

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bard Graduate Center Digital Publication Wins Victorian Society New York 2017 Award

New York, April 2, 2018—Bard Graduate Center is pleased to announce that its Digital Media Department has received the Outstanding New Media award from the Victorian Society New York in recognition of the digitalization of its spring 2017 Focus Project, *New York Crystal Palace 1853*.

The New York Crystal Palace, which opened in 1853 near present-day Bryant Park in New York City, was an impressive cast-iron structure that was the site of first world's fair held in the United States. Bard Graduate Center's Focus Project revealed how the Crystal Palace, one of the city's first tourist attractions with over one million visitors, showcased an enormous range of manufactured consumer goods and technological marvels of the age—a key part of rising claims in New York and the United States to consumer and cultural stature. The exhibition emphasized the experience of those who visited the Crystal Palace in 1853 through objects displayed in the Gallery and its digital components, which included an interactive engraving of the Crystal Palace interior, a visitor's companion modeled after nineteenth-century illustrated newspapers and guidebooks, and a series of three audio tours that offered first-hand accounts by taken from the writings and other historic sources of Walt Whitman, as well as personal stories from two imagined characters, and a collection of student essays.

New York Crystal Palace 1853 was curated by David Jaffee, professor and head of new media research at Bard Graduate Center, who died in January 2017. Students were critical collaborators in all facets of the exhibition, helping to research and develop the digital interactive features and audio tours along with writing the texts that appeared both in the gallery and in the digital publication and its components. Jesse Merandy,

director of the Digital Media Lab, who oversaw the completion of the project after Professor Jaffee's death, will accept the award from the Victorian Society New York. Information about the exhibition can be found at bgc.bard.edu/gallery/new-york-crystal-palace-1853 and the digital publication is at crystalpalace.visualizingnyc.org.

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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