

Alex Currie

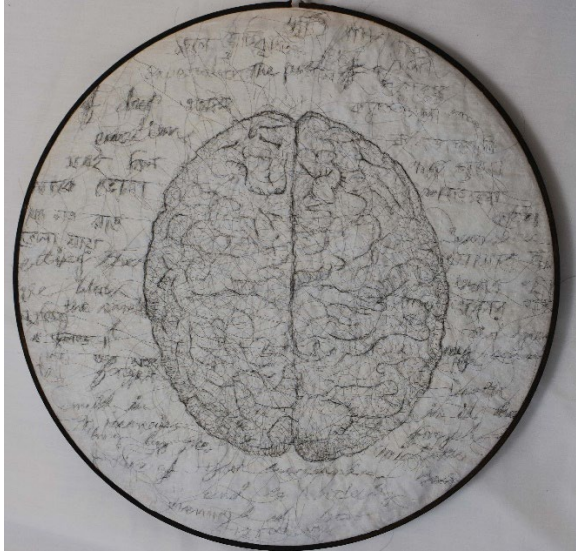


Both "Times are tough" and "Rough Times" are from the series Font Exploration Series: 2023/2024. These works are the response of a single father trying to find affordable housing in a popular tourist area during a housing crisis. With housing/mortgage prices being completely unattainable, rentals becoming scarce and unrealistic, this series is the frustration put to paper.

Alex Currie is an East Coast transplant living in Ontario who recently decided to fully embrace the multi-hyphenates of a lifelong creative. During a period of ups and downs, the one thing that tied his life together was the need to generate something to express this creativity. After reconnecting with hand-produced artwork as a coping mechanism for anxiety and depression, Alex has been exploring a push into the realm of fine art with an invigorated drive to create "something".

Artist Website: alexcurrieart.ca

Asma Sultana

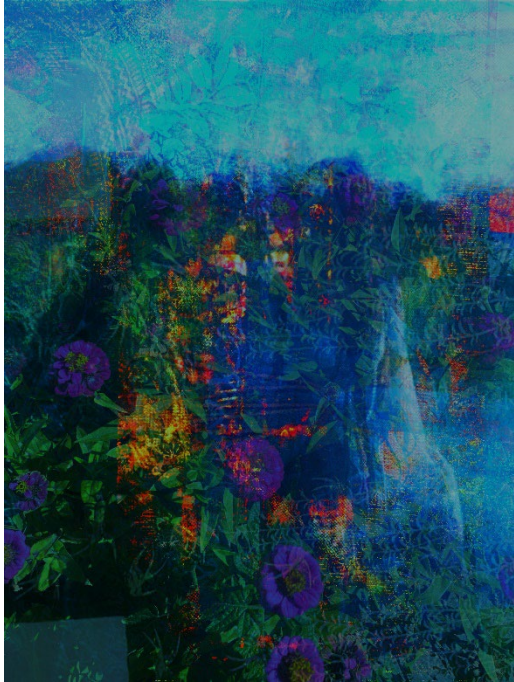


I recently created this textile embroidery piece using my hair to express my identity and tell an autobiographical story through the DNA of my hair. It depicts my recent aftermath of the COVID effect of the phenomenon of forgetting. Once, I was proud of my Elephantine Memory, and it was easy for me to remember almost everything. This piece refers to how our brains can betray us by forgetting actual events and replacing them with false memories; thus, we create our condensation cloud memory. Since I am multilingual, sometimes languages are entangled in my brain, and thoughts become challenging to express; I get lost in the ocean of the in-between remembering and forgetting.

I am an interdisciplinary artist. To conceptualise my autobiographical work, I use my hair and thumbprints as my media to explore my identity in time and space. I organised and curated many solo art exhibitions and participated in many group exhibitions in many different countries. My work was featured in print and digital media and collected by many private collections, including Saatchi art collectors. In my diasporic identity, I am a Bangladeshi-British, Toronto-based artist trained in Fine Arts and Art History from Bangladesh, England, and Canada.

Artist Website: asmasultana.co

Benjamin Priede



*“Looked at but never seen,
It takes the name invisible.
Listened to but never heard,
It takes the name ethereal.
Held tight but never felt,
It takes the name gossamer.*

*You can't unravel these three
Blurred so utterly they've become one,*

*Rising without radiance
And setting without darkness,
Braided together beyond name, woven
Back always and forever into nothing:*

*This is called formless form
Or nothing's image,
Called spectral confusion,*

*Something you meet without seeing a front
And follow without seeing a back.*

*Abiding in the ancient Way
To master what has now come to be
And fathom its ancient source:*

This is called thread of the Way.”

From the 14th chapter of the Tao Te Ching translated by David Hinton.

Benjamin Priede is an artist working with a contemporary form of collage, using approaches of digital multiple exposure to arrive at unique photomontage composites, a technique of photo blending. He earns a living as a custodian, and writes and records experimental electronic retro rock n roll under the name Dada Das, as well as inward facing ambient music as Siddhaphrenia and Echocosm. He views his practices as a search for appropriate reflections of a breakdown between inward and outward duality in the spiritual and mundane realms. He has exhibited in previous Being Scenes.

Artist Instagram: @siddhaphrenia

Chahat Soneja



My trippy artworks aim to transport viewers into surreal and mesmerizing realms. They blend vibrant colors, intricate patterns, and distorted perspectives to evoke a sense of wonder and exploration. The theme revolves around pushing the boundaries of perception and embracing the kaleidoscope of imagination.

As someone who enjoys creating digital manipulations of portraits using free images and techniques discovered accidentally on Photoshop, I can say it's a fun and creative process. To start, I collect free stock images and open Adobe Photoshop. Then, I select and layer the images, using various tools and techniques to manipulate them with various tools to fit my vision. I might also add text or graphics to enhance the overall design. Once I'm satisfied with my work, I save it as a high-resolution image file and share it on social media or my website. There are no strict rules or guidelines to follow, so I can experiment and let my creativity flow to achieve a unique and stunning digital manipulation that showcases my personal style and vision.

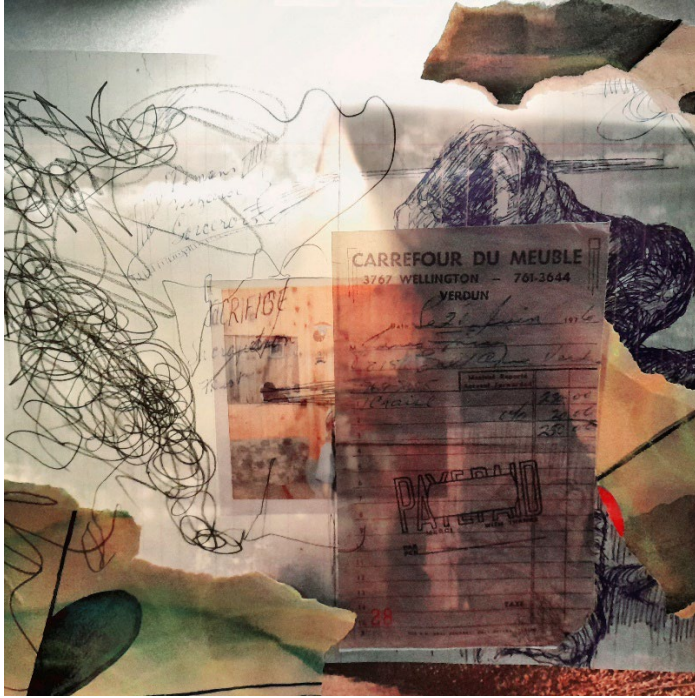
I am **Chahat Soneja**, a self-motivated creative. I recently graduated with a Post-Graduate degree in Advertising-Art Direction from Humber College. As a creative, I have a Bachelor's of Visual Arts from India. I have a strong creative instinct that is as irresistible as a freshly baked "Rainbow Cupcake". I am venturing into digital art. I use various softwares including but not limited to Photoshop to create most of my digital artworks. My current body of work includes digital manipulations around portraits.

The primary reason why I chose to be creative is because I always find myself expressing myself creatively through various outlets and I love these outlets of expression. I mainly work across portraits and have a panache of original ideas, theories across a variety of mediums.

I believe these experiences will help me take my practice further and relate to what I intend to explore as an aspiring creative.

Artist Website: chahatsoneja.com

Christina Foisy



My collage art & poetry conjures ghosts that hover between the lines of repressed and disenfranchised grief. Using collage, I weave fragments of familial memory, objects, heirlooms, and archival traces into new frames of possibility.

The leading catalyst for my exploration of grief was my mother's postpartum suicide as well as my father's hoarding and "vernacular architecture" (what he built from other people's "junk" to recover and rewrite the meaning of a home marked by suicide). My father's architectural work metaphorically addressed the complexity of dealing with grief and mourning a stigmatized death that holds layers of ""silences that speak"". I never knew my mother and have come to meet her through the objects my father collected, as if he were trying to bring her back to life. I try to find her in the piles of hoarded objects and traces left behind—but fail. Instead, my art aims to create space for postpartum suicide and hoarding's expression outside of discourses of deviance or spectacle, but as a material language for grief to be expressed, madly and fully.

"Sacrifice" (2023) is part of a more extensive "lightbox constellation series" called "While Ghosts Still Hover", comprising 12 collages and poems made from materials I found in the family home after years of excavating and sorting through piles. Using a palimpsest technique, I tell a story in layers.

No one leaves hell without sacrifice.
His thoughts rot on thoughts
tortured by what I should have said but didn't say.
can never say.

*-excerpt from my poetry manuscript, Black Pond, that is interwoven
throughout the collage series*

In this collage, I layer some of my mother's handwritten plans for a sculpture she never completed. She wrote the word "Sacrifice" in pen, then scribbled over it with pencil. I wonder about what she sacrificed, what my father sacrificed and what continues to be sacrificed long after her death. I contrast this contemplation on sacrifice with a poignant image: my father, seated alone on the couch he bought shortly after their wedding. It symbolizes his longing for comfort and determination to create a home where we could gather and live.

The longing for what was sacrificed resonates within my mother's heartfelt housewarming poem. She wrote it after being unhoused for six months, sheltered only by the worn interior of their rusty '68 Chevy. Finally settling into a place to truly call home and to start a family, her excitement overflows onto the pages:

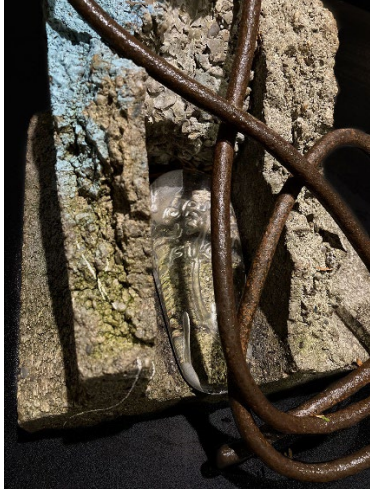
Where now our family & friends will kindle the fire, where this house will
grow among the living and become our home; welcome everyone!

I seek to care for these difficult memories, unmasking them as the raw material for forgiving ourselves and others as we reconcile with what grief asks us to sacrifice.

Christina Foisy (she/her b. 1982) is a white, settler, Neurodivergent poet, collage and sound artist with a BA in Creative Writing, Gender Studies, MEd, and PhD in Health Humanities / Mad Studies currently living in Toronto / Tkaronto (Treaty 13). Her art practice serves to unearth what is difficult to say out loud or to know for certain.

Artist Website: christinafoisy.com

Coley



Railpath (World is a Fuck)

This assemblage is an attempt to capture the essence of a place. The steel and cinder block are found detritus from a location along the railpath in Toronto which I frequent often. The glass component is like a seed, representing the contribution of my presence in the space. This seed was hot sculpted and sandblasted using photoresist to include a small sample of graffiti from the railpath. Graffiti in this case functions as well as coordinates in terms of urban mapping; although tags or throw-ups are found in multiple places there will always be pieces and layering that are completely unique to that location.

Crumpled

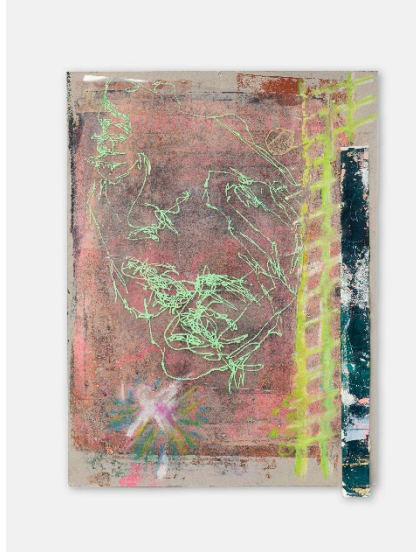
Working with glass is an intense and humbling process, and requires a great deal of determination and resilience. I have been testing strategies for emulating the folds of fabric in glass for 6 months with varying degrees of success. Crumpled is the culmination of my testing so far. It went through several firings of fusing glass which included a rake, where the glass is at such a high temperature that a tool can be pulled through the surface to swirl colours, similar to the technique for marbling fine paper. The piece is remelted to be slumped over a mold, and finally physically manipulated while hot to acquire the depth of movement, folds, and flow. Serendipitously, Crumpled emerges as a visual manifestation of my inner state.

I am a multidisciplinary artist and performer constantly creating in Tkaronto. My work is largely process-oriented, and examines duality, idiosyncrasies and life on the periphery. I create sculptures and installations blending glass techniques from fusing, hot casting, and glassblowing with other media.

My glass craft is greatly informed by my ongoing art practices, primarily collage, drawing, and performance. I take an experimental approach, combining hot and warm glassforming techniques with my established techniques, themes, and imagery to make abstract sculptures and installations rooted in play, movement, and experience.

Artist Instagram: @coley.makes

Georgia Whist



Two primary themes influence my creative practice: intricacy and experimentation. I use these themes to explore the intangibles of existence on Earth during the 21st century.

Intricacy fascinates me. I spot it everywhere: the bark texture of an ancient withered tree, patterns of fine lines etching a hand, a mountain scape seen from far above. The intricate, in its ability to be a visual sensory overload, has always evoked intense emotional states in me. I experience mystifying, expansive narratives in its complex nature that leaves me wondering.

I have never found planning or executing a pre-set formula to portray life intriguing. At most - when starting an art piece - I have a sense of colour, feeling, or material I want to play with. Otherwise, ironically, my creative endeavours result in stilted compositions, devoid of life. I instead embrace an experimental process, where I intuitively respond to my work as it progresses.

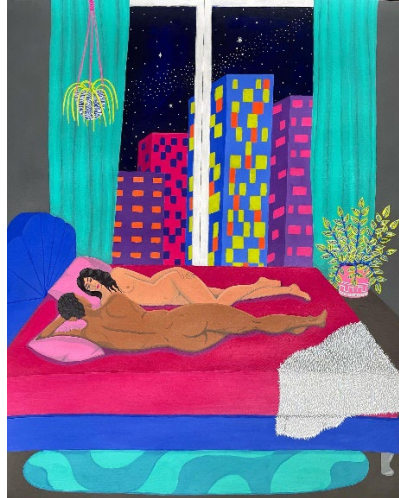
Incomprehensible visuals result from this process, evoking wonder intertwined with the emotions of modern day experience.

Georgia Whist (b. 1995, Vancouver, Canada) is a queer, MAD, emerging mixed media visual artist based in Tkaronto (Toronto). From 2013–2022 Whist pursued a career in the field of civil engineering as restoration consultant, while simultaneously continuing their art practice. At the start of 2022 they left engineering to heal from a bad case of burnout. Since then the experience of living with burnout has greatly influenced their art, leading them to reflect on modern life's impact on societal and individual wellness.

Whist experiments with numerous materials (acrylic paint, encaustic wax, acrylic sand mediums, soldering, found objects, etc.) and the creative technique of automatism - forgoing control to explore the intangibles of mental health and life.

Artist Website: georgiawhist.com

Ghazaraza

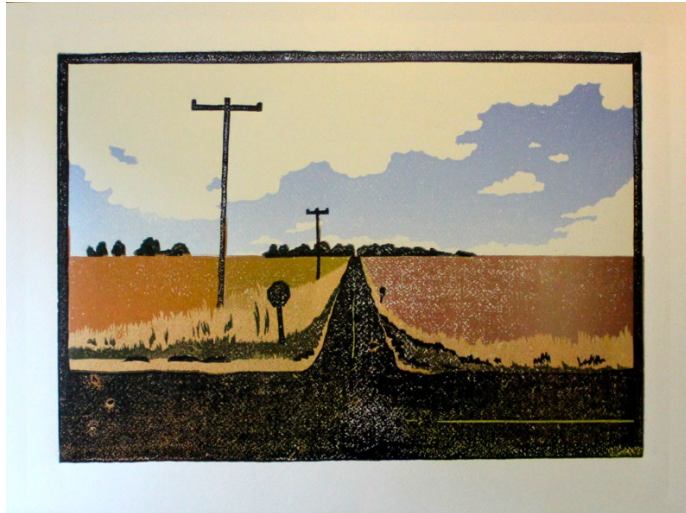


My artistic mission intertwines my Iranian heritage with Canadian life, delving into themes of identity, feminism, and the immigrant experience. Through my work, I provoke dialogue and introspection while celebrating human diversity. Central to my exploration is a commitment to feminism, challenging norms and advocating for empowerment through art, particularly focusing on the female form to express resilience and diversity. I delve into the human body as a vessel of cultural narratives, aiming to capture shared humanity and celebrate imperfections. Specific pieces like "Woman, Life, Freedom" commemorate significant events, such as the women-led revolution in Iran, while "Concrete Love" explores themes of love and belonging in urban settings.

Ghazaleh Rastgar, an Iranian-Canadian multidisciplinary artist, combines nature, the human body, and Iranian stories in her vibrant works. With a Bachelor's from OCADU, she reignited her artistic path after a corporate stint. Ghazaleh's art explores feminism, love, sensuality, and identity, provoking profound reflection through bold shapes, clean lines and intricate textures. Her work has been exhibited worldwide including Paris Museum of Modern Art, gaining global acclaim, as well as on TV programs including CBC's Exhibitionists. She's a curator and coordinator of myriad of projects with StreetARToronto and cofounded an all BIPOC women's collective called Moonlight Murals in 2021.

Artist Website: ghazaraza.ca

Nick Peterson



As a linocut printmaker my practice reflects the processes of perceiving life's many, and sometimes disparate, elements. All things have layers, and each layer has shapes and colours which work together to create a final form. By processing the layers individually and together, we come to understand the whole. In this way, I dissect the complexities of nature, history, myth, culture, literature, and even myself, to refigure these complexities into new works that allow me to more deeply understand my subjects. Life and art are puzzles whose pieces, individual and together, invite appreciation and interrogation. At present my artistic attention is drawn to landscapes and how we represent them. In the face of climate change and capitalist consumption, will natural landscapes only survive in humanity's artistic representations of them?

Nick Peterson is a Toronto-based linocut artist who has been working as a professional printmaker since 2019. His work has been shown in juried exhibitions hosted by various organizations including Workman Arts, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Orillia Museum of Art and History. He also regularly appears at local arts markets. Inspired by printmakers past such as Hokusai and William S. Rice alongside other artists like Eyvind Earle, Nick's linocuts are based on the world around him: trees outside the window, the seasons of the year, or the knick-knacks on his shelves.

Artist Website: theboywhoprints.ca

Saretta Khan



This self portrait painting focuses on the uses of complementary colors purple and yellow tones for the portrait face.

The expressive painting strokes of layers and layers of colors bring out the life-like expressions in the painting.

I am a multidisciplinary graphic designer/artist. I enjoy advancing my skill level by experimenting during my spare time and am passionate about pursuing my love of art. I love experimenting with traditional paintings, digital collages and making one-of-a-kind artwork. I am still discovering my art style and experimenting with various art mediums.

Artist Instagram: @dipiartdesign

Sheila Brosnan



The piece "1998" is from the series "Navigating the Mental Health Landscape: 25 Years of Recovery and Relapse". This series is a visual narrative of my lived experience with a Mood Disorder. Each work represents a period of time marked by the medication I took each day. The pieces are created in chronological order dating back from 1997. The 12x12 format is intended to be reminiscent of the pages of a calendar. My aim is to document my experience from the last 25 years (from 1997 to present).

Each change in medication denotes a renewed appeal for help and hope for recovery. Periods of relative stability are seen through longer repetitions of the same medication. The pills are depicted as approximately life size. The colours form a juxtaposition between their innocuous, almost candy-like presentation and the dark despair they are created to combat.

The repetitive action of drawing and painting each pill provides an opportunity for contemplative reflection of the journey I am documenting. This examination of my experience, past and present, has allowed me to recognize my own perseverance and agency in my recovery.

A few months after graduating from the Material Art and Design Program at OCAD in 1997, I was involved in a near-fatal car accident that resulted in a mild brain injury. One of the many life changing outcomes of this injury was chronic bouts of Major Depressive Disorder. As a result, my art practice has been limited to times of stability and relative recovery. My last experience of this kind was between 2012-2014 when my will to create returned and I was able to be active in the arts community for a period of time. Since then, I have been battling Treatment Resistant Depression with the support of the Mood Disorder Clinic at CAMH(2018-2023). Late in 2023 I responded to a new treatment and have experienced a new level of recovery that has allowed me to rediscover my creativity and desire to share my experience through my art. I now consider myself a “re-emerging” artist, looking forward to developing my practice.

Artist Instagram: @ littlebood

Suritah-Teresa Wignall



Over the last couple of years learning about the history of my family and the strength of the women in my lineage have been the most important thing for me. For me it has been an anchoring, something to lean on in a time in our society when things feel more divided than ever.

For 6 years between 2014 – 2019, I was living in the South of Spain, Seville. I was married, studying flamenco singing, studying fine arts and design, travelling and exhibiting my work. Life was filled with ups and downs. My ex husband was from Czech Republic and I from Toronto, we just clicked, until we didn't. There were many issues that divided our relationship, but the main one was the amount of racism I experienced living in the South. It was soul crushing. What kept me there in Seville were a few things; my marriage at the time, the arts and the many friends I had made, who continue to be my friends until this day. After 6 years, it was time for a change so I came back home to Toronto.

When I arrived back in Toronto, I was so happy to see so many diverse faces, very different from the South of Spain. I was happy to be home. I thought things would be better and I wouldn't experience such heavy heartache like in Spain. But, I was wrong. Things were definitely more intense because I came back a year before the pandemic. Everything was on the rise; rent, food, the cost of living, things felt more divided and individuals felt more cold. Racism was definitely at an all time high as well. It took a toll on my mental health. I needed something to anchor me and so I leaned into the one thing that always felt like home and never disappointed; my love of painting and my love of Art. But I wanted to understand, understand my path, my journey. So, I started with my family, the love of my great grandmother, her story, my grandfathers in my

lineage; their stories. I began talking to family members, researching, writing, and then painting. I also began studying different Nigerian dialects. My great grandmother was Syrian, Jamaican. My great grandfather rowed his boat over to Jamaica from Panama, which makes my mom's side of the family, Afro-Panamanian, Syrian, Jamaica with our ancestors being brought over from Nigeria. This is what has been told to me by my family. I've also been studying Hausa which is a beautiful Nigerian Dialect. Right now I am painting grandmothers from the Diaspora, inspired by my Great grandma. I mean, what is more comforting than the love of a Grandma?

Has this healed everything. No. But it has brought me some ease and put me on this quest. Because the more I know about my past and my lineage, the more rooted I feel. It is the beautiful, complicated journey.

Afro-Caribbean Canadian artist **Suritah-Teresa Wignall** is an artist, writer and storyteller. Suritah's paintings are filled with exuberance, colour and light. Her pieces pay homage to her African roots: "I am truly inspired by the African form, beauty from around the world and beautiful features, the succulent soul food and the rich complexions that coat our skin. I want my people to see their inner and outer beauty reflected in my work." Suritah's talent as a visual artist was recognized at an early age and nurtured by several mentors and teachers. In 1998 she connected with a group of dynamic young Canadians of diverse cultural backgrounds who were devoted to the exploration of both self and social identity through art. After an extensive exploration of many themes, Suritah's art making now centres on her commitment to honouring her African heritage by portraying the beauty, strength and legacy of African peoples.

Suritah's accomplishments include participating in her first commercial group exhibition at YUMART Gallery (2022). Her first commercial group museum exhibition at The Museum, entitled Black and Free (2023). Her first solo exhibit in Spain, (2013). both solo and group exhibitions in Canada and the United States. Her portraits were chosen for the sets of the TV pilot of Trey Anthony's DA KINK IN MY HAIR, Da Kink In My Hair Art Show, AGO (Art Gallery of Ontario), Ryerson University, YMCA and have graced the dressing rooms of Erykah Badu, Jill Scott, Floetry, Maxwell, Goapelle, Femi Kuti and Alicia Keys. Collectors of Suritah's art include Vanessa L Williams, a featured actress on Melrose Place and Showtime's SOULFOOD, award winning Toronto poet D'bi Young and award winning singer songwriter Erykah Badu. Suritah has also designed the album cover for the Stephen Lewis Foundation and the book Cover for D'bi Young's Book, Rivers and Other Blackness between Us, Andrea Thomsons, A selected history of Soul Speak. Suritah also received a scholarship to train at the Paul Richard James Academy to further her paint studies

In 2020, Suritah received funding from the OAC (Ontario Arts Council), CAC (Canada Arts Council) and TAC (Toronto Arts Council) for a community based arts project working with Black Fathers and Children. In 2022, Suritah completed a writing mentorship provided by The Diaspora Dialogue. In 2004, Suritah received a grant from the Sheila Hugh Mackay Foundation in support of her on-going career. And in 2009, she was awarded an Ontario Arts Council grant to teach mask making workshops that also serve as a space for open dialogue for women of color. She also received funding from The Toronto Arts Council and The Laidlaw Foundation in 2010 for her continued work in under served communities. In 2011, Suritah received the Dr. Paul Garfinkle Award for entrepreneurial achievement from the University of Toronto. In 2021, Suritah received an Arts Scholarship to study at The Richard Paul James Atelier for fine arts where she now studies.

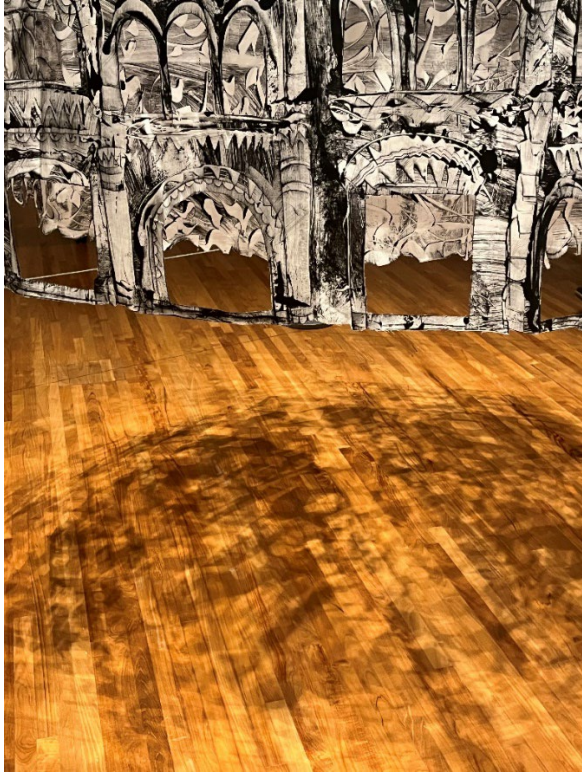
Artist Website: suritahwignall.carbonmade.com

TK Workman



"Flowery" uses self-made stamps with as little acrylic as possible so as not to waste the medium, employing green intentions towards art assembly. This image is trying to create and observe, celebrating the beauty, love and interconnectedness of all life.

Zeni Shariff



Drawing from the essence of Kevork Mourad's art displayed in the permanent gallery of the Aga Khan Museum, where photography is permitted, Zeni Shariff crafted this image using her hands. Inspired by the permanent gallery's interplay of light, texture, and shadows, Zeni aimed to evoke depth and explore light's dynamic relationship with its surroundings. She integrated layers of translucent materials, reflective surfaces, and dynamic compositions into her work.

Experimenting with shadows and texture, Zeni created a mesmerizing visual experience.

Zeni Shariff is an author, illustrator, educator and life long learner.

Artist Website: a.co/d/8ke4KOo