

ESKER FOUNDATION

Winter 2023



WELCOME

With 2022 safely behind us, we are excited to be back with an incredible year of exhibitions, public programs, events, and partnerships. To kick off 2023 with a bang, we are thrilled to be presenting the work of Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson and Toronto-based Margaux Williamson in our fourth-floor galleries.

Ragnar Kjartansson's *The Visitors* is a sound and video installation consisting of nine audio and video channels that document a single-take, approximately hour long, musical performance. Heralded in 2019 by *The Guardian* as #1 on their list of the 25 best artworks of the 21st Century, this immersive experience is as mesmerising today as the day it premiered in 2012. Presenting this work now, in a post-pandemic 2023 world, feels a lot like how we are gradually emerging from a state of complete or partial isolation to one of cautious, often small, yet confident celebratory gatherings. We are thankful to Gund Gallery at Kenyon College, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston for lending us this work.

Margaux Williamson's *Interiors*, guest curated by Jessica Bradley, presents a 17-year overview of paintings, writings, drawings, and ephemera. With a focus on interiors, a dominant theme in Williamson's work, these spaces are comfortably familiar yet strangely disorientating, and as Bradley states, "for Williamson the brush stroke, the act of putting paint on canvas, anticipates both figuration and abstraction: the depiction of real objects situated in the fluid pictorial space and time unique to her work." This exhibition has been organized and circulated by the McMichael Canadian Art Collection.

In the Project Space, until the beginning of February, is *HEADSPACE*, a project developed by May G N in concert with Esker Youth Engagement and students from Discovering Choices schools, including Lizzy Moorhead, Sid Smillie, and Zabdi,



who worked together to create an intensive collage installation that offers a peek into a kaleidoscopic world of image, text, and personal expression.

In Bridge Space until 19 February is *Narrating Ourselves from the City*, a collection of interdisciplinary works by youth artists Abrianna, Liz, Mary, Sasha, and Sergio. Working with PhD Candidate, and U of C Humanities Fellow Karina S. Hincapié over four workshops, the youth explored concepts of race, class, and gender as identity constructs, creating work that speaks to the struggles of finding one's place in a Eurocentric/white society.

The return to in-person programming means some exciting new youth and family programs, including: Create Together which invites families with children to explore exhibitions through collaborative artmaking; Kids Studio, a series of Saturday afternoon hands-on workshops for children and Youth Studio which connects youth to contemporary art and ideas through free experiential and creative activities led by contemporary artists.

For details about these new programs, as well as all our winter events please visit our website, Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter (all @eskerfoundation), or drop by the gallery—we look forward to seeing you soon.

The Esker Foundation team

COVER
Margaux Williamson, *Fire*, (detail). 2021.
Promised gift of Christine & Andrew W. Dunn,
McMichael Canadian Art Collection.
Courtesy of the artist.

CURRENT EXHIBITION

Ragnar Kjartansson

The Visitors

21 JANUARY–30 APRIL 2023

Through elements of theatrical and musical production and an expanded sense of sculpture and painting, Ragnar Kjartansson creates performances that provoke the intertwining of pathos, joy, and communal emotion by testing the limits of repetition and the endurance of both performers and viewers. The figure of the musician is at the centre of these works, either acting alone as a kind of Romantic troubadour or as part of a cast of players. While some of these works happen live in front of an audience, Kjartansson is most well-known for recorded performances presented in the form of immersive video installations.

The Visitors is one such work: it is an enveloping nine-channel audio and video installation that documents an epic single-take musical performance. Lasting for approximately an hour, the piece depicts eight musicians (including Kjartansson) performing a folk music opus of repetition and cannon blasts, based on collaged texts by artist Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir. The musicians, all friends of Kjartansson's, include: Kristín Anna and Gyða Valtýsdóttir, founding sisters of the historic Icelandic band Múm; Kjartan Sveinsson, keyboard player with Sigur Rós, the musical wonder Shahzad Ismaily who has worked on the Icelandic scene and with artists such as Will Oldham, Yoko Ono and Bob Dylan; Þorvaldur Gröndal; Ólafur Jónsson; and composer, jazz master, and frequent collaborator Davíð Þór Jónsson.¹

The performance is set at Rokeby; a large, dilapidated, nineteenth-century estate in upstate New York, with each performer occupying a separate room of the mansion. As the musicians inhabit and animate its storied interior, the faded splendour of Rokeby becomes a character itself. Enlivened by the emotional tenor of the performance, this bohemian mise-en-scène shifts into a pictorial and conceptual framing device. Eight of the screens feature an individual portrait of a solitary performer; and each of them sings and plays a different instrument— isolated, yet in unison. Citing the tension between loneliness and togetherness in the piece, Kjartansson describes the act of making music as a kind of “perfect society,” as when people perform together, they are both focused on themselves and simultaneously deeply invested in their fellow performers as everyone unites to create something.²

PREVIOUS PAGE AND ALL IMAGES

Ragnar Kjartansson, stills from *The Visitors*, 2012.

Nine channel HD video projection, Duration: 64 minutes.

Photo: Elísabet Davídsdóttir, Sound: Chris McDonald.

Video: Tómas Örn Tómasson. Image courtesy of the artist, Luhring Augustine, New York, and i8 Gallery, Reykjavik.

Gift of Graham and Ann Gund to Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, and Gund Gallery at Kenyon College, 2015.1.1.





At the heart of this collaborative composition, which Kjartansson refers to as a “feminine nihilistic gospel song,” are the words that Gunnarsdóttir wrote for various performances and video works of her own but collaged together for a song by Kjartansson; they are lyrics that articulate what Kjartansson described as life’s “dazzling defeat,” but that also expand to reflect on the strength and persistence of affective ties, the instability of life, love, loss, and also a sense of radical acceptance. The insistent repetition of the lyrics transforms the performance into a kind of meditation that ebbs and swells, and alternates between the banal and the sublime. In complement to the lyrics is the ultimate camaraderie of the musicians of Rokeby, who invite us to follow along with them and remind us of our reliance on one another through the tragicomedy of life—and art.

The audio and video tracks were recorded individually but are shown together in such a way that the audience is placed at the centre of the arrangement, and in this way the music takes on a spatial, sculptural element. Installed in the exhibition space so that it is impossible to view the entirety of the work at the same time, the viewer is compelled to move through the gallery, navigating through sound, stopping to view each screen as a glimpse of a solo performance, and moving as the performers move, while assembling a unique, cohesive audio and visual composition. Just like the inhabitants of Rokeby, you, too, are a visitor here; an active part of this work as you mix the music in real time.

Biography

Ragnar Kjartansson engages multiple artistic mediums, creating video installations, performances, drawings, and paintings that draw upon myriad historical and cultural references. An underlying pathos and irony connect his works, with each deeply influenced by the comedy and tragedy of classical theatre. The artist blurs the distinctions between mediums, approaching his painting practice as performance, likening his films to paintings, and his performances to sculpture. Throughout, Kjartansson conveys an interest in beauty and its banality, and he uses durational, repetitive performance as a form of exploration.

Kjartansson (b. 1976) lives and works in Reykjavík. Major solo shows include exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Reykjavík Art Museum; the Barbican Centre, London; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Park, Washington; the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; and the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; among others. Kjartansson participated in *The Encyclopedic Palace* at the Venice Biennale in 2013, *Manifesta 10* in St. Petersburg in 2014, and he represented Iceland at the 2009 Venice Biennale. The artist received the 2019 Ars Fennica Award, and was the recipient of the 2015 Artes Mundi’s Derek Williams Trust Purchase Award, and Performa’s 2011 Malcolm McLaren Award.

¹ *The Visitors* is based on a piece called *The End—Rocky Mountains* (2009), which Ragnar and Davíð Þór created at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.

² Quotations from Ragnar Kjartansson are from a 2013 interview with Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan.

SPECIAL EVENT

The Visitors Special Launch at Block Heater

Thursday 9 February, 7–9 PM

The gallery will be open late, with a cash bar available, for this free special event as part of Calgary Folk Music Festival’s Block Heater, powered by ATB.

February 9-12 marks the 8th iteration of the Calgary Folk Music Festival’s annual winter ritual Block Heater. Featuring 32 artists and 13 separate events, you can choose your own adventure at diverse Inglewood and downtown venues. Get your tickets today!

Explore the festival line up by scanning the QR code →
or visit the website: www.calgaryfolkfest.com

**CALGARY
FOLK
MUSIC
FESTIVAL**



CURRENT EXHIBITION

Margaux Williamson Interiors

21 JANUARY–30 APRIL 2023

Organized and circulated by
McMichael Canadian Art Collection

Guest Curated by Jessica Bradley

Margaux Williamson has said that painting can be a place to consider what is real and what has value. Such consideration leads her to make images unconstrained by the dictates of a preconceived composition and instead she builds progressively with details that stay in the mind. In her studio—an unobtrusive garage behind her house on a downtown Toronto side street—she yields to the slow process demanded by large oil paintings, constructing images that, like thoughts, unfold organically. The interiors that have become a dominant theme in her recent work are both literal spaces, somewhere comfortably familiar, and places of imaginative interiority where her inanimate subjects are brought under the spell of her anarchic treatment of space.

Margaux Williamson, *Garlic*, 2019.
Oil on panel. Collection of the artist.





An assortment of food and objects left overnight on the kitchen table (such as in *At night I painted in the kitchen* [2013]), or the light catching the rim of a glass, a box of discarded papers in the corner, or the glow of a laptop screen, all are given equal value and can seem to exist autonomously. The expanses of undifferentiated space she often leaves around these points of focus are an invitation to look more closely; the banal realities of these compositions are presented as worthy of exploration and are liberated from conventional hierarchies. There is a frankness to her work that enlivens her canvases as fields of inquiry and a spaciousness that gives us licence to rove around details that become anchors in a field of possibilities.

An uncanny temporal element also inhabits the spaces Williamson creates. Objects are seen in fading light or emerging from darkness in dense strokes of paint that describe the intangibility of a moment. She makes her paintings with a fluidity that presents multiple and simultaneous relationships, as in collage. For example, in *Bathtub* (2020) it appears the water has been left running by the person who recently washed a T-shirt that hangs in midair, at

Margaux Williamson, *At night I painted in the kitchen*, 2013. Oil on canvas. Purchase, Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Grants program and the Art Centre Acquisitions Endowment Fund (Queen's University), 2015. Collection of Agnes Etherington Art Centre.



once beside and behind the tiled backsplash of the tub. Veering off to the left is a wall with wooden wainscoting. Are we in another room, or perhaps this is a backyard fence? A painting within the painting hangs here: a watery seascape with a battleship bombardment in progress, a drama from another time and place. Angled fluorescent lighting presses down, condensing the lines of a story that is familiarly domestic yet entirely open to our imagination. For Williamson the brush stroke, the act of putting paint on canvas, anticipates both figuration and abstraction: the depiction of real objects situated in the fluid pictorial space and time unique to her work.

Over the past several years, painting has become her principal occupation, but Williamson also writes prolifically and has made videos and performances. Her community includes writers, artists, and musicians with whom she has collaborated, notably on her 2008 feature-length video, *Teenager Hamlet*, which captures the existential questioning and curiosity of young urban friends thinking through their experience of the world, and on various cultural initiatives with writer Sheila Heti. Writing has been her constant companion, and though writing and

Margaux Williamson, *Table and Chair*, 2016. Oil on canvas. The Bailey Collection.



painting offer parallel paths to meaning, for her they are neither interchangeable nor ultimately substitutes for each other. Rather, writing accompanies her image making, offering another place for reflection and inspiration.

Williamson's painting has evolved through long rhythms; her bodies of work are produced over years interspersed with pauses, often for as many years. During interludes when she is not painting, Williamson builds files the way a writer might, with phrases, lists, and dream fragments written on scraps of paper. To these text sketches, as she calls them, she adds photographs, pictures torn from magazines, illustrations of artworks from various periods, and drawings. These ephemera, as impermanent as thoughts that come and go, await an undetermined future as they accumulate. Indeed, pages with notes appear everywhere in her recent paintings, taped to the wall and stacked on tables, as if to acknowledge another way of understanding and being in the world. A painting may emerge from such collected thoughts as readily as from photographs of light in a room or the items on her tables.

Painting is invention, the opportunity to make visible, to choose or to cast aside. And Williamson's art carries implicitly within that invention histories of painting, whether in the way her works can recall the decorative surfaces of an Édouard Vuillard interior or the deft brushwork of Delacroix and Manet. Her images of hands resemble the awkwardly outsize mitts painted by Philip Guston, and there is a collision of depth and nearness in her work that echoes Matisse, as do the patterned carpets and fabrics she favours. Williamson's work resides in the real world of here and now without allegiance to realism, and this, after all, is what painting can achieve: a way of seeing reality anew, a way of considering its simultaneous familiarity and strangeness.

Jessica Bradley

Biographies

Margaux Williamson was born in Pittsburgh in 1976 and lives in Toronto. Her first book of paintings, *I Could See Everything*, was published by Coach House Press in 2014, alongside shows at the Mulherin+Pollard Gallery in New York, and Frith Street Gallery in London. In 2021, White Cube, London, mounted an online exhibition of her recent paintings.

Her feature-length film, *Teenager Hamlet*, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and is archived on UbuWeb and she also contributed movie reviews to the cultural site *Back to the World*. She was artist-in-residence at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Klondike Institute of Art & Culture, Dawson City; and MacDowell, Peterborough, New Hampshire. Her work has been covered by *New York Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Vogue*, *BOMB Magazine*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Believer*, *The Huffington Post*, and more.

Williamson completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Queen's University, Kingston, and was the recipient of an exchange scholarship to the Glasgow School of Art. Her work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions in Toronto, London, and New York.

Jessica Bradley, curator of *Margaux Williamson: Interiors*, is an independent curator based in Montréal. Formerly, she served as Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (1995-2004) and as Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (1980-87). She was commissioner for Canada's representation at the Venice Biennale on three occasions. Bradley has published extensively and organized numerous solo and group exhibitions in Canada and abroad. She founded her own commercial gallery in Toronto (2005-15), where she mounted more than eighty exhibitions featuring a rising generation of artists.

Organized and Circulated by:

McMichael
CANADIAN ART COLLECTION D'ART CANADIEN

Sponsored by:

HATCH

Margaux Williamson, *Flowers*, 2020.
Oil on panel. Private collection.

PROJECT SPACE

HEADSPACE

Lizzy Moorhead, Sid Smillie, and Zabdi,
in collaboration with May G N

UNTIL 5 FEBRUARY 2023

“Well, collage is just so easy to do. It takes all the skill out of things, and boils art making down to decisions, intent, and preferences. It takes out the fear of making mistakes or wondering if your art is good enough. It’s also cheap; anyone can afford to do it, and best of all it involves taking control of your environment and repurposing it for something unique to you. Collage is beautiful for that.”

— May G N, in conversation with someone she just met, probably.

Created in concert with Esker Youth Engagement and students from Discovering Choices schools, May G N presents *HEADSPACE*, an exhibition that provides windows into the self. The heart of the installation is skinned with a nearly fractal set of collaborative collage works, viewed through a series of reflective silhouetted forms that depict the profiles of the collaborating youth artists. Each person-made-portal offers a vantage point into a world of clashing images, personal expressions, and unique aesthetic tastes. The resulting kaleidoscope-like interior space threatens to fall back in on itself with recursive imagery and text.

Over the exhibition’s duration, G N will continue to work with her collaborators, adding internal elements to the Project Space and fueling further chaos and creation until the work is complete... whatever that may entail.

Biographies

Lizzy, Sid and Zabdi are students at the Calgary Board of Education’s Discovering Choices schools, which offer an alternative high school learning environment that is flexible and self-directed, with a focus on student-centered learning frameworks.

May G N is a Trans-Albertan artist and Educator. She makes cheap art and public programs for Mohkinstsis youth. She splits her time working as an educational assistant, writing, teaching, and creating collage works from salvaged imagery. One day she hopes to create a space where youth feel like art is a part of their lives all the time.

UPCOMING IN THE PROJECT SPACE

Morgan Melenka

13 February – 11 June 2023

Installation view of the exhibition *HEADSPACE* by Lizzy Moorhead, Sid Smillie, and Zabdi in collaboration with May G N, 2022. Photo by: John Dean.





ESKER PROGRAMS & ENGAGEMENT



Esker Foundation's FREE programs create connections: with exhibitions, contemporary art, and each other. Through collaboration with artists, diverse communities, and partnerships we encourage creativity and engagement.

Information and registration for all programs from February to May can be found via our website at: eskerfoundation.com/program/current/



Scan this QR code to learn & register for all current & upcoming programs.
Or call: 403 930 2490,
email: programs@eskerfoundation.com.

Please note that all programs will be offered in person, unless indicated that they are online.

Registration is required to participate, and space in the programs is limited. We request that you please provide 72 hours notice for cancellations so we can offer your ticket to the waitlist.

Photos: left by Elyse Bouvier,
& above by Danny Luong.

TALKS

**Painting Time:
Conversation and Q & A with
Margaux Williamson and
Jessica Bradley**

**Saturday 21 January,
5–6 PM**

Join us for a conversation and Q & A with *Interiors* curator, Jessica Bradley, and artist Margaux Williamson as they discuss working together, and paintings in Williamson's current exhibition.

Registration recommended.
A cash bar will be available.

**Artist Talk with
Morgan Melenka**

**Thursday 23 March
6–7 PM**

Using sculpture and printmaking, Morgan Melenka reproduces, modifies and misuses the familiar forms and materials of physical structures to engage with the world of architecture. Join us for a talk with Melenka as she discusses her artistic practice, and current exhibition in the Project Space.

Registration recommended.

TOURS

Exhibition Tours

Join Esker Foundation Curators Naomi Potter and Shauna Thompson for tours of our current exhibitions: Ragnar Kjartansson's *The Visitors*, and Margaux Williamson's *Interiors*.

***When All is Said and Done:*
Exhibition Tour with
Shauna Thompson**

**Thursdays
23 February & 27 April
6–7 PM**

***Dust in the Sunlight:*
Exhibition Tour with
Naomi Potter**

**Thursday
16 March
6–7PM**

YOUTH & FAMILY

**Bring the Baby
Exhibition Tour & Tummy Time**

**Fridays,
24 February & 14 April,
12–1 PM**

Introducing babies to works of art lays the groundwork for visual, cognitive and language development.

Parents, caregivers and their babies are invited to join us for this gentle ‘baby-led’ conversational tour where we will explore some of the themes in our current exhibitions while considering our youngest participants’ reactions to the artwork and providing them with a stimulating experience. Following a half-hour tour, babies will have a chance to enjoy some ‘tummy time’ social fun on artist Yvonne Mullock’s extraordinary interactive sensory blankets, created especially for babies to explore and enjoy.

In-person program, registration required.

Recommended for little ones 2 and under.



**Create Together
Family Workshops**

AGES 0–12

**Saturdays,
25 February & 15 April,
11 AM–12:30 PM**

We invite families with children up to 12 years old to explore themes together in our current exhibitions through collaborative art-making, and creative experiences. Often inspired by the work in our current exhibitions, each workshop introduces new mediums and techniques in all art forms.

Parents or guardians participate for the duration of the program. All materials will be provided. Dress for mess!

In-person program, registration of all family members essential.

Recommended for families with children up to 12 years old.

Kids Studio

AGES 8–12

**Saturdays,
4 March & 22 April,
11–1 PM**

Kids Studio is a series of hands-on workshops for children aged 8 to 12 where they independently explore creativity through process-based art making, movement and play.

Parents or guardians are not required to be present for the duration of the program. All materials and snacks will be provided.

In-person program, registration and parental consent essential.

Recommended for kids aged 8–12.

Youth Studio

AGES 13–18+

**Saturdays,
4 March & 22 April,
3–5 PM**

Youth Studio connects youth (13-18+) to contemporary art and ideas through free experiential and creative activities led by contemporary artists.

Parents or guardians are not required to be present for the duration of the program. All materials and snacks will be provided.

In-person program, registration and parental consent essential for participants under 18.

Recommended for youth aged 13-18+.



OPPOSITE

Youth workshop at Esker Foundation, 2022. Photo: by Elyse Bouvier.

LEFT

Teresa Tam *Little Memories Cart* outside the Project Space. Photo by: Danny Luong.

WORKSHOPS + EVENTS

Stay on the lookout for more details about these upcoming workshops and events!

- Instrument-Making with **Jared Tailfeathers**.
- Poetry, Rap and Hip Hop with **Tribe Artist Society (Dwight Farahat and Bryan Francisco)**.
- Improv Jam Session with **One Big Jam**.
- Mixed Media Collage and Painting with **Sabine Lecorre-Moore**.
- Live Painting with **McKenna Prather**.

Stay tuned for more workshops and events to be announced this winter and spring at Esker.

Check our website: eskerfoundation.com, subscribe to our e-newsletter, and follow us on social media: [@eskerfoundation](https://twitter.com/eskerfoundation) for updates!

Community Projects

Esker Community Projects invite community groups and organizations into our space, to engage with the arts through unique, specially-designed programming led by artists and facilitators from Calgary, and beyond.



Esker is continuing our multi-year collaboration with the Calgary Board of Education's Discovering Choices alternative schools, offering their art students workshop series led by local contemporary artists, culminating in an exhibition of their work in Bridge Space.

This year we expanded our partnership to invite three senior-level art students for an in-depth mentorship with Esker staff, and a creative mentorship and collaboration with artist and facilitator, May G N. One of the results of this mentorship is *HEADSPACE* presented until 5 February in Esker's Project Space.

ABOVE & OPPOSITE
Youth workshops at Esker.
Photo by: Elyse Bouvier.

RIGHT
Artist Sid Smillie exploring their collage exhibition *HEADSPACE* through the cut out shape of their own silhouette.



Gendai GED

MARCH 2023

Gendai Guerrilla Equity Development (GED) is a project for youth that exists at the intersection of art, anti-racism, alternative economy development, and civic engagement.

Led by Gendai's Petrina Ng and Marsya Maharani, in collaboration with Jasmine Mander, GED is the next project in a series of Gendai initiatives that support artists and arts workers.

Gendai MA MBA (Mastering the Art of Misguided Business Administration) is a year-long think tank and workshop series for art collectives to improve capacity-building skills in a co-learning environment; and Gendai CO-OP, is a peer-led accountability program for arts institutions invested in improving racial equity in the arts.

This March Break, youth (15-19+) will be invited to Esker to work with Gendai, local artists, and collectives, to discuss, debate, connect, and create around these topics.

If you, or a youth you know, is interested in participating, reach out to:

programs@eskerfoundation.com
or 403 930 2490

Learn more about Gendai's work at www.gendai.club

Funded in part by the Government of Canada.



Previous Esker Community Projects participants and collaborators include: Blackbird Healing Arts Collective, the Calgary Institute for the Humanities University of Calgary Public Humanities Fellowship program, CARYA, Katimavik, Magenta Foundation's Flash Forward Incubator program, National Access Arts Centre, Skipping Stone, Stardale Girls, and Trellis Society's Iiyika'kimaat program.

BRIDGE SPACE

Since 2015, Esker has provided programming for children and families that engages with exhibitions, and encourages material and creative exploration. The launch of Esker Youth Engagement (EYE) in 2019 introduced programs that connect youth (13–25) to contemporary art and artists through making, experiential activities, and dialogue.

Bridge is for the young members of our community. It is a space to make visible the incredible work created by children and youth in programs, for youth-led curation, and a space to be claimed by young people for expressions yet to be imagined.

CURRENT EXHIBITION

Narrating Ourselves From The City

UNTIL 5 FEBRUARY 2023

Narrating Ourselves from the City is a collection of interdisciplinary works by youth artists Abrianna, Liz, Mary, Sasha and Sergio. Over the course of four workshops, the youth explored Critical Theory, particularly concepts related to race, class, and gender as identity constructs, and the problems that come with finding one's place in the world in a Eurocentric/white society. They participated in a story circle, where they shared and discussed their experiences in a mutually-supportive community context, offering one-another respect and compassion. They engaged in discussions around the praxis of decolonization, guided by Kaitlyn Purcell (writer, artist, educator), who offered an Indigenous perspective. The youth also met local expatriate artists Mera Reyes (master storyteller) and Fredy Rivas (interdisciplinary artist) who shared their own backgrounds and life trajectories, and how their paths led them to build resilience

and empowerment through their artwork. Finally, the youth were introduced to Digital Storytelling as a decolonizing tool, and with the support of Hortensia Barrios (sociolinguist), learned how to create their own story using writing and images.

Narrating Ourselves from the City was designed by PhD Candidate Karina S. Hincapié (educator, activist) as a way to empower minorities in Calgary, and open spaces that are usually designated for privileged populations. The project seeks to value alternative voices and expressions by bringing racialized and gender diverse youth together to discuss the issues and challenges they have faced in Calgary. A central axis of the project is the participants' reflection on their own identities, positionalities, and the intersections between theirs, and other minorities' experiences.

The workshops and encounters the youth engaged in were crucial in making room for meaningful alliances between minority groups, and in furthering the process of decolonization as a path for social justice. The artwork in this exhibition emerged from our experiences together.

Narrating Ourselves from the City is a community-centered project in partnership with The Calgary Institute for the Humanities, University of Calgary Public Humanities Fellowship program, and Esker Foundation.

A space
dedicated to young
people

Cut + Paste: Inside Out

FEBRUARY–APRIL 2023

Cut + Paste: Inside Out is an exhibition of exploratory collage created in collaboration with dozens of youth from across Calgary, led by artist May G N.

Each of these self-portraits is driven by a mandate for self-expression, offering an opportunity for stress

and worry-free process-based art making. Free from the harsh conventions of formal representation, young artists were instead asked to pull apart, salvage, cut, and paste together something that best reflects who they are. Through the use of silhouettes, *Cut + Paste: Inside Out* invites viewers to imagine each work as a window into its artist. Peer into the portals, imagine the person who created them, and glimpse a small piece their inner universe.

Thanks and gratitude to CARYA, Centre for Sexuality, Skipping Stone, and to CADA for generous funding in support of this free public program.



Artwork from *Cut + Paste: Inside Out* by Aley, *Let Dreams Grow*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist.

UPCOMING EXHIBITION

Mel O'Callaghan

Pulse of the Planet

27 May–27 August 2023

Co-curated by Peta Rake
& Shauna Thompson

Pulse of the Planet is a major solo exhibition by Paris/Sydney-based artist Mel O'Callaghan that synthesizes several years of research, collaborations, and ways of knowing. For the last twenty years of her practice, O'Callaghan has explored resonant objects, spaces, and tools and how they affect, codify, and connect bodies. By working alongside experts in other fields, O'Callaghan seeks to ask new questions through her artistic practice and to highlight the natural synergies between disciplines, as well as how highly curious researchers reciprocally approach complex questions about our existence.

The works in this exhibition bring together trans-disciplinary creative thinkers—oceanographers, physicists, microbial ecologists, hydrofeminists, and musicologists, among others—whose divergent research areas converge around the most urgent problems of our time, including planetary shifts, the viral age, climate futures, interspecies living, and what lifeworlds we must be attentive to and why. Drawing on our innate impulse to connect with one another and to the earth's inexplicable forces, *Pulse of the Planet* sees all bodies—human and non-human—as sites of revelation and connection.

The exhibition brings together a chorus of works that begin at the planet's very depths; at a site from which all life is said to have emerged kilometres below the surface of the ocean. O'Callaghan's collaborators recently made a hydrophone recording at the East Pacific Rise—a site on the floor of the Pacific Ocean at the boundary of diverging tectonic plates—which captured vibrations beneath the earth's surface, a phenomenon often referred to as the Earth's heartbeat. Previously, these vibrations were emitted at a constant low frequency of 7.83 hertz, but in recent years scientists have witnessed

an increase to 8 hertz. This alteration of frequency reinforces the complex planetary changes that are currently afoot. We might understand this shifting, pulsing vibration as a bodily connection with all life, both on a microbial and an immensely geologic scale, that underscores a universal resonance that transcends global borders.

At the centre of the exhibition is a durational performance featuring two large-scale tuning forks installed on a resonant chamber. When played, the tuning forks emit a fundamental note that creates a sympathetic call and response with the body on a cellular level that is in solidarity with the heartbeat of the Earth. During a series of performances throughout the course of the exhibition, the performers and audience members will become conduits for sympathetic sound and will be called into an awareness of their own somatic rhythms, calmed nervous system—pulse, breath, and movement—and to consider the notion that the Earth, too, is a living organism.

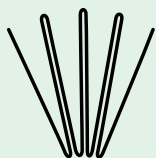
Mel O'Callaghan, *First sound, last sound* (performance), 2022. Installation view, *All is Life*, 2022, Carriageworks, Sydney, Australia. Photo Zan Wimberley.



Biographies

Mel O'Callaghan was born in 1975, Sydney, Australia. She lives and works in Paris, France and Sydney. O'Callaghan's work explores human behaviour in relation to notions of resistance, endurance, and transformation. Recent solo exhibitions include, Carriageworks, Sydney (2022); Samstag Museum, Adelaide (2022); UQ Art Museum, Brisbane (2020); Le Confort Moderne, Poitiers (2019); Artspace, Sydney (2019); NGV, Melbourne (2018); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2017). Group exhibitions include, ACCA, Melbourne; 19th Biennale of Sydney; Seoul Museum of Art; Pompidou Centre, Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila; Serralves Museum, Porto; AGNSW, Sydney; Gillman Barracks, Singapore; Museo D'Art Contemporanea, Rome; NGA, Canberra; and Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam.

Peta Rake is a curator, cook, and community interlocutor presently based in Meanjin/Brisbane. She is currently Senior Curator at University of Queensland Art Museum. Her practice as a curator is currently attentive to transdisciplinary conversations focussed on blue research, working closely with artists and scientists to understand the psycho-social, political, and gendered dimensions of coastal wetlands, sea country, intertidal zones, aquaculture, and the regeneration and articulation of these sites. Her work has always involved a large network of long-term collaborators and thinkers, and friends, with a keen interest in distributed curatorial work towards activism. At present she is collaborating closely with curator Léuli Eshrāghi on *Blue Assembly* and *The Clam's Kiss / Sogi a le faisua*. They have collaborated on a forthcoming text for the L'Internationale/Koenig Publication *CLIMATE: Our right to breathe* (2022).



Explore the Bookshop at Esker

Visit the Bookshop at Esker— at the gallery or online—to purchase your copy of these featured products. Browse all our art publications, limited edition artist totes, and pins at the link below. Shipping and local pick-up is available.

BOOKSHOP AT ESKER— & ONLINE!
eskerfoundation.com/bookshop/



NEW PUBLICATIONS



Margaux Williamson

This publication accompanies the exhibition *Interiors*. Softcover, 84 pages
 McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2021.

Introduction by Sarah Milroy; essays by exhibition curator Jessica Bradley and writers Sheila Heti and Ben Lerner.

“While women artists of the early twentieth century were known for depicting interior spaces as places of privacy and domestic quietude, Margaux Williamson’s interiors reveal spaces of creativity, subjectivity, and a kind of anarchic experimentation. One of Canada’s leading painters, Williamson renders the ‘great indoors’ with a lush touch, drawing us into her world.”

\$35.00 CND

ART METROPOLE Pop-Up!

We are pleased to partner with Art Metropole on a pop-up in our Bookshop with the presentation of three titles: *Water, Kinship, Belief*; *For Zitkála-Šá*; and *Postcommodity: Time Holds All the Answers*.

Art Metropole is a non-profit visual arts centre with a focus on contemporary art in formats predisposed to circulation and dissemination: artists’ books and art publications, video, audio, electronic media, and multiples. Art Metropole distributes works through its space at 896 College Street, Toronto, pop-up and satellite locations, and online.

Art Metropole produces exhibitions, talks, screenings, performances and other programming that feature and/or

intersect with distributed art practices; and manages a public art collection and archive pertaining to these practices.

The centre was founded in 1974 by the artist collective General Idea, as a division of Art-Official Inc. (1972). Art-Official’s mission is to facilitate and document collaboration and exchange of ideas between artists.

Learn more about Art Metropole at www.artmetropole.com



Water, Kinship, Belief
 Toronto Biennial of Art + Art Metropole, 2022.
 Hardcover, 480 pages.

Published in relation to two Toronto Biennial exhibitions (2019 & 2022), this publication *Water, Kinship, Belief* is a “third” site, a place where the continuities, resonances, and dissonances between Biennial editions are extended. Its pages become a means to bring together the artists, artworks, collaborators, and ideas that have together informed the exhibitions, irrespective of chronology, dispensing with categories, and part of a greater whole. Through its content and unique design, it is both a generative guide to the exhibitions and a Biennial site of its own, presenting new artistic relations that course through the book like tributaries.

The publication features over 76 artists, and 15 writers, and is edited by Candice Hopkins, Katie Lawson, and Tairone Bastien, exhibition curators for the first two editions of the Biennial.

\$45.00 CND



For Zitkála-Šá
 Published by Art Metropole & New Documents, 2022.
 Hardcover, 128 pages.

Paying tribute to Yankton Dakota writer, musician, and activist Zitkála-Šá (b.1876), this publication is structured through a series of scores for thirteen contemporary female Indigenous performing artists: Laura Ortman, Cheryl L’Hirondelle, Suzanne Kite, Barbara Croall, Jacqueline Wilson, Autumn Chacon, Heidi Senungetuk, Ange Loft, Joy Harjo, Carmina Escobar, Olivia Shortt, Candice Hopkins, and Buffy Sainte-Marie. *For Zitkála-Šá* is supplemented by texts by each artist and a contextualizing essay by Raven Chacon. *For Zitkála-Šá* coincides with Chacon’s work at the 2022 Whitney Biennial.

\$55.00 CND



Postcommodity: Time Holds All the Answers
 Published by Remai Modern, 2022.
 Hardcover, 217 pages.

This monograph accompanies the exhibition *Time Holds All the Answers*, Postcommodity’s most significant museum presentation to date. Curated by Dr. Gerald McMaster, the exhibition takes on subjects including environmental crises, Indigenous sovereignty and land stewardship, the forces of capitalism, and the mythologies of modern art and architecture.

Postcommodity is an interdisciplinary arts collective, currently comprised of Cristóbal Martínez and Kade L. Twist. They create works of art that personify a shared Indigenous lens and voice, examining aspects of 21st-century life to inspire a uniquely Indigenous vision of the future.

\$49.95 CND

Permanent Collection

For each season of exhibitions, Esker commissions a response from compelling voices within or beyond the visual arts to contribute to Esker’s online art publishing project Permanent Collection. We ask contributors to consider each of the current exhibitions together as a means of generating new ideas and connections about and between the artworks from a new perspective.

NEW ESSAY

SEDIMENTS by Nura Ali

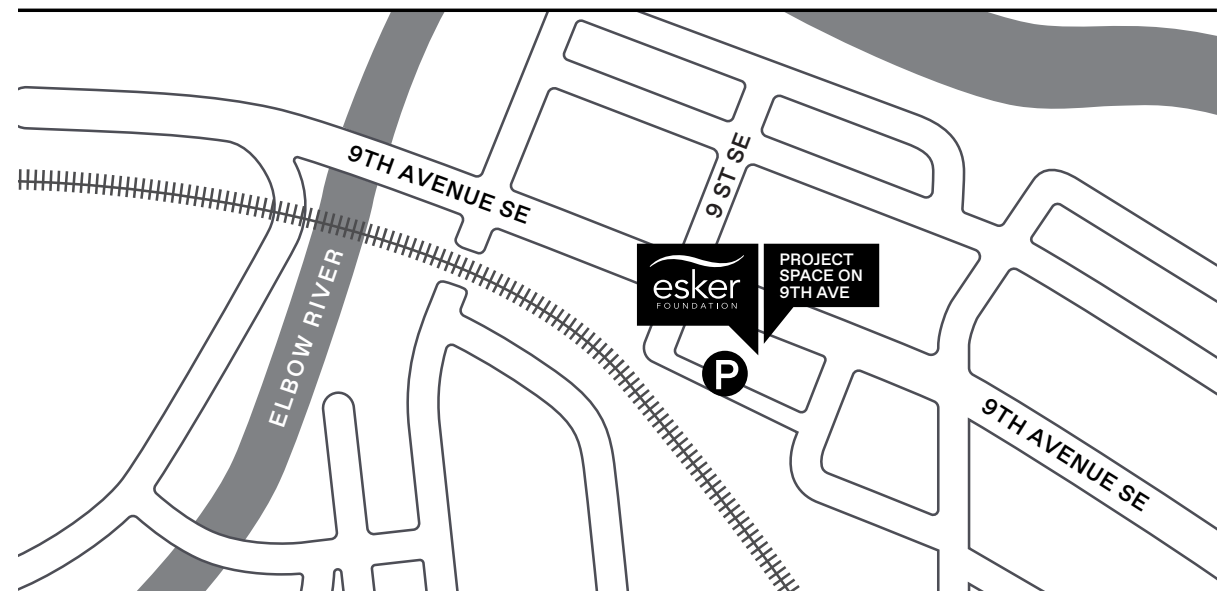
In response to Robin Arseneault, Chloe Lum & Yannick Desranleau, and Gailan Ngan.



Find all the essays at:

permanentcollection.eskerfoundation.com

INFORMATION FOR YOUR VISIT



ACCESSIBILITY

Esker Foundation is accessible via elevator up to the fourth floor, which is available on all levels of the building. A swing door with an automatic door control into the gallery is situated adjacent to the gallery’s revolving door. A wheelchair-accessible public washroom is available inside the gallery, and on the fourth floor. There are accessible parking spaces at the rear of the building.

FREE ADMISSION

HOURS

Wednesday to Friday	11–6 PM
Saturday & Sunday	12–5 PM
Monday & Tuesday	CLOSED

PARKING AND WIFI

Complimentary

PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Programs are free and open to all.

Please visit: eskerfoundation.com/program/current to register

TOURS

Complimentary tours are available on request. Please pre-book at least two weeks in advance.

Call 403 930 2490 or email info@eskerfoundation.com

CONTACT US AT

- Telephone 403 930 2490
- Email info@eskerfoundation.com
- Twitter [@EskerFoundation](https://twitter.com/EskerFoundation)
- [@EskerCalgary](https://twitter.com/EskerCalgary)
- Instagram [@eskerfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/eskerfoundation)
- Facebook [Esker Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/EskerFoundation)
- Vimeo vimeo.com/esker

We all benefit from deeper, relational considerations of accessibility. If you have any questions or requests regarding access to the gallery or programs, please don’t hesitate to contact us at 403 930 2490 or by email at info@eskerfoundation.com

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Esker Foundation is located on the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut’ina, and the Iyârhe Nakoda First Nations. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. Esker Foundation extends sincere appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on this territory in respect and gratitude.

CALENDAR: PROGRAMS & EVENTS

JANUARY

Friday 20 January
6–9PM
Opening of Exhibitions

Saturday 21 January
5–6PM
Talk: *Painting Time* with Margaux Williamson & Jessica Bradley

FEBRUARY

Sunday 5 February
12–5PM
HEADSPACE
Project Space exhibition last day!

Thursday 9 February
7–9PM
The Visitors Special Event with: Calgary Folk Music Fest’s Block Heater

Thursday 23 February
6–7PM
When All is Said and Done:
Exhibition Tour with Shauna Thompson

Friday 24 February
12–1PM
Bring the Baby Exhibition
Tour & Tummy Time

Saturday 25 February
11AM–12:30PM
Create Together:
Family Workshops AGES 0–12

MARCH

Saturday 4 March
11AM–1PM
Kids Studio AGES 8–12

Saturday 4 March
3–5PM
Youth Studio AGES 13–18+

Thursday 16 March
6–7PM
Dust in the Sunlight:
Exhibition Tour with Naomi Potter

Thursday 23 March
6–7PM
Artist Talk with Morgan Melenka

APRIL

Friday 14 April
12–1PM
Bring the Baby Exhibition
Tour & Tummy Time

Saturday 15 April
11AM–12:30PM
Create Together:
Family Workshops AGES 0–12

Saturday 22 April
11AM–1PM
Kids Studio AGES 8–12

Saturday 22 April
3–5PM
Youth Studio AGES 13–18+

Thursday 27 April
6–7PM
When All is Said and Done:
Exhibition Tour with Shauna Thompson

WATCH & LISTEN

SELF-GUIDED AUDIO TOURS

Audio and video content about each artist and their work can be explored via QR codes found on artwork labels throughout the exhibitions, and can also be accessed via our website.

Listen to insights from our current and previous exhibiting artists, curators and educators for more in-depth knowledge and a deeper enjoyment of contemporary art.

Find the resources here



PROGRAM CALENDAR

Scan the QR code to access the online calendar of free events, workshops, talks & tours!



Fourth Floor
1011, 9 Avenue SE
Inglewood, Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2G 0H7

