

9 for '19

Entertainment options heading to Chicago, suburbs this year

Daily Herald Staff Report

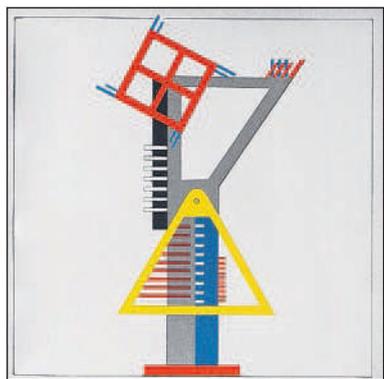
The new year is less than a week old, but we're already looking forward to all the entertainment options coming to Chicago and the suburbs in the months ahead. Here are nine that have us excited about 2019.

1. The Yellow Brick Road ... leads to Rosemont

Thanks to overwhelming demand, Elton John extended his "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour and included concerts at Rosemont's Allstate Arena on Feb. 15 and 16. Tickets are officially sold out, and the resale prices are steep. So consider yourself lucky if you snag tickets to see this master showman on what appears to be his last swing through the area. Of course, "farewell" doesn't always mean farewell when it comes to concert tours. Still, it should be a great show. See rosemont.com/allstate.

2. An international exhibit lands in Elmhurst

The Elmhurst Art Museum plays host to the only U.S. stop of the internationally traveling exhibition "The Whole World a Bauhaus." Running Feb. 16 to April 21, the exhibit marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus, a German school that revolutionized design, and features pieces from both instructors and students, as well as photos and documents. Get details at elmhurstartmuseum.org.



COURTESY OF ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

The Elmhurst Art Museum will be the only U.S. venue for the international traveling exhibition "The Whole World a Bauhaus."



COURTESY OF PATRICE LAMOUREUX, CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

BMX riders perform choreographed tricks during "Volta," Cirque du Soleil's touring show that's coming to Chicago in May.

3. "Hamilton" expands its scope

The next incarnation of the blockbuster musical "Hamilton" (in an extended run at Chicago's CIBC Theatre), opens April 6 in a specially built, football field-sized structure on Chicago's Northerly Island. "Hamilton: The Exhibition" is an immersive, multimedia exhibition designed to more fully examine the life and times of Founding Father Alexander Hamilton. A collaboration between "Hamilton" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda, director Thomas Kail, set designer David Korins and others, the exhibition features an audio tour narrated by Miranda chronicling Hamilton's life. See hamiltonexhibition.com.

4. Chicago becomes the center of the galaxy

The "Star Wars" galaxy, that is. The Force will be with McCormick Place on April 11 as the premier event for fans of the franchise, Star Wars Celebration, lands in Chicago for five days of celebrity appearances, panel discussions and cosplay fun. Described as

"Lucasfilm's love letter to fans," the convention produced by C2E2 organizers ReedPOP could very well be the first place anyone gets to see footage from next year's "Star Wars: Episode IX." Recent Celebrations have featured appearances by Lucasfilm President Kathleen Kennedy, director J.J. Abrams and the series' stars including Mark Hamill, Daisy Ridley and Oscar Isaac. No celebrity appearances have been confirmed

yet, but tickets are available at starwarscelebration.com.

5. New musicals debut in the suburbs

Both the Paramount Theatre in Aurora and the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire will stage new musicals this year aiming for Broadway.

From April 24 to June 2, the Paramount presents a new stage adaptation of the 2007 film "August Rush," about a musically talented boy trying to reunite with his parents. It arrives in Aurora immediately following its world premiere at Virginia's Signature Theatre, complete with a new score by Mark Mancina and Glen Berger and direction by Tony Award-winner John Doyle.

Marriott Theatre, meanwhile, serves up the world premiere of "Darling Grenadine" from June 26 to Aug. 18. This new musical by Daniel Zaitchik — about an MGM musical-obsessed composer who struggles with romance and reality — debuts in Lincolnshire after developmental runs in Los Angeles and Connecticut.

6. Opera premieres prepare to make a splash

Wheaton native and baritone David Govertsen plays Stubb in Chicago Opera Theater's Windy City premiere of "Moby-Dick" on April 25 and 28 at Millennium Park's Harris Theater for Music and Dance. Composer Jake Heggie ("Dead Man Walking") and librettist Gene Scheer ("Three Decembers") received much critical acclaim for their stage adaptation of Herman Melville's 1851 novel when it premiered at Dallas Opera in 2010.

Alongside "Moby-Dick," other operas receive Chicago regional premieres in 2019. These include "The Scarlet Ibis" (Feb. 16, 21 and 24) courtesy of Chicago Opera Theater at Chicago's Studebaker Theater, plus "An



David Govertsen



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Elton John brings his "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour to Rosemont's Allstate Arena in February.

American Dream" (March 15 and 17) courtesy of the Lyric Opera of Chicago at the Harris Theater. See chicagooperatheater.org and lyricopera.org.

7. Great America gets ready to Maxx out

Six Flags Great America in Gurnee — already home to 16 roller coasters — will debut another record breaker. The Maxx Force will be the fastest launch coaster in North America, building up to 78 miles per hour in less than two seconds. And if that doesn't rattle the stomach enough, Maxx Force will be the fastest inversion and tallest double inversion of any roller coaster worldwide. Check back at sixflags.com/greatamerica in the spring for opening-date information.

8. Soldier Field welcomes Cirque

Prepare to be wowed: If you haven't seen Cirque du Soleil perform its mind-blowing acrobatics and stunts in person, you're in for a treat this summer when Cirque brings "Volta" to Chicago's Soldier Field May 18 through June 23. "Volta" combines the culture of street sports with a reality game show in a spectacle that promises never-before-seen acrobatics under the Big Top. Think acrobatics on an articulated ladder, extreme rope skipping, BMX stunt riders, aerial artists swinging and spinning on a rope suspended from the Big Top, two performers balancing one atop the other on a unicycle, plus much more.

Tickets are available at cirquedusoleil.com/usa/chicago/volta/buy-tickets#.

9. Double Door brings music back

When Wicker Park's legendary Double Door closed its doors in early 2017, the local music scene lost a storied venue and meeting place for fans and musicians alike. In December, it was announced the iconic venue would be reopening in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, taking over the former Wilson Avenue Theater at 1050 W. Wilson Ave. Renovations are underway, and the venue is expected to start bringing musical acts to the stage as early as August. Check doubledoor.com.