

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

2016

ANNUAL REPORT

2017



PennState
College of Arts and Architecture



Bria Skonberg
photo by Carolina Palmgren

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Cover: Jessica Lang Dance *The Calling*
photo by Takao Komaru

W **E ARE** pleased to provide this annual report, in which you'll find news about the sixth season of the Classical Music Project, the pilot year of a Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative, and student engagement programs.

Our long-term stretch goal—to be one of the top three reasons students want to come to Penn State—inspired our increasingly robust student engagement programs. In 2016, we began a partnership with New Student Orientation to engage with incoming students. We're proud that one-third of the season audience was made up of Penn State students.

We also remained focused on the audiences of the future by introducing the magic of live performance to young people from across central Pennsylvania through our School-Time Matinee series.

Hundreds of volunteers and donors, a range of supportive partners, and thousands of patrons helped the dedicated staff fulfill our mission. Together, we enjoyed a successful season of enriching lives through many inspiring experiences.

There was much to celebrate about the 2016–2017 season.

Yours truly,



GEORGE TRUDEAU

Director, Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State

LETTER FROM THE

DIRECTOR



“We’re proud that **one-third** of the season audience was made up of **Penn State students.**”

Core Values

Arts Leadership

We believe artistic distinction and exceptional experiences are the cornerstones of the Center for the Performing Arts and are integral to our position of national leadership.

People First

We value everyone who benefits from and contributes to the Center for the Performing Arts. We take pride in fostering an environment of mutual respect, teamwork, and high ethical standards in which everyone's involvement is honored, supported, and appreciated.

Service Focused

We provide our constituencies and partners with a consistently high level of support, access, and opportunities ensuring the greatest possible inclusiveness, diversity, and enrichment for those we serve.

Creative Innovation

We seek and promote innovative, provocative, and risk-taking ideas and creative approaches across our organization.

Committed Stewardship

We ensure fiscal health, sustain superior facilities, create self-sustaining systems, and support the reduction of our environmental footprint through our business model, practices, and policies.



Circus Oz Sraight Up photos by Rob Blackburn



Vision

Enriching lives through inspiring experiences

Mission

The Center for the Performing Arts provides a context, through artistic connections, to the human experience. By bringing artists and audiences together, we spark discovery of passion, inspiration, and inner truths. We are a motivator for creative thinking and examination of our relationship with the world.

2016–2017 Presentations

Each performance was in Eisenhower Auditorium, unless indicated as having been in Schwab Auditorium (SA).

Cirque Éloize
Saloon, A Musical Acrobatic Adventure
Wednesday, September 21

Sphinx Virtuosi
Latin Voyages: Viajes Latinos
Thursday, September 29 (SA)

**Straighten Up and Fly Right:
The Nat King Cole Tribute**
featuring Ramsey Lewis
and John Pizzarelli
Thursday, October 13

Pilobolus • Shadowland
Tuesday, October 18

Odd Squad LIVE!
Tuesday, October 25

Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra
Jacek Kasprzyk, music and artistic director
Seong-Jin Cho, pianist
Friday, October 28

Roomful of Teeth
Thursday, November 17 (SA)

Bria Skonberg Quintet
Wednesday, November 30 (SA)

Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood LIVE!
Sunday, January 15

42nd STREET
Tuesday, January 17

Inon Barnatan, piano
Anthony McGill, clarinet
Alisa Weilerstein, cello
Monday, January 23 (SA)

ONCE
Tuesday, January 31

Circus Oz • Straight Up
Tuesday, February 7

Balé Folclórico da Bahia
Bahia of All Colors
Tuesday, February 14

tickets sold

27,706

tickets distributed

30,719

ticket sales

Wu Han, piano
Philip Setzer, violin
David Finckel, cello
Thursday, February 23 (SA)

Brooklyn Babylon
Created by Darcy James Argue
and Danijel Zvezelj
Featuring Darcy James Argue's
Secret Society
Tuesday, February 28

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra
J.S. Bach: The Circle of Creation
Thursday, March 2 (SA)

En Garde Arts presents
WILDERNESS
Wednesday, March 15

A Year with Frog and Toad
Music by Robert Reale
Book and lyrics by Willie Reale
Based on the books by Arnold Lobel
Sunday, March 19

PIPPIN
Tuesday, March 21

Fred Hersch Trio
with Special Guest Anat Cohen
Tuesday, March 28 (SA)

Julia Wolfe's Anthracite Fields
Bang on a Can All-Stars
with Penn State Concert Choir
Christopher Kiver, conductor
Thursday, March 30

DakhaBrakha
Tuesday, April 4 (SA)

RENT
Thursday, April 6

Jessica Lang Dance
Wednesday, April 12

ANNIE
Tuesday, April 18

performances

30

Penn State
student attendance

32%



Anat Cohen
photo by Jimmy Katz

SCHOO

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide these experiences to central Pennsylvania school children thanks to support from the McQuaide Blasko Endowment and the Honey and Bill Jaffe Endowment for Audience Development.

Partners: 34 schools, plus 51 homeschooling families, from 11 Pennsylvania counties (Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Huntingdon, Lycoming, Mifflin, Snyder, and Washington)

Jaffe Endowment funds supported the cost of the direct-mail postcards and the August mailing of the season information to all of the schools on our mailing list. Additionally, we were able to reimburse 29 schools (total number that requested subsidy) with 65 percent of their total trip costs thanks to the Honey and Bill Jaffe Endowment.

MA'

School-Time Presentations:

Attendance is noted next to each listing



202

Cirque Éloize • Saloon

Wednesday, September 21



767

Odd Squad LIVE!

Wednesday, October 26

L-TIME TINEES

Saloon photo © Jim Mneymneh. *Odd Squad LIVE!* photo by Sam Burkardt Photography 2016. *Balé Folclórico da Bahia* photo by Vinicius Lima. *A Year with Frog and Toad* photo by Chris and Scott Morris.



654

Balé Folclórico da Bahia

Tuesday, February 14



2,234

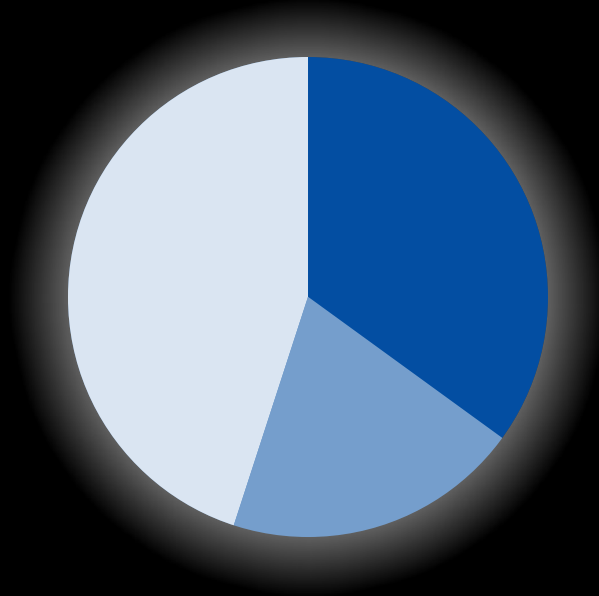
A Year with Frog and Toad

Monday, March 20

FISCAL YEAR 2016–2017

INCOME AND EXPENSES

The Center for the Performing Arts organizational budget totaled \$4,262,442. Fifty-five percent of revenues were earned and contributed through ticket sales and services, facility and equipment rentals, performance program advertising, concession sales, fundraising, grants, and endowments.

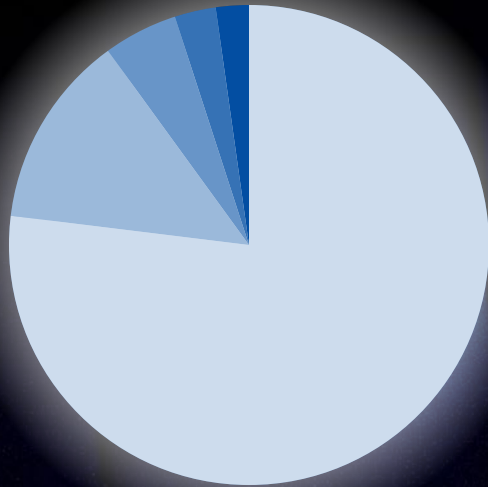


income

university support	45%
earned income	35%
Ticket Sales 19%, Rentals 11%, Other Earned Income 5%	
development income	20%
Contributions 13%, Grants 5%, Endowment Support 2%	

expenses

program and events	77%
general and administrative	13%
grants and special projects	5%
equipment and capital improvements	3%
development	2%



PILOBOLUS *Shadowland* photo by Ian Douglas

Center for the Performing Arts Staff

George Trudeau

director

Lea Asbell-Swanger

assistant director

Annie Doncsecz

finance director

Jara Dorsey-Lash

associate director of development

Tracy Noll

sales and development services director

Laura Sullivan

marketing and communications director

Amy Dupain Vashaw

audience and program development director

Shannon Arney

assistant ticket manager

Erin Baskin

graphic designer

Erik Baxter

multimedia specialist

Shannon Bishop

downtown ticket center manager

Len Codispot-Anderson

sales and development accounting coordinator

Gary Collins

production supervisor

Aimee Crihfield

contracts/logistics coordinator

Melissa Croushorn

student engagement manager

Medora Ebersole

education and community programs manager

Angela Harbst

assistant to the director

Deanna Heichel

assistant finance director

Tom Hesketh

events manager

Wanda Hockenberry

assistant to the director

Christine Igoe

ticket manager

Heather Longley

communications specialist

Rick MacZura

production supervisor

Heather Mannion

marketing strategy specialist

Sherren McKenzie

group sales coordinator

John Mark Rafacz

editorial manager

Mark Tinik

production supervisor

Lisa McClain Wagner

audience services manager

Jason Winfield

production supervisor

Workforce

27 full-time employees
57 part-time employees
97 student employees
125 volunteers
10 interns

Volunteer Event Staff Advisory Board

Ruth Bell
Jean Bloom
Roger Cartright
Dave Cowher
Vicky Droll
Emily Gregory
Joyce Koller
Grace Long
Kathy Matason
Barbara Reed

Community Advisory Council

Lam Hood, *chair*
Mary Ellen Litzinger, *vice chair*

Judy Albrecht
Lynn Sidehamer Brown
Jennifer Bailey
Philip Burlingame
Stephanie Corcino
Ed Galus
Charlene Gaus
Rich Kalin
Charles “Chick” King
Eileen Leibowitz
Elinor “Ellie” Lewis
Christine Lichtig
Larry Mroz
Sally Schaadt
Melinda Stearns
Lillian Upcraft
Pat Williams

student representatives

Brittany Banik
Walker Konkle
Jesse Scott
Caroline Senko

In Memoriam

The Center for the Performing Arts lost a friend and former Community Advisory Council member when **Fran Levin** passed away in June 2017. Levin was a patron and supporter for more than thirty years. She was a passionate arts advocate and served with distinction on the council from 2007–2012. In her role as director of sales and marketing for Penn State Hospitality Services, Levin championed a partnership with the Center for the Performing Arts that helped to provide on-campus housing for countless touring artists.



Wagner retires after decades of caring for the needs of customers and clients

Figuratively *and* literally, Lisa McClain Wagner brought Center for the Performing Arts audience services into the twenty-first century.

Wagner, who retired in June 2017 after two decades as audience services manager, spent a total of twenty-eight years working on client and customer services at the Center for the Performing Arts.

“The front of house team, both wage payroll personnel and volunteers that she has championed, are exceptionally well trained and dedicated,” says Lea Asbell-Swanger, Center for the Performing Arts assistant director. “They have adopted Lisa’s care and concern for all our guests. Lisa developed the front-of-house component into a model of successful customer service.”

During her tenure, Wagner employed more than 400 people—students and community members—and fostered an effective volunteer corps. She created the Volunteer Event Staff Advisory Board, a select group of volunteers that makes recommendations about improving audience experiences and volunteer operations, and the Junior Volunteer program, which encourages volunteerism by people ages 12–16.

Wagner, who worked at Penn State for thirty-five years, wrote the Center for the Performing Arts’ first comprehensive paid and volunteer event staff handbook. She regularly modified the guidelines, with input from her staff, so that they represented changes in the industry *and* expectations of local audiences.

As a College of Arts and Architecture safety representative, Wagner developed evacuation plans for all of the facilities served by her staff.

“Her plans were so complete that they were often the model that others at Penn State were encouraged to match,” Asbell-Swanger says.

Wagner’s client and customer service efforts included forging partnerships across University Park with units such as the Office of Physical Plant, Accessibility Services, Transportation Services, and University Police. She also nurtured relationships with community organizations and performing arts promoters.

“There have been countless major events held at our venue that could not have happened without her contributions,” Asbell-Swanger says.

One of Wagner’s most important projects was supporting the accessibility needs of patrons. She was a proponent of the audio description program, View Via Headphones, created by the Sight-Loss Support Group of Central Pennsylvania. Her support of the sight-loss community prompted her to serve for a term on the group’s board of directors. She also represented the Center for the Performing Arts on the University Access Committee.

In 2002, Wagner received the college’s staff award for outstanding service.



Collins retires after long career in theatre production

They don't make them like Gary Collins anymore. The production supervisor—flyman and rigger by trade—retired in December 2016 after almost sixteen years on the frontline of staging Center for the Performing Arts presentations.

Many of his former coworkers recall Collins, comfortable twelve months a year in shorts and a tee shirt, as a man who doesn't hesitate to use a ten-cent word when a five-cent word would do. He's also remembered as an "expert" about a plethora of topics.

"One of the most memorable quirks about Gary was his ability to completely make up a random number about anything," says former Center for the Performing Arts production supervisor Chad Swires. "Whether it be the distance to something, how much it weighs, how much something costs—it didn't matter. He could always give you a number off the top of his head. The accuracy of said number was always a hilarious discovery."

Collins came to the Center for the Performing Arts from Penn State's Theatre Arts Production Studio, where he spent a couple of years as a shop carpenter. Before that he was the technical director at Cresson Lake Playhouse (now Allegheny Highlands Regional Theatre).

A member of the International Association of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 83, based in Hershey, Collins also did a lot of freelance work at various theatrical venues and festivals, including Hershey Theatre, Hersheypark Stadium, Rolling Rock Town Fair, and Woodstock '94.

A native of Washington, D.C. who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, Collins enjoys hunting, fishing, and building birdhouses.

"Inside my paper cup," Collins is fond of saying, "everything is looking up." Here's hoping his retirement is looking way up.

Collins adjusts ropes on the fly rail. These ropes control the heights of the various bars above the stage that hold lighting and backdrops for the performance. Photo by Annemarie Mountz.



McKenzie retires from group sales position based on building relationships

Sherren McKenzie was born to sell. In her sixteen years as group sales coordinator at the Center for the Performing Arts, McKenzie never missed an opportunity to talk to people about the benefits of experiencing the performing arts.

“Whether it was a chance meeting in a grocery store or someone coming into the auditorium to use the restroom, Sherren made sure they heard about the wonderful offerings at the center and how easy it was to get a group together to come to a show,” recalls Tracy Noll, Center for the Performing Arts sales and development services director.

McKenzie, who retired in December 2016, began her group sales career as a part-time employee at the Bryce Jordan Center. When the Center for the Performing Arts booked eight performances of *Les Misérables* for its 2000–2001 season, McKenzie was asked to help with group sales for the touring Broadway presentation.

“She did such a wonderful job with that event that when we were able to hire a full-time group sales coordinator in August of 2001, we knew Sherren would be perfect for the job,” Noll says.

During her first season at the Center for the Performing Arts, McKenzie helped to launch the Informances program (now School-Time Matinees) by coordinating the sale of more than 4,000 elementary school student tickets to *Charlotte’s Web*.

“Not only did she increase sales, but she also increased the diversity of our audience. Her connections with the local community allowed her to bring in groups of people that would have never considered coming to these performances,” Noll says.

“To know Sherren is to be moved by her warmth, sincerity, and infectious smile. She makes each person she encounters feel appreciated,” says John Mark Rafacz, Center for the Performing Arts editorial manager.

One of McKenzie’s innovations was creating a program in which she worked with Penn State professors to connect specific presentations with the courses—and the students—they were teaching.



“Her dynamic personality and passion for the arts made her the perfect group sales person,” Noll says. “Patrons praised her for the incredible level of customer service they received, as well as her professionalism, enthusiasm, and thoroughness. Sherren took the time to build relationships with her group leaders, which kept them coming back year after year.”

In 2010, McKenzie implemented what became an annual reception and season preview for group leaders.

“The group leaders raved about this event and several of them placed orders that night,” Noll remembers.

In 2012, she made it even easier for academics and their students when she introduced an online group manager program. The online system was billed as a “no-hassle” ticketing program.

A year later, the Center for the Performing Arts entered an agreement to sell group tickets for the Bryce Jordan Center.

“Knowing our budget needs, Sherren was happy to take on this opportunity to help increase our income,” Noll says. “She also saw it as a wonderful opportunity to cross-sell between the two organizations. While it added a significant amount of work for Sherren, she thought it was beneficial for both groups.”

PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION

**Center for the Performing
Arts Presentations: 27**

Student-Sponsored Events: 12

University Presentations: 31

Academic Presentations: 151
included Esber Recital Hall concerts

Community Events: 5
Nittany Valley Symphony, Performing Arts
School of Central Pennsylvania, and State
College Area School District

Rentals: 3

Straight No Chaser, Kenny Rogers,
and *Rockin' Road to Dublin*

Total Events: 233

all events in all supported venues

Total Attendance: 87,035

all public events in Eisenhower and Schwab
auditoriums

Attendance by Groups: 3,113

Center for the Performing Arts presentations



DakhaBrakha
photo by Kulikov

Members

We appreciate the support of Center for the Performing Arts members during 2016–2017.

Executive Circle

\$5,000 and more

Bob and Sonia Hufnagel
Betty Scott and Chick King

Leadership Circle

\$3,000 to \$4,999

Patricia Best and Thomas Ray
Lynn Sidehamer Brown
Mimi Barash Coppersmith
Joan and Marty Duff
Blake and Linda Gall
John and Carol Graham
Robert and Helen Harvey
Beverly Hickey
Richard and Sally Kalin
Eileen W. Leibowitz
Dan and Peggy Hall LeKander
Mary Ellen and Tom Litzinger
Ms. Barbara Palmer
Louis P. Silverman
and Veronica A. Samborsky

Director's Circle

\$2,000 to \$2,999

Anonymous
Grace M. Bardine
Lynn Donald Breon
Janet Fowler Dargitz
and Karl George Stoedefalke
Rod and Shari Erickson
Edward R. Galus
Arnold and Marty Gasche
Richard B. Gidez
Donald W. Hamer
and Marie Bednar
Dorsey and Sherry Houtz
Honey and Bill Jaffe
Kay F. Kustanbauter
Lida and Pieter Ouwehand
William Rabinowitz
Robert Schmalz

Encore Circle

\$1,000 to \$1,999

Pamela M. Aikey
Judith Albrecht and Denny Gioia
Mary and Hu Barnes
Jack and Diana Brenizer
Steve and Sandy Elbin
Francis G. and Edda Gentry
John and Carol Graham
David and Margaret Gray
Lam and Lina Hood
Michael P. Johnson
and Maureen Mulderig
James and Bonnie Knapp
Stan and Debra Latta
Benson and Christine Lichtig
Kenneth and Irene McIlvried
Dotty and Paul Rigby
Sally L. Schaadt
Karen and Scott Shearer
Jackson and Diane Spielvogel
Susan and Lewis Steinberg
Mark and JoAnne Westerhaus
David and Diane Wisniewski
Youmeus

Advocate

\$500 to \$999

William and Deborah Atwater Asbury
Jennifer Bailey and Philip Bosha
Ned and Inga Book
Alan M. Brown
Philip and Susan Burlingame
Richard Carlson and Lori Forlizzi
Lee and Joan Coraor
Joseph and Annie Doncsecz
Michael and Ann Dotsey
Nancy S. Gamble
Bill and Connie Hayes
Steven L. Herb
and Sara Willoughby-Herb
Nancy L. Herron
Dr. Tom C. Hogan and Ms. Sharon Frost

Chris and Gail Hurley
James and Barbara Korner
Elinor Lewis
Richard and Juanita Lysle
John and Michelle Mason
Patrick W. and Susan N. Morse
Marcia and Bill Newton
Jack and Sue Poremba
Patricia Hawbaker Quinlivan
Andy and Kelly Renfrew
Shirley Sacks
Robert and Peggy Schlegel
Paul and K. C. Sheeler
Marilynne W. Stout
Kenton Stuck
John and Sherry Symons
Sue Thorpe
George and Debbie Trudeau
Gary and Tammy Vratarich
Mary Jane and William Wild
Terry and Pat Williams
Sandra Zaremba and Richard Brown
Charlotte Zmyslo

Partner

\$250 to \$499

Lynn and Ellis Abramson
Steve and Christine Adams
Carla Mae
 and Richard Baumgardner
Sven and Carmen Bilen
David and Katharina Blandford
Walter Broughton
 and Joseph Fennewald
Stephanie Corcino
Daniel Davis
Jo Dixon
Terry and Janice Engelder
Bob and Ellen Frederick
Andris and Dace Freivalds
Joe French
Catherine Greenham
Jodi Hakes
Sue Haug
Dawn E. Hawkins
Lisa Herzog
Anne F. Hummer
Gina and John Ikenberry
Allen and Nancy Jacobson
Cindy and Al Jones
Daniel and Kathleen Jones
Harry B. Kropp
 and Edward J. Legutko

Gretchen Leathers
Dorothy Lutz
Susan McWhirter
Eva and Ira Pell
Mary and Gary Petersen
Lisa Preis and Jeffrey Wong
Mike and Joan Roseberry
Vaughn and Kay Shirk
Nancy and Wade VanLandingham
Shawn and Amy Vashaw
Barbara and Joel A. Weiss
David and Betsy Will
Sharon and Carl Winter
David and Connie Yocum
Craig and Diane Zabel
Cal and Pam Zimmerman

Friend

\$150 to \$249

Anne Anderson
Scott and Sandy Balboni
Lou and Bernadette Barth
Janet Blankenhorn
Barry Bram and Laura Perry
Dr. Henry and Elaine Brzycki
John M. Carroll
 and Mary Beth Rosson
Francesca Chiaromonte
John Collins and Mary Brown
Roger and Corinne Coplan
Shirley J. Coploff
In Memory of Doris Croskey
George and Bunny Dohn
Bonnie and Howard Eckstut
The Egan Family
Peggy Ekdahl
Barry and Patti Fisher
Heather F. Fleck
Frank and Vicki Forni
Pamela Francis
Estelle Frankl
P. L. Gavazzi
David and Kay Green
Miles and Tawni Guralnick
Charles and Laura Hackett
Elizabeth Hanley
 and Patrick Kolivoski
John Lloyd Hanson
Betty Harper and Scott Sheeder
Ann and Tom Hettmansperger
Tom and Sandy Hood
Jackie and John Hook
Jim and Susan Houser

Steven and Shirley Hsi
Anne and Lynn Hutcheson
George and Diane Kesidis
Deborah Klevans
Kenneth and Olivia Kuo
Mark and Theresa Lafer
Fran E. Levin
Sharon and David Lieb
Bob and Janice Lindsay
Herb and Trudy Lipowsky
Jane and Edward Liszka
John and Nancy Lowe
Deborah Marron
 and Michael Rosenberg
Mathnasium of State College
Lyle Merriman
June Miller
Gary and Judy Mitchell
Betty and John Moore
Mark and Minda Morath
Chris and Bobbie Muscarella
Robert F. and Donna C. Nicely
Joe and Sandy Niebel
Claire M. Paquin
Joan Peterson
Guy and Grace Pilato
Proformal LLH Promos, LLC
Andrew and Jean Landa Pytel
Ed and Georgia Reutzel
Ford and Mary Risley
Rocco and Lorraine Rosamilia
Tom and Marlene Russo
Midori Savage
Susan J. Scheetz
Donald L. Smith
 and Merrill Budlong
Ronald Glen Smith
Carol Sosnowski
 and Rosemary Weber
Barry and Ellen Stein
JoLaine Teyssier
James and Deena Ultman
Merita and Bruce Valoris
Stephen and Jennifer Van Hook
Jim and Christine Vrentas
Alice Wilson and Friends
Dianne and Ross Witcoski
Debra Young

Member

\$50 to \$149

Kevin and Catherine Alloway
Anne and Art Anderson

Anonymous
Stephanie and Andy Arndt
Jan Babcock
Brittany Banik
Reg and Diane Bartram
Ernest L. Bergman
Chandra Bose
Ben Bronstein
John Bukowski and Cathy Stenson
Alycia Chambers and Rob Gentry
Jane Charlton
Kevin and Suzanne Cheesebrough
Alice Clark
Andrea Commaker
Ms. Ellen Dashem
Frank and Mary Deutsch
David and Paula Diedrich
MaryAnn Domitrovitz
Marti Franklin Duffy
Michael Gabrovsek
 and Susan Traynor
Jane and Brian Galas
Troy Gardner
Dennis and Ellen Gilson
Amy Greenberg and Richard Doyle
Bud and Irma Grimm
Dan and Debbey Grow
Peg and Don Hambrick
Andrea Harrington
Al and Karen Hewitt
Bill and Kelly Hughes
Fred and Jan Hurvitz
Toni Irvin
Nicole Johnston
Mel Kaulkin
Laura and Peter Kemper
Pamela L. Kennedy
Peter and Julia Kiefer
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Kirkpatrick
Jeanne Kitko
Sally T. F. Knapp
Patricia and Lawrence Koch
Gerald and Jean Krum
Rocky Landers
Joseph Landolfi
Ralph Licastro and Laura Reidy
Jane M. Linsky
Doreen Long
Richard Manning
Linden and Kendall Markley
Harold and Priscilla McFerren
Arline Miller
Mary and Scott Miller
Rebecca K. Miller

Rick and Tami Mistrick
Jan Muhlert
Bob and Dottie Neff
Jon and Naomi Nelson
Robert Nelson
Gloria Nieweg
Adrian Ocneanu
Carol Pataky
Lene Nielsen-Paton
Elizabeth Pennock
Bob and Lynn Phillips
Michael Pursley
Dave and Ginny Ray
Len and Nancy Rockey
Ken and Millie Rockwell
John and Donna Romig
Ben and Terrill Salter
Ken Schmill
Paul and Melissa Sherbondy
Rich and JoAnn Shore
Brian and Jill Shunk
David and Willa Siegel

Laura J. Simon and Bruce G. Lindsay
Terry and Kathleen Smeal
Roger and Jo Ann Snyder
Jacqueline Sobel
Kepler Sones
Karen and Robert Spicer
Ben Sporay
Paul and Barbara Spring
Andrew and Susan Stephenson
Richard Steuernagle
Mary Jane Stout
Kathy Strycula
Christine Suhey
William D. Taylor
and Andrea M. Mastro
Suzann Tedesco
Guy and Carolyn Thompson
Mrs. Barbara Van Horn
Donna and Gene Weller
Linda and Carol White
Jardian Wooten
and Pitchayaporn Tantinkarnchara
Diane Zell and David Thomas

The Jazz Train

\$300 or more

William and Deborah Atwater Asbury
Jennifer Bailey and Philip Bosha
Gilbert J. Barker and Sons
Lou and Bernadette Barth
Patricia Best and Thomas Ray
David and Susan Beyerle
Lynn Donald Breon
Lynn Sidehamer Brown
Philip and Susan Burlingame
David and Lisa Coggins
Sarah and Paul Damaske
Gordon F. DeJong
Jim and Polly Dunn
Edward R. Galus
Arnold and Marty Gasche
Charlene and Frank Gaus
John and Michelle Groenveld
Lee Grover and Anita Bear
Steven L. Herb and Sara Willoughby-Herb
Steven Hinckley and Sara Krome
Dale Hoffman
Anne and Lynn Hutcheson
Honey and Bill Jaffe
Michael P. Johnson and Maureen Mulderig

Cindy and Al Jones
Kathleen D. Matason
and Richard M. Smith
Dr. Marla Moon
Wilson and Maureen Moses
Annemarie Mountz
Larry and Kelly Mroz
Jack and Sue Poremba
Sylvia Ruggeri
Sally L. Schaadt
David and Ann
Shallcross-Wolfgang
Louis P. Silverman
and Veronica A. Samborsky
Dan and Melinda Stearns
S. Shyam Sundar, PhD
Dennis and Joan Thomson
Dan and Linda Trevino
Barbara & Joel A. Weiss
Charlotte Zmyslo



Movement workshop serves as catalyst to get into the groove with community



Participants in the September 2016 *Let's Dance* movement workshop perform on the lawn of University Park's Ford Building.

AN IMPORTANT ASPECT of Center for the Performing Arts engagement activities is participation. Many people learn best by doing, and dance is for every body. And heck, it's fun! Center for the Performing Arts movement workshops for the community embody those principles by partnering with Penn State departments and community organizations to ensure that accessible, engaging, educational, and just plain fun experiences can be had by all.

The first *Let's Dance* movement workshop of the season took place on the lawn of University Park's Ford Building. Planned to coincide with daycare pickup time at nearby Child Care Center at Hort Woods and visiting families at The Nittany Lion Inn, the workshop attracted people of multiple generations and abilities across the spectrum.

Led by Penn State School of Theatre faculty member Michele Dunleavy and presented in partnership with Penn State College of Health and Human Development faculty member Krista Wilkinson, the workshop included learning choreography from the Disney film *Aladdin*. Several School of Theatre students also demonstrated their tap dance moves atop wooden platforms placed on the sidewalk. Students from the Alliance of Heroic Hearts nonprofit organization, dressed in superhero costumes, danced and entertained the people who participated.

The interest generated by the workshop prompted discussions among the organizers about ways to sustain the momentum and to satisfy the clear interest families have in participating together. One idea forwarded was

that this could be an opportunity for LifeLink PSU, a program that brings State College Area School District special education students to Penn State to participate and learn independence skills.

The success of the workshop created an opportunity for Center for the Performing Arts Community and Education Programs Manager Medora Ebersole to co-teach with Wilkinson a course bringing together students from the School of Theatre, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and LifeLink to use the performing arts as a means of supporting communication.

The Center for the Performing Arts makes curricular connections with University faculty for one-time class visits and attendance at related performances, but the opportunity to reach students a few times a week across a semester is an impact the center was eager to have. It was especially gratifying to see the work of Brazil's Balé Folclórico da Bahia incorporated into the students end-of-semester showcase.

Members of the broader community were able to see evidence-based practices for language support incorporated into fun activities such as improvisation, vocal exercises, dance, and even *capoeira*—a game of mimicry created by African slaves brought to Brazil beginning in the sixteenth century. The game was introduced to the students during a class visit by the dancers from Bahia. These distinguished international artists, presented by the Center for the Performing Arts, were able to contribute the global competency skills of valuing and benefitting from difference.

Patricia Best and Thomas Ray receive Distinguished Service Award

The Center for the Performing Arts named Patricia Best and Thomas Ray as its 2017 Distinguished Service Award winners.

“Patricia and Tom are exemplary patrons, donors, and advocates for the performing arts,” says George Trudeau, center director. “They attend many performances each season and often bring friends to share with them the joy of live performances.”

Upon meeting thirty years ago, Best says, she and Ray were pleased to discover a mutual appreciation of theatre and jazz. That interest led the Ferguson Township couple to sponsor jazz performances at the Center for the Performing Arts, as well as to become center members at the Leadership Circle and Jazz Train levels. In the past two seasons, they sponsored performances by Maria Schneider Orchestra and Bria Skonberg Quintet.

“We are pleased to join with so many others in supporting the ongoing development of opportunities for Penn State and our community to have the special access to the arts that the Center for the Performing Arts provides every year,” Best says.

Best worked for State College Area School District for more than thirty years and rose through the ranks from teacher, to guidance counselor, to administrative professional. She retired in 2009 after ten years as the school district’s superintendent, during which time she was an avid supporter of arts education.

She served as president of Leadership Centre County, was a chair and a board member of the Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County, and was on the board of the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts. She was president of the Penn State College of Education Alumni Society Board and received the 2009 Penn State Renaissance Award for service to the University and community. She also was a member of the Center for the Performing Arts Community Advisory Council from 2008–2014.

Best serves as vice chair of the Mount Nittany Health System Board. In addition, she is a member of the Children’s Advocacy Center of Centre County and Discovery Space Children’s Science Museum boards.

Ray worked at Raytheon in a variety of capacities, including twenty-nine years in business development. He retired in 2007 after more than thirty-nine years of service.

Best and Ray are supporters of Green Drake Gallery & Arts Center in Millheim. They also established, through the Centre County Community Foundation, a State College Area School District endowment to support annual faculty grants for instructional innovation.



They travel extensively and tend to incorporate live music, theatre, and dance into their experiences. They’ve taken tango lessons in Buenos Aires, Argentina; enrolled in a week of seminars and performances with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra at Chautauqua Institution in New York; and witnessed some of the world’s top vocalists at La Scala opera house in Milan, Italy. They also return annually to New Orleans to hear the region’s notable jazz, Cajun, and zydeco music.

“The arts have been part of human history from its earliest ages through drawings, stories, songs, pottery, dance, plays, and musical instruments,” Best says. “So, the question for us is not ‘Why invest in the arts?’ but ‘How could we not?’”

The Distinguished Service Award has been given annually since 1996.

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A pair of student engagement series make their debuts

A member of Writers Organized to Represent Diverse Stories (WORDS) performs at the HUB-Robeson Center prior to the opening of an exhibit about Black Lives Matter.

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New Leaf Initiative
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State College Area High School
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Unity Church of Jesus Christ

Center for the Performing Arts Student Engagement Manager Melissa Croushorn introduced two series in 2016–17 aimed at getting Penn State students to interact with the arts in innovative ways.

The weekly ArtOut focused on animating University art spaces for students through programming related to particular art forms and making connections to works of art through wellness, social justice, and interdisciplinary collaborations.

For Black History Month, for instance, members of Penn State's Writers Organized to Represent Diverse Stories (WORDS) performed poetry and spoken word in the Robeson Gallery at the HUB-Robeson Center prior to the opening of an exhibit about Black Lives Matter by Penn State

alumnus, former professional football player, and visual artist Aaron Maybin.

Throughout the year, ArtOut visited Woskob Family Gallery in Penn State Downtown Theatre Center, HUB Gallery, Robeson Gallery, and Art Alley in HUB-Robeson Center.

The monthly We Art series centered on interdisciplinary connections within Penn State academic and administrative units, including Sustainability, Human Resources, Education, Earth and Mineral Sciences, Visual Arts, and Journalism.

Students, faculty, and staff members shared their experiences with ongoing projects and interests as an opportunity to identify potential collaborations.

Center Launches Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative



1

Amplifying less familiar voices from around the globe has always been a key component of the Center for the Performing Arts programming philosophy. So, too, has been creating an inclusive environment in which people of all backgrounds are invited to participate in its programs, presentations, and activities. In connection with Penn State's All In campaign, however, the Center for the Performing Arts is codifying those efforts and garnering support from across University Park and the community to initiate the Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative.

With faculty leadership from Tom Hogan, professor of practice in human resources management, lead funding provided by Penn State's Equal Opportunity Planning Committee, and additional support from partners across campus, the collaborative aims to use the performing arts as an agent of change to promote a more welcome, diverse, and inclusive environment at Penn State.



2

DIVE



UNIVERSITY

The pilot year was full of activities, kicking off with a dinner on the Eisenhower Auditorium stage to welcome Sphinx Virtuosi, a Detroit-based ensemble created to support the work of classical musicians of color. Featuring a Latin-inspired menu to complement the ensemble's *Latin Voyages* concert program, the event included remarks by President Eric Barron and Hogan about the importance of the University's diversity efforts, plus a music exchange between Penn State's Essence of Joy choir, under the direction of Anthony T. Leach, and Catalyst Quartet, one of four ensembles that make up Sphinx Virtuosi. Attended by champions of diversity from across campus and the community, including State College Mayor Elizabeth Goreham, the event was intended to build momentum for the collaborative and introduce its work.

Later in the season, Brazil's Balé Folclórico da Bahia came to Nittany Valley. Company founder Walson Botelho visited Penn State entry-level and advanced Portuguese language classes. The opportunity to

host a native Portuguese speaker was so important that the department supported his visit financially, furthering the company's ability to tour across the United States.

While in State College, the company also gave a *capoeira* demonstration to students of mixed abilities in the Supporting Communication Through Performance course, which Center for the Performing Arts Community and Education Programs Manager Medora Ebersole was co-facilitating. The demonstration was incorporated into the class's end-of-semester performance, with students from Penn State's LifeLink program participating with students from the Communication Sciences and Disorders program and the School of Theatre.

The company also gave a demonstration to students from the Portuguese classes they visited and Schreyer Honors College students. The engagement included a free, open-to-the-public





5

dance workshop at the State College Municipal Building, which attracted ninety-two participants representing a spectrum of ages.

The residency culminated with one of the fiercest displays of energetic dancing and music making that central Pennsylvania has seen in quite some time.

The events of the collaborative finished for the season with a post-performance facilitated talkback after *RENT* for the Penn State Alumni Association staff. Hogan, who in addition to his professional duties and association with the collaborative also sits on the Commission for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and Borja Gutierrez, chair of the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equity, facilitated the session. Promoting understanding and helping audience members to process their feelings after a performance is an important part of creating an inclusive environment for all.

- 1 Essence of Joy performs at the Sphinx Virtuosi welcome dinner.
- 2 David Merino as Angel in the *RENT* 20th Anniversary Tour. Photo by Carol Rosegg, 2016.
- 3 Balé Folclórico da Bahia dancers perform a work inspired by the cultural traditions of northeastern Brazil.
- 4 Catalyst Quartet, an ensemble that performs as part of Sphinx Virtuosi and as a separate touring unit, features cellist Karlos Rodriguez, violist Paul Laraia, and violinists Karla Donehew-Perez and Suliman Tekalli.
- 5 Members of Balé Folclórico da Bahia lead community members in demonstrations of traditional dance and *capoeira*.

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Each season brings a wealth of artistic experiences. Some of the highlights of 2016–2017 follow.

- 1 **Cirque Éloize**
in *Saloon*
- 2 **Julia Wolfe's**
Anthracite Fields
- 3 **Pilobolus**
- 4 **En Garde Arts**
in *WILDERNESS*



HIGHLIGHTS



Saloon musicians Ben Nesrallah, Sophie Beudet, and Trevor Pool
photo © Jim Mneymneh



Photos © Jim Mneymneh

1

Cirque Éloize in *Saloon*

The Center for the Performing Arts was pleased to co-commission and present another work from the innovative contemporary circus company Cirque Éloize. *Saloon* takes audiences on a wild romp through a Wild West town full of colorful characters—who do some pretty amazing things—and features live music.

Thanks to contributions from many community investors, the Center for the Performing Arts raised \$15,000 to support the creation of *Saloon*. The work continues to be performed to acclaim worldwide, always with credit to the Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State as a co-commissioner.

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Photo by Derek V. Smythe

2

Julia Wolfe's *Anthracite Fields*

Another highlight was the presentation of Julia Wolfe's Pulitzer-Prize winning *Anthracite Fields*. The oratorio movingly depicts the lives of coal miners and their families in the Anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania in the early 1900s.

The contemporary music ensemble Bang on a Can All-Stars spent several days at Penn State with Wolfe and performed the work with the Penn State Concert Choir directed by Christopher Kiver. Preparing for and performing *Anthracite Fields* was a tremendous challenge for the choir students, and they rose to the occasion receiving accolades from Wolfe and the Bang on a Can musicians.



Bang on a Can All-Stars
Photo © 2014 Peter Serling

3

Pilobolus

Dance theatre company Pilobolus showed its Nittany Lion spirit when it posted a “We Are” video on social media in advance of its appearance at Eisenhower Auditorium.

4

En Garde Arts in *WILDERNESS*

Each teenager experiences the roller coaster of emotions that comes with being one’s own self, claiming independence, and growing up. Some teens have a harder time than others, with some even turning to destructive behaviors in an attempt to make sense of the world.

En Garde Arts’ beautiful, music-filled play *WILDERNESS* uses documentary-style theatrical techniques to get to the heart of its stories. The show was borne out of Executive Producer Anne Hamburger’s experiences with her son. Her research included talking to teens and families to bring an unflinching portrait of this controversial therapeutic technique to life on stage.

The company was in town for three days, making connections across University Park and in the community.



People involved with mental health concerns gathered at State College's New Leaf Initiative for a World Café conversation. Facilitated by State College entrepreneur Spud Marshall, with visual interpretation by Centre County artist Will Snyder, the conversation focused on resources needed in our community and how to work together to leverage our resources for greater good. The cast of *WILDERNESS* also participated in the discussion. Representatives from State College Area High School, Counseling and Psychological Services at Penn State, the Jana Marie Foundation, and others participated.

From the planning for the *WILDERNESS* engagement, a sustained relationship with the Jana Marie Foundation was formed.

Center for the Performing Arts interns planned a variety of events surrounding *WILDERNESS*, including a Mokita dialogue in advance of the artists' visit. A Mokita dialogue is an opportunity for community members to come together to discuss "the elephant in the room" — topics that aren't often addressed. At these, as well as in the lobby before the performance, a large chalkboard in an elephant shape was available for people to share their thoughts and concerns.

The Center for the Performing Arts presents work that challenges, causes deep reflection and thinking, and spurs people to take action for the betterment of the community. *WILDERNESS* focused those energies around mental health, and the conversations that continue today could well make Happy Valley happier.

Previous page, from left: People involved with mental health concerns gather at State College's New Leaf Initiative for a *WILDERNESS*-inspired World Café conversation. Artist Will Snyder creates a visual interpretation of the conversation. This page, from left: Welker White (*mom*), Riley Suter (*Cole*), Taylor Noble (*Sophia*), and Caitlin Goldie (*Elizabeth*) perform a scene from *WILDERNESS*.



Classical Music Project ends on a high note

Classical Music Project 2016–2017 partners

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Student Affairs

The Center for the Performing Arts Classical Music Project, an initiative that aimed to elevate the profile of the center’s classical music program within the community, concluded its six-season commitment in 2016–2017.

According to center Director George Trudeau, the focus of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-funded project was to provide students with live performance experiences and personal interaction with the musicians as a way to engage and grow new audiences.

“College students are at a time in their lives when they should be in hyper-discovery mode and open to new experiences,” Trudeau says. “This may be the last time when they can devote themselves so completely to the broad range of experiences provided on a university campus.”

The foundation wanted to capitalize on growing classical music accessibility and to develop it. Trudeau was one of a group of university-based performing arts center directors invited to explore ways to increase student interest in the style that defined a significant period in music history. Trudeau and his team then drafted a proposal to integrate classical programming into the season schedule and introduce it to the student population.

His plan outlined four key areas to reach new audiences: a major residency program, student engagement activities, curriculum partnerships, and a Penn State campus share project. The foundation approved the proposal and awarded a \$470,000 grant—the largest in the center’s history—to fund the 2011–2014 seasons. Later, an additional \$400,000 was awarded to fund the 2014–2017 seasons.

Over time, because of costs and logistics, the project’s four components morphed into more practical areas of concentration, while other aspects of the initiative were eliminated. By the final season, the program’s elements included visits

by guest ensembles; composer residencies; student and community engagement activities; faculty and commonwealth campus partnerships; a student ambassador plan; course development; and a Classical Coffeehouse series of intimate concerts.

In the project's six years, the center realized its goals. Students were being exposed to classical music in more ways, and not only music students.

More artists performed in residence halls for pop-up concerts. More varied academic departments welcomed classical music-related programs for their students, including arts-entrepreneurship lectures and leadership seminars. Involved students praised the project's ambassador element, saying it gave its participants a sense of ownership—and desire for success—for the classical music programs.

In the project's final three years, more than a thousand students interacted with visiting artists during residencies, which resulted in more students buying tickets to Classical Music Project events. Student attendance at the center's classical music events increased from 26 percent total audience in the project's first season to 40 percent in the 2013–14 season. Data shows that student attendance continued to rise. In the 2014–15 season, students comprised 43 percent of the center's classical music audience; that increased to 51 percent in 2015–16 and to 57 percent in the project's final season.

“Overall, our audiences have had increased opportunities to engage with classical music,” Trudeau says. “The engagement programs have provided (students) chances to meet the artists, get to know them better, along with a greater understanding of the repertoire they are performing.”



Alisa Weilerstein
photo by Paul Stuart

