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## CREATIVE

Music and Arts Festival

FEATURING: PAT HULL

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SYMPHONY  
REDDING | CHICO CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY, MAY 2ND • 6-9PM

ALL AGES • CHICO DOWNTOWN PLAZA • DURING THE FARMERS MARKET



## ARTS DEVO

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**A BURNING HOLE IN THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING** Right in the center of the French region of **Île-de-France** ("Island of France") is the city of **Paris**. And right in the center of Paris is the **Île de la Cité** ("Island of the City"). The centerpiece of that island in the middle of the river Seine is **Notre Dame Cathedral**. It sits in the spot where the city was born and is the central point from which all distances from Paris are measured.

Right there, during a vacation several years ago, while **Mrs. DEVO** was inside the cathedral attending mass, **Arts DEVO** posted up at an outdoor table along the large public square out front and drank in the scene. For a good hour, I was completely alone. The square was quiet and all the chairs on every patio nearby were empty.

It was very easy in that moment, as I studied the features of this weird, old, Gothic wonder—its two massive bell towers out front, the impressive stained-glass rose window above, and the row of gargoyle-shaped rain spouts lining the side—to feel a strong connection to history while I nursed my espresso. It's a feeling I get whenever I'm around anything that has a

history—whether it's as young as **Bidwell Mansion** or as old as **Via Sacra**, **Ancient Rome's** main street.

Of course, some locations contain more juice than others, and Paris' Notre Dame—like many Catholic churches around the world—is bursting with the art and the blood of history. Other than a brief change of hands during the **French Revolution** (to the **Cult of Reason** and then the **Cult of the Supreme Being!**), Notre Dame has belonged to the **Catholic Church** since ground was broken on the site in 1163. (Technically, France owns the place and lets the church run it.) But its importance isn't merely a Catholic or even a Christian thing. Many Parisians never set foot in Notre Dame or any church. The



Sanctuary?

building itself, however, is a monument to the city's and the world's history over the last eight centuries—the violence, oppression and world wars, as well as the resilience, beauty and imagination of humanity. Millions of tourists and modern Parisians still revolve around this massive, centuries-old-yet-still-breathing piece of history.

Bearing witness to Notre Dame Cathedral on that day was one of the most powerful art experiences I've ever had, one that was nearly matched in intensity by my visceral reaction to the images of flames shooting out of the iconic structure that appeared on my **Facebook** feed on Monday (April 15). I'm not a Catholic or even a Christian (or anything really), but the news that most of the art and sacred artifacts (including Jesus' crown of thorns! Who knew?) made it out safely and the damage to the cathedral—the most monumental work of art of them all—wasn't complete had me praising Jah or Jehovah or Jeebus, or whomever.

Notre Dame will be repaired and rebuilt, just as it has been many times during its history. And no matter what form it takes, life around it will continue—the good and the bad—and the art will live on.

