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Lotus woven stars to be displayed at 2018 Commonwealth Games in Queensland, Australia

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA – More than 10,000 eight-pointed stars woven by Bloomington residents will be on display at the [2018 Commonwealth Games](#) in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, when the [Lotus Education and Arts Foundation’s “One Million Stars to End Violence: Lotus International Star-Weaving Project”](#) joins communities worldwide for a truly global installation.

The installation, just announced as the Games’ first “Arts, Culture, and Community” collaboration, will be the ultimate culmination of the larger “One Million Stars to End Violence” initiative started by Australian artist Maryann Talia Pau in 2012. Pau, reacting to escalating occurrences of racial and domestic violence and violence against women in Australia, drew her inspiration for One Million Stars from a quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” Says Pau, “Every woven star reminds us that we have to MAKE peace and safe spaces and that it doesn’t just happen. Every star is a commitment to resist violence and revenge, to believe in forgiveness and healing.”

Lotus approached Pau last fall to become a StarWeave Community Partner, one of only two US partners in this global project. Lotus officially launched its year-long local initiative on MLK Day in January 2016 (<http://www.lotusfest.org/stars-launch/>), inviting the larger Bloomington community into a commitment to weave and contribute at least 10,000 eight-pointed stars made from ribbon and recycled materials. Stars created during Lotus-sponsored public and private workshops over the coming year will be on local display at the 23rd annual Lotus World Music & Arts Festival in September and at City Hall in December, before being shipped to Australia for inclusion in the Commonwealth Games 2018 display of all 1,000,000 stars.

Commonwealth Games organizers were drawn to the alignment of the project with the Games’ ideals, noting that the final display in Gold Coast will “provide a beautiful masterpiece that reflects our commitment to ending violence in our society.” [The Commonwealth Games](#), modeled on the Olympics and held every four years, were launched in 1930 as the British Empire Games and today host athletes representing ~71 countries and territories from the Commonwealth of Nations.

Lotus workshops include instruction in the star-weaving technique and the movement’s goals, as well as background about weaving traditions and star symbolism among Pacific Island cultures. Project founder Pau will also visit Bloomington in the fall. A list of upcoming public star-weaving workshops can be found on the Lotus website at www.lotusfest.org/events/.

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