

A black and white photograph of two figures standing in a corner, facing each other. They are wearing dark, hooded raincoats that obscure their faces. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall mood is somber and anonymous.

INDUSTRY OF THE ORDINARY

2003–2013

SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI

CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER

78 EAST WASHINGTON ST

17 AUGUST 2012 – 17 FEBRUARY 2013

Industry of the Ordinary

[*Sic Transit Gloria Mundi: Survey of Industry of the Ordinary, 2003-2013*](#)

17 August, 2012—17 February, 2013

Chicago Cultural Center, Main Exhibition Hall (2800 square feet), 4th floor, 78 E. Washington St., Chicago, IL 60602, USA

Exhibition organized by *Industry of the Ordinary*, and Greg Lunceford and Lanny Silverman for the Chicago Cultural Center

This mid-career exhibition presented new and existing works of the Chicago-based collaborative team of [*Industry of the Ordinary*](#) (*IOTO*), composed of Adam Brooks and Mathew Wilson. Rather than a conventional survey of their practice, it sought to engage new audiences for both their work and for the Cultural Center itself, including a re-branding of the entire [historic building](#) that housed the exhibition, which was formerly the Chicago Public Library's original home. Through projects that were carried out both on and off site, *IOTO* worked with artists and communities around the city to establish new ways of creating art and dialogue. Partners for the show included [the Southside Community Art Center](#), [the Hyde Park Art Center](#), [Ed Marszewski](#) and the [Small Manufacturing Alliance](#), the Chicago Public Schools and the cultural historians of the City of Chicago. Ultimately, the show involved more than 250 other artists, designers and other creative individuals. *IOTO* also worked with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events [to wrap the Cultural Center with a monumentally-scaled text work](#) that was visible from Millennium Park and up and down Michigan Avenue.

In addition to a broad selection of *IOTO*'s own activities, a major component of the show was an *IOTO*-initiated "platform", a literal and conceptual space within the show that housed a revolving series of projects of various kinds throughout the six month run of the exhibition. Collaborators include [Faheem Majeed](#), an artist, curator, and community facilitator, who incorporated [a long unseen historic mural by Bill Walker from the South Side Community Art Center](#); [Katinka Kleijn](#), long-time cellist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, [who accompanied her own amplified brainwaves in a personal duet](#); Chicago artist [Jim Zimpel](#), who built [a gigantic functional fish tank](#) for the show; [Anna Kunz](#) and [Paige Cunningham](#), who produced [a hybrid dance/painting work](#) that engaged the physical spaces within the Cultural Center; *The Happy Collaborationists* (Anna Trier and Meredith Weber), who curated [a performance and installation series](#) during the show; [Lou Mallozzi](#), who produced two [performative sound works](#) in the vicinity of the Cultural Center; [Max King Cap](#), who created [a sound work for the elevators](#) in the Cultural Center; and [Morehshin Allahyari](#), an Iranian artist now based in the United States, who developed [an extensive project that addressed self-exile through her eyes](#) and those of other colleagues from Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon and elsewhere.

Other activities included [The Harvest](#), an examination of the intersection of folk art and power; a [cake-eating competition](#) under the Tiffany Dome in Preston Bradley Hall; an *IOTO*-co-curated [Young Performance Series](#) that included younger Chicago-based artists; EVERYONE, an animated textual chronicle of all the artists living and working in Chicago at the time of the exhibition; a [Portrait Project of representations of Industry of the Ordinary](#) by a selected group of Chicago-based artists, including Caitlin Arnold, Dawoud Bey, Ivan Brunetti, Kelli Connell, Barbara DeGenevieve, Michelle Grabner, Myra Greene, Julia Haw, Chris Kerr, Julie Laffin, Jason Lazarus, Inigo Manglano-Ovalle, Kerry James Marshall, and Anne Wilson, among many others, and [a related panel discussion regarding the state of contemporary portraiture](#); and an [elaboration of the Supermarketing Project](#).

Another important aspect of the show was a catalog that documented not only the history of *IOTO* but also the many projects that took place during the run of the exhibition. This publication included an extended essay by eminent critic [Eleanor Heartney](#), Senior Contributing Editor for *Art in America*, and an interview with Duncan MacKenzie, co-founder of the renowned art and culture podcast [Bad at Sports](#), and was printed in a minimum

run of 1,000 copies. It is 200 pages in length with copious documentation and contributions from many of IOTO's creative partners from the duration of their career. The catalog was designed by [Jason Pickleman of the JNL Design Group](#), one of the foremost designers in the Midwest, who has a long history in working with artists on unusual and creative solutions to the issue of the "artist catalog". The catalog is distributed nationwide and internationally through museum bookstores and other outlets.

The exhibition was remarkably well-covered and received in the press, with over 25 reviews and articles being written about the various activities contained within it. It was named as one of the best shows of the year, for both 2012 and 2013 (the show straddled both years) by [Time Out Chicago](#), [New City](#) and [HyperAllergic](#). A selection of responses, with links to original articles, follows:

'Despite the variety of artists and works on display what results isn't incoherent but tightly connected, woven together by the collaborative and participatory spirit which runs through much of IOTO's output. You'll come, see and want to stay for a bit, enveloped by the warm and generous nature of IOTO's retrospective, which is almost too highfalutin' a term for what really feels like an invitation to group creativity. Think of it as this season's "zaftig" art show, assuming that's a term as suitable for objects as it is for people.'

[Alison Cuddy, WBEZ](#)

'Not only is Industry of the Ordinary a collaboration between Adam Brooks and Matthew Wilson, with the bulk of their lighthearted, ephemeral work based on interacting, borrowing, cooperating, or delegating, but the exhibition itself consists of dozens of objects, projects and events from creators throughout the local art world. The success of their populist approach was evident at the opening, which was the most thronged affair I've ever attended at the Chicago Cultural Center.'

[Albert Stabler, New City](#)

'IOTO goes to great lengths to give credit where it's due, honoring the Cultural Center's security guards in its 2006 photograph and performance *Secure*.'

[Lauren Weinberg, Time Out Chicago](#)

'In an exhibition that, from its opening last August, has continually felt messy and unfocused, eliciting audience involvement in a caustic and even aggressive manner (IOTO's "[Narcissism Chamber](#)," for example in which viewers watch themselves on a video monitor while they listen to a song about self-admiration) it seems that IOTO's retrospective's strength all along has been in opening up a collaborative, pedagogic space for other artists, resulting in an unfolding chain of cultural output, from artists established enough to warrant their own retrospective, to those a little more, if you will, ordinary.'

[Katie Waddell, New City](#)

'Approaching artmaking in a populist, conceptual fashion, IOTO creates work that at once involves the Chicago art community, and is also a dour comment on contemporary culture.'

[Alicia Eler, Hyperallergic](#)

'When is the proper time to review an exhibition? It's a seemingly simple question that has become complicated because of another question: what constitutes an exhibition? Concluding on February 17, Industry of the Ordinary's sprawling retrospective *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi* pushes these questions to their limits, mirroring the shift in contemporary practice from traditional expectations.'

[Abraham Ritchie, Bad at Sports](#)

'(Industry of the Ordinary's) stated aim is to raise our consciousness about what constitutes an ordinary or

extraordinary human action, or work of art, but that hardly does justice to the almost bewildering variety of forms that are displayed in this mid-career survey.... IOTO possess a rare quality: they make work that is genuinely funny and that has an ingenious conceptual point, while still valuing the materials they use.'

[Phillip A. Hartigan, Hyperallergic](#)

'Top 5 People Whose Lives are Possibly Artworks

...Adam Brooks and Mathew Wilson...'

[Jason Foumberg, New City](#)

Complete press coverage of the show can be found [here](#).

About *Industry of the Ordinary*

Industry of the Ordinary were formed in 2003. The two artists who make up this collaborative team, Adam Brooks and Mathew Wilson, have long histories as visual and performative artists. They bring complementary sensibilities to their activities. They have both lived and worked in Chicago for over 20 years.

Making use of a variety of art-making strategies, *Industry of the Ordinary (IOTO)* have primarily been concerned with the dynamics and aesthetics of public spaces. Drawing inspiration from Joseph Beuys's theory of 'social sculpture' and the Situationists, *IOTO* have explored non-traditional sites for art works where accidental audiences can be found. Often collaborating with multiple members of the community, these works attempt to occupy and invigorate public thoroughfares. The work is intended to provoke and promote public discourse, to bring fine art out of the theater or gallery and, without becoming didactic or pedantic, make it readily available to the non-art-trained audience.

The project began and continues as a website www.industryoftheordinary.com, which functions as a virtual public space where their various activities can be accessed. The project has now grown to include work that addresses a variety of subjects in a wide range of media. In addition to publicly sited performance works, *IOTO* create installations, sculpture, text, photography, video, and sound pieces that are dedicated to an exploration and celebration of the customary, the everyday, and the usual. Their emphasis is on challenging pejorative notions of the ordinary and, in doing so, moving beyond the quotidian.

On the following page there is a complete schedule of events that took place during the run of the exhibition, with embedded links to documentation of these events. Click on a project or an artist's name to see evidence of their contribution to [Sic Transit Gloria Mundi: Industry of the Ordinary, 2003-2013](#). Click on red-lettered annotations to read critical reviews and access additional information about specific projects.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Aug. 17 – Sept. 25
Exhibit Hall Platform [Read review here](#) **Jim Zimpel: *Angle***
Zimpel's modified lake map/fish tank/sculpture provides participants with a fishing experience. Sign up for your chance to be an angler in the Exhibit Hall or online at jimzimpel.com.
- Aug. 17 – Sept. 23
Elevators: NE & NW **Max King Cap: *Bossa Nova Mea Culpa***
[More documentation here](#)
- Aug. 31, Noon
66 E. Randolph St., glass canopy **Lou Mallozzi: *Outpost***
Looking through a telescope, the artist will observe & describe the public from a 2nd floor location in this outdoor interactive sound installation.
- Sept. 26 – Oct. 31
Exhibit Hall Platform **Morehshin Allahyari: *The Romantic Self-Exiles***
This multi-media installation presents Tehran through the experience of Allahyari's embodied self and that of her peers, and attests to their mobility within the city along with their inability to return after having left. [More documentation here](#)
- Sept. 28, 7pm
Preston Bradley Hall **IOTO: *Transubstantiation (Eating Contest) and Time Capsule auction***
Contestants in this competition will consume cakes decorated with images of The Last Supper, vying for an IOTO-generated prize, after which IOTO will auction off the coordinates of a piece of buried treasure in the Sierra Nevada mountains.
- Oct. 15 – Jan. 1, 2013
Michigan Ave. Galleries North **Ed Marszewski: *small ordinary shop***
This space promotes companies and individuals who make locally manufactured products. [More documentation here](#)
- Oct. 5 – 13, Noon
Randolph St. entrance, window showcase **Young Performers Series**
24 hr. performances by student artists, start time noon each day
Friday 10/5: **Grant Anderson and Will Rigby**
Saturday 10/6: **Grace O'Brien**
Sunday 10/7: **Hanna Anderton**
Monday 10/8: **Melody Snyder**
Tuesday 10/9: **Robert Heishman & Brendan Meara**
Wednesday 10/10: **Shayna Cott**
Thursday 10/11: **EJ Hill & Collin Pressler**
Friday 10/12: **Caitlin Ryan**
[Read response here](#)
- Oct. 26
Exhibit Hall **IOTO: *The Harvest***
[Watch interview here](#)
[Read review here](#)
[Read review here](#)
[Read review here](#)
IOTO will walk a refrigerated case with a butter sculpture of President Obama through the streets of Chicago, starting from the Meat Packing District and on to the Cultural Center, documenting its reception along the way.
- Nov. 1 – Dec. 15, 5:30pm
Exhibit Hall Platform **Happy Collaborationists: 773**
A series of presentations of new media, installation and performance by several emerging Chicago artists
11/2: **Erik Peterson: *Square Dance***
Daley Plaza
11/9: **Pete & Dyl: *Pete & Dyl***
Cultural Center Theater, GAR Rotunda
11/16: **Jesus Mejia & Ruth: *Circulatory***
North Stairwell
[More documentation here](#)
11/29: **Jake Myers: *Workout Video***
Preston Bradley Hall
12/7: **Jennifer Mills: *The Dollar Store***
Cultural Center Pedway
- Nov. 13, Noon & 6pm
1st Fl. North **Lou Mallozzi: *Peers***
Group recitation of the last words of Lee Harvey Oswald from time of Kennedy's assassination until Oswald's assassination.
- Nov. 15, 6:30pm
Garland Rm., 1st Fl. **One Out of Many: The Contemporary Portrait**
Portrait scholar Amy Mooney will moderate a panel with artists Kelli Connell, Myra Greene, and Cecil McDonald, all participants in the IOTO Portrait Project.
- Dec. 2 – 16
Garland Rm., 1st Fl. [Read review here](#) **IOTO: *Celebrity and the Peculiar***
An installation of tents infused with celebrity scents.
- Dec. 16 – Jan. 19, 2013
Exhibit Hall Platform [Read review here](#) **Faheem Majeed: *Planting & Maintaining a Perennial Garden III***
Based on the 1930s New Bauhaus designed wood paneling of the South Side Community Art Center's Margaret Burroughs Gallery, Majeed's wood panels serve as a didactic tool that physically records the artists and community that utilize them, including a mural by legendary muralist William "Bill" Walker.
- Jan. 20 – Feb. 17
Exhibit Hall Platform [Read review here](#) **Paige Cunningham/Anna Kunz: *One Careless Gesture Away from Destruction***
[More documentation here](#)
This collaborative dance project draws on relationships between Voguing and Ballet. The modular visual units, by Anna Kunz, combine ordinary materials and elements from art and design of those eras in dance and culture.
- Jan. 20 & 27, 5:30pm
GAR Rotunda **Paige Cunningham/Anna Kunz: *One Careless Gesture Away from Destruction***
Dance performances choreographed by Paige Cunningham.
- Jan. 13, 7:30pm
Yates Gallery, 4th Fl. [Read preview here](#) **Intelligence in the Human-Machine, Duet for Cello and Brainwaves.**
[More documentation here](#)
Co-created by Katinka Kleijn, cello, Daniel DeHaan, composer, and Ryan Ingebritsen, sound designer and composer CSO cellist Katinka Kleijn will perform a newly commissioned piece with her EEG monitoring brainwaves activating a response played on speakers around the room.
- Aug. 2012 – Feb. 2013
Cultural Center, east facade **IOTO: *Prayer for Chicago*** [More documentation here](#)
Banners
- Nov. 16 – Dec. 16
Hyde Park Art Center
5020 South Cornell Ave. **IOTO: *Googling Ordinary***
Scrolling translations of I WANT TO BE ORDINARY using all Google Translate languages will be projected on the facade of the HPAC.

Cover image: Marc Hauser, *Portrait of Ordinary Guys*, 2011 ©Marc Hauser, cover type design: JNL Design, Chicago



ADMISSION IS FREE

Chicago Cultural Center
78 East Washington Street, Chicago, Illinois 60602
312-744-6630 | TTY: 312-744-2964

www.chicagoculturalcenter.org

Monday–Thursday, 8am–7pm; Friday, 8am–6pm;
Saturday, 9am–6pm; Sunday, 10am–6pm. Closed holidays.