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Local Arts Groups to Kick off Season with Info Fair Arts Alive! event set for 9/18 at Public Center Plaza

By tradition when fall arrives, the arts come alive with announcements of upcoming performances, exhibitions, workshops, and classes for the year ahead. And as local arts organizations see it, this year should be no different. They'll adjust for whatever the pandemic throws their way. The show must go on.

The arts took a hit this past year, with venues shuttered, public performances cancelled and most classes going virtual. Of course artists still made art and, with impromptu notice on social media, music could be heard on front porch stages here and there across Clark County. But independent local theater companies and dance, music, and other arts groups can't get by this way. They can't survive without the support of audiences—and without ticket sales. Then along comes an idea to do something about it: Arts Alive!

25 arts organizations representing the visual arts, fiber arts, theater, music, poetry and dance will gather in the first-ever Arts Alive! event, complete with information booths, live performances, food carts and kid's activities. "The goal," says Artstra chair Karen Madsen, "is to invite the public to reconnect with the arts. People will learn what each of these groups are up to and they can check out the upcoming season for what to expect in the coming year."

Arts Alive! will be held from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, September 18 in the Clark County Public Service Center Plaza at 1300 Franklin St. in downtown Vancouver. Admission is free.

Throughout the afternoon there will be live performances on the main stage from Columbia Dance, Journey Theater, Magenta Theater, Metropolitan Performing Arts, Ne Plus Ultra Jass Orchestra, Traveling Day Society, Vancouver Ballet Folklórico, and Washington Dance Creative.

The gazebo will host poetry by current and past Clark County Poets Laureate Armin Tolentino, Gwendolyn Morgan and Christopher Luna.

"We hope this will really be a celebration," adds Madsen, "welcoming back the season of the arts, bringing the arts alive."

Free parking will be available in the adjacent parking garage plus the event is just an easy walk from the Vancouver Farmers Market.

Arts Alive! is a collaborative effort of Artstra, Clark County Arts Commission and Columbia Arts Network. They hope this event kicks off an exciting year for the arts and that it becomes an annual event.

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