



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CITY OFFICIALS UNVEIL MONUMENTAL  
KERRY JAMES MARSHALL MURAL ON THE CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER**

*A gift to the city, Kerry James Marshall's largest artwork to-date honors 20 iconic Chicago women*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), alongside internationally renowned artist and MacArthur Fellow Kerry James Marshall, unveiled his epic, large-scale mural on the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington St.). The mural honors 20 women who have shaped the city's vibrant arts and culture landscape. The 132-foot by 100-foot mural will be the largest artwork he has ever designed or created.

"Chicago is recognized across the country and around the world as an epicenter of innovative art, architecture and design," said Mayor Emanuel. "Kerry James Marshall's new mural on the iconic Chicago Cultural Center is not just a celebration of Chicago's legacy of public art, but it is also a continuation of creativity and culture that continues to inspire us".

The Chicago Cultural Center is the first and most comprehensive free large-municipal cultural venue in the country. Every year, the Chicago Cultural Center, presents hundreds of free international, national, regional and local artists, musicians and performers, providing a showcase where the public can enjoy and learn about the arts. It is currently home to the Chicago Architecture Biennial, which will run through January 7, 2018.

"When I was asked to design a mural for narrow Garland Court, it was immediately clear to me that the site had to be 'opened up' in some way," said Kerry James Marshall. "My solution was a park-like view with a bright sun and stand of trees to bring light and green space to the location while at the same time honoring the mission of the building as the hub of artistic activity in Chicago. My idea was to make of the trees a kind of Forest Rushmore acknowledging the contribution of 20 women who've worked to shape the cultural landscape of the city, past and present."

The mural is funded by Murals of Acceptance, whose goal is to bring art to all people in a free public setting. Murals of Acceptance was founded by Chicago native, Kevin McCarthy and is supported by Marc and Lynne Benioff and by Patricia Arquette and David Arquette. The mural is located on the building's Garland Court façade, between Washington and Randolph Streets.

"I wanted to collaborate with the finest artists alive today to make monuments that preach acceptance, love, and equality to everyone who sees them, and put them in places where everyone would," said Kevin J. McCarthy Founder, Murals of Acceptance.

"Kerry James Marshall is one of our nation's most acclaimed and important artists—and this mural for "The People's Palace" is a true gift to the people of Chicago," said DCASE Commissioner Mark Kelly. "The City of Chicago was thrilled to celebrate Kerry at the Fifth Star Honors this summer and we look forward to his artwork shaping our cultural landscape for generations to come. The 20 women represented in Kerry James Marshall's mural are a who's who of Chicago's arts and culture community:

- **Susanne Ghez**, Director and Chief Curator for nearly 40 years, The Renaissance Society
- **Barbara Gaines**, Founder and Artistic Director, Chicago Shakespeare Theater
- **Jacqueline Russell**, Founder and Artistic Director, Chicago Children's Theatre
- **Ruth Page**, Dancer, Choreographer and Founder, Ruth Page Center for the Arts
- **Lois Weisberg**, Longest-serving Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs
- **Maggie C. Daley**, Longest-serving First Lady of the City of Chicago
- **Jackie Taylor**, Founder and CEO, Black Ensemble Theater
- **Monica Haslip**, Founder and Executive Director, Little Black Pearl
- **Abena Joan Brown**, Founder, eta Creative Arts Foundation
- **Margaret Burroughs**, Founder, DuSable Museum of African American History
- **Harriet Monroe**, Founder, Poetry Magazine
- **Cheryl Lynn Bruce**, Co-founder, Goodman Theatre / Dearborn Homes Youth Drama Workshop
- **Sandra Delgado**, Founding Ensemble Member, Collaboraction
- **Jane M. Saks**, President and Artistic Director, Project& and Founding Executive Director, Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media
- **Barbara Jones-Hogu**, Founding Member, AfriCobra
- **Gwendolyn Brooks**, Literary Icon
- **Sandra Cisneros**, Literary Icon
- **Achy Obejas**, Award-winning writer
- **Oprah Winfrey**, Cultural Icon
- **Joan Gray**, Dancer and Longtime President of Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago

**Kerry James Marshall** is an artist and MacArthur Fellow. A deeply accomplished artist, Marshall uses many types of mediums, including collage, drawings, murals and even comic books. His work is known for referencing African American culture and history, including the Civil Rights era and the Black Power movement. Painting in a Realist style, he depicts dark figures that celebrate black beauty and confront general racial stereotypes within contemporary American society. He has received solo exhibitions throughout Europe and North America and his work has been included in such prestigious international exhibitions as the 1997 Whitney Biennial, the 2003 Venice Biennial, the 2009 Gwangju Biennial, two Documentas (1997 and 2007) and the 1999 Carnegie International. Debuting at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago in April 2016, Marshall's retrospective *Mastry* spanned his 35-year career and included nearly 80 original pieces. On August 28, 2017, the

City of Chicago presented Kerry James Marshall with the Fifth Star Honor Award for his many contributions to our city's cultural landscape.

The design and vision created by Marshall was executed by Chicago mural artist Jeff Zimmermann and his team from Jazim, Inc.

The Kerry James Marshall's mural at the Chicago Cultural Center is part of the Year of Public Art. Throughout 2017, the City of Chicago has unveiled the city's first Public Art Plan, presented exhibitions and series of neighborhood events highlighting the city's public art collection located throughout the city. As the year comes to a close, the city is also celebrating the completion of several new artworks as part of the 50x50 Neighborhood Arts Project, a citywide initiative that commissioned dozens of local artists to create new sculptures, murals and other public artworks in Chicago's 50 wards, representing a \$1.5 million investment in artist-led community projects. In June, the City of Chicago announced [the selected local artists and the participating communities](#). Many of these works are in the final stages of production or have been completed.

Guided by the Chicago Cultural Plan, Mayor Emanuel has outlined a citywide vision for art and culture that has incorporated public art into projects at a variety of City departments—including DCASE as well as the Department of Transportation, Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library and Chicago Transit Authority, among others.

Grant support for the Year of Public Art is provided by Allstate Insurance Company and the Terra Foundation for American Art.

For more information, visit [cityofchicago.org/yopa](http://cityofchicago.org/yopa)—and join the conversation on Facebook (Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events), Twitter and Instagram, @ChicagoDCASE #2017isYOPA #ChiPublicArt. To learn about the history and arts programming at the Chicago Cultural Center presented by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, visit [chicagoculturalcenter.org](http://chicagoculturalcenter.org)—and join the conversation on Facebook (Chicago Cultural Center) and Twitter, @ChiCulturCenter.

### **Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events**

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events 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.