

American Society of Landscape Architects | Executive Committee & Board of Trustees

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

Re: Nomination for Honorary Membership - American Society of Landscape Architects

Dear Executive Committee,

I am writing to nominate my friend and colleague, Linda Pollak, for an Honorary Membership to the American Society of Landscape Architects. Linda's work in architecture thoughtfully bridges the fields of Landscape Architecture and Architecture.

I first met Linda when we were in graduate school together at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. Linda was in the Architecture department but even then, her work was concerned with the creation of a rich and thoughtful edge between inside and outside. Linda understood that landscape and architecture, otherwise compartmentalized fields, could be woven together conceptually and physically to create a new way of manifesting architectural expression. I was very inspired by her work. Her way of thinking as a graduate student has had a huge impact on the development of my own practice.

Linda went on to co-write "Inside, Outside: Between Architecture and Landscape" with Anita Berrizbeitia, which elucidates the complex edge that can happen between architecture and landscape, using a case study approach. James Corner and I gave the book release talk at U Penn when the book came out. It was an exciting moment for the fields of Landscape Architecture and Architecture as it was one of the most thorough compendiums to examine thoughtfully the interconnections between the two fields. I often use the "operations" described in "Inside Outside" in my own work to create a deeper sense of relationship with the immediate site. "Inside Outside" has had a huge impact on my practice. Many architectural practitioners I know use the book as a theoretical underpinning for their own work as well. It has had a considerable impact on the field.

Not only is Linda's scholarly work important to the field, but she is also an inspired architect whose work expands the traditional boundaries between architecture & landscape. Linda's commitment to a thoughtful approach to the interrelatedness of architecture and landscape is evident in her diverse portfolio of projects, each of which reflects a deep understanding of the interplay between nature, community, and architecture.

Linda's practice, Marpillero Pollak Architects, is especially adept at revitalizing urban spaces by creating buildings that are permeable with the landscapes and environments that surround them. Her projects seamlessly integrate green infrastructure, public art, and community, creating vibrant and sustainable environments that foster social cohesion. Linda has developed a body of work within MPA that focuses exclusively on the urban landscape, from transforming neglected brownfields into thriving parks to reimagining city centers as green hubs, to creating small gardens within the city center.

An example of Linda's ability to engage a thoughtful edge between architecture and landscape is her outdoor classrooms, designed for New York parks in Staten Island and Queens. Constructed in collaboration with AmeriCorps, the classrooms create spaces that are designed to highlight the phenomenological qualities of their sites. Both structures effectively create a sense of enclosure and comfort suited to a classroom gathering, while allowing for nearly uninhibited access and immersion with the lake, woods, and marshes that surround. This facilitates just the sort of contact that outdoor learning demands, one which demonstrates interconnectedness with ecosystems. These small projects are examples of how Linda's work, by transcending the boundaries of landscape architecture and architecture, facilitates greater and more holistic encounters among people with the places they inhabit.

Linda has been a featured speaker at numerous conferences and events and has taught at RISD, Harvard's GSD, U Penn, and The Cooper Union. Linda's long legacy of teaching has nurtured a passion for sustainable and landscape-oriented architectural practice.

Linda's research on architecture and urban landscape has been recognized with grants and fellowships from the American Academy in Rome, the Graham Foundation, the Wheelwright Traveling Fellowship, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Design Trust for Public Space. She serves on the Board of Storefront for Art and Architecture and the Advisory Board of Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation and is a Contributing Editor for Places Journal.

In recognition of Linda Pollak's outstanding contributions to Landscape Architecture, her prioritizing of the role that architecture can play in heightening the experience of site, and her unwavering commitment to teaching architects to think beyond the confines of their field, I enthusiastically nominate her for ASLA Honorary Membership. This honor would be a well-deserved acknowledgment of her extraordinary impact.

Sincerely,



Maryann Thompson, ASLA, FAIA  
Founder & Principal | Maryann Thompson Architects

ANITA BERRIZBEITIA

February 12, 2024

Professor of Landscape  
Architecture

American Society of Landscape Architects  
Honorary Membership Committee

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**Subject: Nomination for Honorary Membership - American Society  
of Landscape Architects - LINDA POLLAK, AIA, ASLA Affiliate**

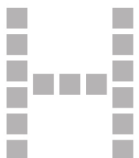
Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am pleased to endorse my colleague and collaborator, Linda Pollak, for an Honorary Membership to the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Linda Pollak is an inspiring architect whose innovative designs have continually pushed the boundaries between architecture and landscape. Linda and I met while we were both teaching at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. I was drawn to her as her scholarship was dedicated to teaching across traditional boundaries of disciplines, with classes and studios that weave seamlessly and thoughtfully between architecture and landscape. Her pedagogy has inspired students at the Rhode Island School of Design, The University of Pennsylvania, and the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and continues to do so today in her teaching at the Cooper Union.

Our joint endeavor, *Inside Outside: Between Architecture and Landscape*, which received a Merit Award in Communication from the ASLA in 2000 was an all-consuming project intent in charting a new language to foster better collaboration between the design disciplines. Linda's virtuosic ability to see landscape and architecture as mutually constitutive parts of an indivisible whole is evident everywhere in this book and has been foundational in her own practice. As both a thinker and designer, Linda balances effortlessly between the demands and ambitions of landscape and architecture without ever sacrificing one for the other: she transcends the category of both disciplines while remaining singularly in tune with the core tenants of each.

Our collaboration aimed not only to dissect the theoretical underpinnings of landscape architecture but also to provide practical applications that resonate with professionals and students alike. Linda's unwavering dedication to the field is



evident in her ability to bridge theory and practice, fostering a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between the built and natural worlds. Thus, her contributions to the field of Landscape Architecture are not just theoretical but have been manifest in both her tangible works and endure through the countless students she has inspired to think beyond the compartments of their disciplines.

Beyond our shared literary venture, Linda has consistently demonstrated her commitment to sustainability, social responsibility, and the advancement of landscape architecture. Her influential work extends beyond the pages of our book, shaping the discourse and inspiring a new generation of landscape architects to think critically and expansively.

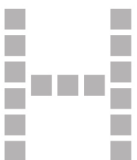
Linda's sensitivity to natural landscapes pervades her work. While her title and achievements as an architect are self-evident, her insistent attention to and work within the landscape are equally impressive and deserve the highest merit. With that said, I wholeheartedly endorse her nomination for honorary membership to the American Society of landscape architects. Linda's intellectual curiosity, innovative designs, and tireless advocacy make her a beacon in our profession, and this honor would be a fitting acknowledgement of her enduring impact.

Thank you for considering this nomination. I am confident that Linda Pollak's inclusion as an honorary member of the American Society of Landscape Architects will not only be well deserved but necessary to the future advancement of the field.

Sincerely,



Anita Berrizbeitia  
Professor of Landscape Architecture



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February 8, 2024

Maryann Thompson, FAIA, Maryann Thompson Architects  
Professor in Practice, Harvard GSD  
48 Quincy Street  
Cambridge MA 02138

Subject: Linda Pollak

Dear Ms. Thompson and Members of the Committee:

I am delighted to offer these words of praise for Linda Pollak in her nomination for the ASLA Honorary membership. I have known Pollak for as long as I have been engaged in Architecture, going back to my first semester --with her serving as a critic on reviews at RISD, having just graduated from Harvard. Thus, I have known her first as a student, later as a peer teaching together at Harvard, and more recently as a dean when I invited her to teach at Cooper Union (some nine years ago). If this suggests some bias, I shall not pretend objectivity, but instead try to build her qualifications on the excellence of her contributions to the field and the unique voice she brings to the discipline.

As an architect with an interest in the broader landscape, Pollak's voice has been unique to the discipline over the past thirty years. Before Landscape Urbanism and Ecological Urbanism as institutional categories, Pollak's interest in expanding the frame of architecture was already evident on the first reviews in which I witnessed her participation. At that time, with departments being somewhat compartmentalized and siloed, she served as a conduit for inter-disciplinary dialogue, helping not only to situate architecture within landscape, but demonstrating the instrumentality of landscape principles as catalysts for architectural thinking: she reframed architecture within an expanded field.

As a young scholar, her book *Inside Out: Between Architecture and Landscape*, allowed faculty and students alike to convene on areas of shared intellectual affinities to recenter our sense of disciplinary closure. She taught between architecture and landscape programs, fostering a unique capacity to speak to both histories with substantial erudition and insight. As she founded her practice, she also situated her interests within smaller projects, forming a space between architecture and landscape, while building up expertise to take on public projects of larger scope, what she has accomplished with pointed elegance and focus. As a professor at Cooper Union, she effectively turned our culture inside out: she patiently tutored students introducing to them a wider constellation of relationships completely alien to our school. The environment, global warming, ecological processes, representational strategies that address the built environment, and many more themes have punctuated her presence here, bringing much needed emphasis on positioning architecture in relation to the world at large.

Beyond this, I speak to her character: an individual of immense intellectual generosity, there is no moment I have not seen her extend her hours for students and faculty alike, giving back in so many ways. Complimentary in her capacity to work with others, practical in her input, empathetic in her understanding of difference, she exemplifies the type of individual from which the ASLA will benefit from as part of its community. I offer these words without qualifications and am very honored to have been asked!

Sincerely,

Nader Tehrani  
Professor and former dean, Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture  
Principal, NADAAA

# STUDIO JOSEPH

ASLA Committee on Honorary Membership  
Endorsement Letter for Linda Pollak

10 February 2024

To the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to support Linda Pollack's nomination. Linda embodies unique qualities as an architectural designer with her passion for making and innate understanding of light, materiality, and site. She thinks holistically about community in the urban condition. But what makes her work and contribution to the profession unique is her distinctive way of intertwining flora, fauna, and the built environment with meaningful human interaction. Her work is intellectually rigorous, joyful, skillfully composed, and reactive to change.

Linda and I met in graduate school at Harvard, GSD. At a time when most of us were struggling to find our voice, Linda had already formulated strong ideas regarding the relationship between building and landscape, understanding the qualities of a site in dynamic terms, including ephemeral qualities of natural light, temperature, seasonality, and movement. She challenged us all (professors included!) to design with nature.

Perhaps the best way to understand a designer is to be their client. In the early 90s, my husband and I asked Linda to design a 39th-floor terrace in midtown Manhattan. She started at an urban scale with an analysis of the neighborhood, then took her inspiration from the architectural qualities of the building. From there, she created a composition

of materials, water features, and collages of plantings that would mitigate the harsh microclimate while providing comfort and beauty. Although a small project, the mastery of Linda's design received National attention and recognition setting a high bar for urban landscape design.

As an architect, Linda's portfolio of architectural projects with her partner Sandro Marpillero is not extensive. They have chosen a path of intensive personal investment as a design strategy for excellence over building a large practice. In doing so, each project has significantly influenced the community through published articles, academic lectures, and award recognition.

Linda's significance is felt through teaching, practice, and, of course, her writings, including the critically successful book *Inside/Outside: between Architecture and Landscape*, Co-author with Anita Berrizbeitia.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Evans Joseph, FAIA, LEED AP  
Founding Partner, Studio Joseph

February 12, 2024

Re: ASLA Honorary Membership

To the ASLA Selection Committee,

I write this letter with great enthusiasm to nominate Linda Pollak, co-founder of Marpillero Pollak Architects, as an honorary member of ASLA. For the past two years I have worked closely with Linda, and during that time I have personally witnessed her rigorous commitment to design excellence in NYC public open space projects. Her collaborative nature has made her a joy to work with; she truly understands the power of landscape. What I admire most about Linda is that her acute ability with site design does not overshadow her respect for the unique knowledge that a landscape architect brings to a project. She is totally receptive of the value that ecological design principles bring to all work. Additionally, Linda's commitment to design integrity in public agency work is admirable; her years of experience carrying the design concept through design milestones has resulted in many successful urban design projects in New York City and beyond.

Last year Linda generously volunteered her time with the ASLA-NY chapter's Plant Research Group, a group that I moderate in NYC. For the group, Linda gave a guided tour through Queens Public Plaza to share her design knowledge with the next generation of landscape architects. Linda is a *design systems thinker*, which was impeccably communicated on the tour. Due to her passion for urban open space design, this was one of the most successful tours of the year.

I highly recommend Linda for an honorary membership for her commitment to design excellence in the public realm.

Sincerely,



Wendy Andringa, RLA

Principal

Assemblage Landscape Architecture, DPC

**Nominee Contact Details:**

Linda Pollak

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