Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce Friends of Materials for the Arts’ 2019 Annual Report. MFTA is a one of a kind program that is recognized world over as a pioneer in creative reuse. Every year, thousands of cultural organizations, artists, educators, and other cultural workers come for free materials and leave with creative energy for their next project. This is what gives MFTA such a unique place in the hearts and minds of New York’s creative community. It is a place where impossible becomes possible, where discovery flourishes, and where items destined for the landfill find new life.

In 2019, MFTA collected 1,400,000 pounds of donations valued at $7,900,000 dollars. MFTA’s work can be felt in our city’s classroom, theaters, museums, and other places across NYC. Non-profit partner Friends of Materials for the Arts makes MFTA an even greater resource to our city. The Education Center reached over 12,000 students through in-school residencies at 12 schools in 2018. Additionally, 6,000 students participated in 200-plus field trips that featured art-making and sustainability programming. Friends of Materials for the Arts continues to help ensure broad access to MFTA’s extraordinary services.

While this report looks at the previous year, in recent months MFTA has found new ways to serve the NYC community. While closed for regular shopping days during the COVID-19 pandemic, MFTA continued to engage with the City agencies that were on the frontlines of mitigating the crisis. Kings County Hospital set up a space for health care workers to relax between shifts with supplies coordinated by MFTA. MFTA staff also worked through the crisis to distribute fabric, elastic, and other supplies to City agencies and non-profits.

This type of action could not have been taken without the leadership of Executive Director Harriet Taub and the dedicated and hardworking staff at MFTA. Over more than 20 years Harriet has built on the foundation of her predecessors to make MFTA into a treasured resource and leader in creative reuse and sustainability that it is today. She leaves an extraordinary team and organization that is poised to continue fueling the creative life of New York and serving critical needs of residents across the city. We are inspired by her commitment, skill, and dedication to the mission of MFTA, and wish her well as she moves on to the next chapter.

MFTA’s mission will grow increasingly important as we tackle the problems presented by climate change and work to ensure that our students have access to quality arts education. I want to thank the staff at MFTA, Friends of Materials for the Arts, board members, donors, and member groups for their important work and support of this wonderful organization.

Sincerely,

Gonzalo Casals
Kathleen Hughes

Gonzalo Casals  Commissioner
Kathleen Hughes  Acting Commissioner
11/20 – 4/20/20
Dear Friends,

If you are reading this, then you are either a supporter, donor, member, or this was given to you by one of the above. In any event, we are thrilled to share our work with you and hope that, after reading this, you come away with a better understanding of our impact on the ecosystem we inhabit.

The dictionary definition describes an ecosystem as a complex network or interconnected system. At Materials for the Arts, we often describe our work as being at the center of a large web. We rely upon donors of materials to fill our warehouse and our large pool of recipient members to take those items for their productions, programs or classes.

Friends of Materials for the Arts provides the funding and human resources that helps make all of this run smoothly. Together with the NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, we can provide more, as partners, than either of us could do individually.

As a newly minted Chair of the Board of Friends of Materials for the Arts, I am happy to work alongside our seasoned Executive Director Harriet Taub for the benefit of this dynamic public/private partnership. Thank you for all that you have done, are doing or will do to support our efforts.

Regards,
Andrew and Harriet
At Materials for the Arts, we pride ourselves on the relationships and opportunities created for our members through our program.

Over the years, our recipients became donors and our donors became volunteers, truly emphasizing and showcasing that, regardless of the role we play in the arts community, we are all truly one community.

Through creative reuse, we work towards supporting more sustainable and equitable practices in all the communities we serve. We are MFTA.
Our recipients come from all over New York City. It is thanks to our groups and their innovative members that we see less waste in New York City landfills, and less GHG emissions each year.

This year, 3,842 member groups visited our warehouse or used our Direct Donations service 5,150 times to receive free materials to reuse and repurpose in theater and dance productions, art galleries, classrooms and after school programs.
Saint Margaret’s has been an MFTA member for 15 years and Lucius has been a shopper for the last nine. He primarily shops for students ranging from pre-k to grade 5.

“It’s a great value, for the young ones. After they do homework, we usually work on arts projects. MFTA provides us with all kinds of materials including the basics, markers, paint, and different types of paper.”

Lucius has been a regular volunteer with MFTA for 4 years, commuting an hour and a half two times a week. Lucius helps by sorting materials, organizing the paper section and tackling whatever is needed. He even brings in treats to share with MFTA staff and other volunteers.

“I love going there. It’s so much fun. It’s nice to be at MFTA, because the folks that work there are great. Great group of people. Great conversation.”

In 2018, JoAnna received hundreds of yards of ribbon from MFTA and in the spirit of creative reuse, she chose to use them in a hanging studio piece, pictured on the left.

“I would never have thought of hanging these stools were it not for this beautiful ribbon.”

In addition to receiving from MFTA, Joanna chooses to volunteer as often as she can and has been doing so for many years.

“I love volunteering at MFTA and try and do so when my touring schedule allows. (3-4 weeks a year)”
This list includes only a portion of MFTA’s 4,000+ member organizations.

**ARTS & CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- Flux Factory Participant
- The Public Theatre
- Queens Museum of Art
- Slavic Arts Ensemble
- ArtCrawl Harlem
- Franklin Furnace Archive
- Brooklyn Arts Council
- Costumers Guild Inc.
- Babycastles
- Weeksville Heritage Center
- West Indian American Day Carnival Association Inc.
- Juan Pablo Duarte Foundation
- Harlem School of the Arts

**NON-ARTS ORGANIZATIONS**

- Parsons-The New School for Design
- New York University-Tisch School
- LaGuardia Community College-CUNY Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
- Pratt Institute
- Pace University Arts Department
- Brooklyn Public Library
- New York Public Library
- Queensborough Public Library
- Heartshare Human Services of New York

**CITY AGENCIES**

- NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
- NYC Department of Sanitation
- NYC Department of Health & Hospitals Corp.
- NYC Office of Management & Budget
- NYC Fire Department
- NYC Administration for Children’s Services
- NYC Department of Education

Wave Hill is a New York City non-profit that offers arts programming with an emphasis on using materials to create pieces inspired by nature. They have been shopping with MFTA for over 20 years and Curatorial Assistant, Jesse Firestone had the following to say about what MFTA and creative reuse mean to their organization.

“Trips to Materials for the Arts, inspire curriculum that challenges me to use materials that invoke new ways of meaning/making while also starting conversations on consumption, intentionality, sustainability, and waste with our families.

Creative reuse means taking time to be intentional and thoughtful with the objects that pass through our hands and have played a part in life in some way.”

Jesse (left) and the Wave Hill team on a shopping day at MFTA.
MFTA Donors

Materials for the Arts accepts a wide range of donations from the public. We weigh, sort and stock these items on our warehouse shelves and provide them to our members for free.

We also have an online service, Direct Donations, that puts our donors in direct contact with our recipients.

Through direct donations and warehouse drop-offs, 2,475 donations were collected. These donations weighed in at 1.4 million pounds. This is the equivalent to 2,048.02 metric tons of CO2E and annual greenhouse gas emissions from 5 million miles driven by the average passenger vehicle per year.

Data prepared by donateNYC and fully funded by NYC Department of Sanitation
This list includes only a portion of MFTA’s 2019 Donors.

**CORPORATE & FINANCE**
- Amazon
- Bloomberg LP
- Jack Loconsolo & Co
- JetBlue
- Jo-Vin
- Major League Baseball
- McKinsey & Company
- Ready Set Inc.
- Vizacom

**CREATIVE**
- Anthony Nappi
- Bark Frameworks
- Bonpoint
- Burberry Ltd.
- Cenric Brands
- Edgeweic, Inc
- Cowan & Tout
- David Moin LLC.
- Designex
- Driggs
- Duggal Visual Solutions
- Flavor Paper
- Gap Inc.
- Hermes de Paris Inc.
- Kaela Otto
- Limited Brands
- LuminoCity US
- Michael Rosenfeld Gallery
- Milk Studios
- Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation
- Poppin Inc.
- Rag & Bone
- Rent the Runway
- Robert A.M. Stern Architects
- Rose Brand
- Samuel & Sons
- Sequential Brands Group
- Sequoia LLC
- Theory
- VP+C Partners
- Wacacal America Inc
- Westpoint Home

**EVENTS & PRODUCTIONS**
- 360 Design Events, Ltd.
- David Stark
- Disney Theatrical
- Martin Jobes Design
- Production Glue
- Raia, Inc.
- The Javits Center

**NON-PROFIT**
- Delivering Good
- Hearts to Toes
- Jazz at Lincoln Center
- Manhattan Theatre Club
- MoCADA
- MoMA
- New York Public Radio
- Whitney Museum of Art

**DONORS**
- Jack Loconsolo & Co.
- Amazon
- Bloomberg LP
- JetBlue
- Jo-Vin
- Major League Baseball
- McKinsey & Company
- Ready Set Inc.
- Vizacom

**Donor Highlight**

“Since February 2018, the Javits Center has been facilitating donations to MFTA as part of its JavitsCares program. Sustainability has become one of our organization’s core values, and we strive to incorporate this concept into all parts of our operations. Our staff recognized the possibility of repurposing furniture and other items from our show floor and initiated discussions with our customers about donating the materials. The rest is history.

Operations at the Javits Center are designed to support the local economy and community, and by ensuring that these salvaged items are finding a second home with groups in need, we have instilled an enormous sense of pride among our staff, customers and stakeholders.”

The Javits Center
Senior Vice President, Tony Scalfani

Employee volunteers from The Javits Center helping out in the MFTA warehouse
Thousands of students and their teachers visited the Materials for the Arts warehouse for tours of our art gallery, conversations with our Artist-in-Residence, and art workshops in our classroom with reusable materials.

MFTA facilitated 245 field trips in 2019. We were delighted to meet our annual goal of providing 120 free field trips to Title I schools, schools at or below the poverty level. 6,197 students were given an art making experience using a wide variety of reusable materials. These hands-on activities integrate classroom curriculum and encourage Creative REuse in schools all over NYC.

“Through hands-on learning I realized that students can visually create their abstract thoughts.”
– Educator from PS 176, Queens
P 141 is a District 75 school serving youth with developmental and physical disabilities. Their partnership with MFTA spans over 14 years, and they participate annually in our residency program.

“Every year, our school has been able to participate in MFTA’s year long residency. We participate in about 60 sessions. This includes family and student engagement with 3 parent workshops with a main focus on our garden, which is really the nucleus of our school.

This past year, our students held a fundraiser where they sold herbs and other produce from the garden. Our students have been able to develop hard and soft social skills while maintaining our green space.”

Natalie Meek
Assistant Principal
P 141
Brooklyn

Professional Development

Hundreds of teachers participate in Materials for the Arts’ professional development workshops, offered through schools, libraries, universities, and the New York City DOE Office of Teacher Effectiveness.

HIGHLIGHT

In 2019, MFTA partnered with the New York Historical Society to facilitate a course covering the Stone Wall Riots. Throughout the year, MFTA offered a variety of long week courses including musical instrument making, paper architecture, costumes and props as well as special one day events for teachers on Chancellor’s Day.

A participant from the Materials for the Arts’ Chancellor’s Day Creative Reuse Workshop

Master Teaching Artist, Joy Suarez (Left) and a student from P141 working on the school’s garden project

In-School Residencies

Materials for the Arts’ teaching artists work in schools across New York City, helping students and teachers reuse materials to make their art, science, social studies, and ELA projects a reality.
Each year MFTA holds a group show featuring the works of current artists who make creative reuse a central part of their practice. This year’s show featured sculptures made from hundreds of colored drinking straws by Annie Varnot; large-scale prints of mold-damaged slides from CERN labs in Geneva by VolMeur; reclaimed wood installations by Yasmin Gur; shrine-like sculptures made from milk crates by Sol’Sax; and whimsical orbs of found objects by Ian Trask.

In July, the MFTA Gallery held an exhibition featuring the creations of MFTA staff and teaching artists. Curated by Omar Olivera, MFTA Education Associate, the works were MFTA’s way of showing our community that we practice what we preach. A total of thirteen artists participated and the show included paintings, sculptures, collages, and large-scale installations all made from reusable materials.

The MFTA Gallery showcases the wide range of artwork that can be created through reuse.

The gallery holds a central location in our facility and is a source of inspiration for the artists, teachers, designers, social service and afterschool providers, and hobbyists who come through our doors.

In 2019, the MFTA Gallery had five exhibitions, viewed and enjoyed by thousands of students, teachers, volunteers, warehouse shoppers, and visitors.

In July, the MFTA Gallery held an exhibition featuring the creations of MFTA staff and teaching artists. Curated by Omar Olivera, MFTA Education Associate, the works were MFTA’s way of showing our community that we practice what we preach. A total of thirteen artists participated and the show included paintings, sculptures, collages, and large-scale installations all made from reusable materials.
Roberto Visani is a multi-media artist who lives in Brooklyn, and is a member of the faculty at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Inspired by traditional African figurative sculpture and his time in Ghana, Visani used laser-cutting machinery and 3D modeling software to create figures from cardboard and Plexiglas found in our warehouse. Visani’s exhibition, Unknown Numbers, re-oriented ideas of primitivism through the lens of technology. The works referred not only to the materials from which they were made, but also to the dehumanizing of black people. Visani’s work raises important philosophical and historical questions about our relationship to materials, their connotations, and sources.

Whitney Oldenburg is an artist from Jacksonville Florida whose solo exhibition, Loose Ends, explored control and the desire to keep things bound, when they so easily can become unraveled. Her show incorporated a variety of materials including rock, clay, string, tubing, and household goods including ice trays. Oldenburg utilizes these unique materials and their properties—whether firm, spongy, smooth, rigid, flexible or coarse—allowing them to shape her work.

Oldenburg made complex configurations of knotted ropes and string, which ranged in size from 13 inches to 31 feet. Her sculpture “Shoe Lace,” which ran the length of one gallery wing, was the largest work to be installed in the MFTA gallery to date.
Every third Thursday of the month, we host intimate workshops with artists who work with reuse materials. Attendance ranges from between 30 to 70 participants, allowing everyone to have a hands-on experience, focusing on creative reuse.

Each workshop showcased the techniques of their presenting artist, emphasizing materials from our warehouse.

This year’s workshops included quilting with Harlem Needle Arts, contemporary dance with Dance Entropy, lamp-making with Annalisa Iadicicco, and artist conversations with Roberto Visani.
At Materials for the Arts we are very grateful to our dedicated individual volunteers and volunteer groups who help keep our materials organized in the warehouse. Volunteers also help in our classrooms and at our public events.

We welcome students and seniors, corporations and clubs when they want to give back to their community.

Volunteering at MFTA

2019 Volunteer Statistics

90 volunteers per week
12,775 hours
2,599 volunteers

Bloomberg LP
As an intern at MFTA, I was always regaled by the MFTA family on the days I came. Overall, I believe that MFTA has guided me in learning more about entrepreneurship, and I am grateful for being able to seize this unique opportunity through the internship.

Henry Trinh, Student Intern from BSGE. 2019
After years of donating valuable materials including mannequins, pallets of fabric, visual display props, flat-screen TVs, and plinths, we were honored to deepen our relationship with the global luxury brand Burberry. In October, on National Consignment Day, Burberry and their partner, luxury consignment marketplace, The RealReal, announced their shared mission to “support and promote the benefits of a circular economy for fashion by encouraging customers to extend the life of their products through resale”. Both companies made a generous donation of $25,000 each to Friends of Materials for the Arts. In December, we were thrilled to host 11 Burberry volunteers in the warehouse. This small but mighty team helped us sort paper, beads, wood, Plexiglas, office supplies, and carpet samples in preparation for our member shopping days. This partnership has enriched our efforts to encourage people to rethink the afterlife of materials all around them.
Since 2001, our annual fundraiser, Masked Marvelous, has been a one-of-a-kind gathering hosted by the Board of Directors of Friends of Materials for the Arts. Each year, donated materials are used to transform the warehouse into a fun, festive, and quirky destination.

This year’s theme, Grit & Glamour, was a spectacular celebration of how we can turn the mundane into the meaningful and finally, into the magical. On Thursday, October 24, 2019, Masked Marvelous captured the true spirit of Creative Reuse in an enduring tribute to New York City.

Attendees journeyed through the five boroughs while enjoying delicious local food, signature cocktails, and roving entertainment. The event raised over $90,000 for educational initiatives and community outreach.
A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR
2019 SUPPORTERS

Director’s Circle - $20,000+
Adobe Foundation
Bloomberg L.P.
Burberry
New York State Council of the Arts (NYSCA)
The RealReal

Benefactor - $10,000 - 19,999
Agnes Gund
American Eagle Outfitters Foundation
The Durst Organization
Estee Lauder, Inc.
Bobbie Braun & The Neuwirth
Foundation

Advocate - $1,000-2,499
Alan Finkel
BNY Mellon
Dona & Keith Schaitkin
Josephine Fleishman
Mathis Pfohl Foundation
Milton & Sally Avery Arts
Foundation
Participatory Safety, Inc.
Rachel & Ken Rader
Samit Shah & Aetna Foundation

Sponsor - $2,500-4,999
Castle Family Foundation
Dubie Silverstein & Ellen Weiman
Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation
Janet Wong & The Deutsche Bank
Americas Foundation
Thaddeus Copeland & Ryan Bagley
Yolanda Shashaty

Patron - $5,000-9,999
Bonnie & Doug Weill
CHANEL
Claire Davis
Garment District Alliance
The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund

Friend - $500-$999
Alok Lal
Anele Miller
Aviva Moster
Chilewich Sustain LLC
Silvercup Studios
Geoff Bartakovics
George Sengly
Harriet Taub & Harry Kita
Intuitive Resources
Jane and Robert
Metrick
LLL Foundation
Matona & Courtney Bynsheim
Pat Brown
Quality Facility Solutions
Scott Reasnick
Recycle Track Systems
Staff & Phil Green
Stephanie & Robert Olnsted
Sue Ellen & Robert Schneider
Sumesh Jagtani
Zainal Arifin

This includes all contributions made to Friends of Materials for the Arts over $500 made within the calendar year of 2019
WE ARE MFTA – OUR TEAM

MATERIALS FOR THE ARTS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
Hannah Taub, Executive Director
Tina Sansone, Deputy Director
Stephanie George, Development & Events Coordinator
Bliss Green-Morehead, Executive Assistant
Yolanda Rodriguez, Office Administrator

EDUCATION
John Cloud Kaiser, Director of Education
Virginia Hoffman, Education Associate
Cesar Olivera, Education Associate
Joy Suarez, Master Teaching Artist

TEACHING ARTISTS
Louie Miranda
David Marini
Edyta Halon
Pamela Isaac
Avani Patel

WAREHOUSE
Christopher Trainor, Assistant Warehouse Manager
Daniel Larkas, Direct Donations Coordinator
Paul Humphreys, Donations Coordinator
Dianna Mendez, Volunteer Coordinator
Joyce Rosa, Warehouse Assistant
Jonathan Valentin, Warehouse Associate
Andres Velasquez, Warehouse Associate
Nick Duguid, Driver

In the office

Administrative
We answer the phones, reply to the emails, register members, set up the calendar, troubleshoot, order supplies, write all communications and social media posts, raise funds and write grants and create a welcoming space for all.

In the warehouse

Donations
We take the calls, respond to the emails, book the truck, arrange for the drop offs, post items on Direct Donations and help make matches between donors and recipients.

Volunteer
We manage volunteers and prep their work, respond to emails and calls, recruit and work with volunteer groups and make the workplace friendly and caring.

In the office

In the warehouse

Microsoft PowerPoint
CREDITS

Annual Report Production By
Bailee Eaglin

Designed By
Omar Olivera

Photography By
Virginia Hoffman
Dianna Mendez
Bliss Green-Morehead
Gary Spector
Jordana Vasquez (UrbanOnSite)
Wil Pierce
David Ponce