



**northern  
spark**

**2011 – 2016**

**GOLD  
MEDAL  
FLOUR**



Robin Garwood, *Wishing Well* <sup>MH</sup>

## Northern Spark 2011 – 2016

Northern Spark is the only all-night arts festival in the Midwest—a free, multidisciplinary, multi-venue, multiple partner, dusk-to-dawn event. On the 2nd Saturday of June, tens of thousands of people gather throughout the Twin Cities to explore the city's great cultural institutions, play in temporary installations in the streets, and enjoy experimental performances in green spaces and under bridges.

Over the past six years Northern Spark has become an eagerly anticipated event that contributes powerfully to the image of the Twin Cities as an active, vibrant community; a place that attracts and retains young talent; a region that loves participatory outdoor and cultural activities.

Northern Spark inspires connection and belonging. Northern Spark connects and mobilizes artists and communities around big ideas. In 2017, Northern Spark continues to explore the interconnected, long-term consequences of climate change, focusing on communities along the light rail Green Line between Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

The artists of Climate Chaos | Climate Rising and our partners inspire attendees to turn a sense of overwhelm into concrete actions anchored in a realistic and hopeful map for the future.

### Northern Spark 2017 Sponsors To-Date



THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION





Keri Pickett, Jason Takahashi, and Charlie Thayer, *Against the Grain* (left)  
Joshua McGarvey and Heckadecimal, *Ice Fall—Feel The Change* (right) <sup>DH</sup>

## Northern Lights.mn

Northern Spark is produced and presented by Northern Lights.mn

The mission of Northern Lights.mn is to support artists in the creation and presentation of art in the public sphere, focusing on innovative uses of technology to imagine new interactions between audience, artwork and place and explore expanded possibilities for civic engagement.



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 and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION





## Northern Spark 2011–2016 By the Numbers

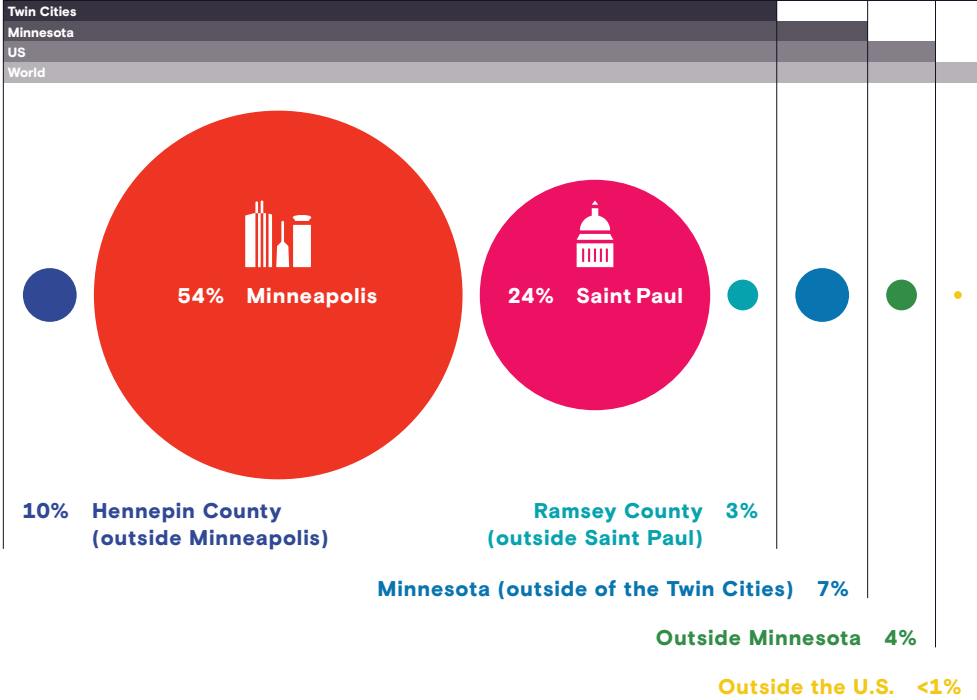
Artist Projects	537
Venues	120
Attendees	222,000
Artists	1,502
Organizational Partners	253
Sponsors	171
Media Impressions	242 million
Website visits	460,844
Unique website visitors	332,110
Website page views	1,154,272
Facebook page impressions	3,468,752
Mobile site access	84%
Print brochures	100,000

### In 2016

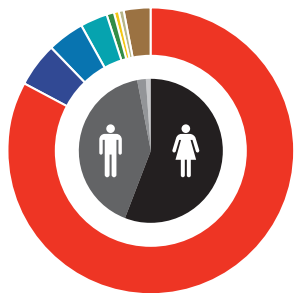
Artist Projects	43
Attendees	34,000
Website page views	185,206
Media impressions	29 million
Zones	1

# Northern Spark 2011–2016 Demographics

## Where do you live?

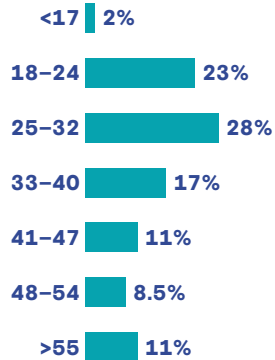


## With which group(s) do you self identify?

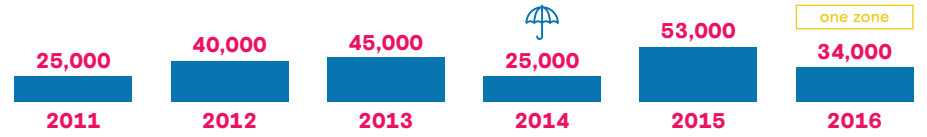


- 83% White
- 6% Asian
- 4% Latino
- 3% African-American
- 1.5% Native American
- <1% African
- <1% Southeast Asian
- 2.5% Other
- 58% Female
- 41% Male
- 2% Gender non-conforming
- 1% Transgender

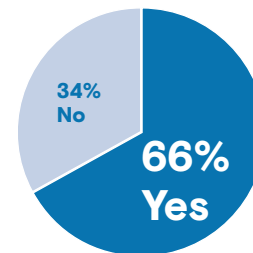
## Your age ... ?



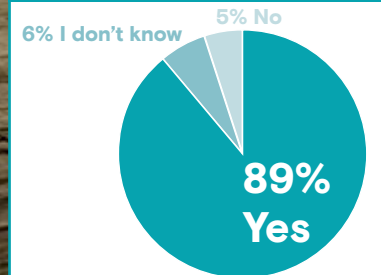
## Attendance



## Have you attended Northern Spark before?




## Are you planning to attend Northern Spark next year?



# 2016

“ This is one of Mpls’ most unique events that feature bikes and pedestrians! Wonderful Hollidazzle in summer!”





“ I thought having a theme knit the night together beautifully, and I loved experiencing many different projects and moments as variations on a theme that, taken together, helped me think more deeply about it. Northern Spark this year provoked far and away more reflecting and connecting than it has in past years for me. I also think that there is significant potential for art to powerfully impact the way that people think about climate change, and that this year’s festival was a beautiful example of that.”

“ Northern Spark is a weirdo contemporary arts event that goes all night. It’s free and its an incomparable cultural event, one that is unique globally just to MPLS. The festival has exposed me and the community to arts that are not only fun and participatory, but also engaging people who would not normally be open to progressive contemporary arts theories and practices. Plus, they had a howling wolf!”





“ Beautiful, absolutely stunning, the surroundings of the river, high arches of brick, the various light sources, all came together as one masterpiece to create the archaic, but very romantic feel. It was just dazzling, especially the sailboat and white flags. Awesome job mother nature!”



# 2015

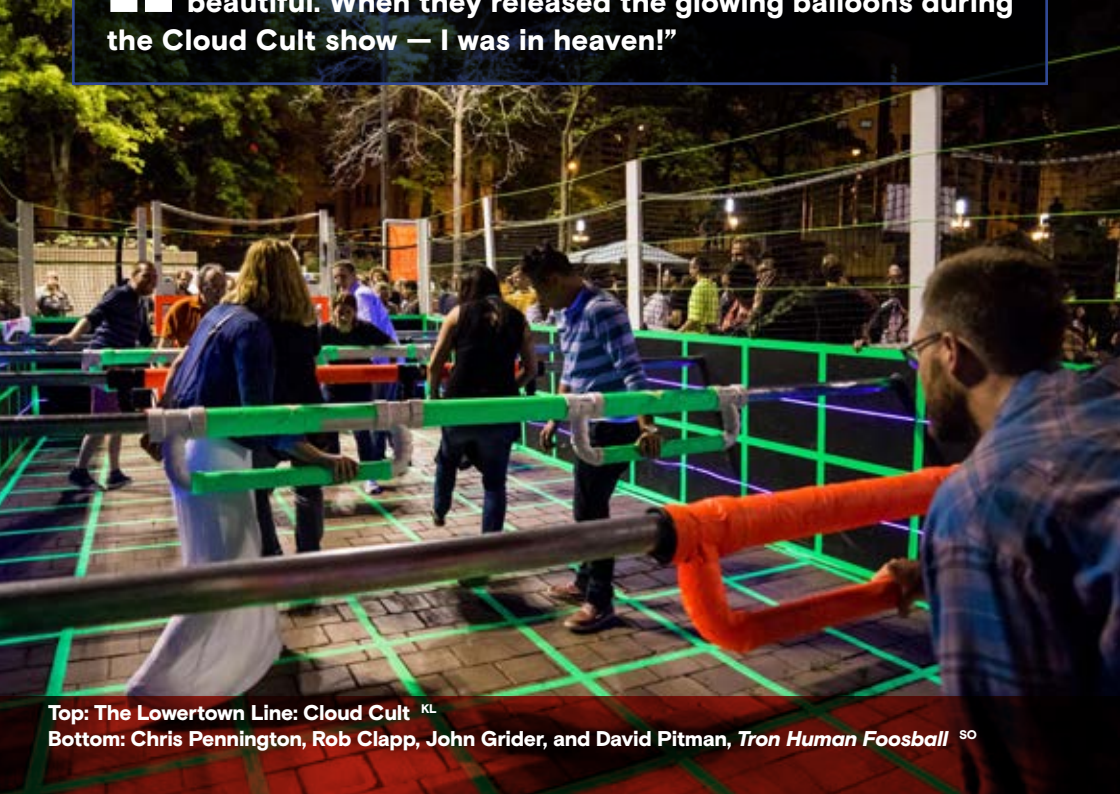


“ [My favorite project/experience was] Being part of a laid back sea of people feasting on unique, creative installments.”





“ The emotions that brought everyone together we’re beautiful. When they released the glowing balloons during the Cloud Cult show — I was in heaven!”



Top: The Lowertown Line: Cloud Cult <sup>KL</sup>  
Bottom: Chris Pennington, Rob Clapp, John Grider, and David Pitman, *Tron Human Foosball* <sup>SO</sup>



Kathy McTavish, *mill city requiem: for solo instrument & distance* <sup>IP</sup>



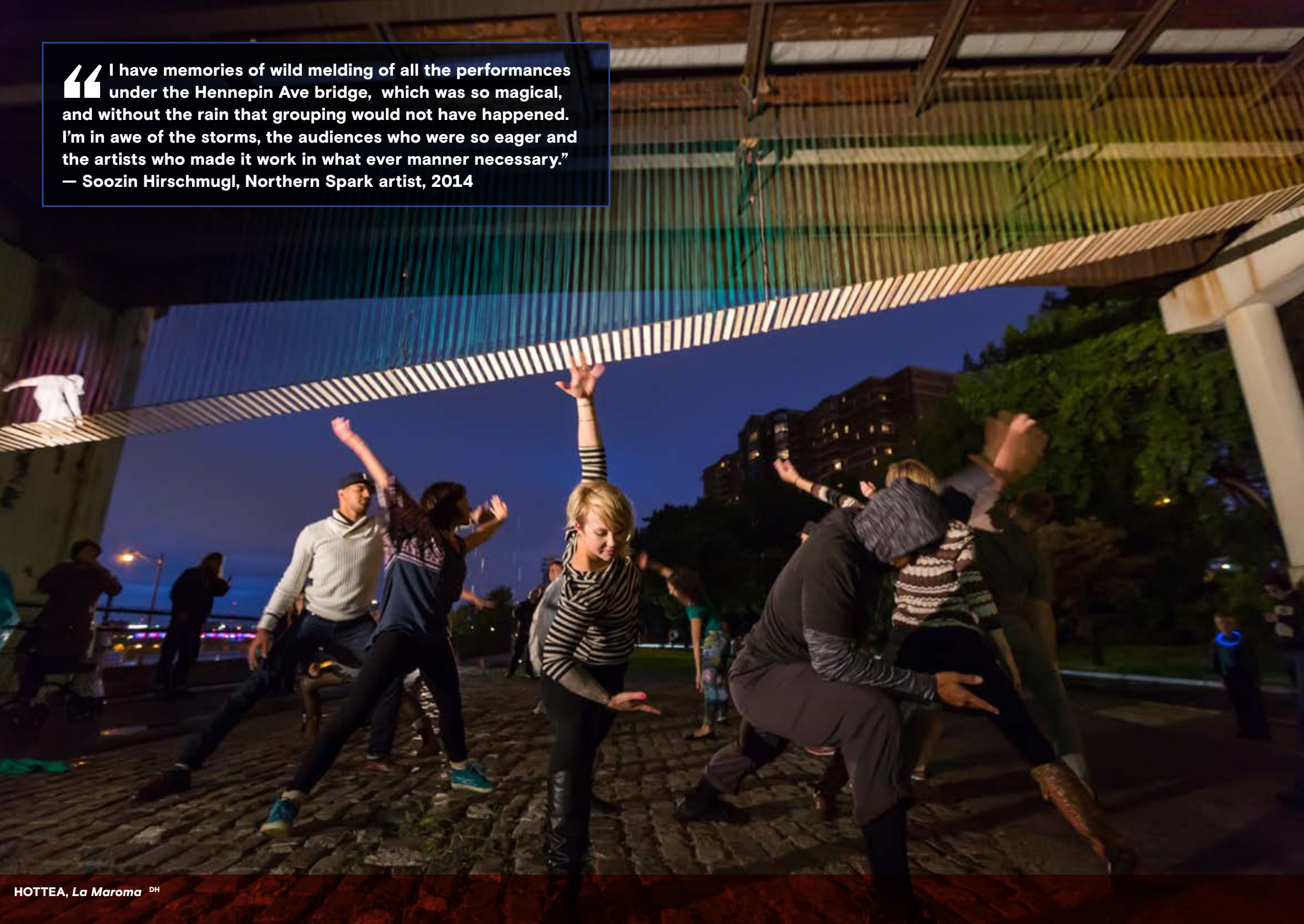
Niko Kubota, Jon Reynolds, and Micah Roth, *mini\_polis* <sup>KL</sup>

# 2014

“ Each year it becomes more and more obvious that Northern Spark is essential in our social, cultural life. It’s renewing connections, building pathways, opening spaces and revitalizing our collective self. And the magic happens only through, and out of tremendous work, energy and time devoted to it by everyone involved.”  
— Piotr Szyhalski, Northern Spark artist, 2014



“ I have memories of wild melding of all the performances under the Hennepin Ave bridge, which was so magical, and without the rain that grouping would not have happened. I'm in awe of the storms, the audiences who were so eager and the artists who made it work in what ever manner necessary.”  
— Soozin Hirschmugl, Northern Spark artist, 2014





West River Parkway <sup>14</sup>



MakeSh!t, Public Acts of Drawing <sup>15</sup>



Arcade Backpack designed by UCLA GameLab's Tyler Stefanich <sup>16</sup>

# 2013

Welcome to Union Square  
June 9, 2013

“ For me, a lot of the magic of this evening was getting to see the spaces I see every day transformed into an exuberant playground of creativity, joy, community, and celebration. I will carry those happy images and memories with me every day now when I am in Lowertown. 4th Street is no longer just the path I walk down to get to my office, it’s a giant board game! . . . as an artist myself, it was so uplifting to see so many people in one place making art, enjoying art, participating in art, interacting with art, and being art. . . .”





“ The anticipation of Chris Larson’s event was immense. I was one among a growing crowd of thousands, waiting for a flame and for a friend to show up. I wanted to experience this with someone close to me, someone who knew the story behind the burning of the house. Suddenly, without any prior cell phone communication, my friend emerged from the crowd in front of me. Five minutes later, we got we got to experience not only the glow of the successful reincarnation, but the warmth of feeling like our world was in tune with the night.”



Chris Larson, *Celebration/Love/Loss* <sup>01</sup>



Chris Larson, *Celebration/Love/Loss*, artist's studio COURTESY THE ARTIST



Chris Larson, *Celebration/Love/Loss* <sup>DH</sup>





Piotr Szyhalski, *Permanent Labor* <sup>JH</sup>



“ Whether you’re at a dance party or a river meditation at this festival, you have to let go of your self-conscious apprehensions about engaging in life and in art while in public. It’s a welcome and important reinvention of public space.”



Hamza Salim, Dunya Alwan, Islam Shabana, and HEND Kheera, *Underpass of the Eyes of Freedom* <sup>OI</sup>



Christian Jankowski, *Rooftop Routine* <sup>OI</sup>

# 2012

“ The point of this evening is really for us to see things that are familiar and beautiful and striking but different. Looking at ourselves and our place in a unique way.”  
— Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak



“ You feel like you own the city. It feels like this is all of us imagining together. Happy people everywhere, the good will is fantastic.”



“ Northern Spark transformed the city of Minneapolis into an all night art playground . . . my favorite parts were swinging in synchrony with 20 strangers in a skyway, playing Capture the flag at midnight in neon face paint, and dancing with strangers in the streets.”



Keetra Dean Dixon, *Swing Hall, Swing All* TOP: JH BOTTOM: DH



David Goldes and Jonathan Bruce Williams, *THE Northern Spark* PK



Eunsu Kang, Diana Garcia-Snyder, and Donald Craig, *Shin'm Piñata* DH

# 2011

“ At the end of my white night, I was exhausted but exhilarated, and not just by the art. I realized that the importance of Northern Spark went well beyond what was on show. Our first Nuit Blanche brought people out of the comfortable confines of their homes at an odd hour for an illuminating experience of togetherness.”





“This event has tremendous opportunity to become a signature summer event for Minneapolis, much like the White Nights in St. Petersburg, *Nuit Blanche* in Paris or *Fete des Lumieres* in Lyon. There was fantastic energy on the Stone Arch Bridge — you could tell people were loving the strolling and being outside on such a beautiful night and craving artistic inspiration.”

— Tristan Pollock, *The Line*



Debora Miller, *MURMUR* <sup>NL</sup>



The Notion Collective, *Station Identification* <sup>PK</sup>

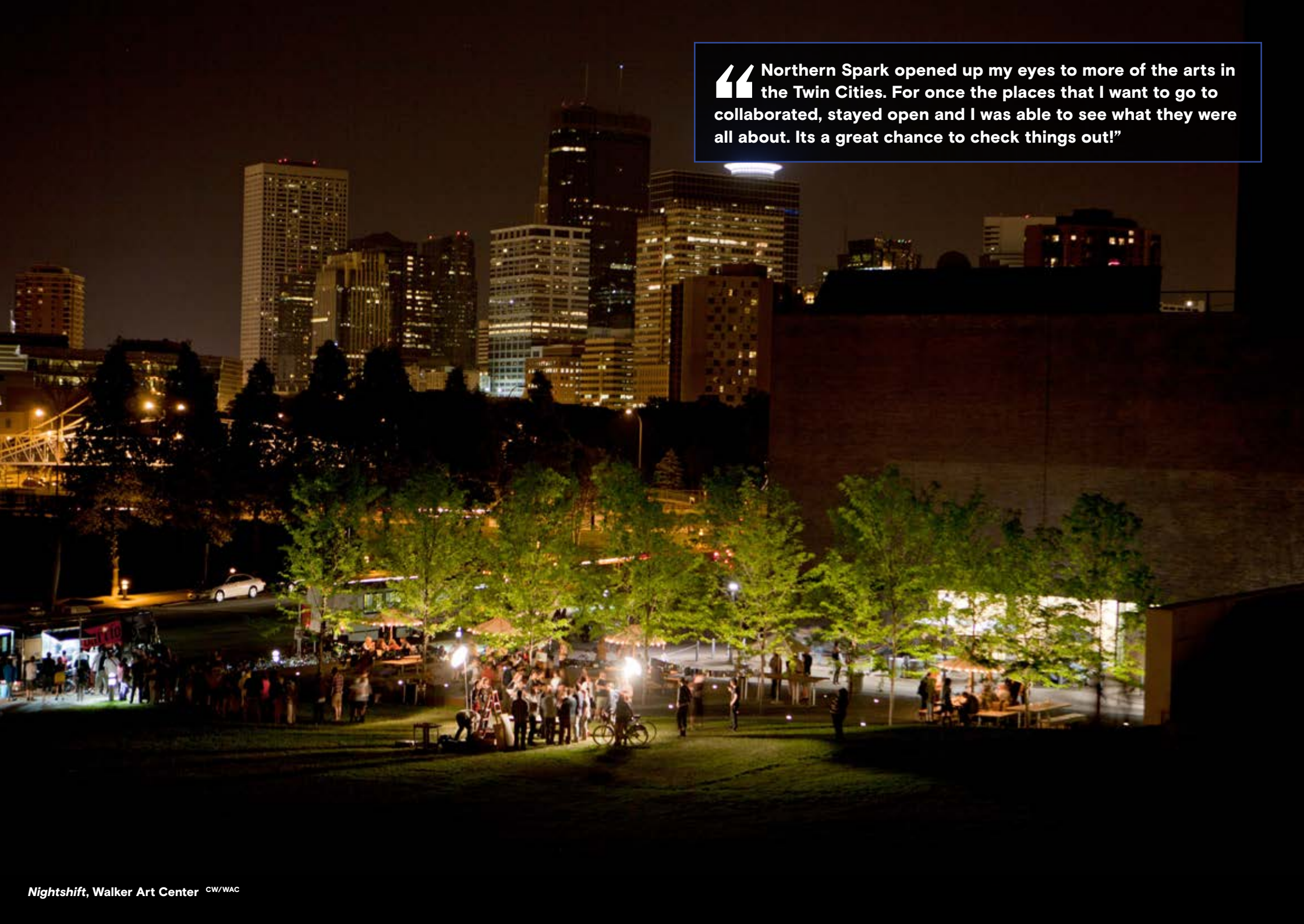


Janaki Ranpura, *Egg & Sperm Ride :: Hide & Seek* <sup>PK</sup>



Michael Murnane and Andrew Saboe, *Landmark in a River City* <sup>DH</sup>





“ Northern Spark opened up my eyes to more of the arts in the Twin Cities. For once the places that I want to go to collaborated, stayed open and I was able to see what they were all about. Its a great chance to check things out!”

# Partners 2011–2016

---

4 Seasons Dance Studio  
airsweetair gallery  
Alchemy Architects  
All My Relations Arts  
Alley Cat Cycles  
American Composers Forum  
American Craft Council  
American Swedish Institute  
Ananya Dance Theater  
Art Institutes International MN  
Art Shanty Projects  
Arts, Culture and Creative Economy  
Program of the City of  
Minneapolis  
Artspace  
AZ Gallery  
Baaken Museum  
Bedlam Theater  
Bell Museum of Natural History  
Big Table Studio  
Black Dog Cafe  
Brave New Workshop  
Burnet Gallery  
Can Can Wonderland  
Center for Hmong Art and Talent  
Center for Spirituality and Healing  
Emily Johnson / Catalyst  
Eyeo Festival  
Forecast Public Art  
Forever Young  
Franklin Art Works  
Gallery13  
Gamut Gallery  
Glitch  
Gorilla Yogis  
Grand Challenges Curriculum,  
University of Minnesota  
Guthrie Theater  
Hack Factory  
HECUA  
Hennepin County Library  
Hennepin Energy Recovery Center  
(HERC)  
Hennepin Theater Trust  
HiFi Hair and Records  
Highpoint Center for Printmaking  
innova  
Institute for Advanced Study,  
University of Minnesota  
Intermedia Arts  
Juxtaposition Arts  
Key 4/4 Kids  
Landmark Center and Plaza  
Leav  
Loft Literary Center  
Lowertown Bike Shop  
Lunalux  
MacPhail Center for Performing Arts  
Make It. MSP.  
McNally Smith College of Music  
Meet Minneapolis  
Midtown Greenway Coalition  
Mill City Museum  
MINN Lab  
Minneapolis Bike Coalition  
Minneapolis College of Art and  
Design

Minneapolis Convention Center  
Minneapolis Downtown Improvement  
District  
Minneapolis Institute of Arts  
Minneapolis Photography Center  
Minnesota Center for Book Arts  
Minnesota Children's Museum  
Minnesota History Center  
Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light  
Minnesota Museum of American Art  
Minnesota Sacred Harp Singers  
Mississippi Park Connection  
Mizna  
MN Orchestra  
MN Planetarium Society  
mnartists.org  
Mpls Parks Foundation  
MSP Film Society  
Musicant Group  
Nash Gallery  
Nautilus Music Theater  
Northern Clay Center  
Northern Voices Festival  
Northrop Auditorium  
On Being  
Open Book  
Open Eye Figure Theater  
Ordway Center for Performing Arts  
Palace Theater  
Public Art St. Paul  
PUNY  
Rain Taxi Review of Books  
Regis Center for the Arts  
Revolver  
Saint Paul City Ballet  
Schubert Club  
Science Museum of Minnesota  
Screenprinting on the Cheap  
Soo Visual Arts Center  
Springboard for the Arts  
St. Cloud St. University  
St. Paul Neighborhood Network  
Students for Design Activism  
Studio Sendero  
Sumunar Indonesian Music and  
Dance  
Sundance Institute  
The Loft Literary Center  
The Museum of Russian Art  
The Soap Factory  
The UpTake  
tpt Twin Cities Public Television  
Twin Cities Maker / The Hack Factory  
University of Minnesota Department  
of Art / Beijing Film Academy  
Upstream Arts  
VidTiger  
Vine Arts Center  
W Minneapolis - The Foshay  
Walker Art Center  
Weisman Art Museum  
Whittier Artists in Storefronts  
Works Progress  
Zeitgeist

# Select Sponsors 2011–2016



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 and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



NORDSTROM



SAMSUNG



MY SISTER



Metro Transit



Askov Finlayson



COVANTA ENERGY for a cleaner world



Carmichael Lynch



Knight Foundation

Lowertown Future Fund of THE SAINT PAUL FOUNDATION An affiliate of Minnesota Philanthropy Partners



RESTAURANT ALMA



THE PRIVATE CLIENT RESERVE U.S. BANK



Le MERIDIEN CHAMBERS MINNEAPOLIS



DOGWOOD COFFEE CO. MPLS MN USA



artspace



BRASA



MARIN



PRAIRIE ORGANIC SPIRITS



sparks

WISE ACRE /EATERY/

THE BACHELOR FARMER

ARIA

Olé Breakfast

## Video Highlights



Christopher Lutter, et al.,  
*Wolf and Moose, Creative City  
Challenge 2016*  
<https://vimeo.com/177322136>



Northern Spark in one word  
<https://vimeo.com/94802082>



Chris Larson,  
*Celebration/Love/Loss,*  
*Northern Spark 2013*  
<https://vimeo.com/73868234>



Opening Ceremonies,  
*Northern Spark 2012*  
<https://vimeo.com/46663966>

**More videos:** <http://vimeo.com/northernspark>  
**All photos:** <http://nspk.mn/photos>  
**Photo highlights:** <http://nspk.mn/topphotos>

## Stay Connected



[northernspark.org](http://northernspark.org)



[facebook.com/NorthernSparkMN](https://facebook.com/NorthernSparkMN)



[instagram.com/northernlights.mn](https://instagram.com/northernlights.mn)



[twitter.com/northern\\_spark](https://twitter.com/northern_spark)



[flickr.com/photos/northernspark](https://flickr.com/photos/northernspark)



Videos from the 2011–2016 Northern Spark festivals are available for viewing online at [vimeo.com/northernspark](https://vimeo.com/northernspark)



[northern.lights.mn](http://northern.lights.mn)



[neighborhoodclimatechange.tumblr.com](https://neighborhoodclimatechange.tumblr.com)



Subscribe to the Northern Lights.mn newsletter online at [northernspark.org](http://northernspark.org) and [northern.lights.mn](http://northern.lights.mn)

**2017 STAFF  
CO-DIRECTORS**  
Steve Dietz & Sarah Peters

**PROJECTS MANAGER**  
Ady Olson

**PARTNERSHIP AND  
OUTREACH COORDINATOR**  
Teeko Yang

**ASSISTANT CURATOR**  
Elle Toni

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**  
Leslie Barlow

**EMAIL INQUIRIES  
SPONSORSHIPS**  
[sponsornorthernspark@northern.lights.mn](mailto:sponsornorthernspark@northern.lights.mn)

**VOLUNTEERS**  
[volunteers@northernspark.org](mailto:volunteers@northernspark.org)

**Food Trucks**  
[foodtrucks@northernspark.org](mailto:foodtrucks@northernspark.org)

**PARTNERS**  
[partnership@northernspark.org](mailto:partnership@northernspark.org)

**PRESS**  
[press@northernspark.org](mailto:press@northernspark.org)

**REPORT CREDITS  
DESIGN**  
Matthew Rezac

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
JH: Jayme Halbritter  
IH: Ian Hanson  
MH: Max Haynes  
DH: Dusty Hoskovec  
OI: Olga Ivanova  
PK: Patrick Kelley  
NL: Nicole Larson  
KL: Kory Lidstrom  
SO: Shawn Orton  
IP: Ian Plant  
WS: Wendy Schreier  
CW/WAC: Cameron Wittig / Walker Art Center