

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2023



**KOU STUDIOS**

***Women of the West Coast: Celebrating Diversity***

***Amy Webber***

March 2 – 7, 2023  
2008 Manitoba Street,  
Vancouver, BC, V5Y 3V3



Amy Webber, *Chai*, 2023  
Oil on aluminum canvas, 24 x 36 inches  
© Amy Webber. Courtesy Amy Webber and AT Art & Interiors.

AT Art & Interiors and KOU Studios are pleased to present, *Women of the West Coast: Celebrating Diversity*, an exhibition featuring a series of figurative and portraiture artworks by Canadian artist Amy Webber (b 1989). Curated by Allison Thompson, of AT Art & Interiors, the exhibition is artist Amy Webber’s latest body of work celebrating the beauty in diversity in ethnicities and the female form, and female empowerment.

The exhibition opens March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and runs until March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 2008 Manitoba Street, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Friday to Tuesday, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. All works will be available for purchase with 10% of the proceeds being donated to a charity chosen by each female model involved in the project.

Amy Webber creates realistic yet dream-like imagery with a focus on capturing emotions, intimate moments, and the complex experience of being human. Originating with painting landscapes and seascapes, most recently the artist has shifted her focus towards figures and portraits, painting primarily with oils. As Amy states: “no matter the subject matter, what I really aim to capture and convey is emotion, especially the moodier side of things. That, and the beauty of light and form. In my previous series, I was focusing on capturing more somber emotions in my work, to represent difficult times and feelings that we often shy away from. In this exhibition, I’m looking to explore themes of empowerment, feeling grounded and in the moment, comfort in one’s own body, and a connection with nature. Often the feelings I’m trying to capture can’t really be described, though, but I think that’s what painting is all about sometimes - to represent things that can’t quite be put into words.”

Amy Webber is a Canadian artist who lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Many art critics have applauded Webber's work for her incredible ability to create photorealistic paintings with a lively energy that captures and conveys the more somber and moodier emotions and moments.

*Women of the West Coast: Celebrating Diversity* features 7 of Webber's largest scale paintings to date as well as a curator video on her artistic process by renowned Canadian cinematographer Jon Thomas, now presented for the first time in Vancouver. The artist speaks about the work as follows: "I recently completed a series that focused more on inclusivity within the LGBTQ+ community. For this series, it was really important to me to explore diversity. As a bisexual woman, growing up I basically never saw representation in art or the media, which affected my perception of myself for a long time. So in my own work I really want to represent all different types of people - different body types, ethnicities, etc. so that many people can see a bit of themselves in it. Everyone has so many unique qualities, and I'm loving figuring out ways to capture different hair textures, skin tones, and beautiful things like freckles, stretch marks, scars, etc... Since I started painting people in 2020, I had basically only used my wife and my sister as models, so it was really cool to start working with different people. One of the best parts of this series has been meeting the models, who come from so many different places, and hearing their stories. They're all super inspiring women that I feel privileged to paint..."

So much of the art market is paintings of women from the male gaze, so I love that I can create paintings of women from the female gaze. I think the more we highlight the importance of inclusiveness and having every voice at the table, the more we'll start to see a shift in the broader market. So that's why I want my work to be diverse and inclusive - to be like, hey, there's so many beautiful, talented, amazing women out here. In fact, several of the models that I painted happen to be artists themselves. The more we elevate each other, the better it will get.'

Allison Thompson, curator of the show, adds:

*"In this solo exhibition, Women of the West Coast: Celebrating Diversity, artist Amy Webber continues to display her astonishing growth as a figurative and portraiture artist. The exhibition displays Amy's interest in the diversity of female form, adding her distinct realistic painterly style combined with a moody ambiance, and a contemporary West Coast color palette. It has been a pleasure working so closely with Amy on this exhibition and to improve my understanding behind the artistic process that goes into creating an oil portrait. We researched extensively the females being selected for the portraiture paintings and the remote beach locations in BC to execute the photoshoots. We wanted the portraits to speak to each other and display that all cultures are worthy of being deemed beautiful and to eliminate racial disparity. We chose a selection of females, that have a strong sense of self awareness, coming from a variety of backgrounds and ethnicities, all with the intent to set positive examples and create stronger connections for female empowerment not only in Canada but globally. We wanted to make it known through this exhibition that no matter what your background is we can find a commonality between all humans which can allow for safe spaces for females to speak up, authentically express themselves and to better understand each other. It has been mesmerizing to witness Amy transport this theme through her thoughts and photographs into paintings. I guarantee you that these paintings will transport viewers to a new level of consciousness, awe, and wonder."*

Amy Webber is a self-taught artist. She always has had a strong interest in the human psyche; completing a degree and working in the fields of psychology and neuroscience for nearly a decade, during which she began casually painting in 2017 before dedicating herself to the fine arts full time in 2019. Seeking to understand and connect with people has been a common thread through both her scientific and artistic careers. In 2019, Webber was awarded a sponsorship with the RBC Emerging Visual Arts Program including an exhibition at Arts Commons, one of the largest art centres in Canada. She later had her debut solo exhibition in 2021 at Gallery Merrick in Nanaimo, BC. She has continued to exhibit across Canada in group exhibitions and most recently completed a residency at Pouch Cove Foundation, which is an invitation only visual artist residency program in Newfoundland. Her work has been extensively collected in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Finland. She is also an active member of the Federation of Canadian Artists.

**Private Preview: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 pm**  
**Public Opening: March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, 6:00 – 9:00 pm**  
**Gallery hours: March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm**

AT Art & Interiors - [www.allisonthompsonstudio.com](http://www.allisonthompsonstudio.com)  
Amy Webber – [www.amywebberart.com](http://www.amywebberart.com)  
KOU Studios – [www.koustudios.com](http://www.koustudios.com)  
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