



# 17 works of public art in Chicago to see right now

*Murals, sculptures, and multimedia installations*

By [Jay Koziarz](#) Jul 16, 2018

While Chicago is known for its [iconic downtown public art](#) like Anish Kapoor's [Cloud Gate](#) and Picasso's [enigmatic sculpture](#) in Daley Plaza, new works are being added all the time to neighborhoods across the city.

From the North to the Far South Side, artists from both Chicago and afar are leaving their respective creative marks on the city's public parks, plazas, and buildings. Here are 17 newly created (or, in one case, *restored*) examples of public art to see right now.

**Note: This list is arranged geographically north to south.**

## 1. Spotted Lagoon and Moon Jellyfish

6022 N Broadway St  
Chicago, IL 60660

This recently completed mural in Edgewater is one of several pieces commissioned by Chicago's Shedd Aquarium to promote its [Underwater Beauty](#) exhibit. Created by local artist Cesar Perez, the vibrant image shows jelly fish gliding above colorful corals.

## 2. Low-Line murals

3410 N Southport Ave  
Chicago, IL 60657  
(773) 472-7171

For anyone interested in watching an artist hone his or her craft in real time, be sure to check out these works-in-progress along Lakeview's [Low-Line](#) path beneath the Brown Line tracks. Here, Chicago artists including [Lauren Asta](#) and [JC Rivera](#) are working side by side on seven new murals. The works are part of a larger [push for more public art](#) in the greater Lakeview area.

## 3. Engine-uity

120 W LaSalle Dr  
Chicago, IL 60614

This metallic sculpture resembling the pistons and connecting rods of a V-6 motor comes from Michigan-based artist Douglas Gruizenga who grew up with dreams of becoming an automotive engineer. Located in Lincoln Park along LaSalle Drive, *Engine-uity* is dedicated to the "diversity of all individuals in the [auto] industry who work every day to continue to make America great," according to the artist's [Facebook](#) page.

#### 4. Worker Cottage Parklet

1395 N Wood St  
Chicago, IL 60622

The 19th century workers cottage is one of the most popular variety of Chicago homes. This [new installation](#) pays respect to the iconic—and, in some cases, [quickly disappearing](#)—style with a mini park topped by a masonry arch that mimics a cottage roofline. Designed by Chicago-based artist Lynn Basa, this Wicker Park piece debuts in July.

#### 5. Las Puertas de Paseo Boricua

Lining Division Street between California and Western avenues in Humboldt Park, the [Las Puertas de Paseo Boricua](#) (the Puerto Rican Doors) includes 16 doors colorfully decorated by 13 artists from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Ecuador. The project started as an idea in 2012 and was recently realized last fall thanks to a grants from the city's 50x50 Neighborhood Arts Project.

#### 6. Barcelonetas

330 N Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL 60654  
(312) 621-8550

Fans of the minimalist brilliance of architect Mies van der Rohe can sit back and take a load off at this [functional art installation](#). Comprised of knock-off versions of the designer's famous Barcelona chair, these lower cost, more durable "Barcelonetas" come from New York City-based ESI Design. The chairs are a fitting neighbor for 330 N. Wabash, Mies van der Rohe's last and largest building, and bring new life to the tower's otherwise desolate riverfront plaza.

#### 7. Black Tiberinus

306 W Wacker Dr  
Chicago, IL 60606

Slated to open later this summer, this trio of colorful geometric sculptures formed from steel, nylon mesh, and cable comes from Chicago-based artist Robert Burnier. Titled [Black Tiberinus](#) as a reference to the Roman god of the Tiber River, the installation will liven up the somewhat sparse ["Riverbank" segment](#) of the Chicago River Walk—an area previously occupied by a [giant deer](#) sculpture.

#### 8. 150 Media Stream

150 N Riverside Plaza  
Chicago, IL 60606  
(312) 788-1800

As Chicago's largest LED screen, [150 Media Stream](#) presents a unique canvass for digital art expression. The 3,000-square-foot screen is curated by creative director Yuge Zhou and has featured a number of interesting visual displays in the past, including [archival photos](#) from the Chicago History Museum.

The current exhibit is a collaboration with Adler Planetarium and highlights the orbits of objects discovered in the Kuiper Belt at the far edges of the solar system. Although the installation is located in the lobby of a private office tower, the public is welcome to view the work on Fridays 6–8 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 1–5 p.m.

## 9. Rush More

78 E Washington St  
Chicago, IL 60602

While it might be easy to miss this massive 132 by 100-foot mural tucked behind the Chicago Cultural Center, it is well worth the trip through the alleyway. Titled *Rush More*, the South Side artist Kerry James Marshall's largest mural to date depicts 20 women who were instrumental in shaping Chicago's artistic and culture scene. Honored individuals include Gwendolyn Brooks, Maggie Daley, Oprah Winfrey, Sandra Cisneros, and Ruth Page. It was [completed](#) in December.

## 10. Riding the 4 ft. 8 1/2 in.

225 S Canal St  
Chicago, IL 60606

During the 2016 restoration of Union Station's former women's lounge into the stunning [Burlington Room](#), Amtrak found that some of the French block wallpaper could not be salvaged. Instead of ditching the water damaged material, the station's owners tapped artist Ashley Pastore and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to repurpose the remnants into a new art work for the building's [Metropolitan Lounge](#).

Titled [Riding the 4 ft. 8 1/2 in.](#)—a reference to the standardized width of US train tracks—the four-panel piece depicts an impressionistic view of cross country trail travel. The recycled wallpaper comprises the sky while other media like *Life* and *National Geographic* magazines make up the forest, plains, and mountains between the two coasts. A *NY Times* story "[How the Amtrak Dining Car Could Heal The Nation](#)" served as an inspiration for the piece, Pastore told Curbed Chicago.

## 11. Eternal Flame of Hope

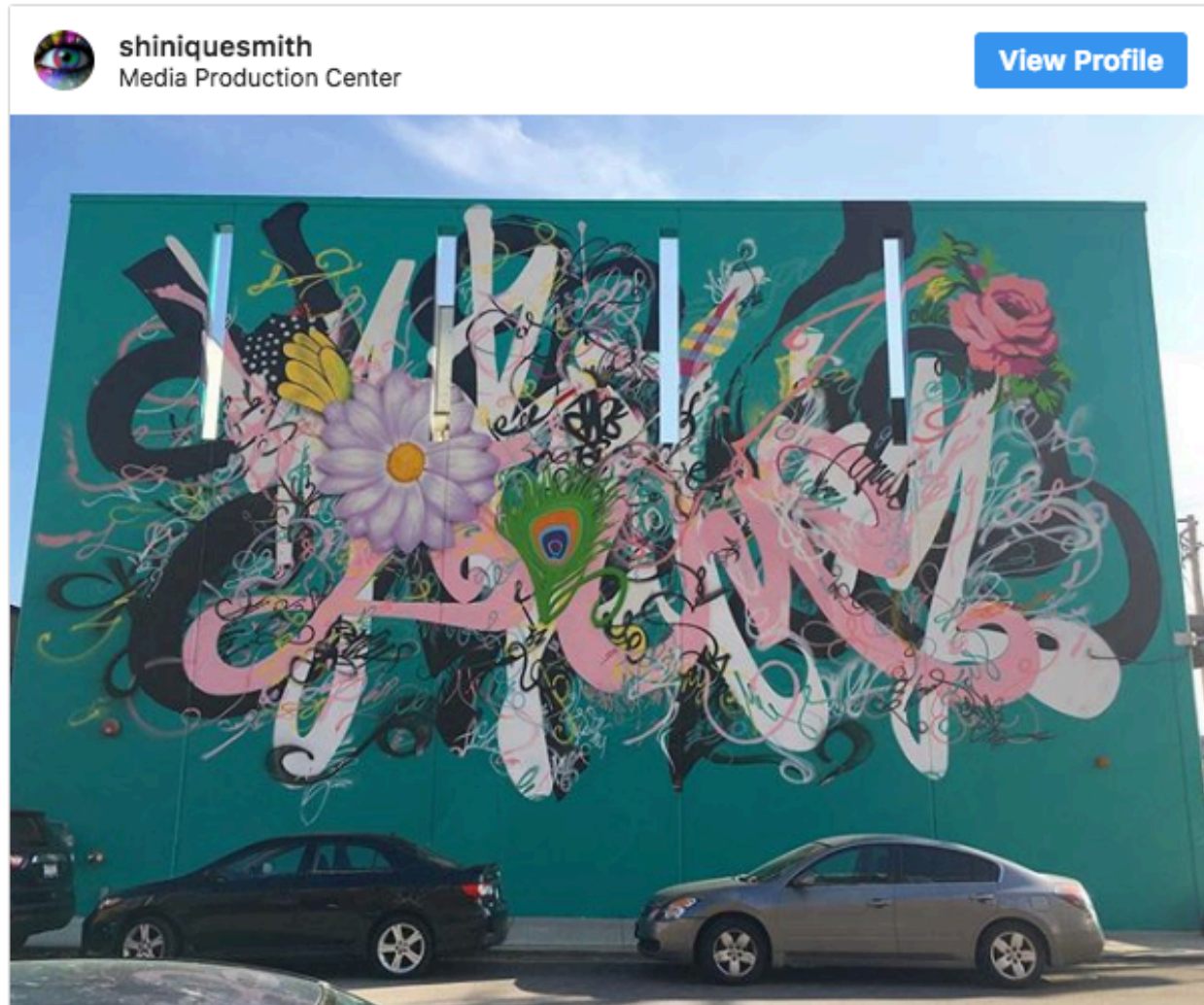
1410 Museum Campus Dr  
Chicago, IL 60605

A permanent monument honoring Chicago's role in hosting the first Special Olympics Games in 1968, this new piece is part of the games' 50th anniversary celebration taking place on July 17-21. Designed by notable metal sculptor Richard Hunt, the [Eternal Flame of Hope](#) will stand 30 feet tall along McFetridge Drive and Soldier Field's north lawn. The design also includes new landscaping and a commemorative plaza.

## 12. What I Am

1600 S State St  
Chicago, IL 60616

New York painter Shinique Smith completed this 65-foot-wide mural at the corner of State and 16th streets last fall. A recent addition to the South Loop's [Wabash Arts Corridor](#), the dynamic-looking piece features vivid splashes of color, feathers, flowers, and graffiti-inspired graphics. The action centers around a large, handwritten "love."



## 13. Chinatown mural

1700 S Wentworth Ave  
Chicago, IL 60616  
(312) 225-3121

This new blue and white mural in Chinatown's riverfront Ping Tom Park was [vandalized](#) just days before it was scheduled to be completed. Undeterred, community members came together and quickly achieved their [crowdfunding](#) goal to repair the piece. The porcelain chinoiserie-inspired design comes from artists Andy Bellomo, Chester Chow, and Anna Murphy.

## 14. Casa Aztlán mural

1831 S Racine Ave  
Chicago, IL 60608

While Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood is known for its wealth of murals, one notable example adorning the Casa Aztlán community center was [painted over](#) last summer by a developer. For many in the community, the erasure of the 1970s-era mural was not only a heartbreaking artistic loss but a metaphor for the area's ongoing struggle with gentrification and Mexican-American flight.

Pilsen residents mobilized to restore the art and work on a new mural portraying local heroes began in October. Although the community center that once occupied the former Casa Aztlán has turned into market-rate apartments, the exterior restoration, completed in December, is an important neighborhood marker and testament to the power of public art.

## 15. Bronzeville's Solar Pyramid

446 E 47th St  
Chicago, IL 60653

Located in Bronzeville's Great Migration Sculpture Garden, the neighborhood's new Solar Pyramid represents a unique blend of art and technology. Designer Shala collaborated with ComEd and local students interested in the STEM fields to build a sculpture that not only represents empowerment, but literally brings energy to its surrounding. The panels feature graphics combining ancient hieroglyphic styles with modern logos and symbology.

## 16. Looking Up

4800 S Lake Shore Dr  
Chicago, IL 60615

A relative newcomer to Chicago's lakefront, this 33-foot-tall metallic figure created by the American sculpture Tom Friedman arrived in late 2016. The artist first rendered the shape of the piece in crushed aluminum foil and baking pans before forming the final product with stainless steel. It will continue "*Looking Up*" until October of 2019.

## 17. SkyART mural

3026 E 91st St  
Chicago, IL 60617

Another product of City Hall's [50x50 Project](#) aimed at bringing a new work of public art to each of Chicago's 50 wards, this Far South Side mural comes from painter Jeff Zimmermann. The design sports abstract shapes punctuated by faces, a Chicago style hot dog with all the trimmings, and a heart made of chains—a motif found in some of Zimmermann's other [recent works](#). The mural wraps around the exterior of the SkyArt center, a building that provides free visual arts programming for young people.