

Official 2025 Annual Report

A Message from 2025 Chairperson, Ginger Cruze

It has been both an honor and a privilege to serve as Board Chair of the Marion Cultural Alliance over the past two years. During this time, I have witnessed a renewed energy and a shared understanding that the arts are essential, accessible, and meaningful for all. Seeing the expressions of awe and connection on people's faces as they experience the true beauty of creativity has a powerful way of making everything else fade away.

Through my time on the Board, most recently as Chair, I have seen firsthand the profound impact the arts have on our community. Working alongside our Executive Director, the MCA team, and a dedicated Board, we have continued to advance our mission: to champion the arts, artists, and arts organizations; to bring people together to appreciate, learn about, and support the arts; and to foster a vibrant and inclusive arts presence throughout Ocala and Marion County.

MCA's designation as a Local Arts Agency by the City of Ocala and the Board of County Commissioners further affirms our leadership and responsibility. With clearly defined partnerships in place, we are well positioned to collaborate with civic leaders to grow and sustain the arts across our region. Our wide variety of programs and initiatives continue to unite individuals from all walks of life, inviting them to deepen existing passions or discover new creative pathways.

The advocacy generated by our local arts partners and launched through the Arts Matters campaign has continued to create meaningful opportunities for collaboration and collective problem-solving. The Board's introduction of an equitable, tiered membership program has empowered donors to support the arts at levels that are meaningful to them. In addition, our personalized recruitment efforts have reinforced an important truth: a personal message truly makes a difference. Often folks just need the "ask".

In my continued role as Principal of the local high school Arts Magnet, I see daily the transformative power of the arts for our students. In uncertain times, the arts provide a vital outlet for expression, connection, and resilience. Through increased engagement with MCA, our students are developing a deeper appreciation for the role of the arts beyond the classroom. They are provided with an understanding that will shape both their current experiences and future endeavors.

As we move into 2026, I am inspired by the momentum we have built and energized by what lies ahead. Together, we remain committed to demonstrating the vital role the arts play in enriching lives, strengthening community bonds, and shaping a vibrant future for Marion County.

A Message from MCA Treasurer and Chair Elect, James Hartley

It has been an honor to serve as Treasurer and Chair-Elect of the Marion Cultural Alliance this year, and I am proud to share that MCA remains in a strong financial position. Through the generosity of our members, donors, sponsors, and community partners, we have raised significant funds to support and grow the arts throughout Marion County.

Our signature fundraisers, including Battle of the Brushes, the Block Party, Art in the Attic, and Applaud the Arts, allowed us to overcome the loss of federal grant funding and continue to invest in local artists and organizations. We were also proud to help support the arts through MCA's annual cultural grants and through private grant programs such as the Megan Boone Grants for Performing Arts, the 4 Friends Grant for Local Artists, and the Levitt AMP Music Series Grant.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen our foundation through the careful management of a well-balanced endowment that supports growth and reflects our commitment to responsible stewardship of donor funds.

With the support of Finance Committee members Michael Mehring and Nick Navetta, and the continued dedication of Emeritus Member Lisa Seiffer, whose years of service have been invaluable, our financial reporting and performance continue to improve.

Serving alongside Chairperson Ginger Cruze has been a privilege. Her leadership has guided MCA through another successful year, and her impact will be difficult to match.

Thank you for your continued support of the arts in Marion County!

A Message from MCA Executive Director, Jaye Baillie, APR

As Marion Cultural Alliance reflects on 2025, I am filled with gratitude and pride for what our community has accomplished together.

For a quarter century, MCA has worked to strengthen the cultural fabric of our community by supporting artists, investing in arts education, and championing programs that enhance quality of life and cultural tourism. Central to that work is our MCA Cultural Grants Program, which since 2001 has invested directly in local artists and arts organizations, helping bring hundreds of creative projects to life throughout Marion County. These grants continue to fuel artistic innovation, expand access to the arts, and support programs that engage residents and visitors alike.

In 2025, our mission came to life in powerful ways—from impactful exhibits and public art initiatives to grants that empowered local arts organizations and creative professionals.

None of this work happens in isolation. Our success is made possible by the dedication of our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, artists, sponsors, business partners, and supporters who believe in the power of the arts to inspire connection and economic vitality. Your support allows MCA to continue serving as a catalyst for creativity and cultural growth.

As we look ahead, MCA remains focused on expanding access to the arts, strengthening cultural tourism, and continuing our legacy of grantmaking that uplifts artists and enriches our community. Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us celebrate the past while shaping an exciting future.

A Message from MCA Secretary, Mary Ellen Poe*2025 Organizational Oversight Committee Summary*

As part of implementing the Conflict-of-Interest policy, at the beginning of the year Executive Director Jaye Baillie continues to ask Board Members to review and complete a conflict disclosure document to identify topics/situations that possibly could be considered an upcoming conflict regarding their board roles with the work of Marion Cultural Alliance. Knowing the information upfront promotes better understanding and management of issues if they do arise sometime in the year.

The results of the 2025 Board self-assessment continue to recognize their views as a "healthy" organization! Yet, being a dedicated group of board members, they worked with Jaye to further plan for success. As a result, the presentation of the monthly financial information, including status of investments, at board meetings was redefined to ensure a greater comprehension of the organization's financial condition. An enhanced process to conduct the performance review of the Executive Director was successfully tested in 2025.

**Community Reach and Support (Since 2001)****425,000+**

Individuals reached through MCA programs & funding

\$635,000

Awarded for Cultural Grants

229,000

Residents and Visitors welcomed to The Brick since 2001

1,250

Local Artists showcased through exhibits, events, classes, and the gallery shop

\$623,500

Paid to Artists in Honorariums, Commissions, Sales, Grants & Scholarships

30/70%

Artist friendly sales split, significantly more generous than the traditional 50/50 model

\$432,144

Distributed to other local nonprofits from the inaugural Horse Fever proceeds

Did You Know? In 2025, MCA and Brick City Center for the Arts' Economic Impact was \$572,772!

(Based on the Americans for the Arts Economic Impact Calculator)

CHAMPION. CONVENE. CREATE.

2025 Gallery Exhibits at The Brick

- **January:** Storytelling Knights Exhibit, featuring art by grant recipients and local artists
- **February:** Arts in Health Exhibit, in pARTnership with Arts in Health Ocala Metro
- **March:** Rivers, Springs and Wild Things, featuring artworks by 5 local wildlife artists
- **April:** UpCycled 3, featuring recycled art by MCA artist members
- **May:** Melodic Metamorphosis, by the Philanthro-Creatives and local artists
- **June:** Summer Block Party Exhibit & Fundraiser, feat. donated works by local creatives
- **July:** Art in the Attic 2025 - MCA's Annual Y-Art Sale
- **August:** Art of Aging: Gallery of Gratitude, featuring art by MCA artist members ages 55+
- **September:** Where We Gather, featuring art by MCA artist members
- **October:** Nocturne, MCA's 7th Annual Juried Exhibit by MCA artist members
- **November:** A Symphony of Color, a solo exhibition featuring artworks by Rich Schleicher
- **December:** Fabric Arts Exhibition, featuring art by local artists (curated by David Campo III)

Gallery programming for 2025 included artist talks, live music & theatre, art classes, art performances, art demos, artist mixers, spoken word, book lectures, and more!



BRICK CITY GALLERY SPONSORS

mca | marion cultural alliance

LILAC FOUNDATION
USA IRWIN LEGACY FOR ARTS & CULTURE

SHOWCASE PROPERTIES OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

RECHARGE CLINIC

State Farm
Angie Lewis

OCALA

WE THANK OUR GALLERY SPONSORS FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE ARTS!

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Art Exhibits: 11
Pieces Exhibited: 563

Exhibit & Gift Shop Sales: \$62,620

Participating Artists: 295

Gallery Rentals: 42

Foot Traffic: 10,467



2025-26 CULTURAL GRANTS RECIPIENTS

1. APPLETON MUSEUM OF ART (\$4,000)
2. ARTS IN HEALTH OCALA METRO (\$3,000)
3. DANCE ALIVE NATIONAL BALLET (\$3,000)
4. KINGDOM OF THE SUN CONCERT BAND (\$2,000)
5. MARION ALL COUNTY CHOIR (\$4,000)
6. OCALA CIVIC THEATRE (\$4,000)
7. OCALA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (\$1,000)
8. OCALA FILM DERBY (\$3,000)
9. REILLY ARTS CENTER (\$2,000)
10. SILVER RIVER MUSEUM (\$4,000)

MCA AS A FUNDER

The *Cultural Endowment Fund* was established in 2001 and initially funded with proceeds of Horse Fever. Today, it provides direct support to nonprofit arts organizations for programming, equipment, and initiatives.

To date, **\$635,000** has been awarded to more than 50 nonprofit arts organizations. Additionally, the *Four Friends Grant Fund* supports artists for workshops, equipment, or program ideas. Actress/Director **Megan Boone** funded the *Laurie D. Reeder Grant for Performing Arts* and the *Nancy A. Atkinson Grant for Music* in honor of two influential teachers who encouraged her when she was a student at Bellevue High School. *To learn more about MCA grants, visit mcaocala.org.*

THANK YOU, 2025 CHAIRMAN'S CLUB! (\$250 - \$1,000)

Bob Levenson & Grace Dunlevy | Jo Foster | Diane Carrizzo | Jim & Jessica McCune
Justin Alsedek | Mary Ellen & Norm Poe | Lisa Seiffer | David Midgett | Susan Reid
Beth McCall | Greg Thompson & Michael Mehring | Bob Kuperberg | Wendy & Ken
Kebrdle | Angie & Clint Lewis | Linda Smith | Gary & Eleanor Simons | Ginger Cruze
J Scott Andrews | Carswell & Charlotte Ponder | Morgan & Kelly Evans | John Rogers
Heidi & Tony Lawson | Mary Delancey | Amy Rowell | Paul Warren & Judy Aquino.

Lifetime Members: Irene McCracken | Nancy Muskovitz | Dr. Felipe & Betty Ann Korzenny

MCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

Board Members: Ginger Cruze, Chair | James Hartley, Treasurer / Chair-Elect
Mary Ellen Poe, Secretary | Heather Batchelor | Mel Fiorentino | Dr. Leslie
Hammond | Brooke Hutto | Valarie Lacefield | Kiah Manning | Comm. Matthew
McClain | Michael Mehring | Nick Navetta | Cherieta Prince | Cara Van Leuven
Luanne Warren

Emeritus Members: Daryl Collier, Lisa Irwin, Trish Kilgore, Paula King, Jessica
McCune, Lisa Seiffer, and Laurie Zink

MCA Staff: Jaye Baillie, APR, Executive Director | Ashley Justiniano, Chief Arts
Officer | Chelsey Marques, Administrative Coordinator | Jonia McGill, Marketing &
Events Coordinator | Nicole Upton, Exhibit Assistant | Micki Rios, Gallery Host

Volunteers: Joy & Jake David | Scott & Danuta Jacob | Mary Delancey



Marion Cultural Alliance, Inc. (MCA) is designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c) charitable organization registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. A copy of the official registration (#CH13766) and the financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Affairs by calling toll-free 1-800-435-7352 within the state or visit the website www.freshfromflorida.com/divisions-offices/consumer-services. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state. Contributions to Marion Cultural Alliance, Inc. are tax-deductible within the limits allowed by law. Marion Cultural Alliance, Inc. does not engage paid solicitors.

Appleton Museum of Art | Artist With a Purpose | Artist-Alley | Arts In Heath Ocala Metro
Bello Midlevel Inc. | BMW Window Coverings | Dance Alive National Ballet | Farm Tours of
Ocala | Heidi's Travel, Inc. | Joanne Cornell-Ohlmans | Kingdom of the Sun Concert Band
Many Happy Returns | Marion Theatre | Master the Possibilities, Inc. | NOMA Gallery
Ocala Civic Theatre | Ocala Cultural Arts | Ocala Symphony Orchestra
Pioneer Garden Club of Ocala | Prince Marketing | Rainbow Springs Art

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