
Presented by
MUSEUM OF OUTDOOR ARTS
Design and Build Competition
2024
Land Art: Celestial Architecture
A National
Art, Architecture & Design Competition
Fifth Annual
Design Brief Launches: November 30, 2023
Opens January 5, 2024
Closes April 21, 2024
Competition Website

MUSEUM OF OUTDOOR ARTS

Design and Build Competition Abstract

The Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA) in Greenwood Village, CO seeks conceptual design proposals for its *Design and Build Competition* from art, architecture, landscape architecture, design and other creatively focused USA based collegiate students, teams, and/or classes. This year's theme is "Land Art: Celestial Architecture" and submissions should address the challenge of designing a land art / architectural installation that is informed by a celestial body or bodies (planets, galaxies, stars, comets, meteors etc.). The design should utilize architecture, landscape architecture, and/or sculpture/installation as a solution while considering environmental impact and sustainability in use of materials. Furthermore, the design should relate to the selected site in some way and primarily utilize materials native to the selected location. Contestants' designs will need to respond with their conceptual project under the premise that the structure will be utilized by the general public in a publicly accessible setting.

Proposals are **due by no later than April 21, 2024. Early submissions are encouraged.**

MOA will award the top four entries with the following prize structure*:
1st place- $10,000
2nd place- $7,500
3rd place- $5,000
Honorable Mention- $1000
*Prizes are divided evenly among all team members.

Winning submissions will be placed on the MOA Design and Build Competition archive website.

Read further for full competition brief with complete entry details.
Visit the competition website to register your entry.

6855 S. Dayton Street #3368
Greenwood Village, CO 80155
303-806-0444

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Design and Build
2023-24 Competition Brief

Organization and Program Background

Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA)- Greenwood Village, Colorado
The mission of MOA is to *make art a part of everyday life.*

Founded in 1981 by commercial real estate Developer, John W. Madden Jr., Marjorie Madden and their daughter, Cynthia Madden Leitner, ***MOA*** is an arts focused non-profit, private operating foundation, based in the Denver metro area. MOA offers a robust outdoor sculpture collection of over 85 pieces throughout the Englewood and Greenwood Village communities, maintains an indoor art collection, hosts student exhibitions and provides education programs. MOA also owns Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre, which it operates in partnership with AEG Presents. More information can be found at www.moaonline.org.

***Design and Build*- Program Background**
The mission of *Design and Build* is to *motivate invention through collaborative creativity*.

Since 1991, MOA's *Design and Build* education program has provided an opportunity for emerging artists, students and creative minds to express their creativity in collaborative art, architecture and design projects. Since the inception of the program thousands of students have collaborated on a variety of projects. Participants find creative solutions to practical challenges as they master the skills to transform their creative ideas into finished pieces. There are several facets to the program including a summer internship, fellowship, outreach, alumni projects and now a national design competition.

Design and Build Competition
After operating the *Design and Build* program for over 30 years in the Denver metro area, MOA has expanded *Design and Build* to include a national competition as part of the program. 2023-24 marks the fifth annual national art, architecture & design competition. The goal of the competition is to cultivate potential from emerging artists, architecture, landscape architecture and design students and to allow these creatives the space to conceptualize inventive ideas within a set of boundaries.

The competition garners an online repository of art, architecture, landscape architecture and design concepts. The competition is based on an annual theme and/or challenge provided by MOA and cash prizes are awarded to the top four submissions. It is the goal to one day realize physical prototypes of future winning entries. For now, the competition is purely conceptual.

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A Note to Educators about Key Learning Objectives and Benefits of Student Participation

Participating in an awarded, conceptual art / architecture competition can have several benefits for students, including the following learning outcomes:

- Developing critical thinking skills: Competitions often require participants to approach a problem creatively, which encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Gaining real-world experience: Competitions provide students with the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting. This experience can help prepare students for their future careers.
- Building a portfolio: Competitions provide students with the opportunity to showcase their work and build a portfolio that can be used when applying for jobs or further education.
- Networking: Competitions often bring together professionals from different areas of the industry. This can be an opportunity for students to network and potentially make connections that can help with future career opportunities.
- Building confidence: Participating in a competition can be a confidence booster for students. It can help them develop a sense of pride in their work and build their confidence in their abilities.
- Understanding the importance of design concepts and how to apply them: Competitions often require participants to create a design that meets specific criteria. This can help students understand the importance of design concepts and how to apply them in a real-world setting.
- Learning about collaboration: Competitions often require teamwork and collaboration. This can help students learn how to work effectively in a team and how to communicate effectively with others.
- Developing technical skills: Competitions often require participants to use specific software or tools. This can help students develop technical skills that can be applied in future projects.
- Learning about project management: Competitions often have deadlines and specific requirements. This can help students learn about project management and how to prioritize tasks to meet deadlines.
- Exposure and recognition: Winning or placing in a competition can provide participants with exposure and recognition. This can be particularly valuable for emerging designers who are looking to establish their reputation in the industry.
- Professional development: Participating in a competition can provide participants with a valuable opportunity for professional development. They can gain experience working on real-world design challenges, develop new skills and techniques, and learn from feedback and critiques from judges and other participants.
- Cash prizes or other rewards: Many design competitions offer cash prizes or other rewards for the winners. These rewards can provide participants with financial support and recognition for their work.

Overall, applying to a conceptual design competition can be a valuable experience for designers at all levels of experience. It can help them develop their skills, build their portfolios, and gain exposure and recognition in the industry. In addition, designing for public use can encourage contestants to create designs that are responsive to the needs of the general public, promote inclusivity and accessibility, and contribute to positive social change in the community.

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Eligibility Requirements
The competition is open to any undergraduate or graduate student currently enrolled in any US university (recent graduates are eligible to enter for up to one year post graduation). Students should be studying in the field of art, architecture, landscape architecture, design, engineering, and/or other similar programs. Entries can be submitted by individuals, teams, or as classes. Collaborative designs are highly desired. Past competition winners must observe a one-year sit out period between competitions prior to being eligible to enter future competitions.

Introduction, Theme & Challenge
For thousands of years, humans have created architectural and landscape structures that they have integrated into the Earth's landscape to align with or reference celestial bodies above. This includes the night sky, sunrise, sunset, planetary alignment, moon cycles, star patterns, celestial phenomena and more. From the ancient Pyramids of Egypt and Stonehenge to more modern day land art projects, such as Charles Ross' *Star Axis* in New Mexico, we hope to inspire the next generation of Celestial Architects through this year's challenge.

MOA seeks concepts for its next Design and Build Competition; designs should address the theme of *Land Art: Celestial Architecture*. Designs should reflect a creative and unique aesthetic and function, and should relate to the selected site and theme. The design should utilize architecture, landscape architecture and/or sculpture/installation as a solution while considering environmental impact and sustainability in use of materials. The structure can be designed as a temporary or permanent installation. (See Appendix B for examples of Land Art and Celestial Architecture).

The concept should be designed for one of five hypothetical, accessible outdoor terrain sites. Site options for the 2023-24 challenge include the following terrain environments (choose one site for your design to respond to): Wooded deciduous forest, coastal bluff, low desert, plains/grasslands or tropical rain forest (see reference images in Appendix A. **Download images**). This space should be addressed utilizing a blend of sculpture and/or architecture/landscape architecture disciplines as solutions to the challenge. The site should be assumed to be located in an open space and primarily an undisturbed, natural setting. The final design should not only respond to the selected hypothetical site, but it should also be functional, economical, efficient, environmentally friendly, unique in character and aesthetically pleasing. The final design should not exceed a footprint of three (3) square acres or 130,680 square feet and should utilize primarily natural materials native to the site (earth, natural stone, grasses etc.) and have an estimated design and build budget of no more than $100,000 USD. Winning students may have an opportunity to be engaged in further concept development after the competition concludes.

Furthermore, we want to know how the space would function as a usable space for the public. Are there particular activities, design elements or technologies that will be implemented as part of the design? Please address this through the narrative portion of your proposal by addressing the questions found in the "items to include in your proposal" section of this competition brief.

Collaboration
The spirit of *Design and Build* has always been to solve problems and create through collaboration. Collaborative team projects are strongly encouraged and desired, however, all proposals must include narrative about how collaboration would be utilized in realizing the design (i.e. fabricators, engineers and architects must work together to realize any design).

Instructors who take the competition on as a class project are eligible to submit up to three proposals per class. Individual student submissions or student team submissions are also eligible for entry.

Prizes
MOA will award the top four entries with the following prize structure*:
1st place- $10,000
2nd place- $7,500
3rd place- $5,000
Honorable Mention- $1000
*Prizes are divided evenly amongst all team members.

Winning submissions will be placed on the MOA Design and Build Competition archive website.
*If entered as a team, prize will be split evenly amongst team members (i.e. If 1st place has 2 team members, each collaborator will receive $5,000).

Competition Review Panel
A panel comprised of MOA Board of Trustees and Executive Staff, and, in some cases, an outside expert(s), will evaluate submissions. While all entries will be submitted digitally, the top proposal teams will be invited to virtually present their submissions via video conference to the panel.

2023-24 Panelists
-Cynthia Madden Leitner, Co-Founder and President of the **Museum of Outdoor Arts**.
-Robert Ferry and Elizabeth Monoian, Founding Co-Directors of the **Land Art Generator Initiative** (LAGI).
-Jill O'Bryan, **Artist and Writer**, board member of Land Light Foundation, which supports the earthwork, *Star Axis*.
-Charles Ross, **Artist** of **Star Axis**, a monumental earthwork in New Mexico.

Entries will be scored based on the following criteria:
- Originality
- Artistic/creative expression
- Professionalism
- Addressing the challenge
- Technical proficiency
- Safety

See items to include in your proposal and important dates on the following pages.

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Items to Include in your Proposal

Proposals should be submitted electronically via the registration website available at: https://moaonline.org/design-and-build-2023-competition/.

Your proposal MUST be submitted as **one multi-*page PDF* file**. The file size may not be larger than 50mb. **Files not in PDF format and multiple file submissions will be automatically disqualified!**

Your proposal MUST include all of the below items **in THIS order**. Incomplete proposals will be disqualified. All pages of proposals must be formatted for horizontal tabloid sized paper (11"x17").

- **Cover Page**
  - Project Image(s)
  - Project title
  - List all contestant names, year in schooling, major/program and affiliated university. Include email and phone number for each contestant.
  - In case of team/class entry, designate **one** team member to be the primary point of contact. Note your team's designated contact on the cover page.
- **Resume/CV and Biography** Tell us about your team. Include a resume/CV and brief biography for each team member. May not exceed one page per team member.
- **Site Selection**
  - Provide a site description and answer the following: What site was selected and why? How does your design reflect the site you selected? Do not exceed one page.
- **Project drawings/renderings**
  - At least three but no more than five pages should be dedicated to drawings/renderings of proposed design. You may include as many images as you would like, but this section of your proposal must not exceed five pages of your proposal. At least one image MUST be an elevation view in the context of the selected site. Other drawings/renderings can include detail, cross section, site plan views and other renderings. *A weblink to digitally animated rendering(s) may also be included.
- **Project narrative.** Explain your concept by answering the below questions **in numbered order.** Limited to 3,000 words total.
  1. How does your design relate to the theme of *Land Art: Celestial Architecture*?
  2. Describe the proposed materials, including required native materials, and methods used to build/install your structure/artwork/installation.
  3. Describe how your concept will be constructed? How long would construction take?
  4. How was collaboration utilized in realizing the design?
  5. How will your structure/installation be used by the public? How was safety addressed?
  6. How does the structure/artwork/installation address the climate in which it would reside?
  7. What type of technology is implemented in your design, if any?
  8. What makes the design environmentally friendly / sustainable?
  9. Open question: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your proposal?
  10. Provide an estimated budget. (3,000 word limit does not apply to this requirement but the budget should be limited to one page.)

VI. Submission Instructions

- Please submit your entry via the competition registration form available at: https://moaonline.org/design-and-build-2023-competition/

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MOA Contact

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions about the competition. We are here to help and want to make sure you are able to submit the best possible proposal. We offer conference/video calls and site visits, if desired.

Tim Vacca
Design and Build Program Director
MOA
303-353-1712
designandbuild@moaonline.org

Downloadable Reference Images, FAQs and additional supplemental information will be available on the Competition Website when Competition Opens.

Schedule & Important Dates

- November 30, 2023
Competition Design Brief Launches

- January 5, 2024
Competition Opens

- April 21, 2024 (11:59pm MST, GMT-7)
Competition Closes / Submission deadline

- May 2024
Finalist proposals selected

- May/June 2024
Finalist proposal presentations (via video conference)

- July 2024
Winning entries announced

MUSEUM OF OUTDOOR ARTS

About the Jurors

Cynthia Madden Leitner
President and Co-Founder of the Museum of Outdoor Arts

Cynthia Madden Leitner co-founded the Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA) with her parents, Colorado developer John W. Madden, Jr. and his wife Marjorie Madden in 1982. Designed as a "museum without walls", MOA's original mission followed the definition by integrating the arts into commercial landscapes and architecture to create synergistic environments for everyday living. Beginning with a donated outdoor collection of 12 sculptures placed in Greenwood Plaza, the collection now has over 85 outdoor artworks installed throughout the Denver Metro area. In 1995 The Colorado Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts was awarded to Cynthia for the realization of MOA's unique vision.

Cynthia Madden Leitner has curated over 200 exhibitions for the Museum of Outdoor Arts and more than 20 exhibitions for other arts organizations during her over 40-year tenure as President and Executive Director. She has worked with local, national, and international artists including Nick Bantock, Sanfte Strukturen, Daniel Sprick, and Claudy Jongstra. In 1999 Cynthia Madden Leitner co-curated "A View from Denver" with the Denver Art Museum for the White House Rose Garden. Among the Museum's publications are Portrait of a Museum and Secret Rooms; the films "Palazzo Verdi" and "Sacred Water at Burning Man" both aired on PBS.

Cynthia has also spearheaded monumental projects such as creating Design and Build, a renowned education program for emerging artists, building Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre (FGA) from an earth sculpture into the largest outdoor live music venue in Colorado, and spearheading the creation of Element House, an off-the-grid home near the site of Charles Ross' Star Axis.

Among civic activities, Cynthia Madden Leitner has served on the board of the International Sculpture Center, is an Honorary Trustee of The Women's Foundation of Colorado, and a founding member of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.. Cynthia has also been selected for the Denver Mayor's Commission of Arts, Culture and Film, the Denver Foundation's Arts and Culture Committee, the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts, and the Advisory Committee for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver and the Greenwood Village Art and Humanities Council.

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Cynthia and the Museum of Outdoor Arts have been honored with the following awards: Distinguished Contributions to Women in the Arts – Colorado Committee for the National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1991; Museum Art Educator of the Year – 1993; Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts – 1995; Englewood Builder Award – 2004; Mayor Hickenlooper's Proclamation for Design and Build Day – 2004; Element House designs and film accessioned by MoMA NY – 2014; AIA New York Design Award issued to MOS Architects for MOA's Element House – 2015; Architecture Design Award issued to MOS Architects for work including MOA's Element House – 2015; Governor Hickenlooper's Proclamation for Design and Build Day – 2016.

Visit **moaonline.org** for more information.

Photo by Heather Longway, 2022.

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Elizabeth Monoian & Robert Ferry
Land Art Generator Initiative
Founding Co-Directors

Elizabeth Monoian (MFA Carnegie Mellon University) is the founding co-director of the Land Art Generator, an organization that is developing global partnerships between private and public entities around interdisciplinary projects that address issues of climate and sustainability through the lens of creativity. She works closely with cities, universities, corporations, arts organizations, and community groups to design customized approaches to renewable energy installations. Elizabeth has published, exhibited, and presented globally on the aesthetics of renewable energy and the role of art and design in providing solutions to climate change.

Robert Ferry is a registered architect and LEED accredited professional with decades of professional practice experience on both consultant and client sides. He has worked as design manager and project manager on sustainable new urbanist developments across the United States and spent four years as a consultant on large commercial projects in Abu Dhabi, where his focus shifted to ways in which buildings can move beyond net-zero and contribute to the energy needs of the surrounding city. His concept designs pushing the envelope of building-integrated renewable energy technology have been published widely. Through the Land Art Generator, he helps support the critical role of architecture and urban design as part of a comprehensive solution to climate change. Robert is the co-founder of the Land Art Generator, partner at Studied Impact Design, and a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University.

Their publications include Land Art As Climate Action (Hirmer Publishing), Land Art of the 21st Century (Hirmer Publishing), Return to the Source (Prestel Publishing), Energy Overlays (Hirmer Publishing), New Energies (Prestel Publishing), Powering Places, (Prestel Publishing), Regenerative Infrastructures (Prestel Publishing), The Time is Now: Public Art of the Sustainable City (Page One Publishing), and A Field Guide to Renewable Energy Technologies.

The Land Art Generator Initiative (LAGI) was founded in 2008 by Elizabeth Monoian and Robert Ferry to leverage the power of art and design to accelerate the global response to climate change.

LAGI works with communities around the world to design public art installations that cleanly generate renewable energy, water, and provide other human support systems at a variety of scales.

As the world works together to rise to the climate challenge, vast new sustainable energy and other infrastructures will quickly become a ubiquitous part of our landscape and culture. LAGI provides exceptional solutions that inspire people about the beauty of our post-carbon future and innovate the integration of zero-emission energy and water systems into cultural destinations—regenerative monuments to this most important time in human history that can inspire the public about the beauty and prosperity of our post-carbon future.

Open design competitions for Dubai/Abu Dhabi (2010), New York City (2012), Copenhagen (2014), Santa Monica (2016), Melbourne (2018), Abu Dhabi (2019), Fly Ranch (2020), and Mannheim (2022) have brought in over 1,500 designs from 80+ countries.

LAGI participatory design projects foster a culture of creative entrepreneurship and include Solar Mural artworks in San Antonio Texas, culturally relevant energy solutions with Maasai women in Olorgesailie Kenya, working with West Virginia coal miners, Art+Energy camps, and more. LAGI has worked closely with cities such as Glasgow, Battery Park City, and AlUla to integrate renewable energy infrastructure into creative placemaking projects and mixed-use developments.

Partners and supporters include City of New York, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Copenhagen, 24th World Energy Congress, European Union Commission on Climate Action, Zayed University, City of Santa Monica, J.M. Kaplan Fund, Masdar Abu Dhabi, National Endowment for the Arts, Capital Region of Denmark, Danish Design Centre, the City of Glasgow, the State of Victoria (Australia), Carbon Arts, Creative Carbon Scotland, Climarte, Royal Commission for AlUla, Burning Man Project, Arizona State University, the German Federal Garden Show, and more.

Visit **landartgenerator.org** for more information.

Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Monoian and Robert Ferry

Jill O'Bryan
Artist and Writer

Jill O'Bryan is an American contemporary artist living and working in New York and New Mexico with her husband, artist Charles Ross. O'Bryan's artworks address connection, action, and time as processes of creation. O'Bryan brings the contemplative practice of being "present" to her artistic process by heightening her awareness of her immediate surroundings. When in the New Mexico high desert she brings attention to her senses by recording her interaction with the land. She received a BA in art and English literature from Macalester College, an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and a PhD from New York University where she studied art theory and criticism with a focus on feminist performance art, the body and identity.

O'Bryan's artworks are part of esteemed collections including the Brooklyn Museum, Colby College Museum of Art, Davis Museum, National Gallery of Art Library, New Mexico Museum of Art, and the Sarah-Ann and Werner H. Kramarsky Collection, among several other notable collections.

O'Bryan is also an accomplished writer and published *Carnal Art: Oral's Re-facing* in 2005, delving into the life of the French artist, Orlan. Her articles have graced the pages of esteemed publications such as *Art Journal, n.paradoxa*, *The Drama Review*, and *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*.

In addition to her art and writing, O'Bryan also serves as the Secretary & Treasurer of the Land Light Foundation.

Visit **jillobryan.com** for more information.

Photo by Clayton Porter, 2017.

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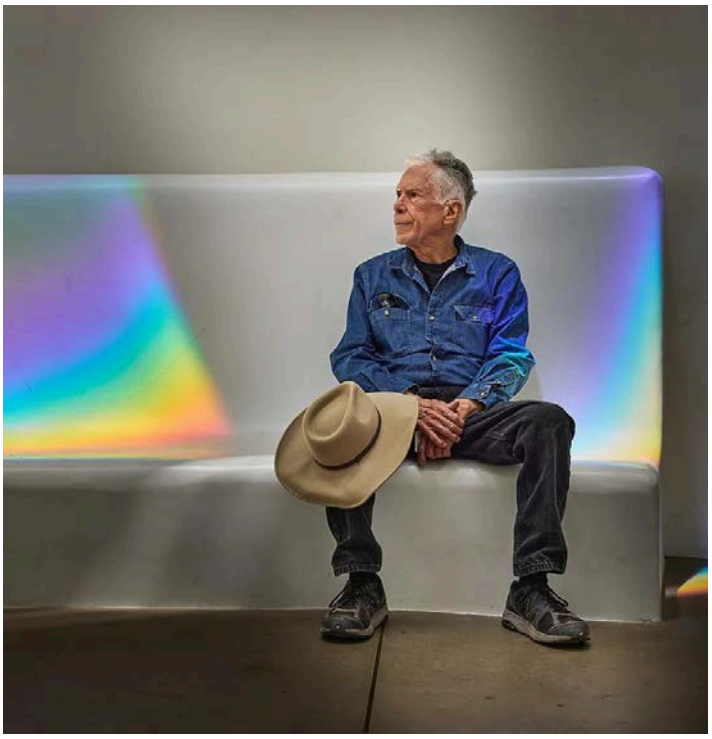

Charles Ross
Artist

Using sunlight and starlight as the source for his art, Charles Ross creates large-scale prisms to project solar spectrum into architectural spaces; focuses sunlight into powerful beams to create solar burn works; draws the quantum behavior of light with dynamite; and works with a variety of other media including photography and video.

For the last 52 years Ross has been building the geometry of the stars into his earthwork, *Star Axis*, now nearing completion in New Mexico.

Ross discovered his passion for making art while studying mathematics at UC Berkeley. There he received his BA in Mathematics in 1960 and an MA in Art in 1962. In 1961 his first solo sculpture exhibit was at Dilexi Gallery in San Francisco. In the 1960s he taught sculpture at UC Berkeley, Cornell University, School of Visual Arts, and Lehman College, New York.

In 1965 while living in a warehouse studio in San Francisco, Ross dreamed the technical details for building large-scale transparent prisms. He abruptly and completely abandoned his earlier work with lattice columns and colored plexi stacks and began making large prisms. A few years later Michael Heizer wrote Ross's "obituary" describing this dramatic aesthetic transformation.

Ross moved back to New York and helped form the first artist co-op building at 80 Wooster Street. Organized by George Maciunas in 1967, it was the co-op that launched SoHo.

Ross exhibited at the Dwan Gallery between 1967 and1971, where both the minimal and land art movements originated. Other artists with Dwan included Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Walter DeMaria, Dan Flavin, Carl Andre, and Sol Lewitt who introduced Ross to Virginia Dwan. Ross's first sculptures exhibited with Dwan were transparent skewed and truncated cubes—minimal objects that bend and refract both light and perception.

In 1969 Ross shifted the emphasis of his artwork from that of the minimal prism object, to the prism as an instrument through which light revealed itself so that the orchestration of spectrum light became the artwork. This began his life long interest in projecting large bands of solar spectrum into living spaces.

A 1971 Dwan Gallery exhibit led to a collaboration with architect Moshe Safdie on Porat Yeshivat Joseph Synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem. Though this project was never built the artwork Ross designed for the Synagogue morphed into an artwork for the Harvard Business School Chapel where Ross again collaborated with Safdie in 1992.

Ross and Safdie won two awards in 1993 for successful collaborative work between artist and architect: The Boston Society of Architects Award for Art and Architecture Collaborations, and the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture Design Award.

Ross continues to create site-specific solar spectrum installations made up of arrays of giant prisms specifically tuned to the sun. The solar spectrums cascade down walls and across floors and ceilings, continuously changing by the hour and with the seasons as they are propelled through the space by the turning of the Earth. Each artwork is specific to the architecture and its location on the planet.
The ultimate goal is to create a nexus of solar spectrum artworks around the globe so that as the spectrum sets in one location, it is always rising in another.

Ross's permanent solar spectrum installations include: The National Museum of the American Indian, for which he was awarded the Washington Building Congress Award in 2005;Conversations with the Sun (2004), Meiji University, Tokyo; Spectrum 12 (1999), Saitama University, Japan, created in collaboration with architect Riken Yamamoto; The US Federal Courthouse, Tampa, Florida (1998); and Lines of Light, Rays of Color, Plaza of the Americas, Dallas, TX (1985).

In 1996 Ross collaborated with Virginia Dwan and architect Laban Winger to create The Dwan Light Sanctuary. Envisioned and inspired by Virginia Dwan, the sanctuary is a place for quiet contemplation. It's located at the United World College, Montezuma, NM.

In 1971 Ross asked himself: "how do I make an artwork that is the opposite of the solar spectrum?" Rather than dispersing sunlight through a prism he decided to focus it into a single point of raw power to create a solar burn. Each day for one year he burned the path of the sun through a large lens into a wooden plank. The burns were exhibited side-by-side filling all the walls of the John Weber Gallery in an exhibition titled Sunlight Convergence/Solar Burn (1971-72). Ross continued to exhibit with John Weber until 1986.

Ross's earthwork, Star Axis, is located in the New Mexico desert. It is both architectonic sculpture and naked eye observatory. The approach to building Star Axis involves gathering a variety of star alignments in different time scales and building them into sculptural form. Walking through its chambers you can see how star space relates to human scale and how the space of the stars reaches down into the earth. Ross conceived of Star Axis in 1971 and began building it in 1976 after a 4-year search through the southwest to find the perfect site—a mesa where one stands at the boundary between earth and sky. He's now finishing Star Axis with a crew of local stonemasons. It's made with granite, sandstone, bronze, stainless steel, and earth. When completed, Star Axis will be eleven stories high and a fifth of a mile across.

Ross's artwork is housed in several museum collections such as the Berkeley Art Museum, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Musée National d'Art Moderne (Centre Pompidou, Paris), Museum Kunstpalast (Germany), National Gallery of Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Nevada Museum of Art, New Mexico Museum of Art, Walker Art Center, Weisman Art Museum, and the Whitney Museum, among many others.

His exceptional talent has garnered recognition through fellowships and grants from prestigious institutions like the Guggenheim Foundation, Thaw Charitable Trust, and Andy Warhol Foundation, among others. Additionally, Ross was featured in the film *Troublemakers: The Story of Land Art* (2015).

Ross also serves at the President of the Land Light Foundation.

Visit **charlesrossstudio.com** for more information.

Photo by Jeremy Frechette, 2023.

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Appendix A

Site Reference Images

Contestants should select one of the five following geographic area types in which to base their conceptual design:
Wooded Deciduous Forest, Coastal Bluff, Low Desert, Plains/Grassland or Tropical Rainforest.

Images are simply meant to inspire a sense of place in the consideration of your design.

The site should be assumed to be located in an open space and primarily an undisturbed, natural setting. Entries should utilize the below site option photo within at least one of the proposal renderings. Additional renderings may include similar site reference images sourced by contestants for the selected site location type.

Below site reference photos are available for download here.

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Site Option #1
“Wooded Deciduous Forest”

i.e. The wooded deciduous forest is characterized by its diverse range of trees that shed their leaves seasonally. These forests boast a rich variety of broadleaf trees such as oak, maple, and beech, among others. They exhibit a vibrant seasonal cycle, with leaves changing colors in autumn before shedding in preparation for winter. Wooded deciduous forests typically feature a varied terrain with rolling hills, valleys, and occasional flat areas. The landscape is often characterized by a dense canopy of trees, creating a shaded and relatively damp environment on the forest floor. Examples include Appalachian Forest (Eastern United States), Black Forest (Germany), and New Forest (England).

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Site Option #2
“Coastal Bluff”

i.e. A coastal bluff stands tall at the edge of the sea, its rugged face carved by the relentless forces of wind and waves. Its steep slopes offer breathtaking vistas of the ocean while providing a crucial natural barrier against coastal erosion. Examples include Big Sur (California), Etretat (Normandy, France), Dover Cliffs (England), and Cliffs of Moher (Ireland).

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Site Option #3
“Low Desert”

i.e. The low desert is a dry, arid region characterized by its extreme temperatures and minimal rainfall. It typically features sparse vegetation, adapted to survive in the harsh desert environment, and is known for its vast stretches of sandy or rocky terrain. Life in the low desert is shaped by its scarcity of water and the resilience of species adapted to thrive in these challenging conditions. Examples include Sonoran Desert (United States and Mexico), Mojave Desert (Arizona / Utah / Nevada), and Atacama Desert (Chile).

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Site Option #4
“Plains / Grasslands”

i.e. These expansive regions feature vast stretches of open land characterized by grasses, occasional shrubs, and relatively flat terrain. These landscapes often feature gently rolling hills or flat expanses, hosting diverse wildlife adapted to this ecosystem, including grazing mammals and various bird species. Examples include the Great Plains (United States / Canada), Savannas of Africa (Eastern Africa), and Pampas (South America).

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Site Option #5
“Tropical Rainforest”

i.e. The land terrain of a tropical rainforest is a labyrinth of diverse vegetation, towering trees, thick underbrush, and a complex network of roots, vines, and foliage. It features a multi-layered canopy that creates a dense, verdant landscape with abundant biodiversity and intricate ecosystems thriving on nutrient-rich soils. Examples include the Amazon Rainforest (South America), Congo Basin Rainforest (Africa), and Daintree Rainforest (Australia).

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Appendix B

Land Art & Celestial Architecture Examples

The following are examples of creative designs utilizing a blend of sculpture, landscape architecture and architecture.

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Example #1
Great Pyramids of Giza

The Pyramids of Giza by night in Egypt may have been built to respond to celestial bodies.

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Example #2
Stonehenge

Stonehenge is located in Wiltshire, England and it is estimated that it was constructed in multiple phases starting about 5,000 years ago.

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Example #3
Cichen Itza

This pyramid structure was created by the Mayan people between 1000 and 1200 A.D. The structure plays with the light and shadow cast by the sun throughout different seasons of the year, including winter and summer solstice.

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Example #4
Star Axis

Created by artist Charles Ross, *Star Axis* is an ongoing land art project that integrates celestial alignments into its design. This large-scale earthwork serves as a naked-eye observatory, featuring precise alignments with celestial bodies such as Polaris (the North Star) and other astronomical phenomena.

***Star Axis* by artist, Charles Ross.**
Images courtesy of CharlesRossStudio.com

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Example #5
Spiral Jetty

Created in 1970 by Robert Smithson, this iconic land art piece consists of a 1,500-foot-long spiral made of rocks and earth extending into the Great Salt Lake. Its circular form and connection with the landscape evoke cosmic patterns and celestial cycles.

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Spiral Jetty **by artist, Robert Smithson.**
Photo by: Gianfranco Gorgoni, Collection of the Museum of Outdoor Arts

Example #6
Roden Crater

Though not completed, *Roden Crater* is an ongoing project by artist James Turrell, transforming a volcanic crater into a massive naked-eye observatory. Turrell's work explores light and space, offering celestial experiences within the Earth.

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***Roden Crater (East Portal)* by artist, James Turrell.**
Photo Courtesy of RodenCrater.com

Example #7

The Lightning Field

While not overtly known as “celestial architecture,” this installation by Walter De Maria is located in New Mexico and consists of 400 stainless steel poles arranged in a grid in the high desert, creating a powerful visual experience that interacts with natural elements, especially during lightning storms. The sculpture interacts with the sky above.

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The Lightning Field, **1977. Estate of Walter De Maria. Photo by John Cliett**
Courtesy of diaart.org

Example #8
Sun Tunnels

Nancy Holt's *Sun Tunnels* art installation in Utah consists of four massive concrete tunnels arranged in an open X configuration. The tunnels are precisely aligned with the sunrise and sunset during the summer and winter solstices, framing the sun as it rises and sets on these significant celestial events. They create apertures that frame the sun, casting specific patterns of light and shadow within the tunnels, engaging viewers in an immersive experience of the solar cycles and the changing play of sunlight throughout the year.

***Sun Tunnels,* 1973-76. Photo by Nancy Holt.**
Collection of Dia Art Foundation with support from Holt / Smithson Foundation
Courtesy of the Holt Smith Foundation.