

# Comfort and Joy

## Your support sustains us all.

Dear Friend,

As I write this note, the Farnsworth remains open to about a hundred grateful visitors each day. I say grateful because so many people find solace and relief, comfort and joy during a trip to the museum. Our visitor comments have been exceptionally complimentary and moving, and I enjoy reading them each day and knowing that together we do make a difference to so many. None of this would be possible without your steadfast support. The board and staff are so grateful to you for keeping us on a steady course, one that keeps an eye on the future and allows us to adapt to our changing world. Thank you!

This is not to say that we don't face rough sailing ahead. Our usual attendance is down by 63% due to the limit on the number of visitors we can host in our safe and spacious galleries. Like most museums across the country trying to combat the effects of COVID-19, we are under pressure to keep expenses low while investing in new technology and improvements to our museum campus in order to better serve our visitors, members, neighbors, and families, both at the museum and online.

**Recognizing the important role the Farnsworth plays in the community and our urgent need for help, the Fletcher Family Foundation is making an unprecedented gift to the Farnsworth and the people of Maine. The Foundation has issued a challenge: they will match all contributions to the Museum Fund for Excellence dollar for dollar, up to \$100,000! This means that your year-end gift will have double the impact.**

As I reflect on 2020, I keep returning to the indispensable role art plays in building community. Research demonstrates the resiliency-boosting effects of engagement with the arts that we art lovers know to be true. Art reduces stress and improves critical thinking, empathy, sense of wellbeing, and even our outlook. One visitor recently wrote us: "Very, very enjoyable!" We could all use a dose of that joy this year!

I'm proud that the Farnsworth is a source of happiness and solace to tens of thousands of visitors annually, especially this year, and gratified that local businesses are buoyed by our activity. The healing powers of art extend to New England and across the United States. More and more people are finding the Farnsworth online. Given our national need for bolstered spirits, it's wonderful to see people from Friendship, Maine, to San Francisco joining us online for thought-provoking lectures, delightful art making, and community programs that connect us to art and each other and welcome old friends like George Bellows, Lois Dodd, Rockwell Kent, or one of the Wyeths into our homes.

**We must meet the Fletchers' challenge and raise \$100,000 by the end of this year so we can continue steadily celebrating Maine's transformative role in American art.**

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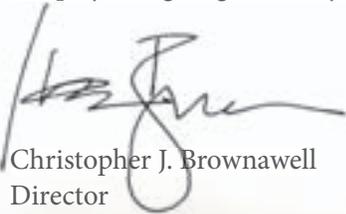
The Farnsworth is leading in service to 3,000 school-age children and their families who experience art through our exemplary Arts in Education program. As schools turn to digital learning, we are expanding our programs online with a state-of-the-art digital learning studio at the Farnsworth's Gamble Education Center. Our digital learning programs are engaging children throughout Maine and beyond in virtual art-making activities, giving them the chance to exercise a powerful means of self-expression and mode of learning. Museum educators are creating digital lessons for school teachers to utilize in their own classrooms, whether in a remote or physical context.

**This season, I'm asking for your help. To bring art inspired by Maine into homes across America, we need to raise \$100,000 by January 1 to enhance technology at the Farnsworth and reach more online audiences. Your gift strengthens all we do and helps us steady our future course. Will you please help?**

Your support now impacts *so many*: the children who learn to love art, the families and friends who take pleasure in their visit, the teachers who are assisted by our free Arts in Education program. A gift to the Farnsworth now is a gift far into the future. Your support says we are a community who will seize this time as an opportunity to act responsively and responsibly to advance the next generation in Maine and beyond to ensure we are able to creatively embrace challenges, innovate solutions, and prosper in the work we do and ultimately the society we create.

Please remember that your charitable contribution to the Farnsworth is tax-deductible—and in fact will receive preferential treatment this year due to the CARES Act, which lifts limitations on individual contributions and does not require you to itemize your deductions. Your gift this season delivers a stronger, more connected community tomorrow.

I hope you'll give generously. Thank you.



Christopher J. Brownawell  
Director

P.S. As one of our most loyal and committed supporters, please give a gift today that will help us make Maine's role in American art more accessible to all at this unprecedented time in our nation's history. Your gift to the Museum Fund for Excellence will be doubled by the Fletcher Family Foundation up to \$100,000 to benefit Maine and art lovers everywhere!