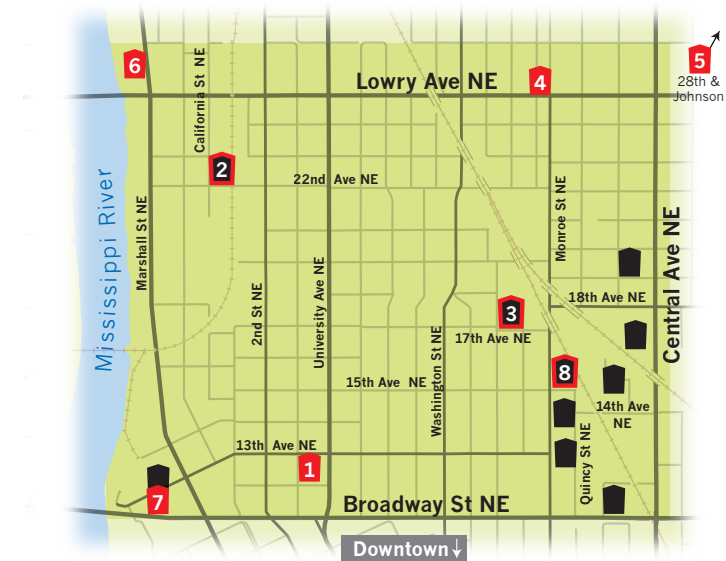




arts INSIGHTS

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



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Female poets known nationwide gathered at Eat My Words Bookstore in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District to give powerful readings on Feb. 22. Mark Peterson's report on the event, held in conjunction with ART365, is on pages 3 and 6 of the 3-11-2020 Northeast, and online at northeastminneapolisartsdistrict.org. Left to right: Katie Vagnino, Isadora Gruye, Sonia Greenfield, Ethna McKiernan, Peuo Tuy.

(Photo by Mark Peterson)

NEMAA annual meeting: review and recovery

by Margo Ashmore

Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association's new president Brian Burke kicked off his part of NEMAA's annual meeting on February 25 with a message of accessibility. He said he's open to talk with anyone interested (email brian@NEMAA.org).

The organization, which produces Art-A-Whirl, not only paid off \$75,000 of debt from 2018 in 2019, but now has moved \$40,000 into savings. Following the example of prior leaders, according to treasurer Nancy Przymus, NEMAA would like to see about one-third of their \$340,000 operation kept in reserve, so there's a ways to go, but much progress made.

Last year, NEMAA had twelve different income streams, the largest of which was membership dues at 24.7% or over \$93,000. Directory/magazine advertising was 17.7%, in-kind donations 14.7% and grants 13.8%. Stakeholders were thanked for their participation.

Executive Director Anna Becker announced partnerships that will

enhance the engagement of Art-A-Whirl on May 15-17, 2020. Fulton Brewing will hold a bike art event, Wet Paint is donating supplies for demonstrations, and the Northeast Minneapolis Lions Club will support the trolleys, which will have an expanded route this year to include the Flux Arts and Holland Arts buildings.

Becker also announced that the trolleys will be able to use 22nd Avenue, which in past years had been blocked by a bar-sponsored street party. She explained that NEMAA is working with alcohol purveyors on ways to support the arts.

There were a few questions from the approximately 40 attendees, a couple who asked if NEMAA would (paraphrasing here) address gentrification.

Northeast Minneapolis Arts District was recognized for its work in that area.

"We look forward to working more with NEMAA," said Northeast Minneapolis Arts District board chair Josh Blanc.

Intimate conversation with a roomful of strangers

by Margo Ashmore

"The Art of Death as Part of Life and Beyond," a PechaKucha Night held March 1 at Rogue Buddha Gallery, brought people of all ages, genders, orientations and ethnicities into the same room, said one observer.

Northeast Minneapolis Arts District sponsors the PechaKuchas. For this event, a series of fast-paced presentations of images was followed, after a break, by Death Café Twin Cities, a format in which people explore death-related topics in small groups. About 40 people of the 80 in attendance for the PechaKucha stayed for the Death Café, which seeks to embrace and honor death as a part of life.

"It's not a grief group," said Christin Ament, organizer, "If you are actively grieving I can give you resources for that." (For DCTC future meetings, see <https://www.facebook.com/DeathCafeTwinCities/>)

Artists' presented how their work was shaped by death and dying close to them as adults or in their youth, and the complexities of relationships pre- and post-mortem.

Gustavo Lira shared traditions of Mexico around Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). It is not a day of

sadness, but of celebration as it's believed that loved ones awaken and celebrate with the living. Ofrendas, or altars, include food, drink and photographs.

Nikki Tundel, who photographs objects that people leave at grave sites, commented on how, in some eyes for example, children who die are perceived as staying the same age forever, as demonstrated by toys or dolls left for them. Others are celebrated on their birthdays with age-appropriate items, celebratory drinks or poems — common to all ages of the deceased.

These items represent the living family's and friends' feelings about the individual and go beyond the obligatory or usual commercially available tributes.

Common conversation starters in the discussion groups were "what brought you here, and what are



Gustavo Lira's parting image.

your questions?" People in one of the groups talked about items or sounds that trigger memories of a person and help heal loss. And there was more than occasional laughter upon sharing fond memories and the discovery of commonality with otherwise strangers.

Watch this space for other PechaKucha events on various topics, approximately quarterly, sponsored by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District's HATCH committee. Not esoteric salons, these are energizing events, accessible to anyone.

DOG DAY

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New podcast: Art Wonderful

Nicholas Harper, artist and owner of Rogue Buddha Gallery, has thrust himself into the world of podcasting. If you have ever wanted to get the insights of an artist and gallery owner working in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District, this is an excellent virtual way to engage. Called Art Wonderful, Harper describes its mission as spreading the gospel of the arts, their essential value to our everyday lives and a deep dive exploration into this most mysterious of subjects.

Weekly episodes oscillate between solo commentary on art-related topics



where host Harper shares his additional perspectives as curator and collector, and conversations he has with artists, collectors and arts-related professionals. Art Wonderful is the perfect podcast for art enthusiasts, from

artists to collectors to those who just love the arts as a spectator or are simply curious what the arts are all about.

"We hope you join us weekly as we build a catalogue of perspectives into the arts that you'll find invaluable, as you explore your own passion for the arts and, ultimately, for life," Harper said.

Art Wonderful is available on Stitcher, Spotify and Podserve.FM.



Mercedes Austin, founder and owner of Mercury Mosaics, was featured on the cover of Upsize Minnesota magazine's January-February issue, and inside the publication in an article about "finding funding."

Many might not have heard of Upsize as it is a Minnesota magazine aimed at small business owners. It is always newsworthy when an artisan can do a crossover into other community news and vice versa. The featured article focuses on non-traditional funding, an area where many artists struggle when looking for resources for larger projects or ideas.

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