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PRESS RELEASE:

ACADIA Awards 2012

ACADIA (Association for Computer Aided Design in Architecture) is proud to announce the winners of this year's ACADIA Awards. A committee of peers solicited nominations from ACADIA members. After a rigorous vetting process, the committee identified four researchers, academics, and architects as most worthy of this prestigious award. Inaugurated in 1998, the ACADIA Award of Excellence represents recognition, by colleagues worldwide, of consistent contributions and impact on the field of architectural computing. Award categories consist of Teaching Excellence, Innovative Research, Society Award, Excellence in Digital Practice, and Innovative Academic Program.

This year's award winners are:

Innovative Research Award(s)

This award recognizes innovative research that contributes to the field of digital design in architecture. The award distinguishes research with the potential to transform contemporary architecture.

Lira Nikolovska (AutoDesk)

The selection of Lira Nikolovska for the award in Innovative Research recognizes her pioneering work in developing next-generation parametric tools in the context of ever-shifting design practice, user interactions, design processes and pedagogical trajectories. Lira is a Principal Designer and User Experience Architect at Autodesk, Inc. Her current research and design work include leading and crafting the vision for next generation digital tools in the context of user experience with BIM and parametric environments.

Ms. Nikolovska has a PhD in Design Computation from MIT. Her research interests are at the nexus of architecture, furniture, interaction and pervasive computing. Her work probes and challenges how social situations are restructured in the context of technology, which has subsequently impacted her current work in the realm of computational tool making and user experience. Her interests and work at the socio-cultural and ethical levels of digital tool-making are timely, relevant, and important. She curated the Design and Computation galleries in 2008 at SIGGRAPH and was chair of SimAUD this past year. Lira has taught at RISD and was a Senior Interaction Designer at Philips Design.

David Rutten (McNeel)

The selection of David Rutten for the award in Innovative Research recognizes his profound impact to architecture and computation as the developer of the Logical Modeling plug-in, Grasshopper, for the Rhinoceros 3D CAD application. Grasshopper has been pivotal to the transformation of parametric design practices over the past five-plus years.

The Grasshopper environment is notable for empowering its users to generate behaviors and associations in digital models without the need to know conventional scripting techniques. Through the creation of this program, as well as Galapagos, he has made parametric design and system optimization easily accessible, and usable, to thousands of academics and practitioners. Mr. Rutten is known among his peers for being remarkably generous with his time. He provides continuous assistance to Grasshopper users through his tireless involvement on the Grasshopper blog and has remained actively supportive of the ACADIA community for many years.

Excellence in Digital Practice Award

This award recognizes creative design work that advances the discipline of architecture through development and use of digital media.

Gehry Technologies (representative - **Dennis Shelden**):

The selection of Gehry Technologies for the award in Excellence in digital practice recognizes their work in developing digital technologies and providing design and project management technology and consulting services to leading owners, developers, architects, engineers, general contractors, fabricators, and other building industry professionals worldwide. GT solutions increase creativity and control; reduce project risks, costs, and completion times; and improve processes and decisions through collaboration, project visibility, and information access. GT is privately held, with offices in Los Angeles, New York, Paris, Mexico City, Abu Dhabi, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Beijing.

Innovative Academic Program

This award recognizes an innovative academic program that contributes to the education of students in the field of digital design. The award distinguishes one or more individuals responsible for the establishment, success, growth, or management of the academic program.

C.A.S.E. (Center for Architecture, Science and Ecology, RPI / SOM | representative - **Anna Dyson**)

The selection of C.A.S.E. for the award of Innovative Academic Program recognizes their efforts in bridging diverse worlds by proposing a new collaborative model for building research that unites interdisciplinary academic research with building and development practices. Co-located on the Rensselaer campus and in lower Manhattan, CASE unites advanced architectural and engineering practices with scientific research through a unique and intensive collaboration between multiple institutions, manufacturers and professional offices within the building industry. By bringing together ambitious building design professionals with research faculty and advanced students dedicated to the exploration of emerging building technologies, the research center is pushing the boundaries of environmental performance in urban building systems.

Ms. Dyson is the founding Director of CASE (2007-present). She teaches design, technology, and theory at the School of Architecture at Rensselaer. She has worked as a design architect and product designer in several offices in Canada, Europe, and the United States. Her work has been exhibited in the MoMA Young Architects Series, and was a finalist in the international Next Generation Design Competition.

This year's ACADIA Awards Committee consisted of:

Marc Swackhamer (Chair)
Susannah Dickinson
Michael Fox
Jenny Sabin