Welcome to the Chicago Architecture Biennial story by Black Quantum Futurism! This guide will help you find projects highlighted in the guide.

The word biennial means “occurring every two years”

Many people think Christopher Columbus discovered the United States, but there were already many people living here at the time. It’s important to remember the stories of Indigenous (or native) peoples that have lived on this land for hundreds of years, and continue to live here. You can read the land acknowledgment written by the American Indian Center inside either building entrance.

How many Tribes are named in the land acknowledgment? Do you know anything about any of them?

The Black Quantum Futurism Community Futures Lab was created for community members to get together and talk about an affordable and accessible housing. Having conversations about the past and future can help us understand each other and make Chicago a better place for everyone. The recordings will be available in the recording booth, store your ideas in the write-able wall, and walk through the shelves of the resource library.

Welcome to the Chicago Architecture Biennial! Every other year this event fills the Chicago Cultural Center with projects created by people from around the world. This year’s Biennial is about stories—we’ve heard before and others are new.

You may be wondering: What do stories have to do with architecture? Architecture and the built and natural environments—including buildings, public squares, parks, and more—tell us about the history, present, and future of a place. As you explore the Biennial today, use this guide to discover new architectural stories and tell your own.

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Match the foods below with the plants they come from:

- How would you remember someone or something you’ve lost?

Sweet Water Foundation created a worker’s cottage in the Yates Gallery on the 4th floor. These cottages were built way back in the 1800s to meet the needs of working people at the time. What kind of house would you build for the people and workers of today?

The Gun Violence Memorial Project in Randolph Square was created by MASS Design Group and Hank Willis Thomas to share the stories and memories of people who lost their lives due to gun violence. This memorial was created as a space where it’s okay to be sad, but also where we can grow, heal, and work together to imagine the future.

Walk through the houses and look at the objects in the memorial. Each one of these items was contributed by someone’s family to honor their life. How would you remember someone or something you’ve lost?

Keep a record of how many homes you see while walking through the Biennial. Every home tells a story about the people who live in it.

Complete your room (or dream room!) below. The things you draw in your room should say something about who you are.

The Palestine Heirloom Seed Library uses plants and the seeds they produce to tell a story. The Palestine Heirloom Seed Library was created to share stories of how landscapes and people change over time. In this Biennial, the extinction of certain plants would mean no longer having access to the foods they produce.

Here’s a list of matching foods below with the plants they come from:

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The oil we use for driving cars, making plastics, and heating buildings comes from deep in the ground. Oil can help us in many ways, but getting oil out of the ground and using it for power can be bad for people because it makes our societies unstable and contributes to climate change.

Territorial Agency believes we should keep oil in the ground. They know this would mean making big changes to our lives but it could also help save the planet.

ADRIAN BLACKWELL

Did you know that the Chicago Cultural Center is the first public library in Chicago? For the Biennial, artist and urban designer Adrian Blackwell has created a new library where you are invited to sit and look through books and other materials. In order to fill the library, Adrian asked groups of activists in Chicago what books inspire them.

Use this space to tell your own Biennial story in words or pictures.

TERRITORIAL AGENCY

How would you get around if there were no cars, buses, or airplanes?

Adrian Blackwell

Activists use their voices and actions to speak about issues they care about. The groups represented in this library are working against things that shape our city in harmful ways, like closing schools, climate change, and issues around immigration. If you were an activist, what would you speak out against and what books would go in your inspiration library? Fill in the titles below.

When you get home

1. Get a camera or smart phone (or a pad of paper and a pencil)
2. Walk around your neighborhood or house and try to notice things you usually wouldn’t
3. Share your pictures with your friends or family

Photographer Akinbode Akinbiyi wanders around cities to walk and talk stories about their architecture and the people who live there. He likes taking photographs of “everydayliness”—the things we see every day but don’t always notice (like grassy edges, colorful walls, and even garbage). He takes photographs of ordinary things—things we know are there, and even forget.

Wander around and take photographs like Akinbode Akinbiyi.

Visit the 2nd floor to see Akinbode’s photographs of the North Lawndale neighborhood in Chicago.

Thank you for visiting the Biennial today. We hope you enjoyed it and learned new ways to see how architecture and the built environment can tell important stories about the world around us.

Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington Chicago, IL 60602 Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–7 p.m. Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Learning Initiatives at the Chicago Architecture Biennial provide free programming to learners of all ages as a way to promote active exploration of the built environment and empower audiences to use architecture and design as tools for change.

Visit chicagoarchitecturebiennial.org/learn for a schedule of youth and family activities.

Created by Learning Initiatives at the Chicago Architecture Biennial, Design by ELLA, Illustration by Molly Anne Bishop

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