Southern Vermont Arts Center

2022 ANNUAL REPORT
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PRESIDENT’S LETTER

Dear friends,

Our staff, led by Anne Corso, has shown a willingness to go above and beyond. The sheer volume, quality, and diversity of programming for young and old is very impressive. Success is measured by participation of our community and visitors. By those metrics, the staff receive a thumbs-up. We are all appreciative of their contribution.

The board of directors also deserves to be recognized for giving of their time and expertise. Whether it is the regular board meetings or the many committee meetings, their contributions to the success of SVAC are invaluable.

Church Street Hospitality, our partners at curATE café, deserve our thanks as well. The synergy between the café and our programming has exceeded our expectations. And curATE has become an important contributor to our financial sustainability.

No board activity is more important than stewardship of our campus. We are tackling the problem of the deterioration of both the Wilson Museum and the educational classrooms, Hay Madeira Studios. We have hired a consulting architect to assess the condition of these two key programming buildings. We are also considering how these buildings meet our future programmatic needs. We expect to have more to report by late spring. We are excited about the possibilities, so stay tuned.

One of our primary goals is to reach financial sustainability, measured by our ability to offset our expenses with earned income and donations. We sincerely appreciate the strong financial support we receive from our community in meeting this crucial goal. Together we can propel SVAC into a leadership position in the Vermont arts scene and strengthen SVAC as the cultural center for our community.

Thank you for your support,
Bob Van Degna
President

DIRECTOR’S LETTER

Dear all,

As I begin my fourth year at SVAC, I am ever more grateful to call this community in this corner of Vermont home, and I am encouraged to hear from so many of you that SVAC holds a special place in your heart. So if you visit every day, or just once a year, SVAC is your arts center, your respite, your gathering place, and your home.

I want to share some of the highlights of 2022:

• We expanded our education programs with new offerings; launched a partnership with Maple Street Lake to offer preschool and an accompanying afterschool program, on campus; and developed an exhibition-related internship program with Bennington College.

• We lent some of the most beloved paintings in our permanent collection, by Luigi Lucioni, to the Shelburne Museum for a landmark exhibition of the artist’s work.

• We offered exciting exhibitions with both talented local artists and artists from across the globe.

• We developed new dining opportunities in conjunction with curATE café.

• We made investments to improve our buildings and grounds including: new campus signage; a fresh facade, entrance ramp, and custom glass chandelier for Yester House; and repaving of the mile-long driveway.

I hope you can take the time to look through this report. The following pages tell the stories of all that SVAC has done and of the many people in our community who have participated in some meaningful way.

At the end of your report, you will likely see your name along with hundreds of other community members who have given their support and their time to SVAC. We thank each and every one of you for helping make SVAC the very special place it has become.

Thank you for all that you do,
Anne Corso
Executive Director
Southern Vermont Arts Center’s education programs are at the core of what we do. Our programs come in many shapes and sizes and for people of all ages. Adult learners participated in a variety of classes including introductions to drawing, ink painting, watercolor, and oil painting; and more intensive workshops in painting with oil and cold wax, abstract painting, and sculpture. Classes took students off-campus to paint the picturesque landscapes of Vermont, and to sketch horses on local farms. Artists found opportunities to hone their practice with critiques and portfolio reviews. Visitors enjoyed talks by exhibiting artists. Those looking for a more meditative experience practiced aerial yoga in the trees in the warmer months, and took to their mats in SVAC’s galleries in the colder months.

Programs for children and families were equally varied. During the summer months, SVAC hosted 21 different camps including Wunderle’s Big Top Circus, Hobbit Houses, Shakespeare for Kids, Girls World Theater Games, Nature Photography, Art and Artists, Into the Woods, Fun with Music, Jazz Dance, Hip Hop Dance & Design, and more. Throughout the school year, the youngest learners enjoyed Hullabaloo, a creative movement class for preschoolers. School-aged children created a set, learned their lines, and put on a play in Afterschool Acting. They used hand tools such as saws, hammers, and nails to create complex structures in Build It. They designed their own illustrations to accompany their stories in Into the Inkwell. They learned to sew both functional and decorative items in Hand Sewing. During the school vacation weeks (February, April, and December), SVAC offered week-long art camps blending hands-on activities with gallery visits.

SVAC also regularly creates programming with its school partners in the community. Groups of students came to SVAC for arts programming specifically designed for them, including circus workshops for high school students with special needs; an opportunity to consider artist statements for their own exhibitions with Alison Crites; and private tours with guest curators for members of photography and memoir seminars. Thirty-two school groups visited exhibitions in Yester House, the Wilson Museum and the Stroup Family Sculpture Park for customized tours or school visit experiences. We offered a Teachers’ Open House to preview our upcoming exhibitions and supervised community service opportunities to support high school requirements.

SVAC launched new initiatives based on deepening partnerships with local schools. We launched an intensive exhibition-related internship program with Bennington College, allowing students to gain professional experience and supplement their academic credentials. Maple Street School opened its first-ever preschool on SVAC’s campus. With Manchester Elementary Middle School, we piloted a program that ran concurrently with the school’s winter weekly early dismissals for snow sports. Students were offered the opportunity to work with a teaching artist at SVAC throughout the winter months. The annual Art from the Schools exhibition featured student work from a record 30 schools and homeschools.
“Heart wrenching and beautiful” were the words one visitor used to describe the Many Americas: Art Meets History exhibition. The exhibition served as the culmination of an Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts curatorial fellowship award for guest curator, Ric Kasini Kadour. It demonstrated competing versions of the history of the United States of America, told through the perspective of contemporary art.

The 2022 exhibition season was particularly diverse. Manager of Exhibitions and Interpretive Engagement, Alison Crites, notes, “From prints made from woodblocks carved in 19th century Japan to digital art created in the newest frontiers of the art world, SVAC’s 2022 exhibition season dynamically showcased both the past and the present, often exploring the relationship between the two. Over the course of 14 exhibitions, we featured the work of nearly 400 artists in our galleries in addition to the 1,575 student artists who participated in our annual Art from the Schools exhibition.”

Some additional exhibition highlights included After the Exhale, SVAC’s first exhibition dedicated to digital media, a partnership with the talented New England Wax Society to present RELATIONSHIPS: Hot, Cold, Intricate; and a poignant pairing of Gail Winbury’s autobiographical abstract paintings with response poems written by local poets in The Girl Who Drew Memories — all in the Wilson Museum.

In Yester House, SVAC artist members participated in two all-member exhibitions, and 20 artists working in a variety of media were selected for two rounds of solo exhibitions. The summer season hosted a thematic group of exhibitions including Dwell: Home is Where the Art Is, which featured artists responding to themes of domesticity inspired by the historic architecture of Yester House; Coming Out of the Medicine Closet by Judith Klausner; Masked, a traveling exhibition organized by Inclusive Arts Vermont; Community Portraits, created by students of Burr and Burton Academy and facilitated by Matthew Perry of Vermont Arts Exchange; and VitroVerse, featuring Robert DuGrenier’s custom-made glass chandelier created from 200 glass planets, each of which has an additional life as an NFT.
SOUTHERN VERMONT ARTS CENTER has the great fortune of putting the “s” in the arts. In 2022, we offered a robust performing arts program and partnered with other local performing arts organizations. Our diverse lineup included concerts by legendary singer-songwriters Livingston Taylor and Dar Williams, each hosting an opening act by up-and-coming performers: Ash and Eric, and Heather Maloney. Other performances included SVAC Gets the Blues; an Argentine tango performance by Cuartetango; a family-friendly circus night by Troy Wunderle; a comedy routine promoting tolerance in Laugh in Peace; a Mother’s Day concert by the Becker Sisters; and Berkshire Bank’s Broadway in Vermont concert series featuring the talents of Andrea McArdle, Andy Karl and Orfeh, Linda Lavin, and Donna McKechnie.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS offered equally varied performances and presentations. Our longstanding partner, the Manchester Music Festival, hosted its 48th season of chamber music in the Arkell Pavilion and Yester House galleries. Taconic Music brought the jazz stylings of the Levin Brothers; Ballet Manchester brought the modern dancers of the Collage Dance Collective to the stage; Southern Vermont Ballet offered The Nutcracker; Vermont Public brought its humor (and animals!) to campus for a live version of But Why?; and Maxine Linehan sang the songs of U2 as a benefit concert for Red Fox Community School. Book launches at SVAC included Megan Mayhew Bergman’s How Strange a Season and Cindy Marshall’s Sorry About Your Diagnosis: You’re Fired.

An important part of SVAC’s strategic plan is to develop meaningful partnerships with local, regional, and national organizations. In addition to working with regional educational organizations, we are particularly proud of a collaboration with the Shelburne Museum, for which SVAC lent seven of our most important paintings by Luigi Lucioni to Shelburne’s long-awaited exhibition Luigi Lucioni: Modern Light, which was seen by over 20,000 visitors.
The third Annual Holiday Craft Market was a resounding success. Nearly 1,500 visitors came to shop. We were honored to host 28 talented craft vendors and artisans who hailed from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Their work included handmade glass, pottery, jewelry, wood, textiles, knitted wearables, ornaments, original posters, and more.

Perhaps everyone’s favorite signature event is Halloween on the Hill. Over 700 people enjoyed story readings and classical performances by Taconic Music, magic shows, face painting, fortune telling, make-and-take art projects, outdoor games, a bounce house, music by Long Trail School student band, food from a variety of local vendors, an art scavenger hunt, a pre-school dance party, a Halloween film, and a costume parade and contest. Twenty-two local businesses helped sponsor the event, either with cash or in-kind donations, and dozens of volunteers worked before and during the event to help make Halloween on the Hill a great success.
2022 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

SOUTHERN VERMONT ARTS CENTER continues towards its strategic objective of fiscal sustainability and, ultimately, break-even of its operations. With expanded programming in 2022, program revenue was up 13% year over year. Particularly noteworthy was the 53% increase in performance revenue. Contributed revenue finished the year 18% over the prior year’s. Annual Fund and grant revenue account for the majority of this success, with a combined increase of 25% over the prior year’s.

Total expenditures increased 12% over the prior year. This included tight control of ongoing expenses plus additional investments in salary costs designed to generate future revenues.

Year-to-date program expenses increased only 4% over prior year despite the 13% increase in program revenues.

Two significant revenue items not reflected in the operating revenue include a $115,000 temporarily restricted gift dedicated to capital improvements and $56,951 COVID-19 federal tax credit.

SVAC continues upgrading the campus to improve patrons’ overall experience. In 2022, approximately $300,000 was spent on capital improvements. This included the installation of a new driveway, extensive landscaping and the installation of wayfinding signage, kitchen upgrades, and major exterior painting.

Fiscal Year runs from January 1 to December 31, 2022. Represents unaudited financials.

Southern Vermont Arts Center is a 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.
We are so grateful to our donors and members who have supported our vision for the Southern Vermont Arts Center. We have endeavored to accurately acknowledge your names and contributions. Many thanks for your continuing belief in this organization. — ANNE CORSO

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Fall 2022
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Susan Atwood
Tom Atkins
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Agnes Baker
John Alexander Baker
John Baun
Edith Beatty and Jeffrey Kilgore
Robert Bent
Cristine Kossow
Carey and Matthew Kokkonen
Mary Klesse
Rose and Richard Klebes
Clarence King
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Theresa Karpinski
Marsha Karle
Asheley Kapelewski
Valerie Johnson
Alan Jeffery
Victoria Jefferies
Bella Ingegneri
Debra Hoyle
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Jennifer WS Hooley
Nancy Hoffmann
Jenna Hobbs
Donald Heintze
Lesley Heathcote
Irma Hawkins
Linda Lynton
Carol Macdonald
Georgine MacGarvey and Eveline Luppi
Bonny Lundy
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Taking back the Art Campus: 2003 - 2006

The Southern Vermont Art Center (SVAC) is a multidisciplinary arts organization in Manchester, VT with a mission to promote and nurture the arts. SVAC strives to provide opportunities for local and regional artists, to introduce the wider community to artwork and performances of national relevance, and to engage diverse audiences. To do this, SVAC creates a community space for the arts through exhibitions, events, performances, and classes in a variety of media for children and adults, and an opportunity to explore the 100-acre campus and sculpture park.

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