



מוזיאון ישראל, ירושלים  
the israel museum, jerusalem  
متحف إسرائيل، أورشليم القدس

## Shpilman Photography Prize Awarded to Sara Cwynar

Jerusalem, Israel, January 12, 2021: The Israel Museum, Jerusalem has awarded **Sara Cwynar** as winner of the [2020 Shpilman International Prize for Excellence in Photography](#). The Canadian artist will receive an award of \$40,000 in recognition of her powerful activation of the photographic medium and her original critique of its political histories and to support the research, production, and post-production of a multi-platform video and photography project. Honorable Mentions were also granted to **Penelope Umbrico** (USA) and **Lebohang Kganye** (South Africa).

This year the Shpilman Prize was dedicated to the theme of *Action*, exploring the tension between camera work that arrests action and the actual activities of cameras in current social and cultural spheres. The suspension of human movement that the COVID-19 crisis has inflicted globally only underscores this subject and its creative interpretations.

Born in Vancouver in 1985, Cwynar is a conceptual video artist and photographer whose practice disrupts the intersection of art history and popular culture. Her recent works have employed the cool, ironical appropriation of various visual genres, in which stories of contemporary Western culture turn into a personal, nearly hallucinatory stream of consciousness. Performing for the camera and roaming between digital manipulation and deadpan documentary styles, Cwynar inserts herself into settings that offer a genuine reflection of her own generation. The ambivalence and self-reflectivity of her work triggers strong feelings and opinions regarding the artist's motivations, intentions, and awareness. Cwynar's work generates discourses that open up new possibilities for the site of the artwork, in wider fields of photography, and beyond.

Candidates for the prize must be nominated by experienced professionals in art and/or photography affiliated with non-commercial artistic, cultural, or academic institutions. Submissions are reviewed and judged by an independent jury of internationally recognized experts. The jury members of SIPEP2020 were: Selen Ansen, Contemporary Art Curator at ARTER, Istanbul; Martin Barnes, Senior Curator of Photography at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Anne Lacoste, Director of the Photography Institute, Lille; Nicola Trezzi, Director and Curator at CCA – Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; and Dr. Noam Gal, Curator and Head of the Department of Photography, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

### About Shpilman Prize

The Shpilman International Prize for Excellence in Photography was created in 2010 by the Shpilman family and the Shpilman Institute for Photography together with the Israel Museum, in recognition of photography as a leading contemporary cultural medium and to cultivate original work in the field of photography. The prize, in the amount of \$40,000, is awarded once every two years based on the review and decision of an international jury comprised of five acclaimed

professionals. Past winners include Michal Heiman, John Jacob, Servet Kocyigit, Lisa Oppenheim and Alison Rossiterd.

### **About Sara Cwynar**

Sara Cwynar (b. 1985, Vancouver, BC, Canada) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, USA. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Gilded Age* Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT, USA (2019); *Gilded Age II*, The Polygon Gallery, North Vancouver, BC, Canada (2019); *Good Life*, Blitz, Valletta, Malta (2019); *Image Model Muse*, Milwaukee Art Museum, WI, USA (2019) and Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN, USA (2018); *Rose Gold*, The Approach, London, UK (2018); *Tracy*, Oakville Galleries, Oakville, ON, Canada (2018); and *Soft Film*, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany (2017). Forthcoming and recent group exhibitions include: *American Women*, La Patinoire Royale, Brussels, Belgium (2020); *Le Dandy des Gadoues*, Centre d'art Contemporain de Noisy-le-Sec, France (2019); *Don't! Photography and the Art of Mistakes*, SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA, USA (2019); *Glenn O'Brien: Center Stage*, Off Paradise, New York, NY, USA (2019); *Age of You*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, ON, Canada (2019); *Last Night I Wore A Costume*, LX, New York, NY, USA (2019); *She Stares Back*, Kendall College of Art and Design, Grand Rapids, MI, USA (2018-19); *You Are Looking at Something That Never Occurred: From The Zabudowicz Collection*, MAMM: Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia (2018); and *To Our Parents*, 33rd Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil (2018).

Cwynar's works are in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Guggenheim Museum, New York; SFMOMA, San Francisco; MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Minneapolis Institute of Art; Dallas Museum of Art; Milwaukee Art Museum; Baloise Art Collection, Basel; Fondazione Prada, Milan; Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; FOAM Photography Museum, Amsterdam; Soho House, Toronto; TD Bank Canada Collection, Toronto.

### **About The Israel Museum, Jerusalem**

The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, is Israel's foremost cultural institution and one of the world's leading encyclopedic museums. Founded in 1965, the Museum's terraced 20-acre campus houses a wide-ranging collection of art and archaeology of world-class status. Its holdings include the world's most comprehensive collections of the archaeology of the Holy Land, and Jewish Art and Life, as well as significant and extensive holdings in the Fine Arts, the latter encompassing 10 separate departments: Israeli Art; European Art; Modern Art; Contemporary Art; Prints and Drawings; Photography; Design and Architecture; Asian Art; the Arts of Africa and Oceania; and the Arts of the Americas. The campus also includes the Shrine of the Book, which houses the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls, the world's oldest biblical manuscripts; an extensive model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period; the Billy Rose Art Garden; and a dynamic Youth Wing for Art Education whose educational programs attract over 100,000 children every year. In just over 50 years, the Museum has built a far-ranging collection of nearly 500,000 objects through an unparalleled legacy of gifts and support from a wide circle of friends and patrons throughout the world. The Museum also embraces a dynamic program of some 20–25

new exhibitions a year, and a rich annual program of publications, educational activities, and special cultural events that reach out to every sector of the population.

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