

# RELINKED, (RELAYED), RELATED

agYU  
SPRING 2018

The middle of every narrative represents a moment of uncertainty before an arrival or change. Artists and curators know this productive process is also purgatory because arrival and change are also ruptures. What if one used this time-before-the-arrival to shape the change-about-to-happen?

For 2018, we have proposed *The Beyond, Beyond* as a way to speculatively consider this interstitial awakening ... and—in true AGYU style—to experiment with artists in order to explore where this thinking might lead us together. If we learn anything from the artists we are hosting this year, it's a kind of circular nomadism: a movement full of detours, interludes, and delays; a multiplicity inspired almost entirely by the "toute monde" of the *Americas*. As Martiniquan poet and philosopher Édouard

Glissant reminds us: the Americas make the multiplicities of the world comprehensible.

"Borders" and "thresholds" are concepts necessary to think through *The Beyond, Beyond*. And so are migration, survival, and connection to place—be that land or locality. Our 2018 program criss-crosses the Americas: from the USA this past winter with Postcommodity, now to Brazil with Bárbara Wagner and

Benjamin de Burca, and upcoming in the fall to Mexico with Betsabé Romero. These artists' work engages real borders, thresholds, and (aesthetic) frontiers to liberate our positions and perspectives—in relation to each other and to the world—now and for the future. In 2018, we also stage actions that intentionally inhabit the civic spaces that surround the gallery—including our new Line One subway extension. We seek to open up our city to new kinds of possibilities for movement and agency: to

relink, relay, and relate locations and cultures across time and space. With Wagner and de Burca, we wonder: What might constitute the creation of new traditions? Or, more interestingly, what will become our contemporary ones? Perhaps traditions can only be known, not from the past but from the future looking back at the here and now. "Our enduring popular culture is at the base of our reflexes.... It is what allows us to persist," says Glissant in *Le discours antillais* (*Caribbean Discourse*).

One never knows what will come next, certainly not in these times of uncertainty. Can uncertain times mean new kinds of arrivals, new sorts of ruptures? At the AGYU, we, too, wonder, changing as we are.

—Emelie Chhangur, Interim Director/Curator

Subway Cypher:  
Poetry and Rap Mobilized  
Wednesday, April 18!

18 April–24 June 2018  
Art Gallery of York University



## BÁRBARA WAGNER & BENJAMIN DE BURCA

Bárbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca's works celebrate—and reframe—vernacular cultural forms as they have manifested through time, as popular traditions become pop culture, for instance. Through photography and film, the artists examine a space in between, where cultural forms of the past adapt in response to changing economic conditions—particularly in emerging economies or post-colonial geographical contexts—and where popular genres persist through cultural mixing and diasporic re-fashioning.

The artists' practice looks to how performative forms of colonial cultural resistance in Brazil's northeast—such as *capoeira*—continue today but in revised expression, such as in *favela*, the subject of the 12-minute film, *Faz que vai* (*Set to Go*) from 2015. For the protagonists, self-fashioning becomes a means of cultural, economic, and social survival. This subtle cultural re-valuing is a key concept behind the photographic series *Mestres de Cerimônias* (*Masters of Ceremony*) and the film *Estás vendo coisas* (*You Are Seeing Things*), produced for the 2016 São Paulo Biennial. The film's protagonists are part of Recife's *brega* scene, a once-regional musical genre that has since gained global attention via social media. For *Masters of Ceremony*, Wagner followed some of *brega*'s best-known video clip producers to document MC culture in Brazil. The series of 16 photographs reveals an economy of desire for visibility, consumption, and celebrity.

Wagner's documentary photography practice often acts as an initial research process, introducing the artists to the main practitioners of these burgeoning cultural phenomena who later collaborate on developing the film's script and also play roles cast for them in the film by performing exactly what they do in real life.

Countering the impulse to categorize culture in terms that are fixed—or deemed "folk" by organizations such as UNESCO—the artists explore cultural change across generations and geographies. Shot on the island of Réunion, *Cinéma Casino* (2014) joins radically different kinds of rhythms and dance traditions through a synchronized split-screen film installation that explores the movement of and in bodies. Here, rhythms of *mayola* and *sega* set the stage for dancers of mixed cultural backgrounds to demonstrate

choreographies adapted from *dancehall*, *zouk*, *ragga-love*, and *coupe-découpe*, all the while talking about the meaning of these gestures. As if in-between the split screen of this syncretic installation, a third space is navigated by a new generation of Réunionnense.

The self-fashioning of their subjects, the framing by the artists, and the conventions of film are entangled in the real-life politics of their films' protagonists. Straddling the border of documentary and fiction, the artists have developed a subtle system of pointing that reveals rather than classifies. In the slippery spaces between the staged and the actual, the gendered, racialized, and socio-economic contexts of the subjects emerge. And, it is precisely there that the self-generated strategies of visibility and subversion between the fields of pop culture, high art, and tradition are performed anew.

Wagner and de Burca's own hybrid practice may well be self-fashioned, too. Perhaps the artists' different backgrounds—Wagner's background in photojournalism and de Burca's in collage—enable a strategy that allows them to stay open to the ways in which, as the artists have said, "the subjects choose their own formats" of presentation. The AGYU is currently doing the same as we commission their latest film. Situating their nuanced practice of examining the contemporary sense of what presents itself as tradition—but now here in Toronto—the film participates in the burgeoning scene of this city's spoken word community and—in particular—the Scarborough phenomenon: RISE (see *Pedagogy/Community/Action*).

Bárbara Wagner (1980, Brasília, Brazil) and Benjamin de Burca (1975, Munich, Germany) have been exhibited most recently at Skulptur Projekte Münster, Germany; São

Paulo Museum of Modern Art; 32nd São Paulo Biennial; the Biennale on La Réunion; EVA International, Ireland, and the 68th Berlinale. Wagner and de Burca live and work in Recife, an old colonial city in the northeast of Brazil. They are represented by Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo, and are the AGYU's 2017–18 artists-in-residence.

Bárbara Wagner & Benjamin de Burca is a primary exhibition of the **Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival** and is presented in conjunction with the **2018 Images Festival** Off-Screen program. The exhibition is curated by AGYU Interim Director/Curator, **Emelie Chhangur**.

SCOTIABANK  
CONTACT  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
FESTIVAL



Prepare to be moved!

Get on the AGYU's inaugural  
*Subway Cypher* with some  
of Toronto's best and  
brightest spoken word poets  
and rappers!

Featuring: Nasim Asgari,  
Nathan Baya, Bidhan  
Berma, Timaaj Hassen,  
Michael Morales &  
T.Dot BANGERZ Brass,  
Tdot Rapstarz, and  
Thunderclaw Robinson.

Performances continue from  
the "new" York University  
Subway stop when the poets  
and rappers exit the station  
and lead us to the AGYU  
for the opening of Bárbara  
Wagner and Benjamin  
de Burca's AGYU exhibition.

### GALLERY INFORMATION

**Gallery Hours**  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,  
and Friday: 10–4  
Wednesday: 10–6  
Sunday: noon–5  
Saturday: closed

**AGYU Staff**  
Emelie Chhangur,  
Interim Director/Curator  
Michael Maranda,  
Assistant Curator  
Suzanne Carte,  
Assistant Curator  
Alyson Adley, Collections/  
Education Assistant  
Hualihong Li,  
Administrative Assistant  
Sara Amosotani, Tanya  
Matanda, Izzy Trevaud,  
Gallery Assistants  
Katarina Veljovic, Amil Shivi,  
Research Associates  
Meagan Castle, Brad  
Isaacs, Gray Richards,  
Carmen Schroeder,  
Installation Technicians

AGYU is a university-  
affiliated, public, non-profit,  
contemporary art gallery  
supported by York University,  
the Canada Council for the  
Arts, the Ontario Arts Council,  
an Ontario government  
agency, the City of Toronto  
through the Toronto Arts  
Council, and through  
our membership.

A SCALABLE TEXT FORMAT  
OF THIS NEWSLETTER IS  
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
AGYU.art/NEWSLETTER

**Advisory Committee**  
Warren Crichton (Chair),  
Alyson Mitchell (Vice-Chair),  
Kareem Bennett, Sandra  
Brewster, Sarah Parsons,  
Georgia Scherman, Greg  
Staats, Krysta Verrall,  
ex-officio: Lisa Philipps,  
Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt

**Honorary Members**  
Carol Appel, Tom Bjarnason,  
Joan Goldfarb, Popsy  
Johnstone, Phil Lind, Laura  
Rapp, Judy Schulich

**AGYU Founders**  
Carol & David Appel, Salah  
J. Bashir, Hal Jackson  
Foundation, Steven & Lynda  
Latner, Philip B. Lind, Nancy  
McCain & Bill Morneau,  
Carol & Morton Rapp, Laura  
Rapp & Jay Smith, Judy  
Schulich & David Stein,  
Sandra L. Simpson

**Directions to AGYU**  
Public Transit: Take the  
Line One Subway to York  
University Station. The front  
doors of the AGYU are directly  
across from the south exit.  
Driving: Enter York University's  
Keele Campus via The Pond  
Road. Park in the Student  
Services parking garage,  
the first building to your  
right. The Accolade East  
building is northwest of  
the parking garage.  
WheelTrans/YRT Mobility  
Plus: The closest drop off/  
pick up location is the north  
entrance to the TTC York  
University Subway Station.  
http://maps.info.yorku.ca/  
files/2013/02/KEELE\_Map\_Accessibility.pdf

**Art Gallery of York  
University (AGYU)**  
Accolade East Building  
4700 Keele Street  
Toronto ON M3J 1P3 Canada  
Tel: +1 416.736.5169  
Fax: +1 416.736.5985  
AGYU @ AGYU, G. Y. U.  
Email: agyu@yorku.ca  
Website: AGYU.art

\*Newsletter theme courtesy  
of Édouard Glissant's  
*The Poetics of Relation*.



According to the wabi-sabi aesthetic principle of organic organization, truth comes from the observation of nature, including all its imperfection, impermanence, and incompleteness. With this as a guiding principle, **Véronique Sunatori**'s commission for **AGYU Vitrines** features the glowing moon on a clear night sky, the reflection of the sky in pools of rainwater, and the tops of tall grass emerging from a bed of fog — all moments of wonder and transience for us to contemplate in our three exterior colonnade windows.

**Véronique Sunatori** has participated in residencies at AIRY Yamanashi and the Société d'art et d'histoire de Beauport. Sunatori's work has been presented at Studio Sixty-Six, Art Mûr, FOFA Gallery, and upcoming at Circa Art Actuel. She is currently an MFA candidate at York University.



Audio Out

For this edition of **Audio Out**, Magdalena Kazubowski-Houston, from YorkU's Department of Theatre, curates *Five Songs for Daddy*, a suite of songs composed by Lynn Hutchinson Lee. Lamenting cultural displacement and the death of memory in the Romanichal Lee/Hutchinson family, who left England for Canada in 1910, these songs are part of a larger performative installation on the experience of Roma refugees in Canada. A collaboration of **Red Tree** and the **Chirikli Collective**, *Canada Without Shadows* was originally conceptualized by **Hedina Tahirović Sijerčić** and Lynn Hutchinson Lee for the Roma Pavilion, Venice. *Canada Without Shadows* was motivated by the need for Romani cultural

agency and voice in an era of globalization and neoliberalism; for Romani women to speak of their lives; and by the need to address contemporary Romani experience as a critical response to prevailing dominant cultures.

**Chirikli Collective** was founded in January 2011 by **Hedina Tahirović Sijerčić** and **Lynn Hutchinson Lee**. This small, informal, and mobile collective is based in Toronto; Aldekerk, Germany; and Sarajevo, Bosnia. The collective explores processes, arts projects, and interdisciplinary installations intrinsic to a vision and practice of cultural identity.



## PEDAGOGY/COMMUNITY/ACTION

**TIME-BEFORE-THE-ARRIVAL... RISE: AN AGYU-COMMISSIONED FILM BY BÁRBARA WAGNER AND BENJAMIN DE BURCA**

Five years ago in Scarborough, located in Toronto's east end, the young poet **Randell Adjei** formed a creative community—a self-professed "safe space"—named **RISE** (Reaching Intelligent Souls Everywhere). Meeting once a week in community centres, participants share their spoken-word poems and songs in an environment inspired by the concept of "Edutainment," a phrase

coined by the legendary New York rapper **KRS-1**, one of the founding fathers of Hip Hop.

At **RISE**, performers are encouraged by a sympathetic audience, who fully participate in an atmosphere of mutual support and collective therapy. The meetings are punctuated by different forms of acceptance through equally affective audience responses (finger snapping, deep throated intonations, *mmmmms*)—indeed a twenty-first century call-and-response—that calls upon the individuals who perform to exhort self-belief and betterment through art and education.

The majority of poets who perform at **RISE** have one foot in another land, culture, or language. The audience, too, shares their status as both Torontonians and as immigrants—having come predominantly from Africa, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. As a result, a sense of non-belonging, "in-betweenness," or duality is often discursively expressed, performed, and debated at each **RISE** meeting.

No newcomer to Toronto—the most culturally diverse city in the world—can ever truly claim Toronto as their own, as we all rightfully recognize

Torontonians as settlers who occupy borrowed land—land taken from the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

This new sense of being—a type of postcolonial non-belonging, in fact—is explored in the film by shooting in the non-spaces of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), rather than in the community centres where these meetings have traditionally taken place. This underground space is a passage, not a destination. It shares an in-betweenness that is felt in

the daily life of Torontonians. Treated as a mise-en-scène, the subway acts as a literal and conceptual platform to frame concerns expressed by artists at **RISE**. The film also questions whether this space, too, is not also a logical outcome of contemporary globalized society.

The experimental documentary *RISE* is not "about" **RISE**. Instead, it is made "with" **RISE**. Wagner and de Burca adopt the concept of **Edutainment** as a conceptual tool for the film's structure. **RISE** participants' performances and poetry form its methodology and script.

Post-production support provided by the Film/Video Studio at the Wexner Center for the Arts. Equipment support provided by YorkU's Department of Film.

wexner center for the arts  
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

**CREATIVE CAMPAIGNING WAVE**

Visit AGYU's new website for the debut of photographer and filmmaker **Alyssa Bistonath**'s beautiful documentation of **Meera Margaret Singh**'s project **WAVE**. The film captures a three-day workshop and



investigative-performance with a wide spectrum of self-identified women students. As part of the *Creative Campaigning* series, the workshops were led by YorkU dance professor and choreographer **Terrill Maguire**, who taught movement techniques for participants to access agency within their bodies.

**STUDENT CASH! WRITING AWARD**

AGYU has two cash awards for undergraduate critical writing! Send us your review or essay on one our 2017/18 exhibitions (*Migrating the Margins*, *Postcommodity*, and

*Bárbara Wagner & Benjamin de Burca*) and we will send you AGYU CASH—\$150 for a review and \$200 for a thematic essay. The review discusses the exhibition and offers a brief critical analysis of its content (word count: 500–1000) and the thematic essay thoroughly explores one or two underlying themes of the exhibition (word count: 1500–2000). Email submissions to agyu@yorku.ca by May 4, 2018.

**TRUTH BE TOLD: YOUTH VOICES IN POETRY**

In partnership with **RISE** (Reaching Intelligent Souls Everywhere), AGYU is offering

spoken word poetry workshops for youth in Scarborough and Regent Park. Taking place throughout the spring, workshops are facilitated by a team of emerging artists including **Thunderclaw Robinson**, **Bidhan Berma**, **Michael Morales**, **Nasim Asgari**, **Timaaj Hassen**, and **Nathan Baya**, who are mentored by established spoken word poets **Joshua "Scribe" Watkis** and **Randell Adjei**. The program provides emerging artists and members of **RISE** with the opportunity to collaborate with acclaimed artists **Bárbara Wagner** and **Benjamin de Burca** on the conceptualization,

screenwriting, and production of their new experimental documentary film. For our cast of poets and rappers, this project represents a rare immersive opportunity to gain hands-on experience in filmmaking as well as a creative platform to experiment with autobiographical narratives of displacement, migration, and immigration. The film provides a vehicle to chronicle the liminal state of postcolonial non-belonging that grows out of the diasporic reality of not being entirely rooted in Canada. At the same time these young artists cultivate and preserve strong connections to

their respective countries, languages, and cultures of origin—an identification that permeates their performative rituals of self-fashioning and artistic self-presentation.

This project evolves out of the AGYU's ongoing commitment to merging the once separate fields of exhibition-making and education in order to explore this intersection as a mutually enriching source of cutting-edge artistic production and pedagogical innovation.

Join us for the following *Truth Be Told* Spoken Word showcase events:

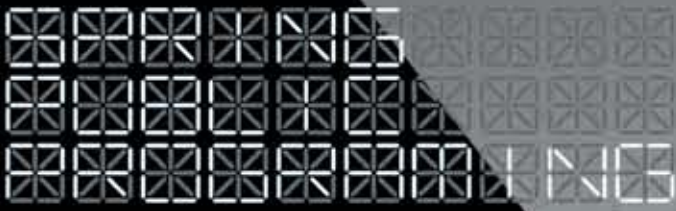
**Truth Be Told – Regent Park Friday, May 25, 6–8 pm**  
Centennial College  
Performing Arts Commons,  
Daniels Spectrum  
585 Dundas Street East

**Truth Be Told – Scarborough Monday, May 28, 6:30–11 pm**  
Burrows Hall, Scarborough  
1081 Progress Avenue

**RISE** thanks the Ontario Arts Council — Artists in Communities and Schools Projects for generously supporting the workshop component of this program.







ARTIST TALK: BÁRBARA WAGNER AND BENJAMIN DE BURCA  
SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018 @ 2 PM | AGYU

Rising international art-stars Bárbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca give a tour of their AGYU exhibition and explore their works' themes, production methodologies, and social-political contexts. Particular attention is paid to the role that documentary photography plays in their research-process and how filmmaking is used as a performative strategy that dramatizes new cultural traditions as they take shape. The artists also discuss their Toronto residencies and the development of their AGYU-commissioned film with spoken word poets from across the Greater Toronto Area.

Presented in conjunction with the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival.



JANE STREET SPEAKS  
FRIDAY, MAY 4, 2018 @ 7-10 PM | AGYU

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque Donec quam felis, ultricies nec, pellentesque eu, pretium quis, sem.

Nulla consequat massa quis enim. Donec pede justo, fringilla vel, aliquet nec, vulputate eget, arcu. In enim justo, rhoncus ut, imperdiet a, venenatis vitae, justo.

Nullam dictum felis eu pede mollis pretium. Integer tincidunt. Cras dapibus. Vivamus elementum semper nisi. Aenean vulputate eleifend tellus. Aenean leo ligula, porttitor eu, consequat vitae, eleifend ac, enim. Aliquam lorem ante.

Dapibus in, viverra quis, feugiat a, tellus. Phasellus viverra nulla ut metus varius laoreet. Quisque rutrum. Aenean imperdiet. Etiam ultricies nisi vel augue. Curabitur ullamcorper ultricies nisi. Nam eget dui. Etiam rhoncus.



STUDENT TOUR SERIES  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2018 @ 6-7 PM | AGYU

Join Tanzanian filmmaker and MFA candidate in Film Production at York University Amil Shivji for a tour of Bárbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca's AGYU exhibition. Amil discusses the artists' surrealist approach to narrative realism as an aesthetic strategy of picturing the worlds of

the oppressed, whose protagonists dance through time as an expression of aspiration.

Amil Shivji is a Tanzanian filmmaker and lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam. He believes in using images to challenge the powers that be, in particular deconstructing urban façades of development and emphasizing the strength and struggles of marginalized communities.



UNALIGNED SEMINAR: THE WE LOVE ÉDOUARD GLISSANT EDITION!

"To move from the oral to the written is to immobilize the body, to take control...", so writes Édouard Glissant, and so, to free up that body, we have decided to move from the written back to the oral, putting our bodies into motion, aided and abetted by the TTC. This version of our occasional *Unaligned Seminar* is a peripatetic reading series of the poetry of Édouard Glissant. We've met a couple times already, the first at the gallery (to get a grounding on the border of the Postcommodity exhibition), and then, *transit gloria mundi* [sic]: A time is set, a text chosen, and participants read en route to a different

subway station, where we put down some temporary roots, and discuss our collective thoughts in the archipelago of public transit.

Our host on this journey is Jonathan Adjemian, a musician known for his skill as a keyboardist and his knowledge of digital and analog audio. His compositions have been presented by The Music Gallery, Flowchart, the Canadian Music Centre, and Dancemakers. Jonathan is Administrative Director of Labyrinth Ontario, coordinates the Composer's Toolbox project at the Canadian Music Centre, and runs informal academic-style seminars in Toronto art galleries. He holds a PhD in Social and Political Thought from York University, and translates from French to English.



BESIDE, OUTSIDE: SOLIDARITY AND/AS PERFORMANCE  
THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2018 @ 2-4 PM  
SPECIAL PROJECTS GALLERY, GOLDFARB CENTRE FOR FINE ARTS, YORKU

From rallies, marches, and protests to hacktivism, citizen journalism, and hashtag activism, today we have more tools at our disposal than ever to organize for social justice. However, with the prevalence of online actions and virtual spaces, we might ask if embodied activism—showing up, being present—might sometimes take a backseat to these more remote and removed forms of solidarity.

accompaniment in Guatemala—this round table asks: how is solidarity performed? Is it necessarily embodied? How has solidarity activism changed since the advent of the internet and social media? How do these differently-manifested forms of solidarity activism perform as tools for change? Speakers from the Latin American Working Group, the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network, and Idle No More examine how this performativity manifests in their particular contexts.

Zoë Heyn-Jones is a PhD candidate in Visual Arts at York University and graduate fellow at the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC), York University.



CONTEMPORARY BUS TOUR  
SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018 @ 12-5 PM

The tour starts at Koffler Centre of the Arts at Artscape Youngplace (180 Shaw Street) and then departs for the Art Gallery of York University, Art Gallery of Mississauga, and Doris McCarthy Gallery. To save a seat RSVP at [may-art-bus.eventbrite.ca](http://may-art-bus.eventbrite.ca).

Presented in conjunction with the opening of *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*—a video- and installation-based exhibition initiated by Zoë Heyn-Jones that looks at human rights

## PUBLICATIONS

Currently on our publication plate is the hybrid book on Allyson Mitchell's *Killjoy's Kastle* project. The Lesbian Feminist Haunted House, you might remember, was a complete hit, both here in its AGYU-sponsored incarnation (2013) and at the Hollywood-One Archive in Los Angeles (2015). Together with *One Archive* at the University of Southern California and the University of British Columbia Press, the AGYU is publishing the book-of-record on the project, a peer-reviewed academic-tome edited by Cait McKinney, University of Toronto post-doctoral fellow in Information Studies, and Allyson Mitchell herself, YorkU Women's and Sexualities Studies professor ... and Deep Lez artist extraordinaire. That's right, Peer Review!!

Of course, we're not all fusty elbow-patched tweed, so we're even more excited about the various artist interventions into the book, and couldn't be more pleased that designer Cecilia Berkovic is bringing her top game to the design end.

An important document for the development of our collective understanding of the Toronto art scene, the *Migrating the Margins* publication is slow in the making, as we take some extra time to finalize its content and contributors. Thank you to the Royal Bank of Canada and the Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts for their help in getting this important book to fruition.



AGYU @ TORONTO ART BOOK FAIR | 5-8 JULY, 2018  
CHINATOWN CENTRE, 222 SPADINA AVENUE

In light of the location—and the *print and resistance* theme—of the Toronto Art Book Fair, we're bringing our newest artist book project as a solo offering: *Fusion Cuisine: Now with Added MSG*, a rollicking romp through culinary stereotypes by Shellie Zhang, with Real™ *Toronto Daily Star* recipes! Designed by Furrawn Press.

## Research & Residencies

### BETSABEÉ ROMERO: VERNACULAR TRADITION AS A FORM OF CULTURAL RESISTANCE

Mexican artist Betsabée Romero returns from May through August to produce a new body of work while in residence with upper-level sculpture students as part of the *L.L. Odette Artist-in-Residence Program*, a key partnership between York's School of the Arts, Media, Performance, and Design (AMPD) and AGYU. Betsabée enacts anti-modern gestures through collective handmade labour techniques that operate against the mechanization of industrial processes to decolonize materials (such as rubber or chewing gum). She is interested in how the global incorporation of influences can be a form of cultural dialogue in the aftermath of colonialism, particularly in the Americas. Betsabée is known internationally for her large-scale public works and unconventional approaches to trace making that explore themes ranging from the megalopolis of Mexico City to pollution, border culture, migration, and movement in contemporary life. A publication that documents this project and exhibition will be released in 2019.

"The *L.L. Odette Artist-in-Residence Program* is an intensive, hands-on production residency that provides upper-level students with the opportunity to work with a professional artist to produce elements of the artist's work and reflects York's commitment to experiential learning.



## Upcoming Exhibition

### BETSABEÉ ROMERO: TRENZANDO RAÍCES / BRAIDED ROOTS

Our fall exhibition consists entirely of commissioned work by Mexican artist Betsabée Romero. These works are produced in Toronto over the summer of 2018 through an unprecedented partnership between the AGYU and the *L.L. Odette Artist-in-Residence Program* in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design (AMPD) at York University.

*Braided Roots* is shaped by the experiences, encounters, and exchanges the artist had during her initial site visit to Toronto in May 2017 as well as further research developed over the past year—particularly in the aftermath of the Mexico City earthquake—into Canada and its mining practices in the Americas. The site-specific work is developed through workshops with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and experimentation with materials and techniques in the AMPD sculpture studio: from bronze casting to weaving human hair by hand. The exhibition is curated by AGYU Interim Director/Curator Emelie Chhangur and Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation Band Council Member, Cathie Jamieson.

The exhibition uses the three gallery spaces of the AGYU as a structuring device to explore the entangled relationships of land, culture, and

communication through the lens of shared symbols, materials, and traditions that overlap and persist in Indigenous cultures of the Americas. Comprised of three monumental works—one in each gallery—the exhibition performs as a kind of cultural *oroboros*, folding back on itself as it comes full circle. Book-ended by a post-apocalyptic landscape of "lost" marker trees—Indigenous wayfinders—pointing in all directions and an invitation to commune under a Quetzalcoatl (feathered serpent)—the Aztec god of wind and learning—reinterpreted as a series of inter-connected plumes suspended from the ceiling, *Braided Roots* weaves together a sophisticated story of strength, solidarity, and wisdom.

An off-site component of the project takes place at New Credit, the present-day land of the Mississaugas. This in-situ work is developed through workshops that explore and evolve new symbols, which are then installed in public space as silk-screened metal signposts, like the ones you would find along the highways going in and out of the surrounding township of Hagersville, Ontario.



## ACKNOWLEDGING

The AGYU respectfully acknowledges our presence on the traditional territory of Indigenous Nations including the Wendat, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), and Anishinaabe, and that this territory is the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Covenant and Wampum between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Three Fires Confederacy (the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomie), and allied nations to peacefully share and care for the resources in and around the Great Lakes. The Three Fire Confederacy includes the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, who settled in what is now the City of Toronto. In 1805, the Mississaugas agreed to the sale of tracts of land known as Crown Treaty No. 13 (also referred to as the Toronto Purchase), although the payment for the land was not concluded until 2010. As a result of the Toronto Purchase, the protection and management of the land is now shared with the present generation of inhabitants of Toronto and, as Métis Elder Duke Redbird reminds us, "remembering always that we never own the land but rather borrow its use from our children."

In 2011, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation presented the AGYU with an Eagle Feather to acknowledge our continued relationship, built through collaboration beginning in 2009 and which has resulted in two projects, *The Awakening* in 2011 and *Ring of Fire* in 2015. We have installed this Eagle Feather permanently in the AGYU lobby as a visual reminder of our friendship, respect, and trust within this relationship.

In acknowledging that York University occupies colonized Indigenous territories, and out of respect for the rights of Indigenous people, we accept our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories as well as their present-day manifestations and to honour, protect, and sustain this land.

AGYU promotes 2SLGBTQIA+ positive spaces and experiences and is barrier-free. All gallery events are free of charge and open to everyone.

