

ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN PRACTICE OLIN NAMED RECIPIENT OF ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA'S 2025 PHILIP HANSON HISS AWARD



(Marie Selby Botanical Gardens expansion designed in collaboration with OLIN)

(Sarasota, Florida — February 26, 2025) — **Architecture Sarasota** has named internationally acclaimed landscape architecture and urban design practice **OLIN** as the 2025 recipient of its **Philip Hanson Hiss Award**, recognizing their transformative landscapes that enrich communities and connect culture with the living world, including the recent revitalization of Sarasota's Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, a 2024 TIME's World's Greatest Place.

Architecture Sarasota's prestigious annual award honors today's pioneers and champions of innovative design within the global built environment and commemorates the legacy of **Philip Hanson Hiss III** (1910-1988). Hiss was a driving force and major proponent of the **Sarasota School of Architecture**, an influential movement in modern architecture tailored specifically to the distinct geography, climate, and social fabric of Florida's Gulf Coast. Past Award recipients include architects Toshiko Mori and Lord Norman Foster.

Philip Hiss believed good design was integral to a larger set of values and practices that defined the Sarasota School. These principles included designs adapted to the natural environment and responsive to the socio-cultural context; a spirit of experimentation, innovation, and transformation; and a commitment to democratic ideals and civic responsibility, including accessibility for all. Presented annually, the recipient makes a presentation and the award is bestowed at a dinner celebration.

Richard Roark, RLA, Chief Purpose Officer and Partner at OLIN, will represent the studio at the Awards activities, Roark has been instrumental in driving a legacy of public-centered design, ensuring that landscape architecture remains a vital force for environmental stewardship, social cohesion, and sustainable urban transformation. He will deliver a lecture on **Thursday, March 27th** and then will accept the award on OLIN's behalf at a celebratory gala and benefit on **Friday, March 28th**. Both events will be held at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, the only botanical garden in the world dedicated to the display and study of epiphytic orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads and ferns, and other tropical plants. OLIN developed a new master plan for Selby, which recently completed Phase 1 of the project.

Just as Hiss fostered a community of forward-thinking architects like Paul Rudolph, whose Umbrella House became an icon of the Sarasota School movement, OLIN cultivates a collaborative approach, deeply respecting the site, cultural context, and programmatic possibilities of each project. Founded in 1976 through a creative partnership between Robert Hannah and Laurie Olin, OLIN's designs emphasize the expressive power of place, seamlessly integrating ecology, infrastructure, and social engagement to create landscapes that foster human interaction, recreation, and community. Their work echoes the Sarasota School's emphasis on site-responsiveness, to design *with* the environment rather than against it. OLIN LABS, which explores innovation across five focus areas — eco, people, tech, design, and build — further demonstrates their commitment to research, education, and technological advancement.

"Design really is an act of collaborative intelligence. Some of that intelligence is nature in and of itself and the other pieces are all those who come together to make something larger than oneself," says Roark, reflecting OLIN's collaborative ethos. This sentiment resonates with the legacy of Paul Rudolph, who emphasized, "We think of buildings in and of themselves. That isn't any good at all. That's not the way it is, not the way it has ever been, not the way it will ever be. Buildings are absolutely and completely dependent on what's around them."

OLIN's transformative work at Sarasota's Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, a TIME's World's Greatest Places in 2024 and a USA Today 10 Best Readers' Choice Award recipient, exemplifies their approach. Since 2017, OLIN has collaborated closely with Selby Gardens to develop a master plan that balances growth with preservation, reinforcing the institution's global excellence as a living museum of the arts and sciences. At the heart of this vision is Palm Avenue, reimagined as a garden esplanade anchored by the Epiphyte Epicenter, a circular plaza celebrating Selby's renowned botanical collections. The expansion features contemporary facilities like the Morganroth Family Living Energy Access Facility (LEAF), incorporating hurricane-resilient strategies, green infrastructure, and a garden-to-table restaurant, and the Steinwachs Family Plant Research Center, revitalizing Selby's international research capacity. Phase 2 will include a state-of-the-art, net-zero Botanical Conservatory, securing Selby's future as a leader in botanical research and environmental education. The reimagined Selby Gardens demonstrates OLIN's ability to create spaces that are both environmentally responsible and culturally enriching.

OLIN's work spans diverse scales and typologies. Beyond Sarasota, their portfolio showcases their commitment to these principles globally, with projects like Bryant Park in New York, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, the 11th Street Bridge Park in Washington, D.C., and the Ensemble of Constantin Brâncuși at Târgu Jiu, Romania.

"Our team at OLIN is honored to receive this esteemed recognition from Architecture Sarasota. The values embodied in the Hiss Award and Philip Hiss's legacy—innovation, responsiveness to genuine needs, and a willingness to challenge precedent—are central to our practice as we shape meaningful and lasting landscapes." – **Richard Roark, RLA, Chief Purpose Officer and Partner at OLIN**

"On behalf of all of us at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, we are thrilled and honored that OLIN is being recognized with the distinguished Hiss Award from Architecture Sarasota. OLIN's visionary design for Selby

Gardens' Master Plan and the implementation of Phase One has transformed our site into a visually striking space that fosters visitor engagement, enhances biodiversity, and promotes environmental stewardship—all while ensuring resiliency and fostering innovation. Through the seamless integration of nature and design, OLIN has elevated this institution, securing its lasting impact for generations to come. We look forward to breaking ground on Phase Two of Olin's Master Plan later this year." – **Jennifer Rominiecki, President and CEO, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens**

"Echoing the core values and principles of the Sarasota School of Architecture, OLIN demonstrates that thoughtful, contextually driven design can celebrate the unique character of a place while enhancing the life of communities and its residents. OLIN's inspired collaboration with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens demonstrates the power of design thinking to realize a vision and reimagine a significant place at the intersection of natural and cultural heritage." – **Morris Hylton III, President of Architecture Sarasota**

ABOUT ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA:

With a vision of transforming places and inspiring lives, Architecture Sarasota is dedicated to stewarding the legacy of the Sarasota School, and providing a forum for the education, advocacy and celebration of good design in the global built environment. With a focus on research and collaborations, Architecture Sarasota is helping develop design strategies that address critical issues ranging from coastal resilience and a changing climate to sustainable urbanism to affordable housing.

ABOUT OLIN:

OLIN is a design-led practice of landscape architects and certified planners with a mission to create places that enhance life. Guided by 14 practicing partners, a partner and director of information technology, and a director of professional practice, OLIN is dedicated to excellence in design and research. With studios based in Philadelphia and Los Angeles, we develop innovative and transformative landscapes and urban spaces around the world. To learn more, visit www.theolinstudio.com.

ABOUT MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS:

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens provides 45 acres of bayfront sanctuaries connecting people with air plants of the world, native nature, and our regional history. Established by forward-thinking women of their time, Selby Gardens is composed of the 15-acre Downtown Sarasota campus and the 30-acre Historic Spanish Point campus in the Osprey area of Sarasota County, Florida. The Downtown Sarasota campus on Sarasota Bay is the only botanical garden in the world dedicated to the display and study of epiphytic orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads and ferns, and other tropical plants. There is a significant focus on botany, horticulture, education, historical preservation, and the environment. Selby Gardens' Downtown Sarasota campus features the world's first net positive energy botanical garden complex, generating more energy than it consumes. The Historic Spanish Point campus is located less than 10 miles south along Little Sarasota Bay. One of the largest preserves showcasing native Florida plants and active archaeology that is interpreted for and open to the public, it celebrates an archaeological record that encompasses approximately 5,000 years of Florida history. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens is a Smithsonian Affiliate and is also accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Selby Gardens was selected for *Time* magazine's annual list of the "World's Greatest Places 2024." For more information visit www.selby.org.

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