



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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WEST BANK ARTS QUARTER

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA'S WEST BANK ARTS QUARTER  
EIGHTH ANNUAL SPARK FESTIVAL OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND ARTS  
Sep. 29 to Oct. 2, 2010

*Among this year's featured artists: minimal techno-master Drumcell, composer and improviser Fred Frith, Art(ists) On the Verge 2, and Danish electronic experimentalist Mikkel Meyer.*

Minneapolis, MN (09/02/2010) — The University of Minnesota's West Bank Arts Quarter will present the eighth annual SPARK Festival of Electronic Music & Arts, Wednesday, September 29 through Saturday, October 2, 2010. SPARK will present a significant portion of its programming in the historic and iconic "Love Power Church" building at 1407 Washington Avenue, in addition to numerous venues within the University's West Bank Arts Quarter. A complete schedule can be found at [www.sparkfestival.org](http://www.sparkfestival.org).

The SPARK Festival is a week-long celebration of the latest electronic music and arts, featuring fresh works created by artists from around the globe— The United States, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. SPARK brings internationally recognized scholars and performers of electronic music and arts to the West Bank Arts Quarter for lectures, performances, and master classes. Other festival highlights include presentations by artists on their works and ideas, video and sound installations, guerrilla-style events throughout the University's West Bank Arts Quarter and expanding to other venues including the Love Power Church and the 1419 Artist Collective.

This year's featured composers/performers include multi-instrumentalist, composer and improviser FRED FRITH, London-based electronic duo FURT, Montreal-based composer/performer group KLAXON GUEULE and Chicago-based trio FRICTION BROTHERS. This year's Night Life programming includes DroidBehavior, techno-master MOE ESPINOZA (DRUMCELL), Los Angeles-based electro-duo Vangelis and Vidal Vargas, Danish electronics recycler Mikkel Meyer and dub-step warrior Puzzleweasel.

In addition to the extensive music programming, SPARK 2010 is proud to present new commissioned works by the winners of the "Art(ists) On the Verge 2" program by [NORTHERN LIGHTS](#): ARLENE BIRT, KYLE PHILLIPS, TYLER STEFANICH, and TECTONIC INDUSTRIES will premiere their new media installation works at the University of Minnesota's Regis Center for Art. SPARK will also host the URBAN CARAVAN Bicycle Tour; a mobile media project by Minneapolis Art on Wheels artists, Andrea Steudel and Luke Anderson. This work is distinguished as a Forecast Public Art's Public Project.

The opening reception, concert and exhibition event will take place on Thursday September 30 at 5pm in the [Regis Center for Art](#)'s Quarter Gallery. For an up-to-date schedule of SPARK events, visit [www.sparkfestival.org](http://www.sparkfestival.org). Photographs available upon request. E-mail photo requests to [mbalhorn@macalester.edu](mailto:mbalhorn@macalester.edu).

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## SPARK special guest biographies

### Fred Frith

Fred Frith is an English multi-instrumentalist, composer and improviser. Probably best-known for his guitar work, Frith first came to attention as one of the founding members of the English avant-rock group Henry Cow. Frith was also a member of Art Bears, Massacre and Skeleton Crew. He has collaborated with a number of prominent musicians, including Robert Wyatt, Brian Eno, Lars Hollmer, The Residents, Lol Coxhill, John Zorn, Bill Laswell, Derek Bailey, Iva Bittová and Bob Ostertag. He has also composed several long works, including Traffic Continues (1996, performed 1998 by Frith and Ensemble Modern) and Freedom in Fragments (1993, performed 1999 by Rova Saxophone Quartet).

Currently Frith is Professor of Composition in the Music Department at Mills College in Oakland, California. For more information please visit [www.fredfrith.com](http://www.fredfrith.com)

### Furt

"Furt, in dictis. explained - 'theft', is a misprint in the later edd. of Tomkis' Albumasar for 'furie'." -OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

FURT is the electronic composition/performance duo formed by Richard Barrett and Paul Obermayer in London in 1986. FURT's dense and intricate musical forms are produced at every level by an interpenetration between free improvisation and systematic composition, and use primarily concrete (sampled/processed) materials. This activity is concerned above all with allying the physicality and expressivity of sound-structures to FURT's vision - but also with deriving methods of musical production from the nature of the (electronic) medium itself. For more information please visit [furtlogic.com](http://furtlogic.com)

### Klaxon Gueule

Montreal's Klaxon Gueule is Michel F. Cote (percussion, microphones), Alexandre St-Onge (basses, electronics), and Bernard Falaise (electric guitar). While all three individuals compose and perform extensively in and around the vast Montreal experimental music scene, Klaxon Gueule's format is one of reduction, space, and refined tension. For more info at: [http://www.actuellecd.com/en/bio/klaxongueule\\_/](http://www.actuellecd.com/en/bio/klaxongueule_/)

### Talea Ensemble

The Talea Ensemble is committed to promoting new, groundbreaking music through innovative programming thereby communicating the distinctive voices of composers that deserve to be heard. By commissioning and programming these progressive works alongside the established literature of modern and contemporary repertoire, the ensemble creates a dialogue that challenges the boundaries of music and fosters a greater understanding of the works today. By developing an interactive relationship between the composers, performers and audience, the Talea Ensemble builds an environment of reciprocal inspiration that sparks the imagination of all.

Talea's performance at Spark is presented by the University of Minnesota's Contemporary Music Workshop. For more information please visit [taleaensemble.org](http://taleaensemble.org)

### The Friction Brothers

Chicago's The Friction Brothers consists of Michael Colligan (dry ice, implements), Fred Lonberg-Holm (cello, implements), and Michael Zerang (percussion, piano insides). While each member has a lengthy resume on his own, their combined forces have produced an endlessly interesting repertoires full of harmonic resonances, grinding objects, manipulated dry ice, and, of course, heavy friction. More info at: <http://sortofrecords.com/the-friction-brothers/>

### Patrick Flanagan - Jazari

Robots get a bad rap. If they're not rebelling against their creators and taking over the world, they're stealing your job. The gears of progress grind into a dark, antiseptic future. Or so movies would have you believe.

But imagine machines that layer rhythms, automatically syncopate backwards looping beats, and trade licks with you. Where is that summer blockbuster? The film-adaptation may not exist yet, but the machines do. The one-man band Jazari consists of machines that play the djembe drum, the bongos, and a variety of hand percussion instruments, all under the control Patrick Flanagan, who wields a custom-built controller and a Wiimote to improvise through his mechanical band-mates. Jazari has played between punk bands at outdoor rock festivals and in darkened, reverent art spaces. No humans have been hurt or made obsolete.

Prior to working on Jazari, Patrick earned a Master's degree in music composition at the University of Minnesota, where he studied primarily with Dr. Noel Zahler. As an undergraduate, he studied composition at Columbia University, where he encountered numerous luminaries of new music and music theory, including Fred Lehndahl, Tristan Murail, Joseph Dubiel, and John McGuire. After college, a Fulbright scholarship brought Patrick to Germany to study composition at the Musik Hochschule in Cologne, where he took classes with two brilliant composers of the Feedback school, the late Johannes Fritsch and Clarence Barlow.

For more information visit [jazarimusic.com](http://jazarimusic.com)

### Moe Espinoza - Drumcell

Drumcell is the founder of Droid Recordings and co-founder of DroidBehavior along with the Vargas brothers of techno duo Acid Circus. Since the mid Nineties Drumcell has been a firm believer in the power of techno and over the past decade become one of Southern California's greatest champions.

As a graduate of the Musician's Institute, a veteran performer at parties, and longtime recording engineer Drumcell harnesses a strong musical background with a gifted sense of technological intuition. The delicate balance keeps him pushing the limits of

his gear continually as a way to develop his artistic express. Forming the Droid Behavior collective with Acid Circus earlier this decade was another other major step in this ongoing development. In turn, the collective has helped expose other local artists as well as established DJs to the growing legion of techno fans in the Los Angeles basin. In the past five years, he's played alongside nearly every major DJ in the genre via the trio's signature Interface parties. This year he also did a mini-tour of the US which culminated in him playing the main stage at the prestigious Movement festival in Detroit  
For more information visit [www.droidbehavior.com/blog/artists-team/drumcell](http://www.droidbehavior.com/blog/artists-team/drumcell).

### **Mikkel Meyer**

As a teenager in the 90s Mikkel Meyer was eager to make electronic music, but first one major problem had to be dealt with; little access to instruments and no ability to buy them due to a restricted amount of pocket money. This led the youngster into recycling. Old broken stuff found in dumpsters was restored to new life and even today a lot of Mikkel's gear is homemade, found, modified or in some way fixed. For more information, visit [mikkelmeyer.dk/](http://mikkelmeyer.dk/)

### **Vidal and Vangelis Vargas - Acid Circus**

Los Angeles born and bred, Vangelis and Vidal Vargas were raised in the '80s on a steady diet of Latin freestyle, electro, and new wave that pervaded their urban environment. Their father also exposed them to cutting edge progressive acts Vangelis, Tangerine Dream and Kraftwerk, planting early seeds for aural exploration. By the mid '90s they were sampling LA's underground club scene and heavily researching electronic music's roots. After years of influence they began to express their musical vision through their own recordings and performances. Vidal and Vangelis eventually found common ground with producer / performer Drumcell, and in 2002 they formed the DroidBehavior event production group and record label out of frustration with the city's lack of knowledge, acceptance, and understanding for Midwest-bred techno and house music and their European counterparts. For more information, visit [www.droidbehavior.com/blog/artists-team/acid-circus/](http://www.droidbehavior.com/blog/artists-team/acid-circus/)

### **Arlene Birt**

Arlene Birt is a visual storyteller, artist and information designer. Her work focuses on visually communicating sustainability by highlighting the cultural, environmental and political stories behind products. Arlene's work visually explains the significance of the every-day within the context of the big picture in order to engage people in their role as consumers. Arlene graduated in Visualization at MCAD, and shortly thereafter received a Fulbright grant to research visual communication methods to explain sustainability. Arlene received a Masters in Design in the Netherlands, and is adjunct faculty in MCAD's Sustainability Certificate program. She has consulted with the UN's Environment Program and her work on sustainability, which rides the line between art and communication, has been featured in Creative Review (UK), U.S. News and World Report, BusinessWeek.com, worldchanging.com, SEED Magazine, and at the Barcelona Design Museum.

### **Kyle Phillips**

In 2006, during his Sophomore year at MCAD, Phillips began developing a tool for dynamic artwork and an attempt to put composition into a set of rules. This was his active project until the summer of 2007 when he moved to Brooklyn, New York and worked at The Studio for Interactive Media. he was introduced to people that have forever changed my course, showing me new ways that interactive media was integrating into the world around me. While in Brooklyn, Phillips won an Adobe Design Achievement Award for my work in generative compositions. His work was exhibited at the de Young Museum in San Francisco and then later Adobe's headquarters in San Jose. Since graduating in December 2008, he continues to work actively on web-based projects as well as physical spaces and have continued to be noticed and have success in both.

### **Tyler Stefanich**

Tyler Stefanich is currently working on receiving his BFA from Minneapolis College of Art and Design in fall of 2009. Last spring he had the privilege to travel to the Burren College of Art stay there for 5 months. This allowed him easy access to the rest of Europe and traveled to such places as Scotland, Germany, and Italy. His work has been shown in such exhibitions as Decorated, Project UFO, Me Myself and Ireland, and Made At MCAD, also he won Creative Commons 2007 Photo Contest. He also has been the recipient of the BFA Visual Scholarship, Senior Media Arts Scholarship and is on the Dean's List.

### **Tectonic Industries**

Tectonic industries is a collaborative art partnership of the Danish artist Lars Jerlach and the British artist Helen Stringfellow. The members began collaborating in 1999, while pursuing their MFA's in Sculpture at Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland. In 2001 they relocated to the USA, and they currently live in the Twin Cities. tectonic industries create mixed-media installations scrutinizing our all-encompassing desire for instant gratification and immediate satisfaction. Their work focuses on the artifice inherent within the creation of the modern myths and belief systems of popular culture, with a concentration on our seemingly endless quest for self-improvement. They recently had solo exhibitions at Franklin Art Works (MN), artDC (DC), and ONEZERO Projects (UK), and have participated in group exhibitions and festivals including The Soap Factory (MN), Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit (MI), Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (MI) and You Are Here Festival (UK).

## **About the WEST BANK ARTS QUARTER**

The West Bank Arts Quarter unites the University of Minnesota's education, research, performance, and exhibition facilities for the visual and performing arts in a compact district on the west bank of the University's Twin Cities campus. Comprised of the University's Department of Theatre Arts & Dance, School of Music, Department of Art, West Bank Arts Quarter brings artists, teachers, students, and scholars together across disciplines to share knowledge and ideas, talent and inspiration. This creative synergy results in the presentation of over 500 free concerts and events per year. For a complete schedule of Arts Quarter events, visit [www.artsquarter.umn.edu](http://www.artsquarter.umn.edu).

### **How to find us**

SPARK Festival locations include:

West Bank Arts Quarter: on the West Bank of the University of Minnesota, bordered by Riverside Avenue and the vibrant Cedar Riverside Neighborhood.

Specific West Bank Arts Quarter locations include:

Lloyd Ultan Recital Hall: inside Ferguson Hall at 2106 4th St. S

Regis Center for Art: 405 21<sup>st</sup> Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Love Power Church: located at 1407 Washington Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55454

Complete Spark venue information is available at [www.sparkfestival.org](http://www.sparkfestival.org).

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