

FEATURES



20 Shows We Want to See in 2017

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BY [CANADIAN ART](#)

Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson will be showing at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal from June 21 to October 8, 2017.

1. [Keeley Haftner](#) in Saint John, New Brunswick, in June

For “Galleryfill,” produced with the help of local artist-run centre [Third Space](#), New Brunswick-trained, Chicago-based artist Keeley Haftner will collect unwanted artworks from artists in Saint John. These works will be used to produce what Haftner calls a “Galleryfill”—that is, a landfill, made to municipal specifications, but containing artworks alone—in a public space somewhere in the city. Elsewhere, a storefront video projection will document the process of installing “Galleryfill,” and the storefront will also display a series of small 3-D prints made from waste



plastics, the forms of which will be produced in response to the experience of working on the installation. Once the discarded artworks are added to “Galleryfill,” the soil removed in the digging process will be packed on top and the ground will be re-sodded.

2. [Olafur Eliasson](#) at the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal from June 21 to October 8

Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson turned Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall into a [sublime solarium](#), built a [riverbed inside a museum](#), transported [chunks of glaciers](#) from the Arctic to Paris and Copenhagen, built a freestanding waterfall at the palace of [Versailles](#) and even [dyed a river green](#). His work is crowd-pleasing and uncynical, but somehow, despite the proliferation of shimmering mirrors and rainbows, he gets away with it. For his first solo exhibition in Canada, he’ll bring works that operate on a more modest scale but still deliver the wow-factor, like [Big Bang Fountain](#), a strobe-lit geyser that lets viewers see eruptions of water suspended into stillness by light.

3. [Suzy Lake](#) and “[Position as Desired](#)” at the Art Gallery of Windsor from February 11 to May 17

A photographer, photographed with her back to the camera, is both capturing an image and forming part of its contents. US-Canadian artist Suzy Lake occasionally visualizes herself as a body studying a landscape, a process that renders her as both subject and object. In “Suzy Lake: Performing the Archive,” she positions herself against the literal backdrop of ruin and revival in urban Detroit in a performance at the Art Gallery of Windsor. “Position As Desired: Exploring African Canadian Identity/Photographs from the Wedge Collection” borrows its title from Toronto-based photo-artist Stacey Tyrell’s 2001 work of the same name, and is curated by Windsor-born art collector Kenneth Montague, founder of the [Wedge Collection](#). The show depicts a variety of works—from rare portraits of the first Africans to immigrate to Canada to contemporary work by Canada’s established black artists. In Windsor, this touring show, previously seen in Toronto and Halifax, is expanded with a series of video-based interviews of the group In the Black Canada to contextualize black Canadian experiences in the year of the country’s 150th anniversary.

4. [Etel Adnan](#) at Oakville Galleries from January 22 to March 12

The paintings of the Lebanese-American nonagenarian were brought to the world’s attention at the last Documenta, but she has been an internationally renowned writer, particularly a poet, for decades. Here, in her first Canadian showing (that is, if you don’t count the text she wrote for Public Studio’s 2015 work for Nuit Blanche Toronto), viewers have the chance to see those paintings—which, like all great paintings, combine the humble with the transcendent—as well as her prints, tapestries and films.

5. Bonavista Biennale in Newfoundland from August 17 to September 17



It's not just all about Venice and Kassel this summer. "Art Encounters on the Edge" is the title of the first Bonavista Biennale, a multi-site exhibition in Newfoundland's rural Bonavista Peninsula, three hours' drive from St. John's. Contemporary works by more than 20 Canadian artists will be installed in a variety of indoor and outdoor sites—a micro-brewery, fish store, an old school, a disused seal plant, a beach, a meadow. Watch for works by Kelly Richardson, Marlene Creates, Ned Pratt, Reinhard Reitzenstein, Catherine Blackburn, John Hartman and Iris Häussler, among others.

6. **Kent Monkman** at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto from January 26 to March 4

Sesquicentennial is a word you're going to see and hear a lot in the art world in 2017. Special project funding around Canada's 150-year celebration has been a boon for arts and cultural institutions and organizations across the country as they prepare to mark the progress of nationhood in spectacular fashion. But there's another side to this anniversary: the glaring spectre of everything we haven't achieved in the past century and a half. Kent Monkman promises to bring that critical perspective to the anniversary spectacle with his solo exhibition "Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience." Set to tour across the country over the next two years, the exhibition presents a counter-narrative of colonial history and museology that begins in the harsh urban environment of Winnipeg's north end and contemporary life on the reserve, then travels back in time to New France and the fur trade. Historical artworks and artifacts on loan from national museum collections will be interspersed among Monkman's own paintings, drawings and sculptures—including a major new installation that remakes Fragonard's *The Swing*, now featuring Monkman's flamboyantly provocative alter ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, decked out in beaver fur and swinging back and forth between Generals Wolfe and Montcalm. Sharply critical, with a touch of the ribald...history will never quite be the same.

7. **LandMarks2017/Repères2017** at various locations across Canada in June

Partners In Art's doozy of a sesquicentennial project includes more than 10 well-respected Canadian artists as well as 7 prominent curators who, through a series of year-long collaborations and educational initiatives, will ultimately unveil a chain of ambitious installations coast to coast, in Canada's provincial parks. Early reports confirm that this is a project delicately mindful of responding to and questioning the dynamics of colonialism. Artists include Michael Belmore, Rebecca Belmore, Jeneen Frei Njootli, Maureen Gruben and Ursula Johnson; venues include Banff National Park, the Mingan Islands and Cape Breton Highlands National Park. The impossible challenge will be to see it all.

8. **Florine Stetthimer** at the Jewish Museum in New York from May 5 to September 24 and at the Art Gallery of Ontario from October 21



Florine Stettheimer (1871–1944) has long been an art-nerd secret, so it's both exciting and a bit melancholy to consider this show, the first major one of Stettheimer's work to come to Canada. Stettheimer was born to a wealthy Jewish family in Rochester and became one of European and American Modernism's biggest champions, her official, gendered role in that history being as a salonnière, along with her sisters and mother, to artists like Marcel Duchamp, who was a friend. But Stettheimer was not just a facilitator of bohemian men; she painted, drew, photographed, designed sets and props and also wrote poetry. The work is startlingly contemporary, and very funny: Stettheimer had the distance, intelligence and satirical eye to see the era as it really was. With all this in mind, 2017 looks to be the year in which Stettheimer's quirky vision and life (ripe for a biopic, by the way) goes mainstream.

9. **John Akomfrah** at the MacKenzie Art Gallery from January 14 to May 14

British artist John Akomfrah has had several Canadian showings since his lauded inclusion in the 2015 Venice Biennale, but they have primarily been in Toronto (notably at the Power Plant and Nuit Blanche). Luckily, his work travels to Regina in 2017 for a showing at the MacKenzie Gallery. *The Last Angel of History* blends documentary and fiction to tell the story of Afrofuturism—especially exciting territory given that Akomfrah's work is always slightly extraterrestrial with a sublime, dream-like feel.

10. **Susan Point** at the Vancouver Art Gallery from February 18 to May 28

Much-lauded Musqueam artist Susan Point is perhaps one of few women to engage in carving at a monumental scale. "Susan Point: Coastal Spindle Whorl" is a career-spanning survey emphasizing pieces beginning with the motif of the spindle whorl, traditionally employed by Coast Salish women in the process of preparing wool for garments and ceremonial textiles. These new and existing works span decades, scales, and materials—from large-scale public works to human-scale jewellery, and from paper to steel.

11. **"For the Time Being: The Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art"** at the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Walter Phillips Gallery from May 27 to September 10

Now in its 10th iteration, the upcoming Alberta Biennial will be split between the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Banff Centre's Walter Phillips Gallery. The Alberta Biennial often involves off-site portions—past years have seen work installed at the University of Alberta's Enterprise Square Galleries and other spots—but this is the first time that a partnership has involved an artist meet-up and a series of workshops in the year before the exhibition. Over the summer, the 25 artists included in the show, including Nicole Kelly Westman, Tia Halliday and Mark Clintberg, convened at the Banff Centre to work and tease out the show's theme. The resulting work will be on view at the AGA in May and the WPG in June, with programming running throughout the show's durat

12. [Maria Hupfield](#) at the Power Plant from January 28 to May 14

You might have found a humble video of one of Maria Hupfield's performance works at Art Toronto 2016. That was a prelude to the Power Plant's opening show of 2017 by the Brooklyn-based artist, born in Parry Sound and a member of Wasauksing First Nation. *The One Who Keeps On Giving* is a new work—an oil painting of Georgian Bay by Hupfield's late mother, signed "Peggy Miller." The painting inspired a performance, with Hupfield's siblings, in Parry Sound, which was filmed and will be presented; there will also be a performance in the gallery space. The show is rounded out by objects and films that speak to Hupfield's fascination with the histories and experiential narratives embedded in and activated by the material world.


13. [Amy Malbeuf](#) at the Kelowna Art Gallery from April 1 to July 9

This spring, Kelowna Art Gallery hosts "Inheritance," featuring Hnatyshyn award-winning artist Amy Malbeuf questioning the extent of personal, cultural and artistic inheritance to Indigenous artists. Malbeuf tells me this will include new and existing beaded works on tarp, such as [Jimmie Durham 1974 \(2014\)](#), that have already garnered her much attention. She also hints that the theme will extend to her own history, potentially including objects inherited from her grandparents.

14. Ed Atkins at DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art from April to September

British artist Ed Atkins called *Ribbons* (2014), which shows a computer-generated shirtless, tattooed geezer named Dave swilling beer, huffing fags, sticking his penis through a glory hole, musing poetically and singing pop songs before his body deflates like a whoopee cushion, "a particularly complex and horrible film." Indeed, there's a feeling of horror vacui to Atkins's work, in that it expresses the ways in which technologies designed to map and measure the likes, habits and movements of human beings are violent, in their methods of both surveillance and standardization. Called "one of the great artists of our time" by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Atkins creates avatars that are creepy in their verisimilitude. Because they're not quite human, he can make them do things that wouldn't be ethical to ask of real people. DHC will also show *Hisser* (2015) and *Safe Conduct* (2016).

15. [Leonard Cohen](#) at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal from November 9

Montreal, one of the world's great cities, celebrates its 375th anniversary in 2017. At the MAC, as part of programming around this anniversary, there is an exhibition of works by and about the late singer-songwriter-artist-poet Leonard Cohen—a solace, perhaps, to fans who were irritated by the US media claiming him as their own in 2016 eulogies. Indeed, Cohen's body of work could only have come out of Montreal: a city of deep religious affiliation (Catholic and Jewish); of literary, particularly poetic, sensibility and fascination; of crumbling beauty and divided hope. Fittingly, the exhibition is named after lines in Cohen's 1992 song "Anthem"—"A Crack in Everything"—which 

reflect Cohen's trademark ribald philosophy (and also speak comically to the ongoing construction projects that are currently frustrating so many Montrealers). Like Bowie and Prince, Cohen was a materialist and archivist—he dressed well, made visual art, and kept many sketchbooks and journals. He was also a prolific inspirer of others, so there is, one hopes, much fodder for a successful show here.

16. **Geoffrey Farmer** at **Catriona Jeffries Gallery** from **January 13 to February 18** and at the **Venice Biennale** **May 13 to November 26**

A January solo show by Geoffrey Farmer at Catriona Jeffries Gallery continues the surgical interactions that characterize [much of his work](#), “cutting into historical retired theatre backdrops which were once part of live theatre performances,” according to Jeffries. “The Kitchen” is an opportunity to look beyond the theatrical, political spectacle that characterized much of 2016 to see what might lie beyond. Rumours abound regarding Farmer and Venice but probably don't expect the same type of cut-out collage work that has characterized his recent, revered showings. We can also promise our own 2017 Farmer treat: a special artist project with accompanying text to be included in our Spring issue.

17. **Jimmie Durham** at the **Hammer Museum** in **LA** from **January 26 to May 7** and at the **Walker Art Center** in **Minneapolis** from **June 22 to October 8**

Saskatoon's Rемаi Modern is slated to open this year, and it recently announced its first major exhibition for 2018, Jimmie Durham's “At the Center of the World.” If you can't wait until then, travel to LA or Minneapolis to see this, Durham's first North American retrospective. Durham has not shown significantly in North America for around 20 years, despite being a pioneering New York artist who participated in the American Indian Movement and a variety of politically charged exhibitions and actions in the 1980s. 2017 may be a good year for Durham: a return to this continent with a border-defying survey show bound to contribute to growing conversations around Indigenous land and water rights, and pipeline resistance.

18. **Beau Dick** at **Documenta 14**, **April to September**

Until it opens, we aren't really supposed to know the details of Documenta—the sprawling, quinquennial group exhibition with major taste-making clout in the art world—but the rumours on this one are strong, so it's hard to hold back. The work of contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw mask-maker Beau Dick will, barring some surprise, be exhibited: reportedly almost a dozen of his masks, some massive in size. This is notable not just because Documenta is showing an Indigenous artist with a Canadian passport, but because 2017 seems poised to be the year in which Indigenous art and culture take the international stage. (Indigenous-art curator Candice Hopkins is on Documenta's curatorial team; there are also rumours that Inuit art will be exhibited at the Arsenale at the 2017 Venice Biennale.) Let's hope, and make sure, that it stays there.



19. Pitaloosie Saila at the Winnipeg Art Gallery from May to September

Pitaloosie Saila has always been ahead of her time. In the early days of the Cape Dorset print collections, to which Saila has contributed since 1968, she developed a drawing style entirely her own. Her images, which frequently have a Modernist feel, often feature, perhaps unsurprisingly, strong female figures alongside families, birds, shamans and experiences from her life, which has been marked by travel. Born on the coast of Baffin Island in 1942, Saila spent much of her youth in Quebec and Ontario seeking treatment for tuberculosis. In this solo exhibition (her first in a public gallery), 32 of her more than 165 prints will be on view. Saila's work has been collected by the Met in New York, the National Gallery of Canada and others—with this public solo show, it feels like we might be finally catching up to her.

20. Public Art and Participatory Practices Mentorship Program at the Illingworth Kerr Gallery from March 23 to April 22

Calgary's relationship with public art could best be filed under "it's complicated." The infamous *Travelling Light*, dubbed "the Giant Blue Ring" by locals, and called "awful" by Mayor Nenshi, lost a lot of public favour for this form. But Lorenzo Fusi, the new academic curator at the Illingworth Kerr Gallery, wants to change that. When Fusi first spoke with *Canadian Art*, he noted his desire to redress things: "I'd like to set up a meaningful conversation about public art... We need to raise the profile, the thinking, the level of the dialogue that we're having here." Later this year, the IKG will join forces with Public Art at the City of Calgary to offer a series of workshops on public art and social practice with some big international names, including Alfredo Jaar and Jeanne van Heeswijk, and local artists—who will exhibit at the IKG and get an opportunity for a \$50,000 public-art commission.