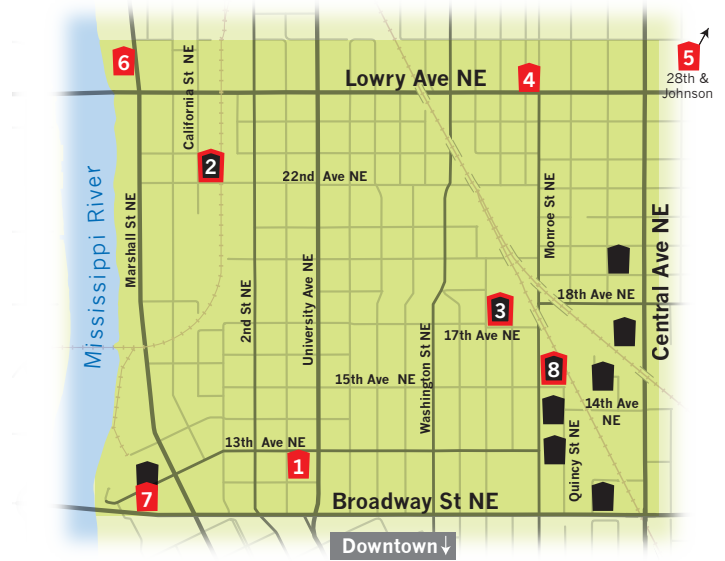




# arts INSIGHTS

A page about artists and The Arts at Work by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District in collaboration with the Northeast.



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Solar Arts

## Thanks!

To assist voters in learning about the multitude of candidates running for the Minnesota House of Representatives 60A seat ultimately won by Sydney Jordan, five neighborhood organizations and the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District held a forum on Monday, January 13 at Solar Arts Building.

Working with Logan Park, Sheridan, Northeast Park, St. Anthony East and Beltrami opened the potential for more joint activities between Northeast neighborhoods and the Arts District board. We look forward to working with Representative Jordan.

An estimated 225 people attended and 839 viewed MCN6's live-stream/tape of the public forum; 4,686 voted in the primary and 2,149 in the February 4 general election.

## PechaKucha

March 1, 6-8 pm at Rogue Buddha Gallery, 357 13th Ave. NE. Join a handful of artists for fast-paced presentations to spark discussion on "The Art of Death as Part of Life, and Beyond." Part of the cycle of life, death returns nutrients to the earth. Many are curious about the possibility of an afterlife, heaven, hell, or purgatory. Death can bring grief, relief, emotions of ambiguous loss and other things unresolved.

Artists presenting include: Christin Ament, Nicholas Harper, Gustavo Lira, Denise Tennen, Peggy Thompson (aka Margaret Carroll), and Nikki Tundel.

Presented in conjunction with the Twin Cities Death Cafe, which will start about 7 p.m. and is dedicated to normalizing death as a topic of conversation.



Collection Point, at left, integrates art sourced from the Northeast community, reproduced on the undersides of cast concrete lids. Photo at right is looking up from inside the new installation near the Northeast corner of 26th and University Avenue.



(Photos courtesy of Randy Walker)

# Randy Walker's new public art in NE a nod to daily city living

**by Josh Blanc**

Artist Randy Walker has created an iconic public art piece as a welcoming entry point into the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District at the new East Side Storage and Maintenance Facility in the Holland neighborhood. The facility at the corner of University and 26th Avenues NE is a multi-purpose municipal operations campus for city vehicles, equipment, storage, maintenance and offices. While many of the city's fleet of garbage trucks and garbage bins are in the building, no trash is collected or stored in the building.

I first met Randy almost twenty years ago, at his then studio in the Northrup King Building (2001 - 2009). His works, made of string and found objects, stood out to me as very thoughtful, able to transform regular objects into mesmerizing pieces of art. Since then, Walker has made an amazing career of public art throughout Minnesota, all over the country and here in Minneapolis. His Bracket Park sculpture *Return Journey* is a piece of public art that draws all ages. He "re-imagined the rocket by elevating it into

the sky and anchoring it to the earth ... the cables give it an apparent motion through space while simultaneously tethering it to its original site."

While his studio is no longer in Northeast, this new project, *Collection Point*, has brought him back to the neighborhood. Randy talked about how he studied and borrowed from the environment to create the piece. A maintenance facility that works with garbage was not an immediate inspirational launching pad, but he started to realize that garbage trucks and the workers are one of the regular touch points residents have with the city and its staff. Even his regular trips to his own garbage bin became inspiring—the repetitiveness of opening and closing the bin had a pop culture connection, the arc of the hinged lid started to intrigue him. Eventually Randy's genius led him to re-appropriate 96 of the lids into cast concrete forms at 180 pounds each; the finished piece showcases the many lids opening up as if reaching to the sky. A structure 30 feet tall and 18 feet in diameter with a bracket ladder sys-

tem will hold the lids. American Art Stone in New Ulm created the mold and produced the pieces; the whole sculpture weighs 20,000 lbs.

Throughout the course of the project, working with the artwork steering committee and the city arts administrator, Randy engaged with community members in outreach sessions at local businesses, community centers and schools. An activity was designed to solicit comments concerning the city in general, and Northeast in particular; a diverse group of participants responded both in drawings and words about what is meaningful to life here. *Collection Point* will include a gallery (or collection) of selected responses, which were reproduced graphically and transferred to pre-cast panels.

A gateway to the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District, this public art piece also serves as a nod to the workers and residents of this historically working class neighborhood. A new working facility and a modern artwork stand side-by-side in welcoming people to the center of Northeast.

# Congratulations to artists awarded State Arts Board grants

Fourteen artists working in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District were awarded Minnesota State Arts Board grants totaling \$135,800. Most will receive \$10,000 for their projects. Congratulations to all the recipients. Here's what they will do

- with their grants:
- John Akre** will create *My Northeast and Yours*, a film essay combining documentary and community-created collage animation about the making and remaking of place in Northeast Minneapolis.
  - Leslie Barlow and Lola Osunkoya** will present *Within, Between, Beyond*, an interactive exhibit featuring videos, portraits, and activities for learning about the identity experiences of mixed race people and transracial adoptees.
  - Colleen Bertsch** will create new arrangements of traditional Romanian Colinde (carols) for advanced singers and instrumentalists and present a public performance of this repertoire. The performance will be recorded and released on CD.
  - Kristin Boldon** will work with a mentor to complete a new draft of her first memoir, *Brokedown*. A panel of readings and information on parenting and mental health will be held at The Coffee Shop Northeast in Minneapolis.
  - Marjorie Fedyszyn** will learn new

- techniques in draping, pattern drafting, and sewing for a new installation on the theme of aging; and will lead elderly memory care residents in the exploration of self through self portraiture.
- Annie Hejny** will become certified in forest therapy and apply the scientific impact of stress reduction in nature to create a new body of artwork. She will host an artist talk and plan for future community engagement with youth.
- Rebecca Krinke** will create a large-scale installation focused on investigating the mystery of dreams. An exhibition will be at Rosalux Gallery in 2020.
- Gregory Lecker** will create portraits of our state's three watersheds while engaging Minnesotans in conversation and painting demonstrations offered within each watershed. Lecker will exhibit *Watersheds* at Waseca Art Center.
- Morgan Mercer**: To connect with new audiences and cultivate a larger presence in greater Minnesota, Mercer will develop a new body of

- abstract paintings that will exhibit in a gallery outside of the Twin Cities.
- Kathy Mommsen** will create a ceramic wall while observing dancers from TU Dance Company as models. The wall will be installed at TU Dance studio in Saint Paul and will be unveiled at an art/dance event and talk-back.
- Beth Peloff** will create a five-minute stop-motion animated video that combines sand animation with other two-dimensional stop-motion techniques to explore themes of transformation and the passage of time.
- Russ White** will create a series of large-scale mixed media drawings of the human form, visualizing

- energy and emotion in abstracted portraiture and figure study.
- Andy Richter** will complete his series *Walking with Julien*. He will create an exhibition of the work for the community and offer an artist talk and photography workshop in Northeast Minneapolis.
- Mary Welke** will create new, mixed media paintings about prairie, farmland burns, and land renewal. An exhibition, public conversation, and inter-generational painting workshop will be held at the Northfield Arts Guild.

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