

NINA MOINI: Northeast Minneapolis beloved Art-A-Whirl is this weekend. For more than 30 years, painters, printers, sculptors, jewelry makers, glass blowers, and more have flung open the doors of their studios and invited guests to check out how they make their art, to buy their art, and even to make art of their own. But there's another side of the weekend, too, that's been growing larger and larger since the festival began in 1995.

It's the live music. The venues and schedules are absolutely stacked this weekend with bands out to show their stuff. So here to help us parse through the thick lineup is local music expert, our own Diane Miller. She's the host of the local show on The Current. Welcome to the studio and to the third floor, Diane.

DIANE MILLER: It's good to be here on the third floor, just below us.

NINA MOINI: From the fourth floor. I always say if anybody from The Current joins us, we feel cooler here on our floor. So thank you for keeping us cool. Tell me a little bit about the background of music at Art-A-Whirl. I think a lot of people, maybe if they're not from the area or if they've never been, think it's just strictly art. But music is so vital.

DIANE MILLER: Oh, my goodness. Music is absolutely vital. And it's from what I know, it's a growing piece. That it started as more of an art studio thing. And now more and more and more locations are hosting live music, including, the distilleries, the breweries, but then also art buildings themselves. Metal studios are hosting live music. It's just a way of adding livelihood.

NINA MOINI: Yeah.

DIANE MILLER: And plus, our music scene is so incredible and it's so active, so why not incorporate live music? But yeah, it's like one giant music festival going around to different locations.

NINA MOINI: Amazing. Well, yeah. And why not? Do you think it's really coveted to get a spot at Art-A-Whirl? Do you think it's grown in that capacity over the years?

DIANE MILLER: It's interesting because, yeah, it is coveted because you for one, are going to be playing in front of hundreds and hundreds of people.

NINA MOINI: Yeah.

DIANE MILLER: And you can be a DIY artist that has released just a few songs, or you could be a top local artist--

NINA MOINI: Sure.

DIANE MILLER: --and be playing at some of the bigger lineups. So depending on the location, some locations are a little more coveted than others because the lineups are so strong. But to be even a DIY artist playing at some of these more smaller locations is really fun too.

NINA MOINI: Yeah, what a great way to just expose the craft to more people who are walking by. And what's so great is that you hosted a whole radio show on the music just that's going to be featured at Art-A-Whirl. So much is going on. So I know you really dove in and you've picked a few favorites for us. And so this one is called "Tough Call" by Dessa, who, of course, is very well known, a state treasure. Let's take a listen.

[DESSA, "TOUGH CALL"] C'est la vie to mon chéri

If you run that French tip

Don't say it lightly

I'm saying it out of friendship

Life will mess you up, but love

You can't hold that against it

I guess we're even

Call it even

They say to suffer is a virtue

But sometimes pain just hurts

You call it even

Ah, don't believe 'em

Sometimes you're rung by the bell curve

NINA MOINI: What made you pick this one, Diane?

DIANE MILLER: She, like you said, she's a local treasure. And so to be bopping around, I want to say that she's playing at Earl Giles studio. And that's going to be one of the most congested areas of Art-A-Whirl. That whole Logan Park area where indeed, where Bauhaus, that area is just--

NINA MOINI: Breweries.

DIANE MILLER: Yes, and she's playing on Friday night, which is going to be a busier night too. But Saturday is a really busy day. But to be just walking around and being able to just pop in and see Dessa performing at a distillery, I think is really, really something.

Yeah, and of course she's such a treasure. She's not only compelling to watch, but she's so compelling to listen to. She's such a linguist and an intellect, and then on top of that, a creative, fun artist. So it's just really special to see. Oh, Dessa!

NINA MOINI: Oh and Dessa's here.

DIANE MILLER: Oh, here she is.

NINA MOINI: Here's Dessa, as I'm buying up something for my bathroom wall, or whatever.

DIANE MILLER: Exactly.

NINA MOINI: All right, let's move to the next song here you picked it's called "Big" by boyish. Let's listen.

[BOYISH, "BIG"]

My lips you neck skin sweating

I'm holding your body so tight that we might be

Closer than this give me something

Through all the frustration I want to be patient like you

Thought I could see you inside of--

NINA MOINI: I really liked that. OK, as I mentioned to you off the air, Diane, I'm super uncool and listening to the same music I did when I was 16. So I don't know this band. Tell us about them and just the significance to the music scene here.

DIANE MILLER: Sure Boyish are a band, an indie rock dream pop band, as you can hear, very modern sound right now that is really hip and trending right now. And they're actually based in Brooklyn and here. So Claire Altendahl grew up here in Minnesota, and met their partner, the one other half of Boyish, India Shore, at music school in Berkeley. And then they created this incredible project and are playing at Indeed's Whirlygig on Friday night. They're the headliner for Friday night.

And I want to say that Indeed Whirlygig is consistently one of my favorite lineups every year. So if you're a fan of really creative, cutting-edge local music, Indeed has a fantastic lineup every year. And they're going on all three days so you can catch music there Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, including Papa Mbye, one of my favorite local artists is playing Saturday night.

NINA MOINI: That's a good tip. Thank you. Because people will know, based on your recommendations, where they want to go, because it's going to be probably pretty busy over there too, so good to plan ahead.

DIANE MILLER: Yes, that area is really busy. Yep.

NINA MOINI: Yeah. OK, so another one of your cool pics here, "Battle Ready" by Obi Original, featuring Black Market Brass. Let's take a listen.

[OBI ORIGINAL, "BATTLE READY"]

Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey. All right.

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Hey-hey hey-hey

Hey hey hey

All right. Give it to me.

All right, all right, all right, all right, all right.

NINA MOINI: This is a different vibe than the last one. I love the range that you're showing us. Just like you said, of just how coveted it is to be here and what people can experience on different levels. Where can people see Black Market Brass and Obi Original.

DIANE MILLER: So it's going to be Obi Original. That track features Black Market Brass, but Obi Original is going to be playing with the Black Atlantics.

NINA MOINI: Oh, OK.

DIANE MILLER: But Obi Original, oh my gosh. You're right. The range of Minnesota Music is so huge. And so I definitely wasn't intentional about choosing a wide range, but OB Original was one of my favorite live artists to see. He's so full of energy. He's the ultimate hype man. And if you want to move, if you want to groove, you've got to go to Bauhaus on Saturday night. He's the headliner for Bauhaus Brewing Company, which it's perfect. He's got a huge sound. So Bauhaus has got a huge stage and a big old parking lot to move and groove. And so, definitely another coveted space to check out live music.

NINA MOINI: More good tips. I love it. I want to get to the last song that you chose here for us, "Open Your Heart," by Adam Bohanan.

[ADAM BOHANAN, "OPEN YOUR HEART"] Before and when you came in

You made me believe that there could have been more

The walls were high to climb

And it wasn't worth my time

But you made me feel like I'm in good hands

Like I am insured

Just open your heart to me

NINA MOINI: I like this. I feel like this is where I would go if I had to pick from the different vibes. I really like that. Tell us about this artist and where folks can see him.

DIANE MILLER: So yeah, feel good music and he's playing on a Sunday afternoon. So like a little bit more chill vibe but R&B smooth, he was also a semifinalist on Season 26 of *The Voice*. He was on Team Reba.

NINA MOINI: Oh, nice. OK.

DIANE MILLER: So fantastic songwriter and singer, and you can catch him at Pryes Brewing Company on Sunday. Yeah.

NINA MOINI: OK, Diane, I really appreciate you coming by and sharing your music, and your insights, and your insider tips here. Tell us if there's anyone else you're excited to check out this weekend.

DIANE MILLER: Oh my gosh. You can go to Edison High School and catch Nur-D. You can go to Sociable Cider Werks, check out Kiss the Tiger, a local favorite. Twin Ignition Startup Garage, Elias Metal Studio also both have really stacked lineups for great local music, so I'd recommend checking out those spots. Otherwise, visit the thecurrent.org. We've got an entire list of all the areas you can check out.

NINA MOINI: Everything you need to know, Diane's got you covered. Thanks so much for being here.

Pleasure