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Interactive “Give” sculpture unveiled on State Street at Chicago Loop Alliance’s The Gateway public plaza

Chicago Street Musicians engaged for pop-up lunchtime performances

CHICAGO (August 22, 2013)—**Chicago Loop Alliance’s** (CLA) newly created public plaza on State Street, **The Gateway**, received two new additions this week: **Give**, an interactive 14-foot-tall steel sculpture by local artist **Dusty Folwarczny**, and a series of ongoing pop-up lunchtime performances from the **Chicago Street Musicians**. Both of these activations on The Gateway, which occupies the State Street median from Lake Street north to Wacker Drive, are a continuation of CLA’s efforts to improve the quality of the public realm downtown, creating a distinctive sense of place and a powerful sense of arrival into the Loop. Since opening in June, The Gateway has become a lunchtime destination, drawing 40-50 visitors at any given time during the afternoon hours.

“In addition to providing a new interactive element for visitors to The Gateway, *Give* helps us cultivate community, art and culture in conjunction with the Chicago Department of Transportation’s ‘Make Way for People’ initiative,” says CLA Executive Director **Michael Edwards**. “Placemaking and place management have emerged as key priorities in Chicago Loop Alliance’s ongoing strategic planning process, and The Gateway is our first major experiment activating a public plaza in the Loop.”

Give, a loop-shaped sculpture, adds to the aesthetic appeal of The Gateway by providing a place for pedestrians to walk through, sit within or frame pictures of State Street to the south. The colors and material of *Give* reflect the surrounding environment and nearby El tracks, in addition to referencing the surrounding Loop neighborhood. Although the steel ring is physically large and commanding, Folwarczny believes her work’s interactive element makes it approachable.

“When someone gives the side of *Give* a push, the steel wall has enough give in it to bounce or rock in place a bit,” Folwarczny says. “You feel strong for being able to move something so massive! The piece explores the act of giving—a transfer of energy from one person to another.”

Chicago Loop Alliance is also sponsoring members of the **Chicago Street Musicians**, a local not-for-profit organization, to perform in unexpected pop-up concerts at The Gateway in the coming weeks. The concerts will occur twice each week for about an hour during lunchtime. Performers

currently scheduled to appear include guitarist/vocalist George Banks, saxophonist Beau Barry, keyboardist Eugene Rowland and violinist Hannah K. Watson.

The Gateway is supported through funding from the Chicago Loop Alliance Foundation, a 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to develop, support and promote the use of art, design and technology to activate public space in the Loop, benefitting businesses, individuals and stakeholders within in the service area of Chicago Loop Alliance. The Gateway was made possible by 42nd Ward Alderman Brendan Reilly and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Gabe Klein. CDOT's Make Way for People initiative, which aims to create public spaces that cultivate community and culture in Chicago's neighborhoods through placemaking, was the impetus for The Gateway. In addition to improving street safety and promoting walkable communities, Make Way for People supports economic development for Chicago's local businesses and neighborhoods.

Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA) is a member-based business organization that represents Chicago's most dynamic mixed-use district—the Loop—and advocates for the rapidly growing central business area. CLA is focused on promoting and uniting Loop businesses and organizations to support one another in creating a vibrant, flourishing Loop where people live, work and play.

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