

11TH ANNUAL REGIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION



Modern Fuel's 11th Annual Regional Juried Exhibition is at Modern Fuel from August 8th to September 5th, 2009, with an opening reception on August 29th at 7pm. The curatorial premise for this group exhibition is to reflect the wide-ranging practices of artists in the Kingston region and is meant to provide a forum in which to compare artistic modalities from one year to the next. This year's guest curator, Steven Loft, has selected works based on their exploratory character – exploratory insofar as they pose interesting question (formally, conceptually and politically) within current artistic and broader socio-cultural contexts.

Steven Loft is a curator, writer, and media artist. A Mohawk of the Six Nations, he currently resides in Ottawa, where he was appointed as the first Aboriginal curator-in-residence at the National Gallery of Canada in 2007. Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre invited artists to submit works produced in visual and time-based disciplines: painting, sculpture, printmaking, video, installation, sound, etc.. We also welcomed proposals for performative, interventionist and live works for presentation at the reception or according to a schedule. This initiative to feature time-based works alongside more traditionally visual works is meant to reflect the diversity of artistic practices in the region. Note: According to our organizational mandate, Modern Fuel ARC will provide CARFAC fees to exhibiting artists.

[11th Annual Regional Juried Exhibition](#)

Image: Steven Loft.

Exhibition Essay

Hmmmmmm, Kingston... According to wikipedia: "Kingston was chosen as the first capital of the united Canadas and served in that role from 1841 to 1844. The first meeting of the Parliament of

the United Canadas on June 13, 1841 was held on the site of what is now Kingston General Hospital. The city was considered too small and lacking in amenities, however, and its location made it vulnerable to American attack. Consequently, the capital was moved to alternating locations in Montreal and Toronto, and then later to Ottawa in 1857. Subsequently, Kingston's growth slowed considerably and its national importance declined."

Owww... But Kingston is so much more than the sum of its history. It is a rich and vibrant community with a socially engaged and art savvy populace. It's an academic town with all that implies and promises. It has galleries, theatres, festivals, and all the cultural accoutrement of a dynamic cultural metropolis. And, it has Modern Fuel, one of the oldest artist run centres in the country. More from wikipedia: "The French originally settled upon a traditional Mississaugas First Nation site called Katerokwi (Catarqui in the common transliteration, and according to French pronunciation rules should be said "kah-tah-RAH-kee," although it is generally pronounced "kah-tah-ROCK-way") in 1673 and established Fort Catarqui, later to be called Fort Frontenac. The fort was captured and destroyed by the British in the Battle of Fort Frontenac during the Seven Years' War in 1758. A receiving centre for fleeing refugees from the American Revolution some years later, Kingston became the primary community of south-eastern Upper Canada. New settlement from the United Empire Loyalists (UEL) and Mohawks from the Six Nations in New York, led by Molly Brant (the sister of Six Nations Leader Joseph Brant - Tyendinega), formed a significant part of an expanding population in the area at the end of the 18th century."

So, maybe it's no coincidence (just a kind of circular logic) that a Mohawk curator (from the Six Nations in southern Ontario) is asked to jury a members' exhibit at Kingston's only artist-run centre. Trying to find aesthetic commonalities and conceptual bridges within the "regional juried show" format can be, well, a crap-shoot. Juried exhibitions are not so much curated, as they are "constructed." Theirs is the interplay of form, medium and theoretical frameworks that marks much of the raison d'être of artist run culture. Juried exhibitions meet the professional development needs of local artists at varying levels of experience by giving them an opportunity to be exhibited in a professional, supportive and critical framework. To have their work viewed and discussed as well as celebrated in a centre committed to excellence and experimentation.

The title of the exhibition, "Not For Pro?it", not only references the fundamental nature of the artist-run centre identity, but to a wholly amusing and utterly extraordinary typo in Modern Fuel's newest brochure. It speaks equally to the fragility of the artist run movement and also to its strength. Whereas artist run centres are always under duress due to their "not for profit" status, their placement as public artist driven organizations also give them their vibrancy, their ability to respond, adapt, question and constantly challenge themselves to "support innovation and experimentation...facilitating the presentation, interpretation, and production of contemporary visual, time-based and interdisciplinary arts." In closing, I'd like to thank and congratulate all the artists who submitted proposals for this year's juried exhibition. To submit is an act of faith and yes, courage...a willingness to engage, to enliven and expose, with all the attendant risks

associated with them. It is, in short, to be an artist. And I thank you all deeply and sincerely for your efforts.

Essay by Steven Loft. Steven Loft Steven Loft is a curator, writer, and media artist. A Mohawk of the Six Nations, he currently resides in Ottawa, where he was appointed as the first Aboriginal curator-in-residence at the National Gallery of Canada in 2007.