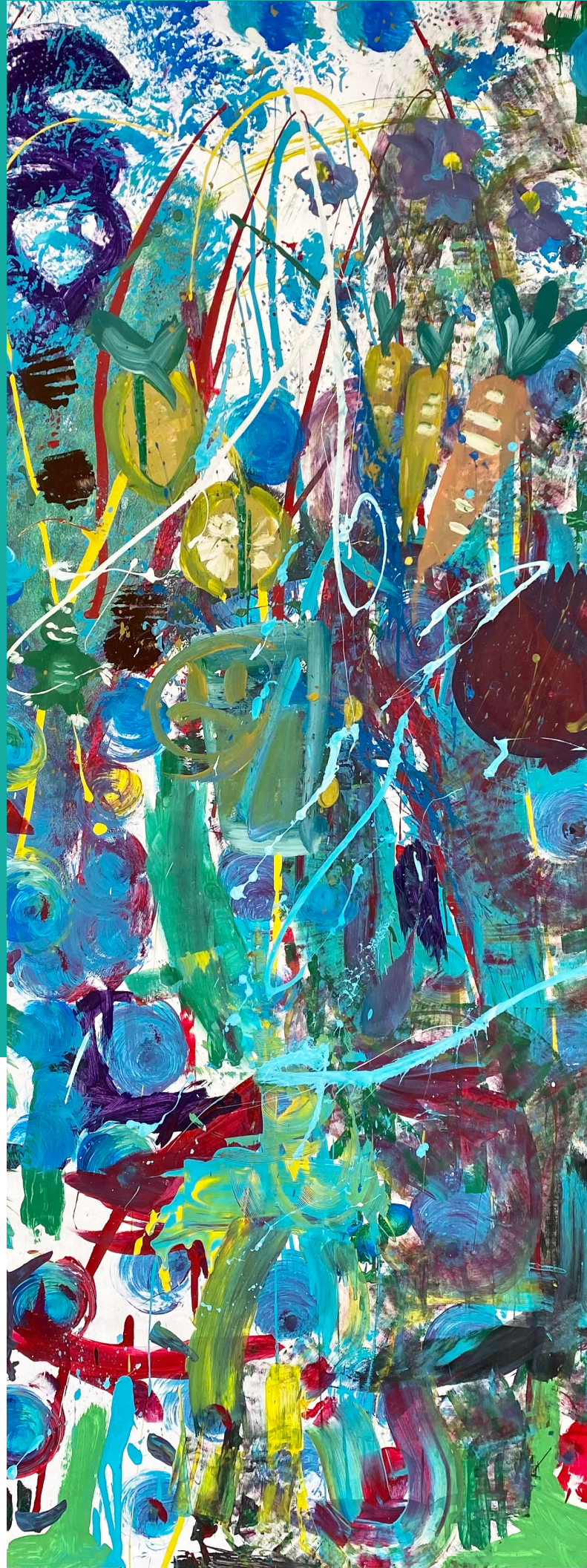


ANNUAL REPORT 2022



inclusive
arts
vermont



A REFLECTION

Dear Friends of Arts Access,

It's once again time to reflect on the past year here at Inclusive Arts Vermont. As I sit down to write this note, hot tea in hand, I notice a theme throughout the stories in this report: broadening.

The following pages are filled with beautiful examples of our organization's work. There are tales of students expanding their ideas of what's possible in the classroom and beyond, organizations adapting to change in a new virtual world for exploration and art serving as a catalyst for communication.

When I think about expansion and Inclusive Arts Vermont, I don't think about doing more, I think about opening and unfolding. We're moving in new directions and morphing like well-worked clay. Our organization continues to adapt, grow, and learn during a period of continued change.

In February, we closed our physical office location and the management team made a shift to working remotely. This has expanded our perspective on what a productive team looks like, and in August we welcomed a new team member who lives outside of the state.

I am proud of the work of Inclusive Arts Vermont. Through direct service arts education, training offerings, exhibitions, advocacy, the organization is truly making Vermont more accessible for people with disabilities, in the arts and beyond. The work of broadening opportunities, expanding possibilities, and increasing access to creativity makes a difference every day, in both big and small ways.



An image of a large collaborative drawing of sea creatures and sea life. Four sets of small hands and one set of adult hands use crayons and fingers to add to the artwork. At the top and bottom, there are bins of crayons.

Thank you to each and every one of our supporters, partners, and friends in this work. We couldn't do what we do without you.

katie miller

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EXHIBITIONS

MASKED, our most recent visual arts exhibition featuring artwork by 22 Vermont artists with disabilities, traveled to five diverse venues blending in-person and remote engagement options.

At the Southern Vermont Arts Center in Manchester, teaching artists, interns, and venue partners attended a workshop on accessible tours. Participants learned approaches for individuals with blindness, low vision, dementia, and memory loss.

The training utilized access features like tactile elements, interactive prompts, open-ended questions, and group discussions. These strategies offer multiple access and engagement opportunities for participants.

Alexandra Turner, teaching artist and Director of School and Community Programs, modeled specific practices with Lissa Nilsson's "inVisible illness: Behind the Smile." Lissa's piece is a 20x20 mixed media on paper work featuring the artist's face in profile, mapping side effects of chronic pain and illness on her brain.

One person observed a what she interpreted as a "map for self-care" and thought she might take inspiration from that and create her own map. Others used gesture and movement to express their responses to the piece.

The art came alive as it hung on the wall, but also through the interaction participants were having; their connections poignantly animating the work.

Later that night, Lissa, the artist, was able to attend the opening reception for the exhibit. The room was abuzz with conversation about the art and the access features. Countless people paused before Lissa's art, observing in their own ways.

Art is reciprocal. Creating expansive opportunities to engage with the art in MASKED assured that more people could connect to art on their own terms and with consideration for their own safety.

These deepening relationships can't be framed and hung on the wall, but their colors and textures are at the heart of efforts to share MASKED wholly: its art, its accessibility features, and its artists' stories, as widely as possible!



Two people stand in front of a piece of art hung in a gallery space. The people face the art, observing it. The art is by Lissa Nilsson, and shows a face in profile, with the brain visible, string connecting the brainstem to a map key.

START WITH THE ARTS

Start With The Arts teaching artist, Lisa, worked with a new provider in Hartford, Vermont. Thembi and Lisa shared joy, learning, and connection throughout the session. Thembi was a sponge for inspiration and new creative ideas.

Thembi integrates her African history and culture, growing up as a child in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, combining it with the songs she learned with Lisa during lessons. Start With the Arts supports creative learning and flexibility for providers, giving them the freedom to blend the strategies and skills learned with their own experiences, strengths, and passions.

The children in Thembi's care are very young, 6 months to 3 years old. Together, Lisa and Thembi experimented with books and activities to see what the little ones responded to. They loved to point out details in books, drum, dance, paint, and play with salt clay.

On sunny days, they'd go outside and point at the white fluffy clouds imagining a bunny, dragon...sometimes calling out words or shapes that only they understand.

In response to cloud gazing, children folded blue paper with white tempera paint inside, patting paper with their tiny hands to squish the paint and create cloud shapes. Seeing their little surprised faces and tiny gasps as they opened the pages was true magic.

Thembi excitedly showed parents the projects the children were working on, their creativity splashed brightly across paper. She framed paintings from lessons, and used them as a jumping off point for rich conversation with the parents.

Start With The Arts reminds us that creativity is communication. The arts are a pathway to understanding our world and each other. Even if we don't always understand what they're saying, tiny ones have a lot to say and are invaluable members of our communities.



Four images, from left to right: an early childhood educator sits on the floor reading to two young children; a toddler paints outdoors with blue paint; a young child shows a piece of paper with a white paint print on it; an educator reads a book to three young children.

START WITH THE ARTS

A preschooler, let's call him Charlie, whose childcare provider participated in our pre-k arts and literacy program, Start With The Arts, fell in love with books.

At the end of the program, his childcare planned a visit to the local library for kids and their families. This was the first time Charlie and his family had ever been to the library.

Start With The Arts couples read-alouds of books with arts activities. Those activities turned Charlie into a book lover. Imagine Charlie's surprise when they learned that there was a place, in their town, where they could borrow books for free. Charlie's joy was contagious.

The librarians signed up Charlie's family for a library card and introduced them to available resources. The library has book backpacks filled with activities to supplement a chosen story, and Charlie proudly wore one, and a big smile, as their family left the library that day.

That moment where art makes things more exciting or makes the world make more sense. The moment when art brings a story to life and instills confidence in a young artist. That moment with Charlie and they're huge smile...absolute magic.

An image of a metal tray with paper and purple crayons and pencils. Resting on the tray is the book, *Harold and the Purple Crayon*.



An image of a child at a table. The child is drawing with oil pastels. On the table is another drawing, a package of oil pastels, and the book, *The Napping House*.

"I can't express just how beneficial this program has been! I've watched these children become a group that can sit together, listen, and work as a group. The teaching artist has a way of engaging them and working with them. The children now look forward to the activities that tie into each book we read. The children have begun 'teaching' their parents!"

**Start With The Arts
Early Childhood Educator**

SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

Last winter, students in our residency program were able to experience art out in the world by visiting the MASKED exhibit while it was on display at Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe.

Four groups of students in Collaborative Integrated Arts Residencies were able to participate in an inclusive gallery tour. Students engaged in guided explorations of the art through discussion, and then made art inspired by the works.

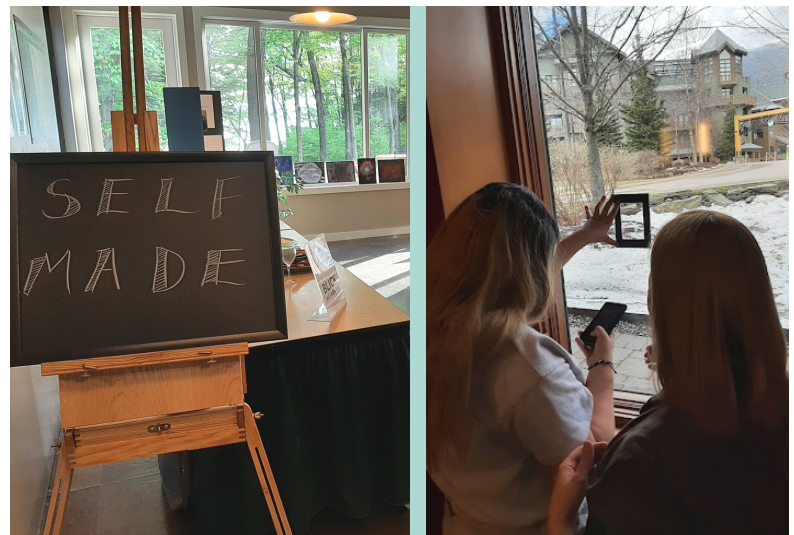
One high school student began taking photographs. They used a cell phone camera, a cardboard frame, and the encouragement of Teaching Artist, Melissa. This interactive art making encouraged the student to share a personal goal, the hope and possibility of pursuing photography in college or as a career.

For another group, one of the big ah-has was from a staff member, who noted: ***"the field trip was a turning point in what we thought was possible for our students. It felt big and scary and like a lot of work, but we saw students show up in the community in a way we did not think was possible. It led to changes in what we did with students for the rest of the year."***

This staff member recently organized another field trip for their students to a planetarium. Students interacted with the exhibits and planetarium staff, learning and sharing their own knowledge and experiences. Before the residency, this would have been considered impossible.

One of the groups that attended was so inspired by this experience that they spent the semester creating their own exhibition called, "Self-Made." Students invited their families, teachers, and friends to join them during an evening celebration of the art. Each student created works of art independently and in collaboration, and wrote artists statement with teaching artist support, identifying what qualities, goals, and characteristics make them self-made.

Several family members of students expressed they had never been to an art gallery, but more importantly, that they had never been invited to the school for a "good" reason, one that wasn't a disciplinary, behavioral, or educational issue. Students, educational teams, and families expressed immense pride in what these students accomplished.



Two images:

Left, a bright room with windows. In the background, student art is displayed. In the foreground, an easel with "Self Made" written in chalk.

Right, a student holds an empty frame against a window, mountains, buildings, and snow outside. A teaching artist stands beside to support.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Like many organizations early in the pandemic, we pivoted to offer many of our programs virtually. And while it's true that virtual options eliminated some barriers experienced by some disabled people, it's also true that digital platforms have their own set of barriers.

Thanks to the support and collaboration of the Vermont Arts Council, we presented a 9-part monthly webinar series called "Digital Access: Key elements for Inclusion of Disabled People."

Topics ranged from disability awareness and ableism, meeting accommodation requests, alt text and verbal description, accessible social media, graphic design, sensory needs, and more. There was no cost to participants and all workshop recordings are archived on the Arts Council's website.

The Digital Access series not only provided information to arts and culture organizations, it fostered relationships between Inclusive Arts Vermont and other organizations.

In individual meetings, people appreciated the "humans first" style and wanted others in their organization to have the same kind of training. A number of organization-specific workshops arose from sparks ignited during the online series, and our staff continues to refer people to the archived recordings about specific topic areas.

The needs and best practices of accessibility in digital spaces are evolving, and we're proud to be providing leadership and support as organizations navigate this new reality.



Digital Access: Key Elements for Inclusion of Disabled People



Monthly workshops, Nov. 2021 – July 2022
FREE to Vermont arts and culture nonprofits

At top, an image of a laptop with multiple Zoom frames open, below, the Inclusive Arts Vermont and Vermont Arts Council Logos, in black and orange writing, it says, "Digital Access: Key Elements for Inclusion of Disabled People, Monthly workshops, Nov. 2021 - July 2022, FREE to Vermont arts and culture nonprofits."

"A highlight of the Digital Capacity program this year was our collaboration with Inclusive Arts Vermont. What a gift to the state's cultural community to have the talented staff of Inclusive Arts present the engaging and thoughtful workshop series. These sessions were most appreciated by attendees and the recordings will live on as a free resource on our website."

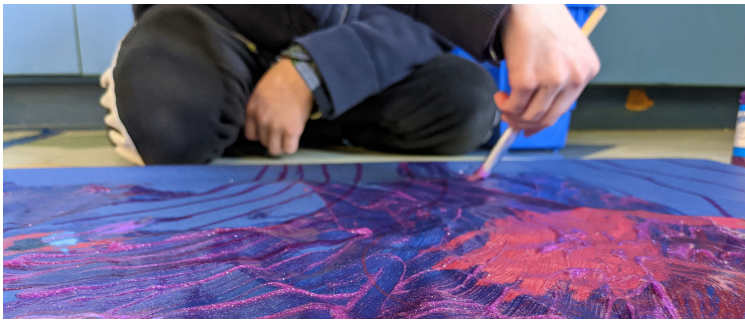
Amy Cunningham, VT Arts Council

MORE MAGIC

"The Land of Disappointment in the Galaxy of Opportunity"

A student made this piece during one of our collaborative Integrated Arts Residencies and an alternative school in Burlington. The brief was to use expressive art to create their own land, considering its geography, governance, currency, how people live, and such.

This student felt the land he made captured how he feels day-to-day, but that the galaxy was his sense of what may lay ahead. A powerful sentiment from this young artist.



Expanding our Cohort

New teaching artists brought dynamic art and teaching skills mixed to our cohort. They teach residencies and adult arts programs throughout the state. Their unique skillsets brought vibrant life to Adult Arts this year with the following classes:

- Music with DJ Mike
- Movement and Improv with Ashley
- Fiber Arts with Alexandra
- Theater and Movement with Ashley
- Digital Photography-the Artist Edition with Janet
- Drumming and music with Rebecca
- Improvisational Dance with Jen



Adapting in the Air

Last fall, we co-hosted an Adaptive Aerial class with Murmurations Dance Studio. Kids ages 7-12 explored a new way of moving with the invigorating support of aerial fabric.

A parent shared, *"The children's adaptive aerial class at Murmurations Studio was amazing. Before the first few classes, my child would say she was not going because it was too hard. The teachers taught her how to come down out of the scarves carefully and with control. This was extremely empowering for her because she often loses control and trips and falls in the day to day. By the end of the classes, she was up in the air doing complex poses with a big smile. The teachers created a very safe and fun space where children with and without disabilities were welcomed."*



Three images:

Center Left, a child sits cross-legged on the floor painting on a large blue paper using pink, purple, and blue paints and glitter
Top Right, an aerial studio with silks hanging down with three children up in the air on the silks being supported by teaching artists
Bottom Center, a teaching artist plays a wooden instrument in a classroom with art on the walls and stacked chairs.

A YEAR IN DATA

INCOME

Government Contracts	\$92,297
Foundations	\$131,500
Fees for Service	\$45,281
Individuals	\$68,854
Events	\$5,412
Interest	\$185
Corporate Giving	\$1,987
TOTAL	TOTAL
\$345,516	\$345,516

EXPENSES

Program	\$193,872
Admin	\$122,532
Operating	\$71,248
TOTAL	TOTAL
\$387,652	\$387,652

NET INCOME

(REVENUE - EXPENSES)
-\$42,136

OUR PROGRAMMING YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

Total Participants: 5,963
Total Adults Participants: 5,430
Total Youth Participants: 533
Total Virtual Programs: 52
Total In-Person Programs: 56
Total Programs: 108



Two images:

Left, a student paints a large sculptural flower with blue paint, a classmate looks on while working on another element of the project.

Right, a group of students, teachers, and behavioral interventionists paint large sculptural flowers with blue, green, and yellow paint.

INCLUSIVE ARTS VERMONT MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Megan Bent, Digital Content Manager
- Katie Miller, Executive Director
- Peggy Rainville, Director of Early Childhood Programs
- Kat Redniss, Director of Communications & Development
- Heidi Swevens, Director of Community Partnerships
- Alexandra Turner, Director of School & Community Programs

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Heidelise Corriveau
- Ruth Gminski
- Masha Harris*
- Kassandra Kohler, Treasurer*
- Debbie Krug, Treasurer
- Abbey Pratt, President*
- Bruce Wilson
- Samantha Zimmer*

*Denotes current board member



A YEAR OF THANKS

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Kelly Adams
Richard Alther
Shannon Anderson
Marcie Andres
& Lawrence Madell
Celia & Paul Asbell
Sue Ashworth
Linda Atkins
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Kaitlyn Barr
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Barbara Leber
Michelle Lefkowitz
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Kelly Lively
Oralia Lopez
Evie Lovett
Carlene &
Mark Lyons
Carol MacDonald
Justin Marsh
Isabella & Peter Martin
Hilary Maslow
Susan McClure
Adelaide McCracken
& Stephen Killam
Barbara McGrew
Bruce McKenzie
Stephen Miller
Theresa Miller
William Miller

Marcy Morgan
Kris Murnane
Liza McCabe
Patrick Newton
Hillary & Francesca
Orsini
Edward Paquin
Alan Peister
Ryan Pontillas
Abbey Pratt
Anne Pratt
Carol Pritchard
Jaime Redniss
Carolyn Robinson
Andrea Rogers
Kate Ross
Lisa Roy
Peter Roy
Vera & Peter Ryersbach
Lisa Schamberg
& Pat Robins
Rebecca Schwarz
Elizabeth Shayne
& Tiffany Bluemle
Laura Shelmadine
Rachel Silliman Cohen
Wendy Simpers
Ann Skilling Andrews
Sara Solnick
Joan Stepenske
& Bob Troester
Erin Stewart
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Kathryn Vogt
David Wheel
Gail White
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& Leman Bronson
Sarah Zobel

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Ben & Jerry's Community
Foundation
The Couch Family
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Courtney & Victoria
Buffum Family
Foundation
Donley Foundation
Fountain Fund
Maslow Family
Foundation
National Endowment for
the Arts
Northfield Savings Bank
State of Vermont
Vermont Arts Council
Vermont Children's Trust
Foundation
Vermont Community
Foundation
Vermont Developmental
Disabilities Council
Vermont Humanities
Council

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Amazon Smile
Apple
Art Works Frame Shop
Davis Studio
Fat Life Drawing
K. V. Sbardella Slate Inc.
Laughing Waters
Network For Good
Roots and Wings Child Care
The GoodCoin Foundation
Twincraft
VLES Designs

