

DECADence



EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

CURATED BY
Valérie d. Walker

|

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
SD Holman

DECADENCE

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

Queer Arts Festival
2018

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DECADEnce

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

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The Queer Arts Festival takes place on the sovereign, unceded land of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), səliłwətaʼ ɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) peoples. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the xwməθkwəy̓əm, səliłwətaʼ ɬ and Skwxwú7mesh communities, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. QAF also acknowledges that it was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this institution is located. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment to continued work to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.

DECADEnce: Foreword

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SD Holman

In a settler-colonial society, we have a very solidified perception of what “counts” as worthy for recording. Systems of power proclaim a single story, asserting authority and superiority, setting the bar by which we are measured and found wanting. As J. Halberstam says in The Queer Art of Failure:

Suspect memorialization. While it seems commonsensical to produce new vaults of memory about homophobia or

racism... Memorialization has a tendency to tidy up disorderly histories... Memory is itself a disciplinary mechanism that Foucault calls a ‘ritual of power’; it selects for what is important (the histories of triumph), it reads a continuous narrative into one full of ruptures and contradictions, and it sets precedents for other “memorializations.”

QAF 2018's curated visual art exhibition DECADEnce interrogates what we collectively choose to celebrate, exploring the marks that live beyond the page, numerical devices, and quantitative data.

2018 marked one decade of the Queer Arts Festival and two decades of the Pride in Art Society. To celebrate these milestone anniversaries, I chose the theme DECADEnce: a festival contemplating time, memory, decay, revisionism, disremembrance, erasure, re-reading, and the future of genders and sexualities. DECADEnce explored embodied vs. selective memory, intergenerational trauma, race, and lost histories—where we are, where we've been, where we are going.

Anniversaries provide occasions to revisit the collective herstories / theirstories / ourstories by honouring our trailblazing queer ancestors, the stories untold, the unmeasurable progress, visceral pleasures, tragic losses, the almos, the pushback, the unnamed, the unmarked, the dead, the blood-sweat-and tears. We repeatedly perform a palimpsest un-layering, because our stories are erased over and over, but nevertheless, they persist. We uncover, expose, write anew — even as our stories keep getting erased. Resistance is important, not

because it changes anything but because it keeps us human. These marks continue to live in and inform our actions and our reality to fuel discourses that challenge perceptions of success by sharing the stories of how we got here and what sacrifices and struggles it required.

For 20 years this organization has been a platform for the voices and visions of artists who challenge normative misconceptions in both art spaces and the greater society. This mayhem of hate, to the shock of all-realities-white, is just another Tuesday for the marginalia — those whose bodies have been stolen, pathologized, and outlawed. These marks are where we find joy, love, thrive, and create. They are how we feed our spirits and thicken our skins.

For this landmark edition of the festival, I invited Valérie d. Walker to curate our signature visual art exhibition, because she conjures a prismatic multidisciplinary multiverse of art activism that deserves to be more widely known. An Afro-Futurist, Trans-Atlantic diasporic rainbow Femme, Hawai'ian, African-Caribbean, Jewish trans-media artist extraordinaire, Valérie is a force of nature. Her vision of DECADEnce interrogated our rich history while spinning nacreous visions of possible futures.

This exhibition was orbited by a constellation of performing arts events including Jeremy Dutcher's duets with the voices of his ancestors in Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa; Lesley Ewen's fantastic revisioning of the early years of multi-media provocateur Paul Wong in Camera Obscura (hungry ghosts); Erato Ensemble's Skin and Metal tribute to seminal electro-acoustic composer Barry Truax; Lee Su Feh's negotiation between the history in her dancer's body and the history of the land she dances upon in Everything; and an encounter with queer art's future with MACHiNOiSY's PROX:IMITY RE:MIX.

Summoning names writ along our timeline, I thank Pride in Art founders Robbie Hong and Jeffery Austin Gibson, and QAF co-founder Rachel Iwaasa. You lift us up. We hold in our hearts Queer Arts Family members death has taken from us—Denis Simpson, Aiyyana Maracle, Laura Aguilar, Jim Deva, and my beloved wife Catherine White Holman. You are forever missed.

This exhibition and catalogue were a labour of love, to which a great many people contributed their energy and devotion.

I'd like to thank Valérie and the artists for contributing their work to this catalogue so that DECADEnce could live on. The exhibition was made possible through the generous support of the Vancouver Foundation, the Canada Council, Canadian Heritage, BC Gaming, the BC Arts Council, and the City of Vancouver. Thank you to our terrific partners at the Roundhouse, especially Marie Lopes for your tireless support. I'd particularly like to extend my personal thanks to QAF's terrific crew, who went above and beyond to make DECADEnce a reality: particularly, Odette Hidalgo, Ben Siegl and Israt Taslim. Thank you; this catalogue could never have happened without your perseverance.

Decadence is often used disparagingly, to denote some kind of moral or social decline with lavish overindulgence. Queer that up and you get a serious voluptuousness, a rapturous languor, a luxurious indulgence, deliberate in ecstatic purpose.

That's the idea. DECADEnce.

Halberstam, J. (2011). *The queer art of failure*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

DECADEnce

CURATED VISUAL ART EXHIBITION

CURATED BY Valérie d. Walker

What is a mark? What do we count and how? Programmed and conditioned by colonial imperial society we literally count success, attaching dates to significant *momentous* occasions, times in *hissStory* when someone is said to have “accomplished something” that *should* be written down and celebrated to press its worth into the collective memory, year after year. That story has tried to erase the *Others* in its willful pursuit towards destruction, asserting stolen authority with congenital superiority. Queer Art goes beyond any limits set in place by systems of hegemonic control to ensure the continuation of multitudes of stories, in a collective alternative memory-bank.

Queer artists have been making marks before, during, and “after” queerness was seen as of value for mainstream commodification. 2018’s curated visual art exhibition, *DECADEnce*, remembers the *Other* marks and interrogates what we collectively choose to celebrate. These marks sustain our collective memory. These marks are where we find joy, love, thrive, and create to feed our spirits. By engaging queer artists across disciplines, *DECADEnce* explores marks that live beyond the page, outside of politically controlled social-media driven devices and quantitative data acquisitions.

In this exhibition, we time-travel across millennia, wandering rainbow-strewn paths into sensual redemption. Remembering times waaay before

Facing page:

Plate 1: Installation, Guerrilla Girls, DECADEnce, 2018



Stonewall when we had to fight just to exist in the shadows. Guided by a young queer black hottie from an Indiana of the 20th century, Princessa Keisha Pope, we visit notorious & glorious places in NYC and Cuba, feeling that vibe even though it no longer exists outside of these hand-printed photos and memories. General Idea, born in 1969 Toronto (of all places!?) a futuristic, 3-headed, 12-limbed, bitinglly Hilarious Art Star is here, asking if we can handle remembering a time when there were no AIDS meds, no PrEP'd hope, while Ronnie Raygun's neo-conservative band played on. Felix Partz is "tHere", Jorge Zontal illuminates their path, leaving AA Bronson, with us, at the carrefour of time.

Flowing thru time, see those Nice-Grrls become Gorilla-headed Art Guerrillas, writing the art-shytstem's wrongs on the walls. Look into the eyes of Danger's *Big'Uns*, joyful, fierce, laughing into the future, shining with Queer power. Susan Stewart turning a corner, spiraling past government censorship. Raven Davis dances a healing ritual across treaties made under duress, signed in blood. Syrus Marcus Ware's Trans-Afro-Futuristic markings, Black beauty in dialogue with the same-old hang-ups and erasure of self stand TALL, refusing to be UnSeen. Timeless Vancouverite Mainstreeter with eyes all over life's city-scape, Paul Wong tunes in video transmissions from another Century & Millennium remarking how hang-ups & pain made of sing-song insults can bounce back and forth until we shout and "So Are you!", seeing out-dated crossed signals in what Twitter-Trolls channel now.

Tactile memories pour thru Tameka's timescapes. HunkPupa Women in Black sing prairie songs so we can remember through the darkness into light. Time's spiral leads us to vortexxxes of Art where transformation is possible. Sensorially enhanced, immersive, meta-verse spaces created by on-going, physically challenging dialogues with life's quotidian moments and sensorial ecstasies: Chandra Melting Tallow, FiND MUTYA, Berlynn Beam, Jenny Lin & Eloisa Aquino, engage with the Queer-power found in interstitial, felt-not-seen spaces, each experience uniquely cracks open reality, filling the cracks with Light and Gold.

Almost half a century after Stonewall, it can feel like change is here, *finally* the struggle is over; in reality we're still living with the burden of an uncertain future and a precarious present that bestows or denies us our freedoms. We do not yet have self-governance of our bodies and minds—we do have artistic visions, marks signifying what may come.

2018 marks one Decade of Queer Arts Festival and two Decades of Pride in Art supporting voices and visions of fearless queer artists. Now is the Time for us to revisit, represent and release our marks from the archives while sharing shining mirror-disco ball *futurisms*. We are time travelers, we have been here before and will do it again.

These are our marks. — Valérie d. Walker, 2018

DECADEnce

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

CURATED BY Valérie d. Walker

AA Bronson
 Angela Gabereau & Coral Short
 & Visionaries
 April Sumter-Freitag
 Berlynn Beam
 Carl Pope
 Dana Claxton
 Chandra Melting Tallow
 Dayna Danger
 Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin
 General Idea
 Guerrilla Girls
 Katherine Atkins
 Mutya Macatumpag
 Paul Wong
 Raven Davis
 Susan Stewart
 Syrus Marcus Ware
 T.J. Dedeaux-Norris

AA Bronson



Plate 2: AA Bronson, Felix Partz, June 5, 1994, 1994/2000, Ink and lacquer on vinyl, 84 x 168 inches. Courtesy of Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, Kingston and the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program and the Chancellor Richardson Memorial Fund, 2001 (44-015).

Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries



Plate 3: Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries,
Future Visions, 2018, Interactive video.
Courtesy of the artists.

Facing page

Plate 4: Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries,
Future Visions, 2018, Interactive video.
Courtesy of the artists.

Plate 5: Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries,
Future Visions, 2018, Interactive video.
Courtesy of the artists.



April Sumter-Freitag



Clockwise:

Plates 6 - 9: April Sumter-Freitag, *Out, Black + Proud in BC* — *For Decadence 2018, 2005/2018*, Video, 13 minutes 44 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.



ARTIST: April Sumter-Freitag



Clockwise:

Plates 10 - 13: April Sumter-Freitag, *Out, Black + Proud in BC* — *For Decadence 2018, 2005/2018*, Video, 13 minutes 44 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.

Upon viewing the video poem ***Out Black & Proud in BC 2004/2018***, a supremely Decadent interlude with Queer Black Canadians living in BC ... then and now, I took off on a time-travel of Canadian Blackness in Western Canada. Discussing this work with its creator, April Sumter-Freitag — Historical, Eighth generation, Black Canadian with Mi 'kmaq and Scottish ancestry, queer, gender non-binary, poet, video-maker — I asked how Sumter knew Vancouver so intimately. For Sumter, the city is a familiar lover who makes breakfast on demand. Exploring that and many questions, We time-traveled looking for 'What was it like for Historical Black Canadians living under the "North Star of Freedom" here, instead of dealing daily with USA-level racism?' Listen Feel it

Valérie d Walker, *curator*

Out Black and Proud in BC 2004/2018 & now... during the covid-19 pandemic year 1

April Sumter-Freitag

Reinventing Decadence

Decadence in the act of being yourself

Decadence with dignity

Decadence with integrity.

*** Reinventing Decadence

When looking at the dictionary definition it literally referenced a dessert bar with **too much chocolate** ... Looking at my work, clearly, Decadence is in featured blackness All the black faces ... the black voices ... black uniqueness ... unity in the stories of black queer experience **here**... a piece of activist decadence simply in our surviving while BEing our queer black selves

.... My first exposure to the LGBTQ+ community in Vancouver was in 1979.... Mom was in the theatre

... a short explanation for a lot of things including why queer and trans people were a part of my life as long as I can remember & why I ended up moving here on my own at 15 'til Mom finished her tour and could join me. She'd set us up in a rental house on 25th and Dunbar with three white feminist vegetarian lesbian roommates as a 15-year-old from Manitoba, I didn't know much about vegetarians... I was raised by black matriarchs so I had an early introduction to passionate intersectional feminism... My educational system was based on studying white people ... so ... I had some things covered. I think they had a harder time trying to understand their independent, black, baby queer, gender-questioning, city-exploring housemate. Mom & I lived in four locations in Vancouver in that year ... my favorite ... the West End on Denman and Nelson ... down the street from the original Hamburger Mary's ... there were still "Sex Workers on Davie" in their Jim Deva plaza location then...

...at 15 I had total freedom ... tall enough to get into clubs ... plus my straight white teenage girl crush had cleavage. We'd skip school and go to the Kings Castle Pub on Granville for afternoon pints. Gay Vancouver was glorious in those pre-AIDS times, full of neon, excitement and decadence. I loved it when Mom would sneak me into the **Gandy Dancer and other clubs** to go dancing with her "theater" friends.

*** Decadence in the act of being yourself...

1979 One night, alone at the bus station @ Davie and Bute, I was picked up by the police. They told me to get in their car.... then started

asking me a bunch of questions about *work-ing*. ... almost took me a minute, in my jeans and t-shirt, to understand they thought I was a sex worker.... didn't seem impressed with my "I was just there waiting for a bus" story. ...my falsetto and my obvious lack of connection to the scene *at that time* convinced them I really was 15 years old and it was best just to drive me the few blocks down the street home... Thankfully they did just that ...

... 2004, in the ***Out Black and Proud in BC*** interviews, other black people echoed experiences of being tagged as a sex worker or a suspect ... in the opening of the film I say: "I was looking for something, I was looking for Community" ... I am still looking ... to live in a world where anti-black racism doesn't shade everything ...

.... To this day "Undue attention" from police is **still** an on-going constant ...

*** Decadence with integrity

I've had a few rides in police cars since Davie and Bute and still get "undue attention" from the police yes ... been stopped and questioned ... had my name run through their systems several times always with a surprise reaction when they find **my spotless criminal record**

... the early 1990's ... Vancouver wasn't utopia but finding some semblance of community did not seem possible in Edmonton so... Vancouver ... being from the prairies, maybe I was easy to impress with mountain views and year-round lush foliage.... The city's architecture... its feel had changed... now post-expo '86

pre-Olympic Village development ... the only tower blocks around Science World seen were at *City Gate* on top of the Main Street Skytrain station ... When I re-engaged with Community I felt like a voyeur ... not seeing myself reflected ... looking for the community *and freedom* I couldn't find in Alberta, I immersed myself in the West End club scene ... a dancer who loved going out dancing a wide variety of queer venues ... the decadence of drag performance art....

*** Decadence with dignity

"I was raised by drag queens in the West End ... slightly better than being raised by wolves" I joked... Partly a statement on how tough community could be, Mostly a sincere compliment acknowledging the incredible resiliency of that community what they taught me about survival and self-determination...

..... In Drag ... Decadence comes with too much makeup, an abundance of rhinestones, and plush velvet lounge jackets ... paired with a quest for pleasure... a dedication to party to live an inverted lifestyle that matched my insomnia/sleep cycle.... I found comfort with the drag community here and some of the diversity I was longing for...

... Onstage: Two-Spirit, Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx and other POC performers were represented... There was a legacy of leadership with the Greater Vancouver Native Cultural Association. For a *brief* time, there was the BLACK AIDS Network (BAN).... one of the spaces I could find other black queers.... some incredibly

talented black drag performers ... I met other black LGBTQ+ plus folks who were dedicated fans who frequented the shows. Inevitably, we would end up hanging out together dancing & sharing stories. .. 15 years later when I was making my film those same folks were some of the Out Black and Proud Queer British Columbians I would interview....

... 1990's ... the killing/tipping point of the AIDS pandemic here.... People were testing positive, getting sick, and dying... it seemed that the partying and decadent celebrations of that time were in rebellion to the trauma of chronic grief as case counts and death rates surged....

1995-2004... ... off to East Vancouverno biological family ... no black community center to volunteer at... joined the Lesbian Connection Centre on Commercial Drive connected with the Aboriginal Women's Action Network (AWAN) it was a relief to be welcomed but.... I still felt on the outside looking in....looking for a way to participate ...

..... back when there were lesbian clubs in Vancouver ... already feeling on display ... flipping the switch from voyeur to exhibitionist controlling the *visibility* of *my blackness* ... my queer art expression was exotic dancing blatant exposure of black flesh somehow making the performance more extreme and shocking somehow it felt more reciprocal Performances in the basement space at Mis T's on Pender, ... X-Files Cabaret .. Kiss N Tell ... the Betty Page social club... a taste of sex-positive lesbian expression still not a lot of blackness...

No black gathering place and no black Jim Deva plaza. I can't recall any black-run or black queer businesses, aside from the short-lived Black Aids Network.... there were no black-owned restaurants, clubs, or other venues I definitely had to venture outside of West End to get my braids done....

.... if you don't exist in the economic landscape, you've effectively been erased in a society driven by economics.... in addition to being a voyeur, I was a consumer of white queer culture and its standards of beauty....

2018.... I made ***Out Black and Proud in BC*** in 2004 over a decade later ... I was looking to see how the piece aged... Is that age marked by the quality of the video resolution?.... or the dramatically different panoramic views?... Community neighborhoods with small shops & food stops driven out by high rent replaced by ... un-stable towers the city of 2004 is barely recognizable in 2018 someone asked me "*where is this?*" I answered ***this was Vancouver***.... & so the city became one of the voices in ***Out Black and Proud in BC 2004/2018***...

There's a demand *be performative to earn acceptance*.... *Black identity is entertainment* ... a pleasure other cultures consume while denying their own anti-blackness.... Few ... rare times & spaces to bring All of your Black self with all the pain and vulnerability without glorifying the strength it takes to show up and participate while feeling such pain ... the vulnerability it takes to be in Community

...Now... or Always it seems There are demands to be performative ... to earn acceptance ... the landscape has not really changed.... denial of anti-black racism in Vancouver remains while the local narrative continues to be about how bad it is in the states or Toronto or Alberta or Québec.... Halifax.... or..... Abbotsford....

*** Decadence in the act of being yourself with dignity and integrity

.... I've been looking for what anti-oppressive black queer art decadence would look like.... having limitless social justice, equity with realness, the richest friendships, satisfying sexual relationships beyond one's wildest imagination ultimate freedom to express your identity safely with abandon... that might come....
..... close.

==

.... "Undue attention" is part of the hyper-visibility and racial profiling attached to all levels of anti-black racism in Vancouver/N.America.

Berlynn Beam



Plate 14: Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017,
Installation, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 15: Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017,
Installation, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 16: Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017,
Installation, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.



ARTIST: Berlynn Beam

Plate 17: Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017,
Installation, dimensions vary.
Courtesy of the artist.

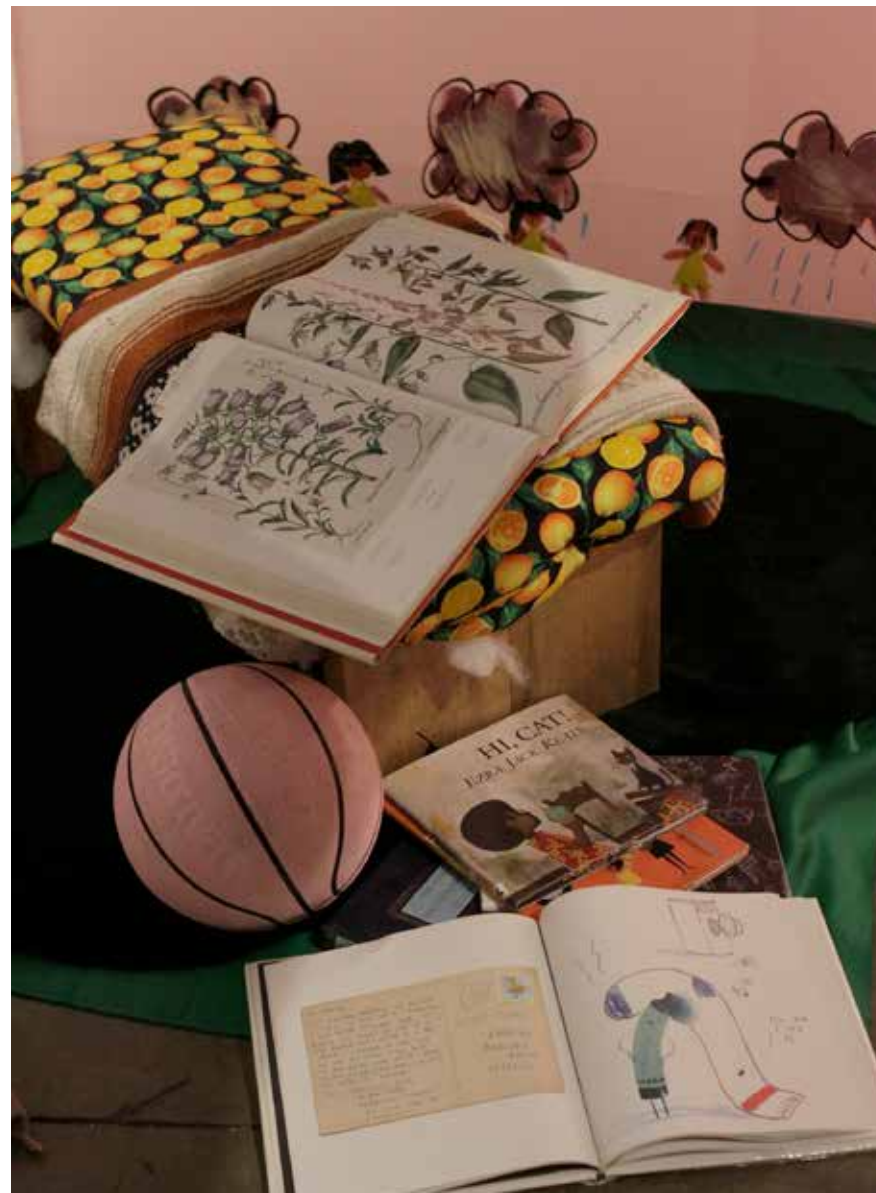


Plate 18: Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017,
Installation, dimensions vary.
Courtesy of the artist.

Carl Pope

Plate 19: Installation,
Carl Pope, *The Cosmology
of Cosmetology*, Ongoing
photographic project
since 1996, Gelatin silver
and C-Print analog
photographic prints,
Dimensions variable
16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.



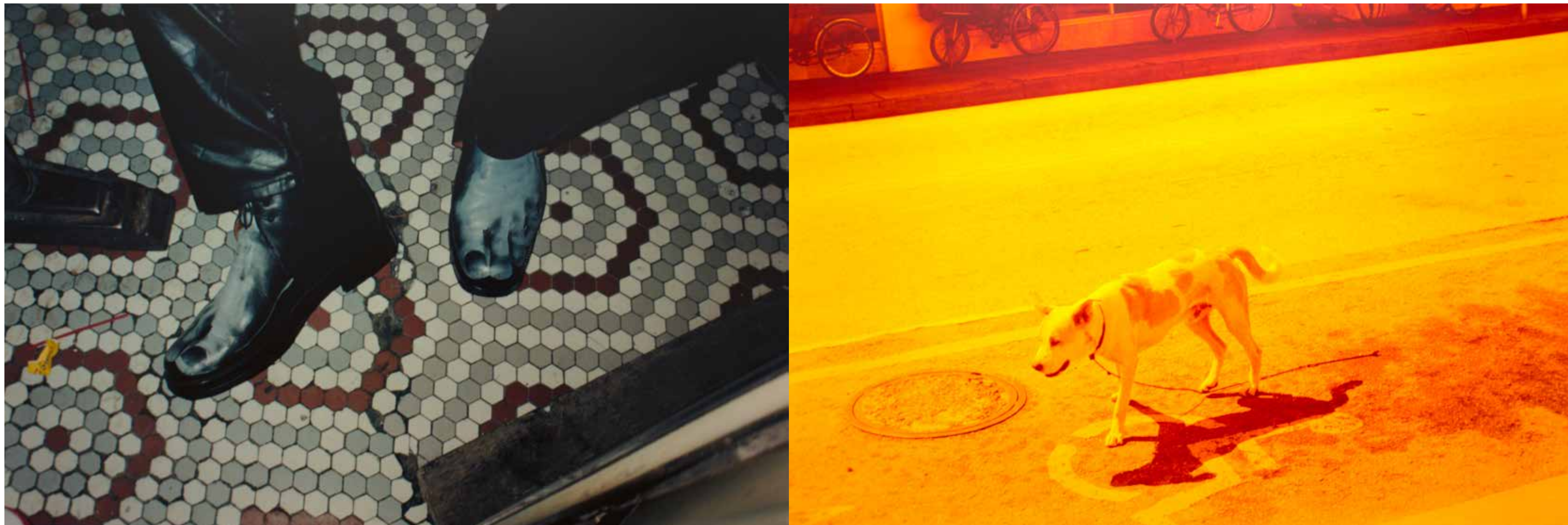


Plate 20-21: Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*,
Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver
and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable
16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plates 22 - 23: Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*, Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable 16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

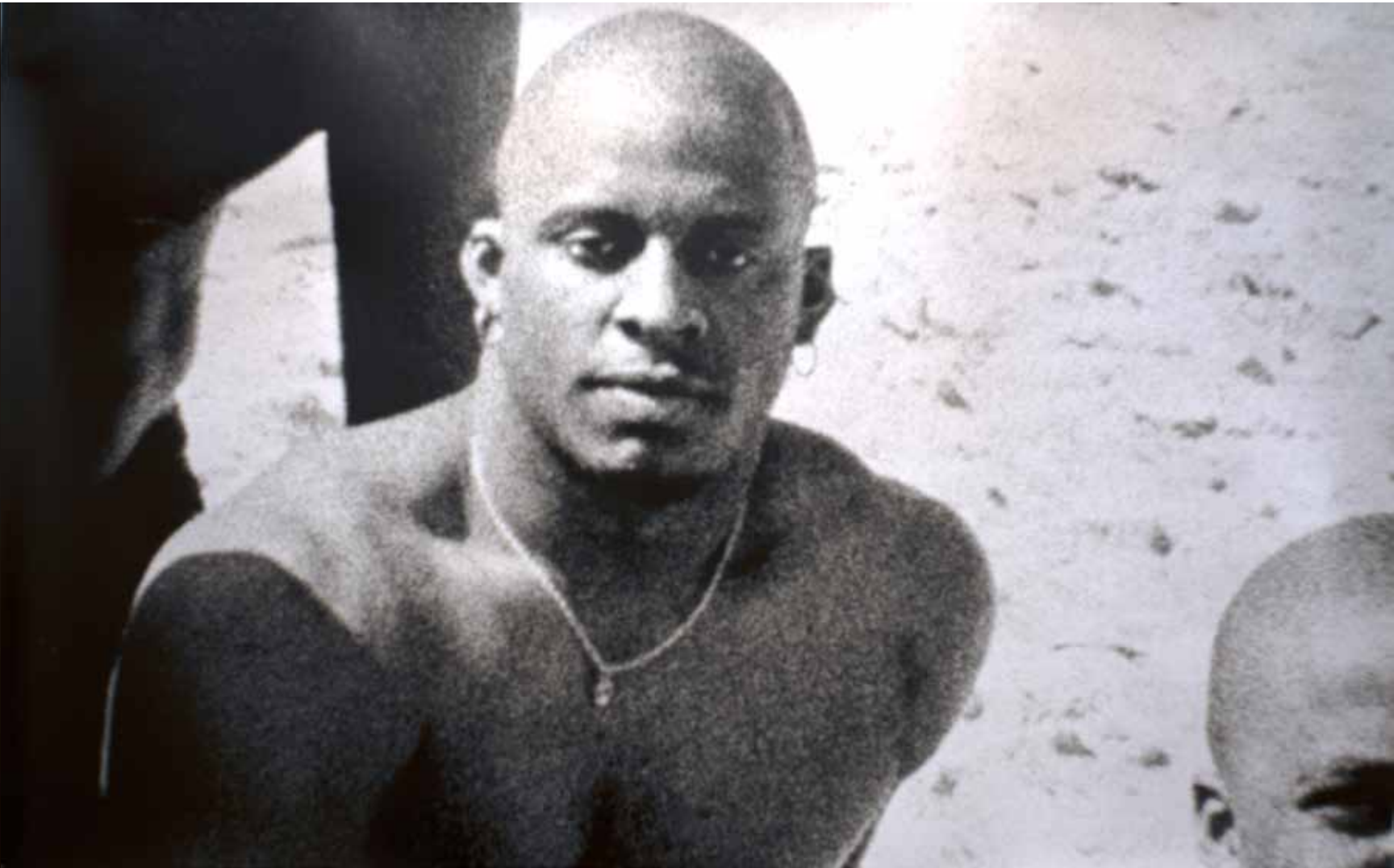
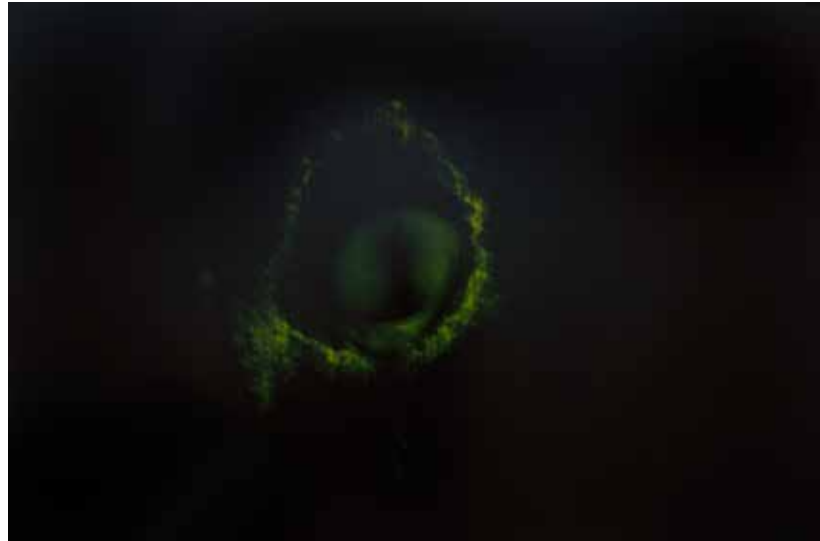


Plate 24 - 25: Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*,
Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver
and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable
16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



All Plates on pages 30-31
Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*,
Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver
and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable
16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Wide-Eyed Glances with Sumptuous Glimpses, Peeps and Peek-A-Boos into LGBTQ+ Creativity, the Year 2020, Decadence and *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*

By Carl Pope



LGBTQ+ Creativity In 2020 and Some Fierce Rhetorical Questions

In thinking about my subject position as an elderly Black Gay man and a conceptual visual artist, I propose that LGBTQ+ Art is not just about LGBTQ, intersexual, androgynous or pandrogynous identities but it also consists of a creative, imaginative practice in which people who identify as LGBTQ+ see ourselves in the world in ways that makes the unconscious conscious and visible in the physical world. We courageously explore the realm of the subconscious and its contents and we inhabit various intersections of subjective experience and imagination with the Cosmic Feminine as we marvel at her ability to invent new forms and venture into uncharted territory that exists beyond hierarchical and binary categorization. Our creative impulse calls forth—out from the subconscious mind, through the repressive barrier, authentic revelations which capture the conscious mind and radically reorders, reframes or rejects what we previously claimed to know about ourselves and our connection to others and the Cosmos. As a result, LGBTQ+ creative activity moves us from private space into the public sphere, from the personal to the political in service to our individual evolution, the progress of contemporary organized society and the biosphere. The elan...the je ne sais quoi

Facing page:

Plate 37: Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*, Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable 16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

of it all is so absolutely sumptuous that I can hardly breathe! But how will LGBTQ+ creativity be implemented to navigate the surprising shifts occurring in the current global system that's unfolding before our very eyes?

In 2020, we are charged once again to creatively meet the challenges of another life threatening global pandemic within the last 40 years, in addition to the existing threats to our right to exist. International drag superstar, The Divine David stated that death was used to give meaning to the 20th Century. Oh yes, he made a very convincing case for his claim. Now, for the next 100 years, the pressing questions seem to be: Will the increasing fatalities from coronavirus infection and the complete destruction of the Middle East and Northern Africa cause mass death to continue to be used to provide meaning for the 21st Century? Which innovative perspectives and approaches can we employ to break free from the binary logic of a decadent, habitually competitive, right-wing authoritarian, fascist, heteronormative, neoliberal, White male capitalist structure of full spectrum dominance and perpetual conflict?

Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, the pandrogynous genius who helped invent the genre of industrial music and an important member of William S. Burroughs' inner circle, clearly articulated this historical moment when he said,

For me, the cut-up is probably the most useful creative tool of the 20th century because you can break patterns, and that causes unlikely collisions and combinations that would happen no other way. Linear thinking is so ingrained in us that you need to break those patterns. Break the language, break the thought, even break the body in order to find out how can we truly change as a species. It's important because we're dooming ourselves right now, through the reiteration of failed processes, failed institutions and failed economic systems... Those in power create wars to maintain their opposition. But this is a revolutionary moment, and we cannot revert to the ongoing distractions of a binary system. We need to take back who we are and write the narrative of our own stories. It's about stripping away our inherited archetypes and our distracting issues to look at our solid bodies, our experiences amongst people. Who is writing my story? Who am I submitting myself to? Who am I forcing to submit? What is it that I truly wish to be? That's where the real battle will be: Will we have an evolutionary thrust or stagnation?

Breaking away from conventional language/ narrative structure, fracturing engrained linear thought patterns or stripping away hierarchical/ binary ordering in the LGBTQ+ creative process is truly an eye opening experience as the power of social programming and conditioning appears

in sharp relief. But something else appears from the wreckage—a defining moment of choice and a newly discovered aspect of one's self with a story to tell. Will the choice be to choose the choice picked by a system that makes all of the choices or will that choice rearrange the established relations between the knowable or the sayable? Will that story flatter those who claim authority over others or will the story speak of hard won victories by being loyal to one's self? We are required to clearly understand the structures and systems of control before we can look beyond their parameters. The Oracle told Neo In a scene in the second *Matrix* film, "No one can see beyond the choices they don't understand. I MEAN NO ONE, NOT EVEN ME!" She continued to tell Neo, "You made the choice and now, you have to understand it—If you don't, then Zion will fall."

The *DECADEnce* exhibition and the revision of the conventional definition of decadence are part of LGBTQ+ cultural labor to "break the language" in order to re-establish LGBTQ+ self-determination and authority over one's own mind, body and sexual expression in a contest over oppressive systems of discipline and control. Noted French philosopher and historian of ideas, Paul-Michel Foucault elaborates on the strategies behind the exercise of authority in his book, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1*,

Sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing one administered. It was in the nature of a public potential; it called for management procedures; it had to be taken charge of by analytical discourses. In the eighteenth century, sex became a "police" matter—in the full and strict sense given the term at the time: not the repression of disorder, but an ordered maximization of collective and individual forces...

Recent sociopolitical developments in America and Europe make it apparently clear that maximizing the analytical discourses and policing of sexual desire, women's bodies, Black and Brown Lives and a host of other things are contributing to the rise of authoritarianism as well as the rising resistance to it. So, is this resistance to tyranny simply a knee-jerk reaction within a vicious circle caused by a clash of opposites? Or is there something radically different being expressed in the hearts and minds of people that's causing the masses to say No? Martin Luther King Jr. inspired all of us to dream which is, in my opinion, one of the most effective forms of protest, especially when the dream destabilizes the uncontested dominance of the status quo while resonating deeply internally and externally with authenticity and inner truth. And for those who permitted themselves to dream; it is the wisdom and vision from this kind of dreaming that cause many to wake up to what they are meant to do and who they are meant to be. Legendary singer,

actress, fashion icon and beloved diva Grace Jones is celebrated because she gave herself the permission to free herself from the oppression of false dichotomies and repression. Grace said,

It's not "being masculine," it's an attitude really, being masculine...What is THAT? Can you tell me what is being masculine? I think that I act the way I feel...I think it's ridiculous trying to categorize people's feelings or saying what one prefers. There is no comparison! You can't just say one is better than the other, one is worst than the other or I prefer one to the other. It's just a...Do what you feel, when you feel like it, if you feel like it. What's shocking? To do what you feel, when you feel like it, if you feel like it? Just do what you want, do what you want. I do want I want and I don't put it in a category. And I don't make comparisons.

Oh my delicious Disco Biscuits, what would happen if we all dreamed as deeply and luxuriously as Martin Luther King Jr., Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, Michel Foucault or Grace Jones? What would we know and what would we see? What would the world look like?

The Transmutation of Decadence and the Poisonous Waters of Life

decadence[dek-uh-duhns, dih-keyd-ns]
noun
 the act or process of falling into an inferior condition or state; deterioration; decay: moral degeneration; turpitude.
 unrestrained or excessive self-indulgence.

While considering this particular definition of decadence from Oxford Languages: what if we, for just a moment, resist defining decadence in a conventional way and re-contextualize what is defined as decadent within an active biological process? Then, decadence is no longer frozen within binary/hierarchical structures of meaning. Whatever is regarded as decadent is reframed as an important element of unknown potential as it releases primal life force energy in each stage of digestion and transmutation. By placing all things decadent within this metaphorical framework; describing a person, place or thing as “decadent” (with intention) can activate an alchemical transmutation. At the beginning of this essay, I used the word decadent in the last sentence at the end of the second paragraph to describe “a decadent, habitually competitive, right-wing authoritarian, fascist, heteronormative, neoliberal, White male capitalist structure of full spectrum dominance and perpetual conflict” in order to transmute and then transcend that oppressive structure in my evolutionary process. The human

imagination is the primary space where each one of us utilize the ability to create and revise our perceptions and experiences. That interior space is the original location where every iteration our appearance in Nature and society is produced. And yes, it is also where we transmute the poisonous waters of life into life-affirming wisdom.

For me, the fundamental purpose, value and gift of the LGBTQ+ imagination and its cultural contributions is about fully embodying and courageously projecting invaluable, subjective insights to others to advance the creative process of our individual and collective unfoldment. These contributions are important elements in the production of a cohesive LGBTQ+ cosmology, in alliance with the second wave of the Civil Rights Movement with Black Lives Matter, the Women’s Movement, the Poor People’s Movement, ANTIFA, the Environmental Movement, Land Rights protests and the human rights struggles of Palestinians and Indigenous peoples, which are aspects of a unified progressive force in service to the human impulse to grow and evolve with creative freedom. Manifesting a waking dream of an inclusive, ethical world that fully occupies vital spaces and places in the real world is now a life or death matter since there are systems and structures in play that are overt and covert—political, militaristic and viral which are working to eliminate the formation of any imaginative space and/or physical place for

people relegated to the margins in the social hierarchy. These very systems are fed by unthinkable sacrifices made by those at the bottom that are rapidly increasing the manufacturing of psychic scarcity used to rationalize the eradication of the 99%. Masses of people all over the planet are alarmed by the recent turn of events and are protesting in the streets against all odds. What can I do as a conceptual visual artist to understand the choices I made to commit to social transformation in order to transcend the parameters of power and control in which I find myself?

The Cosmology of Cosmetology and the Gift of Transcendence

I borrowed a few excerpts from a working definition of the philosophy of Cosmology from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy’s website to contemplate as a point of focus in my short meditation about Cosmology.

There are two main issues that make the philosophy of cosmology unlike any other science.

The uniqueness of the Universe: there exists only one universe, so there is nothing else similar in which to compare it.

Cosmology deals with the physical situation that is the context in the large for human existence: the universe has such a nature that our life is possible.

An avalanche of realizations come to mind about the differences between the physical context for our existence, one’s experiential knowledge of the Cosmos and what we are socialized to think or feel about it. Now it’s easier to see the parallel reality produced by systems of power and it’s easier break away from binary/hierarchical categorization and the policing that comes with it. It’s much easier to demystify, cut up or fracture things to cause “unlikely collisions and combinations that would happen no other way...in order to find out how can we truly change as a species” as Genesis Breyer P-Orridge puts it. Transcendence is known through action, by stripping off the half truths, the untruths and treacherous ca-ca from what is heard or seen to shift from the Matrix to the Real; where the realness is actually real!

Well, I don’t know about you Pumpkin but all of this talk about reality really made me get real vernacular ‘cause I FEEL really REAL and ALL BRAND NEW!!

Excerpts and Cut Ups

Don Semon: Carl Pope, Sweet Corn from Indiana, could you tell me about your opus “The Cosmology of Cosmetology?”

Sweet Corn: (lispig) My photographs are peeps and peek-a-boos into the fabulousness of the universe that loves me because I am here! Life

provides me with whatever I need without me saying that I need it. Life shows me what I want and then Mother just GOES for IT with abandon!!!

Mini Cooper: Please tell us about your work.

Sweet Corn: So, you want me to tell you in front of all of these people about my WERK?

Mini Cooper: No, I am not asking you about your WERK—I am asking you about your work, your artwork...

Sweet Corn: Oh ok, my artWORK is about seeing the world of abundance without war, without shady judgment or the censorship of fake decency. The photographs are definitely about the other side of the rainbow. The seductive side, the side that isn't about genitals as much as a way of seeing the world where metaphor and break in narrative structure informs reality. Photographs often function as indexes of memory and my photographs index glances and glimpses that do more than recall the past. They speak of desire in present time, echoing and morphing glimpses of desire in the past into mind flashes of the future within myself and to those who also seen those kind of glimpses for themselves. These glances are rendered by a frame of mind where the unknown is palatable and hangs in the air, where desire leads to choppy waters and rough shores in a strange frontier that exist right in front of us but can be only seen with the inner eyes, the eyes of a hairdresser with an imagination not bound by

fear but is quite aware of the danger he and/or she perceives.

Don Semon: "Ok Sweet Corn, are you masculine or feminine, gay, straight, trans or queer?"

Sweet Corn: Yes.

Don Semon: Anything else you would like say?

Sweet Corn: My good, Good Judy, which is me, always say, "Cupcake, there are no opposites; there are only complementary elements of various degrees on a sliding scale. There is no permanent stain of guilt or some unending eternal punishment for it. But there are actions and reactions, consequences and at times, hard lessons to learn. Hurry along but never rush—Have fun but don't get into trouble unless the trouble is 'good trouble' as the late Civil Rights leader, John Lewis once said."

Trucker Hall and Son: And if you are a queer what kind of queer are you and if you use a pronoun which pronoun do you use?"

Sweet Corn: "OK, Sugar-Britches...WHAT I AM is HERE, RIGHT HERE-RIGHT NOW livin' MY BEST LIFE!!!"(mic drop)

I CAME for DECADENCE and I BROUGHT IT...
And NOW you have IT!

Heidi, say goodbye to the happy children.

Heidi: "Auf wiedersehen."



Plates 38: Dana Claxton, *Hunkpapa Woman in Black*, 2018, Video, 4 minutes 10 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.

Chandra Melting Tallow



Plate 39: Chandra Melting Tallow, *Ohrwurm Fantasia*, 2018, Installation and audio, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.

Facing page:

Plate 40: Chandra Melting Tallow, *Ohrwurm Fantasia*, 2018, Installation and audio, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.



ARTIST: Chandra Melting Tallow

Dayna Danger



Plate 41: Dayna Danger,
Big'Uns/Rochelle, 2015,
Photo, 69 x 44 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

ARTIST: Dayna Danger



Left:
Plate 42: Dayna Danger,
Big'Uns/Dita, 2016,
Photo, 69 x 44 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Right:
Plate 43: Dayna Danger,
Big'Uns/Parneet, 2016,
Photo, 69 x 44 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.



Left:
Plate 44: Dayna Danger,
Big'Uns/Adrienne, 2017,
Photo, 69 x 44 inches.
Courtesy of the artist..

Right:
Plate 45: Dayna Danger,
Big'Uns/Angel, 2017,
Photo, 69 x 44 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.



Artist Statement

The cornerstone of Dayna Danger's artistic philosophy is reciprocity. In Dayna's world, this is a particular system dependent upon relationship building and consent with the people they photograph. In a very real way, this very simply means that Dayna treats the featured individuals in every work of art as living breathing people who do not metaphorically die once the piece has been created. The individual(s) in their* works of art are not consumable objects devoid of life like a taxidermy deer head over the trophy hunter's mantel.

Dayna Danger operates from a position where they are able to destabilize the traditional power dynamics between artist and the individual(s) being photographed. The individual(s) in their works are not consumable objects, nor subjects, nor models. Rather, they are individuals, they are human beings. Dayna's creation and showcasing of their art exemplifies how to replace the traditional dynamic of an artists' 'power over' with power sharing with the individual being photographed in order to create art that gives the individual featured in the piece autonomy and agency.

To this end, Dayna asks the consent of each individual featured in their artistic works before displaying any piece. In addition, they have a strict signage policy in *Big'Un's*, that requests audience members not to photograph the art during this particular exhibition. This is not about money; this is an extension of Dayna's consent policy. The individuals featured in these pieces have only consented to have their image displayed in a particular circumstance, not to be consumed and proliferated beyond the physical walls of the gallery or museum exhibit.¹

Left: **Plate 46:** Dayna Danger, *Big'Uns/Kildra*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Right: **Plate 47:** Dayna Danger, *Big'Uns/Nicole*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

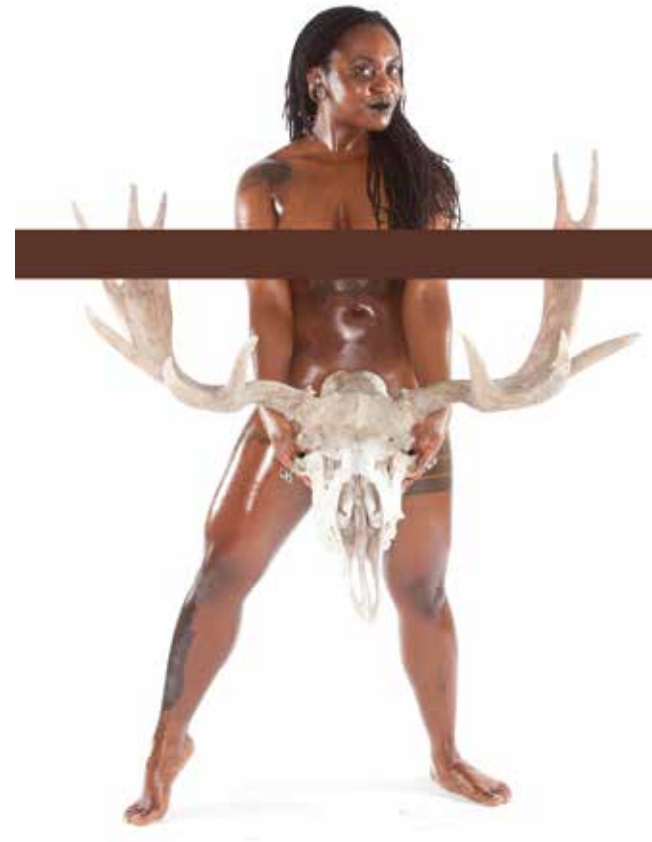


Plate 48: Dayna Danger, *Big'Uns/Jazz*, 2018, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

assesses the needs, comfort level of the individual, that person's safety in the space, and is open to discussion about the content of the artwork. For example, in *Big'Un's*, featured in the Queer & Peace exhibition, Dayna would often allow the individual to select the antlers or horns they wanted to use or allow the individual to swap out for another type if they were not comfortable with the initial selection.

Consent and relationship building to achieve reciprocity also requires the rejection of one of the core tenets of art; regarding the individual posing for the piece as an 'object'. The 'object' is there as a mouthpiece for the artist to engage with the audience rather than being an active participant in the artistic message or statement. The 'object' is a consumable good that can be purchased and displayed anywhere the 'owner' chooses. In this traditional capitalist approach to art there is no reciprocity, relationship or consent. The individual featured in the work, who they are as a living breathing human being, is largely treated as irrelevant. Dayna's approach is not only revolutionary and unique in the professional art world, but it is reflective of contemporary Indigenous worldviews, feminist and queer theory. Perhaps this is simply an appropriate extension of their art, which embodies the latter in new and innovative artistic ways.

*Dayna Danger identifies as a 2Spirit artist, who uses the pronouns they/them/their but sometimes she/her in self-reference.

— Dayna Danger and Diana Rice

This policy also extends to online publications. Dayna prefers not to provide copies of their work for online publication because they feel that the agency and autonomy of the featured individual in the works becomes lost. Due to the fact that it is not possible to contain how content is proliferated and used online, the principle of consent becomes easily lost and the foundation of Dayna's artistic principles of reciprocity become negated.

Lastly, when in the process of creating their art, Dayna ensures to create a safe space and flexibility for dialogue between themselves and the individual they are photographing. Dayna

1. Curator Note: refers to uncensored gallery images.

Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin

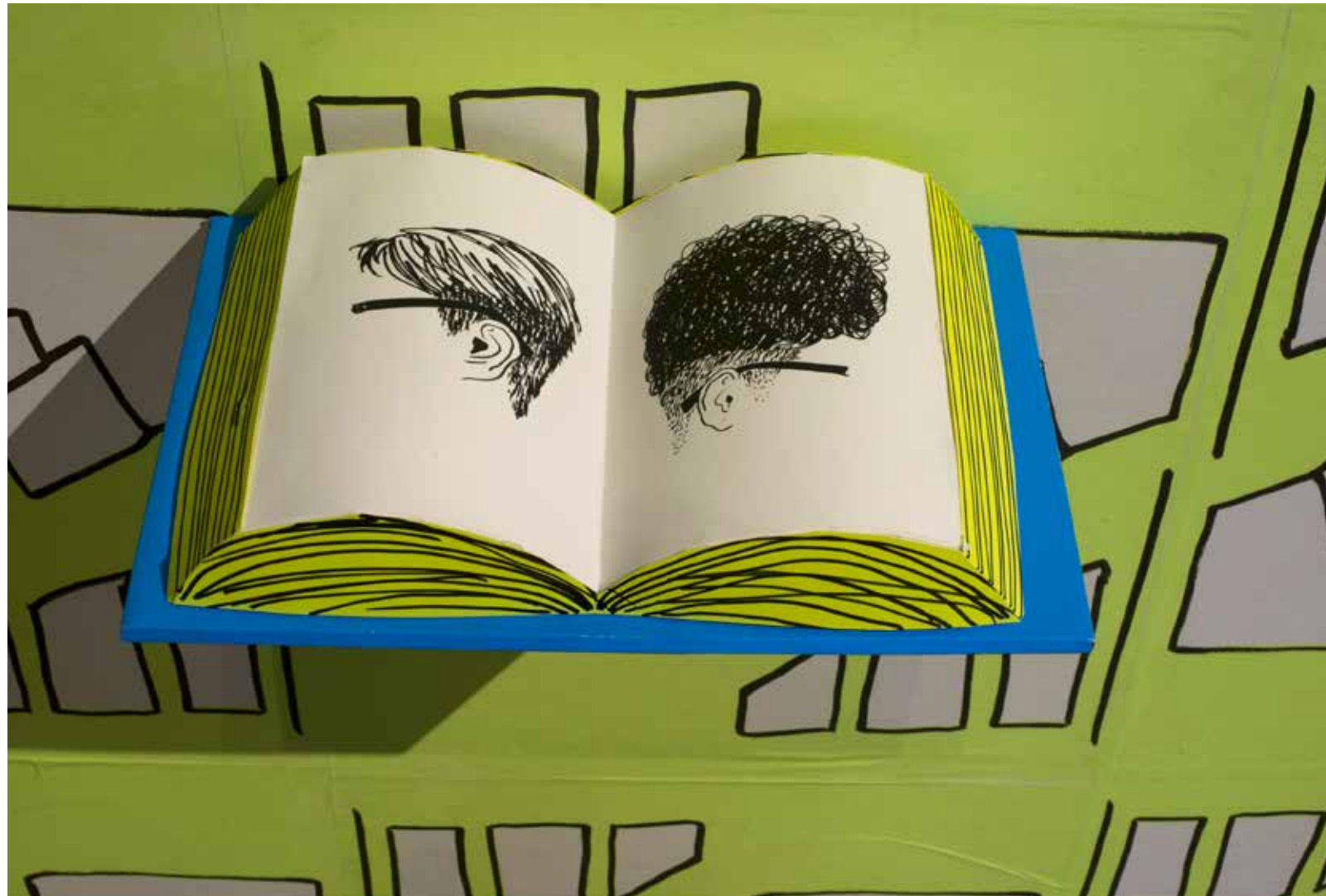
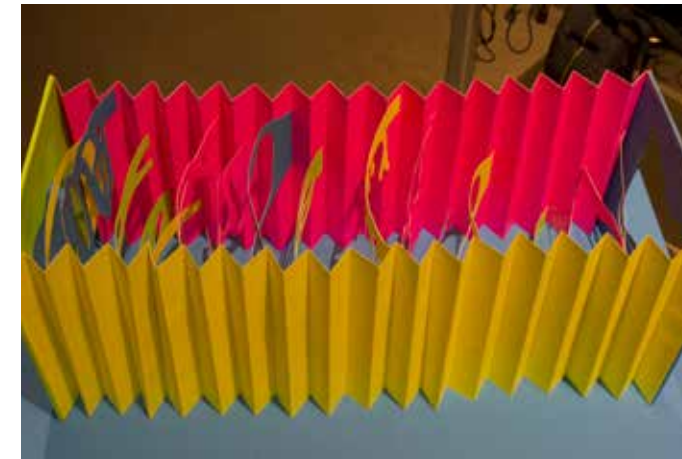


Plate 49: Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin, *Tactical Deer Database*, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper, 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plates 50 - 53:
Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin, *Tactical Deer Database*, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper, 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 54: Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin,
Tactical Deer Database, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint
 and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper,
 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Plate 55: Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin,
Tactical Deer Database, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint
 and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper,
 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Tactical Deer Database and the invention of a queer idiom

By Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin

How can we envision a three-dimensional space as an expression of a flat surface? How can we generate our own iconographies?

Challenged by DECADEnce curator, Valérie d. Walker, to reflect upon and explore the idea of “marks,” we decided to start from the most basic form of mark-making: the line drawing. As an exercise of constraint, at a moment that we were in different hemispheres of the planet, we started a conversation without words. Jenny was in Montreal and Eloisa in São Paulo. We exchanged messages without text, just photos taken with our phones or drawings. We were searching for meaning in that exchange and we didn’t know where our search would lead us.

This image exchange – a call and response ritual – was supposed to be fun, but became more frustrating than fun. Our aim was to create an excess of images and to find amongst that detritus our very own symbols, and those symbols could become Queer Symbols – and maybe the ambitious scope of the quest proved inhibiting.

We had our drawings, but were missing our story. The images were: hand with goo – plant – another plant – leaf – cactus – leaf – leaf with goo – snails – selfies – weights – volcano – stamps – glasses – infinity – crab – pineapple crown – abstraction – lizards – et cetera.

It was a game of reflection, deflection, and evocation. There were many images. Most were



Plate 56: Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin, *Tactical Deer Database*, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper, 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

discarded; rules were re-written and then the new rules were broken. In the end, instead of a bounty, we had a reflection of what our lives felt like at the moment, which amounted to a type of scarcity: just the basics. And we didn’t know what to do with those slim pickings. We needed to re-group.

Once reunited and inhabiting the same space again, we decided to abandon the idea of making Queer Symbols, and, instead, started making symbols of one queer couple, that is, ourselves, finally just making symbols, then just making. By becoming more self-reflective and less grandiose, we could easily navigate our meager image compendium. We saw that one way out of

the deadlock would be to become personal. At the time we were facing an incredibly difficult set of life circumstances and the crisis translated into a muddy, confusing, foggy visual space. But having just a small selection of images now with a more attainable purpose could become a richness.

We are two queer artists sharing a life and trying to make sense of the world. Couples have their own microculture, with their mythologies, their inside jokes, their rituals, language, economy, politics, and legal structures. A small fraction of our microculture was shared in the form of a series of iconic elements: heads, plants, the rope, boobs, glasses, the hat. Those need no explanation: they are open signifiers. They mean

something specific and concrete for us, yet we want them to mean whatever the viewer sees in them.

For instance, the hat. One of us always wears a hat. It is a snapback cap that has numerous connotations in certain lesbian cultures. Many of those connotations are negative, for no good reason. The snapback is seen as cliché, of poor taste, as exhibiting a frozen-in-the-past fashion sense, or a lack of style. It is also popular and has its enthusiasts. There is interplay between the personal and an abstract “community,” and the idea of embracing something that is vaguely embarrassing *and* a source of pride. But it is also just there, as a happy object, an oversized hot pink paper sculpture, solemnly deposited on a plinth. It is full of possibility.

And that was the trajectory of the creation of most elements of the installation. It functions as a “museum of us” or, more accurately, a “dictionary of us”. It is conceptualized as a book or a zine. All the elements of the microculture were collected then curated; some more were added, other nixed. Then we did the layout of the “publication,” trying to explode what existed in two dimensions into space, giving it shape and depth while keeping the simple, archetypal

lines of things, and using paper exclusively. We felt like we were creating a particular space, like a scenery, a set, or a ballroom.

From that initial point of scarcity something celebratory emerged. It was only a story of us, still we could share it with others. Those symbols were created, and they had tenderness and love as originators, and they looked – we hoped – joyous, funny, cozy, and relatable. The iconography was possible. We made an abundance.

That odd little queer museum with its catalogues in the shape of zines, opened to the public surrounded by queer art, a nest inside a bigger organism that inspired and nurtured it. To be in such amazing company was not only a joy and an honour, but also informed the installation, anchored it in histories recent and distant, gave it texture and meaning and opened it for the future of our practice. In the conversations with visitors we were not surprised to see how queer folk immediately grasped and gave so many interpretations of the images, reinforcing our perception of an existing community – not a clear or rigid one, not an exclusionary one, but a permeable and mutable space where we can share languages and imagine futures.

Plate 57: General Idea, *AIDS*, 1988, Acrylic on canvas, 28 x 28 inches. Courtesy of Attila Richard Lukacs.

General Idea



Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?

Less than **4%** of the **artists** in the Modern Art sections are women, but **76%** of the **nudes** are female.

Statistics from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, 2011

GUERRILLA GIRLS CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD
www.guerrillagirls.com



TOP TEN SIGNS THAT YOU'RE AN ART WORLD TOKEN:

- 10.** Your busiest months are February (Black History Month,) March (Women's History,) April (Asian-American Awareness), June (Stonewall Anniversary) and September (Latino Heritage).
- 9.** At openings and parties, the only other people of color are serving drinks.
- 8.** Everyone knows your race, gender and sexual orientation even when they don't know your work.
- 7.** A museum that won't show your work gives you a prominent place in its lecture series.
- 6.** Your last show got a lot of publicity, but no cash.
- 5.** You're a finalist for a non-tenure-track teaching position at every art school on the east coast.
- 4.** No collector ever buys more than one of your pieces.
- 3.** Whenever you open your mouth, it's assumed that you speak for "your people," not just yourself.
- 2.** Everyone is always telling you their interracial and gay sexual fantasies.
- 1.** A curator who never gave you the time of day before calls you right after a Guerrilla Girls demonstration.

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ARTWORLD

THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN ARTIST:

Working without the pressure of success
 Not having to be in shows with men
 Having an escape from the art world in your 4 free-lance jobs
 Knowing your career might pick up after you're eighty
 Being reassured that whatever kind of art you make it will be labeled feminine
 Not being stuck in a tenured teaching position
 Seeing your ideas live on in the work of others
 Having the opportunity to choose between career and motherhood
 Not having to choke on those big cigars or paint in Italian suits
 Having more time to work when your mate dumps you for someone younger
 Being included in revised versions of art history
 Not having to undergo the embarrassment of being called a genius
 Getting your picture in the art magazines wearing a gorilla suit

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD

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Plate 58: Guerrilla Girls, *Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?*, 2012, Poster, 54 x 120 inches.
 Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Plate 59: Guerrilla Girls, *Top ten signs you're an art world token*, 1995, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Plate 60: Guerrilla Girls, *The Advantages of Being a Woman Artist*, 1988, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

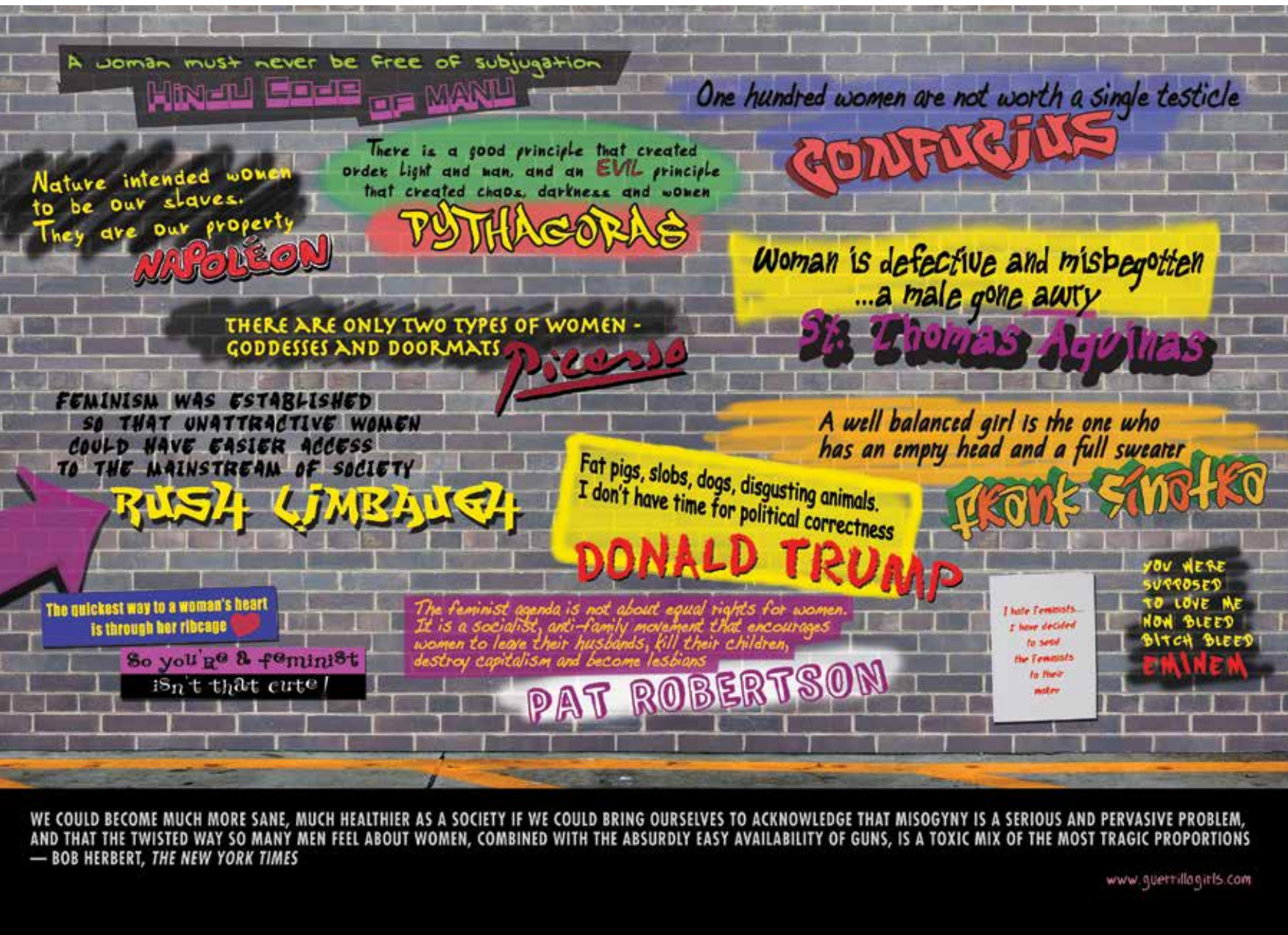


Plate 61: Guerrilla Girls, *Disturbing the Peace*, 2009, Poster, 36 x 51 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

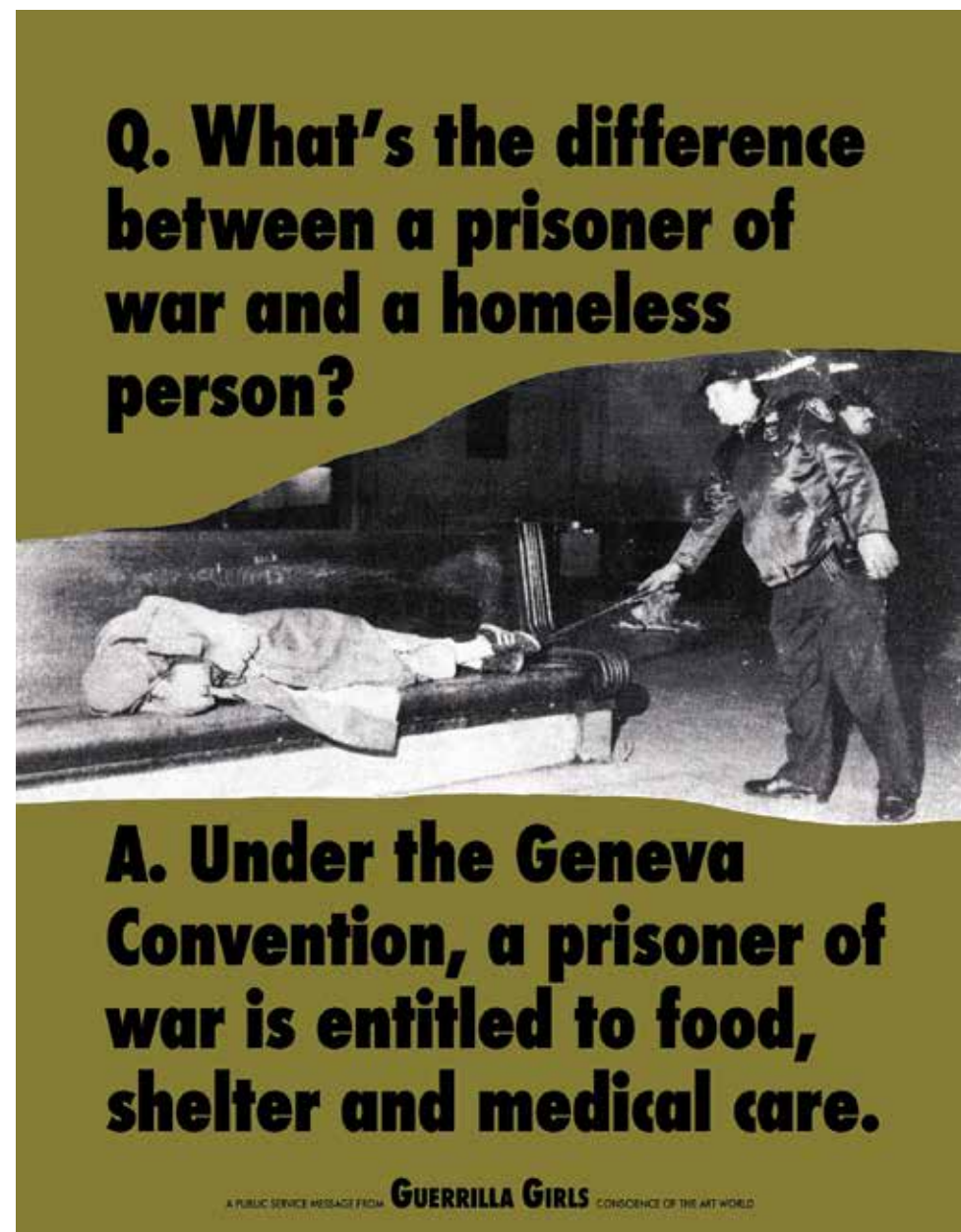


Plate 62:
Guerrilla Girls, *What's the Difference Between a Prisoner of War and a Homeless Person?*, 1991, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Katherine Atkins



Plate 63: Katherine Atkins, *Self Portrait #15: I am Well Armed with Excuses Not to See You*, 2018, Painting: acrylic and blood on panel, 20 x 32.3 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Artist Statement

While considering DECADEnce's thematic stream of celebrating Queer artists' mark making, "that lives in actions unnoticed, voices unheard ... forgotten Herstories/ Ourstories,"¹ I could not overlook acknowledging that the oppressive forces that have been pushing back against those working to be noticed and heard do not only come from outside the Queer community, they exist within as well. Queers are not immune to the imperial colonial systematic strategy of infecting the populace with internalized isms and phobias, or of behaving in ways that "ensure[s] the success of a single story."² Nor are we immune to erasure of the Other.

Except for heterosexualality, all other social positions of power exist within the Queer community—resulting in Queers oppressing Queers. Despite being Queer, female and disabled, as a white settler I am privileged in an abundant of ways many are not. Unconscious, unaware, unchecked,

I risk creating barriers as well as reducing safety for those less privileged. Along with like-minded folk in the Queer community, I am engaged in becoming and remaining conscious of my privilege and- of healing from colonialism's destructive and inhumane influence on me. I want my thinking and behaviour to align with my valuing of equity. This process of awakening, will, hopefully, eventually, make the Queer community a safer place for all Queers. The need for us to heal from colonialism's cunning divisiveness is unquestionable.

In my opinion, in order to fully celebrate DECADEnce's, the naming of internal barriers, such that colonialism has infected us with, marks progress, and a communal awareness of the need for continued engagement in a process of healing. Progress in healing is, definitely, to be celebrated.

With all this in mind for DECADEnce, I've constructed an allegorical image/metaphoric self-portrait, referencing industrial proportioned resource extraction, an aspect of the western colonial project. I am also referencing the immense role language and thought has in constructing, shaping, oppressing and erasing the Other. Formal elements such as abstraction, distortion, multiple and forced perspectives, compositional discord, spatial deconstruction and colour are used to represent aspects of the relationship between language, thought and oppressive forces. A key element is a pattern created using my handwriting, stating, "I am Well Armed with Excuses not to See You," repeated (backwards, forwards, mirrored). The figurative shapes that exist in the negative space of this pattern make visual how language is a tool to shape and form the Other. As with a number of my previous works, I have used my own blood in this one.

My intention with this work is to create a sense of tension and discomfort, and to invite the viewer to contemplate colonialism's systemic influences on language, thought processes and oppression as well as their personal role in "ensuring the success of a single story."

— Katherine Atkins

Sometimes, the Other is the Self. (1, 2. quotes from Curator's statement)

Mutya Macatumpag



Plate 64: Mutya Macatumpag a.k.a FIND MUTYA,
HELLO
SEE YOU AGAIN
GOODBYE
2018, Installation, 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plates 65 - 66: Mutya Macatumpag a.k.a FIND MUTYA,
HELLO
SEE YOU AGAIN
GOODBYE
2018, Installation, 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 67: Mutya Macatumpag a.k.a FIND MUTYA,
HELLO
SEE YOU AGAIN
GOODBYE
2018, Installation, 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Paul Wong



Plate 68: Paul Wong,
So Are You, 1995, Single
channel video, 28 minutes.
Courtesy of the artist.



Valérie d Walker, *curator*

Plate 69 - 80 Paul Wong, *So Are You*, 1995,
Single channel video, 28 minutes. Courtesy of the artist.

This work was created over 23 years ago, and is now being exhibited here as an ironic art-based commentary on how remarkably little stereotypes and prejudices have changed since 1995. Everyone is mocked and held under a magnifying glass; no fingers are pointed saying one group of people is in any way better than another.

So Are You is a commentary on that time and mindset. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Queer Arts Festival,

meditating on time and real vs. imagined changes, the curator decided to revisit this particular work, as offered by the artist to create a commentary on how much further society has to travel in order to really achieve an equitable and open social evolution.

Everything happening today south of the border also happens and here in Canada. for example, in May of 2018, a youth Indigenous hockey team in Quebec had garbage

and racial slurs thrown at them on the rink after winning a game, highlights how racial epithets are still a weapon in people's treatment and attitudes towards others. The fact that people still use the same terms mocked in this video, from decades ago, illustrates how little social consciousness has evolved. It's time to inspire a dialogue with each Other so that such mindsets go the way of the dinosaur.

Raven Davis



Plates: 81-82:

Raven Davis, *It's Not Your Fault*, 2017, Video stills,
60 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 83:

Raven Davis, *It's Not Your Fault*, 2017, Photography, 27 x 48 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

Susan Stewart



Facing page and clockwise on this page

Plates 84 - 90: Susan Stewart, *Lovers & Warriors*, 1993, Silver gelatin photographic prints, 20 x 16 inches. Courtesy of SFU Special Collections and Rare Books.



Plates 91 - 93: Susan Stewart, *Lovers & Warriors*, 1993,
Silver gelatin photographic prints, 20 x 16 inches.
Courtesy of SFU Special Collections and Rare Books.

Artist Statement

The title for the exhibit, *Lovers and Warriors*, refers to the archetypal meaning of the terms, lover=compassion and warrior=action. Compassionate action is one way of describing the generosity of the subjects of this work who participated in self representation for public view. The context within which these representations are framed identifies these women as belonging to stigmatized and oppressed minority, as queers. In offering their images to the world these women exhibit tremendous courage.

Most of the women in *Lovers and Warriors* are lesbians, and for lesbians the mere experience of being 'seen' in a context we create and control is a unique and powerful experience.

Representations of lesbians created by lesbians are extremely rare and difficult to find, even for lesbians. Until very recently, the possibility of discovering lesbian texts relied on the ability to de-code meaning, deeply imbedded to the point of assimilation, in heterosexual productions.

Part of what we hope to accomplish with this work is to explore what a lesbian text might look like as it occupies a traditional form, in this case classical photography. The second part of this equation is the occupation of public space in a bid to overturn exclusion. Toward that end I enlisted the support and help of the women in these photographs, women whose stake in being visible is as urgent as my own.



Plates 94-95: Susan Stewart, *Lovers & Warriors*, 1993,
Silver gelatin photographic prints, 20 x 16 inches.
Courtesy of SFU Special Collections and Rare Books.

Written and produced today, gender variance would have had a much larger stake in the conception of this project. When this work was created, not all of the participants identified as 'women', and were re-writing gender by accessing language such as butch and femme. Some might recognize this work as a radical exploration of what we now identify as gender queer, non-binary or trans*. The subjects of these photographs are ground breakers.

— Susan Stewart, 2018

Co-collaborators

Ali Mcilwaine / Azi / Beth / Dragon / Helga / Iris Fabiola
/ Mardi / Mistress Kate & Slave Falcon / Ms. Taree /
River Sui / Shanti

Syrus Marcus Ware

Plate 96: Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Kim*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 97: Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Megan*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Plate 98: Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Leah*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

T.J. Dedeaux-Norris



Plate 99: T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *Piggly Wiggly 1*, 2014, Oil and acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.

Plate 100: T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *St. Claude*, from the series *Almost Acquaintances*, 2014, Oil paint, acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.

Plate 101: T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *Piggly Wiggly 2*, 2014, Oil and acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.

Curator Biography

Valérie d. Walker

Valérie d. Walker is a Renaissance Artist, alchemist, transmedia maker, educator, curator, Indigo Griot, Radio-Wave creatrix & BIPOC Femme Afro-Futuristic transmitter. She holds 5th level Ikebana (Japanese flower arranging) & Chado (tea-ceremony) degrees with Urasenke-Kyoto & lifetimes of Indigo knowledge, she landed on Gaia in Honolulu & has traveled the planet in space and time. Valérie holds a degree in EECS from UC-Berkeley and her MFA from NSCAD University.

Valérie's artwork explores enviro-positive natural dyeing & printing, fibre-based responsive installations, tactile virtual spaces, solar-powered circuits, story-telling, epigenetic memories, environmentally healing studio processes, craft-based techniques, digitalia & imagining, programming, sensoriality, and Afro-Futurism. Her curatorial work examines Diasporiac revelations, Indigi-Queer Black Other Femme representations & Techno-Enviro Moravecian NightMares.

Valérie has over 20+ years of Grrl Powered radio online from her production & hosting of the XX Files Radio show, @Matricules (<https://www.ada-x.org/>), Canada's only open-source, feminist digital media art portal. Involved with Studio XX (now Ada-X) for 17+ years; XX Flies radio show is in year XXV on CKUT FM & SoundCloud. Her installations & dimensional sculptures are exhibited across Canada and the world. Part of the Surrey Art Gallery's 2017 Ground Signals group exhibition, her recent Richmond No. 3 Road mentoring project, and commissioned work received outstanding reviews.

Valérie returned to the West Coast 6 years ago, after 20 years in Montréal where she taught Techno-Culture, Arts & Gaming (TAG) & Computation Arts in the Fine Arts Faculty of Concordia University. She has started several alternative, BIPOC, Feminist LGBTQ+ hackerspaces & Alternative & Grrl & Queer Games festivals in Montréal. She teaches InterDisciplinary Foundation Studio, Interactive Wearables, Electronics for Artists, FibreShed Regeneration (TARP) Indigo naturally, Programming for Grrlz with community empowerment centers, and serves on various art juries and the boards of Pride in Art and BLAC. She is an artist in residence at the Malaspina Downtown Printing Studios and has her own bio-fermented natural indigo dye studio in East Vancouver, BC.



Curator Valérie d. Walker and leather boys.

Artistic Director Biography

SD Holman

SD Holman is an artist and curator whose work has toured internationally. An ECUAD graduate in 1990, Holman was picked up by the Vancouver Association for Non-commercial Culture (the NON) right out of art school. Holman was appointed Artistic Director of Pride in Art in 2008 and spearheaded the founding of the Queer Arts Festival, now recognized among the top 3 of its kind worldwide, and SUM, Canada's only queer-mandated transdisciplinary gallery and programmed artists including Kent Monkman, Cris Derksen, Jeremy Dutcher, Paul Wong, Angela Grossmann and Jonathan D. Katz. Curatorial highlights include *TRIGGER*, the 25th-anniversary exhibition for Kiss & Tell's notorious *Drawing the Line* project, Adrian Stimson's *Naked Napi* solo show, and Paul Wong's monumental multi-curator *Through the Trapdoor* underground storage locker exhibition. A laureate of the YWCA Women of Distinction Award one of Canada's most prestigious awards Holman's work has exhibited at Wellesley College, the Advocate Gallery (Los Angeles), the Soady-Campbell Gallery (New York), the San Francisco Public Library, The Helen Pitt International Gallery, Charles H. Scott, Exposure, Gallery Gachet, the Roundhouse, Vancouver East Cultural Centre, Artropolis, and Fotobase Galleries (Vancouver). Holman's portrait project *BUTCH: Not like the other girls* toured North America and the book is in its second edition print, distributed by Caitlin Press Dagger Editions.

Artist Biographies

AA Bronson

AA Bronson is an artist living and working in Toronto and Berlin. In the sixties, he left university with a group of friends to found a free school, a commune, and an underground newspaper.

This led him into an adventure with Gestalt therapy, radical education, and independent publishing. In 1969 he formed the artists' group General Idea with Felix Partz and Jorge Zontal; for the next 25 years they lived and worked together to produce the living artwork of their being together, undertaking over 100 solo exhibitions, and countless group shows and temporary public art projects. They were known for their magazine *FILE* (1972-1989), their unrelenting production of low-cost multiples, and their early involvement in punk, queer theory, AIDS activism, and manifestations of the other. In 1974 they founded Art Metropole, Toronto, a distribution center and archive for artists' books, audio, video, and multiples, which they conceived as the shop and archive for their *Gesamtkunstwerk: The 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion*, a kind of meta-museum. From 1987 through 1994, they focused their work on the subject of AIDS.

Since his partners' deaths in 1994, AA has worked and exhibited as a solo artist, often collaborating with younger generations, most recently in his performance series *Invocation of the Queer Spirits*. From 2004 to 2010 he was the Director of Printed Matter, Inc. in New York City,

founding the annual NY Art Book Fair in 2005. In 2009 he founded the Institute for Art, Religion, and Social Justice at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, which he now co-directs. In 2013 he was the founding Director of Printed Matter's LA Art Book Fair. He has taught at UCLA, the University of Toronto, and the Yale School of Art.

AA Bronson's work as an artist, healer, curator, and educator is dominated by the practice of collaboration and consensus. From his beginnings in a free school and commune, through his 25 years as one of the artists of General Idea, to his deep involvement with founding and developing collaborative and social structures such as Art Metropole, the NY Art Book Fair and AA Bronson's School for Young Shamans and his current collaborations with younger generations, he has focused on the politics of decision-making and on living life radically as social sculpture.

AA Bronson holds many awards and three honorary doctorates. In 2008 he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada, and in 2011 he was named a Chevalier de l'ordre des arts et des lettres by the French government.

Thank you to the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, Kingston and the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program and the Chancellor Richardson Memorial Fund, 2001 (44-015)

Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries

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.

April Sumter-Freitag

April Sumter-Freitag is a storyteller, photographer, and filmmaker who is the eighth generation of Black North Americans born north of the 49th parallel from a Matriarchal family. April has travelled through many territories to settle in Vancouver on unceded Coast Salish Territory.

April identifies as gender non-binary, and in absence of direct knowledge of original culture is left questioning. Her work here has been in support of community as a counsellor and facilitator. Her art is often more private and anchored in intimate personal expression.

Out, Black + Proud in BC - For Decadence 2018 is a look back to Vancouver 2004, and some of the lived experiences of Black LGBTQI community, the social landscape and what anti-black racism looked like in Vancouver then. Nearly 15 years later the architectural landscape has changed but the socially segregated infrastructure underlying these themes remain.

Berlynn Beam

Berlynn Beam, originally from Oakland, California, USA, is a multidisciplinary artist specializing in installation artworks. After completing her studies at Emily Carr University of Art + Design with a BFA in Illustration, she continues to make works that call into question the experiences that young Queer People of Color face when proudly identifying with their culture. The series *Me and MF DOOM*, 2017 is an exploration of culture through the lens of a young girl, who is fascinated with the rap artist MF DOOM. In many of Beam's works the imaginary clashes with the real, creating layers in which coded language and imagery bridge the gap between the two. These codes are not meant to exclude per se, but to empower those in the know. By veiling meanings and subverting reality she is able to revisit lost moments in childhood and find moments within Black Womanhood apart from any far-off gaze.

Carl Pope

Carl Pope's creative endeavors are based on the idea of art as a catalyst for individual and collective transformation(s). His multi-media installations were exhibited at prestigious venues including: The Museum of Modern Art and The Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago; receiving generous support from The Guggenheim Foundation, The Lilly Endowment, The National Endowment for the Arts, and The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. The installations gained national and international exposure with *New Photography 6* at the Museum of Modern Art and *Black Male* at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Since 1990, Pope's methodology with public art evolved into ongoing collaborative efforts with artists and communities, producing large-scale public art interventions that stimulate public dialogue and/or community revitalization. Excursions into his internal landscape produced the video/text installation *Palimpsest* commissioned by the Wadsworth Atheneum with funds from The Warhol and Lannan Foundations. The work was included in the Whitney Biennial 2000. The essay of letterpress posters: *The Bad Air Smelled of Roses* and his recent billboard campaigns continue his ongoing exploration into public and inner space.

"Carl Pope's work is at once a form of geography, re-imagining and imaging the forgotten histories, people and places in America, atnd a new psychology, creating a state of mind capable of sustaining the shocks of the present. It's soul food for the mind, in sharp contrast to the quick hit of consumer pleasure that dominates the art market, and it's all the more important for that."

— Nicholas Mirzoeff, Professor of Media, Culture, and Communications, NYU

Chandra Melting Tallow

Chandra Melting Tallow is an interdisciplinary artist, musician, and performer of mixed ancestry from the Siksika Nation. They've been involved in the arts in various capacities since their teenage years through an exposure to theatre and spoken word through their mother, participating in film screening panels and sharing poetry in the Indigenous arts community in Calgary as early as age 16. They spearheaded the experimental music project Mourning Coup and released a full length LP *Baby Blue* in 2015 through No Sun Recordings. They've also created sound art collages for various projects including Untitled Art Society as well as their own films. In 2017, Haunted House Books in Montreal published a collection of their short stories as well as an accompanying self produced audio book on tape *Dear Horse Boy I am Writing to You From Prison*. Last year they also produced a short film, composed a live soundtrack and an accompanying performance for *Unsettling Colonial Gender Boundaries* as part of Queer Arts Festival. They have directed, edited and filmed a number of music videos and experimental films. They recently co-edited *Coney Island Baby*, a short film collaboration with Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, Jeneen Frei Njootli and Tania Willard. Common themes throughout their practice involves confronting the ghosts of intergenerational trauma; utilizing the power of humour to subvert existing oppressive structures of power and articulating the relationship between trauma, the body and the manifestation of chronic illness, while being ever mindful of the ancestral presence throughout the creative process.

Dana Claxton

Born of Hunkpapa Lakota (Sioux) descent, Dana Claxton investigates the ongoing impact of colonialism on Aboriginal cultures in North America, primarily through film, video and photography. Her practice considers Indigenous beauty, the socio-political and the spiritual, among other themes. Claxton is well known for her work *The Mustang Suite* of 2008, a series of staged photographic portraits of a stylish, contemporary Aboriginal family. In this series, each family member is portrayed with their own personalized form of "mustang," whether it be a muscle car or a banana-seat bicycle. She has exhibited widely, including at the Museum of Modern Art, the Walker Art Center and the Sundance Film Festival. Exhibitions include the 2010 Biennale of Sydney and *Beat Nation* at the Vancouver Art Gallery and other venues. Her work is on display in major collections including those of the National Gallery of Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. She has received numerous awards including the 2020 Governor General award for Visual and Media Art, the 2020 Scotiabank Photography award, the VIVA Award from the Doris and Jack Shadbolt Foundation and the Eiteljorg Fellowship from the Eiteljorg Museum and the 2019 Hnatyshyn Foundation Visual Arts award. Dana Claxton is also an associate professor in the Art History, Visual Art & Theory faculty at the University of British Columbia.

Dayna Danger

Dayna Danger is a 2Spirit/Queer, Metis/Saulteaux/Polish visual artist raised in so-called Winnipeg, MB. Through utilizing the processes of photography, sculpture, performance and video, Danger creates works and environments that question the line between empowerment and objectification by claiming the space with her larger than life work. Ongoing works exploring BDSM and beaded leather fetish masks explore the complicated dynamics of sexuality, gender and power in a consensual and feminist manner.

Danger has exhibited her work nationally and internationally in such venues as Latitude 53, Edmonton AB; Urban Shaman, Winnipeg, MB; Warren G Flowers Art Gallery, Montreal; dc3 Projects, Edmonton; Gallery 101, Ottawa; Roundhouse, Vancouver, and the New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe. Danger has been the recipient of various grants, awards and honours including from the Winnipeg Arts Council, Manitoba Arts Council and Indspire as well as participated in residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts and at Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art. Danger currently serves as a board member of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (ACC/CCA). Danger is an Artist in Residence through Initiative for Indigenous Futures at Abtec.

Danger holds a MFA in Photography from Concordia University. and is currently based in Tio'tia:ke - Mooniyang.

Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin

Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin are Montreal-based artists who work with printed media and paper, zines, artist's books, paper installations, drawings, and prints to propaganda through their micro-press, B&D Press they are plotting a queer takeover of the planet.

General Idea

General Idea was a collective of three Canadian artists: Felix Partz, Jorge Zontal and AA Bronson, who were active from 1967 to 1994. As pioneers of early conceptual and media-based art, their collaboration became a model for artist-initiated activities and continues to be a prominent influence on subsequent generations of artists.

Initially working in Toronto, the collective divided their time between Toronto and New York from 1968 to 1993, before returning to Toronto for the last few months of their time together.

General Idea's work inhabited and subverted forms of popular and media culture, including boutiques, television talk shows, trade fair pavilions, mass media and beauty pageants. The *1971 Miss General Idea Pageant* allowed for both male and female artists to send in pictures of them wearing the taffeta dress provided. Their work was often presented in media forms such as postcards, prints, posters, wallpaper, balloons, crests and pins. Self-mythology was a continuous strategy that informed their work. They created a fictional system that self-referenced and self-legitimized, claiming a space within the local art scene in

Canada. Their intent was to reach a greater audience and so their work moved from art galleries and museums to newstands. This ensured that different types of people who spent time in different places could have a psychological or social reaction in a place comfortable to them. General Idea initially portrayed themselves as an ambiguous group, but soon realized it was causing confusion with the public. This led to a series of self portrayal or marketing images including *Fin de Siecle*.

From 1987 through 1994, their work addressed the AIDS crisis, with work that included some 75 temporary public art projects. Their major installation, *One Year of AZT/One Day of AZT*, was featured as a project at the Museum of Modern Art and now resides in the National Gallery of Canada's collection. In 2006 the three giant inflatable pills from their 1991 work *PLA©EBO* were displayed during Toronto's Nuit blanche.

Both Partz and Zontal died of AIDS in 1994. Bronson continues to work and exhibit as an independent artist, and was the director of Printed Matter, Inc. in New York between 2006 and 2011. The General Idea Archive now resides at the Library of the National Gallery of Canada.

Guerrilla Girls

The Guerrilla Girls are feminist activist artists. We wear gorilla masks in public and use facts, humor and outrageous visuals to expose gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture. Our anonymity keeps the focus on the issues, and away from who we might be: we could be anyone and we are everywhere. We believe in intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders. We undermine the idea of a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair.

We have done hundreds of projects (posters, actions, books, videos, stickers) all over the world, including Bilbao, Iceland, Istanbul, London, Los Angeles, Mexico City, New York, Rotterdam, São Paulo, and Shanghai. We also do interventions and exhibitions at museums, blasting them on their own walls for their bad behavior and discriminatory practices, including our 2015 stealth projection on the façade of the Whitney Museum about income inequality and the super rich hijacking art. Our retrospectives in Bilbao and Madrid, and our US traveling exhibition, *Guerrilla Girls: Not Ready To Make Nice*, have attracted thousands.

For 2016 we produced new street and museum projects at Tate Modern and Whitechapel Gallery, London; and in Paris, Cologne, and Minneapolis. In 2017, we have new projects and exhibitions at MASP, São Paulo; the Frestas Triennial, Sorocaba; The Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; The Museum of Military History, Dresden; and many other places. What's next: More creative complaining!! More interventions!! More resistance!!

Katherine Atkins

Katherine is a Vancouver-based interdisciplinary artist, whose artwork is personal, and at the same time, political. As well as being a founding member of the Pride in Art Society, which hosts the annual Queer Arts Festival in Vancouver, Katherine is also one of a group of local artist who founded the 901 Artist Cooperative and established Portside Artist Studios in 2009.

Mutya Macatumpag - a.k.a FIND MUTYA

Mutya Macatumpag is a queer two-spirit made in the Philippines and born a settler on the Unceded Coast Salish Territories of the xwmg0kwgygm (Musqueam), skw wu7mesh (Squamish), Sto:l6, and Tsleil-Waututh traditional peoples.

Mutya is an interdisciplinary artist whose work interweaves music, movement, theatre and visual arts as a creator, performer, creative empowerment facilitator and event producer.

Once a competitive athlete in various sports, Mutya excelled in women's rugby, representing B.C. and Canada. Mutya has received various scholarships and bursaries for Elite Athletic Development training camps, voice and facilitation. Her movement practice was further informed at MainDance, where she completed the Contemporary Dance Teacher Training Program. Mutya was recognized for her choreographic work, receiving the Graduate Commission honour. She was the recipient of the Vancouver Foundation Advanced Arts Study Award to train in the Gyrotonic Method.

Mutya is enlivened by opportunities for authentic connection, belonging, leadership, personal stories, social justice, and empowering people and has worked with a variety of intergenerational, intercultural and youth focused organizations across Canada and the US. Mutya currently facilitates with Partners for Youth Empowerment, IndigenEyez, Reel Youth and AMES.

In 2017, Mutya was cast in Theatre for Living's production *sx am.gt's (home)* and in 2018 TFL toured it across BC and Alberta. In *Summoning (no words)* an interactive sound temple produced by Nicola Harwood, Mutya with six international female composer/ vocalists contributed to the installation responding holistically to violence against women. *Summoning (no words)* exhibited at Oxygen Arts Centre and Heart of the City Festival. Find Mutya graced musical stages with her soothing ancestral sound at the Tiny Tiny Cozy Fest, New Forms and Koksilah Music Festival 2017 and prior to that, at Verses Festival of Words and Artswells Festival of All Things Art, among many more events.

E-findmutya@gmail.com

Paul Wong

Canadian multimedia artist Paul Wong got his first professional commission -- *Earthworks in Harmony* (1974), a 16-monitor, 4-channel video installation -- for the Burnaby Art Gallery, when he was 18 years old. Since then, this self-schooled artist, curator, performer and photographer has gone on to become internationally known for edgy work that tackles even the most discomfiting of topics. His raw portrayals of racism, beauty, sexuality and death can be difficult to look at, but just as difficult to look away from.

Born in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Wong cites Marxist and feminist ideologies as early influences, and mentions finding inspiration in the work of artists such as Robert Smithson, Chris Burden, Lisa Steele, Andy Warhol and Pierre Falardeau. As part of the Vancouver Mainstreet artists' movement of the 1970s and 1980s, he experimented with multimedia art, including body art. Now living in Vancouver, Wong is also active as a cultural critic, community activist, arts administrator and curator, noting that all of these roles feed into and shape his artistic practice.

Wong's work has been exhibited internationally and is in many public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and the National Gallery of Canada. He has won numerous awards and recognition for his work, including a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts in 2005, and the Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts in 2016.

Raven Davis

Raven Davis is an Indigenous, mixed race, 2-Spirit multidisciplinary artist, curator, performer, social justice speaker/advocate and facilitator from the Anishinaabek Nation in Manitoba. Davis was born and raised in Tkaronto (Toronto) and currently works between K'jipuktuk (Halifax) and Tkaronto. A parent of 3 son's, Davis blends narratives of colonization, race, gender, sexuality, Two-Spirit identity and the Anishinaabemowin language and culture into a variety of contemporary art forms.

Susan Stewart

Susan Stewart is a photographer, media artist, and educator who has produced photography, video, writing, and multimedia performances and installations, both in solo and collaborative productions. Stewart was a member of the queer art collective, Kiss & Tell, whose award-winning and provocative productions were exhibited, published and performed locally and internationally for over a decade. Pride in Art exhibited a portion of Kiss & Tell's *Drawing the Line* exhibit, as part of *Trigger: Drawing the Line* in 2015.

"I began doing art as a teenager, and from an early age I regarded art as a tool for social change as well as an aesthetic exploration. I have continuously put art in service to my social, cultural and political views, which over time, have evolved alongside my practice. From the beginning, I was interested in feminism and identity politics and for

many years I worked with the Kiss and Tell collective. We were three queer women who challenged conventional representations of sexuality and censorship. We were interested in exploring and producing non-normative images that came directly out of our own experience. The Lovers & Warriors project was a natural extension of my work with Kiss & Tell. Starting in 1991, and over a three year period, I collaborated with 21 ground-breakers who engaged with me in a project of queer self- representation with great courage to be recognized and seen."

These 12 prints were originally exhibited in the early 90's as part of a collection of 75 images titled, *Lovers and Warriors: aural/photographic collaborations*. The photographs were accompanied by an audio sound track consisting of segments from participant interviews. The ideas and content of the photographs were conceived and constructed by the subjects in collaboration with the photographer.

Syrus Marcus Ware

Syrus is a Vanier Scholar, visual artist, activist, curator and educator. In 2017, Syrus was named the TD Arts Diversity Award winner through the Toronto Arts Foundation and the Toronto Arts Council. Syrus uses painting, installation and performance to explore social justice frameworks and black activist culture. His work has been shown widely, including at the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, Art Gallery of York University and The Gladstone Hotel. His performance works have been part of festivals across Canada, including at Crippling The Stage (Harbourfront Centre, 2016), Complex Social Change (University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, 2015) and Decolonizing and Decriminalizing Trans Genres (University of Winnipeg, 2015). He is part of the PDA (Performance Disability Art) Collective and co-programmed Crip Your World: An Intergalactic Queer/ POC Sick and Disabled Extravaganza as part of Mayworks 2014. He is also a part of the Black Triangle Arts Collective (BTAC), a visual arts collective dedicated to exploring disability, racial and economic justice. Syrus’ recent curatorial projects include That’s So Gay: On the Edge, TSG: Fall to Pieces, TSG: Come Together (Gladstone Hotel, 2016, 2015 & 2014), Re:Purpose (Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2014) and The Church Street Mural Project (Church-Wellesley Village, 2013). Syrus is also co-curator of The Cycle, a two-year disability arts performance initiative of the National Arts Centre.

He is a facilitator/designer at The Banff Centre, and for 12 years was the Coordinator of the Art Gallery of Ontario Youth Program. Syrus is the inaugural Daniel’s Spectrum Artist-in-Residence (2016/17).

Syrus is a core-team member of Black Lives Matter—Toronto. Syrus is also part of Blackness Yes!/Blockorama. Syrus was voted “Best Queer Activist” by NOW Magazine (2005) and was awarded the Steinert and Ferreira Award for LGBT community leadership and activism (2012). Syrus is working on a PhD at York University in the Faculty of Environmental Studies.

T. J. Dedeaux-Norris

T. J. Dedeaux-Norris fka Tameka Jenean Norris was born in Guam and received her undergraduate degree at the University of California, Los Angeles before graduating with an MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2012. Norris has recently participated in numerous exhibitions and festivals including at Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC; Yerba Buena Museum, San Francisco, CA; Prospect.3 Biennial, New Orleans, LA; The Walker Museum, Minneapolis, MN; Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX; and The Studio Museum, Harlem, NY, Rotterdam Film Festival, Rotterdam, Netherlands Mission Creek Festival, Iowa City, IA among many others. Norris has participated in residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Fountainhead Residency, and The MacDowell Colony. She is the 2017 recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant and a tenure track Assistant Professor at University of Iowa. Norris began her career in the Los Angeles hip-hop scene before migrating to the fine arts. She supplemented along the way with a broad array of odd jobs, from call-center customer service representative to sex worker. Her artwork is informed by her experience of how exploitation is built into these systems, particularly for women of color and queer communities. She often combines intensely personal experience with overtly performative personas to critique the ways that identities are appropriated and exploited by high and low culture alike.

DECADEnce Plate List

AA Bronson, *Felix Partz, June 5, 1994*, 1994/2000, Ink and lacquer on vinyl, 84 x 168 inches. Courtesy of Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen’s University, Kingston and the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program

Angela Gabereau & Coral Short & Visionaries, *Future Visions*, 2018, Interactive video. Courtesy of the artists.

April Sumter-Freitag, *Out, Black + Proud in BC - For Decadence 2018*, 2005/2018, Video, 13 minutes 44 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.

Berlynn Beam, *Me and MF Doom*, 2017, Installation, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.

Carl Pope, *The Cosmology of Cosmetology*, Ongoing photographic project since 1996, Gelatin silver and C-Print analog photographic prints, Dimensions variable 16 x 20 to 38 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Chandra Melting Tallow, *Ohrwurm Fantasia*, 2018, Installation and audio, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.

Dana Claxton, *Hunkpapa Woman in Black*, 2018, Video, 4 minutes 10 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Rochelle*, 2015, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Dita*, 2016, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Parneet*, 2016, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Adrienne*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Angel*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Kiidra*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Nicole*, 2017, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Dayna Danger, *Big’Uns/Jazz*, 2018, Photo, 69 x 44 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Eloisa Aquino and Jenny Lin, *Tactical Deer Database*, 2018, Paper installation: screenprint and digital print on paper, paper objects, zines, wallpaper, 120 x 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

General Idea, *AIDS*, 1988, Acrylic on canvas, 28 x 28 inches. Courtesy of Attila Richard Lukacs.

Guerrilla Girls, *The Advantages of Being a Woman Artist*, 1988, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Guerrilla Girls, *What’s the Difference Between a Prisoner of War and a Homeless Person?*, 1991, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Guerrilla Girls, *Top ten signs you’re an art world token*, 1995, Poster, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Guerrilla Girls, *Disturbing the Peace*, 2009, Poster, 36 x 51 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Guerrilla Girls, *Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?*, 2012, Poster, 54 x 120 inches. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Katherine Atkins, *Self Portrait #15: I am Well Armed with Excuses Not to See You*, 2018, Painting: acrylic and blood on panel, 20 x 32.3 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Mutya Macatumpag a.k.a FIND MUTYA, *HELLO SEE YOU AGAIN GOODBYE* 2018, Installation, 120 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Paul Wong, *So Are You*, 1995, Single channel video, 28 minutes. Courtesy of the artist.

Raven Davis, *It’s Not Your Fault*, 2017, Video stills, 60 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Raven Davis, *It’s Not Your Fault*, 2017, Photography, 27 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Susan Stewart, *Lovers & Warriors*, 1993, Silver gelatin photographic prints, 20 x 16 inches. Courtesy of SFU Special Collections and Rare Books.

Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Kim*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Leah*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Syrus Marcus Ware, *Activist Portrait Series: Megan*, 2017, Drawing, 144 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *Piggly Wiggly 1*, 2014, Oil and acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.

T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *Piggly Wiggly 2*, 2014, Oil and acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.

T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, *St. Claude*, from the series *Almost Acquaintances*, 2014, Oil paint, acrylic paint on fabric, 38 x 18 inches.



QUEER ARTS FESTIVAL

The Pride in Art Society (PiA) presents and exhibits with a curatorial vision favouring challenging, thought-provoking art that pushes boundaries and initiates dialogue. As producers of the Queer Arts Festival (QAF) and SUM gallery, PiA brings diverse communities together to support artistic risk-taking, and incite creative collaboration and experimentation.

Pride in Art was founded in 1998 by Two-Spirit artist Robbie Hong, Black artist Jeffery Gibson and a collective of visual artists mounting an annual art exhibition at the Roundhouse Community Centre. Spearheaded by Jewish artist SD Holman and Japanese artist Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa, Pride in Art incorporated as a nonprofit in 2006, mounting their first multidisciplinary Queer Arts Festival in 2008. In 2018, Artistic Director SD Holman founded SUM gallery as a permanent space presenting multidisciplinary exhibitions and events. At the time of founding, SUM was the only queer-mandated gallery in Canada—not the first, but earlier attempts had succumbed to gentrification, or exhaustion, or both.

QAF is an annual artist-run transdisciplinary art festival in Vancouver, BC. Each year, the festival theme ties together a curated visual art exhibition, performing art series, workshops, artist talks, panels, and media art screenings.

QAF has incited dozens of artistic milestones, notably the commissioning and world premiere of Canada’s first lesbian opera, *When the Sun Comes Out* by Leslie Uyeda and Rachel Rose in 2013; *TRIGGER*, the 25th-anniversary exhibition for Kiss & Tell’s notorious *Drawing the Line* project; Jeremy Dutcher’s first full-length Vancouver concert; Cris Derksen’s monumental *Orchestral Powwow*; and co-produced the award-winning, world premiere of the play *Camera Obscura* (hungry ghosts), Lesley Ewen’s fantastical reimagining of multimedia titan Paul Wong’s early career.

Recognized as one of the top 3 festivals of its kind worldwide, QAF’s programming has garnered wide acclaim as “concise, brilliant and moving” (*Georgia Straight*), “easily one of the best art exhibitions of the year” (*Vancouver Sun*), and “on the forefront of aesthetic and cultural dialogue today” (*Xtra*).




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QUEER ARTS FESTIVAL

2018 DECADEnce 10 year anniversary: time, marks, revisioning

2017 UnSettled Two-Spirit and Indigqueer curated festival

2016 STONEWALL WAS RIOT Drama Queer – seducing social change: art in activism

2015 TRIGGER: DRAWING THE LINE IN 2015 25th anniversary of Kiss and Tell's Drawing the Line asks where do you draw your line today?

2014 ReGenerations Queering the International, and a defiant reframing of "Degenerate Art"

2013 TRANS GRESS ION NOW Where Queer artists still transgress social, gender, and political boundaries now

2012 *Random Acts of Queerness* John Cage Centenary – the random as a way of radically breaking with tradition, convention & habit

2011 Games People Play We celebrate the North American OutGames playing with identity and its shadows of artifice, passing, and trespassing

2010 QUEERTOPIA The Best Place on Earth?

2009 *Faerie Tales* the myths and legends that shape us

2008 ♀en♂er twist the inaugural Queer Arts Festival with a Twist

