

DENVER FALL ARTS PREVIEW

By Kazia Jankowski

Not long ago, a cultural night out in Denver consisted of a trip to Paris on the Platte, where you might have found a goateed 20-year-old spouting poetry through the cigarette smoke and the thick aroma of coffee. But in the last decade, the birth of new independent theater houses and art galleries; the expansion, renovation, and completion of our art museums; and the addition of daring programming from our go-to performance halls means that Denver now hums with top-tier local and visiting national exhibitions and productions. The creative landscape we've craved has finally arrived – and now is the time to get out and start experiencing it. As cooler weather pushes us inside, the local arts community cranks up its offerings. Read on for this season's must-see shows.

Damien Hirst

He's been called one of "the most successful artists of our times" and one of just three "brand name" artists – along with giants Picasso and Warhol. And whether or not a life-size human skull made of platinum and diamonds is your idea of high art, there's no debating Hirst's contribution to the contemporary art world. His "Saint Sebastian, Exquisite Pain," an arrow-pierced steer locked in a formaldehyde-filled tank, which will be on exhibit this fall for the first time at the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, is a thoughtful and brutally graphic nod to the Christian saint's martyrdom and Christian iconography. "Incorruptible Crown" (butterflies under glass), which will also be part of the show, is equally bizarre and remarkable.



SAINT SEBASTIAN, EXQUISITE PAIN, DAMIEN HIRST'S MEDITATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE, ART, AND RELIGION.