Dear Friends,

Our 2021 Impact Report celebrates two significant milestones in the history of The Works. To honor our 25th anniversary we opened Smithsonian’s *Habitat* exhibition in the LeFevre Courtyard. *Habitat* is a Smithsonian-wide exhibition exploring one big idea: Protecting habitats protects life. This was a perfect fit to bring life sciences into our portfolio and make our outdoor urban oasis bloom!

The other milestone is the retirement of Executive Director Marcia Downes. Marcia worked closely with Howard LeFevre in the late 1990s to turn an abandoned steam engine factory into the interactive learning center you enjoy today. We are deeply indebted to the vision, leadership and guidance that Marcia has provided to our organization.

Works founder Howard LeFevre recognized the connection between art, science and history and felt strongly that the arts be an integral part of The Works’ programming. His vision included a showcasing of a wide spectrum of artistic offerings from classical to contemporary and for utilizing the gallery as an educational and artistic forum for all learners. We honor Marcia’s service and her own artful legacy by naming the art gallery The Marcia W. Downes Art Gallery.

It took many years to grow The Works into the community and educational resource it is today and you play a vital role in this growth. Thank you for remaining generous and supportive over the past year, as we navigated the challenges that the world around us brought forth. HATSOFF! 2021 “Top Hat & Pearls” was the perfect celebration to give a toast to you our friends.

In gratitude,
Janice LoRaso
The Works maintained its dedication and focus in 2021 in spite of the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic. With a passion for fostering innovation and a dedication to educating all members of our community, The Works fulfilled its mission through offering numerous programs, events and community outreach.

A 25 year milestone was celebrated in 2021 as The Works was founded by Howard Lefevre in 1996. This significant 25th anniversary was highlighted by the biennial HATSOFF! event. The evening provided an opportunity to recognize and appreciate the visionary leadership of our longtime Executive Director, Marcia Downes. It also allowed us to introduce our new Executive Director, Janice LoRaso, who has provided energy and shared exciting ideas for the future.

Since education is so integral to our mission, we were excited to introduce the opening of the Habitat exhibit in 2021. The exhibit, which is supported by many community partners, offers families and guests to explore the life sciences as they enjoy our outdoor courtyard. Much like nature itself, the exhibit is dynamic with additional installments and updates scheduled for this year.

Even with the surges during the pandemic, community outreach was able to continue with Works on Wheels (WOW)! The Works van traveled around the region to provide families with STEAM kits which allowed scientific discovery to occur at home! The kits were made readily available through generous grants obtained by The Works staff.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, we build on the momentum and accomplishments created in 2021. As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I recognize the invaluable asset The Works is for Licking County. We are grateful for the community support and will strive to continue the excellence and tradition that has been established by the prior Works leadership.

Sincerely,
Rob Montagnese
THE WORKS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

In 1996, The Works: Ohio Center for History, Art & Technology opened its doors as a museum and since that time The Works has served the Licking County community, broader central Ohio area, and beyond, as a resource for learning about history, the arts, science, and much more. On June 5, 2021, The Works celebrated the 25-year milestone with new programs and events, SciDome Planetarium shows, a 25th Anniversary Celebration, and the grand opening of Habitat, a new outdoor exhibition.

“We are very proud of what our museum has accomplished since its inception by our founder Howard LeFevre,” said (now retired) Executive Director Marcia Downes. “His vision has carried us through the many additions to the museum over the years, with each new piece offering a valuable experience to the families in our community. This year is another exceptional one as we celebrate 25 years and open a beautiful hands-on learning garden.”

After a ground-breaking ceremony with community leaders, visitors were invited to enjoy the opening of the Smithsonian Habitat exhibit, plus activities throughout The Works complex. Located in The Works LeFevre Courtyard, the Habitat garden focuses on the central idea that “protecting habitats protects life.” The exhibit allowed guests to discover the uniqueness and importance of our natural environment including art structures of insects, beautiful plants and flowers, and engaging interpretive displays. Habitat was developed by Smithsonian Gardens and made available by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES).

During the Celebration, stations in the courtyard included demonstrations, experiments, crafts and take-home activities. In addition, a live-streamed glassblowing demonstration with special guest Bill Gudenrath of The Corning Museum of Glass captivated viewers. The Newark-Granville Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet presented a children's concert, and the SciDome planetarium full dome film, Habitat Earth, was debuted during the event.

THANK YOU to the supporters, members, friends & fans of The Works, for sharing 25 years of inspiring creativity and learning.
Habitat

In June of 2021, in coordination with our 25th Anniversary celebration, we debuted our new Habitat exhibition in the LeFevre Courtyard. Habitat explores the big idea that protecting habitats protects life. The elements of the outdoor exhibition were carefully curated by The Works exhibit team to represent different elements of our natural environment and transform the courtyard into a downtown oasis.

Habitats are Homes for all living things, from the tiniest ant to the tallest tree. Visitors to Habitat are encouraged to explore and learn about the world around them, from the various lifeforms hidden underground to the diversity of biomes around North America. Each installation is a blend of beautiful plants, artful sculptures, and engaging interpretive displays.

Did you know that beneath your feet is a network of living organisms communicating with each other? Life Underground combines art and science to reveal the role organisms like fungi play in a habitat hidden below the ground. A walk along our woodland path will reveal beautiful glass mushrooms interspersed among living fungi.

Visit deserts, rainforests, and more without leaving the museum! Biomes: Life in the Balance highlights four distinct ecological regions, the plants and animals that call them home, and the scientists who study and protect them. Look closely in the pond and you might even be able to find some of our Habitat residents!

Have you ever wondered what a bird nest looks like up close? Look closely in our Nest exhibit and you’ll find larger-than-life replicas of birds’ nests and marvel at the diversity of these structures and the creatures that build them.

Why make room for insects? Our pollinator garden celebrates the vital role insects and other arthropods play in our ecosystem and how you can help make them feel more at home. A walk through Bug B&B will reveal a variety of larger-than-life insect sculptures.

Your journey through Habitat wouldn’t be complete without exploring the sounds we hear in nature. Make music and learn about the calls made by native birds and amphibians in our Sounds of Nature zone.

Habitat was developed by the Smithsonian Gardens and made available by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES).
THE HATSOFF! BALL & FAREWELL TO RETIRING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARCIA DOWNES

Guests donned top hats and pearls to celebrate the 2021 HATSOFF! event, The Works 25th Anniversary, and congratulate Marcia Downes on her retirement after over 20 years of service at The Works. The black tie event took place on October 2 and included dinner, a live and silent auction, and music by Swing's The Thing.

This event marked a particularly exceptional day, due to the uncertainty of the pandemic in the months leading up to the event. Extra safety measures were put in place to create a safe experience for over 250 guests to gather in a tented outdoor space at The Works. During the evening, many supporters thanked Marcia for her years of making an impact in the community. Incoming Executive Director Janice LoRaso made a surprise announcement that The Works main gallery would be renamed to the Marcia W. Downes Art Gallery.

Generous donations were received during the fundraising event and auctions, as well as for the Marcia W. Downes Future Exhibits Fund. This fund was established in recognition of Marcia to ensure The Works’ founder Howard LeFevre’s vision could continue with future exhibits. The Fund is to be used to serve the vision of The Works as: a center of inspiration and creativity for curious learners of all ages; an energetic, indispensable educational and cultural resource; and a catalyst for connection and positive change in our community.
It Takes a Village: Reflection on Life in 2020
This timely exhibit presented the experiences of our local friends, neighbors, and loved ones during the start of the 2020 pandemic and illuminated the moving, thought-provoking lessons learned from it. Through this lens, It Takes a Village gave opportunity for reflection on a challenging year while focusing on the wisdom individuals have gained.

The Art of World Textiles
This exhibition displayed the beautiful textiles – brocades, embroideries, and resist-dyed fabrics – from Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Africa. Textile specialist, Cynthia Cunningham Cort, brought together her most profound pieces from her personal collection of textiles from around the world. The show was sponsored by The Energy Cooperative.

Grand Finale
Central Ohio artist Carol Salome exhibited her grand oil paintings in Grand Finale. In the diverse spread of paintings, the exhibit captured Carol’s passion for the beauty of life through nature-inspired paintings. Visitors enjoyed softly painted watercolor leaves, richly textured flower petals, and intricately detailed equestrian scenes.

Celebrating Watermedia
Hosted by the non-profit Southeastern Ohio Watermedia Society (SEOWS), this exhibit presented a wonderful transparency of watercolors. In addition to watercolor, artists collaged and painted in acrylics, inks and temperas.
2021 brought increased community engagement across the east central Ohio region as we continued to navigate our way through the COVID-19 pandemic. With every visit to the museum, we inspired curiosity, fostered discovery, and encouraged family engagement (and fun!). From discovering the world around us with our new Habitat exhibit to exploring our local history along our Streetscape History Walk, 2021 brought visitors back to the museum for new and exciting experiences!

Throughout the year, we continued many of the newly developed virtual programs for school partners and the general public. Flagship STEM programs, such as Kids Tech University, STEMfest, and Girls STEAM Ahead all remained virtual, while summer brought a return to in-person camps and new programs in the museum. EcoKids fostered an appreciation for the world around us in our youngest visitors as they explored and learned in the new Habitat exhibit. In the fall, community partnerships were at the forefront of our new Around Town program featuring community helpers from a wide array of careers.
OUTREACH

Our education team continued to focus on being a ‘museum without walls’ and create opportunities to engage with youth and families out in the community. The Works on Wheels program brought Family STEAM kits to communities across Licking, Knox, Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, and Fairfield counties. Programs like STEM @The Park offered families a new opportunity to learn and create together in partner with the Licking Park District.

We are fortunate to have the support of our community and partner with many foundations, businesses, and organizations to create meaningful learning experiences. Our ongoing partnerships with PNC Grow Up Great, the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, Battelle, and Boeing continued to support STEM learning and sustainable programming in our community.

Funding from these partners helped provide educational outreach to schools and libraries, enrichment field trips to The Works museum, Works@Home resources for families, and professional development opportunities for educators. Partnerships like these are critical in supporting and expanding our innovative programming that meets the needs of the youth, families, and educators in our community.

At The Works, our team believes it is important to inspire and support the next generation of creative minds and innovative thinkers. Whether it is at the museum or out in the community, we hope that you will explore, create, and discover with us in the coming year!
Thank you for your support

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Looking toward the future

Reflecting on your past is powerful, encouraging and even sometimes challenging. As we look back on 2021, we have unearthed a common thread that binds each program, outreach, fieldtrip, glass demonstration, gallery event and so on. That theme is change and adaptation. We are carrying that theme into everything we do, as we look inward and determine what we can do better to serve the people in Licking County and beyond.

As technology advances and tomorrow’s imagination becomes today’s reality, it is our responsibility to help foster that creative spark in every child who comes through our doors. There are many avenues by which we can help power imagination in our children. We feel the most effective and long lasting method is an overdue update to our exhibits. The Works Team is evaluating, researching and fundraising to bring you the museum experience you and your children deserve.

Watch for more details over the next several months as we prepare to refresh our exhibits and present new experiences at The Works!
The financial statements have been reformatted to streamline operating vs non-operating activities including those from special event fundraising, capital expenditures and restricted endowment. Financial information above is unaudited.
WE ENRICH PEOPLE’S LIVES BY PROVIDING INTERACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES THAT INSPIRE CREATIVITY AND LEARNING.

THE WORKS IS PROUD TO BE AFFILIATED WITH THESE INSTITUTIONS: