UnSettled

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

Queer Arts Festival
2017

CURATED BY
Adrian Stimson

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
SD Holman

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By Jonathan D. Katz and Conor Moynihan, with an introduction by SD Holman

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UnSettled: Introduction

Lacie Burning

During the preparation of this catalogue, Keijaun Thomas, one of the *Drama Queer* artists, asked:

> I personally don't think it is enough to say that queer art has always been left out of art history—well damn, black art and black history, especially art that focuses on creating space and holding space for black and brown people and our legacies, have always been on the margins. What will the Drama Queer catalogue do to sustain our lives? How does the catalogue reflect the urgency to preserve our collective histories?[1]

Drama Queer was the visual art exhibition for the 2016 Queer Arts Festival in Vancouver, British Columbia, curated by seminal queer studies scholar and activist Jonathan D. Katz and Conor Moynihan. It took place June 21-30, which meant QAF's crew began the exhibition load-in just two days after the Pulse shooting in Orlando, Florida. This massacre targeting predominantly QPOC (queer people of colour) hit us hard, even though we were in another country, across a continent.

While I want the scale of the loss in Orlando to be unfathomable, it is not: it is a grim reminder that homophobia is still killing us. So many of us have stories of violence. Our fundamental rite of passage as queers, *coming out*, remains an act of courage. I was reminded of the man that came to my house with a gun in Rock Creek to shoot me, a story I had never told until the morning after Pulse—what's yours?

It is important to remember that Orlando's carnage is part of a larger violent project. Part of a system in which trans people and people of colour—especially Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people—are disproportionately targeted, assaulted, and killed, too often by the police, then blamed for their own murders. Part of a system that pipelines racialized youth from resource-starved schools and social services into slave labour in prisons, and cannon fodder in wars.

1 Keijaun Thomas, e-mail to author and Conor Moynihan, September 11, 2017.

Pulse reminded us how vulnerable and permeable our "safe spaces" are.

So, as I sat trying to work on the Queer Arts Festival opening just a few days later, engulfed, sputtering in rage and sadness, and trying to carry on, I was reminded again why we do what we do.

For generations, queers have carved our own spaces out of a hostile world, spaces where we can sing and dance and draw and rhyme and fuck our resistance; spaces that meld struggle with celebration, politics with sex, serious purpose with more fabulous than anyone could ever swallow. The Queer Arts Festival was specifically created as one of these spaces, an opportunity for queer artists to do the things that are hard to do as queers in the art world, as well as those things that are hard to do as artists in the queer world, including—perhaps especially—at the intersections that get stonewalled in both of these worlds.

To answer Keijaun's question, I don't think that an art catalogue alone can sustain us. However, I do believe the work of the artists in *Drama Queer* reflects the urgency to preserve collective histories/herstories/ourstories at multiple margins. I believe that art is the first step to revolution. From Oscar Wilde to General Idea, artists have been the vanguard of the queer civil rights movement, with social and aesthetic innovations inextricably entwined. Far from a thing of the past, the underlying current of unrest in most contemporary queer art speaks to the socio-political reality of queers today. A wise person once said, *resistance is important not because it changes anything, but because it keeps us human.*

Queer histories are so often palimpsests, requiring loving and painstaking restoration of legacies erased and overwritten. Analogously, queer spaces tend to be temporary and contingent, rainbow-glossed bubbles blooming briefly before they give way to exhaustion or gentrification—or both.

If, as Betsy Warland asserts, the blank page is the writer's homeland,[2] then the filled page—paper and/or web—is where we as queers often find home. This catalogue extends through time and space the invitation I tendered after Pulse: *Come for the art, come for a drink, come to help out, come just to hang out with us queers: us dykes, fags, nancy boys, bulldaggers, girlymen, mannish women, fairies, fence-sitters, and deviants. Come be with your people. Come because you are not afraid, or because you are. You are wanted here, and you are not alone.*

Jonathan D. Katz & the birth of *Drama Queer*

Drama Queer focuses on art produced in the new millennium, bringing together Canadian, American, and international visual artists working in video, photography, performance, painting, and installation. It is part of Pride in Art's mission to incite dialogue between contemporary artists that transcends discipline and place, yet it was the first time that I engaged a US-based scholar—the internationally-renowned curator Jonathan D. Katz—to guest curate the visual art component of this festival. Katz is arguably the leading authority in queer art history, and his work as curator, scholar, and activist has had a profound impact on the understanding of queer art and artists in both academia and the larger world.

I encountered Jonathan's work as I was researching my essay "Towards a Repositioning of Queer Art."[3] Katz co-curated the 2010 exhibition *Hide/Seek: Difference, Desire, and the Invention of Modern American Portraiture* at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, the first major museum show of overtly queer visual art in the US. Katz was doing transformative work most others were afraid to do: to identify what was hidden in plain sight. It felt like Katz was reading my mail when he articulated, "We're in a place where we have carved out a position for queers in popular culture, but not, if you'll excuse the term, in high culture."[4]

I tracked Katz down when he was speaking in Vancouver and asked him to curate for QAF. I told him the festival theme for the year was *Stonewall was a Riot,* but that the exhibition theme was open. He responded with the theme for *Drama Queer:*

> *Drama Queer* explores the role of emotion in contemporary queer art as a form of political practice. Emotion has been identified by scholars and activists as central to much queer contemporary work. This exhibition places the queer utility of emotion into a historical context… Wildly diverging queer artists have shared credence in art's capacity to, if not produce social change, at least lubricate its prospects. And central to this generalized belief is the idea that queerness works a seduction away from *naturalized*, normative and thus invisible ideological creeds towards a position that is precisely other to, at a tangent from, social expectation. In deviating from social norms, queer art
> calls the viewer, of whatever sexualities, to an awareness of their own deviancy. *Drama Queer* solicits a range of contemporary work that engages how feelings function in our political present and the different facets of art and emotion—political emotion, erotic emotion etc. This exhibition explores art that seeks to engender social change by making the viewer an accomplice, queering their perspective or seducing them into seeing the world from a dissident vantage point.

Jonathan commented at QAF's opening night that despite our budgetary restraints, he was able to program works and take risks that would have been impossible at the large museums with whom he typically works.

Meanwhile, in Canada...

> Now after all this death and all this pain and all this unbearable truth about persecution, suffering and the indifference of the protected, Now, they're going to pretend that naturally, naturally, things just happened to get better… We come around when it's the right thing to do. We're so nice. Everything just happens the way it should.
>
> —Sarah Schulman, *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination*, 2012

Canada likes to portray itself as a haven for sexual and gender diversity, with over a decade of same-sex marriage behind us, and many legal protections in place. We paint these developments as the inevitable progress of an enlightened nation.

Yet, two thirds of the homophobic/transphobic hate crimes reported in this country are violent attacks—two to three times the rate of violent racist or religious hate crimes. That man that came to my house with a gun: that was in the great, "safe" country of Canada. In addition to the systemic violence, queer youth are grossly overrepresented among our nation's homeless and suicides. It is clear that everything does not just

2 Betsy Warland, *Oscar of Between: A Memoir of Identity and Ideas* (Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press 2016), 40.

3 SD Holman, "Towards a Repositioning of Queer Art," *SD Holman: Artist Website*, December 31, 2014, http://sdholman.com/towards-a-repositioning-of-queer-art/.

4 Jonathan D. Katz quoted in Avram Finkelstein, "Speaking With Jonathan David Katz," Art Writ, Spring 2011, http://www.artwrit.com/article/avram-finkelstein-speaks-with-jonathan-david-katz/.

happen the way it should.

Canadians are deeply attached to our national mythology of niceness, in spite—or perhaps because—of our country's foundation on genocidal colonialism. Indigenous historians remind us that in two thirds of the nearly 200 Indigenous languages on this continent, the words for gender were not binaries, but rather varying conceptions of three to six genders. They teach us that prior to colonization, Two-Spirit people held an honoured place in their societies. The homophobic dystopia in which we now find ourselves is a direct product of colonization.

So, as we contemplated Pulse, it was particularly symbolic that *Drama Queer* took place at the Roundhouse, which repurposes as an arts centre the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, the literal endpoint of *pioneering* westward expansion. And overlooking the former locomotive turntable sashayed Kent Monkman's monumental *Dance to the Berdashe*. The term "Berdache" is a racist slur denoting a Two-Spirit person, and this five-channel video installation references a colonial oil painting of the same name. Depicting Saukie warriors vying for the sexual favours of an I-coo-coo-a (Saukie Two-Spirit person) to win glory in battle, the original was painted in the 1860s by pseudo-ethnographer George Catlin to illustrate what he termed "one of the most unaccountable and disgusting customs that I have ever met in the Indian country... and where I should wish that it might be extinguished before it be more fully recorded."[5]

In Monkman's revisioning, four Indigenous dandies pay court to his stunningly sensual alter-ego Miss Chief Eagle Testickle. It is hard to convey in a catalogue the extent to which *Dance to the Berdashe* dominated the gallery, with its 750 m^2 (50'x50') footprint occupying the huge central swath of *Drama Queer*'s floor plan, and its rhythmic soundtrack penetrating to every corner of the hall as the beating heart of the exhibition, Monkman's hybridity queering European colonial elements into Indigeneity.

The essayists

Audre Lorde notwithstanding, reclaiming the tools of our oppressors to the service of our liberation has long been a key strategy in queer collective herstories. Words or symbols we now commonly use to identify ourselves within our communities, like Queer, Dyke, or the Pink Triangle, we have subverted from erstwhile derogatory or outright murderous purpose.

The *Drama Queer* artists chosen as essayists deploy this strategy with varying materials, including language, imagery, and the detritus of capitalist consumer culture. They have each been working for many years at the many-hyphenated junctures of queer art, and their essays here amplify perspectives rooted in their multifaceted identities.

Del LaGrace Volcano, international spokesmodel of delirious gender ambiguity, writes about their collaboration with theatre artist Mojisola Adebayo for the work that generated the most controversy in the exhibition: *Moj: Minstrel Tears*.

5 George Catlin quoted in "Dance to the Berdashe," *Urban Nation: a filmmaking project between Kent Monkman and Gisèle Gordon*, accessed November 16, 2017, http://urbannation.com/films.php?film=dance-to-the-berdashe.

The paintings of the *other* tradition are not, however, mirrors of society. They are mirrors of what happens to us without our knowing it. In a way, they might be said to objectify experience, to turn feelings into things so that we can deal with them.

—Gene R. Swenson, *The Other Tradition*, 1966

UnSettled

Adrian Stimson

To turn affective *feeling* and inarticulate *emotion* into intelligible, tangible things is the essence of *Drama Queer*. *Drama Queer* explores the role of emotion in contemporary queer art as a form of political engagement, social practice, and resistance—a way to coalesce feelings and direct them towards social change. More to the point, *Drama Queer* is an international survey of "queer emotion" in contemporary art.

At heart, *Drama Queer* explores emotional contradictions in being queer today through the work of some of the best international queer artists, some of whom, fittingly, happen to be straight. Queerness may entail logical contradictions and inconsistencies, but its emotional tenor is clear. While the closet sought to dam up feelings and deaden emotions, queer art nakedly seeks our reaction—to move, anger, or soothe us. It looks queer because it exists between traditional categories and social norms, paying no heed to expectation. In short, *it looks queer* because it *feels free*.

At once celebrated and lamented, "queer" is itself a highly-contested term, as productively ambiguous in its meaning as it is hard to pin down. After all, what is queer? Where is queerness located in a work—in the artist's identity or the audiences' reading? How does it feel (to me, to you, between us)? As the proverbial quip goes, much like for porn, you know it when you see it. Or, in the case of *Drama Queer*, you know it when you *feel* it. More to the point, how can art catalyze queer emotions, to consider emotion as aesthetic form? Asking—but not answering—these questions guides the underpinning logic of this exhibition.

1 More than a year after *Drama Queer* was exhibited in Vancouver, BC, Canada in June 2016, this essay expands the thesis of that show.

To explore queer emotion, to try to find where and how it resonates in art, necessitates a turning away from the primacy of plastic form. In other words, we must move away from a strict attention to the quality of a brush stroke or the scale of a cube in order to consider the emotional tenor of a work. Furthermore, once queer emotions are exhibited, they open up the possibility for social change—a transformational dynamic that is by definition open-ended and full of possibility.

This is far from the first exhibition that has called into question the overriding primacy of form over feeling. A full fifty years ago, the art historian Gene R. Swenson curated the groundbreaking exhibition *The Other Tradition* (1966) at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. As in the above epigraph, Swenson argued that the dominant conventions of art scholarship of his day, then almost exclusively about form, had an "*other* tradition" that had developed alongside of it. This *other* tradition dealt directly with the feelings and emotions generated by art objects within viewers.[1]

This *other* tradition, as argued by Swenson, had an alternate lineage far removed from the drumroll of art's incessant formal innovations. Swenson presciently argued that this alternative genealogy of art could be traced from Dada and Surrealism onward to Pop art.[2] If, through their connection to the unconscious, Dada and Surrealism seem to have a more direct link with emotion, what does Pop art, with its rude celebration of banality, have to do with emotions—queer or otherwise? Take Andy Warhol's Brillo boxes: stripped of anything approximating invention, design or masterful execution, the cardinal terms that historically denominated something as "art," they nonetheless engendered emotion by reflecting our world, echoing Swenson's apt description of art as "mirrors of what happens to us without our knowing it."[3] Pop art, as an art of the other tradition, turned emotions —our emotions—into things that allowed us to see what was happening to us.

In 1969, only three years after Swenson's groundbreaking exhibition, the Stonewall Riots erupted in New York City, launching the modern LGBT rights movement. Just as Swenson was writing about feelings as a constitutive material quality in art (i.e. art that was not *just* for art's sake), Stonewall unleashed precisely the prototypical affect this exhibition explores: queer emotion. Birthed within the contradictory feelings of rage and pride, a new politics emerged. *Drama Queer* celebrates and recognizes this formative moment in LGBT history wherein emotion erupted as a catalyst for social change.

From the 60s to the 80s, through the advent of AIDS, these emotional undercurrents grew in force and power within queer networks, tracking the fury and terror of a community forced to watch its members die unmourned by dominant culture. Taking up rage and anguish once more, art about AIDS took many forms. Whether through the iconic *Silence = Death* poster (created by AIDS activists Avram Finkelstein, Brian Howard, Oliver Johnston, Charles Kreloff, Chris Lione, and Jorge Soccaras) or Felix Gonzalez-Torres's quieter postminimalist sculptures and installations,[4] queer art conveyed a firm belief in the power to move as the route towards social change.

Today, queer artists continue to work in the *other* tradition, a dissident tradition of emotional engagement directed towards social equity. Through the painful/prideful histories of queer peoples, the *other* tradition has evolved from Swenson's conceptual mapping, spreading from paintings and sculptures to new, other forms including (but not limited to) performance, activism, video, installation, and social practice. Acknowledging this evolution of the *other* tradition, *Drama Queer* includes work by twenty-four contemporary artists from a variety of disciplines and media, each incorporating queer emotion. These works make us feel, but not didactically: they pull us one way, then they jerk us around to feel entirely differently. We often don't know whether we're laughing or crying.

In effect, the works included in *Drama Queer* function, as Swenson once observed, "to objectify experience, to turn feelings into things so that we can deal with them." Queer emotion—with all its attendant complications and contradictions—is now objectified into material form around broader issues of gender, sexuality, race, class, and ability. Such queer emotions often pull in two directions at once: we are different and yet exactly the same as straight folk, we can hate traditional gender norms, and yet find them hot, we want to be mainstream, even as we proudly celebrate our differences. Even the word queer, once an insult, is now, for us, a compliment. Contradiction is the queer norm, for the very identity that marked us as outlaws has now given us freedoms unimaginable a few decades ago.

To viscerally convey the contradictory tug of queer emotion, we begin with **Del LaGrace Volcano**'s magisterial three photographs *Moj of the Antarctic* (2005), *Moj: Minstrel Tears* (2005), and *Moj: White Face* (2005) [pls. 1-3]. In these works, Mojisola Adebayo places herself in black and white face, dresses in showy vaudeville garb, and, positioned in a desolately unpeopled all-white Antarctic landscape, collapses every visible signifier of identity into an open question: white meets whiteface, blackface meets black, culture meets nature, male meets female. Based on the story of Ellen Craft, an African-American slave who passed as a white man with disabilities in her search for freedom,[5] the story underscores how completely cultural authority is raced, gendered, and rendered able-bodied. Yet, just as these works inspire pride by revisiting a triumphant aspect of racial, queer, and disability history, the use of blackface punches us in the gut, causing pain, shame, and unease. These feelings are mirrored in the tearstained face of Adebayo. However, it is precisely this double move—being painfully stung as quickly as we joyfully celebrate—that captures the emotional complexity of *Drama Queer*. History, no matter how reclaimed, is never without its shadows.

Zackary Drucker and **Vika Kirchenbauer** instigate similar contradictory narratives in their works. Drucker's series *5 East 73rd Street* (2006) [pls. 59 and 60] documents the life and ephemera of Flawless Sabrina (a.k.a. Jack Doroshow) and the home he has occupied on Manhattan's Upper East Side since the 1960s. Flawless Sabrina was arrested over 100 times for cross-dressing—a felony at the time—becoming part of a queer history worth celebrating even as she needs to be rescued from the amnesia of our short cultural memory. Kirchenbauer's 3D video installation *YOU ARE BORING!* (2015) [pls. 75 and 76] flips the policing straight-/cis-gaze experienced by her Berlin-based international community back onto the viewer. Kirchenbauer plays with the inequity of looking and being looked at in a dynamic that is simultaneously uncomfortable, sexy, and way too close in every sense of the phrase.

1 Gene R. Swenson, *The Other Tradition* (Philadelphia: The Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, 1966).
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 28.
4 For further explanation of how AIDS changed the direction of American art, see: Jonathan David Katz, "How AIDS Changed American Art," in *Art AIDS America*, eds. Jonathan David Katz and Rock Hushka (Seattle: Tacoma Art Museum in association with the University of Washington Press, 2016): 24-45.
6 For more on Ellen Craft's use of disability in her escape see, Ellen Samuels, *Fantasies of Identification: Disability, Gender, Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 28-45. See also, Uri McMillan, *Embodied Avatars: Geneologies of Black Feminist Art and Performance* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 65-93.

Famous for her portraits, **Zanele Muholi** puts herself in front of the camera for *Bona, Charlottesville* (2015) [pl. 13]. With dramatically luminous skin and a tribal-printed cloth behind her, her face is reflected in a mirror. We thus see her, and she us, through an intermediary refraction, a rich metaphor for a black, queer artist. There is a sense of artificiality to this series, which complicates the high fashion, glossy aesthetics of these works and their relationship to the camera, a device notoriously connected to colonialism. Nevertheless, as her gaze attests, Muholi maintains control in her work. Amplifying the nascent artificiality embedded in Muholi's self-portrait, **Sean Fader** literally places himself within the body of his sitters, emerging as one does from a costume, in his *I Want To Put You On* series [pls. 38-40]. If all self-portraiture entails some amplification of the self, **2Fik**'s portrays numerous different characters emerging from within himself caught in a single image to explore a multiplicity of contradictory identities and (self-)identifications. In *Abdel et son frère* (2014) [pl. 64], two figures are joined together by nipple clamps with one of the twins holding a condom. Gleefully playing with art history as fluidly as with identity politics, 2Fik upends the natural while underscoring the performative aspect of all identity.

Transitioning from the purely photographic to the painterly, **Angela Grossmann**'s work—such as *Gloves* (2015) or *Ginger* (2015) [pls. 55 and 57]—combines disparate collage materials to underscore how gender and sexuality are always already constructed. An absurd combination of bodies and clothing styles, pigment and found material create a sense of perpetual foreignness in her figures. Working in painting, **Andrew Holmquist**'s figuration flirts mischievously with abstraction. However, as the massive erection sprouting from a distinctly female pelvis in the painting *Hips* (2015) [pl. 12] indicates, these works address less how we look in our bodies than how we can feel. Erotic feeling is also central to **Monica Majoli**, but it is ambiguous in an entirely different way. Although black and white, *Amy Used Twice* (2011) [pl. 17] is colored by the emotional gravity of Amy's downcast, diverted gaze. Rather than seeing Amy, we seem to feel her—dejectedly, desirously—instead.

While Majoli's work oozes with the uncertain, inchoate emotional intensity of a sexual encounter, **Jesse Finley Reed**'s *If You're Lonely...* series (2006-2009) [pls. 22-24] revels in the potentiality of anonymous sexual encounter mediated by the internet. His sitters are shrouded in darkness, hidden from view, with only their silhouettes illuminated. These works divert the inward stillness of their subjects outward towards the erotic possibility that follows the silhouettes of these anonymous sitters. We don't know how to feel, but Reed risks seducing us to feel something anyways, to touch to feel more. **Joey Terrill**'s work in *Drama Queer* also pivots on encounters, but intersected by domesticity and the presence/absence of HIV/AIDS such as in his paintings *Tom Gutierrez* (2000) and *Just What is it About Todays Homos That Makes Them So Different, So Appealing?* (2008-2010) [pls. 29 and 30]. In the video work *The Bees Know What to Do* (2014) [pl. 37], **Vincent Tiley** operates in a similar sensorial register, but complicates the equation further by bringing in age- and serostatus-differences into the emotional-erotic equation. Queerness and queer emotions, however, are not limited to same-sex sexuality, as exemplified by **George Steeves**'s *Excavations* series [pls. 41-48], which combines absurdity, humor, and eroticism in images sporting subjects that are neither the right age nor body type for typical nude photography—but are arousing because they cause us to feel forcefully anyway.

The works of **Laura Aguilar**, **Cassils**, and **Keijaun Thomas** bring about complicated feelings around pleasure and pain, while simultaneously complicating the relationship between the body, politics, and the "natural." Aguilar's *Grounded 111* (2006) [pl. 31] asks us to redefine our very definition of nature. In this work, Aguilar's back is turned to the camera, mimicking the shape of the rounded boulder behind her. Her ample body is thus at once naturalized into the landscape while, at the same time, anthropomorphized into inert stone. Similarly using body as material through a series of performances in *Becoming an Image* (2013) [pls. 34-36], Cassils trained their body into the very stereotype of hyper-masculinity while beating a lump of clay in total darkness. Invisible to the viewer, Cassils's grunts, panting, and whacks were the sole evidence of the performance save for a strobe that at irregular moments lit the scene, capturing Cassils's body at maximum extremity and echoing the presence/absence of the trans community and the violence they experience. In *The Poetics of Trespassing (Part 1. Absent Whiteness, Part 2. Looking While Seeing Through, Part 3. Sweet like Honey, Black like Syrup)* (2014-2016) [pls. 19-21], Keijaun Thomas uses disposable coffee containers, the gestures of scrubbing and sweeping, and white flour to deconstruct and reconstruct Black identity. Addressing the affective materiality of blackness, her bodily and spatial movements poeticize objects with long histories of racial oppression, making visible the racism that structures much of what otherwise passes as commonplace.

Together, all three demonstrate the tenuous mutability of their bodies, making us feel the ways our own bodies are as potentially queerly mutable.

Whereas the body has always signified on multiple registers, the complicated affective circuits in text-based artworks can also unsettle fixed, knowable positions of emotional certainty. **Carl Pope**'s quasi-protest poster installation *The Bad Air Smelled of Roses* (2004-ongoing) [pl. 66] speaks in a Black American slang with a queer sensibility. At turns ironic, humorous, angry, or despairing, they give voice to a range of emotions and experiences born of doubled oppression. But rather than giving in, they speak back, in that sassy queer voice that has long sought to counter physical strength with a sharp tongue and surgical wit. Similarly, **Shan Kelley**'s works take the concept of body politic poetically and seriously, navigating the space between embodiment and the rules and codes that govern how it is seen and spoken. In *Once Healed* (2015) [pl. 51], he draws attention to the corporeality of the body. *Once Healed* reminds us that bodies can be injured, but also that they can be healed. Yet, like the raised skin covering a wound, the healing itself testifies to an initial injury, a reminder that healing doesn't obliterate pain, but merely covers it over. A different sort of healing is present in *The Uninvited* (2003) [pl. 18] by **Rudy Lemcke**. *The Uninvited* is a poetic meditation on the parallels between two catastrophic, lethal political crises in global history: the American-Vietnam War and AIDS. By implication, the work refutes the common tendency to "other" people with AIDS, forcing the viewer into direct relationship with these shadows by adding their own shadows to the video installation. Thus, these shadows force us to question our complacency in global catastrophes—past and

present. Healing, in all these works, is nascent, but we feel its imminent possibility.

Violence spills forth from many of the works in *Drama Queer*, but most viscerally in the large-scale paintings *7 Devils Dead* (2008) and *The Tattooed Liar* (2008) [pls. 67 and 69] by **Attila Richard Lukacs**. Broadly concerned with the Iraq war and its enduring and reverberating violence, they share not only an anti-war politic, but also a density of reference and a pictorial power unmatched by most contemporary art. They are paintings, not essays, and as such possess the ability to suggest things that language can barely address. Just as his collages [pls. 70-73] denote, there is a latent erotic potentiality to the violence—perhaps an underlying desire for violence. This seems to be echoed and then challenged in the photograph by **Andreas Fux** showing a sadomasochist cutting himself [pl. 61]. In this work, the sitter's body is marked with a goddess tattoo along his side, an Indian tattoo on his chest, and a haunting swastika right where his hip meets his thigh. As the boy coolly regards his blood, blade in hand, signifiers of pain and pleasure, peace and violence merge—just as it does in the S/M photograph by **Sabina van der Linden** [pl. 74]. While all these works expose themselves to the critique of using violence gratuitously, such a reductionist reading erases the complex equivocality of violence as an emotional device. Queers have often been the object of violence, just as they have been the ethical subject against violence. Thus, these works hold in tension the formative role of violence in queer identity and history.

The ways in which queers experience violence and speak against it, however, are never unidirectional. Sexuality always fits together with other aspects of identity like a puzzle. As disability rights and queer activist Eli Clare has written: "The layers are so tangled: gender folds into disability, disability wraps around class, class strains against race, race snarls into sexuality, sexuality hangs onto gender, all of it finally piling into our bodies."[6] Attending to this intersectional quality of queer emotion is **Kent Monkman**'s installation *Dance to the Berdashe* (2008) [pl. 25]. In the center of this complicated work is the artist himself—part Cree, part European—as Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, his drag alter ego [pl. 26]. Surrounding her are First Nations dancers doing a choreography that combines Indigenous and hip-hop moves [pl. 27]. This work is about cultural exchange and hybridity just as it is about the now centuries-long interchange between two cultures, an exchange that dominant culture tends to deny, both out of a romantic, primitivising nostalgia for the "uncontaminated" Indigenous culture and as a way of protecting itself from its obvious First Nations inheritance. Thus, queer identity, which is often perceived as being inherently western,[7] becomes Monkman's tool for complicating the intertwined, unequal narratives involved in colonialism. In effect, we can feel history with a difference through Monkman's decolonizing, queer aesthetics.[8]

Begun in 2003, **Bill Jacobson**'s *A Series of Human Decisions* [pls. 77 and 78] is a photographic account of human spaces absent people. By removing people from these photographs, Jacobson leaves behind an open and evocative depopulated space while simultaneously mobilizing metaphors of the closet. *A Series of Human Decisions #1710* offers a ready metaphor for closeted sexuality through its ***trompe l'oeil*** of spatial depth that actually forecloses clear lines of site into the photograph's interior—evidence that closets are not, by definition, invisible, but can, from the right perspective, always be glimpsed. The role of perspective, and its relationship to our viewing position, maintains importance in his work even in the absence of depicted subjects. For example, that age old pictorial convention of the horizon line in *Some Planes #115* (2007) [pl. 80] achieves new purposes as it describes at once a landscape, seascape, and pure abstraction. The luminous sky and wavy foreground point to shallow seas, but the actual location of the place pales in comparison to its magisterial, unpeopled absences, an evocation of silence that fittingly is the other face of the high-keyed emotion of *Drama Queer*.

The artists surveyed in *Drama Queer* take us down a rabbit hole of emotional uncertainty, just like Alice in Wonderland. They make us feel large and then incomparably small, we laugh even as tears well in the corners of our eyes, our cheeks burning with shame though our eyes brighten with hope. For a moment, through this art, we can glimpse an equitable future—one that does not and cannot forget the past—even as the work also tallies the daily toll of our many struggles today.

As Swenson foresaw, as the Stonewall rioters and AIDS activists fought for, and as the painful not-so-distant memory of Orlando articulates, emotion and sexuality are so fundamentally intertwined that we can't tell where one begins and the other ends. However, all too often the emotional, the affective, and the queer are scrubbed off the pristine Modernist cubes of art's formal traditions. In that art historical trajectory, a grid is a grid—its repetitious beauty and reassuring sameness of form an analog for a world of stasis. In sharp contrast, the Stonewall Riots, the AIDS Crisis, and the Orlando shooting can never be adequately represented in a formalized grid for the simple reason that they are the obverse of the grid's equilibrium. They are our painful, prideful, heart-breaking, norm-changing histories, histories we still feel even if we weren't born when they happened. Against the Modernist narrative, the artists in *Drama Queer* challenge us to ***see*** differently by ***feeling*** differently.

Modernism seemed to promise utopia, but history has taught us that "utopia" is merely a detailed reflection of the failures and insufficiencies of our own times. And since we all have different experiences, different bodies, different desires, different abilities—we are, in fact, seemingly endlessly different—*Drama Queer* instead suggests that the way we understand each other is to feel with and through each other. In place of a politics of either totalizing sameness or unbridgeable difference, *Drama Queer* foretells a politics of analogy. We might not all be the same, but through our differences we will recognize our conjoining likenesses. Precisely through our differences, we continue to desire, dream, and activate for a politics for social change, social transformation. This is the promise, the allure of queer emotion: by daring to look into the mirror, we can ***see*** how to ***feel*** differently.

6 Eli Clare, excerpt from "Digging Deep: Thinking about Privilege" (keynote address, Against Patriarchy Conference, Eugene, OR, January 24-26, 2003). Accessed via Clare's website on October 7, 2017, at http://eliclare.com/what-eli-offers/lectures/privilege.

7 For a discussion of the relationship between queer in transnational contexts, see: John C. Hawley, ed., *Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001).

8 Desiring with a difference is part of José Esteban Muñoz's disidentificatory strategy, see: José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 1-34.

UnSettled

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

CURATED BY
Adrian Stimson

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew
Alyyana Maracle
Barry Ace
Cease Wyss
Dayna Danger
George Littlechild
Jessie Short
John Powell
Michelle Silliboy
Mike MacDonald
Raven John
Richard Heikkiiä
Robert Houle
Rosalie Favell
Thirza Cuthland
Ursula Johnson
Vanessa Dion Fletcher
Wanda Nanibush

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew

Image on facing page

Plate 1: Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew, *White Shame from First Nations Performance Series*, 1992,
Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Plate 2: Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew, *White Shame from First Nations Performance Series*, 1992,
Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Alyyana Maracle

Plate 3: Aiyyana Maracle, *Gender Möbius from Halfbreed Performance Series*, 1995, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Plate 4: Aiyyana Maracle, *Strange Fruit from play performance series*, 1994, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Barry Ace

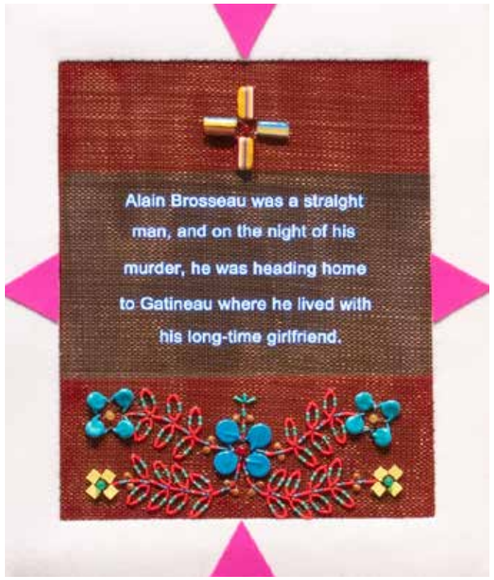


Image right:

Plate 5: Barry Ace, *Bandolier for Alain Brosseau, 2017.* Digital screen, horsehair, electronic components (resistors, capacitors, inductors, LED), fabric, metal, brass wire, 180.3 x 39.4 x 19.1 cm. Courtesy of Ottawa Art Gallery: Donated by the artist, 2018. Photo: Justin Wonnacott.

Image above:

Detail: Barry Ace, *Bandolier for Alain Brosseau*, 2017.

Cease Wyss

Plate 6: Cease Wyss, *Sèlus Áńus Kwelh7áynexw Lhenlhéńt*

[spinningWool / twoSpirits]
Weaving a Blanket, 2017, Installation, 24 x 96 inch shawls (2) together 72 x 192 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger

Plate 7: Dayna Danger, *Adrienne,* 2017,
Digital print, 60 x 75 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 8: Dayna Danger, *Lindsay,* 2017,
Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 9: Dayna Danger, *Sasha*, 2017,
Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

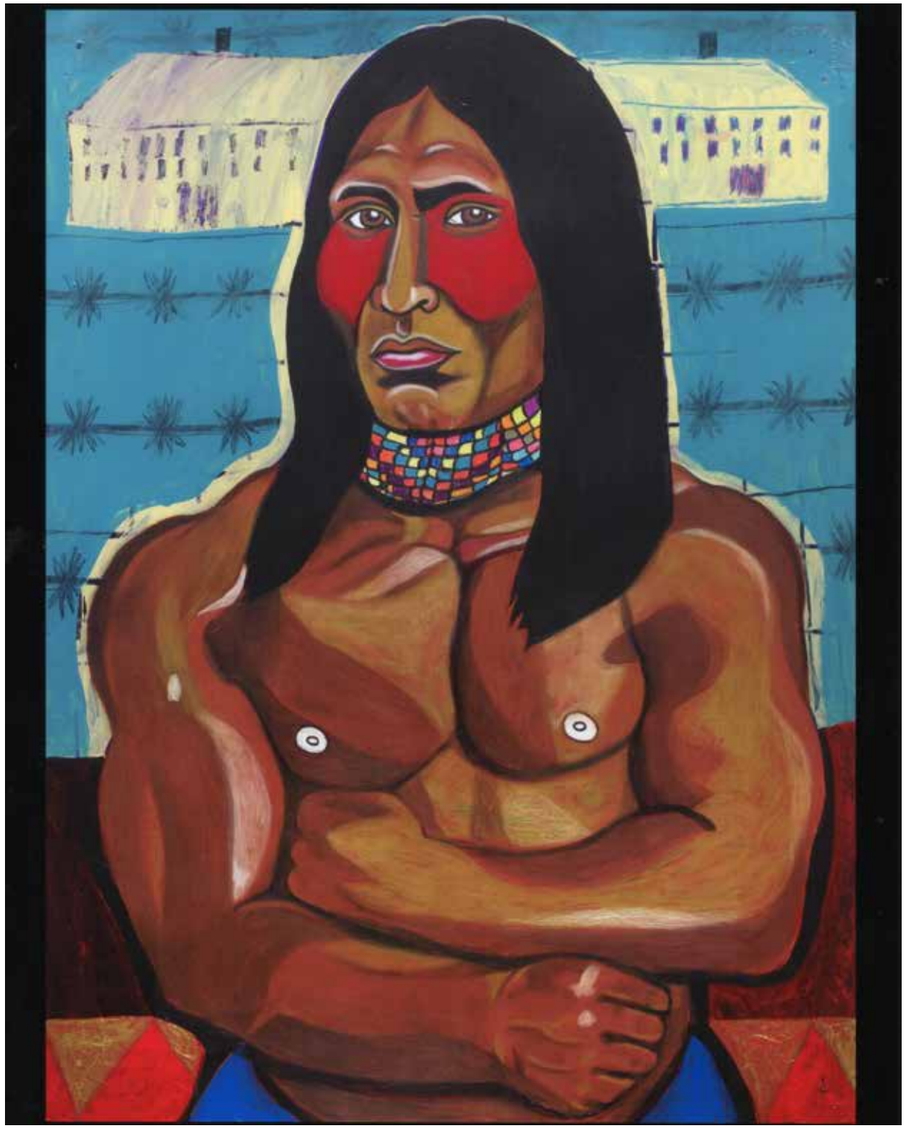
Plate 9: Dayna Danger, *Kandace*, 2017,
Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

George Littlechild

Plate 11: George Littlechild, *Warrior Incarcerated*, 2015, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Facing page

Plate 12: George Littlechild, *Warrior and The Black Snake*, 2015, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Facing page

Plate 13: George Littlechild, *Warrior Indigenous of South America's Sacred Soil*, 2017, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 14: George Littlechild, *Cree Boy Thrust*, 2017, Mixed media, 50 x 38 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Jessie Short

Plate 15: Jessie Short, *Family of Light*, 2016, Photographic.
Courtesy of the artist.

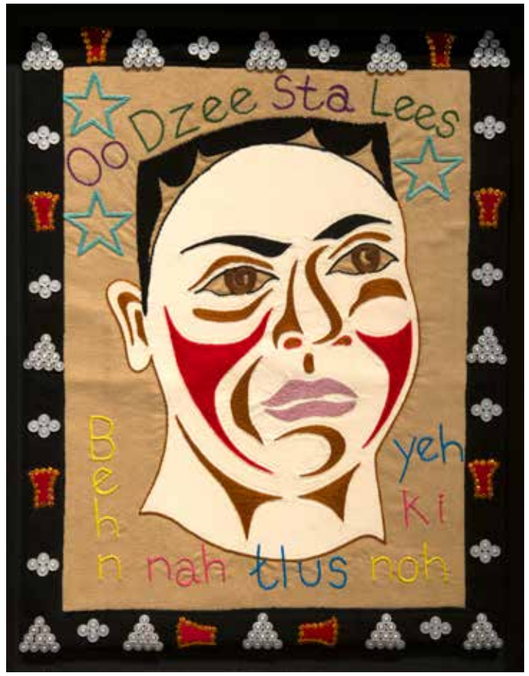
Plate 16: Jessie Short, *Sweet Night*, 2016, Video, 6:53min.
Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell

Plate 17: John Powell, *Winidi (self Portrait)*, 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 18: John Powell, *Yam'gwas (maternal Great, Great Grandmother)*, 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 19: John Powell, *Wa'dzi da laga (maternal Grandmother)*, 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



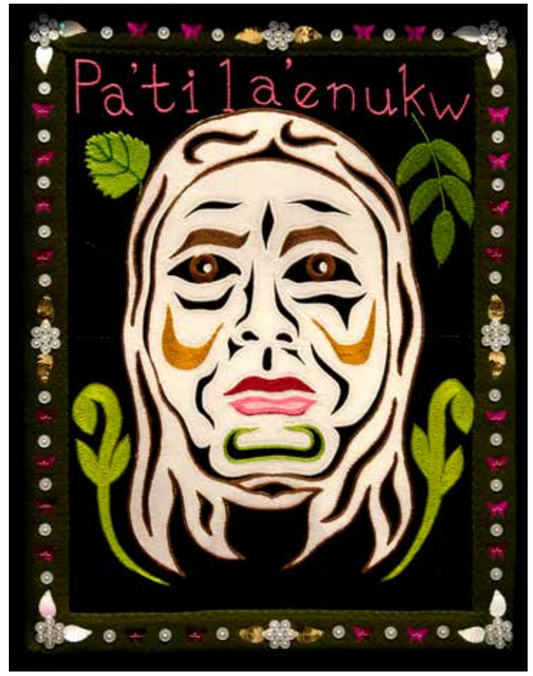
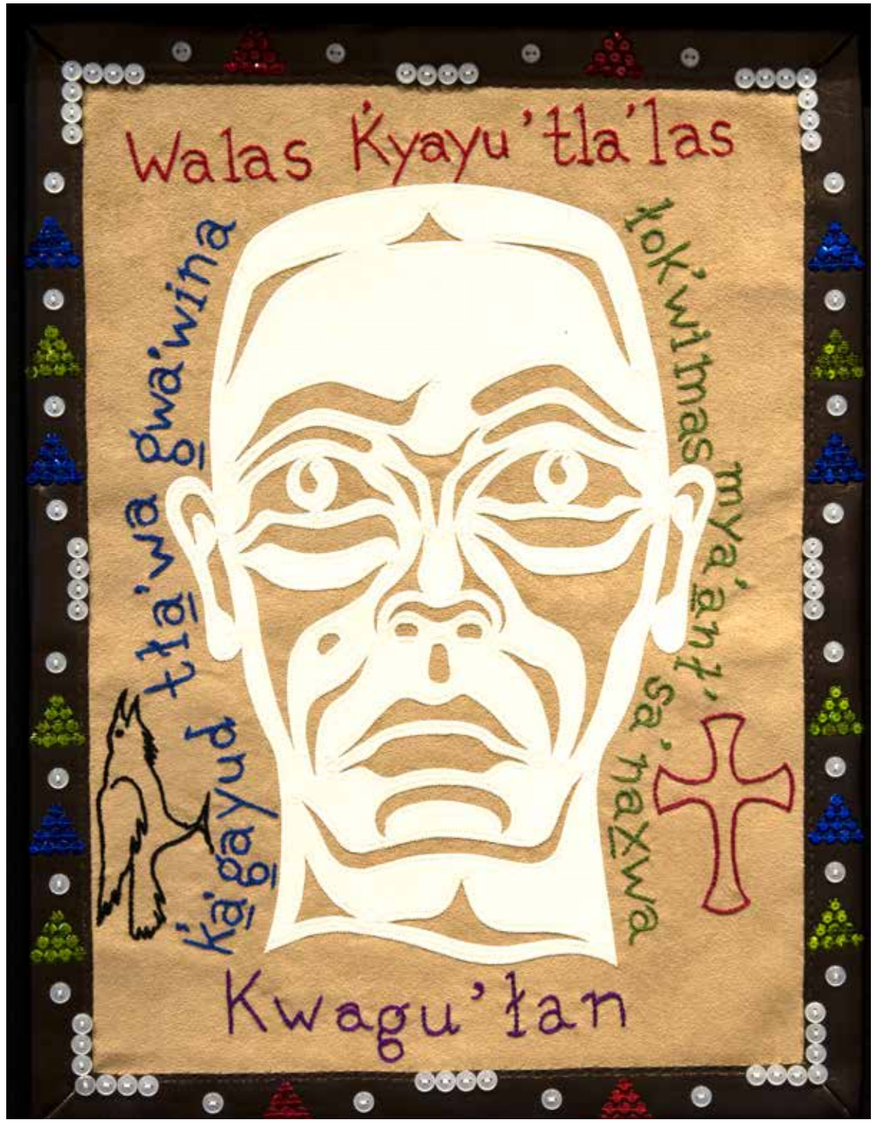


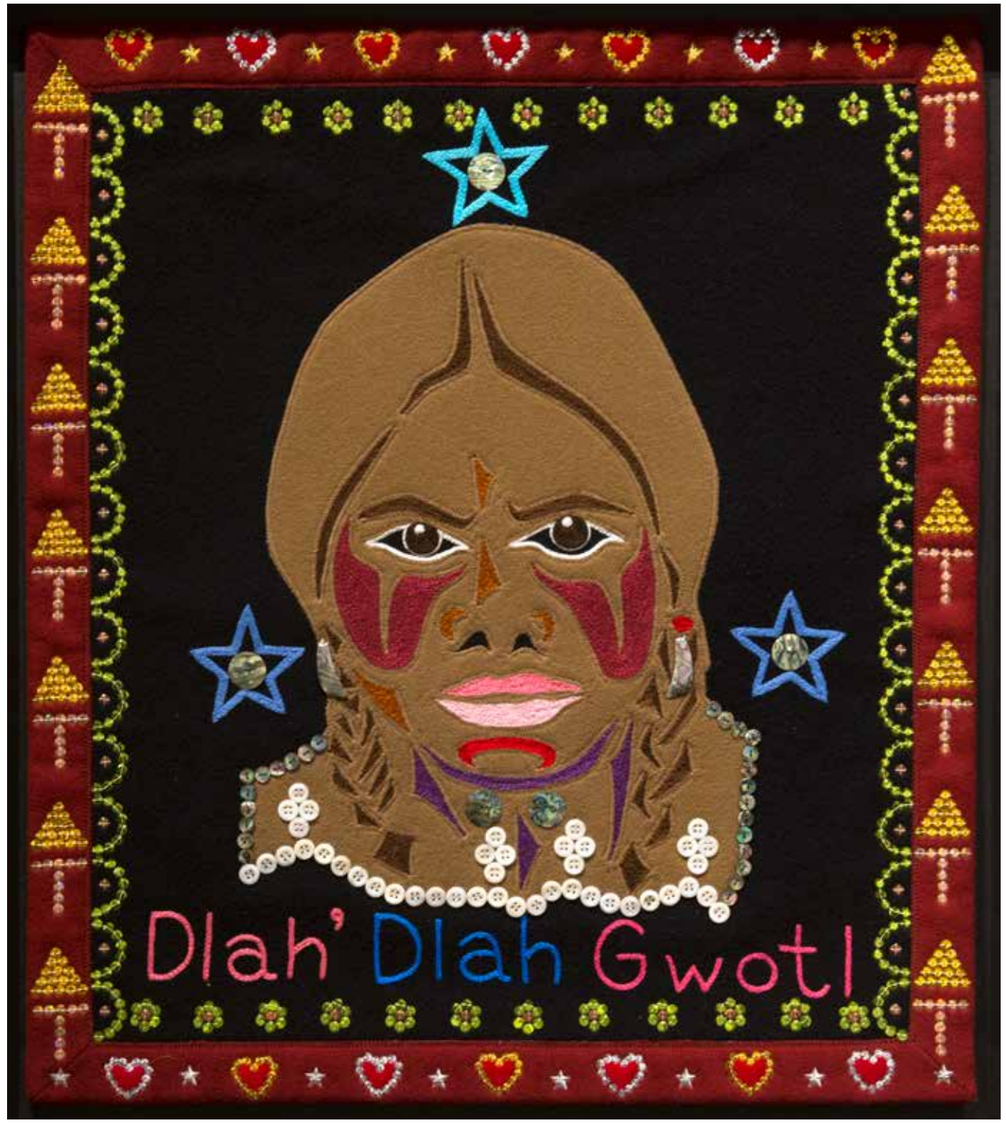
Plate 20: John Powell, *Oo Dzee stah lees (maternal grandfather)*, 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 21: John Powell, *Patila'enukw (maternal great grandmother), 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches.* Courtesy of the artist.

Image on page 32

Plate 22: John Powell, *Walas Kyayu'tla'las (maternal Great Grandfather)*, 2015-16, Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.


Walas Ḱyayu'tla'las
ła'ła'wa gwa'wina
ḵa'gayud
ła'ok'wimas mya'anł'
sa'naxwa
Kwagu'ła


Dlah' Dlah Gwotl

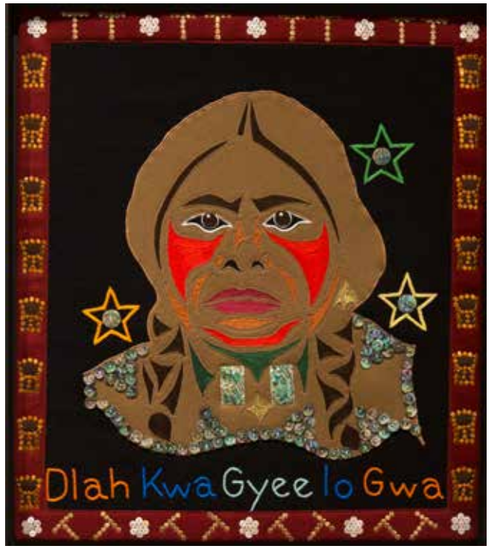


Image on page 33

Plate 23: John Powell, *Dlah' Dlah Gwotl (Grandfather's mother),* 2015-16, Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Clockwise

Plate 24: John Powell, *Mah Q'wa lah oh gwa (my Grandfather's Aunt),* 2015-16, Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 25: John Powell, *Goo Tlah' Lahss (my Grandfather's Uncle), 2015-16,* Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 26: John Powell, *Dlah Kwa Gyee lo Gwa (My Grandfather's Aunt),* 2015-16, Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Michelle Sylliboy

Plate 27: Michelle Sylliboy, *The Art of Reconciliation,* 2016, Video, word, 5:44min. Courtesy of the artist.

Mike MacDonald

Plate 28: Mike MacDonald, *Touched By The Tears of a Butterfly, 1*995, Video, 14:30min. Courtesy of vTape.

Raven John

Plate 29: Raven John, *Two Spirit Transformation Blessing,* 2017, Acrylic on paper, 22 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Richard Heikkiiä-Sawan

Plate 30: Richard Heikkiiä-Sawan, *My Spirits Soar,* 2015, Hudson's Bay history book, King James bible, John Fluevog Rigas boots, mannequin legs, laquer, Finn chair, unopened Big Rock beer can, Lego bricks, foam shapes, Band-Aids, spray paint, children's wooden stacking toy, mahogany valet stand, braided roping, CNC routered yellow cedar, light bulb, toggle switch, duct tape, 76.8 x 17.9 x 17.7 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 31: Richard Heikkiiä-Sawan, *Before the knowing (green, blue, brown),* 2016, Oil on linen, 30 x 40 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

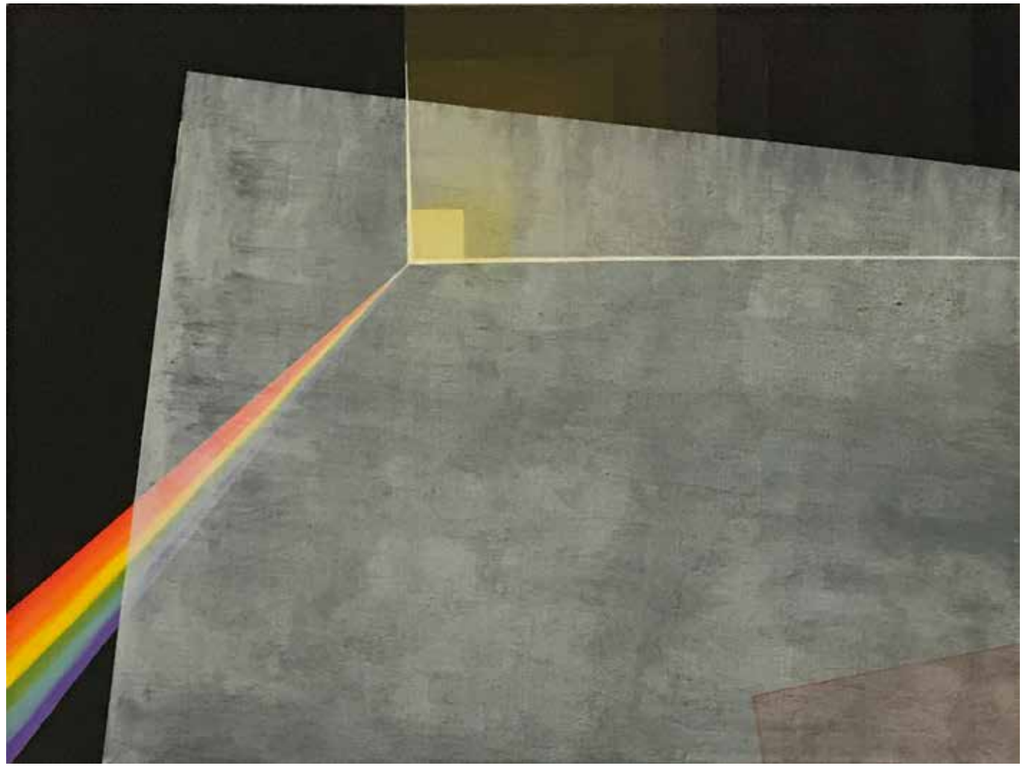


Plate 32: Richard Heikkiiä-Sawan, *Into the knowing, 2016,*
Oil on linen, 30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

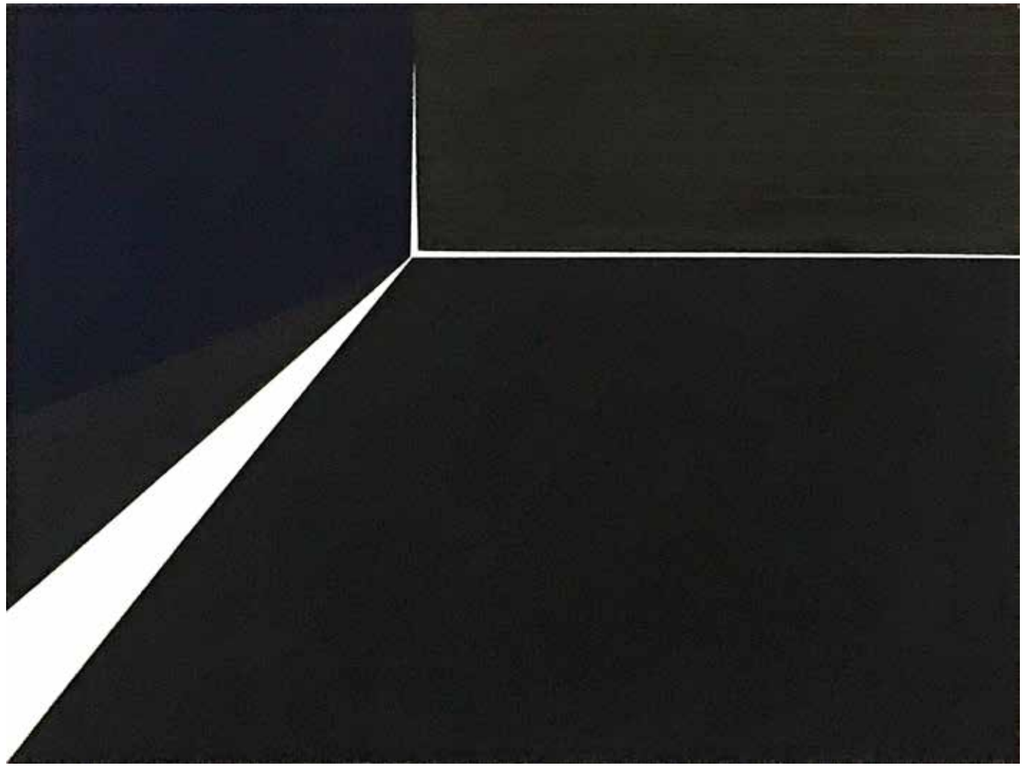


Plate 33: Richard Heikkiiä-Sawan, *Happy at Last,* 2016,
Oil, synthetic polymer on linen, 30 x 40 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Robert Houle

Plate 34: Robert Houle, *Nude*, 2007, Conte on arches paper, 50 x 71 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Rosalie Favell

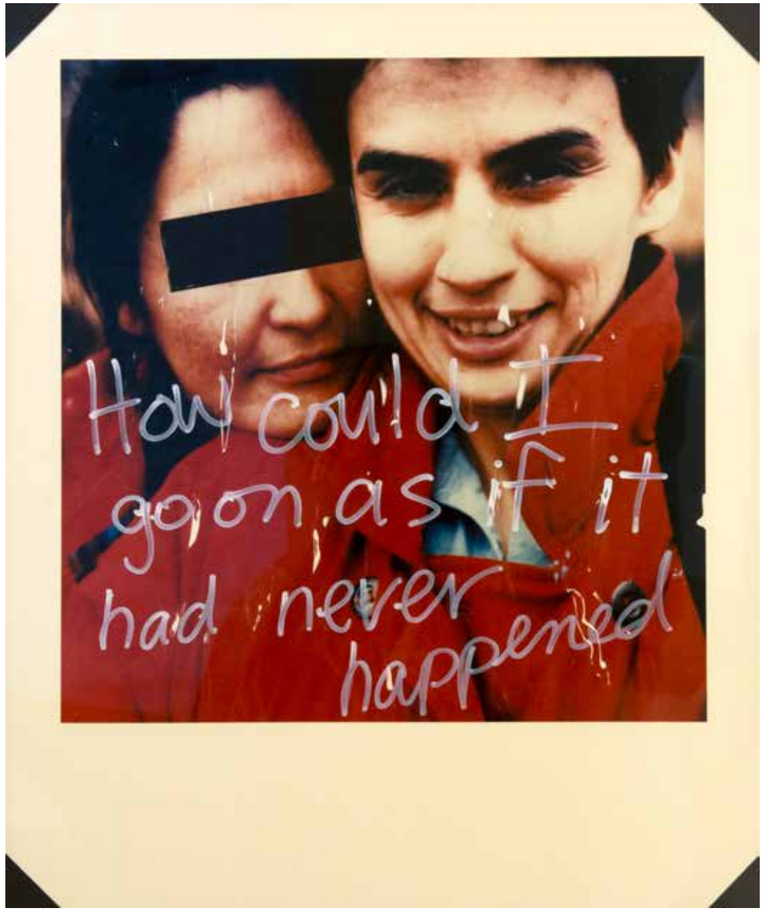


Plate 35: Rosalie Favell, *Living Evidence, How could I go on as if it never happened*, 1994, Photographic, 30 x 35 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Thirza Cuthland

Plate 35: Thirza Cuthand, *2 Spirit Dreamcatcher Dot Com,* 2017, Video, 4:56min. Courtesy of the artist.

Ursula Johnson

Plate 36: Ursula Johnson, *Making A Mark*, Drawing and video installation. Courtesy of the artist.

45

This is the Title

Vanessa Dion Fletcher

Historically, queer art has been rendered invisible or marginal in the scholarly critique of work or misinterpreted through a lens focused on a heterosexual modality. As Chicanos, our history and culture (and its violent repression) have been censured or erased by the dominant white power structure. I'm queer Latinx and I'd like to share some observations and provide context regarding the work that was my contribution to *Drama Queer* at the Queer Arts Festival 2016 – *Stonewall Was a Riot*.

If we allow the word "queer" to stand as a term that includes the full panoply of human sexual and gender identities, we can discern the "drama" that queerness creates in an art world biased in favor of a heteronormative culture.

The trauma (drama) of AIDS on queer artists of my generation has left a gap or, at best, a delineation between those of us that went through that period and those born after the advent of antiretroviral therapy that stopped the death of individuals, allowing for living with HIV as a chronic condition. Post-traumatic stress is a given for those of us who have survived that era when our homosocial networks got smaller as artists, friends, lovers, gallery owners and art patrons died. Collectively, relationships were forged amidst the onslaught of illness and death, and as a community we cared and advocated for one another to varying degrees. Our art production explored issues of mortality, stigma, anger, the body, advocacy and defiance in the face of unprecedented virulent rhetoric and indifference.

For me, my volunteer work in Chicano student activism in high school and concurrently the gay liberation movement in the early 70s stoked my passion for social justice and honed skills that enhanced my AIDS advocacy a decade later. Thankfully, for younger Latinx queers today, that is definitely not *their* experience. It's definitely their history, but not their experience. For many, the artist social networks in which they engage in the 21st century are virtual, much larger and continuously expanding. As a young artist, my networks were smaller and more intimate. Today, social media (for better or worse) is the driving mechanism for engaging with community. But social media is also being used as a tool in bridging the aforementioned gap, allowing for a cross-generational conversation as young academics and artists, immersed in queer and Latino studies, research the politics and art from those earlier years. For them, my art and stories have become the "history" they are researching, and a majority of them are familiar with my and other artists' work only through social media online instead of a gallery setting.

Over the last several years, I have been invited to

Plate 37: Vanessa Dion Fletcher, *# Menstrual Accessory,* 2016, Performance, installation, video, 20min. Courtesy of the artist.

exhibit my work from the 70s and 80s in shows that explore Queer Latinx themes. Within these exhibits, the works created 30–40 years ago are positioned as pioneering examples of proclaiming a queer identity (with my work specific to a Chicano gay male context). Our early work is juxtaposed with the work of younger artists, some of whom were born in the 80s and early 90s. I have come to embrace my status as an elder and never take it for granted but I am struck, though, by how different our generational paths have been. Along with the aforementioned gap in experiencing the worst of the plague years, there is a difference in our developed networks and access to visual information.

I assume that as queer Latinx artists we align ourselves in our commitment to resisting and challenging both the patriarchal hegemony founded on white supremacy as well as the heteronormative gender roles and behavior intrinsic to Latino cultural identity. For me, within those two concurrent directives, it's the wide range of how artists choose to declare and assert queerness in their work that I find interesting and worthy of investigation.

The impulse to create community, and seek others like ourselves, while visually provoking hetero-dominant cultural assumptions is there for both generations. While we pull from the same visual pop culture, historical and ethnic iconography for inspiration, it is apparent that for younger Latinx artists the advent of social media has allowed for much larger virtual networks of potential artistic collaboration. In this age of the "selfie," the exchange of ideas and access to imagery is hastened and prolific. Engagement in visual imagery that once depended on the US Postal Service, meeting in person, or attending art exhibits over a period of time can occur "virtually" within minutes with today's technology. The prevailing theme for all Queer Latinx art can be distilled down to a simple declaration: "Look at me!" and in Spanish, "¡*Mirame!*"

My contribution to *Drama Queer* was three works. The painting titled *Tom Gutierrez* (2001) is based on a photograph of Tom dressed as Pierrot the Clown carrying white balloons at one of my Halloween parties in the 90s. I would spend about three weeks papering, painting, collaging and drawing on my dining room walls and decorating our house in Koreatown. Tom was a friend's boyfriend, who was handsome, athletic, funny and loved cocaine. On the wall behind Tom are some painted cartoon ghosts spurting up from headstones in a blue-grey graveyard, with swirls of green and glittering ectoplasm. The artists, designers, musicians and friends who attended the parties were robust in their celebration and hard partying in a rebuke to the illness and death surrounding us. By the following year, Tom died from AIDS and I later chose to paint that celebratory moment with him holding white balloons.

Black Jack 8 (2008) is the title of one of two still lifes that follow my usual recipe of assembled objects on a foregrounded table top covered with a Mexican blanket. In the center is an extra-large white capsule of Norvir, a component of an HIV cocktail that is considered to boost the efficacy of the antiretrovirals with which it is combined. For those who take a daily HIV cocktail that includes Norvir, the capsule is recognizable and familiar. For others it is an enigmatic presence. I'd like the still lifes to be strange yet familiar and I have allowed myself to have fun with placing commercial products, food stuffs, mid-century advertising and floral arrangements in surreal domestic settings that include HIV drugs. Items nestled against each other don't necessarily go together with any logic. The size of items illustrated—whether painted or collaged—is illogical, sometimes cartoonish. The assemblage overall is a clash of colors, textures, perspectives and illumination sources. Far from being peaceful or contemplative, the still lifes are

Plate 38: Vanessa Dion Fletcher, *# Menstrual Accessory,* 2016, Performance, installation, video, 20min. Courtesy of the artist.

garish, sometimes vulgar, and filled with sexual innuendo open to various interpretations.

For these works, the image sources range from Victorian illustrations of a fruit basket to a 1950s commercial advertisement of a double scoop strawberry ice cream cone. Borrowing the trope of Tom Wesselmann's still lifes from the 1960s, I diverge from exclusively American product advertising in an attempt to "queerize" and "Mexicanize" my still life scenarios. Within Chicano art the domestic realm has traditionally belonged to women and for the most part is viewed as a female space: a source of pride and familial love for some, a restrictive confinement for others. My work indicates a domestic space and home to be queer. A place in which gay Chicano men cook, engage and create. My intent is to challenge Latino gender assumptions and restrictions.

In *Black Jack 8*, I have included a man standing behind the table in the background. The image is taken from a hookup site. He is someone I met online for a sexual dalliance and the pic I used is from his profile. It shows him from the shoulders down to his crotch. His face is not shown to maintain a level of anonymity as he is on the down low and not very open about his sexually engaging with other men. Men on the "down low" and secrecy around sexuality are two factors contributing to the disproportionate rates of HIV infection among men of color. The title is taken from the sticks of gum package, indicating eight sticks of Black Jack (clove-flavored) chewing gum, but for those familiar with the online hookup sites, it also could very well be the profile "name" of the individual.

The third work was the large diptych *Just What is It That Makes Todays Homos So Different, So Appealing?* (2008-2010) which takes its title from the iconic collage of British artist Richard Hamilton from 1956, which is recognized as a seminal work from which the Pop art movement sprang. The Hamilton work, *Just What is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?*, consisted of collaged images from American magazine advertising, including an almost naked body builder flexing his arms wearing a posing strap and carrying an extra-large Tootsie Pop with the round head of the lollipop covered in its namesake wrapper. To the right on a sofa is a burlesque performer, nude save for the pasties covering her nipples. She holds her left breast, implying an offer of titillation and sexual come on. Both figures look out at the viewer instead of each other. The subtext of sexual tension implied in the collage is what makes it so intriguing or "appealing." Parodying the name and the implied sexual undertone is where my piece borrows and then departs from the original Hamilton source. The foreground of my domestic interior is again taken up by the arc of a rounded table top covered in a striped Mexican blanket.

Just What is It That Makes Todays Homos So Different, So Appealing? is an assemblage of items painted and collaged from advertisements that are piled together with a vase of red roses and a shaded lamp illuminating the background with a yellow glow. Here two men on a purple sheeted bed sexually embrace in a 69 position, their faces buried in anal/oral exploration. The two figures are both male and instead of looking out at the viewer, they are oblivious to our presence. The men, based on their coloring, appear to be Latino and Black. We are the voyeur, taking them in along with the myriad objects on the foregrounded table. A Coca-Cola bottle, beads of cold sweat running down its iconic shape, a box of Cream of Rice, a huge piece of yellow layer cake with chocolate frosting referencing the colors of the two men in the background. A skull placed without context or discernable reason acts as its own *memento mori* adjacent to a Mexican straw bowl of lemons, limes and bananas. A cylindrical shaped Quaker Oats box with the smiling Quaker Oats Man. Next to him is a bottle of Cholula, a Mexican hot sauce from Chiapas Mexico, with the smiling *mujer* from Cholula contrasting with the grinning Quaker. This "culturally mixed" grouping invites multiple interpretations and readings. Exploring the origins and historic associations, however trite or low brow, is encouraged. Consider the Quaker religion and its impact on American history (they gave us Nixon) while Cholula is today a very Catholic city but with an Aztec history that includes an epic 17th century massacre by the Spanish. We recognize the role of religion in making gay men "appealing" as a target of homophobic rhetoric and violence but I also consider its role in the creation of the "Quaker Oats man" and its appeal for advertising a breakfast cereal.

Chicano art practice often includes elements of "*rasquachismo*" in the form of collaged images, advertisements or readymades attached or otherwise altered, transforming banal items into "works of art." My still life series does that with the key elements being HIV medications, sometimes the actual pills and capsules, sometimes exaggerated painted renderings, as in this diptych. The upper right hand corner of the work is a window from which a dozen monarch butterflies fly in and out. The story of the monarch is truly "North American," as their migratory ritual has them traversing from Canada, south through the United States and into Mexico, oblivious to borders and government jurisdictions. The monarch is definitely a fitting icon for unfettered immigrant advocacy, but also the Spanish word for butterfly, "*mariposa*" is used as a homophobic slur for gay men. Look at me! ¡*Mirame!*

This is the Title

Wanda Nanibush

Historically, queer art has been rendered invisible or marginal in the scholarly critique of work or misinterpreted through a lens focused on a heterosexual modality. As Chicanos, our history and culture (and its violent repression) have been censured or erased by the dominant white power structure. I'm queer Latinx and I'd like to share some observations and provide context regarding the work that was my contribution to *Drama Queer* at the Queer Arts Festival 2016 – *Stonewall Was a Riot*.

If we allow the word "queer" to stand as a term that includes the full panoply of human sexual and gender identities, we can discern the "drama" that queerness creates in an art world biased in favor of a heteronormative culture.

The trauma (drama) of AIDS on queer artists of my generation has left a gap or, at best, a delineation between those of us that went through that period and those born after the advent of antiretroviral therapy that stopped the death of individuals, allowing for living with HIV as a chronic condition. Post-traumatic stress is a given for those of us who have survived that era when our homosocial networks got smaller as artists, friends, lovers, gallery owners and art patrons died. Collectively, relationships were forged amidst the onslaught of illness and death, and as a community we cared and advocated for one another to varying degrees. Our art production explored issues of mortality, stigma, anger, the body, advocacy and defiance in the face of unprecedented virulent rhetoric and indifference.

For me, my volunteer work in Chicano student activism in high school and concurrently the gay liberation movement in the early 70s stoked my passion for social justice and honed skills that enhanced my AIDS advocacy a decade later. Thankfully, for younger Latinx queers today, that is definitely not *their* experience. It's definitely their history, but not their experience. For many, the artist social networks in which they engage in the 21st century are virtual, much larger and continuously expanding. As a young artist, my networks were smaller and more intimate. Today, social media (for better or worse) is the driving mechanism for engaging with community. But social media is also being used as a tool in bridging the aforementioned gap, allowing for a cross-generational conversation as young academics and artists, immersed in queer and Latino studies, research the politics and art from those earlier years. For them, my art and stories have become the "history" they are researching, and a majority of them are familiar with my and other artists' work only through social media online instead of a gallery setting.

Over the last several years, I have been invited to exhibit my work from the 70s and 80s in shows that explore Queer Latinx themes. Within these exhibits, the works created 30–40 years ago are positioned as pioneering examples of proclaiming a queer identity (with my work specific to a Chicano gay male context). Our early work is juxtaposed with the work of younger artists, some of whom were born in the 80s and early 90s. I have come to embrace my status as an elder and never take it for granted but I am struck, though, by how different our generational paths have been. Along with the aforementioned gap in experiencing the worst of the plague years, there is a difference in our developed networks and access to visual information.

I assume that as queer Latinx artists we align ourselves in our commitment to resisting and challenging both the patriarchal hegemony founded on white supremacy as well as the heteronormative gender roles and behavior intrinsic to Latino cultural identity. For me, within those two concurrent directives, it's the wide range of how artists choose to declare and assert queerness in their work that I find interesting and worthy of investigation.

The impulse to create community, and seek others like ourselves, while visually provoking hetero-dominant cultural assumptions is there for both generations. While we pull from the same visual pop culture, historical and ethnic iconography for inspiration, it is apparent that for younger Latinx artists the advent of social media has allowed for much larger virtual networks of potential artistic collaboration. In this age of the "selfie," the exchange of ideas and access to imagery is hastened and prolific. Engagement in visual imagery that once depended on the US Postal Service, meeting in person, or attending art exhibits over a period of time can occur "virtually" within minutes with today's technology. The prevailing theme for all Queer Latinx art can be distilled down to a simple declaration: "Look at me!" and in Spanish, "¡*Mirame!*"

My contribution to *Drama Queer* was three works. The painting titled *Tom Gutierrez* (2001) is based on a photograph of Tom dressed as Pierrot the Clown carrying white balloons at one of my Halloween parties in the 90s. I would spend about three weeks papering, painting, collaging and drawing on my dining room walls and decorating our house in Koreatown. Tom was a friend's boyfriend, who was handsome, athletic, funny and loved cocaine. On the wall behind Tom are some painted cartoon ghosts spurting up from headstones in a blue-grey graveyard, with swirls of green and glittering ectoplasm. The artists, designers, musicians and friends who attended the parties were robust in their celebration and hard partying in a rebuke to the illness and death surrounding us. By the following year, Tom died from AIDS and I later chose to paint that celebratory moment with him holding white balloons.

Black Jack 8 (2008) is the title of one of two still lifes that follow my usual recipe of assembled objects on

a foregrounded table top covered with a Mexican blanket. In the center is an extra-large white capsule of Norvir, a component of an HIV cocktail that is considered to boost the efficacy of the antiretrovirals with which it is combined. For those who take a daily HIV cocktail that includes Norvir, the capsule is recognizable and familiar. For others it is an enigmatic presence. I'd like the still lifes to be strange yet familiar and I have allowed myself to have fun with placing commercial products, food stuffs, mid-century advertising and floral arrangements in surreal domestic settings that include HIV drugs. Items nestled against each other don't necessarily go together with any logic. The size of items illustrated—whether painted or collaged—is illogical, sometimes cartoonish. The assemblage overall is a clash of colors, textures, perspectives and illumination sources. Far from being peaceful or contemplative, the still lifes are garish, sometimes vulgar, and filled with sexual innuendo open to various interpretations.

For these works, the image sources range from Victorian illustrations of a fruit basket to a 1950s commercial advertisement of a double scoop strawberry ice cream cone. Borrowing the trope of Tom Wesselmann's still lifes from the 1960s, I diverge from exclusively American product advertising in an attempt to "queerize" and "Mexicanize" my still life scenarios. Within Chicano art the domestic realm has traditionally belonged to women and for the most part is viewed as a female space: a source of pride and familial love for some, a restrictive confinement for others. My work indicates a domestic space and home to be queer. A place in which gay Chicano men cook, engage and create. My intent is to challenge Latino gender assumptions and restrictions.

In *Black Jack 8*, I have included a man standing behind the table in the background. The image is taken from a hookup site. He is someone I met online for a sexual dalliance and the pic I used is from his profile. It shows him from the shoulders down to his crotch. His face is not shown to maintain a level of anonymity as he is on the down low and not very open about his sexually engaging with other men. Men on the "down low" and secrecy around sexuality are two factors contributing to the disproportionate rates of HIV infection among men of color. The title is taken from the sticks of gum package, indicating eight sticks of Black Jack (clove-flavored) chewing gum, but for those familiar with the online hookup sites, it also could very well be the profile "name" of the individual.

The third work was the large diptych *Just What is It That Makes Todays Homos So Different, So Appealing?* (2008-2010) which takes its title from the iconic collage of British artist Richard Hamilton from 1956, which is recognized as a seminal work from which the Pop art movement sprang. The Hamilton work, *Just What is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?*, consisted of collaged images from American magazine advertising, including an almost naked body builder flexing his arms wearing a posing strap and carrying an extra-large Tootsie Pop with the round head of the lollipop covered in its namesake wrapper. To the right on a sofa is a burlesque performer, nude save for the pasties covering her nipples. She holds her left breast, implying an offer of titillation and sexual come on. Both figures look out at the viewer instead of each other. The subtext of sexual tension implied in the collage is what makes it so intriguing or "appealing." Parodying the name and the implied sexual undertone is where my piece borrows and then departs from the original Hamilton source. The foreground of my domestic interior is again taken up by the arc of a rounded table top covered in a striped Mexican blanket.

Just What is It That Makes Todays Homos So Different, So Appealing? is an assemblage of items painted and collaged from advertisements that are piled together with a vase of red roses and a shaded lamp illuminating the background with a yellow glow. Here two men on a purple sheeted bed sexually embrace in a 69 position, their faces buried in anal/oral exploration. The two figures are both male and instead of looking out at the viewer, they are oblivious to our presence. The men, based on their coloring, appear to be Latino and Black. We are the voyeur, taking them in along with the myriad objects on the foregrounded table. A Coca-Cola bottle, beads of cold sweat running down its iconic shape, a box of Cream of Rice, a huge piece of yellow layer cake with chocolate frosting referencing the colors of the two men in the background. A skull placed without context or discernable reason acts as its own *memento mori* adjacent to a Mexican straw bowl of lemons, limes and bananas. A cylindrical shaped Quaker Oats box with the smiling Quaker Oats Man. Next to him is a bottle of Cholula, a Mexican hot sauce from Chiapas Mexico, with the smiling *mujer* from Cholula contrasting with the grinning Quaker. This "culturally mixed" grouping invites multiple interpretations and readings. Exploring the origins and historic associations, however trite or low brow, is encouraged. Consider the Quaker religion and its impact on American history (they gave us Nixon) while Cholula is today a very Catholic city but with an Aztec history that includes an epic 17th century massacre by the Spanish. We recognize the role of religion in making gay men "appealing" as a target of homophobic rhetoric and violence but I also consider its role in the creation of the "Quaker Oats man" and its appeal for advertising a breakfast cereal.

Chicano art practice often includes elements of "*rasquachismo*" in the form of collaged images, advertisements or readymades attached or otherwise altered, transforming banal items into "works of art." My still life series does that with the key elements being HIV medications, sometimes the actual pills and capsules, sometimes exaggerated painted renderings, as in this diptych. The upper right hand corner of the work is a window from which a dozen monarch butterflies fly in and out. The story of the monarch is truly "North American," as their migratory ritual has them traversing from Canada, south through the United States and into Mexico, oblivious to borders and government jurisdictions. The monarch is definitely a fitting icon for unfettered immigrant advocacy, but also the Spanish word for butterfly, "*mariposa*" is used as a homophobic slur for gay men. Look at me! ¡*Mirame!*

Artist Biographies

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew (1958-2006)

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew was born Cree/French Métis from the Peace River region in Northern Alberta. After graduating from Emily Carr College of Art & Design and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, he established a practice as a media-integrated performance artist and writer while also working as an arts administrator contributing to opportunities for First Nations artists within artist-run culture, including a two year First Nations arts administration internship at the Canada Council in Ottawa.

His critical writing in Mix Magazine and Fuse magazine addressed many aspects of contemporary First Nations arts practice. His creative works concentrate on examinations of the ways that First Nations history, spirituality, and language influence and operate within contemporary First Nations experience of urbanized street-level fringe culture including the influences of drugs, prostitution, and other forms of criminalization, especially within the lives of those young First Nations people who are forced to negotiate danger, empowerment and, too often, mere survival at these margins.

He was the writer, artistic director and coordination of the collaborative performance project Asowaha at the grunt gallery in Vancouver. Prior to that he co-curated, with Debra Piapot, the nine artist collaborative performance series *Nanatowihitowin Acimowina (Healing Stories)* at the Walter Phillips Gallery at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He has performed at artist-run centres in Vancouver and Quebec City, served on a number of arts juries, recommendation committees, and advisory panels, and was one of the assistant technical coordinators at the Edge '90 Performance and Installation Art Festival in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK.

His project *Isi-pikiskwewin Ayahpikesisak (Speaking the Language of Spiders)* is part of a larger multi-year collaborative production that will be initiated as a World Wide Web screenplay/storyboard (for later production as a CD-ROM and subsequently as an installation) in the Pop, Mass n' Subcultures Residency at the Banff Centre. Support is gratefully acknowledged for this phase of development from the Canada Council Media Arts Computer Integrated Media Program and the Banff Centre for the Arts Media and Visual Arts Program.

On September 26, 2006, Ahasiw passed away leaving his partner Alain Malo, three brothers Jack Macauley, Garry Hachey, Patrick Hachey and many friends and colleagues to mourn. Ahasiw was a brilliant artist, writer and curator who has greatly influenced the Aboriginal arts community, particularly in the development of web-based media arts. .

Aiyyana Maracle (1950-2016)

Aiyyana Maracle was a multidisciplinary artist, scholar and educator, sovereign Haudenosaunee woman and great-grandma many times over. She spent a half-century actively infusing Ogwehoweh art and culture into the Eurocentric consciousness of Canadian society. A powerful activist and advocate on many fronts, her work dealt with a range of issues, from indigenous land claims to trans identity. Through the fields of performance art, video, theatre (where she was awarded the prestigious John Hirsch Prize for emerging theatre directors in 1997), writing, and lecturing, Aiyyana offered an alternate framework to the prevalent Eurocentric view of 'gender dysphoria,' eventually becoming a voice and activist for young trans or gender nonconforming individuals on Six Nations reserve on the Grand River.

Barry Ace

Barry Ace is a practicing visual artist and the recipient of the K.M. Hunter Visual Artist Award for 2015. Drawing inspiration from multiple facets of traditional Anishinaabeg culture, he creates objects and imagery that utilize many traditional forms and motifs, endeavouring to create a convergence of the historical and the contemporary. His work can be found in numerous public and private collections in Canada and abroad and is represented by Kinsman Robinson Galleries in Yorkville (Toronto).

Tuy't'tanat - Cease Wyss

Skwxwu7mesh/Sto:Lo/Metis/Hawaiian/Swiss
Inter-disciplinary Artist Digital Media/installation Works/ Publuc Art/Communuty based Engagement/Dialogues/ Storytelling/Medicine Gathering/Sharing Traditional Knowledge/Cedar & Wool Weaving/Natural Dye Processes/Creating and building Communities/Land and Wetlands Restoration and Remediation/Collective & Collaborative Processes

I am a mother, daughter, sister, cousin, niece and grandmother. I live a rich cultural life in my traditional lands and waters. I work, learn, teach, gather medicines, create art, and strive for a decolonized lifestyle. My work in digital media and plant technology has woven together over 30 years of my involvement in these two practices.

Working with my hands, getting my hands into earth and creating art through ancient cultural weaving techniques is empowering and healing. Singing and sharing stories is a way to bring others into your personal sphere and to share a part of oneself through cultural insights.

I work at staying active and engaged in my practice and I find it connects me to the past/ present/future.

Dayna Danger

Dayna Danger is an emerging Queer, Métis/Ojibway/ Polish artist raised in Winnipeg, MB. Utilizing photography, sculpture, and video, Danger's practice questions the line between empowerment and objectification by claiming space with her human scale work. Co-opting the visual language of fashion and pornography, she repurposes and challenges perceptions of power, gender, performativity, representation, sexuality, and mixed identities.

Danger is currently based in Montreal, QC while obtaining her Graduate degree in Studio Arts from Concordia University. She graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from The University of Manitoba's School of Art in 2010. Danger held a Visual Arts Studio Work Study at the Banff Centre and participated in Candice Hopkins and Raven Chacon's thematic residency, Trading Post. In 2012-2013, Danger was mentored by Amber-Dawn Bear Robe and Daina Warren as part of MAWA's (Mentoring Artists for Women's Art) Foundation Mentorship Program. Her work was displayed at the New Mexico Museum of Art's exhibition *New Native Photography 2011* for Santa Fe's Indian Market in Santa Fe, NM. Danger's first solo exhibition, *Big'Uns*, was shown at Urban Shaman gallery in Winnipeg MB, June 2014. Danger currently serves as a board member for the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective/ Collectif des Conservateurs Autochtones (ACC/CCA), Canada, since 2013.

George Littlechild

If I were to ask myself why I create the art I do, I would have to answer: "It is what I was born to do. It is my passion, my joy, as my art has been there throughout my life's journey!"

If I were asked what kind of art I create, I would answer by saying, "It is art that speaks from the heart, the social and the political."

My art is charged with energy & color, vibrant, magical & thus enabling the soul to travel.

I envision, I rely on the intuitive, the spiritual, the emotional to tell stories through my art. I am a storyteller, a visualist. A conveyer of messages…

I began to create art as a small boy. My foster mother saw that I had a talent at a very young age. She was encouraging, loving… She saw the gift in me. Scribblers were filled, art lessons began at an early age… Art school, exhibition and books, lectures, and teaching.

In my work, I am committed to righting the wrongs that First Nations peoples have endured by creating art that focuses on cultural, social and political injustices. As an artist, educator and cultural worker, my goal is a better world. It is my job to show the pride, strength and beauty of First Nations people and cultures and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

Jessie Short

Jessie Short is a curator, writer, multi-disciplinary artist and emerging filmmaker whose work involves memory, multi-faceted existence, Métis history and visual culture. Jessie attained an MA degree in 2011 from Brock University where she wrote about contemporary Métis visual culture. After this, Jessie served as the Executive Director of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (ACC) from Oct 2012 to Dec 2014 in Toronto. During her time as the National Coordinator, Jessie managed multiple projects to better promote the work of diverse Indigenous artists across North America. Jessie has screened two short films at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts festival in Toronto (2015 & 2016), and performed in the M:ST Performance Art Festival in Calgary (2016). Jessie currently works as a project coordinator for the Ociciwan Contemporary Art Collective.

John Powell

My Name is Winidi and I am Mamalilikulla of the Kwak'wakw'wakw. I have worked in Design for the last 25 years. My media is textiles. I work a lot in Theatre Costume design, I do clothing on a commission basis. I have also worked with The Vancouver Opera Society. In addition, I have designed a number of Graphics for various First Nations and Non-First Nations organizations. I was Design Coordinator for the Vancouver 2010 Welcome Portion of the Olympics.

I was fortunate to have grown up in my culture and gained much knowledge from our old ones. I value this above all else and I work hard to provide opportunities for the larger non–aboriginal population to learn who we are as Kwakwala-speaking people.

I am a designer primarily. Motivation for my Art is driven by culture. Media is generally textiles. I was schooled in Traditional Kwak'wakw'wakw design, costume design, fashion design (by commission), interior design, and graphic design. I grew up in my culture and I do what I can to help the larger population understand.

Michelle Sylliboy

As an interdisciplinary artist Michelle Sylliboy considers poetry and photography to be her first love. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Sylliboy is a Mi'kmaq artist who was raised in the unceded territory of We'koqmaq First Nation, located in beautiful Cape Breton Island Nova Scotia.

With a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Emily Carr and a Master's degree in Education from SFU, Sylliboy is currently doing her Doctorate Degree in Philosophy of Education with a focus on Curriculum and Implementation at Simon Fraser University. Her educational pursuits are aimed at creating language revitalization by developing a Mi'kmaq Hiero-glyphic curriculum using art as the medium.

Her artistic temperament has greatly benefited the community, as she helped the emerging and professional poets and visual artists with the work she did with the West Coast Aboriginal Writers Collective in Vancouver, B.C. She helped raise opportunities for self-publishing and launched *Salish Seas: An anthology of text + image*. As the Art Director, she helped arrange a successful exhibition at Vancouver Gastown's Gallery Gachet which was curated by Tania Willard.

Engaged in the community, Michelle believes in sharing knowledge with others to facilitate meaningful dialogues. Her last curatorial community event in June of 2016 "The Art of Reconciliation" brought together musicians, poets, and visuals artists to address their views about reconciliation at the Vancouver Public Library.

Her contributing piece "The Art of Reconciliation" was a collaborative new work she did with Vancouver Opera Cellist Heather Hays. The words in Mi'kmaq describe the effects of intergenerational trauma, and how it feels to be a child of a survivor. By collaborating with Heather, Michelle was able to bridge two cultures together in a contemporary dialogue through music and poetry. Understanding reconciliation is about understanding our roles as protectors of mother earth and how colonization and residential school shaped our ways of being today. The cello enables the soul to listen in a manner that is non-intrusive while the words and imagery transports you on a subliminal journey. This new work will be witnessed at Read Out Loud in Sechelt for one night only in June and is also part of the 2017 *UnSettled* Two-Spirit curated Festival by Adrian Stimson.

Mike MacDonald

Born in 1941 in Sydney, Nova Scotia, MacDonald is of Mi'kmaq ancestry. Mike drove across Canada every year working as a video installation artist and gardener in addition to pursuing photography and new media projects. Self-taught, he focused on the environment, incorporating plants and animals in his artworks. He found inspiration in both his aboriginal ancestry and Western sources, drawing from science as well as traditional medicine and ethnobotany.

His works have been featured in exhibitions worldwide at such venues as the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona and the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, France. In 1994, he was awarded the prestigious Jack and Doris Shadbolt Prize from the Vancouver Institute for Visual Arts and in 2000 he received the first Aboriginal Achievement Award for New Media presented at the Toronto imagiNATIVE Festival.

MacDonald's most renowned projects include the butterfly gardens he has planted across Canada since the early 1990s. They are tactile living examples of his devotion to and admiration of the environment.

Inspiration to create the gardens can be seen in his video installation works, most notably in Touched by the Tears of a Butterfly (1994). This installation features silent videotape in a loop projected in front of a set of rocking chairs. The video follows the life of a butterfly, from its existence as a caterpillar until it bursts from its cocoon as a colourful winged insect.

MacDonald has also been recognized for presenting some of the most touching installations on Aboriginal heritage and community. For example, Electronic Totem (1987) showcased a stack of five video monitors, one on top of the other, depicting the contemporary life of an Aboriginal community in British Columbia.

Mike's careful, positive storytelling, as well as his tender regard for nature and the quiet goings-on of the butterfly, has built him a reputation as one of the more significant contemporary artists in Canada.

Raven John

I, Raven John am a Native, Feminist, Two-Spirit artist who grew up across the Lower Mainland of B.C. My ancestral name is Exwetlaq, and I am Stó:lō and Coast Salish in origin.

My works encompass my past and identity in many ways, through mere existence, defiance, and the examination of colonialist, patriarchal and classist systems of value in art. I do this by activating space through sculpture, installation and surreality.

I am currently studying at the Native Education College in the Northwest Coast Jewelry Arts Program. I have also Graduated from Emily Carr University in Spring 2017 with a Major in Visual Arts and a minor in Social Practice and Community Engagement.

Richard Heikkilä-Sawan

As a Two-Spirit artist and graduate of Emily Carr University Audain School of Visual Art, I work within the realms of painting and sculpture. I also like taking pictures and just simply creating art.

I was born in Vancouver, BC and adopted by a Mennonite couple at the age of two months. As a biracial artist not brought up within my culture, I approach Aboriginal themes from a unique viewpoint having only discovered my First Nations ancestry at the age of thirty-two. This allows me the freedom to take risks not afforded other artists when dealing with issues of race and identity.

I draw upon recollections of my rich experiences when grappling with cultural signifiers of utopia/dystopia, violence/compassion, and dissimilarity/identity. My art practice speaks to the human condition within these themes.

My interest also lies within the realm of architecture where the suggestion of ambience is generated from the design and construction of form and space to echo functional, aesthetic, social and environmental considerations. Aspects of these notions can be perceived within my work where the viewer's eye can meander through my paintings with places to rest along the way.

My palette is often rich and vibrant. Breaking down an image into geometric shapes of both positive and negative spaces often implementing Gestalt principles, I utilize the science of physiological optics where colour engages an interaction, the colour of one geometric shape impressing upon and affecting the colour of its neighbour.

With this dynamic infused into often culturally current themes, it is my hope that the viewer will walk away from my work with new insight and perhaps changed.

Robert Houle

Robert Houle is a member of Sandy Bay First Nation, Manitoba and currently lives and works in Toronto. As a child, Robert was taken from his family and placed in the Sandy Bay Indian Residential School. He moved to the Assiniboia Indian Residential School in Winnipeg for High School. He received a B.A. in Art History from the University of Manitoba, and a B.A. in Art Education from McGill University and studied painting and drawing at the International Summer Academy of Fine arts in Salzburg, Austria. Robert taught native studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design University in Toronto for fifteen years.

Robert has exhibited widely in solo and group exhibition across Canada and abroad. He was curator of contemporary aboriginal art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization from 1977 to 1981 and has curated or co-curated groundbreaking exhibitions. He has written extensively on major contemporary First Nations and Native American artists.

Robert Houle's curating, writing and teaching has played a significant role in defining indigenous identity. His considerable influence as an artist, curator, writer, educator and cultural theorist has led to his being awarded the Janet Braide Memorial Award for Excellence in Canadian Art History in 1993; the 2001 Toronto Arts Award for the visual Arts; the Eiteljorg Fellowship in 2003, membership in the royal Canadian academy; distinguished alumnus, University of Manitoba, and the Canada Council Residency Program for the Visual Arts in Paris.

He is represented by Galerie Orenda in Paris; Galerie Nicolas Robert in Montreal; and Kinsman Robinson Galleries in Toronto.

Rosalie Favell

Rosalie Favell is a photo-based artist born in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Drawing inspiration from her family history and Métis (Cree/English) heritage, she uses a variety of sources, from family albums to popular culture, to present a complex self-portrait of her experiences as a contemporary aboriginal woman. Her work has appeared in exhibitions in Canada, the US, Edinburgh, Scotland, Paris, France and Taipei, Taiwan. Numerous institutions have acquired her artwork including National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography (Ottawa), Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (Washington, D.C.), and Rockwell Museum of Western Art (Corning, New York). Rosalie has received numerous grants and won prestigious awards such as the Chalmers Fellowship, the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunten Award and the Karsh Award. A graduate of Ryerson Polytechnic Institute, Rosalie holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Mexico. She has studied and taught extensively at the post-graduate level. She has worked with grassroots organizations in Winnipeg with Inuit educational groups in Ottawa and Nepalese women's groups in Katmandu.

Thirza Jean Cuthand

Thirza Jean Cuthand was born in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, and grew up in Saskatoon. Since 1995 she has been making short experimental narrative videos and films about sexuality, madness, youth, love, and race, which have screened at festivals internationally, including the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City, Mix Brasil Festival of Sexual Diversity in Sao Paolo, Hot Docs in Toronto, ImagineNATIVE in Toronto, Frameline in San Francisco, Outfest in Los Angeles, and Oberhausen International Short Film Festival in Germany where her short Helpless Maiden Makes an 'I" Statement won honourable mention. Her work has also screened at galleries including the Mendel in Saskatoon, The National Gallery in Ottawa, and Urban Shaman in Winnipeg. She completed her BFA majoring in Film and Video at Emily Carr University of Art and Design, and her Master of Arts in Media Production at Ryerson University. In 1999 she was an artist in residence at Videopool and Urban Shaman in Winnipeg where she completed *Through The Looking Glass*. In 2012, she was an artist in residence at Villa K. Magdalena in Hamburg, Germany, where she completed Boi Oh Boi. In 2015 she was commissioned by ImagineNATIVE to make 2 Spirit Introductory Special $19.99. In the summer of 2016, she began working on a 2D video game called A Bipolar Journey based on her experience learning and dealing with her bipolar disorder. It showed at ImagineNATIVE and she is planning to further develop it. She has also written three feature screenplays and sometimes does performance art. She is of Plains Cree and Scots descent, a member of Little Pine First Nation, and currently resides in Toronto.

Ursula Johnson

Ursula Johnson, NSCAD Alum, has participated in over 30 group shows and 5 solo exhibitions.

Her art draws upon a variety of traditions from performance, installation, and sculpture, often incorporating the traditional Aboriginal art form of basketry. She is the creator of the 21st Century O'pltek Basket, a subtly non-functional form that utilizes traditional techniques and methods of traditional Mi'kmaw Ash Splint basketry.

Her performances are often place-based and employ cooperative didactic intervention.

Vanessa Dion Fletcher

Vanessa Dion Fletcher employs porcupine quills, Wampum belts, and menstrual blood to reveal the complexities of what defines a body physically and culturally. She links these ideas to personal experiences with language, fluency, and understanding. All of these themes are brought together in the context of her Potawatomi and Lenape ancestry, and her learning disability caused by a lack of short-term memory.

Dion Fletcher Attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago on an international fellowship from the Association of American University Women. While at SAIC Dion Fletcher created the work *Own Your Cervix*, an immersive installation where textiles, pattern, and the athletics of beauty become the backdrop for self-examination in the context of a feminist colonial discourse. *Own Your Cervix* was exhibited at Tangled Art + Disability in Toronto in 2017.

Menstrual Accessory has been performed in Santa Fe, Miami, Chicago, and Toronto. Dion Fletcher looks forward to bringing this performance and life-changing product to Vancouver.

Wanda Nanibush

Wanda Nanibush is an Anishinaabe-kwe image and word warrior, curator, and community organizer living in her territory of Chimnissing. Currently, Nanibush is a guest curator at the Art Gallery of Ontario and is touring her exhibition The Fifth World which opened January 2016 at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery. The island life allows her to finish upcoming projects including a film called *A Love Letter to My People*, also a documentary on Gerald Vizenor, and a book called *Violence No More* (Arp Press), as well as an anthology of Indigenous Curatorial Writing and more. She has a Master's Degree in Visual Studies from the University of Toronto and has taught doctoral courses on Indigenous history and politics at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

UnSettled Plate List

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew, *White Shame from First Nations Performance Series*, 1992, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches.
Courtesy grunt gallery.

Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew, *White Shame from First Nations Performance Series*, 1992, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches.
Courtesy grunt gallery.

Aiyyana Maracle, *Gender Möbius from Halfbreed Performance Series*, 1995, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Aiyyana Maracle, *Strange Fruit from play performance series*, 1994, Photo: Merle Addison, 11 x 14 inches. Courtesy grunt gallery.

Barry Ace, *Bandolier for Alain Brosseau, 2017.* Digital screen, horsehair, electronic components (resistors, capacitors, inductors, LED), fabric, metal, brass wire, 180.3 x 39.4 x 19.1 cm. Courtesy of Ottawa Art Gallery: Donated by the artist, 2018. Photo: Justin Wonnacott.

Cease Wyss, Sèlus Án̓ us Kwelh7áynexw
Lhenlhén̓ t

[spinningWool / twoSpirits]
Weaving a Blanket,
2017, Installation, 24 x 96 inch shawls (2) together 72 x 192 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Adrienne*, 2017, Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Lindsay*, 2017, Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist

Dayna Danger, *Sasha*, 2017, Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Kandace*, 2017, Digital print, 60 x 75 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

George Littlechild, *Warrior Incarcerated*, 2015, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

George Littlechild, Warrior and The Black Snake, 2015, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

George Littlechild, *Warrior Indigenous of South America's Sacred Soil*, 2017, Mixed media, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

George Littlechild, *Cree Boy Thrust*, 2017, Mixed media, 50 x 38 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Jessie Short, *Family of Light*, 2016, Photographic. Courtesy of the artist.

Jessie Short, *Sweet Night*, 2016, Video, 6:53min. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Winidi (self Portrait*), 2015-16, Mixed media,
18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Yam'gwas (maternal Great, Great Grandmother)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Wa'dzi da laga (maternal Grandmother)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Oo Dzee stah lees (maternal grandfather)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Patila'enukw (maternal great grandmother)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Walas Kyayu'tla'las (maternal Great Grandfather)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 18.5 inches by 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Dlah' Dlah Gwotl (Grandfather's mother)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Mah Q'wa lah oh gwa (my Grandfather's Aunt)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Goo Tlah' Lahss (my Grandfather's Uncle)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

John Powell, *Dlah Kwa Gyee lo Gwa (My Grandfather's Aunt)*, 2015-16,
Mixed media, 26.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Michelle Sylliboy, *The Art of Reconciliation*, 2016, Video, word, 5:44min.
Courtesy of the artist.

Mike MacDonald, Touched By The Tears of a Butterfly, 1995, Video, 14:30min.
Courtesy of vTape.

Raven John, Two *Spirit Transformation Blessing*, 2017, Acrylic on paper,
22 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Richard Heikkilä-Sawan, *My Spirits Soar*, 2015, Hudson's Bay history book, King James bible, John Fluevog Rigas boots, mannequin legs, laquer, Finn chair, unopened Big Rock beer can, Lego bricks, foam shapes, Band-Aids, spray paint, children's wooden stacking toy, mahogany valet stand, braided roping, CNC routered yellow cedar, light bulb, toggle switch, duct tape, 76.8 x 17.9 x 17.7 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Richard Heikkilä-Sawan, *Before the knowing (green, blue, brown)*, 2016,
Oil on linen, 30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Richard Heikkilä-Sawan, *Into the knowing*, 2016, Oil on linen, 30 x 40 inches.

Richard Heikkilä-Sawan, *Happy at last*, 2016, Oil, synthetic polymer on linen,
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Robert Houle, *Nude*, 2007, Conte on arches paper, 50 x 71 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Rosalie Favell, Living Evidence, How could I go on as if it never happened,
1994, Photographic, 30 x 35 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Thirza Cuthand, *2 Spirit Dreamcatcher Dot Com*, 2017, Video, 4:56min.

Ursula Johnson, Making A Mark, Drawing and video installation.
Courtesy of the artist.

Vanessa Dion Fletcher, *# Menstrual Accessory*, 2016, Performance,
installation, video, 20min. Courtesy of the artist.

Vanessa Dion Fletcher, *# Menstrual Accessory*, 2016, Performance,
installation, video, 20min. Courtesy of the artist.

Wanda Nanibush, Passive Resistance, Video installation.
Courtesy of the artist.

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