

An abstract painting of a landscape. The top half is dominated by a textured, light purple and lavender sky. Below the sky, a dark, horizontal band of deep purple and blue suggests a shadowed mountain range or a body of water. The middle section is a bright, glowing yellow and white, representing a sunlit plain or a field. The bottom section is a dark, textured blue, possibly representing a body of water or a shadowed foreground. The overall style is expressive and textured, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette.

LA GRUA CENTER

2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT

LA GRUA CENTER

ENGAGING COMMUNITY THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE



HOPE VALLEY VOLUNTEERS PERFORMING AT A MUSIC MATTERS CONCERT WITH PARTIAL VIEW OF LOBBY REDESIGN BY LOCAL ARCHITECT JULIA LEEMING.

A Destination for All

Dear Friends,

If you pass La Grua Center and continue down Water Street, you'll arrive where the Borough meets the sea, "The Point." Like La Grua Center, it's one of the best things about living around here. One is a destination for beauty in nature, and the other is a destination for wonderful arts and culture. But they're similar because they're both places for people to experience, reflect, enjoy, and join together.

The Point attracts visitors from everywhere just as La Grua Center's events bring people from all our surrounding communities. Some of them you know, some of them you don't; but they are all neighbors once they've gathered. At The Point they are drawn by the enormity of the ocean as it hits the horizon in the same way that La Grua Center draws them with

its breadth of concerts, exhibitions, and lectures. Imagination lives in these open and inviting places where friends connect in shared experiences.

During the last year, our new Executive Director, Daniel Brandl, worked with our Program Director, Kelli Rocherolle, as they collaborated with a dynamic board and energetic volunteers. It was a year of successes. As you read this Annual Report, we hope you'll see that we achieved our mission "to engage community through arts and culture," and that a visit to La Grua Center rewards like a visit to The Point. It's one of the best things about living around here.

Thanks for your continued support,
James P. Quinn
President, Board of Directors



Snapshot

La Grua Center welcomed back the community with live in-person concerts, lectures, and art exhibitions consistent with our mission, vision, and guiding principles. Our Music Matters series celebrated its 12th year with exceptional performances by **The Hope Valley Volunteers, Shannon and Matt Heaton, Sophie et Adam, Peregrine Road, and Duo Orfeo.** We showcased several pianists including **Misuzu Tanaka, Wynona Wang, Michael Bahmann, Duo Stephanie & Saar, Olga Vinokur, Judith Gordon, Eric Clark, and Jiayan Sun.**

We had even more music that offered new perspectives like **Cedric Mayfield and Epitome,** singer/songwriter **Jesse Terry,** and the **Mike Casey Jazz Trio.** Sponsored by the **Stonington Village Improvement Association,** we held outdoor concerts at **Stonington Commons and Wadawanuck Square** featuring **Revell Carr, Ms. Bergin, Ed Fast & Conga Bop,** and the **U.S. Coast Guard Band.**

We highlighted the military in Southeastern Connecticut with **Kevin “Red Eagle” Brown, Robert Howard Jr.,** and Vice Admiral **Sandra Stosz.** Our food series featured Sift Bake Shop’s **Adam Young,** RD86 Space’s **Hannah Gant,** Stonington Kelp Company’s **Suzie Flores,** and Whitecrest



Eatery’s **Johan Jensen** and **Abbey Hemman.** *Four Beacons: Art & Social Practice,* a performative lecture, served as an introduction to the local living archive project

The Ships in the Night. The play *People Like Us* with **Artreach, Inc., Emma Palzere-Rae,** and **Elijah Manning** sparked community discussion around diversity, inclusion, and systemic racism. *A Virtual Writing Workshop* with **Jessica Cerullo** supported the creative writing community and **Jonathan Taplin** discussed his memoir, *The Magic Years: Scenes from a Rock-and-Roll Life.*

La Grua Center’s walls were filled with a variety of visual arts. Talented artists from **Stonington, Mystic,** and **Pawcatuck** exhibited at our *Annual Stonington Artists* show. The *New, Used, & Unfriendly* exhibit from Jamaican born artist **Roshane Stephenson** took a closer look at America in 2020, with comments on politics, the pandemic, and other social issues. Friend of La Grua Center **Marija McCarthy** and other

artists presented *A Mix of Oil & Water*. Our partnership with **OutCT** and curators **Edwin Ivey** and **Amy Hannum** celebrated many of the talented LGBTQ+ artists in our area with *Coming Out for Art*. Students from high schools including **Stonington**, **Westerly**, **Wheeler**, and **Fitch**, inspired us with the *Celebrating Our Region's Emerging Artists* exhibit. Our **Postcard Art Project** connected us to the regional community and complemented our emerging artists. In the award-winning exhibit *I'll Follow the Sun*, photographs from **Shelley Lawrence Kirkwood** helped usher in spring and made an excellent backdrop for our Soirée.

We continued our commitment to children with four **Youth Art Workshops** during the holidays, Earth Day, and summer. Talented artists from **Public Art for Racial Justice Education (PARJE)**, **Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut**, and **Expresiones Cultural Center** shared their expertise with young budding artists at our first *Halloween & Dia de los Muertos* workshop. With the **Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce** and the **Town of Stonington**, we offered a free children's workshop where over twenty buoys were painted for the annual Stonington **Loxster Trap Tree**.



By the Numbers

Despite the pandemic, we presented 18 in-person concerts; 15 lectures, films, and panel discussions, together with another 10 from our neighboring nonprofits; 7 art exhibitions; our 12th annual Fine Art & Craft Show/Sale; 4 youth art workshops; and 3 weekly music,

drum, and dance classes—welcoming nearly 5,000 visitors through our doors. More than 7,300 people viewed our online programs on La Grua Center's YouTube channel.



Partnership

We continue to value and build upon our important relationships with our closest neighbors—the **Stonington Free Library**, the **Stonington Historical Society**, **James Merrill House**, the **Stonington Garden Club**, and the **Mystic Film Festival**, which all regularly use our space for their public programming. We collaborate with the **Stonington Harbor Yacht Club** and **SVIA** for outdoor music and other events. We are active members of **Stonington Nonprofits**, the **Stonington Borough Merchants Association**, and the **Cultural Coalition**, as well as our three closest chambers of commerce—**Greater Mystic**, **Ocean Community**, and **Eastern Connecticut**.

Grants and Funding

The past fiscal year La Grua Center received a Connecticut Cultural Fund Operating Support Grant and a Quick Grant from **Connecticut Humanities**; a General Operating Support for Theaters and Performing Groups Grant, a Supporting Arts Grant, and a Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund Grant from **Connecticut Office of the Arts**; a grant from the **Ocean Community Chamber Foundation**; a grant from the **Dominion Energy Charitable**



Foundation in support of our Food, Fitness, and Fun series; and support from the **Chelsea**

Groton Foundation for the updating of our building. Our Summer Soirée sponsors included **Cove Ledge Beer, Wine and Spirits, UBS Long River Wealth Management, DDM Metering Systems, Inc., Dime Bank, Waller Smith & Palmer, Yale New Haven Health-Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, Charter Oak Federal Credit Union, Charter Oak Scanning, Grover Insurance, Helen Moore, Lucia Johnstone, and Pappas/MacDonnell.**

Our Volunteers

Along with our dedicated Board of Directors, who serve on various board committees, our programming and events are made possible by the diverse group of volunteers who serve on committees to staff (Music, Programs, Youth, Facilities) and as event/office volunteers. We also thank former board members who remain engaged by serving on board committees. As always, we extend our gratitude to all the following for their donated time and personal commitment to La Grua Center.

EVENT AND FUNDRAISER VOLUNTEERS

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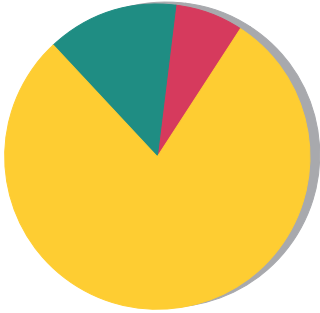
Expresiones Cultural Center
Stonington Garden Club
Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut
Public Art for Racial Justice Education (PARJE)
Stonington High School

Financials



Income

- Direct Contributions: \$166,419 (49%)
 - Fundraiser: \$74,824 (22%)
 - Grants: \$50,350 (15%)
 - Program Sales and Fees: \$46,876 (14%)
-
- TOTAL: \$338,469



Expenses

- Program: \$229,237 (79%)
 - Management and General: \$39,870 (14%)
 - Fundraising: \$20,753 (7%)
-
- TOTAL: \$289,860



The Board of Directors consists of passionate individuals who are involved in supporting our programs, mission, and future. We are proud to have a 100% giving board, with each board member donating to our programs and events every year.

Board of Directors and Staff

James P. Quinn, *President*
Phylcia Adams, *Vice President*
Manju Soni, *Secretary*
Beth Black, *Treasurer*
Mary Anne Butler
BJ Gaynor
Paul Halferty

Rebekah Kepple
Sharon Lynch
Regan Morse
Anne Wynne
Daniel Brandl, *Executive Director*
Kelli Rocherolle, *Program Director*

Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors to the Annual Fund who make our programming possible with their financial support. All gifts to La Grua Center were made to the Annual Fund between the dates of July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

ANNUAL FUND

(\$10,000+)

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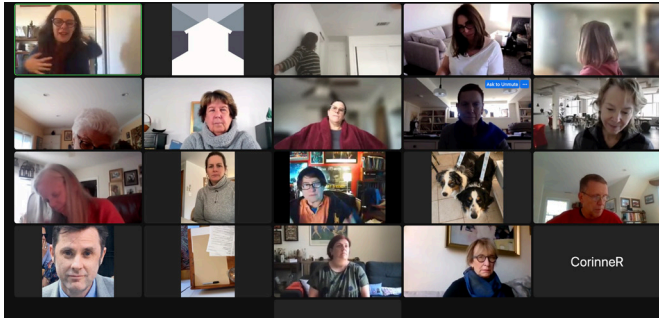
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In Memory of
Maurice and Winifred La Grua
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*While every effort has been made
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 any errors or omissions with your
 name. If your listing requires
 correction, please let us know.*



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