TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART ANNOUNCES CURATORIAL AND PROGRAMMING APPOINTMENTS FOR THE INAUGURAL 2019 BIENNIAL

Toronto, Ontario, Canada…The Toronto Biennial of Art (the Biennial) today announced three new appointments to guide its curatorial program. For the inaugural, city-wide art event taking place next fall from September through December 2019, and for the subsequent 2021 iteration, Candice Hopkins has been appointed Senior Curator and Tairone Bastien has assumed the position of Curator. As part of the Biennial’s core team, Ilana Shamoon has been hired as Director of Programming.

Toronto Biennial of Art Founder and Executive Director Patrizia Libralato said, “We are delighted to welcome Candice, Tairone, and Ilana who bring significant depth of scholarship, experience, and passion to the launch of the Biennial. Candice and Tairone’s involvement into 2021 will set the tone for continuity between events. By celebrating contemporary art and artists from Canada and around the world, our goal is to create an event as uniquely diverse, responsive, and layered as the city itself. Located on Lake Ontario, Toronto has been a significant site for exchange with 15,000 years of continuous Indigenous presence. Today, more than half its residents were born outside of Canada. This context, married with Toronto’s remarkable contemporary art history – from experimental media and sound art to its singular artist-run culture – makes for an engaging, challenging, and thought-provoking foundation for Toronto’s Biennial.”

Candice Hopkins
Drawing on her extensive background as a curator working closely with both small, experimental art spaces and large-scale, recurrent exhibitions, Candice Hopkins will lead the curatorial direction of the Biennial including new art commissions, exhibitions, and publications. Hopkins is co-curator of the forthcoming SITEMAPs 2018 biennial, Casa Tomada opening in August 2018, in Santa Fe, NM, and was recently named co-curator of the Canadian Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale featuring the media-work of Igloolik Isuma Productions Inc., opening in May 2019. She was a part
of the curatorial team for documenta 14 in Athens, Greece and Kassel, Germany in 2017. She has published over 50 articles on contemporary art, sound, indigeneity, native economies, and vernacular architecture and is co-editor of two books. She has lectured widely at such venues as Artists Space, New York; Dak’Art Biennale, Dakar, Senegal; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Tate Britain and Tate Modern, London; WIELS, Brussels, Belgium; and Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam. Originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, Hopkins is a citizen of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation.

Tairone Bastien
Alongside Hopkins, Tairone Bastien will shape the Biennial’s curatorial vision. An independent curator and arts programmer working between Toronto and Dubai, Bastien is one of the curators for Nuit Blanche Toronto 2018. Bastien has held curatorial and programming positions for over a dozen years, most recently as Programming Director for Alserkal Avenue in Dubai. Bastien commissioned a series of iterative cross-border projects that have taken place as part of the Dhaka Arts Summit in Bangladesh and Shubbak Festival in London. He was also a curator for Performa, developing performances, online radio broadcasts, and site-specific installations for Performa 05, Performa 07, and Performa 09.

Ilana Shamoon
As a permanent staff member of the Biennial, Ilana Shamoon will lead all aspects of the Biennial’s overall programming and partnership initiatives. She was curator at the Fondation Cartier pour l’Art Contemporain in Paris (2006-15) where she curated/co-curated numerous exhibitions including Native Land, Stop Eject, and regularly commissioned related artworks, events, and performances, the most recent being the acclaimed 2015 pop-up radio show the Pan African Space Station. Shamoon ran the public art program at Waterfront Toronto from 2016-17 and has worked as an independent curator for institutions including Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto. She joined the Biennial Curatorial Advisory Group in 2016 and subsequently led the Curatorial Framework research and brief for the inaugural curatorial team.

The city’s waterfront—a rapidly changing, symbolically rich, historically charged, and connected shoreline—will be activated by over 40 artists from various disciplines, along with writers, activists, community organizers, and other participants. Artworks, including significant site-specific commissions in new and unexpected venues for art, will be curated to enable exploration of the complex history of the region. Partnership programming with innovative art spaces, established art institutions, artist-run centers, community organizations, and educational institutions will be an integral piece of the Biennial’s core activities. Wherever possible, access to the Biennial will be free for visitors of all ages. More details will be announced later this year.

An organization with an ongoing presence between biennial events, the Biennial is developing and presenting a host of public programs with partners in Toronto beginning in spring 2018. The first public program realized in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) will take place on May 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm, at the AGO, featuring Sally
Tallant, Director of the Liverpool Biennial, in conversation with Kitty Scott, The Carol and Morton Rapp Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the AGO, and co-curator of the 2018 Liverpool Biennial. They will discuss exhibition-making, biennials in general, and the 2018 Liverpool Biennial, Beautiful world, where are you? The event is free and open to the public. Click here for more details.

The Toronto Biennial of Art is pleased to acknowledge the support of the following partners: City of Toronto, City of Mississauga, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Government of Ontario, TD Bank, Castlepoint Numa, and Dickinson Wright LLP.

About the Toronto Biennial of Art
The Toronto Biennial of Art, launching in fall 2019, will be Canada’s newest biennial of contemporary art. Taking place along the waterfront in unexpected venues and public spaces and in collaboration with not-for-profit galleries, museums, community organizations, and educational institutions across the city, the Biennial will present Canadian and international art within the complex creative, cultural, social, and political context of Toronto. On view from September–December 2019, the Toronto Biennial of Art will position the city as an emerging, inclusive visual arts center, providing an ambitious platform on which artists and arts professionals at various stages in their careers might exchange ideas and collaborate. By seamlessly linking year-round educational and curatorial programming, the Biennial will connect Toronto communities through partnerships with existing arts initiatives and create opportunities for residents and visitors to discover and reimagine the city through provocative visual art experiences.

http://torontobiennial.org

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