



ABAE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Art by local artist Dorothy Siemens

abae founding partners:



ARTS & BUSINESS ALLIANCE OF EUGENE

REFLECTING ON 2021

Living in Track Town USA, it feels appropriate to use a sports metaphor to describe the past year. In 2021, it felt like our community was a runner preparing for the start of a race. We stretched, got mentally focused, shook out our legs, and placed our feet in the starting blocks. We were poised and ready for the starting pistol. While there have been a few false starts, I can feel a crackle of excitement in the air. Throughout the pandemic, we have collectively learned so much that will make us stronger going forward. Organizations and businesses have experimented, innovated and made fundamental shifts to respond to various hurdles. We stand poised to begin our emergence.

In June we were able to have a small in-person audience for our BRAVA event. At the event, we were delighted to have a performance by the Eugene Ballet. For many in attendance, it was the first live performance they had experienced in over a year. The connection and emotion of the audience were palpable. I read an article once that said the during a live performance, the audience's hearts synchronize. I never felt this more acutely than in that performance, where I felt the power of our hearts beating together once again.

I am so grateful to live in a community that values arts and culture and have continued to support the sector during these challenging times. I want to thank everyone who has been a part of our story this year. Your support has allowed us to continue our work of enriching Eugene through strong arts & business partnerships.

With Gratitude,
Kelly Johnson, *Executive Director*

in memoriam

The ABAE would like recognize the outstanding service that Gretchen Hult Pierce provided to the community both as a business leader and arts advocate.

Gretchen's dedication as an advocate for the arts demonstrated the active role business leaders can play in shaping the community. Her leadership brought business acumen to help local arts organizations find stability and growth. Her instrumental work aided in the creation of the Arts & Business Alliance of Eugene where she championed and set an example for both the arts and business sectors.

The Arts & Business Alliance of Eugene's Board of Directors and staff wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to Gretchen for the many ways she shaped Eugene into the place we all love and are proud to call home. We join the community in recognizing Gretchen's lasting legacy and impact in our community.

2021 awards

Arts & Business Partnership Award: Dean and Michele Smith and local artists
Recognizes innovative arts-business partnerships that positively impact the community, serve as a model for others, and effect significant mutual benefits for all parties involved.

Dave Hauser Business of the Year Award: Emge & Whyte CPA's
Recognizes a local business that has demonstrated consistent and significant support of the creation and presentation of art in our community.

Eugene Arts & Letters Award: Sharon Schuman, Musician & Arts Advocate
Recognizes an individual who has significantly contributed to the enrichment of Eugene's cultural life through their work as a visual, performing, or literary artist.

Fentress Endowment Award: Upstart Crow Studios Children's Theatre
Recognizes a local arts organization for exceptional work and achievement in the arts.

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mission

Enriching Eugene through strong arts and business partnerships.

contact

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[ArtsBusinessAlliance.org](https://www.ArtsBusinessAlliance.org)

connect



HIGHLIGHTS

In 2021, we collaborated with so many artists, nonprofits, and businesses to maintain our community's vibrancy. Eugene's arts and businesses are deeply connected. The economic health and livability of our community rely on vibrant arts and business sectors. Growth in one area is dependent on the health of the other. The ABAE is grateful to everyone who helped us...

get creative

Being faced with the tough decision to not have Arts After Hours for a second year in a row, we were looking for ways we could still help people explore their creativity. We created series of videos featuring artists-led activities designed to help busy professionals work on their creative skills called Arts DURING hours. This week-long event featured five local arts groups. Each of the videos contained a short activity that viewers could do at any time. They could be done with a work team or individually. They included:

- ZOOMING OUT: a spoken word poetry template
- Learning Breath Flow with Eugene Opera
- Creative Coding with Harmonic Laboratory
- DIY Choreography with #instaballet
- Drumming on Your Desk with MEPPA

The videos are still available on the ABAE's YouTube Channel



feel inspired

In November 2020, we welcomed Dr. Richard White as the keynote speaker and performer for our BRAVA Livestream. Dr. White shared his inspirational story, including a film about his life titled RAW Tube. He is the first African American in the world to receive a Doctorate in Music for Tuba Performance from Indiana University, one of the most prestigious music programs in the United States. Viewers were treated to a live performance by Dr. White. A special question and answer session was held with Dr. White and professors and students from the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance. We were overjoyed to learn from Dr. White.



expand opportunities

We had an opportunity to upgrade this year's ABAE Arts Guide. The Arts Guide helps shine a light on Eugene's arts and culture sector. We realized it was essential to ensure that the community still had a way to learn about the arts sector while we couldn't experience it in traditional methods. We wanted to highlight as many artists and arts groups as possible and eliminate barriers to participation. With this in mind, we made the Arts Guide free to participate in. This led to nearly 100 artists and arts groups being featured in the 2021 Arts Guide. We also held a call to artists to design the cover for the guide. Local artist Dorothy Siemens was selected out of 13 submissions. Her work explores the delicate spaces in the human experience and how we evolve from our collective experiences. This piece celebrates that resilience we found last year, where we quickly learned the importance of showing up for each other. Posters of her work are available for purchase on the ABAE website.



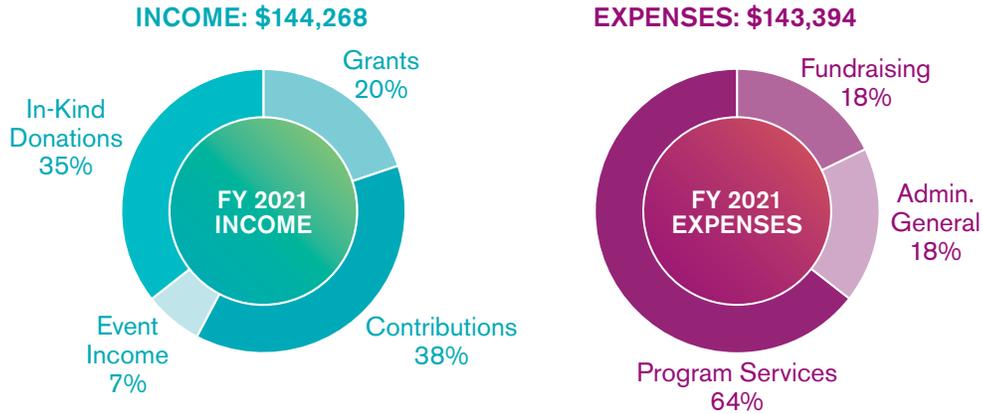
spark conversation

Working in partnership with Lane Arts Council, Florence Regional Arts Alliance, Minority Voices Theatre and Wordcrafters in Eugene, we created an online space for arts and arts leaders to explore topics impacting our arts community in the current moment. In these sessions, attendees had had the chance to learn from experts and the opportunity to learn from each other—many attendees shared insights, lessons learned and resources. Starting in July 2020, we had four webinars covering contingency planning, reopening, audience engagement and funding. In May 2021, we transitioned the series from COVID-related topics to a series addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in our local arts community. The roundtables exploring DEI are ongoing.



FINANCIALS

Financial reports give us the opportunity to report to you – the people who support us and make our work possible. The charts below detail the 2020-2021 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).



SUPPORT

Partnerships are the backbone of the ABAE. Thank you to our donors, sponsors, board members, and volunteers who make our work possible.

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