Architect Frank Gehry To Be Honored at Harvard University

FOUNDER OF FIRM GEHRY PARTNERS, LLP, WILL RECEIVE HARVARD ARTS MEDAL AT APRIL 28 CEREMONY HOSTED BY ACTOR JOHN LITHGOW, THE OPENING EVENT FOR HARVARD’S ARTS FIRST FESTIVAL

(Cambridge, MA)—Award-winning architect Frank Gehry GSD ‘57 ArD ’00 is the recipient of the 2016 Harvard Arts Medal, which will be awarded by Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust at a ceremony on Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 4 pm at Farkas Hall, 10-12 Holyoke St., Cambridge. The ceremony, presented by the Office for the Arts at Harvard and the Board of Overseers of Harvard College, will include a discussion with Gehry moderated by actor John Lithgow ’67 ArD ’05, Master of the Arts at Harvard and host of the event. This is the official opening event for ARTS FIRST, Harvard University’s annual festival showcasing student creativity in the arts, April 28-May 1.

Admission is free but tickets are required, available in person at the Harvard Box Office at Smith Campus Center, 1450 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, or by calling 617.495.8676 or visiting www.boxoffice.harvard.edu (phone and online ticket orders are subject to service fees). Ticket distribution for Harvard affiliates (2 per person, with valid ID) begins Tuesday, April 19; ticket distribution for the public (2 per person) begins Thursday, April 21. Some remaining tickets may be available at the door one hour prior to event start time.

“Frank Gehry is a true original, a visionary artist whose work has revolutionized architecture and place-making in the 21st century,” said John Lithgow. “He’s the first architect to receive the Arts Medal, and Harvard looks forward to celebrating his extraordinary achievements and risk-taking spirit.”

The Harvard Arts Medal honors a distinguished Harvard or Radcliffe graduate or faculty member who has achieved excellence in the arts and has made a contribution through the arts to education or the public good. Previous Medal recipients include former ballet dancer and now arts leader Damian Woetzel MPA ’07; photographer Susan Meiselas EdM ’71; visual artist and essayist Catherine Lord ’70; saxophonist/composers Joshua Redman ’91 and Fred Ho ’79; composers John Harbison ’60 and John Adams ’69 MA ’72; playwright Christopher Durang ’71; poets John Ashbery ’49 and Maxine Kumin ’41; cellist Yo-Yo Ma ’76; film director Mira Nair ’79; conductor and founder of Les Arts Florissants William Christie ’66; stage director Peter Sellars ’80; National Theatre of the Deaf founder David Hays ’52; authors John Updike ’54 and Margaret Atwood AM ’62 LittD ’04; songwriter/musicians Bonnie Raitt ’72 and Pete Seeger ’40; and actors Jack Lemmon ’47, Tommy Lee Jones ’69 and Matt Damon ’92.
One of the most acclaimed architects of the 20th century and known for his use of bold, postmodern shapes and unusual fabrications, Frank Gehry was raised in Toronto, Canada, and moved with his family to Los Angeles in 1947. He received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Southern California in 1954, and studied City Planning at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Since establishing his practice in Los Angeles in 1962—and then forming his partnership, Gehry Partners, LLP, in 2001—Gehry has built an architectural career that has spanned over five decades and produced public and private buildings in America, Europe and Asia. He has served as a professor of architecture at Columbia University, Yale University and the University of Southern California, and also served as a board member at USC’s School of Architecture.

Among his many official honors, Gehry was the 1989 recipient of the prestigious Pritzker Prize—an annual award honoring a living architect “whose built work demonstrates combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.” His other significant awards in the architectural field include the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture, the Wolf Prize in Art (Architecture), the Praemium Imperiale Award, the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Award, the National Medal of Arts, the Friedrich Kiesler Prize, the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal, the Royal Institute of British Architects Gold Medal, and the Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts.

Gehry’s most famous designs include the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain. Other notable projects include the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum Expansion at the University of Minnesota; Nationale-Nederlanden Building in Prague; DZ Bank Building in Berlin; Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Maggie’s Centre, a cancer patient center in Dundee, Scotland; Jay Pritzker Pavilion and BP Bridge in Millennium Park in Chicago, Illinois; Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Ontario; Peter B. Lewis Science Library in Princeton, New Jersey; New Campus for New World Symphony in Miami, Florida; Signature Theatre in New York City; House for the Make it Right Foundation in New Orleans, Louisiana; Biomuseo in Panama; and the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, France.

Gehry’s current projects include King Street Development in Toronto, Ontario; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Battersea Power Station Development, London, United Kingdom; Grand Avenue Development, Los Angeles, California; Facebook Campuses in New York City, Seattle, London and Dublin; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; and the Eisenhower Memorial in Washington, D.C. Projects under construction include the LUMA / Parc des Ateliers in Arles, France; Divan Orchestra in Berlin, Germany; the Ohr O. Keefe Museum of Art in Biloxi, Mississippi; and the West Campus for Facebook in Menlo Park, California.

Harvard University’s 23rd annual ARTS FIRST festival, showcasing student and faculty creativity, will take place Thursday-Sunday, April 28-May 1, 2016. Sponsored by Harvard’s Board of Overseers and produced by the Office for the Arts at Harvard with partners across the University, this year’s festival will feature more than 200 music, theater, dance, film, visual arts and multidisciplinary events at indoor and outdoor venues. All events are open to the public, most free of charge. For more information, contact the Office for the Arts at Harvard at 617.495.8676, or visit www.ofa.fas.harvard.edu/arts.
The Office for the Arts at Harvard (OFA) supports student engagement in the arts and integrates the arts into University life. Through its programs and services, the OFA teaches and mentors, fosters student art making, connects students to accomplished artists, commissions new work, and partners with local, national, and international constituencies. By supporting the development of students as artists and cultural stewards, the OFA works to enrich society and shape communities in which the arts are a vital part of life. Information: 617.495.8676, ofa@fas.harvard.edu, www.ofa.fas.harvard.edu.