

For Immediate Release

PR Contact Lillian Hsu

Director of Public Art

617-349-4389

lhsu@cambridgema.gov

CAMBRIDGE | ARTS

Let the Public Play

CAC Gallery at the Cambridge Arts Council

City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, 2nd Floor, Cambridge, MA

January 21 – June 20, 2014

Opening Reception: Monday, January 27, 2014, 6:00-8:00pm

Play is fundamental to human development. Difficult to define but universally experienced, free play appears to have no function and yet has persisted throughout evolution. It can be observed in an infinite variety of forms, sometimes with intricate rules, sometimes with no rules at all – a “behavioral kaleidoscope”. It can be solitary or social. At its best, it is imaginative, generated from the “player”, improvisational, challenging, open-ended, and multi-sensory. Play is an activity where we learn and think with our bodies as well as our brains.

While the desire to engage in playful activity persists throughout life, we tend to think it should be abandoned upon exiting childhood. Our built environment reflects this view, evidenced by “playgrounds” confined to fenced-in areas in parks – where play is supposed to take place. If play nurtures cognitive, sensory, and social development and contributes to our well-being, then creating more playful public spaces also nurtures stronger communities, and our cities should physically and visibly reflect these facts.

In 2007, the City of Cambridge formed the Healthy Parks and Playgrounds Task Force to determine goals and write recommendations for designing and building public spaces that incorporate, to a greater degree, the principles of healthy play for all ages and abilities. The resulting report in 2009 was followed by a citizen advisory committee that met to discuss ways to bring the mission of the Task Force to the wider public. The work of the Task Force is meant to be continued by all who design, construct, manage, maintain, and use our City.

Let the Public Play, presented by the Cambridge Arts Council, is a three-part project offering experiences of playfulness in daily life: 1) an interactive exhibition in the CAC Gallery; 2) playful sculptures by Adam Simha and Skylar Tibbits for outdoor installation, and 3) an interactive deck

of cards designed by Rick Rawlins. All together, these three components present activities indoors and outdoors as well as in a range of scale from small to large. *Let the Public Play* is an invitation to take play seriously, to be inspired, to remember the critical value of play throughout our lives, and to envision along with us a more playful city.

Cambridge Arts Council Public Art Program

In accordance with Cambridge's Public Art Program, one percent of construction costs for capital improvements is designated to support the inclusion of integrated, site-responsive public art. Since 1979, over 200 artworks have been commissioned into the Cambridge Public Art Collection for the enjoyment of all who live, work and visit the city.

CAC Gallery is located in the Cambridge City Hall Annex at 344 Broadway, at the corner of Broadway and Inman Street. Metered parking is available on Inman Street and Broadway.

CAC Gallery hours:

M: 8:30am - 8:00pm; T, W, TH: 8:30am-5:00pm; F: 8:30am - Noon

The Cambridge Arts Council will provide auxiliary aids and service, written materials in alternate formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request. CAC does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Directions via MBTA: Take the MBTA Red Line to Central Square. At street level proceed west on Massachusetts Avenue (towards Harvard Square) to Inman Street. Turn right and proceed north for four blocks to Broadway. Turn left and walk one block to Inman Street.

The Cambridge Arts Council is supported in part by the City of Cambridge, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Cambridge Arts Council

The Cambridge Arts Council exists to ensure that the arts remain vital for people living, working, and visiting Cambridge. www.cambridgeartscouncil.org or 617-349-4380.

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