

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New SPOTLIGHT installation highlights work by RBC Emerging Artist Janet Wang



April 18, 2024, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh) and Tsleil-Waututh (selilwətaʔ) Nations.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to announce the launch of a new SPOTLIGHT installation, featuring the work of emerging, Vancouver-based artist **Janet Wang**, who works across a range of media, from illustration, painting and installation to digital media, such as augmented reality and animation.

Presented by RBC, SPOTLIGHT is a special initiative organized by the Gallery's Art Rental & Sales Program (AR&S) in collaboration with the Curatorial Department. It aims to provide new opportunities for emerging artists by activating the Gallery's exterior and lobby spaces for thousands of visitors each year.

"Art, artists and creativity are at the centre of everything we do at the Vancouver Art Gallery," says **Anthony Kiendl, Vancouver Art Gallery CEO & Executive Director**. "We are dedicated to supporting, nurturing and promoting the next generation of British Columbian artists, and we are immensely grateful for RBC's impactful commitment to the arts and their dedication to providing emerging artists with the tools they need to succeed."

[Last year, the Gallery and RBC announced a new partnership through the RBC Emerging Artists Program](#) that, through the AR&S program, will help launch the careers of emerging artists and arts professionals based in British Columbia. The program will provide mentorship, visibility and leadership opportunities through various programs at the Gallery, including the RBC Entrepreneurship Program, the new role of RBC Artist/Curator in Residence and SPOTLIGHT art installations.

“At RBC, our commitment to the arts includes supporting artists in the earliest stages of their careers and helping them bridge the gap from ‘emerging’ to ‘established,’” says **Martin Thibodeau, BC Regional President, RBC**. “We are thrilled to continue our support of the Vancouver Art Gallery to help even more emerging Canadian artists make their important mark.”

The RBC Entrepreneurship Program will offer professional development opportunities to emerging, BC–based artists represented by the Gallery’s [AR&S](#) through ongoing mentorship and financial literacy training.

The inaugural RBC Curator in Residence position is currently held by **Nya Lewis**, who is one of [three new Curators in Residence announced in March](#). In this role, Lewis is bringing exciting new perspectives and expertise to the Gallery’s Curatorial Department. Her practice is rooted in the culmination of centuries of resistance, love, questions, actions and study concerning Black Atlantic and Pacific cultural production. Throughout her residency, the Gallery will support Lewis’ research towards a major publication dedicated to Black cultural production in British Columbia.

For **Janet Wang’s** SPOTLIGHT installation *in/visible*, she draws on her lived experience as a second-generation settler of Chinese heritage and refashions art historical references to tell contemporary stories. At the Gallery, her work will transform the Hornby Street entrance, visible to both passers-by and Gallery visitors.

As part of her practice, Wang often reimagines traditional patterns used in drapery and wallpaper—such as Toile de Jouy (an ornate French textile pattern featuring images of rural life) and Chinoiserie (a European artistic interpretation of Asian decorative arts). Her installation *in/visible* is a pattern she created based on a decorative toile motif by French artist Jean-Baptiste Marie Huet, titled [Le Ballon de Gonesse](#) (1784). Huet’s eighteenth-century pattern depicts scenes of villagers as a hot air balloon, travelling from the nearby city of Paris, lands in their fields. Mistaking the unusual flying object for a monster, the villagers attack the balloon with pitchforks upon its descent. In *in/visible*, Wang reworks Huet’s narrative to comment on the cultural erasure experienced by many Chinatowns across North America.

SPOTLIGHT: Janet Wang is presented by RBC and organized by Andrea Valentine-Lewis, Curatorial Assistant, on behalf of the Vancouver Art Gallery’s Art Rental & Sales Program. The installation will run through April 2025 on the Gallery’s Hornby Street windows and door.

For more information about the exhibition, visit our website [here](#).

FEATURED PROGRAM: ARTIST TALK | MAY 9, 6 PM

On Thursday, May 9 at 6 PM, Janet Wang will present an artist talk at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Courtroom 302. She will discuss her studio practice and how it is shaped by the multiple identities that she occupies—including Chinese Canadian, artist parent and artist educator. Using visual storytelling and familiar frameworks drawn from art history, pop culture, gaming and interactive design, Wang’s current research focuses on the question, “What does it mean to be Chinese in Canada?”

This talk is free and open to the public. Registration is required. Find out more at vanartgallery.bc.ca/events.

IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

MEDIA CONTACT:

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Image: Janet Wang, *in/visible*, 2018/2024 (detail), for SPOTLIGHT, window installation

ABOUT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America's most innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery's ground-breaking exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on historical and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world. Special attention is given to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists, as well as to those of the Asia Pacific region. The Gallery's exhibitions also explore the impact of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a charitable not-for-profit organization supported by its members, individual donors, corporate funders, foundations, the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is situated on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and is respectful of the Indigenous stewards of the land it occupies, whose rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Vancouver and the work of the Gallery.

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