

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EDRA ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF ANNUAL GREAT PLACES AWARDS

MADISON, WISC. (MAY 31, 2017) -- Four exemplary projects/books on interior design, architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning have been named winners of the 2017 Great Places Awards by the [Environmental Design Research Association](#) (EDRA). The awards was organized and run by EDRA in conjunction with the [Project for Public Spaces](#) (PPS).

Each of these winning entries will be on display during the 48th EDRA Annual Conference at Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison, Wisc. The EDRA Great Places Awards recognize professional and scholarly excellence in environmental design and pay special attention to the relationship between physical form of the built environment and human activity or experience.

Winning Entries

[Mariahilfer Strasse](#), Vienna, is the **2017 Place Design Award** entry submitted by Simona Serafino. This entry consists of the transformation of a fancy 19th Century shopping boulevard in Vienna into an inviting, pedestrian friendly avenue. This project is particularly noteworthy for its participatory process involving multiple stakeholders to build support for this transformation. During an initial phase, prototypes of the street furniture were placed to test the design as well as give users the chance to experience the changes being proposed. This also served to build support for the proposed changes to the street. As a result of this project, there has been a dramatic reduction of traffic, noise and pollution. The auto-dominated street has been transformed into a human scale shopping area. The street is inviting and beckons people to walk and bike and in the process promote active living. Half a year after the project completion, a significant majority of users are happy with the outcome. This project serves as a model for other human-centered shopping street renovations in cities.

[Making Our Own Space \(MOOS\)](#), is the **2017 Place Planning Award** entry submitted by David Jurca. It is a planning project that empowers middle and high school students with the skills to transform their local public spaces. Led by a team of local and nationally-renowned designers in conjunction with the Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) and the City of Shaker Heights, Ohio, this initiative uses hands-on, on-site workshops to build physical and social infrastructure in collaboration with the surrounding community. Outdoor workshops organized by students addressed issues related to shared spaces, inclusive decision-making and helping to bring diversity to the design fields by involving youth from underrepresented groups. In response to the project, the city created a committee of staff, residents and councilpersons to increase leadership opportunities for middle and high school youth in Cleveland. The Shaker School District is exploring how to incorporate the MOOS peacemaking workshop into its curriculum. This is a great example of planning that involves youth in place making and community building.

Renewable Energy Landscape is the winner of the **2017 Place Research Award**. This is an edited book (Dean Apostol, James Palmer, Martin Pasqualetti, Richard Smardon, Robert Sullivan) published by Routledge (2017). It reviews the existing literature on renewable energy and the cultural value of landscape that people inhabit. Against this backdrop, this book proposes a process for evaluating the (primarily visual) experienced effects of renewable energy projects on our landscape and proposes a more positive public decision making process. The authors developed research and policy recommendations that reflect international needs and priorities regarding integrating public input into large scale renewable energy projects and ensuring that their impact on the landscape is minimized. This book provides guidance to professionals who plan and design renewable energy projects, to decision makers who approve such projects, and to members of the public who are seeking to represent their own interests responsibly and at the same time to critique these projects in a constructive manner. In the era of climate change and global warming, the research represented in this book is particularly significant.

Designing for Autism Spectrum Disorders is the winner of the **2017 Place Book Award**. The book is authored by Kristi Gaines, Angela Bourne, Michelle Pearson and Mesha Kleinbrink and published by Routledge (2016). The book aims to increase knowledge about the influence of natural and manmade environments on individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and other forms of intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD). Using a variety of methods (case studies, interviews with individuals, behavior mapping, picture preference survey, photo voice and survey of special education teachers) the authors identified environmental features that impact individuals on the autism spectrum. The book presents the findings in an accessible manner to enable practitioners to plan and design environments for a diverse range of individuals including ASD and other forms of IDD.

The Process

The winners were selected by a renowned jury of research and design professionals:

- Mark Gillem, Professor, Department of Architecture, University of Oregon
- Jutta Mason, activist, place maker and founder of Centre for Local Research in Public Space, Toronto
- Brian Orland, Rado Family Foundation Professor in GeoDesign, University of Georgia
- David Rubin, founding principal of LAND COLLECTIVE, an award winning landscape architecture and urban design studio
- Randy Tukan, Senior VP and Director of Interiors for HOK (Canada) and Global Director of Hospitality

The jurors followed a rigorous blind review two-tiered process for evaluating the submissions. Final deliberations led to the selection of the winning submissions. The deliberations were overseen by Mallika Bose, EDRA representative and coordinator of the 2017 Great Places Awards. Kathy Madden, co-founder and Director of Education and Training at the Project for Public Spaces served as an observer while Kris Haskin, former EDRA executive director, provided administrative support.

Award recipients were recognized on Wednesday, May 31, 2017 during the opening reception of EDRA48Madison. For more information, please visit the EDRA website at <http://www.edra.org/>

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The Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) is an international, interdisciplinary organization founded in 1968 by design professionals, social scientists, students, educators, and facility managers.