



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3 DECMEBER 2012

The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery's winter season is extended to present a major group exhibition *Beat Nation* and a new solo project by Althea Thauberger
Opening with a FREE party on Friday, 14 December, 2012

Beat Nation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture describes a generation of artists who juxtapose urban youth culture with Aboriginal identity to create innovative and unexpected new works—in painting, sculpture, installation, performance and video—that reflect the current realities of Aboriginal peoples today. Organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and based on an initiative of grant gallery, the exhibition includes work by: **Jackson 2bears, KC Adams, Sonny Assu, Bear Witness, Jordan Bennett, Raymond Boisjoly, Corey Bulpitt & Gurl 23, Kevin Lee Burton, Raven Chacon, Nicholas Galanin, Maria Hupfield, Mark Igloliorte, Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Duane Linklater, madeskimo, Dylan Miner, Kent Monkman, Marianne Nicolson, Skeena Reece, Hoka Skenandore, and Rolande Souliere.**

The Power Plant is also pleased to present **Althea Thauberger's *Marat Sade Bohnice*** to North American audiences for the first time. Her project for The Power Plant is an experimental documentary/video installation about the staging of Peter Weiss's 1963 play *Marat/Sade* at the Bohnice Psychiatric Hospital in Prague. This new work approaches issues of timely reassessment, institutionalization and shifting political terrain.

The Power Plant opens both exhibitions with a **FREE Opening Party for all on Friday, 14 December, 2012 from 7 - 11 PM**, which will feature **live performances** by *Beat Nation* artists **Skeena Reece** performing 'like a boss' at 8 PM and **Bear Witness**, performing from 8 - 11 PM. A cash bar will be available.

The Power Plant
Contemporary Art Gallery

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thepowerplant.org

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Beat Nation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture **15 December 2012 - 5 May 2013**

Since the early 1990s, hip hop has been a driving force of activism for urban Aboriginal youth in communities across the Americas. The roots of this music have been influential across disciplines and have been transformed to create dynamic forums for storytelling and indigenous languages, as well as new modes of political expression. In the visual arts, artists remix, mash up and weave together the old with the new, the rural with the urban, traditional and contemporary as a means to rediscover and reinterpret Aboriginal culture within the shifting terrain of the mainstream.

While this exhibition takes its starting point from hip hop, it branches out to refer to pop culture, graffiti, fashion and other elements of urban life. Artists create unique cultural hybrids that include graffiti murals with Haida figures, sculptures carved out of skateboard decks, abstract paintings with form-line design, live video remixes with Hollywood films, and hip hop performances in Aboriginal dialects, to name a few. *Beat Nation* brings together artists from across the continent—from the West Coast as far north as Alaska and Nunavut, as far east as Labrador and south to New Mexico—and reveals the shared connections between those working in vastly different places.

As Aboriginal identity and culture continue to change, and as artists reinvent older traditions into new forms of expression, their commitment to politics, to storytelling, to Aboriginal languages, to the land and rights remains constant, whether these are stated with drums skins or turntables, natural pigments or spray paint, ceremonial dancing or break dancing.

"It is with great pleasure that we open this travelling exhibition here in Toronto," exclaims Director of The Power Plant Gaëtane Verna. "This important project would not have been possible without our Presenting Sponsor TD Bank Group. TD's contribution to this project represents a major contribution. We celebrate this extraordinary generosity to an extraordinary project. I am also very grateful to Barry Appleton and the Appleton Foundation, lead donor for this exhibition and a valued supporter of the gallery."

"The arts play a critical role in our communities, whether it's the visual, digital or the performing arts," said Scott Mullin, Vice President, Community Relations, TD Bank Group. "And in this case, *Beat Nation* encompasses all those elements

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and provides a positive and unique way to illustrate the Aboriginal culture and how it continues to evolve, and we're thrilled to be a part of it."

This exhibition was organized and circulated by the Vancouver Art Gallery and based on an initiative of grunt gallery. *Beat Nation* is co-curated by Kathleen Ritter, Associate Curator, Vancouver Art Gallery and Tania Willard, a Secwepemc artist, designer and curator.

PRESENTING SPONSOR: TD
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Althea Thauberger: Marat Sade Bohnice
15 December 2012 - 5 May 2013

Althea Thauberger (born 1970) is based in Vancouver and practices art in a way which defies strict definition by medium. She has produced remarkable films, videos, photographs, and performances over the course of her decade-long career. Driven by her interest in and unique facility for collaboration, the thread that connects her projects is her thoughtful engagement with groups of people - most often well-defined social enclaves - as her subjects. She works with these communities to develop performances that offer the participants opportunities for self-exploration and self-definition. The final works - whether videos or photographs - produced by Thauberger to record the collaborations, are always striking documents that entice, engage and surprise her viewers.

The original 1963 play *Marat/Sade* by Peter Weiss imagines that the Marquis de Sade (1740-1814) wrote and directed a play about the assassination of Jean-Paul Marat 1743-1793) while the former was interned in the Charenton asylum in 1808, nineteen years after the beginning of the French Revolution and a time of massive institutional reform. This period saw beginnings of the reformation of the treatment of "mental illness" from punishment to "therapy." In the 1963 play, the inmates enact the drama, and are always partly themselves, as "mental patients," and partly in historical character. The play reveals an ongoing debate about whether the imperatives of revolution originate within the individual or within society as a whole.

While the original play is set in the bath house of the Charenton asylum, Thauberger's production, a new experimental documentary/video installation,

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is set in the decommissioned laundry/water facilities of another post-revolutionary institution: Bohnice, the largest psychiatric clinic in the Czech Republic. Currently undergoing institutional reform, Bohnice is in the beginning stages of de-institutionalization and the final stages of privatization of some of its services. The production was a collaboration with the Prague-based experimental theatre company Akanda and theatrical director Melanie Rada in which play was presented to the patients and staff of Bohnice as well as general audiences who came to the hospital over a five-night run. Thaubergers' *THE PERSECUTION AND ASSASSINATION OF JEAN-PAUL MARAT AS PERFORMED BY THE INMATES OF THE ASYLUM OF CHARENTON UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MARQUIS DE SADE AS PERFORMED BY THE PRAGUE-BASED EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE COMPANY AKANDA FOR THE PATIENTS AND STAFF OF THE BOHNICE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL* is a video work that documents and reconfigures the staging of the play in this location to audiences of the patients and staff of the institution.

Her work has been presented internationally and most recently at the Liverpool Biennial (2012); 17th Biennale of Sydney (2010); National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2009); The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh (2009); Guangzhou Triennial, China (2008); and Manifesta 7, Trento, Italy (2008). She was a 2011 finalist for the Grange Prize and her work is represented by Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto.

Toronto audiences will have the exclusively opportunity to hear **Althea Thaubergers** speak in advance of the opening of her exhibition on **12 December, 2012 at 7 PM at the Studio Theatre, Harbourfront Centre.**

PRESENTING SPONSOR: MARGARET C. McNEE

CO-PRESENTED WITH IMAGES FESTIVAL

PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE: THE POWER PLANT; THE LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL; THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS; PRADELNA BOHNICE, PRAGUE; UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO, DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC AND GERMANIC STUDIES

**Please send all requests for images and interviews to
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Upcoming Programs and Events

PRIMARY EDUCATION SPONSOR: CIBC

ARTIST TALK: Althea Thauberger
Wednesday, 12 December, 7 PM
Studio Theatre, Harbourfront Centre
FREE Members, \$12 Non-Members

Althea Thauberger will be at The Power Plant in advance of the opening of her solo exhibition to speak about her acclaimed practice.

OPENING PARTY
Friday, 14 December, 7 - 11 PM
The Power Plant
FREE

Be one of the first in the city to see the new exhibitions and meet many of the artists in the exhibitions. A cash bar will be available.

Live Performances during the opening party:

Skeena Reece: 'like a boss'
Friday, 14 December, 8 PM

Bear Witness
Friday, 14 December, 8 - 11 PM

SUNDAY SCENE: Skeena Reece
Sunday, 16 December, 2 PM
The Power Plant
FREE

Skeena Reece is a Tsimshian/Gitksan and Cree artist whose work includes performance, spoken word, writing, singing, and video art. She is based on Vancouver Island and is included in the current exhibition *Beat Nation*.

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IN CONVERSATION: Steven Loft & Kent Monkman

Wednesday, 23 January, 7 PM

The Drake Hotel, 1150 Queen Street West

FREE Members, \$12 Non-Members

Multi-disciplinary artist Kent Monkman discusses his acclaimed practice in conversation with curator Steven Loft. Together, Loft and Monkman will discuss the artist's practice and inquiries into the representation and contextualization of Aboriginal traditions.

CO-PRESENTED WITH THE DRAKE HOTEL

For more information about exhibitions and public programs, call
+1.416.973.4949 or visit thepowerplant.org.

The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery at Harbourfront Centre
231 Queens Quay West, Toronto, ON, M5J 2G8, Canada

Admission

ALL YEAR, ALL FREE

NEW Gallery Hours

Tuesday - Sunday, 10 AM - 5 PM

Thursday, 10 AM - 8 PM

Open holiday Mondays

Visit thepowerplant.org for a complete listing of holiday hours.

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Media Contact

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