

# Self-Guide

ART  
INSTITUTE  
CHICAGO

## Inspired Architecture

Inspired by the Burnham Plan Centennial, the Renzo Piano–designed Modern Wing, and a city rich with architectural tradition and innovation, this guide explores the awe-inspiring art of architecture.



GALLERY 11

### *French Library of the Modern Period, 1930s* (c. 1937)

by Mrs. James Ward Thorne

This miniature recreation of a luxurious 1930s Parisian apartment showcases the variety of architectural and design styles popular in Europe's urban centers in the decades following World War I. The spare simplicity of modern design is reflected in the curved wall, bleached wood tones, and the cubistic cityscapes on the left wall. Influences from the Asian continent are found in the bamboo chairs, Chinese brocade upholstery, a gilt Buddha, and a Khmer head. Even 1920s Art Deco style is represented in the matching tub chairs on the left. And, if you peek through the doorway on the right, you can catch a glimpse of one of the world's most recognizable architectural structures, the Eiffel Tower—in miniature, of course.



GALLERY 262

### *The Rock* (1944–48) by Peter Blume

Commissioned by Edgar J. Kaufmann, *The Rock* was originally intended to depict Kaufmann's home, the Frank Lloyd Wright–designed Fallingwater. While the stone and concrete home does appear in the background to the left, Peter Blume's finished painting took a different direction, focusing on a massive shattered boulder, surrounded by various perplexing scenes. Many critics interpret the composition as an image of hope and renewal after World War II's devastation with the construction of Fallingwater symbolizing progress. However, others question this understanding, pointing out the unsettling resemblance of the dirt mound under the rock to the mushroom cloud of an atomic explosion and how the workers slowly destroy the rock's support as they dig more stone for Fallingwater.



GALLERY 285

### *Late Entry to the Tribune Tower Competition* (1980)

by Robert A. M. Stern

In honor of its 75th anniversary in 1922, the Chicago Tribune held an international architectural competition for the design of the company's new headquarters and received over 260 proposals ranging from elongated historical styles to modern glass and steel towers. In 1980 the competition was revisited in an exhibition featuring over 60 designs from contemporary artists. This design by Robert A. M. Stern was inspired by Adolf Loos's original entry, a Doric column–shaped structure. While exaggerating the classical column's three elements—the base, shaft, and capital—Stern's design also honored Mies van der Rohe modernism, using the most contemporary technology and materials.



BROOKS MCCORMICK COURT

## ***Chicago Stock Exchange Building Entrance Arch*** (1893–94) by Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan

A classic early skyscraper by the prominent Chicago architectural team of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, the Chicago Stock Exchange Building stood at the southwest corner of LaSalle and Washington streets for nearly 80 years. In 1972, the beloved building was demolished despite swarms of picketing demonstrators, scathing newspaper editorials, and the efforts of the Landmarks Preservation Council. The structure's original entrance arch, however, was preserved and given by the city to the Art Institute. Reflecting Sullivan's philosophy of "form follows function," the terracotta arch spanned the building's first two stories, visually indicating the floors' interrelated functions.



BETWEEN MILLENNIUM PARK AND THE MODERN WING

## ***Nichols Bridgeway*** (2009) by Renzo Piano

Alternately described as a blade or the hull of a ship, the Nichols Bridgeway is one of the Modern Wing's most dramatic features. An integral part of Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano's design, the 620-foot pedestrian bridge gracefully rises from the Great Lawn of Millennium Park to the third floor of the Modern Wing, elegantly connecting these two centers of Chicago's civic life. Cantilevered off the third floor of the Modern Wing by two supports, dubbed "animals," the bridge appears to soar weightlessly above Monroe Street, echoing the magical suspension of the building's flying-carpet roof. This marvelous effect is one of Piano's goals: "I like fighting gravity. Magic is essential in architecture."



MILLENNIUM PARK

## ***Pavilion*** (2009) by Zaha Hadid Architects

Opening to the public June 19, this tent-like pavilion by the London-based Zaha Hadid Architects celebrates and continues the bold innovation of Daniel Burnham's 1909 *Plan of Chicago*. In fact, the diagonal lines of the pavilion's aluminum ribs were inspired by the radiating avenues of Burnham's century-old design. Inside the fabric-clothed structure, visitors experience the play of summer sunlight changing throughout the day as it is filtered through louvered openings in the roof. Adding to the architecturally enveloping experience is a video installation by University of Illinois at Chicago alumnus and London-based artist Thomas Gray. The video traces Chicago's rich architectural history from pre-Burnham days through local architects' visions for the future.

### ***Continue to celebrate the Burnham Plan Centennial!***

On June 19 from 2:00 to 3:30, join Art Institute architecture curator Joseph Rosa as he talks with the renowned architects behind the Millennium Park pavilions, Zaha Hadid and Ben van Berkel of UNStudio. Plus, stop by the exhibition *Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago* in Gallery 24 to see original artwork from the 1909 plan.