

# Living in a Time of Distance

A photographic series by Jason Starr

From July-August of 2020 Jason Starr photographed the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States of America. During this time, Jason, with assistance by Lydia Daily and Jimmy Wickum, traveled from coast to coast by car capturing some of the vast experiences with the pandemic.



**Jennifer Esperenza**  
Marfa, Texas



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**“Never have I been depressed in my life before COVID” says Jennifer Esperenza, a photographer and owner of a local vintage shop and art gallery. Marfa, a small artist community in Texas, was lined with vacant streets that are normally bustling with tourists. Jennifer explains the particular importance of social distancing guidelines in Marfa because of the town not having a hospital, placing further stress on its inhabitants.**



**Vacancy in Vegas**  
Los Vegas, Nevada



## **Vacancy in Vegas Los Vegas, Nevada**

**The empty strip of Los Vegas lined with closed souvenir shops during peak tourism season.**



## **The Musician in Toas**

### **Toas, New Mexico**

**George Fernando, a street performer, continues to share his music in the empty square. “I don’t play for the money; I play because it makes me happy.”**



**Shelli**  
**Madrid, New Mexico**

Shelli is a painter, graphic designer, and owner of a campground in the Shanti Community. To her surprise, Shelli's campground saw an increase in sales of people looking to escape during the pandemic. She tells the story of the local town singing, playing music, and dancing outside of their own homes to revive a sense of community at a safe distance.



## **Everything has Changed Madrid, New Mexico**

**“Everything has changed” says Ruth, the owner of a boutique which sells local authentic Native American Art. She feels the impact of the pandemic in her community with a lack of social activity and tourism, a worried elderly population, and a disproportionate impact of the virus on its Native American members.**



**Santa Monica Pier**  
Los Angeles, California





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**Los Angeles, California**

The once popular tourist destination is now lined with social distancing guideline markers, minimal tourists, and a quiet sense of longing for the future.



## **COVID Camps Portland, Oregon**

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, homeless shelters in Portland have been forced to move outside. These shelters, which have sprung up across the city, are called “COVID camps” by the locals.**



**Colliding Crises: Portland**  
Portland, Oregon



## **Colliding Crises: Portland Portland, Oregon**

**As the pandemic continues to rage, protests in Portland and across the country arise in response to ongoing racial injustice and police brutality. An advocate speaks outside the Portland Justice Center calling for criminal justice and police reform while highlighting the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on African Americans.**



## **Colliding Crises: Washington D.C. The District of Columbia**

**Protesters following social distancing guidelines speak out against the murder of black Americans by police officers outside the Whitehouse.**



## **Musicians in New Orleans** **New Orleans, Louisiana**

**A group of street performers pose in their masks after performing a concert for three viewers and an empty street.**



**St. Luis Cathedral  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

**A priest prays alone in a church that has gone 16 weeks since it's last gathering.**





**Joshua Tree National Park**  
Joshua Tree, California



## **Joshua Tree National Park** **Joshua Tree, California**

**Landrie, a volunteer at the Joshua Tree Visitor Center, has observed an increase in traffic to the park during the pandemic despite a temporary shutdown of the park and the long-term closure of many facilities.**



**Chinatown**  
**San Francisco, California**



**Chinatown**  
**San Francisco, California**

The streets of Chinatown resemble a post-apocalyptic movie scene with empty street, boarded up shops, and countless going out of business signs.



## **Off Limits San Francisco, California**

**A park in downtown San Francisco lists one of the many public facilities closed in response to the pandemic.**



## **Students of the Pandemic Richmond, Virginia**

**Jimmy, one of the millions of students returning to school, finds himself facing a new set of challenges as he enters the academic year. “The art studio I was once familiar with feels like a foreign environment resembling a laboratory. Some of my courses have been moved online, forcing me find new ways to learn.”**



**Politics of the Pandemic  
Seattle, Washington**



## **Politics of the Pandemic Seattle, Washington**

**Businesses and other public spaces across the country have required masks to be worn. However, this rule has been met with verbal opposition and people refusing to comply.**





## **Frontline on the Navajo Nation Arroyo Grande, California**

**Joe Robinson, an emergency physician based in California, saw a decrease in hospital patients amid the pandemic and went to find temporary work elsewhere. This led him to the frontline of fighting COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation, the most impacted region in the United States. There he worked 12 hours shifts at a time. He explains that 50% of people on the reservation don't have running water, a lot don't have electricity, and that the community lives in close quarters, making them more susceptible to the virus.**