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RiNo Art District Lights Up the Holidays with Denver's First Traffic Cone Tree at *It's a RiNo-FUL Life*, Dec. 4–6

Free three-day winter festival features artist-led menorah lighting, Santa Stroll, live jazz, holiday pet portraits, interactive art activities, and shopping from local makers.

DENVER, CO — November 12, 2026 — RiNo Art District (RAD) invites Denver to celebrate the season with *It's a RiNo-FUL Life Winter Festival & Market*, Dec. 4–6 at RiNo ArtPark (1900 35th St.) and Truss House (3400 Arkins Ct.). This free, three-day celebration puts an unmistakably RiNo spin on holiday traditions, featuring a towering tree made entirely of traffic cones, an artist-created menorah, immersive light installations, live music, hands-on art activities, and a holiday market showcasing local makers. Families, friends, and neighbors are invited to gather, create, shop, and celebrate together.

The festival opens on First Friday, Dec. 4, from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., and continues Saturday, Dec. 5, and Sunday, Dec. 6, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with a special early start for Sunday's Santa Stroll. General admission is free, with online RSVPs requested through MultiPass.

“There's something magical about seeing a neighborhood come together through art, especially during our winter season,” said Daisy Fodness-McGowan, Executive & Artistic Director of RiNo Art District. “Our artists are putting a distinctly RiNo Art District twist on some beloved traditions, from a tree built out of traffic cones to an artist-created menorah. We're inviting everyone to start a new holiday tradition with us: gather with your neighbors, experience art in unexpected ways, and support the local makers who make the RiNo Art District so special.”

Friday Night Kickoff: Light Sculptures, Interactive Installations & First Friday Festivities

Menorah & Traffic Cone Tree Lightings: At 6:30 p.m., artist Shayna Cohn illuminates a monumental artist-crafted menorah on the outdoor plaza to celebrate the first night of Hanukkah, accompanied by complimentary jelly donuts (*sufganiyot*) while supplies last. At 7:00 p.m., the crowd counts down to the lighting of a towering holiday tree designed by Brian Buikema of C8 Productions, built from bright orange traffic cones and crowned with RiNo's signature rhino.

Interactive Sound-Reactive Silo Installation: Deep Space Drive-In (DSDI) transforms the RiNo ArtPark atrium silo with programmable, sound-reactive LED lights that shift color and pulse in real time to live music and ambient sound.

Roaming Performers & Live DJ Sets: Roaming characters and costumed elves from *Handsome Little Devils* bring interactive surprises across campus, while DJ Stevie and Something Vinyl Club provide music throughout.

Holiday Card Printmaking - Free Make & Take: Inside Truss House from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m., artist Lucy Holtsnider leads a free printmaking session where guests can create their own hand-printed holiday cards.

Seasonal Bites & Craft Bar: Tom's Waffles serves made-to-order Belgian Liège waffles alongside specialty hot chocolates and warm espresso drinks. Inside Truss House, a seasonal craft bar offers festive alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Saturday & Sunday: Holiday Photos, Santa Stroll, Live Jazz & Hands-On Art

Free Holiday Photos & Pet Portraits (Saturday, 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.): Families, friends, and four-legged companions are invited to strike a pose at an outdoor holiday photo station featuring a festive winter backdrop and dedicated photographer. Photos are complimentary.

Inaugural RiNo Santa Stroll (Sunday, 10:00 a.m. Check-in | 10:30 a.m. Start): Sunday's festivities begin early with a noncompetitive holiday fun run and walk along the paved RiNo ArtPark trail toward Washington Street. Participants can choose a 0.75-mile stroll or a 1.5-mile run. Adult registration is $25 and includes a full Santa suit to keep, a custom race bib, and access to a pre-run “Bedazzle Your Bib” station. Kids participate free with a registered adult and receive a Santa hat while supplies last. Costumes can be picked up during festival hours Friday and Saturday at the Welcome Center, or Sunday morning at check-in.

Live Jazz (Saturday & Sunday, 1:00–3:00 p.m.):

- **Saturday, Dec. 5:** The Chouette trio (accordion, violin, vocals, bass) performs an international winter repertoire blending jazz, pop, musette, choro, and tango.
- **Sunday, Dec. 6:** The Agent Jazz trio (guitar, vocals, ukulele bass) brings a playful mix of jazz standards, dark pop, spy-film soundtracks, and global blues.

RiNo Holiday Art Labs: Yeastie Boys host free, drop-in DIY button-making and zine workshops inside Truss House on Saturday and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., inviting guests of all ages to make something creative to take home.

All-Weekend Happenings at RiNo ArtPark

Local Holiday Makers Market (Truss House): Guests can shop directly from local artisans offering handmade gifts, jewelry, ceramics, prints, and textiles. Outside, Bertha the Book Bus, operated by independent mobile bookstore Bissap and Books, offers another opportunity to discover thoughtful holiday gifts.

Art Exhibition in the Welcome Center Gallery: Visitors can explore *The Spaces Between*, a group exhibition curated by Johnny Draco featuring seven local artists examining environments surrounding childhood.

Clayton Early Learning Winter Toy Exchange: RiNo ArtPark's Welcome Center Gallery serves as an official donation drop-off for Clayton Early Learning's annual Winter Toy Exchange. Guests are encouraged to bring new, unwrapped toys and warm winter coats now through Dec. 12 to support more than 200 local children and families.

Weekend Bites & Drinks: Tom's Waffles and the Truss House craft bar continue service Saturday and Sunday, offering fresh waffles, espresso drinks, hot cocoa, and seasonal beverages.

Event Schedule & Location Details

Locations: RiNo ArtPark, 1900 35th St., and Truss House, 3400 Arkins Ct., Denver, CO 80216.

Friday, Dec. 4 | 5:00–9:00 p.m.
First Friday kickoff featuring artist-led menorah lighting with latkes and jelly donuts (6:30 p.m.), traffic cone tree lighting (7:00 p.m.), Deep Space Drive-In interactive light installation, DJ Stevie, Something Vinyl Club, Handsome Little Devils roaming performers, holiday card printmaking, local makers, Tom's Waffles, and craft bar.

Saturday, Dec. 5 | 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Free holiday photos and pet portraits, Chouette jazz trio (1:00–3:00 p.m.), Yeastie Boys zine and button-making workshops, local makers market, Tom's Waffles, and craft bar.

Sunday, Dec. 6 | 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Special early start for the RiNo Santa Stroll (10:00 a.m. check-in, 10:30 a.m. start), Agent Jazz trio (1:00–3:00 p.m.), Yeastie Boys zine and button-making workshops, local makers market, Tom's Waffles, and craft bar.

Admission: Free general festival admission; RSVPs requested through MultiPass.

Santa Stroll Registration: $25 for adults, including a Santa suit to keep; free for children with a registered adult. Tickets available through MultiPass.

Press Kit: *It's a RiNo-FUL Life* Press Kit — photos, promotional graphics, and social media content.

About RiNo Art District

RiNo Art District (RAD) is a Denver-based nonprofit arts organization and one of Colorado's first state-certified Creative Districts, ranked #6 Best Arts District in the nation by USA TODAY in 2026. Founded in 2005, RAD champions artists, creatives,

and local businesses through programming, advocacy, and creative placemaking across the historic north Denver neighborhoods of Five Points, Cole, Globeville, and Elyria-Swansea. Rooted in north Denver, RAD works to sustain a vibrant, inclusive creative ecosystem where artists and communities thrive, while helping shape a national model for artist-centered creative districts.

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