

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A NEW GOLDEN AGE OF MAGIC BEGINS

THE HAND & THE EYE

TO DEBUT IN THE LEGENDARY MCCORMICK MANSION
SPRING 2026



Exterior of The Hand & The Eye at 100 East Ontario

Image available [here](#)

CHICAGO, May 15, 2025 – A new era of wonder and awe begins as the world’s largest magic venue, *The Hand & The Eye* (100 E. Ontario St.), prepares to open its doors — set within the walls of the McCormick Mansion and masterfully designed and reimagined by Chicago native **David Rockwell** of **Rockwell Group**, one of world’s most celebrated architects. This groundbreaking venue, a home away from home for magicians from around the world, promises an experience where guests don’t simply watch the magic, but are a part of it.

With reverence to the Chicago style close-up magic traditions of the past, made famous by the likes of Matt Schulien, every night is unique, and exploring the thirty-seven room, multi-floor mansion is an experience all its own. Together, some of the great minds of magic have created a curated tour through the history of close-up magic that includes something truly special, personal, and entirely new.

An Architectural Marvel Meets Enchanted History

Nestled in the heart of Chicago, only steps off Michigan Avenue’s Magnificent Mile, the mansion has an entertaining history, serving as a casino the 1930’s and the Kungsholm Grand Opera Puppet Theatre in the 1940’s. Some may remember it as the beloved Lawry’s for almost 40

years. In the beginning, an invitation to the McCormick Mansion was the ticket everyone in Chicago wanted. A place to be seen, enjoy a delicious meal, and be entertained by who - it was never quite certain. That iconic ambiance is making a return, but this time with a twist. World-class magicians and renowned performers, including some who now call Chicago home, will create a not-to-be missed experience.

Once a symbol of old-world charm and opulence, McCormick Mansion has been transformed into a one-of-a-kind destination for magic lovers and curious minds alike. The reimagining of the mansion preserves its legacy while incorporating magical encounters into its design that enhance every corner with a sense of mystery and spectacle, for visitors looking for both an escape from the ordinary and to discover a new way to see what things can be.

A Magical Experience Like No Other

More than just a theater, the venue offers a series of experiential interactions that blur the line between guest and performer. In fact, there is no line as guests are involved in all of the magic, and visitors are guided through secret passageways, as they encounter world-class magicians in intimate, personalized performances — each tailored to evoke a sense of awe and connection.

From close-up sleight of hand to every type of magic, each act is curated to engage the senses and reawaken wonder, all delivered by legendary performers from around the world.

Food to Match the Magic

The Hand & The Eye's Executive Vice President **Bre Smith** says, "Everyone on our team is a part of creating a genuine experience. They are each empowered to create magic moments for our guests and our message is simply that everyone has their own magic to share."

The deep connections to magic included everyone involved in the project, which is what makes the team so special. Not only is **Andy Lansing**, CEO of **Levy Restaurants**, the organization that will create memorable and delicious dining experiences, but he is also a magic collector and magician in his own right. Lansing says, "this project combines two of my great passions - creating great dining experiences and exploring every aspect of the world of magic. Both are about delighting someone."

Rockwell Group, the award-winning design firm led by **David Rockwell**, known for theatrical architecture and distinctive environments, is leading the reimagination of the mansion. Rockwell Group is shaping the guest journey through the artful interplay of form, material, and movement — bringing the mansion's storied past into a vibrant new era.

"As a designer, you are always looking for the next interesting and challenging project. To work within the legacy of the McCormick Mansion and be asked to create a wonder- and discovery-filled space that becomes the backdrop for creating unforgettable experiences is as good as it gets," says Rockwell, founder and President of Rockwell Group. "Our design guides guests on a uniquely tailored journey among a variety of unique and different performance spaces, opulent bars, and captivating dining rooms that blend motifs from past for an almost out-of-time, mystical experience."

And the founding team includes magicians who have already moved to Chicago. Magician and *The Hand & The Eye's* Curator of Magic, **Jeff Kaylor** says, "I can't imagine a better place than

Chicago to bring back the Golden Age of Magic. After all, the Chicago Magic tradition is strong and respecting the history in a building built for magic is a dream come true.”

Glen Tullman, who brought the team together to create *The Hand & the Eye*, has a simple message, “This is not something you go to see. It’s an experience you have and are a part of. And once you have the experience, you want to share it with others because it’s impossible to describe, like a picture that doesn’t capture something you saw. You must be there to feel it.”

Spanning 35,000 square feet and representing a \$50 million investment, the venue is set to debut in Spring 2026, with tickets and memberships available through an exclusive pre-release to be announced.

Already generating buzz among entertainers, architects, cultural tastemakers, and everyone who already loves Chicago, this magic mansion is poised to become a global icon for interactive storytelling and artistic innovation.

The Minds Behind the Magic — And the Experience

About Glen Tullman

Glen Tullman is a lifelong believer in the power of magic to inspire and connect. As the Chief Executive Officer of Transcarent, a digital health and care company helping to reinvent traditional healthcare, and the co-founder of 7wireVentures, a Chicago-based digital health venture firm, he has helped transform industries by putting people at the center of the experience — a philosophy that carries into *The Hand & The Eye*. A longtime Chicagoan with deep ties to the community, Glen is also deeply committed to giving back, including, most importantly, finding a cure for Type 1 Diabetes. His passion for creating spaces of wonder, discovery, and world-class connection is at the heart of this endeavor.

About Bre Smith

Bre Smith is a hospitality and experience-driven executive whose leadership has been shaped by tenures at some of the world’s most respected properties, including The Ritz-Carlton, Ambassador Chicago, and Soho House. With over two decades of expertise in guest experience, operations, and brand storytelling. Smith is leading the efforts to open the venue’s doors in 2026, where magic and authentic dining experiences will come together to create lasting memories and new traditions in the heart of Chicago. At *The Hand & The Eye*, Smith makes little things feel big – because true magic lives in the details that people overlook. After stints around the world, we’ve brought her back to Chicago to create the magic only she can make happen!

About Rockwell Group

Based in New York with offices in Los Angeles and Madrid, Rockwell Group is an interdisciplinary architecture and design firm that emphasizes innovation and thought leadership in every project. Founded in 1984 by David Rockwell, FAIA, the 330-person firm merges performance and architecture to create extraordinary experiences and built environments across the globe. Since growing up travelling in Mexico, Rockwell has always had a passion for magic and theatre in public spaces. Inspired by theater, technology, and high-end craft, the firm creates a unique narrative for each project, ranging from hospitality to cultural and educational institutions to theaters and Broadway sets. For more, visit www.rockwellgroup.com or follow @rockwellgroup on Instagram.

About Levy

Levy is recognized as the market leader and most critically acclaimed company in the food, beverage and hospitality industry. Levy has twice been named one of the 10 Most Innovative Companies by *Fast Company* and has been honored by *Forbes* as a Best Large Employer, Best Employer for Diversity, and Best Employer for Women. Levy's diverse portfolio includes award-winning restaurants; iconic sports and entertainment venues, zoos and cultural institutions, theaters and music festivals, and convention centers; as well as the Super Bowl, Grammy Awards, US Open Tennis Tournament, Kentucky Derby, Coachella and Stagecoach Music Festivals, and NHL, MLB, NBA, NFL, and MLS All-Star Games. Andy's personal passion for magic is present in the entrepreneurial culture of Levy to inspire the creativity in team members to wonder and develop new ideas. For more, visit levyrestaurants.com or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#).

About Pentagram

Pentagram is a multi-disciplinary, independently owned design studio whose work spans graphics and identity, strategy and positioning, products and packaging, exhibitions and installations, websites and digital experiences, advertising and communications, data visualizations, typefaces, sound, and motion. Its 23 partners are practicing designers who work both collaboratively and independently, maintaining a spirit of friendship and creative exchange. Pentagram is uniquely structured as the only major design studio where the owners are also the creators of the work and the primary client contact—reflecting a belief that great design requires passion, intelligence, and above all, personal commitment. For more, visit www.pentagram.com.

About Jeff Kaylor

Jeff Kaylor is an internationally acclaimed magician and speaker who has performed in over 400 cities across 40 countries. For the past 17 years, he has been an innovator in the world of magic — creating original devices and effects used by magicians around the globe. He is currently touring with his signature keynote, *Creating Magic Moments*, inspiring audiences to break patterns and create unforgettable experiences in their daily lives. Jeff moved to Chicago to help create *The Hand & The Eye*. He says --- you are either all in or not --- and his goal has been to do something that would have an outsized impact on the world and history of magic. His vision has been to create a venue dedicated to the art of close-up magic — a space built for people to put their phones away, lean in, and witness magic the way it was meant to be seen — live and up close and very personal.

About Michael Ammar

Michael Ammar, hailed as one of the most influential magicians of the twentieth century, brings a lifetime of performance, innovation, and mentorship to *The Hand & The Eye*. Michael has taught and inspired generations of magicians — many of whom are now among the world's finest performers — sharing the techniques and philosophy that have shaped modern close-up magic. His work embodies the spirit of trusted discovery and shared astonishment, making each moment feel deeply personal and wonderfully impossible. In addition to his role as "the Professor", Michael is an amazing performer, with appearances on *The Tonight Show*, *Late Night with David Letterman*, and global stages from the Magic Castle to the Vatican. Ammar has captivated audiences for more than 50 years with a style defined by precision, spontaneity, and pure delight.

About Nick Lacapo

Nick Lacapo is one of the most recognized magicians working today. As the 'official magician' of Penguin Magic — the world's largest magic retailer — and a founding member of the P3 Magic Theater, he has spent over a decade at the forefront of the field, performing thousands of live

shows, developing hundreds of original effects, and helping shape how magic is taught, learned, and experienced. With his touring show, Masterpiece Magic, and regular appearances at top venues including The Magic Castle, House of Cards, and Mystique Dining, Nick brings a sharp mind, a warm presence, and a passion for the impossible to every audience he meets.

About The Hand & The Eye

The Hand & The Eye is the world's premiere destination for live magic and experiential entertainment, located in the reimagined McCormick Mansion. In a design reimagined by David Rockwell of Rockwell Group, it combines state-of-the-art performance spaces with rich historical charm to deliver unparalleled personal experiences in magic, illusion, and storytelling and the culinary arts.

For more information on *The Hand & The Eye*, visit www.thehandandtheeye.com.

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