

The Seaside Institute™ 32nd Annual SEASIDE Prize™ Celebration

SEASIDE Institute™

Honors Recipients *Marianne Khoury-Vogt and Erik Vogt*

By Christy Milliken
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The SEASIDE Institute™

The 32nd Annual Seaside Prize, held Feb. 6-8, 2026, brought together leaders, visionaries, and community members to celebrate excellence in architecture, urban design, and community development. This year's event featured a series of engaging presentations, insightful panel discussions, and networking opportunities, all set against the picturesque backdrop of the coastal communities of SEASIDE®, Rosemary Beach®, and Alys Beach®, Florida. Attendees enjoyed learning from esteemed speakers, attending town tours, and honoring this year's SEASIDE Prize recipients, Marianne Khoury-Vogt and Erik Vogt, for their outstanding contributions to architecture and to the built environment through New Urbanist principles.

Event Highlights and Community Engagement

Beyond the formal programming, the weekend included social gatherings, walking tours, and awards dinners that fostered meaningful connections among participants. The event once again underscored Seaside's role as a model for innovative, people-focused community planning and design. The weekend also highlighted the neighboring New Urbanism communities of Rosemary Beach, and Alys Beach.

Private Reception at the Palmer House

Khoury-Vogt Architects (KVA) welcomed clients, sponsors, friends, and the Seaside Institute Board of Governors on Thursday evening to the Palmer House for a sunset reception. The Palmer House, designed by KVA, served as a



Photos by Brandan Babineaux

welcoming venue where the homeowners graciously hosted attendees for the evening gathering on Camp Creek Lake overlooking both the lake and the Gulf. The home was meticulously designed in the style that Khoury-Vogt Architects are known for, creating a memorable experience for all who attended.

Town Tour, Welcome Reception, & Keynote Conversation at Alys Beach

Alys Beach offered attendees a guided town tour led by Marianne Khoury-Vogt, providing insight into the community's architectural features and urban design. Following the tour, participants gathered at Caliza for a welcoming reception, setting the stage for an engaging keynote conversation. The keynote featured Andrés Duany and Scott Merrill, who discussed the origins and development of the New Urbanism movement, and the beginnings of the Seaside Institute as an instrument that has been fostering education surrounding this movement for 43 years and helped inspire the foundation of CNU (The Congress for the New Urbanism). CNU works to



Legacy sponsor Edward F. San Juan (center), craftsman of the box the Seaside Prize keys are housed in, with the Khoury-Vogt team and this year's winners, Marianne Khoury-Vogt and Erik Vogt.



implement and activate the principles in their mission.

During the keynote conversation, participants delved into the development and ongoing impact of New Urbanism, focusing on the distinctive qualities that define Seaside, Rosemary Beach, and Alys Beach. Seaside, recognized as a pioneering community in this movement, served as a central case study. The discussion also examined how Rosemary Beach and Alys Beach have contributed their own unique features to the new urbanism landscape.

A highlight of the conversation was Andrés Duany's remarks, which underscored the significant achievements of Khoury-Vogt Architects. He emphasized the influential role of Marianne Khoury-Vogt and Erik Vogt in shaping the built environment, particularly through their work as the town architects of Alys Beach. Their contributions were recognized as instrumental in advancing the principles.

Signature SEASIDE® Saturday - Symposium, Town Tour, and Awards

On Saturday, the Seaside Institute and the town of Seaside warmly welcomed both attendees and former Seaside Prize recipients for a day filled with signature events. The day's program featured a symposium with notable speakers, guided town tours, a closing panel discussion, and celebratory awards ceremonies.

The symposium brought together a group of esteemed speakers, including Scott Merrill, Michael Imber, Richard

John, Maria Fernanda Sanchez, Pedro Pablo Godoy, Marianne Khoury-Vogt, and Erik Vogt. Their presentations offered valuable insights into architecture, urban planning, and the ongoing impact of New Urbanist principles in shaping the community. The closing panel discussion, skillfully moderated by Marina Khoury, featured perspectives from Mike Watkins, Geoffrey Mouen, Ty Nunn, and the year's prize recipients, providing a platform for thoughtful dialogue and reflection on the event's themes. The town tours were led by Robert Davis, Andrés Duany, and Dhiru Thadani.

Attendees also had the opportunity to view artwork by local artist Allison Wickey. Wickey's creation, inspired by the architects, town planners, and the mission of the Seaside Institute, was on display and available for purchase. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this work will benefit the ongoing initiatives of the Seaside Institute, reinforcing the event's commitment to fostering creativity and community engagement.

The awards celebrations were held at The Chapel at Seaside, where Robert and Daryl Davis presented honors to the recipients. The evening culminated in an awards dinner at Bud & Alley's Waterfront Restaurant, offering a fitting conclusion to a memorable day dedicated to recognition, fellowship, and the advancement of community ideals.

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Prize weekend featured guided town tours, as attendees enjoyed crisp February weather.



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Rosemary Beach Breakfast and Tour

On Sunday, The Rosemary Beach Homeowner’s Association graciously hosted a breakfast for attendees at Edward’s, creating a welcoming atmosphere to begin the morning. Following the meal, participants embarked on a guided town tour led by master planner Andrés Duany, DPZ CoDesign and Rosemary Beach Town Architect, Bret Azzarelli. This tour provided an in-depth look at the design principles and planning strategies that have shaped the distinctive character of Rosemary Beach, offering attendees valuable insights into the community’s architectural vision and development.

Community Gatherings and Cultural Events

Following the insightful town tours, attendees reconvened in Seaside to immerse themselves in the local culture and connect with the broader community. The afternoon began with a Matcha Tasting at Amavida Coffee

Roasters, where participants enjoyed a unique and flavorful experience that fostered conversation and camaraderie. Afterwards, guests attended an art opening at Anne Hunter Galleries, featuring the work of artist Melissa Davis. This event provided an opportunity for attendees to engage with local art and creativity, further enriching the weekend’s celebration of community and innovative design.

Each year, Anne Hunter generously donates a portion of sales from her gallery opening following Prize festivities to the Seaside Institute. This ongoing commitment exemplifies the concept of Civic Art, which plays a vital role in nurturing a holistic community. By supporting the Institute through her artistic endeavors, Hunter helps reinforce the values of creativity, collaboration, and community engagement that are central to the mission and spirit of the Seaside Institute.

Weekend Overview

The Seaside Institute Executive Director, Christy Milliken, with the sup-

port of the Seaside Institute Board of Fellows and Board of Governors, Sponsors, and dedicated volunteers, curated an inspiring weekend that underscored Seaside’s ongoing leadership in innovative community planning. The event featured a thoughtfully designed sequence of activities; each aimed at celebrating people-centered urban design and fostering community among participants.

Program Highlights

- Private receptions provided opportunities for attendees to connect in an inviting atmosphere, setting the tone for the weekend’s events.
- Engaging architectural tours showcased the unique design elements and planning principles that define Seaside and its neighboring communities.
- Keynote conversations explored the origins and development of the New Urbanism movement, offering valuable insights into the philosophies shaping these communities.
- A symposium brought together dis-

tinguished speakers, enriching the discourse around innovative urban design.

- Celebratory awards dinners recognized influential figures in the field, highlighting their contributions and impact.

Community and Recognition

Throughout the weekend, the program fostered meaningful connections among attendees, encouraging collaboration and the exchange of ideas. The recognition of influential individuals further emphasized the importance of Seaside and its neighboring communities as exemplary models for people-focused urban planning and design.



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- LOW HAZARD**
Calm Conditions, Exercise Caution
- STINGING MARINE LIFE**
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