



TOWN OF KIAWAH  
*Arts*  
& CULTURAL  
EVENTS

2022-2023  
ANNUAL REPORT



# Impact Through Numbers



**33 Events**



**5,017 Total Audience Attendance**



**\$44,803 Total Revenue**



**4,013 E-Blast Subscriptions**

This season, the Arts Council hosted 33 events of varying arts genres, including music, dance, theatre, film, and more.

Many shows sold out and audiences grew. Combined attendance across the varying performances totaled 5,017.

Patron engagement was a high priority, and the Arts Council E-Blast subscription count increased to 4,013.



# The Work of the Arts Council

Since its creation in 2004, the Arts Council has grown from having 10 events per year with a \$25,000 budget to having more than 30 events a year with a \$300,000 budget. The program could not function without its 10 volunteer members responsible for proposing and selecting each season's events.

Arts and Cultural Events Coordinator Ruthie Foster chairs the Arts Council. With the help of its members, she facilitates all event operations while offering administrative support and oversight.



*"Our mission is to enhance community and tourist appreciation and involvement in performing arts within the Town of Kiawah Island and its environs by providing a diversity of planned programs. We shall strive to ensure that Kiawah is recognized as an arts and culturally-minded community."*

# A Season in Review

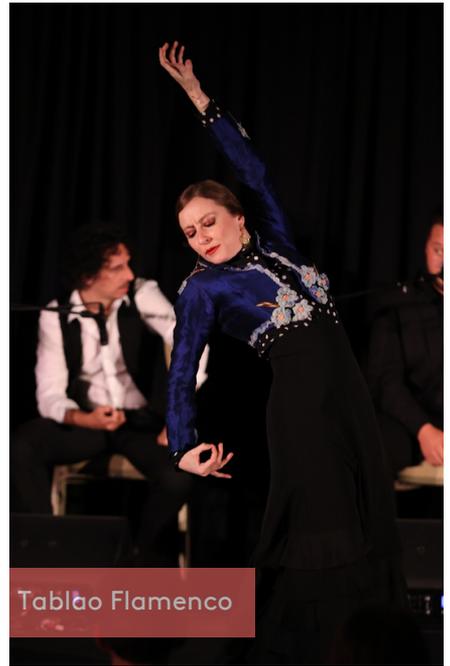
While planning its 2022-2023 season, the Arts Council prioritized balance, diversity, variety, and quality. They presented 33 events featuring genres ranging from classical music to flamenco dance and included both local groups and international touring acts.



Following the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and navigating through reduced capacities, shortages, inflation, and staffing changes, the Arts Council was ecstatic to be back in full swing. The first half of the season included the musical *The Last Five Years*, presented by Footlight Players, HALO's operatic selections entitled *Moonriver*, award-winning pianist David Fung, bluegrass artist Sam Bush, the Charleston Jazz and Symphony Orchestras, and much more.



The second half of the season encompassed more sold-out events, such as two-time Grammy award-winning, Gullah-inspired jazz band Rany Tanky, the California Guitar Trio, and of course, fan-favorite Liquid Pleasure. Audiences were delighted by the internationally acclaimed Tablao Flamenco dance group, as well as the 16th Annual Blues by the Sea Festival, which drew audiences of more than 400.



The events described above are just some of the successful activities sponsored last season. The Arts Council takes great pride in providing quality arts events for both the Kiawah community and its visitors.



# The Feasibility Study

## Background:

This past year, the Town of Kiawah Island hired a team of experts in developing and operating arts facilities to conduct a feasibility study on the need and opportunity for a new arts and cultural center for Kiawah Island. Such a venue would provide the Town's Arts and Cultural Events Council with its own performance space, allowing it to broaden the scope of programming. The Arts Council wrote the below letter in response to the study.

### A Letter From the Arts Council

*"All of us who serve on the Arts Council are residents of Kiawah. Some of us have served as volunteers for almost two decades; others are fairly new to the Council. We volunteered because we all have a passion for the arts and the desire to improve the quality of life for island residents and visitors. Our group is truly a "working committee" in every sense. We work closely with artists, agents, technicians, and venues and individually manage our sponsored activities. We constantly strive to bring new volunteers into the Council to reflect the preferences of our increasing and changing population.*

*Over the past several years, it's become increasingly difficult to find and schedule venues for the events – which is why we asked the Town to consider commissioning a feasibility study to determine if the development of a permanent facility might be possible. We were so appreciative that the Town (both staff and our elected officials) listened to us and responded positively to our request."*

## Update:

The Phase 1 findings presented at the April Town Council meeting displayed that the concept is feasible and responsive to community needs. On June 8, the Town partnered with the consulting team to host a workshop where more than 30 potential facility users gathered to discuss the physical and operational implications of new facilities and gave insight on design and operations.

The Town continues to work with the consultants on the study, which is currently in Phase 2, where physical and business plans for recommended facilities are being developed.



# **A Thank You**

## **From the Arts Council**

We are immensely grateful for the support of our community and want to thank our dedicated audiences for consistently attending and championing our events. Our patron base, largely consisting of Kiawah Island residents, fuels our passion for bettering the community through the arts.



We want to thank Mayor John Labriola, Town Administrator Stephanie Tillerson, and the members of Town Council for recognizing the importance of our work and supporting current and future endeavors.

We want to thank our vendors for helping us build a theatre from the ground up for every event. A special thank you to Andrew Higdon from Hope Sound, Matt Varner from Prime Time Productions, and Joseph Fox from Fox Music.

We want to thank our venues for working with us to help schedule events, despite their busy schedules. A special thank you to Barbara Steele at the Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Amy Cook at the Sandcastle, Michelle Duplessis at the Seabrook Island Clubhouse, Teri Hiers at Church of our Saviour, and Mary Lubic at Holy Spirit Catholic Church.

Lastly, we thank our fellow Arts Council members who volunteer their time and expertise for each event. From initially proposing artists to the day of the event, they are present every step of the way. The success of the program can be attributed to their dedication and passion alone. We can not wait for another successful Arts and Cultural Events season.

**David Wohl, Vice Chair**

**Bill Blizard**

**Judy Chitwood**

**Becky Hilstad**

**Jodi Rush**

**Joan Collar**

**Kristin Thompson**

**Dylan Keith**

**Kimberly Adele**

\*A special thank you to Arts Council member Dylan Keith for providing the photos within this Annual Report.

# 2022-2023 Highlights



The Footlight Players



Arts Council Member Jodi Rush



Tablao Flamenco



The Charleston Jazz Orchestra



Andy Irwin



David Fung



Hotsy Totsy



Glenn Brown



Nina Sandberg and Daniel Mumm



Sam Bush



Arts Council Member Becky Hilstad



Ranky Tanky