

The logo for nFOCUS, with a lowercase 'n' in a pink script font and 'FOCUS' in a grey, uppercase, sans-serif font.A dark blue rectangular graphic with white text. At the top is 'nFOCUS' in a small, white, sans-serif font. Below it is 'Best of' in a large, white, serif font. The year '2020' is written in a very large, white, serif font with decorative flourishes on the zeros. At the bottom is 'Writers' Choice' in a white, serif font.

EVENTS

© FEB 04, 2021

Best of 2020: Writers' Picks

Our writers recall the most memorable moments, events and people of the past year

AUTHORS Nancy Floyd, Holly Hoffman, Jonathan Sims, Megan Seling, Laura Hutson Hunter | **PHOTOGRAPHERS** Eric England, Daniel Meigs

Say what you will about 2020, but one thing is certain: We will never forget it. Although it wasn't a year filled with grand events and memorable nights on the town, there were still wonderful things happening in Nashville's nonprofit community and social scene. In lieu of our traditional Best Parties poll, we asked our readers about the events that did and didn't happen, as well as the nonprofits, restaurants and individuals that made the year

Between the tornado, the pandemic and the Christmas Day bombing, 2020 was an exceptionally difficult year for Nashville. Despite these tragedies, the city's benevolence has never been more evident, thanks in no small part to the efforts of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee. Within hours of each horrific occurrence, the organization established funds to provide resources and assistance to those impacted. With millions of dollars raised and awarded in grants thus far, the CFMT has reminded us all that even in our darkest days, Nashville is a community that comes together and serves one another.

Best Outdoor Dinner Event

River Swing

The Harpeth Conservancy hosted a safe and beautiful dinner under October skies and string lights to raise funds for the restoration and protection of Tennessee's rivers. With strict health, safety and social distancing guidelines firmly in place, the event offered a fresh-air respite from the seclusion of the previous months. And with dinner catered by Puckett's, wine and charcuterie from WillCo Wine and Cheese, and live music from J.B. Strauss and friends, the evening was exactly what everyone needed.

Best Micro Event

Symphony Fashion Show

The Symphony Fashion Show ordinarily draws around 700 people to the Schermerhorn Symphony Center for a runway show from a well-known top designer. Last year's event was ultimately canceled, but that did not deter featured designer Zang Toi from bringing his Fall 2020 collection to Gus Mayer for a trunk show and adding a few micro shows for about 20 lucky ladies. The clothes were stunning, the music fantastic and the intimate setting unparalleled.

Best Literary Event

Southern Festival of Books

When events around the world were being canceled or postponed, literature fans across the South were awaiting word on what would happen to the annual Southern Festival of Books. Humanities Tennessee put together an incredible program of virtual talks and panels, and one of the best parts was that people from around the world were able to join in and participate this year. While everyone missed gathering downtown to hang out with fellow book lovers, this was a better adaptation than anyone could have hoped for.

Best Special Guest

Maren Morris

Award-winning country artist Maren Morris showed up not once, but twice, to lend her voice and her support to two of Nashville's most prominent performing arts companies. In February, she performed three songs, while very pregnant, at the Ballet Ball. In October, she graced the Schermerhorn Symphony Center yet again for a recorded performance to air during the televised Symphony Ball special. Both events support arts education programs, a cause very near and dear to the star's heart, and thanks in part to Maren's generous involvement, both events were smashing successes.

Best New Fine Dining