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NortonMuseum of Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Norton to Showcase 2016 Nominees in *Rudin Prize for Emerging Photographers* Exhibition

Diverse Works By Nominees Clare Benson, Elizabeth Bick, Alexandra Hunts, and Wesley Stringer Offer Varied Perspectives on Contemporary Photography

Visitors Invited to View and Vote From Nov. 10, 2016 – Jan. 15, 2017



WEST PALM BEACH, FL (OCT. 24, 2016) – The Norton Museum of Art will present the work of the 2016 nominees for the international Rudin Prize for Emerging Photographers in a special exhibition on view Nov. 10, 2016 – Jan. 15, 2017. The *Rudin Prize for Emerging Photographers* will feature more than 48 photographs, videos, and installation works by Clare Benson, Elizabeth Bick, Alexandra Hunts, and Wesley Stringer, who were nominated by Arno Minkkinen, Shirin Neshat, Rineke Dijkstra, and Michael Kenna, respectively. The exhibition is curated by Tim B. Wride, the Norton’s William and Sarah Ross Soter Curator of Photography.

“The 2016 Rudin Prize nominees’ bodies of work encapsulate their continued growth as photographers and curiosity as observant artists,” said Wride. “We look forward to revealing to both the jury and visitors how these young artists have pursued in-depth discovery of ideas ranging from femininity and performance to the environment and childhood.”

Each artist will be individually showcased in a monographic installation within the group show. The nominated photographers are known for expressing themselves through cross-disciplinary practice and process. The Rudin exhibition will showcase the complexity of their ideas and the inventiveness of their visual communication to express them. Each takes the form of traditional photographic prints; yet for each there is an additional element within the installation—sculpture,

hand-made books, integration of color prints with black-and-white prints, video, and multi-media—that elevates their discourse.

Clare Benson's artistic practice includes still-photography, performance, video, and sculpture. On view in the Norton's exhibition will be selections from the artist's ongoing series *The Shepherd's Daughter* through which she poetically investigates gender roles, the capriciousness of memory, tradition, and mythology. Benson's single image of the same title features her trekking across the starkly rural Michigan landscape, hoisting a massive antelope head upon her back. What could be read as a subsistence hunting scenario is complicated by the anomaly of the artist's burden being a taxidermy trophy of an African beast.

Elizabeth Bick trained as a dancer before turning to photography. Her hard-won understanding as a performing artist still pervades her work as a visual artist. She is drawn to those situations that isolate yet simultaneously reinforce placement and gesture. Among her works on view will be an example of her *Street Ballet* series in which she uses the camera to organize and "choreograph" the random placement of urban pedestrians and *Every God XXV* (2016) from her series of the same name, which was made within the depths of the Roman Pantheon. The figure and her biblically expressive gesture is spotlighted against a deeply shadowed interior by the light streaming in from the central oculus.

Alexandra Hunts is intrigued with the interaction of digital and analog photography; consumed with the seeming inability of photography to show—not merely describe—abstract concepts; and obsessed with using photography to define the invisible. As a result, she has brought all of her creative powers and technical expertise to bear on the concepts of time and mass. Examples of her visual mediation of each will be on view in the Norton's exhibition. A work such as *Substance of Time and Space* (2015) studies both a shifting object and time by documenting the evaporation of a glassful of water. Every 12 hours, the artist made a photograph of her subject: a glass and the water it contained until the glass was empty. She then folded and assembled all 154 photographs into a single image of a glass of water transitioning from being filled to being empty.

Wesley Stringer is a traditional photographer who also crafts handmade books. Both undertakings derive their significance and meaning from the artist's subtlety of sequencing and empathetic understanding of the exponential accumulation of meaning available through visual haiku. His work is highly contemplative and populated by environmental imagery that recalls his home-schooled upbringing in rural Oklahoma. His search for quiet moments within a rapidly developing landscape results in expressive images of abandoned areas and hidden spaces. His most recent body of work traces the seasonal cycle and will be on view with three of his hand-bound books.

The Rudin Prize is awarded every two years to an emerging photographer on the leading edge of their field, but who has not yet had a solo museum exhibition. The winner, who will receive a \$20,000 cash prize, will be selected by the Norton's Photography Committee, comprised of the Norton's Executive Director, photography curator, collectors, and trustees, and announced on Jan. 5, 2017 during Art After Dark. Visitors will be able to vote for a "People's Choice" selection which will also be announced on that date.

The Rudin Prize, named in honor of the late New York City real estate developer Lewis Rudin, was initiated by Norton Museum staff and Beth Rudin DeWoody, who is a member of the Photography Committee at the Norton and President of The Rudin Family Foundations and Executive Vice President of Rudin Management Company. Past winners of the award include Argentine Analia Saban, nominated by John Baldessari, in 2012; and Israeli Rami Maymon, nominated by Adi Nes, in 2014.

About the Norton Museum

Founded in 1941, the Norton Museum of Art is recognized for its distinguished holdings in American, European, and Chinese art, and a continually expanding presence for Photography and Contemporary art. Its masterpieces of 19th century and 20th century European painting and sculpture include works by Brancusi, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso, and American works by Stuart Davis, Hopper, O'Keeffe, Pollock, and Sheeler.

The Norton presents special exhibitions, lectures, tours, and programs for adults and children throughout the year. In 2011, the Norton launched RAW (Recognition of Art by Women), featuring the work of a living female painter or sculptor and funded by the Leonard and Sophie Davis Fund/MLDauray Arts Initiative.

In 2016, the Norton broke ground for a visionary expansion designed by architecture firm Foster + Partners, under the direction of Pritzker Prize-winning architect Lord Norman Foster. The project reorients the Norton's entrance to the main thoroughfare of South Dixie Highway, restoring the symmetry of the museum's original 1941 design, and includes a new 42,000-square-foot West Wing that doubles education space, and increases gallery space for the Norton's renowned collection. The transformation of the Museum's 6.3-acre campus will create a museum in a garden, featuring new, verdant spaces and a sculpture garden.

The Norton is located at 1451 S. Olive Ave. in West Palm Beach, FL., and during construction through December 2018 is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. and Thursday, noon to 9 p.m., and is free to the public. The Museum is closed on Mondays and major holidays. For additional information, please call (561) 832-5196, or visit www.norton.org.

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Images (left to right): **Clare Benson**, *The Shepherd's Daughter*, 2012, archival pigment print, courtesy of the artist. **Elizabeth Bick**, *Street Ballet I*, 2015, chromogenic development print, courtesy of the artist. **Alexandra Hunts**, *Substance of Time and Space*, 2015, chromogenic development print, courtesy of the artist. **Wesley Stringer** *Untitled*, 2015, archival pigment print, courtesy of the artist.