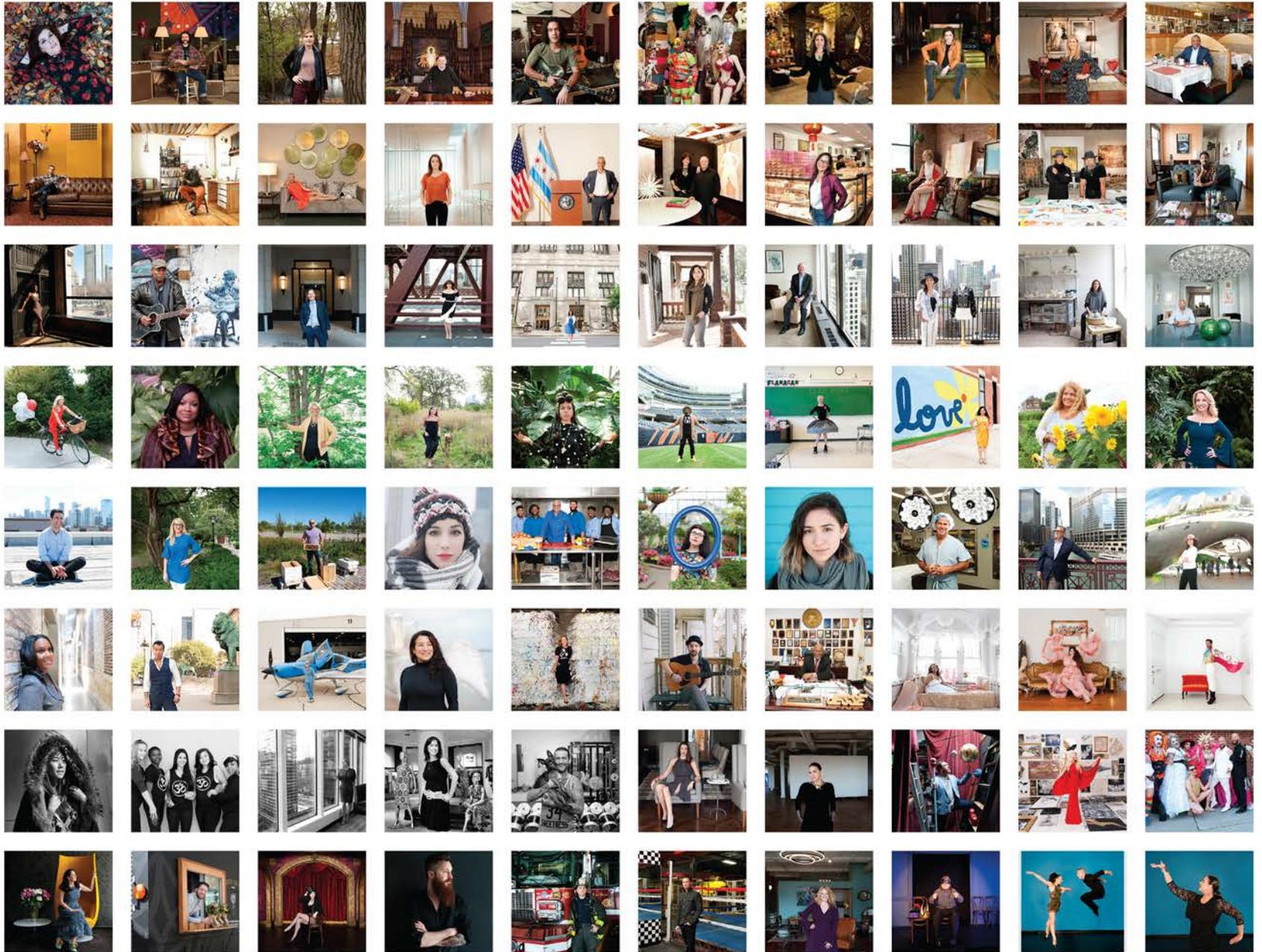


CHICAGO LIGHTS



ABIGAIL ZOE MARTIN

LOVE

JULES MAURO

Manager of Lush Flagship store.

Photographed in her garden in Logan Square

Traveling has really opened my eyes to how differently people live in different places; how people connect differently in different places, but how it's all very similar as well. My family has always connected over food and I saw the same recently in Spain. I was there a few months ago and every time I sat down with our group of friends that we met there, it was over a meal that we shared.

What was really amazing is that even though I don't speak Spanish (my wife speaks Spanish, all of our friends that were there speak Spanish, and some of them spoke a little bit of English), I have never felt more connected to a group that I couldn't actually understand because we were able to share love through a meal together. We were able to connect through our humanity, even if we didn't understand one another. It was really astounding to me, because while they lived so differently and their lives are so different than mine, there are some things that are just foundational that are the same as what I've grown up with.



CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL

Mayor of Chicago.

*Photographed in his Press
Office at City Hall*

Well, without a doubt the people of this city make Chicago special. I think that we have a real passion and love for our city. This is our home. We're not transient through it. Even though you have a thick British accent, I bet you would start defining yourself as a Chicagoan. When you're here, you're immensely proud. You can criticize it, but if somebody from the outside does, you take a shot at them.

It's the greatest city. I call Chicago the most American of American cities and I think people are immensely proud of their city and immensely proud of their neighborhood. It sits—but obviously fights for its place at the table—with New York and L.A., but that makes it a lot scrappier.



Chicago

is in the midst of
an epic battle,

...fighting for the future of our city. Centuries of systemic racism and oppression have created a gulf of inequity in the very Windy City. I am a Chicagoan. I am the Artistic Director at Collaboraction Theatre Company where we incite change and transformation around Chicago's epidemic of inequity through powerful theatre and real conversations. I have learned to use my charisma, imagination, collaboration and privilege as a white male to produce theatre that gives voice to artists historically left out of the mainstream so that they are heard and seen in order to connect us to one another and heal our city. For the past 6 years we have produced work by and for communities in Englewood, Austin and Hermosa and have been blessed with deep personal and artistic relationships that have nurtured my growth as an ally and activist to support others in understanding our role in building the future of Chicago. We all must come together to make sure that we have real equity in regards to education, jobs, hope and so much more. I bring people together around a theatrical campfire to connect, cultivate knowledge, empathy, dialogue and action.

Then, one day I got a phone call from Abigail Zoe Martin.

Abigail is a sorceress of light and vision. We had a delightful and witty dialogue, during which we scheduled a photo shoot. I invited her to come to Collaboraction in the Flat Iron Arts Building in Wicker Park. In a flurry of collaboration we found the perfect light from a skylight behind the light booth in our Salon space. I grabbed a disco ball and some fake candles and some planets from Connected, Collaboraction's 20th annual production I wrote that explored humanity and our connection to one another over, and then Abigail made her magic. Snap.

Abigail has curated, captured, and connected a collection of Chicagoans to show us all our light, our laughter, and our love. She is so much more than a photographer. She specifically selected slices of time and space and packaged them here to remind us that we are alive, we are together, we are Chicago, we are Light. And now, you, dear reader, have also been curated, captured, and connected. Welcome to the club.



— ANTHONY J. MOSELEY III

MILLENNIAL

JENNICA OWENS

Hairdresser, and her dog
Tofu.

*Photographed riding
her bicycle on the 606
Bloomindale Trail, Wicker
Park*

It brings me great joy to be able to make people feel as beautiful on the outside as they do on the inside. I love educating my clients on how to recreate the look, on a daily basis, that makes them feel like the best version of themselves.

When I'm not making Chicago beautiful one head at a time, I'm hanging out with my dog Tofu. I love the Chicago Summers and am outside with my dog as much as possible. Putting Tofu in his bike basket and heading to the lake for the day is one of my favorite things to do in the city.

Traveling is my other love and I hope to see as much of the world as possible. Immersing yourself in other countries' culture, food, traditions and landscapes etc., is something I feel so fortunate to have been able to experience and hope to have many more adventures in the years to come!



SONG

KIARA LANIER

Vocal Performance Artist,
Songwriter and Actress.

*Photographed at the
Garfield Park Conservatory*

I'm in my most natural element within nature. Just walking in this space, I had a deeper level of serenity, an exhale—just being fully in this silence. A lot of aesthetics around my project also have to do with new growth and resurgence.

I use a lot of plant life in my performance and costuming as I'm so inspired by Josephine Baker; I create garments made of fruits and vegetables. I've worn skirts made from collard greens and bras made out of artichoke hearts and things like that. I believe the true sign of strength and success however, comes from being still, consistent and rooted.

An incredible film maker, Terrence Nance, quotes in one of his films, "Once I started planting in the garden I stopped chasing the herd. I sat and let the ground feed me."



HER

BIANCA SMITH

Journalist, Copywriter and
Brand Strategist.

Photographed in Grant Park

It was probably the most insidious part of growing up and even seeing dynamics at home, it still is: we didn't talk about anything. I think that it's a bit generational—more pervasive amongst my parents and their parents—but as children, we learn behaviors and they stick. We just didn't talk about how we were feeling or things that hurt us; we let it be buried, and when it would bubble up and cause other problems, we still didn't address it.

And I think that for me, owning up to things I've done wrong—really taking responsibility to incite change within myself—and talking through them with people that I trust and care about has been such a big learning opportunity for me. When you deflect what's difficult and keep things to yourself and you don't speak them into existence, that's when they start to get untrue; we start to let our minds wander and make assumptions and really weave this intricate web of false realities. Everything gets really messy if we just don't talk about it.



PERFORM

DUCHESS DARLING SHEAR

Cabaret Star, Dancer and
Choreographer.

*Photographed in the
photographer's Bucktown
home*

I've always presented myself in an androgynous, ambiguous type of way. When I finally came to the full reality and understanding of that, I realized that it's beyond transgender and I often refer to myself as transcending, because I encompass all of the sides of myself.

After I had that realization, that affected my performance and it became this whole other level where it was really a healing process for me and I was doing a lot of self-work and doing that through dance. That was a very big shift within myself and I had people coming to me in tears after seeing me perform and saying "Oh my God that was amazing. I was feeling this emotion and I couldn't find the words for it. And then your performance hit what I was feeling right on the head". I paid attention to that and it was interesting to hear it because it had got to a point for me when I danced, that I just kind of went into autopilot and let the Spirit guide me.



If you focus on the door that got slammed on your nose, you're going to miss the window that just opened up to the left of it.

A *Accept people for their differences and embrace them—we don't all have to be the same.*

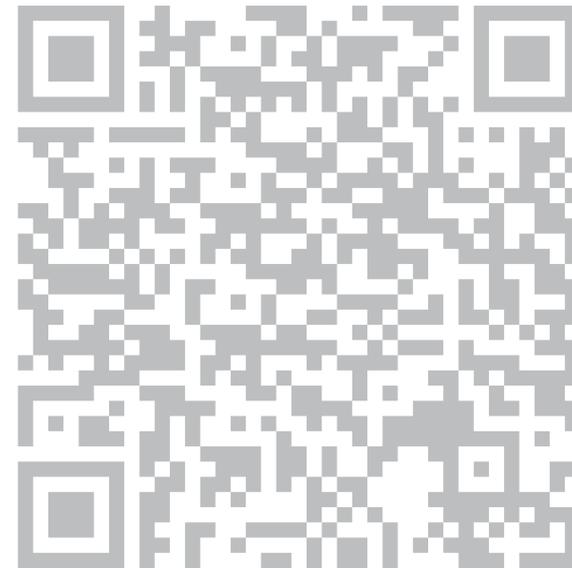
DIGITAL FEATURES

Accompanying each portrait is a theme such as *HIM, HER, GUIDE, PERFORM* etc. These themes correspond to “sound stations” featured at the back of this book. Each “sound station” lets you access audio recordings of portrait subjects speaking in their natural environment for up to a minute around the theme.

The recordings are uninhibited and natural and took place all over the city. You may hear different ambient sounds—from planes flying overhead in Chinatown and kids cheering at a baseball game in Lincoln Park to people chatting in a neighborhood café in the south side—these all add to the flavor and authenticity of the book and bring the city to life.

To listen to the audio, scan the QR code on the page using any QR-code scanning app. This will take you to the theme’s playlist on Soundcloud.com, created by Chicago Lights. Press play, and listen.

To access a playlist of all interviews with each portrait subject in this book, scan the QR code to the right.



SOUND STATIONS

CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL

Mayor Of Chicago

KARA BACHMAN

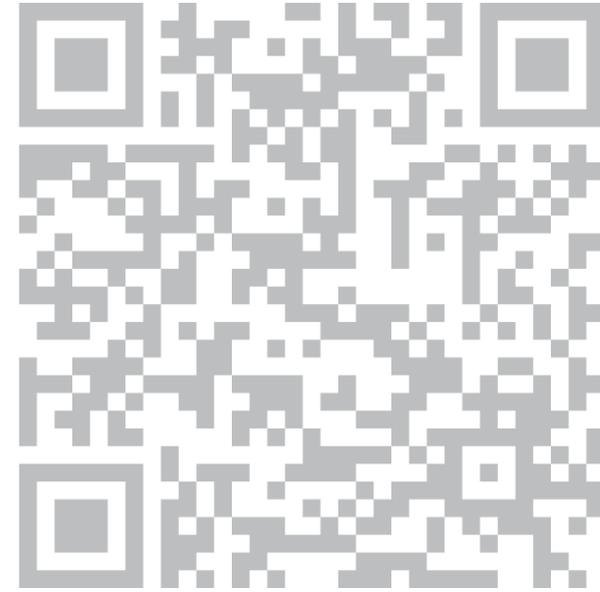
Sports Commissioner Of Chicago

GLEN JOFFE & CLAUDIA MORGAN

Co-Owners, Primitive Gallery

CANDACE JORDAN

Chicago Tribune Social Columnist, Ex-Playboy Centerfold



CITY

THOMAS KERWIN

Founder, BKL Architecture

JASON BRETT

Producer, Writer, Founder Of The Apollo Theatre

NAN GIORDANO

Artistic Director, Giordano Dance Company

CURT BAILEY

Property Developer, President Of Related Midwest And
Founder Of Related Realty

