



TOWN OF KIAWAH
Arts
& CULTURAL
EVENTS

ANNUAL REPORT
2014 - 2015 SEASON



Arts & Cultural Events Council Chairman Mary Q. Johnson

Mary's Notes

The Town of Kiawah's Arts Council is entering its 12th year. That is so hard to believe. The Arts Council is still comprised of Kiawah homeowners who volunteer their time, expertise, and resource connections. The Town and its environs are so very fortunate for these events to be provided from Town funds. Many benefits are derived from the gathering of peoples from the Sea Islands. We have an opportunity to meet and greet each other in a friendly setting. For many residents it is a time to enjoy the arts without driving Bohicket Road at night. The intent of bringing local artists here has been to introduce them to Kiawah and Kiawah to them with the hope that residents would continue to support them downtown. As the Arts Council has grown in popularity it has become another reason to consider Kiawah a resort residence and/or a permanent home. The attributes that describe Kiawah as a destination has increased from natural beauty, golf, tennis, beach, wildlife, and so much more to include the arts in a culturally minded community. Each of which enhances the other.

This past year the Arts Council became the Arts & Cultural Events Council. In years past, ATAX dollars have funded certain events to promote tourism, as well as, many activities - such as extra police protection and beach patrol during tourism months. Now events that are of a cultural nature will be funded by the Cultural Events fund, not ATAX. The events presented so far are still of an arts nature, but could include other cultural events as we go forward. Arts events over the years have been the CSO, a ballet performance, and a Piccolo Preview. The Town recognizes that arts and cultural events are essential elements in the character and quality of life in the vibrant Town of Kiawah Island.

The program for the 2014/2015 season received overwhelming response. Attendance was the largest

ever. We usually use East Beach Conference Center 2-3 times a year. This past year we used it 7 times to maxed out attendance. We usually use Holy Spirit 2 times a year. This past year we used it 4 times to sometimes over full capacity. These venues hold 400 - 700 people. Wow! We use numerous venues. Without them there would be no events. Our thanks are truly heartfelt. We have a special arrangement for reduced fees for accommodations that is beyond wonderful. Before that we, members of the Arts Council, housed the artists. All are valued and are listed under "Thank you" further in this report. I believe I speak for all members of the Arts & Cultural Events Council, including our staff liaison, Stephanie Braswell, when I say what an honor and joy it is to serve the Kiawah community. We look forward to seeing you this next year.

Arts & Cultural Events Council Members

Mary Q. Johnson, Councilwoman & Chair

Bill Blizard
Judy Chitwood
Joan Collar
Arie DeZanger
Bob Hill
Becky Hilstad
Jodi Rush

Stephanie Braswell-Edgerton,
Administrative Assistant



PRESENTED BY TOWN OF KIAWAH ISLAND
ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS COUNCIL
21 BEACHWALKER DRIVE
KIAWAH ISLAND, SC 29455
843-768-9166 | WWW.KIAWAHISLAND.ORG

Chamber Music

Classical music is ageless.

It is interesting to compare the audience turnout from Kiawah and its environs to other areas, even our neighbor, Charleston. We attract what is considered a very large audience. And we are fortunate to have Church of Our Saviour as a perfect venue both in size and acoustics for chamber music. Originally played in palace chambers and later homes, it is intimate and has been described as “the music of friends.”

Chamber music has been a major part of the Arts Council program over the past 10 years. Early on locals organized themselves into string quartets, woodwind trios, and quartets with and without a piano or solo piano. As the program grew the chamber music program attracted the attention of artists who only performed in chamber groups. This year the **Horszowski Trio** were the first chamber performance. The group named for the legendary pianist Mieczyslaw Horszowski presented works from composers with whom Horszowski had personal contact.

The Arts Council members have on numerous occasions created performance programs with artists especially for our audiences. “**Barcino Baroque Tours Europe**” was one such program with local artists Margaret Kelly Cook and Ricard Bordas both vocalists, Phoebe Carrai, cellist, and Ignacio Prego de Oliver on period harpsichord who flew in for our concert. A variety of baroque vocal music from different European countries experiencing the different cultures were an enjoyable surprise for the audience. **Sophie Shao**, a cellist we wanted last year, came with pianist, **Milana Strezeva** who had been to Kiawah with the Manhattan Piano Trio. Both beautiful and quite accomplished performers delighted all. Another beautiful duo was **Di Wu** on piano and **Solomiya Ivakhiv** with violin. Di Wu had recently performed with the CSO with great reviews. A local resident loaned to Solomiya his Stradivarius violin for the concert.

The **Parker Quartet** was scheduled last year to perform just before their Carnegie Hall debut. They traveled to Kiawah, but the ice storm made it impossible to hold the concert. Disappointed that we could not have that concert before it debuted, we re-scheduled. They came this performance year and it was worth the wait.

James D’Leon, a solo pianist, was referred to the Arts Council. D’Leon began playing the piano at age 4 and quite the prodigy, he gave us an amazing concert.



Orchestras

Charleston Symphony Orchestra

The Kiawah Arts & Cultural Events Council brought two orchestral concerts in the 2014-2015 program year. The annual return of the **Charleston Symphony Orchestra** was held under a tent at Freshfields Village. With a larger than usual number of performers, a piano, and new program of music they entertained 500 people. The theme to Downtown Abbey, a new piece for the orchestra, was a calming piece and perfectly played on a cold, windy day. With a larger orchestral core, a piano, and a favorite, Yuri Bekker, as conductor of the program made for a perfect ending to the day that started with the CSOL house tour.



CHARLESTON JAZZ ORCHESTRA
**SWING!
SWING!
SWING!**
PRESENTED BY JAZZ ARTISTS OF CHARLESTON
SPONSORED BY
TOWN OF KIAWAH ISLAND ARTS COUNCIL
SUN 08 FEB 2015
**EAST BEACH
CONFERENCE CENTER
KIAWAH ISLAND**
7:30 PM \$10
CHARLESTONJAZZ.COM
843.641.0011
CHARLTON SINGLETON CONDUCTOR
PHOTO BY ALICE KENNEY

Charleston Jazz Orchestra

The Arts Council has wanted to have the **Charleston Jazz Orchestra** come to Kiawah for years. Somehow it never worked out until this year. Charlton Singleton and Leah Suarez came with the orchestra featuring many of Charleston's greatest local jazz players. Our first ever jazz orchestra and their first performance as an orchestral group on Kiawah. A night to remember!



CSO Chamber Orchestra

A chamber orchestra program was designed by **Yuriy Bekker**, also the conductor, along with **Volodymyr Vynnytsky**, pianist, and Antonio Marti on trumpet for the Arts Council. Titled, "Rebellious Leaders in Classical Music", it featured Mozart, Prokofiev and Shostakovich who were rebellious in their compositional form and style as well as against religious and governmental politics through their music. To have the CSO create a special program made up of a chamber orchestra and special guest has become one of the favorite performances of the season.



All that Jazz

Jazz is expressed in so many ways that defies assuming one jazz performance will be similar to another. This year's jazz events proved that to be ever so true. Jazz has many distinctive styles expressed by the musicians. We had smooth jazz, stride piano, blues, folk, soul, American, European, Latin - all individually presented vocally, as instrumentalist, soloists, and ensembles.

Etienne Charles One of the most compelling and exciting young jazz artists ushering the genre into ground breaking new territory is trumpeter/band leader Etienne Charles, who, still in his 20's, with his jazz quintet performed a myriad of rhythms from the French, Spanish, English, and Dutch speaking Caribbean. "Jazz with a Caribbean Twist" was new and fresh for our audience.

Peter & Will Anderson "Virtuosos on clarinet and saxophone" (New York Times) who performed with a wonderful guitarist slipped into the program due to touring. Delightful young men very much on the rise.

John Eaton, jazz pianist is one of the foremost interpreters of American music. One critic described his performances as "listening to John Eaton is as cozy as sitting around the parlor piano while a close friend interjects wise, witty remarks about composers, their foibles, and their contributions to American culture..." That was exactly what his event for Kiawah entailed. We hated for the evening to end.



Jazz vocalist **Rene Marie** is a legend. Her amazing voice and a commanding stage presence, was one of the highlights of our season. Her style is a mélange of jazz, soul, folk, and gospel with a theatrical ability to interpret the music. Never dreaming we could bring her to Kiawah, we had an opportunity due to mutual relationship with a local artist and her admiration for our support of local artists. She has performed for Spoleto twice. She received the award for Best International Jazz Vocal CD by France's Academie du Jazz and has been the headliner at major international festivals. She performed songs from her new Grammy nominated album "I Wanna Be Evil: With Love to Eartha Kitt".

Tribute to Thomas "Tommy" Gill Jr.



In 2014, the Kiawah/Charleston jazz audiences lost a beloved artist, composer and pianist, Tommy Gill.

Tommy Gill is attributed for establishing a jazz program for Kiawah that has only grown and become an integral part of each season. The Arts Council approached him to perform the first jazz event -three performances titled, "Tommy Gill & Friends." He returned many times with the wonderful jazz artists of Charleston and beyond. One of our best concerts was his concert that he had written titled, "Songs That Mean a Lot to Me". Tommy meant a lot to the Kiawah jazz program and he will be dearly missed.

Judy Carmichael

“Jazz Inspired”

Kiawah Island was the host for world-renowned jazz pianist Judy Carmichael to record her public radio show **“Judy Carmichael’s Jazz Inspired”** at the River Course Clubhouse. Judy Carmichael is a Grammy nominated jazz pianist/vocalist who Count Basie nicknamed “Stride” christening her the one to carry on the tradition of classic swing style piano. Now in its 15th year, “Judy Carmichael’s Jazz Inspired” radio talk program features Judy talking with celebrated creative people about their creative process and how jazz inspires their life and work. She’s interviewed everyone from Robert Redford to Billy Joel to Renee Fleming. “Jazz Inspired” is featured on 130 stations, including NPR and Sirius XM NOW Channel 122. The program gets 3,000 - 4,000 downloads a week on iTunes Podcasts. Judy promoted Kiawah throughout the year during her international performances, jazz periodicals, etc.



On March 2-4, 2015, Judy brought the show to Kiawah Island to do on stage interviews, perform with the guests for two days, and the third day she performed a concert with her trio. The recordings were later broadcasted on National Public Radio (NPR), online and through Podcasts. Judy and her jazz combo performed for the Kiawah audience in 2014 to a record number of people.. Anticipating about 100 attendees for the talk show recordings, 200 attended each recording and 350 people attended the performance.



On March 2nd, Judy interviewed pianist/composer **Dick Hyman**. Prior to the interview, Judy and Dick performed several songs together. Dick Hyman then played a short recital following the interview. Hyman has had a long career involving film scores, orchestral compositions, concert appearances and well over 100 albums recorded under his own name. He was a master of improvisation, which he displayed playing one familiar tune in 4 different styles. He has served as composer, arranger, conductor, pianist for many Woody Allen films.

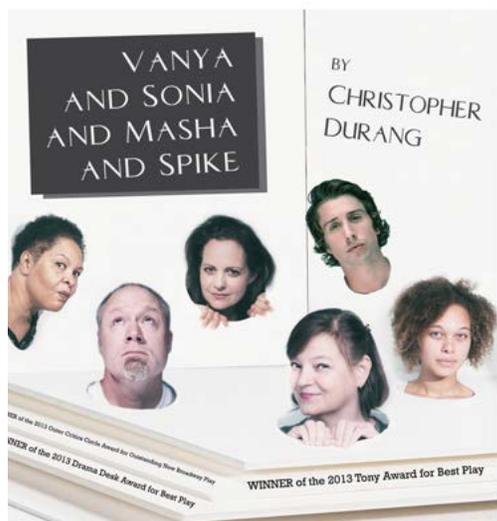
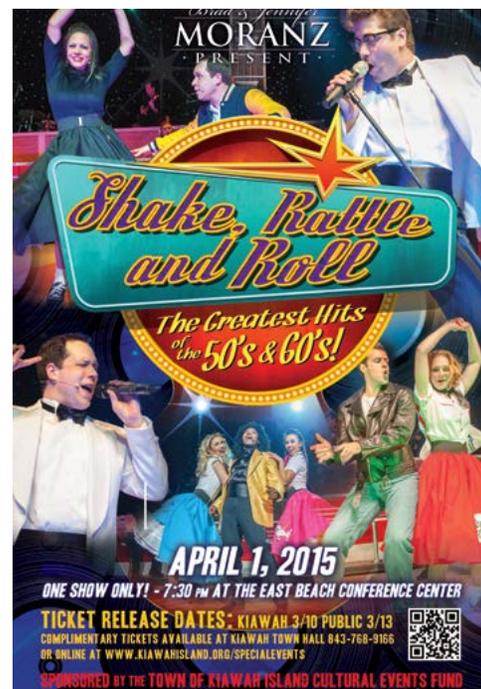
On March 3rd, Judy interviewed saxophonist **Eric Schneider** who toured for years with Earl Hines and with Count Basie. Eric entertained the audience with stories of his tours with these notable artists. Judy interviewed Eric and sang with him backed by guitar great Chris Flory. Chris has recorded with Rosemary Clooney, Benny Goodman and many others and bassist Pat O’Leary who’s toured and recorded with everyone from Lionel Hampton and Diana Krall to Illinois Jacquet and Sting.



“It was thrilling to discuss creativity and perform in the River Club’s intimate, elegant space, to an artistically sophisticated crowd who are excited about, and supportive of the Arts. The goal of “Jazz Inspired” is to enhance the appreciation of jazz and the creative process, and Kiawah’s gorgeous setting and artistically committed community is inspiring in itself, making Kiawah Island the perfect environment for our “Jazz Inspired” festival.”

Moranz Entertainment

Brad and Jennifer Moranz have created musical productions for the Charleston community for years. The Arts Council approached them to bring one of their productions to Kiawah. We were unsure if our venue could be adapted for their performances. They did not hesitate. We were able to bring what we thought would be a small performance through Arts Council funds and one large event with Cultural Events funds. They surprised us with a full musical production, titled **"The Great American Songbook"** with music from some of the 20th century's most enduring and well-loved songs to include Gershwin, Berlin, Porter, and Jerome Kern. The audience was ecstatic. In the spring they performed **"Shake, Rattle, & Roll"** which was another huge success. Scheduled during spring break and Easter, resident grandparents brought their adult children, but also the grandchildren. Singing and swaying, everyone went home happy. Memory building for many.



Theatre

The Arts Council currently allocates one theatre event a season. **PURE Theatre** has been the playhouse that has been selected for number of theatrical productions to Kiawah over the past few years. This year's play, **"Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike"**, received six Tony Award nominations and won for Best Play. The comedy play centered around the concept that the human condition never changes regardless of where you live or how successful or not one is.

Theatre productions are held at Turtle Point that with its intimate setting suits the performances. Risers that were used in the early years were no longer available. Renting risers has been challenging for Theatre and Ballet with different setups as well as additional expense.

Lowcountry Voices

"Gospel Meets Jazz"

Lowcountry Voices, a multicultural and ethnically diverse choral organization along with **Charlton Singleton** and his jazz group filled Holy Spirit Catholic Church to overflowing. Gospel and jazz moved together with a rhythm that captured the joy of the multicultural audience. All swayed, clapped, and left exhausted with huge smiles on their faces. Charlton Singleton moved among the singers and audience enchanting and energizing with his horn intertwining jazz and gospel and jazz. The choir of 60 singers featured soloists throughout the program who sang with passion and force. Audience members stood to show respect. Sometimes you just couldn't sit and hold in the rhythm one more moment.



Blues, Zydeco and More

Blues by the Sea is an eleven year old tradition as an open-air free blues festival at Freshfields Village. An afternoon of national blues artists on the green at Freshfields does attract blues lovers from far and wide. Three to four different musical groups perform their version of blues.

Former artists include: Shrimp City Slim, Shelly Waters, Guitar Shorty, Eddie Kirkland, Skeeter Brandon, Chick Willis, Beverly Guitar Watkins, Drink Small, James Cotton, Eddie Shaw & the Wolf Gang, Billy Boy Arnold, and more.

The American Music Celebration is in its ninth year. Also, an afternoon of artists with American roots perform on the green at Freshfields. Their music ranges from zydeco, bluegrass, and country, Cajun, and more.



Bands, Bands, Bands

Jason D. Williams

Well, the surprise enjoyment of the year was a Jerry Lee Lewis kind of performer. Rumored that he is Jerry Lee Lewis' illegitimate son, it is easy to believe if you came to this performance. What energy! Thank goodness he brought his own piano since he bangs with his hands and fists and boots. Whew! His rock 'n' roll or country or whatever music took us back in time. He had everyone up and about singing and clapping. The walls - they were a shakin'. Great fun and ever so different. Never having been a Jerry Lee Lewis fan, I still smile thinking of the evening. Loved the evening.

Liquid Pleasure has come a couple of times to be our "dance band". They know "our" music. I sometimes wonder why we put the tables in the room. Everyone is dancing. After the dance floor is full, they dance in the aisles, near their tables, or wherever there is space. A huge hit every year. They play Motown, Oldies, Beach, Classic R & B, Rock & Roll from the 50's to the 70's. They can do more, but if they get out of "our" music, everyone sits down. Easy to tell if you missed the mark.



Art Film Series

The Arts Film series appeals to film lovers who also love art! Each film selected is tied to an art theme whether its about an artists life or trade. They are held on a cold (Kiawah cold) Friday afternoon twice in January and twice in February. The art film series attracts an audience of 100-150 people for popcorn and cookies at the Sandcastle Community Center. This past year the series included the following four films:

"In Good Time; The Piano Jazz of Marian McPartland" who died last year was timely as we anticipated the radio recording on Kiawah by Judy Carmichael. Judy Carmichael has been described as the new Marian McPartland. The film gave us the inside view of the hundreds of interviews and recordings done by McPartland with various jazz artists.

"Orchestra of Exiles" told the story of a conductor who helped save Jewish musicians from the Nazis during World War II. Huberman, the conductor and violinist, became a humanitarian saving the musicians and their families.

Ballet admirers went behind the curtain of 6 aspiring dancers in "First Position" to see the dedication, pain, joy, and love of the art. A documentary of these six young dancers from around the world as they prepare for the Youth America Grand Prix, one of the most prestigious ballet competitions in the world.

"Tony Bennett, The Music Never Ends" spans more than half a century of concerts, TV performances, and more for the 89 year old singer and painter. With his son, Danny, he has a resurgence and a new popularity "crooning" much beloved American music.



Piano Bar Series

The Arts Council Piano Bar Series concept began as small informal way to appeal to Kiawah residents as a time to gather among friends or meet neighbors for some Island socializing enhanced with music.

Not meant to be concerts, it is background music in "piano bar" fashion at the Sandcastle where attendees bring wine and snacks to enjoy together and share.

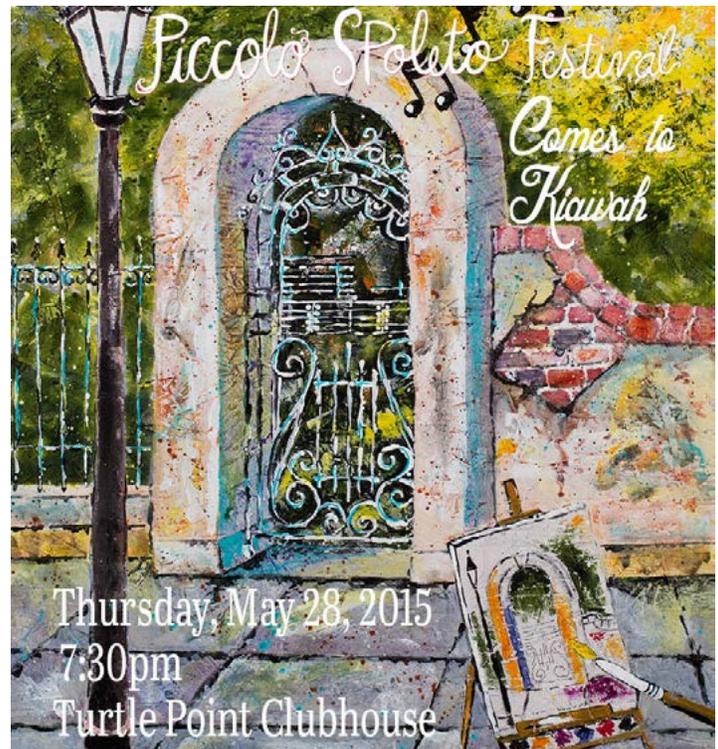
Piano Bar events have grown in popularity from 4 events to 6 events in the fall and spring. At first pianist were the only musicians selected for this series, but it has expanded to guitarist and jazz in a range of music styles.

Piano Bars feature local artists such as **Gary Pecorella, Gary Erwin, The Joy Project Group, Glenn Brown, Bill Howland and others.**

Piccolo Preview

Seven years ago the Arts Council approached Piccolo Spoleto to bring a sample program to the sea islands as a cultural outreach program. Piccolo Spoleto differs from Spoleto, USA in that it brings local artists and some national artists. Spoleto brings international artists.

We timed **“Piccolo Preview”** for the first Sunday in May to coincide with the release of the Piccolo program book. The program format consists of 3 different performance groups representing the different series within the festival program. The challenge always has been that the artists who will be in the program are not always in the area early May. Three years ago a second event was added titled, **“Piccolo Comes to Kiawah”**. It is a ticketed program event during the dates of the festival. It has been successful in attracting new people who are in the Charleston area for Spoleto and Piccolo.



Bringing a taste of Piccolo to the sea islands is an outreach program. The event has attracted a large audience with many people from neighboring communities and afar. It is an opportunity for Piccolo to connect with our community and to offer a selection of the types of events held during the festival. The Piccolo festival offers 500+ events during a 17 day period, many of which are free. It attracts 180,000 people to the Charleston area who stay in hotels, rental homes, etc. It has been a collaborative effort between the Kiawah Arts & Cultural Events Council and the Cultural Affairs Office for the City of Charleston.

Ballet

The Arts Council began the tradition of bringing a ballet to Kiawah in 2005. Uncertain if the venue could provide space for a ballet and an audience, we gave it a try. Now a staple in the program, the audience looks for a ballet program. Initially it was easy with a resident Charleston ballet company until they folded. The **Columbia City Ballet** was willing to come knowing that we did not have a performing arts facility. The first year was a collection of ballet vignettes. Then we had the opportunity for a full set and a full ballet, the ballet “Giselle.” A class from Ashley Hall came after having studied the story. Grandchildren of homeowners came. We placed them on the front row on the floor to see and enjoy. Wide eyed and in awe, they loved it. This year with the ballet, **“Cinderella”**, we timed it for school break and Easter.

The Arts Council brought a second ballet, **“Little Match Girl”**, from a new ballet company **Ballet Evolution**, based in Mt. Pleasant. The principals are from the Charleston Ballet Company whom we had enjoyed for years. The “Little Match Girl” ballet performed in early December. A young ballet company who created the performance and with a relationship with a local musical group who created the music as well. With live music and a small troupe, it was enchanting.

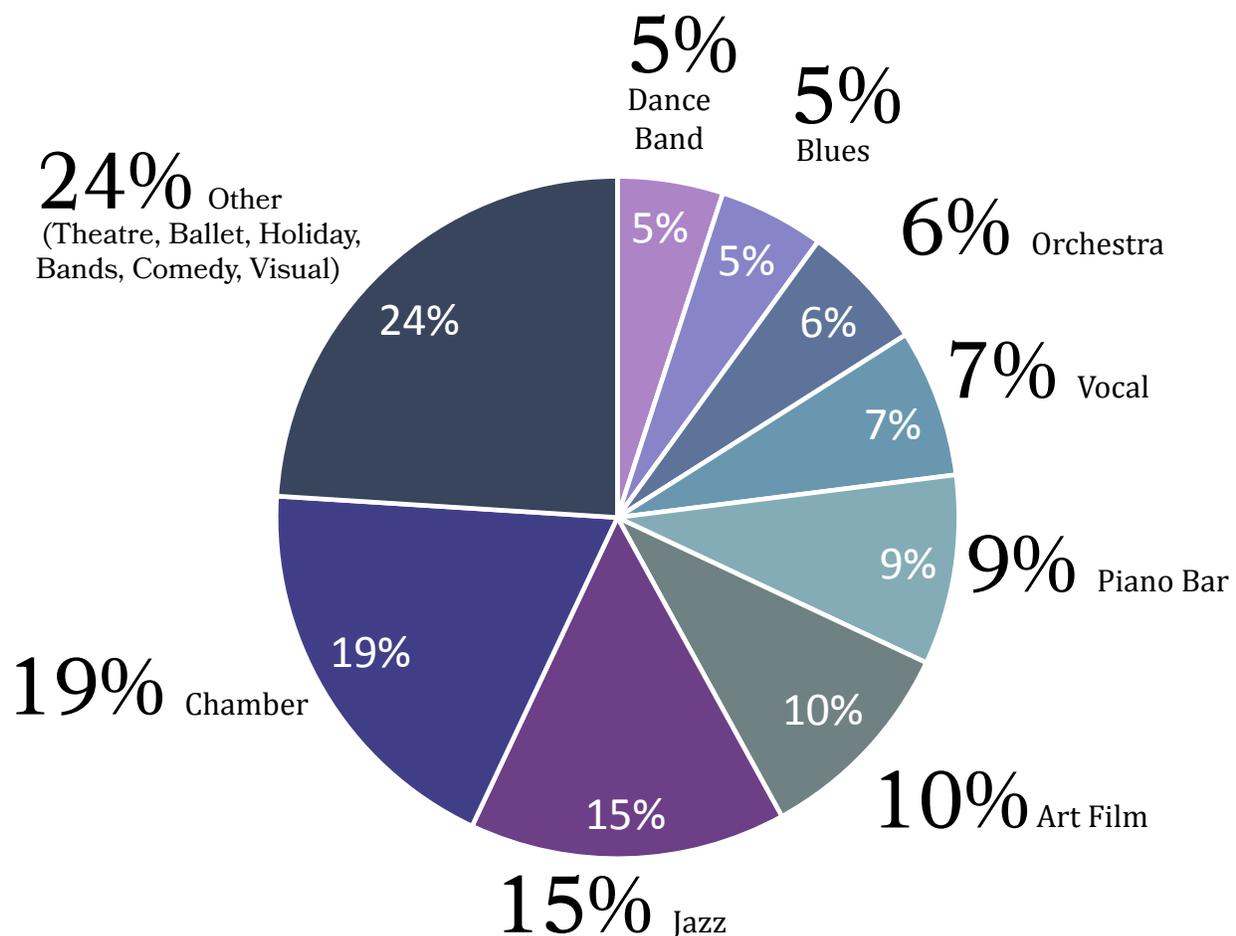


Trends and Opportunities

The Arts Council began in the fall of 2004. Chamber music has always held the majority interest over the years. Jazz first showed up as a single performance in 2007/08 when Tommy Gill worked with us for a series of 3 performances in different styles. Since then jazz has rivaled chamber music. The Council strives to provide the mix of musical styles enjoyed by our audience. Audience feedback is highly valued. For each program year a balance of musical genres is the intended goal. Factors that influence the end product are the perceived interest of the audience, touring dates of desired artists, budget, venue abilities or limitations, new ideas, opportunities presented by new artists and artist groups, and more.

Collaborations have developed over the years. In 2009/10 an interest to bring a Piccolo Preview to the sea islands has developed a strong relationship with Charleston's Cultural Affairs Office. The CSO and College of Charleston School of the Arts have provided artists and programs from the beginning. Each year brings a young artist concert primarily from the College of up and coming performers, many of whom have gone on to win awards and perform internationally. Annually there is a dance band, a theatre event, a ballet, and a holiday offering. An art film idea began as a showing of a performing artist with mini performance by a young artist. Its popularity grew into a winter showing of films with an art theme. The piano bar grew out of an interest to gather and listen to good music. Proposals are reviewed by committee, discussed, and chosen with consensus decision. As the years have passed, the popularity and awareness of the Kiawah arts program has increased. The trend of interests and the opportunities provided by artists ultimately define the program.

By The Numbers 2004-2015



Outreach and Engagement

The Kiawah Island Arts and Cultural Events Council communications and engagement throughout the Kiawah community and its environs has evolved over the years. In the beginning the Arts Council as it was called, used two main avenues to publicize upcoming events. Committee members would place posters in select places as well as through local publications, such as the Kiawah Property Owners publication, *Talk* and in the local newspaper, *The Island Connection*.

The Arts & Cultural Events Council does not have an advertising budget, thus posters were very important. The Town has an appointed staff member to aid in the creation of promotional materials for events. The Town worked with numerous people who flowed through that position. The quality of the promotional materials was limited by the ability of the person and the limitations of whatever software the Town was using at any given time. Then our present Arts Council liaison, Stephanie Braswell, arrived. With a great eye for color and design, she is now a very essential part of the team.

As the number of events grew, as well, as its popularity so did the need for better communication. The Residents Xchange was born as a list serve vehicle to communicate various Town activities to its subscribers. It was limited in that it could not support rich text. That led the Town to further our communication ability with email marketing. Email marketing gave us the ability to display the beautiful posters, support hot links to websites, and support audio/video clips. This year we introduced online ticketing. At first, we allowed 25% of the total ticket distribution to be dedicated to E-Tickets. The community responded well to this convenient feature leading the Arts Council to increase online ticket availability to 50% of ticket distribution. Online ticketing has increased our audience by reaching people outside our area.

The Town joined the social media world in 2013 with Facebook and Twitter accounts. There are certainly ways to move forward with communication. We have just completed a year of record audiences. Communication is vital to our audience awareness and, therefore, our success. We will continue to strive for better and more effective ways to reach out.

Thank You

Kiawah Town Council:

Mayor Charles R. Lipuma | John Labriola
Mary Johnson | Craig Weaver | John Wilson

Accommodations:

Wyndham Resort Rentals

Music:

Fox Music

Nick Miller, Tuner

David Childs, Sound Engineer

Venues:

The Kiawah Island Resort for use of East Beach
Conference Center and Turtle Point Clubhouse

Church of Our Saviour

Holy Spirit Church

The Kiawah Island Club for use of the River
Course Clubhouse

Sandcastle

Seabrook Island House Clubhouse