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Blue Man Group Unveils Winners of 2013 Art Competition

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Blue Man Group, announces six winners of the 2013 Blue Man Group Art Competition. The six winning pieces will be unveiled on September 20, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. on the south exterior wall of the Briar Street Theater (3133 N. Halsted) with 10'x10' reproductions creating a new outdoor art gallery. Each winner will receive \$5,000 and be featured in the outdoor art gallery. The original works of art will also be displayed in the lobby of the Briar Street Theater beginning September 20. The winners include: Kathy Czopek, Bridgeton, MO; Kuzana Ogg, Bakersfield, CA; Dan Olvera, Schaumburg, IL; Audrius Plioplys, Chicago, IL; Cody Rounds, Mahwah, NJ; and Candace Wark and Shirley Nannini working collectively as Wind Flow Photography, Chicago, IL.

The juried Art Competition included a judges panel comprising Alison Cuddy, Arts and Culture Reporter, Chicago Public Radio (WBEZ); Tom Galassi, Blue Man Group Chicago Captain; Carolina Jayaram, Executive Director, Chicago Artists Coalition; Stacey Lemp, Hawthorne Scholastic Academy art teacher; Jeff Quay, Associate Director, Blue Man Group Chicago; and [Chris Wink](#), one of the Blue Man Group founders.

The Outdoor Art Gallery unveiling event will be in conjunction with EXPO ART WEEK (September 16 - 22), a citywide celebration of arts and culture surrounding EXPO CHICAGO, the International Exposition of Modern and Contemporary Art (September 19-22). The outdoor portion of the unveiling event will be open to the public. Guests are invited to watch as the Blue Men themselves unveil the six winning pieces in a one-of-a-kind reveal that will be in keeping with the spirit of Blue Man Group.

"Art has always played a key role in Blue Man Group and it is part of our mission to foster creativity in all of our initiatives," said [Chris Wink](#), a founder of Blue Man Group. "We are thrilled by the pieces these artists have created, as they truly capture the unique spirit of joy, innovation and creative self-expression we strive for in all our endeavors. We hope that they will be seen as a great addition to the cultural vitality of the Lakeview neighborhood. Thank you to all the artists who submitted works; it has been a tremendous experience to see how artists are inspired by Blue Man Group."

Blue Man Group Art Competition Winners:

Kathy Czopek "Blue Frenzy"

Czopek is a St. Louis resident with close family ties to the Chicago community. Primarily using water colors with strong colors on heavy cotton paper and embellishments of ink and colored pencil, several of Czopek's pieces have been featured in St. Louis-area galleries and exhibitions. "Blue Frenzy" attempts to capture the energy, colors, rhythm and chaos of the live Blue Man Group experience.

Kuzana Ogg "Khshathra"

Ogg was born in Bombay, India and currently lives in Bakersfield, CA. Inspirations from her childhood in India and subsequent travels can be seen throughout her work with her interest focusing on textile design, botany, biology, language and anthropology. Her winning piece depicts the colors and form of a figure dancing epitomizing the excitement of participating in the live musical performance that is Blue Man Group.

Dan Olvera "FREN Z"

Olvera is a native Chicagoan who chose photography as his medium for this competition. Vivid color, illusion of depth and light and shadow are all part of his work as an evolving artist. Feeling a strong connection to Blue Man Group as he created his artwork, he drew inspiration from the joy, whimsy and energy of the show. Along with

photography, and in light of today's rapid, ever-changing world of technology, he has embraced the computer as a viable source of creating artwork. His hope is to continue to be excited and challenged in his work for many years to come.

Audrius Plioplys "Blue Consciousness"

Plioplys was born and raised in Toronto, Canada, moving to Chicago as he entered high school at St. Rita. Plioplys then went on to earn his Medical Doctorate in Neuroscience from the University of Chicago. "Blue Consciousness" is comprised of multiple layers of Plioplys's neurons, brain scans and brain wave tracings overlying a transformed photograph he took of a polar bear on Beechy Island, in the Canadian high arctic. The neurons in Plioplys's piece illustrate the joyful essence of the Blue Man Group which comes from the unbridled creativity, imagination and humor, all arising from the interactions of the brain's neurons.

Cody Rounds "Pulse"

Rounds lives in Mahwah, New Jersey, creating art her whole life, focusing on the visual arts of painting and sculpture. Recently, Rounds has moved her focus to more ambiguous concepts, examining the cerebral, spiritual and internal self. Much of Rounds's inspiration is drawn from intuitive responses, emotional stimulation and often from the materials themselves. "Pulse" illustrates what music looks like, aiming to act as a physical realization of the beauty of harmony, play and expression of emotion that music inspires in the human spirit.

Wind Flow Photography "Tangled All in Blue 5"

Candace Wark, a lifelong Chicagoan, has been an engineering professor in the field of aerodynamics, utilizing photography in her research for the past 25 years. Shirley Nannini worked as high school teacher, coach and administrator for more than 35 years before recently reinventing herself by pursuing her passion for photography.

Together, Wark and Nannini formed Wind Flow Photography, photographing smoke as it flows in a wind tunnel over a variety of objects producing one-of-a-kind images that reflect the interactions of wind and light, capturing a single moment in time to reveal the transient and dynamic nature of wind. Like the Blue Man Group shows, their art looks at an ever changing dynamic of patterns that evolve and move.

Blue Man Group's production provides its audience with a unique and thrilling multi-sensory experience that blends innovative theatrical spectacle and dynamic original music with hilarious comedy, art, technology and science to create a performance experience unlike any other. Tickets are available from \$49-\$99. Tickets may be purchased at the Briar Street Theatre by calling the box office at [\(773\) 348-4000](tel:7733484000); by calling Ticketmaster at [\(800\) 982-2787](tel:8009822787); at all Ticketmaster ticket centers or online at www.ticketmaster.com. For more information, visit www.blue.com/tickets/chicago/.