Christine Tohme and Martha Wilson to Receive the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College 2015 Audrey Irmas Award for Curatorial Excellence

Award Given With Audrey Irmas Prize of $25,000
Presented at CCS Bard Gala Celebration On April 15, 2015 at 6:30pm
in New York City

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, NY, December, 2014 — The Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College (CCS Bard) is pleased to announce that Christine Tohme and Martha Wilson, are the recipients of the 2015 Audrey Irmas Award for Curatorial Excellence. The award will be presented at a gala celebration and dinner on April 15, 2015 at 6:30pm in New York City.

Tom Eccles, Executive Director of CCS Bard states: “We are delighted that two extraordinary pioneers from very different parts of the globe have been selected for this year’s award. Both Christine Tohme and Martha Wilson represent the dedication, persistence, and vision that every young curator should aspire to. Each in their own way has been a transformative figure often working in challenging environments and under difficult conditions.”

Christine Tohme is an independent curator and founder/director of Ashkal Alwan – the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts. Founded in Beirut in 1993, Ashkal Alwan is committed to the production, research, and circulation of contemporary artistic and intellectual practices. In 2002, the association initiated Home Works: A Forum on Cultural Practices, a multidisciplinary platform that brings together artists, writers, thinkers, filmmakers, and choreographers, among others, for a public program of exhibitions, panel discussions, film screenings, and performances. In 2011, Ashkal Alwan opened its first multipurpose space and launched the Home Workspace Program, an annual tuition-free art-study program. Tohme received a Prince Claus Award in 2006 for her contribution to the development of critical culture in Lebanon and beyond. She is on the board of Marsa (Beirut), a sexual health center that provides specialized medical services for the general public as well as at-risk youth and marginalized communities. Tohme is also on the board of SAHA (Istanbul), an association supporting contemporary art from Turkey.

Martha Wilson is a pioneering feminist artist and gallery director, who over the past four decades created innovative photographic and video works that explore her female subjectivity. She has been described by New York Times critic Holland Cotter as one of “the half-dozen most important people for art in downtown Manhattan in the 1970s.” In 1976 she founded Franklin Furnace, an artist-run space that champions the exploration, promotion and preservation of artist books, temporary installation, performance art, as well as online works. She has received fellowships for performance art from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts; Bessie and Obie awards for commitment to artists’ freedom of expression; a Yoko Ono Lennon Courage Award for the Arts; a Richard Massey Foundation-White Box Arts and Humanities Award; and in 2013 received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University.

The award has been designed by artist Lawrence Weiner, and is based on his 2006 commission Bard Enter, conceived for the entrance to the Hessel Museum of Art at CCS Bard. The award also comes with the Audrey Irmas Prize of $25,000 to be split between the recipients.
About CCS Bard’s Audrey Irmas Award for Curatorial Excellence
For seventeen years, the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College has celebrated and awarded the individual achievements of a leading curator or curators whose lasting contributions have shaped the way we conceive of exhibition-making today. For the fourth time, the 2015 award will be given under the name of patron Audrey Irmas, who has bestowed the endowment for the Award. Irmas is a board member of CCS Bard and an active member of the Los Angeles arts and philanthropic community.


About the Center for Curatorial Studies
The Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College (CCS Bard) was founded in 1990 as an exhibition and research center for the study of late twentieth-century and contemporary art and culture and to explore experimental approaches to the presentation of these topics and their impact on our world. Since 1994, the Center for Curatorial Studies and its graduate program have provided one of the world’s most forward thinking teaching and learning environments for the research and practice of contemporary art and curatorship. Broadly interdisciplinary, CCS Bard encourages students, faculty and researchers to question the critical and political dimension of art, its mediation and its social significance. CCS Bard cultivates innovative thinking, radical research and new ways to challenge our understanding of the social and civic values of the visual arts. CCS Bard provides an intensive educational program alongside its public events, exhibitions, and publications, which collectively explore the critical potential of the institutions and practices of exhibition-making. It is uniquely positioned within the larger Center’s tripartite resources, which include the internationally renowned CCS Bard Library and Archives and the Hessel Museum of Art, with its rich permanent collection.

General information on the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College can be found on the website: www.bard.edu/ccs.

For more information on the Audrey Irmas Award for Curatorial Excellence Award Gala Dinner or to purchase tickets, please contact:

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