

PUSH STUDIO

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

2024 Nominee: Claire Weisz, FAIA

Dear Executive Committee Members:

I am extremely pleased to submit this ASLA Honorary Membership nomination for Claire Weisz. I have known Claire as both a professional colleague and friend for over 30-years. Our professional journey began as professors in the School of Architecture at the City College of New York. We both taught introductory design studios to students who would opt for an architecture or landscape architecture course of study at the end of their spring semester.

It was during this time that both Claire and I linked in terms of learning from each other about the foundational aspects of architecture and landscape architecture. This intersection between the two professions joined to educate us both to the power of urban design as a mediator between architecture and landscape. Claire has continued to acknowledge the power of landscape in her work since that time. And we have worked together on a variety of projects that have enhanced the landscape in the public realm. One such project was the 2012 'East River Blueway Plan,' which explored the waterfront along the East River in New York City from the Brooklyn Bridge north to East 38th Street. Claire's firm led this project, outlining potentials for open space, pedestrian access across the FDR Freeway, and issues of climate change and waterfront resilience.

Claire Weisz, FAIA is the founding partner of the New York City architecture and urban design firm WXY - www.wxystudio.com. She holds an M.Arch degree from Yale University and a B.Arch degree from the University of Toronto. Since founding the firm in 1998 with her business partner and husband Mark Yoes, FAIA, Claire has contributed to building a firm of 50 employees and projects of local, regional, and international reach. Because of Claire's community-based approach, she and the firm have established a reputation for creative projects that marry landscape and architecture through urban design and planning techniques. This is done without abandoning WXY's core approach to innovative architectural design.

Weisz has remained a dedicated academic as well as practitioner through visiting Critic and Professorships at a variety of universities such as Yale University, Cornell University, Columbia University Urban Design Department, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Parsons-The New School, and the New York University Wagner School of Public Service. In all of these teaching assignments she has brought her affinity for both architecture and landscape to courses in architecture, urban design/planning, and public policy. Because of the interdisciplinary work of her firm, Claire has been able to bring real world issues of landscape architecture into the architecture classroom. This

expands the architects understanding of the key connectivity between architecture and landscape architecture.

Claire is an in-demand lecturer, competition juror, and awards panelists. Although too many to name here, a few of Claire's recent activities include the 2024 Engineering News Record (ENR) Design Awards, 2023 "Conservation and Carbon: Re-Building for the New Normal," AECOM New York Metro, and the 2022 "Streets for Commerce," Urban Design Forum. She is a dedicated Board Member of the NYC Mayoral Sustainability Advisory Group 2022-present, the Industry Advisory Group 2019-2023, the Architectural League, and The Ethel Foundation. In addition, she is a major supporter and donor to the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), the Black Landscape Architects Network (BlackLAN), and organizations that support the advancement of women in design professions. She is most recently the 2024 ENR New York Legacy Award Winner in addition to countless other prestigious professional awards.

WXY projects led by Claire have always included landscape architecture firms, as appropriate, to maintain a balance of ideation on urban projects. Claire's leadership on the 168th Street Step Reconstruction-NY - 2018, Rockaway Boardwalks Reconstruction: Queens, NY – 2016, Battery Bosque: Battery Park City NY – 2026, and Monsignor John J. Kowsky Plaza: Battery Park City, NY – 2005 are but a few projects that exhibit her contribution to the urban landscape.

Claire Weisz is a friend of landscape architecture, and she is a consistent advocate for the profession through her work, her teaching, her lecture engagements, and her public service. I am honored to nominate her as an Honorary Member of ASLA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn LaRue Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "G" and "L".

Glenn LaRue Smith, FASLA,
Founding Partner - PUSH studio, LLC
Founder, Black Landscape Architects Network (BlackLAN)

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Dear Executive Committee Members:

This is an enthusiastic letter in support of Claire Weisz's nomination for Honorary ASLA. I have known and worked with Claire since 2010 when I was Chief Of Design at New York City Parks. She distinguished herself through cross-disciplinary problem solving, determination to improve environmental and social health, and by her design of buildings to serve landscape functions.

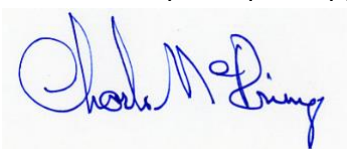
We selected her firm WXY for projects through our Design Excellence Program. Her firm designed artful and resilient structures including concession buildings, comfort stations, shade and performance structures and boardwalks. Her office addressed issues such as replacements for rain forest wood boardwalks, design of a more hygienic and beautiful drinking fountain, and prototyping sculptural and comfortable metal benches that did not use rainforest wood.

WYX has had a large presence in the shaping of urban places all over the world, breaking new ground, without breaking the budget. Her resume contains notable awards from the profession: AIA, ASLA; New York City Public Design Commission, and Press including Architizer, Architecture Record and even Fast Company.

As the Principal -In-Charge at WXY, Claire Weisz is known as an imaginative and supportive leader, providing design direction and career development opportunities for professional staff at every level. Externally, she works collaboratively with Landscape Architects, engineers, and planners to make the most of every project.

She is a prolific creator of solutions for emerging landscape problems such as adaptive reuse of industrial areas, public places during COVID, rooftop farming, urban infrastructure, urban markets and responses to hurricanes and sea-level rise. She is a leader in many New York design institutions, including the Architecture League, Regional Plan association, and Transportation Alternatives. She is known as an enthusiastic and well-prepared lecturer, as well as teacher and juror.

She co-founded the Design Trust for Public Space to improve underused public spaces throughout New York City, including those under elevated transportation structures. Claire is a rare professional, one who cannot pass up an opportunity to make the world better and inspire others.



Charles McKinney, Honorary ASLA
Practical Visionary
DesignConnects

2024.02.11

TO: ASLA awards committee

FROM: Ken Smith, FASLA

RE: ASLA Honorary Member, Claire Weisz

It's my pleasure to support the nomination of Claire Weisz for ASLA Honorary Membership.

I have known Clair since the early 1990's when we were both adjunct professors, teaching together at the City College of New York. I have been fortunate to work with Claire on public projects, serve on public boards and participate in public interest programs with her. Claire has always been an advocate and supporter of landscape architecture and public space.

In her practice at WXY she has led collaborative teams specializing in community-based design and inclusive practices. Claire is a strong supporter of landscape architecture and advocate for creative multi-disciplinary design. I can think of no one more deserving of being an honorary member of the ASLA.



ASLA Honors and Awards Committee

RE: Honorary ASLA Membership for Claire Weisz

Dear friends,

I'm pleased to write in support of the nomination for Honorary ASLA Membership for Claire Weisz. I have known Claire for a good many years—academically at first, and then as a collaborator. She is an architect and urban designer who truly respects the work of landscape architecture. Through her collaborations with landscape architects, she's been a strong advocate for landscape firms to lead efforts where the scope demands a landscape point of view, even if it means yielding territory and scope to others. That is not what matters to Claire. What matters is that the work achieve the highest possible aims, every time.

Our firms have been collaborating on several projects, including a long-range planning effort for the Town of Brewster, MA, where we are prime and Claire is a subcontractor; and a major landscape and building project now in construction for the Storm King Art Center, where both firms are contracted directly to the owner. What's beautiful about this is that the nature of collaboration with Claire is the same: The brain trust part is fully and completely shared and synergistic, and the tasks are allotted according to scope. At Storm King in particular, Claire and I unite easily in advocating for other team members when the going gets tough. We seem always in alignment, and that kind of collaboration brings great personal reward—and it's good for the project, too.

Claire's design work and advocacy for the work of others has had its most compelling impact on the City of New York and its efforts towards a more resilient coastal infrastructure. Dozens of projects, adding up to a greatly improved public realm for the city that will help it to survive the major crises of our time. Here again, while Claire's own architectural and infrastructural works are usually stunningly smart, inventive, and fitted, she knows how to advocate for the best scenario—and often that is not a work of architecture but a larger landscape prospect.

If you work in New York, you will encounter Claire Weisz, and you will be the better for it. She is tireless in her advocacy and her work with NGOs, and that is making her city a more just and resilient place. She is really like one of us—it would be amazing to convey this honor to her.

Sincerely,



Gary R. Hilderbrand FASLA FAAR
Principal, Reed Hilderbrand LLC
Peter Louis Hornbeck Professor in Practice
Chair, Department of Landscape Architecture, Harvard Graduate School of Design



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February 7, 2024

Dear Executive Committee Members:

It is my honor to offer my support for Claire Weisz's nomination for recognition as Honorary ASLA. Claire is an extraordinary leader and designer – one that knows how to collaborate, lead, and lend her urban design and architectural skills and creativity to enable world-class public realm design. Having worked alongside and with Claire for over a decade, I whole-heartedly support this nomination.

I first met Claire (after having known **about her** for years) in 2011 during the Rebuild By Design Competition sponsored by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. In partnership with West 8, WXY was an inspiring presence in that experience. Their proposal – Blue Dunes – presented a provocative and very big idea for protecting Manhattan with a bold metropolis-scaled piece of landscape infrastructure. Beyond the ideas, each of Claire's presentations lives clearly in my memory. Her confident, clear leadership combined with her poetic and grounded use of design language left a lasting impression. I am sure I was not the only designer in the room that felt a bit starstruck.

I came to work closely with Claire through our long and ongoing work in Jacksonville. Claire led an effort to study the whole of the Jacksonville Riverfront, presenting the City with an excellent activation plan that grounds and inspires the many designers and projects underway. Tapping into this knowledge, Agency invited her to our team to provide urban design and architecture for the 10-acre Shipyard West park design project. Over the years of working together, I have greatly valued her commitment to collaboration, to an ideas-first practice, and to delivering work aligned with the client's needs and operational capacity.

The title of Honorary ASLA is a powerful tool to hold high the models worthy of emulation as our collaborators and partners. It recognizes those non-landscape architects that give their best to make us better. Both of these examples illustrate the best of what an architect can offer to the profession of landscape architecture; a site-specific, context-sensitive design approach that values public realm and landscape as a critical driver in excellent urbanism. Claire's advocacy for this idea is the gold standard for every other architectural partnership we undertake. It is here that the designation of Honorary ASLA feels truly befitting.

Lastly, Claire is a pioneer for women in the profession. She is a role model for so many – in how she conducts herself, how she leads, and how she structures a practice. I sense – working closely with WXY – a team that is encouraged to learn, to explore, to challenge. Claire is exactly the kind of professional the Society should recognize with this honor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gina Ford, FASLA
Co-Founder, Principal and Landscape Architect
gina@agencylp.com

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Cambridge, MA 02140



Elizabeth Kennedy Landscape Architect, PLLC 63 Flushing Avenue Building 275-202, Brooklyn NY 11205

February 12, 2024

Honorary Membership Nominations
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636 Eye Street, NW
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Re: 2024 Nominee for Honorary Membership: Claire Weisz, FAIA

Dear Executive Committee Members:

I am pleased to nominate my friend and colleague Claire Weisz, FAIA, for honorary membership in ASLA as a decades-long, passionate champion of landscape architecture in urban design. I have worked with Claire since 1995 and have seen first-hand how WxY's national work under her leadership attests to her profound respect for our profession.

I'm one of several landscape architects enjoying an ongoing, dialogue-driven collaboration with her and her firm, WxY. Our first teaming effort expanded a small community garden project into a broader examination of urban redevelopment and social justice. Culminating in a day-long symposium at Harvard Graduate School of Design entitled "Environmental Justice Is..." its group of panelists, assembled by the City College Architectural Center with which she was associated and the Van Alen Institute, introduced many concepts now considered fundamental to reparative community redevelopment. This design conversation continues today as our firms advance the second of three phases for The Peninsula Live Work Campus. Her award-winning vision for The Peninsula, with more than 60% reserved as open space, reimagines the 5-acre former Spofford Juvenile Detention Center—a site of displacement and trauma—as a place of community rebirth and healing.

I was honored when she invited me to brainstorm WxY's open space strategy for the Africatown International Design Idea Competition's Site One, "Historic Africatown" entry. While EKLA lacks the bandwidth to enter competitions, Claire firmly believed the dialogue between principals would be crucial. Our analysis of a problematic site and ideas for its potential as a gateway—drawn over dinner on a paper napkin—led to the design that celebrates the meaning of Africatown's ancestral cemetery and historic Mobile County Training School—and won!

Many project-leading architects and engineers engage landscape architects without valuing our profession. So it is essential to recognize that Claire's engagement in landscape advocacy stems from an ethos buoyed by her natural intellectual curiosity, openness to opportunities posed by excellence in inter-disciplined design, readiness to break down siloed understandings of environmental and cultural resilience in the urban environment as a matter of practice rigor, and generous spirit.

For these reasons, Claire richly deserves honorary membership in ASLA. I highly recommend her for this recognition.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Kennedy'.

Elizabeth J Kennedy, FASLA,
Founder, Elizabeth Kennedy Landscape Architecture, PLLC

February 12, 2024

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2024 Nominee: Claire Weisz, FAIA

Dear Executive Committee Members:

I can think of no other allied professional more deserving of Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) than Claire Weisz. It is a pleasure to recommend her for this nomination based on her outstanding service to the urban environment, community development, environmental resilience, and the profession of landscape architecture.

Claire and I first collaborated while working on a proposal for the Eastover/Forest Height Corridor Section Plan in March of 2012. Afterwards, we have pursued multiple proposals for projects with a major landscape architecture and urban design component. The most recent collaboration was in 2023 for the Fallen Journalist Memorial in Washington, DC.

As a founding principal of WXY, Claire leads her team in selecting projects that recognize the importance of landscape design as an essential component to the health, safety and welfare of any space. During the initial stages of past proposals, Claire and her WXY team showcased their expertise in landscape architecture and actively championed greater collaboration across professions. As an architectural designer, I deeply appreciate the significance of collaborative efforts.

I wholeheartedly recommend Claire Weisz for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bert Jose Hustvedt", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Vinson - Bert Jose Hustvedt - Camacho
Co-Founder / Managing Director – PUSH studio, LLC



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Nominee: Claire Weisz, FAIA

NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

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