

aroundcenter

Combining photography, sculpture and video projection with civic engagement, Jan Tichy's work reveals contradictions and hidden truths in our lived environment and the larger cultural, social and political sphere. Since emigrating to Chicago in 2007 (from Israel and the Czech Republic), Tichy has constructed artworks that engage a variety of Chicago buildings and spaces, including Mies van der Rohe's Crown Hall on the IIT Campus, the John Hancock Center, Louis Sullivan's Carson Pirie Scott Building, and the recently demolished Cabrini-Green public housing complex.

For *aroundcenter*, Tichy focuses on the Chicago Cultural Center—formerly Chicago's main public library, and now home to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events—where thousands of free cultural events (exhibitions, performances of music, dance and theatre, lectures, tours, and workshops) take place every year within its calm and classical beaux-arts exterior. The nine installations located throughout the building stand on their own as individual artworks, but they also act in concert to illuminate the identity, history, and symbolism of one of Chicago's most unique public places. Many of the works are also about Chicago, and our common impulse to document, portray and understand it. The works in *aroundcenter* can be encountered in any order; cut-away maps on the following pages, as well as *Build Your Own Chicago Cultural Center (2014)*—designed by Matt Bergstrom in collaboration with Tichy—are provided to assist with navigation of the exhibition and the building.

Addressing visitors and passersby on Randolph Street is *Chicago Nature (After Nauman) (2014)*, a neon sculpture that responds to the pulse of the city via its connection to a police scanner, turning on and off as the dispatch opens and closes the radio transmissions to the officers on the street. The title refers to Bruce Nauman's dark and frenetic neon, *Human Nature/Life Death (1983)*, a work formerly installed in the same window in the 1990s. A gift to the city from Arthur Anderson and Company, the Nauman was considered too costly to maintain and protect, and was acquired from the city by the Art Institute of Chicago in 2004. The harsh reality of life in Chicago is also conveyed by *War Memorial (2014)*, a two-channel projection of the names of homicide victims in Chicago over the last seven years. On the dark north stairwell, in close proximity to the Civil War memorial on the second floor, GAR Hall, the names glowing from the marble remind us of the persistence of violence.

Library (2014), at the base of the stairs in Randolph Square, acknowledges the building's past and present uses, as a public library and a place of free assembly and access to the arts. The artwork consists of two parts: on one side a collection of exhibition catalogues, pamphlets and announcements drawn from the building's archive, and on the other a pop-up library of art books donated by the artist's friends and colleagues. The books in the library may be perused on site or taken away, and will be replenished until the supply runs out.

For his installation *Changing Chicago 2014* in the "Chicago Rooms" Tichy has created an exhibition-within-an-exhibition. In response to *Changing Chicago*, a 1986-1987 project to document life in Chicago through the work of 33 photographers, Tichy created his own nine-channel video piece, *Changing Chicago (2012)*, and worked with Chicago-area high school students to create their own single channel versions of *Changing Chicago*, also on view in the space. Complementing these works are selections from the original *Changing Chicago*, and two other Chicago documentary projects, *Landmarks Chicago (1999)* and *CITY 2000 (2001)*.

Tichy's interest in archives, collections and the histories they represent, is embodied in *History of Painting (2014)*, comprised of more than 9,000 slides from the School of the Art Institute's art history teaching collection—rendered defunct by the advent of the digital age. Edited by their predominant hue into color fields, yet still legible as single units, the slides parallel the opulent, mosaic and stained glass interior spaces of the Chicago Cultural Center.

Two works illuminate and expose confusing or inaccessible parts of the Chicago Cultural Center: *Installation no. 19, (bridges) (2014)* uses a slowly moving video projection of light and shape to activate and make newly visible one of the oddest spaces in the building—created by a glass-enclosed series of ramps that joins the north and south halves of the building in a 1974 renovation. In *Untouchable (2014)*, Tichy provides access to a non-public and practically inaccessible space above the old Library comptroller's office: a vault for important documents, cash, and paychecks. The title of the piece refers to the space's secrecy and security, but also to director Brian De Palma's 1987 film, *The Untouchables*, shot in Chicago and at the Chicago Cultural Center. The film, shown on a monitor placed in the vault, is the sole source of light in the room; a closed circuit feed to a monitor on the second floor allows us access.

The final work in the exhibition is, like many others, collaborative. Accessible via smart phone, *Audiowalks (2014)* are recorded tours, memories or impressions of the Chicago Cultural Center, provided by seven Chicago friends and acquaintances of the artist. The collaborative, shared and public nature of Tichy's investigations into the spaces and meanings of the Cultural Center—through means of light, video, photography, sculpture, and the spoken word—are extended in the *Programs and Workshops* listed below, designed and developed by students in the Arts Administration and Policy program of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in collaboration with the artist.

— Daniel Schulman, Program Director/Visual Art

Public Programs

aroundcenter Panel & Chicago Projections Book Launch

February 18, Panel: 6pm; Reception: 7-9pm – Claudia Cassidy Theater & Chicago Rooms

Come celebrate the opening of Jan Tichy's exhibition *aroundcenter* and the launch of his new book, *Chicago Projections*, published by US Equities and the Museum of Contemporary Photography, which charts Tichy's work with nine architectural icons in Chicago. Curator Daniel Schulman will lead a panel discussion with Jan Tichy and Karen Irvine, author of the book and curator at MoCP.

Film Screenings

Join us for a series of films that explore the narrative and aesthetic themes of the exhibition on Sunday afternoons.

The Untouchables February 16, 2-4pm – Claudia Cassidy Theater

Enjoy Brian De Palma's Oscar-winning film *The Untouchables (1987)* in the original setting it was shot. Remember to stop by Tichy's *Untouchable (2014)* installation after the screening.

The Labyrinth of Color & Light March 16, 2-4pm – Claudia Cassidy Theater

Explore films and videos from various filmmakers curated with Tichy's light installations in mind. Treat your eyes and ears to works that explore the aesthetic elements of light and color, including the last film from László Moholy-Nagy and his students at Institute of Design.

Chicago Documentaries April 27, 2-4pm – Claudia Cassidy Theater

After visiting the Chicago Rooms to see *Changing Chicago 2014* curated by Tichy, come to witness the changing cityscape of Chicago and the landmark buildings with various documentaries such as *Moving Pictures* created for CITY 2000.

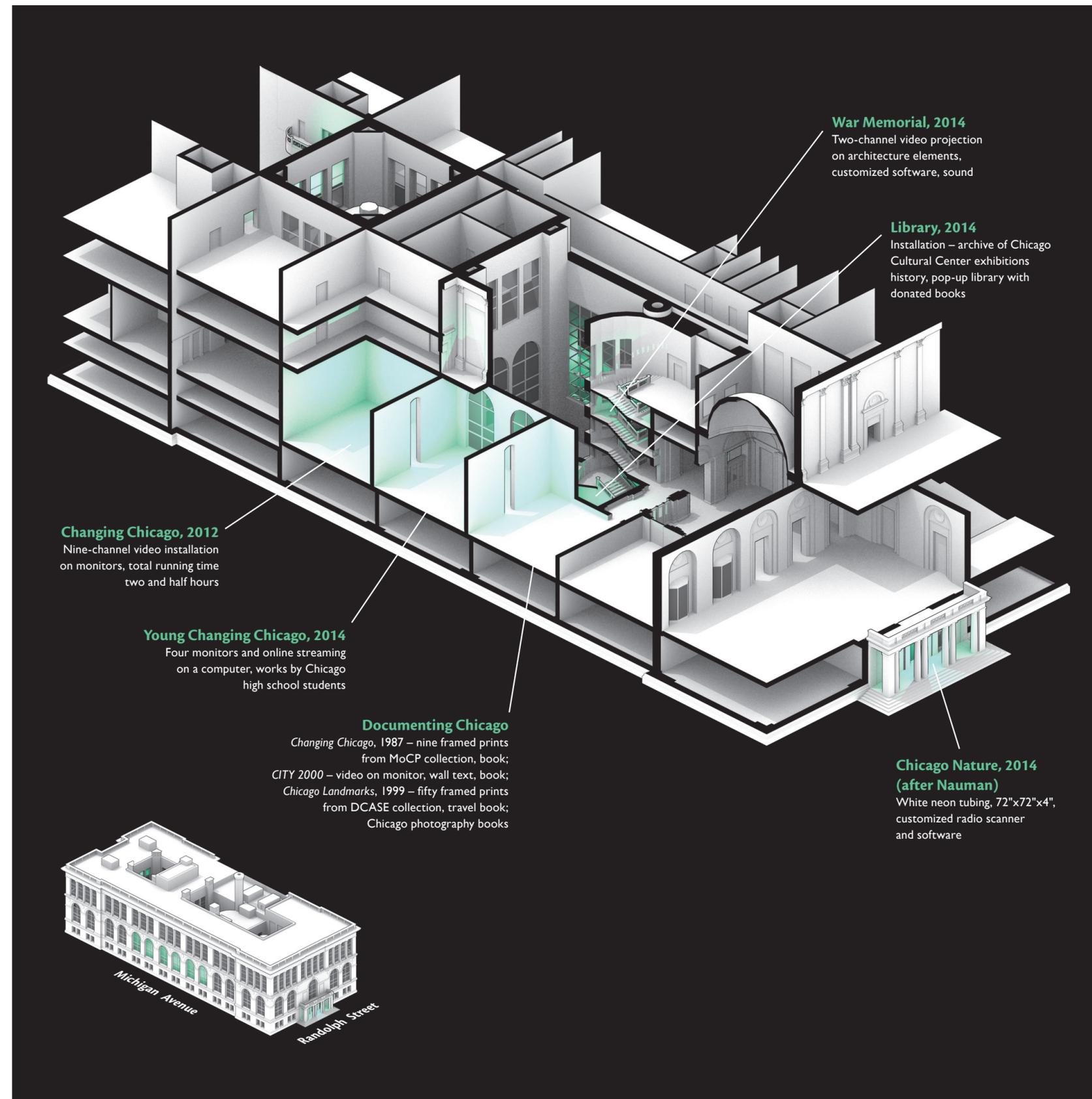
Performances and Tours

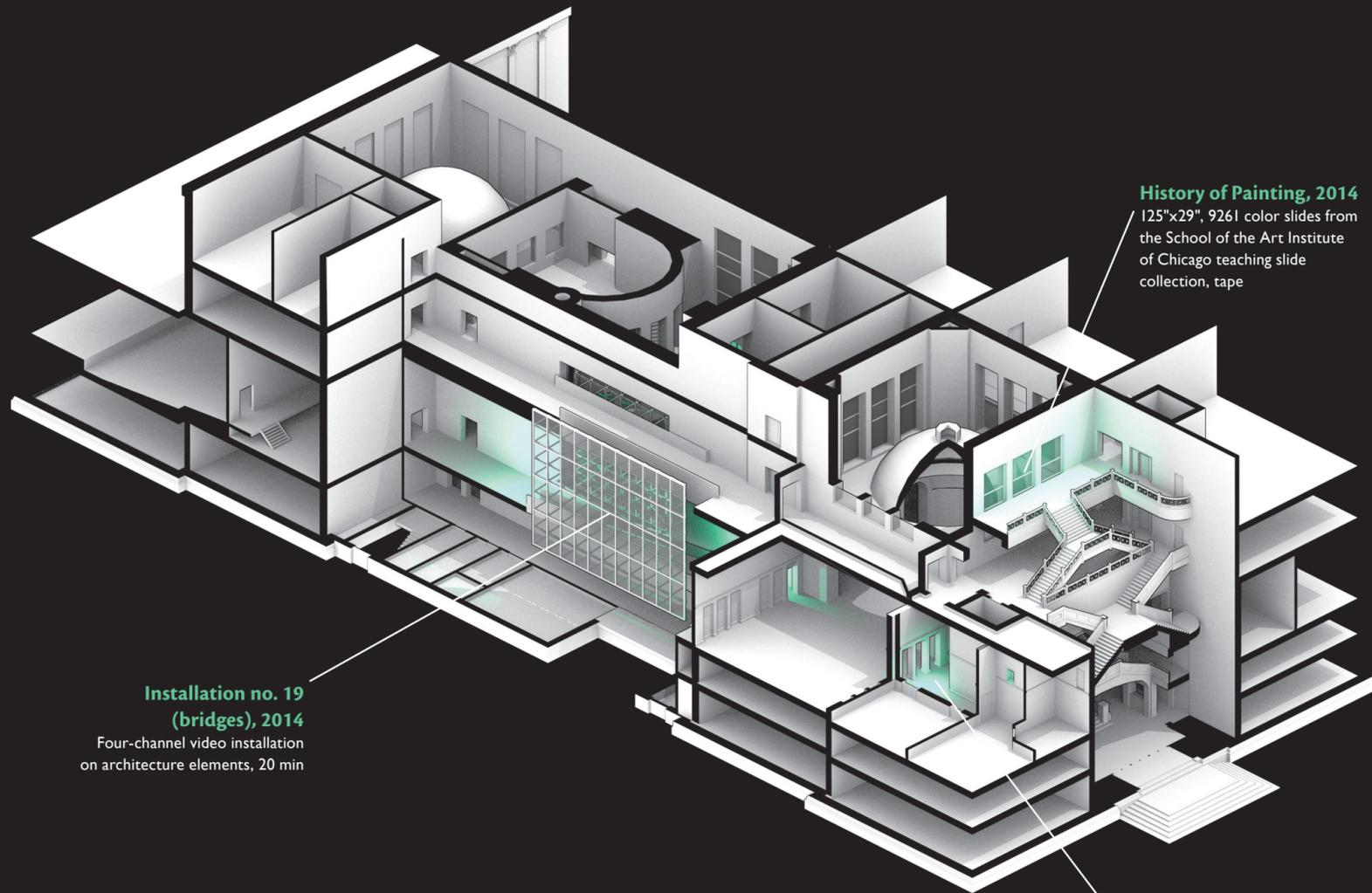
The exhibition encourages guests to view, navigate, and experience the Chicago Cultural Center in new ways. Spoken word performances highlight the words, language, and knowledge that are imbedded in the building, from its history as a library, to the language incorporated as architectural details.

2nd Story "Around the Way"

March 17, 6-8pm – Randolph Square

Join 2nd Story's Bobby Biedrzycki, Senyo Ador and L'Oreal Patrice Jackson as they lead a collaborative team of established Chicago spoken word poets in the performance of seven poems inspired by Jan Tichy's installations.

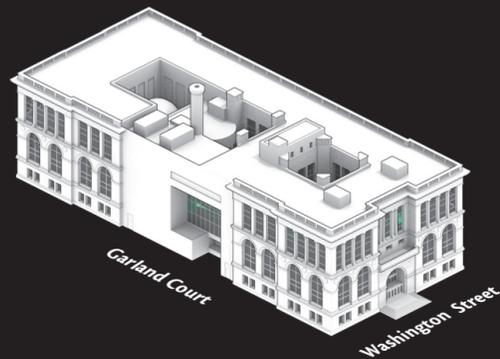




History of Painting, 2014
125"x29", 9261 color slides from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago teaching slide collection, tape

Installation no. 19 (bridges), 2014
Four-channel video installation on architecture elements, 20 min

Untouchable, 2014
Installation – single-channel live feed on 15" monitor, security camera, TV playing *Untouchables* (1987) in loop, secret vault



Audiowalks, 2014
Online sound performance, audio recordings about the Chicago Cultural Center by seven Chicagoans
www.aroundcenter.org

Public Programs (continued)

Flashlight Tour*

April 8, 11pm – Randolph Square
City of Chicago Cultural Historian Tim Samuelson will lead a nighttime flashlight tour of the Chicago Cultural Center. Come explore Jan Tichy's exhibition as Tim offers insight into the mysterious history of the building.

Young Chicago Authors, Remix the Chicago Cultural Center

April 19, 11:30am-12:30pm – Randolph Square
Young Chicago Authors (YCA) poets will Remix the Chicago Cultural Center using found text in the architecture of the building as a construction site for new poems about the current and future state of Chicago culture. This New Chicago Cultural Center Remix project is facilitated by poet and Artistic Director Kevin Coval and YCA teaching artist and poet Jamila Woods.

Workshops

The Hand Knows a Secret: Doodling, Music & New Ways of Representation

February 26, 11:45am; Tour: 1:15pm – Preston Bradley Hall
What do John Keats, Sylvia Plath, Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Beckett have in common? They doodled. Studies have shown that doodling is an inventive and effective response to rich sensory offerings. Come listen to the popular Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert performance while adding your own inspirations to Jan Tichy's exhibition. Participants will use a series of prompts to create doodles in a musical environment led by poet, artist and teacher, Alice George.

Light Workshop*

March 8, 1-3pm – Chicago Rooms
Come explore the behavior of light, the phenomenon that makes our visual life possible. By building kaleidoscopes and camera obscuras, participants in this optical workshop will experiment with the reflective and projective properties of light, its color spectrum, and the images it enables. Have fun navigating the Chicago Cultural Center and Jan Tichy's *aroundcenter* exhibition with an optical keepsake.

Build Your Own Chicago Workshop*

April 5, 2-4pm – Chicago Rooms
As part of Matt Bergstrom's paper model series of prominent Chicago buildings, Tichy and Bergstrom will inaugurate the Chicago Cultural Center into the paper pantheon. Participants in this workshop will cut and fold their own model Chicago Cultural Center and other Chicago landmarks, gaining an intimate appreciation of their architecture.

* Sign up for these events at: aroundcenter.org/program.html

Some public programming was designed and developed by students in the Arts Administration and Policy program of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in collaboration with the artist.

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago's artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago's non-profit arts sector; independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City's future cultural and economic growth, via the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan; marketing the City's cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors.

Some areas of the Chicago Cultural Center may be unavailable to the public due to private events.
Cutaway illustrations by Matt Bergstrom.

Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St., Chicago IL 60602

FREE ADMISSION

Exhibition Hours: Monday-Thursday 10am-7pm | Friday-Sunday, 10am-6pm
Closed Holidays

(312) 744-3316 TTY (312) 744-2964

www.chicagoculturalcenter.org

www.cityofchicago.org/dcase



Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

aroundcenter

Jan Tichy

Chicago
Cultural
Center

February 1 –
April 27, 2014

City of Chicago • Mayor Rahm Emanuel