

## Open Spaces: Windows to a View

This program offers local and regional artists an opportunity to showcase their art in a highly visible downtown location while working with a professional guest curator. The program, which began in 2009, celebrates the diversity and quality of works by regional artists, while enlivening the Centre Street LRT Platform on 7 Ave. between 1 St. and Centre St. SE.

As part of its commitment to provide more opportunities to urban Indigenous artists, our Public Art program is presenting a series of exhibitions focusing on the presentation of work by Indigenous artists and matters of contemporary significance.

### **Mourn**

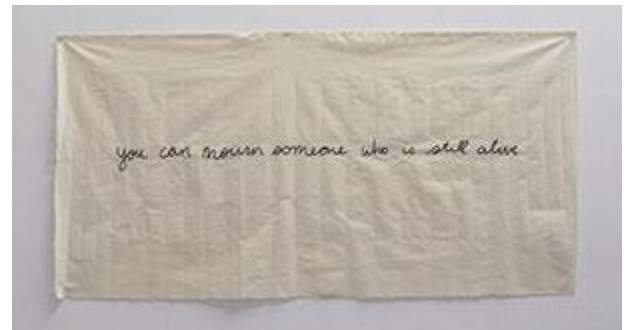
**Jade Nasogaluak Carpenter**

**Oct. 21 - Dec. 17, 2017**

**Curated by Jessie Short**

Mourn is a two-piece installation that consists of a line of beaded text that reads “you can mourn someone who is still alive” and a painting of a ghost. These two pieces work in conjunction to create a platform for the audience to consider their traumas and offer an affirmation to passersby. Mourn speaks to intergenerational trauma, seeks to communicate loss and acceptance, and considers the performative aspect of lamentation by situating the private into the public.

As with most of Nasogaluak Carpenter’s work, she questions the conventions of Inuit art, and challenges the notion of what it means to be an Inuit artist. These specific pieces fit in the space well because of the traffic the gallery garners. The works offer an affirmation to passersby as well as creating a space for contemplation, so the installation is aptly suited for a very public, high traffic area.



- Jade Nasogaluak Carpenter

## About the artist

Jade Nasogaluak Carpenter is an Inuvialuk artist and curator based in Calgary and Banff, born in Yellowknife and raised in Edmonton. She currently holds the Indigenous Curatorial Research Practicum at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. She received a diploma in Fine Art from Grant MacEwan University and a Bachelor in Fine Arts from the Alberta College of Art and Design in 2016. Nasogaluak Carpenter uses art and humour as a coping mechanism to subtly address cultural displacement, and to openly address mental illness; the lighthearted nature of her practice extends gestures of empathy and solidarity. These interests invite a reconsideration of the perceptions of contemporary Indigeneity and counter the stigmatism surrounding mental

health. Since graduating, she has been involved in Calgary's art scene; she has made work for Femme Wave (The Garden, 2016), Sled Island (Group, 2017), Contemporary Calgary (Oki Y'all, 2017), and is a core member of Ociciwan Contemporary Art Collective (2016-present) and a board member of Stride Gallery (2016-present). Recent awards include the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Young Artist Prize (2017). Her drawings were recently featured in the Summer 2017 Issue of Inuit Art Quarterly.

<http://cargocollective.com/nasogaluakcarpenter>

## Curator statement

Jade Nasogaluak Carpenter's installation Mourn invites passersby to pause, reflect and connect to the images and words that explore themes of loss, trauma and acceptance through dark humour. Mourn exists in two window-style spaces along a busy public transit stop in Calgary's downtown core. The work offers a break in the rush of this transitory place through the minimalist style of clean black lines in open space. In one window, a piece of canvas has been beaded in handwritten script that states "you can mourn someone who is still alive," suggesting the acceptance of the pain of life with loved ones touched by loss and trauma. In the second window, a classic, bed-sheet-style ghost is painted directly onto the glass by the artist, a reference to the lingering effects of such loss and trauma. The ghost is also a tongue-in-cheek play on the many Western-themed window paintings that litter the windows of Calgary's downtown core during the summer Stampede season.

But this is a different season.

Fall is a time of haunting. On the cusp of winter, plant beings begin to wither and die leaving dried out husks, little phantom reminders of their summertime selves. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word "haunt" several ways. Haunt can mean, "to visit or inhabit as a ghost." Haunting or being haunted can also suggest a continual reappearance or persistence of something that has a disquieting effect, for example, "problems we ignore now will come back to haunt us." Like the transit platform, the space for acknowledging grief oscillates between the frenetic daytime action of traveling workers and the stillness of the near-deserted night-time; it's all or nothing. Mourning for too long is bad for business, and before long (and likely too soon), people are encouraged to get over it and move on. But how does one move on from a deeply affecting trauma, particularly when the trauma is ongoing and losses pile up overtime, to be handed down through generations?

As an Inuk, Nasogaluak Carpenter knows the pain of trauma and loss. Cultural ruptures and mental illness are some of the many effects of the systemic racism against and the oppression of Indigenous peoples across Canada. Although Nasogaluak Carpenter doesn't offer any easy solutions for quick management of loss and trauma, her work suggests the necessity of giving space, physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, to those persistent painful wounds that haunt us. Though Nasogaluak Carpenter's work is directly connected to the ongoing pain of colonial processes, to which many Indigenous peoples can relate, Mourn speaks to any person that carries within them the dark pain of loss and trauma. Mourn is an offer of visual space to honour what one has been urged to forget.

## About the curator

Jessie Short is an independent curator, filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist whose work involves memory, Métis history and visual culture. Jessie attained an MA degree in 2011 from Brock University where her MA thesis explored contemporary Métis visual culture. Jessie served as the Executive Director for the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (ACC), 2012 to Dec 2014 and prior to this worked in the Visual Art department of The Banff Centre between 2009-2010. Jessie has directed two short films, Wake Up! (2015) and Sweet Night

(2016), both of which have screen nationally and internationally. Jessie currently works as a programming coordinator for Ociciwan Contemporary Art Collective.