



## WELLESLEY CULTURAL COUNCIL

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wellesley Cultural Council Awards Over \$16,000 in Grants to Support Local Arts and Culture**

**January 13, 2026 (Wellesley, MA)** – The Wellesley Cultural Council (WCC) has awarded more than \$16,000 in grants to support arts, humanities and cultural programming in Wellesley for Fiscal Year 2026.

This year's funding includes \$8,200 from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and \$8,000 from the Town of Wellesley Select Board, reflecting a shared commitment at both the state and local levels to sustaining a vibrant cultural community.

The Council approved funding for 18 projects spanning music, theater, visual arts, literature, education, youth programming, and community-based cultural initiatives. All funded projects are designed to be accessible to the public and to enrich cultural life in Wellesley.

"These grants reflect the strength, creativity, and range of Wellesley's arts community," said Marc Zewel, Wellesley Cultural Council chair. "With support from both the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Town of Wellesley, we're able to fund programs that engage residents of all ages and backgrounds and bring meaningful cultural experiences to the community."

Funded organizations and individuals include local nonprofits, regional arts organizations, educators, musicians, journalists, and independent artists. Programs will be presented at venues across Wellesley, including libraries, schools, performance spaces, and other community locations.

The Wellesley Cultural Council is part of the Local Cultural Council Program, funded by the [Massachusetts Cultural Council](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-cultural-council). Local councils play a vital role in directing public funding to community-based projects that promote creativity, inclusion and public access to the arts.

Additional information about funded programs will be shared by recipient organizations throughout the year. The Wellesley Cultural Council also plans to host a public reception celebrating grant recipients; details will be announced at a later date.

For more information about the Wellesley Cultural Council, visit <https://www.wellesleyma.gov/1224/Cultural-Council>

## **FY26 Wellesley Cultural Council Grant Recipients**

*The following projects received Wellesley Cultural Council grants for Fiscal Year 2026. All programs are open to the public unless otherwise noted.*

### **Art Wellesley, Inc.**

#### *AW Programming & Exhibition Support*

Supports exhibitions, artist talks, workshops, and community art initiatives that promote engagement with visual arts across Wellesley.

### **Meghan Damiano**

#### *Teen Advisory Group / Middle School Advisory Group*

A youth leadership program at the Wellesley Free Library empowering middle school students to help shape creative and community-focused programming.

### **The Swellesley Report**

#### *Arts Reviewer Intern Stipend*

Supports local arts coverage through an intern position focused on reporting on Wellesley's cultural events and organizations.

### **Wellesley Theatre Project, Inc.**

#### *Come From Away*

A community theater production of the acclaimed musical, presented by the Wellesley Theatre Project.

### **Janet Applefield**

#### *Combatting Hate and Prejudice*

An educational program featuring personal testimony and discussion focused on combating intolerance and fostering understanding.

### **Wellesley Town Band**

#### *Moving to a New Level*

Supports expanded repertoire and performances that engage audiences and strengthen community music-making.

### **Marcos Valles**

#### *Music and Movement with Rockabye Beats*

Interactive music and movement programming designed for young children and families.

### **Wellesley Society of Artists, Inc.**

#### *Eyes Open to Color*

A visual arts initiative exploring color, creativity, and artistic expression through public programming.

### **Tal Shalom-Kobii**

#### *A Tribute to Women Composers and Songwriters from Around the Globe*

A concert program celebrating women composers and songwriters from diverse cultural traditions.

**Roger L. Tincknell**

*Island Vacation*

A creative performance project blending music and storytelling.

**Wellesley Choral Society**

*Songs of a Century: British and American 20th Century Choral Music*

A choral concert featuring works by British and American composers of the 20th century.

**Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild, Inc.**

*The Massachusetts High School Drama Festival*

Supports a statewide festival showcasing student theater productions and arts education.

**Evan Haller**

*Interactive Music Concert for Young Children and Their Families*

A participatory music concert emphasizing movement, engagement, and early childhood development.

**Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, Inc.**

*Wellesley Symphony Orchestra 2025–26 Season*

Supports live orchestral performances as part of the orchestra's upcoming season.

**Elizabeth Nelson**

*Mini Big Top – A Mini Circus for Mini Readers*

A family-friendly program combining performance and literacy for young audiences.

**Jon Waterman**

*Live Music Making History Live*

A live performance exploring the roots of American popular music through storytelling and song.

**Charles River Sinfonietta, Inc.**

*Chamber Music Concert at Wellesley Free Library*

A free chamber music concert featuring professional musicians, presented at the Wellesley Free Library.

**Land's Sake, Inc.**

*Open Farmyard*

A community program inviting the public to engage with agriculture, land stewardship, and local cultural traditions.

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