

# THE ARTS CLUB OF CHICAGO

## Information and History

### Mission

Since 1916, The Arts Club of Chicago has been a preeminent exhibitor of international art, a forum for both established and emerging artists, and a celebrated venue for performers from around the world. For over 95 years, The Arts Club has opened its membership to artists and art patrons, and its exhibitions to the public. The mission of The Arts Club, defined at its inaugural meeting, is “to encourage higher standards of art, maintain galleries for that purpose, and to promote the mutual acquaintance of art lovers and art workers.”

### Art Exhibitions

Many of the 20th century’s most celebrated visual artists received their first solo exhibitions in the United States, or the Midwest, at The Arts Club: Constantin Brancusi (installed by Marcel Duchamp), Georges Braque, Alexander Calder, Marc Chagall, Salvador Dalí, Jean Dubuffet, Arshile Gorky, Marsden Hartley, Fernand Léger, Robert Motherwell, Isamu Noguchi, Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, August Rodin, Georges Seurat, and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Continuing the tradition of innovation and presenting work that is not exhibited elsewhere in Chicago, The Arts Club hosts three to four free public exhibitions annually. Recent exhibitions have included installations by Marcel Broodthaers and General Idea; paintings, drawings, and notebooks of Paul Thek; the personal art collection of and works by the architect Bertrand Goldberg; works on paper by Chris Ofili and Robert Ryman; drawings by Alice Neel; paintings by Sigmar Polke, David Hockney, Peter Doig, George Grosz, Jörg Immendorff, Alex Katz, Guillermo Kuitca, Francis Picabia, and Andy Warhol; the textiles and projects of Alighiero e Boetti; and sculptural installation work by John Baldessari, Stephan Balkenhol, Louise Bourgeois, Daniel Buren, James Lee Byars, Richard Deacon, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Andy Goldsworthy, Per Kirkeby, Yayoi Kusama, Wolfgang Laib, Charles LeDray, Sherrie Levine, Maya Lin, Mario Merz, Cornelia Parker, Jaume Plensa, Richard Pettibone, Markus Raetz, Keith Sonnier, Richard Tuttle, and Not Vital.

### Member Information

Lunch in the main dining room is served to members and their guests from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Valet parking is available. Members may also make reservations for The Arts Club’s programs. A complete list of upcoming programs may be found on the Calendar page of The Arts Club’s website, [artsclubchicago.org](http://artsclubchicago.org). To make reservations for lunch or for programs, please call 312.787.3997 or email [reservations@artsclubchicago.org](mailto:reservations@artsclubchicago.org). Cancellations for programs must be made 24 hours in advance, or members will be charged the full price for attendance. Members have reciprocity at the International Club at the Drake Hotel for dinner year-round, and for lunch and dinner when The Arts Club is closed. Reservations should be made in advance by calling 312.932.4617. The Arts Club of Chicago also maintains reciprocity with the Arts Club of Washington, The Arts Club of London at Dover Street, and The Cliff Dwellers in Chicago. Please call the Club office at 312.787.3997 for details.

**Public Hours**

The gallery of The Arts Club is open to the public Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. when there is an exhibition on view. The Arts Club is closed between the last week of December and the first week of January. Admission is free. For additional information, please call 312.787.3997 or email [information@artsclubchicago.org](mailto:information@artsclubchicago.org).

**Art Collection**

The Arts Club's collection, acquired from its exhibitions or donated by members and artists, includes works by modern masters: Georges Braque, Alexander Calder, Natalia Goncharova, Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Isamu Noguchi, Francis Picabia, and Pablo Picasso, among others. Recent contemporary acquisitions include Stephan Balkenhol, Malcolm Morley, Paul Thek, Alex Katz, Richard Artschwager, Yayoi Kusama, Peter Doig, and Sigmar Polke. In conjunction with the opening of its new building in 1997, The Arts Club published a scholarly catalogue, *The Arts Club of Chicago: The Collection 1916-1996*, edited by current Club President Sophia Siskel, with essays by museum curators and art historians on the works in the collection. This catalogue, and catalogues for previous exhibitions, are available for purchase in The Arts Club's office, or by mail. Please contact the office at 312.787.3997 for details.

**Locations**

The Arts Club has had a total of eight locations, with interiors all designed by Chicagoans. The Fine Arts Building at 401 S. Michigan Avenue (on two different floors 1916-18), 610 S. Michigan Avenue (1918-24), and the Wrigley Building's north tower (1924-36), were each created by architect Arthur Heun along with interior designer and then Club President Rue Winterbotham Carpenter. The Wrigley Building's south tower (1936-47) was designed by Heun and then Club President Elizabeth "Bobsy" Goodspeed Chapman, with the dining room by interior designers Samuel Marx and Noel Flint. 109 E. Ontario Street (1951-95), designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, was the only interior space executed by the architect for a building that he did not design. 222 W. Superior Street (1995-97) was the interim space while the current Club was being built. The Club's current building at 201 E. Ontario Street, designed by Vinci/Hamp Architects, Inc., opened in 1997. It is the first building owned by The Arts Club, and houses the famous Mies van der Rohe-designed steel staircase preserved from the demolition of the 109 E. Ontario Street site.

**Arts Club Affiliations**

From 1922 to 1927, The Arts Club managed a second exhibition space, a 20th-century gallery at The Art Institute of Chicago, while maintaining a full exhibition, lecture, and concert schedule on its own premises (610 S. Michigan, followed by the Wrigley Building's north tower). The Arts Club's archives—such as personal letters between Marcel Duchamp and Arts Club exhibition curator and member Alice Roullier, or recollections about Rue Carpenter by Fernand Léger translated by Thornton Wilder—can be found at Chicago's Newberry Library.

**Artist and Patron Members**

A two-tiered dues system, established at The Arts Club's inception, is maintained to this day: professional members pay lower dues than patrons, ensuring that fine and performing artists remain a vital component of The Arts Club membership.

## **Presidents**

Ten presidents have presided over The Arts Club since 1916. They include current president Sophia Siskel (2011-present) and Presidents Emeritus Marilyn B. Alsdorf (2006-2011) and Stanley M. Freehling (1980-2005). Mr. Freehling's tenure included building the first-ever Arts Club-owned space, the deacquisition and gifting of *Golden Bird* by Constantin Brancusi to The Art Institute of Chicago in 1989, and ensuring the financial security of The Arts Club. Previous presidents are James Phinney Baxter IV (1979-81), Mrs. Roger Barnett (1979), Rue Winterbotham Shaw (1940-79), Elizabeth "Bobsy" Goodspeed (1932-40), Mrs. William B. Hale (1940), Rue Winterbotham Carpenter (1918-31), and Mrs. Robert McGann (1916-18). Rue Shaw, whose term lasted 39 years, is best remembered for scheduling a performance by John Cage as the first event of her presidency, for persuading Ludwig Mies van der Rohe to design the Club's interior (gratis), and for commissioning Alexander Calder to create his stabile *Red Petals* for The Arts Club. Her aunt, Rue Winterbotham Carpenter, was a founder and driving force behind The Arts Club in its early years. Current President Sophia Siskel is the granddaughter of Rue Shaw, and serves as the President & CEO of the Chicago Botanic Garden.

## **Officers and Board of Directors**

The officers of The Arts Club of Chicago are Sophia Siskel, President; Helen Harvey Mills, Vice President; Patrick Shaw, Vice President; Harrison I. Steans, Vice President; John W. Castle, Treasurer; and Robert Feitler, Secretary.

The non-officer members of the Board of Directors are Leigh Bienen, Heather Bilandic Black, Sandra K. Crown, Wynne Delacoma, Robert G. Donnelley, David P. Earle III, Mary Carol Fee, Mrs. Isak V. Gerson, William Gofen, Geoffrey Goldberg, Helyn Goldenberg, Timothy Goodsell, Michael Halberstam, Katherine Harvey, Leslie Hindman, Edward Horner, Jr., Richard Hunt, Welz Kauffman, Thomas E. Keim, Robert Kleinschmidt, Martyl, Dirk Lohan, Suzanne Folds McCullagh, Norman Perman, Dale Pinkert, Bernard Sahlins, Patricia Scheidt, Franz Schulze, Cynthia Winter

Honorary Directors are Marilyn B. Alsdorf, Richard Christiansen, Stanley M. Freehling, and James Wells.