

## Yoshua Okón

### *Los Palacios de Moctezuma [The Halls of Montezuma]*, 2015

video, 37 sec.

Courtesy of the artist

In Yoshua Okón's *The Halls of Montezuma*, a group of undocumented Guatemalan children temporarily housed in a detention centre in Arizona recite a revised version of the official hymn of the United States Marines, the "Marine's Hymn." Their desolate chorus offers up a sobering counterpoint to the original lyrics of this patriotic song, which jubilantly applauds acts of American military imperialism "in ev'ry clime and place/ Where we could take a gun" for "right and freedom/And to keep our honor clean." Ironically, the US backed a military regime in Guatemala that helped to create the conditions of war, poverty, and inequality that led many Guatemalans to flee; recently, severe US restrictions on immigration from Guatemala have led to a rise in illegal, undocumented migrants.

The artist filmed these nine children from behind in order to protect their identities. By lining them up against a wall, the artist underscores their vulnerability and marginalized status. He writes:

My hope with this work is not only that we can put ourselves in these children's shoes, but mostly that we, those on the privileged side, can examine our own and our government's participation and complicity in such a deeply unfair system.



Listen to an audio recording of this label.

## **Kirsten Leenaars**

### ***The Shape of Things (Come Tomorrow), 2017***

video, 16 min. 12 sec.

Courtesy of the artist

Director: Kirsten Leenaars

Sound: Brent Walquist

Editing: Ellie Hall

Camera: Paul Deuth

Participants: Alanis Aranda-Salgado, Iman Fatmi, Hannah Plevin, Grace Elaine Ohlendorf, Nina Jackson, Elsa Grace Berner, Javon Amin Barker, Vittoria Lucchesi, Paw Boe Say, Rahma Mohamed, Amina Mohammed, Nur Begum, Yusof Begum, Isa Begum, Rokimah Begum, Malachi Moore, Matthew Moore, Kaylin Dillard, Jordan Muhammed, Wayan Muhammed

### ***Manifesto for the Future, 2017***

posters

Courtesy of the artist

Authors: Alanis Aranda-Salgado, Iman Fatmi, Hannah Plevin, Grace Elaine Ohlendorf, Elsa Grace Berner, Javon Amin Barker, Nina Jackson, Coen T. Kriofske Mainella, Vittoria Lucchesi, Ju Hta Paw, Paw Htoo Boe, Paw Boe Say, Rahma Mohamed, Amina Mohammed, Nur Begum, Yusof Begum, Isa Begum, Rokimah Begum, Malachi Moore, Matthew Moore, Kaylin Dillard, Hamilton Reinbold, Jordan Muhammed, Wayan Muhammed, Awais Ali, Nurtho Ali



Listen to an audio recording of Kirsten Leenaars labels.

## **Manon Chamberland and Eva Kaukai in collaboration with the Wapikoni Mobile team**

*Katatjatuuk Kangirsumi (Throat Singing in Kangirsuk)*,  
2018

video, 3 min. 29 sec.

Courtesy of Wapikoni Mobile

The Québec-based non-profit organisation Wapikoni Mobile offers workshops to Indigenous youth on video and music production, cultivating a future generation of filmmakers and musicians, in Canada and abroad. Though eclectic in style, the Wapikoni Mobile-produced videos presented here notably all reveal the importance of the land for their subjects.

In the spectacular *Katatjatuuk Kangirsumi (Throat Singing in Kangirsuk)*, two teenagers practice the ancient Inuk cultural tradition of throat singing—the sounds of their breath offering an urgent rhythmic backdrop to the video. These intimate scenes are interspersed with sweeping drone imagery of village life in northern Nunavik through the seasons: snowdrifts, the greens and pinks of lichen and wildflowers, children laughing and playing, hunters cutting up meat outdoors.



Listen to an audio recording of this label.

**Annabelle Bearskin, Jennica Herodier, Dallas Happyjack, Emery Happyjack, Leland Kanatewat, Isaac Katapatuk, David Lee Louttit, Reggie Ottereyes, Shaylena Salt, Darren Sam**

*Hunting Lessons / Leçons de chasse, 2023*

video, 3 min. 45 sec.

## **Landon Moise**

*It's Me, Landon, 2018*

video, 4 min. 16 sec.

Courtesy of Wapikoni Mobile

In the charming *Hunting Lessons* partially shot with an iPhone, a group of Cree children playfully explain how to be stewards of the land, while the eight-year-old protagonist of *It's Me Landon* earnestly guides us on a tour of the forest trails he regularly frequents on the Clearwater River Dene Nation in Northern Saskatchewan.



Listen to an audio recording of this label.

# Yaimel López Zaldívar

## *(Re)Housing the American Dream & The Shape of Things, 2023*

screen prints

Courtesy of the artist

Here the artist responds to Kirsten Leenaars' featured videos. He layers images taken from her videos (a flag blowing in the wind, a figure standing on a ladder) with text rendered in heavy block capitals, feathery brushstrokes, and fluid cursive. These aesthetic decisions recall the idealism of the youth and the divisiveness—or brokenness—of the "American Dream," including the often elusive values of democracy, liberty, equality, and opportunity for all.



Listen to an audio recording of Yaimel López Zaldívar's labels.

# Yaimel López Zaldívar

## *Los Palacios de Moctezuma, 2023*

screen prints

Courtesy of the artist

In this series of screen prints responding to Yoshua Okón's video, López Zaldívar zooms in on the back of a head like a target. Spiky slashes of green create a sense of danger. Bunches of bananas evoke the history of the American multinational corporation (now known as Chiquita) and its role in supporting US backed military governments in so-called "banana republics" like Guatemala.



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# Yaimel López Zaldívar

*Hunting Lessons / It's Me Landon / Katatjatuuk  
Kangirsumi, 2023*

screen prints

Courtesy of the artist

The artist reworks key visual elements from these three videos and layers them on a bright green background, highlighting the liveliness of Wapikoni Mobile's young collaborators and the dynamism of their productions.



Listen to an audio recording of Yaimel López Zaldívar's labels.



## **Julie Hammond**

### ***Minoru Manifesto, 2019***

photo (documentation)

Courtesy of Richmond Public Art

A manifest is a list of things carried. A manifesto is a public claim. How does what we carry—as individuals and as a community— influence what we claim? – Julie Hammond

Commissioned through the City of Richmond’s Engaging Artists in Community Program, this intergenerational project explored “the relationship between the things we carry and the things we claim.” *Minoru Manifesto* included performances, installations, walks, and pop-up events.



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## **Kirsten Leenaars**

### ***(Re)Housing the American Dream, 2016***

exhibition catalogue, 36 pages

published by Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee, Wisconsin on the occasion of *(Re)Housing the American Dream* exhibition, August 18 – December 23, 2016

### ***(Re)Housing the American Dream: Freedom Principles, 2018***

exhibition catalogue, 34 pages

published by Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee, Wisconsin on the occasion of *(Re)Housing the American Dream: Freedom Principles* exhibition, August 17, 2018 – January 27, 2019

Richmond Art Gallery presents *(Re)Housing the American Dream: A Message from the Future (2017)*, the second iteration of Kirsten Leenaar's ambitious project. You can read about its other iterations in these publications or visit its project website: [rehousingtheamericandream.wordpress.com](http://rehousingtheamericandream.wordpress.com)

## Kirsten Leenaars

### *(Re)Housing the American Dream: A Message from the Future*, 2017

3-channel video, 13 min. 42 sec.

Courtesy of the artist

Director / Editor: Kirsten Leenaars  
Assistant Director: Zachary Hutchinson  
Camera: Ellie Hall and Paul Deuth  
Sound: Brent Walquist  
Composer: Paul Deuth

Performers: Alanis Aranda-Salgado, Iman Fatmi, Hannah Plevin, Grace Elaine Ohlendorf, Nina Jackson, Elsa Grace Berner, Javon Amin Barker, Coen T. Kriofske Mainella, Vittoria Lucchesi, Ju Hta Paw, Paw Htoo Boe, Paw Boe Say, Rahma Mohamed, Amina Mohammed, Nur Begum, Yusof Begum, Isa Begum, Rokimah Begum, Malachi Moore, Matthew Moore, Kaylin Dillard, Hamilton Reinbold, Jordan Muhammed, Wayan Muhammed, Awais Ali, Nurtho Ali

Over several years, Chicago-based artist Kirsten Leenaars collaborated with a charismatic group of youth from Milwaukee over annual summer camps for her majestic yet intimate project *(Re) Housing the American Dream* (2016-2020). At the Richmond Art Gallery, we are able to show two of the videos that came out of this ongoing overarching project in 2017. Against the backdrop of the turbulent Trump presidential era, her young participants—some American-born, some recent refugees—express with sincerity their hopes and fears around the many sociopolitical issues that touch their everyday lives through interviews, movement exercises, public actions, and art-making. Witnessing them speak, chant, move, and play, we

chart their growth and evolution as engaged citizens and future voters.

Leenaars employs a deeply embodied approach to working with her collaborators, as can be seen in her description of some of the group's activities:

They wrote a manifesto, embody the future creative work force, planted flags devised from silver emergency blankets in the neighborhood, took over the streets moving as one collective body, and created a large-scale 'monument of the future' in public space in response to the Charlottesville protests. Collectively they imagined how we could move forward as a nation comprised of a multitude of histories and identities, like the group itself.



Listen to an audio recording of this label.