



Terra Foundation for American Art to Release Report On Impact and Success of Its *Art Design Chicago* Initiative

Chicago—March 13, 2019—This month, the Terra Foundation for American Art will release a public report on the impact and success of its *Arts Design Chicago* initiative, which took place between January and December 2018. A city-wide endeavor, initiated by the Terra Foundation, *Art Design Chicago* provided the most comprehensive examination of the role Chicago, and its creative communities, have played in the development of some of the most important and iconic art and design innovations and movements, in the U.S. and abroad. Focusing in particular on the period between the 1871 Great Chicago Fire and the turn of the 21st century, the initiative revealed many little-known narratives and voices, and provided new insights on Chicago’s enduring influence on fine and decorative arts, graphic and commercial design, product development, and film. Through a wide range of exhibition, academic and public programs, new publications and digital resources, *Art Design Chicago* shone a light on Chicago’s art and design legacy, and its continued impact on contemporary practice.

The following provides a synopsis of the scope and impact of *Art Design Chicago*.

Financial Investment

The total financial investment in bringing *Art Design Chicago* to fruition was \$7.9 million, with the Terra Foundation contributing \$6.5 million. Additional financial support was provided by Presenting Partner The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation as well as by supporting partners Leslie Hindman Auctioneers, the MacArthur Foundation, and The Joyce Foundation.

Nearly 80% of the financial investment went toward supporting the production of exhibitions, programs, publications, and other projects. Approximately 15% of monies were used toward communications and promotions to support public engagement with the initiative, and an additional 5% was put toward administrative costs to support coordination and implementation among the initiative’s partners.

Partners and Projects

Art Design Chicago was initiated by the Terra Foundation following listening sessions with a wide array of cultural leaders in Chicago, who expressed a need and desire to delve more deeply into the work of the artists, designers, and innovators that have made Chicago a major cultural catalyst and incubator. This became the driving vision for *Art Design Chicago*, which was brought to life in 2018, through:

- the ingenuity and efforts of 95 cultural partners, ranging from well-known institutions like the Art Institute of Chicago and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago to university-affiliated museums like the Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College Chicago, and Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago to more focused and community-oriented organizations such as Chicago Film Archives, Edgar Miller Legacy, Hyde Park Art Center, Rebuild Foundation, and South Side Community Art Center;
- and the creation of 46 exhibitions, 36 scholarly convenings and symposia, 29 publications, 15 new digital resources, and more than 300 public programs that engaged a wide range of audiences with

talks, tours, block parties and festivals, film screenings, hands-on workshops, and other content-rich events.

In total, across its varied and dynamic projects, *Art Design Chicago* presented the vision and work of more than 700 artists, who lived and/or worked in Chicago. Many of the *Art Design Chicago* projects required extensive research and new scholarship. Among the cultural figures whose voices were resurrected and newly presented as part of initiative are Ralph Arnold, Charles Dawson, Morton and Millie Goldsholl, Yasuhiro Ishimoto, Barbara Jones-Hogu, Kenneth Josephson, Bill Walker, and Charles White.

Public Participation

To encourage broad-based public participation and movement across the city, *Art Design Chicago* exhibitions, programs, and projects were held in 35 of Chicago's 50 wards, with additional openings and events taking place outside Chicago and Illinois. The diversity and sprawl of the *Art Design Chicago* program resulted in substantive audience engagement. Using attendance figures provided by its partners, the Terra Foundation estimates that approximately 2.5 million people engaged with *Art Design Chicago* exhibitions and events throughout the course of the initiative.

To further understand the depth of this engagement, the Terra Foundation conducted an audience survey, which yielded the following information:

- 68% of those surveyed attended three or more *Art Design Chicago* exhibitions or events
- 20% of those surveyed attended seven or more *Art Design Chicago* exhibitions or events
- 42% of those surveyed visited at least one cultural institution for the first time
- 79% of those surveyed plans to return to at least one of the cultural institutions they visited in 2019
- 84% of those surveyed indicated that they learned something new about Chicago's art and design legacy

Visitorship to *Art Design Chicago* exhibitions included 5,154 public school students, predominantly from schools on the city's South and West Sides, through the initiative's Field Trip Program, which was developed in partnership with the Center for Urban Education at DePaul University.

Partner Feedback

The Terra Foundation and its many partners envisioned Art Design Chicago as a beginning—an initiative that would spur new ideas, collaborations, and scholarship. Many of the participating *Art Design Chicago* organizations have already begun talks about future projects that the initiative has inspired. Below is a selection of commentary provided by partners regarding legacy projects and their experience with *Art Design Chicago*.

“First and foremost, *Art Design Chicago* gave me the opportunity to strengthen my relationships to many colleagues in Chicago, and to meet people I hadn't met before. I also got to know and understand institutions I was only vaguely familiar with. These connections will undoubtedly prove beneficial for future projects. This initiative also proved that our institution can be extremely ambitious in our projects, plan longer term, and attract entirely new audiences. Our collection grew, our collective knowledge of Chicago art history increased, and we collaborated more than ever before,” said Karen Irvine, Chief Curator and Deputy Director, Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College of Chicago.

“As a relative newcomer to Chicago, *Art Design Chicago* allowed me to meet and work with a multitude of colleagues across the city. Even since the initiative has ended, these relationships are helping me to sustain a

more inclusive viewpoint in my programming that is representative and relates to our broader region and cultural realities. Several of these partners will be part of an upcoming exhibition as well, hosting programs that examine the idea of public space and that take place in locations of historic and contemporary significance throughout Chicago,” said January Parknos Arnall, Curator of Public Programs, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

“So often contemporary artists see their work as situated in the present moment, stemming from their current situation and experience, but *Art Design Chicago* encouraged them to see their work as part of an evolving continuum related to a history shaped by artists, thinkers, and designers,” said Tricia Van Eck, Artistic Director, 6018North.

“Exhibition research has raised the profile of our collections through external collaboration as well as given us an opportunity internally to learn more about relationships between individual objects in our collection. Because our *Art Design Chicago* exhibition was about our museum’s founder, this process was almost like genealogical research—uncovering and discovering forgotten pieces of our institutional history and pulling them together,” said Kate Swisher, Registrar and Collections Manager, DuSable Museum of African American History.

“Art Design Chicago provided an opportunity to connect Jane Addams scholars with contemporary artists, to transform thinking about the ways in which progressive movements have contributed to the arts in Chicago. Scholars expressed new perspectives about the reach and impact of fresh research, and the participating artists found a lot of power in connecting with an artistic legacy. For Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, introducing new ideas to an old narrative has been very exciting,” said Ross Jordon, Curatorial Manager, Jane Addams Hull-House Museum.

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