



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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17th Annual Salem Arts Festival Prepares for 2025
A vital celebration for community healing and economic revival

SALEM, Mass. — The Salem Arts Festival committee invites the community to participate in the festival's 17th year, running June 6 through June 8, 2025. At a time when communities nationwide seek connection and renewal, this beloved event provides a crucial platform for creative expression and economic revitalization. Over 8,000 people regularly attend the family-friendly festival, transforming downtown Salem, MA, into a vibrant showcase for the arts community's diverse talents. The festival includes a gallery of juried artists' work in Old Town Hall, outdoor stage venues for performance and dance, an artist and artisan street fair, a collaborative public arts project, the hugely popular Mural Slam, and much more! Special thanks to this year's

festival partner, the Peabody Essex Museum, and title sponsor Jenni Stuart Fine Jewelry for their continued support.

"The Arts Festival has become such an important community event over the years because our community IS the focus," said Kylie Sullivan, Executive Director of Salem Main Streets, co-organizer of the Salem Arts Festival. "We have such an incredible breadth and depth of creativity within our Salem community and the surrounding area, and we take our commitment to showcasing that very seriously."

In today's challenging economic climate, festivals like this serve as vital lifelines for creative professionals while fostering the communal healing desperately needed in our neighborhoods. This year, the festival strengthens its collaboration with Creative Collective, a program dedicated to supporting the creative industries and workforce through economic empowerment and community building.

"The Salem Arts Festival embodies what our community needs most right now," shares John Andrews, founder of Creative Collective. "We're creating a space where everyone belongs—where diverse creative voices find not just appreciation, but real economic opportunity. When we celebrate local artists from all backgrounds, we're investing in a Salem where creativity and inclusion fuel each other. This festival reminds us that by building bridges across our community, we create both cultural vibrancy and economic resilience, especially during times when feeling connected matters more than ever."

Again this year, a juried visual arts gallery will be selected by an on-site review process held the weekend before the festival, May 30 through June 1. Artists interested in the gallery should complete an Intent to Apply online at saalemartsfestival.com to receive the most up-to-date information about the gallery process. Applications for performers, street fair vendors, and the annual mural slam have already been closed.

For the 11th year, a community-built public art installation will be included in the festival. This year's project is titled "Hissstory" and is led by public artists Linda Mullen and Claudia Paraschiv. The "Hissstory" project repurposes vinyl banners from past city events, inviting community members to craft individual snake segments and add their artistic embellishments. These segments will be assembled into a larger snake installation that celebrates Salem's creative spirit and commitment to sustainability—a powerful metaphor for how our community can transform fear and uncertainty into collective beauty.

Salem Main Streets, the Creative Collective, and a collaboration of Salem organizations organize the Salem Arts Festival. This festival is supported in part by the local business community, including the Peabody Essex Museum, Jenni Stuart Fine Jewelry, The Lobster Shanty, Goldberg Properties, Prime Group Shetland Park, Witch City Walking Tours, and the Salem Rainbow Stroll, grants through the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Salem Cultural Council, and by tourism dollars through Destination Salem. The festival relies heavily on the support of over 100 volunteers! Find out how to join our volunteer crew at www.salemartsfestival.com/volunteer.

For more information about the Salem Arts Festival, please see www.salemartsfestival.com or contact Kylie Sullivan at kylie@salemmainstreets.org or (978)744-0004 (x115).

About the Organizers

Salem Main Streets' mission is the continued revitalization of downtown Salem as a vibrant, year-round, retail, dining and cultural destination through business retention, recruitment, and the promotion of the downtown district. www.salemmainstreets.org

Creative Collective connects creativity, community, and commerce throughout Essex County's creative ecosystem. We empower local creators through business support, networking, and advocacy—building inclusive spaces where diverse creative voices thrive, not just survive. Our approach transforms artists and makers into community builders and economic drivers, strengthening our region's cultural fabric and economic resilience. www.creativecollectivema.com

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