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**MATERIALS FOR THE ARTS ENCOURAGES NEW YORKERS TO
CELEBRATE EARTH DAY**

One Easy Step to Help Protect the Earth and Support the Arts

Long Island City, New York – In celebration of Earth Day, Materials for the Arts (MFTA) encourages all New Yorkers to support sustainability and the arts with one action: donate used items to MFTA for reuse by teachers, students and artists.

MFTA is a program of the New York City Departments of Cultural Affairs, Sanitation and Education. MFTA collects reusable items from businesses and individuals for reuse in classrooms, studios, and on stages across the five boroughs. Since its founding in 1978, MFTA has become the City's largest reuse program, furnishing New Yorkers with a sustainable action to support the arts, reduce solid waste, and save on taxes. "We were green when green was just a color," remarked Kate D. Levin, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Last year, donations to MFTA diverted more than 1.3 million pounds of high quality goods from the waste stream. These items – from mannequins to paint to computer equipment to office supplies – were reused by more than 1,800 nonprofits and schools in New York City. Goods are made available to organizations for free from MFTA's 25,000-square-foot Long Island City warehouse, saving the arts community more than \$6 million last year alone.

New Yorkers can follow in the footsteps of many prominent individuals and businesses who have already donated. Recently, fashion companies Marc Jacobs and Ann Taylor gave leftover fabric, while items from the sets of popular New York-based TV shows Gossip Girl and 30 Rock have come to MFTA after shooting. And, the BBC, Google, Macy's, Estee Lauder and the Gagosian Gallery all supplied MFTA with basic office supplies for arts administrators.

"Behind every three-minute dance piece, there can often be 30 hours of rehearsal. Behind every performance, there are hundreds of hours of office work to be done," said Annabella Lenzu, Artistic Director of DanceDrama. "Furniture and supplies from Materials for the Arts have enabled me to create an office environment where I can manage my company on a competitive professional level."

Becoming a donor is easy. Businesses and individuals can call (718) 729-3001, ext. 207 or visit www.mfta.org to schedule a pick-up or to arrange a drop-off at the MFTA warehouse in Long Island City. It's a triple win – arts professionals receive basic supplies, solid waste is reduced, and donors earn a tax deduction.

"Materials for the Arts is an amazing resource for anyone in the arts community," said Brandon T. Snider of Marc by Marc Jacobs. "Every time we send goods to MFTA, we know it's a smart business move. In 'paying it forward', we're confident that our items will be used wisely to mount a production or create something great for the community."

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