

New Bedford Creative Directory officially launches; exploring arts and culture in times of Covid-19

Written by Steven Froias, contributing writer.

It's a daunting task to collect the creativity of a city for online presentation and representation. But, New Bedford Creative has done just that with the formal launch of the Creative Directory on NewBedfordCreative.org.

On the website, browsers can now find and see the multitude of artistic and cultural professionals who constitute such a large part of the population in this authentic seaport city. Almost a year in the making and organizing, mobilizing the resources of the office of Creative Strategist at the New Bedford Economic Development Council, the Creative Directory is a virtual mirror of the inspiration and industry in this city today.

Margo Saulnier, the Creative Strategist, explains that as part of New Bedford's first-ever Arts and Culture Plan a robust website featuring its arts practitioners on a comprehensive directory has been a goal since day one.

"The Creative Directory is an essential resource for businesses and others who want to engage the services of an arts professional, but may not have known where to start before now," says Saulnier. "Going forward, when you need anything from a mural to a musician, you can turn to NewBedfordCreative.org."

After launching the site last year, solicitations went out to all artists to contribute their information to New Bedford

Creative. This involved reaching out to dozens upon dozens of people to participate throughout the city – from schools to stages to galleries to former mill studios and home studios.

Saulnier and her team, including senior creative fellow Jasmyne Baird, with the help of the design firm mediumstudio, then collated the words and images into a stunning and attractive online context which highlights the talent of #NewBedfordCreative on the website.

The Creative Directory is introduced to viewers by honoring the city's past before catching them up to the present:

"Throughout our nearly 250 year history, New Bedford has maintained a vibrant creative and cultural community. Acclaimed artists in visual and performing arts, architecture, literature, and more, lived or worked here, including ornithologist John James Audubon, artist Clifford Ashley, painter Albert Bierstadt, painter William Bradford, author Frederick Douglass, musician Joli Gonsalves, choreographer Carol Haney, author Herman Melville, photographer James Reed, painter Albert Pinkham Ryder, the R&B group Tavares, and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson.

"Today, New Bedford is a hub of arts and culture on the south coast of Massachusetts, boasting a wide array of attractions and diverse venues that showcase the history, art, and cultural fabric of a cosmopolitan seaport. The city is home to hundreds of artists and performers who contribute to our distinctive identity, economic development, and the quality of life of everyone living in and visiting the city. This Creative Directory is a resource to connect you to the talented people who contribute to the arts and culture of New Bedford."

The New Bedford Creative Directory is arranged into the following categories: Applied & Visual Arts; Film & Multi-Media; Food & Culinary Arts; Music & Performing Arts; Written

& Published Works; and History & Preservation.

In the Creative Directory, you'll meet performance artists like Andy Anello and culture*park, visual artists like Adrian Tio and Joe Quigley, and singer/songwriters like Cedric Josey and Dori Rubicco to name but six of the over 100 listed contributors to the South Coast Massachusetts arts and culture hub of New Bedford.

As impressive as the sheer volume of creative professionals is, Saulnier says that there's always room for more. Indeed, New Bedford Creative continues to urge city residents in the arts, or area residents who bring their talents to the city, to claim a directory listing.

"Email us at ArtsNewBedford@gmail.com to be included on New BedfordCreative.org," she reminds all. "Arts and culture is an evolving process, and we want to be right there with you as we all grow into the future."

In the meantime, patrons of the arts and fans of New Bedford are encouraged to log on to NewBedfordCreative.org whenever they find themselves in need of beauty, inspiration or the desire to engage a creative professional on the South Coast.

About New Bedford Creative

The New Bedford Creative Consortium is the leadership group whose purpose is overseeing the execution of the citywide strategic Arts and Culture Plan entitled New Bedford Creative: our art, our culture, our future. The Arts and Culture Plan is a huge step forward in building a thriving creative ecosystem in our city, and these are the people dedicated to implementing it. This volunteer group is facilitated by the Creative Strategist, meets quarterly and is divided into three Squads: Public Art + Facilities, Placemaking + Community, and Fundraising + Distribution.

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