



**Patrick Lundeen**  
*EAR WORMS*

Patrick Lundeen's new work in the exhibition *Ear Worms*, presented by the ODD Gallery, in Dawson City, Yukon, is a contemporary folktale. One part scream therapy to one part spiritual yearning, it is easiest to describe the pieces as a series of nouns and verbs: buzzing, banging, ringing, glowing, pizza, beer, pucks, rope, fringe, towel, cassette recorder, jeans, crate, beads, bat, bleach. These fragments of both material and aural life are plucked from the endless stream of human stuff and assembled to create totemic constructions, sculpture and wall pieces that shout, murmur, and exclaim "I am here! I am in my body! I am alive!, to those fortunate or unfortunate enough to pass by.

In the show, dummy video cameras track your path and motion sensors trigger pulsating light and sound, sometimes sharp, sometimes soothing. Textile pieces hanging on the wall resemble expressions of a back-alley dweller, surviving only with a tarp for walls, having separated themselves monk-like from the world while fashioning strange haikus from the thrown-away detritus of our disposable culture. Lundeen recognizes that as a society we are actually moving farther and farther away from embracing simple mortal truths, instead being drawn further into hermetically sealed pods of digital existence, connected only through the algorithmic whims of corporate machinations. His show functions as a cry into the airless vacuum of disembodied souls grasping for meaning.

The title *Ear Worms* refers to music or jingles that get stuck in your head like so many annoying songs picked up in the mall or through ever-present advertising. These assaults infiltrate the quiet internal places usually reserved for reflection and restoration, uninvited yet aggressively taking up space. Every human body is now known to be made up of a certain percentage of microplastics, floating our way and being consumed in our take-out teas and packaged food. Washed ashore, rocks have been found where minerals have fused together with melted polymers resulting in a new geological discovery. We now coexist with synthetic, commercial material in the most intimate spaces, our bodies and our environment. The human species has truly reached full impact on this earth. *Ear Worms* attempts to redress this new reality through a complete sensorial ambush awakening us from a controlled psychic slumber, shaking loose our counterfeit components.

A spinning roadside sign promoting free car washes with each oil change can be a thing of beauty if considered from an unbiased perspective. An iridescent scrap from a Gatorade bottle label found in the gutter could be treated as a most precious and revered material if happened upon by a small child or any person unencumbered

by society's value judgments. This tension inherent in the artifacts of our consumer tsunami are endlessly fascinating to Lundeen. Can a person find enlightenment in the pixelated distortion of digital screens, the tinniness of Muzac, the sun-faded and torn stock images ghostly smiling at us from the pharmacy window? What choice do we have? Like our primitive ancestors, humans still possess the ability to imbue their environment with deeper significance, if only as a tool for survival. This all has to mean *something*.

Perhaps a person could approach the works in *Ear Worms* as advertisements themselves, simultaneously triggering and seducing us. We are encouraged to put our defenses aside and go all in like the hypnotic whirs and chimes of a casino floor inspire people to leave their wallets at the door. A broken jukebox tone from a looping cassette encased in a tower of milk crates and modular shelving echoes like a minimalist composition of Terry Riley, weaving for us a web of sound and light, threaded with silver strings of metaphysical desire. A Rauschenberg-esque sculpture is fashioned from a kick-drum pedal animating a wiffle ball bat to assail a snare drum. This game of mouse trap in turn sets off the violent trill of a fire bell reminding us of a "Win a Prize!" promotional set-up or a funfair high striker game. A two-tiered stack of wooden boxes (the crates the work was shipped in), emblazoned with various stickers and hung with electrified LED signs imploring us like a sideshow barker to devour "pizza" "beer" and "Canucks", create a Machu Picchu of wants. Atop it all is an outdoor PA speaker perched on a cardboard box proclaiming — what exactly? Psychedelic yodels fill the space of what words fail to articulate. Through it all each piece leaves behind a trail of wires and extension cords, hanging threads and trimming, dirt.

Like the drama mask emoji, the pieces in the show *Ear Worms* are happy and sad, comic and tragic, fully embracing the absurdities of living and dying all together, on our shared rock. The unvarnished awkwardness of it all rises to the surface, floating jetsam strewn around us to lighten our existential load.

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*Bree Apperley is a Canadian artist and writer based in Kelowna, B.C. Previously, Bree has worked for organizations including Harper's Magazine, Pentagram, and Princeton Architectural Press. She holds degrees in both Fine Art and Design Art, from the Alberta College of Art + Design and Concordia University respectively.*

## Patrick Lundeen

### EAR WORMS

November 21, 2019 - January 10, 2020

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

Patrick Lundeen's images are generated primarily by his subconscious through a combination of improvisation and revision. This process involves a combination of freely associating with meanings already existent within the found materials that he manipulates and the generation of new forms that are based on his reaction to these free associations. Lundeen considers his recent artworks to be abstractions that are based on recognizable motifs and signifiers. The figurative and conceptual elements in each work can be compared to the melody or "head" in jazz music; they are jumping-off points that tie the composition together. Yet, like in jazz, it is the improvisational parts that give the work its emotional qualities and make it a viable work of art. Some recurring themes that permeate his artworks include: the body, consumption/decay/garbage, aging, masks, Dadaism, Surrealism, craft, spirituality, music, outsider/folk art, primitivism, material culture and socioeconomic class dynamics. Primarily he finds influence for his artwork in the everyday and is equally inspired by what he sees in thrift stores and flea markets as by what is found in contemporary art galleries.

--- Patrick Lundeen, 2019

#### BIOGRAPHY

Patrick Lundeen is an artist, teacher and musician born in Lethbridge Alberta and currently based in Kelowna BC where he teaches painting and drawing at The University of British Columbia (Okanagan Campus).

He has had past exhibitions at the Alternator Centre for Contemporary Art (Kelowna), L'Ecart (Rouyn-Noranda), Mike Weiss Gallery (NYC), ThreeWalls (Chicago), Confederation Centre (Charlottetown), Wetterling Gallery (Stockholm), Katherine Mulherin (Toronto), Parisian Laundry (Montreal), L'Oeil de Poisson, (Quebec) and AKA Gallery (Saskatoon). Lundeen has received research and creation grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council and The Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and his work has been written about in numerous exhibition catalogues as well as in publications such as *Canadian Art*, *Border Crossings*, *the Globe and Mail*, *the National Post*, *Time Out Chicago* and *Flash Art*.



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