

## Audio Descriptions for Persimmon Blackbridge:

### ***Speak No (emergency)* at Richmond Art Gallery by Wanda Fitzgerald**

#### ***Speak No (Emergency)* Introduction**

**Welcome to the *Speak No (Emergency)* series**, where art and environmental consciousness converge. This gallery exhibit showcases a powerful collection of doll-sized human figures, meticulously crafted from wood, metal, and other found materials. Suspended against a painted grey wooden backdrop—approximately 1.5 feet wide by 7 feet tall—the figures appear to float weightlessly, a delicate reminder of humanity’s fragility within the context of our changing world.

**These figures are carefully arranged** to convey a sense of vulnerability and resilience. Some stand with their legs straight, as if suspended in mid-air, while others are posed as seated forms, creating a visual metaphor for the precarious balance between stillness and movement. The arrangement, from the largest at the bottom to the smallest at the top, further emphasizes this delicate tension.

**In their abstraction**, these figures reflect not just human form but the ongoing environmental struggles we face. With subtle references to the human body—particularly anatomical details such as vulvas and penises—these works explore identity, transformation, and the deeply personal impact of global crises. Through a soft interplay of shadow and light, the figures seem to be in constant motion, perhaps alluding to the urgent, continuous environmental changes around us.

**This exhibit invites reflection** on the ways in which the human experience is intertwined with the planet’s well-being, urging us to consider the consequences of environmental neglect and the unspoken emergency we all face.

## ***2 Cedars (dying)*, 2021**

yellow cedar, red cedar, doll parts, bones, junk metal

Courtesy of the artist

This artwork, titled *Two Cedars (dying)*, is an evocative sculptural piece that combines natural and man-made materials to explore themes of decay, resilience, and environmental fragility. The piece is mounted on a vertical panel with a muted, neutral background, which allows the materials to stand out vividly.

The figures are primarily constructed from cedar wood, highlighting its rich grain and warm, earthy tones. The organic forms of the wood suggest the bodies of trees, their shapes tapering and splitting as if marked by time and environmental strain. The humanoid forms possess elongated, abstract proportions, with some featuring skeletal arms crafted from bone or wire, while others incorporate metallic and industrial components such as bolts and rods, symbolizing human interference with nature.

Twigs or branches stretch diagonally across the composition, resembling veins or lifelines but appearing brittle and fragmented. These lines convey a sense of

fragility, reflecting the title's theme of death or decline. One figure wears a hat-like structure, while another has embedded nails for "hair," giving the forms a hauntingly anthropomorphic quality, as if these cedars have absorbed human traits in their struggle for survival.

The combination of wood's natural texture with the sharpness of metal and the starkness of bone highlights the tension between organic life and industrial influence. The figures appear simultaneously resilient and wounded, standing as powerful reminders of the effects of environmental degradation and the delicate balance between life and death in the natural world. *2 Cedars (dying)* is a poetic and somber reflection on the vulnerability of ecosystems.



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## ***Beetlekill*, 2021**

beetle-killed wood, doll parts, junk metal

Courtesy of the artist

This artwork, titled *Beetlekill*, showcases ten small, abstract wooden figures mounted on a tall, rectangular gray plank. The figures, crafted from beetle-killed pine wood, feature the unique blue-grey and yellow-orange streaks typical of trees affected by the mountain pine beetle. Each figure has a distinct shape and composition, with some combining materials like plastic, metal, and bone. Most figures have smooth, blank faces, while one has a metallic face and another with pronounced curves is headless. The figures are arranged in clusters, with their arms often raised, and a few appear to be floating or seated. The backdrop is punctuated by occasional random holes, echoing the beetle-infested texture of the wood and adding to the piece's raw, organic aesthetic. The lighting casts shadows that enhance the composition's dimensionality and evoke themes of decay, transformation, and resilience.



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## ***Extincture, 2022***

wood, bones, feathers, doll parts, junk metal

Courtesy of the artist

Six figures are arranged in diagonal pairs in the upper, middle and lower areas of the plank. Thin, curved bones are also attached to the plank, with a row of 4 below the upper figures and 2 below the lower figures. The bones range in length from the height of a radiator to the length of a table fork.

The figures range from the size of a standard Barbie doll to a couple of feet tall. They're mostly made of carved wood and bones, with bits of other materials such as brass rods, a crushed can, sinew and feathers. Two figures have pink dolls' legs, three figures have black birds' wings. The predominate colours throughout are black, white and many shades of brown. Half the floating figures are positioned as if standing and the others as sitting. Their faces are mostly smooth and blank, looking down. One has a long-beaked bird skull for a head and another has no head, but a tiny bird skull is attached to the plank beside it.

### ***Extincture*** (detail 1)

This photo is a detail shot from near the bottom of the piece. Two figures are attached to the plank, with two bones underneath the one on the left. The upper bone is a curved rib, about 2 feet (60 cm.) long. The lower is a slightly curved, hollow bone (from the wing of a goose) about a third as long.

The figure to the left is positioned as if seated. Its round, silver head is made from the bottom of a soft drink can, with jagged bits of the can jutting out around it like hair. The torso is made from a smooth piece of cedar with strongly figured grain that seems to shine from within. It's cut into a thick angular stylized shape. The thighs are also stylized, with sharp curved edges, made from pieces of red brown, densely figured burl wood. The lower legs are thick black wires, with no feet. At the shoulders, feathered birds' wings hang down. The right one is 2 inches (5 cm.) long and solid black. The left one is 7 inches (18 cm.) long with black feathers that are very worn in the centre so that the white feather shafts and some of the bones are visible.

The head and torso of the second figure are carved from yellow maple, sanded fairly smooth, but with an overall pattern of scratches that have white paint rubbed into them. The top of the head has been sawn off and reattached. The arms are long, thin bones nailed to the shoulders, hanging down at its sides. The knobby joints at the end of the bones form hands. The left bone has seven short sections of feather shafts lashed along its length with translucent filament similar to sinew. The hips are rough brown sections of burl wood, and the legs are long thin cream yellow sticks, with brown markings (caused by beaver chewing the bark off).

### ***Extincture*** (detail 2)

This photo is a detail shot from the middle of the piece *Extincture*. It focuses on 2 figures, with another partially included at the bottom of the frame. A row of four curved rib bones crosses at the top of the plank, ranging in size from 2 feet (60 cm.) to 6 inches (15 cm) long. Pale pink doll legs come down from the top right of the frame, beside the bones.

The first figure to the left is in a seated position. The head is a white bird skull with large round eyes sockets and a long black beak. It's attached with a brass rod to the torso, which is a wide bone (the sacrum of a small seal) about 6 inches (15 cm.) long, with three large round holes along each side of it. The round hips are carved from mid brown mahogany, and taper to thinner thighs

and knees. The lower legs are long, thin, hollow bones, with tiny toes carved into the ends. Attached to the plank behind the shoulders, coming down like arms are two black feathered wings, spread wide, with pale yellow markings.

The other figure is carved from smoothly sanded, dark brown walnut wood. The head and shoulders are a separate piece of walnut, attached to the rest of the figure with a brass rod. The head featureless and facing upwards. The body is strongly figured, with horizontal curl lines resembling ribs. There's a large hole forming the interior of the pelvis, where a knot in the wood once was, and the legs continue from there in a standing position. There are no feet. Attached to the shoulders are small black feathered wings with pale yellow markings, folded and hanging down like arms at the sides.

The figure at the bottom of the frame is the same yellow maple one described in *Extincture* (detail 1).



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## ***Heat (life)*, 2024**

wood, doll parts, feathers, junk plastic

Courtesy of the artist

*Heat (life)* is an intense and visceral exploration of vitality forged in the crucible of environmental strain. This artwork pulses with energy and movement, capturing the paradoxical vibrancy that emerges from harsh, heated landscapes. Mounted against a richly textured red surface, the figures are sculptural elements that appear partially embedded within or emerging from the fiery backdrop, symbolizing life's persistence even in the most extreme conditions.

The crimson wood grain evokes both the scorching heat of the earth and the lifeblood coursing through it. The figures, rendered in dynamic poses, suggest motion and resilience, with some actively climbing or reaching outward. Their forms—partially deconstructed yet distinct—resemble beings tempered by the fiery trials of nature. The reddish tones of their surfaces, marked with streaks of metallic and charred hues, suggest a link to the destructive force of fire while emphasizing transformation and renewal.

In connection to its predecessor, *Heat (death)*, this piece offers a counterbalance. While *Heat (death)* reflects loss, dissolution, and the existential threat posed by

climate change, *Heat (life)* underscores the capacity for regeneration and survival. Together, they form a dialogue: fire as both an agent of destruction and creation, a force that simultaneously consumes and provides fertile ground for rebirth.

*Heat (life)* invites viewers to contemplate the enduring power of nature and humanity to adapt, to rise amidst adversity, and to find beauty within the harsh realities of a warming world. It emphasizes the duality of heat as not merely an ending, but a potential beginning.



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## ***Heat (death)*, 2024**

Plexiglas, inner tube rubber over plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Heat (death)* is a haunting and contemplative artwork that delves into the existential and environmental crisis of planetary overheating. Utilizing a minimalist palette and sharp contrasts, this piece reflects the oppressive nature of extreme heat and its inevitable consequences on life.

The composition features ghostly, translucent figures floating over the dark, textured backdrop. Their forms are rigid and angular, suspended in an abstract void, evoking a sense of displacement and weightlessness. Each figure appears to be frozen mid-movement, their outlines fragmented as though they are being erased by an overwhelming, unseen force. The stark black background, made from overlapping layers of inner tube rubber, is fractured with faint curved lines that suggest the scorched surface of a parched earth or the rippling distortion of heat waves.

This piece is layered with symbolic meaning: the Plexiglas figures, fading into their surroundings, embody the fragility of life in the face of rising global temperatures. Their ghost-like transparency hints at disappearance—perhaps extinction—underscoring the profound loss caused by unchecked environmental degradation.

*Heat (death)* serves as a stark reminder of humanity's precarious position within the natural world, emphasizing the irreversible damage inflicted by climate change. Its somber tone and stark simplicity leave a lasting impression, urging the viewer to confront the urgency of ecological responsibility.



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## ***I Can Forget (the burning world), 2023***

wood, bones, doll parts, junk metal, feathers

Courtesy of the artist

*I Can Forget (The Burning World)* speaks to the tension between awareness and denial in the face of environmental crisis. This horizontal piece, rendered on a vivid red-orange wooden backdrop, evokes the smoldering hues of a world on fire—both literal and metaphorical. The figures, carved with precision and mounted on the surface, appear suspended in states of action or repose, embodying humanity's complex relationship with a planet under threat.

Each figure is distinct, their forms imbued with subtle details—mechanical elements, fragmented shapes, and raw textures—that suggest both individuality and a collective experience. Some figures seem resilient, their limbs stretched forward as if to confront the challenges ahead, while others lie motionless or altered, symbolizing detachment or surrender. The materiality of the wood, with its natural grain scorched and highlighted, reinforces the theme of environmental degradation—nature transformed and scarred by human impact.

This artwork extends the environmental narrative present in *Heat (life)* and *Heat (death)*, delving deeper into the psychological and moral dimensions of climate change. It

prompts viewers to reflect on the tension between action and inaction, hope and despair, memory and forgetting. The burning world it represents is not just a backdrop but an active force shaping the figures, calling into question whether humanity will confront the crisis or retreat into willful ignorance.

Through its tactile elements and fiery palette, *I Can Forget (The Burning World)* challenges us to engage with the urgency of the moment. It reminds us that forgetting may offer temporary solace but at a profound cost—a stark reflection of the choices that define our shared future.



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## ***Plastic (land)*, 2023**

wood, bone, plastic, wire, doll parts, oxygen tubing, miscellaneous junk, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

This piece, titled *Plastic (land)*, is a thought-provoking environmental artwork that combines surrealist aesthetics with a commentary on human impact. Mounted on a rectangular panel with a muted, grayish-lavender tone, the composition is populated by a variety of humanoid figures and organic shapes crafted from mixed media. Materials like driftwood, bone-like elements, plastic tubing, and found objects form these abstract figures, evoking a blend of natural and artificial forms.

The figures appear distorted and fragmented, with elongated limbs, skeletal torsos, and hybridized, mechanical features. Long curving plastic tubes are attached to the panel behind the figures, suggesting life-support systems or entanglements with synthetic elements. The placement of the figures varies, with some appearing upright, others reclined, and a few in mid-air, as though caught in motion or suspended in time.

The use of weathered wood and earthy textures contrasts starkly with polished, industrial plastics, creating a dialogue between the organic and the manufactured. This duality reflects the environmental

theme, highlighting humanity's entanglement with and alteration of nature. The tubes might symbolize the dependency or intrusion of human activity into ecosystems, while the fragmented forms suggest the disintegration of natural unity under human influence.

*Plastic (land)* invites viewers to ponder the consequences of industrialization and plastic waste, delivering its message through its haunting, poetic imagery and unsettling juxtaposition of materials.



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## *Plastic (ocean)*, 2023

wood, bone, plastic from the ocean, wire, doll parts, miscellaneous junk, plastic sheeting over plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Plastic (ocean)* captures the haunting beauty and devastation of marine ecosystems overwhelmed by human waste. The piece brings together fragmented human and organic forms, tangled in wire mesh and synthetic fibers, to illustrate the entanglement of life with pollution. It is a powerful statement on the fragility of the oceans, where nature's harmony is fractured by the invasive permanence of plastic.

The figures—some skeletal, others partially concealed by net-like structures—appear caught, suffocating within a toxic tide. The materials, ranging from bleached wood to translucent and reflective fragments, evoke the interplay between organic life and the synthetic waste infiltrating every level of the marine environment. The warped forms and hollow bodies suggest the erosion of identity and vitality, mirroring the effects of microplastics and debris on marine life.

The use of textures and materials evokes the sensation of a polluted sea. Strands of netting and rough fibers, reminiscent of seaweed entangled with trash, flow from the figures, creating a sense of motion akin to the ceaseless currents. The muted gray background echoes

the monotony of a lifeless ocean floor, stripped of vibrancy. Meanwhile, the jagged and reflective accents mimic the glint of plastic shimmering deceptively under sunlight.

*Plastic (ocean)* serves as both a lament and a call to action, a vivid reminder of humanity's impact on the world's waters. The stark contrast between the delicate craftsmanship of the figures and the suffocating presence of man-made materials highlights the dissonance between human innovation and its destructive aftermath. It urges viewers to confront the pervasive reach of plastic and to consider their own role in the preservation—or destruction—of the planet's most vital ecosystems.



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## ***See No*, 2022**

wood, junk metal, plant roots, stone, plastic, metal and fabric mesh, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*See No* deepens the thematic exploration of human detachment from environmental collapse, building upon the narrative initiated in *Speak No*. Here, fragmented and distorted heads are arranged vertically, their varied materials and textures reflecting diverse responses—or refusals—to confront the ecological crisis. Each head, crafted from wood and adorned with elements such as wire, fabric, and organic fragments, tells a story of evasion, blindness, or overwhelmed perception.

The use of contrasting textures—smooth finishes, frayed edges, and raw, unpolished surfaces—evokes the discord between humanity’s constructed realities and the natural world’s unyielding presence. Some faces appear obscured, partially wrapped or splintered, suggesting a deliberate or unconscious refusal to see the damage unfolding around them. Others exhibit piercing expressions or restrained features, caught between acknowledgment and the paralysis of inaction.

The vertical arrangement of the piece echoes a moral ascent or descent: the heads at the top seem more eroded or lost, while those lower down retain a heavier, grounded presence. This structure invites viewers to

consider the progressive loss of vision, both literal and metaphorical, as we continue to turn away from the stark realities of climate change.

In dialogue with *Speak No*, this piece critiques humanity’s sensory disengagement. Together, they form a compelling commentary on the dangers of ignoring environmental devastation—not merely in silence but in our failure to see and recognize the urgency of the crisis. Where *Speak No* lamented the absence of voice, *See No* mourns the absence of clarity and vision, urging viewers to confront what lies ahead before it’s too late.



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## ***Sheltered (from the storm), 2024***

wood, junk metal, plastic mesh, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Sheltered (from the storm)* offers a poignant reflection on humanity's fragile relationship with the environment, underscoring the illusion of safety amidst escalating ecological crises. The piece features figures carved from raw, weathered wood and delicate materials, arranged with an air of vulnerability and isolation. Each figure appears precariously balanced, as though seeking refuge yet exposed to forces beyond their control.

The muted palette—soft grays, natural wood tones, and cracks etched into the material—suggests erosion, both physical and existential. The figures' minimalist forms, some suspended and others anchored, evoke the tension between stability and collapse. Their hollow cores and fragmented shapes highlight the fragility of life in the face of environmental upheaval, a stark reminder of the impact of deforestation, rising seas, and unrelenting storms.

The central figure, upright yet fractured, seems to bear the brunt of an unseen tempest, representing resilience while also hinting at inevitable strain. Surrounding figures, smaller and more fragmented, appear as echoes

of loss or memories of past vitality. The backdrop's rough texture reinforces the feeling of a battered landscape, worn down by time and neglect.

The title, *Sheltered (from the storm)*, carries a bittersweet irony—there is no true shelter from the global climate crisis, only temporary reprieves that delay confronting the inevitable. This piece urges viewers to question their own relationship with nature and the false security we construct in the face of ecological instability. It is a meditation on both the resilience and vulnerability of the human spirit, calling for urgent reflection and collective action.



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## *Speak No*, 2022

wood, plastic, miscellaneous junk, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Speak No* is a haunting sculptural work featuring 20 abstract heads mounted on a gray plank with rods, creating a sense of suspension and disconnection. The heads range in size from the small and plum-like to the larger cantaloupe-sized and are crafted from carved wood, metal, Plexiglas, and altered doll components. Each head is a study in variation and individuality, unified by the central theme of silence and obstruction.

Unlike the smooth, featureless faces seen in other works, the faces in *Speak No* are richly detailed and diverse. Some have carved eyes, others are marked by empty holes, and a few include added elements like electrical connectors or natural wood patterns that suggest eyes. The mouths, however, are universally blocked—stitched shut with wire or cord, concealed with metal plates or Plexiglas, or deeply scored and scratched. One head lacks a mouth entirely. These obstructions, paired with the floating arrangement, evoke themes of silenced voices and suppressed expression.

The materials themselves add depth and texture to the piece. The wood, ranging in color from deep red to golden cream and dark brown, features striking natural

grains, bark inclusions, and imperfections that define the faces. Three heads are metallic, with one fabricated from thin printing plates, and another is made of Plexiglas.

Altered doll heads, with their plastic exteriors drawn on or carved, add an eerie, otherworldly quality to the work.

A closer look at specific heads reveals their individuality:

- A walnut head with a smooth, elongated neck has eyes formed from tiny drilled holes and a mouth sewn shut with stark white nylon string.
- A golden-brown walnut head features a rough-edged scrap of window screen obscuring much of its face, while another nearby has a metal fixture stapled across its saw-cut mouth.
- A cream-colored doll's head, mounted on a stick-like neck, has messy fiber hair, scribbled-over eyes, and a graphite-marked mouth, reinforcing a sense of chaotic muting.
- A purpleheart wood head with a long neck has its top sawn off, while its carved mouth is stitched closed with black wires.
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- A final striking head is formed from old printing plates, bent and riveted into a three-dimensional shape. Its eyes are electrical connectors, its torn-metal mouth is rimmed with drilled holes and red wire, and its hair is represented by spiky triangles protruding from the surface.

Through its intricate details and varied materials, *Speak No* captures the tension between expression and suppression, drawing the viewer into a contemplation of what it means to be silenced. Why might we be silenced, by ourselves or those around us, when talking about the climate emergency?



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## ***Lytton Sunset*, 2024**

wood, miscellaneous junk, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

Charred and weathered, *Lytton Sunset* stands as a haunting tribute to a world in crisis. Against the backdrop of a darkened wooden panel, human-like figures emerge—sculpted from driftwood, rusted metal, and salvaged remnants—fragmented yet enduring. These figures, both fragile and resilient, tell a story of loss and survival, their forms shaped by fire, erosion, and time.

The title recalls Lytton, a town devastated by wildfires, evoking the relentless destruction of climate change. The figures, distorted and worn, mirror the remnants of a community reduced to ashes. A central form, its upper half-carved from a twisted branch, extends outward as if reaching for something already lost. Below, another figure appears to collapse inward, its curved limbs bearing the weight of catastrophe. A third, assembled from industrial relics, suggests the fusion of humanity and machinery—our manufactured world now inseparable from the forces that threaten it.

Like a sunset stained by smoke, this piece captures both beauty and devastation. It is a moment suspended in time, where past and future intersect, urging us to reckon

with the consequences of our inaction. In the interplay of shadow and form, *Lytton Sunset* becomes not just a work of art but a warning—one that flickers with the last light of what we stand to lose.



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## ***The Red Forest (Chilcotin 2005), 2024***

wood, doll parts, junk metal, bones

Courtesy of the artist

*The Red Forest (Castlegar)* is a wall-mounted installation featuring ten abstract figures in various shades of red, arranged across a dark red plank. The figures, ranging from 8 to 18 inches tall, are crafted from mixed materials, including wood, plastic, bone, and copper. Some figures have raised arms, while others lack arms entirely; two are seated, while the rest appear to be standing.

Each figure has a unique style and material composition. Near the top, a figure with a dyed purple-red Barbie doll head has raised arms cut short and a copper pipe body. Beside it, another figure with a carved wooden torso has wire arms, a bone leg, a wood leg, and a round head with a carved mouth. Other figures creatively combine carved and uncarved wood, with raw textures suggesting human forms.

A detailed section reveals distinct figures. One standing figure has doll hands, doll legs stained dark red, and a rodent skull for a head, with a threaded rod in the chest. Another seated figure, a dismembered Barbie doll painted dark red, has a tangled, paint-stiffened hair and mismatched legs: one Barbie leg with a mechanical knee

and one plastic tube with a wire foot. A third figure in matte orange-red has a broken wood head with a natural face shape, a water hose chest, cherry wood hips, and a small bullet between the legs.

The installation's rough textures, variety of materials, and contrasting shades of red evoke themes of nature, decay, and resilience, with a forest-like structure that suggests both individual and collective strength.



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## ***Whose Water Is Dying***

***(while mine is so sweet)*, 2023**

wood, bone, plastic, wire, doll parts, miscellaneous junk, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Whose Water is Dying (While Mine is So Sweet)* is a poignant and visceral exploration of the unequal burden of environmental destruction. The work's stark horizontal composition, intersected by jagged barbed wire and flowing organic forms, draws a sharp visual metaphor of division—between those who consume water freely and those whose sources are drying, polluted, or denied.

The barbed wire, taut and unrelenting, represents boundaries both physical and systemic—cutting across rivers, landscapes, and human lives. It is a reminder of how access to this life-sustaining resource is shaped by power and privilege. Behind and alongside the wire, the flowing forms of twisted wood and reflective metal suggest rivers in decline. The shimmering metal evokes contaminated water, reflecting light but void of life. The decayed wood speaks to nature's slow death, as it dries and cracks under relentless pressure.

The piece feels suspended in tension, as if caught in the moment before collapse. The pale, textured background serves as a barren canvas, evoking parched lands or the

bleached residue left by evaporated waters. The contrast between natural elements and industrial materials speaks to the conflict between the organic world and human interference.

*Whose Water is Dying* forces us to confront the paradox: while some sip from abundance, others watch their lifelines disappear. It compels the viewer to ask uncomfortable questions about sustainability, responsibility, and the ethics of resource distribution. In its quiet, harrowing beauty, the piece stands as a memorial to the waters that sustain life—and to those that are slipping away.



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## ***Wired*, 2023**

wood, wire, doll parts, junk metal, plastic, bones, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Wired* is a compelling wall-mounted mixed-media artwork that presents ten abstract figures arranged in four horizontal rows on a tall vertical plank. The figures, ranging in size from 6 to 12 inches, with a single larger figure at the base standing 2 feet tall, are intricately connected by looping black wires. These wires thread through holes in both the plank and the figures, creating a visual metaphor for connection, unity, and shared human experience.

The figures are a celebration of diversity in form and material, each unique yet interlinked. Most figures stretch their arms skyward, their hands fashioned from doll parts, frayed wire, bone joints, or carved wood. Their heads are mostly smooth and featureless, though several stand out with distinctive features, such as a tiny plastic skull or painted wooden elements adorned with striking details like metal lips.

The artistry lies in the individuality of each figure, brought to life through their materials and postures. One figure, crafted from red plywood and Plexiglas, features copper pipe legs and wire arms. A black wire diagonally connects its chest to the plank, adding a sense of

tension and movement. Another figure, seated with quiet elegance, combines a doll torso with a plastic skull head and rough purpleheart wood legs, tethered gently to the composition by a single wire.

Further down, three standing figures showcase an even broader spectrum of materials and textures. One, with a smooth wooden body, boasts a red head, lacewood torso, and red bone arms. Beside it stands a smaller figure with a face made of metal plating and matching red bone arms, its form embodying a sense of industrial rigidity. A taller figure, made of red wood and delicate twigs, contrasts with thick black wire legs and a corroded electrical fixture, blending natural and man-made elements into one striking entity.

The composition comes alive through the interplay of textures, colours, and poses. The wires, looping between the figures and the plank, not only bind the artwork together but also emphasize the interdependence of the figures, evoking themes of movement, individuality, and unity. *Wired* invites viewers to reflect on the invisible threads that connect us all, offering a poignant exploration of the dynamics of human relationships. What

are we wired to, and how does that strengthen or hurt our lives and our world?

The artwork consists of ten abstract, humanoid figures mounted on a tall, vertical, grey plank. The figures are arranged in four staggered rows from top to bottom. Each figure is unique in design, crafted from a variety of materials, and connected to the plank and to one another by black wires, creating a sense of movement and interconnection.



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## ***Wild (fire)*, 2022**

burnt wood, doll parts, bones, junk metal, deer hoof, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Wild (fire)* is an evocative and dynamic artwork that explores the theme of environmental destruction and resilience. Composed of fragmented, expressive human figures crafted from metal and mounted on a stark vertical backdrop, the piece captures the raw chaos of a wildfire and its profound impact on both nature and humanity.

The figures, suspended in various states of motion and distress, embody the unpredictable energy of fire—some leap as though attempting escape, others appear to fall or writhe in anguish, while a few seem to rise defiantly against unseen forces. Their jagged, deconstructed forms suggest the fragility of life amid catastrophe, mirroring the destructive power of fire that reshapes the environment in its wake.

The muted tones of the backdrop, juxtaposed with the dark metallic texture of the figures, evoke the ashen aftermath of a blaze. Subtle details, such as the protruding limbs and angular poses, create a sense of urgency and turbulence. The arrangement of the figures—scattered yet interconnected—symbolizes both individual and collective struggles in the face of ecological crises.

*Wild (fire)* serves as both a memorial to the lives disrupted by environmental disasters and a call to action, highlighting the interconnectedness of humanity and nature. Its raw, industrial aesthetic reminds viewers of the tension between human-made interventions and the wild, untameable forces of the natural world.



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## ***Fire (fighters), 2024***

wood, doll parts, junk metal, thermo part, Plexiglas, hearing aid, plywood

Courtesy of the artist

*Fire (fighters)* is a vivid dance of form and flame, a sculptural symphony of six abstract human figures poised against a luminous backdrop of fiery red-orange. The energy radiates from the piece, as though the figures themselves are emerging from the heart of the fire—each a unique embodiment of motion, emotion, and quiet resilience. The figures are carved from a harmonious interplay of materials, blending the warmth of wood with the starkness of metal, their interplay creating a rhythm that pulses with life.

On the left, a seated figure stretches upward, arms raised in a gesture of yearning or triumph. Its sinewy limbs, carved from smooth, dark wood, are balanced by a long, curved waist made from a metallic tube, a juxtaposition of organic vitality and industrial strength. Next to it, a figure with a small, smooth head stands resolutely, its chest opened to reveal an intricate, mechanical interior—a fragment of vulnerability exposed within the abstract.

At the center, a tall, pale figure anchors the composition. Its softly polished wood bears natural imperfections—knots and grains that speak of raw authenticity. An old-

fashioned plastic hearing aid clasps its chest, a symbol of restraint or balance, while asymmetrical limbs offer a quiet strength, inviting curiosity and contemplation.

Further along, an angular form crafted from pale and dark wood seems to shift between balance and motion. Its fragmented silhouette suggests a fusion of architecture and anatomy, a body caught in transition. Beside it stands a figure with flowing, sensual curves, carved from dark wood, with one dark plastic doll's arm. More naturalistic than the others, it exudes grounded strength, its smooth surface radiating an organic, almost primal energy.

The rightmost figure bursts forth, suspended as though in mid-leap. Its arms reach skyward, its layered wood body alive with tones of red and pink, echoing the flames of the backdrop. It is a moment frozen in time—a celebration of freedom, exaltation, and motion, drawing the viewer's eye upward in its spirited ascent.

Each figure casts shadows onto the fiery backdrop, adding depth and dimension to the composition. Together, they create a dynamic interplay between stillness and movement, connection and individuality.

The glowing background envelops them, embodying both the warmth and intensity of fire—a force that both fuels and consumes.

*Fire (fighters)* ignites themes of passion, transformation, and community. It is a testament to resilience, to the beauty of imperfection, and to the power of creation to transcend the boundaries of the tangible and the ethereal. It presents a vision of working together, even in the face of devastating climate change.



To listen to an audio description of this artwork, please access this QR code through your smart phone