

GAVLAK

BRAXTON GARNEAU

Procession

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May 20 - July 1, 2023
GAVLAK Los Angeles

GAVLAK Los Angeles is pleased to announce Braxton Garneau's solo exhibition, *Procession*. Garneau's work is based in collecting and researching materials, culture and history. Focusing on harvested and hand-processed materials, he explores the sociocultural history of his Caribbean heritage. In *Procession*, Garneau will present a new series of works focused on ritual and costuming through the complex history of Canboulay, and the characters of present day Carnival. *Procession* will be on view at GAVLAK Los Angeles from May 20th through July 1st, 2023. There will be an opening reception on Saturday, May 20th, from 4 - 6 pm.

Materiality is at the forefront of Garneau's work. The natural materials used in his paintings are grounded in the inextricable colonial histories and cultural ties of Caribbeans who've spent generations in proximity to them. His portraits are built up using asphalt, a natural emulsion of mineral elements and bitumen, and raffia, a fibre made from palms found in Africa and the Caribbean. Asphalt, in particular, has a personal significance to the artist. The material connects the journey of his grandparents from Trinidad, home of the world's largest naturally exposed deposit of asphalt, to the oil sands in Northern Alberta, where his grandfather came to work in the 1960's.

Contrary to North American ideas of industrial extraction, Pitch Lake in La Brea in southwest Trinidad is generative. Locals consider the lake to be a fountain of life that cures ailments. Pitch Lake sustains flora and fauna including hummingbirds, nymph lilies, and birds of paradise. The use of asphalt to build up the portraits in *Procession* imbues the work with the energy and life of this natural material. Garneau imagines Pitch Lake as a symbolic melting pot, out of which he pulls the narratives, histories, cultures and characters. The figures in *Dusk (La Brea)* and *Midday (La Brea)* emerge from this lake as witnesses to the events and celebrations before them.

Canboulay (from the French "cannes brûlées", meaning burnt cane) has roots as a harvest festival and celebration in Trinidad in the 18th century, parallel to the extravagant masquerades held by French plantation owners. Through procession, pageantry, satire, music and dance, Canboulay resisted European domination and celebrated African culture. As Canboulay evolved into present day Carnival, it has taken on many different meanings and forms, as complex as its history, but essentially about emancipation and self expression.

Braxton Garneau introduces the exhibition through the structure of the Canboulay mass processional. Through 18 individual portraits of Processioners and the Canboulay King, Canboulay Queen, and Canboulay Prince, Garneau reimagines the 18th century procession where the royalty were flanked by stickmen carrying flambeaux, and followed by women and children with reinforcements of sticks.

Moving into present-day, Garneau draws our attention to archetypal Carnival characters, including Dame Lorraine, Pierrot Grenade, and Midnight Robber. These works showcase the complexities of costuming and layering of cultures that have developed over the decades. These characters combine mask-making and costuming traditions of Africa and Europe to create an amalgamation of cultures, and a symbol of resilience and transformation.

In *Procession* Garneau draws our attention to the complicated colonial history and deeply embedded cultural roots of Carnival while celebrating the collective resistance and social action achieved through costume, music and dance.

BRAXTON GARNEAU

Lives and works in Edmonton-amiskwaciwâskahikan, Alberta, Canada

Braxton Garneau is a visual artist based in amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada). He holds a BFA from the University of Alberta and has had solo exhibitions at Stride Gallery, Calgary (2021) and Parallel Space, Edmonton (2019). His work was featured in the retrospective exhibition *Black Every Day* at the Art Gallery of Alberta (2021), *It's About Time: Dancing Black in Canada 1900 - 1970 and Now* at Mitchell Art Gallery (2020), curated by Seika Boye, and *New Direction*, curated by AJ Girard and Artx at Château Ciroc, Miami, Florida (2021). His first American solo exhibition, *Procession*, will open at GAVLAK, Los Angeles in Spring 2023.

Working in painting, sculpture, printmaking and installation, Garneau's practice is rooted in costuming, transformation, and material honesty. Combining visual influences from classical European portraiture and Afro-Caribbean culture with harvested and hand-processed materials, he creates portraits, shrines, and corporeal forms that explore the sociocultural history of his Caribbean heritage. The materials used—raffia, sugarcane pulp, cowrie shells, asphalt—share inextricable colonial histories and cultural ties to those who've spent generations in close proximity to them.

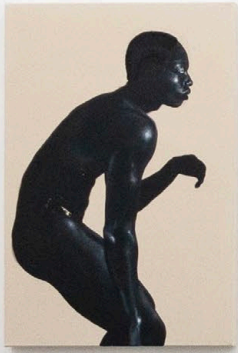
Garneau's recent body of work specifically looks at the traditions of costuming and European influences on the development of Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, and its precursor "Canboulay" from the French "cannes brulés," meaning burnt cane, as a slave revolt and parallel celebration formed in response to 18th century French plantation owners masquerades (Mas).



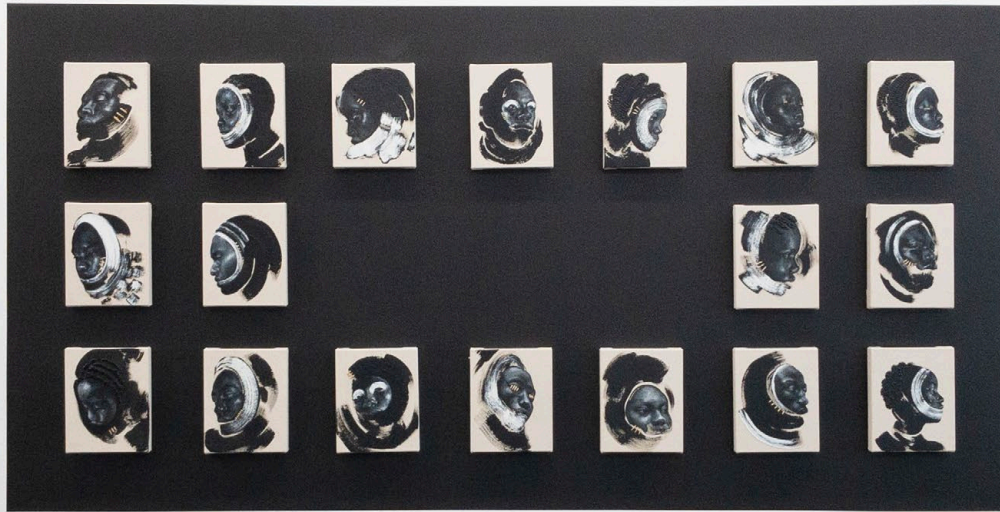
Portrait of the artist Braxton Garneau.



Installation view: *Procession*, 2023
GAVLAK Los Angeles



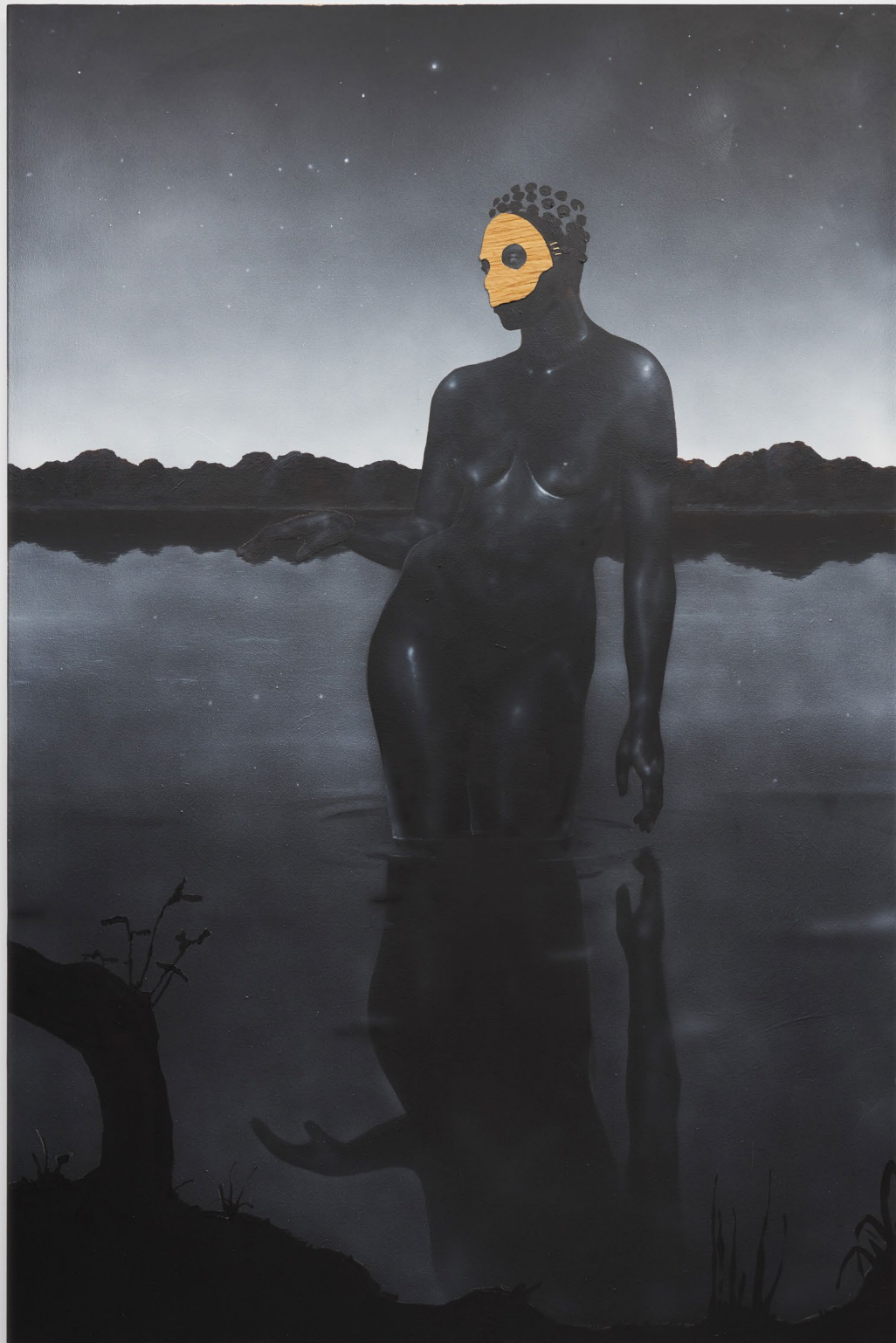
Installation view: *Procession*, 2023
GAVLAK Los Angeles



Installation view: *Procession*, 2023
GAVLAK Los Angeles



Installation view: *Procession*, 2023
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Braxton Garneau

Dusk (La Brea), 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on canvas

72 x 48 in

182.9 x 121.9 cm



Braxton Garneau
Midday (La Brea), 2023
Asphalt and acrylic on canvas
72 x 48 in
182.9 x 121.9 cm



Braxton Garneau

Pierrot Grenade, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on canvas with cloth and sugarcane

36 x 24 in

91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau
Midnight Robber, 2023
asphalt and acrylic on canvas
36 x 24 in
91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau

Dame Lorraine, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on canvas with lace

36 x 24 in

91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau

Bat, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on canvas

36 x 24 in

91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau

Stick Fighter, 2023

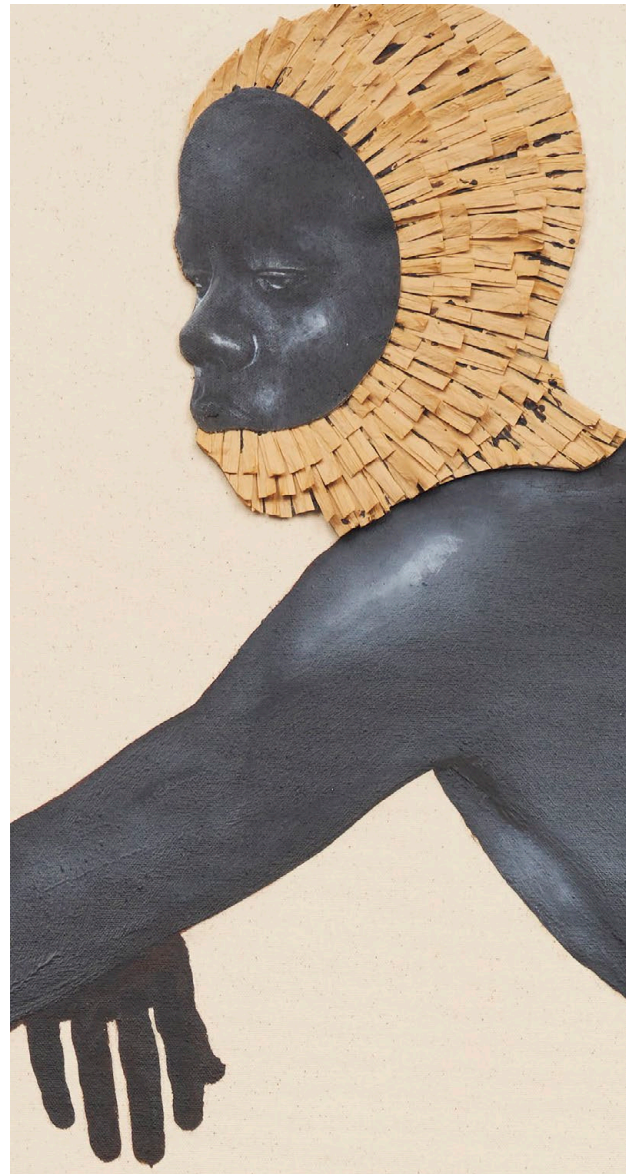
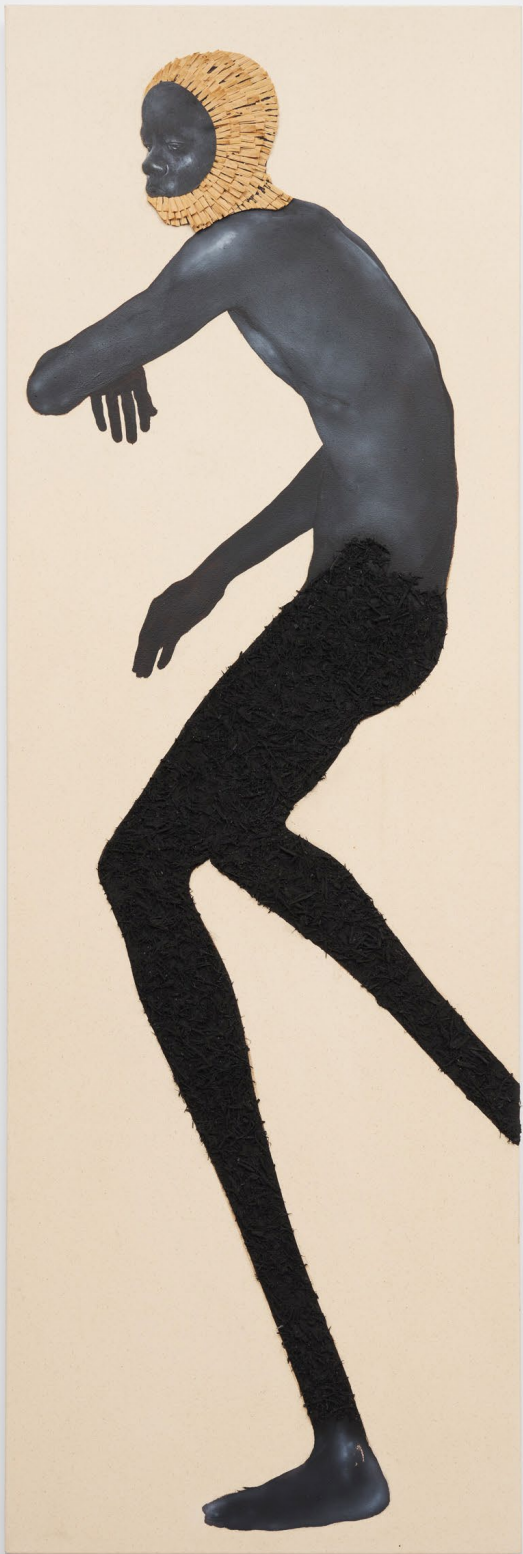
asphalt and acrylic on canvas with raffia

36 x 24 in

91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau
Jab Molassie, 2023
asphalt and acrylic on canvas
36 x 24 in
91.4 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau
Moko Jumbie, 2023
asphalt and acrylic on canvas with raffia, charcoal, and bagasse
72 x 24 in
182.9 x 61 cm



Braxton Garneau

Canboulay King, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia and sugarcane

24 x 12 in

61 x 30.5 cm

Braxton Garneau

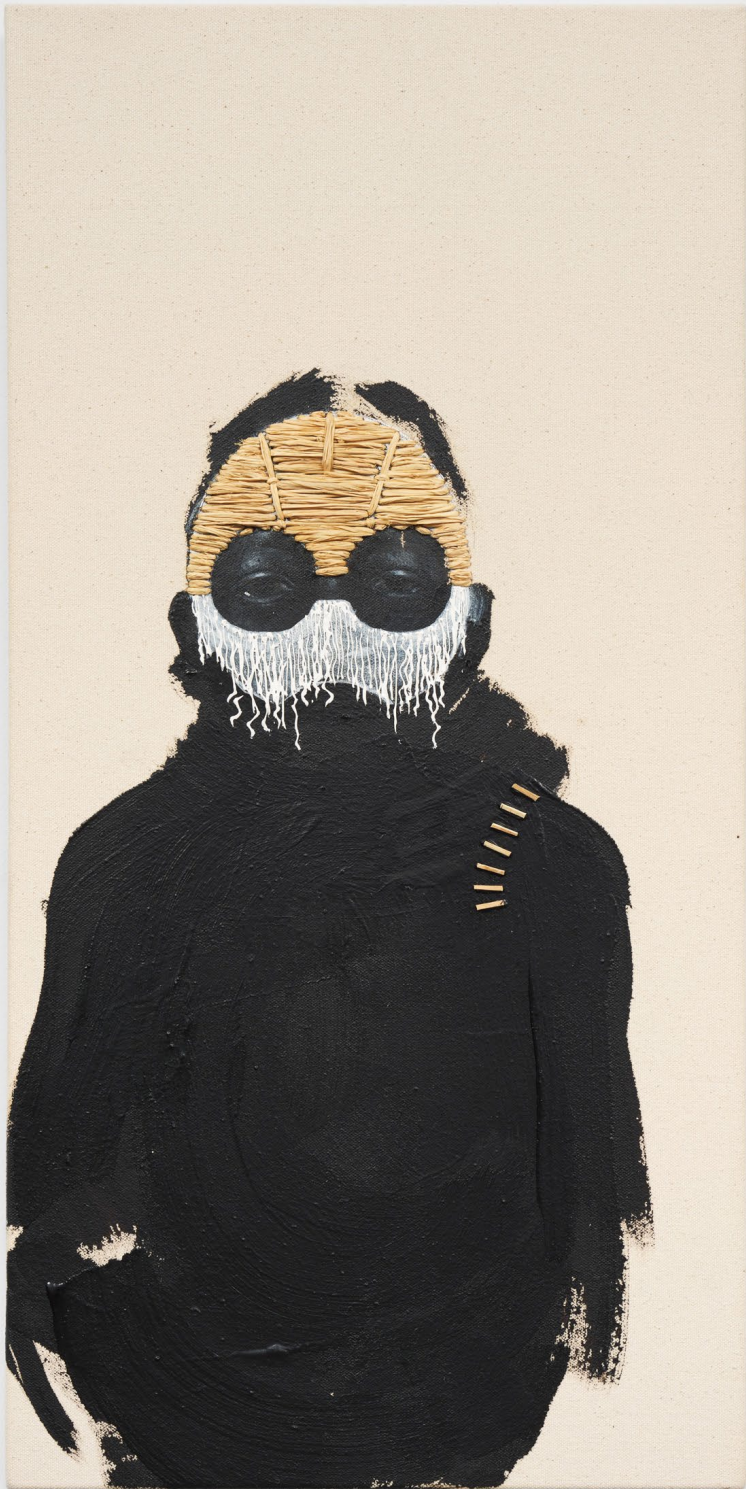
Canboulay Queen, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia and sugarcane

24 x 12 in

61 x 30.5 cm





Braxton Garneau

Canboulay Prince, 2023

asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia and sugarcane

24 x 12 in

61 x 30.5 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 2, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 7, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 9, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 10, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 12, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm



Braxton Garneau

Procession 15, 2023

Asphalt and acrylic on raw canvas with raffia

10 x 8 in

25.4 x 20.3 cm

CURRICULUM VITAE

BRAXTON GARNEAU

Lives and works in Edmonton-amiskwaciwâskahikan, Alberta, Canada

EDUCATION

BFA, 2020 University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 Fine Art Diploma, 2017, MacEwan University, Edmonton, AB

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 GAVLAK Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA
 2021 Cannes Brûlees, Stride Gallery, Calgary, AB
 2019 Braxton Garneau, Parallel Space, Edmonton, AB

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 Fully Realized, Latitude 53, Edmonton, AB
 SNAP at 40: Anniversary Showcase, SNAP, Edmonton, AB
 Scrappy, dc3 Art Projects, Edmonton, AB
 2021 New Direction, curated by AJ Gerard and Artx, Château Cîroc,
 Miami, Florida
 Black Every Day, Art Gallery Of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 ...bring A Folding Chair, Alberta: Trex Aliated Galleries (2021-
 2022), initiated by The Alberta Foundation For The Arts
 Artists In The Fallow 2, Brighton Block Building, curated by
 Michael Cor and Kasie Campbell, Edmonton, AB
 Dy3corpia in collaboration with about Light, curated by
 Marilene Oliver, Edmonton, AB
 Where Do We Go From Here?, Remote Contact Virtual
 Printmaking Symposium, hosted by University Of Tennessee,
 curated by Myken Mcdowell And Jamie-Lee Girodat, Knoxville,
 TN
 Art From Here, Digital Project curated by Latitude 53,
 SNAP Gallery, Mitchell Art Gallery, Ociciwan Contemporary Art
 Collective, Edmonton, AB

2020 It's About Time: Dancing Black In Canada 1900 – 1970 And
 Now, Mitchell Art Gallery, Edmonton, AB
 5 Artists 1 Love, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 2019 Nice To Meet You: Bachelor Of Fine Arts Graduate Show,
 University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 5 Artists 1 Love, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 Black History Month Art Showcase, University of Alberta,
 Edmonton, AB
 2018 -And A Baby, Latitude 53, Edmonton, AB
 Change Climate, Sculptural Work, Rutherford Library,
 University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 Re-Defining Intermedia, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 2017 Define Intermedia, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
 Orange Factory, Macewan University Graduates Exhibition,
 Edmonton, AB

COLLECTIONS

University of Alberta Museums, Edmonton, AB

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2022
 Art in Focus, University of Alberta Museums, April
 The Humber Literary Review, Volume 9, Issue 2 Fall + Winter
 The Dance Current, Volume 25, Issue 1
 2019
 The Colour Edition, SNAPline, January

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For further information please contact

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