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## **ARTSPACE ANNOUNCES ARTIST AWARDS PROGRAM**

### **Artspace Celebration at The Cowles Center draws hundreds of attendees; Livestream watched by artists across the U.S.**

*(Minneapolis)* At the Artspace Celebration on Monday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. at The Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts in Minneapolis, Artspace Board Member Rebecca Driscoll announced the formation of the Artspace Awards, designed to honor Artspace-affiliated artists for their commitment to arts and the community.

The Celebration, which drew more than 300 hundred attendees and was viewed by hundreds more, from Honolulu to the Bronx, via Livestream, was hosted by T. Mychael Rambo and featured performances by Native Pride Dancers and The Stepkids.

The Artspace Awards, which will be given at next year's Celebration, are named for four individuals whose work and dedication served as the inspiration for the Awards: The Dejunius Hughes Award for Activism, The Su Job Award for Education, The Steve Kramer Award for Community Service and The Paul Brawner Award for Support of the Arts. Details on the nomination and selection process will be announced this summer.

Hughes, an early resident of Artspace's Tilsner Artists' Cooperative in St. Paul, was an activist, filmmaker and founder of the Twin Cities International Black Film Festival. Jobs, a fiber artist, teacher and resident of Artspace's Tashiro Kaplan Artist Lofts in Seattle, served as mentor to many artists in the Seattle community. Steve Kramer, a Twin Cities artist, the frontman for the iconoclastic punk-polka band The Wallets, collaborated with artists locally and across the country. Paul Brawner served on the Artspace Board of Directors for more than a decade, lending his business and banking expertise to Artspace, an organization to which he was deeply committed.

In addition to Driscoll's announcement, Artspace President Kelley Lindquist spoke of the growth of Artspace from a one-person advocacy organization 34 years ago, to the nation's leader in developing affordable space for artists, with 32 buildings currently in operation and more than a dozen more in development in New Orleans, Honolulu, New York and elsewhere. Lindquist attributed this growth, in part, to a shift in thinking by government official, community leaders and urban planners.

“American cities have at last discovered that vibrancy cannot be imposed from the top down by building freeways and bulldozing old buildings,” Lindquist said. “It must be built from the bottom up and the inside out, and nobody does it better than artists.”

Artspace Board Chair John Skogmo spoke about Artspace’s record of achievement in completing challenging project, highlighting El Barrio’s Artspace PS109 in New York City and the Artspace Minot Lofts in Minot, North Dakota, pointing to The Cowles Center as the “poster child for challenging projects.”

The Celebration began with a performance by the Native Pride Dancers, with founder Larry Yazzie explaining Native Pride’s focus on honoring native culture through music, dance and storytelling. The highlighting of native cultures was a fitting start for the evening, given Artspace’s current work with indigenous people in the Dakotas and Hawaii.

Midway through the Celebration, Artspace premiered a video short, produced by Seven and Sixty Productions, titled “Why Artspace Matters.” The video, which included footage shot by Artspace-affiliated artists around the country, featured artists showing and talking about their work, their spaces and their communities. The video is now available on the Artspace website at [www.artspace.org](http://www.artspace.org).

The culmination of the event was a performance by The Stepkids, a futuristic electro soul trio comprised of three singer/songwriters – Dan Edinberg, Jeff Gitelman and Tim Walsh. Drummer Tim Walsh, a resident of Read’s Artspace, a live/work Artspace project in Bridgeport, Connecticut, gave an impassioned and impromptu tribute to Artspace midway through the band’s 30 minute set, saying about his studio in Read’s, “It’s just the best place for us to work. I’ve really got to thank Artspace for doing this and bringing such a bright light to so many places in the U.S., and who knows – maybe even the world.”

Throughout the event, artists watching via Livestream engaged in a lively Twitter conversation, commenting on the performances and congratulating Artspace on the Celebration. Artists gathered at Artspace properties in Washington, D.C.; Seattle, Washington; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Council Bluffs, Iowa; and in Artspace’s two newest projects in Elgin and Waukegan, Illinois.

### **About Artspace**

For more than 30 years, Artspace has brought its hard-earned expertise to more than 200 cultural facility planning efforts from coast to coast. Of these projects, 32 have been developed and are owned and operated by Artspace itself, representing a unique, \$500 million investment in America’s arts infrastructure. With headquarters in Minneapolis and offices in Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Seattle and Washington D.C., Artspace is America’s leading developer of arts facilities. To date we have completed more than a thousand affordable live/work units for artists and their families as well as more than a million square feet of non-residential space for artists and arts organizations. Additional information is available at [www.artspace.org](http://www.artspace.org).

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