

Your regional non-profit center for the performing arts, film & education

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2020



THERE WILL BE  
A BRIEF INTERMISSION

**GARDE**  
ARTS CENTER

*A Year of  
Community Connection*

## A Year of Memorable Performances ...and Postponements

*The Garde's final public event in 2020 was on March 8 with a screening of the movie 1917 - set in the year before the flu pandemic of 1918. More than 4900 patrons attended the Garde that week, none knowing it would likely be 18 months before they could return. By the end of 2020, the Garde will have lost \$1.8 million in ticket sales from the previous year, with 45,000 tickets for future events waiting for new dates.*

*In the brief period between January and March, 2020 the Garde presented 13 live shows, with memorable performances including:*

**Randy Rainbow Live!  
The Simon & Garfunkel Story  
The Allman Betts Band**



### A PREVIEW OF SOME SHOWS COMING IN 2021!



**A Bronx Tale with Chazz Palminteri  
Dave Mason & John Mayall  
Bela Fleck & the Flecktones  
Melissa Etheridge**

**A Bowie Celebration  
The High Kings  
Rosanne Cash**

**Arrival from Sweden: The Music of ABBA  
Get The Led Out  
The Mavericks  
Underwater Bubble Show**

## Community-Based Performers

*Regretfully, the Garde was forced to cancel many planned events by the region's finest arts organizations who faced challenges to their own survival including:*

**New London Talent Show  
(10th anniversary in April 2020 became a virtual performance)**

**Eastern Ct Ballet: The Nutcracker  
Eastern Ct Symphony Orchestra**

**Connecticut Lyric Opera  
Salt Marsh Opera  
Broadway Kids and Company  
Luis Pabon Dance Arts Studio  
Kiks Dance Studio**

## Cinema

*The Garde's ever popular Winter Film Series capped a truncated year with 24 films including the Banff Mountain Film Festival and a groundbreaking series of Netflix movies. The Garde's Virtual Cinema attempted to continue to serve our film audiences. However, what our film fans really wanted was the Garde's movie place experience in person.*

**Ironically, the last event at the Garde was a film that took place just before the Great Flu Pandemic of 1918**

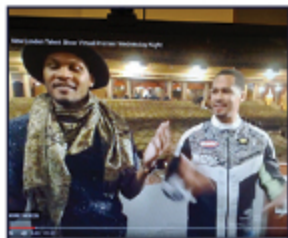


# 2020: A Year of Community Connection

## Garde Goes Digital

*Garde Media Group, a collection of local recording, video, and streaming professionals allowed us to utilize Garde resources to stream a variety of events from the Garde stage and other locations. Highlights of the year:*

- The national book launch of resident writer Jeff Benedict's NY Times bestseller "The Dynasty"
- New London Talent Show; Tenth Anniversary hosted by Curtis Goodwin and Frank Colmenares
- The Day's State Senate Races: four nights of live debates on the Garde Stage
- Rotary Foundation Celebration Event
- "Thanks for Giving" Virtual Variety Show



New London Talent Show hosts livestream from Garde stage.

## Tenants

*The Garde Arts Center owns a block of adjacent historic properties: Garde, Mercer, Meridian and Cottage buildings. New tenants include ISAAC School and Title IX, a Pop-up Book Store by Bank Square Books.*

### Mercer Building

Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications (ISAAC)  
New London Main Street

### Meridian Building

Flock Theater  
Nancy's Hair Salon  
Vincent Scarano Photography  
Jake Kaeser  
Harpisichords

### The Cottage (345 State Street)

Title IX  
Jeff Benedict



## The Community Message Board: Garde Marquee

*The voice of the Garde - and the community - came through in big bold letters on the Garde's giant marquee. Community members offered entertaining messages of celebration and information, supporting the Garde in the process.*



## Focus on the Community

**ISAAC School:** The Mercer Building storefronts now house classrooms and performing arts spaces for the Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) middle school.

**City of New London:** The Garde is hosting supplementary education programs supervised by the Dropln Learning Center for students who need assistance during the school week when they are not in school and either can't be left home alone or have limited home internet access and guidance to complete the home portion of their hybrid learning.

**Census:** The Garde staff and trustee members helped promote and provided assistance for the New London Census campaign.

**Statewide Advocacy:** The Garde has been a leading advocate for relief funding for the arts in Connecticut, in partnership with the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, and working closely with other arts organizations, most notably as a member of "Six PAC", the six urban-based major performing arts centers: The Bushnell, Place in Stamford, Waterbury Palace, Shubert, and the Warner in Torrington. Efforts resulted in a recent \$9 million CT COVID Relief Fund for 154 arts organizations.



*We are so grateful for our partnership with the Garde. This is what it's about. Community helping each other.*

Reona Dyess - Dropin Learning Center, Executive Director

# Protecting the Palace

As the proud owner and steward of a nationally acclaimed movie palace and adjacent historic properties. This past year the Garde began improvements for a more inviting and safe space once doors open again.

- New safety railings in the balcony and stairways
- Touchless restroom fixtures
- New HVAC systems and airflow study
- Improvements to the backstage "green room" to enhance artist and crew safety

## Revenue Comparison 2020 vs 2019

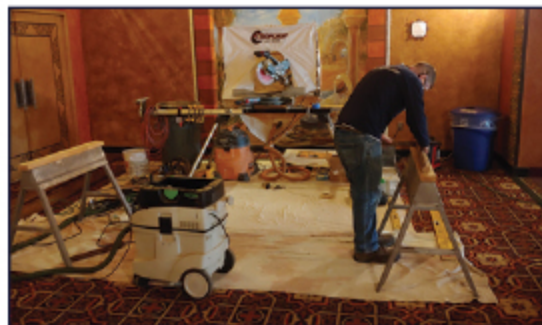
The shutdown of the Garde in March has created a 44% decrease in revenue for the calendar year, an estimated loss of \$1.2 million.

	2020	2019
Ticket Sales and Tuitions	\$296,000	\$1,578,000
Contributions	958,000	519,000
Rentals	105,000	332,000
Concessions	58,000	180,000
Other	65,000	62,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,482,000</b>	<b>\$2,671,000</b>

## Donations will Save The Garde

On March 13, the Garde's prime source of revenue - tickets, facility rentals, and concessions disappeared for the remainder of the year and beyond: There were no more Garde performances, films and events, nor rehearsals and performances by the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, Eastern Connecticut Ballet, Connecticut Lyric Opera, and numerous dance and performing arts studios. Approximately \$98,000 in ticket sales had to be refunded. With future events postponed as many as three times, there will likely be no significant safe theater occupancy until Fall 2021.

Since March 13, the generosity of hundreds of donors has made sure that the Garde - with a skeletal staff, significant overhead, and diminishing resources - survives the pandemic and continues to serve the community while planning for a post-Covid reopening.



## 2020 Gifts

### Individual Giving

In the past 12 months the Garde received \$958,000 in contributions, including 1307 gifts from individuals

### Major Gifts (\$5,000 and up)

Virginia Lee Stowell  
Betty and Bruce Cole  
Joseph Grillo  
Phillip and Mary Ellen Michalowski  
Daneen and Greg Roth  
James Sherrard  
Barbara Timken  
Brian and Susan Turley

### Businesses (\$5000 and up)

A Touch of Grey  
Atlantic Broadband  
Blu-Prints Unlimited  
Charter Oak Federal Credit Union  
Chelsea Groton Foundation  
Conway, Londregan, Sheehan & Monaco  
Dominion Energy  
Jewett City Savings Bank  
Liberty Bank  
Mohegan Sun  
Olde Mistick Village

### Foundations

Anderson Paffard Foundation  
Edward and Mary Lord Foundation  
Kitchings Family Foundation  
Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut  
Robert and Myra Kraft Foundation

### Government

City of New London  
CT Department of Economic and Community Development  
CT Office of the Arts  
US Small Business Administration

### You Can Help Save the Garde

Donate through the Garde website at:  
[gardearts.org/support/](https://gardearts.org/support/)

Send a Marquee message  
[gardearts.org/rent-the-garde-marquee/](https://gardearts.org/rent-the-garde-marquee/)

For further information contact Jeanne Sigel 860-961-4106 [jsigel@gardearts.org](mailto:jsigel@gardearts.org)