

# Artists' Pipeline – December 2018 – distributed by VSA Minnesota

[VSA Minnesota](http://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](mailto:access@vsamn.org) or 612-332-3888. Thanks for your interest – and send us YOUR news!

## INDEX:

- **VSA Minnesota to close in late 2019**
- **Artists in the News:**
- **Emerging Artists Grant available**
- **Art Works Eagan Acquires Former Fire Building**
- **Minnesota cellist named one of four VSA International Young Soloists**
- **Webinar December 11 to address Serving Patrons with Disabilities**
- **Story Studio Workshop offered January 26-27 in Minneapolis**
- **Avivo ArtWorks Winter Market is December 7**
- **Upcoming Art Exhibits at The Show Art Gallery**
- **VSA Playwright Discovery Entries Due January 23**
- **Disability and Progress shows coming up**
- **Open Flow sets 2019 meeting schedule in Minneapolis**

## NEWS:

- **VSA Minnesota to close in late 2019**

VSA Minnesota has announced that, after 33 years of making more accessible to people with disabilities, it will be ceasing its operations at the end of September 2019.

The decision was made by VSA Minnesota's Board of Directors in October following nearly a year of community inquiry, financial analysis and organization examination. The Board cited the primary factors leading to closing as:

- decreasing financial resources to support its work;
- pending retirements of its two staff members, Craig Dunn and Jon Skaalen; and
- the January 1, 2020, loss of rights to its name, VSA Minnesota, due to trademark issues with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, which manages the international VSA affiliate network.

Executive Director Craig Dunn pointed out that "mission accomplished" was not one of the factors leading to closing. He stated, "We have indeed created strong inroads to our mission 'to create a community where people with disabilities learn through, participate in and access the arts.' And more Minnesotans have access to arts programming and arts education than before our founding in 1986." He added, "In fact, it would not be wrong to say that Minnesotans with disabilities have greater access to the arts than do individuals with disabilities in the 49 other states. However, we cannot say that every person with a disability in this state has full and equitable access to the arts in all its forms."

In order to push its advocacy for arts access, the VSA Minnesota staff and board is working to establish new "homes" and stewards for its long-standing programs and services. Thus far, [Springboard for the Arts](#) has agreed to incorporate services to artists with disabilities program into its program offerings. [COMPAS](#) will be absorbing school arts programming for students with disabilities and special education needs. The [Metro Regional Arts Council](#), which funded VSA's *ADA Improvement Grants* for the past nine years, will administer the program in-house beginning in the fall. The organization is continuing to seek stewards for its accessibility assistance services, its *Accessible Arts Calendar* and its Emerging Artists with Disabilities Grant program, which has been funded by the Jerome Foundation for 23 years. It hopes also to find an archival home for its records and historical artifacts documenting how access to the arts has changed for people with disabilities.

Among VSA Minnesota's 2019 programs are:

- \* Applications by Minnesota Artists with Disabilities for six \$2,000 Emerging Artist Grants (Deadline Feb. 1, 2019);
- \* Applications by metro nonprofits for ADA Access Improvement Grants up to \$15,000 (deadlines Dec. 14 and May 1);
- \* June 2 [Caritas](#) concert/VSA MN fundraiser Sunday, June 2;
- \* July 26 performances by artists with disabilities at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual ADA celebration;
- \* An exhibit of new artwork created by 2018 Emerging Artist Grant recipients;
- \* A celebration with VSA Minnesota constituents – artists and arts patrons with disabilities, arts and disability organizations, educators, students, teaching artists, as well as program stewards.

Board chair Maggie Karli of St. Paul stated, “None of us are happy that the organization that began as Very Special Arts Minnesota and grew to the entity now known as VSA Minnesota is to be no more. However, we are proud to have been part of its many triumphs over the years and we each look forward to the many ways new individuals and organizations will step forward to enliven the mission that has served Minnesota so well.”

[VSA Minnesota's website](#) has a recorded statement by Craig Dunn (direct YouTube link is [https://youtu.be/QxR\\_P6TmbyQ](https://youtu.be/QxR_P6TmbyQ)), a FAQ document with more information about its closing process and a listing of some of the organization's highlights over 33 years at <http://vsamn.org/about/vsa-minnesota-events>. It welcomes communications at 612-332-3888 or [info@vsamn.org](mailto:info@vsamn.org). Board and staff are listed at <http://vsamn.org/about/board-staff/>.

- **Artists in the News:**

**CHOICE, unlimited** in Duluth will hold its 8th Annual **Evening of the ARTS** on Thursday, **December 6** from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at Lincoln Park Middle School, 3215 W 3rd St. More than 70 artists will showcase their talent and ability with original music, art, film, dance and poetry. ASL interpreting will be provided. Tickets are \$5 at the door. For more information, contact Annie Roseen, ARTS Program Coordinator and BOLD-choice Theatre Director, 218-724-5869, [aroseen@choiceunlimited.org](mailto:aroseen@choiceunlimited.org), or go to <http://www.choiceunlimited.org>.

- **Emerging Artists Grant available**

VSA Minnesota has administered these annual grants for the Jerome Foundation for 22 years to enable Minnesota artists with disabilities to create new work. The deadline for the coming year's grants is **Feb. 1, 2019**. Applications have been mailed out. If you did not receive a copy and are interested, go online (<http://www.vsamn.org>), or email or call 612-332-3888 or 800-801-3883.

- **Art Works Eagan Acquires Former Fire Building**

The City of Eagan has sold a former Fire Administration Building to [Art Works Eagan](#) (AWE) for \$500,000. Since 2015, according to Eagan Mayor Mike Maguire, it's been a vision of the Eagan Forward initiative for a Community Art Center. He credited Art Works Eagan, its volunteers and their leader, Jerri Neddermeyer, for making this purchase happen by raising funds and arranging the private financing to close this deal. There is no subsidy or risk to taxpayers.

Art Works Eagan (AWE) envisions the building at 3795 Pilot Knob Road for a fine art gallery, studios for working artists, small performance space and a makerspace. Their overall goal is to foster community connectedness particularly with opportunities to interact with local arts organizations and working artists. According to AWE, the facility will also be a vital location to plan programs and community efforts that further the arts.

Its main gallery exhibits the creativity of Art Works member artists, including [Martha Bird](#), through January 25. Featured in the second floor 3D mini-gallery are rarely seen sculptures from the family collection of Anthony Caponi, the late founder of [Caponi Art Park](#). In February/March exhibit will be “Mirrored Mosaics: Artists' Reflections on Being Muslim in Minnesota.”

- **Minnesota cellist named one of four VSA International Young Soloists**

Four young musicians received the 2018 VSA International Young Soloists Competition, a Jean Kennedy Smith Arts and Disability Program that recognizes talented, emerging artists ages 14-25 with disabilities from all over the world. Awardees in the 34<sup>th</sup> annual program are: violinist Eva

Casado Ariza, 22, Florida; Dennis O'Keefe, 25, percussionist, New York; cellist **Madeline Sheard**, 18, Minnesota; and the Out of Time Barbershop Quartet, New York.

Sheard studies cello with Mina Fisher and has won numerous competitions, including Schubert Club, Thursday Musical, and Classical Minnesota Public Radio's MN Varsity Competition. Her solo engagements have included the LaCrosse Symphony Orchestra and the Salon se Lève Young Artist Concert Series. Sheard, who has a hearing loss, studies chamber music with the Artaria Chamber Music School and has attended summer festivals including Bowdoin International Music Festival in Maine. She is principal cellist of the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies and toured internationally with them this past summer.

A recording of the May 30 concert at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage is archived online at <http://www.kennedy-center.org/video/index/M66201>.

- **Webinar December 11 to address Serving Patrons with Disabilities**

An ADA Audio Conference Series session titled "Access to Cultural Programs and the Arts: Serving Patrons with Disabilities" will be offered Tuesday, **December 11**, from 1:00-2:30 Central Time. Sponsored by the Great Lakes ADA Center in collaboration with the ADA National Network, the session will include representatives from Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium (CCAC) discussing efforts to ensure that patrons with disabilities have the opportunity to access the rich and diverse cultural programs and arts available in the Chicago area. Speakers will address how cultural organizations can best include and welcome all visitors, including visitors who are blind or have low vision, visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing, visitors with mobility disabilities, visitors with cognitive disabilities, and visitors with sensory differences.

Speakers will be Christena Gunther, CCAC founder and co-chair; Jason Harrington, education outreach manager, Chicago Shakespeare Theater; and Lynn Walsh, manager of accessibility and inclusion, John G. Shedd Aquarium.

The free session is offered via telephone and/or a web based webinar platform, where it will be captioned. A free account is required to register at <http://www.ada-audio.org>. For more information, call 877-232-1990 or email [webinars@adagreatlakes.org](mailto:webinars@adagreatlakes.org).

- **Story Studio Workshop offered January 26-27 in Minneapolis**

Minneapolis actor, writer and storyteller **Amy Salloway** is offering a two-day [Story Studio Workshop](#) on January 26-27 at the Phoenix Theatre, in Minneapolis. This weekend intensive Storytelling Workshop is for those dipping their toes into storytelling waters for the first time, AND for seasoned performers wanting to brush up on skills or focus on a new or challenging project. The 7-or-so hours of class include lecture, discussion, individual and group exercises, performance time, and feedback and critique. Students will leave having developed and presented at least the first draft of a 5-7-minute personal story to perform onstage, and will come away with tools for developing narrative material that are applicable to a wide variety of settings: theatre, story slams, written memoir, podcasts, lectures, public speaking, TED talks, business presentations, and more.

Saturday (12-4) consists of interactive exercises to help students identify and refine a story to tell to the class. Sunday (12-2:30), students will perform their stories and receive in-depth feedback from their instructor and classmates.

The class is open to everyone. No experience required. Cost: \$150. Registration: <https://bit.ly/2DPn9la>. Location: The Phoenix Theatre, 2605 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis 55408. Instructor: Amy Salloway ([www.facebook.com/awkwardmomentonstage](http://www.facebook.com/awkwardmomentonstage)).

- **Avivo ArtWorks Winter Market is December 7**

Ring in the winter season by supporting local artists making art at [Avivo ArtWorks](#) in their Winter Market on Friday, December 7 from 1-4 PM at 1825 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. A limited amount of Avivo ArtWorks 2019 wall calendars will be available. Titled *Introspections*, the calendar features art and personal quotes from [The Collective](#), exploring wellness and recovery and encouraging hope and reflection! The event is free and open to the public! For more information, contact Jes Reyes at [j.es.reyes@avivomn.org](mailto:j.es.reyes@avivomn.org) or 612-752-8282 or go to [Facebook](#).

- **Upcoming Art Exhibits at The Show Art Gallery**

The Show Art Gallery in St. Paul will host a fan art exhibition called I DON'T OWN THIS! From December 6 through January 13. Fan art is artwork created by fans of anything in popular culture (e.g. a movie, TV show, book series, musicians, etc.). It's a fun, whimsical exhibition – just in time for the holidays! The opening reception is Thursday, December 6 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at 346 N. Sibley St. Regular gallery hours are Thurs.-Fri. 11-6, Sat.-Sun. 11-3; First Fridays 11-9.

The Show is a nonprofit art organization that exhibits works by artists from all walks of life, including artists with disabilities, in a cooperatively run gallery, retail store and community space in Lowertown (a half block from Mears Park). Sales benefit the gallery and sponsor artists who need support in solo exhibitions, art crawl, and other events. For information about volunteering, teaching or other opportunities, contact Tara Tieso, 651-419-8022, [info@theshowartgallery.org](mailto:info@theshowartgallery.org) or [Taratieso@theshowartgallery.org](mailto:Taratieso@theshowartgallery.org). Website: <http://www.theshowartgallery.org>.

- **VSA Playwright Discovery Entries Due January 23**

Young writers with disabilities and collaborative groups that include students with disabilities are invited to explore [the disability experience](#) through the art of writing for performance — in the form of plays, screenplays, or music theater. The annual VSA Playwright Discovery Program, sponsored by the Kennedy Center, is open to students in the U.S. grades 6-12 (or equivalents) or ages 11-18 for non-U.S. students. Writers are encouraged to craft short (10-minute) works from their own experiences and observations in the style of realism, through the creation of fictional characters and settings, or writing metaphorically or abstractly about the disability experience.

Entries – **due January 23, 2019** – may be the work of an individual student with disabilities or a collaboration by a group of up to five students. The competition has three divisions: grades 6-7, grades 8-9, and grades 10-12 (or equivalents). A panel of theater professionals selects winners.

Selected winners in the Senior Division (grades 10-12 / ages 15-18) will receive access to participate in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival in Washington, DC. Winners will have the opportunity to work with industry professionals in workshop and further development of their own script, as well as participating in workshops, networking opportunities, and the festival's award ceremony alongside the nation's premier collegiate playwrights and theatre artists. Winners in the Primary and Junior Divisions will be featured in press releases and on the Kennedy Center website.

To apply, submit a script or for more information, call 202-416-8898, [vsainfo@kennedy-center.org](mailto:vsainfo@kennedy-center.org) or go to: [http://education.kennedy-center.org/education/vsa/programs/playwright\\_discovery.cfm](http://education.kennedy-center.org/education/vsa/programs/playwright_discovery.cfm).

Other programs, whose deadlines are not yet available, are the VSA Emerging Young Artists Program (for visual artists) and the VSA International Young Soloists Award Program.

- **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](mailto:disabilityandprogress@tcq.net). Coming up:

Dec. 6 -- Arc Minnesota's Public Policy Director Alicia Munson will talk about election outcomes and a 2019 legislative session preview.

Dec. 13 -- Peggy Mehen, a passionate self-advocate, will speak about disability rights and why everyone can competitively work.

Dec. 20 -- ADAPT Minnesota representatives will speak about their mission to include people with disabilities in decision making, raise revenue on people who can afford it and use the revenue to fund disability services.

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

Nov. 15 -- Larry Silber, corporate and community relations officer for Memorial Blood Centers, talked about blood donation. Who can do it? Who needs it? And all the facts about blood donating.

Nov. 29 -- Hepatologist and gastroenterologist John Lake, MD, talked about organ transplants. Dr. Lake is director of the University of Minnesota Health Liver Transplant Program and Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition.