

## **BLINK makes you think: BLINK Temporary Art**

BLINK Temporary Art is one of thirty-five social innovations that has made the 2015 M List

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**Karin Wolf**

*BLINK Temporary Public Art*

“Visionary” and “unexpected” are words to describe the ideas behind many BLINK projects. BLINK is a temporary art endeavor by the Madison Arts Commission in which artists pitch their visions for publicly accessible spaces.

In addition to providing professional development and a public arena for artists, the project also opens the door to show Madisonians the possibility for art in certain spaces. With projects lasting no longer than a year, some artists address problems in very forward-thinking ways. “We market BLINK differently than regular commission projects—we want to keep that element of surprise and have people stumble upon them,” says Karin Wolf, administrator for the program. BLINK projects are diverse, with some artists choosing to create quiet projects while others create completely interactive works in which the piece relies on the response of viewers.

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### **What is social innovation?**

According to Stanford University’s Social Innovation Review, social innovation is a “novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable or just than existing solutions” and benefits primarily society as a whole rather than private individuals.

It includes these elements:

- Increasing employment, productivity and economic growth
- Justice, fairness, environmental preservation, improved health, arts and culture and better education

A social innovation:

- Can be a product, production process or technology (much like innovation in general), but it can also be a principle, an idea, a piece of legislation, a social movement, an intervention or some combination of them.
- Recognizes the fundamental role of cross-sector dynamics: exchanging ideas and values, shifting roles and relationships and blending public, philanthropic and private resources. Innovation blossoms where the sectors converge.
- Can’t be understood, let alone solved, without involving the nonprofit, public and private sectors.

### **The M List**

[Madison Magazine’s M List](#) is a who’s who of organizations and individuals who are having an impact on our local culture and economy. In its third year, the M List recognizes those making strides in the area of social innovation. Last year’s list of innovators were in the food industry. The [original M List](#), in 2013, honored the technology sector. [The 2014 M List](#) honored "Foodtastic" entrepreneurs and innovators.