

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Manuel Axel Strain celebrates the Coast Salish longhouse in their Richmond Art Gallery debut

*Exhibition features a major new multimedia installation that challenges colonialism
while foregrounding Musqueam cultural and spiritual values*

AUG. 6, 2025 (VANCOUVER, BC) — Richmond Art Gallery presents a solo exhibition by **Manuel Axel Strain**, *xʷə́niwən ce:p kʷθəθ nə́weyət* (((**Remember your teachings**))), from **Sept. 13–Nov. 9, 2025**. The artist — of Musqueam, Simpcw, and Syilx descent — celebrates the cedar longhouse as an important architectural form and philosophical framework that reflects the collectivist and relational values of their ancestors and communities.

“Richmond Art Gallery first worked with Manuel Axel Strain for a public artwork featured in the Capture Photography Festival in 2020, and we are thrilled to continue supporting this talented artist,” says curator Zoë Chan. “The Musqueam shed-style longhouse is at the heart of their new exhibition. It is not only an important architectural structure, but also an important spiritual, philosophical, and cultural framework profoundly embedded with the collectivist, relational values of their family members and larger community. The artist also invites viewers to critically consider what dominant structures are being upheld in mainstream Canadian society, whether in terms of architecture or ideology.”

xʷə́niwən ce:p kʷθəθ nə́weyət (((**Remember your teachings**))) will feature new and recent works, including paintings, video, and sculpture. The central longhouse installation pays tribute to a style of home central to the collective life of the Musqueam people and used as a gathering place for culturally significant events, such as marriages and potlatches. The red cedar plank-built edifices are designed to be flexible and modular in order to accommodate multiple and extended families. Before their attempted erasure by colonial powers, longhouses were once found all along the coast.

Strain is a 2-Spirit artist from the lands and waters of the *xʷməθkʷəyəm* (Musqueam), Simpcw and Syilx peoples, based in the sacred region of their *q̓ičə́y* (Katzie) and *q̓'wa:n̓l'ə́n* (Kwantlen) relatives. Strain’s mother is Tracey Strain and father is Eric Strain, Tracey’s parents are Harold Eustache (from Chuchua) and Marie Louis (from *nkmaplqs*), Eric’s Parents are Helen Point (from *xʷməθkʷəyəm*) and John Strain (from Ireland). Although they attended Emily Carr University of Art + Design, they prioritize Indigenous epistemologies through the embodied knowledge of their mother, father, siblings, cousins, aunties, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents and ancestors. They have contributed work to the Vancouver Art Gallery, Surrey Art Gallery, the UBCO FINA Gallery, were longlisted for the 2022 Sobey Award, and were a recipient of the 2022 Portfolio Prize.

Public programming

Visit the Gallery's website and social media for the most up-to-date information on upcoming programs and registration. Scheduled events include:

Exhibition Opening Reception

Saturday, September 13, 2–4pm

The reception will include light refreshments and an introduction to this important exhibition with the artist.

Richmond Culture Days: Collaborative Drawing with Manuel Axel Strain

Sunday, Sept. 21, 12–3pm

As part of Culture Days opening weekend, drop into the gallery to join in a large-scale drawing project with exhibiting artist Manuel Axel Strain. This will be a community collaborative activity for everyone to explore mark-making, colouring, and drawing on a grand scale. Free drop-in for all ages.

Exhibition Tour in Mandarin

Saturday, Sept. 27, 2–3pm

Drop in for a tour of the current Richmond Art Gallery exhibition in Mandarin. Learn more about the themes of the exhibition through a guided visit and informal discussion over a cup of tea. Limited spaces, RSVP to reserve a seat at richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events.

國語導覽

9月27日, 星期六, 下午2–3點

歡迎參加列治文美術館當前展覽的國語導覽！通過導覽與輕鬆的對話更多地了解展覽主題。提供茶水, 位置有限, 需預約 更多信息及註冊: richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events.

Art After Dark: Youth Event for Ages 13–24

Friday, Oct. 17, 6–8pm

In partnership with the Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), we invite youth and young creatives (ages 13–24) to this FREE drop-in event at the Richmond Art Gallery. This after-hours, youth-only evening will feature an interactive and collaborative celebration complete with art, community, and music. Meet the RAG's exhibiting artist and join in an interactive art activity with them while you are immersed in the Gallery's exhibition spaces. Have some snacks and chill to the music while you capture a fun, exciting evening with friends at our digital photo booth. Registration is strongly encouraged; RSVP at richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events.

Online Artist Salon with Manuel Axel Strain

Wednesday, Oct. 22, 7pm

Exhibiting artist Manuel Axel Strain shares insights into their art practice that includes exhibiting work, presenting workshops, and coordinating art festivals
richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events.

xʷə́niwən ce:p kʷθəθ nə́weyəl (((Remember your teachings))) is presented with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts. Funding for exhibition's public programs provided by City of Richmond Arts & Culture Project Assistance Grant.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



About Richmond Art Gallery

Richmond Art Gallery (RAG) is a non-profit municipal art gallery established in 1980. The Gallery produces an array of exhibitions and programs that connect, empower, and provoke conversation with our diverse Richmond, BC communities. RAG actively contributes to Richmond's cultural communities through our commitment to supporting artists via its exhibitions, educational programs, publications, and permanent collection.

Address

Richmond Art Gallery
Richmond Cultural Centre
7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC V6Y 1R8

Hours

Monday–Friday from 10am–6pm
Saturday–Sunday from 12–5pm

Press kit and photos

bit.ly/RAGManuelAxelStrain

Press contact

Ines Min
604 440 0791
ines@inesmin.com