Summer Fun for Free in St. Paul

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Beyond the leisure landscape of biking, riverwalks, and picnics in the park that is summer in the Twin Cities lies a menagerie of movie multiplexes and hifalutin music festivals begging for the attention of your disposable income. These events are advertised to deliver high value, but they are also designed to do so at high cost.

Students whose disposable income is nonexistent—who don't have a Rainy Day Fund to raid or don't want to cash their student loan check for anything short of food and shelter—fear not! St. Paul has lined up arts and cultural experiences free of charge all summer long.

Music In Mears

Every Thursday night this summer in the Lowertown neighborhood of St. Paul you will find local bands, local food trucks, local beer, and—for the last six weeks of summer—local films in Mears Park.

For the past 12 years, Music in Mears has featured local musicians and artisans, bringing the community together to share in what makes it special. Expanding to over 13 events, this summer's lineup spans multiple genres and delivers a healthy representation of the local music scene.

Featuring jazz by Pippi Armenia on June 25th and hip hop by Mixed Blood Majority on August 6 helps round out a more traditional, guitar-based lineup featuring the indie rock of Zoo Animal on July 23, the Melismatics on August 20, and the Flamin' Oh's on August 27. Singer-songwriters Field Trip and Van Stee open the series on June 4.

Food trucks, while not offering their wares free-of-charge, are included in each setlist and rightfully billed as the artists they are. Local favorites such as Gastrotruck, Potter's Pasties, Hot Indian, and Tiki Tim's all appear regularly but rotate, so check the schedule for your favorite lineups.

Music in Mears begins at 6pm, June 4th. The full schedule can be found at musicinmears.com

Movies in the Park

The St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department screens films for free with their Movies in the Park series beginning June 19 at locations scattered throughout its recreation centers and parks.

Classic films such as The Wizard of Oz, Annie, Little Shop of Horrors, and The Goonies add variety to the other more recent blockbusters like Frozen, Despicable Me 2, and The Lego Movie. The series finale, Jailhouse Rock, takes place at Harriet Island on Friday, September 4.

Showtimes are at nightfall. The full schedule is available at stpaul.gov/moviesintheparks.

As it says on St. Paul's website: Bring a pillow, blanket, and lawn chair to enjoy a starlit night of fun with friends and family!