

ArtsMatters

SHOWCASING THE ARTS IN THE MORRIS AREA



2020

Morris Arts In Solidarity

Like so many, we are struggling to comprehend the tragic death of George Floyd (preceded by the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many others), and what we've seen across the country over the past week. In a world already complicated by the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic which has disproportionately affected communities of color, Morris Arts reaffirms our commitment opposing racism, inequality and discrimination of any kind. We write to express solidarity with the African American community and with all those who peacefully raise their voices in protest to advocate for justice and equal rights.

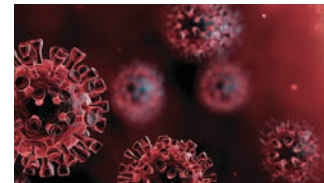
We at Morris Arts are here to continue fostering healing and to promote diversity, inclusion and tolerance through the arts. We remain committed to engaging diverse artists and audiences to ensure that community building through the arts impacts everyone in our community and is inclusive to all.

The arts make life richer and more connected especially now when people feel isolated and more alone than ever before. The arts help us better understand and truly "see" each other and encourage constructive dialogue and important conversations.

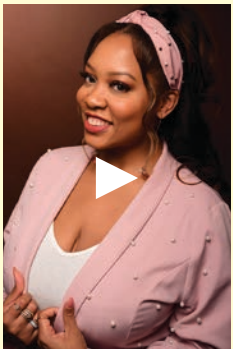
Morris Arts continues to stand for equal rights for everyone, regardless of race, religion or background. In times of crisis and always, we are here to help build community through the arts.

The Arts in a time of Pandemic

As creative organizations and individuals cope with the impacts of this unprecedented pandemic, Morris Arts is finding ways to keep the arts, artists and arts organizations in the public eye, share critical information/resources and to support the arts, artists and arts organizations through this difficult period.



Our Art Galleries in the time of Covid-19:



L-R: Lauren LeBeaux Craig; Viki Craig; poster for exhibit.

The Atrium Gallery reopened, then closed for the pandemic and is now available online.

After a year's hiatus, the Atrium Gallery has reopened and done so in a spectacular fashion. [Art in the Atrium](#) (ATA), a non-profit showcasing the largest exhibit of African-American art in New Jersey, is back at the Atrium Gallery, part of the Morris County Administration & Records Building in Morristown where they have exhibited for nearly three decades.

Click on the photo of Lauren LeBeaux Craig, daughter of ATA's co-founder, the late Viki Craig, as she tells you more about ATA and their exciting exhibit: The Atrium Gallery walls are full of the wonderful art in the new *Dream With Your Eyes Open* exhibit but, with the pandemic, viewing the exhibit in person is not an option. Happily, people can still see (and purchase) the vibrant artworks, virtually, at <https://artintheatrium.org/shop>.

(continued on page 2)

Our Art Galleries in the time of Covid-19: (continued from page 1)

The Atrium Gallery

This exhibit marks the reopening of the Atrium Gallery, showcasing the 28th annual exhibition and sale of African American Art presented by Art in the Atrium. At present, the show has been extended at least until July and perhaps beyond. Highlighting the works of the renowned Newark artist / poet / educator, the late Jerry Gant, this annual show includes works by 60 emerging and established African-American artists.

This year's show also honors the memory of Art in the Atrium's co-founder and artist / educator Victoria "Viki" Le Beaux Clark Craig who passed away December 27, 2018 and was honored by the Morris County Freeholders on Dr. Martin Luther King Day for her "three decades of service in creating and fostering the annual Art in the Atrium exhibit of African-American art in Morris County."

Some of the outstanding artworks on display:



L-R, Top Row: 1) Carlos Jefferson's *Children of God #3*; 2) Glendora Simonson's *Lady in Blue*; 3) Bisa Butler's *The Radiant One*; 4 & 5) two *Untitled* sculptures by Jerry Gant.

L-R, Bottom Row: 6) Jose Manuel Cruz's *No Resistance*; 7) Jamil Burton's *Street Car Blues*; 8) Kay Reese's *Betty's Dilemma*; 9) Monifa Kincaid's *The Healers: Damara*; 10) Ceaphus Stubbs' *...Pride Comes Before the Fall...*

Morris Arts' Gallery at 14 Maple's virtual exhibit, *Vanishing Worlds*

Morris Arts' Gallery at 14 Maple installed *Vanishing Worlds*, its twenty-third exhibit, just before the covid shutdown. With our "virtual gallery," the public can still see – and purchase – the beautiful works [HERE](#). To view the show's catalogue (including details and pricing), click [HERE](#).

Guest curator, Yvette Lucas, selected works by nine distinguished New Jersey artists who each bring a unique perspective to the theme of *Vanishing Worlds*, whether confronting species extinction, lost libraries of the ancient world, disappearing professions, obsolete technologies, vanishing childhood or the gradual vanishings associated with aging. All are rendered with creative, imaginative and intriguing insights that encourage the viewer to reflect on the fleeting nature of existence and the inexorable march of time.

In the hope that people will be able to safely come to the gallery and see the exhibit firsthand, the show has been extended into 2021. Please check our website for updates as they become available.

Morris Arts gratefully acknowledges support for this exhibit from



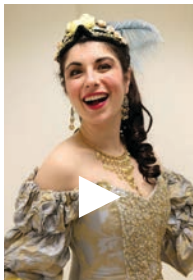
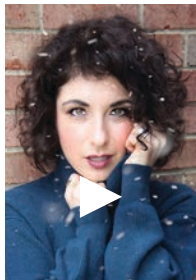
1) Bill Westheimer's collodion wet-plate photograph on slate, *Anthropocene #10 (Rattlesnake Ribs)*; 2) Susan Ahlstrom's mixed media *Other Forest Service Routes*; 3) Philemona Williamson's oil, *Dusty Afternoon*; 4) Diane Savona's wool and thread "Tablet," *Scribes*; 5) Lisa G Westheimer's porcelain, dichroic glass piece, *Sponge Lamp*; 6) Robert Lach's multimedia *Hook*; 7) Onnie Strother's photograph, *Deante, Clinton & Bergan*; 8) Janet Boltax's oil, *Herman B.*

Telling Our Stories through our Covid-19 Email Campaign:

Begun on April 17th, this effort involves our entire staff and has spotlighted the breadth and depth of our work by sharing videos, telling our stories and spotlighting new online resources in arts education and for artists and arts organizations. Additionally, we have invited grantees, scholarship winners, teaching artists, gallery curators, and performing artists to directly share their Morris Arts experiences via personal videos, underscoring how Morris Arts has impacted their work and fulfilled its mission of building community through the arts.

Chelsea Friedlander, operatic soprano and Morris Arts star (and Scholarship Winner)

Along with Morris Arts' mission of building community through the arts, we take pride in our role of recognizing, acknowledging, and supporting the next generation of performing and visual artists. Morris Arts would like you to meet Chelsea Friedlander, soprano and opera singer who won Morris Arts' prestigious Eugenie R. Coladarci Scholarship in 2006. Awarded to high school seniors demonstrating excellence in the arts, this scholarship encouraged Chelsea in the pursuit of her arts education and ultimately a career in the performing arts. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music with a Masters from the Manhattan School of Music, she has performed in operas by Mozart, Bernstein, Bizet, Offenbach, Monteverdi and others – with opera companies from California to NYC.



Click on the first photo to meet Chelsea and learn about her career in the performing arts. Click on the second to enjoy Chelsea in the role of Adel in a February performance of Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus* with the Light Opera of New Jersey.

British Invasion Years band – a special success story

Click on the second photo to hear what the band's co-founders, Robert Murdock and Lee Scott Howard, have to say about their experience with Morris Arts and see the band in action [HERE](#).

What better endorsement for a British Invasion Tribute band than opening for Ringo Starr?! If you love classic 60's rock, you will thrill to this group's note-perfect performances of music from The Beatles to The Beach Boys! Individually and collectively, they have performed with Eric Clapton, Bon Jovi, Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes – at the Stone Pony, on the Tonight Show and Late Night with David Letterman. They rock (and pack!) the house every time.

The band formed in 1997 as the Robert Murdock Band, blending classic 60s British and American rock, and committed to researching and performing the most faithful and joyful "covers" of that iconic repertoire.

Twelve years ago (2008), Morris Arts' spotted their talent and presented them the Midday Music on the Green summer series, recommended them for other gigs and booked them multiple times for First Night Morris County performances at the Mayo Performing Arts Center. Each First Night performance drew standing-room-only crowds and standing ovations! In 2011, they realized that dream of every British Invasion tribute band: opening for one of the original Beatles, Ringo Starr! They have since shared the stage with other legendary artists such as The Beach Boys, Herman's Hermits, Leon Russell, connected with a major talent agency, toured and recorded widely. In addition to their exceptional talent, what is especially wonderful about this band is their genuine appreciation for the encouragement Morris Arts provided at the early stages of their career.



Frank Vignola, Guitar Great, First Night superstar and Morris Arts friend

"Frank Vignola is one of the most extraordinary guitarists performing before the public today. His stunning virtuosity has made him the guitarist of choice for many of the world's top musicians, including Ringo Starr, Madonna, Donald Fagen, Wynton Marsalis, Tommy Emmanuel, Mark O'Connor, the Boston Pops, the New York Pops, and guitar legend Les Paul, who named Vignola to his "Five Most Admired Guitarists List" for the *Wall Street Journal*. Vignola's jaw-dropping technique explains why the *New York Times* deemed him "one of the brightest...stars of the guitar".

"There is little in this world so awe-inspiring as witnessing total mastery of a musical instrument. Like seeing Yo-Yo Ma play the cello or Placido Domingo belt out an aria – sometimes a performer's perfection can elevate a piece of music to heights beyond the realm of imagination. By all accounts, Frank Vignola conjures just that sort of magic with his acoustic guitar." – Matt Cauthron, *Intermission Magazine*

"For me, the standout musician in the ensemble was guitarist Frank Vignola, who can play more musically at ridiculous tempos than just about anyone I've heard." – *The Jazz Session*, Jason Crane, Tanglewood Jazz Festival

As a world renowned guitarist working in jazz, swing, gypsy jazz, classical and pop music, Vignola has performed internationally, with some of the finest musicians in the world. Morris Arts has had the privilege of presenting him – to capacity crowds – at nearly every First Night Morris event since 2009. He has also been a host at Morris Arts' Great Conversations and performed at the Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival and other events in the area. Sharing an artist of this caliber with our community is one of the great joys of our work.

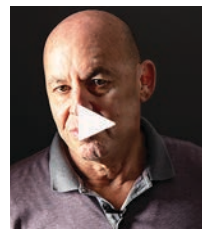


L-R: Click on Frank's photo as he talks about his remarkable career playing with some of the world's top musicians; Frank dazzles with *The Flight of the Bumblebee*; Enjoy his wonderful *Tico Tico* medley (spoiler alert for Led Zeppelin fans, there's bit of *Stairway to Heaven*) – and which concludes with Frank's own virtuoso composition, *Gypsymania*.

ARTS BY THE PEOPLE - A Morris Arts Grantee

This nonprofit defines its mission thus: to establish, operate, promote, and conduct educational programs, opportunities, classes, and sessions in the creative arts for the public, especially seniors and youth with a goal to empower individuals through collaborative acts of self-expression. Believing in the value of shared creative acts and the universal benefits of the arts for people of all ages and backgrounds, Arts by the People provides a diverse range of creative activities to build interest groups or generate intergenerational connections. Using the arts to bridge social divisions and strengthen understanding, collaboration and acceptance in communities of diversity and need, their programs are run by talented teaching artists who are experts in their fields. Programs are free for participants, ensuring that the arts remain available and accessible to all.

Click on the photo of Paul Rabinowitz, Executive Director of Arts by the People, to hear more about their virtual programming.



Helping the Arts and our Community through Our Website and Social Media:

Our website's homepage and social media have also become portals to regularly updated resources, workshops, connections and critical tools for artists/arts organizations and for our community. Please check these sites weekly for new resources, tools, features and opportunities.

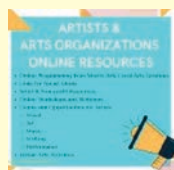
Arts in Education Virtual Learning Resource Center

At <https://cutt.ly/3yXa9Na>, this portal presents a compendium of information to assist teachers, students and families. We make these offerings available with the hope of forming partnerships with not only K-12 schools and families, but also social service agencies and community organizations committed to youth education.



Artists and Arts Organizations Online Resources

At <https://cutt.ly/LyXa0ye>, the Morris Arts Online Resource Center for Artists offers a compilation of helpful tools for artists and arts organizations impacted by COVID-19. Resources include online workshops, webinars, virtual performances, art classes, grants and opportunities to serve our community. Morris Arts is dedicated to continuing to serve the public interest which is why we are quickly adapting our programs and services to meet this moment.



Teaching Artist Workshop

On May 14, Morris Arts held an online workshop entitled *Taking Your Program from Live to Live Stream*. Attracting a capacity crowd, the workshop addressed the pandemic's enormous pressures on artists to adapt to a new and rapidly-changing digital reality.



The workshop provided an overview of online tools and ways to shift live content into online content. The presenters, John Bertles and Carina Piaggio are teaching artists, administrators and professional development specialists with the Kennedy Center – National Arts Partners program. They are also the husband and wife co-founders of *Bash the Trash Environmental Arts*. As Distance Learning Coordinator for Carnegie Hall's Education Program, Bertles re-imagined live programs to bring them to an online format and provided participants an overview on: Using the Technology; Transitioning your Show; Interacting with Students; Connecting with Schools. And, beyond the technology they also looked at translating the distilled essence of artists' shows into a new medium. In response to Morris Arts' support for this program, Bertles and Piaggio nominated Morris Arts for the Morris County Chamber of Commerce's 2020 Not for Profit Excellence Award for Innovative Programs.

To support Morris Arts: How to get involved...

- **Consider an in-kind gift.** Now is a great time to share your technical or professional expertise or items that you think might be useful to Morris Arts.
- **Celebrate holidays and milestones with a tribute gift to Morris Arts.** A donation to Morris Arts is the perfect gift to for a loved one committed to creativity.
- **Check to see whether your company has a matching gift program.** Some companies will match the donations or value of volunteer time given by their employees.
- **Send us your e-mail address!** We value sustainability and community – help us communicate with you more effectively as we all work to build a greener, more creative world. To sign up, visit www.morrisarts.org.

All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information contact Gina Moran, Morris Arts' Director of Development, at gmoran@morrisarts.org or (973) 285-5115, ext. 13.

Thanks

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The New Jersey State Council on the Arts has awarded Morris Arts a "Citation of Excellence" and designation as a "Major Service Organization" in recognition of the quality of its solid history of "service excellence, substantial activity and broad public service".

This newsletter is available in large print by calling (973) 285-5115, ext. 10.

Large Print

For a calendar listing of arts events in Morris County and for more information on Morris Arts' many programs and services, visit us at www.morrisarts.org,

like us on , and follow us on .

Addressing Morris Arts' traditional Spring and Summer events:

Please check our website www.morrisarts.org, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for the latest updates.

For 10 years, **Music Beyond Borders**, a collaboration between Morris Arts and Mayo Performing Arts Center, has offered this summer series of free outdoor programs of world music and dance....celebrating diversity and bringing a taste of cultures from six continents to lunchtimes on the Morristown Green.



Although the coronavirus prevents us from presenting **Music Beyond Borders** this summer, our website's homepage will include a weekly feature revisiting these performances from cultures around the world. See and hear music and dance from Africa, South America, Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, Native American cultures, the Middle East, Central America, Indonesia, the South Pacific, the Caribbean and Australia. Click [HERE](#) each week to join us on this trip down memory lane and enjoy the delights of [Music Beyond Borders](#).



Morris Arts' reschedules 12th annual Great Conversations from April to October 8th, 2020.

This will be a virtual event. Stay tuned to www.morrisarts.org for details as they become available.

Morris Arts' 37th annual Giralda Music & Arts Festival postponed (from June 28th)

Please check in with us at www.morrisarts.org for details as they become available.



Meet Me In Morristown

Our popular summer street arts scene is also postponed indefinitely due to the pandemic.