Welcome! 2019 was a year of metamorphoses for Burning Man Project and Burning Man’s global community of dreamers and doers. A few highlights:

- Today there are more than 100 annual Burning Man events and 40 Burners Without Borders chapters on six continents.
- In 2019 we granted more than $1.4 million through our Honoraria, Global Art Grant, and Community Grant programs.
- The 3,800-acre Fly Ranch now serves as a year-round incubator for Burning Man culture; more than 2,000 visitors from around the world attended 20 camping events and 70 nature walks on the property this year.
- We’ve also taken initial steps to conduct our environmental impact. Informed by our stewardship of the land and water at Fly Ranch and the global climate crisis, we created an environmental sustainability roadmap that sets ambitious goals around waste management, ecological impact, and carbon sequestration.

This year the desert once again gave rise to a thriving, transformative, and playful Black Rock City. Buoyed by support from participants, our global community, and our board of directors, we doubled down on our efforts to strengthen Burning Man culture by recommitting to our Principles and resisting commodification. In a major win for our entire community, our playa restoration efforts in 2019 excelled beyond all measure. We left the playa in what Bureau of Land Management inspectors called “immaculate” condition.

Looking ahead to 2020, we are inspired by what’s on the horizon. We are committed to widening and deepening our network of partnerships and collaborations, laying down new pathways for connections to take root, new ideas to surface, and social impact projects to succeed. Convenings, like Esalen and others, contribute to fulfilling these objectives, and we plan to place new focus on growing this aspect of our annual program.

As we move into the future, we are inspired by our dear founder Larry Harvey’s legacy and vision, including his ambition to see Burning Man culture flourish “on every street corner.”

Thank you for your curiosity, your engagement, and your contributions that fuel Burning Man. In the following pages you will meet a few of the people and programs made possible through your participation and support. Together, we are creating a more generous, creative, and collaborative world. We couldn’t do this important work without you.

Marian Goodell
CEO, Burning Man Project

Greetings from our CEO

Vision
The Burning Man organization will bring experiences to people in grand, awe-inspiring, and joyful ways that lift the human spirit, address social problems, and inspire a sense of culture, community, and civic engagement.

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.

In gratitude,

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Marian Goodell
CEO, Burning Man Project
RANGER KEEPER

“Rangering is my art and contribution to civic responsibility in Black Rock City. Making an experiential community in the desert gives rise to challenges, and rangering is about this community taking care of itself. It’s messy, fun, hard, and I wouldn’t spend my Burn any other way.”

The Black Rock Rangers are our community’s guardians who work day and night in service of the safety and well-being of all participants. Ranger Keeper is a manager and administrator at the local Nevada, Nevada and one of our extraordinary eyes on Black Rock Rangers as they grow in Black Rock City.

Also in 2019, more than 900 people participated in 43 Ranger training events across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and the Netherlands. Ranger sunlight is not a reward for bravery but for a caring and compassionate spirit. The community beyond the Burning Man community have begun to join the Black Rock Rangers for impromptu and volunteer projects that may apply to their community engagement and safety initiatives.

MOSTAFA ISMAEL, Theme Camp Organizer

“Being a first-year Burner and helping to initiate a camp that brings activities, art, and amazing humans from across borders and conflicts from Southwest Asia and North Africa to the playa is a dream come true. Being a first-year Burner and helping to initiate a camp that brings activities, art, and amazing humans from across borders and conflicts from Southwest Asia and North Africa to the playa is a dream come true.

From Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Iran, Dubai, Lebanon, Italy, and the United States, some 250 first-year Burners came together to create a safe space on playa, where they called home, played, and grew together.

Every year, 80,000 people gather in the Black Rock Desert for eight days of creativity and community inspired by the 10 Principles. Kosmic Kamels was one of more than 1,400 placed camps in Black Rock City in 2019 — the highest number of camps in Black Rock City’s history. It’s a testament to the depth of commitment and the breadth of experiences available to those who visit our desert city.

Tahoe Mack, Honoraria Art Grant Recipient

“Art connects people, it projects beauty and depth, and it is necessary. It helps us grow roots in soil, and leaves a legacy behind. We are only as small as our dreams. Let’s build a mammoth.”

Eighteen-year-old Tahoe Mack showed us what young, inspirational leaders look like when she garnered an initiative, the Las Vegas teen collaborated with artists Dana Albany and Luis Varela-Rico to create “The Monumental Mammoth.”

The 6,000-pound mammoth was made from repurposed metal, much of it found from a dumping ground of Tule Springs, which people use as a dumping ground. On playa, the mammoth inspired conversations about sustainability, art, and community. “The Monumental Mammoth” will find its permanent home at the Ice Age Fossils State Park in North Las Vegas.

We are so grateful, humbled, honored and proud to be part of these efforts and eternally indebted to the many volunteers who help us live the 10 Principles in these beautiful ways.

Ten years ago, Comfort & Joy Village decided to build on its presence at Black Rock City by creating a continuing organization promoting the values of Burning Man and the queer community. Their fundraising and outreach efforts have supported the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, AIDS National Memorial Grove, Bay Area American Indian QueerDome (a new queer-centered psychedelic harm reduction space located in Comfort & Joy Village).

In 2019, Comfort & Joy continued to build on the 10-year success of its Paiute Food Drive, which encourages theme camps and Black Rock City citizens to donate their unused food items in Nixon on their way home from the Burn. It was also the group’s fifth year of raising funds for the Paiute Tribal Food Bank, which totaled almost $15,000 in 2019.

The Paiute Food Drive and Fundraiser and the QueerDome project come from a place of deep gratitude, reverence for the human condition, and service to others. Both initiatives have had a positive impact on the lives of people in Black Rock City and beyond. We salute Comfort & Joy for their efforts and the example they set for other theme camps and communities.

MICHAEL “UNCLE DADDY” COOPER, Comfort & Joy Festival Coordinator and nonprofit president

“We are so grateful, humbled, honored and proud to be part of these efforts and eternally indebted to the many volunteers who help us live the 10 Principles in these beautiful ways.”

Twenty-six AERIAL PROJECTS
29 U.S. STATES
25 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

The Public Field Drive and Rekindle the QueerDome project came from a place of deep gratitude, reverence for the human condition, and service to others. Both initiatives have had a positive impact on the lives of people in Black Rock City and beyond. We salute Comfort & Joy for their efforts and the example they set for other theme camps and communities.
**The Year in Stories**

*Burning Man culture spreads because we have more fun, because that fun is good for people in ways that are meaningful to them, and because everyone can play.*

— Craig Merrington, *The River That Became One*

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5  |  Burning Man Annual Report 2018

Art: Temple of Reunion - Artist: David Best & Temple Crew - Photo: Luc Asbury

**Burning Man Art Beyond the Playa**

Stories about the culture keep Larry's spirit alive and root our community in the intellectual sphere he so loved. Through his enduring affection for writing, our community and collective memory of Burning Man. Its newly-appointed director, Stuart Mangrum, calls stories "our cultural DNA," vital to acculturation into our community and fundamental to understanding who we are and what we care about.

In that spirit, Burning Man Project is poised to make significant investments in storytelling in 2020 and beyond. We are developing new channels and opportunities for creating, capturing, and sharing compelling stories about our emerging culture and the remarkable people who bring it to life.

**Radical Ritual: How Burning Man Changed the World**

Man culture. Neil Shister's and other organizers to trace the modern evolution of Burning Man and its growing cultural impact. Caveat Magister's unpacks the philosophical underpinnings of Burning Man culture, artfully balancing the trickster and the thinker. And co-founder Will Roger's "Burning Man culture spreads because we have more fun, because that fun is good for people in ways that are meaningful to them, and because everyone can play.*

The Scene That Became

The Year in Stories

Compass of the Ephemeral

zooms out and up to take a sweeping photographic view of our desert city from the sky.

debuted at Washington, DC's Renwick Gallery in 2018, it then opened at the Cincinnati Museum of Art in late April 2019 (contributing to the highest attendance of any exhibit in the museum's history), before landing at the Oakland Museum of California in October 2019.

The City of San Jose, California, has recently showcased several monumental playa art pieces, including "XO" by Laura Kimpton and Jeff Schomberg and "Tara Mechani" by Dana Albany. Residents saw the installation of "Sonic Runway" by Rob Jensen and Warren Trezevant as pivotal to breathing life into City Hall Plaza — so much so that San Jose has committed to bringing the piece back in 2020 for another seven years.

And in Coral Springs, Florida, David Best worked with the City of Coral Springs, City of Parkland, Coral Springs Museum of Art, and many local volunteers to build and burn "The Temple of Time." The structure was one of five temporary art installations designed to help the Parkland community heal from gun violence.

Projects such as these showcase the power of art to unite communities — not just the ones in Black Rock City. Out in the world, Burning Man art and artists — Caveat Magister, *Out of the Dust, Into the World* makes so much sense to be knowledge-sharing with municipalities and vice versa. The cities of the future just might depend on it.

And in Paris, Roger's "The power of Burning Man to their cities. In 2019 Steven Raspa, our Associate Director of Community Events, shared insights on urban prototyping and nurturing culture in Paris, Berlin, and Amsterdam, and was part of a learning expedition between the cities of Oakland, California, and Saint-Denis, France, in association with California Humanities and the French Consulate.

Our ephemeral city requires constant interaction, collaboration, and continual effort — with resulting rewards. It makes a much richer place to live when knowledge-sharing and research involve place. The value of the lessons you might Georgia

leaders gather around the world

The sixth annual Burning Man European Leadership Summit (ELS) descended upon Aarhus, Denmark, in April. More than 200 participants from across the European Burner community, plus Israel and South Africa, gathered with Burning Man Project staff to share their experiences, hard-won expertise, inspirations, and challenges. The summit fed into a day-long, free and open-to-the-public program called "Radical City: Dreamers, Makers and Doers." Hosted by Dokk1, a world-renowned public library, the workshops helped participants hone their design-thinking skills, see how gifting can impact local culture, and generally create the kind of environment where city dwellers want to connect with each other.

An emphasis on co-learning percolated across the Regional Network in 2019, with leadership gatherings in Atlanta, the program and bringing back knowledge to 18 communities.

The organic growth of these education and training initiatives is a stunning display of the global cultural movement that has emerged from the Nevada event. We hope to support and shine a spotlight on future distributed leadership gatherings, the program and bringing back knowledge to 18 communities.

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**DURING 2019**

The Regional Network of 50 Volunteer METAs in 32 Countries at 47 New Regional Events
“The experience was intensely positive and life-changing for all involved and many new writing projects were launched during the weekend.”

YODASSE WILLIAMS, Writer and Storyteller
“Creativity to me is the core and essence of humanity. I love how Burning Man helps keep creative minds and art alive and expanding, in and outside of Black Rock City.”

– Burning Man Project Donor Mikaela von Glehn-Lindquist, Oslo, Norway

“Off the playa, Burning Man has over the last decade become a major influencer of popular culture, design, music and even business.”


Art: The Wheels of Zoroaster Resurrection | Artist: Anton Viditz-Ward | Photo: Debbie Wolff
Art: HYBYCOZO, Golden Spike | Artist: Yelena Filipchuk and Serge Beaulieu | Photo: Jeff Song.
GIFTS AND GRATITUDE: The vitality of Burning Man culture is made possible, in part, through gifting. Our community’s generosity is extraordinary and is expressed in so many ways. We are grateful for all of the creators, volunteers, organizers, participants, and donors who support our programs both on- and off-playa. Thank you for your investments and confidence in our organization.

SHARMA HENDEL, Donor

“There exists in this world a perfect intersection of community, art, volunteerism, and playfulness where the whole is so much greater than the sum of the parts. For me, that is Burning Man. Being a part of this community means so much more than just showing up. It means finding your superpowers and gifting them to people who you might never know but whose lives you may very well change forever. I donate to Burning Man Project so I can help artists being their gift of creativity to the playa and hopefully to the world.”

CHERYL BART, Artumnal Host Committee member

“Burning Man has and continues to enrich my life in every aspect and I am honoured to complete the circle and give back.”

RAHAPÈLLE SOLOMON, Donor

“Burning Man is a magical place called freedom. A place where you meet incredible people, discover very talented artists, ride a bike while watching the most stunning sunrise, and sometimes I tell myself, ‘Was it just a dream?’ Well, I will go back just to dream a little bit more. This is why I donate to Burning Man Project.”

MADELYN YEUNG, Chair, Artumnal Gathering Host Committee

“The Artumnal Gathering attracts a global, multigenerational, and diverse collective of artists, contributors, and luminaries to gather in support of the Burning Man Project and its vital programs. This annual celebration strengthens bonds, among community members to inspire generosity — to include others — has great positive impact extending far beyond the weekend when it is hosted.”

In November, Burning Man Project cordially invited guests to engage in an adventure of the imagination at the 2019 edition of our Artumnal Gathering Dinner and Auction. The annual celebration of American hospitality, pierced by collaborations with the Pink Mammoth theme camp.

The weekend events raised $515,000 in support of Burning Man Project’s Art and Civic Engagement programs, including Honoraria Art Grants, Art Support Services, Civic Arts, Global Art Grants, the Regional Network, and art and community of Black Rock City.

We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to everyone who supported Artumnal Gathering — including the artists, volunteers, auction donors, Host Committee, Auction Committee, and performers. It was joy to celebrate stories both real and imagined, and as Black Rock City gathered again in 2020!

CHERYL BART, Artumnal Host Committee member

“Burning Man has and continues to enrich my life in every aspect and I am honored to complete the circle and give back.”

It’s huge commitment for Australians to travel all the way to San Francisco to participate in the Artumnal Gathering Dinner and Auction. Artumnal Host Committee member Cheryl Bart said her co-conspirator Paul Meredith were so eager to replicate the experience down under, they launched a grassroots Artumnal fundraiser in Sydney, Australia. Hosted in Sydney Harbor on November 6, Australia Artumnal featured an art auction, DJs, and a crew of generous Australian Burners.
As we continue to fulfill our mission as a nonprofit, we’d like to acknowledge the following supporters who donated $100 or more in 2019.
Financial Highlights

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities
- Accounts payable and accrued expenses: $3,576,293
- Deferred rent - current portion: $33,076
- Total current liabilities: $3,609,369

Other Liabilities
- Deferred rent: $370,957
- Total other liabilities: $370,957

Net Assets
- Unrestricted: $26,073,042
- Temporarily restricted: $276,525
- Total Net Assets: $26,349,567

Total liabilities and net assets: $30,329,893

Assets

Current Assets
- Cash and cash equivalents: $14,542,883
- Accounts receivable: $246,331
- Refunds receivable: $272,760
- Other receivable: $26,862
- Pledges receivable - current portion: $170,000
- Inventory: $30,950
- Prepaid expenses: $251,944
- Total current assets: $15,541,730

Property and Equipment - net: $9,833,367

Other Assets
- Investments: $150,000
- Deposits: $173,733
- Pledges receivable: $100,000
- Goodwill: $4,231,063
- Trademarks: $300,000
- Total other assets: $4,954,796

Total assets: $30,329,893

Consolidated Statement of Activities for the period January 1 - December 31, 2018

Revenues and Support
- Unrestricted: $46,217,123
- Temporarily restricted: $1,527,863
- Total: $47,744,986

Net assets released from restrictions: $1,348,940

Total revenues and support: $47,566,063

Expenditures
- Program expenses: $35,770,391
- Management and general: $8,465,102
- Fundraising: $909,214
- Total expenditures: $45,144,707

Change in Net Assets: $2,421,356

Net assets - Beginning of year: $23,651,686
- Net assets - End of year: $26,073,042

Please note: The data included here in our 2019 Annual Report is our most recent fully audited data, which is from 2018. We encourage readers to return to our website in fall 2020, when we will publish financial information for the 2019 fiscal year.

Grants provided by Burning Man Project increased by about $528,970, from $1,690,078 in 2017 to $2,219,048 in 2018. That brought the total to $7,759,436 since the transition to a nonprofit was completed in 2014.

These grants help support artists bringing art to the Burning Man event in Nevada and to other locations around the world, and support projects like Burners Without Borders civic ignition grants.
Board of Directors

“Burning Man is an example of a harmonious world where people are connecting deeply to themselves and those around them. It’s what humanity needs now, more than ever.” — Burning Man Project Board Member Nushin Sabet

Larry Harvey
Burning Man Founder Board Member Emeritus
1948–2018

Board of Directors

“Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting itself equals a return or an exchange for something of equal value.”

Decommodification

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

Radical Self-expression arises from the nature of the individual. No one other than the individual is a collaborating group member or by contract. It is offered as a gift to others. To this end, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

10 Principles

“We think Burning Man has great application to the world, but a larger iteration can only occur as people incorporate the essential ethos of it. The 10 Principles are meant to describe that ethos, that way of life; and then, by their own inspiration and by collaboration with others in the everyday world, people will find applications that are as various as the many gifts they bring to it.” — Larry Harvey

Radical Inclusion

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

Gifting

Commutal Effort

Our community values creative inspiration and collaboration. We welcome to participate, inspire and contribute to the life of our creative, collaborative, and participatory community.

Civic Responsibility

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 create, inspire, and design to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

Immediate

Immortal experience is, in many ways, the most important lesson of our culture. We seek to promote habits that lead to and resonation of immediate access, the ability of those involved in participation to experience and interact with a natural world exceeding human senses. No idea can substitute for this experience.

Larry Harvey
Burning Man Founder Board Member Emeritus
1948–2018

Chip Conley
Crimson Rose

Marian Goodell

Angela Rose

David R. Wallace

Brenni M. Benitez

Ray S. Foddy

Forhad Mote

Harley K. Dukes

Jennifer Renzi

Key Morrison

Lisa Villanueva

Martin Goodell

Matt Goldberg

Matthew "Chef" Kitchens

Matthew Marvin

Michael Miklo

Mike Farah

Nisah Hahn

Ping Fu

Toby Gym

Will Roger

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Gifting

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting itself equals a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

Decommodification

To enable radical self-expression, 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 anywhere 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 nature of the individual. No one other than the individual is a collaborating group member or by contract. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE WORLDWIDE BURNING MAN COMMUNITY.

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

LEARN: burningman.org

VOLUNTEER: burningman.org/volunteer

DONATE: donate.burningman.org

Artist & Photographer credits:
We're grateful for the photographers and artists whose work brings the story of Burning Man to life in the pages of this report. We have noted the artist and photographer on each photo where available.

Content: Burning Man Communications Team | Design: Tanner Boeger