

# Emily Wilson

## Artist Statement

This exhibition invites viewers on an uncanny road trip along Highway 16 in Northwest British Columbia. Featuring gouache paintings by Emily Wilson, *Up Around the Bend* presents fragments of memories collected throughout a life spent living, working and driving through this region.

These works consider the complicated presence of humanity within the natural world, showing the highway as a transitional space between the urban and the wild. Signs of settlement and industry are scattered among creatures and plant life, arranged with pattern, decoration and repetition inspired by folk arts. Billboards reflect the culture and wide-ranging politics of Northwest British Columbia through simple language, while offering moments of comic relief. By layering gouache on dark paper, Wilson brings from the shadows things that might otherwise be overlooked. Her depiction of the duality of this region challenges a longstanding tradition of portraying the Canadian landscape as a pristine, untouched wilderness.

## Biography

Emily Wilson is an artist from Prince George, BC, currently based in Smithers. Inspired by her personal memories and everyday life among the landscapes of northern BC, she creates work that investigates human connections to nature, through a creative practice that includes painting, drawing, illustration and writing.

Emily earned a Certificate of Visual Arts from Vancouver Island School of Art, and a bachelor's degree in Cognitive Science and History from McGill University. Her work has been featured in the publications *Thimbleberry* and *Fire Season*, and exhibited around British Columbia at Two Rivers Gallery, Island Mountain Arts, and Omineca Arts Centre.