COVID-19_Jack Pine Project Webpage

University of Maine

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The Jack Pine Project responds to this crisis by connecting artists, art therapists, and art therapists with residents from around Maine. Through a series of individual workshops, Maine artists, musicians, writers, and other artists work with different groups to help them express their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and hopes for the future. Community art programs empower people to express their feelings and tell their stories, helping them cope with and heal from trauma, including our current state of crisis. They document life in a community at a particular moment, leaving a shared record for future generations that goes beyond news accounts and government reports.

The title of the project is drawn from the Jack Pine, a species native to Maine that thrives in areas burnt ground is embossed with Maine’s resilience from the COVID-19 pandemic and state of social crisis that we find ourselves in, and the role of the arts in this process.

Contact Information

The Jack Pine Project is a collaboration of the Maine Folklife Center and Maine Studies Program at the University of Maine, and the UMaine Hutchinson Center in Belfast. The project is coordinated by Dr. Jesse Etenger. You can email him at folklife@maine.edu, or call 207-581-1840. You can also learn more by contacting the UMaine Hutchinson Center in Belfast by phone at 207-581-3000 or email at hutchinsoncenter@maine.edu.

Supporting the Jack Pine Project

If you would like to support this project financially, an account has been created at the UMaine Foundation. You can make a gift by clicking on this link: https://www.umaine.edu/jackpine. Any donations made to this account will go directly and completely toward supporting additional workshops and/or exhibitions of the created artwork.

To make a gift by check, please mail it to the UMaine Foundation, attention of Matt Muller, one of our would like to express your thoughts, feelings, and perspectives about the pandemic through art, one of our workshops might be the perfect place to do it. You will work with a talented Maine artist to learn a particular skill, such as printmaking, weaving, or songwriting. Then you and other members of your group will create your own art, individually or as a group, to help tell the story of the coronavirus pandemic here in Maine.

Workshops Now Underway!

Workshops for the Jack Pine Project are taking place right now. Currently three are in progress: “Songwriting for Self-Expression” with Carla Tanguay, “Coronavirus Mind Mapping” with Jessica Hamilton-Jones, and “Scenes from a Darkened Stage” with Stephen Legaiewicz. Several more workshops are scheduled to begin in the coming weeks. For more information about all our workshops, and to register, see our Workshop Registration page.

Participation in all of our workshops is free, and most are open to the public. To see our Works in Progress page. Registration is now open! Click here to learn more.

Why the Jack Pine Project?

The COVID-19 pandemic and related economic shutdown has affected many aspects of life in Maine. People have experienced everything from isolation to food insecurity to anxiety and depression. Some groups have been even more deeply affected, including those in health care, eldercare, education, and essential services, among others. There are also more vulnerable and at-risk groups in our communities. This is a unique experience of the arts!