

March 3–
April 24, 2022



Cover image: Zinnia Naqvi, *Keep Off the Grass—Cullen Gardens and Miniature Village, 1988* (2019) from the series *Yours to Discover*.
Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain.

Libby Leshgold Gallery

Emily Carr University of
Art + Design
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Hours: 12–5 daily

Libby Leshgold Gallery acknowledges its location within the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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“It is the work of ancestors and ancestors-to-be, to support the becoming of what they cannot imagine, but trust will arise.”

—Robin Wall Kimmerer, *What Kind of Ancestor Do You Want to Be?*

When considering family and ancestry, we place ourselves in a group, partnership, or as part of a long line. In a society that values individualism, how do we stress the importance of maintaining this interconnectedness? How can we ensure that relationships are built, rather than severed, through the accumulated separations of distance and time?

Inheritance is a common thread throughout *Related*. The objects, stories, skills, and traits we inherit from our ancestors range from physical appearances and second hand items to anecdotes passed down from the generations before us. The artists all look to a variety of materials including archival family photographs, cooking tools, shared activities, and memoirs to recount the ways in which they are linked to their ancestors.

Each of the artists brought together for the exhibition reveal a piece of their identity as it relates to members of their family. Through their work, they find meaningful ways to connect their familial relationships and histories, in the process discovering more about themselves and their origins. From where they've been to where they are going, they place these discoveries in relation to both private and public moments, looking inward as well as outward to wider cultural contexts. All five artists live within the imaginary border that delineates so-called “Canada,” each with their own distinct histories and connections to this place, which are reflected in their explorations of family and ancestry.

Brittney Namaakii Bear Hat

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is a Mohkinstsis/Calgary-based artist, whose Blackfoot and Cree/Dane-zaa ancestors have lived on the lands that are now part of Treaty 7 and 8, for many millennia. Her work explores this cultural lineage through installation, photography, text and collage. Bear Hat graduated from the Alberta University of the Arts in 2011, where she majored in painting. Her work explores identity, and adds to the rich stories of her home territories. Within her work, Bear Hat is exploring that which ties her to these unique landscapes.

Brittney Namaakii Bear Hat, *Kokum* (2022).
Image courtesy of the artist.

Bear Hat's most recent work, *These Gifts*, was on display in Contemporary Calgary's exhibition, *Planetary*, in January 2020. Other recent exhibitions include *Visions of the Hunt* (2018), *The Esplanade, Medicine Hat; nichiwamiskwém / nimidet / ma soeur / my sister*, Contemporary Native Art Biennial (BACA), Art Mûr, Montréal; *I Believe in Living* (2018), Untitled Arts Society, Calgary, and *Lineage* (2018), Latitude 53, Edmonton. Bear Hat has also been awarded the Joane Cardinal Schubert Memorial Scholarship in 2011 and the Sonia de Grandmaison Scholarship in 2013.

Gabi Dao



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Gabi Dao, still from *Excerpts from the Domestic Cinema Ch. 1 and Ch. 2* (2019), Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

is an artist and former co-organizer at Duplex, a DIY project space + studio collective based on the unceded territories of the *xʷməθkwəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh* (Squamish), and *Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh* (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Her interdisciplinary practice insists on counter-memory, intimacy, hyphenation, multiple truths and blurred temporalities through the pursuit of sculpture, installation, moving image and sound. Often, her work begins with interests in 'patchwork' conceptions of time and materiality, tracing histories of the everyday through themes of globalization, consumption, belief and belonging.

Her work has been presented locally and internationally. Currently she is an MFA candidate at Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. She also hustles her indie perfume label *PPL'S PERFUME* on the side.

Terrance James Houle

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(Niitsitapi/ Saulteaux) is an internationally recognized interdisciplinary media artist and a member of the Kainai Nation/ Blood Tribe. Involved with Aboriginal communities all his life, he has travelled to reservations throughout North America participating in Powwow dancing along with his native ceremonies. His work ranges from subversive to humorous absurdity to solemn and poetic artistic expressions. His work often relates to the physical body as it investigates issues of history, colonization, Aboriginal identity and representation in popular culture, as well as conceptual ideas based on memory, home, and reserve communities. Houle works in whatever media strikes him, and has produced work in photography, painting, installation, mass marketing, performance, music, video, and film. Houle's work has been exhibited across Canada, the United States, Australia, the UK and Europe.

Since 2014, Houle has been working on an ongoing collaborative project titled *GHOST DAYS*. *GHOST DAYS* evokes colonial and non-colonial histories that exist in the light of night as in the darkness of the day, and awakens a collaboration with artists, audience, and spirit. Currently, He has co-directed a short animation *Otanimm/Onnimm* with his daughter Neko Wong-Houle which is currently touring Film festivals, In Los Angeles, NYC, Toronto, New Zealand, Vancouver, Oxford & many more. Recently their short film won the prestigious Golden Sheaf Indigenous Award at Yorkton Film Festival and is Neko's First Award in Film at 17 years old. Houle is based in Calgary, Alberta.

Neko Wong-Houle

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is a queer, registered bandmember of the Blackfoot, Kainai Nation with Ojibwe, Chinese and Romanian ancestry. She is currently based in Calgary, Alberta, where she is studying film at the University of Calgary as a first year student. She is working towards a multimedia practice with primary interests in animation and film as well as fine arts. She often frequents her reservation, the Kainai nation, south of Alberta where she is exposed to the culture and traditional practices of her Niitsitapi people.

In 2021, she received the Indigenous Golden Sheaf Award at the Yorkton Film Festival, she is the youngest filmmaker to win an award at the festival.

Image: Terrance Houle and Neko Wong-Houle, still from *Otanimm/Onnimm* (2019). Courtesy of the artists.



Zinnia Naqvi

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(she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Tiohtià:ke/Montréal and Tkaronto/Toronto. Her work examines issues of colonialism, cultural translation, language, and gender through the use of photography, video, the written word, and archival material. Recent projects have included archival and re-staged images, experimental documentary films, video installations, graphic design, and elaborate still-lives. Her artworks often invite the viewer to question her position and working methods.

Naqvi's work has been shown across Canada and internationally. She is a recipient of the 2019 New Generation Photography Award organized by the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada and was awarded an honourable mention at the 2017 Karachi Biennale in Pakistan. Naqvi is member of EMILIA-AMALIA Working Group, an intergenerational feminist collective. She received a BFA in Photography Studies from X University and an MFA in Studio Arts from Concordia University. Her most recent solo exhibitions were presented at Dazibao and Pierre-François Ouellette Art Contemporain in Montréal.

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An extra special thanks goes to the staff at Libby Leshgold Gallery who contributed special care and effort to put together this exhibition: Susanna Browne, Troy Johnson, Kevin Romaniuk, Mitch Kenworthy, Kay Higgins and Aubin Kwon, to Arina Sin for all her fantastic design work and to the Vancouver Art Gallery and Pierre François Oulette art contemporain.

Related is curated by Lyndsay Pomerantz, an artist, curator and arts administrator. She is an only child with Eastern European, Jewish, and Thai ancestry living and working on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations aka Vancouver.

The Libby Leshgold Gallery is grateful for the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts and presenting sponsor RBC Wealth Management.

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