

# CHICAGO AVENUE FIRE ARTS CENTER

3749 Chicago Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55407

[artspace.org/cafac](http://artspace.org/cafac)



## PROJECT DETAILS

**Owner** Artspace Projects, Inc.

**Architect** UrbanWorks Architecture

**Development Consultant** J. Carlson & Sons Concrete and Masonry Restoration

**Financing** TCF Bank; City of Minneapolis; Great Streets Real Estate Development Gap Financing; Community Planning & Economic Development

**Financing** Community Development Block Grant: Stimulus Funding

**Total Development Cost** \$1M

**Total Area** 5,766 sq. ft.

## OVERVIEW

Early in 2008, a group of artists asked Artspace to help them determine the feasibility of creating a new “fire arts center” in an abandoned auto repair shop in South Minneapolis. At first Artspace provided pro bono consulting services, but when the artists realized they lacked the expertise to redevelop the property, they asked Artspace to assume a larger role. Artspace agreed not only to develop the facility but also to own it for up to 10 years, until the Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, the new nonprofit organization formed by the artists, is stable.

Fire arts include sculptural welding, blacksmithing, glass slumping, jewelry making, bronze casting and other art forms that involve flame or high heat. The Fire Arts Center is a home for these and related industrial and fine art forms. The Center offers classes, provides studio space that artists can rent and operates a gallery.



**artspace**

This \$1 million “boutique” project exemplifies Artspace’s commitment to building better communities through the arts. The structure, built in 1916 as a silent movie theater, was dilapidated. Now it is filling a unique niche in the Twin Cities’ arts scene. At the same time, it has infused new energy into its neighborhood, inspiring galleries and restaurants to open nearby.

*“I want us to have a vibrant intersection here. I see CAFAC as a catalyst for a whole bunch of other amenities that could develop as people come here — places to eat, shop, see art.”*

— Victoria Lauing, CAFAC Administrative Director



**AMERICA'S LEADER IN ARTIST-LED COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

Artspace is a nonprofit organization that uses the tools of real estate development to create affordable places where artists can live and work. Artspace consistently develops these projects in ways that support stable, healthy communities, anchored in existing assets. Because Artspace owns each of the projects it develops, they are able to ensure that the spaces remain affordable and accessible to artists in perpetuity. With 50+ projects developed over the last three decades, Artspace has supported artist-led community transformation, representing a \$653 million investment in America's arts infrastructure. While embracing the value the arts bring to individual lives, Artspace has championed the once-radical idea that both artists living with financial hardship, and chronically underfunded arts organizations, can leverage fundamental social change. With headquarters in Minneapolis and offices in Denver, New York, Seattle, and Washington D.C., Artspace is America's leading developer of arts facilities; and has served as a consultant to hundreds of communities and arts organizations nationwide.

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