

Spring 2025 Exhibitions Opening Conversation: Maria Hupfield and Lisa Le Feuvre

February 7, 2025 conversation with artist Maria Hupfield, curator Lisa Le Feuvre, and Executive Director of Ohio Humanities Rebecca Brown Asmo, who discuss the Spring 2025 exhibitions at the Wexner Center for the Arts.

This transcription is provided as a record of the live conversation, for educational use. [Read more about the Wexner Center for the Arts' Mission, Vision, and Values.](#)

Transcript

Gaëtane Verna ([00:12](#)):

Good afternoon. Thank you all for joining us. I truly appreciate you choosing to be in community with us today. We need this more than ever, but before we begin our celebration I ask that we take a moment to gather our thoughts, breathe, and pause as we respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this territory and their role in the life of this region. We ask that we pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging. We ask that you respect the land and traditions of those who walked upon it for millennia before us. Our art center occupies the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe, and many other Indigenous peoples.

([01:17](#)):

The university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greenville, and the forced removal of nations through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. We honor the resiliency of these nations, and recognize the historical context that continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land. We acknowledge the history, culture, and stewardship of the land. We seek to live in respect and peace and to right past relations as we live and work on their ancestral territory.

([02:00](#)):

On behalf of the entire team at the Wexner Center for the Arts and the Board of Trustees of the Wexner Center Foundation, I welcome you to our opening of *Nancy Holt: Power Systems*, and Maria Hupfield's *The Endless Return of Fabulous Panther (Biimskojiwan)*. Did I say it right? Okay. Nobody told me how. We are thrilled to share the works of these distinctive women artists with you this spring season. As you walked upon the building today, you may have seen a vibrant modular furniture installation. This work is part of an ongoing collaboration between the Wex and two of our esteemed university colleagues from the Knowlton School, Ashley Bigham and Erik Herrmann, also known as the architectural practice Outpost Office. Their modular pieces will provide a place for rest, reflection, and photo opportunity throughout April 6th. We are grateful to Ashley and Erik for their partnership and thoughtful approach to activating the spaces around our building.

(03:13):

Depending on the entrance that you used today also, you may have also noticed a large steel pipe that makes its way into, across, and down to the lower level of our lobby. This piece is Nancy Holt's first interaction with the Wex, the 1986 work titled *Pipeline*. This work reflects the late artist's enduring interests in the physical and economic systems that keep the modern world functioning. *Power Systems* is the most extensive presentation of Holt's exploration of systems that connects and powers societies to date. These works include massive installations exposing the structures used for delivering electricity and heating, but also more intimate, previously unseen related works on paper that offer insight into her process, and delving into football and the system behind the play of the game.

(04:11):

And as you all know, football is something we know a lot at The Ohio State University. Here's to the national champions. The artist herself can be seen and heard in two short films on view throughout the exhibition's run, and we will share more of her short films in a program this Sunday right here in our Film/Video Theater at 1 PM. So, I, of course, invite you to join us on Sunday once more.

(04:38):

As Holt's works reveal hidden systems, the work of Maria Hupfield challenges the traditional relationship between artists, material, institutions, and the public. Maria's installation and video work in Gallery A and The Box offer space for connection and inspiration, where standing rules against touching the art do not always apply. She reflects her Anishinaabe heritage by centering a powerful mythical symbol of resilience from the Indigenous culture of the Great Lakes region. And she also engages the specific environment of the Wex by responding to the architecture of our own Peter Eisenman building. With every interaction from the public, the installation changes and evolves. Video projections of performances build on that sense of motion, and the viewer can be part of it, engaging with the sculpture objects intended for touch on the corner platform, and feeling the cushion of the Marley floor under their feet. I look forward to watching Maria's performance in the Performance Space on April 5th in a program entitled *Channeling Greater Power*, and I highly encourage you to return for it.

(05:57):

In bringing these two exhibitions to you, we have had the pleasure of working with Lisa Le Feuvre, the curator of both exhibitions, and I cannot thank her enough for her care for the artists' work, and her steadfast support and engagement with the multidisciplinary nature of our program and every aspect of the development of this exhibition, from communication and promotion of the two projects. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Lisa. The exhibitions are stellar, and I would be remiss in not acknowledging the work of your team, who worked in close collaboration with our incredible team. So, thank you to the Holt/Smithson Foundation for their unwavering support. What a joy to work with like-minded, dedicated colleagues. The nature of Nancy Holt's System Works created some very unusual needs in the gallery. So in addition to thanking the exceptional team led by Julieta González, Kim Kollman, and Dave Dickas, who each within their capacities guide and install our exhibitions at the Wex,

(07:06):

I must also thank the Farber Corporation for pipe installation, and Capital City Electric for their wiring work of *Power Systems*. They were instrumental in enabling us to light these intricate sculptures. They look very simple, but they're very, very complicated to install. The beauty of it is you don't see how complicated it is, but it was a lot of work and a lot of collaboration, and it was so nice to see the joy of our new collaborators being so excited engaging with Nancy's work. These exhibitions could not have happened without the generous generosity of donors; our sincere thanks to these individuals and organizations for recognizing the value of the arts and helping us bring these artists to our community. Bill and Sheila Lambert and the Crane Family Foundation make our spring 2025 exhibitions season possible. Support for Outpost Office is provided by Ohio State Integrated Physical Planning Liaison Group; *Nancy Holt: Power Systems*, and *Maria Hupfield: The Endless Return of Fabulous Panther* are made possible by Ohio State Energy Partners, funded by ENGIE and Axiom.

(08:23):

Our galleries are always free, thanks to the assistance from Adam Flatto and the PNC Foundation, and through assistance from CampusParc, we can offer discounted parking for Wex events to make visits here fully accessible. I thank all members of the Wexner Center staff for their trust and support, from our communications department, our advancement department, our visitor services department, our security team—~~everyone~~ is everyone's all-on-deck work—from performing arts to film and video, and last but not least, our Learning & Public Practice team. So really, thank you to the entire team of the Wex for pulling this work all the time. If you're not a member, I hope that you will consider joining us and becoming a member, and I'm sure Emily will give us more information about that at the end. Now it's my immense honor to introduce Lisa Le Feuvre, writer, editor, and curator. She is the inaugural executive director of the Holt/Smithson Foundation, the artist-endowed foundation dedicated to the creative legacy of the artists Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson. Thank you.

Lisa Le Feuvre (09:56):

Thank you so much, Gaëtane, for such a nice, and warm, and wonderful welcome. And now I'm standing here—there're so many things I want to say—but I've got plenty time to say that in discussion shortly. What I really want to do by standing here is to say thank you, and there are so many people who I want to say thank you to. To every single person at the Wex, it has been just an incredible pleasure to work on these two exhibitions. It's extremely rare that a team works with such commitment and such passion, and I've been teasing everyone by saying that since I've been here, every morning I wake up full of energy running to the Wex, ready to get installing the exhibition because it's been such a pleasure. My thanks are also enormous to all of the team at Holt/Smithson Foundation—the staff team, the board team—I'm privileged to work with incredible people every single day.

(11:03):

The greatest thanks, though, are to the artists—to Maria and to Nancy Holt. Making exhibitions, I believe, really, really matters. Exhibitions are places where we come together to ask questions, not to find solutions, but to ruminate on the problems of being human. The honor of thinking with Maria Hupfield is second to none; to think, to test, to ask, and to really bring this incredible energy. And I hope you can excuse me, maybe

being a little bit cheesy here. Nancy Holt is an artist who was born in 1938 and passed away in 2014. As a female artist, she did not have exhibitions like this one in her own lifetime. If she were here, she would be running around with complete enthusiasm—being highly critical of me, I’m convinced of that—but this is what she always dreamed of.

(12:14):

And why are these exhibitions so special? It’s because they’re an invitation for us all to test the limits of what we think we know. And there’s another thanks that I think must be given, which is to the audiences who will be coming. We might be launching the exhibition now, but it’s just the beginning. So for me, my thanks are endless, and I look forward to this evening—talking, celebrating, thinking together, and seeing, really, the importance of art in this moment now. So, thank you to all of you.

Dionne Custer Edwards (12:58):

Thank you, Gaëtane and Lisa. Hi everyone. Thank you for joining us tonight. I’m Dionne Custer Edwards, head of Learning & Public Practice here at the Wex, and I’m pleased to introduce and welcome tonight’s speakers. I would like to briefly echo gratitude to all of our staff here at the Wex that make all of our programs possible. I would also like to give a special thank you to our staff in Learning & Public Practice, with a nod to Emily Haidet, our curator for public programs, who organized tonight’s conversation. Each exhibition opening, we strive to celebrate the artists and the work on view with a short conversation to introduce our communities to the exhibitions. Maria Hupfield is Martin clan, and an off-reservation member of the Anishinaabe Nation belonging to Wasauksing First Nation Ontario. Her work merges performance art, design, and sculpture, drawing from Indigenous storytelling traditions through art, scholarship, collaboration, and social justice. The conversation is moderated by Rebecca Brown Asmo, executive director of Ohio Humanities. Please join me in welcoming Maria Hupfield, Lisa Le Feuvre, and Rebecca Asmo.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (14:49):

Good evening. Lisa, Maria, how are you?

Lisa Le Feuvre (14:56):

Pretty good.

Maria Hupfield (14:57):

Pretty good.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (14:59):

Well, thank you all, again, for joining us. So, the three of us had a chance, in preparation for this conversation... we were all on a virtual meeting together on January 16th... And although it was just about three weeks ago, it feels like so many things have happened in the world, and it really feels like events in the world are coming to us so fast. And the work that we’re going to talk about tonight and that you will see tonight—at least to me—seems so much more relevant in the context of current events that have happened, and that are happening, and I know will continue to happen. And so, I’m really grateful that

we're able to have this conversation so that you'll be able to have some of that context as you go out there tonight. But that being said, some of the conversation is going to be very serious.

(15:58): And so I'd like to just take a moment to ground us in something very small, and in... just one moment of gratitude for something small that we're grateful for. And I was telling them earlier that I have two teenagers, and a lot of times they're very mean to me, but in the last couple of weeks, they have been really nice to me. And so, that is one small thing in this crazy world that I'm really grateful for. And so, if you would like to, I'd love to hear something that you're grounded in right now. Or Lisa.

Lisa Le Feuvre (16:36):

Well, I'm super grateful to be here, of course, but maybe because this is always my contrary nature, I want to answer that very generous question with a refusal, actually. It's not for me to say what I am grateful for at this moment; simply being is something wonderful to be grateful for. I'm much more interested in thinking what everyone together is grateful for. So I think it's a generous question, and it's one that really is there in the artwork that we're going to look at later tonight.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (17:24):

I love that answer. I don't think that's a refusal at all, I think it's beautiful.

Maria Hupfield (17:29):

So I have a very obvious answer, which is I'm totally grateful for art, because it really is through art that I've been able to find my own freedom to express myself, to move in the ways I want to move, to find the materials I want to work with, and to bring that to audiences, like everyone here. Thank you for joining us. So art, yeah.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (18:00):

Wonderful. So Lisa, I'm going to start with you, and with what I actually think is a very difficult question because Nancy Holt is monumental, but how would you explain her oeuvre to the audience?

Lisa Le Feuvre (18:17):

It is a simple and a difficult question at the same time. I mean for me—and I'm going to qualify this for me in just a moment—what Nancy Holt's work is really doing is she's reminding us that it's incredibly difficult to be human, and we're all experts in that difficulty of being human. What her artwork is doing is she's showing us these systems that we work within. It could be the system of language; it could be the system of time; it could be the system of energy, of power. And I think so often we don't pay attention to what is around us. And so, this qualifying thing of saying for me... I think Nancy Holt's work is really showing us that experience and perception is different for every one of us.

(19:18):

And there's this rather, like your first question, Rebecca, there's this real generosity to her artistic practice where she's saying, "Come. Come and have a look. What do you think of this?" And there's nothing that comes after that. And so, that observation that what art does... that it speaks to our curious and difficult times. I think as humans, we

always think whatever chapter of the present we're in is the worst one. It's the worst time right now. But if we were asked that question, I don't know, three years ago, it would also be the worst time. And that's that beauty of art that you described, Maria. Art can help us somehow convene with all of that stuff.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([20:12](#)):

Absolutely. And I think it's such a reminder. You make me think about—I work in a field of history and humanities, and I often think that in moments of difficulty, it's important to ground yourself in history because there's actually always moments in the past where things have been much worse and you can look at cycles. When everybody goes into the galleries tonight, you're going to see these very oversized, what I would describe as manifestations of power systems. So you'll see electricity, heat, these utilities that really govern all of the aspects of our lives, but that are usually hidden because we don't usually think about systems when we just flip on a light bulb, or flip a light switch and "oh, the lights come on." Or you flush a toilet, and you don't really think about where all the water comes from and how it gets there.

([21:14](#)):

But with Nancy's work, that cannot be avoided; you physically cannot get around it. But over the past few weeks, I really feel like I have been confronted with all of these systems of power and utilities really in the media—whether it has been with the wildfires in Los Angeles and the conversation around water—and how does water get places, and where is water, or where water is not. Or we're thinking right now with our government—and how do the machinations of our government work, and what happens if the wrong switch at the treasury department gets turned off? And so, as I was preparing for this, I was really just thinking so much about that. And so, how do you think about Nancy's work in relation to current events—either natural or political work—and what do you think that maybe Nancy would've thought about it?

Lisa Le Feuvre ([22:21](#)):

I think it's always impossible to know what an artist who's not here would've thought, but we can take some guesses by thinking about what she talked about. Nancy Holt, like all artists—and I think Maria, I can really see this in your work as well—when an artist presents work, they're presenting something to get us to perceive, to think harder, to look deeper, to pay attention to our perceptions. I think what Nancy Holt would say... she would go, "Mm-hmm. You see? I told you so."

([23:01](#)):

But I think that this sense of—in the Holt exhibition—this sense of power systems is literal and metaphorical. And you'll see—we'll be going to the galleries, and it seems so strange that none of you have been in yet, so I'm itching to get you into the galleries—you'll see electricity systems not inside the wall, but right in the gallery. You will see a heating system filling an entire gallery. These are literal power systems, and they've been constructed through incredible expertise from the tradespeople who've made them. People who know every single solution to a problem. Power systems are also metaphorical. When we make a power system—let's say a heating system—visible, maybe what we're also doing is saying, "Hold on a second. There's other power systems that help us, hinder us, and we need to pay attention to them."

(24:12):

So for me, this is this sense that Holt's work and Maria's work—I think the greatest art, and I think Holt, I'm completely biased, is a great artist; I think Maria, I'm completely biased, is a great artist—their work is always relevant to all these multiple versions of the present, because it presses on what it is to be human.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (24:41):

So Maria, I'd like to just give you a moment to describe your body of work to the audience, and how you feel that it's in conversation with Nancy Holt's work.

Maria Hupfield (24:56):

For sure. I just want to check which mic do you ... Is this mic good, or do you want the hand mic? Hand mic?

Audience Member (25:09):

It's not on.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (25:10):

I think you need to turn it on.

Maria Hupfield (25:11):

This mic?

Rebecca Brown Asmo (25:14):

Yes, yay.

Maria Hupfield (25:15):

Oh, beautiful. I'm back. Okay, wow. Hello, folks. My husband always says don't give me a mic. So a little bit about my work. Okay, so I'm a performance artist, which basically means that my body is my material—what I'm wearing, how I move, how I interact, all of these things. My body is the paint; it is the clay; it is all the things. And what really drew me to performance... well, a lot of things, but specifically what you'll see here at the Wex are tin jingles and a lot of gray felt. And so, when I came to performance, it was through sound. I wanted to work with these tin jingles, which are these little circles of tin that have been hand curled into a cone, and it doesn't have a little hammer in it like a bell; it needs the other cones to make sound.

(26:25):

So there's a lot around the jingle, but I wanted to think about what happens when I wear sound. How does that change the way I move, the way I feel, the way I exist in the world? And so, it really was through that that I came to the felt—I just wanted to be in my body. I wanted to get out of my mind. I didn't want to think and overthink everything all the time. And so, that was really the way that I came to it. So, if I think of someone, like a legend like Nancy Holt, I'm thinking a lot about her work as being something that has a function. And the function that I'm seeing in the gallery is that it's there for us; it's for our

bodies. We're able to feel the heat. We're able to bask in the glow of the light. And those are parallels that I'm thinking about in the two exhibitions.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([27:32](#)):

So, your exhibition is called *The Endless Return of the Fabulous Panther*. Is there a story behind that?

Maria Hupfield ([27:41](#)):

Biimskojiwan. Right?

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([27:43](#)):

Yes, yes, yes. Thank you, thank you.

Maria Hupfield ([27:43](#)):

So in brackets, *Biimskojiwan*. So absolutely, yes. So, I'm coming at my work through this idea of storytelling. The title itself is telling a story... it's like the title of a story. And so, *Biimskojiwan* is an Anishinaabe word, which means it's a spiral, but it's also... it's a whirlpool. So, if we think of a whirlpool, it goes in this shape that continues; it's endless. And so, I'm bringing this story here to Ohio... the place of Ohio—that's what, Seneca, for "the good river?"

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([28:31](#)):

Yeah.

Maria Hupfield ([28:32](#)):

I am sure, yeah. So, I'm bringing this water story here to think about a whirlpool and this idea of the creature who lives in the water—this Fabulous Panther—which is one name for this creature... the creature whose name we do not speak of because even to utter its name will call it forth. So, this is a creature that goes by many names, but it's actually, in the story... it's the tail of this Fabulous Panther—this great lynx, Mishipeshu—that is making the spiral, that is making this whirlpool in the water that becomes a portal into this other realm, into the water.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([29:17](#)):

That's great.

Maria Hupfield ([29:17](#)):

So, that's the story, but-

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([29:17](#)):

No, that's great. Well, and it's actually, so it's a great segue into the next question, because you're talking about your Indigenous culture—and this wasn't talked about in your introduction— but part of your culture is the Ojibwe nation, which is one of the tribal nations that was historic to Ohio. And when Gaëtane did the land acknowledgement, she referenced the Treaty of Greenville, which is what ended up ceding the land that became Ohio. But it's also what created the border between the US and Canada, and ultimately

Ohio and Canada—and you're Canadian—and as part of what ends up creating this border between the two countries. And I've been thinking a lot just about land and the border, and Ohio is a place where tribal nations were completely removed. And so, it is this void here in this space, and we're here in this university, and here in this land.

(30:38):

And when you grow up in Ohio and you study history, Indigenous history ends in 1832 with the last removal, even though Indigenous culture is so alive. And so, I guess my question is what does it mean for you with this story to be here today in this space, in this land, in this building, given that history, but also I would say given the current events that are happening between the borders of the US and Canada right now? And is there relevance? Maybe there's not, maybe I'm projecting too much of what's happening that I'm wrestling with onto this work.

Maria Hupfield (31:37):

Yeah, we're definitely in a very particular moment that we're finding ourselves in. So, I just want to share something. I have a young relative who's seven years old, and when I say "Ohio" to them, they have a very different-

Rebecca Brown Asmo (31:56):

Yes, yes. It's not positive-

Maria Hupfield (31:57):

... meaning that comes to mind.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (32:00):

... it's not a positive thing, yeah.

Maria Hupfield (32:02):

Well, it's just one of these things where in time, through language, that words develop new meaning. So, through TikTok, Ohio...

Rebecca Brown Asmo (32:17):

It means strange—something that's strange.

Maria Hupfield (32:18):

... or weird. But my point is that this young relative got really excited. Like, "What? There's a place called Ohio, and my auntie is going there?" So, in thinking about that, we're in a world where there's history and layers of meaning. And so, I think, with that in mind, we never want to forget these other origins going back to... "oh yeah, there is a place called Ohio. People live there." I'm also a little conflicted because I'm in a city called Columbus. So, there's a whole other layer, but I'm also a visual artist.

(33:08):

And I spent almost 10 years living in Brooklyn surrounded by other performance artists, and that was such an incredibly powerful time for me. It was right after Marina Abramović did her thing. And so, it was in the air, and so was I, and I was able to bring my full self into this cosmopolitan center. So, I mention this because some of those

collaborators are people who appear in the video documentation that you'll see. There's some long videos, some shorter videos. So, I'm just hoping everyone enjoys that. So, I don't know if that answers your question, but-

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([33:53](#)):

It's whatever you want it to be-

Maria Hupfield ([33:54](#)):

... those are things-

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([33:54](#)):

... I mean, whatever it means to you to be here.

Maria Hupfield ([33:56](#)):

Those are for sure things that I have in mind.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([34:02](#)):

And what I think I just maybe want to say to the audience is that I think it's just important that the Wex is having you here, because I think it is... we come to institutions like this so often and hear land acknowledgements, and then just move along. But I think what's so important is that the Wexner Center for the Arts is going much beyond land acknowledgements, and bringing culture, and stories, and artists—not just to tell those stories, but—alive here today. I think that's maybe the point I was trying to make is that it's important to go much beyond that.

Lisa Le Feuvre ([34:48](#)):

And maybe it's also really important to underline that art is absolutely not about the world—it's in and of the world. And art is something that brings friction, and it talks to the other conversations that we're having. And I guess in a way, one of the many reasons why I love art so much is I want to invite it into a conversation with me. And it could be about the changing resonance of a word, like Ohio, and all of the complications with that. It could be about the resonances, not with history, but with histories, and also what comes next.

([35:43](#)):

I think that art's power—and because I'm a super fan of these two exhibitions, because I have no bias at all because I love them so much—I think that they're here to rustle in the leaves of the future, and to be an ignition for what we can do and what we can think. And this sense of being able to show—not in a didactic way—but to show things that we don't necessarily pay our attention to. And there's this great thing that Nancy Holt would always say. She said, "I don't want to be called a sculptor, I don't want to be called a land artist." She hated that term. "I don't want to be called a photographer, a Minimalist; I want to be called a perception artist."

([36:41](#)):

It's not a category in art history, but she wanted it, because, for her, art is something that exceeds these systems, these categorizations, in a way. And I always think that art and art history are in this constant difficult dance. Art history is about history. It's fixing a

narrative—and art is kind of all over the place, and its hands are in the air, and it's falling over, and it's working and it's not working, and it's annoying—And one day you like it, one day you don't like it. That's its job, to be the sands that creates something unthought of before. And in a way, Rebecca, it's this sense of talking around, and sometimes talking around—spiraling around—gets you somewhere in a much more lateral way, and it expands your mind.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (37:49):

One thing... so I'd like to shift to the people that are involved in this, because I think one thing that is similar and also really interesting about both of these exhibitions is that it involves collaboration and contributions of people, and it activates the work in these really... ways that makes each installation unique. And so, I would love to hear about Nancy's work. Something that's really unique is how labor and labor unions are a part of the work. And then, Maria, I'd love to hear—you talked about performances and the collaborations of performance—and so I would love to hear you also talk a little bit about the performance that's coming up in April, and anything you'd like to share about that, or maybe stories behind performances and the people, or what's involved in that.

Lisa Le Feuvre (38:57):

Okay. The sense of the people involved in Nancy Holt's work; so many people are involved in it. And I guess, in fact what's so brilliant about your question, I can now explain to myself why I was being so annoying. Sometimes I think my job description is to be annoying in response to your question of sharing gratitude and not wanting to, because I think with every single exhibition—every single presentation of art—there's usually some curator knocking around somewhere and their name is said. But it's not only that person; There's so many people involved. And I think what's so important about Nancy Holt's work is, yes, she is acknowledging the labor, but she's acknowledging it. There's labor in every single artwork that's made, so many people. And for Nancy Holt, one of the things that's so amazing—so when you go into the galleries, there's two big installations, one called *Electrical System* and one called *Heating System*—

(40:18):

Nancy Holt sets up the parameters for the artwork, and they're executed by experts in electricity and heating. And it's those people who make the actual decisions, because they're the experts. And I would like to say that probably most artists are working with experts. And for Nancy Holt, it's saying, "Come on, let's acknowledge everyone." So, I think that's something that's really exciting. But then because it's art, it's more complicated than that. I think, by Nancy Holt saying, "Come on, let's look at how things are made," she's asking us, every one of us, that when we go home tonight, we think, "well, hold on a second, this road has no potholes in it"—well, that's because some people made sure there was none. "There's no rubbish, or trash, I should say, on the street"—it's because people are clearing it up. This importance of people, and we need to recognize that.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (41:32):

Yeah, and we are so disconnected, from where our shirt comes from or where our shoe comes from these days in-

Lisa Le Feuvre ([41:39](#)):

Well, we can be, but we don't have to be.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([41:44](#)):

Well, and I think this work reminds us not to be.

Lisa Le Feuvre ([41:48](#)):

And maybe that's this kind of—see, I'm on a roll now—maybe that's the shift that maybe we—the we in this room—we need to be aware of this stuff. Someone sewed this together, and it wasn't me, and I need to know what those labor conditions are. And for me, I know what those labor conditions are, and that's really how we can be cognizant that everything is connected. And if we pay attention, just maybe we can make a more equitable world in the future.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([42:32](#)):

Maria?

Maria Hupfield ([42:34](#)):

Wow, there's a lot there. I want to come back to what you said around experts, and that's something I think about—experts, I mean. Nancy Holt is talking about labor, and I'm thinking also about labor but perhaps more ethical labor practices. So, when I'm working with other people, how can I do so in a way that we're coming forth as equals? And this relationship, there's no formula. It changes every time. In the videos that Lisa selected for The Box theater, there's one video where it's me and my siblings—it's my family. So that, as you can imagine, has a whole other complex layer. Fortunately, in that case, trust and respect are core in my family, and they defaulted to me. They're like, "Well, Maria, this is your area." But it changes depending who I'm working with.

([43:38](#)):

So, back to this question about experts. What I like to do when I work with other people is that I tend to work with people, one, who I just love. I love their work, but also that they do something better than me, something I would never think of. And in that way, it's a true collaboration in the sense that the end result is something I would never have thought of on my own. We get somewhere together, that there's strength in our difference, and that we're really paying attention to the specificities that we each have, that we have this whole rich area of... and tools, and things that they do. So here at the Wex for *The Endless Return of Fabulous Panther (Biimskojiwan)*, you will get to see a performance that I did, which was part of a commission for the Toronto Biennial. And in that case I invited two amazing, amazing people, SA Smythe and Olivia Shortt to join me, because I wanted to focus on the sound of the jingle. I wanted to think about sound.

([44:53](#)):

And why they were the right people for that job is because I'm no musician. I don't know much about music. I've learned a lot about jingles, I've learned a lot about jingle dresses, that they change the way you move, that you must be mindful, that there's healing with them, that they reference the sound of the water... so much. In fact, there's a book in that reference library that we put together that talks all about the jingle... lots of

resources. So anyway, that is why I worked with them. And so, that's what you will encounter in the gallery. You're going to hear this incredible soundscape that we came up with together-

Rebecca Brown Asmo ()

Together.

Maria Hupfield

... that we came up with together.

Rebecca Brown Asmo (45:44):

Well, I love that. And as we close, I mean, as I go out into the galleries I'm definitely going to be thinking about this concept of everything is better together. We'll make things when we find the strength in our differences, and when we work together with people who do things better than what we have. So, thank you for that, both of you.

Maria Hupfield (46:12):

Can I add one more thing?

Rebecca Brown Asmo (46:13):

Yeah, please, please.

Maria Hupfield (46:14):

So, I know you asked me a question earlier, and I don't think I quite answered it right, so I've been thinking about it. I want to come back to it, because there's a lot of talk around living in this post-racialized moment, and I just want to go back to that. There's so much strength in the specificity that we each have, that we each are a living archive. We're each carrying a body of knowledge. This is something my husband and I talk a lot about—he's also an artist—we talk about when an artist dies, when Nancy Holt is gone, her whole language, her whole vocabulary goes with her. So, all we're left with is this work.

(47:04):

Anyway, now I'm getting emotional. So, that's a lot of responsibility for curators to think about how do we take care of that legacy? So, I just want to bring it back to that, as you're talking about strength and difference: how we're stronger together; how we have our own agency; how we bring that; how we can take it forth; how abstraction is not empty of meaning but it's ancient, symbolic; it's heavily codified. There's tons of references. The information's out there, and all of this again comes back to art—that that's what we get when we look at art—that richness, that life, that vitality, that energy, that heart, the heat, the sweat, all this human stuff that is essential to us.

(47:56):

And we may mess up as humans a lot, but everything is out there for us. So, everyone here, you could be anywhere else tonight, but you chose to be here and-

Lisa Le Feuvre (48:11):

And that's amazing.

Maria Hupfield ([48:14](#)):

So, thank you.

Rebecca Brown Asmo ([48:14](#)):

Well, I can think of no better way to end than on those words. And so, I want to thank you both for being here tonight. I think that I know I'm going to go—I did have a chance to go to the galleries earlier—I know I'm going to go back into the galleries with just so much more meaning. I'm grateful that I had the opportunity to get to meet you, and I hope that you all feel the same from having this experience getting to meet Lisa and Maria. And I'm grateful that you joined us here tonight, and I hope that you continue to come back. So, thank you.

Lisa Le Feuvre ([49:08](#)):

Thank you.

Maria Hupfield ([49:09](#)):

We'll see them in the gallery.

Emily Haidet ([49:10](#)):

Yes, yes-

Lisa Le Feuvre ([49:11](#)):

Quickly, quickly.

Emily Haidet ([49:14](#)):

... I have a couple quick things, a couple quick bits of housekeeping, so thank you again. I quickly want to introduce myself, I'm Emily Haidet, curator of public programs here at the Wex. Before we visit the incredible exhibitions, I urge you all to consider becoming a member here at the Wexner Center for the Arts. Support our membership program, which will contribute to amazing experiences like we have tonight. There are many folks here who can help you become a member, including our membership manager, Patrick Bradford, anyone upstairs at the front desk, any staff you see, we would be happy to speak to you.

([49:50](#)):

I also encourage you all to attend the screening on Sunday, 1 PM, of Nancy Holt's films. Lisa will be here introducing that screening. It's a free screening, and tickets are available online. Now is the moment we invite you all to open the galleries with us and experience these beautiful, immersive exhibitions. We encourage you to use care and be mindful of your surroundings as you explore the incredible work. There's a beautiful learning guide available, created by our learning team and communications teams if you'd like to dig deeper, and the Wex has an incredible selection of related books, including some that were mentioned this evening. And that reading room... you can actually explore some of those books in the reading room within the galleries as well. Everything's open 'til 9. Please enjoy your evening. Thank you.

Lisa Le Feuvre ([50:45](#)):

Thank you.