



MAP

<sup>1</sup> Indigenous village sites throughout BC  
<sup>2</sup> Kuitiā-Barbara Wyss quoted in T'uy'tanat-Cease Wyss, "Kanakas in Coast Salish Lands and Waters: My Family and Community Stories," in *Journey to Kahō'ōlawe* (Vancouver: grunt gallery, 2017): 57.

In 2014, Wyss travelled to the Hawaiian island of Kahō'ōlawe with German artist and curator Hans Winkler. Their four-year collaborative research project resulted in the artist book *Journey to Kahō'ōlawe* (2017) published by grunt gallery in Vancouver, which is included in this exhibition's reading room. The book documents the history of Kahō'ōlawe, a sacred place and navigational marker for Kanaka Maoli that was occupied as a bombing range by the American military in the 1940s. The island became a focal point of the Hawaiian sovereignist movement in the 1970s and in 1990 was placed under the administration of the Kahō'ōlawe Island Reserve Commission, returning control to the state of Hawai'i. Remediation of the island is ongoing and focused on the removal of unexploded ordinance and plastic debris, and restoring the severely damaged ecosystem as well as ceremonial practices.

Eihu and See-Emiya met Joe Nahinu, another Kanaka Maoli man, shortly after moving to Burrard Inlet. See-Emiya took Nahinu as her second husband and the couple had three children together. "This is how the Skwxwú7mesh and Hawaiian family known as the Nahanees began."<sup>2</sup> A descendent of the Nahane lineage from her maternal grandfather, Lorne Whittom Nahane Sr., Cease Wyss' ancestral name is T'uy'tanat, meaning "woman who travels by canoe to gather medicines for all people".

Around 1860, William Eihu arrived in Fort Langley, built over the Katzie village of Kwantlen, and located in what was then known as the Colony of British Columbia on a trade ship travelling between the Hawaiian Islands and the northeastern shores of the Great Ocean. Mary See-Emiya, a Skwxwú7mesh woman visiting Katzie for the winter ceremonies, met and married William Eihu. The couple had one child together and moved to Burrard Inlet where Eihu worked at the Hastings Mill, the first commercial operation around which the settlement that would become Vancouver developed.

Welcome everyone to this place, my heart is lifted. T'uy'tanat is my ancestral name. I am from Slah7n, Cheak'mus, Chaythús, Kánaka Ranch, Xemelcht'sn, X̱ way X̱ way and Sn'auk'.

Chen kwenmantumi-wit, En ha7h skwalawens: T'uy'tanat kw' en sna. Ti'encha chekw' teha chen'ti' Slah7n, Cheak'mus, Chaythús, Kánaka Ranch, Xemelcht'sn, X̱ way X̱ way, Sn'auk'.

## Tarah Hogue

## Weaving the Great Ocean



# T'uy'tanat-Cease Wyss

## The Commute

22 September–22 December 2018



MAP

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Cease Wyss, August 16, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 59.  
<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 56.

Wyss has also been mentored by Tsawaysia Spakwus—a Skwxwú7mesh and Kwák̓wā k̓á'wakw cultural knowledge keeper—for the past three years. A consummate weaver, Spakwus taught Wyss how to harvest, process, and weave with cedar bark, including the protocols and teachings accompanying this practice. Wyss was driven to learn cedar bark weaving following her maternal grandmother Eva Mae Nahane, and is sharing in this learning with her daughter Senaqwila and her granddaughter Kamaya. The second VR work, *Nexwiniw Tkwí Skwxwú7shen (Teachings from the Deer)* (2018) was shot on the Stawamus River in the Squamish Valley and shows Spakwus and her student Megan Innes processing

travelling great distances.

laying next to honu (green sea turtle), who comes to rest and harden its shell on the beach after away, which is nevertheless touched by the shared waters of the Pacific. The work shows the kahuna dusk. The technology allows the user to be briefly immersed in an environment hundreds of kilometres (*Turtle Journeys*) (2018) is a 360° VR experience of the Papatōia Beach on the leeward side of Ō'ahu at activities as building a rainbow bridge between communities and worlds.<sup>6</sup> *K'axwch'k Nexw'iyay'ulih* and conducted genealogical research at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Kahuna Pahia described their attended cultural gatherings, visited a few heiau (places of ceremony), connected with a Nahinu relative, Pahia, a Hawaiian kahuna. Moving between the mountains and the shoreline of Ō'ahu, the group May 2018 with her long-time collaborator, Métis/Sioux interdisciplinary artist Paul Lang, and Happy ethnobotany, media art and weaving. In preparation for *The Commute*, Wyss returned to Hawai'i in from one another, Wyss amplifies the intersections of practices that are often perceived as disparate: more-than-human world between places that nation states would have us see as distant and separated. In reflecting on these historic oceanic migrations, recent travels, and the interconnectedness of the

ways.<sup>7</sup>

"We have found common cultural bonds that continue to weave our cultures together in beautiful states," Wyss's Hawaiian 'ohana have also joined her on canoe journeys in Coast Salish waters. As the artist has been embraced as 'ohana (family) returning home "after close to two centuries of being away";<sup>4</sup> established on the west coast of Turtle Island (North America).<sup>3</sup> In her own journeys to Hawai'i, Wyss 1800s when a surge of trading occurred between Hawai'i and England, and the colonies then being. In parallel, the book details the Kanaka Maoli presence in Coast Salish territories since the early

## Upcoming Events

29 September Queer Pride: Closing Symposium & Celebration

4 October First Thursdays, Carol McGregor

6 October Book Launch, Ryan Presley: *Prosperity*

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#### Opening Hours

Tuesday–Saturday 11am–6pm | First Thursday of the month 11am–9pm

*The Commute* is supported by the IMA and has received assistance from the Australia Council for the Arts, Australian Government through the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Creative New Zealand, Canada Council for the Arts, Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, and Queensland Government through Arts Queensland in partnership with Brisbane City Council.



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The IMA is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, and from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, and through the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian Federal, State, and Territory Governments. The IMA is a member of Contemporary Art Organisations Australia.



## Exhibition Map

a deer hide in the water. The women share stories of learning and teaching together on the land, enacting and demonstrating the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer.

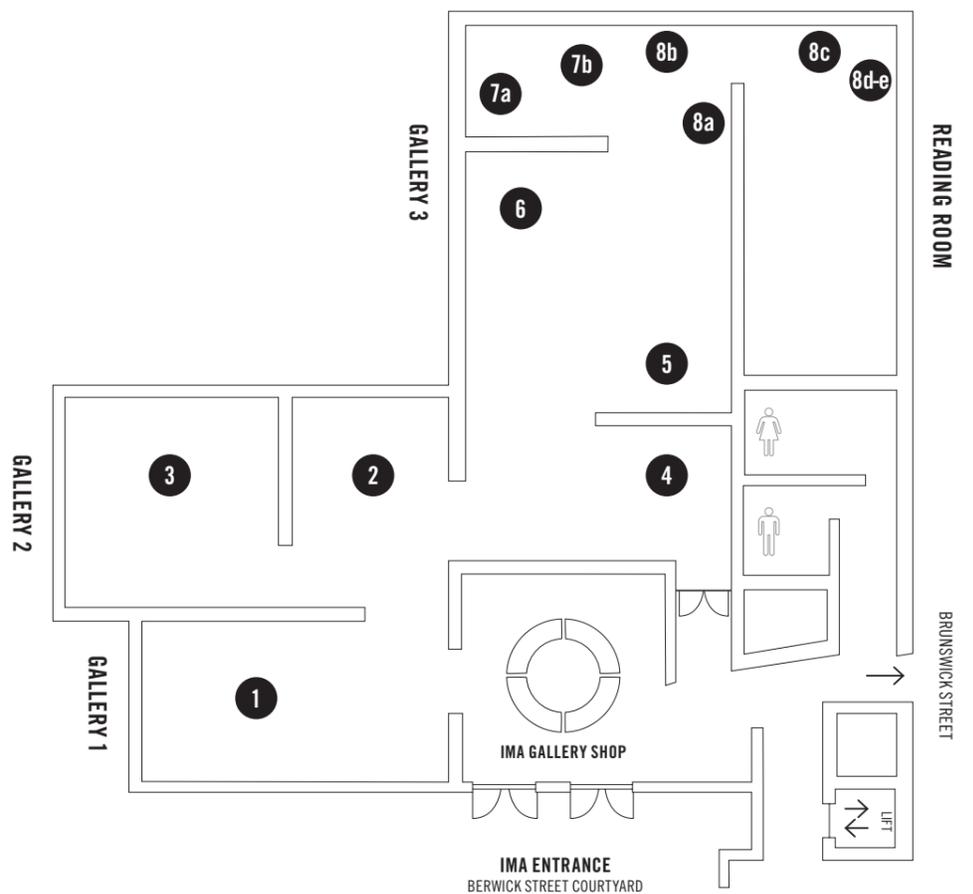
For Wyss, media arts and ethnobotany have, in her words,

...always worked side by side and are intertwined in beautiful ways. They both address natural world stories, beliefs and ideologies. In ethnobotany, you look at how plants are used for foods, medicines or utilities, and how they grow and can be collected. All of that work in collecting is a very similar process to collecting our stories, where we have to go out and work from the ground up to get our stories and inspirations for what we create, whether it's something traditional or whether it's non-linear. However we tell our stories, there is always that connection.<sup>7</sup>

*Shkweh Wéwshkem Nexw7iyá'ulh (To Explore, To Travel by Canoe)* (2018) is a woven ceremonial cape made for an ocean-going traveller; in this case, Wyss' daughter. A traditional cedar canoe that First Nations along the Northwest Coast of Turtle Island use to traverse the waters is the weaving's central motif. The warp of the weaving is comprised entirely of red cedar bark while the weft consists of bands made from twined coconut hull fibre, wool and lau hala (pandanus leaf), materials gathered between Skwxwú7mesh and Hawaiian territories. The cape's matrix, the material ground or support structure of the weaving results from Wyss's cultural knowledge, which is situated in her home territory, enabling her to integrate materials from other territories she is connected with by way of relationality and protocol.

Similarly, Wyss has created an apothecary of salves and tinctures made from plant medicines gathered in Coast Salish, Kánaka Maoli, The Greater Brisbane Aboriginal territories, pointing to the resonances between these landscapes and knowledges. In Brisbane, *The Commute* co-curator Freja Carmichael introduced Wyss to a traditional owner of these lands, Goothala (Danny Doyle), exchanging gifts of plant medicines and knowledge with one another. To be a guest is to honour the responsibility to learn and to go gently, and Wyss's apothecary is a gesture of respect toward this.

Wyss's ongoing work and her project for *The Commute* positions Indigenous knowledge, plant medicines and weaving as technologies comparable with VR and other forms of digital media. VR is an effective platform for the transfer of Indigenous knowledge because of its capacity to transport users into other environments, into realities determined by Indigenous visions of our own futurity.



In tandem with this, Wyss's mentorship as an emerging weaver and her extensive training in ethnobotany clearly articulate the millennia of study, research and expertise that has gone into the creation of these objects and practices. As Cree Métis media artist Cheryl L'Hirondelle has written, "to be truly free and self-governing, we must also acknowledge and be aware of our pre-contact ingenuity as inventors and technologists—experts in new media and avatars of innovation."<sup>8</sup> In weaving together materials, knowledges and experiences from across the Great Ocean, Wyss affirms this past while navigating into the future.

**T'uy't'ananat-Cease Wyss** (Skwxwú7mesh, Stó:lō, Irish, Métis, Kanaka Maoli, Swiss) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work in new media, performance and community engaged projects spans over twenty-five years. Her work focuses on sustainability, Coast Salish cultural elements, ethnobotany, and digital media. Wyss is an emerging weaver, working with traditional techniques in wool and cedar.

**Tarah Hogue** (Métis, Dutch) is a curator, writer and uninvited guest on x̱m̱əθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səilwəta7ɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) territories/Vancouver. Her work engages collaborative methodologies and a careful attentiveness to place in order to decentre colonial modes of perception within institutional spaces. She is the inaugural Senior Curatorial Fellow, Indigenous Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

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|--------------|--|--|
| GALLERY 1    | <b>1 Carol McGregor, <i>Skin Country</i>, 2018</b><br>Possum skins, charcoal, ochre, binder medium, waxed thread   |  |
| GALLERY 2    | <b>2 Bracken Hanuse Corlett, <i>Qvùtix (Dance Blanket)</i>, 2018</b><br>Akoya, abalone, and mussel shell buttons, wool, digital animation, 2:00  |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>3 Ahilapalapa Rands, <i>Lift Off</i>, 2018</b><br>3-channel animation, 3:25   |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>4 Chantal Fraser, <i>The Way</i>, 2018</b><br>Wind turbine, generator, rhinestones, steel   |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>5 Hannah Brontë, <i>FUTCHA ANCIENT</i>, 2018</b><br>Lightboxes, photographic prints, textiles, ink, shell   |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>6 Lisa Hilli, <i>Sisterhood Lifeline</i>, 2018</b><br>Latex ink on wallpaper, inkjet print on cotton rag paper, office partitions, iMac, office telephone with vocal recordings, books, Post-It notes, pens, swivel chair   |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>7a) Natalie Ball, <i>When Harry met Sally. I mean, when my Mom met my Dad. I mean, when my Ancestors met my Ancestors. I mean, when a Lace Front met Smoked Skin</i>, 2018</b><br>Beaded elk hide moccasins, synthetic lace front wig, shell beads, metal pins, sinew thread, tube sock |  |
| GALLERY 3    | <b>7b) Natalie Ball, <i>I Bind You Nancy</i>, 2018</b><br>Coyote skull with lower jaw, sinew thread, vintage plastic dolls, beaded deer hide moccasins   |  |
| READING ROOM | <b>8a) T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss, <i>K'axwch'k Nexw7iyá'ulh (Turtle Journeys)</i>, from the <i>Sacred Teachings</i> series, 2018</b><br>HD video, 5:59  |  |
| READING ROOM | <b>8b) T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss, <i>Shkweh Wéwshkem Nexw7iyá'ulh (To Explore, To Travel by Canoe)</i>, 2018</b><br>Lau hala, coconut hull fibre, sea gress, red cedar bark, wool, abalone shell, and mother of pearl buttons   |  |
| READING ROOM | <b>8c) T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss, <i>Sk'éytl'tanaj (Medicinal Plants)</i>, from the <i>Sacred Teachings</i> series, 2018</b><br>Indigenous plant medicines gathered in Coast Salish, Kánaka Maoli, and Greater Brisbane Aboriginal lands  |  |
| READING ROOM | <b>8d) T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss, <i>K'axwch'k Nexw7iyá'ulh (Turtle Journeys)</i>, from the <i>Sacred Teachings</i> series, 2018</b><br>360-degree VR video, 5:59   |  |
| READING ROOM | <b>8e) T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss, <i>Nexwníw Tkwi Sxwí7shen (Teachings from the Deer)</i>, from the <i>Sacred Teachings</i> series, 2018</b><br>360-degree VR video, 6:08   |  |

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Cheryl L'Hirondelle, "Codetalkers Recounting Signals of Survival," in *Coded territories: Tracing Indigenous Pathways in New Media Art* ed. Steven Loft & Kerry Swanson (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014): 147.