

# GUGGENHEIM

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Hugo Boss Prize Exhibition Featuring New and Recent Work by Deana Lawson Opens at Guggenheim Museum on May 7**

**Exhibition:** *The Hugo Boss Prize 2020: Deana Lawson, Centropy*  
**Venue:** Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York  
**Location:** Tower Level 7  
**Dates:** May 7–October 11, 2021

(NEW YORK, NY—May 6, 2021)—From May 7–October 11, 2021, an exhibition of new and recent works by artist Deana Lawson, winner of the Hugo Boss Prize 2020, will be on view at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Lawson's presentation will include large-scale photographs and holograms. In addition, the museum is producing a film exploring Lawson's practice that will be released in the early fall. Selected by a jury of international critics and curators, Lawson is the thirteenth artist to receive the biennial prize, which was established in 1996 to recognize significant achievement in contemporary art. Since the inception of the award, the associated solo exhibitions have offered an open platform for artists to present projects that realize their current creative thinking, and have formed an anchor of the Guggenheim's contemporary program.

*The Hugo Boss Prize 2020: Deana Lawson, Centropy* is organized by Katherine Brinson, Daskalopoulos Curator, Contemporary Art, and Ashley James, Associate Curator, Contemporary Art. The Hugo Boss Prize and the exhibition are made possible by HUGO BOSS.

Lawson's images are rooted in a moment from the tangible world, but ultimately exist in the shimmering in-between space of dreams, memories, and spiritual communion, where the everyday is transfigured into the uncanny and the magnificent. Her photographs and films usually result from collaborations with strangers whom the artist encounters by chance or deliberately seeks out. These individuals are often depicted within richly textured domestic settings in which the details of decor, lighting, and pose are precisely choreographed. In this way, Lawson draws on the legacies of historical portraiture, documentary photography, and the family album, but transcends these traditions, constructing scenes that merge lived experience with imagined narratives.

The aesthetics and intergenerational connectivity of the Black diaspora guide Lawson's choice of subject matter. The regenerative forces of nature and the cycle of human life from birth to death are abiding themes, with each of her works taking its place in an overarching project that coheres into what she terms "an ever-expanding mythological extended family." Close examination of her compositions reveals the presence of portals, adornments, and devotional objects that evoke the proximity of an unseen realm. This sense of the celestial is heightened by images of sublime natural phenomena such as galaxies and waterfalls, and in instances where the radiance of an individual seems to burn through the surface of the work itself. Lawson's works also demonstrate a special attention to the element of light, as both key to the process by which photographs are produced, and a manifestation of the divinity that suffuses her sitters. Recently, Lawson has begun to set her works in mirrored frames that reflect light outward and materialize an exchange between her subjects and the viewer; in her words, they function as "a reflective lining between worlds, that which is 'seen' in the photograph, and that which 'sees.'"

In this exhibition, large-scale photographs, some of which are embedded with holograms, are arrayed in a dense constellation that surrounds a spectral rendering of a torus—a three-dimensional shape formed by a circle rotated around a central axis. As such, the installation draws on the thermodynamic concept of centropy, a term that describes how the electrification of matter leads to regeneration and harmonious order. The same impulse of renewal through creative energy is central to Lawson's vision, in which her subjects are figured as ineffably splendid, occupying a world that they command absolutely.

In fall 2020, Lawson was selected as the winner of the Hugo Boss Prize from a short list that included Nairy Baghramian (b. 1971, Isfahan, Iran); Kevin Beasley (b. 1985, Lynchburg, Va.); Elias Sime (b. 1968, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia); Cecilia Vicuña (b. 1948, Santiago, Chile); and Adrián Villar Rojas (b. 1980, Rosario, Argentina). The jurors were Naomi Beckwith, incoming Chief Curator of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Katherine Brinson, Daskalopoulos Curator, Contemporary Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Julieta González, independent curator; Christopher Y. Lew, Nancy and Fred Poses Curator, Whitney Museum of American Art; and Nat Trotman, Curator, Performance and Media, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

On the occasion of the prize, the Guggenheim produced videos documenting the finalists' creative processes. Visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) to watch and learn.

In September, the Guggenheim will release a short film illuminating Lawson's artistic practice, which is being created in collaboration with renowned cinematographer Bradford Young and Ummah Chroma Creative Partners.

The exhibition includes works whose production was supported by The Lewis Center for the Arts' Program in Visual Arts at Princeton University, where Lawson is Professor of Visual Arts.

### **Deana Lawson**

Deana Lawson lives and works in New York and Los Angeles. Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions including *Deana Lawson: Centropy*, Kunsthalle Basel (2020); *Deana Lawson*, Huis Marseille, Museum voor Fotografie, Amsterdam (2019); *Deana Lawson: Planes*, The Underground Museum, Los Angeles (2018); *Deana Lawson*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2018); *Deana Lawson*,

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2017); *Deana Lawson*, The Art Institute of Chicago (2015); and *Corporeal*, Light Work, Syracuse, N.Y. (2009).

### **Hugo Boss Prize History**

Since its inception in 1996, the Hugo Boss Prize has been awarded to 13 innovative and influential contemporary artists: Matthew Barney (1996), Douglas Gordon (1998), Marjetica Potrč (2000), Pierre Huyghe (2002), Rirkrit Tiravanija (2004), Tacita Dean (2006), Emily Jacir (2008), Hans-Peter Feldmann (2010), Danh Vo (2012), Paul Chan (2014), Anicka Yi (2016), Simone Leigh (2018), and Deana Lawson (2020). The related exhibitions have constituted some of the most compelling presentations in the museum's history.

Previous finalists are Laurie Anderson, Janine Antoni, Cai Guo-Qiang, Stan Douglas, and Yasumasa Morimura in 1996; Huang Yong Ping, William Kentridge, Lee Bul, Pipilotti Rist, and Lorna Simpson in 1998; Vito Acconci, Maurizio Cattelan, Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, Tom Friedman, Barry Le Va, and Tunga in 2000; Francis Alÿs, Olafur Eliasson, Hachiya Kazuhiko, Koo Jeong-a, and Anri Sala in 2002; Franz Ackermann, Rivane Neuenschwander, Jeroen de Rijke and Willem de Rooij, Simon Starling, and Yang Fudong in 2004; Allora & Calzadilla, John Bock, Damián Ortega, Aïda Ruilova, and Tino Sehgal in 2006; Christoph Büchel, Patty Chang, Sam Durant, Joachim Koester, and Roman Signer in 2008; Cao Fei, Roman Ondák, Walid Raad, Natascha Sadr Haghghian, and Apichatpong Weerasethakul in 2010; Trisha Donnelly, Rashid Johnson, Qiu Zhijie, Monika Sosnowska, and Tris Vonna-Michell in 2012; Sheela Gowda, Camille Henrot, Hassan Khan, and Charline von Heyl in 2014; Tania Bruguera, Mark Leckey, Ralph Lemon, Laura Owens, and Wael Shawky in 2016; and Bouchra Khalili, Teresa Margolles, Emeka Ogboh, Frances Stark, and Wu Tsang in 2018.

To see a timeline and a video on the history the Hugo Boss Prize, as well as an overview of past prize catalogues, visit [guggenheim.org/hugobossprize](https://guggenheim.org/hugobossprize).

### **About HUGO BOSS AG and its support of the Guggenheim**

The HUGO BOSS Group is one of the leading companies in the upper premium segment of the apparel market that focuses on the development and marketing of premium fashion and accessories for men and women. Since 1995, the company has provided critical support to many Guggenheim programs. In addition to the Hugo Boss Prize, the company has helped make possible retrospectives of the work of Matthew Barney (2003), Georg Baselitz (1995), Ross Bleckner (1995), Francesco Clemente (1999–2000), Ellsworth Kelly (1996–97), Robert Rauschenberg (1997–98), and James Rosenquist (2003–04); the presentation *Art in America: Now* (2007) in Shanghai; the Felix Gonzalez-Torres (2007) and Ed Ruscha (2005) exhibitions in the U.S. Pavilion of the Venice Biennale; and the exhibition *theanyspacewhatever* (2008–09) at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. At the 54th Venice Biennale (2011), the fashion and lifestyle group HUGO BOSS was the lead sponsor of the Allora & Calzadilla exhibition in the U.S. Pavilion. For more information about the HUGO BOSS arts program, visit <https://group.hugoboss.com/en/sponsorship/arts-sponsorship>.

### **About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation**

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation was established in 1937 and is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of modern and contemporary art through exhibitions, education

programs, research initiatives, and publications. The international constellation of museums comprises the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice; the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao; and the future Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. An architectural icon and “temple of spirit” where radical art and architecture meet, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is among a group of eight Frank Lloyd Wright structures in the United States recently designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. To learn more about the museum and the Guggenheim’s activities around the world, visit [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org).

### **Visitor Information**

Admission: Adults \$25, students/seniors (65+) \$18, members and children under 12 free. Open Thursdays through Mondays from 11 am to 6 pm. Pay What You Wish hours are Saturdays from 4 to 6 pm, with free admission on select Saturdays. Timed tickets are required and available at [guggenheim.org/tickets](http://guggenheim.org/tickets). Explore the Guggenheim with our free Digital Guide, a part of the Bloomberg Connects app. Find it in the [Apple App Store](#) or in the [Google Play Store](#).

The Guggenheim is implementing health and safety measures in consideration of visitors and employees and in compliance with New York State and City guidelines. Face masks are mandatory inside the museum for anyone over the age of two. New requirements should be reviewed in advance of a visit; they are posted on COVID-19 Safety Measures: What to Expect When Visiting.

For publicity images, visit [guggenheim.org/press](http://guggenheim.org/press)  
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#1604  
May 6, 2021

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