



Boulder Arts Week

March 25 to April 2, 2022

Boulder Arts Week is going into its ninth straight year and is the City's only large-scale, inclusive celebration of our community's artists and robust arts and cultural offerings. Boulder Arts Week 2022 will feature digital and in-person offerings as artists and arts organizations continue to adjust to the pandemic.

Boulder is one of the most vibrant arts communities in the US, ranking in the top 2% in the concentration of artists and arts and culture organizations and businesses. The arts and culture sector contributes to Boulder's economic vitality by stimulating creativity and innovation; by creating jobs, attracting new businesses, and creating an environment that attracts skilled and educated workers. It also generates important ancillary spending by tourists and residents at local restaurants, bars, retailers, and hotels. Arts and culture are also an economic engine in their own right. According to the National Endowment for the Arts, the sector contributes \$16.3 billion (4.3%) to Colorado's economy.

Socially and economically, the arts and culture sector remains at significant risk from the COVID-19 crisis. Losses have been staggering due to restrictions, venue closures, and widespread event cancellations. In the Denver-Metro region, the economic impact of arts and culture nonprofits fell 49% (\$435 million) in 2020 from record highs in 2019. Employment fell by almost 10,000 jobs or 28%. This is equivalent to a decade of growth in the sector.

Many artists and arts organizations adapted and serve our community in innovative ways using online platforms and outdoor spaces while weather allows; and in-person performances have started to return despite continuing risks of shutdowns. Still, recovery of the arts and culture sector is lagging that of other sectors. Through November 2021, the rate of unemployment in the sector is more than four times greater than all nonprofits in the U.S.

The pandemic, the tragic March 22, 2021 mass shooting, the recent Marshall and Middlefork fires which destroyed over 1,000 homes and businesses of our nearby friends and colleagues, and growing awareness of deeply rooted racial and social injustices in the US and locally, have altered our community in unprecedented ways. Arts and culture are critical to Boulder's recovery and sustainability and play an essential role in individual and collective healing. Decades of research show that the arts build emotional health, cultural literacy, social cohesion, and creative expression.

Boulder Arts Week will enhance visibility of the arts within the local community. It will be an opportunity for the community to show the arts much-needed appreciation. Residents are hungry to engage in the communal nature of arts participation that strengthens society. It will be vital to Boulder as we come together again after prolonged social distancing, loss and polarization.

The arts foster beauty, originality, and vitality, to the benefit of connecting all members of the Boulder community.

We, the City Council of the City of Boulder, Colorado, declare March 25 to April 2, 2022 as

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Aaron Brockett, Mayor

