

World-shaping minds inspired at TED gathering

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Technology titans, artists, scientists, and celebrities will be among those taking part in the annual event that has transformed from an elite gathering into an Internet platform for "ideas worth spreading."

TED is renowned for a thought-sparking swirl of viewpoints, revelations, and creative presentations delivered by vaunted personalities asked to pack the talk of a lifetime in an 18-minute punch.

Videos of "TED Talks" are made available free online at Ted.com.

TED Talks have legions of followers and have spread to television stations around the world through an "Open TV Project" launched last year.

The week-long [TED Conference](#) kicking off on Monday will reach a new high, literally, with a greeting from US astronaut Cady Coleman at the International Space Station which will be getting a live stream of the event.

"Our whole goal is to lift people out of their everyday world," said TED media executive producer June Cohen.

"We've gone far afield to find great moments of wonder to infuse you with ideas and provocation," she continued.

The TED program includes a lesson in leadership from US General Stanley McChrystal, former head of International forces in Afghanistan, and a view of the Middle East from Al Jazeera Network director general Wadah Khanfar.

Khanfar is to speak about the political upheaval and how to bridge the divide between the Muslim and Western worlds.

Surgeon Anthony Atala, a pioneer in organ and limb regeneration, will bring to the TED stage a device that actually prints live human tissue.

"We are not certain what organ he will make during the session," Cohen said. "We hear an ear or a liver...I still can't believe he can do that."

Composer and conductor Eric Whitaker, who orchestrated the first "virtual choir" on YouTube, is to premier a new work at TED that

weaves together the voices of 250 people from around the world.

Architect and engineer Carlo Ratti will share his latest creations in the world of tiny robots that swarm with hive-like purpose.

The chiefs of US car maker Ford and beverage titan PepsiCo are part of a roster ranging from puppeteers and a magician to physicists, film-makers, and philanthropists.

In a new TED twist, retired Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates will "guest curate" a set of talks, which his speaker choices mirroring his devotion to technology, education, and eradicating malaria.

A mysterious French artist that uses bleak streets in cities around the world as frames for his photos will be awarded a coveted TED Prize.

Organizers of TED, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to cultivating ideas and innovation through its prestigious conferences, described the man known only as "JR" as a "true humanitarian" whose art inspires people to look at the world differently and want to work to make it better.

"He's putting a human face on some of the most critical social issues while redefining how we view, make and display art," said TED Prize director Amy Novogratz.

JR has mounted his enormous black-and-white photos on buildings in slums around Paris; on walls in the Middle East; on dilapidated bridges in Africa, and on homes in Brazilian shantytowns.

The prize includes \$100,000 and a wish that "Tedsters" are urged to help realize.

"Even knowing the speakers in advance it is impossible to predict who

will give the most transformative talk," Cohen said. "Most of the time, it is the people you least expect."

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