

Duane Linklater's First Major Survey Exhibition Opens at BAMPFA

On View October 7, 2023 through February 25, 2024



Wide-Ranging Midcareer Exhibition Highlights One of the Leading Voices in Contemporary Art

Exhibition Opens with Free Community Day, Featuring Live Musical Performance

(Berkeley, CA) July 17, 2023—This fall, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive will present the first major survey exhibition of Duane Linklater, the celebrated Omaskêko Ininiwak artist whose work explores the contradictions of contemporary Indigenous life within settler

systems of knowledge, representation, and value. *Duane Linklater: mymothersside* will feature more than thirty works by this artist, who has over the past decade become a leading voice in the contemporary art world, with important contributions to the 2022 Whitney Biennial and the 2023 Bienal de São Paulo. The exhibition will survey the wide scope of Linklater's interdisciplinary practice, which encompasses painting, sculpture, video, performance, and large-scale interventions into the architecture of museum spaces.

Based in North Bay, Ontario, Linklater has been celebrated for a conceptual and material practice that interrogates what he calls “the physical and theoretical structures of the museum” in relation to the exclusion of Indigenous cultural production past and present. His work references ancestral traditions from Moose Cree First Nation—ranging from hunting to fur trading to berry gathering—alongside popular bands and films of his youth, including the English rock band The Cure and the American blues musician Taj Mahal. This indiscriminate mixing of a wide range of cultural influences suggests an expansive constellation of affinities that defies reductive notions of identity.

Duane Linklater: mymothersside features multiple structures made with teepee poles, highlighting the artist's interest in deconstructing and reassembling one of the most ubiquitous symbols of Indigeneity. These large-scale architectural installations will be displayed alongside Linklater's draped and folded teepee cover paintings, shaped canvases the artist makes using a combination of digital printing and natural dyeing techniques. A centerpiece of BAMPFA's exhibition will be *wintercount_215_kisepîsim, mistranslate_wolftreeriver_ ininîmowinîhk* (2022), the multi-part installation featuring abstract canvases, each measuring over 18 feet, hung in the round and made using natural dyes including cochineal, orange pekoe tea, charcoal, sumac, and blueberry pigment. The monumental work will be on view for the first time since its debut at the 2022 Whitney Biennial.

Film and video have long been important aspects of Linklater's practice, and his survey at BAMPFA will also include multiple examples of these works—including several digital transfers of 16mm and Super 8mm short films. Linklater's collaboration with Brian Jungen, *Modest Livelihood* (2012), follows the artists on a hunting trip in Dane-zaa Territory in Northern British Columbia. While hunting is deeply embedded in both artists' ancestral traditions, the film's title

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references the Canadian Supreme Court's controversial 1999 ruling—given the long-standing history of Indigenous dispossession—that First Nations can hunt and fish on their own territory provided that such activity not exceed what might be considered a “moderate livelihood.” In conjunction with BAMPFA's exhibition, Linklater and his son Tobias Linklater, who together perform as eagles with eyes closed, will score the silent, 50-minute film for the first time in a live musical performance on Wednesday, February 21.

To celebrate the exhibition's opening on Saturday, October 7—and in observance of Indigenous People's Day the following Monday—BAMPFA will host a Community Day with free gallery admission from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Opening programs will include an impromptu in-gallery musical performance co-created by Linklater and a collaborating cellist; family-friendly art-making workshops; and an exhibition walkthrough led by Victoria Sung, BAMPFA's Phyllis C. Wattis Senior Curator. Sung organized the Berkeley presentation of *Duane Linklater: mymothersside*, with Claire Frost, Curatorial Associate; the exhibition originated at Seattle's Frye Art Museum, where it was curated by Amanda Donnan. In conjunction with the exhibition, the Frye has published an illustrated catalog edited by Donnan that will be available for purchase in the BAMPFA store, featuring new scholarship on Linklater and intergenerational conversations between the artist and his family.

“Duane Linklater is one of the most incisive interdisciplinary artists working today,” said Sung. “His ongoing interrogation of settler systems—including within the space of the university art museum—encourages us as cultural workers, students, and audiences to acknowledge and incorporate Indigenous frameworks of learning.”

“We're thrilled to partner with Duane Linklater and the Frye Art Museum on bringing his first survey museum exhibition to Berkeley, which will give our audiences the opportunity to discover one of today's most vital and engaging artists,” said BAMPFA's Executive Director Julie Rodrigues Widholm. “Duane's interest in reimagining the role of Indigenous art in traditional museum spaces engages the critical questions we want to explore at BAMPFA.”

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Related Public Programs

Roundtable on Native American and Indigenous Knowledge

Saturday / 10.14.23 / 1:30–3:00 PM

Join us for a roundtable conversation on the occasion of the exhibition *Duane Linklater: mymothersside* that focuses on the artist's engagement with forms of Native American and Indigenous knowledge through an exploration of such topics as food sovereignty, land stewardship, and language revitalization.

Please watch for details on BAMPFA's website.

Ewako ôma askiy. This then is the earth.

Wednesday / 11.1.23 / 1:30–6:30 PM

Thursday / 11.2.23 / 3:00–6:30 PM

Friday / 11.3.23 / 1:30–6:30 PM

Saturday / 11.4.23 / 1:30–6:30 PM

A series of open rehearsals with dance artists Ivanie Aubin-Malo and Ceinwen Gobert, led by artist/choreographer Tanya Lukin Linklater, these sessions respond to the cyclical, seasonal, affective, and formal qualities of selected works in *Duane Linklater: mymothersside*. Visitors are invited to view the unfolding processes of embodiment, gesture, and sensation within the exhibition galleries.

Tanya Lukin Linklater is the Art Research Center's Fall 2023 artist-in-residence. Her performance *Ewako ôma askiy. This then is the earth.* is co-sponsored by ARC and BAMPFA. Please consult <https://arts.berkeley.edu/visiting-artists/> for more information.

About Duane Linklater

Duane Linklater is an Omaskêko Ininiwak artist and was born in 1976. He is currently based in North Bay, Ontario. He attended the Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts at Bard College in upstate New York, USA, completing his Master of Fine Arts in Film and Video. Linklater's

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practice is concerned in part with the exploration of the physical and theoretical structures of the museum in relation to the current and historical conditions of Indigenous people and their objects and forms. These explorations are articulated in a myriad of forms including sculpture, photography, film and video, installation and text works.

Linklater has exhibited his work nationally and internationally at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto (2015), Vancouver Art Gallery (2015), 80 WSE Gallery in New York City (2017), Institute of Contemporary Arts Philadelphia (2015), the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City (2015), Documenta 13 (2012), the SeMa Biennale in Seoul Korea (2016), Taipei Biennial (2018), and the Liverpool Biennial (2018) to name a few. Recent projects include a survey of work at the Frye Museum in Seattle (2021) traveling to the MCA Chicago (March 2023), *Whitney Biennial: Quiet As It's Kept* (2022), a commission at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art for *Soft Power* (2019), and a project at the newly reopened Artists Space in New York City in 2020. Duane has also received several prizes including the 2013 Sobey Art Award, a national annual prize given to an artist under forty and more recently the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award from the Canada Council for the Arts in 2016.

Image credits

1. Duane Linklater: *can the circle be unbroken 1, can the circle be unbroken 2, can the circle be unbroken 3, can the circle be unbroken 4, can the circle be unbroken 5*, 2019; courtesy SFMOMA. Photo by Jueqian Fang.
2. Duane Linklater: *what grief conjures* (detail), 2020; courtesy Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver. Photo: Rachel Topham Photography.

Visitor Information

Hours

Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tickets

\$14 general admission

\$12 non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+

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FREE BAMPFA members; UC Berkeley students, faculty, staff; 18 and under; one adult per child 13 and under; and artists in the BAMPFA collection/MATRIX

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