

KERRI-LYNN REEVES
WE Are THREE and The Mother
MAY 16 – JULY 5, 2019

EXHIBITION: MAY 16 – JULY 5, 2019

OPENING RECEPTION: MAY 16, 7:30PM

Curated by Alyssa Fearon

COVER: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, "*Broken Armpit*", 2018,
photopolymer intaglio and screen print on handmade repurposed paper and cotton rag paper, each 8" x 8".

ISBN: 978-1-927076-32-3

WE ARE THREE AND THE MOTHER

Text by Alyssa Fearon

WE are THREE and The Mother combines two projects by artist Kerri-Lynn Reeves. The projects explore family through the use of various media, including fibre and printing techniques, as well as collaborative art-making with her child, Finley Rae Reeves Williams, and co-parent Aron Williams. Reeves' practice is inspired by her upbringing on a farm in southwestern Manitoba, where her family has worked on the land for over 100 years. Her work often looks at skill, legacy, and hands-on knowledge. Originally from the Virden area, Reeves' practice centres around her identity as an artist and mother, and her efforts to strike balance between the work of artmaking and the work of motherhood.

Reeves' project *WE are THREE*, a collection of drawings, paintings, and screen-printed works, was originally shown last year at Arprim, a contemporary art centre in Montreal. The project explores the ways in which Reeves negotiates her multiple roles as a mother, artist, and co-parent, and in the context of this project, she combines all three roles and allows spontaneity to



drive the outcome of the work. The second project, *The Mother*—an outstretched hammock—was originally shown in 2017 at the Blackwood Gallery at University of Toronto Mississauga. The work explores Reeves' fascination with shapes, in particular triangles, and how the shape is used as a metaphor to represent the artist's role within the dynamics of her family. Throughout her work, geometric shapes act as a stand-in for the influences in Reeves' life: her hometown, the members of her family, and the artist herself.

ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, "*You Help Me, Mama*", "*Heart*", 2018, digital print and screen print on heavyweight paper, each 18" x 18".

In this interview, Reeves discusses her ways of blurring the lines between her parenting practice and art practice.

Alyssa Fearon (AF): You tend to involve your daughter in your work in very intentional ways, like involving her in an artist residency, the process of creating new work, and even the titling of work. Why is it important for you to have her be part of your process?

Kerri-Lynn Reeves (KR): I respond very directly to my particular context in my artwork. Whatever is happening in my personal life, I process that through my artwork—whether that’s moving across the country to go to graduate school or being in a long distance relationship. When I became pregnant with Finley, I was coming out of a process of looking at social space and material production done socially, but family-making has been the most intense form of social engagement and has far greater social implications. When artists work with or in community, there are intense social implications and ethics around it, but I had become jaded with the practice and the ethics around participation. So I turned inwards, and was exploring those things through family-making and mothering. I’m really interested in how artists collapse the boundaries between life and art, and ideas of ongoing practices. My parenting practice is just as important as my art and I never want to hide the fact that I’m a parent.

AF: Can you talk about your experiences of being an artist-mother and what it means to find a balance within those two worlds?

KR: It means that everything goes much slower. It was incredible to be pregnant during graduate school, but I could only work in spurts of 15 minutes, so I learned to work in more fragmentary ways and in ways that were a lot kinder and slower. Before Finley, I would just say yes to most things and I was doing a lot, [but now] my life has become a lot smaller and slower. It has been very productive artistically. I have a friend that calls it “mom-time.” The kid will be asleep for 45 minutes, so I just have to do this in 45 minutes. And so sometimes that means things get left behind or not investigated, so I’ve really tried to develop my own intuition and develop other people’s intuition, and bring more balance back into the artworld. [The work] doesn’t have to be super theoretical; it doesn’t have to portray patriarchal concepts; it can be more feminist. There is much more theory that I find supportive, [such as] colour theory, colour healing, spirituality and auras, and mindfulness. [Those theories] have now become part of my practice. I’ve also become more intentional about opportunities that I seek out and follow through with.



ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, *"Mama & Daddy" #1*, 2018, chine-colle, digital print, screen print on cotton rag paper, each 28" x 40".



ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, *"Mama, where's the moon? It's hiding"*, 2018, digital print and screen print on heavyweight paper, each 24" x 24".



ARTIST'S STATEMENT



AF: Shapes, place-making, and collaboration seem to be consistent themes throughout your work. Can you tell me more about the significance of these elements in your work, and what they mean for you?

KR: Place-making comes out of my family history. My family moved to Two Creeks, Manitoba in 1882 as indentured farmers. [One side of my family] arrived from England, and the other side arrived from Ontario through Pennsylvania. That was the start of the history that I know. I grew up in a place that very much felt like a deeply-rooted community that went

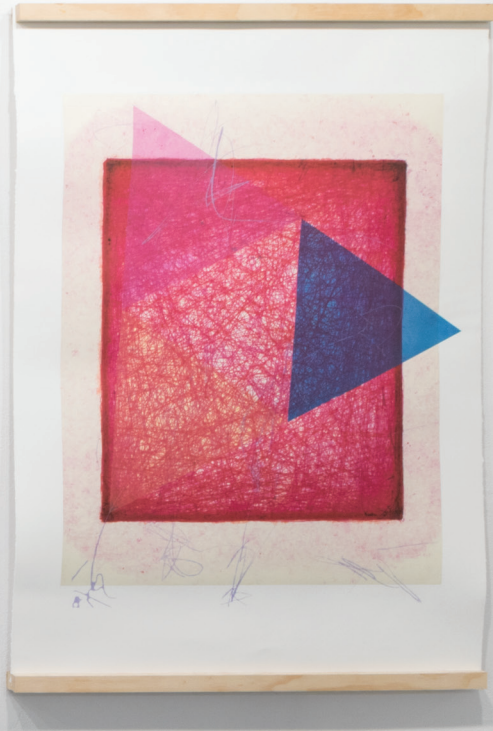
ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, "We Go to Moo House Now?", "I Don't Want to Talk to Daddy", "Mama & Daddy" #2, 2018, drypoint intaglio and screen print on cotton rag paper, each 20" x 28".

generations back, but coming to know how complex those dynamics get, and the history of settler culture and how my family did not acknowledge that at all... My work [looks at] the politics of land use, and in my work the prairies are [represented by] squares as a reference to the grid or quilt-like appearance of the land when seen from above.

During my experience of being pregnant, I did not feel like a beautiful glowing orb. I felt like a big jutting triangle; my body would jut out into public space, and people would comment on it. I felt like an embodied social site. There was social collaboration happening inside me. When Finley was born, [Finley and I] represented two points. The line between me and Finley was equal to the line between me and my co-parent, Aron. So the triangle became the family and that became the social collaboration. Triangles are also really solid and strong, but they don't force, instead they shift as they move. Squares are blocks that just stack to become bigger squares, and it seemed colonial and patriarchal, spatial not social, so the square is a metaphor for the father. The triangle [also represents] the mother, and the circular orb is Finley. The circle represents the child, historicity and cycles, time and the fact that generations aren't linear. Finley also has a lovely relationship with the moon.

AF: There seems to be a level of spontaneity that happens in your work when working with collaborators, especially in *WE are THREE*. How do you go about creating the right kind of environment for that spontaneity to happen?

KR: I had no control over what Aron's or Finley's drawings would look like. I only had a few hours at a time to work, and all of the techniques were new to me, so it was a real time crunch. Spontaneity came from me relying on my intuition, and it became an emotional and intuitive process in the studio. I would start with one of their drawings and then I would layer over that with the other's work, and then I would think about how my own shapes would overlap and interact. [*WE are THREE* is about] exploring when someone's voice has more power, and the truth is, there is never a time where there is true equality. Finley's labour was fun and Aron's drawings were made while he was working at his job (he's an art handler and truck driver). I did all of the art-making and labour, Aron designed and made the display mechanisms, he made the plywood strips and squares that frame and support the work, and the titles are Finley's.



ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, "For Daddy", 2018, chine-colle, digital print, screen print on cotton rag paper, each 28" x 40".



ABOVE: Finley Rae Reeves Williams, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, and Aron Williams, "You sad? Tears?", 2018, chine-colle, digital print, screen print on cotton rag paper, each 28" x 40".

LIST OF WORKS:

"You sad? Tears?", "Mama & Daddy" #1, "For Daddy," chine-colle, digital print, screen print on cotton rag paper, each 28" x 40", 2018.

"Mama, where's the moon? It's hiding." digital print and screen print on heavyweight paper, each 24" x 24", 2018.

"You Help Me, Mama," "Heart," digital print and screen print on heavyweight paper, each 18" x 18", 2018.

"We Go to Moo House Now?" "I Don't Want to Talk to Daddy," "Mama & Daddy" #2, drypoint intaglio and screen print on cotton rag paper, each 20" x 28", 2018.

"Broken Armpit," photopolymer intaglio and screen print on handmade repurposed paper and cotton rag paper, each 8" x 8", 2018.

How I Know #1, screen print on linen, 52" x 114", 2017.

How I Know #2, screen print on linen, 52" x 114", 2017.

The Mother, hammock, 256" x 256" x 256", 2017.

UP NEXT:

JAN BRANCEWICZ

REPRODUCING THE OLD MASTERS

JULY 18 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2019

DOUG DERKSEN

STANDING IN THE CALM OF THE STORM

JULY 18 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2019

The AGSM is supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Manitoba Arts Council, and the City of Brandon.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



MANITOBA
ARTS COUNCIL

CONSEIL DES ARTS
DU MANITOBA



City of
BRANDON



Community
Futures



IB
SPRINKLERS
UNDERGROUND SPRAWLER SYSTEMS



ASSINIBOINE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Lasting Image



chez
Angela
BREADS CAKE PASTRIES



WESTERN MANITOBA CENTENNIAL AUTHORITY

The Brandon Sun



BRANDON
UNIVERSITY



LIQUOR
MART



Westoba
CREDIT UNION LTD.



Jenkins
THE FLOORING PEOPLE



McMunn & Yates
COURTESY & SERVICE
Make It Better



710 ROSSER AVENUE
UNIT 2
BRANDON, MB

204.727.1036
INFO@AGSM.CA
AGSM.CA

MON 4 - 9PM
TUE, WED, FRI 10AM - 5PM
THU 10AM - 9PM
SAT 12 - 5PM SUN CLOSED