



/ AROUND TOWN

October 25, 2008

## **Dining by Design Set to Take Over the Merchandise Mart**



The Merchandise Mart will once again host DIFFA Chicago's seventh-annual Dining by Design event, a unique fundraiser benefitting the Chicago chapter of the Design Industries' Foundation Fighting AIDS. Taking place from Nov. 6 through Nov. 8, Dining by Design brings together top talent from the local and national design

communities to create three-dimensional tabletop installations throughout the Mart's eighth-floor event space.

Given a 10-foot by 10-foot blank canvas to work with, past Dining by Design participants have created everything from rustic environments (with everything from driftwood to daisies) to over-the-top fantasylands (think "Alice in Wonderland" goes to dinner). Who knows what this year will bring?

Kicking off the three-day whirlwind of festivities on Thursday night is Cocktails by Design, a reception and first look at the exhibition, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Friday brings an open house for the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (tickets \$10). Saturday's lineup includes the Table Hop & Taste from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with bites from Chicago restaurants and wine pairings (tickets \$25). The grand finale is Saturday evening's Dining by Design Gala, offering dinner, dancing and a silent auction (tickets range from \$375 to \$1,000).