

Fairs & Festivals

Plenty of reasons to enjoy art, music and food

By **DEBORAH HIRSCH**
SPECIAL TO THE SUN-SENTINEL

It's payback time for all of us who swelter during our subtropical summer. A feast of outdoor art and music events is being served up across South Florida this weekend that would drive freezing friends and relatives up North positively mad — if you were to decide to rub it in.

Five major festivals play South Florida for the next three days. They feature music and art from both sides of the Atlantic.

■ Ky-mani Marley continue family legacy. 26. Kick up your heels and kiss the Blarney stone at Irish Fest '98, tonight through Sunday in downtown Fort Lauderdale. This Celtic celebration at Bubier Park/DDA Plaza features "a complete mix of Irish entertainment," says Sheila Hynes, executive director of the Irish Cultural Institute. "Celtic rock [Black 47], Celtic Cajun [Steve Riley Band], Irish comedians [Hal Roach]. We even have English music [Imagine, A Tribute to the Beatles]."

Also appearing are the Emerald Isle's greatest folk group, the Wolfe Tones, and tenor John McDermott. Plus bagpipes, step-dancing, theater, arts and crafts, a marketplace, Gaelic Mass, food fair and pub tent. For the kids, there will be magicians, clowns, games and rides.

Visitors will learn about Ireland's "myths, music and magic," according to Irish Fest President Rory O'Dwyer, and its "fantastic folk traditions."

Although this is the festival's 12th year, it hasn't always been blessed with the luck of the Irish. Last year's downpour made it "a true Irish event. We even had Irish weather," Hynes says. She promised more tents and more seating for this year's great green Gaelic gala.

With a reggae beat

Florida fairgoers can then travel across the sea, from the Emerald Isle to tropical islands. The fifth annual Bob Marley Caribbean Festival on Saturday in Miami is a family affair, featuring all of the legendary reggae singer's musical children, his wife and his mother.

Performers at the Miami-Dade County Youth Fairgrounds include Grammy-



The Wolfe Tones, Ireland's greatest folk group, will appear at Fort Lauderdale's Irish Fest '98.



The Melody Makers with Cedella Marley, left, Stephen Marley, Ziggy Marley and Sharon Marley Prendergast play Saturday at the Bob Marley Caribbean Festival.

nominated Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers, Latin rocker Carlos Santana (a Rock and Roll Hall of Famer) and Lauryn Hill of the Fugees. Also appearing are Manhattan-based reggae band John Brown's Body and the tropical sounds of Millo Torres y el Tercer Planeta from Puerto Rico.

Each year the festival collects cans of food to benefit Miami-Dade County food banks. Last year, festivalgoers donated more than 90,000 cans to feed the many homeless people of Miami.

Accent's on art, food

Art lovers can feed their cravings at two festivals this weekend. The Coconut Grove Arts Festival will once again weave its way along beautiful Biscayne Bay Saturday through

Monday.

Now in its 35th year, the festival features 326 artists chosen from more than 1,600 applicants by a panel of art experts. Mediums include watercolors, clay works, fiber, glass, sculptures, painting, photography, wood and jewelry on display in Peacock Park and along Bayshore Drive.

For those who want aural as well as visual stimulation, the festival is presenting both national and local musical acts. Headlining are Miami's own Nestor Torres and jazz band the Rippingtons.

In addition, more than 30 food booths will mirror Miami's cultural mix. And at the Coconut Grove Convention Center, Kids ArtFest will provide a hands-on experience for children.



The Rippingtons will jazz it up at the Coconut Grove Arts Festival.

Art connoisseurs also won't want to miss ArtiGras '98, Saturday through Monday in Palm Beach Gardens. The 13th annual event, outside the Gardens of the Palm Beaches Mall, features 340 invited artists and crafters on site to sell their original works. Mediums include crafts, paintings, sculptures, photography, graphics, jewelry, pottery and textiles.

"There's a craft area with more than 100 crafters," said Susan Tancer, festival publicist. "Some people are making things on site."

There will also be a celebrity art auction, children's activities, live entertainment, silent auction, food and seniors' activities.

Finishing off South Florida's festival weekend is the Palm

IF YOU GO

■ IRISH FEST '98 — 5-11 tonight, noon-11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at Bubier Park/DDA Plaza, Andrews Avenue and Las Olas Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale. Musical highlights: Black 47 at 9 tonight; Imagine (tribute to the Beatles) at 8 p.m. Saturday; Steve Riley & Mamou Playboys at 9:30 p.m. Saturday; Wolfe Tones at 2:30 and 7 p.m. Sunday; John McDermott at 6 p.m. Sunday. Tickets \$10, ages 13 and younger free. Call 954-946-1093, 800-882-3746.

■ COCONUT GROVE ARTS FESTIVAL — 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday through Monday at Peacock Park, Bayshore Drive, Miami. Musical highlights: Nestor Torres at 3:30 p.m. Sunday; Rippingtons at 3:30 p.m. Monday. Admission is free. Call 305-447-0401.

■ BOB MARLEY CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL — 11 a.m. Saturday to 1 a.m. Sunday at Miami-Dade County Youth Fairgrounds, 10901 SW 24th St., Miami. Musical highlights: Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers, Carlos Santana, Lauryn Hill (of Fugees). Admission \$10 plus four cans of food. Call 305-665-5379.

■ PALM BEACH SEAFOOD FESTIVAL — Noon-10 p.m. today and Saturday, noon-8 p.m. Sunday and Monday at Currie Park, 23rd Street at Flagler Drive, West Palm Beach. Admission is free. Call 561-832-6397.

■ ARTIGRAS '98 — 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday through Monday at Gardens of Palm Beaches Mall, on perimeter roads, PGA Boulevard, Palm Beach Gardens. Tickets \$3 in advance, \$4 at gate, \$8 three-day pass, ages younger than 10 free. Call 561-433-9000, code 1234.

Beach Seafood Festival today through Monday at Currie Park in West Palm Beach. Although the festival is in its 10th edition, new this year is a chowder cookoff. Both fairgoers and celebrity judges will vote for their favorites as area restaurants compete for awards.

There will also be an expanded children's area, kids' fishing derby, waterfront dining area, carnival rides, arts and crafts and fresh seafood and green markets.

And while you're snacking on fresh Florida seafood and sipping frozen tropical drinks, you can listen to live reggae, Cajun and island-style music in the tiki bar. What a way to wrap up your weekend.

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