

One of a Kind Show offers unique shopping



Kathleen Dorsey

Second Chance Art and Accessories sells wall art like this vintage world map, framed in an old window pane.

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If you go

WHAT: One of a Kind Show Chicago

WHERE: Merchandise Mart, 222 W. Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago

WHEN: Dec. 6 from 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Dec. 7 from 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Dec. 8 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Dec. 9 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Tickets are \$12 per person and provide [admission](#) for all four days of the show. Seniors \$9, Children 12 and under free.

A portion of all ticket sales benefits Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

The 12th annual One of a Kind Show and Sale brought more than 600 individual artisans to the Merchandise Mart in Downtown Chicago from Dec. 6-9.

The show features handmade goods such as jewelry, clothing, holiday decorations, home décor items, original art, food, bath and custom made items.

Amy Manning, of Second Chance Art and Accessories, creates [unique wall art](#) from salvaged materials. She started by making items for her own house.

“The basement was starting to fill up with all my raw materials,” she said. “So my husband told me I had to stop making stuff, or find a way to get it off our hands.”

At first, she made other items such as pillows, but decided to focus on salvaged art once it became clear that it was her most popular line.

The entire eighth floor of the Merchandise Mart is filled with One of a Kind Show vendors. The east corner of the building is dedicated to the “Fashion District,” an area where clothing and jewelry designers are the exclusive vendors.

Etsy, the online handmade goods marketplace, also has a special booth section at the show this year. Vendors applied through [Etsy.com](#) to receive a booth space.

“To receive a booth through Etsy, you had to apply online and make it through a jury process,” said Gina DeSantis, of Columbus, Ohio, a ceramics purveyor at the show. “Etsy was offering these smaller booth spaces at a lower rate for first time One of a Kind Show vendors.”

Etsy also hosted a craft station in partnership with Chicago Craft Bar, which allows visitors to create their own embroidered or illustrated gift box for the holidays.

“It’s great for crafty people like us to have a place to come and do this,” said Kpoene Kofi-Bruce, owner of Mignonette Bridal in Chicago.

DeSantis’ store included holiday ornaments, mugs, bowls and lemon juicers – all handmade by DeSantis out of ceramic.

“I love carving things,” DeSantis said. “I’ll do that for hours, but I won’t clean my house.”

Toyota also had a presence at the show, offering notebook crafts, free screen printed tote bags, five-minute massages, hot teas and photo booth sessions.

Katie Bierdz, of South Bend, was on duty at Toyota’s tote bags station. “It’s pretty cool,” she said. “I’m hoping to get to walk around. I haven’t done my Christmas shopping yet.”

Bierdz said that though she left an hour and a half early, she arrived at the Merchandise Mart right on time for the show.

“Traffic was terrible, and I don’t know the city too well anyway,” she said. “I was lucky that I left so early this morning.”