



Keidra Chaney

Web Contributor

July 28, 2005

Book Cellar

4736 N Lincoln Ave • 773-293-2665

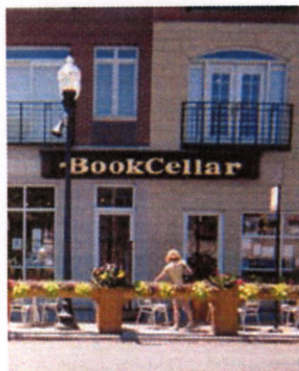


photo: Keidra Chaney

What's better than an evening of settling back with a good book at home? Settling back with a good book and a glass of your favorite vintage at the bookstore/café/wine bar, Book Cellar. Combining two favorite (and complementary) low-key pastimes—books and fine wine—it's a surprise that more local booksellers have not aped the idea. The Lincoln Square bookshop recently celebrated its first birthday and has quickly become a popular neighborhood meeting place, with author readings, book

club meetings, and other regular store events, including a recent Bastille Day champagne tasting and a very well-attended (naturally) Harry Potter midnight release party in July. Book Cellar boasts an impressive selection of books and magazines from smaller publishers and new, little-known, and local writers. The friendly, book-savvy staff will eagerly help you out with a special order. The Friday night special (two glasses of wine and a plate piled high with gourmet cheeses) is a classy after-work alternative to the bar scene.

Gallery 40000

101 N Winchester Ave • 773-342-4930 •

www.gallery40000.com

"Reconstruction" Exhibition Dates: Aug. 12-Sept 13

Gallery Hours: 12-6 pm and by appointment



photo: Britton Bertran

Featuring month-long exhibitions of edgy art collections personally selected and curated by owner Britton Bertran, this sleek storefront gallery is one of the latest in a slew of galleries spearheading a burgeoning art community in the Ukrainian Village neighborhood. The multi-artist sculpture exhibition "Coated" is on display until August 6. Featured from August to September is "Reconstruction: The Remaking of the Reverend Seymour Perkins," a curated showing of striking work from the New Mexico-based outsider artist.

Café Blossom

608 W Barry Ave • 773-935-5284

Located in a tiny storefront near Broadway and Barry, this blink-and-you-may miss-it Lakeview sushi spot eschews trendy flash for friendliness, comfort, and charm (check out the cool anime wall scrolls!). Affordability is another of its strengths: a BYOB with no corking fee and maki rolls that usually run no more than \$5 a piece. Cafe Blossom is an ideal a cheap date option. Speciality rolls like the Mango/Salmon Roll are of the same high quality you'll find at one of those sexy Gold Coast sushi haunts, and at \$6-7, they're a portion of the price. Because of its small size, Friday and Saturday nights usually require a long wait for a table, so visit on a weeknight or earlier in the evening if you don't want to settle for take-out.

Angel Food Bakery

1636 W Montrose Ave • 773-728-1512



photo: Keidra Chaney

It's the bakery of your most decadent sweet-tooth fantasies: the candy colored lime green awning; colorful recreations of chef Stephanie Samuels' customized wedding and birthday cakes are displayed in the window; a collection of vintage Easy Bake Ovens line a shelf near the ceiling. The food and pastries live up to the tasty promise of Angel Food's name—truly heavenly. The lemon squares and brownies are a must-have, and the ginger carrot cake is a delicious twist on a classic. Sunday morning brunch features light, elegant fare, including trout foccacia and baked French toast.

First Fridays and Workshops at the Old Town School of Folk Music

4544 N Lincoln Ave • 773-728-6000 •

www.oldtownschool.com



photo: Keidra Chaney

One of the hidden gems of the venerable north-side music institution are its First Friday events, where for a small "suggested donation" (usually \$4-5), you can watch or join in on a jam session/open mic performance on the first Friday of each month (hence the name). The evening-long party starts with a "song circle," which is open to instruments and singers of all levels, and continues with a songwriter's critique session, screenings of music documentaries in the school's Resource Center,

and performances from Old Town School students and teachers. The atmosphere is casual and encouraging, so don't be afraid to dust off that old acoustic and join in the fun, if you're so inclined. If you're feeling creatively inspired in between First Fridays, check out the school's various one-day workshop offerings in guitar, banjo, voice and dance, or the immensely popular DJ/Turmtablist workshop taught by local DJ Danny the Wild Child.

Keidra Chaney is a Chicago-based writer and editor.