

# London Calling

The Dayton Art Institute Matches Fetes with the Olympic Opening Ceremonies Happening Across the Pond

BY JENNIFER HANAUER

**On Friday, July 27**, the opening ceremonies will mark the beginning of the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London. The celebration will showcase the finest of the United Kingdom and will be watched by an estimated 4 billion people. Taking part in the festivities, albeit on a more modest scale, the Dayton Art Institute (DAI) will be hosting an Olympic opening ceremonies party.

"We were asking ourselves, 'What's the excitement in the community?'" said Jane Black, DAI associate director. "This is an opportunity to catch people where they are and invite them into the museum to have a great experience and have a lot of fun, to get dressed up and watch an event on the big screen in our beautiful auditorium."

Starting at 7 p.m., guests of DAI will be welcomed to the museum where specialty food, cocktails, music, raffles, gallery hunts and all of the London action on the big screen awaits them. The price of admission includes all of the food, from pub-style fare to more elegant items such as coronation salad, and entertainment, which will feature music and dancing from the vibe of a '60s and '70s London. A cash bar will feature an IPA (beer) tasting, Pimm's cups and other classic cocktails.

"People are looking for entertainment that's different, off the beaten path, that offers something exciting and new," said Alexis Larsen, DAI marketing and event director. "And this fits everybody from families to small kids, teenagers to adults and singles."

"There'll be a chance to get to know some new people who also like interesting events," added Black. "I think that's a draw for people. It's fun to have a crowd, to have a little cross-traffic with other groups."

To mirror the idyllic British countryside theme that Danny Boyle, artistic director of the London 2012 Olympic opening ceremony, has chosen for the show, "Isle of Wonder," DAI guests will be invited to go on a tour of artworks in the permanent collection to see pastoral paintings of British landscapes. Also on display for the evening will be Paul Manship's sculpture, "The Wrestlers," to tie in with the Summer Olympics.

As part of an evening of gaiety and entertainment, guests are encouraged to consider how art plays a role in their day-to-day activities.

"We are making the party really fun, and also, we're tying it to our collection and tying it to an art experience," said Black. "It's an opportunity to say, 'Art is relevant. Art is part of your life.'"

The Olympic opening ceremonies party will be the first of the Prime Time Party Rental Series, a run of three parties hosted jointly by Prime Time Party Rental and DAI. The second, a Superhero Costume Ball, will take place August 17 and feature a special exhibition put together by DAI called "You Are My Superhero." The third will be a James Bond Martini Bash on October 26 celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the film "Dr. No" and adding to the excitement anticipating the release of the new James Bond movie, "Skyfall," opening in November.



The name "Prime Time" seems apt to Black.

"I grew up with prime time TV – 8 p.m. until 11p.m. everybody sat together and watched whatever was on those three channels we had," said Black. "It's a little bit different now, but I still think that resonates – that 'prime time' name. These parties are inspired by pop culture, but they have some sort of broadcast connection, and so that remembrance of that phrase 'prime time' goes along with that TV aspect."

DAI is good for more than just parties.

"We're trying to make it clear that the museum is for everybody, for all ages," said Black. "It's a great place to take kids and just walk around the galleries. It's fun to see what they see."

DAI is also currently re-doing their café where they will have Wi-Fi, coffee, wine and snacks.

"Relax, come in and sit awhile. Join us, won't you?" said Larsen of their new museum hang out spot. And who couldn't use a break from these dog days of summer? "It's always cool in here. Even when it's 100 degrees outside, we're required to keep the art at 70 degrees," said Black.

Well that just sounds lovely.

As if all of this weren't enough to attract you to the museum this summer, it's worth mentioning that there will be a special guest at the DAI Olympics opening ceremonies party. The Queen herself (on loan from the Ohio Renaissance Festival) will be making an appearance. "The Queen of England will be on hand to be with her subjects, her loyal subjects and followers," confirmed Larsen. "Can you get knighted?!" asked an animated Black. "Maybe. If you behave yourself," Larsen responded. "I want some knight-ing!!" replied Black in a voice that was edging up on a Monty Python trill. Oh yeah, this is going to be awesome.

In Brief

What: Olympics Opening Ceremonies Party

When: Friday, July 27, 7 – 11:00 p.m.

Where: Dayton Art Institute, 456 Belmonte Park North, Dayton, OH 45405

Who: All ages

Cost: Advance tickets are \$20 per person

for museum members and \$25 for non-members. You may purchase your advance tickets at [www.daytonartinstitute.org/primetime](http://www.daytonartinstitute.org/primetime) or call 937-223-5277, extension 111. Tickets purchased at the door will be \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members.

"THE WRESTLERS" BY PAUL MANSHIP



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