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THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO TO HONOR ARTISTS HOWARDENA PINDELL, SENGA NENGUDI, AND TREVOR PAGLEN AT ITS 2021 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

CHICAGO—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), a global leader in art and design education, will welcome renowned multidisciplinary artist Howardena Pindell to deliver the School's Commencement address on Saturday, May 15, as part of the School's virtual ceremony. Pindell will receive an honorary doctorate alongside two other celebrated artists: Senga Nengudi and alum Trevor Paglen (MFA 2002).

Pindell's work, which has been featured in major museums, including a recent career retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, explores a wide range of subject matter, from the personal to the political. Nengudi's sculpture, installations, and performance have been celebrated with the CAA Distinguished Feminist Award and the Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award, among others. Paglen, an artist and author who documents the American surveillance state of the 21st century, has exhibited widely and been honored with a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship and the MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant.

"Through their practices, each of our distinguished honorees shows our graduates how to see and create fully, with rigor, exuberance, and candor," said SAIC President Elissa Tenny. "They demonstrate a belief we hold deeply at SAIC: Artists and designers are not only shaped by the world. They shape it."

Since 1938, SAIC has awarded honorary degrees to an elite group of individuals who have made significant contributions to art, design, and scholarship. Past recipients include Mel Chin, Albert Oehlen, Jeff Koons (SAIC 1975–76), members of the Hairy Who, Tania Bruguera (MFA 2001), Yoko Ono, David Sedaris (BFA 1987), Theaster Gates, Patti Smith, founding members of AFRICOBRA, Marina Abramovic, and Jeanne Gang.

This year's virtual ceremony will bring together more than 900 undergraduate and graduate students receiving their degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates, who will be watching from around the world, representing over 50 different countries.

In addition to remarks from President Elissa Tenny and Pindell, it will include messages from faculty, alums, and student created animations, all in honor of the class of 2021.

About the Commencement Speaker and Honorees



Howardena Pindell (Commencement Speaker), an alum of Boston University and Yale University, is a multidisciplinary artist and former associate curator and acting director in the department of prints and illustrated books at the Museum of Modern Art and a current professor at Stony Brook University, where she began teaching in 1979. Most recently, Pindell's work appeared in *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85* at the Brooklyn Museum, New York. Her 2018 retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, *Howardena Pindell: What Remains to Be Seen*, traveled to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (2018) and the Rose Art Museum (2019). Pindell's work is in the permanent collections of major museums internationally, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the National Gallery of Art; and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen, among many others.



Senga Nengudi is an acclaimed, Chicago-born interdisciplinary artist whose practice includes sculpture, installations, and performance. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and former lecturer at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, Nengudi has received many awards including the CAA Distinguished Feminist Award-Visual Art, the Bonfil-Stanton Foundation Leadership Award, the Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award, and more. With artwork featured in exhibits around the globe, Nengudi's ephemeral practice, influenced by her African and African American heritage, insists on responding to the moment.



Trevor Paglen (MFA 2002) is an artist who borrows from a wide range of disciplines including sculpture, image-making, celestial mechanics, open-source intelligence, photography, human geography, semiotics, computer vision, and much more. The goal of his work is simple: to learn to see the historical moment and to imagine alternative futures. Paglen has had residencies at Artpace San Antonio and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his honors include the MacArthur Fellowship, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, the Aperture West Prize, the SFMoMA SECA Art Award, an Art Matters grant, and an Artadia grant. His work has appeared in major exhibitions at Creative Time, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, and the Taipei Biennial, among many others.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

For more than 150 years, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) has been a leader in educating the world's most influential artists, designers, and scholars. Located in downtown Chicago with a fine arts graduate program consistently ranking among the top programs in the

nation by *U.S. News and World Report*, SAIC provides an interdisciplinary approach to art and design as well as world-class resources, including the Art Institute of Chicago museum, on-campus galleries, and state-of-the-art facilities. SAIC's undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate students have the freedom to take risks and create the bold ideas that transform Chicago and the world—as seen through notable alumni and faculty such as Michelle Grabner, David Sedaris, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Hunt, Georgia O'Keeffe, Cynthia Rowley, Nick Cave, Jeff Koons, and LeRoy Neiman.