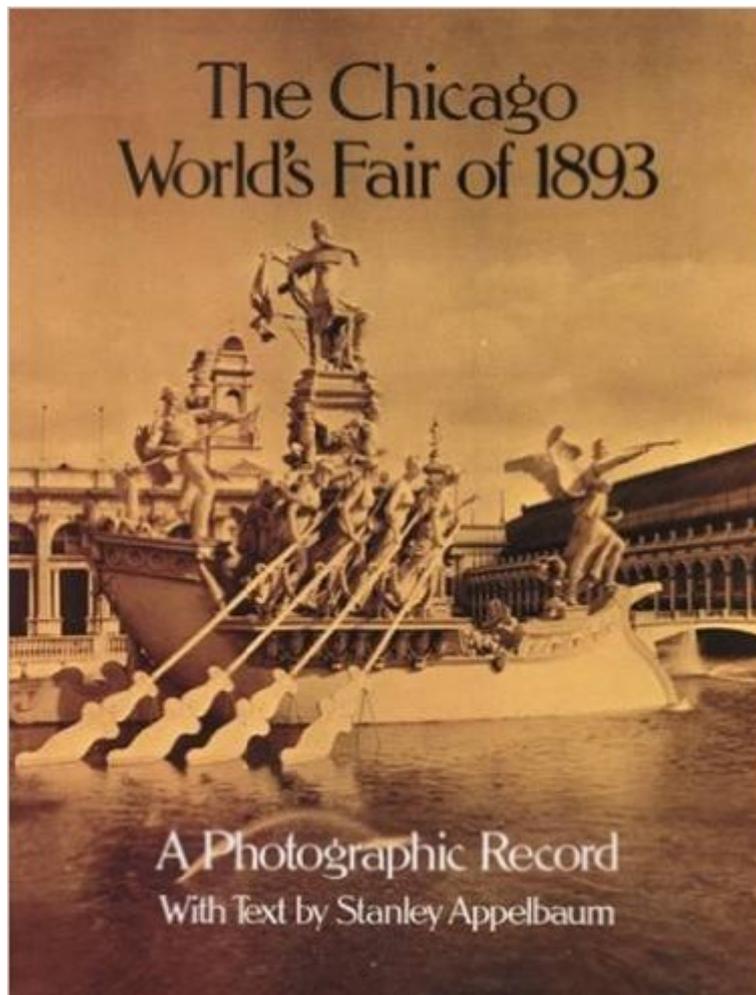


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The Chicago World's Fair Of 1893: A Photographic Record (Dover Architectural)



Synopsis

Originally conceived to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 was one of the largest (633 acres) and most influential aggregations of human talent, energy, and industry ever assembled. More than 27 million visitors entered the grounds (now Jackson Park) to marvel at the exhibits and displays housed in some 200 buildings, including those of 79 foreign governments and 38 states. Although the Fair had its share of "firsts" (original Ferris wheel, first midway, Edison's kinetoscope, etc.), its chief marvel was its architecture. It is that aspect which is emphasized in this striking photographic record. Beginning with an overview of the fair's planning and conceptual stages, Stanley Appelbaum's well-researched text then proceeds to a fascinating discussion of the personalities, regional rivalries, and intense controversy surrounding the Beaux-Arts architecture (the "White City" style) of the fair, including its enormous impact on subsequent American architecture. The contributions of such outstanding architects and firms as R. M. Hunt; McKim, Mead and White; Frederick Law Olmsted; and Peabody and Stearns are described. The book then becomes a building-by-building walking tour of the fair — imaginatively reconstructed with the help of 128 sharply reproduced rare contemporary photographs, printed on fine coated stock, and a concise, fact-filled text. The placid basins, ponds, and Lagoon that graced the fairgrounds lend a serene aura to these priceless views of the great buildings — and sights of the fair: the Beaux-Arts glories of the Administration and Agriculture Buildings; Daniel Chester French's statue of the Republic; the Columbian Fountain by Frederick MacMonnies; the Golden Door of Louis Sullivan's Transportation Building; the Peristyle; Mary Cassatt's mural in the Woman's Building; the pure classicism of the Palace of Fine Arts (now the Museum of Science and Industry); numerous state and foreign pavilions, and of course, the Midway — the first separate amusement area at a World's Fair, and the reputed location of Little Egypt's celebrated *danse du ventre*. In the concluding section, the author touches on other memorable aspects of the fair and its times: the Panic of 1893; the Pullman Strike; famous visitors (Archduke Ferdinand, the Spanish Infanta, etc.); cultural and social congresses, and finally, the disastrous fires that ultimately destroyed many of the buildings. For social and cultural historians, Chicagoans, and anyone interested in the special magic of a world's fair, this book is a loving and nostalgic look back — to a time bathed in the golden light of the fin-de-siècle years, when a colossal spectacle of human achievement in art, science, and industry captured the world's attention for one magic and unforgettable moment.

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Customer Reviews

Beautiful photos and thoughtful text. This book does a nice job of condensing the story and mood of the fair into a quick and easy to read format. I own several books about the fair and while some have more photos, this is still my favorite. A must have for those interested in the Columbian Exposition, Chicago history and architecture. The vastness of the White City is something I can scarcely imagine. I especially appreciated that the author details the fates of many of the fair's artistic treasures as well as discussing the changed landscape of the geographical site of the fair.

I became interested in the Chicago Worlds Fair of 1893 through a friend and I bought this book for him and a copy for myself and was amazed by the beautiful and amazing buildings and the fact that all of these structures stood in my city and then were destroyed. I then read *The Devil in the White City* and pulled this book out as a reference and found the map of the exposition in the front of the book to be a cool way to look up some of the displays or events mentioned in the book (*Devil in the White City*). As I understand it, Burnham only allowed the exposition to be photographed per his approval, therefore, there are only a limited number of pictures that any book could publish on the topic. I think that this book offers big, beautiful pictures and interesting facts about the displays.

One book leads to another. After reading *The Devil in the White City*, I wanted to see the Exposition described in the book. It definitely was an amazing sight to see and this book satisfied most of that curiosity. To go one better, I might look for a book that goes even further into that time in life. The

city is every bit the accomplishment as described in the afore mentioned book. Where is the America of that artful integrity, that is, to do the best that can be accomplished? Gone to disposable products including much of architecture.

In an unprecedented short period of time, the finest architects of the day (including Frederick Law Olmsted of Central Park fame) designed and built the many buildings that made up the Chicago World's Fair. This book shows the success of their Herculean efforts. Further, it is the perfect companion to "Devil in the White City" (the white city is the World's Fair). While reading "Devil," I went on-line often to find pictures of the buildings being discussed, the first Ferris Wheel (which held over 2,000 people!), etc., but was disappointed in how few pictures I was able to find. "The Chicago World's Fair of 1893: A Photographic Record" made the on-line search unnecessary. Since then, I have given the "Photographic Record" together with "Devil in the White City" to several people and recommended it to many more. Everyone agrees that the "Photographic Record" is the perfect companion as well as a great book on its own.

I purchased this photographic record as an accompaniment to the "Devil in the White City" as others have done. I own an original copy of the "Photographs of the World's Fair" published and sold by subscription only by the "Werner Company" of Chicago. The copyright is 1894. The photographs in the Dover publication are far superior as to clarity as one would expect. The difference is the amount of photos taken of the various participants from around the world in my copy. There are 175 pages of photographs, many with multiple photos. As a child in the 1940's, I grew up in Hyde Park/Jackson Park area and visited the "Palace of Fine Arts", AKA, "Museum of Science and Industry" many times and not until I read "The Devil in the White City" and the Dover photographic record did I realize how important the fair was to the city and to the world. These two books are well worth the purchase price.

I had read Erik Larson's "Devil In the White City", an intriguing exciting book which led me to want more of the Chicago's World Fair - which I got so exquisitely documented in the Appelbaum's book. It was like being there, in all its glory, walking through every section, delighting in the magnificent architecture, a mini-miracle in beautiful photographs and detail.

This is an okay pictorial collection of White City photographs. None were new to me, though. My chief complaint is that all of the most striking photographs are blown up to span two pages-- which

means they're cut right down the middle. I would have been happier with photographs oriented vertically to maximize the space on one page while preserving the image.

Having read "Devil in the White City", this photographic record provided clear, concise photos and extensive information regarding the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. Highly recommended for Chicago history buffs.

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