March 17, 2016

ASLA Board of Trustees
Jot D. Carpenter Medal Nominations
c/o Carolyn Mitchell
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Chip Sullivan, ASLA Nominations
2016 Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal

Esteemed Colleagues of the Board of Trustees,

On behalf of the ASLA Northern California chapter, it is my privilege to nominate Professor Chip Sullivan for the 2016 Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal. In his nearly 30-year career in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley, Chip has inspired thousands of landscape architecture students with his iconic publications, unique instructional methods, and overwhelming belief in the power of landscape architecture to create positive change in the world. There are few landscape architects who are not familiar with his work.

Chip Sullivan has developed and sustained a unique pedagogy in landscape architecture education. Through a lens which merges art, nature and environmental consciousness, Chip focuses on helping each individual student realize his or her own creative potential. He instills in students the most valuable and often overlooked element of design – passion and curiosity about the world around us. One can speak to passion, but Chip lives and exhibits it. He is profoundly dedicated to ideals of sustainability and beauty, and through his impassioned teaching, imparts these values to his students, and the local design community.

Please join us as one of his hundreds of students, in recognizing Professor Chip Sullivan, ASLA, with this distinguished award.

The Northern California Chapter of ASLA are pleased to nominate Professor Chip Sullivan for this distinguished award.

Respectfully submitted,

April Phillips, FASLA
Trustee
Northern California Chapter ASLA

Marybeth Harasz, ASLA
President
Northern California Chapter ASLA
Background

Sullivan received both his BA in landscape architecture and his MA in urban and regional planning from the University of Florida. He credits Herrick Smith, a Carpenter Medal winner himself, as a mentor and role model for his advocacy of landscape architecture as an art form. Throughout a decade of professional practice at Sasaki Associates Chip explored alternative ideas about energy-conscious, passive design. He presented his early ideas about new forms of gardens based on microclimatic function at ASLA state and national meetings in Florida and New Orleans, and at CELA (Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture) conferences – where, coincidentally, he had the privilege of meeting Jot Carpenter. His independent work in this realm was recognized with a Rome Prize fellowship in 1985. Soon after, he was invited by Peter Walker to co-teach a design studio and seminar at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design. Intending to return to practice, he was contacted by a faculty search committee (comprised by Sasaki, Treib, Royston, and Eckbo) at UC Berkeley, and successfully interviewed for the position he still holds.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION

Publications

Chip Sullivan is perhaps best known for his distinguished graphic ability. He has a national reputation as the author of Drawing the Landscape (Wiley & Sons, 2013), now in its 4th edition, which is a popular textbook in landscape architecture courses on hand drawing. The book was the subject of a review of “classic” texts in Land Forum 07 (Spacemaker Press, 1999). Sullivan’s ‘comics’ were part of a recurring feature on ‘Creative Learning’ in Landscape Architecture magazine from 2006-2010. He remains committed to this form of graphic communication as a significant teaching tool; his latest publication, due from University of Virginia Press later this spring, is an entirely hand-drawn comic on the theme of environmental awareness told through student-mentor relationships.

Garden and Climate (McGraw-Hill, 2002), Sullivan’s second book, is a compilation of his decades-long research into the historical foundations of climate modification through landscape design. The beautifully illustrated work, which outlines historical postulates as well as contemporary applications for energy-conscious design, won an ASLA Merit Award for communications in 2002, and serves as the foundation for Chip’s undergraduate capstone design studio, titled ‘Energy, Fantasy, and Form.’

Sullivan’s book, Illustrated History of Landscape Design, (co-authored with E. Boultis) has become a well regarded textbook in landscape architecture history courses nationwide; there is always a queue for one of Chip’s signature sketches at the ASLA bookstore booth at our annual meetings. The Impulse to Draw (co-authored J. Slusky) is Chip’s newest publication, focused on drawing as a creative life force. The book formed the basis of a community-wide ‘sketch-in’ at the Richmond Art Center in 2014.

Instructional Innovation

In all his courses Chip promotes drawing and visual thinking a valid tool of inquiry and research. He encourages visualization and ideation with the ultimate purpose of getting students to really “see” the landscape on a plane of higher consciousness. Through assignments and exercises where students map their dreams, build visionary habitat machines with a ‘Steampunk’ aesthetic, develop storyboards to communicate spatial experiences, or diagram an ecological process as a Rube Goldberg sequential narrative, students learn to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena—the very
definition of creativity. Sullivan balances the hypothetical with the pragmatic in learning activities that incorporate life drawing, field observation, and hybrid methods of landscape representation. In teaching drawing he stresses the importance of the hand-eye relationship, a connection which he believes is mediated by the heart.

In the design studio, Sullivan’s students thrive in an atmosphere where they are free to explore how to “make the impossible, possible.” Chip imparts to his students his own sense of wonder and enchantment about the world around him. His positive attitude helps students gain confidence in their abilities, and his constructive criticism validates students’ individual strengths. He also involves his students in the ‘culture of creativity’ happening in the bay area. For example, Chip’s students have recently worked with the ‘maker’ community at American Steel—a former industrial warehouse in West Oakland repurposed as artists’ studios.

Chip firmly believes in learning from direct observation and field study. He has worked with the ASLA student chapter to continue the tradition, first established in his department by Professors Emeritus Michael Laurie, Burt Litton, and Joe McBride in their ‘California Landscapes’ course, of organizing weekend camping trips to draw and paint the landscape. These optional excursions provide valuable opportunities for international and out-of-state students to learn about their local environment. Sullivan continually seeks to advance all forms of visual learning. He has students experiment with—and in some cases construct—‘optical devices’ such as the camera obscura, Claude mirror, Poussin diorama, and Constable viewing box to heighten their awareness of visual phenomena in the landscape.

Support of Student Initiatives

Chip Sullivan is dedicated to his students’ personal and professional development, and goes the extra mile to support his students in numerous ways. In addition to his official responsibilities on the Undergraduate Affairs Committee, Chip offers informal, optional modules in graphics to students in the Environmental Planning program who want to improve their drawing skills but don’t have room in their schedules to take a graphics course; he is faculty sponsor for student-created and facilitated ‘DeCal’ courses on a variety of subjects from visual note taking and comics to ‘The Politics and Design of the Hunger Games;’ and he supervises undergraduates in the college who want to pursue interdisciplinary, independent-study majors.

From serving ice cream at freshman orientation to cheering on his students at commencement, Chip is the landscape architecture student’s beloved advocate, mentor, and friend. He makes students’ needs a priority, and lets nothing intrude on his attention to them. He makes himself available to students outside of the classroom and office hours; each fall he invites his students to his home for a chili party after an afternoon of sketching in the field; he lectures to any group who asks, including fraternities, garden clubs, and at university-wide events such as Homecoming and Cal Day.

In collaboration with Chip, graduate student Robert Glass (MLA ’11), was awarded an Arts Research Center fellowship in 2010. The ARC funds semester-long collaborative projects between graduate students and faculty at UC Berkeley. Working together, the pair proposed the installation of a series of optical devices in downtown San Francisco to study landscape perception in public space.

Chip is regularly invited by ASLA student chapters across the country to lead ‘sketch crawls’ and give extracurricular drawing workshops. In the last two years alone he has led student-initiated workshops on landscape graphics at Arizona State University,
Outcomes

If a teacher’s influence can be measured by the recognized successes of his/her students, then Chip Sullivan has had a powerful effect on the discipline and practice of landscape architecture. Two of his graduate students, Alethea Harper (MLA ’07) and Erik Jensen (MLA ’14) were awarded national ASLA honor awards for their student work. Several of Chip’s former students have gone on to win the Rome Prize, a momentous event in Chip’s own life; he is a sought-after mentor for this honor.

Motivated by his ideal of sustaining creative and artistic output, a group of Chip’s recent grads initiated monthly figure-drawing gatherings at each other’s homes in 2011. Since then, the self-titled ‘Space Open’ group has formalized their mission of “seeing and rendering the world in the spirit of the great masters” and, with Chip’s guidance, organized and curated an inaugural exhibition at the Wurster Hall Gallery on the Berkeley campus. Addressing the question, “outside the office, just what is landscape architecture?” the group has gained enormous support—Peter Walker has even submitted his early artwork for display.

Impact on Students

A quick, informal survey of Sullivan’s current students and former students reveals much about his influence on their academic and professional careers. Inspired by his approach to teaching and learning, many of Chip’s graduate student instructors have gone on to pursue teaching careers themselves. Others credit Chip with providing a perspective on practice that encourages them to maintain their engagement in creative problem solving on both a personal and professional level.

“Chip finds the seeds of creativity in his students, plants them, and provides the ideal environment for them to grow.” Kristine Sanders, BS Landscape Architecture, ’16; undergraduate student

“Chip helped me find my own approach...to learn to see the world. Nobody else ever taught me that.” Michelle Hook, MLA ’16; graduate student

“Chip Sullivan’s unwavering support of his students helped us bud in a hostile environment called life. He is an influential person in my life and I value his critique of any works I produce.” Catherine Gutierrez, BA Architecture, 2004; Apple Inc.

“My first year of graduate school happened to be Chip’s first year at Berkeley, and he still
has the same enthusiasm and energy for teaching. His pen is mightier than the sword... and most software programs.” Eddie Chau, MLA ’90; Director, Landscape Architecture Certificate Program, UCB Extension

“People continue to seek Chip out after leaving school because there's a certain spirit that comes in when you're around him that makes you believe your creativity is worthwhile.” Tim Mollette-Parks, MLA ’09; Principal, Hood Design Studio

“Chip Sullivan is more than a teacher, he is mentor, friend, and constant source of encouragement. He inspires me to reach for personal interests in design and art that go far beyond the typical scope of landscape architecture. Chip will never turn down an opportunity to help his students, colleagues, and collaborators, as he brings an open skillful critique to help others propel their concepts into reality.” Robert Glass, MLA ’11; Hyphae Design Lab

Additional Recognition

Chip Sullivan was the subject of a documentary film by Emmy-award winning director Allan Holzman. Titled The Professor (2012), the film was part of a series on creative practice and highlighted Chip's inspirational teaching methods. Sullivan was also featured in the College of Environmental Design's recent fund raising campaign asking donors to “keep great faculty at Berkeley.”

Personal Characteristics

Chip Sullivan is a respected mentor who freely credits all those who have mentored him throughout his life. He values service, and donates his time and work to many initiatives. He serves on the UC Berkeley Extension advisory board and the East Bay Municipal Utilities District Landscape Advisory Committee; he has produced pro-bono graphics for EBMUD’s water-wise educational campaign and provided graphic facilitation for the Berkeley campus rainwater challenge. He is an annual donor of artwork to the LAF auction.

Chip is generous to his alma mater, leading tours for University of Florida students who visit the bay area, and returning to the university to give seminars. When in Rome he met with a visiting UF class to teach drawing and design and lead a sketch tour of Italian gardens. His enthusiasm and dedication to his work leaves quite an impression on students. At Berkeley, he seeks to actively engage students in ASLA-NCC events and activities; he coordinates the ASLA student awards and is faculty sponsor for their department functions.

Since early in his career, Chip has been an advocate of ‘green architecture’ and in particular the necessity for innovative and transparent landscape infrastructure. He sincerely believes in the power of drawing as a spiritual act, and incites the same sense of conviction in his students. Sullivan has a sustained record of presenting his ideas and techniques at ASLA annual meetings, most recently in Chicago and Denver; Chip’s presentation in Denver was reviewed by Jared Green in December 2015 for ASLA’s blog ‘The Dirt.’ Chip has also been part of the organizational team for the popular ‘Sketch!’ field sessions at our annual meeting for the last three years.

In summary, Chip Sullivan has a record of sustained excellence in landscape architecture education. His seminal publications, inspired teaching, and dedication to the development of the next generation of landscape architects, honors the spirit and memory of Jot Carpenter’s legacy. We appreciate your support of Chip Sullivan’s nomination for this prestigious award.
March 20, 2016

ASLA Board of Trustees
Jot D. Carpenter Medal Nominations
c/o Carolyn Mitchell
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Chip Sullivan, ASLA Nominations
2016 Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal

Board of Trustees,

I write to support the nomination of Professor Chip Sullivan, ASLA for the 2016 Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal. I have known Chip for years, and have enjoyed his passion and energy for landscape architecture and the teaching of its nuances. This passion is demonstrated within the hundreds of students that Chip has influenced through the years, a number of which I have practiced with. To a person, they light up when reflecting on Chip, his studio, and how he has influenced their passion for the profession.

Please strongly consider Chip’s background when reflecting on the 2016 recipient, for I know that you will be impressed by his contributions to landscape architecture education, support of the students, and service to the profession. Chip is an excellent candidate for this notable award.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Marq Truscott, FASLA
March 21, 2015

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

Dear Jot D. Carpenter Medal Committee,

It is my pleasure to whole-heartedly support the nomination of Chip Sullivan for this prestigious honor. I have known Chip from the early 1980’s when he was beginning to make a name for himself with his explorations of landscape design influenced by traditional gardens, climate responsive design, environmentalism and cartooning. Chip brought a fresh perspective to the profession and was a passionate champion of design. I was very happy when he started teaching at UC Berkeley and through my visits to the school over the years I observed his impact on the students there. Whether it was the investigation of the art of tattoos on the design on the land, to the "crazy car" culture of Rat Fink and the underground art of California, to his serious commitment to environmentalism Chip always brought enthusiasm and intelligence into the classroom and he was an constant inspiration to students in challenging them to think outside the box.

I can think of no one more deserving of this distinguished award than Chip Sullivan.

Sincerely

[Signature]

Ken Smith
March 9, 2016

American Society of Landscape Architects
Jot D. Carpenter Medal Nominations
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees:

I have known Chip Sullivan since he returned from the American Academy in Rome in 1985. We taught a design course together at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, which I believe was his first teaching experience.

Chip received his BA in Landscape Architecture and an MA in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Florida and he came to Harvard after working in professional practice in the Sasaki office under Frank James for about 10 years.

As a beginning teacher, he stood out for his great enthusiasm, his real interest in the growth of his students, and his dedication to landscape design.

Years later, in 1997, we were again academic colleagues at the University of California at Berkeley. After the intervening 17 years, Chip was still as dedicated as he was in 1985. But, by now he had risen to a position of tenured full professor.

I had seen Chip from time-to-time over the intervening years and I was familiar with his passion for drawing and the writing and drawing of comics. This seemingly unlikely interest, for a landscape architect, has, however, been put to use in both his teaching and in his professional life. In teaching, he has both amused and amazed his students, pulling them into both the aesthetic and drawing aspects of the field.

Beyond the classroom, he has used his disarming skill to communicate in a wide range of important professional issues, from history to green ecological advocacy to the ideals and practices of landscape architecture.

In this way, he has charmed and inspired a generation of gifted young designers, while holding high the ideal of landscape architecture as a fine art.

As one might imagine, this unique approach has made Chip one of the most inspiring and loved teachers of our time.

I believe that Chip, though certainly unique, follows and advances the memory of my friend, Jot Carpenter and I want to warmly and sincerely recommend him to you for the Jot D. Carpenter Medal.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Walker
23 March 2016

American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Letter of Endorsement for Nomination of Professor Charles “Chip” Sullivan
For the Jot D. Carpenter Medal

“Chip has a passion for the profession and the students and it shows.”

This comment, excerpted from the many superlative student evaluations for Chip Sullivan, is exemplary of more than twenty-five years of committed and esteemed teaching. Chip’s teaching has focused on the studio: large undergraduate introductory drawing and design courses, advanced undergraduate studio courses in landscape architectural design, and medium-sized drawing workshop courses. Anyone in Wurster Hall (where the Department of Landscape Architecture resides) can see that Chip is obviously cherished, indeed beloved, by his students. Nevertheless, I was still astounded by the countless, and consistently heartfelt, accolades that I read through as I prepared my endorsement for his nomination for the Jot D. Carpenter Medal. The comments make clear that Chip is a profoundly transformational teacher of landscape architecture. I would stress that the comments excepted below are by no means cherry-picked; rather they are typical of the comments on almost every single evaluation of Chip’s teaching career.

Chip takes students who are inexperienced, or even a bit afraid, on a joyous journey discovery of drawing, design, and landscape architecture. As a student comments, Chip’s course “taught me how to relate to Art and how to draw/paint through experimenting. It has not only been useful academically but personally.” Or as other students comment, Chip “taught me how to look outside the box and I started to view things differently,” “made me fall back in love with drawing,” and “really opened my portals of creativity for design.” A key part of his strength as a teacher is that Chip models design and creativity but then also allows students to make their own path to design and creativity: “I always hated watercolor but with some practice I now love it,
it’s one of my favorites” and “[Chip is] supportive and encouraging of individual process and representational style.”

The comments also underscore that Chip’s courses have highly effective learning outcomes. As students state: “I came away from this course with what feels like a vast arsenal of visual tools. This class was fun, self-affirming, and instructive;” “It allowed me to use my whole skill set along with along with learning some new skills. Each project was open just enough to allow my imagination to go wild and do some awesome stuff;” “my drawing skills have drastically improved.” Through his classes Chip engages a prodigious array of techniques and topics that students find entirely compelling: “Chip taught a huge variety of subjects and implemented creative projects to apply these new learned skills.”

Chip is also notable for his dedication to teaching and intense attention to individual students, even in classes of 40 to 70 students. Students note that “he took time to comment on everyone’s work” and that he is “hands on and engaging.” As a student declares: “Chip is amazing, truly the most talented professor I have had at Berkeley.” The phrases, “best professor,” “devoted to teaching,” “present and engaged,” and “great instructor,” appear frequently and consistently in his evaluations. Chip truly has a gift for constructive interaction with students in the studio setting: “I feel as if his way of commenting on our work gave room for both improvement and admiration.”

Most important, Chips inspires. As a student writes: “Chip is the archetypal passionate professor who you would always hope to meet in college. He loves what he does and he definitely knows what he is teaching.” The experience of Chip’s teaching is, as a student declares “very effective, if not life-changing.” In the kind of summary comment that only Chip can achieve, when was asked if he was an effective instructor a student said: “Yes, because it is Chip. I don’t think I need to say anything more.”

Beyond teaching students, Chip’s extraordinary graphic and textual narratives about the history of landscape architecture, climate and the landscape, and the history of our own department have educated and informed an international audience of students, faculty, and the general public. Chip conveys sophisticated landscape ideas with a spectacular aesthetic sensibility, an accessible yet highly original drawing style, and conveying a shared wonder and curiosity about the landscape. At ASLA annual meetings he has always generously shared his passion for observing, drawing, and designing the landscape through his unique perspective, whether drawing in the field or learning from Hollywood. At whatever conference I attend with Chip, I see him surrounded by ever-grateful former students. No one comes close to doing what he does in the way he does it.

And as his chair and his long-time colleague I have to mention that Chip is committed in other, more subtle ways to teaching landscape architecture. Chip is one of the members of the department that is always willing to step up, to support with enthusiasm and spirit the ever more complicated enterprise of public higher
education. I am happy every time Chip walks into my office because he is there to make things better for his students, the department, and landscape architecture education.

As if all that were not enough, I want to end with an anecdote. Two years ago we had the good fortune to add Dr. Iryna Dronova, a brilliant ecologist and GIS/remote sensing specialist, to our faculty. Being on campus completing a post-doc in the semester before she started, she wanted to understand more about landscape architecture and our department. She took one of Chip’s classes. He taught her everything more she needed to know.

Awarding Chip Sullivan the Jot D. Carpenter Medal is a fitting reward for a career of unflagging dedication, joyous commitment to student learning, and more than two decades of inspired and inspiring pedagogy—a most apt recognition of Chip Sullivan as one of landscape architecture’s great teachers.

Sincerely,

Louise A. Mozingo
Professor & Chair
Department of Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning
Letter of Support for Professor Chip Sullivan

School of Landscape Architecture
College of Art and Architecture
1715 Volunteer Blvd. Knoxville, TN 37996

18 March 2016

Attn: Chris Kent
444 17th Street
Oakland, CA 94612
United States

To the Selection Committee,

As an incoming freshman at UC Berkeley, I was fortunate to have Professor Chip Sullivan for my first studio design course titled Environmental Design 11A, which at the time was taught by Professor Sullivan and Professor Joseph Slusky. Professor Sullivan had a significant lecture component to the course, where he introduced the students to a significant range of case studies to connect literature, the arts, and making to culture, history, and landscape. We furiously drew and made both in the class and in the field, Professor Sullivan was always drawing with us, gathering everyone around to share in not just the critic of work, but also the production of it. It was in this course, where he inspired me to switch from architecture to landscape architecture, stating that "architecture is buildings, landscape architecture is the world". During my time as a student and after, I experienced incredible community Professor Sullivan cultivated outside of Wurster Hall, where he hosted drawing sessions and conversation with students and former students.

As a professor, his lectures and assignments were always one step beyond imaginative and inspiring, weaving together art history, literature, place, experience, and fiction. Professor Sullivan brought an incredible energy to the classroom where he supported his students with encouragement and supportive feedback. Myself along with many others will always remember Professor Sullivan—in a triumphant attempt to encourage students to carry and use a sketchbook—pulling around twelve sketchbooks (probably more) out of his clothing. He had managed to hide sketchbooks in every pocket and even sock. He then passed around the sketchbooks, some made by hand, to share the contents with the students. I believe this moment captures Professor Sullivan’s ability to inspire and his openness with students.

While Professor Sullivan teaches many courses, I believe his lasting impact is on the beginning design field apparent by his multiple texts, particularly Drawing the Landscape, a text which I continue to use in my classroom when I teach beginning design. The first sentence is, “I love to draw!” He later states: “The drawing program I have presented in this book is personal, intuitive, and expressive. I hope that through this process your own personal vision will flourish.” I believe these few sentences embody Professor Sullivan’s love his work and teaching and ability to reach and guide the individual student’s growth and vision. He is by far the most supportive, encouraging, animated professor I have had the privilege of studying with. Professor Sullivan mentored me along with many others from undergraduate, to graduate, into academia, and I know the time I spent with Professor Sullivan in my early design career will have a lasting impact on my ability to inspire and invent in my design work and teaching.

Sincerely,

Justine Holzman
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
[Bachelor of Arts in Landscape Architecture, UC Berkeley, 2011]