Compiled by Josh Blan

The murder of George Floyd has marked a new consciousness in Minneapolis and beyond. Artists from the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District with different values and who have been working on issues of equality and justice for many years, are engaging on the front lines in this transformative moment.

According to 250 community members who responded to the Northeast online survey conducted May 6 to June 15, local arts ranked high among things to do.

The most popular entertainment venues visited in the previous 12 months were movie theaters (74%), bars and clubs (69%) for Northeast readers surveyed, followed closely by live performing arts and art museums (64% each). More than half (64%) reported visiting one or more art studios. A variety of other activities were offered, including attending charity events, which scored 47%.

Ask them if they intend to do Post COVID-19 in the next 12 months, all percentages were at least slightly lower. The percentage who might still be around in 12 months. Bars, movie theaters, charity events and live music saw the biggest decreases in intent to attend.

The survey asked “what do you value most about the presence of visual art and artists in your community?” “Art provokes thought” at 67% and “Visual beauty” at 67% were the top two answers, followed by “Art to bridge cultures” at 50% and “Art that reflects on the state of communication” at 45%. “Art to facilitate other learning” came in at 40%. Economic impact and learning about artists’ processes scored 34% each.

Prompted by ads in the Northeast, Facebook postings, and flyers distributed to randomly-selected blocks in all Northeast neighborhoods, Columbus Heights, and St. Anthony, respondents were predominantly female (77%). That is typical for the format, according to the Circulation Verification Council which hosted the survey.

Top: Peyton’s George Floyd mural, photo by Urban Camper, candlelight vigil photo by Mark Wojahn.

Wojahn said “99.3% of protesters were peaceful. People want change. They want our city law enforce ment to change.” He noted that the protesters have been strategic in going to the mayor’s residence, taking down Columbus statues and choosing how to fight this battle. Wojahn is hoping for a wider acceptance of street art, which he has been documenting. “Our city has not been accepting. It is a very populist view of art.”

Barbara Rogers Bridges, artist and teacher/college professor for over 40 years and creates social practice art from rescued “power objects” with the purpose of provoking reflection and action on a wide variety of social topics. She invites people with different viewpoints to come together and let go of the idea that there is one valid TRUTH. Bridges is also the Founder of the non-profit Art To Change The World (ACW, www.arttochangetheworld.org). She believes in inviting ACW members to identify a project and then “leave them alone to lead. The results will be astonishing.”

Bridges believes the murder of George Floyd has sparked a sea change. She is three years into her current Trauma and Healing series and has discovered that “Creating art and ideas together leads to healing.” She strives with ACW for all voices to be heard and to participate. She said, “I am done with silos and echo chambers of thinking.” At the end of the day, week, year, life, it’s all about relationships; interpersonal trust is most important.

creative Feed: Co-op will trade food for art, pay for supplies

Eastside Food Co-op introduces Creative Feed, a new way to bring even more local art to Central Ave nue and to support the community of artists who call Northeast Min neapolis home. Eastside Food Co-op is opening windows, walls, and walkways to the artists of Northeast.

Proposals are requested from Minneapolis visual artists for temporary, two-dimensional public artwork centered on themes of food, healing, nature, justice, community and remembrance. The Co-op is looking for proposals that are centered on themes of food, healing, nature, justice, community and remembrance.

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