

GERALD DAVID PEDROS
TRANSFORMING IDENTITY

Cover Image: *Untitled 2*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 31" x 36"

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Design: Laura Woermke

Transforming Identity

'I am the soul in limbo.'

André Breton, *Nadja*

It could be speculated that producing a body of work centred on the relative anonymity of its subjects acts as a cunning decoy to lure the viewer into a realm that is deeply personal. For Gerald Pedros, the perpetually changing conditions of his existence fuel the creative life of his mind—searching for a particular vocabulary to convey his observations. In *Transforming Identity*, Pedros embraces a non-objective approach, compelling the viewer to focus less on technique and more on the individual, if only imaginary physical characters of our identities.

Harnessing his abilities of perception to represent what he sees, rather than attempting to fix an observed reality, Pedros' shadow figures, inspired by the shifting shapes we cast, are ruminations on our relationship with light and space. In *Untitled #10*, two amorphous figures are depicted with sharp, blockish protrusions, countered by a conjoined softness that is enticingly ambiguous. In *Untitled #3*, the form sees a further metamorphosis of insect-like contours and much like Kafka's tragic protagonist, Gregor Samsa who wakes one morning to discover he has transformed into a beetle, there is a sense of despair and introspection.

In works such as *Untitled #17*, produced from life drawing sessions in the studio, Pedros sketches the various poses of the model on a massive roll of brown craft paper, treating his medium like a scroll; creating a frieze where formerly independent figures participate in a continuous, unscripted narrative. This rapid-fire manner of production emancipates the Artist's deep interest in the expressive potential of the human form, communicating gesture and movement with an exaggerated clumsiness with each individual representing a unique facet of the overarching subject.

These cumulative portraits, rather than fixating on a conventionally feminine representation of the subject, emphasize exchanges between figures—touching, overlapping, posturing—that feel like condensing lived time into a single frame. Positioned within the image together by default, subjects appear as manifestations of discomfort and insecurity with profiles downcast in reaction to backs turned, detached. In other instances, a displaced voyeur, as in *Untitled #18* gazes in on interactions taking place with the sort of unsolicited curiosity befitting a person eavesdropping in a cramped elevator or the backup at an orgy.

What is our orientation as observers of these interactions in consideration of the space occupied by our own lives? It is a common belief that an individual surrounded by others does not feel isolated and as much as a majority of Pedros' subjects are accompanied, this misconception is made visible in the desolate air of works such as *Untitled #1* that transmit a detached urban loneliness so adroitly captured in works such as Édouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1882) and Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks* (1942) both of which transcend time and place in the universality of their message.

A new, polished direction of intense visual scrutiny informs this collection, further refining shapes as an assertion of their compositional strength in communication with the other forms and space around them. Like Picasso's 1906 portrait of Gertrude Stein introducing a new language of severely modeled features, that early shift culminated in the provocative *Les Femmes d'Alger* a year later, its figures composed of basic shapes, flattened and disjointed, yet highly interactive.

These works, too, are lively adaptations of Pedros' *Peripheral*, where the static poise of a classic style is replaced with an increasingly impulsive approach to marking the surface of the mylar with an unanchored energy. The dissolution of the anatomy into abstraction flourishes in works such as *Untitled #15*, where the inhuman severity of a painfully conical breast, wasp-like waist or swollen hand alienate the viewer and induce a forced distance.

What does it mean to paint the figure in the age of the digital and virtual as it highlights the rawness of reality and how are certain elements coded to capture our experience of it? For Pedros, reality is a record of his personal experience seen through the soul of the observer. Our world may be rife with surveillance, assimilation and tension between nature and technology, manifested in images that convey isolation and repressed longing as the default state of humanity—but there is hope in that familiar sun resting on a barren horizon; a beacon that provides life and time, through which we are all connected—the quiet opening of a narrative.

Moira McKee, EXCAVO Fine Arts





Left: *Untitled 2*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 48" x 36"
Right: *Untitled 3*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 48" x 36"



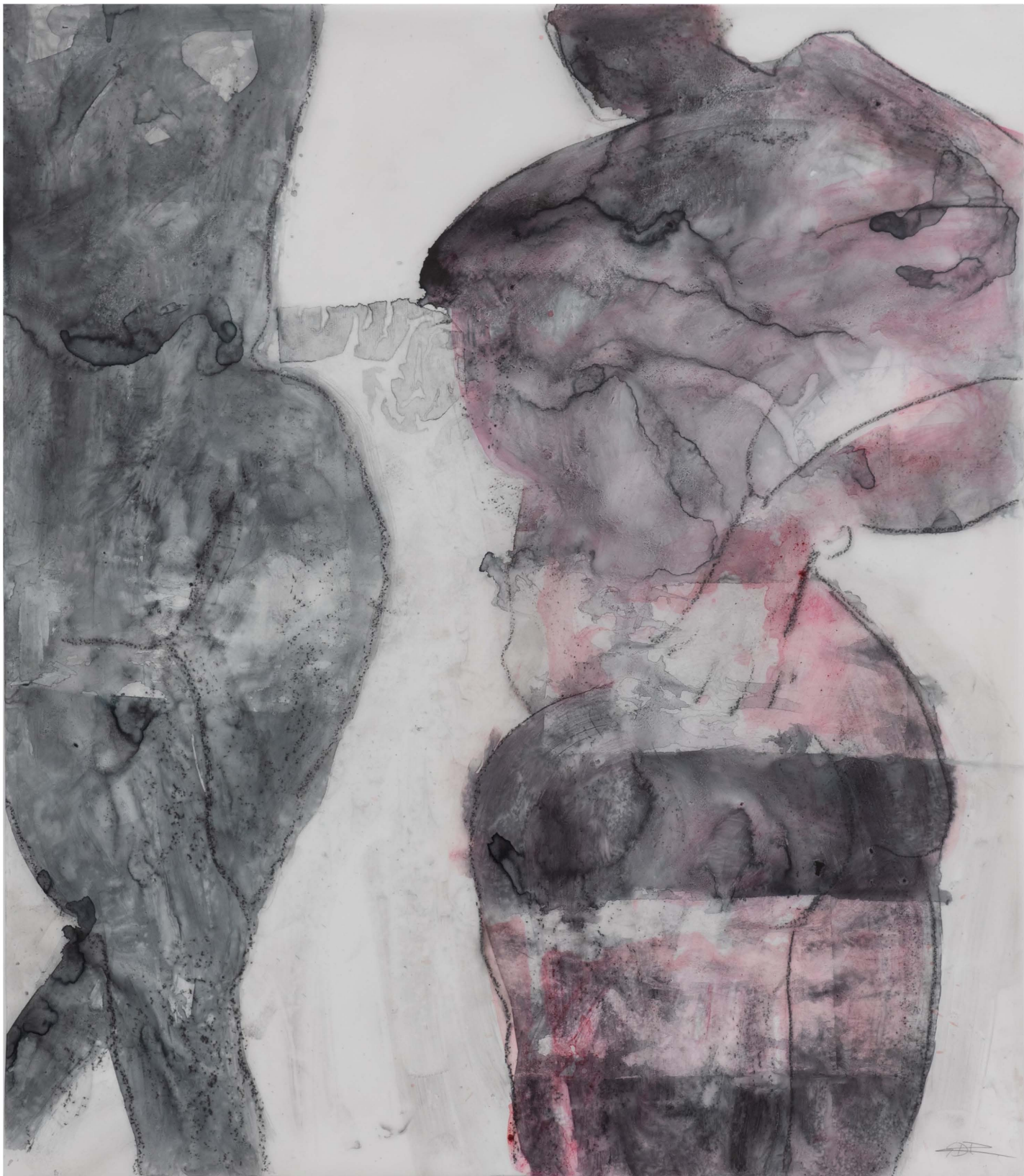




Left: *Untitled 4*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 36"

Right: *Untitled 5*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 20" x 27"





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Left: *Untitled 6*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 36"

Right: *Untitled 7*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 31"





Left: *Untitled 8*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"

Right: *Untitled 9*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 53"



Left: *Untitled 10*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 20" x 24"
Right: *Untitled 11*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 31" x 36"







Left: *Untitled 12*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 47"

Right: *Untitled 13*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"





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Left: *Untitled 14*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 31"

Right: *Untitled 15*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 36"



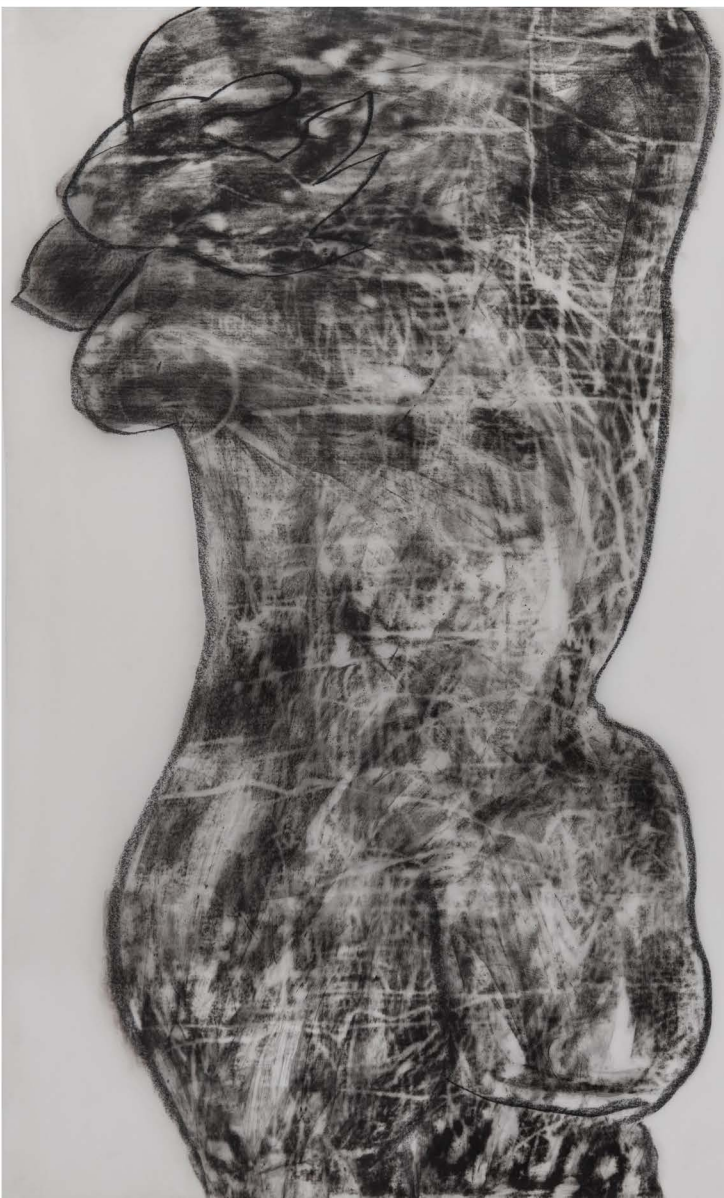


Left: *Untitled 16*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"

Right: *Untitled 17*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"

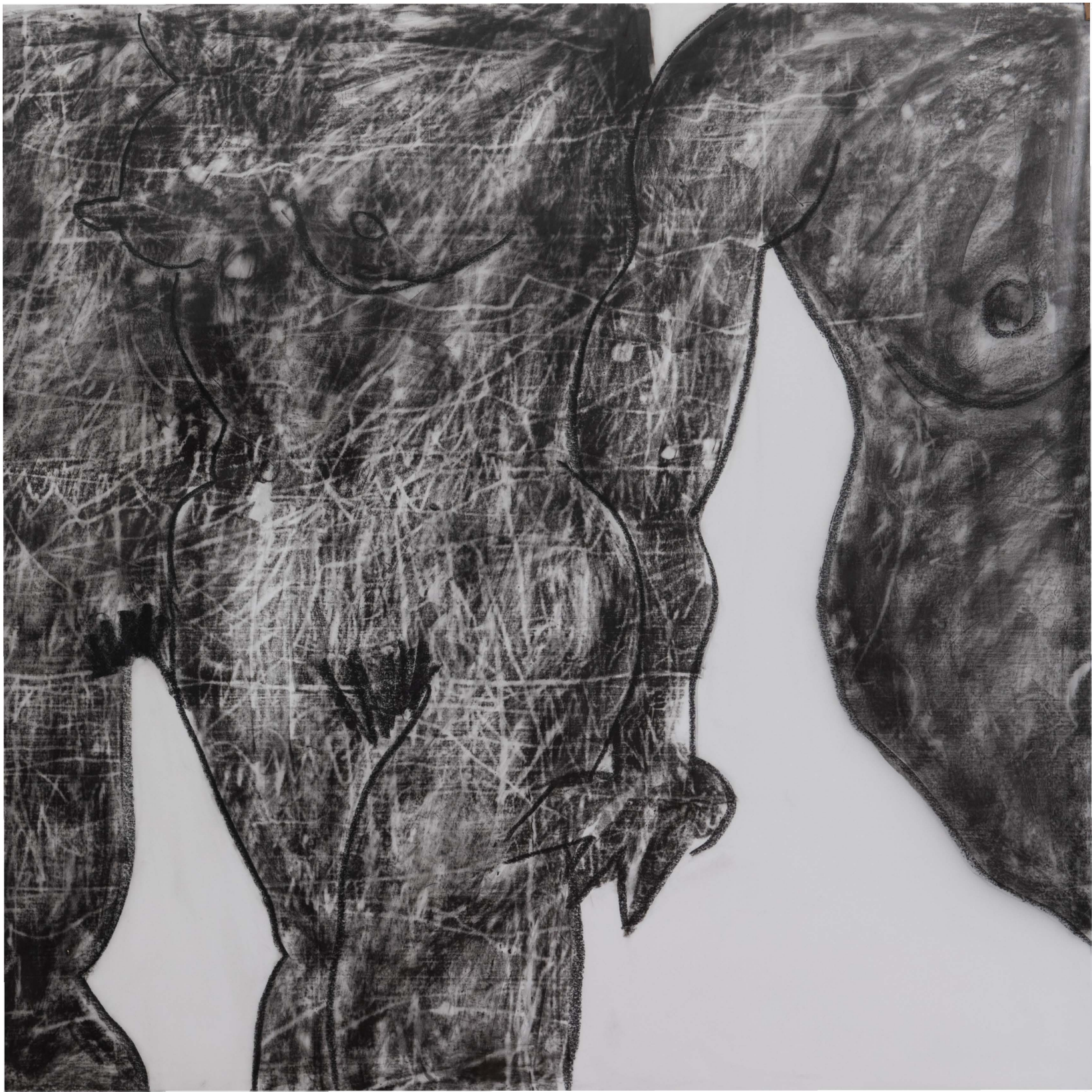


Left: *Untitled 18*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"
Right: *Untitled 19*, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 53.5"



Untitled 20, 2018, Acrylic and Graphite on Mylar, 36" x 48"





STUDIES

Dawson College, Montreal, QC, 1972-74
Concordia University, Montreal, QC, 1974-77 (BFA)
Concordia University, Montreal, QC, 1980-83 (MFA)

STUDIOS

Central Studios, London, Ontario (2015-present)
Potrero Studios, Potrero, Costa Rica (2015)
Pouch Cove Foundation Art Residency Program, Newfoundland (2005)
Banff Centre Leighton Artists Colony, Banff, Alberta (1993)
La Sociedad Mexicana de Artes Plasticas S.O.M.A.R.T., Mexico City, Mexico (1987)
Le Centre Genevois de Gravure Contemporaine, Geneva, Switzerland (1978)
Toronto, Ontario
Montreal, Quebec

AWARDS

Canada Council 1979
Ontario Arts Council 1997, 1995, 1992, 1989, 2001
Greenshield Foundation Graduate Assistantship 1976, 1977

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

2015 – Museum Gallery, Biograd Na Moru, Croatia
2013 – University of North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina, USA
2011 – Provinciale de Artes Plasticas y Diseno, Santiago, Cuba
2010 – Galeria Jose Peon Contreras, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico
2008 – Salon de La Plasticas Mexicana, Mexico City, Mexico
2006 – Public Exhibition, Berezategui, Argentina
2006 – Faculty of Arts Universidad Nacional de Tucuman, Tucuman, Argentina
2006 – Public Exhibition, Catamarca, Argentina
2006 – 2005 – 4th International Conference on Public Art & Muralism, Tlaxcala, Mexico

SELECTED CANADIAN EXHIBITIONS

2017 – Thielsen Gallery, London, ON
2017 – Big Print Project, Roundhouse Community Centre Gallery, Vancouver, BC
2017 – Big Print Project, Chinese Cultural Centre Gallery, Vancouver, BC
2015 – St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, ON
2014 – Big Print Project, Waterfront Theatre, Vancouver, BC
2012 – Thielsen Gallery, London, ON
2011 – St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, ON
2010 – Stewart Hall Art Gallery, Pointe-Claire, QC
2009 – Fieldcote Memorial Park and Museum, Hamilton, ON
2009 – Thielsen Gallery, London, ON
2009 – St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, ON

2007 – MacLaren Art Center, Barrie, ON
2007 – Thielsen Gallery, London, ON
2006 – Woodstock Art Gallery, Woodstock, ON
2006 – Thielsen Gallery, London, ON
2005 – St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, ON
2005 – James Baird Gallery, St. Johns's, NFLD

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Museo Nacional de la Estampa, Mexico City, MX
Consejo Nacional Para La, Mexico City, MX
Musee d'Estampes Geneva, CH
Centre de Gravure, Geneva, CH
S.O.M.A.R.T., Mexico City, MX
Guinness Brewery, Dublin, IRL
Bibliotheque Gabrielle Roy, Quebec City, QC
Consulate General of Morocco, Montreal, QC
St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, ON
Teleglobe Canada, London, ON

CURATORIAL PROJECTS

Francis Caprani and Gerard Pas, *The Nude*, May 24 – June 18, 2018
Central Studios, London, Ontario, Canada

Francis Caprani, *Recent Works*, July 6, 2017
Central Studios, London, Ontario, Canada

Brian Saby, *Playas Tropicales*, November 19, 2016
Central Studios, London, Ontario, Canada

Laura Woermke, *Paper Crown*, August 27, 2016
Central Studios, London, Ontario, Canada

Pamela Williams, *In The Midst of Angels / Esther Rausenberg Anima of Air Spirit Soul*
January 17 – March 18, 2009
St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

Tobey C. Anderson, *The New American Century Project*
November 14 – January 10, 2009
St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

La Raza Artists, *The Bank Job: Three Canadian Painters*
September 2008
353 Richmond St. London, Ontario, Canada

Aidan Urquhart, *Making Memories*

Helene Lefebvre, *Social Queen*

September 6 – October 26, 2008

St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

John Krygsman, *Upon Closer Introspection*

John Maggio, *Images Along the Way*

July 12 – August 31, 2008

St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

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