

Gordon Halloran

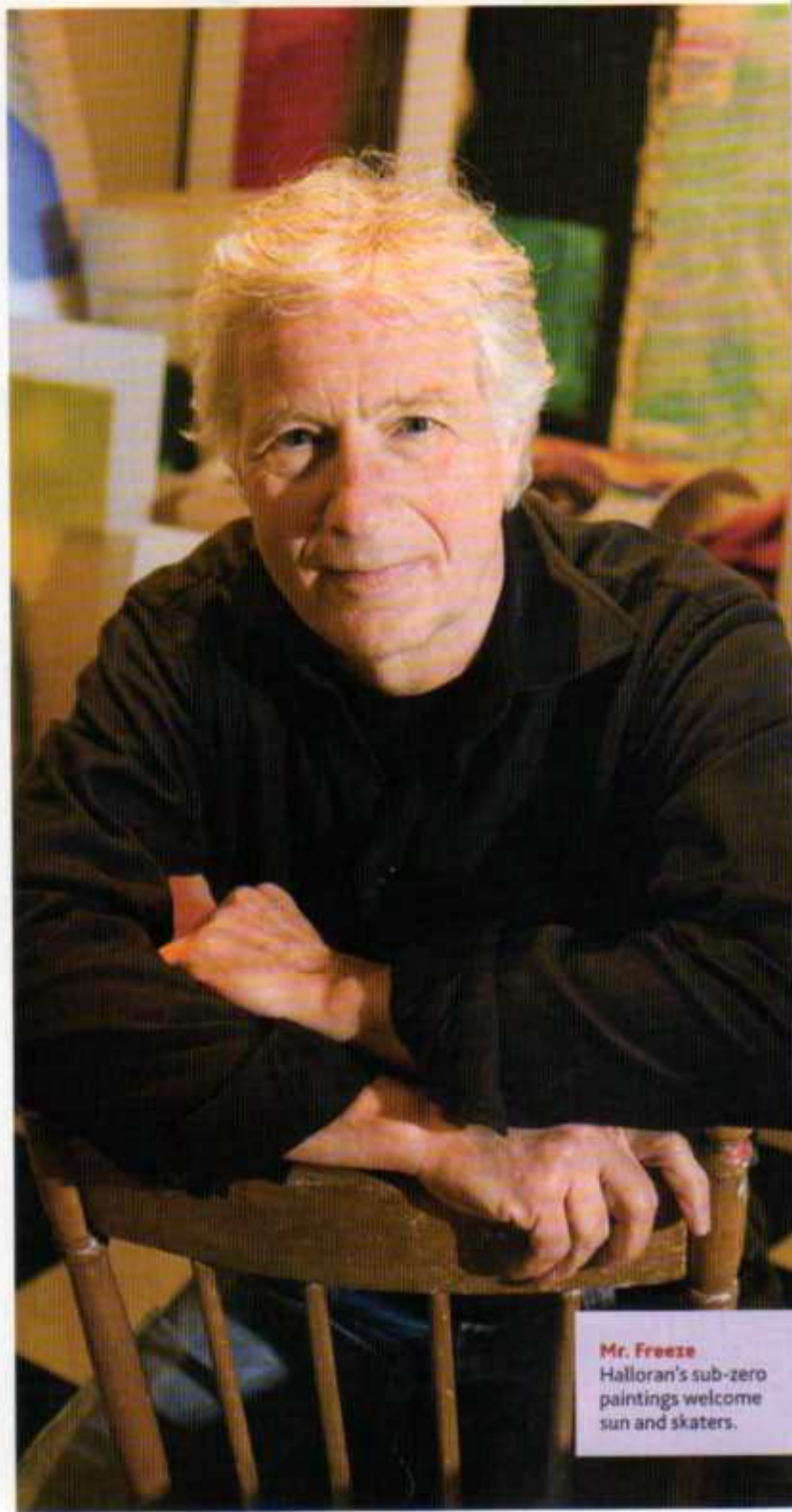
The ice artist brings his paintings to Chicago.

My first artistic experience came when I flooded the backyard of my childhood home in Canada to make an ice rink. The shiny surface of the ice reflecting the moon captivated me, and I eventually invented what has been called the "quintessential Canadian art form": ice painting. Since then, my public installations have traveled from Toronto to Torino, Italy; and in February will come to America for the first time when "Paintings Below Zero" opens at Chicago's Millennium Park.

The installation consists of a 95-foot-long, 13-foot-high wall of colored ice plates nicknamed "The Popsicle," as well as a painting across the surface of the State Street skating rink. The location and the medium let viewers be active participants in the creative process. They can watch the paintings evolve as colors migrate, melt, and re-freeze into new patterns. Or they can skate across the rink painting I've named "The Loop," after the famous Chicago Loop, located nearby.

I created my first ice painting 15 years ago. Using a Zamboni as paintbrush and palette knife, I eventually developed a process that allowed me to create my paintings on vast surfaces of ice. Though I use refrigeration techniques and special aluminum freezer plates to create and preserve the designs, my "finished" paintings constantly change, since colors mix and new designs form as the ice melts.

This impermanence fascinates me. At freezing temperatures, you have these lovely, delicate paintings. Just one degree above that, slush. Though all my paintings eventually melt, I hope that they will inspire people to look closely and appreciate what is so beautiful and so fragile—just like my backyard ice rink inspired me as a child. icepaintingproject.com



Mr. Freeze
Halloran's sub-zero paintings welcome sun and skaters.