

Coyote Walk Saskatoon: **The unseen ecologies of urban beings**

Jay White, in collaboration with Finding City

Artist talk + workshop with Remai Modern // Sept. 20th

Coyote Walk // Sept. 20th to 22nd

Workshop @ Culture Days Kick-off // Sept. 24th

Performance @ Nuit Blanche // Sept. 26th

Community discussion // Sept. 27th

I am honoured to be invited to Saskatoon and to Treaty 6 Territory and aim to respectfully learn from the people and the land during my stay.

-Jay White

Coyote Walk Saskatoon is the starting point of a multi-year collaboration between Vancouver-based artist Jay White, Saskatoon-based curator Michael Peterson, and the people of Saskatoon to bring attention to the entanglement among humans, domestic animals, and wildlife in our city. Rather than presenting an established work, Jay will collaborate with Saskatoon residents to develop a project with them.

To start, Jay is leaving the possibilities for the project open so as to allow it to be generated with Saskatoon residents and to reflect and be informed by the particulars of this place. Possible directions for the project include shared stories, participatory walks, accumulated objects, material installations, and the creation of artworks.

The framework guiding the creation of the project is one of a mutual desire to share, to learn from each other, and to honour each other's perspectives and interests. Jay would like to learn from and amplify local knowledge and respectfully work with members of Saskatoon's various communities. Through the efforts of Jay and community members, the project will explore how experiential learning, participatory art, and storytelling can build capacity and knowledge within a community.

While the direction that this project takes is completely open-ended, during his visit Jay will also be performing a 2 to 3 day Coyote Walk (see below) as a starting point for discussion on forms the project could take and to allow Jay to encounter our landscape from his perspective. Jay will begin his Coyote Walk on September 20th following an artist talk and workshop to introduce the project, held in association with Remai Modern. To conclude his visit, Jay will share stories about his experiences with urban wildlife during Coyote Walk as part of Nuit Blanche Saskatoon on September 26th and then as part of a public roundtable discussion the following day, encouraging community members to share their stories as well during both events.

Coyote Walk

Coyote Walk is a series of walks where Jay camps and hides in an urban area for three days, inviting people to track and attempt to photograph him. The project invites others to enter, or at least consider, unseen spaces in their city and the beings that live there. By asking that participants respect the artist's privacy while also attempting to photograph him, they are confronted with the idea that their presence might infringe on other animals' privacy and behaviours. Participants' photographs and experiences become a central aspect of the final work.

Both times the walk was performed in Vancouver, the project ended prematurely because it became difficult to find places to hide and sleep in the day that weren't already occupied by other animals, including coyotes.

In Vancouver, the project has resulted in a longterm partnership between Jay and Dan Straker, the head of the Co-existing With Coyotes program in the city. Both are members of Urban Animal Agency, a collective of urban ecologists. Through art-based interventions and engagements at their provisional headquarters near Stanley Park, the group illuminates cities as a habitat shared among humans and other animals.

www.urbananimalagency.ca

Bio

Jay White is an artist of Mi'kmaq and European descent whose practice often involves storytelling and walking as a form of collaborative knowledge-sharing. Much of his recent work illuminates animals and places in urban environments that have become marginalized and ignored in order to consider the ways that human activity affects others. He places a high priority on honouring the perspectives of other beings.

www.draworbedrawn.com

Events

September 20th
3:00 to 4:30pm

Artist talk and workshop with Remai Modern

Meewasin Valley Interpretive Centre, 402 3rd Avenue South

Jay will host an all-ages event that shares methods of respectfully making art alongside other animals. This will include short exercises and stories about his interactions with wildlife in urban environments.

September 20th to 22nd

Coyote Walk

Various locations throughout Saskatoon

Jay will camp and hide in Saskatoon while inviting people to track and attempt to photograph him by sending out his GPS coordinates via a downloadable smartphone app.

September 24th
12:00 to 1:00pm

Workshop at Culture Days Kickoff

The Bassment, 202 4th Avenue North

Jay will share stories about his interactions with urban wildlife while asking community members to share their own and mark the locations of these interactions on a map of Saskatoon.

September 26th
8:00pm to late
Discussion 9:15 to 9:45pm

Performance and discussion at Nuit Blanche

Corner of 20th Street West and Avenue E South

Jay will project his short video *Miawe'g Lmu'j aqq Paqt'sm / Between the Dog and the Wolf* as well as engage in a roundtable discussion with those in attendance about their experiences with urban wildlife.

September 27th
11:00am to 1:00pm

Community discussion

The Common at The Two Twenty, 220 20th Street West

Local ecologists and Jay will discuss and wonder at Saskatoon's urban wildlife as the starting point for imagining an art and ecology project in collaboration with the community of Saskatoon, to be presented in 2016. Audience members are encouraged to join in the conversation.

Project organizer

FINDING CITY COMMUNITY ARTS builds relationships between artists and the larger Saskatoon community through collaborative projects focused on the idea of city and the experience of contemporary urban living.

Community partners

THE BASSMENT is a great live music venue in the heart of downtown Saskatoon providing the best live music experience: great acoustics, atmosphere, drinks, and food.

THE CITY OF SASKATOON recognizes the importance of arts and creativity in building a healthy and sustainable city that offers residents a rich quality of life.

CULTURE DAYS raises the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities.

THE MEEWASIN VALLEY AUTHORITY is a conservation agency dedicated to conserving the cultural and natural resources of the South Saskatchewan River Valley.

NUIT BLANCHE SASKATOON is a free night-time arts festival that showcases and celebrates art and culture.

REMAI MODERN is a thought leader and direction setting modern art gallery that boldly collects, develops, presents and interprets the art of our time.

THE SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE is a collaborative, innovative, and internationally-linked institute that houses partners conducting research on environment and sustainability in relation to education.

THE TWO TWENTY is a community of social entrepreneurs, innovators, artists and creative industries defining Saskatoon's urban and cultural scene.

WILD ABOUT SASKATOON is an informal collective dedicated to the conservation and enrichment of wild lives and wild places in and around Saskatoon.