



FOOTE EDMONTON VISUAL ARTS PRIZE NOMINATION BY THE ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA: BRENDA DRANEY

Brenda Draney's recent RBC New Works installation *Suspend* at the Art Gallery of Alberta, a gallery space dedicated highlighting work by regional artists, included nine paintings and a text artwork, and was presented from December 14, 2013 to March 9, 2014.

In the installation *Suspend* Brenda Draney explores a large-scale narrative of her personal memories growing up in between the Northern Alberta community of Slave Lake and Edmonton. The work features a panorama installation of nine paintings, hung salon-style throughout the space, as the artist depicts geography and relationships in a minimalist composition across the raw linen canvas. A large text artwork relayed the artist's memories related to tents, and the symbolism they contain for those displaced.

Draney is known for her sparse style, of suspending paint in calculated gestures that allow the viewer to expand upon their own memories to complete the story. The artist demonstrates the materiality of painting, suspending the forms across the platform of the canvas itself. Through these vacant spaces between the paintings, Draney examines her relationship to her community, as the place where she grew up was engulfed by a forest fire, and the narratives that unfold as her family and community undergo the process of rebuilding.

Brenda Draney is an accomplished Aboriginal artist who resides in Edmonton, Alberta. She completed an English degree at the University of Alberta before graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, majoring in Painting. She graduated with her Master's degree from Emily Carr University of Art + Design, researching the relationship of memory and narrative to the discipline of painting.

Draney quickly received national attention for her unique style and the 11th winner of the annual RBC Canadian Painting Competition in 2009. In 2013, Draney was long-listed for the Sobey Art Award.

Draney's work has been exhibited across Canada, including at the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, the Toronto International Art Fair, MKG127 Gallery, Stride Gallery, Latitude 53 and the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie. In 2013 she participated in the Fiction/ Non-Fiction exhibition presenting artworks by contemporary indigenous artists at the Esker Foundation gallery in Calgary.

Draney's works speak audiences in a way that is imperative to our civic discourse, and her works reflect an investigation into narrative relevant to the international painting milieu. Draney has also been a dedicated and important supporter of artist-run centres and art galleries in the City of Edmonton.

Due to her impact nationally as an accomplished Canadian painter and the regional significance represented in the content of her recent works, the Art Gallery of Alberta would like to acknowledge her notable achievements and contributions within Edmonton's art community.

Any questions regarding the nomination of Brenda Draney for the Foote Edmonton Visual Arts Prize on behalf of the Art Gallery of Alberta can be directed to the contact person Kristy Trinier, Curator (Kristy.Trinier@youraga.ca).