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## Local Arts

# Five things to know before Nuit Blanche takes over downtown Saskatoon

*Saturday, Sept. 28 is the big event, but now there's a Nuit Blanche Eve event on Friday before the main festival kicks off.*

Matt Olson

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Attendees gather around the art piece 4^3 by Laura Payne during the annual Nuit Blanche art Festival in Saskatoon, Sk on Saturday, September 29, 2018. PHOTO BY KAYLE NEIS /Saskatoon StarPhoenix

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For the sixth year in a row, art will take to the streets of Saskatoon for the annual Nuit Blanche festival.

The artistic event is focused on bringing any and all kinds of art to the forefront and making them publicly accessible during one autumn evening. Visual art, performance pieces, auditory experiments — there is no limit on the kind of artwork that might be selected for the festival.

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## 1. Community partnerships:

Nuit Blanche curator Michael Peterson, who has been with the festival in Saskatoon since its third year, said organizers have been trying to put an emphasis on their community partnerships. They've brought in groups from all over the city, from working with PAVED Arts to partnering with the University of Saskatchewan for Nuit Blanche Eve.

## 2. Nuit Blanche Eve:

Nuit Blanche is typically a one-night-only affair, with the art exhibits dominating downtown Saskatoon streets on Saturday, Sept. 28. This year, event organizers have added Nuit Blanche Eve on Friday night at the U of S campus, giving student artists a chance to showcase their work alongside professionals in a sort of mini-Nuit Blanche before the main event.

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“For us, it creates opportunities for students to get involved, for artists at younger ages and earlier stages of their career that might not otherwise be at the level of being able to get through the submission process for the main festival,” Peterson said.

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### 3. More than before:

Peterson said 21 projects will be on display Saturday night, with artists from around the world participating. That's a little more than last year's Nuit Blanche offering. Along with the displays for Nuit Blanche Eve on Friday night, Peterson said more than 30 projects will be involved in this year's events.

“We've got those really participatory projects, and then we've got projects bringing in artists from across Canada and one from Brazil,” Peterson said.

### 4. Interactive projects:

One goal of Nuit Blanche is audience interaction, and some projects are built to be experienced a little more directly than others. Peterson highlighted Brazilian artist Ricardo Bizafrá and his immersive piece called *stuck inside a cloud*, as well as JS Gauthier and Dr. Brian F. Eames's work with interactive projections that came from images produced at the Canadian Light Source.

### 5. Building on success:

It's difficult to estimate exactly what attendance is like at a festival without a gate or tickets, but Peterson said the best guess is that between 8,000 and 10,000 people come out to Nuit Blanche each year. With a growing population of artists and community members, there's hope that Nuit Blanche will keep getting bigger.

“It fairly quickly outgrew the idea of having it on a single street, which was where we started,” Peterson said. “Once we started to bring in large-scale projects, and projections that could cover an entire building, you started to need to spread those out.”

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