

MEDIA INFORMATION
Ada Slivinski, Talk Shop Media
ada@talkshopmedia.com
604 202 1167

THE JACK AND DORIS SHADBOLT FOUNDATION **VIVA**
FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

www.shadboltfoundation.org

The Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation announces the 2023 VIVA Awards and Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize

Laiwan and Hazel Meyer – VIVA Award for the Visual Arts
Daina Augaitis – Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize



LAIWAN
VIVA Award
photo: Nina Skogster



HAZEL MEYER
VIVA Award
photo: Cait McKinney



DAINA AUGAITIS
Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize
photo: Rachel Topham

Vancouver, June 13, 2023 – The Board of Trustees of the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation** announce this year's recipients of three prestigious cultural awards in British Columbia.

This year, visual artists **Laiwan** and **Hazel Meyer** are recipients of the **2023 VIVA Awards**, granted annually by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts. The Foundation also awarded the biennial **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** to acclaimed curator **Daina Augaitis**.

The usual annual celebration, a public ceremony honouring the recipients will be announced in the coming months.

Go to our website for more information and to view winners' artwork:
shadboltfoundation.org

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

The **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation Arts Awards** will be presented online again this year. We are hopeful that as people are more comfortable with the idea of attending public events we can return to hosting our awards ceremony as a live event. A public ceremony is in the spirit of what Jack and Doris Shadbolt envisioned as the value and importance of the awards to the artists and to the visual arts community.

The **VIVA Awards** recipients exemplify the strength and quality of the work being done by artists in our community. Their determination to continue to make engaging and thought-provoking works of visual art are an inspiration to us all. The VIVA Awards continue the legacy of Jack and Doris Shadbolt whose foundation has been celebrating the achievements of British Columbia artists since 1988.

Also through the generosity of the Estate of Abraham Rogatnick, the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** celebrates the achievements of British Columbia 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, Laiwan and Hazel Meyer**. The VIVA jury members were Lyse Lemieux, Jenn Jackson, Elliott Ramsay, Christian Vistan and Corry Wyngaarden. Their generosity and thoughtful deliberations are greatly appreciated.

The trustees would also like to congratulate the Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize recipient Daina Augaitis. The jury was Zoë Chan, Makiko Hara and Ian Wallace. Our thanks for their assistance in the selection process. This year we are awarding two VIVA awards. Next year there will be two VIVA Awards and we are hoping the award ceremony will be an event open to the public.

**On behalf of the Board of Trustees,
Greg Bellerby, Chair**

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. The VIVA jury members were Lyse Lemieux, Jenn Jackson, Elliott Ramsey, Christian Vistan and Corry Wyngaarden.

2023 VIVA AWARD RECIPIENTS – LAIWAN AND HAZEL MEYER

LAIWAN is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, and educator whose wide-ranging practice is, she says, "based in poetics and philosophy." Her socially, culturally, and environmentally engaged art includes performance, photography, drawing, video, installation, memes, web projects, and audio works as well as research, mapping, and interactive public art projects. Since the early 1990s, Laiwan has been, she says, "investigating and developing decolonial practices, with an aspiration to identify what is noncolonial." More recently, she has been concerned with biodiversity, human impacts on natural ecosystems, and the presence around us of non-human species.

Laiwan often collaborates with other artists on cross-cultural and public art projects, attuning herself to the local and to ecological practices. A recent example of this focus is *How Water Remembers*, a multivalent, process-driven project that speculates on the cultural and biological effects of future sea-level rise in what is now Vancouver's Chinatown and what were once the False Creek mud flats. Working with cinematographer John Fukushima, Laiwan also directed an 8-minute film, *Pandemia – The Movie*, for display on the outdoor Urban Screen at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. A dreamlike probing of images and ideas around aliens and "interbeings," it also alludes to urban development, climate crises, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Talonbooks published *TENDER*, a collection of Laiwan's words and images that serve as "field notes from a life lived across multiple affinities, kinships, and desires." In 2022, she was celebrated in the solo exhibition *Laiwan: Traces, Erasures, Resists*, at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia.

Laiwan was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, to Chinese parents and immigrated to Canada

with her family in 1977. She studied art at Emily Carr College of Art and Design, graduating with a BFA in 1983, and earned an MFA at Simon Fraser University School for Contemporary Arts in 1999. In 1983, she founded the Or Gallery as a relational space for performances and exhibitions. She has exhibited and curated widely and has received many honours, including the 2021 Emily Award from Emily Carr University and the 2008 Vancouver Queer Media Arts Award. From 2001 to 2022, Laiwan taught in the MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts program at Goddard College, Port Townsend, Washington.

HAZEL MEYER is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice investigates the relationship between sport, sexuality, feminism, and material culture. Through installation, performance, video, and text, she "seeks to recover the queer aesthetics, politics and bodies often effaced within histories of infrastructure, athletics and illness," she says. Her immersive installations "bring various troublemakers – lesbians- feminists, gender-outlaws, incontinent-queers – into a performative space that centres desire, queerness and sweat." Recent works include *A People's History of Prednisone*, a short video-text in which the artist hand-titles the cover of a book that doesn't exist but should; *Muscle Panic*, a mixed-media installation and performance, which appeared in The Art of Sport exhibition at Copenhagen Contemporary; *WEEPING CONCRETE*, a 40-foot-high scaffolding, constructed beneath Toronto's Gardiner Expressway and from which performers unfurled and dropped large banners of hand-drawn text before a seated audience; and *The Weight of Inheritance*, a performance that took as its point of departure odd pieces of marble found in the house of the late artist and filmmaker Joyce Wieland. Many of Meyer's text-based artworks, whether books, banners, or badges, are hand-drawn in a distinctive style, the playfulness of their form often belying the seriousness of their content.

Meyer holds a BFA in studio art from Concordia University, Montréal, and an MFA in interdisciplinary art from Ontario College of Art & Design University, Toronto. She has exhibited, installed, and screened her artworks across Canada, the United States, Europe, and the United Kingdom, and has toured her ongoing performance *Muscle Panic* across ten venues since 2014, with its next presentation at Lowe Museum, Miami in 2024. She has won many grants and awards from federal, provincial, and civic agencies.

Based in Vancouver, Meyer often collaborates with her partner, media historian and educator Cait McKinney, on projects that explore their "shared attachments to queer histories through research, writing and archival projects."

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ABOUT THE BALKIND PRIZE

The Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize is a biannual award set up in memory of Alvin Balkind to recognize excellence in the field of curating in the visual arts. The prize awards the recipient \$15,000. Awarded in association with the VIVA Awards, it is managed by The Shadbolt Foundation. The Balkind jury members were Zoë Chan, Makiko Hara and Ian Wallace.

2023 ALVIN BALKIND CURATOR'S PRIZE RECIPIENT

DAINA AUGAITIS won wide and sustained acclaim as chief curator and associate director of the Vancouver Art Gallery, a position she held from 1996 to 2017. At the VAG, she was responsible for bringing greater diversity to contemporary art programs and expanding the profile of the gallery nationally and internationally. She also doubled the size of the VAG's permanent collection, inaugurated its Offsite and Asian Art programs, and greatly increased its publication program. The many leading local, national, and international artists whose solo exhibitions and projects she curated or co-curated at the VAG include Vikky Alexander, Bharti Kher, Geoffrey Farmer, Douglas Coupland, Kimsooja, Marianne Nicolson, Ian Wallace, Song Dong, Rebecca Belmore, Brian Jungen, Paul Wong, Nancy Spero, Stan Douglas, and Ann Hamilton. She also curated and co-curated group exhibitions on subjects ranging across post-war craft and design in British Columbia, mash-up culture, Surrealism, and body politics, and she oversaw the revival of the gallery's survey exhibitions of contemporary Vancouver art.

For the VAG as well as other institutions, Augaitis has contributed essays and interviews to innumerable books and exhibition catalogues, most recently *Gathie Falk: Revelations*, *Jan Wade: Soul Power*, *Modern in the Making: Post-war Craft and Design in British Columbia*, *Vikky Alexander: Extreme Beauty*, and *Ben Reeves: Floating among Phantoms*.

Previously, Augaitis held curatorial and directorial positions at the Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff; and Western Front and the Convertible Showroom, Vancouver. She has received many honours, including the Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence, the Canadian Museums Association Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research, and the Emily Award from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. She has undertaken freelance curatorial projects for institutions in Toronto, New York, Seattle, and Madrid;

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her touring exhibitions have been featured nationally and internationally including at the National Gallery in Ottawa, The Power Plant in Toronto, Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon, Jeu de Paume in Paris, New Museum in New York, and MOCA in Los Angeles; was named Canadian commissioner for the Johannesburg Biennale (1995), the Sydney Biennial (2000), and the Bienal de São Paulo (2002); and was curator of the Vancouver Pavilion at the Shanghai Biennale (2012). She also served as interim director at the Vancouver Art Gallery (2019-20).

Augaitis pursued studies at the University of Waterloo, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and Emily Carr College of Art and Design. She holds degrees in environmental studies, studio arts, and curatorial studies.

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MEDIA INFORMATION:
Ada Slivinski, Talk Shop Media
ada@talkshopmedia.com
604-202-1167