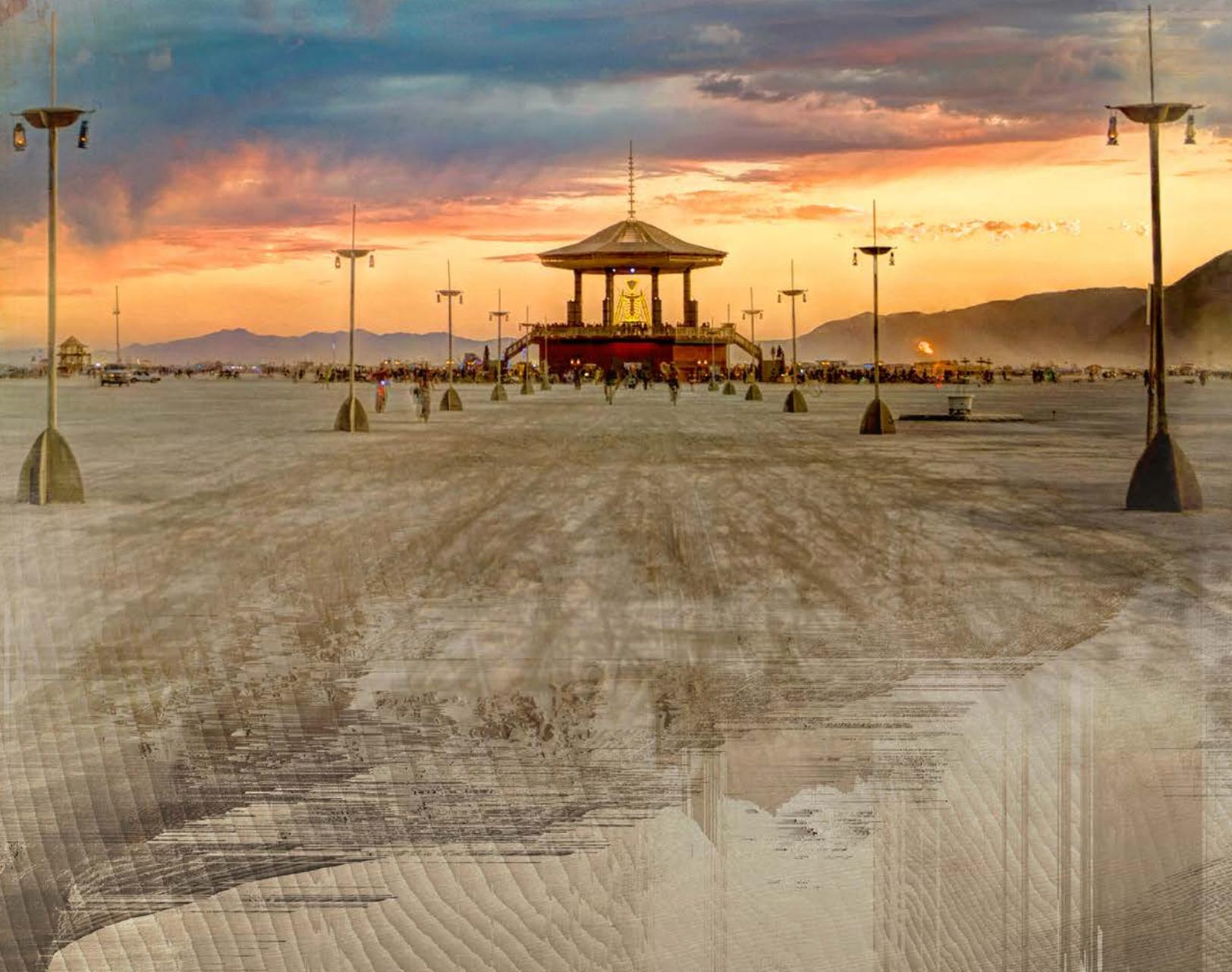


BURNING MAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2017





Δ MESSAGE FROM THE CEO:

Greetings! In 2017, the nonprofit Burning Man Project continued to fulfill its mission of building Black Rock City and spreading Burning Man culture throughout the world. What's most exciting at this phase of our development is that we're seeing tremendous organic growth – Burning Man-inspired ideas, gatherings, and communities are emerging and self-replicating in new and innovative ways. There's a distinct energy gathering around the community's ethos; the ripples have grown into powerful waves.

In 2017, the Global Network expanded to new regions, Burning Man staff were invited to speak at conferences around the world about art, urban spaces, and technology, and our community took matters into its own hands on multiple occasions to effect change and help those in need. Here at Burning Man headquarters, we continue to invest in the people, systems, and infrastructure necessary to support and nurture Burning Man's growth.

We're in a scaling phase, but we're doing it sustainably. We're teaching and learning and sharing experiences across this global Burning Man network. Our investments in education and new learning tools are about making sure the knowledge of how Burning Man works – in the broadest possible sense – is there to be drawn upon for a long time to come, so Burning Man can keep going and going.

On the pages of this report you'll find stories from across the Burning Man universe that bring to life the themes of organic growth and replication. We hope you'll gain some insight as to how the Burning Man culture is spreading, and be inspired to deepen your involvement in our shared quest to build a more creative, connected world.

Now it's time to dive right in. Enjoy!

– *Marian Goodell, Burning Man Project CEO*



MISSION

The mission of Burning Man Project is to facilitate and extend the culture that has issued from the Burning Man event into the larger world.

VISION

Burning Man Project will bring experiences to people in grand, awe-inspiring, and joyful ways that lift the human spirit, addresses social problems and inspire a sense of culture, community, and personal engagement.

MUSEUMS AND PUBLIC ART

NATIONAL WEEK OF MAKING

The U.S. had its first ever National Week of Making in June 2017, driven by a new national nonprofit called Nation of Makers, of which Burning Man co-founder Harley K. Dubois is a board member. Burning Man joined this celebration of America's vibrant maker culture with a week-long Burning Man Journal series covering many of our culture's civic-minded maker projects and spaces.

The series covered a program teaching at-risk teens in the Bay Area to build their own boomboxes, an in-depth interview with Nation of Makers Executive Director Dorothy Jones-Davis, various ways 3D printing and modular workspace design are revolutionizing disaster relief efforts, and ways in which cities are (or should be) big makerspaces writ large — and not just Black Rock City, which clearly already is one.

Burning Man Project's collaborations on museum exhibitions and public art projects reached a new cadence in 2017. While we've done such projects on a one-off basis many times in the past, this year sparked a number of them and made this a core part of our ongoing nonprofit work. Not only does this further the mission of facilitating and extending Burning Man culture, it creates whole new modes of Burning Man experience and engages more people in the world beyond the playa.

The first museum collaboration in 2017 was "The Art of Burning Man" at the Hermitage Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, which ran from June 4 to October 14. This exhibition featured the work of Five Ton Crane, Michael Garlington and Natalia Bertotti, Gregg Fleishman, Charles Gadeken, Jim Peterson, and Kirsten Berg. Large-scale installation art was transposed from the Nevada desert to the forested grounds of the historic Virginia museum.

Burning Man co-founder Crimson Rose and art logistics coordinator Brody Scotland gave in-person presentations, and the Hermitage hosted gatherings throughout the year to enable Burning Man-style participation and creation. The exhibit also brought together Burners from surrounding local areas, who served as docents and helped bring the Burner sparkle to the Hermitage. In fact, a new regional group called the Tidewater Burners emerged directly from the collaboration in Virginia. Burners were able to find like-minds by rallying around Burning Man coming to their backyard.

Next up, Burning Man veteran and archivist Christine "LadyBee" Kristen guest-curated an exhibition called "Playa Made: Jewelry of Burning Man" at the Fuller Craft Museum in Boston, Massachusetts, which ran from February 11 to June 4. The exhibit featured 175 pieces of jewelry from LadyBee's collection and ten photos by George Post. LadyBee, George and Karen Christians participated in a panel discussion at the museum on the weekend of the opening. While Burning Man Project was not a formal partner, the exhibition landed right at the core of our mission.



Participating maker Garrison Cohen said, "It reinforces that Burning Man is about the art, not about commercialism, or separating the hobbyists from the professionals. It's about coming together as a community to contribute what we can and to appreciate what others contribute."

In July, "City of Dust: The Evolution of Burning Man" opened at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno. This exhibition told the story of how it all went down, featuring artifacts and documents tracing Burning Man's evolution. This was our most involved museum partnership to date; in addition to procuring these historic materials, Burning Man Project founders and staff gave a wide range of in-person presentations for museum visitors, from screenings of raw, classic playa videos to lectures about the philosophies and schools of art



that influenced Burning Man, and from live storytelling about the early days to nuts-and-bolts talks about how all the building and burning and leaving no trace gets done. "City of Dust" remained on exhibit through the first week of January, 2018.

Finally, in December, we introduced the public to the upcoming exhibition, "No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man," which opened in March 2018 at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. This multimedia exhibition in the nation's capital is one of Burning Man Project's biggest stories of 2018.

This feels like a new chapter in Burning Man's history for multiple reasons. The fact that traditional arts and culture institutions are interested in curating Burning Man exhibitions is remarkable, but it's important to note that these institutions came to us seeking a collaboration because they recognize Burning Man as an important arts and cultural movement (something we've all known for a long time). Not only are the work and stories produced by our culture seen as legitimate, they're relevant, perhaps even necessary.

And it's a healthy creative challenge to figure out how best to create a Burning Man experience for museum goers and participants outside of the great "tabula rasa" in the desert, while protecting and celebrating the things that make Burning Man so decidedly special and different. It has always been interesting to ask what the outside world finds meaningful about Burning Man, but given this new level of interest, there's a new, more interesting question: What is it about this moment in history that makes Burning Man so relevant?

BURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS RESPONDS TO HURRICANES AND WILDFIRES



Hurricane Harvey made landfall northeast of Corpus Christi in August 2017. Longtime Burners remembered that gut-wrenching feeling from 2005, when Hurricane Katrina hit during the Burn. At that time, it was instinctual to some folks that they should head straight from the playa to the Gulf to help out with the relief effort, an operation that led to the creation of Burners Without Borders (BWB). Twelve years later, when Hurricane Harvey struck, BWB was ready for action.

While the event in Black Rock City was ongoing, Burners Without Borders set up collection points throughout the city for donations, and after the Temple Burn, people and supplies left for Texas. The generosity of Burning Man participants filled a 30-foot box truck, which was driven to Texas by Tom Price, one of the original founders of BWB 11 years prior. BWB Corpus Christi set up a relief camp in Aransas Pass to distribute donations and serve as a basecamp HQ for their cleanup and demolition operations. The Austin, North Texas, and San Antonio chapters sprung into action to support them, and new working groups formed in Galveston and Houston in response to this storm. BWB volunteers took care of first responders and displaced people, helped clear the way for utility crews, and soon expanded to offer sanctuary, skill-sharing workshops, and art activities for kids. Volunteers logged 5,000 hours of work and raised over \$20,000 for displaced and affected people, and the infrastructure established in this relief effort will go on to serve as artistic and civic centers in the affected communities.

Unfortunately, the 2017 hurricane season had more in store. In September, Hurricane Irma struck in Florida, and Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico. An alliance was formed combining Burning Man theme camps TransFOAMation and Abraxas, along with Grassroots Kitchen and some socially conscious companies (the group that would later become Grassroots Aid Partners-G.A.P.) to deploy their playa kitchen to the already distressed town of Immokalee, Florida. They served 30,000 meals and logged thousands more hours combined with efforts from BWB

Florida. The BWB volunteers left a permanent, positive trace, too: They built an educational playspace for the community called Immokalee P.L.A.Y. The scale of the damage in Puerto Rico was so severe that it hampered the efforts of official responders, but even there, BWB volunteers coordinated some relief efforts, most notably the continuing relief project, Sail Relief. That same month, a major earthquake struck Mexico City, and BWB raised funds and supported Burner relief projects there as well. These were organized by theme camps Maxa, Mayan Warrior and Humano.

In November, wildfires took a serious toll on California, and BWB and the Burning Man community again answered the call to provide resources to those in need. Camp Epic, another BRC theme camp, created Oasis Village, gifting ready-to-use container housing to support people displaced by the fires, and people donated the use of their RVs to supplement these structures. The contribution of Burning Man participants to fire relief efforts was covered extensively by local news outlets. And in response to the Lilac Fires in southern California, BWB San Diego coordinated a series of work days to help clean up the damage.



It was a busy year for BWB, and the 21st century promises to provide even greater climate-driven challenges. Through community organizing, the principles of Immediacy and Civic Responsibility, and Burners' uncanny ability to deploy tactical miracles like BWB's Mobile Resource Unit makerspace, our community passed the test in 2017. As real as this year's recovery work was, it also served as training, both for BWB responders and the communities they served. On a long-enough timeline, any community is likely to endure disaster, and BWB is teaching people how to become more resilient and better prepared before disaster strikes.

The work of Burners Without Borders is only made possible through dedicated volunteers and donations. In 2017, more than one hundred supporters contributed donations in support of BWB, and thousands of volunteers donated their time.

TOM LAPORTE

"Lost Tom" LaPorte, a founding figure behind many of Burning Man's media and civic institutions, passed away in 2017. An accomplished journalist and civic leader, he traveled to his first Burn from Chicago in 2005. Early on, he was recruited to the team at Media Mecca, and things just took off from there. He founded and became Executive Producer of the Profiles in Dust Team, who produce Burning Man-related video content year-round, he was a beloved show host and key innovator for Burning Man Information Radio (BMIR), he narrated the BRC webcast for people who couldn't be there in person, and he was a founding member of Burners Without Borders. He was a leader in his regional Burning Man community in Chicago throughout it all.

The common thread through all this action, though, was Tom's passion, kindness, selflessness, leadership, and sense of humor. Tom left an indelible imprint on the people and culture of Burning Man. We are deeply grateful for his countless contributions, and will work to honor Tom's sizable legacy with equal amounts of dedication and fun.





EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP SUMMIT TAKES OVER STOCKHOLM

In March 2017, the fourth Burning Man European Leadership Summit (ELS) was held in Stockholm, Sweden, bringing together over 200 representatives from more than 24 countries. It was the largest ELS to date, but there was more to make it interesting than mere scale. Throughout the city, March 1-7 was declared Burning Man Week Stockholm. Burners organized over 25 free public art events and discussions throughout the city highlighting the creativity and participation of the European Burner community. It was a stand-out example of Burners taking the initiative to transform their local community and invite participation from a wider set of people who care about the future.



ISADORA WRONSKI

Isadora Wronski has been burning since 2010 and stepped into the Sweden Regional Contact role previously held by Olle Bjerkas in 2014. Isadora was the co-lead organizing the 2017 European Leadership Summit in Stockholm. Isadora brought together volunteers and co-creators for the events and also held space for thought leaders from across Stockholm and the Nordic communities to participate in the Summit. "It's a global community," Isadora says, "so while people gather at those events and concentrate this creative power — magic — there, it also floats back into society. It's a reminder that life is precious. It awakens the inherent creative potential."

Isadora was a member of the Nordic Souk project in Black Rock City in 2014, and she has represented Burning Man at Creative Mornings in Gothenburg and in other public arenas. Beyond her work with Burning Man, she has also been an environmental activist with Greenpeace. Isadora also frames Burning Man as a kind of activism: "Participatory culture," she says, "is where society at large is moving. We don't want to consume anymore. We want to create. We want to be it."



The Burning Man Global Network's leadership summits are based on the format of the Global Leadership Conference (GLC) historically held in the Bay Area. The primary content of the summits is by invitation only, designed to allow Burning Man Regional Contacts, community leaders and event organizers to have deep discussions on the issues they face collectively. Happily, in recent years, many summits have achieved the organizational capacity necessary to open up some events and content to the host community, as Burners are wont to do.

But Stockholm's Burner community blew this concept wide open by enlisting their whole city in events and creative experiences that exemplify the spirit of Burning Man while the international group of European Leadership Summit attendees were in town. Offerings ranged from explorations of humanitarian responses to refugee migration, city planning, facilitating artistic culture, creating year-round communal living spaces based on the 10 Principles, and explorations of leadership in a collaborative culture. The Burning Man Week Stockholm program also included fun-filled theatrical subway rides, art car adventures, and an effigy burn of a phoenix in a local park.

The masterminds of this experience were Gustaf Josefsson, who conceived of the radically democratic, bring-your-own-everything model for Burning Man Week, and Isadora Wronski, one of Sweden's Burning Man Regional Contacts (RCs). They partnered with Burning Man's Meghan Rutigliano (Associate Director, Global Network) on the conception and execution of the ELS, along with a passionate team of volunteers.

Sweden is host to a Regional Event called Urban Burn Stockholm, a translation of the Burning Man participatory event model — usually associated with wide-open natural spaces — into an indoor urban environment. At the 2017 ELS, even veteran, dyed-in-the-faux-fur Burners saw visions of Burning Man they had never seen before.

Long gone are the days when the whole Global Network had to descend on San Francisco to learn how the Burning Man sausage... bacon?... gets made. Now we have summits at continental centers around the world for Regional groups to share their completely new ways of doing Burning Man with each other. To scale and further decentralize this network into the future, knowledge and resource sharing at regional convenings like the ELS is critical.

PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENT

WASHOE COUNTY ART TRAIL AND GATEWAY PROJECT

In July, Washoe County received a \$75,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to create a 200-mile interactive art trail winding from Reno/Sparks, up to Pyramid Lake and into Gerlach, a route Black Rock City participants know intimately. Burning Man Project is one of several regional nonprofit and municipal partners on the project, and we put out a call to artists to create two installations on the trail that evoke a sense of home. The art trail will be completed in 2019.

In November, Burning Man Project and the City of San Jose, California, launched a three-year-long initiative called "Playa to Paseo," which brings installation art and interactive events and gatherings to downtown San Jose, thanks to the help of the South Bay Burners Regional Group and other local artists and designers.

The initiative launched with the installation of Sonic Runway by Rob Jensen and Warren Trezevant at San Jose's City Hall. Originally installed in Black Rock City and then reconstructed overseas for a dazzling display in Chengdu, China, it was a pitch-perfect example of interactive public art. Burning Man co-founder Crimson Rose spoke to the crowd at the opening. Sonic Runway dazzled San Jose just like it did Black Rock City, and the installation was so successful that the city extended it beyond its initial run. Throughout the run, there were 13 different Thursday evening live performances by an eclectic roster of musicians, whose performances manipulated the sound-sensitive lights of the piece.

Black Rock City's beloved bears made of pennies, Ursa Mater by Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, were installed in Paseo de San Antonio near the Fairmont Hotel and will be on display through May 2018.

Through this partnership, San Jose hopes to bring its artists out into the community and to enliven the city's 180-square-mile territory with interactive art in public spaces. That works pretty well for us! Burning Man Project staff held a grant workshop in San Jose to teach local artists how to apply for funding from us, whether for Black Rock City or global projects. Other workshops taught hands-on skills like the science of sound, working with steel, LED programming, and more.



Playa to Paseo is a dynamic example of how the civic values we've learned in Black Rock City can lead to more thriving urban life in any city. Not only are we able to share some of the beautiful art and experience Burners have already created, we can transmit skills and ideas to the locals, so they can keep the fires going in their own communities. Going forward, we see the civic and cultural life of cities as central to Burning Man Project's work. We may not have realized it at the time, but we were becoming experts in cities for 30 years, and recently, even the U.S. Conference of Mayors has recognized us for that. It's time to share what we have learned.



BLACK ROCK CITY AND BEYOND

To combat some dismaying behavioral trends in Black Rock City culture, we launched a cross-departmental effort in 2017 called Project Citizenship. As an obvious result of its creative liberty, Burning Man culture is constantly evolving, and at the same time it's growing, with new people flowing in all the time. Preserving the cultural kernels of Burning Man in the face of this dynamism is a challenge we're committed to overcoming.

As an official reinvestment of our organization's time and energy, Project Citizenship kicked off at the 2017 Global Leadership Conference. We used many channels to get key messaging out to participants: videos that discuss Matter Out Of Place (MOOP)/ Leaving No Trace, best practices for getting into and out of the city safely and sanely, and information about the realities of providing emergency services in a city as wild as Black Rock City. We sent targeted emails addressing big themes like "Be kind to yourself and others," and "Be prepared", we gave out sassy and informative acculturation handouts on Burner Express Bus and Air, and more. While we have many communications channels to reach participants, we are also leaning on the community (particularly theme camp/mutant vehicle leads, Regional Contacts, and other leaders) to step it up, be good citizens, and bring their team members into the fold.

In April and May, Placement collaborated with Playa Restoration to call and email camp leadership of the 37 camps with the worst MOOP score from 2016 (ranked on total number of non-green square feet as well as camps who were >75% red). The team from Placement and Resto shared Leaving No Trace strategies with the camps, discussed specific camp issues, and collaborated on concrete plans for how they could improve in 2017. They made fantastic improvements: In 2016, the worst MOOP camps were on average 30% red, 25% yellow, and 45% green. In 2017 these same camps were on average 7% red, 8% yellow, and 85% green!



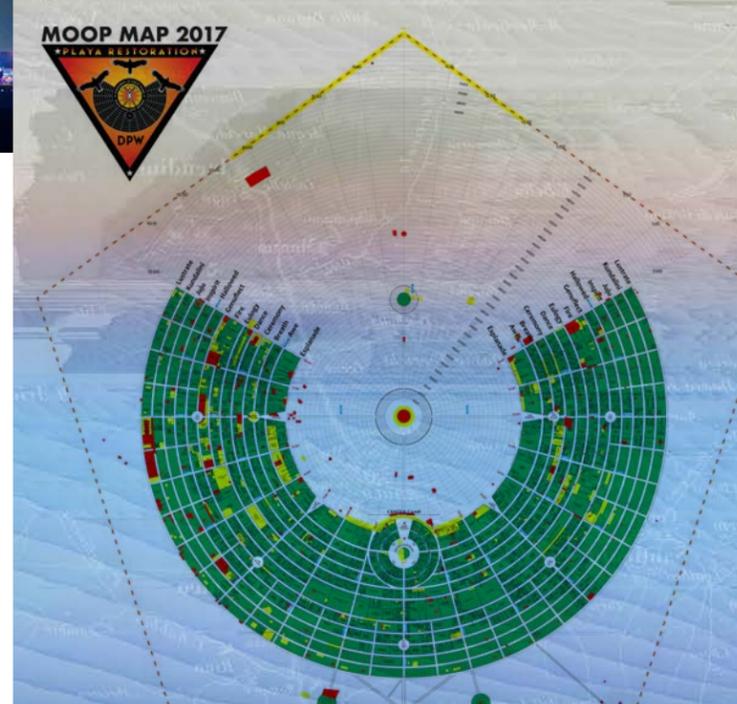
Only three of the 37 camps substantially worsened in 2017. Ninety-two percent improved. Placement continued working with camps who need additional support and cultural education to be more interactive, public, and inviting.

As for the art on playa in 2017, it was extraordinary. An enchanting favorite was Euterpe, a giant marionette of a teenage girl who walked, talked, learned and taught. The piece was formally titled "Step Forward," and it was built by Miguel Angel Martin Bordera of Alicante, Spain. It was part of an ongoing cultural and skills exchange with artists from Las Fallas, a centuries-old community fire art event in Spain. Euterpe will return in 2018, this time with her grandfather at her side.



BUILDING BRC THROUGH THE EYES OF JOHN CURLEY

John Curley has become the de facto leading lens through which our community sees how Black Rock City is built and then torn down. In 2017, Curley celebrated his tenth year documenting the dusty men and women of DPW. Though he insists he's just a lucky guy in the background while people do amazing things in front of him, the truth is he's part of the Burning Man family – or maybe more accurately, part of many Burning Man families. He's earned the hard-won trust of the many teams comprising DPW – they love having him around – and he's sort of Media Mecca's reporter-in-residence (and Quesadilla Commander in Chief). John is the all-time leader in Burning Man Journal posts – even topping the generic catch-all bylines – with over 275 posts on the board going into the 2018 season. Huge thanks to John for a decade of BRC words and pictures!



2017 brought new improvements to the design and construction of the Man. We returned to the aesthetic known as the "classic man" and adapted the structure to include the four chakras along the torso. For the first time since 2000, the Man was once again raised by people using ropes and pulleys. The heroic effort took us back to a previous time and simultaneously set the tone for the theme, Radical Ritual. On Friday night of the event, a public gathering was held to prepare the burlap for the Man in preparation for the burn. This return to – and reinvention of – the old ways of doing things brought the principle of Participation back into the spiritual and literal center of Black Rock City.

Black Rock City is the geographical center of Burning Man, and a core part of our global work. People come there from everywhere, and they bring the power of their experiences back to where they came from. Moreover, the eyes of the world are on Black Rock City each year for the week of its existence, so it's a critical time for representing the essence of Burning Man to the whole world. This year, as hard a year as it was, we passed with flying colors.

FLY RANCH: A MESSAGE FROM OUR LAND FELLOW



In 2016, Burning Man Project acquired Fly Ranch, a strange and wonderful 3,800-acre oasis not far from the playa, thanks entirely to the generosity of donors who wanted to help support the next chapter of Burning Man's history. We spent the first year and a half as stewards of this land carefully and curiously exploring every inch of it, taking stock of its natural features and resources, and getting to know its plant and animal inhabitants.



We selected Lisa Schile-Beers (a.k.a. Dr. Scirpus) as our first Land Fellow. She is exploring and documenting the flora, fauna, and everything else she comes across on the Fly Ranch property. Scirpus began volunteering in Black Rock City in 2006 and now manages the Environmental Compliance team for the Burning Man event. In the past, she's managed the fuel department, worked on the crew building the Man, worked in the Sign Shop, and maintained BRC's eccentric fleet of golf carts. She's a PhD who studies wetland ecology throughout the U.S. and internationally, which made her the ideal candidate to live on our wet, weird land and document her findings.

To share her work with the Burning Man community, Scirpus created a five-part series on the Burning Man Journal called "Making Sense of Fly Ranch." Each article dives deep on the experience of Fly through one of the five senses. Scirpus complemented her evocative writing with photos and videos she either shot by hand or captured remotely with her bevy of "critter cams." The critter cams regularly turn out captivating photos of birds, coyotes, and that beloved Black Rock Desert mascot, the jackrabbit. We've been unable to resist using some of those handsome bunnies in header images for the flagship Burning Man newsletter, the Jackrabbit Speaks.



Scirpus's survey of the land and its environment laid the groundwork for us to begin expanding access to Fly Ranch in the year to come. In partnership with Friends of Black Rock/High Rock, a local conservation group, Burning Man Project is offering weekly low-impact nature walks open to the public (advance reservation required), so the community can begin to experience the power and potential of this land.

Scirpus is the third Burning Man Project fellow. The first was Misa Rygrova, Regional Contact for Czech Republic and Eastern Europe, whose fellowship in 2015 helped highlight and strengthen global Burning Man communities far from the ancestral home in Nevada. In 2016, Tony "Coyote" Perez-Banuet received a fellowship to kickstart the writing of his upcoming book, *Coyote Nose: Tales of the Early Desert Carnies of Burning Man*.



BLACK ROCK SOLAR BECOMES BLACK ROCK LABS



Sometimes projects generated by Burning Man participants grow up to become thriving, world-changing organizations in their own right, with domains stretching beyond Burning Man, though the resonance in values never goes away. Sometimes these projects end up coming back into the fold as Burning Man Project programs, as Burners Without Borders did. Other times, as with Black Rock Solar, they take on a life all their own.

After almost 10 years transforming northwest Nevada by delivering low-cost solar power solutions, Black Rock Solar decided to "declare victory" in late 2016. In that time they had installed 112 solar arrays, delivering 7,600 kilowatts of clean energy capacity and saving their clients nearly a million dollars a year for the next couple decades. When the market price of solar power dropped (because of widespread adoption of solar), our friends and collaborators decided to pivot and form a new entity: Black Rock Labs.

Black Rock Labs' goal is, quite simply, to spur the creation of 1,000 new Black Rock Solar-esque entities. It's an accelerator for start-up clean-tech products and services born in the Burning Man community or particularly well suited for use there. Power generation is one obvious category, but Burners are also pretty good at low-impact construction and temporary housing, water and waste stream management, and more. Looking ahead, Burning Man Project wants more committed global citizens and ambassadors as part of our network, and we're hopeful about the incubator model Black Rock Labs is pioneering.



The first project from Black Rock Labs was helping BRC theme camp IDEATE vet and offer carbon emissions offsets to Burning Man 2017 participants. The offsets came from C-Quest Capital, who use them to install clean-burning cookstoves in rural Zambia to replace the old, carbon-intensive ones. This program saved 877 Burners' worth of carbon emissions for the 2017 event, and the program will be back and expanded in 2018.

Burning Man Project CEO Marian Goodell was a founding board member of Black Rock Solar and, finding the new mission as compelling and vital as the old one, continues to serve on Black Rock Labs' board of directors.



D.C. BURNERS TAKE ACTION



Washington, D.C.'s Burner community really turned up the heat this year. In November 2016, just days after the election, the first ever Burning Man Mid-Atlantic Leadership Conference was held in the nation's capital, coinciding with that community's second annual unofficial event, Catharsis on the Mall. It was a tough time to be a community organizer in the U.S., and the D.C. Burners stepped up to host a gathering of the Burning Man organizers in their region.

The momentum carried into preparations for the 2017 Catharsis, which drastically stepped up the ambition by proposing to install 2015 playa star R-Evolution by Marco Cochrane on the National Mall, a striking symbol of feminine power. They broke the news of their plans at the Global Leadership Conference in Oakland, in front of the largest group of GLC participants ever, showing a dramatic rendering of the luminous dancer looming over the Washington Monument. The room was electrified by the possibility. All systems were go until a sudden, last-minute reversal by the National Park Service forced Catharsis to go on without R-Evolution. Despite every attempt for an appeal, the reversal remained in place.

Undaunted, D.C. Burners looked ahead to the upcoming "No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man" exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, which would open in March 2018. The local Burners convinced their neighbors at the Renwick and the surrounding Golden Triangle Business Improvement District to expand the concept of the exhibition beyond the walls of the museum. While their original vision was thwarted, their persistence paved the way for new art engagement. The museum exhibition would be accompanied by public art installations throughout D.C., and Burners — and non-Burners! — riding around on bikes experiencing it all with Immediacy.



INVESTING IN THE MEANING OF RITUAL



The 2017 art theme, "Radical Ritual," was a slow-burner. At first, it seemed almost obvious; yes, Black Rock City is a ritual we repeat every year; yes, we will always Burn the Man; yes, humans have been doing this kind of thing forever. What's so radical about that? But, as we built up toward the event, and as ever-ready theme philosopher Caveat Magister unfurled more and more aspects to Radical Ritual in the Burning Man Journal, it became clear how radical an idea it was to look at Burning Man's rituals as rituals, and not That mere Thing in the Desert (and now far beyond it).

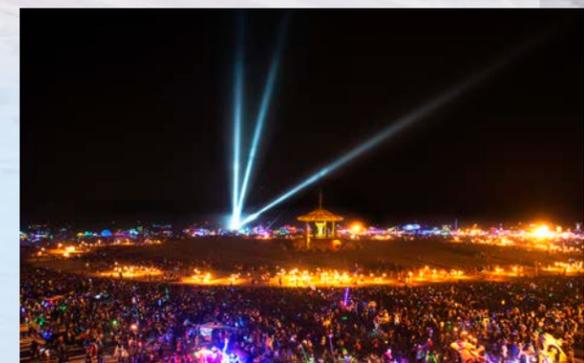
In 2016, the Man build was ambitious and complex, which caused some problems. Radical Ritual brought us back around to the Man's simple essence. The Man Base was dedicated to the Golden Spike, the ritual at the end of Survey that marks the center point of what will become Black Rock City. For the first time since 2000, the Man was standing on the ground and was hoisted by human power.

But the build featured some novel ideas, too. Burning Man founder and theme creator Larry Harvey, always the maverick, audaciously proposed putting the Man inside a temple, an unprecedented step met with skepticism from some purists — much to Larry's delight. Radical Ritual invited us to celebrate the things we've learned how to do as a culture, and to fuse the old ways with the new; even though the Man was raised by the classic, low-tech method, the roof over its head was the heaviest crane-lifted object lifted by DPW in the event's history.



Of course, building (and unbuilding) Black Rock City is a ritual of many rituals, from taking cereal bags out of their boxes and putting socks in zip-lock bags while you pack, all the way through the event and its art burns, to the last little tab from an aluminum can getting dropped in the last MOOP bag on the last day of Playa Restoration. It may be one of Burning Man's greatest lessons that these activities, however quotidian, are not mundane — they are essential pieces comprising a glorious whole.

This stuff is hard to transmit. It is essential to what Burning Man is that you have to experience it to understand it. But that essence is the wisdom of Burning Man, and clearly Burning Man does transmit it through experiential learning. Burning Man Project is investing in an Education and Learning Initiative to build tools for connection, communication, and distribution, so that we can find the ways to share this wisdom, both on specific, local scales as well as in a global language.





TEN PRINCIPLES

Burning Man co-founder Larry Harvey wrote the Ten Principles in 2004 as guidelines for the newly-formed Regional Network. They were crafted not as a dictate of how people should be and act, but as a reflection of the community's ethos and culture as it has organically developed since the event's inception.

RADICAL INCLUSION

Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

DECOMMODIFICATION

In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

LEAVING NO TRACE

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

RADICAL SELF-EXPRESSION

Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

COMMUNAL EFFORT

Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

GIFTING

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

RADICAL SELF-RELIANCE

Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources.

PARTICIPATION

Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

IMMEDIACY

Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.



PROGRAM AREAS

Burning Man Project provides infrastructural tools and frameworks to support local communities in applying the Ten Principles through six interconnected program areas.

ARTS

The mission of Burning Man Arts is to change the paradigm of art from a commodified object to an interactive, participatory, shared experience of creative expression.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Burning Man Project's Civic Engagement Program will foster civic responsibility and volunteerism in pursuit of a civil society and to provide economic development and human services, using interactive and collaborative methods consistent with the Ten Principles.

CULTURE

Burning Man Project's Culture Centers Program will establish and operate urban and rural cultural centers and spaces that incubate and showcase collaborative and interactive arts, culture, and community participation. Burning Man Project's Cultural Centers may be permanent or temporary, physical or virtual.

EDUCATION

The mission of Burning Man Project's Educational Program is to teach the philosophy, principles, and practice of Burning Man culture and experience around the world.

PHILOSOPHICAL CENTER

The Philosophical Center will serve as a think tank to do scholarly research about, and to prepare and publish materials that explain the Ten Principles, and how they have been and can be successfully and practically implemented in many fields of human endeavor. The Philosophical Center will guide the interpretation and application of the Ten Principles in The Project's operation.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Burning Man Project's Social Enterprise Program will collaborate with mission-allied organizations and projects that wish to collaborate for the public good by providing certifications, social and connective networks, fiscal sponsorship, shared support services, and mentoring.

For full descriptions of the Program Areas, please see: www.burningman.org/program-areas

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GIFTING AND DONORS

Every day, people are contributing gifts to Burning Man through their time, skills, knowledge, art, and more. These contributions are the foundation of our community and culture, and we wouldn't be where we are today without them.

We are grateful that our community is helping us grow our Philanthropic Engagement programs and that individuals, foundations and organizations are increasing their giving to help us fulfill our mission. In the spirit of radical appreciation, we want to thank you for all the ways you participate and live the culture of Burning Man! We are deeply appreciative of every volunteer, participant, organizer, artist, and donor in 2017, and if we were to list them all, that list would stretch for miles. As we grow our programs, we're thankful to these supporters who donated \$100 or more in 2017 in support of our mission.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
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Mitch Adler
Sumit Ahuja
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Raymond Allen
David Alley
Brad Anderson
Luis Andrade
Archer (from Texas)
Arizona Regional Burners
Saguaro Man 2018
Richard Austin
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Nicholas Barone
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Will Roger Peterson & Crimson
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Alba Poretti
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Roger Wu
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Andrew Yorra
Joon Yun
Elizabeth Zbinden
Anonymous (24)</p> |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$11,580,597
Accounts receivable	168,969
Refunds receivable	491,192
Pledges receivable - current portion	\$20,000
Investments	899,862
Inventory	27,089
Prepaid expenses	235,654
Other assets	173,890
Total current assets	13,597,253
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT - net	9,894,297
OTHER ASSETS	
Deposits	73,233
Goodwill	4,231,063
Total other assets	4,374,296
Total assets	\$27,865,846

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS December 31, 2017

CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$3,706,005
Deferred rent - current portion	6,520
Total current liabilities	3,712,525
OTHER LIABILITIES	
Deferred rent	404,033
Total other liabilities	404,033
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	23,651,686
Temporarily restricted	97,602
Total Net Assets	23,749,288
Total liabilities and net assets	\$27,865,846

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUES AND SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Burning Man annual event	43,801,088	-	43,801,088
Contributions, gifts and grants	495,400	424,200	919,600
Other program revenue	672,112	-	672,112
Fundraising events - (net of direct expenses of \$254,968)	120,651	-	120,651
Interest income	10,793	-	10,793
Other income	46,798	-	46,798
Subtotal	45,146,842	424,200	45,571,042
Net assets released from restrictions	1,262,192	(1,262,192)	-
Total revenues and support	46,409,034	(837,992)	45,571,042
EXPENDITURES			
Program expenses	33,947,397	-	33,947,397
Management and general	7,159,814	-	7,159,814
Fundraising	693,925	-	693,925
Total expenditures	41,801,136	-	41,801,136
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	4,607,898	(837,992)	3,769,906
Net assets - beginning of year	19,043,788	935,594	19,979,382
Net assets - end of year	23,651,686	97,602	23,749,288

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE WORLDWIDE BURNING MAN COMMUNITY FOR ITS TIRELESS COMMITMENT AND INSPIRATION.

ARTIST & PHOTOGRAPHER CREDITS:

We're especially grateful for the photographers and artists whose work brings the story of Burning Man to life in the pages of this piece.

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Δ CITY IN THE DESERT.
Δ CULTURE OF POSSIBILITY.
Δ NETWORK OF DREAMERS
AND DOERS.

burningman.org / burningman.org/volunteer / donate.burningman.org

Burning Man Project is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to facilitate and extend the culture that has issued from the Burning Man event into the larger world.