



2022 Founders Award Dinner *honoring*
Women Who Make History
June 16, 2022 | Loeb Boathouse, Central Park

2022 Honorees



Jessica Bell Brown Writer, curator, and art historian Jessica Bell Brown is reshaping the cultural narrative to include the voices of those previously marginalized. Her research, social and cultural programming, creative projects and documentary series, and critical essays explore new relationships, foster inclusivity, facilitate deeper engagement, and explore the connections between canonical artists and those creating today. Brown's current work at the Baltimore Museum of Art advances these efforts, and as consulting curator at the Gracie Mansion Conservancy, she organized the exhibitions "She Persists: A Century of Women Artists in New York, 1919-2019" and "Catalyst: Art and Social Justice." Collaborations with New York City's former First Lady Chirlane McCray, these exhibitions at the official mayoral residence celebrated the power of art to spark change and spur progress. Her work at Gracie Mansion, one of HHT's 23 partner museums, serves as an inspirational model for the impact historic sites can achieve by bringing current issues and fresh programming into spaces often misconstrued as antiquated. Jessica Bell Brown is a harbinger of a significant shift in the direction of HHT's partner sites toward becoming places of innovation that bring to light new voices, address complicated histories, engage their surrounding communities, and reshape New Yorkers' collective understanding of history, society, and culture.



Susan Chin As former Executive Director of Design Trust for Public Space and Assistant Commissioner for Capital Projects at the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, Susan Chin has shaped the public realm and supported billions of dollars in innovative new construction, revitalization, and public art projects citywide. Her visionary efforts helped usher in contemporary cultural icons such as the New Museum, Alice Tully Hall, and the Museum of the Moving Image, while her dedication as a preservation architect contributed to safeguarding the historic patrimony of the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage, Dyckman Farmhouse, Bowne House, Kingsland Homestead, Lewis Latimer House, Queens County Farm Museum, and Alice Austen House. Through her recently formed independent consultancy DesignConnects, Chin continues to work tirelessly to bolster an atmosphere in New York City that encourages innovation and collaboration—qualities that inspire HHT. Her work is a reminder that persistence makes ambitious projects a reality and that we all must work together toward the goal of a better New York City.



Anita Durst Anita Durst's passionate involvement in New York City's cultural scene spurred Chashama, her groundbreaking initiative that ensures a place for artistic culture in a city that has become increasingly difficult for creatives to work. Founded by Anita in 1995, Chashama supports artists by partnering with property owners to transform unused real estate into work and presentation space for artists. Her efforts over the past 25 years have generated over one million square feet of space in

New York City for artists free of financial and subjective constraints. In that time the organization has expanded its mission to provide free art classes for under-resourced communities and free storefront locations for minority and women-owned businesses. A tireless force who promotes the importance of sustaining a diverse cultural environment in New York City, Anita is a consummate representative of the qualities HHT's Founders Award seeks to recognize. With 23 partner historic house museums spread across all five boroughs, many in under-resourced communities, HHT is similarly devoted to advocating for, promoting, preserving, and supporting a widespread network of cultural and educational centers. Through an array of programs, exhibitions, and contemporary art installations, these unique places foster free expression, give a voice to evolving historical narratives, and provide New Yorkers of all ages opportunities to learn the value of creativity.



Roberta Brandes Gratz An award-winning journalist, urban critic, lecturer, and author, Roberta Brandes Gratz has made an indelible impact on the conception of cities around the world while always prioritizing their connection to the past. Her books have explored such topics as the cultural resilience of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, the persistent influence of Jane Jacobs' pioneering philosophies on the recovery of New York City since the 1960s, and other subjects related to

urban revitalization. She has written six books, some of which are required reading at university programs today. Gratz was a reporter for the *New York Post* under Dorothy Schiff in the late 1960s and 1970s. She has brought her in-depth research and expertise to appointments, consultancies, and speaking engagements around the world, including the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, where she served for seven years. She was a member of the New York Governor's and Mayor's Task Force on Planning Manhattan's West Side Highway and Waterfront and was later involved in PlaNYC. Gratz was a founder and leader of the award-winning Eldridge Street Project to restore the 1887 synagogue on the Lower East Side, which became the Eldridge Street Museum. With Jane Jacobs, she founded the Center For the Living City to build on Jacobs' work. Additionally, she has established the Fire Island Historical Society. She is also a Trustee and former head of Public Policy of the New York State Preservation League.



Alexa Hampton The renowned Alexa Hampton has taken her father's storied heritage by the reins and created a force that continues to transform the interior design field. Mark Hampton, Alexa's father, was involved in a celebrated redecoration of Gracie Mansion alongside Parish-Hadley Associates in the 1980s. This passion project led him to become a charter board member of the Historic House Trust, which supports Gracie Mansion among 22 other historic sites across New York City. Alexa became

owner and president of Mark Hampton LLC in 1998, and has since advanced its spirit of designing classically based interiors for modern living, while also extending its global reach. Today she is an industry force who promotes an ethos that does not just look to the past, but keeps an eye on the future. Regularly named as a top designer by *Architectural Digest*, *House Beautiful*, and *ELLE Décor*, Alexa translates historic design principles into elegant, functional residences. She is also a lauded author, designs an expanding portfolio of licensed home furnishing products, and sits on the board of trustees for the New York School of Interior Design and the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art.



Mary Jablonski President and founder of Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc., Mary Jablonski has devoted over 25 years to material conservation and historic preservation. Through consistent methodology and high quality work, she has become a sought-after specialist in conserving places of great historical significance in the U.S. and internationally. Her firm has worked at countless historic houses, museums, parks, civic buildings, and public monuments, including at Philip Johnson's Glass House, the Louis

Armstrong House, the Gropius House, Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House, New York City Hall, Orchard Beach, Washington Square Park, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and the Rocket Thrower sculpture on the World's Fair Grounds in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Mary has also led projects at several of HHT's partner sites, notably at the ca. 1783 Lefferts Historic House, where she completed a Historic Structure Report, extensive materials analysis, and a detailed investigation of the framing, mortars, and finishes that assisted in dating alterations. As a Fellow of the American Institute for Conservation and an adjunct associate professor in the Historic Preservation Program in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation at Columbia University, she imparts her deep knowledge and experience to the next generation of conservationists. Mary also continues to advance scholarship in the field, frequently delivering papers and publishing articles.