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ARTon
theMART™



Photo credit Lisa Armstrong

***Art on theMART* to Present *Shaping the Future*, Featuring Select Works Created by Teenagers in Chicago's After School Matters Program**

Full Winter Program Includes *Nutcracker* Projection by Joffrey Ballet and AI-Generated Piece from Ouchhh Studios

CHICAGO – ***Art on theMART***, in partnership with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), today announced the next projection to grace the riverside façade of theMART. *Shaping the Future* is a projection dedicated to celebrating visual art, dance and music created by students in Chicago's After School Matters program, both past and present. The projection premieres on November 26 at 7:30 p.m. in conjunction with additional winter programming.

After School Matters® is the nation's largest and most successful provider of after-school and summer programs for high school teens. In commemoration of its 30th anniversary of empowering local youth to explore their talents and shape their futures, the organization engaged local artist and educator Lisa Glenn Armstrong to create a projection documenting the creative work of Chicago teens from the past three decades.

Shaping the Future uses mosaics as a framing structure that draws on the technique of bricolage, combining materials and media in the spirit of community and collaboration to weave together a final piece that features teen performances, murals and original music. The mosaics showcased throughout the piece are snippets of teen-created murals that reveal themselves in

public art found throughout the city. These mosaics are accompanied by music composed by the After School Matters Future Music Creators program led by instructor Gerald Bailey.

“We are pleased to partner with After School Matters to champion the creativity of Chicago’s youth,” said Cynthia Noble executive director of *Art on theMART*. “The partnership reflects Art on theMART’s values around arts education and investment in a broad range of artists.”

Illuminating works created over the span of three decades, *Shaping the Future* visualizes the past and future of student art. The project aims to celebrate the work of Chicago’s bright young minds while inspiring creativity in the minds of others as they look to the future. The piece features music by teens Dontrell Bovan, Daniel Bright, Josh Diaz and Julian Meadows. Additional musical support was provided by instructor Alejandro Ayala. The projection also includes clips of performances by the After School Matters Dance Ensemble, Hi-Def Dance Ensemble and M.A.D.D. Rhythms. Photography of the mosaics was shot by Jon Shaft.

Accompanying *Shaping the Future* for Art on theMART’s winter season are some familiar favorites. The return of Joffrey Ballet’s *Nutcracker* projection will mark the holiday season, featuring images from its acclaimed production of the Christmas classic set to music from Tchaikovsky’s beloved score. Also returning is an intriguing piece from Ouchhh Studios called *Harmonic AI*. Originally shown as part of Art on theMart’s spring 2019 series, *Harmonic AI* was created by training artificial intelligence with jazz compositions made by Chicago’s most famous jazz musicians. The resulting animation is a visual representation of Chicago’s musical legacy.

Art on theMART’s winter program of projections will be shown twice nightly at 7:30 and 8:00 p.m. and can best be experienced for free from the jetty section of the Chicago Riverwalk running along Wacker Drive between Wells Street and Franklin Street, where accompanying audio can be heard clearly.

Artist Bio

Lisa Glenn Armstrong is a multi-disciplinary designer, artist, and educator living in Chicago. She received her MFA in Motion Graphic Design from California Institute of the Arts and her BFA in Graphic Design from DePaul University. Her work focuses primarily on themes of time, space, motion, and the tensions between artificial and emotional intelligence. She currently teaches as a Lecturer of Visual Communication in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Loyola University Chicago and is part of an electronic music ensemble called Chandeliers.

About After School Matters

Celebrating its 30th year in 2021, After School Matters is a nonprofit organization that provides after-school and summer opportunities to Chicago public high school teens to explore their passions and develop their talents, while gaining critical skills for work, college, and beyond. After School Matters programs are project-based, led by industry experts, and provide a pathway to progress in skills development and independence. Teens earn a stipend while participating in programs in the arts, communications and leadership, sports, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Over the span of three decades, After School Matters has engaged more than 350,000 teens throughout the city of Chicago.

www.afterschoolmatters.org.

About *Art on theMART*

Art on theMART is the largest permanent digital art projection in the world, projecting contemporary artwork across the 2.5-acre river-façade of theMART. This expansive permanent piece of public art continues Chicago’s legacy of providing both residents and visitors with

exceptional art that is both free and accessible to all. Projections are visible to the public from Wacker Drive and along the Chicago Riverwalk, with accompanying audio available on the jetty section of the Riverwalk

The program content rotates seasonally and is selected with the assistance and expertise of the Curatorial Advisory Board. The City of Chicago and theMART work in partnership to manage and curate the projected artwork over the course of a 30-year agreement. Privately funded by Vornado Realty Trust, owner of theMART, *Art on theMART* marks the first time a projection of its size and scope is completely dedicated to digital art with no branding, sponsorship credits or messaging. The permanent projection system illuminates theMART with 34 state-of-the-art projectors totaling almost one million lumens. For more information, visit www.artonthemart.com.

About theMART

theMART (formerly The Merchandise Mart), located in the center of the sought-after River North submarket, is interwoven into the fabric of Chicago as an innovator in business, technology, culture, art, media and more. As the largest privately owned commercial building in the United States, it is also one of the world's leading commercial buildings, wholesale design centers and the preeminent international business location in Chicago. Offering continuous innovation and creativity from leading manufacturers and design-forward showrooms, theMART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies including Motorola Mobility, 1871, Yelp, PayPal and MATTER, as well as Fortune 500 companies ConAgra, Allstate, Kellogg, Beam Suntory and Grainger. For more information, visit <http://themart.com/>.

About the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago's artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago's non-profit arts sector, independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City's future cultural and economic growth, via the Chicago Cultural Plan; marketing the City's cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors. For more information, visit chicago.gov/dc.

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