

# UNIT 17

## **Manuel Axel Strain**

*25 June - 21 August 2022*

Manuel Axel Strain is a 2-Spirit artist from the lands and waters of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Simpcw and Syilx peoples, based in the sacred region of their q̓ic̓əy̓ (Katzie) and q̓'wa:ḥ̓'əḥ̓ (Kwawtlen) relatives. Strain's mother is Tracey Strain and father is Eric Strain, Tracey's parents are Harold Eustache (from Chuchua) and Marie Louis (from n̓kmaplqs), Eric's Parents are Helen Point (from x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy̓əm) and John Strain (from Ireland). Although they attended Emily Carr University of Art + Design they prioritize Indigenous epistemologies through the embodied knowledge of their mother, father, siblings, cousins, aunties, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents and ancestors.

Creating artwork in collaboration with and reference to their relatives, their shared experiences become a source of agency that resonates through their work with performance, land, painting, sculpture, photography, video, sound and installation. Their artworks often envelop subjects in relation with ancestral and community ties, Indigeneity, labour, resource extraction, gender, Indigenous medicine and life forces. Strain often perceives their work to confront and undermine the imposed realities of colonialism. Proposing a new space beyond its oppressive systems of power. They have contributed work to the Richmond Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery, Surrey Art Gallery, UBCO Fine Art Gallery and were longlisted for the 2022 Sobey Award.

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1. *It's gunna fall*, 2022, bricks from Maple Ridge Museum & Community Archives, mortar, fake grass, crow feathers, elk hide, horse hair, dandelion dyed fabric with image transfers, beads, sinew, porcupine quills, wool, candles, hemlock, dimensions variable
2. *Cutting through a sickly white child to show my niece and my sister*, 2022, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 121.9 cm
3. *Water Will Fly If We Let It*, 2022, chair, pillow with my grandma printed on it, homeharvested scent in diffuser, wool, deer hide, fur, tourniquet, fake grass, dimensions variable
4. *qné7e says tá7a*, 2022, stolen white picket fence, fake grass with bricks and a red skirt underneath, Indian Status application, braided deer hide, belt buckle, snake skin, pigeon feathers, cedar bark, dimensions variable
5. *Cutting through a sickly white child to show my nephew and my brother*, 2022, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 121.9 cm
6. *It's time to wake up*, 2022, wood, photo, acrylic paint, leather, beads, sinew, shells, dimensions variable

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