



## **BARD GRADUATE CENTER CELEBRATES 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY WITH LANDMARK EXHIBITIONS AND INITIATIVES**

**Leading institution dedicated to study of decorative arts, design history, and material culture  
to present range of anniversary programs, including  
major exhibitions on French Fashion during WWI and on modernist designer Eileen Gray**

New York, NY (June 19, 2018, Updated November 29, 2018) – As the leading graduate research institute in the United States dedicated to the decorative arts, design history, and material culture, Bard Graduate Center and its Gallery have pioneered the study of objects as a means to better understand culture in all its forms. Offering exceptional experiences for scholars, students, and the general public alike, Bard Graduate Center is built on multidisciplinary study and the integration of research, graduate teaching, and public exhibitions.

In celebration of its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Bard Graduate Center will present a series of exhibitions and events that showcase the institution's groundbreaking research and approach to the study of tangible 'things.' Beginning in fall 2018 and continuing through 2020, the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration will include exhibitions on a diverse range of subjects, including: *Agents of Faith*, examining sacred objects and the practice of votive offering; *French Fashion, Women, and the First World War*; and *Eileen Gray: Creating a Total Work of Art*, an in-depth examination of the work and contributions of the iconic modernist designer and architect, presented in collaboration with the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Other initiatives during the anniversary years will also advance research and scholarship, recognize leaders in the field, present engaging programs for the public, and foster a new generation of students and scholars.

"My vision for Bard Graduate Center was to create a bold community of scholars to invigorate the study of objects as a distinct discipline unto itself—in dialogue with but not constrained by the traditions of art history, archaeology, and other social sciences," said Dr. Susan Weber, Founder and Director of Bard Graduate Center. "Twenty-five years ago, no such place existed in the United States and now, looking ahead to the graduation of our 25<sup>th</sup> class, I am deeply proud of how we continue to expand the scope of our scholarship and foster the success of our students. Our graduates are now working in major institutions across the country and around the world, advancing new ways of thinking about our material world."

"No one discipline 'owns' material culture," said Bard Graduate Center Dean Peter N. Miller. "Things, objects, and materials pose different questions and do different work depending on your approach. In all our efforts—research, teaching, publications, exhibitions—we ask questions and explore the ways in which the material world helps us illuminate the varieties of human experience. While our research interests are diverse—from the examination of Yuan Dynasty Chinese bronzes to new interpretations of 18<sup>th</sup>-century cookbooks—the Bard Graduate Center community is united in our shared pursuit of new meanings and our culture of passionate curiosity. The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is a celebration of that quest and spirit."

## **Bard Graduate Center 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Highlights**

### ***Exhibitions***

Bard Graduate Center is unique in its global investigation of the material world across time periods, places, and disciplines. Gallery exhibitions reflect this expansive approach. In addition to large-scale annual exhibitions, Bard Graduate Center also presents “Focus Project” exhibitions, curated by faculty and postdoctoral fellows, that emerge from research and teaching. These exhibitions form part of an innovative program that promotes experimentation in display and interpretation. Focus Projects also provide graduate students with the opportunity to be involved in every aspect of exhibition development, from conception to realization.

“Our exhibitions investigate design history, decorative arts, and material culture” said Nina Stritzler-Levine, Director of Bard Graduate Center Gallery. “The comparatively small scale of our gallery allows for close engagement with our exhibitions which have been carefully crafted to share the knowledge and expertise of our curators and convey ideas and issues previously overlooked and unexplored.”

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary exhibitions include:

- ***Agents of Faith: Votive Objects in Time and Place***  
September 14, 2018 - January 6, 2019  
*Agents of Faith* will provide a perspective on why humans across the globe create material offerings as acts of faith. Encompassing exquisite works of art as well as everyday items made sacred through the offertory act, more than 300 objects dating from 2000 BCE to the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be on display. The exhibition will reveal the global nature of votive practices and the profoundly personal aspects of their creation.
- ***Spring 2019 Exhibitions: Making — Media — Material***  
February 14, 2019 - July 7, 2019

#### ***The Story Box: Franz Boas, George Hunt, and the Making of Anthropology***

The exhibition will explore the hidden histories and complex legacies of one of the most influential books in the field of anthropology, Franz Boas' *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians* (1897). Focusing on Boas' work with his Indigenous co-author George Hunt among the Kwakwaka'wakw people of British Columbia, the exhibition—guest designed by artist Corrine Hunt, Hunt's great-granddaughter—features ceremonial objects as well as rare archival photographs, manuscripts, and drawings that shed new light on the book while promoting understanding and cultural reactivation of the heritage it documents.

#### ***Jan Tschichold and The New Typography: Graphic Design Between the World Wars***

Tracing the revolution in graphic design in the 1920s, this exhibition displays materials assembled by typographer and designer Jan Tschichold (1902-1974) in Weimar Germany. Objects displayed in the exhibition, including El Lissitzky's iconic 1920 publication 'Pro dva kvadrata' [The Story of Two Squares], were given by Philip Johnson to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and have rarely been publicly exhibited.

#### ***A View from the Jeweler's Bench: Ancient Treasures, Contemporary Statements***

Foregrounding the processes and materials employed in the craft of jewelry making past and present, this student-curated exhibition will highlight contemporary jewelers who

are developing a practice that is methodically inspired by ancient and historical antecedents.

- ***French Fashion, Women, and the First World War***

Fall 2019

*French Fashion, Women, and the First World War* invites visitors to discover the fashion of wartime France, as well as the systems invented to publicize the industry. The exhibition will showcase historically significant clothing and accessories as well as period photographs, commercial catalogues, and fashion magazines. Maude Bass-Krueger, the co-curator of the exhibition with Sophie Kurkdjian, is an alumna of Bard Graduate Center's PhD program (PhD '16). The exhibition will include loans from institutions in France including the Bibliothèque Forney, Musée des Arts Décoratifs; Chanel Patrimoine Collection; Lanvin Archive; Musée de la Grande Guerre de Meaux; Palais Galliera as well as the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

- ***Eileen Gray: Creating a Total Work of Art***

Spring 2020

This is the first major American exhibition in 40 years to examine the entire oeuvre of Eileen Gray, a pioneer in modern design and architecture and one of the few women to practice in those fields professionally before World War II. It will feature never-before exhibited furniture as well as other aspects of Gray's design work, including archival materials from Gray's best-known buildings. Also on view will be newly discovered materials on Gray's architectural projects in France, reinforcing her standing as a gifted architect and shedding new light on her ideas about architecture, interiors, design, and landscape. In addition to exploring Gray as a modernist, it will elaborate on Gray's interest in a vernacular design vocabulary.

### ***Publications***

Since 1993, Bard Graduate Center has produced a series of books and catalogues that reflect the intellectual rigor underpinning the institute's programs. With contributions from faculty and a coterie of international luminaries, Bard Graduate Center Publications now has a list of more than 100 titles, many award-winning including *Artek and the Altos* (Philip Johnson Exhibition Catalogue Award, 2018) and *John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London* (Association of Art Museum Curators' Award for Excellence, 2017). As part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Bard Graduate Center will release a number of new volumes, including an anthology of Founder and Director Susan Weber's research and writings.

### ***Commencement of 25<sup>th</sup> Class: Shaping the Next Generation of Field Leaders***

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will culminate with the commencement of the institution's 25<sup>th</sup> class in 2020. They will join Bard Graduate Center's distinguished network of alumni who occupy leadership positions at universities, galleries, museums, auction houses, and other major institutions around the globe—from the Art Institute of Chicago to the National Gallery of Canada to the National Trust in the UK.

***Advancing Equity and Diversity***

In partnership with Bard High School Early College and Bronx-based community arts organization DreamYard, Bard Graduate Center has created “Lab for Teen Thinkers” designed to support high school students of diverse backgrounds in the study of objects and the exploration of museum careers. Teen Thinkers contribute their research and scholarship with the larger academic community at Bard Graduate Center, while being mentored by members of faculty and staff. The program is part of Bard Graduate Center’s commitment to building a diverse community able to bring new perspectives to the scholarly study of the material world.

***Iris Awards: Celebrating Extraordinary Achievements***

Bard Graduate Center honors scholars, patrons, and field professionals who have made major contributions to the study and appreciation of the decorative arts with the annual Iris Awards. Recent recipients have included Dr. Aileen Ribeiro, Sir Nicholas Goodison, Harold Koda, and John C. Waddell.

More information on additional 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events and programs will be announced in the coming months.

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