ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

JUNE 10, 2022

CANADIAN SHOWSTOPPERS SUMMER EXHIBITIONS TO SEE

Take a break from the heat at museums across the country and visit these not-to-be-missed shows of Canadian art.

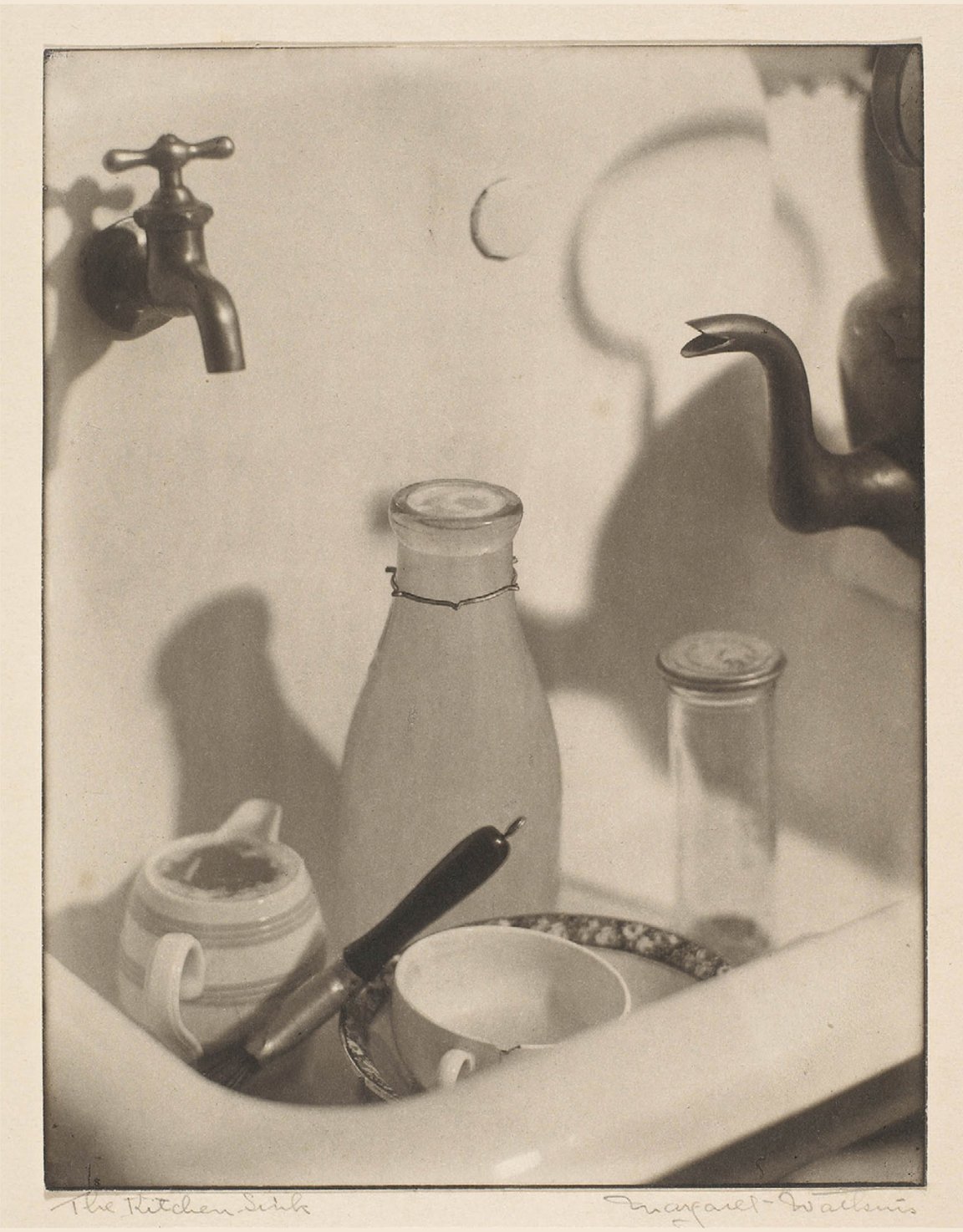
Like the natural world, the art ecosystem is divided into seasons. Since the late eighteenth century, when England's Royal Academy first held what is now known as the Summer Exhibition, the months of June, July, and August have been a particularly excellent time for seeing art. As the days grow longer and are marked by time off, museums around the world feature shows to connect art and audiences. This country is no exception, so today we are sharing with you some of our favourite exhibitions. As part of your summer plans we recommend visits to the destinations listed below, including the Audain Art Museum's presentation of Dempsey Bob, the Art Gallery of Hamilton's display of pictures by the pioneering photographer Margaret Watkins, and the Montreal Museum of Fine

Arts show where artist Stanley Février assumes the role of Director and Chief Curator. These suggestions and the others that follow offer once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to see the work of both eminent and emerging artists whose talents will add insight, inspiration, and delight to your summer. *Enjoy!*

Sara Angel
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

MARGARET WATKINS: BLACK LIGHT

at the Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario
On now through to August 14, 2022



Margaret Watkins, *The Kitchen Sink*, 1919, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Hamilton, Ontario-born Margaret Watkins (1884–1969) was a pioneering genius of early twentieth-century photography who reached the height of her career as vice-president of Manhattan's Pictorial Photographers of America and as a prominent figure in both the artistic and commercial realms of the discipline. With the camera in her hands, dirty dishes piled up in the sink became a complex still life animated by the curving contours of objects and the interplay of light and shadow. A name who should be much better known, the artist's exquisite images are showcased in *Margaret Watkins: Black Light* at the Art Gallery of Hamilton—the sole Canadian venue for the international touring exhibition of this captivating talent. Featuring more than 100 works, this major show offers a comprehensive look at Watkins's art, including her early Pictorialist pictures, celebrated domestic still lifes, and later abstract compositions.

Learn more

KWAATA-NIHTAAWAKIHK – A HARD BIRTH

at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba
On now through to September 3, 2022

Louis Riel (centre) with his councillors, 1870, photographer unknown, University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, Group of Eight Red River Settlement Carte de Visites Collection.

This archival image of Louis Riel, the Métis political leader and founder of Manitoba, sits at the heart of *Kwaata-nihtaawakihk – A Hard Birth*, one of the largest exhibitions of Métis art to ever be held. Revisiting the contentious creation of Manitoba 152 years ago and focusing on the Métis Nation's role in the events of 1869–70, the show features historical and contemporary art alongside archival materials, such as this photo of Riel with his councillors. Outstanding examples of beadwork, painting, photography, film, textiles, sculpture, and performance art by KC Adams (b.1971), Rosalie Favell (b.1958), Lori Blondeau (b.1964), Theo Sims and other creators—and four commissioned works including Jennine Krauchi's new large-scale beadwork piece—offer rich reflections on the founding of Manitoba and its significance today from Métis, Anishinaabek, Cree, and European perspectives.

Learn more

WOLVES: THE ART OF DEMPSEY BOB

at the Audain Art Museum, British Columbia
On now through to August 14, 2022

Dempsey Bob, *Wolf Chief's Hat*, c.1993, Collection of Eric Savics.

The first-ever retrospective of the distinguished Tahltan-Tlingit master carver Dempsey Bob (b.1948) presents more than one hundred of his works, including his masterpiece *Wolf Chief's Hat*, c.1993, which pays tribute to the artist's lineage as a member of the Wolf Clan. A celebrated talent, Bob was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2013 for his work as a carver, teaching the next generation of carvers, and his dedication to Tahltan-Tlingit cultural preservation. Explaining why the exhibition is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see his masks, headdresses, wall sculptures, jewellery, regalia, and prints, Bob stated that a vast amount of his art is in "private collections and museums.... There's never going to be 100 pieces like that of my work in one place again." Following its presentation at the Audain Art Museum, the retrospective will travel to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and Kelowna Art Gallery.

Learn more

RADICAL STITCH

at the MacKenzie Art Gallery, Saskatchewan
On now through to August 28, 2022

Dana Claxton, *Headdress - Jeneen*, 2018, Courtesy of Dana Claxton.

Kenneth Williams Jr., *We continue her beautiful legacy*, 2019, New York State Museum, Albany.

Radical Stitch at the MacKenzie Art Gallery addresses the importance of meticulously embroidered Indigenous beadwork, an artistic tradition that predates European contact. The largest-ever exhibition dedicated to this subject in North America, this show addresses how the cultural practice of making beads—of stone, shell, bone, and glass—to create jewellery and embroider clothing spans back centuries, while also celebrating the innovative beading of contemporary Indigenous artists. The tradition's survival speaks to a legacy of artistic excellence and originality, as well as resistance and resilience in the face of colonial control. With forty-eight artists showing objects that range from the customary to the contemporary—including a beaded Spongebob Squarepants—*Radical Stitch* recognizes how artists have stayed connected to their roots through learning the skill, and how a new generation has pushed the art form in exciting new creative, political, and aesthetic directions.

Learn more

SHANNON BOOL: THE SHAPE OF OBUS

at the Confederation Centre of the Arts, Prince Edward Island
On now through to September 18, 2022

Shannon Bool, *The Weather*, 2018, Courtesy of Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, and Gallery Kadel Willborn, Düsseldorf.

When you think of Le Corbusier, the revered early twentieth-century Swiss-French architect and pioneer of modern architecture, it's hardly the erotic that comes to mind. Corbu, as he's nicknamed, was all about clean lines, white walls, and raw concrete. But in the eyes of Shannon Bool (b.1972), a finalist for this year's Scotiabank Photography Award, the influential architect's drawings of female nudes and interior spaces form the foundation of a mesmerizing body of work, *The Shape of Obus*, now on display at the Confederation Centre of the Arts. The tapestries, silk paintings, collages, sculptures, and photograms on view—which also reference projects by renowned architect Mies van der Rohe, whose Farnsworth House (1945–51) is depicted in Bool's *The Weather*, 2018—take the modernist grid and flip it from flat and rigid to soft and sensual. The role of architecture in directing human bodies and behaviour is at the core of Bool's investigations.

Learn more

CURTIS TALWST SANTIAGO: PAY DE DEVIL - BRANG! BRANG! - PAY DE DEVIL

at the Art Gallery of Alberta
On now through to August 29, 2022

Curtis Talwst Santiago, *J'ouvert Glow Up*, 2021, Courtesy of Curtis Talwst Santiago.

Edmonton-born, Trinidadian Canadian artist Curtis Talwst Santiago (b.1979) grew up hearing stories about Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, a joyous street festival of calypso and soca music, costume, and dance, with origins in the traditions of historically enslaved Black people. In this exhibition at the Art Gallery of Alberta dedicated to his own parents—as well as all members of the diaspora who have kept ancestral practices alive through their children—Santiago presents revellers whose bodies are painted and costumed to assume the identity of devil characters called Jab Jabs, terrifying and thrilling all at once. Like the festival it honours, the jubilant works in the show represent "liberation from the constraints of the past."

Learn more

GENERAL IDEA

at the National Gallery of Canada, Ontario
On now through to November 20, 2022

General Idea, *P is for Poodle*, 1983/89, Courtesy of General Idea.

"We were the bad boys of Canadian art and we embraced the identity fully," writes General Idea member AA Bronson (b.1946) in the publication accompanying the group's major retrospective at the National Gallery of Canada. Born out of 1960s counterculture, the Toronto-founded group, which also included Felix Partz (1945–1994) and Jorge Zontal (1944–1994), garnered world renown for their audacious satirical critiques of the art world, celebrity, media, and consumerism, as well as their pioneering works about queer identity and the AIDS pandemic. The largest retrospective dedicated to General Idea to date, the exhibition explores how three brilliant minds working together over the course of their twenty-five-year career exerted an international impact in which they radically reimagined the role of the artist in society. They subversively reworked familiar formats, such as magazines, talk shows, and billboards, in order to prompt critical reflection on salient social issues.

Learn more

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UNINVITED: CANADIAN WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE MODERN MOMENT

at the Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia
June 11, 2022 – January 8, 2023

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? The touring exhibition *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment*, opening tomorrow at the Vancouver Art Gallery and organized by 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 our country imagines itself. The show presents what the famous group overlooked, says the McMichael's Chief Curator, Sarah Milroy: "While the men went out to the woods and looked away, their female counterparts saw the world differently. They depicted cities, people, Indigenous cultures, immigration, and the environmental impacts of resource extraction on the landscape." 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

MUSEUM OF THE ART OF TODAY / DEPARTMENT OF THE INVISIBLE

at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Quebec
June 15 – August 28, 2022

Wilman Gomez Tamayo, *Shroud*, 2019, Courtesy of Wilman Gomez Tamayo.

Maria Ezcurra, *Manditel / Tablecloth-apron*, from the series *Guardarropa del ama de casa perfecta* (The Perfect Housewife's Wardrobe), 2008, Courtesy of Maria Ezcurra.

With *Museum of the Art of Today / Department of the Invisible* (*MAADI*), the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts invited the renowned Quebec conceptual artist Stanley Février (b.1976) to consider what he would do with the institution's space in the role of its Director and Chief Curator—and gave him an invitation to realize his vision. Throughout the MMFA, Février exhibits his own collection of works made by those marginalized from the mainstream, including Colombian-born, Quebec-based Wilman Gomez Tamayo's sculpture *Shroud*, 2019 (left), and Argentinean-Mexican-Canadian artist Maria Ezcurra's (b.1973) series The Perfect Housewife's Wardrobe, 2008 (right). With this exhibition, Février seeks to "improve the balance of power" and "to democratize the way [museums] are governed and decolonize art historical narratives." Interested in exploring institutional critique, identity issues, and violence-based inequality, Février sees *MAADI* as a living, nomadic artwork that will fill in cultural gaps left by omissions and contribute to rectifying social injustices.

Learn more

GATHIE FALK: REVELATIONS

at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Ontario
June 18, 2022 to January 2, 2023

Gathie Falk, *Eight Red Boots*, 1973, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Perfectly timed to coincide with the Art Canada Institute's new online publication *Gathie Falk: Life & Work* by Michelle Jacques, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection presents a survey of one of the country's most esteemed artists. From men's shoes preserved in bookcases to performances featuring chicken eggs, for fifty years Vancouver-based artist Gathie Falk (b.1928) has drawn on her boundless imagination to transform familiar domestic objects into mysterious and alluring artworks brimming with open-ended narratives. *Revelations* explores the career of a singular creator—and winner of the Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts, Gershon Iskowitz Prize, and Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts—whose humble beginnings in rural Manitoba as a child of Mennonites strongly informed the themes of her astonishingly expansive practice. Encompassing painting, ceramics, performance art, and installation, Falk's not-to-be-missed surreal works are at once intensely personal, playful, and poetic.

Learn more

STAN DOUGLAS: REVEALING NARRATIVES

at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
June 18 – November 6, 2022

Stan Douglas, *22 April 1924*, 2021, from *Penn Station's Half Century*, Courtesy of Stan Douglas, Victoria Miro, and David Zwirner.

Marking the Canadian premiere of two series by the internationally acclaimed Vancouver-based artist, *Stan Douglas: Revealing Narratives* explores diverse stories around historically significant tipping points. The most recent of these, *Penn Station's Half Century*, 2020, involves Douglas's (b.1960) examination and recreation of nine events that transpired in New York's busiest transportation facility between 1914 and 1957. More than four hundred actors were called upon to re-stage scenes such as this one from 1924, which shows celebrity thief—or is it working-class hero?—Celia Cooney, the "Bobbed Hair Bandit," arriving sensationally at the station following her arrest. In the second series, *Disco Angola*, 2012, Douglas assumes the persona of a photojournalist documenting both New York City's nascent disco scene and the Angolan Civil War in 1974 and 1975. Across these works and others by the artist currently on view in the Canadian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, Douglas summons the past to help us reckon with the complexities of the present.

Learn more

KEN LUM: DEATH AND FURNITURE

at the Art Gallery of Ontario
Opens June 25, 2022

Ken Lum, *What am I going to do with my kids while I work*, 2021, Courtesy of Royale Projects and Ken Lum.

As part of the 2019 Gershon Iskowitz Prize awarded to Vancouver-born artist Ken Lum (b.1956) for his outstanding contribution to the visual arts, the Art Gallery of Ontario is presenting a survey of works from his forty-year career, including sculptures and text-based photographs exploring the complexities of race, class, labour, and language. Lum's darkly humorous solo exhibition includes his new series Time. And Again, 2021, which sees the artist use his signature image-and-text format to examine intersections of labour and stress, pairing anxious thoughts with portrait photographs to create compositions that resemble bizarre billboards. Sharp and insightful, the show presents a wry challenge to systemic hierarchies of social power differentiated by race, class, and gender.

Learn more

GENERATIONS: THE SOBEY FAMILY AND CANADIAN ART

at The Rooms, Newfoundland
June 25, 2022 – January 22, 2023

Kent Monkman, study for *mistikôsiwak (Wooden Boat People): Resurgence of the People* (final variation), 2019, Collection of the Sobey Art Foundation.

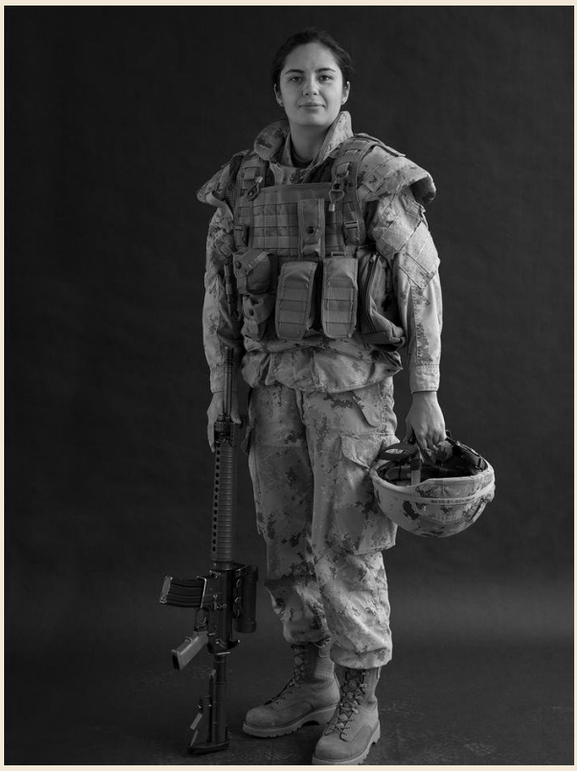
In celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Sobey Art Award, the "pre-eminent prize for emerging Canadian artists of all ages," the exhibition *Generations* affords museumgoers an exceptional opportunity to explore the philanthropic family's private collection of historical and contemporary masterpieces. As founders of and heirs to the supermarket empire bearing their name, the Sobeys have a wide-ranging shared love of and visionary commitment to our country's art. Aptly titled, the touring show, organized by the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, features more than 170 works by nineteenth-century greats like Cornelius Krieghoff (1815–1872), twentieth-century giants such as the Group of Seven, Alex Colville (1920–2013), and Emily Carr (1871–1945), and some of today's leading artists, including Kent Monkman (b.1965), Annie Pootoogook (1969–2016), and Peter Doig (b.1959).

Learn more

JAMES WILSON: SOCIAL STUDIES

at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, New Brunswick
July 29 – November 6, 2022

James Wilson, *Irl Washburn, Gay Rights Activist*, 2012, Courtesy of James Wilson.



James Wilson, *Captain Christy Montoya - RCAF Special Forces,* 2012, Courtesy of James Wilson.

For more than twenty-five years, New Brunswick-based photographer James Wilson has been creating an archive of stunning black and white portraits of people from his province. Chronicling folks from all walks of life, like Irl Washburn (left), a gay rights activist, and Christy Montoya (right), a captain in the Royal Canadian Air Force, his series Social Studies has been described as a "deeply moving and valuable social document that embodies the diverse character of New Brunswickers." The exhibition at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery gathers seventy of these fascinating large format portraits in which individuals present themselves before Wilson's lens in natural light against the same neutral backdrop. These consistencies across the series serve to highlight the uniqueness of each intriguing subject.

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