



Adam Swanson Artist Statement

Through much of 2019 I have been commissioned to paint murals for in- and out-door spaces around Minnesota. These projects began in consultation with community members and committees to find cohesive imagery that engages local neighborhoods and visitors. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to respond to the John Norton mural about Industry at the Ramsey County Courthouse. I grew up in Ramsey County and this has been an important opportunity to share my research on Minnesota's history in order to re-interpret the John Norton murals (1931-32) and connect with the state's Native American and environmental activist communities.

As a member of the Twin Ports Art-Science Collaborative for the past five years, I have worked with local researchers studying a variety of fields. From taking water samples on the Mississippi River to touring the SPRUCE climate change project in Grand Rapids, my membership in this collaborative has given me a rare glimpse into the wealth of important data researchers are gathering about our local environment. I am also a member of Duluth For Clean Water, an all-volunteer 501c4 organization seeking a healthy future for the St. Louis River and Lake Superior watershed. I was also fortunate to spend significant time at the Standing Rock protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline, listening.

The goal of my painting is to celebrate my heroes and friends who are working for the future health of Minnesota. I included current industries that will carry Saint Paul and the rest of Minnesota into a sustainable tomorrow. Now, more than ever, Minnesotans are acutely concerned about our relationship with industry, water, and the environment. I want to inspire new thoughts about our actions on the Mississippi River and surrounding areas. Saint Paul is a leader in the state and country with a dynamic relationship to the Mississippi River. By learning about and sharing our culture and knowledge through thoughtful paintings, we are taking advantage of an important time to acknowledge our changing, and soon to be irreversible, relationship to the land, water, and animals that make our area so special.

For more information on the Ramsey County Courthouse/St. Paul City Hall Council Chamber Art Project, full artists' statements and more, see <https://www.rchs.com/news/chamber-art/>

