



# ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2019—JUNE 30, 2020

# FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES & THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey began 2020 with a great deal of momentum. We spent much of the previous year planning for our long-term future both financially and strategically to further build on our vision of transforming lives through the shared experience of art. The pandemic has forced us to quickly rethink everything. Fortunately, the organizational strength we built through prior planning has allowed us to quickly refocus our collective energy on connecting our communities virtually and in person in a socially distanced environment. There were, and continue to be, many challenges, but the crisis has revealed the true talent and commitment of our team, community, supporters, and partners.

Before the pandemic, the Art Center board and staff put the finishing touches on two strategic initiatives, a long-term strategic plan and a rebranding project for the Art Center's website and logo. Our strategic plan focuses on using the strength of our Studio School and museum to develop high-quality community programming for underserved groups with key community partners. Although the pandemic forced us to shift gears quickly, the tenets of this strategic plan continue to guide our long-term thinking. The plan can be found at [bit.ly/VACNJStrategicPlan20](https://bit.ly/VACNJStrategicPlan20). In addition, the board and staff had worked for roughly a year in advance of the pandemic with the marketing group Red Thinking to develop a new logo for the Art Center. The logo was launched in late April of this year, along with a new website and signage. It incorporates bold colors and angular shapes to create a modern and inspiring logo. Additionally, the triangular forms add motion and direction to imply growth in creativity.

The pandemic caused the Art Center to close to the public on Monday, March 16. What we initially thought would be a month-long closure ended up lasting twelve weeks. The

Art Center staff immediately began working and spent the last two weeks of March transitioning to bring relevant and exciting programs online. On April 7, not even a month after the start of quarantine, our Studio School began offering online art classes for adults and kids. Our museum programs during this time included curatorial reflections on past exhibitions, film discussions with community partner the Film Society of Summit, and a Cabin Fever series of artist talks (See [www.artcenternj.org/programs/cabin-fever-artist-talks/](http://www.artcenternj.org/programs/cabin-fever-artist-talks/)). Our in-community programs offered art in health videos from our art therapists to support the mental wellbeing of our community during this tumultuous time (See [www.artcenternj.org/programs/art-and-healing/](http://www.artcenternj.org/programs/art-and-healing/)).

In late June, after much preparation, we received the go ahead from the State of New Jersey to open our summer camp, and we were able to host both online and in-person sessions beginning July 6, ultimately serving 800+ kids. Parents, kids, and our teaching artists were joyful to come together in a safe place to create art. It was meaningful and healing for everyone.

The dedication and commitment of our staff was extraordinary, allowing us to deliver these programs and experiences in the face of the challenges and uncertainty that the pandemic caused. And we've learned a few things that will make us stronger and better in the future. Necessity led to some innovations in our summer camp and has given us the opportunity to see the healing power of art in action. A grant from the Nicholson Foundation is allowing us to pursue research that will document necessary practices to improve art therapy via video technology. Well before the pandemic, the board had the foresight to lead an initiative to build a board reserve fund to use in case of emergencies. The importance of that fund is now clearly recognized, and with continued

board support, we have embarked on additional funding initiatives that will further shore up our financial stability ensuring we can continue to withstand future unplanned disruptions like this pandemic.

Even though Fiscal Year 2020 ended with difficult circumstances, it also brought a lot to celebrate, especially the support of our donors and students. We began this fiscal year with some important improvements to the museum galleries. Grants from Union Foundation, E.J. Grassmann Trust, and Hyde and Watson Foundation allowed the Art Center to install new flooring and invest in dehumidifiers for both the Main Gallery and Eisenberg Gallery. In the spring, thanks to the hard work of our gala committee and development staff, we were able to pivot our annual gala, held on March 28, 2020, to an online

Lisa A. Butler



Chair of the Board of Trustees

event. Through the generosity of the Art Center's many friends the gala raised \$198,036. Our donors were also very supportive with annual giving and we were able to surpass our annual goal and raise \$143,410.

This outpouring of support has enabled the Art Center to offer our community the healing power of art during a challenging time. As one of our parents said, "Thank you for providing such an awesome experience—especially during this time." And another, "I have to say thank you for the amazing week of camp you and your team provided my boys. They had a wonderful time, produced amazing pieces, and learned new skills ... AND you gave them the confidence they needed to attend in-person school this year sporting their mask all day to stay safe. So, thank you, thank you!"

Melanie Cohn



Executive Director



# VISION + MISSION + VALUES

## Vision

To create an inclusive and welcoming community where lives are transformed and enriched through the shared experience of art.

## Mission

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey nurtures the capacity for personal expression, expands the creative experience, and fosters stronger communities by empowering people to see, make, and learn about art. Through exhibitions, Studio School, and community programs, the Art Center engenders connection, curiosity, and creative risk-taking among its constituents.

## Values

In our work, we embrace the following values:

**Connection:** We foster connection among our community members through a respectful and safe environment.

**Inclusive Community:** We welcome and value diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, and nurture an environment that is open and supportive.

**Excellence:** We are committed to providing outstanding services and programs. We direct our collective efforts to continually improve and innovate.

**Curiosity & Creative Risk-Taking:** We value receptivity, open dialogue, and innovative thinking to encourage curiosity and creative risk-taking.

**Holistic Approach:** We value a holistic approach to art in the individual and community life so that art is found in every facet of life.

**Advocacy:** We value standing up and speaking out for the arts to promote our vision and values.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## Membership

MEMBERSHIPS (AS OF 6/30/20) ..... 503      INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS (AS OF 6/30/20) ..... 705

## Professional Development

### TEACHERS' SYMPOSIA

Teachers' Symposia ..... 4  
Participants ..... 87 participants

## Studio School

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED ..... 14  
(3 Summer Art Camp, 3 Fall Semester, 5 Winter Semester, 3 Spring Semester\*)

*\* Spring scholarships were honored during the fall 2020 term.*

### ART CAMPS

2019 Summer Art Camp Kid, Tween & Teen Students ..... 970  
2019 Winter Break Art Camp Kid Students ..... 63

### SUMMER SEMESTER 2019

Adult Classes ..... 15 classes, 132 students  
Adult Workshops ..... 18 workshops, 105 students  
Teen Classes ..... 1 class, 7 students

### FALL SEMESTER 2019

Adult Classes ..... 80 classes, 678 students  
Adult Workshops ..... 14 workshops, 119 students  
Teen Classes ..... 11 classes, 93 students  
Kid Classes ..... 25 classes, 247 students  
Kid Workshops ..... 1 workshops, 13 students

### WINTER SEMESTER 2020

Adult Classes ..... 70 classes, 586 students  
Adult Workshops ..... 23 workshops, 135 students  
Teen Classes ..... 11 classes, 108 students  
Kid Classes ..... 24 classes, 257 students  
Kid Workshops ..... 2 workshops, 20 students

### SPRING SEMESTER 2020 (ONLINE ONLY)

Adult Classes ..... 11 classes, 127 students  
Teen Classes ..... 5 classes, 49 students  
Kid Classes ..... 9 classes, 63 students

# MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

Galleries closed July–August, 2019 to replace flooring.

VISITORS .....5,087

## SEPTEMBER 27, 2019–FEBRUARY 9, 2020

- *Painted Threads*  
Main Gallery  
Artists: Mark Barrow and Sarah Parke, Samantha Bittman, Crystal Gregory, Hildur Ásgeirsdóttir Jónsson, Victoria Manganiello, Desire Moheb-Zandi, and Oriane Stender
- *Nadia Haji Omar: Ascension*  
Mitzi & Warren Eisenberg Gallery  
and Marité & Joe Robinson Strolling Gallery I

## FEBRUARY 29–JUNE 7, 2020

- *Hillerbrand + Magsamen: The Devices Project*  
Main Gallery  
Artists: Stephan Hillerbrand and Mary Magsamen
- *Yvette Molina: Big Bang Votive*  
Mitzi & Warren Eisenberg Gallery
- *Elisabeth Smolarz: The Encyclopedia of Things*  
Marité & Joe Robinson Strolling Gallery I
- *Adrienne Wheeler: White Dress Narratives*  
Stair-gazing

Galleries closed early due to COVID-19 and reopened October 3, 2020



Artwork from Hillerbrand + Magsamen: *The Devices Project* on display. Photo by Etienne Frossard.

# EXHIBITION-RELATED PROGRAMS

## 2019

Farmer's Market Event (Summer 2019)	
Attendees .....	100
Victoria Manganello Sewing Circuits Workshop (December 7, 2019)	
Attendees .....	15

## 2020

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Event (January 20, 2020)	
Attendees .....	58
History of Weaving Talk (January 26, 2020)	
Attendees .....	42
Artist Talk & Last Look: Fall 2019 Exhibitions (February 5, 2020)	
Attendees .....	27 people, 7 artists
Film Society Event (April 5, 2019)	
Attendees .....	52
Film Society of Summit Public Programs (2019–2020)	
.....	140 attendees, 4 guest speakers, 5 sessions

## CABIN FEVER ARTIST TALKS (ONLINE INTERACTIONS)

Elisabeth Smolarz .....	816
Nancy Cohen .....	2758
Katrina Bello .....	3054
Gianluca Bianchino .....	629
Sally Helmi .....	1134
David Rios Ferreira .....	1330
Kate Dodd .....	1255
Spandita Malik .....	2207
Anne Muntges .....	1193
Lisa Ficarelli-Halpern .....	1105

# COMMUNITY EXHIBITIONS

## ONSITE COMMUNITY GALLERIES

### September 7–November 3, 2019

- *Sarah Canfield: Disintegrate*  
Marité & Joe Robinson Strolling Gallery II
- *Peter Syak: 32*  
Ann's Place Gallery

### November 16, 2019–January 20, 2020

- *Dr. Rosalind Dorlen—Out of This World: Spacescapes of the Cosmos*  
Marité & Joe Robinson Strolling Gallery II
- *Serena Bocchino: Explosive Abstraction*  
Ann's Place Gallery

### February 1–April 4, 2020 (Closed early due to COVID-19)

- *X-Scapes: Students of Howard Nathenson*  
Marité & Joe Robinson Strolling Gallery II
- *Denise Toney: Behold in Textiles*  
Ann's Place Gallery

## OFFSITE SPACES

### Summit Free Public Library "The Gallery"

#### August 1–September 30, 2019

- *Onnie Strothers: The Last of the Hawks*

#### October 1–November 30, 2019

- *Kat Block: A Tiara Day*

#### December 1, 2019–January 31, 2020

- *Perceptions: 6 Photographer's Perspectives (Students of Danielle Austen)*

#### February 1–April 30, 2020

- *Joe Cowdrey: Transplanted*

### The Feature Gallery @ MONDO

#### July 21–September 29, 2019

- *Gary Schwartz: Coney Island and Beyond*

#### October 6–December 1, 2019

- *Parvathi Kumar: Dimensions Within*

#### December 3, 2019–February 2, 2020

- *Louise Wheeler: Musings and Tesseractae*

#### February 9–April 12, 2020 (Closed early due to COVID-19)

- *Howard Nathenson: Marks and Layers*

# FUNDRAISING EVENTS

## ART TO TABLE

2 Art to Table events

Total Attendees ..... 22

## COLLECTORS' EVENING

October 22, 2019

Attendees ..... 29

## ROAD TRIP: JERSEY CITY

November 13, 2019

Attendees ..... 28

## ANNUAL SPRING GALA: MAKE MAGIC VIRTUAL EVENT

March 28, 2020

Participants ..... 111

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

SAGE Eldercare . . . . .	27 in-person sessions, 15 seniors per session (pre-recorded videos sent March–June 2020)
Middlesex County Department of Corrections . . . . .	2 sessions, 17 participants
ECLC Pride Program . . . . .	2 sessions, 30 total participants
Our House . . . . .	25 total participants
Veterans Affairs Program . . . . .	30 total participants



# EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## In-school Programs

Jefferson Arts Academy . . . . .	50 students
CALTA21 . . . . .	49 students
Elizabeth Public Schools 8 <sup>th</sup> -Grade Program . . . . .	400 students
Northstar Academy in Newark . . . . .	95 students
Morris Knolls . . . . .	50 students

## After School Enrichment Programs

Empowering Kids . . . . .	22 students
Girls Scouts . . . . .	22 students

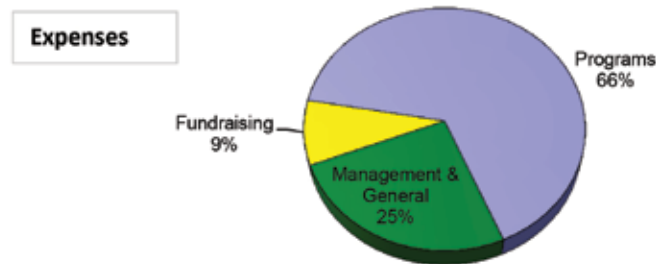
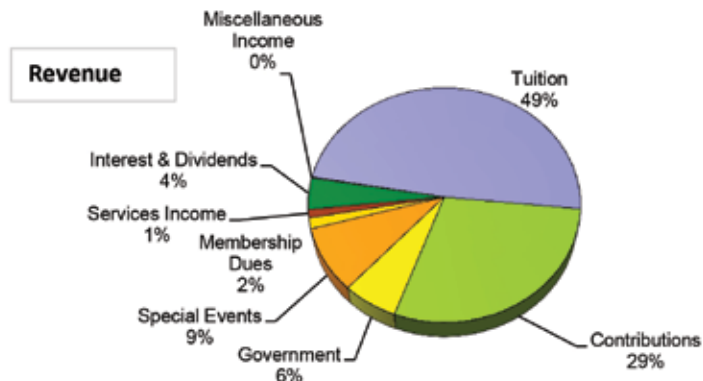


# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES & CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

## Visual Arts Center of New Jersey A view of Fiscal Year 2020

### Statement of Activities

<b>Revenue:</b>	
Tuition	\$1,178,460
Contributions	699,048
Government	149,342
Special Events	214,893
Membership Dues	36,175
Services Income	27,607
Interest & Dividends	105,216
Miscellaneous Income	2,756
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,413,497</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Programs	\$1,515,796
Management & General	589,572
Fundraising	198,741
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,304,109</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets from Operations</b>	<b>\$109,388</b>
<b>Non operation Activity:</b>	
Gains-Investments	\$9,701
Unrealized Loss	(142,091)
<b>Non operation Activity</b>	<b>(132,390)</b>
<b>Total Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>(\$23,002)</b>



### Statement of Financial Position

<u>Assets:</u>	<u>FY 20</u>	<u>FY 19</u>
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$554,738	\$222,464
Government Grants & Accts. Receivables	28,910	50,387
Contributions Receivable	143,410	66,560
Pre Paid Expenses & Oither Assets	24,164	40,942
Current Assets	751,222	380,353
Investments (Market Value)	3,312,276	3,158,339
Fixed Assets	3,999,813	4,092,170
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$8,063,311</b>	<b>\$7,630,862</b>

<u>Liabilities:</u>	<u>FY 20</u>	<u>FY 19</u>
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$128,605	\$112,581
Deferred Tuition	418,046	392,070
Line of Credit	140,000	0
Current Liabilities	686,651	504,651
PPP Loan	325,000	0
Long Term Mortgage	580,743	632,292
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$1,592,394</b>	<b>\$1,136,943</b>

<u>Net Assets:</u>	<u>FY 20</u>	<u>FY 19</u>
Unrestricted	\$2,977,755	\$3,133,203
Restricted	3,493,162	3,360,716
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$6,470,917</b>	<b>\$6,493,919</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$8,063,311</b>	<b>\$7,630,862</b>

Data provided is from draft audited financials FY 2020

## **\$50,000 & Above**

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The Estate of Elizabeth Kelsey  
The Nicholson Foundation  
NJ State Council on the Arts  
Wilf Family Foundations

## **\$20,000 to \$49,999**

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Shirley Aidekman-Kaye  
Patricia A. Bell  
Lisa Butler & Bob Kelly  
The Coby Foundation  
Anne & RJ Grissinger  
Institute of Museum and Library Services  
New Jersey Council for the Humanities  
The Nicholson Foundation  
Peter R. and Cynthia K. Kellogg Foundation  
Marité & Joe Robinson  
The Summit Foundation

## **\$10,000 to \$19,999**

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Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation  
J.C. Kellogg Foundation  
Merrill Lynch Wealth Management  
Alison & David O'Neill  
Union Foundation  
The Walter V. and Judith L. Shipley Family Foundation

## **\$5,000 to \$9,999**

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Katherine & John Buchanan  
Siobhan Creem  
Kelly Deere & Lee Shavel  
George M. & Pamela S. Humphrey Fund  
Elizabeth & Frank Gump  
Helen Clay Frick Foundation  
Nancy & Willis King  
Amy Knight  
Justine O'Malley & Gregory Outwater  
Deborah & Fred Schwarzmann  
Hiller Spires & Tom Lee

## **\$2,500 to \$4,999**

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Sally & Thomas Abbott  
Marie & Roy Alan Cohen  
County of Union  
Laura & David Hardin  
Lindabury, McCormick, Estabrook & Cooper, P.C.

Hadley & Clark Peterson  
Point View Wealth Management, Inc.  
Prada USA Corp.  
Neela Pushparaj  
Isabel Ribeiro & Diego Rotsztain  
Pamela Shipley & Clay Turner  
Mary & Woody Weldon

## **\$1,000 to \$2,499**

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Arthur Kontos Foundation  
Melissa & Dylan Baker  
Sarah Bass-Aspe  
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Joanne & Reid Bundonis  
Lori & Andrew Bush  
Karen & Mark Caplan  
Patti & Paul Ciraulo  
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Mary & Robert Courtemanche  
Dan Crisafulli & Greg Vargas  
Thomas Dackow  
Sharee & Jeffrey Danker  
Rosalind & David Dorlen  
Terri & Mark Friedman  
Valerie & Michael Grant  
Geri & Mark Hahn  
Jessica & Alexander Haverstick  
Suzanne & Dean Henry  
Penny & Phillip Kardis  
Lorraine & Peter Kelly  
Carolyn Kiley & Paul Anthony Formichelli  
Elena & Roger Matthews  
Leslie & Stuart Milsten  
NJ Photography Forum  
Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child  
James Oslislo  
Laura & John Overdeck  
Colette & Joe Parsons  
Kayla & Richard Pechter  
Marilyn Pfaltz  
Donald Polzo  
Susan & Douglas Present  
Jane & Kevin Quinn  
Mitchell & Amy Radin  
Jill Rathyen & George Naseef  
Girish & Rasika Reddy  
Bill Redmond  
Ana Robic & Rob Fuerstake  
Jerry Rose & John Simoudis  
Rebecca & Declan Ryan

Theresa & TJ Scallon  
Ann & Mel Schaffer  
Joanie Schwarz & Don Rosenthal  
Martin & Kristen Segal  
Stacy & Adam Selig  
Helen Torelli  
Alex & Glenn Walter  
Kerry & David Whitcher  
Susan & Stephen Yarad

## **Corporate Matching Gifts**

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Bank of America  
Goldman Sachs  
Pfizer Foundation

## **Board of Trustees 2019–2020**

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Paul Ciraulo, Secretary  
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Dylan Baker  
Katherine Buchanan  
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Joseph R. Robinson  
Diego Rotsztain  
Joanie Schwarz  
Deborah Schwarzmann

## **Honorary Trustees**

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Virginia Fabbri Butera, Ph.D.  
Marie J. Cohen  
Millie Cooper  
Estelle Fournier  
Elizabeth C. Gump  
Roland Weiser

## **2019–2020 Staff**

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Denise Banaag, Studio School Manager  
Mary Birmingham, Curator  
Mike Byrnes, Facilities Manager  
Melanie Cohn, Executive Director  
Alicia Flynn Cotter, Summer Camp Manager  
Cassandra Demski, Director of Studio School  
Jen Doninger, Studio School Coordinator  
Jay Dougherty, Customer Relations Manager  
Heather Ferguson, Accounting  
Kimberly Fisher, Exhibitions Manager  
Katrina Griffith, Studio School Manager  
Emily Lee, Customer Relations Associate  
Jessica Lituchy, Assistant Director of Development  
Stephen Maico, Director of Finance  
Leon Norris, Custodian  
Mara Norris, Custodian  
Noelle Park, Customer Relations Associate  
Brian Riley, Communications Manager  
Chai Evaline Silva, Customer Relations Associate  
Stella Sormani, Online Art Camp Manager  
Aliese Andersen Volk, Customer Relations Associate  
Sarah Walko, Director of Education & Community Engagement  
Susan Yarad, Director of Development and Communications

## **2019–2020 Faculty**

---

Loren Abbate  
Dustin Adamson  
James Adkins  
Joseph Alberti  
Danielle Austen  
Doug Baron  
Lisette Bedoya  
Carolyn Bednar  
Bill Blanchard  
Kat Block  
Susan Boedeker  
Cecily Byk

Sheilah Campbell  
Sarah Canfield  
Mary Jean Canziani  
Kailyn Cavaluzzo  
Lynn Celler  
Beatrice (Jao-O) Chang  
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Alicia Cotter  
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David DiMarchi  
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Andrea Gianchiglia  
Allison Gildea  
Anita Gladstone  
Donna Grande  
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Stephanie Maddalena  
Drew Maillard  
Samantha Matthews  
Sarah Maxwell  
Martha McDonald  
Judy Mensch  
Jeannette Mullarkey  
Moriah Mylod  
Howard Nathenson  
Donald Polzo  
Donna Read  
Shelley Rosen Howard  
Sue Sachs  
Mark Saenger

Kit Sailer  
Cristiana Savore  
Doug Schiller  
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Marissa Soltysik  
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Victoria Starger  
Danielle Stecki  
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Heidi Sussman  
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Katie Truk  
Aliese Andersen Volk  
Louise Wheeler  
Michael Wolf  
Carole Wong Chesek  
Stephen Yavorski  
Traci Zaretska

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Matthew Fernandez  
Johanna Henao  
Julie Horne  
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Graham Hynes  
Julie Kim  
Anna Liu  
Brianna Lorimer  
Violet McEwan  
Lizdabel Morales  
Cassandra Mullen  
Rupert Muson  
Nikisha Narang  
Rachel Nollkamper  
Jerson Ramos  
Marina Romero  
Celeste Scott  
Emma Tager  
Sanjana Thandi

#### **2019-2020 Docents**

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Rita Cohen  
Vivian Furman Rubin  
David Gittleman  
Larissa Reick  
Lori Riseman



**VISUAL  
ARTS  
CENTER**  
OF NEW JERSEY

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