



**GOGGLEWORKS RELEASES NEW PLANS FOR TWO MAJOR EVENTS IN 2019**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Arts Festival Reading to Expand as Holiday Market December 14-15**  
**New Avant Garden Event to be held on June 1**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**READING, PA – February 24, 2019** - GoggleWorks Center for the Arts (GoggleWorks) today announced plans to reimagine two of its major annual events. Arts Festival Reading, the premier juried fine art and craft show will move from October to December 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and will expand its model to a full holiday market. Leaders also announced that the annual fundraising event will be held Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, with the theme *Avant Garden*, which will celebrate breadth and impact of artistic freedom.

Arts Festival Reading, now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, features juried artists from across the country and studio artists from GoggleWorks, along with food, music, kids' programs, and live artist demonstrations. Now, GoggleWorks leaders say, the event will move into the holiday season to broaden its audience and add new activities to its program. "Since I came to GoggleWorks in 2016, our visitors have urged us to consider a holiday market," said GoggleWorks executive director Levi Landis. "Rather than start from scratch, we thought it would be a great opportunity to innovate and expand the beloved Arts Festival Reading, which welcomes thousands annually." By moving the date, GoggleWorks leaders offer an open invitation to holiday shoppers and others, including families and visitors that have never been to Arts Festival Reading. Not everyone holds a deep appreciation for or familiarity with fine art, so we are always looking for dynamic ways to engage and welcome even the most intimidated visitors," Landis said.

Melodie Burkey, Arts Festival Reading chair and owner of M Design Interiors, said she has high hopes for the new model. "Each year we look for ways to keep our programming fresh. We believe that reimagining the event will allow for an entirely new audience and unique opportunities." Landis, who previously directed the Philadelphia Folk Festival and continues to run a company called Floating Festivals added, "With music or other performing arts festivals, you can reinvent each year by way of the acts or performers you book, and their respective audiences. With visual arts, we have to work much harder for new audiences or new reasons for previous attendees to return each year." While GoggleWorks didn't detail the specific holiday activities they hope to add, Burkey said, "When it comes the holiday season, the possibilities for rich programming are endless."

GoggleWorks additionally announced new plans for its annual fundraising event, this year entitled *Avant Garden*. The event has traditionally been a gala model, with a sit-down meal and more formal program. Event chair Ralia Vardaxis said that this year's fundraiser will introduce a more informal format with food and art stations and a programming focus that could bring new supporters into the GoggleWorks fold. "After 14 years, the committee thought it was important to open our fundraiser event to a wider community. We lowered the ticket price to \$75 to welcome younger attendees and others from the area that might be turned off by a more costly gala event." Landis shared her enthusiasm and added, "With planning, committee support, and strong program ideas, GoggleWorks is the most exciting venue in the region. This event will put that on full display, showcasing the far reaches of artistic expression, highlighting our artists, and celebrating the power of creativity for building community."

---

**About GoggleWorks Center for the Arts:**

GoggleWorks, located in the former Willson Goggle Factory Building, is the largest center of its kind in the country. The city-block sized complex features eight large teaching studios in ceramics, hot and warm glass, metalsmithing, photography, printmaking, woodworking, and now virtual reality; 39 juried artist studios; exhibition galleries; Belly Kitchen + Drinkery restaurant; a retail store; and the Boscov Film Theatre. GoggleWorks supports artists and audiences through year round arts education and offers a robust schedule of exhibitions, community programs, and events. The art center is open daily from 9am-9pm; admission and parking are always free. Plan your visit at [www.goggleworks.org](http://www.goggleworks.org).

###