

Bumbershoot 2014 With Kids: Top Picks for Youngershoot and Beyond - ParentMap

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Bumbershoot 2014 With Kids: Top Picks for Youngershoot and Beyond

By Gemma Alexander



Photo credit: Will Austin

Held annually over Labor Day weekend, **Bumbershoot** is both packed with cutting-edge music and arts, and very family friendly — starting with free tickets for kids ages 10 and under. Here's our guide for making the most of it.

Youngershoot Kids Zone – bring swimsuits!

Let's start with **Youngershoot**, the Bumbershoot program just for kids. Like the main festival, Youngershoot programming features more than just music. The centerpiece is the **Kids Zone**, curated by the Seattle Children's Museum and open from **11 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day**. It is open only to children ages 10 and under (who get in to Bumbershoot free) and their guardians. This kid-focused space is a great place to take a break from the intensity of festival crowds and enjoy special performances, hands-on activities and shorter lines to cleaner bathrooms.

This year, the Kids Zone has been moved to the **Alki Court**. Right across from the big fountain, the Alki Court includes the smaller, calmer DuPen Fountain. If you think your kids will play in the fountain, bring bathing suits or extra clothes, but Seattle Children's Museum will offer towels, sunscreen and water toys for guests to use.



Kids Zone. Photo credit: Morgan Keuler

Youngershoot activities and performances

All weekend, the Kids Zone hosts **hands-on activities from the Pacific Science Center** and **Seattle Symphony's Soundbridge**, as well as painting, construction projects and a community art project with recycled materials.

Check the schedule of performances for what looks most interesting. On Saturday, a special lineup of interactive performances for kids will be curated by **Seattle Theater Group**.

Other performance highlights at the Kids Zone include favorites like **Brian Vogan & His Good Buddies** and **Ocheamj** and new highlights such as **Kalahi Dance Company** featuring Filipino dance performed by children, and magician **Maritess Zurbano** on Sunday.

On Monday, don't miss **The Rad Scientist Mikey Gervais** and **Rockaboo**, a music enrichment program developed by members of The Not-Its!.

Tips: The best of the rest of the fest

Don't limit yourself to the Kids Zone! Children are welcome at all performances. It's a good idea to **bring headphones for children** who are too small for earplugs if you are exploring outside the Kids' Zone, but otherwise Bumbershoot is a low-risk way to expose your kids to the music you love.

Note this year's changes: The main stage has also moved from the Key Arena back to Memorial Stadium. This should minimize lines (attendees will now be free to come and go at any time during the day) and maximize the number of people who can attend main stage events. The change to an outdoor venue does mean one less air-conditioned performance space, though.

Every day: Excellent visual arts, theater and film

The nonmusical programming offers rich opportunities for families to explore.

Visual arts: Last year my kids were fascinated by the visual arts program, and insisted on visiting Fisher Pavilion each day of the festival. I'm sure they will be equally intrigued this year by the interactive, interdisciplinary art installation [Interstitial Theater](#) and the sculptures made of food in [Food for Thought](#).

Theater: A welcome break from the noise and heat of outdoor venues, **the theater program has options** for all ages.

Film: There's also different series of short [Films4Families](#) each day at noon.

Saturday: Local artists and big-name classics

In our sample schedule for each day we've tried to select a diversity of musical styles and arts events, just a starting point for you to discover the festival for your family.

On Saturday, ease into the day in the Kids Zone or explore Visual Arts in Fisher Pavilion. Try out [Alligators and Debutantes](#) (Theatre Puget Sound Stage 2 p.m., also on Monday), a unique storytelling venture that blends American fairy tales with choral singing, or head to the main stage to find a spot to watch [Panic! at the Disco](#) (2:45 p.m.).

See Anacortes natives [The Lonely Forest](#) (Fountain Lawn Stage 3:30 p.m.) and the chamber-folk of Seattleite [Tomo Nakayama](#) (Pavilion Stage 4:15 p.m.) before exploring dinner options.

After dinner, parents may be excited about [Elvis Costello and the Imposters](#) playing the main stage at 6:30 p.m. – a perfectly timed headliner for those who have to keep bedtimes in mind.

Teens may prefer to get their social commentary from a new generation with [Black Weirdo](#) (Words & Ideas Stage 5:15 p.m.), followed by the up-and-coming folk singer [Naomi Wachira](#) (Starbucks Stage 6:30 p.m.). For a third option, the fresh, intelligent rock of [Iska Dhaaf](#) (Pavilion Stage 5:30 p.m.) will probably appeal to everybody and will end in time for the whole family to watch [Polica](#) (Fountain Lawn Stage 7 p.m.) before heading home.

If bedtime isn't an issue, innovative hip-hop duo [Grayskul](#) (End Zone Stage 7:45 p.m.) and Malaysian DIY pop artist [Yuna](#) (Starbucks Stage 8:15 p.m.) can broaden the family's musical horizons before you end the night with a classic – either [Wu Tang Clan](#) (Main Stage 9:45 p.m.) or [The Afghan Whigs](#) (Fisher Green Stage 10 p.m.), depending on your family's musical history.



Elvis Costello: Saturday, 6:30 p.m



Photo credit: Will Austin



Alligators & Debutantes: Saturday, 2:30 p.m.

Sunday: Experiment with sounds from heavy to electric

If you get an early start, you can hear the afro-beat funk of [The Polyrhythmics](#) (Fisher Green Stage 11:45 a.m.) Once you've explored the Kids' Zone or watched One Reel's [Films4Families](#) at noon, [We Are Scientists](#) (Fisher Green Stage 1:15 p.m.) will entertain the whole family with their catchy songs and comedic antics.

My family will probably see local heavy metal band [Sandrider](#) at 2 p.m. (Fountain Lawn Stage) followed by Icelandic electronic artist [Hermigervill](#) (Pavilion Stage 2:45 p.m.). A more popular option may be taking advantage of the rare opportunity to attend a family-friendly comedy show – [Bill Nye's Star Talk Live!](#) (Comedy at the Bagley, also on Saturday) at 2:30 p.m. followed by [Craft Spells](#) (End Zone Stage 4 p.m.).

Catch the set from the re-formed [Luscious Jackson](#) (Fisher Green Stage 4:45 p.m.) before dinner, or picnic on the lawn while you hear it.

If your day isn't done, relax with the folky songs of [Gregory Alan Isakov](#) (Starbucks Stage 6:15 p.m.) and visit the Words & Ideas stage for a performance by the storytelling organization [The Moth](#) (7 p.m.). Local indie-soul act [Pickwick](#) is on the Fisher Green Stage at 8:15. To close out the night, local-band-made-good [The Head and the Heart](#) is on the main stage; or you can give your kids a piece of history and entertainment in one with [Bootsy Collins' funk bass](#) (Fisher Green Stage 10 p.m.).



Luscious Jackson: Sunday, 4:45 p.m.

Monday: Go global

Get a relaxed start with the Hawaiian-flavored reggae of [Kore Ionz](#) (Fisher Green Stage 11:45 a.m.) and [La Luz](#) (Fountain Lawn Stage 12:30 p.m.) surf-rock before checking out the Kids' Zone and Visual Arts exhibits.

See [DakhaBrakha](#) reinterpret Ukrainian tradition on the Fisher Green Stage at 2:45 p.m. Enjoy [Rose Windows' retro psychedelia](#) on the Fountain Lawn Stage at 3:30 p.m.

[Chimurenga Renaissance](#) filters traditional Zimbabwean music through modern hip hop (End Zone Stage) at 4:45. Ethereal, looped vocals by [Julianna Barwick](#) (Pavilion Stage 5:30 p.m.) could end the day for younger kids or just provide a peaceful break at dinner time for families who plan to stay late.

In the evening, [Bomba Estéreo](#) (Fisher Green Stage 6:15 p.m.) brings the energy level back up with bouncy South American pop. For a break from music, One Reel's [Show Me the World](#) (7 p.m.), a collection of short films will appeal to adults and older kids alike. Try [Jacco Gardner's baroque pop](#) (really, there's a harpsichord, End Zone Stage 8:15 p.m.) before facing the tough decision of indie rockers [Real Estate](#) (Fountain Lawn Stage 9 p.m.) vs. main stage headliners [Foster the People](#) (9:15 p.m.).



'Show Me the World' films: Monday, 7 p.m.

Tips for Bumberteens

Bumbershoot is an excellent opportunity for tweens and teens to explore on their own. Here's how to make it successful.

Establish guidelines about staying inside the festival grounds (or make sure they know which bus to take home) and checking in by cell phone.

Show younger adolescents where the information booths are, and teach them to recognize Bumbershoot staff in case they get lost or need help. If your tween is uncertain, you can drop them off at the event they want to see, and then meet them there when it's over.

Any kid old enough to wander the grounds alone already has strong opinions about music, but even older teens may not know about Bumbershoot's other options. Teens might be ready to explore the Words & Ideas program, with panels including writers from [The Simpsons](#), or [Black Weirdo](#), a community discussion of what it's like to be Black and Queer in Seattle. [Flatstock](#), an exhibit of concert posters, will appeal to young artists.

Teens will definitely want to **stop by the Vera Project**, where a special under-21 program is debuting this year with DJ sets, artist interviews, and workshops to help youth build their own DJ skills.

In the **Visual Arts program**, teens might be interested in **Lance Mercer's photographs of pre-grunge era Seattle musicians** or the exploration of video games in **Bumbercade**. Theater performances like **The Death of Brian: A Zombie Odyssey** or **Blood Squad** are not even options for most little kids, but might be the high point of a teen's weekend.

If you go ...

When: Aug. 30–Sept. 1, gates open at 11 daily

Where: Seattle Center

Parking: Parking lots at or near Seattle Center cost \$10-\$20 and can fill up. For public transportation, use Metro's online **Trip Planner**. There will also be special shuttle from Northgate to the festival for \$2.50 each way (kids 5 and under ride free). You can also park downtown and take the monorail (adults \$2.25, kids \$1).

Prices: Buy tickets online; ticket prices increase as the festival approaches. Adults' advance single-day tickets currently start at \$60, 3-day passes at \$145. Free admission for children ages 10 and under.

Planning: Download the **Bumbershoot app** to build your own schedule. Check back; we'll provide a link to our suggested schedule.



Blood Squad: Sunday, 5:15 p.m., Monday, 6:45 p.m.

Bumbershoot Field Report: Four tips from the fest, Aug. 31, 2014

1. Don't miss the visual arts!

Bumbershoot is a music AND arts festival, and this year there is a lot of great art for kids to engage with. My kids spent over an hour exploring the interactive exhibits in Fisher Pavilion. In **Interstitial Theater**, they manipulated projected lights by shifting sands around inside a box.



Exploring Interstitial Theater

There was also a tent full of pillows where guests could lie back and contemplate a video projected above their heads.

Finger Power was a light-and-sound display controlled by buttons pressed by visitors.



Finger Power

But by far their favorite was **Food for Thought**; although the kids missed some biting political commentary, the game of Oreo checkers will not soon be forgotten.



Food for Thought

Bumbercade is a second arts area in the Fountain Pavilion that, you guessed it, is full of video games that visitors can actually play. Come early for the shortest lines.

The treat: Kids discover that art is so much more exciting than filing silently through a museum looking at old paintings.

The trade-off: You're probably going to miss some bands.

2. Don't miss the Kids Zone



Although on Saturday, it was a little too cold for playing in the fountain inside the **Kids Zone** on Saturday, a few brave young souls did it anyway. Pool toys and towels were provided. The usual array of crafts and activities were on offer; my kids were most excited about free face painting. While we were in the Zone, the performance by Gansango Music and Dance drew a crowd of listeners outside the fence (only families with children are allowed inside the Kids Zone).

The treat: The Alki Court, where the Kids' Zone moved this year, is a quiet courtyard sheltered from intense sun and wind – alas, not from the rain. The fountain there is a gentle stream falling from a sculpture into a pool the perfect depth for wading.

The trade-off: There are no bathrooms inside the Kids' Zone this year.

3. Be inspired by teen producers

The Vera Project, which has worked tirelessly for decades to make music accessible to young people, has premiered its first-ever Forum with Local, Independent Producers (FLIP) event at Bumbershoot this year. Right next door to the Kids Zone, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. each afternoon, The Vera Project is featuring performances by local, independent producers in their in-house venue.

Producers range from teenagers learning the craft to local stars like Katie Kate. During their performances, the producers will offer explanations of how they work, and be available for questions after the show. Teens can sign up for **The Vera Project's DJ'ing class** (the next series starts September 6) if they are inspired by what they see.

The treat: The walls of this indoor venue are lined with booths with padded seats.

The trade-off: None, really.

4. Enjoy a more flexible Main Stage

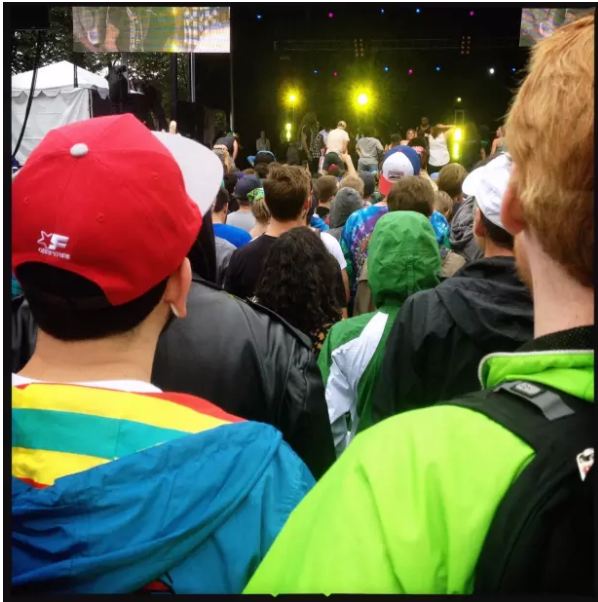


Photo credit: Will Austin

The main stage has moved from Key Arena back to Memorial Stadium, but the configuration of the stadium is different than in years past. To get to the main stage from any part of the festival, find Harrison Street and head East to the end of the street. There are signs to help you find the way in. Take any staircase down to get to the floor. A secondary stage inside the stadium plays shows in between main stage acts, so there is no downtime in the stadium.

The treat: This year you are free to enter the main stage at any time – no more lining up before each show! This is great news for families.

The trade-off: There is no alcohol inside the stadium. Key Arena was the only place at the festival where parents could enjoy a beer without taking turns watching the kids.

August 29, 2014