



MINNESOTA IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE A VISUAL ARTIST

The recent 2017 Creative Minnesota study has a lot of interesting angles about the arts in Minnesota, and you can find several surprising (maybe not so surprising?) things about the state's visual arts sector in the research.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND GRAPHIC DESIGNERS ARE TWO OUT OF FOUR OF THE LARGEST CREATIVE PROFESSIONS IN MN

Creative Minnesota studied national data on the impact of 41 creative occupations on Minnesota's economy.

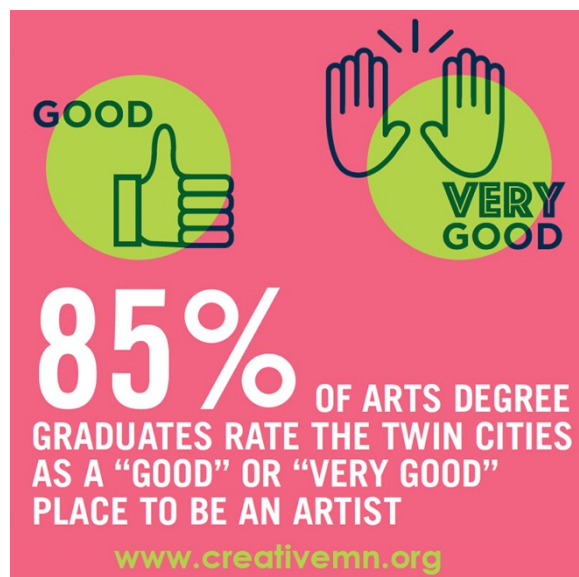
These creative occupations included many specific to visual arts, including curators, art directors, craft artists, fine artists including



painters, sculptors and illustrators, multimedia artists and animators, commercial and industrial designers, fashion, floral, graphic and interior designers, set and exhibition designers, photographers, camera operators, film and video editors, and others. The study did not differentiate between for-profit or not-for-profit workplaces.

There are 16,403 photographers in Minnesota, the largest creative worker profession in the state. The fourth largest profession is graphic designers, with 9,530 workers.

MOST ARTS DEGREE GRADUATES THINK THE TWIN CITIES IS A GREAT PLACE TO BE AN ARTIST



Surveys of arts graduates from around the country, including from participating Minnesota schools Minneapolis College of Art and Design, St. Cloud State University, the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities found that the Twin Cities, St. Olaf College, and the College of Visual Arts and rated significantly higher than other cities of comparable population size around the country as a good place to be an artist.

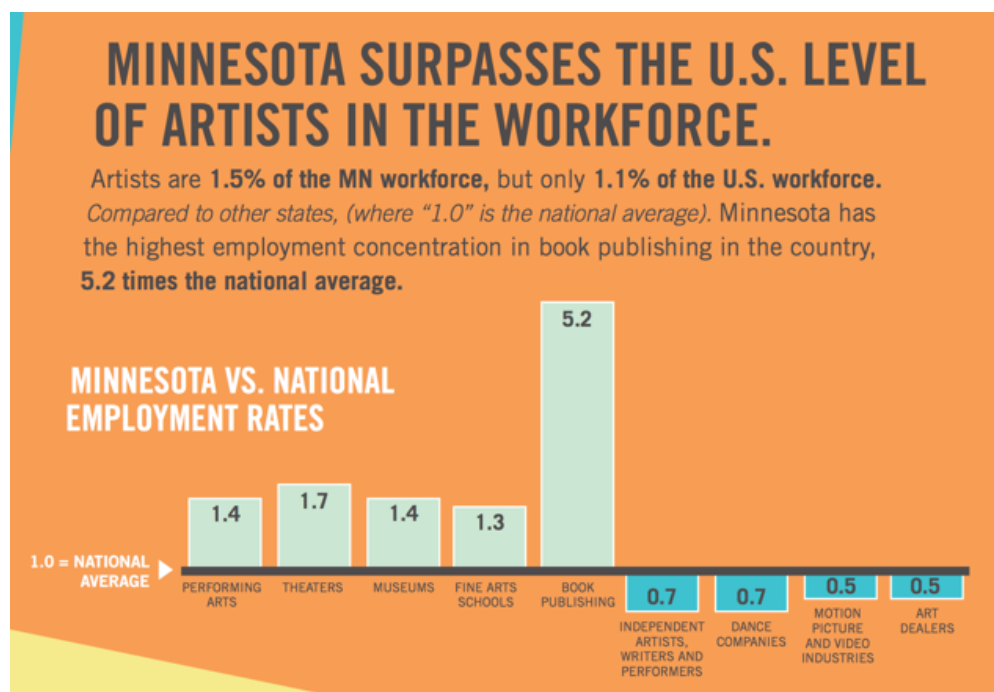
When combined, the percentage of artists responding that the Twin Cities are "good" or "very good" is nearly as high as New

York and Los Angeles and tied with Chicago, a much larger city.

The Twin Cities also had the highest rating in the Midwest, as well as one of the highest level of respondents reporting themselves to be professional artists, at 56 percent.

HOWEVER, MINNESOTA IS LOW ON ART GALLERY EMPLOYMENT

Unfortunately, the 2015 Creative Minnesota study found that Minnesota is below the national rate of employment in art galleries. You can see in the next graph how Minnesota compares to the national average:



MANY NONPROFIT VISUAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Minnesota has a huge visual arts sector in part because there are over 156 visual arts nonprofit organizations in Minnesota, including:

Watermark Art Center, Northern Artist Association, Nemeth Art Center, Lake of the Woods Arts Guild, Bemidji Sculpture Walk, Tweed Museum of Art, North House Folk School, Duluth Art Institute, MacRostie Art Center, Grand Marais Art Colony, Jaques Art Center, Virginia Mural Committee, SoHo Artists, Ely Greenstone Public Art, Ely Artwalk, Hovland Arts Festival, Duluth Fiber Handcrafters Guild, Duluth Pop-up Galleries, Rourke Art Gallery Museum, Kaddatz Galleries, Art of the Lakes, Cormorant Area Art Club, Brush & Palette Club, Pope Art, Greater Wadena Arts League, Milan Village Arts School, Meander Art Crawl, Hutchinson Public Arts Commission, Minnesota Pottery Festival, Rock County Fine Arts Assn.,

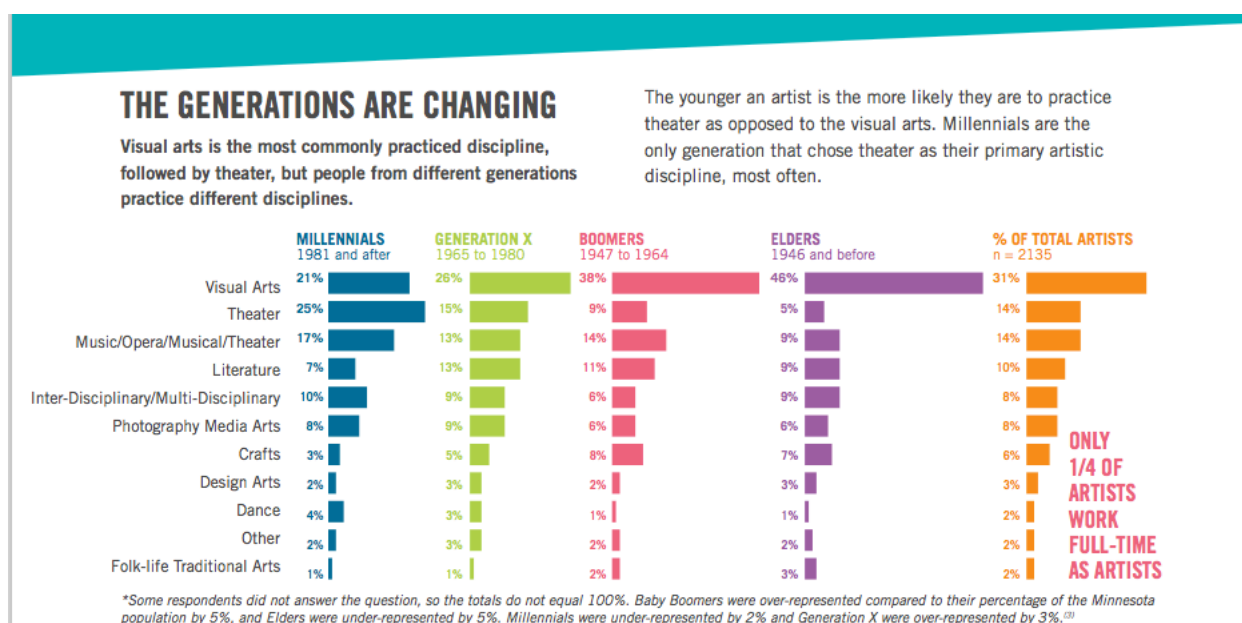
Fiber and Fabric Guild, Franconia Sculpture Park, St. Croix Valley Pottery Tour, Depot Studios, Kanabec County Art Association, Northern Exposures Photography Club, Visual Arts Minnesota, Millstream Arts Festival, Paradise Center for the Arts, Arts Center of St. Peter, Red Rock Center for the Arts, Wanda Gag House Association, The 410 Project, Rochester Art Center, Minnesota Marine Art Museum, Austin Area Commission for the Arts, ArtReach St. Croix, Albert Lea Art Center, ArtReach Red Wing, Bluff Country Studio Tour, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Weisman Art Museum, American Craft Council, Artistry, American Assoc. of Woodturners, Minnetonka Center for the Arts, The Museum of Russian Art, Juxtaposition Arts, Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Minnesota Museum of American Art, Textile Center, The Soap Factory, Highpoint Center for Printmaking, White Bear Center for the Arts, Goldstein Museum of Design, Midway Contemporary Art, Lakeville Area Arts Center, Art-Start, Foci Minnesota Center for Glass Arts, Weavers Guild of Minnesota, Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association, Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, Franklin Art Works, The Atelier Studio Program of Fine Art,

Katherin E. Nash Galler, All My Relations Arts, Eden Prairie Arts Center, Soo Visual Arts Center, Mentoring Peace Through Art, Articulture, Obsidian Arts, Henning Landmark Center, Altered Esthetics, Ka Joog, Women of the West Quilters, OverExposure, Gateway Mural Project, Burnsville Visual Arts Society, TuckUnder Projects, Edge of the Big Woods Art Wander, North Artists' Studio Crawl, Artists del Norte, and others.

VISUAL ARTS IS THE MOST COMMONLY PRACTICED DISCIPLINE AMONG MINNESOTA'S ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS, BUT THAT IS CHANGING WITH YOUNGER GENERATIONS

Part of this year's Creative Minnesota report was a statewide survey of Minnesota's artists and creative workers. The different generations report practicing different art forms, with 46 percent of those born before 1946 most commonly doing the visual arts and Millennials most often (25 percent) practicing theater.

The popularity of visual arts as an art-form has been dropping with each successive generation.



LOTS OF PART-TIME ARTISTS

Interestingly, people in the “design arts” were most likely to report that they were full-time artists (36 percent) compared to other artistic disciplines. (The remaining 39 percent of people in design arts reported being part-time, and 25 percent reported that they were hobbyists, students, or retired).

People in “visual arts,” in contrast, reported that 23 percent were full-time.

Only 22 percent of workers in photography reported working full-time in their field.

WITH SO MANY VISUAL ARTISTS WORKING PART-TIME, AVERAGE INCOMES FROM WRITING WERE LOW:

Visual artists were low among all artistic disciplines in reported average income. Visual artists make on average \$8,528 from their art, with \$27,913 in earnings from other jobs, for a total average income of \$36,411.

Download the full report to see how visual artists compare to other artists at www.creativeMN.org.

THE REST OF THE REPORT

Creative Minnesota highlights the positive impact being made by artists and creative workers. The study found that every region of the state has a robust arts economy, from the prairies of southwest Minnesota to the busy Twin Cities area to the tourist magnet that is the North Shore. The combined annual economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences, and artists and creative workers statewide is over \$2 billion, making **Minnesota's arts economy double the size of Wisconsin's even though we have roughly the same population.** (It is ten and a half times that of Kansas, and twelve and a half times that of South Dakota.)

Clearly, if you are a young creative person looking for a job in a creative field in the Midwest, you should load up your car and move to Minnesota.

Multiple surveys show the unique relationship of Minnesotans to the arts. Minnesotans strongly believe that the arts and culture are important to their quality of life, and, on average, Minnesotans attend and participate in the arts more often than other Americans. Compared to the average American, Minnesotans are eight percent more likely to attend arts and culture events and 14 percent more likely to be personally involved in creative activity in their everyday life. Ninety-one percent of Minnesotans believe that people who create art are contributing something important to their communities, and 90 percent believe that arts and culture activities help make Minnesota an attractive place to live and work. Most also believe it is important to express themselves creatively or to experience the creativity of others every day. These numbers help explain why Minnesotans consider the arts to be crucial to the state's quality of life. High levels of activity by artists and arts and culture organizations also bring added benefits to the state's budget. Artists and nonprofit arts and culture organizations spend

money in their communities by hiring people, renting studio space and buying supplies at the hardware store. State and local government revenue from this spending in the form of income and sales taxes exceeded \$222 million a year in 2014. That is over five times the amount that the arts received in public funding.

Minnesota is home to 1601 nonprofit arts and culture organizations which served 22 million attendees at arts and cultural events in 2014. On average, Minnesota's 5.6 million residents attend four events a year. But it is not only Minnesotans who attend arts and culture events. People come from all over the Midwest and beyond to participate, making up roughly 15 percent of arts and culture attendees.

Minnesota's arts and culture organizations also provide 3.8 million K-12 students with cultural experiences, hosting 29,318 school group visits each year. With approximately 900,000 K-12 students in Minnesota, **on average every student is participating four times a year in arts and culture activities, many of them for free**, provided by these nonprofits because of funding from the Legacy Amendment. (Minnesotans passed the Legacy Amendment in 2008, creating dedicated state funding for the arts and environment.)

An astonishing 104,000 people work as artists and creative workers in Minnesota. Twenty-four percent of self-identified artists are employed full time as artists; 42 percent are part time; and the rest, 34 percent, are retired, hobbyists or students. About 70 percent of these people live in the Metro area. It's important to note that artists live in every corner of the state, however, and while there are of course high density clusters of creative workers in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, Benton, Carver, Cass, Cook, Martin and Marshall counties also had high densities of creative workers.

The arts and culture industry in Minne-

sota is growing, but there are still reasons for concern and work for us to do.

For example, *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that women and artists of color make less from their work than other artists, mirroring wage disparities in the larger workforce.

A recent Minnesota State Arts Board survey found that there are five things that artists need to help them be more successful making a living as a creative worker:

1. Artists need a space to work and access to tools of their trade.
2. Artists have shown a strong interest in opportunities to connect more with each other and more opportunities to serve their communities.
3. Younger, emerging artists are looking for a chance to learn new skills while more experienced, professional artists would like to pass on their skills. Creating mentorships and partnerships to transfer skills to a new generation would be beneficial to all.
4. Artists would like to learn new ways to develop a paying audience and generate income from their work. We all like to get paid for what we do, but this can be a hurdle for newer and unestablished artists. Wider access to workshops and other classes on arts business development would be helpful.
5. Last, but not least, artists want to reach an ever-wider audience and markets.

Despite these needs, **85 percent of arts graduates say that the Twin Cities is a “Good” or “Very Good” place to be an artist. Being an attractive place for creative workers is great for Minnesota’s future**, because in addition to being part of many growing industries, artists are very civically engaged.

Artists and arts advocates give back to their

communities more than the average American. Eighty-eight percent of artists volunteer their time to community activities and events. That compares to 35 percent of all Minnesotans and 25 percent of all Americans who volunteer time for their local communities.

Overall, the study shows that the arts and culture have a unique place in the civic life of Minnesota, and that artists and creative workers and nonprofit arts and culture organizations are having a positive impact. The state’s commitment to arts and culture help make Minnesota thrive.

-Sheila Smith

Executive Director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and Chair of Creative Minnesota 5/23/17

For more information, the statewide *Creative Minnesota 2017* report as well as 11 new regional studies can be downloaded for free at www.CreativeMN.org, where you can also find the study’s data sources.

Creative Minnesota is a collaborative project of the state’s arts supporting organizations in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA) www.artsMN.org. The Creative Minnesota Team includes MCA, The McKnight, Jerome, Bush, and Mardag foundations, Target, the Minnesota State Arts Board and Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota, Springboard for the Arts, The Minnesota Theater Alliance, with in-kind support from the Center for Urban and Rural Affairs at the U of M, Ideas that Kick, City of Minneapolis and others.

