



## ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION

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### For Immediate Release:

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### Ulster County Announces Kick-off for Comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan

**KINGSTON, NY** – Ulster County is excited to launch the “Ulster County Arts & Culture Plan,” the first county-led comprehensive study of arts and culture in the region. This initiative aims to enhance the cultural landscape through community planning to sustain and grow the region’s arts and culture offerings.

The online public launch is scheduled for **Monday, June 17th at 5:00 pm**. The Participate Ulster site ([participate.ulstercountyny.gov/arts-culture-plan](http://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/arts-culture-plan)) will be the hub for all project-related information and public engagement, including details about the public launch.

The County seeks input from as many community members as possible on how arts and culture can create a more equitable, thriving, and prosperous county. Outreach will include town hall meetings, creative sector workshops, surveys, and community conversations.

The final plan will reflect input from community members of all ages and backgrounds, providing well-defined goals and strategies that align with broader community needs, including economic prosperity, social equity, environmental protection, and cultural vitality.

A 27-member Project Advisory Committee (PAC), featuring arts leaders in Ulster County, will guide the plan. This committee represents a diverse range of geographies, artistic disciplines, genders, and races. Their expertise will help create a comprehensive and inclusive arts plan that is both aspirational and practical. Included is a list of PAC members.

To spearhead this initiative, the county has engaged Lord Cultural Resources, a leading global arts and culture planning practice with a proven track record spanning over 40 years that helps arts and cultural destinations achieve their full potential. Work began in April 2024, with the goal of presenting the full plan to the Ulster County Legislature in March 2025.

The project is managed by an Ulster County team including Peter Criswell, Chair of the Ulster County Legislature; Joshua Stratton-Rayner, Deputy Director of Economic Development; and Sara Pasti, Arts and Development Consultant and City of Kingston Ward 1 Alderwoman.

The Arts & Culture Master Plan will develop an inventory of creative resources across the county and gather and analyze data on the economic impact of the arts and creative industries.

The plan will outline goals and strategies to address programming opportunities, access for residents and visitors, services for the creative community, cultural economic development, and facilities development and will explore funding for public art, performance and education programming, and capital improvements. Recommendations will aim to strengthen and integrate resources to advance economic prosperity, social equity, environmental protection, and cultural vitality as well as the county's role in supporting the arts.

**Peter Criswell, Chair of the Ulster County Legislature, stated,** “This is a historic moment for Ulster County and the arts. A cultural plan provides a clear direction for the future of Ulster County’s creative sector. We are proud of our creative community, which makes Ulster County unique, and are committed to nurturing the arts here. We look forward to public feedback as we create this plan.”

**Joshua Stratton-Rayner, Deputy Director of Economic Development, added,** “We’re excited to engage in a planning process that will involve over a year of work with the community, guided by the consulting team at Lord Cultural Resources and our project advisors. We already know that the arts are a critical and vibrant economic sector for Ulster County, and we expect this work will provide a strategic frame for ensuring ongoing positive impacts on the residents and businesses in our county.”

**Eve Moros Ortega, Director of the U.S. office of Lord Cultural Resources, commented,** “Lord Cultural Resources is honored to collaborate with Ulster County on the creation of the Ulster County Arts & Culture Plan. We know from our previous work on the Kingston Arts & Culture Plan how vital arts and culture are for the region. We now look forward to diving deeper into the needs throughout the county to uplift all.”

For more information and to participate in the planning process, visit the Participate Ulster site ([participate.ulstercountyny.gov/arts-culture-plan](https://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/arts-culture-plan)).

## ULSTER COUNTY ARTS AND CULTURE PLAN PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mike Amari	Program Manager, Opus 40
Bryant (“Drew”) Andrews	Executive Director, Center for Creative Education
Lisa Berger	Director, Ulster County Department of Tourism
Danielle Bliss	Producer, Hudson Valley Hullabaloo & Owner, Wishbone Letterpress
Taylor Bruck	Ulster County Deputy County Clerk and County Historian
Dave Channon	Artist and Shandaken Artist Tour Promoter
Beth Davenport	Co-Founder, Stockade Works and Upriver Studios
Melissa Dvozenja-Thomas	Executive Director, Arts Mid-Hudson
Marielena Ferrer-Harrington	Chair, Kingston Arts Commission and Executive Director, Unison Arts
Lara Giordano	Founder and Director, Department of Regional Art Workers (D.R.A.W)
Nicole Goldberg	Executive Director, Woodstock Artists Association and Museum
Stephan Hengst	Executive Director, Big Gay Hudson Valley
Margaret S. Inge	Board President, Kingston Midtown Arts District
Andrew Jacobs	Board President, Catskills Borscht Belt Museum
Nadine Lemmon	Board Treasurer, Center for Photography at Woodstock
Jadin Manipole	Marketing Director, Bardavon Presents / Ulster Performing Arts Center
Melanie Martin	Director of Sales & Communications, New York Foundation for the Arts
James McIntyre	Board President, Shadowland Stages
Kitt Potter	Director of Arts & Cultural Affairs, City of Kingston
Robert Sabuda	Founder, 10 Horse Art Center & Pop-Up Book Artist
Nina Schmidbaur	Chair, Saugerties Arts Commission
Jason Silverman	Co-Executive Director, Upstate Films
Isabel Soffer	Co-Founder, The Local, Saugerties
Megan Sperry	Member, Ulster County Legislature & SUNY Ulster Media Arts Professor
Kathleen (kt) Tobin	Director, SUNY New Paltz Benjamin Center
Helen Toomer	Founder, Stoneleaf Retreat Residency and Upstate Arts Weekend
Carrie Wykoff	Rosendale Town Board Member & Co-Chair, Rosendale Street Festival