

**June 8, 2015 Guest presentation. 10,000 Ripples- Public Art, Peace, and Civic Engagement.** From JPAC Council meeting minutes. Gary M. Ossewaarde

Indira Johnson, artist and 2013 Woman of the Year and teacher at the School of the Art Institute presented, along with Mark Rodriguez, Executive Director of Changing Worlds. Indira showed how the several indoor and outdoor installations led to the program and collaborative of c35 organizations that has resulted in installations in 19 Chicago communities so far of sets of white Buddha heads emerging from the earth and of programs and spaces for peace, personal reflection, and outreach in violence reduction. The heads are made of cast fiberglass filled with sand and generally anchored in concrete. Each community set its own themes and goals, sites, and programs or activities—indeed the process of community engagement, input, dealing with community differences, and planning itself served often as a catalyst for change as well as a sense of ownership, community upkeep, and new community collaborations. The number of heads at each varies from one or two to nearly a dozen, and the sites chosen by the communities vary from beaches to street corners to the front of a church, and more recently parks such as Palmisano (2700 S. Halsted)- even the back of a truck to be moved around! Indira and Mark emphasized that outreach with community stakeholder groups (including schools) and a full community decision-making process must take place, and unless there is independent funding to make more heads, a community must wait until the one-year residency of a set of heads in a park runs out before heads can be installed. To learn more: [changingworlds.org](http://changingworlds.org), [indirajohnson.org](http://indirajohnson.org), 10000 Ripples on Facebook, and a booklet.

President McCurry explained that Jackson Park reached out to 10,000 Ripples and the Park District to start the conversation and suggested the Iowa building location on 56<sup>th</sup> St. as an example of a beautiful historic structure that needs peace healing (a homicide having occurred a year ago, for example), needs to have something that makes more of a destination so that repairs and upkeep are justified, and the place is a logical place (next to the retirement community) for peaceful reflection and small gatherings and activities as well as teaching and programming for youth. (There are already some tai chi etc. there.) The Iowa building has also attracted the interest of architects and outside groups such as the School of the Art Institute. JPAC can do some short term improvements there also, such as plant a shade-plant peace garden, McCurry said.

Members of the audience asked many questions and were enthusiastic about the 10,000 Bubbles programs and the possibilities for the location, asked for it for other sites on the South Side, and were interested in starting a process of community engagement and input. 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Office—Lanita Ross-- will help coordinate.