



Chicago Cultural Center Identity System

Phase 2: Mark Design and Prototypes
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Fall 2024

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Introduction

What is the Chicago Cultural Center?

The Chicago Cultural Center, established by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, is America's first free municipal cultural venue, offering concerts, art exhibits, and programs. Originally completed in 1897 as Chicago's first public library, its grand architecture features rare marbles, mosaics, and two stunning domes: the world's largest Tiffany dome and a Renaissance-style dome by Healy & Millet. The center includes exhibitions, an interactive Learning Lab, the Buddy store for local artisans, the Claudia Cassidy Theater, and a rental program supporting free public events by local artists and organizations.





Mark Development

Direction 1: Dome Sideview
Direction 2: Mosaic
Direction 3: Communing Cs

Direction 4: Floors and Walls
Direction 5: Growing Arcs

Verbal Inspiration

Chicago

Local
Loop
Downtown
City
Chicago River
Lake Michigan
Center
Midwest
Illinois
America

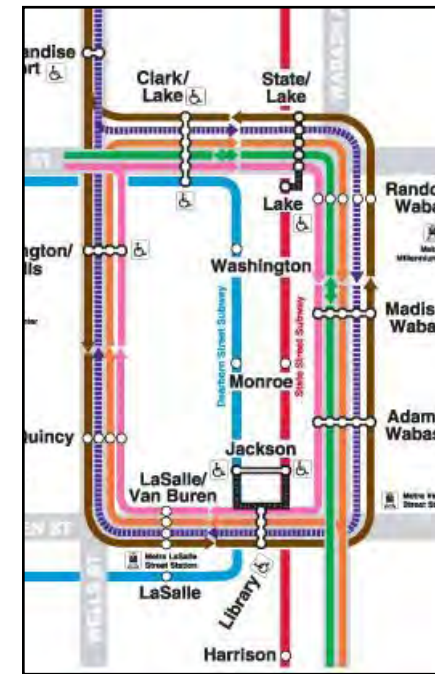
Cultural

Learning
Growth
Information
Transmission
Creative
Performance
Arts
Exhibition
Inspiration
Heritage
Architecture
Historical
Race
Civil War
Neoclassical
Greek
Roman
Veteran
Dome
Progression

Center

Community
Hub
Heart
Mosaic
Stained Glass
Supportive
Collaborative
Inclusive
Uplifting
Interaction
Coming together
Diversity
Collaborative
Public
Advocacy
Intersection

Visual Inspiration



Chicago

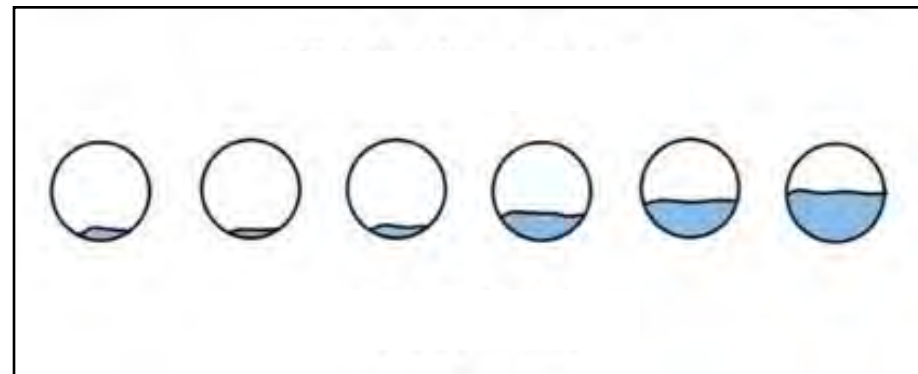
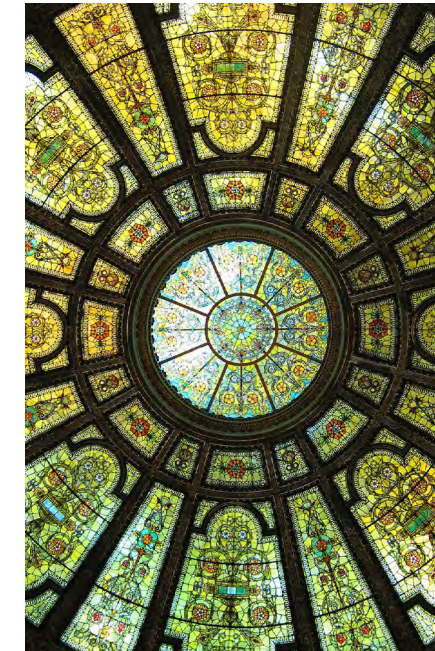
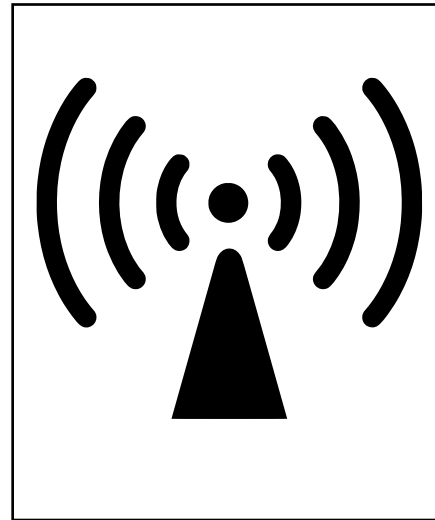
Loop

America

Lake Michigan

Chicago River

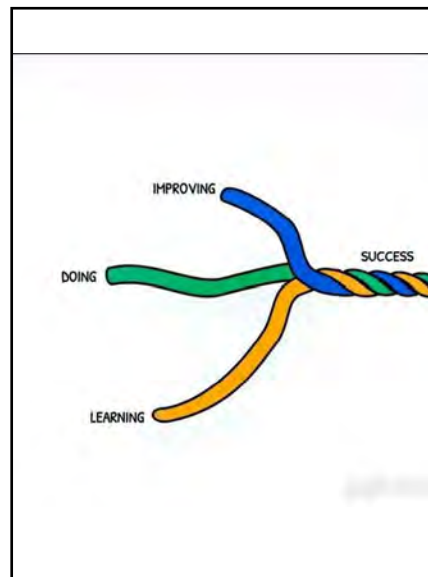
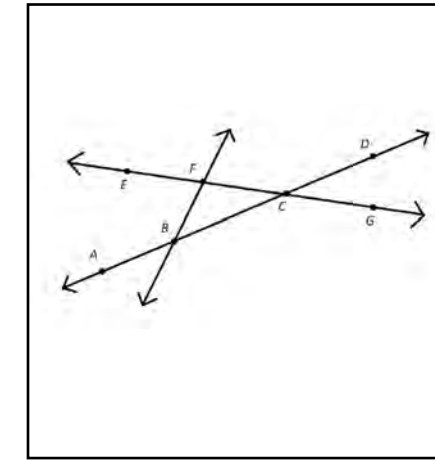
Visual Inspiration



Cultural

Growth Dome
Transmission Architecture
Progression Exhibition
Arts

Visual Inspiration



Center

Community Uplifting
Intersection Coming together
Mosaic

Direction 1: Dome Sideview

Dome
Progression
Coming together

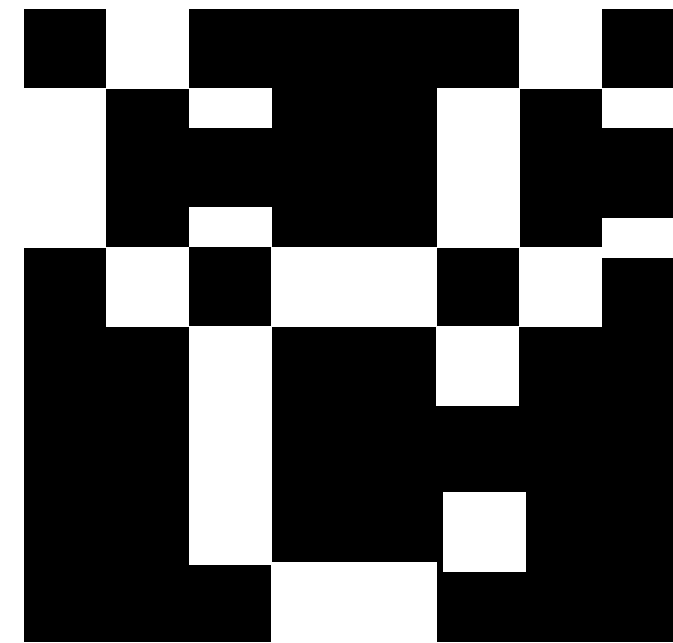
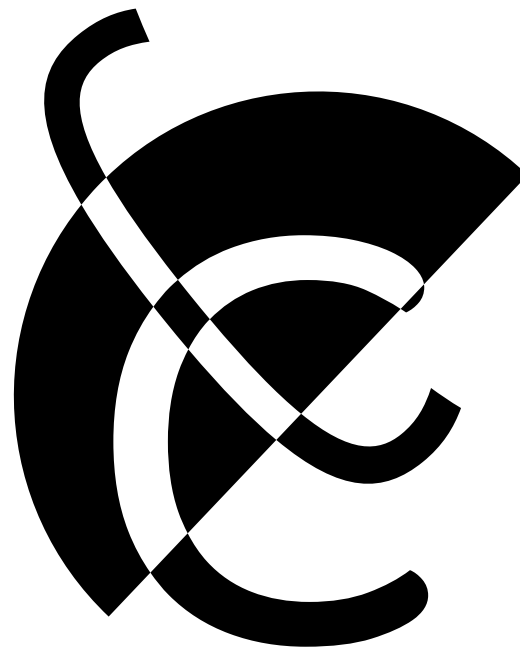
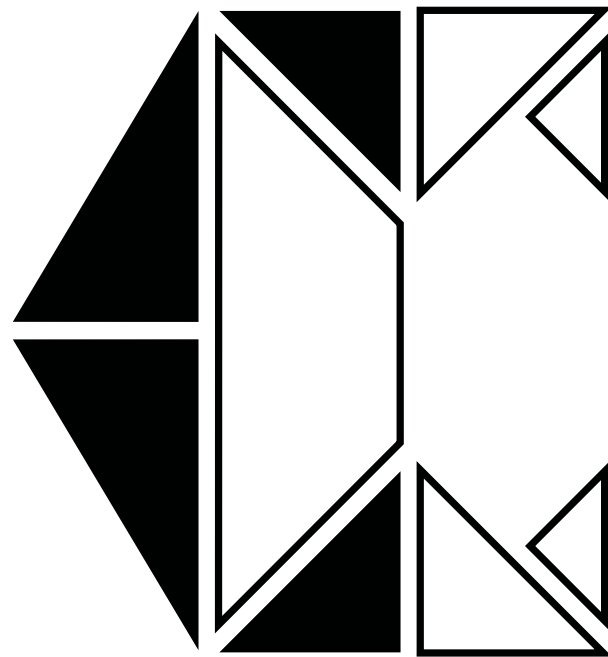
These three marks indicate the side view of the cultural center's domes. The far left side demonstrates progression through the type's staircase-like setting, while towards the right, progression is indicated through the the smaller 'dome' within larger domes.



Direction 2: Mosaic

Community
Mosaic
Architecture
Coming together

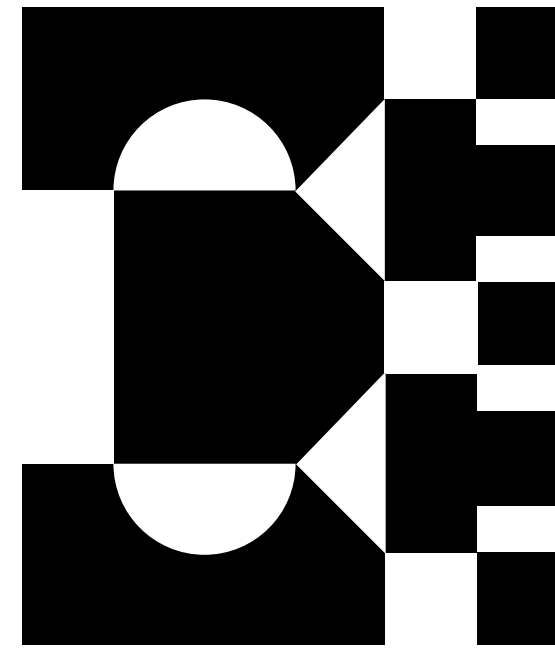
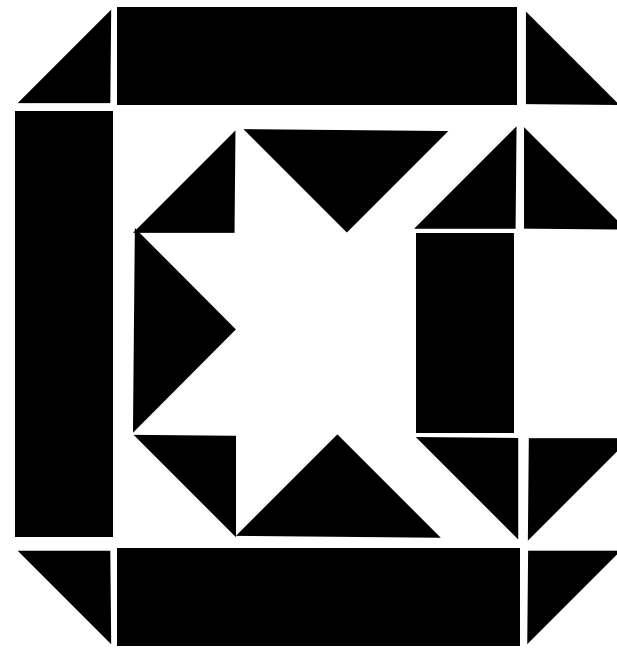
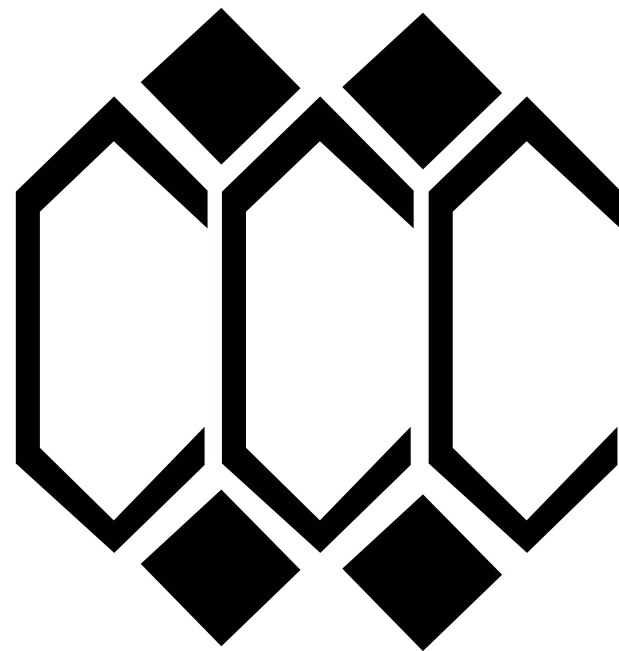
The cultural center's architecture has many mosaics, which may also serve as a symbol of harmoniously coming together as a community.



Direction 2: Mosaic

Community
Mosaic
Architecture
Coming together

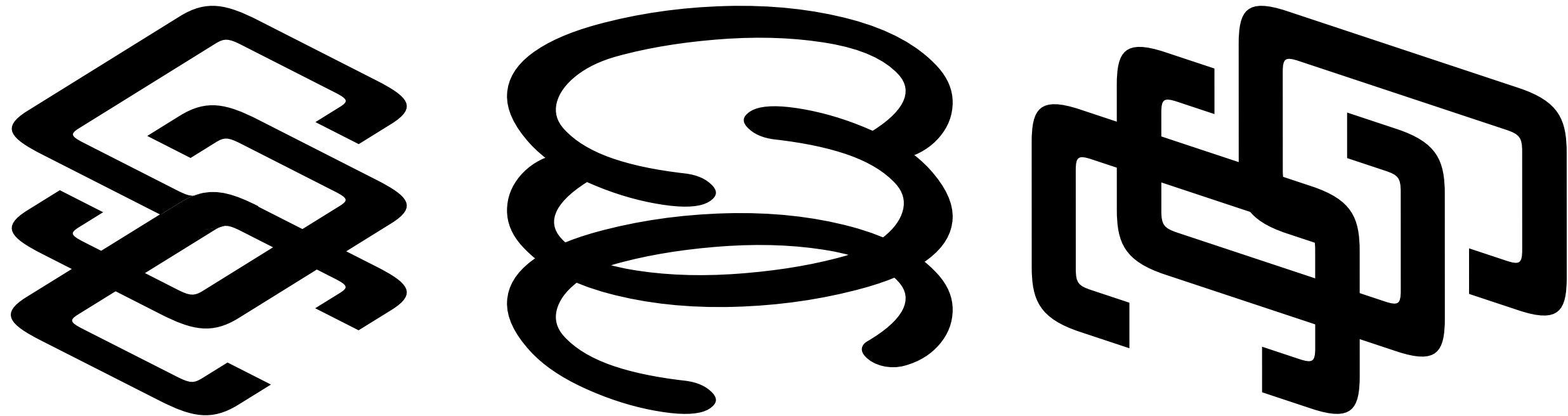
The cultural center's architecture has many mosaics, which may also serve as a symbol of harmoniously coming together as a community.



Direction 3: Floors and Walls

Architecture
Interaction
Exhibition
Loop

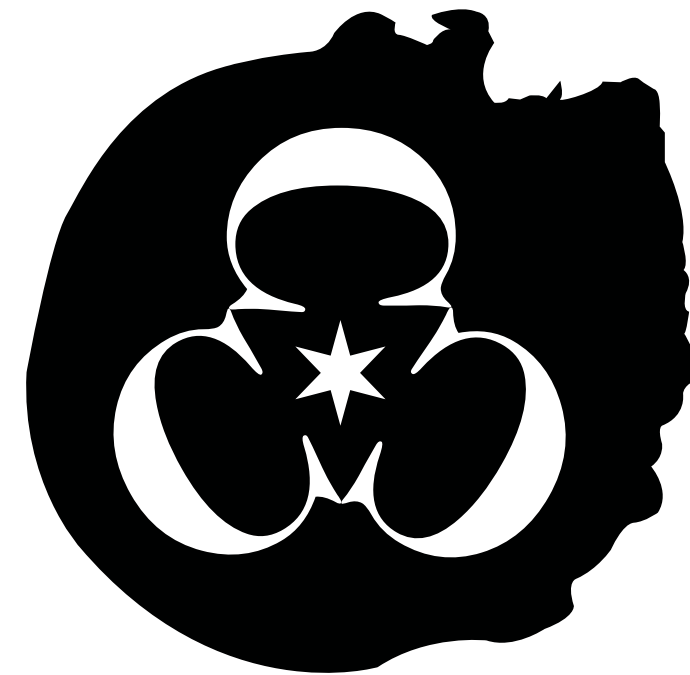
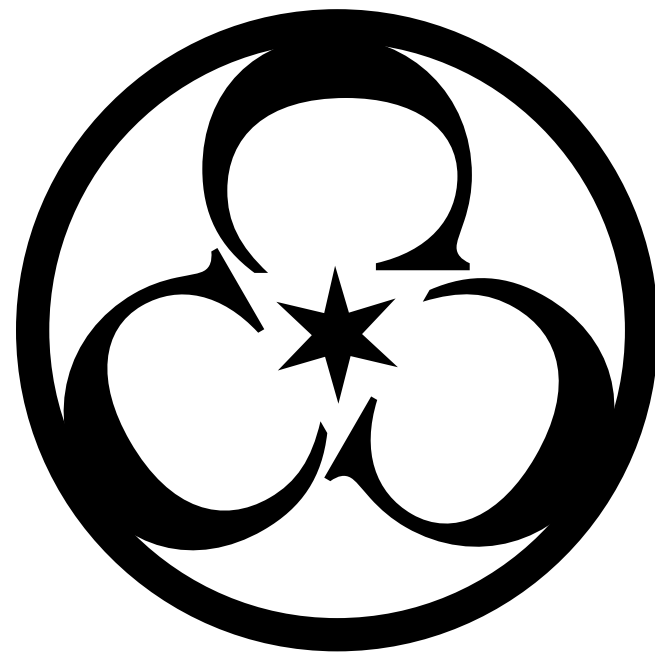
For the first two designs, three intertwining Cs indicate the interaction between each floor of the center. The squareness of first C's reference the shape of the Loop. For the last logo on this page, the interlocking Cs indicate the walls of an exhibition.



Direction 3: Communing Cs

Dome
Chicago
Coming together
Community
Arts

This logo involves three communing Cs all 'center'ed around a Chicago star (as found on the Chicago flag). The second logo references rays of sunlight shining through the dome, while the third logo uses a paint splotch, referencing the cultural center's arts activities.



Direction 3: Growing Arcs

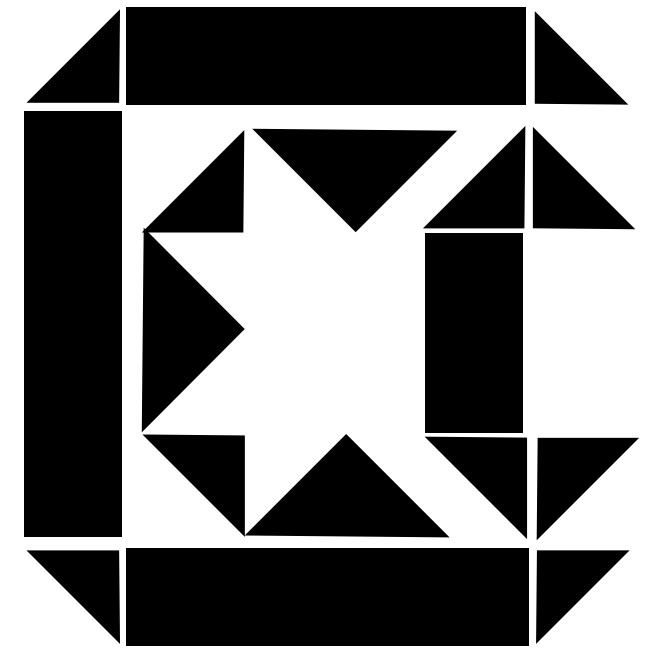
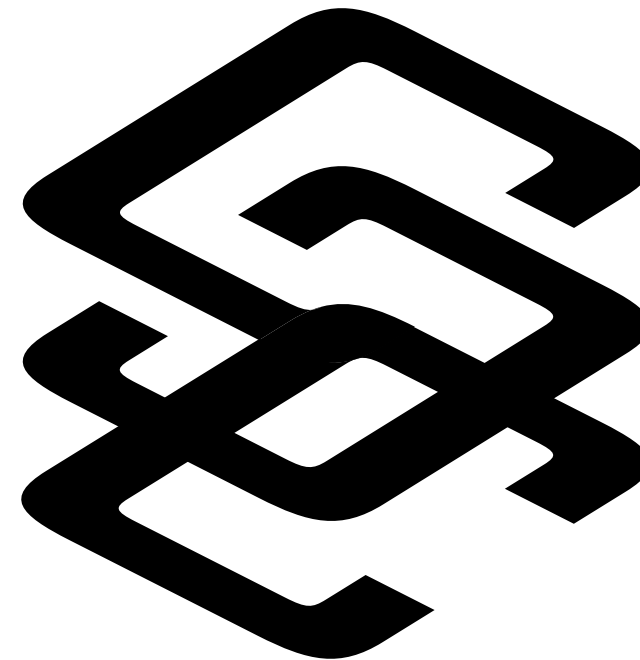
Transmission
Progression
Arts

The original inspiration of these growing shapes was a signal icon, indicating transmission of a information or sound. The three arcs (Cs) grow, conveying progression through learning at the cultural center. The third mark changes the Cs into brushstroke-like shapes, indicating change through arts expression.



Refined Marks

The designs that best represented the center were the ones that referenced the architecture, due to it being a main attraction. Out of the mark explorations that referenced the architecture, the following felt the most resolved in form.





System Development

Final Mark
Scale and Color Applications
Typefaces

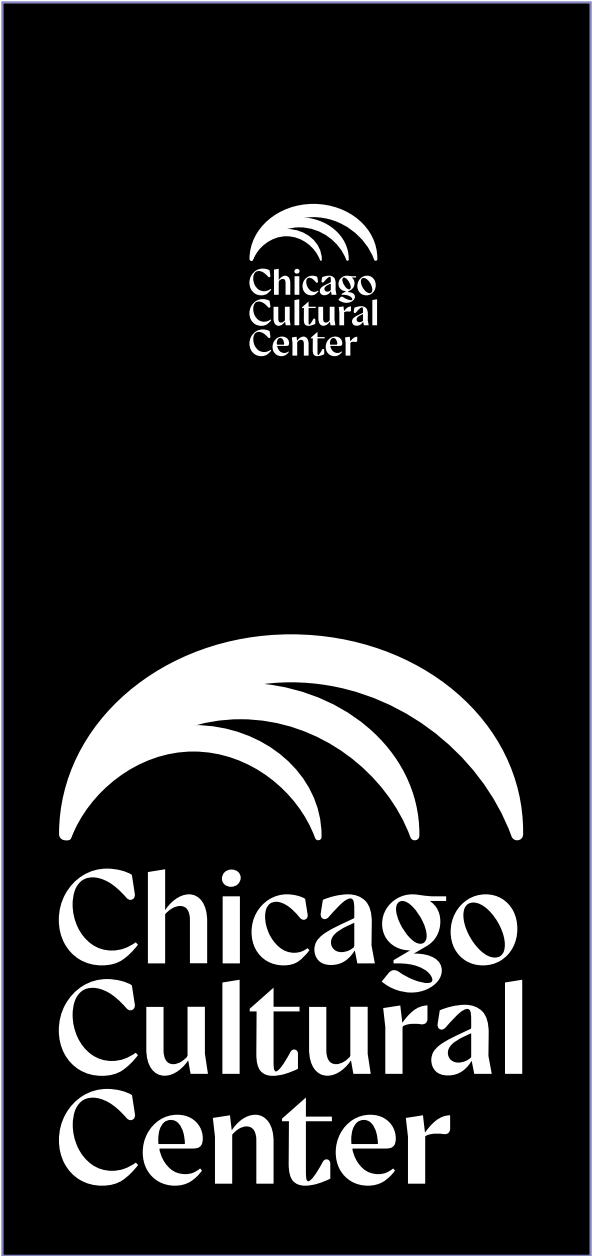
Color Palette
Patterns
Bracket

Final Mark



Out of those four designs, the first one represented the Chicago Cultural Center the most, as while it symbolises the dome through the three arcs, it also references a community coming together through the converging lines. The shape that the lines could also be interpreted as a wave, indicating the transmission of information and culture.

Scale and Color Applications



Typefaces

DISPLAY AND MARK

Gyst Variable

Light	<i>Light Italic</i>
Regular	<i>Medium Italic</i>
Medium	<i>Bold Italic</i>
Bold	

A B C D E F J H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W
X Y Z a b c d e f j h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x
y z ! @ # \$ % ^ & * () _ + { } : " < > ? | ~ , . ; '

SUBHEADINGS AND BODY

Paradigm Pro

Light	<i>Light Italic</i>
Regular	<i>Italic</i>
Bold	<i>Bold Italic</i>
Extrabold	

A B C D E F J H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V
W X Y Z a b c d e f j h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w
x y z ! @ # \$ % ^ & * () _ + { } : " < > ? | ~ , . ; '

BODY AND CAPTIONS

Asterisk Sans Variable

Light	<i>Light Italic</i>
Regular	<i>Regular Italic</i>
Weight: 500, Semi Bold	<i>Weight 500, Italic</i> <i>Semi Bold Italic</i>

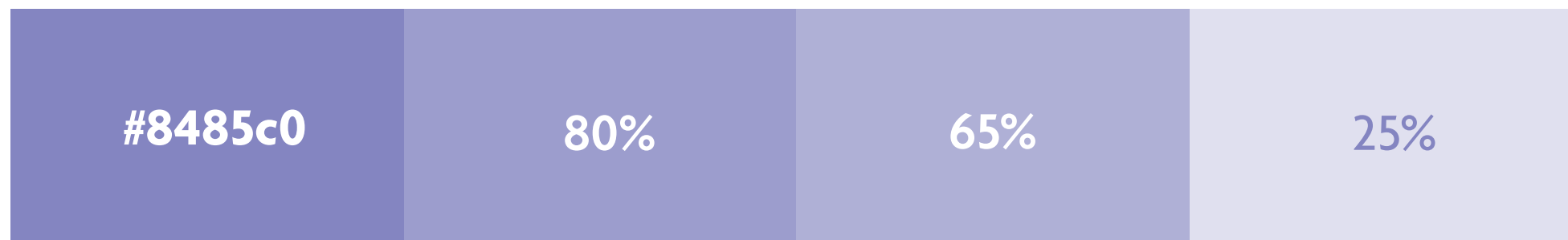
A B C D E F J H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W
X Y Z a b c d e f j h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x
y z ! @ # \$ % ^ & * () _ + { } : " < > ? | ~ , . ; '

Color Palette

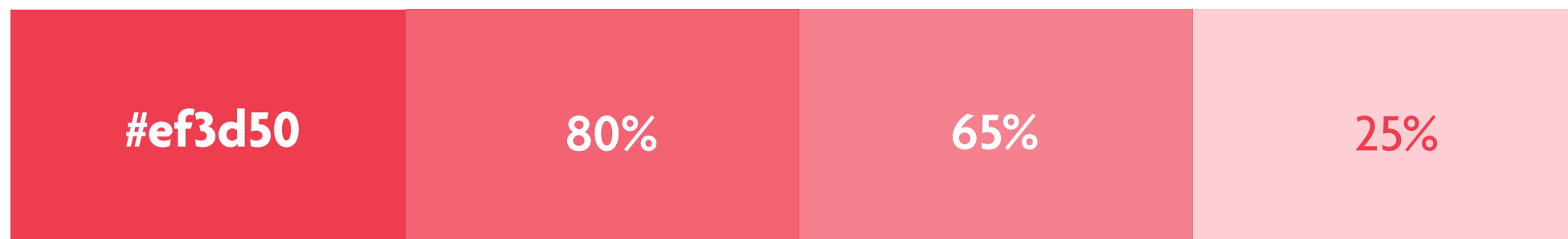
The Chicago Cultural Center identity has three primary colors: light blue, purple and red. The system's secondary colors are tints of the primary colors. The primary colors' hex codes are on the left, while the opacity tints are on the right.



The light blue is an adaptation of the light blue bands on the Chicago flag, which represents Lake Michigan, the Chicago River, and the Great Canal.

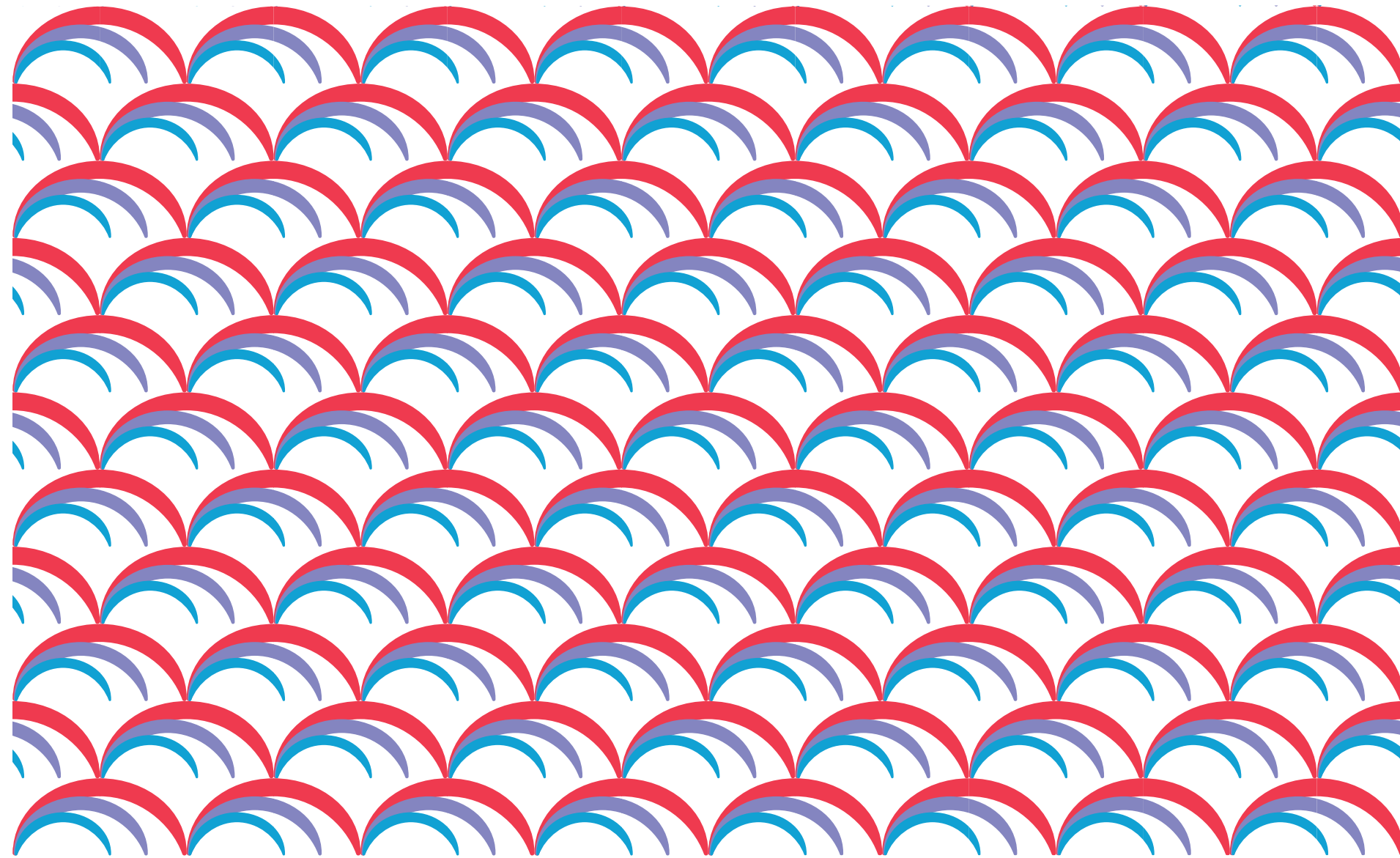


The purple is an in-between between the red and blue of the mark. As both red and blue reference the Chicago flag's colors, the purple acceptance towards the range of diverse people within Chicago.



The red is an adaptation of the red found in the stars of the Chicago flag. In the Chicago flag, the four stars reference Fort Dearborn; the Chicago Fire of October 8–10, 1871; the World Columbian Exposition; and the Century of Progress Exposition.

Pattern



A pattern created based on the three arcs from the mark.
May be placed on top white, or the light blue background
(taken from the color palette) at 25% opacity.

Paranthesis

Sample

Subheading
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

The paranthesis wraps around a area of type with a subheading and body copy. The parenthesis starts in the middle of the height of the subheading, and wraps around to the middle of height of the last line of body copy. The parenthesis can take on any of the primary or secondary colors depending on hiearchy. The thickness of the parantehsis is also variable, dependent on the hierachies established within the design.

Color Variation Examples



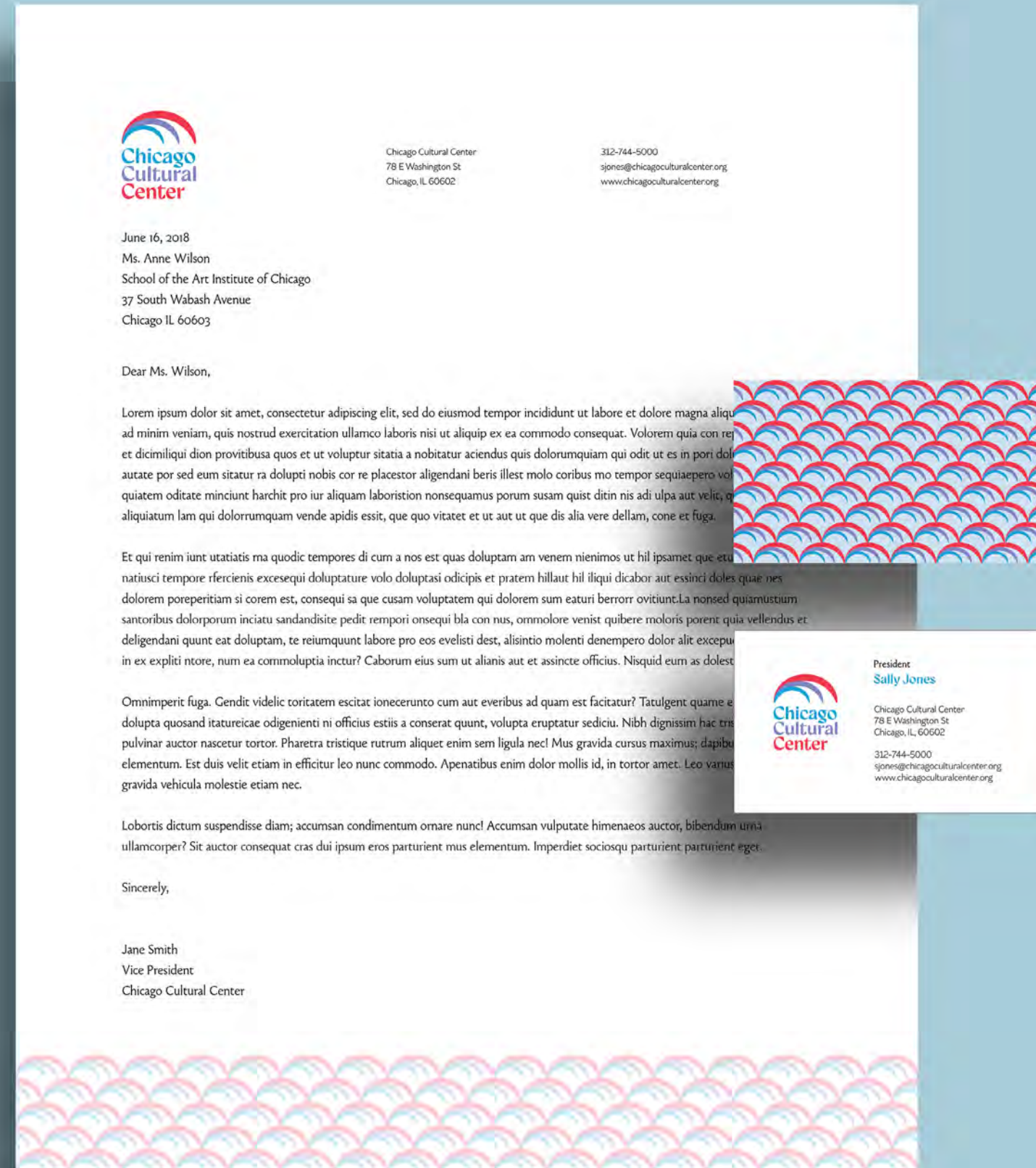


System Prototypes

Stationery
Website
Posters
Brochure

Mark Animation Storyboard
Street Banners
Wayfinding Icons
Map

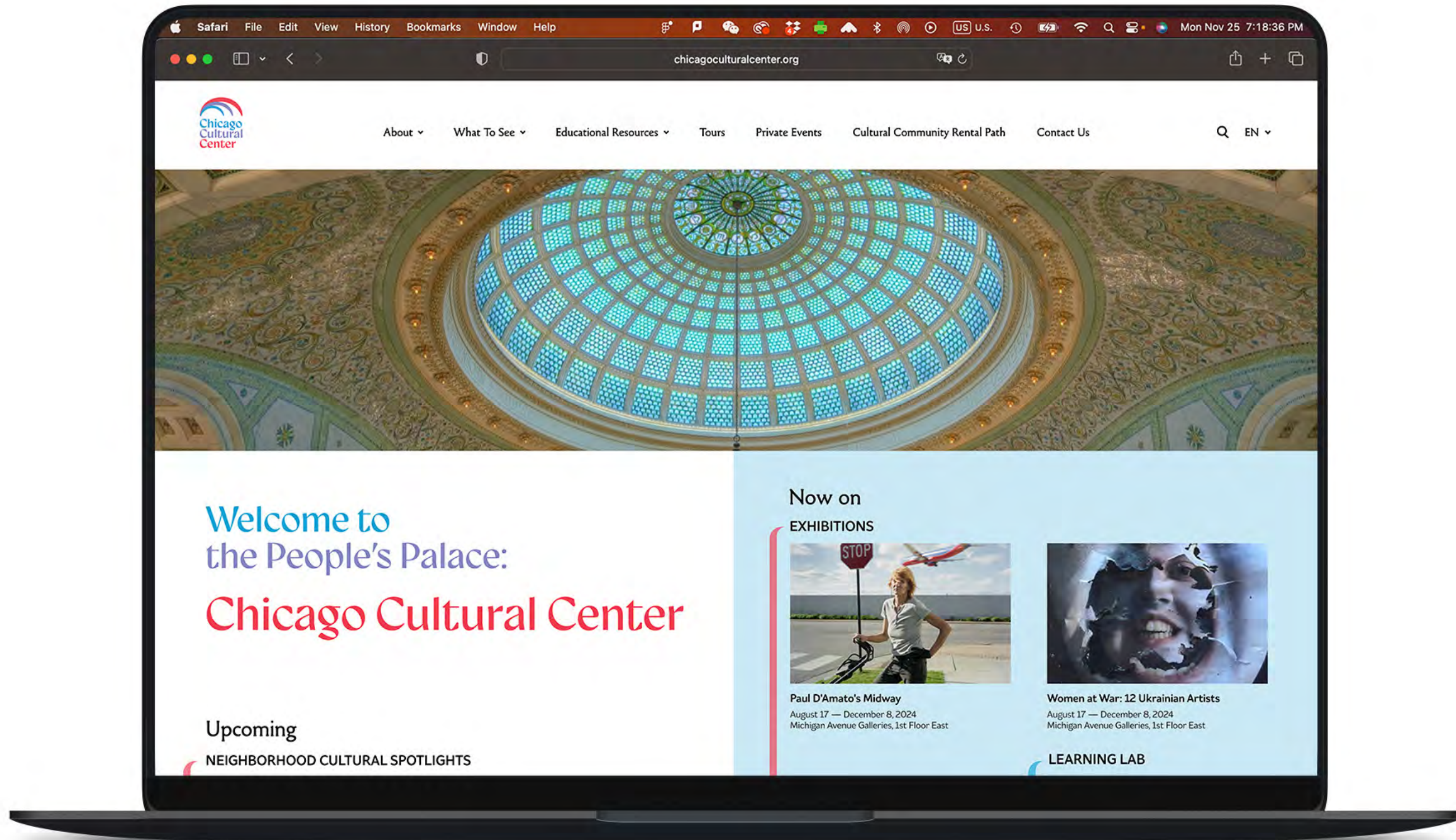
Stationery



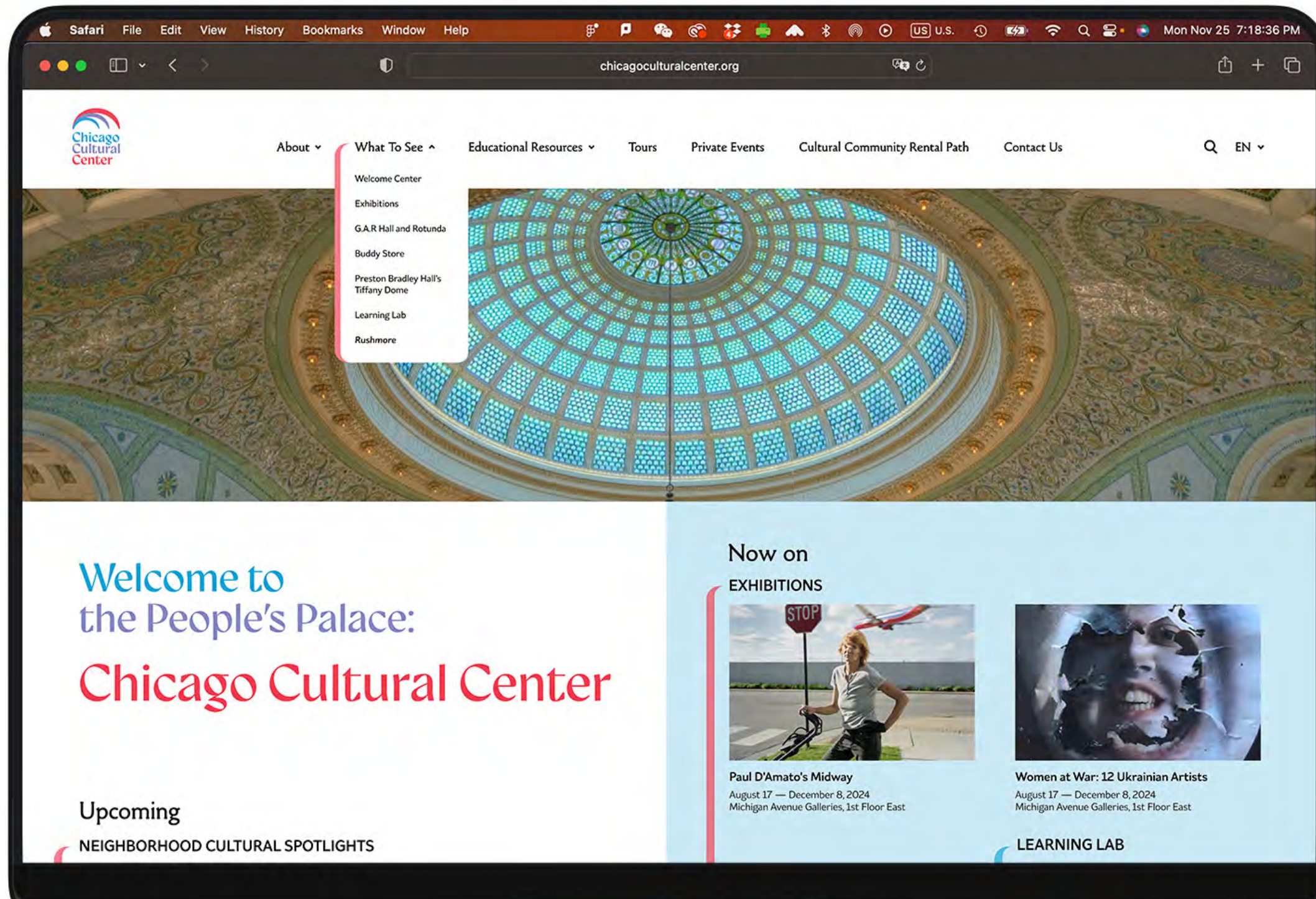
Stationery



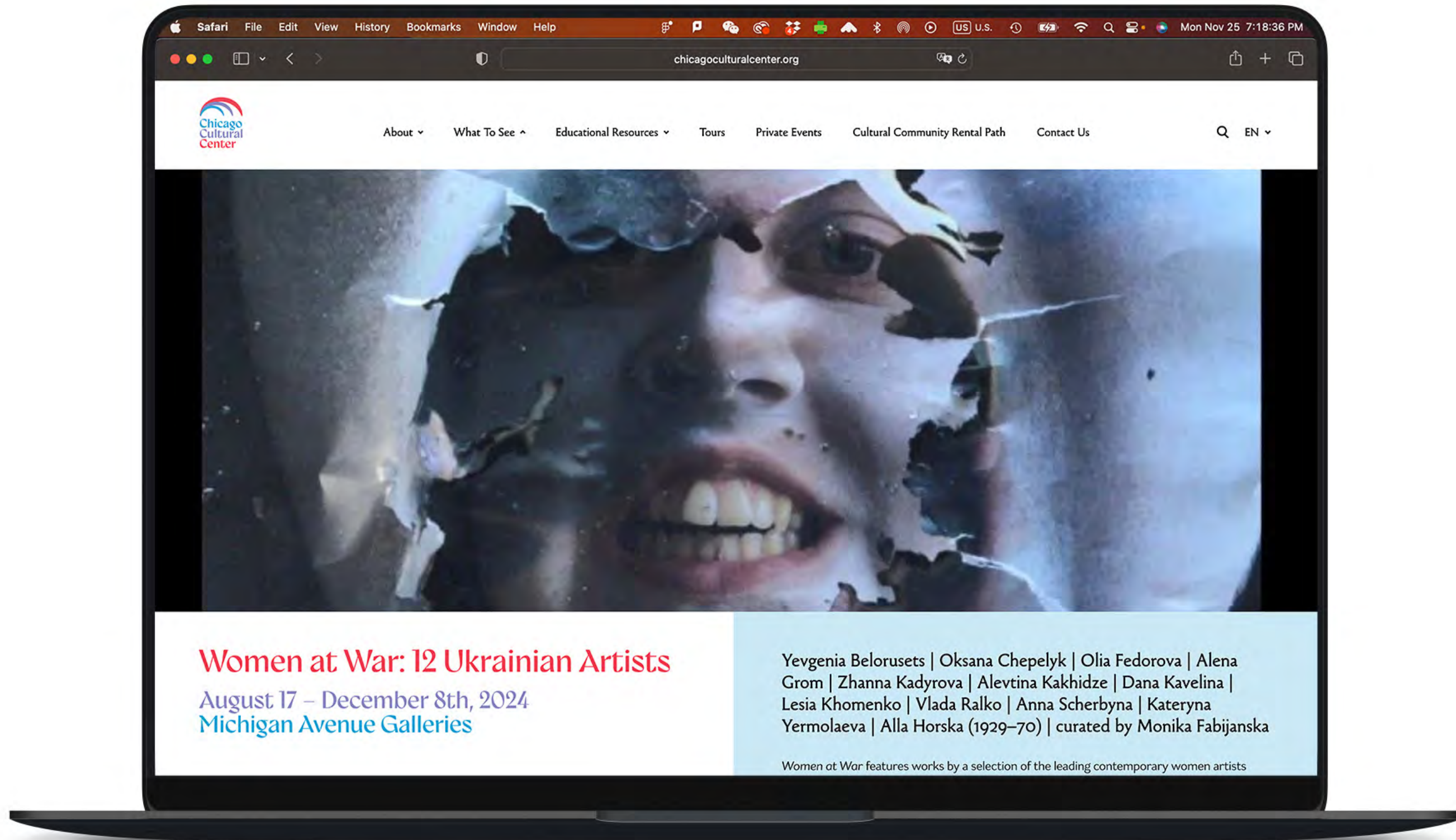
Website



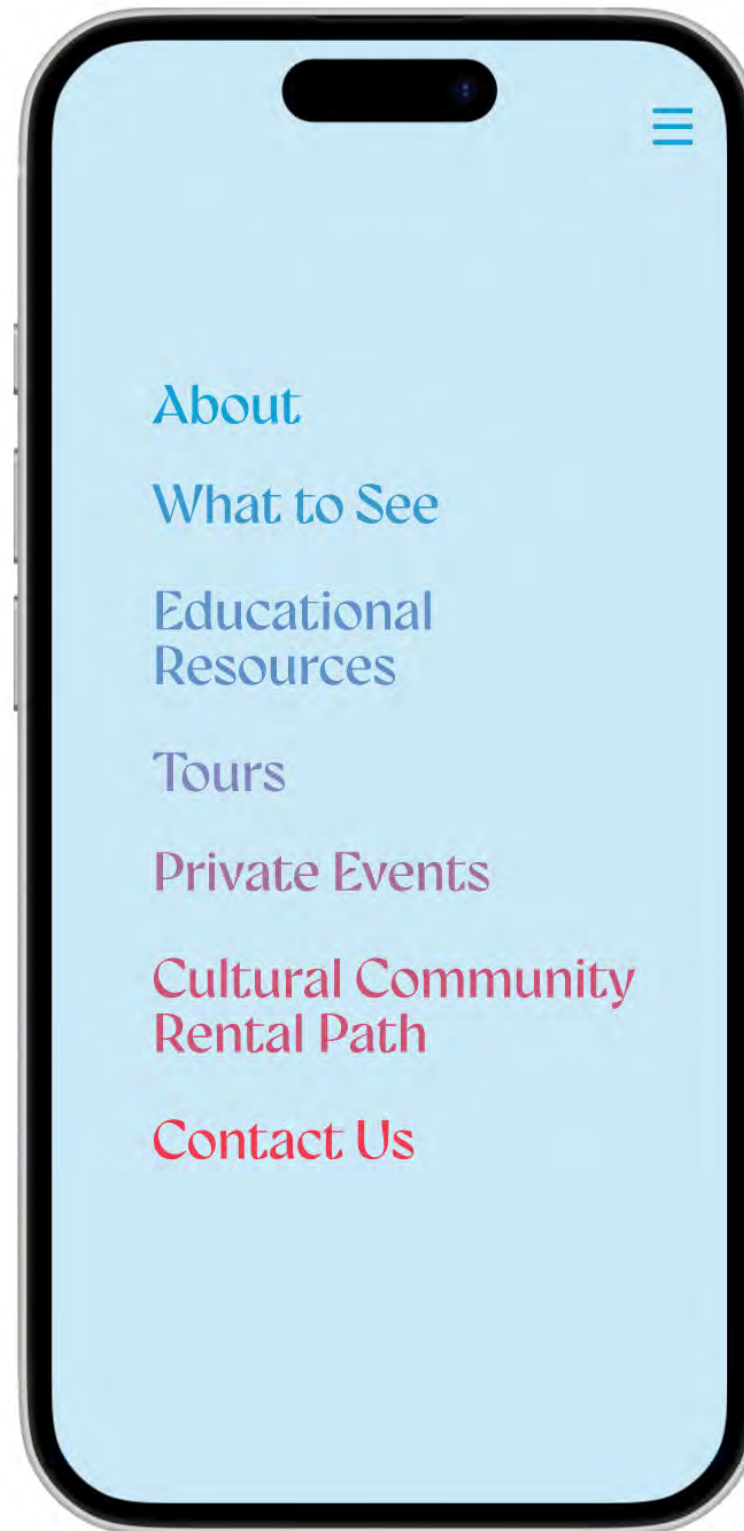
Website



Website



Website



Posters



Brochure



Welcome to the
Chicago Cultural Center!



Visitor Guide

Welcome to the People's Palace: Chicago Cultural Center

Completed in 1897 as Chicago's first central library, the building became a cultural center in 1991. The stunning landmark is home to two magnificent stained-glass domes, as well as free art exhibitions, performances, tours, lectures, films, family activities, music and more – presented by the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events and many others.



Free Tours

Guided, In-person Building Tours

- Thursdays and Fridays at 1:15pm, space is limited
- Meet in the Welcome Center, 1st Floor North

Exhibition Exploration Tour

Exhibition Exploration is a guided tour especially for student groups exploring the building history and one of the current visual arts exhibitions. If time allows it ends with hands-on engagement in the Learning Lab. Pre-register at chicagoculturalcenter.org/tours

Recorded Building Tours

QR Code English



QR Code Spanish



Printed texts of these tours are available in large and standard print at the Randolph lobby desk.

Guests can schedule a tour in Spanish, American Sign Language, or a touch tour with 7 days advance request at chicagoculturalcenter.org

Get In Touch

Address

78 E. Washington St. Chicago, IL 60602

Hours

Daily 10am–5pm

Closed Holidays

Visit chicagoculturalcenter.org and go to About for the full list.

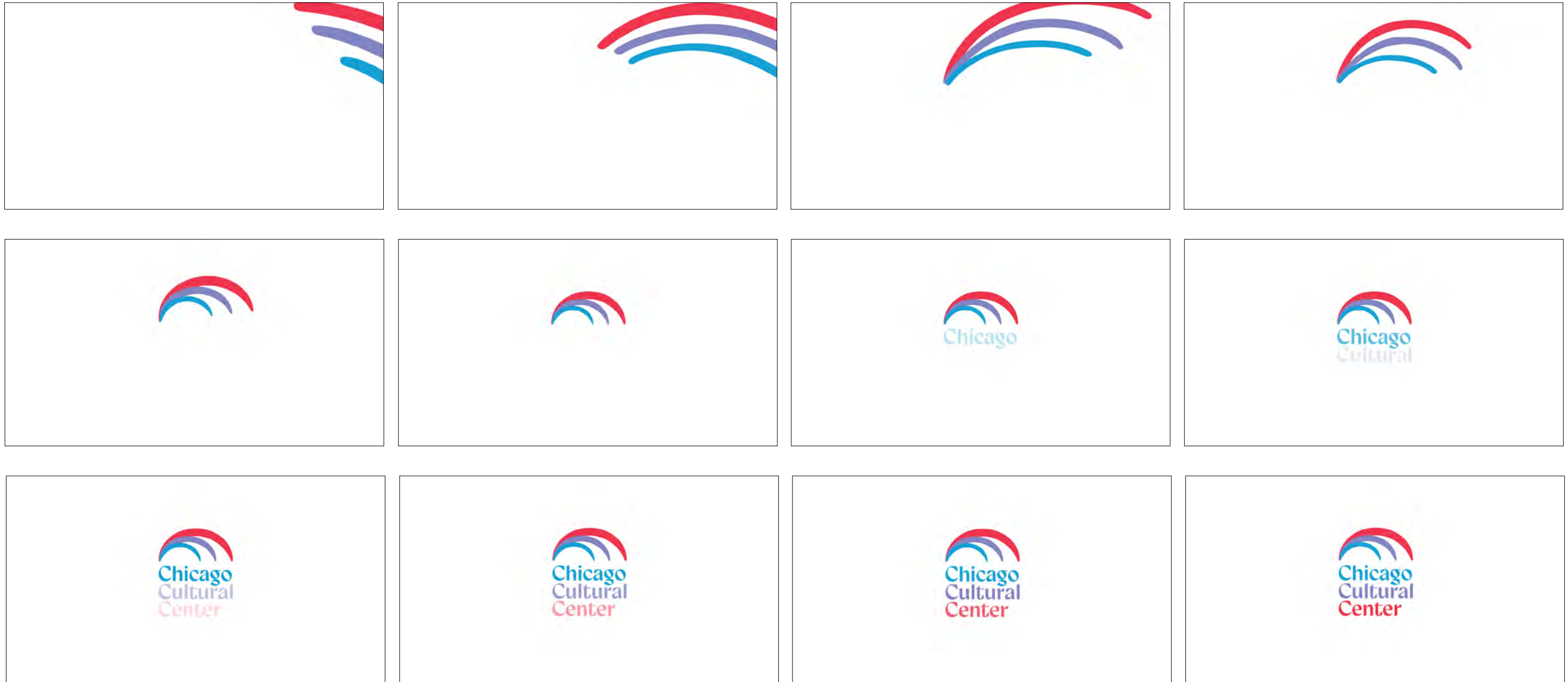
Stay Connected

Instagram and X: @ChiCulturCenter
Facebook: @ChicagoCulturalCenter
chicagoculturalcenter.org
support@chicagoculturalcenter.org

Questions?

Ask a volunteer or a security guard in the lobbies and around the building – or get more info at ChicagoCulturalCenter.org.

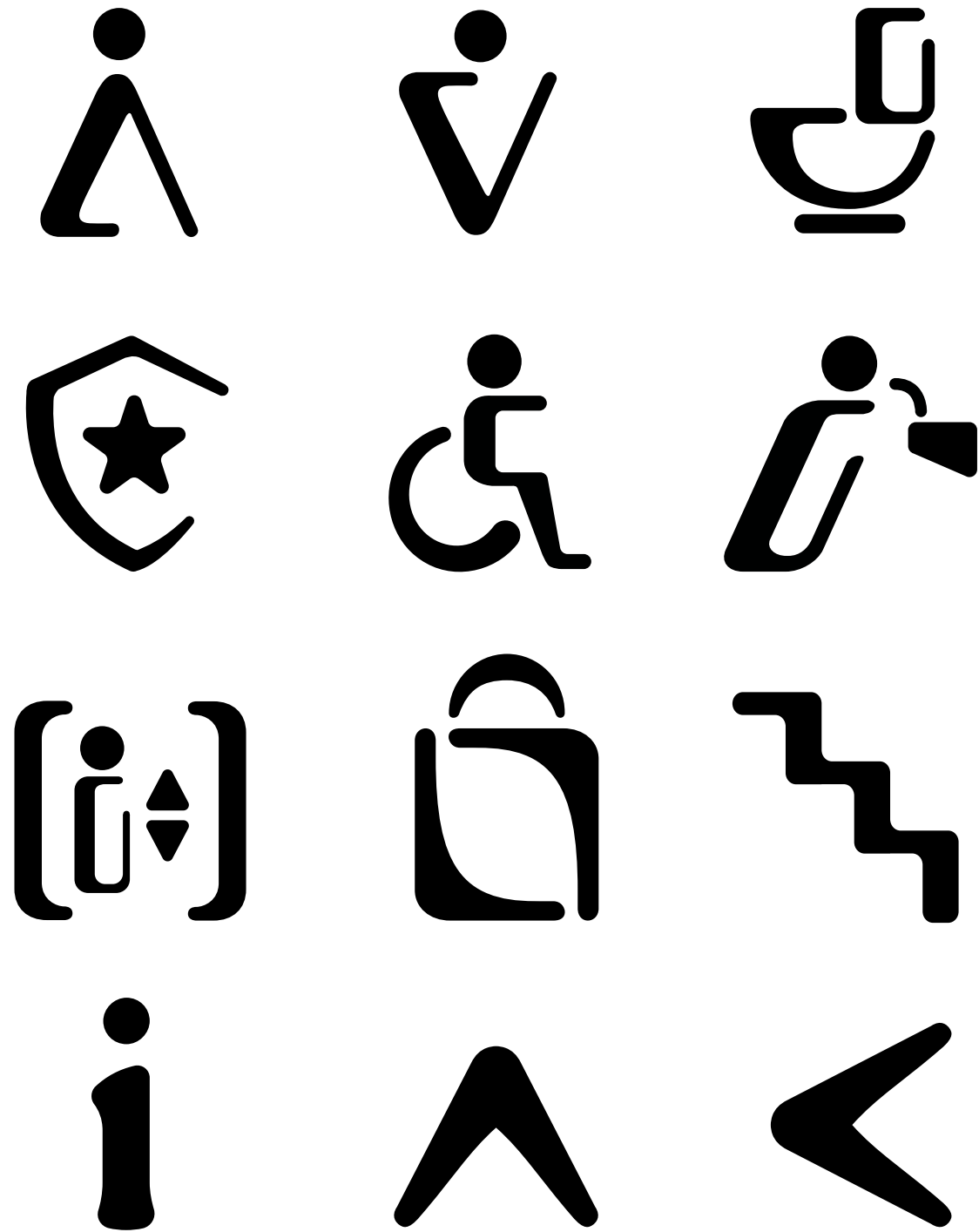
Mark Animation Storyboard

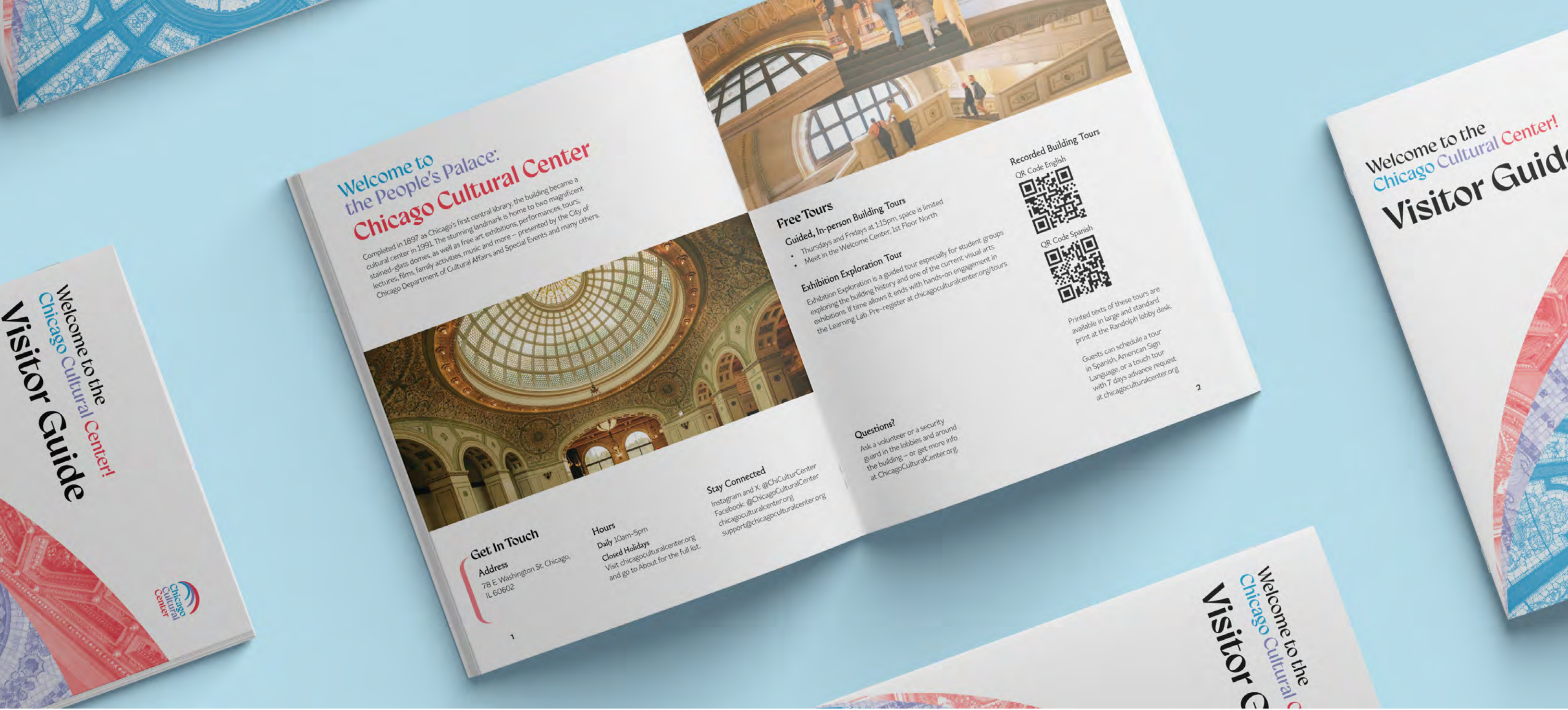


Street Banners



Wayfinding Iconography





Welcome to the People's Palace: Chicago Cultural Center

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 Facebook: [@ChicagoCulturalCenter](https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoCulturalCenter)
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 IL 60602

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Closed Holidays
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Conclusion

Final Takeaways



This redesign illustrates:

- The center's iconic domes.
- Diversity in Chicago.
- A coming together.
- The Cultural Center's influence over the public.

The identity creates a cohesive visual language that celebrates the center's architecture and its mission to make arts and culture accessible to everyone. This fresh perspective invites all audiences to explore, connect, and be inspired by the arts in a space that truly belongs to everyone.