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OF GREATER VICTORIA

Lauren Crazybull and Sheri Paisley Win Takao Tanabe Prize for BC Painters

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria announced today that the 10th Annual Tanabe Prize for British Columbia Painters has been awarded to two artists; Lauren Crazybull and Sheri Paisley.

The Tanabe Prize is an annual award given to artists whose primary medium is painting and who are residents of British Columbia. Lauren Crazybull was chosen for the prize as an emerging artist and Sheri Paisley was chosen for the prize as a mid-career artist.

Lauren Crazybull is a Niitsitapi (Member of Kainai First Nation), Dené artist currently living in Vancouver, BC. In her work, Lauren considers Indigenous presence and multiplicity through paintings, creating worlds where honest portrayals trespass onto romantic representations of Indigeneity. Working primarily in portraiture, a long-standing genre that is often embedded with an imbalance of power between the artist/viewer and sitter, Crazybull seeks to examine the relationship between herself as an artist and the individuals she paints. Through this ongoing work, Lauren uses her practice as a way to assert her own humanity, and advocate, in diverse and subtle ways, for the innate intellectual, spiritual, creative and political fortitude of Indigenous peoples.

Lauren received her Master of Fine Arts from Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts in 2023. Recent solo exhibitions include Contemporary Calgary, the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, Macaulay + Co (Vancouver), and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery (Lethbridge). She was a 2024-2025 Fellow at 221a in Vancouver.

Sheri Paisley's paintings investigate the unstable threshold between perception and atmosphere. Working at the intersection of internal sensation and external landscape, she approaches painting as a site of encounter where breath, wind, and unseen forces become active agents rather than metaphors. Her abstract compositions hover between emergence and dissolution, holding tension between structure and dispersal, matter and energy.

For Paisley, painting is not representation but a form of attunement. Through charged colour, sweeping gesture, and rhythmic mark-making, she navigates the complexities of lived experience including altered perception and the limits of vision itself. Influenced by the volatile light and shifting weather systems of the Canadian West Coast, her work resists fixed imagery, instead offering fields of movement that invite sustained looking. The paintings operate as perceptual spaces / immersive environments where boundaries between self and world momentarily loosen.

Paisley received her BFA from Emily Carr University of Art and Design in 1998 and has exhibited internationally since 2002. She lives and works on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Her work has been shown in Europe, New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, Toronto, and Vancouver, and is held in numerous private and public collections across North America and Europe, including Emaar Properties (Dubai), Toronto Dominion Bank, UBC Psychiatric Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital, St. Paul's Hospital (Vancouver), Swedish Hospital (Seattle), and Overlake Hospital (Bellevue).

Artists are selected for the Tanabe Prize by contemporary art curators who are connected to art museums and galleries in British Columbia. Selection is based on exceptional creativity coupled with a promise of future achievements. Names of the selectors are kept confidential. There is no application process for either the curators or artists. The Tanabe Prize for BC Painters is administered by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

Takao Tanabe was born in Prince Rupert and currently lives on Vancouver Island. He studied at the Winnipeg School of Art, the Brooklyn Museum Art School and the Tokyo University of Fine Arts amongst others. Tanabe has received many honours throughout his career, including being named a member of the Order of Canada in 1999, receiving the Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts in 2013, as well as a Doctor of Letters (Hon) from Vancouver Island University, 2014 and a Doctor of Letters (Hon), from Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design, 2000. Tanabe's painting reflects his interest in abstraction and the landscape.

Takao Tanabe: Inside Passage will run at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria from May 29 through October 10, 2027. With more than 60 paintings, *Inside Passage* celebrates Tanabe's seven-decade contribution to Canadian art, tracing the evolution of his distinctive visual language. This survey highlights the artistic journey of the artist, who turns 100 years old in September 2026. This comprehensive overview showcases Tanabe's earliest forays into Modernism and abstraction through to his transformative depictions of the prairies, and his defining depictions of British Columbia's coastal landscapes. Lesser seen productions from the artist's Emperor series and from his extensive international travels will also be included. *Organized by the National Gallery of Canada, the Audain Art Museum and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.*

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria is located on the traditional territories of the ləkʷəŋən peoples, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on this territory.

For more information visit aggyv.ca