

Electronic music festival set to inspire Asheville audience

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The Mountain Oasis Electronic Music Summit, a three day music festival during Oct. 25-27, gives festival attendees the opportunity to not only hear a variety of music but also to have a proper experience of downtown Asheville, according to **Ashley Capps, AC Entertainment president.**

"The big picture to take away from the festival is we really want to create a remarkable experience for everybody attends," Capps said. "There are many facets to the experience we are trying to make. We want people to enjoy seeing a lot of the music they love and also experience downtown Asheville, which we consider to be a mountain oasis itself."

The festival takes place at five different venues – the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, ExploreAsheville.com Arena, The Orange Peel, Diana Wortham Theatre, and the Asheville Music Hall. A sold-out festival, which Capps expects to see this weekend, will be 8,000 attendees.

"The festival is relatively small, but interest has been there from the beginning," Capps said. "This year looks to be the most successful of the four years. We're expecting to sell out each day."

A festival like Mountain Oasis is a chance for artists to showcase the new innovations in the music industry.

"The exciting thing about the music industry is that music is really continually reinventing itself, exploring new ideas and going back to the past for inspiration," Capps said. "So many new tools have emerged from technology that give people so many ways to explore. It offers a whole new range of sounds and ability to manipulate those sounds."

AC Entertainment also puts on the annual Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival in Manchester, Tenn.

"Mountain Oasis is certainly

never going to be the size that Bonnaroo is," Capps said. "80,000 people come and there is no place in Asheville for a gathering of those people. We hope that it has its own unique identity and it offers something really special for the audience that attends it. Each festival has its own unique characteristics."

Capps said an important part of the festival is the community aspect. AC Entertainment works closely with Buncombe County Schools and the Bob Moog Foundation. A portion of each ticket sale goes to Buncombe County Schools Foundation and Dr. Bob's Sound-school to support music education.

"It's always important to give back to the community in some meaningful way," Capps said. "We like to target programs that we feel strongly about. Arts education and music education are really near and dear to our hearts."

Along with the artists playing at the designated venues, there will also be shows going on at smaller venues all weekend like the Emerald Lounge to give concert-goers experiences outside of the festival.

Capps said Mountain Oasis gives people an opportunity to experience all that downtown Asheville has to offer.

"The business owners downtown have been very supportive," Capps said. "An audience that really wants to experience the town is going out and checking out great restaurants and visiting shops and seeing what Asheville has to offer. We don't start concerts until 6 in the evening, which gives people an opportunity to explore Asheville."

Capps said the combination of opportunities for festival attendees should leave a lasting experience.

"We want people to experience electronic music," Capps said. "It really inspires people to actually start thinking and exploring ideas in new ways. We hope the festival provides that spark of inspiration for people who attend it."

Mountain Oasis

Friday

ExploreAsheville.com

Arena

Bassnectar

12 a.m. - 1:30 a.m.

The Orange Peel

Laurel Halo

9 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Saturday

ExploreAsheville.com

Arena

Nine Inch Nails

12 a.m. - 1:30 a.m.

Thomas Wolfe

Auditorium

Animal Collective

11:30 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sunday

Asheville Music Hall

Shlohmo

10:45 p.m. - 12 a.m.

ExploreAsheville.com

Arena

Pretty Lights

10:30 p.m. - 12 a.m.

CRAFT

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The Folk Art Center houses the guilds library, which contains around 10,000 titles pertaining to craft interests. Anyone can be a member but materials cannot leave the building, according to Schillo.

"We used to circulate to our members but we had too much stuff that was wandering off and it's hard to replace," she said.

According to Schillo, community and guild members donate most of the titles.

"A lot of the libraries don't keep the back issues of craft things," Schillo said. "I'm proud of it, I just wish more people used it."

In an effort to provide a market for artists, the guild hosts the Southern Highland Craft Fair twice a year, according to Nance.

"There are a lot of fairs and it seems like every year there are more. The Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands sets itself apart through its history and its reputation for excellence," Nance said.

The 66th Annual Craft Fair took place Oct. 17-20 at the U.S. Cellular Center in downtown Asheville. Sponsored by the Southern Highland Craft Guild, the fair featured artwork from more than 200 of its members.

"One thing that really defines the craft fair is how it has tradition and innovation. Traditional and contemporary artists and techniques are represented," Nance said.

In addition to artists booths, attendees observed musical acts and artist demonstrations, according to Nance.

"It is very important to keep traditions alive," said musician **Martha Spencer.**

Spencer's band Whitetop Mountain performed at the fair for the second time this October, according to Spencer.

"We both sing, play banjo, guitar, fiddle and mandolin," Spencer said. "We usually do a mix of old time and bluegrass up tempo instrumentals, country duet singing and high energy dancing."

Turnout of the craft fair remains consistent despite an economic decline, according to Nance.