



# the field center

Center for Contemporary Performance,  
Dance and Interdisciplinary Arts



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

# A SANCTUARY FOR ART MAKING

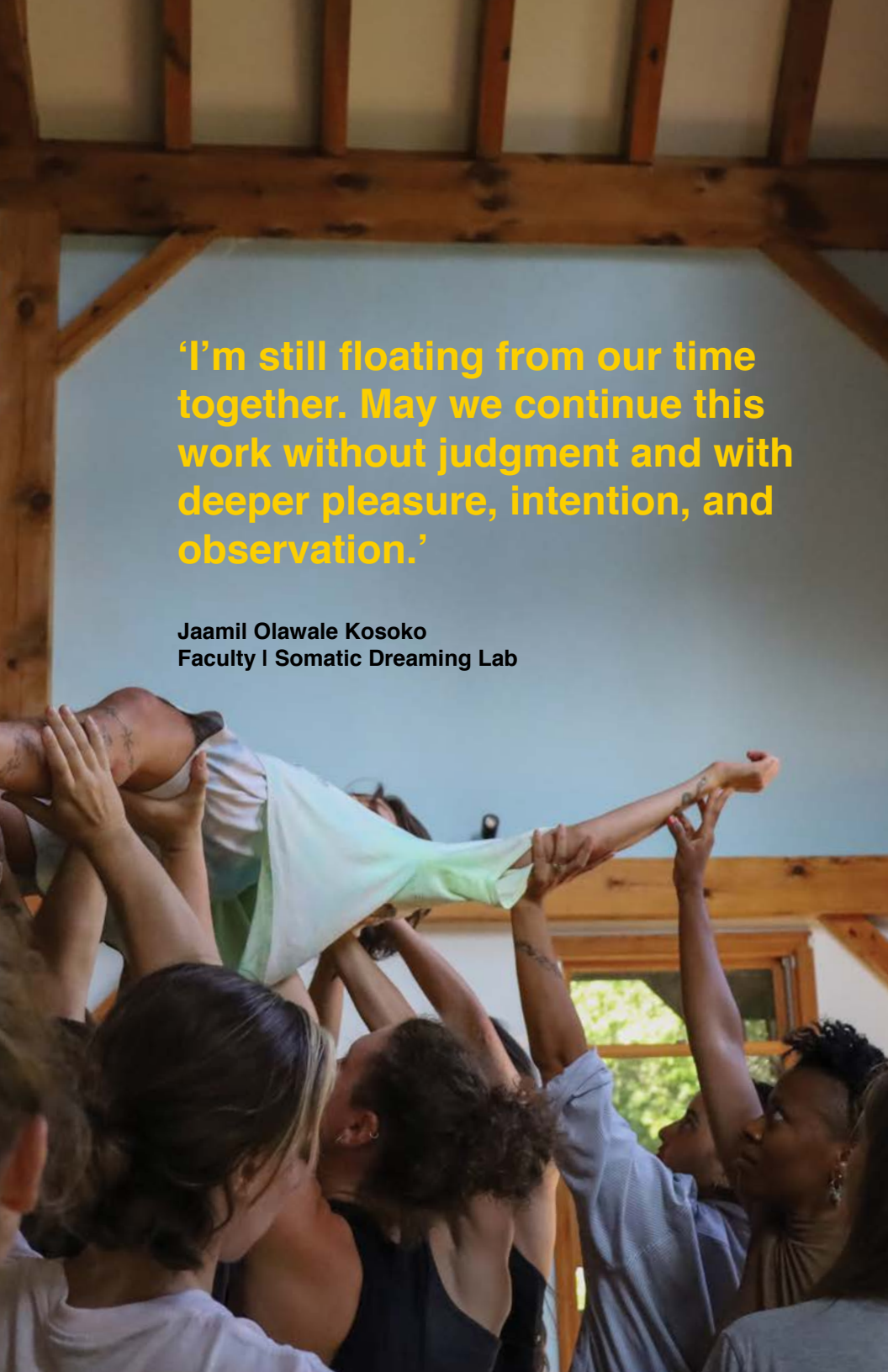


**“The Field Center is uniquely supported by a group of people who are fiercely committed to providing a space for experimentation, and the growth and nourishment of artists.”**

— Eliza Cass | Participant

The Field Center is dedicated to the development and teaching of performance, dance and interdisciplinary arts. Here we believe that we can make arts practices accessible to all while still supporting those artists that have dedicated their lives to their practice.

Officially founded in the winter of 2022, it was created to meet both old and new challenges facing artists and art-making today. Like Black Mountain College and other institutions before it, it provides a residential, non-academic environment where the teaching and development of performance, dance and other arts practices can happen affordably and experimentally, in healthy and sustainable ways.



**‘I’m still floating from our time together. May we continue this work without judgment and with deeper pleasure, intention, and observation.’**

**Jaamil Olawale Kosoko**  
Faculty | Somatic Dreaming Lab

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we enter 2024, we look back on the year behind us with pride and gratitude. The Field Center remains an ambitious and unique initiative in the u.s. performance-arts ecology.

As this report outlines, we met many of our programming goals for 2023 including; increasing enrollment, continued dedication to diversity in both our faculty and participants, developing inter-organizational and regional relationships, initiating of new programming, and two team hires.

When we launched this project 2 years ago, we set out to create something rare in the United States; A residential learning space that is both rigorous, education-based and experimental, joyful, care-full and extraordinary - while working to address many of the challenges common in the arts ecology today. We remain committed to creating ethical containers for learning and art making while still functioning as a viable non-profit business; and though that mission may seem simple in theory, putting it into practice continues to be an upstream challenge and deeply daunting at times.

We are incredibly thankful to all who have helped us financially this year. It has only been because of the collective work of this support, as well as our participants, teachers, working residents, artistic advisors and our core team that we have been able to successfully meet these challenges.

I believe 2023 continues to tell an exciting story of a place that creatively addresses the challenges and potentials of arts-education today as well as the benefits of dance and performance practices to us as both individuals and a collective society.

We look forward to continuing to develop what has become a rich and caring community of artists and, to truly make this mission sustainable in the coming years, we will need your help! Please enjoy this report and, as was said last year, we look forward to rolling up our collective sleeves for the beautiful work that lies ahead.

Thank you all so much and Happy New Year

*Jared Williams*

Jared Williams  
Executive Director



# OUR LOCATION

The Field Center is located in what is now known as Rockingham/Bellows Falls Vermont near the village of Bellows Falls/ Kitchee Pontegu [Sokoki-Abenaki Band + Pannacock territories].

It is home to 50 acres of forest rising up from the banks of the Williams River and is used by vast communities of animals, plants and trees. We acknowledge that these were also the primary tribal lands of the Algonkian speaking Abenaki [Abenqui], one of the five nations in the Wabanaki Confederacy. We also acknowledge and are deeply grateful to our neighbors, the Elnu Abenaki.

Acknowledging and understanding where we are and the impact our presence has on the land and people around us is a call to relationship with our history and to show up with responsibility. We see this as deeply in line with our mission to be in service and to create spaces that address important needs within the arts.



As physical spaces face mounting pressures from diminished arts education in our schools and the rising costs of both production and property, those pressures are passed down to individual artists and teachers. The Field Center exists in direct contrast to those pressures.

During our programs, the Field Center serves as a training space, an educational space and as a living space. The majority of the Field Center is wheelchair accessible including all of our public bathrooms, half of our bedrooms, our kitchen, dining room and movement studios.

Our bedrooms, library and common spaces are built to provide a 'second home' to artists, while our studios provide space for movement, sound and video editing, as well as mixed media and craft-based work so that artists can work interdisciplinary while here.

# OUR SPACE



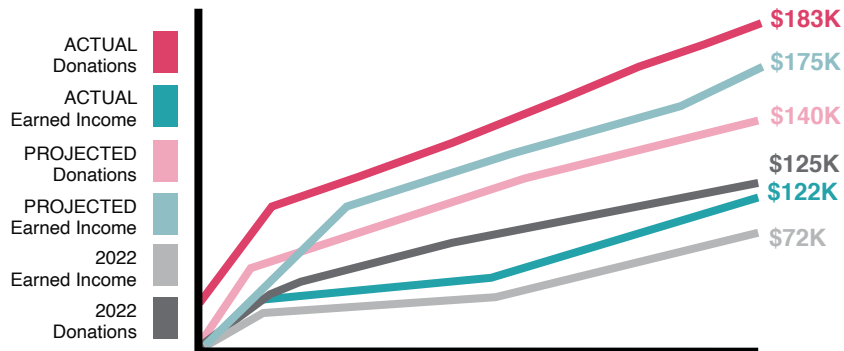
# THE DETAILS

In 2023, our second year, we set out with the intention to sustain many of our 2022 pilot initiatives, develop innovative new programs, and to continue our deep commitment to diversity. Here's how things played out in 2023:

## We met these important benchmarks:

- Non-profit 501(c)3 internal audit of our accounts and budgets to ensure successful grant applications in 2024
- Piloted 3 new programs and sustained year two of our 2022 pilot programs
- Two new team hires:
  - Marketing and Social Media Coordinator
  - Garden Manager
- Expanded our audio/video and multimedia studios
- Completed a full season of our new Residential Work Exchange Program

As the graph below shows, in our projected 2023 budget we aimed to bring in 175k of earned income, however we fell short of that goal by 53k. Thankfully this shortfall was made up by several generous donations, surpassing our expectations. Though our expense budget grew in 2023, so did both our earned and donated income, surpassing our total 2022 numbers by 108k. For the time being we remain debt-free, quite a feat for a young arts organization. We continue to work toward an internal goal of 50% earned against 50% donated income.



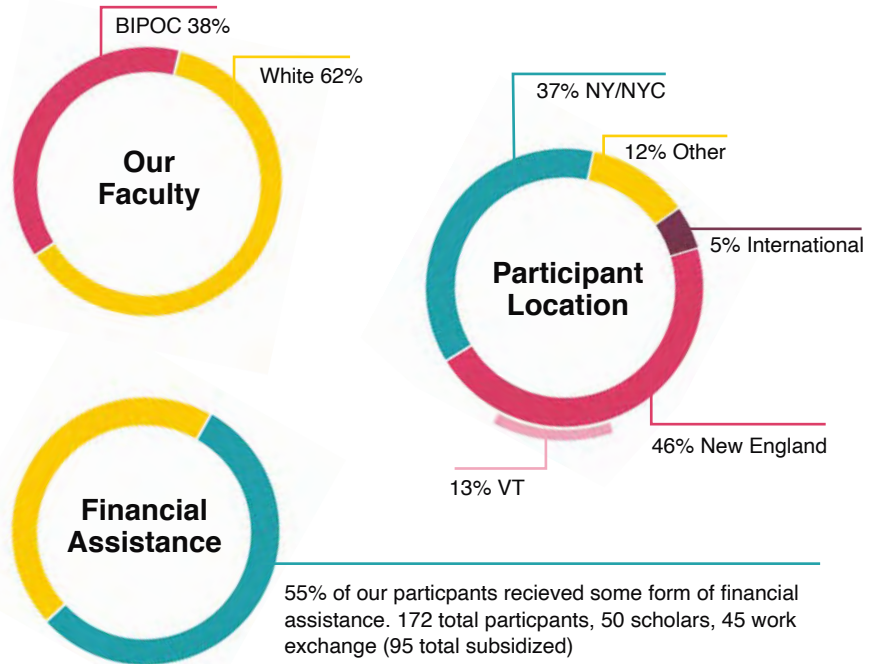
### FY 23

Total income: \$305k

Total expenses: 342k (including taxes paid quarterly)

# PROGRAMS & EVENTS

In 2023 we hosted 364 people (237 in 2022) 27 events (26 events in 2022) and 3 residencies (6 in 2022) note: number of residencies were reduced to create opportunities for more income-generating workshops). We also collaborated directly with the town and local organizations to create 3 public-facing events this year.



## Universities Served

In addition to becoming an annual host site for **Bennington College's 'Field Term' program**, the Field Center continued to engaged directly with multiple local and regional Colleges and Universities

by inviting students to attend our programs at reduced cost. In 2023 we hosted students from **Bennington, Wesleyan, Smith College, UVM, UArts, NYU, Tisch and Sarah Lawrence** among others.

We are proud of all that we have accomplished and, as this report shows, we continue to meet many of our short term goals and make inroads toward several of our long term ones.

# RESIDENCIES



‘My time at the Field Center was so special to me not only because of the specific programming that I was participating in, but also because of the beautiful community that formed and the beautiful space... the pacing of the program felt so expansive. There was enough time, enough space, enough food, enough in general.’

McKay House, Participant | PANDA Labs

# LOCALLY SOURCED\* FOOD



90% of our produce  
(40% from our own garden)



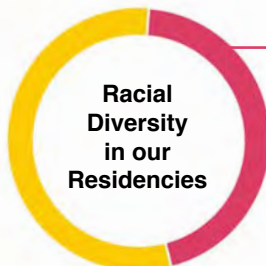
100% of  
our meat



98% of our  
dairy & eggs



In 2023 we hosted 3 group residencies with over 20 artists attending. Artists spent between 3-7 days in practice working on phrase-based choreographies, improvisational and dramaturgical work and development of dance archives. Two out of 3 of our residencies were built collaboratively with regional institutions Bennington College and Boston Dance Alliance.



**Racial Diversity  
in our  
Residencies**

BIPOC 42%

Out of the 21 total artists served in our 2023 residencies, 9 artists were BIPOC, 12 were White identified.



Serving up to 30 people at a time, our dining room and commercial-grade kitchen work in concert with our gardens to process, cook and serve healthy, local food for our participants.



The opportunity for participants in our programs to help harvest and prepare food for our daily meals is something we take seriously and is a huge part of the Field Center experience. We maintain a goal of providing 30% of our food costs from our own garden and to source the remainder from local farmers and merchants.

\* Sourced from Vermont & New Hampshire.

**‘...I love how The Field Center is able to hold and support multiple dance modalities and mobilizations.** I find myself in love with dance and in love with community each time I am there. ‘

Jennifer Nugent | Faculty | PANDA Labs



**“There’s the work of making dance, and then there’s the work of making a world, or remaking it.** I felt like the Field Center’s ethos is built on the conviction that those two projects are inseparable. The place itself is a beautiful one —magic— and but it’s the care, thoughtfulness, and beauty of what is being built between people there that have remained with me quite deeply.’

Agnes Boransky | Participant



This year was inspiring on all fronts. We worked hard to sustain our programs, renovate the space and develop strategic plans for the years ahead, and though we end the year on a high note, it is clear we face very real challenges ahead if we are going to keep this project alive.

### **As we turn our attention toward 2024, we do so with a set of ambitious goals:**

- Add to our campus through the creation of a 2,000 sq. foot outdoor studio/event space
- Fully fund our BIPOC scholars program
- Increase our involvement and support for the local arts ecosystems
- Create two new salaried positions: Program Director and Director of Strategic Planning
- Increase our accessibility through the creation of wheelchair accessible bathrooms (our space currently has no wheelchair accessible showers)

Between the budgetary work we have done to prepare us for grants in 2024 and the inroads we continue to make around both earned and unearned income, we are well positioned going into 2024.

Though every organization must earn money in order to survive, philanthropy is truly the life-blood of the arts in the U.S., with many nonprofits in the arts relying on donors, gifts and grants for as much as 60% of their annual funding. We are no different, and for the Field Center to continue all of its innovative programs and build toward the future it is clear we will need substantial investments from our community. We need your help now more than ever!

It is through the visionary work of artists that we can imagine the future we want to create and are able to reflect on what it means to be alive today.

Thank you, happy new year and we look forward to being in touch with you all in the months ahead.

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communications@thefieldcenter.com  
61 Williams Road  
Chester, VT 05143





[www.thefieldcenter.com](http://www.thefieldcenter.com)