

MICA

MICHIGAN INSTITUTE
FOR CONTEMPORARY ART



SERVING AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION
THROUGH QUALITY ARTS PROGRAMMING



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During the early 1980s young artists discovered a neighborhood in Lansing that had the city's highest concentration of historic buildings, but had been mostly abandoned. They began renting and buying properties for studios, art galleries and performance space. In 1984, a group of these artists formed the North Lansing Art Association (NLAA) which was renamed the Old Town Business & Art Development Association (OTBADA) to eventually become the Michigan Institute for Contemporary Art (MICA) with a mission to catalyze community transformation through the arts.

THE area known as Old Town is located on a Native American trail along the Grand River in what is now Lansing, Michigan, which was charted and plotted by U.S. surveyors in 1825. The land was purchased in 1835 and 1836 by several investors, including the New York land speculators James Seymour and Jacob Cooley.



The land was sold in 1845 to pioneers who built a sawmill and held religious services in a cabin. After the Michigan legislature in 1947 decided to move the state capitol from Detroit to Lansing the area grew rapidly. For another 100 years, the area flourished enriched with the addition with the hispanic community. But, like many American cities in the 1960's and 1970's, the neighborhood began losing residents, businesses, and customers as more people moved to the suburbs. The area languished as many storefronts, businesses, homes and buildings became vacant and were abandoned and boarded up.

Between 1978 and 1990, artists and young entrepreneurs started restoring many of the district's historic buildings.

During the early 1990's, visioning sessions led by the Business & Art Development Association, coordinated by MessageMakers

and supported by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation were held to frame the values, identify key assets and develop a vision for the district. A special effort was made to engage a wide array of stakeholders from the neighborhood, including artists, property owners, business owners, residents, local and regional governments, the universities, historians, architects and other talents and resources from around the state and country.

During the visioning process, they named the neighborhood Old Town, acknowledging its historical significance to the region and focused on developing the art, retail and creative services sectors with an emphasis on enhancing an arts-centric community.

The organization also partnered with Michigan State University's Center for Community Economic Development to conduct their first Community Income and Expenditure Model Study (CIEM) to gain insight into the district's income and expenditure 'leakages' and begin to identify ways to grow and retain income.



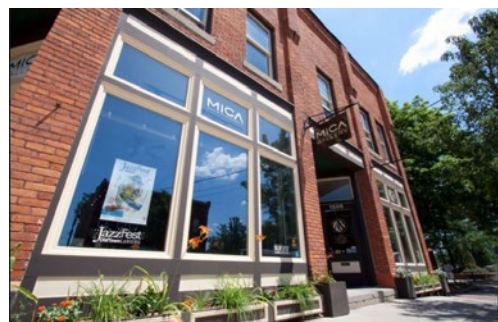
OtherWise Art Gallery was opened in 1992 as the organization's headquarters. OtherWise showcased the works of artists from around the world. It hosted poetry events and for seven years was a venue for live concerts, featuring the first public performances by many startup, basement and garage bands.



In 1994 MICA produced its first big music festival, the Art & OctoberFest and in 1995 its first Lansing JazzFest and years later started Michigan BluesFest.

In 1995, MICA wrote a grant and obtained funding from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation to enable Old Town to be among the first six urban Mainstreet communities in the United States. To manage the Mainstreet program, MICA helped start the Old Town Commercial Association (OTCA) in 1996 and worked to obtain funding from the City of Lansing and the Principal Shopping District to support the startup phase of the Mainstreet program.

During that same time and on the urging of then Mayor David Hollister, MICA restored a set of three buildings, which included low and moderate income loft apartments, a business incubator, and offices. These buildings are now home for the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, MICA and MICA Art Gallery.



MICA is recognized for innovative programming and is a recipient of numerous awards including the Governor's ArtServe Award, Festival & Events Association awards, Addy awards, the Creative Community Award and many more.

A 501(c)3 federally tax-exempt nonprofit organization, it has a robust volunteer base, maintains stable volunteer leadership and provides programs for the benefit of the entire community. It is funded through the support of sponsors, donations and grants.

For more than three decades, MICA has been producing music festivals, helping preserve and restore historic buildings, leading community revitalization efforts, exhibiting visual artists, coordinating poetry, dance and other performances that engage, inspire, catalyze and demonstrate the **vitality and value of the arts community and the vibrancy of the urban centers as a great places to play, work and live.**

MICA's mission - to create open spaces where people can come together, meet old friends, make new friends, and in the context of the arts take action to bring about positive community transformation.



AWARDS:

MICA has been a recipient of numerous awards:

- Addy Awards
- Creative Community Award
- Governor's ArtServe Award
- Michigan Association for Art Agencies Award



MICA Art Gallery

MICA is known as an arts, performance and music event organizer, a business incubator, and a community builder, but it has more humble beginnings as a simple art gallery in a rundown urban neighborhood.

IN THE 1970s and 1980s, local artists were attracted to the neighborhood by its historic structures as well as its affordability and several renovated buildings to create studio spaces and art galleries, establishing pockets of renewal in the neighborhood.

In 1992 the gallery was originally established as OtherWise Art Gallery by Barbara Morris (a co-founder with Robert Busby of Two Doors Down Gallery) and Terry Terry. In the early 2000's it moved across the street and changed its name to Banyan Art Gallery and now is known as MICA Art Gallery.

Since 1984, MICA's art galleries have been a hub for community gatherings and creative experiences.



At MICA Art Gallery, monthly exhibitions feature emerging and established fine artists with an emphasis on Michigan artists who work in a wide range of mediums and whose work is often experimental and include social commentary.

MICA Art Gallery is home to the Lansing Poetry Club and provides a stage for Renegade Theatre, Dance Lansing, and Capital Ballet Theatre performances and is a regular meeting and training space for the Arts Council of Greater Lansing. During the annual 'Chalk of the Town', the gallery is host to children's art activities.

The gallery is also available to rent for special gatherings such as receptions, fundraisers, graduation parties, bridal showers, meetings and more.

The gallery's exhibitions and programs in the visual arts, music, performances, film and poetry serve to educate, entertain, and inspire.





MICHIGAN JazzFest

On a warm summer weekend, Michigan JazzFest is the place to make new friends and enjoy the winding melodies and complex polyrhythms of original American music!

SINCE 1995, during the first weekend of August, the Michigan JazzFest turns Turner Street in Lansing's Old Town into a stage and auditorium for one of the largest, most diverse, and longest-running jazz festivals in Michigan. As jazz has a diverse range of styles and sub-genres, touching nearly every culture for over 100 years, the festival continues to draw the most diverse audience of any Michigan festival.

Michigan JazzFest features multiple stages on Turner street and in various indoor locations, including local nightclubs and other Old Town venues. Performances are recorded

and streamed. Attendance at times has reached around 7,000.

Around 2010, MICA began a partnership with the Jazz Alliance of Mid-Michigan (JAMM), and features their annual award-winners at the festival.

Notable performers have included: Mose Allison, Nicole Mitchell, Eric Reed, Stanley Jordan, Marcus Belgrave, Straight Ahead, Planet D Nonet, Professors of Jazz, Terrell Stafford, Francisoco Mora, Tumbao Bravo, Johnny O'Neal, Oquestra Ritmo, Ramona Collins, Tim Cunningham, Betty Joplin, Michael Kaeshammer, Los Gatos, Greater Lansing Symphony Orchestra, Dave Sharp Worlds



Quartet, Organissimo, Fareed Haque, Aguanko, Paul Keller Orchestra, Tony Monaco, Arlene McDaniel, Mighty Funhouse, Etienne Charles, Elder Kelly, Sunny Wilkenson, Ron Newman, David Rosin, Ray Kamalay, the OtherBand, Mardra & Reggie Thomas, Montez Coleman, Grupo Aye, T.S. Monk, Wes Anderson, Bill Heid, Tenth World and many others.

Michigan JazzFest also features food and craft vendors and a beverage tent called The Turnaround Lounge. Families bring their children to the **KidzBeat** area to play in the Instrument Petting Zoo and are given lessons from musician performers. In addition music workshops for adults are conducted by guest performers.



MICHIGAN BLUESFEST

At Michigan BluesFest one can groove and dance to the soulful sounds of heartfelt blues and even fall in love!

EACH September in Michigan’s Capital City Turner Street becomes stage to one of Michigan’s biggest and longest running outdoor blues music festivals – the Michigan BluesFest, featuring such artists such as Reverend Raven, Larry McCray, David ‘Honey Boy’ Edwards, Eric Culberson, Jimmie Stagger, Stan Budzynski & 3rd Degree, Lady Champagne, Root Doctor, Chris Canas, Sugar Ray and the Bluetones, Jamiah Rogers, Sun Seals, Jackie Scott & the Housewreckers, Kenny Neal, Liz

Mandville, Alberta Adams, Toronzo Cannon, James Harman, Frog & the Beeftones, Thornetta Davis, W.C. Clark, Junior Watson, Carl Weathersby, Johnnie Bassett & the Blues Insurgents, Big Willy, Kathleen & the Bridge Street Band, Grove Council, Cee Cee Collins and many, many more. Multiple outdoor and indoor stages, the festival is also recorded and streamed.

Michigan BluesFest is produced with the support of the Capitol Area Blues Society

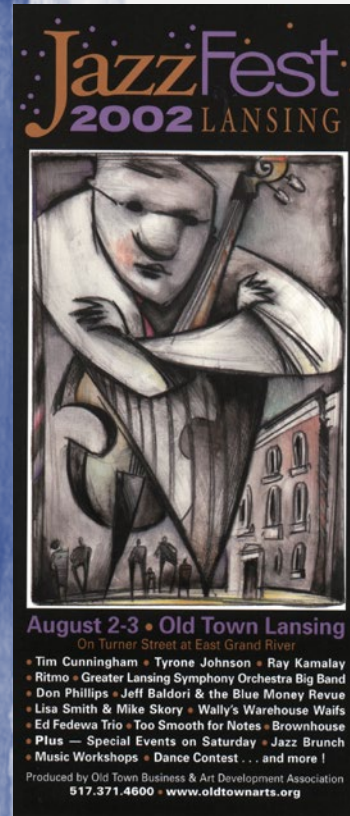
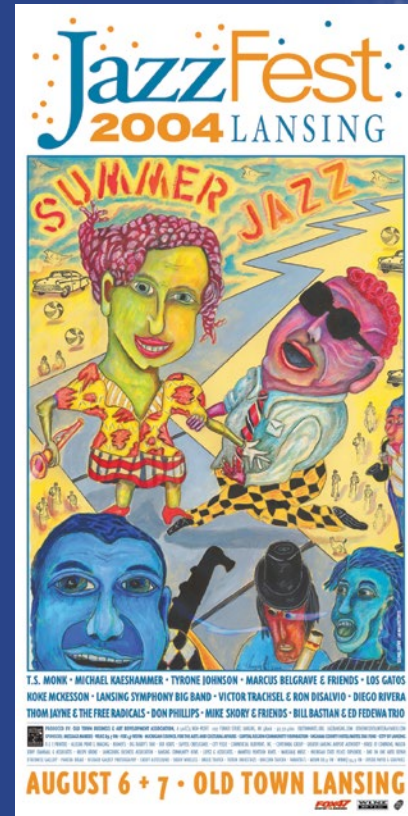
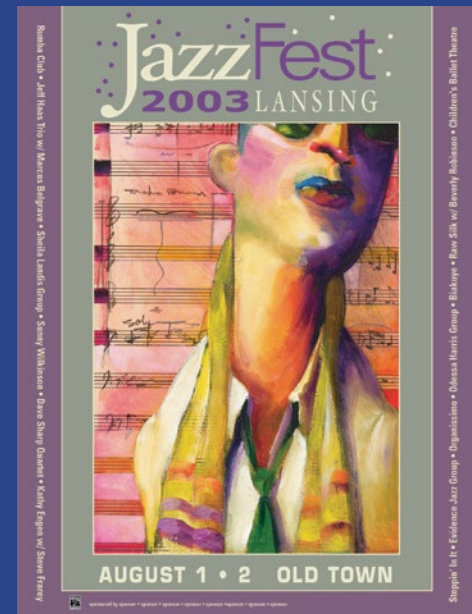
(CABS) and offers multiple stages on the street and in various indoor locations, including local nightclubs and other Old Town venues. Attendance at times has surpassed that of Michigan JazzFest.

Michigan BluesFest, like JazzFest has food and craft vendors, a beverage tent, KidzBeat and music workshops.

At Michigan BluesFest one can groove and dance to heartfelt blues....and maybe even fall in love!

AWARD WINNING POSTERS

IF THERE'S anything anticipated as music as the music, it's the festival posters. They are works of fine art, capturing the energy, excitement and emotion of the music. They've become collector items, have won many awards and are framed and on display in homes, offices and businesses.





WKAR BackStage Pass

BACKSTAGE PASS is a TV program featuring live performances by festival musicians and began in 2008.

It is produced and broadcast by public television station WKAR-TV, in coordination with MICA, and through the support of MessageMakers.

It includes interviews where artists reveal the inspiration behind their music and has been both live-streamed and broadcast in 100 public television markets across the United States.

Michigan JazzFest and Michigan BluesFest BackStage Pass programs have featured The Verve Pipe, Organissimo, Larry McCray, Phil Denny, Rodney Whitaker Quartet, Planet D Nonet, Joe Hertler & The Rainbow Seekers, The Chenille Sisters, The Lash, George Delancy,

Root Doctor, Lowdown Brass Band, Nicky T & the Snake Charmers, Frog and the Beeftones, Thornetta Davis, Tosha Owens, Jamiah Rogers, Kathleen Murray & the Groove Council, Grady Hall & the Disciples of Funk, Southern Avenue, Kathleen & the Bridge Street Band, and many others.



POETRY, THEATER, & DANCE

Programming

MICA collaborates with other arts organizations providing meeting and performance space for poetry, theatre, dance and film.

THE **Lansing Poetry Club**, brings writers, poets and literature lovers together by presenting poetry performances, workshops, and literacy events at MICA Art Gallery. The Poetry Club partners with other literary and civic organizations to engage the community with poetry, including the Lansing Poet Laureate Project and the Lansing Sidewalk Poetry Project.

For nearly 20 years, MICA has produced the annual **Burning Desires: An Afternoon**

of Love Poetry. Held on the weekend before Valentine's Day, this event features poetry, music and theatrical arts.

The annual **Renegade Theatre Festival** brings theatre troupes together to present a free festival of new and original plays during the summer. The Renegade Theatre Festival conducts performances at MICA Art Gallery and other venues in Old Town and the Lansing area.



DANCE Lansing: A Community Dance Project regularly performs a showcase of modern and contemporary dance at MICA Gallery each fall and holds special performances during the Michigan BluesFest and Michigan JazzFest. Performances include discussions with the dancers and choreographers.

Capital Ballet Theatre (formerly Children's Ballet Theatre), where young dancers make their first public performance, is often held at MICA Gallery as well as at MICA's music festivals.



VISIONING *Charettes*

BETWEEN 1990-1993, visioning 'charrettes', led by Terry Terry of MessageMakers and Susan Christian of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, were held to frame the values, identify key assets and develop a vision for the district. A special effort was made to engage a wide array of stakeholders from the neighborhood, including artists, property owners, business owners, and residents, as well as local and regional governments, the universities, historians, architects and other talents and resources from around the state and country.

These sessions provided the foundation and vision for MICA's efforts, stimulated positive participation and partnerships, and launched a wave of new businesses and building renovations that reached a critical mass that put Old Town on the map as it became a model for the State of Michigan's Mainstreet program.



Charrettes, i.e. meetings where many different people come together to work on a plan for a future goal, have been used by designers and urban planners since the 19th century. Students at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris would feverishly work on design problems right up until their instructor's cart or charette was rolled out to gather their work.

THE COMMUNITY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE MODEL (CIEM) *Study*

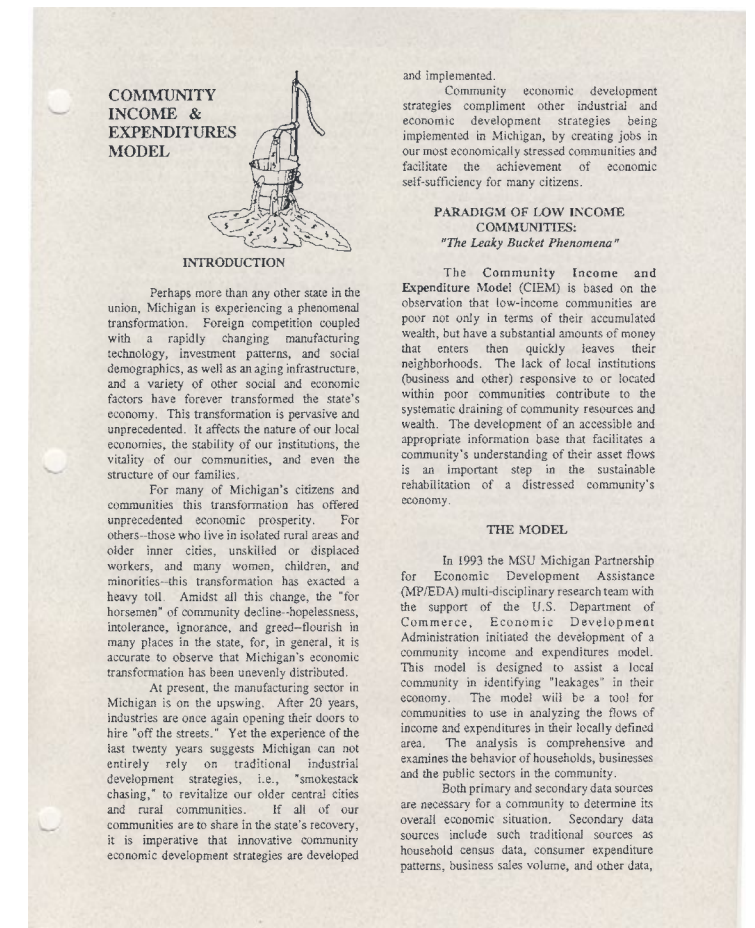
FROM 1992-1995, MICA assisted with a unique study, called the Community Income and Expenditure Model (CIEM) that Michigan State University's Center for Community Economic Development was developing.

Led by Rex LaMore, Rene Rosenbaum, and John Melcher, the study was developed to help identify how income and expenditures flow in and out of a community.

The results showed that more income was flowing out of Old Town to other areas in the region and that a new mix of businesses and a return of urban living would be needed to shift the economy of the district.

Thirty years later, the diversity and robustness of the district, with its high concentration of creative service companies, boutiques, unique restaurants and nightclubs, attest to a vibrancy triggered by artists.

MICA is currently seeking support to replicate the study in order to illustrate the economic development value of art and artists.



**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

TURNER PARK *Place*

IN 1995, Mayor David Hollister directed Emil Winnaker, Director of Neighborhood and Community Development to ask MICA to restore three empty, run-down properties - 1208, 1210 and 1212 Turner Street - in the heart of Old Town. Once storefronts with living space above, the buildings were empty and boarded up.

Through Winnacker's guidance and with the use of Historic Tax Credits, the support of the Lansing Economic Development Corporation, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and others, MICA restored the property, which was then named Turner Park Place. This project served as a model, anchor and spark for the redevelopment of many other buildings by early urban pioneers.

Over the years, these properties have also served as incubators for several start-up organizations, such as

the CityPulse newspaper and Control Room Technologies/Arialink/LightSpeed, an internet service provider.

Today, Turner Park Place houses the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, MICA offices, MICA Art Gallery, and Mother & Earth Baby Boutique, an eco-friendly children's specialty shop. The loft apartments provide low and moderate-income housing.



SECOND SHIFT *TV Documentary*

When General Motors prepared to close facilities in Lansing, an unlikely coalition of leaders from government, business, labor, education, and other sectors of the community worked together to convince the auto manufacturer to not only stay, but also invest over one billion dollars to build new state-of-the-art automobile plants in the region.

MICA, along with the creative team of MessageMakers and the leadership of former MICA board members Ray Tadgerson and David Hollister (then Lansing mayor) and Christine Hollister produced the hour-long Emmy-nominated documentary ***Second Shift: From Crisis to Collaboration*** to tell how this successful regional collaboration created a 'second shift'

for the community. Vehicles built in Lansing have won numerous awards, including the prestigious North American Car of the Year.

The TV program was broadcast on American public television stations and is available on DVD through Amazon. MICA has also begun to develop a curriculum to teach the collaboration model featured in the documentary to community organizers, municipalities, chambers of commerce and those seeking MBA and MPA degrees.



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