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FEATURES

BMO 1st Art! Exhibition at JMB

BMO 1st Art! Exhibition displays the works of art done by emerging artists in each province in Canada. Despite all the artists coming from different places, with the exclusion of Alberta that includes both a provincial and a national winner, they all manage to connect through their themes such as identity and displacement. The competition began with 160 candidates and was eventually narrowed down to the 13 pieces shown at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery on the University of Toronto campus.

The National winner Tamara Himmelspace's "Back into the Earth: Creation and Interpretation of Meaning" is a multi-media performance work commemorated by photographs and the display of her jingle dress. It is no doubt why the piece was chosen nationally as it truly explores what it means to be an Aboriginal Woman in 2015, a subject at the height of its importance as Canada enters a new Liberal era.



Tamara

Himmelspace (Alberta College of Art & Design), Back Into the Earth: Creation and the Interpretation of Meaning. Jingle dress, beaded purse and moccasins: cotton and polyester, unfired clay, deerhide, beads; 11 inkjet prints. Overall installation 72 x 72 in

Some artists like Alberta's Svea Ferguson and Nova Scotia's Connie Lynn Higg turn to textiles in their works with vastly different results. Higg's "(r)evolve" is a gentle consideration of abstract thought, while Ferguson's "Future Classic" created of weaved linoleum blends a classical sculpture of a bird with an everyday material usually used to cover floors. Lindsey Wilson from Ontario also uses textile materials: wool and silk yarn; though she adds ceramics creating a sculpture, titled "Murmur I", in order to explore the connection of body and material in her highly personal piece.



Svea Ferguson (Alberta College of Art & Design), Future Classic, Linoleum flooring, 38 x 28 x 5 in



Lindsey Wilson (Queen's University), Murmur I, Stoneware, wool, silk yarn, 24 x 7 x 3 in

British Columbia winner, Richard Heikkilä-Sawan brilliantly questions identity through the use of a buffalo hide and dye in "Freedom Flag". Similarly, Yucen Zhou (Manitoba) pleasantly knocks the viewer off kilter in "The City Underwater (Montreal)". Zhou turns the world upside down; what first appears as the sky is depicted under a ladder that leads to a ship's deck. Newfoundland & Labrador's Alex Nole pinpointed in his enlightening "Only Begetter" series that Shakespeare's sonnets went through a Christianizing procedure by changing from pronouns that addressed them to a male lover to a female.



Yucen Zhou (University of Manitoba), The City Underwater (Montreal), Oil on linen, 60 x 48 in



Richard Heikkilä-Sawan (Emily Carr University of Art & Design), Freedom Flag, Buffalo hide, dye, 79 x 54 x 2.5 in

There is also the theme of travel consistently coming back. Jasmine Keillor (New Brunswick) explores nostalgia in a blend of sculpture and drawing in "Travellers". Saskatchewan's Shelby Lechman and Yukon's Jon Iñaki Etxeberria Vanneste travel back in time. Vanneste uses digitally manipulated original photographs to look into the distortion of history in "Moving Target Artifacts" while Lechman's "Exodus", in the classical format of oil painting, pays homage to the history of the Hungarian Uprising in an effort to warn future generations of what a loss of humanity can cause.



Shelby Lechman (University of Saskatchewan), Exodus, Oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in

Nunavut's Ramona Barkhouse uses the process of making her beautiful necklace "Flight of the Peacock" as an allegory for life and pride in one's work. P.E.I.'s winner Jude Scheppele in her arresting and disturbing digital illustration, "Dysmorphia", criticizes societies desire to label people. On the other hand Erin Skelton (Quebec) in her sculpture "All Our Mother's Wishes" shows the need for physical belonging we all carry within ourselves, the strong bond between mother and child.



Erin Skelton (Concordia University), All Our Mother's Wishes, Steel, porcelain, pigmented encaustic, cotton cord, silicone, wood crate, 9 x 18 x 7.5 in

Each piece displayed at *BMO 1st Art! Exhibition* is utterly unique, yet they all find ways to connect with each other. It is clear why each of

the pieces were chosen as they all seek to ask questions about their history, their future, and the meaning of life.

Rhiann Moore
Images are courtesy of BMO 1st Art! Exhibition

*Exhibition information: October 22 – December 18, 2015, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Hart House at the University of Toronto, 7 Hart House Circle. Gallery hours: Tue – Sat 12 – 5, Wed 12 – 8 p.m.

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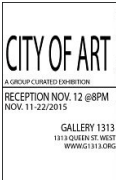
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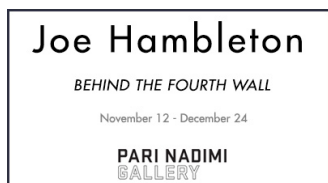
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THINGS I CAN'T TELL YOU



November 7 - 29
Martha Eleen | John Ide

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