



www.masterworkarts.org

2021 Annual Report

April 2022

Executive Summary



In 2021 The Masterwork Music and Art Foundation delivered on a revised scope for the organization that began in 2020 and navigated challenges across all work areas prompted by the pandemic. In a year when many larger arts organizations had exhausted their ability to remain relevant, in a world increasingly forced into digital solutions, Masterwork opened and sustained new programs and expanded its audience significantly. This report explains how in detail reviewing accomplishments related to Masterwork's administration, programming, communications and fundraising.

Administration



There were a number of Administrative enhancements in 2021, among them:

- **Workgroup Effectiveness** – In order to reduce the burden and time we spend on Board meetings, we created Workgroups to iron out details for Finance, the Bylaws, Communications, Event Planning, Fundraising and Programming. Doing so allowed us to accomplish a significant increase in productivity that deserves recognition.
- **New Board Members** – Eric Hafen, a long time arts manager was added to the Board, following the addition of Tony Javed late last year, a digital strategic and producer. Both of these gentlemen bring a breadth of experience and perspective to Masterwork.
- **Updated By-Laws** – A months long effort was waged to update our aged By-Laws, lead by Alice Glock and Board President, Mathews Phillips.

Communications



Here's a summary of key accomplishments in the Communications work area:

- Messaging

Masterwork Foundation has been supporting excellence in the arts for over 50 years. 100 percent of your donation funds art and artists through community grants, competitive awards and a premier award for an emerging artist. Find out more at www.masterworkarts.org

Note that this summary of our brand proposition, was folded into all press announcements and blog posts issued by the organization.

- Web Site

The web site www.masterworkarts.org was created in 2019. While the web site is the anchor for much of our foundational information, our blog site, each of our award sites and our social media round out our true reach online.

Our web site receives 100 visitors a month on average, with 10% returning. There's a 47% bounce rate, but that's largely due to redirecting people to third party sites like our blog and the competition web sites.

Pages continued to be updated monthly at a minimum and several times a week during key events and offerings.

On the award sites, there were over 700 people liking or sharing applicant posts.

- Email

Our email list increased by 33%, largely generated from dance class participants, award applicants, adjudicators, 'A Life in the Arts' interview subjects and individual email requests from the web site.

We issued quarterly announcements and a four message Calendar Year-End Fundraising Campaign in the past year.

- The Masterwork Arts Blog

Launched in 2019, the Blog serves as the device used for all of our formal announcements. **22 blog posts were issued in 2021, double the number of blog posts issued in 2020.**

The most visited blog post was our Premier Award announcement with nearly 500 visits. Our Community Grants awards and Zoom dance class posts tied for second in popularity with nearly 250 visits each.

- Social Media

We have nearly 300 followers in social media between Facebook and Twitter, a **20% increase over last year.**

On Facebook, we issued 120 posts in 2021, a **100% increase over the previous year in volume.** The most popular were our Award announcements (we had a reach of 1.2 thousand for the Premier Award) and our 'A Life in the Arts' announcements (which interview subjects often promoted in kind). Facebook engagement stats (reactions, comments and shares) were highest for the posts that featured award and grant winners and often fell in the 200 range. It's this aspect that speaks to the extended reach of partnering organizations and people who we're connecting with in social (who are extending our marketing meaningfully for free).

Our Facebook followers are 68% men and 32% women, with the largest audience (20%) between the ages of 55 and 64.

On Twitter we issued 50 posts. Demographics and stats are limited on this platform to advertisers. However, we cite, tag and share posts from media partners and individuals when possible in our posts.

In 2021 we also launched a YouTube channel for our performance videos and our *A Life in the Arts interviews*. Together, these materials generated over 300 views.

- Media Placements

Our award offerings allowed us to garner media placements with BroadwayWorld, The Morristown Patch, The Morristown Green and Hudson Valley 360, among others.

In the Fall we engaged Marie Gryphon to assist with media promotion. She developed a spread sheet, categorizing media outlets by location and including contact information for specific pitch opportunities. Marie comes to us with extensive experience with other nonprofits and with developing and promoting events online.

Strategic partners like the New Jersey and New York Council on the Arts, and awardees like Dance on the Lawn, the Prospector Theater, Current Showcase and the Athens Cultural Center, extended marketing through email promotions, as well as the American Guild of Organists (AGO), Yale and Columbia Universities (for features on Colin Lynch and Todd Whitley).

In social media, we benefitted from our offerings being promoted by ALL ARTS (the PBS channel), Morris Arts, the Athens Cultural Center, the Friends of Beattie-Powers, individual award applicants and individual interviewees for 'A Life in the Arts.' We also began posting in Community Forums for Morristown, Catskill and Athens – active forums with a collective reach of over 20K.

Programming



2021 was the second year we offered an awards program with three tiers – one for competitive awards, one for community grants and one for a premier award for an emerging artist.

Here's some detail on what our awards programming accomplished:

- **Competitive Awards** – As in 2020, we offered two competitive awards in the past year – the first was a photo competition which was offered online. The second was a dance award given during a Workshop.
- **Community Grant Awards** – We offered three awards in 2021, with one grant at the \$1,000 level and two at the \$500 level.

The Community Grant Award announcement received good pick-up in media and social marketing and generated a number of submissions from the Tri-State area. The winners reflected that reach with **Dance on the Lawn**, a New Jersey organization, receiving the top award. **The Prospector Theater** in Connecticut and **Current Showcase** in Brooklyn, each received \$500 awards.

Later in the year, a fourth grant opportunity was offered to a previous awardee and a long-standing marketing partner, The **Athens Cultural Center**. The \$3,700 received from a garden party fundraiser for that grant brought *our total grant award giving to \$5,200 for 2021 --- an all-time high.*

- **Premiere (Organ Competition) Award** – The second year of our premier award benefitted from a competition format developed by Masterwork Board member Wayne Walters. In deciding to rotate arts disciplines for this award, this year's award focused on organ performance. The American Guild of Organists helped promote the offering, generating an international response. As we did last year with the vocal award, an esteemed panel of adjudicators (professional organists all) helped us select **Colin Lynch** as this year's Premier Awardee – making him the second artist we have honored with a \$10,000 award to advance his career in music.

Our programming in 2021 was expanded significantly with two free offerings – Zoom dances classes and the 'A Life in the Arts' interview series.

- **Zoom Dance Classes** – Over 100 classes were provided in 2021 (two a week) generating interest from 50 individuals. Cross promotion was provided by the **Athens Cultural Center** and **The Friends of Beattie-Powers**, two community organizations in upstate New York.

This offering seeks to raise awareness of Masterwork, provide a direct benefit to the community and ultimately, increase individual support. It has accomplished all three.

- **A Life in the Arts** – Masterwork's own Board member Joseph White interviews people who have dedicated their lives to the arts in some way. The series has evolved to be presented in seasons and has included a wide range of creatives (from arts administrators to performing artists, educators, and visual artists). To date there have been 18 interviews, which have collectively generated more than 300 views.

This offering seeks to raise awareness of Masterwork's mission of serving excellence in the arts by celebrating the lives of artists and revealing insights on navigating a career in the arts. Operationally, we are building relationships in the arts community to extend our reach.

Fundraising



From the onset, the chief objective of 2021 was to build on the revenue generation efforts that launched in 2020. Note that the organization is starting from square one when it comes to building a community of supporters.

The pandemic and the rise of Omicron prevented us from hosting a Spring fundraiser. A Fall fundraiser offered one of the first opportunities for an outdoor event that would be safe for attendees.

- **Application Fees**

We generated donations from the applicants to the Organ Competition.

- **Dance Class Donations**

Additional funds were donated to Masterwork throughout the year from dance class participants.

- **Garden Party**

The Garden party raised \$3,700 from 17 donors at an event where 40 people were exposed to Masterwork. Todd Whitley and Gary Holder hosted the party in their garden, covering costs. Donations came in from dance students and Athens Cultural Center members for a special Masterwork grant for the Athens Cultural Center.

- **Calendar Year-End Fundraising**

\$1,080 from three Facebook Fundraisers and 24 donors

\$1,100 from three donors

Special thanks and kudos to major donors:

Todd Whitley and Gary Holder

Chris and Carol Pfister

Joan Ferrari

Bill Pratt and Bob Phibbs

Wayne and Anne Walters

Carol May and Tim Watkins

Lynn Breslin

Frank Cuthbert

Eileen Gallagher

Alice Glock and Hebbly Economy

Pamela Harris

Tony Javed and David Edwards

Mary Ellen Knight

Laurie Law

Lavinia Mears

Gwyneth Mooney

Rita Selby

Kiki Smith

Nancy Whitley

Kudos to Masterwork Fundraisers:

Alice Glock

Tim Watkins

Joseph White

Tony Javed

Todd Whitley

Summary



Dear Supporters and Friends,

Creativity does take courage, just as reinventing an organization does. In the past year we proved we could build on the potential of a new vision for Masterwork, with minimal investment (and no impact to our reserves).

The Board has been highly engaged on calls and numerous committee meetings, as work expanded across a number of fronts – literally all of the key work areas covered in this summary.

My heartfelt thanks to each of them, listed here:

Alice Glock

Eric Hafen

Tony Javed

Joel Ferrari

Carol May

Gwyneth Mooney, Treasurer

Mathews Philips, President

Mina (Lavinia) Ruby

R. Wayne Walters

Tim Watkins

Eileen White

Joseph White

To a brighter future in the coming year – serving the arts and aspiring to celebrate “excellence in the arts.”
Yours,

Todd Whitley

Masterwork Music and Art Foundation Executive Director

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