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Lamorinda Arts Council is more vibrant than ever - even online

By Sophie Braccini



"Those Left Behind" by Tyler Pavey Photo provided - Lamorinda Super Shorts

individuals, but the groups had to hone some editing skills to mix each separate performance. The jury received the same number of submissions as last year, and the finalists who will face off in August have been chosen.

One of the perks of this program is the professional training that the young finalists get from a professional singer. According to Harwood the finalists receive online lessons so they can be their best for their last virtual performance. The finalists' videos will be posted online and the public will be able to vote, alongside the professionals, for their favorites. A Zoom party will celebrate the season of singing, with announcements of the winners and playing of all the finalists' videos.

Getting the two art galleries that the LAC manages online has not been that easy. LAC runs the new Wilder gallery and the library gallery, but because the artists are scheduled for displaying their work sometimes months if not years in advance, to reduce the backlog of exhibits LAC created a virtual display of what artists have been producing during the pandemic. One of Nomura's paintings that she created during this time of reflection can be viewed and purchased online. LAC may continue the program depending on its popularity.

The Lamorinda SuperShorts Two Minute Movie Challenge features very personal notes from confined people to reflections of what we can be grateful for. Don't miss two excellent animes: "Cat and Banana" and "FNYNTE." The winning movies can be seen at <https://lamorindaarts.org/>

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And on July 19 LAC is calling writers, artists and art lovers to participate in the first Art Embraces Words webinar. Nomura explains that emerging writers will read from their work in 10-minute intervals interspersed with visual artwork from local artists. Participating artists will be introduced and answer questions about their artwork. Portions of the event will be recorded and uploaded to social media. In this way art still 'embraces' the words. For more information or to sign up go to <https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/>.

One of the most interesting challenges the group is now facing is moving its massively successful fundraising live event, Mixology, online. To do so, LAC has partnered with SaloonBox, a company that specializes in home delivery of craft cocktails. Nomura says bartenders will submit recipes to the committee, which will select the best ones. Kits to make the cocktails will be assembled and sold online and picked up at Lamorinda liquor stores. The kits will have all the ingredients but the hard liquor that either people may already own or can purchase at the pickup location.

The website for Mixology will have videos of the mixologists, and people will be able to vote for their favorite cocktails. Bartenders will be solicited from mid-July to mid-August, and the kits will be on sale at the end of August or September, so people will have plenty of time to taste and pick. Nomura hopes that the final event in October will be live, and if not possible, she promises a crazy festive, fun online party.

Denise Nomura, who has been presiding over the Lamorinda Arts Council for about a year, remembers the shock and the period of wonderment that struck her and the group's board following the shelter-in-place order, which required a paradigm shift, since closing down was never an option. From Lamorinda Idol to art galleries, even the popular fundraiser Mixology will now be organized online this year.

Steve Harwood, who has been leading Lamorinda Idol for years, said that there was no question that the program should continue. This singing competition, open to individuals and groups ages 5 to 18, has been a popular training ground for so many budding Lamorinda artists - and a way to proceed had to be found.

Harwood said it was quite easy for the young talents to record videos of themselves and submit them to the jury. A phone was all that was needed for the

Information about all the programs is online at <https://lamorindaarts.org/>

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