

Tilsner Artists' Cooperative

300 Broadway Avenue | Saint Paul, MN 55101 | Opened 1993



Photo by Marc Nordberg

A Victorian Survivor in Lowertown

When Artspace first saw the Tilsner Warehouse, it had neither windows nor a roof, and parts of its upper two floors were too decayed to bear human weight. Although it was a prime candidate for the wrecking ball, it was also a beautiful building in a National Register Historic District, so the City of Saint Paul asked Artspace to save it. In a \$7.1 million overhaul, Artspace transformed this 1895 relic, a striking example of Victorian Romanesque architecture, into a thriving community of 66 artists and their families.

Each live/work unit at the Tilsner offers high ceilings, pine floors, exposed brick walls, wood beams, large windows and modern kitchens and baths. Some units on the sixth floor have 20-foot ceilings. Building amenities include two seven-story atriums that flood the interior with light.

The Tilsner proved that Artspace can rescue a historic building even in an advanced state of decay and turn it into a functioning, productive part of the community. The artists and families who reside at the Tilsner are part of a Lowertown neighborhood that didn't exist three decades ago but now ranks as one of Saint Paul's liveliest and most desirable places to live. The Tilsner and the adjacent Northern Warehouse proudly anchor the Saint Paul Art Crawl, which brings thousands of visitors to Lowertown twice each year.

“Being at the Tilsner lends credibility that I’m serious. There a lot of people who call themselves artists that aren’t dedicated to it. If you want to get up, roll out of bed and start throwing on your wheel, this is the place to do it.”

— Lisa Mathieson, Artist



Photo by Sean Smuda

DEVELOPMENT COST

\$7.1 million

TOTAL AREA

128,223 sq. ft.

LIVE/WORK UNITS

66

ARCHITECT

Miller Dunwiddie Architecture

DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation

FINANCING

City of Saint Paul

Family Housing Fund of Minneapolis & Saint Paul

Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency

Minnesota State Housing Preservation Office

National Equity Fund

Saint Paul Historic Preservation Commission

Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development

U.S. Bancorp

FUNDERS

Bush Foundation

City of Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

The McKnight Foundation

Northwest Area Foundation

Saint Paul Companies

The Saint Paul Foundation