

Lighten Up :

A Public Art Project by the Teen Advisory Group

Project Summary

MATRIX artist Jan Tichy and the fourteen current members of TAG are working to collaboratively create a series of site-specific light installations along Albany Avenue and adjacent neighborhoods in the North End of Hartford. In their interactions with the artist, both in person and through digital communications, TAG members learn about the artistic process and the role of public art in building community.

Tichy brings his skills as an artist and teacher to the project and is encouraging TAG members to make their own artistic choices. To prepare TAG members to develop the final pieces, Tichy has led presentations, a hands-on exploratory workshop and a guided tour to some potential installation sites. As TAG members select their sites and create planning sketches, Tichy will offer feedback by e-mail, one-on-one Skype meetings and a participatory group website.

Tichy's final visit will culminate in a site installation and opening reception in mid-May. Local organizations and businesses will offer walking tour maps to guide community members and visitors to the neighborhood alike along the trail of artworks. The project will connect thematically with Tichy's other work—such as community-based Project Cabrini Green in Chicago and his MATRIX show at the Wadsworth—while empowering the teens in TAG to tell their own stories of Hartford through public art.



Jan Tichy with TAG members in Keney Park

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Artist Residency Program

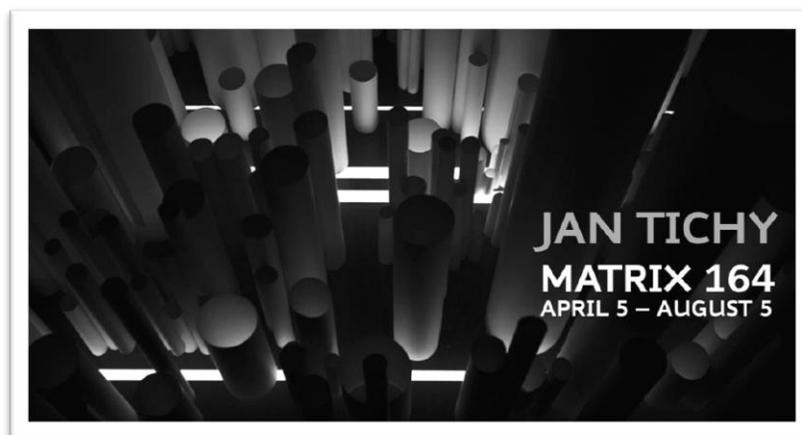
Established in 1842, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is one of Connecticut's principal cultural and civic institutions and a museum of international significance. Holding its collection in trust for all people, the Wadsworth Atheneum is dedicated to advancing knowledge and inspiring everyone to experience and appreciate excellence in art and culture. The Wadsworth Atheneum's world renowned collection numbers more than 50,000 objects spanning 5,000 years of artistic expression. In 1975, the museum launched the MATRIX series which provided a showcase for the most recent trends in contemporary art in dialogue with the traditional offerings of an encyclopedic art museum. The first such series in the country, the program has since been replicated in museums throughout the world.

The Artist Residency program at the Wadsworth Atheneum is part of the Community Engagement Initiative, a large-scale outreach program currently in its third year. Artists engaged in the Artist Residency program work closely with Hartford community groups to plan, develop, and execute a collaborative project.

Past projects include a spray paint mural created by youth at Mi Casa Family Services with artist Kim Shoenstadt and a photography workshop at the Hartford Boys & Girls Club of Asylum Hill inspired by the work of artist Claire Beckett.

Jan Tichy / MATRIX 164

Jan Tichy / MATRIX 164 will be the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States. Chicago-based artist Jan Tichy creates environments that transport visitors to another planet. Combining elements of the visible and the invisible in darkened spaces with moving light, Tichy's mysterious worlds suggest lunar landscapes, secret military sites, and futuristic cities. Mixing a variety of media—sculpture, video, photography, architectural models, and installation—the artist's work addresses his interests in art and architecture, as well as politics, in subtle references to symbols of power. Born in communist Prague in 1974, Tichy studied Political Science at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he also studied photography at Bezalel Academy of Art. The artist earned an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he currently teaches.



Promotional image from Jan Tichy's MATRIX exhibition

The Amistad Center for Art & Culture

The Amistad Center for Art & Culture is dedicated to celebrating art and culture influenced by people of African descent, through education, scholarship and social experiences. Our collection of more than 6,000 works of art, artifacts and ephemera documents no less than the entire history of the literary, military, enslaved, and free lives of Black people in America. We engage, enlighten and entertain young people and adults with the stories of the contributions of soldiers, slaves, artists, actors, poets, and politicians, told as only visual art can. The Amistad Center is an independently incorporated and governed 501(3) not-for-profit organization housed in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. This unique relationship encourages broadly based visitorship and valuable cross-cultural conversation. In 2012 The Amistad Center proudly commemorates our 25th anniversary.

Amistad Center for Art & Culture TAG (Teen Advisory Group)

Founded about 8 years ago, The Amistad Center's TAG (Teen Advisory Group) is a unique program that aims to encourage respect for diverse cultures and to produce art patrons and enthusiasts of the future. This dedicated group meets once or twice a month on Friday evenings September-June for private tours with curators, informational sessions with museum staff such conservators, and to plan activities. Recent projects include free teen film nights at the Museum, managing activities at Juneteenth Family Day, and collaborating with the Hartford Public Library to create poetry and artwork based on the theme of Age in America.

TAG members receive a small stipend for their time and an Amistad Center household membership so that they can visit the Wadsworth anytime with their families for free. Most TAG members join us in their freshman year of high school and remain until graduation. The diverse group comes from a range of local towns and the members attend area public, magnet and private schools. TAG members must complete an application process and participants are welcomed with a range of interests.