



**RICHMOND
ART GALLERY**

**FALL/WINTER
2021**



A PRACTICE IN GESTURES

Farheen HaQ
Deborah Koenker
Bev Koski
Mitra Mahmoodi
Bettina Matzkuhn
Barbara Zeigler

September 10 – November 7, 2021

Curated by Nan Capogna

A Practice in Gestures draws together works by six artists living and working in BC – Farheen HaQ, Deborah Koenker, Bev Koski, Mitra Mahmoodi, Bettina Matzkuhn, and Barbara Zeigler. The exhibition includes textile works - beading and embroidery - video, ceramic, and mixed media. The divergent works share a vocabulary of simple gestures rooted in domestic familiarity. They give shape to meaningful rituals and practices while confronting colonial and patriarchal narratives as well as critical environmental imperatives.

Spanning decades, the artists' practices range from emerging to over forty years. The selected works foreground the artist's relationship with materials, their methodologies and the significance of gestures, rituals, and practices. Centuries-old gestures and practices are

recast and contemporized, and demonstrate the potential of small, intimate gestures to expand from the personal and poetic, to the globally relevant

In her work, Farheen HaQ mines family history and trauma as a means toward healing and understanding. In the video *Drinking from my mother's saucer* (2015) HaQ endeavors to reconcile complicated childhood memories of her mother serving chai in a saucer, with the gift of a bone china teacup from her partner's British grandfather. In her compact and arresting video, HaQ investigates the colonial practice of using buffalo bones in the production of bone china and its devastating consequences to Indigenous peoples. HaQ considers her complicity in colonization in Canada, and her own colonized ancestors. A second video work by HaQ, *Fold* (2015), captures intimate gestures of caring through the folding and swaddling of fabric.



Deborah Koenker considers the status of women's work and the historical practice of excluding women from art studios and exhibitions in her elegant installation, *Hanging By A Thread: Anonymous Re-Vision*. The small hand-embroidered works – referencing needlework samplers – are based on photocopied details of sixteenth and seventeenth century 'Old Master' landscape drawings and engravings by male artists. In a subversive gesture, Koenker includes a number of embroidered works based on her own drawings into the installation. Begun in 2002, Koenker premieres a work of more than one-hundred and thirty embroideries as a new print series, *Hanging by a Thread: Migrations*. The prints are taken from the reverse side of the embroidered works – helter skelter threads charting vulnerable journeys.



In a series of beaded figures, Bev Koski examines ways that Indigenous identities have been appropriated and represented through stereotypical portrayals. A consummate beader, Koski beads over small figurines that are stereotypical representations of Indigenous people. Found in tourist shops and sold as toys and souvenirs, Koski collected the miniatures in her travels, as did friends on her behalf. The titles of the works indicate where they were purchased. In beading over the figurines, Koski erases their stereotypical representations. In the beaded covering she leaves an opening for the eyes to peer out, imparting a disconcerting impact. Koski also includes a new beaded work, *Are you still watching?* She gives a humorous nod to "binge watching" during Covid-19, though a more complicated message lingers.

Mitra Mahmoodi examines her Middle Eastern and Islamic heritage through clay in the installation, *Aftabeh* (2018). She employs the *aftabeh*, spouted pitchers traditionally used for cleansing and ablution, as a vehicle for exploring contradictions in the world of antiquity. Her assemblage of ceramic vessels, distorted and displaying impressions and marks made by the hand, recalls centuries of ritual. Fragments of poems, and passages from the Quran written in Farsi are visible on portions of the *aftabehs*. The selected texts warn of displays of pretense or ostentation, favouring gestures of kindness and compassion.



Bettina Matzkuhn's installation of handmade life jackets, *SOS* (2018–2019) highlight the vulnerability of refugees and migrants. A daughter of refugees who immigrated to Canada in the early 1950s, Matzkuhn inherited her parents' appreciation for the natural world. *SOS* is comprised of seven life jackets; their interior linings elaborately embroidered with landscapes representing "Peace", "Shelter", "Work", "Water", "Freedom", and "Beauty". Displayed upright they function as immigrant proxies huddled together. The life jacket, an iconic symbol of migration in the twenty-first century, underlines the despair of people fleeing. Highlighting the refugee crisis caused by the effects of global warming, Matzkuhn suggests that nature too requires rescuing. Included are three newer embroidered works of deconstructed backpacks from a series, *Gear* (2020-2021) that explore



the conflicting needs of humans and the environment.

Barbara Zeigler presents two closely related works – the video installation, *Passage II*, and *Totally Cracked*, a floor-work comprised of eggshells and river rock, which are part of the ongoing series *Ritual and Change*. Zeigler has been carefully washing and collecting the shells of eggs that her family has consumed for over thirty years. These works explore the small daily gestures that give rise to rituals, their formation, and evolution over time. In a period of accelerated change coupled with an increasingly precarious environment, this body of work serves as a reflection on time, transformation, the role of ritual in our lives, and links aspects of daily ritual to personal and societal change.

Artist Biographies

Farheen HaQ's multidisciplinary practice employs video, installation and performance. As a South Asian Muslim Canadian artist living in Victoria, BC, her current work focuses on understanding her family history on Canadian territories, care giving and the body as a continuum of culture and time. She has exhibited her work in galleries and festivals throughout Canada and internationally. Farheen received a BA in International Development

(1998) from the University of Toronto, a BEd (2000) from the University of Ottawa and an MFA in Visual Arts (2005) from York University.

Deborah Koenker is a Vancouver-based interdisciplinary artist whose practice explores narratives, borders and transformative justice. Professor Emerita, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, she was instrumental in establishing Malaspina Printmakers Workshop, Vancouver, serving as inaugural Director. Koenker is active in curatorial projects, writing, panels, lectures, and artist residency programs internationally; she was selected for the Canada Council International Paris Studio (2011). Her work, exhibited in Canada, the US, Mexico and Spain, is represented in more than thirty public collections in Canada and the United States.

Bev Koski is an Anishinaabe artist living in Vancouver, BC. She is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and has a BFA from York University. For many years Koski worked with 7th Generation Image Makers, an art and mural programme for Indigenous youth run by Native Child and Family Services of Toronto. Her work has been exhibited at the Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, Kamloops Art Gallery, Carleton University Art Gallery, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, Gallery 44, Oakville Galleries and the Textile Museum of Toronto. Her work is in private and public collections in Canada.

Mitra Mahmoodi is an emerging artist based in Vancouver, Canada. She graduated in 2009 with a degree in Economics from her home country of Iran. Soon after immigrating to Canada, she commenced a career as an artist working in ceramics. Mahmoodi studied Ceramic Design at University of Arts London, UK before returning to Vancouver and transferring her education to Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Her work has been exhibited in Canada and in the UK.

Bettina Matzkuhn works primarily in hand embroidery, valuing its versatility as a visual language. Her narratives predominantly focus on ecology, weather, and geography. Matzkuhn holds a BFA and an MA from Simon Fraser University, and is the recipient of Canada Council and British Columbia Arts Council Grants. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions across Canada, as well as in Korea and the United States. Her work is in national public collections. She lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Barbara Zeigler is an artist and Professor Emerita of the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory, University of British Columbia (Vancouver). Her work investigates social and political issues related to human and non-human life and the overlap of image and ideology in divergent forms of representation. Continuing concerns since the late sixties have been ecological degradation, and the need for a paradigm shift. Her artworks have been widely exhibited nationally and internationally and are in numerous national and international public collections.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

ARTRICH 2021

December 3, 2021 – January 2, 2022

Richmond Art Gallery is delighted once again to partner with the Richmond Arts Coalition (RAC) for the fourth bi-annual, juried exhibition. The exhibition celebrates local talent by providing an opportunity for emerging and established artists from Richmond and nearby communities.

Gallery viewers will be able to participate in the *People's Choice Awards*. Results will be announced in Richmond News early January 2022.

In a partnership with the City of Richmond, an artist from the show will be featured in a public exhibition at *No. 3 Road Art Columns*, February 1 – August 1, 2022.

An opening reception will be held December 3, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, BC Health regulations permitting. Please refer to richmondartgallery.org/artrich2021 closer to the opening date for confirmation and more details.



SCHOOL ART PROGRAM

TOURS & WORKSHOPS

The School Art Program is back this fall and is now offering video art lessons, classroom art kits, and in-person gallery tours with hands-on workshops for K-12 students. Please book your visit or classroom art kit at least three weeks in advance.

Registration & Info: [Melanie Devoy mdevoy@richmond.ca](mailto:mdevoy@richmond.ca)
Current workshops: richmondartgallery.org/current-workshops

ART MAKING KITS

Indigenous Art Series

We are delighted to announce that we have partnered with artist Michelle Sound to create a series of video art lessons on the theme of Indigenous Art, and the first activity is now available. Inspired by Métis artist Amy Malbeuf's artwork exhibited in last year's *Labours Trace* exhibition, the first lesson examines the traditional technique of caribou tufting.

A Classroom Kit with required materials for this activity can be purchased from the gallery. To find out more or to order a kit contact the School Program Coordinator, Melanie Devoy at mdevoy@richmond.ca or visit richmondartgallery.org/artkit

Page 1: Farheen HaQ, *Drinking from my mother's saucer*, 2015. video still, courtesy of the artist.

Page 2: Deborah Koenker, *Hanging By A Thread: Anonymous Re-Vision: after engraving by Diderot and d'Alembert after drawing by Titian from 'Encyclopedie' #1*, hand embroidery on dupioni silk, 30.48 x 30.48 cm framed; Bettina Matzkuhn, *SOS: Freedom*, 2019, hand embroidery on painted linen, cotton canvas, assorted sewing notions, foam inserts, 50 x 46 x 30 cm. Photo: Ted Clarke.

Left: Bev Koski, *Toronto #2*, 2015, beads, thread, found object, 11 x 7 x 5 cm.

Right: Example of RAGA School Program art making kit.



JOIN US FOR A SEASON OF PROGRAMS & EVENTS FOR ALL AGES

As health orders change, Gallery events will be hosted on-site, online or both. Live-streamed events will be on our Facebook page.

All events are free unless noted.

RAG@HOME

richmondartgallery.org/rag-at-home

RAG@Home is a way to enjoy the gallery online, from wherever you may be. Engage with us through live and on-demand digital artist talks, hands-on art activities, and exhibition tours for all ages.

Missed the latest artist talk, performance, or pro-D workshop? Check out our online video library.



ARTIST TOUR: A PRACTICE IN GESTURES

Sunday, September 12, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Join curator Nan Capogna and artists, Farheen HaQ, Deborah Koenker, Mitra Mahmoodi, Bettina Matzkuhn, and Barbara Zeigler, as they discuss their works in the exhibition. Space is limited and pre-booking is required.

In-person: Richmond Art Gallery

Registration & Info: richmondartgallery.org/artist-tour

RICHMOND
CULTURE
DAYS

September 24 – October 24, 2021

culturedays.ca

Culture Days is a national celebration of arts and culture. At the end of each September, millions of people attend thousands of free participatory arts and culture events across the country.

CULTURE DAYS EVENT

ARTIST SALON WITH "SIGNS OF PRIDE"

Saturday, September 25, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Youth and professional artists, Sam McWilliams, Paige Gratland, and Phranc will discuss their public art project, *Signs of Pride*, that was created to celebrate Pride Week in Richmond this past summer. What artists need to consider when planning community-based projects will be discussed. Registration required for in-person seating.

In-person: Richmond Cultural Centre Performance Hall

Online: facebook.com/RichmondArtGalleryBC

Registration & Info: richmondartgallery.org/signs-of-pride



CULTURE DAYS EVENT

DRAWING JAM!

Sunday, September 26, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

This hands-on workshop led by artist & ECUAD faculty, Alexandra Philips, is designed to give drawing enthusiasts a direct experience of spontaneous creativity. No drawing experience is necessary! All materials are provided for in-person attendees. Online participants can use any drawing materials found at home. Registration for in-person session required.

In-person: Richmond Art Gallery Program Room

Online: facebook.com/RichmondArtGalleryBC/

Registration & Info: richmondartgallery.org/drawing-jam



CULTURE DAYS EVENT

WOMEN'S WORK: ONLINE PANEL DISCUSSION

Saturday, October 16, 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Throughout the history of art, decoration and domestic handicrafts have been devalued as "women's work". Using the artworks in *Practice in Gestures* as a launching point, join curator Nan Capogna, artists Farheen HaQ, Deborah Koenker and Bettina Matzkuhn. This event will include time for Q+A by participants.

Location: Online via Zoom (www.zoom.us)

Registration & Info: richmondartgallery.org/womens-work



Image, right: *Signs of Pride*, Collaborative Youth Art Initiative, 2021.



ARTIST SALON WITH BEV KOSKI

Saturday, October 30, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

October's Artist Salon features Vancouver-based artist Bev Koski. Koski is an Anishnabekwe artist who will share her artistic journey as a beading artist, teacher, and mentor for an art and mural programme for Indigenous youth. This session is ideal for artists wanting to explore ways of incorporating their art practice into programs for youth.

Location: Online via Zoom (www.zoom.us)

Registration & Info: richmondartgallery.org/koski



ON-SITE GUIDED TOURS

Every Saturday & Sunday: 12:30 pm, 1:30 pm, 2:30 pm, or 3:30 pm

ONLINE TOURS IN ENGLISH OR MANDARIN

Daily, Monday to Friday

In-person tours are hosted every weekend at select times for groups of up to ten visitors. Online tours can also be booked for a virtual tour and discussions with your group or class.

Location: Art Gallery or Online

Register for in-person tours:

gallery@richmond.ca or phone 604-247-8363

Register for online tours: ktycholis@richmond.ca



YOUTH ART + CULTURE LAB

ART COURSE FOR AGES 12-15

October 3, 2021 – April 24, 2022

Youth Art + Culture Lab is an exciting partnership between Emily Carr University and Richmond Art Gallery. This program will provide youth aged 12–15 an opportunity to build confidence and develop diverse creative skills through hands-on and interactive sessions with local and international artists, art gallery professionals and Emily Carr instructors. Most art materials are provided.

In-person: Richmond Art Gallery & Emily Carr University

Cost: \$463.50

Registration & Info bit.ly/ECUADYouthLab / teens@ecuad.ca



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 throughout the year
- 10% discount on Gallery programs and events
- 20% discount on Gallery catalogues
- And much more!

Cost: Memberships start at \$25.00

More info: richmondartgallery.org/membership



VISIT US IN-PERSON!

Enter through the Richmond Cultural Centre front entrance (7700 Minoru Gate), and staff will direct you to the gallery.

You can also book your visit in advance by phone 604-247-8363 or email galler@richmond.ca.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The safety of all visitors and staff is our priority. Protocols following government guidelines are in place to ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable visit. We thank you for your patience and cooperation and as always, we welcome your feedback. Visit richmondartgallery.org for up-to-date protocols.

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 exhibitions, educational programs, publications, and a permanent collection.

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
*Please confirm hours on our website as they may change during the fall and winter.
More info: richmondartgallery.org/reopen
Admission is free or by donation

LOCATION

Richmond Cultural Centre
7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC
V6Y 1R9

CONTACT

richmondartgallery.org
galler@richmond.ca
604-247-8363

richmondartgallery.org



PUBLIC ART
RICHMOND



Cover image, top: Barbara Zeigler, *Change*, 2015–2016, photo-etching on copper, 24.25 x 39.0 inches. Bottom: Mitra Mahmoodi, *Aftabeh* (installation detail), 2018, earthenware clay, dimensions variable.