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NEWS
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Cumberland & Cape May Counties Make History with Virtual Teen Arts Festival!

Cape May Court House, NJ- The first ever, fully encompassing, Teen Arts Festival was held with great success on Wednesday, April 21, VIRTUALLY. The Cape May County Division of Culture & Heritage partnered once again with Cumberland County for the *3rd Annual 2021 Teen Arts Festival*. With over 1,000 participants attending their annual live festival and the hopes of still enticing students and teachers the Counties Teen Arts Festival Committee agreed to move forward with a virtual festival for 2021 after canceling the 2020 festival altogether.

“We did not want the students to miss out on the opportunity of experiencing a Teen Arts Festival. This event is such a unique compilation of the arts, and if that meant we had to make the festival virtual, that’s what we were going to do,” Katie Kiessling, festival coordinator.

The festival, hosted by the Levoy Theatre, is traditionally a one-day event that occurs on and within businesses on High Street, Millville. The festival boasts in-person workshops, performances, pop-up entertainment and a chance for students to come together with their peers and enjoy the arts. They feature many innovative components all designed to enhance the ability and careers of Cumberland and Cape May Counties young artists and to promote the importance of arts education in our schools.

“The students of these two counties were the ones who missed out this year. It is important that we do our best to support them in education. It’s a good thing this festival does for our emerging artists,” said Cape May County Commissioner Director Thornton.

In going virtual the Committee did not want to compromise and leave out anything the traditional festival would have. “This was a go big or go home situation for us. After a rough 2020 and no festival to show for it, we wanted our students to have something to look forward to,” said Kiessling. The festival hosted virtual Workshops and a “Pop-Up” Education Library, covering a range of arts-based categories scheduled throughout the day with around 500 students and teachers participating. All Cumberland & Cape May County students registered for festival adjudication were eligible to participate in these workshops. Adjudication was also held virtually and prior to the day’s events. The classes help students develop perceptual, intellectual, and technical skills; gain cultural awareness and understanding of various art forms; and develop personal aesthetic values.

“My students loved all the dance classes they took! As experienced dancers, they have been to a lot of dance workshops and conventions. The choreographers kept their interest, were appropriately challenging and fun and the pace of the day was great. They had enough rest between classes and were eager to start the next class. Overall, they learned a lot and it was a successful and fun day!!,” said Alyssa Morrison, OCHS Dance, Health, PE Teacher.

The Cumberland & Cape May County Teen Arts Festival is not a competition. Performances were not compared or ranked in any way. Instead, the focus is on sharing achievements and learning. All student work at the festival was publicly critiqued by professional artist adjudicators prior to the day’s events. Student artwork, traditionally displayed in classrooms, were housed on their own website, making it easier to share their pieces with festival participants. “I think in going virtual we learned a few things that can certainly be uses to make our in-person event run smoother,” Kiessling joked. “We never had a closing ceremony to announce state nominees because students had to get back for dismissal, but we could virtually!”

Selected student pieces will advance to the New Jersey State Teen Arts Festival. The state festival will represent the very best of Cumberland & Cape May County teen artists.

The festival committee was awarded funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to help offset costs after the 2020 festivals cancelled due to the pandemic. Awarded funds will be granted to students to use for registration at the 2021 New Jersey State Teen Arts Festival. Registration fees are usually accrued by the students or schools.

Cape May County students participated in two adjudicated categories at this year's festival, Dance and Visual Arts (2D/3D). Students from the County have advanced under both categories of submission. A list of students and schools eligible to advance to the state festival are listed below. To view student artwork, you may view it online at: <https://sites.google.com/levoy.net/2021-teen-arts-student-gallery/home>

The Teen Arts Festival is made possible by the Cape May & Cumberland Counties County Board of County Commissioners, Cape May & Cumberland Counties Division of Culture & Heritage, The Levoy Theatre and the New Jersey State Council of the Arts.

The following is a list of students from Cape May County Schools that have been selected to attend the New Jersey State Teen Arts Virtual Festival, June 1st – 3rd.

<https://www.njteenarts.com/>

CAPE MAY COUNTY – Dance Category

School- *Ocean City High School Dance Team*

Kate Baccala	Olivia Eggie	Ava Kelly	Mya Rihl
Rachel Bacon	Mallory Gould	Bryn Lamanna	Grace Thompson
Abby Berman	Noelle Graham	Alexa Macom	Katie Worchel
Sarah Burgos	Ciera Howard	Kaylee Newton	Marietta Young
Skye Carlin	Chloe Howard	Alex Payne	
Maura Dougherty	Mary Hudak	Gab Powell	

CAPE MAY COUNTY - 2D Visual Art Category

School	Student
Coastal Preparatory School	Marcos Ferrer
Ocean City High School	Fred Green
Ocean City High School	Megan Coen
Ocean City High School	Zeph Zensen
Ocean City High School	Gillian Reid
Middle Township High School	Alisha Roman-Valentin
Ocean City High School	Felix Palmer
Ocean City High School	Yahir Bautista
Ocean City High School	Julia Edmond

Ocean City High School	Madie Keefer
Ocean City High School	Rachel Bacon
Ocean City High School	Av Southard
Ocean City High School	Sofia Keir
Ocean City High School	Haley Richards

CAPE MAY COUNTY - 3D Visual Arts Category

Middle Township HS	Lily Zuzulock
Coastal Preparatory School	Nevaeh Wise
Coastal Preparatory School	Warren Weimer
Middle Township HS	Rylee McFadden

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