

# Artist Jan Tichy leads community art project to “light” the last high-rise at Cabrini-Green in Chicago

RICHARD  
GRAY  
GALLERY

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Beginning on the evening of March 28, the last high-rise building at the Cabrini-Green housing projects (1230 N. Burling St., Chicago) will be lit up in the form of 134 LED lights, one for each apartment in the building. The light installation will be visible in the evenings during the four-week demolition period. As the building is razed, the lights will be demolished along with the building.

The public light art installation, titled *Project Cabrini Green*, is a community-based art project conceived by artist and educator Jan Tichy. *Project Cabrini Green* involved over 200 people to realize, from Cabrini-Green and the wider city. Jan Tichy is represented by Richard Gray Gallery.



From January to March 2011, together with over 20 students from the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago**, Tichy held two and three-day workshops with local youth at **Cabrini Connections**, **Marwen**, **After School Matters Creative Writing Program at Gallery 37** and **ThaBrigade Stamps – Cabrini Green Marching Band**. In the workshops, students were introduced to public art and light art, and brainstorming sessions and group activities were held on the concepts of Home, Public Housing, Community and Demolition. The youth were then charged with the task of writing poems or texts that addressed the concepts above. Employing a computer program developed by SAIC students that translates sound into light, the youth performed their texts for recording, creating unique light patterns. These light patterns define each of the 134 LED lights at the high-rise. Thus, the youth’s voices literally “tell” their stories through light.

As a component of *Project Cabrini Green*, live-feed footage from the site will be projected at the Museum of Contemporary Art at street-level, on the corner of Pearson and Mies Van der Rohe streets behind the museum’s glass façade, thereby rendering it visible at night. A voice/light-activated model of the high-rise will accompany the installation, and the youth participant’s written texts and audio content will be available. Tricia Van Eck, Associate Curator, is the organizing curator for of the installation at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The youth’s text, the audio content, and the live-feed video will also be available on the project website.

For more information please visit the website (live March 28, 2011): [www.projectcabrinigreen.org](http://www.projectcabrinigreen.org) or follow us on Facebook by searching “Project Cabrini Green”

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### **About Jan Tichy:**

Jan Tichy is a contemporary artist and educator who works with video, sculpture, architecture, and photography. Born in Prague in 1974, Tichy studied in Israel before moving to Chicago in 2007, where he earned his MFA at the School of the Art Institute (2009) and where he now teaches. Tichy has had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art; Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago; and the Center for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv. Over the past years his work has been included in exhibitions in Barcelona, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Jerusalem, New York, Paris, Prague, Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Venice, and Washington, D.C. His work, *Bats (2007)*, was recently acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He has been nominated for Gottesdiener Prize of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art for 2011. In March 2011, the publication Art Review named Tichy one of the *Future Greats*.

### **About Cabrini Connections:**

Cabrini Connections is a one-on-one tutoring and mentoring program for youth in grades 7-12 who live or go to school in and around the Cabrini-Green neighborhood of Chicago. In addition to weekly tutoring and mentoring sessions, the program also offers learning and enrichment clubs (art, video, tech, and writing), field trips to colleges and workplaces, and college application assistance.

### **About Marwen:**

Founded in 1987, Marwen is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the development of Chicago's under-served youth in grades 6-12 through free visual arts, college planning, and career preparation programs. In a typical year, students from 54 of the city's 57 zip codes and from more than 220 schools travel to Marwen, where they take classes taught by practicing artists.

### **About After School Matters:**

After School Matters® is a nonprofit organization that offers Chicago teens innovative out-of-school activities through its science37, sports37, tech37, words37 and nationally recognized gallery37 programs. Programs are provided through a network of public and private partnerships that include the Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library and community organizations across the city. Hands-on, project-based programs introduce teens to rewarding careers and help them develop marketable job skills.

### **About The Queen's Brigade Marching Band:**

The Queen's Brigade Marching Band program is a growing program designed to give youth of the Near North/Cabrini Green community training in the arts with a concentration in music education. It is a comprehensive music program encompassing the goals and objectives for music education outlined in the "No Child Left Behind Act" enabling youth to expand their artistic horizons through educational and social outlets while building their resume of accomplishments leading to a bright outlook on life.

### **About the Chicago Housing Authority:**

CHA was created in 1937 to create and expand affordable housing opportunities for low-income families and seniors. Today CHA assists more than 50,000 Chicagoans living in public housing and participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Currently, CHA is carrying out the Plan for Transformation, an ambitious revitalization effort that will deliver 25,000 units of new, affordable housing by 2015.

### **About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC):**

A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, SAIC offers nationally accredited degree programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields.

### **About the National Public Housing Museum:**

The National Public Housing Museum is a living cultural experience on social justice and human rights. We are more than objects and artifacts; we are the sum of our stories. We are delighted to be a part of this project and look forward to the upcoming public light art installation so that Chicago and the nation can experience these essential stories through the lens of children and youth.

