

REGIONAL ARTS COMMISSION
Funds, Fosters and Promotes the Arts in St. Louis



RAC KNOWS
ARTISTS COUNT
IN ST. LOUIS

Funded by
THE KRESGE FOUNDATION



THE ARTISTS COUNT SURVEY

The Regional Arts Commission has always been committed to St. Louis artists through formal and informal initiatives and arts organizations. But we were missing comprehensive data about their ecosystems. In 2012, we undertook the Artists Count survey of artists and creatives to understand their working and living environments, the conditions under which they create their art, how they support themselves financially and the motivations that affect their work.

The survey was conducted by William Cleveland, director, and Dr. Patricia Shifferd, research associate, of the Center for the Study of Art and Community, an organization focused on building working relationships between the arts and the broader community.



“Artists Count establishes RAC as a national leader in documenting and supporting artists as a vital community resource that promotes artistic and civic vibrancy.”

William Cleveland, Director, Center for the Study of Art and Community

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY

From April through August 2012, RAC widely promoted the survey through the media, social media, the Artists Count and RAC websites, contests (“Take the survey and you could win an iPad”), partnerships with the media, paid advertising, posters and distributing collateral materials at many events attracting diverse creative audiences.

More than 3000 artists responded, making this one of the largest studies of artists ever completed in the United States. Participants included visual artists, writers, dancers, actors, directors, videographers, graphic designers, architects, singers, musicians, fashion designers and other self-identified creatives. Ages ranged from 14 to 87, with the median age of 42. 34% were from St. Louis City; 40% St. Louis County; and 26% from other Missouri and Illinois counties. The respondents were 61% female and 39% male. The response from identified diverse communities was 19% and from Caucasians was 81%.

ARTISTS ARE ENTREPRENEURS

Most St. Louis artists are small business owners who are motivated by their creativity. As entrepreneurs, they are in charge of developing their careers and selling their art, which is why 10 to 50% of their time is spent on marketing and communications. Running the business side of art-making also requires planning, promotion and fund-raising. More importantly, artists produce jobs for others, like most entrepreneurs. The artists surveyed reported hiring more than 4100 artists and non-artists to help with their businesses.

“We have such little time to express the magnitude of inspiration in our souls.”

Photographer/painter/actor

“I don’t think we choose art. I think it chooses us.”

Director/actor/administrator

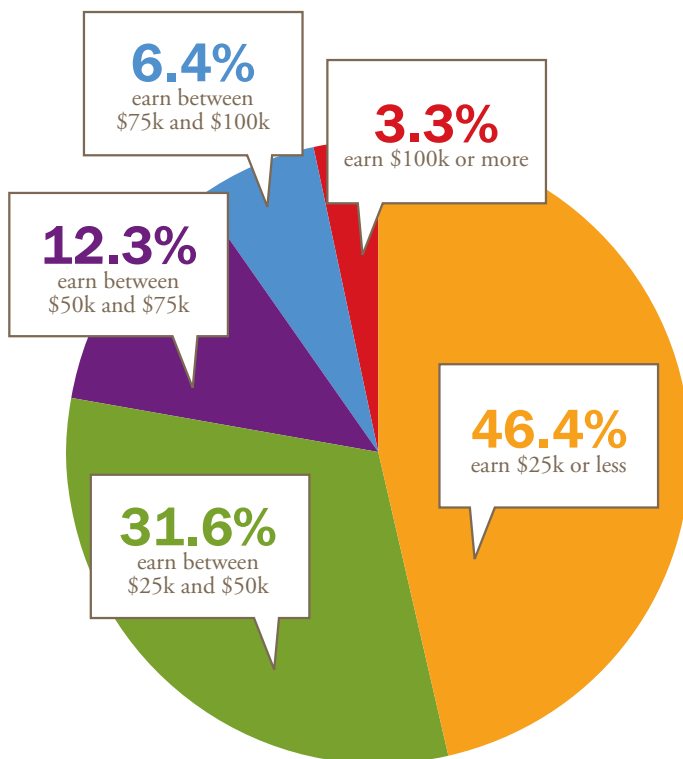
Special thanks to The Kresge Foundation for generously supporting the Artists Count survey.

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

ARTISTS RELY ON MULTIPLE SOURCES OF INCOME

Only 29% of the artists surveyed are full-time artists and art-making alone does not sustain most the area's artists. The rest have multiple sources of income that includes sales of their art, commissions, work for hire, arts jobs, non-arts jobs and grants. For additional financial support, many artists rely on outside jobs, which are most often in teaching or arts administration.

ARTISTS INCOMES



The income is based on earnings from art-based and non-artistic income.

SUPPORT MEANS MORE THAN MONEY

While financial support is important, in order to grow their careers, artists also need different kinds of support from organizations and people that invest in their core mission. This includes training, technical support, marketing assistance, accounting help and legal advice, which many artists have found through a variety of RAC-funded organizations, most notably Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts. Personal support comes from family, friends, artist peers and colleagues as well as through vendors, presenters and curators.

“It is our pleasure to announce that for the very first time, RAC will award artists fellowships and grants in response to the survey. It’s exciting to support the depth and breadth of the creativity in St. Louis.”

Jill McGuire, Executive Director, RAC

TIME IS MONEY FOR ARTISTS

Time to make artwork is the top priority, especially to create their “best work.” They also need time for outside jobs and for family commitments. Often creating art is relegated to late nights or early mornings, leaving the artists wishing for time to sleep.

ST. LOUIS IS A HOT SPOT FOR ARTIST-DRIVEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Increasingly, artists are partnering with other community sectors to help build healthier and more productive communities. RAC is recognized as an international and national leader in the growing arts-based community development movement of the past two decades through its funding priorities and the Community Arts Training Institute. Because of RAC’s focus in this area, St. Louis artists have been actively creating collaborations across sectors such as education, youth work, community development, science, social services and parks and recreation.

Artist-driven community development is benefited when there are large numbers of artists living in the same area. The survey indicates that regional artists are particularly clustered in several areas in Downtown and Midtown St. Louis, Richmond Heights, Maplewood and the Cherokee Street region. As illustrated in national studies, this preponderance of artists in these areas can provide social and economic benefits for community development.

“Artists are the fabric of a vibrant community. Through their work, they reveal the reflection of the community’s past, present and future.”

Writer

“I believe art inspires and challenges people to look at and think about life differently. It can also be beautiful, inspiring and uplifting. It can move one to take action.”

Dancer

REGIONAL ARTS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES INVESTMENT IN ARTISTS INITIATIVE

The commitment to support artists is inherent in RAC's vision to transform St. Louis into a more vibrant, creative and economically thriving community through elevating the vitality, value and visibility of the arts.

Based on the findings of the Artists Count survey, RAC is pleased to announce a new initiative that provides direct support to diverse artists so they can advance their careers and complete creative projects.

Artists Fellowships – Each year, 10 St. Louis artists will each be awarded a \$20,000 Fellowship, which is a financial investment in the careers of the selected artists and in the cultural vibrancy of the region.

Artists Support Grants – Each year, artists will be awarded from \$500 to \$3000 to fund projects, creative opportunities and needs.

Workshops and Support Services – RAC will develop a series of workshops in partnership with other organizations, including the Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts, on various topics to develop professional, entrepreneurial and business skills.

For complete information about these opportunities, visit artistscount.com.

WITH SPECIAL THANKS

To The Kresge Foundation for generously funding the Artists Count survey.

To our media partner, KDHX.

To the artists who assisted in the creation of the Artists Count survey: Dwight Bosman, Dwayne Bosman, Rich Brooks, Keith Buchholz, Juan William Chavez, Karon Hatchett, Diana Haskell, David Jackson, Linda Kennedy, Mike Kociela, Richard Newman, Rich O'Donnell, Gary Passanise, Bryan Pease, Henryk Ptasiwicz, Andrea Purnell, Ed Reggi, Ashley Tate, Bryan Walsh, Ben Watts and Lauren Wilmore.

To Cheeraz Gormon of Alchemy 7 Creative for her help in promoting the survey to diverse communities.

To all the volunteers, individuals and organizations who helped promote the Artists Count survey, including: American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), Art St. Louis, Brain Drain Collective, Cheryl Walker, Civil Ape, Contemporary Art Museum (CAM), Center of the Creative Arts (COCA), Chesterfield Arts, DJ Kut, International Institute of St. Louis, Karen Brown, Laumeier Sculpture Park, Lola, Lois Ingrum, MK Stallings, Nicole Hudson Hollway, Nine Network of Public Media, RAW St. Louis, Stacy West, St. Louis Artists' Guild, St. Louis Arts Project (SLAP), Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers & Accountants for the Arts, Terry Artis, Tim Schall, Third Degree Glass Factory and University City Municipal Arts & Letters Commission.

Didn't take the survey? We want to hear from you. RAC has reopened the survey through 2013 at Artistscount.com

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