

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME TO HONOR ZAHA HADID WITH THE 2014 MCKIM MEDAL

NEW YORK and ROME — The American Academy in Rome has announced that architect **Zaha Hadid** will receive the **2014 McKim Medal**. The award celebrates the internationally renowned architect for her exceptional contributions to design and the built environment. Ms. Hadid will be presented with the McKim Medal in Rome on **Tuesday 3 June 2014, at the 10th annual McKim Medal Gala** at Villa Aurelia.

Zaha Hadid, founder of Zaha Hadid Architects, was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2004 and is internationally known for her built, theoretical and academic work. Each of her dynamic projects builds on over thirty years of exploration and research in the interrelated fields of urbanism, architecture and design.

“The American Academy in Rome is very pleased to award Zaha Hadid the 2014 McKim Medal,” said **Mark Robbins, President of the American Academy in Rome**. “Over a remarkably vivid career, Ms. Hadid has produced an intensely cinematic and sinuous architecture. Her work at all scales reflects a level of personal invention, which approaches the future with exuberant power and beauty. Few individuals embody the challenges of independent creative work for which the Academy is known.” Mr. Robbins continued, “In the tenth year of the McKim Medal, and in the 100th anniversary of the building by its namesake, the firm of McKim, Mead & White, it is especially significant to have an architect of the caliber and originality of Zaha Hadid usher in the next century of the American Academy in Rome.”

Born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1950, Ms. Hadid studied mathematics at the American University of Beirut before moving to London in 1972 to attend the Architectural Association (AA) School where she was awarded the Diploma Prize in 1977. She founded Zaha Hadid Architects in 1979 and completed her first building, the Vitra Fire Station (Weil am Rhein, Germany) in 1993. The MAXXI: National Museum of 21st Century Arts in Rome, the London Aquatics Centre for the 2012 Olympic Games, and Heydar Aliyev Centre in Baku (Azerbaijan) exemplify Hadid’s quest for complex, fluid space.

Previous McKim Medal laureates include **Renzo Piano, Cy Twombly, Umberto Eco, Franco Zeffirelli, Ennio Morricone, Miuccia Prada, Luigi Ontani, Riccardo Muti, and Bernardo Bertolucci**.

Designer and arts patron **Miuccia Prada** will present Ms. Hadid with the 2014 McKim Medal. This year’s McKim Gala is chaired by **Valentina Moncada di Paternò** and **Ginevra Elkann**, together with Honorary Dinner Chairman **Mercedes T. Bass**, Dinner Vice Chairman **Daniel G. Cohen**, and Founding Dinner Chairman **Verdella Caracciolo de Benedictis**. The McKim Medal Gala funds fellowships that provide both Italians and Americans with important opportunities to pursue

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their individual studies and engage in the international dialogue of scholarship and the arts. These opportunities have proven to be an enriching experience, both for the Fellows, as well as the larger international community. The McKim Medal Gala kicks off a week of special activities at the American Academy in Rome that include the Fellows Open Studios and Readings.

### **The McKim Medal**

The McKim Medal was established by the American Academy in Rome in 2005 as an annual prize that honors an individual whose work – most particularly in Italy and the United States – has contributed significantly to the arts and humanities. Named for noted architect Charles Follen McKim (1847-1909), who established the Academy in 1894, the McKim medal was designed by sculptor Cy Twombly. This year's special 10-year commemorative medal was crafted by Roman jeweler Fabio Salini.

### **The American Academy in Rome**

Founded in 1894, originally as the first graduate school of architecture for the United States, the American Academy in Rome emerged in its present form – a hybrid center for the arts and humanities – by 1912. It remains the premier American overseas center for independent study and advanced research, a not-for-profit, private entity, the only one of the 30 foreign academies in Rome not supported primarily or entirely by its government. With an 11-acre campus on the highest point within the walls of Rome, the Academy annually offers the Rome Prize to approximately 30 individuals, following a national competition presided over by rotating independent juries of peers in each discipline, which include ancient, medieval, Renaissance and early modern, and modern Italian studies, and literature, music composition, visual arts, architecture, landscape architecture, design, and historic preservation and conservation.

The annual application deadline is 1 November. The Academy community also includes a carefully selected group of distinguished artists and scholars as invited Residents, Affiliated Fellows, and Visiting Artists and Scholars. To learn more, please visit: [www.aarome.org](http://www.aarome.org).

### **For more information, please contact:**

US: Marques McClary | +1-212-751-7200 (ext. 342) or +1-646-262-2776 | [m.mcclary@aarome.org](mailto:m.mcclary@aarome.org)  
Italy: Maria Bonmassar | +39 335 490311 | [maria.bonmassar@gmail.com](mailto:maria.bonmassar@gmail.com)