CAULEEN SMITH NAMED THE RECIPIENT OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL JOYCE ALEXANDER WEIN ARTIST PRIZE

NEW YORK, NY, OCTOBER 6, 2020 — In conjunction with The Studio Museum in Harlem’s annual gala campaign, Director and Chief Curator Thelma Golden announced that Los Angeles-based artist Cauleen Smith has been selected as the winner of the fifteenth annual Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize. Established in 2006 by jazz impresario, musician, and philanthropist George Wein, the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize is awarded in honor of the longtime Trustee of The Studio Museum, the Prize honors the achievements of an African-American artist who demonstrates great innovation, promise, and creativity and bears a cash prize of $50,000.

A multidisciplinary artist rooted in the mid-twentieth century experimental film, Cauleen Smith describes her work as catalysts for "the everyday possibilities of the imagination." Her first solo New York City exhibition, "Mutualities," is currently on view at the Whitney Museum of American Art, which presented her work in the 2017 Biennial. Her most comprehensive and immersive exhibition to date, "Joyce Alexander Wein Award," was recently presented at MASS MoCA (May 2019–March 2020), with the central portion scheduled to travel to Contemporary Art Museum Houston in 2021. The Studio Museum at Harlem presented her work in the World-Prevailed group exhibition, "The Shapeshift (2013–14)."

Thelma Golden said, "Cauleen Smith’s endlessly generative imagination embraces and transforms multitudes, from the economy of such barriers to the excesses of alien fiction, from shuddering theory to the music of Aluna Coleman and Sun Ra, from the words and visions of Rebecca Dickson to the revolutionary tradition of Third World cinema. Although she has described her subjects as ‘the fragile, the forgotten, the flawed,’ the effect of her work is overwhelmingly one of plenitude, rich in its exploration of human complexities. In recognition of her achievements to date and in the expectation of much more to come, it is a great pleasure for The Studio Museum in Harlem to present Cauleen Smith with the fifteenth annual Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize."

Past winners of the Joyce Alexander Wein Prize include: Torkwase Dyson, 2019; Diedrick Brackens, 2018; Simone Leigh, 2017; and Derrick Adams, 2016.

About Cauleen Smith

Born in Riverside, California, and educated at San Francisco State University (BA) and the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television (MFA), Cauleen Smith lives and works in Los Angeles and serves on the faculty of the California Institute of the Arts. In addition to her solo exhibitions at MAD’s IAC and the Whitney, she has received single artist shows at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and CAFA Headquarters; her short films, , and an installation; and a performance work were showcased in 2019 at the Rotterdam International Film Festival. Her 2016 work硫磺山谷, currently featured in the exhibition "Future Histories: Theater, Galleries and Cauleen Smith by BriMac" at Espace Danse and Cauleen Smith by Espace Danse was recently presented at MASS MoCA (May 2019–March 2020), with the central portion scheduled to travel to Contemporary Art Museum Houston in 2021. The Studio Museum at Harlem presented her work in the Afrofuturist-themed group exhibition, "We Already Have What We Need" (2013–14).

About The Studio Museum in Harlem

Founded in 1968 by a diverse group of artists, community activists, and philanthropists, the Studio Museum in Harlem is internationally known for its catalytic role in promoting the work of artists of African descent. The Studio Museum is preparing to construct a new home at its longtime location on Manhattan’s West 125th Street. Designed by Adjaye Associates in collaboration with Cooper Robertson, the 82,000-square foot facility will be home at its longtime location on Manhattan’s West 125th Street. Designed by Adjaye Associates in collaboration with Cooper Robertson, the 82,000-square foot facility will be the first purpose-built facility in the United States exclusively dedicated to the exhibition of the Studio Museum’s collection. The new building will enable the Studio Museum to better serve a growing and diverse audience, provide additional educational opportunities for people of all ages, expand its program of world-renewed exhibitions, effectively display its singular collection, and strengthen its Artist-Residency program.

For more information on the Studio Museum’s collection, and a wide range of online resources for audiences of all ages, visit studiomuseum.org or follow us @studiomuseum on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

Hours and Admission

The Studio Museum in Harlem’s mainstays are guaranteeing the safety of each member of our community, our staff, our committed donors, and their families. As a public institution, we also are entrusted with our responsibilities as leader in the promotion of both public health practices. For these reasons, as we continue to monitor the challenges posed by the spread of COVID-19, we have closed our programming spaces, the Studio Museum at Harlem, and we are taking every precaution to ensure the safety of our staff and our community.

Photo Credit

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