Mountain Time Arts produces bold, engaging public art projects that explore the history, culture and environment of the Rocky Mountain West.

WaterWorks uses art to reveal a variety of perspectives on water use and conservation. We believe that art can help people understand and care about the science and culture of climate change.

“Fresh, New, Engaging, Small audiences, Outdoors... These events are by far the most inspirational and exciting of the summer. Please, please continue!”
Why Water

WaterWorks 2017

At the Headwaters of the Missouri River, the Gallatin Valley is facing explosive growth. Water quality and abundance is key to a sustainable future; our goal is to raise the water awareness of our diverse community. In 2017, we produced four public art events highlighting the beauty and science, the history and future of our most precious resource.

Over two years of research and conversations with water professionals we identified three themes to guide our work:

- Where our water comes from and where it goes
- The ecology and value of wetlands
- How agricultural producers affect and sustain water health

💧 276 people attended WaterWorks’ tours of Bozeman Creek and Pheasant Farms Wetlands.

💧 A digital version of Isabel Beavers’ Water Rights map was purchased by the Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators to display in the Gallatin County Courthouse.

Our events are free to the public and attracted audiences of diverse experiences, ages and interests across the Valley, building a community of water stewards.

“I learned that water is a finite resource, threatened with population growth and changing landscapes, that has many diverse user interests.”
MTA commissioned 12 regional artists to create installations in storefronts on Main Street illustrating water themes. Artists collaborated with conservationists and scientists for projects on crucial water issues in visually significant ways using a variety of media.

**JENNY HALE**

**Ground Water**

Hale worked with Laura Ziemer of Trout Unlimited on the layered map of the Gallatin Watershed to illustrate that ground and surface water are one resource.

**MICHAEL AND CAROLINE RUNNING WOLF**

**Upstream is Downstream**

The Running Wolfs worked with the City Public Works Dept. to create a series of augmented reality targets on sidewalks. The project virtually revealed the complex water systems below-street.

**GESINE JANZEN**

**Raw/Filtered/Surface Water**

Janzen researched the water treatment system with the City’s Water Conservation Specialist. Her painting visually joined natural and scientific realms.

*We partnered with: City of Bozeman Public Works, Downtown Bozeman Partnership, The Extreme History Project*

*Upstream, revealing Bozeman Creek, exposed an estimated 5,000 Valley residents and visitors to the upcoming WaterWorks season.*

“The map piece, superimposing the town grid, shows how we live inside these other patterns and how topography affects human settlement.”
Joanna Haigood, choreographer of Zaccho Dance Theater of San Francisco, created and directed Spring Thirst, an aerial dance performance. The work explored the effect of climate change on water resources through a series of vignettes acting as poetic metaphors. The dance provoked a range of emotions – astonishment, sadness, and delight – that has enlivened the conversation about our water future.

As part of Upstream and Spring Thirst, we partnered with the Extreme History Project to design a walking tour of Bozeman Creek. Daily tours highlighted a recent restoration, the art installations and revealed Creek history, hydrology, and coming challenges.

Three Bozeman dancers joined the cast of five San Francisco dancers

650 people attended Spring Thirst over two evenings

Spring Thirst viewers, many new to contemporary dance, saw the Pavilion come alive to bring a poignant perspective to the importance of drought awareness.

"Each event was valuable. It was more about life than how I think about art - bringing art to us."

"It was a unique and profound opportunity to think and feel our relationship to water. As neighbors and friends, we shared the experience as a community."
Northern Cheyenne artist Bently Spang’s video installation was created as part of his Modern Warrior Series. War Shirt #6 – Waterways takes the form of a monumental Plains Indian war shirt using 26 video monitors. The installation filled the 1902 Dry Creek schoolhouse, near the East Gallatin River, focusing attention on the sight and sounds of place while confronting the colonization of the West.

My intention is not to re-create an actual war shirt but to use the conceptual framework of this form to signify the importance of our water to my homeland.  
Bently Spang

Daily tours of a restored wetlands at nearby Pheasant Farms were designed by both a Western scientist and a Northern Cheyenne ethnobotanist. They highlighted the crucial value of the bird, plant and aquatic life that depend on wetlands.

Throughout its run, many told us that the Native and Western science integration of the project gave them multiple perspectives on wetlands ecology.

165 people took Wetlands tours and 300 people viewed the installation

Tim and Kathy Crawford of Pheasant Farms opened their wetlands, and the Jolly Neighbors, a group of ranch women, shared the Dry Creek School.

“I loved the War Shirt. It pretty much blew me away by its scope and presence.

“I went fishing today and thought of Bently's work... the beauty and power of water... it caught the essence of my time on a stream when I often feel most at peace."
Tucked in a valley bordered by the Gallatin River and a band of cliffs that form a Buffalo Jump, the historic Kelly Ranch was the site of this performance about irrigation practices. Directed by Mary Ellen Storm, made with and for the agricultural community, it shared their environmental perspectives and how the remarkable canal system functions.

Guides from the agriculture, conservation and Indigenous communities led groups through the ranch scenes: drumming at the head gate, recreated historic farming scenes, music, dance and video performance at the barnyard, and finally, overlooking a large-scale illumination of the remarkable ditch system in the pasture.

385 people attended Gabriel Canal; a cast and crew of 85 were involved, many from the local community.

We are grateful to the agriculture and Native American communities who shared their knowledge and guidance towards this production and to the Kelly Ranch, the protagonist, whose deep history came to life.

“The highlight was the illumination of the irrigation canals with 50,000 LED lights - THAT was truly magical, educational and sublime.”

“It is to your credit that the agriculture folks felt they were involved in the content. The portrayal of who we are and what we do was accurate and positive.”
OUTCOMES

Online Season Survey
• 94% said the events “offered a unique experience”
• 76% liked the “focus on art and science”
• 61% of respondents learned about the events from friends, with Facebook coming in second

What people told us they learned
... to revisit their assumptions about water resources in the Valley
... about water rights, watershed pathways, and early methods of water conservation
... that we must approach our land-planning efforts as an entire region.
... that more education is essential and we need to learn more from Native Americans

Four Families Study
We recruited 4 families of diverse life experiences and asked them to attend events and participate in interviews and conversations to learn their perspectives on water issues and their responses to art events.

• The city family said their participation led to thinking about resources and growth issues, as well as discussing artistic styles.
• The farm family appreciated being involved and their perspectives being heard.
• The suburban family is inspired to try new community events and get involved in conservation.
• The Indigenous family contributed their views by acting as docents at Wetlands and guides for Gabriel Canal.

WaterWorks Outreach
We sponsored a public forum and podcast, "Is Water a Human Right?", produced by Interchange in August with a panel of civic leaders, artists, farmers, conservationists.

Continuing collaboration with the AGAI education committee, including an MTA presentation at the AGAI annual meeting in December.

We produced four short documentary videos of WaterWorks events which can be found on our website.

In 2018 we continue our relationships with regional agriculture, conservation and art communities. We will extend our reach to other water-user groups and Montana tribes.
2018 PREVIEW

WaterWorks is proud to present a second summer of raising awareness and continuing the community conversation about water. Our events will again be collaborations with partners who have a deep interest in our water future.

July brings *Symphonic Body / Water Work* by renowned choreographer and performance artist Ann Carlson. Instead of instruments, individuals in this orchestra perform gestural portraits based on the motions of their workday.

The work will spotlight the human labor and activity of a community, using the diverse water workers of the Gallatin Watershed.

Carlson’s work will be performed three times in historic barns located in the Gallatin Valley, Big Sky area and Paradise Valley.

WaterWorks 2018 will culminate in a celebration honoring water stewardship at the Headwaters in August.

Directed by Mary Ellen Strom, boats will carry musicians down the three rivers that join to form the Missouri, performing an original composition based on Native American and Western musical traditions.

Our community will gather for feasting and ceremonies to recognize the power of this place and our responsibility for healthy and sustainable water as we send it off to the millions of users downstream.

*Thank you to our principal funders*

ArtPlace America | The Kendeda Fund | The Thoroughfare Foundation

Visit mountaintimearts.org to contribute to WaterWorks 2018