



RETURN

NANCY BLECK + EILEEN LEIER

RETURN is a convergent artistic program that brings together the politicized lens-based work of contemporary feminist photographers Nancy Bleck (Vancouver) and Eileen Leier (Kamloops). The collective experiences of solidarity, resistance and healing journeys are at the forefront of these knowledge-sharing documentation/witness projects. In preparation for their exhibition, Nancy and Eileen travelled to the Comox Valley to spend time on the land and with the CVAG curatorial staff, sharing their experiences and perspectives. The idea of returning became a pivotal concept for this thematic program – within each return exists change, over time and in relation to shifting contexts and perspectives. The work in this exhibition reflects on migrations and evolutions. Memories are invoked and provoked. New insights into the cycles of our relationships with each other and with Earth's rhythms are prompted.

RETURN

NANCY BLECK + EILEEN LEIER

EXHIBITION / COMOX VALLEY ART GALLERY

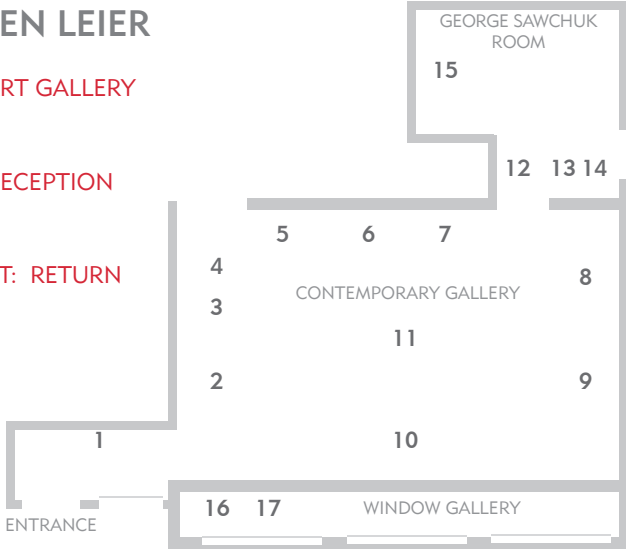
27 January – 23 March 2018

ART OPENING / ARTIST TALK / RECEPTION

27 January 1pm

COMMUNITY MAKE ART PROJECT: RETURN

27 January 11am – 1pm

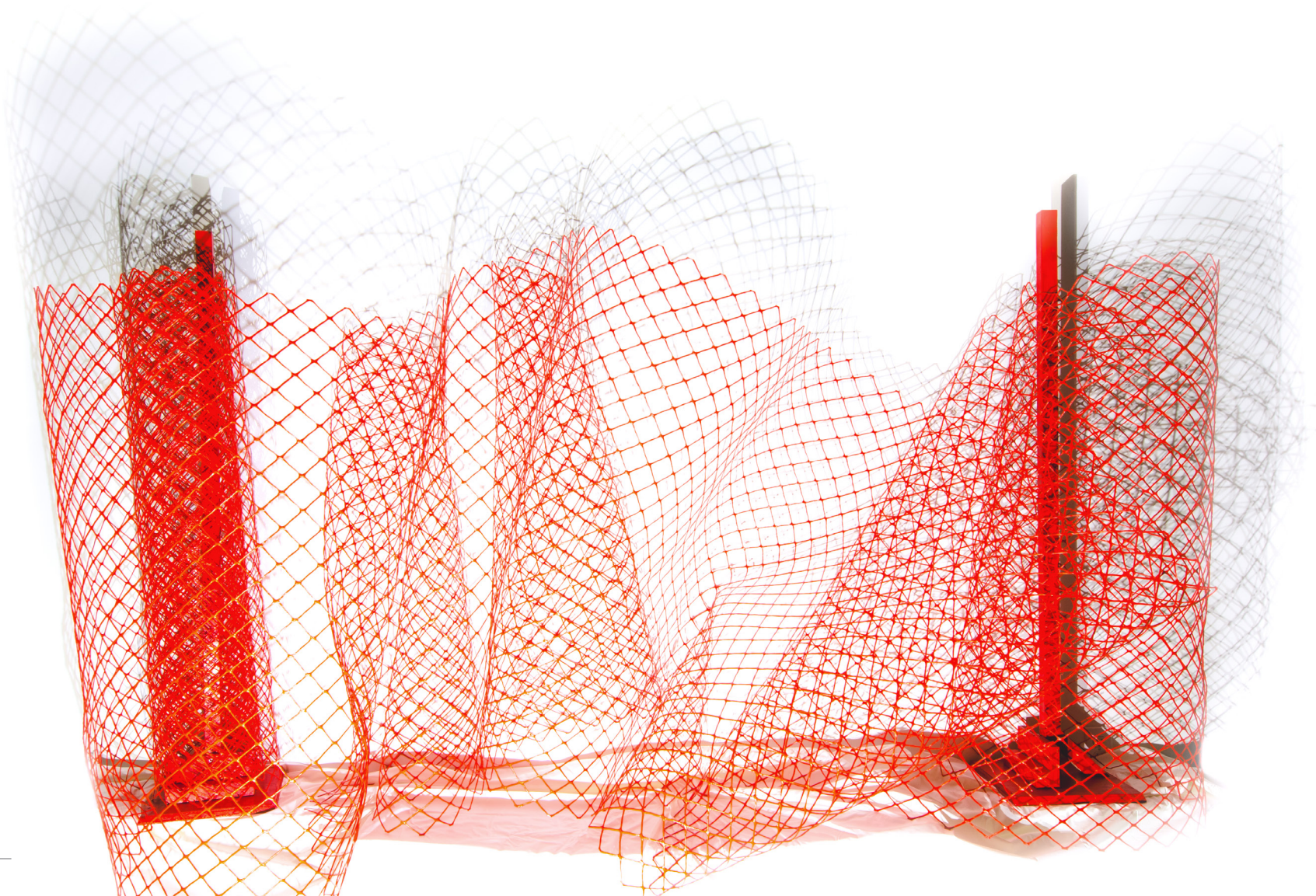


EILEEN LEIER

- 6 *Adams River Sockeye Salmon Run: Dominant Year*
chromogenic print, 30" x 30" 2016
- 7 *Riparian Zone #3*
diptych, chromogenic prints, 30" x 60" 2016
- 8 *Adams River Sockeye Salmon Run: Dominant Year*
triptych, chromogenic prints, 30" x 90" 2016
- 9 *Adams River Sockeye Salmon Run: Dominant Year*
diptych, chromogenic prints, 30" x 60" 2016
- 15 *Effigy – The Adams River*
2-channel video, 3:20 min, safety fencing 2016
- 16 *Adams River Sockeye Salmon Run: Dominant Year*
triptych (detail), ink jet print, 23" x 23" 2016

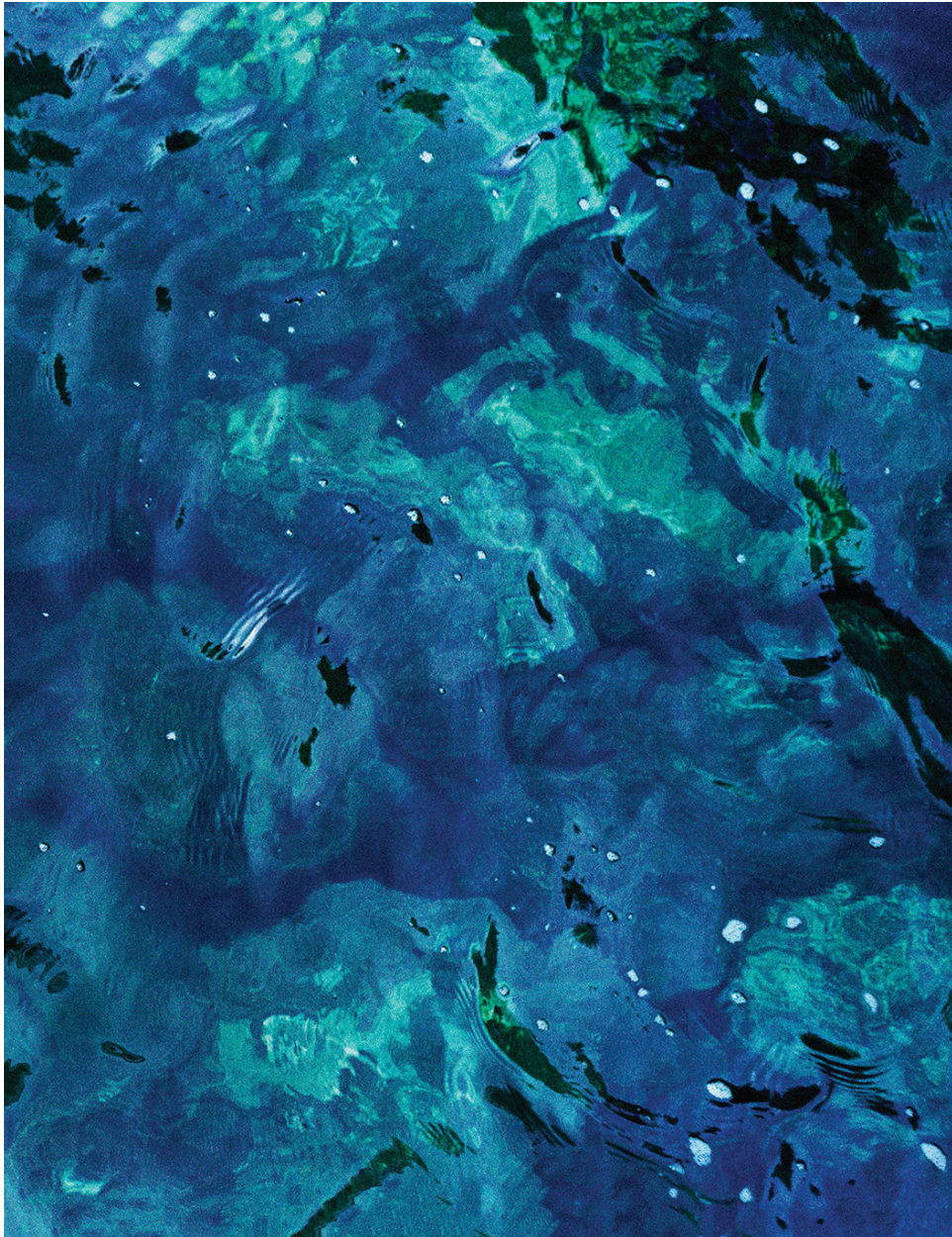
NANCY BLECK

- 1 *Frames of Resilience*
151 Documentary digital images 2018
- 2 *Celtic Moon Drum*
photo canvas heat transfer, 11'5" x 30" 2001
- 3 *Bob Baker, Sa'palek*
aluminum mount, C-print, 30" x 40"
from the *Dreaming Forward* series 2007
- 4 *Marc Williams*
aluminum mount, C-print, 30" x 40"
from the *Dreaming Forward* series 2007
- 5 *Hollow Man*
ink jet print 6 x 17 panorama colour negative, 22" x 67"
from the *Children of Tomorrow* installation 2015
- 10 *Uts'am Witness*
photo canvas heat transfer, 23" x 38'9" 1997
- 11 *Water*
ink jet print 6 x 17 panorama colour negative, 22" x 69"
from the *Children of Tomorrow* installation 2015
- 12 *Ta ah, Amy George*
ink jet print 8 x 10 colour negative, 40"x 50" 2015
- 13 *Ta ah, Amy George, Matriarch, Tsleil Waututh Nation,*
speaking her father's words fifty years later
single-channel video, 9:08 min
from *Storywaves: Remembering our Sacred Responsibilities*
Kamala Todd, curator. *Drum is Calling* Festival, City of Vancouver 2017
- 14 *Lament for Confederation, Chief Dan George*
single-channel video, 8:50 min, courtesy CBC 1967
- 17 *Hollow Man*
ink jet print 6 x 17 panorama colour negative, 23" x 70"
from the *Children of Tomorrow* installation 2015



Eileen Leier's *Sqlelten7úw'i – Red Salmon – Sockeye*: *reconsidering the Adams River Run*, looks at local salmon stream ecologies and is comprised of extensive photographic and video documentation of the recurring salmon returns at Roderick Haig-Brown provincial park. Juxtaposed against this powerful narrative, the artist asks the viewer to consider the equally prevalent associated phenomena – that of amassed urban tourist constructs – assembled kiosks, food vendors and souvenir tents. This project, activates a dialogue of particular relevance to the Comox Valley as a hot-bed of aquaculture.

Eileen Leier is an Associate Professor at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia. Her visual arts studies began with a B.A. from Simon Fraser University and a B.F.A. in photography from Emily Carr University in Vancouver. She studied at the San Francisco Art Institute in California and completed a Master of Fine Art in Photography at Concordia University in Montréal. Leier has shown photo-based and web art works in solo and group exhibitions in British Columbia, Québec, Ontario and Northern Canada. She has exhibited internationally in the United States, Scotland, France and Brazil. Her work is represented on the site; *Fonds Documentaire* sponsored by VOX, Centre de l'image contemporaine in Montréal, Québec.



Nancy Bleck's new projects weave together select works from five portfolios, produced over a 20-year span. In a recent body of work she documented all nations uniting at the Sacred Stone Camp, supporting the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota and the ongoing resistance to the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion in the Burrard Inlet on the Tsleil Waututh territory. *Children of Tomorrow*, done in collaboration with the Tsiel Waututh Nation, is an exhibition that looks at the practice of sustainability across generations and shared between cultures. Her work on the *Uts'am Witness Project*, done in collaboration with the Squamish Nation, connects wilderness conservation with the First Nations culture, art and social justice. Nancy's work deeply investigates contemporary concepts of land, water, stewardship, community, health and violence.

Nancy Bleck's contemporary photography and social practice are informed by feminist philosophy, ecology, and indigenous cultures. Co-founder of the *Uts'am Witness Project* (1997- 2007), Bleck was adopted by the Squamish Nation with the name 'Slanay Sp'ak'wus' in 2001. She is a recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction award in the category of Arts, Culture and Design (2007). A hardcover book titled *Picturing Transformation, Newx-ayanstut*, showcasing her photography over fifteen years, was released in fall 2013. She holds a BFA, Emily Carr University, (2000), MA in Fine Art, MaHKU, The Netherlands, (2005), and was employed as photo instructor at Emily Carr University for ten years. Nancy has worked in the field of visual arts in cities worldwide including Toronto, Berlin, Prague, Utrecht, and currently on the Tsleil-Waututh unceded Coast Salish lands in North Vancouver, BC.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photographs in order of appearance:

*Adams River Sockeye Salmon Run:
Dominant Year* (detail) – Eileen Leier

Hollow Man (detail) – Nancy Bleck

Snowfence – Eileen Leier
photograph courtesy Alun Macanulty

Water (detail) – Nancy Bleck



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GALLERY
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TUESDAY TO SATURDAY 10-5
MONDAY TO SATURDAY 10-5



Canada Council Conseil des arts
for the Arts du Canada



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



CITY OF
COURTENAY



NANCY BLECK

"Lament for Confederation, Speaking Her Dad's Words"

from *Storywaves: Remembering our Sacred Responsibilities*

Kamala Todd, curator.

Drum is Calling Festival, City of Vancouver, 2017

"Frames of Resilience"

Rueben George, Sacred Trust, Tsleil Waututh Nation,
Elder Ta ah (Amy George), Councilor Charlene Aleck,
Tsleil Waututh Nation, Cedar Parker, Phil Lane Jr., Calvin
Pompana, Jewel James. Photographs from The Alberta Tar
Sands 2015; Totem Pole Journey 2016; Standing Rock and
Sacred Stone Camp, North Dakota 2016; Opposition to the
Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion 2012-2018; Vancouver
City Hall 2016; Break Free from Fossil Fuels 2016; All Nations
March, Washington, DC 2017

Children of Tomorrow (exhibition)

"Hollow Man" and "Water" (projects), 2015

Charlene Aleck of the Tsleil Waututh Nation, collaborator

Uts'am Witness Project, 1997

Chief Bill Williams of the Squamish Nation, collaborator

Mountaineer John Clarke, collaborator

Canada Council for the Arts and BC Arts Council

Colorific Digital Printing Solutions

EILEEN LEIER

British Columbia Arts Council

Thompson Rivers Faculty of Arts

The Adams River Salmon Society

G. Scott McNally

Sandra Semchuk

Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

Ashok Mathur

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Printshop, ABC Printing & Signs, and Hitec Printing. We
especially thank all of our volunteers, donors, and members.
CVAG would like to acknowledge that we are located on
unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.