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## **RAGDALE SELECTS WINNING DESIGN FOR OPEN AIR 'RING' INSTALLATION "Rounds" A Striking Reimagining of Famed Architect's Garden Theatre**

Lake Forest, IL (March 22, 2016) Ragdale, the acclaimed artists' residency in Lake Forest, recently announced the winning design in the fourth annual Ragdale Ring competition. Amidst a field of national and international submissions, a young architectural collaborative based in Syracuse, New York, was selected by jury for their proposal of **Rounds**— a contemporary interpretation of the original Ragdale Ring garden theatre designed by architect Howard Van Doren Shaw in 1912.

"The lead designers, Molly Hunker and Greg Corso, have a proven history of thoughtful, creative, and successful built projects," states Jeffrey Meeuwssen, Executive Director of Ragdale. "In addition to being an inventive design, their proposal celebrates and advances the notion of a ring and theatre in the round, offering modularity, adaptability, and unique levels of engagement for both performers and audience members."

### **The Winning Design - Rounds**

The winning design, *Rounds*, submitted by SPORTS, the design collaboration of architects Greg Corso and Molly Hunker, honors Howard Van Doren Shaw's 1912 Ragdale Ring by re-envisioning it as a whimsical and inhabitable performance space.

*Rounds* has a ribbon-like surface that undulates along the landscape at several heights to form the architectural theatre venue, offering performers and audiences a variety of ways to engage with one another in an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment. Small-scale undulations act as lounge spaces both during performances and outside of performance times. Mid-scale undulations provide entrances to the inner space of the ring while also providing smaller scale protected stage areas. The largest undulation is designed for the main stage area, a stage that can be broken down into smaller parts and distributed around the ring for several concurrent performances. The new Ring complements the existing landscape and can be experienced by visitors on special occasions as well as by artists in the residency program as they nurture their creative efforts.

### **The Design Team - SPORTS**

SPORTS is the design collaboration of Greg Corso and Molly Hunker, founded in 2010 that explores the border between the everyday experience and the extraordinary or unexpected. Their primary consideration is how ideas of material, craft, and cultural tradition can both complement and provoke contemporary notions of aesthetics and atmosphere that deeply engage users. [www.sportscollaborative.com](http://www.sportscollaborative.com)



**Molly Hunker** is a Wyoming-raised designer and educator, who has worked for architecture studios and art workshops along the west coast, including Talbot McLanahan Architecture. She previously taught at UCLA, Woodbury University, and most recently, The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) where she served as the inaugural 2013–2014 Douglas A. Garofalo Fellow. She is currently an assistant professor at Syracuse University School of Architecture.

**Greg Corso** is a designer who received his Master of Architecture from the University of California, Los Angeles where he was awarded the Carlin Glucksman Endowed Fellowship in Architecture. He has worked in art and architecture studios in the United States and Europe including Studio Gang. He taught architecture at Woodbury University, The University of Illinois at Chicago, and is currently assistant professor at Syracuse University School of Architecture.

The team declares, "We are absolutely thrilled and honored to be given the opportunity to build our project at Ragdale this summer. This is such an exciting moment in our careers, and we couldn't imagine a better environment in which to work or collaborate. We can't wait to get out there and get started!"

### **The Adrian Smith Prize for the 2016 Ragdale Ring**

The Adrian Smith Prize for the 2016 Ragdale Ring is sponsored by Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture, a world-renowned firm headquartered in Chicago which is dedicated to the design of high-performance, energy-efficient and sustainable architecture on an international scale. Architect Adrian Smith, is known for many landmark buildings, including the two world's tallest structures – Burj Khalifa in Dubai and Kingdom Tower, now under construction in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In addition to supporting the Adrian Smith Prize, he lent his expertise by serving as one of the jurors for the Ragdale Ring competition and selection process.

Adrian Smith affirms, "I am proud to support the Ragdale Ring competition which uniquely serves the field of architecture and dynamically engages the public. 'Rounds' is an exceptional design solution and I look forward to its successful construction and use."

The SPORTS collaborative will be awarded a \$15,000 production grant to fund the project and a three-week design-build residency at Ragdale for their ten-person team. Construction on the temporary structure will begin May 23, with the public unveiling scheduled for a June 9, featuring a garden party and open-air performance with musicians and actors in the Ring.

### **A Legacy Dating Back a Century**

The competition marks the 104th anniversary of the first Ragdale Ring designed by Arts and Crafts architect Howard Van Doren Shaw in 1912. The Shaw family used the space as an outdoor garden theatre to stage plays written by Howard's wife, Frances Shaw.



### **The Ragdale Foundation**

The Ragdale Foundation is an internationally recognized, nonprofit, artists' residency program that provides time and space for creative work to more than 150 artists, writers, and composers each year. Built in 1897, Ragdale is located on the grounds of Arts and Crafts architect Howard Van Doren Shaw's summer home, and is currently celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an artists' residency. Ragdale is located at 1230 N. Green Bay Road, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045. For more information about Ragdale, contact (847) 234-1063 or visit [ragdale.org](http://ragdale.org).

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