

Media Contacts:

Francesca Kielb
Carol Fox and Associates
773.969.5035 / francescak@carolfoxassociates.com

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***ART ON theMART* ANNOUNCES PROGRAM ALIGNMENT WITH CITY OF CHICAGO'S 2019 YEAR OF CHICAGO THEATRE**

Lighting Designer John Boesche to Debut New Work March 13, Set Designer John Musial and Lucky Plush Artistic Director Julia Rhoads Collaborate on Joint Commission Premiering in June

Chicago—theMART, with the City of Chicago, today announced the program alignment of *Art on theMART*, the largest permanent digital art projection in the world, with the 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre, a city-wide celebration of Chicago's theater community spearheaded by the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and the League of Chicago Theatres. *Art on theMART*'s spring program will feature Chicago theater with a work by renowned lighting designer John Boesche. The program will debut March 13 and loop for two hours a night, five days a week (Wednesday – Sunday), beginning approximately 15 minutes after sunset. Subsequently, a collaborative piece by two Chicago theater professionals, scenic designer John Musial and Lucky Plush Artistic Director Julia Rhoads, will premiere on the river-façade of theMART in June.

“Our hope in aligning with the City of Chicago's Year of Chicago Theatre is to present a program that showcases Chicago's multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary theater community,” said *Art on theMART* Executive Director **Cynthia Noble**. “Each selected artist contributes in a unique way to Chicago theater and will lend their perspectives to *Art on theMART*'s monumental platform, transforming this iconic work of public art.”

On March 13, lighting designer John Boesche will unveil the first acts of *7 soliloquies*, a multi-part projection piece that captures seven significant Chicago theater artists in brief solo performances. In addition to performers, the work will also feature prominent composers, sound and scenic designers, puppeteers and visual artists, creating a celebration of Chicago's diverse theater community. Boesche will continue to add acts to the work following its premiere. Boesche's work will be presented alongside a new commission by Istanbul-based video mapping group Ouchhh Studios for the spring program. The complementary piece uses data gathered from musical compositions by famed Chicago-based jazz musicians to create a real-time experience in which a landmark architectural site transforms artificial intelligence into a visual experience.

“*Art on theMART* brings Chicago's legacy of public art and iconic architecture together and helps reshape the way people interact with the Chicago River,” said **Mayor Emanuel**. “It is a fitting tribute to align the 2019 programming with the Year of Chicago Theatre; bringing new energy to the Riverwalk and honoring the cultural and artistic diversity that theater adds to our city.”

Art on theMART's second commission in alignment with the Year of Chicago Theatre is the result of a collaboration between scenic designer John Musial and Lucky Plush Artistic Director Julia

Rhoads. The work utilizes fragmented choreography and script from Julia Rhoads' work with Lucky Plush, a Chicago-based dance and theater ensemble, reimagined within John Musial's layered and evocative projection design. The source material draws from Lucky Plush's *Rooming House*, in which varied interpretations of personal and mythic storytelling leads down a rabbit hole into the lives of everyday people who do extraordinary things.

“This project brings a surprising intimacy and humanity to the grand stage of theMART’s river-façade, truly reflecting the adventurous and collaborative spirit of Chicago theater,” **Julia Rhoads** stated.

Art on theMART 2019 program selections were confirmed by an esteemed Curatorial Advisory Board comprised of several of the city’s most distinguished arts and culture leaders. In addition to *Art on theMART* Executive Director **Cynthia Noble**, Curatorial Advisory Board members include Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago Assistant Curator **Grace Deveney**, Art Institute of Chicago Assistant Curator **Robyn Farrell**, EXPO CHICAGO President/Director **Tony Karman**, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events Director of Public Art **Lydia Ross**, artist **Edra Soto** and artist **Amanda Williams**.

About the Artists

About John Boesche

From Broadway theater productions to performances by premiere dance companies, John Boesche is an acclaimed Chicago-based lighting designer with a diverse creative background. Locally, he has worked on productions at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Goodman Theatre, Joffrey Ballet Chicago, Steppenwolf Theatre and many more. He has also worked on dozens of productions nationwide, including “The Glass Menagerie” on Broadway at the Roundabout Theatre. Since 2012, Boesche has been Chair of Digital Media for Live Performance, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

About Ouchhh Studios

Ouchhh is an award-winning independent creative new media agency with cross-discipline expertise in art, science and technology. Ouchhh is considered to be a multidisciplinary creative hub focused on interactive new media platforms, artificial intelligence, data-driven sculptures and kinetic public arts. Their immersive experiences and A/V architectural facade performances explore boundaries of arts relationship with architecture, science, technology and new media.

About John Musial

John Musial is a scenic designer and filmmaker who writes, directs, designs and creates. As a scenic designer, he has worked with Chicago Children’s Theatre, About Face Theatre, American Theatre Company and many more. Musial received a Jeff Award for the projection design of Lookingglass Theatre’s production of “Nelson Algren For Keeps and a Single Day” and was nominated for a Regional Theatre Tony Award for redirecting and editing “Nelson Algren...” for television with WTTW Channel 11. Musial holds a master’s degree in Architecture from University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).

About Julia Rhoads

Julia Rhoads is the founding Artistic Director of Lucky Plush Productions, a MacArthur Award-winning ensemble recognized for its unique blend of dance, theater, comedy and socially relevant themes. Her work has toured to over 55 cities worldwide, reaching notable venues including Joyce Theater (NYC) and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Independent directing and

choreography credits include Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Lookingglass Theatre, Redmoon and River North Dance Chicago, among others. Julia's work has been supported by major awards from Herb Alpert Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Performance Network, National Theater Project and National Dance Project. Julia received her BA in History from Northwestern University and her MFA in Performance from the School of the Art Institute Chicago. She is currently Director of Dance and Lecturer in Theater and Performance Studies at The University of Chicago.

About 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre

Art on theMART is proud to be part of the 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre, presented by the City of Chicago and the League of Chicago Theatres. To truly fall in love with Chicago, you must go to our theatres. This is where the city bares its fearless soul. Home to a community of creators, risk-takers, and big hearts, Chicago theatre is a hotbed for exciting new work and hundreds of world premieres every year. From Broadway musicals to storefront plays and improv, there's always a seat waiting for you at one of our 200+ theatres. Book your next show today at ChicagoPlays.com.

About Chicago 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 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 Chicago Riverwalk

The Chicago Riverwalk is managed by the Chicago Department of Fleet and Facility Management with programming support from the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Access to the space is free and open to the public daily from 6 a.m. – 11 p.m. For more information about the Chicago Riverwalk and a complete schedule of events, visit chicagoriverwalk.us — and join the conversation on social media using #ChiRiverwalk.

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. Encompassing 4.2 million gross square feet, theMART spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day and nearly 10 million people annually. 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.

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 two hours a night for ten months of the year (March – December), beginning

approximately 15 minutes after sundown. The projections are on view five nights a week, Wednesday – Sunday.

The program content rotates every season, 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 will be 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.

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