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ARTSQUEST'S CHRISTKINDLMARKT BOOSTS SMALL BUSINESS, SETS NEAR RECORD ATTENDANCE

More than 93,500 visitors shopped at the annual holiday market featuring vendors from across the region

BETHLEHEM, Pa.— ArtsQuest's Christkindlmarkt Bethlehem, presented by Univest Financial®, had a successful 29th year this holiday season. More than 93,500 people attended this year's market, a number second only to 2019's record-setting number (almost 95,000). Guests supported the market's 167 unique craft and retail vendors for five weekends from Fri., Nov. 19 – Sun., Dec. 19.

"Visitors from the Lehigh Valley and beyond answered the call to shop small this holiday season," Kassie Hilgert, President and CEO of ArtsQuest said. "More than ever, this year's Christkindlmarkt was a lifeline for so many artists, crafters and retailers from our region. We were thrilled to return to a full-scale festival this year and we thank all of our sponsors, donors and supporters who helped us contribute to the magic of all the wonderful activities, charm and attractions that make Bethlehem the Christmas City."

Christkindlmarkt, voted one of the top two markets in 2021's USA TODAY/10Best Holiday Market competition, offered guests a unique in-person holiday shopping experience. The 2021 festival featured more than 100 Pennsylvania-based vendors and 66 live musical performances. Along with local vendors, guests were able to shop from around the world from holiday favorites like Germany's **Käthe Wohlfahrt** handmade ornaments and collectibles. Many new and returning vendors have told ArtsQuest they enjoyed record sales throughout the festival's five-week run.

"It was great to be back, we saw a lot of former clients and made a lot of new friends," Michael Sandy of Michael Sandy Photography said. Sandy, known for his stunning photography featuring Bethlehem's unique architecture, has been a vendor at Christkindlmarkt for more than a decade. "ArtsQuest did an amazing job of getting people in this year. This was probably our best show ever financially in a five-week period. The experience was absolutely fantastic."

Early indications show food and beverage sales were up significantly when compared to both 2019 and 2018. Guests feasted from an array of seasonal eats like strudel, German bratwurst and a variety of dishes from eight local food vendors. Attendees also got into the holiday spirit by enjoying beverages at the festival's additional bar and by sampling from local distillers and vintners.

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"I think people were rejoicing and happy to be out and about this holiday season," Elaine Pivinski, Owner of [Franklin Hill Vineyards](#) said. "The energy levels of the ArtsQuest team and our teams were the perfect match. Our sales were strong and we were proud to give people the opportunity to give great gifts made here in the Lehigh Valley."

The success of Christkindlmarkt would not be possible without hundreds of ArtsQuest volunteers and the support from presenting sponsor Univest Financial and the corporate community. Thousands of visitors took advantage of new community hours on Friday nights throughout the festival when all entry fees were waived thanks to ArtsQuest's partner [T-Mobile](#). Families enjoyed photos and activities with jolly Old St. Nicholas, presented by [NJM Insurance](#) and [Just Born Quality Confections](#) throughout the five-weekend festival.

"Univest Financial was proud to again serve as presenting sponsor of Christkindlmarkt," said Annette D. Szygiel, Executive Vice President and Chief Experience Officer at Univest Financial. "The overwhelmingly positive response to this event and stellar attendance is a testament to Christkindlmarkt being a favorite Christmas City tradition. Univest is dedicated to supporting the local communities we serve and this event was especially important this year as it provided a great opportunity to support local artisans and small businesses at a time they need it more than ever. Thanks to ArtsQuest for their dedication to safely bringing the community together in support of the arts in the Lehigh Valley."

ArtsQuest would like to thank elected officials Sen. Pat Browne, Sen. Lisa Boscola, Rep. Steve Samuelson, Northampton County Council and County Executive Lamont McClure, as well as Lehigh County Commissioners and County Executive Phillips Armstrong, who provided CARES Act funding that kept our doors open, allowing ArtsQuest to bring this festival back.

Christkindlmarkt 2022 is scheduled to begin on Fri., Nov. 18. Visit artsquest.org for more information on events coming up in the new year. [Click here to download photos for coverage.](#)

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ARTSQUEST ANNOUNCES 2022 DERBY WATCH PARTY

This year's Derby Watch Party on May 7, presented by Noble Oak, will feature a Run for the Rosé wine tasting event, Derby style contest and hobby horseracing.

BETHLEHEM, Pa.— Spend the first Saturday in May partying at SteelStacks! ArtsQuest is proud to announce plans for a reimagined Derby Watch Party, presented by [Noble Oak](#), on **Sat., May 7**. This event will include a Run for the Rosé wine tasting experience, a Derby style contest and hobby horseracing, as well as authentic infield and VIP experiences. Event tickets will go on sale at [steelstacks.org](#) beginning **Tues., March 1**. For more exclusive ticket opportunities, including discounts, become an ArtsQuest member or Circle donor today.

"The Derby is a cultural experience that reaches far beyond the world of sports," Patrick Brogan, ArtsQuest's Chief Programming Officer said. "As an arts organization, we wanted to make sure this event offered new festivities while keeping in the spirit and tradition surrounding the Derby. We can't wait to offer this option for people living in the Lehigh Valley to get in on the party in creative ways."

The Levitt lawn will be transformed into an experience emulating the relaxed party atmosphere of the infield at Kentucky's Churchill Downs. Guests can watch the Derby broadcast live on a new LED screen and participate in lawn games and a hobby horseracing contest. The Mack Truck stop will be serving up themed food and drink specials from Noble Oak including mint juleps, the traditional drink of the Derby. VIP ticket holders will have exclusive access to the [Air Products Town Square](#) and Central Tap bar where an additional large LED screen will be broadcasting the run for the roses. Ticket holders will receive one free mint julep, a glass of rosé, [Yuengling beer](#), or a nonalcoholic drink of choice. VIPs can also enjoy table service and [Wyoming Whiskey](#) samples. The party doesn't stop after the big race, all guests are invited to stick around for free live music. Tickets to the infield are free for ArtsQuest members and \$5 for the public. VIP tickets start at \$45 for members and \$49 for the public.

Guests are encouraged to express their interpretation of Derby fashion by dressing in their finest fascinators, hats or colorful bow ties. This year's style contest will be judged by Elektra Fearce St. James (as seen at ArtsQuest's Dragtoberfest and A Golden Girls Drag Show), Amber Galdamez of [LuxeLatte](#) and Christe Konopitski of [Classically Christe](#). Prizes will be awarded for best hat, best dressed, best couple coordination and more.

New this year, the Run for the Rosé wine tasting experience will feature eight different samples from around the world, provided by [Juniper & Grain](#). Tickets are \$19 and include admission to the Derby infield experience.

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Doors for all areas will open at 4 p.m. on Sat., May 7. Visit steelstacks.org for more information. ArtsQuest will continue to follow the latest CDC, state and local health and safety guidelines. Visit artsquest.org/safety for the latest updates. [Click here to download a photo for inclusion in coverage.](#)

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ARTSQEST ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR MUSIKFEST 2021

The largest free admission music festival in the nation returns in-person August 6-15, 2021, with a special preview night on August 5 featuring Darius Rucker.

BETHLEHEM, Pa. -- Musikfest, the only music festival to be twice named the No. 1 Music Festival in North America by the USA Today/10Best readers' poll, will take place August 6-15, 2021. This festival will feature headliners, food vendors and free performances on stages spread throughout the city of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

"This time last year, doors to arts and culture venues throughout the world were closing – some of them for good," Kassie Hilgert, President & CEO of ArtsQuest said. "We had no idea where we would be a year from then, but we knew for certain that nonprofit organizations like ours, especially in the arts world, were going to be one of the hardest hit. After all we've gone through together as a community, we are so proud to be partnering with the city of Bethlehem, and all our wonderful volunteers, sponsors and supporters, to put on the Musikfest we all know and love, once again."

THE MUSIC

Darius Rucker will kick off the festival with a special preview night *Thursday, August 5*. Tickets for the show originally scheduled for 2020 will be honored.

Wind Creek Steel Stage performances will include:

Phillip Phillips - Friday, August 6
Preservation Hall Jazz Band - Saturday, August 7
Sam Hunt - Sunday, August 8
Shinedown - Monday, August 9 *previously purchased tickets will be honored
Jimmie Allen - Tuesday, August 10
Colin Hay Band - Wednesday, August 11
KT Tunstall - Thursday, August 12
Zedd - Friday, August 13
The Wood Brothers - Saturday, August 14

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**Closing night details to be announced.*

**Fireworks between 9:45 – 10 p.m.*

Headliners rescheduled to 2022:

Willie Nelson *previously purchased tickets will be honored

Poison *previously purchased tickets will be honored

Kelsea Ballerini *previously purchased tickets will be honored

*Dates to be announced shortly

All tickets previously purchased will be honored for their respective new dates. ArtsQuest will notify all ticket holders with details outlining next steps, including an option for those who want to support Musikfest by donating the cost of their tickets back to the nonprofit ArtsQuest.

Tickets to **Sam Hunt, Zedd, The Wood Brothers** and **KT Tunstall** will go on sale to ArtsQuest members beginning *Tuesday, June 1 at 10 a.m.* Tickets will go on sale to the general public on *Friday, June 4 at 10 a.m.*

Jimmie Allen, Phillip Phillips, Colin Hay Band and **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** tickets will go on sale to ArtsQuest members beginning *Tuesday, June 8 at 10 a.m.* Tickets will go on sale to the public on *Friday, June 11 at 10 a.m.*

Rob Zombie - working to schedule, details coming soon.

For more exclusive ticket access and advance purchase opportunities, become an ArtsQuest Circle donor.

In addition, Musikfest is proud to offer more than 300 free performances. This year's artists will include Igor and the Red Elvises, Jimmy and the Parrots, Philadelphia Funk Authority, The Sofa Kings, Seth Witcher, Sunny War, We Banjo 3 and many more.

THE 'FEST

"We are working in partnership with ArtsQuest and our community public health and safety partners to put on the safest festival possible in order to support small business, tourism and economic development," Bethlehem Mayor Bob Donchez said. "For more than three decades, Musikfest has brought millions of people to Bethlehem. Now, more than ever, it is important to support ArtsQuest including the performers, artists, vendors and small businesses in any capacity possible."

For the safety of all artists, community members, guests and vendors, ArtsQuest will continue to follow the latest CDC, state and city health department standards.

The festival will take place both in the Historic Moravian District and SouthSide Arts District of the city of Bethlehem. Although this year will be slightly modified, we are thrilled to offer more than a dozen venues.

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Historic Moravian District:

Hours: **Friday August 6, 5 - 11 p.m. August 7 - 15, 12 - 11 p.m.**

Venues: *IBEW Local 375 Liederplatz, Provident Bank Main Street, Hotel Bethlehem Platz, Martin Guitar Handwerkplatz, Zinzenplatz, T-Mobile Plaza Tropical, Wells Fargo Festplatz, Yuengling Lagerplatz and NJM Insurance Familienplatz*

SteelStacks in the SouthSide Arts District:

Hours: **Weekdays 4 - 11 p.m. Fridays 4 p.m. – 1 a.m.**

Saturdays 12 p.m. – 1 a.m. Sundays 12 p.m. – 11 p.m.

Venues: *PNC Series at Musikfest Café presented by Yuengling, Highmark Blue Shield Community Stage on the Air Products Town Square, Air Products Americaplatz at Levitt Pavilion SteelStacks presented by Coordinated Health, now part of Lehigh Valley Health Network and the Wind Creek Steel Stage at PNC Plaza*

***Hours and locations for this year's festival are subject to change. [Click here to view the full festival footprint.](#)**

Second only to the music at Musikfest are the foods of the 'fest. Patrons will be able to enjoy a variety of food and beverage options, including festival favorites [Aw Shucks Roasted Corn](#), [Island Noodles](#) and [Heaven on a Bun](#), just to name a few. All participating food vendors will be announced later this summer. ArtsQuest's restaurant [Palette & Pour](#) will also be available for private parties.

THE IMPACT

"As a historic Bethlehem business owner, I'm delighted that Musikfest will be happening again this summer," Neville Gardner, owner of [Donegal Square](#) and [McCarthy's Red Stag Pub](#) on Main Street said. "I believe that Musikfest has been one of the greatest marketing devices for small businesses in Bethlehem and we look forward to the influx of visitors again this August."

ArtsQuest and the city of Bethlehem annually welcome approximately one million people for Musikfest, with visitors coming from across the country and around the globe. Established in 1984, the festival provides opportunities for hundreds of performers, as well as local and regional small businesses, to support their livelihood via performances, food stands, artisan booths and more. Approximately 65 percent of artists each year are from the Lehigh Valley and surrounding Mid-Atlantic Region, while 70 percent of vendors are from the Lehigh Valley and surrounding region. Overall, the festival and its patrons had an economic impact of \$77 million on the Lehigh Valley in 2019.

"Musikfest is not only the dose of normalcy we all so desperately need right now, but it's also a ray of hope for the local businesses, artists and economy it supports," Hilgert said. "While this festival attracts millions of tourists to Bethlehem every year, it also creates lifelong memories. We are so eager to bring back this beloved cultural celebration to our community."

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As a nonprofit arts and cultural organization that offers 50 percent of its programs annually for free, ArtsQuest has been especially hit hard by the COVID-19 related shutdowns. In a typical year, ArtsQuest presents more than 4,000 in-person programs and events for the community, including 800 free concerts year-round. In March 2020, the ArtsQuest team went from planning a busy summer schedule, to not being able to offer a single piece of programming overnight, losing 90 percent of its revenue streams in the blink of an eye.

Musikfest fans and community members who want to support ArtsQuest can visit ArtsQuest.org/Support. Members can enjoy a variety of virtual and in-person benefits, including the ability to purchase tickets at future Musikfests and SteelStacks concerts before the public.

Musikfest is a volunteer-driven festival that benefits the Lehigh Valley and surrounding communities. [Click here](#) to apply to become a volunteer. ArtsQuest is also hiring for a number of part time seasonal and festival positions. Visit ArtsQuest.org to apply.

The festival is made possible thanks to the support of the city, the Bethlehem Redevelopment Authority, Bethlehem Area School District, Northampton County, Lehigh County the support of the corporate community and more than 1,000 volunteers and 2,000 supporting members. Musikfest 2021 dates are Aug. 6-15, with a special preview night on Aug. 5. For more information, visit musikfest.org. Additional details on Musikfest offerings will be announced throughout the summer.

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PBS39 Provides Historic Election Coverage with New Platforms, Reporters and Set

PBS39 unveiled a new studio and new technology during the station's first full night of election coverage in more than two decades.

Bethlehem, Pa. - November 7, 2018 - On Tuesday, November 6, PBS39 provided the Greater Lehigh Valley with 3.5 hours of commercial-free election night coverage. The broadcast included six live reporters, five in-studio experts from area colleges and universities, three live interviews with winning candidates and 18 community-focused stories from the field. In addition, the station reached the public in a new way with 92,514 real-time digital billboard impressions. In an election year with women at the forefront, PBS39 was the local news source of choice for women 25-49 in the Valley.

"I am so very proud of this team for creating one of a kind, truly impactful content for our television viewers, digital followers and even area commuters," Tim Fallon, Chief Executive Officer of PBS39 said. "Bringing the very first public media election coverage to the Greater Lehigh Valley in 25 years is truly making our community a better place in which to live."

PBS39's coverage extended beyond the television screen. In partnership with Adams Outdoor Advertising, live news updates and results were visible on digital billboards throughout the Greater Lehigh Valley. The team at PBS39 was able to update the billboards in real-time using Twitter. Messages encouraged voters to perform their civic duty at the polls and later that night, election results were posted live.

"Election night was the first of many historic nights for PBS39," Yoni Greenbaum, Chief Content Officer of PBS39 said. "As a public media outlet, our core mission is educating and making our content available to everyone, wherever they may be. Our experiment paid off and our coverage on a variety of platforms exceeded this goal."

PBS39 will continue to work to create a community that is inspired, engaged and vibrant. Visit PBS39.org to learn about more upcoming initiatives and locally produced programming.

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