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**LIVEWIRE CHICAGO THEATRE GETS VISUAL  
“VISIONFEST 4: WHERE THE IMAGE MEETS THE STAGE”**

LiveWire Presents a Gallery Exhibit and Invites the Public to View and Vote for One Piece that will be the Inspiration for 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Short Play Festival

**Free Gallery Opening to take place Saturday, January 28 from 6 – 10 p.m.  
at the Tom Robinson Gallery in Bucktown**

CHICAGO (January 18, 2012) – For the first time, **LiveWire Chicago Theatre** presents a *VisionFest* Gallery Exhibit and invites the public to view and vote for one piece that will serve as the central inspiration for all new plays submitted to our 4<sup>th</sup> annual *VisionFest*, a short play festival to be presented in June 2012. Selected from dozens of submissions, work by ten visual artists will be showcased **at the Tom Robinson Gallery, 2416 W. North Ave., from January 28 – February 5**. An opening gallery reception will take place, Saturday, January 28 from 6 – 10 p.m. Admission is free, and wine and cheese will be served. Guests will be able to vote in-person at the reception that evening. Appointments can be made to visit the gallery through February 5. Voting can also be done online at [www.livewirechicago.com/vision](http://www.livewirechicago.com/vision).

Playwrights will be required to use the image with the most votes as inspiration for the original plays they submit to ***VisionFest 4: Where the Image Meets the Stage***. The selected artist will be announced February 13, and the image will be posted on the LiveWire website. LiveWire will be accepting short play submissions for *VisionFest* **February 13 through May 5**. ***VisionFest 4: Where the image meets the stage*** will be presented in June of 2012.

“Each year we choose a different and unique guideline that will shape our short play festival, and this year we’re thrilled to collaborate with the talented visual artists in our community. An image opens limitless channels of inspiration, and we can’t wait to see what new work it stirs up for *VisionFest 4*,” Chris Zdenek, curator of *VisionFest*.

The visual artists featured in the Gallery Exhibit include: **Suzanne Bailie** (Seattle, WA); **Rita Dianni-Kaleel** (La Grange, IL); **Diane Donohue** (Peoria, IL); **Breanne Duffy** (Boston, MA); **Josephine Ferorelli** (New York, NY); **Eliza Frye** (Los Angeles, CA); **CJ Hungerman** (Elmhurst, IL); **Layne Jackson** (Chicago); **Judy Radovsky** (Chicago); and **Karen Thomas** (Chicago).

**About VisionFest**

LiveWire established *VisionFest* to expose new works to the community and get the community involved in new works. *VisionFest* begins each year by offering the community a chance to help establish the guidelines for submissions.

In 2010, LiveWire chose the theme of “Feast” for *VisionFest 3* and asked the community for suggestions of a line or phrase that all playwrights would have to incorporate into their play. Through an online poll, the line, “I can’t remember the last time we were all together” won the community vote. Six “compelling original works” (*Chicago Reader*) were presented in a promenade setting in the Tom Robinson Gallery. *Flavorpill* hailed the festival as “shockingly affecting.” In 2009, the focus of *VisionFest* was “Environment” and from several options, the public voted for a “Street Corner” as their preferred Environment. For the inaugural festival in 2008, an overarching theme of “Control” won the majority vote.

Once the unique guidelines are chosen, LiveWire opens submissions to playwrights to write plays that meet the requirements. Each year, we have received hundreds of new plays from writers around the world. From those plays, the Collective chooses six to ten short works to present. At the festival, programs are provided with ample space for the community to offer feedback to the playwrights. LiveWire collects the feedback and sends them to the playwright at the end of the run.

“The community truly has a hand in shaping these plays. It’s an exciting process that always unearths innovative work and new partnerships. *VisionFest* harkens to the core of our mission of bringing new, contemporary works to the Chicago stage,” Joel Ewing, Artistic Director of LiveWire Chicago Theatre.

LiveWire is thrilled to partner with the Tom Robinson Gallery again, where last year’s *VisionFest* took place. The beautiful exhibit space in the Bucktown neighborhood is owned by Tom Robinson, an artist, curator and teacher who has been an influential force in the Chicago art scene for more than 30 years. For more info, visit [www.tomrobinsonartist.com](http://www.tomrobinsonartist.com).

### **About Livewire Chicago Theatre**

LiveWire Chicago is a collective of artists who create theatre that reflects the current cultural landscape of our community through productions of original and contemporary works.

LiveWire’s began its 6<sup>th</sup> season this fall with the Chicago premiere of ***A Bright New Boise*** by 2011 Obie Award-winning playwright Samuel D. Hunter directed by LiveWire’s Joshua Aaron Weinstein. This winter LiveWire presents the Chicago premiere of ***Oohrah!*** as part **Steppenwolf Theatre’s GARAGE REP**, February 2 – April 8, 2012. Written by Bekah Brunstetter and directed by Brad Akin, the cast features LiveWire members Joel Ewing and Madeline Long, along with Peter Esposito, Melissa Engle, Josh Odor, Calliope Porter and Ian R. Tranberg. *Oohrah!* turns a comic eye to a soldiers homecoming gone awry. More at [www.livewirechicago.com/oohrah](http://www.livewirechicago.com/oohrah).

Previous LiveWire productions include the Chicago premiere of ***The 13<sup>th</sup> of Paris*** by Mat Smart, the world premiere of Emily Dendinger’s ***Hideous Progeny***, presented at the DCA Storefront Theater, and the Chicago premiere of ***Red Angel*** by Eric Bogosian, among others.

### **LiveWire Collective Members**

Erin Barlow, Suzanne Bracken, Eric Branson, Brian Cicirello, Cory Conrad, Krista D’Agostino (Literary Manager), Joel Ewing (Artistic Director), Amber Hilgenkamp, Anders Jacobson, Madeline Long (Managing Director), Allison McNeela, Deborah Proud, Glenn Proud, Judy Radovsky, Joshua Aaron Weinstein (Executive Director) and Chris Zdenek (Associate Artistic Director).

For more information, visit [livewirechicago.com](http://livewirechicago.com).

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