

About Studio-MLA

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Studio-MLA is a landscape architecture, urban design, and planning practice with studios in Los Angeles and San Francisco and work across the West Coast and beyond. The studio looks to the cultural narratives embedded in landscapes—stories of people, water, ecology, history, and place—as a foundation for design. Founder and President Mia Lehrer, FASLA, shares leadership of the practice with its principals.

In Los Angeles, Studio-MLA has shaped a practice around the conviction that landscape architecture can transform how communities experience their city. The studio calls this approach 'Advocacy by Design' — a way to bring nature back into the city and create healthier places where people and ecosystems can thrive together.

At Exposition Park, Studio-MLA's work spans nearly two decades and includes NHM Commons and BMO Stadium, contributing to one of Los Angeles' most significant cultural and civic landscapes. Across the county, Los Angeles Union Station, Dodger Stadium, and other civic-scale projects express distinct aspects of Los Angeles' culture, ecology, and public life. Beginning in the early 2000s, Studio-MLA also helped transform the former El Toro naval base in Irvine into the 1,500-acre Great Park. Current large-scale work includes a 142-acre regional park on the former Puente Hills Landfill and the recovery of Eaton Canyon Natural Area following the 2025 fires.

The ideas developed through this deep engagement with Southern California have never been confined to the region. Studio-MLA's work with urban rivers has expanded from the Los Angeles River to the San Gabriel and Santa Ana Rivers, the Sacramento and American Rivers, the Tietê River in São Paulo, and waterfronts along San Francisco Bay.

Across California, the studio has designed landscapes for the University of California and California State University systems, community colleges, conservancies, and public agencies. The California Indian Heritage Center in West Sacramento, California High Speed Rail's Central Valley stations, and Les Kimber Park in Fresno respond to the histories, ecologies, and aspirations of their communities. The same approach informs work in Texas, Arizona, Mexico, El Salvador, and beyond.

Principals Dawn Dyer, Ben Feldmann, Jan Dyer, Megan Horn, Holly Kuwayama, and Kush Parekh work alongside a broader group of leaders and longtime team members. The 40-person team brings together landscape architects, environmental designers, urban designers, naturalists, geographers, and planners from around the world, with the breadth of perspective needed to understand landscapes in their cultural and ecological complexity. Together, the studio believes in the transformative power of design to respond to the individuality of each place while creating a more just and resilient future.

Mia Lehrer

Founder and President of Studio-MLA

Mia Lehrer, FASLA, is Founder and President of Studio-MLA, the landscape architecture, urban design, and planning practice she established more than three decades ago. Raised in El Salvador, Lehrer has spent her career treating landscape architecture as advocacy for communities and ecosystems. Her early advocacy for the Los Angeles River, Baldwin Hills, and greener schoolyards shaped an approach reflected in projects including the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Vista Hermosa Natural Park, and Hollywood Park and SoFi Stadium. Lehrer has devoted decades to civic and public service, including appointment to President Obama's U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and service on the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Board. She is a Fellow of ASLA, an elected member of the National Academy of Design, and recipient of the 2026 Landscape Architecture Foundation Medal and Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian National Design Award in Landscape Architecture.