

2022 Middlebrook Prize awarded to Erin Szikora



The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is pleased to announce that Erin Szikora has been awarded the 2022 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators. Her proposed exhibition, *Homecoming*, has been selected as the winning submission to be presented at the Art Gallery of Guelph from September 15 – December 18, 2022. This year’s Middlebrook Prize jury was composed of Darryn Doull (Curator, Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery), Jaimie Isaac (Chief Curator, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria), and Bushra Junaid (Independent Curator).

Created in 2012, the annual prize is awarded to a Canadian curator or curatorial team under 30 with the goal to support a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive arts sector in Canada. “Not only does the partnership between the Middlebrook Prize and the Art Gallery of Guelph provide a unique professional development opportunity at a critical point in their careers, the recipients recognized over the last ten years have shaped curatorial practice indelibly,” notes AGG Executive Director Shauna McCabe. The Middlebrook Prize also builds awareness of the vital role of artistic expression in an era of ongoing and unprecedented economic, political, environmental, and social upheaval. “Erin is among the country’s best and brightest young curators with a clear sense of the transformative potential of the arts as a force for social change,” states Prize founder Randall Howard.

Szikora’s exhibition *Homecoming* brings together artists Anita Cazzola, Laura Grier, and Justine Woods, and emerges from her curatorial research into alternative economies of artmaking and valuation. Supporting relationship-building as a key element of exhibition design, the artists will be invited to create new works in relation to the idea of returning home and the activities, people, and places that provide safety, stability, and security, all of which have been particularly difficult to locate lately. “As a curator,” states Szikora, “I strive to create opportunities for emerging and mid-career artists, to make space for under-told stories that disrupt and expand the canon, and most importantly, to build caring and lasting relationships with the communities that sustain me.”



Curator Biography

Erin Szikora (Cayuga/Scottish/Hungarian) is an emerging curator, researcher, and beadwork artist born and raised in Guelph and currently based in Toronto. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Visual Studies from the University of Toronto and a Master of Arts in Contemporary Art, Design, and New Media Art Histories from OCAD University. Szikora has worked in curatorial and research roles at the Art Gallery of Guelph, Art Canada Institute, Brock University, McMaster Museum of Art, OCAD University, and the University of Toronto. She currently works as Assistant Curator - Indigenous Projects at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery where she is co-curating the Oshawa iteration of the project Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues: Dish With One Spoon Territory with Missy LeBlanc.

About the Middlebrook Prize

Founded in 2012, the Middlebrook Prize is a national prize awarded annually to foster social innovation and curatorial excellence in Canada while encouraging creative inquiry and public engagement. Selected by jury of arts professionals, each winner is a curator or curatorial team under 30 who receives an honorarium as well as curatorial mentorship in the development of an exhibition. 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.

Media contact:

Nicole Neufeld, Community Engagement Coordinator
nneufeld@artgalleryofguelph.ca | 519-837-0010 x 2

Art Gallery of Guelph

358 Gordon Street,
Guelph, ON N1G 1Y1
Open Tuesday to Sunday, 12 – 5 pm,
Accessible

519-837-0010
artgalleryofguelph.ca
info@artgalleryofguelph.ca