

a deer hide in the water. The women share stories of learning and teaching together on the land, enacting and demonstrating the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer.

For Wyss, media arts and ethnobotany have, in her words,

...always worked side by side and are intertwined in beautiful ways. They both address natural world stories, beliefs and ideologies. In ethnobotany, you look at how plants are used for foods, medicines or utilities, and how they grow and can be collected. All of that work in collecting is a very similar process to collecting our stories, where we have to go out and work from the ground up to get our stories and inspirations for what we create, whether it’s something traditional or whether it’s non-linear. However we tell our stories, there is always that connection.⁷

Shkwēh Wéwshkēm Nexw7iyá’ulh (To Explore, To Travel by Canoe) (2018) is a woven ceremonial cape made for an ocean-going traveller; in this case, Wyss’ daughter. A traditional cedar canoe that First Nations along the Northwest Coast of Turtle Island use to traverse the waters is the weaving’s central motif. The warp of the weaving is comprised entirely of red cedar bark while the weft consists of bands made from twined coconut hull fibre, wool and lau hala (pandanus leaf), materials gathered between Skwxwú7mesh and Hawaiian territories. The cape’s matrix, the material ground or support structure of the weaving results from Wyss’s cultural knowledge, which is situated in her home territory, enabling her to integrate materials from other territories she is connected with by way of relationality and protocol.

Similarly, Wyss has created an apothecary of salves and tinctures made from plant medicines gathered in Coast Salish, Kānaka Maoli, The Greater Brisbane Aboriginal territories, pointing to the resonances between these landscapes and knowledges. In Brisbane, *The Commute* co-curator Freja Carmichael introduced Wyss to a traditional owner of these lands, Goothala (Danny Doyle), exchanging gifts of plant medicines and knowledge with one another. To be a guest is to honour the responsibility to learn and to go gently, and Wyss’s apothecary is a gesture of respect toward this.

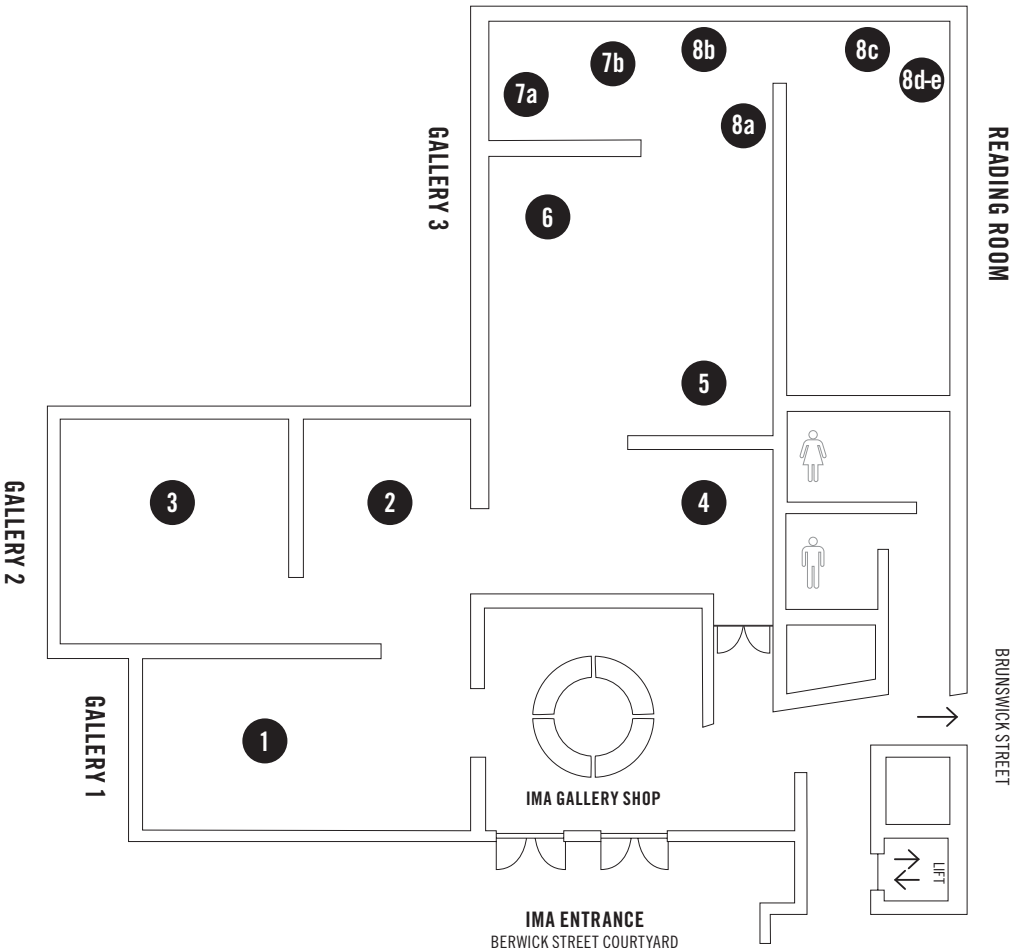
Wyss’s ongoing work and her project for *The Commute* positions Indigenous knowledge, plant medicines and weaving as technologies comparable with VR and other forms of digital media. VR is an effective platform for the transfer of Indigenous knowledge because of its capacity to transport users into other environments, into realities determined by Indigenous visions of our own futurity.

In tandem with this, Wyss’s mentorship as an emerging weaver and her extensive training in ethnobotany clearly articulate the millennia of study, research and expertise that has gone into the creation of these objects and practices. As Cree Métis media artist Cheryl L’Hirondelle has written, “to be truly free and self-governing, we must also acknowledge and be aware of our pre-contact ingenuity as inventors and technologists—experts in new media and avatars of innovation.”⁸ In weaving together materials, knowledges and experiences from across the Great Ocean, Wyss affirms this past while navigating into the future.

T’uy’t’tanat-Cease Wyss (Skwxwú7mesh, Stó:lō, Irish, Métis, Kanaka Maoli, Swiss) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work in new media, performance and community engaged projects spans over twenty-five years. Her work focuses on sustainability, Coast Salish cultural elements, ethnobotany, and digital media. Wyss is an emerging weaver, working with traditional techniques in wool and cedar.

Tarah Hogue (Métis, Dutch) is a curator, writer and uninvited guest on xʷməθkʷə́y̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwu7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔɫ (Tsleil-Waututh) territories/Vancouver. Her work engages collaborative methodologies and a careful attentiveness to place in order to decentre colonial modes of perception within institutional spaces. She is the inaugural Senior Curatorial Fellow, Indigenous Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Exhibition Map



- GALLERY 1

1

Carol McGregor, *Skin Country*, 2018
Possum skins, charcoal, ochre, binder medium, waxed thread
- GALLERY 2

2

Bracken Hanuse Corlett, *Qvùtix (Dance Blanket)*, 2018
Akoya, abalone, and mussel shell buttons, wool, digital animation, 2:00
- GALLERY 3

3

Ahilapalapa Rands, *Lift Off*, 2018
3-channel animation, 3:25

4

Chantal Fraser, *The Way*, 2018
Wind turbine, generator, rhinestones, steel

5

Hannah Brontë, *FUTCHA ANCIENT*, 2018
Lightboxes, photographic prints, textiles, ink, shell

6

Lisa Hilli, *Sisterhood Lifeline*, 2018
Latex ink on wallpaper, inkjet print on cotton rag paper, office partitions, iMac, office telephone with vocal recordings, books, Post-It notes, pens, swivel chair

7a) Natalie Ball, *When Harry met Sally. I mean, when my Mom met my Dad. I mean, when my Ancestors met my Ancestors. I mean, when a Lace Front met Smoked Skin*, 2018
Beaded elk hide moccasins, synthetic lace front wig, shell beads, metal pins, sinew thread, tube sock

7b) Natalie Ball, *I Bind You Nancy*, 2018
Coyote skull with lower jaw, sinew thread, vintage plastic dolls, beaded deer hide moccasins

8a) T’uy’tanat Cease Wyss, *K’axwch’k Nexw7yá’ulh (Turtle Journeys)*, from the *Sacred Teachings* series, 2018
HD video, 5:59

8b) T’uy’tanat Cease Wyss, *Shkwēh Wéwshkēm Nexw7iyá’ulh (To Explore, To Travel by Canoe)*, 2018
Lau hala, coconut hull fibre, sea gress, red cedar bark, wool, abalone shell, and mother of pearl buttons

8c) T’uy’tanat Cease Wyss, *SK’éytl’tanəy (Medicinal Plants)*, from the *Sacred Teachings* series, 2018
Indigenous plant medicines gathered in Coast Salish, Kānaka Maoli, and Greater Brisbane Aboriginal lands

8d) T’uy’tanat Cease Wyss, *K’axwch’k Nexw7yá’ulh (Turtle Journeys)*, from the *Sacred Teachings* series, 2018
360-degree VR video, 5:59

8e) T’uy’tanat Cease Wyss, *Nexwníw Tkwi Sxwí7shen (Teachings from the Deer)*, from the *Sacred Teachings* series, 2018
360-degree VR video, 6:08

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Cheryl L’Hirondelle, “Codetalkers Recounting Signals of Survival,” in *Coded territories: Tracing Indigenous Pathways in New Media Art* ed. Steven Loft & Kerry Swanson (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014): 147.