

January 1, 2010

10 for '10

With star power, fantasy worlds and a Fringe follow-up, the next 364 days have plenty to offer local arts lovers.

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On this, the first day of a new decade, it's nearly impossible not to look forward.

If you weren't sick of the '00s as it was, a full month of best-of-the-decade lists in magazines, newspapers and on Web sites has probably ensured that you are done reminiscing about the past 10 years.

In that spirit, let's look at the year ahead, focusing on everything arts -- museum showcases, concerts and festivals for the new year.

In the dead of winter, a traditionally slow time for the arts world, it might be hard to muster excitement for what 2010 holds. But the year is shaping up well for arts lovers in our area, with plenty of events already scheduled like a fanciful show at the Delaware Art Museum taking us to an imaginary world called Dinotopia where dinosaurs and humans live alongside each other, or the long-awaited arrival of U2's massive 360° Tour in Philadelphia with its dazzling set that The New York Times has called "part insect, part spacecraft, part cathedral."

Whether you want to rock with Bono and the boys at Lincoln Financial Field in July or escape into a new dino world in February, check out 10 standout arts events already set for for 2010.

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Jan. 22 A little more than a year after joining his buddy Marty Stuart for a duo concert at The Grand in Wilmington, **Travis Tritt** will descend deeper into Delaware for a concert all by his lonesome at Dover Downs. The Grammy-winning country singer, who has six platinum and multiplatinum albums under his belt buckle, will give an acoustic solo performance. Although Tritt hasn't released a new album in 2 1/2 years, he has a deep songbook of instantly recognizable country tunes, the best of which come from the earlier half of his career: "Here's a Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)," "Country Club," "Put Some Drive in Your Country," "The Whiskey Ain't Workin'," "T-R-O-U-B-L-E," and "This One's Gonna Hurt You (For a Long, Long Time)." Although the show is sold out, some ticketholders cancel prior to the performance. Call VIP Services at (800) 711-5882 on the day of the show to inquire about sales. www.doverdowns.com.

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Jan. 29-30 The Delaware Symphony Orchestra continues its "DSP Plugged In" pop series by taking on

one of America's most beloved films, 1939's "The Wizard of Oz." Like February's popular "Bugs Bunny on Broadway" show, young and old will be drawn to "**Oz with Orchestra**," which will feature DSO conductor David Amado leading his orchestra through the score and songs of the Judy Garland classic. As the film is shown on a big screen, the orchestra will be providing all the music as Dorothy, The Tin Man and The Cowardly Lion come alive once again, this time at The Grand (818 N. Market St., Wilmington). www.desymphony.org.

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Jan. 31 Fresh from her performance at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Norway -- in which she was handpicked by President Barack Obama -- 25-year-old jazz phenom **Esperanza Spalding** will bring her bass and her sweet voice to The Grand. Originally scheduled for October and postponed due to a scheduling conflict, Spalding will finally make good on her Wilmington appearance: a must-see show for area jazz heads. Maybe Spalding will dish about her biggest fan, who just so happens to be the leader of the free world. In addition to her Nobel performance, she twice performed at The White House in 2009, even breaking out a cover of Stevie Wonder's "Overjoyed" at one of shows. www.grandopera.org.

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Feb. 6-May 16 Thanks to more than 60 paintings by New York artist James Gurney, best known for his New York Times bestselling illustrated book series "Dinotopia," dinosaurs will come alive at the Delaware Art Museum (2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington; www.delart.org) for a three-month exhibit, "**Dinotopia: The Fantastical Art of James Gurney**." Gurney has created a mythical island inspired by lost civilizations and archaeology where humans and dinosaurs live side by side, melding fantasy with history. And take note: Gurney will be at the museum at 1 p.m. on opening day for a lecture and book signing.

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Feb. 22 Remember back when the East End Cafe in Newark hosted national acts on their small, cozy stage? Everyone from Richie Havens, Freedy Johnson and Loudon Wainwright III to Steve Forbert, DanBern and The Velvet Underground's John Cale played at the East End back in the day. After years of turning its attention to local acts, the East End is trying to lure some big names back to town. One of those acts is **Jonathan Richman**, a cult favorite and influential rocker who has played the East End before. Richman, who had memorable turn in the Farrelly brothers film "There's Something About Mary," is the man behind such tunes as "Roadrunner," which he recorded with the Modern Lovers, and "I Was Dancing in the Lesbian Bar." The East End is at 270 E. Main St. Visit www.eastend-cafe.com.

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March 17-April 4 Ten months of life in Wilmington will be under the microscope when the Delaware Theatre Company (200 Water St.) investigates its own hometown with "**Ten Months: The Voices of Wilmington Project**," an original work conceived and directed by DTC artistic director Anne Marie Cammarato. The show will mix video and interviews with actors on stage as they explore life in Wilmington, both in the present and in the past, including the National Guard presence in the city in 1968 just after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (The show is meant for those 15 and up.) www.delawaretheatre.org.

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July 12 More than a year after U2 kicked off its oversized 360° Tour, area fans of the Dublin rock legends will finally hear live versions the songs from "No Line on the Horizon." U2 will set up its state-of-the-art stage on the grass of Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia as part of a 15-date third leg of the

tour through the United States and Canada. As a bonus, expect a major act to open the show. Throughout the tour so far, everyone from The Black Eyed Peas to Muse has stepped up as the opening act. Equal parts spectacle and musical concert, the tour has received rave reviews. Now it's our time to see what all the hubbub is about. www.livenation.com.

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July 29-Aug. 1 Think of it as Woodstock, but with the Lord instead of drugs and alcohol. **Jubileefest** offers four days of Christian music on five stages with nearly 70 music acts, including "American Idol" contestant Chris Sligh. It's slated to be held at a farm in Houston for the first event of its kind held in Delaware. Organizers hope it will draw 1 million believers with an eye on pulling in people from cities up and down the East Coast. There will be plenty of inspirational speakers as well, including well-known names like former NFL star Art Monk, actor Stephen Baldwin and former "Growing Pains" heartthrob Kirk Cameron. www.jubileefest.net.

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Sept. 29-Oct. 3 After a successful first year with about 200 artists and 2,100 spectators in Delaware's largest city, **Fringe Wilmington** will return with plenty of outsider art, performance and film. The 2010 version will be a day longer -- five in total -- and will likely once again include the 24-hour filmmaking competition. Organizers are still brainstorming the second edition of Fringe Wilmington, but Rich Neumann hints, "We're hoping to include several new elements, maybe even a 'Gong Show'-type event with Fringe acts, but we're still in development at this point." www.fringewilmingtonde.com.

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Oct. 1-Jan. 2, 2011 If you thought Betsy Ross can be defined by a sewing kit for famously creating the first American flag, you need to head on out to Winterthur Museum & Country Estate in October for "**Betsy Ross: The Life Behind the Legend.**" Instead of focusing the three-month exhibition on flags, it will dig deep into Ross' life and career as an upholsterer. Ross' eyeglasses and Bible will be included in the exhibition, as well as items she used for her work. By the end of your time with Ross at Winterthur, you should have a better understanding of one of the best-known female figures of the American Revolution. www.winterthur.org.
