



MEET THE ARCHITECT

Janice Parker

produced by Ann Kaiser

THIS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER KNOWS HOW TO WORK WITH THE LAND

“I make sure each of my projects has meaning to me; I wouldn't do the work if it didn't.”



On the Waterfront (ABOVE) Parker designed this New Canaan landscape and pool. **The Architect** Janice Parker, principal, Janice Parker Landscape Architects. See Resources.



You worked on MillionTreesNYC.

Did you enjoy the project? I love the project. It is a part of PlaNYC—New York City's plan to create the first truly sustainable 21st-century city by 2030. It is expected that there will be one million new residents, therefore one million new trees. The program focuses on planting and maintaining the trees, and involving communities in the effort. It has been

fulfilling to see it develop and be successful. **How important is sustainability in your designs?** Sustainability is integral to doing good landscape architecture. Planning enduring landscapes is about creating beauty within the natural constraints of the site. It is a great responsibility to create with nature, but one that becomes intuitive with true respect.

What is the difference between a landscape designer and a landscape architect? I am both, so for me it is a union of two strong disciplines. As a landscape designer, you must have an extensive knowledge of plants and the ability to create a design vision of how planted landscapes should work with a site. As a landscape architect, you must have extensive knowledge of site engineering and how to make the engineering work for your design vision—before you add the plants.

Landscape architects are licensed, have an advanced educational and work background, and have passed national board examinations. **What is it like to redo a previous project of yours for a new owner?** Wonderful! You now know the land inside out and understand the strengths and the weaknesses of the site and your design. Landscapes are always changing. Having the chance to stay “on board” and continue to witness and shape the progress of the landscape is a privilege. **What did it mean to win an IDA?** I am very grateful to have won two IDAs. As professionals we spend most of our time working at our own projects, and it is wonderful to see the work of others and to learn from it. **What is your favorite step in the project process?** I love the initial design process—the “honeymoon” stage. That is the moment for innovation and risk taking—things that are very exciting for a designer. **What time of day are you most inspired?** Anytime it is quiet, I am alone and have just had a strong cup of green tea. **What skills will be key to being a successful landscape designer in the future?** Creating value for your clients is the most important thing. Creating presentations with 3D modeling or computer-generated imagery (CGI) is becoming an essential tool. Being able to create seamless landscapes within a client's budget and time frame, and staying involved to oversee the design's evolution, is the best value you can give your clients. **What's the best part of your job?** Doing what I love for a living and, as an entrepreneur, doing it the way I love to do it.

JANICE PARKER PHOTO BY JOHN KANE; LANDSCAPE PHOTO BY NEIL LANDING, JR.