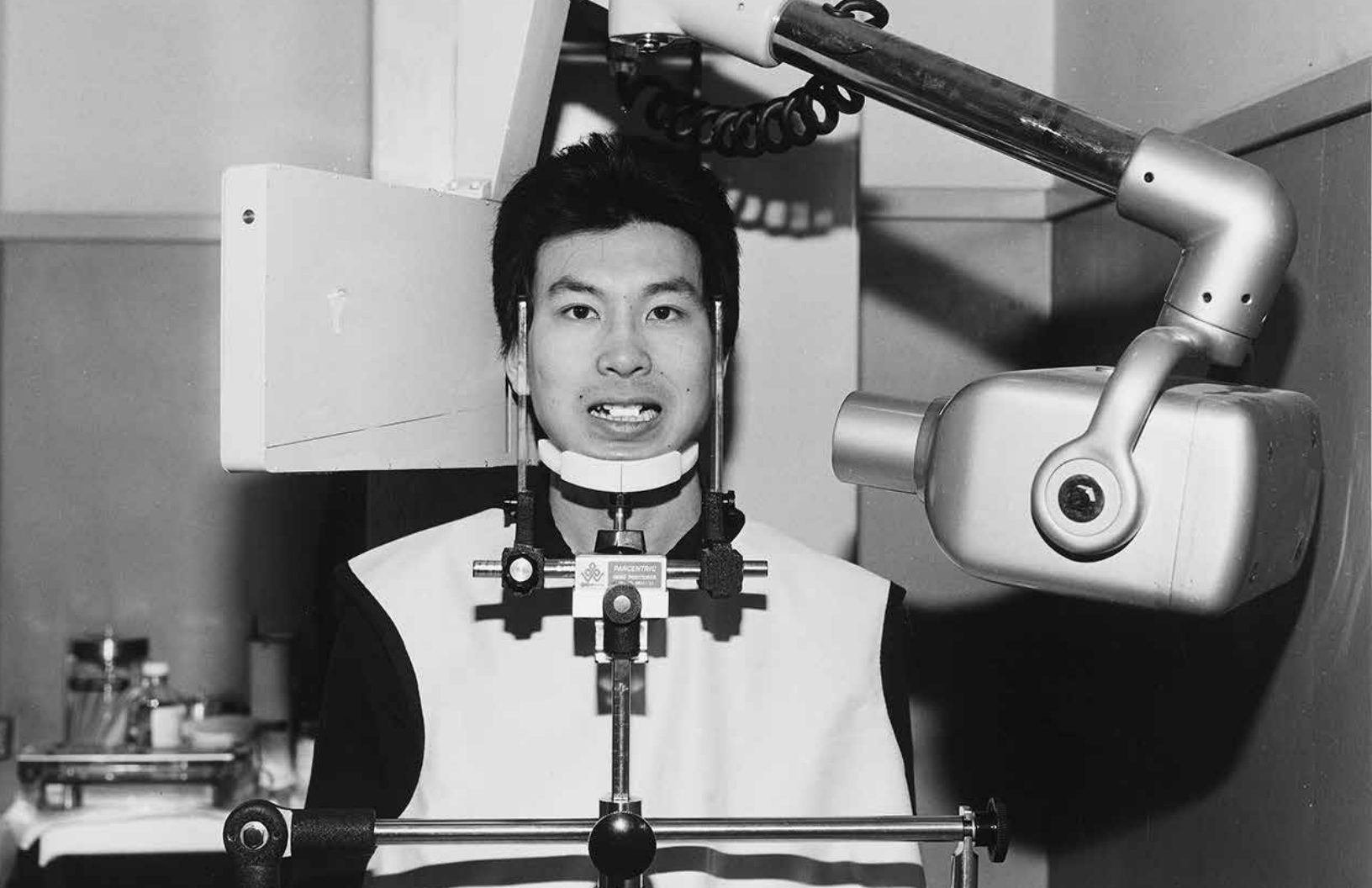


richmond art gallery



spring 2024



Unit Bruises:
Theodore Wan and Paul Wong, 1975-1979

Curated by Michael Dang

April 20 – June 30

Unit Bruises brings together the works of two Chinese-Canadian artists of the same generation, who were active during the 1970s: Theodore Sasketche Wan (b.1953; d.1987) and Paul Wong (b.1954). By mobilizing their own respective bodies, and the visual languages of medical and procedural illustrations, both artists subverted notions of objectivity that have been naturalized through institutions of control such as hospitals and prisons. Both artists were interested in the then-new practices of body and performance art for their potential to, as art historian Amelia Jones would later write, radically dislodge naturalized structures and stereotypes through the assertion of “othered” subject-positions. In these intensely physical works, the two artists respectively asserted their othered subject-positions as people of colour as well as ruminated on the topics of illness, death, and the human condition. *Unit Bruises* frames Wan and Wong’s contemporaneous practices as complementary, in that both artists emphasized their visible differences as Chinese-Canadian men in lens-based practices: photography for Wan and video for Wong.

Wan and Wong were acquaintances who both came of age during a pivotal moment in the Vancouver art scene when artist-run centres, such as Western Front, Video Inn, and Pumps, emerged in and around the Lower Mainland. These new artist-run centres were among the cutting-edge institutions throughout Canada, including Wan’s alma-mater NSCAD in Halifax, that contributed to the rise of international networks of artists who informed both Wan and Wong’s respective practices. Nevertheless the majority of their peers and influences, who were practicing conceptual and body art, were white. Both Wong and Wan had to assert space for themselves, respectively, as individuals of a racial and ethnic minority (and queer, in the case of Wong) working in the primarily white contemporary art world in Canada.

The show is named after Wong and Kenneth Fletcher’s *60 Unit; Bruise* (1976), one of two videos paired together in the work *Blood Brother* (1976/2024) documenting the “ritualized” withdrawal of Fletcher’s blood inserted into Wong’s back via a syringe. *60 Unit; Bruise* is just one of Wong’s powerful visceral works of body art from this period, when the artist was a member of the Mainstreeters, a self-proclaimed “art gang,” made up of friends from highschool. Also showcased in this exhibition is *7 Day Activity* (1977/2008), a work in which Wong critiqued the standards of mainstream white beauty culture as a “pimply young Asian man,” and *In Ten Sity* (1977), a physical

performance work where the artist thrashed and bounced off the walls of a psychiatric-institution-like padded cube.

The disturbingly procedural tone of works like *60 Unit; Bruise* and *In Ten Sity* is complemented by Theodore Wan's work in which the artist performed as a "patient" in a series of medical-style photographs. Wan developed an interest in the codified tropes of medical and surgical illustrations while attending NSCAD in Halifax for his MFA. Photo-conceptualist works by Wan such as *Name Change* (1977) and *Scanning Electron Microscope Photographs of the Artist's Sperm* (1978) reveal the artist's sardonic sense of humor and focus on questions of identity and the body. Wan's interest in the Duchampian readymade extended to his photography, where the artist put himself in the role of "patient" in a series of instructional-style surgical illustrations, including *Bound By Everyday Necessities I and II* (1979), a series that was initially displayed in the contexts of the art gallery and the hospital. Wan's works in the gallery context functioned as Photo-conceptualist interventions for the local art milieu, while in the hospital setting, the works were understood by the healthcare staff as straightforward instructional materials.

With loans from both private and public collections, *Unit Bruises* features rarely seen works by Wan and Wong that continue to resonate in today's sociopolitical climate, particularly given the recent rise of anti-Asian hate crimes. This includes the *Blood Brother*, a newly re-edited work by Wong combining two 1976 collaborations between the artist and Fletcher: *60 Unit; Bruise* and its companion piece *50/50* (1976/2024), long believed to have been lost. This exhibition marks the first time the latter work has ever been displayed publicly. A series of photograph panels for Wong's *7 Day Activity* (1977) will also be featured, marking the first time they have been exhibited since 1978. In addition, the public will have the opportunity to examine numerous objects from Wan's archive including original drawings, handwritten notes, and photocopies of medical manuals.

Content Advisory: *Unit Bruises* is intended for mature audiences. Visitor discretion is advised.

Unit Bruises is made with the support from the Audain Endowment for Curatorial Studies through the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory in collaboration with the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia.

This exhibition is part of the 2024 Capture Photography Festival Selected Exhibition Program.





Hazel Meyer

The Marble in the Basement

April 20 – June 30

Straddling the intimate and the monumental, the comical and the serious, Hazel Meyer's site-specific exhibition *The Marble in the Basement* assembles not only sculpture, drawing, and performance, but also a karaoke-inspired video, a puppet, and an appliquéd blanket featuring her trademark crooked serif script. The installation functions both as an immersive artwork and as a set for a series of performances scheduled to take place during the exhibition's run.

The Marble in the Basement functions under the auspices of Meyer's research project titled *The Weight of Inheritance* which she summarizes as "[looking] to the legacy of Canadian artist and experimental filmmaker Joyce Wieland." Wieland (b.1930; d.1998) is a still-influential figure—and rare woman—within Canadian art history. Throughout her varied oeuvre, she made films, paintings, and artworks that playfully integrated traditional domestic crafts like quilting, embroidery, and knitting, and commodities like plastics and lipstick. She drew from pop culture and politics—comic books, storyboards, news clippings, and partisan soundbites—in response to the still

pertinent *isms* of her time: nationalism, activism, pacifism, feminism, and environmentalism.

With a quirky sense of humour and deep appreciation for everyday materiality bubbling through her eclectic practice, Meyer could be Wieland's spiritual heir. She explains her lasting affection for the iconic artist as stemming back to her first delighted encounter as a preteen with Wieland's *Reason Over Passion* textile work (1968). Meyer emphasizes however that *The Weight of Inheritance* is not *about* the iconic artist but more of an opportunity for "thinking through various kinds of legacies, and queer inheritance."

Meyer's telling of the circuitous origin story for *The Marble in the Basement* bubbles over with juicy details that leave us brimming with questions. Is the story about how Meyer became friends with Jane Rowland, the owner of Joyce Wieland's house following the artist's death in the 90s, or how Meyer got to tour Wieland's former house which Rowland had partially preserved as the artist had originally decorated it? Or is it about almost getting her hands on the marble that may or may not have belonged to the famous artist (and the subsequent disappointment upon actually seeing the coveted marble—a few small slabs remaining in the basement)?

Meyer never limits *The Marble in the Basement* to her brush with Canadian art celebrity or her audacity in getting

strangers to open their doors. Searching beyond the pleasure of these gossipy particulars, she asks us to contemplate bigger questions around artistic value, the art canon, legacy, inheritance, ownership, collecting, and official histories. She asks: “What gets stored in a shoebox? Deposited into an archive? Shoved into a corner? Catalogued as important?”

Recasting the Gallery as a Basement, Meyer taps into the myriad connotations—and vibes— surrounding this often liminal space, used for storage or laundry, tv or play, sleepovers or parties. In pop culture, basements conjure high-school parties and horror movies, as well as *Upstairs, Downstairs*-style costume dramas that point to class divides between the upper classes and the hired help. Using inexpensive materials, Meyers hints at her own childhood and adult experiences of play as embodied by the bug-eyed puppet Marble; a video with the grainy quality of the original 8mm film—captioned with lyrics gleaned from Diana Ross’ feminist ballad “It’s My House”; and a drawing of a “glory hole” with a bite taken out of it, like a donut. Neither does she steer away from life’s pathos as suggested by the textile work made from moving blankets with “WHAT IT MEANS TO GROW UP POUR” stitched across it or the pencil-crayoned message adamantly reminding us not to overlook “self-determination’s aesthetic pleasure.”

In elaborating relationships among mismatched objects, figures, and references from different fields, eras, and aesthetics, *The Marble in the Basement* displays Meyer’s desire to situate her own practice within networks of queer kinship. Contemplating the performance, which traces her relationship to Joyce Wieland’s marble, she writes: “Through a constellation of objects paired with spoken text, I mapped a sprawling, erratic and radiating cosmos—a queered chronology.” And in remembering her unexpected camaraderie with Jane Rowland who gifted her the marble, she ponders, “with that came a swift and nonbiological inheritance, a queering of the straight line tradition dictates.” In *The Queer Art of History* (2023), scholar Jennifer V. Evans asserts, “Kinship is not just biological or even social; it is multidirectional and perspectival.” Significantly, Evans adds that kinship embraces “the potentiality of the otherwise,” a profound credo that bolsters Meyer’s own expansive art practice.

Hazel gratefully acknowledges support from the Canada Council for the Arts, and Shannon Cochrane of FADO Performance Art Centre, who first commissioned *The Marble in the Basement* in 2020. Special thanks to Zoë Chan and the Richmond Art Gallery. Hazel would also like to give deep appreciation to Kelsey Steeves, Calla Soderholm & the Shumka Centre’s Art Apprenticeship Network, Eric Tkaczyk, Anita Rochon, Ben James, Cait McKinney, performers past and present: Moe Angelos, Stephen Jackman-Torkoff & Alysha Seriani.





UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

It begins with knowing and not knowing

Rebecca Bair, Xinwei Che, Patrick Cruz, Zoë Kreye, Ogheneofegor Obuwoma, Michelle Sound, Ximena Velázquez

July 20 – September 29

In a world rife with injustice, pain, and uncertainty, this compelling group of artists engage with dimensions of spirituality, ceremony, and ritual to find greater meaning, rebuild ties with community, bolster a sense of self, or regain a sense of optimism. Transforming the Gallery with new or recent work, the artists of *It begins with knowing and not knowing* respectively present photographs, cyanotypes, sculptures, videos, ceramics, paintings, and performance.

Rebecca Bair traces a language of care in a series of cyanotypes holding traces of the shea butter and castor oil she uses in her weekly hair ablutions. Xinwei Che invites visitors to slow down and consider deep time. Patrick Cruz paints alternate realities based on his experiences with past-life regression techniques. Zoë Kreye constructs ethereal immersive installations with textiles painted using her entire body. Ogheneofegor Obuwoma's striking film delves into the trauma of her experiences at Catholic boarding school. Michelle Sound finds joy in the utilization of material practices like beadwork and drum making in the face of ongoing impacts of colonial violence on family members and Indigenous communities. Ximena Velázquez nurtures ties to her mother country Mexico through the cooking of her grandmother's recipes.

THE ANNEX GALLERY

Located in the Cultural Centre Annex (7660 Minoru Gate, Richmond)

Ya-Wei Lin

Invisibility

March 25 – June 24

Featuring a selection of colour as well as black-and-white photographic works, four photobooks, and a video, *Invisibility* showcases the mundane, fleeting, and otherwise easily overlooked moments that caught the sensitive eye of Richmond-based artist Ya-Wei Lin. Photographed during her commute to work, lunch breaks, walks, and travels, these visual details—from the light trails of night-time traffic or the unguarded social routines of urban dwellers—are Lin's language for narrating the world around her.



CITY HALL GALLERIA

Located in Richmond City Hall (6911 No.3 Rd, Richmond)

Jiangang Su

Birds and Rocks in Cloud City

March 26 – June 10

Birds and Rocks in Cloud City presents a lively natural world that showcases two subjects each representing a culture that is dear to multidisciplinary Chinese-Canadian artist Jiangang Su. Enchanted by BC's natural environment, Su skillfully situates birds native to Canada in poetic settings rendered using traditional Chinese ink and brush painting techniques. Su also meticulously depicts the amorphous and foraminate Taihu (Lake Tai) Rocks—long appreciated by Chinese scholars throughout the millennia—that are native to his home region Suzhou. These paintings offer a picture of Su's practice after he settled in Cloud City—the nickname given to Greater Vancouver by early Cantonese immigrants.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

Artist & Curator Tour at Opening Reception

Saturday, April 20

Artist / Curator Talk & Tour: 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Opening Reception: 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Join Richmond Art Gallery curator Zoë Chan, artist Hazel Meyer, and guest curator Michael Dang for an informal tour of the new exhibitions *The Marble in the Basement* and *Unit Bruises*. Opening launch to immediately follow.

**The Marble in the Basement:
Performances By Hazel Meyer**

May 9 & 10, 7:00 pm; May 12, 2:00 pm

Hazel Meyer and her cast of two other performers and a bug-eyed puppet called Marble act out *The Marble in the Basement*, a site-specific performance that uses her installation of the same name as a set. The marble found posthumously in Canadian artist Joyce Wieland's home becomes a point of departure to think about "inheritance, class, queerness...and what you pass on."

Register: richmondartgallery.org/performances

Cost: Sliding scale \$5.00 – \$15.00





World Collage Day: Collage Party for Joyce Wieland

Saturday, May 11, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

RAG presents a Collage Party for adults! It's the perfect opportunity to get together with friends and make some art! Using imagery inspired by the work of Canadian artist Joyce Wieland, participants are invited to cut and paste as they chat, listen to music, and experiment with simple art materials. All materials provided, ages 16+.

Register: richmondartgallery.org/world-collage-day

Artist Talk With Paul Wong

Saturday, May 25, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Join exhibiting artist Paul Wong and guest curator Michael Dang in conversation about the early works of Wong and his involvement in Vancouver's artist-run culture of the 1970s. Registration is encouraged.

Location: Richmond Cultural Centre Performance Hall
Register: richmondartgallery.org/paul-wong

DOORS OPEN RICHMOND

Archival Conversation: Exhibiting The Archive

Sunday, June 9, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Join *Unit Bruises* curator Michael Dang and conservator Sabina Sutherland for a conversation about archival practices for artworks. The discussion will touch on the ways a curator works with an archive to reveal the history of art and enrich our understanding of artistic practices, as well as the role of a conservator in caring for artwork and archival materials for long-term collections and preservation.

Register: richmondartgallery.org/archivetaalk

Online Panel Discussion: The Work of Theodore Wan

Thursday, June 27, 6:30 pm

Guest curator Michael Dang leads a panel discussion with friends of Theodore Wan, Paul Hess, Christos Dikeakos, and Christine Conley. They will discuss Wan's contribution to the Canadian performance art scene of the 1970s. The panel will focus on questions of creativity within the social climate of that era, and explore some local art history within the early days of Canadian artist-run culture.

Register: richmondartgallery.org/wan-panel



ONGOING PROGRAMS

Free Exhibition Tours for Groups

In-person exhibition tours can be booked anytime throughout the exhibition for your group or adult class of up to thirty participants. RAG staff provide insight and discussion for each exhibition, based on the needs of your group. Mandarin tours are available upon request and subject to staff availability. Book your visit at least three weeks in advance by contacting our Education & Public Programs Coordinator, Kathy Tycholis: ktycholis@richmond.ca

Cantonese Language Tour

Saturday, May 18, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Drop in for a tour of the current Richmond Art Gallery exhibitions in Cantonese. Learn more about the themes of the exhibitions through a guided visit and informal discussion over a cup of tea. Limited spaces, RSVP to reserve a seat.

中文導覽

5月18日，星期六，下午2-3點

歡迎參加列治文美術館當前展覽的粵語導覽！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/cantonese-tour

ARTIST SALON SERIES

Designed for visual artists of all levels, this program features guest artists, curators, and arts workers leading talks or workshops for visual artists to professionalize, socialize, and grow their art practice and community connections. Sessions occur online or in-person every other month for ages 16+.

Artist Salon with Hazel Meyer

Saturday, June 22, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Exhibiting artist Hazel Meyer will talk about her working process with installation, performance, and text to investigate how stories from life, history, and politics come together to take shape as a new artwork. The talk will be interspersed with moments of making small sculptural works, reading out loud, and being together in the embrace of the installation. Limited to 25 participants.

Register: richmondartgallery.org/salon-meyer





UPCOMING PROGRAMS

FOODWAYS Rooftop Garden Project May – September 2024

Throughout the spring and summer, we will be hosting *FOODWAYS Rooftop Garden Project* at the Cultural Centre's Rooftop Garden and Outdoor Plaza. This series of gatherings connecting artists, gardeners, and community will feature various programs related to growing, preparing, and consuming food. Visit the gallery website for updates on this exciting new project, culminating in an exhibition opening October 2024.

YOUTH & CHILDREN PROGRAMS

RAGA School Art Program Tours, Workshops and Teachers Resources

The School Art Program introduces students and teachers to the exciting world of contemporary art. Led by professional art educators, our programs teach inquiry-based art-viewing strategies that encourage students to make personal connections with art while developing visual literacy. We offer classroom art kits for rent, and in-person gallery tours with hands-on workshops for grades Pre-K to 12. Please book your visit or classroom art kit at least three weeks in advance by contacting our School Art Program Coordinator, Melanie Devoy at mdevoy@richmond.ca.

More info: richmondartgallery.org/schools



PERMANENT COLLECTION

Discover our collection digitally! Richmond Art Gallery has launched a new digital database of our permanent collection. Containing nearly four hundred works of art in a variety of media collected from 1982 to 2020, our collection is representative of the history of our exhibitions and a broader history of artistic production in British Columbia and beyond. The permanent collection includes works by established BC artists such as Anna Wong, Wayne Ngan, Susan Point, Greg Girard, and Gu Xiong among numerous others. Our collection tells the story of local artists, ambitious exhibition projects, and a dedicated community. Most works were donated by artists who exhibited at the Gallery, while others were purchased by the Gallery or donated by members of the community.

Info: richmondartgallery.org/ragcollection

Highlight from the Collection

Cynthia J. Smith
b.1955
Anthology of a Facelift, c. 1988
silver gelatin print
47.9 × 40.5cm



PUBLICATIONS

We are proud to announce that two of the Gallery's publications, *Sonja Ahlers: Classification Crisis* and *Brendan Fernandes: Inaction* were awarded Honorable Mentions in the Pictorial category of the Alcuin Society Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada for 2024. Huge congratulations go to talented local designer Victoria Lum for this major achievement.

Pick up your copy of these award-winning books on your next visit to the Gallery, or email galleries@richmond.ca. We can accept payments by credit card via phone or PayPal. Postage and handling costs are not included and will be calculated based on weight and destination.



BECOME A RAGA MEMBER

Members are an important part of the Richmond Art Gallery Association and contribute to the Gallery's growth and vitality by supporting our educational and outreach programming. Join our growing membership and become a supporter of the visual arts.

Members enjoy the following benefits:

- Invitations to members-only events
- 10% discount on Gallery programs and events
- 20% discount on Gallery publications
- And much more!

Cost: Memberships start at \$25.00

Info: richmondartgallery.org/membership

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Richmond Art Gallery Association (RAGA) is currently seeking volunteers aged 18+ to assist with our Public Programs and School Art Program. Join our volunteer team to meet new people, learn more about contemporary art practices and to help RAGA keep our programming free and accessible.

Info: richmondartgallery.org/volunteer

Credits – All images courtesy of the artists unless otherwise noted.

Cover (front): Hazel Meyer, *Marbie*, 2020, foam, silicone, puppet bits, faux fur, milk crate, wood, casters, hand-painted shirt, socks, ADIDAS runners, Photo: Dennis Ha; **p.1:** Theodore Sasketche Wan, *Panoramic Dental X-Ray* (1 of 3), 1977, silver gelatin print on paper, Collection of Vancouver Art Gallery, Acquisition Fund; **p.2 (top):** Paul Wong, *In Ten Sity*, 1978, video still; **p.2 (bottom):** Paul Wong, *7 Day Activity*, 1977, photograph, Courtesy of Paul Wong Projects; **p.3:** Hazel Meyer, *HERITAGE PLAQUES (JOYCE)*, 2020, pencil crayon on paper, Photo: Dennis Ha; **p.4 (top):** Hazel Meyer, *Marbie*, 2020, *The Marble in the Basement* performance, Progress Festival & FADO, Toronto, Photo: Polina Tief; **p.4 (bottom):** Hazel Meyer, *WHAT IT MEANS TO GROW UP POUR (after Wieland's Reason Over Passion)*, 2020, moving blankets, cotton, Tyvek, acrylic paint, felt, thread, batting, Photo: Dennis Ha; **p.5 (top):** Xinwei Che, *Gathering Space*, 2023, inkjet print; **p.5 (bottom):** Ya-Wei Lin, *Daily Moment in Vancouver*, 2022, digital photograph; **p.6 (top)** Jiangang Su, *Magnolia Explores the Spring*, 2022, ink and pigment on rice paper; **p.6 (bottom):** Quentin Qiu; **p.7 (top):** Photo: RAG Staff; **p.7 (bottom, clockwise):** Phillip Chin; Nikki D'amato; RAG Staff; Cait McKinney; **p.8 (top):** RAG Staff; **p.8 (bottom):** Hazel Meyer, *The Marble in the Basement* performance, Progress Festival & FADO, Toronto, Photo: Polina Tief; **p.9:** RAG Staff; **p.10 (top):** Cynthia J. Smith, *Anthology of a Facelift*, c.1988; **p.10 (bottom):** Natalie Davidovic

RAG 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.

We acknowledge and thank the First Peoples of the hən̓dəwičəm̓ language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we work and live.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: [richmondartgallerybc](https://www.facebook.com/richmondartgallerybc)

Twitter: [rag_gallery_bc](https://twitter.com/rag_gallery_bc)

Instagram: [richmondartgallerybc](https://www.instagram.com/richmondartgallerybc)

Youtube: [richmondartgallery](https://www.youtube.com/richmondartgallery)

Tag us: [#richmondartgallerybc](https://twitter.com/richmondartgallerybc)

GALLERY HOURS

Monday – Friday: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Saturday – Sunday: 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm

More info: richmondartgallery.org/visit-us

Admission is free or by donation

LOCATION

Richmond Cultural Centre

7700 Minoru Gate

Richmond, BC V6Y 1R9 Canada

RAG is situated on the unceded ancestral territory of the Hən̓dəwičəm̓ speaking peoples.

ACCESSIBILITY

- 4 accessible parking spaces in the Cultural Centre parkade
- Cultural Centre and Gallery spaces accessible by ramp
- Automated entrance and interior doors
- Accessible washrooms in the Cultural Centre with wide stalls and grab bars



CONTACT

gallery@richmond.ca

604-247-8363

richmondartgallery.org

