



CENTRE A

Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
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Artworks of *Ed Pien: Tracing Water*

September 16 – November 12, 2022

Curated by Henry Heng Lu

Gallery A:

***Splash* (2012–current), video, 2:39 minutes**

Uninhabitable island amidst Australia's Great Barrier Reefs.

Water's expressiveness and playfulness are accentuated by the combined forces from powerful wind gusts and me.

***Diane's Soaked Cod Fish Water Drawing* (2021), salted cod water intervention, gems, glitters and natural fixative on 3M reflective film, various sizes**

As this salt-drenched water marked its slow departure, it articulated incremental drawings with chunks of salt and tiny bits of cod that it abandoned. Inspired by water's breathtaking end-result drawing of glistening and loose salty bits, I sprinkled glitter and patterned tiny crystal gems over parts of it. The provisional state of this work is a reminder of water's infinite forms and its love for transformation.

***The Hungry Sea* (2018), Halifax Harbour Water, lithograph, state proof, 29 x 22 inches**

Moist Halifax air prolonged the drawing out of salt crystals by escaping Atlantic Ocean water. Rain on the seventh day resulted in the water fully returning to the diminished puddles, integrating with the dried-out salt crystals to become ocean water once again! The second attempt at water taking leave resulted in this most anthropomorphic image.

***Ocean Water Drawing* (2016–2019), excerpt from a suite of 6 drawings, ink and Conté with Atlantic Ocean Water intervention, 16 x 11 inches**

The hand-drawn marks and images respond to the trace drawings left behind by ocean water as it made its inevitable departure after its interaction with drops of white ink.

***Salar Drawings* (2017), highly salinated Chilean Desert sea water farm intervention, 16.5 x 11.75 inches**



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This water, already harbouring high concentrations of salt, has been extracted from within the belly of the Chilean desert (the driest place on our planet). Subjected to the sun's intense heat, this water took hasty flight, relinquishing salt and minerals it had partnered with for centuries.

These expressive and luminous drawings were made when highly volatile saltwater responded to drops of ink with explosive force.

Gallery B:

RainForest (2016), digital print on archival cotton paper, 44 x 29 inches

These photographs capture images akin to Chinese ink and brush landscape paintings. The distorted images were facilitated by torrential rain pummeling a car windshield.

St. Lawrence River spring ice/snow melt intervention (2020), ink on paper, 16.5 x 14 inches each

Some 200,000 metric tons of road salt is used each year during Montréal's winter. At spring melt, this material intermingles with freshwater flowing down the Saint Lawrence River. Kidnapped in March 2018, this water assisted in the realization of drawings that imagined watery creatures being tormented by this searing liquid realm.

Making River, Making Lakes (2022), ink, Kogawa House rain water intervention, 10 x 8 feet

Rain joined forces to make this drawing intervention. Wrinkled Tyvek was left in the sloped backyard where falling rain gathered on sunken areas, pooling, and then flowing like rivers. My contribution included adding ink to the pooled areas to show water's activities visibly.

Ghosts (2017–current), sediments on clear mylar abandoned by escaped water, various sizes

These drawings have been realized by waters captured from various locations.

Case 1: Toronto tap water and Smart Water

Case 2: Kainai Reservation Water (not potable) and St. Marys River Water

Top of case 1: Fraser River Water Making **Ghost** drawing (2022), clear mylar sheet temporarily holds kidnapped Fraser River Water, 28 x 61 inches

Top of case 2: Salish Sea Water Making **Ghost** drawing (2022), clear mylar sheet temporarily holds kidnapped Fraser River Water, 28 x 61 inches

Breath (2013), digital prints, 22 1/8 x 16 7/8 inches

Breath, Dawson City.



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Water leaving my lungs transformed itself instantly into vapour with the clashing of body temperature and minus 45 degrees celsius temperature. The short-lived white plumes made ephemeral and haunting drawings in space and were caught by camera and flash.

Suspension (2013), digital prints, 22 ½ x 16 ⅞ inches

Suspension, Dawson City.

Bejewelled minuscule ice crystals seemed to be dancing in minus 45 degrees celsius air.

Runoff 1 (2022), fluorescent textile dye, ink, Kainai Water intervention, 10 x 8 feet

Wrinkled Tyvek mimics rough and tumbled terrain. Dyed water poured onto the peaks and ridges of Tyvek and streamed downward, gathered and pooled before taking its slow, three-day departure.

RainForest (2018), video, 12:07 minutes

Water acts as a lens in this time-based work, distorting images viewed through the car windshield.

New Media Gallery:

Two Worlds (1998), excerpt from a suite of drawings, Amsterdam tap water, ink, acrylic and Flashe on paper, 8.5 x 11 inches

Two Worlds comprises a large series of narrative-based images. This suite imagines a future where humans battle watery beings to gain domination and control. The war wages on for centuries, and amidst destruction, suffering and death, hybridized, part-water and part-humans are born. The epic war finally comes to a halt as the two originating factions can no longer be distinguished.

The Living Sea (2017–2022), video projection over crystal gems, text by Merrell-Ann S. Phare, 14:20 minutes

Merrell-Ann S. Phare is an environmental lawyer, writer and champions First Nations Peoples' rights to access clean and safe water. In this work, she imagines herself to be water addressing us.

The video, projected over the crystal gem texts, displays footage from an ever-growing video archive of different expressions of water.

Subscribe to Centre A's newsletter at centrea.org/subscribe. Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 12 pm – 6 pm. For additional information, please contact us at info@centrea.org or +1 (604) 683-8326. Centre A is situated on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. We honour, respect, and give thanks to our hosts.