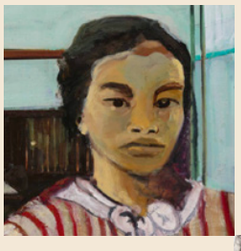
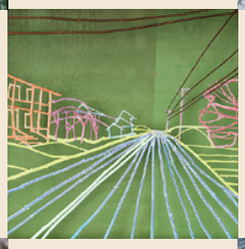
ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

NOVEMBER 5, 2021

# BEST IN SHOW
## MUST-SEE EXHIBITIONS OF THE SEASON

*Immerse yourself in the best of Canadian and international art through these stellar exhibitions currently on view across the country.*





The definition of an art exhibition is "a public display of works"—but in truth art shows are far more than this. They are opportunities to explore what connects us to each other and our communities, to reflect on current events, to honour creativity and the spirit of invention, and, above all, to tell stories and invite people to look beyond the ordinary and imagine new worlds. At last, in-person exhibitions have returned across the country and the thrill of stepping inside gallery spaces could not be greater. This week it is our delight to share some of this fall's most engaging exhibitions with you. We share your excitement as you step inside them.

**Sara Angel**
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

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# RELATIONS: DIASPORA AND PAINTING

*at the Esker Foundation, Calgary*
*July 24 to November 27, 2021*

Maia Cruz Palileo, *Afterward*, 2019, Young-Abraham Collection.

The answer to the question, "But where are you *really* from?" is a story the twenty-seven artists in *RELATIONS: Diaspora and Painting* at the Esker Foundation in Calgary have been telling all their lives. While they work in Canada, the United States, and Britain, they trace their roots from Haiti, Japan, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and many places in between. In this exhibition, curator Cheryl Sim features artists who all work with paint—yet all in a manner that consciously subverts the medium's Eurocentric history. Together, they form a lively chorus of voices tackling the subjects of migration and belonging, without ever letting the conversation settle in one fixed place.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# RIOPELLE: THE CALL OF NORTHERN LANDSCAPES AND INDIGENOUS CULTURES

*at the Audain Art Museum, Whistler*
*October 23, 2021 to February 21, 2022*

Jean Paul Riopelle, *L'esprit de la ficelle* (triptych), 1971, private collection.
© Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle / SOCAN (2021).

A giant of modernism, Jean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002) was the most internationally acclaimed and the most commercially successful of all Canadian mid-twentieth century painters. In 2017 his *Vent du nord*, 1952–53, sold for more than $7.4 million, setting a world record. With *Riopelle: The Call of Northern Landscapes and Indigenous Cultures*, fresh scholarship provides an eye-opening take on vital sources of inspiration for the iconic artist including the rugged northern terrain of his home province, Quebec, and the work of Indigenous artists from British Columbia, Alaska, Quebec, and Nunavut. This exhibition, developed by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and now on view at the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, positions Riopelle in a fascinating new context, with many of his major paintings and sculptures from the 1950s onwards placed alongside works from some of the Indigenous artists he held in such reverence.

Learn more about the exhibition

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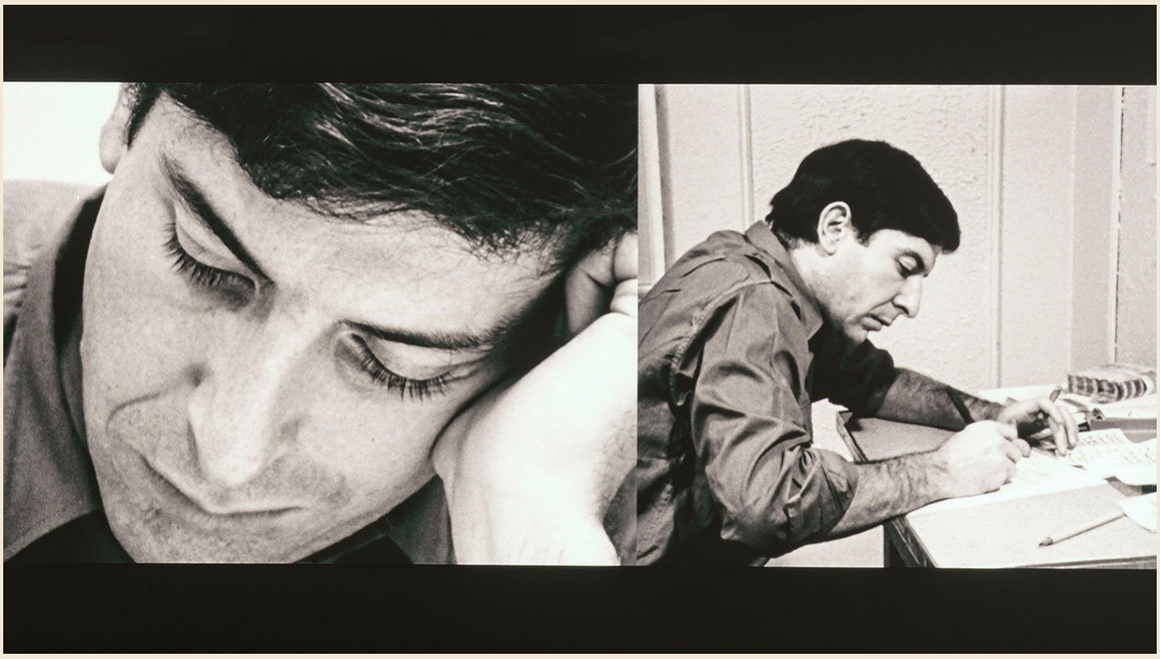
# LEONARD COHEN: A CRACK IN EVERYTHING

*at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal*
*February 10, 2021 to February 12, 2024*



Kara Blake, *The Offerings*, 2007, Courtesy the artist. Archival material courtesy of the National Film Board.

Bob Dylan revered him, Kurt Cobain quoted him, and more than 300 musicians have created versions of his song “Hallelujah.” Montreal-born icon Leonard Cohen (1934–2016) explored sexuality, loss, death, and religion with more poignance than any other poet, novelist, and musician of his generation. In homage to his influence, in 2017–18, the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal (MACM) curated the landmark exhibition *Leonard Cohen: A Crack in Everything*, in which artists from around the world including Candice Breitz, Janet Cardiff, George Bures Miller, and Tacita Dean created works inspired by Cohen. For those who loved the much-celebrated show, which toured internationally, and for those who missed it, the MACM has now digitized the tour-de-force exhibition—so that it might be immortalized like its namesake.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# JAN WADE: SOUL POWER

*at the Vancouver Art Gallery*
*July 10, 2021 to March 13, 2022*

Installation view of *Jan Wade: Soul Power*, exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, July 10, 2021 to March 13, 2022, showing *Epiphany*, 1990–2021. Photo credit: Jessica Jacobson, Vancouver Art Gallery.

Altars and crucifixes adorned with antique buttons, Scrabble tiles, shell fragments, and other found objects hold space alongside vibrant and intricately embroidered textiles in *Jan Wade: Soul Power*, which sees the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) turned into a temple. At once a site of jubilation and grief, this poignant survey exhibition of Jan Wade (b.1952), the first Black female artist to have a solo show at the VAG in its ninety-year history, also pays tribute to its creator's ancestors and contemporaries with incisive works that confront societal racism and celebrate resilience. An artist-curated playlist accompanying the exhibition kicks off with funk singer James Brown's electrifying "Soul Power," which lends the exhibition its name.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# TOM THOMSON? THE ART OF AUTHENTICATION

*at the Art Gallery of Hamilton*
*September 25, 2021 to January 2, 2022*

Thomas John Thomson, *Autumn Woods*, 1916, Agnes Etherington Art Centre.

Don your detective cap and learn the secrets of the sleuths who determine whether works of art are fakes or the genuine article in *Tom Thomson? The Art of Authentication* at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. This highly innovative curatorial presentation incorporates interviews, scientific findings, sketches, and canvases related to works by the iconic Canadian landscape painter Tom Thomson (1877–1917). Viewers are invited to look beneath an artwork's surface to consider the world of art crime, forgery, and such critical questions as: *How are paintings authenticated? What materials are sought out in attributing a work of art to a historical figure?* A trip to this exhibition will give you a deeper level of art appreciation and understanding of the extensive problem-solving that museum professionals undertake in tracing authenticity.

Learn more about the exhibition

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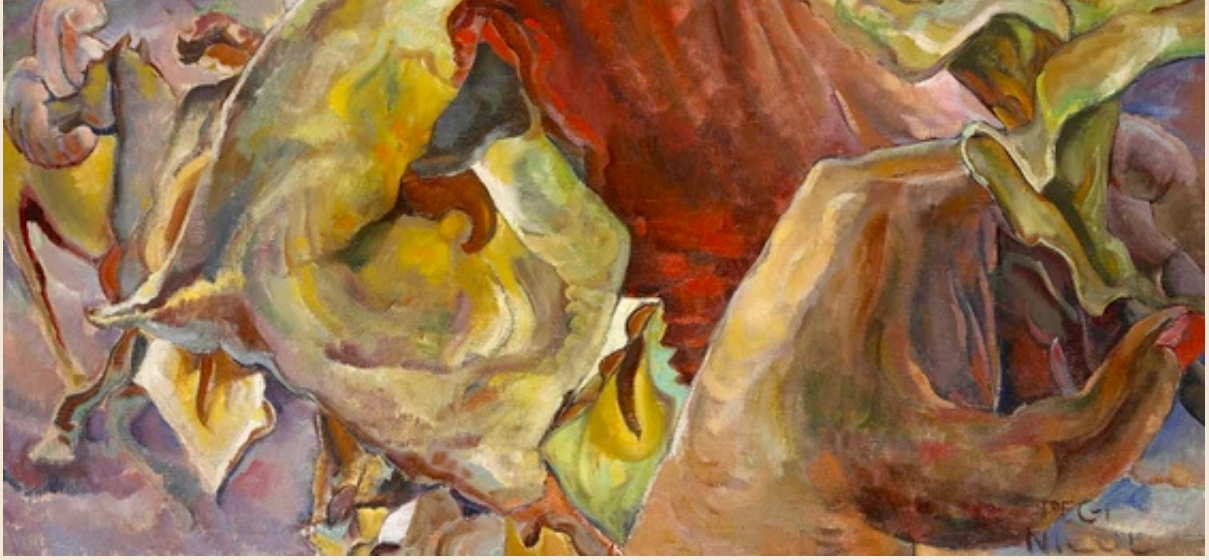
# UNINVITED: CANADIAN WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE MODERN MOMENT

*at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg*
*September 10, 2021 to January 16, 2022*



Pegi Nicol MacLeod, *A Descent of Lilies*, 1935, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

How differently might we envision Canada if women had not been excluded from its major art historical collectives? In *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Movement*, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection confronts this question head on. The McMichael exists because of the Group of Seven, whose unpopulated landscapes of the Canadian wilderness have long dominated how Canada imagines itself. Last year marked the group's centenary celebration, and the gallery is taking the opportunity to centralize the dynamic contributions of the era's women artists. Some two hundred works of art present another history of Canadian modernism, as seen through the eyes of the exceptionally talented women finally getting their due.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# 2021 SOBEY ART AWARD EXHIBITION

*at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa*
*October 8, 2021 to February 20, 2022*

Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, *Nannuppugut!*, 2021, Collection of the artist.

Who are Canada's most talented emerging visual artists? The prestigious Sobey Art Award addresses this question as Canada's largest art prize, granting its winner a life-changing $100,000. To bring national and international attention to the prize finalists, this November, an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada presents the work of the shortlist: Lorna Bauer (b.1980), representing Quebec; Rémi Belliveau, representing the Atlantic provinces; Gabi Dao (b.1991), representing the West Coast and Yukon; Rajni Perera (b.1985), representing Ontario; and Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory (b.1979), representing the Prairies and the North. Williamson Bathory, whose work is pictured here, states: "I make art to tackle colonisation, sexuality, fear, intergenerational strength, food, boundaries, and love."

Learn more about the exhibition

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# NAADOHBII: TO DRAW WATER

*at the Winnipeg Art Gallery*
*August 14, 2021 to February 2022*

Nici Cumpston, *Oh my Murray Darling*, 2019, Courtesy of the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

The Western worldview positions the Pacific Ocean as an expanse that acts as a boundary between continents. The exhibition *Naadohbii: To Draw Water* points out that it is in fact an archipelago of interconnected bodies of land linking Turtle Island (North America), Australia, and Aotearoa (New Zealand). Artists from these regions—including Christi Belcourt (b.1966) and Isaac Murdoch, Rebecca Belmore (b.1960), Jessie Oonark (1906-1985), and Nici Cumpston (b.1963), whose contribution is pictured here—come together in this Winnipeg Art Gallery show to raise thoughtful connections about the political, environmental, and cultural significance of water, and the power of art to speak and enact change.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# MATTHEW WONG: BLUE VIEW

*at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*
*August 13, 2021 to April 18, 2022*

Matthew Wong, *A Dream*, 2019, Courtesy of Karma, New York.

The depths of blue, nature's rarest and most-prized colour, have been plumbed by artists, authors, and philosophers throughout history, from Goethe to Maggie Nelson. The posthumous exhibition *Matthew Wong: Blue View* at the Art Gallery of Ontario assembles a brilliant body of blue paintings left behind by Toronto-born and Edmonton-based Chinese Canadian artist Matthew Wong (1984–2019), who died by suicide. The forty paintings from his Blue Series, created between 2017 and 2019, draw from Chinese calligraphy and scroll painting as well as the modernist works of Fauvist and Post-Impressionist artists. Wong's images are thoughtful and deeply evocative, and his landscapes, interiors, and still lifes hint at an otherworldly reality that coexists with the everyday.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# ZACHARI LOGAN: GHOST MEADOWS

*at the Remai Modern, Saskatoon*

*August 21, 2021 to January 9, 2022*

Zachari Logan, *Rococo Sky (Guardai in alto e vidi le sue Spalle)* (detail), 2021,
Courtesy of the artist.

Spectral tendrils of flowers and shrubs float against hazy, pastel-hued backgrounds in *Zachari Logan: Ghost Meadows* at the Remai Modern, the first major solo exhibition for this artist in his hometown of Saskatoon. Logan (b.1980) is known for work that centralizes the organic wonders of the natural world, presenting images that combine exquisite foliage with bold and harmonious colour schemes, as in *Rococo Sky (Guardai in alto e vidi le sue Spalle)*, 2021. Inspired by notions of masculinity, identity, memory, and place, Logan's enchanting creations take a deep dive into the beauty and wildness of nature.

Learn more about the exhibition

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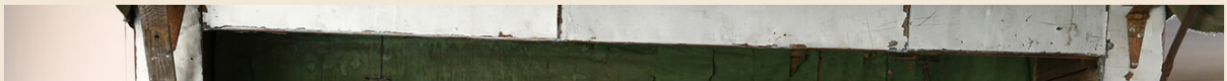
# BGL: TWO THUMBS UP ARTS AND CRAFTS

*at the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown*
*July 17, 2021 to December 5, 2021*



A work by BGL created in 2020, Courtesy of the artists and the Confederation Centre Art Gallery.

Equal parts playful and critical in their approach, Quebec City artist collective BGL—Jasmin Bilodeau (b.1973), Sébastien Giguère (b.1972), and Nicolas Laverdière (b.1972)—present their final show before the group's members go their separate ways after making art together for twenty-five years. The exhibition *Two Thumbs Up Arts and Crafts* at Charlottetown's Confederation Centre Art Gallery reprises BGL's project *Canadassimo*, which was first staged at the Venice Biennale, the world's most prestigious contemporary art event. Also part of the show is a new body of work that explores themes of Canadian cultural identity, the act of creation, and the value of art.

Learn more about the exhibition

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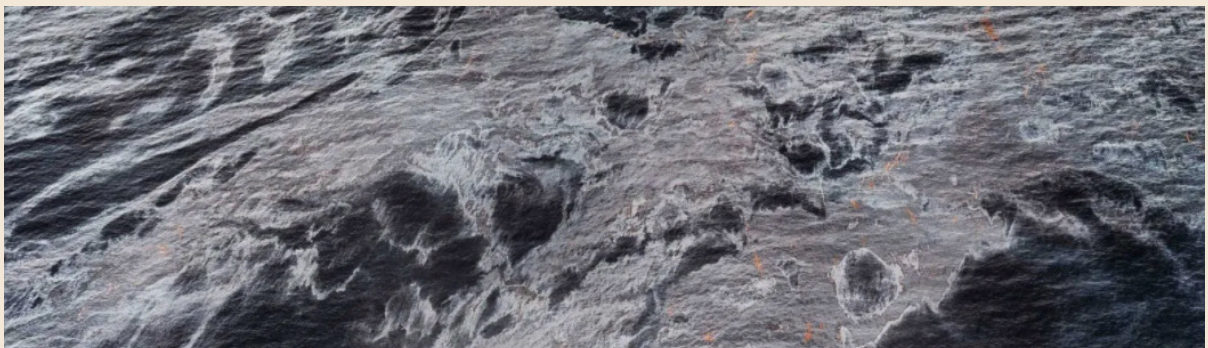
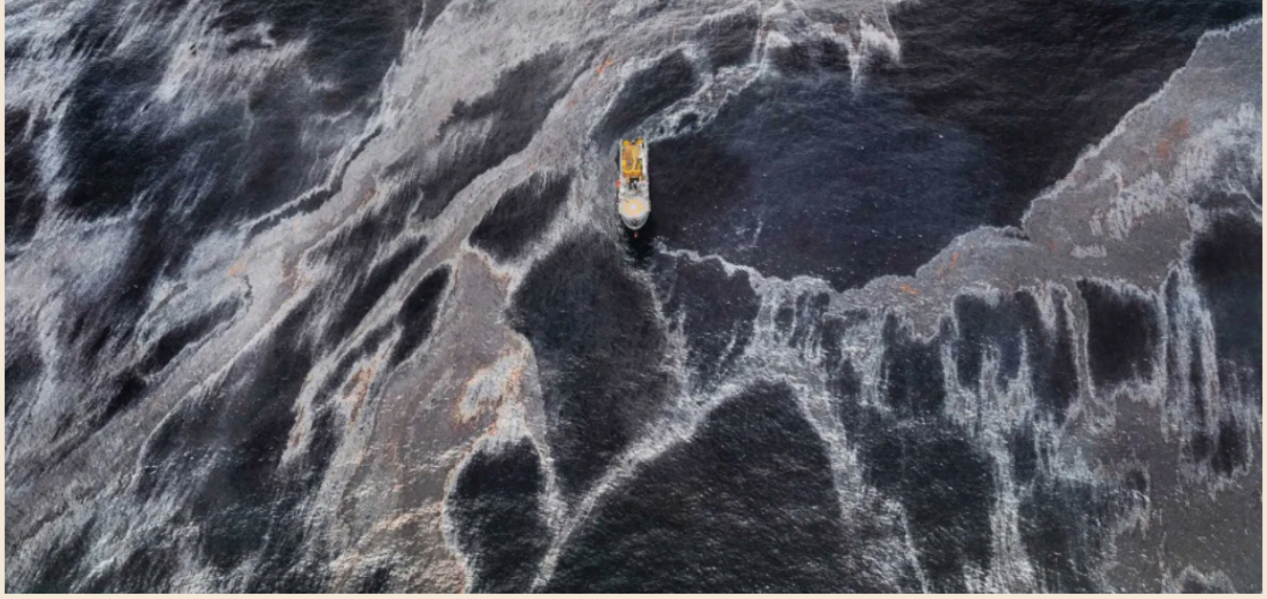
# ECOLOGIES: A SONG FOR OUR PLANET

*at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts*
*Until February 27, 2022*





Edward Burtynsky, *Oil Spill #1, REM Forza, Gulf of Mexico, May 11, 2010*, 2010, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

The climate crisis is at front of mind in *Ecologies: A Song for Our Planet* at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, which brings together ninety works to compose a sublime but startling picture of the complex relationship we have with our Earth. New acquisitions and rarely seen photographs, paintings, sculptures, videos, and installations by a host of important artists including Edward Burtynsky (b.1955), Kim Dorland (b.1974), Isabelle Hayeur (b.1969), Charles Stankievech (b.1978), Adrian Stimson (b.1964), and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (b.1957) are presented together in this expansive and moving exhibition, which takes a frank and awe-inspiring look at the alarming consequences of human activity on natural systems.

Learn more about the exhibition

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# WHAT THE OCEAN REMEMBERS

*at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax*
*June 21 to December 21, 2021*

Meagan Musseau, *Ta'sik Amujpa Iknmaulek (how much do we have to give you)*, May 2021, land-based performance on Mi'kmaq and Beothuk Territory in St. George's, Ktaqmkuk.

If the oceans could speak, what would they tell us? Undoubtedly that we need to take better care of the environment we rely on for survival. At the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, six artists do their best to voice ecological concerns in the virtual exhibition *What the Ocean Remembers*. Works by Jordan Bennett (b.1986), Kym Greeley (b.1973), Thaddeus Holownia (b.1949), Meagan Musseau (b.1990) with Jenelle Duval (b.1984), Jerry Ropson, and Camille Turner (b.1960) explore themes of memory, human action, and the natural world. With *Ta'sik Amujpa Iknmaulek (how much do we have to give you)*, 2021 (pictured above), L'nu artist Meagan Musseau together with Jenelle Duval facilitated a land-based performance based on Mi'kmaq and Beothuk Territory in St. George's, Ktaqmkuk.

Learn more about the exhibition

# WANDERING: A ROHINGYA STORY

*at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Quebec City*
*May 14, 2021 to February 20, 2022*

Renaud Philippe, *Rohingya refugees at the Kutupalong camp in southeastern Bangladesh*, 2018, © Renaud Philippe.

*Wandering: A Rohingya Story* presents the astonishing story of the exodus of the Rohingya people, who have been persecuted for decades in Myanmar as a Muslim minority people. Quebec-born documentary photographer Renaud Philippe (b.1984) produced powerful images of the communities he encountered, like this picture of children enjoying a game of football amidst monsoon rains in Cox's Bazar, taken in October of 2018. Philippe eventually teamed up with filmmakers Olivier Higgins and Mélanie Carrier to visit the Kutupalong camp in Bangladesh and create the work *Wandering*, which consists of media from photographs and film to soundscapes and testimonies, exploring one of the largest refugee crises in recent history. The work is on view at the Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec in Quebec City until February 20, 2022.

Learn more about the exhibition

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**PAST NEWSLETTERS**

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**Image Credits:** **[1]** Maia Cruz Palileo, *Afterward*, 2019, oil on panel, 60.96 x 76.2 cm. Young-Abraham Collection. **[2]** Jean Paul Riopelle, *L'esprit de la ficelle* (triptych), 1971, acrylic on lithograph mounted on canvas, 160 x 360 cm. Private collection. © Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle / SOCAN (2021). Photo archives catalogue raisonné Jean Paul Riopelle. **[3]** Kara Blake, *The Offerings*, 2007, Five-channel video installation, black-and-white and color with sound, 35 min. Courtesy the artist. Archival material courtesy of the National Film Board. Photo: © Guy L'Heureux. **[4]** Installation view of *Jan Wade: Soul Power*, exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, July 10, 2021 to March 13, 2022, showing *Epiphany*, 1990–2021. Photo credit: Jessica Jacobson, Vancouver Art Gallery. **[5]** Thomas John Thomson, *Autumn Woods*, 1916, oil on wood panel. Collection of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. **[6]** Pegi Nicol MacLeod, *A Descent of Lilies*, 1935, oil on canvas, 122 x 91.6 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1993 (37056). Courtesy of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. **[7]** Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, *Nannuppugut!*, 2021, polar bear skin, wooden frame, elasticated rope and projected video, collection of the artist. © Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory. Photo: NGC. **[8]** Nici Cumpston, *Oh my Murray Darling*, 2019, archival pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 75.0 x 175.0 cm. Courtesy of the Winnipeg Art Gallery. **[9]** Matthew Wong, *A Dream*, 2019. Oil on canvas, 177.8 x 203.2 cm. © 2019 Matthew Wong Foundation. Courtesy of Karma, New York. **[10]** Zachari Logan, *Rococo Sky (Guardai in alto e vidi le sue Spalle)* (detail), 2021, pastel, graphite, watercolour and coloured pencil on paper, 127 x 1372 cm. Courtesy of the artist. **[11]** A work by BGL created in 2020. Courtesy of the artists and the Confederation Centre Art Gallery. **[12]** Edward Burtynsky, *Oil Spill #1, REM Forza, Gulf of Mexico, May 11, 2010*, 2010, chromogenic print, 1/6, 120.6 x 161.3 cm. Collection of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, gift of Roy Lacaud Heenan, O.C. **[13]** Meagan Musseau, *Ta'sik Amujpa Iknmaulek (how much do we have to give you)*, May 2021, land-based performance on Mi'kmaq and Beothuk Territory in St. George's, Ktaqmkuk, 7 min. 29 sec. Videography by Tom Cochrane. Production Mazook Studio. **[14]** Renaud Philippe, *Rohingya refugees at the Kutupalong camp in southeastern Bangladesh*, 2018. © Renaud Philippe.