



## Annual Funders Report for 2019

The Ark's fiscal year 2019 (September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019), was mission-driven, focused on the primary goal of *enriching the human spirit* through the presentation, preservation, and encouragement of folk, roots and ethnic music and related arts.

## FY 2019 Accomplishments

Ark programming continued to grow in FY19 and brought some of music's greatest legends to Southeast Michigan –such as Joan Baez and Arlo Guthrie –while also leading the way in pushing the limits of the definition of folk music. Educational programming expanded and partnerships increased around the region. The Ark presented over 300 nights of music at its downtown Ann Arbor location, as well as shows at El Club and The Majestic in Detroit, Royal Oak Music Theatre, the Michigan Theater and more! In the spring of 2019, The Ark completed its extraordinary new entryway on Main Street as well as upgrades to sound and lighting in the Ford Listening Room. The Ark celebrated these achievements with some very special musician friends and the public at June's community open house. The Ark also officially recognized The RFD Boys as its House Band.

## 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. The Ark presented:

- **333 performances** with a total audience of 80,471, including 2 Folk Festival nights in Hill Auditorium, 22 shows at other venues, 7 children's shows through the Ford Motor Company Fund Family Series, and 5 educational programs (5% increase in shows and 11% increase in audience)
- **309 shows at The Ark** with a **total audience of 53,440** and **34 sold-out shows**
- 17% of artists presented by The Ark were from Michigan
- 13% of our shows presented emerging artists 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:

- **4,614 current members** at the end of FY19
- **450 active club and event volunteers** who worked 4,123 shifts, contributing 19,064 volunteer hours; 35 volunteers regularly staffed The Ark's new educational programs; 91 new club volunteers went through orientation
- **19 volunteer sound technicians** who contributed approximately 3,708 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, including:

- **5 Ark Educational Events** that served 16 schools from all over Southeast Michigan. A total of 1,288 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and 189 teachers and chaperones attended field trips to The Ark presents Common Chords (a 56% increase in students served)
- **14 Open Stage shows plus 2 Youth Open Stage shows** hosted by The Ark offered the public a chance to perform on The Ark stage. **10 Artist Spotlight shows** enabled promising new musical acts to perform a show, and offered the public free admission.

- Over **130 area nonprofit organizations worked with The Ark**, including 18 organizations that benefitted from low or no-cost use of The Ark's downtown location and support, and 122 nonprofit organizations that received contributions of tickets to events at The Ark for their own fundraising initiatives. Community partners included Dawn Farm, Community High Jazz Group, Breakfast at St. Andrew's, Kerrytown Concert House, and Food Gatherers.

### Ark Partnerships

- Hosted the Michigan Guild of Artists and Artisans' outdoor **Art Fair Stage** for the 5<sup>th</sup> year, presenting programming over three nights open free to the public
- In its 9<sup>th</sup> year The Ark's **sponsorship of Acoustic Café** highlighting the Ann Arbor Folk Festival had over **1,400** entries. Two ticket winners were flown to the festival and hosted for the weekend by Acoustic Café host Rob Reinhart. Acoustic Café joins media partners WEMU, Ann Arbor's 107one, WDET, MetroTimes, Between The Lines, and Toledo.com in supporting the festival.
- Served as rain date venue for Bank of Ann Arbor's Sonic Lunch series for the 5<sup>th</sup> year, and hosted the event twice.
- Hosted Intermitten, a conference for Michigan entrepreneurs and start-ups in the tech industry
- Hosted the **MOTH Grand Slam** event for the 7<sup>th</sup> year
- Continued **partnership with Conor O'Neill's** offering 3 dinner & show packages this year

### Ark Financials – Annual Operations

For the 11<sup>th</sup> 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 **\$332,540** during FY19, which accounted for 10% of The Ark's total cash revenue
- **9 businesses** were involved in our **Corporate Friend Program** and had **454 participants** attend Ark shows
- **4 Stage Sponsors** supported a total of **10 shows**

### Ark Financials –Capital Projects

In FY19 the Development Committee led by Chair Bob Guenzel raised over \$280,000 toward the Entryway and Concert Production projects.

- The successes of the Entryway and Concert Production projects were celebrated in June with The Ark's Grand Re-opening Weekend, including donor recognition at the Vienna Teng show, a public Open House, and a dedication to The RFD Boys, The Ark's official house band.
- The Ark received a **\$75,000 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts & Culture** to help fund the Concert Production project for new sound and lighting in the Ford Listening Room at The Ark

### 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:

- Complete renovations plan to critical support spaces at the club including the bathrooms, freight elevator and artists dressing rooms
- **Explore and expand new community-based programming**, including educational programs for school children, partnerships with other community organizations and mission-related special events
- Continue **the visioning process for The Ark's future growth and evolution** by developing the next 5-year strategic plan.