

SOUTHERN ALBERTA ART GALLERY
MAANSIKSIIKAITSIITAPIITSINIKSSIN
PROJECT SPACES | u
09.JULY.2022 | 2023

IN THE OFF-SITE SPACE UNTIL 04.SEPTEMBER.2022
CENTRE VILLAGE MALL, UNIT 31
1240 2A Avenue N

Open Fridays and Saturdays 12-5PM

In its most essentialized form, “u” is an element of language; it pre-exists us and accrues meaning through interaction. u is part artist, part arena— a transferable personal alias, and a social space for collaboration. u’s exhibition will take place in three parts, the first two will happen this summer through the Southern Alberta Art Gallery Maansiksikaitsiitapiitsinikssin, and the third will conclude with a publication in 2023.

Part 1.) project spaces / artist talk - empty project spaces will be installed in an off-site space with a moving image/object-based artist talk for a viewable duration of 1 month (July 9- August 6, 2022). project spaces are small, customizable closed forms made out of clear packing tape. They are miniature galleries that provide a literal and hypothetical space for u and collaborators (a wide ranging network of artists, writers, and curators) to analyze the questions, intentions, and interpretations at the core of art and exhibition-making.

After a collaborator receives one, the making of a project space develops through conversation. It begins with the most obvious question: What should go into the project space? Almost immediately a million other questions come to the fore: “How do we get something into the project space? How much can the project space hold? If this is just a frame, does the frame have to be this size? Do we even need a frame? If we didn’t have a frame, where would the work be located? Come to think of it, even if we keep this frame, where will the work be located? Who will see this work? Who do we want to see this work? Who is it for and what conversation do we want to have with them?” And so it goes... Talking back and forth, project space conversations develop organically and vary widely in their outcomes. Convening in the space alongside the empty project spaces, u will present an artist talk through the vessel of an audio/visual (looped video file) sculptural object.

Part 2.) diary entry 5 - Directly following the display period of the empty project spaces, each project space will be shipped to the collaborators to further build on each individual dialogue/collaboration. In the empty offsite venue (resembling a project space), a single diary entry will unfold. diary entries by u are spontaneous and experimental clusters of objects, artworks [by u and sometimes others], and writing [by u and sometimes others] that utilize the performative vernacular of exhibitions, and could be experienced as the personal undertow of u’s conceptual position and work as a whole. The diary entry will continue to develop over a

duration of 1 month (August 7 - September 4, 2022).

Part 3.) Creation of a 'project spaces' publication - If the first part of u's exhibition showcases the "before"/unfinished stage of the empty project spaces and the "middle"/gestational stages seen in the diary entry, then the exhibition catalog in 2023 will become the primary site of the finished exhibition. The catalog will include images and texts that cover the dialogue and development and completion of each project space, the artist talk, and the various aspects of the diary entry. By gathering, highlighting and elevating the often unseen elements of an exhibition. u encounters and reflects its own prompt/provocation of the empty project space; what should go inside? Where will the work be located? Who is it for and what conversation do we want to have with them?

u is the letter "u" in the word "current" on the website of a now defunct Los Angeles based project space called 67 Steps (67steps.info) In 2019, u opened a project in Calgary called u's (uuus.info) which operated until 2020. Since this point, u has been organizing exhibitions in various offsite locations in rural Alberta while a permanent u's location is being constructed in Diamond Valley, AB.. Many of u's past, current, and future activities occur on Treaty 7 land that is cared for by the Blackfoot Confederacy (inclusive of The Kainai, Piikani [Peigan], and Siksika Nations), Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Iyarhe/Stoney Nakoda people (inclusive of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). This land is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. Recent exhibitions include: u and Studio for Propositional Cinema, Wschód, Warsaw; u and Alan Belcher w/ Alan Belcher, The Lily, Calgary; The Lucinda River w/ Naoki Sutter-Shudo, Carl Louie, London; u, Utopian Visions Art Fair, Portland; Showrunners, Los Angeles.

For more information visit: www.saaq.ca/current

This exhibition was made possible with funding assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the City of Lethbridge. Thank you to our exhibition sponsor Anthem Properties and to the National accessArts Centre for assisting with this exhibition.

project spaces | u

project spaces 22-45

with: Amy Yao, Magnus Tiesenhausen, Nicole Kelly Westman, Anne Eastman, Elif Saydam, Kate Newby, Alberta Rose W./Ingniq, Ian Rosen, Francesca Percival, Lilou Vidal, Kai Matsumiya, Teresa Tam, Studio for Propositional Cinema, Jesse Birch, Annie Greenfield, Jason Striemer, Eve Johnson, Nicholas Granada, Rita Mckeough, Zoe Koke, Ashes Withyman, Nour Mobarak, Darian Schoenne, and Gary Uchikura.
packing tape, 2022-ongoing.

project spaces

Publication published by the Southern Alberta Art Gallery Maansiksikaitapiitsinikssin, 2023

artist talk

slideshow of scanned prints, 5 minutes 37 seconds, 2022.

If you or anyone in your group would like an audio version of the artist talk, please ask the gallery attendant.

diary entry 5

artwork and writing, 2022.