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Contacts: Sheila Smith, 651-251-0868
Executive Director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts
Maxine Adams, (218) 739-5780
Executive Director, Lake Region Arts Council

Creative Minnesota 2017 Study Reveals What Artists Need to Make a Living and a Life in West Central Minnesota

SAINT PAUL, MN: Creative Minnesota, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and the Lake Region Arts Council released a new study today indicating that Minnesotans strongly believe the arts and culture are important to their quality of life, and that Minnesotans attend and participate in the arts at a rate exceeding the national average.

“Nonprofit arts and culture organizations contribute to the vibrancy of Minnesota’s economy and quality of life and make our state a magnet for jobs and businesses. Now we can quantify that,” said Sheila Smith, Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts. “In addition to providing life changing experiences, educational opportunities and accessibility to audiences of all ages in their stages and museums, arts and culture organizations are important employers and economic engines.”

As the most comprehensive report ever done of the state’s creative sector *Creative Minnesota 2017* fills in the gaps of available information about Minnesota’s cultural field and seeks to improve our understanding of its importance to our quality of life and economy. *Creative Minnesota 2017* quantifies the impact and needs of Minnesota’s artists and creative workers, updates previous studies on the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations, and reviews other research about the arts sector in the state.

The report includes both new, original research and analysis of data created by others. Creative Minnesota research is available for free at www.creativemn.org.

WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA HIGHLIGHTS:

West Central Minnesota is sixth of 11 Regions in population size as well as 6th in the size of its economic impact from the arts and culture and 6th in creative job density. This region has the highest volunteer rate of its artists at 93%. Becker County has the 9th highest creative worker average wage in the state at \$20.11/hour, and Wilkin County has the 15th highest, at

\$19.38, compared to the other 87 counties in Minnesota.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- The study found that the **combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers in West Central Minnesota is over \$22 million annually**. This includes **\$7 million** spent by nonprofit arts organizations, **\$4 million** spent by **245,852 attendees**, and the direct spending of artists in their communities, on things such as art supplies and studio rental, of **\$11.3 million**.

IMPACT AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **2826 artists and creative workers in West Central Minnesota**. Creative workers are defined as people who make their living wholly, or in part, by working for for-profits, non-profits, or self-employed, in 41 creative occupations.
- These occupations include:
architects, choir directors, curators, librarians, art directors, craft artists, fine artists including painters, sculptors and illustrators, multimedia artists and animators, commercial and industrial designers, fashion, graphic and interior designers, set and exhibition designers, actors, producers and directors, dancers, choreographers, music directors and composers, musicians and singers, editors, writers and authors, sound engineering technicians, photographers, camera operators
- The most common creative worker jobs in the state are **photographers, graphic designers, and musicians and singers**.
- **24 percent of self-identified artists in Minnesota are employed full-time as artists, 42 percent are employed part-time**, and the rest, 34 percent, are retired, hobbyists or students.
- The generations are changing. The most commonly practiced artistic discipline is visual arts, followed by theater and music/opera/musical theater. However, the younger an artist is the more likely they are to practice theater as opposed to the visual arts. **Millennials are the only generation that chose theater as their most popular artistic discipline**.
- **Artists volunteer more in their communities than other Americans, at 88 percent**, compared to 35 percent of all Minnesotans and 25 percent of all Americans.
- The study found that **women and artists of color had lower wages** than other artists, similar to wages in the larger workforce.
- The most dramatic change from a previous survey of artists in 2007 is that **95 percent of 2016 survey respondents reported having health insurance**. In the

“Artists Count” 2007 study we found 14 percent of artists were uninsured, double the uninsured rate of all Minnesotans. The uninsured rate has dropped dramatically, to 5 percent, most likely because of the Affordable Care Act passed by congress in 2009.

STRONGEST NEEDS FOR ALL MINNESOTA ARTISTS:

From the Minnesota State Arts Board “Artists Thrive” Survey

- **SPACE TO WORK:** Artists desire spaces and tools of their own to do their work – but not in solitude.
- **CONNECT:** Artists have strong interest in opportunities to form connections and serve communities.
- **LEARN:** Artists embrace and are seeking more learning experiences, experienced artists would like to pass on their skills, younger artists are looking for mentors.
- **EARN:** Artists remain ambitious about developing paying audiences and generating income from their work, but their identities as artists and the non-monetary value they derive from their practice are strong regardless of earnings.
- **AUDIENCE:** Artists desire to reach wider audiences and markets.

STRONGEST NEEDS FOR:

- **Greater Minnesota Artists:** more access to markets and audiences, more reliable access to work spaces and equipment, greater access to fellow artists for peer learning.
- **Emerging Artists:** Access to markets, adequate work space and equipment, a variety of learning opportunities and professional skills and mentors

IMPACT AND NUMBER OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS:

- **60 nonprofit arts and culture organizations in West Central Minnesota served 245,852 attendees** at arts and cultural events in 2014.

NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN MN BY DISCIPLINE	
PERFORMING ARTS	15
ARTS MULTIPURPOSE	16
HISTORY & HISTORICAL PRESERVATION	15
OTHER*	3
VISUAL ARTS & ARCHITECTURE	6
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS	3
LITERARY ARTS	2
TOTAL	60

**OTHER includes science and children’s museums, zoos, and arts and culture programs housed in non-arts nonprofits and local governments. There was an*

overall increase of 10 participating organizations since the last study in 2015, which accounts for some of the larger audience.

- The economic impact of just nonprofit arts and culture **audiences in this region totaled \$4 million**. Adding in the economic impact of arts organization spending, **the total economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in this region totals \$7 million**.

Participating organizations included:

Alexandria Area Arts Association, Ann Bickle Heritage House, Art of the Lakes, Brush & Palette Club, Central Square, City of Fergus Falls - Arts Programs, Evansville Arts Coalition, Fargo-Moorhead Chamber Chorale, Inc., Fergus Falls Center For The Arts, Inc, Fergus Falls Concert Association, Fergus Falls Senior Citizens Program, Gooseberry Park Players, Grant County Historical Society, Heritage Education Commission, Historic Holmes Theatre, Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County, Kaddatz Galleries, Ltd., Lake Region Arts Council, Lake Region Writers Network, Lakes Chamber Music Society, Minnesota State Community & Technical College, Minnesota State University Moorhead, New Rivers Press, New York Mills Regional Cultural Center, Nordic Culture Clubs, Otter Tail County, Pope Art, Pope County Historical Society, Prairie Renaissance Cultural Alliance, Rourke Art Gallery Museum, Springboard for the Arts (Fergus Falls Office), Stevens County Historical Society, Terrace Mill Foundation, The Prospect House Museum, Theatre L'Homme Dieu, Central Lakes Symphony Orchestra, City of Barnesville/History Project, City of Moorhead/History Project, Concordia Percussion Ensemble, Cormorant Area Art Club, DEBWE Youth Organization, Fargo-Moorhead Choral Artists, Fergus Falls Public Arts Commission, Grant County/History Project, History Arts and Cultural Association of East Otter Tail County, Kensington Area Heritage Society, KKWE White Earth Land Recovery Project, KUMM-FM University of MN Morris, Minnesota Lakes Maritime Society, Perham Center for the Arts, Phelps Mill Country, Prairie Public Broadcasting, Prairie Wind Players of Grant County, Preservation Concerts, Red Willow Arts Coalition, Sons of Norway, Taylor Township/History Project, The Landmark Center, Vikingland Band Festival, Inc., Wilkin County Agricultural Society

STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- The study found that the **combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers is over \$2 billion annually**. This includes \$819 million spent by nonprofit arts organizations, \$564 million spent by audiences, and the direct spending of artists in their communities, on things such as art supplies and studio rental, of \$644 million.
- State and local government revenue exceeded \$222 million, including income and sales taxes.

IMPACT AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **104,000 artists and creative workers** in Minnesota.
- **The total economic impact of artists and creative worker spending in the state is \$644 million annually.**

IMPACT AND NUMBER OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS:

- **1601 nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Minnesota** served **22 million attendees** at arts and cultural events in 2014.
- These organizations serve **3.8 million K-12 students**, hosting **29,318 school group visits** each year. There are approximately 900,000 K-12 students in Minnesota, so on average every student is participating four times a year in arts and culture activities provided by these nonprofits.
- The economic impact of just the participating organizations and their audiences totaled \$1.4 billion, **an increase of \$185 million since our previous study in 2015**. This is primarily due to an additional 332 participating organizations, but also includes **a 1.5 percent increase in impact** by the organizations participating in both studies.

Just looking at the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations, Minnesota has **double the arts economy of Wisconsin** even though we have nearly the same population, **ten and a half times** the arts economy of Kansas and **twelve and a half times** the arts economy of South Dakota.

STATEWIDE PUBLIC OPINION POLLING ON THE ARTS:

Minnesotans strongly believe the arts and culture are important to their quality of life, and Minnesotans attend and participate in the arts more than other Americans:

- **76%** of Minnesotans, compared to 68% of all Americans, attend arts and culture events
- **63%** of Minnesotans, compared to 49% of all Americans, are personally involved in creative activity in their everyday life
- **91%** of Minnesotans believe that people who create art are contributing something important to their communities
- **90%** of Minnesotans believe that arts & cultural activities help make Minnesota an attractive place to live and work
- **82%** of Minnesotans believe it's important to have the opportunity to express themselves creatively or to experience the creativity of others every day

ABOUT CREATIVE MINNESOTA

Creative Minnesota was developed by a collaborative of statewide arts and culture supporting organizations in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA). The report leverages in-depth research made possible because of Minnesota's participation in the **Cultural Data Profile** (culturaldata.org) at DataArts. Creative Minnesota's first round of studies, released in February 2015, looked at the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture organizations in the state's 11 arts regions and at the state as a whole. The second round in October, 2015 looked at the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in 17 Minnesota cities and counties.

The *Creative Minnesota* team includes **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, The McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Forum of Regional Arts Councils of**

Minnesota, Target, Bush Foundation, Mardag Foundation, and Jerome Foundation, with in-kind support from the **Minnesota Historical Society** and others.

Highlights of Creative Minnesota 2017's Data Sources:

ORIGINAL RESEARCH:

- **“Artists Count” Survey** of 2100 Minnesota artists by **Creative Minnesota** done with 194 organizational partners in 2016.
- **“Artists Thrive” Survey** of 800 Minnesota artists by the **Minnesota State Arts Board** in 2015.
- Analysis and Update of economic impact data of 1601 nonprofit arts and culture organizations

ANALYSIS OF OTHER DATA SETS WITH MANY PARTNERS:

- **Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), University of Minnesota** analysis and mapping of *“Artists and Arts Workers in the United States”* from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
- **Minnesota Compass** analysis of Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010-2014, on arts participation
- **Minnesota Center for Survey Research, University of Minnesota**, Public Opinion Polling, *2014 and 2015 State Surveys*
- **Center for the Study of Art and Community**, literature review, synthesis and analysis by Bill Cleveland.
- **For a full list, download the report at www.creativeMN.org**

The Legacy Amendment

The Legacy Amendment was passed by a statewide vote of the people of Minnesota in 2008 to dedicate a portion of the state's sales tax to create four new funds for 1. land conservation, 2. water conservation, 3. parks and trails, and 4. arts and culture. The legislature appropriates the dollars from the Legacy Arts and Culture Fund to the Minnesota State Arts Board, Regional Arts Councils, Minnesota Historical Society and other entities to provide access to the arts and culture for all Minnesotans.

Major Sponsoring Organizations:

- **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA)** is a statewide arts advocacy organization whose mission is to ensure opportunity for all people to have access to and involvement in the arts. MCA organizes the arts community and lobbies the Minnesota State Legislature and Congress on issues pertaining to the nonprofit arts and conducts original research. MCA works with over 40,000 arts advocates in Minnesota. 651-251-0868, www.artsMN.org @MNCitizen
- **The McKnight Foundation:** www.mcknight.org
- **Target:** <https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility>
- **Bush Foundation:** www.bushfoundation.org
- **Mardag Foundation:** <http://www.mardag.org/>
- **Jerome Foundation:** <http://www.jeromefdn.org/>
- **The Minnesota State Arts Board:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/>
- **Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/racs/forum.htm>
- **Minnesota Historical Society:** <http://www.mnhs.org/about>
- **Ideas that Kick:** www.ideasthatkick.com
- **Americans for the Arts:** www.AmericansForTheArts.org
- **CURA Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota:** <http://www.cura.umn.edu/>
- **Minnesota Compass:** <http://www.mncompass.org>
- **Lake Region Arts Council:** <https://lrac4.org/>

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