

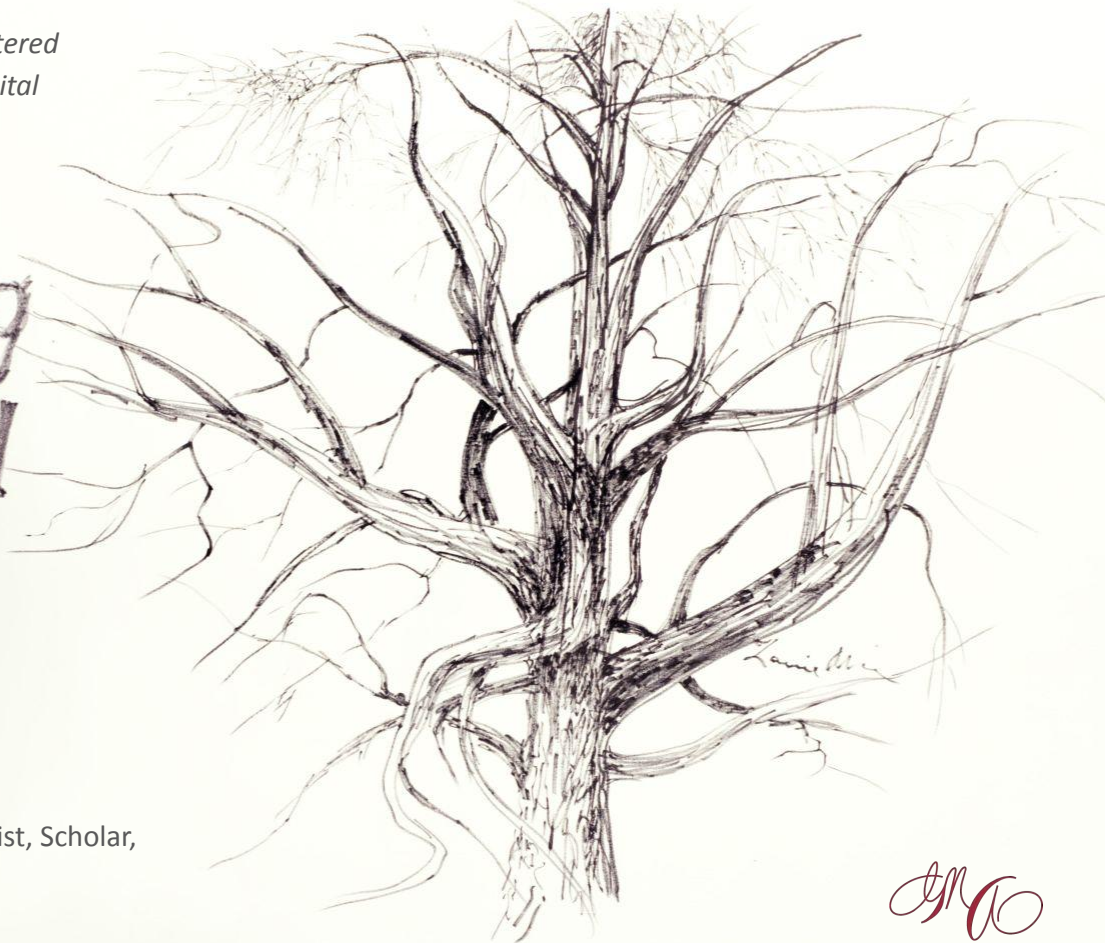
As America's foremost urban designer, Laurie Olin has altered the purpose of modern-day cities and created the most vital landscapes in our country.



*Sitting
Still*

LAURIE OLIN

Landscape Architect, Artist, Scholar,
Author, Urban Visionary



[CLICK HERE TO WATCH SIZZLE](#)



SA KWA Pictures

[CLICK HERE](#)

“...a preeminent landscape architect, renowned for his acute sense of harmony and balance between nature and design, Mr. Olin has dedicated his energy to shaping many iconic spaces around the world and to educating new leaders in his art.”

—The White House, President Obama’s 2012 National Medal of Arts award





OVERVIEW

SITTING STILL is an original documentary that focus on one of the world's greatest urban designers and his profoundly social vision.

This film offers a rare opportunity to get inside the mind of a brilliant and irreverent iconoclast...to see what he sees...and give voice to the environmental concerns that have been affecting our collective humanity like no other moment in history.

SYNOPSIS

At a time in our culture where the notion of “profit over people” is a pervasive one, Laurie Olin is battling to see beyond faulty economic models and misguided politics. He is fighting to bring sustainability to vast ecological systems and create more livable cities. When environments are suffering, so are the people. How we see and think about *place* is the first step toward improving the world we live in.

The stakes are high. With more and more evidence of climate change, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in human history. *SITTING STILL* creates an original way to see and understand our place in the continuum.

Olin’s life story of growing up in Alaska on the edge of the American frontier, living abroad and challenging belief systems around designing in nature, and his lifelong work transforming environments for social good become the launching pad for exploring critical themes around the sociology of public spaces and how they directly impact our human experience.

MAIN INTERVIEWS



Laurie Olin

Designer of the J. Paul Getty Center gardens, Battery Park City, Columbus Circle, the New York Botanical Garden, Bryant Park, the Washington Monument grounds, Independence Mall, Mission Bay, Bishops Gate (UK), Canary Wharf, (UK) and the Villa Olimpica (Barcelona). Designs of museum grounds and cultural centers include Lincoln Center, The Philadelphia Museum of Fine Art, The Rodin Museum, The Barnes Museum, the Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, the Tate Gallery of Modern Art and Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (Berlin).

Recognitions include: The Rome Prize in Landscape Architecture, inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture, the ASLA Medal, the National Medal of Arts Presented by President Obama, the Benjamin Franklin Founders Award, the Vincent Scully Prize, the Frederic Church Award and the recipient of over 20 International Design Awards. A Guggenheim Fellow, an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects, and a fellow with the American Academy of Rome, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Society of Landscape Architects.



Frank Gehry

World-renowned architect known for his postmodern designs including the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the Bilbao museum in Spain, the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Chicago's Millennium Park, the Performing Arts Center for Bard College, and the New World Center for the New World Symphony orchestral academy in Miami Beach. An architecture professor at Columbia University, Yale and the University of Southern California.



Billie Tsien

Architect, President of the Architectural League of New York and Director of the Public Art Fund. Inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the National Academy, the American Philosophical Society, and American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Architect of the Obama Presidential Center, the LeFrak Center at Lakeside, the Barnes Foundation, and the American Folk Art Museum.



Walter Hood

Landscape and public artist, a professor of landscape architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, and the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship Genius Grant whose focus is creating urban spaces that enrich the lives of current residents while also honoring communal histories. Author of the book “Black Landscapes Matter,” melding architectural and fine arts with a commitment to designing ecologically sustainable public spaces that empower marginalized communities.



**Adele Chatfield
Taylor**

A Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, former Executive Director of the New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation, former Director of the Design Arts Program for the National Endowment for the Arts, a Rome Prize Fellow, and former President and CEO of The American Academy of Rome for 25 years. Awarded the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, the Vincent Scully Prize and the Saint Nicholas Society Medal of Merit recognizing her outstanding service to the City of New York.



Prof. David Brownlee

A leading historian of modern architecture and urbanism in Europe and America and Professor Emeritus of Art and History at UPenn. Major publication prizes include the Society of Architectural Historians and the American Institute of Architects. Named a Fellow by the SAH which established the Brownlee Dissertation Prize in his honor. Curator of major exhibitions: “Building the City Beautiful” (Philadelphia Museum of Art), “Louis I. Kahn” (Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art), and “Out of the Ordinary: Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Associates” (Philadelphia Museum of Art).



Peter May

Regional Director of Lands and Planning, National Park Service. Served on the Zoning Commission since 2007 as the National Park Service (NPS) Designee, and previously as the Architect of the Capitol Designee. Associate Regional Director for Lands, Resources, and Planning with the National Capital Region of NPS.



Richard Levey

Founding President and Executive Committee member the Georgetown Business Improvement District, working with Sir David Adjaye, architect of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Chair of New York Live Arts. Served on the Board of the Duke Ellington Fund, The Big Apple Circus and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.



OTHER PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

Olin's former students and people-on-the-street interviews.

OVERVIEW OF THEMES

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

A colorful overview of Olin's personal history from the frontier lands of Alaska to becoming one of the most significant urban designers in the world

THE GRAND TOUR

Reflecting on a life of music, poetry, and drawing, Laurie Olin creates new lines of connection between each discipline and offers original ways of thinking about landscape as art

MAN WITH A PLAN

The remarkable stories behind Olin's highly acclaimed designs of major parks and gardens across the country and the world

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Olin and his colleagues talk about the false promise of the suburbs, the troubling sprawl of mega-cities, finding the spirit of each place, and the importance of humanity in urban design

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Olin and colleagues discuss the ills of the city, the problems with segregating populations, the growing house-less epidemic, and America's continuing failure to create good social housing

LAW AND ORDER

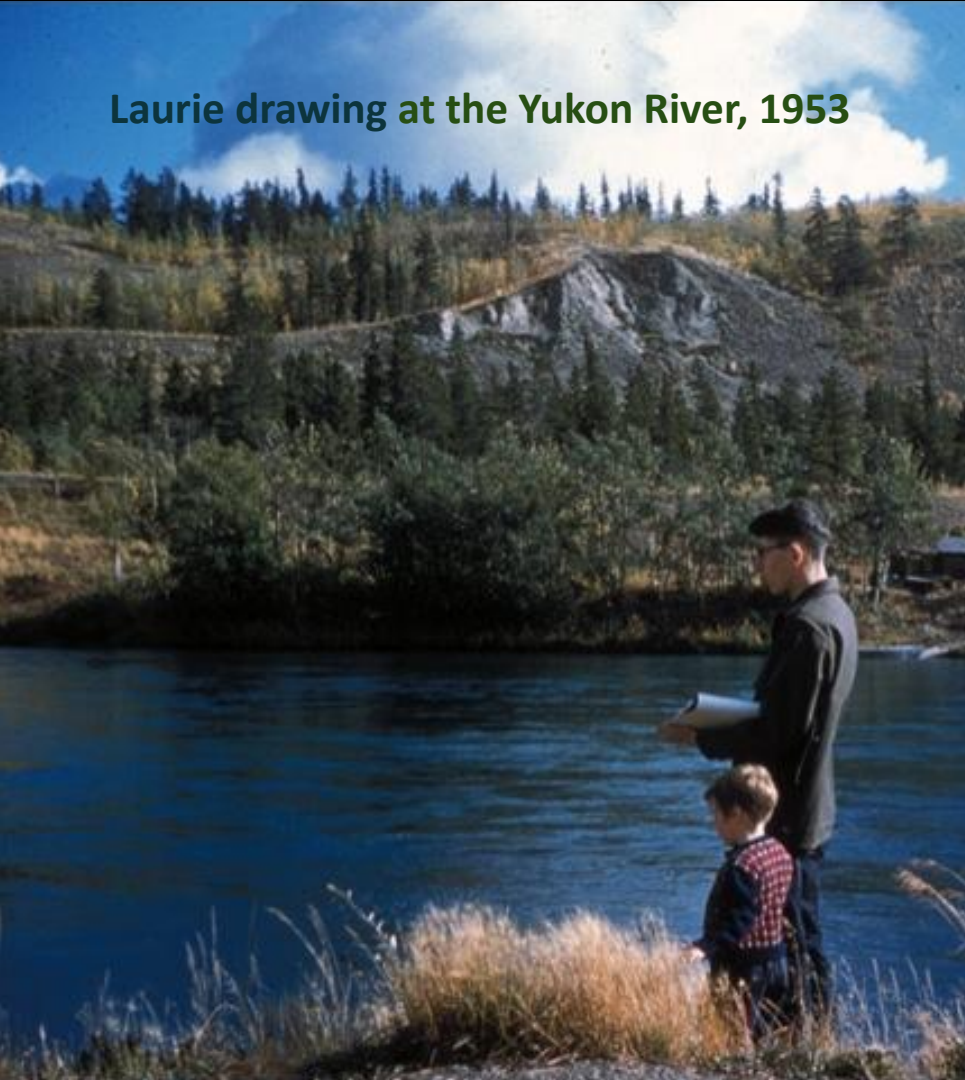
Laurie Olin explains why nature in the city matters, the ongoing effects of climate change, and the problem of living in the virtual vs the real world

ACT 1

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

In looking back at his formative years, Olin touches upon his early sense of community, a life lived in government housing in Fairbanks and shared public space filled with music, people, and books—the seminal things that formed him as an artist. His family's social circle included geologists, anthropologists and paleontologists, and a young Laurie was forged with a strong sense of geological time. In Alaska, the earth's crust felt alive. The world would shake and blow up with volcanic activity. There were floods and fires. Things were never simply static. Alaska offered a fullness and generosity of life, and gave a sense of abundance that deeply informed Olin's later teachings and designs. Where others saw disposable blank space, Olin saw the connective tissue of landscape and the social importance of open, green space. Forests and cities became interchangeable in his mind and everything made sense as an ensemble. This section will go from the wilds of Alaska to Laurie's time as a young man living with the homeless on Seattle's Skid Road, to where he is today.

Laurie drawing at the Yukon River, 1953



Laurie in Fairbanks, 1947



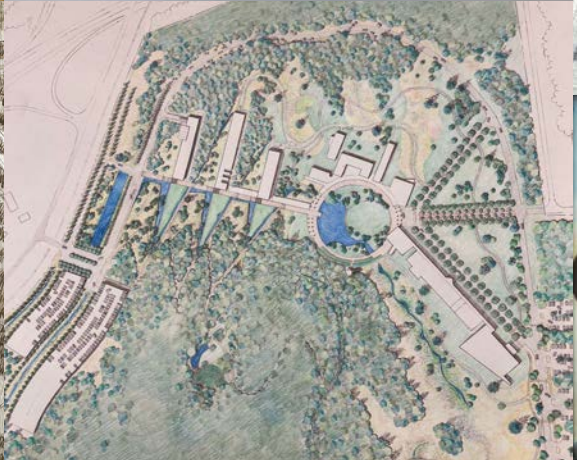
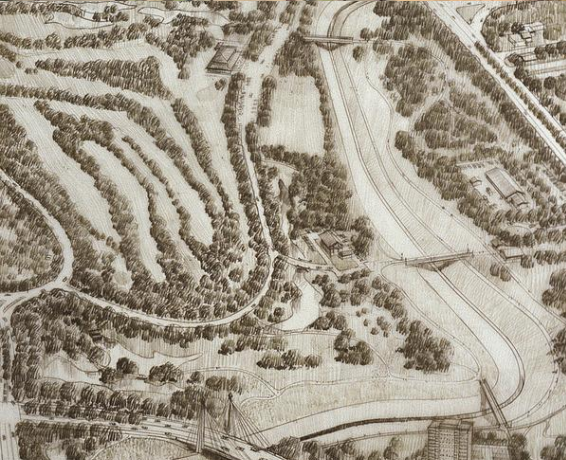
Laurie & Buck
at the Salcha River, 1947

ACT 2



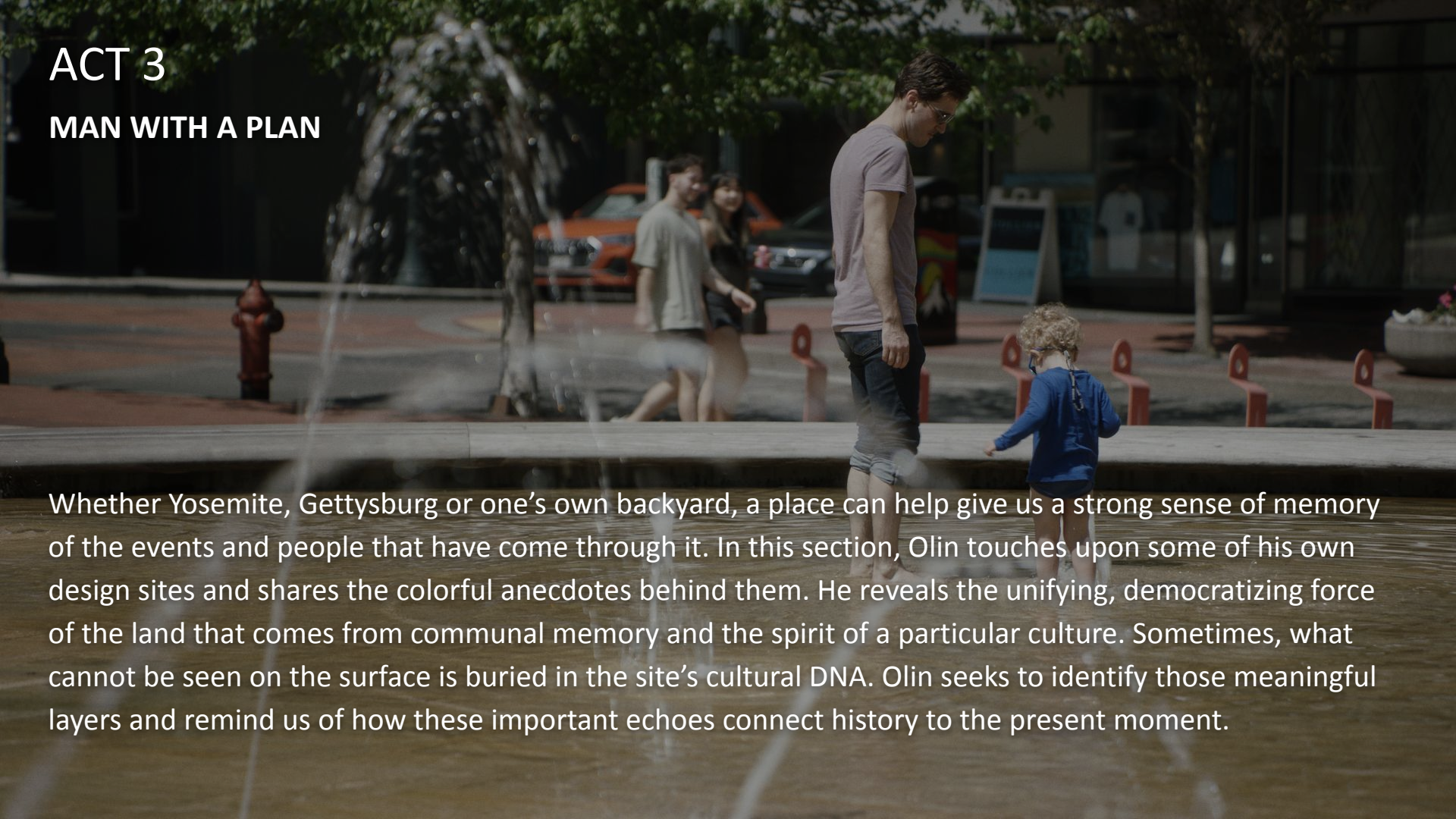
THE GRAND TOUR

Olin grew up with a deep appreciation for music, memorizing everything from Chopin to Benny Goodman. For him, landscape is similar to music—both with pauses, breaks, and spaces, a beginning, middle and an end that one must move through and cannot experience all at once. His relationship to poetry is equally profound, and taught him the art of boiling things down to essences. As Olin began to travel the world and see the parallels and interconnectedness between artistic disciplines, he created a unique lattice-work. These exposures were foundational to his practice as a thinker, planner, artist, and designer of vast ecological environments. This section uses Olin's incredible artwork to illustrate his unique trajectory.



ACT 3

MAN WITH A PLAN

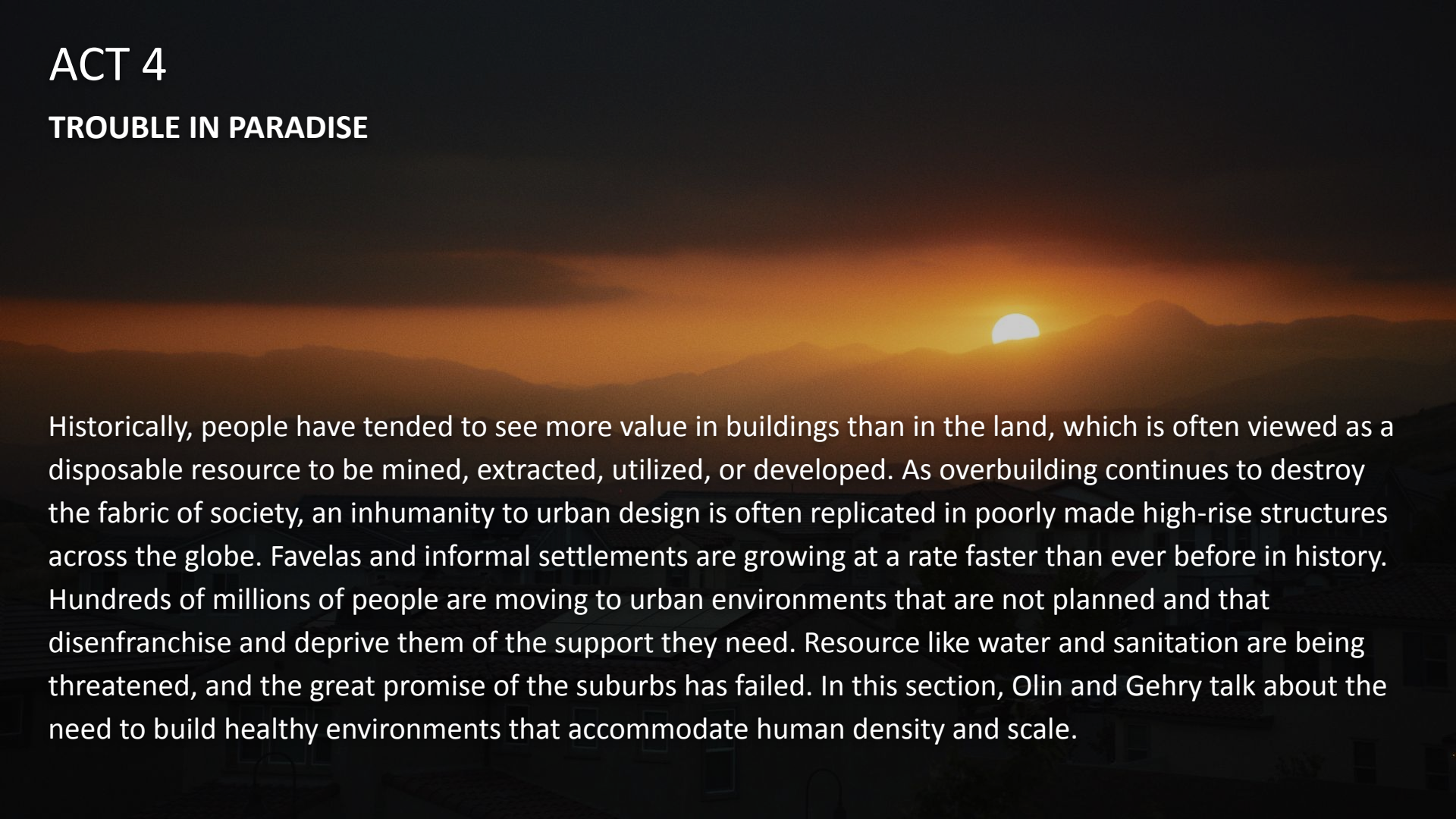
A photograph of a man and a young child playing in a public fountain. The man, wearing a light-colored t-shirt and shorts, stands in the water, looking down at the child. The child, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and shorts, is also in the water, facing away from the camera. The fountain has several jets of water spraying upwards. In the background, a woman and another man are walking on a paved area. There are trees and a building in the distance. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Whether Yosemite, Gettysburg or one's own backyard, a place can help give us a strong sense of memory of the events and people that have come through it. In this section, Olin touches upon some of his own design sites and shares the colorful anecdotes behind them. He reveals the unifying, democratizing force of the land that comes from communal memory and the spirit of a particular culture. Sometimes, what cannot be seen on the surface is buried in the site's cultural DNA. Olin seeks to identify those meaningful layers and remind us of how these important echoes connect history to the present moment.



ACT 4

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

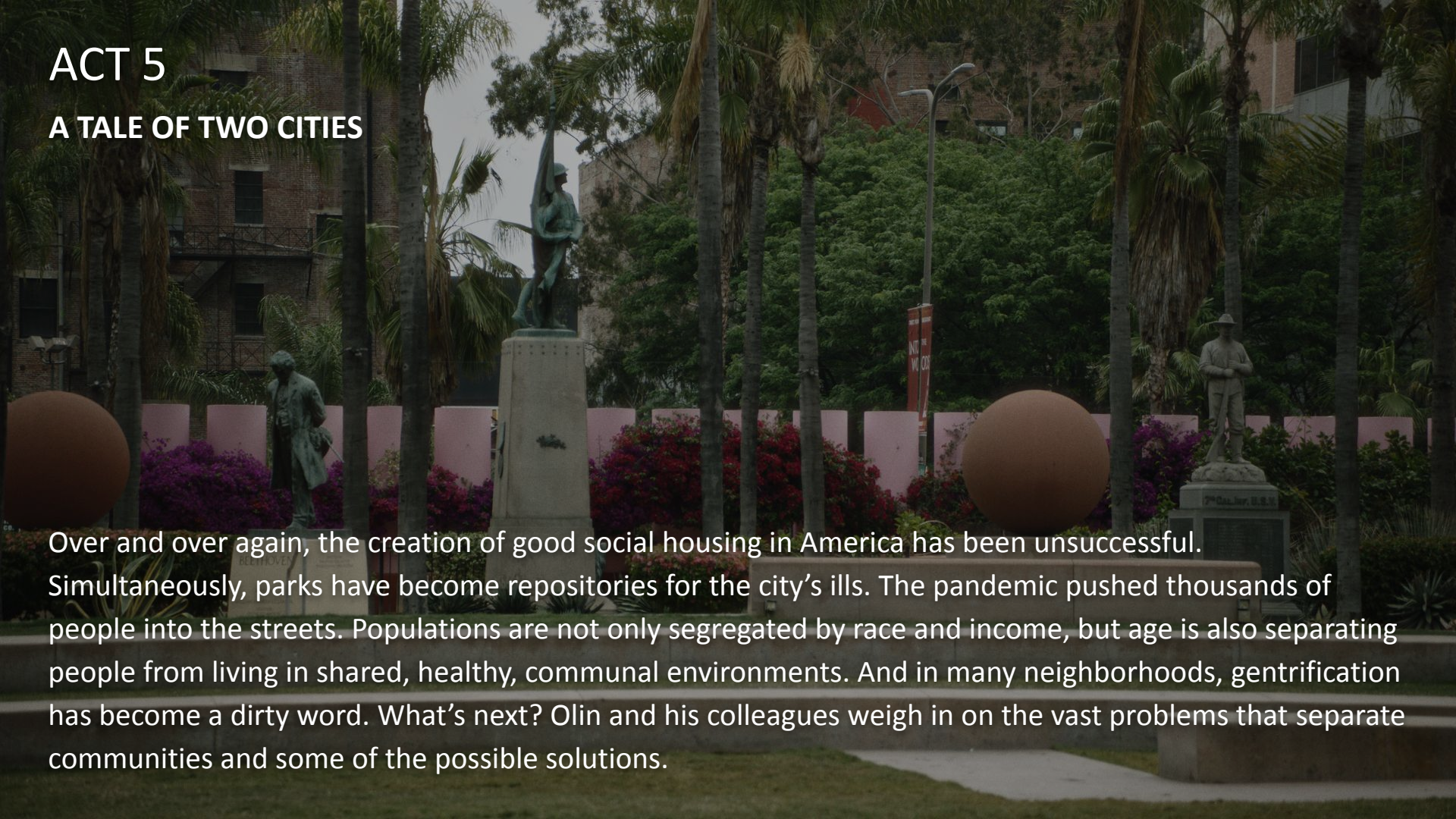
A photograph of a sunset over a mountain range. The sun is a bright white circle partially hidden behind a mountain peak, casting a warm orange and yellow glow across the sky and the silhouettes of the mountains. The foreground is dark and out of focus.

Historically, people have tended to see more value in buildings than in the land, which is often viewed as a disposable resource to be mined, extracted, utilized, or developed. As overbuilding continues to destroy the fabric of society, an inhumanity to urban design is often replicated in poorly made high-rise structures across the globe. Favelas and informal settlements are growing at a rate faster than ever before in history. Hundreds of millions of people are moving to urban environments that are not planned and that disenfranchise and deprive them of the support they need. Resource like water and sanitation are being threatened, and the great promise of the suburbs has failed. In this section, Olin and Gehry talk about the need to build healthy environments that accommodate human density and scale.



ACT 5

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

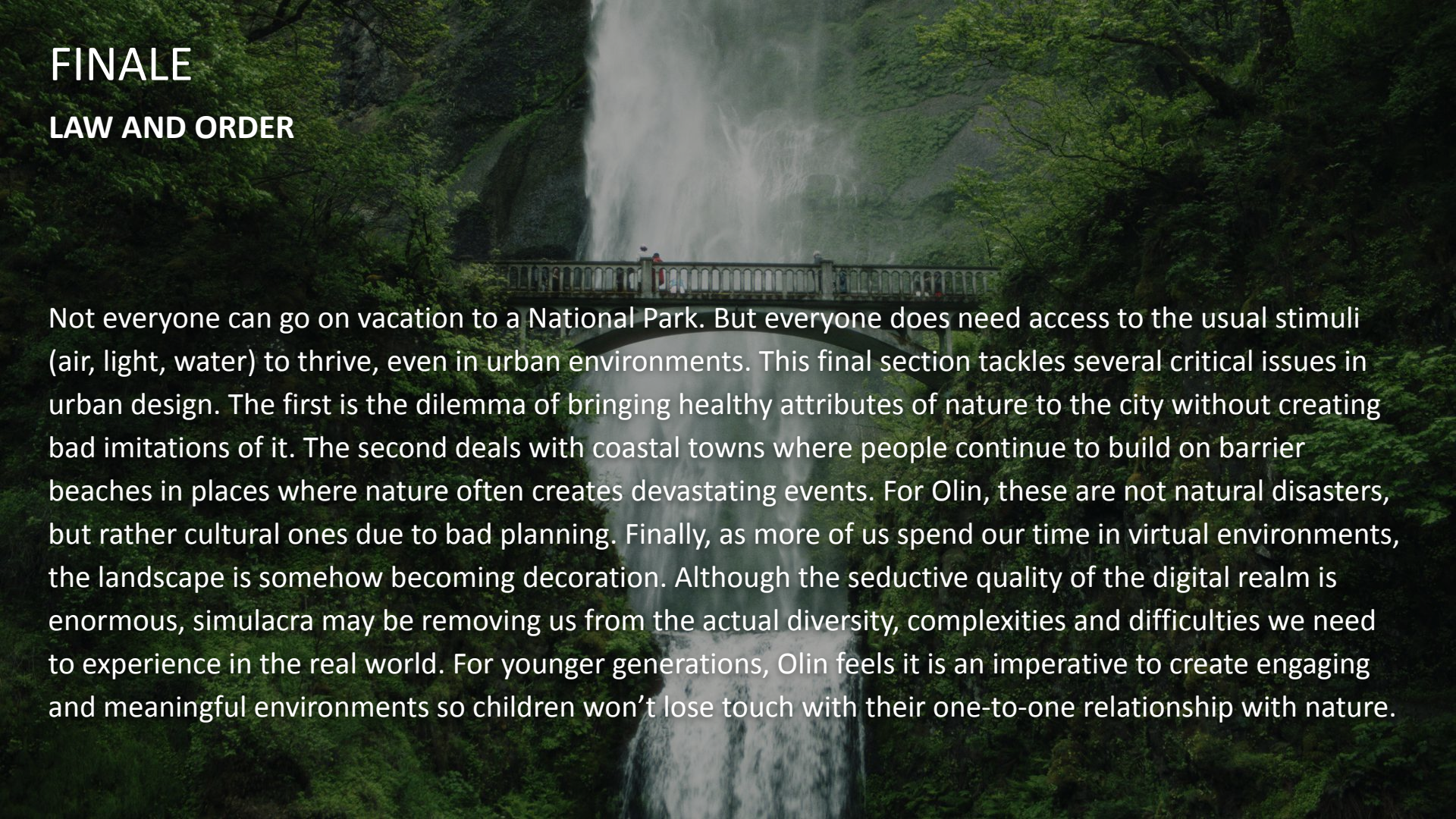
A photograph of a park area with several statues on pedestals. The statues are made of a dark material, possibly bronze or stone. The park is surrounded by palm trees and other greenery. In the background, there are buildings and a street lamp. The overall scene is somewhat dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or late afternoon. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Over and over again, the creation of good social housing in America has been unsuccessful. Simultaneously, parks have become repositories for the city's ills. The pandemic pushed thousands of people into the streets. Populations are not only segregated by race and income, but age is also separating people from living in shared, healthy, communal environments. And in many neighborhoods, gentrification has become a dirty word. What's next? Olin and his colleagues weigh in on the vast problems that separate communities and some of the possible solutions.



FINALE

LAW AND ORDER

A stone bridge with a decorative railing spans across a waterfall in a lush green forest. The waterfall is the central focus, cascading down a rocky cliff. The bridge is made of light-colored stone and has a series of arches along its length. The surrounding forest is dense and green, with sunlight filtering through the trees. The overall scene is serene and natural.

Not everyone can go on vacation to a National Park. But everyone does need access to the usual stimuli (air, light, water) to thrive, even in urban environments. This final section tackles several critical issues in urban design. The first is the dilemma of bringing healthy attributes of nature to the city without creating bad imitations of it. The second deals with coastal towns where people continue to build on barrier beaches in places where nature often creates devastating events. For Olin, these are not natural disasters, but rather cultural ones due to bad planning. Finally, as more of us spend our time in virtual environments, the landscape is somehow becoming decoration. Although the seductive quality of the digital realm is enormous, simulacra may be removing us from the actual diversity, complexities and difficulties we need to experience in the real world. For younger generations, Olin feels it is an imperative to create engaging and meaningful environments so children won't lose touch with their one-to-one relationship with nature.





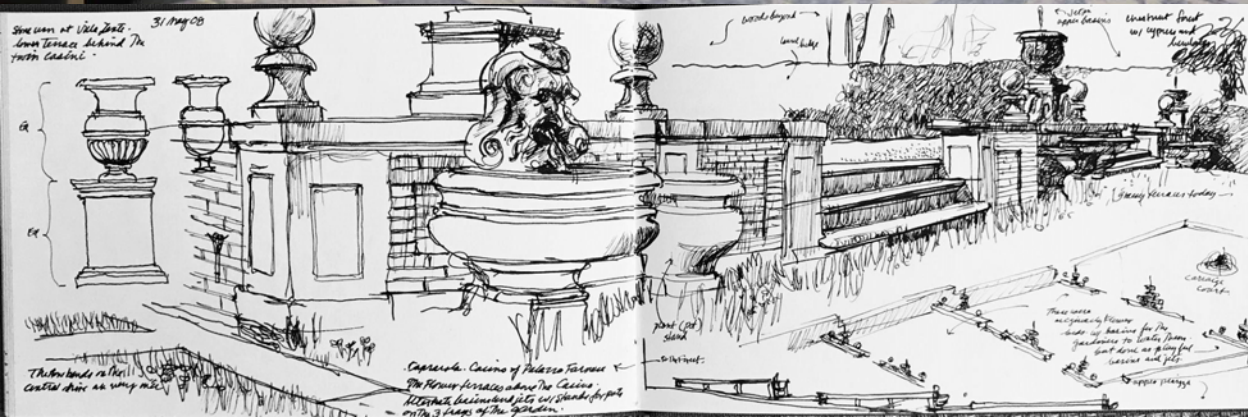
VISUAL APPROACH

Olin's artwork is the visual thread for the film and establishes aesthetic pauses throughout.

A large soundstage with a white cyclorama is the setting for the main interview with the backdrop design of an art studio. Green-screen frames set on easels function like punch-out windows where imagery changes from live action to stills, keeping the frame dynamic. Stylized studio photography and drone footage offer additional texture.

MOODBOARDS AND STILLS









ABOUT THE FILMMAKER



**Gina Angelone,
Director/Producer**

Gina has lived and worked throughout Europe, South America and Southeast Asia making films and writing fiction. Credits include founding Producer of Bravo's Emmy Award-winning "Inside the Actors Studio," and documentary "René & I" (NBC) which won two Audience Awards, a Human Rights Award, and an Emmy award. Her film "It's Better to Jump," has won 11 top prizes in international film festivals and was awarded the MPAC Media Trailblazer Award for social justice (theatrically released and broadcast on Al Jazeera). Gina was also the Writer-Producer-Director of "Connections: Preserving America's Landscape Legacy" narrated by Angela Lansbury (PBS).

Gina wrote and directed the original series "Defining Beauty" for Disney/MAKER Studios and has directed six 90-minute biographies on master designers for a web series. She is a published, award-winning author with grants from The American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Speranza Foundation-Lincoln City Fellowship. A former fellow at The BAU Institute, Gina is currently the Director of their summer artist's residency program. [Click here for more.](#)

PRODUCTION TEAM - CINEMATOGRAPHY



Patrick Stewart, ASC

Patrick has been shooting documentaries since 1982. He has created hundreds of TV specials and worked with three Oscar-winning Directors including Mike Figgis' on "Timecode" and "Hotel". Patrick shot part of Martin Scorsese's documentary "Red White and Blues" and partnered with Peter Bogdonovich on the Tom Petty documentary "Runnin' Down a Dream." Patrick has worked with Clint Eastwood and Malpaso Productions to film "Dave Brubeck: In His Own Sweet Way" and "Johnny Mercer: The Dream's On Me." Patrick was the DP for HBO's "Flight of The Concorde," FX's "The League," HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm," and the Fox/Netflix comedy "Arrested Development."



Ariano Treviño Angelone

Ariano is an award-winning director of photography and American Film Institute Fellow. His work has been recognized by the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC), The Academy, EnergaCAMERIMAGE, BAFTA, The DGA and at international festivals. In 2022, he was selected to be nominated for the ASC Heritage Award as well as being a finalist in EnergaCAMERIMAGE's prestigious Etudes competition.

PRODUCTION TEAM - CONT.



**Bernardo Morillo,
Editor & Co-Producer**

A two-time Emmy winner, Bernardo has over 25 years of experience editing and directing. He initiated his career at Universidad Nacional de Colombia in Bogota and graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia where he taught a production workshop in the film department. His editorial work includes “L-Evated: The Blunt Truth,” “Sister to Sister,” “Life is what you make it,” “First People, Our People,” “Historias de Esperanza” and “Yo Soy La Cara.” Bernardo has been honored by The National Black Programming Consortium, The Black Art Alliance and the Gracie Awards.



Philippe Saisse, Composer

Philippe is a Grammy nominated artist for Best Contemporary Jazz Album. Graduate of the Paris National Conservatory and Berklee College of Music, Philippe has collaborated with David Bowie, the Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, David Sanborn, Phil Ramone, Gato Barbieri, Claude Nougaro, Al Di Meola, Chaka Khan, Peabo Bryson, Peter White, Rick Braun and Richard Elliot. Philippe has also written and produced with Al Jarreau, Michel Legrand, and Gerard Depardieu. He scores for film as well as the popular TV shows, “Madam Secretary” and “The L Word.” Philippe was Knighted in 2005 by the French Minister of Culture.

PRODUCTION TEAM - CONT.



**Benjamin Goldman,
Animator**

Benjamin is the co-creator of “Great and Telling Tales”, a series of short docu-animations for the History Channel. He writes, produces, and animates films for museums, including the Smithsonian’s N.M.A.H. and the National Archives. His other clients include HBO Max, Warner Brothers, IMAX, Hyundai, Dreamworks, and 20th Century Fox. His film “Eight Nights” was featured by The New Yorker.

SUPPORT & PRODUCTION STATUS

This film has been made with grants from The National Endowment of the Arts, The Graham Foundation, The Philadelphia Foundation, The William Penn Foundation, The Lenfest Foundation, The University of Pennsylvania, Poor Richard's Charitable Trust, and many private grantors as well as hundreds of individuals. Fiscal sponsorship is made possible through Women Make Movies (501c3).

Support promoting the film has been pledged by The University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, the American Society of Landscape Architects, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, The Garden Conservancy, the Landscape Architecture Foundation, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Produced in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland (OR), NYC, Providence, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. Over 30 days of filming have taken place, including the main interview, additional interviews, location shoots, b-roll, stylized illustrative footage and art assets. There are approximately 75 hours of footage.

The project is currently in post-production and ready for worldwide distribution in 2024.

SITTING STILL is in English, shot in 4K (color), 16x9 aspect ratio, in stereo.

CONTACT INFO

Gina Angelone

Director/Producer

SA KWA Pictures

818.309.0171

gina@angelone.com

www.sittingstillmovie.com

SITTING STILL

© 2023 SA KWA Pictures



(818) 309-0171

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH SIZZLE](#)



SA KWA Pictures

[CLICK HERE](#)