



## UPTOWN MULTI-CULTURAL ART CENTER

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# Artist Protests City Law by Giving His Art Away

July 1, 2008

**For Immediate Release**

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The "Free Speech Artists' Movement" says Chicago's Peddler's License ordinance denies artists their complete speech rights to sell their art in the public way.

One artist who says the City is cheating artists of their speech rights is protesting this injustice by giving his art away in the Loop. City law, claiming traffic control as the reason, allows artists to give their art away but not to sell their art without severe restrictions. First Amendment case law says there is no difference between selling and giving away speech and that it does not matter whether or not the speaker is paid. To protest the Peddler's License law that unfairly restricts artists, C. Drew will be screen-printing patches in public in the Loop on a random schedule all summer long. He intends to blog at [c-drew.com/blog](http://c-drew.com/blog) about his experiences to build support for the First Amendment rights of artists.

Mr. Drew promotes a basic understanding of artists' First Amendment rights on cable Channel 21 TV show, "Printing T-shirt Art" airing weekly on Fridays at 6:00. He contrasts the First Amendment rights of newspapers to sell their speech on the public sidewalks and in the parks, with the more restricted rights of artists in Chicago. One need only look for the artists in Chicago to realize they are unseen in the city on a daily basis. He compares the absence of street art scenes in Chicago with New York City where street art scenes exist in city parks and on the streets. Artists fought for and won their speech rights in court in New York. In Chicago, artists have not yet fought for their full rights to sell their speech in the public way.

Three pages of prohibited districts listed in Chicago's peddlers license ordinance and the policy banning speech sales by the Chicago Park District combine to prevent artists from reaching the public in areas of Chicago that are speech-vendor viable. The result is no open-air art scenes where artists can freely sell their art, create art in public and attract friendly crowds by their collective action.

The goal of Mr. Drew's protest is to generate serious discussion about artists' (visual artists, musicians, performing artists, and your) free speech rights. Everyone is encouraged to join the discussion by visiting [art-teez.org/free-speech.htm](http://art-teez.org/free-speech.htm) to sign a petition or comment on blog entries. To get involved call 773/561-7676.