

# night out

## Celebrating diversity

• For its opening-night block party, the Minneapolis Mosaic hopes its new venues will bring out some fresh young faces.

NIGHTLIFE TOM HORGEN



Now in its seventh year, the Minneapolis Mosaic will once again spread its "We Are the World" vibe across the city's arts scene.

The festival — which brings more than 100 summer performances under its banner — kicks off with a celebration in downtown Saturday night.

It's like the Festival of Nations rolled into one big block party.

The idea behind the Mosaic is admirable. Celebrating cultural diversity does a body good. But a key demographic seems to be missing from its tapestry of cultures: namely, young people.

Don't get me wrong, this is a family event, so little kids are in abundance. But even the Mosaic's organizers say teens and twentysomethings haven't exactly turned out in droves.

Last week, the Mosaic's head honcho, Scott Mayer, put it bluntly for me: The venues just weren't cool enough for these kids. So this year they brought in a secret weapon — First Avenue. The legendary rock club will host the Mosaic's edgier acts, including Twin Cities hip-hop queen Maria Isa, a group of slam poets and a buzz-worthy teen rock band called Silent Agency.

Also upping the cool quotient is Seven, the ultra lounge just down the block from First Avenue. A trio of jazzy bands, including Salsabrosa, will perform on Seven's rooftop.

In all, more than 40 performance groups will appear at these venues and on the outdoor stages, located in the parking lot along Hennepin Avenue. Food vendors from Midtown Global Market will provide the culinary adventure.

The Mosaic is a city-sponsored event, but it's funded by corporate sponsors, not taxpayers. Best Buy helped fund this year's art commission

### MINNEAPOLIS MOSAIC OPENING NIGHT

**When:** 5:30-10 p.m. Sat.

**Where:** Performances take place on several stages in the parking lot between 7th and 8th Sts. along Hennepin Av. S., and inside First Avenue, the Pantages Theatre and Seven Sushi & Steakhouse.

**Tickets:** Free.

**Info:** minneapolismosaic.com.

— a collection of images by photographer Sean Smuda that details different cultures in the Twin Cities. The photos will be on display Saturday night.

As you can see, there will be a lot to take in during the Mosaic's opening night, and many of the performances overlap. To help, here are my picks for five must-see performances:

**Chamber Ballet of Morelos:** For the first time, the Mosaic is bringing in a performance group from outside the country. With help from the St. Paul Mexican consulate, this acclaimed ballet company from Morelos, Mexico, will perform at 6:15 p.m. in the Pantages.

**Afro-Brazilian Capoeira Association:** Anything with "Association" in its name is usually boring. Luckily, capoeira is never boring. The Brazilian hybrid dance form was pioneered by African slaves who mixed martial arts with spinning dance moves. Today, capoeira practitioners look like breakdancers who know how to fight. They perform at 8 p.m. in the outdoor folk circle (in the parking lot behind First Avenue).

**Maria Isa:** If you missed the hip-hop starlet's CD-release party last night, here's another chance to see Isa's hard-hitting blend of rap, reggaeton and Puerto Rican bomba. 9 p.m. First Avenue.



Provided by MINNEAPOLIS MOSAIC

The acclaimed Chamber Ballet of Morelos, Mexico, will perform as part of the Minneapolis Mosaic.

**Hayor Bibimma African Dance Company:** The West African dance and drum group (led by Francis Kofi) offers a fun dose of colorful, rhythmic bombast. 9:30 p.m. Pantages.

**Friendship Set to Music:** Yep, goofy name ever. But when it comes to

American square dancing you can't mess with these old-timers. Their public-access cable TV show is a classic. Check 'em out: [www.squareandanceminnesota.com](http://www.squareandanceminnesota.com), 7 p.m. in the folk circle.

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exciting — but it still felt like a kooky stunt that wouldn't last. Five years later, the regional contest is going strong. Contestants will once again don their best rock-god personas tonight at the Varsity Theater and thrash invisible guitars for a panel of judges. The winner goes to the U.S. championship in August, and that winner will head to the world finals in Oulu, Finland.

8 p.m. today, 1300 St. 4th St., Mpls. \$16. 21 and older. 612-604-0222. [www.usairguitar.com](http://www.usairguitar.com).

### So many DJs, so little time

If you're looking for a DJ show this weekend, you're in luck. Chicago house DJ **Johnny Fiasco** is at the Lounge (9 p.m. today, 411 2nd Av. N., Mpls. \$8. 21 and older. 612-333-8800. [www.thelounge.mpls.com](http://www.thelounge.mpls.com)). Old-school breakbeat DJ **Freddy Fresh** is in the Loft above Bar-Fly (9 p.m. today, 711 Hennepin Av. S., Mpls. \$5. 18 and older. 612-333-6100. [www.barflyminneapolis.com](http://www.barflyminneapolis.com)).

Classically-trained-pianist-turned-DJ **Andy Caldwell** is at 414 Soundbar (10 p.m. Sat. 414 3rd Av. N., Mpls. \$15. 612-333-0363. [www.414soundbar.com](http://www.414soundbar.com)). If you're still clamoring for some good DJ sets after that, a some downtown Minneapolis DJs are spinning at Grand Old Day. **Joe Maz**, **StrangeLove** and **Gigamesh** will back up the Eyedea & Abilities show during Dixie's outdoor party (noon-5 p.m. Sun. 695 Grand Av., St. Paul. \$6. 21 and older. 651-222-7345. [www.dixiesongrand.com](http://www.dixiesongrand.com)).

### A Cliché fashion show

Always a friend to Twin Cities designers, **Cliché** will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a big fashion show inside Plaza Verde in Minneapolis. The Uptown boutique is calling the show "Five Years of Love." It'll feature such designers as Kjurek Couture and Amanda Christine.

8 p.m. Thu. 1516 E. Lake St., Mpls. \$8.