



Joel Phelps' North Shore series, #3

Stop the Whirl, I want to get off

Art-A-Whirl takes over Northeast

By Linda Schumacher

This year's Art-A-Whirl is bound to make your head-a-swirl with an array of visual and tactile arts, film, dance, spoken word, and musical performances. Conceived by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association (NEMAA) in 1995, the fundamental principles underlying Art-A-Whirl's open studio crawl are to expand the conversation between artist and audience member and to demystify the process of creating art. In its fifth consecutive year, the event has evolved from the initial 1996 showcase to an impressive art crawl including 250 artists housed in 56 buildings.

After talking with several of the enthusiastic, friendly artists and organizers for this year's showcase, I have one solid piece of advice for y'all: Run, don't crawl, to

Northeast Minneapolis. Get involved in what promises to be a wildly interesting and electively interactive experience. Consider the possibilities:

1. Meet artists, musicians, filmmakers, dancers, poets, etc. Art-A-Whirl is expressly organized around the notion of blurring the distinction between those who 'create' and those who 'appreciate' art. This is a great opportunity to see artists in their own studio spaces and to ask questions like, "what was your inspiration for that neon sculpture?" or "how do you throw a clay pot?" Go and learn.

2. Buy art. Seriously, it's really cool to be able to wander around within the private sacred spaces of working artists and to rap with them about their work and process. It's

also cool to invest in one or several pieces that you personally dig or that you know a friend would appreciate. And although you'll be exposed to a bounty of the more traditional fine arts (paintings, photographs, and sculpture), at Art-A-Whirl you'll also spy a wide variety of furniture, lamps, accent tiles, ceramics, and wearables.

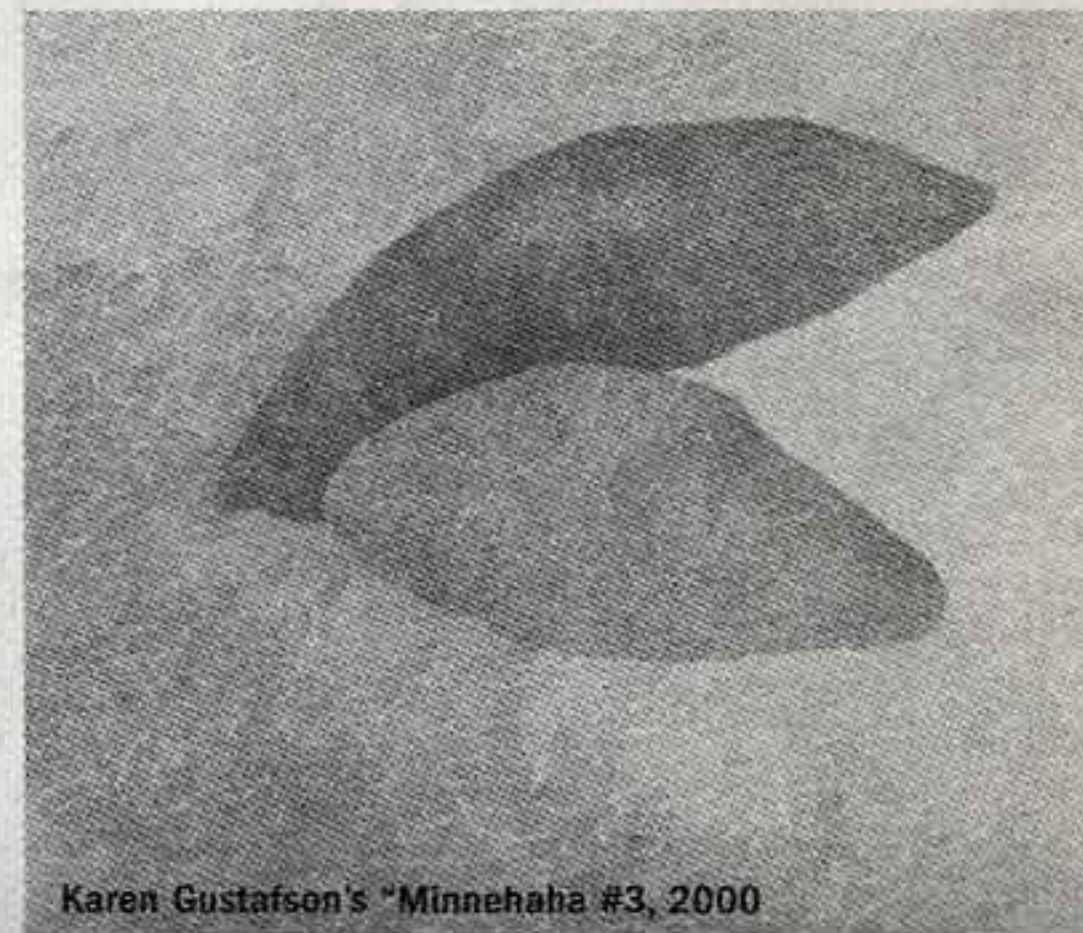
3. Go for the buildings and unique spaces—check out those funky old warehouses you see lining the streets of Northeast. Take a tour of the James Page Brewery. Or visit participating artists' private homes to see how they combine the art of living and the art of creating smack-dab in the middle of residential Northeast.

4. Take the kids. Art-A-Whirl is designed

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(Left) The aesthetics of his surroundings are important in his work, says painter Mike Welton. A selection of his series, "Urban Slice," will be featured in the Art Collective gallery, 1620 Central Ave. N.E. in Minneapolis, throughout May.



Karen Gustafson's "Minnehaha #3, 2000