

ON
&
OFF
THE
WALL

JULY/AUGUST 2021

A MEMBER BENEFIT OF THE
DENVER
art
MUSEUM



On the Cover

ASSERTION OF WILL BY SIMPHIWE NDZUBE

Simphiwe Ndzube constructs imaginary universes that address issues of identity and history, power and political struggle, and globalization and freedom. He draws from the twin realities of racial segregation and political unrest—ongoing consequences of colonialism in South Africa—that have affected his people since the 1940s.

At the center of this lush scene—inspired by the biblical Garden of Eden—a serpentlike creature coils around a tree. In Judeo-Christian and Islamic imagery, this would symbolize evil, but with some clans from Eastern Cape, a snake called “Majola” can signify a welcome visitor, an ancestral incantation coming to pass a message or a protector.

Simphiwe Ndzube is on view through October 10.

Member Tip: Take a closer look at this work during the Mindful Looking Online programs via Zoom in July and August. Learn more on pages 10 and 11.

Simphiwe Ndzube, *Assertion of Will*, 2020. Mixed media on canvas; 79 x 124 in. (200.6 x 315 cm). © Simphiwe Ndzube. Image courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery. Photo by Marten Elder.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

HOURS

Every day 10 am–5 pm

TICKETS

General admission is free for museum members. Timed-entry tickets must be reserved online and in advance.

PARKING

The garage at 12th Avenue and Broadway is the most convenient place to park.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Visit denverartmuseum.org/covid-19 for safety guidelines and visit tips.

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ISSUE #190

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***On & Off the Wall* is published six times a year for members of the Denver Art Museum as a benefit of membership.**

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Photography: Unless otherwise noted, photos are by Christina Jackson or Eric Stephenson.

Send change of address with mailing label six weeks in advance to:

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Denver Art Museum programs are funded in large part by the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).



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Member Benefits

Free General Admission

Enjoy free general admission all year long. This includes admission to our next Untitled: Creative Fusions, which we welcome back partially in person on Friday, July 30. Plus, see *Each/Other*, *Simphiwe Ndzube*, and *Memory Mirror* (opens July 4), all included with general admission, this summer.

Discount on An Inside Look: A Series of Curator Talks

Members enjoy \$5 tickets (free for Museum Friends) to all virtual talks

and lectures. Learn more about this special series of talks about DAM collections on page 10.

Member see it first!


Experience the renovated Martin Building and new Sie Welcome Center before they open to the public with special days for members on October 21–23. Members also will enjoy a preview of our fall exhibition, *Whistler to Cassatt: American Painters in France*, opening in November.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Update

This time last year, Denver and many cities across the country were reaffirming Black Lives Matter in the wake of unrest and protests. At that time, we pronounced our stance against racism and our commitment to being an inclusive space where all are recognized and heard. Tragically, we've also seen over the last year a rise in violence toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The Denver Art Museum stands against violence, hate, racism, and xenophobia in all forms and we remain committed to fostering inclusion and equity inside and out. As part of our commitment, I want to update you on our efforts to make the museum a more inclusive and equitable place to work and to visit.

With input from across the organization, combined with work already underway by our equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) staff and volunteer committee, we are identifying opportunities for improvement in the museum's systems, procedures, and hiring policies, and setting a framework for future decisions. So far, this has included creating a racial equity roadmap, which sets the framework for our intentions to be both a platform for and an amplifier of the voices of all people, including Black, Latino/Latina, Indigenous, and Asian American artists who have been underrepresented in museums for decades. It also has included developing tools such as inclusivity and racial equity lenses, which provide critical questions (such as "Whose voices are present and whose are missing?") for us to ask and answer as we kick off projects. Staff and volunteers are also participating in training sessions facilitated by outside consultants on topics such as understanding identity and mitigating bias. The museum recently hired a Director of Equity and Employee Experience, Alisha Andrews, who will help guide this complex and crucial work.



To help diversify the talent pipeline in museums, this summer we bring back our Museum Pathways Program, an initiative that we started in 2019. The program provides current undergraduate students who come from backgrounds underrepresented in the museum field with a meaningful, practical, and paid work experience. We have 10 interns with us in a variety of departments, including collections, development, exhibitions, learning and engagement, marketing, and technology. In addition, we continue to offer several two-year Pathway Fellowships in the curatorial and learning and engagement departments.

Art has the power to promote mutual understanding and highlight our shared humanity. I hope you will visit this summer to see the work of Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger, as well as the paintings of Simphiwe Ndzube. These exhibitions, which are several years in the making and were developed in collaboration with the community, are two examples of our ongoing efforts to introduce a broad spectrum of voices and perspectives. Learn more about *Each/Other: Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger*, on view through August 22, on page 8. Additionally, *Simphiwe Ndzube: Oracles of the Pink Universe* is on view through October 10. Learn more about the exhibition on page 4 and in video interviews with the artist on our website (denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/simphiwe-ndzube).

With the Martin Building reopening in October, we're excited for members to see how the art in our collections is presented in new, exciting ways, strengthened by this equity and inclusion work. We look forward to welcoming more of you back to the museum for powerful exhibitions and experiences that help connect us to the world and to each other.

We know there is more work to do for the museum to become an anti-racist organization, and our board of trustees, volunteers, and staff remain committed to the difficult conversations, vulnerability, deep reflection, and willingness to grow and change it requires. We will continue to update you as we go forward. Thank you for your continued support!



Christoph Heinrich
Frederick and Jan Mayer Director

DAM Unboxed



Simphiwe Ndzube, *Dondolo, the Witch Doctor's Assistant*, 2020. Mixed media on canvas; 86 x 120 in. (218.4 x 304.8 cm) © Simphiwe Ndzube. Image courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery. Photo by Marten Elder.

Since the beginning of his young career, Simphiwe Ndzube has been exploring the interplay between the real and the magical, stitching together personal accounts and historical memories to give life to his creations. Born in 1990 in Eastern Cape, South Africa, and living and working in Los Angeles, Ndzube constructs imaginary pocket universes as a way to frame larger conflicts about racial identity and histories, political power and struggles, and globalization and freedom. His outsized vivid canvases and dynamic sculptural installations oscillate between the beautiful and the incongruous, producing remarkable visual contrasts that captivate the viewers.

Growing up in the post-apartheid era, Ndzube frequently draws from the realities of racial segregation and political unrest that have affected the lives of Black South Africans since the 1940s, as well as the ongoing consequences of colonialism and cultural imperialism in his home country. *Oracles of the Pink Universe* is Ndzube's first US museum show and represents an expansion of the artist's visual exploration for a mythological place, drawing from his personal experiences, imagination, and art historical references.

Merging the Fantastical and the Historical

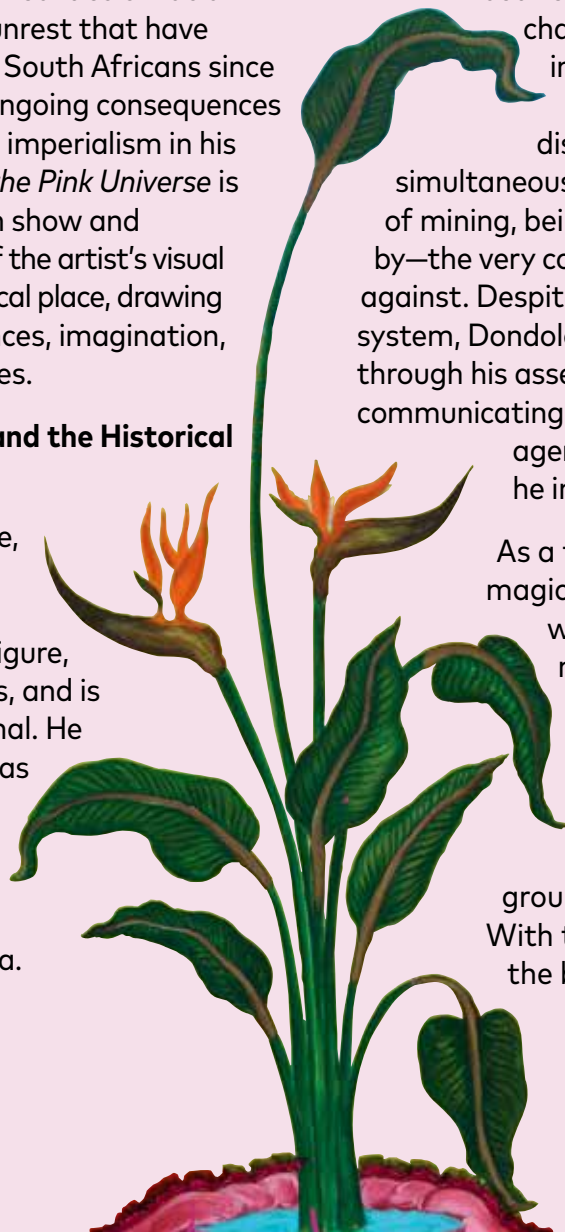
A diversity of characters populates the Pink Universe, including *Dondolo*, the *Witch Doctor's Assistant*. Dondolo is a flamboyant figure, dressed in sartorial clothes, and is part human and part animal. He represents a mine laborer as he carries a blue precious stone in a wheelbarrow, a reference to diamond mining and land exploitation in South Africa.

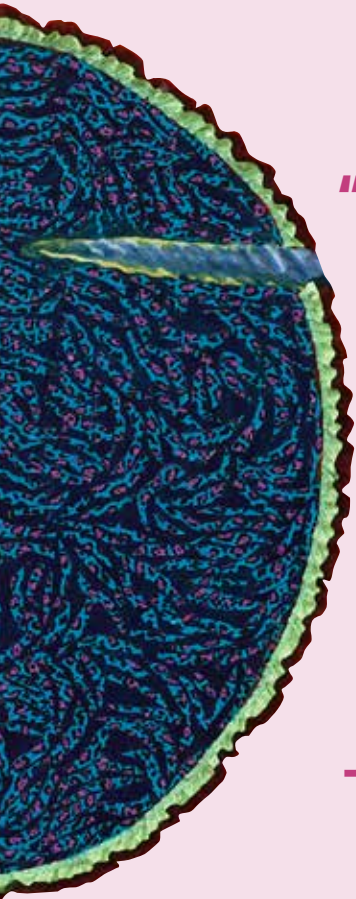
The stonelike object with spikes was borrowed directly from Hieronymous Bosch's painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (1490–1500), as a way to subvert traditional art historical narratives. More specifically, Ndzube's painting addresses the ongoing consequences of colonialism and cultural imperialism in South Africa by merging the fantastical and the historical.

Ndzube includes collages of his own hands and eyes in the painting, implicating himself in it as an autobiographical gesture, while leaving his mark as the creator of the work and of the Pink Universe. Water and fire clash between Dondolo and the idyllic landscape of the background. Standing on his hooves, Dondolo is caught between paradise and hell, the rural and the industrial, oscillating between joy and desolation. Like other

characters in the exhibition, he exists in a contradictory landscape. As Dondolo gazes out at the viewer, displaying his elegant outwear, he simultaneously performs the heavy labor task of mining, being the assistant to—and exploited by—the very colonial structure that he fights against. Despite being part of a subjugated system, Dondolo offers us hope and resilience through his assertive stance and hand gesture, communicating a hidden language that indicates agency in the fictitious world that he inhabits.

As a tactic for moving away from the magic and, in turn, alluding to the real world, Ndzube often incorporates materials that possess historical baggage, such as secondhand clothing, found objects, and accessories. These items serve as references to reality, connecting to viewers' own bodies, and grounding them in the factual world. With the presence of elements, such as the bicycle wheel and Dondolo's





**"My work exists both in a physical and magical realm, in the uncanny, the fantastical, and the absurd. I hope to tell the stories of a place and people that are within me and beyond the community I was raised in."
– Simphiwe Ndzube**

EXHIBITION RESOURCES

At the museum

Visitors will find a visual guide to the exhibition that identifies some of the symbolic elements present in the artworks and paper bookmark to help families look for certain visual components in the artworks.

Exhibition catalog

An illustrated color catalog is for sale in the Shop and online. It features a conversation between artists Simphiwe Ndzube and Phumelele Tshabalala, as well as contributions from Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director, Rebecca Hart, Vicki and Kent Logan Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, and Laura Almeida, Curatorial Fellow

Online

We will be posting videos and articles related to the exhibition on our website. The exhibition guide features label text and images. Visitors who have vision issues can use their phones to increase the font size to more easily read wall text.

garments, Ndzube's fabricated universe becomes palpable, relatable, and familiar. He invites the audience to navigate the duality between the tangible and the imaginary, at times taking spectators out of their comfort zone to a fictional place where they can begin to explore larger issues related to race, identity, and the making of history.

Complementing the recently acquired *The Bloom of the Corpse Flower*, which represents the beginning of Ndzube's journey into the Pink Universe, *Dondolo, the Witch Doctor's Assistant*, explores the complications of control and power, central themes to Ndzube's overall practice. We are thrilled to have both artworks integrate our collection!

– Laura Almeida, Curatorial Fellow

Simphiwe Ndzube: Oracles of the Pink Universe is organized by Simphiwe Ndzube and the Denver Art Museum. It is presented with the generous support of Vicki and Kent Logan and the Birnbaum Social Discourse Project. Additional support is provided by the Hasday Family Trust, the generous donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS4.

What's on View

Exhibitions on view this summer are included with general admission, which is free for members.

NOW ON VIEW

Each/Other:
Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger
THROUGH AUGUST 22

Simphiwe Ndzube: Oracles of the Pink Universe
THROUGH OCTOBER 10

The 19th Century in European and American Art
ONGOING

CLOSING SOON

Paris to Hollywood: The Fashion and Influence
of Véronique and Gregory Peck
THROUGH JULY 18

OPENS SOON

Memory Mirror
OPENS JULY 4

Martin Building Galleries

REOPENS OCTOBER 24
Save the date for Member Previews
OCTOBER 22 & 23

Gallery view of *Each/Other*: Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger



Art in You

Cultivating creativity is central to the programs and exhibitions at the Denver Art Museum. Whether you're getting hands-on with a project in the Studio, participating in Drop-in Drawing, or listening to an artist describe their process, we aim to inspire the creativity and artist within you.

Today, we invite you join us in celebrating your own creativity by supporting the "Art in You" campaign. All gifts are matched at denverartmuseum.org/artinyou

Memories of Collaboration



It was nearly midnight in Manhattan, a city literally built by Haudenosaunee ironworkers. The cool autumn air felt great after piling out of a New York City cab onto the sidewalk in midtown into the rain. At this point, there were only a few of us, but more were on their way. There, along the street, was a descending staircase that led to a nondescript door. Our group walked down this flight of stairs into a place of fear for some and excitement for others: a karaoke bar.

Nearly 20 people packed into a room: a global contingent of Indigenous artists, curators, a program officer from a major arts foundation, and even a radio personality. We travelled from near and far, north (Toronto) and south (Mexico City), and east

(Massachusetts) and west (Alaska). This unlikely group [in town for various exhibitions and reasons] came together to share in one thing: singing. Some were amazing. Others were awful, but we didn't care. We were creating something together, and that was all that mattered. One blended voice created a sound that no one of us could create alone. It was against this backdrop, deafened by a verse of Neil Diamond's *Sweet Caroline* (full disclosure: I may have chosen that song), that collaboration and intersectionality reigned. This was where Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger first [got to know each other]. In this place underground, a place where some creation stories originate, an idea was born.

That night a kernel of an idea began to form as I thought of each artist's practice and the common threads that connect them. It took a while for this seed to grow, but that night was what led me to connect Watt and Luger's art conceptually.

Marie Watt was an artist in residence at the Denver Art Museum in the summer of 2013, so I had an opportunity to see how she engages communities of people in a personal way. Visitors to the museum joined Marie in sewing circles where everyone not only worked together to sew monumental textiles, such as *Butterfly* (2015) and *Trek (Pleiades)* (2014), but also shared stories.

IMAGES THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: The creative collaboration of Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger on their artwork *Each/Other* in Camp Colton, Oregon. Photos by Ginger Dunnill.

***Each/Other: Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger* is on view through August 22. The exhibition is included with general admission, which is free for members. This article is excerpted from the *Each/Other* catalog that accompanies the exhibition.**

Member tip: Use the 20% off coupon on the back page to buy the catalog (or a different item) in the Shop.

Collaboration—with artists and audience alike—is equally integral to Cannupa Hanska Luger's work. Often using short instructional videos, Cannupa teaches a simple act of artmaking—forming a clay bead for *Every One* (2018) or making a mirrored surface for a shield for the *Mirror Shield Project* (2016)—and provides instructions on how to send him what was made. These acts bring together the hands of many to create something on a grand scale. Although the collaborators may never meet, each is personally invested in the meaning of the work and dependent on the others to achieve the artist's aims.

In American society today, we place value on the noun "art" and not the verb "to create." When art is a verb, and the focus is not on the product, it is neither elitist nor a luxury, nor can it be owned.

For much of human history, art was an act of shared creation. Art is a performance that is never truly done alone. The act of artmaking involves collaborating with materials and, by extension (and sometimes directly), with the land or animals that produced them as well as with those who work in the shops or factories that process and sell the materials.

Family is an essential part of both Watt's and Luger's practices and is what helped them develop deep bonds with one another, and in this context, when we talk about art as a verb, for Marie and Cannupa this means

that art is a social project where people who participate in the making become invested, relationships are forged, and an exchange happens. The artists recognize that art can also be transformational. It can facilitate learning, maintain mental health, help develop a new way of seeing, and impart new skills. This way of thinking about art is not new, but it is something many of us have forgotten or never had a chance to experience.

We need each other to ensure our mutual survival—that is to say, the actions required for all of us to survive are beyond the capabilities of any one of us. When art is a collaborative process, it takes on a similar kind of societal importance.

So don't see the catalog or exhibition as a collection of things. Look beyond the noun. Search for signs of the different hands that went into the creation of the artworks here. See the people who sat around a table, making stitches or clay beads, and talking. Ask yourself, again and again as you encounter each piece, "how am I part of this story?" The works presented here are tangible, but they are, more importantly, memories of collaborations that provide us with a model for coming together and taking part in something greater than ourselves.

– **John P. Lukavic,**
Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Native Arts



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

To see the full list of events in July and August, please check the calendar on our website or click on **PROGRAMS** on the top menu of our website. Unless otherwise indicated (**\$**), events are included with general admission, which is free for members. Events that are free or have an additional discount for Museum Friends are indicated with *****.

All events except **Untitled: Creative Fusions** are online via Zoom.

July

6 THE STAPLETON COLLECTION OF SPANISH COLONIAL ART

Between 1892 and 1914, Daniel Casey Stapleton amassed a prodigious collection of Latin American colonial art while living and working in Ecuador and Colombia. Jorge F. Rivas Pérez, Frederick and Jan Mayer Curator of Latin American Art will discuss this collection (now at the Denver Art Museum), its history, and how it contributes to the DAM's larger collection of Latin American art..

July 6 | 6–7 pm \$ *

13 DROP-IN DRAWING

Join artist Anna Kaye on the second Tuesday of the month for our fun and informal creative art sessions using supplies you already have at home. All ranges of drawing experience welcome. Free.

July 13 | 1–3 pm

ART IS A VERB: SESSION 2 COLLABORATION IN CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS ART & PRACTICE

What does collaboration look like in contemporary Indigenous artistic and curatorial practices? With the DAM's collection as a springboard, Dakota Hoska, Assistant Curator of Native Arts, will guide you through successful collaborative endeavors. Look at works by artists such as Melanie Yazzie, Wendy Red Star, Marie Watt, Cannupa Hanska Luger, Jody Naranjo, and others.

July 13 | 6–7 pm \$ *

20 HOW TO GROW A MUSEUM FASHION COLLECTION

The Denver Art Museum's Textile Art and Fashion collection consists of approximately 5,000 objects that encompass all types of textiles from every era, starting with Coptic fabrics to the work of contemporary textile artists. In this talk, Florence Müller, Avenir Foundation Curator of Textile Art and Fashion, will showcase a few recent acquisitions from a variety of designers and offer some insight into how the department acquires new pieces, especially as it concentrates on fashion acquisitions from the period following WWII.

July 20 | 6–7 pm \$ *

20 MINDFUL LOOKING

Slow down and spend time with a single work of art from the Denver Art Museum. In May and June, the artwork is *Melora* by Nicholas Kahn & Richard Selesnick. Join us online the third Tuesday of each month to discover overlooked details, pose questions, and explore ideas as we linger, look, and connect from home...with art and with each other. Free.

July 20 | 1–1:45 pm

27 DROP-IN WRITING

On the fourth Tuesday of the month, explore your creativity through the written word in our informal writing sessions led by Theresa Rozul Knowles, an instructor with Lighthouse Writers Workshop. Open to all levels, from published authors to the occasional journaler. Free.

July 27 | 1–3 pm

ANDERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY LECTURE

Anchorage-based photographer Brian Adams makes pictures about contemporary Indigenous life in the North. Informed and inspired by his own Iñupiaq heritage, Adams has travelled across Alaska and beyond to make pictures of Indigenous peoples, their communities, and the surrounding landscape.

July 27 | 1–1:45 pm \$ *

30 UNTITLED: CREATIVE FUSIONS IN PERSON!

The museum's popular **Untitled** program is back in July! Join us at the museum or watch some of the events online. Weave your way into a night of stitches and stories with R. Alan Brooks and *We Were Wild* (Meredith Feniak & Risa Friedman). Inspired by the strength and healing that comes from collaboration in the exhibitions of *Each/Other: Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger* and *Simphiwe Ndzube: Oracles of the Pink Universe*.

July 30 | 1–3 pm



Untitled: Creative Fusions is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and The VF Foundation.



Lifelong Learning and Access programs are supported by the William Randolph Hearst Endowment for Education Programs, Nancy Benson Education Endowment Fund, CenturyLink Endowment, Jim Kelley and Amie Knox Education Endowment Fund, and the Cooke-Daniels Fund. Support is also provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, NextFifty Initiative, Colorado Garden Foundation, Colorado Creative Industries, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).



August

3 **SWEET LAND, A CONTEMPORARY OPERA**

Sweet Land, a contemporary opera produced by The Industry and featured in the exhibition *Each/Other*, reimagines narratives surrounding the founding of American and westward expansion in order to make visible the violence and erasure of American history. In this lecture, learn about the creative process and larger themes of the opera with Yuval Sharon, founder and artistic director of The Industry and Cannupa Hanska Luger, artist and co-director of *Sweet Land*. In addition to the lecture, the Denver Art Museum will provide access to the streaming version of the opera free of charge to the first 200 registered participants.

August 3 | 6–7 pm \$ *

10 **DROP-IN DRAWING**

Join artist Anna Kaye on the second Tuesday of the month for our fun and informal creative art sessions using supplies you already have at home. All ranges of drawing experience welcome. Free.

August 10 | 1–3 pm

PLYWOOD: A MATERIAL EXPLORATION

The origins of plywood extend back to ancient Egypt; however, today's plywood is the product of mid-1800s industrial progress. In anticipation of opening the new design galleries, Darrin Alfred, Curator of Architecture and Design, will explore the modern history of plywood and how he has diversified the collection's representation of designers who have explored this progressive material's unique properties.

August 10 | 6–7 pm \$ *

17 **MINDFUL LOOKING**

Slow down and spend time with a single work of art from the Denver Art Museum. In July and August, step into Simphiwe Ndzube's imaginative "Pink Universe" with a closer look at the contemporary South African artist's mixed-media work, *Assertion of Will*. Together, we'll look at his magical imagery and peel away deeper layers of meaning. Join us online the third Tuesday of each month to discover overlooked details, pose questions, and explore ideas as we linger, look, and connect from home...with art and with each other.

August 17 | 1–1:45 pm

17 **ART IS A VERB: SESSION 3 ART & ACTIVISM: VOICES FROM THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY**

Like Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger, Denver's local artists inspire action through their work. In this final session, join Stephen Brackett (of Flobots and Youth on Record) in a conversation with artists whose practices contribute to activism and the betterment of our communities, an awareness of things that matter, and calls for change.

August 17 | 6–7 pm \$ *

24 **DROP-IN WRITING**

On the fourth Tuesday of the month, explore your creativity through the written word in our informal writing sessions led by Theresa Rozul Knowles, an instructor with Lighthouse Writers Workshop. Open to all levels, from published authors to the occasional journaler.

August 24 | 1–3 pm

CONNECTING THREADS: RECENT ACQUISITIONS FROM THE MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART DEPARTMENT

The recent acquisitions from the Modern and Contemporary Art department span a wide range of media, from digital artwork to installation to mixed-media paintings, among others. This talk with Laura Almeida, Doctoral Curatorial Fellow, and Caitlin Swindell, Curatorial Assistant, will focus on recently acquired works that incorporate fabric as a medium, including two-dimensional pieces that integrate collaged burlap sacks and used clothing, as well as installations made with shoelaces and pantyhose. .

August 24 | 6–7 pm \$ *

31 **THE NEXT PHASE FOR ASIAN ART: RECENT ACQUISITIONS AND UPCOMING INSTALLATIONS**

Since the Denver Art Museum's permanent galleries of Asian art closed for renovation in 2017, the museum's Asian Art collection has grown by more than 2,000 pieces, largely through donations from museum supporters. In this talk, Douglas Wagner, Curatorial Associate in the Asian Art department, will highlight a selection of these artworks, discussing their history and significance, and hinting at when museum visitors will see them for the first time.

August 31 | 6–7 pm \$ *

OPENS JULY 4

Memory Mirror

Memory Mirror is an immersive installation that invites visitors to explore their relationship with memory through animation, dioramas, and interactive storytelling. Designed to feel like the memory of a relative's living room, the Precourt Family Discovery Hall is being transformed into a surreal domestic den that is both familiar and fantastic.

Museum visitors and community members are invited to contribute audio, images, and objects that represent your own memories to be included in the installation. To make the work truly collaborative and interactive, visitors and community members will be able to share their memories throughout the run of the exhibition, resulting in an animation and experience that evolves regularly, morphing and moving, just like memory.



ABOUT LARES FELICIANO

Lares Feliciano is an interdisciplinary artist and cultural worker based in Denver. Feliciano uses animation, installation, and collage to create worlds where marginalized experiences are front and center. Her work explores queer identities, mixed-race experiences, and complex expressions of grief and trauma. She holds a master's of fine arts in cinema production from San Francisco State University and a bachelor's in film and American studies from Smith College. She has completed residencies with RedLine Contemporary Art Center and Grand Canyon National Park and was a participant in the Colorado Creative Industries Change Leader Institute.

Feliciano is passionate about the power of the arts to create change and strengthen communities. In 2020, she joined the RedLine staff as Art Grants Manager where she supports artists and organizations across Colorado. Previously, she served as program director for Think 360 Arts for Learning and launched the Artist in Residence program at the Children's Museum of Denver. Lares believes that everyone is an artist and is on a mission to support creativity in all.

Memory Mirror is included with general admission, which is free for members.

All artwork © and courtesy of Lares Feliciano.

Why Memory?

Memory has always been a central theme in my work. Archives, yearbooks, family ephemera, and vintage encyclopedias—I am drawn to materials that act as shadows of the past I can build new worlds around. As a result, my work often evokes a dreamlike nostalgia where decades overlap and all of time exists at once.

Memory is the faculty by which the brain stores and recalls information. Memory helps us to delineate time, communicate, build relationships, and create meaning. But as much as we rely on memory to build our sense of self, it is a notoriously imperfect processor. Memory is not so much a record as a reflection, impacted by emotion, experience, time, and bias. Our memories shape us and we in turn shape our memories.

These last pandemic months demonstrate the ways time and memory interact. Normally we use memory to delineate time. Your coworker may say, "Oh yes, I sent you that document right around the time of the April fundraiser." But this year the April fundraiser didn't happen as usual, nor did the summer bbq, the graduation party, or the Thanksgiving family reunion. Without these memories to help us mark time, we are left

swimming in a sea of days and months that blend together. It's no wonder that during the pandemic a common question has been, "What day is it?"

Memory also helps to process trauma and grief. But our ability to work through these feelings is hindered by our isolation. Memories with others that help us make sense of our experiences are few and far between, causing our collective experience of grief to be even more muddled. It is my hope that sharing our individual memories in this collective manner will help us feel some connectedness in a time that is so disconnected.

Finally, my interest in memory is also connected to my own experience of grief and loss. When I was eight years old, my father was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's, a disease of the brain that affects memory. He was sick for eight years and died when I was 16. I watched as the loss of memory changed who my father was. As a result, I have come to appreciate the value of memory and the connectedness it brings. Memory is precious and should be celebrated and savored.

- Lares Feliciano





Storytelling Studio

The Denver Art Museum's interactive Studio is a place to spark your creativity, connect with Denver's creative community, and get a new perspective on the artistic process. Visitors will have the chance to explore themes of place, identity, and imagination in the brand new Storytelling Studio.

Through two interactive, self-guided activities, visitors can discover how artists combine visual imagery and the power of words. Share your own memory of our city on a collaborative map illustrated by artist Kristina Maldonado-Bad Hand and create your own storyboard at our Illustration Stations. Connect with the local creative community as you explore artist Chinn Wang's installation *A is For...*, and get a behind-the-scenes look into process with our local artist showcase and demonstration videos.

As always, staff and visitor safety is our top priority—that's why we've developed a robust set of safety protocols to ensure a clean and comfortable atmosphere in our Studio space. All visitors will be provided with their own material kits and individual artmaking stations, and entry to the Storytelling Studio will be limited to support social distancing.

Join us in the Storytelling Studio and tell your own story through the power of text and image—no experience necessary!

The Storytelling Studio is generously sponsored by Robert and Judi Newman Family Foundation.

DEMONSTRATING ARTISTS

Inside the studio and on our YouTube page and website you'll be able to watch videos of the following artists:

Latasha Dunston | George P. Perez | R. Alan Brooks & Jolyon Yates

PARTICIPATE IN

I Invent It, My Hands Draw a Cloud



As part of the renovated Martin Building, the DAM will showcase a community mural created by Emily Hope Dobkin and Olive Moya. The idea behind the piece is focused on the comfort of belonging under the same sky. The artists want the mural to evoke a sensation similar to astronauts viewing the earth from space and feeling united in humanity's existence on this planet, with the clouds as a haven of acceptance and solidarity.

Photographs for *I Invent It, My Hands Draw a Cloud* will be sourced from the community to show differing perspectives of the shared sky. You also can join Emily Hope Dobkin at one of her Meet Cart virtual programs via Zoom at noon on July 12 to not only share your ideas, but connect, reflect and have some fun!

WHAT'S THE MEET CART?

The Meet Cart is a mobile structure where unfamiliar people become unexpected pals—it's where strangers, friends, family, and colleagues meet, greet, and play through games, prompts, and activities as a way to spark more meaningful connections. During the pandemic, it's been virtually rolling its wheels around the world hosting celebrations, company happy hours, creative conversations, and various community-building experiences. We'll be playing a participatory game that will serve as a creative brainstorm around the concepts of belonging here in Denver.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO PARTICIPATE:

To prepare: cut seven pieces of scrap paper into squares about 4x4"

- Have a pen + notebook readily available
- Feel free to bring and much on your lunch as well

NOTE: This will be a highly interactive experience. Be prepared to have your video setting ON and ready to connect, reflect, and have some fun!

Visit denverartmuseum.org/calendar to find the Zoom link.



TOP: Olive Moya, *It Took This Long to Get Here*. Image courtesy of the artist. BOTTOM: Emily Hope Dobkin. The Meet Cart. Photo by Will Hunter.

UNTITLED

CREATIVE FUSIONS

JULY 30, 5–8 PM

The member-favorite Untitled program is back at the museum in July! The evening will be inspired by exhibitions on view including *Each/Other: Marie Watt and Cannupa Hanska Luger* and *Simphiwe Ndzube: Oracles of the Pink Universe*. The featured artists we're collaborating with are R. Alan Brooks and the We Were Wild duo of Meredith Feniak and Risa Friedman.

Learn a little more about the artists in the following Q&A and we hope you'll join us at the museum on July 30. In addition to live events, there also will be video aspects of the program on YouTube that visitors will be able to watch from the museum or from home.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

R. Alan Brooks teaches writing for Regis University's MFA program and Lighthouse Writers Workshop. He's the author of *The Burning Metronome* and *Anguish Garden*—graphic novels featuring social commentary, as well as *The Colorado Sun's* weekly comic "What'd I Miss?". His TED Talk on the importance of art reached one million views in two months. He hosts the "MotherF**ker in a Cape" comics podcast, which focuses on marginalized members of the geek world, and is a musician and noted stage host.

We Were Wild: This is an ongoing collaboration between Meredith Feniak and Risa Friedman based on their interest in the intersection of the built human environment and the natural world featuring collages of photographs and textiles installed as street art. Feniak has a solo practice of drawing, sculpting, and installations, and Friedman has a solo practice focused on photography, collage, and installation.

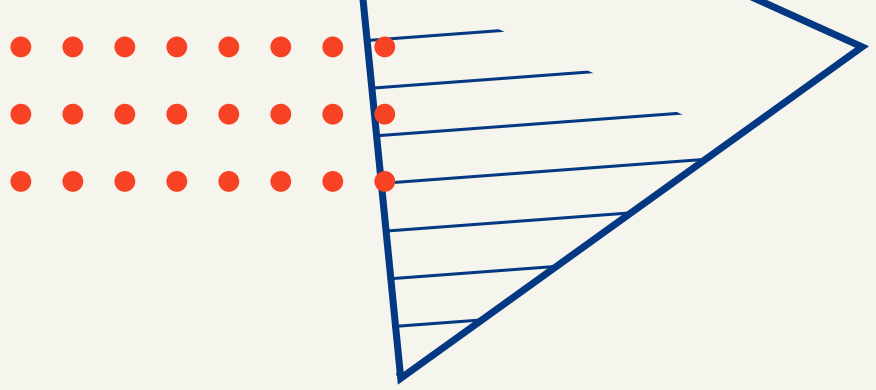
What do you hope people will take away from the July Untitled experience?

R. Alan Brooks: I want people to come away from this experience thinking about how communication is affected by more than what we say—it's influenced by context and who the speaker is. People often listen through filters of class, gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.

What are you most excited about regarding this project?

Meredith Feniak: Street art is organically participatory because of its accessibility, so translating that experience into the formal museum environment was tricky. Through Alan's expertise as a writer, we will make the museum a place to explore not only the art, but ourselves through our reactions to the art and the Untitled events. In order to make our project for the museum truly accessible, we are publishing a zine that will be given as gifts to visitors and will be widely distributed as free art.

Risa Friedman: As an artist and social scientist/public-health professional, I am particularly interested in the aspects of our Untitled programming that involve the overlapping of the participatory moments—especially those that will promote thinking and reevaluating how we perceive people and the healing/medical/art. I'm also super excited to see how Alan creates narrative with We Were Wild's art. I'm super inspired by his work and am stoked for the outcomes of our collaboration. I've already learned several things from him that will influence my future art practice.



What advice do you have for people for using creativity and art as a way to cope with some of the difficult issues we're facing right now—grief, loss, injustice, hate?

R. Alan Brooks: Art is a tremendously powerful way to bring someone into the world of another person and connect them through their humanity. Because so much art is an expression of some aspect of humanity (love, loss, pain, happiness, strength, etc.), when we create art, we provide a place for people to connect with their own humanity. And, that's a way to help people through hard times.

How do you think art/creativity can support individuals and/or the community?

Meredith Feniak: The arts heal; we know that intrinsically and through scientific research. Evan Weissman, a Denver artist and activist, said recently that artists are the people's "shock absorbers." In my circle, the artists are truly the feelers, but feelers who are filled with hope.

We are planning an Untitled to share how we, as artists, are not only coping, but carefully seeking solutions. Through looking, considering, and participating, visitors will share in the artists' quest to open our eyes and hearts, and care for ourselves and others.

What role does art play in helping dismantle oppressive systems and/or what role does art play in helping society evolve?

Risa Friedman: Artists help us communicate thoughts and feelings that we can't always articulate on our own. By providing words and images that explain problems in the world that we need to address/change, art can help people explain the need for change and offer strategies that can be used to implement this change. Art also serves as an outlet for storytelling. Listening and learning about those different from us helps us understand why certain issues matter and are worth our attention, energy, time, and money.



Untitled: Creative Fusions is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and The VF Foundation.



IMAGES, LEFT TO RIGHT: Untitled artists R. Alan Brooks, Meredith Feniak, and Risa Friedman



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Photo courtesy of Instagram user @lolybe3



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