



## City of Maple Ridge News Release

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### Introducing Maple Ridge's New Artists in Residence

**Maple Ridge, BC:** The Maple Ridge Public Art Steering Committee is pleased to announce that Natali Leduc, Gerry Sheena and Manuel Strain have been selected as the new Artists in Residence. These three artists bring a wide range of perspectives, experiences and skills to the community. They will officially start their residencies this summer.

The Artist in Residence program provides an opportunity for artists to create arts based community engagement projects and activities in exchange for a live-work studio space at City owned properties on Fern Crescent and in in Port Haney and a new studio only space residency at the Greg Moore Youth Centre.

The program's goals are to enhance community cultural development and pride of place by activating and animating neighbourhoods, public facilities and/or parks. Artists from throughout BC and across Canada responded to the call for Expressions of Interest for the Artist in Residence opportunity.

The Artist in Residence Program is supported through the Maple Ridge Public Art Steering Committee in collaboration with The City of Maple Ridge's Parks, Recreation & Culture Department. Additional information is available at [www.mapleridge.ca/parksandrec](http://www.mapleridge.ca/parksandrec).

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON ARTISTS:

*Fern Crescent Residency Location (23740 Fern Crescent):*

### **Natali Leduc**



Leduc has an academic background in Sculpture, French Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Houston and University of Ottawa. She has taught sculpture, French language, literature and creative writing at the college level, as well as bookbinding and art bicycle workshops for at-risk teenagers. Natali creates objects and situations as solutions to real and imaginary problems, with a fondness for interactive contraptions, performances, and experimental puppet shows. Her proposal for the residency includes the “The Little Museum of What?” which will turn part of the residence into a little museum and a hub of creativity. She sees the studio space at the Fern Crescent residence as a learning laboratory, and a place for the community to meet and share their experience, knowledge, and ideas. Workshops will be offered to the community, aimed at different ages and interests, and may include bicycle contraptions, costumes, poetry, bookmaking, interactive installations, assemblages, puppets, sculpture, performance, weird repairs and much more.

*Port Haney Residency location (11630 224 Street):*

**Gerry Sheena**



Sheena is an established Coast Salish carver who has been a full time artist for the past 30 years. He recently completed a project for the Collingwood Neighborhood House in Vancouver, which culminated in the raising of the 20 foot red cedar totem pole named “Ancient Cedars Journey Home”. This totem pole was carved outside of the community center with the help of three youth apprentice carvers over ten weeks. He has facilitated community level carving classes, drawing and painting classes and discussion sessions alongside these projects. Sheena is excited to bring his skills, experience and commitment to help build a better understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in our community. He looks forward to working with the community, engaging in meaningful conversations on reconciliation, learning more about the local Indigenous peoples and engaging residents and visitors in exploring creative processes and projects that will not only enhance the beauty of the area, but tell stories of its history. As part of his proposal for the residency Sheena plans to provide painting, designing and carving workshops and to continue his work of designing and carving large sculptures.

*Studio Residency at Greg Moore Youth Centre:*

**Manuel Axel Strain**



Strain is an interdisciplinary artist of Musqueam, Simpcw and Syilx descent. Strain works with painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, textiles and video installations. Strain seeks to use lived experiences to inspire social and political change in Canada and deconstruct colonialism. Strain was raised in the suburban neighbourhood of Maple Ridge with little knowledge of what it meant to be a person of First Nations descent. This upbringing lead them to examine the construction of First Nations identities – in particular the internal conflicts that arise from imposed identity constructs. Their practice confronts the legacies of colonization that have been left upon the identities of the First Nations people of Canada. Strain plans to use this opportunity to celebrate and recognize the Indigenous lands, knowledge and language, and its relationship and interconnectedness to the people of Maple Ridge, non-indigenous and indigenous alike. In addition, their vision for this residency is to create a body of work that is centered on a unique intersection of Indigenous arts, language and knowledge, diversity and environmental issues while simultaneously touching upon themes of storytelling and heritage.