



## Explore the Arts, Enjoy the Lehigh Valley, Expand Our Economy

The Lehigh Valley Arts Council is pleased to announce the release of the new ARTix Passport to the Arts in the Lehigh Valley. ARTix provides a buy one, get one free voucher to twenty-four arts and cultural venues and has a \$400 retail value. Dance, musical, theatrical, and historical offerings are just some of the options available to the arts traveler and a companion through June 30, 2013.

“This new edition of the ARTix Passport marks thirteen years of collaborative arts marketing among the region’s cultural groups,” says Randall Forte, Arts Council executive director. “When we come together to promote all of the arts in the region, everyone wins: The arts strengthen the Lehigh Valley brand, the cultural consumer has more choices, the organizations attract larger audiences—and local businesses thrive.”

A benefit of membership in the Lehigh Valley Arts Council, the passport is also distributed to real estate and corporate relocation offices as a way to introduce new

residents to the variety and depth of programming in the region. Arts Council members are encouraged to use the passport as an advocacy tool and introduce a friend to a whole world of extraordinary arts and entertainment produced in our region. With passport in hand, you can start planning a year’s itinerary to events at the Da Vinci Science Center, Muhlenberg Summer Music Theatre, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Pennsylvania Youth Theatre, Sigal Museum, and so many more!

The Lehigh Valley Arts Council is proud to provide regional leadership that advances the arts in this growing community, and welcomes new members. Membership benefits include ARTix; discounts to workshops and conferences; subscriptions to our bimonthly *Inside the Arts / Arts Calendar* and to *Lehigh Valley Style* magazine; and invitations to the annual spring and fall membership receptions.

Special thanks to our lead sponsor, Fegley’s Brew Works, and to Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.; Christmas City Printing; the County of Lehigh; PPL; and the Harry C. Trexler Trust for their additional support.



## High Marks

Seventy-five people attended the fourth “Whose Business is the Arts?” public forum on June 7, 2012, to examine the relevance of the results of the recent economic impact study “Arts & Economic Prosperity IV.” Cosponsored by the Lehigh Valley Arts Council and the Lehigh Valley Partnership, this year’s event aimed to stimulate a dialogue about promoting sustainability and entrepreneurship in the nonprofit arts sector.

Following a networking continental breakfast, Arts Council Executive Director Randall Forte welcomed the attendees and commended the region’s leaders for their ongoing commitment to and cooperation in supporting this vital research. “Whose Business is the Arts” brought together business executives, corporate contributors,

artists, arts administrators, foundation representatives, board members, and government officials.

According to three economic impact studies that the Arts Council has administered in the past fifteen years, the region’s nonprofit arts and cultural industry continues to experience tremendous growth at a rate that is more than double the national average. In order to sustain this growth, the Lehigh Valley’s nonprofit arts industry will need to expand its audiences. Forte encouraged the attendees to seize the opportunity to build a sustainable future. “As we begin to meet the challenges ahead, it is important to recognize that together we gain access to a broader perspective, discover brave solutions, and advance our common interest.”

# ARTS COUNCIL MATTERS

## High Marks *(continued)*

Roland Kushner, professor of business at Muhlenberg College, then took to the podium to present and interpret the recent results of “Arts & Economic Prosperity IV” relative to life in the Lehigh Valley. The message was clear: The arts are great for business in the Lehigh Valley. The nonprofit arts industry in the region generates \$208 million in economic activity annually, a figure that includes 7,114 jobs and \$21.4 million in local and state revenues.

Keynote speaker Ben Cameron of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation acknowledged the passion and dedication that artists and administrators devote to their arts disciplines and then challenged them to adapt to the changing cultural landscape. Culture, he observed, needs a new language or map to respond to the audience’s twenty-first century expectations of personalization, convenience, and immediacy in their lives. “What if the role of the arts is no longer only to present products to be consumed, but to provide experiences that will serve as springboards to our communities’ own creativity? Are we in the midst of an arts reformation where institutions must change to continue



Randall Forte and Ben Cameron

fulfilling their missions?” Mr. Cameron suggested that one approach is to adopt the entrepreneurial spirit.

Todd Watkins, executive director of the Baker Institute for Entrepreneurship, Creativity, and Innovation at Lehigh University, followed with an interactive session designed to teach organizations to imagine new ways to raise earned revenues. The attendees were divided into six groups to study the case study of a local nonprofit organization (Civic Theatre, Godfrey Daniels, Pennsylvania Sinfonia Orchestra, Repertory Dance Theatre, Sigal Museum, and Touchstone Theatre); a professional facilitator was assigned to each group to nurture innovative thinking and to keep participants on task. Each group was divided into two teams, and each team was asked to produce five revenue-generating solutions based on ideas for potential new partners, new customers, and new ways of engaging the consumer. Afterwards, the teams swapped and evaluated each other’s ideas according to a set of criteria provided by Mr. Watkins. Finally, each team shared the most promising idea with the entire audience. The participants displayed high levels of engagement during the session, and 95% of the evaluations cited it as extremely or moderately helpful.

Many thanks to the professionals who designed and implemented the breakout session. Mr. Watkins and Mr. Kushner joined Ellen Baker Ghelardi, Michael London, Michael Stershic, and Mary Ellyn Voden as facilitators in this session.

“Whose Business is the Arts?” was just the beginning of an ongoing conversation with the community. Throughout this next year, the Arts Council will continue its advocacy work on two fronts: 1) educating the public about the value and economic impact of the arts; and 2) educating the nonprofit arts sector about creating more effective business models.

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

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

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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.

## Why I Do What I Do by Jamie Balliet



Photo by Wilson Black

Even though I have never performed, I've always loved theater. I like to think of myself as a patron of the arts more than anything. I understand the importance of an audience: performers are at their best in front of an audience that appreciates them, and programs can continue when there is an audience to support them.

My job at the State Theatre is to give the artists an audience to entertain, to teach, to share in the kinetic energy. Theater is one of the last remaining gathering places of fellowship. The world is controlled by gadgets that have made life more solitary. But theater? Theater you share with somebody—sometimes many bodies.

I was fortunate enough to be at the State Theatre for the inception of the FREDDY Awards in 2003, a program that recognizes and rewards outstanding achievement in local high school musical theater. From the beginning, in addition to marketing the program to the community, I have produced the television broadcast of the FREDDY Awards alongside creator and executive producer Shelley Brown. One of the goals has always been to help fill the schools' auditoriums for their performances.

But it wasn't until this past season, ten years later, that I truly understood the impact this program has had on the community and on me. For the first time, I went to see all

of the high school musicals participating in the FREDDY Awards—29 performances in 3 months—and I loved it!

It felt good to support the schools in a different way—by being a patron of their art. I went through every emotion this FREDDY season, and all these emotions were evoked by the work the students were doing on stage. With a great sense of pride in their dedication and achievement, I felt an automatic reaction to stand and clap during every curtain call.

When it came time for rehearsals to start for the opening number of the FREDDY ceremony, I would recognize the kids by their characters. Hey, there's Tracy Turnblad. You played P. T. Barnum, didn't you? To student after student I'd say, "I saw you on stage," and they'd all light up.

Having this experience has reminded me that I truly do love being a patron of theater. Even though it's my job on a daily basis to encourage others to share in that experience, it is also part of who I am. Live performances continue to inspire me at the State Theatre, which I like to call my second home, and at every theater I attend. They can be in high school gyms; outside under trees; in new, modern venues; or in old, historic vaudeville houses. It's all theater.

I am a patron of the arts at heart...and I love theater.

### Featured Artist's Statement Vivian Fishbone

*Vivian Fishbone's work is on display at the Arts Council office and on our website, [www.LVArtsCouncil.org](http://www.LVArtsCouncil.org), during July and August.*

These paintings are, for me, a venture into the world of encaustic. Encaustic is method of painting using pigment-infused beeswax and resin on a hard surface. The paint can be made to meld and flow by using a heat source. It is an ancient technique but one that is now experiencing a renaissance. There are many encaustic artists across the country, and they often know one another and show together. Since my work has always been highly organic in form, I was anxious to try this medium.

These paintings, as always, are about feelings. They attempt to evoke a mood or emotion in the viewer, which I hope will intensify each time the work is seen again.



# MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

## Kristin Baxter: Art Professor, Art Advocate, Studio Artist

by Randall Forte

Meet Kristin Baxter, assistant professor of art at Moravian College. For more than five years, she taught art to children in kindergarten through grade eight, and she conducted professional development workshops for teachers in museums, galleries, schools, and community centers.



### What made you decide to become a professor?

Early in my career as an art educator, I was fortunate to work in a variety of settings with diverse audiences, including preschool children; suburban middle school kids; urban non-English-speaking children; college students; and classroom and art teachers. I believe each of my students, whether we were together for one day or one year, connected the art and museum experiences to his or her own life and gained new appreciation for himself/herself and others. I believe this is how new knowledge within art education can lead to social transformations.

### In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing art educators today?

To be more effective at advocating for children to have sustained and meaningful art education with certified art specialists throughout the K–12 years. While I believe children can have very meaningful art experiences with classroom teachers or with specialists in other subject areas, it is critical that certified art specialists be retained in (or restored to) all public schools throughout our country.

### Oftentimes art specialists appear isolated. How can they integrate themselves more fully into the entire school's culture?

Build relationships with new colleagues. At Moravian College, I teach "First Year Seminar," which is a writing/research class and introduction to college life. The theme for my section of this course is "Modern Art History," which includes visits to museums in New York City. Teaching this

class has helped me to learn about college-wide initiatives and ways to integrate them into my courses and to share the importance of art education with colleagues across subject areas.

### I have read that your own art builds on personal objects and narrative. How would you describe it?

I use snapshots and found objects as part of my collages and assemblages. Things make the past real. Things bring the past forward. My art practice explores this dynamic nature of static things.

There is often highly charged emotional content associated with objects from daily life. Children's toy blocks conjure memories of simple play; yet casting them in bronze renders the toys useless for a toddler. My art destabilizes the value of objects just as the memories associated with them shift and fade and, ultimately, mislead. The things we save can possess both pleasing and disturbing narratives at the same time. Through my art practice, I explore this contradiction.

### Whose work has influenced you?

Graeme Sullivan, my mentor from Columbia University, has been my biggest influence for my art practice and pedagogy. I also find ideas through novels, children's books (David Wiesner's *The Three Pigs* and Istvan Banyai's *Zoom*), and films that challenge assumptions and consider objects as purveyors of memories.

In the film *Everything Is Illuminated*, the main character, an American, Jonathan, uses a prized family snapshot to lead him on a journey to the Ukraine to seek out knowledge about his grandparents. Along the way, he collects random objects (such as a cricket and soil) and places them in plastic zip-lock bags. He does so in order "not to forget." This is in contrast to the opinions of Jonathan's Ukrainian tour guide, Alex, who asserts, "The past is past and all that is not now should remain buried along the side of our memories." Throughout the film, there is an underlying debate between the need to save objects and memories but also to let things go in order to move forward in our lives. By the end of the film, Alex declares, "Everything is illuminated in the light of the past." This film shows the ability of snapshots and found objects to both depict and recollect a past, but such images and objects also help us shape our knowledge about ourselves and our future.

### As an artist, how do you balance work, life, and time in the studio?

Being a mother and professor in a tenure-track position, I rarely have time to spend "in the studio." Instead, I make creative moments surround my life, like water filling a jar of stones. I knit whenever I am waiting; I involve my children in my art-making when I can; I go away! Each summer, I plan chunks of time where I am sequestered and making art.

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**THE INSIDE TRACK**

In June, sculptor **Lisa Fedon** installed a new sculpture, *Five Dancing Figures*, at Moravian Hall Square.

Two local organizations, the **Bel Canto Children's Chorus** and the **Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Performing Arts**, have been invited to compete in this summer's World Choir Games, the largest international choral competition in the world. The competition takes places in Cincinnati, and this is the first time the event has been held in the United States.

The National Endowment for the Arts has granted the **Bach Choir of Bethlehem** a \$10,000 Art Works Grant to support its educational outreach programs.

Arts Council board member **Steven Leibensperger** was recently honored by Crayola for his Outstanding Volunteer Service to an Arts Organization.

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**ONE LAST THOUGHT**

The recent "Whose Business is the Arts?" public forum began a dialogue about promoting sustainability and entrepreneurship in the nonprofit arts sector. One of the highlights of the day was a breakout session that introduced attendees to local case studies, new business models, and creative ways to discover new revenue-generating solutions. There is a follow-up meeting on Thursday, July 19, 2012, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., to map out how to move forward with this exciting work. We are meeting at the conference facility across the hall from the Arts Council office, and I encourage you to attend. Please R.S.V.P. to [rforte@lvartscouncil.org](mailto:rforte@lvartscouncil.org) by July 16.

As we begin to meet the challenges ahead, it is important to recognize that together we gain access to a broader perspective, discover brave solutions, and advance our common interest.

*Randall Forte*