

# THE ROOM

Honoring  
a legend!

A READING SERIES

via  
ZOOM



## DAYS OF DECISION - *the music of Phil Ochs*

devised & performed by Zachary Stevenson

11.1.20 @ 3PM  
11.2.20 @ 7PM

2  
shows



### BACKSTAGE GUIDE

A publication of **COMMUNITY SERVICE** at  
**AMERICAN BLUES THEATER**

## BACKSTAGE CALLBOARD

### DAYS OF DECISION THE MUSIC OF PHIL OCHS

Devised & Performed by  
Zachary Stevenson

### ABOUT THE ARTIST



#### ZACHARY STEVENSON

(performer & creator) is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. He is an award-winning actor, musician and writer. Originally from Vancouver Island, Canada, Zachary has been coined a “dead ringer for dead singers” by the Victoria Times Colonist for his portrayals of Buddy Holly, Hank Williams, Phil Ochs and

roles based on Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis. In 2018, Zachary won the Jeff Award in Chicago for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role (Musical) for his portrayal of Buddy Holly in *Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story*, a role he’s honed in more than a dozen productions across Canada and the United States. Other acting highlights include *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Hair*, *Urinetown*, *Assassins*, and *Company*. Zachary has produced and recorded five independent albums and tours frequently as a musician. He is also active as a music director on productions such as *Ring of Fire*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, and *American Idiot* (upcoming). He is currently writing an American Blues commissioned solo show based on the life of folksinger, Phil Ochs.

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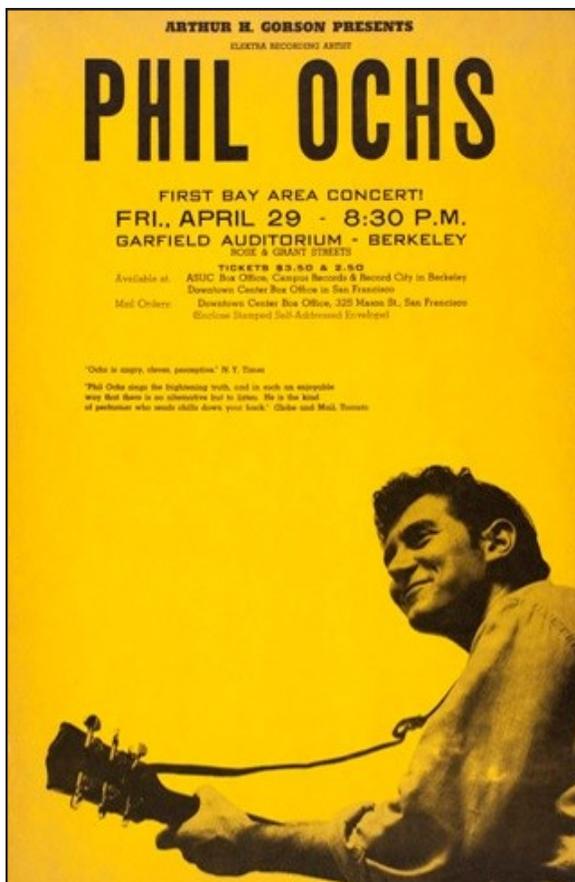
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## DIGITAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To create art in a new digital format, we use equipment and high-speed internet not available in many Indigenous communities. This technology, which has now become central to our daily lives, leaves a significant footprint and contributes to changing climates that disproportionately affect Indigenous people. As we make use of this digital format, it is imperative that we recognize the Indigenous Land, regardless of our geographical location. It is land once occupied and inhabited by hundreds of Native tribes and stolen from these Indigenous people by European settlers. The genocide and forced removal of Indigenous people from these lands is a history that must be acknowledged, and the current struggles of Indigenous people must be brought to the forefront, so that their plight is never forgotten.

*This digital land acknowledgement is inspired by the work of producer & artist Adrienne Wong. Learn more [here](#).*

# ABOUT PHIL OCHS



Phil Ochs was an American protest singer (or, as he preferred, a topical singer) and songwriter who was known for his sharp wit, sardonic humor, earnest humanism, political activism, insightful and alliterative lyrics, and distinctive voice. He wrote hundreds of songs in the 1960s and 1970s and released eight albums.

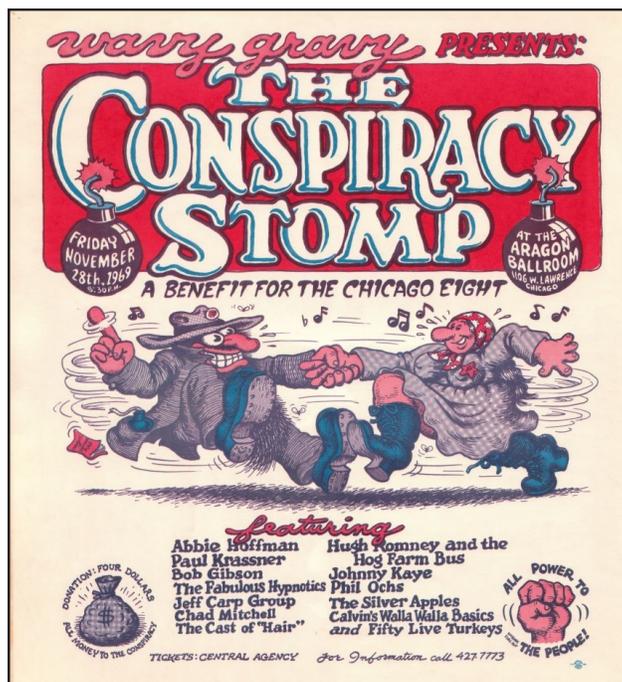
Ochs performed at many political events during the 1960s counterculture era, including anti-Vietnam War and civil rights rallies, student events, and organized labor events over the course of his career, in addition to many concert appearances at such venues as New York City's Town Hall and Carnegie Hall.

Ochs was involved in the creation of the Youth International Party, known as the Yippies, along with Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, Stew Albert, and Paul Krassner. Ochs helped plan the Yippies' "Festival of Life" which was to take place at the 1968 Democratic National Convention along with demonstrations by other anti-war groups including the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. Despite warnings that there might be trouble, Ochs went to Chicago both as a guest of the McCarthy campaign and to participate in the demonstrations. He performed in Lincoln Park, Grant Park, and at the Chicago Coliseum, witnessed the violence perpetrated by the Chicago police against the protesters, and was himself arrested at one point.

At the trial of the Chicago Seven in December 1969, Ochs testified for the defense. His testimony included his recitation of the lyrics to his song "I Ain't Marching Anymore". On his way out of the courthouse, Ochs sang the song for the press corps; to Ochs's amusement, his singing was broadcast that evening by Walter Cronkite on the CBS Evening News.

The events of 1968 – the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and of Robert F. Kennedy weeks later, the Chicago police riot, and the election of Richard Nixon – left Ochs feeling disillusioned and depressed. After years of prolific writing in the 1960s, Ochs's mental stability declined in the 1970s.

The Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975. Ochs planned a final "War Is Over" rally, which was held in New York's Central Park on May 11. More than 100,000 people came to hear Ochs, joined by Harry Belafonte, Odetta, Pete



# ABOUT PHIL OCHS

Seeger, and others. Ochs and Joan Baez sang a duet of "There but for Fortune" and he closed with his song "The War Is Over"—finally a true declaration that the war was over.

Ochs eventually succumbed to a number of problems including bipolar disorder and alcoholism, and died by suicide on April 9, 1976.

Some of Ochs' major musical influences were Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley, Bob Gibson, Faron Young, and Merle Haggard. His best-known songs include "I Ain't Marching Anymore", "Changes", "Crucifixion", "Draft Dodger Rag", "Love Me, I'm a Liberal", "Outside of a Small Circle of Friends", "Power and the Glory", "There but for Fortune", and "The War Is Over".



## THE PHIL OCHS PAPERS AT THE WOODY GUTHRIE CENTER

**WOODY  
GUTHRIE**  
CENTER | TULSA, OK

Interested in learning more about Phil Ochs' life and work? The Phil Ochs Papers collection at the Woody Guthrie Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma contains items that were in the custody of Phil Ochs' daughter, Meegan Lee Ochs.

The papers contain original lyrics, handwritten travel journals, scrapbooks, notebooks, correspondence, personal belongings of Phil Ochs, realia, business records of Michael Ochs, record label correspondence and business materials, flyers, manuscripts and published articles by Phil Ochs, clippings, photographs, audio recordings, film recording, LPs, and biographical information gathered by Phil Ochs' biographers for both a documentary and a book.

Learn more at [WoodyGuthrieCenter.org](http://WoodyGuthrieCenter.org)

# PROTESTS & MUSIC: 1900 - TODAY

The tradition of protest songs in the United States is a long one that dates back to the 18th century and colonial period, the American Revolutionary War and its aftermath. In the 19th century, topical subjects for protest in song included abolition, slavery, poverty, and the Civil War among other subjects. In the 20th century civil liberties, civil rights, women's rights, economic injustice, politics and war were among the popular subjects for protest in song. In the 21st century the long tradition continues.

## 1900-1920

The vast majority of American protest music from the first half of the 20th century was based on the struggle for fair wages and working hours for the working class, and on the attempt to unionize the American workforce towards those ends. One of the most famous protest song composers from this time was Joe Hill, an Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) activist who traveled widely, organizing workers and writing and singing political songs.

## 1920s-1930s

The 1920s and 30s also saw the continuing growth of the union and labor movements, as well as widespread poverty due to the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, which inspired musicians and singers to decry the harsh realities which they saw all around them. It was against this background that folk singer Aunt Molly Jackson was singing songs with striking Harlan coal miners in Kentucky in 1931, and writing protest songs which depicted the struggle for social justice in a Depression-ravaged America. The 1920s and 30s also saw a marked rise in the number of songs which protested against racial discrimination, such as Fats Waller's "(What Did I Do to Be So) Black and Blue" in 1929, and the anti-lynching song "Strange Fruit" by Lewis Allan and performed and recorded by Billie Holiday.

## 1940s-1950s

The 1940s and 1950s saw the rise of music that continued to protest labor, race, and class issues. However, the movement and its protest singers faced increasing opposition from McCarthyism. One of the most notable pro-union protest singers of the period was Woody Guthrie ("This Land Is Your Land", "Deportee", "1913 Massacre", and more), whose guitar bore a sticker which read: "This Machine Kills Fascists". In the 1940s, one of the leading musical voices of protest from the African American community was Josh White, one of the first musicians to make a name for himself singing political blues.

## 1960s-1970s

The 1960s & 1970s was a fertile era for the genre, especially with the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, the ascendancy of counterculture groups such as "hippies," and the escalation of the War in Vietnam. The music often included relatively simple instrumental accompaniment, including acoustic guitar and harmonica. Many still remember Odetta's performance at the 1963 March on Washington where she sang "Oh Freedom".

One of the key figures of the 1960s protest movement was Bob Dylan, who produced a number of landmark protest songs. While Dylan is often thought of as a 'protest singer', most of his protest songs spring from a relatively short time-period in his career. Phil Ochs was also one of the leading protest singers of the 1960s, as he performed at many political events, including anti-Vietnam War and civil rights rallies, student events, and organized labor events over the course of his career. While war continued to dominate the protest songs of the early 1970s, there were other issues being addressed in protest songs too, such as Helen Reddy's feminist hit "I Am Woman", which became an anthem for the women's liberation movement.

The Civil Rights Movement often used spirituals as a source of protest, changing the religious lyrics to suit the political mood of the time. The religious music proved easy to adapt, with many improvised call-and-response songs being created during marches and sit-ins. Many soul singers of the period, such as Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, James Brown, and Nina Simone wrote and performed many protest songs which addressed the ever-increasing demand for equal rights for African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement.

# PROTESTS & MUSIC: 1900 - TODAY

## 1980s

The Reagan administration also received a good deal of criticism, with many mainstream protest songs attacking his policies, such as Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." (1984), and "My Brain Is Hanging Upside Down" by The Ramones. The 1980s also saw the rise of rap and hip-hop, and with it bands such as Grandmaster Flash, Boogie Down Productions, N.W.A, and Public Enemy, who vehemently protested the discrimination and poverty which the black community faced in the U.S., in particular focusing on police discrimination.

## 1990s

The 1990s saw a sizable movement of pro-women's rights protest songs from many musical genres as part of the third-wave feminism movement. Ani DiFranco was at the forefront of this movement, protesting sexism, sexual abuse, homophobia, reproductive rights as well as racism, poverty, and war. A particularly prevalent movement of the time was the underground feminist punk Riot Grrrl movement, including a number of outspoken protest bands such as Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, Jack Off Jill, Excuse 17, Heavens to Betsy, Huggy Bear, and Sleater-Kinney.

## 2000s-2010s

The protest song found renewed popularity after the turn of the century as a result of the 9/11 attacks in America, and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars in the Middle East, with America's former president George W. Bush facing the majority of the criticism. Many famous protest singers of yesteryear, such as Neil Young, Patti Smith, Tom Waits, Jake Holmes and Bruce Springsteen, returned to the public eye with new protest songs for the new war. Contemporary groups such as the Beastie Boys, Green Day, Pink, Bright Eyes, Anti-Flag, Bad Religion, Rise Against, and more also wrote protest songs in response to the Bush administration and the Iraq War.

With the growth of the Black Lives Matter movement, more artists have begun creating songs in support of Black Lives Matter and anti-police brutality. Kendrick Lamar's song "Alright" has become an anthem for Black Lives Matter protests. When asked if he knew it was becoming an anthem for Black Lives Matter he said, "When I'd go in certain parts of the world, and they were singing it in the streets. When it's outside of the concerts, then you know it's a little bit more deep-rooted than just a song. It's more than just a piece of a record. It's something that people live by – your



Photos (clockwise from top left): *The Rebel Girl* by Joe Hill (1915), Odetta performing at the March on Washington (1963), Iraq War protest in Washington D.C. (2007), Kendrick Lamar (left) with a fan at a Black Lives Matter protest (2020), protest at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago (1968), coal miners protest in Harlan County, Kentucky (1931). Source: Wikipedia.

# REGISTER TO VOTE ONLINE & IN PERSON

## THREE WAYS TO REGISTER:

1. **ONLINE:** Use your IL driver's license or state ID card to register to vote or to change your name or address. **Deadline: 11:59 pm, Sunday, October 18.**
2. **IN PERSON AT EARLY VOTING:** You must show two (2) forms of ID. At least one (1) ID must list your current address. **At all Early Voting sites through close of polls on November 3.**
3. **AT YOUR PRECINCT POLLING PLACE ON ELECTION DAY.** You must show (2) forms of ID. At least one (1) ID must list your current address. **Available through the close of polls on November 3.**

## TO REGISTER TO VOTE, YOU MUST:

- be a U.S. citizen, and
  - be born on or before Nov. 3, 2002, and
  - live in your precinct at least 30 days before the election, and
  - not claim the right to vote elsewhere; and
  - not be in prison/jail serving time for a conviction.
- (Note: Ex-convicts who have been released from prison/jail and who meet all other requirements listed above are eligible to register and vote in Illinois. Ex-convicts who have been released and are on parole/probation ARE eligible to vote in Illinois.)

## WHEN DO YOU NEED AN ID TO VOTE?

No ID is needed when you are already registered to vote at your current address and are voting at your designated polling place.

Two forms of ID, at least one with your current address, are needed when you are registering, filing a name change, or filing an address change in person during early voting or on Election Day.

### ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID:

- Passport or Military ID
- Driver's License or State ID card
- College/University/School/Work ID
- Vehicle registration card
- Lease, mortgage, or deed to home
- Credit or debit card
- Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid card
- Insurance card
- Civic, union, or professional membership card
- LINK/Public Aid/Department of Human Services card
- Illinois FOID card

### MAIL ADDRESSED TO VOTER THAT CAN BE USED AS ID:

- Bill, transcript, or report card from school
- Bank statement, pay stub, or pension statement
- Utility, medical, or insurance bill
- Official mail from any government agency

\*A photo ID is never required.

# CHECK OR UPDATE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION



**CHECK YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION [HERE](#).**

**FILE A NAME CHANGE OR ADDRESS CHANGE [HERE](#).**

## **SIGNATURE UPDATE FORM:**

Are you voting by mail? Has your signature changed over the years? [Use this form to update your signature](#). Fill in all blanks, print, sign and mail it in OR, you may email the completed form as a PDF attachment to [registration@chicagoelections.gov](mailto:registration@chicagoelections.gov)

## **FIND YOUR POLLING PLACE**

**LOCATE YOUR PRECINCT POLLING PLACE FOR VOTING OR REGISTERING ON ELECTION DAY [HERE](#).**

If on Election Day, the poll worker cannot find your name on the list of registered voters, confirm that you are at the correct polling place:

- Request that the poll workers check a statewide system (if one is available) to see if you are registered to vote at a different polling place.
- If the poll worker does not have access to a statewide system, ask them to call the main election office.
- You can also call 1-866-OUR-VOTE and ask for help verifying your proper polling place.



# ORDER YOUR MAIL-IN BALLOT



## **1. APPLY TO VOTE BY MAIL.**

Any Chicago voter may apply online now to vote by mail ahead of the Nov. 3, 2020 Election. No reason or excuse is needed to vote by mail.

Chicago voters who apply online to Vote By Mail will receive emails:

- In the days that follow their online application, to confirm that the online application has been received and processed;
- When the ballot is being mailed to the voter -- with a unique link to a system to track the ballot through the US Postal Service;
- When the Vote By Mail "Ballot Return Envelope" is received by the Election Board; and,
- When the Vote By Mail "Ballot Return Envelope" has been approved for counting -- or if there is a question or problem with your Ballot Return Envelope.

## **2. MARK YOUR BALLOT.**

Follow all instructions that come with your ballot and be sure to vote in secret. When marking your ballot, use a black or blue ballpoint pen or a felt-tip pen. Do NOT use a red pen, because red ink cannot be read by the ballot scanners.

## **3. RETURN YOUR BALLOT.**

The Board supplies all Vote By Mail voters with postage-paid Ballot Return Envelopes to return the ballots.

The signed and sealed Ballot Return Envelope may be returned:

- through the U.S. Postal Service or a licensed courier, OR
- by personal delivery to the Election Board at 69 W. Washington, Sixth Floor, OR
- **NEW:** at any of the [Secured Drop Boxes](#) which will be available at 69 W. Washington St., the Loop Super Site at Clark & Lake, and at every Early Voting site in Chicago.

**Especially in the two weeks before Election Day, Chicago voters are encouraged to use a Secured Drop Box at any Chicago Early Voting site to return the signed and sealed Ballot Return Envelope.**

### **WHAT IF I DECIDE TO VOTE IN PERSON AFTER RECEIVING A MAIL-BALLOT?**

You're allowed to vote in person only if you haven't yet cast your ballot by mail. If you decide you'd rather vote in person, you'll need to bring your mail-in ballot to an early voting site or your election precinct polling place and surrender it to an election judge. The election judge should then give you a standard ballot, which you can fill out to vote in person.

# BALLOT RETURN DROP BOX LOCATIONS

## Vote By Mail Secured Drop Boxes - Sites & Hours

There's a new option for Vote By Mail voters! Submit your Ballot Return Envelope at any of the Chicago Election Board's Secured Drop Boxes. Chicago voters may use any Secured Drop Box in the city.

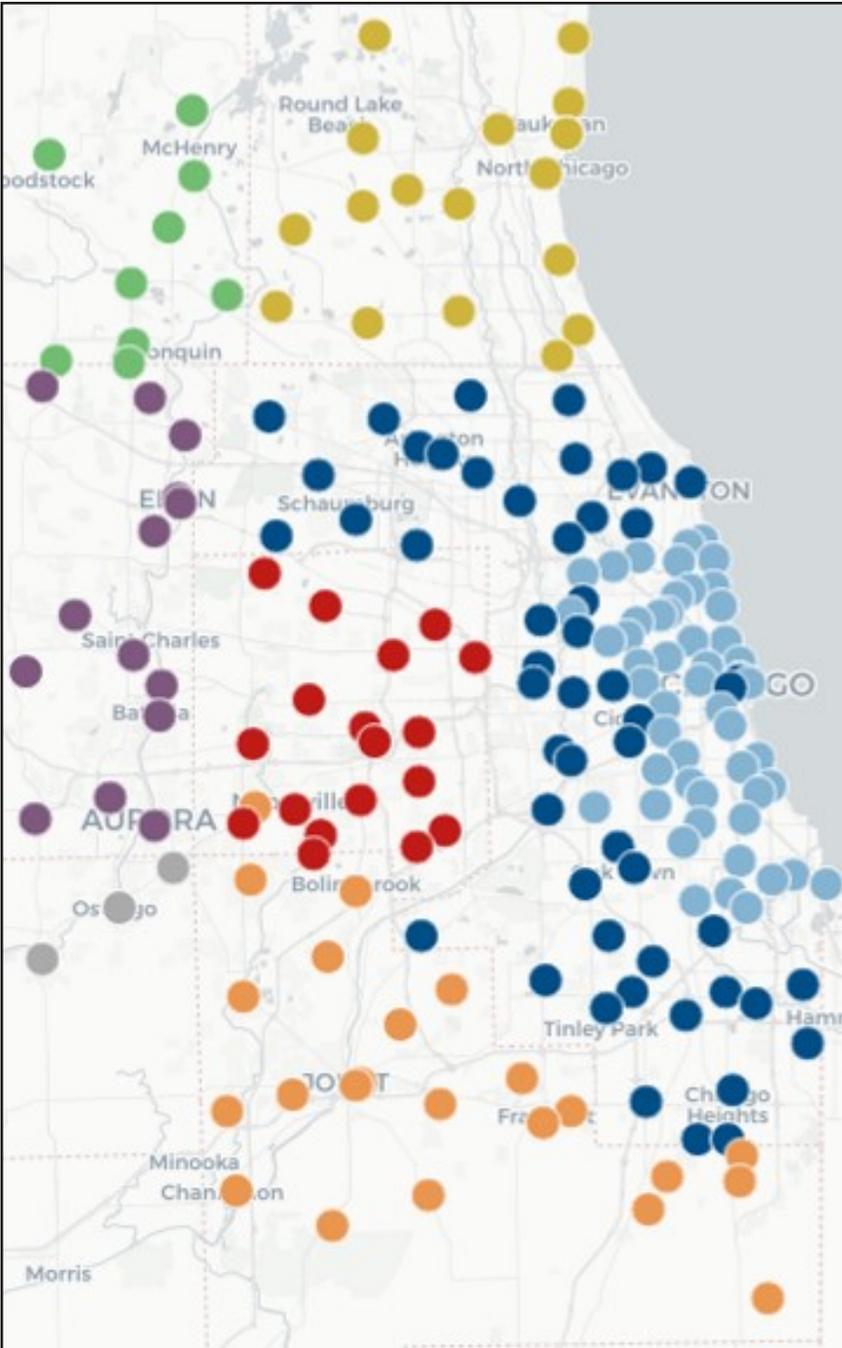
Note: Whether you use the US mail or a Drop Box, you must use the signed and sealed Ballot Return Envelope with your name on it to submit your ballot!



- 1 From Sept. 24 through Nov. 3 - 24-HOUR Drop Box\***  
**69 W. Washington St.**  
 \*Through 7 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 3
- 2 From Oct. 1 through Oct. 13**  
 Loop Super Site at Clark & Lake - 191 N Clark St  
**Mon - Fri: 8:30 am - 7 pm / Sat - Sun: 9 am - 5 pm**
- 3 From Oct. 14 through Nov. 3 - Use the Drop Box at any of these Early Voting sites.**  
**Mon - Fri: 8:30 am - 7 pm / Sat - Sun: 9 am - 5 pm / Election Day Nov. 3: 6 am - 7 pm**

Ward	Location	Ward	Location
	Loop Super Site at Clark & Lake	26 -	Casals Elementary School
1 -	Goldblatts Building	27 -	Suder Elementary School
2 -	Ogden Elementary School	28 -	Westside Learning Center
3 -	Beethoven Elementary School	29 -	Burbank Elementary School
4 -	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center	30 -	Lorca Elementary School
5 -	Ray Elementary School	31 -	Falconer Elementary School
6 -	Harvard Elementary School	32 -	Pulaski Elementary School
7 -	Burnham Elementary School	33 -	Bateman Elementary School
8 -	Olive Harvey College	34 -	Dunne Elementary School
9 -	Curtis Elementary School	35 -	Northeastern Illinois University El Centro
10 -	Sadlowski Elementary School	36 -	Hanson Park Elementary School
11 -	Sheridan Elementary School	37 -	McNair Elementary School
12 -	Kelly High School	38 -	Hiawatha Park
13 -	West Lawn Park	39 -	Sauganash Elementary School
14 -	Edwards Elementary School	40 -	Mather High School
15 -	Carson Elementary School	41 -	Oriole Park Elementary School
16 -	Lindblom Park	42 -	Maggie Daley Park
17 -	Southside High School	43 -	Lincoln Park High School
18 -	Carroll Elementary School	44 -	Inter American Elementary School
19 -	Clissold Elementary School	45 -	Hitch Elementary School
20 -	Dulles Elementary School	46 -	Truman College
21 -	Turner - Drew Language Acad.	47 -	Welles Park
22 -	Ortiz De Dominguez Elementary School	48 -	Broadway Armory
23 -	Richardson Middle School	49 -	New Field Elementary School
24 -	Herzl Elementary School	50 -	Warren Park
25 -	Jungman Elementary School		

# EARLY VOTING INFORMATION



**KEY:**

- Chicago locations
- DuPage County locations
- Kendall County locations
- McHenry County locations
- Cook County locations
- Kane County locations
- Lake County locations
- Will County locations

For the November 3 General Election, Chicago voters may use **any** Early Voting & Registration location in the city, starting October 1 at the Loop Super Site, and then starting from October 14 at the 50 Ward sites.

**VIEW CHICAGO LOCATIONS & HOURS FOR EARLY VOTING [HERE](#).**

**VIEW SUBURBAN EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS & HOURS [HERE](#).**

Any ballots that voters cast in Early Voting are final. After casting ballots in Early Voting, voters may not return to amend, change or undo a ballot for any reason. It is a felony to vote more than once—or to attempt to vote more than once—in the same election.

Government-issued photo ID is not required but is helpful if there is a question about the voter's registration, address, signature or if there are two voters at the same address with the same names or similar names.

Registration services are available at every Early Voting site. Two forms of ID, one of which shows the voter's current address, are needed to register for the first time or to file a name change or an address update.

Every voter is encouraged to wear a facemask that covers the mouth and nose, whether visiting to use in-person Early Voting or to use a Secured Drop Box.

Voters in line must practice social distancing with 6 feet (2 meters) of space between persons in line.

# KNOW YOUR **VOTING RIGHTS**

- **If the polls close while you're still in line, stay in line** – you have the right to vote.
- **If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask for a new one.**
- **If the machines are down at your polling place, ask for a paper ballot.**
- If a poll worker cannot find your name on the list of registered voters, **you are still entitled to a provisional ballot.** After Election Day, election officials must investigate whether you are qualified to vote and registered. If you are qualified and registered, they will count your provisional ballot.
- Under federal law, **voters who have difficulty reading or writing English may receive in-person assistance at the polls from the person of their choice.** This person cannot be the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an agent or officer of the voter's union.
- Counties covered by Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act are **required to provide bilingual assistance to voters in specific languages.** This means that they must provide poll workers who speak certain languages, and make all election materials and election-related information available in those languages. [Check whether your county is required to provide bilingual election assistance in a language you speak.](#)
- **It's illegal to intimidate voters** and a federal crime to “intimidate, threaten, [or] coerce ... any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of [that] other person to vote or to vote as he may choose.”
- Under federal law, **all polling places for federal elections must be fully accessible to older adults and voters with disabilities.** Simply allowing curbside voting is not enough to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements.
- In federal elections, **every polling place must have at least one voting system that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.** Usually, this is a machine that can read the ballot to you (for people with vision disabilities or dyslexia), and let you vote by pushing buttons (for people with mobility disabilities).
- If you have difficulty using the materials provided to make your ballot selections, review, or cast your ballot, let a poll worker know and ask for the help you need. **Accessibility is the law.**

## **IF YOU RUN INTO ANY PROBLEMS OR HAVE QUESTIONS ON ELECTION DAY, CALL THE ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINE:**

**English:** 1-866-OUR-VOTE / 1-866-687-8683

**Spanish:** 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA / 1-888-839-8682

**Arabic:** 1-844-YALLA-US / 1-844-925-5287

**For Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Vietnamese:** 1-888-274-8683

**FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF VOTING RIGHTS VISIT THE [ACLU WEBSITE.](#)**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION - LET PEOPLE VOTE**

The ACLU works to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties of everyone in this country.

## **BALLOTPEDIA - SAMPLE BALLOT LOOKUP**

Access a sample ballot for your area, including information about each candidate.

## **CHICAGO VOTES**

A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization building a more inclusive democracy by putting power in the hands of young Chicagoans.

## **DEMOCRACY WORKS**

A nonpartisan, non-profit organization dedicated to making voting a simple, seamless experience for all Americans so that no one misses an election.

## **NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND - VOTING CENTER**

LDF's Prepared to Vote and Voting Rights Defender projects work to protect voting rights and support Black political engagement.

## **VOTE.ORG**

A nonpartisan platform that uses technology to simplify political engagement, increase voter turnout, and strengthen American democracy.

## **ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE - VOTER HOTLINE**

The AAJC voter hotline provides answers to questions about voting and offers assistance in nine Asian languages.

## **BLACK FUTURES LAB - BLACK TO THE BALLOT**

Registers, engages, and activates Black voters through a national voter registration drive.

## **COMMON CAUSE EDUCATION FUND**

Uses research, public education, citizen engagement, policy development, and litigation to aim to make the promises of the Constitution real for every American.

## **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

A nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## **VOTO LATINO**

A grassroots organization focused on educating and empowering a new generation of Latinx voters, as well as creating a more robust and inclusive democracy.

## **VOTING RIGHTS LAB**

A non-partisan organization that brings state advocacy, policy, and legislative expertise to the fight for voting rights.

## **AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION - ILLINOIS CHAPTER**

The grassroots work AFSP does focuses on eliminating the loss of life from suicide by: delivering innovative prevention programs, educating the public about risk factors and warning signs, raising funds for suicide research and programs, and reaching out to those individuals who have lost someone to suicide.

# ABOUT AMERICAN BLUES THEATER

Winner of American Theatre Wing's prestigious National Theatre Company Award, American Blues Theater is a premier arts organization with an intimate environment that patrons, artists, and all Chicagoans call home. American Blues Theater explores the American identity through the plays it produces and communities it serves.

We believe in cooperative collaborations both on and off-stage. We provide community service for many not-for-profits, such as the Chicago Public Schools, The Night Ministry, Chicago House, Suits for Success, Misericordia, and the USO. Since 2009, we've held food, book, & clothing drives, distributed promotional tickets, and raised awareness for children's surgeries and health needs. We donate proceeds from "Pediatric Previews" to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

We are Chicago's second-oldest AEA Ensemble theater. As of 2020, our theater and artists have 221 Joseph Jefferson Awards and nominations that celebrate excellence in Chicago theater and 40 Black Theater Alliance Awards. Our artists are honored with Pulitzer Prize nominations, Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards, Emmy Awards, and numerous other accolades.

American Blues Theater is committed to developing the classic plays and musicals of tomorrow. More than half of our mainstage productions are world and Chicago premieres. Our new play development consists of a variety of programs – including world and Chicago premieres, the nationally-recognized *Blue Ink Playwriting Award*, *Blueprint* play development, and annual *Ripped: the Living Newspaper Festival* of new short-plays.

## THE ROOM

A READING SERIES

via  
ZOOM



Upcoming *The Room* readings include:

**NOVEMBER 1 & 2**

*Days of Decision - the music of Phil Ochs*

by Zachary Stevenson

**DECEMBER 9**

*Red Bike* by Caridad Svich

**JANUARY 15 & 17**

*The Lion* by Manny Buckley

*More to be announced soon!*



Join us in getting out the vote  
(in a comfortable & stylish way)!  
American Blues Theater is currently  
selling civic merchandise, with a portion  
of the proceeds going to Chicago Votes.

[Click here](#) to learn more & purchase.