

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 2013

***Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good***  
**makes U.S. debut at Chicago Cultural Center, May 24 to September 1, 2013**

(New York, NY) — The City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is bringing *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 13<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale (2012)—will be installed in the ground-floor Michigan Avenue Galleries of the Chicago Cultural Center from Memorial Day (May 24) to Labor Day (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.

“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 will recreate the lively exhibition design of pull-down banners, created by Brooklyn design studio Freecell and Berkeley-based communication design firm M-A-D. The contents of the exhibition have been updated to include more recent and more local projects. Among the 84 projects that will be presented, more than a dozen are from Chicago, including several that also appeared in Venice.

“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. 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 local artist/woodworker John Preus of Dilettante Studios.

“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.

Spontaneous Interventions: design actions for the common good



la Biennale di Venezia

**13. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura**  
Partecipazioni nazionali

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



**INSTITUTE  
FOR  
URBAN  
DESIGN**

All summer long, programs will take place at the Cultural Center, in the pop-up pavilion 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. A calendar of events will be posted to [www.spontaneousinterventions.org](http://www.spontaneousinterventions.org) in May.

**Artists and organizations featured in the exhibition:**

Candy Chang, Change Administration (Aurash Khawarзад), Center for Urban Pedagogy, COMMONstudio, CROP, Design 99, DSGN AGNC (Quilian Riano), Alexander Eisenschmidt with Cheng+Snyder, envelope a+d (Douglas Burnham), Experimental Station, Theaster Gates, Fritz Haeg, Hester Street Collaborative, LA Green Grounds, Latent Design, Public Media Institute (Ed Marzewski), Moving Design (Ric Valicenti and John Pobjewski), Neighborland, OpenPlans, Rockwell Group, Stamen, Street Plans Collaborative (Mike Lydon), Team Better Block, Jordan Seiler, WORKac, and many others.

**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. 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.

**Sponsors**

The organizers of *Spontaneous Interventions* are grateful for the sponsorship of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (engineering), Better Life Technology/BLT G-Floor (graphic floor), Applied Image (environmental graphics), Avery Dennison (adhesive materials), Coloredge (banner printing), Fenner Drives (pulleys), and Gladding Braided Products (ropes).

For more information, please visit [cityofchicago.org/dccase](http://cityofchicago.org/dccase) or [spontaneousinterventions.org](http://spontaneousinterventions.org).

###

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Samantha Topol, [info@spontaneousinterventions.org](mailto:info@spontaneousinterventions.org). Email inquiries only, please.