

Something to Write Home About



“For years I have collected maps of political boundaries which no longer exist, and souvenir plates or teapoons from places I’ve never been. I find them in second-hand stores both at home and out on the road. To me they speak of elsewhere: once they were a memento of a trip taken by someone, somewhere, who I will never know. Now in my possession, they are a whiff of possibility, an adventure not yet taken, a place I have never personally seen.”

Emily Jan

Something to Write Home About is a workshop designed by artist Emily Jan in collaboration with DHC/ART Education. It is offered in conjunction with the exhibition *Bharti Kher: Points de départ, points qui lient*, which runs from April 20 to September 9, 2018.

As Bharti Kher repurposes things found on her hunts through the markets of New Delhi to write them into new narratives, Jan uses discarded and devalued objects in her work to stand for history and distance, and to help create a world in between reality and imagination. In a similar way, this workshop invites participants to engage in the redemption of broken things, scraps, histories, and stories, and to see what emerges when memory and/or imagination is bestowed upon an abandoned object.

Participants are first asked to bring a plate from home. Used, chipped, or orphaned goods are especially welcome. Using bits of cloth and paper, found images, and patterns, each person will decoupage a commemorative plate representing a person, place, or thing—either something remembered or something imagined; something lost or something not yet found. This altering of an everyday object recalls the uncanny and surreal aspects of Kher’s work. Details will be added on each plate using Prussian blue paint, a color evoking various traditions of pottery, like Delftware in the Netherlands and Willow pattern in Britain.

Emily Jan is a Montreal-based artist and writer. She creates contemporary *wunderkammer*: large-scale hyper-realistic installations of handmade flora and fauna mixed with found objects that evoke the faraway and the fantastical. To this end, Jan’s work seeks to transport a form of distant experience to the viewer—to stretch the boundaries of our collective imaginings in order to encompass the unseen, to learn to love the unknown as well as the familiar, and to relearn what it means to be a human living in a world roiling with turmoil and catastrophe, but yet still mysterious and beautiful.

Jan’s work has been exhibited extensively nationally and internationally. Recent awards include the Excellence in Fibers Award 2017 (Fiber Art Now and the San Jose Textile Museum, USA) and the People’s Choice Award at Fiberarts International Triennale 2016 (Pittsburgh, USA). She has recently been an Artist in Residence at Gibraltar Point (2018), the Elsewhere Museum (2017) and Denali National Park (2016). She has written and illustrated two books: *still life* (2014) and *A Denali Book of Hours* (2017).



DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art
451 & 465 rue Saint-Jean
Montreal, Quebec H2Y 2R5 Canada

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Contact:
education@dhc-art.org | (514) 866-6767 (4219)

General Information
(514) 849-3742 | info@dhc-art.org
www.dhc-art.org