

For Immediate Release

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Winners of the 2016 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators 2016 Middlebrook Prize is Awarded to Isabelle and Sophie Lynch

GUELPH - The Art Gallery of Guelph is pleased to announce that Isabelle and Sophie Lynch have been awarded the 4th Annual Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators. Their project, *Blood, Sweat and Tears* (working title), has been selected as the winning submission and will be featured at the Art Gallery of Guelph from September 15 - December 18, 2016.

The jury included Alison Cooley (2014 Middlebrook Prize Recipient with Natasha Chaykowski), Melissa Bennett (Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Hamilton) and Robert Enright (Research Professor in Art Theory and Criticism, University of Guelph and Senior Contributing Editor, *Border Crossings*). "Sophie and Isabelle Lynch's proposed project, *Blood, Sweat and Tears* tackles urgent, enduring questions of labour with deftness and sophistication. Their proposal demonstrates solid insight and attunement to contemporary art's stakes, both in the idea of artistic production as work, and in broader issues of labour that touch audiences outside the visual arts."

In *Blood, Sweat and Tears*, the curators will question how value is created and extracted from labouring bodies. They ask: how can we re-think notions of work and productivity, and how bodies move and interact with space and materials? Through the work of contemporary artists working in video, performance, and installation, this exhibition focuses on the human body's relationship to work and the subjective dimensions of productive and unproductive labour. The artists under consideration include: Kerry Downey (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), Richard Ibhgy & Marilou Lemmens (Montreal/Durham-Sud, QC), Virginia Lee Montgomery (New York, NY/Chester, VT), Tanya Lukin Linklater (Native Village of Afognak and Port Lions, AK/North Bay, ON), and Mika Rottenberg (New York, NY).

As part of their engagement in the Guelph community, the curators plan to conduct studio visits with artists in the local region with the objective to invite a Guelph artist to contribute to the exhibition. Their outreach program will encourage the public to take part in a day of workshops, readings, presentations, and performances. For families, the curators' have created an event that will invite kids to work together to build a Rube Goldberg machine with found objects.

The Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators is funded by the Centre Wellington Community Foundation's Middlebrook Social Innovation Fund, The Guelph Community Foundation: Musagetes Fund, and by private donations.

The Art Gallery of Guelph and its sponsors — University of Guelph, City of Guelph, and the Upper Grand District School Board — acknowledge the support of the Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Curator's Biographies

Isabelle Lynch studied at McGill University (MA in Art History) and at the University of Ottawa (BA in Philosophy and History and Theory of Art). She has worked at McGill University, the National Gallery of Canada, the Icelandic Art Center, and the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at the University of Toronto. She was the winner of the 2014 esse arts + opinions Young Critics Competition.

Sophie Lynch studied at McGill University (MA in Art History) and at the University of Ottawa (BA in Philosophy and History and Theory of Art). She has worked at the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, the National Gallery of Canada, the Icelandic Art Center, and Canadian Art magazine. She will spend this summer working as a MuSe graduate intern at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.