



“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

OVERVIEW

Each year, the Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) organizes Jane’s Walk NYC: an annual festival of free, volunteer-led walking conversations inspired by famed urbanist and New Yorker Jane Jacobs. The goal of the festival is to inspire the public at large to more deeply engage in New York City’s many neighborhoods, cultures, and stories. Jane’s Walk NYC encourages people to lead their own walks about their neighborhoods, discover unseen aspects of their own communities, and use walking as a way to connect with their neighbors. New Yorkers and visitors of all backgrounds are able to join 200+ walks across all five boroughs presenting opportunities for educational urban exploration, celebrating Jane Jacobs and the city we love.

About Jane Jacobs

During the age of top-down master planning, Jane Jacobs turned conventional wisdom on its head. She is best known for galvanizing the West Village to resist an expressway that would have destroyed the neighborhood as we know it. Jane believed in the power of individuals to influence their city.

Jane Jacobs is viewed as a pioneer and her work continues to have a dramatic impact on how cities planning, urban economics, and values are understood. In addition, she provided a unique voice within urban planning, both in her unorthodox philosophies about neighborhoods and transit, and as a woman in a universally male-dominated field. The Jane’s Walk program keeps Jane’s mission alive for the next generation of urbanists.

About Jane’s Walk

Jane’s Walk is an annual global festival held the first weekend in May. Jane’s Walk NYC, organized by the Municipal Art Society of New York, is the largest festival anywhere in the world. MAS staff organize a fleet of volunteers, including borough captains and walk leaders, to create 200+ in-person, virtual, and on-demand walks with over 10,000 participants.



During Jane’s Walk NYC weekend, the simple act of exploring the city is enhanced with personal observations, local history, and civic engagement. Jane’s Walk NYC encourages people to share stories about their neighborhoods, discover unseen aspects of their communities, and connect with visitors and neighbors alike.

Here are just a few of the Jane’s Walks featured in past years:

- A People’s History of NYC: Native Americans, African Americans, and Immigrants
- A Glimpse of the Ghosts of the Five Points
- Relive Life under the Chinese Exclusion Act
- The Insects and Arthropods of Staten Island
- From Crow Hill to Crown Heights: Black History in Central Brooklyn
- Gay Bars That Are Gone
- Off to the Races at the Old Harlem Speedway
- Ghosts of Greenwich Village
- Unpacking The Meatpacking District
- Celebrate the Harlem Renaissance
- Lost Theaters of Bay Ridge

Outreach and Impact

Each year, MAS aims to elevate public awareness for the festival and increase accessibility of both walk locations and non-English language offerings.

Marketing and social media campaigns plus strong organizational partners such as the New York Public Library and the Urban Archive, have helped expand our reach with a 22% increase in the number of walks from 2020, and we look forward to continued growth with new outreach initiatives in 2023 and beyond.

Jane’s Walk NYC receives coverage and promotion from a wide range of media outlets, including *The New York Times*, *NY Daily News*, *Time Out NY*, *WNYC*, *Gothamist*, *Curbed*, *New York Observer*, and many others.

About the Municipal Art Society

For 130 years, Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) has lifted up the voices of the people in the debates that shape New York’s built environment and leads the way toward a more livable city from sidewalk to skyline.

MAS envisions a city in which all New Yorkers share in the richness of city life – where growth is balanced, character endures, and a resilient future is secured.

