

Duane Linklater

From Our Hands

With Ethel Linklater and Tobias Linklater

9 September – 5 November 2016

Opening: Friday 9th September 2016, 7PM

Mercer Union is delighted to present a solo exhibition by Duane Linklater titled *From Our Hands*, with Ethel Linklater (Trapper) and Tobias Linklater. Working across installation, performance, film, and photography, Duane Linklater excavates histories to unearth folds and knots addressing cultural loss, recovery and sovereignty. Unearthing work hidden beneath gallery walls¹ or re-inserting iconic Indigenous imagery inscribed within Canadian identity,² he explores the migration and exchange of knowledge and ideas, and their consequences.

The title of this exhibition *From Our Hands* refers to an exhibition which toured Ontario between 1982 and 1985 presenting Indigenous craft, and including the work of Ethel Linklater, Duane's grandmother, which are re-presented within the galleries and displayed on new support structures. That this loan was negotiated by Mercer Union through the Thunder Bay Art Gallery mobilizes present day structural relations of cultural heritage while highlighting traces of genealogy and questions of legacy. This intergenerational relationship is extended in the presentation of a recent claymation film by Duane's twelve year old son, Tobias Linklater.

For this exhibition Linklater explores the structural language of an institution and space to develop a series of structural responses. Linklater considers the internal language of walls, the spaces for the Indigenous body, and how spaces of inclusion can be extended. Ubiquitous materials of construction, gypsum, plywood and steel mined and extracted from the land, are repurposed in a series of 8 foot high sculptures, their span mimicking that of Linklater's chest and height referring to his height with extended arms. Furthermore, there is a large-scale structural intervention in the galleries, the removal and replacing of the east gallery wall introducing a sentence questioning Indigenous sovereignty of land and law, and legacy.

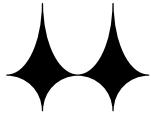
Through this layering of generations, of structures and structural systems, *From Our Hands* is an intervention into that which is given, its residue will persist.

This is Linklater's first solo institutional exhibition in Toronto and is the third in a series of commissioned solo exhibitions at Mercer Union generously supported by Partners In Art.

Upcoming event:

¹ Linklater scraped away the layers of paint since accumulated on the walls to uncover the photographs from Kimowan Metchewais's (formerly McLain) 2002 Ramp project, as part of *Duane Linklater: It means it is raining / Kimowan McLain: Without Ground* (2002) at the ICA in Philadelphia in 2014.

² A stylized bird was appropriated from Norval Morrisseau's seminal large-scale painting *Androgyny* (1983) and translated into neon in Linklater's work *Tautology* (2013).



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ARTIST TALK: Duane Linklater
Wednesday 26th October 2016 at 7PM

The exhibition will travel to 80WSE Gallery at NYU in New York in December 2016.

Duane Linklater is Omaskêko Cree from Moose Cree First Nation in Northern Ontario. Born in 1976, he holds bachelor's degrees in fine art and Native studies from the University of Alberta (2005) and a master's degree in film and video from the Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts at Bard College (2012). His work is currently on exhibition in a two-person exhibition *A Parallel Excavation* (w/Tanya Lukin Linklater) at the Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta and he is participating in the SeMa Biennale 2016 in Seoul Korea. Recent solo exhibitions include; *Salt 11: Duane Linklater*, Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City (2015); *ICA@50: It means it's raining*, ICA, Philadelphia (2014); *Decommission*, Maclaren Art Centre, Barrie, Ontario; *Learning*, Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto; *Something about encounter*, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, Ontario; *Grain(s)*, in collaboration with Tanya Lukin Linklater, Images Festival co presentation with Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto; and *Secondary Explanation*, The New Gallery, Calgary (all 2013). Linklater was awarded the Sobey Art Award in 2013. Duane is represented by Catriona Jeffries Gallery Vancouver. He lives with his family in North Bay, Ontario.

Ethel Linklater was born November 24 1932 near the community La Sarre Quebec. She was raised by her parents in the area who then relocated to Moose Factory, Ontario. A fluent Cree language speaker, she was taught to make objects at an early age by her mother, matriarch of the family, Emily Trapper. Ethel developed her practice over her entire lifetime and the high quality of her work was well known and sought after throughout the James Bay region. Ethel Linklater passed away July 7, 2004 leaving a strong cultural legacy behind for her many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Tobias Linklater (b. 2004) is a member of Moose Cree First Nation (Ontario, Canada) and the Native Villages of Afognak and Port Lions (Alaska, USA). Tobias is Omaskeko Cree and Alutiiq and resides in North Bay, Ontario. *Origin of the Hero* (2016) is his first video for exhibition and was developed at Near North Mobile Media Lab's Animation Creation Camp in August 2016.

Special thanks to Thunder Bay Art Gallery for the loan of works by Ethel Linklater.

Duane Linklater's *From Our Hands* is the third in a series of large scale commissioned projects produced and presented by the gallery with leading support from Partners In Art.

