

Fine art or fine craft may be the answer to the holiday gift question

November 30, 2009

After successfully avoiding "Black Friday" and possibly "Cyber Monday" when everyone else flooded bricks and mortar stores and discount dotcoms, the question of where to find a special or atypical holiday gift still remains.

In the Chicago area, the answer may be over at the Merchandise Mart where the annual [One of a Kind Show and Sale®](#) will be held Dec. 3-6.

A juried show of [570 artists and artisans](#) from across North America, the event pulls together paintings, photography, jewelry, fiber art, pottery and other hand-crafted items for picky present givers.

The show is also fun to attend even if looking to treat oneself or merely to see [fine art and craft](#) and meet artists. What sets the show apart from others where quality is also paramount is that the artists must be on site all four days.

"We encourage the whole family to come because children can talk with the artists and see people who have followed their passion. That is a great message," said Jennifer Woolford, the Mart's senior vice president of consumer shows.

"I love stopping to talk with the artists when I walk through the show. Every artist has a story," Woolford said.

If you go

Where: The Chicago [Merchandise Mart](#), 8th Floor, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, north side of the Chicago River between Orleans and Wells Streets, Chicago, 800-677-MART (6728)

Hours: Dec. 3, noon–9 p.m., Dec. 4, 11 a.m.–9 p.m., Dec. 5, 10 a.m.–7 p.m., Dec. 6; 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Tickets: Adults: \$12, seniors and students: \$9, children 12 and under: free. All Thursday's ticket proceeds will go to Children's Memorial Hospital.

More info: [One of a Kind Merchandise Mart](#) 800-677-MART (6728) also MMPI, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 470 Chicago, 312-527-4141