The Continuity of Change
Adapting and Interpreting Modernist Era Landscapes

With modernist landscapes from the 1940s to 1970s, landscape architects often must choose among preservation, replacement, or adaptation. This session considers the challenges of adapting significant mid-century works to contemporary needs in ways that are respectful of the original design intent through the eyes of three designers, three project scales, and three client types.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand whether to choose preservation, replacement, or adaptation of a modernist landscape.

2. Develop approaches and criteria to recovering common themes and values from modernist landscape designs for contemporary and future use.

3. Learn to bridge the various aesthetic, functional, and cultural values of the public, professionals, and government in re-examining modernist landscapes.

Speaker Bios

Eric Kramer, ASLA
Reed Hilderbrand Associates
Mount Auburn, MA

For over thirty years, Richard Shaw, Principal and Partner with Design Workshop, has been practicing landscape architecture throughout North America and internationally. His project work reaches across all scales of design and planning, from the intimate garden to the regional master plan. Richard’s work in historic and cultural landscapes includes projects with the National Park Service, the reinvention of Washington’s last company lumber town, and the reinterpretation of residential landscapes designed by Richard Haag and Dan Kiley. Richard received the American Society of Landscape Architect’s Design Medal in 2009 and in 2012 was the recipient of the American Horticultural Society’s Landscape Design Award. He lives in Aspen, Colorado.

Peter Schaudt, FASLA
Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects
Chicago, IL

For more than two decades, Peter has achieved numerous design awards and honors, highlighted by the Fellowship with the ASLA and the AIA Collaborative Achievement Award for a consistent attention throughout his career to the integration of land and architecture. Peter has won multiple awards for his work on mid-century modern landscapes, including the historic revitalization of Toronto’s Nathan Phillips Square, Chicago’s Daley Plaza and the Inland Steel Building in Chicago. His landscape restorations at the Illinois Institute of Technology Campus elegantly reinterpreted the landscape designs of Alfred Caldwell on a campus designed by Mies van der Rohe. Peter was profoundly influenced by his mentor, the modernist landscape architect Daniel Urban Kiley.

Richard Shaw, FASLA
Design Workshop
Aspen, CO

Eric Kramer, ASLA, a principal with Reed Hilderbrand, in Watertown, MA, has overseen the design and implementation of significant projects that utilize rigorous technical and horticultural systems to accommodate intensive programmatic requirements. Recent projects include the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA; Central Wharf Plaza, Boston, MA; Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City, MO; and the Harbor Park Pavilion, Boston, MA. He currently teaches at the Rhode Island School of Design.

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Boston City Hall Plaza — Renewal and Redemption
Boston, MA

1. “The World’s Worst Square or Plaza” — Project for Public Spaces
   a. The image of the plaza today
   b. A product of urban renewal
   c. The heroic approach to city-making
   d. The changing cultural and commercial context
   e. Neglect

2. Grand Plans
   a. Multiple redesign efforts over the last 20 years
   b. How have they approached historic significance/fabric?
   c. Why have they failed to gain traction?

3. Taking a new tack: adaptation vs. erasure
   a. Leveraging EPA’s “Greening America’s Capitals” program
   b. Acting opportunistically / thinking holistically
   c. Responding to the history of urban renewal
   d. Assessing which values we take on and which we leave behind
   e. Updating embedded patterns

4. Shaping a framework for intervention — Modernism + The Contemporary City
   a. Heritage
   b. Urban ecology
   c. Public use
   d. Scale and procession
   e. Transportation
   f. Funding models
1. IIT Origins
   a. Alfred Caldwell and Mies van der Rohe
   b. Context

2. Master Plans
   a. Lohan Master Plan
   b. Michael Van Valkanburgh (MVV) + Peter Lindsay Schaudt Landscape Architecture (PLSLA) Master Plan

3. Caldwell’s Inspiration re-interpreted by PLSLA
   a. State Street Boulevard
   b. Crown Hall Field Planting Scheme
   c. Linden Allee
   d. Federal Street
Residential projects in transition: The dilemma and response to modernist landscapes in the wake of change
Aspen, CO

1. PO+LE RESIDENCE | The process of preservation as a community undertaking
   a. Opportunity to view the design in historic context of the town
   b. Adapt to the needs individuals and new time period
   c. Landscape as a community development activity
   d. The Dan Kiley residential plan
   e. Elements of modernism and the ideas behind them
   f. Process of implementation
   g. Dilemma of the deviations and the evolution of the plan

2. The re-started design for the space
   a. New needs of the client and readjustments to program and plan in living with the original landscape
   b. Re-establishing the design parameters
   c. The garden result and the story of the well-considered

RED MOUNTAIN RESIDENCE | Re-shaping the landscape by a modern master landscape architect
   a. Richard Haag’s 1980’s plan
   b. Aging, maintenance, and the technical obsolescent
   c. The client’s perspective- reassessment of the family and their changing needs
   d. Using the original foundation of good ideas for a new garden re-interpreted
   e. Ideas re-invented, re-considered, and assimilated as a new plan and the question of what should be new and what should stay
   f. Design in the context of time, program, and the hope looking to the future