

Uh-Oh, Canada

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By Mike Landry



FASTWURMS' "Flag" installation

Ryan Rice's touring exhibition *Anthem: Perspectives on Home and Native Land* is winding up its three city run at Halifax's [Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery](#). It's an interesting last stop given the [controversy](#) ceramist Léopold Foulem caused last year in Halifax with his black-faced Santa Clause coffeepot.

The exhibition didn't raise any hullabaloo in Ottawa or Banff, but MSVU gallery director Ingrid Jenkner says "it is possible that people outside the campus would find some of this difficult to accept." She doubts it will though.

"I don't think the works are deliberately controversial. They're much more subtle than that, says Jenkner. "I think the show is more about collapsing boundaries than erecting them."

Rice's show features artists, such as [KC Adams](#), [FASTWÜRMS](#) and [Cynthia Girard](#) presenting works dealing with the hot-button ideas of race, sexuality and religion. Jenkner says it's to Rice's credit to try to make a show like this work without upsetting people. She believes Rice was able to do it thanks to the years he spent as curator in residence at the Carleton University Art Gallery.

"You learn how to do that in Ottawa. I think anyone who works in the arts in Ottawa has to learn that balancing act. I don't think Ryan Rice has much to do with official multiculturalism, but in terms of the politics of diversity he's right in that."

The show's hot topics will fit in quite well at the university, where discourse around gender, race and class in the context of feminism is a huge part of most classes. Jenkner is providing guided tours of the show to classes to encourage discussion about the show. And with this show being the first time many of the artists have exhibited East Coast, Jenkner is hoping despite the shows edgy content that the general public comes in to check out artists that may not be back for a while.

ANTHEM: Perspectives on Home and Native Land *runs from Mon August 25-October 5 at the [Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery](#).*

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Filed in [Volume 1 Number 2: August 21-September 3](#)