

NeoCon[®]

NEOCON PROGRAMMING REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 3

The 2024 Educational Lineup Underscores Design's Impact on the Human Experience

(Chicago, IL - March 27, 2024) Registration for NeoCon 2024 programming opens on April 3rd. Held from June 10-12 at THE MART in Chicago, this year's event promises an exceptional lineup of keynotes, featured-presentations, special events and workshops as well as virtual and on-site CEU sessions. Recognized as a major global platform for influential thought leaders from diverse backgrounds, NeoCon's stellar lineup (including an Academy Award-winning designer, a global art powerhouse and the leading entertainment design leader) offers inspiration that sparks vital discourse. Design will be explored from all angles; demonstrating how to harness creativity to enhance visual storytelling and truly affect how we work and live.

Gensler's Global Entertainment Leader, Bob Weis, will headline Monday's keynote presentation, titled "Leveraging the Power of Storytelling in the Places We Create" (presented by IIDA and sponsored by the Wall Street Journal). "I'm excited to be a keynote speaker at this year's NeoCon, because this gathering of creators truly underscores the importance of communal experiences that inspire," says Weis. "I'll share insights from my tenures at Walt Disney Imagineering and Gensler to show how we, as designers, can uniquely provide that inspiration by transforming commercial environments into truly memorable experiences that spark emotion."

British-Nigerian Multi-disciplinary Artist and Designer, Yinka Ilori will helm Tuesday's keynote, presented by ASID and sponsored by Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering. In "The Power of Affirmation" ASID CEO Khoi Vo and IIDA's Executive Vice President/CEO, Cheryl Durst will join Ilori for a "fireside chat" style presentation, covering topics from how design can celebrate cultural identities, to how it can elevate the individual while unifying the masses. Ilori remarks, "I am always looking for new ways to use art and design to tell new stories and bring communities together, all while highlighting my vibrant heritage. My textiles and wallcoverings collection with NeoCon exhibitor Momentum presented the opportunity to do this and expand my creativity into the modern workplace. I'm thrilled to be able to bring this collection to life and dive even deeper into my design perspective during the talk."

Continuing the storytelling theme, 2x Academy Award-winning Costume Designer Ruth E. Carter will take the stage on Wednesday with a keynote presentation titled "Designing Afrofuturism: The Art of Storytelling through Costume Design," presented by AIA Chicago. Known for her work on a number of Spike Lee films and for making history as the first Black person to win two Academy Awards in the Costume Design category for a film and its sequel (*Black Panther* and *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*), Carter will share how she crafted narratives through the building of immersive worlds. "From concept to creation, designing is a passionate adventure in storytelling," Carter remarks. "At NeoCon, I look forward to sharing my process of creating wearable art through the lens of Afrofuturism and bringing out the storyteller within us all," she adds.

Complementing the impactful keynote presentations, NeoCon 2024's Featured Presentations, running each afternoon, are headlined by a notable group of NeoCon thought leaders, designers, change-makers, and visionaries and feature distinguished speakers from leading design firms like Gensler, HKS, and CannonDesign, alongside industry partners. Each program is meticulously crafted to explore the latest trends in design and the workplace, while also delving into more technical and action-oriented topics, including AI and diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.

Below is the schedule and descriptions for the Keynotes & Featured Presentations. NeoCon will also offer more than 60 CEU-accredited programs and workshops accessible to registered NeoCon attendees. Virtual CEU programming will be available on demand through September 13, 2024 programming is available to explore at neocon.com.

Monday, June 10, 2024

- **Keynote: Leveraging the Power of Storytelling in Commercial Design**

10:00 AM CDT

Keynote Speaker: Bob Weis, Global Entertainment Leader, Gensler

The last few years have tested the limits of our cities and built environments across the globe, leaving people and their communities with an urgent need for a return to vibrancy and experiences they can enjoy and remember together. Today, storytelling in design has become a top priority for clients and their stake holders, as well as our own aspirations as creators.

- **Featured Presentation: Collective Design LIVE: The Future of Experience**

11:30 AM CDT

Moderator: Mark Bryan, IIDA, Senior Foresight Manager, Future Today Institute.

Panelists: Upali Nanda, Global Practice Director, Research, and Partner at HKS; Lauren Rottet, IIDA, President and Founding Principal at Rottet Studios; Lori Mukoyama, Global Leader, Gensler Hospitality; and Brian Graham, IIDA, IDSA Founder and Creative Director, Graham Design

How is experiential design changing the face of design at large, and how will experience intersect and empower the future of design and designers? IIDA's once-a-year live episode of our Collective Design series brings you top minds in design who approach experiential design through a variety of lenses, from neuroscience to hospitality to future forecasting — all in a thought-provoking, deep dive exploration of a topic that will shape not only our design work, but our lives. This roll-up-your-sleeves companion program to IIDA's keynote will provide the ideas you need to embrace what's next for design and your business.

- **Featured Presentation: Offices for the New Work Reality**

1:30 PM CDT

Moderator: Jan Parr Contributor, Crain's Chicago Business

Panelists: Eva Greene, Director of Client Experience, Cresset Capital; Kate Davis, Global Practice Director, Commercial Interiors; Sarah Silva, Vice President, Tenant

Representation, JLL; Jason Hall, Creative Director, Charlie Green Studio; Paul Tokarz, Partner, WestPoint Financial Group

Occupancy in downtown Chicago offices is hovering at just over 55%. Hybrid models of work—with employees working from home part time and at an office part time—seem to be here to stay. They also present challenges in designing offices. Come hear from designers, executives in the trenches and leasing agents who have a bird’s-eye view into making (or remaking) spaces that reflect the nature of work today. Find out what has worked—and what hasn’t—in encouraging employees to come back to the office. (Hint: It’s more complicated than installing a ping-pong table.)

- **Featured Presentation: Meet Us On Monday: IIDA's Celebration on the Stairs**
3:00 PM CDT

Speaker: Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA Executive Vice President and CEO, IIDA

Join IIDA as we recognize design’s young talent on the MART Grand Stair with a high-energy afternoon that will include a mini-documentary screening featuring IIDA’s Design Your World pathway program and its success in building grassroots diversity in design; a “deconstructed” panel discussion with design leaders, IIDA scholarship winners, and plenty of audience participation; and IIDA Executive Vice President and CEO Cheryl S. Durst on the mic! We’re going bigger and better this year for a fun, surprising meet-up on the stairs that is the best way to spend an afternoon at NeoCon. (Hint: Join us afterward as we toast IIDA’s 30th Anniversary at Marshall’s Landing with THE MART!)

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

- **Keynote: The Power of Affirmation: Yinka Ilori in conversation with Khoi Vo and Cheryl Durst**

10:00 AM CDT

Keynote Speaker: Yinka Ilori, British-Nigerian Multi-Disciplinary Artist and Designer

In conversation with: Khoi Vo, CEO, ASID and Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA, Executive Vice President and CEO, IIDA

British-Nigerian Multi-disciplinary Artist and Designer Yinka Ilori is known for his dynamic public installations and color-forward aesthetic. Behind his progressive work lies a philosophy grounded in design’s power to tell stories of identity, culture, and purpose. In an intimate “fireside chat” style keynote, Ilori will discuss how he harnesses diverse mediums of design as a catalyst to tell stories, using creativity as a language to celebrate cultural identities, and the power of design to elevate the individual while unifying the masses. Ilori will also give insight into how these tenets can be incorporated into the modern workplace, examining it through the lens of his electrifying new collection for Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering.

- **Featured Presentation: Diversity in Practice**

11:30 AM CDT

Moderator: Joseph Cephas, Senior Vice President, Novità Communications

Panelists: Ronnie Belizaire, IIDA President, Studio Practice Leader, Principal, HKA and Jason Pugh, Global Director of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Design Manager and Principal at Gensler

Progressing from making public statements to enacting practical equity programs is essential in creating a more diverse environment. Novità Senior Vice President Joseph Cephas leads a panel of design leaders as they explore strategies that go beyond the rhetoric to make firms and the projects they produce more inclusive. With a focus on creating tangible, measurable results, the discussion will examine how diversity initiatives can lead to positive change.

- **Featured Presentation: How Generative AI is Changing Design**

1:00 PM CDT

Moderator: Mark Wilson, Global Design Editor, Fast Company

Panelists: Lori Mukoyama, Global Leader, Gensler Hospitality, Chicago Design Principal; Scott Wilson, Founder, MNML

From Dall-E to Midjourney to Sora, a new wave of generative AI tools have arrived to shake up design. Panelists spanning architecture to industrial design will unpack how they're using gen AI in their practice today, and how they see it impacting the industry within the next few years.

- **Featured Presentation: BIFMA + ACT | Fits Like a Glove: The Perfect Pairing of Textiles and Furniture**

2:30 PM CDT

Moderator: Deborah Nemeth, Principal, Interior Design Discipline Leader, SmithGroup

Panelists: Andrea Nelson, Principal Designer, Colors, Materials, and Finishes, Industrial Design Studio, Haworth; Shantel McGowan, VP of Design, Textiles, Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering; Maggie Keilhauer, Marketing Manager, Keilhauer Wallcovering

A moderated discussion among industry textile and furniture trend-setters focusing on textiles' influential role in furniture product design and performance. These experts will explore textiles' influential role in furniture product design and performance. Topics will include textile design inspiration; innovations in materials, technology, and sustainability; application considerations and challenges; and incorporating client expectations into the development process.

- **Featured Presentation: ASID | 2024 Trends Outlook**

4:00 PM CDT

Moderator: Khoi Vo, CEO, ASID

Panelists: Margi Kaminski, Principal, Director of Health Interiors, CannonDesign, ASID Board of Directors; Julia Calabrese, Associate Director, Strategy & Design, IA Interior Architects; Leah Bauer, Global Director of Design and Sustainability, Workday; S. Dawn Haynie, Ph.D., Research Fellow, ASID

The American Society of Interior Designers has catalogued the latest ways we live, work, play, learn and heal. Join us for a discussion of the latest trends impacting interior design. Hear from Khoi Vo, ASID CEO and leading industry designers, as they discuss the impact of these current trends on commercial design – the hybrid workplace and the

desire to encourage connection, cross-specialty and the interconnectedness of sustainability and wellness, adaptive re-use and the repositioning of older buildings, and new strategies in digital marketing given AI algorithms.

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

- **Keynote: Designing Afrofuturism: The Art of Storytelling in Costume Design**
10:00 AM CDT

Keynote Speaker: Ruth E. Carter, Two-Time Academy-Award Winning Costume Designer

The world witnessed history, in 2019, as Ruth E. Carter became the first Black woman to win an Oscar for Costume Design. As she graced the Dolby stage in Los Angeles to a standing ovation, Ruth Carter affirmed her voice and devotion to retraining the eye to see beauty through costume design and the creation of Afrofuturism. Igniting a cultural renaissance, Carter's decades long work in film proves that diversity in design and representation in story matters to audiences. In this keynote, one of the most sought-after costume designers on the globe, takes us on a journey, from concept to creation, to design the Afrofuture and shares how the art of storytelling translates in costume design and the building of worlds.

- **Featured Presentation: Designing A Better Chicago: A Conversation with 2024 Grantees**

11:30 AM CDT

Moderator: Monica Rickert-Bolter, Center for Natives Futures

Designing a Better Chicago shines a light on our city's extraordinary design legacy — the local talent, assets and community that have long supported civic good through design. Launched in 2020, this initiative showcases individuals and organizations, public art and programs across the city, inviting residents and visitors to consider the many ways design improves civic life. Join the new 2024 grant winners (yet to be announced) as they discuss their work, the impact they are making on Chicago, and lessons they have learned along the way.

Show registration is complimentary for all attendees. To register, head [here](#). 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).

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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 more than 400 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

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About THE MART: THE MART is the largest privately held commercial building in the United States: It encompasses 4.2 million gross square feet, spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day (or nearly 10 million people annually).

THE MART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies, including Motorola Mobility, 1871, PayPal, Avant and MATTER, as well as Fortune 500 companies Conagra Brands, Allstate, Medline Industries, Beam Suntory, IPG, and Grainger. It is also the largest and most important center for design in North America with more than 250 premier design showrooms offering the latest resources for both residential and commercial markets.