

For Immediate Release

TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART

TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART ANNOUNCED TWO PRIZES AT THE OPENING OF ITS SECOND EDITION RECOGNIZING AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR AND AN EMERGING ARTIST

Toronto's free city-wide art event is on view through June 5, 2022



Toronto, Canada, March 29, 2022... [The Toronto Biennial of Art \(the Biennial/TBA\)](#)

announced on March 25, during the opening celebration for its second edition, that [Camille Turner](#) is the recipient of its Artist Prize, recognizing an artist's outstanding contribution to the Biennial, and [Aycoobo / Wilson Rodríguez](#) is the recipient of the Emerging Artist Prize acknowledging a promising, early-career Biennial artist. Each prize includes a \$10,000 (CAD) award. Awardees participating in the 2022 Biennial, *What Water Knows*, *The Land Remembers*, were selected by a distinguished jury that included: Michelle Jacques, Chief Curator, Remail Modern, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Dr. Julie Nagam, Artistic Director of Nuit Blanche 2020 and 2022, Toronto, Ontario; and Canadian artist Lisa Steele, an innovator in video art, educator, curator, and co-founder of Vtape in Toronto, Ontario.



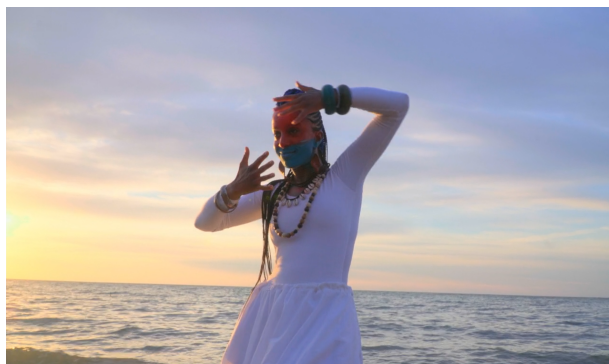
"We are pleased to recognize the inspiring work of our prize recipients, and hope this support helps them further develop their already impactful practices. We are also grateful to the jury for their thoughtful consideration and to our visionary patrons for their exceptional support," said Biennial Executive Director Patrizia Libralato.

The Artist Prizes were generously supported by the Hal Jackman Foundation, Eleanor and Francis Shen, the DH Gales Family Foundation, David and Dawn Beswick, Jay Smith and Laura Rapp, and the J.P. Bickell Foundation. Accommodations for jurors were generously supported by The Drake Hotel.

"With such a broad range of artists from so many different locations, the prizes offered by the Toronto Biennial of Art are important to identify works that resonate profoundly," said juror Lisa Steele. "For me, that means they are deeply engaging in terms of content, are beautifully crafted, and come from the heart of the artist, because it is this openness and vulnerability that speak most directly to me."

About the Toronto Biennial of Art Artist Prize recipient

Canadian artist, Camille Turner (born in 1960, Kingston, Jamaica; lives in Los Angeles, USA) explores themes related to race, space, home, and belonging. Her work combines Afrofuturism and historical research. In her Biennial immersive multimedia installation *Nave* (2022), Turner reveals the entanglement of colonial Canada in the transatlantic trade of enslaved Africans through links between the nave of a church, the hold of the ship, the tomb, and the womb of the world. In



this Biennial-commissioned artwork, a time traveller from the future Age of Awakening—performed by the artist—visits a church in the Age of Silence, circa 2021, to perform a ritual connecting with ancestors of the past. *Nave* situates the viewer within the context of memory embodied by the ocean.

At an opening event on March 25, Turner said "I am so thrilled to be the recipient of this prize! This artwork is dedicated to ancestors known and unknown and I want to thank my amazing dream team: Editor Chris Wiseman, Cinematographer Esery Mondesir assisted by Andrew Osei, Cody Westman who shot the footage in Newfoundland, Performer Emilie Jabouin, Makeup Artist Kristen Gallacher, and Production Manager Roxanne Fernandes. Many thanks to the Biennial for the opportunity to unfurl this vision."

"In experiencing *Nave*, the deep trauma of the transatlantic slave trade is conveyed through the visuals of the ship as both womb and tomb, container of bodies and souls. But this trauma is transformed into redemption and peace through the beauty of both the gently lapping waves themselves and the tranquility of the church interior, as seen on the transformed face of Camille herself. This three-channel video installation encourages the viewer to enter and be immersed, with the work enveloping the viewer and the audio seeping into one's consciousness so effortlessly, as one moves back in time and forward in hope," said Steele.

About the Toronto Biennial of Art Emerging Artist Prize recipient

Aycoobo (Nonuya, born in 1967, La Chorrera, Colombia; lives in Bogotá, Colombia), also known as Wilson Rodríguez, carries forth botanical knowledge from the Amazon jungle of Colombia transmitted by his father, Abel, and his ancestors. His artistic practice embraces the relationship between humans and the invisible world and the use of medicinal plants to expand perception.



For Aycoobo, art is a way to honour his ancient roots and his life as an individual in the contemporary world. His works on paper, featured in both the 2019 and 2022 Biennial, offer depictions of his lived experience ranging from Nonuya creation stories to the Amazon calendar of micro-seasons.

“While looking at the mesmerizing paintings of Aycoobo / Wilson Rodríguez, I was immersed in the feeling of greenness — a green that is only experienced in the midst of a dense jungle such as those he depicts. The sense of careful observation, with each leaf and branch fully articulated, make these paintings work as sheltering spaces, with the plants, trees, and shrubs implicated in the expansion of our perception through his eyes,” said Steele.

In addition to the juried Artist Prizes just announced, the Biennial is introducing two additional prizes to be presented in June 2022. The new prizes will be awarded via an online voting platform, acknowledging projects that inspire audiences and connect communities. The Audience Artist Prize will recognize an outstanding artistic contribution to the Biennial Exhibition as selected by a public vote, while the Programs Prize will recognize an outstanding contribution made by an artist, educator, workshop facilitator, mentor, community builder and/or advocate participating in the Biennial’s extensive schedule of free public programs.

TBA Donors and Supporters

The Toronto Biennial of Art is grateful to all 2022 contributing donors for their generous support. Major funders to-date include: The Pierre Lassonde Family Foundation; Scotia Wealth Management; The Michael and Sonja Koerner Charitable Foundation; RBC Foundation; Polar Foundation; Menkes Developments; Castlepoint Numa; Michelle Koerner & Kevin Doyle; Kilmer Mattamy Tricon; Newpoint Developments Inc.; the Delaney Family Foundation; The Rossy Foundation; Age of Union Alliance; The Jack Weinbaum Family Foundation; TD Bank Group; Partners in Art; Hal Jackman Foundation; The Donald R. Sobey Family Foundation; Woodbridge Investments Corporation; Ron Kimel and Family; Miranda Hubbs; Nutrien; Yamana Gold Inc.; Waterfront BIA; Waterfront Toronto; Stratus Vineyards; Teknion Corporation; the Daniels Corporation with W.J. Properties; and Eleanor and Francis Shen. Much gratitude and thanks to our many other generous donors, including our [Founding Supporters](#).

TBA is also grateful for our government supporters: Government of Canada; Government of Ontario; City of Toronto; Canada Council for the Arts; Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, administered by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund Corporation; ArtworxTO: Toronto’s Year of Public Art 2021-2022; Ontario Arts Council; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; the Toronto Arts Council; City of Mississauga; the Institut Français, French Consulate in Toronto, with the support of the Consulate General of France in Toronto; Japan Foundation; SAHA Association; and the Council for Canadian American Relations.

TBA acknowledges the support of our media partners to-date: Akimbo; blogTO, Cineplex Media; NOW Magazine; Pattison Outdoor Advertising; St. Joseph Communications; Toronto Star; West End Phoenix; the Toronto Transit Commission; and Yonge-Dundas Square.

About the Toronto Biennial of Art

The Toronto Biennial of Art is Canada's leading visual arts event focused exclusively on contemporary art from around the world. For 10 weeks every two years, local, national, and international Biennial artists transform Toronto and its partner regions with free exhibitions, performances, and learning opportunities. Grounded in diverse local contexts, the Biennial's city-wide programming aims to inspire individuals, engage communities, and contribute to global conversations.

The Toronto Biennial of Art launched in 2019 and was a popular and critical success. The Biennial provides expanded understandings of contemporary art practices and is building a legacy of free, inclusive, and accessible contemporary arts programming in Toronto, Mississauga, and their surrounding communities.

For more information, visit: torontobiennial.org, [@torontobiennial](https://twitter.com/torontobiennial), and [#TOBiennial22](https://www.facebook.com/TORontobiennial22) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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Media Contacts:

For additional information, Libby Mark or Heather Meltzer at Bow Bridge Communications, LLC, Toronto: +1 647-544-8441, New York City: + 917-968-5567; info@bow-bridge.com

For Toronto-based media inquiries, Yolonda Abrahams at Toronto Biennial of Art: +1 647-209-8297; yabrahams@torontobiennial.org or Deanne Moser at DMPUBLIC: +1 647-888-9388; deanne@dmpublic.com

Image Captions:

Camille Turner, *Nave*, 2021-2022, 00:12:34 (H:M:S), three-channel 3840 x 2160 video installation. Commissioned by the Toronto Biennial of Art. On view at Small Arms Inspection Building, Mississauga, ON as part of the Toronto Biennial of Art, 2022. Photo: Toni Hafkenschied. Courtesy Toronto Biennial of Art.

Aycoobo / Wilson Rodríguez, *El Bastón*, 2019. Acrylic on paper 70 x 100 cm. On view at Arsenal Contemporary Art, Toronto as part of the Toronto Biennial of Art, 2022. Courtesy Toronto Biennial of Art.

Camille Turner, *Nave*, 2021-2022, 00:12:34 (H:M:S), three-channel 3840 x 2160 video installation. Commissioned by the Toronto Biennial of Art. On view at Small Arms Inspection Building, Mississauga, ON as part of the Toronto Biennial of Art, 2022. Courtesy Toronto Biennial of Art.

Aycoobo / Wilson Rodríguez, *4 elementos del origen*, 2021. Acrylic on paper 70 x 100 cm. On view at Arsenal Contemporary Art, Toronto as part of the Toronto Biennial of Art, 2022. Courtesy Toronto Biennial of Art.