

# Star-Telegram

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## Arts Week Transformed into Arts Month in Dallas

Michael Granberry



Mayor Mike Rawlings got the opportunity last week to deliver some good news: The event that used to be known as Dallas Arts Week will now be known as Dallas Arts Month. This year, the City of Dallas will designate all of April as a celebration of the arts in the city.

“There is so much going on artistically in Dallas, and we see all types of art being created and experienced in every corner of the city — theater, music, dance, sculpture, literature, painting and more,” Rawlings said. “We realized we needed much more than a week to do it all justice. So for the 30 days of April, it’s all about the arts.”

Jennifer Scripps, who last May became director of the city’s Office of Cultural Affairs, said one week was simply not enough.

“What was so sad to hear,” she said, “is that people would have really great things going on three days before or five days after in past years and just miss it. There are so many venues, it was a very easy sell to say, ‘Maybe this ought to be a month.’ I wouldn’t say it’s the planets aligning, but it’s everybody getting their act together to make these things happen this month.”

For the “average consumer,” Scripps said, “it helps galvanize your sense of, ‘Gosh, I need to get out and be a tourist in my own town.’ It helps get it on the family calendar and the family budget, and I don’t just mean money. I mean time.”

Scripps calls it an embarrassment of riches. She sees some of the highlights as being the TITAS Alvin Ailey performance, the Mexico show at the DMA and the Arts District block party on April 22 that’s free.

“It’s a good time to try something that’s maybe outside your go-to cultural area,” she said. “It’s a good time to explore.”

It all begins Saturday, when the Nasher Sculpture Center welcomes its second Nasher Prize for Sculpture winner, Pierre Huyghe of France. That night, TITAS Presents will host the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at the Winspear Opera House, while New York writer Fran Lebowitz holds court across the street at the Wyly Theatre for her second night of sharing stories with a Dallas audience.

On April 10, the mayor’s free Creative Conversation returns to Dallas City Performance Hall, focusing on art, architecture and “place-making.” Free events include a Family Day on April 15 on the Ron Kirk Pedestrian Bridge, as well as three performances on April 22 of BANDALOO, the pioneer in vertical dance. BANDALOO will perform on the side of a downtown office tower across the street from the AT&T Performing Arts Center.

And of course, there’s the ongoing exhibition of renowned Mexican contemporary art at the Dallas Museum of Art, a show well on its way to breaking attendance records.

Here’s a list of some of the other noteworthy events:

- Dallas Art Fair, April 7-8 at the FIG (Fashion Industry Gallery)
- Arts Advocacy Day, April 18, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Latino Cultural Center.
- Family Event, hosted by the Office of Cultural Affairs, April 15, noon to 4 p.m. at the Ronald Kirk Bridge and Felix H. Lozada, Sr. Gateway Park
- DeColonize Dallas Opening Reception, April 11, 6 to 8 p.m. at Nasher Sculpture Center
- *Electra* opens April 14 at the Dallas Theater Center.
- The Dallas Book Festival occurs April 29.
- Award-winning singer-songwriter Kipyn Martin will perform on the night of April 7 at Uncle Calvin’s Coffeehouse.
- Dallas’ own Edie Brickell will perform at the Kessler Theater in Oak Cliff for three nights, beginning April 14.
- The 14th annual “Hecho en Dallas” opens April 13 at the Latino Cultural Center in Dallas. Scripps also points to the South Dallas Cultural Center doing “Black Art 214.” And the Oak Cliff Cultural Center, in Scripps’ words, is doing “a wonderful exhibit of student art.”

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