

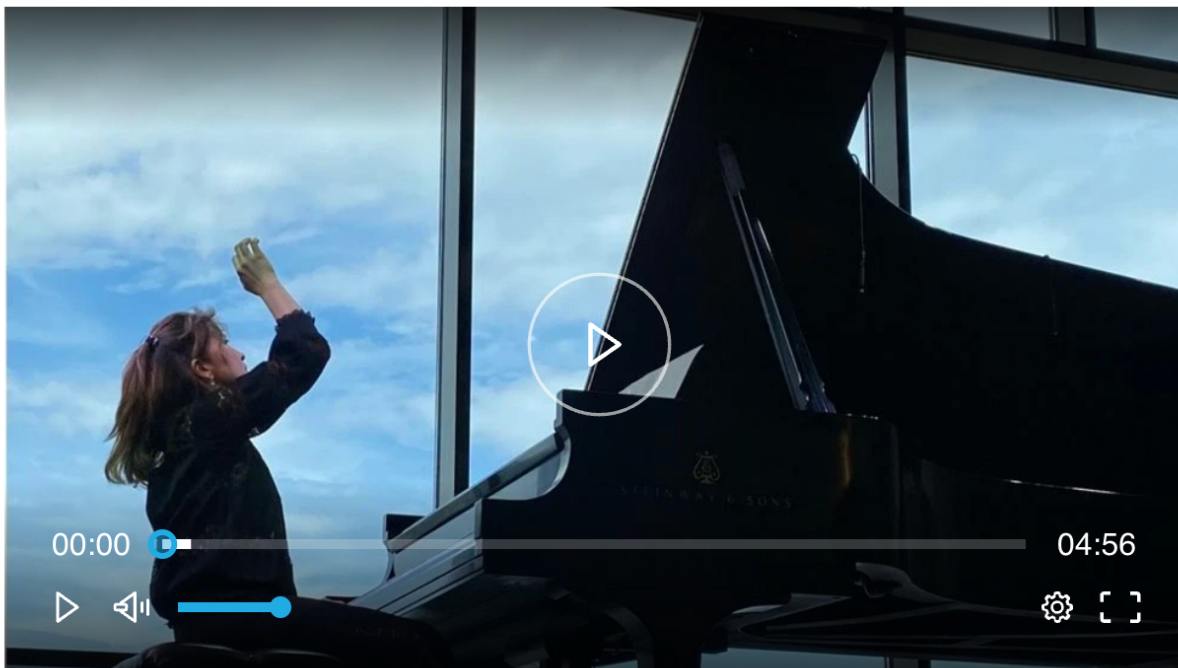
Social in Seattle: Icons of May

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Pianist Min Kwon performs selections from her landmark project America/Beautiful. (Meany Center)

Seattle's arts calendar is packed in May, with major film premieres, a landmark piano project, a new MoPOP photography exhibition and party, rare appearances by designer Christian Louboutin, and a dance trilogy confronting American history and violence.

KOMO News Anchor Holly Menino talks with Seattle Arts Commissioner Linda Lowry about the events happening in May.

The Seattle International Film Festival runs May 7-17. Founded in 1976, SIFF is one of North America's largest film festivals, screening more than 200 films annually from more than 70 countries. This year's lineup includes 203 films from 70-plus countries, with buzzed-about titles including *Sons of the Neon Night*, *Valentina*, and *Nuisance Bear*, a Sundance winner.

SIFF's Opening Night is May 7 at the Paramount Theatre, followed by an after-party at Cannonball Arts.

On May 12, pianist Min Kwon brings her project *America/Beautiful* to Meany Hall at the University of Washington. The performance features selections from the large-scale commissioning project, which includes more than 70 American composers creating variations on "America the Beautiful." Conceived during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was designed to foster connection, creativity, and unity during a time of national isolation. For the May 12 performance, Kwon will present a curated selection announced from the stage.

The Meany Center performance is framed as the nation prepares to celebrate America's 250th anniversary on July 4, with organizers saying the program showcases multiple generations and musical traditions reflecting the country's cultural mosaic, while celebrating artistic innovation, resilience, and shared ideals. Tickets start at \$25 and [are available here](#).

MoPOP's *Rebels + Icons: The Photography of Janette Beckman* opens with a high-energy party on Friday, May 15. The museum is set to transform into a classic New York City-style club scene with turntables, soft-seating lounges, and live graffiti art. The opening night includes a DJ lineup of Maxwell Edison, Eva Walker, and Mix Master Mike, along with hands-on activations and a meet-and-greet with Beckman. The event is 21 and older. The *Rebels + Icons* exhibition is scheduled to remain open at MoPOP through early 2027.

Designer Christian Louboutin is also slated for exclusive Seattle-area appearances on May 19 and May 20.

On May 19, the Seattle Asian Art Museum hosts "Spring Into Art" with SAMS Supporters, billed as an intimate evening of community, culture, and conversation with Louboutin. The event is hosted by SAMS Supporters, a philanthropic group founded in 1985 by Sally B. Nordstrom to support the museum's expansion and

build a community around art and giving. Organizers say the group has grown into a 200-member organization that has raised millions for the Seattle Art Museum's exhibitions and education programs. All proceeds from the May 19 event benefit the Seattle Art Museum.

Spectrum Dance Theater's *The Insidious Trilogy* runs May 20-24, featuring works that confront racial violence, grief, and white supremacist ideology.

The trilogy is led by Donald Byrd, Spectrum Dance Theater's longtime artistic director. Byrd is described as one of the nation's most influential choreographers working at the intersection of art, activism, and social inquiry, known for bold dance theater confronting race, justice, memory, and American identity.