



# 2023 IMPACT REPORT

*Enriching our community  
through artistic experiences*

**2023 WAS ANOTHER** exciting and productive year for the Arts Council. It was our **first full year** in our new classroom and studio, where we hosted nearly 1,000 participants in more than 130 art classes. From youth afterschool art classes to multi-week pottery sessions, the studio was bursting with creativity all year long!

Beyond the success of the classroom, there was much to celebrate in 2023. We again hosted the **Big Sky Artisan Festival**, which featured more than 100 artists from all around the region, as well as a celebration of different cultures and traditions on the Len Hill Park stage. It was a resounding success! Len Hill Park also played host to our **14 free concerts**—drawing close to 50,000 people—including Big Sky’s first-ever outdoor heavy metal festival. Our collaboration with the Big Sky Waypoint meant more than 50 events—from music to movies—presented for the community. Included in that was the debut of our **Adventure Circuit Film Series**, a curated selection of the beset touring film festivals from around the world presented throughout the year. We also kicked off a new public art sculpture campaign, featuring Montana native Brad Rude’s *To the Skyland*, which will be installed in the Big Sky Town Center sometime in 2024.

All of our efforts would not be possible without the support of our community, including our donors, business sponsors, grantors and event attendees. We are **extremely grateful** for the support we have received, and we are passionate about continuing our mission to *enrich the community through artistic experiences*. Although we celebrated our 35th year (our first event was in 1988) in 2023, we feel like there is so much more to do, and that we are just getting started. We hope you can join us as we move forward with a *vision of a community connected to and inspired by art*. Let’s all help to make Big Sky an art-centric place!

We’re excited for what 2024 will bring to the Arts Council, and what **we** can bring to **you**. Our free summer concert series kicks off on **June 20**, and our spring is filled with a wide selection of art classes. Whether it’s in the classroom or in Len Hill Park for a Thursday concert, we look forward to saying hello and, most of all, *thank you!*

Sincerely,



**Brian Hurlbut**

Executive Director, Arts Council of Big Sky

[bigskyarts.org](https://bigskyarts.org)



| **On the Front Cover:** Fan favorites Pinky and the Floyd wrap up another huge show at Music in the Mountains.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## PUBLIC ART

Hired full-time Public Art and Outreach Coordinator  
Installed lighting at *Gibbous* and *Winter* sculptures  
Kicked off campaign to install *To the Skyland* by Brad Rude  
Exhibited three different art installations at BASE gallery

## EVENTS

Hosted 14 free concerts in Len Hill Park  
Presented Montana Shakespeare in the Parks in August  
Hosted more than 100 art vendors at the Big Sky Artisan Festival  
2023 Auction for the Arts gala raised more than \$165K for education programs  
Collaborated with MSU School of Music for annual Madrigal Dinner  
Music in the Mountains awarded Best Annual Event in Explore Big Sky poll  
Presented more than 50 free film and music events at the Waypoint  
Debuted the Adventure Circuit film festival series at the Waypoint  
Hosted first-ever outdoor metal festival in Big Sky: Metal in the Mountains  
Offered six classical and jazz concerts to the community through Bravo! Big Sky

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH


More than 1,200 kids participated in our youth ARTventure activities  
Collaborated with Montana Ballet on Discover Dance student program  
Presented Mountainfilm in the Schools to local students  
Invited eight high-school students to Seattle for annual ARTventure trip  
Hosted Jasmine Pickner Bell for Artist in Residence student program  
Nearly 900 total participants and more than 130 art classes at BASE  
***and much, much more!***


# 2023




| **Top Right:** Pottery class. Kids dancing at concerts. AJ Lee & Blue Summit. Staff/volunteer fun. Center Stage in Len Hill Park.

The arts **IMPROVE LIVES** so we aim to make our art spaces and experiences welcoming, accessible, and affordable for all people.

 69% of Americans believe the arts "lift me up beyond everyday experiences."

 81% of Americans say the arts are a "positive experience in a troubled world."


 92% of those surveyed reported an improved impact on wellbeing and a reduction of stress after participating in Arts Council art classes.


*“ I was so **grateful and happy** every time I entered the studio. Just to have an adult space **to create with others** who wanted to be there to create as well. ”*


~ Art Class Student



The arts **CONNECT** the community and help it thrive, so we make arts experiences that are available and accessible to ALL people.

 72% of Americans believe the arts unify communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity.

 73% of Americans agree that the arts "help me understand other cultures better."

 33% of individuals who take our art class opt to pay above the suggested fee for classes in order to help make the classes accessible to their neighbors.

**“** *Building connections within our community as well as with outside musical and cultural influences enriches Big Sky, while also making us feel **valued and celebrated** for what makes our community unique.* **”**

~ Local Artist and Big Sky Resident



The arts **ENRICH** the community, so we strive to create artistic experiences and to be stewards for the arts in our community.



90% of Montanans believe cultural facilities improve quality of life and 86% believe they are important to local business and the economy.



74% of Montanans believe the arts improve the quality and livability of their community.



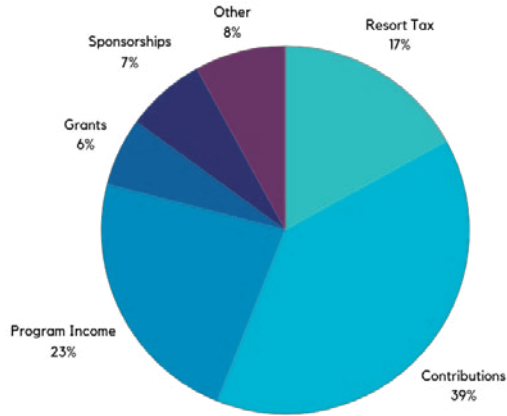
The Arts Council of Big Sky is leading several initiatives to advance Big Sky's collective vision of being a regional hub for arts and culture.



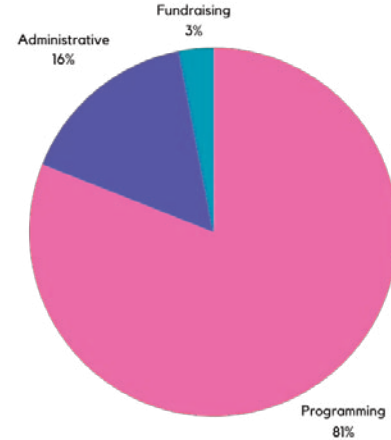
“ *It's hard not to love an organization that is fully committed to bringing **amazing music, film, public art, and arts education** to our community. All **great mountain towns** celebrate the arts and Big Sky is one of those great places.* ”

~ Community Member

# 2023 FINANCIAL INFORMATION



**INCOME: \$1,300,742**



**EXPENSE: \$1,329,140**



*The Arts Council is a platinum-level Guidestar participant, recognized for our commitment to transparency.*



# Annual Impact

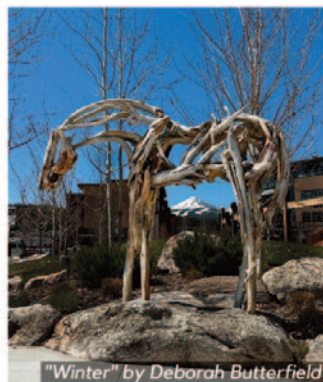
**75**  
Volunteers

**1200**  
ARTventure youth served

**375**  
Working artists supported

**900**  
Art class participants

**45,000**  
Free concert attendees







**40%**  
People who used a reduced fee for art classes

**140**  
Free film and music events

**135**  
BASE art classes

**23**  
Other educational programs

**\$1.2 million**  
Public art assets in our care





# GRATEFUL

The ACBS is supported by the following grantmaking foundations and organizations



# EVENTS. EDUCATION. PUBLIC ART.



Providing access to the arts for all.  
No barriers. Proud partners with our community.

# CONTRIBUTORS

Includes donations made from January 1 – December 31, 2023

## Champions (\$25,000 and up)

Big Sky Resort Area District  
Trux and Durbin Emerson \*  
Bruce and Rebecca Emery  
The Glore Fund  
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Jereco Studios \*  
Spanish Peaks Community Foundation  
Jill and Nick Woodman of the One Valley  
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## Visionaries (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Mike and Sue Arneson  
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Kirsten Hilleman and Greg Slamowitz  
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Rilie Zumbrennen  
Brenda Zuniga

*\* denotes an in-kind donation*

**OUR MISSION:** To enrich our community through artistic experiences

**OUR VISION:** A community connected to and inspired by art

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*A special thank you to outgoing board members Rebecca Appenzeller, Mike Boyer, Nolan Glueckert and Peter Belschwender. And gratitude for the hard work of our 2023 staff members Megan Buecking, Jane Liivoja, Rachel Meihack and Katherine Berceau, who have since moved on.*

## STAFF

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**Back Cover:** Scavenger rocks September's Metal in the Mountains concert. **Right:** Summer art camp.





METAL IN THE MOUNTAINS  
PRESENTS  
THE ROCKS

