ART IS PEOPLE

The Arts Factor 2019
CHANGING LIVES AND CREATING COMMUNITY
The Black Clown, American Repertory Theater. Photo: Maggie Hall
Welcome to The Arts Factor 2019. When we look at the numbers, we can find many reasons for Boston to nurture its arts and culture: they drive economic growth, attract a young and talented workforce, and make the city a more attractive destination for visitors from across the globe. For all the statistics, however, the fact remains that the arts are ultimately about people – those who create them, those who support them, and all of us who live, work, and play in the city. Here, we’re making the case that the arts are not just important to our continued prosperity. They change lives and build community – and make Boston a better place for everyone. Join us!
$2B
DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT TO GREATER BOSTON FROM ARTS AND CULTURE LAST YEAR[^1]
The arts and creativity are increasingly critical as Boston competes globally for investment and talent.

James Rooney
RAISING STANDARDS

Arts, culture, and creativity are economic engines for Boston, supporting local businesses, as well as directly contributing over $2 billion to our economy every year.

JAMES ROONEY
President & CEO, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

As a lifelong Boston resident, born and raised in Dorchester, Jim Rooney feels fortunate to have had a platform to make a positive difference in the city that he loves – whether during his long tenure at the MBTA, as Executive Director of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, or as President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce. These positions have also given him the opportunity to see first-hand what makes Boston attractive to businesses. “As people make decisions to come to the city,” he says, “to open and expand businesses, they consider many factors, from transportation, housing, to intellectual capital. But they also think about what the place ‘feels’ like: ‘what will I find here for me and my family?’ Having diverse experiences is part of the equation.”

Cities like Austin and Nashville, Jim notes, are doing a better job marketing themselves as art destinations. Boston, however, has much broader arts and culture offerings – we just don’t talk about them as much. He cites the Lawn on D – a project Jim led while at the Convention Center Authority – along with Mayor Marty Walsh’s leadership on the transformation of City Hall Plaza and the Rose Kennedy Greenway as examples of Boston innovating with art and public spaces. “Arts and creativity are increasingly critical as the city competes globally for investment and talent,” he says. It’s not just about government: there’s also an opportunity for businesses and arts organizations to foster innovative partnerships that help grow our economy and improve our quality of life.

Previous spread: Merrily We Roll Along, Huntington Theatre Company. Photo: Nile Scott Shots/Nile Hawver
30K+

JOBS CREATED IN GREATER BOSTON BY THE ARTS SECTOR – ALMOST AS MANY AS RETAIL.
9min

HOW OFTEN AN ART EVENT HAPPENS IN BOSTON
The arts provide a new narrative for Boston: not about discord or toughness, but about vibrancy and connectivity.

David C. Howse
BUILDING CHARACTER

Arts, culture, and creativity are part of our regional identity – they’re at the core of our city’s brand, as important as sports, health care, education, and technology. More than that, they give meaning and purpose to everything we do.

DAVID C. HOWSE
Executive Director, ArtsEmerson

A classical musician by trade, David C. Howse has always seen art as a way to build character – not just for individuals, but for the whole community. Art creates opportunities for people to connect; it develops links between different experiences and backgrounds, especially for those of us who are underrepresented in the cultural mainstream.

Located at the intersection of Downtown Crossing and the Theater District, ArtsEmerson presents a model for reimagining what a cultural institution should be. As Executive Director, David has made it a priority to create a truly public space: “We have a responsibility to reclaim downtown for everyone,” he explains, “and push against exclusion and gentrification.”

Arts and cultural organizations, he believes, can counter economic and social trends that are making our cities increasingly homogenous.

David is optimistic about the role of arts and culture in defining Boston’s character. “I find that I don’t have to go to New York as much as I used to,” he says. It’s not just about the growing national reputation of Boston’s output, though: David wants an arts sector that is thriving and fully supported, one that creates value for everyone and makes itself more relevant across the entire community. “The arts provide a new narrative for Boston: not about discord or toughness, but about vibrancy and connectivity.”

Previous spread: Toshi Reagon, ArtsEmerson. Photo: Desdemona Burgin Photography
21M+

ATTENDEES AT ART EVENTS LAST YEAR – OVER 4X ALL MAJOR BOSTON SPORTS EVENTS COMBINED
60% CEOs who say creativity is the most important leadership quality.
Access to the arts inspires innovation and makes young people feel like they belong in the city.

Kiki Mills Johnston
Arts, culture, and creativity are integral to raising the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and social innovators. They also help us attract – and retain – a talented, educated workforce. That’s how we stay competitive as a region.

KIKI MILLS JOHNSTON
Technology & Innovation Leader

What does it take for a region to stay competitive in a fast-moving economy? As someone who has been active in the technology scene since the start of the internet age – and lived through a boom-bust-boom cycle – Kiki Mills Johnston knows that attracting and retaining talent in Boston is crucial to our success. "Back in the mid 2000’s, we were losing a lot of talent to Silicon Valley," Kiki says, “and there was a concerted effort to turn Boston into a hotbed for innovation.” But this is still a difficult town to live in: the cost of living is high; the weather can be difficult. To retain the many graduates that our world-class universities produce, we need to help them develop strong connections to the city. And that’s where the arts can make a big difference.

“Access to the arts makes young people feel like they belong in the city,” she explains. As more young people find fulfillment in experiences over things, having a diverse cultural life plays an important role in making a place feel like home.

But Kiki sees a bigger role for the arts: “Arts and culture open minds and nurture inspiration,” she says. Capital may fuel innovation, but the arts provide the spark. This is something that Kiki saw firsthand in her work at MassChallenge, the global startup acceleration program founded in Boston. “We need to make funding the arts more of an investment than a charity,” she adds. It’s about being smart corporate citizens.

Previous spread: First Friday Event, ICA Boston. Photo: Danita Jo
78%

Millennials who'd rather spend money on experiences than things.\(^6\)
9.8M
FREE ADMISSIONS TO ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS – THAT’S 2X THE POPULATION OF GREATER BOSTON 7
Art lets us talk about issues that matter and change people’s minds.

Evelyn Francis
CREATING COMMUNITY

Arts, culture, and creativity help us understand each other and develop stronger bonds with our neighbors, building bridges across race, gender, and intergenerational divides. They also help us address important social issues, give us context, and help us define our place and purpose in the world. But there is work to be done to make the sector fully inclusive.

EVELYN FRANCIS
Producing Co-Executive Director, The Theater Offensive (TTO)

As a lesbian who came out in the Bible Belt, Evelyn Francis found coming to Boston a liberating experience. “Theater was how I freed myself,” she says, “where I felt safe and found others who shared my perspective and accepted me for who I am.” Evelyn knows that this is an experience not all people have in Boston, but hopes to recreate it for others in her work at TTO. TTO is a Boston-based organization dedicated to building community by presenting “liberating art by, for, and about queer and trans people of color.”

She believes that art makes people’s lives better: “It creates connections and changes how we see each other. It makes us all human.” The arts deserve credit for helping people imagine the world we live in today, when same-sex marriage is legal across the country and an openly gay man is seen as a credible presidential candidate.

But Evelyn also sees challenges ahead: “We need to build bridges across all communities in Boston.” Most arts organizations in the city are still dominated by a white, cisgender, male, baby-boomer leadership which does not represent the cultural abundance of our community. As this generation retires, what’s our plan? Evelyn believes that people of color and women-identified leaders throughout all sectors will build a thriving city. Just as important, we have to step outside of our ivory towers. “We need to bring art where it really makes a difference. Art lets us talk about issues that matter to all of us – and change people’s minds.”
535K
GREATER BOSTON CHILDREN SERVED BY ARTS ORGANIZATIONS IN SCHOOL

The Theater Offensive. Photo: Dom Wise
STEPPING FORWARD

The arts are about people, and that means that they’re also about you. It’s not enough to have numbers in our favor: we need to speak out about the positive impact that arts and culture bring to all our lives. Help us bring The Arts Factor to the next level.

WHAT WE NEED
The arts and culture sector needs robust, consistent, and equitable funding from private and public sources; research by The Boston Foundation shows Boston ranked 10th and 9th out of 11 peer communities in public and corporate art funding, respectively. This keeps small and emerging arts groups from flourishing, and prevents risk-taking at all organizations, which is critical to a healthy creative ecosystem. It also makes it more difficult for arts groups to tackle our communities’ existing and emerging challenges as full partners.

WHAT WE’RE DOING
1 We’re providing you with quarterly data and story updates to build and maintain momentum.
2 We’re empowering you with robust digital access to report findings and a customizable toolkit.
3 We’re collaborating with key stakeholders, including MASSCreative, the Mass Cultural Council, and Boston’s Office of Arts and Culture to engage and educate lawmakers and build public will for more investment in the arts.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
1 Amplify. Share The Arts Factor 2019 and its digital tools with your colleagues, family, and friends. Post and tweet about the critical importance of arts and culture.
2 Engage. Get involved with arts organizations in your community. Volunteer, become a member, or make a donation. Build bridges between your businesses and the arts.
3 Vote. Learn the issues at the local, state, and federal levels, and vote for policies and candidates that support the arts and culture in your community.

If you agree that the arts define the character of our city, that they raise our standard of living, help us stay ahead as a region, and draw us together as a community, then speak out – your stories matter. Access our digital toolkit and download a copy of The Arts Factor 2019 Report at artsboston.org/artsfactor
**METHODOLOGY** The Arts Factor 2019 highlights community-wide data points (and the stories that help illuminate them) that demonstrate the impact of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in Greater Boston. When not otherwise noted, the data for this report come from SMU DataArts Cultural Data Profiles (CDP).

Unless otherwise noted, analysis is based on “Most Recent Fiscal Year Data” from the Massachusetts CDP using the most recently available completed fiscal year. Arts and cultural organizations located in Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties were included.

The data in the Massachusetts CDP are self-reported by the individual cultural organizations. ArtsBoston does not make any representations or warranties concerning the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the self-reported data. Data analysis was performed by SMU DataArts and ArtsBoston. Any interpretation of the data is solely the view of ArtsBoston.

We report some data, such as attendance and jobs, in aggregate because the information in the data set is compiled in total. We do not have the names of individuals, so it is impossible to determine whether a visit is by a unique individual or the same person multiple times.

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**END NOTES**

1. Total expenses in most recent fiscal year by Greater Boston organizations in the DataArts CDP was $1,285,073,661. Total spending by audiences outside of the cost of admission was $31.47 per person multiplied by total attendance of 21,432,062. Those combined total $1,959,540,652.

2. All employment (full-time, part-time, and contracted) positions as reported in the DataArts CDP.

3. Total unique events in most recent fiscal year by Greater Boston organizations in the DataArts CDP was 58,875.

4. Total attendance in most recent fiscal year as reported in the DataArts CDP.


7. Free attendance in most recent fiscal year as reported in the DataArts CDP.

8. Children served in schools in most recent fiscal year as reported in the DataArts CDP.

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**THANKS** ArtsBoston is indebted to the many creative, committed, and collaborative people and organizations that came together to create this report and catalyze a new coalition of allies and advocates for The Arts Factor.

We are particularly grateful to **Bank of America** for its sponsorship of the report as well as its ongoing commitment to ArtsBoston over the last 20 years. We deeply value Bank of America’s understanding of the critical value of Greater Boston’s arts sector, and its willingness time and again to demonstrate that understanding through investment.

ArtsBoston also appreciates the support of key partners from the funding community, including the **Barr Foundation**, **The Boston Foundation**, and **Mass Cultural Council**, who have helped ArtsBoston elevate the role of data in our work to build the capacity of the entire arts and culture sector.
Thank you to SMU DataArts for their work collecting the data that makes this type of research possible and in particular to Nicholas Crosson for being our research partner again.

Thank you to Justin Kang of City Awake and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce for insight into the cross-sector trends that connect arts and businesses throughout our region, as well as our peer arts service organization MassCreative.

We must also thank the members of the Massachusetts Cultural Data Group, a consortium of generous colleagues who are committed to the power of data to inform decision-making, and to the critical need for collective action to drive change.

Thank you as well to the City of Boston and Mayor Marty Walsh for your highly visible commitment to putting the arts front and center and taking The Arts Factor into account as we map the future of this great city. An extra tip of the hat to Joyce Linehan, Chief of Policy, and Kara Elliott-Ortega, Arts + Culture Chief.

As an arts service organization, everything that ArtsBoston does is designed to strengthen the capacity and impact of Greater Boston’s arts organizations. Thank you for all that you do to make Greater Boston such a remarkable region.

Special thanks to the ArtsBoston Board of Directors and staff, who demonstrate every day through their passion and their purpose the many ways in which those who care about the arts can make our communities grow and thrive.

Finally, thank you to our four storytellers (James Rooney, David Howse, Kiki Mills Johnston, and Evelyn Francis) and our creative partners at ThinkArgus, who helped give The Arts Factor its voice and face.

We’re proud to support The Arts Factor because a thriving creative sector is an essential element to a robust, innovation economy that attracts and retains top companies and an engaged workforce.

Miceal Chamberlain, Massachusetts President, Bank of America
ABOUT ARTSBOSTON  For almost 45 years, ArtsBoston has worked to advance arts and culture in Greater Boston by providing the arts sector with the research, support, and expertise it needs to grow and diversify. We partner with businesses, government, and nonprofits to make a powerful case for the immense value that the arts bring to our economy and quality of life. And we are committed to creating an arts community that represents the true diversity and character of our city. Our work is integral to the health and success of the arts sector in Greater Boston.