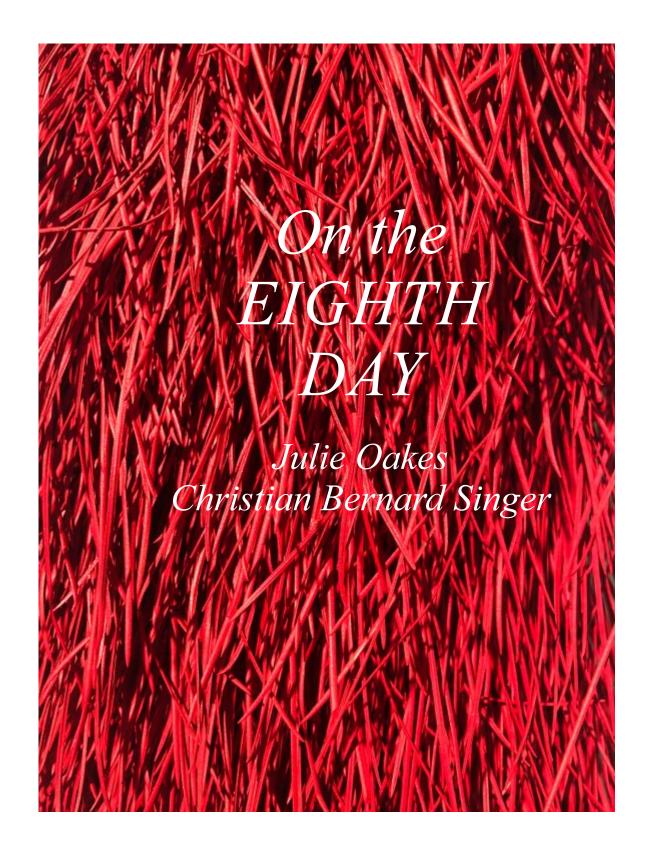


On the EIGHTH DAY

Christian Bernard Singer Julie Oakes

LAKE COUNTRY ART GALLERY



LAKE COUNTRY ART GALLERY

Catalogue of an exhibition held at the Lake Country Art Gallery, 10356A Bottom Lake Road, Lake Country, B.C.V4V1T9, October 10, 2020 to November 28, 2020.

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Julie Oakes 1948-Christian Bernard Singer 1962-Ashley Johnson 1958 -Wanda Lock 1969-



Mane, 2020, Singer 32 x 11 in Pine needles, pigment and mixed media



I. Canadian Art

II. Lake Country Art Gallery

III. Installation

IV. Painting

V. Multimedia Sculpture

VI. Pine Needles

VII. Oakes, Julie

VIII. Singer, Christian Bernard

IX. Lock, Wanda

X. Johnson, Ashley

When the Bubble went Opaque, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter Oils on birch tondo



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On the Eighth Day

In many spiritual traditions, the number Seven represents a special signifier for the natural manner in which life flows, in a cyclical escalating evolution from inception to completion. In the biblical story of Genesis, God rested on the seventh day after having created our world, all of its beings, including the first two humans. Regardless of how one interprets this creation story and the supposed fall and exile of humans, on the Eighth Day, humans entered into a cocreative relationship with the Creator. Today is still the Eighth Day.





. Pass the Buddha, 2007 Julie Oakes and Christian Bernard Singer $$94\ x\ 25.5$$ in. oil and live moss on canvas stretched on wood panel with mixed media support

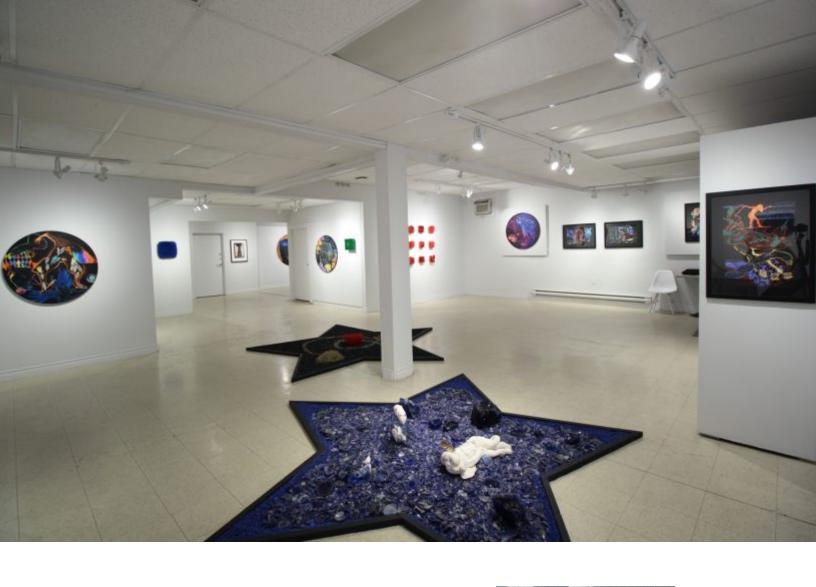


Runner, 2004, Singer Installation at Fish Tank Gallery, New York Living moss., thread, burlap

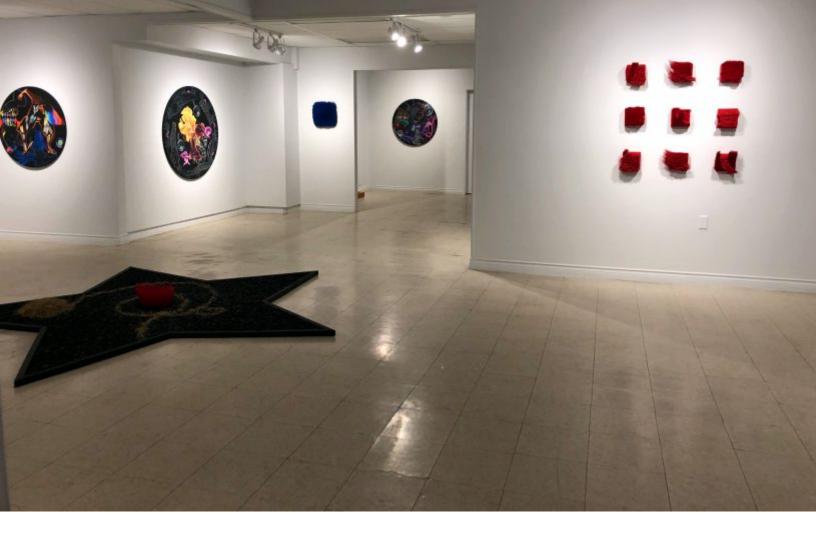


LAKE COUNTRY GALLERY
On the Eighth Day: JULIE OAKES and CHRISTIAN BERNARD SINGER





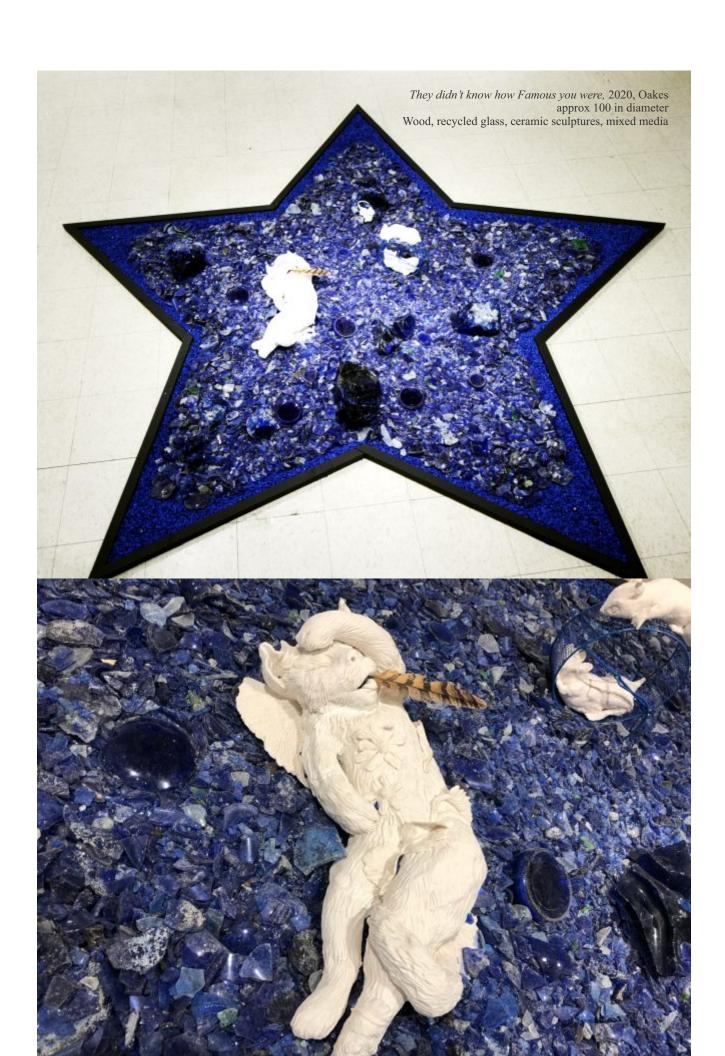




On the Eighth Day is an exhibition of works by Julie Oakes and Christian Bernard Singer that explores the act of creating as inherently linked to the ability to destroy in order to bring about harmony and peace, or chaos and loss. As we grapple with the climate crisis and a world pandemic, humans are being given an opportunity to review our relationship with the land that we were given, but on which we are merely passing tenants.









On the Eighth Day

Julie Oakes Christian Bernard Singer

Lake Country Art Gallery

Human mythology is fraught with numerical references as a way of understanding the cosmos. The Eighth Day is very significant in Judeo-Christian narratives as a day of cleansing. Adam and Eve, by partaking of the forbidden fruit, introduced mortality into human experience. However, redemption by bloodletting could result on the Eighth Day. Thus male babies were circumcised on this day and animals could be sacrificed after being considered 'unclean' for the seven days prior.

Julie Oakes and Christian Bernard Singer have united as eco-artists, presenting an array of works that encourage contemplation of the universe and our place in it. Paradoxically, religious beliefs that encourage a teleological path to redemption at a spiritual location beyond this world, lay waste to the environment. Yet these beliefs are instilled in us through stories and mythologies from babyhood on. One of the most iniquitous fallacies is that humankind has dominion over all. In actuality our world relies upon interconnectedness. It's a long haul to dismantle many of these beliefs, as this would challenge the very concept of individualism. Our shared environment will continue to unravel and become increasingly unsustainable until we reinvent the narrative, letting go of pseudoboundaries that we use to objectify life.

The paintings, sculptures and installations in this exhibition extend a perfectly poised and elegant transmission of the dilemma. Singer's austere vignettes of nature complement Oakes' vibrant, multidimensional explorations of life and the universe. They reflect on the systemic relationship between trees and us, that which sustains us both.

The dominant black background colour in Oakes' work unifies the entire exhibition. Imagery dances around the periphery of her tondo paintings, switching identities and bursting into flaming colour transitions. Positive and negative spaces swop roles as new perceptions emerge like illusions from the darkness. At once we look up at the underbelly of a lynx and then down upon a flock of birds. Sometimes we look through the darkness to daylight beyond. Symbols like stars, ribbons and floral forms decorate the night sky. Shafts of coloured light emanate from eyes in a





Red II No. 6 (DOWN), 2018, Singer 32 x 11 in
Pine needles, pigment and mixed media



Red II No. 6 (UP) 2018, Singer 6 x 6 in
Pine needles, pigment and mixed media

burning vision that sears across the circle and into the cosmos.

Singer is known for his beautiful natural installations using moss as a medium, and there are a couple of references to past works in this show, including a previous collaboration with Julie Oakes in the 'Buddha Disturbed' series. Moss forms are contained in human shapes like triangles or they simulate a carpet ascending a set of stairs as recorded in a photograph from a NY show included in this exhibition. They are living organisms confined within an aesthetic composition or structure.

His current work manipulates pine needles, which are meticulously assembled in small, box-like structures that hang on the wall. They are painted in monochromatic tones of red, green and blue. Variations in the arrangement of needles evoke ideas of natural events like storms, winds and ripples. It is a way of abstracting nature and making powerful forces visible. Thus 'Red Dervish' evokes a tornado, with its crescendo of power ripping at the natural world.

Singer's manner of interacting with his chosen medium is almost biblical, kneeling in forests to select his needles. These are carefully assembled with rapt attention given to the personality of each needle. This intellectual introspection is finally expressed in emotional form as an idea. What was once detritus to be mulched into food for the forest has been born again into mental sustenance. He chooses burrs that would be discarded or rejected; making an assemblage that transfigures them into an object of contemplation called 'Burr Fur', no longer an irritation. We are asked to reconsider nature in the light of this transformation.

In contrast, Oakes is a storyteller embarking on a magical journey, penetrating through the membranes of separation. Her images abound with cavorting animals like bunnies, bears and raccoons. Their eyes are luminous, large, colourful orbs that glow with an anthropomorphic intensity, as if drawn from fairy tales or children's stuffed animals. They are 'us'; sending beseeching looks our way, as we colonize their space. Femininity is evoked by figures that sport high heels and pink ribbons. Our dour attitudes towards gender are denounced as feminine beauty articulates the meaning and joy of life. The forms dance in wild celebration, with the idea that the feminine



is the Earth's centering and nurturing force, displaced for centuries by misplaced notions of power and greed.

Several works point towards our current pandemic and integrate the virus amongst the swirling forms. A female outline has chakras denoting the energy locations of emotions and spirituality. We have a sense that the virus is a part of us and in no small part, we suffer due to our own, reckless environmental ignorance. One tondo refers directly to ancient classical and alchemical lore of the five elements of life: fire, water, air, earth and ether, the spiritual centre. Salamanders occupy the centre above the Earth, seen from the moon. They



Wishful Keening 2020, Oakes 14x21in. (21x29 in. framed) Gouache on black Stonehenge paper



"Me, too," said Leda. 2020, Oakes 14x21in.(21x29 in. framed)
Gouache on black Stonehenge paper



Push 2016, Singer 11 x 11 in Pine needles, pigment and mixed media

are regarded as magical creatures, masters of transformation, living in aquatic and air environments with the ability to regenerate their bodies.

Julie Oakes and Christian Bernard Singer are both consummate artists who make very succinct and beautiful works that yet manage to engage with the broader environmental conversation. WE need this kind of magic right now to regenerate.

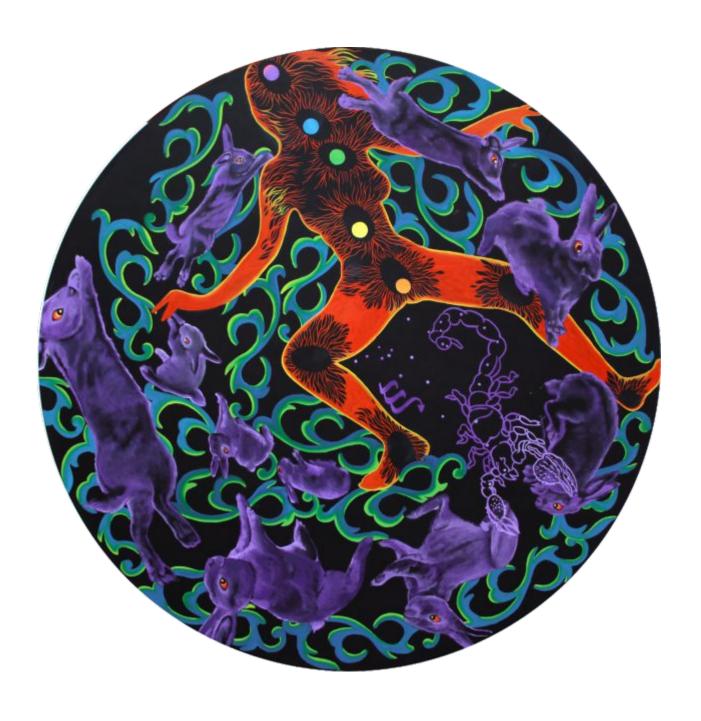
Ashley Johnson

The artist and writer Ashley Johnson was born in Johannesburg S.A. and is now based in Toronto. From 2001 to 2005 he was the art critic for Business Day, a national daily newspaper in South Africa. From 2005 to the present he has been writing reviews for Canadian Art, Vie Des Arts and Dart magazines.









Binking Bunnies, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter Oils on birch tondo



Dervish, 2020, Singer 18x18 in Pine needles, pigment and mixed media



Open, 2020, Singer 10 x 17 in Pine needles, pigment and mixed media





Sour Influence, Tart Perception, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter Oils on birch tondo



Buzzzing Head from Molly's Description, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter Oils on birch tondo



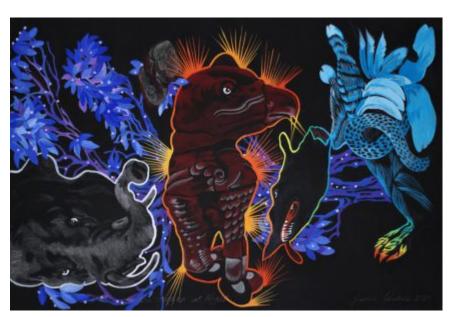




The Electric Alure of Venetian Chairs 2020, Oakes 14x21in. (21x29 in. framed)
Gouache on black Stonehenge paper



The Intrepid Trickster, 2020, Oakes 14x21in. (21x29 in. framed) Gouache on black Stonehenge paper



In the Garden at Night, 2020, Oakes 14x21in. (21x29 in. framed) Gouache on black Stonehenge paper



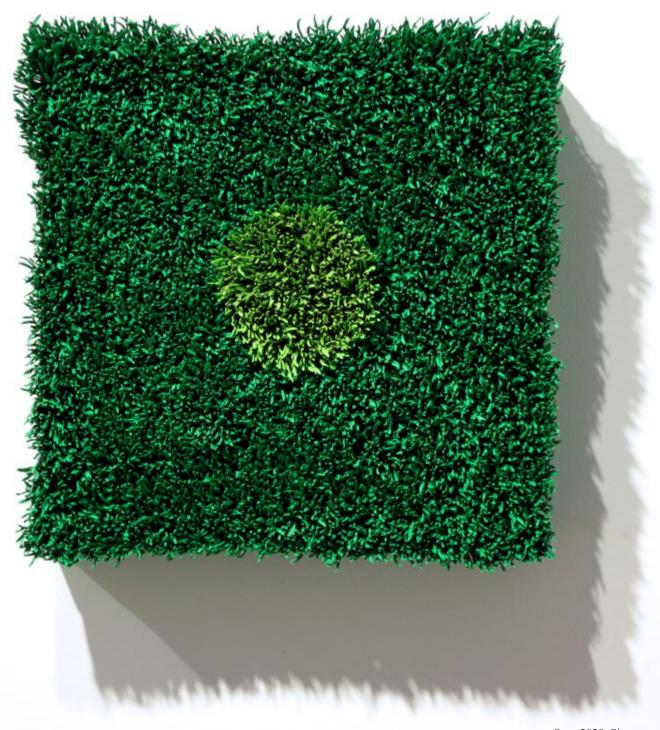


Breath, 2016 - 2020, Singer various overall dimensions, each piece 7 x 7 x 3.5 in. Pine needles, pigment and mixed media





Little Bear is a Better Name, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter Oils on birch tondo



 $Spot \ , \! 2020, \, Singer \\ 10 \ x \ 110 in \\ Pine \ needles, \ pigment \ and \ mixed \ media$

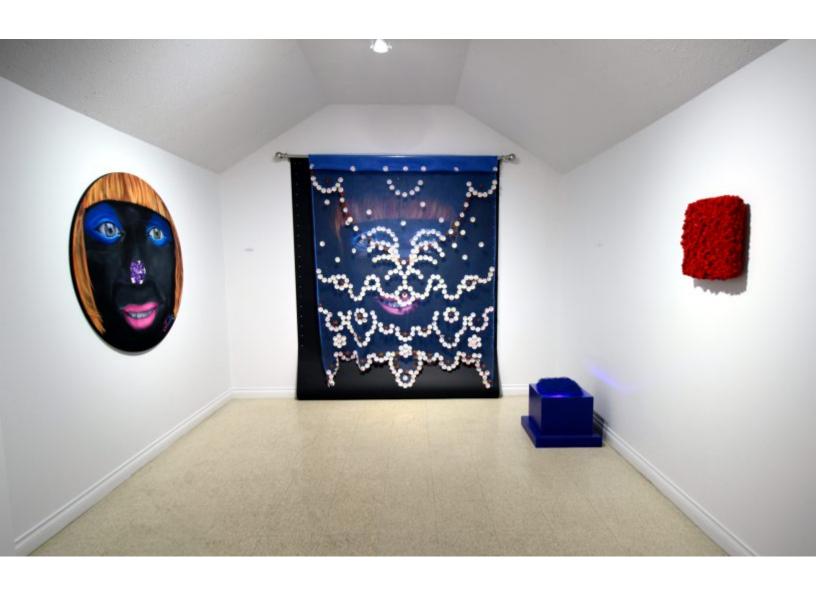


Swirl, 2016, Singer 14 x 14 in Pine needles, pigment and mixed media



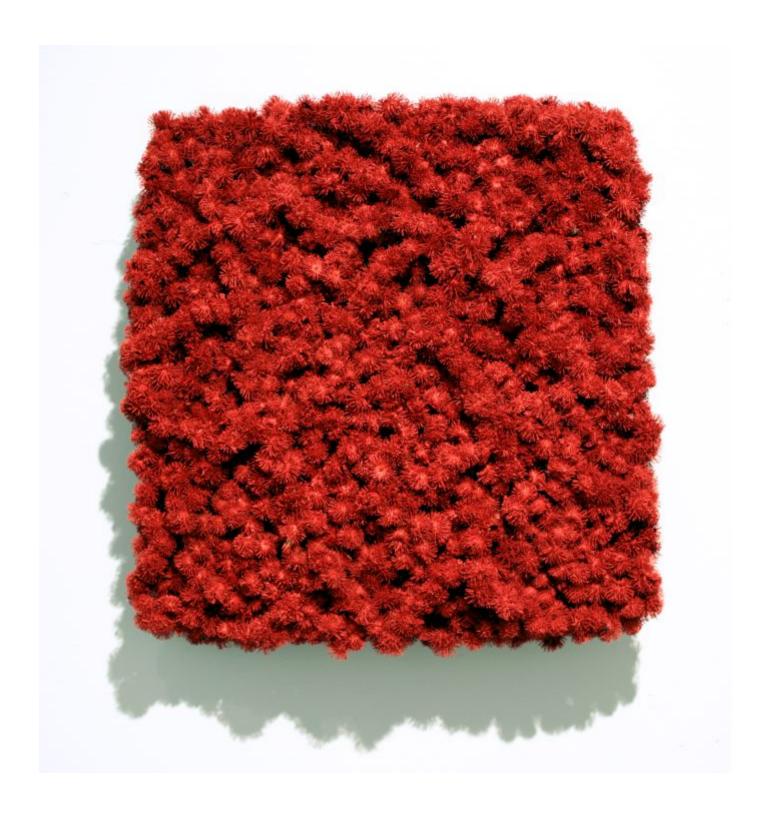


Our Collegial Conviction, 2020, Oakes 36 in diameter
Oils on birch tondo



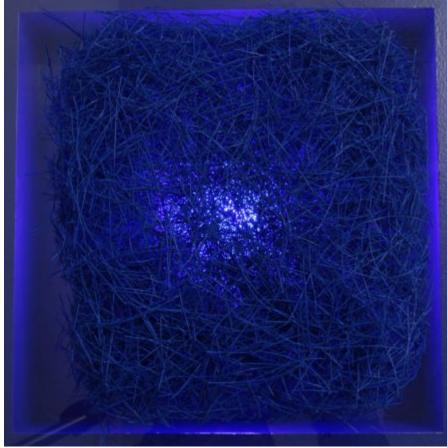


Signed on the Front,, 2020, Oakes 48 in diameter Oils on birch tondo

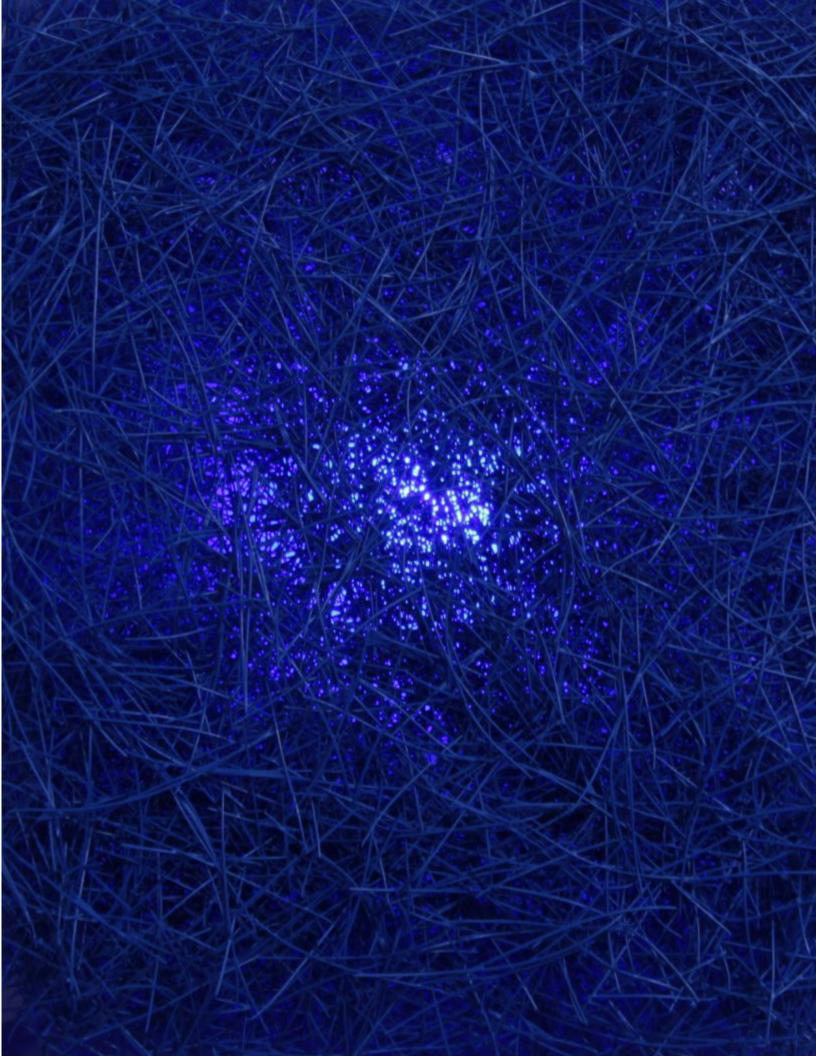


 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \it{Burr Fur}, 2020, Singer \\ \it{14} x 14 in \\ \it{Pine needles}, pigment and mixed media \\ \end{tabular}$



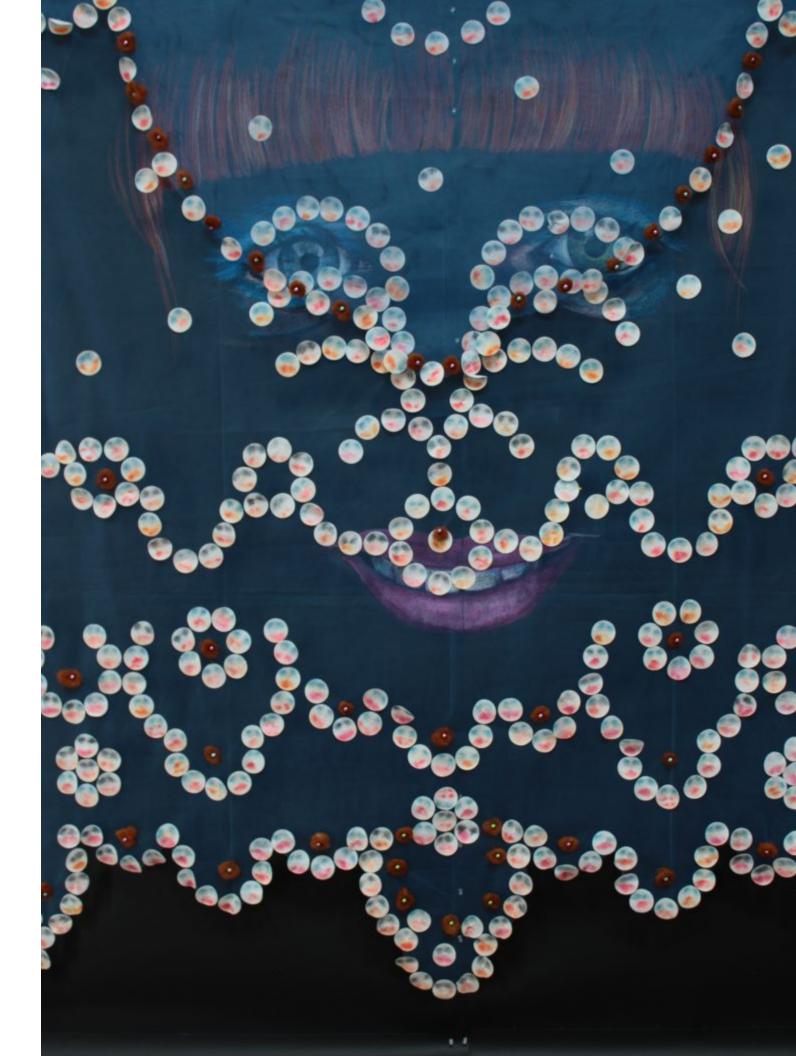


Respire, 2020, Singer 20 x 20 x 15 in Pine needles, pigment, electronics, and mixed media





96 x 72 in. oil pastel and gouache drawing on black paper (96 x 80 in) with a net veil covered in make-up-pad face prints and hair balls retrieved from my brush and affixed with pearls.





Julie Oakes answering the Proust Questionnaire:

Books:

I like long books where I can sink into the language and characters. I read all six books of Karl Ove Knausgaard's *My Struggle* and because he was being compared to Proust, on finishing, and missing the depth, read Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Yet I loved *Bunny* by Mona Awad because it was as far out conceptually as the others were long.

Movies:

I veer away from American block busters in favour of Foreign or Indie picks. I have seen most of Fassbinder's films and have modelled a character in my current novel after Hannah Schugal. *Border* (Scandanavian *Grans*) by director Ali Abassi after a novel by John Ajvid Lindqvist, a mix of social realism and fantasy, has a romp in the woods scene between Tina and Gore that is inimitable.

Online:

I listen to *Ideas* and the *Munk Debates* on CBC podcasts when my visual work is repetitive but keep a quiet backdrop when writing or processing.



Christian Bernard Singer answering the Proust Questionnaire:

Books:

Recently, I've been reading Nalini M. Nadkarni's Between Earth and Sky. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008). She is a canopy biologist who writes about the spiritual and literal connections we have with trees and how trees communicate with each other.

Movies:

Most of the movies I enjoy watching are from the 30s and 40s because of the way that they evoke a sense of mystique. Just about anything with Dietrich, Garbo, Bette Davis, Gary Cooper will do. One of my favourite movies of all time is Midnight in Paris by Woody Allen – for the same reason just mentioned but also the notion of dropping into another time to meet and hang out with the greats.

Online

Earth: A visualization of global weather conditions forecast by super computers (updated every 3 hours) https://earth.nullschool.net I find this site super interesting and the graphics are gorgeous.







October 10th to November 21st



OPEN HOUSE!

Saturday October 10th, 10-4 PM

ARTISTS IN ATTENDANCE

12-4 PM



Lake Country Art Gallery | 10356A Bottom Wood Lake Rd. tel: 250.766.1299 | web: lakecountryartgallery.ca Hours: 10am - 4pm Every day















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