

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Dalhousie Art Gallery presents *Strange Birds*, a multi-media and VR exhibition
by Sackville-based artist Graeme Patterson**

HALIFAX, NS – August 9, 2024 – Dalhousie Art Gallery (DAG) is excited to announce the opening of *Strange Birds*, an immersive multi-media exhibition by the award-winning artist, animator, and filmmaker Graeme Patterson. Organized and circulated by the Beaverbrook Art Gallery and Dalhousie Art Gallery, and curated by Ray Cronin, *Strange Birds* will be on view from **September 6 – November 10, 2024**.

The exhibition delves into Patterson's unique artistic vision through a captivating installation of works that envision a post-apocalyptic Eastern Canada, submerged and inhabited by two anthropomorphized, dancing figures resembling a heron and a starling. This enigmatic dream-like environment originates from a 1:10 scale replica of Patterson's home and invites viewers into scenarios that are both strange and familiar. Starlings, the recurring characters in different scenes, are an invasive species that propagate uncontrollably, overwhelming the fragile ecosystem of the Sackville-inspired marshland. In Patterson's imagined landscape, the sea eventually engulfs the world constructed by these strange birds, erasing all evidence of their presence. Left behind is the water and a great blue heron who observes the antics of the starlings that settled in its ecosystem. Through Patterson's vision, viewers can slip into a world that eerily mirrors our own.



Graeme Patterson, *Strange Birds* video still (2023). Courtesy of the Artist.

Combining sculpture, scale models, stop-motion animation, robotics, interactive programming, virtual reality, and music, Patterson's meticulous creative process draws audiences into an emotionally charged parallel universe that is both moving and playful. Born in Saskatoon and now living in Sackville, New Brunswick, Patterson was a finalist for the 2014 and 2020 Sobey Art Awards, nominated for a Juno Award in 2011, and the recipient of the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award in 2012. His work has been exhibited internationally at venues such as the National Art Gallery of Canada, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, MASS MoCA, and Creative Time (New York), and his animated films have been screened at festivals including the Toronto International Film Festival and the Reykjavik International Film Festival.

"We are excited to present Graeme Patterson's *Strange Birds* at Dalhousie Art Gallery," said Pamela Edmonds, Director/Curator of Dalhousie Art Gallery. "Patterson's work is both visually stunning and intellectually engaging, and we believe this exhibition with its themes related to the local and global effects of climate change will resonate with a wide audience. We are also delighted to have Ray Cronin's expertise in curating this remarkable show."

The exhibition also features an illustrated catalogue with essays by curator Ray Cronin, poet Sue Goyette, and environmental scientist and curator Melanie Zurba.

The opening reception for *Strange Birds* will take place on **Thursday, September 5th from 6:00 – 8:00 PM**. This event will offer attendees the opportunity to meet the artist, enjoy refreshments, and be among the first to experience this captivating exhibition.

Guided exhibition tours will be offered every Saturday in September (September 7, 14, 21, 28) from 2-3 PM. These tours are family-friendly, free to attend, and registration is not required.

Dalhousie Art Gallery is open Wednesday and Friday, 11 AM to 5 PM; Thursday 11 AM to 8 PM, and Saturday and Sunday 12 to 5 PM. The Gallery is always free to attend. For more information, please visit www.artgallery.dal.ca or @dalhousie_art_gallery on Instagram. Media inquiries can be directed to Director/Curator Pamela Edmonds at pamela.edmonds@dal.ca.

About Dalhousie Art Gallery:

Dalhousie Art Gallery is committed to presenting innovative and diverse exhibitions that engage and inspire the community. Through a dynamic program of contemporary art, historical exhibitions, and public programs, the Gallery fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the visual arts.