

nuit blanche twin cities
june 4-5, 2011



Survey Question: Imagine you are out to dinner with friends who were also at Northern Spark and each person is taking a minute or two to describe the most memorable part of the event. It's your turn; what would you say?

northern spark

Northern Spark is a new Minnesota festival modeled on a *nuit blanche* or “white night” festival — a free, dusk to dawn participatory public art event along the Mississippi and surrounding areas in both Minneapolis and Saint Paul. This year’s inaugural event on June 4–5 drew 50,000 visits. The festival takes place again on June 9–10, 2012.

Northern Spark features a rich diversity of art forms and projects. This year’s festival included multi-story and mobile projections, audio environments with vistas, floating Chautauqua, headphone concerts, square dancing and pie eating, lullabies and electronica, multiple “media” including bioluminescent algae, sewer pipes for organs, banjos and puppets as well as endurance flag-raising, public readings, a chair processional, fanfares, and sonic bike riding, among Northern Spark’s 100 projects and performances.

Northern Lights and more than 60 partner organizations presented 100 installations and performances by more than 200 artists in over 34 locations throughout the Twin Cities for Northern Spark 2011. Over 50,000 visits took place to one or more of the events during the arc of the evening — from the top of Minneapolis’ Foshay Tower to the banks of Harriet Island in Saint Paul.

Organized and presented by Northern Lights.mn, a non-profit art agency that supports innovative art in the public sphere, the goal of Northern Spark is not to take over the night like a giant big top tent, but to join it. Whether walking or biking or busing from one venue to another, encountering your surroundings with new eyes and ears creates a unique opportunity to celebrate two magnificent cities through one exceptional night of artistic interventions. During Northern Spark, the Twin Cities come alive from dusk to dawn, animated by the lure of discovery, the elixir of imagination and the celebration of a community illuminated by art.



A: Northern Spark opened up my eyes to more of the arts in the Twin Cities. For once the places that I want to go to collaborated, stayed open and I was able to see what they were all about. Its a great chance to check things out!

community capital

Northern Spark heightens awareness of local artists by magnifying their visibility within the community, extending their reach to new audiences, and providing financial and logistical support for site-specific art projects.

Northern Spark presents the work of important national and international artists (including those who live in Minnesota), further identifying the Twin Cities as a national and international center of creative innovation.

Northern Spark builds a broad audience for serious art and creative fun by producing a free, twin-city event, which encourages participation by people who might not normally pay to enter a museum or see a performance.

Northern Spark partners with MN arts and cultural organizations through jointly curated and commissioned festival art projects, strengthening public awareness and support of our local non-profits by cross-pollination of their core audiences.

Northern Spark promotes and supports the local economy by working with our business partners to provide food, beverages and services for the more than 50,000 visits to the festival, fostering greater brand awareness and expanding their customer base.

Northern Spark invigorates public recognition of our rich urban landscape and cultivates open and active civic engagement with art and community through free, innovative, site-specific public programming.

Northern Spark has the potential to increase local, national and international tourism as part of a burgeoning global *nuit blanche* or “white night” movement, spotlighting the cultural abundance, diversity and vitality of Minnesota’s cultural landscape.

A: I liked the opening ceremony on the Stone Arch bridge — the music was beautiful and it was great to be in a public space with so many people — there was a lot of anticipation and excitement about the event — a very, very great idea!



A: this event has tremendous opportunity to become a signature summer event for Minneapolis, much like the White Nights in St. Petersburg, *Nuit Blanche* in Paris or *Fete des Lumieres* in Lyon. There was fantastic energy on the Stone Arch Bridge — you could tell people were loving the strolling and being outside on such a beautiful night and craving artistic inspiration.



Philip Blackburn with ArtCars of Minnesota, *Car Horn Fanfare*, Upper Landing PHOTO: DH



A: The weather was perfect, the river setting enchanting, magical; it provoked thought, stirred the senses (sight & sound) and made me want to see more.

A: Hands down, it was definitely *Empty Words*! Very theoretically engaging, great participatory elements, and just BEASTLY! They were still going right up until 6 am.





A: The best part was that so many people were out and experienced NS. Some people lived in the Twin Cities, some came in from the suburbs; some came specifically for the event, some just happened upon it in the course of their evening. There was a great cross-section of the population out exploring the Cities.



“At the end of my white night, I was exhausted but exhilarated, and not just by the art. I realized that the importance of Northern Spark went well beyond what was on show. Our first *Nuit Blanche* brought people out of the comfortable confines of their homes at an odd hour for an illuminating experience of togetherness.”

— **Tristan Pollock**, *The Line*

A: Seeing hundreds of people out in St. Paul at night by the river, eager with anticipation, talking about art, discussing what they're seeing, and what they might see next and enjoying it thoroughly.





A: It was amazing to see so many people out in so many different locations and so early into the morning! It was magical to be immersed within Jim Campbell's *Scattered Light* and to see the moving images from a distance. Like orchestrated fireflies!

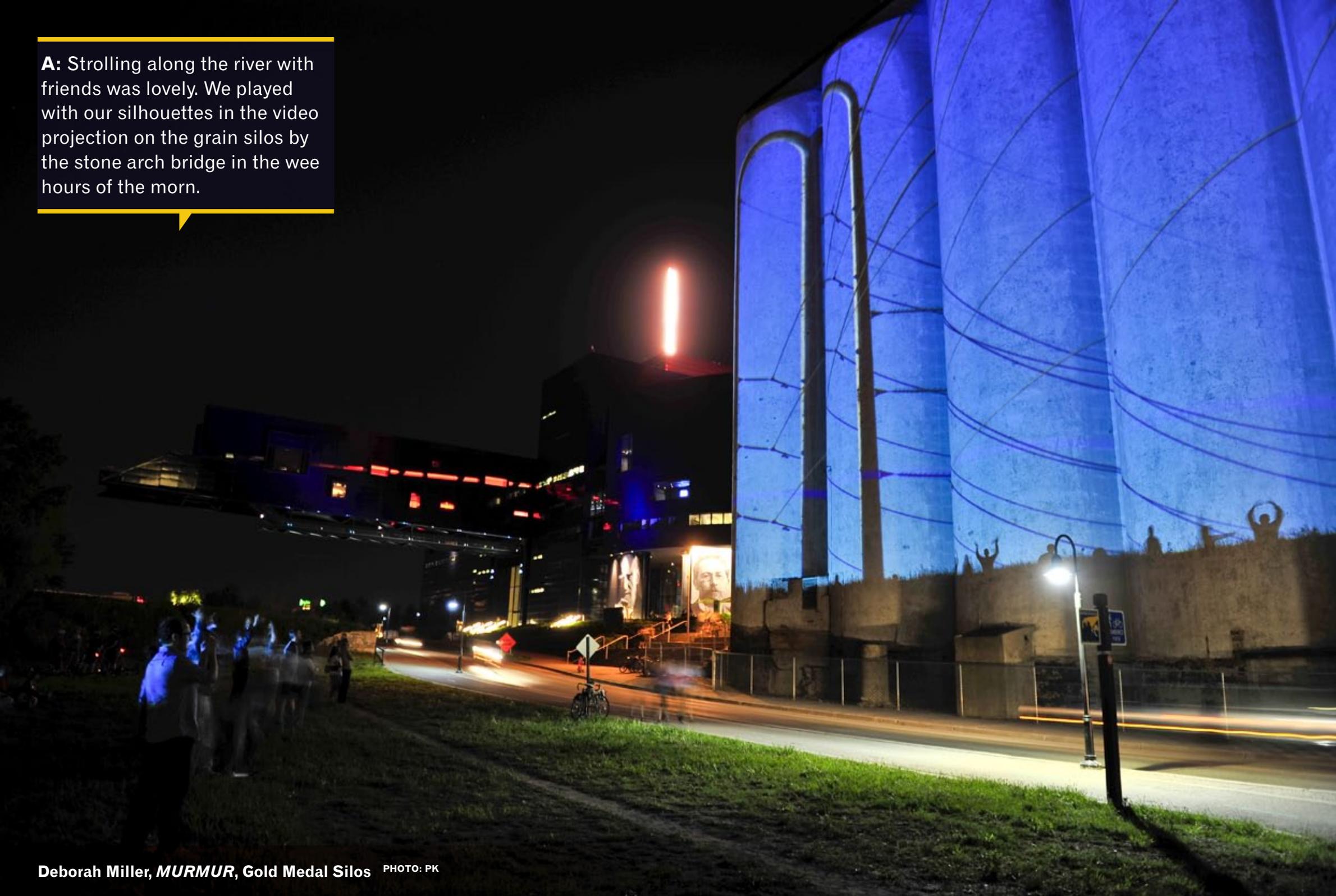


A: While at the puppet show with the dinosaurs, I had my son on my shoulders. My husband kept trying to talk to me and when I would turn to talk to him, my son would turn my head back to the play.



A: How often do you get a chance to be on a bridge with 10,000 people to see an experimental community band, draw under the stars and wander through a gallery at 3 am all in the same night.

A: Strolling along the river with friends was lovely. We played with our silhouettes in the video projection on the grain silos by the stone arch bridge in the wee hours of the morn.



From artist Megan Mayer:

“It made me go places I’d never been in the 25 years I’ve lived here — such as the riverfront in St. Paul, and the Foshay Tower in Mpls. From the observation deck from the top of the Foshay we could see the projections on the MIA in the distance. I was surprised how many people were still up and at ’em at 2 am and that they were so willing to participate and game for trying something new.

Later that evening/morning, I saw a building’s neon sign with a few letters burned out. For a second I thought it must be part of the event and watched those letters waiting for something to happen. Something about the gorgeous, gorgeous weather, the lack of sleep and the buzzing energy of the crowds all contributed to this slightly warm, fuzzy feeling of community potency.”

— Marianne Combs, “The reviews are in for Northern Spark,” MPR



A: Being on top of the Foshay tower watching my friends dance in silver costumes and then seeing the projections on the MIA miles in the distance. It made the city feel so alive! It all felt very friendly and warm and celebratory. Something about the lovely weather, the huge crowds and the lack of sleep contributed to a warm, fuzzy feeling full of potential.



A: When it was 5:30 in the morning and my friends and I were taking the last free bus from the Soap Factory to the Walker, and we were all covered in paint and glitter, we burst out into “I Don’t Want to Wait” and even random people we didn’t know joined in.

A: I would say seeing people out & about, enjoying the arts together is as good as it gets. I ran into so many friends & just having the shared experience with Twin Citians was great!





A: I loved not knowing what was going to happen next. It was a beautiful summer evening and we just headed into the night, ready to be surprised.

Chris Baker, *Waste Not*, Hennepin Energy Recovery Center PHOTO: COURTESY THE ARTIST



A: Aside from all of the fabulous works of art (there were so many, I couldn't possibly pick a favorite nor could I have seen everything that was going on) and creative opportunities to explore the Twin Cities, what stands out in my mind as being the most memorable part of the event is the variety of people that turned up to experience Northern Spark. A friend of mine commented that she expected to see the "usual art-nerd" suspects out and about. We realized together that there were many people out who may have never participated in a community art event before. What a great way to expose the entire community to the arts!

A: Rather than a specific portion of the event, I'd say I liked how different it was from the typical art festival that has rows of tents with individuals selling their wares. I liked that none of the artists were trying to sell me anything. I felt like more of a participant than a patron.





A: I would say the entire night had its amazing moments that are impossible to choose between — the utter chaos of capture the flag at Loring Park, catching the sunrise at the Foshay Tower, running into a bunch of friends at Stone Arch Bridge, the entire night was a blast!



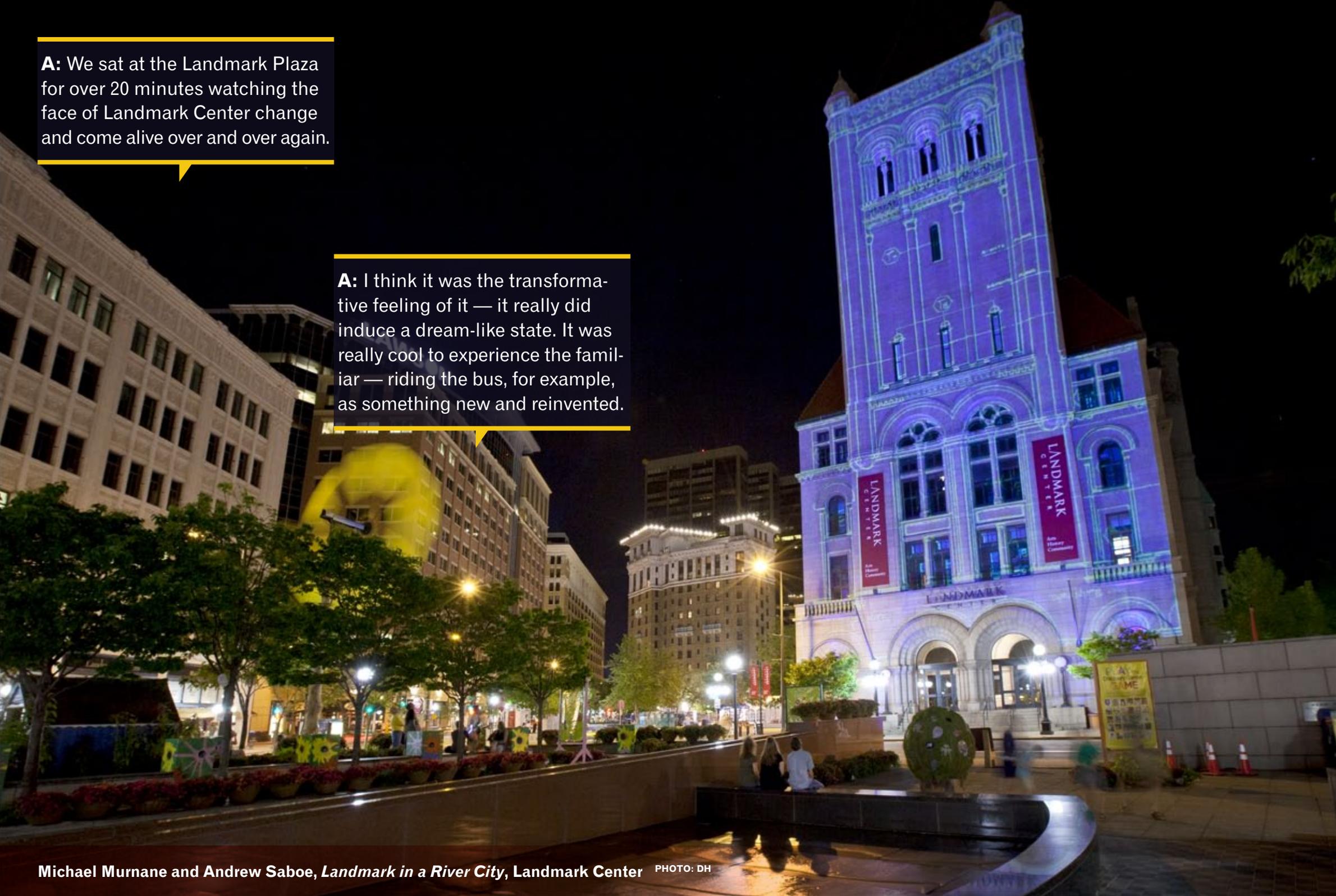
**From theater-goer extraordinaire
Scott Pakudaitis:**

“I especially enjoyed dancing in the Dance Shanty, listening to Michael Crowell’s sound collage outside of the Black Dog at 3:30 am, watching the projections at the Palace Theater and on the Landmark Center, especially near dawn when the clouds started becoming visible in the sky, and talking with random strangers about what they’ve seen and what they liked. I loved seeing the variety of art in the festival — sound, video, lights, movement, words, spray paint, shadows, concepts . . . you name it. The energy of the night was magical.”

— MPR

A: We sat at the Landmark Plaza for over 20 minutes watching the face of Landmark Center change and come alive over and over again.

A: I think it was the transformative feeling of it — it really did induce a dream-like state. It was really cool to experience the familiar — riding the bus, for example, as something new and reinvented.



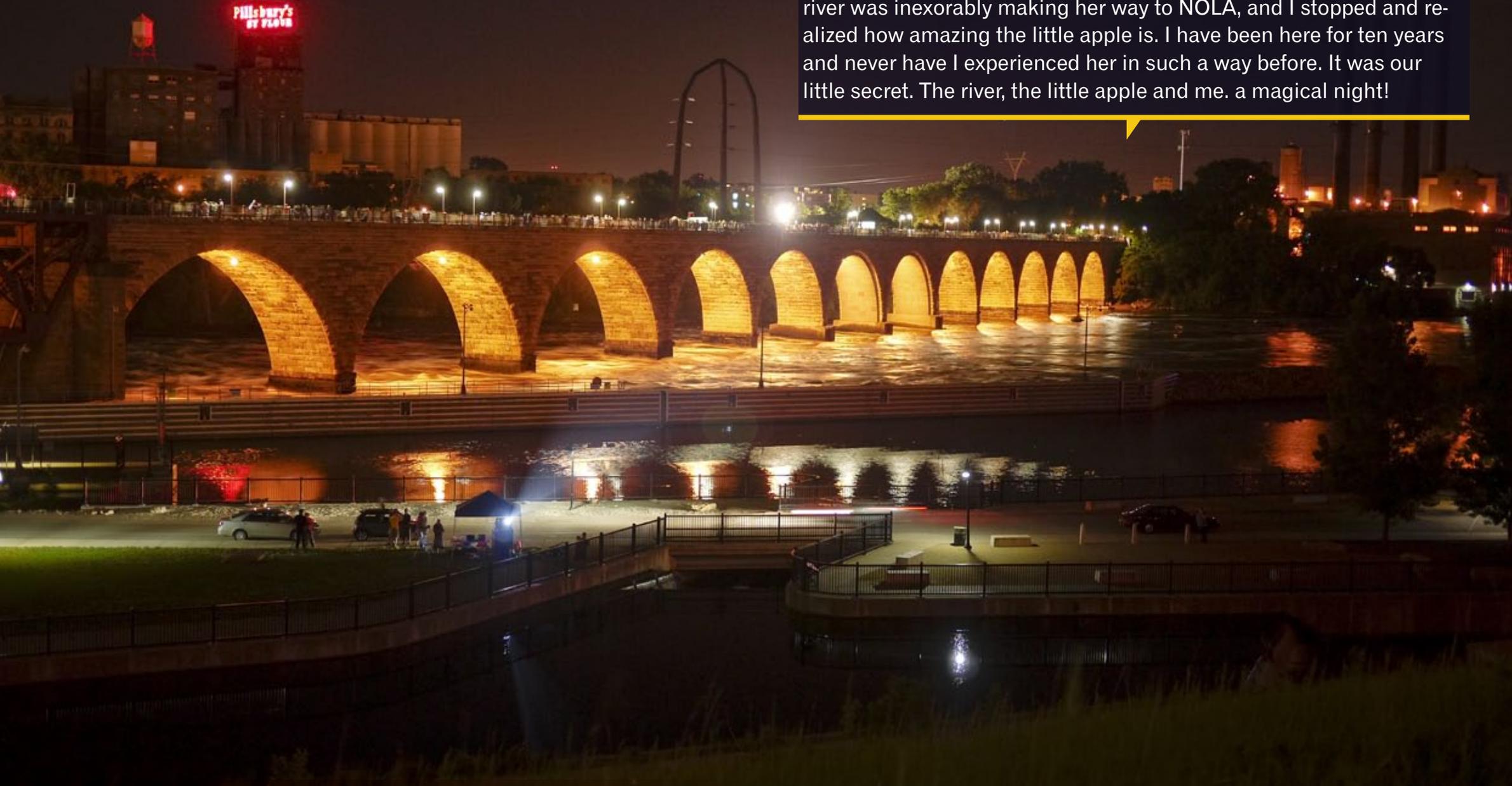


A: Art is everywhere. The night of Northern Spark transforms your consciousness. Yes, you read the brochure and move from installation to installation, but you're also always on the lookout for what might be new or different. Suddenly, everything becomes art: the lights under the 35W bridge; couples stealing a kiss under an archway; even the spaces themselves which you had previously never considered as anything other than no-man's-land. The next morning, the sensation continues, and your senses are heightened for hours.

A: This event was an opportunity to show that we need more all-night activities, and that if we provide these opportunities people will attend. This also showed that we can peacefully enjoy events in this city until 6 am.



A: There were so many beautiful interactions that I had with the city and her art, but the part that I never expected was walking back to my car across the stone arch bridge, sun rising over the smoke stacks of the power plant, and the city was slowly waking up around me. The river was inexorably making her way to NOLA, and I stopped and realized how amazing the little apple is. I have been here for ten years and never have I experienced her in such a way before. It was our little secret. The river, the little apple and me. a magical night!





From poet and musician Anna George Meek:

“I loved the reclamation of public spaces at night, a feeling similar to Take Back the Night marches, but with art. And many of the installations were in places that I’ve previously ignored, ‘no-man’s-land’ spaces that suddenly became meaningful.

In general, the experience heightened our awareness to our surroundings; we were always looking for what was different, and sometimes couldn’t remember what was new and what we simply hadn’t seen before. (A friend remarked that she had never noticed the lights on the 35W bridge.) Everything became an installation. That sensation continued the next day, and for a while, nothing was ordinary.

I loved how many different kinds of people came out. Teenagers, elderly couples, families with kids, 20-somethings who were dressed for the club scene.

... All in all, it was magical, an enormous effort that made me proud to be an artist and a Twin Citian.”

— MPR

A: I love the uniqueness of the event. I think the attendance last night was telling of the interest our state has in the arts.

festival in numbers

50,000 visits

513 minutes

200 local and national artists

100 site-specific art projects
and performances

60 different local arts organizations

34 sites

15 buses

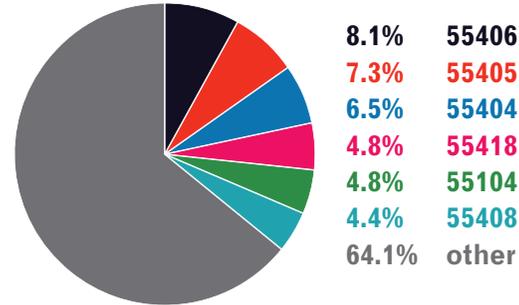
2 cities

1 river

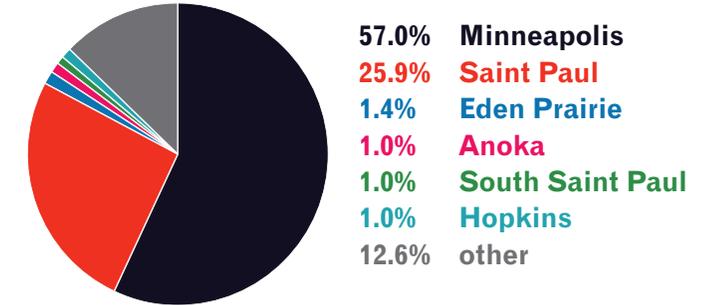
survey results

More than 500 people responded to surveys in person during the Festival and online afterwards.

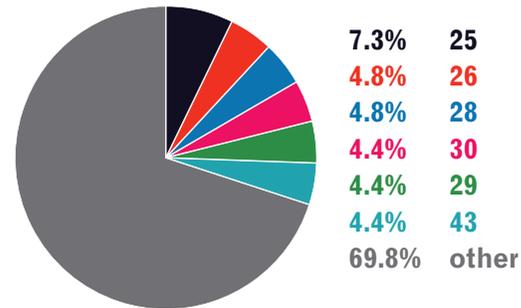
Your Zip Code



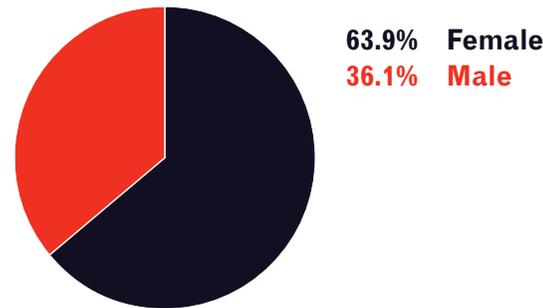
City



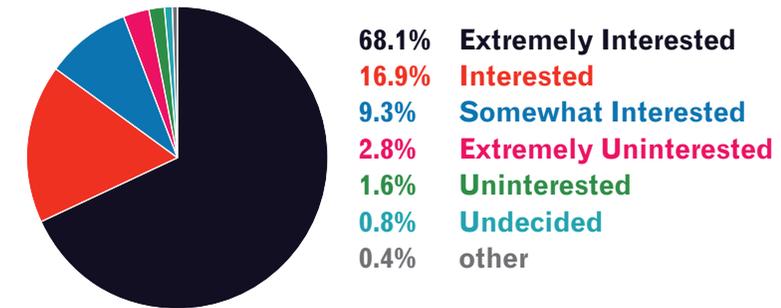
Your Age



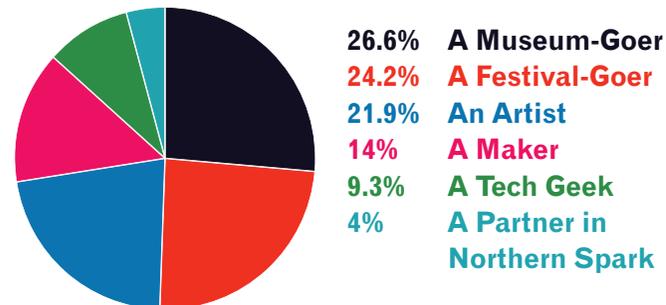
Sex



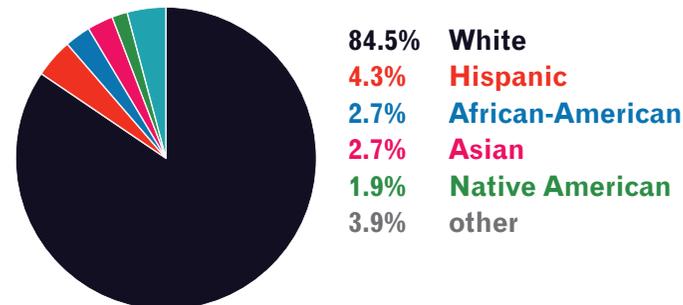
How would you rate your interest in arts and culture?



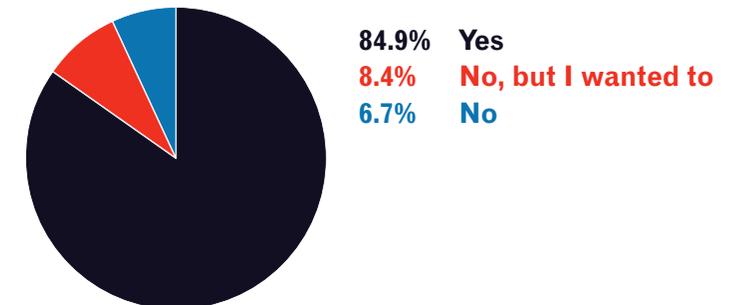
Tell us about yourself. Are you ... ?



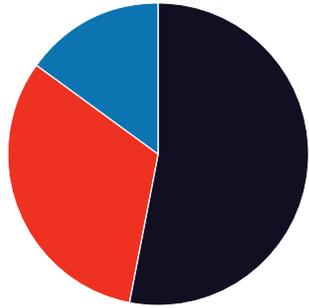
With which group(s) do you identify?



Went to Northern Spark in Minneapolis

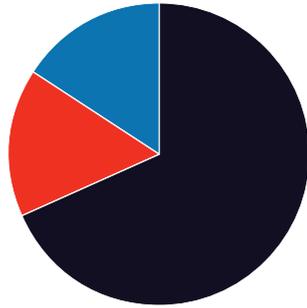


Went to Northern Spark in Saint Paul



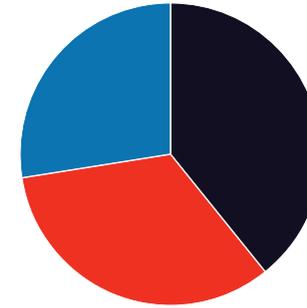
53.2% **Yes**
31.8% **No, but I wanted to**
15.0% **No**

Went to a specific, timed event



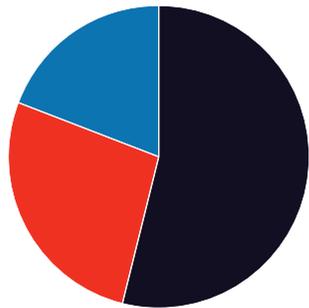
68.4% **Yes**
16.0% **No**
15.6% **No, but I wanted to**

Ate at any of the Northern Spark venues



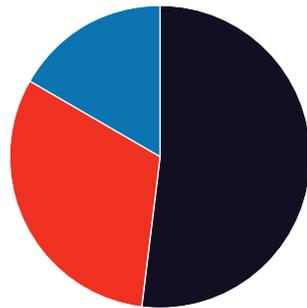
39.2% **No**
33.3% **Yes**
27.5% **No, but I wanted to**

Rode the free bus



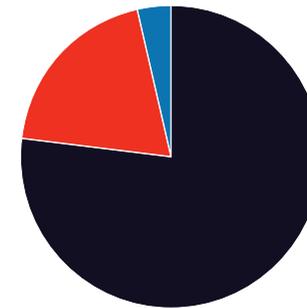
54.0% **No**
27.0% **Yes**
19.0% **No, but I wanted to**

Biked between venues



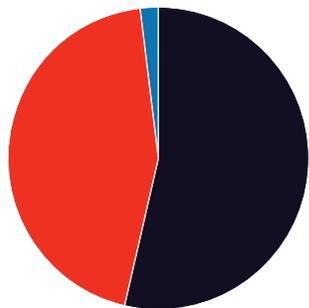
52.2% **No**
31.3% **Yes**
16.5% **No, but I wanted to**

Walked between venues



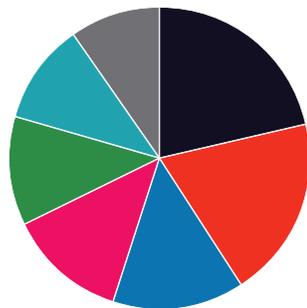
77.1% **Yes**
19.5% **No**
3.5% **No, but I wanted to**

Drove between venues



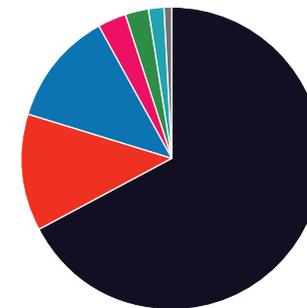
53.7% **No**
44.5% **Yes**
1.8% **No, but I wanted to**

Why did you come to Northern Spark?



21.5% **The arts**
19.5% **It's unique**
14.1% **The river**
12.7% **The nightlife**
11.7% **For a specific event**
10.9% **Seeing friends**
9.7% **other**

How likely are you to come to the next Northern Spark?



67.2% **Extremely Likely**
12.6% **Somewhat Likely**
12.1% **Likely**
3.2% **Somewhat Unlikely**
2.4% **Extremely Unlikely**
1.6% **Undecided**
0.8% **other**

northernspark.org

Web Statistics for May 31 – June 11, 2011

northernspark.org

30,916 Visits

21,076 Unique Visitors

13,788 Visits on June 4–5

63.6% New Visitors

36.4% Returning Visitors

41.63% Referring Sites

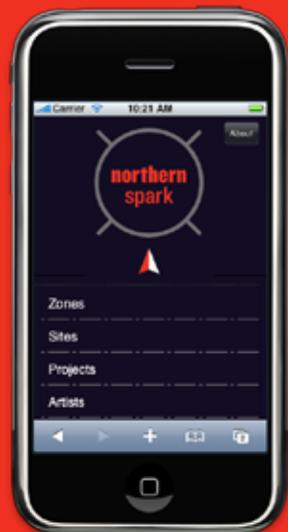
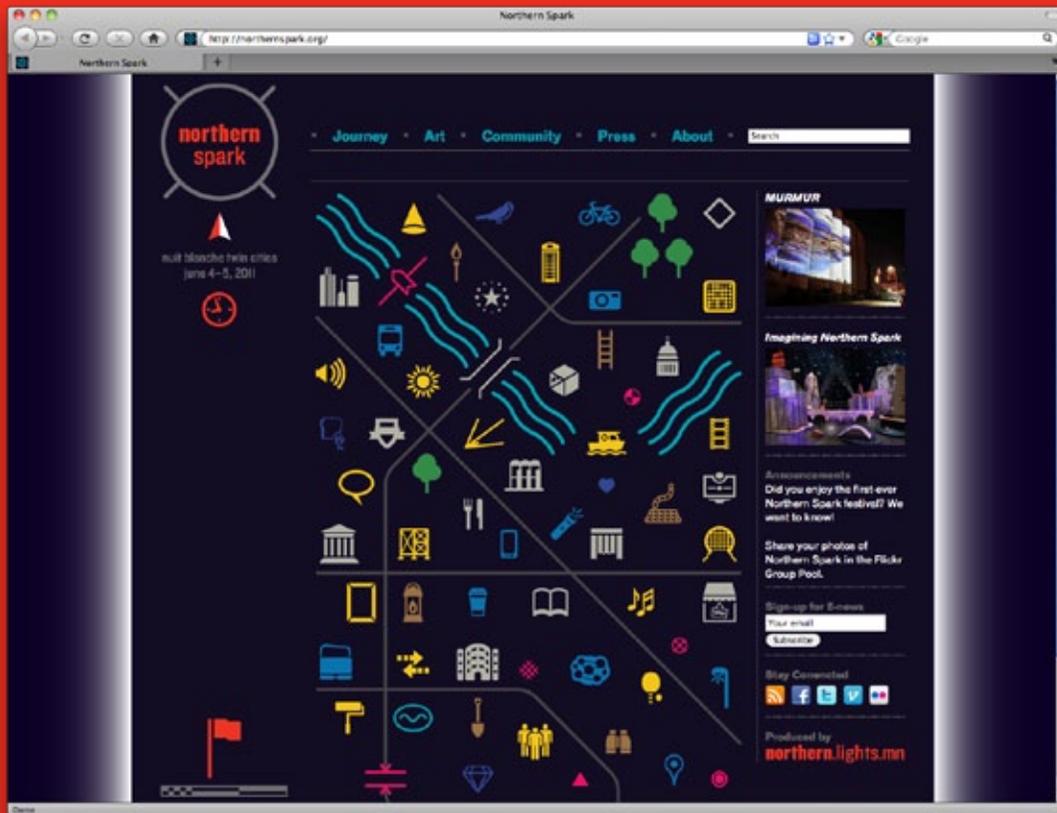
29.83% Direct Traffic

28.28% Search Engines

Mobile Devices

1,207 Visits

823 Visits on June 4–5



support

Starlight



This activity is made possible in part by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature from the Minnesota arts and cultural heritage fund with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

Spark



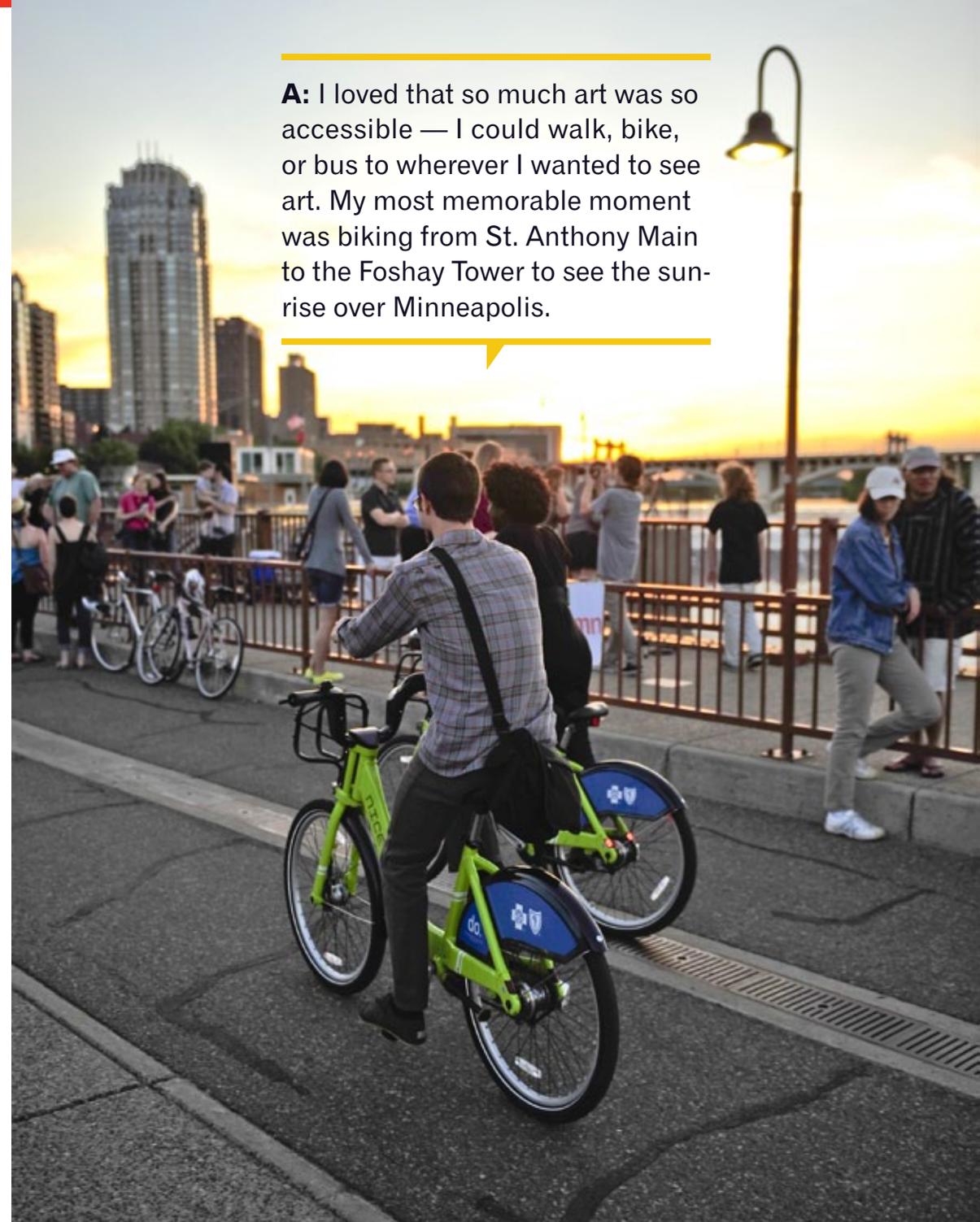
Torch



Media



A: I loved that so much art was so accessible — I could walk, bike, or bus to wherever I wanted to see art. My most memorable moment was biking from St. Anthony Main to the Foshay Tower to see the sunrise over Minneapolis.



Nice Ride MN, Stone Arch Bridge PHOTO: PK

artists



Ai Minnesota Students
Artifact Shore
Luke Axelson
Leslie Ball
Bridget Beck
Christopher Baker
Robert Bauer
Amelia Biewald
Philip Blackburn
The BodyCartography Project
Bart Buch
Jill Burchill
Calamity and the Owl
Charles Campbell
Chris Campbell
Jim Campbell
Jaime Carrera
Genevieve Chamberland
Christopher Charbonneau
Melinda Childs
Bryan Clendenen
Barbara Claussen
Como Avenue Jug Band
Corbian Visual Arts and Dance
Grant Cutler
Emily Darnell
Mike Davis
Daniel Dean
Dirty Talk
Dan Dressler
Pete Driessen
John Driscoll

Alex Dyba
Aaron Dysart
Terese Elhard
Heid Erdrich
Jan Estep
Chris Farstad
Sam Fuentes
Ben Garthus
Jonathan Gering
Charles Gillett
Grace Minnesota
Will Grant
Solange Guillaume
Mike Haeg
Mike Hallenbeck
Malena Handeen
Lara Hanson
Nathan Hanson
Katie Hargrave
Todd Harper
Peter Henning
Alexa Horochowski
Wing Young Huie
Carrie Jennings
Mary Johnson
Peter L. Johnson
JoJo of Murals by Eros
Joe Kaercher
Gulgin Kayim
Chris Kallmyer
John Kamp
Mero Cocinero Karimi

Kalen Rainbow Keir
Sean Kelly-Pegg
Leslie Kelman
Layne Kennedy
John Kannenberg
Julie Kesti
Scott Kesti
Osman Khan
John Kim
Rachel Knoll
Suzanne Kosmalski
Bethany Lacktorin
Landland
Mina Leierwood
Amanda Lovelee
Emily Lynch
Dana Maiden
Meena Mangalvedhekar
Aaron Marx
MAW
Megan Mayer
MCAD Students
Peter McLarnan
Caly McMorro
Megan Mertaugh
Debora Miller
Ali Momeni
Ben Moren
Michael Murnane
Levi Murphy
Joe Nagel
Christy Newell

Kaara Nilsson
The Notion Collective
Nostalgia
Pat Nunnelly
Mark O'Brien
Ryan Olcott (Food Team)
Angela Olson
Erik Ostrom
Panelectric Cinema
Jack FX Pavlik
Chris Pennington
Ilana Percher
Peyton of House of Daskarone
Wang Ping
Bonnie J. Ploger
Liseli Polivka
Tom Poor Bear
Prairie Fire Lady Choir
Scott Puhl
Janaki Ranpura
Red76
Rigo 23
Brian Roessler
James Rojas
ROLU
Molly Roth
Andrew Saboe
Kate Saturday
Carissa Samaniego
Jenny Schmid
Davu Seru
Skewed Visions

Mona Smith
Angela Sprunger
Andréa Stanislav
Chris Strouth (Paris-1919)
Andy Sturdevant
Piotr Szyhalski
Lauren Thorson
Amy Toscani
Anthony Tran
Trash Film Debauchery
Vasily Trubetsky
Robert Two Bulls
U of M BFA Group
Eric Veldey
Vong Vang
Roman Verostko
Vortex Navigation Company
Anthony Warnick
David Wiggins
Diane Willow
Bobby Wilson
Sarah Wolbert
Jim Woodring
Works Progress
Liu Xuguang
Marcus Young
Chester Yourczek
Brad Zellar

partner organizations

All My Relations Arts
American Composer's Forum
American Swedish Institute
Art Department at the University of Minnesota
Art Institutes International Minnesota
Art Shanty Projects
Beijing Film Academy
Black Dog Cafe + Wine Bar
Burnet Gallery at Le Meridien Chambers Minneapolis
City of Minneapolis
City of Saint Paul
CITYDESKSTUDIO
College of Visual Arts
Covanta Energy
Flint Hills International Children's Festival
Forecast Public Art
Franklin Art Works
The Friends of Saint Paul Public Library
Great Water Brewing Company
Hennepin Energy Recovery Center
Highpoint Center for Printmaking
Intermedia Arts

Keys 4/4 Kids
Landmark Center
Le Meridien Chambers Minneapolis
Lorenz Bus Service
Macalester College
McNally Smith College of Music
McSweeney's
Minneapolis College of Art and Design
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Minneapolis Parks + Recreation
Minnesota Center for Book Arts
Minnesota Historical Society
Minnesota Museum of American Art
Minnesota State Arts Board
mnartists.org
Mpls Photo Center
Native American Community
Development Institute
Nice Ride Minnesota
Nomad World Pub
Northern Lights.mn
Northrop Concerts and Lectures

Public Art Saint Paul
Ordway Center for the Performing Arts
Rain Taxi Review of Books
Red Stag Supperclub
Regis Center for Art
St. Anthony Falls Laboratory
at the University of Minnesota
College of Science & Engineering
Saint Paul Central Library
Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program
Schubert Club
The Saint Paul Hotel
Saint Paul River Centre
Science Museum of Minnesota
The Soap Factory
Soo Visual Arts Center
Springboard for the Arts
The UpTake
US Army Corps of Engineers
W Minneapolis-The Foshay
Walker Art Center

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and **Nicole Larson**
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Brennan Vance
Videography and Documentation

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Andrea Billings
Minneapolis Assistant Volunteer
Coordinator

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St. Paul Assistant Volunteer
Coordinator

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Saint Paul Assistant Volunteer
Coordinator

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ghost communications
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Public Relations

Photography: PK: Patrick Kelly;
DH: Dusty Hoskovev; NL: Nicole
Larson; CW/WAC: Cameron Wittig
courtesy the Walker Art Center

A red flag with a white outline of a spark plug in the center. The words "northern" and "spark" are written in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font across the middle of the spark plug outline. The flag is attached to a white pole on the left side.

**northern
spark**