



## 2023 End of Year Report

Hot Shops is one-of-kind, but forged for everyone.

From the venerable Smithsonian Institution to the iconic Museum of Modern Art, these entities have left indelible marks on the nation's artistic heritage. Yet, nestled in the heart of Omaha, the Hot Shops Art Center offers something distinctively unique—a commitment to hands-on artistry. This distinction, while seemingly simple, holds profound implications for artists, art enthusiasts, those who are curious and the broader community.

96 creatives have made this a place to create, teach and share. With their commitment to sharing their passion for the arts, we saw 21,800 participate in our classes and events.

As the Keepers of the Flame, we kindle the fires of creativity, ensuring the artistic spirit of Omaha never dims.

Hot Shops is more than an arts organization; it's a thriving ecosystem. In the following pages, see what we accomplished this year as we live our mission – catalyzing creativity, and putting artistic opportunity within reach for all.





Focus Area

## **Strengthen & Sustain**

Let's build a strong and broad coalition of support to help us stabilize into the future and renovate the Hot Shops into a world-class facility that evokes pride and better accommodates the needs of the future.

### **Measurement Report**

- Nine board meetings were held and one written monthly report was submitted. Rowena Cage, Tammy Williams and Teresa Gleason joined the board.
- Advisory/ 'Friends of the Hot Shops' committee continues to be on hold while we build capacity in the organization to manage more.
- Increased outreach and grant submissions. 6 meetings and 13 emails/letters to potential donors, 18 grant applications submitted. 6 were repeat supporters, and 3 were new. 6 decisions are still pending.
- \$219,856 capital raised in public donations, sponsorships, grants and public memberships
- \$133,000 capital funds raised for the elevator renovation project.
- Anti-discrimination policy updated, Advancing Equity and Inclusion and a Diversity and Equity Policy created.

Throughout the past year, a significant focus of our efforts was directed towards expanding our support base. This initiative aimed not only to increase our reach but also to foster meaningful connections with individuals and foundations who share our commitment to providing affordable space for working artists and for arts education.

This year, we sought assistance from a grant writer to help increase our number of grant submissions. We more than doubled the amount of grants submitted in 2022 and saw positive outcomes with the number of awarded grants rise significantly.

The Hot Shops received contributions from 55 supporters, 220 fundraiser attendees and received donations from nearly 3,000 visitors to achieve our 2023 budget. Donations collected at our Spring and Winter Open House helped us raise more than \$10,000 for the elevator renovation project. In February resident artists organized a second floor, Galentine's Day Fundraising Event. The artists organized music, food, hands-on activities and sold art to attendees. The event drew 65 paid attendees and raised \$2,500 with a donor match. The funds were used to purchase 100 new classroom chairs.

The Hot Shops has diverse income streams, helping us to stabilize while we work to broaden our base of support. Philanthropic support is 53% and earned income is 47% of our budget.

Focus Area

## Build a Creative Pipeline

Let's create a critical mass of future makers while making a positive cultural impact through our educational and public programming and help Omaha retain its creative talent.



*Glassblowing for Students from All Saints*

### Measurement Report

- 1,121 Educational Programs/Classes reaching 4,306 creative learners. 36 programs were held at low/no cost for 501 under-resourced children and 24 programs were held for 153 individuals with disabilities.
- 70 tours and 101 demonstrations were given to 3,269 individuals
- 11 CreativeMornings/Omaha events attended by 584 individuals
- 17 Gallery Exhibitions, 4 exhibitions featured Omaha metro student and OPS teacher work
- 17 Partner collaborations with Visit Omaha, Collective for Youth, OPS, Completely Kids, Boys & Girls Club, Urban League of NE, Nelson Mandela Elementary, Bemis, Encompass Omaha, Brownell-Talbot, Collective for Youth, Autism Action Partnership, Open Omaha, SAVE Program, Completely Kids, OPS EL Family Program
- 136 Community Studio Uses. 1,050 Creation Station participants
- Nearly 21,800 members of the public welcomed in for educational programming and public events

We partnered with a Greater Omaha Chamber/Leadership Omaha group to launch a new art therapy program for Encompass Omaha. Encompass helps people recovering from the physical and emotional trauma caused by violence, many of them are gunshot victims. The group wanted to add art therapy to the recovery journey. Certified art therapist and Hot Shops resident artist, Jenn Radil led the sessions, with Tim Barry leading the pottery session. The intervention specialists at Encompass were so positively inspired by the results of the addition of art therapy, they want to continue the program into the future and work collaboratively on finding funding to do so.

We were excited to host seventh and eighth graders from all three CUES Schools for educational programming. Students from Holy Name, Sacred Heart and All Saints participated in pottery and glassblowing over three days in February. The school received funding for transportation. We received a grant from the Jewish Federation Foundation and FNBO that covered part of the cost of this programming. We did fall short of funds needed to cover the costs of these workshops, but we did raise enough to pay the artists who taught them.

June was the start of our summer programming for children. We hosted 161 children from several organizations focused on under-resourced youth for free, hands-on art classes. We have also partnered with OPS to bring Raku to 41 students at Omaha South and we hosted 30 scholars in from Nelson Mandela Elementary for tours and demonstrations.



Continued

## **Build a Creative Pipeline**

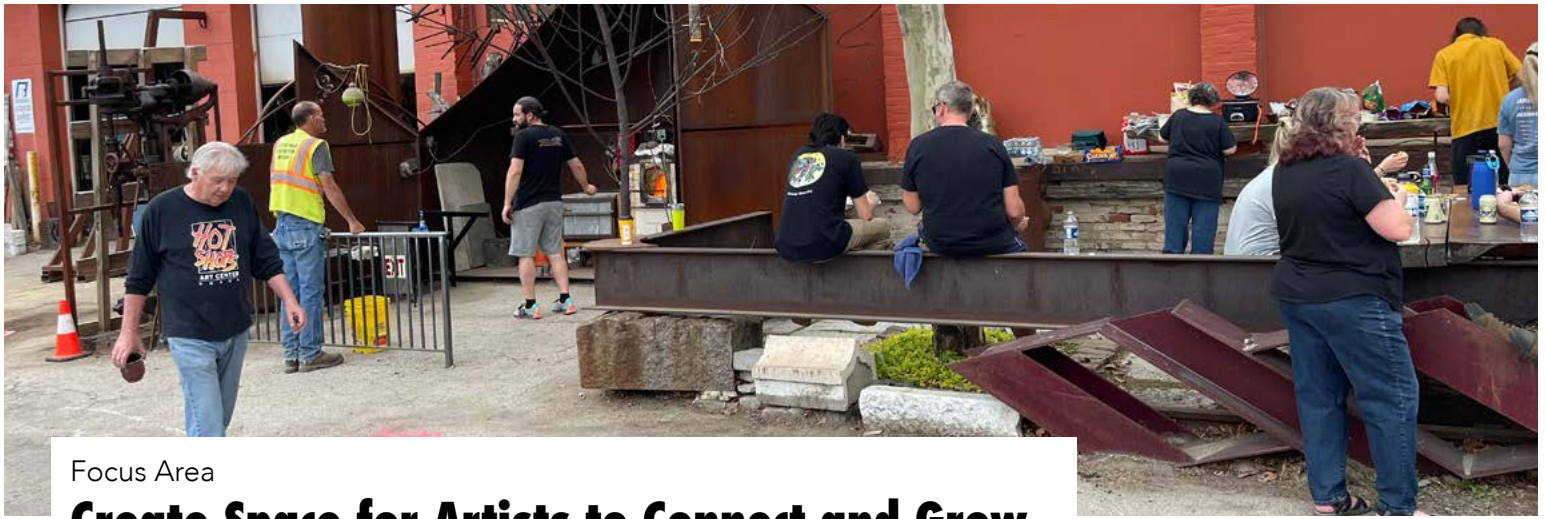
*Glass artists from all over the world attended the International Society of Glass Beadmakers Conference at the Hot Shops*

In September we hosted 36 employees from Confluence, a consulting firm comprised of landscape architects, urban designers and planners, for a day-long opportunity to explore glassblowing at Crystal Forge and sculpture with Les Bruning. We also hosted 60 attendees from the Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects for a two-day conference. Hot Shops was their 'home base' for lectures, lunches, vendor booths and more.

"Omaha, Who Knew." This was the quote from the International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) after hosting their Gathering Conference in Omaha for the first time. The Gathering is a treasured event of the ISGB for over 30 years and has been hosted in Las Vegas for most of those years. This event was special, as it was their first in-person Gathering since the pandemic. Members asked for them to move it around and explore the country, and Omaha, with the help of the Hot Shops Art Center landed this special event featuring glass artists from around the world.

130 attendees enjoyed this first, intimate gathering back. The Hot Shops was a key figure, providing space for 14 torchworking classes to 84 attendees, a demonstration by Switzerland-based glass artist Guido Adam, and hosted a juried gallery exhibition featuring some of the most influential glass artists from around the world.

The Hot Shops developed several new relationships this year, including SAVE, a tutoring/mentoring program for under-served youth that used incentives such as art classes at the Hot Shops to help students achieve more. LaVista Public Schools partnered with us for their Elementary HAL program, treating students as 'artists for a day' at the Hot Shops. The day featured a tour, meet-and-greet with available artists, demonstrations, and hands-on workshop in pottery. Omaha Public Schools English Language Family Program has also partnered with the Hot Shops. Artists offered classes to families and children at the TAC building, and we look forward to hosting some of the students in the program at the Hot Shops next year.



Focus Area

## Create Space for Artists to Connect and Grow

*Potluck for Artists & Construction Workers*

Let's provide our collaborative of creative learners, makers and artists of all ages, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, and backgrounds that work in a variety of mediums a place and opportunity to be creative, exchanging ideas and developing their voice.

### Measurement Report

- 136 Community Studio Uses.
- Provide low-cost working spaces that are well below rental fees currently available in the market  
Hot Shops' rates: \$1/sq foot - \$1.40/sq foot
- Hosted 13 events to connect our 96 resident artists with each other and other creatives. We 58,000 visitors through tourism and events
- Building improvements - new door locking system, building-wide wifi installed

A highlight of our summer was inviting the construction crews from the City of Omaha and MC Wells to a potluck lunch and outdoor glassblowing demonstration to thank them for their work on the sewer separation and 13th Street construction project. Construction took much longer than anticipated due to many unexpected challenges. While the project was frustrating for all involved, and the construction had a negative impact to the Hot Shops in the short-term, the long-term benefits of discovering and fixing a collapsed pipe, new sewer separation that will positively impact past flooding, and new road will be felt for a long time to come!

We have welcomed several new artists to the building this quarter including a mix of beginning, emerging and established artists. Their comments about why they wanted to be part of the Hot Shops were inspiring!

"The community is a big part of the draw. I've been on my own and in my own bubble for so long that being a part of an organization sounds really good. I know I could personally benefit from the interaction with others and obligation to more than just ME." Brian Wetjen

"I feel that a Hot Shop Residency at this time in my career would allow me to discover more because I would have so few limitations. It would open doors for a young artist because I would have a body of work and the implicit support that a Hot Shop Residency provides....a residency would impact my work in the ways that being around other artists, intimately, impacts a person's studio practice." Jahmai Brown

"I used to have a studio at Hot Shops. I miss the camaraderie, energy, and people." Amy Haney

"I would love to have a space within the community to create mixed-media artwork! It would be an amazing opportunity to share a space with other artists and grow from the experience of being surrounded by other determined and driven artists." Sheree Le'Shawn



Focus Area

## Community Awareness and Outreach

*Raku at the Fall Fundraiser*

Let's build our brand awareness and reach to attract more visitors and students.

### Measurement Report

- Marketing/Donation booklet created
- Social media audience growth of 2,082 over four channels (FB, Insta, LinkedIn, TikTok).  
Twitter (now X) is consistently seeing a decrease in followers - down 69.
- Monthly email newsletter. Audience growth of 401 individuals, to 2,652 and open rates at 44-50%
- 223,000 page views on our website and approximately 58,000 visitors passed through our doors.

We were very fortunate to receive several stories in the media.

[Greater Omaha Chamber Magazine](#)

[Visit Omaha Magazine](#) mention

National Convention Site Selection magazine mention

Welcome to the Weekend - Greeting Card Workshop

[Ceramic artists help folks test out sculpting skills at Gene Leahy Mall](#) - KMTV

[Welcome to the Weekend - Spring Open House](#) - KETV

[Nebraska Stories - Les Bruning, Tumbleweed](#)

[At the Intersection of Art and Justice](#)- Omaha Magazine

[Hot Shops Art Center blazes a spirit of artistic creativity in downtown Omaha](#)- Milford Magazine

[Josephine Langbehn connects to the past through art](#)- Milford Magazine

[Omaha's Hot Shops Art Center bursting at the seams](#) - WOWT

[Collaboration, Outreach Unites Artists Across Mediums at HSAC](#)- originally in ISGB magazine, reposted on HSAC website

[The Arts Thrive in These Nebraska Communities](#)- Next Avenue

We were proud to receive the following recognitions this year:

- Finalist: Douglas County/Metro Area Tourism Award
- Best of Omaha finalist - Omaha Magazine
- OEAA Finalist: Outstanding Group Show - Uncovered – Creighton University Kappa Pi Art Honorary, Hot Shops Art Center



*Gretna Elementary 5th Grade Tour with Josephine Langbehn*



*All Saints 7th Grade, Pottery*



*Iowa School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, glassblowing with Matthew Shrader*



*Brownell-Talbot Life Drawing with Eduardo Gardea*



*Gretna Elementary Tours/Demonstrations with Tim Barry*



*Westside Arts for Me drawings were recreated to glass with Samuel Logeman*

#### MISSION

To be a place where ideas, dreams and what ifs are explored, created and shared.

#### VALUES

We catalyze CREATIVITY through bravery, honesty and hard work.

We accelerate ACCEPTANCE through inclusivity and celebrating the individual.

We build TRUST by providing a safe place to share and develop ideas and creative expressions.

We create OPPORTUNITY by breaking down barriers, developing voice and building confidence.

We strive for EXCELLENCE and QUALITY in our programs and experiences to the community.

#### VISION

To be the fire that sparks a more open, creative community where everyone belongs,  
by increasing access to visual arts education.

