



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
REV. April 27, 2012

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KINC FINDS CREATIVE PATHWAY THROUGH DESIGN PROCESS TO SUPPORT THE HEALING OF YOUNG CARDIAC PATIENTS

Problem-Solving Design Duo Brings to Life Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Lookingglass Theatre's
Peter and the Wolf for new Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

CHICAGO – In their 20 years as the custom design and fabrication company **Kinc**, founding artists **Katherine Ross** and **Karen Zissis** have become adept at delivering projects with unusual requirements. Past projects include installing a fully functioning Monet-inspired waterfall in the atrium of Marshall Field's Water Tower Place, and delivering a fantastical 100-foot fabric web for Joffrey Ballet's dancers to move over, under and through during 2011's acclaimed "Rising Stars" program.

Currently, Kinc is addressing their most demanding creative challenge to date: project managing, designing, and fabricating a series of *Peter and the Wolf*-inspired interactive environments for the 15th Floor Regenstein Cardiac Care Unit of the new **Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago**. The world-class hospital facility is scheduled to open in June.

Kinc was personally selected by 15th Floor creative arts community partners the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** (CSO) and **Lookingglass Theatre Company** to help them realize a hands-on design inspired by their 2010 joint production based on *Peter and the Wolf*. To aid this process, Kinc is overseeing every artistic step of the project – from conception to installation – with a primary focus on integrating the contributions of the creative arts community partners with the stringent health and safety needs of the hospital.

“What makes this project so exceptional is that the completed work has to conform to the real-world operational requirements of a hospital ward, while still providing an inspiring and creative environment

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that will support the children as they move towards recovery,” stated Kinc's **Katherine Ross**. “In addition, it’s important to make sure that the visions of each of the creative arts community partners are fully realized. Balancing the artistic and practical sides of the design includes everything from making sure that the pieces themselves are cleanable and pose no physical safety hazards to the young patients, to ensuring that the artworks will be of the highest quality, have emotional depth, and give value to the patients and their families in the days and months they will be living on the floor.”

“The best creative path will achieve all of these requirements,” added Ross. “Kinc is determined that every change, addition, and requirement is achieved in a way that adds to the artistic output.”

“Utilizing the arts as part of the healing process has always been a part of the culture at Children's Memorial Hospital,” said **Rene Roy** producer of the hospital’s Skylight TV and project manager for this partnership. “That commitment continues into the new Lurie Children's in magnificent form with the creative commitments of our partners.” Chief of New Hospital Design and Construction **Bruce Komiske** and the New Hospital Creative Arts Program Coordinator **Lisa Mulvaney** approached the CSO and Lookingglass Theatre in 2009 as they were beginning to lay out the Creative Arts Community Partnership Initiative. According to Komiske, “The new hospital provided an opportunity to engage Chicago's rich cultural and arts community in the process of creating a unique and Chicago-centric healing environment.”

“While there was great awareness and mutual admiration for each others’ work, CSO and Lookingglass had never collaborated with each other, said Lookingglass Theatre Company's Producing Artistic Director **Phil Smith**. “We wanted to present something that sprouted from both companies and was suitable for a children's hospital. Prokofiev’s masterpiece *Peter and the Wolf* was the logical choice.

Both the CSO and Lookingglass felt strongly that the distinct differences between our organizational identities and art forms required an objective approach to the creation of content for the hospital. “Kinc's experience in working with Children’s Memorial Hospital is very important to us; they know how to manage the strict criteria for creating and installing materials in a hygienic environment like the hospital,” said **Charles Grode**, vice president of the CSOA’s Institute for Learning, Access and Training. “The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association is thrilled to be a part of this project. We have enjoyed our collaboration with Kinc immensely, especially the creative, compassionate management that Katherine and Karen bring. They have done a wonderful job of synthesizing many creative ideas and handling the wide range of questions and needs that has resulted in these beautiful installations.”

Lurie Children's New Hospital Creative Arts Program Coordinator **Lisa Mulvaney** said “There is recognizable good that comes out of the journey through illness. The patients and their families, in a metaphorical sense, are going into the forest – we want them to see someplace to reach for on the other side. We believe that the interactive artworks we have commissioned from our creative arts community

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Kinc finds creative pathway release

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partners can provide courage for our young patients and a vision for persevering through illness. *Peter in the Wolf* is an inspirational story, because Peter prevails.”

Ross added, “Some of the children will spend months at a time in the Cardiac Care Unit. Kinc is going to make sure they’re always in a space that engages and uplifts them and contributes to their overall recovery.”

The initial matchmaking by Lurie Children's has paid off for the CSO and Lookingglass Theatre. They first collaborated in November of 2010 on *Into the Big Green Meadow*, a CSO family series concert based on *Peter and the Wolf*. The production became the seed of the Lurie Children's Hospital project. CSO and Lookingglass Theatre have subsequently teamed up for the Feb. 4th CSO family concert performance of *Pulcinella*.

Design and construction of the Regenstein Cardiac Care Unit installation is now underway in Kinc's studio located at 3927 N. Central Park Avenue. The new Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago is scheduled to open in June with a public open house event scheduled for May.

Kinc merges theatricality with practicality to deliver unforgettable, imaginative designs with emotional impact. Kinc’s award-winning works have been featured in public, private, and retail spaces nationwide. For more information visit www.kincinc.com.

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