



OJB Landscape Architecture Receives Cooper Hewitt’s National Design Award for Landscape Architecture, Honoring Practice’s Transformation of Public Spaces Nationwide

October 2, 2020 (New York) – Today OJB Landscape Architecture (OJB) announced that it has received the 2020 National Design Award for Landscape Architecture from Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, honoring the practice’s transformation of public spaces nationwide. Led by founder James Burnett, FASLA and partners Jereck Boss, FASLA, Dillon Diers, ASLA, Kyle Fiddelke, ASLA, Cody Klein, ASLA, Meg Levy, Claudia Thome, and Chip Trageser, FASLA, OJB has been challenging conventional boundaries of landscape architecture for more than 30 years. Since its inception designing landscapes for healthcare environments, the firm has distinguished itself as a leader in building restorative public spaces across industries. Their designs are marked by close attention to community input; sensitivity to local- and micro-climates, ecologies, and topographies; and innovative sustainability features, demonstrating OJB’s environmental leadership.

Launched at the White House in 2000 as a project of the White House Millennium Council, the National Design Awards were established to promote design as a vital humanistic tool in shaping the world, to celebrate excellence across a variety of disciplines, and to honor lasting achievement in American design. The awards are bestowed in recognition of innovation and impact and acknowledge OJB’s contributions to the public realm through innovative landscape and urban planning solutions. OJB and fellow award recipients were honored the evening of October 1 at the Cooper Hewitt’s 21st annual National Design Awards gala, in a virtual program.

“I believe landscape has the power to transform cities and strengthen communities, and that now, more than ever, we have a responsibility to address issues of access, equity, and health in our shared public spaces,” said Jim Burnett. “This award from Cooper Hewitt is especially meaningful because it affirms the power of design, and that is what our practice is about—a steadfast belief that design can, and should, change the world.”

Since OJB’s founding in 1989, the firm has created community-driven spaces. With an early focus on creating healing, restorative gardens and landscapes within hospitals and healthcare environments, Burnett paved the way as one of the first landscape architects designing specifically for healthcare. OJB’s focus on designing with the human experience in mind has since expanded to encompass projects that revitalize local economies, connect disparate spaces, create communities on college campuses, and energize the urban environment. A selection of the firm’s notable projects include:

- [**Sunnylands Center and Garden:**](#) A cultural destination in Southern California that celebrates its arid setting and expresses the surprising vibrancy of the California desert ecosystem.
- [**Klyde Warren Park:**](#) Created over one of the busiest freeways in Dallas, this park has restored connections between city districts and established a new public-private partnership model for transforming cities.

- [The Park at Lakeshore East](#): The central amenity of Chicago’s Inner Loop, this urban park anchors a new riverfront community, and uses scale and function to provide a place for all citizens.
- [Hall Winery](#): A blend of modern and traditional, the project transforms an industrial wine-making campus of outdated Butler buildings into a welcoming garden oasis.
- [Rice University Landscapes](#): OJB has completed more than 15 projects on the campus, placing emphasis on outdoor spaces that have become a central part of student life.
- [Mass General Brigham Administrative Campus](#): Landscapes throughout this urban campus bring together nearly 4,500 employees, as well as the public, showcasing a new benchmark for workplace design and sustainable practices.
- [Levy Park](#): Transforming underutilized space in the City of Houston, OJB designed an urban park featuring 5.9 acres of green space, now a gathering space for the local community.

Currently, OJB is working with several major metropolitan areas to rethink their parks and open space, including projects in: Omaha, Nebraska, where three connected parks will restore access to the Missouri Riverfront (completion fall 2021); Cary, North Carolina, where the new downtown park will be a center for community (completion spring 2022); and East Village Green in San Diego, California, a pivotal urban park in the city fabric (completion 2022). The firm is also engaged on multiple projects at the University of California, San Diego, including the new LEED-Platinum 2000-bed Living Learning Community at North Torrey Pines (completion Spring 2021), as well as projects with Rice University and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

Reflecting the ever-growing scope of design, the National Design Awards program includes nine jury-selected award categories. The awards are accompanied each year by a variety of public education programs, including special events, panel discussions, and workshops throughout National Design Week. In 2020, National Design Week expands to a monthlong virtual celebration throughout October, gathering the nation’s leading designers and communities around the country to celebrate the power of design in the everyday world. OJB will participate in [Design Fair | Meet the Designers](#) on October 13, and will also present a behind the scenes [Design Tour](#) on October 30 via Instagram Live.

About OJB Landscape Architecture

OJB Landscape Architecture is a collective landscape architecture and urban planning practice inspired to create beauty and find unexpected moments in the natural world. Founded by Jim Burnett in 1989 in Houston, Texas and led today by Burnett, FASLA, and his partners in offices around the country, OJB shapes public spaces into community resources that rejuvenate the human spirit, promote discovery and wellness, celebrate the genius loci, and restore ecologies. The work affirms the public realm as an essential human right and shared responsibility. Jim Burnett was the recipient of the prestigious 2016 ASLA Design Medal, which honors a landscape architect who has consistently produced a body of exceptional design work over an extended period of time. Notable projects include urban parks Klyde Warren Park in Dallas; Levy Park in Houston, Texas; Myriad Botanical Gardens in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (all winners of the prestigious ULI Open Space Award); the desert gardens at Sunnylands Center and Gardens in Rancho Mirage, California; and multiple projects for Rice University and the University of California, San Diego, among others. www.ojb.com

About Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

Cooper Hewitt is America’s design museum. Inclusive, innovative, and experimental, the museum’s dynamic exhibitions, education programs, master’s program, publications, and online resources inspire, educate, and empower people through design. An integral part of the

Smithsonian Institution—the world’s largest museum, education, and research complex—Cooper Hewitt is located on New York City’s Museum Mile in the historic, landmark Carnegie Mansion. Steward of one of the world’s most diverse and comprehensive design collections—over 210,000 objects that range from an ancient Egyptian faience cup dating to about 1100 BCE to contemporary 3D-printed objects and digital code—Cooper Hewitt welcomes everyone to discover the importance of design and its power to change the world. Cooper Hewitt knits digital into experiences to enhance ideas, extend reach beyond museum walls, and enable greater access, personalization, experimentation, and connection.

For additional information, please contact:

Francesca Kielb / Katrina Reynolds
Resnicow + Associates
fkielb@resnicow.com / kreynolds@resnicow.com
212-671-5152 / 212-671-5184

Christa Mahar
OJB Landscape Architecture
cmahar@obj.com
617-599-3484