



Contemporary Art Gallery

Vancouver, BC

Leon Polk Smith

Big Form, Big Space

May 14 to August 22, 2021

B.C. Binning and Alvin Balkind Galleries

Christine Howard Sandoval

Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self

Until August 22, 2021

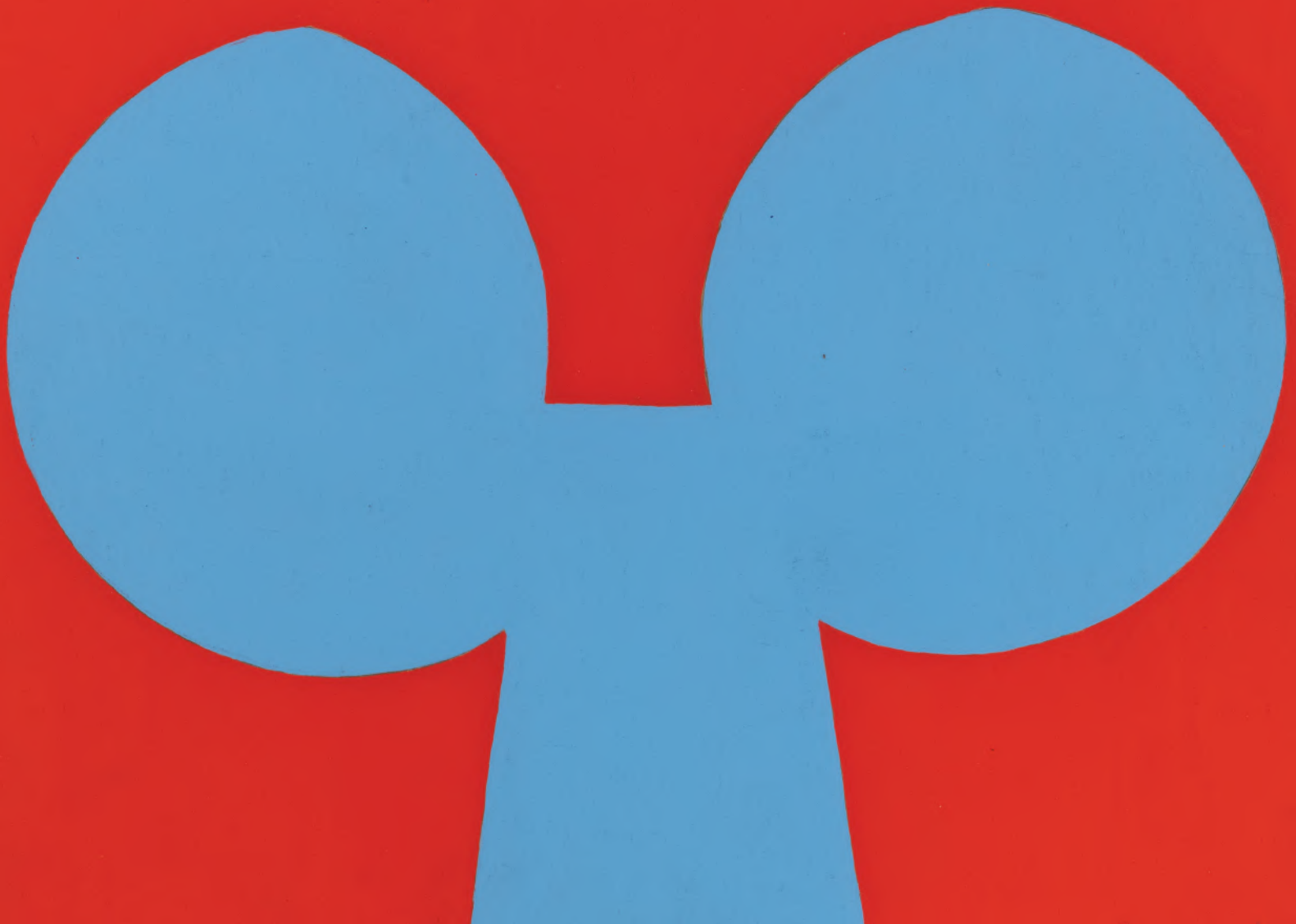
Off-site at Yaletown-Roundhouse Station

Nicole Kelly Westman

muddled mirage of memories escaping encapsulation

Until August 22, 2021

CAG Façade



Leon Polk Smith

Big Form, Big Space

May 14 – August 22, 2021

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Leon Polk Smith holds a unique place in the long tradition of American geometric abstract painting. Born outside Chickasha in what would become the state of Oklahoma, to parents of mixed Cherokee and settler heritage, Smith grew up in a farming community among the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations. He graduated from East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma in 1934, before moving to New York City in 1936, where he attended Columbia University. He remained in New York for the rest of his life.

He was a painter heralded for his lifelong commitment to simplified shapes, brilliant colours and minimal, intense compositions. Since his first solo exhibition in New York City in 1941, Smith has been the subject of numerous retrospectives, most recently *Leon Polk Smith: Hiding in Plain Sight*, organized by the Heard Museum, Phoenix, which presents his work alongside that of 19th- and 20th-century Indigenous artists. His work is included in major institutional collections such as those of the Art Institute of Chicago; Brooklyn Museum; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Guest curated by Nigel Prince

With generous support from the Leon Polk Smith Foundation and Lisson Gallery, London, New York and Shanghai.

Leon Polk Smith

Cover

untitled, 1962

Photo: Adam Reich

Right

Pontotoc, 1958

Photo: Lisson Gallery

Opposite

untitled, 1960

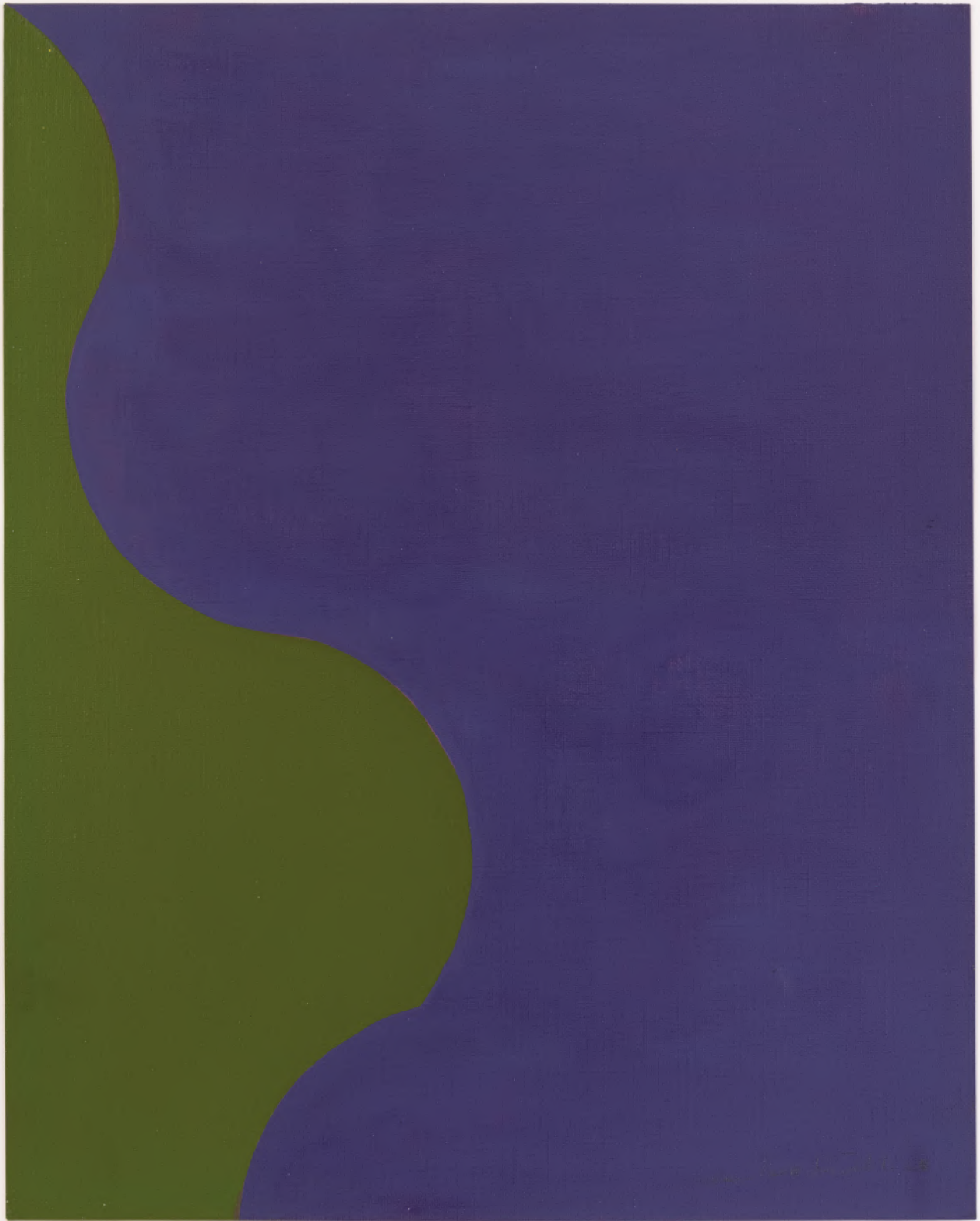
Photo: Adam Reich

The Contemporary Art Gallery presents the first solo exhibition in a public gallery in Canada by American artist Leon Polk Smith (1906-1996). Focusing on paintings and works on paper from the 1950s, the exhibition charts a critical moment in Smith's artistic career in which the signature visual language of his work began to manifest, reflective both of prevalent trends of the time and an increasing engagement with the contexts of his upbringing and identity.

Through almost forty works, the exhibition traces a period in which Smith initiated a move away from the Eurocentric impulses of his formative years to embrace and make plain connections to his rural upbringing in the American Southwest, his Indigenous heritage and his identity as a gay man. At times playful, Smith's refraction of his background is evidenced throughout his work: in his distinctive palette, in his approach to titling, and in the frequent evocation of body, place and landscape, at times recalling shapes, colours and patterns he experienced in his life, family and surroundings.

Big Form, Big Space provides a timely opportunity to re-evaluate Smith's place within art history, looking beyond the strict appreciation of his place within hard-edge modernist abstraction to encompass broader considerations of context, time and identity.







Christine Howard Sandoval

Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self

Until August 22, 2021

Off-site at Yaletown-Roundhouse Station

Christine Howard Sandoval is an interdisciplinary artist of Obispeño Chumash and Hispanic ancestry. Her work challenges the boundaries of representation, access and habitation through the use of performance, video and sculpture. Howard Sandoval has exhibited nationally and internationally at The Museum of Capitalism, Oakland; Designtransfer, Universität der Künste Berlin, Berlin; El Museo Del Barrio, Bronx; and Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens. She is currently Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at Emily Carr University, Vancouver.

Co-curated by Julia Lamare and Kimberly Phillips

This exhibition is generously supported by the Audain Foundation and presented in partnership with Capture Photography Festival and the Canada Line Public Art Program, InTransit BC.

Photography is inseparable from colonialism. While the violent extraction of land, labour, and resources from Indigenous Peoples was in practice long before the invention of the camera, it is both embodied by and perpetuated through the act of “taking” pictures and of organizing them into photographic archives by European settlers. In a meditation on land, language and architecture—and without the use of a camera as a tool—Vancouver-based Obispeño Chumash and Hispanic artist Christine Howard Sandoval reconsiders the insidious meaning-making power of the colonial archive in *Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self*. This public installation was initially presented as a component of the artist’s solo exhibition at CAG, *A wall is a shadow on the land*.

Howard Sandoval wraps the surface of the Canada Line station with a series of overlapping, scanned archival documents and images, forming a multifaceted collage. To build her composition, she draws from the notebooks of J. P. Harrington, a linguist who extensively documented Indigenous cultures and languages in California. She focuses on passages describing mission architecture and excerpts on his work with Rosario Cooper, who was the last language holder of Obispeño. Layered with these archival documents are schematic maps comparing Spanish mission and ancient Indigenous architectures as well as a drawing of Father Junípero Serra from Howard Sandoval’s fourth-grade school report on the California missions.



Christine Howard Sandoval

Opposite and above

Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self (installation views), 2021
Photos: SITE Photography

With Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self, Howard Sandoval creates a presence for Indigenous ways of thinking about space and time and unsettles the archive through the act of enlargement, annotation and collage. The stratum of material encourages multiple entry points for interpretation, calls into question the use value of the image and resists the archive's power to cement colonial histories. Embedded into institutional systems of education, imperial archives inform generations; Howard Sandoval's act of archival dislodging is a crucial step in unlearning history and excavating deep-rooted colonial foundations of knowledge.

Nicole Kelly Westman

muddled mirage of memories escaping encapsulation

Until August 22, 2021

CAG Façade

Nicole Kelly Westman is a visual artist of Métis and Icelandic descent that recognizes with indebted gratitude the artists that came before her and strenuously forged space, the curators that place care at the fore of their labour, the communities that foster confidence in her practice, and the institutions and organizations that implement policies prefacing relations of trust. As an artist, she enjoys practices of listening, watching, hosting, poeticizing, foraging, and sharing.

Curated by Matthew Hyland

Nicole Kelly Westman

Below and opposite

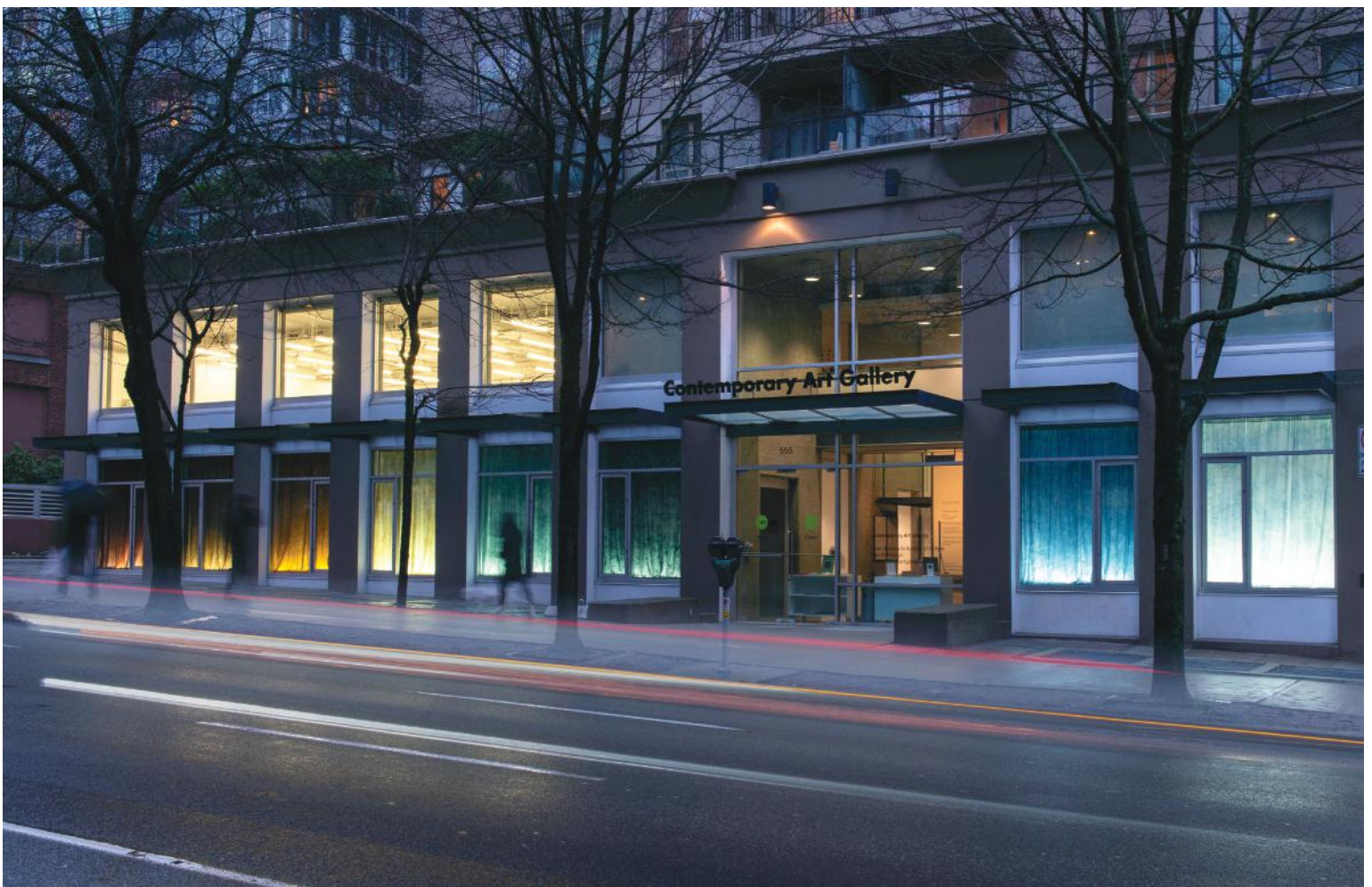
muddled mirage of memories escaping encapsulation (installation views), 2021

Photos: by SITE Photography

The practice of Nicole Kelly Westman is anchored in an ongoing concern with the conditions of image-making. Despite only occasionally using cameras or producing anything akin to a photograph, Westman's work deftly engages the tools, techniques and principles of photography to question the objectivity of the recorded moment.

Light, in particular, is an essential collaborator for Westman. The glow of a sunbeam filtered through treetops; a city street at night, awash in the haze of sodium vapour lamps; the chromatic brilliance of a sunset: light for Westman is an opportunity to index the energies and intimacies that constitute any given moment and the ways in which it is perceived, documented and assigned meaning.

In *muddled mirage of memories escaping encapsulation*, Westman presents a series of three works across CAG's façade windows, each of which nods to the ways memory is shaped, staged and recalled. Referencing the backdrop, the mirror, the gel, and the cucoloris—each used in the photographic process to produce "ideal" images—these works offer a patient counterpoint to the fixity of the standalone photograph, drawing our attention to the felt structures found in light and shadow, sentiments that often elude being captured, shot or taken.





Talks and Events

In light of ongoing precautions related to COVID-19, CAG is pleased to deliver talks and events online this season. Please refer to each event listing for details.

All talks and events are free and suitable for a general audience.

Talks and readings held online via Zoom will be live captioned (CART). For more information contact learning@contemporaryartgallery.ca

For more information about these events visit www.contemporaryartgallery.ca/whats-on

CAG Reads

For more details or to register, visit www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

Nicole Kelly Westman in conversation with Peta Rake and Katarina Veljovic

Saturday, June 26, 3pm PDT

Online via Zoom

Alongside Nicole Kelly Westman's exhibition *muddled mirage of memories escaping encapsulation*, the artist invites two colleagues, friends and sisters—curators Peta Rake & Katarina Veljovic—to speak together about artistic practice and the fruitfulness and responsibility of centering care in arts communities. What does it mean to hold sustaining and porous relationships in an art community? Are there ways we can lean into vulnerability and intimacy in these relationships? What might it look like to witness the often-invisible labour of garnering trust and respect?

June CAG Reads

Nicole Kelly Westman

Sunday, June 6, 2 – 3.30pm PDT

Online via Zoom

July CAG Reads

Tristan Unrau

Saturday, July 17, 4 – 5.30pm, PDT

Online via Zoom

A book club where artists invite us to read alongside them, CAG Reads welcomes an artist each month to propose a book for our collective reading pleasure, culminating in a virtual hangout grounded in their chosen reading material. Selections are announced each month on our website and through our social media channels. Details on upcoming editions to be announced throughout the season.

Join us online this season for CAG's Video Visits, in which we present a variety of perspectives on our current exhibitions.

Presented in five languages—English, Cantonese, French, Mandarin, Spanish—these videos offer short takes on the exhibitions of Leon Polk Smith, Christine Howard Sandoval and Nicole Kelly Westman.

Video Visits

All videos will be available for viewing as of June 18.

Visit www.contemporaryartgallery.ca for more details.

Open Studio with Alanna Ho

Alanna Ho is an educator and community-engaged artist based on the unceded, ancestral and traditional territories of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh; Stó:lō; sə̓lilwətaʔ/Selilwiltulh; xʷməθkʷəyʷəm; and QayQayt (Qiqéyt) Nations. Her research is on deep play, female representation in the arts and accessible art programming in early education. Alanna is a Technology Instructor in Early Childhood Programming for the New Media Gallery and is currently participating in the Artist in Residence Studio (AIRS) in partnership with the Vancouver School Board. For three years, she mentored school-aged children in sound design through the community arts project Sonic Playground, supported by The Western Front. Aside from teaching, Alanna actively performs as an experimental sound artist, performing and exhibiting at venues across Canada and internationally.

Visit www.contemporaryartgallery.ca for more details.

Youth Programs

Application Deadline: Monday, May 31, 5pm

Apply online at artsumbrella.com/VASI

For more details about the program please contact learning@contemporaryartgallery.ca

CAG is delighted to welcome Alanna Ho as our Open Studio guest artist for Summer 2021. Open Studio presents a series of art-making videos for families inspired by contemporary art practices and CAG's current exhibitions. Videos will be released on our website and social media platforms on the third Saturday of the month from May to July.

Free material kits will be available in limited quantities for pick-up from CAG as of the day of each video release.

Saturday, May 15

Saturday, June 19

Saturday, July 17

Open Call

Contemporary Art Practices

**Visual Art Summer Intensive in partnership with Arts Umbrella
August 9 – August 27, 2021
1 – 4pm**

Contemporary Art Practices is a three-week visual art intensive designed for artists ages 15 to 19 who are interested in advancing their artistic skills and creative thinking.

The intensive is a stimulating experience for young artists committed to experimentation and dedicated to pushing the boundaries of their own art-making. In a supportive studio environment, students will work with professional artists, curators and educators, exploring a range of contemporary art practices. The program will introduce participants to creative new approaches in art-making through a series of workshops at Arts Umbrella's new facility on Granville Island. Students will engage in critiques and discussions about how to develop their ideas and work with new materials, with the program culminating in a presentation of their works.

Online Events Calendar

May 15	Open Studio with Alanna Ho	12pm
Jun 6	CAG Reads with Nicole Kelly Westman	2 – 3.30pm
Jun 19	Open Studio with Alanna Ho	12pm
Jun 26	Nicole Kelly Westman in conversation with Peta Rake and Katarina Veljovic	3pm
Jul 17	Open Studio with Alanna Ho	12pm
Jul 17	CAG Reads with Tristan Unrau	7 – 8.30pm

For more details regarding public programs at the Contemporary Art Gallery please visit the events page at www.contemporaryartgallery.ca/whats-on

Contemporary Art Gallery
555 Nelson Street, Vancouver
British Columbia, Canada V6B 6R5

+1 604 681 2700
contact@contemporaryartgallery.ca
www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

Open Tuesday to Sunday 12 – 6pm
Free admission
Visit us at www.contemporaryartgallery.ca for more information

Contemporary Art Gallery Team

Anna D'Avignon, Finance Officer
Phil Dion, Lead Preparator
Jessica Evans, Retail & Publications Coordinator
Danielle Green, Curator of Learning & Public Engagement
Matthew Hyland, Executive Director
Julia Lamare, Acting Associate Curator
Keimi Nakashima-Ochoa, Digital Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Shayla Perreault, Operations & Volunteer Engagement Manager
Kolton Procter, Interim Marketing & Communications Coordinator

To make an appointment to use the Abraham Rogatnick Resource Library, please email contact@contemporaryartgallery.ca.

The Contemporary Art Gallery is generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the City of Vancouver and the Province of BC through the BC Arts Council and the BC Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch. We are also grateful for the support of Vancouver Foundation and our members, donors and volunteers.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous multi-year support of BMO Financial Group.

At the Contemporary Art Gallery, we carry out our work on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x̱w̱məθkw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał/ Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. We are engaged in an active learning process about our responsibilities to the stewards of the land we occupy.

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CAG Elsewhere

Deanna Bowen

A Harlem Nocturne

Walter Phillips Gallery

April 15 to July 18, 2021*

Produced by the Contemporary Art Gallery and presented to Vancouver audiences in spring 2019, the solo exhibition of Montreal-based artist Deanna Bowen will continue its national tour in Banff this spring at Walter Phillips Gallery. This iteration of the touring exhibition at Banff Centre will mark the artist's first solo exhibition in Alberta.

This exhibition tour is generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts.

*Pending lifting of government restrictions.