

Annual Report 2015-2016

Boy & Graffiti by Frances Meyer Ashtabula Arts Center Permanent Collection



2015-16 Annual Report President's Statement

Focus. Passion. Transition. These are just a few of the words I use to describe 2015-2016 at the Ashtabula Arts Center.

With our focus on quality programming in all areas, we upgraded technology in the theater and worked on building our acting, directing, music directing, and technical talent pools. The topnotch production of *Sweeney Todd* this year is evidence that when we are able to focus our resources on a challenging project, we produce excellent theater. The art department has expanded its classes and offerings, as well as welcomed new teachers. The music department features more performing groups than ever, while the dance department continues to offer high quality, pre-professional training for dancers at all levels. Their production of *The Nutcracker* is always one of our most well-attended events every year.

Simultaneously, The Board of Trustees focused on a comprehensive revision of the by-laws and board member responsibilities, while also developing a new Board Orientation Packet. Our Board is prepared and excited to move forward with these tools in hand as they share their passion for the mission of the Arts Center.

The Arts Center staff demonstrated their own passion for the arts throughout the year by actively breaking down barriers and opening access to our programming. Staff members launched multiple initiatives to reach out to new populations of users, with significant advancement in connections with community organizations and local schools.

Under the direction of Executive Director Lori Robishaw, we updated our computing systems and internet access for staff and patrons, launched a new, user-friendly website, and transitioned our bookkeeping system to Quickbooks for easier management and access to our financial data. The Board is truly grateful for Lori's service to the Arts Center and we wish her well in her new position, as Lori transitioned to Connecticut to assume a non-profit directorship. Transition was also seen with the well-deserved retirements of Pam Hammond and Cindy Rimpela, after which we welcomed Amanda Frazier as our Director of Marketing and Public Relations, and Kristi Morris as Business Manager. Meeghan Humphrey was promoted to Deputy Director in January 2015 and stepped into the role of Executive Director at the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2016.

With the many noteworthy happenings of 2015-2016, we are pleased to highlight the impact the Ashtabula Arts Center and its mission in the following pages of this Annual Report. As we *focus* our efforts, share our *passion* and *transition* in our growth, we thank you for your support!

Debbi Waring, President

Highlights

Art Exhibit – Discovering Romania Ashtabula residents were introduced to the traditional arts of Romania in this exhibition of work by the family members of local resident, Mihaela Burtea.







The Sugar Plum Luncheon featured a spectacular dessert table and full attendance.

Art classes ranged from painting workshops to working with gas flames in a raku firing.





Sweeney Todd was one of the high points of our G.B. Theater season bringing together a superb cast with innovative set design and costuming.



Spring Dance Concert In addition to this concert, featuring various styles of dance and showcasing students of all ages, we also

mount a production of The Nutcracker each year.

Concerts on the Lawn Lively evenings of free music



By the Numbers

- We held 129 individual performances and recitals in music, theater and dance
- 90 dance classes were offered
- 12 group music classes were offered
- Over 4,500 individual music lessons were taught
- 19 theater classes were offered
- 130 Visual Arts classes were offered
- 11 Exhibitions were mounted
- 5 Camps were held
- 13,743 Individual tickets were sold
- Over 19,000 adults and over 5,600 children participated in our activities
- We employed 39 teachers as contract employees

Partners

Each year, we strive to build stronger connections with other organizations in the community. We developed new relationships this year with G.O. Community Development Corporation, The Gemstone Project and the Ashtabula Autism Group, working with these groups to reach out to their members. We continued to partner with the Ashtabula YMCA providing programming to their daycare students. Our outreach included after school programming through Redstone Schoolhouse in Rock Creek, After School Discovery and Ashtabula Area City Schools. We offered programming for both children and adults at Harbor Topky Library and in partnership with the Ashtabula Area District Library. LEADERship Ashtabula County brought both their youth and adult classes to the arts center.



A Sampling of New and Exciting Projects

Ashtabula Arts Center Permanent Collection

A full inventory of the permanent collection was completed and a professional appraisal was obtained. Working with assistance from the Inter-Museum Conservation Association, a Collections Management Policy was written and approved by the board. Further work on the permanent collection will be carried out in the coming year to assess and maintain objects in the collection.

Art Attack

We began working with local schools to develop a list of students interested in art activities and publish an e newsletter full of information about events at the arts center and in all of the participating schools.

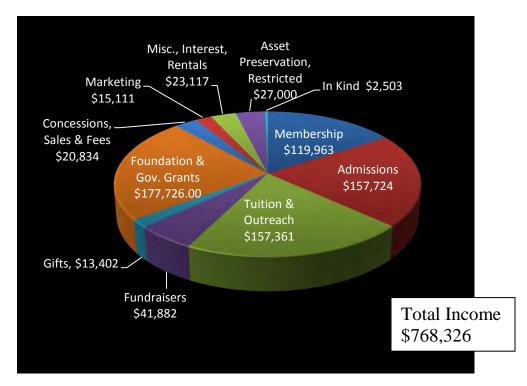
Family Access Pass

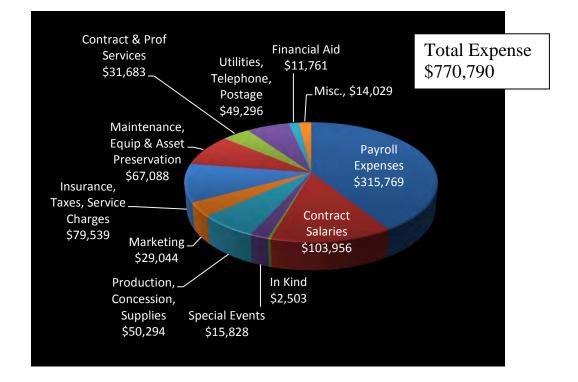
As part of a larger effort to break down barriers to participation, we developed this pass which allows local families to purchase theater tickets at a deep discount. As these passes have been issued, we have seen increased participation on the part of the families involved.

New Music Groups

We organized both the Starlite Singers and The Showoffs in order to give young students a chance to perform in choral groups. We are now the home of the Ashtabula Arts Center Adult String Orchestra and the Youth String Orchestra.

Financials





Our Mission Statement

"To Preserve and promote the arts through education and entertainment across cultural boundaries – encouraging personal growth, cultural growth, and economic growth"

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Foundation and Grant Support

Our very grateful thanks to the following grantmaking organizations for providing the Ashtabula Arts Center with funds essential to our ability to provide high quality arts programming to the region.

> The Ashtabula Arts Center Foundation The Ohio Arts Council The Robert S. Morrison Foundation The Ashtabula Foundation The Herzog Family Foundation The Albert M. Ford Charitable Trust The Conneaut Foundation The Civic Development Corporation

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For 60 years we have provided opportunities for high quality education and performance in dance, drama, music, and art.

Ticket sales and tuition comprise less than half of our annual operating budget. The remainder comes from grants and gifts from individuals and businesses who care about what the arts can bring to the life of a community. We ask that you consider adding your support by becoming a member of the arts center.

Our Members

We recognize the contributions of our members in print, on line, during curtain speeches and at all arts center events. Donors receive discounts on classes and season subscriptions.

To find out more about membership levels and benefits go to ashtabulaartscenter.org or call the arts center today (440) 964-3396.

Thank you,

Lauren Hammond President Ashtabula Arts Center Board of Trustees







