

ARTPHILLY

WHAT NOW ²⁰²⁶

GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

We're throwing a party for the country's 250th birthday.... and you're invited!

WHEN?

May 27–Jul 2

WHERE?

All over Philly!

WHAT NOW?

Great question!

What Now: 2026 is ArtPhilly's first city-wide festival, asking artists to use their creativity to help us understand the past and imagine the future. How can reflecting on the last 250 years inspire how we move forward towards the next ***semiquincentennial?**



***Say This Three Times Fast:**
Semiquincentennial
(seh-mee-kwin-sen-TEN-ee-uhl)

half
Semi
+
500 years
Quincentennial
=
half of 500 years
250!

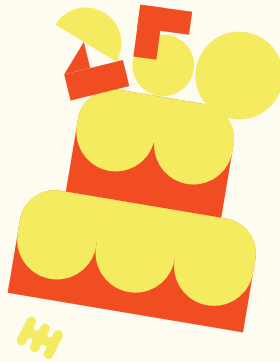


BIRTHDAY WISHES

We've been a country for 250 years. It's all of our jobs to decide What Now?

Make some wishes for what comes next for our nation.

I WISH...



FOR CREATIVES OF ALL AGES

Apr 6–May 18 **FREE** **WHAT NOW**

What Can You Do While You're Waiting

Find looking games, conversation starters, and playful prompts at SEPTA bus stops. Created by Liz Baill and Emily Schreiner and designed by Leen Studios in collaboration with WHYY's upcoming children's TV series, *Good Neighbor Club*, they are designed to encourage kids and their grown-ups to explore their surroundings and think creatively together.



Where? Bus stops on Broad between Lombard & Arch Sts., and select stops on 15th St.

Put on your artist eyes now! Flip through this guide and find some of our looking games.

May 27–Jul 2 **FREE** **WHAT NOW**

Iron and Paper: Unfolding Philadelphia's Chinatown

Turn the crank to flip the pages of artist Colette Fu's giant pop-up book. Each page of this interactive installation, created in partnership with curator Dave Kyu, celebrates the people and culture of Philadelphia's Chinatown.



Where? Crane Community Center Ground Floor Lobby, 1001 Vine St.

May 21–Aug 23

Celebrating America 250: Children's Dreams at Woodmere

This exhibition of children's art celebrates America's 250th through the dreams and imagination of young people. Inspired by Langston Hughes's poem "I Dream a World," the works from neighborhoods across Philadelphia reflect hopes for the future through visions of community, joy, and shared possibilities. This show is mounted in partnership with the Global Philadelphia Association.

Where? Helen Millard Gallery at Smith Hall at Woodmere, 9201 Germantown Ave.

May 28–Jul 30 **FREE** **WHAT NOW**

Sail Through This To That

Visit Penn's Landing for a waterfront art installation and free community celebrations aboard a schooner ship docked at Spruce Street Harbor Park. Displayed on the schooner are artist Indira Allegra's three hand-sewn sails inspired by the lives of two women connected by the waters of the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers: Ona Judge, a seamstress who escaped enslavement in 1796, and Rem'mie Fells, an aspiring fashion designer and trans woman whose life was taken in 2020.



Where? Spruce Street Harbor Park, 301 S Christopher Columbus Boulevard

May 30 **FREE**

Clay Workshop at Fleisher Art Memorial

Create delightfully silly serving pieces for your favorite foods — special trays for your meatballs, bowls for your popcorn, tiny plates for towering cookies, and whatever else your table dreams up. Come play with clay and leave with pieces that are as fun to use as they were to make. Family workshops are best for ages five and up, and are designed for grown-ups and kids to do together. Advance registration required at fleisher.org/events.

Where? Fleisher Art Memorial, 719 Catharine St.

Session One • 9:30–11:30 a.m

Session Two • 1–3pm

May 30 **FREE**

Musicopia String Orchestras' Concert

All are welcome to the Musicopia String Orchestras' spring concert, which is free and open to the public. Listen to musicians ages 7-18 play string instruments including cello, upright bass, viola, and violin. The Musicopia String Orchestras is a tuition-free out-of-school program comprising three ensembles and serving students throughout the greater Philadelphia region.

Where? Church of the Holy Trinity, 1904 Walnut Street, 4PM

May 31 **FREE** **WHAT NOW**

Rewilding Philadelphia: Community Field Day

Over the coming years, a pocket-forest will bloom in a vacant lot in Kensington. Pocket-forests are densely-planted biodiverse woodlands designed for compact urban spaces. As you wander, envision the forest's future a decade from now, as the lot will grow into a green space teeming with life and activity.



Where? 2717 Jasper St., 12-4PM

Jun 5 **FREE**

Family Art and Story Hour at the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum

Enjoy storytelling, music, and artmaking at this free, drop-in family program. After exploring the museum, families are invited to enjoy outdoor play at the Barnes Arboretum. The program is ideal for toddlers and preschoolers, but all are welcome.

Where? Frances M. Maguire Art Museum, 50 Lapsley Ln. in Merion Station, 10:30-11:30AM



Jun 6 **FREE** **WHAT NOW**

What Now? Love Now!

Get creative with hands-on art-making stations featuring everything from floral art to paint, polaroids, and clothing. Enjoy live storytelling, film screenings, music, and an experiential installation exploring the power of love, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.



Where? 934 Market St.

Jun 6 **FREE**

Festival: First American Flag

Discover stars, stripes, and stitching history as part of the Philadelphia Historic District's "52 Weeks of Firsts." Visit the birthplace of the first American flag and learn the story behind the bold woman who started it all, Betsy Ross!

Where? Betsy Ross House, 239 Arch Street, 11AM-1PM.

Jun 6 **FREE**

Community Paddle Boating

Join Fairmount Park Conservancy and Independence Seaport Museum for free paddle boating on Edgewood Lake. Use the kid-friendly binoculars provided to spot turtles, ducks, blooming flowers, and maybe even a great blue heron — the long-legged shorebird the boats are shaped after. Children must be able to fit into a life jacket (30-plus pounds) in order to participate.

Where? FDR Boathouse, 1500 Pattison Ave. & S. Broad St., 10AM-2PM

Jun 7 **FREE**

Sunday Family Art & Storytelling at Woodmere

This free program is designed for children ages 18-months through five years and their grown-ups. Families enjoy a picture book and explore a work of art before making their own artwork. Free with advanced registration at woodmeremuseum.org.

Where? Woodmere's Smith Hall, 9201 Germantown Ave., 11AM

Jun 7 **FREE**

PECO Free First Sunday Family Day at the Barnes Foundation

Enjoy art, lively performances, and free access to the collection. This month features a musical and movement workshop with author and educator Khalil Munir, inspired by his series *The Crown Is Yours*. Families can explore the galleries through a scavenger hunt, join an interactive storytime, and create artwork with Fleisher Art Memorial staff. Visitors can also experience the Barnes' newest exhibition, *Freedom Dreams*, commemorating the country's 250th anniversary. Admission is free, but advanced registration is required and opens on June 4.

Where? Barnes Foundation, 2025 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy., 10AM–4PM

Jun 11–Jun 12 **WHAT NOW**

Say Yes, Philly!

Urban Movement Arts presents a series of community events featuring contemporary dance and music. Celebrate the city's history of communal art and culture, shining a light on today's trends while pointing to future possibilities.



Where? Wilma Theater, 265 S Broad St., 7PM–8PM. A variety of locations and showtimes, scan for details.

Jun 11–Jun 28

Franklin's Key presented by Pig Iron

Best for ages eight and up, this sci-fi, adventure-filled play imagines Ben Franklin in a magical Philadelphia. During the War of Independence, the British feared Franklin could control the weather. Franklin's Key asks: What if that were true? Set in an alternate universe where Franklin's most powerful inventions have been hidden for centuries, two high schoolers race against time to protect the undiscovered technology from shadowy forces.

Where? Plays & Players Theatre, 1714 Delancey St.

Jun 14

Portraits in the Garden: PECO Family Jams at Magic Gardens Museum

Transform your own portrait into a piece of art using an assortment of materials inspired by the work of Santiago Galeas, on view in the galleries. Photos will be taken and printed for free onsite; participants are also welcome to bring their own photographs to use. This event is included with museum admission.

Where? Magic Gardens Museum, 1020 South St., drop in between noon–4PM

Jun 19 **FREE**

Juneteenth Block Party at the African American Museum in Philadelphia

Celebrate freedom and enjoy fun for the whole family. Dance along with live musical performances, shop Black-owned businesses, savor delicious local eats, and more.

Where? African American Museum, 701 Arch St.

Jun 26 **FREE**

Kidchella Music Festival and Fireworks

Kids of all ages can enjoy this free music festival featuring dynamic performances on the Kidchella Music Stage supported by PECO, art stations, mouthwatering treats, exciting giveaways, and more! This vibrant community celebration takes place on Smith's front lawn and concludes with a kid-tastic fireworks display! Event partners include the Musical Petting Zoo by Keep Music Alive, KiDazzle Literacy, Cosmic Writers, The Clay Studio, AJ Autism Institute at Drexel, and more.

Where? Smith Memorial Playground, 3500 Reservoir Dr., 4PM–9PM

DID YOU KNOW?



Many *What Now: 2026* events are

FREE

and

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC*

*Some require tickets.

Head to artphilly.org for all the deets!

WHYY ARTPHILLY

-WHAT CAN YOU DO-
WHILE YOU'RE WAITING

PHILLY COLOR HUNT



"I'D RENAME TEAL TO SLAY/LELL, FOR BLUE + SONY/LELL."
-LOGAN, AGE 9

COME UP WITH NEW NAMES FOR THE COLORS YOU FIND



WHYY ARTPHILLY

-WHAT CAN YOU DO-
WHILE YOU'RE WAITING

THEN & NOW

LOOK AT THESE PHOTOS OF BROAD STREET FROM OVER 120 YEARS AGO.

HOW DOES THE CITY LOOK THE SAME OR DIFFERENT TODAY?



IMAGINE WHAT PHILLY WILL LOOK LIKE IN ANOTHER 120 OR EVEN 250 YEARS

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS



"There will be flying cars in 40 years"
Kervan, age 9



"In the future, City Hall will be an underwater disco"
Eloise, age 10



"I think there will be a swimming pool and a ball pit"
Eloise, age 10

Jun 27

Philly Fairy Festival at Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education

Join woodland friends at the Schuylkill Center for a day of art, play, and exploration. Enter the Fairy House contest along the Fairytale Trail, revel with the fae folk around the woodlands, and learn fantastical crafts from local vendors. Snacks, drinks, performances, and special guests round out the magical event.

Where? Schuylkill Center, 8480 Hagy's Mill Rd., 12-4PM, \$20 pre-registration; \$25 at the door

Jun 28 **FREE**

Summer Solstice Family Day at the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum

Celebrate the longest day of the year with hands-on crafts, refreshments, and art experiences, along with outdoor play on the grounds of the Barnes Arboretum. This event is free and open to the public and marks the opening of the new exhibition *Philly Voices*.

Where? Frances M. Maguire Art Museum, 50 Lapsley Ln., Merion Station, 11AM-1PM

Jul 2 **FREE**

Red, White, and Blue To Do

Celebrate independence in the place where it all began. The day starts with bell ringings and a flag-raising ceremony with Betsy Ross, followed by the Pomp & Parade featuring floats, drill teams, cultural dance troupes, and more. Families are then invited to the All-American Block Party to enjoy music, games, food, and more festive activities. In the afternoon and evening, discover free musical performances throughout the Historic District.

Where? Events center around Independence Mall and all day. The Pomp & Parade begins at the National Constitution Center (525 Arch St.) at 11AM. For the parade route and more details, visit phlvisitorcenter.com.

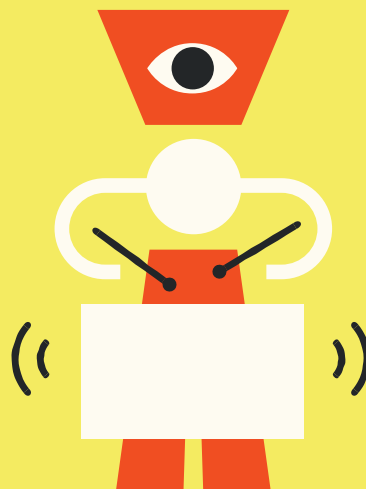


GET ALL YOUR DEETS ON WHAT NOW... NOW!

Information on all these awesome events is available online.

Visit artphilly.org for a full calendar and ticket information.

And make sure you follow us on instagram [@artphilly2026](https://www.instagram.com/artphilly2026) and tag us as you navigate your own What Now adventure!



Jul 5

Stars, Stripes, & Sprinkles Family Festival at the Philadelphia Museum of Art

Celebrate America's 250th and the Philadelphia Museum of Art's 150th birthdays with hands-on art activities, gallery activations in the exhibition *A Nation of Artists*, special performances by School of Rock, and more. This event is included with pay-what-you-wish admission.

Where? Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy., drop in between 10AM–3PM

Jul 12

Mosaic Medallions: PECO Family Jams at Magic Gardens Museum

The mosaics at the Magic Gardens Museum are made of thousands of small pieces held in place by colored grout. Make your own mini-mosaic inside a jar lid using beads, pieces of tile, mirror, and recycled materials. This event is included with museum admission.

Where? Magic Gardens Museum, 1020 South St., drop in noon-4PM

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART | Photo by Albert Yee

Ongoing, every Saturday and Sunday

Weekend Artmaking Sessions at Woodmere

Children can unleash their creativity in Woodmere's brand-new MacDonald Children's Studio at Maguire Hall. Explore new projects each week, then take a family guide and discover the wonders of the galleries. Register at woodmeremuseum.org.

Where? Woodmere at Maguire Hall, 9001 Germantown Ave.,

Saturday sessions · 10:30AM–noon; 12:30–2PM; 2:30–4PM

Sunday sessions · noon–1:30PM; 2–3:30PM

Ongoing throughout the Summer **FREE**

Scavenger Hunts in West Fairmount Park and FDR Park

Fairmount Park Conservancy presents two multi-month-long, self-guided scavenger hunts through some of the city's most beloved parks. From May 1-August 31, hunt through the Centennial District of West Fairmount Park to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Centennial Exposition and discover the history of the city's largest park. From June 1-August 31, head to FDR Park to explore this 348-acre South Philadelphia gem. Visit myphillypark.org for more information on how to participate.

Where? Fairmount Park: Begin at Parkside Ave. between East and West Memorial Drives; FDR Park: Gateway Plaza at Pattison Ave. and Broad St.



BEST FOR AUDIENCES AGES 12 AND UP

Jun 3 **FREE** WHAT NOW

Vote that Jawn

#VoteThatJawn encourages young people across Philadelphia to make their opinions heard through voting, activism, and creativity. Created in collaboration with spoken word artists, students' work will be showcased through performances and videos that amplify youth voices and ask, "What's your jawn?"



Where? Broad Street Love, 315 S. Broad St., Doors at 5:30PM, 6PM-7:30PM

Jun 4–Jun 5 WHAT NOW

Acknowledge Me: A Community Play

Theatre in the X performs a new, original play inspired by the real stories of community members. Four multigenerational gatherings asked participants to reflect on the nation's 250th anniversary, culminating in this community performance.



Where? Community Education Center, 3500 Lancaster Ave., Doors at 6:30PM, 7PM-8:45 PM

Jun 13 **FREE** WHAT NOW

Pepperpot

Pepper pot soup, a traditional dish with a far-reaching heritage, is served alongside this live multimedia performance. The event features new music and poetry inspired by the songs of urban street merchants, in addition to imaginary portraits of these historic, unsung chefs.



Where? Race Street Pier, Race St. & N. Columbus Blvd., Doors at 1PM, 2PM-4PM

Jun 21 WHAT NOW

Joyful Abundance: Emerging Artists

As the country turns 250 years old, the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia celebrates its own 150th anniversary with new choral works by the next generation of emerging composers and poets. This concert debuts commissions of five composer-poet teams with performances that reflect Philadelphia's diverse identities and perspectives. Each team will share insights about their creative process to accompany their piece.



Where? Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N Broad St., 4PM

Jun 26–27, Jun 30–Jul 1 WHAT NOW

Kea and the Ark/Twist the Grid

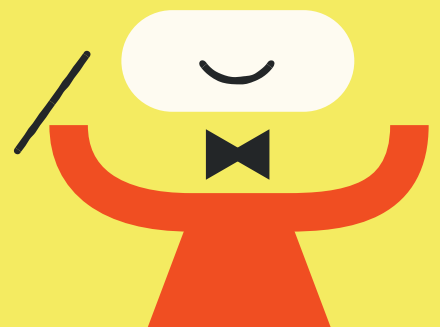
Through puppetry, dance, and electric cello, Sebastienne Mundheim and White Box Theatre tell the story of Kea Tawana, a woman who built an 86-foot long, three-story tall ark as an act of protest and imagination. White Box Theatre also shares its process for a new performance entitled *Twist the Grid*, exploring the myths, science, and history of the Delaware River.



Where? Quintessence Theatre Group, 7137 Germantown Ave.

Kea and the Ark · Doors at 5:30PM, 7PM-8:30PM

Twist the Grid · Doors at 3:30PM, 4PM-5:30PM



CREDITS

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2026.

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