

MEDIA RELEASE

May 5, 2014

**Through the Looking Glass:
A Modern Story from
the Collection of the
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria**

May 16 – September 7, 2014

Ker and Centennial Galleries

Guest Curated by
Lee Plested

Season Opening:
Thursday, May 15, 2014
8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
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Take a Step *Through the Looking Glass* at the AGGV

*"In a Wonderland they lie, Dreaming as the days go by, Dreaming as the summers die:
Ever drifting down the stream- Linger in the golden gleam- Life, what is it but a
dream?" – Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass*

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria invites visitors to take a step through the reflecting glass into a backwards world for this summer's exhibition, *Through the Looking Glass*, structured according to the late nineteenth century Lewis Carroll novel of the same name.

Through the Looking Glass: A Modern Story from the Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria draws from the AGGV's own collection, showcasing many of the most important artists of the 20th century. The exhibition takes viewers on a mind-bending journey through 100 years of modern and contemporary art history, organized chapter-by-chapter according to Carroll's beloved novel.

Opening on May 16, the exhibition draws on the same imagery of mirrors, playing cards and chess that weave throughout the novel's text. In the book, the sequel to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the heroine ponders what the world is like on the other side of a mirror's reflection. As she climbs up the fireplace mantel and pokes at the mirror on the wall, she is surprised to discover that she can step through it to an alternative world.

Curated by guest curator Lee Plested, the exhibition begins with a portrait of Charles Baudelaire by Édouard Manet and features a range of works by famous historical favourites including, Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and Auguste Rodin. Continuing with pieces by well-known contemporary artists Andy Warhol and Michael Snow, the exhibition also showcases works by major Canadian artists, including Frederick Varley, Lawren S. Harris and local artists Michael Morris, Ann Kipling and Pat Martin Bates.

In drawing analogies between the novel's fantastical elements and the works in the AGGV collection, Plested says his goal with this exhibition is to open a new, welcoming avenue into a cultural realm that some gallery visitors may have found to be alienating. For those already familiar with the works, he hopes the exhibition challenges their beliefs of how art is meant to speak to us.

"Through the narrative of Lewis Carroll's novel, I wanted to shed new light on these individual works and to help build a basic knowledge of 20th century art in a way that is engaging and approachable," says Plested. "My hope is that audiences will develop an understanding of modern and contemporary art history, and will be inspired by the great artistic accomplishments of the past."

A range of educational and public programs will also accompany the exhibition, which runs through to September 7. For more information, visit www.aggv.ca or call 250-384-4171.

Related Events at the AGGV:

Thursday May 15, 8-10 p.m.
Public Opening Reception
By Donation

Thursday June 5, 7p.m.

Space is limited to 12 participants, pre-register at luisjacob.eventbrite.ca

Public Talk with artist Luis Jacob

Groundless in the Museum: Anarchism and the Living Work of Art

Join artist Luis Jacob for a participatory exchange concerning museums, anarchism, democracy, the “living” and “dead” aspects of art and various tangents related to his writing, referencing works in *Through the Looking Glass*. Jacob graduated from the University of Toronto with degrees in Philosophy and Semiotics. Through his work as an artist, curator and writer, he addresses issues of social interaction and the subjectivity of aesthetic experience.

<http://www.canadianart.ca/artist/luis-jacob/>

Friday June 13, 8-11 p.m.

URBANITE

Social // Spectacle

Step Through the Looking Glass into an evening of mind-bending sound, visuals, and modern art inspired by the rebellion, verve and freedom of this period. Let the iconic Acid Rain Light Show amplify your senses with 60s style liquid projections, archival 16 mm films and slides from the era's highest heights. Guest DJ Luis Jacob (artist, curator, former Hidden Camera and party starter) brings Torontonians sass to the dance floor. Witness a 'free range fashion show' of local milliner Tierre Joline's modernist, architectural hats and create some chaos at the art making table.

Pre-sale tickets on sale Thursday May 8 at aggv.ca/urbanite

\$20 (\$15 Students and Members)

Thursday June 26, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Advanced registration required, \$25 per person.

Space is limited to 15 participants, pre-register at wendywelch.eventbrite.ca

Drawing from Text, Memory and Imagination with Wendy Welch, Director, Vancouver Island School of Art

Come take a journey into 100 works of art that will make up the *Through the Looking Glass* exhibition, and through a process of observation, description, translation, memory and imagination create fantastical drawings using ink and watercolours. Workshop will include viewing the work, writing about one piece and a hands-on drawing project. All materials supplied. Snacks and coffee provided.

<http://vancouverislandschoolart.com/>