



Side Street Studio Arts advances engagement in the arts by providing inclusive access to exhibition, performance, education, and advocacy resources, because **art is important.**



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

As we look back on 2025 and step into 13 years of Side Street, we're filled with gratitude.

Our year was shaped by the programs and events that bring people together: **Elgin Fringe Festival, AREA 22: Arts, Crafts & Oddities Fair, Art Clash, Going Dutch**, rotating exhibitions, performances, youth and adult arts education, and countless collaborations that activate downtown Elgin and beyond. These moments — large and small — are where creativity, access, and community meet.

And since our founding in **2013**, Side Street Studio Arts has reinvested **over \$1.5 MILLION** back into our community — paying artists, staff, and creative labor, strengthening local livelihoods, and generating real economic impact through the arts right here in Elgin.

Alongside this work, we continue to move forward on our future home at **62 S. Grove Ave.** With our project team — **Designs 4 Dignity, Rieke Interiors, HBPB Architects, and Restoration Professionals Chicago** — we're deep in design and planning work focused on creating flexible, welcoming, and accessible spaces that will support artists and community for generations to come.

2025 wasn't easy. Funding shifts, rising costs, and uncertainty touched us all. But what carried us forward was people showing up anyway — our staff, artists, volunteers, partners, and community.

As we head into 2026, we're focused, hopeful, and building what's next — together.

Thank you for believing in art, community, and Side Street.



Sincerely,
Tanner Melvin & Erin Rehberg
Founders & Executive Directors

133

Free or Low Cost
On-Site Arts
Education Events
**REACHING 1,100
YOUNG ARTISTS**

49

Free or Low Cost
Off-Site Arts
Education Events
**REACHING 4,500
YOUNG ARTISTS**

IN 2025, 16,000 PEOPLE INTERACTED WITH SIDE STREET STUDIO ARTS

144

Performance
Events
**REACHING OVER
3,000 AUDIENCE
MEMBERS**

16

Visual Art
Exhibitions
**FEATURING OVER
144 ARTISTS**

2025 BY THE NUMBERS



350+
Hours of donated and discounted space for rehearsals, co-productions, and community use

4
Summer Youth Employment in the Arts staff

67
On and off-site advocacy, community-building, and professional development opportunities for SSSA staff and area artists

3
Artists-in-Residence

66
Area artists displayed work in MADE-Art Retail with a focus on queer, BIPOC, and female-identifying makers

FUTURE HOME 62 S. GROVE AVE.



We've been working diligently on our future home at **62 S. Grove Ave.**, and we're excited to share where things stand as we continue moving this transformational project forward.

A tremendous amount of thoughtful planning and collaboration is happening behind the scenes to ensure the space truly serves artists, audiences, and the broader Elgin community for decades to come.

Our architectural and design teams are moving the project through the critical Construction Documents phase, with major support from our generous partners at **Designs 4 Dignity** and the expertise of **Rieke Interiors**.

As we finalize design decisions, we'll move closer to permitting and construction. Every step is intentional, collaborative, and rooted in long-term sustainability — not just for the building, but for Side Street Studio Arts as an organization.

Community support continues to be essential. Sharing updates, spreading the word, and contributing when possible all help make this future home a reality.

DONATE TODAY!

sidestreetstudioarts.org/futurehome

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Celebrated the 15th year of *Going Dutch: a celebration of female and nonbinary voices in the arts*



Produced the 12th annual *Elgin Fringe Festival*, encouraging bold and innovative performing and visual arts



10th season of *Art Clash*, our signature live painting competition



Held our second *Area 22: Arts, Crafts, and Oddities Fair*.

★ ★ ★ ACCOLADES ★ ★ ★

- **Community Volunteer Award** from the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce for EFF Committee Member **Michael Novelli**
- 2025 YWCA Leader Luncheon **Dr. Rise Jones Award in the Arts** awarded to Director of Operations **Jess Rocha**

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT



FOLLOWERS: 7324
PAGE VIEWS: 840K
INTERACTIONS: 13.4K



FOLLOWERS: 4338
PAGE VIEWS: 237K
INTERACTIONS: 5K

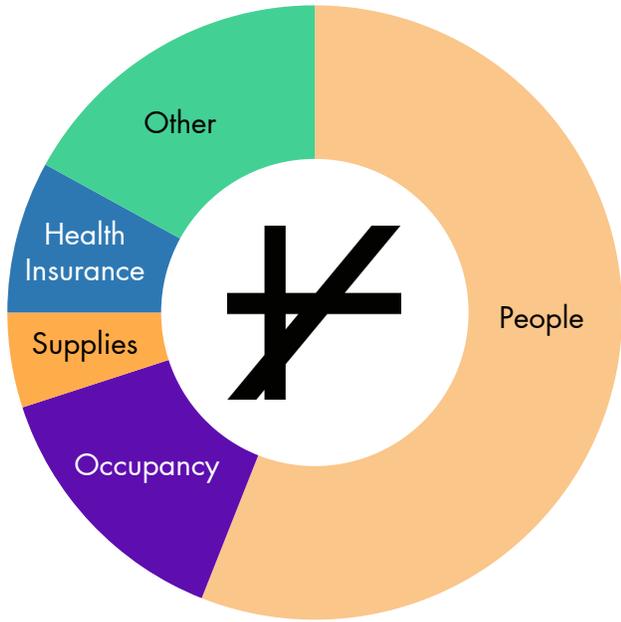


PAGE VIEWS: 75.5K
10% INCREASE
UNIQUE VISITORS: 21K



ADDED 798 NEW CONTACTS IN 2025
OPEN RATE: 50%

2025 EXPENSES



\$50,000 PAID TO ARTISTS IN 2025!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Freddrick Wimms

TREASURER & SECRETARY
Sarah Manata

Ursula Borodzinska
Ramona Burns
Carlos Chavez
Tanner Melvin
Erin Rehberg
Joe Vassallo

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STAFF

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.....Tanner Melvin
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.....Erin Rehberg

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS.....Jess Rocha
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMING.....Nick Mataragas
EXHIBITIONS COORDINATOR.....Andrew Vo
COMMUNITY MOVES COORDINATOR.....John French
MARKETING COORDINATOR.....Trish LaFleur
ARTIST STAFF.....Sugey Mondragon
ARTIST STAFF.....José Alfredo
ARTIST STAFF.....Anna Lentz
ARTIST STAFF.....Yuritsie Martinez
ARTIST STAFF.....Ivette De Santiago
ARTIST STAFF.....Chris Arrecis
ARTIST STAFF.....Nick Jostes
ARTIST STAFF.....Luiza Moraes
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE.....Nicki Fortunati-Warren