

# Ingesting Dfest

Smacking your Lips. *UTW* offers up its showcase recommendations and takes a peek at the rest of the week

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL! THE WEEKEND IS REPLETE WITH LIVE MUSIC FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE HINTER-SUBURBS. AND WE'VE GOT IT ALL

BY G.K. HIZER

**O**t's time to eat. After months of menu preparations, table settings and taste tests, Dfest finally arrives this weekend as we sit down to

the table to feast on music and the business. As you head downtown for the festival, however, it might be hard to differentiate which is more intimidating—the size of the crowd or the number of bands you have to choose from.

This year Dfest not only moved from 18<sup>th</sup> and Boston to downtown's Blue Dome District, it also grew, nearly tripling the size of the festival grounds to include 13 stages for 150 performances over two nights.

Before you head out, it's best to peruse the Dfest performance schedule either online at [www.dfest.com](http://www.dfest.com) or in the pocket guide that you'll receive with your wristband. No matter what your taste—from experimental indie rock to pop, punk, hard rock, country, hip hop and jazz—there's something for everyone in this year's line up. And if you're having trouble getting started or just aren't familiar with the bands, we've whipped up a little cheat sheet to help get you going.

We've intentionally excluded the main stage and national headlining acts, as you probably already know the big names like Amos Lee, Shiny Toy Guns, Black Stone Cherry, Leon Russell and Flaming Lips.

If you're at the festival specifically for the Flaming Lips (and doesn't everyone at least want to see the "Mothership" arrive and deliver the band?), you've already got an agenda.

However, with more than 140 more acts appearing over the weekend, you'll have some other choices to make. Thus, *UTW* is providing a list of "Best Bets" and "Sleepers" for each time slot over both nights. With that in mind, feel free to read on and consider our picks when planning your weekend festival experience, but by all means follow your muse (and the buzz on the street) to find the best shows for you.

Enough of the formalities, lets get down to business.

## Friday Highlights

8pm Best Bet - **Fresh Sunday** at Festival Second Stage. You might as well start your weekend off on a positive note—and you can't go wrong with the straight-forward pop/rock of this Oklahoma City Band. Big hooks and big melodies will send you out with a smile on your face as the sun starts setting and the music heats up.

8pm Sleeper - **HipHopotamus** at Exit 6C. If

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your modus operandi for the evening (or weekend) is to check out something different and avoid the conventional, then HipHopotamus could be the perfect starter for you. It's socially conscious, positive hip hop with MCs rapping over a

live band with an indie-rock tilt... and you'll still hit the streets with a grin afterwards.

9pm Best Bet - **Seis Pistos** at First Street Lofts Lounge. After being an under-the-radar hit at last year's Dfest and one of the bands that had everyone talking, we can't overlook these guys. Seis Pistos is a Mexican punk band that sings in Spanish. Do we understand everything (or anything) they're saying? Does it matter? If you're having trouble getting up to speed, Seis Pistos will give you a kick in the rear and get your party started.

9pm Sleepers - **Adam Lopez Trio** (A.L.T.) at Capella, **Upside** at Blank Slate, **My Solstice** at McNellie's Public House. Adam Lopez was another quiet surprise at last year's festival, performing a solo, acoustic set. This year he's back with a recently reconfigured band and a more powerful delivery of his reggae-infused blues rock.

Also watch out for Upside, a band that brings a high energy show and hard-rock vibe inspired by G'n'R, LA Guns and Buckcherry, as well as My Solstice, one of Tulsa's latest young guns that melds the intensity of Muse, Incubus and Perfect Circle into something heavy, yet palatable.

10pm Best Bets - **Hundred Year Storm** at Tsunami Sushi, **Congress of a Crow** at Blue Dome Diner. If I'm making a bet on an outsider hitting one out of the park on Friday night, I'll put my money on Austin's Hundred Year Storm and its experimental indie rock with an epic scope.

If you're from out of town or just don't get out much, you won't want to miss one of Tulsa's most talked about bands and voices, Congress of a Crow, fronted by Danelle Phillips. Will this be a make-or-break year for Congress? I wouldn't go that far, but it would be awfully nice to see all of the band's hard work start to pay dividends coming off of this year's conference.

10pm Sleeper - **KC Clifford** at 1974 Grill. Gifted with a great voice and a disarming sense of humor, Clifford may well be the surprise highlight of the singer-songwriter crowd at 1974 this evening.

11pm Best Bet - **Love in October** at Festival Second Stage. I don't think you can draw a harder slot than playing opposite the Flaming Lips this year, but if you're going head-to-head with the reigning kings of psychedelic pop and avant indie

rock, you might as well go the opposite direction. Minneapolis band Love in October steps up with hook-laden pop rock that will undoubtedly have the audience dancing at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Elgin.

11pm Sleeper - **Crooked X** at First Street Loft Lounge. Crooked X is no secret to Tulsans, but if you're visiting, it's a band that you have to see to believe. This band of 13-year-olds is no novelty act. They blend classic rock with Metallica-inspired metal and do it so convincingly they recently opened a week's worth of gigs for Ted Nugent and have dates with Alice Cooper lined up for August.

12am Best Bets - **The Veils** at The Continental, **The Randies** AT Exit 6C. What's it going to be as your night hits its peak? If you love anthemic, artsy Brit-pop, don't miss The Veils in an intimate show that's sure to be packed out. If you're just getting revved up, check out The Randies' girl-power punk rock at Exit 6C.

12am Sleeper - **The Doldrums** at Tsunami Sushi. Looking for something different to chill out? Then you need to step into Tsunami to hang with The Doldrums and Dylan Aycocock's ambient, experimental soundscapes.

1am Best Bet - **Citizen Mundi** at Blue Dome Diner. Tulsa's reigning kings of world music were also the band that stole Saturday night last year. Since then they've released a new CD, *No Translation*, and gone on to play Wakarusa. Become a "Mundi" to close out the night and you just might be inspired to dance in the streets until the sun comes up

1am Sleeper - **The Feds** at Bank Slate. I'm not sure it's fair to label this band a "sleeper," because they'll give you no rest. Based in Denton, TX, The Feds are a local favorite with a reputation built upon the band's killer live show and high-octane party rock.

## Saturday Night Recommendations

8pm Best Bets - **John Moreland & The Black Gold Band** at Festival Main Stage, **Hush Hush Commotion** at Festival Second Stage. Why not enjoy the Oklahoma sunset while listening to some great tunes? I'm going to break my own rule here to give a major shout out to John Moreland. When a local boy lands on the main stage with band and material as strong as he has with The Black Gold Band, he deserves some credit. Moreland serves up some heavy-duty country/rock with a double-shot of Steve Earle and a splash of John Mellencamp.

It's a cocktail strong enough to even make it worth braving the crowd at the main stage. Meanwhile, over on the Second Stage, Hush Hush Commotion is anything but quiet when it fires up the maps and dishes out some infectious, high energy, indie noise-pop.

8pm Sleeper - **3<sup>rd</sup> Flow** at First Street Loft Lounge. Hip hop and rap rule the evening at the First Street Lounge on Saturday, but the crowds may miss the smoothest act of the night if they arrive late. 3<sup>rd</sup> Flow is the (relatively) unknown X-factor that could easily upstage the rest of the line up if everyone doesn't bring his A game.

9pm Best Bets - **The Pearls** at Festival Second Stage, **Hannah Blaylock and Eden's Edge** at Dirty's Tavern. The Pearls are the latest Tulsa band to take the town by storm, anchored by strong songwriting, four-part harmonies and a fiddle. It's straight-up

pop/rock with touch of Nickel Creek and the Eagles, and the crowds love it.

The act that could steal the night, however, is Hannah Blaylock and Eden's Edge. This is pure country (no Nashvillian, pre-manufactured drivel) with voice that can make your jaw drop. I can't say enough about this girl—go see a show for yourself.

9pm Sleeper - **Ryan Lindsey** at Tsunami Sushi. Can you really be an underdog or "sleeper" when you're one of the busiest guys in town this weekend? Not only does he play keyboards for Starlight Mints and continue to work with Cheyenne, he's also a solo artist. If this were Liverpool in the '60s, Ryan might be the lost Beatle. Since it's not, we'll just credit him as Oklahoma's resident artist-savant.

10pm Best Bet - **Ladybug Transistor** at Continental Club. OK, so I've gone easy on the artsy indie-rock recommendations. If you're going to check out a few (and you know you will), make sure and check out Brooklyn's Ladybug Transistor, currently on tour with Starlight Mints. Although the band's drummer recently passed away, the group has soldiered on and brings its ultra-hip indie rock and street credibility to the close quarters of The Continental.

10pm Sleeper - **Adam Hood** at 1974 Grill. Alabama native Adam Hood has been touring hard and hammering away at his craft for years now. He comes through Tulsa all too infrequently, so it's a great time to take in his stories-in-song. Hopefully the Dfest exposure will bring him back more often.

11pm Best Bet - **Bang Bang Bang** at Blank Slate. OK, so I've broken another rule by spotlighting a headliner. So kill me. The buzz is getting bigger by the day on Bang Bang Bang (the greasy, Southern blues-rock band from Nashville, not the UK pop band) and my money says they put Black Stone Cherry (Friday night's Blank Slate headliner) to shame. Get your rawk on with a touch of Black Crowes, Wolfmother, AC/DC and Jet.

11pm Sleepers - **On a Sun** at McNellie's Public House, **South 40** at Dirty's Tavern. Milwaukee's On a Sun is certain to cause a stir at McNellie's for rock fans with its hard-to-describe, indie/post grunge/modern rock hybrid. Nevertheless, this band knows how to rock. Over at Dirty's, South 40 turns up the heat on material from Tulsa's best country album of the year (thus far) and gives it a southern-rock flair, courtesy of Jay Falkner's stinging guitar work.

12am Best Bets - **Absent Star** at McNellie's Public House, **The Angel/Devil** at Arnie's Festival Stage. I don't know what it is, but I can't get enough of Absent Star, the Chicago band recently signed to Columbia Records. Maybe it's the Midwestern propensity for great hooks or the band's ability to put an epic spin on a four-minute song. Either way, Absent Star is the band I'm placing all my chips on and betting they put on the best show of the night on Saturday. If you're not willing to gamble, The Angel/Devil is all but guaranteed to be great—especially when you realize it's the reincarnation of Gooding, one of Tulsa's (and Dfest's) most beloved bands. Welcome back, boys!

12am Sleepers - **JFO** at Exit 6C, **Admiral Twin** at The Continental. A festival of this magnitude just wouldn't be complete without Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey and Tulsa's resident avant-jazz mad scientists, Brian Hass and Reed Mathis. Coming hot