

Staring in Coast Salish

Curated by Alanna Edwards

*Untitled*, 2019

Atheana Picha

108"x108"

Returning the woman's gaze from the opposite wall, Picha's paintings together form a face rendered with Coast Salish design elements. SSSH! The stylized ears are a reminder that this is also a library, and of the importance of listening and wordless communication. How do you learn – from a book or a teacher in a classroom setting or from watching, doing, and making mistakes? *Staring in Coast Salish* encourages all those who pass through the space to consider the impact of photography, art, and language on the erasure and silencing of voices, communities, and histories.

*[stares in coast salish]*, 2018

Kelsey Sparrow

Variable dimensions

Reflecting on the land and territory on which KPU Surrey is located, *Staring in Coast Salish* confronts the viewer through related works by the artists Kelsey Sparrow and Atheana Picha. Sparrow's repeated and photocopied images physically replicate the mind-worm effect social media memes have on popular culture while simultaneously referencing the DIY aesthetic of wheat pasting and graffiti. "Reclaiming" physical and virtual spaces from which indigenous peoples have violently been erased and forcibly removed, the original photograph is of a Coast Salish woman by the photographer and ethnologist Edward S. Curtis. With the phrase below, Sparrow's piece questions the authority and accuracy of defining peoples and nations with overarching terms.