

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT PENN STATE



2019 // 2020
ANNUAL REPORT

 **PennState**
College of Arts and Architecture



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Letter from the Director

2019 – 2020

WE ARE pleased to present the Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State 2019–2020 Annual Report, which highlights performances, presentations, and projects that engaged University Park and the region in profound and meaningful ways.

As we contend with the implications of the coronavirus pandemic that brought our season to a close earlier than scheduled, we are grateful for the many sources of support we enjoy. We encourage you to read through this report and take pride in the many accomplishments achieved by the Center for the Performing Arts.

Here are a few highlights for me.

Our season focus, *The American Experience: Through an African-American Lens*, unfolded through curated presentations of music, theatre, and dance to illustrate the stories of African-American life in the United States through the last several centuries.

With support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, we launched *The Reflection Project: Looking at Who WE ARE*, a three-year exploration of identity, community, and empathy.

We engaged students in meaningful experiences connected to both academic and student life, including support for student-organized arts programs and presentations. A new project, IllumiNATION, brought students together to build community through the arts, generating enthusiasm and momentum to continue into future seasons.



pscpa



psupresents



psupresents

Another new program brought jazz into schools. Working in partnership with Jazz at Lincoln Center, we engaged a talented group of musicians to present *Let Freedom Swing* in central Pennsylvania schools.

All of those great projects and much more are detailed in this report.

It was heartbreaking to have to cancel our March and April performances because of the pandemic. We have pivoted in the months since to ramp up our social media platforms as a resource for virtual performing arts experiences. I encourage our friends to connect to us via our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts, where you will find links to arts content to enjoy and be uplifted by during this time away from live, in-person arts experiences.

In times of crisis, we often look to the people and things that encourage us to persevere and give us respite. For many of us, the arts are that resource. It has been gratifying and inspiring to hear from many people about their heightened appreciation for the arts, including a renewed commitment to support the Center for the Performing Arts. Thank you to all who patronize, support, and partner with us. We need you all now more than ever.

We look forward, as soon as possible, to welcoming audiences back for great performances and to again engage artists with communities for life-affirming and enriching experiences.

Stay safe, be well, and take good care.



George Trudeau

Director, Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State





Humans by Circa
Photo by Salih Kalic

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.

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.

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.

Creative Innovation

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

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.



Michael Mwenso

Photo © 2019 Elizabeth Leitzell

Season focuses on the stories of African Americans

The Center for the Performing Arts builds empathy, encourages curiosity, and creates pathways to mutual understanding through curated presentations and related activities.

Sometimes, a theme emerges from the chosen artists that can be used to give greater context and meaning. The 2019–2020 season included eight selections that would amplify and uplift the African-American experience. The eight performances, gathered under the season focus title *The American Experience: Through an African-American Lens*, included theatre, dance, classical music, and jazz—each featuring world-class artists.



Imani Winds and Catalyst Quartet

Imani Winds and Catalyst Quartet paired to bring composer Jessie Montgomery's new work, *Sergeant McAuley*, to life. The piece is based on stories told by her grandfather and her subsequent extensive research into the Great Migration. The engagement featured a talk by Montgomery, offered in partnership with the Penn State School of Music and the Penn State School of Law's Immigrants' Rights Clinic.



Maceo Parker

Saxophonist Maceo Parker and his band paid tribute to a giant of American music, Ray Charles, in their program featuring a rumination on that greatest of human capabilities in *It's All About Love*.

Harlem 100

Jazz plays such an important role in our country's history, and the incredible musicians and dancers of *Harlem 100* celebrated that history through the prism of the Harlem Renaissance. The presentation featured Mwenso and The Shakes with special guests Brianna Thomas, Michela Marino Lerman, and Vuyo Sotashe.



Dance Theatre of Harlem

The pain, passion, and joy of the African-American experience were told through a performance by Dance Theatre of Harlem. Featuring a new work by Claudia Schreier, with a score composed by Catalyst Quartet's Montgomery, *Passage* took inspiration from the 400th anniversary of the first ship carrying enslaved Africans arriving in Virginia.

It was an honor to present a new work by an African-American woman performed by an important company celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. The engagement also included a powerful talk by founding company member and artistic director Virginia Johnson. Through the talk, the Center for the Performing Arts developed a new partnership with Penn State's Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and African American Studies departments.

Photos: 1. **Maceo Parker** by Ines Kaiser. 2. *Harlem 100's* **Brianna Thomas**. 3. Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director **Virginia Johnson** by François Rousseau.



Jessie Montgomery
Photo by Jiyang Chen



Step Afrika!

Photo by Jati Lindsay

Step Afrika!

The Center for the Performing Arts hosted the world premiere of a new work, *Drumfolk*, by Washington, D.C.-based Step Afrika! The unstoppable power of the human spirit formed the core of the work, which told the story of the Stono Rebellion of 1739 and subsequent Negro Act of 1740, which made it illegal for enslaved people to gather, to learn to read or write, and to use drums or other instruments.

The engagement included a week with the company, which led the community in a lesson in stepping, facilitated an exchange among several Penn State student dance organizations, and participated in a welcome event that also featured Roots of Life, Essence 2, and the For Good Performance Troupe. A School-Time Matinee had more than 1,200 children clapping, stomping, and expressing their excitement while learning about complicated history.

Lizz Wright

The season focus featured the inaugural Penn State appearance by singer Lizz Wright. Her engagement included a heartfelt and story-filled class visit to Theatre 101, which included about 230 Penn State students.

The last two presentations of the season focus had to be canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A week with Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra had been planned in partnership with the School of Music and public schools. The orchestra's concert was scheduled to feature Andy Farber's new compositional ode to Frank Lloyd Wright, *Usonian Structures*.

A national tour of the Broadway revival production of *THE COLOR PURPLE* was to round out the season and finish the theme with the story of Miss Celie, one of the most resilient, transformational characters to ever wear pants.



Photos: 4. Step Afrika! Executive Director and Founder **C. Brian Williams**. 5. **Lizz Wright** by Attila Kleb.

"Many stories matter," says Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her popular TED Talk. "Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity."

We hope the selected artists helped to shine a light on the beautiful, complicated, joyous, and tragic history of African Americans through the telling of these stories.

Center for the Performing Arts Staff

George Trudeau

Director and Associate Clinical Professor,
College of Arts and Architecture

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

Deanna Beamer

Assistant Finance Director

Len Codispot-Anderson

Group Sales and Donor Relations Manager

Aimee Crihfield

Contracts/Logistics Coordinator

Medora Ebersole

Education and Community Programs Manager

Hope Falk

Student Engagement Manager

Angela Harbst

Assistant to the Director

Tom Hesketh

Events Manager

Dr. Tom Hogan

Scholar in Residence

Christine Igoe

Ticket Manager

Kelly Kaiserian

Audience Services Manager

Robyn Krause-Hale

Director of Arts Advancement,
College of Arts and Architecture

Heather Longley

Communications Specialist

Rick MacZura

Production Supervisor

Heather Mannion

Marketing Strategy Specialist

Joi McKenzie

Downtown Ticket Manager

John Mark Rafacz

Editorial Manager

Mark Tinik

Production Supervisor

Jason Winfield

Production Supervisor

Workforce

- 26 full-time employees
- 39 part-time employees
- 83 student employees
- 111 volunteers
- 5 interns

Volunteer Event Staff Advisory Board

Ruth Bell
Jean Bloom
Roger Cartright
Dave Cowher
Emily Gregory
Lyn Horning
Susan Houser
Mercedes Lakhtakia
Kathy Matason
Barbara Reed
Roseann Sieminski
Judi Vratarich

Community Advisory Council

chair

Melinda Stearns

vice chair

Jennifer Bailey

Judy Albrecht

Barry Bram

Linda Brown

Stephanie Corcino

Sandy Elbin

Ed Galus

Charlene Gaus

Rachel Ginder

Tom Hogan

Rich Kalin

Charles "Chick" King

Elinor "Ellie" Lewis

Benson Lichtig

Larry Mroz

Sue Poremba

Sally Schaad

Sue Thorpe

Lillian Upcraft

JoAnne Westerhaus

Mary Jane Wild

student representatives

Bhaskar Mukherjee

Grace Murray

Presentations

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

SEPTEMBER

**Emmet Cohen Trio
and Houston Person**

Thursday, September 12 (SA)

**Imani Winds
and Catalyst Quartet**

(im)migration: music of change
Wednesday, September 18 (SA)

**It's All About Love
Starring Maceo Parker
and Featuring the Maceo Parker Big Band**
Thursday, September 26

**Mexico Beyond Mariachi
presents *Sugar Skull!*
*A Día de los Muertos Musical Adventure***
Sunday, September 29

OCTOBER

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Tuesday, October 8

Wednesday, October 9

Thursday, October 10

Friday, October 11

Saturday, October 12 (matinee and evening)

Sunday, October 13

**Academy of St. Martin in the Fields
Chamber Ensemble**

Thursday, October 17 (SA)

**Harlem 100: Celebrating the
100th Anniversary
of the Harlem Renaissance**
featuring Mwenso and The Shakes
with special guests Brianna Thomas,
Michela Marino Lerman, and Vuyo Sotashe
Tuesday, October 22

A BRONX TALE

Wednesday, October 30

NOVEMBER

**Magic Tree House:
Showtime with Shakespeare**
Sunday, November 3

Silkroad Ensemble
Tuesday, November 5

**Dance Theatre of Harlem
50th Anniversary Tour
Virginia Johnson, artistic director**
Tuesday, November 12

**An Evening with Itzhak Perlman
Rohan De Silva, pianist**
Thursday, November 14

RENT
Tuesday, November 19



**The company of the *RENT*
20th Anniversary Tour**
Photo by Amy Boyle 2019

JANUARY

Humans by Circa
Created by Yaron Lifschitz
and the Circa Ensemble
Tuesday, January 21

JERSEY BOYS
Tuesday, January 28

Step Afrika!
Drumfolk
Friday, January 31

FEBRUARY

Lizz Wright
Wednesday, February 5 (SA)

**The National Symphony Orchestra
of Ukraine**
**Volodymyr Sirenko, artistic director
and chief conductor**
Volodymyr Vynnytsky, pianist
Tuesday, February 11

Kronos Quartet and Mahsa Vahdat
Music for Change: The Banned Countries
Tuesday, February 18

Erth's Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure
The Mystery of the Dinosaurs of the Deep
Thursday, February 20

Apollo's Fire
The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra
Vivaldi's Four Seasons Rediscovered
Jeannette Sorrell, conductor
Thursday, February 27 (SA)

**Scheduled presentations canceled
because of the coronavirus pandemic**

Penn State's
College of Arts and Architecture,
School of Music,
and Center for the Performing Arts
Present Bizet's opera Carmen
Friday, March 27
Sunday, March 29

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
with Wynton Marsalis
Masters of Form: From Mingus to Monk
Thursday, April 2

Night Train 57
A Sensory-Friendly Comic Folk Opera
Featuring Dan and Claudia Zanes
with Yuriana Sobrino
Sunday, April 5

Calidore String Quartet
Tuesday, April 7 (SA)

THE COLOR PURPLE
Wednesday, April 15

Hong Kong Ballet
ALICE (in wonderland)
by Septime Webre, artistic director
Friday, April 24

Ticket Sales

Tickets Sold

31,244

Performances

27

Tickets Distributed

33,472

Penn State Student
Attendance

30%



JERSEY BOYS
© 2019 Joan Marcus

School-Time Matinees

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

Sugar Skull! took a young crowd on a journey through the Mexican tradition of the Day of the Dead, with live music and dance helping to tell the story.

The creators of the Magic Tree House series worked with a Kennedy Center creative team to spin a tale of Elizabethan times in *Showtime with Shakespeare*. The show featured hip-hop music as an equivalent contemporary literary device to iambic pentameter.

The Center for the Performing Arts was honored to present the world premiere of Step Afrika! dance company in *Drumfolk*.

The return of Australia's Erth company in *Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure* brought realistic puppets to dazzle the audience, while teaching students about ancient creatures in the sea.

Honey and Bill Jaffe Endowment for Audience Development funds supported the cost of the direct-mail postcards and the shipment of season information to schools in the region. Additionally, nineteen schools (total number that requested subsidy) were reimbursed for 60 percent of their total field trip costs thanks to the endowment.

SCHOOL-TIME PRESENTATIONS

Attendance is noted in yellow above each listing.

PARTNERS

33

schools

58

homeschooling families

11

Pennsylvania counties

Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Cumberland, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Juniata, Lancaster, Lycoming, Mifflin



396

**Mexico Beyond Mariachi
presents *Sugar Skull!*
A Dia de los Muertos Musical Adventure
Monday, September 30**



848

***Magic Tree House:*
Showtime with Shakespeare
Monday, November 4**



1,624

**Step Afrika! • *Drumfolk*
Friday, January 31**



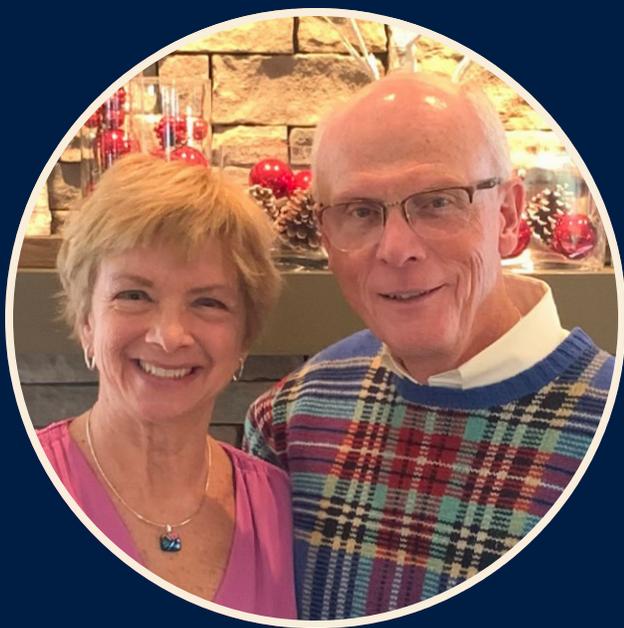
1,145

**Erth's *Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure*
*The Mystery of the Dinosaurs
of the Deep*
Thursday, February 20**

School-Time Matinees canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic:

**Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
with Wynton Marsalis
Jazz for Young People:
Who is Dave Brubeck?
Thursday, April 2**

***Night Train 57*
A Sensory-Friendly Comic Folk Opera
Featuring Dan and Claudia Zanes
with Yuriana Sobrino
Tuesday, April 7**



Lattas create endowment to engage children through collaborations

Deb and Stan Latta, who came to Penn State in the 1970s, have made a significant financial contribution to the Center for the Performing Arts to enhance the arts at Penn State while strengthening their ties to the place they've called home for almost half a century.

The Debra Lee Latta and Dr. Stanley E. Latta Endowment for the Performing Arts will offer financial support to engage K–12 schoolchildren through collaborations with the Center for the Performing Arts.

In 1975, Deb arrived at Penn State from Lancaster with a deep connection to the arts and a passion for dancing. She went on to earn bachelor's and master's degrees in education and spent nearly forty years in various education and administration roles.

When Deb began her studies at Penn State, Stan was in the final year of earning the first of four degrees at the University. He began with a bachelor's degree in recreation and tourism management and eventually earned advanced degrees in education, which supported his long career in higher education.

"To that point in the 1970s, I was always an outdoors kind of guy. And because of being enrolled in parks and recreation, as well as participating in all types of sports, I just wasn't into the arts and honestly didn't know much about it," Stan says. "Then I met Deb."

While raising their two daughters and advancing their careers, the exposure to the arts continued.

As a family they attended countless theatre, dance, and musical performances at Penn State. After their daughters had grown, the Lattas realized the Center for the Performing Arts had become an integral part of their family's culture.

"From my perspective, the impact from the arts has led to a more complete life," Stan says. "There's more than just sports. There's more than the academics. There's a true sense of how you become a more well-rounded person because of the value of an artistic experience."

The couple wanted to move beyond continuing their annual Center for the Performing Arts membership. Deb served on the center's Performing Arts Advisory Council for six years. In 2016, shortly after Stan retired from Penn State as assistant vice president for student affairs and Deb retired from her elementary principal position in State College Area School District, the couple began to consider a more profound way to give back to the arts at Penn State.

"The center has become such a large part of who we are. This is a unique opportunity to support the center and expose children in our local schools to the arts and the endless possibilities that exist by engaging with the arts," Deb says. "This is our way of saying thank you to the arts at Penn State and hopefully encouraging others to support the arts in any way that they can."

Education and community programs manager earns double recognition

The Center for the Performing Arts is people-powered, people-driven, and people-focused. Employees are involved as leaders in local, regional, and national performing arts and other nonprofit organizations. Center for the Performing Arts staff members know how effective, creative, and impactful their colleagues are. It's extra gratifying when other entities recognize one of them, too.

Medora Ebersole, who has served as education and community programs manager since 2007, has been on a winning streak. In April 2019, the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State awarded Ebersole with its Staff Award for Outstanding Service.

"Each day Medora comes to work thinking about what new connections she can make, enhancements she can bring to the table, and what new audiences she can serve," writes one of the people who nominated her for the recognition.



**Medora
Ebersole**

The Center for the Performing Arts' capacity to reach into the community has been significantly increased by Ebersole's work. She's been going above and beyond her specified duties for many years, and she has some amazing achievements to show for it.

Several years ago, a major supporter of the School-Time Matinee series passed away, and memorial donations directed to the Center for the Performing Arts were collected in her honor. Ebersole conceived of a plan to use those funds to include as our audience members people on the autism spectrum or with other sensory sensitivities.

She compiled a list of special-needs teachers in the region and reached out to offer them tickets to a School-Time Matinee. One of the teachers who received the offer responded that her class is never included in field trips and how touched she was for Ebersole to extend the offer.

Inclusion for all is a hallmark of Ebersole's work, as well as utilizing the performing arts as a vehicle for healing and empowerment.

Her passion resulted in a second award. As part of the Rose Cologne Awards given by the Centre County Council for Human Services, Ebersole was named 2020 Volunteer of the Year for the Jana Marie Foundation.

The foundation, established in 2012, "envisions communities working together to knock down walls and transform emotional distress into resilience and hope. Through the power of dialogue and creative expression, we spark conversations, build connections, and promote mental well-being among young people and their communities."

Ebersole engages middle school girls in the SHINE Club with activities using music, art, and creative expression to enhance their sense of well-being and confidence. She also serves on the foundation's education and Mokita dialogues committees.

"The Jana Marie Foundation leverages the transformative power of the arts to give adolescents voice and agency and tools to families in these times of extraordinary pressures and challenges," Ebersole says. "Volunteering allows me to share my life experience with, and passionate commitment to, the arts to build and foster more inclusive communities."

Jazz artists introduce their music to central Pennsylvania children

In true "caravan" fashion, *Let Freedom Swing*, a history-based concert program produced by New York City's Jazz at Lincoln Center Education Department, was performed in February for a total of more than 500 fourth-to-eighth graders at five schools across three central Pennsylvania counties.

New York City-based band members Jake Blasini (music director and vocals), Oliver Beardsley (drums), Justin Poindexter (guitar and vocals), Bria Skonberg (trumpet and vocals), Mika Nishimura (piano), Braxton Cook (saxophone), and Noah Garabedian (bass) supplied the music and the insight.

They traveled to Huntingdon County's Mt. Union High School (where students from three elementary schools had converged); Clearfield County's Standing Stone Elementary School and Clearfield Alliance Christian School; and Centre County's Easterly Parkway Elementary School (along with Mt. Nittany Middle School special education arts appreciation students) and Bellefonte Elementary School.

**Bria
Skonberg**



At each location, the musicians introduced the fundamentals of jazz and described the genre's growth in the African-American communities of turn-of-the-twentieth-century New Orleans. The ensemble demonstrated how jazz mingles the expressions of people who come to the United States, by choice or by force, with the expressions of those already living in the Americas.

"I never liked jazz before. Now I've changed my mind."

A student convert

"You can feel it." "It can make you dance and take over." "I never liked jazz before. Now I've changed my mind." Those are just a few of the comments made by students as they swayed, tapped, clapped, and danced toward a musical understanding of historical sources and American democracy.

The musicians began each lesson by making an analogy to cooking, indicating the need for key ingredients in order for the food to taste or "sound" good. They explained that jazz is like a stew, using the key ingredients of blues, swing, and improvisation.

After being prompted, the students asked the musicians to express certain feelings using the particular ranges of their instruments. The ensemble made the instruments sound happy, embarrassed, hungry, crazy, anxious, mad, bored, and more.

The musicians treated the students to classics from some of jazz history's most important figures, such as "After You're Gone" by Ella Fitzgerald, "Caravan" by Duke Ellington, "Careless Love" by Bessie Smith, and "It Don't Mean a Thing" and "When the Saints go Marching In" by Louis Armstrong.

After the concert, ensemble members made time for the students to see the instruments up close and to realize they were just like the musicians—with opportunities to play in school bands and orchestras.

"This opportunity is so great because they don't get private lessons," says Gretchen Crouse, elementary music teacher in Mt. Union School District. "Music can help students forge a clear path, regardless of their future plans."

"They are not just kids, they are young people who will grow up, and the skills learned in music education far transcend just musical studies," says Skonberg, an artist familiar to Center for the Performing Arts audiences from her 2016 and 2019 appearances at Penn State. "Performing for young people reconnects us with the awe and raw excitement of hearing music in our youth."

"Performing for young people reconnects us with the awe and raw excitement of hearing music in our youth."

Bria Skonberg

Jara Dorsey-Lash, associate director of development at the Center for the Performing Arts, says the visiting artists teach students about what musicians in large cities do for a living, and allows the children to realize the scope of the world and realm of possibilities available to them.

"I am especially thrilled that we are taking the artists into more rural districts and schools, primarily because those schools often don't receive opportunities like this," Dorsey-Lash says.

A gift from the estate of Richard Higgins allowed the Center for the Performing Arts to provide the touring program.

Members and Donors

We appreciate the support of Center for the Performing Arts members and donors. The list below includes members and donors as of April 30, 2020.

EXECUTIVE CIRCLE

\$5,000 and more

Bob and Sonia Hufnagel
Dan and Peggy Hall LeKander
Betty Scott and Chick King

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

\$3,000 to \$4,999

Patricia Best and Thomas Ray
Lynn Sidehamer Brown
Mimi Barash Coppersmith
Janet Fowler Dargitz
and Karl George Stoedefalke
Marty and Joan Duff
Blake and Linda Gall
Beverly Hickey
Rich and Sally Kalin
Eileen W. Leibowitz
Mary Ellen and Tom Litzinger
In Memory of Charles A. Nicholson
Pieter W. and Lida Ouwehand
State of the Art Inc.
Youmeus

DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE

\$2,000 to \$2,999

Jennifer Bailey and Philip Boshia
Marie Bednar
Jack and Diana Brenizer
Lynn Donald Breon
Steve and Sandy Elbin
Shari and Rod Erickson
Edward R. Galus
Arnold and Marty Gasche
Richard B. Gidez

John and Carol Graham
David and Margaret Gray
Bill Jaffe
Michael P. Johnson and Maureen Mulderig
Beth Richards Kalenak
Stan and Debra Latta
Benson and Christine Lichtig
Laura Mosier and George McMurtry
Dotty Rigby
Alex Sahakian and Heidi Handler
Louis P. Silverman and Veronica A. Samborsky
Jackson and Diane Spielvogel
Mark and JoAnne Westerhaus

ENCORE CIRCLE

\$1,000 to \$1,999

Elliot and Bonnie Felkoff Abrams
Pamela M. Aikey
Judy Albrecht and Denny Gioia
William and Deborah Atwater Asbury
Alan M. Brown
Bala Carver, M.D.
Steven L. Herb and Sara Willoughby-Herb
Lam and Lina Hood
Keith Karako and Janelle Bessette
James and Bonnie Knapp
Kay Kustanbauter
Fred and Carol Lucas
John and Michelle Mason
Heidi Nicholas and Bruce Fleischer
Sally L. Schaadt
Robert Schmalz
Susan and Lewis Steinberg
Paul and Joanne Steindorf
Marilynne W. Stout
Sue Thorpe
David and Diane Wisniewski
Stephen Ross and Mary Wujek
Charlotte Zmyslo

ADVOCATE

\$500 to \$999

Ned and Inga Book
Linda B. Brown
Richard Carlson and Lori Forlizzi
Lee and Joan Coraor
In Memory of Doris Croskey
Joseph and Annie Doncsecz
Michael and Ann Dotsey
Nancy S. Gamble
Chris and Gail Hurley
Sharon and Jeffrey Hyde
George and Ann Johnstone
Cindy and Al Jones
Robyn Krause-Hale and Rick Roush
Daniel Larson and Melina Porro
Elinor C. Lewis
Donald and Renee Marks
Bernard McCloskey
Marcia and Bill Newton
Eva and Ira Pell
Jack and Sue Poremba
Beth Richards / Sandy Stover Group
of Kissinger Bigatel & Brower Realtors
Shirley Sacks
Robert and Peggy Schlegel
Wayne and Michele Sebastianelli
Paul Shrivastava and Michelle Cooper
Paul and Susan Smith
Kenton Stuck
George and Debbie Trudeau
Mary Jane and William Wild
David and Betsy Will
Terry and Pat Williams
Kelly A. Wolgast
Craig and Diane Zabel

PARTNER

\$250 to \$499

Ellis and Lynn Abramson
Wendy and Dan Azzara
Diane and Andrew Bartholomay
Bellios Family
Sven and Carmen Bilen
John and Marolyn Boswell
Barry Bram and Laura Perry
Karen Brewster

Walter Broughton
and Joseph Fennewald
Mary Bruce and James Serene
In Honor of Melinda Stearns
Annie Copeland
Stephanie Corcino
Karen Doberstein
Terry and Janice Engelder
Tom and Tamra Fountaine
Pamela Francis
Bob and Ellen Frederick
Catherine Greenham
Jodi Hakes
Peg and Don Hambrick
Elizabeth Hanley
and Patrick Kolivoski
Dawn E. Hawkins
Mary Hile Herold
Jackie and John Hook
Jim and Susan Houser
Anne F. Hummer
Gina and John Ikenberry
Allen and Nancy Jacobson
George and Cindy Johnson
Daniel and Kathleen Jones
George and Diane Kesidis
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Mark and Theresa Lafer
Gretchen Leathers
Lawrence and Rhonda Lokman
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Richard and Juanita Lysle
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Dr. Marla L. Moon
Mark and Minda Morath
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Nelson
Robert F. and Donna C. Nicely
Barbara J. Peterson
Guy and Grace Pilato
Lisa Preis and Jeffrey Wong
William Reiber and Kathy Flannery
Ike and Linda Rosensteel
Tom and Marlene Russo
Chris and Gary Schell
Jim and Patti Shilling
Vaughn and Kay Shirk
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**Emmet
Cohen**



Helen Harvey spent a lifetime informed by the arts

Helen Ann Harvey, a prominent Center for the Performing Arts member and sponsor, died at Mount Nittany Medical Center in March at the age of 91.

Harvey, a retired teacher, served two terms on the Center for the Performing Arts Community Advisory Council. In 2014, she and her husband, Robert, received the Center for the Performing Arts Distinguished Service Award.

The Harveys, who lived in retirement at The Village at Penn State in State College, were Leadership Circle members at the Center for the Performing Arts. When Bob died in 2015, the Harveys had been married for sixty-seven years.

"Helen was a revered member of the Center for the Performing Arts family. Her service and support were driven by her passion for the center and our mission," says Center for the Performing Arts Director George Trudeau. "I always enjoyed seeing Helen in her front-row seat, smiling and ready for the show, as I took the stage to introduce performances. She had a wonderful spirit, was fun to be around, and we will miss her greatly."

The Harveys sponsored a number of Center for the Performing Arts presentations, including Kirov Orchestra, Itzhak Perlman, Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Martha Graham Dance Company, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Les Grands Ballet Canadiens, and Moscow Festival Ballet. They, and later she, sponsored parking for various Eisenhower Auditorium events.

Helen, a native of Latrobe, obtained a business degree at Duff's Iron City College (now Everest Institute) in Pittsburgh, where she also met her future husband through their mutual interest in music.

She later earned a bachelor of science degree in education and a master's degree in English literature from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She did additional graduate studies at Carnegie Mellon University.

Helen retired after a combined forty-two years of teaching English and drama at Kittanning Senior High School and Hollidaysburg Area High School, where she was English department chair.

She also worked as an office manager, an interior decorator, and a ceramic artist with her own studio. She contributed to her community as a pianist, an actor, and a director of theatrical productions.

Spirited and thoughtful, Helen spoke her mind and articulated her insights, often via epic text messages.

She is survived by two daughters, Ann Fertuck and Pat Noel.

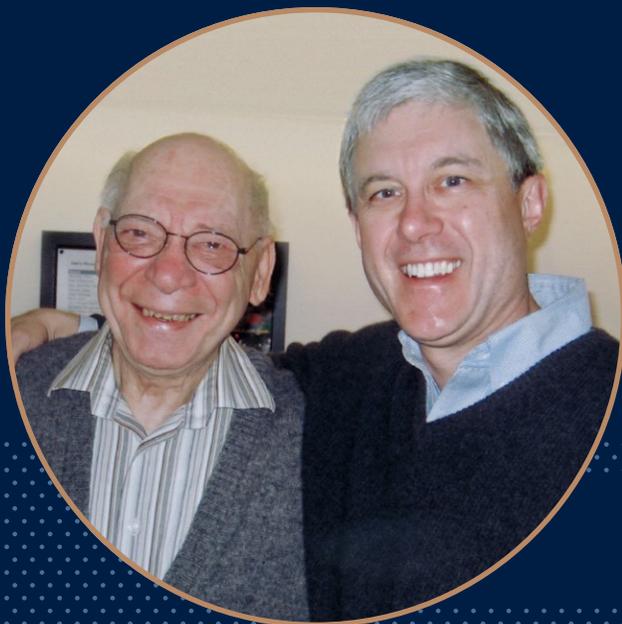
Gerald Stein known for his generosity and commitment

Gerald B. M. Stein, a devoted supporter of the Center for the Performing Arts, died in January at the age 98 in Portland, Oregon, where he had resided at the Robison Jewish Home since 2008.

In 2001, the Center for the Performing Arts honored Stein with its Distinguished Service Award.

In 1999, he created the Gerald B. M. and Sylvia Stein Memorial Endowment for the Center for the Performing Arts "to keep the center's services accessible and affordable, to enhance the center's outreach and educational services, and to maintain the highest artistic quality."

"I feel so fortunate to have been able to get to know Jerry Stein, a truly warm and wonderful person who we all loved," says George Trudeau, director of the Center for the Performing Arts. "His commitment to the Center for the Performing Arts was exemplified by both his patronage and volunteer service, and his legacy will live on through the endowment he established."



Stein lived in State College for more than fifty years. He was known for his generosity, ability to connect with people from many backgrounds, and commitment to his community and profession. Even in declining health in recent years, he was appreciated for his warm smile, politeness, and ability to dance.

He grew up in Scranton and went to Penn State, where he was named one of the twenty outstanding students in 1943. He graduated that year with a degree in psychology. He joined the Army in World War II and served in the signal company with the 94th Army Division. He saw action in France, where he participated in the Battle of the Bulge, as well as in Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Stein graduated from Philadelphia's Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1949. He practiced optometry in Centre County from then until his retirement in 1994. He lectured extensively and was a consulting editor for *Optometric Management* magazine. He served in many leadership roles for the Pennsylvania Optometric Society and the American Optometric Association. He was president of the Mid-Counties Optometric Society, which recognized him as optometrist of the year in 1975.

Stein was an enthusiastic and active member of the State College community. He volunteered on many boards, including Friends of the Palmer Museum of Art, Girl Scout Council, and Centre Home Care. He also served two stints, for a total of eleven years, on the Center for the Performing Arts Community Advisory Council.

He met his wife Sylvia at Penn State, and they married in 1943. They enjoyed traveling together throughout the world and camping in national parks. She passed away in 1993.

He is survived by his daughter Beverly, son Steven, and grandchildren Scott, Leslie, and Seth.

Left: Jerry Stein and George Trudeau

Art installation gives Eisenhower a beautiful sunset every night

During Penn State White Out weekend in October, a blaze of color illuminated the windows of Eisenhower Auditorium for the first of many nights. As part of the University's Campus Arts Initiative, artist Adam Frelin worked with the Center for the Performing Arts to conceptualize, design, and install a site-specific visual artwork.

Frelin's work, *Extended Sunset*, is one of eight commissioned art pieces installed at high-impact locations across Penn State campuses during the 2019–2020 academic year. Funded by Penn State's Strategic Planning Seed Grant program, the Campus Arts Initiative seeks to engage communities and highlight the arts with temporary pieces that will be on display for as long as one year.

Extended Sunset features a Pennsylvania sunset installed into the six large, vertical windows at the front of Eisenhower. The backlit image is evenly illuminated by LED light strips surrounding the interior of the window frames. White vinyl placed behind the images functions as the back of a light box and as a light reflector. An astronomical timer controls the LED lights, illuminating the window as the actual sunset begins and continuing to shine throughout the night before fading into morning.





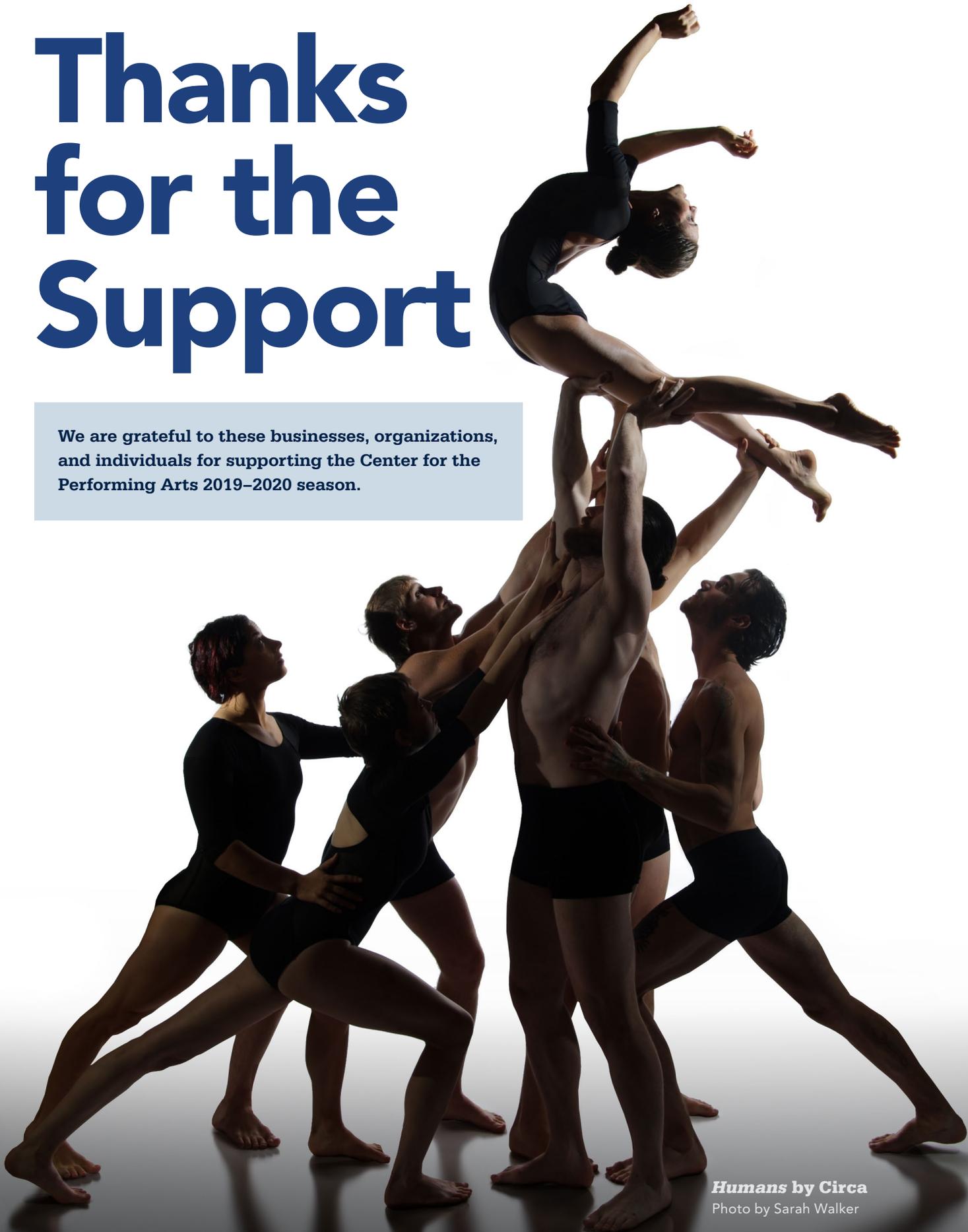
EISENHOWER

AUDITORIUM

Eisenhower Auditorium
Photo by Amirmasoud Agharebparast.

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The Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making the arts accessible to everyone and offers many services to patrons who need assistance in order to fully enjoy attending live performances.

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Catalyst Quartet

Photo by Ricardo Quinones



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Dotty Rigby

Hufnagels create jazz education endowment “for the kids”



Bob and Sonia Hufnagel have made a substantial contribution to the Center for the Performing Arts to support music education for K–12 school students.

The Robert and Sonia Hufnagel Endowment for the Center of the Performing Arts will fund jazz music education and promote Center for the Performing Arts engagement for students with jazz performances, workshops, master classes, and artists-in-residence.

The gift bolsters the financial and leadership support the Hufnagels have offered to the Center for the Performing Arts and the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State for nearly a decade. The focus of the gift reflects Bob’s connection to jazz music and the couple’s desire to enrich the lives of young members of the community through education and interaction with diverse forms of art.

Bob’s affinity for engaging the younger community with music and other art forms doesn’t only flow through the Center for the Performing Arts. He has been a philanthropist in the community for nearly twenty years. He often supports youth initiatives by giving to organizations such as the Palmer Museum of Art, WPSU, and the Centre County Youth Service Bureau.

“I’m in it for the kids,” he says. “The idea that struck a chord with me about doing a jazz education endowment is to bring the kids in to appreciate other forms of music and to stimulate a future for jazz locally and in the United States.”

Bob is chairman and chief executive officer of State of the Art Inc., an electronic component design and manufacturing company based in State College. Although he isn’t a graduate of Penn State, he says his connections to the University and the Center for the Performing Arts have enriched his life and created a lifetime bond.

“The CPA gives us entertainment that we simply aren’t going to get anywhere else. Whether it’s national or local jazz acts, musicals, plays, and sort of off-beat shows like acrobatics, the CPA is the place to be,” he says. “It’s an amazing organization that we are proud to support through membership and any other way we can.”

As the couple was working with College of Arts and Architecture development staff members on the endowment, Bob recalls, his wife turned to him and asked, “Can we afford to do this?”

“Can we afford not to?” he says he relied. “If one student is moved by the incredible art of jazz music, then it was all worth it.”



Itzhak Perlman
Photo by Lisa Marie
Mazzucco

Season Highlights

Each season brings a range of artistic experiences. Some of the highlights of 2019–2020 follow.

HIGHLIGHT

Itzhak Perlman

01



ROHAN DE SILVA

Itzhak Perlman, the reigning virtuoso of the violin, returned to Penn State to perform some of his favorite music and share stories of his life and career, all accompanied by film excerpts and photos from his own archive. The program celebrated Perlman's storied career launched with his televised U.S. debut more than sixty years ago. Joining Perlman was his long-time pianist Rohan De Silva.

A special unannounced guest, who rose out of the audience to correct one of Perlman's stories, was his wife Toby. She joined the violinist on stage to share tales of raising a family while touring the world with a celebrated husband and father.

Perlman captivated the audience with his warmth and charm, reminding everyone why he is still one of the world's most renowned and treasured artists.

02 Silkroad Ensemble

In researching the Silkroad Ensemble prior to its first appearance at Penn State, it was striking to discover how similar the organization's mission is to that of the Center for the Performing Arts. "Silkroad creates music that engages difference, sparking radical cultural collaboration and passion-driven learning for a more hopeful and inclusive world." The ensemble's engagement embodied our mutual purpose, to create empathy and understanding through the arts.

The evening before the group's concert, the Center for the Performing Arts hosted a free public screening of *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble*, a documentary directed by Oscar winner Morgan Neville. The screening drew audience members from many backgrounds. The movie—filmed in locations including Turkey, China, and Iran—traces the ensemble's formation and long-lasting relationships across the globe.

Prominently featured in the film is Kayhan Kalhor, an Iranian virtuoso of the *kamancheh*, a stringed instrument played by holding it on the knee. Although he moved to the United States after the Islamic Revolution, he returned to Iran to teach his technique of playing the culturally important instrument to Iranian youth. When the country became too dangerous for him to safely live as an artist, he returned to the United States, leaving his wife behind. His presence at the screening amplified the impact of his compelling story. After the screening, he gave a short demonstration on the *kamancheh* and answered audience questions.

The ensemble also connected to the community through a visit by *sheng* player Wu Tong to State College Area High School. Students in the global languages and international baccalaureate programs gathered for a guided meditation by the musician, who demonstrated how to slow the breathing by using his Chinese wind instrument consisting of reeds and a series of vertical pipes. The room was silent and riveted, everyone breathing as one human instrument.

The ensemble's concert featured part of a song cycle by composer Osvaldo Golijov, a piece by jazz innovator Jason Moran, and several compositions by Silkroad members.



Wu Tong
Photo by Max Whittaker

**Jordan Matthew Brown
as Elder Cunningham in
*THE BOOK OF MORMON***

© Julieta Cervantes 2019



HIGHLIGHT

03

THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Center for the Performing Arts hosted a seven-performance engagement of the nine-time Tony Award-winning best musical *THE BOOK OF MORMON*. Almost 10,000 patrons enjoyed the opportunity to see the show *The New York Times* calls “the best musical of this century.”

The national touring company included two Penn State School of Theatre graduates, Brinie Wallace and Patrick Graver, who were both thrilled to be back at University Park. The alumni have had impressive musical theatre experiences since graduation. In an interview, they offered thoughts about their time at Penn State.

“One of the most crucial skills that Penn State reinforced in me is that this career is all about presence and persistence,” Wallace says. “Whether I am showing up to an audition room or, in my case, doing a role eight times a week, presence and persistence is embedded in the work ethic that keeps me ahead of the game.”

“Penn State has changed my life,” Graver says. “The musical theatre program was a perfect nurturing environment that enabled me to grow to the greatest of my potential in a safe, loving space that was also very intense and had extremely high expectations.”



PATRICK GRAVER



BRINIE WALLACE

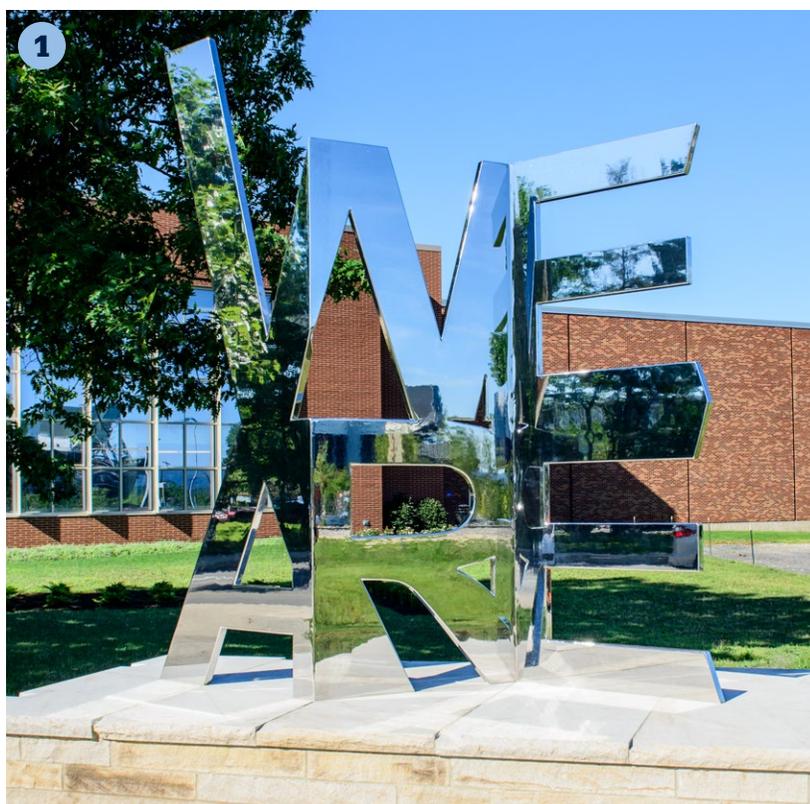
Mellon Foundation-funded project takes a look at who we are

The Reflection Project—Looking at Who WE ARE, a three-year program funded through a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, began in 2019–2020. The project aims to connect students to each other in community by exploring the performing arts and integrating the performing arts into general education curriculum.

At the heart of the project are the carefully considered artists chosen for and funded by the grant. Each performance addresses the program's themes in different ways and from different perspectives. In the days leading up to a performance, the artists participate in residency activities that engage students and community members.

The unifying themes of the multi-faceted approach are:

- Exploring personal and communal identity;
- Creating and receiving empathy;
- Telling one's story and the stories of others;
- Preparing students for global citizenship.



The 2019–2020 season included two presentations funded by the project.

Step Afrika! presented the world premiere of *Drumfolk* in January. On the morning of the debut, the Washington, D.C., dance ensemble also performed at a School-Time Matinee. The cast and creative team engaged students and members of the community in a variety of residency activities.

Kronos Quartet and guest singer Mahsa Vahdat presented *Music for Change: The Banned Countries* in February. Leading up to the performance, members of the quartet participated in multiple residency engagements.

The musicians attended a student luncheon at Penn State’s Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose, where they discussed the impact of the U.S. government’s travel ban on residents of largely Muslim countries. The informal luncheon provided a free exchange of thoughts and information among the students and artists.

Penn State Law’s Center for Immigrants’ Rights Clinic hosted Vahdat and Kronos violinist David Harrington, along with several immigration experts, in a panel discussion. An informal reception and listening session with Harrington followed.

Multiple pathways within the project have been created to meet the program’s goal of connecting students to each other and the community.



Initially, a team of three Penn State faculty members was recruited to provide support and guidance throughout the funding period. They were invited to participate because of their individual expertise and their commitment to the arts in education. The team is joined by the Center for the Performing Arts audience and program development director and Mellon program coordinator, a newly created part-time position. The team works to ensure that the project enhances student learning by incorporating best education practices.

In its first year, the project also competitively awarded funding for creation of four inter-domain Penn State courses that will incorporate one or more of the program’s themes, plus Center for the Performing Arts presentations and artist residencies, in a robust and meaningful way.

Inter-domain courses promote the examination of a topic from multiple perspectives. The inter-domain courses to be developed will incorporate the performing arts along with other academic disciplines. The courses will become permanent offerings, continuing the Center for the Performing Arts effort to engage and impact students far beyond the grant period.

Photos: 1. WE ARE sculpture photo by Penn State University Marketing 2015. 2. Step Afrika! by Jati Lindsay. 3. Mahsa Vahdat © Stephanie Berger.

IllumiNATION seeks a more sustainable and united Penn State



The coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of what was supposed to be the first IllumiNATION festival and parade, but much was accomplished during 2019–2020 to prepare for the Penn State event, which is now expected to debut in March 2021.

IllumiNATION, a student-focused, arts-based project created by the Center for the Performing Arts and Penn State Student Affairs, in collaboration with the Penn State Sustainability Institute and various University student groups, launched in fall 2019.

With a goal of creating community through the arts, IllumiNATION brings together Penn State students to highlight and celebrate Earth Hour. An international lights-out event organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature, Earth Hour raises awareness about the effects of excessive energy consumption on the environment.

Connecting IllumiNATION to Earth Hour demonstrates the transformative power of the arts and unites the Penn State community around a common goal. IllumiNATION seeks to create a University community full of responsible and inclusive citizens of the world by encouraging

creativity, practicing sustainability, and providing a welcoming and inclusive environment.

During 2019–2020, art-making workshops were strategically attached to and inspired by events conducted by the project's partners, the Sustainability Institute and international student organizations.

Cheryl Capezzuti, creative director and two-time Penn State alumna, introduced a trash monsters workshop after consulting with student EcoReps, who wanted illuminated objects for the parade that are made entirely of recyclable or single-use materials.

Examples of those landfill-designated items include cardboard boxes, snack bags, coffee cups, plastic bags, and various other plastics.

"The EcoReps who attended the workshop really enjoyed themselves and recommend it to any student who wants to get creative," says EcoReps leader Morgan Vonada. "We are also partnering with Cheryl for our Earth Hour event in the spring, so we look forward to creating some really great, meaningful art with her in the future."

Check out the **IllumiNATION website** for events. <https://sites.psu.edu/illuminationpsu>

Deb and Stan Latta recipients of Distinguished Service Award

Deb and Stan Latta know that an arts-related experience can be transformative at any age. For their longstanding support of the Center for the Performing Arts and the Penn State community, the couple was named the center's 2020 Distinguished Service Award recipients.

"I could not be more thrilled to see Stan and Deb Latta receive this well-deserved recognition," says George Trudeau, the center's director. "The arc of their experience of discovery and engagement with the performing arts is inspirational."

The State College couple knows firsthand the benefits of a well-rounded life experience. In college, Deb was an arts ally and president of Penn State's Orchesis dance company, and Stan was an outdoor buff and soccer player. He came to attend many of the performances for which she danced and choreographed. Over time, he says, he realized his own interests intersected in the like components—the "movement, flexibility, interpretation, and agility."

The connection Stan made between key aspects of the performing arts and athletic foundations gave him a deeper appreciation of the unfamiliar and influenced his work at Penn State. While director of Union and Student Activities, he advocated for the creation of several dedicated art spaces in the HUB-Robeson Center.

Reflecting on his personal relationship with the arts, Stan says, "There are stories and interpretations that I can appreciate or relate to in my own life experiences. I never fully appreciated that aspect of the arts until Deb challenged me to not just look at a performance or piece of art, but rather ask what message the artist is trying to relate."

Deb, retired from State College Area School District as an elementary and high school principal, says few students came to school having been exposed to live performing arts, visual arts, and other creative outlets outside a general education curriculum.

"That was one of the most positive aspects of my job: to watch with delight as our specials teachers would encourage art, library, drama, and music, then observing how quickly and excitedly the children took to it," she says.

While there are many opportunities for young people to enjoy an arts-related event throughout State College, the Center for the Performing Arts offers its own chances for children to experience the performing arts through pre-performance activities such as Kids Connections, as well as School-Time Matinees and in-school visits.

"The Center for the Performing Arts does a marvelous job sponsoring children's performances at practically no cost to students. Local schools have also worked with the center to enable performers to spend time in the schools working with students," Deb says. "These types of authentic, hands-on experiences are invaluable for introducing the arts to children and students of all ages."

It's the culmination of the Lattas' experiences that influenced them to become Center for the Performing Arts members and sponsors. Deb also volunteered on the center's Community Advisory Council for six years. In 2019, the couple created the Debra Lee Latta and Dr. Stanley E. Latta Endowment, which will help to financially support the center's efforts in using the performing arts to engage local K-12 students.

Since becoming members, the couple has helped to co-commission two Cirque Éloize productions and has sponsored a number of performances both through the Latta endowment and with Deb as a member of the Passionate Supporters of Dance.

"Through their long association and participation with the center, they continue to encourage creating opportunities for all to connect with the performing arts," Trudeau says.

The Distinguished Service Award has been given annually since 1996.

Presentations and Participation

Total events

64

all events in all supported venues

Total attendance:

52,893

all public events in Eisenhower and Schwab auditoriums

Attendance by groups: 2,589

Center for the Performing Arts presentations

21 Center for the Performing Arts presentations

(Canceled: 6)

7 Student-sponsored events

7 University presentations

(Canceled: 6)

13 Academic presentations

(Canceled: 5)

4 Community events

Nittany Valley Symphony (2) and Performing Arts School of Central Pennsylvania (2)
(Canceled: 1)

1 Promoter event

Bob Dylan



Bob
Dylan

Income and Expenses

fiscal year 2019–2020 income

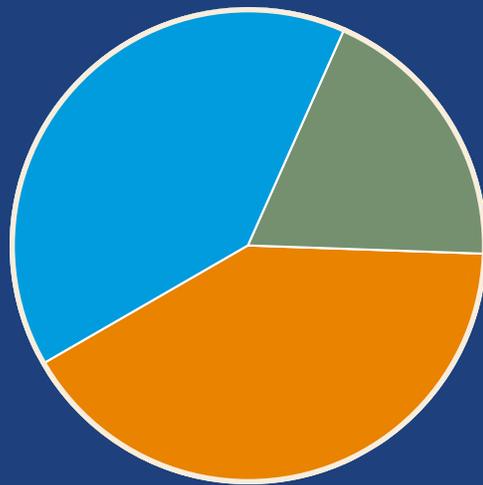
40% earned income

Ticket Sales 25%, Rentals 11%,
Other Earned Income 4%

19% development income

Contributions 13%, Grants 5%,
Endowment Support 1%

41% university support



fiscal year 2019–2020 expenses

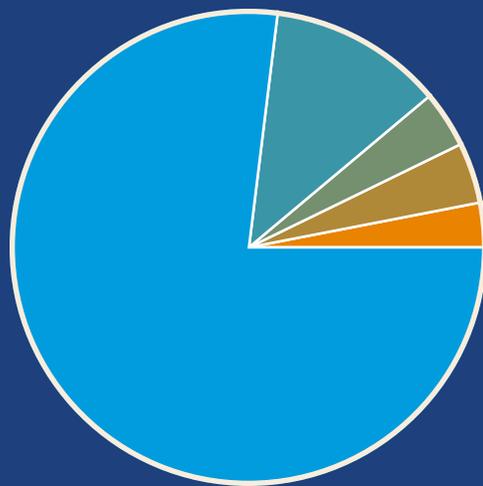
77% program and events

12% general and administrative

4% equipment and capital improvements

4% grants and special projects

3% development



The Center for the Performing Arts organizational budget totaled \$5,010,148. Fifty-nine percent of revenues were earned and contributed through tickets sales and services, facility and equipment rentals, performance program advertising, concession sales, fundraising, grants, and endowments.