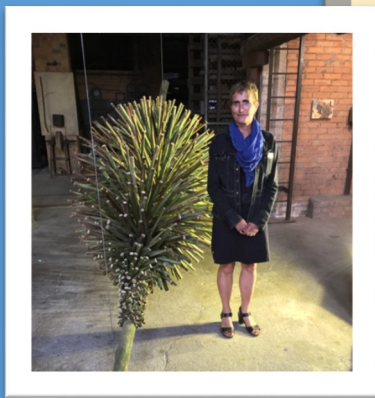
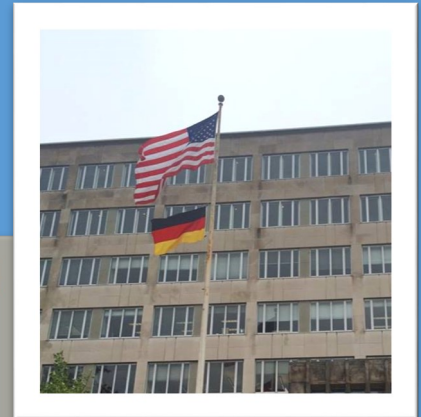
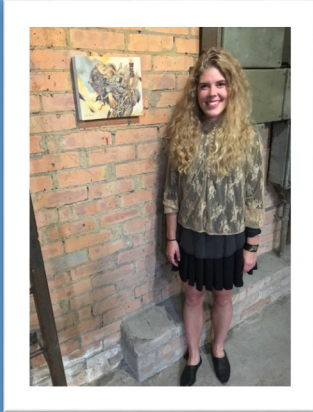




KASSEL-DANE

Sister County Partnership

Established 2007



Dane County, WI and Landkreis Kassel, Germany Partnership

In 2007 Dane County entered into a cooperative agreement with Landkreis Kassel (Kassel County), Germany to form a sister county relationship. The purpose of the agreement is to exchange ideas and build economic partnerships regarding:

- Renewable energy and climate change mitigation
- Cultural exchanges
- Regional transportation systems



“Birds of Memory”, Angelica Contreras, 2022 EUARCA+ arts camp



Dane County Regional Airport Solar Array
Photo Credit: Steve Salt, Madison Gas & Electric



Landkreis Kassel RegioTram



Landkreis Kassel, Germany

Landkreis Kassel, with a population of approximately 236,000, has a regional transport system and is home to both the University of Kassel and the Institute for Solar Energy Technologies. The area hosts a technology-based economy, particularly traffic logistics and renewable energy. Its main industries are systems technology for photovoltaics, the manufacturers of train engines, and automotive factories for Volkswagen and Daimler-Chrysler.

In the last 16 years, both Landkreis Kassel and Dane Counties have remained committed to the goals that were set forth in the 2007 cooperative agreement as demonstrated by many exchanges over the years. This timeline highlights those activities.



Commemorating German Unification Day and German-American Friendship Day by flying the German Flag outside of the City-County Building, October 2020.

2007

A delegation from Dane County went to Landkreis Kassel to experience and learn about Landkreis Kassel's commuter rail infrastructure, solar energy initiatives, and the international *documenta* art festival.



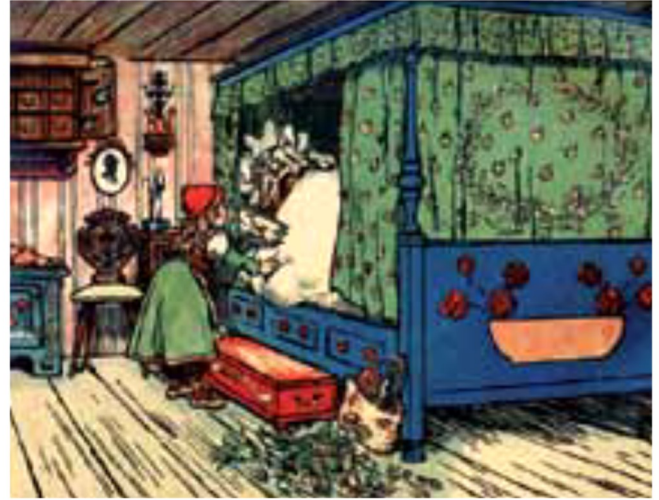
Dane County Delegation to Landkreis Kassel. From left: Dane County Board Supervisor Chuck Erickson (Madison), Dane County Board Chair Scott McDonell (Madison), Landkreis Kassel Executive Uwe Schmidt, Dane County Board Supervisor Mark Opitz (Middleton) and Dane County Supervisor Donna Vogel (Stoughton)

2008

Representatives from Landkreis Kassel came to Dane County to discuss water resource management, visit agri-businesses, tour an organic farm, and attend a performance and a Madison Mallards baseball game.

2010

Landkreis Kassel's Fine Arts curator and local officials brought a Brothers Grimm themed exhibition, "Once Upon a Time..." to the Dane County Regional Airport Terminal. On display for the first time in North America, it also represents the start of the Kassel-Dane visual cultural exchange. Copies of the artwork remain on display in the Office of the Dane County Board of Supervisors.



2012

Launched in 1955 to reintroduce Germans to the international cultural scene following World War II, *documenta* is now the world's largest modern art presentation and is held every five years. In part, this festival was created to demonstrate to the world that Germany had extinguished its Nazi ties by focusing on modern art, which had been suppressed under Nazi domination.



Michael Velliquette
Photo credit to Devin Lunsford



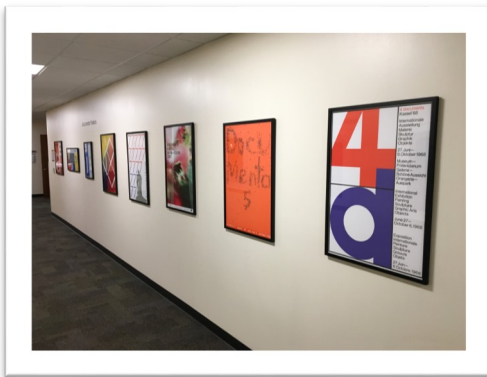
"Power Structure"
Photo courtesy of Michael Velliquette

Artist Michael Velliquette was the first artist selected to represent Dane County at *documenta*. His project, entitled *Power Structure*, was a 12-foot-tall mixed-media sculpture, examining power and responsibility in the built form.

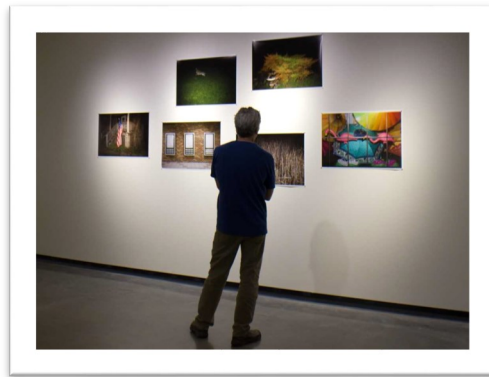
2014

In June, Dane County welcomed Landkreis Kassel photographer Christian Schauderna as an Artist-In-Residence at Edgewood College. The Kassel-Dane Task Force selected the theme “Technology and Art” for this project.

Schauderna created new works in the Edgewood College Gallery, which were given jointly to Edgewood College and Dane County. His three photos elevate the banal objects of his daily surroundings into formal still lifes. In addition to Schauderna’s photographs, Landkreis Kassel donated a complete set of *documenta* posters from 1955-2012 to Edgewood College.



documenta poster exhibit, Edgewood College, Madison, Wisconsin



View of the Edgewood College Gallery, The Stream



Christian Schauderna

2015

During the summer of 2015, a Dane County chamber music ensemble, *con vivo!*, traveled to Landkreis Kassel to participate in the Kultursommer NordHessen Arts Festival, then performed other concerts in the Landkreis Kassel area.



con vivo!, chamber music ensemble from Madison and Dane County



con vivo! in Wolfhagen, Landkreis Kassel

2016

The Edgar Knecht Trio made its first visit to Dane County in October of 2016, performing three concerts, including performances with the chamber music group *con vivo!* and the Madison College Big Band. Members include Edgar Knecht, Rolf Denecke, and Toby Schulte.



The Edgar Knecht Trio performed with the Madison College Big Band at the Mitby Theatre, Madison College Truax Campus



The Edgar Knecht Trio in front of the men's clothing store Jazzman, State Street, Madison

2017

In August of 2017, Dane County artists Brenda Baker and Jennika Bastian attended *documenta 14* in Landkreis Kassel and participated in the EUARCA+ arts camp in Kaufungen. Dane County celebrated *documenta 14* by featuring the only known complete collection of advertising posters from the storied German art show.

In June, the Madison College Big Band performed in Landkreis Kassel with the Edgar Knecht Trio in Rüsselsheim (in Hessen, Wisconsin's sister state in Germany) and in the Bergpark Wilhelmshöhe in the city of Kassel.



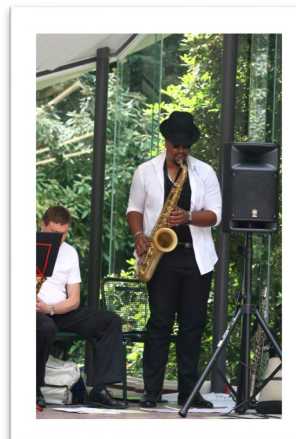
Jennika Bastian paints about fairy tales, a fitting theme in the land of fairytales and origin of the Brothers Grimm, EUARCA+



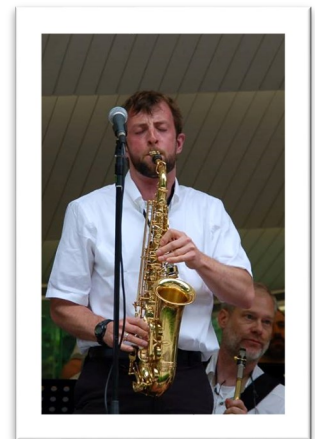
Brenda Baker and her sculpture made with Kassel's most invasive plant species, Japanese Knotwood, at EUARCA + 2017



Lo Marie



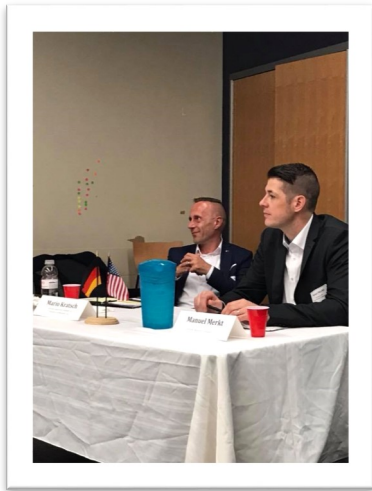
Mandell Mathis



Matt Covert

2018

In May, Kassel-Dane hosted a business and networking event discussing the benefits of German style apprenticeship programs. The event included a presentation by speaker Mario Kratsch, Vice President of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest and head of the Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training Apprenticeship Program, Germany's leading international training program for manufacturing companies. Manuel Merkt, president and COO of Hermle Machine Company and one of their apprentices discussed their experiences.



Mario Kratsch and Manuel Merkt



Mario Kratsch, Vice President of the German American Chamber of Commerce, presents.

In August, Dane County musicians from the Ancora String Quartet went on their first overseas tour to Germany and performed at various venues, including in Landkreis Kassel. Like Dane County, Landkreis Kassel is a place with a vibrant arts community and a passion for classical music.



The Ancora String Quartet and mezzo-soprano Melinda Paulsen in Germany

2019

In September, the Edgar Knecht Trio returned to Dane County. During their visit, the Trio's leader Edgar Knecht, displayed his virtuosity on the piano, blending Teutonic folk songs, jazz, and world music, reviving a seemingly lost musical tradition. While here, they spoke to students at Stoughton and Oregon High Schools, performed at the Stoughton Opera House, with the Madison College Big Band, and with local chamber music group *con vivo!*



Drummer Toby Schulte



Roe Parker and Charles James



Sun Prairie High School clinic with student jazz musicians

2022

Over many years, Landkreis Kassel has invited artists from its many international sister jurisdictions to participate in residencies, creating temporary public artworks during *documenta*. In August of 2022, Dane County artists Angelica Contreras and Helen Hawley attended *documenta* 15 and participated in the EUARCA+ arts camp located in the city of Sensenstein.



Helen Hawley found inspiration for her work in the natural beauty of Landkreis Kassel



Participants of EUARCA+ 2022



Angelica Contreras displays a painting she completed during the arts camp

Interviews with EUARCA+ 2022 artists Helen Hawley and Angelica Contreras:

What is your professional background?

Hawley: I have a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and my practice is multidisciplinary, involving sculptures, paintings, and visual texts. I have supported myself by working as a studio assistant and short-term teaching appointments at various colleges and universities.

Contreras: I studied visual arts in Mexico at the University of Guadalajara and later completed a masters degree in art education at the same university. I paint mostly mixed media with themes of identity, tradition, and popular culture. I've shown my work in exhibitions both in Mexico and the U.S.. I currently live in Madison where I continue to create and showcase my art.

How did EUARCA+22 and *documenta 15* influence/contribute towards your professional/personal/artistic life?

Hawley: Although the projects we produced stayed in Kassel, the influence on the work I have created since has been invaluable. I was inspired by construction methods I saw involving cardboard and ideas about sound and installation. I keep in touch with the artists, and the experience lives on in surprising ways.

Contreras: Euarca+22 brings artists from different parts of the world that have different points of views and work in work in diverse media, so it will be a great opportunity to research and reflect on the type of work I want to create in the future. As artists we tend to isolate ourselves, so this experience has allowed me to open myself to new mediums and languages and overall to the possibilities of art and its importance as a social and communal practice.

How have you shared this experience with others since returning?

Hawley: I would like others to know how vital travel opportunities and cultural exchanges are to artists. Not only do they make us really happy, but they are opportunities to converse with a global community. Feeling that I am a part of something bigger helps me approach my work both more seriously and joyfully.

Contreras: I was very excited to be invited as a guest artist speaker at the elementary school I work at. I made a small presentation about my work and included some slides about EUARCA+22. I explained what artists do, what inspires us, our process, etc. The children were very curious and asked many questions about my trip to Kassel. My intent is to further share my work and process with the community, so they understand the importance and possibilities that the arts can bring to their lives.

The Kassel-Dane Sister County Partnership Timeline is dedicated to Marika Fischer-Hoyt, a member of the Madison Symphony Orchestra and co-founder of the Ancora String Quartet who visited Landkreis Kassel in 2018.

Her music lives on in our hearts and memories.

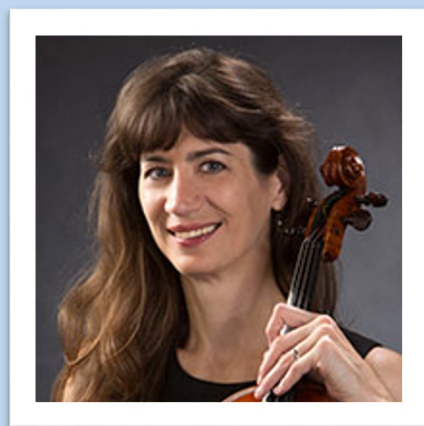


Photo courtesy of Ancora String Quartet
<https://ancoraquartet.com/about-us/>

2023

In June, following multiple cultural exchanges with Landkreis Kassel over the course of 15 years, a delegation including County Board Chair Patrick Miles, Supervisors Castillo, Erickson, and Pellebon, and County Clerk Scott McDonnell traveled to Landkreis Kassel. The delegation was also joined by Charles James, long time member of the Kassel-Dane Sister County Task Force. They met with local officials and business leaders to discuss commonalities and collaboration opportunities related to economic development, renewable energy, and climate change, as well as to strengthen the sister county partnership.



The 2023 delegation met with officials from SMA Solar Technologies, SERA Hydrogen Technologies, Wirtschaftsförderung (WFG) Kassel, the State Sports Association, and the Landkreis Kassel Government and noted multiple salient points and next steps to act on, such as:

- Dane County should explore federal subsidies from the Inflation Reduction Act for transportation and renewable energy infrastructure, and may be able to coordinate with US offices of SMA Solar.
- Connect artistic contacts from Dane County and Landkreis Kassel, and have artists visit to do training, performances, and work with students. Coordinate Madison College Big Band going to Landkreis Kassel in 2024.
- The delegation visited a refugee camp, and alternatively to what is depicted in the media in the U.S., in Landkreis Kassel, what it means is a good community with permanent housing, a pathway to citizenship if available, medical care, case management, education, and food security.

For more information about the Dane County—Kassel Sister County partnership,

please contact the Office of the Dane County Board of Supervisors (608) 266-5758 or visit our webpage at

<https://board.countyofdane.com/board-initiatives/sister-county/Kassel-Dane-Sister-County-Partnership>

