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A SPECTACULAR SEPTEMBER WEEKEND AWAITS ARTS LOVERS IN PHILADELPHIA
One Weekend, Three Debuts: O17 Opera Festival, Fireflies Exhibit & Mural Arts Monument Lab

PHILADELPHIA, March 24, 2017 – September is shaping up to be a spectacular one for arts lovers in Philadelphia. During the weekend of September 14, fans of the fine and performing arts have a slew of exhibits, performances and first-in-Philly happenings from which to choose: Opera Philadelphia’s inaugural opera festival **O17**; the groundbreaking moving art exhibition *Fireflies*—part of **Parkway 100**, the 15-month-long centennial celebration of the city’s Benjamin Franklin Parkway; and Mural Arts Philadelphia’s **Monument Lab**, an eight-week public art and history exhibit that spans the city. Add to that the always outrageous **Fringe Festival** and the last weekend for **Andrew Wyeth: In Retrospect** at the Brandywine River Museum of Art for a not-to-be-missed weekend in Philadelphia.

To fully experience the September spectacle, visitors can sleep over and take advantage of the popular **Visit Philly Overnight Hotel Package**—packed with perks, including free hotel parking.

Here are five reasons to make September a must:

1. **O17/Festival O:** The city’s musical profile hits a high note when Opera Philadelphia introduces this new opera festival to mark the start of the company’s season. O17 features some of the genre’s glittering stars featured in more than 25 performances, including three world premieres, the exclusive East Coast appearance of an internationally renowned production of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, commissioned works and must-see, site-specific performances. **September 14-25, 2017.** Various locations, (215) 732-8400, operaphila.org
2. **Cai Guo-Qiang: Fireflies:** When the Association for Public Art, working with guest curator Fung Collaboratives, debuts Cai’s 27 glowing pedicabs along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, people will have a chance to experience Philadelphia’s Champs-Élysées like never before. Participants can choose one of two routes for their ride in the Chinese lantern-embellished cabs: a 1.5-mile trek that begins at Sister Cities Park or a two-mile journey that starts at Iroquois Park. The public art project—part of the Parkway 100 celebration—kicks off on September 14 with a special artist-led performance starring the colorfully illuminated cabs. **September 14-October 8, 2017.** Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 546-7550, associationforpublicart.org
3. **Monument Lab:** What makes a monument in the 21st century? This eight-week citywide public art and history exhibition co-produced by Mural Arts Philadelphia and curators Paul M. Farber, Ken Lum and A. Will Brown will attempt to answer this question for Philadelphia. A series of temporary installations by local and international artists will be accompanied by interactive pop-up laboratories for creative conversations in neighborhoods throughout the city. **September 15-November 19, 2017.** Various locations, (215) 685-0750, muralarts.org

4. **Fringe Festival:** Avant-garde performance meets street theater during this annual festival of artistic pleasure that takes place in major venues and non-traditional performance spaces in neighborhoods all over the city. Daring audiences watch as pushing-the-boundaries artists reveal themselves through theatrical, dance, musical and visual art expressions.
September 7-23, 2017. Various locations, (215) 413-1318, fringearts.com
5. **Andrew Wyeth: In Retrospect:** The last chance to see the most comprehensive exhibition of Andrew Wyeth's work since 1973 takes place the weekend of September 14 at the Brandywine River Museum of Art. Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the artist's birth, *Andrew Wyeth: In Retrospect* features more than 100 of the artist's works on canvas and paper. **Through September 17, 2017.** 1 Hoffman's Mill Road, Chadds Ford, (610) 388-2700, brandywine.org

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Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of visitphilly.com/pressroom.