

Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival Announces Its 2019 Spotlight On Carrie Mae Weems

[by BWW News Desk](#)



[Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival](#) today announced that renowned American artist [Carrie Mae Weems](#) will headline the 23rd edition of the city-wide event spanning the month of May 2019. Weems' exhibition in five parts, sited at distinct locations across the city, represents the artist's first solo exhibition in Canada.

In addition to Weems, a selection of North American and international lens-based artists will present a diversity of projects in museums, galleries, and public spaces across Toronto. The preliminary list of artists includes Taysir Batniji, Moyra Davey, Weronika Gesicka, Mike Hoolboom and Jorge Lozano, Ayana V. Jackson, Sanaz Mazinani, Meryl McMaster, Nadia Myre, Louie Palu, Sputnik Photo Collective, Michael Tsegaye, and Carmen Winant.

Critically acclaimed and recently chosen by T: The New York Times Style Magazine as one of the "The Greats" in the creative sector in 2018, Weems is among the most acclaimed photographers and multi-media artists of her

generation. Her work explores the human experience by revealing different aspects of society and the role of systemic power, both historically and today. Since Weems began her practice in the late 1970's, she has examined and expanded visual narratives of gender, family, racism, class, and identity, and investigated themes of social inequity and injustice, environmental degradation, conflict, and violence. Although addressing a wide array of issues, her overarching commitment is to help us better understand our present moment by examining our collective past. Often produced in series, her work is exhibited and collected by major museums and galleries around the globe.

Artistic Director Bonnie Rubenstein said, "CONTACT has chosen to place a spotlight on [Carrie Mae Weems](#) in 2019 to highlight the significant depth, breadth, and power of her oeuvre; her importance as a groundbreaking artist of the 20th and 21st centuries; and her work's ongoing critical relevance."

Weems' work will be presented in two gallery exhibitions during CONTACT 2019, including a new iteration of her recent multi-layered project Heave (2018), at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto. The installation incorporates photography, video, text, spoken word, music, projection along with design and architectural strategies to probe the devastating effects of violence in our lives.

Additionally, the CONTACT Gallery will display a series of Weems' photographic works and present three major public art installations in downtown locations including the exterior of the TIFF Bell Lightbox, the headquarters of the Toronto International Film Festival.

CONTACT executive director Darcy Killeen said, "We are delighted to welcome [Carrie Mae Weems](#)-one of the most influential artists of our times-to our city and to the 2019 Festival. We are also pleased to offer a preview of the exciting line-up of participating artists coming to Toronto next May. We look forward to working with them, many of whom will create site-specific works for our primary exhibitions and public installations. The CONTACT team is also thrilled to welcome back many of

our long-standing partners and sponsors who continue to support one of the world's top photography festivals."

Preview of CONTACT 2019 artists

Taysir Batniji (born in Gaza, based in France and Palestine) will have work featured at Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art revealing the social, cultural, and political realities of Palestine, the challenges of migration, and the state of being "in between."

Moyra Davey (Canadian, based in New York), winner of the 2018 Scotiabank Photography Award, will be featured in a two-part retrospective exhibition at Ryerson Image Centre. Davey explores notions of intimacy and unseen, ordinary, and often overlooked moments.

Weronika Gesicka (Polish) will present a site-specific art installation in Osgoode Subway Station (part of the Toronto Transit Commission network). Her work is about memory and its mechanisms.

Mike Hoolboom (Canadian) and Jorge Lozano (Colombian, based in Toronto) will create a multi-screen video installation at A Space Gallery. Both artists use cinema of collage to create unlikely juxtapositions and challenge viewers.

Ayana V. Jackson (American) will present works from her series Dear Sarah (2016) and Intimate Justice in the Stolen Moment (2017) in the historic Campbell House Museum. Jackson's work examines the photographic construction of race and gender.

Sanaz Mazinani (Iranian-Canadian, based in San Francisco and Toronto) will create a site-specific installation at the Aga Khan Museum. Working primarily in photography and large-scale public art and installations, her research focuses on the study of digital image propagation and its impact on representation and perception.

Meryl McMaster (Canadian) will present As Immense as the Sky, an exhibition at Ryerson Image Centre featuring a series of self-portraits

showing performative scenes in site-specific landscapes, where the artist examines contact areas of both her Plains Cree Indigenous and European ancestors.

Nadia Myre (Indigenous and Québécois, based in Montreal) will present her first major solo exhibition in Toronto at Textile Museum of Canada comprising large-scale photographs, video, custom wallpaper, and new textile sculptures. She reclaims Indigenous traditions and narratives through a visual language that communicates her longstanding investment in political critique and personal well-being.

Louie Palu (Canadian, U.S. based) will exhibit a project created for National Geographic at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, documenting the legacies of the Cold War and the increased military presence in the North American Arctic today. The series examines the growing geopolitical tensions in the region, climate change, and Inuit communities in one of the planet's most extreme places.

Sputnik Photo Collective (Central and Eastern European, based in Poland), will create a site-specific installation at Brookfield Place. The collective uses the individual experiences of its members as a starting point for an analysis of socio-political processes and socio-cultural phenomena in the former Soviet republics.

Michael Tsegaye (Ethiopian) will present two bodies of work from his ongoing series Future Memories at BAND Gallery. Future Memories is an exploration of the metamorphosis and redevelopment occurring in Addis Ababa threatening the city's identity and collective memory.

Carmen Winant (American) will create billboard images to be shown in Toronto and across Canada. Winant is a writer and visual artist who explores representations of women through collage, mixed media, and installation.

About Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival

CONTACT fosters and celebrates the art and profession of photography

with its annual Festival in May and year-round programming in the CONTACT Gallery in Toronto. CONTACT presents lens-based works by acclaimed and emerging artists, documentary photographers, and photojournalists from Canada and around the world. The curated program of primary exhibitions (collaborations with major museums, galleries, and artist-run centers), and public installations (site-specific public art projects), are the core of the Festival. These are cultivated through partnerships, commissions, and new discoveries, framing the cultural, social, and political events of our times. The featured and open exhibitions present a range of works by local and [International Artists](#) at leading galleries and alternative spaces across the city. CONTACT also includes a wide range of events including a book fair, lectures, talks, panels, workshops, and symposia during the Festival and hosts exhibitions and programs at its Gallery throughout the year.

CONTACT, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1997, is generously supported by Scotiabank, Scotia Wealth Management, Nikon Canada, Pattison Outdoor Advertising, Vistek, Toronto Image Works, The Gilder, Transcontinental PLM, 3M Canada, BIG Digital, Waddington's Auctioneers and Appraisers, Four By Eight Signs, Beyond Digital Imaging, Steam Whistle Brewing, Art Toronto, The Gladstone Hotel, The Globe and Mail, NOW Magazine, CBC Toronto, and Canadian Art.

CONTACT gratefully acknowledges the support of Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, Celebrate Ontario, Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ontario Arts Council, The Government of Ontario, Partners in Art, Canada Council for the Arts, La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso, the Howard Webster Foundation, Mondriaan Fund, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Goethe-Institut, Tourism Toronto and all of their funders, donors, and programming partners.

Photo Caption: [Carrie Mae Weems](#) Untitled, 2017. Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

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