

BRIGHT LIGHTS. BIG LOVE.



Brooklyn Bridge, NY | 2018 © Alicia Kae Miller

As a once New Yorker, I am stunned to learn that due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 the stage of the **Metropolitan Opera** will officially be dark until the fall of 2021.

The effects have also led to the cancellation and/or online-only option this year to iconic events such as: South by Southwest "SXSW" in Austin, Chicago's annual St. Patrick's Day parade, and Seafair in Seattle.

Ugh. What an endless year of postponement not to mention the loss of special occasions that bring us joy, remind us of our childhood, and ensure perspective as to any given season that we happen to be in.

One day is today.

The biggest takeaway from 2020 aka “the year that won’t go away,” is that we are all in this together.

What many people, including myself, miss most is human touch. The simple knowing that beloved family and friends are within physical reach has eluded us for most of this year. One saving grace is that we live in an era where we have technology that keeps us virtually connected, so seeing the face and hearing the voice of our loved ones is merely a touchpad away.

As the seasons have come and gone, forced isolation has shined a light on the dark parts of our lives and communities in ways unimaginable; just when we think that things cannot get any darker, they go ahead and do.

Dr. Seuss could not have been any more on point when he declared “sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.” While we all desperately want 2020 to be in our hindsight, if we open up our hearts and field of vision we find comfort in knowing that no one, literally no one, is immune from the implications of COVID-19 during this unprecedented time of unpredictability.

Call to kindness.

When the bright lights of Lincoln Center return to all her glory, we will too.

This reflection picks up where Dr. Seuss leaves off and recognizes that one day this moment in our lives will be a distant memory. A moment when our

vulnerability was self-evident and our humanity undeniable, so why not make our future memory deeply valuable just now?

As we move through this together, we have the opportunity to use this intermission as a moment to illuminate humanity through random acts of kindness.

These acts of kindness will likely not be splashed across news headlines or posted to social media, but rather silently through selfless acts such as:

- picking up your neighbor's newspaper and putting it on their porch
- smiling and saying hello to others with both your eyes and mouth
- yielding a coveted parking spot to a fellow traveler

The radiance from a touch of kindness never goes dark and we are living history; wear your burnished pandemic bragging rights badge with integrity, honor, and great pride.

Until we meet again, give my best regards to The Big Apple. ❤️

Yours in Solidarity, -akm

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