

Common Place:

Common-Place

June 5 – July 27, 2019

Art  
Museum

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## Works by

Patrick Cruz, Erika DeFreitas,  
Walter Scott, Catherine Telford Keogh,  
Sojourner Truth Parsons

Curated by Lillian O'Brien Davis

This exhibition is produced as part of  
the requirements for the MVS degree in  
Curatorial Studies at the John H. Daniels  
Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and  
Design, University of Toronto.

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## 2019 MVS Curatorial Studies Projects

*What do we mean when we say 'content  
moderation'?*

May 25–26, 2019

Symposium Organized by Pegah Vaezi

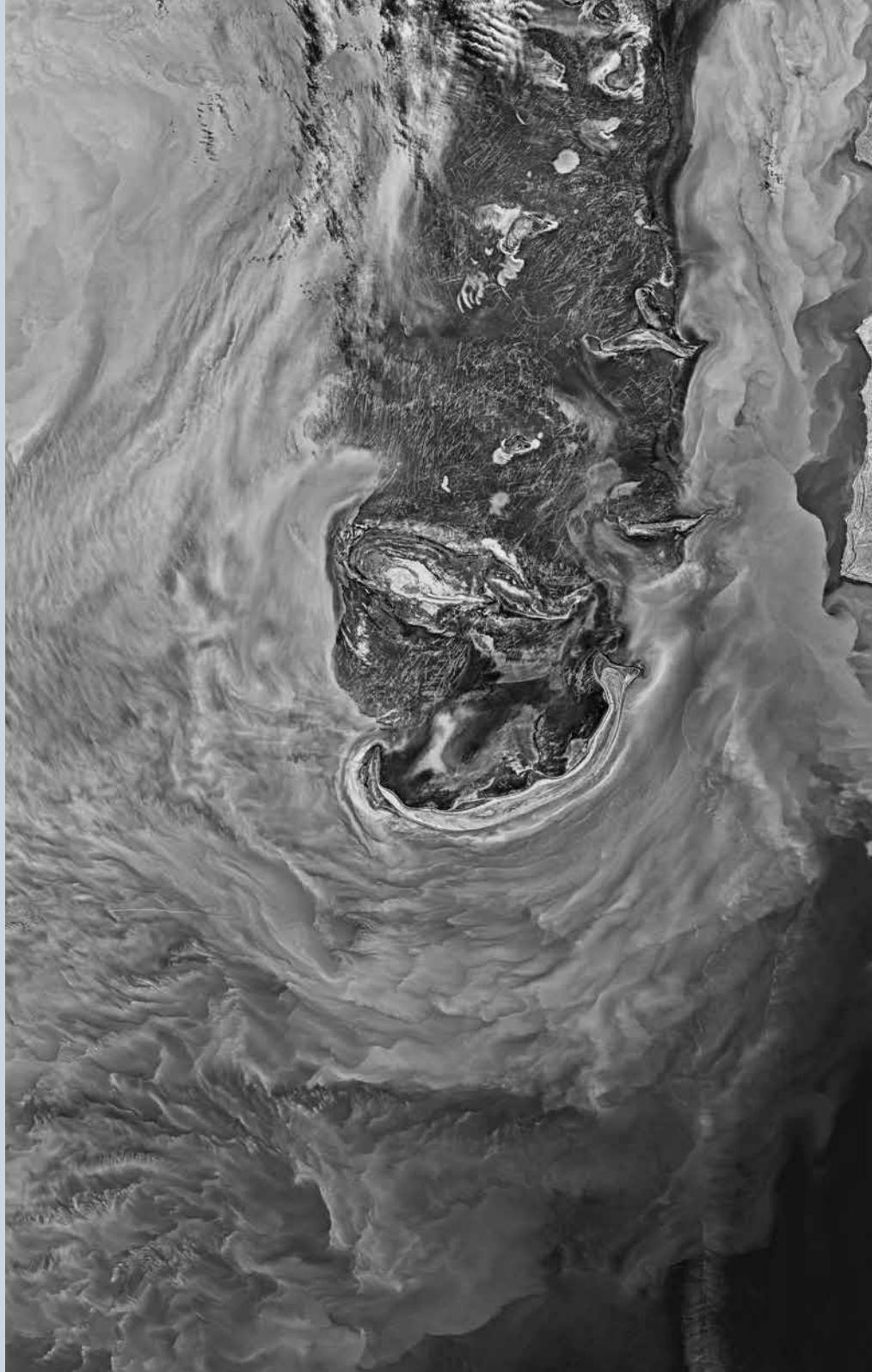
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Hart House

*In & Out of Saskatchewan*

June 5–July 27, 2019

Curated by Kate Whiteway

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University of Toronto Art Centre



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## Common Place: Common-Place

This exhibition takes its name, *Common Place: Common-Place*, from the writings of Édouard Glissant, a poet and writer from the island of Martinique. Glissant's common place was characterized by the gesture of relation: between people, places, and things. He understood relationality as being enacted in a place that is common—common ground. An archipelago of islands was Glissant's metaphor of relation,<sup>1</sup> a site of generative exchange that does not homogenize people or cultures but produces difference from which something new can emerge.

This exhibition explores relations, contradictions, and the considered use of space as an examination of what it means to live together in a common place. Humans are messy and ungraspable, not clean and rigid. The common ground is a space of entanglement.<sup>2</sup> Within the common place existence is not fixed but mutable and articulated through movement as people and objects affect and impinge on one another. The purpose of this exhibition is not to reach conclusions but to explore possibilities.

The artworks included in this exhibition engage with notions of a common place through a variety of entry points to their conceptual and material presences. They are accumulations of interconnectivity—kinships within themselves, with each other and with us.<sup>3</sup> Catherine Telford Keogh's sculptures contain data from previous moments; they include objects that are in and around us, deposits that slowly shift and change state over time, reacting in relation to each other. Erika DeFreitas's video depicts a figure in constant movement, resisting a settled or permanent position. The sound generated by her presence permeates the surrounding space. Patrick Cruz's wall painting engages with the gallery as place, a site for experimentation and assertive gestures that push back against the power of white walls. Walter Scott's humanoid sculptures extend into the gallery; the vulnerability and humour associated with their forms is a variation of representation, proposing alternate possibilities of perception. Sojourner Truth Parsons's paintings work through the cacophony of existence. Acting as memorials or visual representations of an emotional process,

each painting becomes a site of exchange with and in response to the activities of the world. We care where we put things and we care where we are put. *Common Place: Common-Place* looks at the structures that hold us,<sup>4</sup> considering what it means to be in a state of constant exchange and the difficulty as well as the generative possibilities of that state.

Traces of a previous exhibition remain in the space—two small peep holes in one of the walls. They are a gesture acknowledging the life and continuity of thought in the gallery.<sup>5</sup> According to Glissant, place functions as the model for the common—a model that is by necessity a work in progress.<sup>6</sup> The not unwelcome ghosts of previous exhibitions echo through the gallery, reminding us that nothing has been decided yet, no conclusion has been reached—that we are in a place in process. Welcome to the Common Place.



1. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).
2. Denise Ferreira da Silva suggests that current cultural discourse upholds the principle of separability, to which entanglement is its natural opposition. "On Difference Without Separability," in *32nd Bienal de São Paulo: Incerteza viva* (2016), exhibition catalogue.
3. For Glissant's definition of kinship, see Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*.
4. Pascale Guibert, "'Common Place: Common-Place' A Presentation of Edouard Glissant's Poetics of the compounding of place," *Commonwealth Essays and Studies* 39, no. x (Autumn 2016): 113–125.
5. The traces are from work by artist Dana Prieto's *It's only invisible when it works* (2019), part of the 2019 University of Toronto Masters of Visual Studies Studio Program Graduating Exhibition.
6. Guibert, "Common Place."

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Cover Image: Photo by NASA on Unsplash.

Above Image: Sojourner Truth Parsons, *Black and white bitches lose their minds*, 2018, acrylic, flashe, archival glue and canvas on canvas, 60 x 60". Courtesy of Daniel Faria Gallery.

## Opening Event

### Reception

Wednesday, June 5, 2019, 6–8pm  
University of Toronto Art Centre

## Public Programs

### Weekly Drop-In Tours

Exhibition Tours

Tuesdays, 2pm

Meet at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery

Malcove Collection Tour

Last Wednesday of each month, 12 noon

University of Toronto Art Centre

Hart House Collection Tour

Last Wednesday of each month, 2pm

Meet at the Hart House information desk

For program details visit

[artmuseum.utoronto.ca](http://artmuseum.utoronto.ca)

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Carmen Schroeder, Exhibition Technician

Underline Studio, Brand Design

Flash Reproductions, Printing

Ruth Jones, Copy Editor

## Curator's Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Barbara Fischer for her role as teacher and advisor as well as the rest of the Art Museum team for their support in the development and organization of this exhibition. I would like to thank Kim Simon for her careful attention and generosity as well as Elizabeth Harney for her invaluable insights. I would also like to thank Emelie Chhanghur, Suzanne Carte, Mitchell Akiyama, Daniella Sanader, and Magdalyn Asimakas for sharing their knowledge and skills as I plodded through my research. I would like to thank the artists in the exhibition for their patience, generosity, and good humour. I would also like to acknowledge my MVS peers who have been integral to this project, thank you for your love, support, and laughter. Finalement, merci M. Glissant pour votre livre—je n'aurais rien sans vous.

## Visiting the Art Museum

### Justina M. Barnicke Gallery

7 Hart House Circle  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3  
416.978.8398

### University of Toronto Art Centre

15 King's College Circle  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H7  
416.978.1838

Wheelchair access to University College, and therefore the Art Museum's University of Toronto Art Centre location, will be closed due to University College building revitalization. Accommodations for accessibility are available upon request.

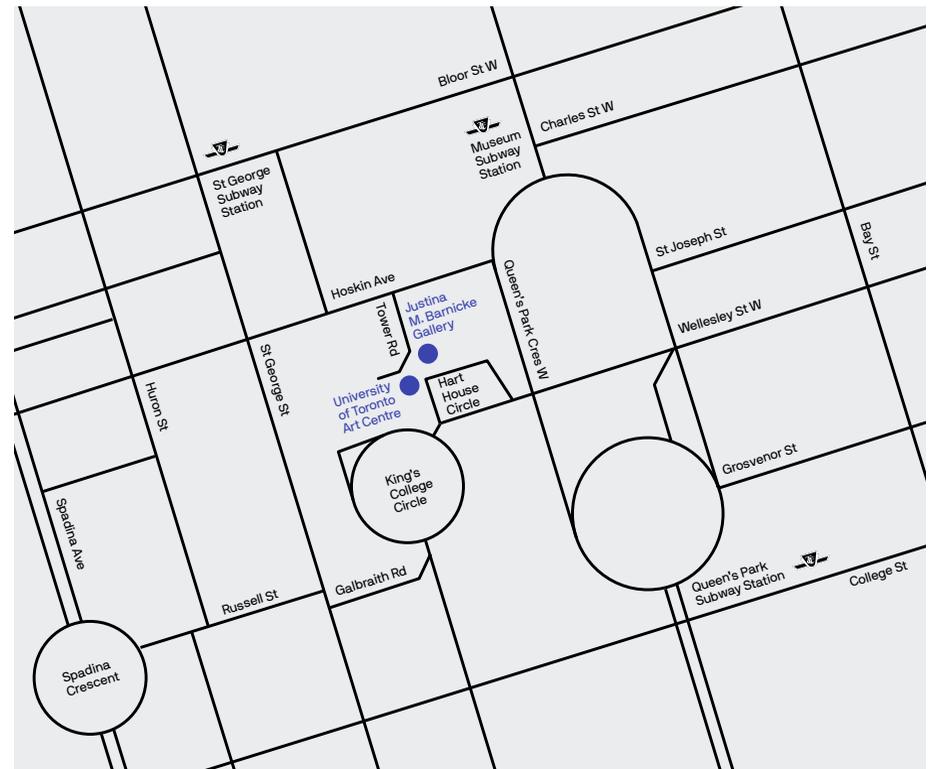
Tuesday	Noon–5pm
Wednesday	Noon–8pm
Thursday	Noon–5pm
Friday	Noon–5pm
Saturday	Noon–5pm
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed

Closed on statutory holidays. Class tours and group bookings by appointment. Admission is FREE.

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