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Herald Square and Greeley Square Kiosks

Carefully designed, carefully placed pavillions help bring two small Midtown public spaces back to life.



Greeley Square, after reconstruction, with kiosks flanking south entrance



Greeley Square kiosk
Photo © Chris Lovi
Herald Square Kiosk

The restoration of parks and public spaces in New York City has been a long and patient process, abetted by the emergence of private, non-profit organizations skilled at marshalling the financial and organizational resources necessary for the renewal of such places. Although this shift of responsibility from government to private hands has raised questions about accountability and equity, these projects have nevertheless revealed possibilities for the public realm that had essentially been foreclosed.

One of the earliest examples of this was the restoration of Bryant Park, the largest open space in Midtown, headed by the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation. By the 1980s the park had become dominated by drug dealing and fallen into a state of disrepair and disregard. Numerous studies of use patterns, some by William H. Whyte's successors at Project for Public Spaces and some by environmental psychologists from City University, clearly documented its design deficiencies.

The park plan, a collaboration of the Hanna-Olin Partnership, HHPA and Lynden Miller, set a standard for restorative landscape design. HHPA also designed a pair of kiosks that bracket one park entrance and a restaurant set snugly against the New York Public Library's rear wall. The kiosks provide a watchful eye and a welcome; the

restaurant turned what was once a dead edge to the space an important destination, activity generator and visual focal point. The structures know better than to steal the scene—which, of course, is all about the dramatic layers of space created by the skyscrapers that surround the park, the trees that embrace the lawn, and the landmark library that serves as a backdrop, as well as about the everchanging human activity on the lawn under the allees.

Hardy is now involved in the renewal of Herald and Greeley Squares, two wedge-shaped spaces surrounded by the intersection of Broadway, Sixth Avenue and 34th Street. Here, the task of establishing functional public spaces was complicated by the extraordinary volumes of vehicular traffic that choke the squares. HHPA designed four new kiosks that complement landscape and traffic calming improvements implemented by the 34th Street Partnership. The structures provide space for newsstands, coffee bars, even a public rest room, amenities that make lingering at the cafe tables in the gardens all the more reasonable—and given the squares' location, remarkable—proposition.

—Todd W. Bressi

**Bryant Park Kiosks,
Cafe and Grill**

**An unprecedented public-private
partnership and effective design
collaboration revives Midtown
Manhattan's greatest open space.**



The Bryant Park Grill and cafe attract people into the back of the park, enlivening an area defined by the rear wall of the New York Public Library.

Top photo © Chris Lovi,
bottom photo © Paul Warchol.