



**2020**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



## DEAR FRIENDS

Today we are optimistic. We celebrate the gradual return to live arts events in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and heartily embrace calls across the nation to address centuries of racial injustice. Bee understood the power of the arts. She made it her life's work to build and support a vibrant arts community because she knew that arts are the soul of thriving communities. Today we are optimistic that in spite of – and due to – the events that shaped 2020, Bee's vision will soon be realized in new and more meaningful ways for our entire community.

In 2020, we moved swiftly to support urgent needs within the arts community and slowed down to understand how our own policies and decisions inadvertently perpetuate racial inequity. The Foundation launched the Artist Recovery Fund to provide direct cash grants to individual artists. We implemented a low barrier funding program to support the creation and presentation of artwork in response to the pandemic, and we encouraged community members to support our creative businesses with challenge grants for local galleries. We also took a hard look in the mirror to acknowledge our own failure to proactively confront racism. We listened to and learned from artists, organizations, and community members that have borne the brunt of this failure. We restructured the Foundation board of trustees to better reflect the diversity of our community, and we made a \$100,000 commitment over and above our regular grantmaking budget to advance racial equity in the creative community.

We hope the difficulty of this unprecedented season will soon pass, yet we know the work will not end. Bee's spirit lives on in the Pikes Peak region thanks to the artists and arts organizations that inspire us to think differently. Now we must act on this inspiration to create a more vibrant, more equitable creative sector, and in doing so, a more just community. In

short, we are optimistic that the breadth of the Pikes Peak region will soon – for the first time – reap the full benefit of the arts community we so cherish.



*George Vradenburg III,  
Board Chair*

*Phillip A. Kendall,  
Board President*

Front Cover: *Awia Repue* by Jasmine Holmes, part of the Creative Corridor Solidarity Mural Project made possible with support from the Bee Vradenburg Foundation.



## BEE'S LEGACY



Bee Vradenburg was larger than life, endlessly optimistic and profoundly successful at anything she set her mind to. And she set her mind to realizing the vision of a vibrant and collaborative arts community.

Bee was an incredible life force, a woman who began a 37-year commitment as the manager of the Colorado Springs Symphony in her living room. Retirement from the Colorado Springs Symphony simply gave her the time and excitement to nurture emerging artistic endeavors. Bee's private generosity mirrored her public commitment. Members of the community retell personal stories of Bee helping them in ways both large and small: paying for music lessons or a musical instrument; underwriting high school projects; or giving money to get through a hospital stay. But she also took on herculean projects such as raising the capital needed to build the Pikes Peak Center, or making sure community members had a chance to experience "Pops on Ice" at The Broadmoor every Christmas. Bee died in 2000, and our foundation, formed by her family and friends, honors her legacy.

## FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

### COVID-19 Pandemic

Our creative community faced unprecedented challenges in 2020. Foundation trustees recognized the perilous moment and stepped up with several initiatives to support the recovery of the sector, including:

- Artist Recovery Fund- individual artists were uniquely affected by the pandemic. The Bee Vradenburg Foundation immediately recognized the threat and joined forces with the Pikes Peak Community Foundation to create the Artist Recovery Fund. Community members stepped up with donations of their own. All told, the Artist Recovery Fund provided more than \$100,000 in grants to 170 individual artists.
- COVID-19 Recovery Grants- almost by definition, arts organizations are innovative, but the pandemic tested this attribute in new ways. Voice lessons moved online, and dance classes took place in five-foot squares taped to the studio floor. Meanwhile, audiences yearned for art that spoke to the extraordinary times. The foundation created a special low-barrier funding opportunity to help arts organizations adapt. Recovery grants supported the creation of new work in response to the pandemic, and capacity support for things like cameras, microphones, and software as organizations pivoted to serve the community through online performances.



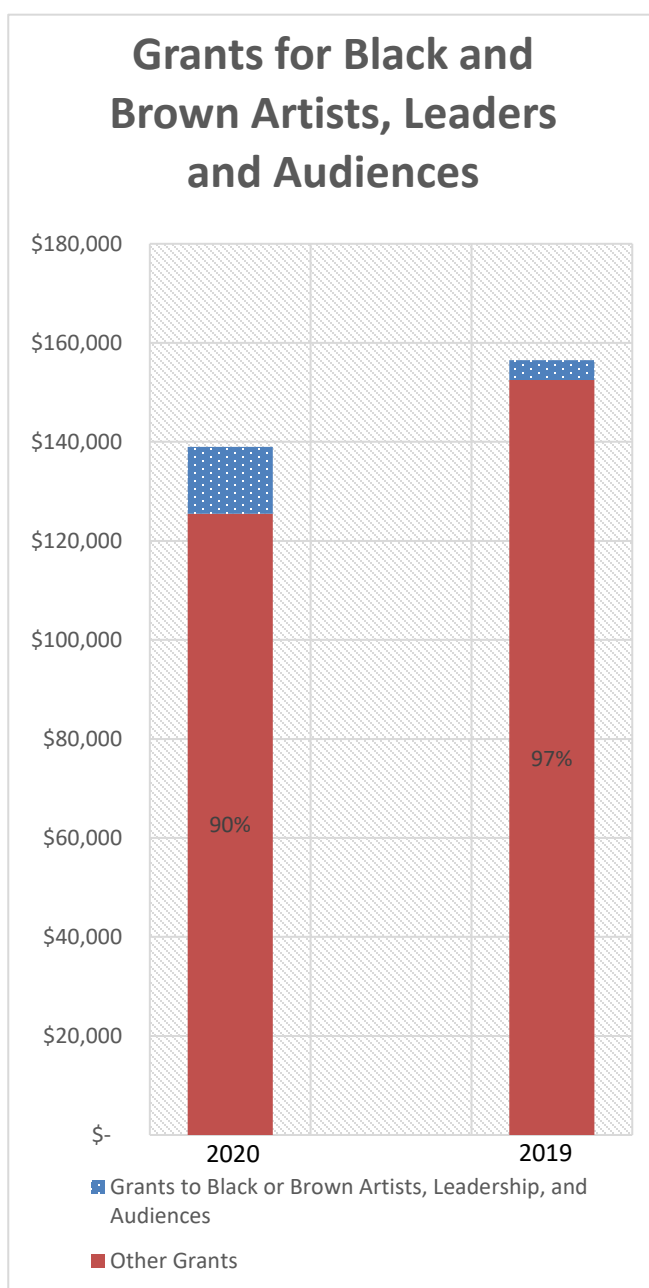
*Credit: Melanie and Tyler Photography*

## Racial Reckoning

Following George Floyd's murder in May 2020, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation took a hard look in the mirror. We saw the many ways our own philanthropic and administrative actions and policies perpetuate racism in our local arts community. We noticed the many unearned privileges that our financial standing and skin color afford foundation leadership and the organization. And we made a commitment to do better.

Better started with listening. We met with Black and Brown artists and arts administrators who opened our eyes to racially diverse details of the arts community we had previously missed. We completed an internal audit to identify the many ways racism impacts the work of the foundation. We created a racial equity action plan grounded in all that we heard to guide the process towards becoming a more equitable foundation. We committed to diversifying foundation leadership in a meaningful way and sharing the race/ethnicity and gender of foundation leadership publicly to hold ourselves accountable. Finally, we committed to increase grant funding for Black and Brown artists, arts leaders, and audiences by 10 percentage points annually, again sharing this information publicly to hold ourselves accountable.

These reports show just how much work we have left to do.



## Race/Ethnicity and Gender of Foundation Trustees (self-reported)

| Year  | Asian/Pacific Islander | Black/African American | Latinx | Native American | White | Multiple Races | Man | Woman | Nonbinary |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------|--------|-----------------|-------|----------------|-----|-------|-----------|
| 2019  | 0                      | 0                      | 0      | 0               | 9     | 0              | 4   | 5     | 0         |
| 2020  | 0                      | 0                      | 0      | 0               | 7     | 0              | 3   | 4     | 0         |
| 2021* | 0                      | 2                      | 1      | 0               | 7     | 0              | 4   | 5     | 1         |

\* as of February 2021

## Community Advocacy

In addition to grantmaking, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation Trustees are deeply committed to researching and supporting efforts to strengthen the sustainability of the arts community and expand awareness and appreciation of its cultural assets. Many foundation board members served on boards of arts organizations in the region and CEO, David Siegel served the arts community in a variety of ways, including:

- Service as chair of the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board, vice-chair of the Lodging and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) committee, and representative on the Colorado Springs Public Art Commission.
- Statewide leadership as co-chair of the Philanthropy Colorado Arts and Culture Funder peer group.
- Service on the Colorado Springs Philharmonic board of directors
- Advocacy for arts organizations on the Pikes Peak Community Foundation Resiliency Through Innovation (RTI) steering committee.
- Regionwide capacity building as co-chair of the ArtsVision 2030 cultural planning process.



## Bee an Arts Champion Award: Peggy Shivers

The Bee an Arts Champion Award, presented by the Bee Vradenburg Foundation, honors the legacy of Bee Vradenburg by recognizing individuals who have demonstrated sustained, passionate and innovative leadership toward advancing the arts in the Pikes Peak region.



**Peggy Shivers** has left an indelible mark on our community, and she's not done yet. Alongside her late husband Clarence, Peggy created the Shivers Fund at the Pikes Peak Library District. The fund brings community together in celebration of history, culture, and the arts by showcasing professional African American artists, expanding library materials and offerings, and providing scholarships for young people of color to study visual and performing arts. The Shivers Fund is a model for all that one can accomplish with a great idea, a lot of legwork, and years of perseverance. Peggy's commitment to – and scholarships for – aspiring artists have launched many successful careers across the country. Put simply, Peggy is a community treasure!

## GRANTS

**Colorado Springs Philharmonic**  
General operating support, \$29,970

**Pikes Peak Community Foundation**  
Program support, \$25,000

**Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region (COPPeR)**  
General operating and program support, \$22,500

**Downtown Ventures**  
Program support, \$6,500

**Colorado Public Media**  
Capital support, \$5,000

**Manitou Creative District**  
Program support, \$5,000

**Indy Give!**  
Program support, \$5,000

**Ormao**  
General operating support, \$5,000

**Colorado Springs Youth Symphony**  
General operating support, \$4,000

**Colorado Springs Children's Choral**  
General operating support, \$3,000

**Total grants awarded in 2019:**  
**\$135, 970**

**Cottonwood Center for the Arts**  
General operating support, \$3,000

**Educational Partnerships Immersive Concerts (EPIC)**  
General operating support, \$3,000

**Knob Hill Urban Arts District**  
Program support, \$3,000

**Manitou Art Center**  
General operating support, \$3,000

**Ballet Folklorico de Barajas** (pictured below)  
General operating support, \$2,500

**Friends of El Paso County Nature Center**  
Program support, \$2,500

**Poetry Heals**  
General operating support, \$2,500

**Rocky Mountain Highway**  
General operating support, \$2,500

**Chinese Cultural Institute**  
Program support, \$1,000





## **Our Goals**

- Advocate for arts and arts education as a vital part of the region's economy and quality of life.
- Support emerging and diverse artists, art forms, audiences, and artistic endeavors.
- Foster growth and resilience for arts organizations that are part of the cultural fabric of the region.
- Build organizational capacity of arts groups.
- Cultivate partnerships with businesses and funders to leverage new financial resources for the arts.

## **Ineligible for Funding**

The following activities or organizations are ineligible for funding from the foundation:

- Individual artists or art students.
- Organizations that are not 501(c)(3) nonprofits or under the fiscal sponsorship of a nonprofit.
- Performances or arts events designed primarily as fundraisers for non-arts organizations.

## **Eligibility**

Organizations may apply for funding once per year. All organizations applying to the foundation must:

- Be a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization; or be an arts-oriented project or organization under the fiscal agency of a 501(c)(3) organization.
- Be based in and serve the Pikes Peak region, defined as El Paso County and the Ute Pass corridor of Teller County to include Woodland Park.
- Have an active employment nondiscrimination policy signed by the board chair that is inclusive of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental handicap, veteran status and marital status.

## **Grant Sizes/Structures**

Standard grants are structured based on the size of organizations. Specifically:

- Organizations with prior-year or current-year revenues of \$50,000 or less are eligible to request up to \$2,500 per year.
- Organizations with prior-year or current-year revenues of more than \$50,000 are eligible to request up to \$15,000.
- Organizations applying for capital support should contact the foundation before submitting a request.

Targeted COVID-19 Recovery Grants were available in 2020. Funding priorities include:

- Relevance grants- The creation and presentation of new work that is particularly relevant to the moment and/or responds to the crisis.
- Resilience grants- Short-term emergency or "hibernation" support to help organizations cover basic expenses like website hosting and insurance during a pause in operations.

Preference will be given to requests that demonstrate a clear plan to achieve resilience during and following the crisis.

- Capacity building grants- technical assistance and investments in the areas of financial and scenario planning, partnerships and mergers, and technology.

As the nation continues to grapple with our long history of systemic racism, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation is eager to support artistic endeavors that respond to, or are inspired by, the racial reckoning. Please contact the Foundation to learn more about funding opportunities.

### **To Apply for a Grant**

Grant application forms are available for download from the website. Applicants may submit applications by mail, in person, or via email. For email applications, please combine the entire application in a single PDF attachment.

### **Deadlines**

Applications are accepted year-round but must be received January 1, April 1, July 1 or October 1 to be considered during the quarterly trustee meetings. When those dates fall on a holiday or weekend, the first weekday thereafter applies. COVID-19 Recovery grants are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis.

## **BOARD, STAFF & FINANCIALS**

### **Board of Trustees**

George A. Vradenburg III, Chair  
Phillip A. Kendall, President  
Libby Rittenberg, Treasurer  
Kathleen Fox Collins, Secretary  
Noel Black  
Susan Edmondson  
Susan Pattee  
Alissa Vradenburg, Trustee Emeritus  
Tyler Vradenburg, Trustee Emeritus

### **Staff**

David Siegel, Chief Executive Officer

### **Financial Information For year ended December 31, 2020:**

**Total expenses and disbursements:**  
\$289,669

**Fair market value of investments:**  
\$5,031,229 (includes \$683,727 in the permanently restricted Symphonic Music Fund)

Pursuant to IRS disclosure requirements, copies of the Form 990-PF for the Bee Vradenburg Foundation are available by contacting the office.

### **CONTACT**

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