



ABOUT US...

Founded in 1955, South Shore Art Center's (SSAC) mission is to enrich the communities south of Boston by engaging artists and by fostering an understanding and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions and education.

For 63 years we have worked tirelessly to meet this mission by installing thought-provoking exhibitions; hosting unforgettable events; providing a space for making art; and offering courses and workshops to assist artistic growth and journeys. More than 1,000 members strong, our geographic reach extends to 45 communities south of Boston. We have grown to become a key anchor for the region's vibrant and thriving art community, each year welcoming nearly 20,000 individuals – of all ages, abilities and incomes – to exciting visual arts experiences held in our facility and at satellite sites.

In the coming year, South Shore Art Center has exciting plans to build on our impact, with more targeted outreach to teens and elders, strategic partnerships with community groups serving disenfranchised populations, and new directions in our educational programming. We also plan to invest in the organizational systems and infrastructure to support and sustain this strategic growth to increase our reach and impact.

Programming and Creative Opportunities at South Shore Art Center

Arts Education

South Shore Art Center offers 120 classes annually for students of all ages and learning levels. Many students seek instruction in foundational art classes such as Drawing, Watercolor, Pastels, Oil or Acrylic Paint, or Ceramics, and these remain the mainstay of our course offerings. That said, we continually pilot new learning opportunities in different and emerging media. In recent years, we introduced *Animation Basics*, *Claymation*, *Comic and Sequential Art*, *Digital Image Transfers*, *Fiber Arts*, *Film-making* and more. We complement our course curricula with a series of *Visiting Artist Workshops* led by high-profile artists from across the country.

Key Community Programs and Partnerships

- *Artist-in-Residence*: Now in its 14th year, SSAC's Artist-in-Residence program introduces elementary school students to the visual arts by bringing them to our facility and partnering them with a working artist, free of charge. Since the program's inception, nearly 15,000 students have engaged in interactive learning experiences at SSAC; demand continues to outpace capacity.
- *ART Stars*: In 2012, SSAC launched ART Stars to engage local teens in an invitational collaborative art project. We ask art teachers at high schools throughout the South Shore to nominate students based on two criteria: artistic ability and demonstrated enthusiasm for the opportunity to create alongside professional artists and peers. Each year, ~25 teens participate and collaborate on the design and painting of public art pieces, which are installed on our exterior wall.
- *Looking at Art*: This informal and interactive drop-in program, linked and adapted to current exhibitions, offers critical public access to arts experiences.
- *Preschool Picnics*: Adapted from the *Looking at Art* model, *Preschool Picnics* offers interdisciplinary art activities designed to help our youngest residents engage in art, connect to exhibitions and understand the role of art and artists in the world around them.
- *Arts to Go*: SSAC develops arts curricula for elementary and middle schools that connects to their core subject learning. We are soon to launch an in-depth study of how art can help fuel social revolutions and political campaigns (i.e. Shepherd Fairey's HOPE posters), which links to seventh grade social studies' curricula.

- *Community Partnerships:* SSAC has developed strategic partnerships with Bridges by EPOCH, Willcutt Commons, South Shore Support Services, The Arc of the South Shore and other local organizations serving elder, disabled and/or disenfranchised individuals with a goal of strengthening access through visual arts.

Festival, Exhibitions and Cultural Events

- *Arts Festival:* On Father's Day Weekend every year, SSAC hosts a three-day arts festival on Cohasset Common. Over 14,000 people from the South Shore and beyond attend this seminal event at which they encounter over 400 works created by artists from across the nation for the juried and members' exhibitions under the main tent.
- *Exhibitions:* SSAC installs ~40 exhibitions each year at our four onsite galleries, and at satellite exhibition space. Exhibitions are vetted through a rigorous review process by our Exhibition Committee, and include two national juried shows annually, ensuring talent from across the country comes to South Shore Art Center. We host openings and gallery talks, open to the public and free of charge, to draw audiences and create opportunities for community dialogue with curators and artists about the show's genesis, philosophy and the artwork presented.
- *Cultural Events:* SSAC's creatively-themed events serve as important community engagement vehicles, introducing wide audiences to our mission, and establishing us as the center for South Shore creativity of all disciplines. We recently hosted BEHIND THE LENS to celebrate film arts and film-making in MA, featuring the set photographer and executive producer of the Amy Shumer's *I Feel Pretty*, which was filmed here in Boston.

Goals and Objectives

South Shore Art Center's overarching goal is to serve as a comprehensive visual arts resource for the South Shore – as a place where community unites in creativity. Our objectives are as follows: SSAC continues to innovate our programs and cultural offerings. Our goals share a common objective of ensuring the Art Center remains

- Offer comprehensive and premier visual arts education for all ages and levels.
- Advance local artists.
- Expand and enhance community participation.
- Build audiences to cultivate a more vibrant creative community.
- Strengthen our art association.

Evaluating and Building on our Success

South Shore Art Center evaluates our organizational and program impact by assessing performance against metrics articulated in our five-year strategic plan, completed in 2015. Relying on program registration data, membership levels, educational evaluations, outreach surveys, event/exhibition attendance and observation, we track the following:

- Number and ages of individuals taking our art classes and workshops each year; and the percentage of new students.
- Number of schools and community groups participating in our outreach programs.
- Communities represented in our membership and programming, with attention to attrition and new acquisition.
- Feedback from students and partnership coordinators on program experiences, faculty and course offerings.
- The number of exhibitions and cultural events hosted annually; the number of local artists represented therein; and attendance.
- The number of art works sold and the cumulative art revenues for both the Art Center and local artists.

Based on evaluative metrics and audience feedback, the Art Center plans to focus on diversifying our art education, particularly with opportunities to explore digital platforms, as well expanding our community partnerships. We will also invest in much-needed systems upgrades, particularly our website, to facilitate our outreach, activate our new approaches, and create a more user-friendly registration experience for our students. With innovation comes positive change and greater opportunity for the whole community.