

SURREY ART GALLERY PRESENTS SOUND THINKING 2017

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SOUNDS FOR ACTION

A SYMPOSIUM OF PRESENTATIONS & PERFORMANCES

Surrey Art Gallery, 13750 88 Ave in Bear Creek Park

SATURDAY, OCT 28 | NOON – 4PM | FREE

Co-conveners: Roxanne Charles and Jordan Strom

PRESENTERS

Marie Côté, Lindsay Dobbin, Farheen HaQ, Liz Howard, Peter Morin, Mavis Pierre-Sam,
and Charlene Vickers and Cathy Busby



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Sounds for Action

Canada's colonial visual culture has been overwhelmingly defined by landscape painting and photography. In recent decades, however, artists have developed alternative forms of sensory apparatus to create a perception of the land that transcends the purely visual. These artworks question preconceptions about identity and colonial history. They conceive of the land as embodied and interlaced with power relations, reflecting upon these dynamics and situating the viewer in an immersive relationship to the world around them. *Sound Thinking 2017: Sounds for Action* features over a half-dozen artist presentations, along with live performance and group discussion that examines these questions and practices.

The presenters in *Sounds for Action* examine the relationships between identity and place, memory and history, performance and ritual, language and song, and local and global. Traces left on the land by lived experience, or industrial incursion, are as important as art-historical legacies embodied in the pictures of nationhood typically found throughout art history.

Sounds for Action seeks to foreground the importance of art in addressing both colonial history and our current colonial present. The convening of these talks and performances is inspired by the extraordinary work being made by contemporary artists today. This event is also motivated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's "Calls to Action," intended to further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous peoples. How can contemporary artworks mobilize real change? How do we as citizens, as artists, embody this shift? How do we manifest these discussions and further real change beyond the required policy changes and institutional transformations? This symposium includes a diverse array of artistic practices rooted in sound, song, speech and performance that address these and other urgent themes grounded in the land.

We would like to thank all of the artists for making their vital work in these times. We would also like to gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the City of Surrey, Province of BC through BC Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, Vancouver Foundation, and Surrey Art Gallery Association. The Gallery would also like to acknowledge the support of SOFIA/c (South of Fraser Inter-Arts Collective) for partnering on Liz Howard's participation in this year's symposium.

Roxanne Charles and Jordan Strom

About Sound Thinking

Founded in 2008, Surrey Art Gallery's Sound Thinking symposium is an annual one-day event which brings together practitioners and professionals in the field of sound art. The symposium features leading sound artists, scholars and researchers in the field of sound studies, along with visual artists who use sound as key components of their practice and musicians who experiment with the limits of music and sound. Past symposia have addressed subjects such as radiophonic space, the relationship between voice and technology, and background sound.

Sound Thinking is part of Surrey Art Gallery's Open Sound program, an exhibition program developed in 2008 to support the production and presentation of audio art forms as part of contemporary art practice.

Our principal Open Sound exhibition this year is *Ground Signals*. Gathering works by over a dozen artists from across Canada, *Ground Signals* features immersive, multisensory art that engages with land and water. The exhibition includes ceramic bowls that emit environmental audio recordings and Indigenous songs from northern Quebec; a towering sculpture of woven copper wire that broadcasts shortwave marine radio reports from a proposed pipeline terminus on British Columbia's coast; a time-travelling shadow machine made of wax, paint, and human hair that transports visitors to the deep past of Tahltan territory; a gigantic mural of found blankets and building materials framed in words and writing about waterways impacted by industrial accidents; composite videos of Southern Ontario vistas morphing into English Romantic landscape paintings; and a solar-powered culture station collects stories in exchange for energy.

Building on several recent Gallery exhibitions that have addressed landscape, ecology, territory, and mapping, *Ground Signals* challenges viewers to listen and experience the land in fresh and compelling ways through a combination of sounds and images.

Open Sound is made possible with the ongoing support of the City of Surrey, the Canada Council of the Arts and the BC Arts Council.

Schedule

Saturday October 28, 12pm to 4:00pm
Surrey Art Gallery, 13750 88th Avenue, Surrey

- 12pm** **EVENT BEGINS – DOORS OPEN**
- 12-12:15 Refreshments
- 12:15-12:25 **Introduction & Welcome:** Jordan Strom and Roxanne Charles
- 12:25-12:35 **Performance** by Mavis Pierre-Sam
- 12:35-1:30 **Panel session 1**
- Peter Morin
- Marie Cote
- Farheen HaQ
- 1:30-1:45 **Break**
- 1:45-2:55 **Panel session 2**
- Lindsay Dobbin
- Liz Howard
- Cathy Busby
- Charlene Vickers
- 3:00-3:30 **Performance** with Peter Morin
- 3:30-3:45 **Open conversation period in the gallery**
- 3:45-3:50 **Concluding remarks and acknowledgments in gallery**

Biographies

Cathy Busby

Cathy Busby is an artist who grew up in the suburbs of Toronto and, as a teenager, moved to the Yukon to be part of an alternative school and community. Early on, she felt at home being involved with social justice movements and found an outlet for this politicization in the visual arts. Cathy studied art and politics at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design in the 1980s and completed an MA in Media Studies and a PhD in Communication at Concordia University in Montreal. She makes installations and printed matter, does performances, and teaches in the Visual Arts at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Marie Côté

For Marie Côté, everything begins with pottery. The pleasure she takes in throwing a clay pot has never diminished, although she is now more well-known for her sculptures and installations. In addition to exhibiting her work in galleries nationally and internationally, she has participated in two artist residencies in northern Canada (Inukjuak, Nunavik and Dawson City, Yukon). Just as all pots want to be filled, Marie's work seeks to make us aware of the complex experience that links an object to space. From her first shadow installations to her recent collaborative work with musicians, it is these links between space and matter that kindle her imagination. She lives and works in Montreal.

Lindsay Dobbin

Lindsay Dobbin is a mixed Indigenous (Mohawk)/Settler (Acadian/Irish) artist, musician, curator, and educator who lives and works on the Bay of Fundy. Her place-responsive practice includes media art, performance, sculpture, installation, social practices, and writing. She is invested in and influenced by Indigenous epistemologies and cultural practices such as drumming. By placing listening, collaboration, and improvisation at the centre of the creative process, Lindsay explores the connection between the environment and the body, and engages in a sensorial intimacy with the living land.

Farheen HaQ

Farheen HaQ is a Muslim South Asian Canadian artist born and raised in the Niagara region of Ontario. She lives and works as a grateful guest on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations in Victoria. She has exhibited her work in galleries and festivals across Canada and internationally including New York, Paris, Buenos Aires, Lahore, and Hungary. Farheen uses video, installation, photography, and performance to explore gesture, identity, and the relationship between our inner and outer world. She is interested in the intersections between indigenous knowledge and contemporary diasporic experience and art as a contemplative practice.

Liz Howard

Liz Howard was born and raised in northern Ontario. She has a MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph and works as research officer in cognitive psychology at the University in Toronto. Her award winning poetry collection, *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent* won the Griffin Poetry Prize in 2016. Howard's chapbook *Skullambient* was shortlisted in 2012 for the bpNichol Chapbook Award. She has read her poetry at many events in Canada and was invited to read at Princeton University in 2014. Her poetry has also appeared on *The Capilano Review*, *The Puritan*, and *Matrix Magazine*. Special thanks to SOFIA/c (South of Fraser Inter-Arts Collective) for partnering on Howard's participation in this year's symposium.

Peter Morin

Peter Morin is a Tahltan Nation artist, curator, and writer currently based in Brandon, Manitoba. He studied at Emily Carr University of Art and Design and completed his MFA at UBC Okanagan in 2011. In both his artistic practice as well as his curatorial work, Peter explores issues of de-colonization through the practice of Indigenous ways of knowing/knowledge. His work, defined by Tahltan Nation production and worldview, takes the form of performance interventions and includes object and picture-making. Peter has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions across Canada and was long-listed for the Sobey Art Prize in 2014. Morin is an Assistant Professor with the Visual and Aboriginal Department at Brandon University.

Mavis Pierre-Sam

Mavis Pierre-Sam is a Katzie Nation singer and community organizer. She regularly performs her songs at events and ceremonies across the Fraser Valley region including the traditional and unceded territories of the Katzie peoples. She is the daughter of the late Katzie drummer and respected teacher Dean Sam.

Charlene Vickers

Charlene Vickers is an Anishnabe Ojibwa artist from Kenora, Ontario, currently living and working in Vancouver. She graduated from the Emily Carr University of Art and Design and received an MFA from Simon Fraser University. Charlene is on the Board of Directors at grunt gallery in Vancouver. Her work *Sleeman Makazin* is in the permanent collection at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. She has recently exhibited at Vancouver Art Gallery, Grace Gallery (New York), Western Front (Vancouver), and AKA Gallery (Saskatoon).

Conveners

Roxanne Charles

Roxanne Charles is an active and proud member of Semiahmoo First Nation in Surrey, BC where she promotes art, language, and culture. She works in a variety of mediums including digital, jewelry, painting, cedar weaving, sculpture, the body, ceramics, and installation. Her work explores a variety of themes that directly reflect her experience as an Indigenous woman in Canada today. Some themes commonly seen in her work are spirituality, nature, identity, hybridity, urbanization, exploitation, intergenerational trauma, and various forms of violence. Roxanne is a contemporary storyteller who has been exploring a troubling colonial present through art.

Jordan Strom

As Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at the Surrey Art Gallery, Jordan Strom has curated solo exhibitions by Cao Fei, Sarindar Dhaliwal, Brendan Fernandes, Ryoji Ikeda, among others. Recent group exhibitions have addressed immigration and contemporary art (*Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru*, 2014), contemporary artist self-portraiture (*Scenes of Selves, Occasions for Ruses*, 2012), and the proto-cinematic (*Vision Machine*, 2012). Jordan has worked on previous curatorial exhibitions and projects for the Vancouver Art Gallery, Kamloops Art Gallery, Presentation House Gallery, Republic Gallery and Dadabase. From 2004 to 2008, Jordan worked as editor at *Fillip*, a journal of contemporary art.

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Information 604.501.5566

www.surrey.ca/artgallery | www.surreytechlab.ca

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