

A midwinter night's dream

Our picks of Nuit Blanche's arts offerings

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It's common knowledge that Montreal is a mecca for all things art. But on Nuit Blanche, happening this year on Feb. 25, the creativity often confined to galleries is set loose among the streets and social inhibitions are dropped as people mingle and proudly come out as fanatical art lovers. It's also a chance for those hoping to break the schoolwork cycle and, for one night, eschew the lack of time excuse that hinders them from taking in art. So behold, our picks to make the most out of your Nuit Blanche.

VISUAL ART



The staple of every teenage girl's wall, collages are one of the most self-satisfying and least frustrating art forms you can partake in. What better way to get down with crafting than a party? Galerie Monastiraki is throwing its third annual collage bash, where they invite people to fulfill all their collage whims and enjoy art by Jaynus O'Donnell at the same time.

The collage party goes from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Galerie Monastiraki (5478 St-Laurent). Admission is free.

If you're looking to really cover some ground, make like Alice and explore the wonderland that is Art Souterrain. With hundreds of installations and performances trickled along the six-

kilometre passageway between Place des Arts and Complexe Les Ailes, you can turn your night into the artsy explorer's trip of your choice. Not sure where to start? Diana Thorneycroft's Chuckie flashback-inducing Doll Mouth Series will be at McGill metro; Martine Frossard and Isabelle Guichard's hopscotch game installation will be at Square Victoria; and Paul Abraham's *Du rêve à la réalité* installation, evoking a POP sensibility with its depictions of Superman, will also be at McGill metro. Lace up your shoes and don't limit yourself, because with the hundreds of other exhibitions, it seems more is better.

Take a look through all of Art Souterrain's offerings at www.montrealenlumiere.com and create your own map for your underground arts journey through the city.



CINEMA

No-show at last year's SPASM? No problem! The festival will be taking over Café Cléopâtre, presenting a best-of showcase from their 2011 edition. With categories including the expected comedy and horror fare, to more intriguing films that fall under "WTF" and "Trash," SPASM will colour your Nuit Blanche weird, gory and exhilarating all at once. If the film roster doesn't win you over, the presenters will—the night will be hosted by the café's drag queens.

Café Cléopâtre (1230 St-Laurent Blvd.) opens its doors for La Nuit SPASM at 8 p.m. Entrance is \$5.

PERFORMANCE

When it comes to boxing—and other gruelling, teeth-clenching sports, albeit this may be a generalization—artists will usually stay in the sidelines. The closest they'll come to those sweat-stained gloves is to maybe make a film about it (here's looking at you, Clint Eastwood). Well, the Art Matters folk are not only getting up and close, they're stepping right into the rink with *In Our Time*, a late-night dance, film theatre and music performance being held at a boxing club. Oh, and just to completely bust your art radar with anticipation, there will be visual art, too. Load up on the energy-boosting substance of your choice and head over to Blue Cat Boxing Club (435 Beaubien St. W.) at midnight. Admission is free.

THEATRE

Are you looking to be amazed? Maybe you'd like a dose of laughter to cure that stubborn winter cold? Look no further than the selection of free theatre performances available at this year's Nuit Blanche. First on the docket from 5 p.m. until 2 a.m., Animagie presents a magical nighttime voyage guided by the Knights of the Order of Templars, where you'll meet fantastical creatures straight out of Quebec folktales. The show takes place at the Olympic Park and promises to be a larger-than-life experience.

Starting at 8 p.m., you can choose between an evening of madness with the Ligue d'improvisation montréalaise or an evening with vengeful lovers and the crimes that made them famous at the Musée du Château Ramezay. LIM is promising electrified sketches and continuous live performances featuring the best and wildest performers of song, intimate theatre and collective madness. The Musée, on the other hand, wishes for you to step into history with them as they remake three historical murder trials that scandalized Montreal between 1658 and 1702. LIM will be done largely in French and takes place at the Lion d'Or (1676 Ontario St. E.) and the madness lasts until 3 am. The Musée du Château Ramezay's trials will go on until 11:30 p.m., with representations every 30 minutes at 280 Notre-Dame St. E.

All shows are free.

COMEDY

If straight up rolling on the floor laughing is what you're looking for out of your Nuit Blanche experience, then French speakers will be satisfied with this year's comedy selections. En français, Rocambolesque is offering theatrical improvisation featuring competitive matches, humourous performances, improv, puppet shows and guaranteed magical moments. The laughs start at 7 p.m. and go until 3 a.m. at the Union Française (429 Viger Ave. E.) Also in French at the Place Deschamps, an evening of comedy and wine has been promised. Check out the laughter at 175 Ste-Catherine St. W. Both shows are free.