



MIT MUSEUM PRESS RELEASE

Date: November 14, 2007

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MIT Museum Presents:

FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING

(F.A.T.)
CHAIN REACTION

Artist/Inventor Arthur Ganson Choreographs “Only at MIT” 10th Anniversary Event
November 23, 2007 — 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Rockwell Cage Gymnasium
[Zesiger Sports Center](#) - 120 Vassar Street - Cambridge

Cambridge, MA (November 2007) -- 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 tenth 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.

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,” said Ganson in an interview in 2006. “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.”

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. While the participants get to explore their own creativity, spectators watch a range of creative people exercising their problem- solving skills and participate in spontaneous build your own contraptions. Over the years the inventions have been ingenious, often very funny and sometimes have included live animals!

The MIT Museum’s *F.A.T. a Chain Reaction* takes place Friday, November 23 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; \$5 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 which was recently expanded to include the Mark Epstein Innovation Gallery.

Advanced registration for participating in the chain reaction is required. For more information about *F.A.T. Chain Reaction* go to:
<http://web.mit.edu/museum/programs/fat.html>

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. Ganson’s newest sculpture, *Gathering Strength* is on display in the Mark Epstein Innovation Gallery.

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 2007

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 23 1:00 - 4:00pm

- **Participants must register in advance. Registration deadline is November 17.**
- Please call 617-253-5927 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; \$5 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 Friday After Thanksgiving. 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!

MIT Museum

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Free Parking Available in the Windsor St. Lot behind the Museum after 5pm and on weekends.