



May 7, 2020

BRMAA Family and Friends – In this anniversary year for our organization, we have endured an unknown path not only for our organization, but for our entire country. The Arts have always helped to make sense of and been in service to communities in times of crisis and uncertainty. With that spirit, BRMAA wants to continue to serve our artists and community members with the realm of the Arts.

With the continued health and safety of our entire community at the forefront of all our organizational decisions, we have decided to hold off opening the Art Center to the general public until **Tuesday, June 2nd**. Given the state issued regulations and guidelines by Governor Kemp and with an abundance of caution for our staff, volunteers, and community, we will be adhering to new business practices for the Art Center beginning June 2nd until further notice:

- If you or a family member is feeling ill, please stay home. Any individual, guest or staff member, exhibiting signs of illness similar to Covid-19 symptoms, such as fever or shortness of breath, will not be allowed to enter the Art Center.
- All individuals entering the Art Center, including staff and volunteers will be required to wear CDC recommended face coverings /masks.
- Restrooms will be closed to the public at this time.
- Hand sanitizing station(s) will be made available in our main lobby upon entering the Art Center.
- Social Distancing of 6ft or more will be enforced.
- No groups larger than (6) individuals may enter at one time with a maximum of (10) guests allowed within the Art Center at one time.
- Our staff is happy to assist you with any items that you would like to purchase. Please avoid touching the artwork or items within the Art Center... it is tough to sanitize unique works of art.
- The Art Center will continue to perform regular cleanings and sanitizing throughout the Art Center's hours of operation.
- All point of sale equipment will be sanitized regularly and between transactions.

All guidelines will be clearly posted on all entrances and common areas of the Art Center, as well as on our social media pages. Please note, for “medically fragile” persons and those over the age of 65, the “shelter in place” order has been extended to June 12, 2020 in Georgia. This date is consistent with the public health state of emergency, which has been extended until June 12, 2020. Guidance and regulations are changing daily, and we are actively working to stay aware, informed and make educated decisions for our guests and community.



Additionally, we are extending all cancellations and postponing/ rescheduling the following events and programs:

- Youth-based programming such as Dance and Music will be cancelled through the end of June 2020. Sadly, we have also needed to cancel our Annual Dance Recital originally scheduled for early June 2020.
- All BRMAA sponsored artist guild meetings and community partners meetings such as Master Gardeners and Blue Ridge Business Association will be cancelled through the end of June 2020.
- All classes and workshops scheduled through the end of May 2020 will be postponed or cancelled to a later date. Our Arts Education and Programming coordinator, Ginger Yaxley, will be in touch with further information and details on specific class updates, transfers and refunds to all registered students and instructors. All classes beginning in June will adhere to the state required meeting guidelines in place at that time.
- We are sad to report that due to the required safety guidelines, the **2020 Summer Youth Art Camp** has been cancelled for this year. All registered students will be refunded and contacted by our Education Coordinator. Please continue check our website and social media as we work to create a Summer Youth program that works for our young artists during this time.
- **23rd Annual Writers' Conference**, originally scheduled for April 3rd and 4th, 2020, has been rescheduled to September 4th and 5th, 2020. New registrations are now being accepted at www.BlueRidgeWritersConference.com
- **The Community Quilt & Fiber Arts Show**, scheduled for June 13 - July 19, has been cancelled this year to accommodate this season's exhibit changes and cancellations.
- **The 3D Off the Wall** exhibition, scheduled for July 25 - August 29, has been cancelled to accommodate all our class cancellations and postponements.
- **2nd quarter Artist in Residence- Colleen Sterling "Glory of the Mundane"** has been postponed and rescheduled to be on display in our third quarter beginning Saturday, July 4th. Official artist opening reception will be scheduled for Saturday, July 25th.
- **3rd quarter Artist in Residence- Don Saunders "The Nature of Blue Ridge"** has been postponed and rescheduled to our fourth quarter beginning Saturday, October 3rd with an opening reception scheduled for that same date.
- **The 44th Annual Spring Arts in the Park** originally scheduled for May 23 & 24, has been cancelled in-person, but will be migrating to a virtual festival platform. Please visit www.BlueRidgeArtsinthePark.com beginning May 15 for a full listing of participating artists and a listing of our live demonstration/ virtual festival schedule.



- **Smithsonian Institution's *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* Exhibit and Events**

The scheduled presentation of Smithsonian's *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* exhibit, originally scheduled to open April 25 and all partner exhibition openings including *Appalachian Perspectives*, *Community PhotoStory*, and *Stories: YES* Fannin High School video project have been postponed. We are working with our partners at the Smithsonian Institute and Georgia Humanities to solidify new dates. At this time, we are hopeful for a mid-June opening. As soon as we secure our final dates, we will notify our partners and our community, pending further public health measures. All programming developed in partnership with the *Crossroads* exhibition (www.BlueRidgeArts.net/crossroads2020) will be postponed until mid-June/ early July, as well.

We are following the recommendations of The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Georgia Governor's office, Fannin County Health Department, City and County government and are monitoring the situation closely. We will continue to respond according to their advice and guidance. Should we need to cancel or postpone further events and classes, we will be in touch via social media, email or phone with important updates as new information is released.

We encourage everyone to visit our Facebook or Instagram (@BRMAA_art_center) pages for updates and our *Creative Connect* initiative.

If you would like to support BRMAA during this difficult time and **make a donation**, you may contribute to our future by visiting our website www.BlueRidgeArts.net/support or links provided via our social media accounts. There are many ways to show your support to our arts community... like and share our posts, renew or upgrade your membership to BRMAA, purchase artwork online from one of our highlighted artists, or just send us a kind e-note on how you love the arts. We thank our community for all the support you have shown us over the last 40 years.

We thank you for your continued support and patience as we navigate this ever-changing global health crisis and continue to send positive thoughts to all those in essential services, healthcare and the medical industry.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our offices at (706) 632-2144 or via email at BlueRidgeArts@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Nichole Potzauf
Executive Director