

An abstract painting with vibrant colors including yellow, blue, green, and orange. The brushstrokes are thick and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. The composition is non-representational, with various shapes and textures overlapping.

**LA GRUA CENTER**  
**2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT**



NEW PHOTO WALL IN OUR REDESIGNED LOBBY

## Small Things Brought Together

July 2019, the beginning of our fiscal year, seems decades in the past.

Our great room by day was filled with voices of children sculpting clay and making art, and by evening the jazz songs of Lisa Marien soared on the cool breeze.



Behind the scenes, La Grua's leadership corps was busily engaged in two transformative initiatives. The first was the development of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan supported by the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. The second was the completion of a five-year strategic plan that included meaningful community input. The board gathered for its first retreat and energized committees with volunteers who represent a broader swath of our community. To say the least, we were busy, actively weaving together our plans to form a roadmap for enriched programs that engage everyone in our region.

We hadn't planned for the pandemic's dramatic closure of gathering spaces in March, but we came together, took a breath, and reframed our priorities. We secured a PPP loan and pivoted to virtual

events. But pausing to take a breath took on a deeper cultural reference in the summer as the nation addressed racial injustice. La Grua, as a cultural center, reflected on our commitment to equity and inclusion, and we continue to ask what we can do to be more welcoming to people of color. We believe opportunity must be accessible to all of us, and we are grateful for the music, words, and images La Grua offers as expressions of our different human experiences. And so we ended our fiscal year with courage and humility as we tapped into a number of digital forms of community engagement.

It hasn't been easy. In fact, at times it's been exhausting. But we worked together and leaned on each other for support and inspiration. Vincent Van Gogh said, "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together," and we couldn't be more proud of the small things we have accomplished together, with you, to connect and engage and be courageous and creative. Together we are great things.

Muireann O'Callaghan and James P. Quinn  
*Co-Presidents, Board of Directors*

## Snapshot

Our signature Music Matters series celebrated its tenth year with return engagements by such favorites as the **New York Classical Quartet** featuring pianist **Julia Bady** and chamber



works by Dvořák, as well as **Sonia Bettencourt** and **Guitarras do Atlantico** with another fabulous afternoon of Portuguese fado. New performers to our stage included **Benita**

**Meshulam** and **Edith Kraft**

playing Brahms on two pianos, contralto **Emily Marvosh** and soprano **Sonja du Toit** with song selections from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and



Turkish musicians **Bülent Evcil** on flute and **Çağatay Akyol** on harp via our partnership with the **Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra**.



LATIN ESSENCE JAZZ ENSEMBLE

The More Music series welcomed local artists, including acoustic guitarist and vocalist **James Harris**, the **Latin Essence Jazz Ensemble**, and the **Packer Trio**, as well as Stonington native **Hilary Castle** in an evening of lush piano trios with cellist **Ani Kalayjian** and pianist **Milos Repicky**. We also were pleased to host members of the **U.S. Coast Guard Band** as solo recitalists in a free concert during the Stonington Borough Holiday Stroll.

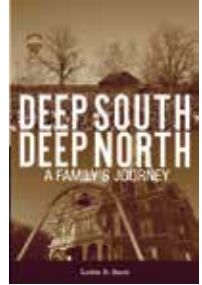
Our guest speakers offered a plethora of fascinating talks, including Pawcatuck journalist **Tom Verde** in a standing room only presentation on the Hurricane of 1938.

Stonington Middle School teacher **Tim Flanagan**

told us about his year abroad in Southeast Asia, Norwich civil rights activist **Lottie B. Scott** shared stories from her book *Deep South Deep North*, and we went behind the curtain with

producer **Andrew Gernhard** about shooting his Hallmark movie *Holidays for Heroes* in our region.

Visual art exhibited on our walls included the whimsical pieces of Colorado artist **Samuel Austin** and the photographs of **Kelley Norcia** documenting the families of New London's Regional Multicultural Magnet School in *Beauty in Diversity*. We're always grateful for the talented group of seasoned local artists who shared their expertise with young budding artists in our annual **Youth Summer Art** and **Holiday Art Workshops**.



## Partnership

We continue to value and build upon our important relationships with our closest nonprofit cultural neighbors—the **Stonington Free Library**, the **Stonington Historical Society**, **James Merrill House**, and the **Stonington Garden Club**, which all regularly use our space for their public programming. We are active members of **Stonington Nonprofits**, the **Stonington Business Merchants Association**, and the **Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition**, as well as our three area chambers of commerce—Greater Mystic, Ocean Community, and Eastern Connecticut.



## By the Numbers

We presented 14 live concerts; 11 lectures, films, and panel discussions, including another 10 from our neighboring nonprofits; six art exhibitions and one craft fair; three youth art workshops; and four weekly wellness, yoga, and dance classes—welcoming nearly 5,000 visitors through our doors.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### TIDEWATER



We were delighted to partner with the **Mystic Film Festival** this year for the first time as a host for two of their events, including a showing of the documenta-



ry *Tidewater*, an exploration of how rising sea levels affect military readiness and national security. After the film was shown, our Military Matters series co-hosted a discussion with the filmmaker **Roger Sorkin**; **Bob Ross**, executive director of the Connecticut Office of Military Affairs; retired Navy Captain **Paul Whitescarver**, former commander of the Naval Submarine Base in Groton; and retired Navy Captain **Robin Tyner**, principal analyst at Sonalysts.

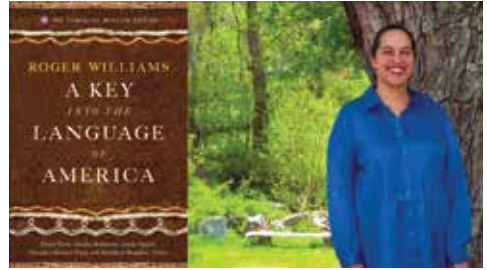
### PAWCATUCK REMEMBERS

We partnered with the **Stonington Public Schools** to present *Pawcatuck Remembers*, a

photography exhibition, student-developed book project, and video about one of the district buildings, which was closing to student classrooms after 80 years. Teachers



**Sheila Adams, Dan Agins, Tim Flanagan,** and **Marika Heughins** worked with students to document memories of alumni across all eight decades, and the video featured an interview with the school's oldest living graduate, **Jack Sammataro**, a 96-year-old from the Class of 1942.



### A LANGUAGE FOR THE AGES

We were pleased to present Tomaquag Museum Executive Director **Lorén Spears** and Narragansett Elder **Dawn Dove**, two of the five editors of the new translation of the 1643 Roger Williams book *A Key Into the Language of America*. The book is considered one of the most important artifacts of early Indigenous American culture, and in it, he recorded the day-to-day experience of the Narragansett people in their own words, the first documentation of an American Indian language in English. The new Tomaquag Museum edition includes for the first time cultural commentary provided by the Narragansett Tribe, and the two speakers delivered a fascinating talk about their tribe's history and culture.

## PANDEMIC PROGRAMMING

In March we went dark and pivoted to deliver digital programs via YouTube and Zoom. We began a new Media Matters series, with *The Day* as our media sponsor, and kicked it off with the *Wall Street Journal's* **Julie Wernau**, who spoke about having her credentials revoked by China at the start of the worldwide crisis. For Music Matters, we first uploaded audio recordings of past concerts, and then moved to musicians coming to an empty La Grua Center and recording their concerts for



later broadcast, starting with **Jiayan Sun**, who played a wonderful recital of Schubert. To polish off our fiscal year in June, we had a mesmerizing display of trickery by **Kristoff the Magician** from his home studio in Minnesota.

---

## Our Volunteers

We remain grateful to all our artist and other volunteers who came out two Sunday mornings in July to make our **Youth Summer Art Workshops** possible: Karin Bastidas, Emerson Baltrukonis, Barbara Ginsberg, Karli Hendrickson, Hanna Hong, Eva Leong, Vincent Loiacono, Hadleigh Payer, Dan Potter, Lauren Vossler, and Jen Rothman of Stone Acres Farm.



This year we also want to call out local architect **Julia Leeming** for her time and beautiful work in redesigning our lobby.

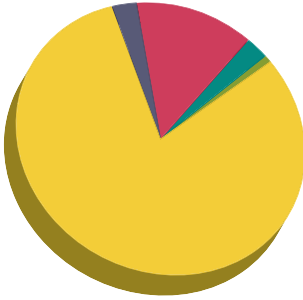
---

Along with our volunteer Board of Directors, who serve on various board committees, our programming is also made possible by the dedication of our advisory committees to staff (Music, Program, Youth, Facilities) and event/office volunteers, as well as the many speakers who give us compelling talks. We also thank former board members who remain engaged by serving on board committees. As always, we extend our gratitude to all of the following for their donated time and personal commitment to La Grua Center.

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EVENT/OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

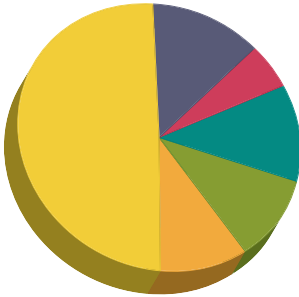
John Adams	Sarah Janssens	Bergin O'Malley
Carole Barnard	Bekah Kepple	Tim Panzarella
Beth Black	Ramil KH	Nancy Potter
Betsy Carr	Morgan King	Shau-Wen Lucia Sokol
Peter Castle	Janice Lamb	Tom Sheffer
Charles T. Clark	Jude Larzelere	Bill Sponn
Harriet Crane	Stephen Loikith	Mary Grace Sponn
Lori Dyer	Mary Kay Long	Stonington Garden Club
Tom Frohnafel	Todd Lynch	Deidre Toole
Barbara Ginsberg	Lauren Lyons	Trish Watson
Christopher Greenleaf	Christine McMasters	Wick York
Artistic Advisor to Music Matters	Cindy MacNeill	Elena Zamolodchikova

# Financials



## Income

Direct Contributions	\$194,723
Government Grants	\$6,848
Program Related Sales & Fees	\$31,656
Rental Income	\$5,720
Misc. Income	\$1,675
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$240,622</b>



## Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$145,841
Marketing & Support	\$36,482
Insurance & Office Related	\$15,150
Facility & Equipment	\$34,598
Programming	\$32,008
Depreciation	\$29,409
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$293,488</b>



## Board of Directors and Staff

Muireann O'Callaghan, *Co-President*  
James Quinn, *Co-President*  
Regan Morse, *Secretary*  
Barbara Heuer, *Treasurer*  
Phylcia Adams  
Daniel Brandl  
Mary Anne Butler

James Eckerle  
BJ Gaynor  
Paul Leeming  
Sharon Lynch  
Minor Myers  
Lori Robishaw, *Executive Director*  
Kelli Rocherolle, *Programs Director*

# Donors

We thank the following donors to the Annual Fund who make our programming possible with their financial support. All donations to La Grua Center were made between the dates of July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

## \$10,000 AND ABOVE

Anonymous  
Meg Raftis and  
Stillman Brown  
Kitchings Family Foundation  
Montauk Foundation

## \$5,000 TO \$9,999

Peter and Deborah Castle  
Barbara and Marc Ginsberg  
David Smith  
James Quinn and  
Chris Zhang

## \$2,500 TO 4,999

Margie Slichter and  
Benson Blake  
Charles T. Clark  
Dudley and  
Michael Del Balso  
Christopher Greenleaf  
Diana and Archie Leslie  
Julia and Mike Roberts  
The Gildersleeve/White  
Fund  
TomKat Foundation  
William White

## \$1,000 TO \$2,499

Anne Fix and  
Kevin Bowdler  
Richard Burnett  
Harriet and Tony Crane  
Cornelia Dickinson  
Dorothy and  
Declan Doogan  
Susan and John Fullerton  
William J. Griffin IV  
Peyton C. Horne  
Deborah and Peter Lamm  
Paul and Julia Leeming  
Amanda Lindberg  
Ann Lobdell  
Stuart and Casey Malcolm  
Thomas and  
Marguerite Moore  
Peter Reinhardt  
Jim Eckerle and  
Mark Renfrow  
Robert and Heidi Simmons  
Victor Sitty  
The Brownington  
Foundation



LA GRUA PLATTER BY SUSAN SCALA

## \$500 TO \$999

John W. and  
Judith B. Alexander  
Deborah Beal  
Beth Black and Randy Bean  
Mary Anne and John Butler  
Tom and Dorrit Castle  
Sam and Beth Chapin  
Christopher and  
Barbara Dixon  
Prue Fairbrother Meehan  
Mary Wolf and  
William Fowler  
Howard and  
Sandy Fromson  
Barbara Heuer  
Hickrill Foundation  
Claire R. Morse  
Tom Frohnafel and  
Muireann O'Callaghan  
Wright and  
Anna Maria Palmer  
Tom and Candy Sanford  
John and Sue Sutherland  
Beth Walker  
Bob and Sue Wesson  
Eugene and Georgia York

## \$250 TO \$499

Ann and Michael Adair  
Ashley and Elliott Blanchard  
Daniel and Kathryn Brandl



THE PACKER TRIO



BECKY TUMICKI PREPPING FOR JOURNAL JAM

Margaret Perkinson  
 Cheryl and David Purvis  
 Margaret Luchars Richards  
 Carol and Edward Sauers  
 Janet Schloss  
 Anne-Marie Smith  
 Kimberly Hoskins Smith  
 Martha Snyder  
 Anne M. Goodrich Twichell  
 Mary Kay Long and  
 Dennis Unites  
 Daniel C. and Melissa J. Verdier  
 Vivien Von Walstrom  
 Harry and Liz White  
 Andrew Wilson  
 Clem and Sally Wood

**\$100 TO \$249**

John and Grania Ackley III  
 Phylcia and Antoine Adams  
 Alice Fund



JAMES HARRIS

Carole Barnard  
 Anne Bartholet  
 Elizabeth Bartholet  
 Ted and Diana Beck  
 John Birkhoff  
 Douglass Bjorn  
 Rene and Kathleen Boelig  
 Jenny Dixon and John Boone  
 Annette Born  
 Susan and Peter Bove *in  
 memory of Juan O'Callahan*  
 Mary Boyer  
 Randy Brooks  
 Elizabeth Tobin Brown  
 Josephine R. Bump  
 Sarene and Tom Byrne

Michael McKinley and  
 Kathy Calnen  
 Jane and Donald Charbonnier



YOUTH HOLIDAY ART

John and Julie Coduri  
 Virginia and Frank Colassano  
 Richard and Lois Cole  
 Marie Cox  
 Chris Tilley and Pauline Cullen  
 Kay and Dick Daniele  
 Dean A. Davis  
 Lisa and Jay DeFanti  
 Arthur M. and  
 Wynne P. Delmhorst  
 John Dixon  
 Eileen and Dene Dobensky  
 Judith G. DuPont  
 Lissa van Dyke  
 Richard and Denise Easton  
 Carole and David Enfield  
 Martin Piecuch and  
 Elizabeth Falk  
 Kierstan and Ben Field  
 Bruce Ferguson and  
 Kathleen Gaynor  
 Richard and Koko Gildersleeve  
 Linda Grimes  
 Mary Elliott Haders  
 Bill Hargreaves  
 Susan Clapp and  
 Charles Hatton  
 Muriel Hinkle  
 Ardis and Dick Holliday *in  
 memory of Shirley Beal*  
 Robin and Judi Honiss  
 Candace Howes  
 Jane Keener and Paul Janssens  
 Jessica and John Kam

Jeff and Lynn Callahan  
 Greg Smith and  
 Deborah Dodds  
 Mark Spano and  
 Kim Donahue  
 Penelope Duckham  
 Mark and Connie Egan  
 Adi Ignatius and  
 Dinda Elliott  
 Margaret Frisch  
 David and  
 Lucia Greenhouse  
 Elizabeth Hopkins  
 Lowell and Joanne Jaeger  
 Saren Langmann  
 Hal Johnson and  
 Jane Leipold  
 Bruce and  
 Catherine Littman  
 Spike Lobdell  
 Monica and  
 William Lynders  
 Judy and Steve Martin  
 Alexandra McCagg  
 Marija and John McCarthy  
 Dorothea Moore  
 O'Brien Goodman  
 Family Fund  
 Dorothy Papp  
 Sharon Lynch and  
 Peter Perenyi



Karin Forde Whittemore and  
Peter Kepple  
George and Lynn Kimmerle  
Peter Kohlsaas *in memory of*  
*Juan O'Callahan*  
Brooks and Anne La Grua  
John and Mary LaMattina  
Laurie Cameron and  
Rick Larkin  
Stephen S. and  
Wendy Lehman Lash  
David and Pamela Leeming  
Susan Lindberg  
Diane MacFadyen

Monica Murer Barnett  
Sandy Murray  
Gerrit and Alexandra Nicholas  
Frederick S. Nicholas, Jr.  
John and Joan O'Brien  
Bunny O'Callahan *in memory*  
*of Juan O'Callahan*  
Joan and Tim O'Neill  
Elizabeth A. Osha  
Cynthia R. Palmer  
Gerry Klender and  
Dennis Palmer  
Joyce and Francis Pandolfi  
Jane Percy



Carla and Rowland Stebbins III  
Alexandra Stoddard  
Raymond A. Uzasas  
Janet McClendon and  
Alan Vaskas  
James Boylan and Betsy Wade  
Gus and Deya Warren  
Joshua and Alejandra Welch  
Virginia and Richard Welch  
Pam Wohltman  
Andrew and Ellen Wormser



Susan and Harry Martin  
Kate McCagg Robinson  
Christine McMasters  
Janvier and Gus Miller  
Carter Holliday and  
Alexandra Moore  
David Moore  
Jessica D. Morrissey  
Caroline and Scott Muller

Geoffrey and Beverly Phillips  
Susan Gallick and  
Jonathan Post  
Lucy Pullen Werner  
Ed S. Purcell  
Dan and Vicki Quinn  
David Rathbun  
Cynthia Elliott and  
R. Douglass Rice  
Betty Richards  
David Black and Anne Rivers  
Mark Twiss and  
Sarah Rogovin  
Robert and Susan Scala  
Peter and Eleanor Schaffer  
J.J. and Chris Sinton  
Hester and Ben Smith  
Lucia Sokol  
Geraldine S. Spillane  
Gigi Bradford and Jim Stanford

**UNDER \$100**

Anonymous  
Maureen McCabe and  
Jeffrey Andersen  
Frederic Paffard Anderson  
Alan and Patience Banister  
Eric Bartholet  
Bertrand Bell III  
Wendy Benchley  
Bruce and Betsy Biddle  
Neal and Jane Lassen Bobruff  
Tucker and Sandy Bragdon  
Alan and MJ Brush  
Charlie and Ann Buffum  
Sharon Carlee  
Clark Family *in memory of*  
*Eric & Burt Ross*  
Tom and Sally Cogan  
Elizabeth and Curt Danforth  
Laurel Butler and Chris Daniels  
Miranda De Kay *in memory of*  
*Coco Knapp*  
Linda Dohrmann  
David and Donna Elks  
Harry and Susie Ferguson



Sandra Sharr and  
 Marc A. Fishbone  
 Marcia and Jack Fix  
 Sandra Gensemer  
 Maggy Gilbert  
 Andrea Greene  
 Priscilla Griscom  
 John and Alice Groton *in  
 memory of Polly Park Dyer*  
 Timothy Hogen  
 Mohamad Homsji  
 Graham Jeffrey  
 Eileen Kenny  
 Steve Grover and Cathy Klein  
 Lucille Laccetti  
 Judith Larzelere  
 Kevin and Claudia Laxar  
 Douglas and Evelynn Lyons  
 Valentina Marchenkoff  
 Sally McBee  
 Kari McCabe and  
 Nate McBride



MYSTIC AQUARIUM'S PAUL ANDERSON

Cynthia Lichtenstein and  
 Charles Miller  
 Sabine Moffett  
 Geraldine Nager Griffin  
 Henry R. Palmer III  
 Jim and Mary Pendergast  
 Marya Ursin and Dan Potter  
 Kayla Hedman and  
 Konrad Poznanski  
 Brett and Donna Quinion  
 Ann and Paul Rath  
 William Reed  
 Alan and Ginny Roessler



Rose and Chris Rose  
 Jerome and Deborah Schwell  
 Lottie B. Scott  
 Alex Slater  
 Candy and Danny Slaton *in  
 memory of Wynne & Maurie*  
 Steven Slosberg  
 Rosanne and Michael Smyle  
 Caroline Souter  
 Rich and Liz Stern  
 Peg Tumicki  
 Suzanne and Timothy Tyler  
 Norma McHoes Vyse

*While every effort has been made  
 to ensure accuracy, please accept  
 our sincere apology if there are  
 any errors or omissions with your  
 name. If your listing requires  
 correction, please let us know.*

**CONCERT/LECTURE  
 SPONSORS**

*The Day*  
 Christopher Greenleaf  
 Yali Stonington



**MATCHING GIFTS**

The following companies  
 have matched the charitable  
 donations their employees  
 have made to La Grua Center.  
 Dominion Energy  
 Pfizer  
 UBS



lagruacenter.org