



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
NEW YORK  
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New York, NY 10017  
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www.aslany.org

ASLA Medal Nominations  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: The ASLA Medal - M. Paul Friedberg, FASLA

Dear Executive Committee Members and Board of Trustees,

It is my honor and great pleasure to nominate Paul Friedberg to receive the ASLA Medal for his lifetime achievements and profound contributions to our profession. Paul is a true pioneer of landscape architecture and urban design who has dedicated his life to providing public places that not only break boundaries of traditional design, but more importantly increase the quality of life for those who use these spaces. His design response to how people interact with their built environment has greatly impacted landscape design and will continue to shape our profession for generations to come.

M. Paul Friedberg is a landscape architect, planner, educator, product designer and author. Born in 1931, he graduated from Cornell University in 1954 with a Bachelor of Science. Principal in charge of design at MPFP since founding the firm in 1958, Friedberg is best known for his work in urban landscape, both nationally and internationally. He has pioneered new forms in the design of urban playground, plazas, malls, and parks and has greatly inspired how designers think of public spaces.

### Redefining Play Environments:

At Jacob Riis Houses in Manhattan's Lower East Side which opened in 1965, Paul created a series of adventures, such as a tree house, a tunnel, and mounds which were connected with paths, slides, and swings. His approach was to provide opportunities for discovery, experimentation, exploration, creativity, and cooperation. Paul felt that a playground was a "challenging facility" and needed a variety of experiences because choice was a major component of play. Paul's use of flowing water, bridges, play features, connecting slides, catwalks, and tunnels has resulted in a continuous flow of play, exploration, and revelation.

Paul's departure from the normal playground was widely reported in the media, including an article in *Life* magazine, and Paul became an authority on urban play areas. Over the years, he came to conclude that all urban design situations involved play for children and adults. He declared, "I think the notion of people being able to play, whether it's as a surrogate or whether it's through doing it itself, I think it is essential... We as landscape architects have a professional obligation to find/create the places where this can occur."

By 1970, Paul was known for his revolutionary theory on play. He furthered this expertise with publications. His first book, *Play and Interplay* criticized the existing play area design process that provided isolated facilities without acknowledging or understanding the intended users "true needs, habits, nature, and desires" and without appreciation for the larger urban environment. It called for a "new recreation" in which the design of multifaceted play areas was integrated with education, housing, commerce, and transportation planning. In 1975, Friedberg published *Handcrafted Playgrounds: Designs You Can Build Yourself*, which demonstrated how play equipment could be built from simple materials.

Paul took an observational approach to designing playgrounds - he studied how play spaces and elements of play were used and also what wasn't working to engage users. His theory was that the users should be dictating what to put in the spaces, not the designer.

### Educator:

In 1970, ASLA identified that there were not enough minorities in our profession and the place to start was in our colleges and university. At the time there were several great programs across the nation, but none in culturally diverse major cities. ASLA asked Paul if he would chair a follow up committee to their recent conference and eventually asked if he would look into opening a school in NYC. Friedberg

M. Paul Friedberg ASLA Medal Nomination

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started the first undergraduate landscape architectural program in a major city at The City College of New York. The Landscape Architecture Program at City College prepares students to meet the challenges of future city design within the dynamic environmental scenario of climate change and the exploding growth of metropolitan areas around the nation and the globe. While the aim for developing this program in a major city was to diversify our profession, one of the unexpected advantages was that it attracted more women to the profession. He was director of the program for 20 years and taught or worked with some of our most prominent landscape architects.

### **Public Urban Spaces:**

*"His vision on how urban space should be used and defined was quite different from the then thinking current attitude. His work seemed to be intuitive and emotional usually thinking how people would fit into the landscape. Proportion, scale and use of material took on a completely different meaning. I always marveled that he was willing to try to do anything. I used to laugh thinking if he had been asked to move the Empire State building, I was sure he would say "how far". For me what he passed on was the idea that you could do anything and the only thing that would hold you back was yourself. I'm not sure that today's young landscape architects know how much he has done for the profession and how much ground breaking he accomplished."*

- Howard Abel, from The Cultural Landscape Foundation's *Reflections on Paul Friedberg*

In 1980 he received the AIA Medal in recognition of his influence on the architectural profession. In selecting M. Paul Friedberg, the AIA Jury on Institute Honors commented, "Throughout his career, he has been able to introduce a new dimension of life for different ages and social groups in the urban environment. His work, which is a testimonial of his dedication to architecture and the human environment, should be taken as a parameter for the future."

In 2004 he received the ASLA Design Medal, the highest honor the American Society of Landscape Architects may confer upon a landscape architect for a body of exceptional design work. In his nomination statement, past ASLA President Len Hopper stated: *"The wide variety of urban spaces represented by his work, brought landscape architecture heavily into the field of urban design on a large scale."*

Paul remains very active in his firm's work traveling across the nation as well as internationally. With Paul's hands-on leadership style, M. Paul Friedberg and Partners have completed numerous urban design projects including the A.C. Nielsen headquarters near Chicago (1972); the Peavey Plaza and the Loring Park Greenway in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Pershing Park and Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C. (1979); Park Place located above a parking garage (1982); the Olympic Plaza in Calgary, Alberta, Canada (1987); a rooftop plaza at New York's Fordham University (1989); the 67th Street playground in Central Park, New York City; Battery Park City in New York City; Holon Park in Holon, Israel; La Jolla Commons in San Diego, California; and the Andromeda Houses in Jaffa, Israel. In all Friedberg's work shares a common conviction: that designed landscapes can enhance life by revealing beauty in the environment and in human contact.

### **Advocate:**

Paul is a strong advocate for the preservation of our important designed landscapes. He has assisted the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) in their advocacy efforts appearing in several videos to educate about sites such as Peavy Plaza. In a 2006 interview with Charles Birnbaum, President of TCLF Paul states, *"I think landscapes that define our culture are important. [They] should be preserved as we do objects of art and buildings that are important. I think that we want to be able to use those not just to study but to enjoy and let people enjoy."*

Most recently he wrote a letter to the Frick Collection Board of Trustees in defense of saving the Russell Page designed garden that will be destroyed if plans for the museum expansion are approved. He states, *"... the very energy that defines New York if left unchecked can prove destructive and destroy the very essence that makes this city great. The plan for the Frick expansion is a case in point. It suggests that to gain a benefit for the museum you must destroy a historic entity that adds to the cultural and aesthetic value of the city."*

### **Milestone Member and Reflections:**

Paul has been an active ASLA member since 1965 - 50 years of continuous membership is a milestone not many landscape architects can claim. I was very fortunate to have worked with him on our chapter's 100th Anniversary Short Film, a project that highlights our chapter's history but also about the changing roles of landscape architects in that hundred year span. In his interview for the project, he really didn't need any questions or statements to speak from - he talked for over thirty minutes with very little interruption and could have spoken longer about our profession if he had the time.



Fortunately, The Cultural Landscape Foundation produced a complete oral history on Paul that not only give great insight into Paul's career and built projects but offer a valuable piece to landscape architecture history to inspire many current and future designers. In the transcripts from his oral history Paul states, " cultural landscapes are landscapes that are products of a particular time and place that inform the present and add to the future." Reflecting on the numerous places that Paul has designed over his distinguished career, many future landscape architects will look at his designs to inform their own.

Paul has paved the path for many landscape architects to push the envelope and use creativity to provide public spaces that are truly for people. His work has not only changed the way we think about playground design and public places but also about how all people use the spaces that we as landscape architects have the privilege to design. The ASLA Medal is the highest honor given to a landscape architect whose lifetime achievements and contributions to the profession have had a unique and lasting impact on the welfare of the public and the environment. I whole heartedly believe that Paul Friedberg is most deserving of this medal and request that he be given your full consideration for this most fitting of honors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer L. Nitzky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jennifer Nitzky, RLA, ASLA, ISA  
ASLA-NY Chapter President

## PERSONAL HONORS

### **Chevalier Dans L'Ordre**

Des Arts Et Des Letters Ministry of Culture Paris, France

### **1979 American Society of Landscape Architects Fellow**

### **1980 American Institute of Architects**

AIA Medal for Allied Professional 1980- in recognition of his inspiration and influence upon the architectural profession.

### **1981 Ball State University**

Doctor of Law by Ball State University -in honor of his contribution to the profession

### **1981 American Academy in Rome**

Resident

### **2002 James Daniel Bybee Award**

For an individual architect for a body of work executed over time and distinguished by outstanding design

### **2004 ASLA Design Metal**

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Professor Emeritus, City College City of New York

Founder / Director of the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at CCNY 1970

Adjunct Professor, Columbia University,

Adjunct Professor, Pratt Institute,

Lecturer, Yale, Harvard, Penn, The New School for Social Research, Royal Danish Academy and numerous academic institutions in the U.S. and Internationally

## HONORARY POSITIONS

Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects

Board Member Institute of Urban Design (past)

Board Member International Design Conference in Aspen (past)

Advisor International Design Conference in Aspen (past)

Trustee of the American Academy in Rome (past)

American Institute of Planners

Advisory Board of the School of Architecture at Cornell (past)

Cornell University Trustee Buildings & Properties Committee (Non Voting)

Board of Directors, Municipal Arts Society, N.Y. (past)

Board of Directors, Municipal Arts Society, New York (past)

Member, Art Commission of the City of, N.Y. 1975

Chairman/Designer, Not Too Late exhibition, Guild Hall, East Hampton, N.Y. 1980

Chairman of the 1976 Conference, "Exploring Change", I D C A

The National Center on Design for Children, Honorary Committee

University of Southern California, Landscape Architecture Program, Advisory Board

National Organization of ADPSR Board of Directors

US National Committee for Early Childhood Education (Past Advisory Board)

Association of Parks and Playgrounds (Past Board of Directors)

ASLA Education Policy and Planning (Advisory Committee)

Art Commission of the City of New York

M. Paul Friedberg ASLA Medal Nomination

## RECOGNIZED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS

- Riis Plaza, New York,N.Y. - New direction in social design for urban public housing
- Roberto Clement State Park Bronx, NY - The first state park in an urban environment
- U.S. Pavilion at the World's Fair in Osaka, Japan
- Moscow World Trade Center, Moscow
- Rainbow Center Mall and The Winter Garden, Niagara Falls, N.Y. - Conservatory/mall
- City Hall Fountain ,New York,N.Y. - Restoration of the first New York fountain, Croton Fountain
- Peavy Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn. - Created the American plaza,the Park Plaza
- Honeywell Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn. - New concept in the American workplace
- State Street Mall, Madison, Wisconsin - Most successful urban mall in US
- Pershing Park, Pennsylvania Avenue, Wash.,DC - First project in America's Main Street
- Transpotomac Canal Center, Alexandria, Vi. - Collaboration with artist on the Promenade Classique
- Battery Park City/World Financial Center N.Y., New York's first waterfront plaza
- Queens Square, Yokohama, Japan -Unique plaza for a mixed use project
- Olympic Plaza, Calgary, Canada, - Ceremonial plaza for the 1988 winter Olympics.
- Park 2000,Holon,Israel - Innovative concept in urban recreation
- Queen Plaza, Yokohama, Japan
- Mac Arthur Place, Santa Anna, Cal.
- Fordham University at Lincoln Center, New York. NY - College campus from barren paved plaza
- Arizona Canal Demonstration Project ,Phoenix. Az - Unique park for a mile of the Arizona canal
- Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco, Cal.- Unique rooftop garden "children's place"
- Fulton County Government Center, Atlanta, Georgia - Artists collaboration landscape
- Honeywell Headquarters, Minneapolis Minn.
- A.C. Nielson Headquarters, Chicago, Ill. - Special use of retention pool
- Laburnum Residential Complex, New Delhi India-Upscale housing
- Bombay Diamond Bourse, Bombay, India



### 1979 Peavey Plaza, Minneapolis

This central public open space for the city of Minneapolis is adjacent to and complements the Nicollet Mall. The 'park plaza' served as the model for the American urban public space. Adjacent to the Minneapolis Orchestra Hall, it is the central focus for all major downtown activities. The summer festival is conducted in the plaza and during the winter there is ice skating which has extended the seasons.



### 1979 Pershing Park, DC

Bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, I Street, 14th and 15th Street, Pershing Park was to be the first of a series of parks and plazas in the revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue. The intention of the park plan was fourfold: to house the Pershing Memorial, to create a peaceful space for noon-time lunchgoers, an activity plaza where special events could be programmed, and a hospitable public place for passive recreation. The park is centered around a 100 x 76 foot reflecting pool with a water fall and terraced seating. The steps leading to the pool create a multi-use amphitheater. During the winter, the pool is converted into an ice skating rink. Together with a concession kiosks, these features make the park a pedestrian-oriented centerpieces for the nation's first street.



## SELECT PROJECTS



### 1986 67th St Playground, New York

The creation of this new play environment replaces an obsolete Moses playground and integrates it within the vocabulary of Central Park, a national landmark designed by Olmstead. The hallmark of the park is the use of the natural setting to express the nature of play. The design concept builds upon the notion of the play environment as an extension of the Olmstead design rather than an intrusion upon it. The use of natural elements; wood, stone and water introduces the concept of play as an activity of nature. The activities in the play area include child operated water sluices, team swings, and a 30' carved granite slide which all interact to stimulate the physical, mental and social aspects of play activities.



### 1996 Holon Park, Israel

This unique park of the 21st century provides for the integration of recreation, entertainment, cultural and educational opportunities. It is the first park in Israel that relies on a marriage of the private and public sector as the source of funding. It is both a highly active, animated urban park as well as a passive green facility providing for a quiet retreat. The basic concept is organized around a linear water body, a canal that originates in a dramatic waterfall - a metaphor for the water emerging from the earth. It traverses the length of the park, terminating in a large pond. Bordering this water body is a children's discovery space that introduces children to dramatic experiences of discovery, both themselves and their environment. These experiences include an IMAX theater; a grass amphitheater with a 1,000 seating capacity; a large structure for multi-purpose functions. Also part of the plan is a discovery garden for children, a high challenge play environment and picnic areas for family outings. The park is intended to address the creative and imaginative needs of children.



### 1999 Queens Square, Japan

Collaborating with the eminent architectural firm Nikken Sekkei M. Paul Friedberg & Partners for designed the public space for COA City in Yokohama, Japan. The project encompasses development of an entire city block and includes Offices and Retail areas. The challenge was to create a coherent design for a series of fragmented spaces that comprised the complex. The Garden Plaza's include a two level Garden with a vertical fountain, a Dining Plaza and Water Garden.



### 2014 DLF Cyber Hub, India

CyberHub is India's first integrate entertainment destination with unique and one-of-its-kind concept. The project which is strategically located on the main artery connects Gurgaon to Delhi, National Highway 8, and is placed at the DLF CyberCity which is a known corporate hub of Delhi NCR. DLF brought the international concept of dining and entertainment in India that not only showcases the flavours of a local souk but also is dynamic and engaging design. The site is long and linear with multiple entrances and viewing points and has three levels to cater to an average daily footfall of 25,000. It is the ambience that makes CyberHub an unparalleled experience and an ideal destination for art and cultural shows, media launches, displays, TV programmes. World-class design and structural ambience with roof top terrace, amphitheatre and exhibit area allow for the ideal entertainment center.



**M. Paul Friedberg, FASLA, AIPP, Professor Emeritus**



ASLA Medal Nominations  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees:

I am honored, privileged and enthusiastic to recommend M. Paul Friedberg for the ASLA Lifetime Achievement award.

I base this recommendation on having known Paul for over 30 years, first as my employer at M. Paul Friedberg and Partners, and eventually as my professional colleague. I am currently the Managing Principal of MPFP.

Paul Friedberg is a landscape architect, product designer, educator and author, a graduate of Cornell University, an urban innovator, artist and the founder of the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at City College of New York.

Paul wouldn't be practicing in the field of landscape architecture if it weren't for his passion for connecting people to themselves, to each other and to their environment. This priority of his was understood immediately in 1986 when we began our long, fruitful professional and personal relationship. Paul gave each of his designs identities by focusing on future park users' personalities and mannerisms, anticipating the way people would use their urban spaces, and planning for recreational or passive opportunities that might not be so predictable.

As physical as urban design was for him, it was just as much about the social benefits for people living or working near, or simply visiting his designs. This design philosophy changed the way our urban environments were designed, built, shaped and viewed; it changed the physical and theoretical course of urban design for practitioners, students, theorists and artists alike.

Paul has been trusted to work worldwide completing projects in four of the seven global continents, winning over 100 awards along the way, including the second ASLA Design Award. His design philosophy is not American, it is global. When awarded the AIA Medal for Allied Professionals, it was commented: "Throughout his career, he has been able to introduce a new dimension of life for different ages and social groups in the urban environment. His work, which is a testimonial of his dedication to architecture and the human environment, should be taken as a parameter for the future."

His innovative urban landscapes and product designs are only augmented by his significant contribution to education. He is the founder and Professor Emeritus of the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at City College of New York, the first urban-oriented undergraduate landscape architecture program to be located in a major city. He served on the advisory board of the School of Architecture at Cornell. He has been on the faculty of Columbia University, The New School for Social Research and Pratt Institute, a trustee of the American Academy in Rome, a member of the NYC Arts Commission, an advisor to the Institute of Urban Design and the International Design Conference in Aspen, a member of the American Institute of Planners, an Emeritus Board Member of the Landscape Architecture Foundation, and has lectured at several distinguished universities: Harvard University, Yale, University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University, Syracuse Institute of Technology, Cornell University, University of Arizona, University of Washington. The list goes on.

Paul has influenced the global world of landscape architecture for over 50 years. Over 100 awards prove testimonial for his outstanding design record in the field and his ability to collaborate on multi-disciplinarian projects for the greater good of urban, social dynamics.

Paul is a dear friend and grand mentor, and I can't think of a better figure to honor for his lifetime contributions for evolving the practice of landscape architecture & urban design, than Paul himself.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of stylized, overlapping loops followed by a horizontal line and two small dots.

Rick A. Parisi, FASLA, RLA  
Managing Principal





ASLA Board of Trustees  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
636 Eye Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001

**RE: ASLA Medal for M. Paul Friedberg, FASLA**

Dear Trustees:

It is with great pleasure that I submit this enthusiastic letter of support for M. Paul Friedberg, FASLA, for the ASLA Medal.

I first met Paul Friedberg in 1982 when I served as an intern in his NYC office. At that time Friedberg listed himself in the *Manhattan Yellow Pages* under “architects,” begrudgingly in acceptance of the fact that the public did not understand what “landscape architects” did or were.

Friedberg however would be an active and at times confrontational maverick on a quest to change that – as a landscape architect, architect, planner, artist, educator, author, urbanist, outdoor furniture-designer, and all around provocateur, Friedberg would push the envelope on what a landscape architect was (e.g. the lead planner – think big), what they did (e.g. reclaim the city), and what they looked like (e.g. actively courting and employing women and minorities in his practice and at the City College program).

On the shoulders of the Olmsteds (all three), and Clarke and Rapuano (enabled by Robert Moses) Friedberg would come along when cities were on the decline and many landscape architects had turned to the suburbs. Complaining that there was more than “drawing tennis courts and parking lots for engineers,” Friedberg would recount in an interview we did together in 2006 that *“I’m one of the few who accepted the city as a viable place to work, and to enjoy the diversity and the places that are created for people to come together, understand each other, through the joy of sharing. If there’s anything, it’s that. It’s enjoying the city, removing the landscape architecture bias of the past the preconceived notion that the city is a hostile place. And, to me the city is where we are, the salvation. If you’re going to preserve the larger landscape, the city is the only way. Density is the only way. That’s it.”*

It has been 50 years since Friedberg unveiled his radical solution for the problem of public housing in New York City – Riis Houses. This revolutionary approach (enabled by the Astor Foundation), would launch Friedberg’s unique approach to what he called – the “total play environment” – a carefully choreographed series of simple, sculptural landscape vignettes that included a tree house, mounds, and a tunnel – all allowing for, and encouraging physical, emotional and sensory exercise and participation. Pete Walker, FASLA, the recipient of the 2004 ASLA Medal (the same year that Friedberg received the ASLA Design Medal) has stated that “modern urban landscape design” began

with this project,” and “like Mies’s Barcelona Pavilion it was unlike anything seen before in the modern city.”

National and international accolades followed its opening (including the front page of *The New York Times* and *Life* magazine). For the 34-year-old Friedberg this was a watershed event. In the half century that would follow in his work in the U.S., Israel, and Japan, Friedberg would not only redefine the role and scope of the landscape architect but the design vocabulary employed, stylistic approach (embracing both Modernism and Postmodernism), and landscape typologies (blurring the lines between the landscape architect and the artist). His seminal works include the first “park plaza” with Peavey Plaza and the innovative Loring Greenway, both in Minneapolis, MN (1974); mixed use waterfront revitalizations (e.g. Battery Park City, 1988; The Yards, Washington, D.C., 2011); multi-use Plazas (Pershing Park, Washington, DC, 1981); rooftop plazas (Fordham University, NYC, 1999), regional parks (Holon Park, Israel, 2000) and myriad civic spaces (Olympic Plaza, Calgary, Canada, 1987, Aroma Square, Japan, 2000).

In addition to those landscape architecture commissions where he challenged acceptable conventions, Friedberg’s constant pursuit for innovation and creativity in the making and crafting of children’s play spaces has been a constant in his career (e.g. Carver Houses in NYC, 1963; 67<sup>th</sup> Street Playground in Central Park, 1985; and, Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco, 1998) as has been his quest to expand the profession as an educator.

In addition to having served on the faculty at Harvard University, Columbia University, Pratt Institute, and other universities, Friedberg founded the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at the City College of New York in 1970 – the first such program in the country – and would serve as its departmental chair for the next 20 years. As Charlotte Frieze, FASLA, noted in a personal reflection that supplements the oral history that was produced by The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) in 2009, “Paul created a program in which New York City was his classroom. He taught using real projects including the Brooklyn waterfront; Jamaica, Queens; and a 50-lot development in Bridgehampton. Our classroom extended to Central Park, The New York Botanical Garden and Woodlawn Cemetery.”

In 2008, TCLF convened the conference, *Second Wave of Modernism in Landscape Architecture*. The opening address, delivered by Friedberg in the Mies van der Rohe-designed Crown Hall on the IIT campus opened with the following salvo: “Designing the Landscape is an abstraction, as is the creation of music. Its function is a search for beauty. The musician achieves it by arranging sound. The landscape architect arranges space to be experienced by inhabiting it, not a bad way to start a day or spend a life.”

The profession and the public realm are much improved because Friedberg has made such a lifetime commitment. I hope that the Board of Trustees will concur by honoring M. Paul Friedberg with the 2015 ASLA Medal.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR  
President and CEO

ASLA Medal Nominations  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

TO: ASLA Executive Committee



**MATHEWS  
NIELSEN**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
URBAN DESIGN  
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

Paul Friedberg's influence is wide and long. As both an educator and practitioner he has touched many people's lives, including my own. I was one of Paul's first "second-degree women" as he called us in the CCNY landscape program. Paul used the program as a platform to instill social change and environmental justice into landscape education. By using New York as our canvas, Paul and his hand-picked faculty prodded, cajoled and inspired us to make the public realm first and foremost, a place for people. As Paul said in his talk at the National Building Museum in April 2013, "everyone has a bit of actor and spectator in them"; those words speak of both form and function. That was the enduring value of Paul's program: we learned that a designed environment had the power to positively affect people's lives and be a tool for societal improvement.

A few years later I worked at M. Paul Friedberg & Partners as a young landscape designer and had the opportunity to witness Paul, the designer, in multiple facets. Whether we were working on the competition for a new capital in Alaska, a new typology of urban space in Washington DC or designing a new line of play equipment for Timberform, each project had at its core the notion of human welfare through the act of play. Paul realized early on that play was not just an activity undertaken by children, but was, in fact essential to all aspects of learning, development and human exchange in people of all ages. The spaces he designs foster intentional as well as chance encounters and observation thereby stimulating the mind through interaction. Open space becomes a means to encourage discovery and initiate an active engagement with the urban environment. His designs are not set apart from the city but enmeshed within it engaging vibrancy and dialogue.

Paul continues to be a thought leader in our profession by advocating for social equity that has pervaded his professional and academic careers. When considering Paul's worthiness for the esteemed Lifetime Achievement Award, I urge the panel to focus on the rare and lasting value of Paul's contribution to the urban environment as viewed through the lens of human welfare.

Sincerely,

Signe Nielsen, FASLA  
Principal



**WEINTRAUB DIAZ Landscape Architecture, PLLC**  
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Nyack, New York 10960  
T: 845-353-2500  
F: 845-353-2599  
E: Len@weintraubdiaz.com

## The ASLA Medal

To The ASLA Executive Committee:

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of M. Paul Friedberg's nomination for the 2015 ASLA Medal. There are several comprehensive biographies of Paul with thoughts and body of built works highlighted. I would like to use this letter of recommendation to add my own personal perspective on accomplishments that I feel have been innovative and groundbreaking (many of which had a direct connection to my own career).

With the design and implementation of Riis Plaza in the Lower East Side of New York the landscape model for low income housing was permanently altered. The model was equally applicable to all urban high rise housing. Integrated into the landscape design is a series of events and opportunities facilitating a new and unique level of social interaction among both the community and residents. No longer were lawns fenced off and inaccessible to the people. Space was re- defined in relationship to the needs and desires of the community and the resident population.

A Demonstration Grant from the federal government and with New York City as the client, Friedberg developed new forms of play environments which made the traditional swing/slide and seesaw obsolete. This was accomplished through the development of playgrounds which were conceived of as total design environments dedicated to the issue of "inter-connected play" and performance. The face of the recreational facility was permanently changed. No catalog of play equipment limits itself to the primary elements that preceded the so-called play- ground revolution, which was started with Riis Houses and the Demonstration Grant from the federal government. Based on the environmental designs that were developed, a company called Timberform was created with Paul as the designer. Since then there have been many imitations, which is the highest form of flattery.

From the creation of the revolution in playground design, Paul began to work in major urban downtown spaces and created the concept of a park plaza, which is an urban space usually with a large water body as a pool, which can be easily drained and thereby creates a usable paved area when the need for a celebration or performance occurs. The surrounding terraced levels are planted with lawns and trees thereby mixing the concept of park and plaza. The specific places that are best known would be Pershing Park in Washington D.C. on Pennsylvania Avenue, a new form of park for the city of Washington D.C., Peavy Plaza, the major central space for the city of Minneapolis; the Olympic Plaza in Calgary, Canada, designed specifically as a residual space for the city, but primarily to provide an opportunity for large crowds to gather while the awards for the 1988 Winter Olympics were being presented. Other forms of urban space that are well known include the Madison Mall, in Madison Wisconsin; the Grand Rapids Mall; and the Niagara Mall, which is particularly unique in the sense that it is punctuated in the center by a large greenhouse which serves as a conservatory of plants providing a living room for the city of Niagara Falls.

The wide variety of urban spaces represented by his work, brought landscape architecture heavily into the field of urban design on a large scale. Towards this end, Paul Friedberg developed Loring Park, a mixed/use housing development in Minneapolis, the Fort Worth Cultural district, the master plan for the

capital city of Willow, Alaska; and urban design studies for the City of Syracuse, NY and Tel Aviv, Israel.

In 1970 Friedberg started the first undergraduate landscape architectural program in a major city at The City College of New York. He served as Director of the program for 20 years. He authored the books "Play and Inter-Play" and "The Handcrafted Playgrounds" and "Playground for City Children" and published numerous articles in architectural and educational magazines.

On a personal note, I'd like to go back forty years to my sophomore year of Architecture School at The City College of New York. It was during that spring semester that Paul gave a presentation on the new Urban Landscape Architecture Program that he had created and was to be offered that fall. It was my first introduction to the profession of Landscape Architecture. The enthusiasm, excitement and energy generated by the presentation of the profession as well as the man himself, changed the direction of my life. In a moment that I will remember forever, I immediately signed on for the fall semester and consider myself to be privileged to have been part of the first junior class of that innovative and creative Program. I have had the extremely fortunate opportunity to be able to teach in the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at City College since 1986. In some small measure, I try to instill in the students the same feelings that Paul, through his generous and unselfish giving of himself, imparted to me and my fellow students. My teaching provides me a vehicle to say thank you and give back a little to a Program that gave me so much as well as continue the legacy of its distinguished founder. Paul's impact and influence on my life, personal and professional, has left a lasting impression. I'm confident that many of my fellow alumni share these same feelings.

Paul Friedberg's vision of a Landscape Architecture school with an urban focus that addressed the physical environment and social issues was a unique concept. In retrospect, the founding of a school with such a non-traditional approach and concepts are more amazing looking back today, than any of us thought at the time. The Program has evolved into a school with a significant minority student body. This all began two decades before the rest of the profession even began, to seriously confront the lack of minorities in Landscape Architecture. As we struggle to address issues of cultural diversity, the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at City is a beacon of potential that shines across our Profession.

On a professional level, little did I know that after leaving the Urban Landscape Architecture Program at City College that I would work for and eventually head the Landscape Architecture Division of the New York City Housing Authority's Design Department. It is in this role that his work at Riis Houses, a NYC Housing Authority development, had a profound impact on my professional career. Paul's work at Riis Houses set a new direction that effected a permanent change in the face of public housing landscape design. That new direction went far beyond just the innovative and creative physical forms introduced at Riis. It was a defining work that represented how Landscape Architecture could provide a physical framework that fosters a sense of community by encouraging social intersection and positive social change. His initial breaking through the barrier of traditional public housing landscape design opened up opportunities for myself and my staff that would be difficult to imagine without Paul's efforts at Riis. The Landscape Architecture Division has received a number of awards as well as national recognition for its work throughout the New York City Housing Authority's housing developments. In my opinion, Paul's early Housing Authority work provided a basis for what we are doing today and in that sense he shares in any recognition we receive for our accomplishments, past, present and future.

In recent years. Paul initiated a new form of landscape as a collaborative effort with artists in such projects as Battery Park City World Financial Center Plaza, the first waterfront urban plaza in New York City with Siah Armajani, Cesar Pelli, and Scott Burton; Fulton County Government Center in Atlanta, Georgia with Jackie Ferrara and Walter Dusenberry; Transpotomac Canal Center with Anne and Patrick Poirier in Alexandria, Virginia, and numerous other projects around the country with a variety of internationally well-known artists.

Paul Friedberg has recently been working on projects in New York, Tel Aviv, Israel, Egypt, Japan, India, Taiwan, Brazil, Athens, St. Maartin, San Francisco, Phoenix, and Atlanta. His recent projects include a major urban complex in Yokohama, Japan; the Children's Place Garden on the roof of the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco; the Phoenix Canal Demonstration Project in Phoenix (winners of a competition); the Archery and Velodrome Venue for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia; the United States Tennis Association -U.S. Open Facilities at Flushing Meadow Park in New York.

Ball State University presented M. Paul Friedberg with a Doctorate of Laws in April, 1983. The French presented Paul with the Chevalier de L 'Ordre des Arts et de Lettres in November, '84 from the, Ministry de la Culture Republic of Francais; The American Institute of Architects conferred the AIA Medal for an allied professional to Paul Fried berg. On this award it states: " Author, Urban Designer, Teacher and Landscape Architect. He is the founder and first Director of the Landscape Architecture Program at the School of Architecture and Environmental Studies at City College of New York. His work - a response to changing needs and values of city dwellers - has redefined urban residential open space and helped mend the tattered inner city fabric". He was awarded the ASLA Design Medal in 2004 for his body of exceptional design work.

In summary, M. Paul Friedberg has won 85 national and international awards for design over his career. Many of these awards from organizations and other professional associations represent the highest level of award that they convey.

I believe that recognizing the work of Paul Friedberg with the ASLA Medal by the Society of his own profession is much deserved and long overdue. I hope that the ASLA Executive Committee will review this nomination favorably and forward the nomination of M. Paul Friedberg for the ASLA Medal to the Board of Trustees for vote.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Hopper', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Leonard Hopper, RLA, FASLA  
ASLA Past President, 2000-2001



Board of Trustees  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: M. Paul Friedberg

Dear Board of Trustees:

I am honored and pleased to write in support of M. Paul Friedberg's nomination to receive the ASLA Medal for his notable lifetime contributions to the built environment. Having known and worked with Paul in a variety of settings for over fifty years, I can attest personally to the influence that Paul has had on his profession and life of the countless individuals who use the spaces he has designed.

Paul's early career in designing playgrounds and public spaces in formerly barren public housing projects had a direct influence in my playground designs over subsequent years. The sensitive melding of landscape, play features, water, and hardscape in Paul's projects became a template for numerous urban public spaces around the United States.

The didactic dimension of Paul's urban projects is matched by his parallel career as mentor, educator, and founder and director of the Landscape Architecture Program at the (now Spitzer) School of Architecture and Environmental Studies at the City College of New York. The graduates of Paul's program have gone on to be influential professionals in their own right, and continue to have an immense impact on our environment.

As a design principal at MPFP, Paul has continued to produce outstanding work in New York, Canada, Israel, and around the United States. His career has been marked by a constant commitment to the urban environment, the users of his creations, and his fellow professionals. Paul richly deserves this recognition for his lifetime achievements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Dattner", with a stylized, flowing script.

Richard Dattner FAIA  
Founding Principal