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# VR AND ROBOTS AND DRONES, OH MY! YES, MAKER FAIRE MIAMI IS BACK – BRING THE FAMILY

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By Nancy Dahlberg

Whether you want to cheer on your favorite Power Wheels Racing car, meet the stars of the BattleBots television show, learn about fashion that combine the latest in science and technology, or solder along with your kids, you'll find there will be something for everyone when **Maker Faire Miami** returns to South Florida April 6-7.



Think of Maker Faire Miami as a giant science fair of tomorrow, says Mario Cruz, a Maker himself who is organizing the event. Miami Dade College, in partnership with MANO Americas and in association with The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and

Maker Media, will host Maker Faire Miami at MDC's Wolfson Campus in downtown Miami. The annual family-friendly weekend event will feature fun inventions and interactive exhibits by scores of local organizations in science, engineering, art, performance and craft.

Emerging from their universities and schools, tech companies, maker spaces, clubs and garages, over 100 Makers will be exhibiting finished projects and works in progress – from VR to drones, 3D printers to robots – at the Faire, inspiring the thousands of fairgoers expected over the two-day event. About 25 Makers will be selling jewelry and other hand-made crafts, too.

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Miami's **tech and startup community** will be well represented. A sampling of the companies and organizations that will have booths: Matrix Labs, Addigy, Prototype House, Wyncode Academy, Moonlighter Makerspace, HackShack, Miami EdTech, Watsco, SunVessel, MDC's Idea Center and FIU's Hardware Lab, among others.

Stars of the Maker YouTube circuit will be flying in from around the country to share their creative energy. And for kids (and kids at heart), there will be even more hands-on activities than years' past.



John Park

"There will be more Makers than previous years, more high school and middle school involvement, and more women and girls participating as speakers and exhibitors. I want the Fair to represent that anyone can be a Maker. Let's get people skilled up for the future," said Cruz.

Maker Faire Miami celebrates the global Maker Movement, accelerated by the launch of Make: Magazine in 2005 and its first Maker Faire in 2006 in Silicon Valley. The original Miami "Mini" Maker Faire was held in 2013 at The LAB Miami and now Maker Faire Miami is part of an elite band of 44 featured cities around the world hosting the larger-scale Featured Maker Faires in 2019, including San Mateo, Rome, Paris, Tokyo, Atlanta, New York and Shenzhen.

To give you an idea of what you will find at Miami's Faire this weekend, here are a few events not to be missed:



Estefannie

- **Learn from the very best, because Maker Faire Miami is flying them in as speakers.**

Visitors will have a chance to meet YouTube stars [John Park](#) and [Estefannie Explains it All](#), who believe anyone can be a maker and you need to break things to make things. You can learn from [Mohit Bhoite](#) all about making circuit sculptures, which requires him to use a different side of his engineering brain. Meet the Witch Doctor, Hypersock and Rotator from the popular BattleBots television show. Check out the full schedule [HERE](#).

- **Ready, set, go:** During Power Wheels Racing, attendees will see five themed battery-powered cars compete in real races during the Faire. "It's so exciting when you see people take what is basically a toy and make it go 25 miles an hour. They are building a mini-Tesla inside a toy car. One looks like a Star Trek ship, and these are all professional Makers" said Cruz. Next year, Maker Faire Miami will be a circuit site for Power Wheels Racing, so show your enthusiasm by cheering these cars on during their premier exhibition races.

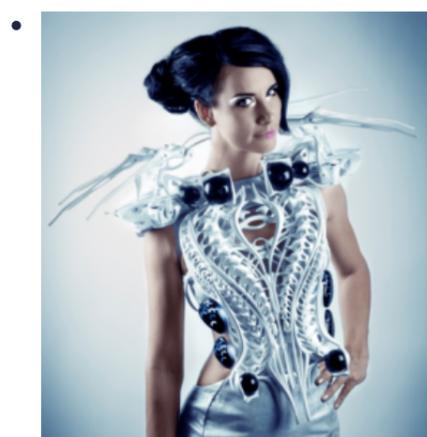
- **Give it a try, and let a kid help you out with that:** A new hands-on activities area for kids (and kids at heart) will have the whole family making fun and exciting projects like vacuum formed plant pods, laser cut kits, soldering LEDs, RC car racing, making flying devices, photo prints, and more. Kids can win a prize if they complete five of the activities on their "passport."



Abby

- **Speaking of kids, Little Makers will be everywhere.** Among them you can meet 11-year old Abby. She started her project, VEX iCutie, when she noticed there were not enough girls participating in robotics. At the Faire, she'll explain how robotics is girl-powered. The brother and sister team behind Kid Kreative – Alejandro and Gaby –and their elementary and middle school friends will show off what they love to create, from slimy concoctions to resin masterpieces, and show you how you can make your own. And a half dozen middle and high schools will have booths this year; Coral Park Senior High will be bringing all its Robots. The Girl Scouts will be showing their

STEM projects.



- **Fashion-tech that's turning heads:** Dutch fashion-tech designer Anouk Wipprecht combines the latest in science and technology to make fashion an experience that transcends mere appearances. Her "Spider Dress" is the perfect example of this – sensors and movable arms on the dress help to create a more defined boundary of personal space with fierce style.
- **Who doesn't want to participate in an art project that saves the environment too?** You can bring your plastic straws and used K-cups to local artist Cristina

Serarols, who will create a mixed-media piece made primarily of donated straws. Read more about her in [Miami New Times](#).

There will be lots to explore, with food trucks to satisfy your hunger pangs, lower prices for children under 16, free parking, and new exciting activities.

Come celebrate the Maker movement this weekend.

**WHAT:** Maker Faire Miami at Miami Dade College

**WHEN:** Saturday and Sunday, April 6-7, 2019

**WHERE:** MDC Wolfson Campus

300 N.E. Second Ave.

**TICKETS:** A multi-day ticket is \$20; children 6-16 are \$10 and children 5 and younger are free. One-day tickets are \$15, youth tickets are \$7.50 for youth and free for children 5 and younger. [Buy them here](#) or at the door.

**LEARN MORE:** [miami.makerfaire.com](http://miami.makerfaire.com)



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I am a writer, editor and a leader with extensive media experience and a passion for journalism and serving the community. Most of my career has been spent with the Miami Herald in business news, and my expertise is writing about entrepreneurs. I'm also good at research and project planning. I enjoy running community-focused projects and utilizing social media. Contact me at [ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com](mailto:ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com)

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