

Northerly Island is a man-filled peninsula located on the north side of the Chicago Park District. It was re-built as a city park designed by Studio Gang in 2003. Before 2003, it was a city airport called Meigs Field. Former Mayor Richard M. Daley accused this airport was too close to the downtown, which might be the terrorism's target. He ordered several bulldozers to destroy the runway in one night in 2003. Then Meigs Field became a city park. Twenty years past, the construction of this island has been paused due to the lack of financial support. However, many people who live close by will still visit here, I'm one of them. I found this "limbo island" back in the summer of 2021. Three man-filled hills planted with bushes and young trees, enclosing a lagoon. Lake Michigan is before the concrete steel dum. Crowds, geese, and many animals are gathering on the 12th street beach, which is connected to the entrance of Northerly Island, vibrating in the summer. In winter, the scene of the island was as unnoticed as its own. Turbulent tide with chopping wind smashed the beach. The beach is empty. Fences block the entrance of Northerly Island. I sometimes turn over the fences, hiking to those hills. Snow covered the whole island. Still, I could notice some footprints people left, a sandhill full of branches on top, like a mysterious ritual just happened before. The wind was roaring. On the southeast end of this island, on the jagged boulders, graffitied "Tell your mom you love her" "You made it". I went there several times. No one did it again. In 1933, Chicago held a famous world fair called "Century of Progress" on Northerly Island. In 1934, all the buildings made a year ago had been destroyed, as nothing happened. At that time, no one graffitied anything on jagged boulders. After I learned its history, I went back to the Island many times, to explore the buried runway, the terminal building has now become a guest center. The landscape seems like always belong to history. When I reviewed those archival images, I witnessed a turboprop plane crash on the Island. It was a dark dark night, snow covered the ground again.

Northerly Island是芝加哥Park District的岛链里最北端的一个人工岛。在2003年被改建为公园，由Gang Studio设计打造。在2003年以前，这里是一个民用机场，Meigs Field。时任市长因机场离城市太近，担心恐怖袭击为由，一夜之间下令在飞机跑道上用推土机划了十来个X。自此就成了城市公园。20年过去，这座岛因为资金缺陷而终止施工。但许多居住在芝加哥市中心南边的居民还是会经常造访这个人造公园。我也是其中之一。我在2021年夏天时第一次发现这个“世外桃源”，大片的山丘，中间围着一个湖泊，翻过人造水泥堤坝，就是密西根湖。夏天人群积聚在附近的第十二街沙滩(12th Street Beach)，野草茂盛。到了冬日，岛上光景便和它本身际遇一样无人问津。湖水汹涌，沙滩空无一人。再往深处走就是被铁栏封住的入口。我时常都越过栅栏，徒步爬上那些山丘。白雪覆盖了这里，我还是能发现一些早前他人留下的脚印，一个插满了枯树枝的小沙丘，像是刚刚举行完一个神秘的仪式。风呼啸，湖水疯狂扑打着浅滩。在这个岛上的东南端，坑洼不平的巨石上，喷绘着“Tell your mom you love her”，“You made it”留给来者。我去过几次。没人再写了。在1993年，芝加哥举办了最盛大的一次世界博览会，叫做Century of Progress，在这座岛上举办。在1934年，上年兴起的岛上建筑被全部推翻。那时，水泥石上的这些所有都还没有被写下。再了解岛本身历史后我再度探寻，掩埋于山丘下的飞机跑道，现已成为游客中心的候机楼。镜头下的景观似乎永远属于历史。在浏览那些档案照片时，我目睹了一架飞机迫降在这座岛上。那是一个黑夜，地面被白雪再次覆盖。

THE LAST DRIVER

1954

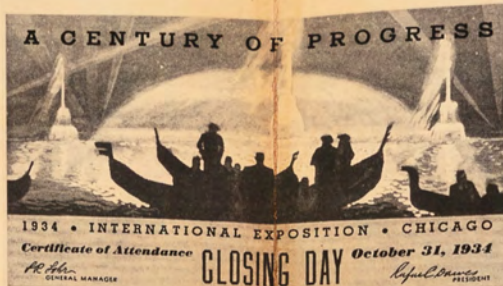
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Alpha Omega Phi sorority luncheon in the dining room of the Administration Building. Miss Martha McGrew, Assistant to the Manager of a Century of Progress gave a talk about the wonders to be expected of the world's fair. After luncheon we toured the grounds.



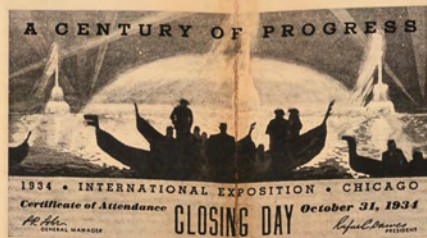
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Alpha Omega Phi Sorority luncheon in the dining room of the Administration Building. Miss Martha McGee, assistant to the Manager of a Century of Progress gave a talk about the wonders to be expected of the World's Fair. After luncheon we toured the grounds.



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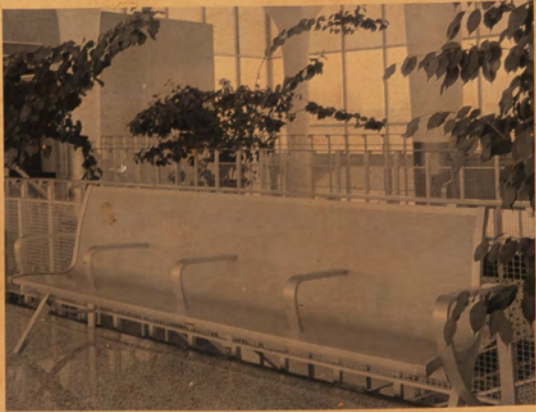
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The disappearing



Airplane



Taking off

In the Storm



Found a dead owl

Found a dead owl



I

With gorgeous black and white feathers

On March 13th 12:31pm





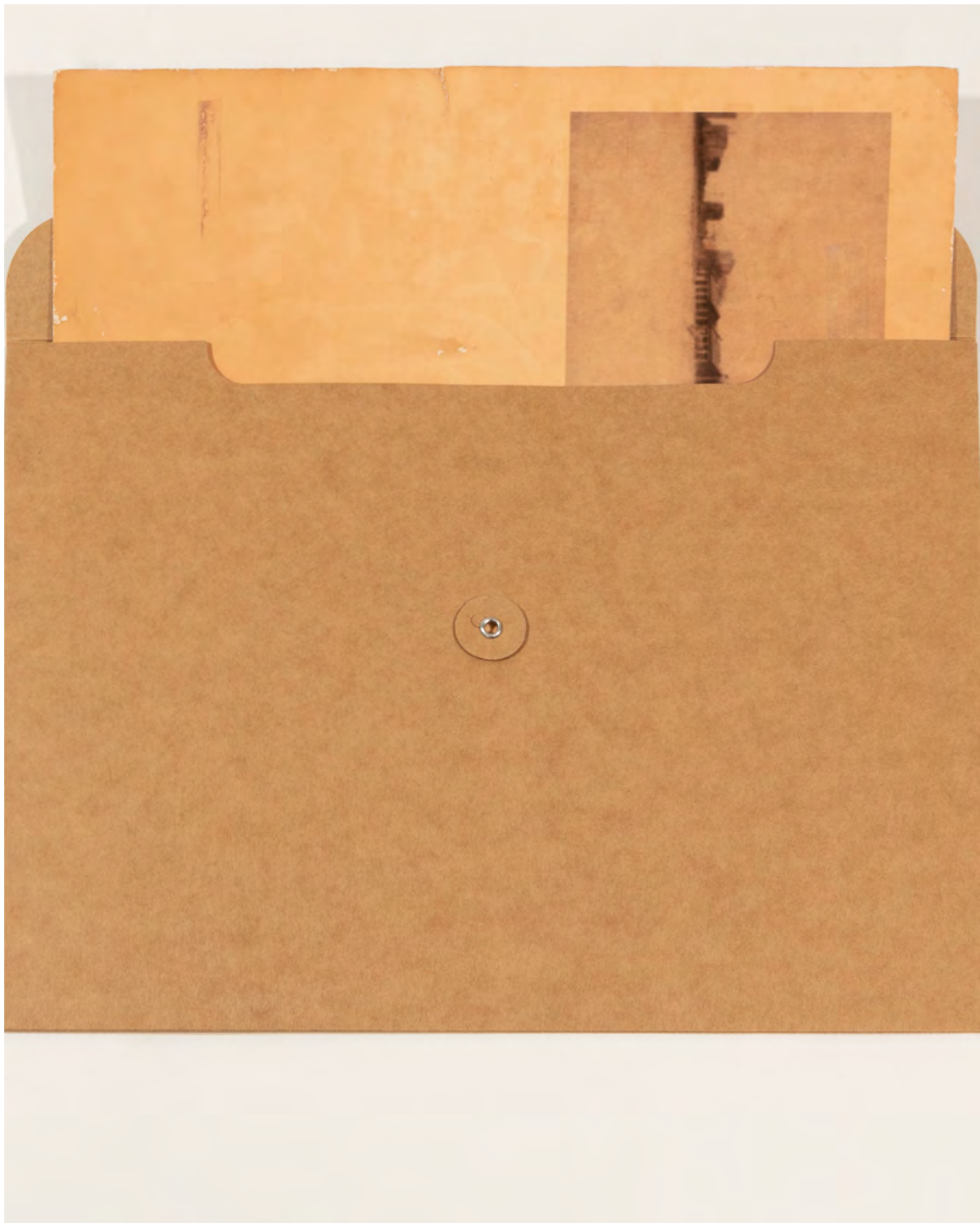
With gorgeous black and white feathers

At 2:31pm

Found a dead owl

On March 13th



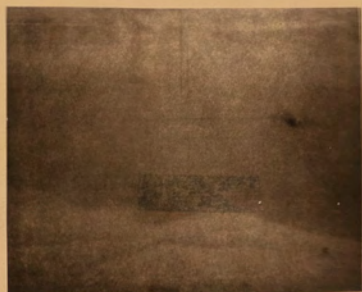








Pathway on lagoon at Northerly Island
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