

About Artistry

Who We Are

Artistry is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in the city-owned Bloomington Center for the Arts. We produce arts experiences of exceptional quality in an accessible, welcoming setting, drawing a region-wide audience. “Welcoming and nurturing talent” is a key part of our mission. Toward that end, we provide opportunities for early-career artists to learn and grow, and for established artists to work in new ways.

What We Do

Theater: What began as a community theater in the mid ‘50s has grown into an Ivey Awards-eligible program drawing an audience of 35,000+. We currently produce eight productions per season on two stages in the Center for the Arts, offering everything from classic musicals like *Carousel* – always with our large, critically-acclaimed pit orchestra – to thought-provoking newer work like *Next to Normal*. Over the past several seasons, our directors and choreographers have included Gary Gisselman, 2013 McKnight Distinguished Artist Wendy Lehr, Joe Chvala, Michael Matthew Ferrell, Joel Sass, and many others.

Exhibitions: We produce 14 exhibitions per year in two galleries in the Center for the Arts, showcasing the work of emerging and established artists from Minnesota and surrounding states. Notable examples from the past several years include *Out of the Abyss: William Murray and the Prison Art Project*; *Fruitful and Multiplying*, a group show guest-curated by John Schuerman on the theme of overpopulation; and *Cartoonival*, featuring the mixed media creations of Pulitzer Prize-winning *Star Tribune* editorial cartoonist Steve Sack. Our 2014 exhibitions attracted more than 55,000 visits.

Arts Education and Partnership Programs: We offer year-round arts classes for all ages and abilities at the Center for the Arts and a growing array of arts activities in partnership with other organizations throughout the Twin Cities. With the Bloomington Public Schools, we offer free afterschool arts workshops in all 10 of the district’s elementary schools and all three middle schools. With the Hennepin County Libraries, we offer free programs for teens and families. We provide hundreds of free theater tickets for children and families every year, lead workshops for seniors in assisted living facilities, and this spring, launched a new arts learning program for women incarcerated at the correctional facility in Plymouth.

Creative Placemaking: In 2013, we received a \$100,000 matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to work with the City of Bloomington, the Mall of America, McGough, the Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau and other partners to harness the power of the arts and artists to transform Bloomington’s South Loop into a vibrant, distinctive, urban neighborhood. Other placemaking projects include working with United Properties to facilitate a large exterior installation for the new Fresh Thyme Market under construction in Bloomington’s Penn American district.