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ATTILA RICHARD LUKACS & LAWRENCE PAUL YUXWELUPTUN

June 20th – July 18th

Text by Vancouver-based writer Jill Lambert based on a series of studio visits and conversations with Lukacs and Yuxweluptun.

Two artists, born a few years apart but still very much of the same generation, both graduates of Emily Carr Institute and both painters of international renown. Over the years, each has followed a personal trajectory. Attila lived in Berlin, New York, and Hawaii before returning to Vancouver; Lawrence Paul remained here, focused on the land that sustains him. Attila is known for oil paintings of shocking gay skinheads and soldiers, flowers and trees, monkeys and moons, with a compositional style that draws references from Bellini to Gainsborough; Lawrence Paul's work in acrylics combines and overturns a rhetoric of traditional Northwest Coast First Nation shapes and forms, colour theory and searing social commentary that simply won't be silenced.

Their work connects through many points of commonality. Both engage with the surreal, spirit animals and transformation, birds flying into paintings, melting figures. There's some fun with form: a dangling monkey is a lovely calligraphy, less threatening, less sexual, more gentle than previous incarnations. Nostrils curve into moustache shapes, teeth take on a terrifying T-Rex dimension. Trees appear and contain various meanings, some peering right out at us. Bitumen can be a motivating controversy or simply a pigment, but either way stands as a focal point in the body of work. Areas of exploration include contemplation, the sacred, isolation, mystery, the nature of good and evil – all is open to interpretation, random fragments of alphabet, enigmatic figures, mysterious black smoke that curls and puffs. All is on display but not much is explained, leaving the viewer to read the paintings and resolve them individually.

Experience is evident in the work of two artists who can look over the rules and decide to bend them to great effect. Both are able to find new and striking results that are at once deeply personal yet universal.

Like fireworks in a bottle, these two are duking it out on canvas, explosive and energetic, passionate and colourful, endlessly intricate and engaging, enriched by experience but not dimmed by the passage of years.

- Jill Lambert, June 2015.

Attila Lukacs currently lives and works in Vancouver, BC. Recent exhibitions include; MOCCA Toronto, *Over the Rainbow* (2014); Belkin Satellite, *Full Frontal* (2013); *Shore, Forest and Beyond* Art from the Audain Collection, Vancouver Art Gallery (2011); Attila Richard Lukacs from the Collection of Salah J. Bachir, Art Gallery of Hamilton (2011); Attila Richard Lukacs: Polaroids, Johnen Galerie, Berlin (2011); *MALE*, Maureen Paley Gallery. Curated by Vince Aletti (2010); *Polaroid Studies for Paintings*, The Art Gallery of Alberta, and *Presentation House Gallery Vancouver*, curated by Michael Morris (2009); *PAINT*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia curated by Neil Campbell (2006); *Das achte Feld*, Museum Ludwig, Koln, Germany (2006).

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun lives and works in Vancouver, BC. A forthcoming retrospective of his work will be on view at MOA, UBC in 2016. Recent exhibitions include: Belkin, UBC *WITNESSES: Art and Canada's Indian Residential Schools*(2013); National Gallery of Canada *SAKAHAN: International Indigenous Art*; Vancouver Art Gallery (2012) *Shore, Forest, and Beyond: Work from the Audain Collection*; Contemporary Art Gallery of Vancouver (2010) *Neo-Native Drawings and Other Works: Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun*; Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun: *Colour Zone, Plug In* ICA, Winnipeg (2001) and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun: *Born to Live and Die on Your Colonialist Reservation*, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (1995).