



**ADIRONDACK EXPERIENCE™**  
*The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake*

- [VISIT US](#)
- [EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS](#)
- [EDUCATION & RESEARCH](#)
- [JOIN & SUPPORT](#)
- [ABOUT US](#)

[Home](#) » [Creativity in Quarantine](#)

# Creativity in Quarantine

## ADIRONDACK ARTISTS AT WORK

The Adirondack Park is home to a vibrant and diverse community of artists. During this challenging time, the Adirondack Experience will offer a unique peek at the creative work of the painters, sculptors, basket makers, photographers, printers, furniture makers and more who find their inspiration in the landscape and small-town life of the Adirondack Park. Working out-of-doors and in the shelter of their studios, artists share their works in progress and the ways the coronavirus crisis is shaping their creative process.

## John Van Alstine

Creativity in Quarantine Featured Artist



John Van Alstine (b. 1952) was born and raised in the Adirondacks. He lives and works in Wells, NY in a former wood processing mill beside the Sacandaga River. His abstract stone and metal sculptures marry natural elements with found industrial fragments and often reference nautical or Greek mythological themes. An internationally recognized artist, Van Alstine has exhibited at the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; the Smithsonian American Art Museum; Olympic Park, City of Beijing, China; and The Phillips Collection, among others. The museum owns three pieces by Van Alstine: *East River*

*Passage* (1988.038.0001); *BROADREACH III (red billow)* (2007.077.0001); and *Sisyphean Circle XXXIII* (2010.072.0001).

Faced with the pandemic shutdown, “We (Van Alstine and his wife sculptor Caroline Ramersdorfer) are lucky to have a wonderful property to shelter in place – even be productive these last two months. In fact, we

are looking at the situation as almost an ‘artist’s retreat’ – where artists go to isolate themselves from the rest of the world and work uninterrupted (and not be distracted–if you keep the news and media off ...)

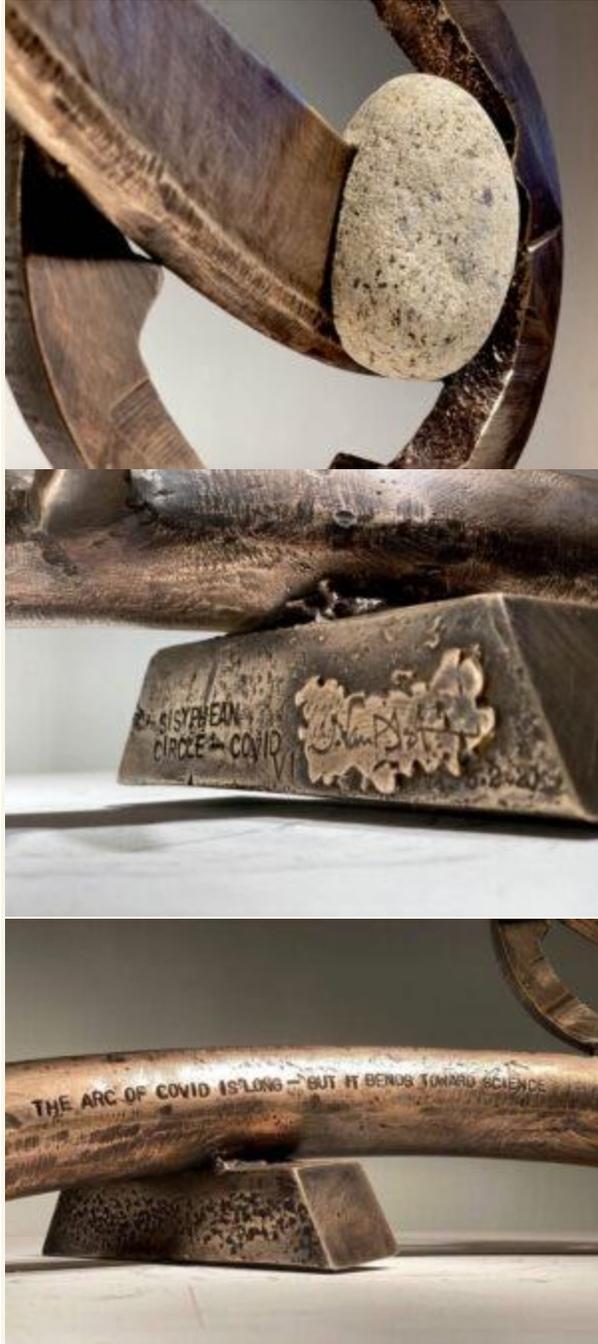
I have embarked on a new bronze ‘self-distancing’ / Covid series, trying to incorporate some of the themes I have worked on for many years (like the myth of Sisyphus) and re-focus them to bring meaning and an artist voice to these very unusual times. During this time of “self-distancing/ isolation” I have created 35 bronze and stone sculptures, since March, an extraordinary number for me, totally brought on by this crazy situation. I think of many artist in the past that were able to use dangerous and uncertain times to spur on their creativity (Shakespeare during the black plague, many artist during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic like Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele, and many others who were faced with Nazism or the great depression, or even the McCarthy era in the 1950’s). Not sure mine will stack up with those very well-known artists, but I am giving it a go...”

Click on gallery images below to view larger

**“SISYPHEAN CIRCLE-COVID VI: The Arc Of Covid Is Long – But It Bends Toward Science” \*\* 5-2020, bronze and river stone, 9.5”h x 20”w x8”d**

\*\* Title is homage to the quote often credited to Martin Luther King *“Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long but it bents toward justice”*.





Learn more about this important Adirondack artist  
at <http://johnvanalstine.com/>.