



***Liberation in
Landscape
Education means
to change not only
what we do, but
also how we do it***

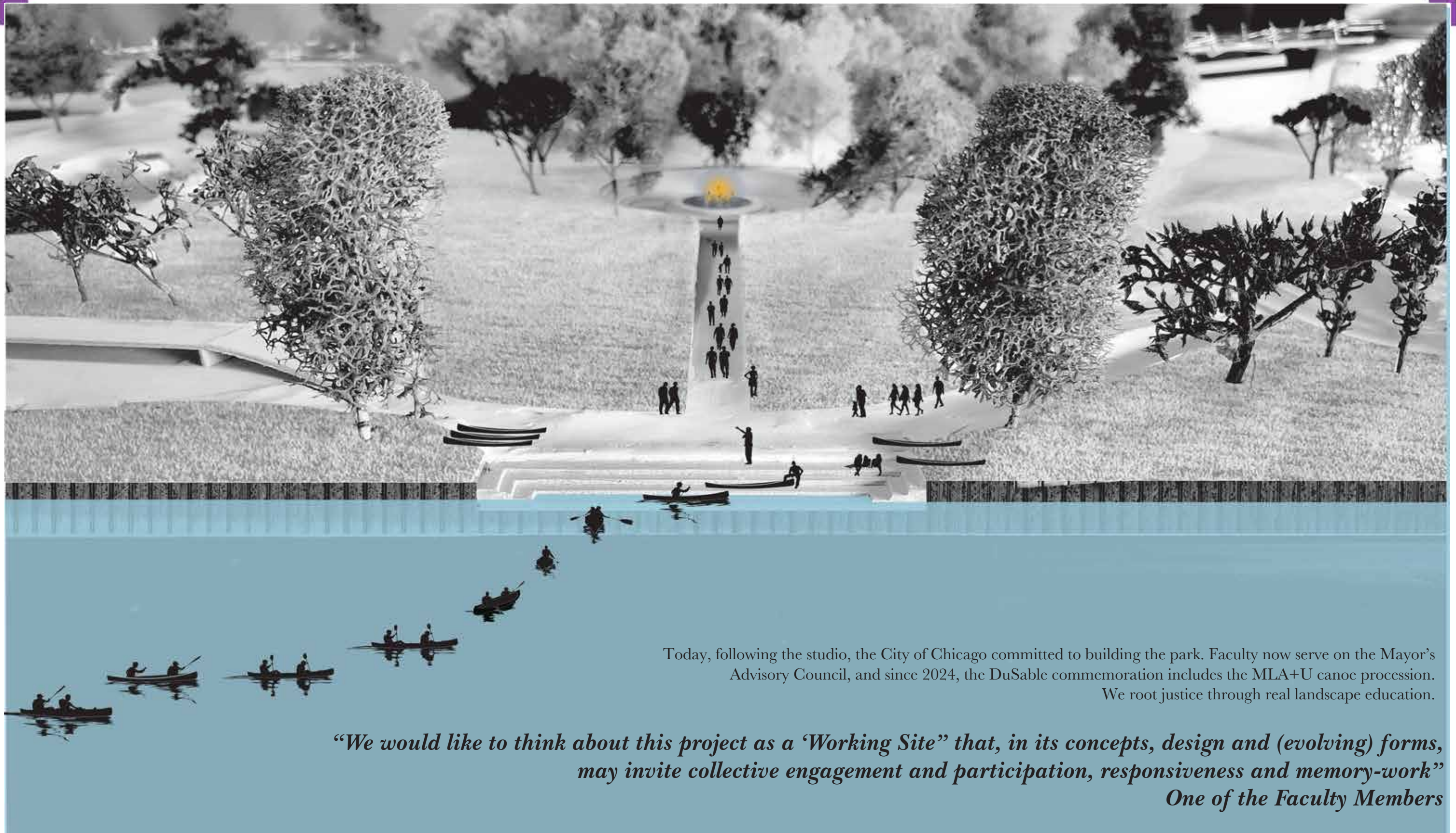
DuSable (North Chicago), Living Tracks (South Chicago), Hosting Life (North Chicago), Monterrey (Latin America), and Vineyard of Change (Chile, Napa, Barcelona) prove that communities, public agencies, NGOs, private actors, and academia—across ages, languages, and regions—can collaborate without competition, hierarchy, or the urge to standardize methods, aesthetics, or outcomes. These works show how landscape architecture can hold difference, urgency, and care—without compromise.

They intervene in real soil, entangled with botany, culture, emerging technologies, and community-led ambitions. Threads in a broader, more turbulent curriculum, where design justice is a current—coursing through core studios, experimental electives, and transdisciplinary collisions. We begin in the streets, enter the classroom with dirt and love on our hands, build triangular solidarities, then return to the streets to grow, test, and disrupt.

Our urban pact and impact reclaim the profession after decades of prioritizing wealthy geographies and colonizing agendas. Rooting justice is our method—restoring land, memory, and the right to belong. This is about pragmatic good. We work with clarity, depth, and care. Receiving this award will honor our ambition—and signal what landscape architecture education must become.

Illinois Institute of Technology
College of Architecture
Master of Landscape Architecture +
Urbanism Towards Design Justice

The five projects representing the IIT Master of Landscape Architecture + Urbanism are declarations—living embodiments of Towards Design Justice, a pedagogy grounded in care and the belief that landscapes prioritize people over property, ecology over extraction, and joy over compliance. Each project was chosen for conceptual clarity, engagement with justice through design, and ability to spark collective action across language, territory, and difference.



Today, following the studio, the City of Chicago committed to building the park. Faculty now serve on the Mayor's Advisory Council, and since 2024, the DuSable commemoration includes the MLA+U canoe procession.
We root justice through real landscape education.

“We would like to think about this project as a ‘Working Site’ that, in its concepts, design and (evolving) forms, may invite collective engagement and participation, responsiveness and memory-work”
One of the Faculty Members

Country/City

United States, Chicago.

University / School

Illinois Institute of Technology, College of Architecture, Master in Landscape Architecture and Urbanism. Towards Design Justice.

Academic year

2021-2022

Title of the project

Reimagining DuSable Park

Authors

Davey Hines Friday, Erik Schiller, Krista Dawson, Vrittany Salais, Johann Friedl, Nick Myers

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| Title of the project | Reimagining DuSable Park |
| Authors | Davey Hines Friday, Erik Schiller, Krista Dawson, Vrittany Salais, Johann Friedl, Nick Myers |
| Title of the course | LA 543 Commemorative Landscapes |
| Academic year | 2021-2022. |
| Teaching Staff | Ron Henderson |
| Department / Section / Program of belonging | Master in Landscape Architecture and Urbanism. Towards Design Justice. |
| University / School | Illinois Institute of Technology, College of Architecture. |



Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

DuSable Park should foster the evocative power of landscape to occur in public space as a framework for memory. It should become a “witness” of the past and a “voice of memory” embedded in everyday life. We understand the significance of this project will be to establish ethical dialogues with the site and the community, and elicit participatory engagement. As a path towards commemoration, it should become a public place of exception that acts as a reminder of the community’s commitment, today and for future generations, to remember this place.

Reimagining DuSable Park is a collaboration between three heritage and advocacy organizations and the IIT MLA+U Program. DuSable Heritage Association acknowledges and celebrates Chicago’s first non-native citizen, the Haitian Jean Baptiste Pont DuSable. The American Indian Center provides cultural, social and educational services to Chicagoland’s large Native community. Friends of the Parks advocates for equity and justice in Chicago parks. Working with these groups, the MLA+U Studio envisioned scenarios for DuSable Park - a park that was designated on paper over 30 years ago but remains unbuilt. The park commemorates DuSable and his Potawatomi wife, Kitiyawa, whose tribe welcomed him into their community.

Since the completion of the studio, the park has gained momentum and is in the public design process currently. The proposal, by student Nick Myers, for a flotilla of canoes to play the waters of the Chicago River on a day of commemoration was inaugurated in August 2024 to create a public procession celebrating Chicago’s founding family.

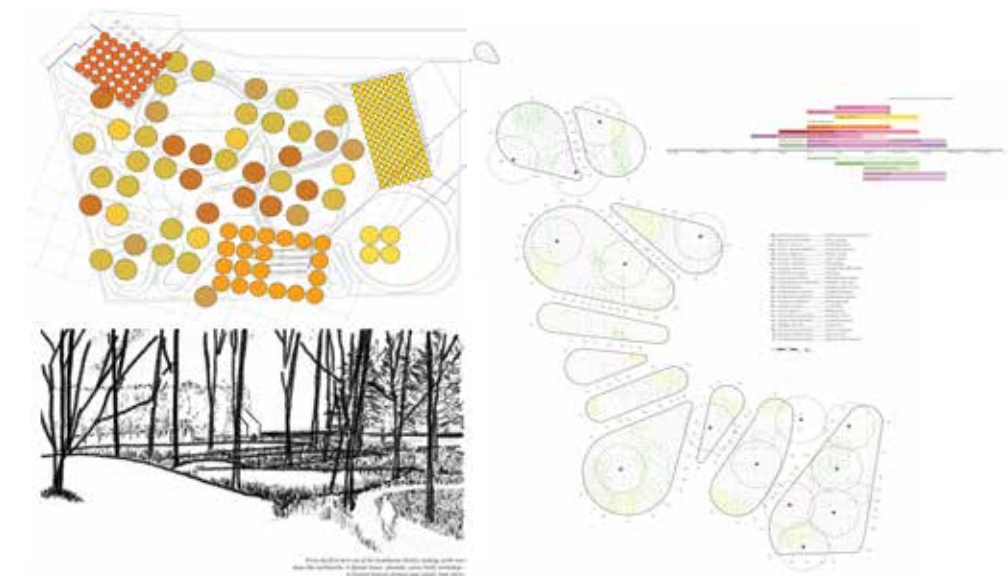
Barcelona International Landscape Biennial

Contact via email:
biennialadm@coac.net

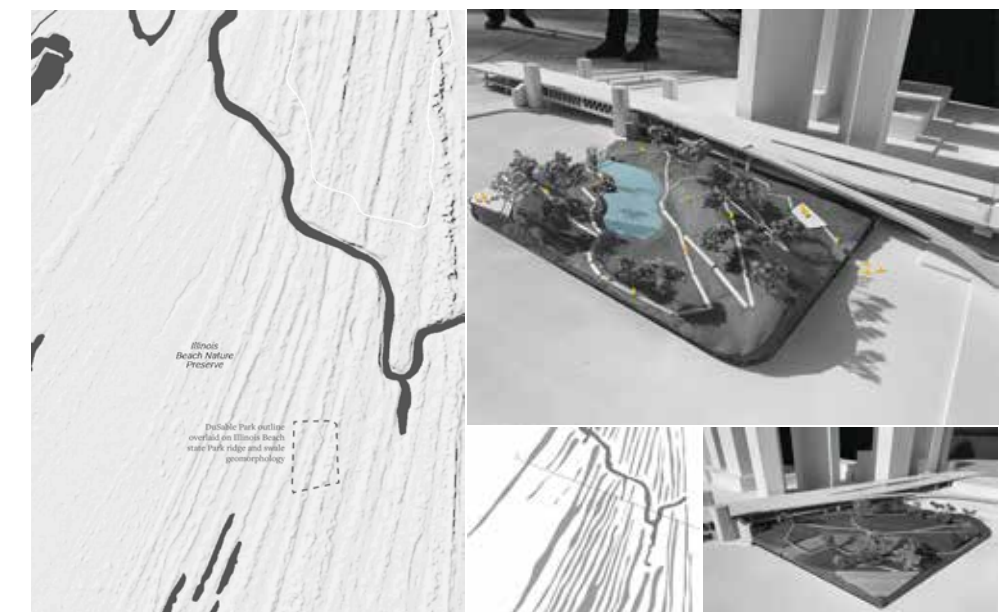
Venue:
COAC - Col·legi Oficial d’Arquitectes de Catalunya
Carrer Arcs 1-3, 08002 Barcelona - Spain



BLACK BRUTALISM acknowledges the ways various spaces have be used to brutalize Black people, but also celebrate the accomplishments, feats, and achievements Black people have been able to attain despite oppressive American systems.



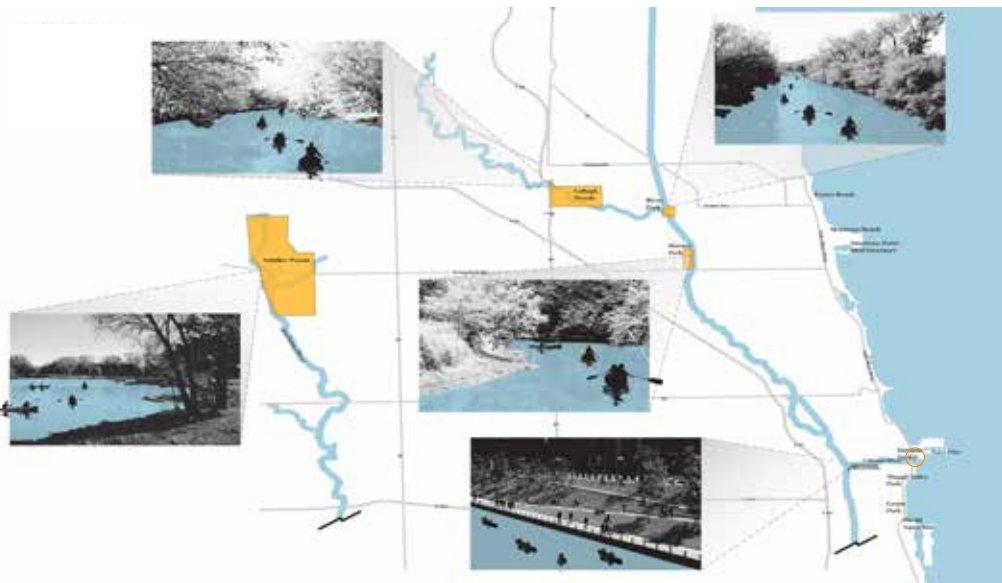
ENACTING MEMORY How can we hope to capture the familiarity and intimacy of a place that was so tightly bound to just four people - DuSable, Kithawa, their daughter, and their son? This investigation builds intimate urban spaces, in wooded rooms and structures sized to the DuSable family's experience.



RIDGE and SWALE draws on the charactrstic geo-morphology of the lakeshore and associated ecological zones to create a park that re-establishes the spatial structure that was occupied by the many peoples who lived in the region prior to the development of modern day Chicago.



DUSABLE'S SHORELINE recalls the land as DuSable knew it at a pivotal moment of change in our city's landscape history. It also sheds light on the impacts of both cultural and environmental changes that the land has experienced.



A PLACE OF FIRE is a ceremonial and ritual experience: fires burning, waters flowing, cultures blonging, and communities gathering. An annual procession of canoes ply the waters of the Chicago River and converge at DuSable Park to celebrate the DuSable Family.



SOUND TACTICS is a strategy to deploy specific plant species and topographic differences allow sensory design to take hold in DuSable Park, creating an escape from the loudest and most visually distracting regions of the City's shoreline.



1 The mouth of the Chicago river in 1937, with DuSable Park visible to the right of the bridge; 2 One of the earliest maps of Chicago. DuSable's home had eventually been sold to John Kintien; 3 and 4 DuSable built his cabin near the mouth of the River, making him the first known non-native settler in Chicago. He married a local Potawatomi woman named Kithawa in 1788, and they had two children together; 5 Illinois Beach State Park is the closest example of what the pre-industrial shoreline of Chicago would have looked like. This landscape includes rolling dunes and swales with streams meandering their way towards Lake Michigan; 6 The shoreline of Chicago has been altered greatly in the last 200 years, with multiples waves of landfill and development.

