

CELEBRATING 50+ YEARS OF THE ARTS

The Arts Commission was founded in 1959 as the City Culture Commission, through a proposal by Councilman Michael J. Damas (later mayor), under Mayor John Yager. In 1960, the name changed as the Toledo Arts Commission took on the Art in Public Buildings program and compiled the city's first comprehensive local arts calendar. In the late '60s, Richard Boers was appointed City Liaison and was the first to push for public art investments at Crosby Gardens, wooing a 24-year old Edith Franklin onto the board. In 1970, Barbara States was brought on as the organization's first paid employee, becoming its first Executive Director in 1974 (serving until 1980).

By 1975, the organization was known widely as the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo (ACGT). The previous year, ACGT relocated to Crosby Gardens and co-sponsored the first annual Toledo Festival of the Arts, a tradition that continued until 1990. In 1977, pushed by board member John Richards, City Manager Jim Bacon and Boers, Susan Reams, created Toledo's 1% for Art program, the first in Ohio, and among the first in the nation.

Between 1977 and 1983, ACGT established an Arts Awards Program, co-sponsored the Toledo Film Festival, created the Artist-in-the-Community program, Artist for the Handicapped Program, and the Inmates Poetry Program; it conducted NWO's first economic impact study (with Susan Reams as Board Chair), began the annual Ninth Congressional District Invitational Art Exhibition, co-sponsored with Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, and established a grants program for local artists and organizations.

"City pulls the plug on budget," the Blade reported in 1992. "The organization was going broke, they thought they would have to close. That's when they organized the Hot Glass exhibit. It was collector's money that saved the Arts Commission - Margy Trumbull, Sara Jane DeHoff, and Mary Wolfe — without those purchases, it would have gone under," Boers said.

Two new signatures manifested in 1993, the Black & White Ball fundraiser (later The Mix series), and the Young Artist at Work (YAAW) program. In 1999, ACGT celebrated its 40th anniversary by collaborating with Toledo Cultural Arts Center for the design of the Valentine Theatre Plaza, and the I-280 Veterans' Glass City Memorial Highway. Between 2000 and 2004, ACGT moved into the Professional Building, partnered with CitiFest and the City for "It's Reigning Frogs," facilitated the design review board for the Mud Hens Ballpark, opened the Parkwood Gallery, and developed the Art in TARTA program in partnership with Toledo Area Transit Authority.

ACGT met with Kickstart Toledo in 2005 to plan the Meet & Greet series. "Calling all creatives," the bi-annual series inspired a new era in ACGT programming, spurring Artomatic 419! (2006), establishment of the Arts Zone (2007), the Live Work Create Toledo initiative (2007), and the Art Walk series (2008). ACGT celebrated 50 years of arts programming in 2009 with the Art Tatum Memorial Sculpture Dedication at the Lucas County Arena. In 2010, it focused on professional development for artists and the creation of the Well-Fed Artist Workshop Series.

In 2011, ACGT unveiled the Tribute Memorial sculpture at the I-280 Bridge, hosted the fourth installment of Artomatic 419! (featuring 450 artists and nearly 10,000 attending), launched the Downtown SoundTrek program to celebrate Toledo's live music community, and joined Toledo Children's Hospital and the Autism Collaborative to participate in their annual fundraiser, Art & Autism. Also in 2011, ACGT planned for the 50th Anniversary Glass Art Society Conference, coming to Toledo in 2012, to celebrate its legacy as the birthplace of the studio glass movement.

The organization emerges into the new year with a fresh face. Undergoing re-branding in 2011, its new identity as The Arts Commission—Inspiring a Vibrant Toledo was unveiled for November's Art of Fine Living fundraiser.

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1959

Ordinance No. 55959 created the City Culture Commission. Mayor John Yager names 11 board members.

1960

Name changed to Toledo Arts Commission. Art in Public Buildings established.

1966

City Division of Forestry became City Liaison to Arts Commission.

1974

First year of Toledo Fest: A Celebration of the Arts.

1977

One Percent for Art ordinance established by Toledo City Council. Established Arts Awards Program.

Co-sponsored Toledo Film Festival.

1978

Created Artist-In-The-Community Program.

1979

Created Artist for the Handicapped Program. Established Inmates Program. Published Artist Directory. Conducted Economic Impact Study.



1980

Co-sponsored Artist-in-the-Community Dance Residency with Ohio Arts Council. Murals program Toledo Townscapes.

1981

Started 9th District Congressional Art Exhibition in cooperation with U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur. Held Very Special Artist Festival.

1982

Co-sponsored Visual Artist and the Law Conference with the University of Toledo. Started Minority Arts Program Cultural Expo '82. Conducted workshops jointly with the University of Toledo and the Ohio Arts Council.

1983

Grants program established. Installation of City Candy sculpture.

1987

Established Cultural Arts Show (renamed Roots of Diversity in 1991) in cooperation with the Office of Multicultural Development at the University of Toledo.

1991

Introduced Hot Glass Exhibition and Auction.

1992

Coordinated the Northwestern Ohio Save Outdoor Sculpture Program. Initiated Music in the Park Series.

1993

Introduced Black and White Ball fundraising event. Began the Young Artist at Work Program.

1994

Created award winning “I am a Sculptor” video. Developed interdisciplinary teachers guide/video package tied to public art in Ohio cities, and produced in collaboration with Cincinnati,

1996

YAAW recognized as one of the country’s top programs by Morrison Institute. Published Tour Toledo Sculpture Book.

1997

Released Economic Impact Study.

1999

Arts Commission celebrates its 40th Anniversary. Collaborated with the Toledo Cultural Arts Center for the design, and implementation of the Valentine Theatre Plaza.

2000

Offices move to the Professional Building, sharing space with the Toledo Symphony. Co-sponsored the “Day of the Dead” Latino celebration with the Toledo Museum of Art.

2003

Partnered with CitiFest and the City of Toledo on “It’s Reigning Frogs.” Facilitated Design Review Board for Mud Hens Ballpark, at Fifth Third Field. Opened the Parkwood Gallery. Young Artists at

2004

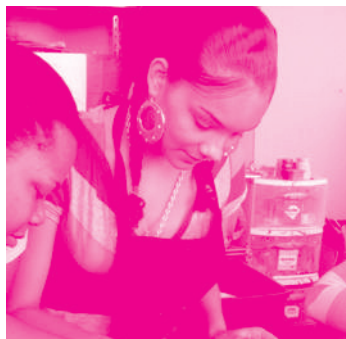
9th Congressional Art Exhibition expanded to a second show at Oberlin College in cooperation with Firelands Association of the Visual Arts. Developed award winning “Art in



Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton’s Save Our Sculpture agencies. Published ArtsXchange, community newsletter.

1998

Young Artists at Work Program receives the Governor’s Award for Artistic Outreach. Produced information video about public art, “From Concept to Reality.” Inaugurated ACGT’s new website: www.acgt.org. Spanish language edition of Toledo Sculpture Tours published.

**2001**

Collaborated with Toledo Botanical Gardens for the Sculpture in the Garden exhibit. “Artifacts of Childhood” sculpture dedicated (front of Central Union Plaza) Completed Union Memorial Project

2002

Educational “loan boxes” developed for the I-280 Bridge project for use at schools.

Work and the Black and White Ball celebrate 10-year anniversaries. Partnered with American Craft Marketing for “Artwork Toledo”, indoor art show and sale.

TARTA” program. Young Artists at Work produced the mural “Creating a Journey Through Hope,” commissioned by the Juvenile Justice Center.

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2005

Gateways project develops into larger scope “ArtNet” project. Rededication of “Small Park with Arches” at the Toledo Botanical Garden. Partnered with Kickstart Toledo and North River Community

2007

In Partnership with SFC Graphics, City of Toledo and Downtown Toledo. Improvement District developed Downtown Windows. Toledo’s Mural Ordinance gives AGGT responsibility for administering

2008

Susan Reams awarded Governor’s Award, Patron of the Arts. Initiated Thursday Art Walk program to highlight burgeoning Downtown arts zones and the

2009

Celebration of 50 years. Art Tatum Memorial dedicated. Live Work Create Toledo initiative is restructured to house current programs and initiatives such as Arts Zones, Artomatic 419!,

2010

Added two new public works at the Lucas County Multipurpose Arena. Received \$250,000 award for Recovery Act funds from the NEA for sub granting within Northwest Ohio. Received \$122,000 grant from

2011

Artomatic 419! breaks records, with more than 450 artists participating, and nearly 10,000 visitors in attendance over three Saturdays. Received grant from Toledo Community Foundation to expand current

Development Corporation to sponsor Meet & Greet, networking event for Toledo creative community.

2006

First Artomatic 419! held with 150 participating artists + 5,000 in attendance. The Original Mix is held Fort Industry Square (replacing Black and White Ball.)

the Mural Program. Identified downtown’s first “Art Zone,” a 22 block area to highlight and focus programming. Live Work Create Toledo program founded to partner arts with economic development and revitalization efforts. Margy Trumbull awarded the 2007 Glass Key to the City by Mayor Carty Finkbeiner. Art of Fine Living fundraiser introduced.

influx of artists and businesses.

Art Walk, and Meet & Greet series.



the Small Business Administration to initiate a project to build the entrepreneurial skills of local artists—Well-Fed Artist Workshop Series begins. Meet & Greet program is re-branded as The Gallery Loop.

programming to literary and performing artists in the community. Downtown SoundTrek program initiated to showcase local performing arts. Began planning for 50th Anniversary Glass Art Society Conference in Toledo (2012).