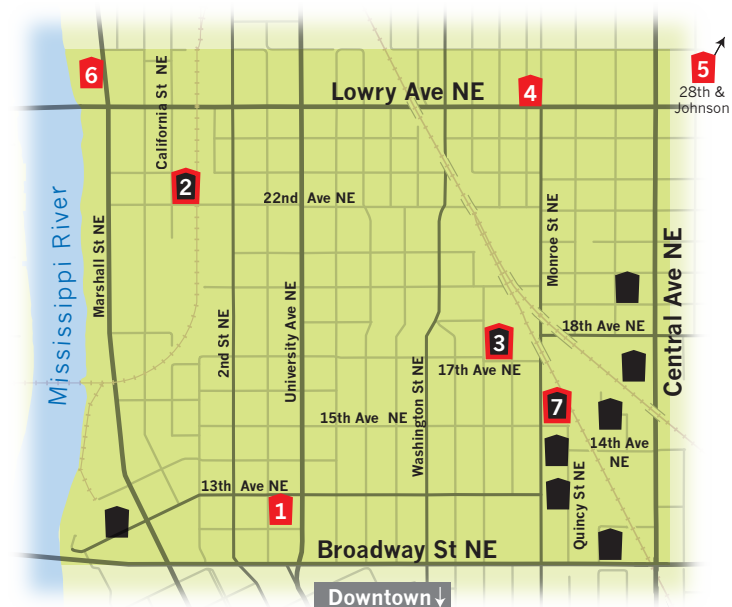




arts INSIGHTS

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



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Documentary photos, arts move awareness, change

by Josh Blanc

Art has been front and center throughout the past year responding to the pandemic and the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin. Art throughout history has always been a powerful medium to help society understand complicated and difficult situations. For reference, two artists who documented their societies' indifference and brutality were Francis Goya of Spain, 1746-1828 and American Gordon Parks, 1912-2006.

Francis Goya's "Third of May 1808" painting depicted "French soldiers aiming their guns at a Spanish man, who stretches out his arms in submission both to the men and to his fate. A country hill behind him takes the place of an executioner's wall. A pile of dead bodies lies at his feet, streaming blood. To his other side, a line of Spanish rebels stretches endlessly into the landscape. They cover their eyes to avoid watching the death that they know awaits them. The city and civilization is far behind them. Even a monk, bowed in prayer, will soon be among the



Untitled, New York, New York, 1963. Photograph by Gordon Parks Courtesy of & © The Gordon Parks Foundation

dead." [quote from <https://kiamaartgallery.wordpress.com/2015/04/17/romanticism-francisco-goya-the-third-of-may-1808-1814/>]

Gordon Parks influenced social justice through his photography from 1940 to the 2000s.

"Gordon Parks, one of the greatest photographers of the twentieth century, was a humanitarian with a deep commitment to social justice. He left behind an exceptional body of work that documents American life and culture from the early 1940s into the 2000s, with a focus on race relations, poverty, civil rights, and

urban life. Parks was also a distinguished composer, author, and filmmaker who interacted with many of the leading people of his era—from politicians and artists to athletes and other celebrities." [From <https://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/gordon-parks/biography/>]

Currently, many artists in the Arts District have channeled consciously or subconsciously with these and other figures from art history to symbolize place, time, and voice. Peyton Scott Russell, Leslie Barlow, their associates and others have

reached international audiences with their work.

Art has a special power to expose injustice, galvanize and catalyze emotion into change.

To see 1,696 pieces of social justice art made in Minneapolis and throughout the country, go to <https://georgefloydstreetart.omeka.net/>

"Justice for George: Messages from the People," an exhibit of some of the 2020 mural art saved, will be at Phelps Park May 21-23. Register to attend at: <https://www.memorializethemovement.com/2021-exhibition>

Mavericks Wary and Fierce



by Margo Ashmore

"It's fun to realize that all the connections I had to get this project done happened in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District or just outside of it. We are so lucky to live/work in such a great community that we can take advantage of these connections and work together," said Kyle Fokken of his latest project.

Permanently installed as a gateway outside the event center where the Mankato State University Mavericks hockey team plays, the heads of two bulls are called The Wary and The Fierce. Fokken said, "I see these bulls as siblings, or as two sides of the same [free, maverick] spirit — one that is cautious, measured and wary, and one that is energetic, raging and driven. Each side complements the other to accomplish great things."

The donors who funded the project, Michelle and David Schoof, told the Mankato Free Press the two sculptures perfectly represent their passion



for the arts and support for a Division I hockey team. "We really want to make this a place where we can grow the game of hockey," Michelle said. "On game days, with the eyes lighting up in purple and the fog coming out of the snout — families can share that experience with their kids and make this arena a difficult place for competitors to come and play."

Northeast area artists and vendors involved include artist Brian Hart (referred by sculptor Aaron Dysart) who took pictures of the models and rendered them into a digital 3D design. Ben Janssens at Solid Metal Arts had the enlarged pieces cut out in layers



with his CNC plasma cutter. AZZ Galvanizing staff did the galvanizing. (Photo at left)

Fokken welded the CNC-cut layers together with spacers to get the general shape, then covered them with a lighter weight steel to act as the skin of the form. The eyes, nostrils and mouth had to be tweaked. "I also had to make sure that there were plenty of channels for the hot zinc metal galvanizing to go through so that the form wouldn't rupture. Finally, I had to work on a design that would be reasonably vandal proof but still allow Ben to add in the lighting system and channels for the fogger. It's a more complicated build than a static form. I welcomed the challenge to expand my knowledge."

Kyle Fokken Artist LLC is at www.kylefokken.com in Casket Arts Studio #120 (east side of building next to parking lot on 17th and Madison), 681 17th Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413.

(Photos courtesy of Kyle Fokken)

Arts organizations' news bits

by NE-AD Board of Directors

• The Northeast Minneapolis Arts District board congratulates Public Functionary, recipient of the remaining \$1 million from Intermedia Arts. The organization is inviting collaboration at hello@publicfunctionary.org. For more information, see their website and Facebook page.

• Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association continues to walk the transitional fine line between encouraging people to come in person/by appointment for Art-A-Whirl® May 14-16, and

facilitating shopping online. See their ad on page 4 for suggestions on how to navigate the gradual re-opening. And see the ads on this page for individual buildings intentions.

• Northeast Minneapolis Arts District/NECDC is proud to have received the go-ahead for an intern to work on our project of quantifying space in use for arts and other industries within the boundaries of the Arts District. We'll likely have an introduction to make in next month's Arts Insights.

• The nearly 250 artists involved

in the Airport Exhibits and anyone interested in seeing the high quality work can find images online at <https://northeastminneapolisartsdistrict.org/programs/msp/>

A delegation of board members joined Sam Fuentes of the Airport Foundation on April 27 to check out the exhibits in context of the massive Minneapolis & Saint Paul International Airport. Fuentes conveyed that the exhibits have gotten excellent reviews from the Foundation staff.

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