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## ACGK Announces 2023 Art Hop Dates

**KALAMAZOO, Mich.**—The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo (ACGK) has released the dates for Art Hop in 2023. Art Hop will take place the first Friday of every other month starting in March 2023 through November 2023, with the exception of July's Art Hop being the second Friday of the month and adding a special Art Hop that will be taking place on the first Friday of December.

Kim Shaw, Programs Director of the Arts Council, said, "After two and a half hectic and unpredictable years, the art world is finally catching our breath. There are plenty of exciting things on the move this year! That is why we are beginning our 2023 Art Hop season with Art on the Move!"

The themes and dates for each Art Hop in 2023 are:

### **March 3, 2023: Art on the Move**

We will start off the 2023 Art Hop year by celebrating movement! The Epic Center will highlight RAD Fest! The Midwest RAD Fest is hosted and supported by Southwest Michigan's oldest professional dance company, Wellspring/Cori Terry & Dancers, featuring the best in modern, post-modern, and contemporary dance from all over the country. Venues around the city will join in the celebration by showcasing movement through a wide variety of visual art mediums, music, theater, and more!

### **May 5, 2023: Public Art**

Let's take a walk! Join us in touring public art in our county in conjunction with the Kalamazoo County Public Arts Commission, which will unveil its Pixel Stix project! In Kalamazoo, we have a growing and vibrant public art collection which includes sculptures, murals, and interactive experiences. There will also be open studios around the city showcasing art making in action featuring glassblowing, ceramics, fiber arts, woodworking, and more!

### **July 14, 2023: Mental Health and Art Therapy**

Art therapy promotes emotional growth through the creative process using a variety of art forms to unravel and heal from within. The therapeutic arts may include, but are not limited to, drawing, painting, mixed media, music, writing, sculpture, and movement. In July, we will focus on the theme of mental health and the idea of art as a therapeutic act. We will feature artists who work in the fields of mental health and art with a couple of these artists running interactive workshops throughout the evening.

### **September 1, 2023: Storytelling and Identity**

Storytelling is the social and cultural activity of sharing stories, sometimes with improvisation, theatrics, or embellishments. Every culture has its own stories or narratives, which are shared as a means of entertainment, education, or cultural preservation. Join us in September as we share our stories through the arts with illustration and the visual arts, improv, music, a poetry slam, and dance.

### **November 3, 2023: The Future Looks Bright! / Focus on Students, Teachers, and the Life-long Learner**

Arts education is an opportunity to create a safe and creative environment for individuals to try new things, express themselves, and build their knowledge of skills to improve and foster positive relationships as life-long learners. This Art Hop will be education-focused, and we will have live art demonstrations, music, and dance groups featuring organizations around our city who enrich the lives of others with workshops, camp experiences, and individual practice.

### **December 1, 2023: The Art of Giving**

Artwork is the gift that keeps on giving. This Art Hop will focus on businesses and organizations that give back to the local and global community through art. Organizations such as MRC artworks, Glass Art Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Book Arts, Rootead, Read and Write Kalamazoo, and the Vine Neighborhood Association show up all year to shine on our community. Join us at the December Art Hop by exploring all the exceptional venues highlighting art gifts made by artists in our community.

When asked about the schedule change for the program, Kristen Chesak, Executive Director, stated, "We spent a great deal of 2022 listening to businesses, artists, and patrons in Kalamazoo talk about their experience at Art Hop and decided to limit the number of months for Art Hop. This will give our staff time to enhance each Art Hop with collaborations that will deepen the experiences and make Art Hop more enjoyable. Additionally, we have decided to remove the participation fee for businesses to host artists. We understand that cost can be a barrier to participate and hope that removing the participation fee will encourage businesses, and artists alike, to participate in this community event."

For more information about Art Hop, please visit the Arts Council's website at [www.kalamazooarts.org/art-hop/](http://www.kalamazooarts.org/art-hop/).

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#### ***About Art Hop:***

*Art Hop was created as a way for local artists, organizations, and businesses to showcase their work and to bring the Kalamazoo community together surrounding a shared love of arts and culture.*

#### ***About the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo:***

*The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo exists to infuse arts and culture into the commercial, educational, and creative economies of our region. The ACGK provides access to a broad range of artistic and cultural opportunities through grants, promotion, advocacy, and free programming to the seven-county region which it serves. For more information visit the ACGK website at [www.kalamazooarts.org](http://www.kalamazooarts.org).*

*Editor's Note: The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo and Art Hop logos are attached for your use.*