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SWA Announces New Visual Identity Created by Sagmeister & Walsh

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Challenge:

Who is SWA today and what does that look like? As an employee-owned, studio-based group of designers focused on landscape architecture, planning, and urban design, each new leadership team considers this issue freshly (at least every decade or so!). With hundreds of current projects ranging in scale from sprawling (the nine-kilometer Shenzhen Bay restoration master plan) to small (pro-bono pocket parks in Los Angeles), and with work being generated by over thirty seasoned principals in seven offices, it's not surprising that SWA means different things to different audiences.

So with Sagmeister & Walsh's guidance we asked ourselves this question: Is it even possible for a single image to convey the essence of an international landscape architecture firm composed of many talented people with as many points of view, working in different geographic regions?

Process:

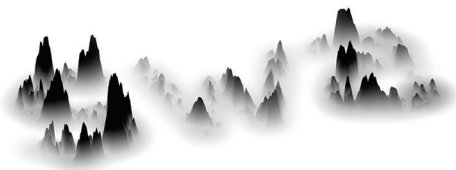
After a thorough RFP process led by SWA senior management, we teamed up with celebrated New York City-based branding firm Sagmeister & Walsh (S&W). S&W engaged in creative fact-gathering sessions with people from all levels of the company. A firm-wide invitation welcomed suggestions for four words that most clearly represent SWA today: **Design-driven**, **Personal**, **Fearless**, and **Adaptive** were selected as both accurate and aspirational descriptions of what SWA means today. In addition, staff in each of the firm's locations created a short video about its office culture and personality to help inform the distillation process by S&W.

Solution:

A dynamic new identity that reveals the most essential aspects of SWA, our new branding is at once grounded and forward-thinking. While it relates to the larger architecture, engineering, and development community for whom we work, it more authentically places our graphic identity in the organic world of landscape architecture. The branding tools begin with a logo featuring SWA's initials and extend to include dynamic, activated versions for use in client presentations and on web sites.

Here's what Sagmeister and Walsh had to say: "We built the foundation of the identity by introducing the classic elements that SWA works with such as earth, water and wind. These elements interact with a custom-designed SWA typographic logo to suggest how SWA provides the security of a large design company as well as offering the agility of a small one by allowing these natural elements to alter in size, speed, and direction. Just as SWA represents a multitude of individual approaches, the identity can change based on the goals of the individual users."

We will begin to use this new identity in the weeks to come.
Please tell us what you think!



Earth



Water



Wind