



2025

# IMPACT REPORT



URBAN COMMUNITY  
ARTS NETWORK

CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY, CAREERS





## Our Mission

Urban Community Arts Network fosters Madison's urban culture through mentorship, education, advocacy and creating equitable and inclusive spaces where creativity thrives.

## Creating Space

Mad Lit is a free event series featuring live music. We highlight local musicians, visual artists and small business owners who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

[www.ucanmadison.org/madlit](http://www.ucanmadison.org/madlit)

### *Vendor View*

Jodie Pope, Ivy Up Creations  
2025 Mad Lit Event Series

**"No where in Dane County are you given a stipend for vending, plus have the amount of foot traffic that support your sales, in such a beautiful atmosphere. For an emerging artist, this was a wonderful vending experience."**



## Participants

We invited **64** musicians, vendors and visual artists of color to State Street. **38** participants were new to the Mad Lit Event Series, and **4** participating musicians joined us from Milwaukee and Chicago!

# 64

**TOTAL**  
participants

# 38

**NEW**  
participants

# 4

**REGIONAL**  
participants





## Better Together

Thanks to the support of our sponsors, we were able to continue dedicating  $\frac{1}{3}$  of our budget to paying performers and vendors. Stage and sound remains our highest expense.

Honoring sponsor contributions, we featured logos on our event based promotional materials, website and day-of event signage.

Helping relate our mission to the values of our sponsors, our promotional graphics and reels on social media received:

**79K**

**REACH**

↑ 41.76%

**279K**

**IMPRESSIONS**

↑ 59.28%

**29K**

**ENGAGEMENTS**

↑ 545%

### Individual Donors

Thank you for contributing to the success of Mad Lit's fifth year anniversary!

**\$3.4K**

Raised by Christopher, Jacquelyn, Courtney, Adam, Lina, Christine, Nick, Jose, Kyle, Eva, Todd and an anonymous donor.



## Mad Lit's Growing Audience

Your support allowed us to include **4** regional musicians as part of the Mad Lit Event Series, leading to an increase of web visitors from all over the region, highlighting our growth as an event series worth traveling for.

**4.5K+** web visitors<sup>1</sup>

**56.6%** Statewide

**27.1%** Regional<sup>1</sup>

**16.2%** National

### Top Cities

1. Chicago
2. Milwaukee
3. Minneapolis

1) Visits to [www.ucanmadison.org/madlit](http://www.ucanmadison.org/madlit)

*Public Comment*

City of Madison  
Finance Committee Meeting  
April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

64

Registered in support of increasing  
Mad Lit's Economic Development  
funding allocation in 2025.



# G Stylez

*"The Mad Lit series is really a blessing to all creatives. Not only to the performers but for the audience. Many people who might not be able to pay to see their family or close friend perform are able to gather, watch and celebrate together."*

**2025 Mad Lit Event Series Musician**



# Bliz Gee

*"Mad Lit is a dope event. It's a great platform. It's a vibe that brings the city out."*

**2025 Mad Lit Event Series Musician**





## Mad Lit's Growing Audience

Combining our social media, web, newsletter and print advertising efforts for 4 events\*, we saw:

**12,000 +  
IN ATTENDANCE!**

\*One event was cancelled due to inclement weather.



Black and Brown residents make up about 80% of our audience, attending with friends and family. We see our crowd dancing with their partners while browsing vendors, their children joining the fun and the young adults in between absorbing the sounds and colorful representation of Madison's up and coming creatives.

*Public Comment*  
Hedi LaMarr Photography  
2021-25 Mad Lit Event Series

"When I take photos at Mad Lit, I often tell folks that while I am taking photos in the dark, it doesn't matter because the light from within the folks in attendance shines so bright that my photos are able to still tell a colorful story"



## Paquita Purcell

Blessed Divine  
CREATIONS

*"Mad Lit has been a cornerstone of growth and community connection for Blessed Divine Creations since we first participated in 2021. Every year, it has given us the opportunity to share our custom gifts and products with new audiences who value supporting small, locally owned businesses.*

*Beyond sales, Mad Lit has helped us build real relationships – people who discovered us there have become long-term customers, collaborators, and supporters. The atmosphere is always welcoming, uplifting, and rooted in cultural pride, which aligns beautifully with our mission as a Black-owned business. Mad Lit continues to be one of the most impactful community events we participate in, both for our business and for the people we serve."*

**2025 Mad Lit Event Series Vendor**





*Rob Dz*  
Co-President of Urban Community Arts Network

# It's for the culture.

*"creating better understanding for everyone, to be able to see their stories, interact and have conversations based upon that."*

 **8 O'Clock Buzz**

Jason Joyce, WORT 89.9FM  
May 2025

 **"Mad Lit event series turns 5: popular summer concert series creates space where underrepresented artists can thrive"**  
David Dahmer, Madison365  
April 2025

*Dr. Karen Reece*  
Co-President of Urban Community Arts Network

## a tangible way to combat long-standing stereotypes

*"The ultimate goal is for the general public to see hip-hop happening, to hear the music, to see people interacting and experience that. Ultimately that's what changes stigma."*

 **"How hip-hop has grown in Madison in the face of opposition"**

Jonás Tijerino, The Cap Times  
August 2025



[www.ucanmadison.org/madlit](http://www.ucanmadison.org/madlit)





# What's Next?

Working to achieve racial equity in local arts and culture isn't optional. It's urgent.

UCAN will always prioritize work for the culture that is accessible and community-led.

We stay committed even when alignment gets uncomfortable, and your support sustains the work when others step away.

## In 2026, UCAN will continue to:

- Strengthen community-rooted arts infrastructure in Madison
- Create pathways for youth and emerging artists
- Expand education-based and career building programming
- Build a sustainable future for Mad Lit and UCAN.

# SUPPORT UCAN, DONATE TODAY!

[www.ucanmadison.org/donate](http://www.ucanmadison.org/donate)

