

40 Railroad Street  
Great Barrington, MA 01230  
T: 413-528-5485  
F: 413-528-3286  
cata@bcn.net  
www.communityaccesstothearts.org



Vol. 4 2005

Community Access to the Arts  
seeks to lessen the stigma of  
difference and disability through  
shared experiences  
in the visual and performing arts.

COMMUNITY ACCESS TO THE ARTS

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**Dawn Lane**  
Program Director

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**Chelsea DeSantis**  
Office & Gallery Manager

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Ulana Farmiga Chapman

## PHOTO CREDITS

Chelsea DeSantis  
Ulana Farmiga Chapman



Dear Friends,

The new year has brought many exciting changes for Community Access to the Arts. We have expanded our administrative offices across the hall, which allows us to bring back our weekly visual and performing arts workshops to our beautiful CATA studio/gallery, and we have hired Chelsea DeSantis as our Office & Gallery Manager. Chelsea joins us with an extensive background in set design and gallery experience.

We are excited to announce that we have received a \$50,000 challenge grant for general and operational support. Your generous donations will be matched dollar for dollar by our anonymous angel. Thanks to your participation, and the monies we raise through grants and special events, we can continue to advocate for art programs for people with disabilities. We're also excited by CATAdirect, a program that employs our participants in the arts and crafts industry, offers a new product line of hand-crafted items, and will become a new source of revenue. Through the arts we make wonderful opportunities for our community to come together!

CATA's theme this year is SenseABILITIES. Our senses transcend difference, regardless of culture, color, or ability. Our senses shower us with light and darkness, with sound and silence, and with the tastes, scents and textures of life. When you join us for our annual performance on May 13 and May 14, your senses will be

heightened as you witness for yourself CATA's talented performing artists. Experience their impressions of how they see the world in a way that continues to inspire us all!

Our newly designed studio/gallery will host CATA's Annual Art Exhibit this summer. On August 20th, come see the paintings, sculptures and other extraordinary expressions of creativity produced by our participants in collaboration with CATA's faculty artists. Also on display will be artwork created in a residency with special guest artist Tim Lefens, abstract painter, sculptor, and founder of Art Realization Technologies. This organization enables people with severe physical challenges to express themselves in color and form. We hope that this residency will open CATA's doors even wider to all the members of our community.

Our relationships—with community partners, participants and their families, staff, teachers and administrators—are the source that fuels CATA's work, allowing the voices, hearts and souls of so many to be heard and noticed. We welcome you to join us as a volunteer, a supporter, a dancer, a singer, an artist. We invite you to use your senses to experience the power of art. Please call and come visit us anytime!

Sandra Newman  
Founder & Executive Director



*Untitled*, by Cathy Marden  
Pastel on paper, 2004  
CATA ARTiculations series



*Flowers*, by Susan Booth  
Fabric and paper collage, 2004  
CATANotte series at Riverbrook Residence



*Untitled*, by Shaun Gallagher  
Paint on paper, 2004  
One-on-one series at BCARC Social Development Center



*Still Life*, by a Searles Middle School student  
Pastel on paper, 2004  
Program funded by a MCC Creative Schools grant

## From My Perspective

Tracy Roach, CATA Volunteer

I was a CATA Community Guide this past fall at a visual arts workshop at IS183 Art School of the Berkshires, and it was an extraordinary experience. Superlatives can be used indiscriminately, but I assure you that this is an occasion when they are appropriate. The hour that I spent making art with my CATA friends was absolutely the best hour of my week.

When I arrived at IS183 on the first day of class, I was curious and apprehensive. Ready to make a difference, represent the community, and be an able guide, I presented myself for duty. The instructor, Senta Reis, invited me to take a seat and join in. Puzzled, I found a seat. Hmm, okay, but was there nothing for me to do? Pass out paint and paper? No, just sit and have a good time. Maybe this was the orientation, or perhaps time was needed for everyone to feel comfortable with me before I got to work.

But everyone else seemed perfectly comfortable. A few participants waved. There were big smiles and a few names offered in introduction. It was clear at that moment, that I was most definitely in need of an orientation, but not the one I expected. I had the feeling that I had just met the community that would guide me to a place I had long forgotten. I would find comfort and belonging in a world of wonder and awe. I needed to check my coat of expectations, complications, and judgements at the door. The task was to just be me and have a good time. Eventually I would pass out some paper,

clean up some paint, and explain how to make glitter spread all over the paper instead of sticking in big globs. Mostly I swirled colors on paper, was very silly, and received buckets of love and acceptance.

Working with CATA is a gift. We receive far more than we give. Being a Community Guide is a time of simple joys and belly laughs. My new friend Teresa burst into giggles every time I came near and finally informed me between guffaws that I just made her crazy. I think that was a good thing but it didn't really matter because I make myself a bit crazy too! Katie put her head on my shoulder when I paused to see her painting and gave me a hug - just because. Michael shook my hand one day. Ellen and I rolled our eyes at every one, banged on drums, and made a great watercolor together. And Senta showed me that the essence of teaching is presence and compassion.

At the start of each class, my world weary cynicism was firmly in place. Within moments, a bright smile would catch my eye, Eric would remind us to sign our work, and the CATA magic would fill the studio. At the end, I would linger. Often Senta and I would stand before the artwork spread on the floor to dry. It was a stunning display and we would marvel at the explosion of creativity we had witnessed. There wasn't much to say. It was just a moment to smile and be grateful and hope the magic would touch the days that would pass until it was time to be guided again.

## CATA CALENDAR

### TOO MUCH TO STOP

**Monday, April 11, 7pm**

at the Images Cinema in Williamstown, MA  
"Too Much To Stop" is a documentary by filmmaker John Whalan, about Dancer/Choreographer Dawn Lane's work with Marisa Yudkin, a dancer with Huntington's Disease.

### HEALTHY ARTS

A free family event! An hour of entertainment followed by an hour of swimming at the Berkshire South Regional Community Center. Underwritten by Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation

**Saturdays 11am - 1pm**

**March 5th** - Vikki True & Peter Schneider

**April 2nd** - Michael Wolski as William K. Whiskers

**May 7th** - Roger Reed as Roger the Jester

**June 4th** - Meredyth Babcock as Dr. Marmalade

### SenseABILITIES

**CATA's Annual Performance & Benefit**

**Friday, May 13, 7pm**

Performance followed a reception with desserts & savories, \$125 per person

**Saturday, May 14, 1pm**

Matinee Performance  
\$30 suggested donation, children free

### CATA'S ANNUAL ART EXHIBIT

**Saturday, August 20**

at the CATA Studio/Gallery, Great Barrington, MA  
Join us for an exhibit of this year's artwork with guest artist, abstract painter & sculptor Tim Lefens.

### CIRCUS AT THE CENTER

**November 7 - 18**

CATA participants join Berkshire South members in a two-week circus residency by Circus Minimus. The residency culminates with a six-act evening community performance, Friday November 18th.

### CATApults

Anonymous  
Berkshire Bank  
Blue Q  
Gussie & Peter Greer  
Lenox Capital  
Massachusetts Cultural Council  
Emily J. Rechnitz & John Paladino  
Pumpkin Trust  
Joan & Robert Rechnitz Fund  
Joseph H. & Carol F. Reich Fund  
John A. Sellon Charitable Residual Trust

### CATApillars

Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation  
Berkshire Life Insurance Company of America  
Lelia & Erik Bruun  
Heather Wells Heim & Matt Heim  
Maria Sirois & Jonathan Kramer  
Estate of Ruth Krauss  
Leslie & Stephen Shatz

### CATAlysts

Allen A. Stein Family Foundation  
Chase Family Foundation  
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Harriet Heilbruun  
JPC Capital, Inc.  
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Liana Toscanini & Richard Migot  
Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation  
Elaine & Bernard Roberts  
Diane & Neil Saxton  
Elaine & Ben Silberstein / AJA Risk Management  
Gun & Richard Stanley  
June Thomas  
Tom & Suky Werman  
Liz Williams  
Alexandria Zahorian

### CATAfriends

Anonymous  
Lisa Atkin  
Elizabeth Azar  
Margaret & Peter Barrett  
Candace & Frederick Beinecke  
Sarah Bell  
Berkshire South Community Center  
Berkshire Taconic Community Fdtn  
Berkshire United Way  
Suzanne King & Richard Berlin  
Rosalind Berman  
Black Ice Entertainment  
Ruth & Andrew Bloom  
Birgit & Charles Blyth  
Maxine Bookless  
Nan Bookless  
Edna Bookspan

Ellen Braude  
Maggie & Don Buchwald  
Dawn Kramer & Steven Buck  
Esther & Jack Budnick  
Lorimer Burns  
Amy & Brian Butterworth  
Ulana & Dan Chapman  
Lillian Chasnoff  
Kathleen & Neil Chrisman  
Blanche Cirker  
The Clark Art Institute  
Ann Cohen  
Ellen Cohen  
Sue & Arnold Cohen  
Michael & Shawn Considine  
Ranny Cooper  
John & Elizabeth Costa  
Susan Crofut  
Bobbie Crosby  
Margery Davis  
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Alberta & Frank DeSantis  
Frances Dichter  
Michele & Jim Dodge  
Domaney's Discount Liquors  
Anne Douglas  
Debra & Peter Downs  
Egremont/Alford Cultural Council  
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Laurily Epstein  
Kathleen Favaloro  
Susan & Lawrence Feldman  
Sharon & Richard Feldstein  
Catherine & Robert Ferris  
John Forrest  
Frames on Wheels  
Ann Fredericks  
Victoria Fremont  
Mary Jo & Frederick Friedman  
Gatsby's  
Sylvia Ginsberg  
Morton & Claire Goetz  
Great Barrington Cultural Council  
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Virginia Cleary & William Greenspan  
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Sheldon & Charlotte Gross  
Jami & Ira Grossman  
Julie Scott & James Hall  
Paula & David Hellman  
Katja Henke  
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Lucy Holland  
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Kiin Media  
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Kwik Print  
Joan & David Lane  
Marilyn & William Larkin  
Lee Cultural Council  
Donna Leep  
Helaine & Sidney Lerner  
Chelsea DeSantis & Andrew Liebchen  
Marianne & Karl Lipsky  
Clara & David Londoner  
Maureen & Barbara Lucey  
Mahaiwe Tent  
Catherine & Matt Mandel  
Jaye & Ian Matchett  
Wendy & Thomas McCain  
Betsey & David McKernan  
Mary Linda McManus  
Mary Kate & Walter McTeigue  
Sally Eagle & Dan Mead  
Susan & David Millen  
Cora Miller  
Robin Modr  
Laurie & Craig Moffatt  
Monterey Cultural Council  
Margot Moomaw  
Judy Moss  
Mount Washington Cultural Council  
Elissa Myers  
Caitlin & Mitch Nash  
Mary & Seth Nash  
Suzanne & Ken Nash  
Beth & Michael Nathan  
New Marlborough Cultural Council  
Sandy Newman  
Nancy Nirenberg  
Linda & Bob Norris  
Janet & David Ornstil  
Elaine & Fred Panitz  
Alexander Papachristou  
Susan & Arthur Peisner  
Barbara & Marc Peltz  
Helice & Steve Picheny  
Pittsfield Cultural Council  
Catherine Plakun  
Maria Black & Bernard Plishtin  
Carol Pogash  
Jonathan Prince  
Railroad Street Reality  
Marian & Marshall Raser  
Ruth Ray  
Ray Murray Inc  
Jill Schwartz & Ron Ronan  
Lawrence Rosenthal  
Leslie Milton & David Rosenthal  
Joseph Roy  
Sue & David Rudd  
Pat & Marty Salvador  
Eva & Harvey Samo  
Pamela Sandler  
Martha Sauer  
Sandra Constantine & Stanley Schair  
Barbara Schulman  
Lowell Schulman  
Neal Schultz  
Charlotte & Mischa Schwartz  
Rita & Steven Schwartz

Seeds  
Sheffield Cultural Council  
Dawn Lane & Janice Shields  
Helen Sierles  
Roberta & Robert Silman  
Marion & Leonard Simon  
Deborah Sims  
Turbi & Paul Smilow  
Lindy Smith  
Lisa Smyle  
Society for Arts in Healthcare  
Aline & Jeffrey Sosne  
South Street Veterinary  
Julie Michaels & Pad Spence  
Rabbi Jack Stern  
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Stonover Farm  
Lorna & David Strassler  
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Kelley & Andrew Vickery  
Elliott & Harriet Vines  
Vlada Boutique  
Christopher Vought  
Anne & Alan Wallach  
Nicholas Wardle  
Frances Anthes & Charles Washburn  
Doreen Sawicki & Cynthia Wassell  
Eliza Hewat & Susan Weinberg  
Leila & Walter Weltman  
West Stockbridge Cultural Council  
Elizabeth Wexler  
John Whalan  
Wheeler & Taylor  
Carol & Carter White  
Eric Corbett Williams  
Marisa Labozzetta & Martin Wohl  
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Jane Goodrich & Jim Youngerman  
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RJ & Christine Zelehoski  
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Rena Zurofsky

CATA is a program affiliate with VSA arts Massachusetts.

If you would like to support CATA's programs you can make a tax-deductible donation by check or credit card, or make a gift of securities. Donations can be mailed in the enclosed envelope to: Community Access to the Arts, 40 Railroad Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. For more information call 413-528-5485, or email us at [cata@bcn.net](mailto:cata@bcn.net).

### \$50,000 Challenge Grant

We are pleased to announce a \$50,000 challenge grant for unrestricted general/operational support funds. CATA was notified about the match in January as a way to support CATA's scholarship program and administrative needs. All donations will be matched dollar for dollar. Please help us reach our \$50,000 goal!

### MCC Funding:

CATA received a \$4,500 operational support grant from **The Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC)**. The MCC promotes excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences, in order to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents and contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

### Art Cart Program Strengthened

**Berkshire Life Insurance Company of America** has awarded a \$2,500 grant to enrich CATA's Art Cart Program. The grant purchased 200 framed art reproductions, musical instruments, and a digital recorder. The Art Cart Program is a mobile lending library of artwork that serves 240 residents of six **Berkshire Healthcare Systems** elder care facilities: Fairview Commons, Hillcrest Commons, Kimball Farms Nursing Care Center, Mt. Greylock Extended Care Facility, Williamstown Commons, and North Adams Commons.



### Performance Passport Program

The Performance Passport Program offers our student participants and their families complimentary tickets to attend SenseABILITIES, CATA's Annual May Performance. The program offers the families a chance to witness and enjoy CATA's work in an environment that celebrates and advocates for arts accessibility for people with disabilities. This program is partially funded by the **Great Barrington, Monterey, Stockbridge and Tyringham Cultural Councils**.

### Program Scholarships

**Berkshire Bank**, a multi-year supporter of CATA's programs, has awarded CATA \$10,000 for program scholarships. CATA provides \$40,000 in program scholarships for its visual and performing arts programs.

### New Instruments

CATA received a gift of percussion instruments from **The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation Special Projects Program**. The 54 REMO instruments, with a retail value of \$1,500, include drums, tambourines, bells, maracas, and shakers. The instruments are free standing and/or designed to be held easily so that students with disabilities can enjoy the texture of the instruments and sounds they make.



### CATAdirect: Creative Employment

CATAdirect is a creative employment program for individuals with disabilities and an earned income venture ultimately intended to be self-sustaining and revenue-generating. After a successful test phase, CATAdirect began its first year of operations in February 2005, by employing ten individuals with disabilities for three and a half hours a week to create hand-crafted bags, pillows, and dolls. CATA has received a \$10,000 grant from **The Pumpkin Trust** and \$1,500 from **Alexandria Zahorian**, and is seeking additional underwriters. CATA welcomes Cindy Kelly as CATAdirect Coordinator.

### CATAeducation

CATAeducation is a new school-based initiative program for Berkshire County public schools that offers a dollar for dollar matching grant to establish weekly CATA enrichment programs within its special education framework. **The Joseph H. and Carol F. Reich Fund** at the **Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation** provided the lead gift of \$10,000 to establish the program. We welcome additional donations.

### Healthy Arts

**Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation** funded the second year of Healthy Arts, a free community program that offers one hour of entertainment led by CATA performing artists, followed by an hour of open swim. The program is a collaboration with Berkshire South Regional Community Center, Community Health Programs, and CATA.

### CATA Tag Sale 2004

The 2nd Annual **Massive Sale of Fashions & Finds** in December 2004, raised \$6,274. Special thanks to all the tag sale volunteers, those who donated merchandise, shoppers, and event co-chairs Gussie Greer, Catherine Mandel and Aline Sosne.

### CATA and Southgate: The Sense of Joy

For the past two years, two CATA faculty artists, visual artist Susie Hardcastle, and singer and songwriter JoAnne Spies, have led a series of CATA workshops at Southgate, a day program of Berkshire County ARC in Pittsfield, MA. CATA has many such workshops throughout Berkshire County, but the story of this group of artists is particularly noteworthy. Southgate Program Director Carol Brenner-Ford describes the people who take part in the workshop series as, “unique individuals with unique personalities, facing a variety of challenges.” Eleven are in wheelchairs, most are non-verbal and visually and hearing impaired.

At the start of her visual arts series at Southgate, Susie felt overwhelmed and inadequate. How could she use art to communicate with people who were non-verbal, and couldn't see or hear very well? As they worked on their first project together, Susie soon discovered that there was a sense of joy in the room. She used tactile materials such as felt, corrugated cardboard, and silky ribbons, as the sense of touch was so important to these individuals. The participants responded to her classes through gesture, movement, and tone of voice to indicate what they liked and what they wanted to be a part of. “I learned that the atmosphere of activity was important to them, that they loved the feeling of activity,” said Susie. “The people who work at Southgate are so caring, and have deep insight into each person there. I called Carol and met with the staff to discuss how I could push the art experience for the individuals further.” Inspired by her meeting with the staff, Susie picked up discarded roll-up blinds for the participants to paint on. “We squirted out paint on them, and the participants put their hands right into the paint and smooshed it around. A few even picked up paintbrushes!” In the next few weeks as they painted, Susie was overwhelmed by the sense of joy and involvement in the room. The individuals hummed, moved as they painted, and gave the impression that they loved the tactile feeling of the paint on the shades. As the program continues, Susie, the individuals, and their staff, will turn the painted shades into large hanging dragon sculptures with painted cardboard and rug-scrap heads.

JoAnne's music class is quite different from Susie's art class. JoAnne arranges the individuals in a circle, brings tambourines, drums, shakers, rain sticks, a xylophone, and leads them in song and music with her guitar. JoAnne also developed a special



A participant at Southgate moves to the music in JoAnne Spies workshop

activity, The Duet Game, to help all the participants be able to move to the best of their ability. She passes a xylophone around to the staff and asks them to translate the movements of the participants into sound. For those that sit in wheelchairs, the slow tapping of a finger becomes a slow beating of a tone on the xylophone. As the slow tap is joined by a sweeping roll of the head, the staff sweeps the stick up and down the notes on the xylophone. Movement that might otherwise be overlooked is placed center stage. Describing The Duet Game, Susie said, “As you watched the two come together, you really felt that someone was appreciating their every movement and that the participants were actually dancing!”

In a letter to CATA, Carol wrote: “Each week our program is filled with love, laughter, art and song. JoAnne and Susie in their unique ways, involve each individual in participation. The folks smile and sing and make absolutely beautiful music in JoAnne's presence. The incredible art pieces created under Susie's loving attention, decorate and warm our walls and hearts. My individuals are truly appreciated and their efforts are praised and valued through this workshop series. CATA to us equals: Caring Artists Transcending Antipathy. We appreciate and salute your valuable contribution to the community.”

It's hard to say who gains the most from this program, the individuals, the staff at Southgate, the artists, or CATA as an organization. What is obvious is that everyone who encounters the artists at Southgate are inspired by their spirit, the art they make, and the magic of connection and meaningful relationships.

### Creative Schools Program

A Massachusetts Cultural Council Creative Schools grant is funding a special arts program for fifteen Berkshire Hills Regional School District middle school students. The Creative Schools Program is designed to help schools and districts strengthen teaching and learning in the arts, humanities, and sciences through activities that directly connect with school improvement plans. The Searles School program, overseen by Joyce Bulter, Ed.D. Director of Teaching & Learning, is a two-year program based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Health Framework that

includes using the arts to build self-esteem, develop self-expression, promote creativity, and encourage students to want to attend school.

The program will be divided into 3-eight week series of ninety-minute classes taught by CATA faculty artists Marlene Marshall, Vikki True and Roger Reed, using the mediums of visual art, music, and juggling. Artwork and showings of performance pieces will be shared at school events throughout the school year. Next year the program will include integrating the students with CATA participants, encouraging an exchange of mentorship roles and lessening the stigma of difference for everyone involved.

Community Access to the Arts proudly presents



# ABILITIES

## CATA's Annual Performance & Benefit

**May 13, 2005** 7pm

Performance followed by a reception of desserts & savories  
\$125 per person

**May 14, 2005** 1pm

Matinee Performance  
\$30 Suggested donation, children free

At the Founders' Theatre  
Shakespear & Co.  
Kemble St • Lenox MA

Save the Date

### ADVERTISE:

Purchase an ad in the senseABILITIES program  
Deadline: April 1st  
View, print, and mail an ad form at:  
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or call 413-528-5485.



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