While the Spring Equinox is almost a month away, at the Work Center we have been preparing for months to welcome back the renewal we have all so desired. This renewal has in every way been enabled by the unprecedented support of the Work Center’s broad stakeholder community during this pandemic year. As National Endowment for the Arts Acting Chair Ann Eilers said, “The Fine Arts Work Center is among the arts organizations across the country that have demonstrated creativity, excellence, and resilience during this very challenging year.” We are deeply grateful for the 50% increase in funding we will receive from the Endowment.

The Massachusetts Cultural Council, through the Cultural Organization Economic Recovery Grant awarded the highest level of support – $200,000 – to ensure our capacity to prepare for this Summer’s programming and to welcome back the Fellows in October. We thank our state legislators and Governor Baker for this recognition. And significant streams of support through the federal CARES Act enabled our staff to stay on through all these months to rebuild. This was undergirded by the outpouring of support from friends, students, faculty and Fellows, most poignantly following the sad passing last Fall of long-time trustee Dan Mullin, which moved friends and family to raise funds for the exquisite Daniel A. Mullin Light and Courtyard, a welcoming new approach to the reoriented Kunitz Room, Galleries and Bookstore.

These initiatives – along with improvements to Fellows’ studios – are under construction and highlight the five-year 50th Anniversary Campaign launched in 2018. Leveraged by a gift of $200,000 from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, individual major gifts and much needed increased operating support, this comprehensive fundraising effort has raised nearly $6 million since the Campaign began. The Work Center will continue seeking gifts to permanently endow the Fellowship Program, expand operating funds and support new capital projects identified in the Work Center’s evolving campus plan. For these resources, given in faith and confidence, we are deeply grateful to all.

Most importantly, as we pursue this work of financial and program stabilization that underpins our mission, we recognize that with renewal also comes a reckoning. The racial and cultural injustices that endlessly unfold in our country must open the eyes of every organization to the awareness of our responsibility to act. In the last several months the Work Center engaged in many conversations and established working groups to ensure we work to become a fully equitable organization. The Work Center’s community is comprised of an international and diverse group of Trustees, Fellows, staff, faculty, students and all our friends and neighbors in Provincetown. With regard to this broad stakeholder network, we are committed to creating an environment and culture where everyone’s ideas are heard, where it is safe for everyone to feel like they belong; and to absolutely ensure that every individual in our community feels recognized and safe when not among others like themselves.

To explore how we will achieve these goals and many others, we have engaged Dr. Darnisa Jackson, founder of the Disruptive Equity Education Project (DEEP). DEEP aims to bridge stronger connections to humanity and embrace challenges of inequity with love and care, while offering key insights and strategic interventions that sustain diversity, belonging, inclusion and equity over time. Please review our plans here. And we encourage you to share any thoughts you have at DBIE@fawc.org.

We are almost six months into our fiscal year and we are fortunate. We have a long ways to go, still. We continue to need your help and ideas. I very much hope you will stay with us for the unique journey ahead.

Richard MacMillan