



# Congregation

by KMA – Kit Monkman & Tom Wexler

Friday, Feb 21 – Sunday, Mar 16

Sunday – Thursday: Dusk to 10:00 p.m. Friday & Saturday: Dusk to midnight



Market Square  
Public Art

[MarketSquarePublicArt.com](http://MarketSquarePublicArt.com)

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## MARKET SQUARE TO HOST THE NORTH AMERICAN PREMIER OF CONGREGATION Interactive Art Exhibit by KMA to launch the Three Year Market Square Public Art Program

**Downtown Pittsburgh, PA** – The North American premiere of *Congregation*, a dynamic, large-scale video and sound installation, will launch on Friday, February 21 in Market Square and will run every evening starting at dusk through Sunday, March 16. *Congregation* commences the [Market Square Public Art Program](http://MarketSquarePublicArt.com), a program of the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning Public Art Division, managed by the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. This program will exhibit public art in Market Square in the winter months of 2014, 2015 and 2016, showcasing the very best in contemporary public art and establishing the recently redesigned Market Square as a local, regional and national arts destination. The installation is free and open to the public. Tickets and reservations are not needed to experience the artwork.

*Congregation* is an interactive kinetic video and sound installation designed and choreographed for interaction with pedestrians in Market Square, created by UK-based pioneering media artists Kit Monkman and Tom Wexler, known collectively as [KMA](http://KMA.com). *Congregation* will transform the plaza of Market Square into an interactive stage. The audience becomes performers, exploring the environment as the installation responds to their movements. The music for *Congregation* is by the contemporary composer, Peter Broderick.

“Pittsburgh has a long history of public art,” said Mayor William Peduto. “It not only beautifies our built environment, it inspires and educates. So, as people make their way through Market Square during this cold winter, it is our hope that they will find a warm moment of education and inspiration by enjoying the exhibits that will be a part of this program.”

The plan to install temporary public art in Market Square stemmed from the desire to provide more vibrancy to this important public space throughout the winter months. For three quarters of the year Market Square has become a successful urban oasis with outdoor seating, improved retail, and some of the City’s best public programs: the Farmer’s Market, Holiday Market, large and small events and a range of non-profit fundraisers and advocacy events. A lack of programming occurs once the holiday season is over and Pittsburghers endure a long, cold winter. The City of Pittsburgh is partnering with the PDP to fill this void with engaging, dynamic public art.

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“Public art is an important part of a vibrant, world-class city. We are excited to be leading the effort to create art installations in Market Square that will engage residents and visitors with an interactive video and sound project. We appreciate the support of the City of Pittsburgh and the Office of Public Art in collaborating with our organization to bring *Congregation* to Downtown Pittsburgh. We are proud that this installation will be the North American debut for KMA and *Congregation*. Our Downtown retail and restaurant destinations look forward to welcoming people from around the region and the country to visit the project and explore Downtown,” said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership.

KMA's highly original interactive work stems from a joint interest in the physical patterns of social behavior and in the use of digital technology as a vehicle for public theater. They have presented their interactive works involving public participation for various cities, public institutions and art festivals at places such as Trafalgar Square in London and the People's Square, in Chongqing, China. KMA has also collaborated with many video artists and dance groups such as Justin Timberlake and DV8. Their work has been described as “Staggeringly inventive!” by The Daily Telegraph. The world premiere of *Congregation* at Rockbund Art Museum was a part of the UK's program at Shanghai World Expo 2010, after which it was presented at Tate Britain, London, and in Bournemouth, UK. The work was originally commissioned by SCAN in partnership with The British Council.

According to artists Kit Monkman and Tom Wexler: “the idea of communities gathering after dark to enact or watch a drama or ritual lies so deep within us and our ancestral history it's surely one of the oldest and most essential of human responses to our shared fate. The mutual empathic response to participating in this way is a powerful feeling. It's not generated by allegiance, or ideology, but simply a common response to the moment.”

To initiate the Market Square Public Art Program, a call for artists was released in the summer of 2013; more than 130 submissions were received from artists throughout the world. Submissions were reviewed by a jury of Downtown stakeholders, visual art experts, and representatives of the City of Pittsburgh. The selection process was managed by the Office of Public Art.

“*Congregation* is magical, and I hope everyone within 150 miles of Pittsburgh will come Downtown to experience it. Kit and Tom have created an installation that is an interactive experience, giving viewers not only the opportunity to see and hear the work, but to move through it and create changes in the projection. I know it will be a moving and meaningful experience, and am excited that such an adventurous project is being presented as the inaugural work of the Market Square Public Art Program,” states Renee Piechocki, Director of the Office of Public Art.

Funding for the Market Square Public Art Program has been generously provided by The Heinz Endowments, an anonymous source, Colcom Foundation, Richard King Mellon Foundation, and the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. Local production support for the installation is being provided by Flyspace Productions and the Office of Public Art.

The public will have the opportunity to learn more about *Congregation* at a free public lecture hosted by the Office of Public Art and Point Park University. The lecture will be held Saturday, February 22 at the GRW Theatre at Point Park University from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. The theater is located the University Center, 414 Wood Street. Reservations are appreciated at [www.publicartpittsburgh.org](http://www.publicartpittsburgh.org) or by calling 412-391-2060 x 237. Following the lecture, the Office of Public Art will host an artists reception at 6:30 p.m. at the Original Oyster House in Market Square. The public is invited to meet the artists and share in food and drink.

Arts, technology, entertainment and student or classroom groups, as well as individuals, are invited to learn more about *Congregation* and the Market Square Public Art Program. The Office of Public Art will offer free 30 minute talks to learn about the artwork, the artists who made it, program details, and other works of public art in Downtown Pittsburgh. Talks will occur Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesdays at 7:30 PM in Market Square. To attend a talk or arrange for your group to participate, please sign-up at [www.publicartpittsburgh.org](http://www.publicartpittsburgh.org).

**About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership**

*Celebrating 20 years, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations and residents who provide energy, vision and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP's strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, marketing, economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit [www.DowntownPittsburgh.com](http://www.DowntownPittsburgh.com), follow us on Twitter @downtownpitt and "like" us on Facebook.*

**About the Office of Public Art**

*The Office of Public Art is a public-private partnership between the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Founded in 2005, they provide technical assistance and educational programs about public art in the Pittsburgh region. For more information, visit [www.publicartpittsburgh.org](http://www.publicartpittsburgh.org)*

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