

OAKVILLE GALLERIES

Les Fleurs du Mal

Curated by Karen Kraven
Gairloch Gardens & Centennial Square
04 February 2026–24 May 2026

Abbas Akhavan, Lili Huston-Herterich, Sukaina Kubba,
Jeremy Laing, Jenine Marsh, Diyar Mayil, Marisa Portolese,
Swapnaa Tamhane, Aimée Zito Lema

To learn more visit oakvillegalleries.com or scan below:



Image: Abbas Akhavan, untitled, 2017, refrigerators, flowers, plastic buckets, dimensions variable. Photo: Rachel Topham. Courtesy of the artist.

OAKVILLE GALLERIES

Gairloch Gardens | 1306 Lakeshore Road East, Oakville ON L6J 1L6
Centennial Square | 120 Navy Street, Oakville ON L6J 2Z4

GALLERY HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Closed Sundays, Mondays and statutory holidays
Monday (available by appointment)

Admission is always free.
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Table of Contents

1	Exhibition Text by Karen Kraven
8	Artworks at Centennial Square
10	About the Artists at Centennial Square
12	Artworks in Gairloch Gardens
18	About the Artists in Gairloch Gardens

Les Fleurs du Mal Exhibition text by Karen Kraven

Les Fleurs du Mal brings together artworks that explore flowers, gardens and the rituals of mourning and remembrance. Grappling with the complexities of loss and the thresholds between life and death, the artworks in this exhibition consider commemoration, materiality and embodiment, to imagine futures and elsewhere while also reflecting on the disenchantment in those fantasies and the fleeting beauty in our everyday lives.¹

Prior to floral arrangement, the cut-flower is poised in anticipation of being assigned meaning. Bouquets are often substitutes for words or sentiment; their poetics insist on both the affirmation and fragility of life. The flower is a stand-in, like welcomed company, offered by those who couldn't be there or sent in lieu of genuine support.

The garden is contradictory, a place of impermanence and decay, a rebel outpost and a communal paradise, on the one hand offering sanctuary, gardens also embody power structures. This tension “makes visible one of the most interesting aspects of gardens, that they exist on the threshold between artifice and nature, conscious decision and wild happenstance.”² The garden is an experiential space that spills out of its boundaries in that it is as much about the gardener and the world around as it is about the plants and ecosystems within. Mapping possession, microcosm and macrocosm, the metaphor of the garden becomes the stage for narratives of transformation.

The exhibition borrows its title from Baudelaire's infamous book, which explores themes of death, disgust for evil, and a search for a utopian ideal, and is often translated into English as *The Flowers of Evil*, but in French can read as *Wrong Flowers* or *Flowers of Illness* or *Flowers of Pain*. *Mal* is an ambiguous word in French. The title asks us what can be made from human ugliness, cruelty, cowardice explores themes of death, and greed?

The ambiguity of flowers and their meanings was the starting point for this two-year-long artistic and curatorial project, which began with the research for my solo exhibition *Bloemenlust* at Gairloch Gardens, Oakville Galleries in 2025. *Bloemenlust*, meaning the 'love of flowers', was the name for the largest flower auction in the world in

1 Nathan Brown, *The Flowers of Evil*, Verso, 2024, p.20

2 Olivia Laing, *The Garden Against Time*. p.14

“Ooh-oh-oh God, tu-urn me innnnnn, tooo a flower”³

Visiting Royal FloraHolland in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands last year, I entered the 12-football field sized warehouse at 7 AM and burst into tears. The herbaceous fragrance was overwhelming, something I wasn't expecting from mass production, and I breathed in collective heartsong with all the millions of soon-to-be-recipients of those flowers. My Lilliputian view from the elevated walkway miniaturized the flowers and I imagined little beings in buckets and on carts, travelling on highways and gathering in houses. I desired to be transformed from a rigid, self-obsessed human into a soft and joyful flower.

The floral bouquets in 17th-century, Dutch still-life paintings were like impossible gardens; they often paired flowers that would never grow together or be in bloom at the same time, as a demonstration of wealth and longevity. Now, it is possible to have any combination of flowers because they are flown all over the world every day.

At Centennial Square, the varieties of cut flowers in **Abbas Akhavan's** *untitled*, 2017–ongoing, are selected in consultation with a local florist by what is seasonal, and the composition reflects these changes throughout the duration of the exhibition. To choose seasonal and local flowers is to resist ever-abundance and reminds viewers of the sensory and social experience of selecting flowers in person, for a loved one. The careful arrangement of buckets of tulips, lilies, lisianthus, roses, chrysanthemums, snapdragons, and irises in floral refrigerators turns the installation into an image, embodying the fight against death that photography contends with. Cut flowers are given and received worldwide as stand-ins for emotion, poised in untitled the flowers are in suspension prior to being assigned meaning.

In **Jeremy Laing's** *Infinite Sample Set (the 2026 Grow-op Edit)*, 2022–ongoing, the frame of one of the existing suspended lighting grids is lowered to emphasize its greenhouse-like enclosure and draped with reflective sheets or tarps. The embodied negotiation of framed surfaces (or surfaced frames), screens and windows, are saturated with colour and pattern, like an ornamental crop under synthetic sun.

These stand-ins, like doubles or proxies bring forth anxieties around death and the supernatural. Like flowers, puppets have served as political metaphors and vessels for agencies unable to be expressed by humans.

3 Nathan Brown, *The Flowers of Evil*, Verso, 2024, p.20

In **Lili Huston-Herterich's** *Pushing Up Daisies*, 2025, the installation and performance reflect on the fear of death and the fear of talking about death. The installation includes kinetic sculpture, stage lighting, video, and sound liven the empty set, breathing life into the inanimate. The accordion-like sound gasps for air, laughs uncomfortably and sighs with relief. In *Dying Livingly*, Staci Bu Shea writes, "death has been outsourced for generations, our grief sanitized or quieted. I understood that death happened suddenly, or it was gradual behind closed doors, both to be feared. Talking about death always seemed to happen too early, and then too late."

In the four-chapters of the live performance (*American Yoga*, *Towering People*, *Death Bed* and *You Are A Stain*) that accompany the artwork, Huston-Herterich performs the puppeteer for an uncertain, yet sincere puppet who takes very deep breaths while talking themselves through a crisis, describing a strange and unsettling dream, discussing their end of life wishes and singing a hallucinatory song. Typically, a marionette is innocent, trustworthy and sweet, but seemingly immune to gravity's force and void of self-consciousness. In Huston-Herterich's performance, we become convinced of the puppet's animacy and sentience.

Each of these installations has lighting that emanates from within the artworks, casting temperatures of light that feel like three orchestral seasons: spring, summer and fall.

In **Gairloch Gardens**, the selection of works by **Aimée Zito Lema** transcend timelines of life and death, utilizing the properties of paper and photography to retrace the archive, using X-ray imaging and paper restoration to reexamine the methods of repair of archival material as acts of care.

The Subversive Body, 2016–ongoing, is a sculptural performance where the artist carefully enwraps her daughter, as if under a blanket, with large prints of photographs taken from archival images from revolutionary movements during the last Argentinian civic-military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983, historically known for its brutality and the forced disappearances of 30,000 people. The archival images show incredible courage and fearlessness of the people in demonstrations, protests and acts of collective resistance.

The Subversive Body will be repeated with her daughter, now 13 years old, and after her father's passing. The cotton rag paper registers the body, and it sculpts the print into moulded contours to leave both the absence of the material body and its memory embedded in the paper

that takes space. What does it mean to reshape personal and collective loss through the material experience of history and memory with the body? How is broken history passed on? Impression can mean a reproduction or print, it can also mean a feeling, mental image or opinion on someone as well as a physical mark or indentation left on a paper.

Time (restored), 2024, visibly mends a torn photograph, using a detailed paper restoration technique and joining together the materiality of memory and the transformation of the intergenerational archive. Watch (*portrait*), 2024 and *Untitled (hands)*, 2024 are like mirrors into the intergenerational depth of grief and the life-affirming passage of time.

"Learning to live with our dead requires a raft. Losing someone so integral to our ecosystem, losing a sense of ourselves as our whole chemistry changes -knocks us off our feet and ushers a shift in our lives, demanding a new state of balance."⁴

Diyar Mayil's *Still Air*, 2025 is an architectural garden and a fountain courtyard; to exhale, to hold breath, to slowly contemplate, as waves crash and water ripples infinitely, or to wait for something to happen, or not to happen. This anticipation, steeped in both hope and fear, is an expression of the grief that continuously accompanies everyday life.

The enclosure of the installation contains and limits movement but also suggests that the water is flowing from somewhere, or to elsewhere, through what look like marble gutters. On the contrary, the pool and irrigation system are cast from melted emergency candles, suggesting the aftermath of long nights of vigil; of keeping flames burning. Floating in suspended value, like pennies, are copper beans ready to germinate or be exchanged. Mayil uses materials that could melt, seep away, or evaporate in thin air, suggesting precarity and uncertainty.

For Jamaica Kincaid, the garden is a space, of making and unmaking, for cultivating personal memory and encountering trauma and colonial history, acting as the 'counter-memory' to dominant narratives. "A garden, no matter how good it is, must never completely satisfy. The world as we know it, after all, began in a very good garden, a completely satisfying garden –Paradise– but after a while the owner and the occupants wanted more."⁵

⁴ Staci Bu Shea, *Solution 305: Dying Livingly*, Sternberg Press, 2025

⁵ Jamaica Kincaid (ed.), *Introduction in My Favourite Plant: Writers and Gardeners on the Plants They Love*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2024 (1998)

Jenine Marsh's *Paradise is a Walled Garden (Generator)*, 2025 is like a trellis or a snare fence that produces a dense, illusionary effect of containment while also suggesting abundant growth and possibility. The site-specific installation of synthetic rubber-drenched flowers, wire and metal buckets crosses the thresholds spanning the bay window and covered porch of Gairloch Gardens with climbing vines that are reaching outwards like hydro wires or communication lines. The energy transmitted throughout the sculpture reflects the contemplation on the restorative and hopefulness of gardening, regenerating oneself in order to face destruction. "The very act of trying to look ahead to discern possibilities and offer warnings is itself an act of hope."⁶

Marsh's daisies and mums are durable, conductive and neither living nor dead. "Even as ornaments, flowers represent life itself, as fertility, mortality, transience, extravagance, and as such they enter our art, rites, and language."⁷ Transformed, they propagate a different kind of seed, one that asks the viewer to think about what they give lifeforce to.

The flower trade industry, an emblem of beauty and comfort for lovers, mourners, and celebrants worldwide, masks an unsettling reality tied to its labour practices; in factory-farms workers endure long hours and hazardous chemical exposure to meet the insatiable demand. "To accept the presence of death in the garden ... is to refuse an illusion of perpetual productivity, without rest or repair: an illusion purchased at a heavy, soon unpayable cost, inaugurating summer without end, the fields burning, the trees like stones."⁸

Committed to slow processes, like papermaking, **Swapnaa Tamhane's** *The India Report*, 2023, references the research undertaken by Charles and Ray Eames in their involvement in developing a pedagogical framing for a design institution in post-Independent India that highlighted the Eameses' poetic perception of "undesigned design" in their analysis of the everyday vessel, or lota.

Tamhane's sculptures emphasize the curves, variance, texture and how the lota fits in the palm of her hand by remaking the form with kala cotton pulp. The structural fibres of the cotton have been transformed, and the paper pulp registers the hands of the maker. Kala cotton is an indigenous seed, producing a slightly rougher fibre cotton than the Indian government's khadi cotton, as though it is in resistance to the now-regulated cotton that was the material pathway to colonial resistance.

6 Octavia Butler quoted by Rebecca Solnit in *Orwell's Roses*, 2021, p.259
7 Rebecca Solnit, *Orwell's Roses*, Viking, 2021, p. 20

If filled with water, Tamhane's vessels would become slippery and fall apart, destabilizing colonial possession through employing the skills and materials used by artisans and questioning the relationship between design and decoration.

Marisa Portolese's *Botanical Portraits–Goose Village Still Life*, 2026 is the second phase of the artist's research project *The Goose Village* which explores the cultural memory, sites of historical trauma and the vehicles of emotional continuity through storytelling, photography, oral history and mapping. Goose Village was a vibrant neighbourhood in south-west Montreal that was home to many Italian immigrants. In 1964, its occupants were displaced and their homes expropriated for the development of a parking area and Autostade for Expo '67 which was demolished in 1976. What remains is a concrete, field-like lot with wildflowers and perennial plants that continue to grow, unyielding, asserting their presence. Pursuing the persistence of this vegetation, Portolese speaks to endurance, regeneration, and the refusal of memory to fade; the garden's glory continues to bloom.

Juxtaposing life-sized reprints of archival expropriation photographs of home interiors awaiting demolition with flowers clipped from the present-day ruins of the district, Portolese infuses these spaces with life and memorial, honoring the lives of her family and heritage. The aster, rose rugosa, Queen Anne's lace and goldenrod are like fireweed, thriving in the upturned and decimated soil, the regrowth of resistance or simply seeds blown from elsewhere, building a new home.

By transforming a rug into a lace-like membrane by drawing with filament, **Sukaina Kubba's** *Tonight I Received News That My Beloved Will Come*, 2026, is composed of fragments of found rugs to tell the stories of displacement, travel and trade, flora and fauna. Like a textile that has all but disintegrated, the gossamer and transparent quality of the work translates the object into the imaginary, engaging memory and history. Designs often feature streams of water, flowers, shrubs, trees, and sometimes birds as well as geometric shapes and patterns that offer protection. Rugs are nomadic, often rolled and carried and then unfurled to make familiar a home elsewhere.

Apparitions, traces and reflections emerge and dissolve throughout the exhibition. The presence and absence of the body is embodied through the metaphor of the flower; "the thinness and transparency of the petals (that lets one see the sunlight through them or see the shape of another overlapping petal coming from behind) gives them a

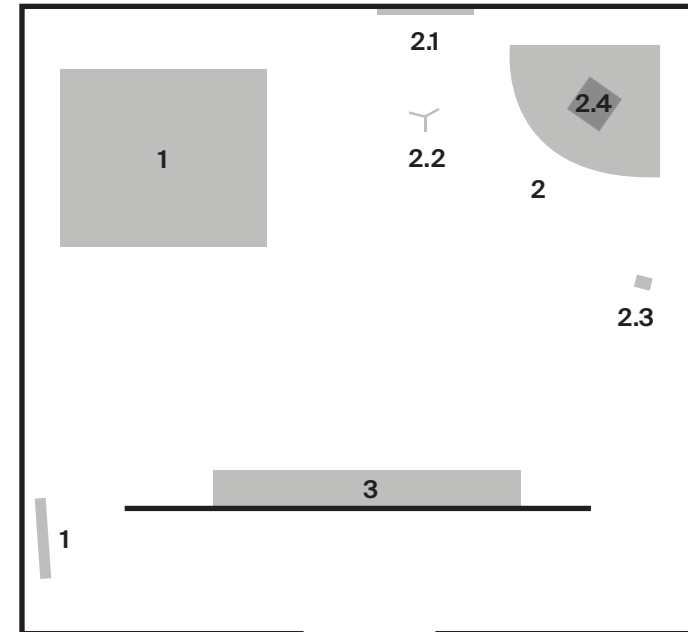
8 Olivia Laing, *The Garden Against Time*, p. 279

kinship with the filmy substance, the substancelessness, of mental images.”⁹

Les Fleurs du Mal considers the garden as a different kind of clock, where time moves in spirals and waves between rot and fertility, generating its own future and regenerating in the face of destruction and death, suggesting other ways to spend a life, against productivity, where generosity, care, gentleness and custodianship also count.

9 Elaine Scarry, *Imagining Flowers: Perceptual Mimesis (Particularly Delphinium)*, *Representations*, Winter 1997, University of California Press, pp. 90-115

Les Fleurs du Mal At Centennial Square



- 1. Jeremy Laing**
***Infinite Sample Set (The 2026 Grow-Up Edit)*, 2022–ongoing**
X-frame stands, found materials, grommets, and fibre drums, with lighting grid, dollies, and hand truck courtesy of Oakville Galleries
Variable dimensions

Initial support for this project was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the University of Toronto's Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, and Visual Studies Department.
- 2. Lili Huston-Herterich**
***Pushing Up Daisies*, 2025**
Multi-piece installation: marionette, stage top, textile & small sculpture & performance
Variable dimensions

- 2.1 **Lili Huston-Herterich**
Do you worry? 2025
 Knitted synthetic yarn
 270 x 340 cm
- 2.2 **Lili Huston-Herterich**
Fore & From, 2025
 Puppet (epoxy resin, knitted synthetic, found jewelry, wood, felt, synthetic hair), welded steel stand
 112 x 60 x 70 cm
- 2.3 **Lili Huston-Herterich**
Janus, 2025
 Modified found object (toy dog in a Nike shoe box), pressed aluminum dog tag
 24 x 32 x 12 cm
- 2.4 **Lili Huston-Herterich**
An Entrance (I Am Who You Are Afraid Of), 2025 (excerpt)
 Video, CRT monitor, stereo speakers
3. **Abbas Akhavan**
Untitled, 2017–ongoing
 Refrigerators, flowers, plastic buckets
 Variable dimensions

About the Artists at Centennial Square

Abbas Akhavan

Born in Tehran and based between Montreal and Berlin, Abbas Akhavan's multidisciplinary practice reflects on the relationships between place and history, attending to the geopolitical forces which define spaces. Akhavan's practice ranges across site-specific ephemeral installations to drawing, video, sculpture, and performance. The direction of his research has been deeply influenced by the specificity of the sites in which he works, including the architectures that house them, the economies that surround them, and the individuals that frequent them. The concept of the garden and by extension, the spaces and species just outside the home, such as the backyard, public parks and other domesticated landscapes, have been foundational components in his work. In recent large-scale installations, Akhavan recreates cultural sites affected by international conflicts, attending to the multivalent ways in which ongoing geopolitics fight for control of historical narratives.

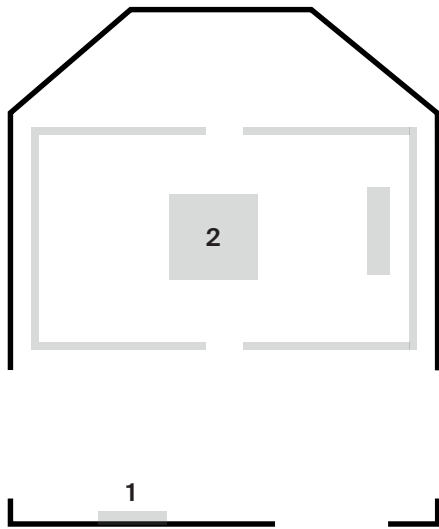
Lili Huston-Herterich

Lili Huston-Herterich is a white American-Canadian artist based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. As an artist, she is concerned with how her work emerges in relation to space, histories, and other people, and with maintaining an awareness and acknowledgment of these relationships. Her practice is situated both materially and conceptually; she works with what is in her close vicinity in order to develop a dialogue from her current historical, geographical, and economic position. Conscious of her role as a maker within a context of excess, she uses the flotsam and jetsam of capitalist culture to create work that radically reflects a dependency on the present. Her research focuses on personal and political lineages of information, specifically improvisational and dialogue-based methods of knowledge transmission. She works both independently and collaboratively, engaging tactile materials as well as performance, sound, and video. Currently, she is interested in storytelling, character building, personal archives, humour, repetition, revision, and singing.

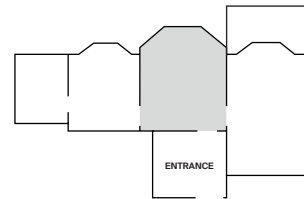
Jeremy Laing

Jeremy Laing is a Canadian artist who makes objects, spaces, and situations for embodiment and relation. Through the synthesis of craft, conceptual, and social modes, their work explores the interrelation and transitional potential of people and things, materials and meanings, and questions the normative logics of who and what is considered to matter, or not.

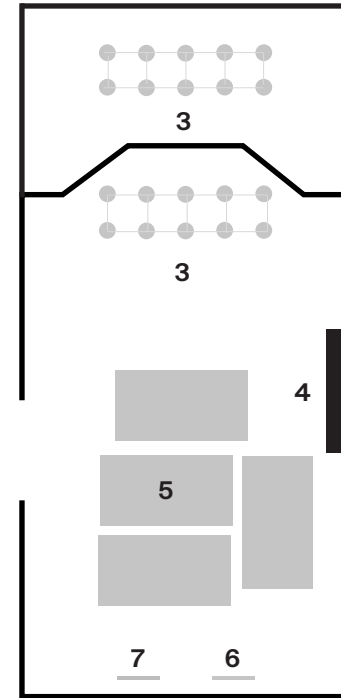
Les Fleurs du Mal
In Gairloch Gardens



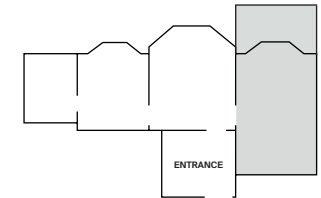
Central Gallery



1. **Swapnaa Tamhane**
The India Report, 2023
Pulp made from excess kala cotton yardage, mirrors
Variable dimensions
2. **Diyar Mayil**
Still Air, 2025
Emergency candles, copper, water
Variable dimensions

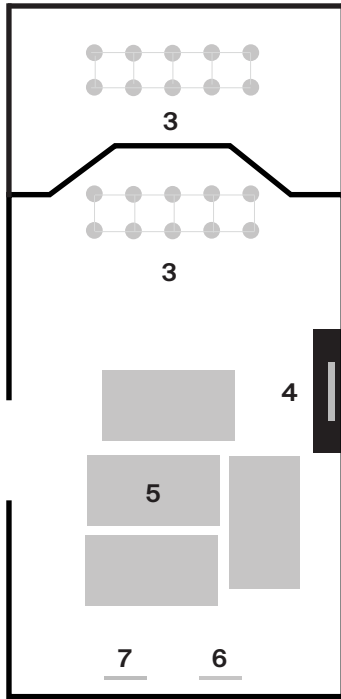


North Gallery
& Covered Porch

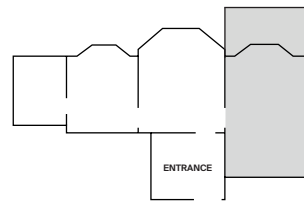


3. **Jenine Marsh**
Paradise is a Walled Garden (Generator), 2025
Flowers, synthetic rubber, acrylic varnish, powdered pigment, wire, stainless steel security cable, LEDs, electroplated bronze, newspaper, steel pails, concrete, hardware.
788 x 685 x 335 cm
4. **Aimée Zito Lema**
Watch Portrait, 2024
Inkjet print on Epson semigloss photopaper
50 x 70 cm
5. **Aimée Zito Lema**
The Subversive Body, 2016–ongoing
Inkjet prints on Hahnemühle paper
80 x 170 cm

Les Fleurs du Mal
In Gairloch Gardens

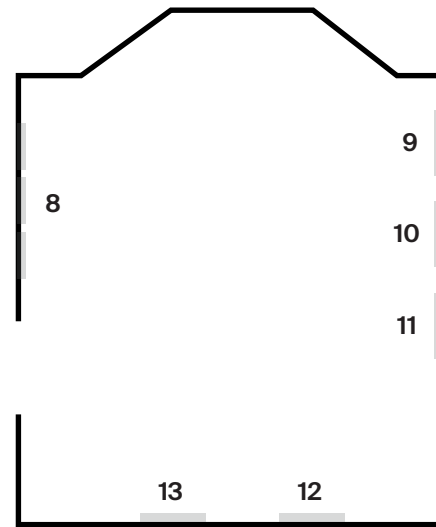


**North Gallery
& Covered Porch**

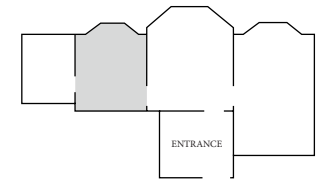


6. **Aimée Zito Lema**
Untitled (hands), 2024
Inkjet prints on hahnemühle paper
45 x 70 cm

7. **Aimée Zito Lema**
Time (restored), 2024
Inkjet print on Epson semigloss photopaper
29.7 x 42 cm



South Gallery

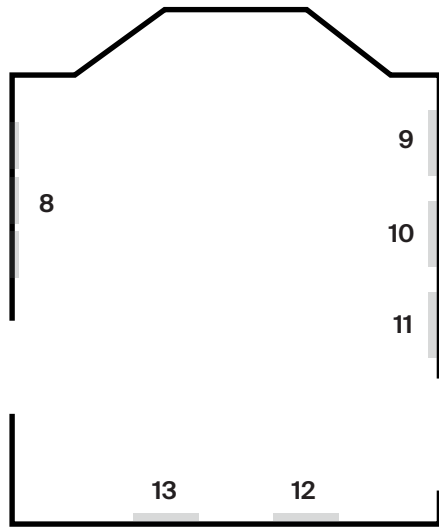


8. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Queen Anne's Lace
From the Goose Village Still Life, 2026
Wallpaper
Variable dimensions
Made for the Oakville Galleries

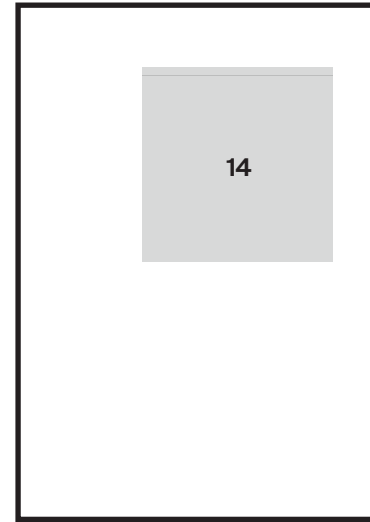
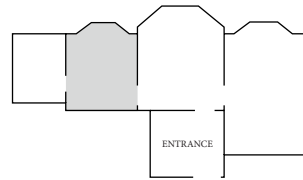
9. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Purple Aster
From the Goose Village Still Life, 2026
Inkjet print
69.85 x 82.55 cm

10. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Ribbon and Verdant Greens
From the Goose Village still life series, 2026
Inkjet print
69.85 x 82.55 cm

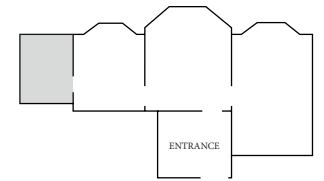
Les Fleurs du Mal
In Gairloch Gardens



South Gallery



Salah Bachir Gallery



11. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Rosa Rugosa
From the Goose Village Still Life, 2026
Inkjet print
69.85 x 82.55 cm

12. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Goldenrod and Statuette
From the Goose Village Still Life, 2026
Inkjet print
69.85 x 82.55 cm

13. **Marisa Portolese**
Botanical Portrait-Wildflowers
From the Goose Village Still Life, 2026
Inkjet print
69.85 x 82.55 cm

14. **Sukaina Kubba**
Tonight I Received News That My Beloved Will Come, 2026
Hand drawn TPU filament
150 x 400 cm

About the Artists in Gairloch Gardens

Sukaina Kubba

Sukaina Kubba is an Iraqi-born Toronto-based artist whose work is rooted in material and cultural research, material experimentation, storytelling and drawing connections. Kubba has exhibited at Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, Western Exhibitions, Chicago and Patel Brown, Montreal. In Toronto she has shown at Venus Festival, two seven two gallery, Patel Brown, Greater Toronto Art Triennial at MOCA, Mercer Union SPACE Billboard Commission, the plumb, The Next Contemporary, Art Gallery of Ontario, and Aga Khan Museum. She has also exhibited in Scotland at Dundee Contemporary Arts, Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow, Glasgow International and Kendall Koppe, Glasgow. Kubba will exhibit at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa in April, her first institutional solo in Canada. Kubba has completed residencies at the International Studio and Curatorial Program, New York and La Wayaka Current, Chile. She is a sessional lecturer in Visual Studies at the University of Toronto, and was previously a curator and lecturer at The Glasgow School of Art.

Jenine Marsh

Jenine Marsh (b. 1984, Calgary AB) lives in Toronto. Engaging with themes of agency, mortality and value, her sculpture and installations have been exhibited at Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, ON (2025); the Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, NY (2025); the Goldfarb Art Gallery, Toronto; Ensemble, New York (2024); Prairie, Chicago (2024); Ashley, Berlin (2024); the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (2024); Cooper Cole, Toronto (2023); Joe Project, Montreal (2023); Gianni Manhattan, Vienna (2023); Union Pacific, London (2023); Night Gallery, Los Angeles (2022); Franz Kaka, Toronto (2019); Centre Clark, Montreal (2019); Entrée Gallery, Bergen (2018), and Lulu, Mexico City (2015). Marsh's work has received funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, Partners in Art, the Chalmers Arts Fellowship, the Toronto Arts Council, and the Ontario Arts Council. Jenine received her BFA from the Alberta University of the Arts in 2007, and her MFA from the University of Guelph in 2013. She is currently a doctoral candidate at York University.

Diyar Mayil

Diyar Mayil is an artist working in sculpture, installation and performance. She often works with the familiar to address issues of comfort, discomfort and the blurring of public and private contexts. She is the laureate for the Bronfman Fellowship in Contemporary Art (2022) and the recipient of the Liz Crockford Award (2023). Her work has been supported by Canada Council for the Arts, CALQ, Conseil des arts de Montréal, and has recently been shown at Whitney

ISP, Articule, Circa Art Actuel and Centre Clark. She holds a BFA and MFA from Concordia University. Originally from Istanbul, she now lives and works in Montréal.

Marisa Portolese

Marisa Portolese is a Canadian-Italian visual artist born in Montreal, Quebec. She is a Professor in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University, where she obtained an MFA. Portraiture, representations of women, autobiography, familial and cultural heritage are recurrent subjects in her artistic practice. She has produced photographic projects featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Canada, Europe and the United States. From 2017 to 2019, she was the Artist-in-Residence at the McCord Museum in Montreal. Her work has been widely reviewed and featured in various magazines and newspapers, and she has four published monographs: *Un Chevreuil à la Fenêtre de ma Chambre*, *Antonia's Garden*, *In the Studio with Notman and Goose Village*. She has been awarded grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Québec Arts Council, and from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and has received a Concordia University Research Fellow Award in 2022. Her works are included in various corporate, museum and private collections.

Swapnaa Tamhane

Swapnaa Tamhane's art practice is dedicated to drawing and the material histories of cotton and jute. She has an MFA in Fibres & Material Practices, Concordia University, Montreal, where she was recently an Artist-in-Residence. She has been supported by SSHRC, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, and was an International Museum Fellow with the Kulturstiftung des Bundes in 2013. Her research extends to material culture, and with designer Rashmi Varma, she wrote *SĀR: The Essence of Indian Design*, Phaidon Press (2016). She has exhibited her work at Nature Morte, Delhi; articule, Montreal; Sculpture Park Jaipur; Green Art Gallery, Dubai; Victoria & Albert Museum, Dundee, Scotland; and has had solo exhibitions at Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; and Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey, British Columbia, Mead Art Museum, Amherst, MA, and she has been short-listed for the Sobey Art Award 2025, with an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Aimée Zito Lema

Aimée Zito Lema is a Dutch-Argentinean visual artist. Born in Amsterdam and raised in Buenos Aires. Both research-based and intuitive, Zito Lema works with archival material and personal memory. Her projects seek to investigate history as it is passed through generations, and in turn, as a tool to rethink the present. Growing up between Argentina and the Netherlands, Zito Lema is influenced by movements: of the body in space, across geographies; and of the past into the present.

Aimée Zito Lema studied Fine Arts at the Universidad Nacional de Artes, Buenos Aires (2003), and the Gerrit Rietveld Academy (2007). She completed a Master's degree at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague (NL, 2009-2011) and was a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam (NL, 2015-2016).

Her work was shown in numerous international solo and group exhibitions at a.o. Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2024), Mercer Union, Toronto (2022, CA); Whitstable Biennale, Whitstable (2022, GB); Grazer Kunstverein, Graz (2021, AT); Triennial of Arts of SESC, Sorocaba (2021, BR); Oude Kerk, Amsterdam (2020, 2021, NL); Centro Centro, Madrid (2020, ES); HangZhou Triennial of Fiber Arts, HangZhou (2019, CN); Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (2018, PT); De Appel Art Centre, Amsterdam (2018, NL); Kunsthalle.

She lives and works in Amsterdam and since 2019 is teaching at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. In 2025 Zito Lema was selected as the first Artist-in-Residence of the Rijkmuseum, Amsterdam.

About Oakville Galleries

Oakville Galleries is a contemporary art museum in two locations presenting international and Canadian artists. Housed in a unique lakeside mansion in the magnificent Gairloch Gardens and a white cube gallery downtown, Oakville Galleries is one of Canada's leading contemporary art institutions. Supported by The Town of Oakville, Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council, sponsors, patrons and members.

