



MEDIA NEWS

Frederick Law Olmsted
DESIGNING AMERICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WNED-TV Film Profiles Pioneer of American Landscape

"Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America" to air Friday, June 20 at 9 p.m. EDT on PBS

BUFFALO, N.Y. - [WNED-TV Buffalo-Toronto](#) presents a new documentary, "[Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America](#)," coming to [PBS Friday, June 20 at 9 p.m. EDT](#) (check local listings). The film offers viewers a glimpse into the life of the most successful landscape architect to have ever lived. From co-designing Central Park to leading the campaign to protect Niagara Falls, Frederick Law Olmsted made public parks and preservation an essential part of American life.

The program explores the enormous contributions of Olmsted to the American landscape, as well as his marked failures and loss. He was co-designer of **Central Park**, head of the first **Yosemite** commission, leader of the campaign to protect **Niagara Falls**, designer of the **U.S. Capitol Grounds**, site planner for the **Great White City** of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, planner of Boston's "**Emerald Necklace**" of green space and of park systems in many other cities. Olmsted's pioneering design of the public parks and parkway systems in **Buffalo, N.Y.**, is the oldest coordinated system in America and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"Olmsted has a double legacy. On the one hand, he's a super pragmatist; he's a problem solver. At the same time, he's a dreamer. What his parks are all about is finding immensely practical solutions to the problem of building a dream in the middle of a city," says writer **Adam Gopnik**.

To the pioneer of American landscape architecture, a park was both a work of art and a necessity for urban life. Olmsted's efforts to preserve nature created an "environmental ethic" decades before the environmental movement became a force in American politics.

"'Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America' documents the life, work and legacy of an extraordinary figure," said **Donald K. Boswell**, WNED | WBFO president and CEO. "We are thrilled to tell his astonishing story. Over a hundred years later, the impact and genius of Olmsted's system of parks and green spaces still works. "

"Olmsted may have been the first truly talented and forward thinking urban planner in the U.S.," said the film's director **Lawrence Hott**. "How cities are designed, how we live and work in urban areas, how we build and utilize public open spaces, are some of the more important issues facing American cities today. Olmsted knew that 150 years ago."

With gorgeous cinematography, creative animation, and compelling commentary, "Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America" presents the biography of a man who forever changed the Americans' relationship with public open spaces.

"Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America" is a co-production of WNET-TV Buffalo-Toronto and Florentine Films/Hott Productions, Inc. The documentary is narrated by **Stockard Channing** and the voice of Olmsted is performed by **Campbell Scott**. More information can be found at www.pbs.org/wned/frederick-law-olmsted.

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WNET-TV long ago established itself as an originator of television content for PBS; WNET-TV was the founder of the Emmy Award winning "Reading Rainbow" series and was the producer of the popular Mark Russell Comedy Specials for PBS. In recent years, WNET-TV has expanded its position by becoming a significant producer of original high-definition television and online content for local and national distribution.

National productions broadcast on PBS include: "The Shaw Festival: Behind the Curtain," "The War of 1812," "Underground Railroad: The William Still Story," "Chautauqua: An American Narrative," "Window to the Sea," "The Adirondacks," "The Marines," "Niagara Falls," "Frank Lloyd Wright's Buffalo," and "Elbert Hubbard: An American Original."

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Twitter: Film profiling pioneer of American landscape, Fredrick Law Olmsted, coming to [@PBS](http://www.pbs.org) in June. #OlmstedPBS <http://to.pbs.org/1jUYd9H>

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