

# CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE BIENNIAL

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Chicago Architecture Biennial Announces Cultural Partners  
Offering Fall 2021 Programs that Bring *The Available City's* Exploration of  
Architecture, Space, and Public Use to a Broad Range of Contexts and Communities**

*More than 100 museums, architecture studios, and community organizations—including Douglass 18, SOM, Museum of Contemporary Art, 6018 North, Studio Gang and Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs, and many others—will offer lectures, panels, performances, workshops, and other events in neighborhoods across Chicago*

July 21, 2021 (Chicago, IL) -- The [Chicago Architecture Biennial](#) today announced more than 100 city-wide cultural partners that will present programming in coordination with this year's Chicago Architecture Biennial, *The Available City*, which will take place from September 17-December 18, 2021 at locations across the city. The 2021 edition will present ideas and possibilities for vacant urban spaces, activated with and for local community groups in collaboration with designers.

Comprising in-person and digital programs, *The Available City* moves outside of what has historically been the main venue of the Chicago Cultural Center to upwards of ten outdoor sites and two indoor exhibition venues. The 2021 Biennial spans ten neighborhoods and features 18 projects created by more than 68 contributors, with site partners ranging from community gardens and historic sites to schools and vacant lots. Each will bring *The Available City's* community-focused exploration of architecture and the urban landscape into neighborhoods throughout Chicago, augmented and broadened by the participation of cultural partners across the city.

"It is beyond inspiring to see our city's communities and cultural organizations collaborate together on the impressive, global platform that is presented by the Biennial," said Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "*The Available City's* alignment with my administration's signature neighborhood investment initiative INVEST South/West will only amplify this collaboration and allow us to continue addressing issues that are impacting our residents by highlighting our shared histories and hopes for the future."

*The Available City* reveals the wide-ranging possibilities for creating and introducing new spaces to serve community needs—including education, arts and culture, health and wellness, businesses, urban agriculture, and affordable housing—by reimagining available and vacant space in and around the city. The programs organized by cultural partners are central to ensuring that the conversation around the Biennial is inclusive and ever-changing in a diverse range of settings, venues, and communities throughout the Biennial.

"The participation of organizations across the city is very important to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events," noted DCASE Commissioner Mark Kelly. "We are excited to be once again partnering with the Biennial—especially with this edition, which is deeply focused on artists, architects, and cultural organizations in neighborhoods across Chicago."

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The Biennial's 2021 cultural partner programs include:

The opening of a mini-golf course by **Douglass 18**, a community-led project supported by the **Lincoln Park Zoo**, is being redesigned with a theme of bird conservation. Located in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood, the plan to reinvigorate the underutilized course was developed by a cohort of young adults and community partners from Chicago's West Side, inspired by the park's migratory bird population. The course is set to open on August 7, 2021.

**Architecture firm Skidmore Owings and Merrill (SOM)**, in partnership with Tsz Yan Ng and Wes McGee at the **University of Michigan's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning**, is designing and building an outdoor pavilion utilizing robotic fabrication techniques for Epic Academy in South Shore, Chicago. The pavilion, which will be on view starting September 17, is constructed from sustainably sourced timber and will function as an outdoor classroom and an event and performance space, designed with the needs of Epic Academy students and teachers in mind.

*RAISIN*, an exhibition presented at **6018North**, is inspired by and explores themes from Lorraine Hansberry's classic play *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959)—from first-time homeownership, gender dynamics within communities of color to generational dreams, and more. Featuring artworks created by more than 30 Chicago and international artists, the exhibition offers local and global perspectives on 'home' and was organized by guest curator Asha Iman Veal with curatorial assistants Shannon Lin and Esraa Youssef.

**Studio Gang**, presenting the first exhibition in their new Wicker Park gallery space—a look at the Studio's collaboration with apparel manufacturing workers co-op **Blue Tin Production** to transform a vacant former post office in Chicago Lawn into a new production headquarters and community hub.

On view at the **Museum of Contemporary Art** from September 4, the exhibition *Bani Abidi: The Man Who Talked Until He Disappeared* brings together nearly two decades of the work of Bani Abidi, a multidisciplinary Pakistani artist whose work explores cosmopolitanism through semi-fictional scenes of everyday life captured with a barbed sense of humor that are informed by her experiences in metropolitan cities including Chicago.

Chicago's **Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)** is supporting public art and site-specific cultural programs led by the Artists-In-Residence in four INVEST South/West communities: Auburn Gresham (Dorian Sylvain), Austin (Antonia Ruppert), Englewood (Eric Hotchkiss) and New City/Back of the Yards (Fernando Ramirez in partnership with Project Onward). This program addresses the urgent need for cultural investment in neighborhoods on Chicago's South and West sides—and furthers the City's ongoing commitments to equity and access to the arts. Additionally, DCASE will present free cultural events and exhibitions at the

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Chicago Cultural Center, Millennium Park and in communities across Chicago—including a new “Music Lives Here” public art initiative launching August 29 with historical markers installed at 50 sites across Chicago and a special Record Row concert series, presented as part of the new citywide “Chicago In Tune” festival.

"The Biennial's partnerships with both world-renowned and distinctly local arts and cultural venues across Chicago add a diversity of ideas to an exposition intended to foster an international dialogue on architecture in the city known for groundbreaking, innovative design," states Jack Guthman, Chicago Architecture Biennial Chairman of the Board. "We greatly value these alliances."

Throughout the Biennial, there will be a series of dedicated activation weekends between September 17 and October 31, 2021, that bring CAB's installation sites to life through conversations, performances, and workshops in partnership with community organizations. Installation sites include Grow Greater Englewood, Community Christian Alternative Academy's PermaPark, Central Park Theater, Westside Association for Community Action's playlot, and El Paseo Community Garden. All projects and programs are developed in close collaboration with neighborhood organizations, schools, local residents, and the global architects who are contributors to the Biennial.

"It is exciting to see the full city coming alive with site activations and programs that highlight the work of community based and black led organizations dedicated to contributing to the future of our city" explained Anton Seals Jr., Director of Grow Greater Englewood. "In addition to participating as an installation site, we are looking forward to engaging the public from across communities and around the world to explore the significance of community-led design."

## **Chicago Architecture Biennial 2021 Cultural Partners:**

062

6018North

ACE Mentor Program Chicago

ACRE

AIA Chicago

Alliance Française de Chicago

ALLL x Leapfrog Project

ArchAgenda

archKIDecture :: architecture teaching for kids

Arquitectos Inc.

Art Institute of Chicago

Art on theMART

Arts + Public Life

Association of Architecture Organizations

Auditorium Theatre

Bronzeville Artist Loft

BUILD

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Canopy / architecture + design, LLC  
Carol Fox & Associates  
CCA Academy PermaPark  
Central Park Theater  
Chicago Architectural Club  
Chicago Architecture Center  
Chicago Art Deco Society  
Chicago Cultural Alliance  
Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events  
Chicago Humanities Festival  
Chicago International Film Festival  
Chicago Mobile Makers  
Chicago Public Library  
College of Architecture, Illinois Institute of Technology  
Could Be Architecture  
Cultural services French embassy / French consulate  
Danish Arts Foundation  
DePaul Art Museum and Stockyard Institute  
Design Museum of Chicago  
Douglass 18  
Eastlake Studio  
Edgar Miller Legacy  
El Paseo Community Garden  
European Cultural Centre - USA  
Exhibit Columbus  
Experimental Sound Studio  
EXPO Chicago  
Galaudet Gallery  
Gallery Guichard  
Glessner House  
GnarWare Workshop  
Good City Group  
Graham Foundation  
Grow Greater Englewood  
Historic Stone Temple Church  
HOK  
Human Scale  
Hyde Park Art Center  
Kuumba Lynx  
Landon Bone Baker Architects  
Legat Architects  
Lincoln Park Zoo

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MAKE Literary Productions  
MAS Context  
Memorial Nature Fund  
Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize at IIT College of Architecture  
MLK District Garden  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago  
Museum of Science and Industry  
National Museum of Mexican Art  
NeighborSpace  
NEXT.cc STEAM by DESIGN Eco Web  
North River Commission  
Omni Ecosystems  
Open sheds used for what?  
Openlands  
Overton Elementary School  
PLAMEN Art Foundation  
Plant Chicago  
Poetry Foundation  
Project Hood  
Roman Susan Art Foundation NFP  
SAIC Sculpture Department  
SAIC Visual and Critical Studies Department  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago Homan Square  
site design group  
SITE/less, an experimental architecture, movement and research center  
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)  
Society of Architectural Historians  
Space p11  
SpaceLab.info  
Studio Gang  
Tender House Project  
Terrain Biennial  
Terrain Exhibitions  
Territory NFP  
The Arts Club of Chicago  
The Franklin  
Theatre Y  
Unity Temple Restoration Foundation  
University of Chicago  
Volume Gallery  
WACA

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Water Wayfinding  
Watershed Art & Ecology  
Whose Lakefront Planning Group  
YMEN  
Zephyr

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## Resources

[Chicago Architecture Biennial 2021 Digital Media Kit](#)

## About the Chicago Architecture Biennial

The Chicago Architecture Biennial (CAB) is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating an international forum on architecture and urbanism by producing year-round programs and a biennial exposition of city-wide activations for a diverse audience of designers, educators, advocates, students, and local communities. CAB's programs are committed to producing opportunities to explore and address timely global issues through the lens of architecture and design, emphasizing community input, sustainability, and equity. Free and open to the public, CAB stands as North America's largest international survey of contemporary architecture.

CAB has shifted from an event-based model of hosting an exhibition and programs across to developing a combination of virtual programs and outdoor or socially distanced exhibitions, performances, and events throughout Chicago. This pivot has required CAB to consider new ways of engaging with local and global audiences that will likely impact our model moving forward.

The Available City, the theme and title for CAB's 2021 biennial, is led by Artistic Director David Brown, a designer, researcher, and educator based at the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The Available City is based on more than a decade of Brown's research into Chicago's 10,000 + vacant lots and the creation of an ongoing urban design proposal that connects community residents, architects, and designers to work together to create spaces reflecting the needs of local neighborhoods, Brown will engage both local and international projects and practices that reflect new concepts for shared space and collective agency in the city.

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Brown is a long-time collaborator of the Chicago Architecture Biennial, having been a participant in the inaugural 2015 Biennial and presenting two pop-up exhibitions and a series of youth programs for the 2019 edition.