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Press Contact:
Lynn Kim
212-358-6114, lkim@aiany.org
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AIA New York Announces Design Awards 2026 Recipients



Architecture Honor recipient Davis Center at the Harlem Meer. Photo: Richard Barnes.

24 winning projects in the categories of Architecture, Interiors, Projects, and Urban Design celebrate the wonder of architecture, its role in building community, and its capacity as a vehicle for optimism.

New York City, January 13, 2026 – On Monday, January 12, 2026, a jury of independent architects, educators, and planners from outside New York City convened to select the 2026 winners of the [AIA New York Design Awards](#). Later that evening, the jurors publicly announced the 24 winning projects at a symposium, free and open to the public, hosted at the Center for Architecture and on Zoom.

The selected projects and the architecture firms that designed them represent the exceptional work by AIA New York members and architects practicing in New York City. Awards were



conferred in four categories: Architecture, Interiors, Projects, and Urban Design. Each winning project, granted either an “Honor,” “Merit,” or “Citation,” was chosen for its design quality, response to its context and community, program resolution, innovation, thoughtfulness, and technique. Submitted projects had to be completed by AIANY members or architects/designers practicing in New York or be New York projects designed by architects/designers based elsewhere.

Selected from among over 200 entries, the winning projects span scales and typologies, ranging from cultural institutions and academic buildings to intimate interventions in public space. Together, they argue for the urgent need to design the architecture of the future *now*, whether through forward-looking academic environments such as Penn Engineering’s [new home](#) for data science and AI, or through research and advocacy on emerging technologies, as exemplified by [Evan Shieh’s work](#) on autonomous vehicles.

At the same time, the projects share a sense of optimism, rooted in action: a belief that architects possess the skills to actively shape the future rather than remaining passive subjects of forces like AI or the housing crisis. These works demonstrate rigor in architectural practice and in tackling the technical and bureaucratic challenges that architects navigate while advocating for a better future.

Above all, the honorees celebrate the humanity of architecture—projects such as the [Lopez Playground Comfort Station](#) reveal the care and dignity embedded in designing for everyday public use, while renovations like the [David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center](#) illustrate the concept of reinvigorating public space as a tool to bring our community together.

Adam Ainslie, Assoc. AIA, on Neuhoff: “It’s a multi-block renovation of what had been abandoned for 50 years as a slaughterhouse. This project really celebrated history and brought it to the forefront in a way that didn’t have to be capital-A architecture for it to become the protagonist. We talked a lot about what histories do we engage with and how do we engage with them, and we thought this was a particularly innovative use of the history that was there becoming the identity of the place and uplifting that portion of Nashville.”

Maarten Gielen on optimism: “Architecture can make a difference. It’s as simple as that, in a way, but what we’re trying to show is that good architecture, whether it is making an excellent structure that is future-proof and that is going to be adapted and cared for over multiple generations, or whether it is an attention for the people who maintain and care for our parks—at whatever scale it is, architecture can make a difference. That is ultimately our optimistic reading of the situation of the profession today.”



Brie Hensold, HASLA, on the Lopez Playground Comfort Station: “We saw this project as taking on a challenge that many people have not solved for decades: how do you provide comfort, rest, and peace in a cost-effective, replicable way across many parks within a system? This project considers the needs of caregivers, children, maintenance workers, and the unhoused community and offers a way for people to stay and linger and visit public spaces much longer than they could otherwise. This is proof-of-concept for a system that is modular and can be implemented across a much broader system that could provide inspiration, not just here, but across the country.”

Susan Jones, FAIA, on designing for the future: “The selected projects represent the architecture of the future, and the architecture of now—we don’t have time to wait! We need to design the future now. And that’s what we believe these projects represent in different ways. We just shout out to this community and all of us as architects and as professionals in this country to do more designing the future now.”

Jeff Kamuda, AIA, on the idea of repair: “[During the jury deliberations,] there was a lot of discussion around reinvigorating community and public space and focusing on that as a way to really bring us back together. David Geffen Hall is a great example—and there’s many others—of prioritizing and focusing on human beings and allowing community to really be a driver of a sense of optimism and what architecture and design are capable of. We’re all in desperate need of that at the moment.”

Christiana Moss, FAIA, on the impact of AI: “The age of AI has made unbuilt work even more challenging [to judge.]... We’re focusing on research and advocacy and how architects are actually doing other kinds of work to be able to execute all of the work that you see here [in the winning projects.] I’d like to see more of that coming to the fore instead of just sexy images, because AI’s going to do them for us. We have to reinstate our professional existence very clearly and do that with force. I would say, let’s focus on the hard things because we can get them done as architects.”

Kia Weatherspoon on Manifest: “It’s a mixed-use retail concept with a speakeasy, a restaurant, a barbershop, a coffee shop and café, and also a restaurant component. What we really loved was the necessity to really elevate the care of men. The idea of self-care and what it means to cater to a male demographic is still a necessity, especially in a city like Washington, DC. Manifest is very well done and beautiful and it brings great color, story, and sexiness around men’s wellness and men’s health.”

We invite you to [browse all winners](#) on our website. The spring issue of [Oculus magazine](#) will include further quotes from the jurors and a review of their discussion.



HONORS AND AWARDS LUNCHEON

Winning projects will be recognized at the [Honors and Awards Luncheon](#), scheduled for Friday, April 24, at Cipriani Wall Street.

EXHIBITION

The Center for Architecture will host an [exhibition of the winning projects](#), opening Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 6:00 pm, and on view through September 2, 2026.

2026 Design Jury:

Adam Ainslie, Assoc. AIA, Associate, BLDUS; Lecturer, University of Maryland

Maarten Gielen, Director, Halfwerk

Brie Hensold, HASLA, Principal and Urban Planner, Agency Landscape + Planning

Susan Jones, FAIA, Principal Architect, atelierjones

Jeff Kamuda, AIA, Design Director, Birdseye

Christiana Moss, FAIA, Principal, STUDIO MA

Kia Weatherspoon, NCIDQ, ASID, President, Determined by Design

AIANY DESIGN AWARDS 2026 RECIPIENTS

24 awards conferred

ARCHITECTURE – 17 total (5 honors; 9 merits; 3 citations)

INTERIORS – 3 total (1 honor; 2 merits)

PROJECTS – 2 total (1 honor; 1 merit)

URBAN DESIGN – 2 total (1 merit; 1 citation)

ARCHITECTURE

Honor

Amy Gutmann Hall, University of Pennsylvania

Architect: Lake Flato

Architect: KSS Architects

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Book Tower

Architect: ODA Architects

Location: Detroit, MI

Davis Center at the Harlem Meer

Design Architect: Susan T Rodriguez | Architecture • Design

Architect of Record: Mitchell Giurgola Architects



Landscape Architect: Central Park Conservancy
Location: New York, NY

The Eliza and New York Public Library Inwood Branch

Architect (Building; The Eliza Residences; Universal Pre-K; Activities, Culture, and Training (ACTS) Center): Fogarty Finger
Architect (Library Interiors): Andrew Berman Architect
Location: New York, NY

Doris Duke Theatre at Jacob's Pillow

Architect: Marvel
Lead Design Architect: Mecanoo
Location: Becket, MA

Merit

Brown University Brook Street Residence Halls

Architect: TenBerke
Landscape Architect: STIMSON
Location: Providence, RI

Disney New York City Headquarters, Robert A. Iger Building

Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Interior Architect: Gensler
Landscape Architect: Scape Studio
Location: New York, NY

Frame 122

Architect: Brent Buck Architects
Landscape Architect: MKM Landscape Architecture
Location: Brooklyn, NY

Garden House at the Packer Collegiate Institute

Architect: WXY architecture + urban design
Landscape Architect: Starr Whitehouse
Location: Brooklyn, NY

Honnen Arts Hub

Architect: Kennedy & Violich Architecture
Location: Colorado Springs, CO

Lopez Playground Modular Comfort Station

Architect: 1100 Architect
Location: Staten Island, NY



St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Architect: Snøhetta

Location: St. Louis, MO

Studio Museum in Harlem

Architect: Adjaye Associates

Architect of Record: Cooper Robertson

Location: New York, NY

Terminal Warehouse

Architect: COOKFOX Architects

Landscape Architect: Terrain-NYC

Location: New York, NY

Citation for the Integration of Embodied and Operational Sustainability

475 High Performance Building Supply

Architect: Ryan Enschede Studio

Location: Brooklyn, NY

Citation for Reconnecting Family to Nature Through a Highly Evolved Sustainable Strategy

Riverhouse

Architect: WORKac

Landscape Architect: Anne Penniman Associates

Landscape Architect: Golden Root Inc.

Location: Hopkinton, RI

Citation for Sensitivity to Landscape and Art

Storm King Art Center

Architect: Heneghan Peng Architects

Architect: WXY architecture + urban design

Landscape Architect: Gustafson Porter + Bowman

Landscape Architect: Reed Hilderbrand

Location: New Windsor, NY

INTERIORS

Honor

David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center

Architect of Record (Master Plan and Concert Theater): Diamond Schmitt



Architect (Public Spaces): Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners
Location: New York, NY

Merit

Manifest

Architect: INC Architecture & Design
Location: Washington, DC

Sculpting History at the Valentine Studio: Art, Power, and the “Lost Cause” American Myth at The Valentine Museum

Architect: Studio Joseph
Associate Architect: Glavé & Holmes Architecture
Location: Richmond, VA

PROJECTS

Honor

Exodus and Dance Restoration at Kingsborough Houses

Architect: New York City Housing Authority
Consulting Architect: Ronnette Riley Architect
Location: Brooklyn, NY

Merit

Autonomous Urbanism: Towards a New Transitopia

Author: Evan Shieh
Publisher: Applied Research & Design

URBAN DESIGN

Merit

South Battery Park City Resilience

Architect: AECOM LAUD NYC
Location: New York, NY

Citation for Celebrating the Reuse of Post-Industrial Infrastructure

Neuhoff

Architect: S9 Architecture and Engineering



Architect of Record (New Buildings): HKS

Architect of Record (Adaptive Reuse): Smith Gee Studio

Landscape Architect: Future Green Studio

Location: Nashville, TN

About AIA New York

Established in 1857, AIA New York is the oldest and largest chapter of the [American Institute of Architects \(AIA\)](#), serving as the collective voice of nearly 5,000 licensed architects, allied professionals, students, and design enthusiasts in New York City.

Inaugurated in 2003 as one of the AIA's first cultural institutions, the [Center for Architecture](#) engages local and international audiences with the value, impact, and wonder of architecture. Together, we advance the value and practice of architecture to promote just and sustainable communities.

Both AIA New York and the Center for Architecture advocate for the importance of design in enhancing urban life, offering programming that fosters engagement among architects, professionals, and the public. We prioritize values such as civic engagement, equity, environmental sustainability, resiliency, technological innovation, and inspiring design.