

TRACELINES



Vance Wright

Rests behind me

My first word

Was thank you

Old syllables

Like a home I've never

I string my pearls

With sinew

rd

feel awkward
er stepped in

rls

ARTIST

Vance Wright

RESIDENCY

26 April - 20 May 2023

OPEN STUDIO

6 + 13 May 2023

EXHIBITION

27 May - 17 June 2023

**EXHIBITION & RESIDENCY
COORDINATOR**

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CATALOGUE DESIGN

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PRINTER

Hall Printing, 2023
(Canada)

ISBN#

978-1-7774428-8-0

oxygen art centre

Oxygen Art Centre is an artist-run centre located on the tum xula7xw of the sri'ayckstx (otherwise known as Nelson, B.C.). Oxygen provides space and programming for artists and the public to engage in the creation, study, exhibition, and performance of contemporary art. Founded in 2002, Oxygen is an integral and long-standing cultural hub for artists of all disciplines. Oxygen's annual programming includes an Exhibition & Residency program and Education program, as well as events, presentations, readings, and workshops.

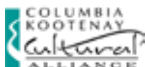
acknowledgements + gratitude


Oxygen Art Centre acknowledges with gratitude that we are located on the tum xula7xw/ traditional territory of the sn̓ɬay̓ckstx/the Sinixt People. As uninvited guests we honour their ongoing presence on this land. We recognize that the Sylix and Yaqan Nukij Lower Kootenay Band peoples are also connected with this land, as are Métis and many diverse Indigenous persons.

We are grateful for the financial support we receive from the Canada Council for the Arts, BC Arts Council, BC Gaming, Province of BC, Government of Canada, Vancouver Foundation, Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance, Columbia Basin Trust, United Way, Osprey Community Foundation, Nelson Lions Club, and Nelson and District Credit Union.

We offer thanks to Elephant Mountain Literary Festival and other key partners including Hall Printing, Speedpro Signs, and Selkirk College for their support.

We especially thank all of our volunteers, donors, and members.





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EXHIBITION STATEMENT

redacted

To trace a line; to leave something behind; to make a mark. Trace meets line through a series of actions—a light pencil line around the Dakelh phrase for “draw through,” sinew pulled through a string of pearls, czech beads highlighting camouflage pattern contours—they layer to form an archive of vulnerable actions presented together apart in the exhibition, *Tracelines*.

Vance Wright approaches their practice as co-creator. The materials and practices that they work with expand across ancestral, cultural, and familial lines, surfacing as traces that recede and emerge in each gesture. Traditional practices and natural materials are juxtaposed with newly industrialized and synthetic materials to create a sovereign space within the white cube for queer Indigeneity.

As a two-spirit reconnecting member of the Tl'azt'en Nation, Wright leaves traces of learning these practices and working with these materials in states of ectasis. Traces remain in the green lake silt that fills Dakelh phrases for beadwork in *bewhunuzguz, draw through* (2023) and each bend in the lengths of cedar that compose a series of scaled down shipping containers in *Lhk'elhahitulye, they are trading* (2023). Co-created during their time in residence, Wright proposes these tracelines as assemblages, as gesturing to the processes in which they are formed. These works create a time warp where the artist enacts this learning, these practices, while also reaching backwards and forwards across temporalities.

The artist plays with these tensions materially in *Culturally Modified Tree 1, 2, & 3* (2023) where acrylic paint and flagging tape are contrast with wood and caribou tufts. The materials bring their own histories, but also the histories that are prescribed to them as they are manipulated to function within

hierarchical value systems. Installed on mirrored plinths with camouflage bases, the sculptures collapse artificial representations of nature and exhibitionary infrastructures meant to recede into the background here thrust into the foreground.

High visibility colours reverberate throughout the space and artworks. ***Proprioception 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5*** (2023) holds the centre of the exhibition, suspended by sinew, and arranged overhead. The bright orange flagging tape fringe adorn the five camouflage belts. Intended to be worn to fade into the background, camouflage is interrupted by brightly coloured plastic and beadwork. The artist enacts these forms of embellishment to disrupt the camouflage's function to recede and conform to normative patterns of colonial natural environments. Instead, the beadwork and hyper-visibility trace soft interventions to instead foreground the artist's queerness, their Indigeneity, in ways that trouble normative spaces, logics, and definitions.

These complexities are further blurred in the installation, ***inheritance/remainder*** (2023). Anchored by a poem written before the artist began making the sculpture, glass pearls and real pearls are held together with sinew in the form of a nervous system laid out on the floor. Concerned with the embodied process of working with these materials and the traditional processes of beadwork, the artist contends with intergenerational traumas with each thread so as to not leave it as a remainder for future generations to inherit. The materials spill at the top where porcupine quills, glass beads, pearls, abalone buttons, and a cedar coil create a swirling cosmos to transform this pain and healing.

Just as *Tracelines* reveals and disrupts violent colonial apparatuses, and embellishes and celebrates queer Indigeneity, there is much that is left unannounced, redacted.





Exhibition Photography by Kenton Doupe





inheritance/remainder

Green pacific milk
Laps bristling sides
Disinfecting a thousand cuts
From white mouths

Sun bake and detritus
Lie thick upon the nose
A foreign tongue
Rests behind my lips

My first word
Was thank you
Old syllables feel awkward
Like a home I've never stepped in

I string my pearls
With sinew
Tying mediation
Between each bead
Like they are close siblings
Turned quarrelsome

I follow my grandmothers examples
as I amiably keep them
From scratching each other

Waves beat into chests
Rocking long left things
Hoping they will
Come out in the wash

No one holds my hand
Like we do

Green pacific milk
Laps bristling sides
Disinfecting a thousand cuts
From white mouths

Sun bake and detritus
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Rests behind my lips

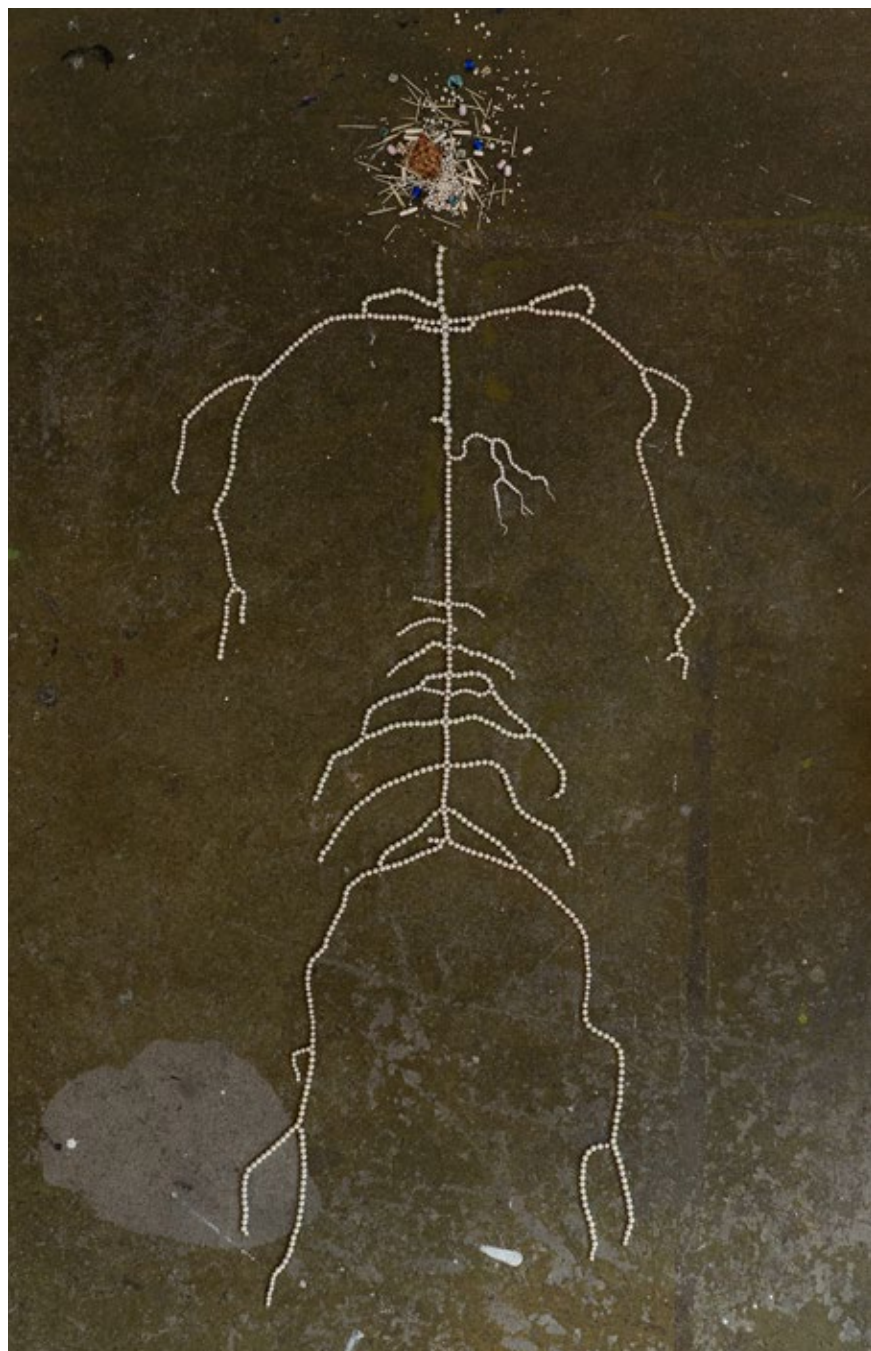
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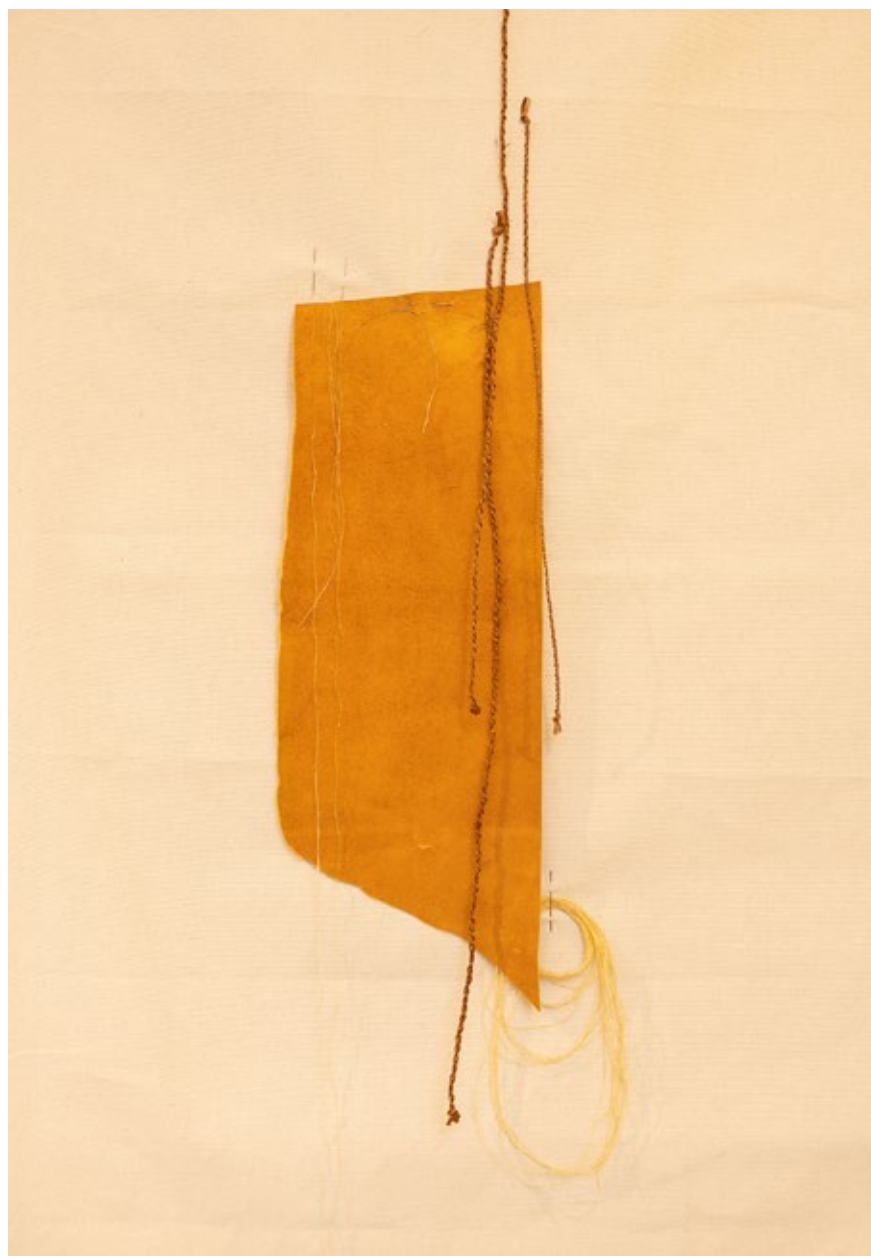
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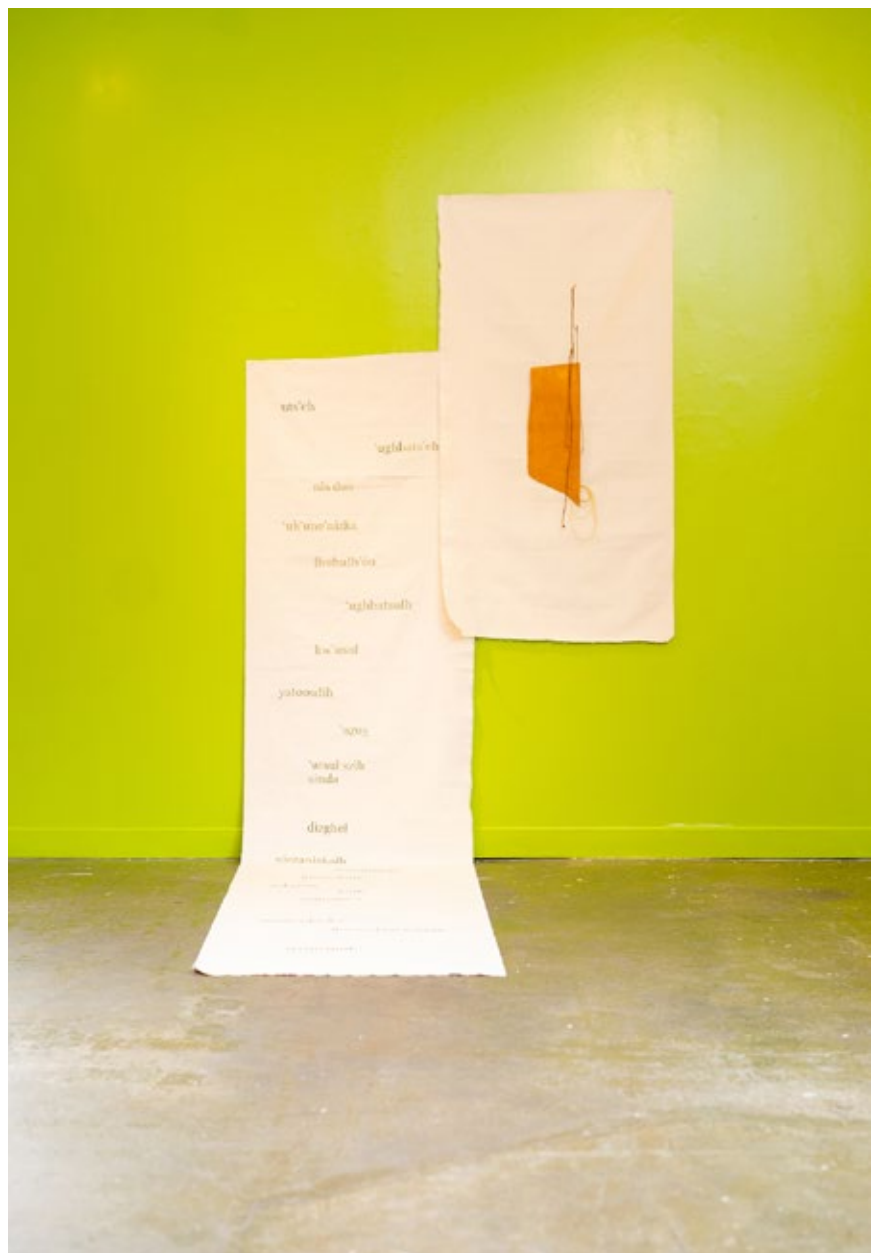
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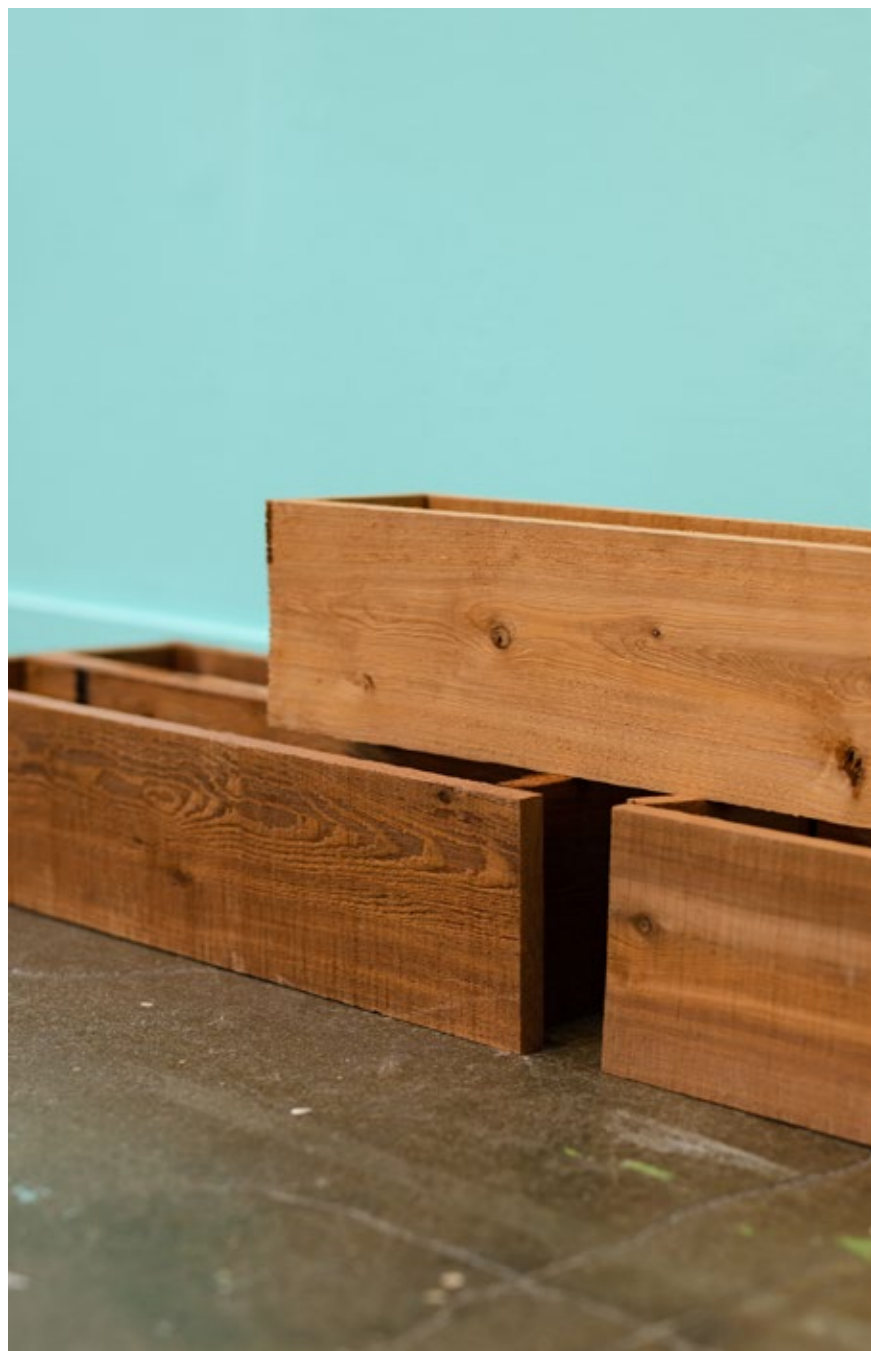










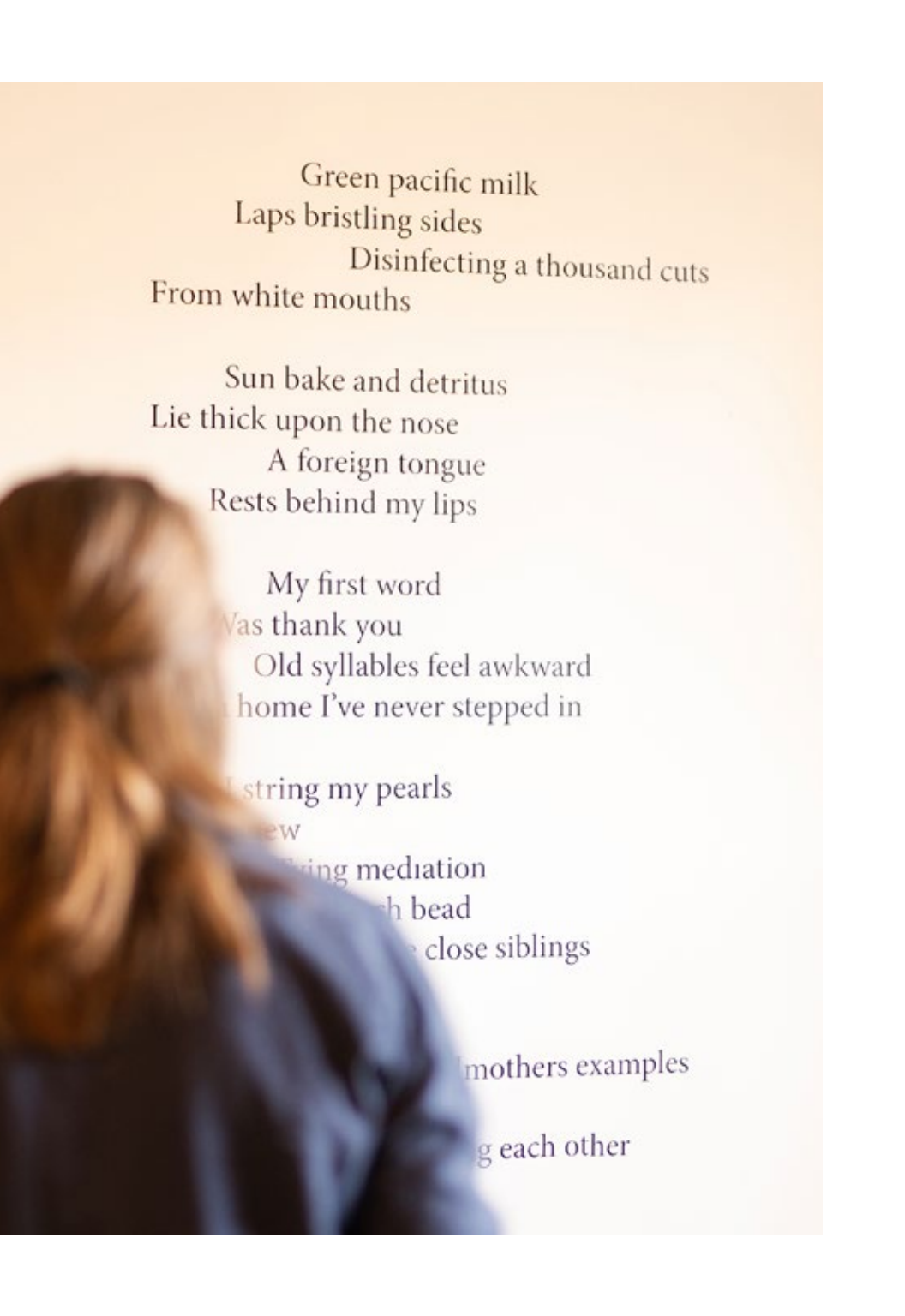












Green pacific milk
Laps bristling sides
Disinfecting a thousand cuts
From white mouths

Sun bake and detritus
Lie thick upon the nose
A foreign tongue
Rests behind my lips

My first word
Was thank you
Old syllables feel awkward
In a home I've never stepped in

I string my pearls
I sew
I bring mediation
I wash bead
I close siblings

mothers examples

g each other



artist biography

Vance Wright is a two-spirit reconnecting member of the Tl'azt'en Nation who was born on the traditional territories of the S'inix't Nation, colonially known as Nelson, BC. They are an interdisciplinary artist who is currently attending Emily Carr University of Art + Design with a focus in Critical & Cultural Practices, and Sculpture.

artworks

PAGES 16, 17, 20, 21, 27

Culturally Modified Tree 1, 2, & 3

*Acrylic paint, caribou fur, driftwood, flagging tape, paracord,
synthetic leather, tanned hide*
2023

PAGES 18, 19

bewhunuzguz, draw through

*Canvas, cedar, czech beads, natural pigments, sewing needles,
sinew, thread*
2023

PAGE 23

Proprioception 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5

Camouflage fabric, czech beads, flagging tape, sinew
2023

PAGES 24, 25

Lhk'elhahitulye, they are trading

Cedar
2023

PAGE 34

Acknowledgement

Acrylic on window
2023

PAGES 12, 13, 14, 15, 29

inheritance/remainder

*Abalone buttons, bone beads, caribou fur, cedar, glass beads,
pearls, porcupine quills, sinew, synthetic pearls*
2023



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