Modern Landscape Architecture: Presentation and Preservation
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Expanding the Field: Modern Landscape Architecture and Historic Preservation

CHARLES A. BIRNBAUM

Twenty years ago I last had the good fortune to serve as a guest editor for what was then called Historic Preservation Forum. That May/June 1993 issue was the Forum’s first thematic volume solely dedicated to the emerging field of landscape preservation. As noted in my preface, the goal was to “present recent advancements in the development of this specific discipline and to highlight the landscape preservation process.”1 At the conclusion of my opening essay, “Landscape Preservation Today,” I issued the following call to action: “Given the current knowledge and evolution of the field, new project work should be measured against new standards.”2

Continuing the spirit of “presenting recent advancements,” this Forum issue focuses on the critical task of preserving Modern landscape architecture, and follows up on the Forum Journal’s Fall 2000 edition in which broader issues of post-war heritage were addressed. Then Trust president Richard Moe noted in his introductory essay, “When Sprawl Becomes Historic”: “The 1960s and 1970s don’t seem that long ago to some of us.”3 In the same issue I wrote of the Modernist preservation dilemma: “When we think about the preservation and management of historic designed landscapes in the West, specifically California, images of Golden Gate Park, Yosemite, Filoli, or even the Huntington Botanical Gardens come to mind.”4 However, while practitioners such as Thomas Church (1902-1978) or Garret Eckbo (1910-2000) “merit our interest... it is doubtful... that we would automatically think about preserving their legacy.”

INCREASED VISIBILITY FOR MODERN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Much has changed in the past dozen years. To begin with, the profession of landscape architecture has witnessed the most significant changing of the guard since the end of the Olmsted era. Many
of the influential professionals that were active during the post-war years have died or retired. This leadership change has offered new opportunities to examine the value we assign our shared legacy of post-war landscape architecture.

The new millennium was marked by significant changes in the visibility of Modern landscape architecture: first, the National Historic Landmark (NHL) program completed the first thematic study to recognize the contributions of a living landscape architect—Dan Kiley. In March 2000, the iconic Miller Garden in Columbus, Ind., was designated an NHL as part of the thematic study, “Modernism in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Design and Art in Bartholomew County, Indiana, 1942-1999.” That same month, Thomas Church was recognized in the National Register of Historic Places designation of the General Motors Technical Center campus in Warren, Mich., as a historic district.

Later that year the critical first steps were taken toward the founding of the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), joining the more established HABS and HAER documentation pro-
grams. HALS became an important new documentation tool, particularly for Modernist landscape architecture. In 2003 Lawrence Halprin’s Skyline Park in Denver, Colo., became the nation’s first Modernist landscape and first Colorado landscape documented to HALS standards, and then, sadly, it was largely demolished.

Since then, other significant, and in some cases threatened, Modernist landscapes have been documented for HALS including M. Paul Friedberg’s Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis, Minn., in 2006 and in 2005, the Kaiser Roof Garden in Oakland, Calif., by Theodore Osmundson, David Arbogast, and John Staley, while others were lost or radically altered. Along with Halprin’s Skyline Park, the following Modern works of landscape architecture met the wrecking ball: New York’s Lincoln Center by Dan Kiley (2005); the sculpture garden at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts by Lawrence Halprin (2006); the Chambers Waterfront Park in Beaufort, S.C., by Robert Marvin (2005); and the Reese Hospital Complex in Chicago by Walter Gropius and landscape architects Hideo Sasaki and Lester Collins (2009).

Fortunately during this time, Modernist works began attracting the design and preservation communities’ attention—and engage-
ment. In tandem with this, we saw a surge in survey, recordation, and registration. Moreover, rehabilitation projects that balanced change and continuity were becoming the norm.

In this period the first two Lawrence Halprin designs were listed in the National Register (Park Central Square, Springfield, Mo., and Heritage Park, Fort Worth, Tex., both in 2010), and the landscape of the United States Air Force Academy by Dan Kiley became an NHL in 2004. As further evidence of a shifting tide, this past fall, four major Modernist works were considered for listing in the National Register of Historic Places: the Portland Chain of Open Spaces in Oregon (designed by Lawrence Halprin), Gas Works Park in Seattle (Richard Haag), Tucson Convention Center (Garrett Eckbo), and Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis (M. Paul Friedberg)—the last of which is also threatened with demolition.

Recent trends in survey, registration, and documentation are chronicled in greater detail in the essay by Gretchen Hilyard and Courtney Spearman, titled, “Establishing a Historic Context for Modern Landscape Architecture,” while Nancy Slade, in her “Resource Guide for Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture,” documents the coast-to-coast growth in special collections that emphasize landscape, university, and private press publication series that are steadily adding to our foundational knowledge. Most significantly, questions about the cultural value of the designed urban landscape have moved from intellectual arguments in scholarly journals to debates in city councils, on editorial pages, in the blogosphere. Increasingly and incrementally, the cultural value of Modernist works, namely those from the recent past, are being thoughtfully re-evaluated as the resurrection of the country’s urban centers continues. However, much work still needs to be done as this reconsideration is still too often accompanied by a threat to a site’s existence or design integrity.

NEW TOOLS NEEDED

Given these developments, is it time to develop additional tools for evaluating and valuing our authentic Modernist landscape heritage? Tools that go beyond designation and sustainable design solutions? If under U.S. law an Environmental Impact Statement is required for
certain actions that “significantly affect the quality of the human
environment,” should Cultural Impact Statements be in our future?
Can historic preservation professionals make this part of their toolkit
for responsible design and wise, sustainable stewardship?

As mentioned earlier, debates are occurring around the country
and, more often than not, the decision on action is cast as an “either/
or” scenario, either preserve or raze and replace. On occasion that is
appropriate. Usually, however, it’s not. Nevertheless, proverbial lines
in the sand are drawn, the usual suspects queue up to take sides and
more reasoned conversation is trampled (remember when we used
to talk about the “third way”? Perhaps it’s time to resurrect that con-
cept). How can we strike a balance between change and continuity?
When do we destroy sufficient historic fabric to such an extent that
we lose the authentic, character-defining features that make a work
of landscape architecture distinct or significant? Are there solutions
that can be evaluated and endorsed by both the design and historic
preservation communities?

It’s easy to point to New York’s High Line (James Corner Field
Operations), which is justifiably an internationally celebrated triumph
of design and historic preservation. Unfortunately, it has spurred
a somewhat myopic copycat mentality, with officials in other cit-
ies scampering to find their own abandoned sections of elevated
railroad. The High Line is a unique confluence of location, location,
location, resource, design, and a phenomenal friends group. I think
municipalities should employ a more flexible, constructive, and
entrepreneurial mindset, one that looks broadly at cities’ cultural
assets and thinks more holistically about their integration. Here are
three examples with which I have been personally involved: one has
successfully resolved itself, the other two are still being debated.

THE NEED FOR A MORE FLEXIBLE MINDSET

Pittsburgh’s Mellon Square (by John Simonds), which is discussed
at length in this volume by Susan Rademacher, is the first Modernist
landscape built over a parking garage. The project was announced
in 1949 and opened to considerable acclaim in 1955, an oasis amidst
a sea of concrete and asphalt. However, this experimental design
proved difficult to maintain. Fountains leaked, plantings died in the
winter, and fountain tiles wouldn’t adhere, among other maladies, and the city grew weary of constant expenditures. A subsequent $3.1 million rehabilitation ultimately failed to solve the problems and by 2007 new actions were being considered. Fortunately, as Rademacher chronicles in her essay “Reviving the Square in the Heart of the Triangle,” there has been success.

Next is the Fulton Mall in Fresno, a six-block pedestrian mall on the site of Fresno’s historic “Main Street,” constructed in 1964. This pioneering attempt at revitalizing a city’s center by Garrett Eckbo and Victor Gruen was one of more than 200 urban pedestrian malls constructed in North America from 1959 to the mid-1980s. Fresno’s downtown has suffered from economic downturns like dozens of other downtowns nationally and now the Fulton Mall is being reassessed. The current debate is an “either/or” scenario: either reopen all of the streets to vehicular traffic as a new design calls for, or reopen none as preservationists want. The former would fundamentally alter the site’s design, while the latter doesn’t adequately recognize present-day needs or economic realities. A middle-ground solution that recognizes the Mall’s cultural value as

Completed in 1954, the Fulton Mall in Fresno, Calif., was designed by Garrett Eckbo. Originally acclaimed as a pioneering approach to revitalizing city centers, the design of this pedestrian mall is today the subject of debate.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION
a seminal project in Eckbo’s career and the oldest, surviving Mall in the Modernist style is called for.

Finally, there’s Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis (full disclosure—my organization is a co-plaintiff in a suit to prevent the Plaza’s demolition, and I was also a consultant on the team selected to revitalize Peavey). Completed in 1975, this Modernist public space, adjacent to Orchestra Hall, is the most important extant work by M. Paul Friedberg and the progenitor of the “park plaza” landscape typology. According to ASLA Minnesota Chapter’s Valued Places: Landscape Architecture in Minnesota, “The plaza is considered a high point of modern-period landscape architecture in Minneapolis.” Orchestra Hall is undergoing a major renovation and the owners of Orchestra Hall and the city have decided that Peavey no longer works for them and should be replaced.

Peavey has been poorly maintained and does need help; however, the public is being offered a false choice: either raze and replace the plaza or restore it to its original 1975 condition (which
the city misleadingly calls “replacement”). Why not rehabilitation? This approach would maintain the site’s character-defining features while addressing accessibility and programmatic issues. Friedberg, at his own expense, came up with an alternative concept that solved the problems. Nevertheless, the city has determined there are no alternatives to demolition and that a tabula rasa approach is necessary. To read more about Peavey see Charlene Roise’s essay on page 19.

Here’s the irony. Lack of maintenance is like removal of life support, but in this case, we blame the patient for getting sicker. Consequently, these parks, starved of resources, are deemed at fault and must be demolished!

THE INVISIBLE LANDSCAPE
This situation is not exclusive to landscape architecture; the well established architecture preservation community still battles daily to save examples of the nation’s unique Modernist architecture. But, they deal with a public that has a basic understanding of architecture’s worth and an awareness of the variety of design and the value that authenticity and diversity bring to their communities. Landscape, by contrast, is largely invisible. Moreover, landscape architecture in these situations is generally demonized and has to be defended before a public education campaign can be mounted about its value and virtues.

We are in an era of urban re-renewal where ecological and cultural systems underpin our urban landscape infrastructure, in all of its rich, glorious, and at times messy manifestations. New York Times architecture critic Michael Kimmelman alluded to this re-renewal in his review of “Spontaneous Interventions—Design Actions for the Common Good,” the official U.S. entry at the Venice Architecture Biennale, when he quotes one architect as saying “every city is a fixer-upper.” The “fixer-upper” mentality, as the exhibit notes, underpins “citizen-led urban improvements.” The challenge for us all is to harness the energy, involvement, and collective concern of those engaged in “citizen-led urban improvements” and provide them with the tools to see, understand, and value Modern landscape architecture. Then we can leverage the recent collective develop-
ments in research, recordation, registration, planning, and design to insure that our shared narrative and the post-war landscape expressions that remain will be carefully and thoughtfully incorporated as part of our urban fabric. Abstaining from or abdicating that responsibility will most certainly lead to more bland design and the additional homogenization of our urban core. FJ

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Once—when Pittsburgh was truly the “Smoky City,” when businessmen took an extra white shirt along for afternoon wear, when Fortune 500 companies couldn’t persuade executive talent to move their families there, and when downtown streets were clogged with cars—an emerald ambition was born. There would be a post-World War II renaissance in the city’s fabled “Golden Triangle,” the birthplace of industrial fortunes. This renaissance would clean the air, accommodate parking needs, and create dazzlingly urbane public spaces. It would keep U.S. Steel and the American Aluminum Company (Alcoa) from abandoning America’s “Arsenal of Democracy” for Manhattan.

A bi-partisan coalition of the powerful realized this ambition with thrilling speed. They passed clean air legislation, formed new authorities, agencies, and commissions, and married public with private funding. The products of this effort included Point State Park, Gateway Center, and the Civic Arena (recently demolished), but the first of the emblematic public spaces was Mellon Square. Its opening in 1955 was widely publicized and did much to rebrand the emerging modern city.

THE SITE AT SIXTH AND SMITHFIELD

The proposed site for the new square was at Sixth Avenue and Smithfield Street, which had nearly always been adjacent to one or another of the successive Mellon Bank buildings. Mellon National Bank had, over its 77-year history, orchestrated the growth of top American industries and Richard King Mellon well understood the role played by the urban environment in the success of its corporate citizens. In 1945, R.K. Mellon and cousin Paul Mellon advanced the idea of creating an ensemble of two new office towers fronting on the one-block site at Sixth and Smithfield. The Mellon concept for the towers and adjacent park was clearly influenced
by Manhattan’s Rockefeller Center. But both R. K. Mellon and Pittsburgh’s mayor, David L. Lawrence, had also been impressed by Union Square in San Francisco, where excavation beneath a 19th-century park had created an underground parking garage, which was completed in 1941.

Their ideas caught the attention of other city leaders, and two years later, work on the city park and underground parking garage got underway. A gift of $4.3 million by a trio of Mellon and Scaife family foundations allowed the city to acquire the land and build the park landscape. Public bonds were used to construct the garage along with revenue from parking and retail rentals, revenue which later was to be used to help maintain the park. The collaborative design team was Mitchell & Ritchey (focusing on the garage structure) and Simonds & Simonds (focusing on the public park). Together they would create 1,000 parking spaces and give a “breathing space and beauty spot” to downtown workers.

THE “PARKING PARK”

When the Mellon Square project was announced in 1949, there was “not a single blade of grass,” in downtown Pittsburgh, as remembered by Robert Pease, former executive director of the Urban Redevelopment Authority. The new park changed all that. When the “Parking Park” opened to great fanfare on October 18, 1955, Mayor Lawrence proclaimed “...we are, in a true and real sense, giving Pittsburgh a new symbol of this community’s character, its new confidence and its great expectation... this mid-city park of beautiful design and of skilled craftsmanship typifies the spirit of the new Pittsburgh.”

Mellon Square was a vivid icon of an optimistic era, its 1.37
acres encapsulating the political will, financial savvy, unlikely partnerships, and design ambition that remade the city for the second half of the 20th century.

It was, said landscape architect John Ormsbee Simonds, “an oasis in an asphalt desert... A park must give the welcome relief of foliage, shade, splashing water, flowers and bright color. Like the oasis it is, the urban park must be a place of pure delight—an inviting refreshing environment.” The creative Simonds and partner Philip Simonds (with his genius for detail) ensured that all of the square’s components would perform in perfect harmony to achieve the intended effects and change perceptions of the city. Indeed, as Jane Jacobs wrote admiringly of Mellon Square in *The Exploding Metropolis*, it “has that indefinable quality of intimacy, comfort, and protection...” that makes a public space an appealing “room with a view.”

Simonds also intended the square to be a dramatic and enticing landscape to be viewed from hotel and office windows. He understood, too, how it would be a platform that joined the office towers, and a “focus space” from which to admire these newest additions among Pittsburgh’s remarkable architectural collection. Simonds saw that the square did more than just increase the value of the surrounding buildings, saying that “it appreciates the whole value of the city.”
Mellon Square was like nothing Pittsburgh had ever seen: rustic Venetian terrazzo paving; majestic fountains with artfully choreographed sprays and cascades; granite planters with more than 35 varieties of trees, shrubs, and ivies; and nighttime lighting for atmosphere and safety. The result was an island of beauty and serenity above the din of downtown streets.

The project was hailed nationally as a masterwork. Also, it was (and remains) a superb example of how an innovative public space can spur revitalization and private investment in downtown American cities. In 2008, almost 30 years after the park first opened, the American Planning Association named Mellon Square one of America’s Ten Great Public Spaces, noting that “the Square is iconic not only for its design and character, but for the way it was planned and the role it played in spurring revitalization and private investment in Downtown Pittsburgh.”

Perhaps most importantly, Pittsburghers instantly loved their new square. Office workers, shoppers, and visitors came from near and far to refresh their spirits, instinctively recognizing Mellon Square as a place that met important human and social needs. Almost immediately, “the Square in the heart of the Triangle” had become an indispensable part of life downtown.

WEATHER AND TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS
In 1955 it was a modern masterwork, hailed across America for its beauty and innovation. The City of Pittsburgh had committed to maintain it. But the park construction was experimental in several respects, and it wasn’t long before the city tired of making expensive corrections and adjustments.

Plant failures occurred with depressing frequency thanks to harsh winter exposure, and the beautiful porcelain tiles in the fountain wouldn’t adhere. The waterproofing technology was no more sophisticated than a traditional roof and soon began to leak. Fountain controls broke down and weren’t replaced. As a result of these cumulative problems, the city undertook a major rehabilitation of the park in the 1980s with the help of private funds.

To lead the design, the city turned to Simonds & Simonds, under its new name, Environmental Planning and Design. John
Simonds had retired in the previous decade, but his input was solicited. Although it has been reported that he approved the late-'80s changes, his widow Marjorie Simonds stated that he was not in favor of the significant redesign of the fountains. They lost their light, cantilevered profile in favor of granite seatwalls, with the aim of enhancing the "water-to-people" contact. The fountain’s water effects were simplified, and the colored lighting eliminated. In addition, one tree planter was replaced with a small stage, breaking the symmetry of individual trees lining both major pedestrian passages through the square. Gone was the subtle night lighting that once played so delightfully against the lights and darks of the triangular paving pattern. Flood lamps installed on adjacent buildings resulted in deeper shadows.

The rehabilitation plan also called for the retention of Kenneth Snelson’s *Forest Devil* sculpture, which was installed in 1977 in a turfed planter next to the central fountain, resulting in a notable loss of character.

**FINANCIAL ISSUES PLAGUE PARK**

Two decades later, in the face of Pittsburgh’s post-steel economy, the city once again proved unable to maintain this complex landscape. By 2007, the square was coming under fire for its unappealing condition. It was the domain of smokers and pigeon feeders by day, skateboarders after school, rats drawn to the birds’ leftovers by night, and overnight sleepers camping among the planting beds. The fountains, lacking automated controls, were shut down every day at 2 p.m. when the park worker punched out. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were broken. Drains were clogged from years of neglect, prompting leaks, crumbling terrazzo, and thick mineral deposits. Many trees, shrubs, and groundcovers from the once rich planting plan were now absent, dead, or dying.

People suggested turning the park into a dog park, skate park, playground, or community garden. Recognizing the importance of the park, *The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation*, the *Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership*, and the *Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy* decided to join forces to stimulate a renewed appreciation of Mellon Square. In 2007 they invited Charles Birnbaum,
FASLA, founder of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, to deliver a lecture on Mellon Square, which did much to restore its value by informing an influential audience of its origins and import.

**A NEW RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

From 2008 to 2009, with funding from the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the BNY Mellon Charitable Foundation, the Conservancy developed a restoration and management plan with a multidisciplinary team led by Heritage Landscapes LLC. Analysis revealed that Mellon Square had a high degree of integrity, with restoration as the predominant recommended treatment. Implementation would incorporate updated green roof technologies, plant selections for greater winter hardiness, and LED lighting.

Two areas required a new approach. Problems of leakage and unsustainable plantings were addressed by converting the former planter atop the retail spaces into a terrace, increasing the usable public space of Mellon Square by 15 percent. The new terrace was inspired by the discovery of a concept drawing, dating from the original design process, depicting this space as a terrace for public use. Symmetrical entry ramps make it fully accessible from the square, and the space will command exciting new views of the cascade fountain.

The second new element is an interpretive wall telling the story of Pittsburgh’s Renaissance and Mellon Square. This installation addresses the frequent complaint that the surrounding storefronts were dark and unappealing, with pigeons roosting among the signs. The installation is designed to reinstate the rhythm and scale of original storefront windows, which had earlier been replaced by black granite at a tenant’s request. Unifying the entire frontage, a backlit sign band will bounce light off the overhanging canopy.

Strategies for undertaking the Mellon Square project included securing a long-term operating agreement with the city, establishing a fundraising committee, and assessing economic impact, which is expected to be dramatic. According to a study by 4Ward Planning, surrounding property values will increase by $71 to $106 million, and an estimated $2.5 million in consumer expenditures will be generated. Grants from the Colcom Foundation and the Richard
King Mellon Foundation led a total construction budget of $6 million and a permanent management/maintenance fund of $4 million. Upon completion in June 2013, the square will continue to receive basic maintenance from the city, with the Parks Conservancy providing enhanced custodial and security services, as well as scheduled preventive maintenance.

A CITY OASIS

For Mellon Square to continue fulfilling its civic role as an oasis in the heart of the city, it must also stimulate public delight. Ensuring its success on a day-to-day basis will require a careful eye for detail. Like a Swiss watch, many different components need to perform in harmony to achieve the desired effect: plantings, drainage systems, irrigation, fountain plumbing, lighting, and so forth. Going forward all actions will be guided by the original design intent on providing an oasis in the heart of the city for the people of Pittsburgh. It will be an integral and positive part of downtown life: a place where today’s workers, shoppers, residents, and visitors can relax and refresh their spirits… a significant asset to economic development efforts… an emblem of the city’s commitment to being “green”… and an icon of Pittsburgh’s revitalization, right in the heart of the Golden Triangle. FJ

SUSAN M. RADEMACHER is the Parks Curator for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. To discover more about Mellon Square, please visit www.pittsburghparks.org. Copyright 2013 by Susan Rademacher.
The Unfinished Saga of Peavey Plaza
CHARLENE ROISE

There is a certain irony in defending an innovative landscape grown old. The landscape architects who introduced radical design ideas to America in the tumultuous decades after World War II were rebelling against what had come before. A few decades later, they are the establishment. Their work, once cutting edge, is aging—and not, in all cases, gracefully. A tenacious faith in the new is a hallmark of the American psyche, so communities sometimes decide to cut their losses and move on. This tendency is counterbalanced by a growing interest in recycling everything from soda bottles to historic buildings.

Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis is a poster child for the limbo where landmarks from the recent past can land. Despite being determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office—and, as an extant, seminal work and a progenitor of a landscape type, an excellent candidate for National Historic Landmark status—the plaza is slated for a makeover by the City of Minneapolis that will eviscerate significant features of its 1970s design by the office of M. Paul Friedberg. The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) and the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, a statewide nonprofit, have filed a lawsuit to stop the carnage. Even before the next stage of the drama is played out in court, there are lessons to be learned from the saga to date.

A PLAZA IS BORN

To understand the significance of Peavey Plaza, it is helpful to know what led up to its creation and its evolution since that time.

Minneapolis, like many cities in the United States, was showing signs of deterioration by the mid-20th century as buildings and infrastructure aged. Families and businesses abandoned the urban core and moved to the suburbs, threatening the vitality of down-
town Minneapolis. In the mid 1950s, food-industry giant General Mills announced plans to relocate its headquarters to a suburban campus. Rumors grew that the Pillsbury Company, another major local corporation, was planning to follow suit.

Civic and business leaders fought back, convincing Pillsbury to remain downtown. The city’s planning department, energized by an influx of young planners with Ivy League pedigrees, embarked on a massive urban renewal campaign with strong support from the private sector. One of the hallmarks of the city’s renaissance was the Nicollet Mall, designed by California-based landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, which transformed a central commercial street into a pedestrian corridor.

The concept was radical for the times. In an article dating from the early 1960s, one critic remarked: “Comparison with other downtown plans is difficult because this is the first transitway proposed any place in the country. We feel it is better than anything else provided to date and that more attention has been given to traffic circulation and overall engineering problems than anywhere else.” Cars were banished and buses were contained on a sinuous path through a landscape designed to seduce pedestrians. The mall garnered international acclaim and was much copied—but rarely with equal success.²

The mall drew scores of visitors, overwhelming its capacity. Plans were soon underway to extend it and add a gathering space for popular public events. This space was to share a block with the new home for the Minnesota Orchestra, designed by New York architects Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer. When the Orchestral Associa-
tion opened the new hall in 1974, the city was finally starting the construction of the outside event space, which had lagged due to a shortfall in funding. The budget was finally met with a donation from the Peavey Company, a local grain merchant, which gained naming rights for its generosity.

The city had retained the office of New York landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg to design the space. Friedberg was an advocate of an innovative approach to urban design, the park plaza, and Peavey was an early model. Using hard-edged materials such as concrete and metal, and rectilinear rather than curvilinear forms, the park plaza was a modern counterpoint to the picturesque greenery that had characterized parks in the Twin Cities before that time.

Peavey Plaza opened to acclaim from landscape architects and the general public in 1975. Its central focus was a 140-foot by 200-foot pool at an elevation 10 feet below the grade of the adjacent streets. The shallow pool could be drained when more space was needed for large events and could be converted into an ice-skating

Peavey Plaza's dramatic central fountain as seen in 2008. At present the water has been turned off and the site suffers from years of neglect.

PHOTOGRAPh © KERI PICKETT; COURTESY OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION
rink for entertainment during Minnesota's notoriously long, cold winters. A series of concrete and planted terraces provided seating shaded by Honey locusts. Corners were anchored by two fountains where water flowed down stainless steel cylinders into a series of angular basins.

The plaza served its intended purpose admirably for decades. Located at the front door of Orchestra Hall, the plaza held Sommerfest, several weeks of music, food, and entertainment associated with one of the Minnesota Orchestra’s concert series. A commemorative history marking the orchestra’s centennial explained: “For three weeks in July (and later, four) the Hall and Peavey Plaza were simply the place to be. The Plaza was renamed the Marktplatz, and quickly nicknamed the Platz. It swarmed with people buying brats and beer at the vendor stands while others took a break from the sun by ducking under the red-and-white table umbrellas for an ice-cream cone. An endless stream of ensembles

Peavey Plaza’s pool basin is filled with water during the summer. The water was originally allowed to freeze to create an ice rink for skating in the winter. Waterfalls absorb city noise and small garden “rooms,” delineated by groves of honey locusts, create a sense of human intimacy that softened the modern angular surfaces.

PHOTOGRAPH ©KERI PICKETT, COURTESY OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION
kept oom-pah, barbershop, mariachi, jazz, klezmer, you name it, wafting over the best people-watching spot in the entire city.” The scene “of families enjoying music on the Plaza has been repeated over and over through the years.”

The plaza also hosted blues festivals, jazz concerts, and a variety of other events, and became a haven for downtown workers seeking a pleasant spot for a picnic lunch. The gentle burbling of the metal fountains and the lower poolside elevation muffled the noise of city streets. Looking back on his creation in the 1980s, Friedberg remarked: “It is encouraging to see how the community has taken to the space and made it their own.”

**PEATNEY IN PERIL**

By the early 20th century, though, the plaza was showing signs of age. An article in *Landscape Architecture* magazine in September 2004 was titled “Death of a Thousand Patches: Shoddy Maintenance Whittles Away at a Minneapolis Gem.” In 2006, the local landscape architecture community rallied and documented Peavey Plaza for the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), making it one of the first post-World War II landscapes to be included in the Library of Congress. In addition, the group attempted to nominate the plaza for local historic designation by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, but that effort was abandoned after it became clear that powerful factions within the city government would oppose the designation. There was also concern over the plaza’s uncertain future at the state and national level: it was included in both Preservation Alliance’s “Ten Most Endangered Historic Places”
In 2011 the historical significance of Peavey Plaza was evaluated during a cultural resources survey related to the proposed construction of a light-rail line. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (as a representative of the Federal Transit Administration) and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office determined that the plaza was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A nomination to list Peavey Plaza in the National Register was enthusiastically endorsed by the Minnesota State Review Board in November. Assuming that the National Park Service concurs, Peavey Plaza will be officially listed in the National Register by January 2013.

In the meantime, Orchestra Hall, like Peavey Plaza, was in need of renovation. The orchestra performed its last concert at the hall in spring 2012 before moving to a temporary venue so that a major rehabilitation could begin. As funds were being raised for work on the hall, pressure increased on the city to update the plaza. This led the city to interview a short-listed group of four landscape architecture teams for the project. The Minneapolis firm Oslund and Associates was selected. The city asserted that the plaza’s revitalization would respect the original design—a promise that seemed assured by the inclusion on the design team of M. Paul Friedberg and Charles Birnbaum.

During the design process, however, the team marginalized Friedberg and Birnbaum, and it became clear that there was a move to create a plan that was entirely new. In the same period, the city subverted a community engagement process by an excess of control and a lack of transparency. The single “alternative” for Peavey that was made public virtually ignored the historic design and called for the demolition of all of its character-defining features.

The city was undeterred by criticism of the flawed process. Armed with $2 million in state bonding funds for the project, it applied to the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) for a permit to demolish Peavey Plaza. While acknowledging that the plaza was a historic resource, the city claimed that the cost of rehabilitating it was too great—partly because of the deterioration that had been caused by the city’s own neglect. The commissioners
were not persuaded. At a public hearing in April 2012, they voted eight to one to deny the demolition application. Their vote also placed the property under interim protection and directed the city to initiate a study to designate the plaza as a local landmark.

Concurrent with the HPC hearing, TCLF unveiled a series of *concept sketches* generated by M. Paul Friedberg and Partners illustrating reasonable and cost-effective rehabilitation solutions that solved both programmatic issues (e.g., accessibility for all, security) and current programmatic needs (e.g., outdoor screen for concerts, cafe). Unfortunately, a debate over a new stadium for the Minnesota Vikings football team garnered the lion’s share of local media coverage that day.

Within ten days of the public hearing, the city appealed the HPC’s decision. The appeal was heard by the city council, which overturned the HPC’s denial of the demolition permit and ignored the provisions for interim protection and the designation study. At this point, TCLF and the Preservation Alliance, concluding that legal action was the only recourse, filed a lawsuit under the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act that seeks to protect this significant resource.

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**THE HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY (HALS)**

The HALS was created in 2000 as a companion to the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), established in 1933, and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), dating from 1969. HABS, HAER, and HALS are programs overseen by the National Park Service that produce in-depth documentation studies of buildings, engineering works, and landscapes, respectively. There are three levels of documentation, depending on the significance of the resource, all conforming to strict archival standards.

Peavey Plaza received the most intensive type of documentation, Level I, which comprises detailed measured drawings, large-format (usually four inches by five inches) black-and-white photographic negatives and contact prints, and a narrative containing a physical description, a discussion of historical significance, and an extensive bibliography. The original documentation set is housed in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. A digital version of the Peavey Plaza HALS documentation (HALS No. MN-2) is available at www.memory.loc.gov (type “Peavey Plaza” in the search box).
OLDER AND WISER

As of this writing, the court case is months from being heard, and the city appears far from reaching its fundraising goal to complete the proposed overhaul of Peavey Plaza. In this momentary lull, there is time to reflect on what has transpired to date. A few things are clear:

Don’t trust “The Process.” While the HPC voted in favor of designating the plaza, and even the city conceded that the plaza was of historic and architectural significance, political will proved stronger than the facts. Advocates should not count on a single process to protect a historic resource. It is imperative to have a Plan B (and a Plan C, and more) at the ready.

Rally the troops. While preservation of the recent past is a relatively new concept, it has been embraced by several national organizations including TCLF, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and DOCOMOMO (Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement); by regional chapters of the American Society of Landscape Architects; and by statewide preservation groups. In addition, there are local allies. While the citywide nonprofit group Preserve Minneapolis has no staff, its email distribution list is broad and deep, a tremendous asset for distributing updates quickly and at virtually no cost. As the Peavey case illustrates, there are also dozens and dozens of professionals in the arts, architecture, landscape architecture, and planning fields who will raise their voices by writing letters and speaking at public meetings.

Never underestimate the sentiments of the general public. Supporters have been diverse and, at times, even surprising. In testimony at the HPC public hearing, people who probably don’t think of themselves as preservationists—including several members of Occupy Minnesota—spoke eloquently about the plaza.

Know your resource. The Historic American Landscapes Survey documentation that local landscape architects prepared for Peavey Plaza assembled valuable information on the plaza’s history as well as its existing condition. Serendipity played a role too: a Section 106 inventory completed for an unrelated project resulted in the plaza being determined eligible for the National Register. On
a broader scale, the increasing academic research on the history of landscape architecture in the United States provides a context for evaluating landscape resources. Having a photograph of Peavey’s fountain on the cover of *Shaping the American Landscape*, a major compilation of information on pioneers in the field of landscape architecture, highlighted the plaza’s national significance.

Don’t give up. While the lawsuit sometimes seems like a David and Goliath battle, it is encouraging to remember that the little guy won. Keep your dial tuned to Minneapolis where, in the spirit of Mary Tyler Moore, optimism continues that the forces of good will ultimately prevail and Peavey Plaza will be sensitively rehabilitated to hold blues concerts, baby strollers, and bratwurst carts for many decades to come. FJ

CHARLENE ROISE is the president of Hess Roise Historical Consultants, based in Minneapolis, Minn. Copyright 2013 by Charlene Roise.

1 According to Charles Birnbaum, president of The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF).

2 “Fact Sheet—Nicollet Avenue Mall,” sometime after 1962, 1–3, Minneapolis Collection files, Hennepin County Central Library.

3 Brian Newhouse, “Sounds of Summer,” in Minnesota Orchestra at One Hundred, 131–145.

Every industry has its heroes—think Orville Wright, Jane Addams, Jonas Salk—they earn a place in our hearts and our textbooks because they have been agents for change and for good. So why shouldn’t we who are in the business of preserving historic landscapes claim a couple of heroes of our own. By chance they are both named Charles. Charles Beveridge, senior editor of the *Frederick Law Olmsted Papers*, whose four decades of academic research has fueled a movement to preserve the thousands of landscapes designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and his successor firms. And another Charles, Charles Birnbaum, a landscape architect in his own right and founder of *The Cultural Landscape Foundation*, which has worked unceasingly to bring attention and appreciation to cultural landscapes of all kinds, in all places, and from all periods. I challenge you to find a major designed landscape, or a minor one for that matter, that has not benefited from the work of one Charles or the other, or both. Almost every story of a landscape preservation victory includes the statement: “And then we brought Charles to town and he…”

When we began planning this edition of *Forum Journal* devoted to Modernist landscapes we knew we wanted to include some discussion of the evolution of advocacy for historic landscapes from all periods. Last summer, I sat down with Charles and Charles in Washington for a wide-ranging discussion about the challenges facing historic landscapes.

Both acknowledge that their first challenge has always been teaching people to “see” and value these places as great masterworks of artistry and engineering, much in the same way that people learn to appreciate and understand paintings and sculpture. Olmsted’s palette of blues and greens, meadows and forests—the ingredients that make up a pastoral landscape—have often proved easier to defend. Yet, as is the case with abstraction in paintings, the hardscapes and...
geometry of more recent landscapes also engender passion among advocates.

Unfortunately, cultivating such rich appreciation for these spaces is often thwarted by mismanagement and neglect. Designed landscapes are living, breathing spaces that require a kind of management and stewardship unmatched among works of architecture. When systems fail, plants die, and water features become polluted, there is often a rapid call for removal not renewal. This coupled with redevelopment pressures make landscapes particularly vulnerable.

And yet both men see reason for hope. Both spoke of advances in recent years in scholarship and documentation and the founding of organizations and associations dedicated to historic landscapes.

**VIDEO**—TO SEE THE INTERVIEW, CLICK HERE.
During the past decade, the value of Modern landscape architecture increasingly has been recognized by both historic preservation professionals, designers, and a wider audience. Efforts to document historic designed landscapes have come after the loss of many significant works of Modernist landscape architecture (such as Lawrence Halprin’s Skyline Park in Denver) and from current threats (including the potential demolition of M. Paul Friedberg’s Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis). Before other significant projects are lost, it is important to document, record, and designate Modern landscapes, as well as raise public awareness about their significance.

Modern landscapes—from entire states to single sites—are being documented today using a range of different media and approaches that include surveys, historic designations, and HALS documentation standards. While these same tools can be used to document significant work from any period in American landscape history, it is only in the past decade that they have been more broadly used to capture work from the Modern era.

SURVEYS

Surveys play an important role in documenting important landscape design and planning at neighborhood, city, region, or state scale. Historic context statements and resource surveys record the location, distribution, and significance of historic resources and provide the valuable historic context necessary to evaluate important projects. Survey teams in the 1960s and 1970s canvassed neighborhoods to identify important works of architecture; only in the last decade has the focus of survey initiatives shifted from individual buildings to include significant landscapes. This shift signifies a new understanding that landscapes have equal value to architectural resources, indicating that the field of historic preservation is
becoming more inclusive. It is a particularly important shift at this time, with many Modernist designs now reaching 50 years of age and qualified for designation, while simultaneously their preservation is threatened by poor maintenance and lack of awareness and the perception that they are obsolete.

City and state governments, nonprofits, and community groups are working in earnest to document vulnerable or threatened Modernist resources. The West Coast leads this effort, with California as home base for many of the nation’s most influential Modernist designers who led the nation’s recovery from World War II. The California State Historic Preservation Office has awarded preservation planning grants to eight Certified Local Governments to conduct surveys of Modern buildings and landscapes in their communities. Other efforts include work by a group of dedicated city staff and consultants in Eugene, Ore., to prepare one of the first surveys
of Modern-era resources in 2003; detailed surveys of Modernist residential architecture and landscape architecture in New Canaan, Conn.; an initiative by the San Francisco Planning Department to update historic district records to include important public spaces and landscape design contexts; and surveys in numerous cities including Columbus, Ind., St. Louis, Mo., and Washington, D.C., as well as statewide surveys in Hawaii and Maryland.

**DESIGNATION**

These survey efforts generate an awareness of the resources that exist within a community, but identification doesn’t necessarily lead to preservation. In these situations, designation is the key. Local and state designations often come with significant protection for a particular site, while the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark programs, coordinated...
through state historic preservation offices, are the national standard. Significant landscapes are still rarely designated, with fewer than 2,600 properties (out of 88,200 on the National Register) listed for their significance in landscape architecture and only a small fraction of those from the Modern era. But the trend is changing and notable exceptions exist. These include Manitoga, Russel Wright’s retreat in New York’s Hudson Highlands, listed for architecture and landscape architecture in 1996; Philip Johnson’s Glass House, listed in 1997 with significance in both fields and now owned by the National Trust; and the General Motors Technical Center, a masterwork by Eero Saarinen and Thomas Church, listed with significance in both fields in 2000. Multiple Property Listings also capture the interrelated aspects of landscape and architecture. The multiple property listing, “Modernism in Architecture, Design and Art in Bartholomew County, Ind., 1942-1999,” is one important example.

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
The Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), documents historic landscapes though detailed measured drawings and high-resolution photography as well as text. To date, several important Modernist landscapes have been fully documented by HALS, two of which are now lost (Lawrence Halprin’s designs at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond and Skyline Park in Denver) one of which is highly threatened (M. Paul Friedberg’s masterwork, Peavey Plaza, in Minneapolis), and one of which is well cared for (the Kaiser Roof Garden designed by Theodore Osmundson in Oakland, Calif.).

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS
Academic scholarship also offers a foundation for Modernist landscape preservation, as a direct call to action and as a teaching tool that broadens awareness of potentially endangered landscapes. These publications are critical to understanding the social, cultural, and design contexts that Modernist practitioners worked within. In general, the body of available published work that focuses specifically on Modernist landscape architecture tends to fall into three categories: monographs about single designers, books focused on
specific landscapes, or compilations of essays that address some aspect of Modernism.

Research done in the 1980s and 1990s occurred while many significant designers were still alive or recently deceased, and focused on biographical writing and bibliographic resources. Pamela Anela Messenger’s 1981 bibliography for Thomas Church was the most comprehensive research effort focused on a single Modern-era practitioner at the time. The National Park Service’s *Pioneers* publications, produced in 1993 and 1995 through the Historic Landscape Initiative, were the first efforts to broadly document American landscape architects across time, incorporating both brief biographies and extensive bibliographies.

In more recent years, scholarship has diversified, digging deeper into the work of specific designers and targeting particular trends. Authors are writing about early practitioners who shaped the field, including Dorothee Imbert on Jean Canneel-Claes, David Haney on Leberecht Migge, and David Jaques and Jan Woudstra on Christopher Tunnard. Echoing a growing interest in women practitioners, Harvard’s Graduate School of Design held a Spring 2011 colloquium, Women and Modernism in Landscape Architecture, which will lead to a publication of essays from scholars and practitioners of the era. Ethan Carr’s *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007) touches on Modern landscape preservation challenges within our National Parks, while Caroline Zaleski’s *Long Island Modernism* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2012) addresses the buildings and landscapes of that rarified coastal environment. The work of more recent practitioners, including Richard Haag and Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, is gaining attention, particularly in graduate student research.

**ONLINE RESOURCES**

In the 21st century, online media is essential to generating broad-based support for any landscape preservation effort. Blogging, tweeting, and posting on Facebook are all obvious means of advertising an issue, but social media also can link to more substantial content that can inform networks of people about the sites, designers, issues, and historic context in greater depth.
In 2009 the National Trust launched TrustModern, its Modernism + Recent Past initiative, which included a blog, highlights about endangered Modernist sites, schedules of conferences, and educational modules tailored on Modernism in Minnesota, Boston, and Los Angeles. That same year, The Cultural Landscape Foundation introduced the What’s Out There WOT database, the nation’s most comprehensive catalog of historic designed landscapes. More than ten years in the making, with content created by a diverse range of academics, local activists, and volunteers, the database now includes more than 1,300 landscapes representing every state. While WOT includes designers, landscape types, and artistic styles from all periods of American landscape history, there is a focused effort to document Modernist sites, including such typologies as plazas, corporate office parks, and vest pocket parks that grew out of this era. What’s Out There has generated several related programs, including an active partnership with universities across the country to generate content through the college classroom, and What’s Out
There Weekend (WOTW), during which TCLF offers free tours of historic designed landscapes in a city or region.

**ORAL HISTORIES**

As a complement to the WOT database, telling the stories about the post-war designers and the cities and landscapes they shaped is a critical educational endeavor. Oral histories are a crucial source of scholarship about landscape architects and their work, and are uniquely suited to online media. The National Park Service, with an archive of thousands of oral histories for hundreds of parks, has recently produced a collection of interviews with former employees and other key players in the design of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (aka, Gateway Arch, a collaboration between Eero Saarinen and Dan Kiley). The Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, has a significant collection of oral histories, grouped together online as “Interviews on Architecture and Landscape Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area.” Interviews here have been conducted with individual practitioners who discuss their own work and experiences, or are compiled about a particular person in multi-interview volumes; the latter group includes extensive interviews about Thomas Church and Julia Morgan. TCLF’s Pioneers of American Landscape Design oral history series contains more than 15 hours of extensive richly produced and edited footage of a diverse group of practitioners who span the country, and even reach to Canada and Israel.

**CONCLUSION**

One of Modernism’s central tenets is the inextricable link between inside and outside, architecture and landscape. The surveys now being undertaken by the preservation community incorporating landscape along with architecture in San Francisco, New Canaan,
Conn., and Bartholomew County, Ind., with their broader emphasis on architecture, planning, landscape architecture, and the cultural dimension, can also be evidenced in such publications as Waverly Lowell’s *Living Modern: A Biography of Greenwood Common* (2009) and Dianne Harris’s *Maybeck’s Landscapes: Drawing in Nature* (2005, both released by William K. Stout Publishers). In addition to the shared values that can be found in research and scholarship, greater and deeper collaboration between landscape architects and architects, designers and historians can be found when addressing Modernist works of landscape architecture found on residential sites (e.g., Glass House, Eames House), plazas (Mellon Square, Pittsburgh; Park Central Square, Springfield, Mo.) and campus landscapes (University of California Berkeley, Cranbrook Academy). Breaking down the divide between these groups bodes well for each of the fields as we go forward to preserve, protect and interpret our shared Modernist landscape heritage. FJ

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To assist in investigating Modern landscape architecture, listed below is a sampling of the best resources for research, documentation, recordation, designation, treatment, and management (following *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties & Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*).

**RESEARCH**

Foundational to understanding the field of Modern landscape architecture has been an increasing interest and surge in scholarship and research on the subject. This can be evidenced with the expansion of special collections, publication of books, journal articles, and papers, and survey and recordation efforts. Listed here is a selection of key books and publications to guide your research. Online resources and academic archives with collections of individuals whose work contributed to the Modernist movement in landscape architecture are also included.

**Research: Resources about the Modern Movement**


from contemporary educators, scholars, and practitioners who examine the historical and cultural framework of the period and the legacy of Tunnard, Eckbo, Thomas Church, Kiley, and others.

Campus Guides Series. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999. With 22 campus guides to date, the series documents the architecturally most significant campuses in America. Most volumes include their Modern era of campus development.

Research: Published Resources about Individual Practitioners and Firms

Although too numerous to mention, a number of valuable references about Modernist practitioners and their firms are listed below.


Treib, Marc, and Dorothée Imbert. Garrett Eckbo—Modern Landscapes for Living. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. An in-depth look at the career of Garrett Eckbo; included are more than 100 of his designs and a bibliography of books written by him and about him. For additional information on Eckbo see also Laurie, Michael, interviewer and Karen Madsen, ed.


Treib, Marc, ed. Thomas Church, Landscape Architect: Designing a Modern California Landscape. San Francisco: William Stout Publishers, 2004. Provides a comprehensive look at Thomas Church’s post-war landscape designs and his influence on the movement. Included are many unpublished Church drawings housed at the Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley. For additional information on Church see also his own books Gardens Are for People and Your Private World: A Study of Intimate Gardens.

Halprin, Lawrence. A Life Spent Changing Places. (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture) Philadelphia: Penn Press, 2011. Lawrence Halprin reflects on his 60-year career as an innovator of public landscapes both in the United States and Israel, including background for his design philosophy, personal accounts about the development of some of his iconic Modernist urban spaces, and 90 black-and-white and 100 color reproductions of photographs, plans, and sketchbooks.

For additional information on Halprin see also Process Architecture No 4. and a selection of books authored by Halprin including The Sea Ranch: Diary of an Idea; The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial; Lawrence Halprin: Changing Places; Sketchbooks of Lawrence Halprin; Taking Part: A Workshop Approach to Collective Creativity; Lawrence Halprin: Notebooks 1959-1971; The RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment and Cities.

Process Architecture
Published in Japanese and English in Tokyo from 1977 to 1996, each issue is dedicated to an individual subject and offers in-depth
coverage of 20th-century practitioners in the fields of landscape architecture and architecture. In addition to those practitioners and firms previously mentioned, other volumes include Robert Zion, Peter Walker, Sasaki Associates, Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden, and others.

RESEARCH: ONLINE RESOURCES
In addition to published reference materials, The Cultural Landscape Foundation offers a variety of online resources dedicated to Modernist landscape architecture and its practitioners.

What’s Out There Database
Nested within this richly illustrated database (searchable by landscape name, locale, designer, type, and style) is a flexible glossary that allows relevant searches for Modern landscape architecture. Within the 27 types and 49 sub-types, the database includes many Modern landscape types from plazas to vest pocket parks. It also incorporates more than 100 entries on Modernist landscapes such as the Donnell Garden, Gas Works Park, Freeway Park, FDR Memorial, and links to the landscape architect’s biographical profiles. This is the ideal tool for establishing a landscape’s historic context.

Pioneers Oral History Series
A collection of 90-minute video oral history interviews of post-war landscape architects includes profiles on Shlomo Aronson, Edward L. Daugherty, Stuart O. Dawson, M. Paul Friedberg, Lawrence Halprin, Carol R. Johnson, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, and James van Sweden. These individual modules document in the designer’s own words their career development, design philosophy, and strategies for their major projects, providing context for the designs and an understanding of how their design decisions evolved.

Pioneers of American Landscape Design
A complement to both What’s Out There and the Oral History series are biographical profiles of Modernist practitioners who were both regionally and nationally significant. This includes Arthur and Marie Berger, Ted Osmundson, Lester Collins, and many others.
RESEARCH: ACADEMIC ARCHIVES

As the careers of post-War practitioners come to a close, there has been a surge in the availability of collections at academic archives. Listed below are three such archives with significant holdings on individuals who shaped the Modernist movement in landscape architecture.

Architectural Archives—University of Pennsylvania

Since its establishment in 1979, the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania has collected, preserved, and made available for research, publication, and exhibition, materials that record the work of a number of the most significant designers of the second half of the 20th century. Starting with the archives of architect Louis I. Kahn, the collection has grown to include the collections of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and in the area of landscape architecture and ecological design, the records of Ian McHarg and Lawrence Halprin. The Halprin Collection is of particular significance given the extent and impact of his practice and methods. From drawings, models, and correspondence to his precious notebooks (more than 150 volumes), the collection provides an intense and revealing look into his remarkably inclusive, creative process.

Equally of note, and imbedded within the holdings of the Kahn Collection, are records documenting Kahn’s collaborations with significant landscape architects, including early work with Dan Kiley and Cornelia Oberlander. Joining the Patton and Pattision collections are selected holdings related to the work of Robert Hanna and Laurie Olin and the design work of Ian McHarg and Peter Shepheard.

The Environmental Design Archives—University of California, Berkeley

The archival collections of landscape design practitioners have been an integral part of the College of Environmental Design beginning with the acquisition of Beatrix Farrand’s Reef Point Collections in the 1950s. The Environmental Design Archives, which is committed to raising awareness about the significant architectural and landscape heritage of primarily Northern California, continues to actively collect the records of landscape architects. The 43
landscape collections range from the drawings of Gertrude Jekyll to the environmental work of Randy Hester and Marcia McNally. In between is an outstanding group of mid-century landscape architects, from Thomas Church, Garrett Eckbo, and Douglas and Maggie Baylis to lesser known figures such as Richard Vignolo and Mai Arbegast. These collections are heavily used for research, preservation and restoration, publication, and exhibition.

In addition the Archives established the Berkeley Design Books, as noted in several of the citations above, a series of monographs produced primarily through material held by the Environmental Design Archives. Under the editorship of emeritus professor Marc Treib and Archives Curator Waverly Lowell, these scholarly studies vary in scope from analyzing particular works to examining broad issues.

**Special Collections, Frances Loeb Library—Harvard Graduate School of Design**

Harvard GSD, Special Collections contains research and primary resource materials for architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and urban planning. Notable Modernist holdings include the public and private work of Edward Larrabee Barnes, writings and lectures by Marcel Breuer, research files and correspondence of Grady E. Clay, and the Daniel Urban Kiley Collection with drawings and plans relating to some 600 projects. Also found in Special Collections is the work of Roberto Burle Marx including 350 slides and materials related to the exhibition Roberto Burle Marx: The Unnatural Art of the Garden, held in 1991 at MoMA. Additionally, the collections of Eleanor Raymond, Josep Lluis Sert, Sidney N. Shurcliff, TAC/The Architects Collaborative and materials relating to dozens of projects by Benjamin Thompson and Associates and a selection of projects from Sasaki, Walker and Associates (SWA) beginning in 1959 are archived here.

**DOCUMENTATION: SURVEY**

Surveys that incorporate Modernist landscape architecture tend to fall into two categories: Modernist-focused surveys of a neighborhood, city, or region that include buildings and landscapes, or
landscape surveys that cover a broad range of periods including Modernism. Following are some exemplary surveys of both types:

**San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement**

This **historic context statement**, the first in Northern California to address Modernist architecture and landscape architecture, was prepared by the San Francisco Planning Department in 2010. It identifies character-defining features of Modern architecture and landscape architecture and traces the development of this style in San Francisco, while providing a framework for evaluating future landscapes and properties. It also includes a list of designers practicing in San Francisco between 1935 and 1970, with information on their significant projects and concise profiles of their careers.

**Modern Homes Survey—New Canaan, Connecticut**

Begun in response to the demolition of the Paul Rudolph house in 2007 due to “lack of criteria for significance,” this **survey** illustrates the breadth and depth of Modernist architecture in the New Canaan area. The survey, covering 91 homes including the Philip Johnson Glass House (now an NHL owned by the National Trust), led to the statewide Multiple Property Listing “Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residences in Connecticut, 1930 – 1979” and National Register designation for 18 properties in 2010. It is now a national model for other Modernist surveys throughout the United States.

**2009 Survey of Rochester’s Historic Parklands**

This **report**, commissioned by the City of Rochester, surveys 61 parks and goes beyond those in the Picturesque style to include more recent Modernist work such as Manhattan Square Park, designed by Lawrence Halprin in 1975. The survey lays the foundation for future designations and will lead to a Multiple Property Listing in the National Register.

**RECORDATION: HALS**

Foundational to the field of preservation is documentation and recordation. One in-depth method of recording landscape is the
Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS). With this program, historically significant landscapes are recorded by written histories, measured drawings, and photography.

The work for this young program, founded in 2000, includes several Modernist landscapes:

**Skyline Park**, Denver, Colorado (HALS CO-1)
The three-block Halprin commission from 1973 was the first Modern landscape documented with HALS methods at the national level. It was prepared at the time of Skyline Park’s imminent demolition in 2003.

**Peavey Park Plaza**, Minneapolis, Minnesota (HALS MN-2)
This two-acre sunken park plaza, designed by M. Paul Friedberg, opened in 1975. Considered Friedberg’s masterwork, it is representative of the best in Modern landscape design.

**Kaiser Roof Garden**, Oakland, California (HALS CA-3)
The first private roof garden built after World War II and the first example of post-war Modernism on a roof top.

**DESIGNATION: NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS**
In addition to recordation, designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) honors those landscapes that exhibit exceptional quality and are the finest expressions of our nation’s culture. See notable nominations below.

**Residential Designations with significance in Architecture and Landscape Architecture**

**Philip Johnson - Glass House**, New Canaan, Conn. (Designated in 1997).


**Manitoga** (the Russel Wright Design Center) Garrison, N.Y. (Designated in 1996).

**Multiple Properties Listing/NHL Theme Study**

**DESIGNATION: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The National Park Service’s official list that recognizes buildings, landscapes, associated multiple properties, and districts worthy of preservation. Modern landscapes and their designers have only recently been eligible for recognition.

**Municipal Designation with significance in (Modernist) Landscape Architecture**

*Heritage Park*, Fort Worth, Tex., (significance in Landscape Architecture, Lawrence Halprin, landscape architect, designated in 2010).


**District Designation with significance in Architecture and Landscape Architecture**


**Municipal Designation which Expanded the District and the Period of Significance**

*Springfield Public Square Historic District* (boundary increase), Springfield, Mo., (significance in Landscape Architecture, Lawrence Halprin, landscape architect, designated in 2010).

*Halprin Open Space Sequence*, Multnomah County, Ore., (significance in Landscape Architecture, Lawrence Halprin, landscape architect, anticipated for 2013).

**TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

The following resources are a compendium of case studies that examine various ways in which Modernist landscape architecture has been protected, preserved, and restored throughout the United States.

protecting post-war landscapes. Essays provide both historic context, sometimes in the words of the designers themselves (Peter Walker, Rich Haag) and treatment dilemmas and solutions (Lincoln Center, Adventure Playgrounds).


Komara, Ann. *Modern Landscapes: Transition and Transformation Lawrence Halprin’s Skyline Park*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2012. The first volume in the Princeton Architectural Press series on Modern Landscapes focuses on the three-block promenade that was part of an urban renewal effort for downtown Denver in the 1970s. This monograph both documents the history and evaluates treatment work. Subsequent monographs in the series will include information and insights on the design and future strategies for Mellon Square and the Charlottesville Mall. FJ

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