

# 2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT SESSIONS



FOCUSED FORWARD

Community Foundation  
for Greater Buffalo

## Reimagining Arts & Cultural Experiences

There is no question that our region's arts and culture sector enhances the quality of life in our community and boosts our local economy. Whether it is a painting on a canvas— or the side of a building — a concert or a theatrical performance, art can be a source of healing for communities, bringing us together during challenging times.

With cultural institutions forced to close their doors for months when the COVID-19 crisis hit, it was more critical than ever before to keep art alive and support our cultural institutions in many different ways. Our Western New York arts organizations did exactly what they do best— they got creative. From taking performances online to creating installations you could drive, bike or walk by, they assured us the show would go on. However, there are still major hurdles ahead with fundraising events up in the air and the potential for government funding cuts looming.



The Community Foundation is committed to sustaining and strengthening our significant cultural assets by building capacity and encouraging collaboration in the arts and culture sector. We have more than doubled our investment to advance this goal and strengthen our community for future generations.

One way the Community Foundation supports the sector is through Fund for the Arts, a funders cooperative administered by the Community Foundation, that brings together public, private, family and corporate foundations to assess the needs of our arts community. Fund for the Arts provided initial funding to create Arts Services Initiative (ASI) of Western New York in 2011, an organization with a mission to empower the region's artists and arts organizations with connections to funding, learning opportunities and community access to the arts. ASI has played a critical role in responding not only to the COVID-19 crisis, but also to the spotlight on racial inequities in our community. ASI recognizes the arts community has a key role to play in bridging racial equity gaps.

Join us on October 13 to hear more about how our arts community has been adapting and innovating during the past six months to ensure the sector comes out stronger together.

## Arts Services Initiative of Western New York

*Speaker: Jennifer Swan-Kilpatrick, Executive Director*

COVID-19 has profoundly impacted Western New York's creative industry. With the cancellation of performances, workshops, gigs and more, artists and arts and cultural organizations that rely on event-based income are losing revenue that is essential to continue their operations.

As a resource hub for the arts and cultural sector, Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (ASI) moved quickly to advocate for the sector, create emergency grant funding, provide reopening guidance and encourage creative thinking for virtual programming. ASI is committed to ensuring that our rich and diverse arts sector not only withstands this crisis, but also comes out stronger.



## Albright-Knox Art Gallery

*Speaker: Janne Sirén, Peggy Pierce Elfvin Director*

Like all arts organizations, the Albright-Knox found itself in a challenging position this year. It had already planned for its Elmwood Avenue home to be closed in 2020 and 2021 for a major renovation and construction project. A temporary location on Northland Avenue in the heart of the East Side just reopened in late September with a new exhibit. Programming has been converted to an online format to continue engaging with patrons and the Albright-Knox continues to bring art into the community with new murals, like the one just unveiled on the side of the Say Yes Buffalo office at 712 Main Street entitled "Love Black, 2020" by Edreys Wajed and James "Yames" Moffitt. You will hear more about the construction project and the engaging work in the community to carry this critical organization through 2020 and beyond.



Albright-Knox

## Road Less Traveled Productions

*Speaker: Scott Behrend, Artistic Director*

A small theatre established in 2004, Road Less Traveled Productions has yet to re-open its doors after shutting down in late March. Staying true to a mission of creating unforgettable live theatre experiences that bring value to our lives, Road Less Traveled began brainstorming ways to ensure the show would go on and began commissioning performances created specifically for an online platform. With the traditional season on hold, the team made it a priority to reaffirm the theatre's commitment to racial equity and develop an action plan that will create new relationships with artists of color and provide a network and opportunity for those artists.

