



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Charlie McCabe; 617-603-7723; cmccabe@rosekennedygreenway.org

## **World Renowned, Local Artist Janet Echelman to Create Aerial Sculpture to Float Above the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Spring 2015**

*Major Contemporary Public Art Project Made Possible by Challenge Grant from the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation*

June 17, 2014 – BOSTON, MA – The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy announced today that internationally renowned artist Janet Echelman will suspend a monumental, aerial sculpture over the Greenway from Spring 2015 to Fall 2015 as the signature contemporary art installation in the Greenway Conservancy's Public Art Program.

Echelman is known for her soft, billowing sculptures the scale of buildings that respond to the forces of nature — wind, water, and light. Her creation for Boston will be a knotted-fiber sculpture suspended hundreds of feet over the central section of the Greenway. The ultra-lightweight art moves gently with the wind in ever-changing patterns. In daylight, it casts shadow-drawings on the ground, and at night it becomes a beacon with dynamic colored light. The sculpture is Echelman's first major Boston commission and will connect between existing buildings to form a visual linkage and focal point for civic life.

"We are honored to bring Janet's world-class work to the Greenway," said Jesse Brackenbury, Executive Director of the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. "Partnering with Janet underscores the Conservancy's commitment to bringing engaging contemporary public art by world-class artists to Boston. We look forward to working with our generous donors, our Greenway neighbors, the City, and the State to invite everyone to relax, dine, or play on the Greenway, while gazing at Janet's magical art."

"Here in Boston, I'm excited to visually knit together the fabric of the city with art," said Echelman. "The creation of the Greenway was a seminal event in the unfolding of our city, so I'm delighted and humbled to be a part of its transformation into a vibrant cultural destination."

Echelman was selected through a competitive RFQ process managed by the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. The Conservancy received 97 artist submissions from around the globe. Echelman's signature contemporary installation will be made possible through a major challenge grant from the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation. The project has also received initial grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Fund for the Arts, a public art program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, with others pending.

"We are thrilled to help bring this visually compelling gift of art to Boston to surprise, engage, and inspire all who see it," said Susan Smith, co-chair of the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation. "Janet's work will bring additional vibrancy to the Greenway and, we hope, elevate public art in Boston."

A Brookline resident, Echelman has completed major commissions and installations in Amsterdam, Sydney, Madrid, Porto, Vancouver, Singapore, and numerous cities across the US. A recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, Echelman was named an *Architectural Digest Innovator* for "changing the

very essence of urban spaces." Oprah Winfrey ranked Echelman's sculptures number one on her list of "50 Things That Make You Say Wow!" Her TED Talk "Taking Imagination Seriously" has been translated into 34 languages and viewed by well more than a million people worldwide.

"Art enriches our public spaces, sparks our young people's imaginations, and lets visitors know we are a city of culture and creativity," said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. "I congratulate the Greenway Conservancy and the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation who have set the stage for internationally acclaimed Janet Echelman to activate and transform our skyline."

"The Greenway Conservancy is taking many imaginative steps to offer visitors new and exciting experiences," said MassDOT Secretary and CEO Richard A. Davey. "Janet Echelman's aerial sculpture is sure to become another memorable favorite for local residents and tourists enjoying the Greenway. It's this kind of creative use of space that will continue to make Boston and the region a world-class destination."

The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy's [Strategy for Public Art](#) is to bring innovative and contemporary art to Boston through free, temporary exhibitions. The Conservancy provides artists with unique opportunities to exhibit bold, new work that considers the possibilities of 21st century Boston. Past and current art installations include the Os Gemeos and Matthew Ritchie murals on the Greenway Wall at Dewey Square Park and a sculpture exhibition curated by the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum.

#### **About The Rose Kennedy Greenway and Conservancy ([www.rosekennedygreenway.org](http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org))**

The Rose Kennedy Greenway is a mile-and-a-half of contemporary parks in the heart of Boston. The Greenway, a roof garden atop a highway tunnel, connects people and the city with beauty and fun. The non-profit Conservancy maintains, programs, and improves the Greenway on behalf of the public and in partnership with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Greenway welcomed over 800,000 destination visitors in 2013, and millions more casually enjoyed the park. The Conservancy has won awards for its organic landscape care and park programming.

#### **About Janet Echelman ([www.echelman.com](http://www.echelman.com))**

Janet Echelman builds sculpture that is experiential in nature: sculpture that shifts from being an object you look at, to something you can get lost in. Using unlikely materials such as fishing net, Echelman combines ancient craft with cutting-edge technology to create her sculpture at the scale of buildings. Recent prominent works include: *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks* in Vancouver; *The Space Between Us* in Santa Monica, CA; and *1.26* in Singapore, Amsterdam, Sydney, and Denver. She is the 2012 winner of the Boston Society of Architects' Women in Design Award of Excellence.

*[continued onto next page]*

Pictured: Janet Echelman's *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks*, Vancouver, Canada, 2014



**About The Richard and Susan Smith Foundation ([www.smithfamilyfoundation.net](http://www.smithfamilyfoundation.net))**

The Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation is committed to effecting permanent positive change in the lives of the residents of Greater Boston, particularly individuals and families in economically disadvantaged communities. Today, three generations of the Smith family oversee the Foundation, stewarding approximately \$13 million annually in grants aimed at promoting greater health, educational attainment, and economic mobility.

###