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Press Release

Alanna Heiss and Klaus Biesenbach part of curatorial team for "Urban Creation" 2002 Shanghai Biennale International Forum.

November 22 – January 2003

(Long Island City, NY; October 25, 2002) – P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center announces the curatorial participation of its Director Alanna Heiss and Chief Curator Klaus Biesenbach for the 2002 Shanghai Biennale International Forum, opening on November 22, 2002 in Shanghai. The theme for this Biennale, "Urban Creation," highlights the interaction between art and architecture in the contemporary urban environment. It also addresses the manifestations of the contemporary urban atmosphere, which necessitates communication between cultures and encourages sharing ideas to produce art and architecture. Two teams of curators, one Chinese and one international, are working together on the project. Each team selected 15 artists and as many architects to realize the theme.

Alanna Heiss, Director of P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and recognized as one of the most influential curators and organizers of exhibitions in the world, became one of the founders of the alternative space movement in the United States. In 1971, she organized her first American show, *Under the Brooklyn Bridge*, which was a groundbreaking outdoor show including installations by American and European artists, including Carl Andre, Phillip Glass, Sol LeWitt, and Dennis Oppenheim. Heiss has continued to experiment with group shows in unusual locations. Recognizing that New York was the worldwide magnet for contemporary artists and believing that traditional museums were not providing adequate exhibition opportunities for site-specific art, Heiss decided to establish a formal, alternative arts organization. In 1971, she founded the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, with the mission of turning abandoned, underutilized buildings in New York City into artists' studios and exhibition spaces. By 1976, the Institute had concentrated its activities in two facilities: P.S.1 Museum (now P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center), and the Clocktower Gallery.

In addition to her role as Executive Director of P.S.1, Heiss has curated and/or organized over 1,000 exhibitions. Her shows include: *John Wesley: Paintings 1961-2000* (2000); *John Coplans; A Self-Portrait* (1997); *Alex Katz Under the Stars, American Landscapes 1951-1995*, a traveling exhibition (1998); *Stalin's Choice: Soviet Socialist Realism, 1932-1956* (1993), co-curated with Joseph Bakshtein, Kathrin Becker, and Zdenka Gabalova, and *Rooms*, the innovative show which opened P.S.1 in 1976. Heiss also served as an organizer of numerous landmark shows, including, *The Knot: Arte Povera* (1985), curated by Germano Celant; *New York, New Wave* (1981), curated by Diego Cortez; and the *Rise and Fall of Pop* (1987-88). Heiss served as the Commissioner of the 1985 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennial (Isamu Noguchi, curated by Henry Geldzahler). Among other international shows are the 1985 *Paris Biennial* of which she was a Commissioner. The same year, with Achille Bonito Oliva and Kasper Koenig, Heiss organized, *Quartetto* with Joseph Beuys, Bruce Nauman, Enzo Cucchi and Luciano Fabro. She served as Chief Curator of the *Tribute for John Cage*, organized for the 1993 Venice Biennial, and in 1995 she co-curated the *Lausanne Textile Biennial*, with Toni Stooss (Director of The Kunstmuseum, Bern), and Christian Bernard (Director of Musee d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland).

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Heiss has edited and written texts for numerous catalogs and anthologies. She frequently lectures and participates in symposiums in the United States and abroad on the re-use of existing urban structures and on developments in contemporary art, particularly installation art. Heiss received the Mayor's Award for Contributions to the Artistic Viability of New York City, and she is a recipient of France's prestigious Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in the Legion d'Honneur. She is also a member of the Royal Swedish Order of the Polar Star for her contributions to the promotion of the arts in Sweden and is a recipient of the Skowhegan Award for outstanding work in the arts. She received her honorary doctorate from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2001, and many more awards too numerous to mention.

Klaus Biesenbach is the Director of Kunst-Werke Berlin, which he founded in 1990, and Senior Curator at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York. In 1996-1998 he oversaw the re-conception and renovation of Kunst-Werke and produced Dan Graham's first enclosed building structure, *Café Bravo*. Among his projects in Berlin are 1992's 37 rooms and numerous solo presentations with Douglas Gordon, Bruce Nauman, Marina Abramovic, Carsten Hoeller, Matthew Barney, Paul Pfeiffer, and Dinos and Jake Chapman. In 1998 he co-organized the *Berlin Biennial of Contemporary Art*. At P.S.1 he has curated *Some Young New Yorkers I, II, III* (1997-99); *The Promise of Photography* (1999) and numerous solo projects. He was part of the curatorial team on projects for the re-opening of P.S.1 in 1997, and was a co-curator of *Generation Z* (1999); *Children of Berlin* (1999) and *Greater New York* (2000). Projects abroad include *Club Berlin* and *Projected Images at the Venice Biennale* (1995); *Nach Weimar* (1996) at Neues Museum Weimar; *Hybrid Workspace, Documenta X* (1997) with Hans Ulrich Obrist, Nancy Spector and Catherine David. He was a member of the International Jury of the Venice Biennial 1997, and was an advisor on the opening of the Center for Contemporary art in Kitakyushu, Japan, and site construction at the South London gallery.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center

Background: P.S.1 was founded in 1971 by Alanna Heiss as The Institute of Art and Urban Resources Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to the transformation of abandoned and underutilized buildings in New York City into exhibition, performance, and studio spaces for artists. P.S.1 became an affiliate of MoMA in 2000 and now operates two internationally acclaimed spaces for contemporary art: P.S.1 in Long Island City and The Clocktower Gallery in Tribeca, both of which contain museum-quality galleries and extensive studio facilities for the National and International Studio Program.

P.S.1 is one of the largest and oldest arts organizations in the United States solely devoted to contemporary art. Recognized as a defining force of the alternative space movement, P.S.1 stands out from major arts institutions in its cutting edge approach to exhibitions and direct involvement of artists within a scholarly framework. P.S.1 acts as an intermediary between the artist and its audience. Functioning as a living and active meeting place for the general public, P.S.1 is a catalyst for ideas, discourses and new trends in contemporary art. With its educational programs, P.S.1 assists the public in understanding art and provides the tools to appreciate contemporary art and its practices.

Funding: P.S.1 receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs towards operating costs. Programs of P.S.1 are supported by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, The Office of the President of the Borough of Queens, The Council of the City of New York, the P.S.1 Board of Directors, the New York State Council of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding is provided by foundations, corporate and individual contributions, and membership and admission donations.

Directions: P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center is located just across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan, at the intersection of Jackson and 46th Avenues, in Long Island City. It is easily accessible by bus and subway. Traveling by subway, visitors should take either the E or V to 23 Street-Ely Avenue (Please note that the V does not run on weekends); the 7 to 45 Road-Courthouse Square; or the G to Court Square or 21 Street-Van Alst.. Visitors may also take the Q67 bus to Jackson and 46th Avenues or the B61 to Jackson Avenue.

Hours and Admission: P.S.1 is open from 12pm-6pm, Thursday-Monday.
Admission is a \$5.00 suggested donation; \$2.00 for students and senior citizens; members free.

Web Sites: www.ps1.org
www.moma.org

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