



macon **arts** alliance

## 2020 Cultural Awards

*recognizing individuals, organizations, and businesses who have made significant contributions to the cultural life of Central Georgia through their work or philanthropic efforts*



With the support of neighborhood champions and local artists, Bike Walk Macon is taking a creative approach to solving transportation and pedestrian challenges.

**Open Streets Macon** is a car-free celebration of public space that brings people of all ages together to re-imagine how we use public space.

**Love Your Street** empowers Maconites to improve their neighborhood streets by building low-cost creative traffic-calming installations.

**My Bike Photo Series** highlights the talents of local photographers and bicycle commuters, using images and stories to form a portrait of Macon as an emerging bicycling city.





# Scott Mitchell

"Scott Mitchell has boundless and authentic energy in promoting equality for all people"

- She Keene

Scott is a fearless promoter of local artists. He highlights a local artist with monthly exhibits in his shop – making sure not to merely display their work, but to always tell their story. In addition, he was the force behind the Macon Sculpture Walk that brought public art pieces to the urban core.

In 2019 Scott co-founded Macon Pride to create unity in our community that includes diverse gender and sexual identities. The group hosts an annual Macon Pride Festival in June, adding to the cultural diversity of Macon's festival calendar.





# Storytellers Macon

Humans have been telling stories since 15,000 B.C. to connect, entertain, and pass along important information.

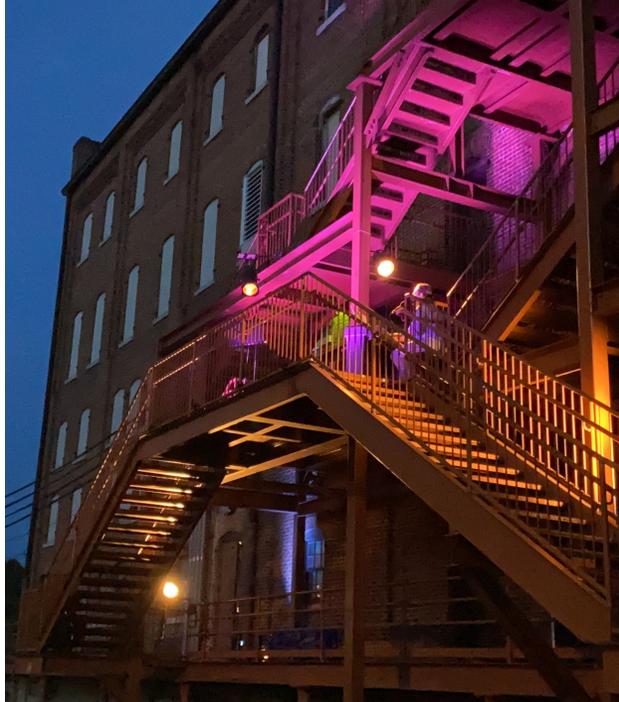
Storytellers Macon is a non-profit organization created to give people a platform to tell their stories. They host a monthly event where people come together to share stories suggestive of a theme. In addition, they host a bi-weekly Facebook Live event, 'One Person, One Story' and curated a four-part series with the Grand Opera House which showcases featured stories. The purpose of the stories is to unite us in a different and creative way and give an outlet for creative self-expression through the art of storytelling.



# Stratford Academy

In 2016, Stratford Academy embarked on hosting an event that would give our community an opportunity to celebrate the arts. In planning the school realized that this would best be accomplished by recognizing the organizations in Central Georgia which were already providing leadership in the art world. Community partnerships were formed with the Macon Arts Alliance, Mercer University, Middle Georgia State University, the Museum of Arts and Sciences, and Wesleyan College for a week-long event focused on the visual arts.

The idea was to expose participants to new artists, experiences, and opportunities for learning. The event has grown over the years and now includes a showcase of student talent, a lecture series with featured artists, an artist residency, and workshops for adults and youth.



# 2020 Creative Impact Awards

*recognizing those who responded to the challenges of 2020 with creativity and innovation*

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# #BlockTheHate

In spring of 2020, people across America were focusing on the need for racial equity, and the focus in Macon turned to a Confederate memorial on Cotton Avenue.

Organized by Tiara Ponce with the hope that the art piece would serve as a starting point for important conversations about race in Macon, #BlockTheHate featured the work of Ponce and local muralist Kevin 'Scene' Lewis.

The installation provided an innovative approach to re-examining our past with a focus on the future.



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a green sequined top, is seen from behind, playing a black and white keyboard on a balcony. She is looking at sheet music on a stand. The balcony has a metal railing. In the background, a city street at night is visible with a white van parked on the left and buildings and streetlights in the distance.

# Broadway Does Cabaret

On March 13, 2020 Broadway shut down. That action was felt across the country as local live performance theatres also closed their doors. The Grand Opera House in Macon responded by opening their parking lot – and the fire escape – for a concert series that began with 'Broadway Does Southern Rock', paying homage to the genre born in Macon.

Audience response was positive – the new experience provided a creative solution to an unusual situation and an outing for music and theatre lovers who were longing to be entertained.

THE  
**GRAND**  
★  
OPERA HOUSE



# Frontline Faces

When COVID shut down schools and businesses, Micah Goguen's self-employed work came to a halt. Rather than focus solely on lost income, Micah decided to create something that would help people transition through the changes created by the pandemic.

He writes, 'I wasn't sure if it was helping anyone, but it was helping me to stay focused on helping others instead of fixating on my own mental anxieties.'

He learned to use Zoom and lined up students who were willing to participate in online classes. The series was about more than teaching, he wanted to focus on themes that brought awareness to what was happening in our community.

Frontline Faces was a portrait sketching class in which Micah and his students drew portraits of the local hospital front liners from selfies they had taken - exhibiting pure exhaustion after their tireless shifts. The feeling of being heard and seen gave them momentum to keep going and help as best they could despite the enormous stress caused by the pandemic.



# Macon Freedom for All Solidarity Walk



Macon Freedom for All is a united community partnership in which we stand together to confront our history of racial injustice, to honor lives taken by racism and senseless acts of violence, and to actively build a future that is truly free for all.

Nancy Cleveland and Rachelle Wilson created the Solidarity Walk event as an alternative way to recognize July 4th and acknowledge the lack of freedoms found throughout our nation.

The walk highlighted history in Macon's downtown that is important to our Black community by featuring a route that was intentional and educational. Walkers finished the race by writing the name of a victim of violence on the sidewalk.



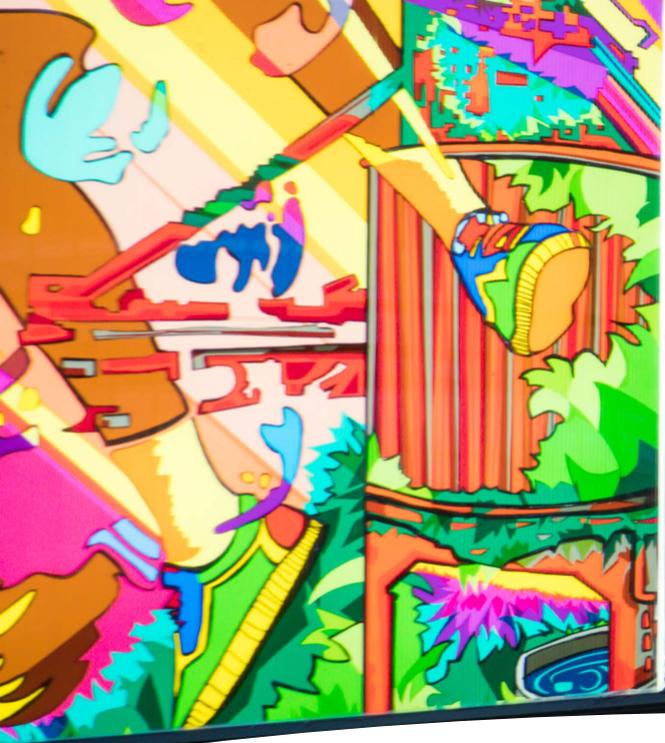
# Play it Forward

Thanks to donations by individuals and organizations, and matching funds from United Way of Central Georgia and the Jazz Association of Macon, fifteen musicians and their families were assisted during this time when gigs were few and far between.

JAM members and contributors assisted musicians who were adversely impacted by the coronavirus. Starting with a May 2nd virtual performance in Edward Clark's back yard, JAM launched a fund-raising effort that netted over \$3,000 in individual and corporate donations, plus \$4,000 from United Way through its 478 Sings United drive, all matched by more than \$3,400 from JAM. Fifteen musicians applied and received grants of \$700 each.

Over 2,400 guests have viewed the concert which may still be viewed at the link below.

[JAM Play it Forward Concert](#)



# Pop-up on Poplar Music and Bright City

When COVID-19 caused businesses to close their doors temporarily, it was as if the heart of Macon momentarily stopped beating. Downtown streets that were once filled with pedestrians strolling from business to business became empty. NewTown Macon quickly realized immediate action would be necessary to ensure our businesses would reopen once it was safe to gather again.

In August, NewTown Macon re-imagined Bright City, a public art installation of illuminated photographs highlighting the good things happening in Macon.

In the fall, NewTown launched the Pop-up on Poplar Music Series to activate the added seating on Poplar Street. Local musicians performed a set each week to encourage the community to support downtown businesses and gather safely after months of limited programming and interaction. NewTown Macon intentionally hired diverse performers during this series to promote racial unity.



# Second Friday Drive Thru Art Gallery

Triangle Arts Macon has been a living, vibrant space since opening, offering a place for artists to showcase their work, have studio space, and providing numerous forms of canvas for graffiti artists to paint. Owner Ric Geyer has stoked the flames of creativity for artists of a variety of backgrounds.

This past August, Ric was looking for a new way to showcase art and bring people together safely. He brought together a team to plan a Drive Through Art Show for the second Friday of September. The show featured two local artists, allowed for people to view their artwork from the safety of their own vehicles, and enabled people to purchase the art via the Triangle Arts Macon website.

The response was well beyond what anyone imagined, with more than 120 vehicles driving through. In addition, in the weeks leading up to the show, the Museum of Arts and Sciences moved their Wunderkammer to the Triangle campus. Ric and volunteers adapted the shipping container to allow it to be an additional gallery. Windows were cut, electricity and air conditioning brought in, and artwork was displayed so attendees could walk by and build on their experience at Triangle.

