

# GALLERY | 400

400 SOUTH PEORIA STREET (MC 034)

Chicago, IL 60607

**UIC** SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY

312 996 6114

[gallery400.uic.edu](http://gallery400.uic.edu)

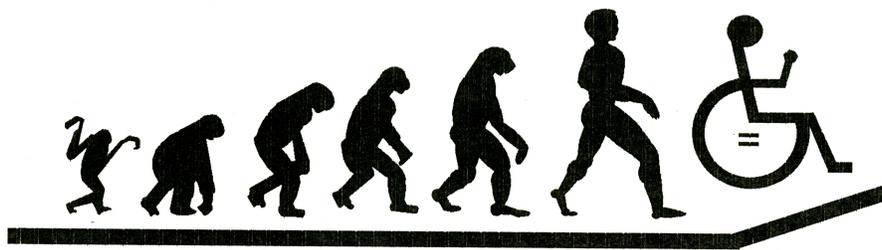
Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 12–6

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Erin Nixon, Assistant Director, 312 996 6114, [gallery400@uic.edu](mailto:gallery400@uic.edu)

### **Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today**

September 14–October 20, 2018



**"ADAPT OR PERISH"**

**-C. DARWIN**

*ADAPT or Perish*, undated, image designed by Anna Stonum and her design company Design for All and used on T-shirts, stickers, and more. Courtesy Mike Ervin.

### ***Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today*** ***September 14-October 20, 2018***

Artists included: **Dawoud Bey**, **Winnifred Birts** and **Kenneth Willaims**, **Jude Conlon**, **Sky Cubacub**, **Susan Dupor**, **Terence Karpowitz**, **Stephen Laphisophon**, **Riva Lehrer**, **Tom Olin**, **Hollis Sigler**, **Andy Slater**, **Barak adé Soleil**, **Anna Stonum**, **Sandie Yi**

With contributions from: **Todd Bauer**, playwright; **Jack Catlin**, architect; **Mike Ervin**, playwright, author; **Kris Lenzo**, dancer; **Susan Nussbaum**, playwright, author; **Bill Shannon**, dancer; **Alana Wallace**, dancer

August 31, 2018—Chicago, IL— ***Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today*** explores how Chicago artists and designers with disabilities were integral to the development of a local and national disability rights movement, creating radical change for more than one fifth of the US population, as well as for all of American society, and influencing lasting transformation in the visual art and design fields. At its heart a research project and inviting new contributions, the exhibition focuses on the history of the disability arts movement in the late 20th century, the role artists played in that activism, and the development of a disability aesthetics, as evidenced in work artists are making today.

Through artworks (paintings, drawings, sculpture, installation and video), graphic design, architectural documents, oral histories, archival documents, and other ephemera, the exhibition will tell the stories of how Chicagoans with disabilities and their allies broke barriers, created change in policy and federal law, and changed culture at a time when the reality of life for many people with disabilities was the restrictions imposed by institutionalization and segregation. People with disabilities in Chicago changed the cultural agenda, challenged the medical model of disability, and told the world that 'disability' wasn't a people with disabilities' problem; it was society's problem for having disenfranchised people by creating barriers to full participation and engagement. Artists with disabilities have played (and are playing) a central in that activism and have created work that formulates a disability aesthetics, an aesthetics that challenges traditional modes while exploring conflicting categories and definitions.

**Gallery 400 Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today Programs:**

Friday, September 14, 5-8pm—**Opening Reception: Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design with performance by Barak adé Soleil**

Tuesday, September 18, 6pm—**Artist Talk: Reveca Torres**

Tuesday, October 16, 6pm—**Intergenerational Artist and Activist Panel Discussion: Featuring Andy Slater, Barak adé Soleil, Sky Cubacub, and more, Moderated by Carrie Sandahl**

**Additional program details to be announced.** For a complete list of programs visit <http://gallery400.uic.edu/events>

**Tours:**

Gallery 400 also offers guided tours for groups of all ages. Tours are free of charge but require reservation. Please complete our online form (accessible at [gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours](http://gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours)) to schedule a tour of *Chicago Disability Activism, Arts,*

*and Design*. For more information, or to discuss accessibility accommodations, please contact us at 312-996-6114 or gallery400@uic.edu.

**Sign language and bilingual tour schedule to be announced.**

*Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today* is part of Art Design Chicago, an initiative of the Terra Foundation for American Art exploring Chicago's art and design legacy, with presenting partner The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation.

All Gallery exhibitions are supported by the UIC School of Art & Art History; the UIC College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts; the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

\*\*\*

Founded in 1983, Gallery 400 is one of the nation's most vibrant university galleries, showcasing work at the leading edge of contemporary art, architecture, and design. The Gallery's program of exhibitions, lectures, film and video screenings, and performances features interdisciplinary and experimental practices. Operating within the School of Art and Art History in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Gallery 400 endeavors to make the arts and its practitioners accessible to a broad spectrum of the public and to cultivate a variety of cultural and intellectual perspectives. Gallery 400 is recognized for its support of the creation of new work, the diversity of its programs and participants, and the development of experimental models for multidisciplinary exhibition.