



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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***ART ON theMART TO LAUNCH SEPTEMBER 29, 2018 AS LARGEST DIGITAL ART PROJECTION IN THE WORLD***

*theMART and City of Chicago to Host Public Celebration of Inaugural Program*

theMART with the City of Chicago, today announced September 29, 2018 as the date for the inaugural program of *Art on theMART*, featuring work by four renowned contemporary artists, to be announced at a later date. The first-of-its-kind for Chicago, this curated series of digital artworks will be projected across 2.5 acres of theMART's exterior river-façade, creating the longest-running and largest digital art projection in the world.

"Both the Chicago Riverwalk and theMART are Chicago institutions, so it is fitting that the two will come together to strengthen the city's legacy of public art," said Mayor Emanuel. "This visionary project, led by Vornado and theMART, will quickly become a Chicago staple that helps to reshape the way people interact with the Chicago River."

On September 29, theMART and the City of Chicago will welcome the public to experience *Art on theMART* for the first time. Beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m., Wacker Dr. between N. Wells St. and N. Orleans St. will be closed off to traffic to enable public viewing of the projections. The program will begin after dusk (around 7:15 p.m.), running for approximately 35 minutes and culminating in a one-minute pyrotechnic display.

Following the launch event, the projections will be displayed up to two hours a night, five days a week (Wednesday – Sunday), for ten months of the year (March – December). Projections will be visible to the public from Wacker Dr. and along the Chicago Riverwalk. The City of Chicago and theMART will 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.

"I am happy to welcome the Art on the Mart program to Chicago's 42nd Ward," said Alderman Reilly. "This one-of-a-kind public art installation will help further activate the Chicago Riverwalk, and will bring dynamic and engaging visual art to downtown residents and visitors using state-of-the-art technology."

Artists for the inaugural program of *Art on theMART* are being selected by theMart, in consultation with a Curatorial Advisory Board shaped by theMart and the City's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Two of the selections are made in partnership with the Terra Foundation of American Art as part of *Art Design Chicago*, a year-long celebration of Chicago's art and design legacy.

"Vornado Realty Trust and theMART are proud to bring this unique and iconic public art installation to the City of Chicago," said theMART COO Myron Mauer. "We appreciate the support of Mayor Emanuel, Alderman Reilly, Commissioner Kelly, and all of the city departments which have helped make this project come to life. We are certain this extraordinary two and a half acre canvas will be recognized globally as the intersection of culture, art and real estate."

Obscura Digital, notable for its large-scale architectural projection mapping on iconic buildings around the world, has partnered with theMart owner Vornado Realty Trust and architecture firm Valerio Dewalt Train Associates, Inc. to design and implement the projection system which will illuminate theMART with large-scale visual artistry on a nightly basis. With 34 projectors, totaling almost one million lumens projected on the building façade, this will be the largest permanent projection system in the world and will feature a new software-driven platform that allows theMART to curate an ongoing exhibition of imagery from celebrated artists, keeping the illuminations fresh, timely and engaging.

"We're eager to welcome *Art on theMART* into the pantheon of iconic public artworks in Chicago," said Mark Kelly, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). "This installation is a result of Chicago's first Public Art Plan and has the potential to be as impactful as Cloud Gate, the Picasso, the Pilsen murals and the thousands of public art works which have transformed how we see and experience our city."

The City of Chicago is continuously exploring options for siting more public art not only on theMART and the Chicago Riverwalk but throughout the city. *Art on theMART* exemplifies the city's commitment to infusing arts and culture throughout its neighborhoods for all residents and visitors to enjoy, and is a key driver of the rising tourism numbers and last year's record-setting 55.2 million visitors from across the globe.

### **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 culture, art,

business, fashion, media and more. As the largest privately held commercial building in the United States, it is 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 showrooms, theMART serves as a business hub for interior designers, architects, contractors, business owners and buyers, and recently has become 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, Grainger and Caterpillar.

### **About Art Design Chicago**

Art Design Chicago is a spirited celebration of the unique and vital role Chicago plays as America's crossroads of creativity and commerce. Led by the [Terra Foundation for American Art](#), this citywide partnership of cultural organizations explores Chicago's art and design legacy with more than 30 exhibitions and hundreds of events in 2018. Support for Art Design Chicago is provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art and Presenting Partner The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation. Additional funding for the initiative is provided by Leslie Hindman Auctioneers, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Joyce Foundation. The Chicago Community Trust, Leo Burnett, Polk Bros. Foundation and EXPO CHICAGO are providing in-kind support. [artdesignchicago.org](http://artdesignchicago.org)

### **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](http://chicagoriverwalk.us) — and join the conversation on social media using #ChiRiverwalk.

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