

An abstract painting featuring a complex interplay of vibrant colors including reds, oranges, yellows, pinks, purples, blues, and greens. The composition is dominated by thick, expressive brushstrokes and sharp, angular geometric shapes, creating a sense of dynamic movement and depth. The overall effect is one of intense energy and visual richness.

Architects Against Housing Alienation,  
Rodney Graham, Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill,  
Karin Jones, Tiziana La Melia, Carel Moiseiwitsch,  
Alex Morrison, Debra, Aleen and Isaiah Sparrow,  
Janet Wang, Holly Ward, Tania Willard,  
Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

# Town + Country

Narratives of Property  
and Capital

January 10 to April 13, 2025

# Town + Country: Narratives of Property and Capital

Architects Against Housing Alienation, Rodney Graham, Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, Karin Jones, Tiziana La Melia, Carel Moiseiwitsch, Alex Morrison, Debra, Aleen and Isaiah Sparrow, Janet Wang, Holly Ward, Tania Willard, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

*Town + Country: Narratives of Property and Capital* troubles the enduring narrative binary of town and country. Borders between these two terrains have always morphed and slipped around each other theoretically, politically, economically and socially, yet the narrative of the urban/rural divide persists. Indigenous land dispossession and reclamation, capital accumulation in the form of real-estate assets, labour and technological development are all obscured by this persistent fiction. Town and country narratives similarly obscure questions of class, freedom of movement and resource extraction.

Art has played a defining role in the narrative. This group exhibition, which focuses on histories and practices in so-called British Columbia, approaches the political, economic and representational systems at play in our long-mythologized conceptions of this binary of place, through the work of contemporary artists. The narrative's total erasure of Indigenous sovereignty and other communal approaches to land – systems and protocols that governed (and continue to govern) unceded lands and preceded notions of western property – has had a profound impact.

Debra, Aleen and Isaiah Sparrow's blankets – one mass-produced for wide dissemination (2024) and the other hand-woven for family use (2023) – ground the exhibition firmly

in unceded Musqueam territory, where the Musqueam people have lived for thousands of years. Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun's declarative text painting *You Are on Indian Land* (2024) counters colonial erasure by emphatically situating the exhibition in territory beyond the limited perspective of town and country.

Bourgeois migration from the industrial city to the country idyll – seen in the British Arts and Crafts movement at the turn of the twentieth century, the back-to-the-land movement of the 1960s and the most recent pandemic exodus – cycles repeatedly. This conception of “retreat to the country” wherein the country is seen as an unoccupied space of health and freedom continually under threat from its hungry, industrial urban counterpoint, in both instances, hinges on conditions of colonialism, land ownership and physical labour. As the city increasingly becomes a place of parked capital (in the form of real estate investment) resulting in an urban housing crisis, the country becomes an attractive alternative for many. But the country is not simply a place where artists can enjoy larger studios for a lower cost; it is a place of diverse cultural production and economic imperatives of its own. Obscuring this repeats violent economic cycles of private property and its displacement in a doppelgänger effect. Works by Rodney Graham and Tiziana La Melia invoke these doppelgängers through the tale

of the town mouse and the country mouse, the aesthete and the rube, to directly problematize these characterizations. Alex Morrison's drawings and sculpture examine the ongoing relevance of William Morris's socialist activism around labour and housing, itself expressed through a romanticized rural aesthetic.

The ongoing colonial land grab and conceptions of property ownership as economic security follow an unsustainable commodity logic. Past and current land use policy continually entrenches the conversion of housing and territory into "assets." Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill's sculptural works from her *Four Effigies for the End of Property* (2017) series consider how stolen land becomes (and remains) colonial property through legal frameworks such as pre-emption and highest and best use. Architects Against Housing Alienation, with their *Not for Sale!* (2023) project presented at the 2023 Venice Architecture Biennale, point to achievable policy alternatives and ways of reframing that could ameliorate the current critical housing crisis across Canada.

The perceived separation of urban from rural, country from city has, in addition to fueling land dispossession and privatization, hidden the mass exploitation of human capital. Holly Ward's *Monument to the Vanquished Peasants* (2016/2024) points us back in time to the feudal shift from land as a public commons to private enclosures and its impact on peasant labourers and economies. In her installation *Ports of Entry* (2021), Janet Wang considers histories of Chinese workers in British Columbia, as the railway, necessary to open up the province for further extraction and exploitation, was built through their indentured labour. Karin Jones's sculptural installation aestheticizes the farming implements of

rural labour as tools of both complicity and resistance.

The rapidly unfolding climate catastrophe may render moot any distinction between city and country, as floods and fires destabilize established systems of property and value. Tania Willard's *Carrying Memories of the Land* (2022) approaches the change affecting the land and communities in Secwepemcúlecw. Her banners show the resurgent practices of hide tanning and basketry on one side and the skies from intense and devastating wildfires on the other, along with a text reflection on the memories carried by the land and the medicine it has to offer. Carel Moiseiwitsch relocated from the city to the country, only to be forced back to the city as a result of a devastating wildfire in Lytton, BC that destroyed her home and her life's work. Her fire paintings capture the violent endgame of ongoing capital accumulation.

The works in this exhibition subvert rural and urban binaries to offer gestures of refusal and resistance. Through the inextricable entanglement of town and country's histories, nostalgias and futures, the exhibition reflects on a critical reframing of conceptions of "land use" across disciplines. Our moment requires a radical rethinking of property, territory, occupation and ownership, and these artists and activists can help do this.

# List of Works

## Architects Against Housing Alienation

*Not for Sale!*, 2023  
installation

*The Atlas of Housing Alienation*, 2023  
video, 14 m 22 s

AAHA ephemera, 2023

All works courtesy of the artists

Architects Against Housing Alienation (AAHA) is a collective of architects, activists and advocates who came together in 2021 to present *Not for Sale!*, Canada's contribution to the 2023 Venice Architecture Biennale.

Across both town and country, housing has become alienated from its basic function – to provide us with shelter and safety. It has instead become a vehicle for wealth accumulation. First for its owners/occupants, who have seen their home values increase exponentially year after year, and more recently as a commodity, bought and sold by real estate speculators. This shift, from shelter to commodity, has been one of the major drivers of a worldwide housing crisis. In Canada these conditions began with colonial dispossession and continue through to today. Emerging from this crisis and the disconnection of housing from land and community is AAHA's intersectional call-to-arms.

*Not for Sale!* is a manifesto of urgent actions aimed at ameliorating the current conditions of crisis. Both revolutionary and practical, each of AAHA's demands are supported by a series of concrete policy proposals, case studies and architectural and economic models. *Not for Sale!* demands that we change course



Grey Piitaapan Muldoon, *Banners for Fugitives*, from *Not for Sale!*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist

– to decolonize, to create a more equitable future and to fight against climate change. The collective and the numerous students who worked on this project show examples of realistic and achievable ways to make change.

*The Atlas of Housing Alienation*, a collaboration with multidisciplinary video creator Marie-Espérance Cerda, combines extensive archival footage and serves as an introduction to the economic, political and colonial forces that brought us to this particular place.

## Rodney Graham

*City Self/Country Self*, 2000

single-channel video with sound, 3 m 58 s and wallpaper

Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery,  
Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisitions Fund

Rodney Graham (1949–2022) is internationally known for his multimedia practice, rigorous conceptualism and complex interior logic. Among his recurring concerns are the camera, modern technologies of picture-making and historical modes of self-representation. Graham's work recurrently plays with the split between the rural and the urban and the perceived divide between nature and culture, pointing instead to their inseparable and indissoluble selves.

*City Self/Country Self* follows Graham's iconic video works *Vexation Island* (1997) and *How I Became a Ramblin' Man* (1999), all of which are costumed dramas in which he uses film tropes from popular culture to tell a particular kind of story, in this case, the tale of a country bumpkin in the city. Set on a cobbled street in nineteenth century France, this period piece depicts the comic misadventures of a provincial rustic. The video shows a dandy gleefully kicking the behind of his rural doppelgänger at precisely the stroke of noon. The two protagonists, rustic and urbanite, are locked in an uncanny comedic loop in their perpetual pursuit. Ultimately, the city self repeatedly tries to evict the country self, suggesting that the latter does not belong in the refined context of high fashion, polished carriages and groomed horses. The William Morris-esque wallpaper that Graham made as part of the video



Rodney Graham, *City Self/Country Self* (production still), 2000. Courtesy of Rodney Graham Studio

installation reinforces the work's interrogation of class, the relationship between art and life and the loop of self-representation.

Graham's theatrical scene recalls the Aesop fable of the town mouse and the country mouse, in which a proud town mouse visits his cousin in the country and with disdain promptly invites the country mouse to the city for a taste of the fine life. Their rich feast in the city is interrupted by a cat and the country mouse quickly returns home, preferring security to luxury. In Graham's version, the country self is not a willing participant, but the victim of a joke in which irony unravels the narrative at every point. Graham incites his critique of class with humour in a way that makes him (and us) complicit in the actions of the doppelgänger characters he personifies.

## Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill

*Be Long*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property*, 2017

mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives)  
Courtesy of the artist and Unit 17

*The Highest and Best Use*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property*, 2017

mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives)  
Private collection

*Preempt*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property*, 2017

mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives)  
Private collection

Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill is an artist and writer who utilizes found materials – natural and human made – to investigate ideas of economics and land ownership. In this body of work, Hill connects her sculptural practice to the tradition of effigies, wherein sculptures effect change in the lived world.

The sculpture series *Four Effigies for the End of Property* (three of which are on display here) make visible the tenuous and mutable nature of ongoing and violent systems of colonial land accumulation. Composed of objects deaccessioned from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives, the hoses, fencing and scrap metal which comprise the sculptures were taken from the site where the Museum and Archives are now located, and where the work was first shown at the Polygon Gallery. Individually and together, they consider how stolen Indigenous lands become (and remain) colonial and private property through specific legal frameworks.



Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, *The Highest and Best Use* (detail), 2017. Photo: Teresa Donck-Matlock

*Preempt* refers to a mechanism whereby Crown land, aka unceded territory, became privately held by settlers simply by staking their claim. The highly precarious sculpture *The Highest and Best Use* mediates on another pernicious policy framework; one where land value is based on its future development potential. In our current framework, “highest and best” refers not to the land’s ability to sustain a robust ecosystem, but its capacity to generate revenue. *Be Long* alludes both to its own elongated form, and also alternative economic potentials and models of communal ownership and belonging.

Hill’s sculptures are a provocation to see how unstable and ultimately precarious our current conditions truly are, and how easily we might dismantle them.



Karin Jones, *Precious*, 2009–10.  
Photo: Teresa Donck-Matlock

## Karin Jones

*Precious*, 2009–10

24K gold and fine silver Damascene inlay on found objects (carbon steel and ash)

Courtesy of the artist

As a multidisciplinary artist, Karin Jones's methodologies and forms explore notions of beauty and race, identity and labour. With a background in jewellery, Jones's interest in craft and her investment in materials have produced bodies of work that examine hair, attire, tools and a discourse of modern art production.

Jones's history as a goldsmith is highlighted in *Precious*, a series of tools (scythe, pitchfork, spade, hoe and billhook) into which the artist has inlaid silver and gold patterns. This Damascene inlay has a long history associated with power as it was used both in jewellery and on weapons and armour in Syria and Japan, and then carried into colonial cultures.

Made in response to living on Salt Spring Island, BC, *Precious* raises questions around romanticized notions of agricultural labour

and self-sufficiency against the reality of that economic life. Jones moved to the island with the idea of gardening and canning – Salt Spring was once an agricultural community and home to BC's earliest Black farmer communities – but found that lifestyle unsustainable. Instead, she realized that small farmers and a rural lifestyle were often supported by wealth in the form of amassed private property and independent income. Farming in this milieu is now a largely privileged pursuit that obscures class and the industrialized agri-tech that has taken over the bulk of food production.

The jewellery of farm implements – of these utilitarian tools – reveals them to be for show and not for use, shifting the objects in the *Precious* series from food cultivators to ironic items of adornment and economic power.

## Tiziana La Melia

*City Mouse/Country Mouse – The Simple Life*, 2020

oil on custom-made panel

*Country Mouse, City Mouse – No Pointe de Capiton*, 2020

oil and Flashe on custom-made panel

*Country Mouse City Mouse Hamster*, 2020  
video, 60 m

Video Credits: written and directed by Tiziana La Melia, cinematography by Kasper Feyrer and Tiziana La Melia, editing by Ellis Sam and Tiziana La Melia, soundtrack by Ellis Sam and Tiziana La Melia, featuring improvised musical performances by James Albers, Jonathan Scherk and Sam Dzierzawa, costumes by Tiziana La Melia and Natasha Katedralis, project manager Natasha Katedralis,



Tiziana La Melia, *Country Mouse City Mouse Hamster* (still), 2020

location recordings by Amy Kazymierchyk, Rebecca Brewer and Hannah Rickards

Starring in order of appearance: Martina La Melia, James Albers, Kiel Torres, Taro (hamster), Natasha Katedralis, Franca La Melia, Camilla Impronta, Franca La Melia, Rebecca Brewer, Suzy Chung-Smith, Reiko Inouye, Christian Vistan

Supported by the Canada Council for the Arts  
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*Beside the weather*, 2024

oil, denim, metal, plastic and crystal teardrop on panel

All works courtesy of the artist

Tiziana La Melia works across painting, poetry, video and installation as a gleaner of everyday materials and gestures. Their work proceeds by poetic and iterative associations, dense play and a light touch to reflect on the doubling of

lifestyle choices and the slippery containers that hold them.

La Melia was raised on an orchard-garden on Syilx/Okanagan territories and currently lives in Vancouver. The video *Country Mouse City Mouse Hamster* was shot in various locations around these two sites and features friends and family performing. The work evokes the fable of the country mouse and the town mouse as a parable in which, after visiting one another and finding the other's lifestyle not to their taste, each returns home, the city mouse preferring luxury and excitement while the country mouse prefers security and a simpler life. The characters in La Melia's video travel between the urban and the rural, tracing familial and symbolic understandings of food, clothing and place.

Creating an installation around the video, the two paintings further articulate culture at play in the rural. *Country Mouse, City Mouse – No Pointe de Capiton* charts a path through a pink patchwork landscape between the country mouse and city mouse like a yellow (in this case pink) brick road, while in *City Mouse/ Country Mouse – The Simple Life*, two doe-eyed girls, based on the reality television show *The Simple Life*, peer out from behind their blond hair through the tines of a pitchfork. Both are painted on surfaces redolent of a classic house-shape conjuring dollhouses, board games and advertisements. Functioning within the context of a set, the video, paintings and furniture offer material textures, shapes and symbols which move through unstable contexts to offer a consideration of place, home and the romanticized fantasy-rural.



## Carel Moiseiwitsch

*Blue Comet*, 2024  
acrylic on canvas

*Codex Extirpation: The Sad Last Days of Homo Sapiens*, 2024  
artist book, laser print on paper (originally ink on paper)

*Eclipse*, 2024  
acrylic on canvas

*Juniper Tree*, 2024  
acrylic on canvas

All works courtesy of the artist

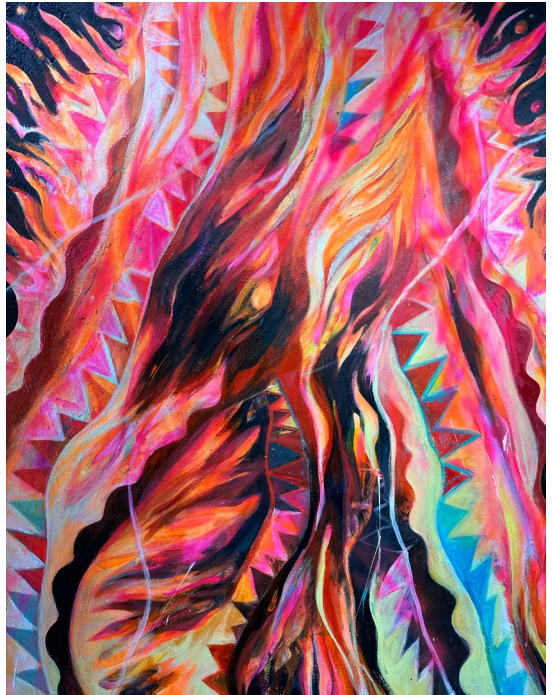
Trained as a painter at Saint Martin's School of Art in London, England, Carel Moiseiwitsch leaned heavily into drawing after immigrating to Canada in the 1970s. Her distinctive punk graphic style was seen in a variety of contexts including galleries, underground comix and newspaper editorials. Dedicated to progressive politics and social movements throughout her career, Moiseiwitsch's formal style matched the political urgency of her subjects: feminism, institutional racism and colonialism in all its forms.

In 2011, Moiseiwitsch relocated from Vancouver to Lytton, BC. In 2021, a wildfire destroyed the entire town and with it her home and life's work. Forced back to the city from the country as a climate refugee, in Vancouver she returned to painting – landscape painting in particular. Once too genteel a proposition for the artist, scenes of a landscape on fire, fueled by human-caused climate change, have become a particularly urgent subject.

*Juniper Tree* is a portrait of a beloved tree from her home's front yard. Its fluorescent, almost

surreal colour abstracts from its devastating reality. *Blue Comet* references the enduring art historical practice of depicting a comet as a harbinger of doom. Here the comet is possibly an omen of the historic heat dome which fueled the Lytton fire and countless fires that summer. *Eclipse* colours the night sky as a rapacious fire moves up the mountainside – a symbol of planetary and galactic forces far greater than our human lives on earth.

The insignificant yet destructive nature of human activity is also the subject of *Codex Extirpation: The Sad Last Days of Homo Sapiens*. A return to form for Moiseiwitsch, this pen and ink artist book recounts the myriad ways humans will be driven (or more precisely, have driven themselves) to extinction.



Carel Moiseiwitsch, *Juniper Tree* (detail), 2024

## Alex Morrison

*Suburban Creed*, 2009

gouache on board  
Private collection

*Untitled (Dome)*, 2009

graphite on paper  
Courtesy of the artist and Monte Clark,  
Vancouver

*Homes for the People*, 2011

graphite and gouache on paper  
Private collection

*Prototype for Lucent Signals And The  
Comfortable Warmth Of The Orangerie*, 2023  
MDF, latex paint, Chavant clay and mixed media  
Courtesy of the artist and Monte Clark,  
Vancouver

Alex Morrison's practice investigates domestic and institutional environments and their countercultural inhabitation, particularly around the histories of the Arts and Crafts movement of the late nineteenth century and its political counterparts of the 1960s that sought out new ways of country living to counter the perceived ills of the city. Interested in the ongoing relevance of socialist activism around labour and housing, Morrison examines the aesthetics and processes by which radical impulses are subsumed within commodities and cultural consumption through his paintings, drawings, sculptures, videos and installations.

Morrison's analysis of design and architectural styles, the historical context of their development and the evolution of their use over time is expressed here through aesthetics. For Morrison, the design and craft of wallpaper, furniture and ceramics is tied up with the politics of housing. The proponents of the Arts and Crafts movement promoted the integration



Alex Morrison, *Untitled (Dome)*, 2009

of aesthetic appreciation and domestic life, a turn to the country life that, like the back-to-the-land movement, has aesthetic, structural and political expressions in the desire to escape urban industrialization, technology, pollution, corruption and illness. Anxieties were placed on these dwelling and aesthetic choices and continue through to today in what we might now call cottagecore.

With humour, Morrison's text paintings emulate William Morrisonian treatises for garden communities, the drawing sees a Buckminster Fuller-esque dome being carried into a rural space for experimental living, while the sculpture considers the vernacular of design in offering furniture as display, as well as an object for living. These slippages reveal an entanglement of town and country's histories, nostalgias and futures.

**Debra Sparrow, Aleen Sparrow and  
Isaiah Sparrow**

*Graduation Blanket*, 2023  
wool

Courtesy of Isaiah Sparrow

*Generations Blanket*, 2024  
recycled wool, acrylic and recycled polyester,  
manufactured by Mini Tipi, Quebec

These two blankets, designed and made by Debra, Aleen and Isaiah Sparrow, combine traditional and personal design – centring Musqueam cultural history and vitality. Working together as three generations of Musqueam weavers, the blankets emphasize the importance of place and intergenerational connection and knowledge.

Debra Sparrow is a weaver, artist and designer who was born and raised at Musqueam Indian Village. Her work combines textile and Salish design into geometric blankets. Her work revives Chiefs blankets for Musqueam cultural use and she also makes hangings that are prominent at Vancouver Airport, Museum of Anthropology and the Smithsonian. Aleen Sparrow is an artist, weaver and model from Musqueam who began learning traditional weaving techniques from her mother Debra in 2019. Isaiah Sparrow is an artist and weaver from Musqueam and he is working with his mother Aleen and grandmother Debra to learn weaving techniques. Aleen and Isaiah are part of the continuance of a Salish weaving tradition.

Debra Sparrow’s wide-ranging project *Blanketing the City* aims to blanket the city of Vancouver in Musqueam designs. In addition to numerous large-scale mural projects, as part of *Blanketing the City* Debra worked with the

Vancouver School Board to place a blanket in every school, connecting new generations to the art and culture of the Musqueam people, on whose traditional territory they learn and live. In 2023, Debra and Aleen opened the Salish Blanket Co., a studio and workshop from which they teach weaving and produce a range of commercial blankets. The *Generations Blanket* is a product of this company and has been mass-produced for wide dissemination. The *Graduation Blanket*, which inspired the design for the *Generations Blanket*, was woven by Isaiah, with guidance from his mother and grandmother for his high school graduation “capstone” project. These blankets observe cultural protocol and acknowledge the Musqueam people who have lived on these unceded territories for thousands of years.



Debra, Aleen and Isaiah Sparrow, *Generations Blanket*, 2024 (top) and *Graduation Blanket*, 2023 (bottom).  
Photo: Michael R. Barrick



Janet Wang, *Ports of Entry* (still), 2021

## Janet Wang

*Ports of Entry*, 2021

video, 4 m 55 s

Original artwork by Janet Wang; animations by Nastenka Alava and Yejin Kim, sound design and original composition by Micah Meuleman, created with the generous support of the BC Arts Council

*Ghosts of Gum San*, 2024

laser print on Tyvek

Both works courtesy of the artist

Drawing on her ancestry as a second-generation Canadian settler of Chinese heritage, Janet Wang's work explores the construction of diasporic identity through the appropriation and disruption of social patterns. As a multidisciplinary artist whose practice is grounded in painting and drawing, Wang integrates sculptural installation and digital media to tell her stories.

The panoramic, large-format digital work *Ports of Entry* and the scroll-like drawing on Tyvek (a building wrap material), *Ghosts of Gum San*, were conceived from 2018 to 2021 and developed as part of a research trip the artist made throughout British Columbia in 2021 where she looked at the history of Chinese

settler migration in the province in the late 1800s. Her research explored the Gold Rush Trail and railway routes built by Chinese labourers which resulted in the settlement of towns along the railway, including Kamloops.

This body of work references sociopolitical narratives about the Chinese diaspora and the hyphenated identity of Chinese Canadians. Wang juxtaposes celebrated histories and landmarks in BC with the indelible marks left on the landscape by the labour of Chinese settlers, visualizing a continuous narrative of movement and migration between the past, present and future, and illustrating the enduring connection between urban and rural development. As sites inextricably linked to colonialism, Wang features the ocean and the sky as key modes of transit for immigrants and exposes the patterns found in the histories of labour, movement and settling.

Wang's narrative uncovers economic relationships between waterways, railways, resources and development. Historical references are woven together with everyday stories and contemporary modes of working, including the precarious ups and downs of the artist's profession. The works reimagine traditional patterns used in drapery and

wallpaper including *toile de Jouy* (an ornate French textile pattern featuring images of rural life) and *Chinoiserie* (a European artistic interpretation of Asian decorative arts). Each frame of the animated work is a pastiche of *Chinoiserie* by Jean-Baptiste Pillement, whose Rococo artwork of the 1700s was filled with fantastical flora and creatures influenced by then popularized “Orientalist” narratives and aesthetics within Europe. In this body of work, Wang reclaims this aesthetic as a way of reframing Chinese diasporic identity in Canada.

## Holly Ward

*Monument to the Vanquished Peasants*,  
2016/2024

nylon banner, acrylic paint, steel pole, iron and  
paper posters  
Courtesy of the artist

Holly Ward is an artist working between Toronto and Heffley Creek, BC. With a long-standing research interest in utopian thinking, her interdisciplinary practice explores different conceptions of utopia and their relationships to issues of community, architecture and land-use.

Her installation *Monument to the Vanquished Peasants* takes its title from a 1525 proposal for a “victory monument” by the German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer. During the Feudal period in present-day Europe, peasant workers had access to commons – communal lands which provided basic subsistence through hunting, fishing and farming. Over time, peasants became increasingly alienated from these communal lands through a process of privatization known as the enclosure period. In response to these enclosures, bloody peasant revolts sprung up across Europe.



Holly Ward, *Monument to Vanquished Peasants*, 2016/2024.  
Photo: Teresa Donck-Matlock

In memory of a sixteenth century German peasant revolt, Dürer's *Monument* and its accompanying treatise detail the elements of such a monument. He includes the tools and bounty of pastoral labour, such as livestock, fruits and vegetables, and crowns it with the figure of a peasant, pierced through the back by a sword.

Scholars have debated whether Dürer's proposal celebrates victory over a peasant rabble or honours their struggle for justice. Ward's version is decidedly less ambiguous. Originally created in 2016 as a site-specific installation for an empty lot at

379 East Broadway in Vancouver, Ward's *Monument* draws a clear parallel to today's global neoliberal context. The current version of this work features a hand-painted flag, surrounded by cast bronze produce and a distributable version of Dürer's proposal installed inside the gallery. Both versions point back in time to a moment of collective resistance. The challenges of these peasants – land privatization and use, fair wages and the ability to develop and maintain communities – are still critical today, and inform the core of Ward's project.

### Tania Willard

*Carrying Memories of the Land*, 2022  
digital prints on vinyl  
Courtesy of the artist

As a mixed Secwépemc and settler artist, Tania Willard's work is embedded in land-based art practices that activate a connection to land, culture and family. Her practice centres art as an Indigenous resurgent act through collaborative projects such as BUSH Gallery in Secwépemc territory and through support of language revitalization in Secwépemc communities.

*Carrying Memories of the Land* draws on two different moments in Secwepemcúlecw, the Interior of British Columbia. The first set of images captures Willard's learning of resurgent practices – hide tanning and basketry. The second landscape is from Willard's home on Neskonlith Indian Reserve in Secwépemc territory. It depicts the skies from the intense and devastating wildfires in the area in 2023. The sets of images are combined to think about change affecting the land and communities in Secwepemcúlecw, and how this is connected to global situations.

For these photographs Willard uses a red filter, historically used in black and white photography to heighten contrast. In her imagery, the red that saturates each image acts as an intervention into the historic use of black and white photography by colonizers to document Indigenous land. The banners are overlaid with a poem that expresses gratitude for the land and honours the Secwépemc practice of offering back to the land before working with its materials, in this case by sharing a reflection on the memories carried by the land and the medicine it has to offer. Willard uses her signature flagging tape as fringe on the banners to reference the marking of territory and the development of land, acknowledging how this has impacted the dispossession of Indigenous lands.



Tania Willard, *Carrying Memories of the Land*, 2022.  
Photo: Teresa Donck-Matlock



Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun Lets'lo:tsetlun, *You Are on Indian Land*, 2024

**Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun  
Lets'lo:tsetlun**

*You Are on Indian Land*, 2024  
acrylic on canvas  
Private collection

*Apartheid Canada*, 2024  
acrylic on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and Macaulay and Co.

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun's work is a retort to colonialism, government and corporations. As a history painter for his generation, he documents and promotes change in contemporary Indigenous history using text, Coast Salish cosmology, Northwest Coast formal design elements and the western landscape tradition to explore political, environmental and cultural

issues as well as his own personal and socio-political experiences.

In his text paintings, which he calls literature paintings, Yuxweluptun makes stark statements akin to advertising billboards or warnings. These works use a monochrome ground and a conceptual approach to call viewers to immediately address the land they are on, and by extension the role they play within a space, a place, a nation. *You Are on Indian Land* and *Apartheid Canada* ask us to confront a history of Indigenous land dispossession and ongoing capital accumulation in the form of real estate.

In a 1995 artist statement for the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Yuxweluptun states, "Land claims have always concerned me: fishing rights, hunting rights, water rights, inherent rights. My home, my native land. Land is power, power is land. This is what I try to paint." Aboriginal land and title and the apartheid situation of the Government of Canada's approach to First Nations and Indigenous people remain at the forefront of his work.

*Town + Country: Narratives of Property and Capital* is co-organized by the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery and the Kamloops Art Gallery, curated by Caitlin Jones, Charo Neville and Melanie O'Brian and made possible with the generous support of the Audain Foundation, Jane Irwin and Ross Hill, the Hamber Foundation, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council, the City of Kamloops and the Belkin Curator's Forum members. *Town + Country: Narratives of Property and Capital* is part of the 2025 Capture Photography Festival Selected Exhibition Program and was presented at the Kamloops Art Gallery from July 20 to September 21, 2024.

## Programs and Events

For details, visit [belkin.ubc.ca](http://belkin.ubc.ca).

To arrange an exhibition tour for groups and classes, email [belkin.tours@ubc.ca](mailto:belkin.tours@ubc.ca)

### Welcome and Artist talks with Karin Jones and Holly Ward

Thursday, January 9 from 5 to 6 pm

### Opening reception

Thursday, January 9 from 6 to 8 pm

### Workshop on housing at UBC with Architects Against Housing Alienation

Thursday, January 30 from 12:30 to 2 pm

### Kids Take Over UBC

Sunday, February 16 from 10 am to 4 pm

### Film Screening with works by Maggie Groat, Joan Jonas, Tiziana La Melia and Krista Belle Stewart at The Cinematheque, co-hosted with Or Gallery

Thursday, March 27 at 6:30 pm

### Concert with UBC Contemporary Players

Wednesday, April 2 at 2 pm

### Symposium: *Keywords - Labour and Land* at the Musqueam Cultural Centre

Friday, April 4 at 2 pm

### Walking Tour: *Edge Conditions - Narratives of Property* with Annabel Vaughan

Saturday, April 12 at 2 pm, self-guided tour available at [belkin.ubc.ca](http://belkin.ubc.ca)

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MORRIS AND HELEN BELKIN ART GALLERY  
[belkin.ubc.ca](http://belkin.ubc.ca)

1825 Main Mall | Vancouver BC V6T 1Z2  
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Open 10–5 Tue–Fri | 12–5 Sat–Sun  
Closed Mondays and Holidays | 604 822 2759