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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 19, 2023

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Boston Society for Architecture Awards Janet Echelman Prestigious Harleston Parker Award for *As If It Were Already Here*

BOSTON, Massachusetts – At last night's Design Awards Gala, the Boston Society for Architecture (BSA) presented the Harleston Parker Award – its highest honor – to sculptor Janet Echelman for *As If It Were Already Here*. This monumental sculpture, made by hand-splicing rope and knotting twine into an interconnected mesh of more than a half-million nodes, was installed 600 feet above the Greenway in downtown Boston in 2015 – spanning the void where a highway once split the downtown from its waterfront. Established in 1921 in memory of Boston architect J. Harleston Parker and first awarded in 1923, the prestigious Harleston Parker Award honors the most beautiful piece of architecture, building, monument or structure built in the past 10 years within the City of Boston or Metropolitan Parks District limits.

As If It Were Already Here was selected from five finalists for the award, out of 75 submissions, by a jury of prominent architects and other leaders from the Boston community. The jury commented: "Embracing New England's craftsmanship traditions in its design, this is a complex and highly engineered structure exhibiting a kaleidoscope of colors reminiscent of a child's blown soap bubbles...The piece evokes memory, history, future possibilities, and conversation about how parts of a city can be sewn back together, better than before." The sculpture makes reference to the history of its location, with the three voids representing the "Tri-Mountain" that was razed in the 18th century to create lands from the harbor, and the color banding referencing the six lanes that once dominated this landscape before they were buried in the Big Dig.

"It was an honor to present this award to Janet last night for her impressive sculpture that symbolizes the rich energy of our interconnected city and defined the skyline over the Greenway in 2015," says BSA President Andrea Love AIA. "The jury so aptly stated that by recognizing this work as significantly beautiful, we hope to elevate our collective recognition of beauty's civic value."

"It's both exciting and humbling to see the Harleston Parker medal given to an artist for the first time in its 99-year history. Receiving this award now shines a light on how ephemeral



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works can profoundly impact life in cities, and how a temporary work can live robustly in our minds years after its physical presence has gone,” said Janet Echelman.

Jurors included: James Bennett II, Digital Producer/Announcer, GBH; Heather Boesch, Operations Director, IDEO, Boston; Yanel de Angel Salas, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, CPHC, PHIUS, NOMA, Principal, Managing Director, Boston, Perkins + Will; Kara Elliott-Ortega, Chief of Arts and Culture, City of Boston; Katie Faulkner, FAIA, LEED AP, Founder/Principal at West Work; Lou Jones, Owner, Lou Jones Photography; Amy Longworth, Executive Director, Boston Green Ribbon Commission; John Messervy, AIA, Corporate Director of Design and Construction, Partners Healthcare; and Rose Mary Su, Lab & Sensitive Facilities Market Leader and Principal, Acentech.

The BSA’s mission is to improve the quality of life for Boston-area residents by championing innovation in the built environment. The BSA is a partnership between the Boston Society of Architects, one of the largest and oldest chapters of the American Institute of Architects, and the BSA Foundation, a community organization.

For information on all Design Awards presented last evening, visit:

<https://www.architects.org/2022-design-awards>

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