



NEWS RELEASE

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SAINT LOUIS ARTIST JILL DOWNEN AND DESIGN STUDIO act3 WIN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

WHO/WHAT: Artist Jill Downen and design studio act3 were chosen from sixty national and international artists to create a permanent sculpture installation to be housed in COCA's two-story atrium in University City, Missouri.

Currents, the winning design, will transform the atrium wall into an undulating sculpture whose subtle, elegant movements call to mind the currents of a river and suggest the impact the creative arts have on diverse communities through the experiences of their students. Original soundscape compositions and coordinated theatrical lighting will be activated by visitors in the space, washing the installation in sound, color and light.

Jill Downen is a 2010 recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. In 2009 she received a John and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation travel grant as a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow at the MacDowell Colony in Petersborough, New Hampshire. In 2007-2008 she was appointed the Wallace Herndon-Smith Distinguished Visiting Assistant Professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Jill Downen is represented by Bruno David Gallery. Her work can be seen at www.jilldownen.com.

act3 is a communication strategy and design firm that specializes in telling stories. Founder Ben Kaplan holds a degree in Film and Television Production from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. He has worked in visual communications, interactive design, radio, film, journalism, fine art, music composition, sound recording and graphic design, as a creator, director, writer, editor, and teacher. Peter Gilchrist serves as act3's system and lighting designer. Eric Ratinoff creates scripts, web content and promotional copy, and is the voice behind act3's blog.

"*Currents* captures the spirit of COCA" said project manager and former COCA education director, Kathryn Adamchick, "the ripple-like forms suggest the impact COCA has had on the St. Louis community since its inception 23 years ago, and the Downen/act3 team celebrates interdisciplinary collaboration".

The commissioned artwork will honor COCA's founding executive director, Stephanie Riven, who will retire on June 30, 2010. The founding vision was to create a place where people of diverse interests and backgrounds could have access to the highest quality artistic experience. The work will be dedicated on October 1, 2010.

For additional information on Jill Downen and act3's winning proposal, visit www.cocastl.org.

Housed in a 60,000 square foot building designed by world-renowned architect Eric Mendelsohn, COCA serves over 50,000 participants annually. COCA's multidisciplinary and multicultural programs include performances, classes, camps, workshops, artist residencies, exhibitions and school outreach programs.

Founded in 1986, COCA's mission is to enrich lives and build community through the arts. COCA's programs include the COCA Family Theatre Series; educational classes, camps, and workshops in dance, music, drama, and visual arts; artists' residencies; and exhibits of contemporary art in the Millstone Gallery. COCA's award-winning outreach program, Urban Arts, provides free arts education to low-income students. Please visit www.COCAstl.org.