

For Immediate Release

## The Polygon Gallery presents the Canadian premiere of Stan Douglas's Venice Biennale exhibition, 2011 ≠ 1848

Exhibition pays homage to the global political unrest of 2011,  
and will tour nation-wide following Vancouver run

AUG. 9, 2022 (VANCOUVER, CANADA) — **The Polygon Gallery** presents **Stan Douglas's 2011 ≠ 1848** from Sept. 9–Nov. 6, 2022, the first stop of a nationwide tour that includes the **Remai Modern** and **National Gallery of Canada**. This Canadian premiere follows the exhibition's unveiling this spring at the Venice Biennale, where it earned critical acclaim for its reflection on the global political unrest of 2011 and the lasting legacy of those movements. The exhibition features Douglas's signature large-scale photographs and a two-channel video installation.

The photographs depict four different protests and riots from 2011: the start of the Arab Spring in Tunis on Jan. 12 with sit-ins and protests along Avenue Habib Bourguiba; the Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver on June 15; clashes between youth and police in London on Aug. 9; and the arrest of Occupy Wall Street protestors on Brooklyn Bridge in New York on Oct. 1. Douglas created the images by combining meticulous and elaborate re-enactments of the events, high-resolution plate shots of each city site, and aerial documentary footage.

In contrast to the still images, a two-channel video explores music as another powerful form of cultural resistance. The immersive installation depicts a fictionalized collaboration between rappers from London's Grime and Cairo's Mahraganat music scenes. Titled *ISDN*, after a now-outdated mode of transmitting high-quality audio over telephone lines, the video imagines rappers from the two cities exchanging beats and lyrics in improvised studios. The two genres share similarities in their production: both use free or pirated software and employ samples from the Internet.

*ISDN* presents Grime and Mahraganat as the soundtrack to the 2011 revolts, highlighting the nature of how information spreads in today's era of social media and 24-hour news cycles. This is in contrast with the Revolutions of 1848, a series of social and political upheavals across Europe that spread through print media. As the exhibition title suggests, Douglas draws a comparison between the socially, politically, and economically driven protests of 2011 with the earlier uprisings.

"2011 ≠ 1848 is a meditation on the parallels and dissimilarities of these two years," says **Reid Shier**, curator of the exhibition and Director of The Polygon. "The revolutions of 1848 have been called the Springtime of Nations, though it would be decades after the events of that year before Europe would see significant political change. Comparatively, it's far from certain how the activism, riots, and occupations that erupted across the globe in 2011 might become manifest in years to come. History has a way of playing out in radically unforeseen ways, and this exhibition presents a nuanced and complicated way to think about its trajectory."

The Polygon will present the photographs and videos in the same space for the first time. For the project's unveiling in Venice, Douglas's photographs were exhibited in the Canada Pavilion in the Giardini and *ISDN* was located at Magazzini del Sale, a 16<sup>th</sup>-century salt warehouse. The Vancouver exhibition will also feature a fifth photograph, *London, 2011-08-09 (Mare Street)*, a companion to Douglas's Pembury Estate image depicting the London riots in Hackney.

The exhibition opening celebration will take place on Thursday, Sept. 8 at 7pm. An artist talk with Stan Douglas and additional programming will be announced in early September.

For more information about the exhibition, visit [thepolygon.ca/exhibition/stan-douglas-2011-1848](https://thepolygon.ca/exhibition/stan-douglas-2011-1848).

*This exhibition is presented as a partnership between the National Gallery of Canada, Remai Modern and The Polygon Gallery.*

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Additional works by Stan Douglas will be on view at the Griffin Art Project's *Allegories of the Present*, open from Sept. 9 to Dec. 11.

### **About The Polygon Gallery**

The Polygon is one of Canada's most acclaimed photography and media art galleries. The Gallery moved into its Governor General's Medal-winning building in 2017 after operating as Presentation House Gallery for 40 years. The organization has presented more than 300 exhibitions and earned a reputation as one of Canada's most adventurous public art institutions. Admission is by donation, courtesy of BMO Financial Group.

### **Gallery hours**

Wednesday, 10am–5pm; Thursday, 10am–8pm; Friday–Sunday, 10am–5pm

### **Address**

101 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver | Unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), and xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) Nations

### **COVID-19 safety protocols**

The Polygon has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. All exhibitions are planned in accordance with the Provincial Health Officer's most recent order. Mask wearing is encouraged.

### **Press kit and photos**

[bit.ly/PolygonStanDouglas](https://bit.ly/PolygonStanDouglas)

### **Social media**

Facebook: [@polygongallery](https://www.facebook.com/polygongallery)

Instagram: [@polygongallery](https://www.instagram.com/polygongallery)

Twitter: [@polygongallery](https://twitter.com/polygongallery)

Spotify: [The Polygon Podcast](https://open.spotify.com/show/polygongallery)

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