

BHMA

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WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER



BHMA HIGHLIGHTS



Loomis Village Hosts BHMA Art Exhibit

Thank you to our friends at Loomis Village for supporting the Ascending Artist Program! Throughout the month of October, the local senior living community displayed BHMA paintings and prints in the halls of their facilities. Our artists were invited to speak to Loomis residents about their work, field questions, and show off their creations. We are excited about this partnership and look forward to continued collaboration.



Return to the Workforce

We're pleased to announce that in-person jobs and internships have resumed for many of our individuals. While some locations remain inaccessible due to Covid, we're steadily reintegrating into the community and continuing to identify prospective sites. Pictured here, first-year volunteers Thomas and Sophie are building work skills while preparing packages for those in need at Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry- a win-win!



The Music Plays On

Music is the common thread that unites us at BHMA. For a year and a half, the pandemic required all performances to shift to a virtual format, so the return of live music this fall was music to our ears! Our musicians and dancers are thrilled to be doing what they love again, both onsite among their peers, and offsite at gigs. If you are interested in hiring our talented performers, visit:

berkshirehills.org/performers



PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS: CAPTURING THE BEAUTY OF BHMA AND BEYOND

The introduction of visual arts at BHMA has provided additional outlets for the abundance of creativity that our students possess. Nested in the Ascending Artist Program is Photography- a class that has quickly become a favorite. The concept was the brainchild of Vocational Advisor, Carly Brunault. Carly is a professional photographer who was hired in 2017 to capture BHMA events like graduation and the annual gala; this connection sparked an interest in full-time employment at BHMA, where her artistic, innovative spirit could thrive. She joined our team as a staff member in 2018 and has built the Photography framework from the ground up. Read on for a Q&A session with Carly about this exciting endeavor!

Q. What's your approach to teaching?

A. I work closely with each person offering 1:1 guidance, some prompting and reminders, but I also give them the freedom to create on their own and pursue their specific ideas and direction. I encourage each student to do one thing each class that pushes them past their comfort zone.

Q. How is a typical photography class structured?

A. We gather in the art studio at the beginning of class, brainstorm, and use our imaginations to generate inspiration. After setting our intention for the day, we go out and photograph. We then meet back in the studio for sharing, editing, and discussing our captured images.

Q. What kind of photos are students capturing?

A. We often go on walks through nature, focusing on capturing vibrant colors, abstract styles, designs and patterns, or things that "catch the eye" or are particularly interesting. Indoor photos include taking still life images with musical instruments and culinary items with an abstract approach- making our photographs by placing different objects together to our liking. And of course, lots of less formal pictures of friends and staff!

Q. Are there collaborative or individual projects in the works?

A. Both. As a class, we're currently taking shots of all things BHMA to compile photos for the yearbook- classes in action, the campus landscape, candid, music performances and more. On a more individual basis, I assist students vocationally with creating their own portfolios and preparing products like prints and greetings cards for art shows and sales.

BHMA is proud to have talented professionals like Carly designing and implementing meaningful programs. Our student photographers are not only acquiring new skills, but gaining a fresh perspective about their abilities and the world around them. We can't wait to share their progress with you!

Photos Above: (1) Jack Ryan, (2) Matt Cloughley, (3) Calista Rodriguez, (4) Jennifer Barrett, (5) Connor Thompson, (6) Tori Wiktor

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A MESSAGE FROM BHMA



Hello everyone,

It is great to be back! We're excited to have successfully reopened our day program at full capacity for in-person services. For many in the BHMA community, this was a long 18 months in the making. The halls are once again filled with music, laughter, friendship, and learning.

We were thrilled to welcome back more than 200 guests to campus for our annual fall gala. With the addition of a virtual component, we had attendees from across the country join us as we celebrated the mission of BHMA with a Roaring Twenties theme. It was an incredible evening- thank you to all our sponsors, donors, and attendees!

Our reopening, the gala, and weathering the many challenges Covid has presented could not have been achieved without the extraordinary staff at BHMA! Our dedicated team of both seasoned and new staff are truly dedicated to providing high quality programs; they have continuously demonstrated heart and innovation.

While the pandemic isn't completely behind us, it is important to acknowledge how far we have come and the steps taken to keep everyone safe. We're glad to share that BHMA is as vibrant as ever!

With warm regards,

Michelle N. Theroux *Elizabeth Scheibel*

MICHELLE N. THEROUX
Executive Director

ELIZABETH SCHEIBEL
Chair, BHMA Board of Directors



ROARING TWENTIES RECAP	
325k TOTAL REVENUE	255 TOTAL ATTENDEES
66 SPONSORS	24k AUCTION SALES
73 RAFFLE & AUCTION ITEMS DONATED	18 STUDENT PERFORMERS
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!	

ROARING TWENTIES FUNDRAISER A ROARING SUCCESS!

Since its inception in 1999, Berkshire Hills Music Academy has been the fortunate recipient of incredible support from a vast network of people who believe in its unique mission. The annual fundraiser has become a special way to bring this community together to celebrate progress and bolster future programming. Following an in-person hiatus due to Covid-19, the return of the on-campus gala was a long awaited, highly anticipated occasion. The theme this fall, The Roaring Twenties, marked the eighth year of the event and drew over 250 attendees.

The program was emceed by former television host and current dance teacher/studio owner, Ashley Kohl, with help from her longtime friend- Executive Director, Michelle Theroux. Eloquent founder, Kay Bernon, and her equally articulate son, Paul Bernon, expressed their gratitude and shared the impact of BHMA with the audience. Very special guest

appearances included television personality and entrepreneur, Bethenny Frankel, and actor/singer, Meghann Fahy- a rising star and Longmeadow native. LIVE members delighted the crowd with a fabulous jazz set, an era-inspired dance number, and swinging music that got partygoers out of their seats and onto the dance floor! Needless to say, we are already looking forward to next year.

The success and fortitude of BHMA wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our donors- thank you for helping to fuel our mission and sustain the program for years to come. We are so grateful for your contributions. Top sponsors of the The Roaring Twenties include: The Bernon Family, Frank & Patti Connor, Veronica & Donn Heath, The Kraft Family Foundation, Kevin & Ann O'Connor, Kevin & Claudine Curran, Ann & Stephen Davis, Mona & Abdul Jomaa, Mary Richardson & Bill O'Neill, Mike & Judy Van Handel, and Laura & Ken Wernick.



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