

Arts & Culture in Washington, DC

The nation's capital owns a rich arts and culture scene. Visitors and locals can explore awe-inspiring art galleries, must-see museums, authentic performing arts and lively music venues. Many experiences are free of charge.

Notable Museum Openings and Refreshes

- National Gallery of Art and Sculpture Garden: Renovated East Building opened September 2016
- National Museum of African American History and Culture: Newest Smithsonian opened September 2016
- Freer|Sackler galleries: Renovated and reopened October 14, 2017
- Museum of the Bible: Opened November 17, 2017
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: Dolcezza Café and lobby renovation opening February 2018
- International Spy Museum: Relocating to L'Enfant Plaza winter 2018

Public Art Installations

- Renwick Gallery and Golden Triangle BID: No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man Outdoor Extension – Mar. 30-Dec. 30, 2018 (multiple locations)
- Art Parks in NoMa neighborhood - spring 2018
- Sculpture gardens at the National Gallery of Art and Hirshhorn Museum
- [Murals](#)
 - African-American icons for Ben's Chili Bowl by Aneikan Udofo – U Street
 - George Washington by MADSTEEZ – NoMa
 - "Let.Go." by Rose Jaffe – Blagden Alley
 - "Relax. Your heart is stronger than what you think!" by Yoko Ono – Union Market

Must-See 2018 Theater & Performing Arts Performances

- [Women's Voices Theater Festival](#), Jan. 15-Feb. 15, 2018
- *Hamlet* – Shakespeare Theatre Company, Jan. 16-Feb. 15, 2018
- *Hamilton* – The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, June 12-Sept. 16, 2018
- *Snow Child* – Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, April 13-May 20, 2018
- *The Color Purple* – The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, July 31-Aug. 26, 2018

Music Venues

- Capital One Arena renamed (20,000 capacity - previously Verizon Center)
- The city's newest music venues recently opened in the Wharf neighborhood:
 - The Anthem (6,000 capacity)
 - Pearl Street Warehouse (300 capacity)

- Union Stage (450 capacity)

Art Trends

- Contemporary African-American Art
 - Barack and Michelle Obama's portraits – Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, starting Feb. 12, 2018
 - *Jacob Lawrence: Migration Series* – Phillips Collection, Ongoing
 - *Kara Walker: Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War* – SAAM, Oct. 13, 2017-Mar. 11, 2018
 - *Marc Bradford: Pickett's Charge* – Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Nov. 8, 2017-Nov. 12, 2018
- Female Artists
 - *Anne Truitt: In the Tower* – National Gallery of Art, Nov. 19, 2017-Apr. 1, 2018
 - *Barbara Kruger: Belief+Doubt* – Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Ongoing
 - *Kate and Laura Mulleavy: Rodarte* – Women in the Arts Museum, Coming Fall 2018
 - *Sally Mann: A Thousand Crossings* – National Gallery of Art, Mar. 4, 2018-May 28, 2019

Popular Annual Cultural Events and Festivals

- Chinese New Year – February 16, 2018
- National Cherry Blossom Festival – March 20-April 15, 2018
- Passport DC – May 1-31, 2018
- DC Jazz Festival – Summer TBD
- Capital Pride – June 7-10, 2018
- Smithsonian Folklife Festival – June 27-July 1 and July 4-8, 2018

Resources

- Photo library (please use credit: courtesy of washington.org)