



# FAZAKAS GALLERY

## Fazakas Gallery announces its participation in Art Toronto, Canada's international modern and contemporary art fair

VANCOUVER, BC (September 22, 2016) – Fazakas Gallery is pleased to announce its participation at Art Toronto 2016, Canada's only international art fair. Fazakas Gallery's theme, *Mask*, will feature works by five contemporary, intercultural, multidisciplinary artists. The artworks presented will explore how masks of the 21st century create a dialogue between colonial and cultural modes of thought, and how we build upon and diverge from traditions.

Fazakas Gallery is proud to be featuring masks by renowned Kwakwaka'wakw artist **Beau Dick**, whose work demonstrates the evolution of the Northwest Coast tradition of carving through proficiency of traditional techniques. While Dick is aligned with the traditions of his ancestors, his work reveals the effects of cultural hybridity and examines how native imagery has transformed over time. His highly animated masks feature unique, gestural strokes reminiscent of 20<sup>th</sup> century Expressionist paintings, and show influences from styles external to the traditional Northwest Coast canon. Dick's re-invention blurs the lines between ceremonial object and art object. A documentary feature film on Beau Dick, entitled *Meet Beau Dick: Maker of Monsters*, will be released early next year (co-directed by Natalie Boli and LaTiesha Fazakas).

Adding to the dialogue of masks in society, Fazakas Gallery will also feature paintings, sculptures, screen prints, and photographs by **Carlos Colín**, **Carolynne Yardley**, **Mark Preston**, and **Jeneen Frei Njootli**. These artists are informed by their individual cultural backgrounds and traditions and offer unique responses to our contemporary, postcolonial landscape.

Photographs by Mexican artist **Carlos Colín** combine self-portraiture and masks, engaging us in ideas about concealment and rebellion. Colín's self-portrait series depicts his face covered in various Guatemalan textiles, bringing attention to issues of indigenous cultural identity in Latin America.

**Carolynne Yardley's** self-coined term 'Squirrealism' is used to describe her signature style of fine artwork employing squirrels, hybrid humans, and masks. Shape-shifting and humanoid forms are further examined in her work through collaborations with artist Chief Rande Cook (Kwakwaka'wakw), reminding viewers that art is alive, influenced, and constantly changing.

**Mark Preston's** abstract masks make reference to traditional Tlingit forms, but do not share the traditional functions typical of masks, as his pieces cannot be worn. Preston's work plays on the reductive aspects of Modernism; his surfaces use pared down elements and are monochromatic in appearance. Preston's compositions repeat throughout his work, replicating an endless void, while "avoiding" visual distractions.

**Jeneen Frei Njootli's** performance and installation works confront the ways in which First Nations' cultural identity is understood and disseminated in present-day society. Her work examines the cross points between colonization and geography and seeks to reclaim control of Indigenous identity. Parallels can be drawn between Beau Dick's work, which is often intended to be performed at traditional Kwakwaka'wakw ceremonies and potlatches, and Frei Njootli's performances that grow out of a consideration of the differences between knowledge situated within the academy or the art world and that of a specifically Gwich'in gaze. Frei Njootli was recently awarded a William and Meredith Saunderson Prize for Emerging Artists.

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Fazakas Booth # C83

Art Toronto 2016  
October 28-31, 2016  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre  
North Building, Exhibit Hall A & B  
255 Front Street West

Opening Night Preview  
Thursday, October 27, 2016  
6:30 - 10pm

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