The Cultural Landscape Foundation®
Cornelia Hahn Oberlander International Landscape Architecture Prize

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JULIE BARGMANN
ORAL HISTORY
INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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PRELUDE

I am Julie Bargmann. And we're in Charlottesville, Virginia. And I am in what I call the Blue House, which is a polite house, but I tried to mess it up with a lot of sumac and black locust. To make it wild.

BIOGRAPHY

EARLY LANDSCAPES

The landscapes that shaped me, kind of unknowingly, when I was little, was the really exciting thing that we would do. We'd be like, wow, we're going to go see Dad in the city. Dad, being a plastic salesman on the 44th floor of the Chrysler Building. Really exciting. So we'd pack into the station wagon, all eight of us, we're talking packed, and I always remember being, if I got a window seat, I'd be lucky. But I'd be slumbering when we got to the part of the New Jersey Turnpike that was all the refineries.

I loved the part of the New Jersey Turnpike that had all the refineries. I mean, just incredible, billowing, gnarly, just like yikes. I just loved it. So I mean, in retrospect, I think well, that's a little weird that that's the landscape that I liked. You know, but like, why not? It was part of my history. The other part that I really remember is Radburn. I swam competitively, and we went, we swam against Radburn. And I remember going there, and I'm like, this place is weird. You know, this is like I'm in somebody's backyard. A collective backyard. Maybe that's where I got one of those first moments of feeling that design made a place inclusive. Because I was like, oh, OK. I'm welcome here, and I'm a complete stranger. So I had refineries on one end, Radburn on the other, and you know, that's, it kind of went from there. I mean, the refinery part, you know, just kept building and building and building. I mean, it just, I mean, I think

years later in the station wagon still, I started to think about the people that lived there. And the people that worked there, of course. And I was like, wondering about how they lived, which was very different than me. I was in Northern Jersey. So they really had a profound effect on me. And it's only in retrospect that I realize how much I loved them and how much I needed to work with them. It was great.

One of the most exciting, but also frightening things, about going to see my dad on the 44th floor, where we jammed every typewriter on that floor. Sorry. Not sorry. Was this instruction from my father that said, if you get lost, go to the Lever House. So at like age nine or ten, I was like super groovy that I knew the Lever House. So I never had to go there.

PITTSBURGH AND CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Well, when I was in art school in Pittsburgh, I, you know, with being clueless about landscape architecture, I didn't even know to go to all these masterpieces. I went to the steel mills. Surprise, surprise. I did. I was like, you know, and that's when Pittsburgh still had [them], it's been wiped clean. Right? I remember telling the mayor of Pittsburgh at one of the Mayors Institutes that I was on the teams, I said, you wiped out too much of the slag. You know? Because now it's all happy, happy. Then, you know, I was there when it still smelled of steelmaking. And I loved that. I mean, I love Pittsburgh. It's a working city. Those cities are my favorite, all the working cities. So I don't know, I guess I was always looking at the B side of things.

I had, I was on the top floor of Designers of America House. I just thought, what is this ex-Catholic girl doing there? But I'd come out, and the smell was, oof, amazing. Amazing. It was still there.

Well, I mean, it was being in Pittsburgh was an extension of me riding in the station wagon down the Jersey Turnpike. And I just think that there was more and more evidence or things that happened that I was starting to just internalize, you know, coming out of my place in Pittsburgh, and smelling the steelmaking and also kind of like the residue. So I have to say, when I flash back to that, again, I think about all the people that were working in the steel mills. And just thinking about the kind of level of incredible ambition and perseverance that they had to do that hard work. And then, and maybe at the same time, think about the landscape that they were making, for better and for worse. Right? To me, though, their workings are in a way as authentic as our workings, or future workings. Right? Those landscapes. That's the cycle thing that I just, I've become obsessed with, is thinking of them as that.

When I was in high school, I had the great privilege of having an amazing art teacher, Mickey. And you know, in high school, you are supposed to be doing like all the subjects equally. Well, I, you know, no. I ran to D Wing, wanting to do more and more with this wonderful woman, which included going out and digging the clay that we would then make vessels with. You know? So yet again, I mean, well, special to Mickey is bringing us to that place to just with our bare hands grabbing the clay, and knowing that that's where vessels came from. Just incredible. We also, I have to say, had a really weird deal, a day with our photography teacher, who said you could be a certain person for a day. And I'll forget, my very best friend, Lee Cane, was Andy Warhol. And I was Mick Jagger. What? Whatever. But most importantly, you know, the art and the making of things that had meaning, actually, from a landscape, and was generated from a landscape, really fueled going to art school where I was thinking about [Robert] Smithson and the other Earth artists, but I think I was mostly inspired by Eva Hesse. My, and it's kind of like doing things, sometimes I would do things that were really like crisp and blah, blah, blah, minimalist, like [Donald] Judd. But then when I ventured into some other work that was more sensual, you know, and of the heart, and of the body, you know, where you

could just see Eva Hesse's just kind of loving on that material. I, whew, you know. Towards the end of my time in Pittsburgh, at Carnegie Mellon, I lost faith in making these things, these things that would exist in and of themselves, to then finally doing some installations. And it was then when I went, bang. You know, well, not bang, because then it took me about seven or eight years to figure out, to go to landscape architecture school. I had my black hole period, as I call it. Because I couldn't find a place to do the making in a broader context. So that's when I like finally discovered landscape architecture.

I discovered landscape architecture from a few folks who when I would talk about really what I wanted to do, they were like, that's landscape architecture. There were a few people in Western Massachusetts when I went there for some, whatever, odd reason. And they were landscape architects. I can't remember their names. They said, yeah, that's it. And so I looked into it. I was like, yep, that's it.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN

I really tripped in to going to Harvard for landscape architecture, just because I was like, wow, that sounds cool. You know? I'm going to go. So, there, I like dive into the world of an amazing, intense bunch of folks. You know, the characters we know. Uncle Pete [Walker], Aunt Martha [Schwartz], Boy George [Hargreaves], crazy-ass-smart Beth [Meyer], and Cherie Kluesing, who want to mention, and Michael, Michael van Valkenburgh . And my classmates, Anita Berrizbeitia and Steve Stimson, and Toru Mitani. So what an intense group. It was wonderful. But I have to say, I almost dropped out my first year. Being an artist, art student coming in, I just wasn't understanding the prevalent process that was much more linear and rational, because I was still like, you know, like eh, you know, I mean, I feel like we should do it this way. I also, I have to say, I remember that I went to the art department, and I brought in clay, but it was slack, it's called. And I laid it out onto the floor to dry. And then rework for a model, and it was a model of a cemetery project we had. I will never forget, Gary Hilderbrand

was on the review, and I, and I had little gravestones and stuff. And he just was like, "Argh! I just saw it crack." And the gravestone moved. It was hilarious. But anyway, I just, I was just having a really hard time. That kind of like switch from art to design, and I was really rescued by Cherie Kluesing. (Hi, Cherie.) And Michael, who really supported me in my more intuitive way of working. That, of course, was combined with rigor. And to this day, I love that kind of crazy combination of rigorous intuition, or intuitive rigor. And that helped tremendously. And so by the end of, I remember, the first year, it was like, yep, I'm here. I'm here. I'm in the right place. And then just amazing people. I remember going to Catherine Howett's office and talking about Smithson, a bad situation to have. I talked to her about Smithson. Yeah. And Laurie Olin hating the pink that I painted the stairs. Please don't do that. And yeah. I'm going to dare tell a story now, and it's going to be too exposing.

So I'm in my last year of graduate school, and we have, of course, these options to take different studios. And I actually, I've been working for Michael for, all through graduate school, me and Steve Stimson. We were his first employees. And I remember this one day that George came over to my desk, and he said, why didn't you take my studio? And I said, because I heard you were an asshole. [LAUGHTER] And we were very good friends after that. It was hilarious.

My time at the GSD was really kind of deeply, deeply, deeply formative and just substantial. And that came from all of the folks that were there that were really pushing the discipline. I mean, I felt intensely this post-McHargian, almost anti-design, and so to be with these folks who were saying, make form, make form, don't be shy, let's go, let's tell the world what landscape architecture is, and so I felt really, really charged with that, that I should be part of that, and that I was going to be kind of the next generation doing that. You know, there was really all these layers. Right? You know, because there was Laurie and Pete and then Michael and George, and yeah, and so I really felt like I was a part of this, ech, I don't really want to use family, because they didn't really like each other that much. But a community. Right? That

was really trying to define what it meant to make landscapes, not always plan them or conceptualizing, but boom, make it. You know? And make it with conceptual rigor. With Beth and Catherine being there, and with Anita, my classmate. So there was, yeah, there was kind of almost a mission. You know, and I think that's quite different than the experience a lot of the student have. I think they are in graduate school, and they get trained, which drives me crazy, which I think just drags the discipline down when it's training. Yeah, so there's not that feeling of a mission of making a contribution. Which I just feel is really important. I mean, as a, you know, an educator, you know, my students don't really like it, but I'm thinking about how often they would talk about what they're doing, and I go, so what? You know? And I'm like, what does this contribute? Who does this benefit? So it's kind of saying, you're part of this mission. You know? You really are. And I think that, I mean, I remember talking distinctly with Anita one time, you know, about teaching, and we were both saying, you know, she even said, do you think we're begetting the next generation that has the rigor that we were wonderfully privy to? And I want, hm. I'm not sure. And I'd better get my act together to do that.

The formation of the philosophy of my work was not easy at the GSD. Right? It's a strong place, and with strong folks. And when I rejected things, pretty formalist stuff, it was met with some resistance. You know, when I put a bunch of chairs surrounding a lake in Massachusetts, and that was my proposal, you know, folks were like, really? You know, and realized that actually this is when I had to articulate my intuition, my instincts. I just was always like, eh, you know? I can do this. But now I had to articulate them. And so there's a significant moment when I did a proposal, and I did a rather infamous model, where I just was like, I am what I am. I'm so Popeye, watch out. And I'm proud to be Popeye. And I did this model, and it was of dirt. It was made, you know, of dirt. And it had to do with a landscape that was just a single line of bounded earth, you know, that then I had hoped would make sense of the forest on one side and water on the other. And I think that's when it was interesting that I just felt really confident to do that. That's a pretty significant moment, where I think in a timely way, I was starting to feel fearless. And again, to have the support of Michael and Cherie and others there

was tremendous. Because if I were to go out into the discipline now, graduate and go into the discipline, we all need that support. So I luckily had it. And it reinforced things, like my instincts from when I was nine or ten in the station wagon. I mean, it all builds. It all builds. And I had the chance to work with Michael while I was in graduate school. I needed to make some money. And to buy mylar. And I remember, I built a full-scale model of one of his fountains in his office, and made an incredible mess. I was like, oh-oh. But there I was. I mean, imagine it. Right? An art student at the GSD building full scale unapologetically in his office. So it's meant a lot, and it was going into landscapes that I was witnessing his restraint. But not enough restraint that it was right neutral, but very sensual landscapes, I think. I also have to say, I think that's when I learned the value of gardens as experiments. Because I was like, oh, you know, because we were always doing like big old things. You know? And there I got the chance to see the scale of the garden being majorly deployed. And then I, after graduation, I had the chance to work at Carr, Lynch [& Sandell] for a year. I just, well, I spent just that amount of time on Battery Park City, North Park. What was it? Rockefeller Park now. It was North Park when we were designing it. And you know, that is when I realized that there was a problem. You know? With design. Because I just was like, what are you doing? They put these balustrades, you know, and I even would look at my watch and go, oh, what year is it? You know? And I realized how fortunate I was to work with Michael, to be just so kindred spirits. And so when it was at about 95% construction documents, Rockefeller Park, I got this call from Michael. And all he said was, he's hilarious, are you done yet? So I went back to the firm, back to his studio office, and took a year off to go to Rome. But man, I was in good shape working there for so long. You know, really learning so much, and then to have the confidence, eventually, to start D.I.R.T. And yeah.

You know, it was an intense time when I was at the GSD. I was really fortunate. I mean, what an amazing crew. And besides my goal. I just really remember Pete pushing. He pushes, man. You know? And you know, he so wanted us to go forward. Like, come on, do the next thing. Because, you know, he, like, was the ice breaker through all the anti-design of McHarg. Sorry.

And that was when it was really hardcore. He was like, make form. Make the landscape evident, and dah, dah, dah. And I remember, I'd like listen to him, but went in another direction, that he then pushed, which was like, OK, OK, what are you doing? And meanwhile, Martha [UNINTELLIGIBLE] you know, she just, well, we were kindred spirits. She just, she really continued to help with my problem of being a fine arts student there and kind of still trying to figure out what design was. And of course, it was about things being sculptural, but of course with her provocative, and I don't know if, I never got to the provocative part, but the questioning part, you know, her questioning, which I think is embedded in the work, underneath the form, you know, her being bad ass, of course. And that was a huge help. She was a huge help. Yeah. It was, she's always provided amazing support. There is a solidarity there that's, oh, so profound.

There is a generational thing that I've always been aware of. I used to love when Uncle Pete used to just kind of go on about what was happening in landscape architecture over time, and gave us really just a great understanding of where we were in relationship, right, to all of that, and what it is that we might be pushing against. Whether we knew it or not. So, and as I say that, I do flash back to the big LO being at my desk in graduate school. We were working on the train station, the 30th Street train station. And I just remember our interaction being that I found myself almost gravitating to the world of his work and sketches of really organizing things really well. And I remember then being uncomfortable with it. You know? And instead of being insistent, you know, on the direction I was going before, good old Laurie, of course, was very curious. He just was like, I think he spilled his cup of coffee, which of course is Laurie, and but I remember him just being curious, because I was kind of like wanting to go another way. So that's when I really, I felt it. I really felt like I was part of a disciplinary evolution. And I do have to say, by the way, Laurie, I'll never forget, he goes, you know, I would love to hire you, Julie, but you would be bored after eight hours. [LAUGHTER] God bless you, Laurie.

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

I remember applying for the Rome Prize, and a lot of it had to do with wanting some time in a way to myself to keep doing that kind of formulating who I am. Not that I didn't, I couldn't be who I am at Michael's office. But there was something about doing that before in a way I got just, I mean, it's a wonderful thing. You just don't want to get sucked into what you do. Right? You want to be able to kind of jump up and go, I'm going to Italy, man. [LAUGHTER] You know? I'm just going to drink so many negronis. No. But I had, I still had that thing where I was not reconciling. I wish I had a better word. But of combining my art background and landscape architecture. I just, in a lot of ways I've always wanted to keep that alive. And I think it has to do, when I talk about an intuitive or instinctual way of working, that for me, art is that. I wish I was still making. Maybe I will after this. But I do have to say, the interview was incredible. I'm trying to remember. Oh, actually, Warren Byrd was on the jury, I'm remembering, and he had like a big ass smile on his face the whole time, because you know, these folks, the director, whatever, really kind of don't know what landscape architecture was. And I'll never forget that Michael said, you bring the black granite garden, bring the model, because that is your puppy. I was like, really? I will? OK. Of course, with all the models we made at Van Valkenburgh's and MVVA, it was in this box. And uh, and it's about this big, and I like open it, and the director goes, what, did you bring your dog? I was like, yes. Then I roll out the black granite garden. What? So, anyway, I also had this instinctual gravitation towards the Etruscans. I just think they're like so cool. I hate the Romans. And the Etruscans, to me, always had a smile on their face. And it's like, who are those guys? They must have it. But I had an inkling about their sites. So I went and had, of course, a beautiful studio, and a beautiful amount of freedom. Oh my gosh. You know? And I did rubbings. And I also did, instead of dirt drawings, I did tufa drawings. I would crush the tufa and adhere it to the page. And again, it was very formative, you know, and of course, the director hated that I was doing those rubbings. But I was like, they're like, he goes, where are your measured drawings? And I was like, uh, full scale. You want to come upstairs? And, get a load of this, one day, the professor in, the professor, the biggest, what's he called? I don't know what he's called. I don't know, the professor, is walking

down a path, where I'm at this end, because it was near my room. And he's with Dan Kiley. And Michael said later (he's the professor in charge) he goes, it was like you saw God. And I said, I did. And Dan came up and saw my rubbings. And he did say, he goes, you're one of those intuitive, instinctual types, aren't you? I was like, yeah. He goes, OK, Blondie, let's go have a gin and tonic. So absolutely the most wonderful time. And I gained strength, you know, individual strength, as you know, it's one thing to be working in an office, and it's great to be getting support or whatever. But to be there and doing my own work, you know, to be able to say that, it was, I just, I felt really strong leading there.

At the academy, there was a great crew, a few folks that I got to be really close with. One was the painter, Christopher Wool. And we used to run around on his Motorino named Jane, to different sites. And that was interesting, because Christopher really wanted me to interpret the sites for him. You know, he was kind of like, what are we looking at? And he was really amazing. He had his friends come over, Cindy Sherman and Robert Gober, and so it was a pretty intense group. It was wonderful. And Ross Anderson, the architect, Evonne Levy, the baroque scholar. I never thought I would be friends with a baroque scholar, the ultimate, like, minimalist. But we had an exchange. She said, well, I'll show you the churches if you bring me to Etruscan sites. I said, OK, it's a deal. So yeah, I think it was there that, right, you gain such an appreciation, because you're cheek to jowl with all these other disciplines. Right? And there really isn't that much of an opportunity to have that happen. You have to kind of work hard to make that happen. There it was part of life. You know? And again, I have to say, that is where, with all the different disciplines, I had to talk about what landscape architecture is. And what I was up to, how I looked at things. You know? And yeah.

What actually comes to mind is seeing all the [Carlo] Scarpa work. Oh, yes. Gobsmacked. Yeah. And the different depths of the water that are different colors.

TEACHING AT UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

So after Rome, I was just so charged, right? Charged up. I was like, you know, I'm like, and I returned to Michael's office, and I remember distinctly that it was so great to be coming back to his office when he was getting into the larger projects, like Mill Race Park that I worked on. And that was, of course, tremendous. What I started to see was, because I worked with Michael when he was making gardens, what I was starting to see is how he was making garden experiences within larger landscapes. And I was like, wow. That's like killer. You know? To not lose any of the intimacy one has within these larger expanses. And he, they talk about that to this day, the intensive intimacy and the immensity, which is really, it really influenced me, because I'm always thinking about those kind of two scales, right, because you have to deal with like, you know, kind of in a very butch way, deal with those larger landscapes. But it's like, whew, how do you find that place that the person is still kind of enveloped. You know? And I flash back to maybe what I was saying about material evidence that can do that. You know, always looking at like that, I don't know, that intimate little thing that they can just kind of focus on, and then look up, and be intimate. So that was, of course, an amazing experience. Yeah. And then, actually, I got the call to teach. And I was like, that's interesting. You know, I was TA at Harvard, and I was like, teaching, hmm. And it was Minnesota, and I remember calling Beth, and I'm like, hm, should I do this? And she goes, yeah. There's some great people out there. Bill Morrish, Catherine Brown, Garth Rockcastle, Mary Rockcastle. And so it was really hard. I mean, I told Michael in the Oak Room, you know, of the Waldorf Astoria, and yeah, I sobbed. Yet, I was like, I have to do this. I need to do this. And I'm telling you, that is when I realized that you could take adventures with the students. And I was like, I'm not going to teach you. You are going to go on this adventure with me, having no idea what we're doing. You know, we're going to figure it out as we go. And maybe that's that version of me just saying, you know, hey, this is just like how you enter a site. You know? So let's do it together. I'm like maybe one step ahead of you, but not really.

THE D.I.R.T. PATH

The really cool thing I loved was in Minnesota, while I was in Minneapolis, which is a great city, was I, for whatever reason, got intrigued with all the mines that were there. Like, oh yeah, big surprise, refineries, mines, you know? So I did, I got a little chunk of change, and I did the "dirt" path, as I called it, because I had just started D.I.R.T. studio. And I rode around the country looking at all different types of mining. And that is when I said, I want in. You know? I visited, of course, with all the engineers, mostly engineers. Right? And you know, that is when I just saw that they were being treated like machines. And, but you go into a bar and have a beer and pasty, you know, in Montana, and so there was this accumulation. Had no idea what I was going to do with it. And I didn't, you know, anyway. It really just fueled the fire. And this time it was really mine, if I'm so bold to be possessive of mines. But it was really mine. You know, I just was like, oh, boy, that is when, what was so great about going to all of these different mines and meeting with the engineers, and sometimes several people, like the people running the mine, that's when I started to be angry about how the mines and the people who worked there, past, present, were being treated. And then, of course, I went into the whole thing of what the regulations were, you know, and that's when I used to, it wasn't quite then, but I'm flashing to how I started to call Niall Kirkwood and just say, what the, is up with that piece of legislation? And we were talking, the great thing is that we were talking about the critique of the legislation in terms of, well, what I would often say what the law looks like. And nobody was looking at what the law actually looked like, because if they did, it was ridiculous. And so we would be a support group for each other, and to kind of keep going, because I have to say, it was then, maybe it was then, or after that, I started to work a lot with superfund sites and the EPA. Oy, oy, oy. I mean, and that's why I have to say, after whatever the decade, I just was like working with the EPA is like smashing your head on a brick wall. You know, and I just was like, I can't take it anymore. I mean, I think I made some headway. And I think that's when I got practice articulating what the potential was for landscape architecture here, and what was being missed, and what they were doing, blah, blah, blah. I just really kind of like analytical in a way, but you know, making some headway about understanding them as cultural landscapes.

We, you know, made some headway there. But there was just too much in the way. Also, with mining, you know, they're pretty, sometimes quite remote. And I decided that I wanted to work at sites that were closer to communities, like cheek to jowl, just to really kind of understand and begin to negotiate that relationship, so that's when I went into kind of manufacturing more. But you know, it was teaching that allowed me to really experiment and get into it. You know? I don't know how I would have done it just through practice.

TEACHING AT UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

UVA came into my life with my digging my heels in not wanting to come to the interview, and Beth Meyer saying, you don't dare do that to a friend. Well, OK. [LAUGHTER] OK, I'm coming. So 1995, I'm sitting on a balcony of one of the pavilions, and you know, smart ass as I am, I just said, why should I come here? And each of the faculty members just were so eloquent about what I would bring, where the department could go if I was with them. And I was like, wow. I really don't want to live in the South, but if I want to teach, I have to teach here. And that was when they said, you'll have complete freedom. And I said, OK. So right away, I launched a series of studios on industrialized sites, which was when I really discovered how rich that was to be working with a bunch of students who were just hungry. I also did studios. I'm just remembering one of the first ones that was called DUMP, of course, four letter words. And I told the students, I said, I have no idea what a landfill is. I mean, I just have an inkling. So here we go. So I tried always to create this atmosphere, or the reality of us doing this together, like here we go. And maybe in a way, trying to model being fearless. Like, let's just go. I mean, we have no idea what we're gonna, and that was a year, it was amazing. It was before 9/11. So we got to go to Fresh Kills, and see all that. So from there, it just became a collection, after collection, and in each time, there was a group of folks that we would engage. And it went everywhere from engineers to sometimes the community groups. So it just varied. And man, I was just [UNINTELLIGIBLE GUTTERAL SOUND] you know, I mean, it just charged the practice big time. And I think the students felt that, too. They were like woohoo. We're in on this. So a

good many of those students are out there doing it. A lot of them. Ross Altheimer, David Hill, Thomas Woltz. Yeah. I mean, so much fun. The teaching was always just a joy. It was all the other academic stuff that was a pain in the ass. You know, but I got to work on curriculum wise, I kind of shepherded, invented the series of courses now we call ecotech. Because I, we were looking at how the curriculums, a lot of curriculums used to just be kind of like this, landform, then this, then this, then this, not them as an assemblage. You know, and you're like, wait a second. When you're in the field, it's like all of this stuff. So we started, we've done these kind of like hybridized or those courses. So I'm proud of that. And I'm proud of planted form class. That's a kind of like throwback to Michael, who I was, you know, his teaching assistant for that class. So there's a lot of him in there, and a lot of me in there. We used to invent things, like hip hop rows. And the students were like, you know, I was like, do not talk about hip hop rows to a client, unless you're ready to draw it and explain it. You know? And an amazing vocabulary that we started, which was not scientific and not something Aunt Rose was using. But it's about 300 terms. And I mean, really a lot of former students will come up to me, and they just were like, man, oh, man, planted form. Can't forget that one. So such a joy, such joy.

I never imagined that I would be in the world of academia as long as I have. And the only reason I have been is the incredible support and trust I've gotten from my colleagues at UVA, to really do anything I want. They told me that at my interview. I went, OK. And so that ability to have that collaboration with my colleagues, but my students, of these kind of adventures. You know, them doing this amazing research and sometimes some really crazy ass proposals. Love it. You know, I mean, there was, that's where I started to see that kind of the benefit of the push and the pull, and I would try to bring as much as I could, the resistance I got in the field, I mean, they didn't really get that. They got glimmers of it, because I would line up people, and the superfund woman would talk, and they'd all be rolling their eyes. You know, so I was like, and so teaching has been, well, and then, you know, the other bit of obsession was planted form. And I developed that course over many years. But yeah, I actually wouldn't even be the landscape architect I am without the teaching. Couldn't have done it.

One thing that I find I always tell my students is that designing a landscape is like being on a thrill cam. You know, that I always kind of consciously have them pick scales at which they're thinking about the place and just constantly do the thrill cam. That's from David Letterman. You know, of going up and down, up and down, so it needs to go to, not planetary, maybe, but not with me, but at least like city. And all the way down to a person standing there near a tree, looking at a leaf. So how do you actually make each one of those scale, kind of charged, comprehensible and charged, you know, that at every scale folks could understand it or not. So maybe a neighbor is experiencing at a leaf, but a mayor is looking at the scale of the city or the neighborhood, and that they need to speak with their work at every one of these scales. And I think, you know, I think the discipline is good about it. I think, though, sometimes the different scales at which landscapes operate isn't charged enough. It's not as serene, it's not responding to a condition. It's finding, I think there is the trap of finding a comfortable scale. You know? Of, I'm thinking about a lot of the projects that have been very patterned, and sometimes still are. They seem locked to me in a certain scale. So I think about that. So it's dynamic. A landscape is dynamic. All of those physical scales and all of those temporal scales.

It's a bit scary to, at age 62, think about a legacy that I have. I may prefer the dedication I've had to cultivating a generation, maybe at this point generations. But seriously, they, the students, I've always tried to kind of fan the fire in their belly. And if they didn't have the fire in the belly, I brought matches to the studio all the time. You know? And all the time, it was this accountability. It was this responsibility. And it was this passion that I asked them to bring. I think the nice thing I had was to bring to the studio, the studio's life experiences. I used to call them war stories. You know? And I think the students really appreciated them, because I, and there's always that disconnect the students have to the world, and so to create that context for them, to create the conflict, to actually work up a rub, because if they had a rub, they had something to push against. I also had the privilege of teaching what we would call the

manifesto studio. I mean, how fantastic is that? You know, so to demand that they articulate what they're about. And the war stories were full of Julie-isms, and I would hear them repeat them. And when they're, I've always run into them, of course, today, I don't know, they're just like, well, you would have said this. You know? And I've even done things like [LAUGHTER] in the studio, and someone is doing something, and I'm like, really? You know, ugh. That's not productive. And it's, just really hold them accountable. And I have said things like, if you do that, I'm going to hunt you down. [LAUGHTER] Oops. But you know, it made them, again, accountable all through, and I don't know, I like to think they get a kick out of that, and that my voice, annoyingly, is in their ear.

LIVING IN CHARLOTTESVILLE

So when I got dragged, or I dragged myself to Charlottesville, I had to seek out how to live in this Southern town. So I was looking for urbanity. And the place I found first was a Coco-Cola building, I was really lucky to get a place in there. It was absolutely fantastic. Yeah, just wonderful, you know window walls, and it was when I was actually a little bit social, and we had wild dance parties there. It was excellent. The historian, Dan Bluestone, he's a great colleague that really was influential. We did studios together, and actually that's when I really learned the value of working with historians, that landscape architects themselves I think do kind of a hack job. So he was great. He discovered, he come to me, and goes, do you mind if I pull up a piece of the carpet? Because I was studying the Coca-Cola buildings, and there's one place where they put the secret syrup, in what they called the "sweet room." And he went back to my bedroom, and he pulled it up, and it was the sweet room. I said, see, that's why I'm so sweet. Not true. So I was driving around in a white Mercedes, 1969 Mercedes. I had a roommate, the architect Shawn Rickenbacker, who was driving a black Alfa Romeo, so they called us, what was that song? Da-da-da… and Ebony. Ebony and Ivory. That's what we were. Anything to be abused. So that's when with studio space, I wanted to have a kind of equal kind of weird, not weird, but you know, gritty experience. And I found this flour mill barn and

rented the top floor. It was a little toasty. But that's where I set up what felt most like an artist's studio. That's what I always wanted it to be. You know, so I have a really hard time, actually, sometimes going to a firm or an office. I'm like, no. It's a studio. So to just really cultivate, not that firms aren't creative, but I just really wanted rawness and kind of spontaneity, and so it was great. The barn really inspired that. So, and then I had an amazing opportunity--it was probably when D.I.R.T. was the biggest, it was five of us, including me--to be in the silk mills. Always seeking out these productive places. And that was just absolutely wonderful. Again, it just inspired spontaneity. We plucked *Robinia*, black locusts, and put it in an old channel that was the spillway for the boiler. And then painted a shuffleboard court, so that when I, you know, I used to do time out sometimes when it was like getting a little crazed in the studio. It was like, time out. Come on, let's go. That really helped people's mind.

And so in the whole sequence, then, goes to, maybe it fast forwards to the time that I went to New York. And I did that, because I've always wanted to live in New York, I mean, I've lived outside New York for my whole childhood, and you know, I had that, I did find an incredible live/work place in Soho, and stirred up as much of the creative juices again. But it was a really hard time. It was 2011 to '13, and I always, I thought that being really small, or like a colleague also called me a speed boat, that I could pull up to some of the ocean liners and do some work. And it was just, it was a real hard time. Everyone had it. RFP after RFP, you know, lost because all the big guys were competing for it. So I returned to Charlottesville, and it was a bit disappointing. And I mean, Charlottesville, I have to say, I was mad at it for a few years, but then I realized how off the radar it is, and that we could, I could really do my work. I could go to insane places and just return to this quiet place, very nurturing place. And yeah, so I thought maybe I should grow up and buy something. And a student was murmuring something about her house for sale, and I came over and said, I'll take it. I've spent more time picking out a dress. It was pretty scary. [LAUGHTER] What am I doing? But I really wanted to live in this neighborhood, called Fifeville, because it was racially mixed, really old, you know, Black neighborhood community. And you know, my, I was called the Blue House, a little twee, it's a

little sweet. But I was happy to live on the other side of the tracks with a crazy mix of neighbors. And I tried to mess up the Blue House as much as I could with the sumac out front. Everybody'd like, people come by, and they're like, what's the jungle? And experiments in back. So yeah. Here I am. I think it's even more than 25 years that I've been here. It's incredible. But, and I had a lot of offers. You know? I remember Uncle Pete [Walker] saying, can you come to San Francisco and, I actually at first said, yes, and then I thought about it, and I said, I don't want to be a warrior princess. I want to spend my, in another firm, you know, I just want to be a warrior princess for D.I.R.T. But anyway, it was always, of course, very flattering that I would get these offers. But I continued to be really happy with my colleagues, who were really quite intense, even though they're in a quiet Southern town, intense and incredibly dedicated. I mean, I just cannot always believe how dedicated the faculty has been to teaching. Amazing. Absolutely amazing. So I've grown a lot.

PAYDIRT

One day, I got the most wonderful call from Mel Chin, the artist. We had actually worked on a project when I was at MVVA, and Mel was working on a project in New Orleans addressing the lead soils down there. And he said, I can figure out the way to engage folks, and conceptually put my head around this. But I don't know, or I would like you to work on how to deploy it, how to come up with some logistics of, at that point, the goal was for 30,000 or 300,000 sites to remediate. A lot. And I was like, I'm in. Oh, and the title of the project was Paydirt. So down I went to New Orleans. Absolutely one of my favorite places. It's so raw and messy. And what we proceeded to do with data from Dr. Howard Mielke, where he was really locating where the lead was, and with help from my UVA students, we came up with an idea about like a citywide, all the scales from extra-large to extra-small. A way to have the operation, Paydirt, which I called our side Big Mud, Big Mud Action. How would the materials, or what I called active ingredients, reach this land in all these different scales? And in a way, it was as simple as that. But we were conscious, again, of the nested scales, that extra-large was bringing sediment from

the Bonne Carre spillway, hopefully by barge, and then the scale of the trucks would come in there, and the scale of the people, of the characters, would be the city of New Orleans, you know, the Army Corps, larger than that. Then something like medium or extra-small, I can't remember, we had "mud market," would operate at the scale of the wheelbarrow. And the community, one of the, a vacant site would be where folks could get their soil tested. And so, it was kind of a logistical network. It was, you know, really spoke to a social network, of regenerating the soil, TLC, we called it, treat, lock, and cover. Yeah, it was an action plan. You know, it wasn't a master plan. The form actually had to do with whatever was going to happen at the site, maybe some would become parks. And someone would help, a landscape architect would help design it. But that really wasn't the point, at least for our portion of the project. So I always look to that, because I'd say, we designed a process, not a thing. And I think a lot of, I just would like to charge my colleagues to do that. And not be uncomfortable with it. You know? It's formless. Yeah.

MAYORS INSTITUTE

At the Mayors Institute, this issue of client/patron really arises. I mean, they, you know, the mayors in this situation have nothing at stake, except their pride, when we really tear them up. But the whole process of educating them, of having them understand consequences, helping them set up the context within which they're working, that it's not like, oh, it's just like this isolated development. You know, am I doing right? But to be a bit more thorough a lot of times, I found, with the mayors, that they were often seeing these things as isolated projects. But to help them see the value in weaving together the incredible city they're being the architect of. Right? To actually to be, learn to be a good client and patron, to actually truly engage. Don't kind of just make decisions, like just make decisions. I think also I found, what I love doing was with mayors at the institute and working for them, or with them, that's an important thing, it's always with, is having them be good matchmakers of all of the

departments in their cities. They often have no idea what the DNR [Department of Natural Resources] is doing, or this and this. And it's like put them together, man. They're in it. They're an incredible resource. It's not just you in your office. You have these folks that can really look at a project within the city's context, in multiple ways, to make a really good project.

There are so many ways I think my colleagues would attest to that we relate to clients. And it's so variable. And for myself, I always think it's the greatest challenge, I love it, of actually really cultivating this. I mean, there's the aspect of them being patrons, right, and they bestow things upon you, and there's another thing where you really forge the collaboration. I know it sounds maybe hokey. But when they're right in there with you, they're, I think they're even, they even have, I hope, more appreciation for you. They're happy that they bought this painting. Right? And that is when that kind of confidence is built, not just you as a designer, but a confidence in the client, where really, you know, you have the chance to do your best work. When you feel, I think I said it before, but I'll say it again, safe in an odd way. To experiment, you know, I mean, you think about great patrons, you know, of repeated works. I mean, we don't really get that chance, kind of, maybe if they have different properties. But there's just something about when you feel really good, and yeah, when you feel really good, and unafraid. But I think that, I think it's a project in and of itself, that we should work on. I think that there's sometimes too much of this kind of deferral, or this kind of like, I will do as I am told. But it's more fun to forge that.

DESIGN

D.I.R.T. STUDIO

D.I.R.T. emerged when actually I went to Minnesota to teach for just a few years. And I made an immediate connection with Garth Rockcastle, Maura Rockcastle of TENxTEN's dad. And you

know, I just always have loved to collaborate with architects. And so it was great, because it gave me kind of real projects to work on right away, while also what was emerging was through my obsession with industrial sites, you know, a very important project, Vintondale. I mean, Vintondale to me still is the project that I feel just launched D.I.R.T. and really, even still defines its trajectory.

I was in Minnesota from 1992 to 1995. And actually, D.I.R.T. came to be, well, I was doing D.I.R.T. as an academic, which mean road trip, you know, project. And then I thought, OK, D.I.R.T. Studio, for the name of it. And it came to be because of more of Rockcastle's father. Yeah. He came to me, and he goes, could you look at this project in Las Vegas? I was like, OK. He goes, could you get that critique. I'm like, yeah, yeah, yeah. So you know, I'd like spew about dah, dah, dah, and he goes, you're hired. You know, so, and it just rolled with Garth. So I was like, oh, I guess I have to do what Martha told me to do. She said, get a rubber stamp and just, [RASPBERRY SOUND] a card. Which I do to this day. [LAUGHTER] So yeah, it was wonderful, really wonderful, just all different types of projects. It was also, when was that? Oh, it was at the end of when I was in Minnesota. Oh, I have to say, I have to say, in Minnesota, I would, I was kind of a fellow at the Design Center for the American Landscape with Bill Morish and the late Catherine Brown. And that was also incredible. I mean, I felt like I got an honorary degree in urban design. Probably not the case, but anyway, I tried. So at the end of that kind of foray within Minneapolis, is when Vintondale came to be. So Vintondale, the project, started to take off. And that's when I came here.

So the D.I.R.T. thing, you know, is, I don't know. It's kind of silly, but I always have the periods there, and I'm obsessed with acronyms. And so, and it is several things, like one, on the academic side, it stands for doing industrial research together. And practice is, dump it right there. So. Anyway, I mean, the good thing is, you know, I tell people the name of the studio, the practice, and they're like, it sticks. D.I.R.T.? Yep, right, D.I.R.T.

Acronyms and actually four-letter words, unfortunately, have always been a favorite of mine. And I have this thing about puns. Because I don't want to take things too seriously. So when it came to naming two things, both my academic pursuits, and then also opening the practice, I had D.I.R.T. Projects on the academic side, which stood for Doing Industrial Research Together. And then D.I.R.T. Studio, the practice, D.I.R.T. stands for Dump It Right There. Because I love to command. [LAUGHTER]

D.I.R.T. was not wholly a pun. It was a mission. It was an agenda that formed the practice and informed the practice from the get-go. You know, I was always adamant from the get-go of wanting to do the right thing, you know, by landscapes. And being truthful and being curious. You know, just deeply curious. And all the wonderful, very few, folks that worked at D.I.R.T. brought the same thing. I mean, you know, well, almost all of them were former students. So they knew my schtick. And they gravitated towards me. And I just fueled that fire in them. And so they very readily became part of the army. I always picture them as wearing protective clothing [LAUGHTER] in order to collaborate at D.I.R.T.. So always from the get-go there was a mission, and when even some projects would come in, we would ask the question, you know, is it D.I.R.T.-y? You know? And is the client willing to go there, to take on a difficult thing. We used to say, to come out of the closet. And, you know, the industrial closet. And I had the privilege by teaching at UVA to really pick and choose the projects, and so that the projects were very directed, and involved a lot of research. In some cases, not headed towards being built, but by having a mission to I guess educate. I mean, I think once you're in academia, you're always a teacher. And it was about the clients knowing the implications of their decisions, and the consequences of them. And a lot of times we would illustrate those. Right? We're like, well, if you decide this, it's going to look like this. You know? And really show them. And guide them, and really actually hope they do the right thing. You know, sometimes they

refuse to. You know? And I'm flashing to a project that I even won't name, where I quit. I just, in a fax, that dates it, I just said, I'm sorry. I quit.

Yeah. The day I think it was that I dedicated myself to call myself D.I.R.T., that was the day that I just stuck my flag in the ground, albeit being toxic ground, and I just said, you know, this is my life's work. I'm going to have at it. I don't want to be a hero. I just want to have at it. And I want to increasingly have people do it with me, to collaborate. And I think of Cornelia, and I think about her planting her flag in the ground. And how persistent she was in this kind of, I mean, kind of dogged way. You know, with that accent. And it's fantastic. And just said, this is my life's work. You know? And my God, watching her just pursue that over time, you know, is really inspiration. I mean, I think, I like to think more and more colleagues will do that. I do it, I'm maybe not a savior, but I like to think maybe I'm an avenger. And I am leading a charge. But to have more colleagues plant their flag in the ground and go, really go, and unrelentingly, just believe in what you're doing. Don't get all distracted and fulfill the program of projects. You know? Have at it.

INDUSTRIAL SITES BELONG TO US

It's actually very heartwarming that industrial sites are being, have become a part of people's consciousness. And not just landscape architects. What's even more heartwarming is that the public are looking at these sites and realizing that they're actually part of that site. You know, that they need to adopt it, which before they just were like, ugh, you know, the Ugly Duckling. You know? But instead, and I have to say, that is what, that was what I was trying to do when I told the story of these sites. It's always how they connected, like my loop there is the industrial site, and the neighborhood, always, you know, that knitting. And the revelation by the neighbors was beautiful. They were like, oh. You know? Really, they were like, that belongs to us. And they were very engaged. And meanwhile, on our discipline's front, I think there was an equivalent revelation. Some things proactive, some commissions that come up. I mentioned

mayors at some point, a lot of mayors being totally perplexed what to do with all of this land. And I think they also, my colleagues, saw an immense opportunity. I've actually over the years spoken with a lot of them, because, which is really kind of nice, because they get a little stuck. You know? And they'll call, and they'll be like, eh, you know, and we have a little therapy session, and you know, away they go. And I think I also told you that the experience of broadening the purview of the discipline into these industrial sites has been really nice and very concrete collaborations I've had. And in particular with TENxTEN, I'm thinking. And, there it was just, I don't know, I guess I couldn't help but feel like Mom. But I stood back, you know, a bit, let them go, make sense of it, which they did beautifully. And act as a critic. There I go back to being a teacher, asking questions of like, do you think you've covered this? Do you think you've covered this, addressed this, addressed that? And those have been really beautiful collaborations. And I'm, I mean, you know, well, you imagine. Imagine how happy I am that two-and-a-half decades ago I was by myself with Niall Kirkwood, and now, you know, that, those landscapes were marginal, and I think they're pretty close to front and center. And that's a pretty cool evolution.

It's funny to work with toxic sites that I have. They're kind of the flip side of cherry trees at Urban Outfitters. And I mean, it's serious, and it's dire. I mean, I think we all have felt this in the past year and a half. You know, we've been in this dire state. And I think, I don't know if I really should compare it to all my time on toxic sites. But then again, yes, because of how difficult it is.

I don't think I should necessarily compare COVID with toxic sites, but it is a dire situation. And there's a certain umph you need to have, and willingness to I guess confront it. But I also don't want to say confront as much as I say, take it on. You know? Just kind of embrace it, because all of these sites are a big old part of our history. And so what do you do with the complexity, right, of regenerating these sites? And now we all are working on and not quite out of COVID.

Right? But we're going to be looking for a place to regenerate ourselves. COVID was one of the ultimate disturbances. So again, back to kind of polluted landscapes, I have loved them, because they are such a challenge. And I love them because, with the folks that have created these landscapes, if they are still around, you know, are of a generation where that work and the byproduct of it literally was progress. No question about it being progress. So now to work with them and say, well you know, you need, and we need, and the landscape architect needs that next cycle of that landscape, you know, to be healthy, to be strong, which is always one of my mantras. And to, once again I'm going to bring up the words, be unafraid. You know? I also will bring up again the idea of stories, of narrative, because once you know the stories of those complicated sites, you know, you can make sense of it. You can make sense of them. And you can draw in folks that have worked there. If it's not too old of a site. But you could also honor the people who have worked there. And that says a lot about all of our perseverance. And then I'll flip back to the pandemic. Look at all the perseverance. You know? So I wish us all to be fearless and be out there as landscape architects to go, ah, that's what we can do. That is what we can do. That is hard. You know? I think that's where our discipline can still expand. We can not always plant cherry trees. Although it's really fun.

What gives me most joy when I work on these industrialized landscapes, everywhere from toxic to actually just kind of degraded, I like to think that they, in their essence, are a big piece, a big sign, a big gift of optimism. That, to me, is the goal and how to have the landscapes you work on to just simply be joyful. You know, I mean, maybe it's not as easy as I'm saying, and I don't think it is. But I think that, I think there's a good charge for all of us how to look at how it is that you can lift up, lift up, and I think, again, about Core City, and just the kind of vast expanses now that are very forlorn. And I look at them, and I'm like, how do I turn that frown upside down? That cliché. But seriously, you know, how do you, how do I invert those landscapes to be about the future and this trajectory, and now the kind of the, just kind of being resigned to loss. You know? So those are the latest ones that I'm most excited about. So it's the same with, like the industrial sites I've worked on. But these seem like even more of a challenge now, and they

certainly touch neighborhoods and people directly. And I think it's a really cool thing, to work, work, I always say, cheap and cheerful. How do you do that? And I often use wild and wooly. You know, that's what you do. So anyway, I'm optimistic, and I want to get out there. And as soon as D.I.R.T. 2.0, when I'm healthy, and D.I.R.T. 2.0 is all set up, boom. I don't know what kind of avenger, but I think maybe I can just be myself.

INDUSTRIAL SITES AND AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

The most difficult part of working with toxic sites is actually mapping which way the toxins go, where they're leaching, and sure enough, they're leaching a lot of times right into adjacent neighbors who are often disenfranchised communities. And you know, you just, there's so many times where I just wanted to stand by like a monitoring well and scream, no fair. Just no fair. So that's where, actually, I just say something about mapping contaminates for the longest time, and maybe still engineers weren't really, I mean, they were specializing them, but in their kind of secret language. They weren't specializing them in terms of, in terms of the effect they were having, invisible effect. That's the real problem. You know, and that, to me, both fascinating, but so frightening, so frightening. Yeah. I think there's still a lot of work to do there. I think there is still a lot of invisible things, bad things, leeching towards, yeah.

For three decades now, in working on toxic and polluted sites, there isn't anything more that could piss you off to no end, was when you would look at a map, you would make a map, and see those toxins going to neighboring communities. The neighbors are sitting there going, why does my cousin have cancer? Why, you know, why, yeah, what's with all this illness? And they actually don't know. So I found the role that I took on was actually explaining to these neighbors what was going on. Because the EPA didn't know how. They made their obscure maps, and we spatialized them, and said, you are in harm's way. And when I teach my students, I say, I want to hear who's in harm's way. You tell me. Who's at risk? What's at risk? It's not sort of like, ew, oh, it's bright orange. You know? And it's going in [there]. No. There's

a lot and a lot of folks that are at stake. And it's not going away. It's not going away. And hence there's a lot of frigging work to do, still. Nobody is translating this toxic cloud and plume that is looming. You know, so what I really liked doing was making these maps and explaining them to the neighbors so there was no more wool over their eyes. You know? It's like, oh. And I would teach them how to read the data and the toxic levels. And so, they would come to the meetings and, oh my God, I didn't have to do anything. The EPA was like, doh. They know what's going on. And I mean, I also would talk about maybe how to work with the EPA or a corporation that was kind of supervising or in charge of this. And, you know, because it could turn into just anger. I would, we would try to kind of formulate again those choices. I remember us almost making menus, remediation menus. I have my students make remediation menus to show how smart you could be and be optimistic, realistic, and optimistic. But wow, got me going. I'm still mad.

I have found that the effective role that the effective roles that D.I.R.T. studio can have, and it was part of how we practice and what we do and what we think we can do out there, especially with the toxic sites, is not, more often than not, not doing a proposal per se, but we are trying to cultivate or be advocates for the neighbors, to be in the know, you know, to not be victims anymore. And so that's a different kind of client relationship. I mean, it's just been so heartening to watch some folks who understand the data and then ask incredible probing questions. Right? So the EPA or corporations. And you know, they then have a powerful voice. It's not just an angry voice. You know? It's a powerful one.

PLANTED FORM

My love of plants was kindled, actually, during my strange period between art school and landscape architecture, my black hole period. And I say this because this wonderful person, Jeff Peabody, I said, I would like to learn plants, other than the flowers that we have here. And he said, I'm going to teach you one, one every day. And he goes, and we're going to start with

Metasequoia glyptostroboides. [LAUGHTER] I said, OK, here we go. So anyway, that was learning, looking at the medium of plants. Right? I mean, oh my God. They're, you know, yum. Is, was just such, you know, I mean, come on, it's just such a joy. And when I went to Minnesota to teach, they asked me to teach, I called it planted form, because I said, planting design sounds like something your great aunt does. So anyway. Just a little, but anyway. I taught, I actually should say, you know, my big experience was being a teaching assistant for Michael [Van Valkenburgh] for the plant classes, the whole series, which of course was phenomenal. And then when I went to Minnesota, I had this amazing opportunity to teach with a horti-, an ecologist, a landscape ecologist, Dr. Sue, we call her. And I formulated the class, and it had the art and the science combined. It had an amazing vocabulary. A lot of the vocabulary that I brought was with, from Michael and Matthew Urbanski, which I would kind of teach those terms, and everybody goes, I can't find that when I Google it. I'm like, eh, no, you're not. Like, hip hop rows. They're like, what are hip hop rows? And I'd always say, don't say that a client. They won't understand unless you actually draw it in front of them. So I had that art and science combo at Minnesota, and then when I came to UVA, there was that support, again, of teaching planted form, of experimenting with it year in and year out. And I had, you know, the legacy of Warren Byrd in front of me teaching it. And it just, it simply was joyful. The students, we found, loved planted form. And not because of me, but loved it too much, almost like the, all the other instructors would say, stop it. You know, you're taking away from studio time. I'm like, that's not my problem. I can't help it if they love plants. But it was also, it was also a course where I think they felt, unlike studio, sometimes with conceptual [UNINTELLIGIBLE] going on, that they really had a very kind of tactile material and at a scale, I always worked at like eighth if not bigger drawing scale. To have that very concrete, and without a lot of complexity, you know, to make propositions. So yeah. And Dirr[*'s Enclyclopedia*] is right there, down there. And I tell people sometimes that I sleep with Dirr almost every night. [LAUGHTER] You know, and Julian Raxworthy's book, *Overgrown*, just sent me over the moon. And so the planted form is actually going a very different place now, very different. Especially after working in, or still working in Detroit, and all the fallow land. I'm kind

of determined to make sense of that fallow land without gussying it up. And I think there's something to be unlocked there. And I think it's going to take a very different attitude about plants to go there.

MATERIALITY

I mean, aligned with my love of plants is my love for materials. You know, and love for tactility. And just love for that kind of innate relationship that I know I have, maybe as a recovering artist, and people would have with the materials. That's what I always want to kind of like trigger. You know? And that gets back to what I always think about those associations and accessibility. And that there's a, what I strive for is this kind of recognition of the material. You know? And a lot of times that takes the transformation of that material. So it's much like the concrete, actually, in Dallas, at the Pump House, but then at Urban, also, that you know, transporting that material, the concrete that we found, into a new world. You know, I think it worked. Because there's a new level of attention to it, in that folks maybe feel, maybe don't know, is the, right, the next use, the next evolution of that material, because it's in a new place. So I like to fantasize about what might happen next to Barney Rubble, where he goes next. So, you know, I have the agenda of no materials leave the site. It's actually one of the first things I say to clients. I'm just like, just so you know, and are you comfortable with this? About the reuse and so on and so forth. It's kind of a test if I want them as clients. [LAUGHTER] I mean, right? You have to impart that, you have to impart that philosophy and that way of working in order to, one, establish trust with the client, you know, that they are going to be OK with the things that you do or propose. You know, and I forget what two would be. But so, yeah. I mean, I scan all of the projects, and I see myself kind of rearranging. You know? That the site is still true, because it's there. I mean, I don't mean to be like all like, oh, oh, oh. Nothing comes in. But I'm really careful about what's imported. I also look for, and luckily both at Urban and Core City, I also scavenge, like Dick Hayne, the founder of Urban, and I would get into a golf cart, and we would buzz around, even the place we weren't supposed to go, looking for stuff.

He was, he really got into it. And so, and at Core City, because Philip Kafka, the client, the developer, was working on all these other buildings. What was great is the material flow was with all of these different buildings. So it was just, I don't know, it feels really cool, because you just kind of recognize something when you're going around to the different buildings, and like the park then is anchoring it. Yeah.

I think I always just like absorb stuff. I mean, if anything, I'm embarrassed that these things are my homage to MVVA, the wood things. But I never, no, I never think it that way. When I go to others' projects or sites, I try to absorb stuff rather than record it. And you know, so that there's an essence I go away with. And that's what, you know, I'll remember when I'm doing some things. I'm like, I'll be thinking, and then I'm like, oh, you know, and I'll have that kind of feeling when I'm working on something. And then I'm like, oh, this reminds me of, you know, when I was here. So it's not the stuff recorded. And kind of interpret again, or chew it up an spit out. Yeah, it's just absorption. I think that's part of a phrase that I love of slow looking. You know, of this just really letting the time it takes, right, for a place to be internalized. I love that. I love that expression.

Finding materials and then reusing them, especially the finding part, is part of slow looking. And yeah, I go pretty far and wide. Not in a golf cart in Detroit. You know? Looking. And finding. And I find that when the pieces are, these materials are recombined, is that folks don't readily recognize it. You know? They're just, right, so they're brought in to the slow looking, you know, of like, oh.

With the effort to rearrange and love on these materials, it's an invitation for other folks to, in their own way, do some slow looking. Because I have found that the, even though the materials are familiar, when they're recombined, they're not immediately in a way understood. So I have watched people in Core City, and they're walking slowly. And there are no paths, by the way. They just meander. You do it what you want at your pace. And they meander. You

know? And they, I mean, maybe they have the same fascination of a blotch of the green paint. Who knows. But yeah, they're, I like seeing people move slowly. [LAUGHTER] You know? And sit for a long time. And like in Core City, one of the crew sent me an image of a woman asleep on one of the big slabs. And I was just, I was just so happy.

I would say the most intense slow looking I got to do, well, I do it everywhere, but I'm thinking of Detroit, right, my more recent efforts of slow looking, and of finding. You know? I love this idea of finding, like before now recording, but that's where the juices start to flow. You know, and the finding of materials and material evidence, I mean, really, yum. You know? And so, when, you know, I basically rearrange materials on a site. I find that folks feel like, well, that's familiar, but I'm not quite sure what it is. Right? Because it's kind of in its new configuration. So they've invited to do their own slow looking. And I've witnessed in Core City Park folks moving through the park, no paths, anywhere they want to go, and they're moving slowly. You know? And I think they're doing their own version of slow looking. They're meandering. And they're meandering between the different textures of the found materials. And also all the punctuation of tree trunks, you know the piece that came in. Saw that first. It was there. For the urban woodland. So I just, I have to say that's kind of one goal I might continue to have, you know, is my own slow looking, and others, because I think there's something, eh, I don't want to say spiritual. There's something nice about it.

I do think that as landscape architects, and sometimes I'm guilty of it, we're kind of obsessed with like prescribing movement through paths. I always tell my students, no paths. So it's great. And again, there's this kind of level of freedom, you know, that you're imparting if there's something more, a way for, right, a visitor to make their own way. You know what, I just flashed to Duisburg Nord Latz and Partners. Of course, the seminal industrial landscape. And I'm just always struck by how it really feels like you're on an adventure at that place of discovery. You know? And I think brilliant stuff like, a fence and the planting in front of it, the

necessary fence and the planting in front of it. So you know, you're still in the wilderness. It's really good. I'll bet. So yeah. I think we just still need to be careful about how prescriptive we are. I think folks respond to, respond to being let go.

ACTION PLANS

I loathe master plans. I think they are not kind. I think they paint this pretty picture, this whole finished picture. And there's no room in there, I think, you know, a lot of times there's no room. So I prefer action plans that give some structure to the process of that landscape growing over time. And there's an openness, like it can evolve. It's influenced by, hey, it's starting to get built, and the neighbors are questioning it. It's open to their voice. So that action plan is, you know, attentive. I think master plans are just, you know, with blinders on. And so a lot of the projects, built or unbuilt, in the, at D.I.R.T. Studio, I call those design studies, because I think they're legit, part of the research and expression of the mission. They're really great in terms of being able to fulfill the mission. And I found that they could have an attitude.

Because I don't believe in a master plan, what I believe in is an action plan, and what I mean by an action plan is a plan that sets some of the structure in place, a structure for a process. You know? Design is a verb. And in my experience, that means pieces that get built, areas that get built upon an action plan are open. They're open to influences, say they are disturbing the neighbors. The neighbors have some input, because the action plan should be open, right, to that kind of metamorphosis and influences, outside influences. Outside influences. So at D.I.R.T. Studio, the action plans are really embedded in the design studies that we do. Design studies, of course, are part of the formation of built work, but they're also the, I think, the strength of D.I.R.T. Studio's mission, that becomes evident in these design studies. And mostly it's all about, again, showing these implications and the consequences of what the client is thinking about. And the client here, I've had wonderful range, from private development folks, to cities, to wanting to flush out what the possibilities were, especially for the industrial sites,

because they just were like, you know, we're stuck. We really don't know what to do. And so, if they don't know what to do, the onus is not to do a physical design plan, per se, although there are elements of it that we kind of talk about, would be about holding onto the cultural value and the material history and the labor history of these places. But you know, a process, an action plan that they could go forward with. And you know, it's nice. A lot of times they went forward, and they hired a local firm, which I love, sometimes don't love it so much if the action plan looks like shit, but yeah, the design studies, I'm really proud of.

What I mean by design is a process and not a thing, has to do with this essential idea of design being a verb. Robert Smithson talks about things being a thing in and of themselves, itself, and problematic. Right? Because they're just headed towards a static kind of dead thing. So yeah. What goes along with that is the other mantra that I kind of came up with, with my client, Philip Kafka. And I just said, he goes, hey, Julie, we have a quote for the day. You have one? And I said, design emerges. It doesn't descend.

Design to me a lot of times is like jumping rope. You know? And it has to do with really knowing when, right, to jump in, to a thing, a landscape that's already in motion. Right? And doing different things when you jump in. Are you redirecting? Are you calling attention? Yeah. How are you, I'm glad I thought of that, [LAUGHTER] because it's kind of like, oh, that's what it is, because you're like in it. And having to make decisions by virtue, not of yourself, well, you're trying to not trip, but really being attentive, or attentive to the site. And then there's always the time when you jump out. This is related to my mantra about the art of restraint. You know? Yeah. I mean, and I say that, and often times I'm talking about curating the existing. But it's also about when you're really aggressively reworking a site. I mean, again, Core City, I mean, we excavated there, unapologetically. I mean, it just was dig, dig, dig, dig. But there was a time when I would say, stop. There was also a time in terms of restraint or also respect for things, and again, not imposing our own kind of predilections on something. And that had to do

with the most memorable moment, I think, in any of my projects, was when we were excavating, and the firehouse, the engine house was down below, we knew it was, because it got, well, we didn't know it was. I made a best guess that it was. And one time a really big stone came up, and it flipped around towards us, and it said, 1893. And that was like, oh my God. You know? Bingo. And we were looking at the stone, and I always say, it just bequeathed 170, whatever the arithmetic is, upon the park, like how old you are. And you know, and I was like, I knew there was going to come the flood of like, oh, let's put it up on a pedestal and treat it like a piece of sculpture, and dah, dah, dah. I went, no. I said, put it on the ground. Dump it right there. You know, put it on the ground. It's got to go back to work.

ROBERT SMITHSON

Smithson is my hero because when I first started reading Smithson at art school, but even more so after, in graduate school, his writings were all about that process, the import of the process, of digging, of finding. And also to not dismiss the landscapes that we both loved. He completely reframed them, the industrial landscapes. And as cultural landscapes. And even equated the process of dealing with them with "Dead Fred" [Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.]. Which I mean, was just like amazing that he traversed that. He also, I love the part where he said, he talked about the importance of the artist's glance. And again, that's the part that I mean, I just so love, that involves the slow looking. And his slow looking was so deep in time. And that's what I loved, also, because all of a sudden I felt like I wanted a watch that was geological time. For me, the importance of that was to look at the landscape in a much deeper way, much deeper way, and to think about time, fast time, slow time, the importance of duration. So I just, I don't know, I just took to the guy from New Jersey and said, you know, you're it. You're it. You constantly inspire me. I read and reread him. And I know he was kind of fashionable and groovy and stuff, but you know, I don't care. I mean, when I, when we were, Michael [Van Valkenburgh]'s team was working on the High Line, that's when I was rereading him. And that was where the quote I often show in lectures has to do with that value of the

glance. You know? And we added to that, well, very Smithson, about a landscape that was growing according to its own logic, not ours. Respect. So it's that respect, too, you know, that I gain from reading, reading him, rereading him. And also, you know, doing right by the landscape. And I like to think he would hunt me down if I did something funky.

The most important essay by Smithson, in my mind is Sedimentation of the Mind. And that's where he really talks about the value of polluted sites, sort of, not per se. He does talk about mining in there. But again, it's about that deep evolution, which I've become completely obsessed with, this idea of the cycles. Now I feel like work should be about that next cycle. You know? And push it, just mm, set processes in motion, just set them in motion. So I always have the students read that as my number one. I'm not much of a reader. That's why I send students to that. But when it comes to Smithson, that's a required reading.

I was visiting the mother lode of pits in Bingham, the Bingham Pit in Salt Lake City, Utah. And I heard tell that Spiral Jetty was reemerging. So I hightailed out there, and I mean, and it was awesome. The part about it being awesome was having watched the film of the making of it. And that the essence, the important part was the making of it. And dump truck after dump truck, talk about "dump it right there." You know? And what, but what emerged from the process was form. You know? It wasn't form first necessarily, although of course Smithson thought about this infinite form, kind of then becoming a creature, an organism in this shallow water with all its red rocks and algae and crazy stuff. And again, big influence, big influence by combining the film and the place. And the peace.

ARTICULATION AND CHANCE

When I've worked on projects and collaborations, I find that a lot of times I have to try to articulate this, what's the word, just kind of difficult way of seeing difficult projects. And I see

my colleagues, and even myself trying to give them form. And it's then where sometimes you just take a deep breath, you know, and think about form only mattering, with time and also by chance, which is really scary a lot of times. Just like, oh, chance? No. It's got to be, because, right, clients don't want to take chances. Right? It's like, ay yi yi. I have to say, this is something that I found with the High Line, our team had trouble articulating, you know, that it was OK, that that landscape would continue to exist by chance. You know? And to relinquish to that. And that's what's most important about chance over time, and it has duration. Is that time element? And which has to do with the length, we know, of the High Line. And also, you know, again, I'm thinking about Hardberger Park, which I haven't talked about very much, the collaboration with Steve Stimson and a host of local consultants. You know, and it was there that that landscape was, I mean, like the High Line, that landscape was uncontrollable in a lot of ways. And we talked to everybody about it. And worked. Because we had great wildlife biologists, so it's like, hm. Note to self, right now, even, that scientists are great at how they speak to that. They're able to. And also people trust scientists, for whatever reason. And yeah, they were so helpful, because they're dealing with chance and process and time so much, and we'd say, OK, but then we were also showing, getting back to an action plan, we were also showing about how that chance was rubbing up against a landscape, a framework that was operating at a different speed. So again, I go back to Smithson, talking about different speeds. God, as I think about that, I love that. You know? That you can, I just always talked about how can you, how do you speed up, you know, succession? How do you slow it down? But it's also talking about the experience of folks. And I think a lot of times, when colleagues and myself are designing a landscape, there's kind of like a neutrality that happens that you're going to assume that people are experiencing that landscape at kind of the same speed and time. So the idea of I think getting more of a dialectic going, or a rub going, so they, folks, I'm thinking about a path through different parts of Hardberger Park, that they can really see and appreciate this chance. And in actually kind of a safe way. And you know, they don't go there. I mean, I love landscapes now where we've calculated, we calculated that in that landscape, like, people could occupy 25% of it. That's it. And the community loved that. Because they were like we're

going to leave the rest to the critters. You know? The parks department liked it, too, because they only had to maintain 25% of it. Well, you know, they had to pay attention to the other, but I don't know. I think, yeah, this chance thing is good. Yeah.

NAMING AND CLAIMING LANDSCAPES

I often use the phrase, the idea of finding the untitled landscape. And I do so to really emphasize the finding part. And it's, again, part of the slow looking, but it's, the looking is for an essence of a landscape that is mute at the moment. And I think again of both, well, my obsessions with fallow ground, and it's both the industrial sites, and in a way, what I often do, another thing, is name and claim, maybe brand, but I don't want to seem like a whore. But name and claim. That seems a little milder. But it is to, it is to look hard enough to be able to see and imagine that landscape titled. And in doing this process of naming and claiming, I literally named a lot of them, and it's so that folks that I'm hoping associate with that landscape actually find a way in. Because before they had no words, and with no words, there's kind of no invitation. I find, too, that folks love it. There's just kind of like, eh, that's, oh, God, I can't remember one right now, but they're seeing that they can then speak to it. And talk about it. And begin to kind of adopt it. So that's what I just, and actually, I feel like that's, it's often the first thing I do. The names change, as I kind of learn more. I also have to say that I'm brutal on my students. Because I'm like, what is that? Name it and claim it. Who is it for? Because a lot of the naming, because it's about association, says who it's for. You know, it suggests who it's for. And it, the names, I may be repeating myself here, but the names signal to someone how, you know, in a lot of cases, literally move through their landscape. You know? And begin to develop a relationship with it. Which they couldn't do before. So it's really fun.

One of my favorite films of all time is Wings of Desire, by Wim Wenders. And I could watch that repeatedly. I also assigned my students to watch it. Because I wanted myself and my students to see this idea of operating in kind of another space. You know? That other spaces were OK.

You know? The fictional ones with the angels talking a little bit. To me, it just, that to me was just amazing that they were inside other people's heads, to maybe kind of understand more of that territory. And I think that understanding went out into what I would call an untitled landscape, because you were like, what is that? And the old Turin Vague or whatever. I mean, they named and claimed it. But I wanted to know more about what this fallow land could hold, you know, in terms of cultural value. You're seeing it framed in the cultural context of the film. So how could that extent out? And I think that's why I have recommended it, and people watch it, so that they might see that land in a different way. Maybe they listened to it like an angel. And just become, always been important to me. I think, I don't know, I think especially now, because the industrial sites, for the most part, are full of stuff. You have some place to start. But these other expanses, like the fallow fields in Detroit, and the fallowness of, actually of Hardburger Park in San Antonio, and of Core City, which was the kind of ubiquitous kind of generic parking lot. So in a lot of ways I think they're great, kind of as is. Like Wim Wenders would have them be, because they kind of , I don't know what it means. Do they kind of explain and exist in relationship, right, to other things? Like my friend and developer and client, you know, we're looking at this idea of the fallow land as is, in relationship to these very urban clusters that he's making. You know? And of Core City Park was also that kind of foil, you could say, for the expanses. But I have to say, I didn't want to be too far away from being, it's not untitled. But maybe the designer is untitled and nameless. You know what I mean? just you could come in and touch, an out you go. Because to me, that's a certain kind of poetry and atmosphere for folks to find their way and feel their way, and just to be open. And I use the word optimistic again. It's, but again, it's like how do you turn Turin Vague into an optimistic ground, and not forlorn. And yeah, Wings of Desire, to me, says something to that as kind of acknowledging the dialectic, the conflicting forces, the difficulty. But they, you know, listen to it.

PROJECTS

THE BLUE HOUSE

When I moved into the Blue House, the backyard was a hot mess. It was just a lumpy thing, lumpy thing. It was like insane. So the first thing was to bring in a dozer. A small dozer. And you know, it's funny, the backyard, there are moments of it that are really quite formal, and you know, I have to say, I just like, oh my God, I'm still addicted to that. Whatever you want to make things. But the first thing I did with the dozer was to kind of make this upper plinth, the crisp edge, and the lower, because those wanted to happen, because it was like latently up and kind of sort of down. So that was the big thing. And then I just started experimenting with plants, of course. So, well, maybe not of course, but I think that the, my favorite part of the garden is the debris garden. I mean, you know, that's kind of course. And I was so glad, I mean, this is really maybe kind of weird that the yard was such a hot mess, that we just found more and more debris. I'm like, yes! So I was like, OK, and to this day, any time we find something, [RASPBERRY] we just chunk it into the debris garden, which is a long, long piece. And then next door, which was a crack house, I kind of wanted to put a little filter there, and I love bare root trees. And so we got some *Robinia*, some black locust, and they were like all of four feet, and I just like chunked them in there, like 30 of them. I'm always accused by being planting things too close, and I would tell people, go walk in the woods. And in five years, they're just like towering now. But I just, I love their light. Anyway, I'm just thinking about how Michael van Valkenburgh and I like exchange little texts with images of plants, just mm. So there's that. I love the debris garden, and then I've done other experiments with trying to give this back façade some depth, because it didn't have any at all. So I have dancing *Nyssa*. I love that tree, too. And then embedded in there, you know, an outdoor shower, made out of pipe, and the other thing, which is the most cheap and cheerful thing I do is this, on the steep slope, to the lower areas. Zinnias. I just like them. Actually, I harvest the seeds, like a good farmer, and I don't know, they're just, they're happy. I give people bouquets. It's happy. And on the lower area, I wanted to make a grove, and again, I just combined a couple of my favorites, planted too

close together, two little poplars and sweet bay magnolias. An attempt at farming with the raised beds. That's, you know, maybe successful, maybe not. But really, you know, it's all, I think a lot of colleagues would talk about their gardens as experiments. Well, maybe not, because I, mine has a lot of failures. And I just go, OK, whoops. That didn't work. And so you know, it's, I have to say, generally with gardens, what I've always appreciated, and D.I.R.T. Studio was like, you do gardens? I'm like, not really. Secretly I do them. It's whatever, the "frouff" factor. But they're fantastic experiments. And I mean, its' all one big mockup. I love mockups. And yeah, and they give you that intimacy and that immediacy that I've realized just has been so important to feed even the big work. The big work. So, and I think a lot of colleagues do that. But I hope, though, I hope, I just hope the role of the garden will always kind of keep that stature of an important thing for us all to do for our soul, right, and for others. And to be able to bestow that level of intimacy and experience. You know, even if you're working on large work. Because we experience the landscape at the scale of the leaf.

VINTONDALE

When I worked in Vintondale, I really felt like, at first I felt like our charge was like, OK, you know, clean this up. Which I hate that. But regenerate this. And I always, at first I thought about that as just like, OK, that's the next step, and that's it. You know? And if I look back at it and just say, no. That was, it was almost the next, I say, shift, that we were taking on the next shift. The workers did their thing. Now we're going to do the next thing, and that landscape is going to just keep going in terms of different people and different things working.

The industrial sites that visit are pretty difficult to interpret, or at least to interpret to the folks who, if they're still alive, right, to really have them understand that these are cultural landscapes. And that they aren't just kind of a chunk of dead stuff, a carcass, that there's just so much still within those landscapes, namely the people who worked there. And that's kind of a thing that's difficult to do, right, because you can go down the nostalgia rabbit hole very

quickly. And I think that's why I've always gravitated towards the material evidence. You know? It's almost like I've always felt like, I look at a piece of concrete, and that it's impregnated. I mean, it's a bonus when I find one with a boot imprint, but irregardless of that, there's something about what I've always endeavored to do, is to situation that evidence enough that folks recognize it. Whether or not there are any, that direct part of that history, you know, but to see that landscape again as alive, ah, that's better than healed. I hate that healed thing. You know? That it's still alive. Again, it's those cycles. And they see that. Sometimes you know that it's not real obvious, but I refuse to put up a sign, you know, explaining it. Which is hard, too, right, to try to tell a story without any text. But just through these cues that one can find. I love thinking about those things, those landscapes as alive again, as kind of cultural machines, not just machines that make steel. You know? Cultural machines that make entire families dependent on it, and blah, blah, blah. So, and what a cool thing to discover and feel. You know?

CORE CITY PARK

I got a call from this developer, seemingly out of the blue, and we proceeded to have an extraordinary conversation, because one of the first things that Philip Kafka said was, I'd like to think of Core City as a park. And I'm like, who is this guy? You know, I was like, you know, and it went on from there. And so he goes, OK, so what do we do? And I said, well, you know, at D.I.R.T. Studio we usually suggest having a first date. You pay for everything, and I come out. So I did. And it was an extraordinary moment, I mean, extraordinary first date, where, oh, I remember Philip took me to this really good coffee shop, and I had a, he goes, oh, you want something to eat? Well, I picked a gooey, crusty thing like an idiot, but so we proceed to Core City and the site, and this contractor that he has was coming out of his backhoe. He was cleaning up the site. And he jumps out of the backhoe, and he wants to shake my hand. So I'm like, and I reach down, and I rinse my hands in a puddle. And Sylvester says, Philip, she's the one. [LAUGHTER] He goes, I agree. You're hired. I went, OK. And it was literally on that trip

where we stood in front of this parking lot, you know, with these wonderful one, two story buildings that he had a bakery going and a restaurant. And he said, he just turned to me, and he said, what would you do? And I said, dig. I immediately regretted that, because I'm like, oh my God, what did I do? And he just was like, well, do it. Because I did, I was like, well, the engine house was razed I think in the '70s, where they used to push the buildings just into the basements. And so, and I said, you know, I'd love to see, I have a suggestion to form the ground from below the ground up. And an idea of urban woodland, just descending into this ground. So we dug. And we, I walked around Core City where they'd done other work, and had other materials. I was like, can I use that? Can we use that? Can we put that over there? And we just, I mean, it was, I was going to say a party, maybe a party. I mean, like every day, it was just gleeful of what we would find. And it was through that digging that kind of the organization of the park took place. And kind of as simple as that. And I was still directing. And yeah, it was amazing how it came together. And we found folks, because it wasn't a very typical, I guess, construction site with a fence around it or anything. We found that neighbors were really curious. And that was wonderful. And we had, we had folks going to the bakery who were new Detroiters, curious. So they were watching. They were watching the park emerge. And that 1893 stone was the plaque. That's all you had to do. And I saw Philip there over and over telling the story. Yeah, just, I still kind of just swell up with, because for me, I think a lot of aspects of D.I.R.T. work found their way there. I think it's a work that is sending me in a direction. One that I don't think I was wholly convinced of, or confident about. So making that park with Philip and other folks, that contractor, I think is why I swell up. And it's always nice to, I mean, it's amazing that I had the opportunity to experiment that way and in a way, I mean, maybe it's dumb to say, but feel safe in doing that. And maybe, again, as I say that, I wish that for other colleagues. You know, of seeking out projects that you can take risks and grow. You know? I've grown because of that project.

TURTLE CREEK PUMP HOUSE

Another call I got for a project in Dallas was from Deedie Rose. As a lot of folks know, the most amazing patron of the arts, that includes the design arts. And Deedie described this amazing landscape that was right next to her house of a pump house and these tanks that held the water supply for Highland Park. And she actually went ahead and described the trouble she was having with the architect of the pump house in that, I have a very specific reference from that. It was, that he, within the tanks, wanted to fill it with three feet of dirt and put dirt on it, I mean, a lawn. You know? And I was like, what are you insinuating by that? You, curse word. What, debutantes? It's just like, oh, I was furious. You know? I mean, I hadn't even seen it, and I was furious. So I went down to see Deedie, first date, and I almost fell on the ground looking at this site. It was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. Oh, my God, and there was the first time we saw, oh, no, in the museum, but just looking over in Dede's house, and seeing a Smithson. I was like, argh. [LAUGHTER] I almost fell on the floor. He's so delightful.

And I believe I said to Deedie, I said, Deedie, really? You want me to work on this? What's to improve? [LAUGHTER] She goes, well, you know, I want to play with my grandchildren. I want to have parties here. I'm like, OK. That's good. And that was when in feeling that the landscape was already designed, already perfect, that the process of curation, of restraint, of testing always a minimal thing versus a maximum kind of proposal, took hold. I think I was doing it everywhere else, but there was something about the scale of the site, less than an acre, and of working with Deedie. Because it's almost like, I think because she's a patron, just gets you. You know? And draws you out, and so, always like listening. Like, what are you trying to do? And reverberating. And I was like, wow. I'd never, it was like, she was a mirror of my process. You know? And I was, wow. So with the idea of the surrounding, the tanks and the pump house getting more porous when we started digging. A lot of concrete. And when we piled it up, I remember going to get Deedie, and I said, I need you to see something. And I need a decision. And I said, how would you feel if I reuse all of this? She said, Julie, I'm happy

because you're being right on the site. I like, I don't want to say it on a Southern accent, but oh my God, how dear was that? It was so dear. And that's when I'm like, OK. These are big old pavers. They're just big pavers. And we figured out where they might be distributed, and we would, because we have the luxury of the small site and Deedie right there. We would meander the site, and she at one point, she said, I want to jump and hop like we're children. [LAUGHTER] It was so dear. And so we were just figuring out that she could jump and hop. And you know, we were bringing, we were bringing the water works to life again, not in, hopefully, if anybody looks at it, not in this kind of patronizing way. You can patronize a site. You know? But we were like, I was like, where's the plumbing? Is the plumbing still intact? Because they just up and left. And sure enough, the plumbing was there. And I said, I was like, can we turn on the plumbing? She goes, good idea. And the, hence the kind of industrial cascade came about, and one tank being one big old reflecting pool, a place that she said she wanted a barefoot party, for them to go into the tank.

You know, the pump house, right, that ground, you know, the undulated or depressed into voids, was pretty darned flat. And there was something that Deedie and, Deedie was kind of wondering about this kind of undulation of like what, you know, how could we have maybe the ground swell? You know, as I kind of drew in a manic drawing of like the creek and the bluff being brought up like a blanket, and doing its thing. And that was when Meg Webster, the artist, came into the scene, and Kate and I worked as hard as we could. It was a difficult undulating, terracotta piece, to have the land and this piece just like squished, pushed into it, you know, where you could lounge and look out to a very different part of the landscape. You know, this is where some vastness came in, the spillway down to one side, the crick, creek, sorry, to the other, and then the plain of the lake. And then beyond that is the mounds, this undulation with the Eve's Necklace grove on it. I always wanted to use Eve's Necklace, just because it's a great name and a great tree. [LAUGHTER]

And I've been able to, you know, revisit the site, and in a way, I think they're keeping it a little too tidy. But you know, that's OK. And it feels good. It feels good. Yeah, it feels good.

I had an incredible opportunity with the Waterworks project, Turtle Creek, to work with Kate Orff. She was kind of a free agent at the time. And I said, come on, Kate. Let's do this. And yeah, I mean, and as you know, she's amazing. And she was always, you know, kind of hard on me. Well, I shouldn't say she was hard on me. She wasn't hard on me. She, we were different, and I would be going around with my kind of crazy bipolar intuitive thing, and Kate would always ground me with, let's do this. Let's get it. Which was great. I do have to say, also, one of my favorite moments with Kate Orff is that, it would be so hot. You know, there. So we would work in the morning and then go back in the evening when the mosquitos the size of horses would come out. But in the middle, we would go to lunch, and then we had this thing about going to secondhand stores. And especially when we were thinking about the opening party coming up, I'll never forget seeing Kate Orff come out of the dressing room with this yellow chiffon, rose patterned dress. [LAUGHTER] Anyway --

The other privilege that came as a gift with the Turtle Creek project was to be working beside what I think is a [Antoine] Predock masterpiece of that house, beautiful. And then behind, going down to the creek and into the ravine was the MVVA garden. So I can't get away from the guy. [LAUGHTER]

URBAN OUTFITTERS

Imagine these huge ships right outside the buildings, the studios where folks were designing clothing. Right? And you wonder, what does the ship have to do with sewing some buttons onto a blouse? And all the things in between? Like going down the railway into Building 543

for coffee, going through, we called it the amber waves of grasses. And seeing a certain pair of heels and a dress going through, you know, blue dress was great, through these grasses. So this, the nested scales, again, were really important, and I thought, oh my gosh, you guys, you're so lucky that there is this other scale of these ships and of the river and of the airport, to always be, I mean, it's one thing, right, to be in the city, another to be within this kind of vast, still active, which made it really cool, manufacturing site. And then going back to your table and sew buttons.

Many projects I did for a decade, maybe more, were with the Architects MSR. And they, when they were working with Urban Outfitters, Dick Hayne, the founder, very, very hands on, they said, you know, we need a landscape architect. And recommended me. And recommended D.I.R.T.. That was when David Hill was there. He was amazing. And yeah, that was when I arrived on the scene, and like I said, Dick Hayne is very hands on. And he is difficult. Phew. And I had come to really depend upon a really close relationship with the client, you know, engendering this amount of trust, and not just trust in me, but trust in the process, that they would be a part of. So they also had to be a bit adventurous. Well, you know, I mean, Dick was dealing with hundreds and hundreds of creative people. So it wasn't difficult to get in there. But he was, you know, he was just very tough. Kind of a bully. That changed later. And I worked, by the way, on Urban Outfitters for ten years. I went through, I worked on four phases of it. I mean, that's a privilege. I know my colleagues will say, of course, that is the ultimate wonderful thing, to be able to work on a project and see it grow as you're continuing to work on it. But Dick, I basically said, OK, Dick is a bully. You know? And I have three brothers, and even sisters, that bullied me. No problem. Let's have at it. So I was pushing back. And it turns out, that's what he loved. Weirdo. I mean, some bullies are that way. They just want somebody to push back at them. You know? So we had very animated meetings. That is where, for a larger landscape, I really wanted to work with this idea of an action plan that would set the framework in motion, but ask for a pretty spontaneous way of working. And the client was into it.

My charge, I felt there, was to work with Dick [Hayne] on an action plan, instead of a master plan. Some strategy that would set the framework in place and then let the other stuff evolve, you know, as we began to understand it. I mean, that's, to me, why master plans are premature a lot of the times, and can't be responsive. And Dick was very comfortable with that. I mean, when you think about it, I think about how he works with the designers, and pushes and pulls ideas. So that was great. And we totally bonded. It was crazy. And he'd, when I was on site, especially or even in between, we would really walk around together. That's where mockups were cleaned. The mockups, though, also, what I was really excited about was a way to communicate with the contractors also as being part of that process, you know, not showing the sample in that, in that detail. We kept so many of the ballards that were there, and of course revealed these gorgeous rail tracks. And I looked at it, and I was like, oh my God, they're going to make a terrible mess of the broom finish, to be straight and go around it. So I was like, hm, what could I do? And so I invented crazy broom. [LAUGHTER] And I was with the contractors, and we were like, oh, is it better to do one of those, whatever you're talking about, or the broom, and I would demonstrate it, and I'd say to a contractor with a mockup, you do it now. And crazy broom, along with Barney Rubble and Betty, was invented. And yeah, I just, you know, each piece, each phase, there were things that we changed, just brought on a new thing that we were trying to bring out the poetry of the Navy Yard. By doing so, in my mind, it was honoring the Navy Yard and all the folks who worked there. There are pieces of it that I don't like too much, but experiments, but for the most part, it feels good. It feels right. You know? Yeah, folks feel really good there. And I mean, that was a good thing to be able to accomplish, with the feeling good there, because they came from inside, you know, in the city we didn't have a square. And I worked hard, actually, to not let that place become suburban. Because that's what Sterns was doing. Using off the shelf terrible benches, and just, ugh, and I would see it and just was like, you're violating this landscape.

The approach to the Navy Yard was so much about working with what's there, working with the existing. And it was about like showing this to Dick, the founder, all the other folks, and actually all of the designers there. They were really great about communicating all of this. So as I always say, design emerges. It doesn't descend. There is, actually, with it being a corporate campus, may have been the predilection to kind of impose all of these forms onto it. Yet, what I, I guess I'm proud that I instilled in the client, the patron, was patience. It was like just, you know, and I would take them around with me, and we would, what do we see? What are we seeing here? You know? And so, it was kind of like I Spy, you know, or just a different way of engaging instead of, well, what do you want? And here's my proposal? And dah, dah, dah. It was like, let's go see. Let's go see what we want. And it was an important time for me to have that opportunity to test that way of working with the existing, with a very important patron.

When we arrived at the site, it had this black skim coat of asphalt. So I mean, we're like, wait a second. Where are all these beautiful arabesque rail lines that just look too sexy, too good to be true? And I realized, you know, because I've been looking at things, that I know how to read cracks in asphalt. I get a badge for that. [LAUGHTER] Anyway, so there we go. There we go having kind of this material heyday, and almost like an archeological dig there to uncover these, uncover the tracks. So there was this skim coat of asphalt that, you know, was stockpiled, and then there were the rails. Yay. Because a lot of times rails are taken away from sites for salvage. So that was gorgeous. Then the other thing in the charge to make the site more porous, we dug. We hammered and found beautiful pieces of concrete. Luckily they didn't have too much reinforcement, because they were thick. And that's when I spoke to the client about, that I was going to be rearranging the materials on the site. Not reusing, don't sound ecological. I learned not to say that to Dick. So just that I'm rearranging. So yeah, off we went, with Barney Rubble, the big chunks, Betty Rubble, the combination, the calico, I always called it, of brick, asphalt, and concrete. That's what was actually Bam Bam. And I have to tell a quick story that it was hilarious to me about naming and claiming of things. That in the construction trailer, they had that description of what was what. And the contractors, it was hilarious to see

them, and they'd yell, Julie, is this Barnie or Betty? [LAUGHTER] I'd go, it's Betty. OK. You know? And we just had this beautiful, you know, over materials beautiful relationship. And it became a pallet for there on in, and because everyone loved it. And so there was this continuity, and to me, like you know, for people who wanted to know about an ethos about not seeing that concrete go off site. We were able to use I think 85% of it. Yeah. [LAUGHTER] We were pretty proud of that. And yeah, yeah, I mean, just so you know, and we can talk about the project more, that Barney Rubble was born in Dallas.

When I go back to my projects, I just kind of like stroll along and start just kind of observing and seeing how the public feels like that's their place. And I probably could tell a couple of stories that mean a lot to me. In a few projects, I remember Urban, especially, Urban Outfitters, two comments I got. One was from a designer who is right in the Free People building, Building 15, and they look onto the cherry grove that is emerging from Barney Rubble. And she said, she was like, she recognized me. She goes, are you the landscape architect? You know. Of the project? I said, yeah. And she goes, I want to tell you that when those cherries are in bloom, I'm 20, no, 25% happier. And she goes, and then I think about them all year. And I went, OK. You know. And another person recognized me and said, I want to tell you that the feeling I get of this place, from this place, it's like it's always been here. You know, and I'm now part of its deeper history. And here I am, part of the future.

APPENDIX

CORNELIA HAHN OBERLANDER

I was privileged to know Cornelia. I gave the Cornelia Oberlander lecture at UBC, and then the greatest privilege was Cornelia invited me to spend the day with her the day after, to see her projects. Wow. And we looked at the projects, and it just was amazing how strong they were. You know, they just were sturdy, but also you wouldn't think poetic maybe would go with sturdy, but it did, in a way that was like Cornelia, sturdy and poetic. And the project that struck me the most was the Museum of Anthropology. There was something about that where it had some ease about it, strength but some ease. It felt like it was really coming from the Earth. And Cornelia and I talked about it. We talked about the earth forms, and we talked about plants. I always like to talk about plants. And then the funny part of the visit, that she did actually at like every project, when we were kind of about to leave, she would turn to me, speak in the first person, and say, Cornelia did good here, didn't she? And I'd be like, yeah, you did. [LAUGHTER] So funny. So yeah, and the other quick story I want to say, to tell you, is that Cornelia was at the LAF. I forget what it was called, but it was their legacy, the 50-year thing. And I was standing outside with some other power chicks, like Martha Schwartz, and Cornelia came up and said hello to everyone. You know, she was like, I must go back to the hotel. And she's walking away. I turn back to the group, and I said, I want to be Cornelia when I grow up. So here I am, I think, in a position to really grow up like Cornelia. Pretty wild.

Cornelia to me is just this, a hero, superhero. You know, the pioneer in her, that unrelenting quality of just in a way not being afraid. You know? The word fearless comes to mind. And you know, that's what I want to be. [LAUGHTER] You know, and I'm so glad the prize is named, that it's not an anonymous prize, and that especially it's named after Cornelia, because she deserves all of the recognition of being a hero that we can give her. Certainly as a woman, kind of navigating the big boys, with the big boys. Yeah. And I think it's that pioneer and fearless part that I don't know, I think it's one of the most important things we need to be as a landscape architect, because we're always up against stuff. Always up against it, you know, and you have to just not be afraid. Say, OK. You know? And do things like with a client, say, hey, we need a historian. You need a scientist. Just boom. Just don't be afraid to be able to work the way Cornelia did. You know? So yeah.

I think the one thing that maybe I just haven't said previously is, I've always been taken by how obsessed she is with making. You know? And that may sound like kind of, I don't know, maybe it's not dumb. But if I were to be speaking with my students, there are often times where students are afraid of making. You know, they're afraid of making a proposal, just because, you know, you're putting yourself out there in terms of committing to an idea. And I think Cornelia, when I hear her speak, there's no hesitation and no apology for being obsessed with making. And I have to say, I respect a lot of landscape architects that aren't making I would say form for form's sake.

I have found in both looking at how colleagues work, but also in my teaching, that to impart that part about being fearless, and also just it comes into the form of making. You know, and it's like, don't be afraid. Get your idea. Give it form. You know? And a big thing is that not form for form's sake, but for it to, what you're making has strong associations, you know, and has the potential, if you can imagine it. Right? Students, the poor students don't see it. Right? But has the potential to be immersive. That's what I learned from Michael van Valkenburg. But

I found in like, you know, looking at Cornelia's work, there was very much that immersive quality that I think comes from no fear of making.

CORNELIA HAHN OBERLANDER INTERNATIONAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PRIZE

I believe the significance of the Oberlander Prize is a significant mark to really elevate us all in the highest level of pride, you know, in our discipline. And that acknowledgement is, I think it's huge. And it's not bad that it's named after a woman. But I do think that it's, I think most of it is pride. You know? For what we do. And that maybe in comparison to all of the other prizes that have, were mentioned, the Pritzker, that does that elevation of our pride, but also the aspiration to really be kick ass.

The significance of the Oberlander Prize, I think, is that we are, like finally, not finally, but maybe finely, recognizing our own discipline at the level of the Pritzker, and those other prizes that have been around for a long time in terms of acknowledging the pride we should be having in our discipline. I do think that a lot of the awards today have been project based, and they're all kind of like internal. But the Oberlander is kind of like, almost like a coming out party. You know? Of saying, whoa, look at us. Look at us. Look at all we were. Look at all we can be. It's kind of amazing to be like in the position to be a spokesperson for that. I like love it. You know? I do. I'm not really that shy. So to kick off this prize, with a lot of pride, hoping that I do a decent job of inspiring our colleagues, our whole community to be as wonderful a landscape architect as Cornelia was.

It's amazing to me in the decades that I've bene practicing, to witness landscape architecture, our discipline, be able to operate at a level that really has been recognized by the general public, maybe not to the full degree that it could be, but to a point where they, the general

public are seeing that we can tell their story through making landscapes that are about them, and for them, both.

ON BEING THE INAUGURAL PRIZE LAUREATE

The significance of being the first person, or woman, to receive the Oberlander Prize, I think anybody out there that's listening to this would know that it's mind blowing. Also, an amazing, amazing opportunity. You know, I always actually have loved being, when I have the chance, a spokesperson for the discipline, because I want to get a message across of being strong and adventurous as a landscape architect. And I think, I'm flashing to Cornelia again, and just thinking about how she just embodied, you know, the discipline in the most elegant way, and yet the most assertive way. I mean, it's a wonderful combination. I'm almost thinking about the black locust outside here, which is my spirit tree, as I call it. And it's thorny, and aggressive, but it has beautiful white flowers [LAUGHTER] and beautiful translucent leaves. So there's a way in which there is a combination that I think it takes to really be out there in the field. I don't mean just the site, but in the field. And to be recognized with the prize is just awesome to think that, for me the prize was not necessarily for me, per se, but for the body of work that just shows that I wanted to push, I wanted to push us to, you know, to be able to navigate and orchestrate these difficult sites, also add just some beauty. I am thinking for souls that have masks on. You know? So yeah.

The prize, for me, when I've been reflecting on it, has a profound effect on where my practice has been and where it might go. And the type of landscapes that I'm hoping will inspire other colleagues. And I haven't built the whole lot. I hope the things that have been built do that job of inspiration. Because I think I've arrived at a place where the work feels the most authentic, that it feels connected to the process. You know, my professional and personal methodology, right, that I have to say, like with the Core City project, my collaboration with Steven Stimson on Hardberger, there was no real plan. You know, I mean, I felt like, oh brother, you know, I

mean, it's like, I like had to draw a site plan, which I didn't really want to do. But there's something that I think has to do with the cycles of really feeling like our landscapes are a part of this longer, you know, longer time span, and of an evolution. And that's what's so impressive about Cornelia, like with me, yet another visit to one of her landscapes, which she's done over and over, and it's like she goes to one of her projects, and she's like giving it a big hug. You know? Incredible, that was an incredible thing to witness. But to, that to me represents an amazingly deep commitment.

What's great about thinking about the prize, you know, you think about the legacy of all the number of people who I'm sure were nominees, and I'm like, argh. But all that kind of kindness and generosity of begetting these ways of working, you know, in a personal way, but also professional and kind of linked. You know, Cornelia, Kiley, Michael, my mentor, all actually having this message that I think resonates with me the most, and that is about treading lightly.

To receive the Cornelia Prize is also thinking about having her voice in my head, and other voices, you know, because there's an amazing generational thing and this kind of passing on with unbelievable support. I'm thinking about the big LO. Sorry, Laurie Olin, dear Laurie Olin. Very simply, we were in at Villa Lante, and I will never forget that I ran out of film, when we used film, and Laurie handed me a roll of film. And I was like, OK, well, I owe you. He goes, no, you don't. Just keep going. You know, and Pete, you know, I was thinking the other day about how, he said, how are you? And I said, well, you know, it's kind of like I'm a little uncomfortable. He goes, if you weren't uncomfortable, I'd worry about you. You know? So anyway, but Michael, my amazing mentor, and you know, others that just bestow just amazing philosophies. The most important one to me is, tread lightly. My client in Dallas telling me, she's like the work to be light on the set. Well, I always say that. And to me, the way you do that, and again, I think it takes a little chutzpah, to have a lot of restraint, a lot of restraint, just being careful, careful, you know, with your work. And to me, that has a lot to do with the

methodology that is calibrated internally for me, intuitively, where there's a tipping point. There's a min and a max, which I work with my students a low. I'm always like, I want to see a min scheme and middle and max. Make sure the max is when you've had at least a few bourbons. You know? So that they could kind of feel, and we could all feel if we're being true to the site. And yeah, restraint.

I have to say, it's pretty intimidating, but also awe inspiring to be the inaugural for it, of the Oberlander Prize. You know, to help shape, perhaps help shape in a collaboration with everyone, the donors, to shape how it is that the prize can just do a lot of work, and a lot of good work. And well, how that takes form, especially in the charge, to have some level of this kind of public engagement, is pretty cool to see. I have no idea, by the way, not yet, of how it's going to roll out, you know, over the next two years. And it's so cool. I mean, it's such a cool aspect of the prize. It's just kind of, get out there. Don't just kind of like, OK, thank you. You know? Great. I'll buy a Porsche. I mean, it's just, to send the message that a prize means an ultimately contribution. And this is your ability to do it. So it's more out than in. I think it's amazing that way. And yeah, like I said, it's a combination. It's like, you know, I'm so excited, but also like, yikes. You know?

ON CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

What I mean about landscapes being about people and for people is kind of the age-old, now it's kind of age-old importance of narrative in the landscape. And I believe that when a narrative, a story is uncovered in the landscape, it aligns with the stories of who that landscape is for. And for me, I feel like we're going beyond the genus loci, to be, talk about a landscape being for the people of that place, that it comes from, really intensely from the place. In a modest way, but also honest way, and still unapologetic way.

A goal of mine with the projects I make in terms of the interaction with the general public is really quite simple, in a way, in terms of trying to figure out a way that they feel welcome, that there's just something about what you're doing is just like, you know, an invitation. And I think this is actually kind of a big deal in terms of access, when you think of access. And I don't usually wear equity on my sleeve. I don't. But I want it to happen in terms of that kind of open invitation. So it's difficult. I know I've got, our colleagues are thinking, wow, it's so difficult. But I do think, and what I try to do is a pretty subtle thing. And it's hard to even articulate. You know? But I'm thinking of Urban Outfitters again, where it's a private kind of campus, but it's also the historic core of the Navy Yard. And really should be public. You know? So I had to really have the client behave in terms of anything that felt like it was privatizing that landscape. It's tricky. But there are some tipping points of that. And with the Core City, I feel like it was the material itself, the way in which the landscape was built, of course, but in a way, the material itself, because it came from that place, I mean, and this wasn't just kind of goofy recycle, blah, blah, blah. And it was sustainable. Anyway. To me, even more important was, it was recognizable. And that meant it just was like, oh, it's OK, you know, for me to be here. You know, old Detroiters, new Detroiters, as they're called, felt welcome in this place where they may not have really understood where the stuff came from. But it felt right. I think it's so important. And again, if I think about Cornelia, I think about sitting with her at the Museum of Anthropology, actually walking with her, and our talk about plants wasn't just talk about plants. It was talk, it was here researcher into those plants, being indigenous, and of some consequence, that I'll come back to using the word, ease. That feeling of ease and feeling of any number of people that would feel welcome there. And I love that.

ON IDENTITY AND RESILIENCE

Disturbance has always been an amazing concept to me, or a principle, in the fact that disturbance has this base in ecological term, but I see it as also a social term, a personal term,

that talks about the acknowledging, you know, acknowledging this kind of rhythm and these cycles that we go through. Everybody goes through, right, a different cycle, and my sense is that if you accept the idea of disturbance, there's a way to navigate through real difficulties. And I think to build some resilience, to be able to regenerate from them, I'm personally, I've had my share. First breast cancer, and then a very bad accident, near fatal accident. And you know, it was a lot of work to become healthy again. And I just, again, think of disturbance, and I go, it was a disturbance. I'm here. I'm alive. I'm going to carry on. But it tested my resilience. And to stay tough. Maybe not tough. I mean, if anything, it's done a lot for humility and vulnerability. And you know, it's like right now, but you know, I actually have another condition of chronic pain, and D.I.R.T. has yet taken another hiatus, because D.I.R.T. is kind of me and one or two other folks. And that's been really hard. Because D.I.R.T. is my identity. I kind of hate to say that, especially on camera. But it is. You get really, begin to really embody your work and depend on it for existing. But I'm kind of OK. I mean, I think this idea of resilience and disturbance, you know, everyone is facing now with the pandemic. And I just got a double whammy, that's all. And so, I'm eager to, hey, I reached work on regenerating industrial sites. I can regenerate myself and D.I.R.T.

I have been called the Toxic Avenger. And I'm like, really? Do I want to strap on that cape? And in a lot of ways, I do. I want to have that, you know, force to not save people, but to engage them in such a way that they can be the, quote agents of change for their landscape. You know, neighbors, mayors, whoever, right, is going to really be the toxic avengers for the regeneration of the landscapes that are impacting them. I'm spacing out on the other stuff.