

Celebrating Black History in Chicago

1. The DuSable Museum



The Nation's Oldest Independent
African American Museum
Celebrating 61 Years.

740 East 56th Place
Chicago, Illinois 60637
Phone: (773) 947-0600

OPEN

Wednesday – Sunday
11:00AM – 4:00PM

CLOSED

Monday & Tuesday

Our Mission

The DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center is a Chicago community institution and the first non-profit Museum dedicated to the collection, documentation, preservation, study and the dissemination of the history and culture of Africans and African Americans. As an educational institution, DuSable attracts school groups from Chicago and surrounding areas. More than 100,000 visitors attend or utilize the facility yearly. Through exhibits, educational programs, the archives, and special activities, the Museum continuously explores the African American experience and accomplishments of the past and present to further advance the education of the future.

Founder's Story

The DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center was founded in February 1961 by husband and wife team, Dr. Margaret Taylor Burroughs and Charles Burroughs, on the ground floor of their home. Its purpose was to educate the public about Black history, culture, and art. The museum was originally named the Ebony Museum of Negro History and Art.

2. Morton Arboretum's 'Human+Nature' Exhibition



With the Morton Arboretum this year celebrating its 100th anniversary, an extension of the Human+Nature exhibition was one of the first announcements for its yearlong centennial celebrations. The sculpture exhibition by artist Daniel Popper highlights the deep roots between humans and trees and will stay open through March 2023. Featuring five massive natural sculptures by renowned South African artist crafted especially for Arboretum visitors, it is the largest exhibition of Popper's work to date.

Daniel Popper is a globally-known multi-disciplinary artist whose oeuvre consists of spectacular mega-installations that have featured prominently at hit music festivals such as Electric Forest, Burning Man, Boom Festival in Portugal, and Afrikaburn in the Tankwa Karoo in South Africa.

Human + Nature features similar pieces: "The installations include a towering interpretation of a Mother Nature figure welcoming Arboretum visitors to interact by walking inside the sculpture, large-scale human hands, diverse human facial traits interwoven with root structures, and a symbolic opening of the human heart."

Tickets need to be reserved in advance to help keep track of timed-entry passes and moderate attendance numbers but the Human+Nature exhibit does not cost anything more than the general Arboretum admission fee. Head to the [Morton Arboretum website](#) to learn more and book a timed entry.

HOURS

The Arboretum grounds are open daily, 365 days a year, from 7:00 a.m. to sunset (members-only hours 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. Last entry is at 6:00 p.m.). Timed-entry tickets or passes are required. The Arboretum closes at sunset and all guests must leave the grounds at that time.

	Price
Members	Free
Adults: Age 18–64	\$16
Children: Age 2–17	\$11
Infants: Under 2	Free

4100 Illinois Route 53
Lisle, IL 60532
Phone: 630-968-0074

3. Chicago History Museum

Chicago's Oldest Cultural Institution



Founded in 1856 and incorporated in 1857 by an act of the state legislature, the Chicago Historical Society and its collection grew and opened its first building at the corner of Dearborn and Ontario Streets. Chicago History

Museum is the museum of the Chicago Historical Society (CHS) and was founded to study and interpret Chicago's history.

Address: 1601 N Clark St, Chicago, IL 60614

Hours: Tues – Sat 9:30AM – 4:30PM | Sun 12:00PM – 5:00PM

Phone: (312) 642-4600

ADULTS \$19.00 | SENIORS \$17.00 (Ages 65+)

STUDENTS \$17.00 – Students (19-22)

CHILDREN FREE – Children (18 & under if Illinois Residents)

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/>

4. Semicolon Bookstore



Based in Chicago, Black woman-owned bookstore and gallery space, Semicolon Bookstore and Gallery is committed to nurturing the connection between literature, art, and the pursuit of knowledge; while also using the power of words to better our community.

Wicker Park

[Website](#)

Chicago's only woman- and Black-owned bookstore and gallery space has been catering to a loyal and thoughtful following since 2019 and continues to dedicate itself to spreading the gift of reading to Chicago's marginalized communities. Helmed by DL Mullen, who holds a PhD in literary theory, Semicolon Bookstore is brimming with carefully curated books sorted into unconventional categories like "Women Doin' Their Thang" and "For the Shawtys." Once a month, their #ClearTheShelves campaign invites CPS students to take home whatever books inspire them, free of charge. The rotating art displays area also sure to leave a mark—maybe just as much as the books themselves.

How to support: Stop by for in-person shopping or browse and order online.

Other places to consider

Architecture and historic landmarks:

In Bronzeville, the [Monument to the Great Migration](#) celebrates the historic movement with a striking statue near Chicago's southern lakefront. And the [Victory Monument](#) was erected in 1927 to memorialize an African-American unit that served in France during World War I. The

towering granite monument is on the list of National Register of Historic Places and a Chicago landmark.

The two monuments serves at markers for the [Bronzeville Walk of Fame](#). The path honors more than 100 Bronzeville residents who have made significant cultural contributions, including civil rights activist Ida B. Wells, poet Gwendolyn Brooks, astronaut Robert H. Lawrence Jr., and more.

Also in Bronzeville, the Chicago Bee building is a charming Art Deco structure that was originally home to the *Chicago Bee*, a newspaper serving the local African Americans community. It's now a branch of the Chicago Public Library system and recently underwent a \$2 million restoration.

Throughout the community, you can see the homes of some of Chicago's most prominent African American citizens, including [Nat King Cole](#), [Louis Armstrong](#), and [Ida B. Wells](#). In Hyde Park, check out [Obamafamily home](#) on a lovely tree-lined street, plus the spot where Barack and Michelle shared their first kiss, memorialized at the [Obama Kissing Rock](#).

In the historic Pullman neighborhood, the [A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum](#) showcases the history of the African American labor movement. The only museum of its kind in Chicago, it's in the Pullman National Monument district.

Black art and culture in Chicago:

The [South Side Community Art Center](#) has been a catalyst for creativity in Chicago for almost 80 years. Displaying works by celebrated and emerging artists alike, the center was named a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2017. And at the [Stony Island Arts Bank](#), a crumbling former bank building has been transformed into a world-class arts center.

[Gallery Guichard](#) specializes in works relating to African diaspora. This inviting space is a cornerstone of the Bronzeville community, featuring both international and national exhibitions that span mediums, including paintings, sculpture, and even furniture.

[Little Black Pearl Art & Design Center](#) is a nonprofit firmly rooted in the local African American community. They offer diverse youth education programs, plus a robust calendar of events that features live poetry, musical performances, and artist exhibits.

The [Black Ensemble Theater](#) in Uptown is one of the most diverse musical theatres in the country. The group, whose mission is to end racism through theatre arts and community outreach, is known for their lively performances that will have you up out of your seat and singing along.

Music Venues:

In the 1900s, the Great Migration brought hundreds of thousands of African American migrants to Chicago, who introduced the city to jazz and blues. That legacy lives on today in Chicago's many legendary music venues and clubs.

With its more than 100-year-long history, [Green Mill Cocktail Lounge](#) is famous for hosting iconic jazz musicians and notorious mobsters alike. During Prohibition, the club was a favorite hangout for Al Capone (you can still sit in his favorite booth) and attracted legendary performers like Von Freeman, Franz Jackson, and Wilbur Campbell. Today, the historic spot is still known as one of the country's top jazz venues.

In River North, [Andy's Jazz Club](#) is a Chicago institution that's been around for more than a half century. One of the city's most prominent jazz venues, this place is a must-visit for fans of swing notes and saxophone solos.

With live music and a late-night dance floor, Kingston Mines is a must-visit destination for blues fans. As the city's oldest and largest blues club, Kingston Mines offers an authentic Chicago music experience. Another classic blues club, [Buddy Guy's Legends](#) features live music from fresh talent and famous acts every night of the week.

In the Kenwood neighborhood, [Some Like it Black Creative Arts Bar](#) is a cozy and welcoming space that spotlights local artists of all crafts. Catch some live music, storytelling, or a poetry reading insider, or head outside to sip cocktails inspired by Black musical icons.

Famous African-American churches, newspapers, and cultural sites:

Haitian-American pioneer/trader John Baptiste Point DuSable is known as the Father of Chicago because he established a trading post in the 1780s near where the Tribune Tower currently stands. He left in 1800, but nearly a half-century later, that former trading post would officially become Chicago.

Thousands of black southerners first made their way north to Chicago during Reconstruction after the Civil War. Then in the first half of the 20th century, hundreds of thousands of African-Americans settled in Chicago as part of "The Great Migration"—many attracted by Chicago's abundant need for work in the stockyards, steel mills, and factories.

As a result, Chicago has a number of different Black historic landmarks to see that range from churches, newspapers, cultural sites, and the houses of civil rights leaders.

1. Johnson Publishing Company Building

820 S Michigan Ave

Chicago, IL 60605

[Visit Website](#)

This 11-story South Loop building is the former home of Johnson Publishing and Jet and Ebony magazines, which were amongst the most important and influential Black media of the 20th century. The building—which was [redeveloped as luxury apartments](#)—was also designed by Black architect John Warren Moutoussamy.

2. Chess Records

2120 S Michigan Ave
Chicago, IL 60616
(312) 808-1286

[Visit Website](#)

Over the course of the '50s, Motor Row evolved into Record Row—a stretch of South Michigan Avenue where popular jazz, blues, and soul albums were recorded and distributed. This building at 2120 S. Michigan Avenue (also the title of a 1964 Rolling Stones song recorded there) became Chess Records in 1956, the legendary music label that featured Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry.

3. Chicago Defender Building

2400 S Michigan Ave
Chicago, IL 60616

One of nine buildings in the [Black Metropolis-Bronzeville Historic District](#), this former synagogue was home to the Chicago Defender newspaper during Chicago's midcentury Black Renaissance. Once the largest African American newspaper in the world, the Defender—currently located at 4445 South King Drive—went to digital-only publication in 2019.

4. Quinn Chapel AME

2401 S Wabash Ave
Chicago, IL 60616
(312) 791-1846

[Visit Website](#)

This 1892 building wasn't the first for Chicago's oldest African-American congregation. The Chicago Fire of 1871 destroyed the original building, so the church met in temporary locations until purchasing a lot at 2401 South Wabash Avenue. Named for Bishop William P. Quinn, this church was a stop on the underground railroad and was visited by Martin Luther King Jr. An original pew of the church was donated to the Smithsonian Institute.

5. Ida B. Wells-Barnett House

3624 S Martin Luther King Dr
Chicago, IL 60616

[Visit Website](#)

This Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne style house is the only direct physical link to Ida B. Wells' life in Chicago. It was the home for the writer and civil rights activist and her lawyer-

journalist husband Ferdinand Lee Barnett from 1919 until 1930. In early 2019, the city renamed Congress Drive for Ida B. Wells.

6. South Side Community Art Center

3831 S Michigan Ave
Chicago, IL 60653
(773) 373-1026

[Visit Website](#)

Originally built in 1893 for a grain merchant, this [Georgian Revival-style structure](#) at 3831 South Michigan Avenue was remodeled in 1940 and converted to the South Side Community Art Center. Eleanor Roosevelt opened the center on behalf of the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project, and it's now the only survivor of more than 100 centers established nationwide by the WPA during the '30s and 40s.

7. First Church of Deliverance

4315 S Wabash Ave
Chicago, IL 60653
(773) 373-7700

[Visit Website](#)

Designed in 1939 by Walter Bailey, the city's first African-American architect, this Art Moderne style building was striking even before Kocher Buss & DeKlerk added a pair of towers to the terra cotta facade in 1946. The church is notable for its history in the development of gospel music and Christian radio broadcasting.

8. Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church

4600-22 S King Dr
Chicago, IL 60653
(773) 373-0070

This neoclassical revival-style building designed by the notable architect Alfred Samuel Alschuler got preliminary landmark status in December. Originally, the Sinai Temple, the Mt. Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church is most famous for being the site of the 1967 [Martin Luther King Jr. sermon](#) "Why Jesus Called Man a Fool."

9. National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum

10406 S Maryland Ave
Chicago, IL 60628
(773) 850-8580

[Visit Website](#)

On the north end of the Pullman National monument site, you can visit the first Black labor history museum in the United States. It tells the story of the African-Americans who worked as

railroad porters for the Pullman Company. In 1894, the company town was ground zero for a two-month-long nationwide rebellion of workers on strike.