

## fenêtre d'opportunité/ window of opportunity

In 2007, 4240 collaborated with Chicago artist Bernard Williams in a competition to create a mural for the renovated Bir Hakeim Metro station in Paris. The project proposed to inform Parisians about their sister city, Chicago, by creating an image within the windows of the station's truss. 4240 and Bernard Williams created the following project brief to explain the proposal:



### What does Chicago mean to you?

Through a simple question we hope to relate our city to the citizens of Paris. We hope to find simple commonalities shared between people of both countries. Traveling to work, an evening stroll, or shopping at the holidays, discoveries connecting people will be made.

### We are closer.

We also hope to enable new, sophisticated connections between the cities. Through someone's love of the blues in Chicago, someone in Paris will be intrigued, curiosity piqued. Koko Taylor will be googled and her music downloaded. A piece of Chicago transported around the world. A higher level connection made.

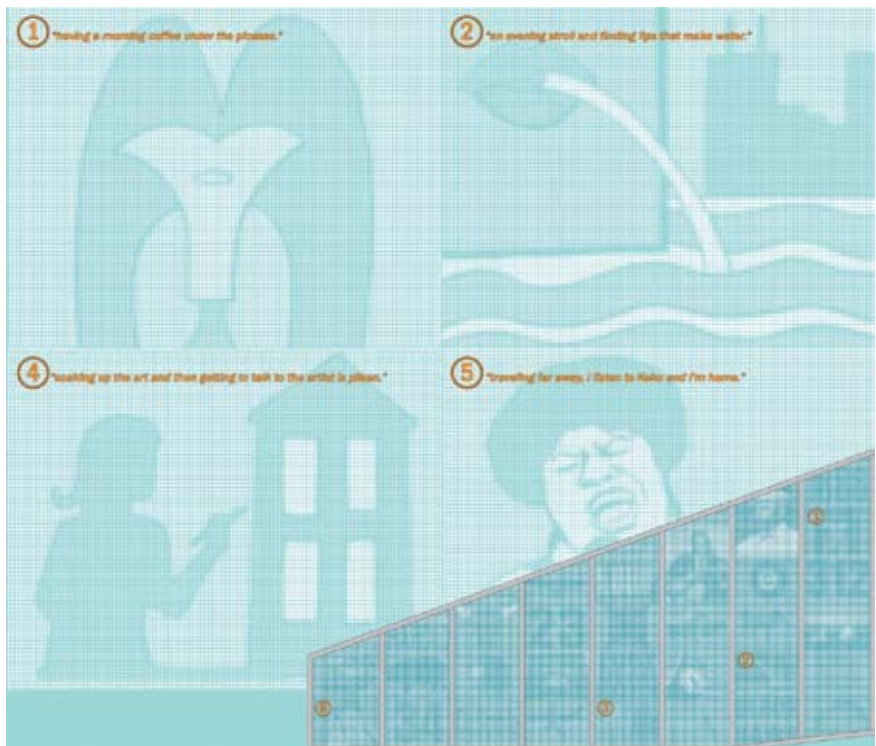
### We are closer.

We hope to inspire Parisians, in learning why we love Chicago, to describe to us why they love Paris. Maybe they will be so moved that a sister installation will be cited in Chicago that relates Paris.

### que signifie Paris pour vous?

### What does Paris mean to you?

A simple question is the genesis of our work. Through hundreds of soulful responses from a diverse cross section of our population we will better understand the depth and wonder of our city. We will make these responses our project, our poetic ambassador to Paris. Each response will be synthesized into a symbol rendered within the glass. Each symbol a cherished moment of Chicago's past, present and future. These moments become part of the Architecture of the station; each a quiet rendering of Chicago.



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### DAY/ micro

During the day, the monochromatic dot pattern that defines the symbols gently filters light. 365 unique symbols softly speak to the commuter's gaze.

### NIGHT/ macro

During the night, the symbols become a canvas upon which larger projected images appear. These images, visible from beyond the terminal, display real time video feeds from Chicago; images from the many neighborhoods/ cultures that is Chicago; the individual responses to "what does Chicago mean to you."

It is the combination of these two works that is the spirit of our proposal. Simple and meaningful connections with the Parisians will be made through the micro and macro images. Whether it be a commuter arriving home (paris) simultaneously with a commuter headed to work (chicago); a cloudy day in Chicago compared to an overcast night in Paris; a more sophisticated connection involving music, art, celebration; the glass gables of the train station are transformed. They become windows of communion.

Windows to a neighbor.  
A neighbor that is now  
just a little bit closer.

### EPILOGUE

This project is a collaboration between artist Bernard Williams and 4240 Architecture. project credits: Bernard Williams, Robert Benson, Jason Chernak, Tom Brauer.

