

2016-2017 POCONO ARTS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Now in its 42nd year, PoconoArts continues to serve the artists, residents and visitors to the Pocono region. **The theme for the year was Emerging Artists, recognizing artists of all ages who were in the early stages of their careers.** The following programs, services and events were the highlights of the last fiscal year.



- **PA PARTNERS IN THE ARTS (PPA)** – This was the twenty first year of participation in this partnership program with the PA Council on the Arts (PCA), serving five counties – Monroe, Pike, Wayne, Lackawanna and Luzerne. Total grant awards distributed in 2017 were \$46,767 to 46 organizations through the PPA Project Stream and an additional \$46,508 to 22 organizations through PPA Program Stream. Since the beginning of the PPA program, PoconoArts has helped administer grants totaling \$1,938,609 - all tax dollars coming back to our region for arts programming. The Monroe County recipient of a PPA Program Stream grant is the Pocono Bluegrass & Folk Society. Monroe County Project Stream recipients included East Stroudsburg High School South; Eastburg Community Alliance; ESU Art Dept.; ESU Theater Department; Laurinda Faye Rubin; Pocono Concert Chorale; Pocono Watercolor Assoc.; Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm; Shawnee Playhouse; Sherman Theater; Stroudsburg High School Musical and Theatrical Gems. Please visit our website for information on the grants and upcoming events sponsored by the PPA program.
- **YOUTH & EMERGING ARTIST OUTREACH**
 - In March, PoconoArts sponsored its first Emerging Artist Showcase featuring 35 artists of all ages who were in the early stages of their careers. Out of the 35, 15 were selected to participate in the live auction at Spring for the Arts. **Anna Kaszupski** won first place in the show and was awarded the 2017 Visual Artist of the Year recognition.
 - **4th Annual Suzanne Anderson Scholarship for Visual & Performing Art Students** – These scholarships are granted through a bequest by Suzanne Anderson and are available to one visual and one performing arts high school senior annually who will be continuing their education at the college level. This year's recipients were **Victoria Padmos, music,** and **Kate C. Martin, visual arts.**
- **GALLERIES**
 - **ARTSPACE Gallery** – The ARTSPACE Gallery featured a variety of theme shows during the summer under the leadership of gallery curator, Claire Marcus. Each show was juried for prizes by an artist from outside the area and \$175 in prizes awarded. In addition to these regularly scheduled shows, the Emerging Artists Show in March and the PoconoArts Members' Exhibition in May, the ARTSPACE Gallery hosted three special exhibitions in 2017. In January, Opportunity Associates sponsored **Art as Spirituality** featuring 23 artists. This unique collaboration brought new artists and a new audience to the gallery and will be repeated in March, 2018. In April, **The Earth Speaks – A Juried Exhibition on the Environmental Crisis**, returned to the gallery. This collaborative effort was a regional call for artists whose work spoke to the environmental crises. Forty-five works were on exhibit and the opening reception included art, poetry and music. Co-sponsors included East Stroudsburg University and the Monroe County Conservation District. Watch for The Earth Speaks IV in April 2018 – deadline for artist entry is February 2. Finally, in July, ARTSPACE featured the 10 winners of the first two years of ArtPop competition in a group show.
 - **Public Galleries** – showcasing the work of PoconoArts member artists throughout the year - 7 galleries currently exist throughout the county including the newly added Vinny D's

Deli in East Stroudsburg. Exhibitions run for two months and generated \$1425 in sales. If you are interested in exhibiting – or have not been contacted in a while – please let the office know and we will place you on the master list.

- **Gallery Store** – The gallery store continues to create quite a bit of local interest with sales totaling over \$2900. The store has become a popular place for the local community to find gifts in support of local artisans.
- **Holiday Store** – Last December's store featured work by PoconoArts members and was very successful with over \$2000 in sales.

- **PROGRAMS**

- **Studio Courses** - The goal of the PoconoArts studio program has always been to offer quality classes, with professional instructors, at a moderate price. Classes and workshops are offered monthly in the PoconoArts Cultural Center and include a variety of disciplines. Ongoing oil classes taught by John McAllister and watercolor and acrylics with Iraina Caramelli were both very popular this year, as were workshops with Jim Smeltz and a variety of other instructors. Jim will certainly be missed by both his students and the art community. PoconoArts also offered collage classes at the Monroe County Correctional Facility, with Claire Marcus as the instructor, throughout the year.

- **Annual Members' Exhibition** – Once again, this show was held in May. Fifty-six artists participated with prizes awarded by this year's judges, Santa Bannon-Shillea, Bernard Mangiaracina, and Cynthia Smith. The Best in Show was awarded to Lenore Fiore Mills for her batik, "Gardener's Shed at Jumel House." The opening on May 20th featured an artists' reception, as well as Art on Main, coordinated by Lisa Diemer from Kitchen Chemistry.

- **FUNDRAISERS & EVENTS:**

- **Starving Artist Mac & Cheese Bake-Off** – the 4th annual event was led once again by Jeff Kash, President of the PoconoArts Board of Directors, last November. Held at Rainbow Mountain Resort, four restaurants and four amateurs vied for the title of Best Mac & Cheese in the Poconos. Special thanks to sponsors of the event, KW Commercial-The Perich Group, Carol's Scents & Soaps, and Dulce Ridder-Berkshire Hathaway Home Services, as well as Sterner Outdoor Advertising, Neversink Media (Pocono 96.7), and the Bushkill Group for providing prizes for the entrants and raffles. The event raised \$1300.

- **Spring for the Arts** – The 9th annual Spring for the Arts auction was held on Friday, May 5. This year's event recognized **Anna Kaszupski**, winner of the Emerging Artist Exhibition, with the Visual Art Hall of Fame Award, **Porter & Sayles** with the Performing Arts Hall of Fame Award and **Sherwood Samet** with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Highlights of the evening were a special exhibition of work by Sherwood Samet in the Auradell Gallery, a live auction featuring work by local emerging artists and a performance by Porter & Sayles. Additionally, two students were honored with Rising Star Awards – **Kate C. Martin**, Visual Arts, and **Victoria Padmos**, Music. Sponsors of the event included, Key Foods, Monroe County Bar Association, St. Luke's University Health Network, White Light Foundation, East Stroudsburg University, ESSA Bank & Trust, Kash Fedrigo Belanger LLC, Mullins Insurance, Key Foods, PNC Bank, Laurie Samet, Sean Turrell, Stroudsmoor Country Inn, Wayne Bank, First Northern Bank & Trust, William Martin, DC, Milford Theater, Mountain View Winery, Sorrenti Orchard, and Thrivent Financial. Sherwood Samet, former president of the PoconoArts Board of Directors donated all proceeds from the sale of his artwork to the Council – Thank you Sherwood! PoconoArts netted \$12,200 from the event.

- **13th Annual Festival of Wood** was held at Grey Towers National Historic Site on August 5 & 6. Twenty-three wood craftsmen participated in what has become a popular event in the Milford area, with \$2000 raised for PoconoArts. Thanks to Lori McKean from Grey Towers, PoconoArts continued to receive a federal grant to help offset expenses.

- **31st Annual Pocono State Craft Festival** returned for its 10th year at Quiet Valley

Living Historical Farm. Sixty-one craftsmen participated. Special thanks to Joni Oye, Paul & Amanda Reiche, and Helen & Al Weichman from the Pocono Chapter of the PA Guild of Craftsmen, and Katherine Mueller and the staff at Quiet Valley for help with the show. \$4,500 was raised for PoconoArts.

- **MEMBERSHIP** – Unfortunately, membership in PoconoArts declined in the 2016-17 fiscal year. While part of this was due to a large clean-up of the data base and actual income remained about the same, it is still discouraging. **Membership is by far the most important income stream at PoconoArts.** These funds pay the overhead to keep the council running. Once again, I encourage all members to invite their friends and family to join - the newsletter alone is worth the small membership fee and there are discounts to all PoconoArts paid events including studio classes and the Spring for the Arts Gala. If you are a current member, please pay attention to the renewal letters you receive in the mail. While you may still be getting the newsletter online, PoconoArts needs your financial support to keep the doors open. In 2015 we began a sustaining membership program through which a small amount is taken from an account you specify monthly. More and more members are taking advantage of this program and it is very helpful to PoconoArts. Finally, don't forget the benefits of membership for you – if you have a website, make sure we link it to our site and, please provide us with a link on yours. Also, please like us on facebook, Instagram and twitter and forward any arts related events to your family and friends. Membership is available on-line.
- **COLLABORATIONS** – as in the past, PoconoArts collaborated on several projects during the year. In addition to The Earth Speaks and the two festivals, additional collaborations included:
 - **Origins Gallery** – Over the winter, Origins Gallery approached the Pocono Arts Council with a request to use the Studio Gallery. Since that time, Origins has become a permanent part of PoconoArts, serving the area's emerging, as well as established artists. Jody Singer and his crew have become familiar faces at PoconoArts and we welcome them.
 - **Northampton Community College, Monroe Campus** – thanks to the efforts of Dr. Matthew Connell, Dean of the campus, six local art groups continued their work as the Pocono Art Collage, creating exhibits in the Dunning Gallery. This year, PoconoArts participated in "Flying Free: Birds and the Human Spirit," September-January, and an "Emerging Artists" exhibition, January-May, as well as the annual PoconoArt Collage over the summer. A panel discussion on "Your Art in the Marketplace" was offered in June and similar panel discussions are scheduled for the future. Member organizations in the Art Collage include the Pocono Mountain Arts Council; Pocono Mountain Art Group; Pocono Painters; Pocono Watercolor Associations and Pocono Photo Club.
 - **ArtPop Competition** – Five billboards created by local artists were on exhibit throughout the year. This year's artists were Jill Gleeson-Dougherty, Darlene Farris-LaBar, Sarah Lanier, Judy Moeller, and Jason Williamson. The Poconos is only one of 14 areas throughout the country that offer the ArtPop program – and, in fact, it began here about 10 years ago. The 3rd Annual ArtPop Competition is currently underway.
- **Strauser Gallery at East Stroudsburg University** – for the past several years, PoconoArts has worked with the Strauser Gallery committee at ESU. This partnership will continue into the future.
- **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT** – While state grants remain at an all-time low, PoconoArts continues to receive steady support through the PA Partners in the Arts Program. One of the missions of PoconoArts is advocacy. Please watch your emails and let your state legislators know of your support for the arts and the vital services they provide to the community. The best way to keep up to date with what is going on in Harrisburg is to join Citizens for the Arts, the state-wide advocacy group that monitors arts support. By joining Citizens and monitoring their emails & website, www.citizensfortheartsinpa.org, you will

have the most up to date means for arts advocacy. Also at the state level, PoconoArts received a new copier and four new computers thanks to a LSA grant. This grant, based on gambling revenue, is administered by the Monroe County Industrial Development Authority and backed by the support of local legislators. At the local level, PoconoArts continued to receive funds from the county commissioners and seven out of twenty local municipalities.

- **FINANCES & CORPORATE SUPPORT** – PoconoArts was able to make some gains in revenue through increased donations and sponsorships during the past year.
 - **Corporate Support** – One of the most important levels of support is at the corporate level. Once again, this is money that can be used for overhead. Corporate sponsorships lagged slightly during the year and are a goal for next year. If you have a business, or know of someone who does, please consider donating to PoconoArts. Memberships are available at many levels, as well as sponsorships for different programs. For all corporate sponsors, PoconoArts has a good variety of marketing benefits targeted toward an arts audience, including prime visibility on our new website.
- **MARKETING & OUTREACH**
 - **NEW WEBSITE** – Thanks to FullCup.Co, the council has a new, fully interactive website. It is still being “fine-tuned,” but it is a wonderful marketing tool for the council. As a special incentive for members, we are currently working on updating the directory with websites so please make sure we have yours. Also, logos for corporate sponsors scroll across the bottom of the screen giving them extra value for their sponsorship. Special thanks to Rich Spezzano for creating and maintaining our former website for many years.
 - **Newsletter** – In keeping with the Emerging Artist theme, each issue of the newsletter featured an emerging artist on the cover. Special thanks to Jack Swersie and Phil Barcafer for taking on this challenge and helping us recognize these up and coming artists. Our newsletter continued to be distributed by both email and snail mail. Please do not forget the opportunity to enclose a flyer of your event with the mailed newsletter and have it posted on the website. We have also established a price structure for members interested in sending an email blast about a specific event.
 - **Social Media** – Special thanks to Jack Swersie and Jody Singer for working on the council’s facebook page throughout the year and welcome Julie Golin who added Instagram and twitter in August. Please make sure to follow what is going on!
- **OFFICE STAFF** – As you know, while the office staff remained the same throughout the year, it is currently in the middle of a major change. Special thanks to Tassy Gilbert who continues to serve as PPA Program Coordinator and Administrative Assistant, Carolyn Hetherington, Studio Coordinator, and Claire Marcus, ARTSPACE Gallery Coordinator. I truly appreciate their support and hard work in making the office and gallery run smoothly. It is hard for people not involved in a non-profit office to understand how much there is to do and how many interruptions there can possibly be as work is being done. PoconoArts would not be what it is without the dedicated support of Tassy, Carolyn, and Claire. For the 2017-2018 fiscal year, PoconoArts will be adding a new part-time position for Marketing. Julie Golin, who has been active in the council since August, will be filling this position and marketing the council through all social media. Welcome Julie.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

It has been my extreme pleasure to serve as Executive Director of PoconoArts for the past 25+ years and I want to thank all the current and past members of the Board of Directors as well as all the members, past and present, of the council for their support. Thank you to all the volunteers, committee chairs and staff that made my job one of the best. Every day at PoconoArts was an adventure, with a challenge waiting around every corner. Leaving is difficult, but I feel confident that the council will continue to serve the needs of the arts community for many years to come under the new leadership of Susan Randall. I know you

will give her the same support you have always shown me and with your help, the 2017-2018 year and the future of PoconoArts will be a success. As we know, the arts touch all our lives at many levels. It is time for all of us to join together and move them forward.
Culture Does Build Community!

Laura L. Goss, Executive Director

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