

Aimia Inc.

## Aimia | AGO Photography Prize announces 2016 shortlist

*Jury selects four international finalists; public vote for C\$50,000 prize begins in Gallery on September 7*

TORONTO, July 27, 2016 /CNW Telbec/ - Four outstanding international artists have been shortlisted for the 2016 **Aimia | AGO Photography Prize**, Canada's most significant award for photography. Co-presented by **Aimia**, a Canadian-based global leader in data-driven marketing and loyalty analytics company, and the **Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO)**, the Prize awards C\$50,000 to one winner, who is chosen by public vote. The four finalists will present their work in an exhibition opening **Sept. 7, 2016** at the AGO in Toronto. Voting begins in person at the AGO upon the exhibition's opening and on the Prize's [website](#) on **Sept. 14, 2016**.

The 2016 finalists are:

- **Talia Chetrit** (USA)
- **Jimmy Robert** (France)
- **Ursula Schulz-Dornburg** (Germany)
- **Elizabeth Zvonar** (Canada)

Fourteen international nominators selected a long list of 23 artists. From that list, a jury of three experts named the four finalists, who each showed extraordinary potential. The jury was headed by **Kitty Scott**, the AGO's Carol & Morton Rapp Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, and included artist **Stan Douglas** and art scholar **Russell Ferguson**. The exhibition will be curated by **Adelina Vlas**, the AGO's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art.

"The four nominated artists for this year's Aimia | AGO Photography Prize all work with photography in singular ways, each of which embodies a current mode in contemporary art," Vlas said. "The strength of their work and the diversity of their approaches will make for a unique exhibition inviting visitors to appreciate, reflect on, and participate in the visual culture of our time."

**Talia Chetrit** was born in Washington, DC in 1982, and lives and works in New York. Chetrit's work focuses on the human body—often her own—as a starting point to examine how images are constructed to support different agendas and interpretations of reality. After beginning her practice with an exploration of the manipulative nature of photography, Chetrit is increasingly interested in the relationship the camera has with the subject matter it documents. Her work has recently been featured in group exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art and Sculpture Center in New York, Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Studio Voltaire in London and LACMA in Los Angeles.

**Jimmy Robert** was born in Guadeloupe in 1975 and currently lives and works in Bucharest. His multidisciplinary practice encompasses performance, photography, film, video and drawing. Robert typically uses photography as a starting point for his works on paper, breaking down the divisions between two and three dimensions, as well as image and object. In some works Robert uses found photographs that he tears, collages, tapes and crumples before digitally scanning them and pinning them to the wall. In other works, Robert takes new photographs in his studio and crams them into wooden boxes or arranges them on the gallery floor. His sculptures similarly give the illusion of paper forms and often play with notions of value and durability. Integrated within his photographic and sculpture practice, performance remains a central part of Robert's work. His dance and performance works also oscillate between image and objecthood as well as the personal and the political.

**Ursula Schulz-Dornburg** was born 1938 in Berlin and lives and works in Dusseldorf. Since the end of the 1960s, the house as a fundamental fact of human existence has been central to her work. She has travelled from the secret village of Kurchatov, Kazakhstan to the Hejaz railway in Saudi Arabia, from Kronstadt, Russia to Armenia and the border of Georgia and Azerbaijan to Iraq and Syria, in order to photograph the intertwining relationship between industrial and architectural structures, land and humans. Her work captures the historical and political importance of architecture and its destruction within the last century. Schulz-Dornburg's work is a critical exploration of the construction of power and its impermanence, and has recently been included in exhibitions at the Tate Modern in London and Giorgio Mastinu Gallery in Venice.

**Elizabeth Zvonar** works in a variety of mediums, including collage, sculpture and photography. Her collages are created from a variety of sources, from fashion magazines to art history and science textbooks, they are then scanned and reproduced as glossy photographs while keeping the rips and cuts of the original collage. Zvonar's images explore the conflicting meanings that exist within Western media, playing with inherent hypocrisies in the media's depictions of women, consumerism and history. In her sculpture, she uses a variety of materials including porcelain, cement and bronze to cast body parts and pieces of clothing. These body parts are then assembled and re-contextualized with a similarly collage-like approach. The materials and forms suggest luxury objects but the strange juxtapositions are designed to unsettle the viewer and offer alternate possibilities of purpose and interpretation.

The **Aimia | AGO Photography Prize recognizes and develops the best in Canadian and international contemporary photography and helps to foster the next generation of artists. The Prize** has a total annual prize value of C\$90,000, and is composed of an annual exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario, an online exhibition at [AimiaAGOPhotographyPrize.com](http://AimiaAGOPhotographyPrize.com), a range of public programming and a [national scholarship program](#). It includes awards of \$50,000 to the winner, \$5,000 to each of the three runners-up, \$7,000 to each of three scholarship winners and \$1,000 to each of their respective schools. This year, the Prize also expanded to include an award of \$1,000 for honorable mention in the scholarship category.

Previous winners of the Prize include Americans Dave Jordano (2015) and Lisa Oppenheim (2014), Canada's Erin Shirreff (2013), Britain's Jo Longhurst (2012), Gauri Gill of India (2011), Canadian Kristan Horton (2010), Marco Antonio Cruz of Mexico (2009) and Canadian Sarah Anne Johnson (2008). For updates on the Prize, further details on the shortlisted artists and additional information, please visit [AimiaAGOPhotographyPrize.com](http://AimiaAGOPhotographyPrize.com) and follow [@AimiaAGOPrize](https://twitter.com/AimiaAGOPrize) on Twitter.

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## **ABOUT AIMIA**

Aimia, a data-driven marketing and loyalty analytics company, has adopted two fundamental principles of loyalty, trust and reciprocity, as the pillars of its global social purpose — to create mutually beneficial partnerships that leave a lasting impact in our communities. As an enthusiastic patron of the Arts, Aimia supports many Canadian and International arts and culture initiatives through donations, sponsorships and employee volunteer activities. Aimia has supported several Canadian cultural organizations including the Art Gallery of Ontario, Art Canada Institute, Business for the Arts, Canadian Art Foundation, the National Gallery of Canada, Luminato Festival, the Walrus Foundation and Canada's presentation at the International Art and Architecture Venice Biennale since 2006. Aimia is proud to engage in a dialogue around the arts through the Aimia | AGO Photography Prize and scholarship program, and through our office art installations in Montreal and Toronto. Visit us at [www.aimia.com](http://www.aimia.com) to learn more.

## **ABOUT THE AGO**

With a collection of more than 90,000 works of art, the **Art Gallery of Ontario** is among the most distinguished art museums in North America. From the vast body of Group of Seven and signature Canadian works to the African art gallery, from the cutting-edge contemporary art to Peter Paul Rubens's masterpiece *The Massacre of The Innocents*, the AGO offers an incredible art experience with each visit. In 2002, Ken Thomson's generous gift of 2,000 remarkable works of Canadian and European art inspired Transformation AGO, an innovative architectural expansion by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry that in 2008 resulted in one of the most critically acclaimed architectural achievements in North America. Highlights include Galleria Italia, a gleaming showcase of wood and glass running the length of an entire city block, and the often-photographed spiral staircase, beckoning visitors to explore. The AGO has an active membership program offering great value, and the AGO's Weston Family Learning Centre offers engaging art and creative programs for children, families, youth and adults. Visit [ago.net](http://ago.net) to learn more.

The Art Gallery of Ontario is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Additional operating support is received from the City of Toronto, the Canada Council for the Arts and generous contributions from AGO members, donors and private-sector partners.

The AGO acknowledges the generous support of **Aimia**, Signature Partner of the Photography Collection Program and Founding Partner of the Aimia | AGO Photography Prize.

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