

PRESS RELEASE

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CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY PARTNERS WITH THE NATIONAL VETERANS ART MUSEUM TO OFFER *ABOVE AND BEYOND*, THE 58,000 DOG TAG ART INSTALLATION BY VETERAN ARTISTS AT HAROLD WASHINGTON LIBRARY CENTER

Through an extraordinary effort to understand combat through the eyes of those who experienced it, Chicago Public Library and the National Veterans Art Museum partner to present, *Above and Beyond*, the 58,000 dog tag art installation created by Veteran Artists, a very important art exhibition reflecting on the meaning and consequences of the Vietnam War. *Above and Beyond* features over 58,000 dog tags representing U.S. military personnel who lost their lives in the Vietnam War. *Above and Beyond* will be featured as an extended exhibition, opening on February 20, 2016 and continuing through April 15, 2020, at the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State St. The *Above and Beyond* exhibition is made possible through private and public grant donations to the National Veterans Art Museum, and administered through the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

Above and Beyond was commissioned by the National Veterans Art Museum and created by U.S. Military Veterans (and artists) Rick Steinbock, Ned Broderick, Joe Fornelli, and Mike Helbing. The exhibit is comprised of hand-stamped replicated dog tags of every U.S. soldier killed in service to their country in Vietnam. The dog tags are suspended from the ceiling of an open 13 ft. X 34 ft. installation, making the impact of combat visible to all.

“Chicago Public Library is extremely proud to feature the *Above and Beyond* exhibit at the Harold Washington Library Center,” said Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. “It is so important that the people of Chicago see their Library as a place where ideas are brought to life and shared, whether it be through a book, picture, story, or a highly impactful piece of art.”

“*Above and Beyond* is a powerful piece of art that makes a bold statement on the impact of combat to our society, and is all the more potent as it was created by veteran artists who served in Vietnam,” said Lionel Rabb, Chairman of the National Veterans Art Museum Board of Directors. “*Above and Beyond* exemplifies the quality and stature of veteran art, while showing its ability to expose people to the realities of war and combat.”

In October 1981, a group of Vietnam War veterans put together an exhibition of artwork based on their war experiences. The success of the show led to the establishment of the Vietnam Veterans Art Group. Fifteen years later, with a building donated, the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum was launched. In 2003, the museum began accepting work by veterans of all conflicts and, in 2010, changes its name to the National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM). While the NVAM is one of the only museums in the world to collect and exhibit artwork exclusively created by veterans in a permanent exhibition, it also provides important

programming for veterans, their families, and the community. For more information about the National Veterans Art Museum, visit www.nvam.org, or call (312) 326-0270.

Since 1873, the Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; was named the first ever winner of the National Summer Learning Association's Founder's Award in recognition of its Summer Learning Challenge; and was ranked number one in the U.S., and third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, please call (312) 747-4050 or visit chipublic.org.