

FROM MITCH WILBER, CHAIRPERSON OF THE SMITH’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

We hope many readers of this report recall an August 2019 image of 200 diners at a table stretching the length of Linden Street. The turnout for the “Silk and Tassel” collaboration by some of our region’s finest providers of food and wine to honor and support the Smith’s mission demonstrated how the theatre can boost our community’s civic spirit. Coming together for shared experiences is what the Smith is all about. That remarkable evening was certainly a 2019 highlight.

And there were many others, both on stage and off. Concerts ranged across genres. The Smith hosted jazz legends Dave Holland and Kenny Barron to mark the birthday of Geneva’s native son, Scott LaFaro, tribute productions of Patsy Cline and the Beatles, and a sold out solo show by Phish’s Trey Anastasio.

The Smith continued to support the productions of our great community partners: Geneva Concerts, Geneva Theatre Guild, Geneva Light Opera, Geneva Music Festival, and Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Off-stage, 2019 brought the curtain down on the much-needed renovations of the dressing rooms, the cabaret, and the patron restrooms. And the challenge to raise a \$125,000 endowment in the 125th year was surpassed by the tremendous generosity of our supporters.

It’s difficult to write about the lively and healthy 2019 from the perspective of the very challenging Summer of 2020. I can’t overstate the effect the Covid virus has had on the Smith. We confront one of the greatest challenges of our organization’s history. However, we have assets: a great staff, an incredible group of volunteers, some financial reserves, and the legacy of support from the community. The Smith’s 126th year will reflect the hiatus of operations for some period of time and all that entails. We look forward eagerly to the night when the ghost light returns to the wings and the stage is alive again with talent.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Mitchell Wilber,
President & Treasurer

Vinny Aliperti,
Vice Chair

Kelby Russell,
Secretary

DIRECTORS

- Frank Bartels
- Martha Bond
- Rebecca Burditt
- Joan Grela
- Murray Heaton
- Beth Johnson
- Nancy McDermott
- Mara O’Laughlin
- Harrison Schutzer
- Anthony Shelton
- Ford Weiskittel

STAFF

Susie Monagan,
Executive Director

Daril Corsner,
Technical Director

Emily Martens,
Box Office Manager,
House Manager

Jocelyn VanGelder,
Bookkeeper

Sydney Hill,
Marketing Associate

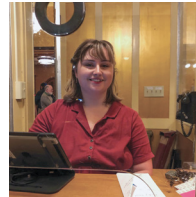
Corey Percey,
Technical Support,
Maintenance

Sharon Caito-Lackey,
Box Office Associate,
Volunteer Coordinator

Bill Kovacs,
Maintenance Coordinator

Brian Iddings,
Maintenance

Aaron Zettlemoyer,
Custodian



ABOUT THE SMITH

The 125-year-old Smith Opera House is one of the oldest operating performing arts theaters in the U.S. and is recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. Called an “architectural gem” by *The New York Times* and *Smithsonian*, The Smith has presented a wide variety of performances, from burlesque to Bruce Springsteen. Through classic films on the largest screen in the Finger Lakes, the ArtSmart series for young audiences, and the Smith’s Jan Regan Club Series, The Smith seeks to program something for everyone in our diverse community. The Smith is the cultural anchor of community life for Geneva and surroundings, featuring local performances, hosting meetings, and cheering area students as they cross our stage each June for their high school graduations.



SMITH CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

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www.thesmith.org

 @smithoperahouse

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Photos by Jan Regan,
Stiller Zusman, Neil Zusman

SMITH CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

2019
ANNUAL
REPORT

The Smith Center for the Arts, Inc. is committed to providing and sustaining diverse arts and education enrichment opportunities for Finger Lakes residents and visitors, while maintaining its historic venue - the Smith Opera House.

VOLUNTEERS We couldn't do it without our volunteers.

75+ Event Volunteers provide key services and connections to Smith patrons by selling food, drink, tickets and artist merchandise, helping patrons to their seats, scanning tickets and handing out programs. At sold-out events, such as our October, back-to-back, Trey Anastasio and Lake Street Dive concerts, The Smith has as many as 30 volunteers on hand to ensure the best audience experience possible.

In 2019, non-Board member volunteers donated more than 1300 hours to The Smith. At minimum wage, the value of that work is \$15,340.

If there are many opportunities in the area to volunteer, then why the Smith? The direct face to face interaction with patrons gives a true sense of satisfaction that you are contributing to their experience. You become a part of the atmosphere and grandeur that the Smith has to offer. When I am able to, I try to be in the lobby as a show is let out. This gives me one last chance to greet the guests. Many times people tell me how much they enjoyed the evening and some give helpful suggestions that I try to capture and pass on. I greatly value being part of the experience of the beautiful Smith Opera House.

-Doug Peeso, volunteer

The Smith's 15 volunteer Board members and additional Board committee members provide invaluable expertise in areas including strategic and financial planning, fundraising and grant management, and legal services.

PROGRAMMING

The main source of The Smith's income is its programming and associated services such as concessions and bar sales. In 2019:

27 films screenings brought in just over **1000 patrons**. Films were as diverse as the classic *Moby Dick* and recent films such as *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Perennial favorite, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, was upgraded to include a live "shadow cast."

36 live performances brought in more than **13,000 patrons**.

5 Club Series events brought in just under **400 patrons** (the Smith Club Series invites the public to experience live music in smaller, more intimate venues in and around Geneva).

3 ArtSmart events brought more than **1,600 area children and their teachers** to the theatre. ArtSmart performances included Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* for high school students.

6 meetings or community celebrations brought in over **6,000 patrons**.

The Smith's opera house, dance studio, and newly-renovated cabaret space are available for rent. In 2019, The Smith partnered with 17 groups to present concerts, films, meetings, graduations and speakers. The Smith received grant funding to present films and live performances that supported Geneva's Pride Festival (June) and Festival Latino (September). These events had the benefit of developing new audiences while amplifying existing community celebrations.

Grant funding allowed the Smith to get out of the Opera House and into the community. Performers Los Pleneros 21 from the Bronx engaged students at the Boys and Girls Club's after-school program. Cast members of Chicago's The Second City brought improv workshops to students at Geneva High School.

Having Second City come to Geneva High School and work with participants of the Geneva High School Drama Club was a dream come true! These students never would have had the opportunity to learn improvisational theatre from such professionals this early in their lives. It was thrilling, submersive, intense and fun.

-Larry Ann Evans, Director, GHS Drama Club

In October 2019, The Smith closed out a joyful birthday year by throwing a birthday bash that culminated in a site-specific, immersive theatre event that enlivened the building's unique history.

FUNDRAISING

The Smith relies on contributed income and employs the following strategies to raise it:

125th Birthday Campaign. The Smith wrapped up its "Endowed Support for Continuing Maintenance" campaign, raising \$183,000 while leveraging a matching leadership gift from Brenda and Dave Rickey.

Annual membership drive. Members join at levels ranging from \$60 to \$1,000 and receive benefits such as free movie passes and beverage tickets. In 2019, the membership drive raised \$30,482.

Show sponsorships. Local businesses such as Lyons National Bank and Bank of the Finger Lakes gain valuable exposure for their businesses by sponsoring film screenings and live performances. In 2019, Bottomless Brewing became a sponsor of the Smith's Jan Regan Club Series.

Foundation grants. Grants from organizations such as The Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation and The Nelson B. Delavan Foundation are an important source of programming and project dollars for The Smith. Grant income in 2019 totaled \$64,000. The Smith launched a new partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, accessing their Mid-Atlantic Tours fund.

Government support. The Town and City of Geneva are instrumental in providing the Smith with discretionary marketing and operational support. The City of Geneva sponsored 2019's "The Second City" and "The Blind Boys of Alabama" performances.

Special Events. The Smith launched "Silk and Tassel," a communal meal of 200 diners down the middle of Linden Street in downtown Geneva, featuring the creations of local chefs paired with Finger Lakes wines. Food and wine were donated and the Smith raised valuable funds for its operations.

At Bottomless Brewing, we have always believed in the importance of the arts, and the beneficial impact they have on our community. As a business, we value giving back to our community and being able to support an amazing place such as The Smith Opera House.

-Tom Thompson, Owner

2019 OPERATING RESULTS

Where It Came From & Where It Went

REVENUE	
Support and Contributions	729,846
Earned Revenue	425,608
From Fund Reserves	5,341
TOTAL	1,160,795

EXPENSES (excluding depreciation)	
Programs and Operations	438,695
Management and General	171,201
SUB-TOTAL	609,896

Change in unrestricted net assets before depreciation and transfers 584,424*

Depreciation expense	-177,364
Change in unrestricted net assets	407,060

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

What We Own and What We Owe as of 12/31/19

OPERATING ASSETS	
Current assets	216,757
Property and equipment	1,628,232
Investments, Certificate of Deposit	303,007
Capital and donor reserves	167,134
TOTAL assets	2,315,130

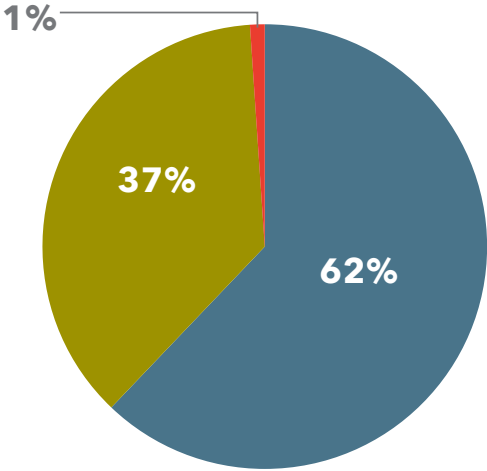
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES	
Current liabilities	132,920
Total liabilities	132,920

NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted net assets	1,847,019
Unrestricted-Board designated	153,615
Temporarily restricted net assets	181,376
TOTAL net assets	2,162,210
TOTAL liabilities and net assets	2,315,130

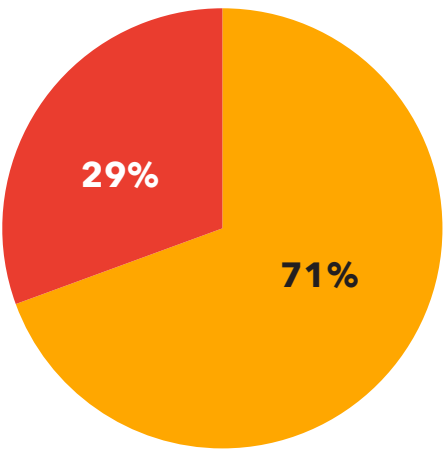
*Includes an investment gain of \$33,525

REVENUE



- Support and Contributions
- Earned Revenue
- From Fund Reserves

EXPENSES



- Programs and Operations
- Management and General

Here are our modest goals for 2020:

Retool the ArtSmart educational theater program during the 2020-2021 school year to go digital and bring arts experiences to children in their classrooms and homes;

Build audiences for the several digital series we have developed so far and expand those series;

Successfully prepare the opera house and our staff to reopen following the NY State Reopening Guidelines for Indoor Arts Entertainment;

Offer a modest slate of live performances and films at The Smith while adhering to state protocols that reduce the theater's capacity by more than 70%;

Maintain membership campaign donations at the levels of the past three years; and,

Build staff's capacity for flexibility and innovation while exploring new avenues of connecting with our audiences and keeping our organization financially viable.

What a time to be alive!

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUSIE MONAGAN

What is it about The Smith that seems to attract the most passionate, warm, open-hearted, and fun-loving people? I am so grateful for the staff, Board, donors, volunteers, and patrons without whom The Smith would just be a really cool museum. Instead, it's a vibrant arts center imbued with the creativity and good cheer of those who cross its thresholds. So, it hasn't been easy being closed. We know our duty is to bring people together to share in the good times as well as the bad...but we can't perform that function these days. We try to be patient as we plan to welcome you back.

