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PERKINS CENTER PURCHASES COLLINGSWOOD BUILDING

Celebrated Arts Center Cements Commitment to Accessible Arts Programming in Camden County

Collingswood, NJ (August 7, 2023) – Perkins Center for the Arts will increase accessibility to the arts through the purchase of its Collingswood building.

Perkins Center has served the local community through classes, workshops, programming, and exhibitions in this location in the heart of downtown Collingswood, New Jersey since 2005. Perkins Center’s original location has operated in nearby Moorestown since 1977.

[In 2005](#), Perkins and the Borough of Collingswood entered a collaborative relationship to bring arts education to Collingswood and Camden County. Since then, Perkins has leased the building at a nominal rate from the Borough. Between 2002 and 2011, Perkins Center for the Arts raised more than \$450,000, through private donors and grants, to renovate and improve the facility, to create gallery spaces, workshop areas, classrooms, and offices. Perkins will purchase the building from the Borough for \$456,147.

“Taking full ownership of this building will enable Perkins to make additional facility updates and pursue ADA measures that will provide increased accessibility to the communities we serve,” says Kahra Buss, Executive Director of Perkins Center for the Arts. “The first goal of Perkins’ existing strategic plan is to improve access to the Arts – financially, geographically, and physically. Accessible arts programming is essential to the mental and physical well-being of our communities. We are excited to take this next step.”

At both its Moorestown and Collingswood locations, Perkins Center offers visual and performing arts programming 50 weeks out of the year and serves more than 42,000 people annually throughout South Jersey. The Collingswood studios offer classes in glass, mosaics, and clay, and the galleries host 12 exhibitions annually, featuring work by local, regional, national, and international artists.

“Perkins has emerged as an important community partner over the last two decades, supporting the arts in Collingswood and the surrounding region,” said Cassandra Duffey, Collingswood Borough Administrator. “We have always hoped that Irvin Avenue would become their permanent home, and we are eager to see the positive growth that follows this commitment to providing continued access to art and culture in our town.”

Upon taking possession, Perkins plans to replace the roof, install HVAC, make ADA improvements to the building.

Perkins Stats and Facts:

- Serves 42,000 people a year, including children, families, seniors, artists, veterans, cultural artisans, individuals with disabilities and community partners; 50% from its Collingswood location alone
- Increased arts programming and exhibitions by 400% since 2019
- Increased educational programming by 64%
- Half of the [Board of Trustees](#) are women
- Executive Director Kahra Buss named a [“Top CEO”](#) by South Jersey Biz Magazine

What Makes Perkins Different:

- Multidisciplinary arts education institution providing instruction from beginner to intermediate to advanced
- One of New Jersey’s five Folklife Centers, a co-sponsored project of the NJ State Council on the Arts
- Exhibition and performance opportunities for emerging, new, and established visual and performing artists
- High caliber, professional artists and teachers, receiving fair pay
- Affordable class costs, plus scholarships for students in need
- Growth mindset among staff and leadership

[Learn more.](#)

[PHOTOS](#)

About Perkins Center for the Arts

Perkins Center for the Arts is a regional, multi-disciplinary arts education center with locations in Moorestown and Collingswood, New Jersey. With a mission to enrich lives, inspire life-long learning, and cultivate intercultural experiences, Perkins Center for the Arts offers a music conservatory, visual and performing arts classes, exhibitions, concerts, artist-led school residency programs, summer camp, Folklife Center, and community enrichment projects. Visit www.perkinsarts.org.

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