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► Festival season kicks off this weekend.

Lewiston GardenFest 2021, presented by the Lewiston Garden Club, will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday along Center Street.

Organizers are taking measures to ensure a safe event for all. Helping to contribute to the event complying with current coronavirus safety guidelines, Catholic Health-Mount St. Mary's Hospital donated face masks that will be available for those who may need them. The coverings will be available at the hospitality tents located at South Fourth and Center streets, and North Seventh and Center streets.

Also at hospitality, participants will be able to register for the event and obtain GardenFest programs, which list the gardens that will be open for viewing during the two-day event.

Pictured, from left: Marianne Gittermann, Mount St. Mary's Hospital Manager of Public Relations and Community Affairs Karrie Gebhardt, GardenFest Chairperson Judy Talarico and Doreen Albee. (Photo by Robert Albee)

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ARTPARK LIFTS COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Upon hearing Gov. Andrew Cuomo's decision to lift COVID-19 restrictions, Artpark & Company has changed its coronavirus policies for 2021.

On Wednesday, the venue announced that, following review of the state's easing or removal of many COVID-19 restrictions for businesses and outdoor entertainment venues – and upon consultation with the Office of New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation – it will remove current venue restrictions for its season events, effective immediately.

Proof of vaccination will no longer be required to attend events in Artpark venues. Guests will also not be asked to complete a health screening questionnaire or temperature check upon arrival. Social distancing will no longer be

mandated, and vaccinated patrons will not be required to wear facial coverings.

Patrons who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear a mask whenever social distancing cannot be maintained (indoors or outdoors). Those who are not feeling well at the time of an event are also discouraged from entering the park, regardless of vaccination status.

The Artpark Amphitheater event season opens with the Strawberry Moon Festival this Saturday. A celebration of the Indigenous cultures of the Niagara Region begins at 4 p.m. and features storytelling, music, dance, arts and crafts.

A press release said the event “encourages a spirit of inclusion and community; an antidote to the separation many have felt during the pandemic. The festival offers

an ideal transition as the region starts to experience more of a return to prepandemic life and larger public gatherings for live performances.”

Featured musical artists include Martha Redbone Roots Project, Lakota John, Charly Lowry, and Western New York native Tonemah. The festival also offers a smoke dance competition. Tickets are \$7 and are available at ticketmaster.com and at the door.

The press release noted, “Artpark has intentionally planned for primarily reduced capacity/attendance events for this summer. Therefore, guests who may not feel comfortable gathering with larger numbers of other people of unknown vaccination status should still have the benefit of social distancing if they so desire. The outdoor expanse of Artpark's

grounds also makes for a safe and comfortable visitor experience.

“Artpark's 2021 season offers an incredible range and diversity of experiences for all ages, including rock, pop, jazz, Indigenous, country, classical and new music; ‘Sonic Trails’ mobile app; modern dance; Artpark Theatre Academy, visual arts and music and soccer camps; ‘Free Family Saturdays’; outdoor movies; Cirque performances; art installations; theater/performance art and more.”

Venue admission policies may change over the course of the summer if New York state and Centers for Disease Control guidance further evolves. For an Artpark venue guide and other frequently asked questions, visit www.artpark.net.

Visit Artpark's website to see more announcements in the coming weeks.

‘New Music in the Park’ debuts at Artpark



Lewiston's first outdoor concert of the summer took place Sunday at Artpark, 450 S. Fourth St. Emerald Grove was the site of the debut of Artpark & Company's “New Music in the Park.”

Crowds gathered early to get an ideal seat for Sō Percussion – many bringing a picnic and making a whole afternoon out of the event. The pictured four-piece is known as “a percussion-based music organization that creates and

presents new collaborative works to adventurous and curious audiences and educational initiatives to engaged students, while providing meaningful service to its communities, in order to exemplify the power of music to unite people and forge deep social bonds.”

This summer, Artpark & Company will bring in top musical performers from across a variety of genres for the series, which will alternate locations within



the park.

There is a show fee. Tickets can be purchased at www.artpark.net.

Each concert begins at 4 p.m., except the double-bill on Aug. 7.

Additional dates for performers in the “New Music in the Park” series include:

√ Sunday, June 27 – Baroque Dreams: Moshe Shulman, Kenneth Kam and Anne Harley.

√ Saturday, July 10 – Null Point: Nature is Not Natural

√ Sunday, July 11 – Buffalo Jazz Composers Workshop

√ Sunday, July 25 – Multi-Dimensions Quartet

√ Sunday, Aug. 1 – Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus

√ Saturday, Aug. 7 – JP Jofre and the Hard Tango Chamber Band/Alarm Will Sound (7 p.m. performance)

√ Sunday, Sept. 5 – Puppets of Palm: A Deforestation Wayang (Photos by Joshua Maloni)



Niagara County **Tribune/Sentinel**

Founded February 14, 1987

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©2021 Niagara Frontier Publications
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The Tribune is published weekly.

Display Ads Deadline: MONDAY 5 PM

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