

Are We Ready to Travel?

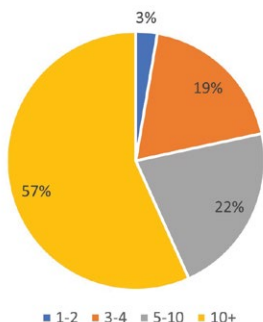
Artists Share their Plans

By Diana Jones

Sunshine Artist asked artisans about their current comfort level of participating in art and craft shows. Of the artists polled, 57% said they weren't doing shows yet and of those, 54% were concerned about contracting COVID-19. The remaining 46% had other reasons they weren't currently exhibiting, with the most common response being that the shows in their area are still canceled.

Of the 43% who are currently selling at shows and fairs, 24% care about COVID protocols being followed. The remaining 76% of these artists are carrying on the same way as they did before COVID. The biggest problem they are facing is lack of shows reopening.

How many in-person shows will you exhibit/sell at this year?



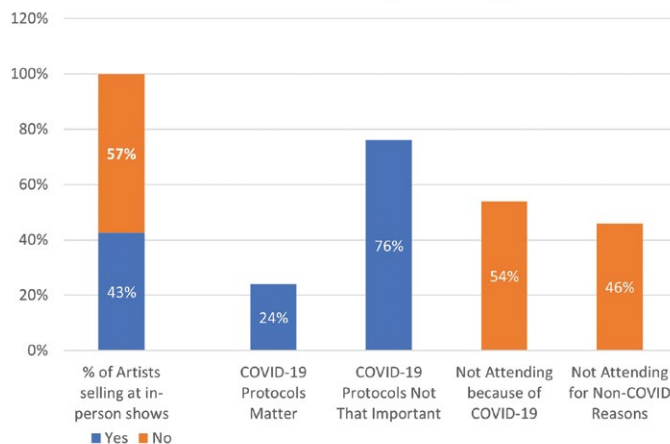
Barb Sargent of Classy Glass in Pennsylvania hasn't been exhibiting at fairs and shows for over a year and a half. She shared, "You get ready to go, then the show cancels. Have to cancel hotel rooms, etc." She is hopeful that the show she signed up for in June will still happen.

Of those who commented that there aren't any shows in their area, most declared that they would like to get back to as much normalcy as possible, and most were alright with the COVID protocols that have been put into place by show promoters.

One artist shared their sentiments, "We think we may have to leave the northeast and move further south in order to be able to continue to have a business. It looks like we will never open or if we do it will be under conditions that are not tenable."

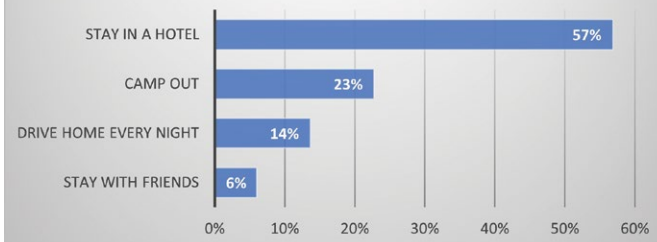
Of those who were concerned about contracting COVID-19, many said that with vaccinations, masks, disinfectant spray, hand sanitizer, and spacing, they were mostly comfortable getting back to selling at shows.

Artists Comfort Surrounding Attending Shows



Crochet artist Kathleen Garrett has more than 10 shows planned for this year. She's also doing her part to help the economy. "When the shows opened back up, everything else had been open," Garrett said. "Right now I am trying to spend money at restaurants and hotels so people will have work. We do not have our room in the hotel cleaned once we check in. We put the 'Do not disturb' sign on the door the entire time we are there. If we need anything, we stop at the front desk."

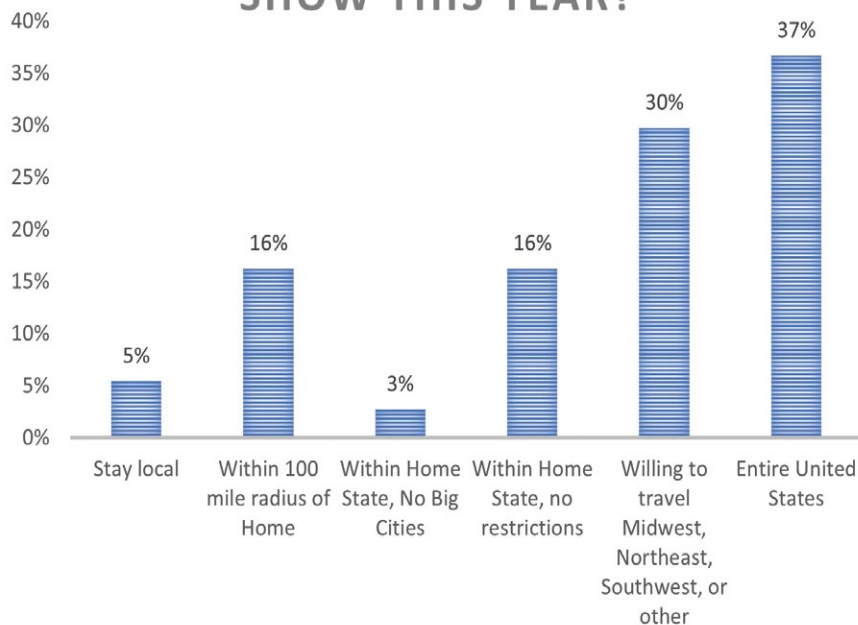
If you are traveling outside of your hometown, where do you end up spending the night?



Kyle Wilson of Left Behind Photography declared, "If a real in-person show occurs, the PEOPLE WILL SHOW UP AND BUY! This has been my experience in 2021. People are hungry for events and for art! We artists should be, NEED to be there for them to satisfy this hunger."

Another artist, Kent Harper of Designs by Kent, con-

HOW FAR ARE YOU WILLING TO TRAVEL TO EXHIBIT/SELL AT A SHOW THIS YEAR?



curred. "I'm optimistic 2021 will be a good year for festivals so long as the economy holds together. From what I've seen and heard folks are ready to get out and enjoy attending festivals and other events again after being cooped up with little to do during 2020. I was able to attend a couple of small local events in late 2020 and did surprisingly well. I attribute that to people wanting normality and having a desire to support local artists during the hard times." ☀



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