TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART

TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART ANNOUNCES FEATURED ARTISTS FOR ITS INAUGURAL EVENT SEPTEMBER 21–DECEMBER 1, 2019

Toronto, Canada, June 20, 2019 — Today the Toronto Biennial of Art (the Biennial) announced the participation of 33 more Canadian, Indigenous, and international artists, collaborators and collectives presenting work at its inaugural event from September 21 to December 1, 2019. Co-curated by Candice Hopkins and Tairone Bastien, the free, 72-day event will include 20 new commissions and more than 100 works installed across 10 sites on or near Toronto’s waterfront.

“We are beyond excited to launch Toronto’s first art biennial this fall,” said Toronto Biennial of Art Founder and Executive Director Patrizia Libralato. “Our inaugural roster celebrates local and Canadian talent and showcases artists from across the globe. Exhibited in unexpected locations along the waterfront, and working in collaboration with different cultural partners around the city, we invite the world to come to Toronto this fall to experience ambitious contemporary art.”

In total, the Biennial will bring together more than 90 local and international participants, hailing from over 40 places of origin, including Brazil, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iran, Thailand, Turkey, and the United States as well as Nunavut and Indigenous communities in Canada, Colombia, Mexico, and Aotearoa | New Zealand. The range of contributors reflects Toronto’s status as one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world and the Biennial’s commitment to addressing the most pressing issues of our time from a variety of perspectives. Additional participants will be announced in August along with details for the Biennial’s extensive public programs and creative partnerships.

Dana Claxton, Headdress-Dana, 2019. Image courtesy of the artist.
The majority of the Biennial’s exhibitions and programs will take place at venues along Toronto’s waterfront between Etobicoke Creek and Ashbridges Bay. The city sits on the edge of Lake Ontario, which is part of the Great Lakes—one of the largest freshwater systems on Earth. The vision for the first Biennial has been shaped by the water and the multi-layered history of Toronto’s ever-changing shoreline—a site of migration, colonization, and commerce that includes relics of heavy industry, dense condominium developments, active and decommissioned military sites, lost rivers, manufactured parks, and human-made spits.

The artists in Toronto’s inaugural Biennial will engage with the waterfront’s different ecosystems—environmental, cultural, spiritual, infrastructural, economic—to explore the effects of connection as well as disjunction. “The contingencies among people, nature, and economies inform the Biennial’s central question: ‘What does it mean to be in relation?’” said co-curators Candice Hopkins and Tairone Bastien. “The artworks explore how relations—both human and non-human—can reaffirm communion and generate ecosystems, but also have the potential to breed anxieties, glitches, anomie, and alienation.”

Artists have responded to this query with new works that contemplate different kinds of relation and examine the past and the present to project alternative futures. New works for the 2019 Biennial include:

- *Plot*, a commissioned ephemeral sculpture by Abbas Akhavan, recreates the fragments of an Assyrian protective deity called Lamassu. Like the ghost of an unwanted inheritance, the work appears in the space as many tons of soil that will be distributed to local community gardens after the Biennial.
- Two dynamic structures by Adrian Blackwell that will serve as gathering places for performance and programming at two different Biennial sites.
- An installation and performance by AA Bronson and Adrian Stimson born out of their ongoing dialogue and research into their respective ancestors’ involvement with and enrollment in the Old Sun residential school on Siksika Nation, Alberta. AA Bronson’s, *A Public Apology to Siksika Nation*, responds to European genocide, including his great-grandfather’s role as the first missionary at Siksika Nation, while Adrian Stimson’s response, generated in close dialogue with residential school survivors and leaders, reveals the layers of colonization and Indigenous resistance in his community.
- A series of LED fireboxes by Dana Claxton that are testaments to the beauty and resilience of Indigenous women whose portraits feature them wearing their cultural belongings.
- Groundbreaking wearable art and sculptures by Jae Jarrell that embody the vibrant spirit and bold aesthetic of AfriCOBRA, Chicago’s Black Arts collective co-founded by Jarrell in the 1960s. Jarrell’s work will be presented in partnership with the Art Gallery of York University.
- A selection of clay vessels by Jumana Manna that draw formal inspiration from khabyas (seed vessels), a key feature of rural Levantine architecture. Manna’s vessels extend her insightful explorations into biodiversity, resilience, and preservation that were initiated in her film *Wild Relatives* (2018).
- A multi-channel video, textiles, and sculpture series by New Mineral Collective (Tanya Busse and Emilija Škarnulytė) that takes a critical look at the “perforated landscape”—land altered by extractive industries—as well as the marketing practices of mining companies.
- A swarm of more than 100 robotic Monarch butterflies by Fernando Palma Rodríguez programmed to respond to seismic frequencies. Monarchs, which have suffered rapid decline, are the only species to migrate between Mexico and Canada annually.
- *The Drowned World*, a film series at the Ontario Place Cinesphere presented by guest curator Charles Stankievech that will pay homage to Ontario Place’s utopian architecture situated on human-made islands.
Confirmed Biennial participants:

- **Maria Thereza Alves** (born in São Paulo, Brazil; lives in Naples, Italy and Berlin, Germany) in partnership with Evergreen
- **Abbas Akhavan** (born in Tehran, Iran; lives in Montreal, QC, Canada)
- **AA Bronson** (born in Vancouver, BC, Canada; lives in Berlin, Germany) & **Adrian Stimson** (born in Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Canada; lives in Siksika, AB, Canada)
- **Adrian Blackwell** (born and lives in Toronto, ON, Canada)
- **Hera Büyüktaşçıyan** (born and lives in Istanbul, Turkey)
- **Judy Chicago** (born in Chicago, IL, USA; lives in Belen, NM, USA)
- **Dana Claxton** (Hunkpapa Lakota (Sioux), born in Yorkton, SK, Canada; lives in Vancouver, BC, Canada)
- **Moyra Davey** (born in Toronto, ON, Canada; lives in New York, NY, USA)
- **Shezad Dawood** (born and lives in London, UK) in partnership with Fogo Island Arts, MOCA Toronto, A Tale of a Tub (Rotterdam)
- **Naufus Ramirez Figueroa** (born and lives in Guatemala City, Guatemala)
- **Laurent Grasso** (born in Mulhouse, France; lives in Paris, France)
- **Embassy of Imagination + PA System - Alexa Hatanaka** (born and lives in Toronto, ON, Canada) and **Patrick Thompson** (born in Chelsea, QC, Canada; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada), plus Kinngait youth artists: Christine Adamic, Iqaluk Ainalik, Parr Joseph, Moe Kelly, Acacia Lawrence, Annie Oshutsiaq, David Pudlat, Cie Taqiasuk, and Oasis Skateboard Factory 2019 Fall Cohort
- **Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh** (both born in Tehran, Iran; both live in Dubai, UAE) and **Hesam Rahmanian** (born in Knoxville, TN, USA; lives in Dubai, UAE)
- **Luis Jacob** (born in Lima, Peru; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada)
- **Jae Jarrell** (born and lives in Cleveland, OH, USA) in partnership with the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU)
- **Jumblies Theatre & Arts with Ange Loft** (Kahnawake Mohawk, born in Kahnawake, QO, Canada; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada)
- **Kapwani Kiwanga** (born in Hamilton, ON, Canada: lives in Paris, France)
- **Jumana Manna** (born in Princeton, NJ, USA; lives in Berlin, Germany)
• Qavavau Manumie (Inuit, born in Brandon, MB, Canada; lives in Kinngait (Cape Dorset), NU, Canada)

• Caroline Monnet (Algonquin-French, born in Outaouais, QC, Canada; lives in Montreal, QC Canada)

• New Mineral Collective - Emilija Skarnulyté (born in Vilnius, Lithuania; lives in Tromsø, Norway) and Tanya Busse (born in Moncton, NB, Canada; lives in Tromsø, Norway)

• The New Red Order: Adam Khalil, Zack Khalil (both Ojibway and born in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, USA; both live in New York, NY, USA) and Jackson Polys (Tlingit, born in Ketchikan, Alaska, USA; lives in New York, NY, USA) in partnership with Gallery TPW

• Fernando Palma Rodríguez (born in Atocpan-San Pedro, Mexico; lives in Mexico City, Mexico)

• Napachie Pootoogook (Inuit, born in 1938, Sako Island Camp, NT, Canada; died in 2002 Kinngait (Cape Dorset), NU, Canada)

• Elder Duke Redbird (Ojibway, born in Saugeen First Nation, ON, Canada; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada) in partnership with Myseum, SummerWorks, and Young People’s Theatre (YPT)

• Lisa Reihana (Maori – Nga Puhi, born and lives in Auckland, Aotearoa | New Zealand)

• ReMatriate Collective (based in unceded and ancestral territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh and Səl̓íwətʔən Nations, BC, Canada)

• Abel Rodríguez (Nonuya, born in Cahuinarí region, Colombia; lives in Bogotá, Colombia)

• Wilson Rodríguez (Nonuya, born in Cahuinarí region, Colombia; lives in Bogotá, Colombia)

• Arin Rungjang (born and lives in Bangkok, Thailand) in partnership with Harbourfront Centre

• Susan Schuppli (Canadian/Swiss, lives in London, UK) in partnership with Office for Contemporary Art Norway

• Lou Sheppard (born in unceded Mi'Kmaq territory, NS, Canada and based in K'jipuktuk | Halifax, NS, Canada) in partnership with the City of Toronto

• Nick Sikkuark (Inuit, born in 1943, Garry Lake, NU, Canada; died in 2013 in Kugaaruk, NU, Canada)

• Lisa Steele (born in Kansas City, MO, USA; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada) and Kim Tomczak (born in Victoria, BC, Canada; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada)

• Curtis Talwst Santiago (born in Edmonton, AB, Canada; lives in Lisbon, Portugal)

• Althea Thauberger (born in Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Canada; lives in Vancouver, BC, Canada) and Suzanne Kite (Lakota Sioux, born in Sylmar, CA, USA; lives in Montreal, ON, Canada) in partnership with the Her Majesty’s Canadian Ship HMCS York

• Caecilia Tripp (based in New York, NY, USA and Paris, France) in partnership with the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU)
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- Bárbara Wagner (born in Brasilia, Brazil; lives in Recife, Brazil) and Benjamin de Burca (born in Munich, Germany; lives in Recife, Brazil)
- Hajra Waheed (born in Calgary, AB, Canada; lives in Montreal, QC, Canada)
- Syrus Marcus Ware (born in Montreal, QC, Canada; lives in Toronto, ON, Canada) in partnership with the Ryerson Image Centre

About the Toronto Biennial of Art

Launching in fall 2019, the Toronto Biennial of Art is a new international contemporary visual arts event that is as culturally connected and diverse as Toronto itself. For 10 weeks every two years, the city will be transformed by exhibitions, talks, and performances that reflect the local context while engaging with the world’s most pressing issues. In an effort to make contemporary art available to everyone, the Biennial’s free, citywide programming aims to galvanize citizens, bridge communities, and contribute to global conversations from a variety of perspectives.

For more information or to register for accreditation, visit: torontobiennial.org. Follow @torontobiennial and #TObiennial19 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
TBA Founders and Funders

The Toronto Biennial of Art is grateful to all contributing donors for their generous support. Major funders include: Founding Signature Patron - The Pierre Lassonde Family Foundation; Founding Premiere Patron - TD Bank Group; Founding Innovators - CIBC, Canadian Malartic, The Michael and Sonja Koerner Charitable Foundation, and Polar Foundation; Founding Visionaries - Miranda Hubbs, Michelle Koerner & Kevin Doyle, Lisa & Mathew Melchior, Menkes Developments, Theresa & Seth Mersky, Newport Developments, and Partners in Art. View the full list of donors at torontobiennial.org.

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Image Captions:

Dana Claxton, Headdress-Dana, 2019. Image courtesy of the artist.


Jae Jarrell, Brothers Surrounding Sis in Ornamented Screen, 2017. Image courtesy of the artist and Kavi Gupta Gallery.