



Annual Funders Report for 2016

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!**

2016 Accomplishments

The Ark's year-long **50th Anniversary celebration** concluded with a special performance by the legendary Joan Baez at the 39th Ann Arbor Folk Festival in January of 2016. Other anniversary signature shows were Arlo Guthrie's Alice's Restaurant 50th Anniversary Tour, Rhiannon Giddens, Chris Bathgate, and the Steel Wheels with the RFD Boys at the Fall Fundraiser.

The Ark's Renovations Task Force completed a comprehensive **renovations master plan** to be implemented in phases starting in November of 2016. The Ark hired Phoenix Contractors to be the project's Construction Manager.

FY16 was an exciting year at The Ark for **new pilot programming**. In April 2016, The Ark partnered with the Ford Fund to bus students from 4 metro-Detroit schools to an educational program on American history and diversity –*Common Chords: Telling America's story through music and cultural expression*. Other pilot programs included two tech conferences and two memorial/celebration of life events.

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 this special venue. FY16 saw **record attendance numbers** as The Ark presented:

- **322 performances** with a total audience of 79,065, including 2 Folk Festival nights in Hill Auditorium, 13 shows at other venues, and **6 children's shows** through the Ford Motor Company Fund Family Series
- **306 shows at The Ark** with a **total audience of 56,793** and **24 sold-out shows**
- 10% shows targeted toward younger audiences

Ark People

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

- **4,609 current members** at the end of FY16, over 7% growth for the second year in a row
- **520 active club volunteers** who worked 4,193 shifts, contributing 19,435 volunteer hours
- **26 volunteer sound technicians** who contributed approximately 3,672 volunteer hours

Ark Community

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

- **12 Open Stage shows** hosted by The Ark that offered the public a chance to perform on The Ark stage. **11 free Take-A-Chance Tuesday shows** enabled promising but largely unknown musical acts to perform a fully produced show.
- More than **100 area nonprofit organizations that worked with The Ark**, including more than 12 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. More than 90 other nonprofits received free tickets to Ark events for their own fundraising initiatives.

Ark Partnerships

- Supported summer's **Fair Lane Folk Festival at the Henry Ford Estate** for the 2nd year
- Sponsorship of **Acoustic Café** for the 6th year, highlighting the Ann Arbor Folk Festival and with over **2,000** entries. Two ticket winners were flown to the Festival and hosted for the weekend by Acoustic Café host Rob Reinhart.
- Hosted the **MOTH Grand Slam** event for the 4th year
- Served as rain date venue for Bank of Ann Arbor's **Sonic Lunch** program for the 3rd year

Ark Financials – Annual Operations

For the 8th year in a row, The Ark was in the black at the end of the year. This 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 **\$299,440** during FY16, which accounted for 10% of The Ark's total cash revenue
- **11 businesses** were involved in our **Corporate Friend Program** and had **717 participants** attend Ark shows
- **9 Stage Sponsors** supported a total of **45 shows**

Ark 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.

- The campaign **passed the original goal of \$2.5 million in August, 2016**, with \$700,000 raised in FY16 alone
- In January of 2016, The Ark received **the Weiser Family Challenge** to match up to \$220,000 in new gifts and pledges for Guest Services Area renovations. In six months The Ark's generous donors met the challenge and Phase I renovations –concessions upper lobby and photo gallery –were scheduled to begin in November 2016.

Ark 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 essential to all activities.

Goals and priorities include:

- **Completing the Campaign for The Ark** and transitioning to annual development to support The Ark's regular programming and new initiatives
- **Completing Phase I of the renovations master plan** and continuing to prioritize, fundraise for and implement additional phases of the plan.
- **Continue exploring new community-based programming ideas**, including educational programming for school children and mission-related special events