



**ADIRONDACK LAKES
CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

www.adirondackarts.org

P.O. Box 205 3446 State Rt. 28 Blue Mt. Lake, NY 12812

December 4, 2023

Dear ALCA Friends,

As we enter winter and our Annual Fund appeal drive, we have much to be grateful for—especially our Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts (ALCA) supporters! With your faithful support, ALCA has been able to grow and thrive through the years, meeting the challenge of many changes and transitions. Now entering our 56th season, we can proclaim to all that we are the longest continually operating arts center in the Adirondacks. This is something to be tremendously proud of, and we largely have you to thank for such longevity.

Our mission statement includes promoting, developing, cultivating, and fostering quality programs in the arts, sciences, and humanities in the Adirondacks. Through dynamic programming and innovative approaches, ALCA continually strives to achieve this mission. Our organization fosters and cultivates the arts with the New York State Council of the Arts (NYSCA) Statewide Community Re grants (SCR) Program. ALCA's building, staff, and organizational infrastructure all contribute to implementing, sustaining, and growing the NYSCA SCR program here in the Adirondack North Country. When you support ALCA, you support the SCR program.

As the NYSCA SCR site for the four-county region of Hamilton, Essex, Franklin and Clinton counties, ALCA saw an historic increase in the amount of funds we had available to regrant in 2023 to artists and arts organizations—a total of \$210,000 was awarded to 77 different applicants, up from \$91,000 and 49 applicants in 2022. Encouraged by NYSCA to dream big with our SCR-renewal application for the 2023 grant cycle, we did, and we received an all-time record-high increase in funding of more than 125%. As a result, ALCA regranting a total of \$52,500 to 21 different recipients in the Individual Artist category (offered for the first time in our region in approximately a decade); \$22,475 for five projects in Arts Education; and \$135,025 for 59 projects in Community Arts. With this increase in funding, we were also able to expand the SCR Coordinator position into a full-time one. Fred Balzac, our dedicated SCR Coordinator, is expanding ALCA's services to the region's arts community by increasing our outreach and coordination.

In 2022, ALCA's SCR Program served 66,228 adults, 10,337 youths, and 750 artists. ALCA's in-person attendance, including the SCR programs, was 81,155 people that year. Not only does ALCA regrant to artists and art organizations, but we also continually strive to nourish our relationships with them. Carl Rubino, for example, is a fine-arts photographer in the Adirondacks who concentrates on creating interpretive, impressionistic, and abstract images of the subject matter that lies in front of him, including rivers, mountains, peeling paint, and people. Upon being awarded a 2023 Individual Artist grant, he wrote to SCR Coordinator Fred Balzac, *"First, I want to extend a huge thank you to you, ALCA, NYSCA, and all the individuals involved in the process of dealing with these applications, reviewing applications, selecting the recipients, etc. I am deeply honored to have been chosen as a recipient of an individual artist grant, and most particularly to have been told that both of my submitted Individual Artists projects were worthy of a grant, and given the opportunity to select which one I would receive funding for."*

When you invest in ALCA, you invest in artists and in the vitality of our communities. Recently, the Center for Urban Studies, released a report "Upstate's Creative Spark: How the Arts is Catalyzing Economic Vitality Across Upstate New York," that provides the following statistical information and comparisons. From 2009 to 2019, employment in the arts-and-culture sector across upstate New York surged 35 percent, nearly 10 times the overall rate of employment growth upstate (4 percent) and three times the growth rate of the healthcare sector (12 percent).

This employment boom occurred in nearly every corner of the state, including in the North Country, which saw arts-sector job growth increase by 28.5 percent! At a time when many upstate communities have seen little population growth—and when the under-65 population has been in rapid decline in most communities—between 2011 and 2021 the number of working artists in upstate New York increased by 26.5 percent. This influx of artists and rise in homegrown talent has helped reinvigorate our downtown communities, drive tourism, and spark the creation of new restaurants, coffee shops, and other small businesses. The growth in artists and arts-related employment has occurred in spite of declining levels of public investment in the arts across upstate New York. The primary grant-making budget for the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), the state’s primary arts funder, fell from \$63.1 million in FY 2008 to \$40.6 million today—a 35.6 percent decline, after adjusting for inflation—and is now 68 percent below its 1990 peak. ***This is why your support for ALCA is critical: your monetary contributions to our Annual Fund appeal directly sustain ALCA!***

With strength and vigor, ALCA interacted with almost 130 creatives in our 2023 programming and 55th season. This included 30 visual artists, artisans, instructors, and lecturers who were featured in our gallery exhibits and gift shop, adult Workshop Wednesdays, and Summer Kids’ Arts Camp. This also included almost 100 performing artists and directors—including musicians and actors—in our touring Adirondack Lakes Theatre Festival, our Weekend Series of concerts, our newly revived Tuesdays@theAC series (featuring Adirondacks-based or connected performers), and fundraising events, such as our June Jubilee and Great Arts Benefit. We hosted “An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of His First Show at ALCA,” a gallery exhibit by beloved artist Don Wynn, and a slide-show presentation by Don. We continue to sell notecards of selected Don Wynn paintings and created a 2024 ALCA Don Wynn calendar, also still for sale. Don wrote to Artistic General Director George Cordes, *“It was great meeting you and all the other ALCA staff. It was a fine experience.”* Cultivating these relationships with creatives from the Adirondacks and beyond is important to the ALCA community. With our extensive programming in 2023—and exciting plans for 2024—ALCA is promoting the arts in our local communities. This has not gone unnoticed. From Betsy Dirnberger, Associate Publisher of the Adirondack Explorer and Adirondack Almanack: *“Very impressive (Adirondack Lakes) Theatre Festival line-up! You’ve turned the arts scene on its Adirondack head these last few years!”* ***Without your support, this kind of innovative programming and dedication to the arts in our communities would not be possible.***

We hope you contribute generously to this Annual Fund appeal request today, as you help provide the monetary foundation for the arts in the Adirondacks with ALCA. Both ALCA’s and your continued commitment to the arts in the Adirondacks has helped to develop and nourish relationships with local, regional, and international artists for decades. These relationships are important and foster an ongoing sense of creativity in the greater ALCA community that, in turn, keeps us connected with the ever-growing arts community in the Adirondacks. From musician and artist Bob Stump: *“My band and I enjoy performing at the Arts Center. Over the years, we have met a lot of folks that continue to come out and support us. The patrons are supportive and appreciate us. The band can really feel the warm welcome, and it motivates our performance. It is an intimate room and a joy to perform in. Some years back, my fiddler Doug Moody and I first met in Blue Mountain Lake and performed an impromptu campfire concert. We discovered a great musical connection and have been performing together ever since. It is always special when we return there.”*

This vital relationship of the arts to community is at the heart of ALCA, and we thank you for helping cultivate these connections for more than 55 years! On behalf of the Board of Trustees, staff, and our indispensable volunteers, as ALCA enters its **56th** season we thank you for your continued foundation of support, whether it be monetary, participatory, or by your presence at our events—all in supporting the arts in the Adirondacks!

Together in the Arts,



Joanna Pine
Board President



Jean-Marie Donohue
Development General Director



George Cordes
Artistic General Director



ADIRONDACK LAKES CENTER FOR THE ARTS 2023 ANNUAL FUND RESPONSE FORM

**Thank you for your interest in supporting the Arts Center!
Please check your desired gift amount below.**

Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Your gift is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

- Adirondacks: \$10,000
- Northern Lights: \$5,000
- Mountains: \$2,500
- Lakes: \$1,000
- Rivers: \$500
- Woods*: \$250
- Campfire: \$100
- A gift of any amount: \$ _____

*As a special thank you, receive a **2024 Don Wynn calendar** (while supplies last) with a gift of **\$250 or more!**



Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ payable to ALCA

Please charge my credit card \$ _____ (or donate directly online at adirondackarts.org)

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Your Signature _____

May we thank you on our website? Yes! No, thank you.

PO Box 205 | 3446 NY-28, Blue Mountain Lake, NY 12812

