
ENDLESS SUMMER

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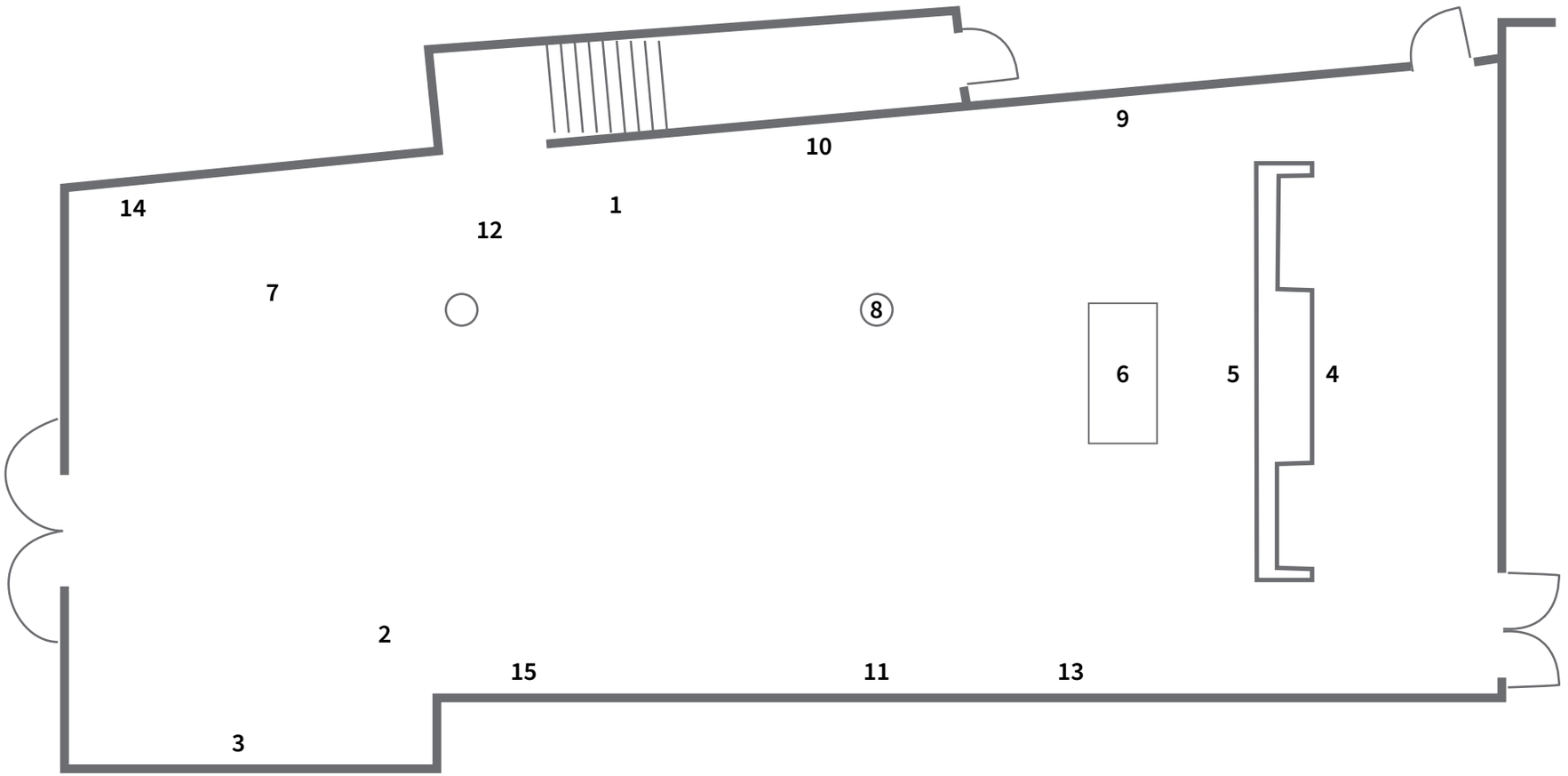
Katie Kozak + Lucien Durey

April 15 - June 17, 2023

Curated by Jenn Jackson

Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art
2121 Lonsdale Avenue
North Vancouver, BC V7M 2K6

EXHIBITION MAP



1 *Flotsam Mobile*, 2023
Found metal, fishing net yarn, hammock yarn, frame

2 *Wigs*, 2019-2023
Found rope, found wire

3 *Foreshore*, 2023
C-print, gesso, oil paint

4 *Candelabra*, 2020
Looping video, 4m15s

5 *Covers*, 2023
Bedsheets, dye, beeswax, sea salt

6 *everything is borrowed and will be returned*, 2021-23
Glass, mirrors, salt water

7 *Strawberry Roan*, 2023
Fibreglass horse, flocking, lamp parts, lightbulbs

8 *Bere Point Mobile*, 2023
Tent poles, pressed loonies, embroidery floss, cane

9 *Wigs*, 2019/2023
Lightjet C-print

10 *Index*, 2023
Lightjet C-print

11 *You*, 2023
Beach glass

12 *Three*, 2023
Found photo

13 *Dog Beach*, 2023
Inkjet print

14 *Net*, 2023
Found netting, bingo chips

15 *Gutter Glass*, 2023
Auto glass, frame, shelf



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FOREWORD

Endless Summer is an exhibition and series of public programs that features the collaborative works of artists Katie Kozak and Lucien Durey. Since 2012, Kozak and Durey have worked together on durational projects that enact care for one another and gratitude toward the places and spaces in which the artworks are realized and exhibited. The resulting artworks and programs contemplate lineage, ancestry, queerness, sustainability, and healing within a context of reimagining place-based relations that serve the social and cultural landscape of their shared communities.

Endless Summer conveys a dedicated period of trust and exchange between artists. The program engages with a longstanding collaborative practice of collecting discarded materials to be reassembled in unexpected ways. This drawing together of collaborative social networks and reciprocal exchange is a continuation of Kozak and Durey's ongoing practice of collectivity and care.

The project includes new and recent sculptural, photographic, and video works that consider lineages of reciprocity that grow from friendship and familiarity. The public programs extend to include additional artists, musicians, and creative collaborators through workshops, events, and presentations.

Scan to view a virtual exhibition tour of *Endless Summer: Katie Kozak & Lucien Durey*





C!

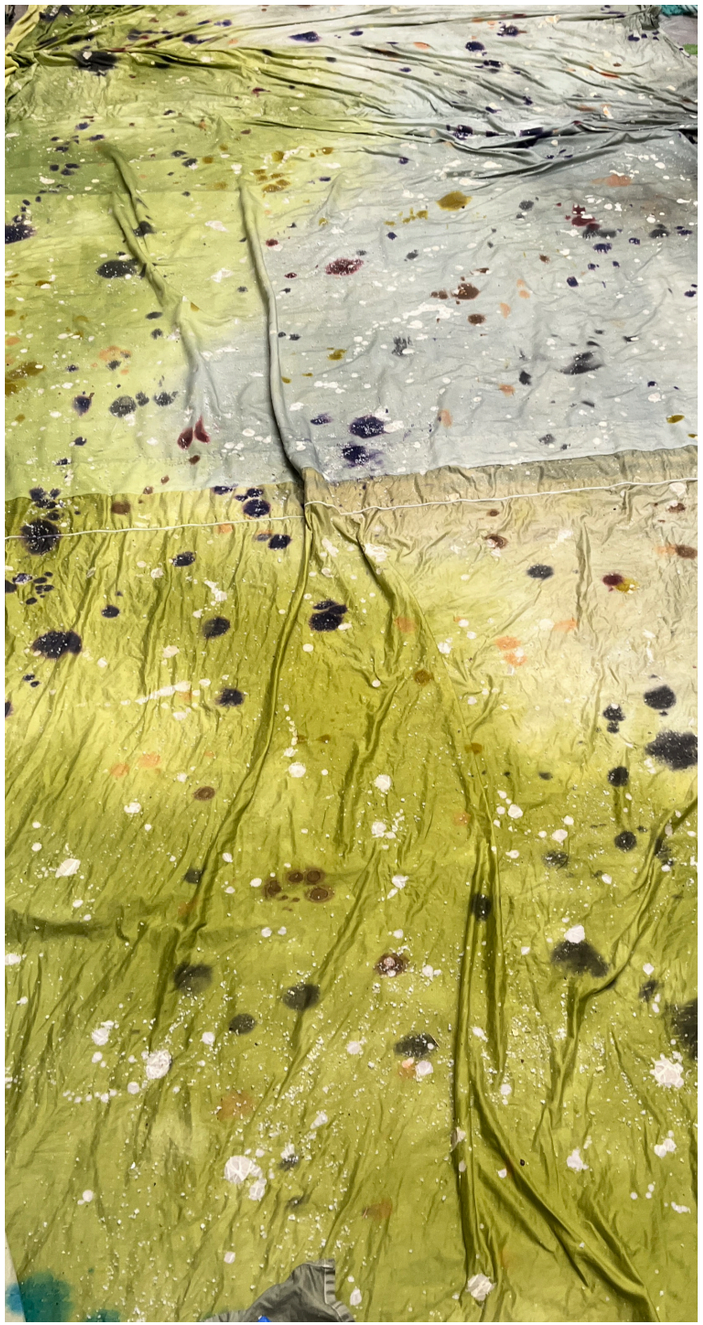
Kiel Torres

Writing to you in the tilted light of March. Daylight savings has left me thinking about what is lost in an hour. Sometimes that's all we have when calling across time zones. Have I told you about my dimes? I'm finding them on the ground everywhere. Sometimes between strides I can even intuit them before looking down. The pattern has turned walking into a forecast, anticipating where I'll see my next little silver cookie floating in the grass, on the pavement, between lights at the crosswalk. I mentioned my dimes to my mom & she said that they're signs that someone is sending guidance, family perhaps. "A call from beyond." I pick up & pick up & pick up & suddenly my pockets are full. When I remember, I empty them into a clamshell on my dresser, a gift from my lover, where they collect like metallic pearls.

Most of the snow from the morning had melted by the time I had to leave for my studio visit with K & L. Thankfully it was the drool kind of snow that signals the change of seasons & doesn't require any clearing. Meanwhile, all of L's furniture was pushed against the walls to make space on the floor for a curtain made from thrifted bedsheets sewn together at the ends. I sat next to J on a couch in the corner of the room & watched as K & L dripped wax, pigment & salt across the fabric. Hand-dyed green, the sheets stained according to their weave. Brackish at the meeting point of fibres, crocodile lime bled into broadcast juniper into diesel moss. A tidal marsh of linens. Meanwhile, K tended to a second panel soaking in a metal bowl. She used a container to scoop dye from the tub onto the fabric, gently lapping what oozed, the way you would bathe a baby.

While we waited for the sheet to spin dry in the washing machine, L held out his hand to show me two things he & K found on the beach: a green piece of glass that says YOU & a sun bleached wallet print of three friends. Heads to a tail. K said that she & L wear matching coral outfits when beachcombing to help them keep an eye on each other when wandering along the water. In response, I was going to say "the b in bff is for buoy!" but *buoy* is one of those words that even in context, makes more sense when written out, so I'm telling you here.

xo k



















THE SHAPE OF TOGETHERNESS

Jenn Jackson

There are many ebbs and flows to friendship. The buoyancy of a new beginning, the sense that you have known someone for a lifetime, the feeling of drifting apart and eventually coming back together. *Endless Summer* traces the friendship and decade-long collaboration between artists Katie Kozak and Lucien Durey. The duo likens their continued work together and the cycles of their friendship to the movement and entanglements of water—from the steadiness of frozen glacial sheets that carve shapes into surroundings, to the fleeting rush of rivers subsumed into the ocean. Physically and psychically, Katie and Lucien acknowledge the expansive networks linked through water—both human and more than human. Their intentions and creations make space for the swirling energies of relational elements—interconnected narratives and ever-changing ecologies. They honour collective making together through an openness and plurality of practice whereby the work that they create is sustained through community and often involves acts of reciprocity between one another, friends, neighbours, strangers, and family. *Endless Summer* offers an invitation for relational moments of kinship and a queering of time which opens space towards meaningful connection, shared resources, and collective living.

Initially, a post searching for a roommate on Craigslist brought artists Katie and Lucien together. Beyond their brief time sharing a cozy basement suite in Vancouver's Cambie Village, they have continued to be drawn into collaboration. In 2012, the duo spent a year living in the home of Katie's 80-year-old maternal grandmother, located in the Northern Saskatchewan town of Creighton, the sister community to Flin Flon, Manitoba, on the territories of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, the Assin'skowitiniwak or Rocky Cree people. The self-imposed residency was intended as a sabbatical from the city and a gesture of care for a space that was overflowing with decades of memories and accumulations. Katie's grandmother, Sophie Ostrowski, known to many as Baba, vacated the home for the duration of the residency, and the pair of artists meticulously sorted through each room, cupboard, drawer, nook, and cranny. They began indexing their findings into piles and eventually documented an expanse of imaginative associations via a home office scanner, gifted from a nearby resident. The resulting image archive was a disparate collage of nostalgic connections. Baba was invited to comment on each scan, adding a layer of narrative unknown to the aesthetic surface of the photographic combinations.

Scan to view the archive of scanned compositions by Katie Kozak and Lucien Durey of *Baba's House*. Courtesy of the artists.

The surface of Katie and Lucien's work is often seductive in colour and pattern with familiar forms drawing the viewer in. Beneath the surface of the work rests the labour and care that defines their collaborative process—the ways in which they enact support for one another and gratitude towards the places and spaces in which artworks are realized and exhibited. In 2019, they spent the summer in Sointula, on the unceded territories of the 'Namgis, Kwakiutl, and Mamalilikala Nations, at The Sointula Art Shed, a residency program that offers a one-bedroom cottage beside a studio for writers, artists, and musicians who wish to spend focused time working. During their stay, Katie and Lucien kept a routine of activity. Every morning they would return to the intertidal shoreline to collect discarded manmade debris from the long stretch of beach. Without fail, the rhythmic tide of the ocean delivered a bounty of flotsam. In the evenings, they would clean and sort the material into piles—the treasures and idiosyncratic selections were neatly stowed away with the remaining scraps set aside to be deposited at the local recycle depot.

The repetitive and meditative quality of Katie and Lucien's collaboration often happens without words. A slow meandering of space, the collection of castoff materials, the sorting and eventual transformation—the process is intuitive. The duo has a twin flame sensibility. To an outsider it appears to have evolved out of a lifetime of familiarity and friendship. The two mirror one another while simultaneously having distinct and sometimes conflicting aspirations for their material outcomes. The result of these meditations together is a recombinant assembly of unexpected associations and connections. In their mobile series, found metal flotsam of the shore is delicately strung together along fishing net, hammock yarn or embroidery floss, suspended from above or along the bounds of a stoic black metal frame. Within the archive of coveted objects, each surface has a story, a place from which it came, a disconnection and eventual recombination, a collection that sways gently in the viewer's gaze.

Over their summer spent in Sointula, Katie and Lucien collected many fragments of ceramics. Some had matching pieces that fit together while others were solitary along the beach. As the days passed, the piles of shards within the studio-turned-storage-and-sorting-room grew. By the end of their stay, the duo quietly sifted through the potsherd archive and kept one example of each distinct pattern. The collection then departed from the island to the city studio where it would be arranged, row upon row, and documented in a portrait-oriented photograph. The flat blue surface of the image holds each piece static, immobilizing the shards that once swirled within the ocean current. Like a microscopic slide, the stillness lends details to where each shard might have journeyed from and who their respective users may have been. The magic of guessing these histories is a game of concentration—a chronology that does not follow a straight line of provenance but rather curves and communicates through proximity.

The assemblages created by Katie and Lucien are open to alternate forms of time. Time that is productively filled together yet ephemeral. The wandering of the artists' bodies is imbued within each artwork. An invitation for the eyes to peruse and leisurely cruise the interior of each frame. This invitation to look holds a desire for reciprocal exchange through recognition. The act of looking caries a potential for acknowledgement but also an encounter where the familiar is turned and becomes unrecognizable through material transformation. In *Wigs* (2019-2023), for example, lengths of abandoned marine rope, that have been washed along the shore, are unravelled by hand to reveal a burst of colour—a disguise of sorts, a way of being in the world that does not adhere to a fixed intention or use but rather fluidly shifts shapes and invites alternate narratives of representation.

In their beachcombing, Katie and Lucien are indiscriminate in their gathering of debris but ensure that each object drawn from the shore is free of discernible living organisms. They avoid the seduction of extracting natural materials from the surrounding land and waterways. If an object has been reclaimed by barnacles, or twisting plant life, or is a shelter for other sea creatures, it is left to sustain its contribution to the surrounding ecosystem. The duo's methodology is one which welcomes the discarded and accepts and saves that which has been jettisoned. This reclaiming is a continuation of Katie and Lucien's practice of collectivity and care which draws together collaborative social networks and reciprocal exchange. The networks from which they draw are the unseen dimensions of the resulting artworks—the many personal and collective pasts, presents, and futures of their shared communities.

Strawberry Roan (2023) is one such artwork that reaches towards the bonds of friendship and familiarity. To mark the 70th birthday of Katie's grandfather, or Gedo, his immediate family pitched in to professionally record an album of Wilf Carter songs that he often performed. Revisiting the recordings after his passing, Katie shared them with Lucien who began arranging backup vocals to accompany the tracks. The result was an album that spanned time and space, death and life, Lucien singing with Katie's Gedo. Recently, a childhood friend of Lucien's reached out to ask if he and Katie might be interested in retrieving a life-size fibreglass horse. The ornament that once greeted diners at a restaurant was going to be discarded and the friend, knowing of Katie and Lucien's penchant for rescuing such things, thought it should join the artists in their studio. To be transported, the cumbersome equestrian statue was sawed in half. When Katie and Lucien arrived to retrieve the two halves, they remembered Gedo's rendition of Wilf Carter's "The Fate of Old Strawberry Roan," first released in 1936, that tells the story of the demise of an unruly but beloved horse.

Artworks like *Strawberry Roan* (2023) refer to the stories that are living and breathing in plain sight yet awaiting activation—the people, places, histories, knowledges, memories, and ways of life that inform a practice. Katie and Lucien bring to life these histories through a queering of material approach that elevates personal and collective pasts, presents and futures. The work *Covers* (2023), for example, harkens to a family tradition of Ukrainian Pysanky egg painting that was passed down from Katie's Baba. The process of wax resist and colourful dye are combined with sea salt and applied to gently used sheets, sourced by Lucien's mother, and sewn together. Assembled, they create an all-encompassing kaleidoscopic parachute. The combination of cosmic abstraction mingles with the translucent stains of bodies and released beeswax. The messy togetherness balances the powerful presence of previous embrace with the absence of bodies to cover. These traces connect across time and create a complex residue of intimacy between Katie and Lucien as well as previous figures that wrapped themselves within the textile's embrace. The bodies that are no longer with us are colourfully performed and persist in the absence of memory through a distinctive residual aura.

Covers (2023) offers a diary of sorts. Each sheet carries with it an exposure of daily ritual. To indulge in sleep—a falling into individual and collective consciousness—as well as a marking of time between Katie and Lucien in the studio. The labour of treating each textile with wax, water, dye, and sea salt. The waiting for an exposure to set in, to dry, to take form. The combined exposures communicate a ritual of connection and kinship—the shape of being together. The deciphering of these narratives is slow and at times cumbersome. They resist a clear definition and opt for a more amorphous geography. The improvised compositions require that the viewer seek out meaning. A tender invitation into the multifaceted nature of queer kinship.



The complexity of collaboration is signaled in the works *You* (2023) and *Three* (2023). Both frames feature a small object found while wayfinding together and collecting debris. *You* (2023) is a single piece of green glass that, when examined closely, announces its namesake with y-o-u. *Three* (2023) is a found photograph of three women huddled together tightly in the postage-stamp-sized image, posing with beaming smiles and looking directly at the camera. The mementos propose opposite narratives, one a lost or perhaps purposefully discarded memory, the other a happenstance shard from a 7-Up-like pop bottle of another era. In proximity, the works manifest associations of the individual and its relation to the plurality of a threesome. Through their partnership, Katie and Lucien have grappled with the messiness of collective production and the queering of singular authorship. Spending time with their work conjures a polyphonic breadth of connection and imaginative association. The manifestation of individual identity and self is bound to the spiritual dimension of working together—the rhythms of friendship.

In *everything is borrowed and will be returned* (2021-2023), the performative dimension and index of time is also rendered through an alternate photographic form. Using salt water and coveted glass objects collected from friends, neighbours, and community members, Katie and Lucien submerge each surface and then exposed it to sunlight until dry. Unlike traditional photographic salt printing, they omit the step of sensitizing the surface with silver-nitrate and skip the application of preserving wax. The resulting images are ephemeral constellations of dried salt upon the coveted knickknacks and mementos. The signifier of the image is once again codified into a language that challenges visual representation and offers vectors of temporality akin to the affect of staring at the sky whereby what is not readily available on the surface of the work reveals itself through meditative exposure.

The installation of *Candelabra* (2020) provides an expansive space for this call towards meditative embrace and a relational way of understanding the world. Filmed along the Sointula shoreline, the work features a candelabra, gently swaying in the wind to the sound of the tide lapping, with candles slowly dwindling along with the sunset. The makeshift form, a combination of manmade debris, is held on the natural horizon. Katie and Lucien think of the horizon and shoreline as liminal spaces—the boundary or threshold relating to transition. Within the *Endless Summer* exhibition, *Candelabra* (2020) has been placed within the bounds of a darkened room that has been wrapped externally by the work *Covers* (2023). To enter the room, one must lift the celestial curtain and move into the womb-like space that envelopes *Candelabra* (2020). From within the room the translucent areas of *Covers* (2023) glow like far-off galaxies in the night sky. Once they are settled within the darkness, a rhythmic loop of gently collapsing waves creates a harmonic vibration for the viewer. It attunes them to the push and pull of the ocean's body, opening contemplation towards the sunset on the horizon and the unseen but sensed moon. It orchestrates the shared experiences that draw together collectivity, whereby the whole and its individual relations expand and are elaborated through a spontaneous and vital alchemy of place.





START AND FALL

Lucien Durey

I grow used to your leaves falling
I drift away Since kisses autumn
I miss hear The old song

my lips to the long
summer sunburned window
The see of red and gold
When all the days went by you

And soon I'll hold But winter's hands
the most darling start and fall

Scan to listen to audio for Lucien Durey's *start and fall* (2023). Courtesy of the artist.







FROM BELOW

Katie Kozak

while holding hands over ears
dampened sound
muted waves of breath
the singing of my blood
a deep vibratory rumbling
the sound of belonging
subdued patterns oscillating
far-off swishing
squishing
swaying insides to the rhythm
the sound of unrecognized interactions
muffled noise of traffic from behind walls
padded tones above
all enveloping
a murkiness to all sensation
the unperceivable sound of comfort
and echoes of entanglement



BIOS

The artists, writers, and curators involved in this exhibition would like to acknowledge that they live, work, and create on the ancestral, unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and neighbouring territories.



Artists

Katie Kozak is a queer artist of Métis and Ukrainian settler descent. She grew up in Denare Beach, Saskatchewan, and her ancestral roots are in the Métis communities of St. François Xavier, and Boggy Creek, Manitoba. Her visual art practice is centered around connectivity to land, relationship, ritual, and traces. She begins her process by spending contemplative time in nature with other living beings. Being with the forest and near water reminds her of her father. She has become aware that her values for making and being are deeply tied to him, to processing his loss and reforming connections to family and identity.

Lucien Durey is a queer artist, writer, and singer. He is the son of Americans who immigrated to Northern Saskatchewan in the 1970s. He now lives and works in Vancouver. His mixed media and performance-based practice engages with found objects, photographs, sounds, and place. His relationship to material is a maternal trait, influenced by his mother's reverence for keepsakes and souvenirs.

Kozak and Durey are dedicated and practiced collaborators. Their first major duo project began in 2012 when they moved to Creighton, SK, to take up a year-long, self-directed residency in the home of octogenarian Sophie Ostrowski—Katie's maternal grandmother. Titled *Baba's House*, the site became a venue for public exhibitions, presentations, workshops and events, as well as an artists' studio. Using materials found within the home, the duo produced scanner bed photographs that were exhibited at multiple institutions across Canada. Both Kozak and Durey are graduates of the MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts program at SFU's School for the Contemporary Arts.

Contributors

Jenn Jackson is a curator, writer, and researcher. She has held a range of roles at post-secondary institutions, galleries and museums, and in public art commissioning, connecting relationships and impacts between regional, national, and international scales. Jackson has published texts on contemporary art in catalogues, books, and journals, and is co-editor of Haunt, a non-profit that produces texts, editions, events, performances, and exhibitions. Jackson has curated exhibitions and programs at Libby Leshgold Gallery, SFU Galleries, Burrard Arts Foundation, and 221A in Vancouver, as well as at Portland State University, and documenta 14 in Athens, Greece and Kassel, Germany. In 2021, along with Phanuel Antwi, Jeneen Frei Njootli, Christian Vistan, and Grant Arnold, she was co-curator of the Vancouver Art Gallery's civic survey exhibition *Vancouver Special: Disorientations and Echo*. Jackson is currently the Director Curator of Or Gallery.

Kiel Torres is a writer and editor whose work considers friendship, reading, embodiment, and fandom as ways to navigate social and emotional worlds. She is the editor of the publication *Covers* (2022), which emerged from a curatorial residency at Artspeak, and is currently the Content Writer & Editor at Western Front.



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Jenn Jackson, Katie Kozak, and Lucien Durey

COLOPHON

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Editor
Jenn Jackson

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Designer
Sara K. MacLellan

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