

My name is Dee Case, and I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. I remember always being interested in the arts as a kid but found my true inspiration on a middle school field trip. I learned about the legendary Black architect, Paul R. Williams, who went from learning how to draw upside down since his white clients refused to sit next to him to making an enormous mark on the architectural design of Southern California. Because of Williams, I went on to pursue a BC in Architecture at Wright College, before earning a BA in Architecture Studies from University of Illinois Chicago.

While in college, I realized that I wanted to help expand access to architectural design through education, which led me to obtain my teacher's license and begin teaching at Dunbar Vocational Career Academy. As a teacher, I felt as though my students needed an outlet to be proud of the things they were creating, so I organized an annual End of Year Showcase in which friends, family, and community members could admire the young artists' work.

In 2017, I started exploring another art form I love, photography. I became increasingly aware of the amount underutilized space in Chicago and began photographing these areas. After speaking with a friend who has experience in animation, we decided to superimpose different uses for the spaces to show the distinct opportunity each one had. Together we envisioned community centers, playgrounds, co-op living spaces, farmer's markets and more.

Today, I still use my background in architecture and newfound love of photography to make art more accessible to youth and uplift the potential of underutilized areas in the city. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with family, watching stand-up comedy and organizing against mass incarceration.