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HUMCARD

notes from an artist

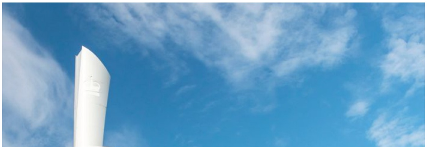
***Welcome to the seventh edition of the HUMcard.** These are special mailouts that we have been sending to all our HUM patrons and supporters this year, focusing on different international projects by New Zealand artists. We hope you've been enjoying them!*

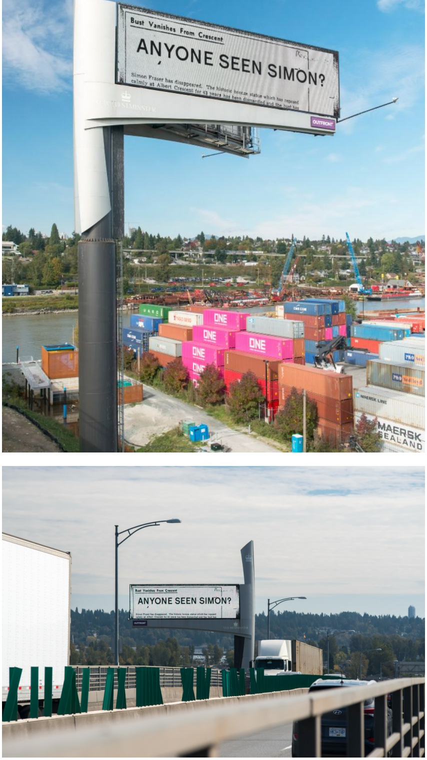
Our last HUMcard featured Steve Carr and his project Chasing the Light *in the National Gallery of Victoria in Australia. For this edition, we have invited Sweden-based artist* ***Maddie Leach*** *to share her recent project* **Lowering Simon Fraser,** *a site-specific work located in* ***New Westminster, in the vicinity of Vancouver.***

Running from September 30 to October 04 2019, this was a special project that was developed following on from Maddie's 2016 residency with Contemporary Art Gallery (CAG) in Vancouver. Keep reading for a detailed look and unique images of the project, sent to us from the artist , especially for our HUM supporters.

Maddie Leach in New Westminster, Canada

"At some point between 1986 and 1988 a section of granite disappeared from the Simon Fraser Monument in New Westminster, British Columbia. It wasn’t just a small piece; it was the entire central column that had given the monument most of its height. In the process of relocation, from a grassy traffic island near the Pattullo Bridge to the new riverfront boardwalk at Westminster Quay, Simon Fraser was lowered by a good four feet. There is no record of what happened to the removed section."

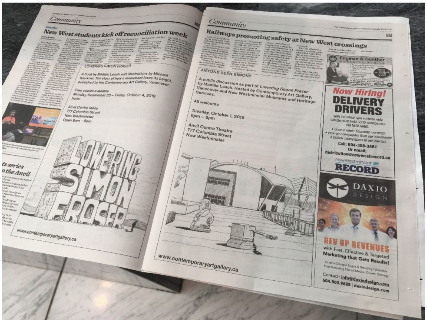



Bust Vanishes From Crescent
ANYONE SEEN SIMON?
Simon Fraser has disappeared. The historic bronze statue which has reposed calmly at Albert Crescent for 43 years has been dismantled and the bust has
OUTFRONT
MAERSK SEALAND
ONE

Top & Bottom: *Lowering Simon Fraser* (detail). Electronic billboard, Queensborough Bridge, New Westminster. Sept 30 - Oct 4, 2019. Images: Scott Massey

"Since 2015 I've undertaken several visits to Vancouver as artist in residence with the Contemporary Art Gallery (CAG). My research has focused on the history and shifting locations of the Simon Fraser Monument. I've been exploring different narratives around Fraser's 1808 expedition of the river that now bears his name, and how the monument was commissioned in 1908 to commemorate this achievement. In particular, I've paid attention to several moments of disassembly, reassembly and relocation that the monument has undergone since its creation.

In 2017, with this series of unacknowledged 'lowerings' in mind, I made a proposal to City of New Westminster to remove a narrow slab of the monument's granite plinth and transport it to the source of the Fraser River in a remote area of the Rocky Mountains. There, the modest granite monolith would have been left to be reshaped and reduced by the effects of weather and running water, and slowly carried downriver over aeons of time. I imagined that one day, the granite slab may have arrived back in New Westminster as a small, insignificant stone."



Community

New West students kick off reconciliation week

LOWERING SIMON FRASER

A book by Maddie Leach with illustrations by Michael Kluckner. The story of how a monument loses its height, published by the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver.

Free copies available
Monday, September 30 – Friday, October 4, 2019
from:

Anvil Centre lobby
777 Columbia Street
New Westminster
Open 8am – 5pm

www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

Community

Railways promoting safety at New West crossings

ANYONE SEEN SIMON?

A public discussion as part of Lowering Simon Fraser by Maddie Leach. Hosted by Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver and New Westminster Museums and Heritage Services.

All welcome

Tuesday, October 1, 2019
6pm – 8pm

Anvil Centre Theatre
777 Columbia Street
New Westminster

www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

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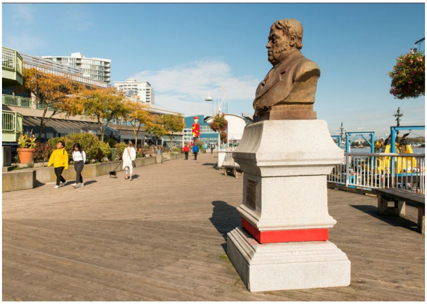
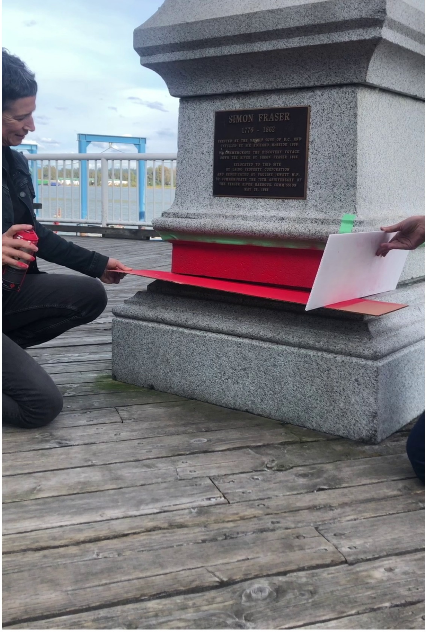
Top (1): Newspaper listing with a drawing by Michael Kluckner, 2019. ***Bottom L (2):*** Working on the layout of the book component of the project. ***Bottom R (3):*** The public roundtable discussion which accompanied the launch of the project, October 1 2019, Anvil Centre Theatre, Vancouver. All images courtesy of the artist.

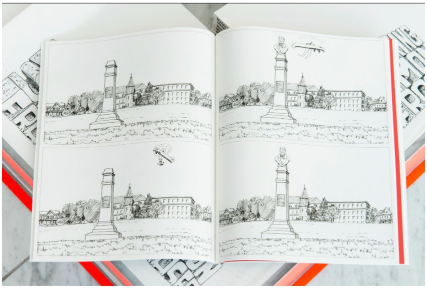
"A condition of the approval by Council was the requirement to attain written support from a specific First Nation community in New Westminster and the nation whose tribal boundaries the granite would be repositioned within. The process that followed has revealed some of the structural complexities, ideological aspirations and practical uncertainties located in achieving such a request. In addition, it has highlighted the vulnerabilities and problematics of working at distance to the place in which the project is located geographically and conceptually, and the ability to maintain institutional attention on a durational project."





Top: Temporary paint marking, Simon Fraser Monument, New Westminster, Sept 30 - Oct 4, 2019. Image: Scott Massey. ***Bottom:*** Maddie Leach highlighting the section on the monument which was proposed to be removed. Image courtesy of the artist.

"*Lowering Simon Fraser* is now reimagined and chronicled in a free book, with drawings by Vancouver illustrator Michael Kluckner; a text displayed on the north-facing electronic billboard over the Queensborough Bridge; and an intervention on the monument itself, highlighting the section I originally proposed to remove. The launch of these three components was accompanied by a public roundtable discussion, hosted by New Westminster Museums and Heritage Services on October 1. In many ways *Lowering Simon Fraser* remains an active proposal for adjustment rather than removal, and an unresolved and open-ended question for the future."



Top (1) & Bottom L (2): *Lowering Simon Fraser* (book detail). ***Bottom R (3):*** free books in custom plexiglass box. Anvil Centre lobby, New Westminster, Sept 30 - Oct 4, 2019. All images: Scott Massey.

More on the artist

Maddie Leach (b. 1970) is an artist from New Zealand, currently based in Sweden. Her sculptural projects include building an ice rink in a gallery and a 16-foot sailboat for the roof of New Zealand's national museum. She has shipped a Eucalyptus tree across the Pacific Ocean from New Zealand to Chile, and back again; sent 325 litres of water from the Te Waihou 'Blue Spring' to Jakarta, where it vanished; and coaxed a community of writers, businessmen, council officials and a newspaper editor to imagine a 'whale' made from 70 litres of used mineral oil and one-tonne of cement. In 2017 she produced *The Grief Prophesy* album, working with two Swedish musicians and visual artist 'Necrolord' to reinterpret an unremarkable black metal track into a powerful lament.

Maddie Leach has worked with international curators Charles Esche, Claire Doherty, Hou Hanru, Nav Haq and Mercedes Vicente; Australian-based curators Blair French, Zara Stanhope and David Cross; and with New Zealand curators Christina Barton, Natasha Conland, and Charlotte Huddleston. Leach has been an artist in residence with Serlachius Museums (Mänttä, Finland); CAG Field House Programme (Vancouver, Canada); International Art Space (Western Australia); Spike Island (Bristol, UK) and Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago, USA). She is currently Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Valand Academy at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden.

Visit the artist's website here...

The Grief Prophesy (2017), Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art, Sweden

From where she was standing (2016), St Paul St, AUT School of Art and Design, Auckland

The Blue Spring/Mata Air Murni (2015), Jakarta Biennale 2015, Indonesia

If you find the good oil let us know (2014), Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth

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Once again, we hope you enjoyed this HUMcard special.

Until the next one, we want to give a big thanks to all of you who have supported HUM over the past three years!

In order to continue growing and expand our coverage of international art events with Aotearoa artists, we are currently seeking support to sponsor our future co-editors in Asia and the Americas. Please let us know if you'd like to be involved or want to help make this a reality.

HUM is busier than ever and we wouldn't be able to keep doing what we do without your generosity and encouragement. So, thank you and ka kite anō!

Contemporary HUM is the first centralised platform dedicated to documenting New Zealand art projects abroad. We publish conversations, reviews and essays on the international projects of New Zealand creative practitioners, in addition to a calendar of events and exhibitions.