“The Ship of Tolerance” Sails onto Navy Pier Fall 2019 in Partnership with EXPO CHICAGO

Conceptual public art installation to arrive and “dock” in Navy Pier’s Polk Bros Park from September 17 through October 6 as a visual representation and vessel of tolerance and peace

CHICAGO – Navy Pier, Chicago’s iconic lakefront destination, is thrilled to partner again with EXPO CHICAGO, the International Exposition of Modern & Contemporary Art (September 19 – 22, 2019), to present a free, temporary public art installation at the City Stage lawn in Polk Bros Park. From Tuesday, September 17 through Sunday, October 6, guests will have the opportunity to view and interact with “The Ship of Tolerance,” a dual art installation and vessel presented by The Ilya & Emilia Kabakov Foundation.

The mission of “The Ship of Tolerance” is to educate and connect youth of different continents, cultures and identities through the language of art. The conceptual art piece reflects how divergent cultures interpret tolerance and how these understandings overlap. The ship’s sails are stitched together from drawings, painted on silk by local schoolchildren from different ethnic, religious and social backgrounds to convey a message of tolerance and hope.

“We are all afraid of the unknown,” said artist Emilia Kabakov. “Like a child, you are afraid of something coming at you from the darkness of different religions, different races. We work with these fears—trying to eliminate them, trying to learn about the others—and trying to make our audience understand that knowledge is a tool, which helps with communication. You do not even need language, just cultural inheritance that we all have, by using dance, music, poetry and song. You just have to be tolerant and willing to learn how to trust each other.”

Over the course of nearly three weeks, “The Ship of Tolerance” will be on display at Navy Pier as the installation’s seventeenth exhibition site, inviting Chicagoans and guests to utilize the space to reflect and discuss the themes of tolerance and peace. Project partners and collaborators for this version include Chicago Children’s Museum, ChiArts, Chicago Public Libraries, Hyde Park Art Center, MacArthur Middle School and many others.

Originally built in Siwa, Egypt in 2005 to engage children and young adults in an active discussion surrounding tolerance, participants were exposed to different cultures and ideas while creating astonishing works of art. These drawings were later sewn together to form a mosaic sail, which was mounted atop a ship. Since then, past iterations of the project have taken place in Venice, Italy; St. Moritz, Switzerland; Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; Miami; Havana; Brooklyn, New York; Moscow; Samara, Russia; Zug, Switzerland; Cham, Switzerland; Rome; Capalbio, Italy; Rostock, Germany; and Duren, Germany. The ship will sail around London in early September 2019 before arriving to the Windy City.

The vessel will be available for public viewing beginning Tuesday, September 17. Additionally, on Saturday, September 21, Navy Pier will host a special “Ship of Tolerance Day,” featuring performances and workshops from 2 – 4 p.m. to offer a public forum of discussion on the work as part of the larger EXPO CHICAGO event schedule. Two concerts will be held on Tuesday, September 17 and Sunday, September 22 at the South Shore Cultural Center and the Preston Bradley Hall,
respectively, featuring performances by children and young adults to showcase cooperation through music and dance across cultural barriers.

The installation is presented in collaboration with EXPO CHICAGO, and is a part of IN/SITU Outside, a citywide initiative that provides the opportunity for EXPO CHICAGO exhibitors to present temporary public art installations situated along the lakefront and throughout Chicago neighborhoods. In addition to Navy Pier, IN/SITU Outside partnerships include the Chicago Park District (CPD) and the City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE).

“The Ship of Tolerance” is part of Navy Pier’s ongoing commitment to offer guests free, one-of-a-kind arts and cultural programming, designed to inspire, educate and connect communities across the city and globe. For more information, please visit www.navypier.org.

PHOTOS: Ship of Tolerance | Credit: Identified within Dropbox

About the Ship of Tolerance and the Ilya and Emilia Kabakov Foundation
Ilya and Emilia Kabakov Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 2012 with a mission to promote and support art and education. The Ship of Tolerance is one of the Foundation’s ambitious projects that is designed to bridge divisions, overcome segregation, racism and refugee problems by working with children through the universal language of music and art. www.shipoftolerance.org. Orliana Morag currently acts as ambassador for the Ship of Tolerance, the globally celebrated project dedicated to educating and connecting children from different continents, cultures and identities through the universal language of art. Orliana has traveled extensively to speak to young people about cooperation and overcoming prejudice and bias, giving talks and performing in New York, Moscow, Havana, Miami, Rome, Zug, and Rostock. She is thrilled that her newly adopted city of Chicago will host the Ship next September.

About EXPO CHICAGO
Opening the fall art season each September, EXPO CHICAGO, The International Exposition of Contemporary & Modern Art features leading international galleries alongside one of the highest quality platforms for contemporary art and culture. Hosted within Navy Pier’s Festival Hall, EXPO CHICAGO’s eighth edition will take place September 19 – 22, 2019, in alignment with the 2019 Chicago Architecture Biennial (September 19, 2019 – January 5, 2020). EXPO CHICAGO presents a diverse program, including /Dialogues (presented in partnership with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago) and Exchange by Northern Trust, an unrivaled talks program for both public and VIP audiences; IN/SITU, dynamic on-site installations highlighting large-scale sculpture, film, and site-specific work; and major public art initiatives, including IN/SITU Outside, public art installed throughout Chicago Park District locations, and OVERRIDE, a curated selection of international artists throughout the city’s digital billboard network. The EXPO CHICAGO program also features an unprecedented commitment to host curatorial initiatives during the exposition, including the Curatorial Forum in partnership with Independent Curators International (ICI), and the Curatorial Exchange, which partners with foreign agencies and consulates to expand the exposition’s global reach.

EXPO CHICAGO is the publisher of THE SEEN, Chicago’s only international journal of contemporary and modern art criticism, online and in print. EXPO CHICAGO is presented by Art Expositions, LLC. 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. For more information on EXPO CHICAGO and EXPO ART WEEK (September 16 – 22, 2019) visit expochicago.com.

About Navy Pier
Located on Lake Michigan, Navy Pier is one of the top-attended nonprofit destinations in the Midwest, stretching more than six city blocks and welcoming nearly 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. The Pier recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with the unveiling of the iconic Centennial Wheel, Polk Bros Park, Fifth Third Bank Family Pavilion and Peoples Energy Welcome Pavilion. In 2019, Navy Pier continues to usher in its second century with ongoing pier-wide redevelopment efforts – including a 220-room Hilton hotel with rooftop bar Offshore (now open), a marina and more – in addition to free, year-round arts and cultural programming designed to inspire, educate and connect communities across the city and globe. Click here to donate to Navy Pier, a 501(c)(3) organization, in support of free public programs. For more information, visit www.navypier.org.

Naval Pier Mission Statement
Navy Pier is the People’s Pier, Chicago’s lakefront treasure, welcoming all and offering dynamic and eclectic experiences through partnerships and programs that inspire discovery and wonder.

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