

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 8, 2023

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PHOTOS: Attached with required captions as per the request of the artist.

ARTIST ADRIAN PIPER AM '77, PhD '81 TO BE HONORED AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

The conceptual artist and analytic philosopher will receive the Harvard Arts Medal from President Lawrence Bacow on April 26 at a pre-recorded ceremony at the Harvard Film Archive, kicking off Harvard's ARTS FIRST festival.

(Cambridge, MA)—Award-winning conceptual artist and philosopher **Adrian Margaret Smith Piper AM '77, PhD '81** is the recipient of the 2023 Harvard Arts Medal, which will be awarded by Harvard University President **Lawrence Bacow** at a pre-recorded ceremony **7 p.m. Wednesday, April 26, 2023**, at Harvard Film Archive, 24 Quincy St., Cambridge. The ceremony, presented by the Office for the Arts at Harvard, Harvard Film Archive and the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies, is the official opening of [ARTS FIRST](#), Harvard University's annual festival showcasing the creativity of students, faculty, staff and university affiliates in the arts. The medal ceremony is followed by a screening of Piper's film *Passing Beyond Passing* (2004).

"Each year, the Office for the Arts has the honor of awarding and presenting an outstanding alumni artist and immersing our community in their work," said Jack Megan, Director of the Office for the Arts. "Adrian Piper has offered us an extraordinary opportunity to recognize and celebrate her work directly with our students and faculty in curricular engagement, and with the public during the Arts Medal ceremony. Piper has questioned value systems and challenged us to think more critically about the worlds we inhabit. These interrogations are central to the work we do at the Office for the Arts and at Harvard."

Exhibiting internationally for more than 50 years, Piper produces artwork in a variety of traditional and nontraditional media, including photo-text collage, drawing on pre-printed paper, video installation, site-specific sculptural installation, digital imagery, performance and sound works. Her artwork is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Centre Pompidou, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Generali Foundation, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles and Museum Ludwig, among others.

"Playfully—and with rigor—Adrian Piper invites us to wriggle free from the terms of transaction, compromise and the rush to judgment that so often mediate our relationships with others," said Tracy K. Smith, Professor of English and of African and African American Studies in the Department of English, Susan S. and Kenneth L. Wallach Professor at the Harvard Radcliffe Institute and 2019 recipient of the Harvard Arts Medal. "Piper's work leads us into states where surprise mingles with awe, unrest and necessary humility."

In 2015, Piper received the Golden Lion Award for Best Artist in the 56th Venice Biennale for her mixed media installation and participatory group performance, *The Probable Trust Registry* (2013-2015). For her artwork, Piper has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, AVA Fellowship, and National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. Her work consistently explores the nature of subjecthood and agency, the limits of the self, and the continuities and discontinuities of individual identity in metaphysical, social and political contexts. Her essays in art and art theory, collected in the two-volume *Out of Order, Out of Sight: Selected Essays in Meta-Art and Art Criticism* (MIT Press), have remained continuously in print since their first publication in 1996.

Piper taught philosophy at Georgetown University, University of Michigan, Stanford University, University of California, San Diego and Harvard University. Teaching at Georgetown University in 1987, she became the first tenured African American female professor of philosophy in the U.S. For her work in philosophy, Piper has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (now the Institute for Citizens & Citizen Scholars), Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften, and Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin Institute for Advanced Study

“In addition to being one of the most consequential, influential and lauded artists of our time, Adrian Piper has been a unique beacon for generations of artists and students, especially those seeking fearlessness and a rigor that bends towards truth,” said Matt Saunders, Professor of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard. “Her practice spans artistic media—virtually all the known forms plus many of her own invention—and it never stopped there. As an artist, philosopher, teacher, memoirist and engaged citizen, Piper embodies the power of broad and deep inquiry bound by a life of clear integrity. Piper’s early conceptual and performance work cracked open the art world, making space for essential and uncomfortable conversations that resonate to this day.”

The Harvard Arts Medal honors a distinguished Harvard or Radcliffe graduate or faculty member who has achieved excellence in the arts and has made a contribution through the arts to education or the public good. Previous Medal recipients include musician/composer Rubén Blades LLM '85; architect Frank Gehry GSD '57 ArD '00; choreographer Damian Woetzel MPA '07; saxophonist/composers Joshua Redman '91, and Fred Ho '79; composer John Adams '69 MA '72; playwright Christopher Durang '71; poets John Ashbery '49 and Maxine Kumin '41; cellist Yo-Yo Ma '76; film director Mira Nair '79; conductor and founder of Les Arts Florissants William Christie '66; stage director Peter Sellars '80; composer John Harbison '60; National Theatre of the Deaf founder David Hays '52; authors John Updike '54, Margaret Atwood AM '62, Litt.D. '04 and Colson Whitehead '91; songwriter/musicians Bonnie Raitt '72 and Pete Seeger '40; and actors Jack Lemmon '47, Tommy Lee Jones '69, Matt Damon '92 and John Lithgow '67 Art.D '05.

Piper joins the artist and essayist Catherine Lord '70 and photographer Susan Meiselas EdM '71 as recipients of the medal recognized for contributions to the visual arts.

Admission to Harvard Arts Medal ceremony is free. Open to all on a first come, first served basis. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Ceremony starts at 7 p.m.

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The **Office for the Arts at Harvard** supports student engagement in the arts and integrates the arts into university life. Through its programs and services, the OFA teaches and mentors, fosters student art making, connects students to accomplished artists, commissions new work, and partners with local, national, and international constituencies. By supporting the development of students as artists and cultural stewards, the OFA works to enrich society and shape communities in which the arts are a vital part of life. The OFA programming team hosts visits with world-class professional artists who interact with students through a range of educational forums, many open to the public. Information: 617.495.8676, ofa@fas.harvard.edu, ofa.fas.harvard.edu.