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***ART ON theMART* ANNOUNCES 2019 FALL PROGRAM**

Largest Permanent Digital Art Projection in the World to Feature Site-Specific Commissions by **Charles Atlas** and **Petra Cortright**—Launching September 21

Fall Program to Include Extended Viewing of Select Soliloquies by Year of Chicago Theatre Artist **John Boesche**, Including Performance by **Cheryl Lynn Bruce** Backgrounded by **Kerry James Marshall** Paintings

Chicago—On September 21, *Art on theMART*, the largest permanent digital art projection in the world, will unveil new site-specific commissions by **Charles Atlas** and **Petra Cortright**. The program will also feature extended viewing of select soliloquies by Year of Chicago Theatre artist **John Boesche**, including a projected performance by **Cheryl Lynn Bruce** backgrounded by images of paintings by artist **Kerry James Marshall**. The approximately 25 minute program will be unveiled with a free public launch event at 6:30 p.m. on September 21 in alignment with EXPO ART WEEK (September 16 – 22) which will feature food vendors and entertainment on Wacker Dr. between Wells St. and Franklin St., followed by a fireworks display that concludes the program.

During the opening weekend of the fall program (September 21 & 22), *Art on theMART* will add a collaboration with EXPO CHICAGO's **OVERRIDE | A Billboard Project** to the fall program. Following the opening weekend, the fall program will remain on view nightly through September 30, then transition to five-nights-a-week (Wednesday – Sunday) until November 22, beginning approximately 30 minutes after sunset.

"We are proud to present a strong program highlighting new contemporary artwork by Charles Atlas and Petra Cortright on our monumental platform this fall," said *Art on theMART* Executive Director **Cynthia Noble**. "The visually and conceptually rich work is perfectly suited for a presentation of this scale and will be essential viewing for Chicagoans and visitors from around the world."

Charles Atlas' site-specific projection is an approximately eight-minute piece is broken down into 1-minute chapters, which each feature a characteristic combination of abstract shapes and numerals. Chapters begin with a splash of color that starts at the base of theMART's façade and rises to the top of the turrets, animating and exploring the structure and architecture of theMART.

"I am very excited to be working with *Art on theMART* on my first public art commission," said artist **Charles Atlas**. "In my recent installation work I have been working at a large scale, but never at nearly the scale of the Chicago piece, which is inspired by and in response to the architecture of the façade of theMART. The projection represents a continuation of a tendency of some of my recent video work towards pure color and abstraction."

In Petra Cortright's site-specific commission *Webcam still life with flowers: blue, green, and red*, the artist continues an exploration into merging her painting and video practices. The work, which will project across theMART's 2.5 acre river-façade, blurs the lines between the two using a range of technical and figurative modes key to her work in both fields. The result reflects the incredibly intimate and low fi approaches in which Cortright works, translated to a grand scale.

"I wanted to make something bright and beautiful for Chicago's public," said artist **Petra Cortright**. "The effects used in the videos took the architecture of the building into account, and the simplicity of the figurative content is meant to offer space for a contemplative visual experience." Cortright added, "The best gift is always flowers."

Finally, Art on theMART will continue to display a selection of John Boesche's *7 soliloquies*, a multi-part projection piece that premiered March 13 in alignment with the 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre. The work highlights significant Chicago theater artists in brief solo performances. In addition to performers, the work features prominent composers, sound and scenic designers, puppeteers and visual artists. Acts that will remain on view through the Fall Program include *To Be In Love*, a piece featuring performance by Cheryl Lynn Bruce and original artwork by Kerry James Marshall.

*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 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 Charles Atlas**

Charles Atlas has been a pioneering figure in film and video for over four decades. Atlas has extended the limits of his medium, forging new territory in a far-reaching range of genres, stylistic approaches and techniques. Throughout his production, the artist has consistently fostered collaborative relationships, working intimately with such artists and performers as Leigh Bowery, Michael Clark, Douglas Dunn, Marina Abramovic, Yvonne Rainer, Mika Tajima/New Humans, Antony and the Johnsons, and most notably Merce Cunningham, for whom he served as in-house videographer for a decade from the early 1970s through 1983; their close working relationship continued until Cunningham's death in 2009.

### **About John Boesche**

From Broadway theater productions to performances by premiere dance companies, John Boesche is an acclaimed Chicago-based media 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 Petra Cortright**

Petra Cortright's core practice is the creation and distribution of digital and physical images using consumer or corporate softwares. She became renowned for making self-portrait videos that use her computer's webcam and default effects tools, which she would then upload to YouTube and

caption with spam text. Cortright's paintings on aluminum, linen, paper or acrylic are created in Photoshop using painting software and appropriated images, icons and marks. The digital files are endlessly modifiable, but at a "decisive moment" they are translated into two-dimensional objects. They become finite, yet their range of motifs and marks, and their disorienting perspectives and dimensions suggest dynamic change.

### **About OVERRIDE | A Billboard Project**

OVERRIDE | A Billboard Project is a citywide public art initiative presented by EXPO CHICAGO and the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) which displays contemporary artwork throughout Chicago's City Digital Network (CDN). Placing artwork within this public context and the broader presentation of billboard advertising, OVERRIDE takes its name from industry terminology referring to the continuation of an outdoor advertising program beyond a contracted period. Fully integrated into the language of advertising and local familiar signage, each of the works included within the OVERRIDE program present the opportunity for artists to intercept and push the boundaries of how visual culture is disseminated in our increasingly image-based environment. *Art on theMART* will use its expansive public platform to showcase several of these digital works, to be announced at a later date.

### **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 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. For more information, visit [cityofchicago.org/dcase](http://cityofchicago.org/dcase).

### **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. For more information, visit <http://themart.com/>.

### **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 regularly on view five nights a week from Wednesday – Sunday, with expanded nightly viewing to seven nights a week from May 13 – September 30, 2019.

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. For more information, visit [www.artonthemart.com](http://www.artonthemart.com).

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