

2020 COMPETITIONS Annual





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Editor in Chief: G. Stanley Collyer, Ph.D, Hon. AIA
Associate Editor: Daniel Madryga, MS Arch.



Contents

6	Introduction	68	Two New Competitions for Moscow’s Expanding Metro
8	Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum <i>Winner</i>		Klenoviy Boulevard 2 <i>Winner</i>
8	Snøhetta Oslo/New York <i>Finalists</i>	68	Zaha Hadid Architects London <i>2nd place</i>
14	Studio Gang/Olin Chicago/Philadelphia	72	Architectural Bureau KPLN LLC Moscow <i>3rd place</i>
20	Henning Larsen Copenhagen/New York	74	Blank Architects CISC Moscow <i>4th place</i>
24	Powerhouse Precinct at Parramatta <i>Winner</i>	76	Buro Vozduh Moscow <i>5th place</i>
24	Moreau Kusunoki/Genton Paris/Sydney <i>Finalists</i>	78	ABT LLC Moscow
30	AL_A / Architecturus London/Auckland, New Zealand		Prospekt Marshala Zhukova: <i>Winner</i>
36	Bernades Architectura Rio de Janeiro/Sydney	80	Asadov Architectural Bureau LLC Moscow <i>2nd place</i>
40	Steven Holl Architecture/Conrad Gargett New York/Brisbane	82	MAParchitects LLC Moscow <i>3rd place</i>
48	CHROFI + Reko Rennie Sydney/Melbourne	84	NOWADAYS LLC Moscow <i>4th place</i>
52	Brooklyn Bridge: Reinventing a 19th Century Icon <i>Winner Professional Category</i>	86	ABTB LLC Moscow <i>5th place</i>
52	Pilot Project Design Collective Montreal/New York <i>Finalists</i>	88	Blank Architects CISC Moscow
56	BIG + Arup New York	90	A Non-profit on Design’s Cutting Edge: The Houston Endowment <i>Winner</i>
58	ScenesLab + Minzi Long + Andrew Nash New York/Boston/Vienna <i>Young Adult Winner</i>	90	Kevin Daley Architects Los Angeles, California <i>Honorable Mention</i>
60	Shannon Hui, Kwans Kim, Yujin Kim New York/Bay Area, CA/Hong Kong <i>Young Adult Finalists</i>	96	Olson Kundig Seattle, Washington <i>Finalist</i>
64	Lukus Kurler Milford, Connecticut	100	Deborah Burke & Partners New York, NY <i>Finalist</i>
66	Aubrey Bader + Maggie Redding Knoxville, Tennessee	102	Schaum/Shieh Architects, HKS New York/San Francisco
		106	A Tribute to Eisenhower on the Mall Frank Gehry and Partners Santa Monica, California

An Ultimate Destination for Naturalists



Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Competition

Until now, the establishment of presidential libraries at the conclusion of their terms has followed the founding of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library after World War II. The first exception to this was the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, established in 1962.* Now a foundation has been established in North Dakota (2014) to honor the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, but with an overriding theme—protecting this country's national parks, which TR was so instrumental in establishing. North Dakota as a site for this effort would appear to be quite logical.

Until Teddy Roosevelt's interest turned to politics in 1888, he spent time roughing it in North Dakota, even buying two ranches near the area when the new library is to be located. One of four presidents honored on Mt. Rushmore, Theodore Roosevelt is known as much for his creation of the national park system, as for using anti-trust laws to break up major corporate monopolies at the turn of the century. Since he first became aware of the benefits of our forests and plains as a natural resource during visits in his early years in North Dakota, it was logical that a group proposing the library idea could immediately gain support

from the state government for such a venture. Moreover, raising \$100M for the construction of the project from private sources hardly proved to be an insurmountable obstacle and paved the way for a \$50M grant from the state government for an endowment to support the operation of the library.

The site chosen for the location of the new library is adjacent to the town of Medora, North Dakota, just south of Roosevelt National Park. Although only having a population of 128 inhabitants, Medora will undoubtedly see an increase, due to an anticipated growth in visitors when the library is completed by 2025.

To arrive at a design for the building and site, the Theodore Roosevelt Library Foundation turned to a design competition format that shortlisted three firms as finalists:

- Snøhetta (Oslo, Norway and New York City)
- Studio Gang (Chicago)
- Henning Larsen (Copenhagen, Denmark/New York)

Although all three firms can point to major projects in their resumes, Snøhetta is best known for having launched the firm by virtue of winning a major international competition—for the

Winner

Snøhetta
Oslo/New York

OPPOSITE PAGE
Looking north

BELOW
Aerial view of site

Alexandria Library in Egypt. The competition finalists were announced on 21 May 2020, and the winner, Snøhetta, was revealed to the public on 21 September 2020. The selection of Snøhetta was not a great surprise, since the goal of the competition, as expressed by the client, was “to build an awe inspiring, architecturally significant destination that works with, not against, nature.”

Snøhetta's design of the main building can only be characterized as landscape-oriented, as it hardly represented a gigantic structure rising out of the hills. One might have interpreted this as a guiding factor in the extension of the hill landscape. This was somewhat in contrast to the designs by both Studio Gang and Henning Larsen, who produced designs focusing more on the buildings than the landscape as a solution.

Snøhetta's solution for the library itself could even be regarded as something peeking out under the landscape, with the possibility of visitors even using the grassy rooftop as a point of contemplation.

Looking back to other competitions, this strategy had a few forerunners: the winning design for wHY Architecture's Ross Pavilion competition in Edinburgh, Scotland prevailed by turning to a landscape-oriented solution.**

The following narratives accompanying each proposal illustrate each team's strategy. As of this date, the client has just reached an agreement to start construction by adding local firms to the winning Snøhetta team. The Foundation hopes to have the library open to the public by 2024 or 2025. -Ed

*It should be noted that, in the absence of a national library for Abraham Lincoln, The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in Fort Wayne, Indiana possessed the largest collection of materials on Lincoln until its closing in 2008, when the Lincoln National Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois became the major source of Lincoln's records.

**<https://competitions.org/?s=Ross+pavilion%2C+Edinburgh&submit.x=0&submit.y=0>





Winner

Snøhetta
Oslo/New York

LEFT
Looking west

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE
View looking north
OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW
Visitors' lobby

Snøhetta Narrative

Snøhetta's design for the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library is informed by the President's personal reflections on the landscape, his interest in environmental stewardship, and periods of quiet introspection and civic engagement. The design of the Library is more than a building, it is a journey preserving the existing landscape of diverse habitats punctuated with small pavilions allowing for reflection and activity. Its gently sloping roof looks to the northeast, gazing out to the National Park, historical settings in the Little Missouri River valley, and the Elkhorn Ranch far in the distance, further connecting the Library of tomorrow with its origins from the past.

The main building for the Presidential Library is defined by its unique roof rising from the butte, echoing the landforms of the surrounding Badlands. Visitors can ascend the accessible rooftop to discover commanding views of the National Park and Medora during the day, as well as an ideal location for stargazing at night. Inside the Library, large windows highlight views to historically significant landscapes and complement the rhythm of the interactive exhibitions within. A generous covered porch overlooks the nearby valleys and can be used for gatherings throughout the year.

The Library's location at the northeast edge of the butte preserves the landscape for research while offering a setting for educational walks, leisure, and recreation. As visitors set out on a loop from the Library, they will encounter adventurous paths which connect to the nearby Maah Daah Hey Trail as well as several small pavilions. Ranging from contemplative nooks to expansive vistas, these pavilions allow visitors to experience Roosevelt's trials and triumphs in in dialogue with the landscapes that shaped him. Pavilions may also be used at other important locations related to the National Parks or include a facsimile of T.R.'s early Elkhorn Ranch cabin.

Snøhetta's design for the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library is a journey through the North Dakota Bad-lands. The Library also functions in harmony with the unique ecology of the region and expresses the conservation ethos for which Roosevelt is remembered. Its construction will use natural and renewable materials, while its sophisticated energy systems will set a new standard for sustainable design in the region. Our design is oriented to diminish the impact of wind and other climatic factors so that the Library will be accessible in

all seasons. Facing northeast, the new Library looks onto the Little Missouri River, the former military camp called the Cantonment, and the original train depot in where T.R. first arrived in the area. A parking option at Pacific Avenue nearby these locations, which we call the Depot, will allow visitors to connect easily to the town, the National Park, and the Library. A caravan from the Depot will bring visitors on a dramatic electric train ride through a nearby wash to the Library atop the butte. This electric caravan can be expanded over time to support an ecosystem of destinations in Medora and the National Park.

Snøhetta's design for the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library strengthens connections to the town of Medora. Through strategies that streamline and activate the visitor experience, we see opportunities to connect the project to larger institutions such as the National Park Service, universities and schools, and look forward to engaging in a participatory design process to bring community input into a realizable project. Drawing a continuum between past and present, our design captures the legacy of T.R., while also inspiring a commitment to the longevity and health of the region.

We see this design process as more than just creating a building; it is about making a place for community, rooted in T.R.'s story and composed of all those who call North Dakota home.





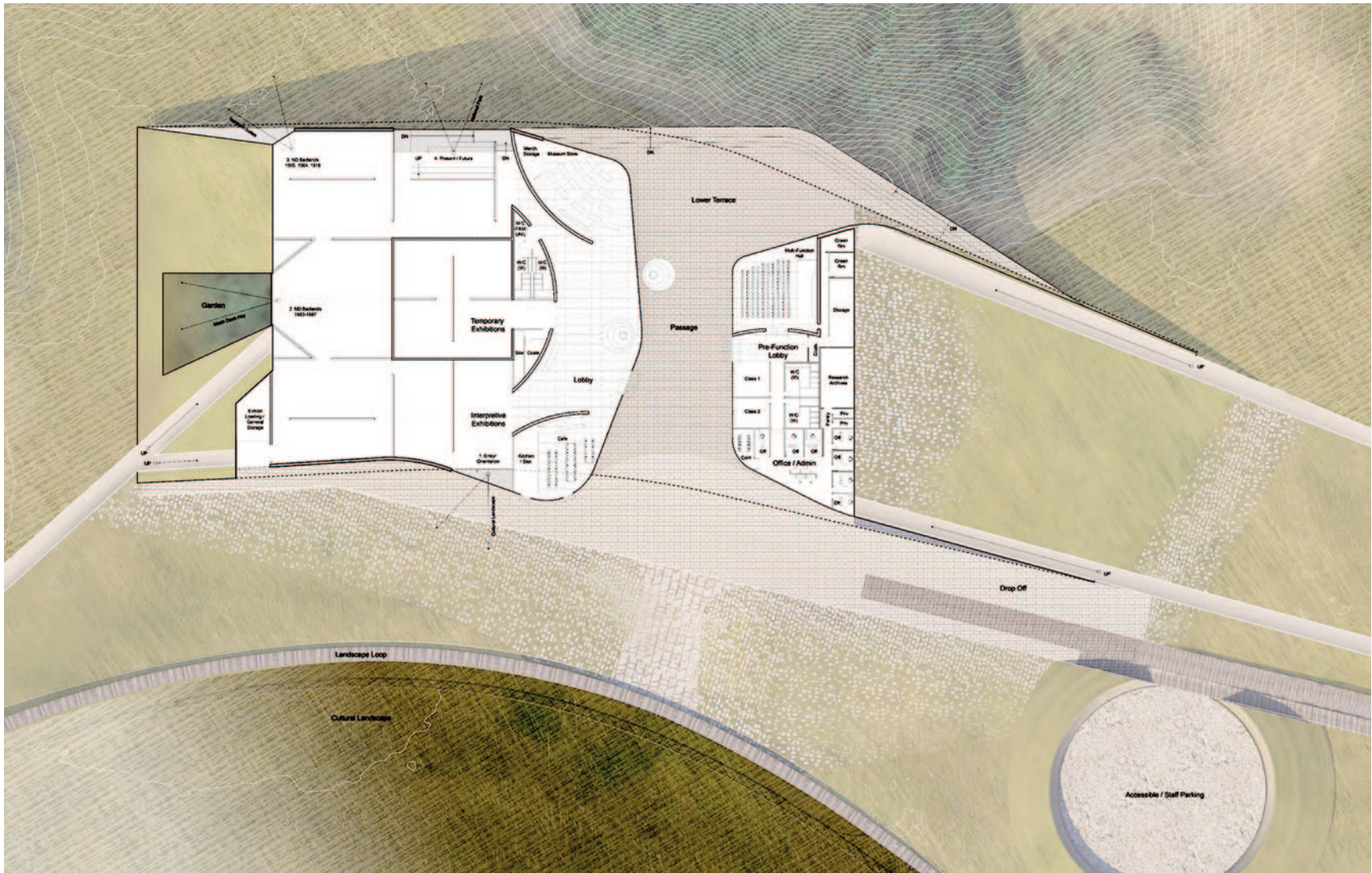


Winner

Snøhetta
Oslo/New York

LEFT
Landscape view
BELOW
Floor plan

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE
Site plan
OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW
Terrace view



Finalist

Studio Gang / Olin
Chicago / Philadelphia

RIGHT, ABOVE
Maah Daah Hey view
BELOW
Private dining

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE
View from gully
OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW
Aerial view

Studio Gang/Olin Narrative

Our design is inspired by T.R.'s dual love of learning and the outdoors, As the first Presidential Library attached to a National Park, the project is poised to foster greater understanding, environmental stewardship, and healing in one of North America's most incredible natural places. Intimately connected with the ecology of the North Dakota Badlands, Basecamp will at once draw people inward for intellectual exchange and direct them outward for physical exploration, allowing them to discover new connections with each other and the natural world.

The structure takes its inspiration from the rock formations of the Badlands, presenting itself as an emergent hardscape naturally formed by water and wind over time. Three horseshoe-shaped volumes organize the different functions of the Library, each housing distinct activities at the interior while emphasizing qualities of the outdoor environment by creating terraces and garden spaces that offer varying views of the landscape.







Finalist

Studio Gang / Olin
Chicago / Philadelphia

RIGHT
Orientation stair

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE
View to entry
OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW
Research archives and
offices porch



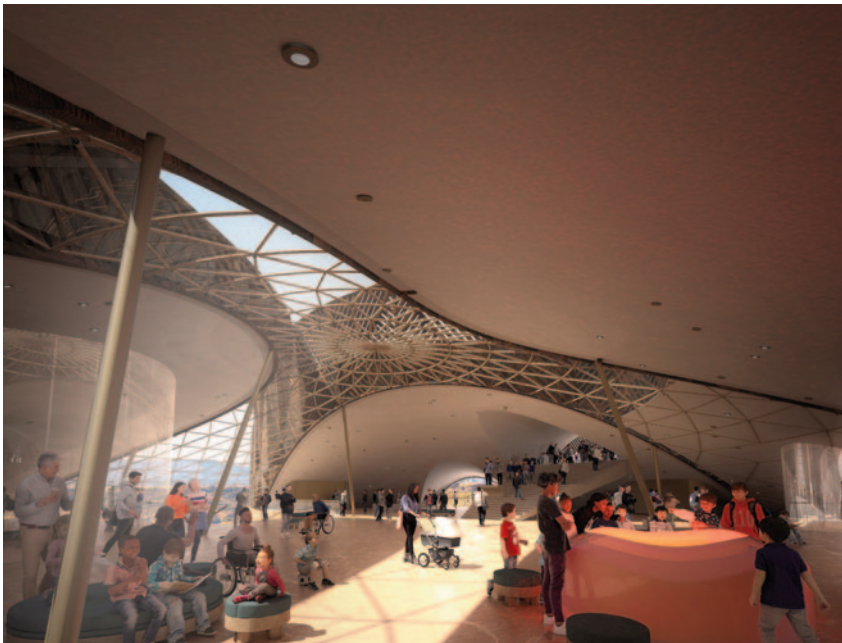


Finalist
Studio Gang / Olin
 Chicago / Philadelphia

LEFT, ABOVE
 Sunset terrace
 LEFT, BELOW
 Assembly room

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE
 Roofscape
 OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW LEFT
 Magic table
 OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW RIGHT
 Cafe





Finalist

Henning Larsen/Nelson Byrd Wolz
Copenhagen-New York/
Charlottesville-New York

RIGHT
Summer perspective
BELOW
Interior view

OPPOSITE PAGE
Arrival perspective





Finalist

Henning Larsen/Nelson Byrd Wolz
Copenhagen-New York/
Charlottesville-New York

RIGHT, ABOVE
Evening light
RIGHT, BELOW
Winter scene

BELOW
Cafe night view

OPPOSITE PAGE
Aerial view

