CENTRUM BELIEVES IN A FUTURE WHERE ANYONE FROM ANYWHERE CAN NURTURE THEIR CREATIVITY IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SUPPORTIVE, CHALLENGING AND UPLIFTING—BUILDING A WORLD OF GREATER CIVILITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH THE ARTS.
That Centrum is a family, sharing values and deep feelings of kinship, has never felt more true to me than it does right now. We are part of a remarkable and resilient community. Whether you are a workshop participant, concert attendee, artist faculty, artist in residence, donor, volunteer, member of the staff or Board of Directors, I am grateful to the core for every one of you.

I hope you are well, able to persevere, and are finding creative ways to thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this most challenging Spring of 2020, you are behind the scenes, look at what’s happening at Centrum, and in the moments to come, I hope you’ll hold close the Centrum family that you are a part of.

We have prepared this Quarterly Impact Report to share with you a “behind the scenes” look at what’s happening at Centrum in this most challenging Spring of 2020. We hope you will find it informative, inspiring, and engaging.

Hello!

Robert Birman
Executive Director

Centrum is greater than the sum of its parts. And the reason CENTRUM IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS, AND THE REASON THAT’S TRUE IS YOU—YOU CONTRIBUTE TO CENTRUM’S ABILITY TO DELIVER CREATIVITY IN COMMUNITY IN DISTINCT AND IMPORTANT WAYS. HERE’S A LOOK AT HOW CENTRUM’S RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC HAS SHAPED OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OF YOU IN THIS SPRING OF 2020.
If you’re a Centrum workshop participant, you are one of many affected by the cancellation of summer programs at Fort Worden. Last year alone, Centrum served approximately 2,200 of you, arriving from all parts of the world to experience an immersive music, dance, or writing program. Measured as days-per-person, you were part of 14,000 days of vibrant arts experiences within the Centrum community!

Sadly, all workshops through August 2020 have had to be rescheduled to 2021:

But, you have responded with generosity to our workshop changes:

- 38% of you have either shifted your workshop reservations forward to 2021—effectively holding your place for when Centrum programs can return—or have converted your 2020 registration deposit to a donation to help support Centrum this year…and we are most grateful.

Centrum will make final decisions by July 1st about workshops still scheduled to take place after August.

We do plan for the return of traditional offerings in 2021. In Port Townsend, we’ve had low rates of COVID19: a total of 29 confirmed positive cases in our area (27 of which are labeled as “recovered”), and thankfully, we have had no deaths. According to the latest census data, Jefferson County has one of the oldest populations on average of any county in the nation, so we will be extremely cautious and deliberate as we relaunch programs.

We are exploring opportunities to offer smaller online programs in the meantime.

It is important that anything we offer not compete with artists’ efforts to generate their own sources of income. It is also our goal to add value by offering you the chance to work with artists not usually accessible to an online or mass audience. We will keep you informed about those plans as they are finalized, and we hope you will join us on these uncharted adventures.

A word about finances: Centrum began 2020 projecting $1.07 million in Spring and Summer workshop activity to sustain our operations. 10% of this value has now been earmarked for next year, and nearly $200,000 has been issued in refunds. Like other arts organizations, we have been hit hard by the shut-down but proud to do what’s right.

Updates will continue to be posted on our website at www.centrum.org.
Each year, 11,000 of you purchase seats at Centrum concerts and performances. We’ll miss sharing our faculty and their work with you this year. But there is much to look forward to!

So far, in 2020:

• Centrum’s new Communiversity arts and lecture series has continued without interruption via online streaming. All Communiversity talks are available by podcast on our website 24/7 at www.centrum.org. Admissions for lectures in September, October, and November are still available. If we are not able to convene in person by then, look for them to happen online.

• Centrum’s Spring and Summer chamber music performances with the Miro Quartet and Callisto Trio have been rescheduled for the fall and winter; existing tickets for those ensembles will be honored on the new dates, September 27 and February 18, respectively.

• Tickets for this summer’s events hadn’t been opened for sale at the time the State’s Stay-at-Home order commenced. All summer events through early August have been rescheduled for 2021.

• Centrum may undertake alternative programming once gatherings are deemed safe per the Governor’s advisories. We have been in communication with sister organizations at Fort Worden and in Port Townsend about partnerships and will post any news or developments in this regard on our website at centrum.org.

A word about finances: in a typical year, ticket sales account for $315,000, most of which has been lost in 2020 as a result of cancellations. We have issued $4,520 in ticket refunds from Spring events, had $1,400 converted to gift certificates for future events, and converted $3,000 worth of ticket sales into outright donations. Thank you for being both flexible and generous.
If you had planned to be part of Centrum’s ongoing artist residency program this year, you know they’ve been halted as part of the State’s Stay-at-Home order. Centrum is rescheduling 112 resident artists and 33 weeks of activity, working closely with participating artists to move dates of stay and refund reservations where applicable.

- Regular residencies will resume when we can safely have housekeeping, maintenance, and support staff back in service on our campus—we are projecting that to be April of 2021.

- The Emerging Artist Residency opportunity is still scheduled for this fall. Centrum’s call for applications produced a huge response! Jurors Kemi Adeyemi, Ben Gale-Schreck, and Avantika Bawa are reviewing the 89 submissions, and we’ll announce the six finalists in July.

- Group residencies for the two-year Northwest Heritage Residency project, happening in partnership with the Fort Worden PDA with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, have been rescheduled. We anticipate concluding these progressive and stimulating gatherings to focus on the art, culture, and ecology of the Olympic Peninsula by December 31, 2020.

Foundwork, a platform helping to connect artists and collaborators across the contemporary arts community, will introduce your work to a global art audience, where curators, gallerists, and others can research and engage with practicing artists wherever they’re based. Artists profiles on the site normally have a $4 per month membership fee, but Centrum residents and alumni may create a profile free of charge.

To receive your free code, go to surveymonkey.com/r/centrumresd, complete a brief survey for Centrum’s records, and receive your code when you’re done.

Centrum staff continues to explore new networking and residency concepts with our local community. The program’s e-newsletter and Instagram account are lively; follow at @centrumresidencies or visit our website at centrum.org/centrumartist-residencies/ to stay current.
Centrum’s teaching artists have been deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic because it simply isn’t reasonable to gather in crowds anywhere around the world! As a recent Forbes feature noted, “those [musicians] working in the music industry are now facing unprecedented financial disaster due to coronavirus, as lockdowns are being deployed and tours and concerts canceled. Music data company Viberate reveals over 300 festivals have already announced cancelations or postponements.”

Centrum’s 2020 program cancelations mean our 250 faculty artists have lost a collective $422,000 in fees from us this year. Thankfully, nearly every one of the artists has committed to returning as workshop faculty in 2021. Until then, each musician, composer, dancer, and writer is creating their own bridge over this troubling time in the most inspired and pragmatic ways they can.

Here’s to you, faculty artists. We look forward to your return.

Volunteers

Where would Centrum be without its 200+ loyal volunteers who contribute hundreds of hours of time and talent each year? We are not waiting to find out!

With all upcoming events on hold, Volunteer Coordinator Claire Africa has initiated a new volunteer blog to help this vast community stay in touch. She shares community news, updates on Centrum artists and staff, and lifts our pandemic spirits.

To read it, go to centrum.org/programs/volunteer.

While the Centrum office remains in work-from-home mode, Washington State Parks has recently reopened Fort Worden to the general public. And the volunteers are out in force, maintaining the grounds and beaches—a healthy six feet apart, of course!

Bravo!
All of us at Centrum are grateful for all expressions of financial support received as we navigate these uncharted waters together. We’ve been heartened by these recent examples:

- Many ticket buyers and workshop participants have elected to convert their Centrum purchases into donations this year—$8,000 worth and rising!
- Others have rolled their ticket and workshop commitments forward, providing a base for audiences and workshops next year.
- Donors have responded to this year’s GiveBIG campaign at twice the rate and total of last year.

As a non-profit organization, Centrum relies on charitable giving to meet its mission even in the best of times. Heading into 2020, Centrum’s projected 42% (or $1.6 million) of total revenues would come from individual gifts.

Of course, now all that has changed. Centrum has lost roughly $1.8 million in workshop income, and though we’ve trimmed costs proportionately, we still need to raise $1 million from individual donors in 2020 (a 28% reduction from last year) to break even.

Centrum invites your support and thanks you in advance for including Centrum in your charitable giving this year. It means we’ll be able to rebound with even greater community impact in 2021. It means we’ll continue to meet the needs of thousands of artists through services and creativity in community in the years to come, no matter what the future brings.

To donate, go to www.centrum.org/donate.

Thank you for your generous and thoughtful consideration.

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By mid-March, Centrum, with great regret, had placed 40% of its administrative staff and production crew on standby in response to the pandemic. We helped employees who needed assistance in filing and receiving unemployment benefits, and we continue to keep in touch as to their welfare and future plans. We’ve retained only essential full-time personnel at this time—which allows Centrum to develop alternative programming now and resume operations when it’s safe to do so.

Centrum received federal support through the first round of the Small Business Administration’s Payroll Protection Program. It underwrites eight weeks of core staff payroll and provides a small share of our lease and utility costs while our office is closed. Here’s to our colleagues at Kitsap Bank for their swift and able assistance in securing this support.

So, what are we doing with ourselves?
• We hold weekly all-staff meetings via Zoom.
• We’ve processed a large volume of refunds for canceled programs.
• We’re organizing Centrum’s extensive archives to prep for our 50th anniversary in 2023.
• We’re making repairs to our artist studios and cabins at the Fort.
• We’re planning alternative public programs to produce as soon as the time is appropriate, among them a series of free, online education modules for parents and students, each connecting to Centrum programs and the cultures we cherish.
• We continue to work closely with our affiliates at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, ArtsWA, and State Parks to monitor the latest developments from Olympia.
• We meet online weekly with our fellow program partners at Fort Worden to create partnerships and a revised operating model for our shared future at the park.
• And we engage in online professional development—a collective 155 hours of trainings and webinars, and climbing!

As a body, Centrum’s staff is selfless and dedicated; the pandemic provides just one more demonstration of their worth. We thank them for their creativity and high energy as they work from home.

The pandemic has offered Centrum’s Board of Directors no rest. It has:
• sustained its monthly committee sessions and full board meetings, exclusively on Zoom
• reviewed the organization’s investment policies and governance protocols
• considered new members for the Centrum Board with an enduring focus on long-term issues of leadership and sustainability
• examined the consequences of Centrum’s SBA PPP funding
• continued to steward Centrum supporters through one-to-one communications and coordinated outreach efforts
• diligently continued to execute their core role of fiduciary oversight

Centrum has built an operating cash reserve and endowment fund over the past four years which positions us to respond to the pandemic’s unique challenges in the near-term. We have also pledged to replenish any funds borrowed from our own reserves.

For these reasons alone, I am grateful every day that the Board is monitoring the economic impacts of the pandemic on Centrum and its future, and has a laser-like focus on achieving the annual fundraising goals that are as critical as ever to Centrum’s financial health.

Each member of Centrum’s Board of Directors is a volunteer. The staff is profoundly thankful for all of them—as individuals and as a decision-making and fundraising body—for their incredible commitment to Centrum. They have made it their personal mission to ensure that founder Joe Wheeler’s original vision continues to thrive as we look ahead to 2023—our 50th anniversary—and well beyond.

Thank you for your sustained attention! When in doubt about what’s happening at Centrum, feel free to call us at 360.385.3102—the phones are staffed remotely during traditional business hours—or find us on the web at centrum.org.

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