

Ave Hail
Have Hell

Winter 2023



GRIFFIN
ART PROJECTS



Alibaba Conundrum

10 + (-5) Commandments, 2022

Still from Video with Sound, Single Channel

Duration: 28:24 min., looped

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Cover image:

Alibaba Conundrum

Ave is to Have as Hail is to Hell, 2022

Urine on copper plate

24" (w) x 12" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

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Director's Note

Happy 2023! The team at Griffin Art Projects wish you and yours good health and meaningful time shared with family and friends this New Year.

We began the season with **KNOWN TO US**, our Youth Mentorship Exhibition, presented in collaboration with the **Artists for Kids** Program offered through the **Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art**. The exhibition featured students from across the North Shore who were mentored last fall by **Lacey**



Jane Wilburn, Griffin's Emily Carr University Fellowship Award recipient. Wilburn specializes in painting practices which she was able to share with this year's students. We are delighted to celebrate their work in the exhibition.

In 2023, we also renew our outreach programs for youth in Grades 10 to 12, with the program, **YouthHUB: Experiences in Contemporary Art**. This program invites educators to engage with Griffin's residency artists and Residency and Public Programs Coordinator, to enjoy bespoke programming for the classroom. **See page 12 for details on how to have your class participate!**

In February we also open our feature exhibition, **Alibaba Conundrum** from February 11-May 7. **Alibaba Conundrum** is a title that refers both to the exhibition project and the artist collective of **Ali Ahadi** and **Babak Golkar**. The project is accompanied by an artist tour and panel discussion of the exhibition with the artists; **see page 6 for details.**

In January-February, the Griffin residency welcomes BIPOC Studio Award Winner, **Natalie Purschwitz** and **Rain Cabana-Boucher**, who kicks off our **Through a BIPOC Lens** series. In March-April, the series will continue as we welcome Toronto based artist **Juka** and **Miriam Berndt**, Griffin's first Indigenous Emerging Artist Award winner. **For information about how to submit for other upcoming Griffin residencies, see page 10.**

We are also thrilled to announce two new publications, **Whose Chinatown?** and **Janet Werner: Sticky Pictures**. These beautiful publications can be ordered online through the Griffin website, www.griffinartprojects.ca. **For more details, see page 11.**

This year, Griffin is also launching our new sponsorship and donation program. We welcome your contributions throughout the year in support of our various programs and offer the opportunity for named sponsorships in support of our exhibitions, residency awards and publications (**see page 22 for details**).

As Griffin is a nonprofit entity, we are able to provide tax receipts for your generosity. Please keep us in mind this year, as your support keeps our program vibrant!

We are excited to launch another year of programming at Griffin as we celebrate our eighth year in operation. We are delighted to contribute to the North Shore and Vancouver visual arts ecology and we look forward to seeing you at the Griffin!

- Lisa Baldissera

Who's Who at Griffin

Young Canada Works Indigenous Curatorial and Marketing Assistant - Jordanna George

Jordanna George is from Sooke, BC, a member of the T'Sou-ke nation on their father's side and of Ukrainian ancestry on their mother's side. They are an emerging illustrator as well as a comic artist and writer, with interests in genre fiction with Indigenous and queer influences. They received a BFA from the University of Victoria in 2019, majoring in visual arts with a minor in gender studies. When they aren't creating, Jordanna enjoys reading, going on nature walks, and playing RPGs. Some of their work can be found at jordannageorge.com.

During their time at Griffin, Jordanna has worked on developing Indigenous programming bringing together different voices on Indigenous curatorial practices.

Young Canada Works is an organization that seeks to arrange jobs and internship opportunities to young workers and employers in Canada, particularly focusing on historic research, heritage sites, arts institutions and more.



Public Programming

Every Sunday, 2:30PM - Exhibition Tours

(in-person)

Join Griffin Art Project's Indigenous Curatorial Assistant, Emmett Hanly, in weekly tours of our ongoing exhibitions!

February 12, 1PM – Live from the studio with Natalie Purschwitz

(via Zoom)

Join the recipient of the Griffin Art Projects' BIPOC Studio Award 2023, Natalie Purschwitz, to learn what she has been up to through her time at Griffin.

February 18, 1PM – Alibaba Conundrum Artists Exhibition Tour

(in-person)

Join artists Ali Ahadi and Babak Golkar for an in-person tour of their exhibition Alibaba Conundrum.

February 19, 1PM – Live from the studio with Rain Cabana-Boucher

(via Zoom)

Join "Through a BIPOC lens" series artist in residence, Rain Cabana-Boucher, to learn what she has been up to through her time at Griffin,

February 26, 1PM – Open Studios with Rain Cabana-Boucher and Natalie Purschwitz

(in-person)

Join our artists in residence, Rain Cabana-Boucher and Natalie Purschwitz, in the studio for an in-person chat about the work they have undertaken during their time at Griffin.

Rain Cabana-Boucher
French Exit, 2021
Charcoal
Courtesy of the Artist

March 5, 1PM – Film Screening: Those Who Come, Will Hear

(via Zoom)

Curated by Griffin Art Projects' Adjunct Curator, Dr. Karen Tam, join us for an online streaming of the first of two feature-length films that address concepts related to language. See our website for details!

March 12, 1PM – Indigenous Curators' Talk

(via Zoom)

Join Griffin Art Projects for a virtual panel discussion between three Indigenous curators as they discuss their methodologies and approaches to curation. Organized and moderated by Jordanna George, Young Canada Works Indigenous Curatorial and Marketing Intern.

April 2, 1PM – Conversations on Collecting

(via Zoom)

This ongoing series builds on Griffin Art Projects mandate to make privately held art collections accessible to the public. Join us in conversation with Haitian-Canadian collector Yves Pierre-Louis and Montreal-based gallerist Hugues Charbonneau for a virtual discussion revolving around alternative art-collecting economies.



April 9, 1PM – Live from the studio with Miriam Berndt

(via Zoom)

Join the recipient of the Griffin Art Projects' Indigenous Emerging Artist Award 2023, Miriam Berndt, to learn what she has been up to through her time at Griffin!

April 16, 1PM – Live from the studio with Juka

(via Zoom)

Join "Through a BIPOC lens" series artist in residence, Juka, to learn what he has been up to through his time at Griffin!

April 23, 1PM – Film screening: Edge of the Knife - Sᑭaawaay K'uuna

(via Zoom)

Curated by Griffin Art Projects' Adjunct Curator, Dr. Karen Tam, join us for an online streaming of the second of two feature-length films that address concepts related to language.

April 29, 1PM – Alibaba Conundrum Panel Discussion

(via Zoom)

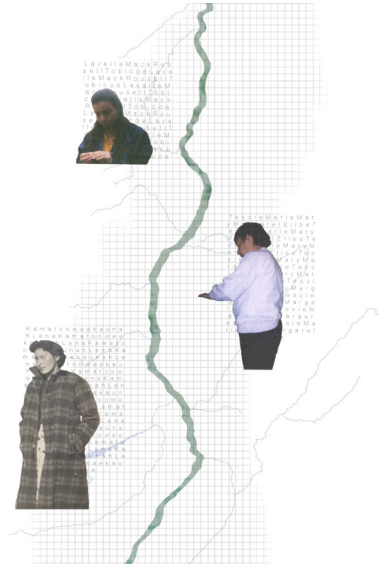
Ali Ahadi and Babak Golkar, the artists behind Alibaba Conundrum, will host an artist talk in discussion with a selection of panelists, followed by a Q+A.

April 30, 1PM – Open Studios with Juka and Miriam Berndt

(in-person)

Join our artists in residence, Juka and Miriam Berndt for an in-person chat about the work they have undertaken during their time at Griffin!

More information about all of our public programming can be found at griffinartprojects.ca/events



Miriam Berndt

The Women Before Me, 2022
10" x 14"

Scanned photos and maps, ProCreate
Courtesy of the Artist

Juka

Adinkra, my father..., 2017
Illustration

Courtesy of the Artist



Winter Residencies

Rain Cabana-Boucher

Rain Cabana-Boucher, is a Michif/British settler interdisciplinary artist raised in treaty 6 territory, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Her family has historic ties to the Michif communities of St-François-Xavier, St. Boniface, and St. Louis, Saskatchewan. She currently lives and works on the stolen land of the Skwxwú7mesh, Selilweta?, and xwməθkwəy̓əm Nations. Cabana-Boucher is a recent recipient of the Takao Tanabe prize for emerging British Columbia Painters and the First Peoples Individual Artist grant. Cabana-Boucher explores the autobiographical in relation to place and politics; seeking to navigate the complexities of identity within environments that are rapidly changing under systematic pressures.



Natalie Purschwitz

Natalie Purschwitz is an artist living and working on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) people. Her research is propelled by material exploration drawing on modes of making that include collecting, accumulating, arranging, editing, and writing. She is curious about the ways in which the landscape is shaped by humans and nonhumans, through systems of organization, networks of support and ruptures within these systems. By reconfiguring everyday objects, elemental substances and other lively combinations, she attempts to create conditions for material events.



Miriam Berndt

Miriam is a Plains Cree and Irish woman living in c̓snaʔəm (so-called Marpole, Vancouver BC), with roots in Kahkewistahaw First Nation and an upbringing on Six Nations of the Grand River territory. Her mixed media art explores themes of generational healing, hybrid identity, and land-based epistemologies through abstract expressions. She specializes in land-based design through a landscape architecture lens.

Juka

Juka is a Brazilian interdisciplinary artist whose practice explores storytelling through poetry, sculpture, illustration, performance, film, and digital technologies. Juka concluded his MFA in Interdisciplinary Art, Media and Design at OCAD University in 2022. Before embarking on this academic journey, Juka lived and worked as an artist in Brazil. He has worked on 12 books for children and youth and over the years, also worked as an educator. He began learning Capoeira at the age of ten, and it quickly became profoundly meaningful in his life and became a part of his identity.



Call for Applicants



Griffin Art Projects' North Shore Studio Art Residency Award

RESIDENCY DATES: May and June, 2023

DEADLINE TO APPLY: March 3rd, 2023

We are pleased to announce a call for submissions for Griffin Art Project's annual North Shore Studio Art Residency Award. Artists living in the Districts of North and West Vancouver, and the City of North Vancouver, are invited to apply. The successful applicant will receive:

- Two months of rent-free studio space in Griffin Art Project's residency building from May-June, 2023
- The opportunity for professional development and networking opportunities in Vancouver and beyond.
- A residency artist fee of \$2000.00
- The opportunity to share the works created throughout the residency during an open studio event organized and promoted by Griffin Art Projects.

Griffin typically hosts two residents at a time. Facilities include a 340 sq ft., lightly furnished studio for each resident, with a shared kitchen and bathroom. Griffin is closely monitoring the provincial guidelines in response to COVID-19 and regularly reviews and implements corresponding health and safety protocols within our residency building.

For more information and how to apply, please visit us at griffinartprojects.ca/residency-opportunities

Publications



Whose Chinatown?

Written by Karen Tam, and Joni Low

Edited by Lisa Baldissera

Translated by Yubing Guo and Henry

Heng-Lu

A catalogue of Griffin's 2021 show *Whose Chinatown?: Examining Chinatown Gazes in Art, Archives, and Collections*, this book continues this vital new research through a collection of essays and extended discussions of specific works. *Whose Chinatown?* was a comprehensive examination of Chinatowns from Western to Central to Eastern Canada, revealing an art historical and political account of Chinatown neighbourhoods while also looking unflinchingly at anti-Asian sentiments, which have grown more widespread during the pandemic globally.

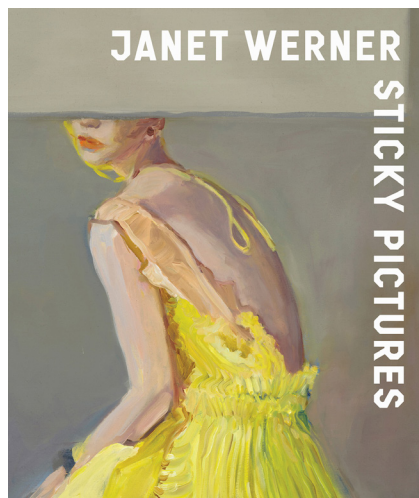
Janet Werner: Sticky Pictures

Written by Lisa Baldissera, Melissa E.

Feldman, Francois Letourneux, and Ara Osterweil

Edited by Lisa Baldissera

Janet Werner: Sticky Pictures examines and celebrates the evolving work of Montreal-based artist Janet Werner. Werner's unique combination of abstraction, fictional portraiture, and the rich history of painting are explored in *Janet Werner: Sticky Pictures* through texts by art and media historians, as well as an interview with the artist. Janet Werner was one of Griffin Art Projects' 2019 artists in residence, and some of the works presented in this publication were produced during Werner's residency.



YouthHUB: Experiences in Contemporary Art

Creative Mentorship Classroom Programs for Students in Grade 10 – 12.
Join us for creative discussions, gallery tours, studio visits, and hands-on workshops with Griffin's current artists-in-residence!

Are your students interested in pursuing the arts at the post-secondary level? Looking to gain firsthand knowledge of how an art gallery operates? Want to meet contemporary artists at the site of their work?

Griffin Art Projects is thrilled to offer *YouthHUB: Experiences in Contemporary Art*, an educational program designed to foster critical and creative engagement in the arts. Educators can work with Griffin's Residency and Public Program Coordinator to develop a program offering tailored to your students' needs.

For more information, please send an email to the Public Programming and Residency Coordinator, Faune Ybarra (faune@griffinartprojects.ca), to start the conversation!

Youth Exhibition: KNOWN TO US

Oil paintings by Artists for Kids'
Studio Art Academy Participants
January 14 & 15, 2023

Griffin Art Projects, in collaboration with Artists for Kids, was proud to host *KNOWN TO US*, a two-day exhibition featuring the oil painting portraits by 25 North Vancouver high school students made under the mentorship and guidance of ECUAD Fellowship Award winner Lacey Jane Wilburn.

Griffin is thrilled to continue our partnership with Artists for Kids, whose program offers students the opportunity to develop a personal portfolio each year, increasing confidence in their abilities as artists.



Alibaba Conundrum

Curated by Lisa Baldissera

February 11 - May 7, 2023

Exhibition Overview

Alibaba Conundrum, an artist collective formed by Vancouver-based artists Ali Ahadi and Babak Golkar, presents its debut exhibition at Griffin Art Projects.

The Alibaba Conundrum project considers how the English language and its enduring and global impact directly but quietly conditions everyday experience in the way that it surreptitiously shapes individual subjects and citizens by posing as the ‘norm.’

The project explores English language to critically examine how different ways of seeing and processes of creating and presenting subjectivities are produced through media and via cybernetics, under the hegemony of the English language. The project also explores how socio-economic structures reproduce themselves through image-based platforms, and how their production of subjectivities adhere to modes of late capitalism within contemporary life. Their project explores how vision and language have transformed as, during the pandemic period, the media’s polarizing enforcement of reductive language for complex issues has further deepened neoliberal subjectivities performed as instrumentalized capital.

The name, Alibaba Conundrum, is derived from the artists’ interest in visual representation in art and economics, and in information dissemination and the connections between the imaginary and the real enforced through the digital sphere. The artists state, “Allegorically, the term Alibaba points to two disparate subjects: the Orientalized story of ‘Alibaba and the Forty Thieves,’ inserted by Antoine Galland into *A Thousand and One Nights*; and its contemporary signification, ‘alibaba.com.’ The digital interface, the algorithmic, as well as the linguistic logic of such platforms condition the contemporary citizen’s desire to see, resulting in their consumption automatism through that seeing. Inspired by the characteristics of the literary Alibaba, Alibaba Conundrum, however, uses similar strategies and aesthetics implemented by visual commodity bazaars such as alibaba.com to research and propose ways of questioning this manufacturing of desire through subversive art practice.”

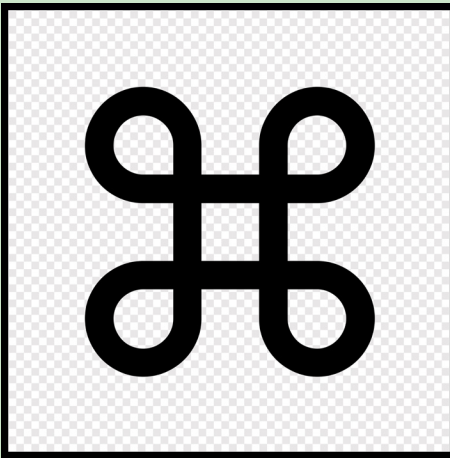
Another aspect of this work is this philosophical conceptualization of the ‘pun’—and both visual or literary double-meanings are included in this show. This is also reflected in the etymology of the word ‘conundrum’ itself, which according to the artists, began as a made-up term invented by students at Oxford University in the late sixteenth century. It was a habit of the students to ‘make up’ Latin words as a form of wordplay.

Conundrum was therefore a word that literally did not mean anything, and yet through continued use came to define the meaning of a puzzle itself. According to the Oxford Dictionary (itself notably an Anglicizing institution and the origin of this word), ‘conundrum’ has come to mean “a confusing problem or question that is very difficult to solve.”

Working together as Alibaba Conundrum, they note, “This exhibition critically examines how different ways of seeing, and subsequently those of saying, are manufactured today through the hegemony of the English language, globally conditioning the possibilities of thinking. It also explores how the link between the socio-economic structures of neoliberalism, Christian theology, and the global institution of art with its English grammar, maintains the contemporary habitus of thinking through diverse regimes of image production and media cybernetics.”

The artists attest to the challenge of escaping English as a formulating and directive force. As they note:

“In the contemporary world, one is either marked and affected by voicing/ responding to the speaking of English, or one is equally left unmarked and still affected by the inability to voice that speaking. With the omnipresence of English, every peripheral language (vis-à-vis English) attempting to connect to the world becomes a torsion of English. Therefore, one is either an English-speaking-thinking subject or one is simply defined as the negation of it.”



Alibaba Conundrum

Sign (Sentence to Come), 2022

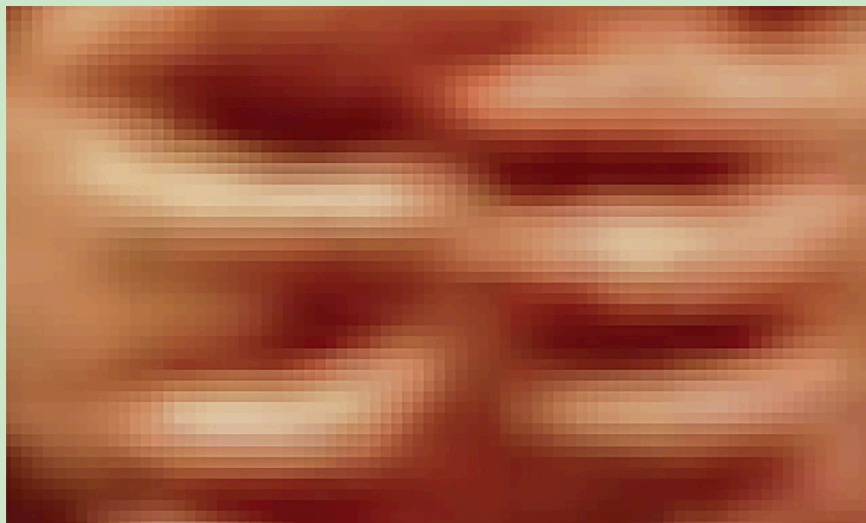
Inkjet on photo paper

60" (w) x 60" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Interestingly, within this evolution of the word conundrum, can be found a central problem of the English language and its naturalization of authority. It is a problem that results in an alarming geo-political universalisation. The artists state:

“Every English-speaking subject is also a non-English-speaking subject, and every non-English speaking subject is definitely an English-speaking subject. The problem is the extremely unequal struggle for recognition between the two and the asymmetrical proportion of this dialectic.”



This exhibition reveals these conditions by creating a space in which to consider one's own relation to the English language through the artist's playful yet seriously rigorous word and image-play. Through this play the artists create a conceptual interrogation using language itself to point to this puzzle—this conundrum—and consider how to decentre this force. As they write, "It is within this context that Alibaba Conundrum is a performer of the negation of the negation, a syntax/grammar attempting to counter-symbolize the grammar of the institution of art. In a word, Alibaba Conundrum is an It."

Through installations comprising a short film, sculpture, wallpaper, and a series of printed, image-based objects, Alibaba Conundrum calls our attention to the problem of escape—how can one find an "outside" to the English language? Alibaba Conundrum suggests that although there is no seemingly geographical "outside" to the hegemony of the English language, the possibility for an ontological "outside" is inside the English language. It is a conundrum of epic proportions, which the artists demonstrate unequivocally within this project.

Lisa Baldissera
Director
Griffin Art Projects

Content Advisory: This exhibition contains adult content of a sexual nature, as well as flashing lights. Please take care, as it may not be suitable for those with epilepsy.

Alibaba Conundrum
The Origin of the World, 2021
Inkjet on photo paper
60" (w) x 36" (h)
Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Artist Biographies

Ali Ahadi (b. 1984, Tehran) is a Vancouver-based artist and a scholar in humanities. His interdisciplinary practice spans from site-specific ephemeral installations to sculpture, photo and video-based works, writing and translation. Ahadi's work is constituted through addressing the problems of presentation and representation, monstertion and demonstration, and the relationships between aesthetics and contingent forms of abstractions. His proposed protocol of abstraction calls for what he terms a “monster”, an assemblage of a disorganized relations between the linguistic economy and the optical economy of an object.

Ahadi is an internationally exhibited artist. His last solo exhibition, *Shit Yes Academy* (Goh Ballet Academy) was held at the Ag Galerie (Tehran). He holds a PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies with a focus on continental philosophy from the University of British Columbia. He currently teaches in the UBC's Department of Art History, Visual Art, and Theory, where he previously received his MFA in visual arts in 2012. Ahadi's doctoral research devises two new models for a critical approach to historical and contemporary issues in art, politics, and philosophy. These models are “Thought-Activism” and the “Visitor”.

Babak Golkar (b. 1977, Berkeley) is an artist working and living in Vancouver. Grounded in deconstruction, replication and transformation, Golkar's working process is manifested in an array of media and object forms. His research emerges from his interest in the relationship between space and human conditions in the contemporary world, and aims to both examine and upend established ways of looking. By distorting the assumed certainties of perspective, Golkar questions accepted cultural and socio-economic systems and ideological viewpoints—as well as their persistence over time. He holds a BFA in Visual Arts from Emily Carr Institute (2003) and an MFA from the University of British Columbia (2006).

Golkar's has exhibited and presented works in national and international institutions, including: Vancouver Art Gallery (Vancouver); Polygon Gallery (North Vancouver); West Vancouver Museum (West Vancouver) Aga Khan Museum (Toronto); Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (Montreal); Sabrina Amrani Gallery (Madrid); Museum Villa Stvck (Munich); Framer Framed (Amsterdam); Sazmanab (Tehran); Sharjah Contemporary Art Museum (Sharjah); Fondation Boghossian - Villa Empain (Brussels); Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (London). In 2022 Golkar was named the first international Jameel Fellow at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, U.K., where he has been conducting research on the museum's collection.

Ali Ahadi and Babak Golkar co-founded the duo Alibaba Conundrum in 2021.

Artist's Statement

“**Alibaba Conundrum** is made by using a protocol of abstraction, one that employs the dialectic of the past and the present, that of the fragments from the category of the-already-said/seen and their contemporary interpretations under the linguistic and grammatical hegemony of the here-and-now. In its view, not only is the past accessible only in fragments but also conceivable only as fragments. In these fragments is condensed a totalizing logic that has brought about them. Alibaba Conundrum regards history as a constellation, one that embraces a body of presentations and representations, images and words, art and forms, laws and sentences, sentences and acts, and so forth, whose cohesion speaks of a generally present and consistent logic, the logic of political economy with its theologico-linguistic structure.

Alibaba Conundrum's approach to history is venturing into the forest of the past so as to collect. Its protocol of abstraction, however, necessitates bringing what is collected into the trial of montage that is to take place in the present. It does so in accordance with the logic of assisted readymade, i.e., a readymade that one or some of its components are modified by the artist. Such a modification, in Alibaba Conundrum, takes various forms, including but not limited to, introducing incommensurability between the visible object and the linguistic signs.

This exhibition consists of two interrelated components, the video *10 + (-5) Commandments* and a constellation of images and objects all as derivatives of the video. In other words, what contextualizes the images and objects presented in the second exhibition hall is the video *10 + (-5) Commandments*, which itself is a construction from another context, that is history.”

- Alibaba Conundrum



Two Gazes of Alibaba (Conundrum), 2022
Inkjet on photo paper
54" (w) x 20" (h)
Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Entrance/Room 1

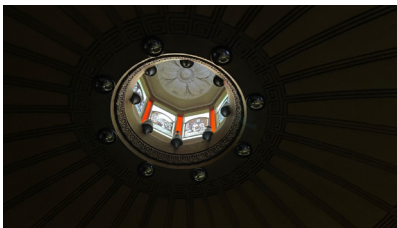


1. **Something Axiomatic Here (and Elsewhere)**, 2022
Illuminated stereo digital image, inkjet print, 3D glasses
Dimensions Varied
Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Employing 3D technique, this multimedia image creates a visual condition in which language is extricated from a two-dimensional image. The diptych brings together two separate moments from the 1976 film by Jean Luc Godard, *Here and Elsewhere*. The hovering and solidified phrase in the foreground of the image spells out: "it has to be said that the image of the sum will have nothing to do with the sum of images", which in the mentioned film is heard as voice-over narration.

2. ***a:vel / AH-vay**, 2022
Digital print on vinyl
94" (w) x 84" (h)
Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

An image of a mosaic outside the "House of the Faun" (Pompeii), spelling out the word HAVE, the Latin written form of the theological Christian word Ave, meaning hail.



3. **10 + (-5) Commandments**, 2022
Still from Video with Sound, Single Channel
Duration: 28:24 min., looped
Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

10 + (-5) Commandments is a single-channel video consisting of five divisible yet related episodes, each presented as one commandment. The five commandments forming the structure of the video are, respectively, called *Read It*, *Say It*, *See It*, *Have It*, and *Amass It*. Following Alibaba Conundrum's protocol of abstraction described in the artist statement, the video employs a collage/montage technique bringing into play a dynamic relationship between language, sound, images, archive, text, and narrative.

Room 2



4. *Two Gazes of Alibaba (Conundrum)*, 2022

Inkjet on photo paper

54" (w) x 20" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

This diptych juxtaposes two faces from two historical paintings overlaid with a sentence addressing the Alibaba(ed) version of the John 1:1 verse of the King James Bible. The face on the left is derived from the Ottoman era *Tuhfet Ul-Mulk* (a Turkish translation of *Ruju as-Shaykh ila sibah*), 1773 and the face on the right is a derivative of the 1882 painting, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* by Édouard Manet. The work brings into play the question of gaze as an intervention challenging the long-standing dichotomization of subject-object orientation.



5. *15 Commandments (The Origin of the Word)*, 2022

Inkjet on photo paper

24" (w) x 24" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

From Mel Brook's 1981 film, *History of the World*, this image pictures Moses in mount Horeb (Sinai) where he was called upon by God to take his commandments. The image depicts the exact moment when Moses drops one tablet out of the three on which the lord's commandments were inscribed.

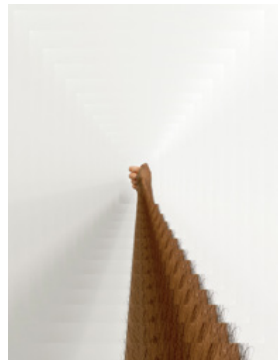
6. *English (Triggerrrrrrrrrrrring)*, 2022

Inkjet on photo paper

60" (w) x 80" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

Alluding to the inherent nature of language, that is the capacity to construct and form realities, the piece *English (Triggerrrrrrrrrrrring)* visually echoes this aspect of language by creating a perspectival dimension which directs the eye to the hand. The depicted hand is shown in a locked grip with a silicone replica of another hand, suggesting a constant relationship between language and the construction of reality.



7. *The Origin of the World*, 2021

Inkjet on photo paper

60" (w) x 36" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

This image is an enlargement of a specific moment in the history of cinema. Its complete image, from which it has been abstracted/extracted, can be found in 10 + (-5) *Commandments*. Moreover, with its title at the core figure of this work, the visitor is immediately situated in a historical trajectory commencing with Gustave Courbet's *L'Origin du Monde* (*The Origin of the World*). This work problematizes the question of "seeing" and its ontological relations to that of "saying" as the constitutive element of what a world is.



8. *Alibaba's Perspective*, 2022

Wood, fabric, tripod, LCD panel, security camera

Dimensions varied

Alibaba's Perspective is a multimedia sculpture consisting of a photography tripod, a wooden box akin to a camera obscura, LCD panel, and a surveillance camera. The box is mounted on the tripod inviting visitors to peek through its hole. Placing their eyes on the hole, the visitor will notice that the live footage they see is not one and the same as what they expected to see.

9. *Ave is to Have as Hail is to Hell*, 2022

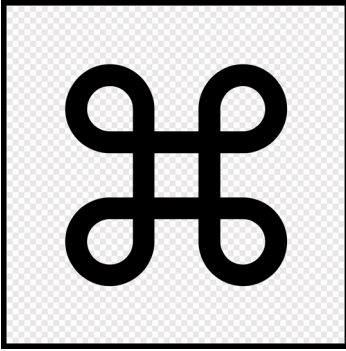
Urine on copper plate

24" (w) x 12" (h)

Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

With the possibility of being read based on multiple orders of reading, this equation highlights the complex intersubjectivities, as well as interchangeabilities between the processions of capital accumulation, theological superstructure and grammatical discipline. Although seemingly unconventional, the material used for the production of this piece has a long art historical precedent.





10. **Sign (Sentence to Come)**, 2022
 Inkjet on photo paper
 60" (w) x 60" (h)
 Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

This sign/logo iconizing a looped movement encapsulates a rather condensed and long history of symbolism spanning from the ancient time to the contemporary. As a historical sign, it has been used in Nordic countries "as an indicator of cultural locations and places of interest". It is also known as "Saint John's Arms" and "Bowen knot". What bonds this historical sign to the contemporary is the adaptation of it by Apple corporation as the "Command Key".

11. **It Flashes.**, 2022
 Camera flash, micro computer
 Dimensions Varied
 Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

It Flashes is a booth situated at the centre of the exhibition hall inviting visitors inside itself. While inside the booth, the visitor will be embraced within a rather dark environment that soon will break with a bright light flashing off. Upon their exit from the booth, the visitor will notice that a floater word has been shaped on their retina. This effect is, of course, very ephemeral. The ephemeral floater will accompany the visitor for a short amount of time as they attend to other works in the exhibition.

12. **DynamicEquilibriumStaticEquilibrium**, 2022
 Part I: Color print on vinyl sticker, Part II: Inkjet on photo paper
 89" (w) x 120" (h)
 Courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum

This work brings together two images from historical sources, one from the modern cinema and the other from modern literature, respectively, *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1975, and *Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mustafa Al-Misri, Tuhfet Ul-Mulk* (a Turkish translation of *Ruju as-Shaykh ila sibah*), 1773. By way of assemblage, this work addresses the problem of disciplined bodies within the homogenizing and rationality systems of the power structure within the post-enlightenment capitalist logic. The disciplinary mechanism of such structure is precisely that which is visible in the image from Pasolini's *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* in the form of an inspecting authority group from a fascist organization, while the same structure is removed from the realm of visibility and turned into the position of an entertained spectator (the royal Sultan) in the image from the *Tuhfet Ul-Mulk*.



*All works by Alibaba Conundrum. Works descriptions courtesy of Alibaba Conundrum.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Consider joining Griffin's new Supporting Community Program! Your contributions will help us put on excellent exhibitions, offer paid residency opportunities, produce and design beautiful publications, and organize engaging programming for youth and adults. Our programs and exhibitions are free for all to attend offering families, students, seniors and those who are income-challenged equal access to high level visual arts experiences. With your contribution, we will be able to help them stay that way!

Whether you're looking to contribute individually (with fun perks!), or for a corporate sponsorship, there's something for you in our program. With well-attended exhibitions and programs, consistent email marketing, and a robust social media presence, Griffin offers a unique opportunity for businesses large and small to build brand awareness while supporting local arts and culture.

For more information, please contact Griffin Art Projects Director, Lisa Baldissera (lisa@griffinartprojects.ca), or our Gallery Administrator, Vanessa Lee (vanessa@griffinartprojects.ca).



Image: Combine Art Fair, Dec 9-11, 2022

Acknowledgments

Griffin Art Projects is situated on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the səliiwətaʔtəməxw (Tsleil-Waututh), Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Temíxw (Squamish), šxwməθkwəy̓ əməʔtəməxw (Musqueam), and S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō) Nations. We are honoured and grateful to undertake our work here.

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Griffin Art Projects Staff:

Director: Dr. Lisa Baldissera

Adjunct Curator: Dr. Karen Tam

Gallery Manager: Brittney Groetelaars

Indigenous Curatorial Assistant: Emmett Hanly

Public Programs and Residency Coordinator: Faune Ybarra

Gallery Administrator: Vanessa Lee

Young Canada Works Indigenous Curatorial and Marketing Intern:

Jordanna George



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