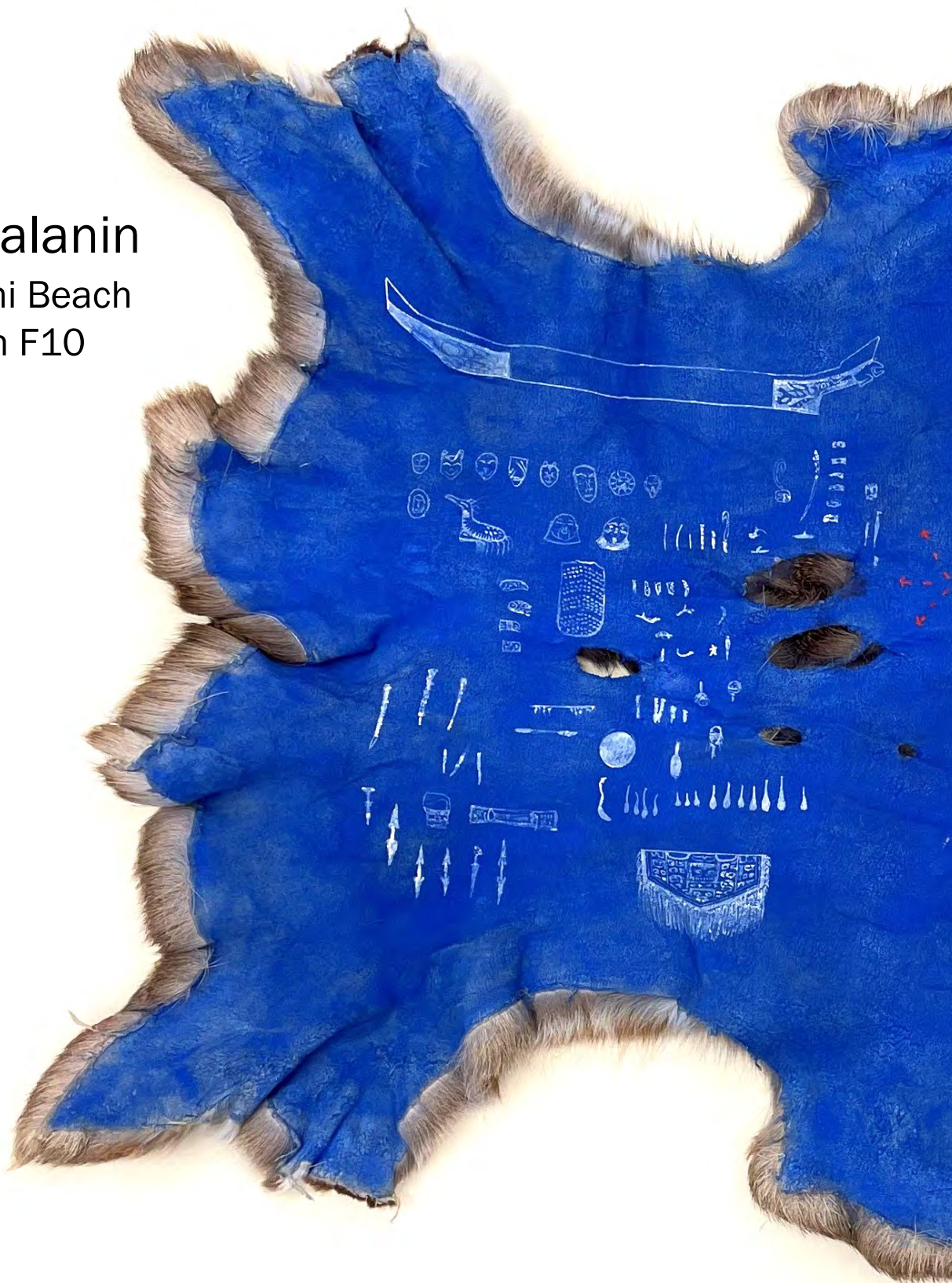


Nicholas Galanin

Art Basel Miami Beach

Galleries Booth F10



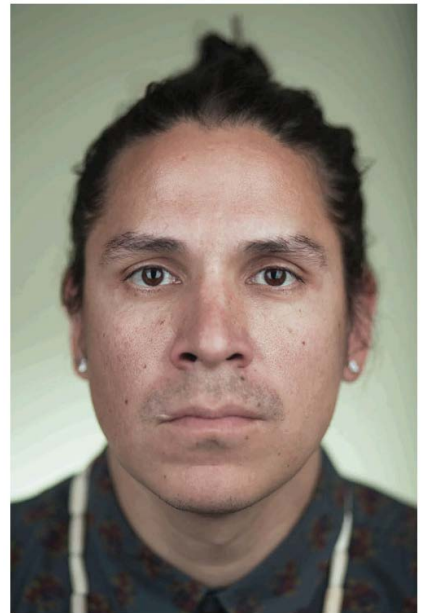
PETER BLUM GALLERY

For Art Basel Miami Beach 2021, we are pleased to exhibit a solo presentation of work by Nicholas Galanin in Galleries Sector booth F10. The art fair opens with preview days on November 30 and December 1, and is open to the public December 2-4, 2021.

Examining the complexities of contemporary Indigenous identity, culture, and representation, Galanin works from his experience as a Tlingit/Unangax artist. Embedding incisive observation and reflection into his work, he aims to redress the widespread misappropriation of Indigenous visual culture, the impact of colonialism, as well as collective amnesia. Galanin reclaims narrative and creative agency, while demonstrating contemporary Indigenous art as a continually evolving practice. Galanin unites both traditional and contemporary practices, creating a synthesis of elements to navigate “the politics of cultural representation.” Speaking through multiple visual, sonic, and tactile languages, his concepts determine his processes, which include sculpture, installation, photography, video, performance, and textile-based work. This contemporary practice builds upon an Indigenous artistic continuum while celebrating the culture and its people; Galanin contributes urgent criticality and vision through resonant and layered works.

“My process of creation is a constant pursuit of freedom and vision for the present and future. I use my work to explore adaptation, resilience, survival, dream, memory, cultural resurgence, and connection and disconnection to the land.”

— Nicholas Galanin



Nicholas Galanin was born in 1979 and lives and works in Sitka, Alaska. He participated in 2021 Desert X Biennial, 2020 Biennale of Sydney, 2019 Whitney Biennial, and 2017 Venice Biennale Native American Pavilion. His work is in public collections including The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Art Institute of Chicago, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and Princeton University Art Museum, Cornell Art Museum, Art Bridges in Bentonville, among others. He is the 2020 recipient of the Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence Award in Art, Academy of Arts and Letters, New York and a 2020 recipient of a Soros Arts Fellowship.



Nicholas Galanin
Static Broadcast, American Prayer Rug, 2020
wool, cotton
60 x 96 inches (152.4 x 243.8 cm)
(NGA20-03)



In Nicholas Galanin's *Static Broadcast, American Prayer Rug*, a woven image of static on a television set offers a critical analysis of contemporary American culture's relationship with white noise. Although prayer rugs typically serve as movable sites of devotion, this one probes American culture's relationship with white noise, an acoustic vibration sometimes used to drown out unwanted sounds. Galanin points out that "whiteness as a construct has been used historically throughout the world to obliterate the voices and rights of generations of people and cultures regardless of complexion." A version of this work was exhibited at the 2019 Whitney Biennial in New York.



Nicholas Galanin

The Imaginary Indian (Totem Pole), 2016

wood, acrylic and floral wallpaper

totem: 80 1/2 x 51 1/2 x 11 inches (204.5 x 130.8 x 27.9 cm)

wallpaper: dimensions variable

(NGA16-05)



In *The Imaginary Indian (Totem Pole)*, Nicholas Galanin juxtaposes the form of a carved totem overlaid with Victorian Era floral designs. He both confronts viewers with their own assumptions about Indigenous art and reflects on the attempted assimilation of Indigenous culture by Europeans, thereby asserting contemporary Tlingit art as continually evolving. He comments, "This is despite the resistance of individuals and institutions that would limit Indigenous culture based on assumptions about Indigenous peoples prior to interaction with Europeans. The fetishization of early contact and pre-contact Tlingit art has resulted in skeletal, ghost-like objects in gallery and museum collections. *The Imaginary Indian* points to the romanticization of these works as a form of colonization of culture, dependent on devaluing current cultural artistic production. The works reflect the attempt to disappear the Indigenous into the European through hand-painting the surface of the pole to match the Victorian era floral wallpaper."



Nicholas Galanin

Things Are Looking Native, Native's Looking Whiter, 2012
giclée

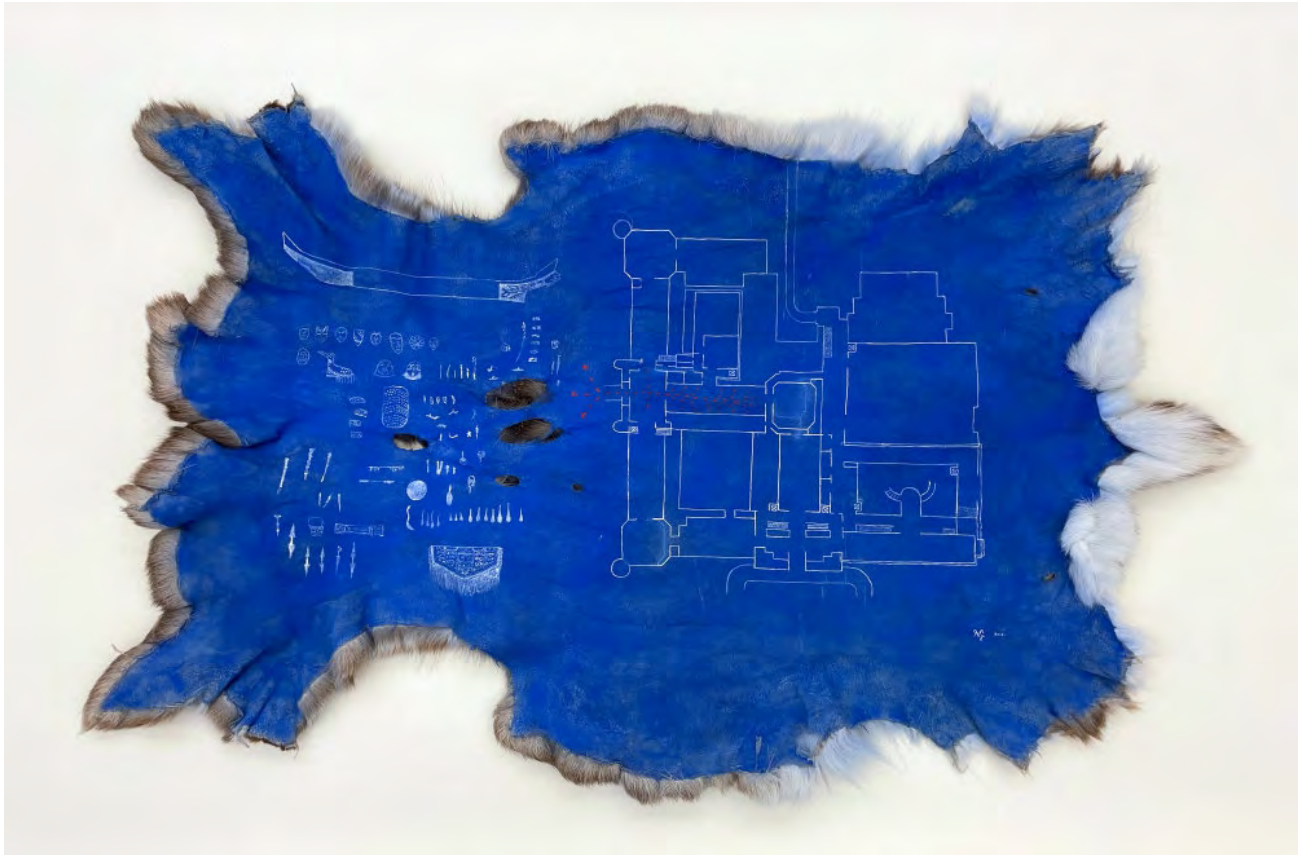
42 x 30 3/4 inches (106.7 x 78.1 cm)

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

(NGA12-026)



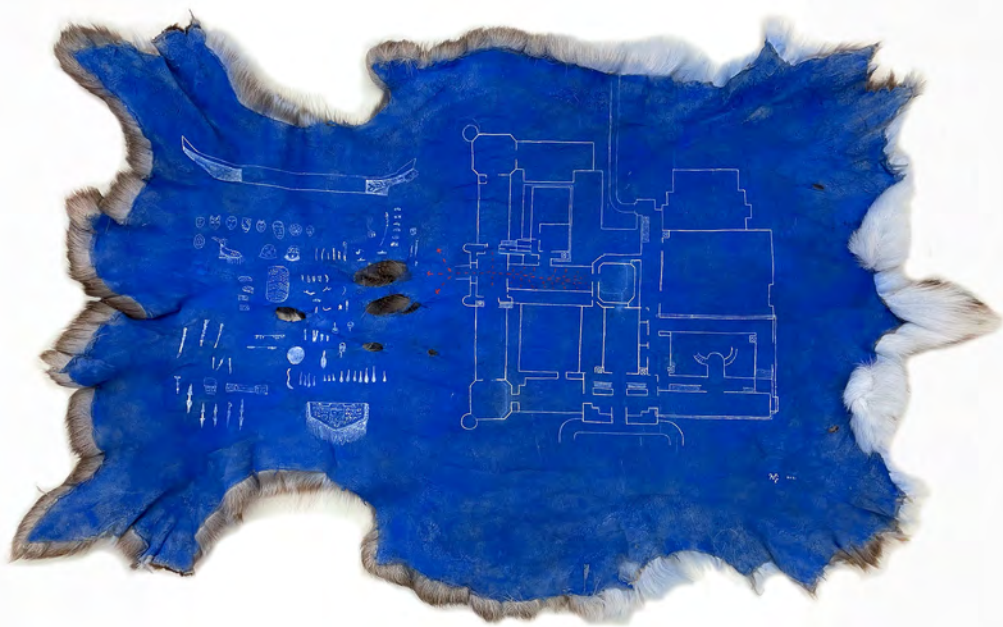
In *Things Are Looking Native, Natives Are Looking Whiter*, Nicholas Galanin juxtaposes two iconic images. One image is of a Hopi woman wearing her hair in the squash blossom, or butterfly whorl style worn by unmarried Hopi women. This Edward Curtis photo documented Indigenous people throughout the West in the early 1900s and supported the false notion that Indigenous people and ways of life were disappearing. The second image is taken from a promotional photo for *Star Wars*, depicting a Caucasian female, science-fiction character wearing her hair in a style mimicking the squash blossom or butterfly whorl. As Galanin asserts, “In borrowing from an Indigenous aesthetic, the image projects settler claims to Indigenous culture into the future. The title speaks to consumer culture’s desire to claim ‘Native inspired’ looks, while simultaneously refusing Indigenous people the agency to define Indigenous culture in an increasingly hybrid world.”



Nicholas Galanin

Architecture of return, escape (American Museum of Natural History), 2021

pigment and acrylic on deer hide
32 x 61 inches (81.3 x 154.9 cm)
(NGA21-15)



This work is from a series of hide paintings for guiding the escape of Indigenous remains and objects in non-Indigenous institutions to their home communities. Entitled, *Architecture of Return, Escape*, the series of hide paintings depict a floor plan referencing a visitor's guide as well as blue architectural blueprints, this example of the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Of the few objects held in display cases, many more (including human remains and ceremonial objects not intended for public view) are held in museum archives. As Galanin asserts, "The cost and processes required for Indigenous communities to travel and visit these archives limits access to cultural knowledge and inheritance and continues the removal of the objects from their land and people. While institutions control the environmental conditions, they are unable to adequately care for these objects in cultural or spiritual ways. The objects themselves are unwilling visitors to the museum, and the work builds an escape route and a vision for reunification of cultural inheritance with community. The work serves as a reminder of the past, and as a plan for a good way forward. Stolen objects, human remains, and works sold under duress can now return home for their own health, for the health of the communities that created them, and for the health of the communities that took them. "In Nicholas Galanin's *Land Swipe*, a deer hide is painted with lines based on the New York City Transit Authority's subway map representing the limited green spaces and subway routes on Lenapehoking, Lenape land, the area that New York City currently occupies. This was a location for trade among thriving Indigenous communities, while hide paintings have been used to record and remember events of significance. The "swipe" refers to the theft of land, hunting, and fishing rights from Indigenous people, while also referencing the "swipe" of land from low-income residents and communities of color in the city. The process of pushing Indigenous people off the land is repeated through the gentrification of the land the city occupies, pushing people of color further from access to employment and educational opportunities, as the cost of living, rent, and commuting increases.



Nicholas Galanin

Never Forget, 2021

C-print mounted on Dibond, walnut frame

51 3/4 x 78 3/4 inches (131.4 x 200 cm)

Edition of 10

(NGA21-01.10)



For Nicholas Galanin, memory and land are inevitably entwined. The 45-foot letters of *Never Forget* reference the Hollywood sign, which initially spelled out HOLLYWOODLAND and was erected to promote a whites-only development. Its timing coincided with a development in Palm Springs that also connected to the film industry: Studio contracts limited actors' travel, contributing to the city's rise as playground and refuge of the stars. Meanwhile, the white settler mythology of America as the land of the free, home of the brave was promoted in the West, and the landscape was cinematized through the same lens. *Never Forget* asks settler landowners to participate in the work by transferring land titles and management to local Indigenous communities. The work is a call to action and a reminder that land acknowledgments become only performative when they do not explicitly support the land back movement. Not only does the work transmit a shockwave of historical correction, but also promises to do so globally through social media.



Nicholas Galanin
Land Swipe, 2019
acrylic on deer hide
44 x 36 inches (111.8 x 91.4 cm)
(NGA19-03)





Nicholas Galanin

Woman, 2016

wood carving and hair

42 x 8 1/2 x 4 inches (106.7 x 21.6 x 10.2 cm)

(NGA16-03)



In *Woman*, Nicholas Galanin splinters a mask in what appears to be a destructive gesture. However, this act is not directed at the cultural production of Tlingit people, the materials are masks made by Indonesians for predominantly non-Indigenous markets. The exclusion of Tlingit peoples as participants in either the creation or collection of these objects is terminated in the act. As Galanin intercedes, he dismantles the masks and forms a new mask from the resulting woodchips, thereby reclaiming agency through this new creation. This narrative is furthered by the title that references the traumatic imprisonment of Indigenous children. In 1879, the United States opened the Carlisle Indian Industrial School under General Henry Pratt's coined slogan, "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." Indigenous children were taken from their families and subjected to forced assimilation programs that included corporal punishment for speaking Indigenous language or practicing cultural rites.



Nicholas Galanin

Welcome, 2009

polar bear hide and sea otter hide

36 x 48 inches (91.4 x 121.9 cm)

(NGA09-01)



Installed on the floor, the mat is polar bear hide with otter sewn in, forming the word "Welcome" in English. As Galanin describes: "The survival of polar bears and sea otters has been endangered through settler hunting practices and human driven climate change. The mat draws attention to the fact that neither the sea otter nor the polar bear is welcome in colonial or settler models of living beyond trophies or sources of trade capital. The welcome extended to Indigenous life in the Americas by colonial and subsequently settler states has been as material and labor in creating the welcome mat itself; an object to be stepped on by who are actually welcomed to enter and participate with full rights and agency. The mat is made using Indigenous technology and materials, and also points to the initial welcome extended by the land and it's peoples during early contact prior to the abuse, violence and oppression extended by colonizing nations. The work speaks to sources of life and sustenance, to land and to respect."



Nicholas Galanin

What Have We Become? Gold, 2017

carved book with gold leaf

8 1/2 x 5 x 4 1/2 inches (21.6 x 12.7 x 11.4 cm)

(NGA17-01)





Nicholas Galanin

What Have We Become?, 2017

carved book

8 1/2 x 5 x 4 1/2 inches (21.6 x 12.7 x 11.4 cm)

(NGA17-02)



PETER BLUM GALLERY



Nicholas Galanin

What Have We Become? Basic assumptions, 2017

carved book

11 3/4 x 19 x 2 1/2 inches (29.8 x 48.3 x 6.3 cm)

(NGA17-03)

scripts indicate that the original phrase has been transposed upward or downward. Thus, A' means a repeat of phrase A, transposed upward a third, while A, would indicate an A phrase transposed downward a third.

There is a tendency for the last phrase to become progressively shortened as the melody is repeated. The singer may simply be broken off, or the principal phrases may interrupt himself in order to call out directions to others. (These calls are so important that they are not to be given even when the singer is alone.) A phrase may occur more than once in a song.

more occur may reduce may occur more than once in a song. The whole part is repeated. I-C, recorded by Charley W. is the song of the ghost of the Teqwedi warrior, Luwaga who died in 1877. As a shaman's spirit he is above Yakutat Bay' (Thaxay) as one of the spirits controlled by the gods. This song was introduced by John Eliot White, the one who became a shaman. 'Lusa [sees the war]. That's his spirit to sing. The song is 1.32 seconds. The singer beat on the drum with a regular rhythm, probably imitating the drum. He concludes in Tingit, as translated thus (yu 'eyá) the words (claxuxs) of my grandfather's spirit. When repeated the words of the song are somewhat different both in melody and in lyrics.

A tremolo-effect is occasionally employed when attempting to indicate the noise of a rattle.

Although the Yakutat Tingit liked to acquire foreign songs, there was a strong tendency to fit these into their own style. Songs which depart markedly from the Tingit pattern, even though they may have Tingit words, I suspect to be of foreign origin. On the other hand, the most abundant of all (1952, 7-2-A and 7-2-B) are traditional Raven Moity songs referring to Raven's Theft of Daylight, and are believed to be very ancient Tingit songs.

Agi Jambor has made the following observations on the songs:

"It is almost paradoxical to try to transcribe aboriginal Indian music in Western musical notation. It is as if we would explain a pear by means of an apple. Our notation preserves with almost a short-systematized, between our soul and the music—is that is, between our soul and the music—is expressed it so beautifully of that art. Mimic Johnson 'Nobody taught me this song; it lived in my heart.' Our feelings have finer shadings than the 12 notes of our compositions.

"The performance of Tingit music is an organic part of the composition, and sometimes speech and melody cannot be divorced from each other. To quote Mimic Johnson again: 'My grandmother was crying and singing, singing and crying.' Where did she learn the reason for composing her children's songs? 'I compose them to make my grandchildren happy. It is a laughing music.'

"How can we put this down, these infinite shadings of the human soul, with our musical notations? When singing these songs we should always see behind the five lines and little black dots Minnie Johnson who didn't learn her songs; they lived in her heart."

By constructing enigmatic sculptures of masklike faces from the pages of 1970s anthropological books, Nicholas Galanin examines the politics of cultural representation and contemporary Indigenous identity. In this series, the materiality of the sculptures is significant pointing to a construct of Tlingit culture by Europeans. Commenting on the outsider's perspective of Tlingit culture, Galanin notes, "I have found myself reading Western literature, often written from a foreign perspective, in which my culture has been digested and recycled back to me." Galanin recognizes the importance of literature as documentation and is also overtly conscious of its biases in presenting "a dilemma in which old and new, customary and non-customary, overlap and collide. It is at this point of collision that a new dynamic and tension is being negotiated."



Nicholas Galanin
Indian Children's Bracelet, 2014-18
hand-engraved iron
3 x 7 1/2 x 1/2 inches (7.6 x 19.1 x 1.3 cm)
(NGA18-14)



In *Indian Children's Bracelet*, hand engravings adorn small handcuffs, like those used to forcibly remove Indigenous children from their families during the Residential School Period in the United States and Canada. Tlingit carvers began engraving copper bracelets to replace clan tattoos when the practice of tattoo was forcibly removed from communities by the church and European colonizers. The practice of jewelry making by Indigenous people of the Northwest Coast is one of cultural preservation, adaptation, and survival. As Galanin states, "These 'bracelets' embody the shared history of European colonization and settlement of the Americas as experienced by Indigenous communities, despite the amnesia of settler states in recognizing history. The work suggests the complexities of the desire for Tlingit art and simultaneous rejection of Tlingit people's realities and experiences by non-native consumers." In engraving these bracelets Galanin claims them as part of his history, acknowledging and honoring the resilience and survival of the generations affected by the weight of wearing these "bracelets".



Nicholas Galanin

Get Comfortable, 2012

C-print mounted on Dibond

32 x 48 inches (81.3 x 121.9 cm)

Edition of 10

(NGA12-07.10)



The photograph *Get Comfortable* was shot in Galanin's home community. As he describes: "The altered sign spray focuses the viewer on LAND, a reminder that the land and people Indigenous to it remain connected regardless of the discomfort this may cause nations and communities built on colonial legacies of attempted genocide. The work raises questions about comfort, pointing to the lack of comfort afforded to Indigenous communities during the invasion of the Americas by colonial states and during the subsequent permanent settlement of the land. The title *Get Comfortable* addresses communities that continue to disenfranchise and disregard Indigenous people, asserting the continued presence of Indigenous life connected to the land. Read by Indigenous communities standing next to the artist, it is a reminder of presence as well, of comfort gained from land, of resistance to erasure, of responsibility to land. The work also acknowledges discomfort, a reminder that Indigenous communities have not been comfortable for generations; that cultural amnesia, and cultural violence are maintained through the renaming of the land. By intervening actively, Galanin encourages presence, resistance and re-Indigenizing our concepts of place."



Nicholas Galanin

The violence of blood quantum, half human (animal), half human (animal) after James Luna, 2019
diptych, portrait of the artist; both halves of torn archival digital print

20 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches (52.1 x 39.4 cm), each

Edition of 10
(NGA19-2310)



This self portrait torn vertically in half, one eye swollen black and blue, reflects multiple layers of violence enacted through religious indoctrination and state enforcement of division between humans and non-human animals and by further dividing humans from each other. Half human (animal) references the dehumanizing language and policies used to justify genocide and violence towards Indigenous and non-European people in the Americas. The work's title asserts all humans as a single type of animal, resisting non-Indigenous epistemologies that espouse human supremacy and false moral division from non-human life. The work specifically targets Blood Quantum, a colonial and settler legislated genocide against Indigenous communities. The policy of tracking and measuring Indian Blood was (and continues to be) a fundamental tool in removing Indigenous people from "legal" claim to live, farm, hunt and fish on ancestral lands throughout North America. Simultaneously African blood was tracked and measured down to a single drop; not to erase the African, but to retain oppressive claims of ownership under colonial and subsequently settler law. The diptych is a record of Galanin's act of tearing his own image in two. The internalization of Blood Quantum legislation by Indigenous people and communities causes Indigenous people of mixed heritage to tear themselves into pieces daily. The work asserts that belief in, and enforcement of, the non-Indigenous concept of Blood Quantum slowly erodes and erases connection to Indigenous Identity and culture and perpetuates violence, while damaging the rights and responsibilities of people descended from Indigenous Nations. (After James Luna's Half Indian/Half Mexican, 1991).



Nicholas Galanin

Let Them Enter Dancing and Showing Their Faces: Shaman, 2018

monotype and gold leaf on paper

21 x 30 inches (53.3 x 76.2 cm)

(NGA18-01)





Nicholas Galanin

Let Them Enter Dancing and Showing Their Faces: Thief, 2018

monotype and gold leaf on paper

30 x 21 inches (76.2 x 53.3 cm)

(NGA18-09)





Nicholas Galanin

Everything We've Ever Been, Everything We Are Right Now - North, 2019

monotype and gold leaf on paper

30 x 22 inches (76.2 x 55.9 cm)

(NGA19-05)





Nicholas Galanin
Dreaming in English (shadow dance), 2021
monotype and gold leaf on paper
30 x 22 inches (76.2 x 55.9 cm)
(NGA21-03)





Nicholas Galanin
Dreaming in English (written in robe), 2021
monotype on paper
30 x 22 inches (76.2 x 55.9 cm)
(NGA21-06)





Nicholas Galanin
Familiar Faces 4, 2013
monotype on paper
12 1/4 x 9 3/8 inches (31.1 x 23.8 cm)
(NGA13-04)





Nicholas Galanin
Familiar Faces 8, 2013
monotype on paper
12 3/8 x 9 1/2 inches (31.4 x 24.1 cm)
(NGA13-06)





Nicholas Galanin
Familiar Faces 10, 2013
monotype on paper
13 3/8 x 9 1/4 inches (33.8 x 23.3 cm)
(NGA13-07)



In Galanin's monotypes, the artist's hand as much as Tlingit culture's history shapes the representation. Each monotype bears the imprint of a story of its creation, not as myth, but as lived experience and through memory—the marks showing the spontaneity of a drawing with the enduring qualities of a print. The imagery is central to Tlingit life and references and mimics visual movements of a customary aesthetic. However, Galanin's contemporary interpretation forms a creative continuum that combines past with present. Monotypes are included in the collections of such museums as The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Alaska State Museum, Juneau, AK; The Detroit Institute of Fine Arts, MI; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX.