

## New York's "High Line" Selects Finalists

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Unused for 24 years and often the center of a contentious debate between preservationists and property owners, the High Line elevated rail on the West Side of Manhattan now appears to be destined not only for survival but for a major, innovative redesign as a public space. Friends of the High Line (FHL), a non-profit group, and its partners within the City of New York have fought successfully for preservation of this unusual remnant of old New York and are midway through a process of planning and redevelopment, with an international competition to select a design team to be completed by late-summer 2004. They have chosen four teams of architects, landscape architects, and artists as finalists to design the future development.

The four finalists are:

- Field Operations, landscape architects; Diller, Scofidio + Renfro, architects; Olafur Eliasson, artist; Piet Oudolf, horticulture; Halie Light & L'Observatoire International, lighting.
- Zaha Hadid Architects, architects; Balmori Associates, landscape architects; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, LLP (Marilyn Jordan Taylor), architects; studio MDA (Markus Dochantschi), architects.
- Steven Holl Architects, architects; Hargreaves Associates, landscape design; HNTB, technical design.
- TerraGRAM: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, landscape architects; D.I.R.T. Studio (Julie Bargmann), industrial site design; Beyer Blinder Belle (Neil Kittredge), urban design.

An exhibition of finalists' designs will be on display July 15 through August 14 at NYC's Center for Architecture.

According to FHL Planning Director Peter Mullan, the winning team will, by necessity, be a true partnership of architects, landscapers, and others that can formulate a brand-new concept for adaptive reuse. "Our vision is fairly open," explains Mullan. "We're looking to our designers to help us come up with a vision for what it could become."

The High Line was originally opened in 1934 in order to avert congestion and traffic accidents borne of street-level rail lines and it once stretched across most of Manhattan's length. Now, its steel and reinforced concrete span meanders some 1.45 miles between, above, beside, and, occasionally, through buildings, with about 6.7 acres of surface space.

Ilan Kayatsky

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