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The Arts in the Time of COVID-19

As communities across America and the world struggle to deal with the devastating impact of the coronavirus, one thing is for certain. The impact on economies everywhere is profound.

The arts are particularly hard hit. Concerts and performances are being canceled for the foreseeable future. Galleries are scaling back hours or staying closed as people remain at home and practice physical distancing. Workers who are laid off or are worried about their jobs are cutting back on their “non-essential” purchases. Others are just staying home to reduce or eliminate their exposure to others.



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In the meantime, musicians and artists are trying to figure out how to pay their bills -- with the new restrictions, it makes it difficult if not impossible for them to earn a living.

According to the nonprofit [Americans for the Arts](#), more than five million people make their living in the creative arts. Artist's contributions are important, providing personal experiences, unifying communities, and contributing substantially to the local economy. The new survey from Americans for the Arts explores the impact COVID-19 has had on the arts community. Out of the more than 10,000 artists surveyed, about 62% are fully unemployed as a result of current restrictions, and this is wreaking havoc on the finances of artists.

Even though their jobs may not be considered “essential,” the Arts ARE important, and supporting local artists will be **essential** to the economic recovery, particularly for rural areas like Page County which rely heavily on tourism.

The Arts:

- unify communities
- improve well being
- strengthen the economy
- spark creativity and innovation
- drive tourism revenue to local businesses

To see the complete list of reasons the Arts are important [read the full survey results](#) or [take the survey](#) if you qualify.

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Designed by Happy the Artist.

Currently located in front of the Luray/Page County Chamber of Commerce

What Have You Been Creating?

Help us spread the word on Facebook about all the great artists living in Page County. Send us photos of the creative projects you have been working on in the past month or two.

Some local artists, including photographer Ben Somberg, painter KC Warner, wreath maker Kevin Boyd, and Bliss Ninja artist Charleen Johnston, have been doing just that, and we're amazed at the wonderful things they have produced.

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They are an inspiration, and YOU can be too. The more we get the word out, the more we help local artists not just survive, but thrive. Who knows, what you post this week might just inspire someone else to create something beautiful! And it will probably result in sales, even if you don't have a website or Etsy page.

Many of these artists don't have websites or Etsy pages. They have been posting directly on Facebook, repeatedly and often. They post individual photos, and ask readers to type **SOLD!** so that everyone knows it got snapped up. Think about starting to do this and you may be pleasantly surprised at the results.

We're here to help you with that! Submit one or more photos of something you are working on or have recently finished, with a brief description, to Cathie Miranda at cmpottery lady@yahoo.com to post on the [Page Valley Arts Council Facebook page](#). Copy Liz Lewis of the Page County Economic Development and Tourism office at l Lewis@pagecountyvirginia.gov so she can share it on the [CREATE Page County Facebook page](#) as well.

When you see something you like, be sure to comment or ask a question to promote engagement, and share posts as well. Post early and often, so that we can spread the word about the creativity and amazing artists we have in Page County. Stay tuned for an artist collaboration in the upcoming parody, "*Maskmaker, Maskmaker Make me a Mask*" on Facebook in about a week. To check out our latest [Facebook postings](#).

Interested in Teaching or Learning Online?

Are you looking for some online lessons, or perhaps considering launching some of your own? Check out Virginia's newest initiative to help link artists to

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students – TRAIN!

A collaboration between the Virginia Folklife Program and Virginia Humanities, TRAIN - Teachers of Remote Art Instruction Network – links interested students of all skills with musicians and craftspeople who are offering remote instruction.

Right now, the majority are musicians teaching on a wide variety of instruments, but also include mixed media, art, Mexican cooking, and woodwork instructors.

To see the full list of instructors or apply to be added to their website, go to

<http://www.virginiafolklife.org>.

Once again, thank you for reading this, and feel free to share with your friends.

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