**Collective statement from the Border North East cultural community**

COVID-19 has affected the cultural industries more than any other and our region is no exception.  We know our audiences and our artists need to reconnect. We know that our industries will be called upon to help restart tourism and drive visitation to our regions. So that this can happen sooner rather than later, we are busy developing our road map to recovery and planning projects for the other side. We’re actively engaging with artists, companies, organisations and governments to ensure we are ready to return.

This is a really tough time for many in our local creative industries and within our region more generally, but we want you to know that we all stand beside you in solidarity.

Border North East cultural organisations have come together with a united mission to build a stronger and more harmonious regional cultural community that will see us through this crisis and into a brighter future.

If you are an art loving member of the public – thank you. Please wait for us. We will return soon. And in the meantime, please check out your favourite local creative’s websites or Etsy stores. Buy art! Buy books! Buy tickets to live streamed performances! Support the work you love, by paying the people that make it. It is more important now than it has ever been.

We’ll have more to say soon – please watch this space.