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The City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs presents *The City Luminous: Architectures of Hope in an Age of Fear*

Charleston, S.C. – The City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs presents *The City Luminous: Architectures of Hope in an Age of Fear* March 30 to May 5. Curated by the College of Charleston’s Assistant Professor of Art and Architectural History, Jessica Streit, and Assistant Professor of Architectural History, Nathaniel Robert Walker, the exhibition assembles architectural installations and images designed to suggest a hopeful way forward for the world’s fractured communities. City Gallery will host an opening reception March 29 from 5 to 7 p.m., with a curatorial talk on Saturday, April 13 at 3 p.m.

Through immersive architecture installations, *The City Luminous* is an expression of hope that, with tolerance and teamwork, humanity can build upon common ground to claim a more harmonious and beautiful world. In collaboration with the College of Charleston, Clemson University, The American College of the Building Arts, Datum Workshop fabrication studio, and architects, including support from LS3P, the exhibition will expose visitors to the philosophical and aesthetic model of a cosmopolitan city that fuses the timeless values of human-scaled and ornamented architecture with radiantly modern materials and fabrication techniques.

The City Luminous centers around a 12-sided Paradise Pavilion designed by New World Byzantine’s Andrew Gould. Drawing upon Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theological and architectural traditions, the piece will be made of plywood and aluminum robotically cut into beautiful patterns, and lit from within. The surrounding installations will include a columnar hallway evoking the great spaces of the past and the limitless possibilities of the future. There will also be an interactive Girih wall featuring Persian tiles created by using abstract mathematics that reflect the way crystals grow. One pattern will be set while another will allow guests to play with the tiles and thereby compose their own decorative façade.

“Infinity and intimacy, fragmentation and restoration, diversity and unity are the dichotomies that resolve into the City Luminous,” says Nathaniel R. Walker. “Other portions of the

exhibition will summon historical and modern images of fear and apocalypse, the shadows that our light attempts to dispel.”

About the Curators

Jessica Streit is an Assistant Professor of Art and Architectural History at the College of Charleston. She specializes in the art and architecture of medieval Spain, and is more broadly interested in cultural exchange between Christians and Muslims in the medieval Mediterranean. Jessica’s current research project discusses Almohad Friday mosques in Spain and North Africa, providing interpretations of the buildings’ politics and ornament.

Nathaniel Robert Walker is Assistant Professor of Architectural History at the College of Charleston. He earned his PhD at Brown University, and studies the relationships between architecture, public space, and socio- political power networks. Much of his research has focused on the utopian dreams of progress and futurity that proliferated in nineteenth- and 20- century literature, film, advertising, and other media.

About City Gallery

City Gallery, located at Joe Riley Waterfront Park, is owned by the City of Charleston and operated by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, presenting an annual program of exhibitions and events featuring the finest contemporary art from local, regional, national and international artists, with a focus on the Lowcountry. City Gallery provides access to the visual arts for everyone in Charleston, visitors and residents alike, by offering exhibits that are all admission-free. City Gallery is located at 34 Prioleau St. in downtown Charleston, and gallery hours of operation are 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday as well as 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information and holiday closures, visit www.charleston-sc.gov/citygallery or call 843-958-6484.

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