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ACTIVATE returns with *Wasteland: Dispose and Discover* on Wednesday, July 26

Chicago Loop Alliance transforms Chicago Theatre alley with a kinetic flame-shooting sculpture, garbage pond, and robotic flower

CHICAGO (July 10, 2017) — **Chicago Loop Alliance** (CLA) launches its second **ACTIVATE** event of the year with **Wasteland: Dispose and Discover** on Wednesday, July 26 from 5-10 p.m. at the Chicago Theatre alley (enter on Benton Place at State St). Guests who RSVP in advance at loopchicago.com/activate will receive a complimentary drink ticket for beer, wine, or cocktail at the event.

The 2017 ACTIVATE series invites the public to explore the pulse of daily life that the alley embodies. Art and programming will focus on a different aspect of alley life for each event. **Wasteland** explores the alley as the space where we dispose of our unwanted stuff – and discover discarded objects that continue to hold value. Through a series of interactive art installations using discarded objects and trash receptacles as the primary materials, the event highlights the story of our trash and the alley’s role as garbage hotspot.

The identity of the practical, hardworking alley is inextricably linked to trash. Chicagoans, who each throw out about one ton of garbage per year, make frequent trips to the alley dumpster. But, as the old adage goes, “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure.” Picture an alley picker’s excitement to find an antique footstool lounging by the trash can. Imagine a scrapper stacking old pipes and rusty stoves in his retrofitted pickup., Curators **Duncan Bindbeutel** and **Desmond Naranjo** have created an array of activities and installations that highlight the alley’s main function: a wasteland for the discarded.

- **Flametube**, a kinetic sculpture designed by Joshua T. Gilbert made of repurposed materials (such as recycled cell phone chargers and salvaged car components) that shoots flames in response to musical input
- **Mystery Cans** from artist Kelly Wyatt, whose contents will mystify patrons as new and mysterious forms emerge from not-so-ordinary trash and recycling cans throughout the night

- Propagation, a **robotic flower** made of reclaimed materials and cutting-edge 3D printed components, programmed to move, grow, and respond to the audience from industrial designer Steven Krejcik and software developer Paul Kirby
- **On Garbage Pond**, a large functional fountain sculpted by Devon Bonstein made from items found in Chicago alleys

The Portal, a monumental structure overlaid with an illuminated scenes of alley activities from Chicago's past, returns to amplify the ACTIVATE experience. Designed by PORT Urbanism, the structure will display a photo montage comprised of contemporary and historic images to support each theme, inspiring passersby to give an alley a second glance and wonder about its history. By their very nature, alleys are voids – the space between buildings. The Portal provides a sense of arrival and puts the alleyway in play with the streetscape.

The other 2017 ACTIVATE events on August 24 and September 28 will explore the alley as a channel pulsating with power lines and a hideaway where we can cavort and misbehave away from the eyes of the street. Dates are subject to change. Specific location and event details will be posted two weeks prior at loopchicago.com/activate.

Over the past three seasons, ACTIVATE has generated nearly \$1.7 million in estimated economic impact to Loop businesses, with nearly \$1 million in 2016 alone. More than 47,000 people have attended ACTIVATE over the course of the series. "Linger Longer" is a program of exclusive offers and promotions to drive traffic to CLA business members before and after each event.

ACTIVATE sponsors include: School of the Art Institute of Chicago as presenting sponsor; PNC Bank, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Little Things, and CH Distillery as title sponsors; Vitacoco and RX Bar as event sponsors; and TimeOut Chicago as media sponsor.

About Chicago Loop Alliance

Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA), the sole service provider for Special Service Area 1-2015, creates, manages, and promotes high-performing urban experiences, attracting people and investment to the Loop. For more information, please visit www.LoopChicago.com.

About ACTIVATE

ACTIVATE is a series of pop-up arts programs that encourage visitors to see the Loop anew. ACTIVATE transforms alleys and other urban locations into creative exhibition spaces that bring artists and the public together for an evening of exploration, interaction, and celebration of the arts. Chicago Loop Alliance launched the initiative in 2014.

About Duncan Bindbeutel

Duncan Bindbeutel's work, collaborations, and curatorial endeavors emphasize a use of unconventional materials, reclaimed space and elaborate installations. While attending the New School in New York City, he worked on projects including monthly warehouse parties throughout Brooklyn, the conversion of a fleet of abandoned boats into operational hotel rooms, and production and filming of New York City's longest-running public access fine art game show. Since moving to Chicago, Bindbeutel has been building and installing large-scale advertisements and sculptures throughout the downtown area, as well as working for art departments on numerous films and commercials filmed throughout the city.

About Desmond Naranjo

Desmond Naranjo received a Bachelors of Design in industrial design from UIC and has spent his professional career to date designing and building installations for marketing campaigns with Illumivation Studios. He is now transitioning to software development focused on public service and government. inspiration for this ACTIVATE event is the idea of “third places,” those between work life and home life, the role of raw material in creating valuable things, the beauty and opportunity present in urban life and objects and places we perceive as waste.

About PORT Urbanism

PORT is a leading-edge design consultancy whose work focuses on the analysis, visioning, design, and implementation of new forms of collective space and the public realm, ranging in scale from plazas, parks, and public waterfronts to institutional framework plans and regional planning strategies. The practice synthesizes professional expertise in urban design, landscape architecture, architecture, ecology and urban planning in order to provide the hybrid model of design services necessary to negotiate today’s complex public realm challenges.



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