

MILWAUKEE ARTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

Presented to the Community and
Economic Development
Committee, April 30, 2025

MILWAUKEE ARTS BOARD PURPOSE AND CREATION

320-12. Arts Board. 1. CREATION. There is created an arts board consisting of 17 members appointed by the mayor for 3-year terms and confirmed by the common council. At least one member shall be selected from among the members of the common council, one member shall be selected from the membership of the Cultural, Artistic and Musical Programming Advisory Council and 2 shall represent the Milwaukee board of school directors. All members shall be city residents. No member may participate in any decision that would directly assist any organization to which the member belongs, except as a dues-paying member, or from which the member receives any benefit, except as a dues-paying member.

2. DUTIES AND POWERS. The board shall:

- a. Promote the development, support and enjoyment of the arts in this city.
- b. Promote cultural diversity in the artistic life of this city.
- c. Promote the formation and growth of artistic projects or programs that are administered by and responsive to the needs of the city's communities that have been historically underrepresented or underserved based on race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, or citizenship status.
- d. Promote the design, construction and landscaping of public projects and private buildings, including public and private improvements, that enhance the beauty of this city.
- e. Determine the amounts to be expended from the Milwaukee arts fund in accordance with the guidelines established under sub. 3 and any additional written guidelines adopted by the board.
- f. Review the designs of projects in accordance with the guidelines established under sub. 4. *(elucidated on next slide)*
- g. Administer the municipal art fund established by s. 304-27 and seek grant opportunities to supplement the municipal art fund when appropriate.
- h. Submit annual reports to the common council and the mayor with respect to the board's activities under s. 304-27 and this section.

MILWAUKEE ARTS BOARD PURPOSE AND CREATION



From left to right, MAB members David Flores, Xela Garcia, April Heding, 2023 Artist of the Year Paul Druecke, Mayor Johnson, 2023 Friend of the Arts Jenelle Elder-Green, 2023 Artist of the Year Ben Tyjeski, and MAB members Tina Klose and Vice-Chair Polly Morris

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320-12. Arts Board. 4. DESIGNS TO BE SUBMITTED TO BOARD. a. Before any municipal bridge or public arts project is constructed, installed or altered by the city, its design shall be submitted to the board for examination before final working drawings have been started or any contract has been let. For the purposes of this sub., a public arts project is defined to include all forms of limited edition or one-of-a-kind original creations of visual art created by an artist and located in a space readily accessible by the general public.

b. If, within 60 days after a design other than a design for a public arts project has been submitted to the board under par. a, the board prepares a written report that objects to the design and transmits the report to the affected city department, the mayor and common council, the affected department may not proceed with the project until 30 days after the transmission of the report.

c. Within 60 days after review of a design for a public arts project that has been submitted to the board under par. a, the board may prepare a written report evaluating the design and transmit the report to the affected city department, the mayor and the common council. The affected department may not proceed with the project until receiving approval from the common council.

5. PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE.

a. The membership of the public art subcommittee shall consist of 5-7 members of the arts board. Nominees for the public art subcommittee shall be named and voted on by the arts board.

b. The public art subcommittee shall:

b-1. Administer the public art new work and conservation funds and provide project recommendations to the arts board.

b-2. Develop strategic partnerships with organizations, neighborhoods and artists to commission public art.

MILWAUKEE ARTS BOARD PURPOSE AND CREATION



I Didn't Do It Alone – Credit Karyn Olivier Studio



Statue of Beechie O. Brooks,
proposed for Halyard Park

SUSTAINING GRANT PROGRAM

In 2024, 47 arts based nonprofits, all based in the city of Milwaukee, were awarded either \$3,000 or \$6,000 grants based on their organizational income, for a total of \$272,000 in grants made.

The \$250,000 from the City budget is supplemented by annual Wisconsin Arts Board re-granting dollars, \$24,000 in 2024 and \$28,500 in 2025 (acceptance of which is before you today, FN 241978).

In 2025, MAB received 62 complete and eligible applications, which are being reviewed by 8 panel members with recommendations for funding considered in May.

The 2024 final reports are due June 30, 2025. In the 2023 final report, grantees reported on a program that met the purposes of the Arts Board. In total there were:

- 4,686 artists engaged (students, musicians, actors, artists, educators etc.)
- 462,671 people served (audience members, gallery attendees, zoom views, listeners, etc.) over 4,054 sessions

SUSTAINING GRANT PROGRAM



Milwaukee Chamber Theater's Midwest Premiere of *Laughs in Spanish* by Alexis Scheer, featuring (left to right) Jenna Bonofiglio, Isa Condo-Olvera, Rána Roman, Ashley Oviedo and Arash Fakhrabadi



Environmental Arts interns from ArtWorks for Milwaukee painting a storm drain mural at Samuel Clemens Public School



Sound Bowl Healing with Melissa Blue Muhammad for guests of Lakeside at the Milwaukee Art Museum

MILDRED L. HARPOLE ARTISTS OF THE YEAR AND FRIENDS OF THE ARTS AWARDS

- The MAB accepts public nominations for these awards, and received many deserving nominations to consider this year.
- Artists of the Year should promote the development, enjoyment, and cultural diversity of arts in Milwaukee
- Friends of the Arts should demonstrate exemplary support of the Milwaukee arts community through mentoring, teaching, philanthropy, advocacy, and/or building community
- The 2025 awardees will be announced via a press release in May and honored at the annual Arts Celebration, June 10th in the City Hall Rotunda. We hope you will join us!



2024 Mildred L. Harpole Artists of the Year Justin Goodrum (left) and Fatima Laster (right center), and 2024 Friend of the Arts Jacobo Lovo (right) and Jessica Meuninck-Ganger (left center) pose with Mayor Johnson (center)

PUBLIC ART CONSERVATION FUND



Before



\$5,000 for the conservation and revisioning of the Victory Over Violence murals by Brad Anthony Bernard, awarded and completed in 2024

PUBLIC ARTIST IN RESIDENCY (PAIR) PROGRAM

The Milwaukee Arts Board launched the PAIR pilot program in 2022 to embed an artist in a City of Milwaukee department to bring an artist's voice, way of thinking, and creative vision to a specific pressing civic issue. Through mutual education between the artist and host department, PAIR demonstrated art's ability to spark important community conversations.

Inaugural PAIR Sarah Davitt worked in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Vision Zero to raise awareness around the dangers of reckless driving. Sarah created a visibility patch printing activity that has engaged hundreds of community members through hands on art-making. *The Moving City*, another outreach tool / art piece created by Davitt, launched in August 2024. Vision Zero has taken *The Moving City* under their care, bringing the art car to 37 events in 2024 and 3 already in 2025 with 30 more booked for the season – and counting!



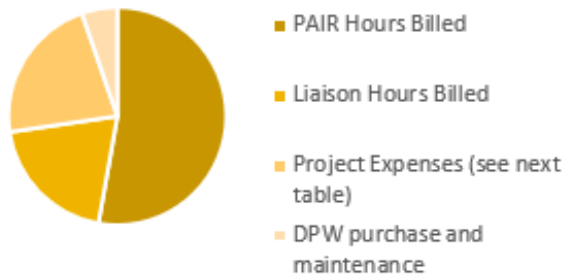
Community members print visibility patches at Juneteenth (left); cones carved with Milwaukee homes (left center) and safety messages (right center); visibility patches printed (right)

PAIR PROGRAM — BUDGET

PAIR Program Expenses

PAIR Hours Billed	\$42,957.00
Liaison Hours Billed	\$16,177.20
Project Expenses (see next table)	\$17,926.58
DPW purchase and maintenance	\$ 4,300.00
Total	\$81,360.78

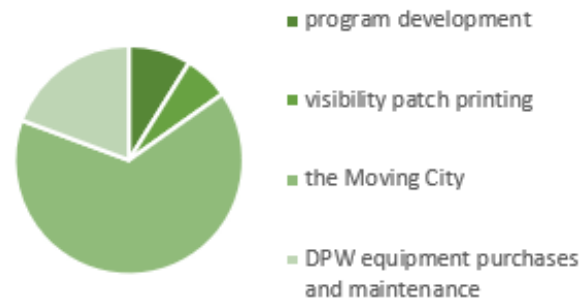
Final PAIR Program Expenses



PAIR Project Expenses by Outcome

program development	\$ 1,961.00
visibility patch printing	\$ 1,419.39
the Moving City	\$14,546.19
DPW equipment purchases and maintenance	\$ 4,300.00
Total	\$22,226.58

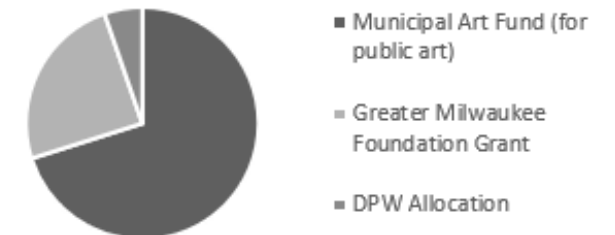
PAIR Project Expenses by Outcome



PAIR Program Funding Sources

Municipal Art Fund (for public art)	\$57,060.78
Greater Milwaukee Foundation Grant	\$ 20,000.00
DPW Allocation	\$ 4,300.00
Total	\$81,360.78

PAIR Program Funding Sources



*Hours billed includes comprehensive outreach and hands on art-making activities in multiple Milwaukee communities

PAIR PROGRAM - EVALUATION

Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Chair of the MAB:

“Art changes lives. So finding ways to get serious issues addressed and solutions being sought through art and artists is a brilliant idea. It is my hope we continue to run the PAIR program and that we learn from it and improve it.”

Sarah Davitt, artist for the PAIR Pilot Program, creator of Moving City:

“It’s fascinating how my personal practice evolved. This was my first sculpture designed to be in motion. And it’s pretty cool that the result of this learning is the first municipally owned art car in the United States.”

Jessica Wineberg, Vision Zero Policy Director:

“Interdisciplinary work is important and it’s where we find creative, effective solutions for all types problems. Looking at the city’s wide-ranging expertise, only PAIR brings artists and art into that interdisciplinary effort.”

Kate Riordan, lead DPW contact for PAIR at the time of the pilot:

“This was a pilot program so there was a lot to learn, there’s potential for more artist immersion and interaction with city personnel early on. Perhaps there could be a video or some other format to introduce the artist to everyone in the department. Followed by lunch-hour meet and greets with the artist.”

Paul Druecke, artist and writer

“A notable takeaway from evaluation interviews is the joy, pride, and excitement expressed when looking back at the pilot program. A common refrain is: given the difficulties of creating such a program, the fact that it happened qualifies as success. I agree. That said, I’m also looking for indications that PAIR is moving forward. The power of process is the ability to create its own future.”

QUESTIONS?

More information at: [Milwaukee.gov/MAB](https://milwaukee.gov/MAB)

Contact ArtsBoard@Milwaukee.gov