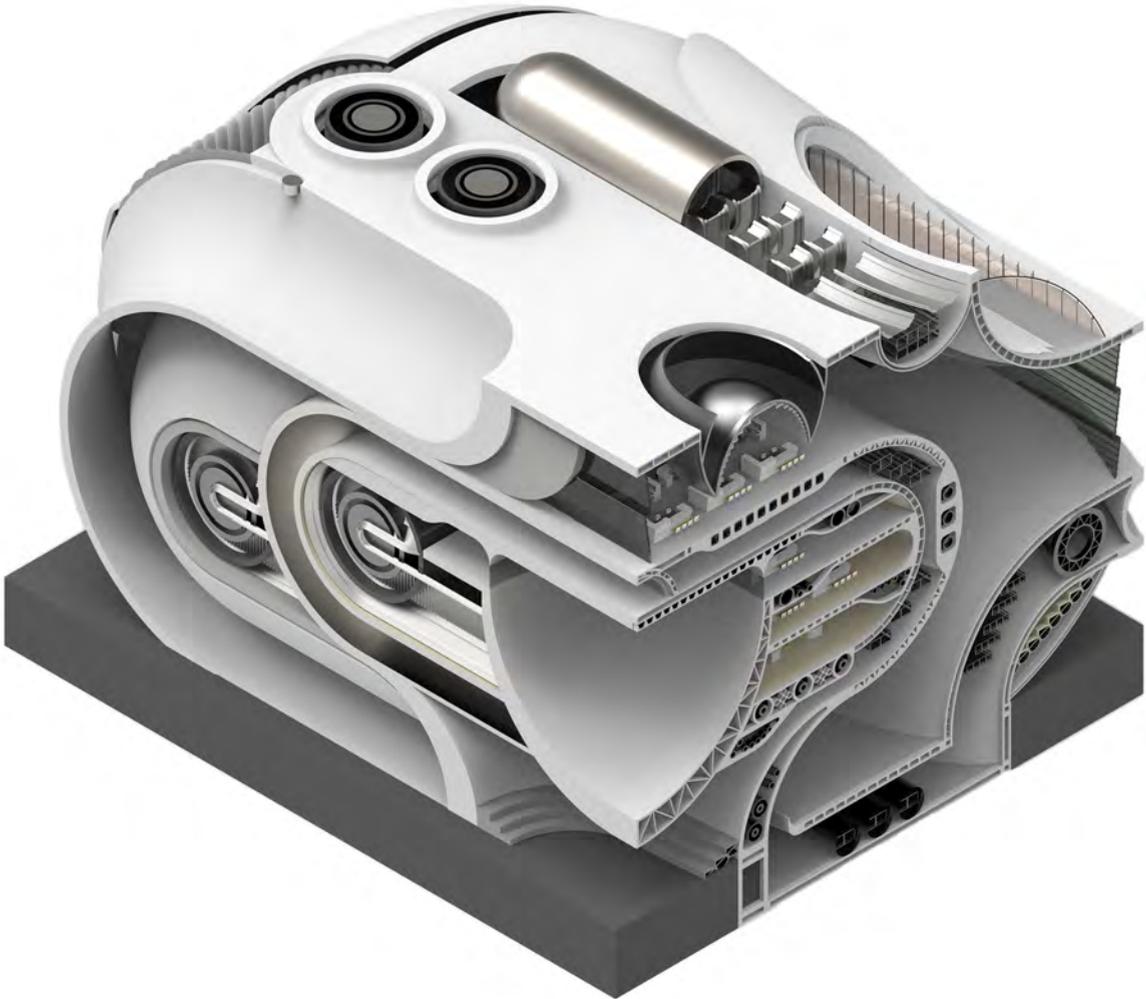


University of  
Pennsylvania  
Stuart Weitzman  
School of Design

The Weitzman School prepares students to address complex sociocultural and environmental issues through thoughtful inquiry, creative expression, and innovation. As a diverse community of scholars and practitioners, we are committed to advancing the public good—both locally and globally—through art, design, planning, and preservation.



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**Danny Jarabek, MArch'24**

"I chose Penn because the high level of design thinking provided me with an outlet to advance my interests and passions surrounding the field of architecture in both practice and research. I was confident that the faculty in conjunction with the urban setting of Penn would be an ideal setting to work toward becoming a licensed architect."



**Kanya Khandelwal, MCP'24**

"Philadelphia's dynamic urban landscape, with its complex urban challenges and opportunities for hands-on learning and research, provided the perfect backdrop for my studies. In choosing Penn, I saw an opportunity to not only expand my knowledge and skills but also to immerse myself in a city with a rich history of urban development—a city where I could directly apply my academic pursuits to real-world urban issues."

Go online to meet  
current student  
ambassadors





**Victoria Antoinette Megens,  
MFA'24**

"I was interested in the interdisciplinary aspects of the School of Design and within the studio-based program itself."



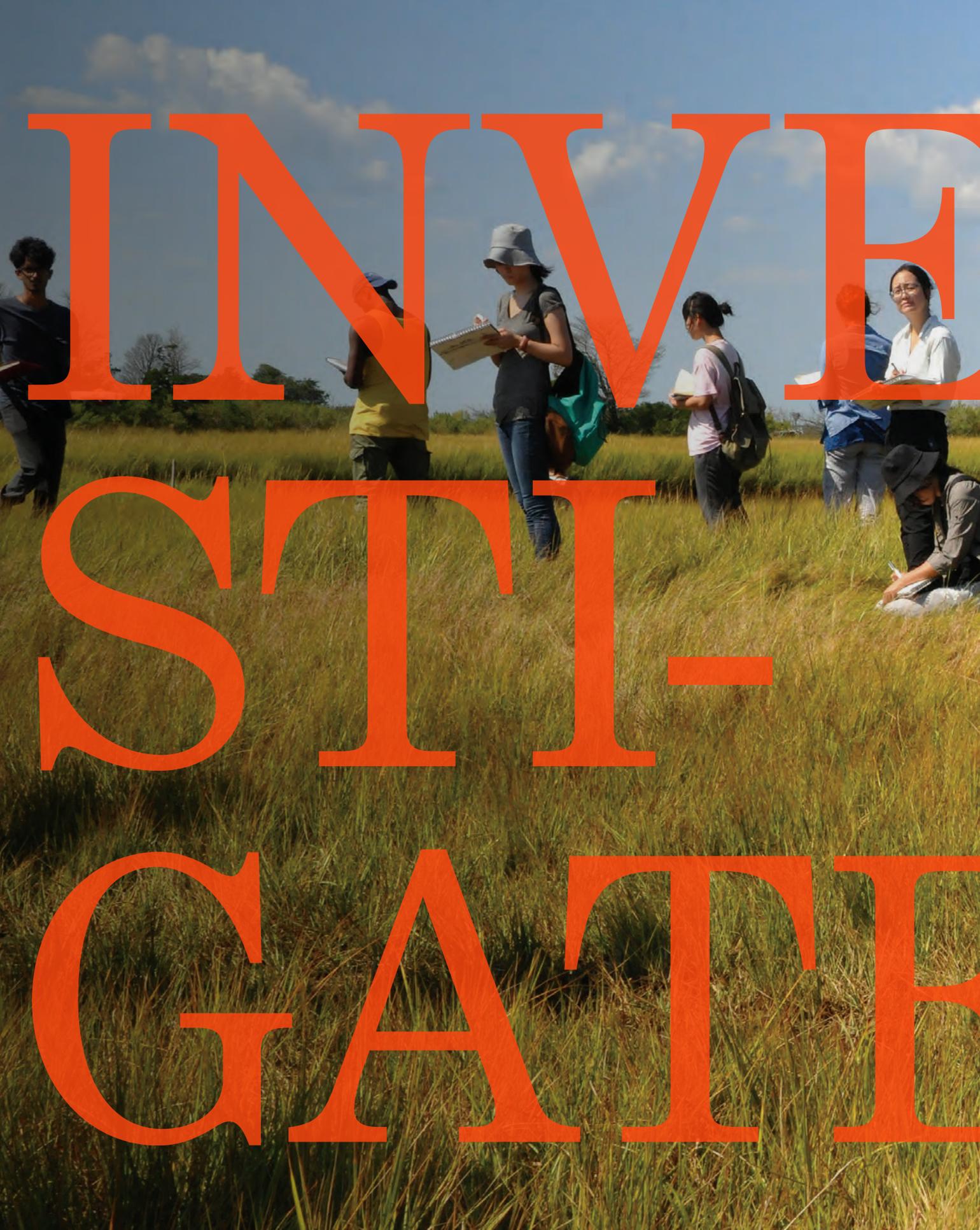
**Daniel Saldaña, MSHP'25**

"I was impressed by the curriculum as it acknowledges the interdisciplinary nature of the field as well as the number of full-time professors providing many research opportunities. Also, the concentrations approach is unique and very helpful in order to take advantage of your time at Penn."



**Clio Macrakis, MLA'26**

"I was struck by how faculty interacted with each other at Penn, they all seemed willing and eager to talk to one another. I also felt that Penn's program is less conceptual and more technical than some of the other private universities, while still providing a foundation in drawing and graphic design."



INVEST

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PHOTO BY SARAH A. WILLIG



01 Louis Kahn with students at the Fisher Fine Arts Library, Louis I. Kahn Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania

02 Julian Francis Abele (1881-1950) earned a BS in Architecture in 1902. Photo courtesy University Archives of the University of Pennsylvania



03 Artist Andy Warhol and his first solo museum exhibition at ICA featured in the Penn Comment, October 1965, Vol. II, No. 2. Photo © Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania.

04 Professor Ian McHarg at Earth Week, Independence Mall, Philadelphia.



# Making History

More than fifty years ago, a group of students in the landscape architecture and regional planning program at Penn began organizing Earth Week. Their mentor, Professor Ian McHarg, had just published *Design With Nature*. Together, they helped birth the environmental movement and revolutionized the practice of landscape architecture and planning.

*Design With Nature* was not the first time history was made by our faculty or students, nor was it the last. Just as McHarg became legend at Penn for inviting anthropologists, biologists, and other scientists into the conversation on design with nature, our school's sphere of influence today isn't confined to the built environment. Consider the 30+ degrees and certificates that we now offer, several in collaboration with our colleagues at the Wharton School, the School of Law, the School of Engineering and Applied Science, and the School of Social Policy and Practice.

From our work in robotics and bio-art to big data and remote sensing, we continue to invent new forms of expression and interpretation for architects, landscape architects, planners, preservationists, and artists. Consider the efforts of PennPraxis or Monument Lab, at the Center for Public Art and Space, to make design more inclusive.

The Weitzman School's mission goes beyond giving our professions new tools. We are working to make them more representative of our communities. Consider the activities of the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy to support a just and efficient transition to sustainable energy around the world, or the resources of the Architectural Archives, which ground our innovations in centuries of human ingenuity and challenge us to look at history anew.

Whether you find inspiration in the work of Julian Abele or Lou Kahn, Marion Weiss or Sharon Hayes, I invite you to join us in giving form to "design with nature now"—really building the kind of future we want to live in. We've been doing this work for over 150 years, and we're just getting started.

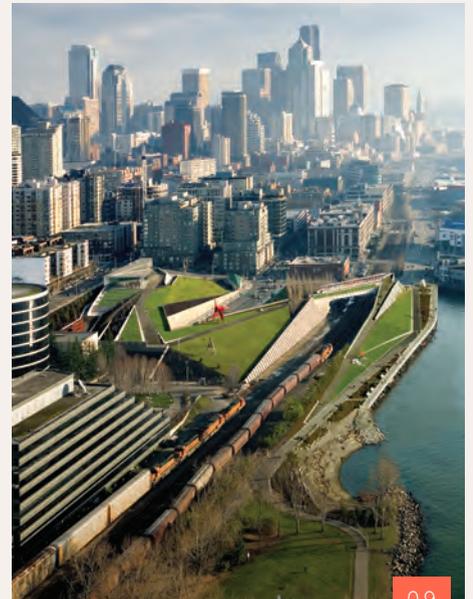
// **FRITZ STEINER** (MRP'77, MA'86, PHD'86)  
*Dean and Paley Professor*  
*FASLA, FAAR, RAAR, SITES AP*

**08** Sharon Hayes, *If They Should Ask*, installation at Rittenhouse Square for Monument Lab, 2017. Photo by Steve Weinik courtesy Mural Arts.

**09** Weiss/Manfredi, Seattle Art Museum: Olympic Sculpture Park, 2007. Photo by Ben Benschneider courtesy Weiss/Manfredi.



**05** B | reactor, a biological design platform developed by Orkan Telhan, associate professor of fine arts (emerging design) and Karen Hogan, Biorealize Inc. **06** Work by MUSA students Andrew Renninger, Dhruvi Kothari, Lufeng Lin, Sagari Datta. **07** PennPraxis design fellows present design proposals at a community gathering in South Whitehall Township, Pennsylvania.





## Designing For, and With, Forests

By Jared Brey for Weitzman News

**ABOVE** Treated fire-resilient forest, after thinning and prescribed burning, in the Tahoe National Forest, a project partner with the North Yuba Forest Partnership. From left: Lon Henderson, US Forest Service; Weitzman students Ari Vamos, Vyusti Agarwalla, Jiajing Dai, Caz Gagne, and Oliver Atwood. (Photo Nicholas Pevzner) **NEXT PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** Nicholas Pevzner (front row center, in black) and students gather in front of the US Forest Service's new wood chippers, part of fuels management in the Plumas National Forest; Pile burn in progress on private land near the Plumas National Forest, organized by the Plumas Underburn Cooperative, which describes itself as "a group of landowners and community members helping each other to use prescribed fire as a management tool on private property." (Photo Nicholas Pevzner); Work by Matthew Lake

Forest fires in the United States have gone from bad to worse in the last decade, burning an estimated 7.6 million acres of land in 2022 and foreshadowing visions of ever-larger blazes to come as global temperatures rise. Meanwhile, cities scorched by the urban heat-island effect are looking for ways to expand their tree canopies and keep existing urban forests in good health, with health benefits for residents and carbon benefits for the environment.

Working at the intersection of these issues is Nicholas Pevzner, assistant professor of landscape architecture at the Weitzman School of Design.

This spring, Pevzner is leading a landscape architecture studio called The Fire Studio: Wildfire, Forests, Jobs, + Carbon, which is focused on forest management practices in the American West. He's also finishing up research for an article in the *Journal of Landscape Architecture* about the past and future roles of designers in managing urban forests. And, working with a team of research assistants, he's completing a greenhouse gas inventory of the Delaware

River watershed, including the carbon contributions of forests, funded partly by a grant from the William Penn Foundation. The projects are all part of Pevzner's broader interest in the reciprocal links between social and natural systems.

"Ecosystems are socio-ecological systems," he says. "Humans are part of ecosystems, and you really need to look at them always interacting—the biophysical always interacting with the social and built components."

Designers are "only beginning to grapple with the spatial and land use challenges of fire risk and fire dynamics," Pevzner wrote in the syllabus for the Fire Studio, "But smart new approaches to managing fire risk could unlock new approaches to reducing this climate threat for vulnerable communities, while simultaneously increasing forest resilience, keeping more carbon on the landscape, and creating lots of jobs in struggling rural communities." The studio follows on a previous course Pevzner led as part of the Green New Deal SuperStudio in 2021. This year's studio, focused on the areas around Tahoe National Forest and Plumas National Forest in Northern California, explores the

roles industry, the US Forest Service, and communities can play in managing forests for greater fire resilience and protecting communities for wildlife and people.

Western forests are increasingly fire-prone not just because of climate change but also because of a century of fire-suppression practices, funding decisions by Congress, and changes in the timber industry, Pevzner says. The government has also blocked Indigenous groups from carrying out practices like cultural burns which they traditionally used to manage forest fires. Making forests safer—meaning less susceptible to big, destructive conflagrations—requires human intervention to remove excess fuel from mature forests. That means taking out young, small-diameter trees to protect the largest and oldest stands, which are better able to survive fires without adding to their severity. That material tends to be harder to sell, though, leaving many places with no viable market for removing and disposing of small-diameter fuels.

“We could be doing much more to help rural communities adapt and help them get to that healthy relationship with fire.”

“It’s really challenging how you move out of the current status quo, which is that there’s not enough workers, sawmills, or funding to reduce the biomass in those forests to the point where they can re-enter a healthy fire ecology,” Pevzner says.

In his studio, students take a systems approach to the problem, studying the logistics and spatial needs of emergent engineered wood products, biomass, and biochar industries with the goal of understanding how a

range of social, economic, and environmental functions could complement each other.

In February, the group visited forest restoration

sites, sawmills, and biomass utilization campuses in Northern California. They met with fire experts and forest managers to learn about “the labor and the physical transformation that these landscapes need to undergo to prepare for a healthy fire regime,” Pevzner says. For their final projects, they’re producing site analyses and designs that explore “multifunctional arrangements” for communities and industries

that connect forest-management practices, carbon reduction, economic incentives, and jobs. Examples could include colocation of complementary business types that could aid in the removal of small-diameter trees, or designing recreational trails that could help provide fuel breaks and access to hard-to-reach places for fire responders.

“The premise of the studio is that we could be doing much more to help rural communities adapt and help them get to that healthy relationship with fire,” Pevzner says.

// For more stories about Weitzman students and faculty in the world, visit [www.design.upenn.edu/signup](http://www.design.upenn.edu/signup).





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“The Department cultivates a multi-disciplinary approach to the design and interpretation of the built environment.”

## Statement from the Chair: Department of Architecture

The Department of Architecture at Penn is among the oldest architecture programs in the United States. In the 150+ years since we began educating architects, we have never been more committed to engaging with the most pressing issues of our time and expanding the possibilities for design, construction, and building performance.

Wherever you find yourself on Planet Earth, from heatwaves and droughts to wildfires and floods, the effects of climate change are unmistakable. Meanwhile, urban centers account for a growing share of resource consumption as more and more of the world's population migrates to cities. Since the built environment accounts for nearly 40% of global carbon emissions annually, architects are uniquely positioned to advance climate change adaptation and mitigation. This work calls upon all of their skills—as form givers, systems thinkers, and agents of change. It is the Department of Architecture's aim to equip students with these skills, nurture their individual talents, and advance the profession.

The Department cultivates a multi-disciplinary approach to the design and interpretation of the built environment. The Master of Architecture is a compre-

hensive and rigorous program, preparing graduates for the full range of activities in the profession. The Master of Science in Design degree is offered with three concentrations: Advanced Architectural Design; Environmental Building Design; and Robotics and Autonomous Systems. The Master in Environmental Building Design is a professionally oriented post-professional degree designed for architects seeking new skills and competitive advantage in the growing field of sustainable design. The Master of Science degree is intended for individuals with a professional degree in architecture who wish to pursue a self-directed research program of study at an advanced level. The PhD Program in Architecture is dedicated to the productive and critical creation of knowledge in the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, and historic preservation.

Weitzman faculty and students are driven by innovation, and every studio offered by the Department is conceived as design research. The Department also advances innovation through our research labs, where our faculty and students collaborate with researchers at other institutions and leading industry partners. At the DumoLab, Assistant Professor of Architecture Laia Mogas-Soldevila and her team are translating innovations in medicine using bio-based and bio-degradable materials to the design

and construction of buildings. At the Autonomous Manufacturing Lab, Assistant Professor of Architecture Robert Stuart-Smith and his team are combining robotics, computation, sensor, and computer vision technologies. At the Polyhedral Structures Lab, Assistant Professor of Architecture Masoud Akbarzadeh, along with Assistant Professor of Architecture Dorit Aviv and their collaborators, are developing a method that will turn buildings into carbon sinks—in part by re-writing the recipe for concrete. At the Thermal Architecture Lab, Professor Aviv and her team have developed a novel design for buildings in desert climates that combines a roof aperture and an oculus.

Our faculty includes some of the most sought-after designers and widely-published scholars at work today. They have built and led their own practices in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Philadelphia, Shanghai, and elsewhere. They are frequently invited to lecture at colleges and universities around the world, and are routinely cited by news organizations for their expertise on topics from materials to memorials. And they are dedicated to bringing up the next generation of great architects.

### // ROSSANA HU

*Miller Professor and Chair of Architecture;  
Co-founder, Neri&Hu Design and Research  
Office*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP  
 Architecture  
 review; work by  
 Paul Germaine McCoy  
 and Matt Kohman;  
 work by Merrick  
 Castillo and Amie  
 Hanqing Yao; work  
 by Karen Vankovich  
 and Matt Kohman;  
 work by In Pun.

# City and Regional Planning



“Our work in  
and out of the  
classroom focuses  
on equity and  
social justice.”





## Statement from the Chair: Department of City & Regional Planning

It's never been a more exciting and important time to study planning, and the City and Regional Planning program is the place to do it. Climate change, inequality, and globalization are just a few of the issues that have made our world more complex and planners' skills more necessary.

Our dynamic, engaged faculty consists of academics and practitioners who work across the range of specializations we offer: land use and environmental planning; housing, community and economic development; transportation and infrastructure planning; public-private development; and urban design.

Our curriculum provides a mix of cutting-edge theory and ground-level practice that prepares our graduates to grapple with the pressing challenges of our time. You'll learn to think about and analyze these problems through intimate seminars, studios that rely on design thinking, and applied, real-world projects. The fact that we are part of a world-class university also provides you with access to a universe of other

courses and joint degree programs.

In addition to our city planning degrees, we also offer a Master of Urban Spatial Analytics (MUSA) degree. The goal of the MUSA program is to provide analytical and domain-specific skills that will help you compete in an increasingly data-driven job market. Graduates from our program will have gained new skills in spatial analysis, machine learning, data science, visualization, statistics, and web-based mapping. More importantly, they will be able to ask interesting and important questions of their data in order to inform relevant public policy, environmental, and business questions. They go on to jobs and internships ranging from city government to private data science firms and software development companies.

We are committed to working toward a more just world. Our work in and out of the classroom focuses on equity and social justice.

### // MEGAN S. RYERSON

*Chair of City & Regional Planning; Professor of City & Regional Planning and Electrical & Systems Engineering; UPS Chair of Transportation*

[PREVIOUS PAGE](#) Joyce Smith, vice president, Centennial Parkside CDC with Master of City Planning students Hengyu Lan and Tianyi Shao, and Claritza Cruz and Mignon Verdell, members of the CDC's Community Development Committee (top); work by Farasha Zaman (bottom).  
[ABOVE](#) Work by Junwon Kim.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT

Work by Cicada Chen;  
work by Victoria  
Antoinette Megens;  
Emilio Martinez Poppe  
(MFA'22, MCP'22) in  
a Performance Studio  
class.



## Statement from the Chair: Department of Fine Arts

Art is a practice, a passion, a profession, and a position from which to engage the world and the challenges of this contemporary moment. The complexities that face artists are social, political, economic—the urgencies of migration and the climate crisis, the questions of access, gender, ethnicity and identity formation, the convolutions of new media and emergent technologies and the unknowns of spiritual commitment and belief.

The Department of Fine Arts cultivates an expansive and dynamic approach to teaching artists that prioritizes diverse perspectives, multi-disciplinary methodologies and rigorous experimentation. We recognize that the field of contemporary art is heterogenous and in active dialogue with other disciplines and fields of practice. Led by a faculty of internationally recognized artists and practitioners, the Master of Fine Arts program allows students to develop an individualized course of study that is supported by sustained collective dialogue and collaborative study. In this way, artists develop an autonomous practice in generative dialogue with a wide range of interlocutors, including fellow students, staff, faculty and visiting critics.

The Master of Fine Arts program facilitates in-depth engagement with the skills and technologies of art-making as well as with the intellectual and theoretical discourse necessary for an artist to situate themselves and their work in a set of intersecting histories and fields of practice. At the center of the program's curriculum is studio production supported by a constellation of individual and group studio critiques led by the faculty and an acclaimed group of rotating visitors: senior critics, visiting artists, curators and writers. Students choose from a robust set of departmental courses in a range of media from video, photography, sculpture, painting and drawing to performance, animation and biological design.

The Department encourages cross-departmental and cross-school study and research. As the program is housed within the Weitzman School of Design, artists have ready opportunities for creative dialogue with faculty and students in the departments of architecture, landscape architecture, city and regional planning, and historic preservation. We offer

“Artists develop an autonomous practice in generative dialogue with a wide range of interlocutors.”

dual-degrees and certificate programs for those who want to pursue formal cross-department study. Additionally, there are leading scholars and researchers across the university and many of MFA students take course work in departments such as Creative Writing, English, Anthropology, Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, Biology and more.

The Department maintains a broad range of facilities for art fabrication and installation. These facilities are maintained and supported by an incredible staff, many of whom are artists and all of whom are specialists in their area, which includes a wide range of technologies—from photography and painting to digital fabrication and sculpture. Staff are available to teach students technical skills through intensive one-on-one instructions or group workshops.

**Vital to our program are our collaborations** with the leading art institutions on campus, including the Institute of Contemporary Art, the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation, the Center for Experimental Ethnography, and the Arthur Ross Gallery. There are internship and graduate student committee opportunities at both the ICA and the Arthur Ross Gallery. Additionally, the department partners with the ICA to host a yearly Visiting Artist series, through which we bring prominent artists and creative thinkers to campus to lecture and do studio visits with artists in the MFA program.

**The Department of Fine Arts is shaped by** the artists who come to study and work with us. We look forward to meeting you and to learning about your work and the desires you have for your art practice. We welcome you to visit us during our Open House held in the Fall. Mid-term and final reviews of student work are also open to the public. If you are unable to visit us, you may view examples of student work on our website, correspond with a current MFA student, or take a virtual tour.

// SHARON HAYES

*Professor and Chair of Fine Arts*

## Statement from the Chair: Department of Historic Preservation

Conservation in its broadest environmental and cultural contexts takes on renewed urgency in these times of great and unprecedented change, so the idea and practice of historic preservation has never been more important.

Heritage is often celebrated and always contested. Every society interprets and cares for its inherited environments in its own way. How do we remember? What is our notion of sustainable settlement? How do we manage the built environment to reflect our individual and collective values while insisting on social equity? How can the material past be preserved, represented and activated to have relevance in contemporary society? These are some of the core issues facing our field today.

As with the other disciplines at the Weitzman School, historic preservation takes on the complex, long-term challenges of understanding, designing, imagining, and managing built environments. First among them is retaining and revealing the cultural significance of buildings, archaeological sites, and landscapes so that the building blocks of social well-being—attachment to collective memory, access to public spaces, shared and sustainable stewardship of environments—are provided.

In the historic preservation program, faculty and students pursue all aspects of preservation. As scholars, we are dedicated to advancing knowledge for our field. As practitioners, we take on projects where important heritage is at risk, we test new methodologies and ideas, and we work collaboratively to demonstrate the power of preservation to contribute to the public good.

Our work finds us involved in our own backyard here in Philadelphia, across the country with colleagues in the national preservation movement, and in international circles of practice and scholarship. Exposure to international heritage debates and con-

“We work collaboratively to demonstrate the power of preservation to contribute to the public good.”

servation practices is a cornerstone of our program.

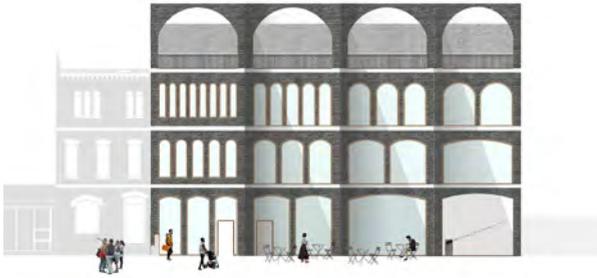
Since its creation in 1981, the program has seen enormous growth and development in all areas of thought and practice. Continuing James Marston Fitch's concept of historic preservation as a true cross-disciplinary field requiring a 'synoptic approach', we have created a full complement of courses that provide a framework for the program's "concentrations" in response to the specialized knowledge and skills required for professional engagement. Our faculty define the most diverse and accomplished graduate preservation program in the country and a leader among the most respected institutions in the international arena. Our graduates continue to define and shape contemporary preservation thought and practice.

Research has been a cornerstone of the historic preservation program and we have grown exponentially in sponsored research, studios, and theses. The Center for Architectural Conservation and The Center for the Preservation of Civil Rights Sites have expanded the program's reach and influence, providing a dynamic complement to teaching through preservation praxis and research.

Our partnerships with national and international institutions have fixed our ability to collaborate locally and globally on the most pressing issues while providing students with field-based experience through our summer internships and third year post-graduate externships. Finally, the creation of our new MSD with a concentration in preservation for practicing professionals promises to influence and expand the current the next generation of designers, engineers, and planners as the field pays greater attention to the importance of heritage places worldwide.

// **FRANK G. MATERO**

*Gonick Family Professor; Chair of Historic Preservation; Director, The Center for Architectural Conservation*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP  
LEFT Work by Héctor J. Berdecia-Hernández, Katherine Brill, Abigail Dolan, Xue Fei Lin, Zhen Ni, Maggie Sollmann, Sung Di, Chongke Wu, and Yujia Zhang; the Center for Architectural Conservation; students at Powderham Castle; Carly Adler at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Colorado; Caroline Dickensheets at Wupatki National Monument, Arizona.

“We are designing  
the world we want  
to inhabit.”

## Statement from the Chair: Department of Landscape Architecture

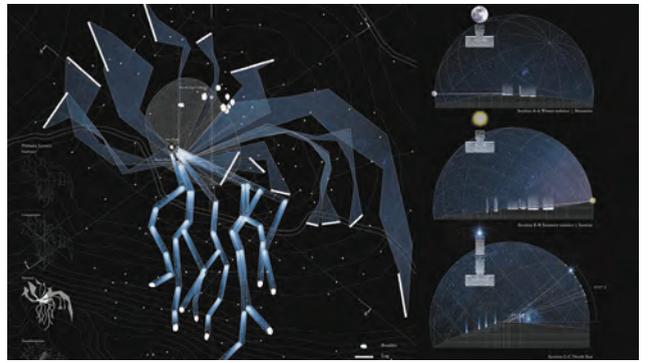
The Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania has an extraordinary international legacy. First established in 1924 and later revitalized under the leadership of Professor Ian McHarg in the 1960s, the Department is founded on the principles of ecology, anchoring landscape architecture squarely within the earth sciences. The word “ecology” has its roots in the Greek *οικολογία*, translated literally as the “household of nature,” thus bringing home the everyday and entangled relationships between humans, plants, animals, and the mineral world.

Yet our understanding of ecology has evolved radically over the past century—our Department studies urban ecologies, material ecologies, and social ecologies, while reassessing our impact upon both the planet and each other as we address the climate crisis. We have rethought earlier ecological theories of successional progression to a steady climax state. Today, landscape architects consider the complex and messy conditions of resilience, disturbance, and indeterminacy, heightened by the social and environmental necessities of reparative justice and decarbonization.

At Penn, our exceptionally diverse landscape architecture students and faculty are engaged in new collaborative and powerful ways of thinking and researching, nimbly moving across scales from the high-altitude observations of the astronaut to the attentive fieldwork of the naturalist. Educating flexible design minds is more important than ever; our three-year, studio-based Master of Landscape Architecture degree program enhances experimental, innovative design thinking and design action. We engage with multiplicities and complexities, and embrace novel strategies for reimagining future ecological relationships through the lens of social, environmental, and multispecies justice. We are designing the world we want to inhabit, advancing both the landscape profession and the discipline, and we look to the future with optimism.

### // CATHERINE SEAVITT

*Professor and Chair of Landscape Architecture; Martin and Margy Meyerson Chair of Urbanism; Co-Executive Director, The Ian L. McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology*

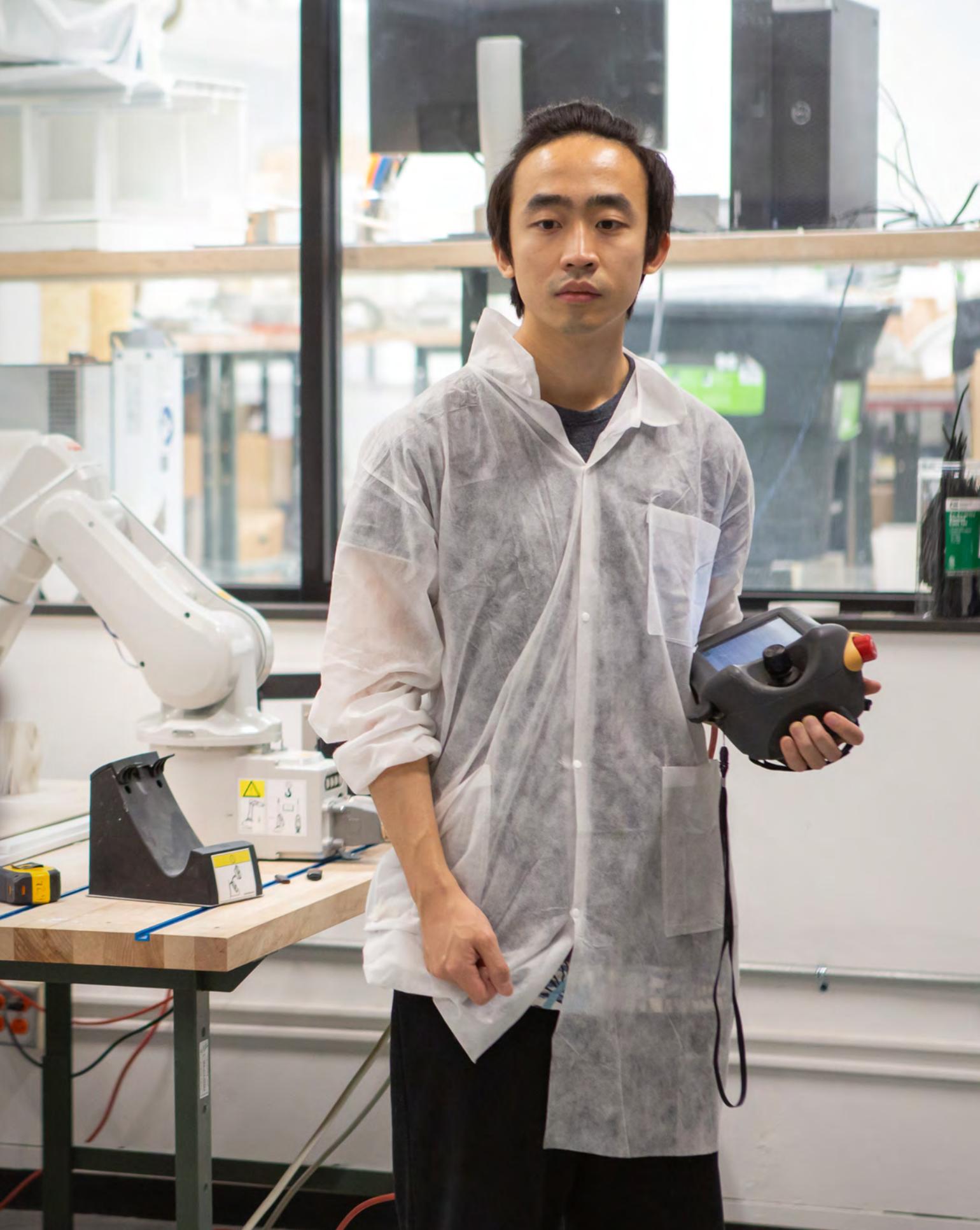


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT Work by Zicheng Zhao; work by Zhijie Wang; studio review; work by Jiayuan Wang.

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## An Empty Outdoor Space Transformed

By Nathi Mgubane for Penn Today  
(Photos by Eric Sucar)

In the heart of West Philadelphia, a major transformation has taken place, turning a neglected school space into a vibrant, functional spot designed to enhance student well-being and foster community: the Breathing Room at William L. Sayre High School.

This ambitious project, supported by Penn's Office of Social Equity and Community (SEC) as part of their Projects for Progress (P4P) initiative, was announced in 2023 as a partnership between faculty, students, and staff at the Weitzman School, Graduate School of Education, Perelman School of Medicine, Netter Center for Community Partnerships, and Sayre High School. The project was unveiled in the spring of 2024 and quickly became a cherished part of the school.

The University's P4P program was introduced in June of 2020 to support initiatives geared at addressing the world's most intractable problems. Each year, winning teams receive up to \$100,000 for projects that seek to improve the quality of life for Philadelphia communities.

"The Breathing Room is a culmination of the



work of students, both at Penn and Sayre, teachers, local volunteers, school administrators, many Penn faculty and staff," says Ellen Neises, associate professor of practice in landscape architecture at Weitzman and the Lori Kanter Tritsch Executive Director of PennPraxis.

Neises says the team designed the space with the goal of reshaping how students experience their daily school environment. "Kids could just hang out, talk, enjoy the shade, see some birds, smell the flowers, and sit at these beautiful tables instead of inside a dark cafeteria," says Neises, pointing at one of the long, elegant, sturdy wood and concrete community tables Weitzman students designed and built. "The aim of

the project was really about reducing high school students' stress and improving the social experience at school by getting them outside, especially at lunchtime."

Neises, who with Akira Drake Rodriguez, assistant professor at Weitzman's City and Regional Planning Department, helped shape the partnerships to create physical improvements first at West Philadelphia High School, and then at Sayre, explains that the effort at Sayre started because design students entered the US Environmental Protection Agency's Campus RainWorks Challenge.

"During the process, they talked with a lot of Sayre students and the principal and teachers at Sayre about creating a garden that would absorb rainwater and make a garden space that served a real purpose," Neises says.

"Even though they didn't win the competition, the idea took root," she adds, "and when the Weitzman students graduated, they reached out to PennPraxis and asked if we could continue the project. That's when we helped bring this incredible team together and wrote proposals, one of which received a Projects for Progress award."

Neises points out that PennPraxis coordinates the Weitzman School's Studio+ initiative, an interdisciplinary, action-focused design and planning studio that creates opportunities for students and faculty to work on projects that reduce racial inequity, including the quality of public school environments and access to safe neighborhood spaces. Studio+ teams always include community leaders and youth who collaborate on the planning, design and build phases. In last year's Studio+, Weitzman graduate students and local public school students worked together to design and build The Porch, a stage and garden for West Philadelphia High School, over 15 months. That initiative was supported by a 2022 Projects for Progress award, and built on the success of Design to Thrive, a PennPraxis program aimed at empowering Philadelphia and New York teens to reshape the city.

Dyan Castro, a project manager at PennPraxis who graduated with a dual master's degree in architecture and landscape architecture in 2020, shaped and coordi-

nated the collaboration at Sayre, overseeing the day-to-day operations and ensuring the project stayed on track.

"My role was to help facilitate the vision from the design and development side of things to the school-based execution," Castro recalls. "A lot of what I did was help identify needs at the school and then bring resources here. It was all about making sure we had everything we needed to make this dream a reality."

Abdallah Tabet, a lecturer in landscape architecture at the Weitzman School with experience in design and building, taught the design studio that supported the efforts of eight Master of Landscape Architecture students to design the Breathing Room with input from Sayre students and administrators.

Design studio students Mira Hart, Shuyan He, Sneha Kakkadan, Illa Labroo, Yuming Lu, Lucia Salwen, Alexis Tedor, and Mengjie Wang were interested in contributing something to West Philadelphia before they graduated, and learning how to build what they draw. Neises says PennPraxis hired Daniel Flinchbaugh, a 2022 Master of Landscape Architecture graduate, who now works with Penn's Facilities & Real Estate Services, to teach the Weitzman School students woodworking skills and support their work in the shop.

In addition to Brand and Castro, the two other members of the Projects for Progress team are Amanda Peña, a 2023 graduate, who led the planning studio portion of Studio+ which was instrumental in engaging the youth in the project, as well as visioning for other improvements to the school; and Heather Klusaritz, the director of the Center for Public Health Initiatives, which will evaluate the impact of the Breathing Room on student wellness and sense of belonging.

//  
[Learn more about Weitzman students and faculty making a difference in their communities by subscribing to Weitzman News at \[www.design.upenn.edu/signup\]\(http://www.design.upenn.edu/signup\)](#)



Watch a video about the making of Sayre's "Breathing Room"



#### [Research Centers at Weitzman](#)

Advanced Research and Innovation Lab (ARI)

Architectural Archives

Center for Architectural Conservation

Center for Environmental Building and Design

Center for the Preservation of Civil Rights Sites

Center for Public Art and Space

Center for Safe Mobility

Housing Initiative at Penn

Kleinman Center for Energy Policy

The Ian L. McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology

PennPraxis

Urban Heritage Project

#### [More Art, Design, and Planning Resources at Penn](#)

Arthur Ross Gallery

Common Press

Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)

Penn Institute for Urban Research (Penn IUR)

Penn Museum

Sachs Program for Arts Innovation

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Top 10 Best Art Cities  
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// ARTISTS MAGAZINE

# PHILAD

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IN THE U.S.

FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN  
CHURCH, MOTHER BETHEL AME

FIRST FINE ART MUSEUM  
AND SCHOOL IN THE U.S.,  
PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY  
OF FINE ARTS

## Degrees

The comprehensive **Master of Architecture\*** program, which is accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board, prepares graduates for the full range of activities in the profession. An intensive sequence in design studios constitutes the focus of the program and thorough training is also provided in history, theory, technology, ecology, society, and professional practice. Studios and courses are supported by a rigorous sequence in visual studies that develops skills in digital and new media.

The **Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Advanced Architectural Design\*** (MSD-AAD) is a post-professional program offering students a three-semester studio-based sequence aimed at innovation in architectural design. The program allows students to pursue an individually directed course of study by choosing from a wide range of options in advanced design studios and elective courses.

The **Master in Environmental Building Design** (MEBD) is a professionally oriented, two-semester, post-professional degree designed for architects seeking new skills and competitive advantage in the growing field of sustainable design.

The advanced, three-semester **Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Environmental Building Design\*** (MSD-EBD) is designed for architects seeking new skills and competitive advantage in the growing field of sustainable design.

The one-year **Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Historic Preservation\*** (MSD-HP) complements the long-standing two-year MSHP degree by addressing the needs of practicing design professionals seeking post-professional training, specialization, or change in career path.

The **Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Robotics and Autonomous Systems\*** (MSD-RAS) is a post-professional program offering students a one-year (two-semester) sequence that explores avenues for re-situating the role of architectural design within present day autonomous technologies. The program aims to critically develop novel approaches to manufacturing, construction, occupation, demolition and re-use, through creative engagement with robotics, material systems, and design-computation, primarily operating through prototypical design research.

The **Master of Science in Architecture** is a one-year non-professional research-based degree program for students who wish to pursue a self-directed program of study at the advanced level.

The two-year **Master of Fine Arts** program focuses on the professional development of studio artists. Through studio work, seminar courses, international residency opportunities, and interactions with vital working artists, the program provides an open intellectual framework to foster critical awareness and independent methods of artistic research. The program encourages exploration, extending studies into other disciplines within the School and the university-at-large with a rich selection of outside electives.

The **Master of Science in Historic Preservation\*** provides an integrated approach for architects, landscape architects, planners, historians, archaeologists, conservators, managers, and other professionals to understand, sustain, and transform the existing environment. The program combines rigorous intellectual training with practical foundational skills needed for professional practice. Four concentrations are offered: Architectural Conservation, Preservation Design, Preservation Planning, and Public History of the Built Environment.

The two-year **Master of City Planning\*** program, accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board, gives students the knowledge and skills to solve the most vexing problems facing the world today. The program teaches the quantitative, qualitative, and digital skills needed to analyze complex problems and visualize alternative futures for communities.

Students gain in-depth knowledge in at least one of six areas of concentration:

**Housing, Community and Economic Development:** studying how planners and policy leaders influence the social and economic factors shaping metropolitan economies and urban neighborhoods.

**Land Use and Environmental Planning:** exploring new ways to accommodate population and economic growth

while strengthening existing cities and towns and preserving precious and irreplaceable farm and resource lands.

**Public and Private Development:** learning the planning, design, entrepreneurial, and financing principles of developing for-profit and community-oriented housing and commercial development projects.

**Smart Cities:** giving students the skills and abilities they will need to develop a new generation of planning applications that seamlessly combine user-friendly data retrieval and modeling procedures with individual and collaborative urban planning and design tools.

**Sustainable Transportation and Infrastructure Planning:** exploring the roles of transportation and other capital infrastructure systems in shaping urban and metropolitan development patterns in the U.S. and around the world.

**Urban Design:** focusing on understanding the links between the physical form and structure of cities and regions and the economic, social and political forces that shape them.

The **Master of Landscape Architecture\*** first professional degree, designed for students with an undergraduate degree in a field other than landscape architecture or architecture and second professional degree, designed for students with a professional degree, are both committed to innovative design as informed by ecology, the history of ideas, techniques of construction, new media, and contemporary urbanism.

The **Master of Urban Spatial Analytics\*** is a two-semester graduate program that teaches students how to use spatial analysis and data science to address the most pressing public policy and city planning conundrums of our day.

The **Ph.D. in Architecture** program is one of the oldest in the country and is widely regarded as preeminent in the fields of theory, technology and representation. Its goal is to produce scholars engaged in the history of the architecture and associated fields, with attention to how these histories bear on the present.

The **Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning** program offers access to a broad, multi-disciplinary faculty and all the resources of a first-rate urban research university—an ideal setting in which to study the serious problems that face our metropolitan areas today and the broad spectrum of responses to meet those challenges.

\*STEM eligible

## Dual Degrees

### Master of Architecture +

- Master of Business Administration (Wharton)
- Master of City Planning
- Master of Landscape Architecture
- Master of Science in Design: Environmental Building Design
- Master of Science in Historic Preservation

### Master of City Planning +

- Master of Business Administration (Wharton)
- Master of Environmental Studies (School of Arts and Sciences)
- Juris Doctor (Carey Law)
- Master of Fine Arts
- Master of Landscape Architecture
- Master of Public Administration (Fels Institute of Government)
- Master of Public Health (Perelman)
- Master of Science in Engineering (School of Engineering and Applied Science)
- Master of Science in Historic Preservation
- Master of Social Work (Social Policy and Practice)
- Master of Urban Spatial Analytics

### Master of Landscape Architecture +

- Master of Business Administration (Wharton)
- Master of Urban Spatial Analytics
- Master of Environmental Studies (School of Arts and Sciences)
- Master of Science in Design: Environmental Building Design

### Master of Fine Arts +

- Master of Landscape Architecture
- Master of Social Work (Social Policy and Practice)

### Master of Science in Historic Preservation +

- Master of Business Administration (Wharton)
- Master of Landscape Architecture
- Master of Science in Design: Environmental Building Design



### **Accreditation**

The Master of Architecture program is fully accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board. The Master of City Planning program is fully accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board. The Master of Landscape Architecture program is fully accredited by the American Society of Landscape Architecture.

### Certificates

- Ecological Architecture
- Ecological Planning
- Emerging Design and Research
- Environmental Building Design
- Energy Management and Policy
- GIS and Spatial Analysis
- Historic Preservation
- Integrated Product Design
- Land Preservation
- Landscape Studies
- Real Estate Design and Development
- Time-Based and Interactive Media
- Urban Design
- Urban Redevelopment
- Urban Resilience

## Inclusion and Belonging at Weitzman

### Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University-administered programs or in its employment practices.

Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to the Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street, Suite 421, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6205; or 215.898.6993 (Voice).

The Weitzman School of Design is committed to cultivating an environment that celebrates and promotes diversity, champions social equity, and welcomes all members of our community. We strive to ensure that students, staff, and faculty from all backgrounds and identities feel included and have access to equal opportunities, and that everyone in our community knows that they belong and that their lived experience is valued.

The Weitzman School's Inclusion and Belonging initiative invites students, faculty, and staff from all over the world to recognize commonalities and become more aware of how to understand and support each other's differences, practice cultural humility, and make design justice a central motivation for the Weitzman community. We are working to create a shared understanding of how to recognize our advantages and disadvantages by focusing on our curriculum, community engagement, and culture. Recent examples of IB initiatives include:

// Establishing a school-wide IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity-Awareness, and Service) Committee consisting of Weitzman faculty, staff, and students to generate Inclusion and Belonging programs and facilitate their implementation within our community.

- // Reviewing and restructuring curricula to represent more diverse perspectives and creating courses focused on design justice and community engagement.
- // Educating students, faculty, and staff about harmful biases, and sharing tools and best practices to help us address them.
- // Hiring more diverse faculty and staff, and recruiting students with varying backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.
- // Partnering with communities across the region to implement neighborhood improvement initiatives, promote greater equity, and reduce systemic racism embedded in uneven distributions of public resources and power, under-achieving buildings and spaces, and erasures.
- // Increasing schoolwide engagement experiences focused on inclusivity and belonging, including student activities, public lectures and events, and community workshops and gatherings.



We are working to create a shared understanding of how to recognize our advantages and disadvantages.



# Applying

## General Application Requirements

- // Online Application
- // \$80 Application Fee
- // Personal Statement
- // Three Letters of Recommendation
- // Unofficial Transcripts
- // Resume
- // Program-Specific Essays
- // GRE Scores (required for some programs)
- // TOEFL, IELTS, *or* Duolingo English Test (required for non-native English speakers or applicants whose undergraduate degree was not conducted in English)
- // Portfolio and/or writing samples (required for some programs)

## Financial Aid

Weitzman offers scholarships based on merit. In addition, the Office of Student Registration and Financial Services will consider all US citizens and permanent residents for Federal loans and work-study after they file a FAFSA.

## Contact

admissions@design.upenn.edu  
215.898.6520

## Notice of Availability of Crime Information

The federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, as amended, requires colleges and universities to provide information related to security policies and procedures and specific statistics for criminal incidents, arrests, and disciplinary referrals to students and employees, and to make the information and statistics available to prospective students and employees upon request.

Federal law requires institutions with on-campus housing to share with the campus community an annual fire report. In addition, the Uniform Crime Reporting Act requires Pennsylvania colleges and universities to provide information related to security policies and procedures to students, employees and applicants; to provide certain crime statistics to students and employees, and to make those statistics available to applicants and prospective employees upon request.

You may view the report online at [www.publicsafety.upenn.edu/clery/annual-security-fire-safety-report/](http://www.publicsafety.upenn.edu/clery/annual-security-fire-safety-report/) or request a paper copy of the report by calling the Division of Public Safety's Office of the Vice President at 215.898.7515.



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