



Connecting People and Parks and Conserving the Emerald Necklace

BACK BAY FENS • RIVERWAY • OLMSTED PARK • JAMAICA POND • ARNOLD ARBORETUM • FRANKLIN PARK

EMERALD NECKLACE CONSERVANCY

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy is a non-profit organization founded in 1998 to steward and champion the Emerald Necklace, Boston's largest park system. The Conservancy protects, restores, helps maintain and promotes the Emerald Necklace's six distinct parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and comprising 1,100 acres of meadows, woodlands, waterways, and paths. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy, in collaboration with its public partners, provides maintenance of the parks and capital restoration projects, free events, visitor services, and environmental education. The parks serve as a respite from the city and a valuable commuting connector for more than one million residents and tourists each year. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy works in partnership with the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, Town of Brookline Parks and Open Space Division, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and twenty-two local overseers groups to plan and implement its projects in the Emerald Necklace parks.

THE EMERALD NECKLACE

The Emerald Necklace is a linear park system linking 13 neighborhoods. It is truly Boston's park system, and was designed as an urban park and a sewage management solution by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903). Considered to be the father of American landscape architecture, Olmsted conceived and developed the chain of linked parks from 1878 through 1895 to connect the historic downtown sites of Boston Common, Public Garden and Commonwealth Avenue Mall to the more variegated environments of the Fens, the Riverway, Olmsted Park, Jamaica Pond, the Arboretum and the largest "wilderness" in Franklin Park. The result is widely recognized as a feat of beauty, urban planning, and water engineering well ahead of its time that today remains the oldest linear park system in the nation. The Necklace is linked by Olmsted's signature tree-lined parkways, including the Fenway, the Arborway and the Jamaicaway, as well as the 3.5-mile Muddy River, which connects Jamaica and Leverett Ponds upstream to the Fens downstream, and empties into the Charles River. It also comprises nearly half of Boston's park acreage, parkland in the Town of Brookline, and parkways and park edges under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. From the Back Bay Fens to Franklin Park, it is approximately five miles by foot or bicycle and more than 300,000 people live within its watershed area. The Necklace offers an opportunity for city residents and visitors to enjoy respite and recreation in a variety of ecologically important urban wilds, and improves the air quality of the city with its tens of thousands of trees.

CELEBRATING EMERALD NECKLACE CONSERVANCY'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

To mark its 20th Anniversary year, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy is undertaking three major initiatives to elevate its visibility and visitor experience: engage new visitors by bringing to Boston's Emerald Necklace parks an exhibition of "climate responsive" art by renowned Japanese artist Fujiko Nakaya called *Fog x FLO: Fujiko Nakaya on the Emerald Necklace*; develop and pilot new way-finding approaches to help park users orient their way to and through the Necklace from surrounding neighborhoods during the exhibit; and research, design, and install new interpretive displays in the Emerald Necklace Shattuck Visitor Center at 125 The Fenway.

FOG X FLO: FUJIKO NAKAYA ON THE EMERALD NECKLACE

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy debuts Fujiko Nakaya's first-ever extended exhibition of multiple "fog sculptures" in Boston. Organized by guest curator Jen Mergel and on public view from

August 11 to October 31, 2018, the presentation of Nakaya's shape-shifting installations of pure water vapor is conceived to engage visitors from Boston and beyond with "climate responsive" systems as timeless and timely as their sites – the Emerald Necklace parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. The newly commissioned works mark five decades of Nakaya's pioneering career as the first artist to harness fog as dynamic installations in tree canopies, on water surfaces, across landscapes, and interacting with architecture. Her works' fluid forms are sited at locations to encourage visitors to progressively move through the parks that Olmsted designed as a cultural conduit for the city to link more than a dozen historic neighborhoods. Locations selected by Nakaya for her site-specific works include:

- The Fens: In the canopy of a tree-lined path, in close proximity to the Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Emerald Necklace Conservancy's Shattuck Visitor Center
- Olmsted Park: On an island of Leverett Pond at the edge of Allerton Overlook in Brookline
- Jamaica Pond: in a glacial depression adjacent to the kettle pond
- Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University: A "fog fall" rolling down a hill under tree cover
- Franklin Park: Amid the Overlook Shelter Ruins, echoing the domed roof of one of the few buildings Olmsted had a hand in designing

Nakaya's installations are timed to activate from dawn to dusk, emitting fog that rhythmically appears and dissipates in shifting natural light, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in a familiar, yet awe-inspiring experience. Just as Olmsted's vanguard landscape and water engineering may at first appear like nature untouched, Nakaya's rigorous planning yields artful outcomes that appear spontaneous, which she describes as "a conversation with nature," aimed to enhance and reinforce, rather than distract from, their natural settings.

This will be Nakaya's first presentation in Boston and her first and largest city-wide exhibition. All exhibition sites will be free and open to the public. To develop related educational offerings and performance programming, the Conservancy has extended invitations to collaborate with partners across Boston including independent artists and educators. Confirmed partners as of June 18 include Berklee College of Music; Huntington Theatre Company; Ashe Gordon, violist and cofounder of Castle of our Skins; Andy Graydon, independent artist; Beau Kenyon, composer and faculty of Northeastern University; and collaborators Max Lord and Sarah June of Mobius.

FUJIKO NAKAYA AND HER ART

Born 1933 in Sapporo, Japan, and a graduate of Northwestern University, Fujiko Nakaya has for fifty years pioneered a unique form of dynamic, site-responsive outdoor installation she calls "fog sculptures." Initially exploring ideas of simultaneous composition and decomposition in painting in the 1950s, she transitioned these ideas into experiential installations in the 1960s upon her introduction to the engineers and artists of the New York-based collaborative known as Experiments in Art and technology (E.A.T.) Via a network of scientists known through her father, renowned glaciologist Ukichiro Nakaya, Fujiko Nakaya has built upon his legacy through direct studies of natural weather patterns to radically innovate her field. Merging observations of both an artist and scientist, Nakaya has advanced discourse on environmental art, land art, and experimental architecture. Her first fog sculpture was created in 1969, with the assistance of Californian cloud physicist Thomas Mee, and the world debut of the first fog piece came the following year at the

Pepsi Pavilion of the first World's Fair in Asia, Osaka '70. By 1989, Nakaya honed and patented the use of a water nozzle system for fog art. Responding to weather data from a specific site, Nakaya creates powered nozzle installations that release ultra-fine mist at intervals to react to that site's wind patterns, temperature, humidity, and dew point. Each work is a signature of its location.

Ahead of her time, Nakaya pushed the research that developed pure water (chemical-free) mechanical fog that could be safely explored as an immersive art experience – not only to be seen but also touched, tasted, and heard. At once systematic and poetic, her works make visible all of those invisible forces that shape how a place might not only look but feel. Nakaya sees her “human-scaled” fog sculptures as a way to animate our senses and immerse us in a brief encounter with nature.

Nakaya has created more than 80 fog sculptures around the world in a range of environments, including the gardens and ponds of Kyoto, meadows in the Loire Valley, Australian desert parks, the National Mall in Washington DC, and museums including the Guggenheim Bilbao, the Exploratorium in San Francisco, and the Tate Modern in London. Nakaya was recently awarded the *Commandeur, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* and is revered across continents for her uniquely poetic art, which she calls “a conversation with nature.”

KEY COLLABORATORS

The Curator: Jen Mergel (based in Boston, MA) has organized over 50 exhibitions in the past two decades. From 2010 to 2017, she led the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston contemporary program as the Beal Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, and prior to this was a curator at the Institute for Contemporary Art, Boston, and the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, where she first encountered Nakaya's art in 2002. Mergel also presented exhibitions at Harvard University, where she graduated *summa cum laude* in Visual and Environmental Studies, and at Bard College, where she received her Master's in Curatorial Studies. Her specialized experience in site-responsive sculptural installations is evident in her work as curator of the public commissions for The Armory Show 2018 in New York City, and in her publications on artists including Tara Donovan, Nicholas Hlobo, and members of the Boston Sculptors Gallery. During Mergel's 2017 residency for the Center for Curatorial Leadership, she met Nakaya at her commission for the Tate Modern, London. Mergel is a native of Dorchester, and has known and used the Emerald Necklace parks since childhood.

The Systems Engineer: Dave Sola (based in Irwindale, CA) is the lead sales engineer of special effects at Mee Industries, Inc., which for decades has worked with Fujiko Nakaya to produce the pump and nozzle systems that she developed since her first successful sculpture with founder Thomas Mee. Sola has worked directly with Nakaya since 2002 and is responsible for sourcing and assembling the specific pump systems, high-pressure hoses, and nozzles to achieve Nakaya's specifications of fog scale, volume and intensity, and within US standards for power and water purification. Sola directs the team that provides systems drawings for, and builds out, each installation system to Nakaya's specifications.

REDISCOVERING THE ENVIRONMENTAL JEWEL IN BOSTON'S BACKYARD

This project will reinforce Frederick Law Olmsted's design of a public space for urban recreation and respite, and as an avant-garde design of “green infrastructure.” Considered by some to be Boston's

largest art piece in itself, the Emerald Necklace is the city's largest chain of parks, connecting residents to their environment, neighborhoods, and each other for more than a century. Less visible is how Olmsted engineered the Necklace to absorb storm water, mitigate flooding, reduce the city's heat index, and support biodiversity – all safeguards that continue to ensure the city's resilience to climate change.

In showcasing the water-based works of Fujiko Nakaya, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy aims to re-introduce residents and visitors to this jewel, encourage new interactions with nature, and to foster an appreciation of this extraordinary natural and cultural resource.

PILOTING A NEW WAY-FINDING APPROACH

Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted as a comprehensive linear system of curving waterways and woodland paths, the Emerald Necklace was since "broken" in the 20th century by multi-lane roads, overpasses, and parking lots as cars advanced into the city. Since its founding in 1998, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and its partners have worked to re-link the string of parks and parkways, championing solutions to restore connections (such as crosswalks, footpaths, bicycle lanes and more) that ensure the Necklace remains an inspiring and safe connector for the present day.

Building on the Necklace-wide *Fog x FLO: Fujiko Nakaya on the Emerald Necklace* exhibition of "fog sculptures" by artist Fujiko Nakaya on view August 11 to October 31, 2018, way-finding and interpretive approaches to navigating and understanding the Emerald Necklace parks will be piloted during the exhibition. To serve a range of park users, the way-finding pilot will test formats that are visual, physical, and digital. For the first time, visitors will be offered information such as distances and travel times on foot and by bicycle between park destinations, directions to nearby amenities, and from nearby neighborhoods to the parks. The results will be evaluated to inform the Conservancy's recommendations to City and State partners for more permanent way-finding elements, which will be used for navigation as well as to identify namesakes, historic landmarks, and significant sites along the Emerald Necklace. This process will be achieved with an advisory team of key park users, civic partners, and professional and academic experts. Project leading the design team is the award-winning Somerville-based firm Landing Studio, and guiding the digital interface is the Boston-based firm Cuseum

NEW INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy's Shattuck Visitor Center is strategically situated in the Back Bay Fens, neighboring the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Northeastern University. Located in an 1882 H. H. Richardson gatehouse, the Visitor Center was converted in 2010 into an accessible, all-season site for park visitors, school groups, neighbors, volunteers, program participants, and community groups to gather and learn through the Conservancy's education programs. The Visitor Center's reinstalled interior will provide more than 1,000 square feet of gallery space, an information area, and a convertible programming and meeting space to visitors.

Educational displays will be visually presented so that visitors can learn and take pride in the history of the Emerald Necklace. Areas of discipline include:

- Olmsted's legacy within Boston
- The parks' origins and future as green infrastructure

- The impact of climate change and urban development on ecosystems
- How the parks “grow” engaged citizens

An educational advisory group will review the proposed exhibition and interpretive display content and design, with representatives assembled from the Boston Nature Center, Zoos New England, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, Boston Children’s Museum, and more. Pilot displays will be installed in summer/fall 2018 to test visitor engagement and feedback. Long-term displays will be designed and installed for programmatic use by March 2019.

SUPPORT FOR THE 20th ANNIVERSARY

Fog x FLO: Fujiko Nakaya on the Emerald Necklace and other 20th Anniversary programs are organized by the Emerald Necklace Conservancy in partnership with the City of Boston, Town of Brookline Parks and Open Space Division, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. Presentation is made possible with the generous support of Barbara and Amos Hostetter, High Meadows Foundation, Tom and Lisa Blumenthal, Brooke and John Cook, Plimpton Shattuck Fund, Kate and Ben Taylor, The Japan Foundation, Kohlberg Greer Fund, Dr. Barbara Millen and Family, Fish Family Fund and an anonymous donor. Media sponsor: *Boston* magazine.

EMERALD NECKLACE CONSERVANCY PARK OVERSEERS

Arborway Coalition, Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, Boston Committee of the Garden Club of America, Boston Society of Landscape Architects, Brookline GreenSpace Alliance, Emerald Necklace Greenway Project, Fenway Alliance, Fenway CDC, Fenway Civic Association, Fenway Garden Society, Franklin Park Coalition, Franklin Park Zoo / Zoo New England, Friends of Jamaica Pond, Friends of Leverett Pond, Friends of the Muddy River, Garden Club Federation of MA, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Jamaica Hills Association, Jamaica Pond Association, MASCO and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

PERSONNEL

Karen Mauney-Brodek, President
Veronika Trufanova, Director of Development & External Relations
Jen Mergel, Guest Curator

LOCATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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