

**Samuelle Grande**  
***Free play***

Samuelle Grande's *Free play* features large-scale oil paintings where schematic shapes are placed on the canvas: a house, a leaf, a shoe. Reduced to their simplest form, these shapes evoke simultaneously both manufactured objects and the nature surrounding us, abolishing the distinction between the living and the non-living in favor of a playful gaze. With a hand gesture, the foliage of a tree can become a butterfly, and a house can take the place of the heart. Figures show themselves and hide, eat sandwiches, plant a tree, or surrender to sleep. Via lines, brushstrokes and drips, their presence reveals the artist's body and gestures.

Samuelle Grande's artistic practice is shaped by cultivating a relationship with the unknown. Not knowing is the guiding principle of her work. The title of the exhibition 'Free play' represents the spontaneous, self-directed activities of children, also called unstructured play. To the artist, free play is akin to the playfulness of her studio practice. To create this body of work, the artist began by creating drawings from memory, often at night lying in bed before bedtime. This horizontal pre-dream state of mind guides the freewheeling compositions of her works. In the studio, she employs these drawings as a jumping board for related paintings that eventually emerge via free associations.

Samuelle Grande lives and works in Tiohtià:ke-Mooniyang-Montréal. She holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Guelph (2023) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in Studio Arts from Concordia University (2019). She has exhibited her work in group and solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Guelph; Boarding House Gallery (Guelph) and Galerie Nicolas Robert (Toronto and Montreal). In 2024, she was an artist-in-residence at Fool's Paradise, the Doris McCarthy residency (Scarborough). Grande is the recipient of several awards including the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation (2024, 2023), the Canadian Federation of Women Graduate Award (2023) and the Tony Sherman Graduate Scholarship (2021).