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KEEP JERSEY ARTS ALIVE

Leaders across the state comment on the impact of the arts on New Jersey's economy, education, wellness, and more.

"Arts workers and organizations are valued members of the New Jersey family, and their recovery from the impact of COVID-19 is essential to our shared future in the Garden State," said Tahesha Way, Esq., New Jersey Secretary of State. "New Jersey's arts sector and artists enrich our lives and communities, and I'm thrilled that the Keep Jersey Arts Alive initiative will celebrate our arts industry."

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"A comprehensive recovery is one that positions the arts industry to endure this crisis and continue to provide opportunities for safe and meaningful connection for New Jersey communities, families, and individuals," said Allison Tratner, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. "From economic revitalization and jobs, to fostering dialogue and unity in the face of issues of social injustice, the arts are a critical tool for action and change as our state works to rebuild."

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"The arts contribute greatly to our communities, and, while most physical doors are still closed, cultural groups continue to find creative ways to keep our minds and bodies strong," said Adam Perle, President & CEO of the ArtPride New Jersey Foundation. "We look forward to when we can all gather safely, but, until then, we must work together to keep Jersey arts alive."

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"Surflight Theatre is directly tied to the tourism economy here on Long Beach Island. The theatre's existence and success is symbiotic with our local restaurants, shops, breweries and, of course, our own Show Place Ice Cream Parlor. We are tied together by our customers and our community. We have thrived together before and we will recover together now. Surflight Theatre and Long Beach Island are excited to safely welcome back loyal patrons and greet new guests with all of the proper precautions in place. For the summer, everything we do has been moved outside into open air tents. When it turns cold, we'll see what can be done safely." –Steve Steiner, Producing Artistic Director, Surflight Theatre

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“The arts are integral to a healthy downtown economy, especially in New Brunswick. We have created strong partnerships among businesses, institutions, and the creative community to ensure a robust economy that stimulates development and growth throughout the region. The arts are key to our success by not only providing hundreds of jobs, but also driving evermore patrons to our restaurants, hotels, and other businesses. We are anxious for the arts to reopen statewide, and look forward to welcoming audiences back to the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center.”
–Christopher Paladino, President, New Brunswick Development Corporation (Devco)

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"South Jersey's arts assets are integral to each of the many charming historic downtowns that make South Jersey the richly diverse area that so many call home. Galleries and classes at Perkins Center for the Arts in Moorestown and Collingswood or the Markeim Arts Center in Haddonfield, and performances at Symphony in C or The Broadway Theatre of Pitman each draw a vibrant community of residents and visitors alike, gathering to practice and celebrate the arts in South Jersey. The visitors they attract patronize our restaurants and shops and become stalwart fans of the award-winning wines being produced in our Outer Coastal Plain AVA. Visit South Jersey considers arts organizations to be the heart of each one of our downtowns and crucial to our efforts to bring visitors to our region.”
–Michael P. Snyder, Director of Operations, Visit South Jersey

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"The arts have an incredible impact on students of all ages. Academically, there's an improvement in literacy when students participate in theatre, and in math when learn music. Emotionally, those who partake in creative activities and attend cultural events benefit from positive effects in health and well-being. Members of our teen Performing Arts Company recorded a song from Broadway's "Dear Evan Hansen" as a message of hope to those who are suffering during this difficult time. I strongly believe that art has helped them not only deal with their own feelings of loss and seclusion, but has made them more empathetic to those around them. Art keeps us learning and growing throughout our lives." –Allison Larena, President & CEO of Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown

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“A healthy nonprofit arts sector helps NJBIA realize its vision of a New Jersey that is the home for economic vitality, business prosperity, and a great quality of life. We recognize their contribution to this vision and support all efforts to keep Jersey arts alive, knowing that our state’s arts and cultural sector drives business, employs workers, builds community, and is key to our state’s recovery. Further, arts are a critical component in workforce development and that is why NJBIA advocates for programs supporting STEAM in education- science, technology, engineering, ARTS and math.” –Michele Siekerka, President & CEO, New Jersey Business & Industry Association

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"Arts education helps us understand ourselves, others, and our worlds, while creating a place to share out that understanding. Right now, we are facing collective and personal fears, anxieties, grief, and stress related to our worlds through the lens of COVID-19. By focusing on the social emotional learning that intrinsically exists in arts education, we can help our learners identify, manage, and overcome these feelings.” –Julia Weekes, Programs & Creativity Director, Appel Farm Arts & Music Campus

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