

# CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Chicago Architecture Foundation Launches Citywide, Civic Education Initiative

*New graphic novel, No Small Plans, unveiled as centerpiece of signature program*

Chicago, IL (03.30.2017) — Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) announces a graphic novel, [No Small Plans](#), as the centerpiece of its three-year, citywide, civic education initiative, "Meet Your City." Beginning in the Fall 2017 school year, CAF will give the novel to 30,000 Chicago teens and partner with Chicago Public Schools and Chicago Public Libraries to conduct conversations with students about what makes a good neighborhood.

"For fifty years, CAF's tours and public programs have shown Chicagoans and visitors how architecture and design enriches our lives," says CAF CEO Lynn Osmond. "As we begin our 51<sup>st</sup> year, CAF is deepening our educational programming, especially for young students, to explain how architecture and design can offer real solutions to our city's many challenges and improve the lives of its citizens."

*No Small Plans* is inspired by the classic 1911 textbook, [Wacker's Manual](#), that for nearly three decades taught Chicago's young people about [Burnham's 1909 Plan of Chicago](#). Chicago continues to be a city of plans — [Onto 2050](#), [City of Chicago Technology Plan](#), [Chicago Cultural Plan](#), the [Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs](#), to name a few — but since the 1911 *Wacker's Manual*, there has not been a citywide document specifically intended to help young people understand their role as stewards for Chicago. *No Small Plans* calls on young people to serve as stewards for the city they want, need and deserve.

*No Small Plans* follows the neighborhood adventures of young people in Chicago's past, present and future. It is filled with beautiful illustrations and divided into three chapters set in the years 1928, 2017 and 2211. Each chapter ends with a map and a short interlude about Burnham, to give readers insight into the creation of the 1909 Plan and other urban planning challenges.

In addition to the 144-page graphic novel, CAF's "Meet Your City" initiative includes teacher professional development and trainings, curriculum resources and workshops that challenge the students to explore the question, "What makes a good neighborhood?" The entire program allows young people the opportunity to become designers of their own neighborhoods. It challenges them to learn more about the structural needs of their neighbors and to understand how the built community impacts culture. In addition to

classroom instruction, CAF has partnered with the Chicago Public Library system to supply 80 libraries with *No Small Plans* and will conduct trainings with staff on how to host workshops supporting the curriculum.

“In many ways, this book is a book for young people written by young people,” says CAF VP of Education and Experience Gabrielle Lyon. “As we developed the themes for the book, we listened carefully to the [CAF Teen Fellows](#), Class of 2016, who also reviewed the many proposals from artists and helped select the team from Eyes of the Cat artist collective.”

*No Small Plans* illustrates what it looks like when young people get to know — and take care of — their city. These are adventures that need to be shown: low-income students, students of color and young people not planning to attend college have fewer civic education opportunities than their peers. In addition, low-income and less educated citizens — as well as recent immigrants and those less proficient in English — are often underrepresented in the political process and have far less voice. When young people have opportunities to consider questions like the ones the characters wrestle with in *No Small Plans* it makes a difference. *No Small Plans* supports mandated Illinois State Civics Education requirements, and the story is ideal for students in grades 6-10.

CAF has received advisory support from Shawn Healy, [McCormick Foundation](#); Ben Leitschuh, [American Planning Association](#); Jeff McCarter, [Free Spirit Media](#); Jessica Marshall, [Chicago Public Schools](#); Nathan Mason, [City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Events](#); Shelley Stern-Grach, [Microsoft](#); and Angel Ysaguiere, [Illinois Humanities](#).

*No Small Plans* has been generously funded, in part, by donations from The [American Planning Association](#), [Microsoft](#) and the [Tawani Foundation](#). On March 30<sup>th</sup>, CAF invited its members and supporters to directly support the project through [a month-long Kickstarter campaign](#) which will include a synopsis of the book, background on the project and more information about how they can purchase or donate a copy. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, a special excerpt will be distributed to CAF supporters at our annual benefit gala. In May we'll begin the print process and share advance copies with long-lead media outlets. In June we'll host a community breakfast and begin the process of distributing examination copies to teachers throughout Chicago and will publish a free online toolkit for teachers to support the use of *No Small Plans* in the classroom. In August we'll conduct a two-day institute for a pilot cohort of teachers who will use *No Small Plans* in their classrooms. All these activities will culminate with the launch of “Meet Your City” in Chicago Public Schools on the first day of the Fall 2017 school term — Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>.

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### **About the Chicago Architecture Foundation**

The Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. As an education leader in architecture and design, CAF offers tours, programs, exhibitions, field trips, curricula and online tools that are part of a dynamic learning journey for all ages. Proceeds from CAF's tours and store, as well as grants, sponsorships and donations, support this educational mission.

### **About the Authors**

The novel was created by Gabrielle Lyon, in partnership with the Eyes of the Cat illustration studio, Devin Mawdsley, Kayce Bayer, Chris Lin and Deon Reed.

### **Gabrielle Lyon**

Gabrielle served as creative director, writer and editor for this project and will be leading the effort to get the copies into the hands of teens. She's an education activist committed to exploring and designing new ways to increase access and equity in education. In her role as the Vice President of Education & Experience at the Chicago Architecture Foundation She's responsible for leading the organization's thinking on how to engage youth, educator, mentor and family communities to explore the built environment and design thinking through in-person and online experiences.

### **Devin Mawdsley**

Devin worked on the Pencil & ink illustrations for Chapters 1, 2 and 3. He maintains a diverse studio practice with works that includes graphic novels and abstract painting, and he recently completed an ACRE studio residency. For the past five years, Devin has developed the fundamental drawing component of the Chicago High School of the Arts pre-professional Visual Arts conservatory as well as an 8th grade Social Studies course, Photography and the New Civil Rights.

### **Kayce Bayer**

Kayce executed color in Chapters 1, 2, 3 and the Burnham Interludes 1, 2, 3. She also worked on writing and research. She's an interdisciplinary artist and educator who received her MFA from the Memphis College of Art in Tennessee and currently teaches at the Chicago High School for the Arts. A recent project, "The Great Fire: A Traveling Truck Show," toured Chicago neighborhoods with a moving truck as a pop-up stage, engaging audiences with local history, visual storytelling and music.

### **Chris Lin**

Chris did pencil & ink for Burnham Interludes 1, 2, 3; and color in Chapters 1, 2, 3. He graduated from of the School of the Art Institute and has exhibited extensively in the U.S. and Canada, including group exhibitions in Contemporary Art Workshop, Southside Hub of Production, Chicago Art Department, Eel Space, and The Franklin in Chicago, Verge Art Fair in New York, Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, FL, and Fifty Fifty Arts Collective, Deluge Contemporary, and The Ministry of Casual Living in Victoria, BC, Canada. He currently teaches Sequential Art and Visual Communications at The Chicago High School for the Arts.

### **Deon Reed**

Deon worked on Maps 1, 2, 3; and the color for Chapters 1, 2, 3. Deon, a native Chicagoan, grew up in Englewood, participated in out of school arts programs including Marwen and Pallet & Chisel, and graduated from ChiArts. Since graduation he has collaborated with artists in a variety of media including sculptors Jeremiah Spofford and Josh Garber. Deon is in the process of starting a screen printing business and developing his illustration practice.