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Contacts: Sheila Smith, 651.251.0868
 Executive Director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts
 Nancy Valentine, 218.770.8208
 Marketing and Membership Coordinator, Otter Tail Lakes Country Association

New Creative Minnesota 2017 Study of Otter Tail County Reveals Large Impact of the Arts on Local Economy

SAINT PAUL, MN: **Creative Minnesota** and a lengthy list of co-sponsors (see below) released a new study today indicating that the arts have a large impact on Otter Tail County.

“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 in Otter Tail County.” 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 and nonprofit arts and culture organizations. The report includes both new, original research and analysis of data created by others. All Creative Minnesota research is available for free at **CreativeMN.org**.

“We took part in this study because we no longer wish for the arts and culture of our area to be the best kept secret in Otter Tail County,” said Nicholas Leonard, Economic Development Director of Otter Tail County. “We have identified the weight and value of the creative and alluring nature of the arts and history of this region, which is why we are excited for this study to be the platform for which we can share that with the greater public. Whether it be music, theater, visual

arts or history, the arts and culture of our region have a substantial impact on our economy and influence in the shaping our communities.”

OTTER TAIL COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Combined, the total annual economic impact of Otter Tail County’s **22 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations**, their **audiences**, and its **artists and creative workers is \$6.9 million**.
- Otter Tail County has close to **600 artists and creative workers** who alone drive an economic impact of \$2.3 million annually. Impressively, wages for those creative workers are **\$1.41 an hour higher** than average overall wage in Otter Tail County.
- Otter Tail County’s arts sector is performing better than would be expected considering the county’s population. While ranked 7th in population size among the 15 participating study areas, **Otter Tail is ranked 4th highest in economic impact from nonprofit arts and culture organizations and 5th highest in audience spending, as well as local and state government revenue generated by the arts sector.**
- Otter Tail County also ranked **6th in total annual arts attendees, drawing 100,240 people to arts and culture activities who spend \$1.6 million in the county that would not otherwise be spent there.**

“Art is an essential thread in the fabric that is our region. It is not only paintings and sculptures in beautiful small galleries throughout the county, but it’s also the community festivals and gatherings that give vibrancy to our communities,” said Betsy Roder, Executive Director of New York Mills Cultural Center, where the study was revealed. “On any given weekend in Otter Tail County, there is a plethora of options for ways to engage with art and culture and make connections with fellow residents.”

"You can find art in every corner of Otter Tail County, whether it's a potter's studio next to a remote lake, or a world class theater performance in a downtown arts center, said Michele Anderson, Rural Program Director for Springboard for the Arts, Lake Region. “These experiences not only provide essential opportunities for us to connect with one another across differences and to be active participants in the region's future, but they are also a critical component to the region's economic health. People want to live and work in places where they can learn more about the world, or creatively express their own stories, and the arts provide this on a daily basis.”

Co-sponsors of the study included:

- **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts**
- **Otter Tail Lakes Country Association**
- **Otter Tail County**
- **Lake Region Arts Council**
- **New York Mills Cultural Center**
- **Springboard for The Arts – Lake Region**
- A Center For The Arts – Fergus Falls
- A Center For The Arts – Perham
- Art of The Lakes – Battle Lake
- Fergus Falls Economic Improvement Commission
- Henning Landmark Center
- Kaddatz Galleries
- Fair Lakes Resort
- Five Lakes Resort
- Wildflower Golf Course

OTHER LOCAL FINDINGS:

OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- In Otter Tail County the study found that the **combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers is \$6.9 million annually**. This includes
 - **\$3 million** spent by nonprofit arts organizations,
 - **\$1.6 million** spent by **100,249 attendees**,
 - and the direct spending of artists in their communities, on things such as art supplies and studio rental, of **\$2.3 million**.
- This economic impact represents an infusion of \$122.70 per county resident into the local economy from the arts and culture.

IMPACT AND NUMBER OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS:

- **22 nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Otter Tail County served 100,249 attendees** at arts and cultural events in 2014. This number includes 9,607 K-12 students served annually.

NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS IN MN BY DISCIPLINE	
PERFORMING ARTS	3
ARTS MULTIPURPOSE	9
HISTORY & HISTORICAL PRESERVATION	3
OTHER*	2
VISUAL ARTS & ARCHITECTURE	5
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS	0
LITERARY ARTS	0
TOTAL	22

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

- The economic impact of **just nonprofit arts and culture audiences in this region totaled \$1.6 million**. This spending at local businesses is above and separate from the cost of the ticket to the event, and includes spending in restaurants, gas stations, and other local businesses by attendees on the way to and on the way home from an event. The average spent by an attendee is \$16.39, and is money that would not have been spent in the community unless the event had occurred. Nonlocals spend even more, bringing dollars to the community that would otherwise not be there.

- Finally, the nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Otter Tail County generate \$437,111 in state and local government revenues and support 131 FTE jobs which generating \$2.9 million in resident household income annually.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS COUNTED IN THE STUDY INCLUDED:

- Art of the Lakes
- City of Battle Lake
- Artspace: Kaddatz Artist Lofts
- City of Fergus Falls - Arts Programs

- Fergus Falls Center For The Arts, Inc
- Fergus Falls Concert Association
- Fergus Falls Public Arts Commission
- Fergus Falls Senior Citizens Program
- Henning Landmark Center
- History Arts and Cultural Association of East Otter Tail County
- Kaddatz Galleries, Ltd.
- Lake Region Arts Council
- Minnesota State Community & Technical College
- New York Mills Regional Cultural Center
- Otter Tail County Historical Society
- Perham Center for the Arts
- Phelps Mill Country
- Preservation Concerts
- Sons of Norway
- Springboard for the Arts (Fergus Falls Office)
- The Landmark Center
- The Prospect House Museum

LOCAL ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **588 artists and creative workers** in Otter Tail County. 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 county are in **photography, music, and writing.**
- Surprisingly, the average hourly wage for creative workers in Otter Tail County is \$18.19, which **is above the average worker wage** of \$16.78.
- The direct spending of artists and creative workers alone in the community generates **\$273,676 in state and local government revenues.**

OTHER STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR:

- Statewide, 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.

- 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, state and local government revenue from the arts sector exceeded \$222 million, including income and sales taxes.

STATEWIDE IMPACT AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE WORKERS:

- *Creative Minnesota 2017* found that there are over **104,000 artists and creative workers** in Minnesota whose **spending in the state totals \$644 million annually**.
- **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.

STRONGEST NEEDS FOR ALL MINNESOTA ARTISTS:

- **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.

STATEWIDE 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.

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 is a long-term collaborative initiative of statewide arts and culture supporting organizations in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA). 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 2017 study expanded its scope to look at the impact and needs of Minnesota's artists and creative workers. All *Creative Minnesota* research is available for free at **CREATIVEMN.ORG**.

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 full 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>
- **Otter Tail Lakes County:** <http://www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/>
- **Otter Tail Country Lakes Association:** <https://ottertailakescountry.com/about/join/>

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