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## Arts Council Launches Art Hop App, Plans for May Art Hop

**KALAMAZOO, Mich.**- The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo (ACGK) launched its Art Hop app today, encouraging the public to sign up for a free account using their smartphones or computers. Using the app, Art Hop attendees can interact with a map of the Art Hop stops, learn more about participating artists, get walking directions to each location, and more. Instructions for using and downloading the app can be found on the Arts Council's website at <https://www.kalamazooarts.org/art-hop-may-2021/>.

Supporting positive environmental impact and convenience, the Art Hop app will replace the brochures that were previously distributed during Art Hop. Users are encouraged to add the app as a shortcut to their phone to have easy access to information about Art Hop right at their fingertips.

"The Art Hop app gives users a chance to check out the artists before the event, see their work, and find where they will be located," said Arts Council programs director Bianca Washington-Ciungan. "The app serves as a tool for wider exposure, knowledge, and accessibility for our artists and businesses downtown. We are excited to see people out on the streets in the downtown area using this new platform."

The next outdoor, in-person Art Hop is scheduled for Friday, May 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. in downtown Kalamazoo. Over 20 local businesses and artists will have tents set up outside on the Kalamazoo Mall, Bates Alley, and near Bronson Park. The Kalamazoo State Theatre will also have live music outdoors by local blues band Blue Veins from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

"We are thrilled to be able to participate in Art Hop and entertain guests with live music and a visual artist," said Harry Phillips, director of marketing and development at the Kalamazoo State Theatre. "It's been more than a year since we have hosted an indoor performance for the public, so it's exciting to have them enjoying the music of Blue Veins performing from the marquee while hanging out in our outdoor patio."

To keep Art Hop a safe, socially distant event, masks are required to visit artists, and 6-foot distancing rules are in effect. A virtual gallery of this month's artists will also become available on the Arts Council's website at the day of Art Hop.

Art Hop is a monthly community event that brings local artists, organizations, and businesses together to showcase artwork and culture. The event is free for the public to attend, and typically takes place in downtown Kalamazoo and the surrounding neighborhoods on the first Friday of the month from February through December.

Art Hop is sponsored by LKF Marketing, Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Dorothy U. Dalton Foundation, Marvin and Rosalie Okun Foundation, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, D.L. Gallivan Office Solutions, Kalamazoo Valley Museum, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Artists and businesses interested in participating in Art Hop can register online at <https://form.jotform.com/63324454998165>. The registration deadline for Art Hop on Friday, June 4, is Monday, May 10. The fee to participate is \$50.

The Arts Council is also seeking volunteers for Art Hop, specifically for the upcoming Art Hop in May. Volunteers can sign up online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0a4eaba929abf94-mayart>.

Contact [arthop@kalamazooarts.org](mailto:arthop@kalamazooarts.org) to learn more.

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