

**For Immediate Release
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**Former Magic 104.9FM, host of Life Chats, and Author of the New
Book, The NO Journal, Meochia Thompson, Returns to ArtPrize with
HUG**

HUG: Help Uplift Goodness

Grand Rapids, MI— August 25, 2018 — Former, Magic 104.9FM, host of Life Chats and Author of the new, *The NO Journal: 90 Days of Saying No to Mess and Stress and Yes to Your Success*, Meochia Thompson, announced she will be returning to ArtPrize, Sept. 14-Oct. 1, with her Time-Based exhibit, entitled, HUG: Help Uplift Goodness (Vote 57128) which is a uniquely shaped, “friend and handmade”, 264sq ft, brightly colored, wooden structured stage, covered in poetry in English and Braille, signatures and messages of love, located at Canal Park (925 Monroe Ave NW). The stage serves as a “safe space” for Huggers from around the world to come and share a loving embrace with others. It even has a sanitation station and a hug tutorial for extra safety. She has been on a HUG Campaign for over a decade, hugging people all over the globe, including London. “Years ago, about ten of us came out and hugged over a thousand people in two hours at ArtPrize. People kept asking if I was part of an exhibit. Nope, we were just there to show love.”

“We need to show what pure love looks like. For a moment, when wrapped in a loving embrace; color, age, race, job, past, troubles or social-economic status does not matter. That is what HUG is all about. In a world crowded with social media and the loneliness and mental hardship of COVID, people are lonelier than ever. Whether it’s talking face to face, handwriting a letter, or picking up the phone to say, ‘I love you’, all of us can play a part in filling a void in

each other's life, even a stranger. HUG is about doing our simple part to Help Uplift Goodness," said author and HUGOLOGIST, Meochia Thompson.

HUG City GR/ HUG Park

Meochia is calling on individuals, musicians, performers, families, friends, groups, businesses, and organizations to come out to the Canal Park and do some real "arms" outreach. Groups of five or more can book the HUG Stage for free to have some HUG time of their own.

All participants must purchase a hug t-shirt to identify themselves as part of the exhibit and watch a 3-minute hug tutorial Meochia created to teach "How to Hug the Public". For charity, 25% of the sales from the HUG t-shirts will be donated to WayfindersAfrica.org, a nonprofit dedicated to helping impoverished countries in Africa, like Mozambique, with food, shelter, and spiritual connection.

"In 2018, HUG made it to the top exhibits in Time-Based category but I had to leave early because my mom got the good news that she was receiving her liver transplant. What I thought would be a 3-day trip turned into 2 weeks. So, I wasn't able to return. Unfortunately, there were some mishaps that left her having to get another liver transplant operation 4 days later and in a coma for over 2 months, fighting for her life. She came out of the hospital and lived an additional 2 years but died on October 31, 2020. This year's HUG exhibit is dedicated to her because she ended every 'see you later' with love and hug," said Meochia.

"Meochia is like a morning cup of coffee. Her energy is just contagious," said Christiana Love of Kentwood, Michigan, "and she gives the best hugs."

In a city as diverse and giving as Grand Rapids, Meochia hopes to leave a favorable impression and label the city, “HUG City GR”.

HUG Exhibit Availability

To donate, buy a t-shirt, or get an interview with Meochia to learn more about the HUG exhibit at Canal for ArtPrize, visit mylifechats.com/hug.

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For more information on the HUG Exhibit:

mylifechats.com/hug

Vote 57128

Canal Park (941 Monroe NW)

Grand Rapids, MI

ArtPrize (Sept. 14-Oct. 1)

The No Journal: 90 Days of Saying No to Mess and Stress and Yes to Your Success by Meochia Nochi Thompson, can be purchased at blessedpenink.com.

Donations: <https://gofundme/97c119ad>



