



**ASLA Design Medal
Nominations**

c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-
3736

via WeTransfer to
honorsawards@asla.org

Boston

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TEXAS

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TEXAS

Philadelphia

PENNSYLVANIA

San Diego

CALIFORNIA

20 February 2023

Dear Design Jury Members,

It is my distinct pleasure to nominate **James Corner, FASLA** for our profession's highest honor: the ASLA Design Medal. His career serves an inspirational model, combining design leadership, teaching and theoretical scholarship, service, and advocacy, and above all else, a remarkable body of sustained work that builds and protects our common public realm.

Summary Statement

Few landscape architects have planted themselves in the public imagination as creative leaders that change the way we look at cities, parks, and public space as a vital connection to our humanity and environment. James Corner is one of those rare exceptions. James has devoted the past 30 years to advancing the field of landscape architecture and urbanism, primarily through his leadership on high-visibility, complex urban projects around the world, as well as through teaching, public speaking, and writing. His design capacity to craft large, complex multi-disciplinary projects that literally transform the quality of life for people in cities is extraordinary, and we must acknowledge the significant impact his teaching and work has had on the profession. His design projects are transformational, profoundly inspiring and raising the profile of landscape architecture for all of us.

James, and his world-renowned practice Field Operations, turned the idea of remaking industrial urban fragments into places of celebration and wonder, from the acclaimed *High Line* in New York City and *The Underline* in Miami to the award-winning *Domino Park* in Brooklyn. Underscoring these projects is the important idea that he's championed: infrastructure reuse projects can be a suitable platform to address the complex interrelated needs of the 21st century city.

In a still active and vibrant portfolio of work, James has continued to define the urban experience with the making of place that is specific and expressive of its locus, including Cleveland's *Public Square*, Chicago's *Navy Pier*, San Francisco's *Presidio Tunneltops*, and Seattle's new *Central Waterfront*.

The success of *The High Line* in particular can be seen as a long and continuous thread in Corner's work, a natural outcome of his commitment to expand the dialogue about landscape with collaborators and approaches that cross disciplines and boundaries. Such creative synthesis lies at the heart of extraordinary design thinking, and points to why James Corner is so deserving of the 2023 ASLA Design Medal.

The Evolution of James Corner's Practice

James is the consummate landscape architect, with a career that encompasses an integrated view of landscape architecture, urban planning and placemaking as a shared endeavor. He is an acclaimed teacher, author, and advisor to all levels of government and institutional clients.

After earning a B.A. in architecture and landscape architecture with First Class Honors from Manchester Metropolitan University School of Architecture, James worked with Richard Rogers and Partners in London, and then went on to earn a master's degree in landscape architecture and urban design from the University of Pennsylvania School of Design. Inspired by Ian McHarg, James became a highly influential professor of landscape architecture at the University of

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Pennsylvania from 1989 to 2016 and served as Chairman of the department from 2000 to 2012. His academic legacy and inventive approach to design influenced hundreds of students from around the world, and his books and writings continue to inform and inspire current practitioners and students alike. James is a licensed landscape architect in nine US states, including New York, Florida, and Texas.

After participating in and winning several international design competitions, James founded Field Operations in 1999. Early projects included the masterplan for the 10-mile stretch of the *North Delaware Riverfront* in Philadelphia; the masterplan for the 2,200-acre *Freshkills Parkland*, Staten Island, once the world's largest landfill to be closed and transformed into one of the nation's most expansive urban parks; the distinctive *Race Street Pier* in Philadelphia; and the *French Embassy Garden* in New York City.

In 2004, he and his team won the high-profile competition to design New York's *High Line*, an extraordinary project that transforms an abandoned elevated rail line into an astonishing 21st-century promenade and garden in the sky. The success of this project, with over eight million visitors annually, helped raise the profile and visibility of landscape architecture in the public imagination.

As Corner's portfolio of projects continued to diversify and expand, a common thread began to emerge. In cities across the world, parks and public space are an important barometer for ecological health, social change, and civic pride. Exemplary projects include Seattle's *Central Waterfront*; Santa Monica's *Tongva Park*; Cleveland's *Public Square*; Chicago's *Navy Pier*; Memphis's *Shelby Farms Park*; Miami's *Knight Plaza*; London's *South Park Plaza at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park*; Hong Kong's *Victoria Dockside and Avenue of the Stars*; Brooklyn's *Domino Park*; and New York's *Manhattan West Central Plaza*. Recent projects include the *Presidio Tunnel Tops* in San Francisco; the *South Bay Resiliency Initiative* in San Francisco; the *Cultural Arts District and Central Park*, Doha; and the new *City of Qianhai*, Shenzhen, China.

James and his team at Field Operations continue to be trusted collaborators for numerous academic institutions as the primary campus landscape architect, at *Columbia University's Manhattanville Campus*, *Cornell Tech's Campus* on Roosevelt Island, and *Princeton University*, among others.

Today, Field Operations is working across the globe, with five offices and nearly 100 employees. Three U.S. locations (New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco), as well as London and Shenzhen, are a testament to James's generous mentorship and shared leadership. His senior leadership team is drawn from both former students and collaborators, including Lisa Switkin, Sarah Astheimer, Richard Kennedy, and Isabel Castilla, among others. This strong framework will ensure that the ideas and the values of his eponymous practice will continue into the next generation of practitioners.

Teaching and Writing

James began teaching at the University of Pennsylvania in 1989, with a focus on design media and theory, as well as design studios. He was elected Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department in 2000, whereupon he rewrote the curriculum to embrace the changing pedagogical shift to include urban design, technology, and digital design media in landscape architecture. As a professor, Corner developed innovative approaches toward landscape architectural design and urbanism, advancing critical theory, innovative design methods and visionary projects. Many of his former students have gone on to become leaders in the profession and education around the world. Visiting professor appointments at Harvard University School of Design, the Architectural Association, London, the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, and the KTH School of Architecture in Stockholm further illustrate his impact on expanding the creative, intellectual, and professional reach of landscape architecture.

James's much acclaimed and widely referenced books include *The High Line* (Phaidon); *The Landscape Imagination* (Princeton Architectural Press); *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* (Yale University Press); and *Recovering Landscape* (Princeton University Press).

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Advocacy

Given today's urgent issues surrounding climate, resiliency, equity, diversity, inclusion, and the future of meaningful public space in cities, James continues to be a major force and advocate for innovative design thinking that creatively addresses these multiple challenges.

He has also been instrumental in gathering a broad and diverse audience into the dialogue about how design can meet the changing needs and pressures on communities. In projects such as *Shelby Farms Park*, Memphis; the *Central Waterfront*, Seattle; *Tongva Park*, Santa Monica; and *The Underline*, Miami, disaffected and disengaged communities found new voice in both micro and macro-scale programmatic expression within the landscape. Similarly, recent planning work in *South Baltimore's Middle Branch* has brought together many different communities to not only reimagine their waterfront and parkland, but also build new economies, jobs, and opportunities for growth. Field Operations' pro bono project "Neighborhoods Now" is a community-based project in Bedford Stuyvesant focused on how the built environment and public space can more directly impact neighborhood cohesion.

James serves on the Board of the Forum for Urban Design, and as a government advisor to the City of Qianhai. He has served as Chair of numerous award juries, including the distinguished Barcelona Rosa Barba Prize. In 2019, James led an effort to re-imagine the Tidal Basin and its monuments in Washington DC, a site subject to rapid deterioration through flooding and subsidence. He also worked on the Rebuild-By-Design initiative to imagine and build more resilient communities around San Francisco Bay in the face of climate change, rising tides and flooding. In 2018, major exhibition at the National Building Museum showcased his installation "Icebergs" as part of a large-scale immersive environment aimed at educating visitors about global climate change.

James continues to be a passionate advocate for the field of landscape architecture. He is a highly visible speaker and panelist, and in addition to his books, he is the author of many shorter essays showcasing the role and work of landscape architects.

Body of Work

Over the past 30 years, James has steadily built one of the most esteemed design practices, with an innate curiosity and capacity that expands the field and crosses disciplines. Field Operations is distinguished by a strong contemporary design language across a variety of project types and scales, from large urban districts, master plans and complex planning sites to small well-crafted, detailed design projects. Regardless of scale, there is a special commitment to the design of a vibrant and dynamic public realm, informed by the ecology of both people and nature, rooted in place and context.

From revitalizing neglected urban spaces and neighborhoods, to creating innovative greenways that connect communities, James' work has improved countless lives around the world. His approach to design collaboration between stakeholders from all sectors of society -- a staple of his portfolio of projects -- has become increasingly popular as it has resulted in dozens of examples where communities' unique needs and values are successfully expressed in their built environment.

His designs are also highly acclaimed for their sustainability-focused nature. Long before it was in the mainstream, his work showcased native plants, water reuse systems, solar power generation capabilities, wildlife habitat enhancement plans and other eco-friendly features that reduce environmental impact. His master plan for Cornell Technion on Roosevelt Island, for example, has created a zero-energy, zero-carbon development, with geothermal wells, stormwater management systems, solar energy supply, biodiverse native plantings, and flood resiliency.

As seen in James' portfolio of work, his most significant work is in the public realm, including three ASLA Honor Award projects: New York's highly acclaimed *High Line*; Santa Monica's *Tongva Park* and Seattle's *Central Waterfront*. In addition to the urban interventions in cities across the U.S. detailed earlier, significant commissions include London's *South Park at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park*; Hong Kong's *Salisbury Gardens and Avenue of the Stars*; Hong Kong's

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Victoria Dockside and K11 Musea; Shenzhen's City Masterplan of Qianhai; Shanghai's Taupu Central Park; Shanghai's Arts District West Bund Waterfront; Qatar Museums Cultural District Flag Plaza, Doha; and Guiwan Tidal Park, Qianhai, Shenzhen.

James' work has been recognized with the 2010 Cooper Hewitt National Design Award; the American Academy of Arts & Letters Award in Architecture; the Daimler-Chrysler Design Excellence Award; the AA&D Black Pencil Award; and a number of important ASLA, AIA, APA and ULI Honor and Merit Awards over the years. The ASLA awarded Field Operations the Firm Award in 2020. James was elevated to a Fellow of the ASLA in 2019.

James was cited by *Time Magazine* as "one of the world's most influential people" in 2010 and featured as a "Gamechanger" in 2013. He is an Elected Member of the American Academy of Arts & Letters and has received Honorary Doctorates in Design from the Technical University of Munich and Manchester Metropolitan University.

His work has been published broadly and exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum; the National Building Museum; the Royal Academy of Art in London; and the Venice Biennale. He has been invited as part of a spring 2023 installation at MoMA, called *New Publics*, and the 2023 Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Art, London.

Conclusion

The Design Medal represents excellence. It is bestowed on a person that is an exemplar for our profession. James Corner's record in design is unmatched and would be reason enough to recognize him for sustained excellence. The built work continues to find new expression in even greater scale and complexity. The design awards from ASLA, AIA, APA and others offers an enviable list of notable recognition. Yet, his influence, and his impact on the profession is so much greater.

Often, great design means great ego. But, as seen in his letters of recommendation from a Gold Medal winning architect to the former NYC Planning Commissioner, his collaborators share how much James champions collaboration as essential to the design process.

Great thinkers are often theorists only, but James has shown a great facility for exploring the intellectual landscape and has also built a hugely successful design practice. As Laurie Olin notes in his letter of recommendation, James started out as one of his most brilliant students and went on to become one of the most important figures in our field, with a remarkable record as both an inspirational teacher and practitioner. "As chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, he wrote a series of important theoretical essays while teaching invigorating studios and energizing a generation of students who have gone on to practice and teach around the country and world." These ripples of influence continue to be felt.

I urge the jury to consider how James Corner is the complete landscape architect. He is the rare design polyglot: versatile in thinking, writing, teaching, design and advocacy. I can think of no better recipient for the 2023 Design Medal.

Sincerely,



James Burnett, FASLA
President and Founder

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February 7, 2023

ASLA Design Medal Nominations
c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: James Corner, FASLA – Nomination for the 2023 Design Medal

Dear Members of the Jury,

I get many requests for letters of recommendation, but I am often unable to accommodate these inquiries. This letter of endorsement for James Corner's recognition as the ASLA's 2023 Design Medalist is a welcome exception. James stands at the very top of his profession and has inspired an entire generation of landscape architects.

James and I first met in 2002 when I was the New York City Planning Commissioner and responsible for overseeing the transformation of Staten Island's Fresh Kills Landfill. James had recently won the competition for the design of the landfill, and his extraordinary vision to convert this toxic wasteland into 2200 acres of new parkland and habitat inspired citywide optimism and hope on the heels of the tragic events of 9/11. Today, the landscape of Freshkills Park is already spectacular and has become a national model for ecological restoration.

Two years later, in 2004, James was selected as designer of the High Line, the result of an international design competition. I was familiar with his prior distinguished record of teaching, advocacy, and design, but our collaboration over the next few years revealed to me his true genius as a creative pragmatist who understood the full spectrum of competing pressures on the design of public urban space.

Finding ways to repurpose and reinvigorate a long-forgotten post-industrial remnant in the city and find beauty within its otherwise overlooked remains, is a hallmark of the High Line's transformation. Blurring the boundary between planning, design, architecture, landscape architecture and planting, James put together and led an extraordinary multi-disciplinary team that included Diller, Scofidio + Renfro, Piet Oudolf, L'Observatoire and Buro Happold. I worked extremely closely with James and saw firsthand how he curated the team toward a landscape-led vision of gardens, walks, seating nooks, overlooks and other unique features. The High Line has succeeded precisely because it embraced its industrial rail-track character on which he overlaid with a new contemporary design vocabulary of concrete planks, wood seating and richly planted perennial gardens with a textured mix of trees and shrubs. He understood how to make the subtle play between contemporary and industrial design.

This was James's vision, and it took great fortitude to make it the beautiful reality it is today. Of course, there were others outside of the design team who were instrumental in the project's success: Mayor Bloomberg, my team at the Department of City Planning, Adrian Benepe with Parks, Robert Hammond and Joshua David - the founders of the Friends of the High Line, and various others, including community representatives and neighbors. But James' ability to execute his unique vision and to lead a complex and talented team was the key to the High Line's success.

Over the past 40 years, I have seen vast areas of New York City be transformed. In my role as VP for Planning and Design at the Battery Park City Authority, we turned a 92-acre landfill into one of the most successful developments in the nation. Later as New York City Planning Commissioner (2002-2013) under Mayor Michael Bloomberg, I rezoned 40% of the city, creating urban design plans for 124 neighborhoods. We reclaimed New York City's waterfront, making the water part of New Yorker's every day lives. Inspired by my mentor, William H. Whyte, I prioritized the creation of inviting, enjoyable public open spaces, large and small. I always sought out like-minded allies, like James Corner, who were committed to finding new ways to protect and expand the public realm, especially through landscape, greenery, social seating and inventive placemaking. James is that rare combination of designer and advocate, leader and listener. He understands that design is for people, for an often diverse and heterogenous public, and that successful placemaking must be inviting and welcoming for all.

James has long been a champion of dynamic planning and has led the dialogue on landscape urbanism as an approach to integrating green systems and landscapes with the city. At Fresh Kills, I recall seeing him in public meetings on Staten Island working closely and inclusively with community groups to help address equal access and promote green parkland as a remedy not only for challenging ecological issues but also for social justice, equity and inclusion. This approach resonated with me as a planner and urban advocate because Jim so eloquently merged his earlier academic ideas with practical application. At its heart, his contention that cities are discrete ecosystems with multiple communities, and any design and policy advancements must address these interconnected threads is now taken as a matter of course.

In 2002, when work first began on the transformation of Fresh Kills, and in 2004, when James began work on the High Line, these ideas were in their infancy. I have watched as James has gone on to lead such amazing projects as the new central waterfront for Seattle, the Tunneltops Park at San Francisco's Presidio, Chicago's Navy Pier or the South Park at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London. These are all enormously complex, multi-disciplinary projects that require deft leadership and design intelligence with the public, the community, political leaders, and a complex cadre of professional disciplines. To execute and deliver groundbreaking and beautiful physical design on such large projects cannot be taken for granted: James delivers, he gets the job done, and the work is always breathtaking.

Often a single project is the catalyst for future investment and influence, and when successful, this seems to be an obvious and foregone conclusion. Yet small steps lead to larger ones: the High Line has certainly revitalized Chelsea and the West Side of Manhattan and now serves as a model for cities across the globe. Similarly, the Public Square in Cleveland has reinvigorated the center of that city; Shelby Farms Park in Memphis has brought new vitality to otherwise overlooked neighborhoods and communities, and led to new investments and opportunities; Tongva Park in Santa Monica has transformed entire blocks of development and created a new much-loved, green heart for the city; and the ongoing transformation of Miami's Underline, a remarkable transformation of linear mobility infrastructure into a 10-mile long green corridor, is linking together multiple communities and public spaces.

While the success and design intelligence of the High Line is unmistakable, James continues to find ways to improve our urban environment and communities with important urban planning and public park projects around the world. His work shines with the power of regeneration, invention, and of course, beauty. Over the years, he has built a world-class team of professionals at Field Operations, with multiple offices, each bringing distinctive care and originality to the design and vitality of every project.

James Corner's extraordinary record of projects, ideas, writings, and vision have changed the way city shapers, academics, students and designers in every field look at our shared public realm. Awarding James the 2023 ASLA Design Medal would give due recognition to his outstanding and enormously influential achievements

Very Sincerely,



Amanda M. Burden FAICP
Principal, Bloomberg Associates
Former New York City Planning Commissioner (2002-2013)

OFFICE FOR URBANIZATION

10 February 2023

ASLA Design Medal
c/o Honors and Awards
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

re: James Corner FASLA nomination for ASLA Design Medal

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to endorse James Corner's nomination for the ASLA Design Medal.

James Corner is without question one of the most important and influential landscape architects practicing in the world today. He has made fundamental contributions to the advancement and impact of the field over the past three decades. His contributions include canonical built works of landscape architecture that represent the best of our profession. He has created original and significant new knowledge in our field, and he has taught two generations of leading landscape architects. He led one of the most historically significant and vital academic programs in our field. Finally, Jim has contributed indelibly to raising the visibility, relevance, and public profile of landscape architects and landscape architecture. He is imminently well-qualified for this honor, which in many respects is long overdue recognition of the influence of his ideas and the impact of his body of design work across the design professions.

Corner's practice *James Corner Field Operations* has been among the most significant offices of landscape architects in the world over the past two decades. *Field Operations* have realized an extraordinary array of built works of landscape architecture and urban



Harvard University
Graduate School of Design

design, including several already canonical projects across North American and Asia. Among these, nothing less than the High Line in New York exemplifies the critical aspirations, design imagination, and public impact of *Field Operations*. Beginning with the winning entry to the design competition which they authored with architects Diller, Scofidio + Renfro and plantsman Piet Oudolf, *Field Operations* have been the lead design professionals responsible for perhaps the most impactful public landscape project in recent memory. From the elevated park's opening to the public in 2009, through its global dissemination and reception, and to its present status, The High Line has elevated the status and relevance of landscape architects and landscape architecture. The project has spawned enormous touristic attention, leveraged the redevelopment of Chelsea and the Meatpacking District, and changed the perception of landscape architects as lead design professionals for major public works and urban redevelopment projects.

Corner's responsibilities extended beyond the conceptualization and programming of the project through its exquisite material palette, design language, and detailing. For Corner, the material realization of the work is fundamental, and speaks to his love for the careful craft of bringing materials together in the service of contemporary urbanity and a renewed commitment to the public realm. While Corner consistently acknowledges the contributions of DS+R, Oudolf, and dozens of other contributors, it is evident that *Field Operations'* leadership of the project through construction has changed the public and professional estimation of the role and responsibilities of the landscape architect. This has also contributed to the growing sentiment that the landscape architect stands as the urbanist of our age.

After nearly a decade of awards and honors for The High Line, I had the privilege of serving on the jury for the Harvard Graduate School of Design's Veronica Rudge Urban

Design Prize in 2017. This award is bestowed every two years in recognition of the most successful and influential realized work of urban design in the world, and that jury selected The High Line as the most significant example of contemporary urban design. That jury recognized The High Line as an “exemplar for the complex coordination of creative professionals, philanthropists, and policy makers by deeply committed community advocates.” The fact that the project began with community opposition to a top-down planning agenda to demolish the abandoned rail line was one of the most persuasive aspects of the project. This is particularly relevant as we continue to struggle to find community-based bottom-up and socially relevant forms of urban design and development in the American city.

Beyond their work on The High Line, Corner and Field Operations have realized important public parks at Fresh Kills Park on Staten Island, New York, and Tongva Park in Santa Monica, California. These parks are complemented by an impressive array of larger scale urban design and landscape projects including the redevelopment of the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Seattle’s public waterfront, and the port of Qianhai, in Shenzhen, China. Taken collectively, it is difficult to overstate Corner’s influence on the field and allied design professions around the world.

In addition to his significant contributions in practice, Corner is among the most influential theorists of landscape architecture over the past quarter century. Beginning with his canonical *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* with Alex MacLean (1996) and *Recovering Landscape* (1999), Corner has contributed fundamental intellectual, cultural, and social knowledge to our field, and has helped to shape the commitments and agenda for the academic discipline. More recently, Corner’s *The Landscape Imagination* (2014) gathers his essays and journal articles from the past three

decades under a single volume. In addition to his theoretical contributions, Corner's work through *Field Operations* has been published and translated internationally through various venues.

In addition to his practice and theoretical work, Corner was a dedicated teacher for two generations of students in the MLA Program at the University of Pennsylvania. Through his development of studio teaching, theory seminars, and creative workshops, Corner shifted the trajectory of that institution and had a disproportionate impact on pedagogy in the field across North America and around the world. He also served as chair and provided disciplinary and professional leadership for the Department of Landscape Architecture at Penn, while cultivating the next generation of leadership for our field.

As much or more than any individual landscape architect practicing today, I believe that James Corner has contributed to the intellectual vibrancy, cultural relevant, and public perception of landscape architecture. I can think of no more worthy recipient of the 2023 ASLA Design Medal, and I am pleased to endorse his nomination without reservation. Please let me know if I can provide anything more on behalf of his application, and all best with your process.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Waldheim', followed by a period.

Charles Waldheim, AIA, ASLA (Hon.), FAAR

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February 14, 2023
ASLA Medal Nominations
c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, N.W.
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To the ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

Letter of Endorsement for James Corner for Nomination for the ASLA Design Medal

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I submit this Letter of Endorsement for James Corner, Founder and CEO of James Corner Field Operations, for the 2023 ASLA Design Medal.

James has proven for more than three decades that consistent excellence in design has an enduring impact on the health and well-being of people and their urban environments. James' resume and accomplishments speak for themselves. He has led by innovation and provocation throughout his career, and his impact on the profession can be seen not only in his firm's body of work, but in the many other projects designed by many other design firms that have embraced the way in which James approaches design. His innovation at scale has created a newfound deeper purpose for landscape architecture especially in cities. As a designer, James has always balanced beauty with the broader functions of landscape both in urban regeneration, and as urban infrastructure. City leaders and James' clients around the globe have sought him out for these qualities.

I have known James for more than twenty five years. I first met James when my husband Joseph E Brown FASLA was teaching at Harvard and we attended a lecture that he was giving as a guest of the GSD. It was clear at that time that James was already defining through his research, a different way of seeing and responding to landscape through design. Over the years our paths have crossed in the CEO Roundtable, and at numerous other professional events. I have also had the pleasure of visiting a number of James' projects, all of which stand out without exception, as being broadly impactful on the cities and communities which they serve. James Corner Field Operations' work lifts the design ambition of the profession as a whole.

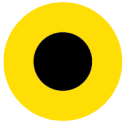
James' practice has expanded over the years to embrace the globe and his work in Asia, specifically China, is testament to his ability to bridge different cultures while still accomplishing design excellence.

I have had the pleasure of getting to know some other senior leaders in James Corner Field Operations and it is clear that they have been nurtured as designers, and have been encouraged to reach their full potential as designers. This type of skilled mentorship speaks volumes about the commitment James has not only to his personal design goals but to that of his entire team. James is without question one of the leading designers globally in landscape architecture of the past 30 years. It is for this reason as well as the other qualities outlined above that I believe that James would be a worthy recipient of the ASLA 2023 Design Medal.

Yours Faithfully



Jacinta McCann FASLA
Global Design Advisor AECOM



OLIN

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To the Jury,

I write to support the nomination of Jim Corner for the ASLA Medal. He is unquestionably a worthy candidate.

I have known him since he was a student – one of the most brilliant, challenging, and rewarding to have. Like a handful of other important figures in our field he has been both an inspirational teacher and practitioner. As chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, he wrote a series of important theoretical essays while teaching invigorating studios and energizing a generation of students who have gone on to practice and teach around the country and world.

At the same time, he created an internationally prominent and highly regarded design firm, Field Operations, which has won international competitions, designed and built projects nationally and internationally, and participated in museum exhibitions that have raised the profile of our field, for instance in the Museum of Modern Art's landmark exhibition, Groundswell.

By far the most well-known of his projects internationally is that of the Highline in New York City, a competition which Jim and his partners won, and against all odds managed to execute in collaboration with a panoply of others (success has a thousand partners, failure is an orphan). How many masterpieces does a person have to make? In his case, Jim has gone on to produce other brilliant important projects, some through open or invited competitions, such as Freshkill Park on Staten Island, the most important major park project in New York since Olmsted, and the new Waterfront Park in Seattle, as well as work in Europe and Asia.

I am proud to think of him as a colleague at Penn and in the profession and recommend him for this award without reservation and with enthusiasm,

Sincerely

Laurie Olin

February 20, 2023

ASLA Design Medal Nominations
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636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear ASLA Executive Committee,

I am delighted to recommend James Corner Field Operations (JCFO) for the ASLA Design Medal. Having worked with directly with James and the Field Operations team on the design of Shelby Farms Park in Memphis, Tennessee, I can attest to his exceptional contributions to design and his extraordinary body of work and its international impact. James is also an academic who is equally impactful in landscape theory and design. His lasting influence as an author is felt across disciplines, having written 'Taking Measures Across the American Landscape,' a canonical text about the cultural terrain and the unique ways in which it can be represented. His distinct approach to drawing and to design is uncommonly effective and the critical foundation upon which the success of his high-profile, public-focused projects around the world depend. It goes without saying that these projects are intensely difficult, and that the sustained success of James Corner Field Operations across such a wide variety of high-profile projects depends upon his ongoing contributions to design through a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that warrants recognition at the absolute highest level.

Beyond his dedication to design, James Corner – 'Jim' to his friends and close colleagues - also believes in strong and authentic collaboration with the communities within which he works. In his work on Shelby Farms Park - one of the largest urban parks in the United States – his firm Field Operations engaged members of the community to inform and shape an inclusive design process. Shelby County, Tennessee, is now almost exclusively African American, and not surprisingly suffers from an overall lack of investment in park space and public amenities. In fact, Shelby Farms Park is a private park operating as public one, operating without substantial governmental funding with more than 80% of the Park's operating budget coming from donations and earned revenue. In response, James Corner Field Operations helped to secure significant philanthropic funding for the project through their extraordinary vision, exceptional drawings, and compelling imagery. His visionary work helped will into existence an unlikely and extraordinary park that serves an underserved community.

Many landscape projects have a very long life, and Field Operations had already been working on Shelby Farms for five years when we joined the team. By comparison, we were relatively unknown at the time, but James and all of Field Operations immediately embraced and challenged us as full members of the team. We worked together to site seven new buildings in a massive park landscape with a newly formed lake, considering how the buildings could best relate to the land, to frame views, to serve the public, and to generate revenue for the park. We worked tirelessly as a team alongside a diverse array of clients and consultants to ensure the highest standards of sustainability and environmental performance. I developed a real appreciation for the deep professionalism of James and his office, who were refreshingly organized and direct. Our collaboration was highly iterative and rigorous, and the built outcome speaks for itself, with striking architectural forms in a gorgeous landscape of fields, woodlands, lakes, and trails – seemingly natural but deftly designed and constructed from the ground up. The buildings and the landscape are truly inseparable, each fitted to one another through an intense design process in support of the broader mission of the park. Our collaboration was emblematic of a broader impact and was recognized with a 2019 AIA Institute Honor Award for Regional & Urban Design, the highest recognition of our design efforts we could hope to achieve.

In that regard, on both a professional and personal level, I wholeheartedly recommend James Corner for the prestigious ASLA Design Medal. James embodies the spirit of this award, committing himself to the long-term engagement of diverse and dynamic communities, whether in Memphis or Seattle or anywhere around the world, realizing extraordinary parks and public spaces where they are perhaps least expected, making them all the more exceptional and valuable. Recognizing James Corner with this award would be to acknowledge the patient and often thankless work

he has done to bring this and so many other great projects into existence, ones that will be enjoyed well beyond our lifetimes. His remarkable spirit and skill have produced a body of exceptional design work at a sustained level worthy of our recognition and, frankly, of our admiration, not just for the last ten years, but for the last twenty or more. His project in Fresh Kills, New York, exemplifies his impact – a project that transformed a landfill into a public park with a 30-year vision, now nearly 20 years old. This project, like so many of his works helps us all reimagine what is possible for public space, an impact that is now clearly felt around the world. I hope you will equally regard his fortitude, skill, and commitment to design that is of exceptional benefit to us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marlon Blackwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marlon" and last name "Blackwell" clearly distinguishable.

Marlon Blackwell, FAIA
Recipient of the 2020 AIA Gold Medal

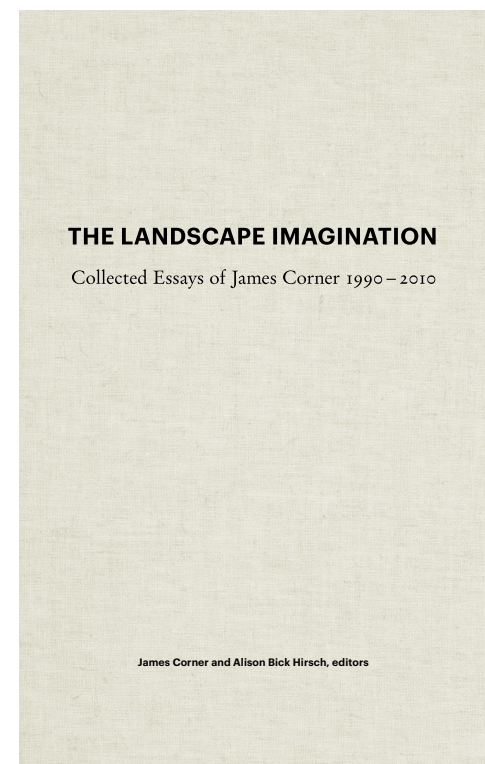
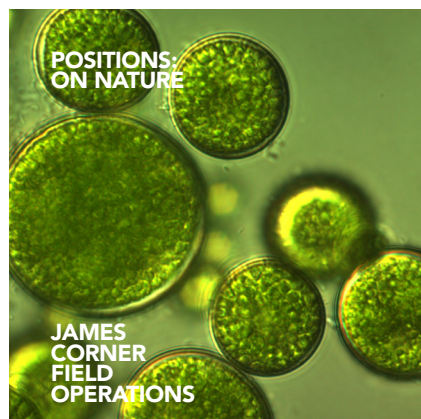
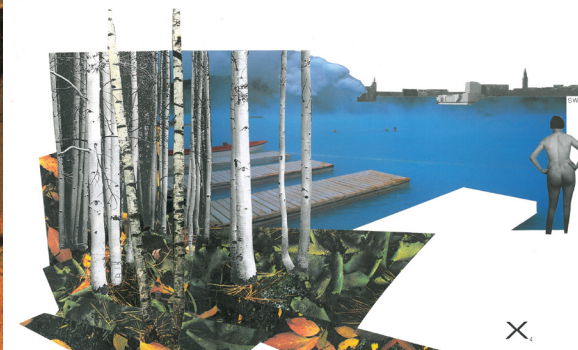
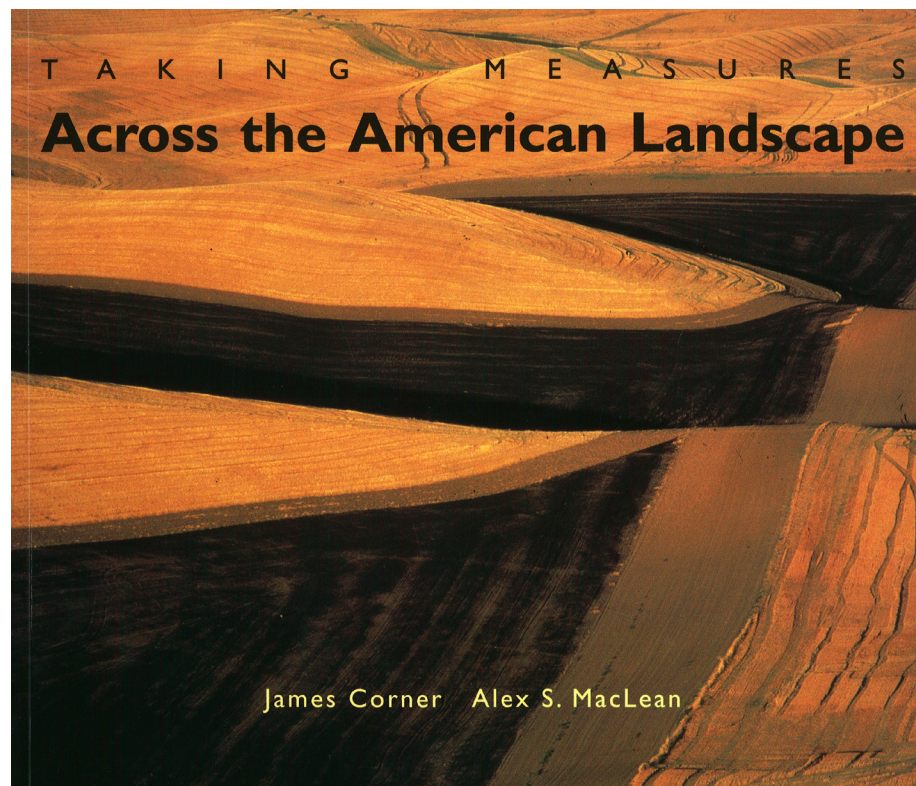
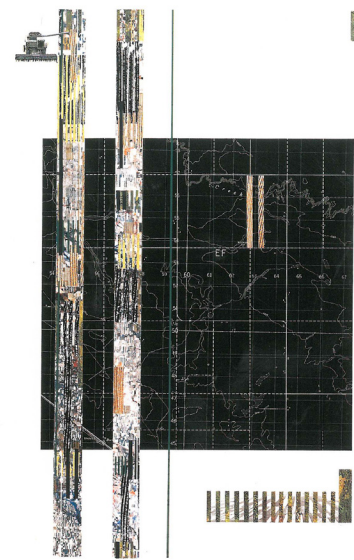


James Corner, FASLA

Founder, James Corner Field Operations

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High Line, New York, NY
ASLA Honor Award 2011, 2013
Veronica Rudge Green Prize 2017

"An instant landmark of landscape architecture [...] it is, hands down, the most influential design project of the last decade."
—Michael Kimmelman, Architecture Critic for *The New York Times*



High Line, New York, NY
ASLA Honor Award 2011, 2013
Veronica Rudge Green Prize 2017

"The presence of these High Line tributes in cities across the globe shows the power of a singular, iconic work to spawn similar projects elsewhere."
—Nic Monisse, Design Editor for *Monocle*



Tongva Park and Ken Genser Square, Santa Monica, CA
APA National Planning Achievement Award 2015
ASLA Honor Award 2018

"The project is unquestionably a rare example of farsighted urban planning in Southern California, which may in the end be its most important legacy."
—Christopher Hawthorne, *Los Angeles Times*



Freshkills Park, Staten Island, NY

"Freshkills, once a daily dumping ground, will become a showcase of urban renewal and sustainability."
—Michael Bloomberg, Former Mayor of New York City



Domino Park, Brooklyn, NY
ULI Urban Open Space Award 2020
ASLA Honor Award 2022

"The revitalization of the 160-year-old industrial Williamsburg waterfront deftly weaves the site's history together with the park's programming while simultaneously protecting it from future floods."
—Jonathan Hilburg, *The Architect's Newspaper*



Navy Yard Central Green, Philadelphia, PA
ULI Philadelphia Award for Excellence 2016
ASLA-NY Merit Award 2016

"This unique environment has become one of the nation's leading places to work, creating even more reasons for innovative companies from around the world to move to Philadelphia."
—Michael A. Nutter, Former Mayor of Philadelphia



Navy Pier, Chicago, IL
ASLA-NY Honor Award 2017
ASLA PA-DE Merit Award 2019

"The redevelopment of Navy Pier is vital to our ongoing efforts to attract 55 million visitors annually to the City of Chicago by 2020, creating new jobs and injecting millions of dollars into our local economy."
—Rahm Emanuel, Former Mayor of Chicago



Shelby Farms Park, Memphis, TN
AIA Regional & Urban Design Award 2019

"Shelby Farms Park is well on its way to achieving its potential as the next great urban park of the twenty-first century—a truly world-class public space with global impact built for and by Memphis."
—Jen Andrews, Chief Executive Officer of Shelby Farms Park Conservancy



Qianhai's Guiwan Park, Shenzhen, China
ASLA-NY Merit Award 2022

"Guiwan Park has become a new landmark and a new internet celebrity in Qianhai's urban public landscapes."
—Qianhai Holdings



Qianhai's Guiwan Park, Shenzhen, China
ASLA-NY Merit Award 2022

A continuous coastal park, Guiwan Park features 51,000 sqm of mangroves, 18,000 sqm of freshwater wetland, and 255,000 sqm of parkland, naturalizing the tidal corridor and creating a harmony of beauty and ecological performance.



Victoria Dockside, Hong Kong, China
HKIUD Grand Award 2021
MIPIM Asia Best Urban Regeneration 2019

"The new art and design district will reinvigorate the Victoria harbourfront and create the most exciting new neighbourhood for both Hong Kong residents and the city's 60 million annual visitors."
—Adrian Cheng, CEO of New World Development Company Limited



Presidio Tunnel Tops, San Francisco, CA

"Presidio Tunnel Tops will serve as a beautiful beacon of recreation, education, and community [...] Visitors in the Bay Area and beyond will benefit from this magnificent new park—now and for generations to come."
Nancy Pelosi, 52nd Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives



Taopu Central Park, Shanghai, China
ASLA Honor Award 2020

"It is not only a beautiful garden, but a big sustainable ecological system as well.
It will serve as an urban 'green lung.'"
—Xu Wei, *Shanghai Daily*



The Underline, Miami, FL
Monocle Best Urban Intervention Award 2021
ASLA-NY Honor Award 2016

"[The] opening of the first phase of The Underline is the first step toward a people-first Miami."
—Daniella Levine Cava, Mayor of Miami-Dade County