



Inside the LA Studio with

FLOOR
a s s o c i a t e s

Education Session: SUN-B02
ASLA 2015 Annual Meeting Chicago
November 8th, 2:00-4:00

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Firm:

Since its inception in 1997, **Floor Associates'** work has sought to integrate a contemporary design approach with the timeless beauty and ecology of the desert Southwest. Through case study examples of their work, this wife and husband team will discuss the firm's highly collaborative, interdisciplinary design approach to urban, healing, learning and playing environments and how they continue to refine their new, yet authentic, "Desert School" design vernacular.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand how landscape architects play a strong role in positioning a project within the community by creating "Third Place" Environments.
2. Understand key design strategies for successful design within an arid environment
3. Examine how landscapes can inform and transform visitor perspectives through demonstration and interpretation
4. Learn how successful spaces are the result of balancing program and design
5. Understand how professional collaboration (within an interdisciplinary team) and public collaboration (with community input) leads to projects that exceed social and economic goals.

Presentation Outline:

Introductions and Brief Firm History

Firm Design Philosophy and Influences

Case Studies

Open Space: Preservation and Play

- The McDowell Mountain Preserve - Pinnacle Peak / Lost Dog Wash / The Gateway / Brown's Ranch
- George "Doc" Cavalliere Park
- Rio Salado Audubon Center

Interpretive and Healing Places

- The Phoenix Zoo
- Desert Botanical Garden
- Elsie McCarthy Sensory Garden

Urban Living

- Optima Camelview
- Scottsdale Waterfront
- Safari Drive

"Third Place" Environments

- College Avenue
- Re:New - Uptown Plaza / Agritopia / Dana Park
- Margaret T. Hance Park



The Gateway, McDowell Mountain Preserve



Heritage Garden, Desert Botanical Garden



Optima Camelview



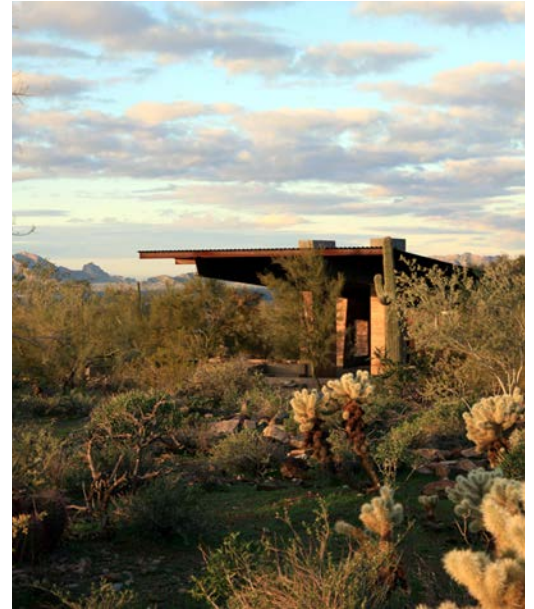
Margaret T. Hance Park

McDowell Sonoran Preserve

In 1990, Scottsdale citizens, working through a non-profit public/private partnership, initiated the vision for what ultimately will be the preservation of approximately 36,400 acres of Scottsdale's McDowell Mountains and Sonoran Desert – land that otherwise stood directly in the path of imminent development. Integral to Scottsdale's vision for the Preserve is to provide access to all of its citizens to experience the ecology and beauty of the Sonoran Desert. To date, six Trailhead Access Areas have been completed including Pinnacle Peak, Lost Dog Wash, The Gateway and Brown's Ranch. Each is unique and each provides a demonstration project of how to responsibly design and build within an arid environment. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve will be honored with the Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence at this year's conference.

Team: City of Scottsdale, Floor Associates, Weddle Gilmore

Additional Resources: "Gateways to the Desert", Landscape Architecture Magazine, March 2010. Landscape Design @ USA, Second Edition. Pace Publishing LTD, 2009. Print. Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Environmental Planning and Design, Fourth Edition, Simonds, 2006. Print. "Lost Dog Wash Trailhead", Landscape Architecture China, January 2008. Case Study: A Desert Portal Made of Desert Materials", GreenSource Magazine, February 2010.



George "Doc" Cavalliere Park

The design utilizes a limited palette of native materials and reductive design principles to create a beautiful modern architectural aesthetic, nestled into a dramatic Sonoran Desert site. Constructed almost exclusively from native stone, concrete and unfinished steel, the resulting project has established a new standard for the design and implementation of a truly sustainable public space within an arid environment. The project intentionally blurs the lines between the built and natural environments and is designed for net-zero energy and potable water usage, as well as near-zero long term maintenance. In recognition of this accomplishment, Cavalliere Park was selected by the ASLA's Sustainable SITES Initiative as a Pilot Project and was the first certified SITES project in Arizona.

Team: City of Scottsdale, Floor Associates, JJR|Floor, Weddle Gilmore

Additional Resources: LAF Performance Series Case Study, www.landscapeperformance.org/case-study-briefs/doc-cavalliere-park. Sustainable SITES Initiative, www.sustainablesites.org/certified-sites/cavalliere. "Going with the Flow", Architectural Record, June 2014.



Rio Salado Audubon Center

The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center serves as the primary destination for visitors to the City of Phoenix's Rio Salado Restoration Project. Jointly developed by the City of Phoenix and the National Audubon Society, the Center exemplifies the standards of sustainable design practices and allows visitors to immerse themselves into the fragile ecology of the Rio Salado riparian corridor. With birds and wildlife as the focus, visitors are invited to explore the site's various trails to discover educational nodes that engage nature lovers in the wonders of the original river's natural habitat.

Team: Audubon Society, City of Phoenix, Okland Construction, Weddle Gilmore, Floor Associates

Additional Resources: "Beyond Sustainability", Sources + Design, March/April 2010.



The Phoenix Zoo

Floor Associates has completed the master planning and landscape architectural design services for more than a dozen projects and exhibits for the Phoenix Zoo including Arizona Wildlands, Desert Lives, Wallaby Walk-About, Primate Aviary, Animal Care Center and the Native Species Recovery Center. The Wallaby and Primate exhibits are noteworthy in that they are designed to provide a true immersion experience by allowing visitors to enter directly into the exhibits with the animals.

Team: The Phoenix Zoo, Weddle Gilmore, Floor Associates, Thinking Caps

Additional Resources: "Desert Meets Desert", [Landscape Architecture Magazine](#), January 2001. "Desert Lives at the Phoenix Zoo", [Landscape Architecture China](#), 2010 No. 3.



Desert Botanical Garden - Heritage Garden

The Heritage Garden celebrates a timeline of past, present, and future. It is an exhibit that takes visitors on a historic journey of environmentalism by honoring the Desert Botanical Garden's founders. Concurrently, it is an exhibit that enhances the guests' experience of the present by providing exceptional views of historic Cardon cacti planted in 1939 and the surrounding Papago Buttes, water features and inspiring interpretive elements. The exhibit looks into the future by starting new Cardon forests and other plantings intended for visitors in the year 2089. The Heritage Garden design includes two new displays: the Cardon Plaza and the Contemplation Garden. Through plantings, materials, views, and sensory elements (e.g. water, poetry, shadows, light), each area will have a unique feel to it. At the same time, the exhibits still have a common experiential thread: a connection to the past, memorable experiences of the present and thoughts to what can be done for the future.

Team: Desert Botanical Garden, Floor Associates



Elsie McCarthy Sensory Garden

The Elsie McCarthy Sensory Garden was specifically designed for use and enjoyment by the visually impaired. The garden was funded through a donation by the estate of Elsie McCarthy. Her vision was to create a garden in honor of her father who was legally blind. A committee comprised of local citizens, city staff and visually impaired individuals from the Phoenix area was assembled to guide the development of the design. This garden is the first in Arizona specifically designed for those who are visually impaired. The goal of the garden's design was to create a multi-sensory environment that could be safely and independently explored through touch, sound and scent. The garden includes the extensive use of small water features, tactile materials and plant materials that are pleasing to all senses.

Team: City of Glendale, Floor Associates, Underwood Crisp

Additional Resources: "The Butterfly Effect", [Landscape Architecture Magazine](#), November 2004. "Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Environmental Planning and Design", Simonds 2013.



Optima Camelview

This highly technical, overstructure condominium community incorporates more than 500,000 SF of green roofs, to create a truly immersive indoor/outdoor living experience. Floor Associates provided hardscape, waterfeature and landscape design for the 13 acre site. The project pioneered the use of an “extensive” (5” deep soil profile) green roof system. Camelview Terraces was the first of its kind to utilize this type of system in a truly arid environment, which presented a range of viability, maintenance and aesthetic challenges. To mitigate these concerns, Floor Associates designed and coordinated the construction of a series of above ground planting beds. These beds tested the viability of various plant, soil and irrigation types to determine the right balance between form and function in the final design. Based on the results, Floor Associates completed construction documents through 90%. As a design-build organization, Optima then used the documents as a framework to construct the project.

Team: David Hovey and Associates Architect, Inc., Floor Associates



Scottsdale Waterfront

Floor Associates developed the overall site theme and image for Scottsdale Waterfront, a high-end, mixed-use project located in downtown Scottsdale. The design draws heavily from desert landscape imagery and the historical references of Scottsdale for inspiration. The concept incorporates the bold forms, colors and textures of native cacti and cactus flowers throughout the plazas and public spaces as an overall unifying theme. Strong chroma paving, sculptural walls, fabric shade structures and custom light fixtures create a unique sense of place while providing interest and texture. All site elements are constructed over the underground parking structure.

Team: Opus Architects SCB Design, H & S International, Drake & Associates, Floor Associates

Additional Resources: “1000x Landscape Architecture”, First Edition, Braun Publishing 2009. Print. “Landscape Design @ USA”, 2nd Edition. Pace Publishing LTD, 2009. Print. “City + Design + Evolution - Unique Landscape Design from 6 Continents”, Pedro Marcelino, 2011. Print.

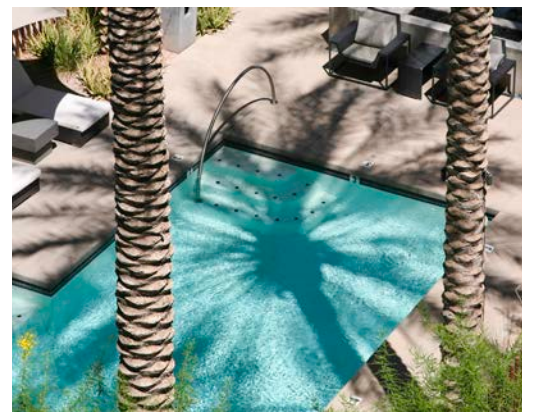


Safari Drive

Located in the heart of Scottsdale, Safari Drive provides a vibrant live/work community. The project is bounded on three sides by retail and commercial office space and by the Arizona Canal on the fourth. The site has been designed to respond to the desert climate, to take advantage of mountain views, and to provide direct pedestrian links to the revitalized canal bank frontage and surrounding amenities. Most of the parking is accommodated within a below-grade parking structure, creating a community with a strong emphasis on outdoor living opportunities. A series of courtyards and terraces blur the lines between the interior and exterior spaces. Large lawn terraces with fireplaces and water features serve as outdoor living rooms, while smaller courtyards provide space for intimate gatherings. Three pool terraces, nestled into date palm groves create a resort like atmosphere.

Team: Miller Hull Partnership, Floor Associates

Additional Resources: “City + Design + Evolution - Unique Landscape Design from 6 Continents”, Pedro Marcelino, 2011. Print. “Safari Drive”, Landscape Architect, Dalian University, January 2010.



“Third Place” Environments

College Avenue

Incorporating strategies from the National Complete Streets Coalition, the project design eliminated unused vehicular pavement, narrowed travel lanes, incorporated dedicated bike lanes and provided shaded pedestrian walkways. The project was designed to be an extension of both indoor and outdoor areas associated with the adjacent retail spaces as well as ASU's College Avenue Commons. This was accomplished through the use of a unified, integral concrete paving design for the street, sidewalks, and plaza spaces in front of adjacent building facades. Bollards, lighting, paving and street trees delineate traffic creating separation for bicyclists and pedestrians while allowing for flexibility in event staging. The “new” College Avenue has transformed this district within the urban core into a vital active space providing a gateway to the City of Tempe as well as to ASU and creating a people focused space that will serve generations to come.

Team: ASU Office of the University Architect, Floor Associates, SmithGroupJJR, Wood Patel, Okland Construction



Re:New - Uptown Plaza / Agritopia / Dana Park

As the “brick and mortar” retail economy continues to evolve, many older retail centers across the Phoenix market have begun to lose their market positions and have started to suffer significant levels of vacancies. For many property owners, this shift has created an opportunity to reposition these centers into what is becoming known as “The Third Place”, that is, alternative places that can provide that missing public venue for comfortable community gathering, that is neither home or work oriented. Typically oriented around locally based, smaller scale retail and dining experiences, the transition requires a highly collaborative approach to project programming and design to establish appropriate balances of tenants, amenities and aesthetics to create environments where people want to meet and hang out. Floor Associates strongly believes in the role Landscape Architects must play throughout this re-envisioning process, beginning with initial programming.

Team: Nelsen Partners, Johnston Farms, Floor Associates, Kimber Lanning



Margaret T. Hance Park

The initiative to reinvigorate Hance Park emerged from grass roots effort sparked by the Hance Park Conservancy to re-imagine Phoenix's central urban park. The Conservancy realized Hance Park's potential to go from an under-maintained and poorly utilized park to an activated vital public space serving the community at large. The City of Phoenix embraced this community driven effort and engaged the Hance Park Master Plan design team to develop a new vision for the park that would position it as one of the great urban parks in the world. The Master Plan design team organized a 3-tier planning process encompassing a deep analysis and investigation that revealed undiscovered history; examined and redefined connectivity and circulation patterns; and studied adjacent economic development potential. The outcome is a fresh new vision and identity for this urban park that is on par with Phoenix's city core development, serving as a catalyst for new development and providing opportunities for a wide variety of programmed and open uses. Building on the success of the approved Master Plan, Phase 1 design is currently underway.

Team: Imelk, Weddle Gilmore, Floor Associates, Kimber Lanning

Additional Resources: [Landscape Architecture Magazine](#), February 2015.



Team

Kristina Floor FASLA, LEED-AP BD+C, Partner



Throughout her career, Kris has primarily focused on projects situated within the urban context of the desert southwest, requiring a strong interdisciplinary approach to site programming and design. Kris has earned a reputation for employing critical thinking and design strategies that identify how a project can support and enhance the surrounding context while bringing a fresh approach to the design. Kris thrives on opportunities to be involved in projects that employ this skill set within a collaborative design and development team environment, crafting complex mixed use projects that reinvent how we live, learn, work and play.

Christopher Brown FASLA, LEED-AP BD+C, Partner



An innovator throughout his career, Chris has become a national leader in the design of sustainable techniques and methodologies for arid environments, including work on several LEED Platinum projects and the only Sustainable SITES certified project in Arizona. As a designer, Chris has developed a unique personal style of working with contextual native materials to juxtapose ordered modern design aesthetics with the natural character and reality of the site ecology. His deep love and respect for native landscape, native materials and a native vernacular are consistently expressed in beautiful, award-winning works that inspire, educate, and authentically embody their environment.

Ashley Brenden Nye ASLA



Ashley blends creativity, enthusiasm and style into signature planning and landscape architectural designs. She joined Floor Associates in 2010 while earning her Masters in Landscape Architecture at Arizona State University. Ashley's background includes a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and Ecology, which provides her with a holistic understanding of the interactions between scales, between public and private space and between natural and built systems. In 2013 Ashley was named a University Olmsted Scholar by the Landscape Architecture Foundation.

Moderator: Todd Briggs ASLA

A native of Arizona and founding principal of TRUEFORM landscape architecture studio, Todd's passionate outdoor pursuits have led to his respect and understanding of the diverse ecology, environmental considerations and cultural heritage that define the American southwest. With over 15 years of experience, Todd's sustainable design sensitivities and commitment to utilizing regional and enduring materials on both public and private projects have helped create memorable places that fit texturally and cohesively into their region. His work has ranged from parks and recreation, professional sports venues, urban redevelopment, university campuses, resort and hospitality, restorative healing gardens and private estate gardens.

