

2021 TESTIMONIALS FROM DUCK CREEK'S COLLABORATORS & COMMUNITY

JULIAN SCHNABEL (2021 Curator)

During the past year I've had the illimitable pleasure of working with Jess Frost, the director of The Arts Center at Duck Creek, on one exhibition in two parts. Merging the intentions of two artists, and narrowing the gap between their intention and the public is an altruistic practice and one that must be admired. There is a selfless and magnanimous nature to this practice, and a love of art and people. It takes patience and courage and strong opinions and a human touch that can't be minimized in any way. I've watched, close at hand to indefatigable situations, where no job was too big or small to achieve the best result: the inspired exhibition. In the welcoming rustic barn and landscape of Duck Creek Farm, a light has been switched on that says 'join this community of joy and talent and newness, and be surprised to see what you wouldn't have seen otherwise.'

JEANNE SILVERTHORNE (2021 Artist)

Most striking in my experience with doing an exhibition at Duck Creek was the beauty of the space itself. Indeed, each time I re-entered the building I was taken over by its proportions, its lovely smell, the harmony of its natural elements. As an artist, I have shown in all kinds of venues, ranging from the white cubes of galleries and museums, to the decay of nearly abandoned buildings, to a fifteenth-century house in Germany where any kind of nail or screw was prohibited. But this was my first experience showing in a formerly rural architecture, a barn, and I was fascinated by how the elements of that architecture changed the way my work looked. For sculptors especially, the exhibition space affects which pieces you will show and how you will show them, but it is rare that one feels the architecture to be on an equal rather than competitive or disappointing footing with the art. The Duck Creek building is itself a piece of sculpture. And not in the way that, say, the Guggenheim, is a piece of sculpture—an architecture which the artist has to contend with. The Duck Creek barn is

somehow a friendly, companion piece of art in which the artist and the space are having a lovely conversation. Maybe this has to do with the history of these kinds of spaces—once spaces of labor, yes, but not industrialized. And once spaces of protection for living entities. I don't know. Anyway, you get the point. It's a great place to show art.

Then there is the wonderful support of its director, Jess Frost, who is not only welcoming and enabling, but will get on the ladder or haul the tools, and do whatever it takes to get things done... That there can be a nexus of activities at Duck Creek—concerts, lectures and community activities, along with the exhibitions—gives it an added advantage that could and should make the center one of ever-increasing importance.

BRIAN PETUCH (2021 Composer)

Previewing Portrait and a Dream out at Duck Creek was one of the most meaningful artistic experiences I've had. There was so much love from everyone in attendance and everyone involved in making it happen. It was one of those concerts that makes one remember why they make music to begin with. Being able to preview the opera out where so much of it took place was truly a magical experience.

AURELIO QUINONES (Community Member)

Sometimes you try to find say how much you appreciate something and it is difficult to do because you have too much to say. The Duck Creek Music Series is that type of program - it has so much going on, so much to speak for, that you have to limit your thoughts to a few. Thoughts that in any event could never capture the feel of Saturday evenings in the summer, surrounded by the impressive beauty of the setting, and by the brilliance of its performers, all in a place whose artistic history - within walking distance - is without parallel because its artists once created a new view of the world. Duck Creek confronts that legacy with an ambition of its own, one that shows. The curators don't shy away from that history, they're helping extend it to now. I sometimes describe what is going on at Duck Creek as 'legendary' and I feel it is not an

exaggeration. Legendary because the performers are excellent, curious, energetic, and at a stage in their careers where one day you may find yourself saying, Yeah I once heard them at Duck Creek, hungry, full of heart, and so full of talent, so good you wouldn't believe. And you were sitting outdoors, on the grass or on a lawn chair, it is a free concert and you're surprised at the quality, dusk is gathering, maybe after a day at the beach, maybe with a beverage in hand, realizing that this is something special, wishing that the piece that is playing would never end. I don't know the why or the how, but it is all expertly crafted. And it's been my experience at Duck Creek, time and again.

KALIA VANDEVER (2021 Musician/Composer)

Duck Creek has provided such a beautiful and welcoming space to share music with the community! I had the opportunity to perform at the Arts Center a few times this summer and I always looked forward to speaking to the audience after the performances. The audience met us with attentive and eager ears and their generosity and openness was felt from the stage!

JENNIFER CROSS (2021 Artist)

Duck Creek is a very special place. Situated on the site of a farm dating back to the 1700s, Duck Creek demonstrates reverence for the legacy of the Springs artistic community while presenting contemporary art exhibitions, musical performances, film screenings and educational programs, all free and open to the public. As an artist I was honored to exhibit my work in a solo show at Duck Creek in the summer of 2021, an experience I found meaningful on a number of levels. I have enjoyed attending concerts, readings and other events with family, friends and neighbors at Duck Creek. Serving its mission with integrity and purpose, Duck Creek is a valuable addition to the cultural institutions of the East End.

MARY BLAKE (Community Member)

It's a Saturday summer's eve. Armed with a blanket, picnic basket of goodies and bottle of rosé, you and a friend or two make your way along Three Mile Harbor Road in East

Hampton until you reach the sign for Duck Creek Farm. It's an idyllic site, now housing a not-for-profit arts center where fireflies and crickets and jazz en plein air waft through the evening stillness and transport you to another time. Hanging on the rough-hewed walls of the barn where musicians play, contemporary artists exhibit: bringing to life expressionist John Little's (1907-1984) dream; an enchanting, otherworldly setting for those fortunate enough to delight in its magic.

ELIZABETH HAZAN (2021 Artist)

I first came to Duck Creek to see an art show and quickly learned that their music program was equally vibrant and vital to the East End community. Both programs make optimal use of the property to offer a singular experience, rooted in Long Island history. Open to the air and fresh, with raw barn walls, you are always aware you are not in a commercial art space. As both a visitor, and now as an artist who has exhibited there, I appreciate that Duck Creek mixes this welcoming feeling with a knowledge and professionalism behind the scenes to ensure a high level of programming.

Duck Creek makes inventive use of the enormous white doors of the Little Barn to make an outdoor stage for music. It's an ideal setting. The audience spills out across the lawn on folding chairs and blankets, with picnic food and the occasional family dog on a leash. These evening performances feel like an antidote to the overhyped and crowded parts of the Hamptons and offer a connection to its history. Sitting there listening to innovative contemporary musicians, one could as easily be at the kind of gathering held in the 1970s as today. It is this quality that makes Duck Creek so essential to the area.

Having just had a solo show of my work at Duck Creek this past May and June, I can attest to the remarkable leadership of its director Jess Frost. Not only has she managed to steer its programs through this difficult Covid era to offer safe and much needed art and music events, she is an absolute pleasure to work with. Jess makes the artists who exhibit there feel tremendously valued and respected. During the run of my

show, I was struck by how many visitors relayed to me how welcoming and informative she was when they came to see the show. I am convinced that she will ensure that Duck Creek remains true to its mission to serve the community and while expanding and enlivening the art and music offered there.

GILLIAN GORDON (Community Member)

I feel very lucky as a Springs resident to have Duck Creek Arts Center near me. It is a world class institution in a beautiful, calm environment. I have enjoyed the art exhibits as well the music and performance events. There is something about wandering across the field and through the barns that creates the perfect setting for experiencing the art, on so many levels.

BEN LENZER (Community Member)

Every time I attend a concert at Duck Creek, I'm amazed. The summer concert series is extraordinary - young, emerging, jazz cats from the city showing up in Springs, outside, in front of the barn. It's always such a joy to show up and be surprised. The Joel Ross concert was no exception. He was amazing on the vibraphone and with an octet, you can beat that, a group of eight, experimenting with sound and flow and melody and rhythm. The lyrical gorgeous sound of the vibraphone is like medicine for the ears! Joel Ross at Duck Creek was the place to be.