

For Immediate Release

## **National Nordic Museum Debuts Ginny Ruffner's *Project Aurora***

*The Ballard-based artist evokes the Aurora Borealis in a 20-foot light installation using renderings of the phenomenon and tens of thousands of LED lights*

Seattle, WA. (02.08.24) The shimmering, captivating colorful rivers of light of the Aurora Borealis become visible at the National Nordic Museum on February 9.

[\*Project Aurora\*](#) is a bright wall of light, 20 feet high and 10 feet wide, made up of 34,560 individual LED lights. Shimmering sheets of colored light, drawn from images of the Aurora Borealis, are programmed to undulate across the wall of light. Microprocessors update the installation 20 times per second, creating a peak brightness of 350,000 lumens; the light equivalent of 225 traditional 100-watt bulbs. Aided by artificial intelligence, the piece captures the unpredictability of the natural phenomenon.

Artist Ginny Ruffner worked in collaboration with Ed Fries, a prominent video game programmer and entrepreneur, and Wanda Gregory, a University of Washington lecturer and former video game professional, to evoke an experience of ephemeral beauty for viewers of the artwork.

“Creating a representation of the most elusive phenomenon required a lot of equally complex technical expertise. My hope is that the Aurora Borealis’ incredible beauty (created by just wind and atoms) inspires humans to be aware of the beauty of the natural world and their impact on that beauty through their individual impact on the physical world,” said Ruffner, an internationally renowned Seattle-based multimedia artist known for her glass sculptures in 50+ global collections.

Chief Curator of the Nordic Museum, Leslie Anderson, emphasized that the exhibit illustrates two of the museum’s core values; innovation and connection to nature.

“*Project Aurora* gives us the incredible opportunity to witness the remarkable spectacle of the Northern lights through cutting-edge technology, while celebrating the vision of a world-renowned artist in our own neighborhood,” says Anderson.

*Project Aurora* opens Friday, February 9 and will be available to visitors through June 2 from noon to 10pm, Tuesdays through Sundays. General Admission tickets can be purchased at the [National Nordic Museum’s website](#).

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**About the National Nordic Museum:** The National Nordic Museum is the only museum in the United States that showcases the impact and influence of Nordic values and innovation in contemporary society and tells the story of 12,000 years of Nordic history and culture, across all five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and

Sweden) as well as three autonomous regions (Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and Åland) and the cultural region of Sápmi. The Museum shares Nordic culture with people of all ages and backgrounds by exhibiting art and objects, preserving collections, providing educational and cultural experiences, and serving as a community gathering place. For more information, please visit [nordicmuseum.org](http://nordicmuseum.org).

### **About Ginny Ruffner**

Born in Atlanta, Ginny Ruffner is a multimedia artist who lives and works in Seattle. She trained at the University of Georgia as a painter, graduating with honors and an MFA. She is best known for her sculptural work in glass, which is held in more than 50 museum and public collections around the world. Her career has spanned 90 solo and several hundred group exhibitions. Her recent work includes augmented reality (AR) projects, such as *Reforestation of the Imagination*, which was exhibited at the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. The exhibition is currently traveling museums across the United States. She has authored two books and been featured in an award-winning documentary titled *A Not So Still Life, the Ginny Ruffner Story* (2010). In 2016, Ruffner founded the non-profit SOLA to recognize the work of female artists.