

BROADSTROKES

ALBERTA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS TRAVELLING EXHIBITION PROGRAM



GREETINGS

This year the Southwest Region (Region 3) of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) Travelling Exhibition Program (TRES) will tour 16 diverse and engaging exhibitions to 50 venues in 25 communities. Among these venues are 8 that are new to our roster, including: Heloise Lorimer School (Airdrie), Calgary French and International School (Calgary), Holy Child School (Calgary), St. John Paul II Elementary School (Calgary), Cochrane Public Library (Cochrane), Lacombe Composite High School (Lacombe), Red Deer Regional Hospital (Red Deer) and Sylvan Lake Library (Sylvan Lake). We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our venues (both old and new) and the AFA for their support of this special program.

This issue of our newsletter looks at ways in which walking can be used as an artistic gesture to investigate our surroundings. It includes a featured lesson plan titled 'Taking a Line for a Walk' (page 5) and a Q&A (page 10) with the Calgary-based interdisciplinary artist, Alana Bartol. In the summer of 2016, Bartol walked the roughly 174 kilometer Calgary city limit to discover *what bodies move alongside, within, and outside of the designated city boundary and how the border of the city is inscribed on the land and felt in space*. The resulting photographs and video work that the artist compiled are currently on tour in the TRES Southwest exhibition *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*.

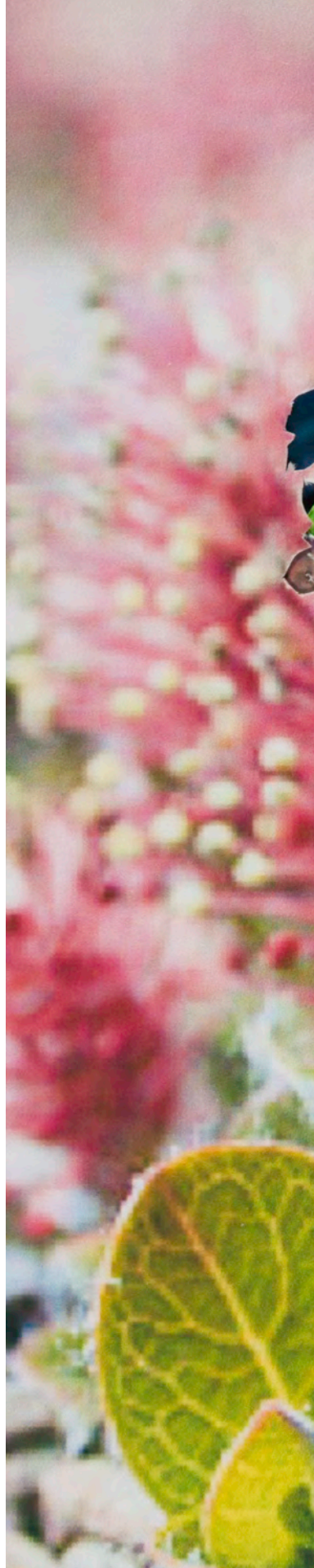
Also included in the pages ahead are a few selected snapshots of recent activities and a schedule of upcoming exhibition locations from October 4th, 2017 to February 21st, 2018.

Wishing you a creative Fall and Winter!

Shannon Bingeman
Curator, TRES Southwest

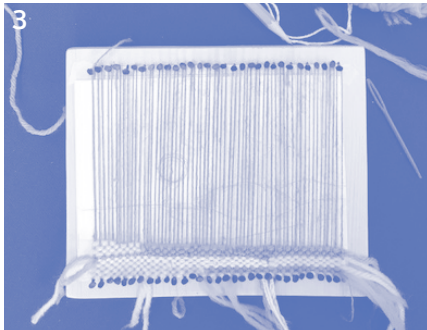
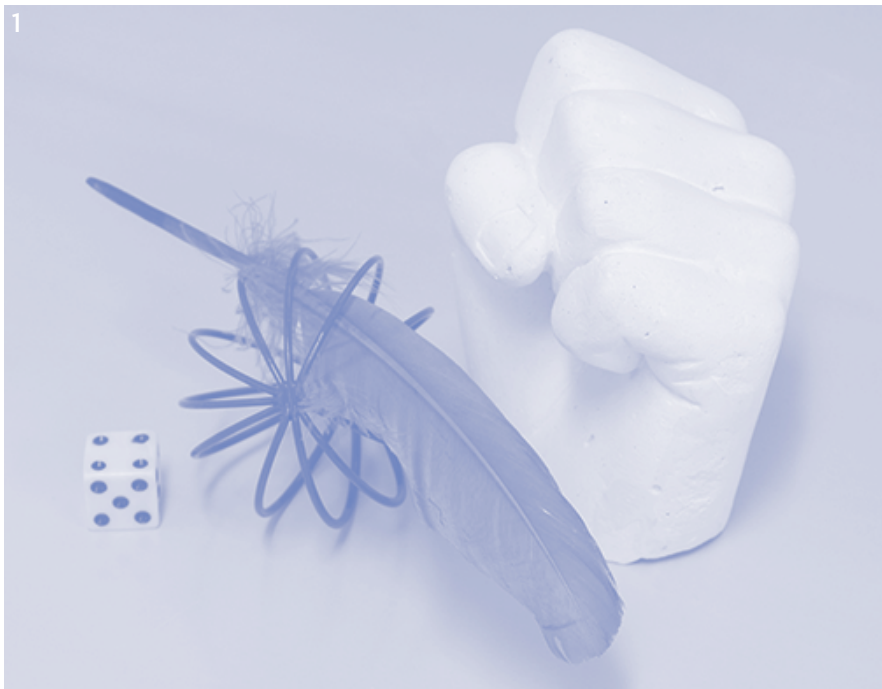
Cover image— Alana Bartol, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, 120 St SE, 2016. Photograph, 28 x 86 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Image right— Jennifer Wanner, *Absentia: Newfoundland and Labrador #06*, 2017. Collage, 60.96 x 81.28 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

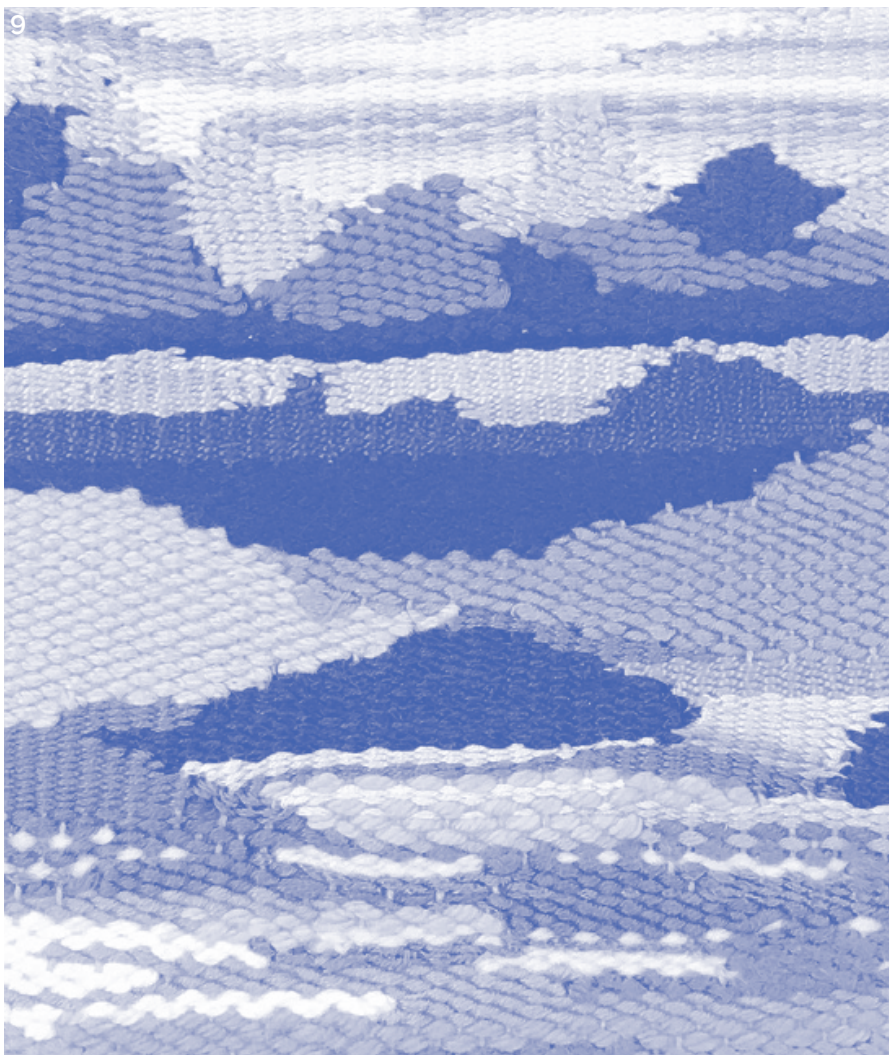
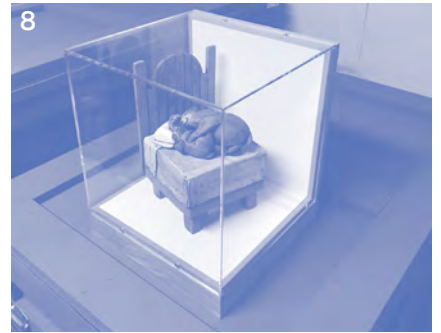
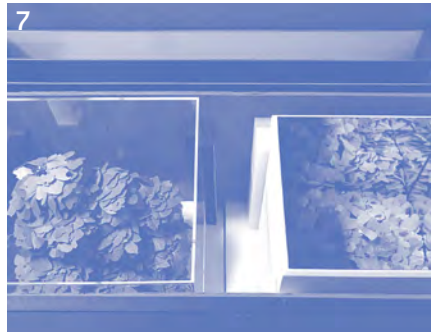




AROUND THE REGION



- 1 I saw a blue wolf by C. Ian McLaren School students and Emily Promise Allison of *Make-Believe*.
- 2 I saw toilet paper then it turned into a bubble gum machine by C. Ian McLaren School students and Allison.
- 3 A Dutch plank loom prepared by Liv Pedersen of *Loom* for a visiting artist workshop in Didsbury.
- 4 Liv Pedersen visits students at Our Lady of the Evergreens School in Calgary to talk about her work.
- 5 Emily Promise Allison teaches students about composition while planning their collaborative still life images.
- 6 Liv Pedersen at Sundre Municipal Library with an avid group of weavers and her work in the background.
- 7 Two of Dara Humniski's works mounted, crated and ready to tour in *The Future is Botanical*.
- 8 *Nestling* by Annette ten Cate of *Life on Earthenware* sitting atop it's crate/home for the next two years.
- 9 A completed weaving by Susan Bentley who attended Liv Pedersen's workshop at Sundre Municipal Library.
- 10 Teacher and student, Liv Pedersen and Susan Bentley, reunited at Didsbury Municipal Library.
- 11 Students from Olds High School engage with *Wind* by Reinhold Pinter.





FEATURED LESSON PLAN

TAKING A LINE FOR A WALK

In this lesson plan, participants will work with partners to chart their movement through a selected landscape. While one person walks through the environment, the other will observe their actions and capture a simple gestural line drawing of their path. After they have both had turns walking and drawing, they will work together to construct one of the lines using natural objects found on site.

MATERIALS

Sketchbooks and/or paper, pencils, cameras.

PREPARATION

Discuss what a gestural line drawing is. Do a few quick exercises as a group so that participants become familiar with the process.

Have participants select a partner to work with. Ask participants to brainstorm potential areas to work in. It could be one of their backyards, a local park or a forest. Remind them that the goal is to temporarily alter the landscape. They should work in areas that they have permission to be in (i.e., avoid conservation areas and private property).

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Participants begin by familiarizing themselves with the environment. Have them walk around their selected area together, looking for an abundance of one natural material (e.g., rocks, leaves, sticks and so on) that can be rearranged to construct their sculpture.
2. Partners will agree upon a vantage point that the final photograph will be taken from and set up their sketchbooks and pencils at that location.
3. One of the partners will walk at least 40 feet away from the vantage point, turn around and walk back slowly through the landscape. The other partner will use their pencil to create a gestural line drawing of the movement. A useful tip is to not pick up the pencil from the page once the person has started walking.
4. Repeat step 3 with partners switching roles.
5. Partners will select one of the gestural line drawings and recreate it as a sculpture by rearranging the selected materials from step 1. They may need to gather more resources as they build.
6. Once the sculpture is complete, have participants photograph the result from the chosen vantage point.

VARIATIONS

Assemble the sculpture inside – use gathered material to recreate the gestural line drawing inside the classroom or gallery space.

Draw with found materials – instead of creating the line in the environment, use found materials such as mud or charcoal to create the gestural line drawings.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Can walking be considered an art form? Why or why not?

+ This lesson plan was developed for the TREX Southwest exhibition, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*. For more information please visit the Current Exhibitions section of our website: <http://albertasocietyofartists.com/exhibitions-2/>

FALL/WINTER 2017-2018 EXHIBITION LOCATIONS

OCT 4—NOV 1

DREAMING WITH MY 'GREAT MOTHER'

BANFF
Banff Elementary School

ART & DESIGN IN THE 21st CENTURY

LUNDBRECK
Livingstone School

MARGARET SHELTON: BLOCK PRINTS

RED DEER
Glendale Sciences School

SOMETHING NOW AS DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE

CALGARY
Holy Child School

TALISMAN

RED DEER
Annie L. Gaetz School

THE TIES THAT BIND

CALGARY
St. John Paul II School

EMMA LAKE: LANDSCAPE, ABSTRACTED

SUNDRE
Sundre Municipal Library

WIND

LACOMBE
Lacombe High School

A WOMAN WALKING (THE CITY LIMITS)

CALGARY
St. Albert the Great School

LIFE ON EARTHENWARE

DIDSBURY
Westglen School

ON THE GRID

BLACKFALDS
Blackfalds Library

THE FUTURE IS BOTANICAL

MILLARVILLE
Millarville Library

NOV 8—DEC 6

SYLVAN LAKE
Mother Teresa School

AIRDRIE
Heloise Lorimer School

BANFF
Banff Elementary School

CALGARY
St. Albert the Great School

CLARESHOLM
Claresholm Library

CAYLEY
Cayley School

CALGARY
St. Philip Fine Arts School

AIRDRIE
Bert Church High School

CALGARY
McKenzie Lake School

CALGARY
Monsignor Doyle School

LACOMBE
Lacombe Upper Elementary School

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE
Rocky Elementary School

DEC 13—JAN 17

TOURING IN REGION 4

CALGARY
SAIT Library

MILLARVILLE
Millarville Library

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE
Rocky Elementary School

CALGARY
St. Albert the Great School

CALGARY
SAIT Campus Life

HIGH RIVER
High River Library

RED DEER
Red Deer College Library

CALGARY
West Springs Elementary School

LACOMBE
Lacombe Upper Elementary School

CALGARY
Holy Child School

EXSHAW
Bighorn Library

JAN 24—FEB 21

RED DEER
Annie L. Gaetz School

THREE HILLS
Three Hills Library

LUNDBRECK
Livingstone School

CAYLEY
Cayley School

RED DEER
Glendale Sciences School

DIDSBURY
Westglen School

TURNER VALLEY
Turner Valley School

CALGARY
St. Augustine School

OLDS
Olds High School

FRANK
Crownsnest Pass Public Art Gallery

BLACK DIAMOND
C. Ian McLaren School

Image— Dara Humniski, *Sunset*, 2015 - 16. Digital print on Epsom Somerset Velvet paper, 51 x 34 cm. Courtesy of the artist.





ARTIST Q&A WITH ALANA BARTOL

In the TREX Southwest exhibition *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, the Calgary-based, interdisciplinary artist Alana Bartol used walking as a medium to explore the carefully delineated city limit. Curious about “what bodies move alongside, within, and outside of the designated city boundary and how the border of the city is inscribed on the land and felt in space,” Bartol attempted to walk the roughly 174 kilometre perimeter using the City of Calgary map as her guide. In most instances, the boundary was marked by barbed wire or fence and was not easily accessible by designated pathways. Bartol, therefore, forged her own trail by walking alongside roads and highways, the Tsuut’ina Nation 145, private property, farmland, suburban sprawl, the Bow and Elbow rivers and the Bearspaw Dam. Along the way, she collected found objects, recorded video and captured photographs. These items not only document the artist’s personal journey but reveal the curious traces of the inhabitants who occupy or have occupied these liminal spaces.

The following Q&A was conducted through written correspondence between curator, Shannon Bingeman, and artist, Alana Bartol over several weeks in February and March of 2017:

Shannon – Walking, to me, is an improvisational act. We’re often interrupted by different stimuli that can alter the course of our path and thoughts. That being said, walking is also a planned action—whether that plan is as simple as getting from point A to point B or one with a spiritual, conceptual or metaphysical purpose. I’m curious what your original intention was for this project before you set out on the 174 plus kilometres route?

Alana – Walking has always been an integral part of my creative process, even before I began to conceive of it as performance. The idea for *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)* began with walking as a

way to get to know a place, in this case the city of Calgary, which I moved to in 2015. Earlier that year, I had been at the Banff Centre for a six-week residency in which I began to explore dowsing (aka “water-witching”) as part of my creative method. In this work, walking is part of dowsing. I see how these two bodies of work relate and continue to evolve alongside one another. During the residency, I was often walking alone in the woods for hours at a time in the deep snow of winter, feeling as though I was on an absurd quest, unsure what it meant to be dowsing in the dead of winter. One of the ideas that surfaced during these walks was thinking about the body as receiver, an antenna of sorts that is open and receptive to new forms of experience and knowledge. Like dowsing, walking allows one to become not just an observer but an active receiver and transmitter, generating reciprocity between the walker and their immediate surroundings. Lauren Elkin writes in her recent tribute to female flâneurs: “As we progress through the cityscape there comes a point when we are no longer just reacting: we are interacting, created anew by this interaction.”¹ In my work, walking becomes a starting point to ask questions about how this interaction is *stored in, processed and released* by the body. I don’t know that this is answered in this particular work, but it is something I continue to think about through site-responsive performance.

After the residency in Banff, I was on the Greyhound bus on my way to Calgary. As the bus approached the city, I was struck by how defined the city’s rippling edges appear from afar and the startling view of suburban sprawl. Through the bus window, my gaze was met with rows of fences and walls describing the edges of residential communities. I wondered what it would be like to walk along the city limits. *Is there a map to follow? How is the city boundary inscribed on the land? Would it be possible to walk along? What would be the point?* Having lived in smaller cities with struggling economies, I was particularly interested in the desire to expand Calgary (both outwards and upwards) through its history of annexation and consistent demand for construction. Walking through downtown streets, I felt the same sense of awe and anxiety that I felt the first time I went to Toronto and encountered skyscrapers. In the heart of the city one receives the message that Calgary is shiny and new. Reflective glass towers reveal one of Alberta’s most notable features—big skies—while giving a sense of openness and expansion. I remember remarking to a friend that the skyline was littered with cranes, “No, not the bird, the kind used in construction.”

After living in Calgary for almost a year, I took public transit but rarely ventured outside of the downtown core. I had become aware of urban walking paths, planned as designated routes for leisure and recreation, channels that also dictate the movement of bodies through public space. Another question began to arise: *where do people feel free to move in a city?* While urban walking is celebrated like the development of the Rotary/Mattamy Greenway, which is positioned to be the longest network of urban pathways in the in world, the city itself is challenging to navigate on foot. Unless you have a vehicle, it is difficult to get across the city quickly and as I discovered through this project, it is almost impossible to reach the outer limits.

As I set out to realize my initial question of whether it would be possible to walk along the city limits, I was thinking about the forces that shape how bodies move through space and who feels the freedom to move through public space. I realized the importance of asking these questions and set out to do so with a lot of planning, some of which went out the window once I started the walk.

S – The quote that you mentioned by Lauren Elkin describes the crossing of a liminal state (or threshold) while walking, when an individual is able to move beyond reaction to interact with their surroundings and is consequently changed by those interactions. Was there a moment during the performance when you felt that you had crossed a similar threshold? Were there specific encounters that occurred or objects that you found that shaped your experience?

A – Yes, there were so many. Within the first hour of walking I was drawn to film, unravel and sometimes collect the detritus caught in and along barbed wire fences. This was the beginning of an unanticipated shift in the direction and outcome of the work. Throughout the walk, barbed wire ran alongside me as a constant reminder of exclusion, ownership and enclosure, one of many indicators of the violence of settler colonialism inscribed on the landscape.



ARTIST Q&A

continued...



I began walking along the northern city limit (starting at the intersection of 144 Avenue NE and 24 Street NE). There were fragments of plastic bags, material, rope and other weathered debris entangled in barbed wire being blown wildly. I saw what I thought was a raincoat caught in the fence, but as got closer, I realized it was a deflated sex doll. I felt a mix of emotions including defeat. Unsure of what to do, I sat down. I began to film and photograph it, hoping to understand the complexity of the moment, thinking about my desire to speak about my own experiences of domestic and sexual violence and how difficult this has been despite the sense of urgency to communicate these experiences. At that moment, I realized it would be important to foreground what it might mean to walk along the outskirts of the city as someone who identifies as a woman.

I had not intended to pick up objects, but as the walk progressed, there were particular moments when I was at an impasse that needed to be acknowledged or presented in some way. A good portion of the city limits cut through private property, so I began to pick up debris at or near these sites. I also encountered many birds and animals during the walk, mostly domesticated farm animals but also muskrats, coyotes, dogs, osprey and prairie dogs. Outside of the sections that cut through parks and outlying suburban communities, I rarely crossed paths with another human, and the animals and birds seemed to be the only ones that noticed me. There is this perception that Calgary is a very clean city, and I was interested in what might it mean to draw attention to what is discarded at the city's edges and the aspects of society that these remnants might speak to.

How do we relate to complexity? We absorb and experience the world around us in dense, layered and multifaceted ways, yet we learn to distance ourselves from the environments we live in and move through. Art (and walking) can be a way to reconnect to our bodies: to observe, to listen, to feel, to smell, to think and to reflect. In this work, walking and art are inseparable. They become joined through performance, an embodied methodology that allows me to begin to attempt to communicate some of the complexities of everyday experiences and the structures that hold them in place.

S – What I find so interesting about the project is that it doesn't just trace your personal journey, but documents the curious traces left by other people who have also occupied these peripheral spaces. The image of the sex doll wrapped in barbed wire is a jarring one, and so too is the empty Plan B box juxtaposed with the image of a bull staring directly into the camera. As a woman, it's hard not to look at these images without considering the dominant perceptions that persist in Western society about the vulnerability of women who walk alone. From an early age, we're taught that walking is an action that comes with potential risk, and we're warned not to walk alone



in certain areas or at certain times of the day. As someone who uses walking often in your practice, I'm curious how you negotiate these perceptions and if you ever encounter people who question what you're doing, perhaps because of your gender?

A – I use walking as a way to intervene in public space and consider how bodies, in particular women's bodies, navigate public space. The piece points to the difficulty (if not impossibility) of walking in the city's current configuration. *How can we reconfigure boundaries without considering the oppressive systems that reinforce them?* Capitalism and patriarchy—the systems that not only oppress women, but also racialized, poor and vulnerable people—shape the social construction of gender. The collected objects speak to stories but also hierarchies in our society, revealing gendered power relations. Rebecca Solnit writes, "Walking shares with making and working that crucial element of engagement of the body and the mind with the world, of knowing the world through the body and the body through the world."² If while walking, women can become active negotiators of public space, then walking can become an act of creating a space of self-determination, choice and freedom.

While walking, I came across very few people, though sometimes I would see others from a distance. People create places to gather along the city limits where access to the river has been restricted to those who own property or by the railway or private industries. When I entered residential areas in Bears paw, an affluent area along the city limit, no one questioned me. *Would this have been the case if I were not a white woman?* My white privilege allowed me to move into areas where I wouldn't normally be but still be relatively safe. I found myself trespassing in a few sections of the walk, unintentionally, though I made the decision to trespass on a company's land in one section. No one stopped me at any point and I met no one. If you watch the full video, you can see these moments. At one point, I see a "No Trespassing" sign and realize I am on private property. I slip through the barbed wire fence back to side of the road, only to be confronted with the "I Don't Get Mad...I Get Even" license plate (*A Woman Walking (the City Limits), Township Rd 250*). I completed this part of the walk in July. A month later Colten Boushie a 22-year-old indigenous man was shot dead in Saskatchewan by a farmer. The shooting sparked public debate over the "right to defend" one's person or property with lethal force. It revealed widespread racism in Canada toward the indigenous peoples and brought to light the racism in our justice system. Coming from a place of privilege, I created this work with the hope that we can create a world that all women identify with and oppressed people could feel the freedom to move and make choices without constraints or fear of violence.

Women learn to be vigilant when navigating public space. While I was walking, a woman in her car pulled over and asked if I needed help. Closer to the end of the walk, in a desolate industrial area at the eastern edge of the city, I was approached several times by a man in a car and told to “get in the car.” The risk of violence shapes where, when and how women move in public space, yet statistics tell us that violence against women happens more often in domestic sphere. I view the edge of the city as an in-between, unsettling place between public and private space, catching the evidence of interactions that occurs in both realms.

S – Earlier you mentioned how the presence of barbed wire became a visual reminder of the violence of settler colonialism. I imagine that this became front of mind as you walked alongside the Tsuut’ina Nation 145. Can you describe that experience? How do the city and First Nation appear to coexist as neighbours?

A – Walking the border between Calgary and the Tsuut’ina Nation was the only area where the city limit was visible “on the ground.” I walked alongside fences lined with barbed wire for most of the walk around the city, but these fences marked divisions between public and private property, whereas the fence along the Tsuut’ina Nation runs directly along the city limit. Rather than seeing the occasional sign reading “Calgary City Limits,” there were signs frequently posted stating “Tsuu T’ina Nation Lands / Private Property.” In various sections of the walk, I came across large signs outlining the future development of a southwest ring road, to be called the Tsuut’ina Trail, a long and controversial development, which will see the transfer of reserve lands to the province of Alberta in order to build a section of the road and utility corridor. The image of the culvert (*A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, AB-8) was taken in one of these sites.

There was evidence of settler / First Nations tension (and transgression) along this section of the city limit. In the video, I follow barbed wires, trying to capture the path, the tension from straight lines to dips and swirls, and finally, it disappears, creating an opening. There were many footpaths across these openings. There was also graffiti on a few of the signs and some were turned upside down. In one section near a suburban community, the fence was completely gone. At this site, there was a fairly large area that appeared to be for dirt biking, which was almost directly on the border. There were human-made hills, a fire pit, a few ramp-like structures and other debris that seemed to indicate it was in regular use. A former student told me about a dirt bike / recreational area near the southwest city limit created by youth from the suburban community. There was no one there, but it was clearly still in use; part of one structure was charred from being burned. Once I had passed through this section, I looked back and could see a woman and a young girl crossing from the Calgary side into Tsuut’ina Nation lands. *Were they trespassing?* I was too far away to ask them or for them to see me. It made me wonder about this site and how to learn more about what happens there.

As I began this piece, I became aware of how little I know of the Tsuut’ina First Nation. The performance took place on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Tsuut’ina Nation, as well as the Siksika Nation, the Piikani Nation, the Kainai Nation and the Stoney-Nakoda Nation. This work has prompted me to learn more about the history of the place where I now live. I see *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)* as the beginning of a larger body of work. I hope to revisit sections of the city limits, including the section along the Tsuut’ina Nation lands and re-walk them with others. My hope is to begin conversation, to learn about how other people experience the boundary, and how reconciliation might begin or is beginning.

Credits:

1. Lauren Elkin, “A tribute to female flâneurs: the women who reclaimed our city streets.” *The Guardian*. July 29, 2016, accessed February 11, 2017. <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/jul/29/female-flaneur-women-reclaim-streets>.
2. Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Viking, 2000), 29.

Page 9— Alana Bartol, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, B01, 2016. Video still. Courtesy of the artist.

Page 12— Alana Bartol, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, AND TOWNHOMES NEXT LEFT, 2016. Video still. Courtesy of the artist.

Page 13— Alana Bartol, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, AB-8, 2016. Photograph, 28 x 86 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Page 14— Alana Bartol, *A Woman Walking (the City Limits)*, Township Rd 250, 2016. Photograph, 28 x 86 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Page 16— Photograph of Alana Bartol from her recent series *In Blood and Bone*. Courtesy of the artist.



+ Alana Bartol comes from a long line of water witches. In her art practice, she explores visibility, transformation and survival by negotiating the boundaries of our relationships with the non-human world and each other. Through performative, research-based and community embedded practices, her site-responsive works propose dreaming, walking and divination as ways of understanding across places, species and bodies. Her participatory works invite others to engage in acts of trust, inquiry, care and improvisation, while making visible unseen forces that shape our world.

Bartol's work has been presented and screened nationally and internationally at various public venues including Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art (Winnipeg), ARC Gallery (Chicago), Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit, Karsh-Masson Gallery (Ottawa), SIMULTAN Festival (Romania), Museo de la Ciudad (Guadalajara, Mexico), Access Gallery (Vancouver), InterAccess (Toronto), Media City Film Festival (Windsor, ON), and Groupe Intervention Vidéo (Montréal) amongst others.

Bartol is the recipient of grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, The City of Windsor and the Ontario Arts Council. She currently lives in Calgary and teaches at Alberta College of Art + Design.



ABOUT

THE TRAVELLING EXHIBITION PROGRAM

Since 1980, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) has supported a provincial Travelling Exhibition (TREX) Program. The TREX program strives to ensure every Albertan is provided with an opportunity to enjoy fully developed exhibitions in schools, libraries, health care centres, and smaller rural institutions and galleries throughout the province.

The TREX program assists in making both the AFA's extensive art collection and the work of contemporary Alberta artists available to Albertans. Four regional organizations now coordinate the program for the Foundation:

REGION ONE Northwest — The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie

REGION TWO Northeast/North Central — The Art Gallery of Alberta

REGION THREE Southwest — The Alberta Society of Artists

REGION FOUR Southeast — The Esplanade Arts & Heritage Centre

THE ALBERTA SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

The Alberta Society of Artists (ASA) is an active membership of professional visual artists who strive for excellence and through exhibition, education and communication, will increase public awareness of the visual arts. The ASA is contracted by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) to develop and circulate art exhibitions to communities throughout southwestern Alberta. Each exhibition is designed to easily unpack and install within smaller spaces found in schools, libraries, museums and other public venues.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Image left— Annette ten Cate, *Overflow*, 2017. Earthenware clay with underglaze and ceramic patina finish. Courtesy of the artist.



