Our Mission

Twenty Summers is an incubator for art and ideas. It imagines a more equitable and sustainable future, twenty summers from today.

The organization was founded in Provincetown's historic Hawthorne Barn, and we honor its legacy of artistic freedom by providing resources, residencies, and a platform for original projects and innovative ideas.

We believe that, in the right context, creative minds can find solutions to our hardest problems.
Dear Friends,

It’s hard to believe that Twenty Summers is about to launch into our 10th season at the Hawthorne Barn. Season Nine continued our tradition of bringing diverse and visionary creatives to Provincetown. This year we welcomed our most international group of fellows—with half of them coming from overseas, including a linguist from Mexico, a hacker collective from Berlin, and a photographer from Cuba. It was an extraordinary festival—we hope you had a chance to participate.

What’s next for Twenty Summers? Thanks to generous support from our donors, foundations and the NEA, we are planning our biggest season of programming yet. When we open the doors to the Hawthorne Barn this May, Twenty Summers continues the legacy of artistic freedom that has made the Outer Cape such a storied locale. More than that, though, we are building the kind of communities that we want to see exist in the world. We want communities that are diverse. Communities that are curious and creative. That are safe and welcoming to all. That are joyful. You are a part of that community with us. Thank you for all that you do, and for all of your support.

Aziz Isham
Executive Director

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Dear Friends,

I vividly remember the first time I found myself at the end of Miller Hill Road on my way to the Twenty Summers’ Season Five Open House, in May of 2018. The heel of my boot sank into the soft earth as I climbed, craning my neck to catch my first glimpse of the Barn atop the hill. Entering the space, I was struck with an immediate and intimate connection with Provincetown’s rich artistic past. I pictured the Hofmann Studio empty of its furniture. I heard Sal Del Deo’s voice saying, “before building my studio, I visited all the schools and studios in town and they all had a big north facing window.” Before me was one of the original creative spaces, not as a dusty black and white archival image, but abuzz with energy and awash in light.

Since joining the organization the following spring of 2019, I’ve learned that Twenty Summers’ true magic is its ability to adapt, reimagine, and grow. Though the pandemic forced many changes to the festival, it shifted our energy to further support artists and expand our residency program. Our 2020 all-virtual fall season was the first to focus on the intersection of art and social justice, and introduced our first co-residency at the Hawthorne Barn. The following year, we doubled the number of fellows, awarded generous honoraria, and created a COVID-safe outdoor summer concert series. This past year, we created our first publication, “Twenty Summers from Today…” showcasing the work of Twenty Summers alumni and friends. We also built deeper community connections by co-curating events with fellow nonprofits PAAM, FAWC and CCS.

For this May 8–June 12, we are excited to continue this vital creative energy with an expanded fellowship program, and more local nonprofit and artist collaborations. Events will include immersive installation art, international musicians, film screenings, sound and movement workshops, and more. Most of our public programming will continue to be free, with reduced admissions to ticketed events available for EBT, WIC, and ConnectorCare cardholders through the Card to Culture program. Honoring the legacy of art in Provincetown, Twenty Summers continues to be a place to gather, create, experience, and explore together. We hope you will join us to celebrate Season Ten!

Alice Gong
Program Director
Dear Friends,

As Twenty Summers prepares for its 10th season of programming in Provincetown in 2023, I’m reminded of our beginnings in 2009 when the idea for the organization was born. That year, when we first stepped into the Hawthorne Barn, we felt the residual energy of the artists who had once created there, and we were determined to share it with a new generation of artists and audiences.

We planned to renovate the Barn and open it for residencies and events in 2010 and then, after that didn’t happen, in each of the four following years—finally, achieving that goal when we launched our first season of programming in 2014. Getting there as an all-volunteer team with no staff took us longer than we anticipated, but we believed that the Barn and our organization could become a vibrant part of a vibrant Provincetown, even if we didn’t know if it would survive for two seasons—let alone last for the name we chose of Twenty Summers.

The past three years of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that all organizations, including ours, are vulnerable, but they also demonstrated that Twenty Summers is durable and dynamic, a dependable convener and curator of annual programming. In 2022, we presented luminaries, ranging from Joey Soloway to Cynthia Nixon, continued to host outdoor concerts at Truro Vineyards, and incubated new work in disciplines diverse as photography, digital art, architecture, linguistics, and painting. We also converted our longtime Program Director Alice Gong to a full-time role and welcomed Alex Capecelatro to our board.

After nine seasons, I still believe that there’s great value in exposing artists and the public to inspiring spaces, that such spaces are rare, and the Barn is one such space. In a way, it had, perhaps, always been an historical place. Charles Webster Hawthorne opened it in 1907 to teach painting en plein air, a style that had already peaked with the French Impressionists in the 1800s.

We’ve been proud of the Barn’s history from the start, but now we’re also proud that a slice of its history is our history and that we can look to translate the Barn’s spirit into the future through new initiatives and programs, both in and outside its confines. As an organization that aims to imagine and foster a more equitable and sustainable future twenty summers from today, we approach Season Ten in pursuit of such a future—hopeful that each time we create an experience, each time we cross disciplines, each time we encourage experimentation, we’re getting a little closer to it.

I’m grateful to my fellow co-founders and board members, to Twenty Summers’ collaborators, donors, guests, artists, performers, and volunteers, and, of course, to Aziz and Alice. No season would be possible without this community and its support of Twenty Summers. I look forward to what it will produce someday in Season Twenty—what will it incubate, innovate, and inspire then?—and I can’t wait to see Season Ten.

Ricky Opaterny
Director & Co-Founder
“The beautiful thing that just happened, having the opportunity to have this presentation here. Generating that environment, talking about things that you don’t usually share other than in an intimate circle of friendship. I think the Barn was inviting and I was more encouraged to tell more about the work. It felt good, it felt coherent with the space.”

–Adrián Fernández, Photographer
2022 Fellowships

Twenty Summers Fellowships celebrate creatives at the intersection of social justice and the arts.

Brenda Zhang (Bz) artist and designer whose work explores narratives of Place

Yásnaya Elena Aguilar Gil linguistic and indigenous rights activist and scholar

Devin N. Morris multimedia artist whose work draws from everyday experiences of Black and queer people

Jenna Worthan writer, podcaster and healer

The Peng! Collective members Jelka Kretzschmar, Dominick Mouroz and Rebecca Nea Alemee Meyer who seek creative circumvention of global inequality and use art to aid refugees and migrants

Adrián Fernández whose photographic work reflects the “epic past and the current precariousness” of his Cuban homeland

Sharon Mashihi interrogates Story and the Self though the mediums of audio, film and performance
Summer Concerts at Truro Vineyards

Continuing our partnership with Truro Vineyards + South Hollow Spirits, we presented our second outdoor concert series, intimate COVID-safe outdoor events complete with a full bar and Blackfish’s gourmet Crush Pad food truck.

**Roots Meltdown with New Sheriff**
and percussionist **Jon Joly**, a journey into the history of Jamaican music, from early roots to rockers, deep dub, rub-a-dub and Dancehall.

**Mali Obomsawin**, an award winning songwriter, bassist and composer from Odanak First Nation.

LGBTQ+ youth activist, **Celeste Lecesne in *POOF!* (Or What the Fairies know)**, an evening of theater and magic.
“I felt held close by the deepness of time. Each of so many moments felt both infinite and fleeting, whether I was by myself painting, or with Yásnaya writing nearby, or with dozens of folks gathered to be moved by music together. In so many ways, Provincetown reminded me of other homes, other people, other stories I think I know, but whatever resemblances and synchronicities exist, the place invited me to see and understand what-I-think-I-know anew, thank goodness!”

–Brenda Zhang(Bz), Visual Artist, Designer, Organizer & Educator
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2022 Government Support

National Endowment for the Arts
New England Foundation for the Arts NEST
Mass Cultural Council
Provincetown Cultural Council
Provincetown Economic Development Grants
Provincetown Tourism
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