

May 31, 2013

General Release

Award-winning exhibition *Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good* makes U.S. debut at the Chicago Cultural Center

The City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is pleased to present *Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good* to Chicago for its first U.S. appearance. The exhibition—the official U.S. presentation at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale (2012)—is an environmental installation that has completely transformed the Michigan Avenue Galleries (ground floor) of the Chicago Cultural Center, and will be on view through September 1.

Spontaneous Interventions, organized by Cathy Lang Ho on behalf of the New York nonprofit Institute for Urban Design, is devoted to the growing movement of architects, designers, artists, and everyday citizens acting on their own initiative to bring improvements to the urban realm, creating new opportunities and amenities for the public. The exhibition received over 178,000 visitors in Venice, and earned a Special Mention from the Golden Lion jury, the first time the United States has been honored in the history of the Venice Architecture Biennale. The exhibition design was also named Best Exhibition Design of 2012 by the editors of *Architectural Record* and a silver medal in the 2012 Spark Awards in the communication design category.

"We're so pleased that Chicago is the first destination for this thought-provoking display as the City has always been at the forefront of architecture and design," said DCASE Commissioner Michelle T. Boone.

The Chicago installation features a lively exhibition design of pull-down banners created by Brooklyn design studio Freecell and supergraphics by Berkeley-based communication design firm M-A-D. The show presents 84 projects, including 17 newly added projects and more than a dozen based in Chicago. *Please see attached for a full list of artists and organizations featured in the exhibition.* Snaking across the exhibition floor is a timeline of city-making and urban activism, which brings visitors to a workshop/resource room featuring a library of recommended reading and a community message board.

"American urbanism always seems to circle back to Chicago: grid, fire, skyscraper, Burnham, rivers reversed, White City, sociology, Jane Addams, the Daleys, the projects, community organizing, urban renewal, greening," said Michael Sorkin, New York architect, president of the Institute for Urban Design, and founder of Terreform. "We are honored to bring a view of a new, democratic design movement that is growing across the country but with deep roots in America's most essential city."

In conjunction with the exhibition at the Chicago Cultural Center, *Spontaneous Interventions* will include a pop-up "outdoor living room" in Millennium Park, designed by Chicago-based MAS Studio, led by architect Iker Gil, in collaboration with Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill. The space will serve as an outpost for the exhibition and a venue for exhibition-related programs, including talks, panels, tours, workshops and more. The space will feature a colorful canopy and seating made of salvaged lumber by Chicago artist/woodworker John Preus of Dilettante Studios.

Spontaneous Interventions: design actions for the common good



la Biennale di Venezia

13. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura

Partecipazioni nazionali

U.S. Pavilion at
the 13th International
Architecture Exhibition
la Biennale di Venezia
Aug 29 - Nov 25, 2012

from the Biennale jury:
Special Mention
FOR NATIONAL PARTICIPATION

MAY 24 - SEP 1, 2013
Chicago Cultural Center
Michigan Ave. Galleries
78 E. Washington St.
Chicago, IL 60602

chicagoculturalcenter.org
open daily, closed holidays
free admission



City of Chicago
Mayor Rahm Emanuel

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF
DCASE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS & SPECIAL EVENTS

**INSTITUTE
FOR
URBAN
DESIGN**



“Our goal is to use the exhibition as a framework for understanding a larger movement, in which citizens all over the world are devising and implementing clever, low-barrier urban interventions to make their cities more inclusive, sustainable, pleasurable, and safer,” said Cathy Lang Ho, a New York–based design journalist and curator. “For this reason, we have organized a rich roster of programs that will place the trend of tactical urbanism in the context local urban issues and citizen action.” Program director is Samantha Topol, a Chicago editor and writer.

All summer long, programs will take place at the Cultural Center, in the pop-up outpost in Millennium Park, and at various offsite locations. Many of the programs are organized in partnership with Chicago-based designers, nonprofits, community organizations, and city agencies. Please refer to www.spontaneousinterventions.org or www.cityofchicago/dcse for details about upcoming events.

About the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE):

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 2012 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.

About the Institute for Urban Design

Since 1979, the New York–based Institute for Urban Design has served as a central platform for debate among architects, planners, policy-makers, developers, academics, journalists, and urbanists. Led by president Michael Sorkin and The Institute, directed by Anne Guiney, operates as a think tank and advocacy group, drawing on the collected experience and knowledge of its large fellowship to bring important issues into wider public debate through lectures, events, and publications.

Supporters

The organizers of *Spontaneous Interventions* are grateful to the City of Chicago/DCASE and to the following companies for their kind support: Applied Image (environmental graphics), Avery Dennison (adhesive materials), Better Life Technology/BLT G-Floor (graphic floor), Coloredge (banner printing), Edsal (work tables), Fenner Drives (pulleys), Gladding Braided Products (ropes), Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts (support), Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (engineering).

For more information, please visit cityofchicago.org/dcse or spontaneousinterventions.org.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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