

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER

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Chicago Architecture Center launches *CAC@Home*

Remote-access engagement programs bring industry leaders and CAC docents to audiences worldwide; include family-friendly activities, archival content and free benefits for CAC members

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[High-resolution images with captions and credits downloadable here](#)

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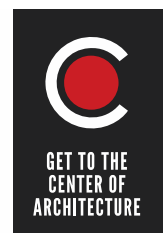
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CHICAGO – Beginning with [the debut issue of *CAC@Home*](#) sent on March 26, 2020, the [Chicago Architecture Center](#) (CAC) is pleased to offer a broad spectrum of timely opportunities for public engagement, through and beyond its [temporary suspension](#) of in-person activities.

Initial responses to [CAC@Home](#) and [CAC Live](#)—the organization’s recently launched slate of book talks, panel discussions, lectures, virtual tours, interactives for families and more—has been overwhelmingly positive, with more than 400 people viewing [archival video](#) of the late architect Stanley Tigerman’s last public lecture, held in the Gand Lecture Hall at the CAC in February 2019; and more than 150 people from across and beyond the United States logging into [CAC Live: Architecture Essentials](#), hosted by CAC Director of Interpretation Adam Rubin on April 4. That program repeated on April 7 to kick off the CAC Live series; **see below for additional upcoming CAC Live events.**

Alongside one-time-only CAC Live events featuring architecture experts, design practitioners, acclaimed authors and industry leaders, CAC Live also engages the organization’s corps of more than 600 docents and volunteers through online talks and virtual tours, [stories](#) to inspire Chicagoans to explore their own neighborhoods while spatial distancing, and submissions to [CAC Recommends](#)—the CAC’s new weekly roundup of media endorsements for design lovers.



Select CAC Live events will focus specifically on the coronavirus, such as [Lessons from Seattle: An Interview with Planning Chief Samuel Assefa](#), at noon CST on Thursday, April 23. Subscriptions via email to CAC@Home are free; visit architecture.org to sign up today.

“Like so many of our peers in the cultural nonprofit space, we at the CAC were already committed to bolstering our online engagement strategies—especially given the nature of our audience, which includes visitors from around the world,” says [CAC President and CEO Lynn J. Osmond](#). “The global public health crisis caused by the coronavirus shifted this goal for us dramatically, from a work-in-progress to a mission-critical, all-hands-on-deck effort to sustain our organization.” Across CAC@Home and other audience-specific emails, social media channels @chiarchitecture and visits to the CAC website, the organization’s average daily audience is currently estimated at more than 100,000 individuals worldwide.

“Schools may be out of session and museums are closed, but the CAC is working to keep children, parents and teachers learning about architecture and design, including the buildings around them, while practicing spatial distancing at home in their own neighborhoods,” says [CAC Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement Nicole Kowrach](#). Each week, CAC@Home includes new resources to support quality learning, including hands-on activities in STEM subjects, easy neighborhood explorations focused on building types and materials, lesson plans for middle and high school students, LEGO® Build challenges, and video Storytime sessions. Select programs subtitled “For the Family” within CAC@Home are offered in both English and Spanish.

“Families are currently challenged by working from home, supporting their kids’ learning and keeping everyone occupied,” adds Kowrach. “The CAC Education team has moved quickly to support them, offering ways for parents and other caregivers or educators—and not just in Chicago—to educate and inspire. We value the power of place-based learning in our programs for schools, and that learning is just as powerful in your own neighborhood and home.”

A selection of upcoming CAC@Home and CAC Live events is as follows; all start times listed are Central Time and all events are hosted online via [Zoom](#) unless otherwise noted.

[CAC@Home Calendar of Events: April 2020](#)

CAC Live: Chicago Public Art Stories

Saturday, April 11 at 1pm

Wednesday, May 13 at 7pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

Due to the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, Chicago’s public art legacy is younger than Boston’s or New York City’s. Its vast collection of public art, however, is star-studded, widely varied,

endlessly interesting—and still growing. CAC docent Ed McDevitt leads this engaging introduction to some of Chicago’s greatest public art treasures.

Host Ed McDevitt has been a CAC docent for ten years. He has developed or co-developed numerous walking tours for the CAC, including two public art tours. McDevitt is the founder of Public Art Chicago, established to document Chicago’s vast collection of public art online. McDevitt lives in River Forest, where he enjoys studying the remarkable architecture and homes of the Illinois village.

CAC Live: “Design Is Storytelling” Book Talk

Wednesday, April 15 at 1pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

For award-winning writer Ellen Lupton, design is not just about problem solving, but a political and rebellious act with many societal applications. In the book “Design Is Storytelling,” Lupton applies her characteristically sharp commentary and social observations to show how designers use storytelling techniques to create satisfying graphics, products, services and experiences.

Host Ellen Lupton is a graduate of Cooper Union College. In 1997, she became director of the Master of Fine Arts program at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Lupton is also a curator at the Cooper-Hewitt and a writer, having authored numerous design and typography books. In 2007, she was awarded the AIGA Gold Medal.

CAC Live: The Vision of Illinois Center

Wednesday, April 15 at 7pm

Saturday, May 9 at 1pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

Learn how an abandoned railway freight yard was transformed into an important urban development called Illinois Center—home since 2018 to the Chicago Architecture Center. CAC docent Lorie Westerman shares how Illinois Center was designed for people to “work, live and play,” along with interesting facts gathered through her extensive research into the history of one of the Office of Mies van der Rohe’s last Modernist projects. Discover the promises and controversies it generated at the time it was envisioned, improvements beyond the buildings that were included in the project, and the ongoing transformation of this once-unremarkable patch of land, where the Chicago River meets Lake Michigan and where the city was born.

Host Lorie Westerman has been a CAC docent since 2006. She leads several CAC neighborhood tours and serves as Tour Director for the CAC’s pedway tours, including the Illinois Center Pedway tour.

CAC Live: Women of the 1893 World's Fair

Saturday, April 18 at 1pm

Wednesday, May 6 at 7pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

The World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago's famous fair held in 1893, was a triumph for architect and planner Daniel Burnham—but it was also a showcase for women, and many more than just the celebrated Bertha Honoré Palmer. Learn about some of the artists, activists and achievers who were so compelling that we still discuss them, and their work, 127 years later.

Host Kathleen Carpenter has been a CAC docent since 2006. She has served as Director of Development and Alumni Relations at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, Vice President of the Museum of Science and Industry, and Executive Director of the Three Arts Club of Chicago. Born in Chicago, Carpenter is a graduate of Northwestern University.

CAC Live: Lessons from Seattle: An Interview with Planning Chief Samuel Assefa

Thursday, April 23 at noon

FREE

Seattle was the first major U.S. city hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, early in March 2020. With little precedent, domestically at least, local government had to act decisively. Seattle Director of Planning and Community Development Samuel Assefa recounts the moment it became clear that combatting COVID-19 would require the full resources and attention of city government, describing the planning department's role in the city's response. Learn how Seattle's story—and Assefa's personal, front-line experience of the pandemic—have helped Chicago and other cities respond both now and into the future. CAC President and CEO Lynn Osmond hosts.

Samuel Assefa is Director of the Executive Office of Planning and Community Development for the City of Seattle, an office responsible for developing and implementing planning policies and programs to support Seattle's current and future growth, as envisioned in its Comprehensive Plan. Prior to his appointment by former Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, Assefa served as the Senior Urban Designer for the City of Boulder, Colorado, from 2010 to 2016. From 2002 to 2010, he was with the City of Chicago where he served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor Richard M. Daley. He is a graduate of MIT with a Master's in City Planning, and of the University of Illinois at Chicago with a B.A. in Architecture.

CAC Live: Art Deco Skyscrapers

Wednesday, April 22 at 7pm

Saturday, May 2 at 1pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

Art Deco and the Roaring Twenties were the perfect match. Take a virtual tour of some of Chicago's most stunning Art Deco skyscrapers and learn the defining characteristics of a style that epitomized the prosperity and optimism of that exuberant era.

Host Bill Coffin is a former appellate attorney and adjunct professor of legal research and writing. A CAC docent since 2004, he is Tour Director of both of the CAC's Art Deco walking tours and has presented lectures about Art Deco at the CAC and at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, a program of Northwestern University's School of Professional Studies.

CAC Live: The Rise of the Skyscraper

Saturday, April 25 at 1pm

Saturday, May 16 at 1pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

Why is Chicago often considered the birthplace of the skyscraper? Explore the history of these tall buildings and discover how Chicago became a global center for high-rise design, innovation and engineering.

Host Leslie Clark Lewis has been a CAC docent for more than ten years. She is Tour Director for Historic Treasures of Chicago's Golden Age, which features some of Chicago's most iconic historic buildings (and stories). Before becoming a docent, Lewis worked for 25 years in marketing and communications. The first thing she did after retiring was apply to become a CAC docent.

CAC Live: A Tale of Two Fairs

Wednesday, April 29 at 7pm

Wednesday, May 20 at 7pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

We often hear about the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 but rarely about Chicago's "other" world's fair, held 40 years later. While little remains of A Century of Progress International Exposition, we can still compare the two—and explain why one is talked about so much more often than the other is today.

Host Ellen Shubart has been a CAC docent since 2006, leading many tours on land, on the Chicago River and from the top of an open-air bus. Prior to becoming a docent, Shubart worked in journalism for 20 years, followed by land planning and public policy advocacy.

CAC@Home Calendar of Events: May 2020

CAC Live: If the Walls of Farnsworth House Could Talk

Saturday, May 23 at 1pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

A brief encounter at a dinner party led to one of the most intriguing and beautiful design collaborations of the 20th century—and sparked a firestorm of society gossip. When Modernist architect Mies van der Rohe met accomplished physician and polymath Dr. Edith Farnsworth, the resulting house he designed for her was a structure so simple, so elegant, and in such defiance of conventional wisdom, that it revolutionized domestic architecture forever.

Host Bobbi Pinkert, a self-described “archiholic,” has been a CAC docent since 1999. She is currently Tour Director for five tours and leads many others, including the Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise aboard Chicago’s First Lady. A former President of the CAC Docent Council, Pinkert was named “Outstanding Docent” by her peers in 2010.

CAC Live: Chicago Architecture, Page by Page

Wednesday, May 27 at 7pm

\$8, **FREE** with registration fee to CAC Members

Chicago’s distinctive architecture illustrates the works of numerous writers, from novelist Theodore Dreiser to poet Carl Sandburg to graphic novelist Chris Ware. This visual presentation explores the intersections between Chicago architecture and literature, revealing how each art form continues to enrich the other.

Host Leanne Star is a CAC docent, a professional writer, and a former professor of literature at Beloit College in Wisconsin and Colby College in Maine.

CAC Live events are free to current CAC members at all levels, with nominal fees to sustain the CAC during significant losses in earned revenue. CAC members also receive special editions of the weekly *CAC@Home* mini magazine and exclusive access to the complete *CAC@Home* archive online. Non-members are welcome to join most CAC Live events for just \$8 plus fees.

While the CAC Call Center remains closed to support employee safety, voicemails at 312-922-3432 are monitored daily. The CAC responds within 24 hours to all inquiries sent via email to tickets@architecture.org, boxoffice@architecture.org and info@architecture.org. Visit bit.ly/CACUPDATES for the latest information regarding the cancellation and postponement of CAC activities and programs to best support efforts to limit the transmission of COVID-19.

Visit architecture.org/join to become a member today starting at just \$80 per year and architecture.org/donate to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Chicago Architecture Center—where the stories of the city begin.

About the Chicago Architecture Center

The Chicago Architecture Center (CAC) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1966, dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. A national leader in architecture and design education, the CAC offers field-leading tours, programs, exhibitions and more that are part of a dynamic journey of lifelong learning.

Opened to the public in 2018, its riverfront location is in the heart of the city, where Michigan Avenue meets the Chicago River, featuring nearly 10,000 square feet of exhibition space filled with super-sized models—and views—of iconic skyscrapers built over the course of more than a century. Exhibitions focus on Chicago's diverse neighborhoods, housing types, leading architects and future projects, and include the largest scale model of the city, with more than 4,250 miniature buildings, interactive touchscreens, and a cinematic backdrop animating key moments in its history. Highly knowledgeable, enthusiastic CAC docents guide visitors and residents through more than 75 walking tours with more than 7,000 annual departures, plus the Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady.

Through partnerships with schools and youth-serving organizations, the CAC reaches approximately 30,000 K–12 students annually, while teacher workshops provide educators with tools and resources they need to advance STEM curricula in their classrooms. Committed to increasing access for populations historically under-represented in ACED (architecture, construction, engineering, and design) professions, the CAC offers many of its education programs—and all of its programs for teens—at no cost to participants. CAC programs for adults and members include talks with acclaimed authors and practicing architects, in-depth presentations on issues and trends in urbanism, and classes unlocking a wide range of subjects with connections to the built environment.

Proceeds from programs, tours and the CAC Design Store, as well as from grants, sponsorships and donations, support its educational mission. Visit architecture.org to learn more and follow @chiarchitecture and #chiarchitecture on social media.

