INSIGHT

SPRING

ASLA CENTRAL STATES UPDATE

LAMP RYNEARSON
Establishing a Practice Within a Multidisciplinary Firm

HOW CAN WE DESIGN WITH COMMUNITIES WHILE APART?

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AT NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

NEBRASKA GOVERNOR SIGNS LB30
WHAT WE’VE BEEN UP TO...

SD SECTION WINTER SOCIAL IN RAPID CITY
Sponsored by Gold Partner, Landscape Forms!

THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY HAS ACHIEVED FULL ACCREDITATION FROM THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ACCREDITING BOARD!

CONGRATULATIONS!

PORTFOLIO REVIEWS
April 10th - April 24

EVENT: Our student members at NDSU, SDSU, and UNL are looking for portfolio reviews!
WHEN: April 10th to April 24th
WHERE: Online reviews with Zoom discussion!

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SPRING 2020
As your Chapter President, I am so encouraged to be continuing the excellent efforts of those before me while advancing the Chapter into a new decade. Things are changing rapidly, particularly in recent weeks. The world we have become accustomed to is shifting, re-focusing, and evolving. Ever flexible, we, as landscape architects, have the unique talent to adapt. We will take part in shaping the world on the other side of this pandemic. I don’t know about you, but as I sit here writing this while working from home, I am seeing more and more individuals and families OUTSIDE – walking, biking, scavenger-hunting. These are the kinds of activities that will thrive, with a greater focus on health and physical and mental well-being. Landscape Architects see the opportunity this creates to reset our habits, our focus, and our efforts to support the communities where we live. Because as we know—nothing improves physical and mental health like being outdoors!

I am sorry I won’t get to see you at this year’s Central States Conference, but this will pass, and we look forward to seeing you all here in Omaha in 2021! Our planning committee, led by Katie Swanon, has worked hard to put together a wonderful event. We look forward to sharing more details with you as we regroup for next year. We will continue to schedule and share CEU and virtual learning opportunities throughout the coming months as we know these are important to many of our members – keep an eye out for emails from section chairs Sam Christensen, Tanya Olson, and Dominic Fischer.

Last year we saw a great resurgence of involvement among our members and partners and took some time to plan a way forward. This year it’s time to put the plan to action. Our executive committee is working hard implementing our strategic plan, which includes recommendations for Chapter Advocacy, Public Outreach/support, and Membership retention. I am particularly excited to explore ways we can support the future of our profession and organization with a focus on community service, education, and outreach. While that may be a challenge now, it remains important. Coming up, there are opportunities to mentor students in Landscape Architecture as well as participate in virtual portfolio reviews with each of our three Universities. So please let me know if you would be interested in participating! We will be continuing to boost our social media presence – so if you aren’t already - please follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – particularly this month on April 23rd when the Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter takes control National ASLA’s Instagram for one whole day!

I am so thankful to Jennifer and all current and past volunteers for their leadership and support. We will see our way through the challenges before us, and dare I say, be better for it.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe

Robin Fordyce, PLA, ASLA Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter President

“Ever flexible, we, as landscape architects, have the unique talent to adapt. We will take part in shaping the world on the other side of this pandemic.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

2020

GET YOUR CEU CREDITS!
NDC PARTNERS HAVE ONLINE CEUS AVAILABLE
Check your email for notifications from your section chairs with upcoming virtual opportunities. We are keeping the chapter website up to date with CEU opportunities from our partners at this link:

ASLA CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE
POSTPONED TO SPRING 2021
FUSE 2020 will focus on how landscape architects are part of a collaborative industry fused together with multiple disciplines and trades. Even though we all specify and excel in our differing fields, it is critical to remember that to achieve true excellence, we must work as a cohesive unit.
http://www.aslacentralstates.org/

STAY UP TO DATE!
VISIT OUR CHAPTER WEBSITE

FUSE 2020
APRIL 22-25

Setting the stage since 1962.
INTRODUCING THE STELLA OF SUNNE® COLLECTION.
Victor Stanley designs, engineers and manufactures timeless site furnishings that bring communities to life.
Stella of Sunne® features a classic, minimalist look inspired by Scandinavian design.
Contact Becky Whelan at rebeca@victorstanley.com

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We have announced that Central States – FUSE 2020 will be postponed due to the current and escalating circumstances with COVID-19. Today, we would like to provide an update on things moving forward. As always, the health and safety of our members, guests, sponsors, allied professionals and community is our number one priority. We are currently working with the venue to find alternate dates to reschedule the conference. We respectfully request your patience and understanding as we work through the necessary details and options.

We have made the decision to postpone the Central States – FUSE 2020 conference to the spring of 2021. This decision takes into account the large number of other conferences being rescheduled for this fall, as well as the ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in Miami Beach on October 2-5, 2020. We will continue to update you as we work through the rescheduling process.

All current attendee registrations will be fully refunded. We will begin issuing the refunds shortly. You do not need to request a refund. Registration for the 2021 Central States Conference in Omaha will re-open in January 2021.

AWARDS

The planning committee would like to thank everyone for your submissions for the 2020 Central States Awards. Due to the number of submissions and logistics of reviewing the awards with the current restrictions for gatherings of our awards jury we have extended the review time for awards to give the submissions the proper review they deserve. We will notify award winners in the near future and thank you for your patience.

The Committee believes that even if we are not able to gather as a group for Central States in 2020 we plan to celebrate the great work that has been submitted through the Awards Program. We are working through timelines and how we will develop a meaningful celebration. Please look for updates in the coming weeks. We thank everyone for their patience and flexibility as we work through the logistics of this celebration.

If you have any questions regarding your registration, sponsorship or just in general please feel free to reach out to info@aslacentralstates.org.

We hope to see everyone at the rescheduled Central States – FUSE 2021 Conference next spring!

Thank you,
Central States Planning Committee

For hotel cancellation information please refer to your confirmation email from Omaha Marriott Downtown Hotel.
In the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, do we wait for social distancing to end or start experimenting and adapting our community outreach models?

Public agencies, design teams, and communities face uncharted territories, not without risk. Our ability to advance projects relies on the insights and magic that emerge from interactive, person-to-person community gatherings. Can we successfully forge camaraderie and casual interaction online? What are the real and perceived barriers to equitable access to online interaction and how can they be addressed? Does the pandemic actually present an opportunity to widen audiences and level the playing field? As we adjust our short- and long-term approaches, here are a few considerations:

**PUT EQUITY FRONT AND CENTER**

Do we really know what we think we know? Assumptions about the digital divide – who has Internet access and who doesn’t – can be misunderstood, as reported by the Center for Internet Society. Remember this mantra about the importance of a community input: “nothing about us, without us, is for us.”

It is critical to hear directly from the community what the barriers are. This takes more time. Some of the barriers include English as a second language; childcare and eldercare at a time when health issues are even more pressing; and a lack of or limited Internet access and associated support.

There are many relatively inexpensive solutions such as free webcams, hot spots, or phone data top ups. Filling the gaps identified by community members can help support advisory councils and allow community informed work to continue.

The health crisis could push the landscape architecture profession to make initial outreach about barriers to access commonplace.

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This article was originally posted April 7th, 2020 on ‘The Dirt,’ written by Deb Guenther, FASLA

Video can be a reciprocal tool for designers and community members to document observations and share posts for discussions. This media was explored by Nicky Bloom, a Mithun landscape designer, in her University of Washington College of the Built Environment thesis called “Tideflat Tales.” Nicky Bloom

How Can We Design with Communities While Apart?
**Build a Welcoming Atmosphere**

Create personal connections, stimulate creativity, and support trust. In order to achieve these goals, consider the context of our revised daily lives: localized experiences; more free time for some, less for others; individualized experiences as well as more multi-generational interaction; interpersonal tensions and mental health challenges; more time outside for some and more time inside for others.

How can we adapt our familiar community engagement goals – diverse communication style choices, interaction between residents, reporting back to the group – to the new normal? Some ideas include self-care and personal experience check-ins; self-guided walking tours; scavenger hunts; general gamification of activities; sharing on-site design team and community member smart phone videos; and prompting storytelling through video, written or illustrated media.

There are exciting possibilities for video analysis, which builds on the power of emotion in a way traditional analysis does not.

**Remain Flexible and Appreciative**

Plan the first meeting and adapt with the next. It’s hard to anticipate right now what will matter. Each community is having collective and unique experiences that will influence their priorities going forward. Keep the outlines broad and any necessary expectations clear. Reflect on those expectations to ensure they are truly the basic ones.

Share back what was heard and confirm the value of participation. Constantly tailor the process to the audience interests and needs to influence how the interaction occurs and how it is curated. Perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic can be the advent of a much more inclusive process.

**Design Intentional, Substantive Participation Experiences**

Establish stipends for community ambassadors and residents who co-create with the design team and bring the expertise of their lived experience to the project. Ask what types of leadership and mentorship opportunities could be built into the process to provide career opportunities during uncertain times.

This is where diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations meets design – where designed process outcomes are much broader and long lasting than the physical design itself.

An intentional process in this pandemic-conscious world could also result in valuable policy input and revisions as agencies scramble to keep their work meaningful and valuable to constituents. Building in opportunities to inform policy helps people connect with the democratic process, which is increasingly critical when chaos is also an opening for autocracy.

There is opportunity for this health crisis to accelerate democratic, community-driven design.
“The pandemic could result in greater listening – the ability to hear another person’s story, one that may be in conflict with your own beliefs or assumptions.”

Be alert. Create space for true narrative.

A silver lining of disruption is that previously unheard narratives can emerge and provide a more holistic picture of our world. In public settings, social norms tamp down sharing of difficult stories. But difficult stories are the foundation of racial reconciliation and transparency. It leads us to acknowledge we operate in a gray world, not black and white.

Challenging stories are the foundation of building trust. As research demonstrates, compelling stories stick with people. We can create safe space by consistently providing a venue to share those stories, celebrating the sharing of stories and their impact, and curating them to create a constructive environment.

Repeating the invitation to share stories in multiple meetings communicates this is a deep desire, not a superficial request, and will prompt different results in different times and settings among people.

The pandemic could result in greater listening – the ability to hear another person’s story, one that may be in conflict with your own beliefs or assumptions.

With thoughtful outreach, but acknowledgement that we will make mistakes, we can bring our design creativity to a community-informed design process. Much can emerge from this crisis that will improve business as usual.

Let’s keep sharing the many ways to accelerate relationship building apart and together. We look forward to hearing the collective wisdom.

Deb Guenther, FASLA, is a design partner at Mithun, an interdisciplinary firm focused on design for positive change and located in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles. She is working with community members, utility districts, and transit agencies to shape city infrastructure together.
Lamp Rynearson’s Landscape Architecture team is a relatively new area of practice within a larger multidisciplinary firm that was traditionally focused on Civil Engineering design and Geomatics. Over the last five years, our team has grown from one to five professionals, collaborating with several other services such as Civil Engineering, GIS, Aquatic Design, and Structural Engineering as project scope requires. We work with a variety of clients, including both the private and public sector, in-house, and with other multidisciplinary firms that need landscape architectural expertise. Since our inception, we have thrived on the differences we make in the community and opportunities to meet other local landscape architects. When approached to provide a Firm Focus, we met as a team to discuss our message. We were thrilled for the opportunity and wanted to pursue a deeper look into who we are and how we have come together as a new team within the Omaha Metro. We will attempt to shed some light on how we have grown and some of the challenges that come with creating an area of practice within an established multidisciplinary firm. We also wanted to open the door for future conversations and to encourage other landscape architects who are following a similar path.
“We had to establish the difference between what we do as landscape architects and a planner to sell our services better.”

One of the initial challenges of integrating a new discipline into a multidisciplinary firm is to get everyone on the same page. When we began, few of our coworkers and clients knew what a landscape architect’s role was. As a result, the title “Planner” was loosely thrown around, and we always thought to ourselves, “What exactly does that mean to us?” Unfortunately, no one we worked with seemed to know what that meant. Did it mean we were project finance planners, subdivision planners, or did we spend our evenings writing municipal code? In addition, almost every other engineering or architecture firm in town called themselves “Planners.” Why would another firm or client hire a planner from Lamp Rynearson when they are also planners or have already hired other planners? We had to establish the difference between what we do as landscape architects and a planner to sell our services better. After a few muddled conversations with coworkers and clients, the feedback was clear. As a new team, we had to create a clear message and better define ourselves and scope. For us, this message was changing our titles, website, conversations, contracts, and marketing from Planning to Landscape Architecture. Upon providing a clear message, we found ourselves with a crisis that had to be immediately balanced; the projects were coming in at a very fast pace. It was make-or-break time, and if we fell short on any of these projects, that placed our reputation on the line. In short, one major flop could cost us future work and growth. Fortunately, we had assembled an exceptionally talented and motivated team that thrived off each other’s successes. Everyone jumped in and worked together to get across the finish line. Our ability to collaborate and complete large, complex projects was noticed by both our internal and external clients. Due to these accomplishments, we had unintentionally created a sales force. Coworkers and clients trusted us to get projects done on time, on budget, with great communication, and exceed expectations. We now had a large base of internal clients and several external clients in the community selling our landscape architectural services for us. Creating and developing this reputation has been very special to watch, and we receive reminders of it when new opportunities present themselves. Now the work was coming in, and it was time to further focus on our integration. The big question—how do we get a seat at the table when we’re such a minority within the office? From our perspective, it was the ability to bring work in. We didn’t seek to survive on handouts, and to be taken seriously, we had to join in the pursuit of work and share our knowledge of new projects with others. This meant bringing work to the table for everyone, including engineers, surveyors, GIS, and landscape architects. If we can convey a message of “we’re all in this together,” and we can also bring work in, then others will do the same. Fortunately, as a new team of landscape architects, we landed some great opportunities that helped employ multiple disciplines and to strengthen our relationships with our fellow design professionals and within the community. This helped us become perceived as project partners.

We have established what we do, we’ve established our expertise, and the work is coming in. Now it’s time to stabilize the workload to help ensure our long-term success. As a new team, we consider landscape architecture as a technical profession. We understand the intricacies of construction. From our perspective, if we are a technical profession, then we can’t afford to miss out. As a team, we understood the importance of technical design, and while it’s not always fun, it’s vital to our long-term success. This ability to pursue and accomplish technical design helped to maintain workload, billable
the opportunity to cross-sell our services within multiple landscape architecture or related markets. We have expertise in front-end design, modeling, wetlands, land development, rooftops, horticulture, redevelopment, project management, and a variety of other areas. This went a long way to further our integration. Integration is an on-going process, and it’s never once and finished. Our market is continually shifting, and we are continuously adapting. As part of a multidisciplinary firm, our scope can also vary greatly. We work on anything from planting plans to designing entertainment districts, parks, communities, and urban redevelopment. Sometimes, we’re a subconsultant, and sometimes we’re the lead consultant. Either way, we’re excited to pursue our passions within design and encourage the growth of our team and the local community of landscape architects.

Sam, Zack, Mike, Jamie, Lamp Rynearson, and I all thank you for the opportunity to participate in this spring’s Firm Focus and we look forward to seeing everyone at ASLA Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter events!
The Landscape Architecture program at North Dakota State University has entered its 37th year and admitted its second MLA class. The year kicked off in August with an intensive hands-on workshop led by Dean Cardasis, FASLA, professor and director of the James Rose Center for Landscape Architectural Research and Design in Ridgewood, NJ.

Along with the multi-disciplinary workshop with approximately 30 participants, Cardasis delivered an insightful lecture on James Rose, coinciding with the publication of his James Rose biography, a part of the Masters of Modern Landscape Design Series.

In September, the Urban Design Studio, led by Associate Professor Dominic Fischer, traveled to New York City to experience the evolution of Landscape Architecture in America. The focus of the design studio was addressing the needs of the Lower Eastside between the Manhattan and Williamsburg bridges, starting at the Ken Smith Workshop and SHoP architects designed eco-park and urban beach on Pier 35. It was a fun follow-up as the previous Urban Design studio met with the project manager, general contractor, and crew the year before during construction. Topics included sea-level rise, designing for storm surges, retrofitting public housing, recognizing multi-cultural and multi-generational layers, green infrastructure, and mass transportation networks.

The guiding philosophy of the program is to approach design as a knowledge-based discipline that considers the prairie, the

University Focus contributed by Dominic Fischer, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture & North Dakota Section Chair
“The guiding philosophy of the program is to approach design as a knowledge-based discipline that considers the prairie, the agrarian heritage and cultural landscapes of the plains, and the work of notable architects and landscape architects of the region.”
competition was organized by the Regional Development Fund of the West Greece Region, which was seeking Panhellenic architectural design ideas. Associate Professor, Dominic L. Fischer completed several sponsored research projects that were well received and covered by local media, including the design for incorporating a proposed columbarium at the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery in Mandan and the completion of a feasibility study to preserve and convert the Bismarck Mandan Rail Bridge into a bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Missouri River at Bismarck/Mandan. The bridge is listed as one of the National Trust’s annual list of 11 most endangered places. Professor Fischer also contributed to award-winning professional projects that include the proposed grounds for the new Governor’s Residence at the State Capitol Grounds in Bismarck and the Fargo Project, an artist-led multi-year stormwater project in Fargo, ND.

At the writing of this newsletter brief, the faculty and students have shifted to 100% online/distance learning. We are doing our digital best given the situation and have seen a great outpouring of support from our alumni advisory board, fellow professionals, and academic peers. I am personally working on real-time redlines with the thesis studio as they complete their final semester of Landscape Architecture sheltering in place. In an unfortunate time, we are grateful for the technology we have available and the support of the ASLA network.
After seven years and three different bills, Governor Pete Ricketts signed LB30 into law on February 12, 2020. This new law, LB30, updates the definition and scope of the profession of landscape architecture. Some of the major updates include allowing for online renewal of licensing, changing the renewal period from one year to two years, rearranging the sections to follow other professional licensing laws in the state, and more clearly defining the penalties for violating the law. The law will go into effect ninety days after the Governor signed it.

The next step is in this process is to update the Rules and Regulations to the Act. The Nebraska State Board of Landscape Architects (NSBLA) will hold a public hearing on the proposed Rules and Regulations later this year. Be on the watch for a date and time for the hearing! There are also a few state agencies that must review and approve them as well. Once those approvals are obtained, the revised Rules and Regulations will go into effect. The goal is to have everything in place before the end of the year so that we can start 2021 with the new law entirely in effect.

The process to update the current Act started back in 2013 when the NSBLA decided that it was time to overhaul the current Act. A Task Force was established to assist the Board in gathering information on what should be revised. The Task Force provided recommendations to the Board in 2014. In 2015 the Board had a draft bill written, but at the eleventh hour, the state senator who was considering sponsoring the bill decided not to. The Board was successful in getting a senator in 2016 to sponsor the bill, LB788, but it never made it out of committee.

In 2017, a second attempt was made with a new bill, LB364. The Great Plains Chapter and Chapter Trustee John Royster, FASLA applied for and received an Advocacy Grant from ASLA to hire a lobbyist. In addition, a number of local landscape architectural firms provided additional financial support towards hiring a chapter lobbyist. The bill had its public hearing in 2017, but the committee didn’t vote on it, and the bill was carried over to the 2018 session. While the bill did make it out of committee during the 2018 legislative session, it never made it to the floor of the legislature and died at the end of the 2018 session.

In 2019, a third attempt was made with LB30. It made it out of committee, but did not make it to the floor of the legislature and was carried over to the 2020 legislative session. With the charge being led by the lobbyist hired by the Chapter and Senator Kolterman, the sponsor of the bill, the legislature voted 48 to 0 on February 6, 2020 in favor of the bill and sent it on to the Governor for his signature.

There are a lot of people who participated in the new law over the past seven years. This includes the members of the Nebraska State Board of Landscape Architects (Dennis E. Bryers, Eileen Bergt, Gary Wells, Dave Ciaccio, Todd Maierlaro, Eric J. Casper, JoAnne Kissel and Gayle M. Malmquist), Jean Lais, Administrative Assistant to the Board, the Task Force (John Royster, Ken Backman, Dennis Sheer, Brad Swerczek, and Pat Slaven), the leadership of the Great Plains Chapter ASLA (now Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter ASLA), John Royster, Chapter Trustee, Nebraska State Senators Tanya Cook (LB788), Lynne Walz (LB364), and Mark Kolterman (LB30), and the chapter lobbyist Baird Holm, LLP (David Levy and Vanessa A. Silk).

Be sure to thank these individuals for their outstanding work in advocating for the profession of Landscape Architecture! Well done!
ASLA JOINS ARPL
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE PROFESSIONAL LICENSING (ARPL)

Over the past few years, professional licensing has been under attack all over the United States. Organizations opposing professional and occupational licensing, state representatives, and governors have been actively trying to weaken or eliminate licensing standards. It’s not just the landscape architect profession that has been in the crosshairs but architects, engineers, accountants, nursing, medical professions, etc. that are threatened by deregulation. The problem is that there hasn’t been a centralized voice for professional licensing to counteract those working to deregulate professional licensing.

As a result, in 2019, a few of the professional organizations got together and formed the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) to be their voice in promoting professional licensing. The original members of ARPL included Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB), the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). Since its founding, the organization has been joined by The American Institute of Architects (AIA), the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), and the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE).

The Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) promotes a responsible, balanced approach to professional licensing. ARPL is not engaged in lobbying. They aim to educate policymakers and the public on the importance of high standards, rigorous education, and extensive experience within highly complex technical professions that are relied upon to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. ARPL recently completed a survey that shows that consumers care about professional licensing. A summary of the survey results is on the next page.

For additional information on ARPL, please visit http://www.responsiblelicensing.org/

2019 COUNCIL OF FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN STUDENT, DARBY BUCKLEY RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP

Darby Buckley, Student ASLA from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, was one of four students to receive the 2019 Council of Fellows Scholarships. In addition to Darby, Eddy Gonzalez, Student ASLA from Cal Poly Pomona; Janes Ryan, Student ASLA from Kansas State University; and Nancy Gandarilla Valenzuela, Student ASLA from Texas A&M University were also recipients. All four attended the 2019 ASLA Conference of Landscape Architecture in San Diego, the Council of Fellows Investiture Dinner Sunday night, and the Council of Fellows business meeting Monday morning, where all four were presented with their certificates.

The Council of Fellows currently funds four $5,000 scholarships per year to support students with financial need to promote diversity in the profession. These scholarships include registration and travel and hotel accommodations for the annual conference. It is the goal of the Council of Fellows to raise $120,000 every three years and to add one new scholarship every three years.

2019 Council of Fellows Scholarship Recipients from left: Darby Buckley, University of Nebraska - Lincoln; Nancy Gandarilla Valenzuela, Texas A&M University; Janes Ryan, Kansas State University; Eddy Gonzalez, Cal Poly Pomona
Photo Courtesy of Dennis E. Bryers

2019 ASLA CONFERENCE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN SAN DIEGO, THE COUNCIL OF FELLOWS INVESTITURE DINNER, SUNDAY NIGHT, AND THE COUNCIL OF FELLOWS BUSINESS MEETING, MONDAY MORNING.
To feature your firm in Firm Focus, promote upcoming events, or share an award winning project in Feature Story, please contact Anne Machian.