

Engaging our Cultural Heritage and Highlighting Minnesota Arts

A Report on Minnesota Public Radio's
Fiscal Year 2016 Projects Supported by the Minnesota Legacy Amendment's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund

July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016



(Class Notes Artists Lux String Quartet during artist residency)

Legislative leaders and fellow Minnesotans,

The Minnesota Legacy Amendment's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund helps to enrich the lives of all Minnesotans and strengthens the vibrant culture that makes our state such a great place for our diverse residents to live, work, and play. Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) is proud to be a part of accomplishing the Fund's goals to support and promote the talent of artists statewide, showcase our rich cultural heritage, and bolster arts education for Minnesota students.



In fiscal year 2016, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund investments enabled MPR to provide the impactful *Class Notes Artists* education program at no charge to schools across the state and to travel to Winona for the first time as part of the Mid West Music Fest, all while delivering free content on MPR News, Classical MPR, and The Current to listeners statewide. On behalf of our Board of Trustees, statewide staff, Sustaining Members, community volunteers and loyal listeners, I thank the citizens of Minnesota and the Legislature for helping to make these activities, and the resulting statewide impact, possible.

We are grateful and pleased that MPR helps to deliver on the Legacy Amendment's mandate *"to support arts, arts education and arts access, and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage."* Our efforts in fiscal year 2016 touched and served many individuals throughout the state:

- More than **900,000 Minnesotans** were kept up to date about our state's robust arts and music scene thanks to multimedia coverage from MPR News, Classical MPR, and The Current.
- **25,740 elementary students** at **66 schools** in **20 counties**, from Fairmont to Grand Rapids to Warroad, experienced live music from Minnesota classical or choral artists visiting their classrooms.
- **606 singers** joined their voices during our inaugural season of **Bring the Sing**. Classical MPR hosted **community choral events** in **Duluth** and **St. Paul**, bringing together young and old, professional and novice singers, students and community members, to share in the joy of singing.
- **Served as the primary resource** for news, information, and music following the unexpected death of **Minnesota musician Prince**.

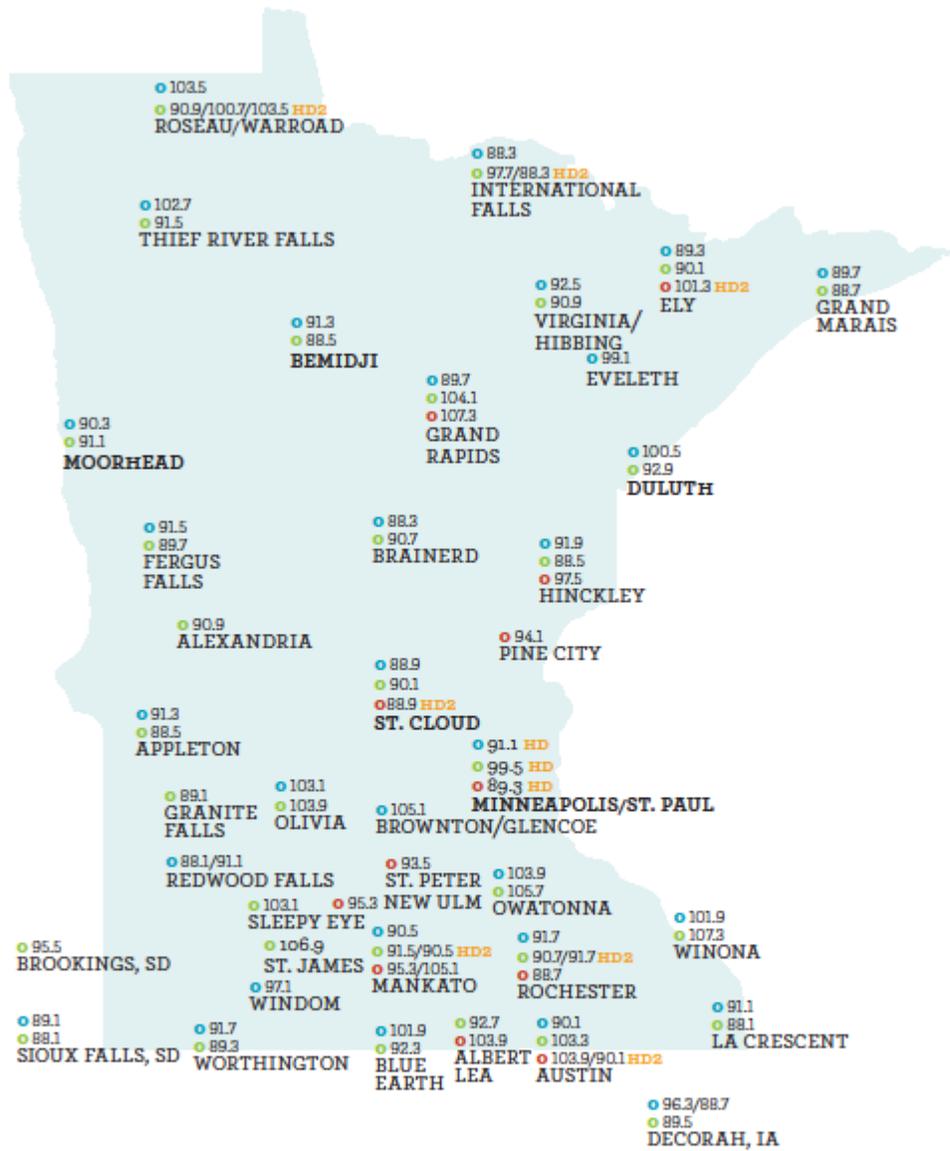
Each week, MPR serves nearly 1 million Minnesotans with trusted news, inspiring music, and cultural programming from MPR News, Classical MPR, and The Current. More than 95 percent of Minnesota residents live within the service area of an MPR broadcast signal, and hundreds of thousands more visit our websites, use our mobile apps, attend our live events, download our podcasts, listen to our music streams, and interact with us on social media. Our broad statewide reach helps us fulfill our Mission, *"to enrich the mind and nourish the spirit, thereby enhancing the lives and expanding the perspectives of our audiences, and assisting them in strengthening their communities."*

MPR's essential public service to Minnesotans is made possible by the support of Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund investment, as well as contributions from MPR's community of Members and additional partners across Minnesota. We are fortunate to live in a state that invests in our cultural and artistic heritage, and we remain committed to honoring the spirit of the Minnesota Legacy Amendment and deepening its value for all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon".

Jon McTaggart
President and CEO
Minnesota Public Radio



MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO

● NEWS
 ● THE CURRENT[™]
● CLASSICAL
 HD multicast see mpr.org

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To alleviate printing costs, this report will be submitted online and available at [MPR’s website](#).
The estimated cost of preparing this report (as required by Minn. Stat. § 3.197) is \$917.00.



(Bring the Sing – Duluth)



(Lumina – Class Notes Artists)



(Class Notes student audience)

Minnesota is a culturally rich and diverse state. MPR’s goal is aligned with that of the Minnesota Legacy Amendment’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund to create and showcase “arts, history and cultural heritage programs (that) will bolster Minnesota’s reputation as a center for creativity, innovation and imagination, supporting the long-term vitality of our state.”

MPR achieves the State of Minnesota’s goals through Classical MPR, The Current, and MPR News and live events aligned with what each of these services provides. Our work in service to the people of Minnesota falls into four categories:

- Highlighting Minnesota Artists
- Supporting Music Education in Minnesota Classrooms
- Live Events Arts Experiences
- Preserving Minnesota’s Cultural History

Overview



*"7000 Miles Davises," by Andrew Nordin, oil on canvas, 2014. Courtesy of Andrew Nordin.
Featured in coverage on MPR News - Art Hounds – Abstract Paintings in Hutchinson –
November 12, 2015)*

In 2008, Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution. The amendment created four funds, one of which is the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF). The ACHF receives 19.75 percent of the sales tax revenue resulting from the Legacy amendment **to support arts, arts education and arts access, and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage.**

Minnesota Public Radio is a proud recipient of ACHF investment. Following each fiscal year, MPR is required to submit an annual report to the Legislature detailing its ACHF activities and expenditures. This report covers MPR's programs and projects conducted in fiscal year 2016 and supported by the following grant from the ACHF:

- MPR Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) – \$1,568,000
 - Grant administered by the Department of Administration (Minnesota Laws, 2013 Regular Session, Chapter 137, Article 4, Section 2, Subdivision 6)

Featured Impacts

MPR Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Activities

COVERAGE OF PRINCE AND HIS DEATH



(Prince at First Avenue in Minneapolis, undated. Courtesy of Daniel Corrigan.)

Prince Rogers Nelson, one of Minnesota’s most iconic musicians, left this universe on April 21, 2016. MPR was able to react quickly and develop programming to highlight Prince’s artistic contributions due to the State of Minnesota’s investment in our work through Legacy funds. Because Prince was notoriously protective of his music, The Current became ground zero for coverage of his life, his death, and his music.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/collection/prince>

Highlighting Minnesota Artists

The Current – 89.3, web stream, and blog

As observed by the Huffington Post, “Since Prince was notoriously protective of his music rights on the internet, if people wanted to memorialize Prince by playing *Purple Rain*, like old times, they had to turn on the radio. He’s not on YouTube. He’s not on Spotify. The Current’s website became a de facto vigil for Prince fans anywhere on the web.” People from more than 216 countries, territories, and other governmental entities sought out The Current’s coverage in order to access Prince’s music in real time.

Due to The Current’s eleven-year relationship with Prince and his staff, the station had substantial resources upon which to draw. The Current assembled a nine-hour tribute of eighty-five songs for immediate broadcast and streaming, which included anecdotes by collaborators and friends. Nearly 490,000 listeners streamed the tribute, twenty-five times The Current’s regular digital audience, demonstrating Prince’s impact on the world and the importance of The Current’s coverage of his life, career, and death.

The week following Prince’s death, The Current’s DJ Jill Riley hosted a documentary, *Purple Reign: the life, music and legacy of Prince*. This hour-long piece explores his life and legacy through his music and memories of those closest to him. Jill interviews Bobby Z, producer Susan Rodgers, Jimmy Jam, Wendy and Lisa and more.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/feature/2016/04/25/prince-documentary-purple-reign-life-music-legacy>

The Current Staff - External Media Coverage

The Current's staff was in high demand immediately following Prince's death, sought after to provide perspective on his influence and to talk about the Minneapolis Sound that he helped to create. Program Director Jim McGuinn was interviewed by nationally- and internationally-renowned media entities including PBS NewsHour, CBS This Morning, BBC Radio, and The Daily Beast. The Current was also referred to as a resource for all things Prince by USA Today, RollingStone, the Guardian newspaper (United Kingdom), and TIME Magazine.

MPR News

MPR News also produced a documentary, a comprehensive obituary, and *A Look at the Life and Legacy of Prince* photo essay. Euan Kerr, arts reporter, was a key member of the team leading the coverage of Prince's death.

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/04/24/minnesota-remembers-prince>

<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/04/21/the-road-that-led-prince-rogers-nelson-to-stardom-obituary>

<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/04/21/photos-a-look-at-the-life-and-legacy-of-prince>

Live Events Arts Experiences



(Photos by Nate Ryan/MPR)

In addition to being an online resource for Prince fans globally, The Current and Minnesota Public Radio immediately began working with partners like the City of Minneapolis and First Avenue night club to stage events to commemorate and celebrate Prince and his music. On the evening of his death, MPR threw a street party that attracted thousands to First Avenue, the Minneapolis music club made famous by Prince in the film *Purple Rain*. The street party featured Prince songs performed by Minnesota artists including Lizzo (*top right photo*), Cameron Kinghorn (*bottom right photo*), Chastity Brown, and PaviElle French. *Purple Rain* served as the finale with performers and attendees singing the song together. MPR's depth of resources allowed us to quickly secure local artists to perform in tribute to arguably Minnesota's most iconic artist.

Minnesota Public Radio also hosted a special Films at the Fitz presentation of *Purple Rain* with special musical guests Nooky Jones. Nearly 1,000 tickets were reserved for this special event at the Fitzgerald Theater.

UPCOMING ARTIST: GAELYNN LEA

MPR had the distinction of working with Gaelynn Lea on multiple occasions in the past year, with Ms. Lea participating in projects throughout the state via Legacy investment in all three of MPR's services: Classical MPR, The Current, and MPR News.



(Photo by Michael K. Anderson via Gaelynn Lea on Facebook)

A Duluth resident, Ms. Lea is a classically-trained violinist and songwriter who won NPR Music's 2016 Tiny Desk Contest. She, along with Duluth musician Alan Sparhawk of Low, travelled to Washington, D.C., to perform a special concert following her win. Her star continues to rise.

<http://www.npr.org/2016/03/10/469966998/gaelynn-lea-tiny-desk-concert>

After winning the Tiny Desk Contest, Ms. Lea was a special guest for Classical MPR's Bring the Sing at its inaugural event in Duluth. More than 300 singers from across Northern Minnesota came together as a mass choir for a special, one-time-only performance. Ms. Lea and the choir collaborated on a performance of *Someday We'll Linger in the Sun*, the song that was her winning submission to the Tiny Desk Contest.

<http://www.classicalmpr.org/story/2016/02/29/bring-the-sing-join-our-choral-community>

In addition to her music being featured on The Current and The Duluth Local Show, Ms. Lea has been invited to perform as a special guest for The Current-presented live performances. The band Lucius invited her to join them during a sold-out show at First Ave. Lucius band members Jess Wolfe and Holly Laessig were judges for the Tiny Desk Contest and were so moved by Ms. Lea's work, they were compelled to have her join them on stage.

<http://blog.thecurrent.org/2016/03/watch-gaelynn-lea-join-lucius-onstage-at-first-avenue/>

MPR News arts reporter Marianne Combs traveled to Duluth following Ms. Lea's win, for a news feature that encompasses not only her music but her advocacy for persons with disabilities.

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/04/27/gaelynn-lea-tiny-desk-winner-touring-raising-awareness-disabilities>

THE CURRENT® EFFECT



Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund investments (highlighted in gray below) help the influential tastemakers at The Current nourish Minnesota musical artists at every stage of their careers. This process has culminated in sold-out local shows, national media appearances and major record deals for the artists we love.

EMERGING ARTISTS

Local Current

Feature on **Local Current™** blog
(1.8M+ page views in FY16¹)

Plays and mentions on **Local Current stream**
(15,600 stream requests² per month,
940+ local artists featured in FY16)

JAY SMART 

BUZZING

The Local Show

Feature or in-studio performance
on **The Local Show**
(41 performances by
local artists produced in FY16³)

Regular rotation on The Current
(300,000+ weekly listeners³)

The Current goes to ...
(3,800+ attendees total at events
featuring local artists in Duluth & Winona³)

MONICA LAPLANTE 

GROWING

Rock the Garden and The Current Birthday Party

Performance at high-profile local concerts:

The Current's Birthday Party
(2,500+ attendees over 2 nights);

Rock the Garden

(One day + two stages + 8 bands at Boom Island)

2016 featured the last show for local hip-hop
collective GRRRL PRY - Lizzo, Sophia Eris, and
Manchita with DJ Shannon Blowtorch

Heavy rotation on The Current

HIPPO CAMPUS 

MAJOR EXPOSURE

Nationwide TV, e.g., *The Late Show*

Gaining exposure through airplay
on national radio stations similar
to The Current

POLIÇA | JEREMY MESSERSMITH | HALEY BONAR 



THE CURRENT – DULUTH

The Current has worked for several years to cultivate and support the local music scene in Duluth and along the North Shore to bring Minnesota-made music to more Minnesotans. We continue to seek live events that reflect the array of broadcast and streaming programming. On July 24 and 25, 2015, The Current’s van was filled with staff and gear and pointed north for the second The Current Goes To...Duluth. While The Current hosted several events on the first day, the stars were local artists featured on a live taping of The Local Show with David Campbell and at two free performances. David Campbell also emceed and DJ’d the All Pints North Summer Brew Fest the next afternoon while other staffers hung out with festival attendees at The Current’s booth.

Success of The Current in Duluth has led to the expansion of our programming. In spring 2016, Mike Novitzki was named as our Duluth host. The Duluth Local Show launched on May 1, 2016, and can be heard at 90.9 FM The Current in Duluth every Sunday at 8 p.m. For listeners not based in Duluth, The Duluth Local Show is rebroadcast on The Local Current stream at thecurrent.org/local on Mondays at 2 p.m. Following this rebroadcast, the show is available on-demand on The Current’s web site which features an archive of past shows.

The Current is fortunate to have Novitzki as the point person for us in Duluth. A Minneapolis native, Novitzki became a Duluth resident in 2007 and has been an integral part of the Twin Ports music scene. As a student at University of Minnesota - Duluth, he was an overnight DJ at the college’s station KUMD. After graduation in 2011, Novitzki became assistant music director at the station, also hosting *Music Through the Day* and *Live from Studio A*.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/programs/duluth-local-show>



(Digital image by MPR)

THE CURRENT GOES TO...WINONA

The Current took a road trip to Winona and participated in the Mid West Music Fest. The musical festival was established in 2010 and The Local Show's Andrea Swensson has covered it for a number of years. 2016 marked the first year that The Current was able to participate in the festival. We look forward to expanding this relationship in future years.

During The Current's three days in Winona, Legacy funds supported a number of activities for festival goers. The Local Show with Andrea Swensson taped a show and later co-hosted a workshop with Sean Moller of Daytrotter. Mid West Music Fest featured an impressive music line up. Notable performers in the three-day line up included many Minnesota artists played on The Current - Jeremy Messersmith, Charlie Parr, Heiruspecs, Bad Bad Hats, Romantica, The Heavy Set, Reina del Cid, Al Church, and Martin Devaney among others.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/events/2016/04/29/1575/the-current-goes-to-winona>



*Top: Winona band The Ultrasounds
Bottom: Mayor Mark Peterson*

Photos by Nate Ryan, MPR



CLASS NOTES ARTISTS

Class Notes Artists is a Classical MPR program that places musicians and ensembles in Minnesota schools for day-long residencies at no cost to the participants or the schools. These residencies give students the opportunity to learn about classical music by interacting with professional musicians. The Class Notes Artists program strives to serve as many schools as possible each year with a goal of reaching a diverse array of communities statewide. Although relatively new, the program has been in such demand that participating schools are rotated from year-to-year to ensure all schools seeking a residency are able to host one every few years. Class Notes Artists program staff also schedule visits to maximize resources, for example planning several days in the Grand Rapids-area rather than a number of day-trips that are more spread out.

The Class Notes Artists team tracks the communities served each year as we continue to balance metropolitan and Greater Minnesota access as well as to ensure that demographically diverse populations continue to have equitable access to Class Notes Artists. **During the 2015-2016 school year, Class Notes Artists visited 54 schools with 38% of those being in Greater Minnesota.** Students and teachers warmly received the musicians who visited classrooms from Fairmont to Warroad as well as throughout the Twin Cities.

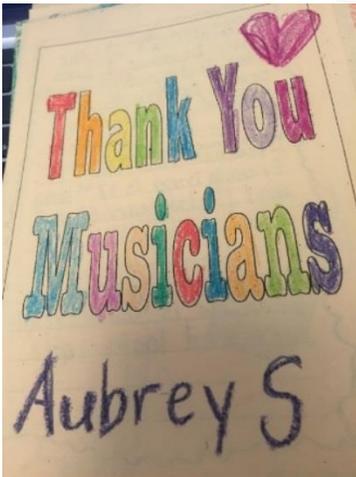
MPR has asked teachers to complete surveys describing student impact, which have provided insights as to how to best implement Class Notes Artists. Additional research compiled from the Minnesota Department of Education web site has shown that 50% of schools that had a Class Notes Artists residency had a free and reduced lunch student population of 51% or greater. We are also proud to have served diverse communities across the state including Willmar schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population, Tower-Soudan with 28% Native American student population, and a number of Twin Cities-area schools with a higher percentage of African-American and Asian students.



(Photo by Derek Montgomery)

From Warroad music teacher Christine Prusak to the Concordia Wind Quintet:

THANK YOU for coming and performing for us! I planned on sending you a thank you note but you beat me to it. :) The kids had a WONDERFUL time and couldn't stop talking about it. It was such a fabulous experience for our students. Thank you for making the long haul up here. We truly hope you will be able to come back sometime in the near future. Please pass on my thanks to each of your members. Enjoy the rest of your fall!



Student Survey

Please comment on your experience at the Copper Street Brass concert. Describe what you liked and didn't like (if there was anything). THANK YOU!

I loved the French Horn because I also play the French Horn and it made me want to play like you guys.

I loved all the other instruments to. Your group was amazingly good! I liked when you played the Imperial March, and the Star Wars Theme Song because I love Star Wars. I like all the Disney Songs also. Thank you so much for coming. I hope you can come again! I loved it!!

Sincerely,
Symone
Horns:
2

Concordia Wind Quintet -

A thousand thanks for your wonderful presence! The staff and students alike loved the music & the presentation! Energy, educational, joyful, fun, funny, engaging all make for an outstanding music program - & you definitely pulled it off!

Enclosed are ThankYous from Southwest Elem. Students. We would love to have you back.

Thanks so much!
Mary-Kwanig Sherman
SW Elem, Music Teacher

In addition to having an impact on the schools, Class Notes also has an impact on the Minnesota musicians who participate. Classical MPR has been working to include artists of different disciplines, backgrounds, and histories. Gaosong Heu (right) describes her participation during FY16:



“I am so honored to have been brought into the Class Notes Artist program. I think this effort to be more inclusive of other forms of classical or traditional music from different cultures in Classical MPR is both revolutionary and crucial to the growth of Classical MPR, while serving our diverse community in Minnesota.”

Gaosong V. Heu is a Hmong-American performer who uses art to bridge the gap between western classical music and Hmong classical and traditional music. As a Class Notes Artist, she combined music and storytelling at schools across the Twin Cities metro.

<http://www.classicalmpr.org/topic/education>

<http://www.classicalmpr.org/topic/class-notes-artists>

BRING THE SING

Classical MPR launched **Bring the Sing** in 2016, bringing together voices of all abilities at two events that are equal parts sing-along and community gathering. The inaugural Bring the Sing was held in Duluth and drew 300 singers not just from the Duluth, but also from throughout northern Minnesota. Cities represented include: Alexandria, Askov, Aurora, Barnum, Carlton, Cloquet, Ely, Esko, Grand Marais, Hermantown, Hibbing, Knife River, Mankato, Prior Lake, Proctor, Saginaw, Silver Bay, and Virginia. During the week leading up to Bring the Sing, MPR held choral clinics at Esko, Duluth East, and Two Harbors High Schools as well as the College of St. Scholastica, which also hosted the mass choir for Bring the Sing on Saturday, April 30, 2016. MPR's connections to the Duluth music scene allowed us to include Duluth musician Gaelynn Lea as part of Bring the Sing. Lea won the National Public Radio Tiny Desk Contest in 2016 and has risen in the national spotlight as a result, garnering praise for her solo album debut, *All the Roads that Lead Us Home*.

On May 21, 2016, Bring the Sing came to Central Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, which is adjacent to MPR's studios. On a beautiful spring day, several hundred singers came together to sing a bit of classical, a spiritual, and some other numbers. Our St. Paul Bring the Sing was a diverse, inclusive event. Participants were from a variety of racial, age, and socioeconomic backgrounds. We were particularly thrilled to have clients from the Dorothy Day Center come and raise their voices alongside both novices and some of the Twin Cities finest singers. Each Bring the Sing was recorded and included on Classical MPR's Choral Stream programming.

<http://www.classicalmpr.org/story/2016/02/29/bring-the-sing-join-our-choral-community>

<http://www.classicalmpr.org/story/2016/03/21/bring-the-sing-join-our-choral-community-in-st-paul>



ART HOUNDS – LIVE

Art Hounds is an MPR News broadcast and podcast that invites Minnesota artists to share information and enthusiasm about upcoming arts events. During FY16, Minnesota Public Radio hosted an inaugural Art Hounds – Live to celebrate the rich diversity of the Minnesota art scene. The event showcased the wealth of arts options produced statewide, with performances by artists whose work had been featured on the segment. Gaelynn Lea, the Duluth fiddler who won the NPR Tiny Desk Contest in 2016, had the dual distinction of performing during Art Hounds – Live and previously serving as an Art Hounds community contributor. The event was held at the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, and 630 tickets were reserved by patrons who enjoyed the cabaret-style event hosted by MPR News arts reporter Marianne Combs.

Performances included:

- Reina del Cid, Minneapolis folk-rock band
- Ananya Dance Theatre, contemporary Indian dance company comprised of women of color
- A short film from the Arab Film Festival
- “B-Girl” Joy Spika, Minneapolis artist, activist, and musician sharing her experiences as a black woman
- A scene from “Souvenir” by Commonweal Theatre of Lanesboro, Minnesota
- Gaelynn Lea, Duluth musician and keynote speaker for people with disabilities
- An excerpt from *The Hmong-Lao Friendship Play*
- Artist Joe Sinness, Minneapolis artist specializing in photorealistic colored pencil drawings

Based on the event’s success, future Art Hounds – Live events are planned.



Clockwise: The Hmong-Lao Friendship Play, Reina del Cid, Commonweal Theatre, and Joy Spika

Additional Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Activities

Highlighting Minnesota Artists

CLASSICAL BROADCAST PERFORMANCES

Through **Regional Classical Broadcast Recordings**, Classical MPR records, produces, and broadcasts concerts by the Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Schubert Club, Minnesota Opera, St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra, Winona Beethoven Festival Chorale, Mankato Symphony Orchestra, Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Symphony Orchestra, and many others.

CLASSICAL MPR'S CHORAL STREAM

The **Choral Stream** gives audiences 24/7 access to choral music via the internet. Minnesota has a rich tradition of choral singing, performance, and composition, which allows the Choral Stream to dedicate half of its content to choral ensembles, conductors, and composers from the state. Of the fifty-seven Minnesota choral ensembles featured, the three most-played are the Dale Warland Singers, Cantus, and the National Lutheran Choir. In addition to these well-known groups, ensembles from Bemidji, Collegeville, Elk River, Moorhead, and Rochester have received airplay on the Choral Stream. Choirs include professional and college ensembles as well as mixed voice, men's, women's, and youth choirs.

THE LOCAL SHOW

The Local Show continues to be a significant resource, cultivator, and influencer of the Minnesota music scene. Long-time host David Campbell departed and current host Andrea Swensson took the reins from her beloved predecessor on January 9, 2016. Ms. Swensson hit the ground running when Prince died unexpectedly on April 21, 2016. She found herself in the midst of an internationally resonant story which focused on a local artist and his monumental contribution to the contemporary music scene.

Swensson has stepped into the role of local music champion, continuing to support growing artists like Hippo Campus and to uncover emerging artists like Jay Smart. In addition, she brought The Local Show for the first time to the Mid West Music Fest along with The Current Goes To...Winona. Swensson and her team recorded the show live in front of an audience at the local Ed's (No Name) Bar. She dedicated the whole show to Winona music, hosted two bands on stage, and even interviewed the mayor of Winona about their scene.

LOCAL CURRENT BLOG

The most noteworthy event covered during the fiscal year was Prince's death. **The Local Current Blog** became a primary source of information for music fans internationally wanting to know more. The prominence of Prince as an artist put the spotlight on MPR – and Minnesota – for an exceptional amount of coverage.

LOCAL CURRENT STREAM

DJ in Residence

In addition to playing local music on The Local Current Stream, several local artists are invited to serve as **DJ in Residence** throughout the year. Listeners are treated to each guest DJ's curatorial style every Friday and artists have the opportunity to learn about the radio industry from the inside. DJ in Residence hosts for fiscal year 2016 included well-known musicians Mark Mallman and DeM atlaS as well as up-and-coming talent Kerry Alexander of Bad Bad Hats and Katharine Seggerman. *(pictured below, photos by Nate Ryan/MPR)*



Purple Snow

In October 2015, The Current highlighted the first snow of the year with a unique streaming event: **Purple Snow**.



Digital image by Brett Baldwin/MPR

Purple Snow was revealed by The Current on October 19, 2015, as a unique way to celebrate the first full inch of snowfall in Chanhassen (home of Prince's Paisley Park studio) for the season. Prince became aware of the plan and supported our programming and live-Tweeted throughout the show. Purple Snow was broadcast on December 1, 2015, an unusually late date for the region's first snow.

Because The Current cultivated a close relationship with Prince and his staff over the past eleven years, the station had exceptional access to Prince's closely guarded music rights. In addition to producing Purple Snow, this access allowed us to be uniquely positioned to provide wall-to-wall coverage and music immediately following Prince's untimely death on April 21, 2016.

<http://blog.thecurrent.org/2015/10/local-current-to-go-all-prince-as-soon-as-it-snows/>

ART HOUNDS

Art Hounds invites Minnesota artists to share information and enthusiasm about upcoming arts events. The MPR News-produced show airs regularly on Thursday mornings and afternoons, giving listeners the chance to learn about and plan to attend events during the upcoming weekend. During the fiscal year, Art Hounds produced 47 episodes to bring attention to a wide variety of artists and art statewide – from community playhouses to professional theaters, small galleries to major museums, coffeehouse stages to concert halls.

<http://www.mprnews.org/topic/art-hounds>

During the course of fiscal year 2016, the program reached or covered 27 Minnesota communities including:

Albert Lea	Hastings	Northfield	St. Cloud
Anoka	Hutchinson	Osseo	St. Paul
Bemidji	Lanesboro	Park Rapids	St. Peter
Bloomington	Minneapolis	Plymouth	White Bear Lake
Duluth	Moorhead	Red Wing	Willmar
Fergus Falls	Morris	Rochester	Winona
Grand Marais	New York Mills	Shafer	

CONVERSATIONS ON THE ARTS

By committing ourselves to **Conversations on the Arts**, our goal is to foster and disseminate community and statewide dialogue about issues important to Minnesota’s cultural heritage. Some of these conversations occur on the air; some take place in public forums. Some are simply about art; others concern arts policy. In Fiscal Year 2016, MPR hosted more than 100 such conversations. Here is a sampling:

Sept. 30, 2015: Marianne Combs spoke with Roger Guenveur Smith, creator of a one-man show titled “Rodney King.” After Rodney King, a victim of police violence in Los Angeles in 1991, died a few years ago, Mr. Smith decided to create a show that offers a robust memory of King. The conversation on MPR News covered the creation of art, civic engagement, and the relevance of the show at this time in history.

<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/09/30/bcst-rodney-king-play>

Dec. 11, 2015: Marianne Combs hosted a panel discussion among the new artistic directors at well-known Twin Cities theaters. The panel featured Sarah Bellamy (Penumbra Theatre), Joe Haj (Guthrie Theater), Sarah Rasmussen (Jungle Theater), and Randy Reyes (Mu Performing Arts).



https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/01/08/mpr_news_presents

Feb. 4, 2016: Marianne Combs hosted an on-air discussion with three artistic directors about the role of women in Shakespeare’s plays. Tina Packer, the founding artistic director of Shakespeare & Company; Sarah Rasmussen, artistic director of the Jungle Theater; and Michelle Hensley, artistic director of Ten Thousand Things Theater Company, shared their perspectives on Shakespeare and the opportunities present when productions flip the script with all-female casts.

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/02/04/shakespeare-women-characters>

Additional Live Events Arts Experiences

THE CURRENT GOES TO...DULUTH

The Current took its show on the road to Duluth for two days in July 2015. The community, musicians, and The Current's staff all look forward to this annual trip to Duluth, which has strengthened MPR's ties to the region and informed our decision to establish the Duluth Local Show.

On the afternoon of July 24, The Current hosted a live taping of The Local Show with David Campbell at The Red Herring Lounge. The venue was later the site of a free evening of music hosted by The Current featuring Duluth-based bands Lion or Gazelle, Fever Dream, and Gramma's Boyfriend. The Current also hosted a free event at Pizza Luce that evening featuring performances by Social Disaster, Sam Cassidy, and 4onthefloor. July 25 found Team Current hosting a booth at All Pints North Summer Brew Fest in Bayfront Festival Park. DJ David Campbell provided music and served as emcee throughout the event.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/events/2015/07/24/1140/the-current-goes-to-duluth/>

EVENTS

Films at the Fitz

Films at the Fitz features not only films, but also local bands as part of the evening. Bands are selected to complement the film and provide an additional arts experience for attendees. City Pages named Films at the Fitz as the Best Place to Do Something for Free in 2016.

The Current Presents at the Fitz

The Current presented **PaviElle, Jayanthi Kyle, and Sarah White** at the Fitzgerald Theater on June 3, 2016. These three powerful performers are African-American women at the forefront of the Minneapolis-St. Paul music scene. The combination of these three talented performers provided The Current a unique opportunity to highlight female artists of color.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/events/2016/06/03/1633/pavielle-kyle-sarah-white>

On March 26, 2016, The Current presented **The Secret Stash Soul Revue** featuring local African-American musicians. The show featured the well-known band Sonny Knight & The Lakers with special guests PaviElle, Cameron Kinghorn (Nooky Jones), Jayanthi Kyle (Gospel Machine), and James Grear & Company. With the Fitzgerald Theater serving again as the venue, Sonny Knight and his guest performers played a mix of original tunes and classics all backed by The Lakers.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/events/2016/03/26/1455/secret-stash-soul-revue>



The Current – Duluth Launch Party

Early 2016 marked the addition of the signal 90.9 FM in Duluth. To celebrate, The Current threw a launch party. Noted local music venue the Red Herring Lounge welcomed the community on April 1 to the event featuring music from Babes in Toyland, Astronautalis, tiny deaths and Shaunna Heckman, plus the Crunchy Bunch DJing in the Red Room. Many of The Current's well-known on-air talent participated in the event including Jill Riley and Brian Oake of *Oake and Riley in the Morning*, *The Local Show's* Andrea Swensson, and DJs Mark Wheat and Sean McPherson.

<http://www.thecurrent.org/events/2016/04/01/1539/the-current-in-duluth-station-launch-party-babes-in-toyland-astronautalis>



Shaunna Heckman, Duluth artist, at The Current – Duluth launch party

(Photo by Jason Larkin Photography)

Preserving Minnesota History

MPR ARCHIVE

The Minnesota Cultural Leaders Collection was established to preserve Minnesota's cultural heritage by creating digital copies of historic news stories about Minnesota political, business, and cultural leaders. These newly digitized pieces are freely accessible to the public online and available to partners like the Minnesota Historical Society and Minnesota Digital Library.

The initial goal was to digitize 2,000 stories in fiscal year 2016, but the archive team exceeded that goal by completing 22,000 stories. This unanticipated success is due to process efficiencies developed by the archive staff dedicated to this project. The result is an unprecedented number of media transferred from the more fragile original media type to a digital format. Not only does this preserve a resource before it decays, it greatly increases the number of stories available to the public at no cost via our publicly accessible archive.

850 Hmong-focused stories were added to the digitized MPR archive to support the Minnesota Historical Society's exhibit *The History of Hmong Arrival*. A significant number of stories about Walter Mondale, Hubert H. Humphrey, and Paul Wellstone and his death were among those digitally preserved.

<http://archive.mprnews.org/>

Appendix 1 – Financial Report

Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016)

Project	Budget Amount	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Expended
Highlighting MN Artists	\$ 890,033	\$191,389	\$ 209,820	\$ 178,904	\$ 300,689	\$ 880,802
Live Event Art Experiences	\$ 352,379	\$ 33,220	\$ 47,505	\$ 82,940	\$ 181,848	\$ 345,513
Preserving Classical Music History	\$ 72,105	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,774	\$ 20,894	\$ 27,467	\$ 79,584
Supporting Music Education	\$ 253,483	\$ 68,463	\$ 78,579	\$ 40,195	\$ 74,865	\$ 262,101
Total	\$1,568,000	\$ 308,522	\$ 351,678	\$ 322,933	\$ 584,867	\$ 1,568,000

Appendix 2 – Details and Outcomes

Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016)

Project Title	FTE Positions	Assessment Method	Measurable Outcomes
Highlighting Minnesota Artists	10.27 (FY16)	Stream Requests	Projected: 380,000 Actual: 562,865*
		Minnesota Artists Featured On-Air	Projected: 2,000 Actual: 3,046
		Radio and Digital Minnesota Arts Features	Projected: 1,400 Actual: 3,989*
		Page Views	Projected: 1,700,000 Actual: 2,346,882*
		On-Air Listeners (estimated weekly cume)	Projected: 50,000 Actual: 55,000
		Performances Produced for Broadcast	Projected: 120 Actual: 300
Live Events Arts Experiences	1.51 (FY16)	Live Events	Projected: 15 Actual: 18
		Local Performers	Projected: 100 Actual: 172
		Event Attendees	Projected: 6,700 Actual: 9,991
Preserving Minnesota History	1 (FY16)	Stories Digitized	Projected: 2,000 Actual: 22,000
Supporting Music Education	1.89 (FY16)	Students Reached	Projected: 24,000 Actual: 25,740
		Minnesota Artist Participants	Projected: 15 Actual: 32
		Schools Participating	Projected: 45 Actual: 66
		Minnesota Counties Served	Projected: 16 Actual: 20

Sources for outcomes listed above and cited throughout report:

- Listenership data © Nielsen Audio, July 2015-June 2016, Persons 12+.
- Page view data from Google Analytics, 2016.
- Stream request data from Ando Media, 2016.

*Note: Coverage of Prince’s death resulted in larger than projected numbers.

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