

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BARD GRADUATE CENTER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL IRIS FOUNDATION AWARDS

New York, March 6, 2018—Dr. Susan Weber, founder and director of Bard Graduate Center, has announced the recipients of the twenty-second annual Iris Foundation Awards for Outstanding Contributions to the Decorative Arts. This year’s awardees are **John C. Waddell**, collector of modern design and decorative arts; **Dr. Aileen Ribeiro**, scholar of fashion and costume; **Dr. Jason Sun**, curator of Chinese Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and gallery owner **Benoist F. Drut**. The awards will be presented at a luncheon at the Colony Club in New York City on April 18, 2018.

In announcing the awards, Dr. Weber stated: “This year’s honorees, through philanthropy, scholarship, and professional commitment, have dedicated their careers to sustaining the heritage of our world as expressed through its material culture. These awards offer an opportunity to recognize and celebrate their achievements.”

Past Iris Foundation Award recipients include many of the most influential patrons, scholars, and dealers in the field of decorative arts. Patrons such as Sir Nicholas Goodison, Jayne Wrightsman, Lord Rothschild, Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Richard Jenrette, and Iris Cantor have received the award for their visionary support of museums, galleries, and educational institutions. Among the distinguished scholars who have been honored are Harold Koda, Thomas P. Campbell, Paola Antonelli, Morrison H. Heckscher, Dame Rosalind J. Savill, and Finbarr Barry Flood. Outstanding dealer honorees include Adrian Sassoon, Martin Levy, Deedee Wigmore, and Titi Halle.

2018 Honorees

John C. Waddell, Outstanding Patron

For the past forty years, John C. Waddell has formed collections that explore the advent of modernism. In 1989, his collection of early modernist photographs was donated to the

Metropolitan Museum of Art and exhibited as *The New Vision: Photography Between the World Wars*. His first collection of modern design and decorative arts, donated to the Met in 2000, was exhibited as *American Modern, 1925–1940: Design for a New Age*. In 2011, he donated a second design collection, focusing on the earliest examples of American modern design and decorative arts, to the Yale University Art Gallery. It is featured in Yale's catalogue *A Modern World: American Design from the Yale University Art Gallery, 1920–1950*.

Dr. Aileen Ribeiro, Lifetime Achievement in Scholarship

Dr. Aileen Ribeiro is a specialist in fashion and costume history who has shared her knowledge in lecture appearances throughout Great Britain, Europe, and North America. She holds a degree in history from King's College London, an MA and PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art, and has been on the faculty of the Courtauld as well as the University of London. Ribeiro has published many books and articles. The most recent include: *A Portrait of Fashion: Six Centuries of Dress at the National Portrait Gallery* (2015), and *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion 1600–1914* (2017); essays on dress in the work of Liotard in *Jean-Etienne Liotard* (National Gallery of Scotland and the Royal Academy of Arts 2015), and on clothing in Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* (Phillips Collection, Washington 2017).

Dr. Jason Sun, Outstanding Mid-Career Scholar

Dr. Jason Sun is the Brooke Russell Astor Curator of Chinese Art in the Department of Asian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He received his PhD in Chinese Art and Archaeology from Princeton University and was the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of East Asian Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art before joining the Metropolitan in 1999. Dr. Sun has curated *The Bishop Jades, Excellence and Elegance: Decorative Art of the Eighteenth Century Qing Court*, *Small Delight: Chinese Snuff Bottles*, *Colors of the Universe: Chinese Hardstone Carvings*, and the 2017 landmark exhibition *Age of Empires: Chinese Art of the Qin and Dynasties (221 B.C.–A.D. 220)*. He worked with James Watt, former chairman of the Asian Art Department, on two seminal exhibitions: *China: Dawn of a Golden Age*, and *The World of Kubilai Khan: Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty*. Sun has lectured and published widely on a variety of subjects including Chinese jade carving, metalwork, calligraphy, archaeology, and museum studies.

Benoist F. Drut, Outstanding Dealer

Benoist F. Drut developed an interest in collecting early on in his native France. At fifteen, he met acclaimed dealer Thierry Millerand who advised him on how to become a successful dealer. After finishing his law degree in Paris, Drut moved to New York, taking a job with eighteenth-century furniture collector, Roger Prigent. A chance meeting with Gerard Widdershoven brought him to Maison Gerard where he became his business partner. Today, Drut, as sole owner, continues to preserve the welcoming character Widdershoven fostered in the seventies: “the gallery is not merely a place for design, but a place where design lives; not only where the old and new coexist seamlessly, but where it is easy to feel at home amongst the beauty of both.”

About the Iris Awards

The Iris Foundation Awards were created in 1997 to recognize scholars, patrons, and professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the study and appreciation of the decorative arts and thereby help to sustain the cultural heritage of our world. The Awards are named for Bard Graduate Center Founder and Director Susan Weber’s mother, Iris Weber. Proceeds from the luncheon fund graduate student scholarships and fellowships. For more information or to make a reservation to attend the awards, call 212-501-3058 or email support@bgc.bard.edu.

About Bard Graduate Center

Bard Graduate Center is devoted to the study of decorative arts, design history, and material culture through research, advanced degrees, exhibitions, publications, and public programs. Our community encourages creative investigation of objects, from the everyday to the esoteric. For more information about the Gallery, MA, and PhD degree programs, public programs, publications, and more, visit bgc.bard.edu.

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