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DEAR LISTENER

WORKS BY NICHOLAS GALANIN

BY ERIN JOYCE
FINE ARTS CURATOR

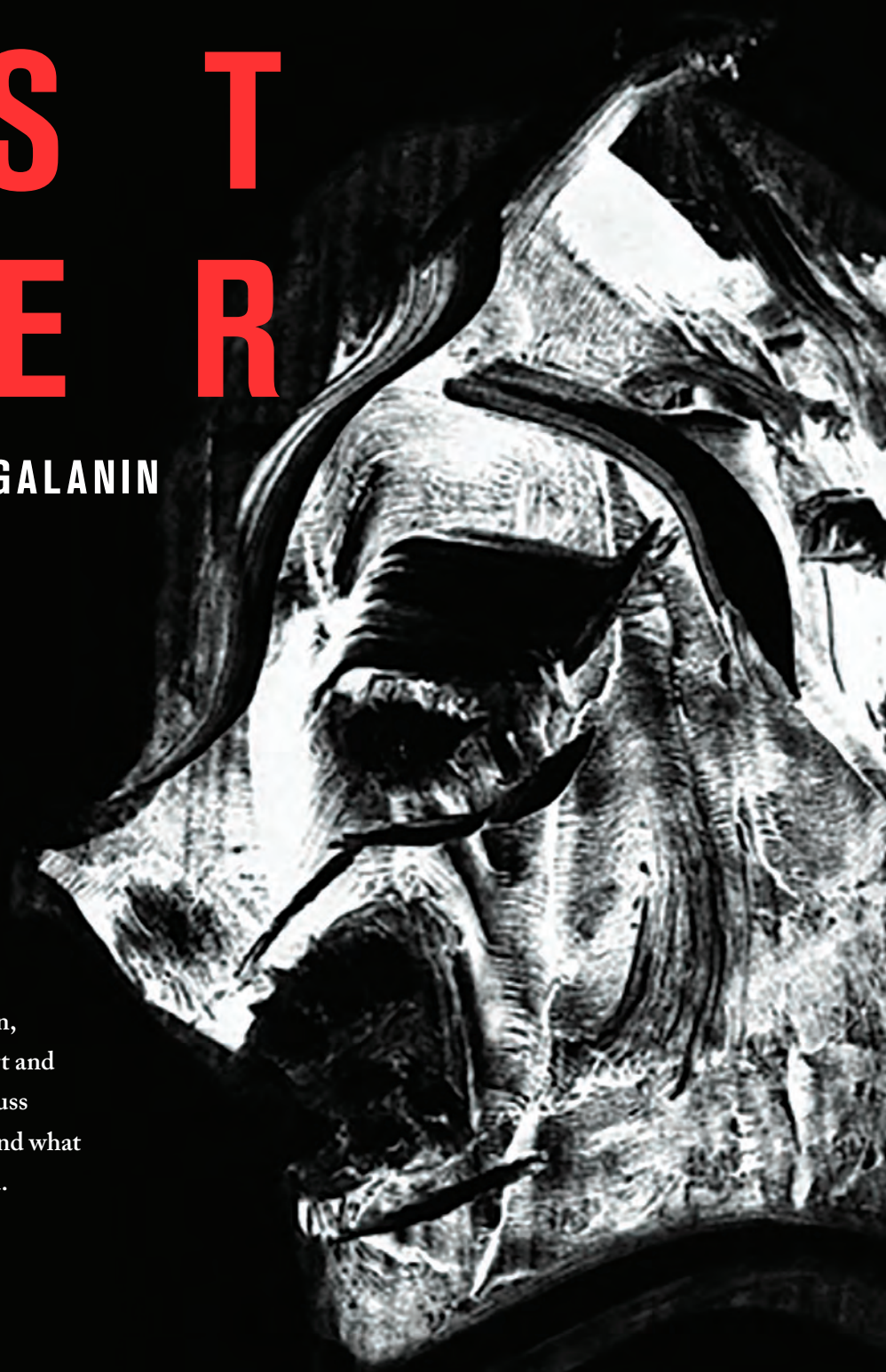
This May the Heard is ushering in a new wave of contemporary art. Our exhibition, *Dear Listener:*

Works by Nicholas Galanin, is a mid-career retrospective of Nicholas Galanin, b. 1979.

The exhibition will feature over 10,000 square feet of new and existing work, including installation, video art, work on paper, performance art and fashion. I recently asked Galanin to discuss the exhibition, his practice as an artist, and what is on the horizon for him after the Heard.

Where did it Go?

Collaboration with Christian Petersend, 2014





Nicholas Galanin
Photo: Wendy Red Star

ERIN JOYCE: Nicholas, I have had the privilege of working with you and seeing your career progress over the years. For our readers who are new to your work, can you share a bit about your background and what has led to this moment in your career?

NICHOLAS GALANIN: Yes, I am grateful for all of these projects we have worked on. I have been involved and interested in creative work since I was a child; this has been an ongoing practice of passion and process, a lifetime of growing, learning, teaching, holding and contributing to my cultures' continuum. So yes, this is a personal milestone for me, [and] I hope it is one of more to come, as I feel like I am still just getting started here.

EJ: Your practice as an artist is so diverse. Looking at your visual work, can you describe your process as you start a work, commencing with research and then manifesting that into a physical object? How does that progression unfold for you?

NG: It is always different, [there's] no recipe—just creative necessity and curiosity, listening, learning and continual growth. I believe everything is connected and am not so quick to categorize or separate my creative practice. There is sovereignty in diversity of medium. There is power in this sovereignty. Institutions and audiences tend to need boundaries and definitions, walls and barriers often built by stereotype and romanticization.

CIRCLES AND EXPERIENCE OPENING

May 3 | 6 to 8 p.m.

MEMBERS' OPENING

May 4 | 6 to 10 p.m.



EJ: One of the pieces in the exhibition that I am most excited to bring to the Heard is *Imaginary Indian*. Can you tell the readers more about that work and the concepts behind it?

NG: This series has taken form in many works. The original concept started with cultural appropriation and an economy of culture rooted in colonialism and settler communities that forcibly removed these objects from Indigenous communities through theft and genocide. Generations later, this same settler community commodified and homogenized Indigenous knowledge, ceremony and object. It is a way of reclaiming that agency, reclaiming power over our cultural heritage and cultural future.

EJ: Another piece like that is *A Supple Plunder*. Often your work addresses and redresses histories of violence and the genetic memory of trauma. Can you discuss this work and your intention behind creating it?

NG: My work is not solely based in or defined by these conversations, though I will not stand by as this violence continues. It is necessary to highlight and expose histories and conversations [that] settler communities deny. We are still living in a nation that continues this oppression and violence institutionally. These conversations are often ignored, purposefully overlooked as we are expected to remain available and complicit in giving our experiences and knowledge for homogenization and anthropology. To create work that holds this space and sits in to do what it has been created to do, engage and promote progress and dialogue in all communities. *A Supple Plunder* is a memorial to Indigenous men and women who've been subject to the still-ongoing violence of U.S. and Canadian government nation-building. Many of the statues we see erected in bronze are of men who were responsible for the raping, murdering violence toward Indigenous peoples.

LEFT
Imaginary Indian
Wood, floral wallpaper.
216 x 216 in. 2016

RIGHT
Nicholas Galanin.
Photo: Wendy Red Star





2018



A Supple Plunder. Leonard Getinthechar, 2015-18. Ballistic Torsos, two-channel video. Dimensions variable. Leonard Getinthechar is a pseudonym used for collaborations between Nicholas and Jerrod Galanin.

EJ: In addition to your practice as a contemporary artist, you participate in projects in your community, like the canoe and the totem you are currently working on. Can you share more about that and the importance of those activities?

NG: My practice formed and continues to exist on this side of cultural continuum with community-based projects that are not always rooted in conversations mentioned in the question above. The violent history is not removed from our generations here now, and this cultural work is also engaging in healing. The totem I am carving now in Juneau is a healing pole for the Yanyeidi clan in Juneau. The Taku village was burnt to the ground to remove Tlingit families from their homes to make way for a boat harbor. This happened in 1962! The strength in our culture is understood and shared through our cultural arts, visual language, customs, subsistence, language and cultural sovereignty. I want to see all of our Indigenous brothers and sisters succeed; to the outsider, our presence and resilience is resistance.

LEFT

Let Them Enter Dancing, Showing Their Faces: Guwakaan
Monotype
2018

EJ: You collaborate quite a bit with other artists, and many of the works in the exhibition are collaborative. Tell us how those projects with other artists begin and evolve.

NG: Collaborations have all happened organically. I feel grateful for the opportunities to collaborate and work with some of the brightest minds in the game. Some of these collaborations happen on the spot, as in creating while we hit “record” in the music studio; other collaborations occur over several lifetimes of conversation, and we are continuing these conversations today.

EJ: After your exhibition, what are you working on?

NG: I’ll always be working on music; the next planned collaboration is taking place as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship at the Bellagio Center in Italy this fall with poet Adrian Matejka. We will work on music and video projects. I was recently invited to do something for the Honolulu Biennial in 2019, so I am getting excited about this as well. As for long-term projects, I would love to build a school in my community for visual and creative arts, music, etc.