



Reimagining

the Adirondack Experience
THROUGH THE POWER OF THE ARTS

C A M P A I G N



Harmonizing Past, Present, and Future at Caroga Arts

A Message from Kyle Price Artistic and Executive Director

The Caroga Lake community has been an integral part of my life since childhood – family summers at my grandmother’s camp, and many happy days at Sherman’s Amusement Park. Like many others, I have long recognized the magic and beauty of Caroga Lake. In 2012, while studying at the Cleveland Institute of Music, I began dreaming of launching a chamber music festival in this special place. That summer, I brought seven fellow musicians and friends to Caroga Lake and we performed our first concert series at the Caroga Chapel. And yes, we all bunked at my grandmother’s place.

Thanks to the generous support of the community that shared our dream and believed that “if you build it, they will come,” we have grown from those humble beginnings into the Caroga Arts Collective, now in its 12th year attracting artists and audiences from all over the world. And, just as my grandmother did, our community has consistently opened its doors to give our visiting artists and educators a home away from home.

Now, with our eye on the future, we are launching our **Reimagining Campaign**, which we detail here. I invite you to join us as we work to create a true and lasting home for Caroga Arts, one that will sustain and grow our performance and education programs throughout the year, reach an ever-broadening audience, drive regional economic growth, create housing for our artists onsite, build an even stronger community presence, and create new opportunities for everyone to explore the arts.

Kyle

Enhancing Adirondack Culture and Community

The Caroga Arts Collective is an oasis for artists, audiences, and community members alike, nestled in the Southern Adirondacks. Captivating the imaginations of all visitors, Caroga Arts provides unforgettable experiences and opportunities in and around the historic center of Caroga, NY, by:

- **Bolstering the economy of Fulton and Montgomery Counties.** We are striving to build Caroga’s reputation as a destination for those who love the mountains and love the arts.
- **Growing the Caroga Lake Music Festival.** In just a dozen years, we have grown from a one-week chamber music concert series to a months-long internationally recognized festival showcasing multiple genres. Our summer residency now features renowned soloists, chamber musicians, and orchestral professionals, in collaboration with international touring guest artists.
- **Expanding arts educational opportunities for youth and adults.** We are launching a mentorship program for high school students interested in pursuing music in college. Our SPACE Education Program (String Project & Arts Collaborative Education) partners with local school districts to help provide cutting-edge, accessible, affordable arts education. SPACE also assists day camps focused on music. And for adults, it provides lessons, concerts, and jam session events.
- **Bringing world-class artists to the Southern Adirondacks.** Through the Artist Residency program, artists – musicians, filmmakers, photographers, writers, poets, choreographers, and sculptors – are immersed in the life of our community throughout the year. While here, they present educational workshops, perform in local K-12 schools and at other community organizations, and have the opportunity to collaborate with other artists to strengthen their art form.
- **Celebrating with the community.** Caroga Arts plays a big part in community-wide celebrations, such as Trunk or Treat for Halloween, holiday tree lighting, Memorial/Independence/Labor Day concerts, Hispanic Heritage Month, and much more.





Photo: Josh Bovee



Photo: Kathy Esposito



Caroga Arts Growth and Impact by the Numbers



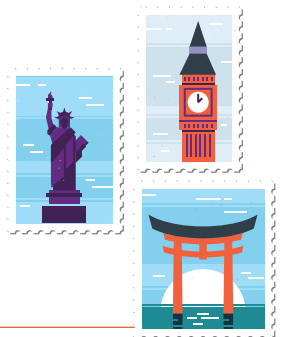
13 years of music festivals

10 years of arts education



Expanded from 2 performances in our first year to **50** in 2024

In 2024, the summer festival showcased more than **150** artists, from **20** states and **9** countries



15,000 attendees in 2024

20,000 kids immersed in the magic of music reimagining the Caroga experience through the power of the arts





Caroga Arts Reimagining Campaign

The heart of Caroga Arts is music and our campus, which has been supported by two generous gifts of property – the historic century-old Sherman's Amusement Park, home to the annual festival, and Myhil, a future dedicated space for our resident artists to stay, practice, network, and collaborate. The renovation and building plans for these properties will open a world of opportunity for year-round performance and engagement, and preserve and enhance the vibrancy and heritage of the region.

Sherman's: From Historic Dance Hall to Cutting Edge Center for Music and Education

With its history of hosting iconic big bands in the 1920s and 1930s, Sherman's provides the perfect setting for an engaging and memorable concert-going experience. Our goal is to renovate our unrestored, open-air performance space into a state-of-the-art outdoor amphitheater that takes full advantage of the stunning view of the lake. Following the construction of the stage and stagehouse, three tiered amphitheater seating sections will be added with delectable food and drink purveyors, guest restrooms, and an enticing Adirondack gift shop. Construction on the stagehouse will begin in 2026. Future project phases will surround the stagehouse with additional performance and practice spaces, giving new life to historic structures while maintaining their original character. The original Sherman's Dance Hall will be restored and renovated to provide a year-round flexible venue for dining, music rehearsal, lessons, and performance and to foster community life in the region. Students and adults will be able to learn from great artists through programs at local schools and community classes.



Final project phases at Sherman's site will, as the Town of Caroga Comprehensive Plan envisioned, become a true town center providing a boardwalk, docks, picnic pavilion, and playground. In a nod to Sherman's colorful past, the carousel and Ferris wheel will be fully preserved.

A 1920s Mecca

In the 1920s, a newspaper ad claimed Sherman's Dance Hall was "the mecca for pleasure seekers throughout the Capital District," offering "marvelous music for dancing." It was the gateway for many to not only the Adirondacks, but to the possibility and freedom of summertime. Over 100 years later, we have the honor to celebrate this heritage by reawakening the Southern Adirondacks with the power of music year-round.





Myhil: Creating a Home and a Hub for Internationally Renowned Artists

For a decade, the community has graciously provided housing for visiting artists who perform at Caroga events, but our resources are becoming more strained with each passing year. There is a growing need for a dedicated space for artists to live, work, and teach during their residencies. Such a space will attract even more talented artists to Caroga Lake. Brothers Bruce and Richard Veghte, sharing our vision for an innovative home for the arts in the Adirondacks, have gifted to Caroga Arts the property that was once the summer home of Junius Myer Schine and Hildegard Schine, called Myhil. Myhil, currently undeveloped land, is the ideal place to build a campus containing a lodge, complete with classrooms and residence rooms. The lodge would be surrounded by 25 cabins to house over two dozen artists at a time, and eventually, a dedicated teaching lodge would be added to the site. Myhil would serve artists and students alike.

The projected cost of \$2 million to develop the lodge structure is already more than 70 percent funded, which allows us to put Myhil on the fast track to breaking ground in 2025.



Expanding Innovative Arts Programs for All

A key goal of the Caroga Arts Collective is to serve as many of the region's individuals as possible. Paid fellowships for mentors and copious scholarships for students would include:

Resident Artists interested in attending a two-year fellowship to build pedagogical skills and act as teachers to Caroga Arts' various community/regional programs while also providing unique performances and collaborations across the region.

Acclaimed Guest Artists in their respective fields visiting once-a-month to work and collaborate with resident artists and providing master classes and interaction opportunities for participants of Caroga Arts community programs and events.

Participants in Caroga Arts community programs, including audience members and guests from our many events, seeking an opportunity to interact, learn, and contribute to the artistic process.





Message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors



Rick Ruby, Chairman

Caroga Arts' long-term impact on the Southern Adirondack region has the potential to be economically and culturally transformative. Our Founder's strategic vision to create a sought-after oasis for artists, community members, and art patrons alike inspired those of us in the lake communities to rethink Sherman's Park, the centerpiece of Caroga Lake, and consider what this place could be fueled by the power of the arts.

What started as a capital campaign for the amphitheater and Myhil is now a comprehensive campaign to raise the necessary revenue for the broader Caroga Arts strategic vision for an oasis for the arts in the Southern Adirondack lake communities. Our campus master plan will allow us to expand the Caroga Lake Music Festival, youth education and artists-in-residence programs, as well as the construction of the new stagehouse and artist lodge. With the funds we have in hand or pledged, we need to raise \$5 million by 2026.

The shift to the Reimagining Campaign will position Caroga Arts not only as a hub for internationally renowned artists but also strengthen its impact as a local partner in the region's economic development. Under the guidance of the Saratoga Springs-based national development counsel, Innovative Resources, the Reimagining Campaign will build on the incredible momentum of the Sherman's Legacy efforts to bring the magic of music to the Adirondacks all year.

While funding the entire campus master plan over the coming decade has a significant cost of \$28.6 million, there is a demonstrated interest from donors and funders to accelerate that timeline and get this done!

Our plans to expand programs, create a sustainability reserve, and transform our vision into reality will require an ongoing focus on growing philanthropic support, securing more grants, and increasing earned revenue from ticket sales, merchandise sales, and rentals.

Please join us and all who are passionate about the arts, the future of the Adirondacks, and the power of music and culture to enrich our lives and communities by making a gift to the Caroga Arts Collective and our shared vision for the future.

Rick

Rick Ruby, Chairman
Caroga Arts Board of Directors

International Artistic Advisory Council

We are excited to introduce the Inaugural Caroga Arts Collective International Artistic Advisory Council! The council, chaired by Deborah Barrett Price, consists of renowned leaders in their artistic fields and will help us elevate the visibility, reach, and mission of Caroga Arts Collective.

A 2018 MacArthur Fellow, **Matthew Aucoin** is an American composer, conductor, writer, and pianist. His music has been performed by artists ranging from Yo-Yo Ma to the Philadelphia Orchestra. Aucoin is a co-founder of the American Modern Opera Company.

Hailed by Jon Batiste as “one of the world’s most important saxophonists,” **Eddie Barbash** was a founding member of the house band for the Late Show with Stephen Colbert and currently tours the world with Cory Wong and the Wongnotes.

Mike Block is a multi-style cello player, composer, singer, and educator. Mike has been a member of the Silk Road Ensemble, founded by Yo-Yo Ma, with which he earned a 2017 Grammy Award.

Jeff Haydon, president and CEO of Ravinia Festival, brings extensive experience in the nonprofit and music festival sectors. His leadership background includes serving as CEO of the Caramoor Festival in Katonah, New York, and as executive director of the Ojai Music Festival.

Ayane Kozasa is the violist of the renowned Kronos Quartet and a founding member of the award-winning Aizuri Quartet. She is on the viola faculty of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Kevin Kwan Loucks, CEO, Chamber Music America, is a Juilliard-trained Korean-American concert pianist, educator, and arts entrepreneur.

Tommy Mesa is a Cuban-American cellist who has established himself as one of the most charismatic, innovative, and engaging performers of his generation.

Violist **Deborah Barrett Price** is the founder and artistic director of the Chamber Music Connection, Inc., a nationally recognized program providing education, service, and performance opportunities to students of all ages and skill levels.

Cole Randolph, a Posse Foundation Leadership scholar, is a cellist in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

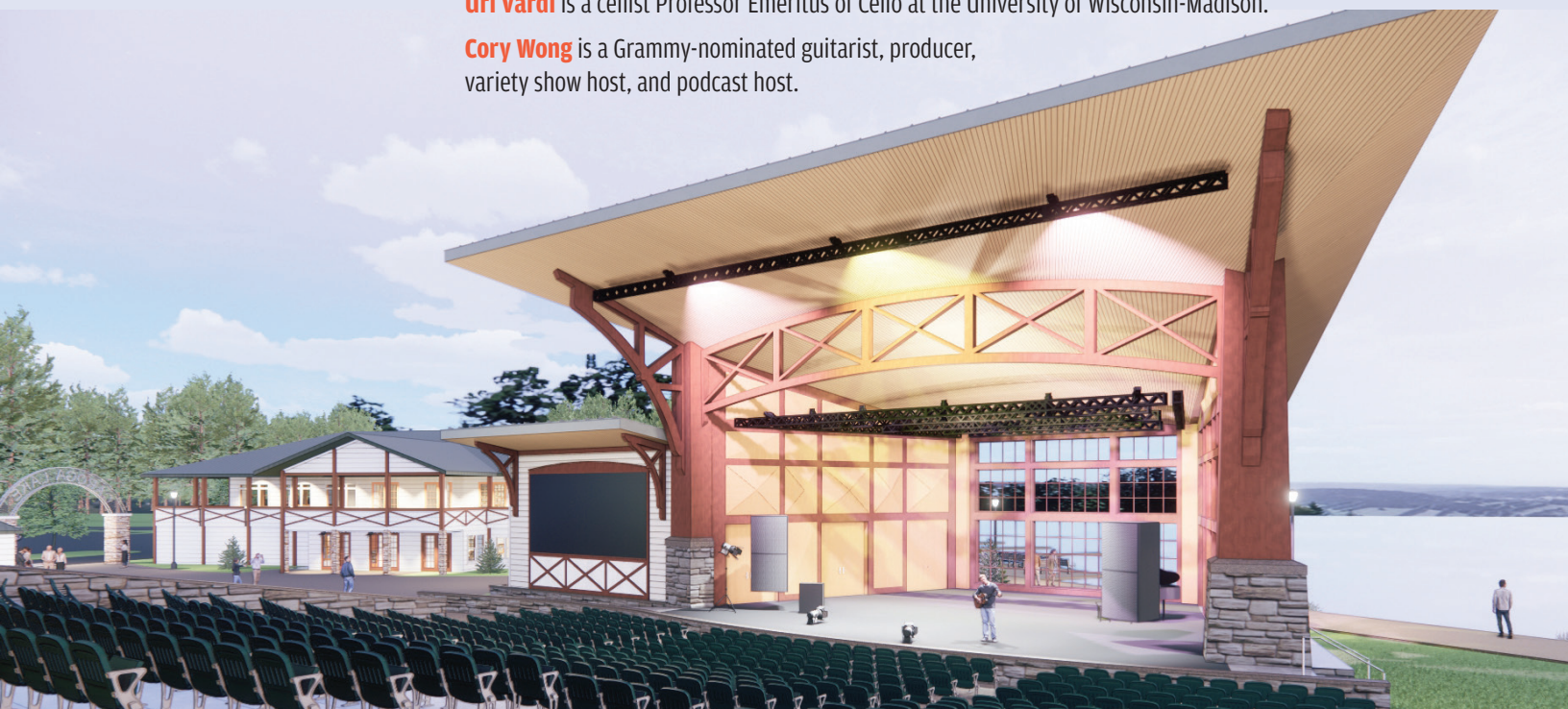
Jim Rosenthal is a partner in the law firm Cohen Rosenthal & Kramer LLP and a lifelong music lover.

Cara Samantha is a Grammy Award-winning background vocalist, American Idol alum, and graduate of the University of Miami’s Frost School of Music. Cara has been a guest and resident artist at Caroga Arts since 2014.

Originally from Gloversville, **Renée Schine Crown** spent her childhood summers at MyHil on Caroga Lake. Based in Chicago, she is a founding member and former president of the Women’s Board of Northwestern University and has been Honorary Chair of the Board of the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation.

Uri Vardi is a cellist Professor Emeritus of Cello at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Cory Wong is a Grammy-nominated guitarist, producer, variety show host, and podcast host.





Join Our Engagement Network

We are forming an Engagement Network made up of individuals who believe in our mission, impact, and value and can help us cultivate and engage philanthropic investors for our comprehensive campaign. Engagement Networkers identify, cultivate, and open doors to individuals and entities who can invest in Caroga Arts' vision and impact.

As a member of the Engagement Network you would undertake the following at your own pace:

- 1. Open doors.** Develop strategies with us – open doors to prospective supporters and influencers.
- 2. Tell others why you are investing in Caroga Arts' future and persuade others to join you.** Reach out and make connections with people who share your values. Our development counsel will support and coach you with materials and talking points so you're ready to talk about our impact and strategic efforts to grow.
- 3. Ask.** If someone is interested in getting closer to Caroga Arts, ask them to consider investing in the Reimagining Campaign and then help keep them connected and connecting.
- 4. Gratitude.** Help us thank those who share our collective vision and show them how they're making a difference with their support.

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Caroga Arts Collective, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) community benefit, nonprofit organization.
Tax ID: 81-2778740

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