

For Immediate Release

Local Artists Highlight Cultural and Social Discourse Through Vibrant Creativity in Arts Commons Galleries this Fall

October 4, 2023 - CALGARY – With crisp fall days now upon us, Arts Commons welcomes people inside to experience the free gallery exhibitions in the building. Featuring 17 local artists working in the mediums of photography, textiles, videography, ceramics, paint on canvas, and mixed media, the artworks explore questions of identity, cultural and social belonging, gender conformity, and feminism. **Current exhibitions run September 25 – January 8, 2024, at Arts Commons.** For more information, visit artscommons.ca/galleries.

Lightbox Studio is home to experimental, studio-based projects. Multidisciplinary artist **Chish** describes his practice as “spontaneous and organic, using any medium available.” Over the summer months he explored bright colours and bold shapes in his paintings in the Ledge Gallery, and now he’s taking those learnings into textiles. *MOO* pays homage to his African heritage, while pulling from his life in Calgary (aka Cowtown).

Ledge Gallery is the largest gallery and public studio space in Arts Commons and is home to an eclectic range of art installations, performative, and sculptural works. **Anthony T. Russell** first exhibited with Arts Commons in 2020 and is returning with his newest exhibition *The New Gold*. Through his work he strives to combat stigma and stereotypes, while celebrating the resilience and joy of his Jamaican heritage with his chosen medium of stencil and spray paint.

Window Galleries proudly display two-dimensional and sculptural artworks in a series of seven unique spaces. This fall, the Window Galleries celebrate individual contemporary practices within a greater conversation of Chinese contemporary art and process featuring multidisciplinary artists **Christina Yao** and **Shiyao Fu**, photographer **Stephen Chan**, and painter **Wanru Kemp**. Each artist in the Window Galleries explores their Chinese heritage and place within the world from a different perspective, with their respective exhibitions *Near or Far*, *Place*, *Skylights*, and *Moon Gate*.

+15 Galleries consist of eight spaces that create the ideal platform for collaboration within our community. Fem Assembly is a collective of women, trans-women, and non-binary emerging artists. Their exhibition in the +15 Galleries features the work of **Christina Krentz**, **Diane McGeachy**, **Kelly Isaak**, **Lexi Hilderman**, **Mao Chen**, **Samantha Charette**, and **Wei Li** exploring various facets of feminine identity through mediums of ceramics, drawing, and installation work.

Broadcast Lab brings experimental, eccentric, and thought-provoking films to three media monitors scattered throughout Arts Commons. The micro-cinema brings the works of **Jiajia Li**, **Lili Tayefi**, and **Vicki Van Chau** with their respective pieces *Flashback*, *(Un)veiled Traditions*, and *Hearth of the Lion*.

+15 Soundscape is one of the few multichannel sound galleries in Canada, immersing you in experiential sound as you walk from one end of the corridor to the other. In his exhibition *We Make Clocks, Not Time: My Lived Experience with Psychosis, Creativity, and the Ideas That Have Helped Me*, interdisciplinary artist **John F.**

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Gerrard shares excerpts from his book of the same name, blended with soft sonic textures and atmospheric music to ease the listener into a mind space of calm reflection.

“It’s very exciting to be sharing the work of so many dynamic and diverse artistic practices this fall season,” says Sanja Lukac, visual and media arts curator at Arts Commons. “And in addition to the individual artists on exhibition, we also have a beautiful collaboration with Fem Assembly who create a safe artistic space for women, trans-women, and non-binary individuals who face in gender oppression. Each artist uniquely reflects their lived experience in their process and artwork. I encourage anyone who is curious to stop by these free exhibitions. You might discover something completely new!”

Arts Commons Galleries energize the public spaces of Arts Commons, providing exhibition opportunities and studio space for local artists, as well as free access to visual and media arts for the greater Calgary community. All exhibiting artists are also members of the RBC Emerging Visual Artists Program or the TD Incubator program, giving them access to professional development, networking, and artistic mentorship opportunities. The media galleries are curated through the TD Incubator program under the artistic vision of Wakefield Brewster, Poet Laureate of Calgary and TD Incubator Fellow.

What: Arts Commons Galleries – Fall Exhibitions
When: September 18, 2023 – January 8, 2024
Where: The Galleries of Arts Commons
Info: artscommons.ca/galleries

Arts Commons Presents wishes to express our sincere appreciation to Naming Partners the RBC Foundation, and TD Bank Group as well as our friends at the Canada Council for the Arts.

For media inquiries or more information contact:

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Arts Commons Galleries are proud to showcase impactful work of the visual and media artists engaged in our RBC Emerging Visual Artists Program and TD Incubator program. These galleries offer key exhibition opportunities to local artists and showcase the talent that our community has to offer in the Lightbox Studio, Ledge Gallery, Window Galleries, +15 Soundscape, Broadcast Lab, and +15 Galleries.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that Arts Commons is located on the sacred land that is the original home of the Niitsitapi from the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Piikani, and Kanai First Nations); the Îyârhe Nakoda (Chiniki, Goodstoney/Kichipwot, and Bearspaw First Nations); and the Dene of the Tsuut’ina First Nation. This territory is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland. We thank these Nations for sharing this land with us and commit to being good stewards of this land, while we are here. We welcome all who work, live, and play in, as well as honour and celebrate this historic territory.