

# 2021 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# ABOUT



**Flemington DIY (Do It Yourself) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide an inclusive art space that engages the community with the burgeoning local arts scene, inspires social change, and invigorates the economic development of Flemington, New Jersey.**

In May 2014, Flemington DIY was founded by a local group of young adults. With support from the now defunct Flemington Business Improvement District (BID), they found a temporary home in the borough-owned 90 Main Building, once a bank, but vacant for years. "The Space," as it became to some, immediately began hosting art shows, concerts, and film screenings. Since then, Flemington DIY

has transformed into a flourishing center for community life for all ages, sustaining on the generosity of donations, grants, and the Borough of Flemington.

## **Vision**

- Providing a safe and accessible outlet for community members' expression.
- Fostering an inclusive community in Flemington with respect for and through participation with the broader community.
- Showcasing socially-conscious ideas and promoting networks between others.
- Actively combating sexism, homophobia, racism, and other forms of oppression.
- Creating a safe space for everyone.

As a 100% volunteer-run collective, we value collaboration, shared knowledge, self-expression, and meaningful communication. Everyone who enters the space has a responsibility to uphold these values. All events are all ages and alcohol is always prohibited.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The art space hosts several weekly groups and programs including: Print Club, hands-on open hours for screen-printing and printmaking; Tai Chi; tap dancing class; Kick StART, art classes for young adults with physical or mental disabilities; Fiber Freaks, a crocheting and knitting group; and meditation.

All programs are donation-based.

Monthly open mics and bluegrass jams have become a popular event on the calendar - featuring a wide variety of local talent, ranging from 8 to 80 years old.

For 3 years in a row, Flemington DIY has hosted Black History Month celebrations; participated in "Write All Night" - a 24-hour novelwriting workshop part of the National Novel Writing Month; and has hosted the world-renowned throat-singing group, Alash Ensemble, from Tuva.





# SOCIAL INITIATIVES



Flemington DIY ensures a space and platform for social change, often partnering with area organizations to raise awareness and support for various causes. This includes benefits for the **Jersey Battered Women's Service, the Coalition for Animals, Hunterdon Humane Animal Shelter, humanitarian efforts in Nepal post earthquake, the ACLU, and Hunterdon Helpline.**



Other partnerships include hosting Hunterdon Central High School's Gifted and Talented Art Class' mural projects and National Art Honors Society; Hunterdon Academy of the Arts' youth performances; and Black Lab Studio photography students' showcases. Additionally, Flemington DIY has participated in school supply and clothing and food drives, and has been the home of Hunterdon County Anti-Racism Coalition and Moms Demand Action monthly meetings.





# AWARDS AND NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Flemington DIY was awarded \$12,000 by Flemington BID to support its proposed 2015 budget.

**In 2014, Flemington DIY accepted Downtown NJ's Tools of the Trade Platinum of Excellence award for its efforts to revitalize Main Street. This was the 2nd highest honor awarded in this category across NJ.**

In March 2015, Flemington DIY was invited to participate in NJ Future's 10th Anniversary Redevelopment Forum, where Flemington DIY highlighted its work and collaboration with the local municipalities on how Flemington and other towns can attract millennials to move and participate in these communities. The audience was comprised of council people and developers from around the state.

August 2016 saw the debut of Flemington DIY's two-day music festival "Flem Fest," which featured a stage of headlining acts at Stangl Factory across town. The fest highlighted more than 30 musical acts and artists from around the country, as well as local art and business vendors, attracting more than a hundred people to Flemington.

In August 2017, the newly-formed Flemington Community Partnership (FCP) awarded Flemington DIY a small grant for the creation and launch of a community print shop, and continue to fund other endeavors, such as a jazz series and façade improvements.

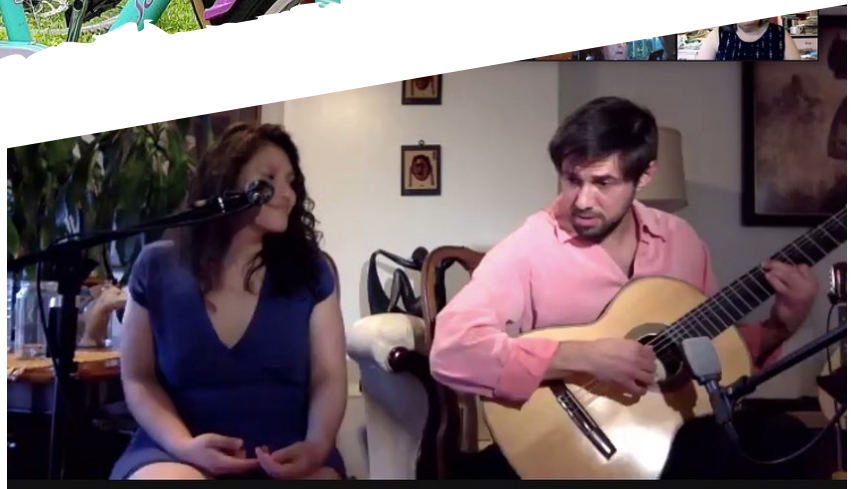
Since 2018, Flemington DIY has received grants from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission, Chancy Memorial Foundation, and Meow Wolf, an arts and entertainment group (in 2019).



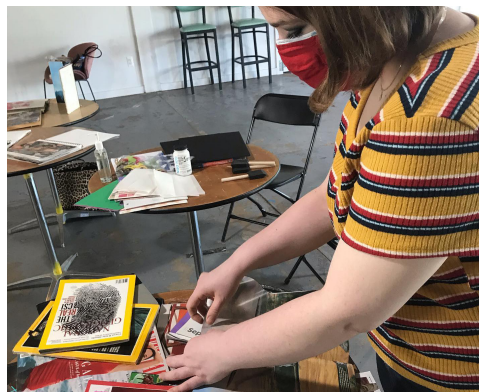
# NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC



In the wake of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, Flemington DIY shifted to virtual programming and building community online. Out of that came a collection of **art shows, live performances, open mics, various classes, and the launch of a biweekly Black Youth Meet Up** - a Black-led virtual space for Black youth ages 15-18 to connect, bond, and share their experiences in a safe, inspiring, and empowering space.



In the warmer months, Flemington DIY turned to outdoor pop-up events at various locations in town, leading to **two town-wide scavenger hunts, a series of bike maintenance workshops, supply drives for various organizations, and Jazz on the Lawn, a highly successful outdoor jazz series,** among others programs.





# WHY INVEST?



Investing in Flemington DIY is now more important than ever. In **February 2021, Flemington DIY lost their long-time space** to the impending Courthouse Square Redevelopment Plan, a move expected since day one. The group is actively working on securing a new space and seeking funding and partnerships to alleviate and subsidize new operating costs.

When you invest in Flemington DIY, you provide an inclusive space for local artisans, hobbyists, actors, musicians, and students of all ages, races, genders, and abilities to create and present their works.

**You afford opportunities to those who otherwise may never have the platform to do so.**

The volunteers that make up Flemington DIY are dedicated to ensuring events and programs run smoothly. This hands-on approach allows Flemington DIY to operate within the boundaries of fiscal prudence.



# SECURING A FUTURE



Securing the financial resources to responsibly save for a future, permanent home is a goal at the forefront, depending on the generosity of local philanthropists, donors, and organizations aligned with a future Flemington, including this community art space.

## Support The Arts Hub

Since 2014, Flemington DIY has hosted over 600 unique events, attracting hundreds of people to Flemington, NJ. This space has established itself as an essential mainstay in the New Jersey arts scene, supporting live musical performances, staged theatrical productions, art installations, cultural and historical presentations, and discussions about social issues - all stimulating the vitality and economic growth of this town.

Flemington DIY has attracted musicians and performers alike from all over the globe - from New Jersey to California, Canada to Scotland, and even Tuva, a small Russian republic in southern Siberia.



# COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS

“Flemington DIY has truly made its mark on our town. It is open to new ideas and services all age groups in a variety of artistic arenas. Their accomplishments speak for themselves, and they truly deserve the continued support of their community!”

–Tom DeMuro, Flemington, NJ

“Flemington DIY recognizes the importance of community, something which has been lost in the shuffle of the social media age. They are open to all kinds of suggestions for events, clubs, etc. It can't be overstated how important resources like this are.”

–Anthony Savasta, Toms River, NJ

“DIY provided practice space for our struggling community theater group. And made it easy to fit into schedules of our actors.”

–Carol Nemetz, Annandale, NJ

“Artists, musicians, poets, print makers and so on, need a community space. As athletes have spaces in sports centers which promote physical health, community art spaces like Flemington DIY promote development of ideas & promote good mental health in the area. Ideas developed among artists are usually the catalysis or precursor for developments in the sciences. We are the thinkers, the dreamers of dreams. When community members are given materials and a platform to be free and expressive, emotions are less bottled up. As a musician in my teens and as an adult musician, I have visited countless spaces like Flemington DIY around the country and even Europe & Canada. These places are needed. Community arts spaces are entirely more supportive, safer and healthier than the other options (traditional bars etc.) for artists to be expressive and industrious.”

–T. Penn, Lambertville, NJ

“I love DIY because it brings art and an eclectic buzz to my little town.”

–Sharon Ransavage, Flemington, NJ

“A great place for arts and culture for people who want something different and interesting. Lots of opportunity to be exposed to new ideas, music, art and most importantly new and interesting people. It offers a space rarely found in its area and acts as a prefect facilitator for bringing a diverse crowd together.”

–Ed Weisgerber, Jersey City, NJ

“DIY is an important resource for the Arts and an invaluable resource for this community. I hosted ongoing monthly Bluegrass jams at DIY. Those evenings brought musicians together in a safe and supportive environment. The jams were growing when the pandemic hit. I'm optimistic that the future holds a new DIY space where music, Art, laughter and being together is the norm. It is important and necessary for the health of the community and for us as individuals. Life is better with DIY!”

–Susan Lembo, Whitehouse Station, NJ

“Flemington DIY is a place for people without a place. Teenagers with nowhere to go, families with limited resources, adults with disabilities, groups with unique skills and interests, artists without the space at home to create, and friends with ideas and no other way to implement them. Flemington DIY is a community space that asks very little in return for everything it provides. In my own life I forged unlikely friendships, met neighbors I had lived near my whole life but never seen, and even connected with my future husband. I don't know what my life would be like if Flemington DIY hadn't happened, but I'm so glad I never have to find out!”

–Carlyn Turner, Easton, PA

“Flemington DIY represents endless possibilities for cultural enrichment and education. For years, the organization has provided space for new and exciting voices in art, music, dance, education, and countless other passions. These events and classes bring unique experiences and interest to the area and are an asset to the continued development of the town. Every town would be so lucky to have a Flemington DIY in it.”

–Shannon Moore, Lambertville, NJ

# COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS CONT.

“Flemington DIY is an outstanding community resource. I have attended numerous events there, all unique and diverse. Their policies ensure that ALL people feel welcome and, indeed, I have met a wide variety of folks and broadened my friend group because of Flemington DIY. Art, Music, even practical skills are showcased and taught there! I view it wholeheartedly as a Necessary part of the community.”

–Dash Coom, Elizabeth, NJ

“Flemington DIY is an incredible gathering of individuals that are looking to help bring about conversation, positive change, and community. As someone who works for the state of New Jersey, I have seen a plethora of outreach programs that have helped many people. From self-care to entertainment, Flemington DIY has connected many likeminded individuals to finding a greater sense of community. When I first started volunteering at Flemington DIY, it was a place that many different types of people could get together to converse and form new ways of thinking, problem solving, and helping give back to not only the Flemington Area, but to the great state of New Jersey. If Flemington DIY were to continue its mission of engaging “the community with the burgeoning local arts scene, inspires social change, and invigorates the economic development of Flemington, New Jersey, we would continue to bring about change that would make the future of New Jersey, a brighter and better one.”

–Alex Holland, Manville, NJ



# GET IN TOUCH



@flemingtondiy



Make a contribution:

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Partner with us:

[flemingtondiy@gmail.com](mailto:flemingtondiy@gmail.com)

856.431.3692

Event calendar, volunteer  
opportunities, & more:

[flemingtondiy.org](https://flemingtondiy.org)

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