

# NeoCon<sup>®</sup>

## **DESIGN HAS ITS OWN RHYTHM: NEOCON 2023 KEYNOTES LOOK TO HIP HOP, COMMUNITY, AND TECHNOLOGY TO BUILD OUR FUTURE**

*Amy Webb, Michael Murphy, Michael Ford and Lupe Fiasco Headline NeoCon 2023  
Programming Registration Opens April 3*

**(Chicago, IL - March 21, 2023)** NeoCon, June 12-14, at THE MART, is pleased to announce the keynote speakers for this year's edition: world-renowned futurist Amy Webb (Founder & CEO of the Future Today Institute), celebrated designer, writer, and teacher, Michael Murphy (Co-Founder of MASS Design Group), and "The Hip Hop Architect" Michael Ford, AIA, NOMA, alongside Chicago Hip Hop legend and visiting MIT professor, Wasalu Muhammad Jaco, a.k.a Lupe Fiasco. Pulling from diverse backgrounds and experiences and drawing inspiration from music, poetry, technology, and the power of community, the thought leaders will explore how to build a more sustainable, equitable and brighter future.

"As a resource for timely education, we are committed to delivering a rich and varied NeoCon conference program that brings together the most provocative and influential leaders across all verticals and beyond," comments Allison Kearns, Director of Programming for NeoCon. "Our 2023 keynotes are emblematic of how diverse perspectives can drive and effect positive change."

A trailblazer in determining the ways society will utilize emerging technology, Monday Keynote presenter Amy Webb will challenge the NeoCon audience to think like a futurist; to manage the present while innovating for the future and to practice purpose-driven decision-making. Designer, writer, and teacher Michael Murphy will take the stage on Tuesday to explore how our environment shapes our actions, as well as provide insights that help us to build more ethically and honorably. On Wednesday, prolific, Grammy-winning rapper and producer Lupe Fiasco will join Mike Ford—an award-winning architect known for positioning Hip Hop culture as a catalyst to introducing the world of architecture to underrepresented youth—to discuss how rhythm, poetry, textures, and patterns can stimulate innovation and inspire how we design.

Below are more details on keynotes, which will be presented live onsite during the show and will also be available for streaming on the NeoCon Programming Hub.

### **Monday, June 12, 2023**

- **Amy Webb: Designing a Way Forward**

**10:00 AM CDT**

***Presented by IIDA***

As the design and business worlds look to navigate today's disruption while preparing for the complexities of the future, world-renowned quantitative futurist and tech leader, Amy Webb, provides the strategic foresight and forecasting that is crucial for organizations to adapt and position themselves for sustained success in this era of unprecedented transformation. Amy leads an extraordinary exploration into the emerging trends and technologies that will turn industries on their heads and reshape every aspect of our lives.

### **Tuesday, June 13, 2023**

- **Michael Murphy: Empowering our Communities**

**10:00 AM CDT**

***Presented by ASID***

Michael Murphy is co-founder of MASS Design Group, the award-winning architecture and design collaborative, and a designer, writer and teacher whose work investigates the social and political consequences of the built world. With a focus on how environments shape behavior, Michael's research and writing advocate for a new empowerment in architecture that calls on architects to consider the ethical nature of their design decisions while simultaneously searching for beauty and meaning.

### **Wednesday, June 14, 2023**

- **Michael Ford and Lupe Fiasco: Exploring the Rhythm of Design**

**10:00 AM CDT**

***Presented by AIA Chicago***

Known as the "The Hip Hop Architect," award-winning architect and academic Michael Ford is on a mission to promote diversity in the architecture, engineering and construction fields through culturally relevant pedagogy. Joining Michael is Wasalu Jaco, professionally known as Lupe Fiasco, a Chicago-born, Grammy award-winning rapper and currently a visiting professor at MIT. Together, Michael and Lupe will discuss their explorations in extracting the rhythms, textures, and patterns of Hip Hop as a source of design innovation in theory and in professional practice.

Programming registration for keynotes, featured presentations, CEU sessions and workshops will open on April 3. NeoCon 2023 [expo registration](#) is currently open and is free for all attendees. Stay tuned for more details on featured programs and CEUs, exhibitor updates, product trends, show highlights and more.

For showroom, exhibitor, and general NeoCon news, images, and real-time information, follow NeoCon on: [Facebook \(@NeoConShows\)](#), [Twitter \(@NeoCon Shows\)](#), [Instagram \(@NeoCon\\_Shows\)](#), and [LinkedIn \(@NeoCon-Shows\)](#). For updates on THE MART, follow on [Instagram \(@theMARTchicago\)](#) and [Facebook \(@theMARTchicago\)](#).

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**About NeoCon:** NeoCon is the world's leading platform and most important event for the commercial interiors industry, held each year at THE MART in Chicago. Since launching in 1969, NeoCon has served as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world's manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, end-users, design organizations and media. The three-day event showcases game-changing products and services from close to 500 leading and emerging companies—providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions. A robust educational program of keynote presentations and CEU sessions offers world-class expertise and insight about today's most relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design. [www.neocon.com](http://www.neocon.com)

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**About THE MART:** THE MART (formerly The Merchandise Mart), located in the center of the sought-after River North submarket, is interwoven into the fabric of Chicago as an innovator in business, technology, culture, art, media and more. It is one of the world's leading commercial buildings, wholesale design centers and the preeminent international business location in Chicago. Encompassing 4.2 million gross square feet, THE MART spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day and nearly 10 million people annually. Offering continuous innovation and creativity from leading manufacturers and design forward showrooms, THE MART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies.