

STARTER

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headed for Chicago, and she went to the Netherlands to work for Rem Koolhaas. In 2000, she joined Felsen in Chicago, and they founded their own firm, UrbanLab.

This fall, UrbanLab surfaces in two high-profile museum shows. For its multidisciplinary exhibition Young Chicago, opening November 18th, Art Institute of Chicago curator Joseph Rosa selected Dunn and Felsen's futuristic proposal for a visitor center, complete with an undulating video façade right out of *Blade Runner*. Meanwhile, the Museum of Contemporary Art is featuring a blueprint for the city of Aurora that embodies the pair's passion for sustainable, green design. "Chicago is a great model for how to build, but our suburban sprawl is bad," says Felsen. "We're using up too many valuable land resources."

Dunn and Felsen, who are both 38, have experimented with green principles in their prefab glass-and-steel loft in Bridgeport, which serves as their home and UrbanLab's office. To build it, they knocked down an old grocery store and used the resulting debris to create a mound of prairie grass, which rises to meet the second-floor residence. Other eco-strategies include a green roof of succulents over the office, radiant heating in floors, and a rotating suspended fireplace.

It was in the middle of building the loft, in 2004, that the pair married in an impromptu ceremony. "We realized we'd have one week free during a slow spot in construction," says Dunn, "so we called our parents and told them we were getting married next Saturday." Not surprisingly, the forward-thinking duo have since stayed busy. They haven't yet found time to take a honeymoon. ■

The Short List

An "amazing race" visits downtown; drink recipes for Turkey Day; some good news for Woodlawn; and more for November



Freeze tag:

For four days starting Nov. 2nd, British runners dressed in black garb and carrying GPS devices will invade downtown. Here at the invitation of the **MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**, the group **BLAST THEORY** will chase virtual characters that anyone can manipulate over the Internet. "It's very much like any **COMPUTER GAME**—[users] see little figures running around on a screen," says Matt Adams, of Blast Theory. "But the fact that these little avatars represent real people dramatizes the relationship between the real and virtual." For info, go to www.mcachicago.org.

Thanksgiving topper:

This year, the food world loves the pomegranate. Take a cue from **KODA BISTRO** in Beverly (10352 S. Western Ave.; 773-445-5632),



and serve up a mind-blowing **POMEGRANATE MARTINI** with this year's holiday feast. As bartender Kathy Merkouris coaches: "Mix one part Pama"—a pomegranate liqueur available for \$24.99 at Sam's Wines & Spirits (1720 N. Marcey St.; 312-664-4394)—"with one part citrus vodka; then add a splash of both sweet-and-sour mix and grenadine."

Fact—or goofy theory?

Is the long-accepted assertion that **WALT DISNEY** was born in Chicago in 1901 just a colorful tale? In *Walt Disney: The Triumph of the*

American Imagination, due out this month (Knopf; \$35), writer **NEAL GABLER** weighs rumors that Disney may have been born in Andalusia to Spanish parents who went to work for Elias and Flora Disney (they later adopted the boy). Gabler dismisses the story—as did Walt. "It is with utter amazement," he wrote in 1945, "that I learned that I was born in Spain, which is certainly stretching the point by 5,000 miles."



Costume crazy:

"Give a kid an **ASTRONAUT SUIT** and an empty room, and he can be on the moon in 12 seconds," says Mark Levine, a Lake Barrington-based toy designer (www.aeromaxtoys.com).

.com). From Nov. 17th through 19th, parents and kids can test Levine's line of "real" dress-up clothes—think NASA suits with patches—at the **CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL TOY & GAME FAIR** (at the *Renaissance Schaumburg*; for info, www.chitag.com).



Made just Wright:

"I grew up with [my great-grandfather's] furniture, and that created an impression," says S. Lloyd Natof, great-grandson of **FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT**. "It clearly adjusted my baseline for what was typical." For 19 years now, the low-key Natof has been building **CUSTOM FURNITURE** out of a West Loop workshop. The first two weekends in November, he holds his **LARGEST PUBLIC SHOW TO DATE** (1217 W. Monroe St.; 312-733-4205, www.slnatof.com).

From the ashes: In 2001, a fire blazed through a Woodlawn community center, destroying everything but the exterior walls. After two years spent blocking rezoning efforts, and three more of renovations, artist **DAN PETERMAN** (with help from local activists) is reopening the newly named Experimental Station (6100 S. Blackstone Ave.; experimentystation.org). Look for artist exhibitions, music classes, and the return of **BLACKSTONE BICYCLE WORKS**, which lets kids trade work hours for bikes.



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