THE CENTER OF IT ALL

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“The whole, wonderful experience at NJPAC is composed of two parts: Half is the sublime artistry we’ve come to know, and half is that little, unplanned serendipity we weren’t expecting...”

—William J. Marino & John R. Strangfeld, Co-Chairs, NJPAC Board of Directors
Dear Friend of the Arts Center:

Welcome to this special Report. There’s a part of my job I am particularly fond of, and I wanted to share it with you.

I make it a habit to meet all of NJPAC’s new employees, from senior hires to paid interns, within 30 days of their start date. These get-togethers allow me an opportunity to know—at least a little bit—the brothers and sisters who comprise the NJPAC family, and prove to them that the professional curmudgeon in the corner office isn’t such a tough guy after all.

More often than not, these are the most inspiring meetings of the day for me.

I recently met Alexis Almeida, the latest member of our Arts Ed team. A young staffer, she already has a lot of responsibility: She’s the department’s Program Coordinator for Music Programs and New Initiatives, of which we have plenty. Alexis works with the students in our Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens program; the high schoolers who make up the Brick City Jazz Orchestra; and the kids who participate in M.A.N.Y. (Music Advancement for Newark Area Youth), the collaborative instrumental training program we created with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra.

Alexis is busy, and she is totally, delightfully, immersed in her career in the arts. A graduate of Montclair State University, she also is studying for her master’s degree in Public Administration at Rutgers-Newark.

And she couldn’t be more excited about making a difference at the Arts Center.

Alexis understands that NJPAC’s arts learning initiatives enhance and often transform the lives of children, and she embraces the unique ability she has, every day, to leave a positive impact on the kids (and parents) who take part in our programs.

She told me she is jazzed (my word, actually, but you get the idea!) by the diversity and inclusiveness of the NJPAC universe: a place where everyone is welcome and our mission is to serve all, especially those who might feel disenfranchised from our community and its cultural opportunities.

I was jazzed to see NJPAC’s potential reflected in Alexis’ optimism, her love of the power of live performance, and her wish to share her cultural literacy with others. I saw a young woman who is inspired to learn a business, change the world, and make a difference through the arts in the lives of her students and colleagues.

We are, proudly, a mission-driven institution. With some 400 events a year, a commitment to civic engagement and arts education, and the most diverse programming of any cultural institution in the State, we strive daily to be a place that Alexis, and you, can be proud to call your own.

The marvelous year just past is detailed in all its glory in the pages to come. I am awfully proud of what we accomplished, but more excited about what’s to come.

Thank you for your support, advocacy, generosity and leadership.

When you’re next on the campus, I invite you to stop by my corner office or Alexis’ cube in the Center for Arts Education, and check on our progress.

I promise we’ll both be working hard for the bright future of this uncommon place we all love so much.

With gratitude,

John Schreiber
To NJPAC Friends and Supporters:

The whole, wonderful experience at NJPAC is composed of two parts: Half is the sublime artistry we’ve come to know, and half is that little, unplanned serendipity we weren’t expecting.

They’re the tingles that sneak up on you as fireworks paint the skies over Broadway at Moorland or as Joshua Bell raises his bow to answer applause with an encore. It’s the chance to hear the familiar through fresh ears, as when an African-American cast sings Meredith Willson’s score to The Music Man. No one can predict the zaniness that can result from Stephen Colbert and Steve Carell being in the same room or which surprise guests Hairspray creators Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman are going to summon to the piano for a taping of American Songbook at NJPAC.

Audiences in 2014 shared those and many, many other unique moments. This was the year that good vibes combined with good weather on Thursday summer nights for a dynamic Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City, and the Women’s Association of NJPAC one-upped its own Spotlight Gala with a musical lineup of Broadway’s “best-est.”

And who wasn’t impressed by the matchless teenagers of Arts Education? Appearing both inside and outside our campus, these high school performers included the Brick City Jazz Orchestra, which deftly accompanied big-leaguers like jazz reedman Paquito D’Rivera at Dorthaan’s Place and Black Violin at Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City.

As Marvin Gaye put it, “Two can make the light shine through,” and the same can be said for the unbroken success of NJPAC’s partnerships this year: the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (with the return of the Dodge Poetry Festival), the Montclair Film Festival, and Rutgers University-Newark … just for starters. We all tell our friends about NJPAC, but imagine telling millions of people simultaneously. That’s what can happen whenever NJPAC collaborates with a national broadcast outlet, be it HBO or WBGO.

Just as the year wound down, NJPAC prepared to peer into the future by announcing a new senior executive team charged with fostering growth and innovation through a new, five-year strategic plan. CEO John Schreiber’s ambitious restructuring holds even greater opportunities for wise, positive change and fiscal vigilance.

Thanks to your loyalty and generosity, NJPAC stands tall among its peer institutions as a presenter of exceptional entertainment and a meeting place for the free exchange of ideas and opinions. With you, we can make the light shine through.

Sincerely,

William J. Marino                  John R. Strangfeld
As the campus was being rewired for high-definition broadcast capabilities, armchair audiences experienced NJPAC through its growing presence on cable, network television and radio...

American music icon Johnny Mathis performed his immortal songbook in Prudential Hall

2014 also welcomed evenings with (l–r) Hugh Masekela, Wanda Sykes, Bob Dylan, and Joshua Bell
With this year’s emphasis on broadcasting, the message that NJPAC is a preeminent presenter of diverse and first-rate entertainment came through loud and clear to those at home. Even as the campus was being rewired for high-definition broadcast capabilities (see story on page 10), armchair audiences experienced NJPAC through its growing presence on cable, network television and radio. Here’s just a sample of where millions of viewers and listeners visited us in Newark: *American Songbook at NJPAC* on NJTV and PBS, *Black Girls Rock!* on BET, *John Leguizamo’s Ghetto Klown* on HBO; *Wait Wait...Don’t Tell Me!* on NPR; *Artie Lange* on Comedy Central; *Seth Rudetsky’s On Broadway* on SiriusXM; and new episodes of *America’s Got Talent* on NBC.

For jazz and poetry enthusiasts, NJPAC was an enticing destination in 2014. Two festivals that drew audiences from far-flung locations—the TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival and the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival—made their returns. The *Montclair Film Festival*, a relative newcomer as an NJPAC partner, presented what has become an annual must-see: its fundraiser featuring Stephen Colbert (this time in conversation with pal Steve Carell).

Cribbing a lyric from *The Sound of Music*, the hills were alive when NJPAC and the NJSO packed their trunks and headed to bucolic Far Hills to stage *Broadway at Moorland*. The concert-and-fireworks spectacular was the product of a first-time partnership with the Far Hills Race Meeting Association (see page 21).

And the stars came out in abundance indoors, too. Among the artistic luminaries seen at NJPAC in 2014 were Johnny Mathis, Joshua Bell, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Patti LaBelle, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, El Gran Combo (on a 50th anniversary tour), Earth, Wind & Fire, Willie Nelson, Pat Metheny & Bruce Hornsby, and Yuja Wang.

Hugh Masekela brought his 75th birthday tour in April, made more poignant by the death of his friend, Nelson Mandela. Long Island medium Theresa Caputo appeared in January and, by popular demand, reappeared in March. Comedians like Amy Schumer, Lewis Black, Wanda Sykes, John Mulaney and Eddie Izzard kept the laughter rolling. And fans of Bob Dylan braved a Thanksgiving Eve snowstorm to hear him play with his band.

Fresh ideas in programming put younger faces in the audience. Family shows remained an important component of the entertainment mix while Gen X and Y patronized a wide range of performers, from comedy to world music, and joined in conversations about issues that affect their world.

Young people attended master classes held by jazzman Christian McBride and singer Nnenna Freelon, among others, and had opportunities to interact with visiting performers like the comedy troupers of Second City. In addition to conducting a summer residency, Second City returned to hold improv workshops prior to its romp through Second City Does New Jersey: Paved & Confused. The teenage musicians of NJPAC’s Brick City Jazz Orchestra performed not only as a unit, but alongside Paquito D’Rivera at Dorthaan’s Place and Black Violin at Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City.

In the weeks prior to presenting the musical *Into the Woods Jr.*, arts education students at NJPAC were invited to attend a sound check for the Sondheim mash-up *Into Sweeney Todd’s Woods* on Nov. 1. Two of the cast members—Kelli Rabke and Scott Coulter—returned later in the month to conduct a master class with the young thespians.

“A wonderful aspect to the season was that family programming focused largely on literacy, for instance, *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley and Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse*,” said Executive Producer David Rodriguez.

“Looking forward to January, for older students, there will be poetry residencies with Bryonn Bain linked to his multimedia work *Lyrics from Lockdown*, co-produced with Gina and Harry Belafonte.”

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**Montclair Film Festival, a new partner of NJPAC, brought Stephen Colbert and buddy Steve Carell to Prudential Hall**

NJPAC patrons received free, added value to their theater-going when performances were coupled with special events, often arranged by the Department of Community Engagement. For example, visitors to the Millburn Public Library attended a screening of the documentary *Searching for Sugar Man* prior to an appearance at NJPAC by its subject (singer-songwriter Sixto Rodriguez) and enjoyed a pre-engagement dance demonstration by cast members of *Mystic India: The World Tour*.

Directly targeting its mission to provide a forum for public discourse, NJPAC—in partnership with WBGO Jazz88.3FM—opened its doors for February events featuring Newark mayoral candidates Ras J. Baraka and Shavar Jeffries. After Baraka’s election victory, the first of four *Believe in Newark* town halls was presented in Prudential Hall.

Audiences listened to and participated in commentary about relevant issues “Obamacare” artistic assessments (the scarcity of black ballerinas), and backstage banter (with *American Songbook* host Ted Chapin and guests). The establishment of the New Jersey Speakers Series by Fairleigh Dickinson University brought Alan Alda, Steve Wozniak and Madeleine K. Albright to the Prudential Hall stage, with others to come.
“They say three times is a charm,” said Festival Director Martin Farawell at the conclusion of the 2014 Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, which last October made its third appearance at NJPAC. “This was by all accounts the smoothest run, warmest, most enjoyable Festival ever...”
THE DODGE POETRY FESTIVAL GIVES EVERYONE A REASON TO LOVE LIT

E.E. Cummings once wrote: “Listen; there’s a hell of a good universe next door; let’s go.”

Taking Prudential Hall as the jumping-off point, “next door” at the 15th biennial Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival probably meant the Victoria Theater or the Center for Arts Education—but could have referred to a number of NJPAC’s neighbors.

Military Park, the Newark Museum, Trinity & St. Philip’s Cathedral and other venues within a short walk of NJPAC centralized North America’s largest gathering of logophiles into a downtown poetry “village” from Oct. 23–26. Under the roof of each gallery, auditorium or tent, a galaxy of themes and thoughts was unfurled.

Poetry all-stars blew into Newark on a Thursday, along with the remnants of a nor’easter, for an event NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber likened to a World Series in his welcoming remarks. Recalling the genesis of this 28-year-old poetpalooza, Chris Daggett, President and CEO of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, said founders first asked themselves, “Which is the art form that gets the least attention?”

Readings, however, are among the arts that warrant the highest levels of attention and reverence from audiences. Rapt listeners hung on the meditations of boldface literati like Eavan Boland, Billy Collins, Rita Dove, Mark Doty, Marie Howe, Yusef Komunyakaa, Marilyn Nelson, Sharon Olds, Robert Pinsky, Alberto Ríos and Gary Snyder—for starters.

“The Dodge” is one of the few places where thousands of high schoolers, teachers and aspiring writers can converse with U.S. Poet Laureates. Advice is given freely, especially evident at Friday’s hosting of thousands of students. Some of the topics posed for discussion were “Going Public with Private Feelings,” “From Homer to Hip-Hop” and the meshing of poetry and music, led by collaborators Komunyakaa and the Tomás Doncker Band.

An observation by Latino poet and memoirist Richard Blanco that “the power of poetry is to connect us to our common humanity” was played out in myriad ways. Saturday night’s Another Kind of Courage program brought war veterans and their families to the podium, along with featured poets and musicians, to conjure frequently harrowing stories.

A tribute on Sunday to the late Newark poet Amiri Baraka concluded with the wistful remembrances and readings of his works by Nelson, a three-time National Book Award finalist, and Snyder, a Pulitzer Prize winner who recalled late nights in Greenwich Village with his pal Allen Ginsberg and Baraka, then known as the scribe LeRoi Jones.

The largest assemblies were for the mainstage readings and sneak previews of works in progress. “How inspiring it is to see so many people who obsess over the position of the comma,” joked Doty, the bestselling (Dog Years) writer in residence at Rutgers University. Several poets seemed to be obsessing more about the wee hours and breakfasts, like the wink-and-nudge Collins, who declared himself older than “Cheerios” in a poem of the same title (One bright morning in a restaurant in Chicago/as I waited for my eggs and toast/I opened the Tribune only to discover/that I was the same age as Cheerios), or Dove’s toast to “Insomnia Etiquette” (it’s just me and you,/Brother Night—moonless,/plunked down behind enemy lines/with no maps, no matches/The woods deep./Cheers.)

Pinsky, the U.S. Poet Laureate (1997–2000) whose family resided for generations in Long Branch, rumbled compellingly through works laced with autobiography, including “Poem with Refrains” and “At Pleasure Bay.” He bid farewell to the festival with “Rhyme” (Air an instrument of the tongue,/The tongue an instrument/Of the body, the body/An instrument of spirit,/The spirit a being of the air.).

“They say three times is a charm, and this was by all accounts the smoothest run, warmest, most enjoyable Festival ever,” said Festival Director Martin Farawell. Attendees numbered into the thousands.

Poet Brian Turner, a veteran of the war in Iraq and author of My Life as a Foreign Country, summed up this year’s festival in a single sentence: “Dodge is where lovers of poetry gather to explore the landscape of the imagination within the music of our time.” ●

“I came into this program today ignorant about poetry…(but) I left feeling more passionate about the power of words than I have ever felt before…”

— A South Plainfield student, overheard at the Dodge Poetry Festival
ALL SIGNALS ARE GO

Television, video and radio projects at NJPAC are growing in size and scope, thanks to recent upgrades to transform the campus into a first-class broadcast facility...

NJPAC made immense strides toward becoming a high-definition, broadcast-ready venue through a donation of leading-edge equipment from Panasonic, including two fly packs (mini-studios). This, partnering with social investment support from Prudential Foundation, enabled rewiring of the campus for broadcast, which was completed by mid-October.

Designed in collaboration with Panasonic, the improvements will make the Arts Center more attractive and cost-effective to new and current partners, such as America’s Got Talent, HBO, BET and Comedy Central; enhance the viewing experience for audiences; enable initiatives like long-distance learning programs; and upgrade the property’s security camera system.

Expanding the broadcast infrastructure to incorporate an IMAG (image magnification) system translates into much sharper clarity for projection and simulcasting. Big screens will be put to full effect, especially when used for events like the New Jersey Speakers Series.

“Key to the project is not only the broadcast of existing programs, but also the creation of a state-of-the-art distance learning hub,” says Ross Richards, Senior Vice President of Operations and Real Estate. “This expands NJPAC’s role as a leader in arts education nationally.”

Most importantly, NJPAC takes a giant step into the forefront of performing arts centers in its ability to bring its programming beyond its four walls and into theaters, classrooms and living rooms throughout the country.

In 2014, NJPAC hosted (l–r) an NJTV benefit concert with The Midtown Men, later broadcast on public TV outlets; songstress Nellie McKay, whose Victoria Theater concert was taped for public television’s American Songbook at NJPAC; and an evening with Alan Alda, whose Prudential Hall appearance as part of the New Jersey Speakers Series was simulcast on large screens in Prudential Hall.

BROADCAST VENTURES TURN UP THE VOLUME ON NJPAC’S PRESENCE

The 2013 inaugural American Songbook at NJPAC series began airing in January on public TV and continued into the warm weather months. By autumn, the second season was playing out live on the Victoria Theater stage (see page 20).

The support of comedy at NJPAC, which drew HBO to produce John Leguizamo’s Ghetto Klown in 2013, brought Comedy Central on-site for an Artie Lange stand-up special, The Stench of Failure, also filmed in the Victoria Theater. The Jersey comic’s air date in October coincided with the release of his homecoming special online, in stores and on streaming platforms.

A partnership with WNYC 93.9FM, New York public radio, continues to generate such events as Jonathan’s Choice, an American Songbook series hosted by WNYC personality Jonathan Schwartz, and One Year Checkup: Obamacare in Newark, a free community forum.

In the spring, NJTV hosted its first major benefit at NJPAC with a performance by The Midtown Men, which later aired on public TV outlets. One of the evening’s honorees was veteran producer Steve Adubato, Jr., who frequently tapes One-on-One with Steve Adubato at NJPAC.

Taped at NJPAC and co-produced by NJPAC and Caucus Educational Corp., One-on-One offered a new season with Jersey-centric thought leaders in the arts, industry and politics. Episodes with such guests as Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, author Helene Stapinski, NJPAC CEO and President John Schreiber and U.S. Sens. Cory Booker and Bob Menendez were readied for broadcast starting in early 2015 on NJTV and WNET.

Jersey-born Peter Sagal, the host of NPR’s Wait Wait... Don’t Tell Me!, brought his entire crew to Prudential Hall in December for a live presentation of the award-winning quiz show. Listeners matched wits with celebrity panelists on that week’s hottest headlines.

But wait, wait—there’s more. Stay tuned for the anticipated returns of America’s Got Talent and the Black Girls Rock! awards telecast.
NJPAC proudly welcomed the following members to the 56-seat Board of Directors in 2014:

**Jacob S. Buurma, Esq.** is a Managing Associate at Dentons US and a member of the boards of trustees of the Newark Museum and The Sagner Family Foundation. His family has a longstanding relationship with NJPAC and is strongly committed to early childhood education and the arts.

**Robert H. Doherty** is the New Jersey State President for Bank of America. He previously held executive positions with Fleet Bank and Wells Fargo/Wachovia Bank and its predecessor banks. He serves on the boards of the State Chamber of Commerce and Community FoodBank of New Jersey, among others.

**Thasunda Brown Duckett** is CEO of Chase Auto Finance and Student Loans, part of JPMorgan Chase’s Consumer & Community Banking Division. She has been featured in *Ebony* magazine as a young African-American leader and in 2011 was named a Black Achiever in Industry by the Harlem YMCA.

**William V. Hickey** joined Ares Management LLC, a leading global alternative asset manager, as an Operating Advisor to the firm’s Private Equity Group. He is the former Chairman and CEO of Sealed Air Corp. and is a board member of organizations and institutions throughout New Jersey.

**Michelle Y. Lee** is the Regional Banking Executive, Eastern Region, for Wells Fargo. A Newark native, she serves on many boards in Newark and the metro area; prior to joining the NJPAC board, she served on the Council of Trustees. She is a pianist, composer, choir director, playwright and poet.

**John S. Willian** is the Managing Director of Global Prime Services at Goldman, Sachs & Co. He serves on the Board of Governors of TEAM Charter Schools KIPP New Jersey. The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts at NJPAC is supported by John and Suzanne Willian through Goldman Sachs Gives.

The resignations of board members **Lucia DiNapoli Gibbons** and **Deborah Sagner** were announced with regret and appreciation for their dedication to NJPAC.

A reassessment of the structuring of NJPAC’s board committees and their alignment with strategic priorities prompted the creation of the Arts Education (Board) Committee and the Development Committee in November.

**Dr. Daniel M. Bloomfield** was appointed Chair of the Arts Education (Board) Committee and **Ann D. Borowiec** was named Co-Chair of the Development Committee.

Dr. Bloomfield and Ms. Borowiec also became members of the Executive Committee, as did **Michael A. Tanenbaum, Esq.**, who is Chair of the Audit Committee.

**Senior Staff Pacesetters**

In December, **Ross S. Richards**, Vice President of Operations and Real Estate, was promoted to Senior Vice President, Operations and Real Estate. Richards joined NJPAC as Production Manager in 1997, just prior to the Arts Center’s opening. He is a graduate of Ithaca College and received his master’s degree in fine arts from the Yale School of Drama. Before arriving at NJPAC, Richards worked at New York City Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, and off-Broadway.

NJPAC’s Development Department is ready to take on new challenges with next year’s task of structuring a strategic plan and preparing for an ambitious capital campaign. Congratulations were in order for Vice President of Development **Peter Hansen**, who was promoted to Senior Vice President of Development, while a national search was launched to fill his previous position. When Hansen rejoined NJPAC in 2007 (he had served in various senior Development roles at NJPAC from 1992–2002), he successfully completed a $180 million capital campaign, which helped establish the Arts Center’s $70 million endowment. Since 2009, Hansen has effectively managed an annual fundraising campaign that generates more than $10 million.

Continued on next page
BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE
NJ PAC ANNOUNCES NEW SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

In the most significant restructuring of executive management at NJPAC since his arrival in 2011, President and CEO John Schreiber in December announced a series of appointments to enhance the Arts Center’s status as one of the country’s leading performing arts centers and a home to diverse programming and excellence in arts education.

Given the planned retirement of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Bobbie Arbesfeld, the forward-thinking changes are being put into action between the completion of NJPAC’s three-year strategic plan and the commencement of a new five-year plan, which will reassess and articulate NJPAC’s mission and vision. This road map to the future signals an exciting time of growth and innovation for NJPAC.

“The business and the mission of the Arts Center demand an organizational structure that allow us the best chance to achieve our revenue and community service goals as effectively and efficiently as possible,” Schreiber said in a statement. “This carefully considered refreshing of senior management roles and responsibilities has been designed to accomplish that.”

Bobbie Arbesfeld, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, announced her retirement effective June 30, 2015. A resident of Gladstone, Arbesfeld arrived at NJPAC in 1999 as Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, was promoted to Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer in 2006, and was appointed to her current position in 2008.

“Bobbie has been an indispensable architect of the high standards of professional excellence that have set NJPAC in the top rank of its peer institutions,” Schreiber said. “Bobbie’s management of Finance and IT, Governance, Human Resources, Operations and Real Estate has enabled those divisions to operate thoughtfully, successfully, humanely, and efficiently.”

“It’s been a privilege to engage with such supportive and generous leadership and a joy to work with such a creative and diverse team,” Arbesfeld said.

In her place, two veteran NJPAC executives will share the title of Executive Vice President, effective Jan. 1, 2015. Executive Producer David Rodriguez will become Executive Vice President and Executive Producer. Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Warren Tranquada will be named Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

NJ PAC has retained Janet Albert of Bridge Partners, LLC to launch a nationwide search for a new Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, whose responsibilities will include oversight of the Finance and IT departments. Until the announcement of that appointment, Tranquada’s title will be Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Arbesfeld will then serve as Senior Advisor until her retirement in June.

The Vice President and CFO will report to Tranquada, as will the departments of Operations and Real Estate, Human Resources, Ticket Services and Special Events. Tranquada will continue to shepherd NJPAC’s strategic planning and assist with governance matters.

In his new role, Rodriguez will continue to supervise Programming, Broadcast, Marketing, and Performance Rentals, and will add the Community Engagement and Production departments to his portfolio.

Top to bottom: Bobbie Arbesfeld, David Rodriguez, Warren Tranquada

SENIOR STAFF PACESETTERS
Continued from previous page

When NJ BIZ magazine wrote about its selection of Warren Tranquada as its CFO of the Year (Large Nonprofit) award, notice was made of an aerial photo of 1960s Newark mounted on his office wall. “It is a reminder of the past, and also a good guide to the progress that has been made in recent years,” he told the reporter. NJPAC’s Vice President and Chief Financial Officer received the honor in October for the Large Nonprofit category (51 or more employees). The annual citations are given to New Jersey financial executives whose work sustains the vitality of economic growth in the state. NJPAC conveys its thanks and a hearty well-done to Warren for his steadfast vigilance as guardian of the books and the Strategic Dashboard.

At the end of August, NJPAC bid farewell and good fortune to Vice President of Arts Education Laurie A. Carter as she departed to serve Eastern Kentucky University as Executive Vice President. Alison Scott-Williams, Assistant Vice President of Arts Education, stepped up to take on the responsibilities of Acting Head and Assistant Vice President of the department. In December, following a nationwide search, President and CEO John Schreiber announced Scott-Williams’ promotion to Vice President of Arts Education. “Alison is a great leader and genuinely nice person,” he said. “Arts learning is an integral and essential part of NJPAC’s mission. The entire Arts Center staff looks forward to working with Alison and her fine team to enhance and transform the lives of many more children in the seasons to come.”
NEW FACES AT NICO

Although one works his wizardry behind the scenes and the other is visibly front and center, Todd Allen and Christopher Keys combine into a living recipe for success at NICO Kitchen + Bar.

Allen—announced as NICO’s new Chef de Cuisine in April—shook his first sauté pans at the now-defunct Manhattan restaurant, March. The Wayne native has held positions at some of the area’s most highly rated kitchens and country clubs, such as Restaurant Serenade in Chatham, The Brass Rail in Hoboken and the Trump properties Mar-A-Lago in Palm Beach and Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster.

Formerly an advertising executive at Young & Rubicam in New York, he had an epiphany to follow a second, arguably riskier career path after a memorable dinner at Eric Ripert’s Le Bernardin. During his years as a media planner at Prudential (2000–2002), he began studying on weekends at the Institute of Culinary Education in New York, where he graduated on the brink of turning 30.

Allen creates within the parameters of the “Italian without borders” concept launched by founding Executive Chef Ryan DePersio (of Fascino and Battello) when NICO opened at NJPAC in 2012.

In the summer of that year, Keys—who also happens to be fondly nicknamed Keys—began bartending at NICO on the first day of Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City and in the midst of America’s Got Talent. His Mom, a Jersey Shore pastry chef, had watched him sample every kind of restaurant job growing up, including “boot camp” as a manager in corporate training for Brinker International Restaurants in Jersey City (Chili’s, Maggiano’s).

The 26-year-old Newarker was “discovered” by Gail Stone, Managing Director of the Women’s Association of NJPAC, while he was working at the now-defunct Embankment catering hall, also in Jersey City. This past spring, the guy who’s frequently seen stopping at tables to make sure diners’ experiences are both delightful and delicious was named Restaurant Manager at NICO.

HIT <ENTER> FOR EFFICIENCY

TWO NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEMS HELP STREAMLINE NJPAC’S DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

The introduction of two computer software systems helped streamline and organize data processing and better manage information relating to events.

Want to find a volunteer? The Office of Volunteer Services now uses Better Impact, a program that not only tracks the schedules of current volunteers, but allows prospective recruits to sign up quickly and easily. The cloud-based database is accessible via NJPAC’s Volunteers pages at njpac.org.

Launched in the spring, the site permits the 300-plus volunteers at NJPAC to log their hours, list their interests and talents, and update their availability. Opportunities for volunteers are posted speedily and users are able to synch their online schedules with mobile devices.

“Volunteers can see a wider variety of opportunities available to them instantaneously,” explains Ginny Bowers Coleman, Director of Volunteer Services. “In the past, they were waiting for a letter or a phone call...there’s an increase in the number of applicants, and when asked how they heard about NJPAC, more people credit the website.”

ArtsVision, a tool designed to consolidate event information, was introduced in August. ArtsVision gives the staff one user-friendly system, with a simple, web-based front end, for accessing and managing all event-related information.

“I love that on any given day, I can pull up our calendar in real time, right on a smart phone, from anywhere I am,” says Operations Manager Lauren Vivenzio.

ArtsVision frees up storage in the network by eliminating a huge amount of file-keeping and can be tapped by departments in many ways. For example, Arts Education now has a new place for managing rosters of students and teachers. Development can keep track of the A-to-Z planning of a reception on a common spreadsheet. And multiple personnel (restaurant, security, operations, producers) are able to absorb the information for a particular event or performance at a glance.
The arrival of Nancy Cantor as Rutgers University-Newark’s chancellor in 2014 ushered in a new vision for the university, and almost immediately prompted dialogues to foster creative partnerships with NJPAC. Cantor, the former Chancellor and President of Syracuse University, is a recognized expert in advancing the role of anchor institutions in strengthening communities.

Within months, scholarship was meshed with culture through the announcement of an ambitious plan, “Express Newark: A University-Community Collaboratory.” In this project, a constellation of students, residents, organizations and institutions will collaborate in a multimedia incubator, housed in a portion of three floors in the long-neglected Hahne & Co. building, which will be revitalized into studios, galleries and performance spaces.

NJPAC will be an active player in this collective, especially in arts education and the advocacy of young talents. President and CEO John Schreiber, who has swapped ideas and conversation with Cantor on many occasions, conducted his own Q&A over coffee about the alliance of Rutgers and NJPAC, adapted for this report:

John Schreiber: As a proponent of the idea that anchor institutions can be facilitators of change, you’ve made us think differently about our roles in the Newark community. What kinds of opportunities do you see here?

Nancy Cantor: I wasn’t planning to be a university president again, but I think what is so genuinely unique about Newark is that Rutgers University-Newark, like NJPAC, is a road to opportunity in civic life and the kinds of changes that metropolitan America can represent. With respect to Rutgers University-Newark, it’s not only an extraordinarily diverse institution that is really on the front lines of educating the future of this country—in terms of all kinds of immigrant populations, race and ethnicity, class, backgrounds, cultural perspectives and experience, all in the mix—but it is an urban institution deeply embedded in one of the iconic cities of the country. A city that on the one hand has all of the energy and possibility and life that great metropolitan centers can have, and on the other hand, it has all the challenges that great metropolitan centers have and historically have had and is trying to reinvent itself reintroduce itself to the world.

It mattered a lot to me that Newark was not just a transportation hub or a center where there were, important corporate partners, but that it has its own history as a cultural center. When you think about the writers and architects that have come out of Newark, when you think about jazz, performance in general, and visual artists, about the public history that’s been written here and rewritten, it’s an amazing center and NJPAC is a galvanizing force for that.

JS: The Hahne’s building is an amazing prospect for us to bring collaboration to life. What led to your decision to relocate and expand art and design programs into Hahne’s?

NC: I am a firm believer that space and design can become a catalyst for all kinds of cultural expressions and democratic practice...It is really important, from the perspective of a university, not to be cloistered inwardly when you are trying to reach outwardly and build bridges and create civic dialogue and cultural consciousness. You need to get out of where you are. You need to walk across the street, so to speak. And in so doing, you need to create what I like to call “third spaces”—places that no partner owns or has control of, but space where all partners meet. That’s what we’re trying to do in Hahne’s.

We think about Hahne’s as a catalyst or third space for coming together with all our various assets, scholarly, creative and intellectual, and people, and bringing them together in a place that is first of all an iconic, historical statement about Newark. There is barely a person I’ve talked to who grew up in Newark or around this area who doesn’t say, “Oh, I used to go to Hahne’s or I used to go to Bamberger’s...”

For example, Hahne’s used to have this extraordinary portrait studio and we’re going to have your “portrait studio” of today. It can be a media center, a community storytelling center, a film and video production space, a black box...

JS: From your perspective as someone who unites disparate stakeholders, what are the elements of a successful partnership?

NC: I think one of the perils of modern life in any discipline is that you become or think you are an expert. And that the conditions for good partnerships are to put...
expertise either aside or jointly on the table. My friend Harry Boyte, a public historian, also talks about the cult of the expert as problematic and that we need to be a community of experts. So good partnerships require saying, “We’re in this together, it’s mutually beneficial, neither side nor any side is the leader.” You know, the old “whole is better than the sum of its parts.”

The other thing that happens in partnerships, and it’s particularly important in anchor institution work, is that you’ve got to have a commitment to sustainability, pay as much attention to the collaborative process as to a particular project you’re doing at the time. So that you’re really making a joint infrastructure of collaboration, not just a one-off.

JS: There are obvious connections between NJPAC and the university. Is it important to you to have the same depth of collaboration among other, less obvious partners?

NC: I take a sort of eclectic approach to this. I like to think about Rutgers University-Newark as having some centers of gravity, of real deep and broad collaboration, whether it’s in the arts and culture, public humanities domain, economic development, the educational pathway and...the building of strong, safe, healthy neighborhoods. I like to think of there being some centers of gravity where you bring together substantial collaborative networks, a cross-sector network, lots of anchor institutions.

Then I like to think of the fact that there are going to be a lot of other projects that do come and go. You help seed them, but you don’t worry as much about whether they have all the right partners at the table or long-term sustainability of the collaboration. For example, if a faculty member gets a grant and wants to study the urban ecosystem and environmental pollution, that’s fine to have it happen.

JS: Can you describe Newark City of Learning?

NC: Newark City of Learning Collaborative is a commitment to increase the post-secondary credentials of the residents of the City of Newark from 13 or 18 percent, depending on what you count, to 25 percent by 2025. So it’s a cross-sector collaboration, it has schools at the table, it has universities and county colleges, funders, college pipeline, community-based organizations that do that kind of work. It’s everybody coming together to say, what does it take to cement educational pathways and opportunity for kindergarten through college, what does it take to credential the adults in Newark who have some post-secondary credits, but haven’t finished, and then what does it take to keep the talent that does graduate here—here? So reverse the brain drain, if you will.

On Nov. 5, Newark lost an irreplaceable champion with the death of Dr. Clement Alexander Price, distinguished historian and NJPAC Trustee. In the following tribute sent to the NJPAC community, President and CEO John Schreiber recognized the founder and director of The Rutgers Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience as a visionary and a comrade.

It is with profound sorrow that I share with you the awful news that our cherished friend, colleague and inspiration, Dr. Clement Price, has died. He had suffered a massive stroke on Sunday. Clem was the Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor at Rutgers-Newark and was vice-chair of the President’s Council on Historic Preservation. He was Newark’s official City Historian and a Trustee of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

I could list dozens of Clem’s other affiliations, accomplishments, and civic engagements, but suffice it to say that if something that advanced the public good was happening or about to happen in our City, Clem Price was invariably a first responder to help it come true. I am new to Newark, but I understood early on that Clem Price was a noble, brilliant, generous-hearted, sensitive and compassionate man. Clem taught me the history of Newark every time we met, and offered the benefit of his wisdom on matters large and small whenever asked. His unique ability to focus on anyone he was conversing with, and make that person feel supremely valued and worthwhile, enhanced the lives of students, community members and friends every day.

My last conversation with Clem was the Sunday of the Dodge Poetry Festival 10 days ago. We were in Prudential Hall’s big glass-plated lobby on a sunny, blustery afternoon. Clem was beaming. He gave me a big hug (he always gave big hugs) and said: “Aren’t all these poets miraculous? And isn’t it great to see all the kids in the house? Man, I think we’re on to something!”

That was the Clem we all adored: positive, loving, appreciative, talking about kids and the future.

The entire Arts Center family sends deepest condolences to his beloved wife Mary Sue, and to his sister Jarmila and brother James. Our world is so much the poorer for Clem’s early and unfair departure. We shall not see the likes of him again.

Godspeed, good man. You taught us about humanity and we promise not to forget the lessons.
FOCUS ON NEWARK

THE CITY ELECTS A NEW MAYOR

On May 13, Newark voters elected a new mayor: Democrat Ras J. Baraka, a veteran community organizer, municipal council member and educator whose first campaign for that office was run in 1994, when he was only 24. The Arts Center’s Theater Square provided an open-sky forum for citizens and workers who witnessed the swearing-in ceremony on July 1.

Acting on the recommendation of Newark’s cultural leaders, the new mayor established an Office of Arts, Cultural Development and Tourism in City Hall under the direction of Gwen Moten. NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber, who co-chaired the arts and culture transition team, will continue as Chairman of the committee.

In December, Baraka participated in the first of four “Town Halls”—a community initiative at NJPAC, enhanced by live broadcasts via WBGO Jazz 88.3FM. Free to attendees, the gatherings address specific issues crucial to the quality of life in Newark.

Rewind to April, when NJPAC and WBGO co-presented New Voices for Newark: The Mayoral Candidates in Conversation with Dr. Clement Price. Then-candidate Baraka and his challenger, former Assistant Attorney General Shavar Jeffries, appeared in separate public forums moderated by Rutgers history professor Dr. Clement Price, the city’s official historian. The free events, supported in part by the Victoria Foundation, were streamed live and later broadcast on WBGO.

BELIEVE IN NEWARK

Four topics of vital concern to people who live and work in Newark were chosen to launch a new program of public forums led by Mayor Ras J. Baraka at NJPAC.

Believe in Newark: Mayor Baraka’s Town Hall on Public Safety, the first in a series of four free conversations, was held on Dec. 3 in the Victoria Theater. Sessions in 2015 will address economic development, education and health.

Moderated by Marcia Wilson Brown, Vice Chancellor for External and Governmental Relations at Rutgers-Newark, the panel was recorded for future broadcast by NWK-TV (City of Newark Government Access Channel) and WBGO Jazz88.3FM. The more than 900 people who attended welcomed the opportunity to ask questions of the mayor and guest speakers: Newark Police Director Eugene Venable, Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn A. Murray, and Rutgers-Newark Provost Todd R. Clear, former Dean of the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice.

“The opportunity for the mayor to speak to citizens in a direct and unfiltered way is what our democracy is all about...”

—John Schreiber, on Mayor Ras J. Baraka’s series of Town Hall public forums at NJPAC
THE ROAST WITH THE MOST
Former Governor Brendan Byrne in the (hot) seat of honor

Former Gov. Brendan Byrne was in the seat of honor—and humor—in the Chase Room on April 1, when the Celebrity Comedy Birthday Roast Benefit turned into a “grand old occasion” for a grand Irish lad who turned 90 years old on that very day.

New Jersey’s 47th Chief Executive—who’s slung more than a few witticisms during his two terms as the State House’s own Yogi Berra—was ribbed by his successors, celebrity comedians and other politicians. The co-producer was an important member of the follies brigade: Ruthi Zinn Byrne, President of the public relations firm Zinn Graves & Field Inc. and wife of the honoree.

On the dais were occupants of New Jersey’s front office, past and present: roastmaster and Gov. Chris Christie, Tom Kean, James Florio, Donald DiFrancesco, Jim McGreevey and Richard Codey. Comedian and actor Vince August, also known to Jerseyans as municipal court Judge Vince Sicari before he was asked to choose between careers, showed why he’s arguably the State’s lead counsel in lawyer jokes.

Celebrity comics lined up for a chance to lampoon the paternal Democratic leader and raise money for NJPAC Arts Education, such as Joy Behar, former co-host of The View; “Jersey Joe” Piscopo, the famed alum of Saturday Night Live; sports-minded comedian Reese Waters, formerly of The Daily Line; and Stewie Stone, Vice President of the Friars Club. Jazz guitarist and singer John Pizzarelli, from “New Jersey’s First Family of Cool,” provided the musical accompaniment and a rendition of Byrne’s favorite song, “Happy Days Are Here Again.”

New Jersey’s 47th Chief Executive—who slung more than a few witticisms during his two terms—was ribbed by his successors, celebrity comedians and other politicians...

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION
NJPAC and Rutgers University Team Up

Newark became the epicenter of a global conversation about the positive influences of the arts on distressed cities in a convocation held by NJPAC and Rutgers University’s School of Public Affairs and Administration.

Titled An International Conference on Cultural Institutions and Urban Transformation, the gathering in October was shepherded by NJPAC Founding President and CEO Lawrence P. Goldman, who is the school’s Distinguished Practitioner in Residence. With events held at both sites, participants were able to tap into the flavor of Newark’s rejuvenated downtown during strolls, take a tour and dine at NJPAC, and conduct sessions on the Rutgers campus.

Presentations and debates focused on whether deep investment in large-scale cultural facilities was an effective strategy for downtown redevelopment and urban planning. While panelists were proud to point to success stories, they also posed tough questions about how to effectively measure a center’s role in the economic development of its community.

The “local team” included such players as NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber, Rutgers-Newark Chancellor Nancy Cantor, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, former Gov. Thomas H. Kean and Shané Harris, Vice President, Corporate Giving, Prudential and Executive Director, The Prudential Foundation. Prudential Financial sponsored the symposium.

Experts in attendance spanned the worlds of arts institutions, architectural and design firms, planners and developers, and academia. Keynote speakers included former Pittsburgh Mayor Thomas Murphy and Manchester Bidwell Corp. President and CEO William E. Strickland, winner of a MacArthur Fellowship “genius” grant.

Three CEOs of other arts centers joined the panels: Kevin McMahon of Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Art Falco of Cleveland’s Playhouse Square and Karen Brooks Hopkins of Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM).
For the 2014 edition of NJPAC’s *TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival*, musicians, singers, students, educators, music industry professionals and listeners all turned up to share their devotion to the most democratic of musical genres...

*Fantasia took charge of Prudential Hall*

Insets, top to bottom: Christian McBride, Jazzmeia Horn, Chris Botti and Ray Mantilla
As the third annual TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival drew to a close on Nov. 16, Sarah McKenzie, one of the finalists in the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, recalled a mentor who described jazz instruments as “amplifiers of the soul.”

Those amplification levels of soul pinned the needle all week at NJPAC and several off-site venues as musicians, singers, students, educators, music industry professionals and listeners all turned up to share their devotion to the most democratic of musical genres.

The term “democracy of jazz” refers not only to the collaborative nature of musicians when passing along musical ideas, but to the festival’s changing focus on each instrument, whether it be Chris Botti’s trumpet or Christian McBride’s acoustic bass, or saxophone. The festival is a tribute to Newarker James Moody (1925–2010), the iconic sax player, so it was fitting that saxophonist Paquito D’Rivera started the music rolling on Nov. 9. The woodwinds master guested with the teen instrumentalists of NJPAC’s Brick City Jazz Orchestra in the opening concert at Dorthaan’s Place jazz brunch at NICO Kitchen + Bar.

Venerable Cuban percussionist Ray Mantilla—the image of a prophet of jazz with his alabaster hair, white jacket and cream-colored congas—was one of the first artists to bless the proceedings, with a fiery concert on Nov. 10 at Bethany Baptist Church. Counted among those who have carved out remarkably long histories in the business, Mantilla is an artist whose career has been tracked for decades by people like 72-year-old Patricia Caesar of Newark, an original member of WBGO Jazz88.3FM (the festival’s co-presenter). Watching him perform with his quartet, she was reminded of his tours with Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers.

Also at Bethany, Rahsaan Roland Kirk: The Case of the Three-Sided Dream, Adam Kahan’s biopic about the multi-instrumentalist and activist, was given a free screening on Nov. 11. Steve and Iqua Colson’s 40 Years in the Moment! gig at the Newark Museum on Nov. 12, featuring compositions by the pianist and his vocalist spouse, included an ace band with Oliver Lake on saxophone and flute, Kelvyn Bell on guitar, Santi DeBriano on bass and Tyshawn Sorey on drums.

Bass was front and center for Christian McBride’s hosting of Jazz and Soul (Nov. 13) with his 15-piece big band. Sharing the bill were Fantasia, Earth, Wind & Fire’s Philip Bailey, José James, and the fortuitously-named, scat dynamo Jazzmeia Horn, a past winner of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. Fantasia chose sultry and atmospheric for her turn, melding Arlen’s “Stormy Weather” with Gershwin’s “Summertime.”

Chris Botti, headlining on Nov. 14, let his trumpet do some eloquent talking. In arguably the most eclectic of the week’s programs, Botti unpacked a repertoire of pop, classics, jazz and standards for his return to NJPAC, ranging from Morricone’s “Love Theme” from Cinema Paradiso to Sting’s “La Belle Dame Sans Regrets” to Miles Davis’ “Flamenco Sketches.” One of his guest vocalists, soprano Sy Smith, responded to his trumpet with a plaintive love song from the opposite side of the Prudential Hall orchestra section, melting spectators where they sat.

That same evening, the NJMEA All-State Jazz Ensemble, a collection of gifted young musicians from throughout New Jersey, kept the vibe going in Victoria Theater.

James Moody’s wife, Linda, was ever-present at events “to celebrate Moody’s legacy with fabulous music.” During Day of Swing (Nov. 15), an afternoon of free family activities at the Center for Arts Education, she reminisced about observing Moody’s many master classes, which he always began by asking the gentlemen in attendance to remove their hats.

Toting their instruments, dozens of music students flocked to back-to-back master classes, conducted by McBride, who is also NJPAC’s Jazz Advisor, and Brazilian jazz guitarist Romero Lubambo. Elsewhere, young participants learned about the recording industry, created art inspired by Romare Bearden, and exercised their vocal cords with call-and-response and improvisation.

Praise was heaped on women of song for the festival’s final day, beginning in the morning with Vanessa Rubin at Dorthaan’s Place. Later, five young women rightfully considered the future of jazz sang at the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, named for Newark’s “Divine One,” and one—Ashleigh Smith—left the stage with the SASSY Award, a prize of $5,000 and a recording contract with Concord Music Group. Pianist Frank Owens’ trio accompanied the singers and held sway during the program’s interludes.

Among the Newark-centric celebrities frequently spotted during the week at NJPAC was jazz advocate Nicholas Miceli, Market President of TD Bank—title sponsor of the festival—who engaged in onstage banter with NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber. The Prudential Foundation sponsors the Arts Center’s jazz season.

Schreiber welcomed the diverse, multigenerational audiences with the salutation: “I congratulate you on your hipness.”
Thousands of music fans basked in the summer sun and danced in the evening breeze at this year’s Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City. The eight outdoor concerts in Theater Square turned Thursdays into Downtown Newark’s hottest scene for grabbing a bite and a drink after work, meeting up with friends old and new, and getting close to some of the most ear-catching bands in world music.

As always, admission to the 17th season of Sounds of the City was free. The festival-like gatherings, which included vendors, food trucks, an outdoor bar, and proximity to activities in the newly beautified Military Park, took place under near-perfect skies in July and August.

A tradition at Sounds of the City, Felix Hernandez’s Rhythm Revue dance party kicked off the celebration, followed later in the month by Third World, Red Baraat and the Eddie Palmieri Salsa Orchestra. August brought the Sounds of the City debut of NJPAC’s own Brick City Jazz Orchestra, which shared the stage with Kev Marcus and Wil B of Black Violin on Aug. 14. Rounding out the lineup were The Funky Meters with the best of the bayou, the reunion of Living Colour and the imaginatively eclectic Burnt Sugar The Arkestra Chamber.
It’s hard to single out the most awesome moment at June 5th’s Broadway at Moorland, the outdoor music celebration co-presented for the first time by NJPAC and the Far Hills Race Meeting Association.

Concert-goers would probably say just being part of the vista of Far Hills’ Moorland Farm on a balmy June evening. Or, no, maybe the surprise appearance by Ben Vereen (pinch-hitting for ailing composer Stephen Schwartz), who sang his signature “Magic to Do” from Schwartz’s Pippin. How about that vocal sparring of Tom Wopat and Liz Callaway on “Anything You Can Do” from Annie Get Your Gun?

Some might say it was free-dancing to Pharrell Williams’ “Happy” while Fireworks by Grucci splashed cascading diamonds of light across the sky.

The hits just kept rolling for the thousands of spectators who had toted, wheeled or rode on golf carts with their arsenals of picnic supplies to claim a vantage point on the grassy slopes. Closer to the stage, VIP donors mingled at umbrella tables decorated in vivid yellows and topped with deep-purple centerpieces of African violets. Corporate tents pitched at the acropolis afforded guests a panoramic view of all the action.

The spectacular event benefited NJPAC’s Arts Education programs. Musically gifted young people grow into artists like the players of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, who were on hand with conductor Gerald Steichen to accompany the cast of singers.

“We were nervous about the change,” admitted longtime Moorland patron Carrie Rose of Basking Ridge, who heard that Broadway, rather than classical pops, was on the menu. “But we knew because it’s NJPAC it would be a great show.”

Splendor on the Grass

Broadway at Moorland proved to be a Starry, Starry Night for Lovers of Great Music, Food and Fireworks
Classical music lovers were able to choose this year from a Who’s Who list of some of the world’s greatest orchestra and superstars and their compelling programs.

Two conductors also soloed on violin with their orchestras: Pinchas Zukerman in an all-Beethoven program with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in January, and Vladimir Spivakov in a celebration of Italian Baroque composers with the Moscow Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra in May. Also that month, Joshua Bell made a return appearance with his fiddle, igniting Ravel’s Tzigane and Sibelius’ Violin Concerto with the NJSO.

Consummate pianists included Yuja Wang in recital, making her long-awaited NJPAC debut in December, and Evgeny Kissin, who dazzled with an ultra-romantic selection of works by Schubert and Scriabin. Journeying to Newark from far corners were conductor Yuri Temirkanov with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic in February and, a month later, Gianandrea Noseda leading the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Last season’s seven classical music engagements were so well-received that ticket sales were up 53% from the previous season and attendance increased by 49%.

The voices of tomorrow’s opera luminaries can now be heard at NJPAC, thanks to a new partnership with the Metropolitan Opera. The three-part Metropolitan Opera Rising Stars recital series features artists who are on the cusp of extraordinary careers through their association with the Met or its Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. Rising Stars made its debut in November with a trio of up-and-coming vocalists in Mozart and Company.
WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD
ENTERTAINMENT WITHOUT BORDERS

NJPAC’s audiences are armchair globetrotters who can journey to foreign lands and experience diverse cultures without leaving the building.

And when the Arts Center’s multicultural programming is coupled with rentals from other presenters, patrons enter a realm of entertainment without borders.

Take the month of June, for example. Shortly after South Korean singer Lee Moon Sae appeared in Prudential Hall, Portugal’s Gisela João brought her contemporary fado hits to Victoria Theater. Italian vocalists and PBS favorites Il Volo and El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico, featuring Charlie Cruz, led rousing performances in pop and salsa, respectively, and the “Dream Girl” of Hindi cinema, Hema Malini, headlined in Durga, a dance ballet.

Taiwan’s leading contemporary theatrical troupe staged The Village, an epic drama about three generations of migration from China to Taiwan, in Prudential Hall; the play was performed in Mandarin with English supertitles.

Mystic India: The World Tour, presented in March, is a popular spectacle of dance and music that will return to NJPAC in 2015. August became even hotter with the booking of Jamaican reggae king Beres Hammond and his special guests, in addition to the always globally-spiced lineup of Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City. (See story on page 20.) And the musically explosive SalsaPalooza was back, this time with multi-grammy-nominated trombonist and composer Willie Colón.

2014 welcomed world music from (top to bottom) Portugal’s Gisela João, salsa specialist Charlie Cruz with El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico, and Jamaican reggae king Beres Hammond

NEW DIRECTIONS IN THEATER

NJPAC unfurled two innovative stage projects in 2014 that appealed to discrete theater audiences: Broadway-goers and followers of serious drama.

Director and playwright Robert O’Hara (Bootycandy) helmed a co-production of Meredith Willson’s The Music Man during March at NJPAC and at Two River Theater in Red Bank. The Tony-winning best musical of 1957 about big brass bands and small-town busybodies was presented as a concert version with an intriguing twist: The entire cast, led by Broadway actors Isaiah Johnson as Harold Hill and Stephanie Umoh as Marian Paroo, was African-American.

The singers were accompanied by a six-piece, onstage band.

The show’s opening sequence aboard a train conjured the Great Migration of blacks to the Midwest and across the country following the Civil War. The players, seated in a minimalist set representing the “Colored Section,” assembled themselves into the community of River City; in true trunk show fashion, some of their props and costuming were pulled from luggage.

This was the first staging of a musical for O’Hara, who is an Obie Award-winning director (for In the Continuum) and author of the acclaimed dramas Antebellum and Insurrection: Holding History.

Culture, conversation, community. When combined, the three ingredients of the NJPAC Stage Exchange meld into a provocative evening of artistry and discussion.

The Stage Exchange is a new series of script readings for plays in development by recognized New Jersey playwrights. Each presentation is followed by a panel of guest speakers convened to explore the drama’s themes and respond to the POV of the audience. A decidedly New Jersey perspective interlaces with social and political issues reflected by the works.

The first of five Stage Exchanges—to be held on and off the NJPAC campus—opened on Oct. 10 in Elizabeth with Martyna Majok’s Ironbound, a study of immigration and the plight of working-class women. The presentations continue into May. A partnership of the Arts Center, Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey and Yendor Productions, this inaugural project qualifies as both performance and public service—admission is by reservation, but it’s entirely free.

From Meredith Willson’s The Music Man
NJPAC’s resident orchestra continued to engage audiences with innovative programming and earned glowing press for its efforts. Here are some of last year’s noteworthy occasions:

- The NJSO heralded the start of the season with a 2014–15 Opening Night Celebration, a concert and gala at NJPAC, in honor of NJSO Board Chairman Emeritus Dr. Victor Parsonnet. The orchestra celebrated Parsonnet on the occasion of his 90th birthday. “Victor Parsonnet’s legacy is truly extraordinary,” said NJSO Board Co-Chairs Ruth C. Lipper and Stephen Sichak Jr. “As a gifted surgeon, he has pioneered the development of procedures and technologies that have saved and enhanced countless lives. As a devoted arts patron, he has been an inspirational leader not only for the NJSO, which he has served for nearly 30 years, but also for the arts and culture of the entire state.” The concert program featured Carmina Burana—the work that introduced audiences and musicians to Jacques Lacombe in his first appearance with the orchestra—and garnered critical acclaim. The Star-Ledger wrote: “An orchestra’s opening night of the season should always be a festive affair, with gala attire, local luminaries in the audience and music chosen to invigorate a crowd. The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra met all those marks.” And from Examiner.com: “With the mighty NJSO and compelling music-making of such outstanding caliber in your backyard, who needs to schlep to New York?”

- The NJSO’s 2014 Winter Festival—Earth marked the end of a four-year Winter Festival Cycle through the elements. A creative and critical highlight of the season was percussionist David Cossin’s performance of Tan Dun’s Earth Concerto, which features clay pots as instruments. The NJSO and The Star-Ledger created video previews showing the process involved in purchasing the right pots to use as instruments. The Star-Ledger praised the performance: “Throughout the work, short blips, chirps and splatters of orchestral color—elephantine bursts of brass, plucks of strings, mallet against flowerpots like knuckles cracking—grew into a complex and intricate sound world... Jacques Lacombe exquisitely commanded the uncommon forces at hand, with an interpretation that was full of life and color. The orchestra was in top form.”

- The NJSO launched NJSO Accents—a slate of pre- and post-concert events that enrich the patron experience of orchestra performances. Among this year’s Accents have been popular College Night, #OrchestraYou, #ChoraleYou, and “Saturday Night Out” LGBT events, as well as a special post-concert talkback featuring Team USA Olympic bobsled pilot Jazmine Fenlator and NJSO Concertmaster Eric Wyrick discussing what it takes to be at the top of their respective games.

- Fiddle-and-Fa-La-La-Fest brought together students from El Sistema-inspired music-instruction programs across New Jersey for a special performance on June 7 at NJPAC. The student musicians of NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project), the Paterson Music Project, Sonic Expressions and Union City Music Project performed. The event was the first of its kind and a significant moment for music education in New Jersey, according to El Sistema expert Tricia Tunstall, author of Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema and the Transformative Power of Music.

- The first ever #OrchestraYou saw conductor Jeff Grogan leading NPR’s Anastasia Tsioulcas and an ensemble of audience members when they performed alongside NJSO musicians...
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Music Director Jacques Lacombe has announced that, upon the completion of his current contract with the orchestra, he will step down as the NJSO’s Music Director in August 2016. Lacombe will continue to lead the NJSO through the completion of the 2015–16 season.

“I’m extremely proud of the work that I have accomplished with the NJSO and the creative initiatives that we’ve put in place: the New Jersey Roots Project, celebrating the wealth of composers who have lived and worked in this great state; an interesting array of world and U.S. premieres; the NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute; and developing important and original ways of involving other cultural institutions through my programming, including dance, theater, visual arts, choirs and children’s performing groups,” said Lacombe in a statement. “Most of all, I’m truly proud of the high level of performances we have achieved and sustained at the NJSO in the last five years. Over the years, with our many performance venues, we have grown something special for the entire community of the Garden State.”

Since becoming the NJSO’s Music Director in 2010, Lacombe has garnered praise from critics and audiences for his programming and talents on the podium. This spring, Inside Jersey included Lacombe in “The 100+ Club” of the most influential people in New Jersey, writing: “As music director of the NJSO since 2010, Jacques Lacombe has led the orchestra on one fruitful adventure after another. Honored by Carnegie Hall for adventurous programming, he and the orchestra achieved a stunning success at the spring for Music festival in 2012—their first appearance at the venue in six years. Lacombe has also initiated the New Jersey Roots Project, showcasing composers with local ties, including jazz artist Geri Allen; excelled in challenging and contemporary music and celebrated the classical masterworks.”

The orchestra has launched a search for its next music director.
It was a year of transition, a year of expansion, but mostly it was a year of firsts for NJPAC’s Arts Education Department...

Chyna Weathers from Maple Avenue School rehearsed the original musical *Big Deal* in a program created by NJPAC and The Johnny Mercer Foundation.

NJPAC’s nationally renowned Arts Education programs include (top to bottom) Dancing Classrooms™, Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens, and Embodying the Dream, a family festival celebrating the life and work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
ARtS eduCAtion
EACH DAY, A WONDER UNFOLDS

Vice President of Arts Education Alison Scott-Williams, following in the footsteps of her predecessor, Laurie A. Carter, mobilized her team to seamlessly carry on the business of educating children and teachers, to foster partnerships, and to perform, perform, perform.

Arts Education welcomed artists like dancer Carolyn Dorfman, founder of the Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company, who taught modern dance at NJPAC after school. The choreographer worked with a winning quartet of young dancers who shone at the final recital of the Young Artist Summer Intensive (YASI) and later joined her own intensive. Jazz singers Jackie Jones and Charenée Wade showed teenagers how to master three- and four-part harmonies and enhance their repertoire of solo pieces in a new vocal ensemble. Certainly no strangers to NJPAC’s jazz programs, Juilliard Jazz Orchestra conductor James Burton III was named NJPAC’s Director of Jazz Education and multi-Grammy nominee and vibraphonist Stefon Harris became Artistic Director of Jazz Education.

Conducting classes in their craft were actor-comedians of The Second City, jazz drummer Carl Allen, singer Tony DeSare, bassist Christian McBride with singer Jeffrey Osborne, and banjoist Béla Fleck. Broadway’s Kelli Rabke and Scott Coulter, who appeared in NJPAC’s Sondheim mash-up, Into Sweeney Todd’s Woods, returned to coach young cast members of December’s Into the Woods JR.

Arts Education was first in line with many new projects targeted for both culturally-minded young people and their elders. Here are some of them:

Often held in New York City, the annual Dancing Classrooms™ National Conference was hosted at NJPAC for the first time in July. Directors of Dancing Classrooms™ affiliates brainstormed with NJPAC staff on topics such as how to market and fund-raise. The Colors of the Rainbow Team Match, an exciting display of ballroom dance virtuosity and social grace by fifth-graders from the residency, balanced competition with respect, teamwork and elegance.

There was overflow enrollment for an arts teacher professional development day held in conjunction with Newark Public Schools on Oct. 1. The gathering of 175 arts teachers under one roof made for a considerable exchange of information on how to implement the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. In the afternoon, breakout sessions covered arts disciplines, such as recorder instruction provided to third grade music teachers through the Recorder Arts for Musical Pathways (RAMP) program. (About a thousand students and their music teachers, representing over 15 Newark schools, learned to play the recorders, which were provided at no cost to the children. Their proficiency will be showcased in a year-end concert with musicians of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra in Prudential Hall.)

An arts education partnership with Washington, D.C.’s John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts enabled about 15 Newark Public Schools teachers to learn to become arts integration experts. Held four times during the academic year, this special training uses the arts as a through-point; for example, if a social studies teacher wants to help students to retain certain facts, he or she could turn to an arts teacher to develop a theater game or song to enhance comprehension. Another new arts integration program—via NJPAC’s participation in the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts—is Early Childhood STEM Learning Through the Arts. Designed to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills in 3- to 6-year-olds and under, the roll-out was the subject of a workshop and keynote address given by NJPAC at the New Jersey Association for the Education of Young Children conference in October.

An unprecedented partnership between NJPAC and the NJSO will provide fifth-through tenth-grade students in Greater Newark with high-quality music instruction. Music Advancement for Newark Area Youth (MANY), announced in the Fall, will groom instrumentalists for acceptance into performance-based educational programs in the community, including NJPAC. Also in music, the NJPAC Jeffrey Carollo Music Scholarship, in partnership with Newark School of the Arts, was expanded to include divisions for juniors (one private lesson per week) and seniors (two weekly lessons). The scholarship is funded by the MCJ Amelior Foundation, which also supports summer intensive scholarships at Berklee College of Music in Boston for NJPAC students. Berklee’s PULSE Music Method, a music theory class, is now also available to students at the Center for Arts Education.

Beginning in January and extending into June, NJPAC’s pilot Careers-in-the-Arts: Technical Theater Training Program—supported by the Victoria Foundation—taught 180 freshmen from Newark’s North 13th Street Tech High School that it takes a team to put on a show. Classes led by drama teachers, NJPAC...
EACH DAY, A WONDER UNFOLDS
Continued from previous page

staff and teaching artists, and other professionals acquainted students with all aspects of show biz, from lobby signage to running lights. Students all played a role in the crowning production, whether it was stage management, ticket and usher services, or performance. And they’ll be back for another year.

Last, but most inspiring, are the young artists themselves. Of the 19 students who “graduated” from NJPAC in 2014, all were members of Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens and all entered college on a music track. Trombonist and composer Alan Hsiao even earned a full, four-year scholarship to Berklee.

The joyful sounds of jazz were heard throughout the metro, brought to you by Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens, which played gigs to promote NJPAC at venues that included Trumpets Jazz Club & Restaurant in Montclair, the Atrium at Lincoln Center and the NYC Marathon. After making a swingin’ debut at Essex County’s Cherry Blossom Festival, the Brick City Jazz Orchestra was found in concert with Black Violin at Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City, the Rutgers-Newark graduation at Prudential Center, and accompanying Paquito D’Rivera at Dorthaan’s Place during the TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival. The Women’s Association of NJPAC and an all-female ensemble from Jazz for Teens made a fine pair at the annual Spring Luncheon & Auction. (See story on page 38.) Not only did the WA’s fund-raising greatly benefit scholarships for musically gifted young women—the Jazz for Teens ensemble landed paying gigs after performing at the luncheon.

Another teen, Shamar McPherson, was in need of a clarinet to match his talent. Thanks to the intercession of Lauren Sevian of the Jazz for Teens faculty, the Buffet Crampon Company in France, centuries-old makers of finely crafted woodwind instruments, supplied the Newark resident with an E12 model.

Two noteworthy, no-cost events for the public were Embodifying the Dream, held as part of NJPAC’s MLK Celebration, and Day of Swing, an attraction of the TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival. Despite a pounding of snowfall, the MLK tribute had an impressive turnout of families who participated in a civil rights sing-in, liturgical dance, a class with Dance Theatre of Harlem, storytelling, a drumming circle… and departed reluctantly. Day of Swing was a jazz-a-thon for all ages, with activities that ranged from master classes with bassist Christian McBride and guitarist Romero Lubambo to a conversation about the music industry, creative movement sessions, and concerts galore, including a family swing dance featuring the Jazz for Teens faculty.

Mary Pope Osborne, author of the Magic Tree House series of adventure books for young readers, first clapped hands with NJPAC in 2012, when her volume #42, A Good Night for Ghosts, was staged as an original musical.

That production, titled A Night in New Orleans, toured schools with its fictional story of young Louis Armstrong and was presented during the TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival. In addition, the best-selling writer and her husband, playwright-musician Will Osborne, donated and hand-delivered boxed sets of Magic Tree House books to about 4,300 Newark third-graders.

For the 2013-14 academic year, many of the city’s fourth- and fifth-grade students were next up to get acquainted with Jack and Annie, the books’ intrepid explorers. Magic Tree House: Dinosaurs Before Dark-KIDS, a musicalization of Mary Pope Osborne’s very first book in the series, was rehearsed and performed by the casts of Abington Avenue Elementary, Harriet Tubman Elementary, Lafayette Street School and Newark Educators’ Community Charter School.

Teachers learned to stage the show during workshops held at NJPAC through a partnership with iTheatrics—experts in musical theater for young people. The schools assembled at NJPAC on June 5 for a collaborative performance, each assigned a particular segment of the show.

When A Night in New Orleans was performed, the cast of 10 and band members were composed of students from NJPAC’s Arts Education programs. For Dinosaurs, Newark students of diverse backgrounds and interests discovered their inner actor. Or Ankylosaurus.

“The kids were nervous before going to NJPAC,” said Abington Avenue teacher Cynthia Gonzalez. “They didn’t have faith that they could do it—and now they’re proud.”
THE BEGINNING OF RECORDER HISTORY

NJPAC Arts Education had something to toot about with the professional development launch of RAMP (Recorder Arts for Musical Pathways), its pilot music program in partnership with Newark Public Schools. Some 1,000 third-graders and 16 teachers learned to read music and perform on the recorder, while gaining the benefits of increased math and reading capacity and improved social skills. Students, parents, teachers and friends turned out in droves to cheer on the children and recognize their hard work during a June 30 concert in Prudential Hall, where the young musicians were accompanied by members of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. ●

SCHOOL’S IN FOR SUMMER

200 young people spent their summer vacation at NJPAC, participating in a series of unique programs...

While classrooms were closed for the warm-weather months, the Center for Arts Education was buzzing with activity and the sounds of jazz, folk, hip-hop—and laughter. About 200 participants signed on for these unique programs:

• Jazz pianist and composer Geri Allen led an All-Female Jazz Residency for young women at Montclair State University with a little help from friends, including jazz greats Terri Lyne Carrington, Carmen Lundy and Tia Fuller. The one-week residency included students from around the country being mentored alongside female jazz greats, seeing a performance in New York and participating in a concert finale. One of the teenagers, who lives in Colorado, was told about the intensive by her aunt, who emailed her from Korea.

• The Second City, Chicago’s famed improv troupe, selected Newark as the fourth city to host its summertime comedy residency for teens, children on the autism spectrum, and adults. (Stay tuned for the next Tina Fey, Stephen Colbert, Steve Carell or Key & Peele to emerge from these sketch comedy and improvisational workshops.) The Second City returned to NJPAC in the Fall, bearing the gift of an original sketch comedy show based on the great Garden State: The Second City Does New Jersey: Paved and Confused.

• Mark Conklin led a tuneful program for young singers and songwriters, who learned about different aspects of the recording industry while making music. The end of the workshop was celebrated with a “Single Release Party” for guests and students, which showcased the original compositions in a performance setting.

At last summer’s All-Female Jazz Residency

• Sheikia Norris, aka Purple Haze, introduced 11- to 15-year-olds to the world of hip-hop culture and creative expression through MCing, DJing, breakdancing, beatboxing and spoken word.

• And, as always, the Young Artist Summer Intensive (formerly the Summer Youth Professional Workshop) offered students in apprentice and advanced divisions the opportunity to enrich their talents in all facets of the performing arts. ●

Chicago’s famed Second City improv troupe selected NJPAC to host its summertime comedy residency
“I didn’t choose the arts, they chose me,” Shamsuddin Abdul-Hamid said simply and sincerely in his keynote speech at The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts annual recital.

There were plenty more people who heard his words in NJPAC’s Victoria Theater and had been inspired by choosing the arts. In the Spring, four Newark arts students were chosen to receive a total of $100,000 in college scholarships. They were joined on stage and off by many “alumni” chosen in previous years. All chose to make the arts a part of their lives, whether or not they chose to become performers in their careers.

Abdul-Hamid remembered another important choice: His mother, who ran a hair salon in Newark, chose to support her son’s dream to become an actor. In 2010, he became a Star-Ledger Scholarship Women’s Association Scholar, receiving $40,000 in college tuition aid. Four years of training at Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts, he said, turned out to be “an intimate and rigorous program that’s allowed me to grow into myself.”

The young actor added that he was inspired by past scholars and was obviously there to pay that inspiration forward by performing a piece from Marc Bamuthi Joseph’s choreopoem, Word Becomes Flesh.

Recipients of the 2014 scholarships were Arts High School seniors Johnny Carmona, Wesley Colon and Ashanti Colon (no relation), each awarded $20,000, and North Star Academy College Preparatory High School senior Dominant Ward, who received $40,000. All were 17 years old and theater students, with the exception of Wesley Colon, who played a spellbinding marimba at the recital (Matthias Schmitt’s Ghanaia).

Ward began the monologues with a selection from Athol Fugard’s My Children! My Africa! Carmona portrayed a police interrogator from Martin McDonagh’s harrowing play, The Pillowman. Ashanti Colon closed the honorees’ presentations with the “Lady in Red” monologue from For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf by Jersey-born playwright Ntozake Shange.

Founded in 1999, The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts has been presented by Arts Education at NJPAC and supported by The Star-Ledger (the Newhouse family) and John and Suzanne Willian through Goldman Sachs Gives.

The Force is strong with this one: Crystal Clarke, who was awarded a 2011 Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts, bested thousands of hopefuls for a role in J.J. Abrams’ highly-anticipated Star Wars: Episode VII, set for release in December 2015.

Born in Belleville, Clarke studied most recently at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. At 17, the then-senior at Newark Arts High was awarded a $20,000 Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts.

In an email earlier this year to the Arts Education Department, the young actress was happy to tap out the news of her first feature film, the upcoming fantasy-adventure The Moon and the Sun, with Pierce Brosnan and William Hurt.
MAKING A “BIG DEAL”

STUDENTS LEARN TO STAGE A MUSICAL IN A PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY NJPAC AND THE JOHNNY MERCER FOUNDATION

As one of the musical greats of 20th century America, Johnny Mercer was renowned as a lyricist, composer and mentor, whose words were his trade. His namesake foundation, which champions the art of songwriting in schools, continues to show by example that musical theater is just plain good for the soul.

For the second year, The Johnny Mercer Foundation partnered with NJPAC’s Arts Education Department to create an original musical. The title of the show was Big Deal. And to the audience of family, friends and educators who turned out for the culminating performance on May 21, it certainly was.

Scripting, composing, choreographing, casting and producing are some of the skills directly related to the dramatic arts, but the ripple effects for students are teamwork, creative expression and self-confidence. It was the job of NJPAC’s Teaching Artists, like Victor Burks, Janeece Freeman-Clark and Daryl Stewart, to guide the process. The participating middle schools included Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Performing & Fine Arts in East Orange, and Link Community School, Maple Avenue School and Marion P. Thomas Charter School, all in Newark.

The NJPAC-Mercer Musical Theater Program involved about 80 students, who met twice-weekly for 20 sessions. Drawing on their new understanding of American musical theater history and lyric writing, they set out to tell a story of broken dreams and triumph through a shared performance in NJPAC’s Chase Room. Big Deal was crafted into four sequences so a cast from each school had a turn in the spotlight.

Prior to the start of the show, Mercer Foundation Vice President Jonathan Brielle congratulated the young actors from the stage. “Learning to be a great actor or writer is about learning to express yourself while listening to others,” he said, adding, “I can’t wait to hear what’s in all of your hearts and minds.”

Justin Dominic, a 26-year-old dancer who grew up in Newark, returned to NJPAC this year as a Teaching Artist for Dancing Classrooms and as a teaching member of the Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company. A recent Brooklyn transplant, Dominic (whose given name is Justin Melvin) is an Arts High School graduate and the recipient of a $40,000 Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts. Subsequently, he was awarded full tuition to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Since receiving his degree in 2010, Dominic’s repertoire and prowess expanded through experiences with Lustig Dance Theatre, Limón, Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Keigwin + Company, and Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company. Joining Dorfman’s company in the fall brought Dominic back to conduct class at the Center for Arts Education, which he first visited as a kindergartener.
CONTRIBUTIONS
CHAMPIONS OF THE ARTS

NJPAC is grateful for these loyal benefactors, whose contributions in the past year have made it possible for so many to open their minds and hearts to the NJPAC experience...

Josh and Judy Weston, longtime philanthropists whose generous support continues to ensure the vitality of NJPAC. A member of NJPAC’s Board of Directors, Josh Weston is Honorary Chairman of ADP; he and his wife are founders of the Josh & Judy Weston Family Foundation.

Attorney Nina Mitchell Wells, Esq., Co-Executive Vice President of the Women’s Association of NJPAC and recipient of its 2014 Ronnie Goldberg Award for dedicated service to the WA and NJPAC. Also a member of NJPAC’s Board of Directors, Wells is a former Secretary of State (2006–2010) and was Vice President for Public Affairs at Schering-Plough and President of the Schering-Plough Foundation.

John S. and Suzanne Willian, supporters of The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Arts through Goldman Sachs Gives. A new member of the Arts Center’s Board of Directors, John S. Willian is Managing Director, Global Prime Services of Goldman, Sachs & Co.

ON THE MARKET

It was business among friends when two smart-money gurus—Leon G. (“Lee”) Cooperman and Jim Cramer—caught up with each other for a conversation about investment strategies in the Chase Room on Sept. 18...

Cooperman, Chairman and Founder of hedge fund Omega Advisors, Inc. and a longtime NJPAC benefactor, began his career trajectory at Goldman Sachs & Co. Also a former employee of Goldman Sachs, Cramer is a hybrid of quieter credits (attorney, newspaperman, restaurateur) and nationally recognized achievements (host of CNBC’s Mad Money, co-host of Squawk on the Street, founder of TheStreet.com and bestselling author).

No stranger to either speaker, NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber told members of the investment and philanthropic communities in attendance that, in fact, he and Cramer were first acquainted in 1970, as teens at Camp Paradox in the Adirondacks.

The genial banter hopscotched from a day in the life (Cramer claims he functions on less than five hours of sleep and puts in practically a full day before he begins tapings) to prescient assessments made prior to the aughts (Cramer had predicted the democratization of money with the arrival of the 401k). Talk of the stock market was imbued with optimism.

Responses to questions from the audience touched on recession, the effect of geopolitical hot spots on the U.S. economy, and why Cramer pursued a law degree. (After covering “the bad guys” as a reporter, he wanted to become a prosecutor.)

Add “mountain climber” to those lofty aspirations. Schreiber remarked that the 15-year-old Cramer was a “46-er,” meaning he scaled 46 peaks, 4,000 feet or higher, while at camp. The feat was heralded on the front page of The Paradoxian, where Schreiber was editor. “Even then he was an overachiever,” Schreiber quipped.

The evening was sponsored by Atlantic, Tomorrow’s Office, a provider of tailored office technology and workflow solutions.
THANK YOU, NJPAC MEMBERS

Like the engraved bricks that provide the foundation of Theater Square—an open gathering place for a diverse public—the 3,200 members of NJPAC reflect people from all walks of life who together form a path of support to the Arts Center...

Members are entitled to desired benefits like advance ticket purchases, yet NJPAC receives much in return. Thanks to member contributions, children are able to engage in superior arts education programs and NJPAC is able to sustain the high caliber of its entertainment lineups.

Jon Ulanet of Fanwood is a longtime member whose family business, the George Ulanet Co., has been based in Newark since 1931. Ulanet, who received his degree in physics from Franklin & Marshall College and did graduate work at George Washington University, joined the company—a manufacturer of electrical immersion heaters and bi-metal thermostats for industrial applications—in 1972. He is the company’s president and sole officer.

Raised in nearby Maplewood, Ulanet developed strong ties to the City of Newark throughout the years. He has established a scholarship for electrical engineering and computer science majors at NJIT in memory of his father, Herman, a 1926 graduate of Newark College of Engineering. He is an active member of the city’s last synagogue, Ahavas Sholom, and has been a strong supporter of WBGO Jazz88.3FM.

He is a board member and works on the annual campaign and pledge redemptions for the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ and is also a board member of its Jewish Community Foundation.

Supporting NJPAC from the ground up and attending performances there was “a no-brainer,” says Ulanet, who is a jazz enthusiast and plays the clarinet with community bands. A fan of woodwinds master Paquito D’Rivera and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, he is frequently found in the audience at NJPAC jazz events, cabarets and classical concerts with the Mariinsky Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig’s Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

His parents sang in the Zilbert’s Choral Society of New Jersey, and Ulanet sings in a synagogue choir (Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains). An avid bicyclist, photographer, hiker, kayaker and snowshoer, he loves spending weekends and vacation time in Vermont and has enjoyed traveling to Maine, California, Colorado, Washington and overseas destinations that have included Costa Rica, Mexico, Israel, Italy, France and England.

Ulanet grew up in a family of three boys, and is a proud dad of three grown daughters: Danielle, Sara and Debra, and a granddaughter, Maya.
In 2006, NJPAC established the Business Partners program to provide its corporate partners with more prominent recognition, as well as enhanced donor and sponsor benefits. Concurrently, the Arts Center launched the Business Partners Roundtable, which has become an overwhelmingly popular perk. The Roundtable, a breakfast forum held six times per year, allows top executives of multinational firms and small-business owners alike to connect and network with peers, while at the same time hear thought-provoking presentations by CEOs, entrepreneurs, and public sector leaders.

Taking the podium in the past as keynote speakers were Ken Frazier, Chairman and CEO of Merck; Jeff Smisek, Chairman, President and CEO of United Airlines; Arianna Huffington, Chair, President and Editor-in-Chief of The Huffington Post; and Lee Cooperman, Chairman of Omega Advisors. In the latest series, sponsored by PNC, two top sports executives teamed up on March 12: David S. Blitzer, Senior Managing Director & Head of Tactical Opportunities Blackstone, Co-Owner Philadelphia 76ers and New Jersey Devils, and Scott O’Neil, CEO of New Jersey Devils, Prudential Center and Philadelphia 76ers.

Kevin P. Conlin, Executive Vice President, Healthcare Management and President and CEO, Horizon Healthcare of New Jersey, Inc., discussed the implications of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) on May 16. In December, American Express Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer Marc D. Gordon described recent advances and concerns in the realm of cyber security.

A full panel of CEOs assembled for “What Will the Future Health Care Delivery System Look Like?” on Oct. 16. Moderated by Paul Mango, Director of the Pittsburgh Office of McKinsey & Company, the participants included Robert C. Garrett, President and CEO of Hackensack University Health Network, John K. Lloyd, FACHE, President and CEO of Meridian Health, and Barry H. Ostrowsky, President and CEO of Barnabas Health. On the following day, Hackensack University Health Network and Meridian Health announced first-step plans to merge into Hackensack Meridian Health, which would create the state’s largest healthcare network.
When it was established in June 1994, the Women’s Board of NJPAC counted on a core group of leaders that could be counted on two hands. Even so, in the 20 years since its founding, the organization now known as the Women’s Association of NJPAC has flourished into a philanthropic powerhouse...
The WA began by selling the community on an idea and a promise—NJPAC would not become a reality until its opening in October 1997—that the Arts Center would have a transformative presence in Newark. Some might consider the 1996 gala celebration at Newark Liberty International Airport as the defining moment when the WA took flight, but the fundraising and awareness-raising were launched well in advance of groundbreaking.

Today there are more than 2,000 members and together, each year, they produce New Jersey's largest nonprofit benefit event, the Spotlight Gala, among many other initiatives and events. More than $43 million has been generated over those two decades—and 19 galas—in support of NJPAC and its Arts Education programs. That makes the WA the biggest single annual contributor to the Arts Center.

NJPAC Board Member Veronica (Ronnie) M. Goldberg, a past president and Founding Member of the WA who traces her Newark roots back to 19th century Irish immigrants, was one of the first philanthropists and volunteers to play a role in the rejuvenation of the city she frequented in her youth.

“20 years ago, when we started,” she says of the creation and diversification of a women’s organization for NJPAC, “women on the board, for the most part, were not in the ‘traditional’ workforce. Now most of our board members are women with high-profile jobs.”

A “mural magic” project conceived during NJPAC’s building phase, Goldberg recalls, encouraged children to create art for the site’s construction walls—not one was destroyed or marred by graffiti. “People in the neighborhood wanted this to be successful,” she adds.

The task of convincing suburbanites to patronize Newark became easier as the welcoming brick plaza and open glass façade of the main building rose from the ground. The women of the WA shared an “it’s going to be fine” epiphany.

At the show-stopping Spotlight Gala, which includes a starry performance in Prudential Hall, more than a thousand guests, many of whom were introduced to NJPAC by a WA member, make merry and give generously. (The inaugural Passport to the World gala celebration was held off-campus in the Continental Airlines hangar with entertainers Ray Charles, Cissy Houston and Max Weinberg. The fifth anniversary Gala in 2001 was canceled in the aftermath of 9/11, yet most guests donated the cost of their tickets to NJPAC.)

The history of the Spotlight Gala reads like a who’s-who of famed artists and unique moments—and frequently in combination, as when Jennifer Hudson and Newark singer Rhenotha Whitaker, plucked from the audience, earned ovations for a rendering of Chaka Khan’s “Sweet Thing” in 2010.

In the past, stadium-sized tents and fireworks on the Passaic River were major attention-getters. Viewers throughout the metro area tuned in to WNET to watch a Great Performances special taped at the 1997 grand opening. A year later, Diana Ross blazed onstage and the WA used the Gala as the perfect forum to help announce the creation of The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts. Jay Leno, Michael Bolton, The Blues Brothers, Kristin Chenoweth and Bernadette Peters have all appeared at galas throughout the years.

The institution of the Spring Luncheon & Auction provided another considerable source of funding for NJPAC and arts education. The 2014 edition raised more than $200,000, which included $20,000 in scholarships to benefit young women attending NJPAC’s All-Female Jazz Residency at Montclair State University.

And Goldberg and the WA took the first steps in creating the New Jersey Walk of Fame, which connects NJPAC to NJ Transit’s light rail stop at Center Street. In 2007, this was the location for the arrival of the cast of the film Hairspray, which had a red-carpet premiere at the Arts Center.

One of the actors was NJ Walk of Famer Queen Latifah, whose mom, Rita Owens, was on hand as a founding member of the Jubilation Choir. A little orchestration by the WA enabled some 700 children to attend the screening for free, subsidized by a surcharge on VIP tickets.

Queen Latifah returned to perform at the 10th anniversary Spotlight Gala with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, a milestone that raised more than $3 million.

“It’s just a way to give back,” she told The Star-Ledger. “A little Hollywood in Newark can never hurt.”

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**PRESIDENTS OF THE WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION OF NJPAC**

- Veronica M. Goldberg (1999–2001)
- Sheila F. Klehm (2009–2011)
- Christine C. Giffilan (2011–)

**FOUNDING MEMBERS**

- Joan Budd
- Gabriella Morris
- Patricia Chambers
- Patrice E. Ryan
- Sally Chubb
- Diana T. Vagelos
- Veronica M. Goldberg
- Phyllis Cerf Wagner
- Sheila Lebrecque

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If you want to see what clicks with members of the Women’s Association of NJPAC these days, all you have to do is click with them—at wanjpac.org.

The WA’s new website is designed to keep members and those who love them up-to-date on events, while sharing insider intel on good reads, fashion trends, women’s issues and many other topics.

“As part of our 20th anniversary, we decided it’s time to have a web presence because so many people conduct work and have all kinds of social activities online,” says Gail P. Stone, Managing Director of the WA. “We created a blog-centric website to keep our members inspired, connected and aware that membership is more than social events at NJPAC.”

Visitors to the site can learn about membership, register for events, donate online, view NJPAC’s calendar, and purchase tickets by linking directly to njpac.org.

The four sections are titled “Arts and Culture” (WA recommendations on the entertainment scene here and abroad); “Events World” (behind-the-curtain looks at event planning); “WA Members Talk” (members post about news and interests); and “We Love” (good finds on Pinterest, for example).

And it’s a way for members to get to know each other better, Stone points out. There are bios and photos of the 39 board trustees, along with a “Member Spotlight” profile each month.

A DEVOTED SISTERHOOD

Each year, the Women’s Association of NJPAC shows that the fabulousness of its Spring Luncheon & Auction translates into funds for seriously important NJPAC causes.

With 20 years of advocacy and fundraising for NJPAC to its credit, the WA has proffered some $43 million to the Arts Center—delivered with panache. This year’s Spring Luncheon & Auction—the largest in the WA’s two decades—raised more than $200,000 for NJPAC, including over $20,000 in Arts Education scholarships for girls this summer. Mary Beth O’Connor and Suzanne M. Spero served as Co-Chairs.

The celebration was off to a brisk start as the guests placed bids on an array of gotta-haves like a “Comedy @ NJPAC” package with tickets to Wanda Sykes, Gabriel Iglesias and Amy Schumer, a mini-Mercedes for ‘way underage drivers, or raspberry patent leather heels from Saint Laurent, Short Hills. “Who Could Ask for Anything More?,” sang a member of Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens, a program at NJPAC that benefits from the event and is recognized for turning students into first-rate jazz musicians and vocalists.

This year’s Spring Luncheon & Auction—the largest in the WA’s two decades—raised more than $200,000 for NJPAC, including over $20,000 in Arts Education scholarships for girls this summer...

Christine C. Gilfillan, Board President of the Women’s Association, led the welcome before a sold-out room of 440 attendees, acknowledging the growth of the WA Board from its original nine Trustees to 39.

WA Founding Member Veronica M. Goldberg, who admitted to “an addiction for NJPAC,” was on hand to present her namesake award to her friend and fellow Trustee, Nina Mitchell Wells. An attorney and former New Jersey Secretary of State, Wells was honored for her dedication to both the WA and NJPAC, which she serves as a member of the board.

Pamela Ryckman, author of Stiletto Network, moderated a panel that recounted women’s experiences in building connections that led to changing the face of business. The title of her book, which she described as “a love story disguised as a business story,” refers to groups of women who consolidate their resources for advancement, profitmaking or a greater good. Her guests included playwright and musician Lourds Lane; Wells Fargo Executive VP and Regional President Michelle Y. Lee, who serves on the NJPAC Board; producer Francine LeFrak; and Maria Giulia Prezioso Maramotti, granddaughter of legendary designer Achille Maramotti and Director of Retail for Max Mara USA.
As Mama Rose would say, “Sing out!” And they sure did. Four Broadway divas added to a quartet of talented teenage girls made for a performance that guests could not stop gabbing about at Spotlight Gala 2014, the Women’s Association of NJPAC’s 19th annual fundraiser on Sept. 27.

As one audience member observed, “When the girls came out, I thought they were the headliners.”

Students in NJPAC’s Arts Education program—Janayla Montes (17), Marisa Budnick (16) and Elizabeth Kallay and Tyler Korin Matos (both 14)—blazed into the opening of the Nothin’ Like A Dame concert with a medley of Manhattan-esque show tunes and returned to the stage several more times to pounding applause.

Through the years, the WA has generated some $43 million for NJPAC, with the greater share reserved for Arts Education initiatives. By the end of the night, more than $2 million was raised, exceeding targeted revenue.

The evening’s leading ladies were Laura Benanti, Patina Miller and Faith Prince (all Tony Award winners) and Andrea McArdle (the youngest performer to be nominated for a best musical actress Tony, for Annie).

When the onstage patter referred to “The Arts Ed Girls” as future Tony awardees, NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber made a surprise appearance with his own Tony Award, given for his producing role in Elaine Stritch At Liberty. In a kind of Sisterhood of the Traveling Tony Award, the teens were invited to take turns keeping Schreiber’s Tony for a month each as career incentive or just for “practicing acceptance speeches in front of a mirror.”

The performance’s two “honorary dames” were the world’s longest-running “Phantom”—Howard McGillin—and Musical Director Seth Rudetsky (SiriusXM’s On Broadway), who hosted, swapped show-biz anecdotes with his actor friends, and conducted his musicians from the piano.

Some of the program’s ah-mahzing highlights (to quote Rudetsky) included McGillin’s swoon-worthy “The Music of the Night” from The Phantom of the Opera; a Pippin medley from Miller, who won the Tony for that musical’s current revival; a personal pastiche of the favorite songs of Jersey’s own Benanti; and showstoppers “Tomorrow” and “I Dreamed a Dream” from McArdle. As the finale, Prince was joined by Rudetsky and “The Arts Ed Girls” as backup in “Suddenly Seymour” from Little Shop of Horrors.

This year’s award winners were NJPAC Board Co-Chairman William J. Marino and Paula Marino (Chambers Award for Service to the Community and to the Arts); NJPAC Founding President and CEO Lawrence P. Goldman (Ryan Award for Commitment to NJPAC and Leadership in the City of Newark); and Harold L. Morrison, Jr. and Chubb Group of Insurance Companies (Vagelos Award for Corporate Commitment to the Arts). Gala Co-Chairs were Erica Ferry and Karen C. Young and Dinner Co-Chairs were J. Fletcher Creamer, Jr. and Linda A. Willett, Esq.

Christine C. Gilfillan, President of the WA—or rather, her avatar—made an appearance on video in an animated short about the WA’s past and present.

Spotlight Gala 2014 featured Tony-winning Broadway divas like Patina Miller alongside talented arts education students (and aspiring divas) like 17-year-old Janayla Montes

The festivities, which evoked an opening night on Broadway, glittered with decorative touches of black and gold and centerpieces of deep red roses. An Art Deco motif of a gowned figure was repeated in the décor, including nine “hidden” projections of the diva inside and outside the Arts Center. Gala-goers dined on fennel-dusted seared tuna and clementine glazed duck with creamed spinach over black beluga lentils and golden roasted sweet potato.

Bringing everything to a sweet conclusion was the transformation of the lobby into a networking lounge and Dessert Extravaganza. Revelers crowded the dance floor in the tent, and the Dylan Matthews Band kept rocking.

“Tonight showed all of us that lively, engaged audiences come to see the arts in Newark,” said Mary Sue Sweeney Price, Director Emerita of the Newark Museum. “This was total fun and the icing on the cake was that it raised money for the Arts Center.”
When the legendary Dance Theatre of Harlem returned to NJPAC for the first time in more than a decade, the Arts Center hosted a panel to explore the topic of Black Ballerinas: Breaking the Boundaries of Classical Ballet…

Dance Theatre of Harlem’s Michaela DePrince in Black Swan pas de deux

Following her performance as Golda Meir in Golda’s Balcony, Tovah Feldshuh greeted the Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life, NJ-Israel Commission, Consulate General of Israel and JCC of Monmouth County

NJPAC brought cast members from the Bollywood spectacular Mystic India: The World Tour to the Millburn Free Public Library for a visit and mini-performance

Getting creative at NJPAC’s annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
NEW DEPARTMENT, NEW IDEAS

On July 1, Donna Walker-Kuhne, NJPAC’s former Vice President of Marketing and Communications, was named Vice President of Community Engagement. Because Walker-Kuhne is recognized as one of the country’s leading advisors in building multicultural audiences, she was able to quickly helm the creation of a department dedicated to sustaining long-term relationships with constituents.

A rarity among arts centers nationwide, the Department of Community Engagement represents a commitment by NJPAC to increase audiences, while at the same time introduces the public to arts and culture through activities within and outside the campus. In large part, it was inaugurated in response to the rapidly changing demographics and cultural mosaic of New Jersey and the U.S.

An Advisory Council, composed of the Faith-Based, Jazz, Corporate, Elders, Latino, Pride (GLBTQ) and Celebrate Dance committees, shares insights and makes recommendations on programming, marketing and other opportunities for building partnerships. These advocates also point to other events where NJPAC can be visible and interact with participants in a sincere and robust way.

Community engagement has proven to be a mutually beneficial conversation that allows NJPAC to gauge interest and identify audiences while helping nonprofit organizations to fulfill their diversity initiatives. These efforts also have resulted in an uptick in the number of groups tagged for group ticket sales.

In 2014, Community Engagement projects included:

- A Welcome Neighbor mail campaign that offers incentives like ticket discounts and a complimentary drink coupon for NICO Kitchen + Bar to newcomers in Greater Newark
- Partnerships with such organizations as the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce to co-present activities and concerts
- Increased access to NJPAC spaces and catering facilities for public discourse, meetings, celebrations, lobby exhibitions, and mini-performances
- A quarterly newsletter
- Enhancements to performances, including wellness treatment packages, receptions, exhibits, jam sessions and more
- Activation of college and university partnerships by targeting classes to include NJPAC events in curricula
- Promotion of the NJPAC Ticket Subsidy Fund, which provides underserved individuals and families with deeply discounted ($6) tickets to select attractions
- Selection of staff members for an internal community engagement advisory committee

NJPAC in YOUR Community! is the title of an ongoing initiative and a promise. “It means we take samples of our programming to specific venues so people can experience art where they live and are more comfortable with it,” explains Donna Walker-Kuhne. “It’s an investment based on interest and curiosity.”

Too many to detail here, examples of programming enhancements this past year included panel discussions, artist appearances, screenings, and performance excerpts. Frequently, these complementary events begin with a partnership, as was the case with the Millburn Free Public Library. When NJPAC brought cast members from the Bollywood spectacular Mystic India: The World Tour to town for a visit and mini-performance in February, the library requested an encore. The Community Engagement team responded with an April screening of the Oscar-winning documentary Searching for Sugar Man to promote a concert by Rodriguez, the subject of the film.

The gifted young ambassadors for jazz at NJPAC—Wells Fargo Jazz for Teens and the Brick City Jazz Orchestra—are constantly making new converts to their kind of music in every corner of Greater Newark. These talented teens performed during Harlem Day in the summer and—again, in Harlem—provided the musical accompaniment for runners competing in the NYC Marathon.

“We take samples of our programming to specific venues so people can experience art where they live...” —Donna Walker-Kuhne

Special events designed to engage the community also take place on the NJPAC campus, largely at no cost to the public. When Dance Theatre of Harlem returned to the Arts Center for the first time in more than a decade, Artistic Director Virginia Johnson and other guests held a lively conversation, Black Ballerinas: Breaking the Boundaries of Classical Ballet. In October, following her performance as Golda Meir in Golda’s Balcony, Tovah Feldshuh greeted representatives of the Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life, NJ-Israel Commission, Consulate General of Israel and JCC of Monmouth County at a reception.

A standing-room-only forum was led by Newark civil rights activist and author Robert Curvin on the occasion of his most recent publication, Inside Newark: Decline, Rebellion, and the Search for Transformation. Speakers took turns at the podium to offer their perspectives on Inside Newark, which assesses the city’s efforts to reignite its socio-economic status over the past half-century. The gathering, co-hosted by the Newark History Society, was followed by a book signing in the lobby.
IN PRAISE OF DR. KING

The themes running through any tribute to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—unity, respect for others, the triumph of the human spirit—may be conveyed by words and deeds, but are frequently expressed most eloquently through the arts.

NJPAC’s three-day, campus-filled celebration told of King’s legacy in dance, song and stories throughout performance spaces, while community leaders engaged in discussion and reflection in other rooms. Crowning the events was a performance by Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH), a company founded in 1969 at the height of the civil rights era.

Beginning on Thursday, Jan. 16, with the arrival of Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH) for rehearsals, a panel was convened to explore the topic of Black Ballerinas: Breaking the Boundaries of Classical Ballet. The next day, DTH performed for sixth- through 12th-graders in a SchoolTime warm-up to its Friday night program for the public in Prudential Hall. The Newark Branch of the NAACP kicked off its centennial as part of an awards ceremony held before Friday’s curtain. And on Saturday, despite wet, snowy weather, children and adults turned out for Embodying the Dream, an energetic family festival.

At the Black Ballerinas conversation, Virginia Johnson, Artistic Director and founding prima ballerina of DTH, addressed a question first posited by The New York Times: “Where Are All the Black Swans?” She reminded attendees that DTH was co-founded by Arthur Mitchell—the pioneering African-American dancer who achieved superstardom at New York City Ballet in the 1960s—as an artistic response to Dr. King’s assassination.

Friday evening’s pre-performance reception in the Chase Room (“Celebrating the Man and the Message”) was presented in cooperation with the Newark Branch of the NAACP and honored two individuals from different generations but the same pursuit of public service. NJPAC’s Arts Education Department named Sally G. Carroll, former Member of the NAACP National Board of Directors and Past President of Newark’s NAACP branch, as the recipient of the Steward of the Dream Award and Vaughn E. Crowe, Senior Program Director of the MCJ Amelior Foundation, as the Visionary of the Future awardee.

Some of the speakers doubled on duties by addressing the audience directly afterward in Prudential Hall, where Virginia Johnson introduced her dance company and the Rev. Dr. DeForest B. Soaries, Jr., former New Jersey Secretary of State, delivered a stirring sermon about the respect due and inspired by Dr. King. The tightly numbered but power-packed dancers of DTH performed the spiritual ensemble piece Gloria; For But Close, a love story built of music, dance and spoken word, and the urban-neoclassic Return, set to buoyant numbers by James Brown, Aretha Franklin and others.

Add kids of all ages to five ongoing sessions in NJPAC’s Center for Arts Education and the result was an ever-busy morning of activity at Embodying the Dream: A Family Festival Celebrating the Life and Work of Martin Luther King, Jr. Circulating from classroom to classroom, attendees sampled—at no cost—liturgical dance, a civil rights sing-in, a drumming circle and storytelling. A limited number of serious-minded and able-bodied young dancers were invited to participate in a master class conducted by DTH.

FAMILY FAIR AT THEATER SQUARE

Kids of all ages who enjoyed the inaugural Family Fair at Theater Square in summer 2013 expected more of the same for 2014. And that was a good thing. Because if face-painting was your child’s favorite activity, there were more artists this time around. If the roaming entertainers grabbed their attention, stilt walkers, balloon makers and clowns made the scene. And if $20 tickets to select NJPAC performances appealed to your instinct for savings, the Box Office had an even larger selection for the 2014–15 season.

Did we mention that free admission to the fair was also back? Family Fair rang in the new on July 26 with its first presentations in revitalized Military Park (an instrument petting zoo and ribbon dancing); the Step 4 Step Soul Line Dancers and the students of the School of Rock in Montclair also made debuts. In the arts and crafts arena, little hands created and colored “Flat Stanleys” in conjunction with The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley at NJPAC.

The Universal African Dance & Drum Ensemble and Richard Reiter’s Spiritual Drum Circle set hearts thumping with their percussive rhythms, along with the foot-stomping, flab-busting energy of Betty Robertson’s Zumba class.

NJPAC’s neighbors and partners returned, along with new faces, to provide additional activities: storytelling from Go On Girl! Book Club, interactive games from the Newark Museum and Radio Disney, and picture-making from WBGO Jazz88.3FM. Children also were invited to take their grown-ups on a behind-the-scenes tour of NJPAC’s splendid main building.
There was a lot going on in Military Park on June 13 to distract the attention of two men hunched over their chess game. A brass quintet from the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra performed merrily next to them. A crowd pressed in from all sides. Dignitaries made speeches. Whoopie pies were practically passed under their noses.

They just kept on playing.

The gamers’ focused claim on their park space is the sweet spot for the Military Park Partnership. The privately funded consortium behind the much-anticipated, $5.3 million restoration of the park, whose grand opening was celebrated that day, wants Newarkers to feel like they own the place.

That sense of connection and pride was evident among the residents, workers and visitors who gathered under a tent to meet and greet city fathers at the ribbon-cutting. Others meandered around the six acres of manicured, leafy pathways, stopping to investigate the playground, board games rack and centuries-old landmarks, including the crownpiece, Gutzon Borglum’s Wars of America monument. Flowers spilled from urns and filled the interior of the in-ground concrete sword, a former reflecting pool whose hilt begins at the sculpture and whose apex points to Jacques Lipchitz’s bust of John F. Kennedy.

“The truly rewarding part of our work is seeing the public enjoy it,” says Ben Donsky, Senior Project Manager for Biederman Redevelopment Ventures Corp., the team that directs the park’s reconstruction and operations. “It’s hard for me to express how fulfilled I am every time I hear a Newarker or visitor to the city talk about how beautiful the park is, see kids from nearby schools playing ping-pong, or listen to an author or poet in the park’s reading room.”

Military Park’s main role is similar to NJPAC’s raison d’être, since it provides a stage for “urban theater,” notes Donsky, who constantly asks himself, “Will this make people more likely to visit the park?”

“That’s why we focus so much on our programming, whether it’s board games, poetry slams or a yoga class,” he adds. “We’re trying to foster an environment where people can make spontaneous connections and, hopefully, some new friendships.”

NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber, who likens the park to NJPAC’s front yard, continues to serve as a Military Park Partnership board member. This year, a carousel is expected to arrive, along with a restaurant. A multi-year campaign also will be launched to preserve the park’s four major pieces of public art.

“We want them to be conserved for generations,” explains Donsky. “Long term, our goal is for the park to grow with the downtown and the city as a whole, and eventually become a year-round destination.”
Volunteers

Throughout 2014, NJPAC Volunteers demonstrated their loyalty time and again at mega-events like Broadway at Moorland and Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City— in fact, for the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival alone, 200 volunteers clocked 800 hours to assist with the international crowd...

NJPAC’S MOST-REQUESTED LIST

Have needs, will travel is the motto of NJPAC’s hardy volunteers, who put in serious mileage to be wherever the Arts Center asked them to be in 2014.

“The Indispensables” were the superheroes of Super Bowl’s media roundup—not to forget Broadway at Moorland, Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City, the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival and Family Fair at Theater Square. Those were the high-visibility events that demanded larger turnouts and longer hours, but volunteers are always an integral part of the day-to-day functions that make NJPAC tick.

Volunteer Services Director Ginny Bowers Coleman, who knows a little something about mileage from running marathons, says, “Their collaborative and can-do-anything spirit really makes memorable occasions for each of us, as well as the patrons.”

The nine delegates for Super Bowl XLVII Media Day, who served as ambassadors for Newark and NJPAC, arrived in Manhattan at 5am to board separate buses filled with journalists and promoters. During the drive to Newark’s Prudential Center for the event, the volunteers described tourism experiences offered by the city and the Arts Center.

Greeting busloads of visitors and escorting famous poets fell into the many responsibilities attached to the Dodge Poetry Festival, which required months of planning and the coordination of about 200 NJPAC volunteers, who were dispersed to all participating venues. Teenagers were recruited from North Star Academy and the New Jersey Youth Corps to collate welcome packs for students and even accompany some of the poets.

“There’s a pride you have in showcasing the Arts Center to the nation and the world,” Coleman says of the eagerness of her team. They clocked some 800 hours to assist with the international gathering.

In May, Volunteer Services gave a round of applause to its own at the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner. Anne Streater and Jeanette Marable were named recipients of the Kandice Dickinson Award for exceptional service to House Management and the Dena F. Lowenbach Volunteer of the Year Award, respectively. The guest speaker was Ben Donsky, Senior Project Manager for Biederman Redevelopment Ventures Corp., the company behind the reconstruction and operations of newly restored Military Park.

“NJPAC volunteers have such pride in showcasing the Arts Center to the nation and the world…”

—Ginny Bowers Coleman
Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler!
Volunteer Season Kick-Off Conjures Mardi Gras

Baubles, bangles and them cool, cool beads—must be Kismet, right?
Yes, and it’s also the customary, fabulously over-the-top apparel paraded by NJPAC volunteers at their annual kickoff, which this year had a Mardi Gras theme.

On Oct. 15, the sequins-and-feathers team stepped into a new season to the zydeco sounds of “When the Saints Go Marchin’ In.” Planning Committee Chairwoman Anne Streater summoned the start of the hand-clapping and swaying with a trill of her bandleader’s whistle.

“This is always a happy and joyous event,” said NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber as he was marshaled to the podium. “Clearly I’m underdressed.”

And while NJPAC doesn’t celebrate “Hug a Volunteer Day” or “Adopt a Volunteer Day,” staff and leadership are thankful every day for their loyalty, demonstrated time and again at such mega-events as the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, Broadway at Moorland and Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City.

“Volunteers do it graciously, generously, and with a smile,” remarked Donna Walker-Kuhne, Vice President of Community Engagement.●
WHO WE ARE

Whether it’s programming or marketing, arts education or development or day-to-day operations, NJPAC’s enthusiastic, professional team shares a genuine passion for making the Arts Center experience world-class, every time. In this year’s Report to the Community, we shine the spotlight on two of the outstanding staff members who embody the NJPAC mission...

ANDY DONALD
PRODUCER, ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Taking into consideration all of NJPAC’s new employees, there’s only one “theater guy”—and that’s Andy Donald.

However, his work as a producer is evident practically any time the performing arts—including the art of conversation—engage the community at NJPAC.

“Theater guy” is shorthand for Producer, Artistic Development and Community Programming, which the Brooklyn resident translates into presenting original, sometimes provocative work in NJPAC’s spaces, while cultivating diverse audiences. Since arriving here in 2013, he has guided—among many other projects—The Hip Hop Nutcracker; the Newark mayoral debate and town halls; an African-American concert version of Meredith Willson’s The Music Man; readings of new plays, such as Chisa Hutchinson’s She Like Girls and the NJPAC Stage Exchange series; the Jersey Moves! Festival of Dance; and American Songbook at NJPAC.

“The position, as it was conceived—and I think it’s really smart—is to have one producer on the programming staff to commission, develop and present work here to send out, whether it’s to other performing arts centers or venues. To work on projects over the long term that were given birth at NJPAC and find life later on,” says Donald, who is a native of Santa Monica, Calif. “My job is to develop or discover work that advances NJPAC’s mission. That’s a rare and exciting opportunity that you can’t find at many other performing arts centers.”

Although he began his theater studies by trodding the boards, Donald moved into the directing track at New York University and later earned his master’s degree at Columbia University.

Professionally, Donald worked as an assistant to an executive producer at ABC-TV and HBO, where he learned pilot development; produced some work at the New York City theater company Naked Angels; was a company manager at Second Stage; and revived his producer role, this time at the Public Theater under Artistic Director Oskar Eustis. After closing the Public’s acclaimed, 2008 revival of Hair in Central Park, Donald heard back from Naked Angels, which caught wind of his newly minted degree and growing expertise in theater management.

During his four years as artistic director of Naked Angels, Donald introduced the Naked Radio monthly podcast (“a metropolitan ‘Prairie Home Companion’”) and a public high school writing program. He was proud to be in the wings in 2010 for the company’s first transfer to Broadway, Next Fall, nominated for a pair of Tony Awards. It was almost immediately followed by another hit for Naked Angels, off-Broadway’s This Wide Night, with Edie Falco and Alison Pill.

“It really epitomized Naked Angels that we had a show on Broadway with no ‘stars’—a new American play—and we had a show off-Broadway with two big stars. Both got great reviews and made a lot of money for the company, and I just thought it was great that this was the story we were telling.”

“My job is to develop or discover work that advances NJPAC’s mission. That’s a rare and exciting opportunity that you can’t find at many other performing arts centers...”

Donald imagines even more stories being told at NJPAC, which grabbed his attention as a standout presenter on the regional theater scene and as a forward-thinker in community relations.

“I would love to see shows come here before they go to New York, not the other way around,” he explains. “I think we can be a large, supportive space for the current titans of New York theater and musical theater and I want to start projects with them.”

This producer may be plugged in to all forms of the performing arts, but he’s also the product of jazz-making parents: concert producer Darlene Chan (New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival) and drummer Peter Donald (The Abercrombie Quartet). Rudy Henry, his 6-foot-8 “godbrother,” was a high school basketball prospect from Detroit when Donald was in kindergarten.

“My parents consider him a son, and our family is like the United Colors of Benetton,” says Donald. “I have a Chinese mother, a white father, a black brother, and I look Hispanic.”

●
DEBRA VOLZ
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING AND GRAPHIC PRODUCTION

How does this report look so far? Clean, orderly spacing in typography, attractive display ...

What you’re also seeing is Debra Volz’s fine hand at work.

As NJPAC’s Director of Advertising and Graphic Production, she’s got the eye of a seasoned editor, the brain of a marketer, an ear for the music of language and voice—and if you’re creating something that passes her desk, she’s got your back. For all that, and serving church and community as a parishioner of the First Congregational Church of Westfield, she was also the 2014 recipient of the NJPAC/M. John Richard Community Service Award. (See accompanying story.)

A full-blooded Jersey girl, she resides in Kenilworth with her husband, Robert, and 12-year-old son, Zach, a student at David Brearley Middle High School. Zach was diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) at age 7, prompting his parents to educate themselves and work to dispel misconceptions about the condition to others. He is also one of NJPAC’s kids, a visitor to the building since infancy.

“When Zach was about 5 or 6, we got tickets to see Walking with Dinosaurs at the Meadowlands Arena,” Volz recalls. “During the show he looks at me and says, ‘So when do we get to go backstage?’”

A lyric soprano and section leader of her church Chancel Choir, Volz grew up in Union Township as a self-described band geek (clarinet and tenor sax). She continued her music and arts administration studies at Duquesne University and the Hartt School of Music at the University of Hartford, where she graduated. Her first opportunities, both in New York City, included an administrative and marketing position at PolyGram Group Distribution and a creative services post at A&E Television Networks.

Then, in 2000, she spotted a notice seeking an Advertising Coordinator at NJPAC. “I had produced a lot of materials over the years,” she remembers. “There were curriculum guides, posters, ads, all sorts of stuff. I didn’t quite have a portfolio, so I took along a rolling suitcase and just piled it all in there.” She got the job.

During her years at NJPAC, Volz held various titles. Her current, main responsibility is to direct a staff of employees and freelancers to create the print and digital materials that “sell” NJPAC, whether that means a brochure to announce the new season, a promotional piece for arts education, or an ad campaign on NJ.com.

Her spiritual work at First Congregational Church involves organizing annual mission trips with the youth group, aiding in the needs of the homeless, and ensuring the well-being and future of 18-year-olds who are released from the foster care system.

Volz talks about a “feeling of awe” that she experiences when she thinks about audience members who are drawn to NJPAC because of an ad or brochure that her team produced. But perhaps the most rewarding moment at NJPAC was a chat she and Zach shared with Howie Mandel—and his mom—during tapings of America’s Got Talent. Mandel, who has struggled with OCD and ADHD all his life, offered advice to his fan on coping with “the really bad days” and handed him his personal email address.

“Zach was diagnosed in 2010 and we told him immediately what it meant,” Volz says. “Now that he realizes the differences between himself and others, and is coming to terms with his self-esteem issues, it was really important for him to see that there are people out there who are successful and are able to work through it. It was his ‘aha’ moment, and we were thrilled to be able to experience it with him.”

Debra Volz talks about a “feeling of awe” that she experiences when she thinks about audience members who are drawn to NJPAC because of an ad or brochure that her team produced...

A BIG HAND FOR HELPING HANDS
6 YEARS OF THE NJPAC/M. JOHN RICHARD COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

During his nearly two decades at NJPAC, John Richard, the Arts Center’s first Vice President of Development and later Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, embraced the idea that the men and women of NJPAC should dedicate time and talents in service of the community.

This spirit of volunteerism outside NJPAC’s walls is recognized each year by the NJPAC/M. John Richard Community Service Award, an honor conceived by founding President and CEO Lawrence P. Goldman. The creation of the award was announced in tribute to Richard during his farewell party at the end of 2008, when he accepted the post of President and CEO of the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami/Dade County.

Now a Thanksgiving tradition at NJPAC, the NJPAC/M. John Richard Community Service Award is given to staff, full-time or part-time, who are “good deed doers.” NJPAC donates $1,000 to the honorees’ organization of choice, and John and Lynne Richard, in turn, match that sum by $500.

In 2009, at the inaugural award reception, the citation was shared by Jeffrey Norman and Brenda Murphy. They were followed by Michel Cuillerier and Tyrone Manning (2010), Robin Jones (2011), Sanaz Hojreh (2012), Chad Spies (2013) and Debra Volz (2014).
**THE BUDGET PICTURE**

**OPERATING INCOME – $30.3 MILLION**

- Contributed Revenue: 38%
- Endowment Income and Transfers: 10%
- Other Earned Income: 4%
- Arts Education Revenue: 3%
- Performance Related Revenue: 45%

**OPERATING EXPENSES – $30.3 MILLION**

- Arts Education: 9%
- Theater Operations: 21%
- Marketing and Communications: 6%
- General and Administrative: 11%
- Development: 7%
- Performance and Performance Related: 46%
## Assets

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<td>Designated for special purposes, including net investment in property and equipment</td>
<td>112,548,222</td>
<td>115,647,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated for operations</td>
<td>(773,967)</td>
<td>(773,967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total unrestricted</strong></td>
<td><strong>111,774,255</strong></td>
<td><strong>114,873,109</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>18,412,541</td>
<td>13,353,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently restricted - endowment</td>
<td>63,289,372</td>
<td>62,923,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>193,476,168</strong></td>
<td><strong>191,150,351</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 204,589,186</strong></td>
<td><strong>205,320,044</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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NJPAC is deeply grateful to the following corporations, foundations, individuals and government agencies for their generous annual support of artistic and arts education programs, the endowment fund, and maintenance of the Arts Center. As of March 1, 2015

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Corey Lester  
Vincent Ransam  
Aaron Ratzan  
Francisco Soto  
Operations Support Staff
George Gardner***  
House Painter

PRODUCTION
Chris Moses*  
Senior Director of Production
DJ Haugen  
Christopher Staton  
Production Managers
Samantha Davis  
Assistant Production Manager, Administration
Adam Steinbauer  
Assistant Production Manager
William Worman**  
Head Carpenter
Richard Edwards***  
Mario Corrales***  
Assistant Head Carpenters
Jacob Allen*  
Head Electrician
John Enea  
Gummersindo Fajardo***  
Assistant Head Electricians
Paul Allishouse*  
Head of Audio
Al Betancourt  
Jon Hiltz**  
Assistant Head of Audio
Robert Binetti**  
Bryan Danieli**  
John Finney*  
George Honzarenko*  
Stage Crew
Eunice Peterson***  
Senior Artist Assistant
Melvin Anderson  
Louell Craig*  
Caresse Elliott  
Ameer Muhammad
Daniel Ovalle
Allison Wyss***  
Artist Assistants

PROGRAMMING
David Rodriguez  
Executive Vice President & Executive Producer
Evan White**  
Senior Director of Programming
Andy Donald  
Producer, Artistic Development & Community Programming
Craig Pearce  
Program Manager, Arts Education
Kitab Rollins*  
Manager, Performance & Broadcast Rentals
Kira M. Ruth**  
Administrative Assistant & Office Manager
Andrea Cummis  
William W. Lockwood Jr.***  
Programming Consultants

SPECIAL EVENTS
Austin Cleary**  
Assistant Vice President
Raslyn Brawn*  
Event Planner

TICKET SERVICES
Erik Wiehardt  
Director, Ticket Services
Yesenia Jimenez***  
Associate Director, Priority Customers
Stephanie Miller***  
Associate Director, Ticketing System
Nicole Craig**  
Senior Box Office Manager
Robin Polakoff  
Ticketing Systems Specialist
Veronica Dunn-Sloan*  
Box Office Manager
Daryle Charles  
April Jeffries  
Robert Paglia  
Priority Customer Representatives
Jana Thompson  
Box Office Representative

WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION OF NJPAC
Gail P. Stone*  
Managing Director
Amy Mormak  
Manager, Events & Marketing

Service Recognition
(as of 10/1/14)
* * * 20+ years
* * * 15+ years
* * * 10+ years
* * * 5+ years
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