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**The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Honors Contemporary Artist Mona Hatoum at the 2016 Medal Award Gala, May 23**

Annual gala raises funds to directly support scholarships for SMFA students

**Boston, MA (April 6, 2016)**—Throughout her distinguished career, Mona Hatoum has questioned and explored themes of home, displacement, and self. Whether taking shape as installation, sculpture, video, photography, or works on paper, Hatoum’s art elicits strong psychological and emotional responses. In celebration of her internationally acclaimed work, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA), will honor Hatoum at the Medal Award Gala on May 23, 2016, in the Ruth and Carl J. Shapiro Family Courtyard at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. First presented in 1996, SMFA’s annual Medal Award recognizes notable artists and influential art patrons for their commitment to and impact on the art world.

“Mona Hatoum is one of the essential creative voices of our time, an artist whose work challenges us to rethink a world fractured by conflict and imagine new forms of connection,” says SMFA President Chris Bratton. “We are privileged to be honoring her with this year’s SMFA Medal Award.”

Hatoum first became widely known in the mid 1980s for a series of performance and video works that focused with great intensity on the body. In the 1990s her work moved increasingly towards large-scale installations and sculpture. Working in a diverse range of media, she has developed a language in which domestic, everyday objects are often transformed into foreign, threatening, or surreal sculptures.

“Hatoum alters the context of familiar objects, actions, and bodies to evoke multi-layered associations around personhood, place, and belonging,” says Committee Chair Abigail Ross Goodman. “Her work speaks to art’s power to communicate complex truths in a way that language alone can’t. It’s the kind of intelligent practice we should foster, and I’m proud that we are celebrating her while supporting the unique history and bold future of the SMFA.”

Born into a Palestinian family in Beirut in 1952, Mona Hatoum has lived and worked in London since 1975. Hatoum has participated in numerous significant exhibitions including the Turner Prize (1995); the Venice Biennale (1995 and 2005); Documenta XI (2002); the Biennale of Sydney (2006); and the Moscow Biennale (2013). She has held solo exhibitions in major museums and institutions in Europe, North and South America, Australia, and the Middle East. A major survey of her work was inaugurated at the Centre Pompidou in Paris in 2015 and will tour to Tate Modern, London and Kiasma, Helsinki in 2016.

The 2016 gala event includes seated dinner, award presentation with the artist, and a silent auction of student work. The Medal Award, endowed through the generosity of the Haynes Family Foundation, has been awarded to Glenn Ligon, Sarah Sze, Ellsworth Kelly, Ellen Gallagher and Julian Schnabel, among others.

Visit [smfa.edu/medal](http://smfa.edu/medal) for more information and to purchase tickets.

**About the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston:**

Founded in 1876 and accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA), is one of only two art schools in the country affiliated with a major museum—the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Our mission is to provide an education in the fine arts—for undergraduate and graduate artists—that is interdisciplinary and self-directed. This education values cultural, artistic and intellectual diversity; it embraces a wide range of media; it stresses the development of individual vision and its relation to culture in general; it values equally the knowledge gained by thinking and doing; it is deeply engaged with the world as a whole. If the mission is constant, its practice is always transforming. For more information about our programs and partnerships, visit [www.smfa.edu](http://www.smfa.edu).

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