

**ELEKTRA**  
Engineered Artworks



## CREATING ART FOR BURNING MAN

Everyone loves art, but creating it is a whole other story. With many years of experience engineering large-scale artwork, we have created a list of helpful tips for those of you that have the urge to create but don't know where to start.

**rbhu** | engineering imagination

**CONTACT**  
**INFO@RBHU.ORG**

# USEFUL TIPS FOR CREATING LARGE SCALE ART

**rbhu** | engineering imagination



**BLISS**  
Marco Cochrane

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is one of the most critical steps in the journey of creating art. If you're selected for a Burning Man Honorarium grant, it will likely only cover a small percentage of your total cost, so it's important to think further. Funding can come in different forms, such as private donations, self-funding, fundraising parties, selling swag, silent auctions, crowd funding, and more.

### TIP 1

Find a way to showcase your vision such that potential donors get excited about it! This can be done in many ways such as hand sketches, maquettes, Photoshop images, or 3D renderings.

### TIP 2

Fundraising can be time-consuming. Be prepared to allocate a lot of time to it.

### TIP 3

Choose a fundraising platform that suits your needs and be sure to read its terms and conditions.

### TIP 4

Providing gifts to your donors is great, but you don't have to! If you do, calculate all costs, including postage. It adds up! As an alternative, you can provide something positive to the community, such as planting trees or digital gifts.

### TIP 5

Be organized. You may have many donors that you need to keep track of. Utilize Spreadsheets and be sure to thank them for supporting your project.





## TEAM MANAGEMENT

It takes a village to create large-scale sculptures. Having someone manage each section of the project - such as organizing the design & build, transportation, installation, strike, the camp, food (and beer) - can make the project run smoothly and make it a success.

### TIP 1

Give your team credit and show your appreciation! They are a big part of this creation and they should feel like it's their art too. Having ownership fuels passion and energy.

### TIP 2

Understand that people volunteer to be a part of your community. Team building is a great way to foster a collective. This can include ice breakers, BBQs, and opening parties.

### TIP 3

Have clear expectations and be organized. What needs to be done and who is doing what? Everyone should know their role and whom to ask if they have questions. Having a roster will keep track of everyone's time and help you understand your project's value.

### TIP 4

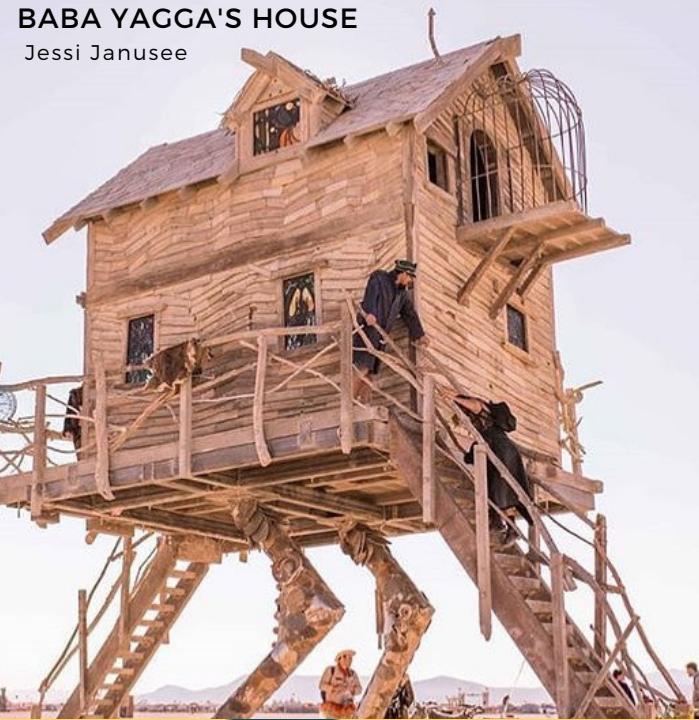
Consider not putting all tasks on one project manager, since in most cases it is more work than one person can handle. Sometimes it's best to give responsibility to a bunch of project managers. For example, have one person who talks to heavy equipment and let that person manage everything around that task.



**FLYBRARY**  
Christina Sporrang

## BABA YAGGA'S HOUSE

Jessi Janusee



# ENGINEERING

Engineering is one of the key steps to having a successful project. It could save you time, money, and gives you the opportunity to place your art outside of Burning Man. Most importantly, it ensures safety which helps you sleep more peacefully at night.

## TIP 1

To add efficiency to the engineering process, use 3D modeling tools. It is a lot easier to change things in a 3D model than in real life. Some commonly used programs include SketchUp, Rhino, Solidworks, and Inventor.

## TIP 2

Iron out the aesthetics before you get the engineers involved. Some alterations may cause significant changes in the engineering process. It is recommended to build a maquette or 3D print your model to work out the kinks.

## TIP 3

Start the engineering conversations early. The process takes time so plan ahead and budget accordingly. To check [Burning Man's engineering requirements](#) click [here](#).

## TIP 4

Often engineering sculptures require out-of-the-box thinking. Choose an engineer who fits your project needs. Some engineers are more comfortable with unconventional structures than others.

## TIP 5

There are footing limitations you should be aware of. You can't pour concrete and you can't dig a hole larger than 1'X1'X3'. However, you *can* borrow Burning Man ground anchors, purchase your own ground anchors or use added weight to secure your sculpture.

## TIP 6

If you plan to place your work after Burning Man, let your engineers know before they start the analysis, and consult with them about city requirements for placing your sculpture in a public place.

### DOT, THE DOG

Friends of George Simon





## ELECTRICAL

Electrical design can influence the aesthetic of your sculpture greatly so be sure to plan this out early and incorporate it into your design. This includes lighting, projection, sound, power, sensors, and mechanical systems.

## TIP 1

Burning Man requires your sculpture to be lit at night, even during installation, because it gets so dark that people run into things that are not lit! Lighting can change the look and feel of your artwork drastically so consider this in your design from the get-go. If your lighting system isn't set up yet during installation, you can use construction lights.

## TIP 2

Map your electrical cables, components, sensors, and their attachments early on to make sure that everything fits and your build sequencing take these into consideration. Think ahead.

## TIP 3

You have options with your power sources: such as generators, solar panels, wind turbines, human-powered mechanisms, etc. Most power sources are placed away from the art with trenched cables. Always have backup parts and use waterproof cables.

## TIP 4

Generators will need to be hidden. This can be another opportunity to compliment your art. They are loud, can leak, and gas must be refilled each night, but they are reliable. Gas can be purchased at Burning Man (coordinate with art support services). Solar panels get dusty be prepared.



**ILY**

Dan Mountain

## INTERNAL EXPOSURE

Jessica Levine



# TRANSPORTATION

How will you get your project to and from playa? Transportation can be costly and plays an important role in your design, as it will define the modularity of the sculpture. After you engineer and build it, it will be too late!

## TIP 1

Know the dimension limitations of each mode of transportation that you might use, including truck beds or shipping containers, as well as overpass height constraints. You may need to divide your piece into sections.

## TIP 2

You want to occupy the least amount of space in the truck/trailer/container to minimize costs. 3D modeling or a to-scale maquette is a helpful tool to play with packing configurations. Try to nest pieces within each other. You may need to build a crate to support certain pieces or help with stacking. When it makes sense, you can even plan your packing configuration around your build sequence.

## TIP 3

Coordinate early and shop around. Some trucking or rental companies don't provide services for Burning Man and some specialize in it. Don't forget to check Burning Man's Preferred Vendor List.

## TIP 4

Your trucking distance will affect your transportation costs. Building closer to Burning Man, such as Reno, will save you money.

## TIP 5

If you don't need all the provided space, reach out to the Burning Man community to see about sharing the costs!

### ALL POWER TO ALL PEOPLE

Kindred Arts w/  
Hank Willis Thomas



## RAINBOW BRIDGE

Looking Up Arts



# INSTALLATION

What happens when you get to the playa?  
How will you assemble your art? With limited time to install, it is crucial to plan ahead to make the process go as smoothly as possible.

## TIP 1

Write a detailed step-by-step installation plan, outlining your build sequence. You don't want to wing it out there! Bring extra parts. The closest Home Depot is in Reno.

## TIP 2

Know which heavy equipment is available to you and the limitations of each (weight, dimensions, lift angles). Forklifts tend to be more available than cranes but the capacities and functions are different.

## TIP 3

Be prepared when equipment gets there and don't waste HEaT's time. Be patient while you wait for them (they're doing the best they can) and have shade, water, and food on hand.

## TIP 4

Try to just assemble on-site, instead of build. Everything takes 10x longer on Playa.

## TIP 5

Burning Man offers heavy equipment and anchor installation (for BM anchors only), but this will be on their schedule. You could also rent your own machinery if needed. Coordinate with your ASS and HEaT partners.

### THE SPACE WHALE

Matt Schultz and the Pier Group



**TEMPLE OF DIRECTION**  
Geordie Van Der Bosch



## ITS WORTH IT!

Your art has the chance to touch the lives of many. You get this incredible opportunity to share your art with the world.

# HERE ARE SOME PREFERRED VENDORS

[Burning Man Outside Service Providers](#)

## DIRECTORY

[ARTery](#)

[BRC honorarium](#)

[Playa art](#)

[Building Safe Structures](#)

# FACEBOOK GROUPS

[Burning Man Makers and Builders](#)

[East Bay Burners](#)

[Reno Burners](#)

## SUGGESTIONS TO ADD TO OUR BROCHURE?

Fill out [this form](#) if you have any suggestions or tips for new artists.

### THE MAN 2019

Black Rock City Organization

