

2020 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators



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2020 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators is awarded to Maya Wilson-Sanchez

Guelph, ON – March 6, 2020 – The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is pleased to announce that Maya Wilson-Sanchez has been awarded the 2020 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators. Her project, *Grounding*, has been selected as the winning submission and will be presented at the Art Gallery of Guelph from September 17 – December 13, 2020. The award was presented at a gala ceremony at the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto on March 5, 2020.

Created in 2012, the prestigious annual prize is awarded to a Canadian curator under 30. By supporting and mobilizing Canadian creative talent, the Middlebrook Prize aims to inspire positive social change through creativity in an era of ongoing and unprecedented economic, environmental, and cultural challenges. This year's jury was composed of Julie Crooks (Associate Curator, Photography, at the Art Gallery of Ontario), Sally Frater (Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Guelph), and Lisa Volpe (Associate Curator, Photography, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston). "The partnership between the Middlebrook Prize and Art Gallery of Guelph provides a unique professional development opportunity for emerging curatorial practitioners," stated Frater, "I look forward to working with Maya as she brings her dynamic project to fruition."

Engaging the resource-based economies that connect Canada and South America, *Grounding* brings together artists Tsēmā Igharas of Tahltan First Nation, Ximena Garrido-Lecca of Peru, and Dana Prieto of Argentina, as well as Métis artist and academic Warren Cariou. With artwork that is "made from the ground, using as its material basis the same valuable natural resources that drive world economies," for Wilson-Sanchez "the artists propose a relationship to these materials beyond that of capital accumulation and environmental destruction."

According to juror Julie Crooks, "The title of the exhibition suggests both the grounding of the natural materials that are taken from the earth to create artworks while offering context about the residual effects for communities affected by mining. I look forward to seeing the project (and practice) of this emerging curator, writer, and researcher unfold."

"Not only original in concept, the topic is increasingly timely," notes Lisa Volpe, "I applaud the curator for also taking into account the monetary implications of the art world, and her own exhibition, on extractive economies. My congratulations go to Wilson-Sanchez for this well-deserved prize."

The Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators is made possible through the support of the Centre Wellington Community Foundation Middlebrook Social Innovation Fund, the Guelph Community Foundation Musagetes Fund, and through private donations. For more information about the Middlebrook Prize and the cohort of past winners, please visit middlebrookprize.ca.

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Curator's Biography

Maya Wilson-Sanchez is a curator and writer based in Toronto. She holds a BA in Visual and Critical Studies from OCAD University, where she co-founded the *Journal of Visual and Critical Studies* and co-directed the OCAD U Student Press, and an MA in Art History from the University of Toronto. She has published essays, reviews, and exhibition texts in multiple venues including the *Senses and Society* journal, the book *Other Places: Reflections on Media Arts in Canada* (2019), and in the upcoming anthology *Community of Images: Strategies of Appropriation in Canadian Art, 1977-1990* (2020).

Wilson-Sanchez has worked in collection, research, programming and curatorial research roles at Gallery TPW, the Art Gallery of Ontario, Onsite Gallery, Xspace Cultural Centre and the Royal Ontario Museum. She co-curated *Living Room* (2017) inside *The Family Camera* exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum and curated *Intra-Action: Live Performance Art* (2016, 2017) at Xspace Cultural Centre. In 2019, she was Editorial Resident at Canadian Art and held a curatorial residency award at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto. In 2020, she will be participating in the Tate Intensive program at Tate Modern.

About the Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators

Founded in 2012, the Middlebrook Prize is a national prize awarded annually to foster social innovation and curatorial excellence in Canada while encouraging social connectedness and a shared sense of community. Selected by jury of arts professionals, each winner is a curator under 30 who receives an honorarium as well as curatorial mentorship in the development of an exhibition at the Art Gallery of Guelph. For more information about the prize and past recipients, please visit middlebrookprize.ca.

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About the Art Gallery of Guelph

The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is one of Canada's premier public art spaces, engaging audiences with innovative artists and ideas from around the world. Through a rigorous and collaborative artistic program that positions visual culture in an ever-changing cultural landscape, the gallery supports social exchange and shapes public discourse. Located in one of Canada's most innovation-rich and socially engaged urban environments, AGG offers compelling artistic encounters and contributes to a thriving national artistic climate through global connections that foster and proliferate creativity and imagination. For more information, please visit www.artgalleryofguelph.ca.

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