



LITARTS RI 4th ANNUAL REPORT



Building Rhode Island's arts community by
supporting the state's creative writers
and enriching the lives of readers

OUR IMPACT!

1350+
EVENT
ATTENDEES

3500+
RI CREATIVES
SERVED



Photo by Brittany Taylor

65+
EVENTS

550+
ACTIVE
MEMBERS

30+
BOOKS
PUBLISHED

200+
LOCAL ARTISTS
SHOWCASED

15+
WRITING
GROUPS



Photo by Brittany Taylor



NOTES FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It's such a pleasure to look back on the activities and accomplishments of 2024! It was our first full year in our new Harris Avenue home, our membership grew by over 15% and we earned support for our programs and initiatives from local, state and national funders from government, corporations and private foundations. With this support, we were able to provide our signature mix of writing groups, rigorous craft-based workshops and professional development practicums, growing participation in all offerings, serving over 1,350 attendees and showcasing over 200 local artists.

We also grew our connections within the arts and cultural community, taking advantage of our new home in the burgeoning Valley Arts District, where we're surrounded by other creative organizations and individuals. Something as simple as a walk down the block to Whisk Me Away Bakehouse or New Harvest Coffee often resulted in a serendipitous conversation that led to a new project or partnership, and we were thrilled to participate in over 20 partnering events over the course of the year.

We continued to prioritize growing and supporting a diverse membership. Thanks to grant funding from multiple sources, we were able to host monthly B/I/POC Coffee Hours under the leadership of our B/I/POC Advisory Committee, host a day-long event by and for writers of color, offer two free seats in each paid workshop to B/I/POC community members, and once again support, in partnership with Haus of Codec, a memorable Queer Writers' Showcase during Pride celebrations. We also highlighted and celebrated diverse writing practices in our programming and connected writers across a wide breadth of genres.

The experience of preparing our 2024 Annual Report from the vantage point of mid-2025 has made me wonder whether, as if in a fairy tale, we somehow fell asleep in late December of 2024 and have just woken up a century later, into a world profoundly changed. Over the past six months, as resources for nonprofits and the arts have been slashed and funding priorities drastically altered, we continually remind ourselves of our priorities and reimagine and strategize new ways to sustain and grow the resources needed to support them.

And while the external landscape may have changed, our greatest resource remains: our community. As with any deep practice, community building happens day by day. It asks our time and attention, and it rewards us immeasurably for both. In this year of scarce resources, you have a pivotal role to play: if the work of creative writers has enriched your life, please make a generous gift in solidarity with our mission to build Rhode Island's arts community by supporting the state's creative writers and enriching the lives of readers.

Yours in gratitude,

Christina

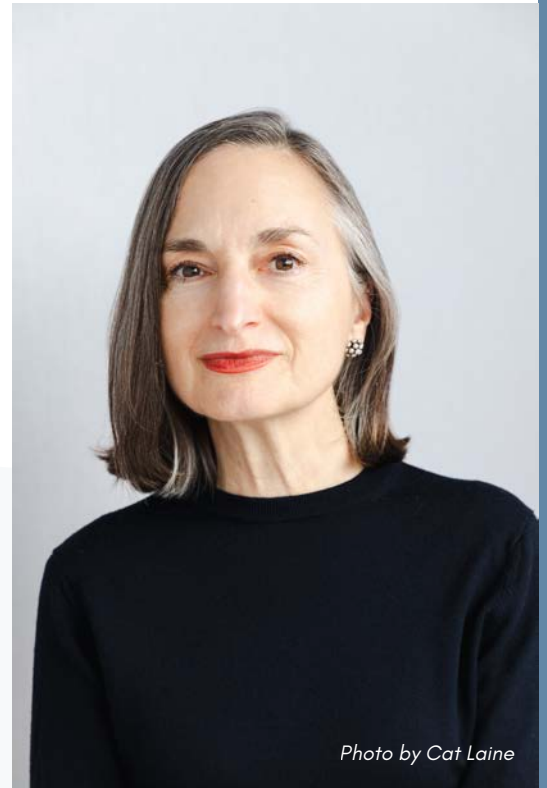


Photo by Cat Laine

**A letter from LitArts RI's
new Executive Director
Christina Bevilacqua**



Writing + Wellness Resource Fair

We brought the community together to support writers and help them find the resources they need to thrive. From art and social justice organizations to housing help, healthcare and grants, writers stopped in to the LitArts RI Center to learn what local resources are available to support their creative practice.



Writers Like Us

Rhode Island writers of color gathered for a day of celebration and free programming designed by and for local B/I/POC creatives, from writing workshops and author headshots to a professional development panel and open mic.



Build Your Creative Capital

At this application support day, writers got feedback on their bios, CVs, artist statements and author websites, and consulted with experts on writing samples. They left with a professional toolkit and the confidence to apply for the next opportunity.



Queries, Proposals + Publishing for Writers of Genre

Acclaimed Rhode Island authors Riss M. Neilson, Sophie Burnham and Vanessa Lillie discussed the challenges their genres face in traditional publishing circles and their own journeys to book publication.

1350+
EVENT
ATTENDEES

22
WORKSHOPS

15+
WRITING
GROUPS

200+
LOCAL ARTISTS
SHOWCASED

*Representation matters,
and seeing someone like me
leading the workshop was
not only encouraging but
also deeply empowering.*

*Places like LitArts RI are
so important. They are
sites of resistance,
community building,
learning, understanding
and enjoying difference.*

— Writing Workshop Participants



Photo by Brittanny Taylor

AWARDS



This is just a sampling of LitArts RI Member accomplishments throughout the year. To see more, subscribe to the **Riters Resource newsletter** by scanning this QR code!

Nancy Agabian's book *The Fear of Large and Small Nations* won a bronze medal in the Multicultural Fiction category of the Foreword Indies Awards.

Rebekah Bergman's novel *The Museum of Human History* was nominated for a 2024 Philip K. Dick Award.

James Celenza received the Entertainment Community Fund 2024 Encore Award.

Colin Channer was named the next Rhode Island Poet Laureate by Governor McKee.

Kassondra Cloos was named Travel Writer of the Year by the British Guild of Travel Writers.

John Cotter's book *Losing Music* was the winner of the 2024 Colorado Book Award in Creative Nonfiction.

Stephanie Gorton's book *The Icon and the Idealist* was named a finalist for the Plutarch Award for the year's best biography.

Diane Josefowicz's novella *L'Air du Temps (1985)* was a finalist for General Fiction Novel from Indie Book Awards.

Vanessa Lillie's *Blood Sisters* was chosen as the 2024 RI Great Reads Adult Section of the Library of Congress National Book Festival.

Lucas Mann's essay collection *Attachments* made NPR's end of year list of Books We Love.

Lance Richardson was a Cullman Center Fellow at the New York Public Library.

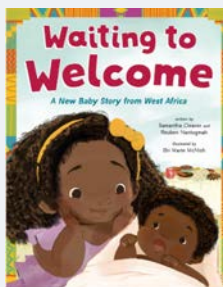
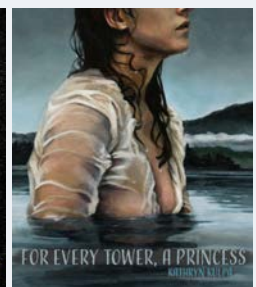
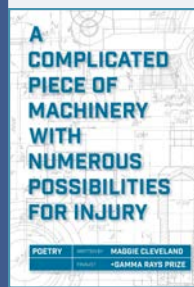
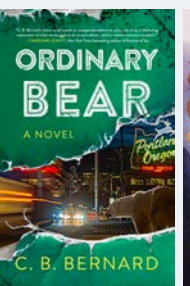
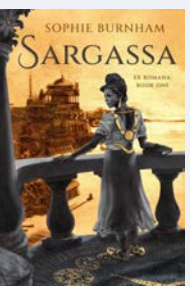
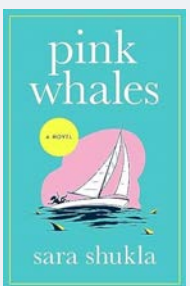
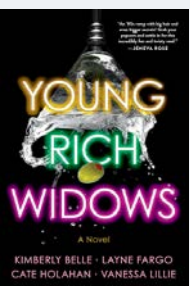
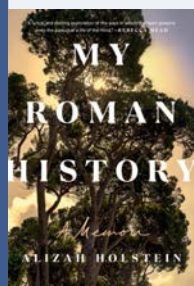
Kim Salinas Silva's poem "The Singing Girl" was nominated for a Science Fiction and Fantasy Rhysling Poetry Award.

Nada Samih-Rotondo's *All Water Has Perfect Memory* was shortlisted for the Saroyan International Prize for Writing.

Tracey Solomon-White and **Shahidah Ali's** *Big State Little Voices* podcast was named Favorite Local Podcast by *Motif's* RI Spoken Awards.

Doug Still's podcast *This Old Tree* was awarded the Gold Media Award from Garden Communications International.

Loren Walker was a finalist for the 2024 Luminaire Poetry Award.



**30+
BOOKS
PUBLISHED**

RESIDENCIES & SCHOLARSHIPS

Cill Rialaig Arts Centre
Sean Carlson

Creature Conserve
Reza Clifton

Elizabeth Kostova Foundation
Sean Carlson

Fine Arts Work Center
Charlotte Abotsi

Linden Place
Kate Hanley
Caitlin Howle
Nada Samih-Rotondo

Martha's Vineyard Creative Writing Institute
Nada Samih-Rotondo

Sundress Academy for the Arts
Nada Samih-Rotondo

Wedding Cake House
Hannah Liongoren
Sage Morgan-Hubbard

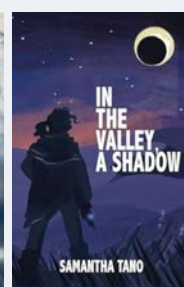
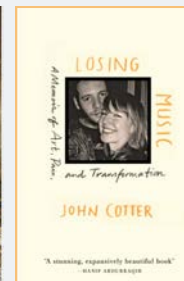
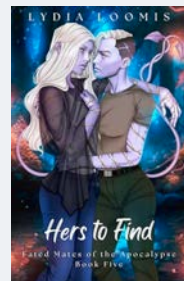
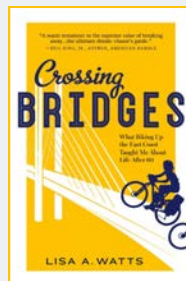
AUDIO STORYTELLING

Our 2024 audio arts programming was made possible in part by a Grants for Arts Projects award from the **National Endowment for the Arts**.

Through this funding, we were able to offer **free podcast trainings** to the community with teaching artist **Alex Birch**.

Programming continued with **Beyond Episode 1: How to Build a Podcast Without Burning Out** and culminated in our **Podcast Listening Party** with local media artist **Hernan Joubá**.

Sample RI podcasts here!



FY2024 OPERATING INCOME

● Earned Revenue	\$80,600
● Donor Advised Funds	\$180,200
● Grants	\$52,100
● Donations/Fundraising	\$15,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$327,900



FY2024 OPERATING EXPENSES

● Admin + Operations	\$62,000
● Fundraising	\$30,600
● Programs: Workspace	\$85,500
● Programs: Events	\$125,200
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$303,300



LitArts has contributed enormously to the art scene and creative writing landscape of Rhode Island. The diversity of the membership and accessibility of the programming provides offerings that would otherwise be out of reach for working-class and caretaking writers like me.

— Nada Samih-Rotondo, LitArts RI Member

5000+
SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS

SPONSORS + SUPPORTERS



RHODE ISLAND
COUNCIL for the HUMANITIES

**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT**

for the **ARTS**
arts.gov

National
Book 
Foundation

*Presenter of the
National Book Awards*

RISCA
RHODE ISLAND STATE
COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

**Papitto
Opportunity
Connection**



RHODE ISLAND
FOUNDATION

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE
DEPARTMENT OF

**ART
CULTURE
+ TOURISM**

**THE
SENG
FUND**
at Rhode Island
Foundation

 **PROVIDENCE**
TOURISM COUNCIL

**CAMPUS
FINE WINES**
CULTIVATING THIRST

48 The 48 Hour Film Project
PROVIDENCE

 **SEVEN
STARS**
★★★★★
BAKERY

 **WASHINGTON
TRUST**

OUR PARTNERS

20
PARTNER
EVENTS



Baypath University
Binch Press/Queer.Archive.Work.
blackearth collective + lab
Blue Tomato Studio
Cereal for Dinner
Creative Reuse Center of RI
Direct Action for Rights + Equality
Haus of Codec
Haven Box
The Heal Room
Heartleaf Books
Interlace Grant Fund
Lefty Loosey Bike Collective
Luke Dani Blue Astrology
North Burial Ground
Providence Astrology
Providence Fringe Festival
The Providence Poetry Slam
Providence Workers + Renters
PVD Things
Riffraff Bookstore + Bar
RI Latino Arts
RI State Council on the Arts
SISTA Fire
The Steel Yard
Symposium Books
Tomaquag Museum
Twenty Stories
Wedding Cake House
Wilbury Theatre Group
Writing Diversely

LitArts RI relies on partnerships to ensure all creatives have the opportunity to take part in our programming, extending resources to more Rhode Island writers. Throughout 2024, we partnered with organizations, collectives and creative entities for co-hosted events—from the popular open mic at Riffraff Bookstore and Bar to a write-in at a cemetery. We value these collaborations for the way they infuse our communities with new energy and fresh voices.

A FOND FAREWELL

In 2024 the LitArts RI community said farewell to **Jillian Winters**, co-founder of the organization and its Operations Director for six years. Jillian was the person who set up the tech before your open mic or fixed it when it broke. She trained many of you in on the studio equipment. She took your photo when you came to sign your book for the local author library. She made the coffee. She balanced the budget. She wrote a whole lot of grants. She led our staff, paid our bills, manage the finances, planned parties and events. She did it all with an infectious joy that has infused this space with warmth and welcome.

Underlying the many responsibilities Jillian carried out was her love and appreciation for this particular place and the people who are drawn to it, as well as her ability to see those who were not in the room yet. She **created a culture of welcome** that you may have felt when you first stepped in the door. You might not have known then how much of her is in this place, but recognizing it now allows us to see what makes a community flourish around the arts as well as the values that bring us together.



Photo by Emily Homonoff

**LitArts RI Co-Founder +
Operations Director
Jillian Winters**



What a gift LitArts RI has been to my creative life! When I joined, I was a closet creative writer – scribbling furtively in my own private bubble, with little sense of how to move outside of it. The organization’s inspired programming and intentional community building have changed that.

— Jessica Tabak, LitArts RI Member

Compassion and empathy guided us as we explored moments of personal difficulty and forged new connections on the other side of a changed world.

— LitArts RI Writing Workshop Participant



Cover photos by Brittany Taylor

LITARTS RI

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www.litartsri.org

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