

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ART INSTITUTE TO PARTNER WITH CATALYST RANCH

Organizations Collaborate on Creative Approaches to Business Skills

The Art Institute of Chicago and Catalyst Ranch, a Chicago organization that provides creative services and meeting spaces for groups and corporations, jointly announce a unique partnership that will draw on the skills and resources of both institutions.

Together the Art Institute and Catalyst Ranch have developed a program called **Art-Work**, which is designed to enhance the world of corporate training through the experience of art. This arts-based approach to learning focuses on improving communications, leadership, teamwork, diversity, and creativity and innovation.

Art-Work pairs a museum educator and experienced corporate facilitator to lead groups through activities both in the museum and at Catalyst Ranch (656 West Randolph in downtown Chicago) for a full day. Starting at the Art Institute, the group participates in art interpretation exercises that require no specific art-historical knowledge or training. Art-Work asks participants instead to bring the skills they use in a professional setting—communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity—and apply and hone them in a completely new arena, the art museum. The learning continues in the afternoon at Catalyst Ranch.

“Through this collaboration, the facilitators and educators have developed a fresh, innovative program which leverages the unique combination of art interpretation and a specific corporate training objective,” said Bobbie Soeder, vice president of sales and marketing at Catalyst Ranch. “The expectation is that by using the resources available at the Art Institute of Chicago and the creatively stimulating environment of Catalyst Ranch, the program will provide participants with a powerful set of learning tools using a completely new model for corporate training.”

Sarah Alvarez, the museum educator spearheading the program, agrees. “Many professionals often have years of training that equip them to feel confident in what they do, but that confidence can break down when faced with something totally new, like being asked to interpret a painting. Art-Work is designed to dispel this insecurity and lead professionals to realize that they absolutely do possess the skills to have a profound experience with art. And engaging with art, in turn, can help further develop those professional skills.”

Art-Work is a new component of the Art Institute’s “Art and the Workplace” programs, which also include “The Discerning Eye,” which helps medical professionals further develop their visual skills, and “Art Express,” a program that provides talks on the museum’s collection and exhibitions to Loop-area businesses.

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SUMMER HOURS: MAY 31 TO AUGUST 31, 2007
10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
10:30 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Target Free Summer Evenings after 5:00 p.m.
10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday.
Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day.
Please check www.artic.edu before your visit.

Admission: Adults, \$12.00; children 12 and over, students, and seniors, \$7.00; children under 12 free; members always free. Target Free Summer Evenings are free to all, except for certain special exhibitions that may require full or extra admission fee. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Check Us Out" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago. To reach the Art Institute on the World Wide Web, contact us at: <http://www.artic.edu/aic>
The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park.