

The Current

Impact Report—October 2024

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The Current Supports Artist Development

Donor support powers Minnesota Public Radio's (MPR) diverse musical programming, including [The Current](#). Thanks to generous donors, The Current brings listeners the best authentic new music alongside the music that inspired it. For almost 20 years, The Current has remained a resource for music-lovers in Minnesota and around the world.



One of [MPR's three services](#), The Current began broadcasting in 2005 as a non-commercial, member-supported radio station. But The Current is much more than a radio station, also reaching thousands of listeners around the world every day who listen via [the stream](#). The Current awakens curiosity and connects communities through music and every day **The Current discovers, empowers and celebrates the new and important voices** that are shaping the future of music. The Current brings music-lovers together in collaboration with recognized names and emerging artists, venues, record labels, local businesses and each other. From [intimate in-studio sessions](#), [MicroShows](#) and community events such as a [free summer happy hour series](#) to presenting artists in small clubs and on large stages across the region, The Current provides experiences that allow listeners to connect with artists and other listeners in an engaging way while also encouraging the development of new talent and voices.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Current reaches new audiences, celebrates important voices and supports diverse artists through live music experiences for communities across the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota. As The Current approaches its 20th anniversary, we seek to highlight and grow the emphasis on developing and supporting new artists. The Current fills a critical need for emerging and mid-career musicians in Minnesota and across the country by regularly helping them find their audience and document their progress. The Current has helped kickstart the careers of well-known artists including Lizzo, Cloud Cult, Trampled by Turtles, Dessa, Jeremy Messersmith and more. But for every one of those recognized names there are dozens of new artists where airplay and artist exposure, first live shows and first press conferences are only happening because of The Current and its unique approach to working with and promoting artists. Some of these new artists include:

[Hermanos Gutiérrez](#) – a Latin instrumental duo from Zurich with roots in Ecuador, the brother band has collaborated with Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys.

[Sierra Ferrell](#) – a rising star in the Americana and Country music scene from West Virginia. In 2022, she was named the “Americana Music Honors & Awards - Emerging Artist of the Year.”

[Laamar](#) – a Minneapolis based artist whose work has emerged since their debut release during the pandemic. Geoffrey Laamar Wilson has performed at The Current's Happy Hour series, in our studios and has appeared as a guest on The Local Show.



Hermanos Gutiérrez perform in-studio at The Current (Credit: The Current)

REACH:

More than
100

live in-studio sessions in the past three years

More than
15

free happy hours around the state in the past two summers with 200–300 attendees at each event

134,700

average monthly unique visitors to thecurrent.org

3.69 million

average monthly video views of “The Current” accounts including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Tiktok

330

videos published on The Current’s YouTube channel over the past year

The Current supports new artist development in several ways including airplay on the radio and on digital channels, in-studio sessions, at events and through content production.



DEHD performs at one of The Current’s summer Happy Hours in Rochester (Credit: Rosei Skipper)

Summer Happy Hours – Every summer, The Current hosts happy hours at venues across the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota. The Current’s hosts provide the soundtrack, and a special musical guest performs at each event. Each of The Current’s Happy Hours are free and open to everyone. The Current’s 2024 Happy Hour series featured artists such as Jade Bird, Laamar, The Wild Feathers, DEHD and Faith Boblett.

In studio artist sessions – Throughout the year, The Current invites artists to perform [live in the studio](#).

Emerging Artist Showcase – The Current brings together musicians from communities across the region to showcase and develop the next generation of songwriters and performers. The 2024 event was curated by Aby Wolf and held in January at the Duluth Masonic Temple.

The Gig List – The Current sponsors this [one-of-a-kind online nonprofit event listing](#) for new artists.

The Local Show – The Current dedicates five hours a week to local musicians [on The Local Show](#), which explores Minnesota’s local music scene, debuts new songs and includes songs from our deep library of local music.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE:

“

I no longer live in the Twin Cities, but regularly stream The Current. I'm so thankful this option exists. You all have your finger on the pulse of what's happening, the music is always good and makes me feel connected to a place I will always love. Thank you!"

– Angela in Harbor Springs, MI

“

Public radio is essential to ensuring a diverse set of music and information is available to the public. Without The Current, finding new music becomes extremely difficult. Thanks for all you do... you guys keep exposing me to great new music and keep me young!"

– John in Minneapolis, MN

“

I am a new listener to The Current, just in the last several months, and it has become a huge part of my day-to-day routine! I love listening to The Current whenever I am in the car, or just hanging around my house! I've discovered so many new bands that I love, and I enjoy hanging out with all the hosts."

– Jillian in Minneapolis, MN

“

I enjoy hearing new bands daily on the Current. My gig list is filled with new favorites like Fontaines DC, The Last Diner Party, Bully and Yard Act, all thoughtfully curated by the Current. Thank you for helping me discover these and other great artists!"

– Chris in Crosby, MN