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Events for Children in NYC This Week

By Laurel Graeber — August 17, 2017



Our guide to cultural events in New York City for families with children and teenagers.

‘CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG! THE MAGICAL CAR, ILLUSTRATED BY BARNEY TOBEY’ at the New-York Historical Society (through Aug. 30). Self-driving automobiles may not have been perfected for the global market, but one of them has already provided memorable journeys: Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, the title character of Ian Fleming’s only children’s book, named for the noise it made upon ignition. Al Perkins adapted the tale for beginning readers in 1968, with watercolor illustrations by Barney Tobey (1906-89), which have recently been donated to the Historical Society. This exhibition includes 29 of his preparatory works, along with page proofs and text celebrating the enchanted car, which didn’t just drive — it flew and floated, too.

212-873-3400, nyhistory.org

CLAY CLUB at SculptureCenter (Aug. 19, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.). What could be more enticing to imaginative children than 2,000 pounds of clay? And what could be more appealing to their parents than not having to clean it up later? SculptureCenter, originally called Clay Club, the exhibition and education space now in Queens, used to hold summer sculpting parties from 1928 to 1939, and it’s reviving that tradition on Saturday by transforming its interior into a free communal studio. Participants, young or old, can work on individual projects or join in large-scale group sculptures to be led by seven artists. Food and live music will help fuel the creativity.

718-361-1750, sculpture-center.org

CONEY ISLAND SAND SCULPTING CONTEST on the Coney Island Beach and Boardwalk (Aug. 19, noon to 4 p.m.). For families entering this 27th annual free event on the Brooklyn shore, the only necessities are sand, water, inspiration and ingenuity. The Parks Department will supply a dune and a beach pail; the rest is up to the team. Parents and children who don't want to take part in the art can watch the wacky and wild spring up around them; previous sculptures have included Mount Rushmore-style busts and the title character from the movie "Creature From the Black Lagoon." The prizes are cash, just in time for back-to-school shopping. (Contest registration starts at noon on the boardwalk at West 12th Street; adult groups and individual adults compete separately.)
wearebcs.org/sand

GRAND CENTRAL'S SUMMER SEND-OFF at Grand Central Terminal (Aug. 22-24, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.). A point of departure for many New Yorkers seeking seasonal entertainment, this train station will temporarily become a destination itself. From Tuesday through Thursday, its celebration in Vanderbilt Hall will offer children face painting, science demonstrations, scavenger hunts and New York Transit Museum artifacts to observe, as well as refreshments for sale. Each day will also feature free live performances, including acts from the Big Apple Circus (Tuesday and Thursday), and numbers from the Broadway shows "School of Rock" and "Cats" (Tuesday); "Wicked" (Wednesday); and "Anastasia" and "Stomp" (Thursday).
grandcentralterminal.com

'GRIFFINS, GOBLETS AND GOLD: A WIZARDING TOUR OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART' The works in this museum often cast a spell with their beauty, but the young people participating in this expedition are seeking evidence of even more powerful sorcery. Sponsored by e.t.c., a company whose initials stand for "events — tailor-made and customized," this tour views the Met as filled with horcruxes and other mystical objects from the Harry Potter books. For an hour and 45 minutes, J. K. Rowling fans take part in scavenger hunts and games, as well as visit exhibits that evoke Harry's adventures. These include the "Courtiers in a Rose Garden" medieval tapestry, the Patio from the Castle of Vélez Blanco and a chamber resembling a Hogwarts common room. The tour, currently on Saturdays, Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (reservations are required), features activities encouraging children to think like wizards. "One," said Evan Levy, e.t.c.'s founder, "is coming up with a fifth Hogwarts house using inspiration from the Met."
917-513-4081, etccustomevents.com

HONEY WEEKEND at Wave Hill (Aug. 19-20, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Just as fragrant blossoms attract bees, this Bronx public garden hopes to lure lots of little human visitors with two days of sweet activities. Held earlier than usual this year, Honey Weekend offers its perennial family art project: "Be a Bee," from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at which children can make wings, antennae and pollen cups (bees actually have them on their legs) so as to metamorphose into the occasion's insect of honor. In addition to playtime in a cardboard hive, the festivities promise a 12:30 p.m. costumed bee parade, weather permitting, at which small participants will buzz around with kazoos. The fun will also include an information station, with a defunct hive to examine and beekeeping gear to try on; a honey tasting; a honey extraction demonstration; and a candle-making drop-in workshop.
718-549-3200, wavehill.org

'THE WIZARD OF OZ' at the Tato Laviera Theater (through Dec. 16). This Sunday and Sept. 2 are the last opportunities of the summer to go somewhere over the rainbow with the Harlem Repertory Theater. And here, the Emerald City has become much more diverse since Dorothy first visited. This hourlong production, presented by the theater and the Yip Harburg Foundation, features a multiracial cast, jazz-inflected musical arrangements and a more contemporary Dorothy who's ready to take charge of rebuilding the farm when she returns. But some things haven't changed: the original movie dialogue and score.
212-868-4444, harlemrepertorytheatre.com