

Rockefeller Foundation *news advisory*

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Rockefeller Foundation Announces Award to Honor Activist, Author & Urbanist Jane Jacobs

New York, NY, February 9, 2007 –The creation of a Jane Jacobs Medal to honor the activist, author and urbanist was announced today by the Rockefeller Foundation. Awarded annually by the Rockefeller Foundation, Jane Jacobs Medals will recognize two living individuals whose creative vision for the urban environment has significantly contributed to the vibrancy and variety of New York City.

The 2007 Jane Jacobs Medal will be accompanied by prizes totaling \$200,000. The selection of the winners and allocation of the prize money will ultimately be decided by the members of a Medal Selection Jury (see complete list below), which is co-chaired by George Campbell Jr., president of the Cooper Union, and arts patron and philanthropist Agnes Gund, and includes Rockefeller Foundation trustee David Rockefeller, Jr.. One award will recognize leadership and lifetime contribution; the other will recognize new ideas and activism that reflect the ideals of Jane Jacobs. The two Jane Jacobs medalists will together represent the creativity, innovation and dynamism of New York City. The 2007 Jane Jacobs Medal will be administered by the Municipal Art Society (MAS).

The Rockefeller Foundation launched an Urban Design Studies program in the 1950s that helped foster the emergence of the new discipline – urban design and theory. As part of this initiative, one of the Foundation's grants was to a then-obscure writer from Greenwich Village, Jane Jacobs, for the research and writing of a book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Almost fifty years later, the book is considered an urban classic. Jane Jacobs died in April 2006 at the age of 89.

In announcing the award, Darren Walker, Vice President, Foundation Initiatives at the Rockefeller Foundation, said, "In addition to being known for her writing and theory, Jane Jacobs is remembered as an activist who took her principles to the streets. Through her close participation in, and study of, her community, Jacobs brought fresh thinking to the relationship between the needs of living communities and the urban environment. To honor her indomitable spirit and life's work, the Rockefeller Foundation has established the Jane Jacobs Medal to celebrate individuals whose accomplishments exemplify 'Jacobsonian' principles and practices in New York City today."

Nominations for the Jane Jacobs Medal can be submitted electronically via on <http://www.rockfound.org/efforts/jacobs/janejacobs.shtml> until 5PM EST on March 2nd, 2007.

The recipients of the 2007 Jane Jacobs Medals will be announced in June. An award ceremony will take place in September, in conjunction with a new exhibit on Jacobs that will open at the Municipal Art Society.

MAS President Kent Barwick said, "We are honored to work with the Rockefeller Foundation on the Jane Jacobs Medal, and we greatly appreciate the Foundation's support of our upcoming exhibit. I can't imagine a better time to celebrate and explore the life and work of a woman who challenged the way we think about, preserve, and develop New York City. As the debate about the growth and the development of the City continues, I keep thinking to myself: 'What would Jane say?'"

The Municipal Art Society of New York is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote a more livable city. Since 1893, the MAS has worked to enrich the culture, neighborhoods and physical design of New York City. It advocates for excellence in urban design and planning, contemporary architecture, historic preservation and public art.

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller, Sr., to "promote the well-being" of humanity by addressing the root causes of serious problems. With assets of more than \$3.5 billion, it is one of the nation's largest private foundations.

**The Jane Jacobs Medal Jury
2007**

Bill Aguado
Executive Director, Bronx Council on the Arts

Barry Bergdoll
Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art &
professor of architectural history in the department of Art History and Archeology at
Columbia University

George Campbell, Jr. (Jury Co-Chair)
President, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art

W. Paul Farmer
Executive Director and CEO, American Planning Association

Rosalie Genevro
Executive Director, Architectural League of New York

Paul Goldberger
Architecture Critic, The New Yorker
Joseph Urban Professor of Design, The New School, New York

Agnes Gund (Jury Co-Chair)
President Emerita, Museum of Modern Art

Hoong Yee Lee Krakauer

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Executive Director, Queens Council on the Arts

John T. Reddick
Director of Education, Central Park Conservancy

David Rockefeller, Jr.
Director and former Chair, Rockefeller & Co., Inc
Trustee of The Museum of Modern Art, The Rockefeller Brothers Fund & The Rockefeller Foundation

Ronald Shiffman
Director Emeritus, Pratt Center for Community Development

Marilyn J. Taylor
Partner-in-Charge of Urban Design and Planning, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill

More information on the 2007 Jane Jacobs Medal and Jury, as well as Jane Jacobs' life, is available on the Rockefeller Foundation website at

<http://www.rockfound.org/efforts/jacobs/janejacobs.shtml>

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