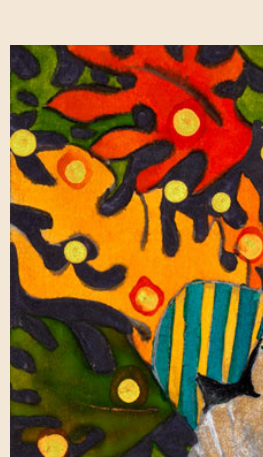


JANUARY 5, 2024

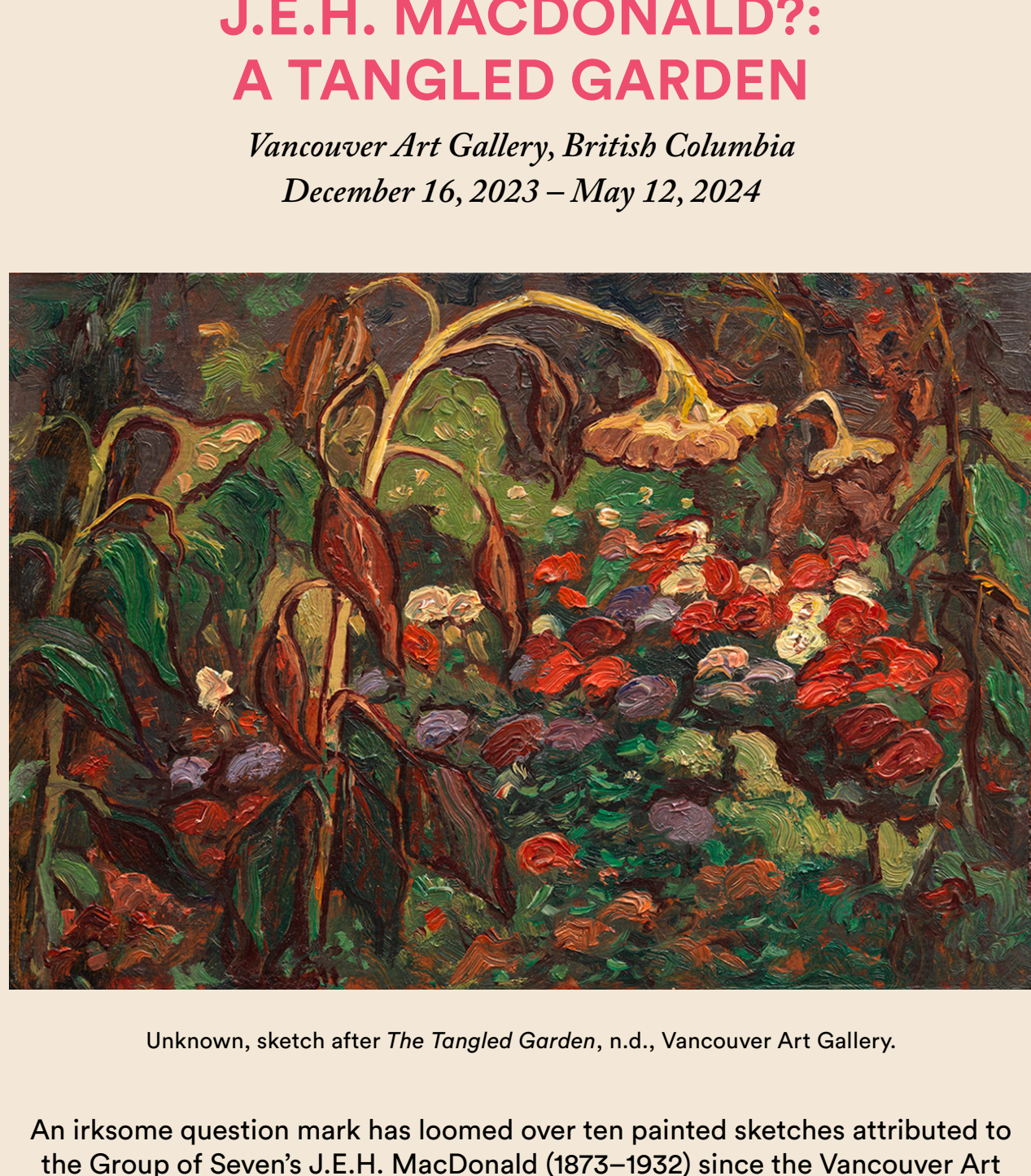
A NEW YEAR IN CANADIAN ART 10 MUST-SEE 2024 EXHIBITIONS

*Early 2024 is brimming with can't-miss exhibitions
showcasing the best of Canadian art.*

Wherever you find yourself in Canada this winter, there is magnificent art to be seen. In British Columbia, celebrate foundational figures in the Op art movement and question what constitutes truth and authenticity. In Alberta, pause with paintings built around fragmented recollections and photographs that harness the majesty of nature. And in Ontario, language is permanently preserved in sculpture and memories are made material in supernatural, moody painting. The province also hosts two major retrospectives of senior women artists, while New Brunswick takes on a third. In Quebec, an exhibition pays tribute to a twentieth-century, Nicolet-born artist who blended tradition and modernity in his rural landscape paintings, and in Nova Scotia a gallery is transformed through farmhouse whimsy. Read on to start planning your 2024 itinerary.

Sara Angel
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

GHOSTS OF CANOE LAKE: NEW WORK BY MARCEL DZAMA

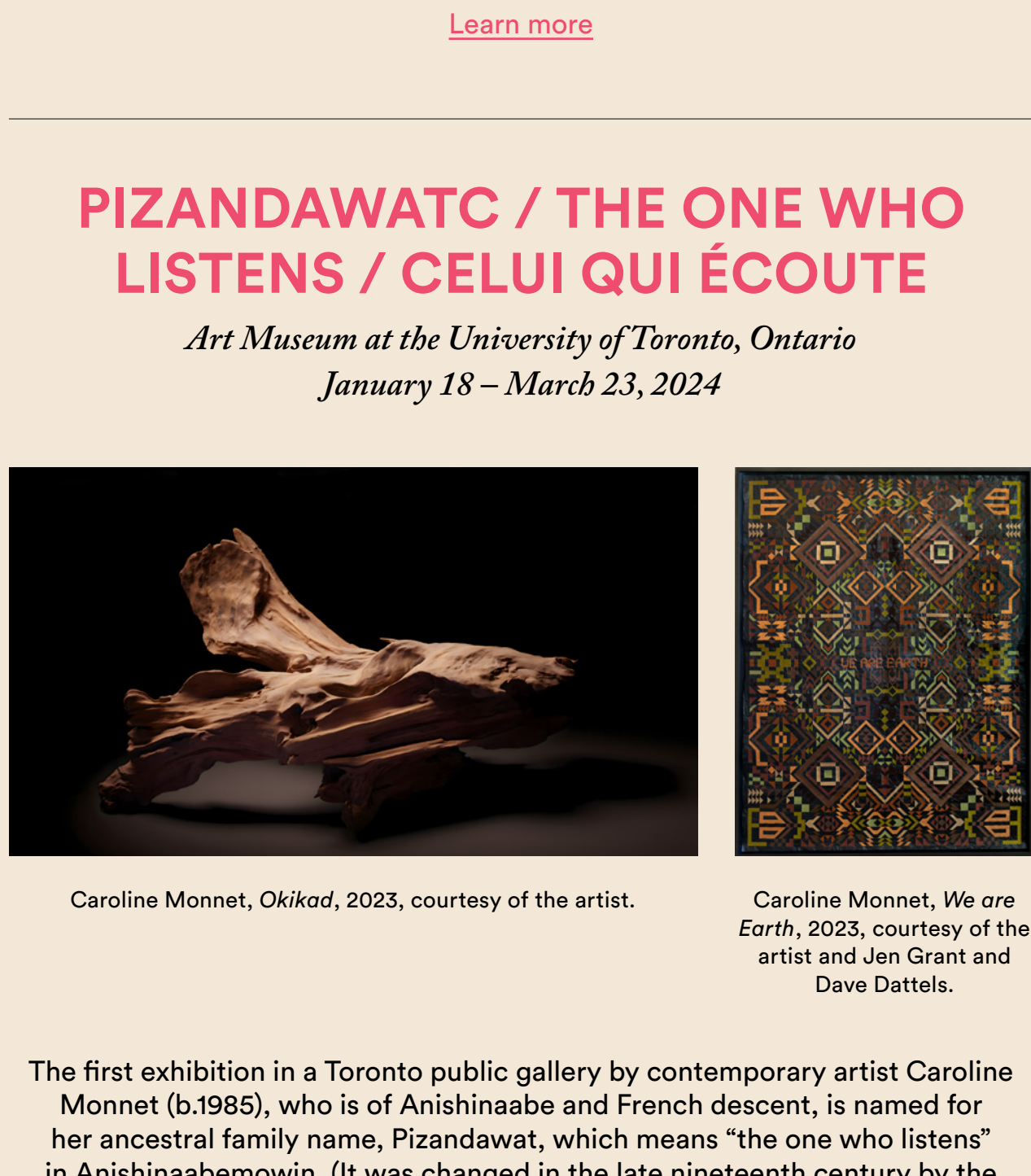
*McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Ontario**December 9, 2023 – June 9, 2024*

Marcel Dzama, *Ghost of Canoe Lake*, 2023, courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner, © Marcel Dzama.

Winnipeg-born artist Marcel Dzama (b.1974) has been working in Brooklyn for more than a decade, and *Ghosts of Canoe Lake* at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario, makes for a hauntingly beautiful homecoming. The suite of surrealist paintings is informed by the Canadian landscape, the climate crisis, and Dzama's childhood growing up on the Prairies. It sits in conversation with an exhibition held concurrently at the McMichael of work by Group of Seven contemporary Tom Thomson (1877–1917), who disappeared mysteriously during a trip on Canoe Lake in Algonquin Park in 1917.

[Learn more](#)

J.E.H. MACDONALD?: A TANGLED GARDEN

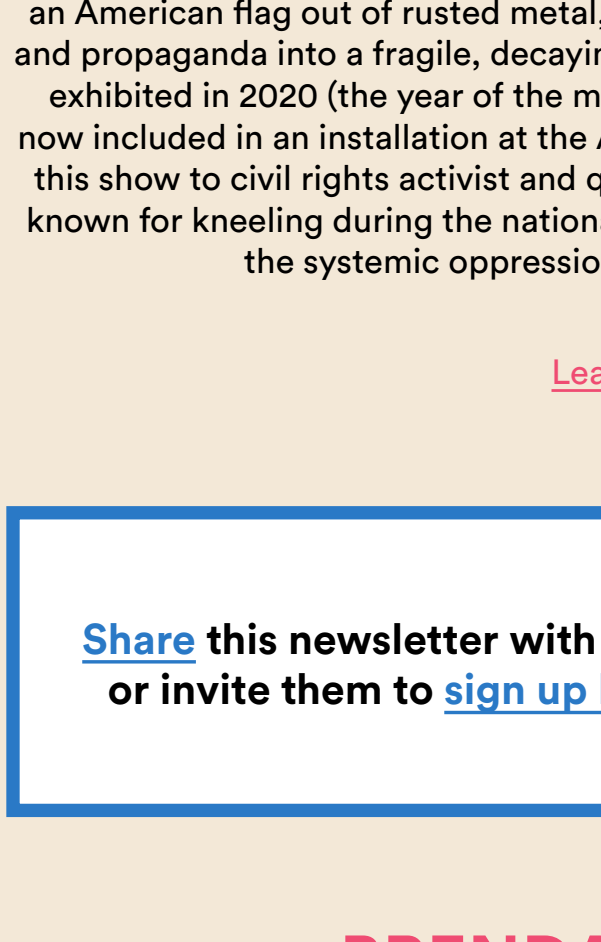
*Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia**December 16, 2023 – May 12, 2024*

Unknown, sketch after *The Tangled Garden*, n.d., Vancouver Art Gallery.

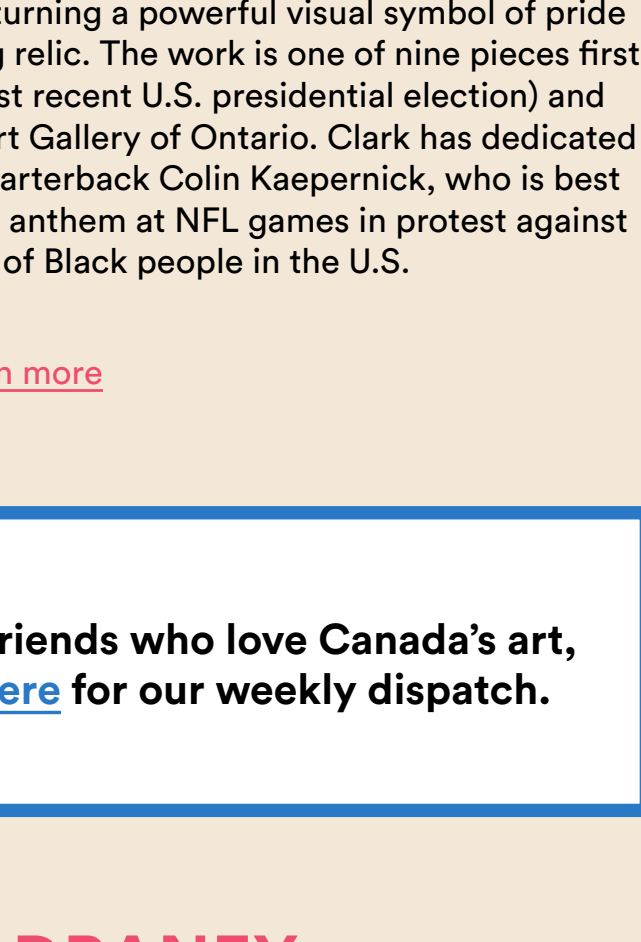
An irksome question mark has loomed over ten painted sketches attributed to the Group of Seven's J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932) since the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) acquired them in 2015: Are they authentic? *A Tangled Garden*, confirming in a [Globe & Mail story](#) that the works are fakes—created by a single artist whose identity remains unknown. Visitors to the exhibition will have the opportunity to examine the body of evidence gathered by art historians, handwriting experts, and the Canadian Conservation Institute, as well as a selection of verified Group of Seven oil sketches from the permanent collection.

[Learn more](#)

KENOJUAK ASHEVAK: LIFE AND LEGACY

*Beaverbrook Art Gallery, New Brunswick**January 12 – April 1, 2024*

Kenojuak Ashevak, *Between Friends*, 2005–8, courtesy of West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative, Kinngait (Cape Dorset) and Toronto.



Kenojuak Ashevak, *Oracle* (detail), 1999, West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative Ltd. and Toronto.

Birds, fish, humans, and mythical creatures assembled in vivid, surreal formations (such as in *Oracle*, 1999, above right) made the work of Kenojuak Ashevak (1927–2013) both massively influential and eminently recognizable. At Fredericton's Beaverbrook Art Gallery, a fifty-year retrospective celebrates Ashevak's prints inspired by traditional Inuit iconography, including her depiction of an owl embracing two birds in the charming work *Between Friends*, 2005–8 (above left). The exhibition also offers an unprecedented look at drawings from the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative that served as the basis for some of her best-known prints.

[Learn more](#)

PIZANDAWATC / THE ONE WHO LISTENS / CELUI QUI ÉCOUTE

*Art Museum at the University of Toronto, Ontario**January 18 – March 23, 2024*

Caroline Monnet, *Okikad*, 2023, courtesy of the artist.



Caroline Monnet, *We are Earth*, 2023, courtesy of the artist and Jen Grant and Dave Dattels.

The first exhibition in a Toronto public gallery by contemporary artist Caroline Monnet (b.1985), who is of Anishinaabe and French descent, is named for her ancestral family name, Pizandawatc, which means "the one who listens" in Anishinaabemowin. (It was changed in the late nineteenth century by the Catholic Oblates in Kitigan Zibi, the largest and oldest Algonquin reserve in Canada.) Monnet's mixed-media works, videos, and installations ground the survey exhibition in the power of Indigenous resilience. The show also presents a new body of work—including *Okikad*, 2023 (above left)—in which, as [the curatorial statement explains](#), the artist "reclaim[s] the Anishinaabe language by recording its soundwaves in layered native and industrial wood."

[Learn more](#)

JUNE CLARK: UNREQUITED LOVE

*Art Gallery of Ontario**Opening January 20, 2024*

June Clark, *Dirge*, 2003, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

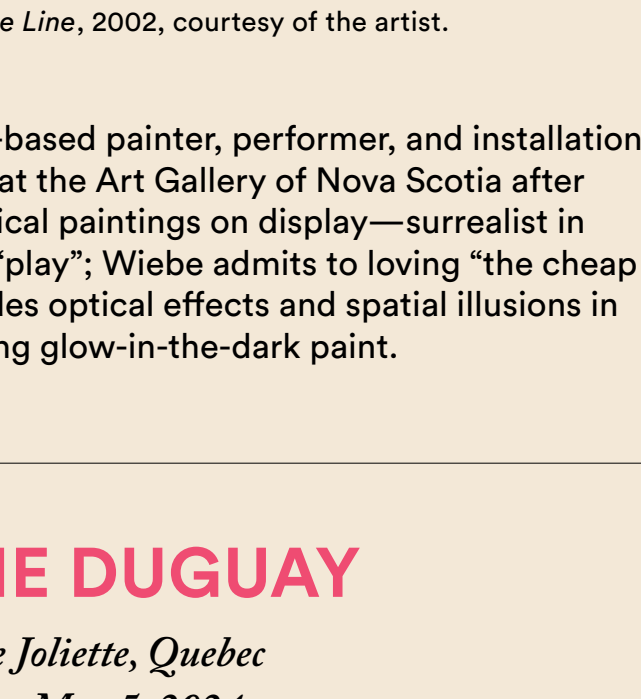
For *Dirge*, 2003, Harlem-raised, Toronto-based artist June Clark (b.1941) fashions an American flag out of rusted metal, turning a powerful visual symbol of pride and propaganda into a fragile, decaying relic. The work is one of nine pieces first exhibited in 2020 (the year of the most recent U.S. presidential election) and now included in an installation at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Clark has dedicated this show to civil rights activist and quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who is best known for kneeling during the national anthem at NFL games in protest against the systemic oppression of Black people in the U.S.

[Learn more](#)

BRENDA DRANEY: DRINK FROM THE RIVER

*Art Gallery of Alberta**January 20 – May 5, 2024*

Brenda Draney, *Dart*, 2017, The Indigenous Art Collection of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Gatineau.

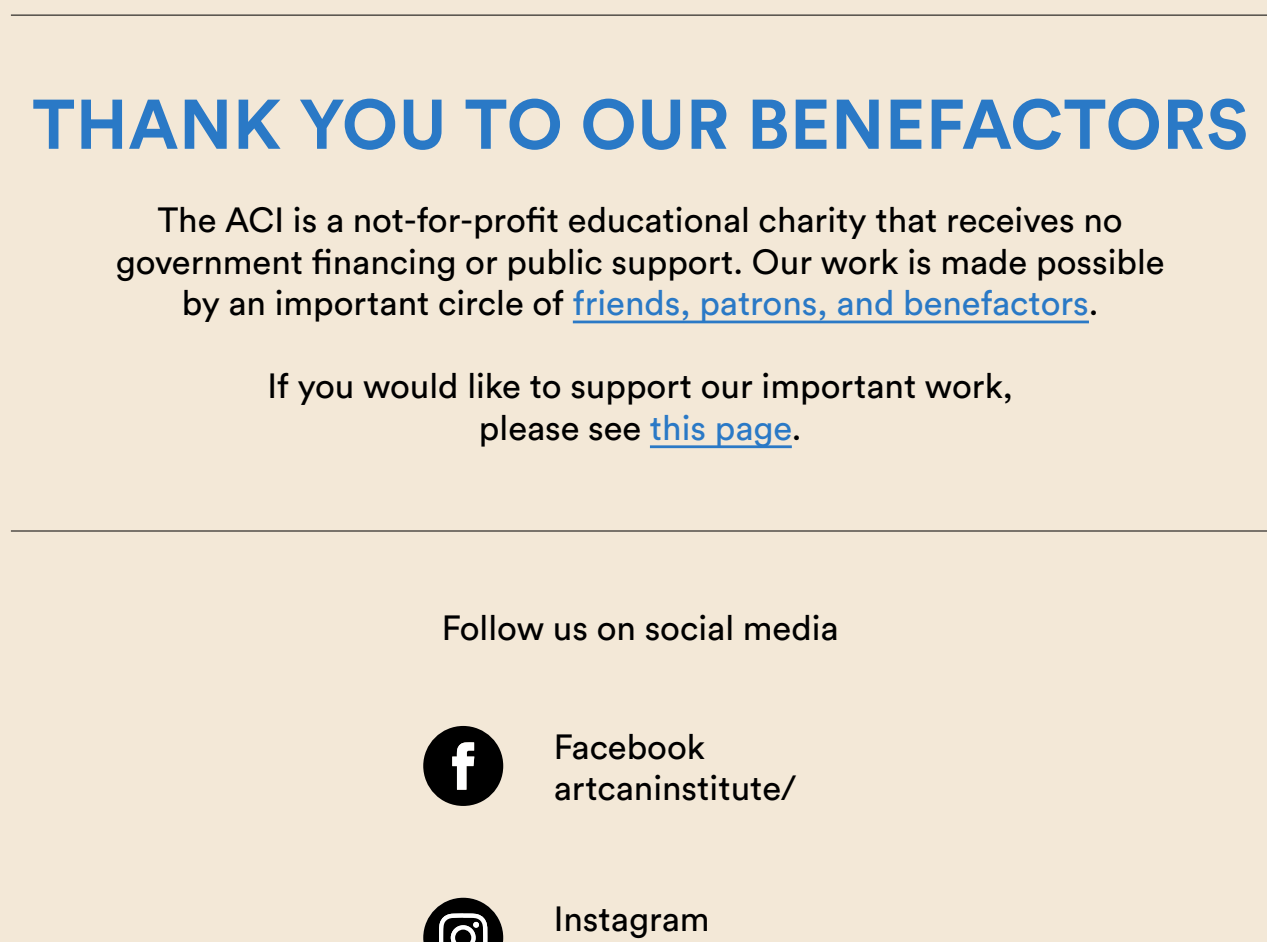


Brenda Draney, *Diane*, 2022, collection of Joe Friday and Grant Jameson.

Inspired by images from her personal archives, memories, and Internet sources, Edmonton-based Cree artist Brenda Draney (b.1976) creates paintings that can best be described as dreamlike. Previously shown at the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery in Toronto, the works in *Drink from the river* frequently feature blank spaces and everyday motifs—such as a three-seater sofa—that reappear in various contexts and compositions, encouraging viewers to form their own narratives.

[Learn more](#)

ARTO DJERDJERIAN: YA HA TINDA - THE RANCH

*Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Alberta**January 26 – April 2024*

Arto Djerdjarian, *On the Nose*, July 2019, courtesy of the artist.

At Ya Ha Tinda Ranch, a federally run operation in Clearwater County, Alberta, horses are trained to become horse wardens ridden by Parks Canada staff in Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Yoho national mountain parks. The Cairo-born, Montreal-raised Armenian Canadian photographer Arto Djerdjarian has been shooting the ranch for the last six years, capturing its 4,000 hectares of high-elevation natural grasslands and mixed forests, majestic and stalwart working animals, and the people and wildlife that coexist with them.

[Learn more](#)

INTERSECTING ORBITS: MICHAEL MORRIS AND JOAN BALZAR

*Griffin Art Projects, British Columbia**January 27 – May 5, 2024*

Joan Balzar, *Silver Scope*, 1962–65, courtesy of Shawn Macmillan.

The story of Vancouver art in the 1960s cannot be told without mentioning artists Joan Balzar (1928–2016) and Michael Morris (1942–2022), peers and colleagues who were pioneers of abstract painting on the West Coast. Balzar's large-scale, hard-edge compositions (like the dynamic *Silver Scope*, 1962–65, above)—which sometimes incorporated neon tubing—and Morris's precise abstracts are venerated examples of Canadian Op art, and this exhibition at Griffin Art Projects in North Vancouver features major works by both.

[Learn more](#)

MITCHELL WIEBE: VAMPSITES

*Art Gallery of Nova Scotia**Opening February 2024*

Mitchell Wiebe, *Donkey Holds the Line*, 2002, courtesy of the artist.

VampSites, the touring show by Halifax-based painter, performer, and installation artist Mitchell Wiebe (b.1967) lands at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia after multiple Western stops. The fantastical paintings on display—surrealist in nature and vibrant in palette—scream "play"; Wiebe admits to loving "the cheap attraction of the fun house" and includes optical effects and spatial illusions in his installations, including glow-in-the-dark paint.

RODOLPHE DUGUAY

*Musée d'art de Joliette, Quebec**February 10 – May 5, 2024*

Rodolphe Duguay, *Approaching Storm, the Nicolet River*, n.d., Musée d'art de Joliette.

Best known for rural landscape paintings like *Approaching Storm, the Nicolet River*, n.d. (above), the Quebec painter, printmaker, and illustrator Rodolphe Duguay (1891–1973) depicted his native province, and particularly his hometown of Nicolet, in expressive, sweeping brushstrokes influenced by Post-Impressionism. In honour of the 50th anniversary of Duguay's death, the Musée d'art de Joliette is presenting a selection of his works from its permanent collection, many of which are on view for the first time. They reveal how, in the early twentieth century, Duguay synthesized his training in Montreal and Paris to create evocative rural scenes that blended tradition and modernity.

[Learn more](#)

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Image Credits: [1] Marcel Dzama, *Ghost of Canoe Lake*, 2023, pearlescent acrylic, ink, watercolour, and graphite on paper, 36.2 x 36.2 cm. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner. © Marcel Dzama.

[2] Unknown, sketch after *The Tangled Garden*, n.d., oil on paperboard. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery. [3] Kenojuak Ashevak, *Between Friends*, 2005–8, ballpoint pen and coloured pencil. Courtesy of West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative, Kinngait (Cape Dorset) and Toronto. [4] Kenojuak Ashevak, *Oracle* (detail), 1999, ink, coloured pencil on paper. Collection of West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative Ltd. [5] Caroline Monnet, *Okikad*, 2023, bronze, 38.1 x 55.9 x 30.5 cm. Photo credit: Charlie Leroy. Courtesy of the artist. [6] Caroline Monnet, *We are Earth*, 2023, embroidery on air barrier membrane, 139.7 x 106.7 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Jen Grant and Dave Dattels. [7] June Clark, *Dirge*, 2003, oxidized metal on canvas, 94 x 160 x 1.8 cm. Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. Purchase, with funds by exchange, and funds from Joyce and Fred Zemans, 2021 (2020/137). © June Clark, courtesy of the artist and Daniel Faria Gallery. Photo: LF Documentation [8] Brenda Draney, *Dart*, 2017, oil on linen. The Indigenous Art Collection of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Gatineau. Photo credit: Toni Hafkenscheid. [9] Brenda Draney, *Diane*, 2022, oil on canvas. Collection of Joe Friday and Grant Jameson. Photo credit: Toni Hafkenscheid. [10] Arto Djerdjarian, *On the Nose*, July 2019, digital print. Courtesy of the artist. [11] Joan Balzar, *Silver Scope*, 1962–65, chrome aluminium and acrylic on canvas, 134.6 x 228.6 cm. Courtesy of Shawn Macmillan. Photo credit: Byron Dauncey. [12] Mitchell Wiebe, *Donkey Holds the Line*, 2002, acrylic and oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist. [13] Rodolphe Duguay, *Approaching Storm, the Nicolet River*, n.d., oil on cardboard, 38.4 x 45.3 cm. Collection of the Musée d'art de Joliette, Wilfrid Corbeil collection, gift of the Clercs de Saint-Viateur of Canada (2012.052). Photo: Musée d'art de Joliette. © Estate of Rodolphe Duguay.