

For immediate release

## Award-winning artist reckons with local history in KWAG's fall exhibition, *Black Drones in the Hive*

**16 September 2020, Kitchener ON** – The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery will launch its fall exhibition season with an ambitious new solo project by Montreal-based artist Deanna Bowen. [\*Black Drones in the Hive\*](#) opens at KWAG on Friday 18 September in both our Main and Eastman Galleries for a sprawling exhibition that connects local history with contemporary conversations on race, colonization and cultural monuments.



*Black Drones in the Hive* draws its title from the disparaging words of the Deputy Reeve of Berlin (now Kitchener) in describing William Robinson, a local Black journeyman, as inscribed in the records of the Waterloo County House of Industry and Refuge (1869-1950). By combing local archives, KWAG's Permanent Collection, historical publications, and wartime propaganda, Bowen's exhibition weaves together narrative threads of labour, migration, dispossession and militarization. Collectively, this interdisciplinary work invites audiences to consider how our historical canon is constructed over time, and whose stories are hidden from public view.

"As a museum that prioritizes contemporary art, KWAG is especially attentive to the ways in which artists of our time help us to understand what precipitates this moment and where our actions may lead us," says Crystal Mowry, KWAG's Senior Curator. "Deanna Bowen is an artist who deftly creates a paper trail for the grievances and Black trauma that underlie our present-day reckoning. Through her extensive research, she shines a light on the various avenues through which power can enable erasure and refuse duty."

"Deanna Bowen unearths ugly truths in our regional histories and as such, her work is timely in the current climate of systemic racism," explains Shirley Madill, KWAG's Executive Director. "We are pleased to create space for such critical voices in our Gallery."

*Black Drones in the Hive* will remain on view at KWAG until 28 February, 2021, while its themes will resonate through upcoming public programs and educational events including a virtual artist talk with Deanna Bowen to be announced at a later date.

"It is an unbelievable honour to have worked so closely with Deanna on this exhibition during a time of so much uncertainty," adds Mowry. "We are proud to be sharing this work in a moment that so desperately needs it."

## ABOUT THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO ART GALLERY

Established in 1956, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) is Waterloo Region's leading public art gallery with an emphasis on contemporary art, offering creative and accessible experiences for all ages and segments of society. KWAG connects people and ideas through art, drawing the community into a shared experience of art that moves from sight to insight. The Gallery and its Permanent Collection of more than 4000 works is located within Centre In The Square.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. We are on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral Confederacy), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples.

### MEDIA CONTACT

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### KITCHENER-WATERLOO ART GALLERY

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### HOURS AND ADMISSION

KWAG is open to the public Tuesday to Saturday from 11:00am-5:00pm and Sunday from 1:00-5:00pm. We encourage visitors to familiarize themselves with our [COVID-19 Visitor Policy](#) when planning their visit.

Admission to KWAG's exhibitions is free, courtesy of Sun Life Financial.

