



The mission of the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod is to support, promote, and celebrate the arts and culture of Cape Cod in order to sustain a vibrant, diverse and strong arts community.

As a Pops by the Sea supporter, you have long understood the vital importance of arts and culture, both in our lives and in our community. That's why we are writing to let you know about exciting new changes to the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod (AFCC) that will strengthen the resiliency and vitality of the region's arts sector for the short- and long-term.

To achieve that goal, our Board of Directors and staff recently made the difficult decision to suspend the Pops by the Sea concert for this summer (2022) and beyond. This was a strategic decision based on the past two years of the pandemic; the size of our organization; and the need to prioritize our efforts on fulfilling our mission — to support, promote, and celebrate the arts and culture of Cape Cod in order to sustain a vibrant, diverse and strong arts community.

While the Pops by the Sea shined a spotlight on the power and beauty of the arts for one night every August, it was a monumental undertaking that shifted valuable resources from our mission and our ability to support, promote, and celebrate the arts and culture of Cape Cod.

The pandemic has demonstrated the critical need to reinvest in our mission. When Covid-19 first hit in early 2020, the arts sector shut down. While it eventually reopened in 2021, it hasn't fully recovered. By many estimates, it will be years before it does.

Our primary focus since March 2020 has been on:

- **Providing vital support to artists and cultural organizations to ensure they make it through the pandemic via our Cape Cod Arts Relief Fund, Provincetown Performing Arts Fund, and annual grants**
- **Advocating for more resources to address the growing needs of the region's creative economy**

Thanks to a significant investment from both the state, through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, as well as the Cape Cod Foundation, we have been able to **bolster our Creative Exchange (CEX) Program to offer meaningful professional development to local artists** that includes:

- One-on-one mentoring (new)
- A capacity-building grant program that provides participants with a \$1,000 stipend and a business plan to grow their business (new)
- An expansion of our artist fellowships
- In-person and virtual workshops to help artists advance their business and financial goals (new)
- Creative Exchange Podcast which highlights Cape artists who are making an impact locally, regionally, and beyond
- Spotighting artists and cultural events on our Arts Cape Cod website, Arts Cape Cod Facebook page, and It'sOn! weekly email
- And a return to our one-day CEX Conference in November that will offer artists practical strategies to further their creative endeavors

We kicked off 2022 by **announcing our inaugural Artist of the Year, Jo Hay of Provincetown**. This is another step the AFCC is taking to recognize artists across all mediums in our region.

A National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant we received in 2021 will allow us to increase our investment in cultural organizations beyond our annual grant-giving process. We have \$139,000 available that we will distribute later this year which will provide relief to arts nonprofits in Barnstable County which have been directly impacted by the pandemic.

And this is now the second year, **we are managing a robust marketing campaign, Capture the Arts on Cape Cod, to shine a spotlight on the region as a cultural destination** thanks to funding from the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT) and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce.

We continue to **place an emphasis on AFCC Access, a program that connects underserved students in Barnstable County with year-round extracurricular arts activities** that enhance their academic experience, build their confidence, offer connection, and open up a world of possibilities.

The AFCC would not be able to embark on these exciting new changes without your support! You have allowed our organization to be nimble, thoughtful, and adapt to a two-year landscape where artists have lost jobs and income, and cultural organizations have lost significant revenue and are struggling to fill staff to deliver programs and services.

Throughout the year, we have numerous opportunities for you to continue to engage in our work and be inspired by art. We hope you'll continue to Stand with the Arts at a time when our creative sector needs it more than ever.

Should you have any questions about our work and the future direction of the AFCC, please don't hesitate to contact us.

With gratitude.

Julie Wake, Executive Director

Kathryn Kayajan, Board Chair