



Arts & Culture Session November 14, 2016

Goal & Objectives

- ❖ To provide an overview of the arts and culture in Western Connecticut
- ❖ To introduce the great richness and variety of arts and culture through guest speakers and tours
- ❖ To examine the economic impact of the arts in our community and the issues and challenges facing artists and non-profit organizations
- ❖ To highlight ways in which individuals can become involved with the non-profits represented

Important Session Information

Session Leaders

Pam Baker & Kate MacKinney

Session Attire

Dressing for comfort is appropriate. **Comfortable shoes are recommended for walking tours.** If rain is forecasted please bring an umbrella or rain jacket.

Venues

Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts
58 Main Street, Torrington, CT 06790

Mattatuck Museum
144 West Main Street, Waterbury, 06702

Parking

For Nutmeg/Torrington Locations:

There are several options for parking in downtown Torrington. [Click here for a map.](#) There are metered spaces along Main Street, however we discourage these because there is a 2 hour time limit and we do not want you worried about feeding the meters! Some better options include:



1. **Behind Nutmeg Conservatory**— a limited number of free spaces are available behind the Nutmeg Conservatory. Entrance is from East Main Street. Other businesses use this lot—**please park only in the spaces designated for Nutmeg.**

2. **Behind the Warner Theatre**—a limited number of free spaces are available behind the Warner Theatre. The lot is accessible from either City Hall Avenue or from East Main Street (turn left on St. John's Place, directly after St. Peter's Church).

3. **City Hall Municipal Lot**—a limited number of spaces are available in the municipal lot adjacent to City Hall. The lot is accessible from City Hall Avenue. You **must pay** at the Parking Kiosk and display your ticket on your dashboard.

4. **Torrington Plaza**—parking is free and plentiful at the Torrington Plaza (Staples/TJ Maxx). Entrance is from South Main Street.

For The Mattatuck Museum:

Free parking is available on Park Place (behind the museum). If that lot is full, continue up Park Place to the lot behind the YMCA and across from Girls, Inc. This lot is guarded by a YMCA staff member in the parking booth. [Click here for map.](#)

For questions about parking, please contact Sarah at 203.753.1315 x 101 (Office) or 203.910.3047 (Cell)



Agenda

- 8:30 Arrival, Light Breakfast
Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts
- 8:45 **Welcome & Introductions**
Pam Baker & Kate MacKinney, 2015 WCL Class Participants
Sharon Dante, Executive Director, *The Nutmeg Conservatory*
Amy Wynn, Executive Director, *NW CT Arts Council*
- 9:00 **The Economic Impact of the Arts in CT**
Kristina Newman-Scott, Director of Culture, *State of Connecticut*
- 9:30 **Panel—Expanding the view**
Amy Wynn, moderator
Sharon Dante, Executive Director, *The Nutmeg Conservatory*
Judith McElhone, Executive Director, *Five Points Gallery*
Lynn Gelormino, Executive Director, *Warner Theatre*
- 10:30 **Break**
- 10:45 **Walking Tours: Warner Theater & Five Points Gallery**
- 11:45 **Drive to Mattatuck Museum**
- 12:15 Lunch
- 1:15 **Panel: Impact of volunteers**
Ed Bassett, Managing Director, *Phoenix Stage Company*
Becky Butler, Founder and Executive Director, *Arts Escape, Inc.*
- 1:50 **Activity Break**
- 2:05 **Bringing Arts to the next generation**
JoAnne Torti, Executive Director and Founder, *ASAP!*
Emily Mattina, Artistic Director, *Shakesperience Productions*
- 2:40 **Session Day Wrap Up**
Brief Review of the Day & Opportunities for Engagement
- 2:50 **Break**



- 3:00 **Tours of Mattatuck Museum**
Bob Burns, Director, *Mattatuck Museum*
- 4:00 **Graduation**

Speaker Biographies

Sharon Dante

Executive Director, *The Nutmeg Conservatory*

Sharon Dante founded the Nutmeg Ballet in December 1969 and has developed a training program and performance curriculum which has attracted students from over thirty-four states and a number of countries around the world. Ms. Dante was responsible for the growth and development of the training program and its related performance curriculum. During her artistic career, she coached dancers who participated in international competitions in New York, Paris, Lausanne, Varna, and Moscow.

After graduating from Endicott College ('64), University of Hartford ('66), and the Hartford Ballet, Ms. Dante became a de Rothschild Scholar at the Martha Graham School in New York City in 1967. She danced as a soloist with the Charles Weidman Dance Company, Rudy Perez Dance Company, and the Larry Richardson Dance Company, where she performed principal roles throughout the United States and Europe. Joining the Hartford Ballet as a performer, faculty member, and assistant to the director in 1969, she was instrumental in the development of that company's educational programs throughout New England. Ms. Dante began her extensive study of the Vaganova syllabus of classical ballet training in 1972. She later became well known for her work based on this method – so much so that she has been featured on the cover of *Dance Teacher Magazine* in recognition of her training programs. She is one of the few Americans to have participated at the Moscow World Dance Competitions in the 1970's and 80's. The White House Commission's Presidential Scholars Program has twice recognized her as "Distinguished Teacher." Instrumental in the resurrection and re-opening of the Warner Theatre in 1984, Ms Dante was a founding member of the City of Torrington's Economic Development Commission. She has proudly served several Mayors of Torrington in the role of Artistic Adviser.

Currently, Ms. Dante serves as Executive Director to the Nutmeg Conservatory turning over the position of Artistic Director to Nutmeg Ballet graduate, Victoria Mazzarelli, in 2010. She remains committed to continuing her long time relationships with many Nutmeg Alumni and current students whom she mentors on dance and extended career planning.

Contact Info: sdante@nutmegconservatory.org, nutmegconservatory.org



Kristina Newman-Scott

Director of Culture, *State of Connecticut*

Kristina Newman-Scott is the Director of Culture for the State of Connecticut where she oversees all aspects of the state's programs and services related to art, culture and historic preservation. Prior to this role, Newman-Scott served as Director of Marketing, Events and Cultural Affairs for the City of Hartford, the Director of Programs at the Boston Center for the Arts and Director of Visual Arts at Hartford's Real Art Ways.

Kristina's leadership in the community has earned her several awards and recognitions including being selected as a National Arts Strategies Creative Community Fellow, a Hive Global Leadership Selectee as well as a Hartford Business Journal Forty Under 40 awardee in 2014. Most recently, she was selected as a 2015 Next City Vanguard 40 Under 40 participant. She serves on the boards of the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Connecticut Forum, and Aurora Foundation for Women and Girls. Kristina has been a visiting curator, guest lecturer and panelist at many organizations and institutions across the country.

Newman-Scott was a visual artist, arts consultant and popular television/radio personality in Jamaica, where she was born and raised. She became a citizen of this country in 2013 and resides in Hartford with her family.

Contact Info: Kristina.NewmanScott@ct.gov, www.cultureandtourism.org

Amy Wynn

Executive Director, *Northwest CT Arts Council*

Amy Wynn, a resident of Falls Village, has been Executive Director of the Northwest Connecticut Arts Council since it was founded in 2003. The Arts Council serves as a resource for all things cultural for 25 towns and their environs. Ms. Wynn holds a BFA in Dance from The Juilliard School and a MFA in Performing Arts Management from Brooklyn College CUNY. After her dance career, she worked for national search consulting firm serving non-profit arts and education clients. She then worked for Dance Theatre of Harlem as Director of Administration and General Manager. After seven years, she was invited to take the position as Director of Marketing, Public Relations and Outreach for the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University, where she also taught Arts Management for undergraduates as an adjunct faculty member. Since her move to Falls Village, she has become involved in arts organizations and other non-profit organizations throughout the region on both a volunteer basis and as a consultant.

In addition to her volunteer work, she has been a Peer Advisor for the Connecticut Office of the Arts, DECD. Amy serves on the boards of the Connecticut Arts Council, the Connecticut Arts Council Foundation, the Northwest Connecticut Economic Development Corporation, and chairs the Connecticut Arts Alliance board.



Contact Info: awynn@artsnwct.org, artsnwct.org

Volunteer Opportunities for the NW CT Arts Council currently include:

- Help at events, such as CultureMAX Awards, CultureMIX network gatherings, and the Open Your Eyes Studio Tour info table
- Assistance as part of the team for the Economic Impact Study of the region's cultural nonprofits (attending events and conducting research)
- Monthly assistance with mailings in the office
- Committee work for events
- Serving as a Panelist for the REGI Grant program or the CultureMAX Awards

Judith McElhone

Executive Director, *Five Points Gallery*

Judith McElhone is the executive director of Five Points Gallery, a nonprofit contemporary art gallery located in downtown Torrington, which showcases regional, national and international artists. FPG promotes the understanding and appreciation of contemporary art through exhibitions, education and public dialogue.

McElhone received an AS degree from Northwestern Connecticut Community College, a BFA and MFA from the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford. She is a past Connecticut Visual Arts Fellow and her work has been exhibited in many venues, including The Painting Center in NYC, The Attleboro Museum, Brigham Young University, and Real Art Ways. McElhone is a former adjunct professor of art and is a 2014 recipient of the University of Hartford's Anchor Award.

Contact Info: jmcelhone@fivepointsgallery.org, www.fivepointsgallery.org

Lynn Gelormino

Executive Director, *Warner Theatre*

Since Lynn Gelormino joined the Warner Theatre staff in 1999, she has served in various capacities including patron services, production support, development and public relations. In 2013 Lynn was named Interim General Manager and helped lead the historic theater out of financial crisis. She was appointed Executive Director in 2014 following a nationwide search for the position. Lynn previously worked as a Radiologic Ultrasound Technologist at The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

Lynn is deeply invested in the Torrington area community. She worked with the City to develop the first Arts and Culture Commission and served as Commission Chair for two years. Additionally, Lynn was instrumental in helping to establish Main Street Marketplace, a popular downtown summer street fair. As a member of the City's Arts and Culture Commission, Lynn



authored and was awarded two grants for public art projects and Creative Placemaking. Lynn is a Board Member of the Torrington-Winsted Rotary and serves on a number of task forces for the City.

Contact Info: lgelormino@warnertheatre.org, <http://www.warnertheatre.org/>

Ed Bassett

Managing Director, *Phoenix Stage Company*

Ed discovered his love of theater while serving in the United States Navy and has been involved with community and professional theater for over thirty years. He is a founding member of the Phoenix Stage Company and serves as the Managing Director. Ed works as Costume Designer for Arabesque Dance & Theatrical Supplies in Waterbury. He also serves on the board of CCTA (the Connecticut Community Theatre Association) and of the Greater Waterbury Arts & Culture Collaborative (ACC). He has most recently been seen on stage at Phoenix Stage Company in *Farce of Nature*, *The Butler Did It!*, *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* and *A Man of No Importance*. He recently directed *Cops* and *Three Murders and it's Only Monday* for PSC, and designed costumes for *Dreamgirls* at Landmark Community Theatre. Ed has been a volunteer in his community since the age of 13 and recently received a Presidential Volunteer Service Award from President Obama's Committee on Volunteerism for service to his community.

Phoenix Stage Company was founded in 2010, with the mission of providing high quality entertainment to our community in a place that allowed area actors, directors and artists to showcase their talents. Since our founding, we have gained national recognition for our work on new plays by new playwrights and we are the most produced community theater in the state with 11 full stage productions each year. We are a one hundred percent volunteer organization with an active volunteer list of over 100 names. Our board of directors is made up of volunteers who are active in our organization; production manager, volunteer coordinator, box office volunteers, and performers. We are known to area performers and production staff as "the happy place", a label we are most proud of.

Contact Info: ed@phoenixstagecompany.org, www.phoenixstagecompany.org

Becky Butler

Founder and Executive Director, *Arts Escape, Inc.*

After twelve years working with seniors in a planned retirement community in Connecticut as the Community Life Director, Becky created the "Art of Living" concept and now the nonprofit Arts



Escape Inc. The Art of Living program was designed by Becky for seniors in her community to enhance their quality of life through creativity and learning. She co-founded *The Art of Experience*, Connecticut's only senior juried art show, which is now approaching its ninth year of showcasing the work of more than 150 senior artists.

Prior to Becky's Community Life position, she was the administrator of a dance school and community theater company in Connecticut. She managed both businesses and also created a teen theater summer program for Main Street Theater Company.

Becky received her BFA in Communications Art and Design from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. She is an active member of PEO (Philanthropic Education Organization) and is on the governing board of the Arts and Culture Collaborative in Waterbury, Connecticut. Becky has always worked in the nonprofit world and believes people can make a difference and she prides herself in being one of those people. Becky lives and raised her 3 children in Southbury, Connecticut with her husband Paul, and she is the bookkeeper for Paul's business, GlobalEdg as well.

Contact Info: beckybutler@artescape.org, www.artescape.org

JoAnne Torti

Executive Director and Founder, *ASAP!*

JoAnne Torti graduated from the School of Hartford Ballet's teaching program in 1979. She was Ballet Mistress of Cape Cod Ballet and founded the Dance School. In 1984, she established Town Hill Dance Academy of Bar Harbor, ME, and directed the school for twelve years. JoAnne also founded Mount Desert Ballet, a nonprofit company dedicated to providing young dancers with experience in dance performance. As an extension of Mount Desert Ballet, she created the Eden Dance Festival. The summer festival integrated musicians, artists and dancers in outdoor performances. JoAnne has taught creative movement, modern dance, Pilates, ballet and improvisation to students of all ages.

In 1999, members of the Waterbury Foundation, now the CT Community Foundation recognized the need for an after school arts program for middle schoolers in Region 12 (Washington, Roxbury, Bridgewater). The CT Community Foundation invited area artists and arts organizations to a meeting where they could collaboratively brainstorm ideas for the after school program. At the next meeting, JoAnne presented a program to include local artists and arts organizations teaching workshops in dance, music, and visual arts for middle schoolers, she also gave the program a name. Everyone at the meeting approved of the proposal and *ASAP!* was born. For the



next five years, JoAnne ran the program from her home with ASAP! under the umbrella of the Washington Parks and Recreation.

In 2004 ASAP! was established as a 501 c 3 non-profit and in 2005 moved to its first office in New Preston with two full-time employees. Since 2008, ASAP!'s office has been located in Washington Depot. It presently has four full-time employees and one part-time employee with JoAnne as the Executive Director.

Today, ASAP! is recognized as the place for quality and innovative arts education offering literary, performing, visual, and culinary programs year round for pre-k through adult. ASAP!'s community includes families and children of diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds from over 100 towns. We reach 8,000 – 10,000 children a year from all walks of life throughout Connecticut. Our program impacts kids by exposing them to experiential learning opportunities that encourage them to think creatively, ask questions, and explore possibilities. Since our inception ASAP! over \$500,000 in financial aid and scholarships to families in need. ASAP! never turns a child away.

**ASAP! was voted top cultural arts organization and will receive the CultureMax Award 2016 from the Northwest CT Arts Council and CT Office of the Arts for its excellence in arts educational programming and the positive impact it makes on regional communities.*

Contact Info: joanne@asapct.org, www.asapct.org

Emily Mattina

Artistic Director, *Shakesperience Productions*

Emily Mattina hails from Lenox, Massachusetts, having availed herself of the rich cultural offerings in the Berkshires from an early age. Ms. Mattina earned a B.A. from the University of New Hampshire with a major in Theater and an M.A. in 17th Century English Literature with an emphasis on Shakespeare from the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, England. Ms. Mattina has worked as an actor, director, teaching artist, and arts administrator for companies and regional tours based in California, Connecticut, Minnesota, and New York.

The original founder of Shakesperience, Ms. Mattina auditions and hires actors and directors, directs performances and workshops, develops and manages the Residency Program Wing, and creates company literature. She has also developed the Shakesperience Approach through the many workshops and residency programs under her direction and she is the primary director for the touring performances of Shakespeare's plays. In addition to her work with Shakesperience, she has consulted and directed for youth theater companies in both New York and California, including PCPA Theatrefest and the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse, and she is proudly listed on the Connecticut Commission Directory of Teaching Artists.



Additionally, Ms. Mattina consults with other nonprofit arts groups regarding collaboration, outreach, and positive company culture. Her Shakespeare Interactive Workshops are currently performed, under her direction, throughout central California for the fifth consecutive year. The New Haven Business Times has identified Ms. Mattina among the 2006 "Forty Under 40" for her professional success and community involvement in New Haven County.

Contact Info: emattina@shakesperienceproductions.org, www.shakesperienceproductions.org

Robert Burns

Museum Director, *Mattatuck Museum*

Robert Burns is the Director of the Mattatuck Museum, a position he has held since 2012. Bob serves on the City of Waterbury Mayor's Art Advisory Council, the Regional Advisory Council at Naugatuck Valley Community College and the Waterbury Community Investment Program. He also serves on the boards of the Hartford Art School, the Washington Art Association, Waterbury Development Corporation and Main Street Waterbury. Burns has been a juror for the annual member's exhibitions at the New Britain Museum of American Art, the Washington Art Association and the Canton Artists' Guild. He recently curated a group show for Five Points Gallery in Torrington. Bob joined the Mattatuck following 10 years of service at Olana, a New York State Historic Site and the home of Hudson River School artist Frederic Edwin Church. He has worked in the non-profit sector for over 25 years. A native of West Virginia, Bob has been identified as one of the "50 Most Influential People in Litchfield County" by Litchfield Magazine. He earned his Masters of Fine Arts from the University of South Carolina and Bachelor of Fine Arts from West Virginia University. He currently resides in Goshen, CT with his husband, Gary Schiro and attends St. Michael's Church in Litchfield.

Contact Info: bob@mattmuseum.org, www.mattmuseum.org

Volunteer Opportunities: www.mattmuseum.org/visit/about/job-opportunities/