

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation announces the 2021 VIVA Awards, Balkind Prize and Max Wyman Award

Diyan Achjadi and Samuel Roy-Bois – VIVA Awards
Makiko Hara – Alvin Balkind Curator’s Award
Robin Laurence – Max Wyman Award for Critical Writing



DIYAN ACHJADI
VIVA Award
photo: Four Eyes Portraits



SAMUEL ROY-BOIS
VIVA Award



MAKIKO HARA
Alvin Balkind Award
photo: Paul Wong Projects



ROBIN LAURENCE
Max Wyman Award
photo: Andre Petterson

Vancouver, April 21, 2021 – The Board of Trustees of the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation** announce this year’s recipients of four prestigious cultural awards in British Columbia.

This year, visual artists **Diyan Achjadi** and **Samuel Roy-Bois** are the recipients of the 2021 VIVA Award, granted annually by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts. The Foundation also awarded the biannual **Alvin Balkind Curator’s Prize** to independent curator **Makiko Hara**, each receiving \$15,000.

Art critic and writer **Robin Laurence** received the \$5,000 **Max Wyman Award for Critical Writing**. The Max Wyman Awards are jointly administered by the Max Wyman Award Committee and the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation.

The usual annual celebration, a public ceremony honouring the recipients, was cancelled this year due to COVID-19.

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Statement by Greg Bellerby, Chair of the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation:

Again this year the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation Arts Awards** will be presented online. The continuing Covid-19 restrictions preclude our ability to present the awards through a public ceremony. We all have had to adjust our lives to deal with the pandemic. The lack of a public ceremony does not diminish the value and importance of the awards to the artists and to the art community. This also extends to art curators and critical writers as this year we are also awarding the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** and the **Max Wyman Award for Critical Writing in the Arts**. Together these award recipients exemplify the strength and quality of the work being done by artists, curators and writers in our community. Despite the challenges of our current situation their work continues to inspire and enlighten us.

The **VIVA Awards** continue the legacy of **Jack and Doris Shadbolt** whose foundation has been celebrating the achievements of B.C. artists since 1988. Also through the generosity of the Estate of Abraham Rogatnick, the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** celebrates the achievements of B.C. curators both independent and those working in institutions. The vision of Jack, Doris and Abraham in establishing these awards has had a positive impact on the art community and will for the foreseeable future.

On behalf of the trustees I would like to congratulate this year's recipients of the **VIVA Awards, Diyan Achjadi and Samuel Roy-Bois**. The jury members were Marian Penner Bancroft, Bopha Chhay, Alison Hrabluik, Cindy Mochizuki and Tania Willard. Their generosity and thoughtful deliberations are greatly appreciated. The trustees would also like to congratulate the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** recipient **Makiko Hara**. The jury was Dana Claxton, Karen Henry and Michelle Jacques and our thanks for their assistance in the selection process. As we did last year we are collaborating on the **Max Wyman Award for Critical Writing**. We would like to extend our congratulations to this year's recipient **Robin Laurence**.

It is hoped that as we move on from the restrictions of Covid-19 pandemic we will once again be able to come together in person and celebrate the achievements of our artists, curators and writers.

ABOUT THE VIVA AWARDS:

Established in 1988, the **VIVA Awards** are funded by the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts**. The **VIVA Awards** were created to nurture the advancement of the visual arts in British Columbia and their appreciation by the public.

Providing a minimum of \$15,000 annually, these awards celebrate exemplary achievement by British Columbia artists in mid-career, chosen for outstanding accomplishment and commitment by an independent jury.

2021 VIVA AWARD RECIPIENTS

DIYAN ACHJADI employs drawing, printmaking, collage, and animation to examine knowledge transmission and to re-imagine cross-cultural narratives in the wake of colonialism and post-colonial migrations. She has spoken about the ways her formative years spent “navigating different educational, political and cultural systems,” from Jakarta, Indonesia to London, UK, have powerfully informed her art practice. Fluent in both traditional and digital printmaking techniques, Achjadi has employed the cartoon-like avatar of a young girl to address a myriad of issues, from armed conflict and militarism to environmental disasters and the social function of mass media. Recent projects investigate the ways certain culturally specific images, patterns, and motifs have travelled across time and place, and the alterations and “contaminations” of meaning that have occurred in the process. Public art commissions in Vancouver and Richmond have included large scale projections, vinyl banners, and imagery for display on the exteriors of public buses. *Coming Soon*, documented in a limited edition publication, was a year-long undertaking that involved creating and mounting prints at or near construction sites across Vancouver, in the process posing questions about “value, temporality, and labour.” Her most recent video work, *Hush*, is on view on the Urban Screen at Emily Carr University. Achjadi has also contributed work to exhibitions and portfolios that speak to queer identity and experience. *Never as it seems*, four banners commissioned for Pride in Chinatown MMXX, was mounted last summer at the entrance to the Dr Sun Yat Sen Gardens.

Born in Jakarta, Indonesia to a West Javanese father and English-Canadian mother, Achjadi grew up there and in Hong Kong, London, and Washington, D.C. before settling in New York City, where she lived for ten years. She received a BFA from Cooper Union (New York) and an MFA from Concordia University (Montreal), and taught at the University of Maryland before moving to Vancouver, where she is a professor in the Audain Faculty of Art at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. She has exhibited her print, installation, and video art in local, national, and international venues, and has been an artist-in-residence across Canada and abroad.

SAMUEL ROY-BOIS is an award-winning artist who is acclaimed for his use of sculpture, site-specific installation, and sound to heighten viewer engagement with the built environment and to question the ways architecture shapes our understanding of the world. "I am always aware of working within an economy of means, voluntarily blurring the border between art and life," he says. Roy-Bois has worked with found objects and inexpensive building materials, creating architectural interventions and immersive environments that speak to a poetics of space while also proposing a "low-scale utopianism". He frequently transforms art gallery spaces to prompt us to think beyond the institutional convention of the white cube and to shift the ways we experience works of art. At times, his installations invite visitors into them; at other times, they prevent visitors from entering. His numerous acclaimed projects have included an ambitious public sculpture consisting of a wrecked car that seems to be passing through a multi-storey building; an art gallery within an art gallery with wooden steps leading nowhere; an interactive sound booth; a multi-faceted construction made of cardboard and duct tape; and a carpeted living room environment installed upside down on a gallery ceiling.

A musician and performer as well as a visual artist, Samuel Roy-Bois was born and raised in Quebec City and earned a BFA from Université Laval (Quebec) and an MFA from Concordia University (Montreal). He has been based in Vancouver since 2006 and has exhibited his sculptures and installations in local, national, and international venues, including Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa; Musée d'art contemporain de Montreal; Simon Fraser University Galleries, Burnaby; Vancouver Art Gallery; and Point éphémère, Paris. He is an Associate Professor in Creative Studies, Visual Arts at the University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus.

2021 ALVIN BALKIND CURATOR'S PRIZE RECIPIENT

MAKIKO HARA is an independent curator, lecturer, researcher, writer, and "art incubator." Born in Tokyo, Japan and based in Vancouver, she has held curatorial and research positions and organized numerous exhibitions and cultural initiatives on both sides of the Pacific Ocean. Her principal focus has been creating platforms for dialogue and exchange between artists in Canada, Asia and beyond. Through the 1990s and early 2000s, she divided her time between Tokyo and Montreal; she was also a co-founder of the Tokyo Art Speak Collective. She moved to Vancouver in 2007 to take up the position of chief curator at Centre A: Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, later assuming

the role of deputy director. She left Centre A in 2013 and has worked independently since then. Hara has been involved in numerous solo and group exhibition projects including Scotia Bank Nuit Blanche (Toronto, Canada), AIR YONAGO, Tottori Geiyu Art Festival (Yonago, Japan), Fictive Communities Asia-Koganecho Bazaar (Yokohama, Japan), Rock Paper Scissors: Cindy Mochizuki, Yonago City Museum of Art (Tottori, Japan); and MASH UP: The Birth of Modern Culture, Vancouver Art Gallery (Vancouver, Canada). In 2017, she was appointed as an advisor to the International Exchange Centre at Akita University of Arts (Akita, Japan).

In 2019, Hara co-founded the Pacific Crossings curatorial initiative with three other British Columbia-based curators and directors and has organized research residencies, lectures and forums with partner organizations in Tokyo, Manila, and Hong Kong. Recently, she was invited to join the Doryphore Independent Curators Society, which was founded in 1999. Hara has also been working on a long-term research project, "Kitchen Talks: Women Aging and Art Making." In this context, she curated "Before the 37 Trillion Pieces Get to Sleep", a performance by Tari Ito for the LIVE International Performance Art Biennale in Vancouver in 2019, and "Unlikeness", the 2020 exhibition of large-scale drawings by Elizabeth MacKenzie at the Teck Gallery, Simon Fraser University. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, she opened "My Kitchen Anthropology Museum" in her own apartment in 2020.

ABOUT THE MAX WYMAN AWARD FOR CRITICAL WRITING

Visual arts critic **ROBIN LAURENCE** is the winner of this year's Max Wyman Award in Critical Writing.

The annual award celebrates critical commentary on the visual, performing and literary arts. It is intended to honour informed and compelling writing that stimulates critical thinking, fosters ongoing discussion about the role of arts and culture in contemporary society and demonstrates the value of creative commentary in our understanding of the world around us. The winner receives a prize of \$5,000 and a gold and emerald pin designed by Vancouver artist Robert Chaplin.

The award was established in 2017 by philanthropist Yosef Wosk to honour the career and lifetime contributions of the Vancouver author, arts critic and commentator Max Wyman. It recognizes writers who have amassed a significant body of work. Eligible subjects of criticism include the visual arts, architecture and design, theatre, literature, dance, music, film and television, as well as more general cultural commentary.

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Robin Laurence is an independent writer, critic and curator based in Vancouver. For three decades she was the award-winning visual arts critic for *The Georgia Straight* and for a couple of years in the mid-1990s, she wrote art reviews for *The Vancouver Sun*. She has been a contributing editor of both *Border Crossings* and *Canadian Art* magazines, for which she has written extensively. Her published work includes essays about art and artists in more than 60 books and exhibition catalogues, as well as reviews and features in local, national, and international publications. She is the author of *A Sense of Place: Art at Vancouver International Airport* and she recently co-authored Gathie Falk's memoir, *Apples, etc.* Laurence holds a BFA from the University of Calgary and an MA from the University of Victoria. In 2016, she was awarded the RCA medal for "distinguished service to the visual arts and cultural community in Canada."

The jury citation reads: Robin Laurence is regarded as the critic of record in the British Columbia visual arts community, a measure of her career-long dedication to the creative activity of the community's artists and the institutions that sustain them. Her lively and accessible writing is informed by a deep commitment to all facets of the artform, reinforced by an authoritative grasp of art-historical and socio-philosophical context, and a ready willingness to engage with fresh and developing innovations and explorations in the field.

Yosef Wosk commented: "Robin Laurence's insightful writings about the visual arts have stimulated and provoked Canadian audiences for decades. She helps us to see. The pandemic has placed tight restrictions on our live experience of the arts, but if we can't be physically present, the next-best thing is the virtual experience, augmented by the contextualization and informed commentary of a voice we can trust. Robin Laurence is such a voice."

The 2021 award jury consisted of Brenda Leadlay, Executive Director of the B.C. Alliance for Arts and Culture, Scott Watson, Director of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of BC, and Max Wyman.

For more information specifically about the Max Wyman Award contact:
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