

Salmon Arm Art Gallery Presents

# Breaking the Binary

Twelve 2SLGBTQ+ artists explore gender and  
sexuality binaries in contemporary society

October 16 to December 11, 2021

Opening Reception **Saturday, October 16, 11am to 1pm**

Gallery Hours **Tuesday to Saturday, 11am to 4pm**

Artists' Talk **Thursday, November 18 at 2pm**

Family Saturdays @ Home **on YouTube**

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SHUSWAP FILM SOCIETY



Find more Salmon Arm Pride Project  
virtual and in-person events at  
[www.salmonarmprideproject.ca](http://www.salmonarmprideproject.ca)



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70 Hudson Ave. NE • Salmon Arm, BC  
[www.salmonarmartscentre.ca](http://www.salmonarmartscentre.ca)

# You are on the unceded and ancestral lands of the Secwépemc people.

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The board and staff of Shuswap District Arts Council acknowledge that they have benefited from the systems and structures that have oppressed Indigenous people for nearly two centuries.

We apologize for the harms that have been inflicted upon Secwépemc people.

We endeavour to work in accordance with the 94 Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Report. We pledge to support reparations and reconciliation through our mandate, using the arts to build respectful relationships, create cross-cultural community engagement, and to make space for Indigenous cultural and artistic expression. Our policies reflect the importance of supporting authentic Indigenous voices, as well as guiding the education of settler cultures by including Indigenous perspectives in every exhibition and program.

Director/Curator Tracey Kutschker wishes to personally thank Neskonlith Councillor and knowledge-sharer Louis Thomas, as well as artists and storytellers Dolan Badger, Delores Purdaby, Mary Thomas, Aaron Leon, Gerry Thomas, Kenthen Thomas and Geri Matthew for their generous guidance, advice and wisdom over the past 18 years. It is now time for settler cultures to take on the re-education of our collective history, and to make the changes that are needed to decolonize our systems and structures.

## Curator's Statement, Tracey Kutschker

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The Salmon Arm Pride Project committee is comprised of thoughtful and enthusiastic individuals who bring forward important issues from within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. These issues do not even show up on the radar of cis-gendered straight folks until an opportunity arises to educate them. I have been that person, many times. I have learned what makes a safe space, what pain mis-gendering someone can cause, and how to re-learn the past to be fully accepting of an individual who has been forced to hide their true selves. When the committee brought up the term “breaking the binary” as a theme for 2021, it resonated with my goals as a curator, and as a mother.

In the past few years, I've had many conversations on 2SLGBTQ+ topics with individuals who are, shall we say, of a certain mindset. The subjects have ranged from transgender discrimination to two-spirit terminology. I have witnessed a distinct discomfort when we are asked to move beyond our traditional binary thinking, and imagine a space in between these dualities. Judging from the walls that form during these conversations, I perceive that binary thinking is a significant barrier to us moving past prejudice and intolerance. We, meaning descendants of European settlers, have constructed a linear understanding of gender and sexuality, and it has created “otherness” in anyone who does not fit upon this rigid scale. Before we can evolve (or devolve) to a place where gender and sexuality play no part in our abilities to relate to each other as humans, we must break down these binaries.

In a blog post by transgender and Christian author Austen Hartke, found on the Centre for Action and Contemplation website, he writes, “It seems that everything we put in a neat and tidy package must eventually be allowed to come undone, including our understanding of our bodies, gender, and attraction.” This succinct statement gives me hope that it can be as simple as allowing ourselves to undo the package. How do we do that? We see the package, see its origins, and teach ourselves to undo it. The artists in this exhibition are helping us with this practice, and it is very much a practice.

# Scott Crocker

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**1. Umbrella Term**                      *mixed media, 2021*                      NFS

RW: So what is the piece you're working on about Scott?

Scott: I think it might be about the Unity to be found in Diversity when there's Solidarity. Also it's pretty...

*Scott Crocker lives in the Shuswap and studied at Mount Royal University and UBC Okanagan. As an artist he believes that everyone can draw from the same creative river and that the way a person stacks the dirty dishes can be beautifully done and can enrich the everyday. He is currently exploring how mundane materials can be used to express the transcendent.*

# Cathy Stubington

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**2. Puppets on Gender and Sexuality**                      *mixed media, 2021*                      NFS

Meet Mateo, Hawk, Audrey, Pluto, Jade and Mrs. Schuler. The stars of the digital video currently in production are having an after-class conversation on sexual health for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. Cathy worked with a team of three young 2SLGBTQ+ character designers to create these puppets, and heard their concerns about heteronormative sex ed in schools. These puppets will continue to have important conversations beyond the first episode, due at the end of 2021, and well into the future.

# Margaret Albaugh

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**3. Tomgirl**                      *photography, 2021*                      \$100/\$150/\$200

In her photography practice, Margaret explores topics surrounding gender, race and identity, particularly in how our identities are informed by social constructs and historical events. She challenges social narratives to help people consider other perspectives, and plays in between the documentary and conceptual genres using straightforward photojournalistic approaches at times, and mixing mediums and manipulating in Photoshop at other times. Margaret's children and her personal history inspire her to document their stories and the issues they face.

*Margaret Albaugh is a documentary and conceptual photographer based in eastern Washington State. A mother to both small humans and big cats.*

## Wren Rathbone

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### 4. Sir (They/Them)

*mixed media on canvas, 2021*

NFS

This painting recounts the day Wren discovered euphoria from being address by a masculine honorific. Sketch and unfinished, this piece pays homage to Wren's continuing journey to discovering their true self. Initially coming out to close friends at the age of 18, it was not until the Spooktacular 2019 event that pieces started to fall into place around gender and appearance.

*Wren is a Salmon Arm artist who works in acrylic and pen & ink. Sharing a home with a significant cat, Phantom, Wren is inspired by the local flora, and is a fan of gothic design and horror art.*

## Cleo Moore

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### 5. Lesbian Foxes

*watercolour, 2021*

NFS\*

Depicting two female foxes in love, this work has been painted using the colours of the lesbian flag. Studies on foxes have shown courtship, affection and pair bonding between female foxes.

### 6. Bisexual Bonobo

*watercolour, 2021*

NFS\*

When primatologist Frans de Waal first witnessed sexual acts between same sex pairs of bonobos, other scientists remarked that the behaviour must have arisen because those bonobos were locked in a zoo. However, data gathered from the wild has demonstrated that bonobo bi-sexuality is just part of who they are.

### 7. Transgender Clownfish

*watercolour, 2021*

NFS\*

Clownfish are among many species of fish and reptiles that can change their gender. The dominant female clownfish is always surrounded by males, and is larger than male clowns. The matured male fish holds second place in the hierarchy. This male can breed with a dominant female. The rest of the male clowns are sexually immature. After the death of the dominant female fish, these male mating clownfish change their gender into the female.

*Cleo is a watercolour artist living in Kelowna, BC. She uses research into animals that break social construct binaries to show viewers that we are all still a part of the animal kingdom. No matter our gender or sexuality, we all belong here. Cleo's work can be found online @cleos.black.cat.watercolor.*

\* Prints available for \$25 each at the front desk

## Patrick Hughes

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**8. Are You On My Wavelength?** *acrylic on canvas, 2021* \$2000

1951 Colour coded at birth.  
Pink or Blue. Vagina Pink, Penis Blue.  
How did you do?  
Pink is not even a wavelength  
And Blue can be so cold.  
Are You On My Wavelength?  
Is an attempt to address the dilemma  
faced by those who don't relate to Pink or Blue.

*Patrick Hughes is a mixed media artist living in Kamloops, BC. He studied at Caribou College in Kamloops, and UBC in Vancouver, where he lived and exhibited for many years. Upon returning to the Interior, he has been collecting, salvaging and constructing large installations that comment on our environment, capitalism and the health of Canada's waterways. He is also well-known for his photographic work, found online @trickhughes.*

## Ellie Johnson

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**9. Love** *acrylic on canvas, 2021* NFS

Love is being able to see through the darkness to what is possible, to love one's self and to love others.

*Ellie is a youth artist living in Salmon Arm.*

## Flynn N.

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**10. But I've Been Called Worse** *acrylic on board, 2021* NFS

Flynn has placed years of thought into four little paintings, as they reflect the gender experience that they have been dealing with for the majority of their life.

*"As much as I wish I could just wake up one morning and immediately be in the body that fits me, that just isn't how it works. But I think in time I'll eventually be able to say that I'm happy with where I am."*

*Flynn has been creating art since elementary school, and prefers drawing visual characters to tell a story rather than writing words. They flip between traditional and digital art like a drinky-bird toy, but when in traditional art-making mode, uses acrylics, gouache and pen.*

## Jamie Oosterhuis

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### 11. what i think i know and what i actually know

*digital video, 2018*

*what i think i know and what i actually know* explores self-discovery after moving away from the ideologies of small-town heteronormativity. Within the work, the artist contemplates the internal struggle of understanding her bisexual identity through hazy flashbacks of late-night love affairs that break the societal boundaries within which she was raised. She bears witness to the shattering of who she thought she was and attempts to pick up the pieces and place them into who she knows she is. By simultaneously providing stillness and chaos through video and sound, viewers are offered the opportunity to engage with the same turmoil felt by the artist.

*Jamie is a recent graduate of the Bachelor of Fine Arts program at University of Victoria. Now living in the BC Interior, she continues to explore contemporary art methods with a focus on European history's influence on queerness, sexuality and the body.*

## Joey Roo and Jo McAvany

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### 12. Truth and Beauty

*photography, 2021*

\$400 ea.

Gender expression is how one demonstrates gender through clothing, make-up, behaviour and cultural practices. The three images presented here are part of the artist's contemporary life as a model, construction worker, and an Indigenous artist helping to increase awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Joey is tackling trauma by taking back the power of the external image and expanding perspectives of beauty.

*Joey Roo is a Kamloops-based Indigenous make-up artist and model, who also works in the construction industry. Joey works in partnership with Pritchard-based photographer Jo McAvany of Captured By Jo Photography. More images can be found on Instagram @joeyrooofficial.*

## Meg Froehler

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**13. Self Intimacy in a Non-Binary Body** *photography, 2021* \$200 ea.

- i. **Pronouns:** Human grasps onto jacket with they/them pin attached
- ii. **I Am Safe:** Human holds their face while looking to the sky
- iii. **Freedom:** Human sitting on rock with harness
- iv. **Queer Joy:** Human basks in the sun happily
- v. **Held:** Human embraces themselves in nature
- vi. **Acceptance:** Water falls from a human's hand as they grab their harness

The term self-intimacy can be provocative, as some would categorize it as taboo. However, it is a defining aspect of gender identity as humans attempt to place themselves within society's expectations and yet strive to know their true selves. This series shows three non-binary models coming to a fuller understanding of their bodies and identities, finding comfort and acceptance of who they are. The models each shared words about their journey with Meg, and are part of this catalogue (page 12).

*Meg is a Kelowna-based photographer specializing in empowerment, creating a safe space for raw, authentic and vulnerable photos of humans. The aim as an empowerment photographer is to allow people to see the beauty and light that she sees in them.*

## Karmen Krahn

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**14. Coming to Terms** *mixed media, 2021* NFS

Over the years, Karmen has tended to live in cities of about 17,000. Despite steady progress toward queer inclusion, she remained convinced that love, safety, even self-expression were only possible in The City. That belief is not only expensive, it is wholly flawed. It was costly in too many ways to count. Entitled *Coming to Terms*, Karmen's freedom was ultimately found in terminology. Unbound by the urban/rural binary, truthful naming has set her free. From Moose Jaw's first Pride board to Salmon Arm's Pride Project and SD83's SOGI, love and self-expression are possible right here at home.

*Karmen is a freelance artist and author. She serves SD83 as Behavior Consultant. Karmen lives in an orchard with her pups, George (she/her) and Bobby John (he/him).*



# Sarah Hope

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## 15. Bisexual = Ability to Love

*mixed media, 2021*

NFS

Sarah has been exploring internalized myths and fears surrounding bisexuality. She credits her daughter for giving her the language and confidence to express who she is. Sarah has discovered a wider definition of bisexual that has evolved over the years and is trans and non-binary inclusive. This continual learning reminds her of an accordion: expanding ever more outward as she learns more about herself and the LGBTQIA2S+ community. At times it has felt like a spinal twist, wishing she could be out and yet wishing to stay safely compressed. Recently, Sarah has been inspired by the colors of the bisexual flag, in particular the lavender. As a mix of blues and pinks and anything in between, lavender represents an attraction to more than one gender and for Sarah, an expansion of self. Our culture tends to assume binary: if a woman is holding hands with a man, it is assumed she is straight. If she is holding hands with a woman, it is assumed she is lesbian. Sarah is exploring some of these assumptions that can lead to bierasure. Robyn Ochs defines bisexuality as “potential to be attracted, romantically or sexually to people of more than one gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way and not necessarily to the same degree.” Essentially, bisexual does not equal a binary.

*Sarah explores the beauty of impermanence working out of her home studio east of Salmon Arm, often highlighting environmental themes such as the importance of water, biodiversity and pollinators. Her recent work uses foraged and recycled materials to represent the pure emotions related to change, grief and new growth. This work is created with handmade paper from recycled pieces of an old art bio that Sarah no longer feels describes her, dyed with hawkweed, cannabis leaves, mountain ash and aronia berries. She creates pigments from rock and bone for permanence and makes paper and plant-based inks for the ability to portray vulnerability and qualities that change over time.*

# Patrick Hughes

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## 16. Original Sin

*mixed media, 2021*

NFS

Original Sin n. (in Christian theology) the tendency to evil supposedly in all human beings, held to be inherited from Adam in consequence of the fall. The view of some early theologians that the human will is capable of good without the help of divine Grace was branded as heresy. OED

*“I recently read an interview with Tarana Burke, the founder of the ‘me too’ movement, where she talked about abuse she suffered as a child. She said that she couldn’t tell anyone one because she thought she had sinned. This resonated with me. Among the many reasons not to tell, I hadn’t really focused on sin. I now realize sin was the underlying connection. Shame, fear and the stigma of homosexuality (illegal at the time) were the predominant emotions. And I certainly couldn’t confess my sin.”*

## Ryan Baker and Nathan Blue

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### 17. The Vase

*digital video, 2021*

This experimental film brings to life the complexities of passing. As a transgender man, Ryan is not passing as a man, he IS a man. What he is passing for is a *cisgender* man. As a biracial Black person, he also passes as a white person and thus can function in the world as a white person even if is under a conditional basis. American slavery and blood quantum reduced him to fractions. The gender binary only accepts one kind of man - a white one. The Vase is the child Ryan was projected to become. What he actually is cannot hold this vase anymore.

*Ryan Baker is a film director based in Northern California. He is his own kind of man and craves finding bits of wisdom from people and places that are underestimated and undervalued. He finds joy in the unimaginable coming to life.*

*Nathan Blue is a filmmaker and artist located in Sacramento, California. He studied film and media at UC Santa Barbara and worked on many film sets to date, but the biggest teacher has been honoring his inner world and allowing himself to be who he truly is. Nathan was the cinematographer for Ryan's film "The Vase." The choice to film on an iPhone was important to Nathan because he wants trans youth to know that their story can be documented in many ways. Film and photography is more about composition and lighting than the gear. Nathan encourages everyone to just go out and film something, whatever catches the eye and for any reason. "When you stop to film the moonlight or your friend's emotion, you are a filmmaker."*

Director, Writer, Performer, Editor: Ryan Baker

Director of Photography: Nathan Blue

Music: IDHAZ

## Meg Froehler, in conversation with her Non-Binary Models

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### **What does self-intimacy look/feel like being a non-binary human?**

**M-** To me this has gotten better and healthier since coming out as non-binary because I'm not trying to conform to anyone's ideals on how I should look, just on how I feel.

**C-** Self-intimacy for me is celebrating the fact that my body finally feels like home. I love looking down and seeing the scars on my chest as a reminder of how far I've come and what I've had to do to get here. I don't have bottom dysphoria so I have elected not to change anything surgically as it's not something I feel I need. I love the fact that I'm not bound to one gender norm and can comfortably exist in the space between.

**K-** Compassion. Compassion and releasing control on how I feel about my body that day. Embracing the feminine and masculine simultaneously and allowing myself to lean into one or the more without judgment.

### **How does our gender normative society affect your ability to connect with your mind, body and soul?**

**M-** I struggled my entire life because I was constantly told I needed to look more feminine and wear more make up. I was constantly being told how I had to look to suit someone else's idea/comfort.

**C-** I have to remind myself that I am not defined by society or its endless constraints but rather that I am allowed to just exist as I am, not worry about adhering to an outdated collective way of thinking.

**K-** It has made me a bit scared to embrace my masculine side. To present more masculine and to consider getting top surgery sets off an alarm in the back of my head that I cannot be loved by a cishet person. (I'm pan)

### **Do you feel safe being non-binary in our society?**

**M-** This is a loaded question. The answer is yes and no. I feel safe because there is more dialogue around it and people are becoming more aware of pronouns and different gender identities, but no because even in our own community they still want to put non-binary people in a box of androgyny. Some days I feel more femme and somehow by acknowledging that aspect of myself it leads people to see me as less non-binary, but if I present more masc/androgynous there's less second guessing. Non-binary people do not owe anyone a specific look.

**C-** As someone who "passes" for a cis male I feel that I have an easier time navigating my day to day. As I open up to new people or correct them on my pronouns it's sometimes hard that people don't understand or accept that there are a multitude of different ways to be non-binary and having to explain and justify that is mentally draining and disheartening at times. People come with pre-existing ideas of what makes a man a man or a woman a woman and have no idea how people who don't conceptually fit into those boxes work. I like to challenge people to reedify these things on their own terms because at the end of the day what effect does being one gender or the other or neither really have on them?

**K-** Mostly. I do have a lot of privileges being white and presenting AFAB, but I also don't tell people my pronouns at work. I'm not the best at standing up for myself and I need to work on that. I'm a lot stronger than I think.

**Have you ever experienced feeling unsafe due to a lack of understanding of non-binary identities?**

**C-** I am fortunate enough to not have felt threatened, I've been misunderstood and have borne the brunt of some misguided words or outbursts but not to the point I have felt unsafe.

**K-** No and I'm very privileged in that.

**How can allies and the queer community enable more safety and visibility for non-binary identities?**

**M-** Celebrate your NB friends and family and remember being non-binary doesn't mean we dress any specific way. Always ask pronouns or state your own, which opens it up for the rest of us who feel unsafe or unsure.

**C-** Anyone, in any community can help promote safety and visibility by choosing their language carefully and intently. Ask pronouns and don't assume, try leading with your own as an icebreaker. Using language for events that are geared towards people who menstruate rather than marketing events for women. Stand up for us when we are misgendered if we are openly non-binary especially if we aren't there. I challenge anyone to really take note of why they gender things in the first place. Pants are just pants; they don't need to be specified as women's or men's! Also, just holding space to have conversations and educating yourself on the non-binary experience, we are just people and if asked in a respectful manner, at an appropriate time most of us are very willing to share the small things that make us feel validated and seen.

**K-** Use gender neutral language, don't assume people's genders, and believe someone when they say they're non-binary. Being non-binary looks different on everyone. We're all in this lifetime together, let's lead with love.

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## **Glossary of terms:**

**AFAB/AMAB:** Acronyms meaning “assigned female/male at birth” (also designated female/male at birth or female/male assigned at birth). No one, whether cis or trans, gets to choose what sex they are assigned at birth.

**Androgynous:** Androgyny describes the blending, in a particular individual, of traditionally male and female characteristics.

**Cisgender:** Often shortened to "cis," cisgender is a term used frequently in the intersectional, feminist, LGBT+, and transgender communities. It is an adjective used to describe someone whose gender identity matches their body and the gender assigned to them at birth. In other words, someone who is not transgender, nonbinary, or intersex.

**Cishet:** used as both an adjective and a noun, describes a person who is both cisgender and heterosexual.

**Femme:** a written abbreviation of feminine.

**Masc:** a written abbreviation of masculine.

**Non-binary:** Non-binary or genderqueer is an umbrella term for gender identities that are neither male nor female—identities that are outside the gender binary.

**NB:** a written abbreviation of non-binary.

**Pronouns:** Preferred gender pronouns or personal gender pronouns refer to the set of pronouns that an individual wants others to use in order to reflect that person's gender identity.