

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

'Artist Barbara Kasten Commissioned to Design Stage for Hans Ulrich Obrist's Creative Chicago: An Interview Marathon and Four-Act Structure Announced'. *Artsy* Online. 06 September 2018



## Artist Barbara Kasten Commissioned to Design Stage for Hans Ulrich Obrist's Creative Chicago: An Interview Marathon and Four-Act Structure Announced



Images courtesy the artist and Bortolami Gallery

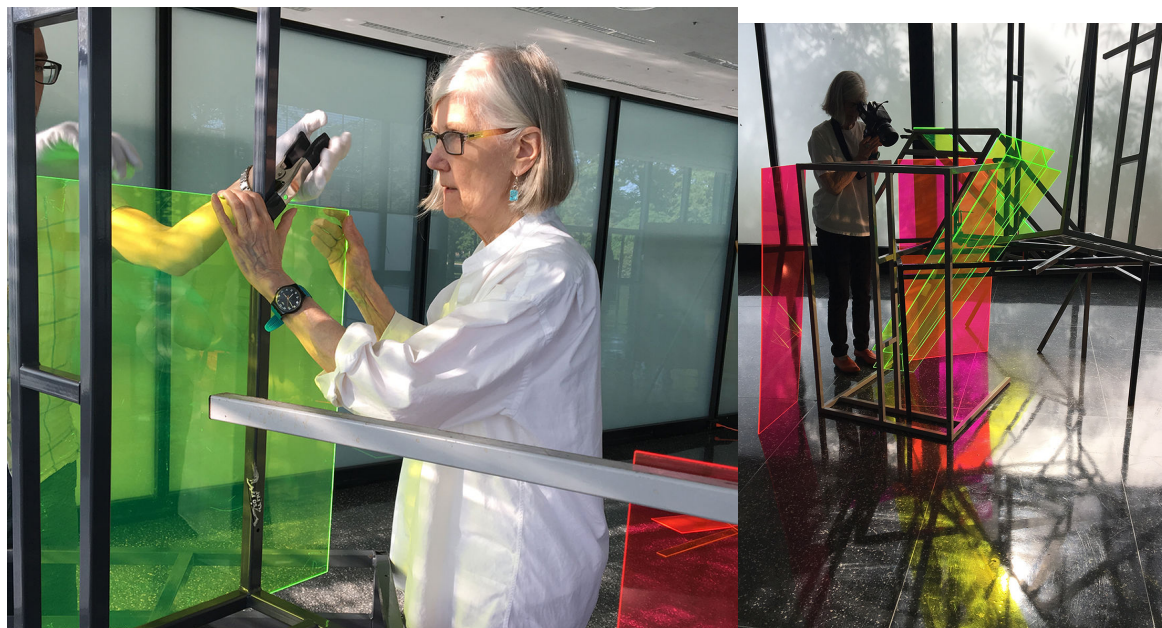
Chicago Humanities Festival, in partnership with The Terra Foundation for American Art, EXPO CHICAGO and Navy Pier, today announced Chicago-based artist Barbara Kasten will create a specially commissioned, Bauhaus-inspired set design for Hans Ulrich Obrist's Creative Chicago: An Interview Marathon. Led by Obrist, Artistic Director of London's Serpentine Galleries and one of the world's most influential curators and critics, the Marathon will be structured in four acts, thematically grouping interview participants with subjects ranging from poetry to historical archives. Creative Chicago is Obrist's first ever U. S. Marathon, taking place Saturday, September 29, 2018, from 1 – 6 pm in Navy Pier's historic Aon Grand Ballroom, during EXPO CHICAGO (September 27–30, 2018). The event is funded by the Terra Foundation for American Art and The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, and is a centerpiece of the Terra Foundation's year-long, citywide initiative, Art Design Chicago, celebrating the city's rich art and design history through more than 30 exhibitions and hundreds of programs and special events throughout 2018.

"In keeping with my longstanding following of the legendary Studs Terkel, and the site of my archives, Chicago is a natural choice for my first Interview Marathon in the United States," said Artistic Director of the Serpentine Galleries Hans Ulrich Obrist. "The participants selected for this Marathon will speak to the legacy and future of creative life in Chicago, and the four-act structure of the interviews will address themes both locally and internationally relevant."

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Kasten's stage set, entitled *Intervention*, connects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Crown Hall and the New Bauhaus principles brought to the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) by László Moholy-Nagy. Both Mies van der Rohe and Moholy-Nagy's inventive approaches to experimentation and innovation resulted in rich developments in architecture, design and photographic practices worldwide. The Constructivist inspired stage design, which will utilize IIT student worktables, merges Kasten's vision with the artistic points of view of these two Bauhaus masters whose legacies are central to Chicago's creative, educational and cultural heritage.



Images courtesy the artist and Bortolami Gallery

"My sculpture celebrates the diversity of Chicago by honoring Moholy-Nagy and Mies van der Rohe, two incredible European immigrants who made a lasting impact on the arts and architecture of the city, as well as the world," said Kasten. "I grew up in Bridgeport, a neighborhood adjacent to the Illinois Institute of Technology, unaware that these creative geniuses—both connected to the school—would influence my career as an artist."

The sculptural elements of the stage set will exist beyond Creative Chicago, with the possibility of exhibition and display in the future.

"Barbara Kasten's tribute to Chicago design icons Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and László Moholy-Nagy reflects the mission of Art Design Chicago which brings to light the

central role Chicago has played as a global nexus of art and design," said Amy Zinck, Executive Vice President of the Terra Foundation for American Art. "Additional stories of immigrant artists' contributions to Chicago's cultural landscape are also revealed in several Art Design Chicago exhibitions on view at partner institutions throughout the city this fall, from the DePaul Art Museum to the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership, and many more."

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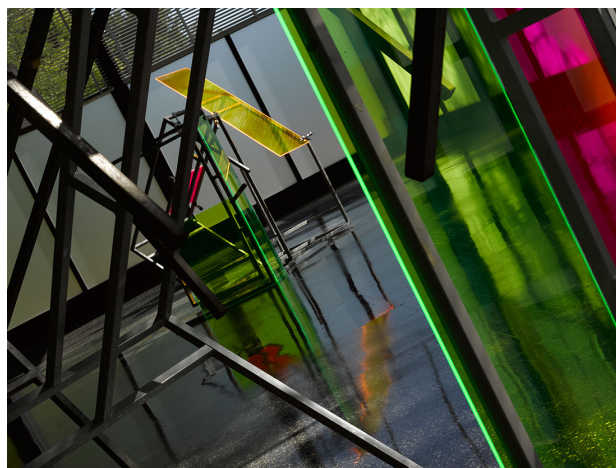


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The four-act structure of Creative Chicago: An Interview Marathon thematically groups together prominent Chicago creatives in a series of conversations that will highlight both the unique talents of each individual and the multi-disciplinary and collaborative nature of Chicago's cultural scene.

“Dividing the marathon into acts is both a small homage to our city’s brilliant theater scene and gives momentum to our exploration of Chicago-style creativity” said Alison Cuddy, the Marilyn Thoma Artistic Director at the Chicago Humanities Festival. “There is a loose chronology to the overall event—a prologue followed by a series of conversations moving from foundational to future-thinking individuals—but each section will serve as a crossroads for our city’s creative history; past, present and future.

To date, confirmed Creative Chicago: An Interview Marathon participants include artist Amanda Williams, artist Art Green, artist Barbara Kasten, artist Brandon Breaux, owner of Old Fashioned Donuts Buritt Bulloch, artist Cauleen Smith, photographer Dawoud Bey, organizer/activist Eddie Bocanegra, writer Eula Biss, writer/artist Eve L. Ewing, poet Fatimah Asghar, artist Gerald Williams, architect Jeanne Gang, artist/art historian Joseph Grigely, Museum Director of the Obama Presidential Center Museum Louise Bernard, artist/performer Shani Crowe, architect Stanley Tigerman, artist Theaster Gates, sculptor Richard Hunt and cultural historian Tim Samuelson.



Images courtesy the artist and Bortolami Gallery

“Through our partnership with Hans Ulrich Obrist since 2015, we have worked closely to ensure that artists in Chicago are elevated onto the international stage—and the Marathon provides the next step for this initiative,” said EXPO CHICAGO Director of Programming Stephanie Cristello. “The program acts as a platform to record these contemporary histories, supporting many of the leading contemporary artists living and working in Chicago represented by our international list of galleries, as well as traces an intersection between the exposition’s year-round programs—including a panel and performance presented earlier this year at US Pavilion at the Venice Biennale with Marathon participants Amanda Williams and Shani Crowe.



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### **About Barbara Kasten**

Barbara Kasten was born in 1936 in Chicago. She received her BFA from the University of Arizona in 1959 and MFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts in 1970. She currently lives and works in Chicago. Her work has been exhibited across the United States and Europe. Most recently, Kasten was the subject of a retrospective at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia that travelled to the Graham Foundation in Chicago and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art. Her work has been featured in institutions including the Sprengel Museum in Hannover Germany, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Tate Modern in London, The Whitney Museum of American Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. among many others.

### **About Chicago Humanities Festival**

The Chicago Humanities Festival believes that humanity thrives when people gather, connect, and open themselves to ideas that go beyond their individual experience. For nearly 30 years, the Festival has been curating live events that allow audiences to connect with today's most provocative thinkers—both established and emerging—and to see the world differently. Under the leadership of Executive Director Phillip Bahar and Marilynn Thoma Artistic Director Alison Cuddy, CHF is one of Chicago's most vibrant civic institutions and a platform for celebrating the social life of ideas. [chicagohumanities.org](http://chicagohumanities.org)

### **About EXPO CHICAGO**

EXPO CHICAGO 2018, 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. [epochicago.com](http://epochicago.com)

### **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. Initiated by the Terra Foundation for American Art, this citywide partnership of more than 75 cultural organizations explores Chicago's art and design legacy and continued impact with more than 30 exhibitions, hundreds of events, as well as the creation of several scholarly publications and a four-part television series presented throughout 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. [www.ArtDesignChicago.org](http://www.ArtDesignChicago.org) #ArtDesignChicago

### **About Terra Foundation for American Art**

Since it was established in 1978, the Terra Foundation for American Art has been one of the leading foundations focused on the historical art of the United States. Headquartered in Chicago, it is committed to fostering exploration, understanding, and enjoyment of American art among national and international audiences. To further cross-cultural dialogue on American art, the foundation supports and collaborates on innovative exhibitions, research, and educational programs. The foundation also provides opportunities for interaction and study through the presentation and ongoing development of its own art collection in Chicago, recognizing the importance of experiencing original works of art. Implicit in such activities is the belief that art has the potential both to distinguish cultures and to unite them. [www.terraamericanart.org](http://www.terraamericanart.org)

### **About Navy Pier**

Located on Lake Michigan, Navy Pier is one of the top-attended nonprofit cultural destinations in the Midwest, stretching more than six city blocks and welcoming more than 9 million guests annually. Originally opened in 1916 as a shipping and recreation facility, this Chicago landmark showcases more than 50 acres of parks, restaurants, attractions, retail shops, sightseeing and dining cruise boats, exposition facilities and more. In 2018, Navy Pier continues to usher in its second century with ongoing pier-wide redevelopment efforts – including the Fifth Third Bank Family Pavilion, Peoples Energy Welcome Pavilion, 220-room hotel and more – in addition to free, year-round

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arts and cultural programming designed to inspire, educate and connect communities across the city and globe. For more information, visit [www.navypier.org](http://www.navypier.org) or download the free Navy Pier app for Android and iOS device users.

<https://www.artsy.net/article/expo-chicago-artist-barbara-kasten-commissioned-design-stage-hans-ulrich-obrist-s-creative-chicago-interview-marathon-four-act-structure-announced>

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