

OUR MISSION: To foster cultural and human flourishing through the cultivation of the religious imagination.

Art in a time of trial

WHY ART

Together, we've entered a time of trial. COVID-19 is testing us all—physically, emotionally, financially, and spiritually. We're witnessing tremendous suffering, stress, and fear.

*The arts ask us to use
the full range of our senses.
They can restore us
to our full, God-given
humanity.*

In this strange new landscape, we're looking to experts in global health and epidemiology, economics and public policy, to tell us how to behave responsibly, what to hope for, how to plan, when this might be over. They give us lenses through which to see the world and navigate the struggle we're all engaged in.

In this context, the arts can seem like a vanity, a temporary distraction. It's hard to perceive the value of poetry, painting, literature, and film when the world is suffering. But the arts are more than another lens; the arts are a prism. A lens shows us what we see. The arts show us *how* to see.

Art can teach us to see the tiny gradations in a field of blue—or how to see a suffering world in the context of grace. How to recognize the humanity of a character who seemed like an irredeemable villain. How to slow down. How to pay attention not just to the notes but the silences between the notes. How to hear the echo of divine music in human speech. How to look at our own failures and successes with perspective, even laughter. The arts ask us to use the full range of our senses. And they can restore us to our full, God-given humanity.

If we attempt to suspend our intellectual and artistic lives during a time of international crisis, we will simply replace a richer cultural life for a poorer one.

Jamie Quatro

In a recent installment of “Redeeming the Time,” our weekly emailed offering of Covid-19-related work, Jamie Quatro uses C.S. Lewis’s lecture “Learning in Wartime” to illuminate why we need to hang on to the arts in the situation we face now. She writes: “If we attempt to suspend our intellectual and artistic lives during a time of international crisis, we will simply replace a richer cultural life for a poorer one.” She exhorts us to remain faithful to artistic pursuits **“so that [we] can emerge on the other side of this global crisis as the kinds of thinkers and leaders our country, and the world, will desperately need.”**

In this time, we have plenty of lenses on our circumstances — social media, new and traditional journalism, a wealth of health, policy, and economic information. *Image* offers something different: a prism that distills, amplifies, and illuminates; that assigns even the darkness of Covid-19 its place amid a scandalous spectrum of color; that projects an essential vision of God and of ourselves, of the world and its suffering, of this time and its unexpected gifts.

Image in a Time of Trial

Given the unique and compelling role the arts can now play, and after careful reflection and advice from board members and nonprofit leaders, *Image* is not retreating, but retooling and intensifying its programs to serve in these unusual times. We have postponed in-person gatherings and shifted to new and engaging online programs; we’ve recognized the value of beautiful items, like our print journal, that you can hold in your hand (and have delivered to your door), and will continue to invest in them; and we are connecting you, our community, with our expansive network of luminaries, who see the gifts for our time at the intersection of art and faith.

Here’s what we’re doing for our community and world during these unsettling times:

OLD PROGRAMS MADE NEW

Our flagship programs are particularly meaningful during this season of isolation.

Where necessary, they are retooled.

The print journal

Our editors will continue to publish *Image* each quarter, recognizing the growing need for tangible beauty and regular rhythms.

ImageUpdate

We will also continue to publish our weekly online newsletter connecting our community in isolation with new books, streaming concerts, online art shows, and signs of hope and meaning in a challenging time.

The Glen Workshop (Online)

Though disappointed that we can’t gather in Santa Fe this summer, we’re pivoting to an online experience that we think will be deeply meaningful for attendees. The Glen Online will offer engaging and substantive classes via Zoom, as well as morning chapel services, discussion groups, and open mic nights.

NEW PROGRAMS

We are launching a set of new programs directly in response to our global circumstances.

Redeeming the Time

Each week, our editors are writing and soliciting essays, poems, and other original work that speaks to our current moment. These pieces are shared in *ImageUpdate* and collected on our website.

Online Exhibition

Visual arts editor Aaron Rosen is co-curating an online exhibition, *Home Alone Together*, in which twenty-five artists from around the world will explore the shared, bounded environment that we're all living in—a project that will eventually become a traveling exhibition and physical book.

Live Events

Contributors to our current issue (#104)—poets, writers, and visual artists—have participated in live online readings and discussions for audiences of over sixty households at a time. These are also accessible on our website.

Image Summer Stage

Each week from Memorial Day through Labor Day, *Image* will present an eclectic mix of programming, featuring editors and contributors from all over the world:

- *Tuesday Talks*: poetry readings, author interviews, curator talks, studio visits, and more.
- *Friday Night Lights*: concerts and watch parties featuring film, theater, and music.

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Sustaining *Image* in a Time of Trial

Most nonprofits, even robust ones, are now suddenly in fragile places. Although the sector is accustomed to balancing mission with sustainability, this balancing act has become more fraught. *Image* has taken proactive steps to prepare itself to survive this crisis while embracing the opportunity to engage our community in new ways. We are dedicated to being fiscally responsible so we can serve our mission over the long term—through the economic consequences of the pandemic and beyond.

To be frank, we know that we are living out a tension between the opportunity for art informed by faith to play a life-giving role (which requires stepping up and into this crisis) and a recognition of the financial realities of this season. We may not resolve that tension, but we recognize that it's there. Taken together, the new activities described above and the cuts described below are our effort to live in that tension.

We know that our patrons and our community face difficult economic circumstances. Everyone, in one way or the other, is tightening the belt, and so have we. Although we are a small team and a lean organization, we have engaged in a number of austerity and fund-development measures.

AUSTERITY

- We have cut our budget by 25%;
- We have canceled or postponed all in-person gatherings, including the Glen Workshop (now online), Levertov Award, L'Engle Seminar, and the Dallas Lecture on Art and Faith;
- We have identified three additional scenarios with more severe cuts, should charitable giving continue to decline. We remain committed to maintaining our current staff, given our small team and the deep commitment they have shown to our community during this difficult time. Our scenarios, however, take all options into consideration.

FUND DEVELOPMENT

In April, *Image* launched a fund-development campaign in direct response to the current crisis and its effect on the charitable sector. *Image's* earned income projections for the year have declined by 70 percent due to the cancellation of the in-person Glen Workshop in Santa Fe. In consequence, we will need to rely more heavily on charitable contributions to fulfill our unique mission during this season. To be sustainable, *Image* must raise \$580,000 (our new target for 2020 contributed income) to meet our 2020 budget. As of April 30 we have raised \$50,000 towards our target.

Over the next four months:

- We have applied for all available emergency government funds for small businesses and have just recently received support for two months of our US payroll.
- Through letters, email, calls, Zoom, and social media, we'll invite our community of donors and potential donors to support us in making the arts a prism for meaning and hope in these strange times;
- We'll expand our donor base at all levels. It is clear to us that contributions of any size—small, medium, and large—make a significant difference in the sustainability of *Image*. We are initiating fund-development programs that are dedicated to each level.

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An Invitation

We invite you to help us bring meaning, beauty, and human flourishing to a world in crisis. If you recognize the compelling opportunity for art informed by faith at this historic moment, and if you are able, we invite you to make a contribution to the work of *Image*.

You may contribute online or by mail.

DONATE
USA

DONATE
Canada