



## Marking a Milestone with a Miracle

On Tuesday, June 14, 2016, the Lehigh Valley Arts Council and the Disability Friendly Community, in cooperation with Lafayette College, gathered at the Williams Center for the Arts to commemorate the inaugural year of Arts & Access with an evening of laughter and fellowship. Red, White & Blue celebrated the unified effort made by the arts and social services communities to expand cultural accessibility in the Lehigh Valley. The occasion also marked Flag Day and featured a performance by Josh Blue, the award-winning comedian who uses his cerebral palsy as the subject of his comedy. The proceedings unfolded with heartfelt tributes, camaraderie, and a small miracle.

In his welcoming remarks, Randall Forte, executive director of the Arts Council, congratulated the attendees for their remarkable achievements. In the past year, thirty cultural organizations teamed up with social service agencies to present fifty disability-friendly events, including sensory-friendly performances for children with autism; dance classes for Parkinson's patients and their caregivers; audio-described, open-captioned, and ASL-interpreted theatrical performances for people with vision and hearing loss; concerts; lectures; exhibitions; poetry readings; film screenings; and public meetings. Seven hundred ninety people with disabilities either attended or performed at these events, and they were accompanied by nearly 750 family members and friends.

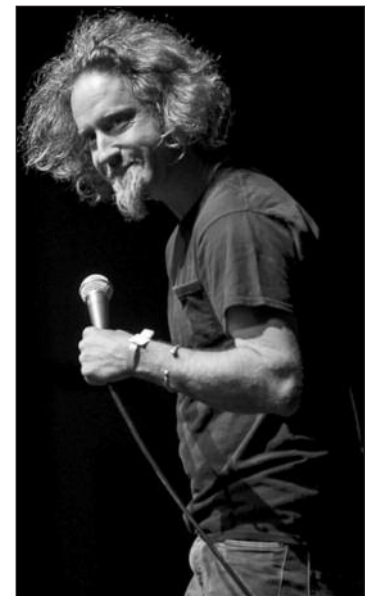
"The scope of Arts & Access and the breadth of support speak to the power of the arts to bring people together and change lives," Forte exclaimed. "We applaud the dozens of volunteers, businesses, and foundations for their donation of time, expertise, and financial resources that helped us to pave the way."



Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Executive Director Philip Horn presented two commendations, one from Governor Tom Wolf and the other from PCA Board of Trustees Chairwoman E. Jeanne Gleason. Horn acknowledged the important work of this region's arts community and the leadership of the Lehigh Valley Arts Council for spearheading the initiative.

As the audience of 225 people eagerly awaited comedian Josh Blue's performance, news that he was in a Lehigh Valley hospital due to a fall drew a gasp from the crowd. Guests were invited to move into the lobby for the dessert reception, only to be surprised by Josh's arrival on the scene twenty minutes later. His banter with the crowd lured them back into the theatre for an hour of laughter, Q&A, and insight into the world inhabited by persons with disabilities.

At the end, the evening was a big success. According to Forte, "It introduced Josh up close and personal, engaging and raw because he was so vulnerable and present in the moment. He reminded us that greater inclusion requires great resiliency to meet unforeseen challenges."



# ARTS COUNCIL MATTERS

## 2016–2017 ARTix

The Lehigh Valley Arts Council announces to the community the release of the new ARTix Passport to the Arts, a buy-one, get-one-free ticket to eighteen arts and cultural venues through June 30, 2017. Dance, musical, theatrical, and historical offerings are just some of the travel destinations offered by the passport.

“This year marks the eighteenth anniversary of this successful arts marketing promotion,” says Arts Council Executive Director Randall Forte. “The Lehigh Valley Arts Council is proud to provide regional leadership that advances the arts in this growing community.”

Over the years, the Arts Council has increased the circulation of ARTix and opened the door wider for all people to enjoy the arts. Real estate and corporate reloca-

tion offices give passports to new residents relocating to the Valley. Local health networks encourage volunteers to enjoy the arts as part of a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, the social service sector offers ARTix to its clients with disabilities, allowing them affordable access to disability-friendly events. There is definitely something for everyone to enjoy—

from symphonic to folk music, fine arts to vintage cars, Shakespeare to Broadway musicals—fun and entertainment for the entire family.

The most direct way to receive your very own ARTix Passport to the Arts is simply to join the Arts Council. An Individual Membership is reasonably priced at \$40 per year. With passport in hand, start planning your itinerary today and build your circle of arts friends. Members also receive discounts to workshops and conferences, subscriptions to the bimonthly *Inside the Arts / Arts Calendar* and to *Lehigh Valley Style*, and free admission to the annual spring and fall membership receptions.

ARTix Passport is made possible through the support of Christmas City Printing, the County of Lehigh, and the Harry C. Trexler Trust.



**Inside the Arts** is a bimonthly publication of the Lehigh Valley Arts Council, 840 Hamilton St., Suite 201, Allentown, PA 18101.

Editor-in-Chief: Randall Forte

Call for submission guidelines. News items must be received by the fifth of the month preceding publication.

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### Our Mission:

To promote the arts; to encourage and support artists and their development; to assist arts organizations; and to facilitate communication and cooperation among artists, arts organizations, and the community.



The Lehigh Valley Arts Council is a Pennsylvania Partner in the Arts, a program of the PCA.

## Call for Artists: Are You Ready to Answer?

This seminar will guide the emerging artist with instructions on preparing a professional application. Learn the essentials of a successful submission and how to create marketing materials—artist statements and bios, digital images, pricing, and contracts—that reflect the caliber of your work.

Date: Tuesday, July 12, 2016  
Presenters: Sculptor Daniel Kainz and Nicole J. O’Hara, Esq., Gross McGinley  
Location: Butz Corporate Center  
Second Floor Conference Room  
Ninth & Hamilton Streets, Allentown  
Time: 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Fees: \$25/Arts Council members  
\$45/nonmembers

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**THE INSIDE TRACK**

Poet Marilyn Shoemaker Hazelton, President of the Tanka

Society of America, was recently in Japan to address the Eighth International Tanka Festival.

Best wishes to storyteller **Eva Grayzel** who has relocated to Florida.

The Lehigh Valley arts community mourns the loss of painter **Tom Burke**, who passed away in the spring.

Congratulations to **Julia Marsh** on her new appointment as Curator of Exhibitions and Academic Affairs at Franklin & Marshall's Phillips Museum.

For a listing of disability-friendly events, go to [ARTSandACCESS.org](http://ARTSandACCESS.org).

**NEW MEMBERS**

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Evelyn M. DiCandia

Amy Gery

Dattatreya Phadke

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Lynn Godfrey & Carl Lee

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Karen Hobson  
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**ONE LAST THOUGHT**

Josh Blue delivered a raw and very personal performance at Red, White & Blue—a performance that transcended the laughter he evoked from his fans. There was something almost supernatural about watching this slight man with wild eyes physically dominate the space with incredible energy. In spite of a fall that fractured his sacrum on route to the Lehigh Valley—and over and above his cerebral palsy—his performance mesmerized the audience and challenged their notions about health and illness.

It made me think: Are comedians the new shamans? Laughter may be the best medicine, but making people laugh at life's absurdities is close to divine.

*Randall Forte*