Dear Friends and Supporters,

At the beginning of fiscal year 2020, we were eager to spend the year celebrating our 50th Anniversary and partnership with the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in a big way. By March, as we all know, life around the world changed dramatically in a way we could never have predicted. Although 2020 brought many challenges, with determination and focus, and great support from our community and donors, we turned those challenges into opportunities and progress.

This annual report looks at the reach and accomplishments of Peters Valley in fiscal year 2020. In the following pages, you will read how we moved quickly to implement new virtual programs to ensure we could continue our mission while operating remotely. You will see images of our new Noborigama kiln and the restoration work happening to Valley Brook Farm House. We will share more about our 50th Anniversary exhibition and the in-depth research that went into that project. You will also read about the public investment and the benefit of public and private partnerships, along with lists of friends and board members whose financial support ensured that Peters Valley could survive, and even thrive, during such a challenging year.

We are grateful to our community of donors and supporters for their continued support and belief in our ability to make it through the pandemic. Whether you tuned into one of our virtual programs, donated to the appeal, or shopped in our virtual gallery, please know that you are a special and integral part of Peters Valley. Thanks to you, we are well-positioned to continue to build on our success and momentum we established this year and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kristin Muller

Executive Director

REAFFIRMING OUR Commitment to Diversity

Peters Valley champions the unifying power of art, craft, and creativity; celebrates the diversity of our shared humanity; and condemns racism and violence in all forms. This year we took an elevated commitment to our DEI work.

We are learning and are working to transform our culture, promote advocacy and improve diversity across the entire organization. With renewed dedication, we will continue to support and showcase BIPOC artists, and to use our platform to uplift their voices and creativity.

In fiscal year 2020, we joined in national conversations around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work and have set specific goals to accomplish in the coming year. These sessions have connected staff with an array of non-profit organizations doing important work throughout the country and have helped us to connect with leaders of color, while engaging in very productive dialogue with a committed group of people.

Peters Valley continues to welcome anyone regardless of race, background, sexual orientation, income level, religious beliefs or need for physical and emotional accommodation and we strive to accommodate visitors with disabilities to allow access to all programs and services.
Peters Valley enriches lives through the learning, practice, and appreciation of fine crafts. The making of fine crafts is a kind of exploration, which relies on an integration of heart, head, and hands. Peters Valley encourages and facilitates this exploration in everything we do. We are a vibrant community, bringing together established and emerging artists from around the globe. Coming together to make things makes us better artists, able to learn from each other, and to evaluate our own efforts in a wider context. We provide studio-based educational workshops for life-long learners who have the opportunity to benefit from working with nationally and internationally recognized artists. We are stewards of the creative process: from preparation, to incubation, to illumination, to verification. We strive to develop the creative abilities of all of our participants through this focus on process. We also believe creativity is not entirely a solitary effort—sometimes the most interesting creative ideas emerge from new experiences in new places with other artists who see the world differently than we do. We provide an inspiring natural setting, intensive instruction, the right tools, and a supportive environment to immerse oneself in making things by hand. Fresh air and respite from one’s normal routine can bring fresh insights, and for some, perhaps, opportunities for peak moments, magic, and transformation. Since 1970, Peters Valley School of Craft has continued to fulfill its mission to enrich lives through the learning, appreciation, and practice of the art of fine craft. Today, the school features nine distinct craft studios providing instruction to almost 1,000 students annually. Located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, we offer immersive learning opportunities, featuring courses in ceramics, blacksmithing, fibers, weaving, fine metals, photography, woodworking, glass, printmaking, and special topics. We welcome artists of all skill levels, ages, and backgrounds to spend time exploring materials, experiment with new tools, techniques, and ideas, and engage in conversations with others about creative processes. Along with our immersive workshops, we also mentor and provide professional development opportunities to emerging artists through our Studio Assistantship and Fellowship Programs, leading them into productive career and leadership opportunities in the field of craft. We provide artist residencies, community outreach and youth art programs, and opportunities for working artists to teach and participate in our annual craft fair, virtual market, retail, and exhibition galleries showcasing American craft. Our gallery shows, craft fairs, annual auctions, presentations at various festivals, community outreach efforts, and other programs allow us to both bring fine crafts to a wider audience, and to help shape future standards of excellence in fine crafts. We honor the tradition of crafts by continuing to experiment with new techniques and materials, in pursuit of artistic, professional, and personal growth. This is our focus and joy. We are firmly committed to inclusion, diversity and equity. We champion the unifying power of art, craft, and creativity; celebrate the diversity of our shared humanity; and condemn racism and violence in all forms.

WHO WE ARE

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OUR CORE VALUES

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We honor and acknowledge that Peters Valley exists on the lands of the Munsee Lenni Lenape people, whose ancestors were the first craftspeople and makers on this land that today is stewarded by the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.
Our dynamic team rallied and executed well in the unprecedented operating environment. We understood the huge demand for virtual creative programming as we all quarantined at home.

We turned our weekly summer Visiting Artists/Instructor Presentations into virtual events every Friday evening at 7pm. Each presentation included 5-7 of our 2020 scheduled workshop instructors sharing their work and inspiration and their specific craft medium. We also moved our longer more focused bi-weekly individual Artist Lecture Series online, every other Wednesday at 7pm and intentionally invited underrepresented artists to participate. The lecture program features artists, curators, and academics in a more formal webinar format discussing their work with Q&A.

In addition, we moved our Gallery exhibitions, receptions and panel discussions online for the year and began a virtual “Meet the Artist” weekend series featuring gallery artists. All of these events were free for the public to attend via the Zoom platform and were also streamed live on our Facebook page and later uploaded to our new YouTube channel, where they live in perpetuity as resources for artists and educators in the future.

We can happily report that while canceling in-person programming was a huge experiential (as well as financial) loss, we also gained new perspectives and have embraced new opportunities to provide arts education with great success, while also expanding audiences and increasing accessibility to programs. Our mailing list has grown by 25% and now, we have a successful program of online workshops, demos, and artist talks completed and plan to continue virtual programming in some capacity in the coming years.

For 50 years, Peters Valley’s mission has been to enrich lives through the learning, practice and appreciation of craft. When the pandemic hit, we paused to reflect and ask: how can we continue to fulfill our mission remotely?

PIVOTING TO THE COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

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REDESIGNED WEBSITE

In the summer we began working with Social Impact Studios and Philadelphia-based web-designer Chris Hershberger-Esh on a complete re-design of Peters Valley’s website. We reimagined our online presence giving our site a user-friendly interface focusing on the immersive experience, and simplifying our scholarship, assistantship, and fellowship application portals. We also shifted our online store/gallery to a more comprehensive platform with additional capacity to facilitate sales and promote artists and their work.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

This year we are particularly grateful to our local and state government officials for their resounding support of arts and culture in New Jersey during the pandemic. We are especially grateful to Governor Phil Murphy for his acknowledgment that the creative community is a worthy priority and that investment in the arts will be part of the economic recovery. In addition, thanks to government support, such as the CARES Act, PPP and EIDL SBA Loan programs, we have been able to maintain vitality and continue to fulfill our mission to provide creative programming even during this challenging time.
While the pandemic halted our workshop season, we were able to take time to focus on several campus improvements and strategic investments.

Watching Bruce Dehnert, our Head of Ceramics, rebuild our brand new, beautiful Noborigama kiln was certainly another highlight of the year. The Noborigama is Peters Valley’s workhorse kiln, fired approximately 10x per year. The demolition process was begun in early June and completed by early-mid July. Due to the pandemic, all demolition and rebuilding had to be done by 2-3 builders who isolated outside the close quarters of the building process. Construction of the new kiln began in mid-July and continued until completion in November. We expect the new kiln to last longer than the original did [nearly 30 years] because construction wasn’t rushed and there was time to place every brick perfectly. Thank you again to all of the individual donors who made this project possible and especially to the Julia Terr Fund for Ceramic Arts and The John & Margaret Post Foundation.

Thanks to a generous grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust and support from the National Park Service, this year we began important restoration work to the exterior of Valley Brook Farm House, our largest seasonal student housing facility. Valley Brook provides housing for 14 students in single and double rooms during each workshop season. Contractors worked throughout the year on remediation to the house’s roofing, gutters, siding, windows, exterior doors, chimney, porches/decks, and foundation. The project continues into 2021 when the exterior envelope will be painted. This project will ensure the building can accommodate generations of future students during their experience at Peters Valley.
This year we welcomed six new members to our board of trustees. Robert Martin comes to Peters Valley with over 30 years of corporate finance experience, in the areas of structured finance, leveraged acquisitions, corporate restructurings, merger and acquisitions, and the management of significant distressed loan portfolios. He has taken the role of Treasurer at Peters Valley.

Bonnie Schorske, a lover of photography, had a career at the State of NJ Division of Mental Health where she managed innovative statewide program development projects for children, adults, and their families. Husain Bootwala oversees the illiquid securities valuation models, and develops processes for effective and timely valuations of illiquid securities in collaboration with various sector desks for Guggenheim Partners Investment Management. He strongly believes in keeping the skills that Peters Valley imparts to its participants nurtured and passed on to the next generation.

Deeple Patel hails from JP Morgan Chase, has an immense passion for woodworking and has led a successful career as an entrepreneur and technologist for over 15 years. Susan K. Schear is an established speaker and facilitator leading strategic and business planning, and focuses on organizational capacity, functional areas assessments, fiscal responsibility and budgeting, leadership and team building, DEIA, and board development. Shari Siegel is Managing Director and General Counsel of Ranieri Partners LLC, an investment platform and enjoys mixed media collage and painting in her spare time.

We also thank our departing board members Amy Ferris, Fred Guendel, Teresa Stack, and Nancy Till for their contributions to our work and mission.

PEOPLE OF PETERS VALLEY

Maureen Strelzik, Maureen Graff Ballone, 2nd Vice President, Bob Wharam, Treasurer, Mitzi Campbell, Secretary, Harvey Fein, Maggie Niles, John Loughnane, Kathleen McNamara, Maleyne Syracuse, President, James Viste, Robert Martin, Bonnie Schorske, Husain Bootwala, Deeple Patel, Susan K. Schear, Shari Siegel.

PEOPLE OF PETERS VALLEY

Cathryn Jasterzbski is a former Peters Valley Fine Metals Assistant. She completed her BFA in jewelry and metalsmithing at SUNY New Paltz and her MFA at Rhode Island School of Design. She is a practicing goldsmith and high school teacher in the Hudson Valley where she teaches an interdisciplinary craft program in textiles and metal. Cathryn was awarded the Marzee Graduate Prize, and the Ethical Metalsmiths Emerging Artist Award in 2019 while she completed her most recent artist residency at the Baltimore Jewelry Center. This past year her work was accepted into Munich Jewellery Week’s “Schmuck 2020.” She continues to participate in various panels and workshops in the field while maintaining her creative practice in the heart of the Hudson Valley. She will be beginning a jewelry-specific program in her school this year and looks forward to making connections with this program and surrounding craft institutions like Peters Valley School of Craft.

PERSONAL STORIES:

Where Are They Now?
During the last year, we turned significant attention to our holdings of photographs and ephemera from throughout Peters Valley’s history in preparation for our 50th Anniversary exhibition held at the Hunterdon Art Museum, From the Ground Up: Peters Valley School of Craft. Our archives include a wide variety of documents, course catalogs, newsletters, maps, architectural drawings, photographs, slides, and unique objects made at Peters Valley throughout the years. The curator of the show, Elizabeth Essner, connected with artists involved in Peters Valley’s earliest years and pursued stories about artists historically marginalized in the history of craft as she developed the framework for the exhibition. The exhibition was to be held in Richmond, Virginia concurrent with the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conference, an event where many ceramists convene away from home. Due to the pandemic, however, the NCECA conference was cancelled and the exhibition instead was realized in a virtual format later in the summer.

In addition, to celebrate our remarkable Ceramics program, curator Carolyn E. Herrera-Perez organized Peters Valley Present, an exhibition that reacted to the last two decades of ceramic programming designed by Bruce Dehnert, Head of the Ceramics Program at Peters Valley. The exhibition was to be held in Richmond, Virginia. Due to the pandemic, the NCECA conference was cancelled and the exhibition instead was realized in a virtual format later in the summer.

In October, Peters Valley sponsored “Present Tense: 2019” the American Craft Council’s Conference in Philadelphia, PA. This national event focused on craft’s relevance as a catalyst for navigating and making meaning in today’s world. Over three days, we discussed topics ranging from how craft creates community and the ability of objects to tell stories, to how craft participates in technology and political developments and the ways female makers are using their work to build a more sustainable, equitable, inclusive future.

In February, we also took part in the School-to-Market program at the ACC Baltimore Craft Show. Seven of our recent studio assistants joined us to present their work to thousands of buyers. It was an excellent professional development opportunity for the artists.

In the summer, the Sally D. Francisco Gallery presented Incubation: Artists in Pursuit of Discovery, a virtual exhibition that showcased the work of a selection of our studio assistants from over the last ten years. Peters Valley Summer Assistants are an integral part of our summer workshop program and we’ve seen how, at times, the studio experience is like an incubation experience. This show focused on where they are now, and the new directions they’ve taken since leaving Peters Valley.
Thank You!

Peters Valley recognizes and thanks our generous donors and supporters who make our mission possible.

(October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020)

$5,000 & Above

Deborah Heid & Joel Brown
Geraldine F. Dodge Foundation
Harvey & Foss Rinear
Caroline Sebatine and John Lougheane
Dorothy Motz
Charles Lawrence Keith & Claire Miller Foundation
New Jersey Council for the Humanities
New Jersey State Council for the Arts
Gay Prig
The John & Margaret Post Foundation
Michael Thommer and Malayna Spier
Julia Stein Fund for Ceramic Arts
Foundation Sonoma County
Wingdale Charitable Foundation
Mary & John Zimmerman Fund

$2500 - $4999

Barbara & Bradley Selden
Antony and Jane Cono
Bruce & Mary Dillard
Greater Pike Community Foundation
The John Schrock Foundation
Kathryn Wagner
John & Gema White
Rick and Jeanie Wamer

$500 - $2,499

Kathleen & Harold Aaron Anonymous
Tamra Beckett
She Palestine
Sophie Balin
John & Elizabeth Best
Erica Bingham
Jodi Biegel
Huan Huy-Bostock
Marie Brigham
Patricia Bronstein
Kim Burton
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Charles Fleischman
Dennis Fuge
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Tiffany Jacobson
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Tara Keenan
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Allyson Knecht
Mary Kopp
Mary R. Kopp
Susan LeBlanc
Suzanne G. Lebow
Gwen Lowry
John & Sue McKittrick
Molly McKittrick
William McKittrick
Arlene McKee
Ingrid Meier
Linda de Mellow
Stacy Melikian
Leslie Miller
Tom & Suzat Milam
Marilyn Miller
Claire Miller Foundation
Debora Meltz
Loughnane
Carole Sebbane and John
Deborah Heid & Joel Brown

$500 - $2,499

Tania Kravath & Carolyn
Penny Canamare
Mitzi Campbell
Clare Callender
Kathleen Cafasso
Erin Burnett
Linda Brooks Hirschman
Deb & Paul Brooks
The Branchville Agency
Tom & Jane Biron
Marshall Bienstock
Stephanie Bernhardt
Norma Bernsman
Gary Beausoleil
Marshall Berntson
Helen Beavers
Diana Belfield
Kris Imbrie

For over 50 years, Peters Valley has grown and flourished as a leader in the field of craft, providing artists with a vibrant place to learn and explore their creativity. Legacy Gifts give you the opportunity to assure your continued support of the school to benefit future generations of students. For more information on ways to be a part of Peters Valley’s future, please contact development@petersvalley.org.

LEGACY GIFTS

Nicole & Kevin Alvernaz
Glenn & Jean Allan
Lyn Aleksandrowicz
Christabel Aidala
Ahlquist
Jean Adams
John & Gemma White
Goldsmiths
John Sheridan
Jim Shea
Allyson Schwab-Miller
Potters Guild of New Jersey
Penny Canamare
Mitzi Campbell
Clare Callender
Kathleen Cafasso
Erin Burnett
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