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Contacts

Liz Thomson (44) 7799 503414 | LizThomson@TheVillageTrip.com

Clifford Pearson 646 853 0744 | CliffPearson@TheVillageTrip.com

The Village Trip Festival Will Energize Greenwich Village this September with Music, Art, and Culture

Bringing It All Back Home to Washington Square Park

New York, NY – July 18th, 2021 – Greenwich Village’s rich history of creativity and activism will drive dozens of events throughout the iconic neighborhood, from September 18 through September 26. Seven-time-Grammy-nominee Bobby Sanabria and his Multiverse Big Band will bring Latin Jazz to a free concert in Washington Square Park on Sept. 25, while the folk revival will return to the Bitter End on Sept. 26, and classical compositions by Village residents Harold Meltzer and David Del Tredici will fill the sanctuary of St. John’s in the Village on Sept. 23 and Sept. 24. Literary tours, poetry readings, theater crawls, a program of Village-themed films, open design studios, children’s book readings, and many other activities will offer Village residents, New Yorkers, and tourists opportunities to discover what makes Greenwich Village such a vital place.

Inspired by the Edinburgh Festival, which began in 1947 as a way of reviving the city after World War II, The Village Trip hopes to rally Greenwich Village as the Covid pandemic releases its grip on city life. British journalist and author Liz Thomson founded The Village Trip in 2018, bringing singer Suzanne Vega to Washington Square Park and tapping into the neighborhood’s heritage of music, literature, and drama. In 2019, Steve Earle headlined the concert in Washington Square Park, while Tom Chapin, Rory Block, David Amram, Martha Redbone, Diana Jones, and David Massengill played a hootenanny concert at The Bitter End and Kate Colby and Liz Howard read poetry at St. Mark’s in the Bowery.

Thomson, who lives in London, fell in love with Greenwich Village on her many trips to New York covering the music scene and the publishing industry. “I couldn’t believe there wasn’t a Greenwich Village arts festival,” she says. “Every town in England has a festival.” David Amram, who was the musical director of the first season of Joe Papp’s Free Shakespeare in the Park in 1957 and performed with Jack Kerouac, Charles Mingus, and Thelonious Monk in the Village in the 1950s and ‘60s, now serves as Artist Emeritus of The Village Trip and will perform once again at this year’s festival. Amram says the first two iterations of The Village Trip “provided endless joy, enthusiasm, and a true community spirit that filled Greenwich Village in the same way that the first season of Free Shakespeare in the Park did for all New Yorkers back in the summer of 1957.”

In 2021, The Village Trip will greatly expand its scope and reach, running for nine days and offering activities for people of all ages. Bill Groom, production designer for the Amazon series “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” will lead a walking tour of the Village, noting places in the neighborhood shown in the series. Bill Goldstein, who is writing a biography of playwright and AIDS activist Larry Kramer, will talk about work on that book at the NYC AIDS Memorial. Other festival activities will include a concert by

young performers from the Third Street Music School Settlement, presentations of scenes by students at HB Studios, a theater crawl, a Land of the Blacks tour led by Kamau Ware, a Willa Cather tour led by Tom Gallagher, an architectural tour, a rock-and-roll tour, and an LGBTQ tour. Public historian Kathleen Hulser will lead people on a tour focusing on the “Bad, Rad, and Boho Women of the Village.” Young-adult author Diane Zahler will give a reading, as will other children’s book authors. Writer Brad Gooch will talk about his novel “Smash Cut,” which is set in the Village of the 1970s and ‘80s.

Restaurants and bars in the neighborhood will participate by offering special Village Trip cocktails and dishes on their menus during the course of the festival.

“This year, The Village Trip will have special resonance and meaning, as the neighborhood recovers from Covid and looks to the future,” says Clifford Pearson, Joint Artistic Director of the festival. “As a Village resident, I know we all need the chance to remember what we’ve been through and celebrate where we are headed.”

[The Greenwich Village Chelsea Chamber of Commerce](#) is partnering with The Village Trip to organize this year’s festival, which will be the third event in its Live the Village Initiative to bring footfall back to the Village this year and beyond. “The Village Trip is a community-wide celebration of all things Greenwich Village from the revolutionary ideas to the experimentation, the wildness, the sheer madness and joy of it all,” says Maria Diaz, Executive Director, The Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce.

According to an April 2021 report from the [Office of the New York State Comptroller](#), tourism in New York City fell 67% in 2020, and various estimates suggest hundreds of thousands of residents fled due to COVID-19, both factors having significant economic, social and cultural impact. Now, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that as of June 15th, all COVID-19 restrictions are lifted as over 70% of New Yorkers have received at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The newly lifted restriction, rising vaccination numbers and warming temperatures have allowed for more time outdoors, making people excited to return to activities they enjoy and support the city they love.

The GVCCC’s goal is to provide unique experiences for the businesses, residents, and community members of the West Village through advocacy, networking, and education. Building on the success of the two previous events in the Live the Village Initiative--Art on the Ave and Shop the Village--The Village Trip will feature a broad range of activities.

Other participating organizations include the historic Washington Square Hotel, the festival’s founding sponsor and home base, Village Preservation, the Village Alliance, the NYC AIDS Memorial, and the Center for Architecture.

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About the Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce

For over 70 years, the Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce (GVCCC) has served as the leading voice of business in our communities. Founded in 1949 by a select group of small business

entrepreneurs in Greenwich Village, the Chamber has steadily grown to service Greenwich Village, Chelsea, SoHo, NoHo, Union Square, Flatiron, as well as the East and West Villages. With membership ranging from sole proprietorships to locally owned independent businesses, to major institutions and organizations, diversity is one of our greatest assets, providing our membership with unique opportunities and a strong voice from which to address business issues. We offer numerous benefits and services including networking opportunities, business and educational seminars, government advocacy, marketing and promotional campaigns and much more.

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