THE MINNEAPOLIS
CREATIVE INDEX 2013

Understanding the Scale and Impact of Minneapolis’ Creative Sector
A report from the City of Minneapolis’ program on Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy
Minneapolitans know that our city is infused with creative energy. From internationally recognized theater productions to community art projects that transform neighborhoods, the arts are a critical element of what makes Minneapolis vibrant. We know cultural offerings improve our quality of life and that these creative enterprises also contribute to our local and regional economy, but how do we begin to measure these impacts?

The Creative Vitality Index (CVI) developed by the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) provides one way of capturing the impact of the creative sector. The CVI is a measure commissioned by the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy program for the City of Minneapolis and captures some of the economic impacts of the creative sector. By measuring the share of creative jobs, arts spending, and creative for-profit and nonprofit organizations in a given city or region, the CVI captures nuances of the creative sector that many other measures miss. The creative sector is notoriously difficult to measure, and while CVI data is not complete, it does provide the City with an annual baseline measure to compare Minneapolis to metropolitan regions across the country.

This report, among others, places Minneapolis as a leader within the growing national dialogue about how the arts impact communities. In decades past, the conventional way cities measured the impact of the arts was through the lens of economic impact. While this is an important lens, we now have language and a growing body of research about how the arts impact urban development and communities. The term “creative placemaking” attempts to encompass this complexity, and this report is part of that national dialogue.

The CVI indicates that Minneapolis has a highly productive creative population measuring nearly five times more “creative vitality” than the national average. This creative population is made up of complex and interdependent layers of professions and organizations that range from fine artists to arts educators, from internationally recognized institutions to neighborhood venues and more. To better understand this complexity we have paired the hard data of the CVI with stories and statistics from leaders in the field. These leaders reveal how different industries within the creative sector work together to give Minneapolis its creative vitality, as well as how they measure their own impact.

**INTRODUCTION**

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WHAT IS THE CREATIVE VITALITY INDEX?

How the Creative Vitality Index is Measured
The Creative Vitality Index (CVI) is a tool that measures annual changes in the economic health of highly creative industries using information about organizational revenue, jobs, and other measures from creative businesses and nonprofits. One of its key benefits is that it captures occupational employment, a better way of measuring creative employment that the census misses. Because it uses nationally available annual data sources, the CVI allows us to compare Minneapolis to other geographic areas like the metropolitan area, the state, nation, or other cities, each year by assigning each area an index number that reflects its comparative creative vitality.

The Creative Vitality Index:

- Provides a framework for conceptualizing and understanding the creative economy as a network of many actors that range from fine artists to educators to nonprofit organizations.
- Educates arts leaders and helps them build strategies and policies that strengthen the creative sector and respond to deficiencies.
- Tracks and compares the creative economy regionally and nationally as a significant driver of economic growth and a key factor in an area’s quality of life.
- Leads by helping City government bring stakeholders in the creative sector together around strategies to address local industry deficiencies.

While the index does an excellent job of describing many elements of the creative sector, it also presents some shortcomings. The CVI relies heavily on business transactions and employment, leaving out many non-commerce-related arts impacts such as greater community cohesion and safety, feelings of well-being, expressions of identity, and even rates of attendance. Its employment data does not measure nonprofit organizations with annual budgets under $25,000. It also does not allow us to factor in demographic traits like race, age, or gender.

However, the CVI is an excellent baseline tool to grasp the size and overall impact of the creative sector and compare it to cities across the country. For details on methods and data sources of the CVI, see endnotes.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report is for policymakers, arts professionals, grantmakers, artists, and audiences.

Policymakers can use this report to help make informed decisions on arts activities that have a direct economic impact on neighborhood growth or decline. For example, the strength of downtown creative employment can help boost existing efforts for developing downtown housing for these creative workers and support plans for population growth in the area.

Arts Professionals can use this report to get an overview of the relative health and competitive advantage of different industries within the creative sector. It can also inspire arts decision makers and administrators to make better use of data collection to measure the impact of their own programs.

Grantmakers can use this report to view Minneapolis’ creative sector at a new level of detail. Viewing occupational data at the zip code level can be helpful in developing an overview of development needs in the creative community.

Artists and workers in highly creative industries can use this report to see how their fields measure up and fit into the greater whole.

Audiences, Arts Fans and Advocates can see that they are an important part of the creative economy. From sending their children to arts education programs to attending public art festivals, audiences are arts supporters and one of the most important elements of a thriving arts ecology. They participate in the creative sector financially as ticket buyers, product and service purchasers, volunteers, and individual donors.
KEY FINDINGS

The CVI helps us see how Minneapolis compares to the metropolitan region and the nation as a whole as a powerhouse of creative economic and social activity. CVI scores compare Minneapolis to the national average of 1.

The creative sector pumps on average $700M into the economy in a single year. Of the $700 million, $430 million were in retail sales. As a comparison, creative sector sales revenues are roughly 70% of the size of Minneapolis sports sector revenues.

Minneapolis’ CVI score outpaces the national average 4.8X OVER.

In 2010, the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan region had the 6TH HIGHEST CVI SCORE IN THE NATION.

Our local arts audiences and advocates provide strong support. Rates of revenue and charitable giving to nonprofit arts organizations that present artwork in Minneapolis are 13½X THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

The creative sector employs nearly 20,000 residents in Minneapolis alone, making up 5% OF ALL JOBS IN THE CITY. This indicates the creative sector has stayed steady even during tough economic times.

Minneapolis has especially high per capita revenues for theater companies and dinner theaters 14X THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

Highly Creative Zip Codes:
1. (downtown north) has 3,309 total creative employees, 17% of citywide creative employees.
2. (downtown south) has 2,277 total creative employees, 12% of citywide creative employees.

All data for 2011 unless otherwise noted.
MPLS CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS

BY SIZE, GROWTH & LOCATION QUOTIENT

This visualization shows total number of jobs in 2011, percentage change in the last 10 years, and location quotient, or density of jobs compared to the national average.

Location Quotient is an index value that measures whether or not there is a per-capita concentration of an occupation within the area being measured. LQs in this report are for the state of MN and show the relative concentration of employment when compared to the nation. For more information on location quotients, see endnotes.
When we talk about creative occupations, we mean fine artists like painters and dancers but also workers in creative industries like sound engineers and set designers. Minneapolis has a strong and diverse creative sector made up of nearly 20,000 jobs, comprising 5% of all instances of employment in Minneapolis—making our creative occupations 3.4 times more robust than the national average.

Looking at creative jobs between 2002-11, we see that the creative sector helped fuel Minneapolis’ overall job growth. Between 2005-7 growth in the creative sector outpaced overall job growth by a factor of two, growing 8% in those years compared to 4% overall. This growth was fueled in part by increases in occupations such as photography, musicians and singers, graphic design, writers, architects, and occupations related to television production. Despite this growth, however, creative occupations declined sharply during the recession.

Over a ten-year period, from 2002-2011 occupations where Minneapolis has the most competitive edge suffered losses (see previous page). This includes occupations related to the housing market like architects and landscape architects. Architects, who are also densely clustered in Minneapolis over four times the national average, have decreased by nearly 20% in the last ten years, and nearly 10% in the last three years. The decline in dancers (the second-fastest declining occupational group), may strike some as a surprise for a city that has a renowned dance community. This raises a red flag especially because dancers are very densely located in Minneapolis, at 5 times the concentration of the national average.

Over the last ten years, creative employment has increased by over 7%, just below the 8.6% growth rate of all occupations in Minneapolis. However, today, rates of creative employment hover around 2006 levels, without showing the same rate of recovery as other sectors: creative employment continues to slowly decline, by less than 1% in 2009-11. While we should celebrate the diversity and tenacity of the creative sector, this decline, and decline in key occupations, is a cause for concern. This data allows the city to develop future strategies to support creative job growth by targeting support at growing industries and bolstering flagging ones.

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RETAIL SALES

Buying a sculpture, paying for dance classes, attending a theater production—retail sales and revenue in the creative sector is an important facet of measuring the impact of creativity on our economy.

Over $430 million dollars of creative spending flowed through Minneapolis’ economy in 2011 through retail sales alone. This creative sector revenue accounted for 1% of the retail economy as a whole. As comparison, creative sector revenues are roughly 70% of the size of Minneapolis’ sports sector revenues. Compared to the nation, our CVI scores were above the national average, with performing arts revenues earning nearly ten times the national average.

The impact of these revenues does not stop here. We know that each dollar spent on the arts has a ripple effect. Other arts economy studies have shown that nonprofit arts and culture attendees spend on average $20.40 per person, excluding the cost of admission, on event-related purchases such as restaurants and parking. Many of these audiences are from outside Minneapolis, capturing that value for the city. In addition, arts organizations are businesses and generate spending of their own by purchasing materials and services from local retailers.

NONPROFIT COMMUNITY

Nonprofits in the creative sector produce and present artwork and deliver crucial support services. In Minneapolis, nonprofit arts organizations whose primary mission is to present artwork have a CVI score of over 13, a per-capita measure that takes into account nonprofit revenues and number of organizations. Minneapolis’ competitive advantage in arts nonprofits is a key part of its strength, demonstrating strong community demand for arts products and services. Even though in recent years there have been losses in nonprofit revenue, gifts and contributions to nonprofit arts organizations increased 10% from 2009-11 adding up to $180 million in total in 2011. Total arts nonprofit revenue was $300 million in 2011. This growth may be due, in part, to increased revenue from the landmark Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment passed in 2008. The amendment generates $7.5 billion dollars in statewide funding over a 25 year period, 19.75% of which goes towards arts and cultural activities.

CREATIVE ECONOMY REVENUES 2011

1% Photography Store Sales: $2,898,000
5% Book & Record Store Sales: $21,852,000
2% Music Store Sales: $9,870,000
49% Art Gallery/Dealer & Independent Sales: $211,094,000
43% Performing Arts Participation Revenues: $187,271,000

TOTAL: $432,985,000

$300M TOTAL REVENUE

1 More Creatively Vital
13x More Creatively Vital
4x More Creatively Vital

Nonprofit arts organizations whose primary mission is to present artwork
Nonprofit arts organizations that support or incorporate the arts

MINNEAPOLIS NATIONAL AVERAGE

MINNEAPOLIS NATIONAL AVERAGE

Minneapolis boasts not only a strong local arts community that lives and works here, we also draw a regional audience that supports our creativity. In a national context, the Minneapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has the sixth highest CVI score in the country. Minneapolis is a cultural powerhouse in the state as well: the MSA boasts 74% of all of Minnesota's creative occupations, and Minneapolis itself hosts 21% of all of Minnesota's creative occupations. Within Minneapolis, we see high concentrations of creative workers in downtown and the University of Minnesota and Loring Park neighborhoods. This unique concentration of creative activity is essential to what makes Minneapolis—and Minnesota—tick.

**HOW WE MEASURE UP**

Minneapolis boasts 74% of all of MN's creative occupations.

Minneapolis holds 21% of MN's creative occupations.

**NO. 6 MOST CREATIVELY VITAL METROPOLITAN AREA IN THE COUNTRY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Index 2008</th>
<th>Index 2009</th>
<th>Index 2010</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.484</td>
<td>2.564</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA MSA</td>
<td>2.932</td>
<td>2.181</td>
<td>2.114</td>
<td>-6.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA MSA</td>
<td>2.012</td>
<td>2.014</td>
<td>2.027</td>
<td>0.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH MSA</td>
<td>1.676</td>
<td>1.727</td>
<td>1.723</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI MSA</td>
<td>1.481</td>
<td>1.518</td>
<td>1.506</td>
<td>1.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA MSA</td>
<td>1.432</td>
<td>1.435</td>
<td>1.469</td>
<td>2.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver-Aurora-Broomfield, CO MSA</td>
<td>1.216</td>
<td>1.282</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Lake City, UT MSA</td>
<td>1.232</td>
<td>1.178</td>
<td>1.267</td>
<td>2.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX MSA</td>
<td>1.196</td>
<td>1.219</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>3.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas-Paradise, NV MSA</td>
<td>1.399</td>
<td>1.311</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>-12.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA MSA</td>
<td>1.194</td>
<td>1.151</td>
<td>1.168</td>
<td>-2.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA</td>
<td>1.366</td>
<td>1.176</td>
<td>1.161</td>
<td>-0.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT MSA</td>
<td>1.177</td>
<td>1.226</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>-2.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, CA MSA</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>1.053</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td>-2.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI MSA</td>
<td>1.301</td>
<td>1.099</td>
<td>1.071</td>
<td>-2.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>1.068</td>
<td>1.063</td>
<td>-3.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus, OH MSA</td>
<td>1.027</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indianapolis-Carmel, IN MSA</td>
<td>1.053</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>-2.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI MSA</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>0.999</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>2.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH MSA</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.027</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td>0.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA MSA</td>
<td>0.987</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>-1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, MO-KS MSA</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>0.968</td>
<td>0.954</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA MSA</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>0.947</td>
<td>7.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore-Towson, MD</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>-0.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI MSA</td>
<td>0.983</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>0.931</td>
<td>-5.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL MSA</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>-7.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC MSA</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh-Cary MSA</td>
<td>1.081</td>
<td>0.965</td>
<td>0.887</td>
<td>-17.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, MO-IL MSA</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.825</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>3.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati-Middletown, OH-KY-IN-MSA</td>
<td>0.822</td>
<td>0.825</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memphis, TN-MS-AR MSA</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.713</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>6.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX MSA</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-1.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale, AZ MSA</td>
<td>0.699</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>3.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duluth, MN-WI MSA</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td>0.706</td>
<td>9.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEFINING THE CREATIVE SECTOR

We know from the CVI that art and artists are drivers in our City’s economy. Yet how to describe the complexities of the sector is a subject of debate within the arts community. A creative ecosystem model, developed by the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy program, represents the sector as a system of exchanges and reveals these important complexities that help explain the interdependence of arts participation and economic drivers. Within the creative ecology we include not only artists, but architects and designers, artists and arts educators, foundation funders, and theater-goers. This visual system maps out the creative sector as a dynamic ecology of economic and social relationships.²

Creative Ecology Highlights

**FINE ARTS**
Highly skilled fine art producers are central to our creative ecology. The core purpose of these artists and organizations is to create art. Without their activity of art-making there would be no system of economic or social exchange.

**ART SERVICE ORGS**
Support art producers

**ARTS EDUCATION**
Educate next generation of producers/supporters/consumers

**CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**
The creative industries use creativity to add monetary value to a functional product such as a hamburger or a house. Thus, a designer burger is more expensive than a fast food chain burger; a handmade artisan crafted chair more expensive than a factory product. Creativity is the driving force behind these cost differences. It is this added value that makes creative industries key players in the creative economy.

**ARTS FESTIVALS**
Participation/vibrancy/placemaking cultural celebration

**CROSS-SECTOR ARTS**
Skilled producers with indirect arts goals

**CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**
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**ARTS EDUCATION**
Arts education is a key component of our ecology. It creates the next generation of consumers and producers of art and creativity. It also plays an important role in the ecology by employing artists in teaching positions.

**PHILANTHROPY & PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT**
Community infrastructure/framework or support

**CIVIC GROUPS**
Active/direct participants

**ART FANS**
Indirect participants

**ECONOMIC & SOCIAL EXCHANGE**
The interdependence of arts participation and economic drivers

Pillsbury House and Theatre (PHT) blends its theater and social service mission to create challenging theater that inspires choice, change and connection through major theater productions, community engagement programs, and social services. In 2008, two separate but co-located units of Pillsbury United Communities merged, combining Pillsbury House neighborhood social service center and Pillsbury House Theatre, into Pillsbury House United Community Services. The mission of these two organizations would enhance one another. PHT's community engagement programs include Breaking Ice, a multi-racial, socio-political improvisational theater program, the Chicago Avenue Project, a theater-mentoring program that brings youth and adults together to create original theater, and artist residencies through the Hennepin County Home School Project and Minneapolis Public Schools. In 2011, 15,000 people participated in Neighborhood Center programs, and 10,000 were involved in Theater programs.

PHT's hybrid arts and social services model is a national example of how the theater arts combined with social services can transform communities. Noel Raymond, Co-Artistic Director, describes how art and social services work together:

"Art involves being able to see something that doesn't already exist and figure out how to get there. Our participants have multiple barriers, including generational poverty. We want them to cultivate an imagination, to think about a different future and how to get there. The ability to dream is something a lot of us take for granted. It is not a privilege that everyone enjoys. Art can help people do that. Theater is particularly good because it's a social and collaborative process. It relies on everyone's unique and particular talents coming together. For kids, there's an experience of public recognition and success that can be life changing."

Why Minneapolis?

"You can build a life here. " Raymond said, "You can be a whole human being and not only an actor. The arts ecology here is a really unique web of collaboration and support among artist organizations. There's an overall foundation that the arts are part of the fabric of life." She explained how there is support on every level for the arts, in part because of the legacy of arts philanthropy. Although there is competition for resources, Raymond described how the possibility of philanthropic support added to the richness of creative life. "Artists are here, and when they don't get fellowships they do their own thing anyway...I see that all the time, people create their own opportunity in this city."

Social connectivity is intrinsic to the process of collaboration and creation, and an important outcome of creative activities such as making a piece of theatre or playing in an orchestra. To better understand the impacts of these social gains, we interviewed community leaders heading organizations large and small to understand how they evaluate the social capital of their creative activity. We discovered that Minneapolis is rich with organizations that place a high value on the social impact of their work and have deep experience engaging across sectors; embracing the public value of arts activities in festivals; harnessing the community’s collective energy in non-curated creative forums, and much more. While the social capital created by the creative sector may be difficult to measure (it is not measured by the CVI’s participation rates), it is important for us to acknowledge and understand the positive impacts of the arts beyond economics on our communities.

The national dialogue around creative placemaking amplifies the value of the arts as a vehicle for bringing diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired. These social gains, in turn, set the stage for economic renewal. How the arts impact the vitality and inclusiveness of social spaces is important and a dimension of creativity not measured by the CVI.

The arts ecology here is a really unique web of collaboration and support among artist organizations.

Theatre, a professional theater, with the goal that the missions of these two organizations would enhance one another. PHT's community engagement programs include Breaking Ice, a multi-racial, socio-political improvisational theater program, the Chicago Avenue Project, a theater-mentoring program that brings youth and adults together to create original theater, and artist residencies through the Hennepin County Home School Project and Minneapolis Public Schools. In 2011, 15,000 people participated in Neighborhood Center programs, and 10,000 were involved in Theater programs.

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Northern Spark 2012; Northern Lights MN


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Minneapolis Public Schools
Calvin Keasling, K-12 Arts Content Lead and Arts for Academic Achievement Director

The Minneapolis Public School District is a national leader in arts education. It provides K-12 fine arts education from licensed teachers at each of its sixty-one schools including a teaching artist program titled Arts for Academic Achievement (AAA) in forty-six of its schools. AAA involved 19,000 students, 453 teachers, and 533 classrooms in the 2011-12 school year. The mission of the district’s arts education and integration programming is to ensure that every day, each student receives a meaningful arts experience.

AAA curriculum focuses on four key categories; arts for observational technique, observational drawing, critical response, and understanding character and plot, development and identity. Through arts curriculum and programs that bring teaching artists into classrooms, children “learn in and through the arts.” As Calvin Keasling described, art education can be as diverse as a theater group teaching an improv exercise that helps a teacher focus her classroom, to exercises in radio and film that promote self expression and look at social issues.

Why Minneapolis?
Minneapolis’ arts community is enthusiastic about engaging with arts education. Minnesota, Keasling said, is one of the more progressive states for teaching artists in that there are multiple opportunities and pathways into the profession, there is a large support community, and because artists in Minnesota tend to be proactive and value teaching. Keasling said, “We have such a healthy arts community in the Twin Cities. Artists can choose to look at the art first because they know there is a community and that society values it.” The fact that so many people in Minneapolis believe in youth arts exposure, Keasling believes, is a tribute to public school programs themselves.

However, like school art programs around the country, Minneapolis Public School’s AAA programming has seen its annual teaching artist budget drop from approximately $1.6 million in 2002 to around $300,000 in 2012, dropping their teaching artist roster from over 150 to 76. Keasling credits this drop to the economic downturn and individual, corporate, and foundation funding shifting away from PK-12 arts education toward adult artists.

Soap Factory
Ben Heywood, Executive Director

Since its founding in 1988, the Soap Factory has been a magnet for creative, freewheeling exhibitions of emerging and established local and national artists. Housed in the historic St. Anthony Waterpower district, the Soap Factory selects artists to exhibit through an open call, invites curators from in and out of town to organize shows, and invites artists to do major solo shows. After their renovation, the Soap Factory will boast 30,000 square feet for exhibitions and programs, making it the second largest contemporary gallery in the Twin Cities after the Walker Art Center. Their space allows artists, many of whom have never exhibited in such a large space, to take risks and experiment. Last year Andy DucCatt used 12,000 square feet for a single installation.

The Soap Factory is an anchor in the arts community and partners with many local institutions. In recent years it has hosted MCAD’s MFA exhibit, given dozens of college students their first art gallery exhibition, supported the public art festival Northern Spark, and partnered with the park board to facilitate a local Native American cultural event. “We do a lot of things that are relatively minor, but all the cultural wheels in this part of town,” said Ben Heywood. “It adds up to a major contribution to the vitality of this neighborhood.”

Why Minneapolis?
Heywood described how the unique mix of major cultural institutions, from the Walker to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and supportive foundations like Jerome and McKnight, make Minneapolis feel full of potential. “People stay here for a bit longer than they might otherwise just because they might get themselves a Jerome [fellowship].” They might never get a Jerome, but they still stay here. This really contributes to endless frothiness and interest of the community.” The downside, he says, is that Minneapolis’ creative community can feel isolated. “I’ve had numerous conversations with local artists who have exhibited in every space in town that say, ‘Okay what do I do next?’ And there’s no answer to that. Either you’re happy being here or you have to go somewhere else.”

Dialogue on Evaluation and Measurement

Trying to find the meaning of art is an elusive goal. Yet cities around the globe strive to measure and make meaning of how artists and the creative sector impact economies, culture, and quality of life. While quantitative data like the CVI is valuable, it often misses the non-economic benefits of the arts. Leaders in the field shared several important themes about how to approach evaluation and measurement:

The dangers of over-measurement
In today’s nonprofit world, part of advocating for funds is proving impact. It is difficult, however, to measure the impact of the arts. “There are two camps in the arts education community,” described Calvin Keasling of the Minneapolis Public Schools. “Those that believe that arts can be measured, and those that believe arts should not and cannot justly be measured.” Although he is required to measure the impact of the arts, Keasling is sympathetic to those that resist measurement. “As soon as we start measuring everything, joy and excitement, which are fundamental to the process, become lost. We start thinking that if we don’t get the desired outcomes we’re not doing art right.” This tension between instrumentalizing art as a tool for academic achievement, and one with outcomes like joy, self-expression and self-efficacy that are more difficult to measure, is an important challenge for measuring the arts. Although measurement is important, Keasling said, when we correlate math and reading scores too closely to arts education, for example, it can “push a false idea of what the arts are and have the power to do.”

Difficulty of pinpointing impacts
Pillsbury House and Theatre is in the process of building an evaluation plan to draw connections between their programs and impacts in the surrounding neighborhood. They are able to assess their youth programs by measuring participants before and after their programs, but they say the most difficult part about program evaluation is measuring community impact.

They observe benefits in the community that they suspect Pillsbury contributes to, but they do not have a way to show direct cause and effect. They have many compelling stories, but translating stories into hard data is a challenge.

Qualitative data can be powerful
Publicly accessible forms of art are difficult to measure, as Steve Dietz, Artistic Director of Northern Spark reports.

“In a very basic sense, the measure of success in the arts isn’t the number of visitors, the quantity of visitors, or the economic impact. The measure of success needs to be a qualitative analysis.”

Northern Spark was a major public art festival that transforms the city for one night per year. In 2012, it drew over 40,000 visitors from around the region, partnered with over 50 institutions, and presented 118 artist projects. Through online and in-person interviews they gleaned demographic data. However, it was the qualitative data, the stories and memories, that ended up being the most powerful said Dietz.

The surprising thing for Northern Spark was that people had eloquent responses that were as insightful as anything in the press, which often focused on how much it cost and how many people showed up where – but the people who responded to our questionnaires really reflected on their experience of Northern Spark as a unique and special event that changed them. It changed how they thought about things, opened their eyes to other places and programs they didn’t know existed. Qualitative information was in some senses the most valuable validator of what Northern Spark was doing for the community.”

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WHAT’S NEXT?

The data provided by the CVI is already being used by the City of Minneapolis administration and our partners to influence decisions on creative sector reporting, programming, and arts and culture planning:

- CVI data is being used in the City’s 2013 Arts, Culture and Creative Economy Results Report. The results from the Minneapolis initiative tracks departmental progress on the City’s goals and strategic directions.
- The CVI’s detailed jobs and zip code data has triggered a conversation within the department of Community Planning and Economic Development research division on how best to reliably measure creative jobs with City boundaries.
- Core CVI data will be released annually and a full report with be published bi-annually.
- CVI data will be used in future reporting documents issued by the new Hennepin Avenue District.

Programming

- CVI data on employment among architects and designers, influenced the development of the Creative City Challenge on the Minneapolis Convention Center plaza, an urban design competition targeted at architects, landscape architects, and urban designers.

Planning

- CVI data is helping to lay the groundwork for a new arts and culture plan for the City of Minneapolis that is planned for completion in 2015 when the 2005 Minneapolis Plan for Arts, a ten year plan, is scheduled to expire

This is the first of many reports on the creative economy published by the City and an opportunity for the City to set a broad baseline of reliable information on creative sector jobs, spending, and occupational revenue. This in turn helps us set the stage for continued tracking and communication to creative sector stakeholders of key trends in the creative economy as they emerge over time and allows us to demonstrate the importance of the sector to the health of the broader economy. The CVI shines a light on these issues and allows us to flag trends and look deeper at topics that merit further investigation.

The overall findings demonstrate that while we should celebrate the overall health of Minneapolis’ creative economy, we should do more to encourage growth in this sector. For example, stakeholders at all levels in the dance community now have information on employment trends. This information can be a powerful motivator for action around the issue of preventing further job decline. The City has begun to use this data in conversation with this sector and the rest of our creative industries.

Finally, it is our goal that subsequent CVI reports will continue to pair quantitative data with stories that inspire broad community conversations about how to use this data—and encourages arts leaders to consider how they measure their own impacts.

Many thanks to those people, departments and organizations, both within and outside the City, who contributed their time and resources to the development of this report.

For more information on the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy Program, please call 612-673-2032 or visit www.minneapolismn.gov/coordinator/arts

NOTES

Methodology

The CVI™ was initially developed in 2002 in a year long collaborative research project that included WESTAF (Western States Arts Federation) researchers, consultants at Hebert Research, the senior staff of the Washington State Arts Commission and the director of the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture.

CVI™ data inputs were selected to be highly reliable, nationally vetted, already publishable measures of arts participation (demand for arts products and services) and occupational employment in the arts.

Occupational Data

Selection of occupations to be considered in the CVI™ was accomplished through a process of crosswalk matching with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) occupations for matching particular skill sets with occupations. The CVI™ measures 36 selected occupational categories that are highly correlated with measured full-time or part-time in terms of gender parity and fine arts knowledge as measured by the Employment and Training Administration’s “O*NET” occupational network database. Given this meticulous selection of occupations, the CVI™ presents a highly justified proxy for creative economy employment.

Occupational data in the Creative Vitality Index come from Economic Modeling Specialist Inc. (EMSI). EMSI’s proprietary labor market data and modeling platform have not been modified to use the full CVI™ occupational network database. Given this meticulous selection of occupations, the CVI™ presents a highly justified proxy for creative economy employment.

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Location Quotients

Location quotients (LQs) are an important indicator of a geography’s creative vitality. An LQ is an index value created for each creative occupation, measuring whether or not there is a sufficient concentration of an occupation within the area being measured. CVI™ uses the report of the Department of Commerce and the Internal Revenue Service’s 990 forms to identify changes in charitable giving in an area.

Geographic Determination of Minneapolis

This report defines Minneapolis as the collection of zip codes that have all or a large share of their area within the political boundaries of Minneapolis. The zip code methodology was used because of the CVI™’s measurement. Because the political boundaries of Minneapolis and the zip codes within Minneapolis do not align perfectly, some zip codes were included while others were excluded. Although the city of Minneapolis is included, some zip codes within some areas outside of Minneapolis were excluded while some zip codes within some areas within Minneapolis were included. The City did not provide a list of zip codes included. Contact the authors for more information

Nonprofit Data

Information about nonprofit arts activity is secured from the Urban Institute’s National Center for Charitable Statistics, and Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. The Urban Institute’s National Center for Charitable Statistics aggregates information from the Internal Revenue Service’s 990 forms. The forms are required to be submitted by nonprofits. 501(c)3 organizations with annual gross receipts of $25,000 or more. Organizations with more than $25,000 but less than $500,000 in annual gross receipts can file a 990-EZ form that collects less information. The CVI™ uses the information contained in the 990 forms to identify changes in charitable giving in an area.

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For more information on WESTAF’s methodology, please visit: cvi.westaf.org/content/what-cvi

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