

Artists' Pipeline – June 2018 – distributed by VSA Minnesota

VSA Minnesota, the state organization on arts and disability, provides these monthly news updates for artists with disabilities and arts organizations. To adjust your subscription, contact access@vsamn.org or 612-332-3888. Thanks for your interest – and send us YOUR news!

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NEWS:

- **Artists in the News: Raymond Luczak, Becca Cerra, Brian Shaughnessy**

[Raymond Luczak](#) of Minneapolis has published his newest book – *The Kinda Fella I Am*, exploring the disabled queer male experience. Author and editor of 19 books (including [Silence Is a Four-Letter Word](#), [This Way to the Acorns](#), [Snooty](#), [Men with Their Hands](#), [How to Kill Poetry](#), and more), Luczak offers 15 stories, whose narrators “tell their stories with voices brimming with pride, rage, and hope. Their experiences rise from the page like wildfire, ferocious and breathtaking, burning away our preconceptions of disability and leaving us dazzled.” — Michael Thomas Ford, author of *Lily*. Another reviewer (Jack Fritscher, PhD, author, *Mapplethorpe: Assault and Gay San Francisco*) said, “These accessible and entertaining eyewitness stories of physical identity and existential inequities are ‘performance-art arias’ of desire, anxiety, and hope capable of rocking the consciousness of even the most sympathetic readers curious about the hazards to all that are inherent in gay society’s quarantine of people labeled disabled.” Published by [Reclamation Press](#) in March, the paperback is \$19.95.

[Becca Cerra](#), a 2016 Emerging Artist Grantee from VSA Minnesota, was featured in the May issue of [Minnesota Women's Press](#). She is a multi-disciplinary artist currently collaborating with people who have amputations to create wearable sculptures, called Altered Aesthetics. She sees her nonmedical "prosthetics" as her visual homage to the body's story.

Brian G. Shaughnessy, 59, died on April 17. An actor, writer, lawyer, he performed with other performers with disabilities at the 1994 international VSA festival in Brussels, Belgium (when the airlines lost his wheelchair battery, and his personal care attendant had to push him through the cobblestone streets of Europe). He Founded Open Door Theatre, published a memoir, [The Squeaky Wheel](#), in 2005, and performed excerpts at the 2010 Minnesota Fringe Festival. He spent recent years in Hawaii. He is survived by his son Amadeus, his mother Ina Louise, siblings, and other relatives. A memorial service will be held June 1 at 11:00 (10:00 visitation) at St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis.

- **Attend a VSA Minnesota community forum June 13 or 20**

VSA Minnesota is engaged in strategic planning to create a new roadmap for meeting the organization's mission into the foreseeable future. Guided by Propel Nonprofits, the board of directors invites arts participants (artists, audience, organizations), program partners, funders or contractors to share your opinions about our future. Two gatherings will focus on the community's need for VSA's services and its mission to "create communities where people with disabilities can learn through, participate in and access the arts." Snacks and soft drinks will be served. Advance registration is appreciated for two dates and locations:

Wednesday, June 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at History Theatre, 30 E. 10th Street, St. Paul (NOTE: location may change). OR

Wednesday, June 20, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Perpich Center for Arts Education, 6125 Olson Memorial Hwy., Golden Valley. The front door is the accessible entrance. (ASL interpreting provided.)

RSVP to craig@vsamn.org or 612-332-3888 (option #1 for Executive Director Craig Dunn). Indicate if you need additional accommodations. If you are interested in this effort but unable to attend, please respond, too, for follow-up.

This planning process is made possible by funding from an Organization Development grant from the Metro Regional Arts Council.

- **Avivo ArtWorks exhibits June 9-10 at Art on the Lake in Excelsior**

Artists with disabilities from Avivo ArtWorks will have a tent at this year's Art on the Lake in Excelsior. The engaging creative event connects artists' personal stories with the vibrant lakeside village community, while showcasing outstanding artistic work from multiple disciplines. It is Saturday, June 9 (10 AM - 6 PM) and Sunday, June 10 (10 AM - 4 PM) at Commons Park, 36 Water Street.

- **National Hearing Loss convention in Minneapolis in June**

The national convention of the [Hearing Loss Association of America](#) (HLAA) will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis June 21-24. Registration \$350 members, \$425 non-members, (\$200 day pass) offers opportunities for workshops, "West Side Story" at the Guthrie Theater (captioned and ASL-interpreted), a Mandy Hardy concert, exhibition hall, and a tour of the Twin Cities on Sunday.

- **Keeping Your Kids Safe Online session offered in St. Paul for parents**

Families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing are invited to a free presentation in St. Paul on "Keeping Your Kids Safe Online: A Guide for Parents." It will be Saturday, June 23, at Lifetrack, 709 University Avenue West, St. Paul.

Tarra Grammenos and Melinda Brown will present information on cyber safety, cyber bullying, and suicide prevention/awareness. Activities will be provided for kids and pizza will be offered after the presentation along with an opportunity to ask questions and visit with the presenters, role models, and other families. RSVP via [Eventbrite](#).

- **Nature Center opportunity in Rochester for families with D/HH children**

Families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing are invited to "Little People, Big Feelings: Fostering Emotional Expressions In D/HH Kids," on Sat, June 23, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at Quarry Hill Nature Center, 701 Silver Creek Road NE, Rochester. Children ages 0-5 and their families will enjoy this beautiful nature center and ice cream sundaes. Kids are invited to decorate a cup and plant a seedling while parents learn about the importance of helping young children who are deaf and hard of hearing learn to identify and express their emotions. RSVP via [Eventbrite](#).

- **Crisis Connection ends, other hotlines continue**

Canvas Health has reported that as of June 30, 2018, Crisis Connection is no longer providing crisis hotline services. However, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline will continue to be available at 800-273-TALK (8255). Minnesota also has 24/7 crisis services available both by phone and in person. County crisis phone numbers are listed at <http://www.mn.state/dhs/crisis>. In the metro area (soon statewide), call or text **CRISIS (274747) from a mobile phone.

- **Show (your art) with the Saints**

The Show Gallery in Lowertown invites artists to sign up to show and sell your art work at a St. Paul Saints Game! It's easy: pick a game, pack up your art, head to the ballpark! Set up at Andy's Gallery at CHS Field, on the concourse behind home plate. Table and grid walls are provided. Your name will be announced and displayed on the giant video board. It's free, fun, and over 7,000 fans at every game may see your work. For more info, contact katieemory@theshowgallerylowertown.org.

- **Artability offers artist workshops leading to October show/sale**

The 2018 Artability exhibit will be held October 25-27 at the Great Hall in downtown St. Paul. Free workshops for artists are being offered at various People Incorporated locations and at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; for the schedule, go to <https://www.peopleincorporated.org/get-involved/artability/workshop-schedule/>.

- **Patrick's Cabaret celebrates its 'FUNeral', plans final discussion**

In January Patrick's Cabaret announced that [Patrick's Cabaret would sunset](#) this summer. Founded by Patrick Scully, the Minneapolis-based Cabaret has had a 32-year history of providing performance opportunities for emerging artists in the edges of mainstream culture. In its last months the Cabaret produced a number of events, including several Community Roundtables to imagine and create the future for artists, particularly artists of color, disabilities, and queer and trans identities.

On Sunday, June 3, Patrick's Cabaret celebrated the organization's sunset with a "FUNeral" at [LUSH](#) in Minneapolis. Eulogistic performances by artists spanning Patrick's history included storytellers **Danielle Daniel**, **Howard Lieberman** and **Amy Salloway**, who reflected on their time with the organization and the process of saying goodbye in their signature styles. Drag artist **Iris Oconnel** and drag co-operative **House of Larva** channeled their alter egos into farewell songs — Iris with a sweet and sincere nod to Judy Garland, and House of Larva with their bombastic embrace of camp. Speculative fiction writer **Gabriela Santiago** presented "Who Killed Patrick's Cabaret?," an absurdist, audience-participatory murder mystery dinner theater performance, and **Kat Purcell** united umbrella-wielding collaborators in a dance piece suggesting a transformation of grief to acceptance. Farewells were also offered by board members, volunteers and staff, including executive director **Scott Artley**. Attendees wore their "funeral finest" for an evening of reflection, love and celebration.

Patrick's final flare will be a **Monday, June 25** panel discussion entitled "The Tipping Point," centering queer and trans Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) voices. The panel will feature leading artists & organizers Roxanne Anderson, Lisa Brimmer, Sharon Day, Xochi de la Luna and Oskar Ly, and facilitator Kathy Mouacheupao, newly appointed executive director of MRAC (Metropolitan Regional Arts Council). The event is free and open to the public from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at [Public Functionary](#), 1400 12th Ave NE, Minneapolis.

A retrospective book has just been published: [Out on the Edge: three decades of Patrick's Cabaret](#).

The Cabaret wants to raise \$11,000 to meet its final commitments. If fundraising exceeds needs, the balance will be re-granted to mission-aligned organizations who have agreed to take on Patrick's programming and continue the legacy, such as 20% Theater, which agreed to adopt the annual "Controlled Burn: queer performance for a world on fire" that features acts of new, radical queer performance. To donate, visit patrickscabaret.org/news/be-part-legacy-patricks-cabaret, mail to Patrick's Cabaret, PO Box 8096, Minneapolis 55408 or contact Scott Artley at 952-221-1724.

- **The Mighty offers weekly emails about health & disability challenges**

The Mighty is a digital health community created to empower and connect people facing health challenges and disabilities. Founded in 2014 by Mike Porath and based in California, it has over a million registered users who receive free weekly emails of articles on many disability topics or check its website (<https://themighty.com>) and archive. According to editor Megan Griffo, "The Mighty, I hope, will be a place to come if you need to be reminded that you're not going through whatever you're going through alone. It's a place that will make you think about the cards life has dealt you and decide what your next play will be or if you're even in the mood to make one. I joined *The Mighty* because

there's a difference between alone time and actually being alone. And that difference may convince someone to not give up just yet." Recent articles include: [Navigating the Space Between Visible and Invisible Disability](#), [Disposable Plastic Straws Suck. Try These Disability-Friendly Alternatives](#), [Please Don't Pray for My Daughter With a Disability to Be Healed](#), [4 Reasons Why Disabled People Should Run for Office](#), [Why I Chose to Give Up My Disability 'Passing Privilege'](#). You can [subscribe](#) or submit articles to *The Mighty*.

- **Art exhibit at Vision Loss Resources**

Artworks by two Twin Cities artists, **Emma Erspamer** and **Jon Leverentz**, are featured in the Vision Loss Resources lobby gallery in Minneapolis through July, 2018.

Leverentz has been an artist for most of his life, using acrylic and oil paints to create his artwork. He is inspired by nature and likes painting outdoor scenery. Several discussions of his work are found in an online video ([Jon Leverentz: The Soul of an Artist](#)) and in [Art Beyond Sight: A Resource Guide to Art, Creativity, and Visual Impairment](#).

[Erspamer](#) creates art through painting, sculpting and whatever meets her fancy. She also loves movement in nature and wants viewers to see the visible and invisible, the yin and yang of the world around us. Using unique colors, brush strokes and textures in creating series-based works, she doesn't put people in her paintings because she wants the viewer to find themselves in her work.

Coordinated by VSA Minnesota, the exhibit is open to the public during Vision Loss Resources business hours, Monday-Friday, 8:00– 4:30, at 1936 Lyndale Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Parking is free in a lot off the southbound lane on Lyndale.

For information about purchasing art or participating in or arranging future exhibits, contact Halle O'Falvey, Exhibits Coordinator, 612-332-3888 or exhibitions@vsamn.org.

- **Easterseals Disability Film Challenge announces winning filmmakers**

Winners of the fifth annual **Easterseals Disability Film Challenge** were announced May 11 at a red-carpet awards ceremony in Beverly Hills. The Easterseals Disability Film Challenge gives filmmakers — with and without disabilities — the opportunity to collaborate to tell unique stories that showcase disability in its many forms. Filmmakers were given a span of 55 hours in April to write and produce a three-to-five-minute film using this year's genre, "buddy comedy." Films must include a person with a disability either in front of or behind the camera and are judged by a panel of noted and diverse entertainment industry professionals. Top prizes include mentorships with industry leaders; cash grants; film festival screening opportunities; and other awards. Winners were:

[Check Mate \(Carl Hansen\) for Best Film](#);

[Day Danniells \(Hit On\) for Best Filmmaker](#);

[J.B. Abajian \(Visibility\) for Best Actor](#); and

[Footloose \(David Tenenbaum\) for Best Awareness Campaign](#).

For more information, go to the website at <https://disabilityfilmchallenge.com/>; or can see photos from the event [here](#) and watch the winning films [here!](#)

- **Disability and Progress shows coming up**

[Disability and Progress](#) is a weekly radio show that explores "insights into, ideas about and discussions on disability topics." The program is broadcast Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:00 PM on KFAI (90.3 FM Minneapolis, or 106.7 FM St. Paul). If you have an idea for a show, call Sam Jasmine 612-341-3144, or email disabilityandprogress@tcq.net. Coming up:

June 21. The Center for Homicide Research and its accessibility goals will be addressed by Dave Cummer, their volunteer accessibility coordinator, and Jeff Mathwig, their research manager and development officer.

Shows are archived online for two weeks. Recent topics included:

June 7. Vicki Greenleaf speaks about the Easter Seals Disability Film Challenge.

- **LEAD Conference August 9-11 in Atlanta**

The Kennedy Center Office of Accessibility will present the [2018 LEAD@ conference](#) (Leadership Exchange in Arts & Disability) in Atlanta, Georgia with capacity-building workshops August 7-8 and

the conference on August 9-11. For more information, contact the Kennedy Center Office of Accessibility at 202-416-8727 or access@kennedy-center.org.

- **Como Park Zoo & Conservatory Launches Autism, Sensory Friendly, Senior Programs**

Como Park Zoo and Conservatory is presenting **Autism & Sensory Friendly Early Entry Days**. These free sensory-friendly opportunities allows individuals with autism and other sensory needs the ability to see and experience all the things the Como Zoo has to offer before the doors are open to the general public.

Como Zoo will open at 9:00 AM on certain dates (see below) for an inclusive experience for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Attendees can spend time exploring exhibits, and participate in activities designed specifically for them from 9:00 to 10:00 AM. This year's dates include: Sun. June 10, Wed. June 13, Sun. July 8, Wed. July 11, Sun. July 22, Wed. July 25, Sun. Aug. 5, Wed. Aug. 8, Sun. Aug. 19, Wed. Aug. 22, Sun. Sept. 9, Sun. Oct. 14, Sun. Nov. 11, Sun. Dec. 9.

Como Park Zoo & Conservatory has on its [website downloadable materials](#) such as a "[Visual Schedule](#)" and a "[Sensory Map](#)" that will help plan the day before heading to Como Zoo. Working in collaboration with the [Autism Society of Minnesota \(AuSM\)](#), Como has also created a downloadable "[Social Narrative](#)" guide to help visitors reduce anxiety about new experiences by explaining what to expect step-by-step as they explore the zoo.

The Zoo has also introduced **Senior Strolls**, a new, free program for 55-and-older friends to experience Como Park Zoo & Conservatory before it opens to the public. Seniors Strolls take place 9:00 to 10:00 AM on the first Tuesday of each month. Special activity stations will be set up, as well as an opportunity for a leisurely stroll through the lush greenery and warm confines of the conservatory, or, in warmer months, a walk among the animals and world class exhibits on the. These active, social and education times in 2018 include June 5, July 3, Aug. 7, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4, and so on into 2019.

- **Artists with disabilities Open Flow meetings to reconvene on Sept. 6**

Artists with disabilities and supporters meet the first Thursday of each month at Walker Church, 3104 16th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Established by the Artists with Disabilities Alliance (AWDA), these Open Flow gatherings are an opportunity to share art, writing, performances and support. Participants also bring treats to share. The venue is fully accessible and gatherings are from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

The "first Thursday" schedule in 2018 will reconvene Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Dec. 6. Facilitators are Dan Reiva, dprw@yahoo.com; Tara Innmon, 612-376-7779, tarainnmon@gmail.com; Kip Shane, kipshane@gmail.com; or Jon Skaalen at VSA Minnesota, 612-332-3888, jon@vsamn.org.

- **Subscribe or submit items to the Accessible Arts Calendar**

To receive a monthly email of VSA Minnesota's **Accessible Arts Calendar**, send your name & email address to access@vsamn.org. You can request all listings or whichever ones offer the accommodations you need: ASL interpreting, captioning, audio description, sensory-friendly. Each version includes exhibits and other events featuring artists with disabilities. Most listings also appear on the website as well: <http://www.vsamn.org>. You can submit items for the website or calendar by emailing access@vsamn.org or using the online form at <http://vsamn.org/about/contact-us/>.