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Dear Friends

It is my second January in Saratoga. Unlike last Winter, 2018 has brought wild swings into arctic temperatures and white, frigid landscapes that dazzle the eye and urge one home to seek warmth and companionship, to cook, to read, to daydream.

In my home-bound reveries, I am dreaming of Spring, I am dreaming of Summer and all the plans we are making. Every day, there is the snow-covered reality of the Winter SPAC where I go to work. And in my imagination there is the verdant, Summer SPAC that represents the utterly perfect confluence of man-made and natural beauty.

Over the last few weeks, I have been reading Walter Isaacson's magisterial biography of Leonardo da Vinci. In the history of man, has there ever been an individual who observed and expressed more eloquently, more exquisitely, the connections throughout our cosmos, all the beautiful manifestations of man and nature and art and the underlying unity of existence?

A friend with whom I have been discussing all this sent me a quote from great artist, producer and Renaissance man of our own time, T Bone Burnett:

"Beneath the subatomic particle level, there are fibers that vibrate at different intensities. Different frequencies. Like violin strings. The physicists say that the particles we are able to see are the notes of the strings vibrating beneath them. If string theory is correct, then music is not only the way our brains work, as the neuroscientists have shown, but also, it is what we are made of, what everything is made of. These are the stakes musicians are playing for."

There is much to ponder. We will be exploring these ideas this Summer at SPAC in a new festival within a festival called "Out of This World", where we think about that place of beauty between the inner universe and the outer, of the nexus between music and art and science and space, The Music of the Spheres.

The other night, I walked home from dinner at a friend's house. The temperature hovered around 2 degrees, the snow and ice glistened and crunched and the sky was a miracle of crystalline light against the dark. Pausing in that brief, cold moment to look up, a shooting star went by. An omen?

When we find ourselves held up in that place between man-made and natural beauty, where awe and wonder reside, the world becomes porous, our differences dissolve, we return to a state of openness and equanimity and connectedness where empathy and compassion are born.

That's what I am dreaming about.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Sobol". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Elizabeth Sobol  
President & CEO



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