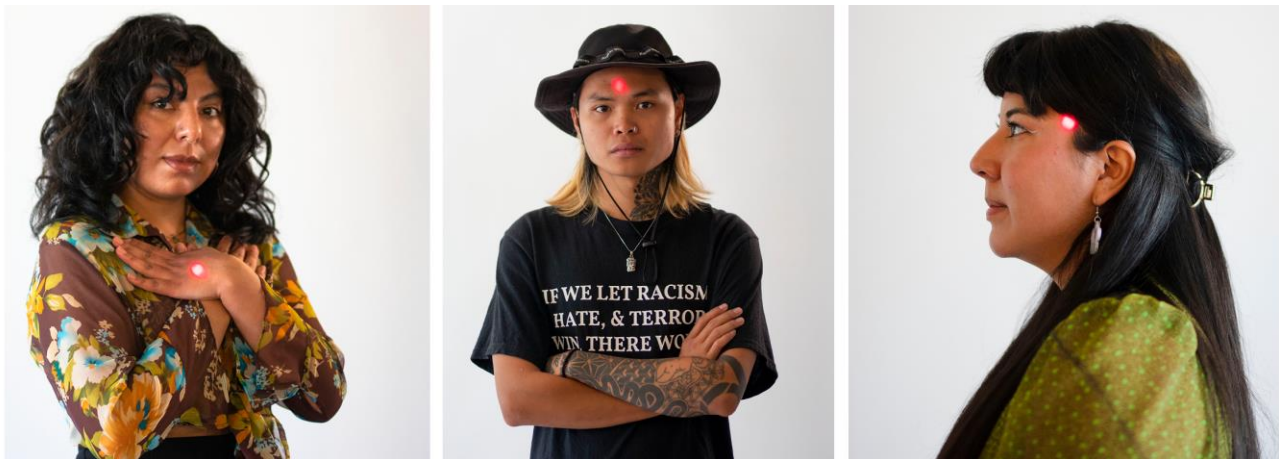


For Immediate Release

Arts Commons: Photographic Exhibitions Focus on Social Justice, Beauty, Intergenerational Trauma, and Self-Reflection this Winter Season

February 14, 2022 – CALGARY – Come in out of the cold and experience what the Arts Commons galleries have to share this winter. Exploring the medium of photography, artists from the Ledge Gallery, Lightbox Studio, and Window Galleries share their varied approaches to the artform, from traditional portraiture to camera-less exposure. [Exhibitions are live now at Arts Commons](#), free and open to the public.

The Ledge Gallery features emerging artists Valentina and Laura Alejandra Caraballo, who together make up the artist collective **RAZA**, with their exhibition, [Lasers of Sentiment](#). Located in Centre Court of Arts Commons, Ledge Gallery's *Lasers of Sentiment* investigates the inhospitable attitudes towards peaceful protest using the threatening image of the laser pointer, while incorporating community engagement to present a more complete picture of the immigrant experience. During the timeframe of the exhibition, RAZA will invite people into the Ledge Gallery space to share stories and learn from each other's sentiments and perspectives.



Bianca, Harvey, and Joose from the exhibition *Lasers of Sentiment*. Photography by RAZA.

In the Lightbox Studio, located in the corridor adjacent to Martha Cohen Theatre, artist **Haley Eyre** transforms the space into a working publisher's studio for her magazine [Unabashed \(Volume 3\)](#). A fledgling publication that tackles difficult subject matter and explores topics in depth that are often oversimplified in mainstream media, *Unabashed* gives voice and a platform to creatives and critical thinkers who would otherwise not be heard.

The Window Galleries, located just outside the lobby of the Max Bell Theatre in Arts Commons, features four photographic artists from vastly different approaches: **Twinkle Banerjee**, **Sam Doty**, **Mecoh Bain** and **Cerys Davis**. Tackling generational trauma with [The things we carry with us](#), Twinkle Banerjee's exhibition shares emotional imagery of her family, particularly her grandmother, who lived through the partitioning of Bengal instigated by religious divides and British colonialism. Sam Doty's [Stairway To](#) consists of a single image of a stairway leading from dark to light, encompassing the artists' feeling of alienation and lack of connection to the place he calls

home. Mecoh Bain's vivid portraiture photography with [To Bloom](#) seeks to explore both the feminine and masculine energy in every human body, juxtaposing brightly coloured flowers and greenery idealized masculine figures. And finally, Cerys Davies uses alternative photography to create layered [Abstractions](#) of the natural world, using only sunlight and photo paper to achieve haunting and surreal images.

"Our winter exhibitions share the wonderful diversity of art that can be expressed through photography and photographic technique," says Sanja Lukac, Visual and Media Arts Curator. "Photography in its many forms exposes us to new realities, perspectives and experiences and in these exhibitions, each artist takes action to shift narratives and celebrate lived experiences through their individual artistic process. It's a fantastic demonstration of the talent that our city has to share."

To see all of the exhibitions online, visit artscommons.ca/learn-engage/visual-and-media-arts. The current visual arts exhibitions will be available for viewing until May 22, 2022. The winter exhibitions in the Lightbox Studio as well as the Ledge and Window Galleries at Arts Commons are part of the [Exposure Photography Festival](#).

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Arts Commons is the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada located in the heart of downtown Calgary. For over 35 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians. It is home to six resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall, and promotes local, national, international, emerging and established artists with a focus on inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and equity.

The **RBC Emerging Visual Artists Program (RBC EVAP)** provides opportunities for emerging visual artists in Calgary to develop their artistic practice; to showcase their work to the public through exhibitions, open studio, and speaking engagements; and hone their professional skills to build a solid foundation for a successful career.

Mecoh Bain is a freelance photographer whose work is largely informed by her experience as a bi-racial Filipino-Canadian woman. Mecoh's practice turns honest moments into soulful art, giving a voice to those who historically have been overlooked. Her work is anchored in storytelling and community, with an intention to empower her subjects with the permission to be seen and celebrated. Her work is aesthetically minimal with an emphasis on the use of colour and clean lines. As a woman of colour, Mecoh feels the responsibility to shift the narrative and bring diversity and representation of BIPOC and LGBTQ2IA+ communities to the forefront of contemporary art and photography.

Cerys Davies is an artist and photographer from Calgary, Alberta. She received her B.F.A. Honours in Visual Studies from the University of Calgary in 2016. She has shown in several exhibitions at galleries such as Exposure Photography Festival Headquarters, Contemporary Calgary, Nickle Galleries, and the Art Gallery of Alberta. Her work has also been featured in publications such as SEITIES and filling Station magazine. Themes of abstraction and painting with light are prevalent in her work as she explores the unique techniques of alternative photographic processes in the darkroom.

Sam Doty is a self-taught photographer based in Calgary, Alberta. His work focuses on ideas of loneliness, home and roots, and relationships with new regions. He is currently working on completing a B.Comm degree, Entrepreneurship

concentration, and a BA, English, at the University of Calgary. His work has been exhibited at CSpace King Edward and was featured in the Exposure Emerging Artist Showcase at Contemporary Calgary. His work was a part of the online exhibition A Moment of Zen and has been featured in Shutter Hub's online exhibition and printed zine Yearbook 2020.

Haley Eyre is a Calgary-based artist specializing in photography. She received her Bachelor of Design majoring in Photography from the Alberta University of the Arts (2019). Haley's work has been exhibited in numerous local galleries including the Christine Klassen Gallery, the Herringer Kiss Gallery, the Illingworth Kerr Gallery, and the Creig Gallery. In 2019, her work was featured in the Canadian photographic magazine PhotoEd. Alongside her photography, Haley runs a self-published magazine titled *UNABASHED*. She is currently working on the third issue of *UNABASHED* Magazine at the 2021-22 Arts Commons RBC Emerging Visual Artist Program.

RAZA is a Calgary-based multi-medium art collective formed by Colombian artists Valentina and Laura Alejandra Caraballo. Valentina is currently completing her BFA at the University of Calgary, and Laura holds a BA in political sciences from University of Calgary. Their artistic practice explores ways to further their understanding of self and the world through art by developing concepts from a psychosocial approach. RAZA held their first solo exhibition at The Bows in collaboration with ICAI in 2021, and they are continuously working to further their creative career

Twinkle Banerjee (she/her) is an Indo-Canadian visual artist, who works with alternative and digital photographic processes. Her practice covers a wide variety of topics, ranging from social commentary to conceptual storytelling rooted in activism. Born in 1987 in India, she spent the first two decades of her career leading teams in the hospitality and the financial sectors before transitioning to the arts in 2019. Since then, she has exhibited in the USA, Canada, published in Berlin, and featured on CBC. Recently her work *Characters of Memorial Park* was part of an exhibition through the ICP-New York. She is currently a member of the RBC Emerging Visual Artist Program (RBC EVAP 2021-22). In the near future, she hopes to document parts of India that are diminishing due to globalization while trying to decolonize the narrative surrounding photography in the country.