Performances that will
ASTONISH & DELIGHT
Pandemic disruptions and cultural awakenings have challenged our values. What is the role of art, when sickness, upset and death are so prevalent, we ask? And we have answered—art’s presence provides meaning for us as individuals and our collective spirit. This is especially true when we reciprocate by bringing our own physical presences to the art. We share a moment and place together. Our Festival of Puppet Theater is a front row seat to just such an experience, transcending the real and aggravated shortcomings of daily life.

See the puppet there, standing just on the periphery of our human world. There in its spot, though surrounded by our world of turmoil and uncertainty, the puppet has been waiting. Waiting for us, its audience. The time is now. Welcome back to the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival! Please join us this winter for a return to the warmth of connection, of insight, of humor, of astonishment and... delight!

Blair Thomas
Artistic Director & Founder
### Shows & Events

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<tr>
<td><strong>DREAMING by Torry Bend [p. 25]</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I, OBJECT! 30 PUPPET PLAYS by The Neo-Futurists [p. 27]</strong></td>
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### More Shows!

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<td>by Maria Camia</td>
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<td>by Marsian De Lellis</td>
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### Workshops

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Master puppeteer Basil Twist, recipient of the Rome Prize, hailed for his work on Broadway’s *The Addams Family* and The Joffrey Ballet’s *Nutcracker*, unfolds an intimate, abstract, contemporary journey of images and emotions in *Dogugaeshi*. The piece is influenced by the rarefied tradition of Japanese dogugaeshi stage mechanism technique and his own encounters with the remaining rural caretakers of this once popular art form. Winner of the 2005 Bessie Award and an UNIMA Award for Excellence in Puppetry, *Dogugaeshi* features original shamisen compositions created by authorized master musician Yumiko Tanaka and performed live by the highly accomplished, distinguished virtuoso of Japanese koto and shamisen in both traditional and contemporary music: Yoko Reikano Kimura.

**UPSTAIRS AT CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE THEATER**
800 E. Grand Ave., Navy Pier

$40; $30 students

60 minutes

*For ages 9 and up*

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org
The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival “anchor attraction” is The Plastic Bag Store, open for the duration of the festival in a street-level storefront in Chicago’s Wrigley Building. New York artist Robin Frohardt’s tragi-comic ode to the foreversness of plastic appears to be a storefront grocery, but it’s actually stocked with hundreds of hand-made items—fruits, vegetables, sushi, deli meats and more—all crafted from organic NYC trash. Several times a day, the Store transforms from an installation into a micro-cinema for a series of dynamic performances.

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org

**CHICAGO PUPPET FEST presents:**

**ROBIN FROHARDT**  THE PLASTIC BAG STORE

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 20 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 30**

**THE WRIGLEY BUILDING**
410 N. Michigan Ave

Tickets to Immersive Puppet Film:
$30; $20 students
Store visits are FREE

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 20**
Opening Night
 Immersive Puppet Film at 4pm and 7pm

See next page for more info and schedule for January 21-30
puppet-films that transport the audience from the distant past into a dystopian future. With her distinct sense of humor, Frohardt challenges us to think about how future generations will misinterpret us by the waste we leave behind.

Co-Produced by Robin Frohardt and Pomegranate Arts. This Chicago presentation of The Plastic Bag Store was made possible by generous support from:

**JANUARY 21-30**

**Tuesdays-Fridays:**
Store open 11am to 3pm
Immersive Puppet Film at 4pm, 6pm and 8pm

**Saturdays:**
Store open 1pm to 3pm
Immersive Puppet Film at 11am, 4pm, 6pm and 8pm

**Sundays:**
Store open 1pm to 3pm
Immersive Puppet Film at 11am, 4pm and 6pm

Film Running Time: 60 minutes
Film for ages 8 and up
Store for all ages

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org

Photos: Todd Selie; and Courtesy Robin Frohardt and Pomegranate Arts
Cabinet of Curiosity transforms Sea Change, their celebrated outdoor exploration of the power of the sea and the feminine divine for the MCA mainstage. It is a series of wild, strange, lovely puppet shows written by emerging female playwrights and lyricists Liz Chidester, Kasey Foster, Bethany Thomas, and Lindsey Noel Whiting, with original musical compositions by Manae Hammond and Charlie Otto, additional text by Seth Bockley, and the searcher performed by Time Brickey. Giant puppets, mechanical devices, and original, live music weave together to create an evening of pageantry, puppetry, wonder and hope.
The streamers are strung, the punch has been spiked, and the cake is just waiting to be eaten. Now all Bill has to do is wait for his guests to arrive. But waiting is hard. RSVP now for Bill’s 44th, an original comedy by Brooklyn-based artists Andy Manjuck and Dorothy James, two puppeteers who together create one very worried protagonist. Many styles of puppetry, raucous balloons, and a cheeky piece of crudité all collide in this “poignant, comic puppet play... as much about the ingenuity of the mind as it is about loneliness.” (New York Times Critic’s Pick)

CHOPIN THEATRE
1543 W. Division St.

$35; $25 students

Tuesday, January 25 at 7pm
Wednesday, January 26 at 7pm
Thursday, January 27 at 7pm

55 minutes

For ages 16 and up

With special support from Cheryl Henson

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org

CHICAGO PUPPET FEST presents:

ANDY MANJUCK
and DOROTHY JAMES

BILL’S 44TH

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25 - THURSDAY, JANUARY 27

NEW YORK

Photo: Richard Termine
Innovative puppetry brings Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison’s coming of age novel into a contemporary context. Picola is a black girl caught in tragic circumstances. Her best friend narrates her search for the source of responsibility and for an understanding of her own part in the story. The production interrogates how identity is shaped, using a synthesis of puppets, puppeteers and actors. Celebrated South African artist Janni Younge's puppetry highlights the formation and fragility of self, literally building the self as it is held and supported (or not supported) by a community at large.

DUSABLE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY and CHICAGO PUPPET FEST present:

MARGARET LAURENA KEMP
and JANNI YOUNGE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

THE DUSABLE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
740 E. 56th Place

$30; $20 students

Friday, January 28 at 7:30pm
Saturday, January 29 at 7:30pm
Sunday, January 30 at 3pm

120 minutes
For ages 16 and up

With special support from the Paul M. Angell Foundation. Co-produced by UC Davis & Janni Younge Productions.
From award-winning, Brooklyn-based puppet artist and theater maker, Nick Lehane, comes the heartfelt, poignant, and stranger-than-fiction story of a chimpanzee raised as a child in a human home in a cross-fostering experiment conducted in the United States. An exquisite bunraku style puppetry performance breathes in life and illuminates the need for humanity.

New York

With special support from Cheryl Henson

INSTITUTO CERVANTES OF CHICAGO and CHICAGO PUPPET FEST present:

NICK LEHANE

Chimpanzee

Phot: Richard Termine

Saturday, January 22 - Monday, January 24

INSTITUTO CERVANTES OF CHICAGO
31 W. Ohio St.

$35; $25 students

Saturday, January 22 at 2pm and 7:30pm
Sunday, January 23 at 2pm
Monday, January 24 at 5pm

65 minutes
For ages 10 and up

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org
Dreaming. Torry Bend’s collaboration with playwright Howard Craft and director JaMeeka Holloway, examines the racist legacy of comics and animation by following two men deeply affected by Winsor McCay’s comic strip *Little Nemo in Slumberland*. In a world where comic book characters live side by side with real people, Malachi Washington works to free comics cast in prejudiced bodies while Winsor’s son, Bob McCay, seeks to revive the old comic strip. What follows is a compelling story of reckoning and racial healing.

**CHICAGO PUPPET FEST** presents:

**TORRY BEND**

**DREAMING**

**UNABLE TO PRESENT IN 2022**

**CHOPIN THEATRE**
1543 W. Division St.

$35; $25 students

75 minutes

*For ages 12 and up*

**CONTENT WARNING:** For your consideration, *Dreaming* includes some adult language, racially charged imagery, and instances of potentially unsettling loud noises.

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org
From Chicago’s celebrated Neo-Futurists comes this all original, all new series of short works by local theater makers giving audiences a dunk into object performance and high-speed theater. The folks that made the short form famous bring you the same energy, intellect, craft and humor, this time of course, with puppetry at the core. Be amazed as The Neo-Futurists perform 30 short puppet works, in random order, chosen by the audience. It’s chaotic, irreverent, honest and messy. In addition to The Neo-Futurist ensemble, a guest artist will be featured each night.

THE NEO-FUTURISTS and CHICAGO PUPPET FEST present:

THE NEO-FUTURISTS  I, OBJECT!  30 NEO-FUTURIST PUPPET PLAYS

JANUARY 21 - 23 and JANUARY 28 - 30

THE NEO-FUTURARIUM
5153 N. Ashland Ave.

$30; $20 students

Friday, January 21 at 10:30pm
Saturday, January 22 at 10:30pm
Sunday, January 23 at 7pm

Friday, January 28 at 10:30pm
Saturday, January 29 at 10:30pm
Sunday, January 30 at 7pm

100 minutes
For ages 16 and up

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org

Photo: Cody Nieset
In a bizarre and irrational world, a man is condemned to death for an absurd crime and sent to a surreal prison to await his execution. But the prison may not be what it seems. Alternately disorienting, absurd, hysterical and hopeful, this great novel by 20th century master Vladimir Nabokov is brought to the stage by Michael Brown and Rough House with their signature combination of playfulness and strangeness. Full of surprising twists and turns, the novel comes to life through a combination of puppetry, masks and imaginative storytelling. “a brilliant, impeccable, and weird event” – Newcity
This is your chance to double or triple down on an evening of puppetry by hitting the late show to round out your puppetry day. The wild rumpus continues into the night with this special edition of Nasty, Brutish & Short, the quarterly cabaret curated by Rough House. This is home for raucous, raunchy, dark, sassy, sad and mostly hilarious puppet theater, featuring Chicago's charming and furry host, Jameson. During the festival, the series will highlight the high flying out of towners, joining local legends in a night of revelry, followed by friendly unwinding at the Links Hall/Constellation Lounge afterward.

JANUARY 21 - 22 and JANUARY 28 - 29

Nasty, Brutish & Short: A Puppet Cabaret

JANUARY 21 - 22 at 10:30pm
JANUARY 22 - 23 at 10:30pm
JANUARY 28 - 29 at 10:30pm

85 minutes
For ages 16 and up

Links Hall
3111 N. Western Ave.
$10; $8 students

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org
In the human cloning family business, Allimah lives a quiet, regimented life with her parents. But while recovering in a hospital, her dreams slowly become reality and she finds herself connected to the prestigious Utopian planet called Aricama, a land of practice, play, and healing. *New Mony!* is a spiritual sci-fi puppet production exploring duality and ancestry that questions our current paradigm and visualizes our highest reality.
Created and performed by Marsian De Lellis and developed with director Michele Spears, *Object of Her Affection* is an unconventional love story that follows the emotional journey of one Andrea Lowe, after she has fallen, mysteriously, from a building. De Lellis endearingly demonstrates their artistic passion for animating the inanimate, as they craft the story of a heroine whose Object Sexuality reveals the way that objects quietly hold multiple personalities, and sometimes multiple hearts.

**LINKS HALL and CHICAGO PUPPET FEST present:**

**MARSIAN DE LELLIS  OBJECT OF HER AFFECTION**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 27 - SATURDAY, JANUARY 29**

**LINKS HALL**
Studio A  
3111 N. Western Ave.

$30; $20 students

Thursday, January 27 at 7pm  
Friday, January 28 at 7pm  
Saturday, January 29 at 7pm

60 minutes  
For ages 16 and up

**Links Hall**
CHICAGO PUPPET FEST presents:

BREAD AND PUPPET THEATER

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

A new adaptation of Aeschylus’ tragedy from the famed Bread & Puppet Theater, created in 1963 by the “creators” of puppet pageantry and spectacle in America, Elka and Peter Schumann. Their radical spectacle puppetry style with their 10 foot puppets became a mainstay of U.S. political protests. Here their gorgeous pageant adaptation of a famous Greek drama enjoys live music and the beautiful surroundings of Chicago’s new Epiphany Center for the Arts.

EPIPHANY CENTER FOR THE ARTS
201 S. Ashland Ave.
$40; $30 students
Friday, January 28 at 7:30pm
Saturday, January 29 at 3pm and 7:30pm
80 minutes
For all ages

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org
Featuring hand-carved marionettes and original music, TIMBER! is about a forest: its wild inhabitants, its enemies, and the artist who defends it. Chicago-based puppeteer, Mark Blashford (Rootstock Puppet Co.), brings his special brand of delightful to this poetic work starring Paul Bunyan, Bigfoot, and the forest itself. Chicago-based music group, TV Dinners, provides live acoustic accompaniment to this brand new show made possible in part with a Jim Henson Foundation Production Grant.

INSTITUTO CERVANTES CHICAGO and CHICAGO PUPPET FEST presents:

ROOTSTOCK PUPPET CO.

TIMBER!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

Get Tickets at: chicagopuppetfest.org

INSTITUTO CERVANTES OF CHICAGO
31 W. Ohio St.

$30; $20 students

Saturday, January 29 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, January 30 at 2pm

45 minutes

For all ages
Skeleton Canoe, a new work-in-progress, is the story of young, Nawbin as they leave home and set out on a rites of passage through a season of their life. Their journey along the water to discover their truth and way back to themselves and ancestral knowledge. Along the way they discover unexpected friends, weather storms, and gain a canoe! Through the use of puppetry, traditional Anishinaabe lifeways, and multimedia design, Skeleton Canoe makes known what is just below the water’s surface.

Skeleton Canoe

A WORK-IN-PROGRESS
written and performed by TY DEFOE

Created by Ty Defoe, Mark Denning, Katherine Freer & Blair Thomas

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER
3401 W. Ainslie St.

FREE first come, first serve

Saturday, January 29 at 5pm
Sunday, January 30 at 5pm
45 minutes
For ages 10 and up

With special funding from:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
(
4)

3CW Foundation

See next page for times, locations and more information!

The Free Neighborhood Tour fosters an appreciation for puppetry throughout the city by bringing free, family-friendly performances to locations outside of Chicago’s theaters. The tour offers a range of high-quality puppetry styles in order to create moments of community enjoyment while expanding the base of puppet enthusiasts. This year, three nationally acclaimed puppet artists — Ty Defoe, Jerrell L. Henderson, and Joshua Holden — will tour to five locations around the city to present short works.

Navy Pier and Chicago Puppet Fest present:

FREE
NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20 - SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

FREE first come, first serve

Thursday, January 20 at 4:30pm
Friday, January 21 at 4:30 pm
Saturday, January 22 at 12pm + 2pm
Sunday, January 23 at 11 am
Sunday, January 23 at 4 pm
45 minutes
For all ages

Supported by The Marshall Frankel Foundation

Learn More at: chicagopuppetfest.org
EAGLE DANCE
BY TY DEFOE

Inspired by the wisdom gained from eagles, this dance embraces the interconnectedness of all living things; the two legged, the four legged, the winged, the finned, and the rooted. Stemming from the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee teachings, this movement honors the past, celebrates the present, and provides inspiration for future generations. Grammy Award winner Ty Defoe is a writer, actor and interdisciplinary artist of the Oneida and Ojibwe Nations of Wisconsin. Defoe co-created with IBEX Puppetry the unforgettable 2019 Chicago Puppet Fest production, *Ajijaak on Turtle Island*, an eco-focused, First Nation origin story and spectacle.

I AM THE BEAR
BY JERRELL L. HENDERSON


Chicago’s Jerrell L. Henderson performs *I Am the Bear*, based on his experience being racially profiled by police on Chicago’s North Shore. Henderson is a director, puppeteer, and an assistant professor of performance studies. Directing credits include *Mlima’s Tale* with Griffin Theatre (Jeff Award Nominations, Direction and Best Play, Thurgood with Walnut Street Theatre and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show* at Chicago Children’s Theatre.

Joshua Holden debuted *The Joshua Show* at Nasty, Brutish & Short in Chicago in 2012. He then took it to the Puppeteers of America’s National Festival, where it was awarded “Best Performance” and “Fan Favorite.” He has been touring the show internationally ever since. “An unabashed ambassador of joy” (*New York Times*), Holden also performed in the national tour of *Avenue Q*, was lead puppeteer in *Peter Pan 360*, and worked with Banksy on *Sirens of the Lambs*. He currently lives in Brooklyn and works for The Jim Henson Company as a puppet wrangler on *Sesame Street*. Jeb Colwell, New York based singer-songwriter, brings live musical accompaniment.

Learn More at: chicagopuppetfest.org
THE CATAPULT ARTIST INTENSIVE

The Catapult Artist Intensive returns with two unique professional development weekends to inspire and inform practicing artists of all disciplines. Over a three-day period, participants take a deep dive into puppetry with a curated, guided experience of the Festival programming. Join an intimate cohort, escorted by a professional leader, for discussions, a performance workshop, backstage access, and more. The Catapult is designed to advance the form and expand understanding of the field of puppetry in the United States. Each weekend includes 8 performances in 3 days, with a workshop, symposium, some meals and local transportation. 

Cost: $585

SESSION 1: JANUARY 21-23
Led by Grace Needlman
Shows include The Plastic Bag Store, Sea Change, Nasty, Britush & Short, New Mony!, I, OBJECT!, Ty Defoe/Jerrell L. Henderson/The Joshua Show, Chimpanzee, and Dogugaeshi, with a workshop by Vanessa Valliere, and a symposium—What We Leave Behind: The Plastic Object Geological Layer.

SESSION 2: JANUARY 28-30
Led by Samuel J. Lewis II
Shows include The Plastic Bag Store, Dreaming, Invitation to a Beheading, Nasty, Britush & Short, TIMBER!, The Persians, I, OBJECT!, and The Bluest Eye, with a workshop by Tom Lee, and a symposium—Race and Representation in Puppetry.

CHICAGO PUPPET STUDIO
The Fine Arts Building 410 S. Michigan Ave.

No application required. Pricing and details at: chicagopuppetfest.org

Monday, January 24 at 10am, 2pm and 6pm
Tuesday, January 25 at 10am, 2pm and 6pm
Wednesday, January 26 at 10am, 2pm and 6pm

For ages 16 and up

WORKSHOPS

PUPPETRY WORKSHOPS

Over three days, Festival artists share introductions to their own unique styles and techniques through an offering of hands-on workshops, morning, noon and night. Hosted in the Festival’s picturesque Puppet Studio in Chicago’s Historic Fine Arts Building, topics including Table Top Puppetry, Cantastoria, Puppet Parades, History of Limberjack puppets, and Shadow Puppetry.

Instructors include world class puppeteers: Bread & Puppet Theater, Clare Dolan, Robin Frohardt, Tom Lee, Nick Lehane, Eli Presser, and Dr. Paulette Richards.

With special funding from:

Learn More and Register at: chicagopuppetfest.org/Catapult | No application required
The Ellen Van Volkenburg Puppetry Symposium brings together practicing Festival artists with scholars to consider the intersection of puppetry with other disciplines and ideas.

**THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE BALLROOM, 112 S. Michigan Ave.**

**FREE and open to the public**

Puppetry is an absorbent and persistent art form, leaping categories and classifications such as the religious and secular, political and personal, ribald and regal, just to name a few. In Van Volkenburg’s honor, as we seek to expand the field of our art, we host our Symposium to bring to the forefront the ideas and inspiration behind *why* the puppet.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 22**

10am - 12pm  
**Staging the Non-Human Character: Animal, Alien, or Architecture**  
**Moderator:** Dr. Paulette Richards  
**Panelists:** Maria Camia, Nick Lehane, Marsian De Lellis, Basil Twist

1pm - 3pm  
**What We Leave Behind: The Plastic Object Geological Layer**  
**Moderator:** Julie Moller  
**Panelists:** Dr. Sasha Atkins, Robin Frohardt, Sarah Newman

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 29**

10am - 11:30am  
**Race & Representation in Puppetry**  
**Moderator:** Dr. Paulette Richards  
**Panelists:** Torry Bend, Ty Defoe, Margaret Laurena Kemp

12pm - 1:30pm  
**How Objects Make Meaning on Stage: New Perspectives**  
**Moderator:** Dr. Dassia N. Posner  
**Panelists:** Ana Diaz Barriga, Jess Bass, Marissa Fenley, Skye Strauss, Kenzia Waters

Learn More at: chicagopuppetfest.org
JOIN US FOR THESE SPECIAL OPENING NIGHT EVENTS

Chaired by Kristy Moran and Kimberly L. Ohms

PRELUDE RECEPTION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20
4:30 - 6:30 PM
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
400 N. Michigan Ave.
Suite 1100

TICKETS: $100/person
Show tickets sold separately

POST-SHOW CELEBRATION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20
8:15 - 10:30 PM
THE FINE ARTS BUILDING
410 S. Michigan Ave.

TICKETS: $75/person

Join Festival Directors, lead artists and VIPs for a special prelude to the opening night performances. Enjoy hors d’oeuvres and toast the opening of the 4th Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival prior to heading over to one of the three theaters hosting an opening night show.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20
4:30 - 6:30 PM
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
400 N. Michigan Ave.
Suite 1100

TICKETS: $100/person
Show tickets sold separately

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20
8:15 - 10:30 PM
THE FINE ARTS BUILDING
410 S. Michigan Ave.

TICKETS: $75/person

After seeing a 7pm performance of The Plastic Bag Store, Dogugaeshi or Sea Change on Opening Night, come join the celebration as together we revel in and support the return of the festival with artists and friends at the Festival’s new studios. Enjoy this fun gathering with treats, drinks and an inside peek at the Festival headquarters, our special courtyard, the Puppet Studio, the Puppet Lab, workshop hub and more, in Chicago’s landmark Fine Arts Building.

$50,000 - $200,000
Walder Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
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The Reva and David Logan Foundation
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Kristy & Brandon Moran
Elizabeth Liebman
Chicago Community Trust
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MacArthur Fund for Culture, Equity,
and the Arts at Prince
Julie & John Guida Family Foundation
Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
Alphawood Foundation

$2,500 - $4,999
The Saints
Cecilia Conrad
Christina & Bennett Lasko, Jim Lasko & Tria Smith
Maureen Mizwicki
Anna Seifert
John & Claudia Teschky

$1,500 - $2,499
Cecilia Conrad
Christina & Bennett Lasko, Jim Lasko & Tria Smith
Maureen Mizwicki
Anna Seifert
John & Claudia Teschky

$1,000 - $1,499
Ingeborg Kohler
Kate Thomas & Lloyd Perlow
Jane Nicholl Sahlins
Chuck Thurrow
Bruce English

$500 - $999
Cheryl Henson
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$250 - $499
The Saints
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Maureen Mizwicki
Anna Seifert
John & Claudia Teschky

$100 - $249
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$2 - $4
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$1 - $2
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We gratefully acknowledge the following contributors for their generous support:

Chaired by Kristy Moran and Kimberly L. Ohms

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The Fine Arts Building
410 S. Michigan Ave. #310
Chicago, IL 60605

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