

TIFFANY APRIL

Ottawa, ON

BIOGRAPHY

Tiffany April is a visual artist working in painting and light-based installation. She deconstructs the hierarchy between human and non-human beings, and instead considers the human body as engrained in ecological processes. April uses sensuality and simplicity of forms woven in space to place the bodily on the same plane as the technological and the organic.

April completed her MFA at the University of Ottawa (2019), and her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Arts at Concordia University (2014). April was awarded participation in the Untapped Emerging Artist section at The Artist Project (2022) and took part in Toronto Outdoor Art Fair (2021). She was shortlisted for the RBC Emerging Artist Award (2020) and invited to create a public installation for the City of Ottawa's Microcosm Project (2020). Her participation in Emergence2021 (Galerie Art Image) was supported by the City of Ottawa's Creation and Production Grant and the Ontario Arts Council's Exhibition Assistance Grant. Her MFA thesis exhibition, *The Surgeon and the Magician*, was presented at the Ottawa Art Gallery (2019). Her work is in national and international private and public collections including Invest in Canada (2021) and the City of Ottawa's art collection (2018, 2021). April has exhibited in Canada (Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto) and internationally (London, Berlin and South Korea).

April is grateful to the Canada Council for the Arts for their support of her solo exhibition *If You Discover Fire*

ARTIST STATEMENT – *If You Discover Fire*

The ancient Greek philosopher Empedocles theorised that vision functioned by emitting rays of fire from the eyes, similar to a lantern. In this sense, humans were the illuminating source of their own world. Fire was considered part of human biology, an extension of the human body reaching beyond its confines to interact with the world.

I find Empedocles hypothesis captures a meaningful depiction of human interaction with the world that breaks with the idea of humans as individual, impenetrable beings. Despite its human-centered implications, Empedocles was suggesting that

humans are in conversation with and affecting their environment.

Human subjectivity has been center focus in Western philosophy and innovation. If You Discover Fire brings forward the intelligence of fire and human entanglement within its agency. I understand nature's intelligence as self-correcting action or growth in favour of ecological balance. Fire can be a destructive force, but it is also one of renewal.

The inspiration for this body of work began during lockdown, while waiting for the elevator in my apartment building. I was absent-mindedly reading the fire escape sign, followed by a morning of news reports on the untameable chaos of the B.C. wildfires, and months prior, the devastation of the Oregon and Washington wildfires. The fire safety sign read: IF YOU DISCOVER FIRE, followed by a list of safety and escape measures. It was the first line, and the signs' purpose, that struck me as ironic. The human species evolved biologically and created society as we know it because of our 'discovery' and harnessing of fire's raw energy. Now, in the 21st century climate crisis we are increasingly exposed to wildfire and the sublime presence of its destructive power.

If You Discover Fire weaves together the myriad ways that our bodies and minds are deeply connected to fire; from its effect on early hominin brain development, status as a divine entity, mythological connections to sexuality, power, and knowledge, its hand in Indigenous and Western land cultivation and technological developments, and its role in balancing ecosystems.

Today, fire has made space travel and renewable energy possible. As our bodies continue to undergo mental and physical stressors of climate change, the question remains: if you discover fire what will you do with it — innovate or find the nearest exit?

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CV

EDUCATION

- 2019 Master of Fine Arts, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON
2014 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Major in Studio Art (Honours), Concordia University, Montreal, QC

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *If You Discover Fire*, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2020 *When You Sense the Forest Breathing*, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2019 *The Surgeon and the Magician* – thesis exhibition, Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Renaissance*, OttDesign Club X Wall Space Gallery, Zine Launch + Pop-up exhibition, Ottawa, ON
2022 *Material Presence*, Fitzrovia Gallery, London, UK
2022 *The Artist Project*, Queen Elizabeth Building, Toronto, ON
2021 *Toronto Outdoor Art Festival*, juried competition, online edition, Toronto, ON
2021 *Emergence 2021*, Art Image, Gatineau, QC
2020 *Art + Parcel: A Holiday Show*, Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2020 *OSA Emerging Artist's Exhibition*, Queen Elizabeth Park Cultural Centre, Oakville, ON
2019 *Fresh Paint / New Constructions*, Art Mur Gallery, Montreal, QC
2019 SWAP (MFA Exchange Show), Audain Gallery, Victoria, BC
2018 *Fresh Paint / New Constructions*, Art Mur Gallery, Montreal, QC
2018 *ICAPU* (International Contemporary Art Project Ulsan), Ulsan City, South Korea
2017 *Reclaiming the Screen*, Possible Worlds, Ottawa, ON
2017 *Mélange*, St. Brigid's Centre for the Arts, Ottawa, ON
2017 *BYOA (self-portrait/selfies)*, RIA Artist Project Room, Ottawa, ON
2015 *IMAGE&WORD*, Spring Residency Exhibition, Kunstraum Tapir, Berlin, Germany
2014 *GALERIE LUZ*, Gallery LUZ, Montreal, QC
2013 *COMBINE2013*, FOFA Gallery, Concordia University, Montreal, QC

SCHOLARSHIPS + AWARDS

- 2022 Explore and Create Grant: Research and Creation, *If You Discover Fire* — Canada Council for the Arts
2022 Untapped Emerging Artist Award, *The Artist Project*, Toronto, ON
2020 Creation and Production Grant, The City of Ottawa Cultural Funding

- 2020 RBC Emerging Artist Award Shortlist
- 2020 Ontario Council for the Arts Grant for Emergence 2020 Exhibition
- 2019 René Payant Award for Outstanding Thesis Paper
- 2018 Stonecraft Venice Scholarship
- 2018 Charles Gagnon Masters in Fine Arts Entrance Scholarship
- 2017 University of Ottawa Entrance Scholarship

COLLECTIONS

- 2021 Invest in Canada
- 2018/21 City of Ottawa Direct Purchase Art Collection

PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

- 2021 Salon – Nosy Mag + Congrego, Saw Gallery/Club Saw, Ottawa, ON
- 2020 Outside In/Inside Out – Microcosm, City of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON

RESIDENCIES

- 2023 BEAMS Sound, Media, Movement and Visual Artist Residency, Viljandi, Estonia
- 2015 TAKT Residency, April 5 – June 30, Berlin, Germany

PUBLICATIONS

- 2023 [Petal Projections](#), Summer Issues, Toronto, ON
- 2023 [Ottawa Design Club Zine](#), Renaissance - Zine 0006, Ottawa, ON
- 2022 Raw, Ottawa Design Club, Zine 003, Ottawa, ON
- 2021 *There's Magic in the Paintings*, Nosy Mag, Ottawa, ON
- 2021 The Racket Reading Series, Issue 49, San Francisco, CA

RELATED EXPERIENCE

- 2023 Artist Talk – If You Discover Fire, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
- 2022-23 Teaching - The Ottawa School of Art, Introduction to Studio Painting I & II, Ottawa, ON
- 2021/22 Mentorship Program, Turps Correspondence Course - London, UK
- 2021 Creative Coding, mini-course with Conor Byron, DARC - Ottawa, ON
- 2022 Curator ■ Wall Space Gallery
- 2021-2022 Turps Correspondence Course, Turps Banana, London, United Kingdom
- 2020 Artist Talk/In-Conversation with Catherine Sinclair, April 14, The Ottawa Art Gallery
- 2019 Islands From an Island Exhibition, Feb 11 – 22, University of Ottawa
Co-organizer/Co-curator for Exchange Show, University of Victoria and OttawaU MFA
- 2017- University of Ottawa – Teaching Assistant; ART4919A (Painting and Practice ART1661)

- 2019 (Art Histories I), ART3116A (Art and New Technologies), ART4989 (From Studio to Exhibition)
- 2018 Stonecroft Visiting Artist Lecture Series, Aug 10 – Dec , Marketing for the University of Ottawa Visual Arts Department
- 2018 Great Canadian Theatre Corporation, Jan 6 – March , Intership in Set Design (under Roger Schultz)
- 2017 RIMAV, Oct 25-27, L'Université du Québec en Outaouais Lecturer
- 2016 - Gallery Associate - Wall Space Gallery
- 2022
- 2016 - P(a)INT&DRAW, Saint Brigid's Centre for the Arts, Ottawa, ON
- 2017 Organizer and host for monthly life model drawing sessionals for all artistic skill levels
- 2016 Ottawa Art Therapy, Nov 5 – Dec 17, 52 Antares Dr., Unit 12, Ottawa, ON
Volunteer with art therapy for developmentally disabled children age 3-11
- 2016 Being Studio, May – Nov, Bronson Centre, Ottawa, ON
Volunteer with visual arts for developmentally disabled adults
- 2015 Nuit Blanche, Byward Market, Ottawa, ON Volunteer

REPRESENTATION

WALL SPACE GALLERY, Ottawa, ON