



MIT MUSEUM PRESS RELEASE

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MIT Museum Presents:

A SERIES OF FORTUNATE EVENTS: “FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING” (F.A.T.) CHAIN REACTION

Artist/Inventor Arthur Ganson Choreographs “Only at MIT” Event

November 24, 2006 — 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Rockwell Cage Gymnasium

[Zesiger Sports Center](#) - 120 Vassar Street - Cambridge

Cambridge, MA (October 2006) --Whether it’s the reaction induced between one creative contraption and another equally crafty contrivance, or the joyful reactions sparked on the faces of the spectators, the MIT Museum’s Friday After Thanksgiving (F.A.T.) Chain Reaction is a one-of-a-kind, got-to-be-seen-to-be-believed engineering feat.

Now in its eighth year, the F.A.T. Chain Reaction invites people to join the fun as participants as well as spectators. Participants bring their own mini-chain reactions and connect them to each other, to form one giant chain reaction, set off at the end of the program as the thrilling culmination.

“I am especially pleased this year,” says Beryl Rosenthal the Museum’s Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs, “The PBS youth science program, ‘Dragonfly TV’ will attend the festivities, and will be filming it for airing in its new spring season. With national visibility who knows who will participate in coming years? The team that has traveled the furthest has originated in the Midwest; maybe next year we will get a team from California!”

Artist/inventor Arthur Ganson masterminds the choreography of this Rube Goldberg-machine, assisted by MIT student teams. Participants range from Girl Scout troops to artists and engineers, from family teams to MIT clubs and living groups. Teams have come from as far away as Michigan and Rhode Island.

“Every year there are ingenious new creations so it is particularly interesting to see what people come up with,” says Ganson. “I also like the spontaneous drama and performance art nature of the event. Where else can you find 1,500 people rooting for a piece of wet paper towel? It is quirky, simple, and grand all at the same time.”

“I see F.A.T. as a personal challenge for each participant to make something that is both interesting and that works,” Ganson continues. “Everyone takes the challenge seriously and puts many hours into their creations. Each event ends up as a kind of statement of many unique minds working together. If it does not go according to plan, perhaps they see that in the end, it really was ‘the thought that counts!’

F.A.T. Chain Reaction is also a spectator event where visitors can meet the creators of the links. “F.A.T brings together hundreds of tinkerers and fans to enjoy an event that could only happen at MIT,” says Rosenthal. “While the participants get to explore their own creativity, spectators can watch these creative people exercising their problem-solving skills. Which is not to mention that their inventions are ingenious and often very funny.

The MIT Museum’s F.A.T. a Chain Reaction takes place Friday, November 24 from 1:00 to 4:00pm at Rockwell Cage in MIT’s Zesiger Sports and Fitness Center at 120 Vassar Street. Participant fees are \$10 per four-person team; \$5 for each additional team member. Spectator admission is \$10 for adults; \$2 for students, seniors, and youth under 18; and free for children under 5 and MIT identification card holders. Admission price includes a free visit to the MIT Museum.

Advanced registration for participating in the chain reaction is required.

Registration deadline is November 17.

For more information about

F.A.T. Chain Reaction:

<http://web.mit.edu/museum/programs/fat.html>

or call 617-253-5927.

Arthur Ganson Bio

A longtime resident of the Boston area, Arthur Ganson has explored kinetic sculpture for over 25 years. His career includes sculpture racing with the World Sculpture Racing Society in the 1980s. He is also the creator of the popular foam construction toy, Toobers and Zots. Ganson has held residencies in science museums and universities, including a 1998 residency at MIT; collaborated with the Studebaker Movement Theatre; and been featured in one-man shows at the MIT Museum, Harvard’s Carpenter Center, the

DeCordova Museum, and the Ricco/Maresca Gallery in New York. His latest projects have taken him to Iceland and Germany.

Many of Ganson's works can be experienced at the MIT Museum's ongoing exhibition, "Gestural Engineering: The Sculpture of Arthur Ganson." Citing that "each of his artworks is an invention in itself," the Lemelson-MIT Program, which honors the acclaimed and unsung heroes who have improved our lives through invention, named Ganson "Inventor of the Week" in 1998.

LISTING

chain reaction

A series of events in which each influences or gives rise to the next event. The term originated in the physical sciences first, in chemistry (1920s) and later physics (1940s); in the latter it denotes a process of nuclear fission. By the 1940s it had been transferred to more general use.

— *The American Heritage* ® *Dictionary of Idioms*

MIT Museum's F.A.T.

(Friday After Thanksgiving) Chain Reaction 2006

Take part in a series of fortunate events: At the MIT Museum's *F.A.T. Mega Chain Reaction*—orchestrated by renowned artist/inventor Arthur Ganson—bring your own mini-chain reaction . . . or just witness the excitement.

Friday, November 24 1:00 - 4:00pm

- **Participants must register in advance. Registration deadline is November 17.**
- Please call 617-452-2111 during business hours.
- Participant fee: \$10 per four-person team; \$5 for each additional team member. For additional information and registration form, see <http://web.mit.edu/museum/programs/fat.html>
- Spectator fee: \$10 for adults; \$2 for students, seniors, and youth under 18; and free for children under 5 and MIT Card holders.
- Spectator fee includes a free visit to the MIT Museum.
- Note: On F.A.T., the MIT Museum will be open one hour later, through 6:00pm.

FAQ's about Friday After Thanksgiving

What is F.A.T.?

FAT is **F**riday **A**fter **T**hanksgiving. Participants link self-created mini chain reactions together to form one giant, mega chain reaction, set off at the end of the program as the event's thrilling culmination. It's like watching a giant domino demonstration.

The annual event allows people to explore their own creativity, and see how their unique contraptions relate to a larger whole. No matter how different the chain reactions, inevitably, with a little string and duct tape, they all work together beautifully.

How does it work?

The MIT Museum's F.A.T. Chain Reaction event allows people to join the fun as spectators or as participants. Participants can register to bring their own contraptions with MIT students and MIT artist and inventor Arthur Ganson, renowned chain reaction creator, on hand to help with connections.

Can Anybody Do It?

Of course! Participants range from Girl Scout troops to artists and engineers, from MIT clubs and living groups to schools and family teams. Teams have come from as far away as New York and Rhode Island!