

KATHERINE BOYER'S ARTIST'S STATEMENT

How the Sky Carries the Sun is a universe that extends beyond my complex and seemingly dichotomous identity (Métis and white Settler). This exhibition explores internalized dualities, expressed as the relationship between the sun and the sky: a connection that exemplifies distinct but supportive experiences.

The living paradox of the title is a buoyant state of in-betweenness and potentially contradictory experiences. It represents my queerness and my craftiness (blended with my simultaneous desire for functionality), my own hardness and softness, and my stillness that isn't still at all. The exhibition title is an invisible through-line for structural support to explore a Queer, Métis phenomenology¹. Phenomenology helps me to ask an important question about self-consciousness and identity: "Am I the sky, or am I the sun?"

Utility and functionality are part of Métis aesthetic, which shares commonalities with the intentional and essential experience of "queering" and Queer worldmaking. In this case, hardware stores became places to negotiate use, affirm the handmade, and serve as the site to rotate between process and materials. Lumber, formally used for framing, trim, or general construction is transformed into elements that support, cradle, and hold. This fluidity can be found at the heart of *Memories the Sundogs Herd*, a grid of delicate lightboxes, mounted on OSB, suggesting a roof truss design while also referencing quilt appliqué and a common prairie winter phenomenon: sundogs. *Memories the Sundogs Herd* uses light to reveal a range of family recollections about life in the Souris Valley, as if overheard and collected by this recurring winter skyline. Recorded as written and oral accounts, these memories do not expressly belong to me but they are nevertheless internalized and are intrinsic to my experience of the Souris Valley as a *place*.

Alternatively, *Cyan Blue Eclipse*, which uses an approach that blocks UV sunlight, reveals plant and animal imagery drawn from a summer spent gardening. This direct engagement with the sun as a collaborative partner in the creative process relays agency back to nature in the reciprocal cycle of plant care, respect, and gardening.

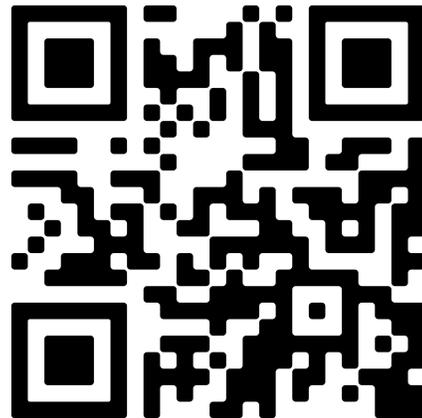
Throughout *How the Sky Carries the Sun*, absent or negative space functions as a placeholder for the conceptual body and oneself. This void functions as an imagined construction site for an internalized sense of home. It is a (non)space for exploring memories, inner conflict, nonlinear timelines and disjointed experiences.

The serpentine line of the hooked rug, *Queer Hometown Horizon*, reveals the shape of a formative place from my youth. A horizon line that wraps upon itself and contorts around the

¹ In this context a helpful description of phenomenology comes from author, Sara Ahmed: "Phenomenology can offer a resource for queer studies insofar as it emphasizes the importance of lived experience, the intentionality of consciousness, the significance of nearness or what is ready-to-hand, and the role of repeated and habitual actions in shaping bodies and worlds." Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2006. Page 2.

urban features of my hometown neighbourhood, it reinterprets memories and experiences that were once benign but might reveal a young queer experience. Made using a cord used in landscaping to maintain a consistently straight and levelled surface known as a mason's line, *Queer Hometown Horizon* questions urban conformity and heteronormative expectations. This horizon line opens space for considering place, environment and reexamining memory.

I created *The Sky Vest* over the span of a year and fitted it with exacting precision to my own body. *The Sky Vest* materially connects my body, and the skies of places that were formative to understanding myself. The lands at the base of these places contain a resonance that spans generations, while the sky is exclusively for me, is exclusively my perspective, my angle, and orientation.



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