



The Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency

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THE BLUE CABIN RESIDENCY

The Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency is a one-of-a-kind residency that is unique to this region yet global in its reach. The Residency is situated in the waterways of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and provides exceptional space for artists-in-residence to research and make work, engage with the local arts community, create dialogue, and expand audiences for contemporary art.

The Blue Cabin itself is a recently restored former squatters' cabin with considerable heritage value and cultural significance. It serves as a studio space for artists-in-residence, and sits alongside an energy sufficient small deckhouse where artists live during the residency period. Both structures are sited on a floating platform that has the capacity to relocate around the Vancouver and Lower Mainland waterways, offering artists the potential to create works that reference the region and its many histories.

Vancouver has always been Terminal City, where the road stops—the end of the line. The Blue Cabin speaks to that line where the water meets the land, the ocean meets the shore, and the workers on that line through most of the 20th century—the stevedores and fishermen, loggers and tugboats. But the refurbished facility also speaks to the future, with Internet streaming and connectivity creating new levels and types of engagement. Equipped for the 21st century, the new facility will provide the tools for a new generation, opening up recording and streaming possibilities for world-wide engagement.

With residency lengths up to 2 months, the program allows artists from different disciplines to get a real sense of the city and the waterfront and gives them time to tackle a substantial body of work or conduct significant research. The artists receive not only living and work space, but also a stipend for expenses, giving them the freedom to concentrate on their work.



PROGRAMMING VISION

Weaving on the Foreshore

Moving between False Creek, Indian Arm and the Fraser River, the residency provides different perspectives on the territory and will provide a range of experiences to different artists through its location. Working with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people, we will provide programming that speaks to the history of this land and looks at ways we can facilitate a real and needed reconciliation with its peoples and environment. Our intention is that the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency will be dedicated to reciprocity, the giving and receiving of knowledge, acknowledgment of accomplishment, learning, exchange and furthering of professional practices.

Skeins: Weaving on the Foreshore is the inaugural program for the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency beginning in September 2019. Skeins is a celebration of Salish weaving practices that have developed in the traditional and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations over thousands of years. The program includes three fully supported research terms and residencies for weavers Angela George from Squamish/ Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Buddy Joseph and Janice George from Squamish Nation, and Debra Sparrow from Musqueam Nation. All four of these weavers have made significant contributions to the continuation and development of Salish Weaving into the 21st century. *Skeins* will also include an international residency in collaboration with the Australian Arts Council for Gunditjmara artist Vicki Couzens, who is a senior artist and has played a significant role in the reclamation of language and textile practices, and whose work will resonate strongly with the local context.

As a foundational practice, the woven object can operate in numerous ways that include honouring and affirming positions of families and individuals, documenting history and rights, and conveying knowledge about the lands of which Indigenous people are caretakers. As both practice and metaphor, weaving provides a ground for exploration into the stories of this region, and provides a jumping-off point for programs that address relations and histories that are complex and intertwined.



CONNECTING PAST AND PRESENT

The Blue Cabin comes from an earlier time and place, emerging out of a past of fishing, logging and maritime industries. Its location on the ancestral territory of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation near Cates Park in Dollarton, District of North Vancouver, was less than a mile from the squats where Malcolm Lowry wrote *Under the Volcano*, Tom Burrows was making ephemeral sculptural works on the beach and Paul Spong was working hard getting Greenpeace to focus on the plight of whales. Its location points to the deep roots people have with this land. The story of the Blue Cabin is the story of these histories: vernacular histories, Indigenous histories, maritime histories, squatters' histories, activist histories and cultural histories that all converge on the foreshore where the Blue Cabin stood for almost 100 years.

These are the stories of the people of this place, the stories that keep people in this place and keep people coming to this place. These are the stories we in Vancouver risk losing in the rapid redevelopment of the city.

From 1932 to 2015, the cabin rested on pilings above the intertidal zone of high and low tides on the property of the McKenzie Barge Company. The cabin was originally barged over from Coal Harbour to serve as a place to live while the carpenter who built it (c.1927) worked at the shipbuilding yard. The late artist and musician Al Neil moved there in 1966. At first he was a paying tenant, but later Neil acted as the unofficial beach watchman in exchange for free rent. His partner, artist Carole Itter, joined him in the late '70s and both used the site as a generative place for art production until their eviction.

In 2014 the cabin came under threat when the McKenzie Barge Company was sold to Polygon Homes. In 2015, Glenn Alteen of grunt gallery, Barbara Cole of Other Sights for Artists' Projects, and Esther Rausenberg of Creative Cultural Collaborations, led efforts to move the cabin to a secure storage lot for repair and remediation, and began to develop a concept for the cabin's future. The idea to repurpose it as an off-the-grid floating artist residency emerged as the chosen course of action.



June 2017 saw the cabin's relocation from its storage site to a sheep pasture at Maplewood Farm in North Vancouver, where it underwent a full remediation by Mayne Island artists Jeremy and Sus Borsos. They took every board off, inside and out, essentially deconstructing the cabin before methodically putting it back together. Since then Jeremy and Sus have gone on to accept an Honour in Heritage Conservation award from Heritage BC and a Change Maker award from BC Museums Association on behalf of the committee for this work on the cabin.

This April 2019, Vancouver Pile Driving completed construction of the 32'X40' concrete hull and in early May the cabin was towed from Maplewood Farm to the work site, where it was lifted and positioned onto the hull. We expect to tow the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency to False Creek in July, where it will be moored in front of the Plaza of Nations for its first year.

The Blue Cabin will remain a studio and artist Germaine Koh and her team have been building the accompanying deckhouse that will act as the artist's living quarters—one that uses solar power, water treatment, composting toilets, and energy recovery ventilators. Local Douglas fir has been used for the structural framing of the deckhouse, with cedar siding and spruce paneling. The cabin was built with çse¥ (pronounced T ' tsay), a **hə́ŋqəmiŋə́m** (Halkomelem) word later to be known as Douglas fir, and is original-growth wood from trees circa 1750. Designed by Marko Simcic, the deckhouse includes windows with a 360-degree view and a covered outdoor gathering space to host workshops and public events.

The residency's components are structures of resistance to the city's constant gentrification. Squatters' cabins and tiny houses are past and current responses to an unaffordable Vancouver—ways to live off the grid and under the radar and allow a proximity to a city that's harder and harder to afford. The squatter's cabin as studio and the tiny deckhouse allow an artist to see Vancouver from the water—an opportunity increasingly inaccessible now except to the wealthy.



The remediated Blue Cabin lands on the hull at Vancouver Pile Driving

SUPPORTERS

The Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency is grateful for the visionary support of Vancouver Foundation, The City of Vancouver, Heritage Canada's Cultural Spaces Program, BC Museums Association Canada 150 Program, British Columbia Arts Council, BC Collaborative Spaces Program, Wayne Saunders of Vancouver Pile Driving Ltd., Carole Itter, Australia Council for the Arts, Maplewood Farm, Polygon Homes, Canexus Corporation, Daisen Gee-Wing and Metropolitan Properties Corporation, PM-Volunteers, Harold Kalman, Andrew Todd Conservators Ltd, Ian McMurdo, Wayne Poole, Lisa Muri, Marko Simcic of Simcic + Urich Architects, Clint Low of Bush Bohlman & Partners, Carlo Elholm of Advisian Engineers, Jeremy and Sus Borsos, Germaine Koh Studio Ltd., District of North Vancouver, Michael Audain and The Audain Foundation, Lehigh Hanson, Harris Steel, Native Shoes, Joe Spears, European Touch Hardwoods, Rick Erickson and Donna Partridge, Heritage BC, San Cedar, The Hamber Foundation, Fasteel, Standard Building Supplies, Fine Art Framing, North Shore Waterfront Liaison Committee and our other generous supporters and donors.



Other Sights



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien



THE AUDAIN FOUNDATION





CAMPAIGN FINANCIALS

The Blue Cabin committee's overall goal for the capital campaign is to raise \$1,413,000. \$797,000 in cash (65% from government, 30% from community foundations and 5% from individuals) and \$170,000 in-kind has been secured to-date for a total of \$967,000.

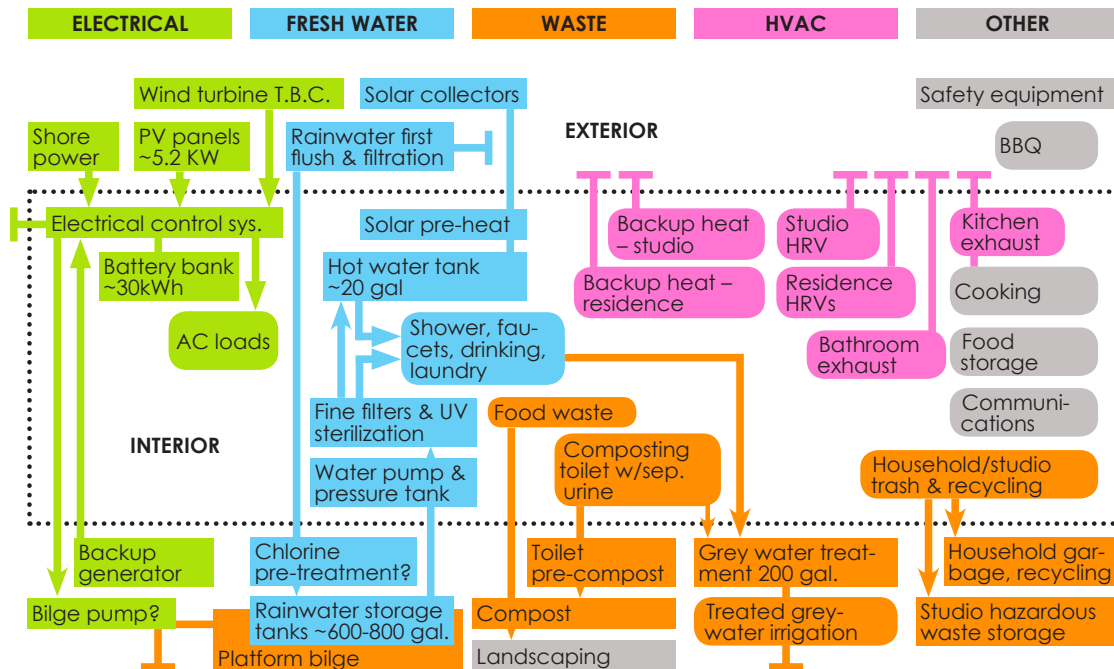
\$446,000 is needed to complete the build and sustain the residency for its first 3 years. We are looking to individuals, family foundations and corporations to garner \$200,000 of the remaining resources and \$246,000 to be sourced through additional public foundation and government support.

Donations to support the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency are tax-receiptable and can be made over a 3-year period. We would be very pleased to discuss with you the various ways in which a gift can be made.



\$1.413M

| | \$967K SECURED | | \$446K TO-GO |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------|
| PRE-BUILD | \$290K | \$290K | \$0 |
| BUILD | \$325K | \$518K | \$156K |
| START-UP | \$0 | \$45K | \$45K |
| OPERATING 3-YEAR | \$285K | \$330K | \$45K |
| ARTIST FEES & STIPENDS 3-Y | \$30K | \$180K | \$150K |
| COMMISSIONING FUND | \$0 | \$50K | \$50K |



SUSTAINABLE Systems Design

From the beginning the plan has been for the Blue Cabin to be off the grid in the ways squatters' shacks and tiny homes have always been. Being on the water, this meant devising systems that allow us to be as clean and self-sufficient as possible when in use. That said, it needed to be on the grid digitally and be able to interface with the wider world in a variety of ways. It needed to have the capacities to tell the stories of the foreshore and to do so in a way that respected the environment.

Artists Germaine Koh recently developed her project *Home Made Home* and was extremely interested in self-sufficiency and living off the grid. As an advocate for "low impact small dwellings for modest living," her vision and the Blue Cabin's were perfectly in sync. Germaine was keenly interested to move forward on planning what the systems in the small house might look like.

Her planning considered the electrical, fresh water, waste water, HVAC and solid waste systems for the facility, including solar power with backups, fresh water and hot water, grey water retention and treatment, self-composting toilets, and heating systems as well as garbage, recycling and food prep systems.

Other Sights Production Team member Colin Griffiths is developing a Communication System plan coordinating the Internet, security and presentation capacities of the facility.



HERITAGE

The Blue Cabin sat on the shores of Indian Arm for the last 85 years. Having been built as an off-the-grid dwelling, first as a float home, then in 1932 on the foreshore as a squatter's cabin for a maritime worker, and finally as an artist's home and studio, it has had many lives. In it are contained histories: working class histories, maritime histories, artists' histories, and Indigenous histories because of the territory it was on. These types of vernacular histories don't often get attention and this type of architectural structure doesn't often get saved. Vancouver's past often leaches out with the rainwater.

In 2017 when Jeremy and Sus Borsos started their monumental restoration of the structure, they took every board off, inside and out, essentially deconstructing the cabin before methodically putting it back together. There were literally thousands of pieces of moulding all hand cut into place. The Borsos took each and every piece down, labeled and numbered them, sanded and cleaned them, and replaced them in as loving a fashion as when they were created.

When they took up the floor, nestled between the floorboards and the joists were 40 posters for events from 1927, allowing us to date the year of its construction. The events advertised were plays and concerts, films and vaudeville acts, dance performances and boxing matches and all were brightly printed on thick card to be displayed on the front of trolley cars. Vancouver was the end of the vaudeville circuit and had lots of leftover posters which often got used in construction, as they did in the Blue Cabin as insulation so the floors didn't squeak.

Early on in the saga of the Blue Cabin, we were lucky enough to have the support of Heritage Planner Harold Kalman and Andrew Todd Conservators for consultation and delivery of the important Cabin Report. Hal also provided a Statement of Significance for the Cabin and Andrew a Preservation report that acted as a blueprint for the Borsos remediation. The Borsos and the Blue Cabin Committee have won The BC Museums Change Makers 2018 and Heritage BC 2019 Heritage Conservation Honour Award for the remediation work on the Blue Cabin. There has been tremendous interest from the heritage community in the Blue Cabin and its development, both on the North Shore and in the city. As the last of the North Shore squatters' dwellings, the Cabin carried a lot of significance and with its removal from the foreshore a whole history of that foreshore went with it.



The last remaining squatter dwelling along the Burrard Inlet foreshore is moved to storage

STEWARDSHIP

The Blue Cabin is a dwelling that has resisted ownership for 80 years or more and in its new incarnation it remains a structure that is not owned, but stewarded. In this way the project has mobilized our best hopes for a kind of capital that proposes an alternative to property ownership as we generally understand it.

This collaboratively run, publicly-funded, placeless (though deeply situated) floating residency has inspired a wide diversity of supporters from heritage enthusiasts and artists to politicians, urban geographers, architects, city planners, cultural theorists, historians, environmentalists and tiny-house advocates.

The Blue Cabin committee is made up of members from three organizations dedicated to furthering contemporary art practice.

grunt gallery is an artist-run centre founded in 1984 with a mandate to inspire public dialogue by creating an environment conducive to the emergence of innovative, collaborative, and provocative Canadian contemporary art. Over the past 32 years, grunt has produced hundreds of programs in exhibitions, performance, publications, media art, archives, web-based works, and other special (community) projects.

Other Sights for Artists' Projects was incorporated in 2005 and operates as a collective. They develop new and unexpected exhibition platforms outside of the gallery context and provide support to artists, writers and curators interested in creating temporary, critically rigorous work for highly visible locations in public space. They collaborate and share resources with organizations and individuals in order to present projects that consider the aesthetic, economic, and regulatory conditions of public places and public life.

Creative Cultural Collaborations started in 2010. It is a project-based visual art society dedicated to stimulating, developing, and executing unique art projects and activities including building networks, promoting understanding, and enhancing cooperation between local, national and international artists and arts organizations by facilitating exchanges of artists, and developing and brokering creative collaborative projects.



Floating Blue Cabin diorama by Sus Borsos for the The Blue Cabin Exhibition presented at grunt gallery 2018

BE A PART OF HISTORY

Support the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency

The Blue Cabin residency provides the most dynamic take on Vancouver possible, creating three very human-scale spaces that facilitate discussions around our heritage, culture and our communities. Seamlessly moving between the global and the local, it is a vehicle of engagement that strives to have low impact on the environment and be self-sustaining, mobile and connected, giving artists and audiences dynamic new perspectives on the city.

Despite Vancouver's international reputation for producing exceptional artists, inflated real estate prices make it challenging for arts organizations to offer visiting artists spaces for research, experimentation, innovation and exchange. The partnerships we build now help us realize a vision of a new kind of space that provides a unique residency experience for professional artists from multiple disciplines, generations and locations.

There has been a tremendous amount of community and corporate support and strong media coverage. Thirty-five articles and news stories have been released including those in *Canadian Art*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Vancouver Sun*, *The Georgia Straight*, *Montecristo Magazine*, *subTerrain*, *The Capilano Review*, *North Shore News*, *CBC News*, *On the Coast*, *The Early Edition* and *Global News*.

A Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency website is near completion and each of the partner organizations host a Blue Cabin page on their distinct organizational websites. We are working with Murray Patterson Marketing Group, an award-winning agency of big thinkers with a passion for marketing the arts and creative industries, to roll out the launch. We expect far-reaching attention.

Please consider leaving your mark! Your support will make a big impact on a little gem. Sponsors benefit from a broad recognition program, tax receipts, features in editorial content, invitations to special events and sneak peeks, art, artifacts and more!