

Public Art Saint Paul is leading the first Saint Paul-Minneapolis Triennial Art Festival for summer 2023, named “Wakpa” Triennial Art Festival. Wakpa is the Dakota word for “river.”

A multi-location event, the Triennial will feature temporary outdoor public art at many sites in Saint Paul and Minneapolis along with related gallery and museum projects presented by primarily small-to-mid-sized arts and culture organizational partners. Several organizations outside of the two major cities are also sites for art events and projects, including Red Wing, Winona, Shafer, Bloomington, and Saint Anthony, MN. The 12-week-long art festival runs from June 24 to September 16, 2023. **The budget for the Triennial is \$1.4 million annually.**

Key features of the Wakpa Triennial:

- The majority of artists being commissioned and presented are artists of color.
- All artists are based in Minnesota.
- The theme for the first Wakpa Triennial is “Network of Mutuality,” a phrase from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s 1963 Letter from Birmingham Jail, which emphasizes human interdependence. Artists have been selected with this theme in mind and are orienting their art projects toward this theme.
- Related indigenous ideas about “we are all relatives” are also acknowledged by art projects, bringing in human relationships with the natural world.
- Art installations will be free and open to the public.
- Art projects will be appropriate for all ages and for families.

The Wakpa Art Festival will feature compelling artists whose work will foster interchanges among visitors. We estimate the audience that will experience and participate in Wakpa Triennial projects and programs at 200,000. This major event will bring dynamic activities to neighborhoods and key areas, such as downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis, the Mississippi Riverfront, the University Avenue Corridor, Lake Street and Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, and several satellite locations in Twin Cities suburbs and beyond.

The event will showcase the Twin Cities as a creative center with a commitment to equity and inclusion. The festival will instill pride in the area through a cultural event that presents artists as leaders who can spark ideas, promote creative thinking, and help us to envision how we build communities with equity and inclusion. The Wakpa Triennial will be presented in a new form with a new theme every three years with active programming continuing between the major events.



Pramila Vasudevan, Artist

More about us:

Public Art Saint Paul (PASP) is a private non-profit arts organization that was established in 1987. By working in partnership with many organizations, businesses, neighborhood groups, and governmental entities, such as the City of Saint Paul and the Capitol Region Watershed District, PASP has had a major impact on the cultural landscape of Saint Paul and on the field of public art. Its projects and programs have been emulated by other cities across the Minnesota and the United States. In addition to its ongoing programs, such as Western Sculpture Park, City Artist in Residence, eARTh Lab for youth workshops, The Art of Food in Frogtown and Rondo, and Next Public Art, PASP has organized major events that have been multi-year projects and involved many organizational partners. The Wakpa Triennial builds on and expands the ways of working that PASP has developed over its 35 years.

Organizational Partners include:

Saint Paul:

Asian Economic Development Association
Capital Region Watershed
Center for Hmong Arts and Talent
Creative Enterprise Zone
East Side Freedom Library
Frogtown Farm
Hidden Falls Park
Hmongtown Marketplace
Indigenous Roots
Landmark Center
MN Museum of American Art
Northern Lights.MN
Oyate Hotanin
Springboard for the Arts
Saint Paul Downtown Alliance
MN Humanities Center
Second Shift Studio
Victoria Theatre Arts Center
Wakan Tipi Center, Lower Phalen Creek
Western Sculpture Park
City of Saint Paul

Minneapolis:

All My Relations Gallery
Dreamsong Gallery
Hammel, Green, and Abrahamson, Architects
Hennepin Theatre Trust
Lake Steet Council
Longfellow Rising
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
MN Center for Book Arts
Mississippi Watershed Org
North East Minneapolis Arts Association
Pangea World Theatre
Walker Art Center
Weisman Art Museum

Other Cities:

Anderson Art Center, Red Wing
City of Bloomington, South Loop Creative Placemaking
Franconia Sculpture Park, Shafer
MN Marine Art Museum, Winona
Silverwood Park, Saint Anthony

