



The State of The Ark Annual Report for 2015

Last year The Ark celebrated **50 Years of enriching the human spirit** through the presentation, preservation, and encouragement of folk, roots and ethnic music and related arts. It's been an outstanding year for programming and an exciting look into The Ark's future. **THANK YOU** for supporting **50 Years More!**

2015 Accomplishments

In 2015 we launched The Ark's 50th Anniversary celebration with Jeff Daniels serving as Honorary Chair and "50 Folkin' Years!" as our theme. Special Anniversary activities included:

- Two benefit concerts featuring **Raul Malo** and **Jeff Daniels**
- Three nights of programming at the **Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair** stage
- The **Fifty Year Fling**: five nights of programming at The Ark in July, including a **Community Sing, Movie Night** and **three in-the-round concerts**

The Ark Board created The Renovations Task Force and began the process of creating a comprehensive **Master Plan for renovations** for The Ark that can be implemented in phases starting in 2016. Local firm Mitchell and Mouat were selected as the architects for this project.

Ark Music

The Ark continues to bring the best in folk, roots, Americana and ethnic music to our region, showcasing **emerging artists and well-known performers** who love to play The Ark. This year The Ark presented:

- **333 performances** with a total audience of 74,437, including 2 sold-out Folk Festival nights in Hill Auditorium, 17 shows at other venues (Michigan Theater, Power Center, Royal Oak Music Theater), and 6 children's shows through the Ford Motor Company Fund Family Series
- **313 shows** and **one workshop at The Ark** with a total audience of 52,935
- **15 sold-out shows at The Ark**
- 10% of shows were targeted toward **emerging artists** and **younger audiences**
- 18% of shows featured **Michigan artists**
- The **38th Ann Arbor Folk Festival** featured 16 artists and included 8 emerging acts and 2 Michigan acts

Ark People

Collaboration among The Ark's staff and volunteers at all levels is vital to ongoing success, as is the continued support of The Ark's membership. The Ark benefited from:

- **4,294 current members** at the end of FY15
- **485 active club volunteers** worked 4,160 shifts contributing 19,300 volunteer hours
- **21 volunteer sound technicians** contributed approximately 2,500 volunteer hours

Ark Community

The Ark plays a critical role in our community by fostering emerging artists, increasing the accessibility of important music, and providing key opportunities for community organizations, such as:

- **12 Open Stage shows** hosted by The Ark offered the public a chance to perform, and one **Open Stage Showcase** featured 2 of the year's Open Stage acts. **11 free Take-A-Chance Tuesday shows** enabled promising but largely unknown musical acts to perform a full show
- More than **100 area nonprofit organizations worked with The Ark**, including more than 18 organizations that benefitted from low or no-cost use of The Ark's downtown location and staffing support. Community partners included Jazzistry, Wild Swan Theater, Community High Jazz Group, and Food Gatherers. The Ark provided more than 100 nonprofits with free tickets to Ark events for their own fundraising initiatives.

Financial Picture – Annual Operations

The Ark was once again in the black at the end of this past fiscal year. The continued financial success is the result of staff, volunteers, members and patrons coming together around our mission and excellent programming.

- **Membership** is a key contributor to The Ark's success: members contributed **\$290,260** during FY15 and accounted for **9%** of The Ark's total **cash** revenue
- The **Ann Arbor Folk Festival** set another record for ticket revenue
- **9 businesses** were involved in our **Corporate Friend Program** and had **634 participants** attend Ark shows
- **12 Stage Sponsors** supported a total of **65 shows**

Financial Picture - Capital Campaign

Led by Chair Bob Guenzel and Honorary Chair Judy Dow Rumelhart, The Ark continued its capital campaign to pay off the costs of purchasing our space, fund capital improvements, and increase capacity to develop new initiatives. Progress included:

- **\$1,921,878 raised as of August 31st, 2015**, including \$1,131,978 raised in FY15 alone
- **\$500,000 Lead gift from Ford Motor Company and the Ford Motor Company Fund** was the largest in The Ark's history and was recognized by naming **the Ford Listening Room at The Ark**
- Campaign success has allowed The Ark to accelerate payments on the loan for purchase

Goals and Priorities for the Coming Year

This year The Ark is continuing to do what The Ark does best: ensuring that our mission of enriching the human spirit through folk, roots and ethnic music is at the forefront of all planning and reflected on all fronts, including continued programming excellence, production values, day-to-day operations, internal and external relationships. Goals and priorities include:

- **Closing out The Ark's 50th Anniversary** Celebration at the 39th Ann Arbor Folk Festival in January 2016
- **Completing the Campaign for The Ark** to ensure The Ark's ongoing financial stability including fundraising for operations
- **Completing the Master Plan for facility renovation** and establish priorities and timelines in alignment with funding and strategic planning