# BEING SCENE

22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

2023

COVER IMAGE Artist: Georgia Whist Title: The Robots Year: 2021

This year marks the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual *Being Scene*.

This exhibition series celebrates over 40 artists exhibiting in three different venues across the city, featuring a juried exhibition and a guest curated exhibition titled *Un/Common Threads*.

BEING SCENE 2023	04
ABOUT BEING SCENE	04
UN/COMMON THREADS	05
JURIED EXHIBITION	20

#### **ABOUT BEING SCENE**

The Being Scene exhibition began over 20 years ago on the grounds of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). Since, Being Scene has exhibited a juried survey of over 100 artworks by Workman Arts member artists as well as artists with lived experience who have received services from CAMH. In 2021, Workman Arts introduced a smaller curated portion as part of the overall exhibit. Working closely with a guest curator, artists gave shape to compelling ideas and narratives, covering a wide range of conceptual and material approaches from diverse experiences. The exhibition has been shown in spaces such as The Gladstone Hotel, Toronto Media Arts Centre (TMAC) and at CAMH.

#### **BEING SCENE 2023**

For this year's curated Being Scene exhibition, curator and multimedia artist Kat Singer presents a constellation of works by Mad and neurodivergent artists that troubles the dichotomy of mental health and mental wellness. These intimate textile artworks weave complex narratives of recovery, resilience, and restoration; illustrating how pain and joy, celebration and mourning, acceptance and change, are inextricably intertwined. Works in the exhibition are meant to be touched, providing audiences with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the tactility of the medium. In line with Kat's previous curatorial projects, *Un/Common Threads* furthers a vision of a future where difference is no longer feared or pathologized, but welcomed and desired.

*Un/Common Threads* presents the work of artists Brandon Wulff, Khadija Aziz, Paulina Wiszowata, Kingi Carpenter (Peach Berserk), Catherine Heard, Apanaki Temitayo, Estée Klar, V Vallières and Adam Wolfond.

The Being Scene annual Juried Exhibition will present over 30 artists in the First Floor Hallway Gallery of the Artscape Daniels Spectrum Building and features artists that utilize innovative material approaches to give shape to compelling ideas and intimate narratives from diverse life experiences. This year's esteemed jurors include Apanaki Temitayo (Workman Arts Members Advisory Council), Max Ferguson (Curator in Residence at Tangled Art + Disability), and Robert Colgate (Poet in Residence at Tangled Art + Disability).

# UN/COMMON THREADS

#### CURATOR

Kat Singer

#### ARTISTS

Apanaki Temitayo Brandon Wulff Catherine Heard Estée Klar & Adam Wolfond Khadija Aziz Kingi Carpenter Paulina Wiszowata V Vallières Un/Common Threads brings together the works of nine dynamic artists whose textile works challenge the dichotomy of mental health and mental illness, highlighting the complexity and diversity of human experience. The title of the exhibition alludes to the tactile nature of the medium, the multitude of stories a textile piece can contain, the connection between the works chosen, and also to the importance of open dialogue that values a variety of perspectives. The smorgasbord of textile art forms on display includes quilts, rugs, embroidery, clothing, and more.

Curated by multimedia artist Kat Singer, a textile enthusiast who balances their artistic vision with a deep respect and admiration for the artists and their works, *Un/Common Threads* features works by artists from across the gender spectrum, challenging the assumption that textiles are a predominantly "feminine" medium. Singer's passion for the medium, understanding of the creative process, and lived experience as a multiply neurodivergent person enable them to craft a thought-provoking exhibition that welcomes and celebrates Mad and neurodivergent perspectives.

The exhibition is held across multiple locations, both physical and virtual. Tangled Art + Disability at 401 Richmond St W hosts a vitrine display. Workman Arts OFFSITE, located in unit 302 of Artscape Youngplace, presents an immersive tactile installation. For a nominal fee of two dollars, visitors can also obtain unique pieces of art from participating artists via Catherine Heard's artist multiples project, *The Magic Gumball Machine of Fate*, located in the hallway outside OFFSITE. Visitors will be able to expand their understanding of the artworks by accessing recordings of informal studio visits with the artists on the exhibition website, in lieu of reading traditional artist statements and bios.





The artworks in the Tangled Art Gallery vitrines are arranged in a way that appears symbolic, or even ritualistic, like pieces of a mysterious puzzle. This mode of display reflects two opposing tendencies in the curator's mind: their Autistic craving for order and routine juxtaposed with their ADHD urge for playful chaos and spontaneity. It also invites the viewer to ponder the connection between these distinctive artworks, and to "complete" the puzzle by experiencing the other parts of the exhibition.

The pieces on display in the cozy, intimate space at Artscape Youngplace are all touchable, allowing visitors to engage with the texture and materiality of the artwork, deepening their connection to the stories and experiences represented. Whether gently running one's fingers over the intricate stitching of Brandon Wulff's Visibly Mended, stroking the silky scales that form the border of V Vallières's Iceberg Heart, or arranging cutout shapes on Khadija Aziz's When We Felt Together (At Workman Arts), the viewer gets to be up close and personal with the works. The unconventional use of the gallery space pushes against pre-established display conventions, representing the way a neurodivergent mind defies societal expectations. Kingi Carpenter's vibrant screenprinted installation, Into My World, takes over the office area that is normally left untouched. Paulina Wiszowata's cheerful tufted rugs, with the tongue-in-cheek title: Textiles are very in right now, exuberantly pop up across multiple walls, refusing to be confined to a single area.

Through their use of fabric, yarn, thread, and other mediums, the artists tell personal and collective stories of hope, perseverance, and triumph over challenging circumstances. These artists come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, each with their unique aesthetics, techniques, and materials. Some have been working with textiles for decades, while others are relative newcomers to their respective art forms. Some have a long history of showing their work in galleries, while for others, it is their first time. Some have received a formal art education, while others are almost entirely self-taught; however, all demonstrate innovation in the way they create their works. While each artist in the exhibition has a unique and distinctive style, their bodies of work share several common threads.



Photo credit: Ashley Bowa and Michelle Homonlyo 🜌 🖉 🖉

One such thread is the importance of relationships at the individual and community level. Apanaki's art quilt Little Joy features a screen-printed portrait of her daughter lyiola, emphasizing a parent's admiration for her child. Estee Klar and Adam Wolfond, a neurodivergent mother-and-son duo create their art pieces in collaboration. Klar uses her weaving skills to integrate objects that are part of Wolfond's sensory world, such as sticks he collects on his daily walks, and Tabasco sauce bottles, into their yarn-wrapped sculptures. Aziz shares authorship of her work with the audience, as visitors contribute to a changing collage-like design by adhering pieces of felt to a "tactile drawing wall". Heard's participatory embroidery project The Emperor of Atlantis invites participants from around the world to contribute their own redwork pieces to the communal quilt, forming a virtual embroidery circle that expands across time and space.



Photo credit: Ashley Bowa and Michelle Homonlyo

Another thread is the artists' engagement with themes of repurpose, reconstruction and repair. Wulff uses visible mending techniques on antique shawls to showcase the beauty in the process of healing.

Heard deconstructs and reconstructs recorded history by integrating pieces of antique redwork quilts she had obtained from the secondhand market into her project. Both Apanaki and Vallières use fabrics gifted to them by friends, imbuing their quilts with deeper personal significance.

Multiple works in the exhibition speak out against various forms of systemic violence. Wolfond and Klar's triumphant creativity pushes back against neurotypical behavior norms that limit connection, undermine Autistic autonomy, and stifle Autistic joy. Carpenter's reclaiming of symbols and colors traditionally associated with femininity pushes back against a simplistic understanding of what it means to identify with the Feminist movement. Apanaki's focus on Black womanhood makes a strong statement about intersectionality. Wiszowata's use of machine tufting is a protest against the elitist, exclusionary art scene that often limits the mediums considered to be "worthy" of being used for artistic expression. Heard's choice of historic imagery brings to light the shameful legacy of colonial oppression and abuse, illuminating the ongoing struggle against such injustices.



Photo credit: Ashley Bowa and Michelle Homonlyo

Textile art provides a unique form of nonverbal storytelling that can be particularly valuable for Autistic creators, who may have limited or intermittent speech. Vallières, for example, prefers to express their emotions through visual imagery rather than words, hence the title of their quilt Iceberg Heart which invites both a literal and poetic interpretation. Wulff's The Wandering Eye, currently displayed at Tangled, illustrates the tendency among Autistic individuals to interpret metaphors literally, often with humorous effect. Wolfond's work serves as a testament to the powerful voice that can be found in non-speaking individuals, and offers a window into his unique perspective.

All the artists share and benefit from the slow and repetitive nature of their artistic process, which involves performing similar movements multiple times. Whether cutting, stitching, weaving, tufting, or screenprinting, the artists engage in a meditative and contemplative practice that requires mindfulness, patience, and perseverance, and contributes to their mental well-being.

Building on Kat Singer's previous curatorial projects, Un/Common Threads offers another step towards creating a future where diversity is embraced and celebrated. To convey the idea of valuing both commonalities and differences, Singer has incorporated the fabrics and techniques used by the nine participating artists into the handcrafted letters spelling out the exhibition title. This sprawling, multipart exhibition serves as a platform for fostering connection and mutual understanding among artists and visitors alike, with the ultimate goal of promoting a more compassionate and inclusive world.

#### - KAT SINGER





Opening Reception: Un/Common Threads. Photo courtesy of Henry Chan.

#### APANAKI TEMITAYO

*Little Joy* Quilt 2023







Apanaki Temitayo is a Trinidadian-raised, Toronto-based bisexual, multi-disciplinary, multimedia fibre artist and art facilitator. She is the proud mother of three. Her canvas compositions are an expression of her Trinidadian heritage and spirituality. Apanaki is currently represented in the Sales and Rental Program at the (AGO) Art Gallery of Ontario. She is a member of the Women's Art Association of Canada. She was the (CAMH) Center for Addiction and Mental Health's 1st Artist in Wellness, 2019 - 2021. She was a featured artist at Kuumba Exhibit, Where She Went, She Thrived at Harbourfront Centre presented by Nia Centre for the Arts, 2021. She was the Workman Arts Artist-in-Residence for 2017 - 2018. She has featured in artwork Numb at Workman Arts, Being Scene 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Virtual Exhibition 2021, and To Speak Without Speaking. She made her international debut at the North Charleston Cultural Arts Department, 9th Annual African American Fiber Art Exhibition: Maya Angelou, with her original artwork, Mama's Watching in South Carolina. The first woman of colour to be featured in Room Magazine: Woman of Color Issue for 2016. Her original artwork Oshun Blooming was commissioned for the Grow Room Feminist Literary Festival 2018 in Vancouver and is now part of the private collection of Donna Slaight, Founder of The Slaight Family Foundation.





**BEING SCENE 2023** 

Visibly Mended Quilt (vintage indigo dyed shawls, Ikinen sheet, cotton thread), 74 x 60 " 2022

#### BRANDON WULFF





Brandon Wulff is a rising star in the world of quilt art. As an autistic artist, Brandon brings a unique perspective and creative energy to his work. He has quickly gained recognition for his quilt pieces that are both visually striking and deeply personal.

Brandon's journey in art began at H.B. Beal Secondary School, where he attended the renowned Beal Art program. It was there that he discovered his passion for working with textiles and honed his skills as a quilter. After graduation, Brandon continued to develop his craft and began to explore the intersection of quilting and interior design.

Today, Brandon works with interior designers to create one-ofa-kind pieces that add warmth and character to any space. His quilts are a fusion of traditional techniques and contemporary design, featuring bold colours, intricate patterns, and unexpected textures.

Brandon's work has been showcased in galleries and shows across Canada and the United States, earning him critical acclaim and a devoted following. His pieces have also been featured in prominent art and interior design magazines, cementing his place as a rising star in the art world.

Despite his relative newcomer status in the quilting world, Brandon's work has already found its way into many private collections. With a bright future ahead of him, there's no doubt that Brandon Wulff will continue to captivate audiences with his unique artistic vision and unparalleled talent.





#### CATHERINE HEARD







BEING SCENE 2023

*Redwork: The Emperor of Atlantis* Antique fabric, embroidery, various dimensions 2023





Catherine Heard's practice employs fine craft as a foil for abject subject matter, delving into contested imagery and primal anxieties of the human psyche. Her current project, Redwork: The Emperor of Atlantis, invites the public to collaborate in the creation of a textile installation that utilizes traditional redwork embroidery techniques to engage histories of injustice. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, The Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Art Gallery of Kamloops, and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery. Catherine Heard holds an undergraduate degree from OCADU, and a Master of Visual Studies degree from the University of Toronto. She is an assistant professor at the School of Creative Arts of the University of Windsor. Catherine Heard is represented by Birch Contemporary Gallery in Toronto and online by CMS Art Projects. *"Sit Still"* and *"Look at Me"* Chairs wrapped in yarn and fabric 2022

Estée Klar holds a PhD Critical Disability Studies from York University. Her dissertation, Neurodiversity in Relation: an artistic intraethnography is a collaborative work with Adam Wolfond, now a published writer and the first non-speaking classically autistic M.A. student in Canada. Klar is also a facilitator and an artist and founder of dis assembly, a lab for neurodiverse artistic experimentation involving processes that explore conditions and techniques for human and more-thanhuman relation and support located at Artscape Youngplace in Toronto. She collaborates with others around the world in these projects. Klar is also the founder/director of the former Autism Acceptance Project (2006–10) and its subsequent artisticactivist events, and the original blogger at The Joy of Autism (2004-8) which over the years has resonated throughout the autistic community. She is an artist and filmmaker and her work can be seen at www.esteerelation.com and dis-assembly.ca.

Adam Wolfond is an autistic poet and artist who uses a device to speak. He has been featured poets.org as the youngest poet to ever be published there and his work has been featured in The New York Times Magazine (2023). Wolfond has also exhibited his film and installation work in Toronto, Canada. He is the cofounder of dis assembly in Toronto, an arts collective which

# ESTEE KLAR + ADAM WOLFOND



practices techniques for neurodiversity. Languaging is a way of movement, a continual disassembling, challenging the way of neurotypical grammars for more diversities to come. His work can be viewed at adamwolfond.com and also, dis-assembly.ca. His chapbooks of poetry In Way of Music Water Answers Toward Questions Other Than What Is Autism, are available here at the studio. His book The Wanting Way which we are celebrating this evening is published by Milkweed Publishing Multiverse Series and In The Way of Water will be published by Punctum University Press in 2023.







When We Felt Together (at Workman Arts) Felt, thread 2023









in Toronto and Montréal. Not tied to any particular medium, she makes sense of her world through material gestures of mark-making. Through her artistic and educational practice, she fosters community-building and individual development by establishing grounds for a collective learning experience. Khadija's art has been exhibited in Canada, Australia, and Austria. Her most recent artist residency was at the Estonian Academy of Arts in Tallinn, Estonia. In recognition of my creative practice, Khadija received the Shanks Memorial Award in Textiles from Craft Ontario and the Creative Promise Award from Surface Design Association in 2020. She received the Award of Excellence in Community Engagement from the Ontario Museum Association in 2019 for her contributions to the Textile Museum of Canada.

Khadija Aziz is a multidisciplinary artist and educator based

*Into my World* Screen printed textiles, found (thrifted) objects 2023

#### KINGI CARPENTER



"I have had a lifelong love of designing and making things, that led me to start my creative career at the Ontario College of Art in the 1980s. There, I realized that fabric design and screen printing were the perfect artform for me. This all brought together my love of fashion/ sewing/drawing and colour. Textile design was also the perfect way for me to express my feelings, my feminist/political views and to (hopefully!) be self employed. I became an indie fashion entrepreneur, with my business Peach Berserk in 1987. This business showcased my quirky, unique and progressive prints.

My wildly popular studio/fashion boutique was open for 20 years, leading Fodor's Travel Guide to describe me as 'the undisputed monarch of Queen St West'. Now from my reimagined store front space in Parkdale, Toronto, I run a screenprint studio/art space where I teach textile classes, host events and design/sell my screen printed clothes. My line now is almost exclusively upcycled and repurposed. I love this 'new frontier' in my creative life and I feel I still have so much to say through textiles. My current design/ screen printing classes are also so important to me.

I am a visual arts teaching partner with the Toronto District School Board, and teach classes for Workman Arts in Toronto as well as at community centres, colleges, Indigenous centres throughout Ontario and beyond. I have gone as far away as Northern Cambodia to teach my craft. My DVD Screen Printing With Peach Berserk and Biz Tips for MisFits, and my book, Silkscreen NOW have sold internationally, and I'm now working on a new one too!"





#### PAULINA WISZOWATA

Textiles are Very In Right Now Series of rugs 2023









artwork details





Paulina Wiszowata's (she/they) innate interest in the art world manifests itself in her artistic practice, in which she critically reflects upon and examines many different notions of art and what it means to be an artist. Framing herself as a contemporary conceptual artist, she utilizes a multitude of motifs including humour, language and deskilling in order to demonstrate these self-reflective concepts and her hyperawareness of them. Her identity as an artist is rooted in her training in the visual arts, with a primary focus on painting, performance, and most recently rug making; she uses these fields to construct an effortless appearance with the use of calculated gestures that both fulfill and critique her own identity. Art is simply the means in which she chooses to question herself, her community and her craft; in doing so, she attempts to understand the conventions of being an artist, where these conventions originate from and how they are defined.



V Vallières is a Toronto-based, multi-media artist, working primarily in ceramics, textiles and printmaking. They hold a BFA from Concordia University and have attended residencies in Montréal, Moncton and Winnipeg. As a film curator, they co-programmed monthly film and performance events. V Vallières has received multiple grants for their work, which have been exhibited widely, and have had pieces acquired for the CAMH permanent art collection. They continue to produce work in community studios and identify as non-binary, queer and neurodivergent. They have worked in movie theaters for the past fifteen years and greatly enjoy visual stimuli.









# BEING SCENE: JURIED EXHIBITION

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This year's esteemed jurors include Apanaki Temitayo (Workman Arts Members Advisory Council), Max Ferguson (Curator in Residence at Tangled Art + Disability), and Robert Colgate (Poet in Residence at Tangled Art + Disability).

#### ARTISTS

Alex Adams Althea Knight Alyssa Pisciotto Anita Mckernan Anette Seip Asma Sultana Barbara Szymanska **Bethany Carpenter** Brianna Papia **Christopher Scott** Claire Mercer Diana Bershadsky E. Lum **Eve Crandall** Garrett Scott Georgia Whist

Jace Traz Kiril Goushleff Mackenzie Willis Marisha Pula Michele Dickson Nathan Cole Nick Peterson Robin Jones Saretta Khan Selina Yung Taryn Lee Victoria Ilgacs Vikkeh Wendy Lu Xiao Wen Xu









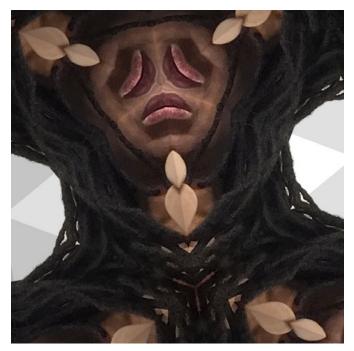
Green Trees, Georgian Bay Acrylic on canvas 2022

#### ALTHEA KNIGHT

Leaf from Reconfigured Emergence Series (top) Digital photography 2022

Swamp Soothe (bottom) Soundscape 2023





SCAN TO LISTEN:



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### ALYSSA PISCIOTTO

*Nevada* Acrylic yarn, polyester trim 2021

# ANITA MCKERNAN

Autumn 1 (top) Autumn 2 (bottom) Film photograph 2020



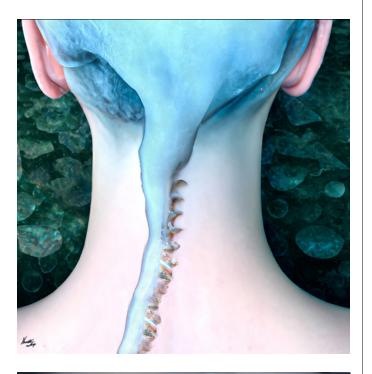






The Shapes of Pain (top) Frozen Thoughts (bottom) Digital print on metal 2023

ASMA SULTANA *My Niece* Artist's hair and fabric 2022







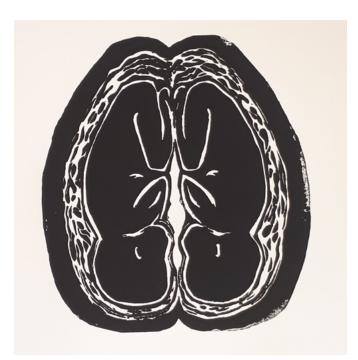
#### **BEING SCENE 2023**

# BARBARA SZYMANSKA

Resonance Photographic print on wood panel 2020-2021

# BETHANY CARPENTER

Endo (top) Prodrome (bottom) Linocut 2022











### BRIANNA PAPIA

As I Wander (top) Rough Passage (bottom) Mixed media collage 2022

# CHRISTOPHER SCOTT

Babel (top) Assembly (bottom) Acrylic on canvase 2023









**BEING SCENE 2023** 



*Human Heart* Sculpture 2023

#### DIANA BERSHADSKY

Before I Formed You (top) Clay 2022

*Translated* (bottom) Ink on paper 2021









Cathy in Paradise Oil on canvas 2022

EVE CRANDALL *Weeping Willow* Quilling 2022

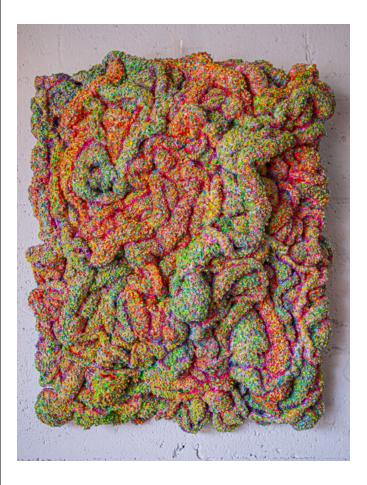




#### **BEING SCENE 2023**



*Blue* Digital on canvas 2021 GEORGIA WHIST *Robots* Mixed media 2021





#### JACETRAZ

Random Croation Obsession Oil on paper 2022-2023

### KIRIL GOUSHLEFF

Vines in the Valley Photography 2022









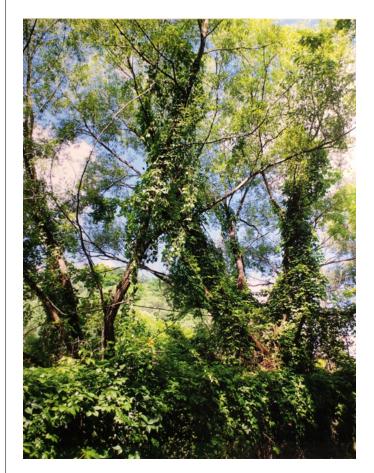
















**BEING SCENE 2023** 

### MACKENZIE WILLIS

Net Mud-larked ceramics and nylon thread 2022











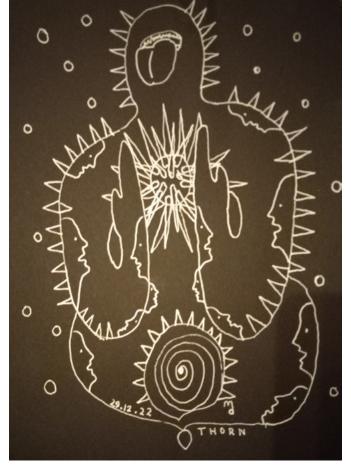
# MARISHA PULA

Rush Hour Flurries Photography 2022

#### MICHELE DICKSON

*Tongue* Ink on paper 2022





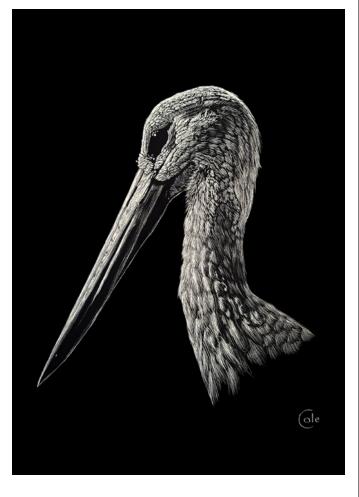
# NATHAN COLE

White Stork of Andalucia Quill on scratchboard 2022

# NICK PETERSON

*Diving Falcon* Linocut 2021





## ROBIN JONES

Nue (femme) (top) Crouching Nude (Femme) (bottom) Water-soluable oils on canvas 2018-2019

# SARETTA KHAN

*The Sorrow* (top) *The Icon* (bottom) Mixed media 2022







# SELINA YUNG

Sail with Blessings Mixed media collage on paper 2023

# TARYN LEE

Self Portrait (top) Her Hands (bottom) Oil on canvas 2022



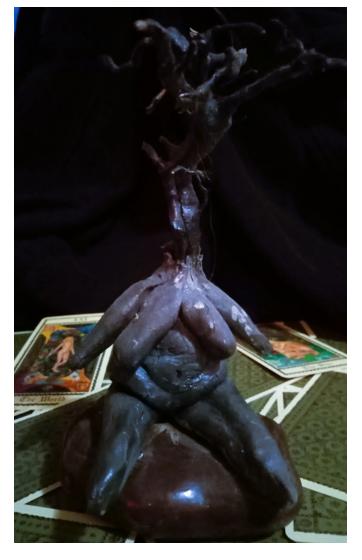




VICTORIA ILGACS *Glass Window* Photography 2022 VIKKEH

Rooting Thoughts Earth clay, dried root and stone 2020





# WENDY LU

Modern Gardenscape Acrylic on canvas 2018

# XIAO WEN XU

Poppies VI (top) Poppies V (bottom) Watercolour on paper 2021







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**BEING SCENE 2023** 

20 - May 12

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NICK PETERSON SARETTA KHAN VICTO

2nd Annu

JACETRAZ

KATE HOLLETT

**KIRIL GOUSHLEFF** 

MARISHA PULA

NATHAN

**ROBIN JONES** 

**SELINA YUNG** TARYN LEE

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