Dear Friends of The Umbrella,

Thirty-seven years ago, artists founded The Umbrella to save the former Emerson School and create a community of artists. That vision flourished and now includes 50 studio artists, superb youth and adult education, a unique arts and environment program, an award-winning theater program and concert series, gallery exhibitions and outdoor public art, and numerous community collaborations.

Today’s Umbrella is a gateway to enriching and immersive experiences through the arts. And as you’ll see, that gateway is undergoing a radical transformation. We began the quiet phase of our Building the Arts: A campaign for our creative community in 2015 to transform our facilities to better support our programs and our community’s deep engagement in the arts.

Early donors have generously committed $17 million towards our $20 million campaign goal. Our deepest thanks to everyone who has already contributed. Now we are seeking your support to finish this ambitious project.

Building the Arts is much more than a slogan—it’s a shared passion inspired by our belief that self-expression and creative thinking are essential to a healthy community.

We can only achieve this vision for our creative community with your support. We hope this snapshot of The Umbrella and our vision for the future inspires you to join us in this campaign for our creative community.

Liz Cochary Gross, Campaign Chair
Allie Kusin, Board Chair

What makes The Umbrella so crucial to the fabric of life here is the breadth of its appeal to all backgrounds and professional status. It’s more than an educational institution. It’s a place that is central to the ethos and mission of The Umbrella. We call it a community, and not just the artists and students who frequent our facilities. It’s a place where everyone has a right to belong, to leave with a sense of belonging.

Here’s how we see the creative community:

~ Gregory Maguire
Umbrella Studio Artist
Board Member
Author of Wicked

Construction updates are regularly posted at theumbrellaarts.org/blog.
THE UMBRELLA TODAY

ARTS EDUCATION
250 classes are offered for adults and youth through three semesters of classes, vacation week and summer camp programs, and special workshops. Ceramics, drawing, fiber arts, painting, woodworking, film, glasswork, mixed media, printmaking, and performing arts are among the spectrum of arts and programs offered.

ARTS & ENVIRONMENT
Educational programs, nature walks, and public art initiatives began in Concord and now extend into Lowell, Framingham, Acton, and Maynard. Programs such as Earth Day and Solstice celebrations, "Ninjas in Nature" programs and Art Rambles invite the community to reconnect with the outdoors and experience the connections between art and nature.

PERFORMING ARTS
Bold, Daring, Innovative... our theater programs are widely recognized for excellence! Last season, from a field of 132 productions, The Umbrella won 11 out of 30 award categories from the Eastern Massachusetts Association of Community Theaters, including Best Play, Best Musical, and Best Director. Our Concert Series presents nationally recognized performers in an intimate setting, and we host the Concord Film Project, engaging audiences to eat, socialize, and explore independent films together.

STUDIO ARTS
50 resident artists practice both fine and applied art forms including painting, drawing, weaving, illustration, pottery, jewelry making, writing, and woodworking. Open Studios, Winter Market, and Art Talks welcome visitors to meet artists in their workspaces and explore their creative process.

ARTS GALLERY
Our galleries provide space for the region to examine new visual narratives and engage deeply with visual arts through high quality exhibitions, accompanying receptions, and programming. We seek work that is contemporary, accessible, and expressive and that enables diverse artists and audiences to present and share in art-making techniques, strategies and perspectives.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE UMBRELLA

With our renovation and expansion, our building will reflect our deep commitment to engagement with the community. Art will now be available to everyone due to accessibility improvements and systems upgrades. The facility is designed so that the historic building meshes naturally into the new wing to create a coherent, easy-to-navigate arts center with a nearly 20% increase in usable space.

The new building—and programs—are designed to transform how we experience and celebrate the arts. Spaces will be reorganized to provide greater transparency, collaboration, and interaction between artists, educators, students and visitors.

We envision The Umbrella as a regional hub for innovative artists and programs that will:
• Serve as the region’s "living room" - a place where the community gathers, shares, socializes and is inspired in open, well-lit, and inviting spaces
• Place arts education at the center of our mission and diversify course offerings within four new light-filled classrooms, a new Maker’s Space and workshop, an expanded ceramics wing, and new theater facilities

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

MAKE A GIFT!
Please consider investing in our arts community with a multi-year pledge.

VISIT US!
Sign up for a class, attend a play or concert, or come for a tour.

SHARE!
We welcome your volunteer energy, suggestions, ideas, and help spreading the word and engaging new audiences.

QUESTIONS?
Contact Beth Garvin at beth@theumbrellaarts.org or Jerry Wedge at jerry@theumbrellaarts.org or at 978-371-0820.

Visit theumbrellaarts.org to learn more and make a gift.