



Winchester Cultural Council

www.winchesterculturalcouncil.org

A Town Agency appointed by the Select Board to promote and support the arts

Report for Spring Town Meeting 2020

Cultural Council members: Kevin Drum, Peter Engeldrum, Jian Liu, Shukong Ou, Peter Pulsifer, Anne Westlund, Spenser Wu, Mingdi Zhang

Meetings: Monthly, usually third Wednesday at 5 pm

Mission and Goals

- Administer Local Cultural Council grants
- Conduct Arts and Cultural Activities in Winchester
 - Art in August / Art in the Park
 - Supporting Member of the Winchester Cultural District
- Promote arts activities by Winchester residents so that all town residents can appreciate them; and ensure access to the arts by all residents, of all ages, all cultural backgrounds.
- Help enhance the cultural experience of Winchester residents and institutions by giving them access to exceptional artists from outside the community
- Add vitality to the downtown area: culture connects residents and businesses
- Foster connections between resident artists (Winchester Artists' Network) and between different cultural disciplines. Connect/coordinate cultural creators
- Ensure cultural facilities and other needs are included in town planning and development
- Advocate on behalf of the arts with state and local governments

Recent Accomplishments

The Winchester Cultural Council (WCC) administers an annual grants program that is largely funded by a local allocation from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). Application deadline is October 15 of each year, and decisions are made by December 31. Winchester's allocation for 2020 was \$6,000. This year, the WCC also received \$5,000 from the town budget. The additional money was used to extend the state program, in particular by sponsoring two major innovative projects:

- **The Fence**, a photography exhibition which is the inaugural project of the Winchester Cultural District (supported with a \$1,500 grant from town money, which supplements a \$5,000 direct grant from the MCC);
- **Winchester Porchfest**, a unique festival bringing a wide variety of musical, dance, literary, and other performers from Winchester and other towns to

Winchester audiences (supported by a \$1,500 grant from town funding). Similar Porchfests have been very successful in neighboring communities, including Arlington and Somerville. Winchester's Porchfest was initiated following discussions at the September 18 WCC forum at the public library.

The remaining town funding was to be used to support a partnership with Winchester's business community (working with the Chamber of Commerce) to help mitigate the effects of several major construction projects planned for the summer of 2020, including the reconstruction of the MBTA commuter rail station. In light of the current health crisis, that funding has now been earmarked for cultural activities in support of the reopening of the downtown business district this summer. The current goal is to sponsor an extension of Art in August this year that will promote exhibitions by local artists in shop windows and other downtown areas, without any cost to participating businesses or artists.

This year, the WCC funded 16 projects for a total amount of \$9,567 (including both state and local funding). They included **a video explaining and promoting involvement in Town Meeting**; performances of **Peking Opera** and appearances by **Chinese dancing lions** at all Winchester public elementary schools; a civic-oriented **theater presentation celebrating women's suffrage** and a **professional stage production of Shakespeare** at Winchester High School; a **conservation program at the First Congregational Church** that combines conservation, art, and music, a special booth at the Farmers' Market to **promote the art of letter writing, high-quality musical performances** at the Winchester Community Music School, the Jenks Center, and Winchester Nursing Center, and educational and enrichment programs for children at the library and in after-school programs.

A full list of grant-funded projects follows.



Winchester Cultural Council Grants For 2020

Listed in chronological order; projects without specific dates are at the end

Chinese New Year Celebration, January 26, 2020.

Organized and hosted by Winchester School of Chinese Culture and held at Winchester High School, the celebration includes performances by schoolchildren and by Chinese performing arts artists from neighboring towns. After the performance, there is a Chinese New Year style lunch, with arts and crafts and New Year gifts for the children.

Peking Opera Performance at the Chinese New Year Celebration: January 26, 2020.

A performance of Peking Opera works by local amateurs and professionals.

Chinese Dancing Lions: January 20 to February 20, 2020

A Chinese Dancing Lion Troupe will have a small parade in front of each primary school in Winchester during time of the Chinese New Year celebration.

The Fourth Wall's "Fruit Flies Like a Banana:" February 3, 2020

An arts enrichment program at Kids' Corner for children in kindergarten through sixth grade that includes a novel and engaging hybrid performance style that makes the arts more accessible to children.

Faculty Concerts at the Winchester Community Music School: Year-round

A dynamic line-up of musical programming featuring free live music by WCMS faculty throughout the school year. Concerts slated for spring 2020 include "Dreams & Meditations" (February 28), a multi-dimensional performance highlighting clarinet and sitar and "Songs of Urgency, Advocacy, and Hope" (March 27), an inspirational concert that celebrates stewardship of our earth and its inhabitants.

From Ireland to America: March 5, 2020

A one-hour music festive celebration with Roger Tincknell of Irish and Irish-American culture at the Jenks Center that includes lovely Irish ballads, sea shanties, and Irish American work songs. The audience will be encouraged to sing, clap and dance. Irish step dancing and spoon playing instruction will also be provided!

We Did It For You: March 8, 2020

A musical theater performance at McCall Middle School sponsored by the League of Women Voters that provides a quick tour through the journey that women have taken to get rights in the United States. The play focuses on the stories of some of the women who believed they deserved more than being treated as minors and extensions of men—from Sojourner Truth and Susan B. Anthony to Rosa Parks and Betty Friedan.

Shakespeare's Romeo And Juliet: March 11, 2020

New Repertory Theatre's Classic Repertory Company will perform for students at Winchester High School.

ScienceTellers: Aliens Escape from Earth: April 22, 2020

A science-oriented presentation at the Winchester Recreation Department for families. The ScienceTeller relates a fun, original story, broken up into short chapters, each with

an exciting visual or aural element that is brought to life through a corresponding science experiment.

A Celebration of Song: April 24, 2020.

John Root will sing and play flute, clarinet and saxophone in an hour-long program at the Winchester Nursing Center, featuring familiar songs from the first half of the twentieth century. Everyone will be invited to sing along, and requests for favorite selections will be welcome.

Ecomusic: Conservation as an Artistic Practice: Concert May 8, 2020

A three-pronged conservation residency at the First Congregational Church combining conservation, art, and music. In partnership with the children of the Neighborhood Cooperative Nursery School, the church will provide a designated Monarch Waystation, and Ecomusic will provide a local entomology program and exhibit for the community. Ecomusic has commissioned a new composition from American composer Luke Blackburn, which the professional ensemble Hub New Music will perform.

Winchester Porchfest: June 13, 2020.

Porchfest is a unique, volunteer-organized, one-day community-building music festival. Winchester residents will lend their porches as pop-up micro-stages to amateur musicians who will showcase their musical talent to neighbors who will walk around town and join other community members in enjoying concerts and the atmosphere.

The Fence: June through October 2020.

As the first event of the Winchester Cultural District, the Griffin Museum of Photography will bring the largest public photography installation in North America to Winchester.

Letters Trellis: all summer on the Winchester Town Common

Five times during the summer a letter-writing booth will be set up on the Winchester Common where visitors may create a letter. Based on the letter tables nestled in tiny courtyards in the hill town of Grignan, France, for the annual celebration of the art of letters, the setting will feature a garden trellis decorated with seasonal motifs. A writing table, chair, and writing supplies (including pens, paper, envelopes, and postage stamps) will be centered within the semi-enclosed space, inviting inspiration from the sense of community surrounding the writer. Conducted by Karen Fullerton and Shukong Ou.

Imagine Your Story: June 29, 2020

A unique 45-50 minute family-oriented magic and juggling performance by Scott Jameson at the Winchester Public Library which connects to the 2020 Summer Reading Program theme by featuring routines which explore imagination, fantasy, and mythology.

This Is Winchester: Town Meeting: A video production

The first in a series of short videos about the town's civic organizations, the video shows in story form the election process, creation of warrant articles, and discussion of issues at the meeting. It is meant to encourage more residents to get involved in their government.