



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES TO DELIVER COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
FOR THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO**

Ukeles will receive an honorary doctorate from the School, along with Dawoud Bey, Isaac Julien and Chris Ware

CHICAGO—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), a global leader in art and design education, will welcome celebrated artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles who will deliver the School’s commencement address on Monday, May 13, at Wintrust Arena, 200 East Cermak Road. Ukeles, an activist artist known for her feminist works, will receive an honorary doctorate from the School, along with esteemed honorees, photographer Dawoud Bey, whose latest body of work was recently featured at the Art Institute of Chicago; filmmaker Isaac Julien and cartoonist and SAIC alum Chris Ware (SAIC 1991–93).

“We are honored to welcome Mierle, Dawoud, Isaac and Chris,” said SAIC President Elissa Tenny. “These visionary leaders are inspirations to our graduates. Like them, SAIC artists, designers and scholars pursue the questions that expand our understanding, increase our compassion and help make our shared society better.”

Since 1938, SAIC has awarded honorary degrees to an elite group of individuals who have made significant contributions to art, design, scholarship and culture. Past recipients include Marina Abramovic, Judy Chicago, Jeanne Gang, Theaster Gates, Kerry James Marshall, Yoko Ono, Patti Smith and Kanye West, and SAIC alums Tania Bruguera (MFA 2001), Jeff Koons (SAIC 1975–76) and David Sedaris (BFA 1987).

More than 900 students are expected to receive undergraduate and graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates from the prestigious art and design college.

About the Honorees

To see the full biographies of the honorees, please visit saic.edu/graduation.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles (commencement speaker) has been the official, unsalaried artist-in-residence of the City of New York Department of Sanitation. Her artwork, blurring boundaries between labor and performance, system and spirit, unveils connections between feminism, work, the city, and the environment. Among her key works are: *Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969! Proposal for an Exhibition “Care;” I Make Maintenance Art One Hour Every Day; Touch Sanitation; The Social Mirror; Ceremonial Arch Honoring Service Workers; Snow Workers’ Ballet, Echigo Tsumari; Unburning Freedom Hall; and LANDING at Freshkills Park (in process)*. Ukeles asks whether we can design modes of survival—for a thriving planet, not an entropic one—that don’t crush our personal and civic freedom and silence the individual’s voice.

Ukeles has exhibited internationally, including at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; Queens Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Tel Aviv Museum of Art; the Armory Art Show; Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates; Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco; Wellcome Collection, London; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Art Institute of Chicago; and the Istanbul Biennial. Her work is in

permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Migros Museum of Contemporary Art, Zurich; Jewish Museum, New York; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut; and the Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts. She is represented by Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York.

Dawoud Bey is an award-winning artist whose expansive approach to photography creates new spaces of engagement within cultural institutions, making them more meaningful to and representative of the communities in which they are situated. He has been honored with numerous fellowships, including a 2017 MacArthur “genius” grant, a United States Artists Fellowship, a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Bey’s works have been exhibited at such institutions as the Art Institute of Chicago; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Detroit Institute of Arts; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and other museums worldwide.

Isaac Julien, CBE RA, is a Turner-prize-nominated artist and filmmaker. Julien creates multiscreen film installations and photographs that incorporate different artistic disciplines to create a poetic and unique visual language. As one of the most prominent figures at the intersection of media art and cinema today, Julien pioneered a form of multiscreen installations with works such as *Western Union: Small Boats* (2007), which won the Charles Wollaston Award in 2017, *Ten Thousand Waves* (2010) and *Playtime* (2014). Julien’s work is included in the collections of institutions around the globe, such as the Tate Modern, London; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Chris Ware (SAIC 1991–93) is the author of *Jimmy Corrigan—the Smartest Kid on Earth*, which won the Guardian Prize in 2000, and *Building Stories*, which was chosen as a Top Ten Fiction Book by both the *New York Times* and *Time Magazine* in 2012. A regular contributor of comic strips and more than two dozen covers to the *New Yorker*, his work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, as well as in regular exhibitions at Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York and Galerie Martel, Paris. Ware’s work has been the focus of a 2016 PBS program *Art in the 21st Century* and an eponymous, 2017 art monograph by Rizzoli, and his next book *Rusty Brown, Part I* will be published in late 2019.

About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

For more than 150 years, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) has been a leader in educating the world’s most influential artists, designers and scholars. Located in downtown Chicago with a fine arts graduate program consistently ranking among the top programs in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, SAIC provides an interdisciplinary approach to art and design as well as world-class resources, including the Art Institute of Chicago museum, on-campus galleries and state-of-the-art facilities. SAIC’s undergraduate, graduate and post-baccalaureate students have the freedom to take risks and create the bold ideas that transform Chicago and the world—as seen through notable alums and faculty such as Michelle Grabner, David Sedaris, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Hunt, Georgia O’Keeffe, Cynthia Rowley, Nick Cave, Jeff Koons and LeRoy Neiman.

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