

RURAL ARTS & CULTURE SUMMIT 2019

October 3-5, 2019 | Grand Rapids, Minnesota



The Rural Arts and Culture Summit is a biennial, practitioner-driven gathering that celebrates and expands the field of rural arts-based community development. The 2019 Summit marks the 5th gathering since its start in Fergus Falls in 2011.

The 2019 Rural Arts and Culture Summit is a partnership between the following organizations:



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WELCOME

Welcome to the 2019 Rural Arts and Culture Summit!

We are thrilled to be with you in Grand Rapids. This gathering takes place on settled and colonized lands. As we gather we offer respect, solidarity and gratitude for this place and the traditional stewards of this land, this home of the Anishinaabeg Ojibwe Nation.

From its beginning, the Rural Arts and Culture Summit has been rooted in the values of place and connection. And as it has evolved, the Summit has become firmly rooted in a set of practices and values that stem from Springboard's own work and the work of our local and national partners and collaborators:

Practitioner focused: The Summit has and always will be focused on the people who do the work in their communities. We are interested in celebrating the people who wake up every day and try to make their place better and healthier for more people. Our goal for this gathering is to introduce you to ideas and people you might not already know, to inspire you to action and to help you connect with allies, collaborators and a support network keep you going.

Locally centered: We believe it is integral to the success of this gathering that we gather in a small town. What we feed grows and by collectively putting our dollars, attention and energy in a small community we can not only talk about rural economic development, we can be rural economic development. It also gives us the opportunity to amplify and connect with the creative people power that exists in every community. We hope that your experience in Grand Rapids allows you to connect with this community, think about how this place is different and the same as your place, and gives you a new appreciation for the unique assets that are hidden in every community.

Creating a more complex narrative: We are living in a moment when many people are writing a narrative of rural America. The majority of these authors are not from or rooted in rural places. We are invested in reclaiming a more complicated narrative about the opportunities, assets and challenges of rural life. The summit aims to amplify voices that are often intentionally left out of the narrative of rural communities. We hope the stories you hear over the next three days are stories you can carry with you to counter narratives that seek to harm, divide or write off the culture, value, and complicated history and future of rural places and people.

Rural urban solidarity: Growing from our own experience as an organization with two contexts and two homes, we are invested in creating solidarity across geographic contexts. In particular, we believe there is great value and power in building solidarity and connection between rural places and underinvested urban neighborhoods. Recognizing that every community is different and faces its own specific challenges, we believe we can work together to counter and repair the systemic extraction and disinvestment that rural and urban communities face and create opportunities for shared work, shared purpose and recognition that our future is interdependent and intertwined. We hope that the Summit helps forge connections across urban and rural communities, creates pathways to share ideas across urban and rural contexts and builds new friendship, partnership and collaboration. For us, this work has been hard, it has been important, but most of all has been joyful work to find similarities in our own two communities, share ideas across our differences and to celebrate our shared future.

Most of all we hope you enjoy your time here and make space for contemplation, connection and wild possibility.

— Michele Anderson and Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts

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91.7 KAXE

Northern Community Radio

KBXE 90.5

Grand Rapids | Bemidji | Brainerd | Ely



RAC Summit Registration

2:00–5:00 PM at the Reif Center
6:00–10:00 PM at Rapids Brewing

KAXE Station Tour + Phenology Walk

2:00–5:00 PM: Station Open House
2:30 PM: Station Tour
Location: Northern Community Radio, 260 NE 2nd St

Learn about the history of the oldest rural public radio station in the country and how they’ve made community radio relevant for over 40 years. Longtime KAXE volunteer and phenologist John Latimer will talk about the successful phenology program that connects elementary school students across Minnesota with the natural world through radio.

ICTV Station Open House

2:00–4:30 PM
Location: ICTV, 819 NE 4th St

ICTV is the local public access cable television station dedicated to local government, education and public video. Programming is available on cable television, streaming online, on-demand and on YouTube. Its most recent endeavor, 47 North, is an in-studio event that gives musicians a chance to showcase their original works, and creates their online video resume on Youtube. Come tour the full studio and production offices.

Nicole Camene: Fungi Bridge Project Installation

2:00–4:00 PM
Location: Pedestrian bridge over the Mississippi, just east of KAXE/Northern Community Radio, 260 NE 2nd St

Visit with artist Nicole Camene who will be installing “Fungi Bridge Project,” a new piece of temporary public art selected by the Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission in partnership with Forecast Public Art. The inspiration for this project developed when Nicole learned about the history and future vision Grand Rapids has planned for its forests and public lands. For this project she will be sculpting large scale shelf mushrooms as a representation of the complex role we hold, much like the fungi, in creating and maintaining a state of balance with nature.

“Beyond Borders” Exhibit at MacRostie Art Center

2:00–5:00 PM: Gallery open to the public
5:00 PM: Gallery Talk with co-curators Kayla Aubid & Colleena Bibeau
Location: MacRostie Art Center, 405 NW 1st Ave

Get a first look at the new Indigenous Invitational exhibit curated by MAC Gallery Director Kayla Aubid and Colleena Bibeau of the ISD #318 American Indian Education Program. The exhibition brings together indigenous arts, language, and culture for a gallery experience that celebrates history, life ways, and the ties that bind communities. The exhibit aims to inspire young people with the strength of intergenerational stories, dreams, and teachings as seen through the eyes of prominent regional artists.



Downtown Public Art Walk with Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission

3:30–4:30 pm

Location: Meet at Old Central School, 10 NW 5th St

Join Kathy Dodge of the Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission for a walking tour of downtown Grand Rapids' public art. See recent additions to the public art landscape, hear about some of the challenges of developing a public art plan, and meet with local artist Leah Yellowbird to see some of her recent public works.

“Hope in the Heartland” Photo Exhibition

2:00–5:00 PM: Gallery open to the public

4:00 PM: Gallery Talk with One Heartland

Location: Reif Gallery, 720 NW Conifer Dr

One Heartland is a non-profit organization based in the Twin Cities with a rural facility in Willow River, MN. Their mission is to improve the lives of children, youth and families facing significant health challenges and social isolation. The Reif Gallery will display an exhibition of photos by Paul Gregersen that feature youth from the 2019 summer camp sessions for LGBT+ youth, youth experiencing housing instability, and youth striving for a healthy lifestyle.

FELT HERE

2:00–5:00 PM

Location: Reif Gallery, 720 NW Conifer Dr

Visit and create together with Iron Range neighbors! All are welcome to try dyeing, felting, and printing with earth and imagery gathered through community workshops and storytelling circles across the Iron Range. While we work together, we'll also visit about our relationships with land, water, family, work, craft, the future of climate change and community life, and more. FELT HERE is part of an ongoing project, Overburden/Overlook, which will surface stories about life on Minnesota's Iron Range—especially the overlooked stories of women, work, and water. It is a collaboration between public artist Shanai Matteson, social scientist Roopali Phadke, and an emergent network of people from across the Iron Range, including the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability.

Welcome Reception

6:00–10:00 PM

6:00–8:00 PM: Music: Briand Morrison (jazz guitar)

8:00–9:00 PM: Buckanaga Social Club Fashion Show

Location: Rapids Brewing Co, 214 N Pokegama Ave

Enjoy free appetizers, a cash bar and meet new and old rural arts friends at one of Grand Rapids' newest downtown businesses!



FREE CONSULTATIONS DURING THE SUMMIT

Do you need one-on-one guidance about your art career? Do you have a question for an attorney about an issue related to your creative business, or questions for the Minnesota State Arts Board about state arts funding? Sign up for a consultation time at the registration area!

Springboard for the Arts and the Minnesota State Arts Board will be offering free consultations for artists during the Summit from the following individuals:



Adia Morris

Theater (acting, directing and teaching), Dance (dance, choreography), and On Camera (film, commercial, hosting)



Jeremy Staab

Entrepreneurial development, grant administration, business planning, sales, project management



Walter Lehmann

Legal and business affairs services (Lehmann PLC)



Laura Youngbird

Visual Art (drawing, painting, printmaking), Instructor, Art Advocate and Administrator (leadership)



Natalie Kennedy-Schuck

Minnesota State Arts Board program officer (administers the Arts Access, Arts Learning and Partnership in Arts Participation grant programs)



Rina Rossi

Minnesota State Arts Board program officer (administers the Minnesota Festival Support, Folk and Traditional Arts, and Arts Tour Minnesota grant programs)



LOCAL ART

Friday, 4:00–7:00 PM in Downtown Grand Rapids

The First Friday Art Walk is a community event open to all

All events are free unless noted

First Fridays are brought to you by GrandRapidsArts.org



Your passport to local art!

Saturday, October 5th | 10 am - 5 pm

starting at MacRostie Art Center
macrostieartcenter.org/studiotour



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FEATURED ARTISTS

Amber Buckanaga, Buckanaga Social Club

Fashion show: Thursday, 8:00–9:00 PM at Rapids Brewing

Pop up shop: Friday, 4:00–7:00 PM at Old Central School



Amber Buckanaga is an artist and member of the Leech Lake Band of Chippewa who resides in East Lake, Minnesota. From her first introduction to Native American arts she loved and knew she'd grow up to be an artist. She is inspired by the beautiful, usable things in everyday life made by the Ojibwe people like tools, storage, clothing and shelter and how this practice truly radiates honor and respect for all things. Amber first began learning to sew blankets and later taught herself how to sew powwow regalia, appliqué, bead earrings, bracelets and medallions. In recent years she decided to work from home as an artist. Her art has evolved into sewing relaxed, traditional clothing that enhances modern fashion, which has increasingly attracted custom orders and was recently accepted into a show with Rise New York Fashion Week. The collection has also been featured at MacRostie Art Center, Fashion Week Minnesota, and the Depot Train Museum with the Duluth Art Institute. Amber and her fellow Buckanaga Social Club artists have been fulfilling custom orders for their art and fashion, participating in pop up shop opportunities and sharing their knowledge by hosting sewing classes in their communities.

Briand Morrison

Performance: Thursday, 6:00–8:00 PM during opening reception at Rapids Brewing



Briand Morrison (b.1961 New York, New York) is a guitar player with a wide range of musical interests and great love for music of many idioms and styles. He is blessed (and cursed) with an inveterate fondness for and profound desire to play jazz.

Shanai Matteson

FELT HERE workshops (see description on page 4)

Thursday, 2:00–5:00 PM at Reif Performing Arts Center (during registration)

Friday, 10:30–11:00 AM and 3:15–3:45 PM at Reif Performing Arts Center (between sessions)

Friday, 4:00–7:00 PM at Old Central School Lawn (during First Friday Art Walk)



Shanai Matteson is an artist, writer, mother and cultural organizer who grew-up in rural Aitkin County, Minnesota, and who currently resides in Minneapolis. Her people came to Northeastern Minnesota in the 1860s and 1930s as settlers from Northern and Eastern Europe, working primarily in logging and mining, and more recently in education and healthcare. Through slow and emergent arts activism, Shanai strives to deepen her commitments to protecting water, advancing racial and economic justice, healing relationships between people and place, and the transformation of culture. Shanai is one of the founders and co-directors of Water Bar & Public Studio and currently co-leads the place-based project, Overburden / Overlook, which surfaces overlooked stories of women, work and water in Northeastern Minnesota's Iron Range communities.

Annie Humphrey

Performance: Friday, 9:00 AM in Wilcox Theater (pre-plenary performance)

Creative People Power in the Northwoods Plenary: Friday, 9:00 AM in Wilcox Theater



Growing up on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota, Annie lived in a home filled with voices made of thunder and nothing could stop it. Her parents were brilliant people individually. Her father, a singer and musician and her mother an artist and poet. Together they made sadness. Each of her parents taught Annie the beautiful things they knew. They showed her that she carried their gifts in her hands too. This is how creating art and music came about for her. This is what saved her. This is how she lives now. Annie has 4 children and 2 grandsons. She has a handsome, Indian, horseman husband. They inspire her spirit and her art.

DanceBARN Rural Collective

Performance: Friday, 1:30 PM in Wilcox Theater
(pre-plenary performance)

Bringing Dance to Your Rural Community: Friday, 11:00 AM
in Ives Studio Theater (breakout session)



DanceBARN Collective is a nonprofit organization based in Battle Lake, Minnesota. They are committed to using dance as a way to build community by connecting dancers, educators, choreographers, and community members. Since founding the organization in 2014, DanceBARN has hosted over 50 artists from all around the country for an annual dance festival in Battle Lake, and organized dozens of community performances, classes, artist residencies, screendance projects, and a youth camp. Recently, they have been working to build the Rural Collective, a network of artists, dancers, and community organizers working to cultivate a supportive region for dancers. Their performance on Friday afternoon will include Collective members Molly Johnston, Ayumi Shafer, Alyssa Berube, Emily Koljonen, Chelsey Dagan and Olana Flynn.

Not Your Average Family Band and No Rest for the Pickers

Performance: Friday, 5:30-7:30 PM at Kremer's Parking Lot



Not Your Average Family Band features a unique repertoire of toe-tapping tunes, heartfelt ballads and old-time bluegrass crowd-pleasing favorites. Sawyer (11) has been playing fiddle since he was four years old and has won multiple awards for his playing on both violin and mandolin, most recently winning 1st place in the Minnesota State Fair Fiddle Contest in the Jr Division, and has recently added the guitar to his musical skill set. Natalie (8) is a natural on stage with her vocal skills, and has also started studying guitar. Jeff is a lifelong musician and retired music instrument repairman, Leah is a Registered Nurse, and Jan is a massage therapist.

No Rest for the Pickers is a new and up-and-coming group of talented musicians featuring an eclectic repertoire of Bluegrass, Cajun, Blues, Old Time and American Folk Music! This mixed-ages (14, 14, 11, and two adults) ensemble will delight their audiences with fiddle, banjo, guitar, mandolin and bass.

Heidi Jeub

Tiny School of Art and Design: Friday, 5:00-8:00 PM at
Kremer's Parking Lot



The Tiny School of Art & Design is a traveling studio that builds community through the foundations of art. Created by Heidi Jeub, a visual artist from Little Falls, Minnesota, it is meant to travel to places where design and community does/should/could mix. As a teaching artist, she felt that by being present in public spaces she could provide a new entry point for creatives of all types, ages, and abilities.

The trailer is fully equipped with drawing horses, work tables, and art equipment found in art studios and schools. The Tiny School of Art & Design was funded by the McKnight foundation, with an organizational partnership with SproutMN and Five Wings Arts Council through the Ala cARTE Mobile Market Initiative. Through this program, Jeub will bring the Tiny School of Art & Design to communities that do not have access to fresh foods, providing art activities for the same populations.

Sam Miltich

Performances:

Friday, 7:00-10:00 PM at the VFW (featuring David Karr)

Saturday, 12:30-2:00 PM in Reif Center Lobby (closing reception)



Sam Miltich is a self-taught jazz guitarist born and raised in the woods of northern Minnesota. In his teens, Sam emerged as a rising star in the Jazz Manouche scene, joining Paul Mehling's Hot Club of San Francisco and touring internationally with the Robin Nolan Trio. Sam has performed on hundreds of stages, from small towns on the Iron Range to New York's Lincoln Center. In addition

to fronting his band, the Clearwater Hot Club, Sam frequently collaborates with Minneapolis-based jazz singer Charmin Michelle; legendary saxophonist Dave Karr; and many more of the Twin Cities' top jazz artists. Sam has been featured on NPR's "Weekend Edition," and performed for Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion. He also hosted his own radio program "Sam and Friends" for Northern Community Radio. Sam is passionate about jazz and improvisation and is dedicated to bringing live jazz music to rural places. While maintaining a busy touring schedule, he also hosts a weekly Jazz Night at the VFW in his hometown of Grand Rapids, MN.

Thomas X

Performance: Saturday, 10:45 AM in Wilcox Theater
(pre-plenary performance)

New Voices/New Futures Plenary: Saturday, 10:45 AM in
Wilcox Theater



Thomas X is an Anishinaabe Hip Hop Artist from the Red Lake Band Ojibwe. Co-founder of Rez Rap Records, Thomas incorporates reservation life-style, Native American awareness, and his personal life experiences through pure lyricism. Featured on VICE, Apple Music, and Noisey; he brings a unique style of rap music that ties in traditional hand drumming, Ojibwe language, and current issues and topics regarding the indigenous communities.

Creative People Power in the Northwoods

9:00–10:30 AM



Moderator: Whitney Kimball Coe (1)
Center for Rural Strategies

Delina White (2)
Anishinaabe fashion designer
and bead work artist



Annie Humphrey (3)
Native American Music Awards
2018 Artist of the Year

Sonja Merrild (4)
Grand Rapids Arts & Culture
Commission/Blandin Foundation



Jay Arrowsmith DeCoux (5)
Mayor of Grand Marais, Minnesota

Moira Villiard (6)
American Community Indian
Housing Organization

The overall theme of this year's Rural Arts and Culture Summit is "Creative People Power," inspired by Springboard for the Arts' recently released report and framework for combining creativity-centered and people-centered development to build strong, healthy, and resilient communities. To kick off our time together, we'll hear from creative leaders in the Northwoods of Minnesota, to learn about what creative people power looks like in the context of this region which, like many rural regions across the country, is experiencing dramatic shifts in economic, social, cultural and environmental identity. Moderated by Whitney Kimball Coe, the director of the National Rural Assembly, this conversation will illuminate the experiences of artists making a living in the region, leaders incorporating art and culture into local challenges, their hopes for the future of the communities they call home, and the implications of these experiences and ideas in the national rural development field.

Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector

1:30–3:15 PM



Keynote & Moderator: Pam Breaux (1)
President and CEO for National
Assembly of State Arts Agencies,
Washington, D.C.

Susan DuPlessis (2)
Community Arts Development Director
for South Carolina Arts Commission,
Columbia, South Carolina



Em Johnson (3)
Executive Director of Blue Sky Center,
New Cuyama, California

Michele Anderson (4)
Rural Program Director of Springboard
for the Arts, Fergus Falls, Minnesota

This session will begin with a short keynote from Pam Breaux, president and CEO of the National Association of State Arts Agencies, who will share highlights from "Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector," an action guide developed in partnership with the National Governor's Association, which offers research insights and lessons learned from states that are harnessing the power of the arts to drive rural prosperity. Breaux will share creative policy solutions that draw on home-grown arts and cultural assets to address the urgent problems facing rural America.

Following this keynote, Breaux will invite three rural leaders, who are each leading bold arts-based economic and community development strategies in their own communities, to respond to the suggestions in the report. By connecting policy to practice, this conversation will examine the important intersections of economic development and cultural equity, the complexities of rural narrative and identity, how to adapt to shifting local and national politics, and the opportunities and challenges of this work going forward.

New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development

10:45 AM-12:30 PM



Moderator: Nevada Littlewolf (1)
Political Director, Women Winning

Joseph Claunch (2)
Zuni Youth Enrichment Project,
Zuni, New Mexico



Erin Dorbin (3)
Multimedia Historian, Houston
County, Minnesota

Shel Neymark (4)
Artist, Embudo, New Mexico



Jamie Horter (5)
Artist and Rural Advocate,
Lyons, Nebraska

Thomas X (6)
Hip Hop Artist, Red Lake
Band of Ojibwe

What is it like to grow up “rural” today, and what important perspectives and ideas do our young people in rural places have to offer to our communities, and to national and global challenges such as climate change, racial justice, health and well-being, and the economy? How are artists working within schools, community organizations, reservations, parks and downtowns to activate these important young voices and imaginations? From hip hop to community media, hear from artists about their approaches to rural youth development, what they’re hearing from young people about the future of rural places, and their hopes and fears for the next generation of rural youth.

WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities Through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action

(D) (T)

Wilcox Theater, Reif Center

Ashley Hanson, Lauren Carlson, Saara Raapana, Cassie Williams, Esmeralda Hernandez
Women's Empowerment Creative Action Network

A recent Creative Minnesota report stated that female artists receive only 50% on the dollar of what male artists are paid in Southwestern Minnesota. To address substantial inequities, ten female-artists from the region co-organized a Women's Empowerment Creative Action Network to utilize arts and culture strategies to produce creative events, activities, trainings, peer learning groups, and gathering spaces that allow women and people of color to strengthen leadership skills, cultivate creativity, make connections, and encourage active participation in civic processes. In this session, WE CAN! artists will first share their process for coming together and the creative strategies they are developing and implementing to build leadership through creative action, and then facilitate an interactive workshop for participants to create their own "action bank" of strategies to address equitable opportunity in their community.

Bringing Dance to Your Rural Community: Starting a Dialogue

(A) (P)

Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center

Ayumi Shafer, Molly Johnston
DanceBARN Collective

DanceBARN Collective, based in Battle Lake, Minnesota is committed to creating dance opportunities to rural communities through community events, residencies, and activities that draw in those who may have misguided views about dance and the arts. They will share how, as a new arts organization in the community, their ideas engaged with and challenged local residents. Participants will have the opportunity to participate in activities they've created to make dance more inclusive, like "Dance Dice" and their community screendance events. This session will inspire others to involve dance and movement in their projects as well as explore broader topics related to the arts in rural communities such as collaborations, obstacles, and accessibility.

The Power of Listening and Learning Through Practice, Story and Documentation

(F) (P)

Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center

Michael Dantzler
Michael Dantzler Photography
Susan DuPlessis
South Carolina Arts Commission

The power of listening and learning in rural America is examined through a close look at the development of a South Carolina initiative, The Art of Community: Rural SC. With program designer and director Susan DuPlessis, this session examines the basic tenets that drive a new practice of local, state and national engagement. Through a conversation with South Carolina artist and activist Michael Dantzler, they will share insights as to why this initiative matters and what has been learned and advanced as a result.

Program Evaluation 101: Crafting a Plan You Can Actually Use (A) (T)

Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center

Rachel Brown
Rachel Brown Consulting

When you get to the Evaluation section of a grant proposal, do you groan a bit or maybe even panic? Do you ever feel like program evaluation is just a reporting hoop to jump through? When writing an evaluation plan do you ever feel like you are making stuff up or just putting in what you think the funders want to hear? If you answered yes to any (or all!) of these questions, come for a fresh look at the power of program evaluation to get you information that you can use to reflect on your art, connect with your communities, and help explain your work to others. We'll cover topics such as how to build an evaluation team, collect and use data, write reports, and more. This session includes handouts designed to have participants become more confident and effective program evaluators for their art and/or arts organization.

Art and Agriculture: Curating in the Hedgerows (C) (P)

Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center

Anne Dugan
Free Range Film Festival

In farming terms, field trials are an opportunity to determine effectiveness of experimental techniques. In the arts, experiments are usually only visible in the artist studio. "Free Range Trials" is a lab for artistic process and creative testing through the exhibition of contemporary art. To celebrate the creative energy that can benefit from cross-pollination between these two fields, curator and organic farmer Anne Dugan will facilitate a conversation about the intersections of sustainable agriculture practices and contemporary arts, including examples of alternative spaces for visual arts and moving image exhibitions, and ideas for audience development in rural landscapes.

Sustainable Mending in Our Communities (A) (H)

MacRostie Art Center offsite

Maday Delgado
Free Spirit Designs

At a time when technology seems to rule much of our interactions and also unify people from all over the world, this session will focus on creative placemaking through "mending." From the standpoint of leading a more sustainable future, working on repairing the clothes we have is a mindful technique that welcomes the perspective and traditions of our ancestors and helps the environment in the long run. At a more basic level, we can participate in the practice of "making do" with what we have instead of purchasing and discarding garments that make their way into landfills across the United States. Mending has been a social activity as much as it has been a needed one, from the practice of Sashiko in Japan to the resourcefulness of the quilters of Gee's Bend in Alabama; my hope is to bring awareness on how our traditions across cultures and generations, can help us lead more sustainable and fulfilling lives, while encouraging collaboration and community.

Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (A) (P)

Old Central School offsite

Sarah Waddle
North House Folk School
Patricia Canelake, Frank Sander
Little Knife Sanctuary
Andrew Ranville
Rabbit Island
Derek Hamm
Tallgrass Artist Residency

Any residency is an act of exchange, whether it's with the natural world on a remote island or with local residents of a small town. What do artists bring and leave behind when they visit? How is the environment or the community changed as a result? Meet leaders of 3 rural residency programs to hear how visiting artists are interacting with places like the Kansas prairie, the folk art traditions of a small community, the Northwoods, and a remote island on Lake Superior. Learn about how each of them are creating unique conditions and opportunities for artists to feel supported, focused, and inspired, and learn about the local impact and lessons of welcoming artists to these places.

Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development

© E

Wilcox Theater, Reif Center

Sarina Otaibi & Emily Kurash Casey

Rethos: Places Reimagined

Michele Anderson

Springboard for the Arts

Ben Strand

Winona Main Street

Sarah Swedburg

City of Willmar

John Salgado Maldonado

Artist

Artists on Main Street was launched in 2018 by Rethos: Places Reimagined (formerly the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota) and Springboard for the Arts to help connect Main Street leaders to their creative communities, and identify and engage under-recognized leaders to lead the creation of vibrant commercial districts. The program has provided training and project support for artists in seven communities, resulting in over 60 small projects that are helping activate downtowns and address local challenges. Session attendees will hear from Main Street directors and artists about the impact of these projects, receive a toolkit about how to start a similar program, and reflect on how artist-led engagement can help their own public processes be more proactive, creative, and inclusive. The session will also highlight the need for building partnerships between local Main Street programs, Cities, Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce, and local arts organizations in order to support artists as leaders in their communities.

Creating a Statewide Native Buying and Marketing Cooperative

D E

Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center

Pamela Standing

Minnesota Indigenous Business Alliance

The Minnesota Indigenous Business Alliance (MNIBA) recently published the first ever tribal guide to cooperative development, a tool for creative and restorative economies, especially in rural communities. This year MNIBA is partnering with Cooperative Development Services to work on a statewide Native Artisan Buying and Marketing Cooperative. This effort includes convening artisans to come together and begin the process of fleshing out a feasibility study and what will meet the needs of these rural artisans. Participants will learn about other types of artisan cooperatives in the US, Canada and Belgium, how this model is meeting the needs of isolated and rural communities, the nuts and bolts of cooperative development, and how this holistic model has the potential to increase an artisan's exposure to new markets and improve an artisan's livelihood. MNIBA will have its new expanded tribal guide to cooperative development to share with the participants.

Angry Black Women & Well-Intentioned White Girls: A Conversation Space on Race in Rural and Other Communities

D T

Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center

Amoke Kubat

Yo Mama's House Cooperative

In 2015, Amoke Kubat authored her play "Angry Black Woman & Well-intentioned White Girl," expressing the daily 'unsaid' between black and white women. In this conversational play, accusations and silences reflect our miseducation about each other, and the superficial and deep conflicts around our womanhood, ethnicities, rights, power, and constant juxtaposition of roles in the politics of white male patriarchy. ANGRY BLACK WOMAN and Well Intentioned White Girl goes deep into those hidden dehumanizing narratives, through storytelling and audience participation. In 2018, Amoke and partners across Northern Minnesota worked together to schedule a tour of this play to small towns and community spaces in Minneapolis, Cloquet, Cambridge, Sandstone, and Duluth. Each play reading was followed by conversations facilitated by black and white women. Amoke and partners from Minneapolis and northern Minnesota will share insights from this play tour and conversations (which are ongoing).

Spectacular Failures: How Changing the Way You Think About Failure Can Breathe New Life into Artistic Processes

A F

Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center

Lauren Carlson (facilitator)

John Davis, Erika Nelson

We often hear about the road to success (linear only in retrospect), but what about the paths that veer into the void? Not just a hiccup, but an utter, total failure. This humanizing discussion will focus on philosophies and strategies for reinvigorating creative work using failure as a means of exploration, discovery, and resilience. Panelists will offer true examples for overcoming epic failure and adversity and discuss subsequent unexpected lessons and surprises. Through this shared exploration of the embarrassing, each participant will see that success isn't a guarantee, but a journey, with twists, false starts, and the permission to start over with a clean slate.

Building a Creative Community: Letting Artists Lead

E F

Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center

Siobhan Spain
Mainframe Studios

For the sake of your communities, do not underestimate your artists. Recruit them as you would a top manufacturer, or surgeon, or tech company. What would it be like to view them as change agents and leaders? Slated to become the largest nonprofit art studio building in the nation, Mainframe Studios offers an entirely new approach for strengthening creative culture in cities of all sizes. By giving artists a rightful place and letting them lead, Mainframe Studios serves as a catalyst for significant community enhancements in Central Iowa. Its mission is to provide permanent affordable workspace to artists of all disciplines. Siobhan Spain will share how the project began, its self-sustaining business model and stunning stories of community impact. Get a playbook for upgrading perceptions of what artists are capable of to unleash the real power of creative people.

Bikes, Plants, and Overlooked History: Artist-Led Processes for Local Pride and Identity

A P

Choir Room, Grand Rapids High School

Jessica Gorman
Community Artist
Dana Sikkila
Project Bike
Carolyn Runck
Strategist + Creative

Artists play a significant role in helping their rural communities recognize, reframe and activate their natural, historical and cultural assets, which increases local pride, identity, and a spirit of collaboration. In this session, meet three rural artists and learn how they approach this work. Jess Gorman will share the creative processes behind “Follow the Yellowstone Trail,” “Prohibited Acts” and “Art Spark” projects which reinvigorated interest in a historic roadway connecting rural MN communities and the Volstead House of Granite Falls; Carolyn Runck will invite participants to explore how the natural features of our communities—qualities such as flora, fauna, geology, and weather patterns—play an important role in community identity and forming an environment that fosters creative leadership in all community members; and Dana Sikkila will share stories from “Project Bike,” a state-wide bicycle tour of art studios in Minnesota that has resulted in a grassroots network advocating that art and artists are truly part of our chemistry as individuals, as communities, and as a state.

Topophilia: Mapping a Sense of Belonging

H P

MacRostie Art Center **offsite**

Mary Jones

Deep mapping interweaves many disciplines and focuses on story and cultural geography. Participants will learn about two community mapping projects: Topophilia and the Walking Book. Topophilia invites participants to identify their “markers,” that is, features of the built or natural environment that carry significant meaning for them. Through a series of prompts, participants identify these markers, as well as markers for feeling out of place. The Walking Book is a simple folded structure made in the pattern and direction of a walk. The contents of this structure are built out of the participant’s sensory observations during the walk. Supplies will be provided for participants to make a blank book structure which will be theirs to keep and use.

The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement)

A F

Grand Rapids VFW Post 1720 **offsite**

**Kelly Gregory, Zoe Minikes, Mary Welcome, Corbin LaMont,
Jack Forinash, Spencer Kroll**
Homeboat

Talking to your neighbor is political! Hanging out is radical action! Homeboat will share their process of deep community engagement and creating culturally creative, relevant strategies in small towns. This workshop will include audience participation and sharing of tools used to address different social, economic, and political divides. The work will be presented through a process of storytelling, anecdotes, and live acting. Beyond being practical and personal, this workshop will be F-U-N. We believe that the bulk of community work happens after hours and beyond the meetings; we’ll discuss the taxonomies of after-hours social practice and the power of working in collaboration outside of the office. We’ll do some social practicing and make new friends along the way.

It Takes a Village: Innovative Rural Housing Partnerships

C P

Old Central School **offsite**

Courtney Bergey Swanson
Community and Economic Development Associates
Miranda Moen
Architectural Designer

When local high schoolers in Spring Grove, MN, met with city leaders to discuss their vision for the community, leaders expected requests for a Dairy Queen or new basketball hoops at the park. Instead, students expressed interest in affordable housing, which led to working with a local architectural designer, exploring trends in affordable housing design, and designing an efficient, beautiful home rooted in modern Norwegian design to honor Spring Grove’s heritage as the first Norwegian settlement in Minnesota. Habitat for Humanity agreed to become a partner and build the home, now known as Spring Grove Heritage House. In this session, learn strategies and lessons learned throughout the Spring Grove Heritage House Project.

FULL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 3

2:00–5:00 PM	Registration	Reif Center
2:00–6:00 PM	Local Tours and Activities	Various (see pg 3) offsite
6:00–10:00 PM	Opening Reception	Rapids Brewing offsite
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Music: Briand Morrison (6:00–8:00 pm) ▪ Fashion show: Buckanaga Social Club (8:00–9:00 pm) 	

Friday, October 4

7:30–9:00 AM	Registration & Continental Breakfast by Bixby's (Grand Rapids, MN)	Lobby, Reif Center
9:00–10:30 AM	Opening Plenary: Creative People Power in the Northwoods	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome remarks: Laura Zabel & Michele Anderson, Springboard for the Arts ▪ Gary Charwood, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe ▪ Shantel Dow, Reif Center for Performing Arts ▪ Performance: Annie Humphrey 	
9:00–10:30 AM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
10:30–11:00 AM	Networking Break with Coffee & Snacks by Bixby's Shuttle to offsite breakouts	Lobby, Reif Center Entrance, Reif Center
11:00 AM–12:15 PM	Breakout Sessions A	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities ▪ Bringing Dance to Your Rural Community ▪ The Power of Listening and Learning ▪ Program Evaluation 101 ▪ Art and Agriculture: Curating in the Hedgerows ▪ Sustainable Mending in Our Communities ▪ Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies 	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center MacRostie Art Center offsite Old Central School offsite
11:00 AM–12:15 PM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
12:15–1:30 PM	Lunch by Bixby's	Lobby & Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conversation Tables: Perpich Arts School, Minnesota State Arts Board, Minnesota Theater Alliance, Minnesota Presenters Network ▪ Film Screening: <i>Next Gen Rural Retail: Houston, Minn.</i> 	Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center Theater Classroom, Reif Center
1:30–3:15 PM	Afternoon Plenary: Rural Prosperity through the Arts & Creative Sector	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome: Sue Gens, Minnesota State Arts Board ▪ Performance: DanceBARN Rural Collective 	
1:30–3:15 PM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
3:15–3:45 PM	Networking Break with Beverages & Snacks by Bixby's Shuttle to offsite breakouts	Lobby, Reif Center Entrance, Reif Center
3:45–5:00 PM	Breakout Sessions B	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artists on Main Street ▪ Creating a Statewide Native Buying and Marketing Cooperative ▪ Angry Black Women & Well-Intentioned White Girls ▪ Spectacular Failures ▪ Building a Creative Community: Letting Artists Lead ▪ Bikes, Plants, and Overlooked History ▪ Topophilia: Mapping a Sense of Belonging ▪ The After Hours Hours ▪ It Takes a Village: Innovative Rural Housing Partnerships 	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center Choir Room, Grand Rapids High School MacRostie Art Center offsite Grand Rapids VFW Post 1720 offsite Old Central School offsite
3:45–5:00 PM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
4:00–7:00 PM	First Friday Art Walk	Downtown offsite
5:30–7:30 PM	Dinner: Food Trucks, Live Music	Old Kremer's Parking Lot offsite
7:00–10:00 PM	Jazz Night with Sam Miltich & Friends	Grand Rapids VFW Post 1720 offsite

Saturday, October 5

7:30–9:00 AM	Continental Breakfast by Brewed Awakenings (Grand Rapids, MN)	Lobby, Reif Center
9:00–10:15 AM	Breakout Sessions C	
	▪ Facing Resistance, Bridging Differences	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center
	▪ More Than Just a Show: Power, Planning, and Impact	Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center
	▪ A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy	Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center
	▪ Cook County Economic Development Authority/Creative Economy	Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center
	▪ Fighting for Visibility: Cultural Sensitivity Using the Language of Art	Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center
	▪ Laomagination: Building An Inclusive Rural Refugee Arts Voice	Choir Room, Grand Rapids High School
	▪ Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord!	MacRostie Art Center offsite
	▪ Arts & Culture Development Led by City Government	Old Central School offsite
9:00–10:15 AM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
10:15–10:45 AM	Networking Break with Coffee & Snacks by Brewed Awakenings	Lobby, Reif Center
10:45 AM–12:30 PM	Closing Plenary: New Voices, New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Dev.	Wilcox Theater, Reif Center
	▪ Performance: Thomas X	
10:45 AM–12:30 PM	Kid's Track	Theater Classroom, Reif Center
12:30–2:00 PM	Closing Reception & Lunch by 4 Seasons Market (Coleraine, MN)	Lobby, Reif Center
	▪ Music: Sam Miltich	



event contact info:

218-998-4037

racsummit@springboardforthearts.org



Guests may connect to the Reif Artist Network

password: RAC123

Please note this service is "best effort." It offers no encryption. Since it is limited in bandwidth and capacity, we appreciate your willingness to use your cell phone data as much as possible for social media and personal use.



#racsummit

@racsummit



SERVICE LOCATIONS

Rapids Brewing
Thursday night only

Hotels
Country Inn, Timberlake, Super 8,
AmericInn & Hotel Rapids

Old Central School
Parking lot across the street
from MacRostie Art Center

Reif Center
Main entrance

look for
**RAC SUMMIT
BUS STOP**
signs

SERVICE TIMES

Thursday: 5:00–10:00 PM
Bus loops from Hotels to
Rapids Brewing
* wait time every ~20 mins

Friday: 7:30 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:30 AM
Bus departs from Hotels & drops
off at Reif Center
Friday: 5:00 | 5:30 PM
Bus departs from Reif Center
& drops off at Old Central School
& Hotels

Friday: 6:00–11:00 PM
Last shuttle leaves
MacRostie at 11:00 PM
Bus loops from Old Central
School to Hotels
* wait time every ~20 mins

Saturday: 7:30 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:30 AM
Bus departs from Hotels &
drops off at Reif Center
Saturday: 12:45 PM | 1:30 PM | 2:15 PM
Bus departs from Reif Center &
drops off at Hotels

Facing Resistance, Bridging Differences (C) (D)

Wilcox Theater, Reif Center

Emily Fuerste Swanson
Oldenburg Arts and Cultural Community
George Marks
NUNU Arts and Culture Collective

Want to learn more about cultural strategies about working with rural communities? We'll be talking about the bridges arts and culture provide to support regional economies and strengthen civil society within rural, working class, and Native American populations. Learn how the individual priorities of artists, arts advocates, farmers and environmentalists can be harnessed together to galvanize progress.

More Than Just a Show: Power, Planning, and Impact (A) (T)

Ives Studio Theater, Reif Center

Rena Youngs
Minnesota State Arts Board

We all know that using arts and cultural activities to spur positive community change takes lots more than just gathering up friends and declaring "let's put on a show!" like Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. But there are a handful of tools for program and project design that are under-used in the arts and which could make a big difference in planning our work. This workshop will introduce attendees to two powerful planning tools: a project planning worksheet, intended to help us identify all the moving pieces of a project; a guide for clarifying our intended results, and creating a single statement of the outcome we hope to achieve from our work. Both of these tools work at different scales, from an artist's first community-building open studio event all the way to multi-year local or regional initiatives. Attendees will spend the session working with either or both tools to describe and build on their own current work.

A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy (E) (F)

Sewell Dance Studio, Reif Center

Sheila Smith
Minnesota Citizens for the Arts / Creative MN
Anne Katz
Arts Wisconsin
Veronica O'Hern
Iowa Arts Council
Carl Atiya Swanson (facilitator)
Springboard for the Arts

Join national leaders for a conversation about successes, challenges, and strategies in statewide approaches to rural arts advocacy. Using examples of studies and reports done in recent years, this session will provide food for thought and useful facts and figures you can use to make the case that the arts have a positive impact in rural communities.

Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority and Creative Economy Collaborative (C) (E)

Johnson Dance Studio, Reif Center

Mary Somnis
Linda Jurek
Greg Mueller
Ruth Pszwaro

In 2013, community stewards in Cook County came together to create a vision to respond to post-recession challenges and opportunities that the area was facing. The history and culture of art and craft were identified as key prosperity drivers to diversify the economy and enhance the quality of life. Following that, a Blandin Leadership cohort raised funds to engage Arts Midwest/Arts Lab to develop "Leveraging Creativity—Cook County Cultural Plan." This formalized the commitment of artists, arts organizations, elected officials, local government staff and other leaders to form the Creative Economy Collaborative (CEC), whose focus is threefold: 1) Telling Our Story, 2) Working Together and 3) Placemaking. One of many results of this work has included working with MNDOT to prepare plans for amenities to be included in the reconstruction of Highway 61 through Grand Marais. This panel will share lessons learned about how "Creative People Power" has come together and evolved in Cook County in recent years.

Fighting for Visibility: Cultural Sensitivity Using the Language of Art

D **E**

Andersen Dance Studio, Reif Center

Holly Doll
Native Artists United

“A Nation where Native art and culture is valued.” That’s the vision of Native Artists United, NAU, which is currently the only Native artist cooperative within North Dakota. NAU President, Holly Doll, will be discussing the structure that has been implemented, why a cooperative mentality mirrors traditional Native values, and the need to increase market value of Native art which in turn will help create economic sustainability for entrepreneurs. Holly will also talk about how Native Artists United offers cultural education and cultural sensitivity training. NAU believes that we can successfully bridge gaps and encourage sensitivity through art and face-to-face storytelling. The session will include time for a Q&A.

Laomagination: Building An Inclusive Rural Refugee Arts Voice

D **F**

Choir Room, Grand Rapids High School

Bryan Thao Worra
Lao Minnesotan Poet Laureate

As many Southeast Asian Minnesotan communities mark 45 years in diaspora in 2020, how do we strengthen artistic expression in rural communities with an eye towards our shared traditions and emerging opportunities? In this session we will gain a historical overview of previous efforts and challenges, current directions and resources refugee communities are developing to engage each other at a local, national and international level.

Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord!

A **T**

MacRostie Art Center **offsite**

Kristin Eggerling
Northwest Minnesota Arts Council
Hilary Smith
Minnesota Public Radio
Paul M. Gregersen
Reif Performing Arts Center
Adia Morris Swanger
Springboard for the Arts

It’s a veritable buffet of marketing tips, tricks, and ideas! After a lightning round of topic introductions, attendees will be invited to break into smaller groups to dig deeper into the conversation of their choosing: “Creating Marketing Content on a Shoestring Budget” with Paul M. Gregersen (Reif Performing Arts Center); “Be a Minnesota Public Radio Art Hound” with Hilary Smith (Minnesota Public Radio); “Creating Easy Podcasts” with Kristin Eggerling (Northwest Minnesota Arts Council); “Work of Art: Marketing for Individual Artists” with Adia Morris Swanger (Springboard for the Arts). What’s better than a breakout session? A breakout session with it’s own breakout sessions, of course!

Arts & Culture Development Led by City Government? Yes, it’s Possible.

C **E**

Old Central School **offsite**

Sonja Merrild, Kathy Dodge
Grand Rapids Arts & Culture Commission
Ed Zabinski
City of Grand Rapids

Rural places are full of creative, smart, connected people and Grand Rapids is no different. Our rural places need folks who make a life from creative endeavors, which is why cities need to create structures that help artists and creatives connect and thrive. The City of Grand Rapids Arts & Culture Commission will share its creation story, including how they wrote a ten year arts and culture road map, wrote and presented an arts adoption and management policy to the City, got help creating a formal public art placement plan, managed an artist in residency program, and more. If you care about furthering arts and culture in your community, but you might not be an artist, this session is for you. Well, even if you are an artist, this may be for you. And if you’ve tried a few things to advance the visibility of the arts in your community, and want to learn more from a group of folks who have struggled through lessons and setbacks, this session is also for you.

PRESENTER BIOS

Michele Anderson

Rural Program Director, Springboard for the Arts (Fergus Falls, MN)



Michele Anderson is the Rural Program Director for Springboard for the Arts. In 2011, she launched Springboard's office in Fergus Falls, and since has led nationally recognized programs at the intersection of the arts, historic preservation, health and economic development. Her writing and ideas on dismantling stereotypes of rural life have been featured in martists.org,

the New York Times, the Huffington Post, CBC's "As it Happens," and more. Michele is also a pianist and creative writer, and lives in Fergus Falls, MN with her husband, Spencer, and their new son Ash.

- Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector (Friday, 1:30–3:15 PM)
- Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Pam Breaux

President and CEO, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (Washington, D.C.)



Pam joined the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies in 2015. As president and CEO, she works with the association's board of directors and staff to advance NASA's policy and programmatic mission to strengthen America's state and jurisdictional arts agencies. A native of Lafayette, Louisiana, Pam has held leadership positions at the local, state and national levels. While in Louisiana

state government, she was secretary of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT), assistant secretary of CRT, and executive director of the Louisiana Division of the Arts. During her time at CRT, Pam developed and led Louisiana's cultural economy initiative and spearheaded the successful UNESCO inscription of Poverty Point State Historic Site (an ancient Indian site) as a World Heritage site. Pam is currently a member of the U.S. National Commission on UNESCO. She graduated from McNeese State University with a B.A. in English and earned an M.A. in English and folklore from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

- Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector (Friday, 1:30–3:15 PM)

Rachel Brown

Consultant (Roseville, MN)



Dr. Rachel A. Brown is a program evaluation consultant, facilitator, educator, and strategic planner who facilitates learning, change, and growth in mission-driven organizations. To make learning with data useful, impactful, and fun, she melds expertise developed as a social science researcher, English teacher, camp director, curriculum writer, assessment editor, staff development specialist, and

theater arts enthusiast. Since pivoting from K-12 education into the arts, she has worked with a variety of Minnesota arts organizations, including Stages Theatre Company, Theater Mu, The Grand Marais Playhouse, The Minnesota Theater Alliance, Arts Nest, MRAC, Lyric Arts of Anoka, and Nautilus Music-Theater.

- Program Evaluation 101: Crafting a Plan You Can Actually Use (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)

Patricia Canelake

Artist (Knife River, MN)



Patricia Canelake is a painter and printmaker and is assisting in the operations of The Little Knife Sanctuary Artist Residency. She was included in the 2015 Minnesota Biennial Exhibition at the Museum of Minnesota Art and her work is in permanent collections at the Tweed Museum of Art, Arrowhead Regional Arts Association, private collections and The Department of the Interior, United

States. She has received two McKnight Foundation Fellowships, Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Grants, Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Fellowships, and Arrowhead Regional Arts Council awards, served as a panelist for the Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and as a juror for The Minnesota State Arts Board. Canelake taught Media Arts in St. Paul Minnesota for 15 years and has worked as an adjunct instructor in the Duluth area.

- Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)

Lauren K. Carlson

Author (Dawson, MN)



Lauren K. Carlson resides in Providence Township, south of Dawson, Minnesota. She is the author of the poetry chapbook *Animals I Have Killed*, which won the 2018 Comstock Writers Group chapbook prize. She currently studies with the MFA program for writers at Warren Wilson. For more about her work in community and writing see www.laurenkarlson.com or contact

laurenkarlson@gmail.com.

- WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)
- Spectacular Failures: How Changing The Way You Think About Failure Can Breathe New Life Into Artistic Processes (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Emily Kurash Casey

Rural Programs Coordinator, Rethos (Winona, MN)



Emily Kurash Casey is the Rural Programs Coordinator for Rethos: Places Reimagined. Previously, she worked as the Winona Main Street Program Manager, for the Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce as Director of Communication & Programming. Emily has spent significant time in working with rural non-profits and arts programs both as a board member and facilitator, and has been proud to lead

programs focused on revitalizing downtowns, activating young professionals, and fostering cross-collaboration between businesses and artists.

- Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Joseph Claunch

Director, Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (Zuni, NM)



Joseph Claunch PhD. is a member of the Puyallup Tribe in Tacoma, Washington, and currently services as the Director of the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (ZYEP). ZYEP is a small grassroots non-profit dedicated to promoting the resiliency of youth living on the Zuni Reservation in New Mexico. Joseph's research and professional pursuits have focused on developing programs

that optimize the engagement and well-being of Native American youth.

- New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM-12:30 PM)

Whitney Kimball Coe

Coordinator, Rural Assembly (Athens, TN)



Whitney Kimball Coe serves as coordinator of the Rural Assembly, a rural movement made up of activities and partnerships geared toward building better policy and more opportunity across the country. In 2017, she was a featured speaker at the inaugural summit of the Obama Foundation and a guest on the radio program On Being with Krista Tippett. In 2018, she spoke at the Aspen Ideas

Festival. Her focus on building civic courage in communities is directly tied to a practice of participation in her hometown of Athens, Tennessee, where she lives with her husband Matt and daughters, Lucy and Susannah. Coe has an MA in Appalachian studies from Appalachian State University in North Carolina and an undergraduate degree in religion and philosophy from Queens University of Charlotte.

- Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday, 9:00-10:30 AM)

Michael Dantzler

Photographer and Artist (Eastover, SC)



A photographer, artist and community interconnectivity professional. Michael is the Owner/Photographer of Michael Dantzler Photography, where he specializes in portrait, documentary and fine art photography. From a very young age, Michael has always had an uncanny ability to study various towns and cities internationally crafting best practices for his home turf. Currently, he is

focusing on creating a healthy, dense arrangement of small businesses and creative community for talent retention in his hometown, Eastover. In 2016, he was awarded the Leo Twiggs Arts Leadership Award and Riley Institute Diversity Scholarship for his community garden efforts in starting up the Eastover Community Garden. Michael is a native South Carolinian with deep roots in the Midlands, particularly rural Eastover and Columbia.

- The Power of Listening and Learning through Practice, Story and Documentation (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

John Davis

Bush Fellow (Lanesboro, MN)



John Davis is the founder and former Executive Director of Lanesboro Arts, receiving a Bush Fellowship in 2018 to further study and advance the field of rural arts and rural sustainability. Davis was also named a 2018-2020 RUPRI Senior Policy Fellow. His work with the Lanesboro Arts Campus initiative resulted in Lanesboro's selection as one of the top 12 Small Town Artplaces in America for 2013 as well as winning a 2014 Bush Prize for Community Innovation.

Mr. Davis was the recipient of the 2011 Visionary Leadership Award from the Minnesota Council of Non-Profits. His innovative work in New York Mills, Minnesota (pop 1,199) has been recognized as a national model for rural economic development in the arts. Davis is a national speaker on rural arts issues, risk and innovation. His work has been featured on National Public Radio and broadcast on C-Span; it has also been featured in Corporate Report Magazine, USA Today, The New York Times, and the NBC Today Show.

- Spectacular Failures: How Changing The Way You Think About Failure Can Breathe New Life Into Artistic Processes. (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Jay Arrowsmith DeCoux

Mayor (Grand Marais, MN)



Jay Arrowsmith DeCoux has served as the Mayor of Grand Marais, MN since 2014 when he was one of the youngest elected mayors in the state. Since then he has worked to update and innovate the City's operations to encourage the creative economy while expanding on the tourism economy that anchors the City. Jay and his family own a bed and breakfast and the bike shop in

Grand Marais, giving him additional insight into the challenges of an isolated rural economy.

- Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday, 9:00-10:30 AM)

Maday Delgado

Art Educator (Baraboo, WI)



As an art educator living in the Midwest, Maday Delgado is passionate about sustainability and urban gardening. She spent her formative years living in Cuba, where she was born, and migrated to the USA as a teen, settling in NYC in the 90's. Her professional background is in the banking industry. She switched careers over five years ago and now leads workshops in a variety of mediums. In her workshops,

she encourages sustainability as a way to build confidence and community, with a back-to-basics approach and consciousness about resource use/waste. Her focus is on the perfectly imperfect aspects of discovery by exploring new tools and techniques to expand on experimentation as a means to living a satisfying, creative life, and teaching others to create with purpose and intention as the starting point to a transformative and healing future.

- Sustainable Mending in Our Communities (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

PRESENTER BIOS

Kathy Dodge

Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission (Grand Rapids, MN)



Kathy Dodge's first experience in arts administration was as the Executive Director of the Itasca Orchestra and Strings Program in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. This came after a long and loving career as a high school English teacher. Her six-year stint at the Orchestra sparked her passion for arts advocacy, particularly rural arts. As a result, she chaired the steering committee for the

Minnesota Orchestra's first Common Chords Residency in Minnesota, served on the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council (ARAC), and was co-founder of Grand Rapids Arts, a nonprofit dedicated to marketing area arts. She also is a recipient of the Maddie Simons Arts Advocate Award from ARAC. Currently, she is a board member of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and a commissioner on the Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission. Her education includes a BA in English from St. Lawrence University (Canton, NY) and an MA from Syracuse University.

• Arts & Culture Development Led by City Government? Yes, it's Possible. (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Holly Doll

Founder and President, Native Artists United (Mandan, ND)



Holly Doll—Lakota name Anpao Wiŋ (First Light Woman)—is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. She is the founder and President of Native Artists United. Holly has been working with indigenous artists for over 10 years, providing cultural/racial sensitivity training for 5 years, and started her own artist career over 15 years ago. She has dedicated her career to

encouraging artists to find the value in the work they do and to create a sustainable, reliable, long term outlet for them.

• Fighting For Visibility: Cultural Sensitivity Using The Language Of Art (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Erin Dorbin

Multimedia Historian (Houston County, MN)



Erin has a vibrant background as a community organizer, documentarian, and public historian. Her work with immigrant communities and oft-overlooked neighborhoods of Milwaukee has been acknowledged by the American Association for State and Local History (2013, Award of Merit), Chicago's Metropolitan Planning Council (2012, Runner-up, Placemaking Chicago), and Americans for the Arts (2013, Best of Public Art Projects). A native of rural southwest Michigan, with years of experience in urban environments, Erin recently fell head over heels for Houston Co., MN in the gorgeous Drifless region. Here, she has pioneered a new youth media and local history program in partnership with the Smithsonian. Erin also lovingly curates the Crystal Creek Citizen-Artist Residency program.

• New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM-12:30 PM)

Anne Dugan

Independent Curator (Wrenshall, MN)



Anne Dugan is an independent curator and teaches art history at the College of St. Scholastica and the University of Wisconsin Superior. She is the director for the Kruk Gallery on the UWS campus. Dugan is the founder and co director of the internationally recognized Free Range Film Festival, which she founded in 2004. Before her current positions, she served for seven years at the

Duluth Art Institute (DAI) as curator and director. While at the DAI, Dugan presented more than 80 contemporary visual arts exhibits, some of which went on to travel nationally and receive recognition in publications such as Hyperallergenic. Her background is in art history and new media studies, and she holds a master's degree from Columbia University.

• Art and Agriculture: Curating in the Hedgerows (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

Susan DuPlessis

Community Arts Development Director, South Carolina Arts Commission (Columbia, SC)



Susan DuPlessis has worked at the intersection of arts, culture, business and community development for more than 25 years. With a background in documentary photography, her approach is grounded in respect for people, place and shared story. Leading The Art of Community: Rural SC and its corresponding program, CREATE: Rural SC, she continues to practice listening,

learning and connecting in rural and urban settings as more local constituents organize themselves to address community challenges using arts and culture as tools for change. A native South Carolinian, Susan is driven by opportunities to showcase the rich diversity of South Carolina through its people, places and stories.

• The Power of Listening and Learning through Practice, Story and Documentation (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

• Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector (Friday, 1:30-3:15 PM)

Kristin Eggerling

Marketing and Promotions Specialist, Northwest MN Arts Council (Hallock, MN)



Kristin Eggerling works as a marketing and promotions specialist at the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council, freelance writer, and Communications and Digital Media Coordinator for C&M Ford. She is the author of *Breath of Wilderness: The Life of Sigurd Olson*, a children's book about wilderness advocate and writer Sigurd Olson.

Kristin serves on the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, Conservation Minnesota, the North Dakota Museum of Art Boards of Directors, the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, and as the chair of her local library board. Kristin holds a B.A. in sociology from Augsburg College and an M.A. in sociology from the University of Manitoba. Kristin is passionate about the arts, preserving wild places, sustainability, travel, and politics.

• Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord! (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Jack Forinash

Organizational Development Obsessive (New Cuyama, CA)



Jack Forinash is an organizational development obsessive found most often in rural towns, bringing empathy and consideration to the practice of applied arts, architecture, and good old-fashioned fun. He's a program director, spreadsheet enthusiast, technical assistant, relationship builder, and a crew's first mate. Jack would like to talk to you about data and stars.

- The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Jess Gorman

Artist (Renville, MN)



Jess is an artist using social practice, visual art and immersive research to kickstart rural revival of community history and legacy. Her projects incorporate collaborators such as arts councils, businesses, historical societies, nonprofits, and local artists with goals of invigorating interest in rural stories, providing access to art in rural places and connecting modern communities with local

legacy and each other. She doesn't believe in strangers. Her work is often begun by enticing public participation with taboo talk, silly costumes, and pie.

- Bikes, Plants and Overlooked History: Artist-Led Processes for Local Pride and Identity (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Paul M. Gregersen

Artist and Marketing Director, Reif Center (Grand Rapids, MN)



Paul's areas of focus range from visual arts to copywriting, audio production, theatre arts, and music. His work has been featured by national and international media and garnered numerous awards. Gregersen has bachelor's degrees in mass communication and history, with graduate studies in social responsibility. He works as Marketing Director for the Reif Center in Grand Rapids and Theatre

Director for the historic Hibbing High School. Previously, he was the Marketing Director for the prestigious Kitchi Gammi Club in Duluth and Minneapolis Club.

- Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord! (Saturday 9:00–10:15 AM)

Kelly Gregory

Social Architect (Oakland, CA)



Kelly Gregory is a social architect based on the sea. Her practice is rooted in socially-engaged work: affordable housing projects, exhibitions, reimagining spaces of incarceration, democratic public space, design-build, and in-depth community-driven research. Her projects fold current communities and future solutions into functional, beautiful spaces for collaboration and engagement.

- The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Derek Hamm

Coordinator, Tallgrass Artist Residency (Matfield Green, KS)



Derek Hamm is a designer and educator living in Matfield Green, Kansas. He is an on-site coordinator for the Tallgrass Artist Residency, produces public projects with and about people and place, does client work for area organizations, co-manages The Bank Art Space, and teaches art and design at Tabor College in his hometown of Hillsboro.

- Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)

Ashley Hanson

Founder, PlaceBase Productions and Public Transformation (Granite Falls, MN)



Ashley Hanson is the founder of PlaceBase Productions, a theater company that creates original, site-specific musicals celebrating small town life and the founder of the Department of Public Transformation, an artist-led organization that collaborates with local leaders in rural areas to develop creative strategies for community connection and civic participation. She is the Director of

the Small Town City Artist in Residence program and The YES! House—a radically welcoming creative community gathering space—in Granite Falls, MN. She was recently named a 2018 Obama Foundation Fellow and a 2019 Bush Fellow for her work with rural communities. She spends most of her time on the road visiting with people in rural places and believes wholeheartedly in the power of play and exclamation points!

- WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)

Ayumi Hori-Shafer

Co-founder, DanceBARN Collective (Minneapolis, MN)



Ayumi Hori-Shafer is an educator, choreographer, dancer, and co-founder of DanceBARN Collective. New to the Twin Cities, Ayumi and her husband relocated from Oregon after she earned her MFA in Dance at the University of Oregon (2013). She completed her thesis research on the idea of play and creativity being effectively integrated into a curriculum in dance in higher education. Prior to

her arrival at the UO, Ayumi extensively trained in modern dance in the city of San Francisco, and earned a BA in Dance from San Francisco State University (2009). Ayumi has over 10 years of experience teaching in studios and schools that offer classes for both recreational and professional dancers. In building DanceBARN, Ayumi dreams of supporting all artists and creating an environment that encourages collaborative projects.

- Bringing Dance to Your Rural Community: Starting a Dialogue (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)
- Pre-plenary performance (Friday, 1:30 PM)

PRESENTER BIOS

Jamie Horter

Rural advocate, small town artist and community coach (Lyons, NE)



Jamie Horter is a rural advocate, small town artist, and community coach based out of Lyons, NE (pop. 850). She uses art to create opportunities for everyday citizens to become more engaged in the conversations and decisions impacting their communities. Her site-specific projects are interdisciplinary, intergenerational, inclusive, and invite community collaborators. Learn more at

www.jamiehorter.xyz.

- New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM–12:30 PM)

Annie Humphrey

Native American Music Awards 2018 Artist of the Year (Deer River, MN)



Growing up on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota, Annie lived in a home filled with voices made of thunder and nothing could stop it. Her parents were brilliant people individually. Her father, a singer and musician and her mother an artist and poet. Together they made sadness. Each of her parents taught Annie the beautiful things they knew. They showed her

that she carried their gifts in her hands too. This is how creating art and music came about for her. This is what saved her. This is how she lives now. Annie has 4 children and 2 grandsons. She has a handsome, Indian, horseman husband. They inspire her spirit and her art.

- Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday, 9:00–10:30 AM)
- Pre-plenary performance (Friday, 9:00 AM)

Em Johnson

Executive Director, Blue Sky Center (New Cuyama, CA)



Em joined is the Executive Director of Blue Sky Center, a rural economic development hub in the Cuyama Valley in California. She envisions building capacity in the Cuyama communities through creative placemaking and grassroots entrepreneurial empowerment. Her role at Blue Sky Center has led to a focus on developing Blue Sky's business plan through impact investment strategies.

Em holds an M.B.A. in Social Entrepreneurship and Strategic Leadership from Antioch University in Santa Barbara, CA, and a B.A. in Arts Administration from Drury University.

- Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector (Friday, 1:30–3:15 PM)

Molly Johnston

Co-Founder, DanceBARN Collective (Battle Lake, MN)



Molly Johnston is a dancer, teacher, choreographer, screendancer, and co-founder of DanceBARN Collective. Her roots lie in Minnesota, but dance has taken her from the land of 10,000 lakes to Philadelphia, PA (BFA, University of the Arts), Eugene, OR (MFA, University of Oregon) and back to Minnesota where she worked as Zenon Dance Company and School's school coordinator before

moving to rural Minnesota to pursue her passion for creating dance in rural communities. Molly resides on Silver Lake in Battle Lake, MN with her husband and son and is excited about continuing the collective effort of creating professionally charged dance making to the community she loves and spreading the idea that dance can be a language that connects rural communities.

- Bringing Dance to Your Rural Community: Starting a Dialogue (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)
- Pre-plenary performance (Friday, 1:30 PM)

Mary Jones

Artist (Indianola, IA)



Mary Jones makes mixed media artworks about walking. For 15 years, she was Professor of Art & Design at Grand View University in Des Moines, where she taught courses in printmaking, book arts, and graphic design. Prior to teaching, she worked as an illustrator with work published by The Chicago Tribune, Playboy Magazine, and the Philadelphia Enquirer, among others. She has work in the

Linda Lee Alter Collection of Women in the Arts at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, and in the State Museum of Illinois in both Chicago and Springfield. She has been an artist in residence at the Ragdale Foundation and at Anchor Graphics, Chicago. She is a 2018–19 Iowa Arts Council Fellow.

- Topophilia: Mapping a Sense of Belonging (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Linda Jurek

Executive Director, Visit Cook County (Grand Marais, MN)



Linda Jurek is a Grand Marais native. After spending 30 years down south (Duluth), she returned to Cook County MN in 2013 and assumed her role as Executive Director of Visit Cook County. After attending the Blandin Leadership program in early 2014, a focus on the art economy was launched. She has been involved with the Cook County Creative Economy Collaborative since its

inception and is pleased to help share the story at the summit.

- Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority and Creative Economy Collaborative (Saturday, 9:00–10:15 AM)

Anne Katz

Executive Director, Arts Wisconsin (Madison, WI)



Anne Katz is executive director of Arts Wisconsin, whose mission is to nurture, serve, promote, and speak up for the arts in Wisconsin and all of its communities. She guides Arts Wisconsin's programs and activities, serves Wisconsin's diverse and ever-expanding creative community, and advocates and builds partnerships in the public and private sectors for the arts and creative industries on the local level. Anne was an Arts Administration Fellow at the National Endowment for the Arts in 1988, and was a member of the 2014–2015 class of National Arts Strategies' Chief Executive Program. Under Anne's leadership, Arts Wisconsin received the 2004 Governor's Award in Support of the Arts from the Wisconsin Foundation for the Arts. Anne serves on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Public Radio Association, Leadership Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Downtown Action Council.

- A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy (Saturday, 9:00–10:15 AM)

Amoke Kubat

Artist (Minneapolis, MN)



Amoke Kubat is a multi-disciplined artist who uses writing to speak truth to power and hold a position of wellness in an America sick with inequalities and inequities. "Missing Mama: My Story of Loss, Sorrow and Healing" is her self-published memoir. "Angry Black Woman & Well Intentioned White Girl" is her first play. In June, she completed her solo piece, "Paradise: No People Allowed, a Creation Story from a non-human perspective. Amoke is a Pillsbury House NAKED STAGES fellow and is working on her second play, "Old Good Kat & Old Good Kit Kat." Amoke created YO MAMA and the Art of Mothering Workshops, which support the work and services of mamas who are also artists, activists and healers. YO MAMA is bringing Mother Wit to the discussions about Climate Change. Amoke is reclaiming an African Indigenous lens that informs Black peoples' historical and complicated relationship with water in the United States.

- Angry Black Women & Well-Intentioned White Girls: A Conversation Space on Race in Rural and Other Communities (Friday 3:45–5:00 PM)

Spence Kroll

Architect (Portland, OR)



Spence Kroll is an architect based in Portland, Oregon, where he has worked in the design-build industry for several years. Spence heads Bowline Studio, a practice that focuses on thoughtfully-scaled live and work spaces, utilitarian installations, and functional landscape design. This manifests itself in projects that range from new single family residences, additions, remodels, A.D.U.'s and small commercial tenant improvement work. Spence is inspired by latent energies, minimal construction footprints and the elimination of lawns. He believes in front porches, wild gardens, and not going to bed angry. Spence and his husband live in the Columbia Slough Wetlands with their dog Bruce.

- The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Corbin LaMont

Participatory Designer and Creative Director (Corvallis, OR)



Corbin LaMont is a participatory designer, creative director and social practice artist who creates unique methods of community engagement as a way of connecting people to their places. With a background in design education and systems thinking, she takes on different roles to make publications, site specific works, and moments of introspection. She founded her studio, Office of Virtue, in 2012 with the belief that behind everything there is a truth, a merit, a fundamental worth. Her client based work develops visual communication for everyone from international brands and agencies to independent entrepreneurs. In the last two years she has published thirteen issues of The Changing Times, a newspaper from many places that accumulates her practice into a co-created print piece with her community of research.

- The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Nevada Littlewolf

Political Director, Women Winning (Minneapolis, MN)



A member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Nevada has over 20 years of experience working across sectors of the arts, community, government, non-profit, philanthropy and business. She was elected to the Virginia, MN City Council from 2008–2018. Nevada is an experienced leader who works for equitable systemic change. She serves on the boards of The Women's Foundation of Minnesota, ClearWay MN and Minnesota Urban Debate League. She has an AA Degree from Mesabi Range College, BFA from the University of Minnesota Duluth and is a Graduate Student at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Nevada is a 2016 Bush Fellow.

- New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM–12:30 PM)

John Salgado Maldonado

Social Activist, Percussionist and Photographer (Willmar, MN)



John is a social activist, percussionist, and photographer, interested in using these artistic expressions to contribute to social realities and to provide community awareness. He has a background in Occupational Therapy applied to empowering indigenous/tribal communities through social projects, and a Master degree in Strategic Consulting. Currently, John is an International Project Advisor for social innovation projects, working with universities from Canada, Chile, and Brazil. He is also a member of the Human Rights Commission in the City of Willmar, MN, and the former Director of the NGO "Oro Negro" (Chile), for afro-descendent social development, cultural/artistic revival, and their ethnic legal recognition. John is a firm believer that arts are there to make sense of life and community.

- Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

PRESENTER BIOS

George Marks

Director, NUNU Arts and Culture Collective (Arnaudville, LA)



George Marks is an award-winning contemporary visual artist and social sculptor living and working in the small rural town of Arnaudville, Louisiana. He attended Louisiana State University, where he received a Bachelor's degree in fine art with an emphasis on painting and drawing. Marks is a seminal member and outspoken advocate of Louisiana's culture and arts scene, residing as president and founder of numerous organizations such as the NUNU Arts and Culture Collective and Le Semaine De Francophonie, a five-day summit that helps to build French partnerships between Louisiana's culture and the francophone world. A reflection of his passion for the French community in and out of Louisiana, Mark's work revolves around the history and culture of southwest Louisiana, delving into topics such as slavery, human rights and cultural sustainability. From clothing and design to social sculpting, his work can be seen in corporate and private collections around the globe. Marks is an experienced state and local level arts advocate, having served on the boards of the Louisiana State Arts Council and Louisiana Partnership for the Arts.

• Facing Resistance, Bridging Differences (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Sonja Merrild

Director of Grants, Blandin Foundation (Grand Rapids, MN)



Sonja leads Blandin Foundation's work to fund Minnesota organizations, which seek to grow healthy and vibrant rural communities, and its Education Grants scholarship program, available to graduates of Itasca area high schools. Sonja considers herself a rural advocate and grew up in a small town of 2,000 people in rural Denmark. After completing her education, she moved to Wyoming—where she engaged in nonprofit leadership, foundation leadership, and volunteer and consulting opportunities to advance the lives of rural residents. Sonja grew up in a home full of love of the arts, and has dabbled in music, writing and visual arts, but ultimately followed in her mother's footsteps as an arts appreciator and advocate for community-based arts opportunities. She has been part of the Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission since 2014 and is currently serving as Chair.

• Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday 9:00-10:30 AM)
• Arts & Culture Development Led by City Government? Yes, it's Possible. (Saturday 9:00-10:15 AM)

Zoe Minikes

Social Practice Artist and Designer (Detroit, MI)



Zoe is a social practice artist and designer based in Detroit, Michigan. For ten years, she has worked in creative community engagement, primarily focusing on the principles of co-creation and improvisation. She loves breaking bread with neighbors, strangers, and friends as a catalyst for conversation and change work. She is an experienced facilitator, a spirited bowler, and a loving friend.

• The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Miranda Moen

Architectural Designer (Austin, MN)



Miranda Moen (she/her) is an architectural designer driven to serve rural communities through cultural heritage research, innovative place-based and attainable architecture and creative projects that ignite economic development. Her passion stems from growing up in the far southeast corner of Minnesota at the intersection of the Mississippi River and the Iowa border. She graduated from Iowa State University with her Master of Architecture and has since focused her energy on creating a rural architectural practice serving the unique needs of the Upper Midwest. She works to spread the power of creative partnerships through her writing for regional and national architecture journals and websites, encouraging others to develop support for their rural communities.

• It Takes a Village: Innovative Rural Housing Partnerships (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Greg Mueller

Artist (Lutsen, MN)



Greg Mueller (BS Studio Art, St. John's University; MFA Montana State University School of Art) also studied at the Massachusetts College of Art, and worked as a foundry apprentice to sculptor Paul Granlund at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota where he recently served as a resident sculptor in the Granlund Studio. Mueller has held academic professorships including the Bowling Green State University School of Art in Ohio and the Converse College School of the Arts in South Carolina. Mueller Studio is located on Lake Superior's North Shore in Lutsen, Minnesota. His national exhibition record and public art commissions can be seen in detail at www.gregmueller.com.

• Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority and Creative Economy Collaborative (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Erika Nelson

Artist and Educator (Lucas, KS)



Erika Nelson is an independent artist and educator, exploring contemporary art forms in the public realm. While living in a vehicle for two years, she explored the nooks and crannies of the U.S. seeking out the odd and unusual, gathering stories of people who build Outsider Art Environments, as well as Roadside Vernacular Architecture known as World's Largest Things. She developed her own traveling roadside attraction and museum featuring The World's Largest Collection of the World's Smallest Versions of the World's Largest Things. She now serves as the Garden of Eden's Cultural Resources Director, a field representative for the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission, a Humanities Kansas speaker, and visionary art site conservator. Her artwork manifests itself in a series of interesting, innovative, engaging public art projects that incorporate Art into the Everyman's everyday experience.

• Spectacular Failures: How Changing The Way You Think About Failure Can Breathe New Life Into Artistic Processes. (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Shel Neymark

Artist (Embudo, NM)



Born and raised near Oak Park, Illinois, as a teenager Shel often rode his bike to see and sketch the many Frank Lloyd Wright homes in the area. He majored in ceramics in art school at Washington University in St. Louis, graduated in 1974 and began work as a full time artist. Shel has lived in Northern New Mexico since 1976. He makes commissioned work for indoor and outdoor spaces, sculpture, lighting,

pottery, tiles and murals. He's done commissions throughout the country. In addition to making art, Shel advocates for rural libraries statewide and is a long time board member at his local library. He plays jazz violin and is an avid hiker. He finds inspiration on his daily walks along the Rio Grande.

- New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM-12:30 PM)

Veronica O'Hern

Grants Services and Artist Programs Manager, Iowa Arts Council (Des Moines, IA)



Veronica O'Hern serves as Grant Services and Artist Programs Manager with the Iowa Arts Council. Veronica is an advocate for recognizing the role Iowa artists play in sustaining creative, vibrant communities. She works to provide Iowa's arts sector with the tools and resources they need to thrive and to communicate their contributions to the economic and social well-being of the state. In addition

to overseeing grantmaking programs at the Iowa Arts Council, she created the Artist Fellowship program, and coordinates agency professional development and exhibit programs. Veronica is a visual artist specializing in child rearing and Victorian Hair Art. She lives in rural Iowa where she serves on the Friends of Warren County Conservation Board, raises chickens and bees, and dabbles in foraging. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography and Imaging with a minor in Spanish from New York University.

- A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Sarina Otaibi

Rural Programs Manager, Rethos (Saint Paul, MN)



Sarina Otaibi is the Rural Programs Manager for Rethos: Places Reimagined. With her passion for rural communities, she provides program support to Minnesota Main Street Communities and launched Artists on Main Street in partnership with Springboard for the Arts to establish an arts-based approach to address downtown challenges and opportunities. Sarina serves as a board member for two

national arts and cultural organizations based in Minnesota, Springboard for the Arts and Art of the Rural. In her community of Granite Falls, she is a founding member and the board chair of a local cooperative, Bluenose Gopher Public House, and spends any of her extra time on rehabbing her historic church building. Sarina holds a master's degree in historic preservation from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a B.B.A. in marketing from Stetson University in Florida.

- Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Ruth Pszwaro

Artistic Director, Grand Marais Art Colony (Grand Marais, MN)



Ruth Pszwaro holds an MA in theology and art with an emphasis on poetry and mixed media. For the past five years she has crafted work space and professional resources for artists in her role as the Artistic Director at the Grand Marais Art Colony. She is the current chair of the Grand Marais Creative Economy Collaborative, a group that includes government officials, artists, and arts

organizations, working to support those whose livelihood is in the arts and culture sector.

- Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority and Creative Economy Collaborative (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Saara Myrene Raappana

Writer, Teacher and Editor (Marshall, MN)



Saara Myrene Raappana is a writer, teacher, editor, and communities member living in SW Minnesota. She was born and grew to her full height in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Respected third parties have published two chapbooks (Milk Tooth, Levee, Fever and A Story of America Goes Walking) and many poems-worth of her work in journals, anthologies and literarily-inclined

websites. She has recently felt a stitch in her heart to write fiction, and the good taxpayers of MN have seen fit to fund this notion with a 2019 Artist Initiative grant. For more info, go to saaramyrene.com.

- WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

Andrew Ranville

Director, Rabbit Island Foundation (Calumet, MI)



Andrew received his MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2008 and has been a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society since 2016. Andrew's installations, sculptures, architecture, photographs and films underline research that includes community and fieldwork, while focusing on local ecological challenges and resilient design. In 2016 Andrew represented the United States

during the 5th Moscow International Biennale for Young Art with his installation East is West and West is East, which was also exhibited in Iceland in 2017. His recent research and projects include a collaboration with the crees Foundation in Manu Biosphere of the Peruvian Amazon and an art and conservation exhibition on Isla del Coco in the Pacific as a TBA21 Academy Fellow. He is the Director of the Rabbit Island Foundation, an international arts and research residency on a wilderness island in Lake Superior off the coast of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula.

- Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

PRESENTER BIOS

Carolyn Runck

Strategist & Creative (Lamberton, MN)



Carolyn is a native Minnesotan, recently returned from living and working in Guangzhou, China. She uses a variety of media including collage, painting and photography to explore themes of place, language and belonging. Her work has been shown throughout Minnesota, and most recently she led a workshop on Environmental Art and Design.

Carolyn received her Bachelor's degree in Studio Art

from the University of Northwestern, St. Paul.

- Bikes, Plants and Overlooked History: Artist-Led Processes for Local Pride and Identity (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Frank Sander

Documentary Filmmaker (Knife River, MN)



Frank Sander is a documentary filmmaker, founder, creator and builder of the Little Knife Sanctuary Artists Residency in rural Duluth Township. The residency's mission is to bring people together to create in a natural environment and to preserve the land for posterity. Sander studied fine art and architecture in Germany, and emigrated to Minnesota in 1979, first settling in

Minneapolis and then Duluth. For the past 12 years he has made a home along the northshore of Lake Superior in Knife River with his partner Patricia Canelake. He created The Little Knife Sanctuary Artist Residency whose mission is to bring people together to create in nature. The sanctuary will be preserved as a land trust for future generations of artists, filmmakers and writers.

- Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

Dana Sikkila

Executive Director, 410 Project Community Art Space (Mankato, MN)



Dana Sikkila received her Master of Arts in Printmaking as well as her Non Profit Leadership Certificate from Minnesota State University, Mankato. At just 33 years old, Sikkila has been named as one of the most well-known creative leaders of Southern Minnesota, developing and executing numerous grassroots cultural project and programs throughout the state. Still based in Mankato,

she concentrates on her studio practice as well as being Executive Director of the 410 Project Community Art Space, as well as holding studio art and education adjunct professor positions at Minnesota State University, Mankato. You can find Sikkila's name leading and directing independent projects such as Project Bike and M.A.C. Public Access Program. Since 2014 Sikkila has served as a board member for the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, as well as a Grant Review Panelist, and Artistic Evaluator for the Minnesota State Arts Board.

- Bikes, Plants and Overlooked History: Artist-Led Processes for Local Pride and Identity (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Esmeralda Hernandez Simental

Videographer and Editor (Hanley Falls, MN)



Esmeralda Hernandez Simental is a videographer and editor living in Hanley Falls, MN. She currently works for Pioneer Public Television in the Communications department, but also specializes in social media videos. She is a DACA recipient. Esmeralda enjoys making videos for fun in her free time as well as doing photography and playing drums when she has a chance. The first video

she uploaded to YouTube has over 151,000+ views and counting as the video is still being played and enjoyed by many.

- WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

Hilary Smith

Development Officer, Minnesota Public Radio (Saint Paul, MN)



Hilary Smith has been an arts fundraiser for more than a dozen years. She currently works for Minnesota Public Radio as a development officer in institutional giving with a portfolio including the Minnesota Arts and Culture Heritage Fund Legacy Amendment plus numerous regional funders. She is also an active performing arts volunteer.

- Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord! (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Sheila Smith

Executive Director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (Saint Paul, MN)



Sheila M. Smith is the Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, artsMN.org, which strengthens our cultural community by achieving arts friendly policy in Minnesota. As Chair of Creative Minnesota, CreativeMN.org, she produces important research about the arts and cultural community for education, policy making, and advocacy. She led the arts community into

the successful 2008 statewide "Legacy" ballot campaign which created 25 years of dedicated funding for the arts through a constitutional amendment. She also served on the Board of the 2012 Minnesota United campaign, protecting the rights of all Minnesotans to marry, and served as staff in the Minnesota Senate. With a BA in Shakespeare and graduate degree from St. Mary's in Arts Administration she teaches at the University of Minnesota about the intersection of arts and politics. In her spare time she is a painter, wood carver and vernacular architect. mnaartists.org/sheila-smith @SheWhoTravels

- A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Mary Somnis

Executive Director, Cook County/Grand Marais EDA and Creative Economy Collaborative (Grand Marais, MN)



Mary Somnis came to northeastern Minnesota in 1979 to work on the Gunflint Trail and the North Shore. She was employed as Executive Director of the Lutsen-Tofte Tourism Association and as Tourism Director for the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board. Mary managed the Wild North marketing campaign, provided technical support to tourism businesses and organizations and administered the Culture and Tourism Grant Program. Mary is now the Executive Director of the Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority (EDA). She is a member of and provides administrative support to the Cook County Creative Economy Collaborative (CEC). The CEC's mission is accelerating the development of Arts and Culture as a key prosperity driver contributing to the social and economic vitality of Cook County.

- Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority and Creative Economy Collaborative (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Siobhan Spain

Director, Mainframe Studios (Des Moines, IA)



Siobhan grew up on a 100-acre farm in Iowa as the youngest of seven who are industrious makers, builders, designers and dreamers. Seeing a startling gap in the family system, she forfeited an art degree for one in business, directing her focus on advocating for the careers of individual artists. Siobhan is director of Mainframe Studios, which is slated to be the largest nonprofit studio building in the nation.

She has served in advisory roles for Center for Contemporary Arts Santa Fe, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines Public Art Foundation, Los Angeles Times' foundation, and Women, Food & Agriculture Network. She was an opening presenter at Walton Family Foundation's 2018 Heartland Summit and you can listen to her talk about art and community in the first interview of "900Views" podcast.

- Building a Creative Community: Letting Artists Lead (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Pamela Standing

Executive Director, Minnesota Indigenous Business Alliance (Saint Paul, MN)



Pamela Standing left a 16-year international business career in 1991 to return home and immerse herself in grassroots organizing and rural tribal community wealth building. It was during this time she was able to draw upon her experiences from business and international travel to move into sustainable organizational development. Standing specializes in culturally-based business, and strategic

planning. Her experience has shown her that Indigenous run organizations and businesses can be healthy, enjoy financial growth, and succeed within the dominant business system without compromising cultural values. She endeavors to close the disparity gap through cooperative work, collaboration and forming partnerships. Standing holds a BA in Education and an MBA in International Business. She is a citizen of Cherokee Nation.

- Creating a Statewide Native Buying and Marketing Cooperative (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Ben Strand

Program Manager, Winona Main Street (Winona, MN)



Ben Strand, Main Street Program Manager for Winona, MN, has lived in Winona since 2012 when he started his freshman year at Winona State University studying Journalism and English Writing. While in school he worked at the local paper for three years and also spent a year working at the Pump House Regional Arts Center in La Crosse, WI. He started getting involved in Winona's

arts and culture community by hosting monthly open-mic poetry events in 2014 and volunteering for various music and arts festivals in town. During his last year of school he started a multi-media production company (Treedome Productions) with a group of friends after winning a "Shark Tank" style competition put on by Winona State. Treedome was a recipient of an Artist on Main Street grant in 2018, which led to the birth of "Shut Down Third Street—An Arts and Culture Block Party" in Downtown Winona. Ben is extremely passionate about the Winona community and looks forward to contributing to the growth of the downtown area in the coming years, as a lot of important projects are in progress that will have drastic and positive impacts on the community.

- Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45-5:00 PM)

Adia Morris Swanger

Professional Development and Operations Coordinator, Springboard for the Arts (Saint Paul, MN)



Adia Morris Swanger is Professional Development and Operations Coordinator at Springboard for the Arts, where she oversees the Artist Career Consultant roster, teaches business skills workshops for artists, and connects artists to funding opportunities with the Incubator Fiscal Sponsorship program. Adia is also a freelance theatre artist, writer, and educator based in

St. Paul, MN. She also appears on Twin Cities Public Television's Almanac and was the host of TPT's TV Takeover for Seasons 1 and 2.

- Creative Marketing Strategies and Tools: A Smörgåsbord! (Saturday 9:00-10:15 AM)

Carl Atiya Swanson

Associate Director, Springboard for the Arts (Saint Paul, MN)



Carl Atiya Swanson is the Associate Director for Springboard for the Arts. He manages Creative Exchange, a national platform sharing stories of artists with impact and toolkits for change. Carl is a theatermaker and writer of essays and poetry, and has served on the boards of the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network—Twin Cities, and Dissonance, which advocates for health and

wellness in creativity. He holds a BA in Studio Art from the University of Southern California and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas. www.carlatiyaswanson.com.

- A Conversation About Rural Arts Advocacy (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

PRESENTER BIOS

Courtney Bergey Swanson

Director of Community Engagement, CEDA (Rochester, MN)



Courtney Bergey Swanson (she/her) is a community development consultant and artist driven by the promise of rural America. She grew up on a farm just south of Lanesboro, MN, using years of exploring pastures, building tree houses, and feeding baby calves to fuel her penchant for curiosity and creative problem solving.

Courtney serves as Director of Community Engagement for Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), a nonprofit based in southeast Minnesota that provides innovative community development consulting to small towns and rural counties. Courtney also serves on the Board of Directors for four organizations: Mainspring Arts & Cultural Center (Caledonia, MN), Listos Dual-Immersion Preschool (Rochester, MN), Threshold Arts (Rochester, MN), and the Department of Public Transformation (nationwide, but based in rural MN). For Courtney, this work is about strengthening economies, empowering citizens, inciting radical joy, and sparking positive change. She lives in Rochester, MN and spends any spare moment over her stove, cooking up something nourishing for friends and family.

• It Takes a Village: Innovative Rural Housing Partnerships (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Emily Fuerste Swanson

Oldenburg Arts and Cultural Community (Carlton, MN)



Emily served as an executive in several community development and advocacy positions throughout her 40+ year career, from a community clinics, to a domestic violence shelter to an affordable housing organization to several large health systems. She also ran a consulting organization that served arts, community development, housing and healthcare organizations. She holds a BA,

MPH and MBA; and now runs Oldenburg Arts and Cultural Community with her husband, Glenn, and dotes on three grandchildren.

• Facing Resistance, Bridging Differences (Saturday, 9:00–10:15 AM)

Sarah Swedburg

Director, Willmar Main Street (Willmar, MN)



Sarah Swedburg is the Director of the Willmar Main Street program in Southwest Minnesota. This is her first year with a Main Street program, and comes from a background in human geography and City Planning, with a Bachelor's Degree in Geography from Bemidji State University. During post-colonial land rights research in rural Kenya, she found a love for working

with people and sharing their stories. Her favorite aspect running Willmar Main Street is capturing the unique community and helping locals realize and celebrate their numerous existing assets.

• Artists on Main Street: A Model for Creative Community Development (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Moira Villiard

Arts and Cultural Program Coordinator, American Indian Community Housing Organization (Duluth, MN)



Moira Villiard is an independent traditional artist, activist, muralist, speaker, writer, designer and filmmaker who, by some feat of pluralism, hopes to better our community through these niches. Villiard grew up on the Fond du Lac reservation in Cloquet, Minnesota and is an Ojibwe and Delaware Lenape descendent. She is a full-time Arts & Cultural Program Coordinator at the American Indian

Community Housing Organization (AICHO). She currently serves as a freelance writer, creative/community consultant, editor and graphic designer, as well as a member of the Executive Board of the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, a member of the Bush Foundation Change Network, and co-director of the Twin Ports-based variety show, A Goody Night. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Communicating Arts with a minor in Global Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Superior in 2016. Moira Villiard was recently awarded a 2019 Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board to paint a series of portraits related to human rights. She is also a recipient of the 2019 Emerging Artist Project grant from Forecast Public Art to design 4 community street murals in Duluth.

• Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday, 9:00–10:30 AM)

Sarah Waddle

Program Manager, North House Folk School (Grand Marais, MN)



Sarah Waddle is a Program Manager at North House Folk School in Grand Marais, Minnesota. She manages the Artisan Development Program, a two-year residency for emerging traditional craft artisans as well as a 10-month internship program, community programs, and volunteers at North House. In her work with the Artisan Development Program she is excited to center the goals

of craftspeople as they develop their creative voice, teaching skills, and professional direction.

• Welcome to this Place: Rural Artist Retreats and Residencies (Friday, 11:00 AM–12:15 PM)

Mary Welcome

Multidisciplinary Cultural Worker (Palouse, WA)



Mary Welcome is a multidisciplinary cultural worker collaborating with complex and often under-represented rural communities. As an artist-activist, her projects are rooted in community engagement and the development of intersectional programming to address hyper-local issues of equity, cultural advocacy, inclusivity, visibility, and imagination. She collaborates with local schools, city

councils, civic groups, youth, summer camps, libraries, neighbors, and friends to build cooperative environments that encourage civic engagement, radical education, and community progress. She believes in small towns, long winters, optimists, parades, and talking about feelings.

• The After Hours Hours (or Why My Bar Tab is a Valid Expense for Reimbursement) (Friday, 3:45–5:00 PM)

Delina White

Anishinaabe Fashion Designer and Beadwork Artist (Onigum, MN)



Delina White, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, is a Native Apparel Designer and Beadwork Artist specializing in traditional Woodland floral designs of Great Lakes Nations. In her art, Delina works with natural materials prized by the original people of this continent; mixing the traditional with contemporary, combining richly textured fabrics with

indigenous items used in trade with the Europeans in the 18th & 19th centuries. For more information and photos of Delina's art work, please check out her Gallery on the website: www.iamanishinaabe.com.

- Creative People Power in the Northwoods (Friday, 9:00-10:30 AM)

Cassie Williams

Poet and Writer (Marshall, MN)



Cassie J. Williams is a poet and writer born in Chicago, IL, raised in St. Paul, MN, and resides in Marshall, MN. She is an Academic Specialist for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Access Opportunity Success at Southwest Minnesota State University. She has published her work in literary journals, performed in slam competitions and presented at schools and events in conferences. As a wife

and mother of four children, Williams is currently sharing her journey of balancing (or not) being a writer and mother on Instagram under the name Poetess Unbound. Williams recently was awarded a Southwest Minnesota Arts Council Individual Artist grant and is currently working on her first collection of poetry.

- WE CAN! Working Towards Equity in Rural Communities through Female-Led Artistic Interventions and Creative Action (Friday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM)

Bryan Thao Worra

Lao Minnesotan Poet Laureate (Minneapolis, MN)



Bryan Thao Worra is the Lao Minnesotan Poet Laureate, and president of the international Science Fiction and Fantasy Poetry Association. Previously representing the nation of Laos during the 2012 Poetry Parnassus of the London Summer Games, he is the first Lao American to hold an NEA Fellowship in Literature (2009) and is a 2019 Joyce Award recipient. He is the author of 10+

books including the recently released "Before We Remember We Dream," (2019) from Sahtu Press. He recently presented at the Smithsonian Asian American Literature Festival in Washington DC demonstrating excerpts from the forthcoming Laomagination 45 exhibit. You can visit him online at www.thaoworra.com.

- Laomagination: Building An Inclusive Rural Refugee Arts Voice (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Thomas X

Hip Hop Artist (Red Lake Band Ojibwe)



Thomas X is an Anishinaabe Hip Hop Artist from the Red Lake Band Ojibwe. Co-founder of Rez Rap Records, Thomas incorporates reservation life-style, Native American awareness, and his personal life experiences through pure lyricism. Featured on VICE, Apple Music, and Noisey; he brings a unique style of rap music that ties in traditional hand drumming, Ojibwe language, and current issues and topics regarding the indigenous communities.

- New Voices/New Futures: Arts-Based Rural Youth Development (Saturday, 10:45 AM-12:30 PM)
- Pre-plenary performance (Saturday, 10:45 AM)

Renae Youngs

Director of Research and Evaluation, Minnesota State Arts Board (Saint Paul, MN)



Renae Youngs is Director of Research and Evaluation at the Minnesota State Arts Board. In that role, she works to document the impact of the arts across the state. Renae has worked as a research and evaluation consultant for institutions ranging from art museums to zoos, helping clients to clarify their goals, design effective programs and exhibitions, learn about their visitors or audiences,

and document the processes and outcomes of their work. Renae's professional interests include evaluation capacity building and the use and usability of evaluation findings: she advocates, to anyone who will listen, for making good use of good data. She is also active in professional service with the American Alliance of Museums and serves on the board of the Visitor Studies Association.

- More Than Just a Show: Power, Planning, and Impact (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

Ed Zabinski

Co-founder, Untapped, LLC (Grand Rapids, MN)



Ed has helped public, non-profit, and private-sector organizations with strategic planning, communications, business development, and change management. He has worked as a senior manager at Grand Rapids State Bank and UPM/Blandin Paper Company in Grand Rapids. Ed also worked for Congressman Jim Oberstar and the Boundary Waters Conservation Alliance early in his

career. Ed co-founded three companies: MotherLode North America, Zabinski Consulting, and Rapids Brewing Company. His consulting work includes the Blandin Community Leadership Program and the Blandin Leaders Partnering to End Poverty. Ed served on the Grand Rapids City Council from 2008-16, and on the boards of several organizations, including the Northland Foundation, Northspan, Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission, Range Association of Municipalities & Schools, and the Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority.

- Arts & Culture Development Led by City Government? Yes, it's Possible. (Saturday, 9:00-10:15 AM)

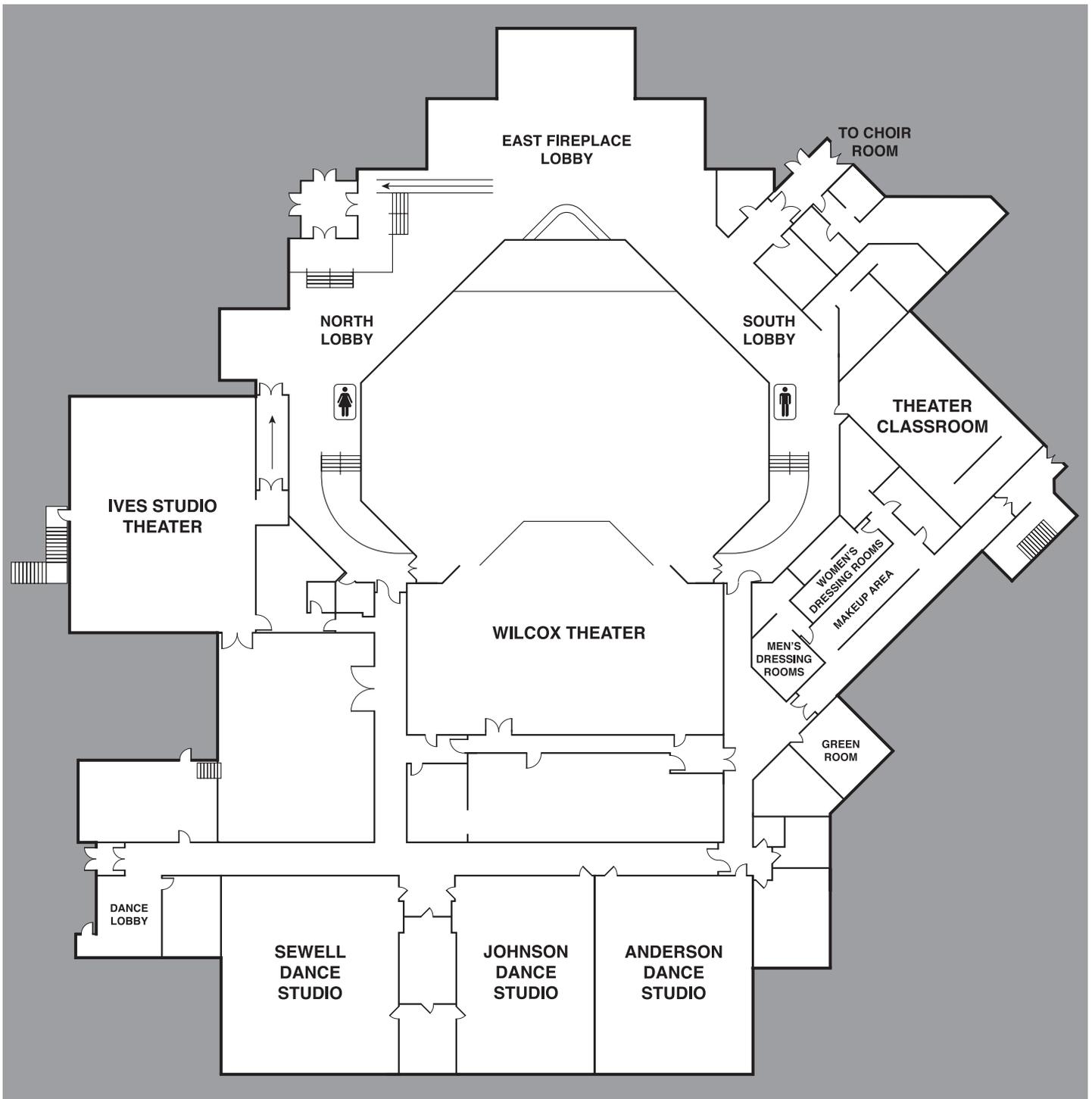
GRAND RAPIDS



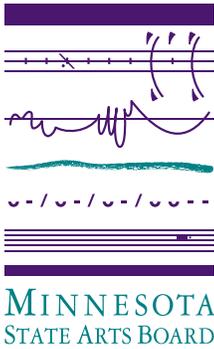
- ❶ Reif Performing Arts Center, 720 NW Conifer Dr
- ❷ MacRostie Art Center, 405 NW 1st Ave
- ❸ Old Central School, 10 NW 5th St
- ❹ Rapids Brewing Company, 214 N Pokegama Ave

- ❺ VFW Grand Rapids, 14 NW 3rd St
- ❻ Northern Community Radio (KAXE/KBXE), 260 NE 2nd St
- ❼ ICTV, 819 NE 4th St
- ❽ Old Kremer's Parking Lot

REIF PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



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This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Come for the Summit, Stay for the Adventure

Looking for an excuse to extend your stay? Check out the events happening this weekend!

Oct. 4th-5th: Vintage North Shop Hop: From Grand Rapids to Bovey, shop vintage stores and enjoy food, refreshments, special deals & prizes!

Oct. 5th: Feelin' Alright @ The Reif: Spend the evening with this entertaining Musical Variety show paying tribute to the cultural phenomenon of Woodstock.

Oct. 4th: Hobo Revival @ Klockow: Enjoy an evening of live music at Grand Rapids' first brewery!

Oct. 5th: MAC 2019 Studio Tour: Tour the studios of over a dozen area artists representing a wide range of mediums.

Oct. 5th: Rapids Brewing Co Octoberfest: Beer, pizza, and lederhosen! Who could ask for more.



Want more? Go to:
WWW.VISITGRANDRAPIDS.COM/CALENDAR/EVENTS