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FOUNDATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS ANNOUNCES 2019 ELLSWORTH KELLY AWARD RECIPIENT

New York, NY, July 2, 2019 – Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA) is pleased to announce the 2019 recipient of The Ellsworth Kelly Award, a \$40,000 annual grant created during Ellsworth Kelly's lifetime and endowed by the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation to support museum exhibitions for contemporary artists. The recipient is the California College of the Arts Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (CCA Wattis Institute) for an exhibition of new work by Algiers-based multidisciplinary artist **Lydia Ourahmane**. Opening in spring 2020, the exhibition will be curated by Anthony Huberman, Director and Chief Curator.

The Ellsworth Kelly Award is a by-invitation, \$40,000 annual grant to support a solo exhibition by an emerging, mid-career, or under-recognized contemporary visual artist at a regional U.S. art museum or university or college art gallery. The program and selection process are administered by FCA. Applications in this cycle were solicited from a small number of institutions west of the Missouri River. In 2020, applications from institutions east of the Missouri will be invited.

The 2019 Ellsworth Kelly Award will support the first solo museum exhibition of Ourahmane's work in the United States, and will feature new work created by the artist since returning to her birthplace of Algeria in 2018. Having explored the politics and trauma of migration in her work in recent years, and particularly the restrictions preventing freedom of movement that are placed on so many from North Africa, Ourahmane considered it imperative to make work "from," rather than "about," Algeria. Working in sound, installation, sculpture, text, and performance, Ourahmane's research-based practice often incorporates personal history, and reflects on the effects of migration policies on the body and how the body inhabits space.

"This award makes it possible for Ourahmane to pursue her most ambitious ideas, and it allows the CCA Wattis Institute to properly introduce our audience to the work of one of the most compelling voices in an emerging generation of artists," said Huberman. "Her work embraces contradictions of all sorts and asks challenging questions about vulnerability, belief systems, intuition, and the relationship between politics and abstraction. This exhibition, her first institutional show in the United States, comes at a particularly resonant moment and this award gives her the resources to develop an entirely new body of work."

The CCA Wattis Institute's proposed exhibition of Lydia Ourahmane's work was selected by FCA's Board of Directors, including Cecily Brown, Anne Collier, Anthony B. Creamer III, Anne Dias, Jasper Johns, Jennie C. Jones, Julian Lethbridge, Glenn Ligon, Dean Moss, Emily Wei Rales, James Welling, and T.J. Wilcox. In selecting the award, FCA's Directors seek projects that are in the earliest stages of planning at

the time of review and require the financial catalyst provided by The Ellsworth Kelly Award to propel them from planning to realization. "The CCA Wattis Institute reflects Ellsworth Kelly's belief that a museum exhibition can be transformative for an artist's career," said Stacy Tenenbaum Stark, Executive Director of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. "FCA is pleased that the 2019 Ellsworth Kelly Award will make possible the first museum exhibition of Lydia Ourahmane's work."

The first recipient of The Ellsworth Kelly Award (2016) was the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) at the University of Pennsylvania, for *Cauleen Smith: Give It or Leave It*, a solo exhibition of film, video, and sculpture. Presented at the ICA in fall 2018, the exhibition traveled to the Institute for Contemporary Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond (February 16–May 15, 2019), and is currently on view at the Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA (June 1–September 1, 2019). In 2020, the exhibition will travel to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA. The 2018 Kelly Award recipient was the Mary S. Byrd Gallery of Art in Augusta, GA, for a solo exhibition of new multi-media works by sculptor Bojana Ginn, opening September 19, 2019.

About Lydia Ourahmane

Lydia Ourahmane was born in Algeria in 1992. After living in London for seventeen years, Ourahmane returned to Algiers in 2018, where she currently lives and works. Ourahmane received her B.F.A. from Goldsmiths, University of London in 2014. Her research-driven practice reflects her personal history, and explores themes of escape, departure, displacement, and migration in a wide variety of ways.

Ourahmane has exhibited her work internationally in biennials and group exhibitions, including at Manifesta 12 (Palermo, Italy, 2018), *Songs for Sabotage*, the New Museum Triennial (New York, NY, 2018), and the 15th Istanbul Biennial (2017), among others. The CCA Wattis Institute's exhibition will be the first solo museum exhibition of her work in the United States.

About the CCA Wattis Institute

The CCA Wattis Institute was founded in 1998 at California College of the Arts in San Francisco, and is located a few blocks from campus. A nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute, the CCA Wattis Institute commissions and shows new work by emerging and established artists who take risks and experiment with new ideas that challenge our understanding of contemporary culture.

About the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA)

Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts was established in 1963 by John Cage (1912–1992) and Jasper Johns. At that time, some emerging visual artists were beginning to experience modest financial success, while many of their peers working in dance, music, and theater struggled to find funding to present their work. Cage and Johns decided to organize a benefit exhibition at the Allan Stone Gallery to support their colleagues in the performance arts. Lee Bontecou, Elaine de Kooning, Willem de Kooning, Marcel Duchamp, Alex Katz, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Marisol, Barnett Newman, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Frank Stella, Elaine Sturtevant, and Andy Warhol were among the 67 artists who contributed to this landmark show. With proceeds from the exhibition, the Foundation began making grants to individual artists.

Now known as the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA), its mission is to encourage, sponsor, and promote innovative work in the arts created and presented by individuals, groups, and organizations. FCA's unrestricted, by-nomination grants support pioneering work across the fields of dance, music/sound, performance art/theater, poetry, and the visual arts. More than 3,000 grants awarded to artists and arts organizations—totaling over \$14.5 million—have provided opportunities for creative exploration and

development. To date, over 1,000 artists have made these grants possible by contributing paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, and photographs to the fifteen benefit exhibitions held over the years.

www.foundationforcontemporaryarts.org

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