

études vivantes

**Bjornerud & Jerezano, Paul Chartrand,
Liam Cole, Noni Kaur, Andrew Testa,
Ana Valine**

Curated by Anne-Sophie Grenier

APRIL 2 TO MAY 21 2022



Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre is a non-profit organization facilitating the presentation, interpretation, and production of contemporary visual, time-based and interdisciplinary arts. Modern Fuel aims to meet the professional development needs of emerging and mid-career local, national and international artists, from diverse cultural communities, through exhibition, discussion, and mentorship opportunities. Modern Fuel supports innovation and experimentation and is committed to the education of interested publics and the diversification of its audiences. As an advocate for contemporary art, as well as for artists' rights, we pay professional fees to artists in accordance with the CARFAC fee schedule.

Modern Fuel is situated on the unceded ancestral territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg peoples. We acknowledge the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg peoples as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land. We also recognize the Métis peoples and other nations from across Turtle Island who have called Katarokwi / Kingston home for generations upon generations. We are grateful to be able to live, learn and make art on this land and be in such close proximity to the waters of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. To acknowledge this traditional territory and waterways is to recognize this city and country's longer history pre-dating confederation and the work that must still be done in decolonizing our spaces and relations. We at Modern Fuel strive towards respectful relationships with all of our communities in hopes of walking a good path together.

We at Modern Fuel want to state unequivocally that Black lives matter, Indigenous lives matter, and that the lives of People of Colour matter. Modern Fuel strives to ensure that members and visitors feel safe and welcome in our space and at our events. We do not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or violence including but not limited to ableism; ageism; homophobia and transphobia; misogyny; racism and white supremacy. It is also important to us that Modern Fuel not only continues to present works and programs that support Black and Indigenous artists, members and visitors, but invests in the work of becoming an inclusive, anti-racist organization. We feel it is only then that Modern Fuel can advocate for artists and foster community with care and respect.



Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre
305-307 King Street West
Kingston, ON K7L 2X4

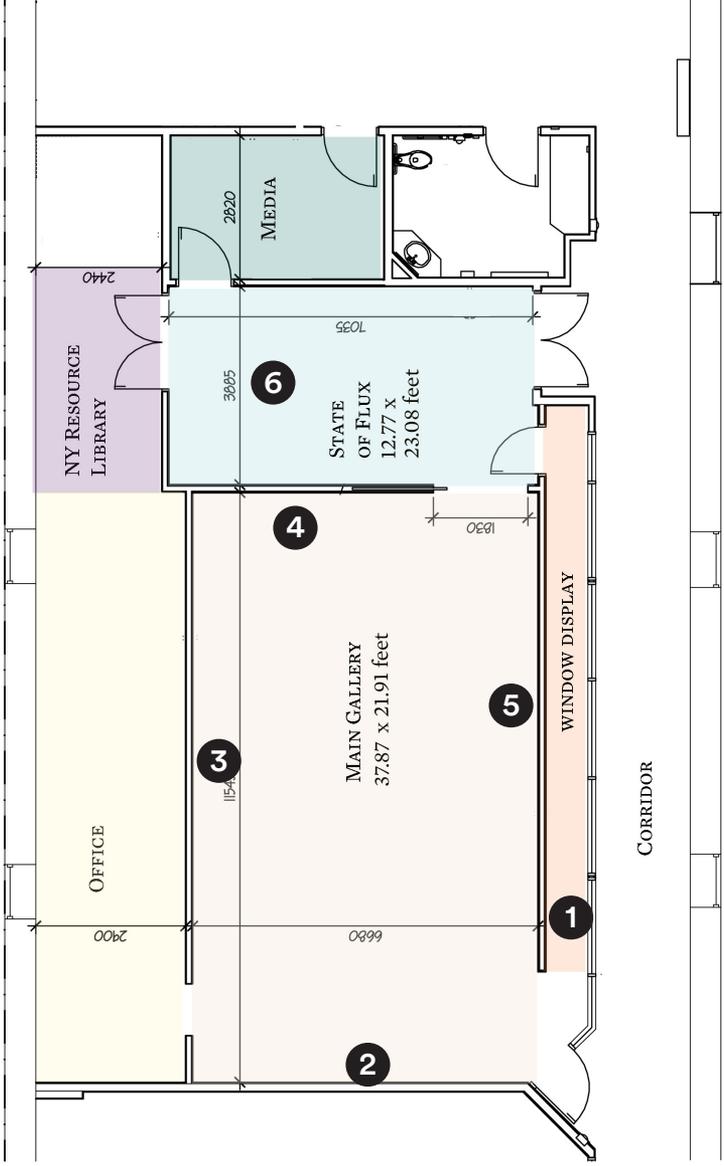
Gallery Hours
Tuesday-Saturday
12-5PM

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**MODERN FUEL
ARTIST-RUN CENTRE**
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NOTE: All measurements are in mm.



- 1** Bjornerud & Jerezano
- 2** Ana Valine
- 3** Paul Chartrand
- 4** Liam Cole
- 5** Andrew Testa
- 6** Noni Kaur

Kristin Bjornerud and Erik Jerezano have been making collaborative drawings together since 2008. They have exhibited together at the Ottawa Art Gallery, the Latcham Gallery (ON), Galerie Trois Points (QC) and this fall they will present a retrospective of drawings at ARTSPACE artist-run centre (NS).

Kristin Bjornerud is a visual artist whose watercolour paintings examine our relationship to the natural world through the lens of magical realism and modern ecofeminism. She holds a BFA from the University of Lethbridge, Alberta and an MFA from the University of Saskatchewan. She has lived in many places across Canada receiving grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Ontario Arts Council and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. Her work is represented in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, the City of Ottawa, Sask Arts and the Brucebo Museum (Sweden). She has participated in residencies in Sweden and Finland and later in 2022 she will be an artist in residence at the Nordic Watercolour Museum (Nordiska Akvarellmuseet) on the island of Tjörn (Sweden). Kristin is a Professional Member of RAAV (Le Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec) and a member of La Centrale Feminist Artist Run Centre. She has lived in in Tiohtià:ke (Montréal) since 2016.

*Erik Jerezano was born in Mexico City. He is a self-taught artist who has lived and worked in Toronto since 2001. In his individual practice Erik works with a visual language he terms the visceral-intuitive, a figurative-based practice that combines anthropomorphism, fable and the grotesque in ways that offer abstract encounters. He has received grants from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Toronto Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Council. His work is represented in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and the Museum of Latin American Art in California. Erik has attended residencies in Baie-Saint-Paul (QC) and Croatia and has contributed to numerous community mural projects in Canada and Mexico. Since 2004, he has also been part of the Toronto based Z'otz * artist collective with Nahùm Flores and Ilyana Martinez.*

ARTIST STATEMENT

For over ten years we have shared a collaborative practice rooted in the idea that drawing is a universal language. We share a visual correspondence—an exchange across the boundaries of gender, culture and language. In its most pared down sense our project can be viewed as a variation on the surrealist practice of the *le cadavre exquis* and an epistolary exchange. Since 2008, we have been sending unfinished drawings back and forth through the mail. However, what anchors our practice within the epistolary tradition is not simply the sending and receiving of work through the post. Rather, it is the desire to connect and exchange ideas through the language of drawing. We read each other's work and search for meaning in pictorial codes, interpreting intentional marks and blank spaces in order to find a path toward meaningful reply and an understanding of each other and our place in the world.

In our work there is a cross-pollination of autobiographical themes, historical and cultural symbols, personal and folk mythologies. The result of our dialogue is the emergence of a hybrid narrative where politics, identity and imaginary worlds merge and surreal humour blurs the edges.

Our most recent series *Nosotros Injertáremos (We are Grafters)* is an investigation of plant life generated from a combination of observational drawings, natural history research, memory, and imagination. Grafting in horticulture, whether natural or deliberate, results in multiple parts fusing together to become one. In our drawing practice we bind and insert new branches of drawing onto the works we receive from one another. This process requires careful consideration of space and also an intuition for how any addition will change the narrative of the piece. Our 'study' of plants could be characterized as a kind of adventitious botany, whereby certain elements of chance and intuition are cultivated alongside a naturalist's eye for inquiry in order to create multiple layers of meaning. This series is uniquely illustrative of our individual interests and our process more generally and includes a number of watercolour drawings of endangered or extirpated plant species composed as approximate mirror images. These formal arrangements are both a conscious intimation of our need to examine threats to plant life in the age of the climate disruption and ecological breakdown and a reference to the mirroring that has evolved naturally within our compositions over the years. Over time we have adopted and integrated each other's visual lexicon, cultivating a process of echoing and shadowing where we simultaneously assimilate the other's vision and anticipate a response—yet we continue to surprise each other. It is this playfulness and entanglement that has sustained our partnership for over a decade.

Ana is a Vancouver based writer, director, and artist whose films have screened and won awards internationally. She is an alumna of the Canadian Film Centre, WIDC at Banff, the TIFF Talent Lab, and Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

From theatre, visual arts and writing, to experimental filmmaking, her creative projects have been enhanced by adventurous life experiences including a welder's apprenticeship on the Alberta pipeline, training horses, tree planting, and a brief stint doing phone sex.

Her narrative films have travelled to Spain, Russia, India, Busan, Turkey, Armenia, New York, Iceland, and more, and have been awarded for their tense family relationships and bittersweet dark humour. Her art films have screened at The Polygon Gallery, The Libby Leshgold Gallery, and Paneficio Gallery in Vancouver.

Ana has recently completed an MFA degree with a focus on film, is writing her third feature screenplay, and is in her first year of PhD film studies at Queen's University.

ARTIST STATEMENT

From theatre, visual arts, writing, and narrative film, my creative projects have been enhanced by adventurous life experiences including a welder's apprenticeship on the Alberta pipeline, training horses, tree planting, and a brief stint doing phone sex.

With a background in digital filmmaking I discovered hand processing celluloid during my master's degree. When the pandemic hit, and the school closed down, I couldn't get into the darkroom so I turned towards the natural world both as solace and to be creatively autonomous.

In my eco-processing filmmaking practice I am collaborating with the sea and making 16mm films of waves as the water rolls up onto the land. I think of these films as oceanic self-portraits. The sea makes its own image. What we see in the frame are the ingredients that develop the film: seaweed and salt water. Each roll of film reflects the properties of its shoreline in colour, rhythm and texture.

I often use steel as a projection surface. Steel has been chosen for its reflective quality and ability to interact with the projector's beam in high ambient light conditions. It is generous but not easily manipulated. Other than extreme heat, the only thing that can change it is water, given enough time. The steel screen serves a metaphorical return as well: seaweed has a high iron content and these films made with seaweed are projected onto an iron surface that contains the same element as the images. Like returns to like.

Making films with the sea brings forward ancient relationships with matter. I'm learning to see through the camera in a different way, one that is more about inviting an image than 'capturing' or 'shooting'. This new perspective is led by slowing down and filming in a way that is more receptive and exploratory. In this line of inquiry, I'm researching ways to interpret ocean states in celluloid, helping the sea reveal its condition by the image it develops.

This film, **SMSR2**, was made entirely at the shoreline on a remote peninsula in northeast New Brunswick. The seaweed and ocean water for developer and fixative were gathered at the same spot on the beach that the film was developed. I used a hand-crank vintage Bolex camera, a portable darkroom tent and a light-tight developing tank. I built a campfire to heat the water for the seaweed developing brew so the whole process was done on site, within and around the frame you see in the film. This is a practice I'm finessing that I will be able to travel with to shorelines around the world, learning about ocean health.

Paul Chartrand engages with environmental and cultural issues through the construction of sculptural assemblages. He builds these projects from carefully chosen and assembled objects, which he then populates with *living* plants. Paul considers the meaningful roles of each discrete part as functioning, living entities that possess their own unique forms of agency. Individually, plants, inanimate objects, or human actions may appear mundane, but when framed in the context of thriving and interconnected webs of being, they become members of a *community*. In his *living text installations*, Paul focuses on the ephemeral nature of life, the written word and art itself. Everything we know will eventually return to the Earth, but before that happens, it will be part of an assemblage, a web, a community.

Project Title:

Desiccated Root Text

2021 Mixed grass seed, hydroponic grow medium, vapour barrier, wood, open-cell foam, polycarbonate. 77"x50"x5"

Liam Cole is a percussionist, composer, and interdisciplinary artist from Kingston, Ontario. Liam graduated college with a bachelor's of music in jazz performance for percussion and has worked as a freelance musician performing, recording, and touring in several bands of various genres. Currently, Liam is focusing on his own musical project Lius Rhutilius and developing his audio/visual art practices as well as his experience as a teacher. Liam is exploring different ways of creating, based in big relationship and small resource.

WIWMPS stemmed from the idea of interacting with the patterns in our environment in various ways. Specifically here, creating instruments out of found materials and interacting sonically with the rhythm of the windmill lights on Wolfe Island. Our environment and community are constant, sustainable wells of inspiration. A practice of connecting with them creatively is something most valuable, and there are endless ways of doing so. This project was inspired by Pauline Oliveros' deep listening and sound meditation. Deep listening is, as Oliveros puts it, *listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear no matter what one is doing...* The performances in WIWMPS had the intention of deep listening behind them. A few of the performances came out of instruction from Pauline Oliveros' sound meditation / improvisation compositions. This way of tuning into our surroundings creates connection, inspiration, and presence.

Another inspiration for this project was an idea Jinny Yu talked about at her artist talk at the Agnes Etherington in late 2018. Yu talked about being a *perpetual guest*, both in our communities and environment. This inspired the question: how do we show thanks to the people and places that let us in? WIWMPS is a small cumulation of ways of giving thanks to this waterfront and the people that listen to it. These instruments are, as Tau Lewis puts it, *time capsules* of the experiences shared here and the music made from this project is a way of communicating deep gratitude for this community.

Andrew Testa is an artist, writer and educator working through printmaking, drawing, books, words, sounds, installations and collaborations, currently living and working in Ktaqmkuk, also known as Newfoundland. He has been awarded ArtsNL, SSHRC, a VP Grenfell Research Grant, and the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant for his research, has exhibited nationally and internationally, and has participated in residencies and conferences across Canada. Testa has recently shared his work in solo exhibition at The Rooms Provincial Art Gallery in St. John's, NL, and at SNAP artist-run-centre in Edmonton, AB. His recent collaboration, Printshop in a Box, has been awarded a Canada Council for the Arts Grant, and he has upcoming collaborative residencies exploring community knowledge sharing at Union House Arts, Port Union, NL and CASA, Lethbridge, AB. Testa is the Chair of the Board of Directors at St. Michael's Printshop and is an Assistant Professor in printmaking at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Testa has additionally taught at Thomson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC, and at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. He completed his BFA and MFA at York University in Toronto, ON.

In my art practice, I pose and respond to the question: what does a mutual and nurturing conversation with the other-than-human look like and what would the ethics of such an endeavour be? In my investigations, I perform gestures that bring me to a space parallel to the other-than-human, a space I attempt to not impose upon but rather sit beside: to watch, to listen and to wait with. In such acts I hope to allow the opportunity for the other-than-human to perform its own language—a language that isn't an attempted translation into the familiar words and voices I may know but rather one that exists in its ambiguity and acknowledged for its difference and distance.

My prints, words, books, and installations aim to bring myself to a space of familiarity (while always seeming to acknowledge my inherent unfamiliarity) of the places my body temporarily exists upon. Through gestures of slowness, I hope to become acquainted and courteous with my surroundings—places/spaces that includes the ground, stones, trees, bugs, histories, communities, etc. I begin my practice by attempting to create two-way conversations with the other-than-human things I experience in my daily rituals of walking, pausing, looking, and listening. I think of my practice as a study *with* things opposed to a study *of* things: a collaboration and participation between the other-than-human and myself that is interested in not only the individuality of something but its ecology, how that something can speak, exist, and influence the community of things it is a part of.

Noni Kaur, is an award-winning multidisciplinary artist, educator. Kaur's works are an embodiment of her response to intersectional identity across cultures and communities. Her immersive, reactive, multi-sensory installations bridge gaps between gender, culture, the body and the non-human world, through her expansive, topographical landscapes of desiccated coconut installations Kaur's intersectionality through her heritage result in her bold cellular mapping works stemming from being a Singaporean woman of Punjabi descent in Canada.

Kaur's work has been featured in international venues including: the Havana Biennale, Cuba; the Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, Bangladesh; the Fukuoka Triennale, Asian Art Museum, Japan; White Columns, New York; the Henie Onstad Kunstenter, Oslo, Norway amongst others. Kaur lives and works in Toronto, Ontario.

My practice explores my cultural history and how particular materials are adapted or transformed through use in different spaces/environments. A cultural practice in India and Singapore is the art of rangoli – the act of using coloured materials to decorate floors in domestic and public spaces. Traditionally made from powder pigments, flowers, rice, or sand, rangoli designs act as a revelation of beauty and the acquisition of auspiciousness around significant events and festivals. My practice also explores my cultural history as an intersectional woman of color and how particular materials are adapted or transformed through use in different spaces/environments. The work is an exploration in materiality, rituals, assimilation and bridging gaps of the human and post-human environments. While tracing the agency of cellular, plasma and parasitic forces in both human and non-human worlds. I explore cycles of life and death, ephemerality, nature through medium explorations. These result in vibrant, colorful, fleshy and fluid natural depictions of cellular play in the unseen environment. The impactful, zestful painted cellular maps are based on interior biosystems that expand outward, displaced and swallowing up patrons in a microbial world that often goes unnoticed in daily human life. It is a platform for critical engagement, creative interpretation in experimental, progressive and impactful artwork. My works are live conversations that are about lived experiences.

Using the space:

The installation piece proposed will be built upon the tradition of Rangoli. A floor sculptural piece made with desiccated coconut – a commonplace

domestic commodity –taken out of context and adapting it to an experiential space to draw on the ephemeral nature of the practice and its connections to cycles of life and death. Coconut is used in countless capacities to nurture, heal, and nourish the body in the form of moisturizers, conditioners, and food. By ritualistically hand-dying the coconut and orchestrating a large scale, topographical rangoli, my work brings together human cultural and embodied practices while acknowledging the presence of the non-human world. Using desiccated coconut, non-toxic materials, the artwork becomes a repository of energy for the microbial systems that live within the installation, albeit harmless and not visually in plain sight, feeding organisms that go unnoticed in the human world. Concurrently, patrons are immersed in their own fleshly experience through reverberating colours, softened sound, rich aromas, and the anticipation of taste and touch. The installation splaying across the gallery room floor, transforming slowly over the exhibition run, echoes rangoli's ephemeral nature; however, at its culmination, the half-digested material will be recycled into new energy through its decomposition by millions of microorganisms, beginning a new cycle. These are in the form of mylar cellular maps that seep on the wall surrounding the ephemeral installation.

The work itself fits to increase awareness, enrich both the cultural and diverse life in communities around the gallery through the appreciation of contemporary art. My practice also supports the commitment to fostering and engaging through my work, the role of contemporary art as a platform for critical engagement, creative interpretation. The work will also further contribute through critical dialogue, the functioning of the gallery space and its push towards enhanced experiential dialogue and critical engagement opportunities.

The work is supported through an ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL GRANT.

Title: ***Sniff ...metasis***

Type of Exhibition: Installation and use of space

Medium: Mixed media, hand dyed coconut, pigments, mylar, inks

Individual Artist

2022

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