

Media Contact:

Carly Leviton
Carol Fox and Associates
773.969.5034
carlyl@carolfoxassociates.com

MCA
CHIC
AGO

EXPO
CHGO
THE INTERNATIONAL
EXPOSITION OF
CONTEMPORARY
& MODERN ART
13 – 17 SEPTEMBER 2017
OPENING PREVIEW
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 13

For Immediate Release:

September 20, 2017

**SIXTH ANNUAL OPENING PREVIEW OF EXPO CHICAGO AND
THE MCA'S VERNISSAGE WELCOMES MORE THAN 8,500 PEOPLE AT NAVY PIER**

The Opening Night benefit for EXPO CHICAGO, Hosted by the MCA
Women's Board, Raises \$300,000



(Chicago, IL) **EXPO CHICAGO**, The International Exposition of Contemporary and Modern Art, opened its sixth edition to more than 8,500 people during **Vernissage**, the opening night event benefiting the **Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago**. A vast crowd of the city's business, civic and cultural leaders, as well as artists, collectors and art enthusiasts filled Navy Pier's Festival Hall Wednesday, September 13 as they were treated to a special preview of more than 135 of the world's leading galleries from 25 countries and 58 cities.

Notable guests included **Lena Baume, Allison Berg, Bruce and Barbara Berger, Marlene Breslow and Berle Blitstein, Fred Bidwell, Neil Bluhm, Barbara Bluhm-Kaul and Don Kaul, Pierre Boulais, Gwen Callans and Biff Ruttenberg, Larry and Marilyn Fields, Caryn and King John and Sharon Hoffman, Bill Gautreaux, Helyn Goldenberg and Michael Alper, Rod Lubeznik and Susan Goodman, James Gordon, Paul and Linda Gotskind, Ken Griffin, Jack and Sandra Guthman, Anne Kaplan, Susie Karkomi and Marvin Leavitt, Liz Lefkofsky, Nancy Lerner and David Frej, Jennifer Litowitz, Susan Manilow, Eric McKissack, Gary Metzner, Bob Munch, Lewis and Susan Nerman, Claire and Mike O'Grady, Randall and Shelia Ott, MK Pritzker, Alan and Rebecca Ross, Cathy Ross and Chris Liguori, Lyn Segal, Amir Shariat, Irving Stenn, Kristin Binder Stevens and Stan Stevens, Carl and Marilyn Thoma, Lucas Walton, and Helen Zell**, among others.

This unique celebration, co-chaired by MCA Women's Board members **Tonya Geesman, Christine Poggianti and Ellen Wallace**, began with a patron reception at 5:00 pm in the VIP Collector's Lounge, presented by Northern Trust, featuring food by some of Chicago's top restaurants and food providers including: 20E, Talbott Hotel, BellyQ, Chicago Raw, Marisol, Big Star, Riva Restaurant, Tanta, The Windsor, Yusho, Eli's Cheesecake and Skinny Pop and Nude Dude Food. Featured beverage sponsors include Lagunitas and Terrazas de los Andes.

At 6 pm President | Director of EXPO CHICAGO **Tony Karman** took a humbling moment to thank the crowd for their tremendous support for the fair's sixth year. He then called on MCA Chicago's Pritzker Director **Madeleine Grynsztejn** to speak to the incredible partnership between the MCA and EXPO CHICAGO.

"We have been collaborating with the art fair since the inception of Vernissage and we are especially proud of that partnership this year because we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of

EXPO CHICAGO And The MCA's Vernissage Welcomes More Than 8,500 Guests

the MCA Women's Board. Thank you to the Women's Board and all of you for making the MCA the preeminent contemporary art museum in Chicago and beyond for 50 years." She added, "Collaborations like this are so important, and I am proud to debut another collaboration between the MCA, world-renowned artist Kerry James Marshall and fashion brand MZ Wallace. Together, we debut a gorgeous bag based on a painting by Kerry James Marshall in our permanent collection, and all proceeds go directly to our education programs."

Northern Trust Wealth Management Central Region President **Mac MacLellan** then took the stage stating, "We are thrilled with the growth of the art fair and the major impact it has had on our entire city. Northern Trust remains the only financial services firm based in the U.S. to sponsor a modern and contemporary art exhibition of this scale and size, showing our firm's commitment to the art community." He continued, "The entire art world will have its eyes on Chicago the next several days and that is due in large part to the unique collaborations that EXPO CHICAGO has made possible between the public sector, such as the City of Chicago and Navy Pier; the private sector as represented by our Corporate Sponsors; and the arts community including artists, gallerists and collectors. In this time where there appears to be so much divisiveness and not enough collaboration among disparate groups, it is an example I hope that others can follow not only in our city but throughout the country."

MacLellan then introduced Navy Pier's Chief Program and Civic Engagement officer **Michelle T. Boone** who welcomed everyone to Navy Pier stating, "Tony and his vision for EXPO CHICAGO has really paved the way for establishing Navy Pier as one of the most exciting cultural districts in the city of Chicago and I am just thrilled and honored to continue this tradition and partnership." She reiterated MacLellan's sentiments by adding, "This is a tremendous demonstration of the power of partnerships and collaborations between private, public and non-private sectors pulling together to make this the most exciting arts week not only in Chicago but in the nation."

Chairman of the Chicago Architecture Biennial **Jack Guthman** also took a moment to thank Tony Karman for his vision. "I told the Mayor we had to align the Biennial with EXPO CHICAGO because no one promotes Chicago the way Tony Karman promotes Chicago. I wanted the biennial, my little ship, to follow in his wake, and the Mayor got it right away."

The City of Chicago Commissioner of Cultural Affairs and Special Events **Mark Kelly** concluded the remarks, perfectly encapsulating the unique collaborations of the night and throughout the city. "This year is the 50th anniversary of the MCA and the sixth year of EXPO CHICAGO. 50 is the most perfect number in numerology, and six is the most harmonious of the single digit numbers so what we have is major good karma here today. Congratulations to the MCA and to EXPO CHICAGO. On behalf of Mayor Rahm Emanuel, I want to thank Tony Karman and his staff for lighting a fuse, making Chicago on fire with the visual arts. This is a civic event that reaches out into the entire city including artists, museums, galleries, cultural organizations and more. We are not only the center of visual arts in the country but in the world. When you take EXPO CHICAGO, the Chicago Architecture Biennial, the upcoming Art Design Chicago, the Year of Public Art and all the great work going on in the city, right here and now, this is the epicenter of great visual arts in the world."

A bottle of **Ruinart Champagne** was popped and all gathered together for a celebratory toast before making their way onto the show floor.

Guests mingled throughout the show floor until **Nick Cave's** *Up Right Chicago* commenced on the show floor featuring a processional of dancers in soundsuits making their way through

EXPO CHICAGO And The MCA's Vernissage Welcomes More Than 8,500 Guests

Festival Hall. The performance, a part of *Here Hear Chicago* and a unique collaboration between Cave and architect **Jeanne Gang** continued in the Aon Ballroom welcoming guests of Vernissage in addition to the general public.

About the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is one of the nation's largest multidisciplinary museums devoted to the art of our time. With an international reputation for groundbreaking exhibitions, the MCA presents the latest in cutting-edge, contemporary culture. The performing arts program, MCA Stage, features leading performers from around the globe in its 300-seat theater. Located near the historic Water Tower in the heart of downtown Chicago, the MCA features exhibition spaces, the restaurant Marisol with an interior designed by artist Chris Ofili, the Commons engagement space, a gift store, and a terraced sculpture garden with a view of Lake Michigan.

About EXPO CHICAGO

EXPO CHICAGO, The International Exposition of Contemporary and Modern Art, is presented by Art Expositions, LLC at Navy Pier's Festival Hall, hosting more than 135 leading International exhibitors presented alongside one of the highest quality platforms for global contemporary art and culture. Entering its seventh year as a leading international art fair, EXPO CHICAGO offers diverse programming including **/Dialogues**, **IN/SITU**, **IN/SITU Outside**, **EXPO VIDEO**, the **Curatorial Forum**, the **Art Critics Forum**, **Special Exhibitions**, **EXPO Sound** and **OVERRIDE | A Billboard Project**. In addition, EXPO CHICAGO continues to publish **THE SEEN**, Chicago's International Journal of Contemporary & Modern Art. Under the leadership of President and Director **Tony Karman**, EXPO CHICAGO draws upon the city's rich history as a vibrant international cultural destination, while highlighting the region's contemporary arts community and inspiring its collector base. In 2017, **EXPO CHICAGO** aligned with the opening of the **Chicago Architecture Biennial** (September 16–January 7, 2018), establishing the city as a preeminent destination for global contemporary art and architecture, intersecting across a wide variety of programs including panels, international residencies, exhibitions and citywide events. In addition, EXPO CHICAGO also partnered with the **Palais de Tokyo** in Paris for its first U.S. satellite exhibition to kick off EXPO CHICAGO (September 12–October 29, 2017) at the Roundhouse at the DuSable Museum of African American History.

EXPO CHICAGO 2018 will return September 27–30. For more information on EXPO CHICAGO and **EXPO ART WEEK** visit **expo-chicago.com**.

#