

EXPERIENCE *the Nineteenth*

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A Japanese Themester

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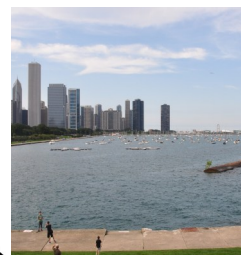
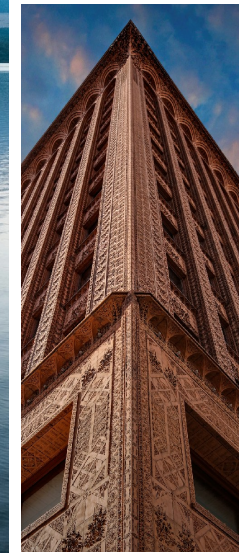
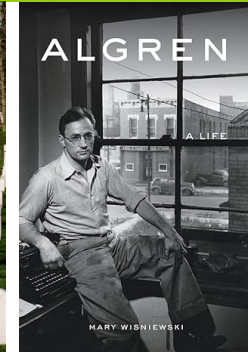


The Nineteenth Century Charitable Association
— Learning, Giving, Sharing —

178 Forest Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60301 ♦ 708-386-2729 ♦ nineteenthcentury.org

EXPERIENCE *the Nineteenth*

2025-2026 HUMANITIES & ENRICHMENT SERIES PROGRAMS



The
Nineteenth Century
Charitable Association

Learning, Giving, Sharing



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MONDAY LUNCHEONS (RESERVATIONS ONLY)

Our Executive Chef and staff prepare and serve a three-course meal on Mondays at noon. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for check-in and socializing. If you have dietary restrictions, note them when you make your reservation or tell someone in our Main Office no later than the Friday before.

RESERVATIONS: MEMBERS & GUESTS, \$25; NON-MEMBERS, \$30

Reservations can be made online, in the office, or over the phone (cash, check, or credit card). Prepayment is required.

PARKING

Nearby street parking is frequently available. Be sure to note the street signage for maximum time allowed. Parking is also available in two nearby parking garages—Lake and Forest (next door) or Holley Court (two blocks west). Check signs for current rates. The only spots available in the open parking lot next to the building are the ones marked “Visitor.”



Programs are held on Sundays at 3 pm; doors open at 2:45 pm

The Free Readers Ensemble (FRE) is an actor-based ensemble whose mission is to present diverse theatrical and literary materials in a reader’s theater format to Oak Park/River Forest and the surrounding communities. Through voice and dramatic interpretation, FRE brings a world of literature to life while achieving a high standard of consistently entertaining and thought-provoking performances. All programs are free to the public; donations are appreciated and help cover costs. For more information, visit our Facebook page!

October 26—LIFE IS A CABARET!—hosted by Mercita DeMuynck

November 16—NO EXIT by Jean-Paul Sartre

December 21—INSPECTING CAROL by Daniel Sullivan

January 18, 2026—FAITH HEALER by Brian Friel

February 15—THE ROOMMATE by Jen Silverman

March 15—WAIT UNTIL DARK by Frederick Knott

April 26—SEX by Mae West

May 17—PRESENT LAUGHTER by Noel Coward

MISSION & DIVERSITY STATEMENT:

NINETEENTH CENTURY CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION

The mission of the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association is to strengthen our community through learning, giving, and sharing our landmark building.

The Nineteenth Century Charitable Association welcomes members of diverse cultures, faiths, genders, orientations, and abilities. We make a point to celebrate differences and respect each others’ unique perspectives. Membership is open to anyone who wants to support our mission, regardless of income. For more information, contact the office at 708-386-2729.



THE ANNUAL OPRFHS SWING DANCE

The award-winning High School Jazz Ensemble offers up an electrifying and professional program. Boogie to the beat of this all-ages, family-friendly event open to all!

Thursday, April 17, 7:30 pm

Admission: Students up to 17, \$5;
adults 18 & older, \$10

Tickets available at the door.
Proceeds benefit band camp
scholarships.

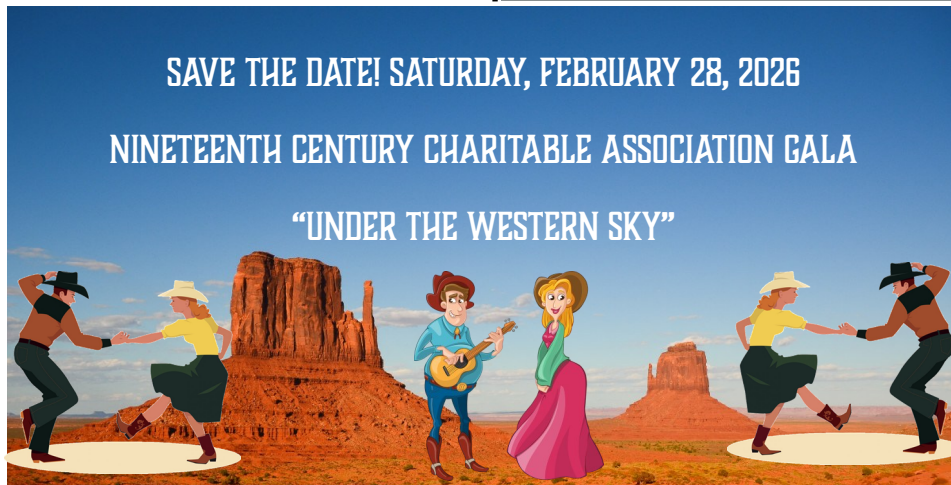


COOKIES & COCOA WITH SANTA!

**Saturday, December 13,
10 am – 12 noon**

**Admission: \$5/person;
\$20/family**

Enjoy cookies and cocoa, arts and
crafts, and shopping for gifts and
artisan-made goods. Bring your
camera for photos with Santa!



WELCOME TO THE NINETEENTH!



Welcome to the 2025-2026 season of Monday Enrichment Programs, presented by the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association as part of our vision to be a dynamic cultural center for community learning.

MONDAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

This season's collection of educational and cultural programs in **Art, Literature, Music, Science, and Social Science** features a diverse set of presenters and topics. Our goal is to provide audiences with opportunities for life-long learning through absorbing discussions, thought-provoking information and/or analyses, fascinating stories, and musical interludes.

A JAPANESE THEMESTER

We also hope to introduce you to many fascinating aspects of Japanese culture! Our **“Japanese Themester”** is a focus on Japanese themes, history, and culture made possible through a generous grant from the Toshiba International Foundation.

NEVER MISS A PROGRAM!

Because most Enrichment programs are live-streamed, recorded, and available on our website, it's easy to revisit a program or catch one you missed. Visit www.nineteenthcentury.org for details. You will also find information there on other sponsored programs, including Wednesday Wisdom events, wellness classes, films, and more!

BE A FRIEND, BRING A FRIEND

Our programs are open to the community, and if any of them intrigue you, don't hesitate to attend. Consider supporting our charitable, educational, and cultural activities by making a donation or by becoming a member. We hope to see you soon!

Mary Ann Porucznik
Director, Programming

HUMANITIES AND ENRICHMENT SERIES PROGRAMS

Monday Afternoons at 1:15 pm

Open to all...Donations to support programming are appreciated!

SEPTEMBER 29—A HOUSE THAT MADE HISTORY

MK PRITZKER, FIRST LADY OF ILLINOIS



In this special program, First Lady of Illinois MK Pritzker shares stories of the Illinois Governor's Mansion and the lives and times of its inhabitants. Mrs. Pritzker recently oversaw the updating of the mansion and chronicles its evolution since 1855 in her book, *A House that Made History: The Illinois Governor's Mansion, Legacy of an Architectural Treasure*.

OCTOBER 6—MUSIC

Traditional Japanese Music and Dance—Mikoren Awa Odori



Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

Awa Odori is folk dance and music from Tokushima, Japan, performed by a Chicago-based community troupe aptly named “Miko” (Beautiful Lake) “Ren” (group). The dancers and musicians harmonize and share their happiness with the audience.

OCTOBER 13—SCIENCE

How I Accidentally Created a Medical Mission—Michael McDonald, MD



Michael McDonald, MD, participated in medical missions in Nepal and Nigeria, attempting to emulate his uncle, Dr. James McDonald. But in 1999, Dr. McDonald fell into a perfect arrangement in Ceiba, Honduras, and has returned with colleagues 27 times.

APRIL 20—ART

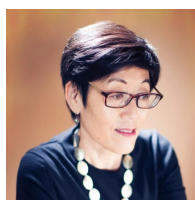
Louis Sullivan: An American Architect—Patrick Cannon



NCCA member Patrick Cannon and photographer James Caulfield have published nine books on Chicago architects and architecture, three of which have won Gold Medals from the Independent Book Publishers. Today, he brings stories and photos of every surviving structure designed by Louis Sullivan.

APRIL 27—LITERATURE

Japanese Tanka Poetry and its Key Role in One Chicago Family—Nancy Matsumoto, Mariko Aratani, and Kyoko Miyabe



Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

Learn what tanka poetry is, how it differs from haiku, and its important place in Japanese culture as the oldest form of Japanese poetry, still widely practiced by citizens at all levels of society. Nancy Matsumoto shares her family history, introducing her grandparents, Tomiko and Ryokuyo Matsumoto, who, in 1960, published a book of tanka poetry, *By the Shore of Lake Michigan*, now translated into English.

MONDAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS ARE BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

ART: Marie Kruse, chair; Jana McIlroy, Patrick Cannon, Alice Rose

LITERATURE: Debb Hammond, chair; Vicki Bartlett, Linda Bonner, Laurretta Christensen, Hope Hommersand, Lauren Levrant, Chris Majkrzak

MUSIC: Joan Greene and Dorothy Rog, co-chairs; Collin Boltz, Robyn D'Alba, Mary Alice Povolny, Lyn Rains, Carolyn Skipper

SCIENCE: Susan Roberts, chair; Fran French, Peggy McGrath, Mila Tellez

SOCIAL SCIENCE: Judy Eckberg, chair; Val Abatangelo, Jackie Eckholm, Carolyn Skipper, Judy Sora, Linda Tibensky, Diana Wilkens

AND THE GENEROUS DONATIONS OF OUR SPONSORS!

Image credits: Cover—Japanese Themester photo by Yu Kato; Supreme Court photo by Jon Tyson; Arlington National Cemetery photo by Chad Stembridge; Louis Sullivan building by James Caulfield. Page 7—Mark Larson by Sarah Elizabeth Larson. Page 9—Japanese Themester photo by Mark Cosentino.

president of the Kalo Foundation/Iannelli Studios, Maria Hrycelak, will introduce him to you.

MARCH 30—LITERATURE

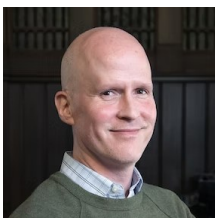
Street Fight: The Chicago Taxi Wars of the 1920s—Anne Morrissey



Author Anne Morrissey vividly recreates Chicago's Taxi Wars, bringing this nearly forgotten story to print for the first time. She introduces us to larger-than-life Jazz Age characters, including Al Capone, Joe Kennedy, Jack Dempsey, and Chicago mayor "Big Bill" Thompson. These deadly wars played out on the city's streets nearly a century ago, endangering the lives of passengers and passersby, while simultaneously forming the regulatory foundation that still governs cab, limo, and rideshare transportation today.

APRIL 6—MUSIC

Fryderyk Chopin's Revolution at the Piano—David Kasunic



The Polish composer-pianist Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849) revolutionized the way one played and composed for the piano. Listeners at the time understood that Chopin was creating something radically new. Chopin expert David Kasunic, Professor of Music at Occidental College, gives us a guided tour through Chopin's music and piano technique to uncover Chopin's revolutionary approach to the piano and its legacy.

APRIL 13—SCHOLARSHIP

Presentation of the 2026-2027 Scholarship Awards—12 Noon



Meet our newest scholarship recipients and hear about the motivation, dreams and aspirations that have led these extremely accomplished OPRFHS seniors to choose the educational paths they will follow. This event is an inspiration to all!

Did you know? The first male recipients of the Founders Memorial Scholarship were DeV Vaughn Benion Jr and Steven Copher in 2015.

OCTOBER 20—SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Other December 7th—Lourdes Nichols



Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

This is the story of one family's experience in an incarceration camp for Americans of Japanese ancestry. Lourdes Nichols tells her personal story of her family's harrowing journey from immigration and life in Chicago to incarceration at Manzanar and final release, in addition to the legacy passed on.

OCTOBER 27—ART

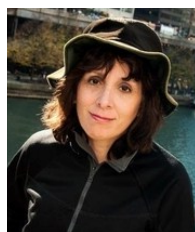
My Right Is a Future of Equality: The Art and Politics of Elizabeth Catlett—Sarah Kelly Oehler



In conjunction with the exhibition "Elizabeth Catlett: A Black Revolutionary Artist and All That It Implies," currently on view at the Art Institute of Chicago, curator Sarah Kelly Oehler will explore the intertwined art and politics of Elizabeth Catlett (1915-2012), who was not only a deft sculptor and printmaker, but also an ardent feminist and lifelong social activist.

NOVEMBER 3—LITERATURE

Algren: The City's Prophet—Mary Wisniewski



Twentieth-century Chicago author (*The Man with a Golden Arm*) and winner of the inaugural National Book Award, Nelson Algren was a prophet for our new Gilded Age and known for writing about the seamier side of life. Mary Wisniewski's biography of him, *Algren: A Life*, is the first in 25 years.

Did you know? 2026 marks the 75th anniversary of the Founders' Memorial Scholarship. It was created in 1951 to mark the 60th anniversary of the Nineteenth Century Club, and awards were originally designed to help young female graduates of Oak Park River Forest High School attend college.

NOVEMBER 10—MUSIC

Johnny & June: Stories and Songs from the Soul—Brian Grey, Cory Goodrich, Steve Roberts, Lawrence Kohut



Prepare to be transported back in time and celebrate the legendary love and timeless music of Johnny Cash and June Carter. From the fiery passion of “Ring of Fire” to the tender honesty of “Jackson,” every note and narrative will draw you deeper into their remarkable world.

NOVEMBER 17—SCIENCE

Meet PARO, the World’s Most Therapeutic Robot—Dr Takanori Shibata, Ms Jing Yun Yang

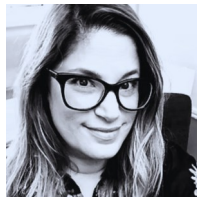


Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

PARO, a “biofeedback medical device,” has been recognized as the world’s most therapeutic robot. Its creator, Dr. Takanori Shibata, will explain how PARO is being used by medical and welfare systems around the world as a substitute for animal therapy.

NOVEMBER 24—SOCIAL SCIENCE

Love Under Fire: The Story of Bertha and Potter Palmer—Amelia Dellos



Documentary filmmaker Amelia Dellos, who is also the mother of a Founders Memorial Scholar, introduces us to Potter Palmer, the man behind the television series “Mr. Selfridge” and the builder of the Palmer House Hotel, and his wife Bertha, who courted kings and brought impressionism to America.

DECEMBER 1—ART

Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and the Influence of Japanese Art in France—Andrea Morgan



Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

When Western-Japanese trade resumed in 1853, Europe was flooded with imported decorative and fine art objects that would greatly influence the aesthetics of French art

MARCH 2—MUSIC

Rewind to the 70s & 80s—Nicholas Druzbanski, Lawrence Kohut, Christine Mild, Alex Newkirk, Steve Roberts



Get ready to feel the nostalgia, the rhythm, and the unforgettable energy of the most iconic era in music history. This concert brings together the heartfelt harmonies of Carole King, the piano-driven brilliance of

Billy Joel, the legendary rock riffs of Fleetwood Mac, and the vibrant beats of disco. It’s the soundtrack of a generation!

MARCH 9—SCIENCE

Power Generation for a Reliable Energy Future—Dale Jones



As our demand for electricity continues to grow, so does our need for alternative technologies to produce reliable sources of energy. Project manager Dale Jones will explore some alternative technologies being used or under development to diversify our energy landscape and provide a reliable, sustainable energy infrastructure.

MARCH 16—SOCIAL SCIENCE

Audrey Hepburn—Leslie Goddard



It is 1989, and Audrey Hepburn has just returned to her home in Switzerland for an interview about her work as a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF. She shares stories about her childhood during World War II, her remarkable success in Hollywood in films such as *Roman Holiday* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and her lifelong efforts to find real love and overcome her own deep-seated fears.

MARCH 23—ART

Alfonso Iannelli: Renaissance Man—Maria Hrycelak



Alfonso Iannelli was a Renaissance man whose career spanned more than 50 years from his studio in Park Ridge. From magazine illustrations to sculptures and industrial design, he was a remarkable artist. The current

FEBRUARY 9—SOCIAL SCIENCE

The United States Supreme Court: What's Happening Now (And How We Got Here)—Sarah Konsky



The news is filled with stories about the Supreme Court of the United States. But what is really going on? Beginning with the role of the Supreme Court at our nation's founding, Sarah Konsky will show how the Court has evolved over time and how the US Supreme Court works today—from the appointment of justices to the selection of cases to the issuance of decisions.

FEBRUARY 16—ART

Contemporary Japanese Art at the Art Institute of Chicago—Janice Katz



Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

The Art Institute has been displaying and acquiring Japanese art since the 1950s. The latest exhibition is Radical Clay, focusing on women ceramic artists from Japan. Dr. Janice Katz will speak about the display and acquisitions made during her time at the museum,

highlighting efforts to present tradition-based as well as avant-garde contemporary art.

FEBRUARY 23—LITERATURE

Let's Celebrate Barbie—Renee Rosen



Join us for a look back at the creation of Barbie, the world's most iconic doll, presented by Renee Rosen, author of *Let's Call Her Barbie*. Go behind the scenes at toy maker Mattel as Ruth Handler shocks the industry with a doll shaped like a grown woman. Wear your favorite pink outfit for this fun trip down memory lane!

Did you know? Since its establishment, the Founders' Memorial Scholarship has provided more than \$1,000,000 in scholarships to 345 graduates of Oak Park River Forest High School.

and design. Art Institute of Chicago curator Andrea Morgan will explore the impact of Japanese fashion, culture, and art, especially woodblock prints, on Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters and their works.

DECEMBER 8—LITERATURE

Doing Oral History—Mark Larson



Join oral historian and author Mark Larson for an inside look at how he collects and shapes oral histories. Drawing from his books *Ensemble: An Oral History of Chicago Theater* and *Working in the 21st Century*—released for the 50th anniversary of Studs Terkel's *Working*—Larson will share his creative process, from

interviewing to editing and storytelling, interspersed with video clips from his interviews.

DECEMBER 15—SCIENCE

Turbulence on the Water Front: News & Reflections from 18 Years of Public Service—Debra Shore

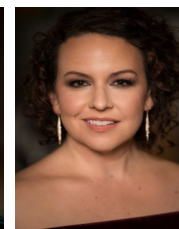


We are fortunate to have access to drinking water from Lake Michigan, but threats to water quality and supply abound. What do we know and what should we be doing? Debra Shore provides suggestions based on her experience as commissioner for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and as regional administrator for the US Environmental Protection Agency.

DECEMBER 22—MUSIC

'Tis the Season—Pamela Williams, Desiree Hassler, Mike Cavalieri, Lisa Kristina, John Concepcion

Celebrate the season in style with an unforgettable afternoon of music, as acclaimed performers Desiree Hassler, Pam Williams, Mike Cavalieri, Lisa



Kristina, and John Concepcion present a festive program filled with holiday favorites!

DECEMBER 29—SCHOLARSHIP—NOON



The Scholarship Committee hosts its annual reception for current and recent past scholarship recipients and their family members in the dining room at noon. Join them to engage with the students and hear their tales of college, their aspirations, and their challenges.

JANUARY 5, 2026—SOCIAL SCIENCE

America's Cemetery: Arlington National Cemetery—Paula Fenza



Member Paula Fenza shares her fascination with cemeteries. She will take us to Arlington National Cemetery, which began as a Civil War cemetery and has evolved into a national cemetery. She will share the stories of some of the great Americans who served this country and are buried at Arlington. It will be an inspiring and patriotic presentation.

JANUARY 12—ART

Threading Community—Carina Yopez



Fiber arts uniquely position practitioners at the intersection of material culture, ancestral knowledge, and social change. Carina Yopez will share pivotal moments from their creative evolution and discuss how personal narrative informs studio practice while simultaneously opening pathways to broader community dialogue.

JANUARY 19—LITERATURE

Chicago's Japanese-American History: Resettlement Stories—Mike Tanimura, Erik Matsunaga, and Linda Suzu Kawano

Part of A Japanese Themester, funded by the Toshiba International Foundation

Three members of the Japanese-American Service Committee explore the remarkable story of Chicago's Japanese-American community. Historian and writer Erik Matsunaga shares the little-known history of post-World War II



resettlement with moving first-person accounts of participants in JASC Oral History Project. These stories of resilience and change will give you a deeper understanding of socio-economic and political forces that shaped Chicago in the decades after the war.

JANUARY 26—MUSIC

Steel Band Calypso Festival—William Hatch Elementary School Steel Drum Band, Evan Jacobson, Director



Come and clap your hands and stamp your feet to the rousing sounds of this award-winning group of third- to fifth-graders from Hatch School. Students play the steelpan, native to the Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago. It will be just the thing to warm you on a January day!

FEBRUARY 2—SCIENCE

Creation of the "Blood Bank"—Alan Hoffstadter



In the early 20th century, the transfusion of blood was rare, labor-intensive, and dangerous. Medical practitioners had been attempting it for centuries, often with disastrous consequences. But it could be the "holy grail" of certain medical treatments, if carried out successfully. Alan Hoffstadter tells the story of the Oak Park physician who finally found a safe, easy, and efficient way to carry out transfusions.

Did you know? The first recipient of the Founders' Memorial Scholarship was Gladys Greening. She received \$500 to attend Blackburn College in Carlinville, Illinois. The current level of \$2,500 per student per year was established in 2023. The Founders' Memorial Scholarship has no restrictions on how the money may be used, giving students much needed flexibility.

FEBRUARY 16—ART

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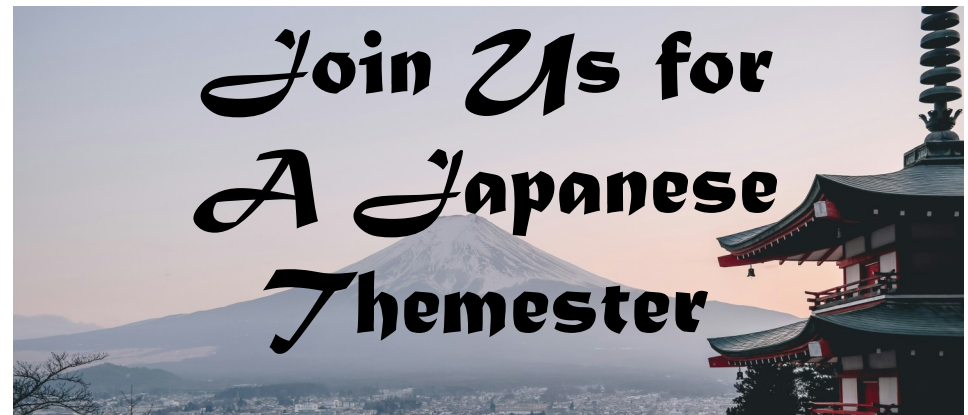
Discover more about these and other “Japanese Themester” programs! Visit or call:

- 🌀 nineteenthcentury.org 🌀 708-386-2729
- 🌀 programinfo@nineteenthcentury.org
- 🌀 FACEBOOK: 2024NineteenthCenturyCharitableAssociation

TOSHIBA

Toshiba International Foundation


The Nineteenth Century Charitable Association
— Learning, Giving, Sharing —



Join Us for A Japanese Themester

Japan—Land of the Rising Sun

Journey to a realm where ancient heritage harmonizes with contemporary innovation, where the rhythm of the seasons is celebrated through art, cuisine, and custom. In Japan, the spirit of resilience and reinvention is woven into the very fabric of daily life. Centuries-old temples stand in the shadow of digital billboards, every season is honored, and the pursuit of excellence—in art, cuisine, technology, and hospitality—defines daily life.

The Nineteenth Century Charitable Association is proud to present a special series of programs focused on increasing our understanding of Japanese arts and culture. Funded by a generous grant from the Toshiba International Foundation, our “Japanese Themester” programs are FREE and open to all who wish to attend and learn more about Japan. Programs begin at 1:15 pm and are held at the Nineteenth Century Club, 178 Forest Ave., Oak Park, IL 60302. For more information, visit our website, nineteenthcentury.org, call 708-386-2729, or email programinfo@nineteenthcentury.org


The
Nineteenth Century
Charitable Association
Learning, Giving, Sharing

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OCTOBER 6—MUSIC



Traditional Japanese Music and Dance— Mikoren Awa Odori

Awa Odori is folk dance and music from Tokushima, Japan, performed by a Chicago-based community troupe aptly named “Miko” (Beautiful Lake) “Ren” (group). The dancers and musicians harmonize and share their happiness with the audience.

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DECEMBER 1—ART

Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and the Influence of Japanese Art in France— Andrea Morgan

When Japan resumed trade with the western world in 1853, Europe was flooded with imported decorative and fine art objects that would come to greatly influence the aesthetics of French art and design. Curator Andrea Morgan will explore the impact of Japanese fashion, culture, and art, especially woodblock prints, on Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters in the second half of the nineteenth century. She will examine the Japanese influence on works both within and beyond the collection at the Art Institute of Chicago.



JANUARY 19—LITERATURE

Chicago’s Japanese-American History: Resettlement Stories—Mike Tanimura, Erik Matsunaga, and Linda Suzu Kawano

Three members of the Japanese-American Service Committee explore the remarkable story of Chicago’s Japanese-American community. Historian and writer Erik Matsunaga shares the little-known history of post-WWII resettlement along with moving first-person accounts of participants in JASC Oral History Project. These stories of resilience and change will give you a deeper understanding of socio-economic and political forces that shaped Chicago in the decades after the war.

