

# from *Four Effigies for the End of Property: Preempt, Improve, The Highest and Best Use, Be Long*

Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill

I made *Four Effigies for the End of Property* while thinking about two different but related concepts: private property and sculpture. I wanted to know how lot #274, the lot on which Polygon Gallery sits, came to be property under the law of Canada, how it was expropriated from the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh First Nation, how it came to be understood as the rightful property of settlers, and how that idea became naturalized in the minds of so many Canadians. Each work in the series considers an idea or mechanism through which the land was turned into private property: preemption, improvement, highest and best use, and belonging.

Regarding sculpture: I had been thinking, what do sculptures do? I came across the word “effigy” in an anthropological text about the history of Cree sculpture. The word was used much like “fetish” often is, to describe a practice of object-making that hopes to influence material reality. The works in *Four Effigies for the End of Property* are images of four ideas that intend to have a kind of power over those ideas, a kind of undoing power, an ending power.



Photographs by Angie Dubé

Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, *Be Long*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property: Preempt, Improve, The Highest and Best Use, Be Long*, 2017, mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives), 23 x 98 x 14 inches, courtesy of the artist



Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, *Preempt*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property: Preempt, Improve, The Highest and Best Use, Be Long* (detail), 2017, mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives), 10 x 32 x 16 inches, courtesy of the artist



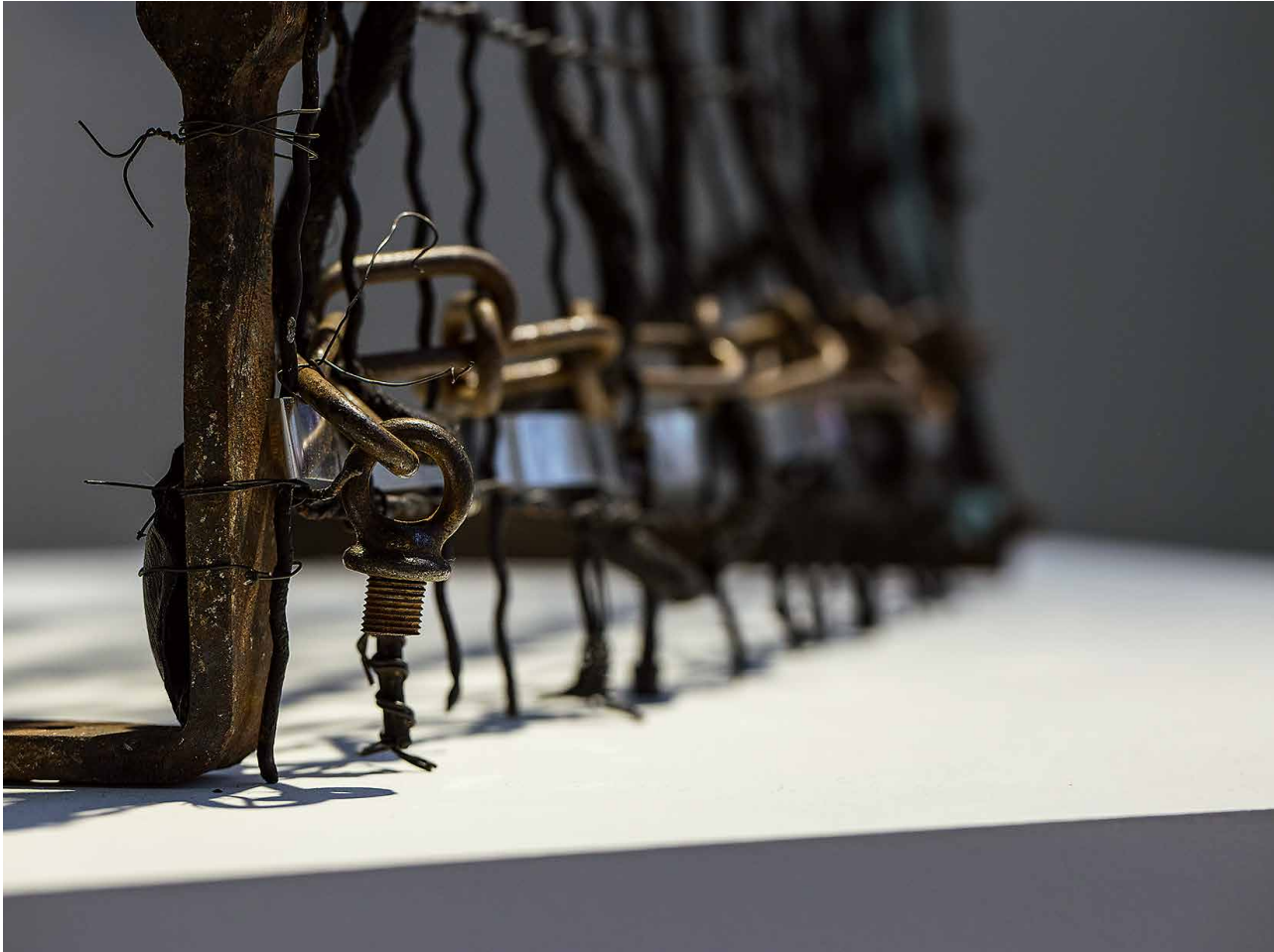


right and left: Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, *The Highest and Best Use*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property: Preempt, Improve, The Highest and Best Use, Be Long* (detail), 2017, mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives), 71.5 x 32 x 16 inches, courtesy of the artist





**BARCELLE (CANNIBALE) 1911**  
Cage for the exhibition of the artist's work  
at the Museum of Modern Art, New York  
1911  
1911  
1911



right and left: Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, *Improve*, from *Four Effigies for the End of Property: Preempt, Improve, The Highest and Best Use, Be Long* (detail), 2017, mixed media (de-accessioned artefacts from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives), 36 x 29 x 16 inches, courtesy of the artist