

Welcome to the Chicago Arts District



**PODMAJERSKY**

since 1914

# CHICAGO ARTS DISTRICT

## History

In 1914, John and Elizabeth Podmajersky, Slovak immigrants, settled in the Pilsen East neighborhood and raised their family. Through hard work, they became the owners of a dairy in the heart of this Eastern European port-of-entry. The first of their properties was purchased to house the dairy, family members, and new immigrants employed by the business. As the neighborhood grew, so did their business. They began to purchase additional properties, and provided housing as well as employment to many immigrants arriving from their homeland. By the late 1950's the community was in decline due to construction of a major highway and the resulting suburban flight. Their son, John Podmajersky Jr., and his wife Annelies, returned to the neighborhood with a goal to revitalize the once vibrant community through ambitious urban design. They converted dilapidated buildings into artists' lofts organized around a series of urban gardens created from reclaimed alleyways. Artists came in a steady flow, and their son, John Podmajersky III, purchased his first property in Pilsen East in 1987. The third generation to live, work, and invest in the community, he understood the pressures of a developing metropolitan area, and in 2002 launched the *Chicago Arts District* (CAD) with the goal of creating a destination art community and economic stability for artists looking to become entrepreneurs.

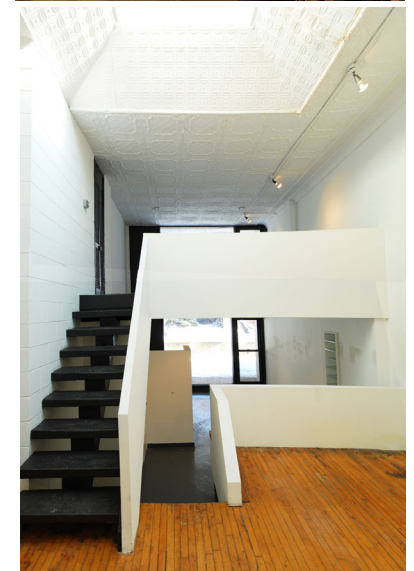
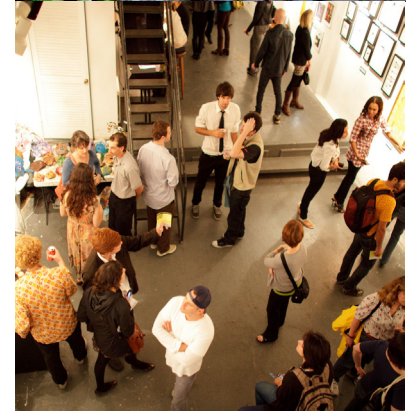
## Overview

Through three generations of property assembly and private investment, the *Chicago Arts District* now encompasses a number of contiguous blocks of creative space. Live and work spaces, gallery, loft, studio, office, industrial, and exhibition space are all offered by Podmajersky, Inc. The company is more than a property owner. It is a steward of the neighborhood, voluntarily assuming responsibilities that are typically the province of local government. During the last ten years, the *Chicago Arts District* staff, working closely with the team at Podmajersky, Inc., has supported more than 100 creative entrepreneurs in starting, growing, and marketing their art businesses.

Supported by Podmajersky, Inc., the independent staff of CAD connects the public with the neighborhood and its artists through programs and outreach. A monthly newsletter and website showcase the work of its artists. Popular programs include the Pilsen East Artists Open House, 2nd Fridays Gallery Night, a monthly collaborative opening of the thirty galleries of the *Chicago Arts District*; showPOD, a public art project based on an installation format, as well as numerous special events designed to connect people with an authentic art experience.

## Vision

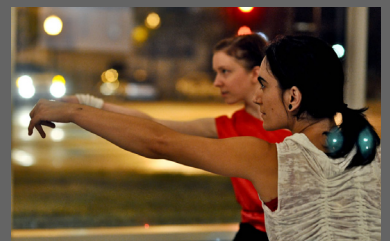
With a passion for infill development, urban planning, quality of life issues, and sensitive design, John Podmajersky III holds a vision for the neighborhood. He sees an outstanding pedestrian community, with the charm of the old world and the excitement made possible by a vibrant multi-cultural city like Chicago.





# our work

Podmajersky, Inc. has been creating community and economic development through inspired environments, sensitive planning and the creative use of existing structures for over 50 years.





inspired environments



inspired environments



inspired environments



inspired environments



creative programming





inspired environments



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creative programming



inspired environments



creative programming



inspired environments

## Some comments from our residents...

- *“This is the best collection of unique vintage apartments or loft spaces with character and charm in the entire city. The places Podmajersky has are like nothing else on the market. Podmajersky has done a lot for the area and for the artists which they house.” - Audrey T. 2007*
- *“Great to see all of your company’s investment in the neighborhood. Keep up the good work”- Seth P. 2010*
- *“I live in a stunning two-story loft with tons of light and space. I pay a very fair rent and as an artist (photographer) and someone who works very hard at part-time jobs (because I want to keep my time free to develop my photography) - I look for value in just about everything. I certainly feel I found it living in the Pods. My rent is affordable, I have street parking and plenty of it for guests, I have a great location to get almost anywhere in the city and great public transportation - my favorite mode. Mostly though I have to say I have found the Pod staff so accommodating, helpful and responsive. Jamie McBain (just had a baby boy) is great. Karen, Danielle and Cynthia - all of whom I have had interactions with - are great to work with, but best of all is my space. Love my home.” -Barbara H. 2010*
- *“We appreciate your support, as well as all the help over the years in making us the artists that we are. Thank you.” -Greg and Jill 2008*
- *“On behalf of Nicole and myself, I just wanted to extend a big ‘thank you’ to you and Podmajersky for helping us find our new home. We are really excited to stay a part of the Arts District community.” -Jeremy M. 2010*
- *“I was at openings tonight - River North first... it was a bit dead and uninspiring. I then went to back to Pilsen; much more energy, and much of the work looked quite good. I’m impressed with how much energy and excitement your 2nd Fridays are generating. Congratulations.”- David K. 2012*

## Some comments from our residents...

- *“Cynthia, you have a real gift of bringing together the perfect experiences to showcase Chicago Arts District. No wonder you’ve remained Director for ten years -- It was a perfect combination and I learned so much about Chicago’s creative talent. I particularly enjoyed the last presentation of how those young people are getting children exposed to the arts.” - Mary Jane B. 2011*
- *“You really are the best. I couldn’t be happier living anywhere else! Thank you.” - Jenn I. 2010*
- *“I wanted to thank you again and again for how quickly my maintenance requests have been answered and completed. I really appreciate it! The new refrigerator is great!!” -Tiffany P. 2009*
- *“Just wanted to thank the guys for what I’d say is nothing short of miraculous job of snow removal. Really, I’ve not seen anything like it- Incredible! Please let everybody know that it’s appreciated!” - Scott M. 2011*
- *“Cynthia, thank you again for bringing the Chrysler Museum group to my studio - You did a great job handling and directing them. I’ll invite you back to the studio when the new installation piece gets near completion.” -David K. 2011*
- *“By the way, we used a counter for Friday’s opening and we had over 1000 people come through the space (1,030 actually). Just thought you’d want to know...” Mike N. Gallery Owner 2009*
- *“So this weekend, I just went to my first 2nd Friday event since moving into my funky, new, Podmajersky managed apartment 3 1/2 months ago. How awesome is it to have all this amazing artwork and something worth doing on a Friday night, right outside of my front door?” Stephen P. 2010*
- *“Karen and Daniell, you have been such a help in all of our needs as tenants with Podmajersky. All the best this new year!!” -Seth P. 2010*