

Salmon Arm Art Gallery Presents

Sound Machines

Multi-media artists explore sound, voice,
music and noise in this interactive exhibition

Featuring Alison Beaumont, Doug Buis,
Lucas Glenn, Daryl Kehler, Geri Matthew,
Daniela O'Fee, Louis Thomas and Heather Yip

July 3 to August 21, 2021

Opening Day Saturday, July 3, 11am to 4pm

Gallery Hours Tuesday to Saturday, 11am to 4pm

Artists' Talk Thursday, July 15 at 2pm

Family Saturdays @ Home on YouTube

Sponsored by  SONG SPARROW HALL

salmon arm
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70 Hudson Ave. NE • Salmon Arm, BC
• www.salmonarmartscentre.ca

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

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 Louis Thomas, as well as artists and storytellers Dolan Badger, Mary Thomas, Delores Purdaby, 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

In 2015, *Salmon Arm Art Gallery* hosted *Experiment in F# Minor* by Janet Cardiff and George Bures-Miller. It was a room-sized installation, inviting visitors to compose their own sound experience through movement, shadow and purposeful interaction. Area artists and musicians were intrigued by the way Cardiff & Miller utilized the audience to direct the artwork, and it inspired many to explore audio art in a new way. This exhibition invited artists to create sound machines that would ask something of the audience; to interact, to lean in, or to play.

In this past year, the pandemic has pushed us to find innovative ways to deliver the same cultural services to the community, and engage people as they struggle with an unknown future, isolation and concern for loved ones. Among the many new digital outcomes was the creation of the *Marie Manson Virtual Artist Residency*. Two artists were selected to receive the award over the course of a 4-month virtual residency in collaboration with Secwépemc Knowledge-Keeper Louis Thomas. Through bi-weekly zoom check-ins and thoughtful conversation about integrating Secwepemc land knowledge into settler artworks, Heather Yip and Lucas Glenn created their responses to the challenge, and are integral contributors to this exhibition. We are extremely grateful to Louis Thomas for guiding this residency, offering his extensive knowledge of this land and its history for these two artists to explore.

Visitors to this exhibition may find the sounds interact in pleasing or displeasing ways. This is a purposeful goal of the presentation method, to create composition that may result in dissonance, but also allow for miraculous moments to happen spontaneously. Our world is so layered with constant sound that we often feel uncomfortable in silence. We can explore this state of being by becoming aware of the sounds others make while in our presence, in an otherwise quiet gallery space, and deciding how to curate our own sound environment based on our mood at the time. This could result in music, like a jazz improv concert, or discord, which may evoke an unpleasant response. This collaborative exhibition is an experiment, just not in F# minor, but in a key of each visitors' actions.

Daniela O'Fee

1. Chance Encounters for Prepared Turntable

mixed media, 2018

See and hear the suspended stone's random dance
across the surface
while taking turns holding the bow
with or without a partner.

Chance Encounters for Prepared Turntable is an interactive composition that brings together seemingly divergent acoustic experiences by positioning a record player into a recreated nature setting. Cultivating this subtle, pointillistic timbre may evoke that of a campfire among other live, outdoor, organic, sonic occurrences that are increasingly endangered by noise pollution. Pairing methods of chance with an electronic machine invites participants to imagine indeterminate, non-linear links: inadvertent social encounters, interaction with media, and unexpected happenings in our relationship with the environment.

Traversing the multi-sensory landscape, Kamloops artist Daniela O'Fee creates immersive experiences to investigate the flux between acoustic and visual realms. With a Bachelor of Music degree from University of Victoria, she has worked as a pianist, director, composer and educator in British Columbia for over forty years. Daniela is a champion of new piano works by Canadian composers and has worked as an interpreter of graphic scores for Vancouver New Music. Informed by her sonic curiosity and encouraged in her recent visual arts studies at Thompson Rivers University, her practice extends the act of listening beyond traditional music making toward experimental intermedia using repurposed instrument parts, obsolete media machines, sculptural installation, field recording and soundwalks.

Heather Yip

2. Not-So-Happy Meal

mixed media, 2021

In researching this artwork, Heather spent time visiting the local ringed-billed gull population on *Christmas Island* at the foreshore of Shuswap Lake, trying to learn their story. The gulls live in a huge, noisy colony interacting and depending on one another, and Heather also sees them throughout the area scavenging in schoolyards, beaches and the landfill. In making this sculpture she was curious about how our animal kin, like the ringed-billed gulls, relate to humans through the waste we produce. Heather feels that we humans will never truly know what insurmountable difficulties our plant and animal kin face on planet earth while we continue to occupy such a dominant and destructive place at the top of the food chain.

Heather Yip (b.1976, Fort Qu'Appelle, SK) works in a variety of media, with artworks referencing feminist parenting theory as well as the avant-garde. Her work also demonstrates how life extends beyond its own subjective limits and often tells a story about the effects of technology and its use for contemporary cultural interaction. Heather currently lives and works in Salmon Arm, BC on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc people.

Doug Buis

3. Songs for Cows

mixed media, 2021

In the 70's, Doug recalls a high school field trip near Hedley, and remembers finding a pipe that came out of the Hedley mine. He and a friend laid next to the pipe making sounds into it, their voices echoing back to them in forms similar to electronic music of the time. Doug's current artistic practice mixes digital and analog technologies, methods he can trace back to that initial inspiration. When Doug hears sounds, he also sees colours and shapes, a phenomenon called Sound Synesthesia. His artwork mixes physical sculpture with sound, giving the viewer the experience of the blending of media.

Where Doug lives there is a high population of beef cattle, and working on this piece outdoors allowed him to observe and listen to the sounds of the cattle grazing. *Songs for Cows* allows viewers to compose their own song using audible and hand-cranked initiatives.

Doug Buis was born in London, Ontario, and has lived in many places including Mexico, Montreal, Saskatoon, and California for 7 years, before moving to Kamloops. His BFA is from the University of Victoria and his MFA from York University in Toronto. His exhibition and curatorial record includes galleries and museums across Canada, in Holland, Belgium, Korea, New York, Denver, Washington and Los Angeles. He was a tree planter for 18 years, having planted close to 2.3 million trees. He investigates our malleable perception of landscape and environment through a series of different media and strategies including sculpture, video, kinetic art, installation, time-based media, photography and some writing.

Daryl Kehler

4. Attraction

mixed media, 2021

Attraction is a re-imagining of the traditional xylophone. As Daryl continues to explore the space between function and art, he utilizes his 3D printer and CNC machine to create the parts he needs to invent his art objects. In this piece, a custom programmed Arduino microcontroller provides control over the activation and deactivation of electromagnetic coils, harnessing the invisible forces of electricity and magnetism to create sounds and melodies. Each cycle of the coils must be precisely timed within a matter of milliseconds to successfully propel a cylinder of rare earth magnets upwards to strike a musically tuned copper tube. *Attraction* is able to autonomously play seven original melodies and one randomly generated melody in the C major scale. It also allows a user to manually control the xylophone with a keyboard (similar to playing a piano) if you know the secret combination to activate it.

Daryl Kehler is a multi-media Sicamous artist focused on combining electronic elements with metal or wood to explore a deeper meaning in culturally relevant topics. His education in audio engineering as well as experience as a recording artist in a Canadian hip-hop group, Jimmy Current, launched his artistic career. He began to create with metal, starting with scraps leftover from the collision repair shop where he worked, and adding LED lights and computer coding.

Alison Beaumont

5. The Feels

mixed media, 2021

Inspired by a poem she wrote, Alison has combined sound and sculpture to create *The Feels*. Exploring the intersections of joy and sorrow, her work includes recordings of found, everyday sounds, presented using many interesting technologies. She utilized motion sensors, cameras and machine learning to build her knowledge of coding, and over time was able to pull together a system that would be interactive and run independently on a Raspberry Pi computer, camera and speakers, housed in a plastic wrapped box. *The Feels* is operated using an html file, made using Scratch 3. The sound was recorded and edited using Audacity, and no two viewer experiences will be the same.

As visitors move in front of the piece, fifteen different sounds emerge from a mysterious box, each representing a different part of *The Feels*. Viewers can hear moments of water lapping on the shore, the sound of trees being hacked by chainsaws and later chipped, sliding down a hill on a sled, rain on water, crying, laughter at the beach, electric guitar, and people jumping into a frozen lake.

The Feels

Joy Radiates. Smile,
Feel The Spark,
Dancing Light,
Luminescent Light,
Eyes lower, close,
Fade to Black,
Water, gentle,
Flow,
Torrent rising,
Thunderous,
Murderous,
Trees,
Hearts Breaking,
Sorrow, Pain,
Land will heal,
Hope begins,
Joy Radiates. Smile.

Alison Beaumont grew up in Bingley in the county of West Yorkshire in England. She studied Art & Design at college, then obtained her BA(hons) in Photography at Staffordshire University. After meeting her husband, she moved to the Okanagan in 2008. Her work uses photography, video and sound to explore space and inward reflection. She studied Therapeutic Photography at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland, which continues to inform her practice in themes of identity, loss, mindfulness and expression of feelings.

Lucas Glenn, with Louis Thomas

6. Quiet Reckonings of Many Species and Objects

Electric duck decoy, aluminum post, snowmobile hand-guard, soil, sand, bark, pine branch, plastic aquarium plants, tumbleweeds, motor oil container, driftwood, bunchgrass, reeds, paint, PVC glue, wood, plaster, aluminum mesh, plastic mesh, styrofoam, stones, clay, stainless steel wire, speakers, iPod, power bar, decoy crow, plastic frog, plastic butterfly, hot glue, audio. 2021

Try listening to plants and critters. Try to learn their languages. Try speaking with them, too. This is the advice to Lucas from Secwepemc Knowledge-Keeper Louis Thomas when he asked him what settlers could do to relate more positively to the nonhuman world. Just months ago, Lucas started listening as Louis suggested. Each time he did, he heard new things: a small snake rustling through short grass, its tail running against a plastic garbage can, the sound of a train's brakes squeaking with the squawks of seagulls overhead--Lucas holds to this day that he heard a beetle's footsteps on a stone. In this piece, Lucas and Louis reflect on language revived, language lost, and the challenges of translation.

We designate some objects as persons, and some as not. This imagined *severing* has led us to abandon hybridity and interconnectedness. It has separated human systems from their impact—to justify pollution, deforestation, and resource extraction. These acts are too often performed on stolen Indigenous land, and have led us to a global climate crisis.

Quiet Reckonings aims to collapse these boundaries into an interconnected mesh. A real ecology. Where the boundary of what's human and what's nonhuman is thin, and things pass between it. A dirt bike tire will be produced from carbon-emitting petro-chemicals; it will be sent along shipping routes; it will destroy sensitive habitat; it will reinforce trail systems; it will wear beyond use, it will shelter insects; it will hold water to benefit critters and bacteria; it will release harmful toxins in its millennia-long life cycle; and it will be enveloped and eroded by moist soil. Nature is an obsolete category in the world of real, interconnected materialism.

Lucas Glenn is a Kelowna-based artist, and a graduate of UBC's Bachelor of Fine Arts program. Glenn creates sculptures, installations, and digital works, mining science fiction and fantasy to address systems of power and capital in the context of climate crisis. Glenn is recognized by a 2017 Okanagan Arts Award, and a 2014 UBC Creative Studies Department Award. He is one of two artists in residence in the 2021 Marie Manson Virtual Artist Residency.

Louis Thomas is the son of the late Dr. Mary Thomas. His work started as a young adult when his mother brought him in on the development of the Switzmalph Cultural Centre – a place where all cultures are welcome. He has been a Neskonlith band councilor for many years, and is a cultural liaison for over a dozen organizations in the region. Louis' goal is to share Secwépemc culture with all ages and all backgrounds, and to integrate traditional Secwépemc knowledge, stories, language and food systems into contemporary practice. He is the 2020 recipient of the BC Medal of Good Citizenship.

Daryl Kehler, with Geri Matthew

7. Weyt-k 411

mixed media, 2021

Weyt-k 411 is an experience in augmented technology. A collaboration between the artist, the Secwepemc language speaker, and the curator, this artwork gives visitors a chance to hear and respond to Secwepemctsin words and phrases in a way that mimics a telephone conversation. This traditional oral language was assigned an “alphabet” by a Dutch linguist (Kuipers), but in fact, Secwepemctsin has a sound system of 48 sounds. The iconic aesthetic and mechanics of an old analog rotary phone is interfaced with a modern microcontroller to allow control over the playback of digital audio files. By dialing a number, one will initiate the playback of words and phrases of Secwepemctsin. For settlers on this land, it is truly a gift and an honour to receive the sounds of the language that have resonated here for hundreds of years.

Daryl Kehler is a multi-media Sicamous artist focused on combining electronic elements with metal or wood to explore a deeper meaning in culturally relevant topics. His education in audio engineering as well as experience as a recording artist in a Canadian hip-hop group, Jimmy Current, launched his artistic career. He began to create with metal, starting with scraps leftover from the collision repair shop where he worked, and adding LED lights and computer coding.

Geri Matthew is a Secwépemc knowledge-keeper who works to share resources and expertise to develop strategic language plans. She teaches language workshops throughout Secwépemc’ulucw.