BEING SCENE



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BEING SCENE 2025

Being Scene 2025

March 7 to April 17, 2025

Special Events:

Cross-Pollination Curatorial Research and Conversation between Casper Sutton-Fosman and Fatma Hendawy

Location:

32 Lisgar Street, Toronto, ON

WELCOME TO THE BEING SCENE EXHIBITION



On behalf of Workman Arts, we are honoured to welcome you to Being Scene, a celebration of artistic expression, resilience, and community. This exhibition brings together powerful works that invite reflection, spark dialogue, and amplify diverse voices through creativity.

Being Scene highlights a variety of techniques and forms that include innovative art expressions and the exploration of mental health through art.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our board members, staff, funders, supporters and artist members. Your dedication and support make Workman Arts a vibrant and inspiring space where hope, creativity, and connection thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

Amadeo Ventura Executive Artistic Director



Warm welcome to each of you to Workman Arts's 24th Being Scene Juried Exhibition.

Sincere thanks to each of the 33 artists presenting artworks in this year's exhibition – we are so grateful for your unique, personal and insightful creations. We are so lucky to be entrusted to present your work and to have such a large number of amazing submissions to select from, thanks to all who submitted their work for consideration.

The 33 artists in Being Scene 2025 are presenting works in a plethora of mediums including video, textile, sculpture, digital media, photography, painting, drawing and mixed media there is something for everyone made by a mix of Workman Arts' member artists and those who have received services from our partner, CAMH. This is our first year with Visual Arts Manager Fatma Hendawy, a seasoned curator and cultural catalyst. She brings innovative approaches to contemporary art and a creative sensitivity to the multitude of distinctive and diverse voices expressed through our artist members' work.

Next year is the 25th Anniversary of Being Scene – I have been fortunate to attend all 10 of these exhibitions since I joined the team at Workman Arts, and the show continues to evolve and grow into a fantastic display of personal expression and shows the immense creativity of artists who are able to channel their creativity into magical creations. The future looks bright and hopeful despite the heaviness of the past year.

Heartfelt congratulations to the Being Scene artists who are inviting us to challenge our perceptions and understandings of mental health and addictions through visual art.

See you at the exhibition!

Scott Miller Berry Managing Director



Being Scene is Workman Arts' long-standing exhibition, with a profound history of showcasing visual artists who have been committed to their artistic practices despite life's obstacles. Living and working as an artist can be a struggle as the pressure of maintaining a decent life increases every day. The ethos of Being Scene is to continue creating art and sharing it with the public. We are committed to dismantling the barriers and stigmas around mental health and addiction through connecting our community with the multitude of artistic communities in Toronto and beyond.

This 24th edition of Being Scene exhibition brings a myriad of topics, whether it is related to land, nature, the body, finding ways of healing and connecting with the self and the world. All these topics are extremely tied to the rapid changes we witness in our present times. The artworks in this exhibition reflect on the multilayered and tangled reality of our times, they simply transform the personal into the public through a caring approach that embodies vulnerability and strength alike. I am truly impressed by the Being Scene artists and the variety of media, themes and criticality they bring to the exhibition which is unique and celebratory.

I am honoured to be part of this process of creativity and care, leaning on and accommodating each other so we can all thrive together.

I would like to thank all the Being Scene artists for sharing their powerful and unique works, your work encapsulates moments of fragility, awareness and rebirth that are irreplaceable.

Thanks to the entire team at Workman Arts for welcoming me and supporting each other effortlessly. Thanks to the jurors this year who selected 33 artists, to the team of installers (Nykyta Kuzmicz, Kiké Otuije, and Meena Rizwan), gallery attendants, exhibition assistants (Meek and Olivia Deresti) and all our sponsors, you have kindly contributed your best to make this exhibition happen.

Fatma Hendawy Visual Arts Manager

LETTER FROM JURORS

Alana Traficante is an arts organizer, writer/editor, reader and curator based in Toronto. She has been the Executive Director at Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography since 2018.

"It was lovely to be an invited juror for Being Scene and to learn more about the wide variety of artistic practices being nurtured by Workman Arts. Congratulations to all the selected artists!" Natalie King is a queer interdisciplinary Anishinaabe (Algonquin) artist, facilitator and member of Timiskaming First Nation. King's arts practice ranges from video, painting, sculpture and installation as well as community engagement, curation and arts administration.

"Being a jury member for the 2025 Being Scene exhibition at Workman Arts has allowed me to engage with the diverse and powerful range of works submitted. I feel privileged to be part of a team that helps elevate voices and stories that are often underrepresented in the arts. The opportunity to contribute to this exhibition has reinforced my belief in the transformative power of art, and I'm excited to see how these works will resonate with the broader community. Thank you to Fatma Hendawy and my fellow Jurors, and congratulations to the artists!"

Warren Harper is a curator, researcher and writer currently based in Toronto, Canada, He holds a PhD from Goldsmiths. University of London, and has worked with various arts organizations across the UK. Canada and the US. He is a member of the plumb, an ad hoc collective of Toronto-based artists, writers, and curators. and a member and supporter of the Working Class Creatives Database, which is a platform to share and highlight the work of working-class creatives.

"It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to see the breadth of work produced by Workman Arts members and those who have received services from CAMH. It highlights the important work that Workman Arts does, the positive impact art can have on one's mental health and quality of life, and affords a broad range of artists across Toronto the opportunity to exhibit in the city. I feel really privileged to be a part of the over 20-year history of the **Being Scene juried exhibitions** and am incredibly appreciative of the invitation."

FEATURED ARTISTS

Stephanie Avery	12
Diana Bershadsky	16
Mei Chan-Long	20
Jenny Chen	24
Michele Anne-Marie Dickson	28
Paul Elliott	32
Kayla Free	36
Danielle Hyde	40
Ghazaraza	44
Gigi	48
Merle Harley	52
Andrew Johnston	56
Althea Knight	60
Serena McCarroll	64
Clare McIntyre	68
Rick Miller	72
Leslie Ordal	76

Sam Paboudjian	80
Marisha Pula	84
Marie Ruisseau	88
Sha	92
David Shuken	96
Ashley Snook	100
Alsa St Rose	104
Dinesh Subramanian	108
Casper Sutton-Fosman	112
Jan Swinburne	116
Shannon Taylor-Jones	120
V Vallières	124
Raechel Wastesicoot	128
Georgia Whist	132
Paulina Wiszowata	136
Brandon Wulff	140

STEPHANIE AVERY

Looking For Love 2024 mixed media 4" x 8" x 3 1/2"

stephanieavery.com@stephvonawesome

I love working with found objects, particularly objects that resonate within a pop-culture/massmedia lens, and remixing them into something guite absurd. Traditionally I have focused on advertisements but I have broadened my subject matter to include more of the detritus of consumer culture. I hand-alter the text and paint or sculpt my own additions onto items that are thrifted, from the dollar store, or curb-scored. Though leaning heavily into absurdity, the work is a response to our growing collective sense of loneliness and disconnect. and the ease with which we can fill those voids by accumulating stuff. The art is an act of reclamation, rebellion and resilience that simultaneously mocks the inanities of consumer culture while bringing genuine joy to these once-forgettable objects.





Looking For Love is a commentary on modernday loneliness and how the task of finding/nurturing human connection has been transformed into a consumer experience. It is about the paradox of craving connection and the increasing reliance on impersonal tools that feed our isolation, rather than fix it.

BIO

Stephanie Avery is a Toronto-based multidisciplinary artist with a degree in visual art from York University. With an emphasis on interactivity and empowerment, Stephanie's practice intervenes with familiar spaces, objects and imagery to imbue her subjects with new meanings and narratives. Being especially interested in our collective relationships to the spaces we inhabit, Stephanie explores the world with an equal balance of joy, curiosity and skepticism, a balance she strives to represent in her practice. Her work is both playful and critical, and nothing she does is without a hint of mischief.

Looking For Love (detail)

DIANA BERSHADSKY

Tears sowing seeds 2024 mixed media 10" x 10"

dianabershadsky.com

Ø @dianabershadskyart

Diana's work encompasses a diverse range of mediums. Her fascination with the intricate details of Polish folk art is evident in many of her pieces, which often have a whimsical and nostalgic quality. Her life experiences serve as a constant source of inspiration, and she aims to capture the essence of these memories in each of her creations. Incorporating the inspiring notion that our tears can sow seeds into something beautiful, Diana's artwork conveys a profound message of resilience and transformation. Through her unique blend of mediums, she strives to evoke emotion and provide a thought-provoking reflection on the beauty that can arise from our most vulnerable moments.



Diana has completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Ontario College of Art and Design University (OCADU), and received a Diploma in Social Service Work with Distinction from George Brown College.

Her works have been exhibited at the Royal Ontario Museum, University of Toronto, and she has received the honourable distinction of displaying several of her pieces at the Ingram Gallery and at the Atlantis pavilion in Ontario Place.

Giving back to the community is important to Diana. She has been a speaker at Centennial College's Creative Fusion Series, and donates her works for auction to the annual Good Shepherd Gala in support of homeless and disadvantaged individuals.

Diana is currently working as a visual arts instructor.

MEI **CHAN-LONG**

Fly with me 2025 textile 16" x 18"

Z meichanlong.com

(O) @mei.chan.long

Quietly exploring and expanding is an adventure in a new world.





Sculptor Mei Chan-Long turns to art-making as a vehicle for self-expression. Creations of contemporary sculptures, Chan-Long's sculptures act as lines of communications, translating experiences and emotions that are often difficult to verbally articulate.

Chan-Long's sculptures express undergoing emotional and spiritual changes. These apparent contradictions that present themselves in Chan-Long's sculptures point to the fluctuating emotions that ebb and flow within us.

Her work has been shown at Sculptors' Society of Canada, Visual Arts Centre of Clarington, Nathan Phillips Square, Union Station, TIFF, Globe and Mail Centre, Etobicoke Civic Centre, Assembly Hall, Neilson Park Creative Centre and publications. Employment background is design in marketing, working with furniture, period jewelry and creating with special children.

Explore 2024 textile 8" x 8"

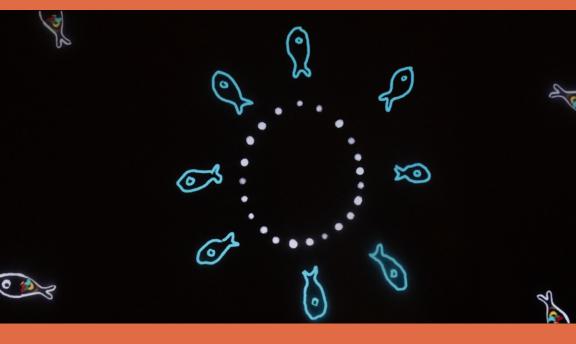
JENNY CHEN

Seachange 2024 installation digital media

Z jennychen.me

Sea Change tells the story of a transformation, where water acts as a guide and metaphor for one's inner journey. The piece represents a moment of transition, where the flowing water points to the passage from one state of being to another, ultimately leading to the rebirth of a new spirit, embodied by the fish. The concept draws on water as a universal symbol of renewal, cleansing, and transformation in various cultures and spiritual beliefs. Through the fluidity and movement within the piece, Sea Change invites viewers to reflect on their own experiences of change, growth, and the continuous cycle of life.

Image credit: Henry Chen, 2025



Jenny Chen is a visual artist who makes work raising questions about existentialism and spirituality. Her work uses symbols to create mystical environments inspiring viewers to wonder about life beyond the material world. She graduated from OCAD University with a major in Drawing and Painting and a minor in Illustration. Since then, Chen has worked mainly in watercolour, pen and clay. Her exhibition history includes the Small Arms Inspections Building, Toronto Media Arts Centre and Living Arts Centre. She has received grants for her work from the Ontario Arts Council.

MICHELE ANNE-MARIE DICKSON

Darkness 2024 painting 12" x 9"

N

7 missmdeesaccount.blogspot.com

O @missdeesaccount

Injury forced me to draw left-handed, igniting a passion for surreal art. My dreamlike creations explore life's joys and challenges, dignity and failure. Imagination fuels my work, inviting viewers on a journey of self-discovery through universal themes. Though deeply personal, my art transcends boundaries, sparking introspection and connection. It's a testament to the human spirit's ability to adapt and express in unexpected ways.





Michele Anne-Marie Dickson (she/her) is a disabled, self-taught, multi-disciplinary artist, poet and writer. She works in a variety of mediums, including poetry, fiction, nonfiction, flash fiction, pen + ink, acrylic, water colour, pastels, photography, graphite and mixed-media. Michele identifies as someone with lived experience of mental illness, chronic illness, and a history of trauma. Some of the themes she explores in her art and writing are based on her experiences, and she uses art as a healing and coping mechanism. Michele has two YouTube channels, collects designer perfumes, and enjoys playing with her Mom's two feline companions. Michele has had her art and writing published on Off Topic Publishing's website, and in The Ex-Puritan's online journal.

Trauma/No More Room 2008 drawing 12" x 9"

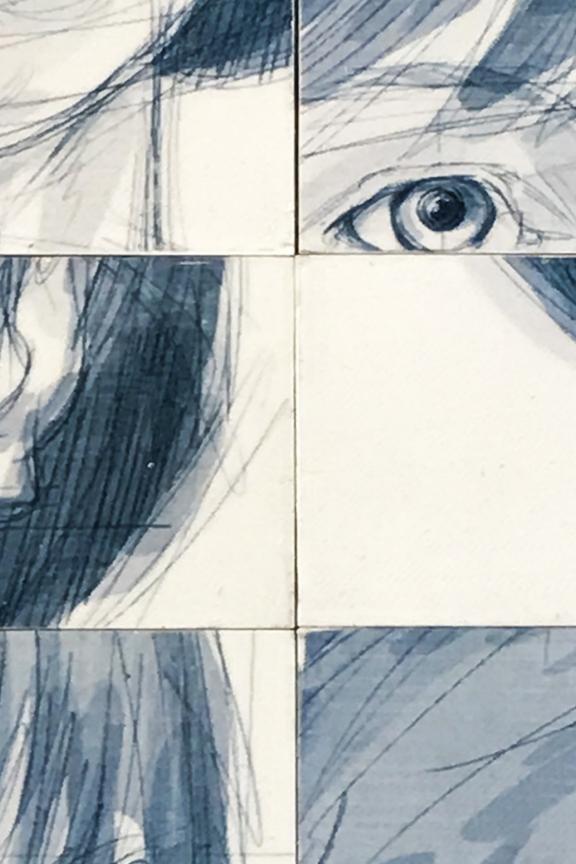
PAUL ELLIOTT

Puzzled Boy 2024 image transfer on to 3D printed plastic 9" x 9" x 1"

pauljohnelliott.ca@pauljohnelliott_art

My work is an accumulation of therapeutic thoughts and expressions that attempt to comprehend my bipolar life. Drawing or painting difficult or awkward moments with humility or a grain of humour affords me both a purpose and a faith in myself to trudge through even the darkest of days. I often capture these moments as rough sketches or as recurring iterations of a theme. I have included these roughs alongside more polished work to underscore that our struggles and failures are also a significant part of our success. I feel that by depicting my bipolar experiences in this body of work, it is not an act of defiance or activism, it is health.





Born in Toronto in 1961. A Montréal-based artist, Paul studied fine arts from 1985 to 1987 at The Art Centre – the visual arts program at Toronto's Central Tech School. Paul is 2023 Canada Council for the Arts grant recipient as a multidisciplinary artist for his project Trudge: A Journey. Trudge is a series of works that explores his life experiences as a bipolar artist.

Puzzled Boy (detail)

KAYLA FREE

The Pit 2015 collage 10" x 10"

Z kaylafree.com

o @kayla_free_illustration

Kayla's work explores the inner landscapes of the human spirit by using visual metaphors to illustrate tales of biblical passages. In her art, she presents her unique musings on Biblical texts in a whimsical, child-like style with the goal of engaging her audience to delve into the spiritual components of life. She also has a special place in her heart for her late father, who was both her spiritual and creative mentor. He helped her understand how biblical passages were artistically evoked in her earlier artwork. Her art is both a testimony to her faith and a tribute to her father.





Kayla Free, a Toronto-born illustrator, discovered her love of drawing at a young age and has since pursued her creative passion. She earned a Bachelor of Design with a major in Illustration in 2015 at OCADU. She starts her illustrations from a doodle or improv, using colours and textures from magazines, posters, and scraps, which are then handcrafted or digitally pieced. Her work was included in 'Life on the Line,' a public art mental health awareness campaign on the Toronto TTC Subway in 2018.

The Pit (detail)

DANIELLE HYDE

Earth Meetings in Spring 2022 painting mixed media 48" x 42"

Cocreationsart.com

O @CoCreation_Art

Cocreations.bsky.social

Titled Earth Meetings in Spring, this mixed media work features sugar bushing during the transition between late winter and early spring as a visual metaphor for wellness through connections. The Sun and Iskigamizige-giizis (sugarbushing moon) are depicted meeting with the Land. Working together, they shift between cold nights and warmer days allowing maple water to flow within maple trees. Their relationship ensures the return of vital food to come through the winter. With snow still on the ground, figures warmed by the sun collect from the trees in birch baskets surrounded by red dogwood and willow. Carrying the knowledges of foods and medicines that keep us well during this time. Interconnecting fluid forms in vibrant colours speak to this layered relationality critical to whole body wellness. The figures in the painting are inseparable from the Land. Everything is shown in dialogue. By reconnecting with all our relations we invite ways to reimagine our daily wellness with the world and cultivate inclusion rooted in communal care



Danielle Hyde is an Indigenous artist and consultant living with a disability. They work under CoCreations Art and R.U.N Collective across Tkaronto. Weaving at the intersections of place-making, place-keeping and futurisms, their artwork explores dialogues between disability arts and Indigenous identity. They've created work for galleries, artist-run initiatives, non profits, festivals and public partners.

Danielle's work is multi-disciplinary, including murals, installations, painting, illustration, photography and performance. While this practice is diverse it remains anchored by an approach guided by Art's fundamental generosity and agency. Danielle sees Art as its own being that is aware when it's being observed and changes the world around it in response. Art is not a product from a Colonial vacuum. Instead its being emerges through collaborative acts. These acts are part of a co-creative process with the seen, unseen, human, and beyond-human. Protocols and care inform every act made throughout their creative process. Collaborating with generosity Danielle seeks to honour these beings operating in this creative chorus, sharing stories and space.

GHAZARAZA

You Only Die Twice 2024 painting and mixed media 36" x 60"



7 ghazaraza.ca

(O) @ghazaraza

Ghazaleh draws inspiration from nature, the human body, and contemplating life as an Iranian woman. This piece contemplates the struggles of migration and searching for the meaning of "Home"; leaving one's home and identity turns one's life upside down, resembling a rebirth in a new place, searching for that sense of belonging all over again.



Ghazaraza aka Ghazaleh Rastgar is an award winning multidisciplinary artist from Shiraz, Iran, now based in Toronto, Canada. Graduating from OCADU with a Bachelor of Design, she initially pursued a corporate career before rekindling her passion for visual arts. She also has coordinated and curated a number of street art initiatives.

GIGI

Earth and Water Entwined 2024 drawing and mixed media 23 ²/s" x 54"

I created this piece at school by deconstructing a stained painting on raw canvas. I cut it up using the sections I liked best and glued and sewed it into a different form. I added fringe and gold leaf embellishments. I darkened the paint stain in certain areas. The theme is based on the elements of earth and water.



I have always been crafty, knitting, sewing, crochet, scrapbooking, and journaling, but I only found out I could draw realistic portraits 10 years ago. I had never taken any lessons; it just happened by accident. After my joy, Sam, who is now 25, graduated from University, I decided that I would go back to school. I am taking my Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at York University to explore and expand on the talent I recently discovered. I have had art displayed in Workman Art's Being Scene's juried exhibition in 2015, 2016, and now 2025, but I mostly created for family and friends over the years. I am enjoying learning new skills and creating in a variety of mediums.

MERLE HARLEY

If I Touch You Will You Feel It? 2023 textile 12" x 16"

7 merleharley.com

@merlesworld2.0

If I Touch You, Will You Feel It? is based on experiences of struggling with disassociation influencing close relationships and how nature and tenderness can lead to finding little ways to come back to life.



Merle Harley creates continually building alternate visual realities. They are a material artist of many different mediums, often using drawing, painting, building, weaving and props and sets for theatre and TV. Mainly working in imagery of nature and animals with an aspect of otherworldliness. Their work tries to find a balance between natural exploration, strange awe and uncanny visualization.

ANDREW JOHNSTON

Magnolias 2024 painting 9" x 12"



I have received training but I am largely self-taught. My strengths are in the creation of fine art. I find the creation of art to be therapeutic. I hope that it's viewing also finds this in you.

ALTHEA KNIGHT

Woman of Earth + Sky 2024 digital media on archival paper 13 ⁷/₈" x 16 ¹/₈"

altheaknight.com@althea_knight

In these tumultuous times, sometimes equilibrium and equanimity feels elusive. Creating this new body of work has been a needed sanctuary. When I engage in deep thought — strategizing ways to reach my goals, crafting alternative explanations to be understood, advocating for the support I need, and executing intricate plans — it sometimes feels as though my brain chemistry teeters on the edge of implosion. The electrical signals racing through my neural pathways and synapses threaten to shortcircuit under the strain, leaving me overwhelmed by the sheer intensity of the cognitive load.

Mitigating the stress and anxiety that can sometimes constrict my breath and leave my being wound tight — when even the simplest tasks feel overwhelming — I found unexpected relief in digital doodling on a gifted iPad from Workman Arts.

Woman of Earth + Sky is one of these digital creations carrying celestial whispers for spiritual strengthening and earthly grounding, inviting soul kin – here or beyond – to gather, to raise frequencies, and to find support, strength, and solace in their essence's purpose. A call for balance and vision to return to the fore in this intricate, sometimes confounding, awe-inspiring journey we call life.

May you be held in comfort and care as you live your soul's truth.



Althea's creative work is an offering – an alchemy of ancestral teachings, nature's wisdom, identity and the divine mysteries. She embraces the power of prayer and the mystical, channeling vibrational signatures and energy medicine into her art. Whether through painting, pottery, photography, poetry or digital art, Althea's practice is an ongoing dialogue with the unseen, bringing forth messages of soul, healing, and ancient knowing.

Living truth learned and reactivated through her inner work, community care and travels, she dreams into her art, dedicated to wholesome love, inclusion, and amplifying the voices often unheard. Presently residing in Ottawa, she is preparing for her *Ancestry Project* multidisciplinary solo show in May.

Risking and speaking truth others may not want or be ready to acknowledge, is an act of courage and often comes at a cost; yet, Althea remains steadfast — witnessing, creating, and offering perspectives that may not be immediately welcomed but more often than not take root in time. She knows that integrity, self-kindness and expression of soul, steady and strengthen her spirit. Facing fears, failures, and resistance has only deepened her resolve, finding what is truly hers not what has been imposed or inherited out of fear — but the voice that is uniquely her own.

SERENA McCARROLL

Uh Oh. Hello. 2025 cyanotype on fabric with embroidery 14" x 11"

allcitizens.org

Uh Oh. Hello. explores themes of transience and communication. It takes the form of a textile diptych composed of cyanotypes on fabric (contact-prints made using everyday objects to create spectral impressions) layered with coloured embroidery. The work meditates on ghostly visitations and the complexities of interpreting messages from beyond. The spirits, limited in their capacity to communicate, must carefully choose what to convey when the veil between worlds thins. These moments of connection are marked by ambiguity, highlighting the fragile interplay between the material and the immaterial.



Serena McCarroll received a BFA degree from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and a MFA from Ryerson University. Her work has been shown in galleries such as Harbourfront Centre (Toronto), Stride Gallery (Calgary), The Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, Paved Arts (Saskatoon), The Nickle Arts Museum (Calgary) & IMA Gallery (as a featured solo exhibition at Toronto's Contact Photography Festival). She is the author of the book All Citizens (Conundrum Press, 2012).

CLARE McINTYRE

Low Tide 2023 painting 24" x 24"

Claremcintyre.ca

o @clare_mcintyre_studio

I'm drawn to a natural world that is wild and uncontrolled. I paint organic life that is untouched, or neglected, by human hands, that seems to be in motion and actively growing on the canvas. Compositionally, I try to fill the canvas with a dynamic image that continues beyond the edges, and overlapping layers weave together adding depth to the canvas surface. My painting style is realistic but with flowing brushwork which evokes a dreamlike feeling. I use colours and highly contrasting values that are slightly amplified from reality. I magnify and detail delicate intricacies of flowers, stems and leaves.

A sensory experience is conveyed through the sense of a slight breeze in a gestural brushstroke, the impression of warm, dappled sunlight, or the rendered tactility of a smooth, dewy leaf. I want to emphasize the vibrance and abundance of nature when it is not interfered with or altered.



Clare McIntyre is a formally-trained artist and designer who lives in Toronto. Clare spent her early childhood in St. John's, Newfoundland surrounded by jellybean houses and wild, dramatic landscapes. The essence of those memories tends to persist in her art.

Clare is drawn to unbounded and uncontrolled nature that bursts with life. Her paintings come from deep observation, with compositions that appear to expand past the edges of the canvas, and have layers that go deeper than the canvas surface. As someone with a chronic migraine disorder, Clare feels she has a heightened awareness of her senses and surroundings. She translates this into a slightly surreal and amplified depiction of her subjects.

After earning a BFA from Concordia University and an advanced diploma for Interior Design from Sheridan College, Clare spent several years working as a designer while maintaining an art practice alongside. While working in design, she found she could bring artistry to spaces through impactful focal points and features. In recent years Clare has made painting her primary focus, participating in several juried group shows and art festivals. Clare enjoys being connected with other artist peers with lived experiences through the Workman Arts community.

RICK MILLER

Under the rocks are the words 2024 digital media 24" x 12"

Millrick.bsky.social

While my experience of mental illness is isolating and corrosive, the act of creation can be a collaborative, nurturing, affirmation of my value as a person. Collaboration is, for me, a way to harness my manic creative energies while simultaneously defeating depression's siren call towards oblivion.

Ancestral Mindscapes / Geographies de l'intime is an ongoing collaboration that explores the impact of nature on my mental illness and self-identity. The project began in 2018 with Jules Koostachin, a Cree filmmaker from Attawapiskat First Nation, and Geneviève Thibault, a photographer from the Gaspésie region of Québec. Gaspé is where I grew up, and where my mental illness first emerged.

The work is focused on the watershed of Québec's Rivière York, which my ancestors began settling around 1775, on the unceded Mi'gmaq territory of Gespe'gewa'gi.

Geneviève and I, while working on a new project in Gaspésie that reflects our shared love for the vast region where forested mountains meet the sea, realized that we had more work to do with Geographies de l'intime.

Content note:

mention of suicidal ideation



This panoramic image tries to invoke the timelessness of the landscape while reflecting on the insignificance of our egos when confronted by the sublime forces of nature.

I would like to acknowledge the Ontario Arts Council for their ongoing support of this project.

BIO

While I've lived with mental illness all my adult life I've only thought of myself as an artist for 15 years. Having lost everything to manic depression I now use lens-based media to make sense of my Madness.

Mad Art is a canvas on which I can explore my place in the world, how I came to be who I am, and question where my creative journey will end. Mad Art allows me to make sense of past traumas and to imagine a future in which I exist. I have learned to take pride in my Madness.

In order to see beyond the limited perspective and privileges of being a cisgendered white male, I often work collaboratively. I am currently working with Geneviève Thibault, a Québécoise artist living and working in my homeland of Gaspésie.

In 2018 Geneviève and I began collaborating on an autobiographical project, where I revisited the teenage emergence of my mental illness. Despite having never met, nor even spoken, we embarked on an ongoing project; Ancestral Mindscapes / Geographies de l'intime. It's become one of our most successful works, with over a dozen exhibitions and publications.

LESLIE ORDAL

Pale Horse undated photography 12" x 18"

7 0

Z leslieordal.com

O @frontoparietal

I was inspired by news photographs of domestic horses fleeing disasters, such as the increasingly common wildfires in the western US, or bombings in Ukraine. Shot on film that shifts colours to another part of the spectrum, this image was my first experiment with this new emulsion. A brilliant blue sky on a winter's day becomes a sickly postapocalyptic orange; the horse's yellowed coat now glows a spectral blue. The horse still wears its bridle, as if it had broken free in an attempt to survive.



I'm a genetic counselor working primarily in academia, and the counterweight to the heaviness of my work is my artistic practice. Though it takes many forms (textile art, writing, etc), film photography provides me with the greatest opportunity for reflection and insight into both my own practice and myself. Something happens between the creation of the image and seeing it for the first time, a delay that is both mindful and magical.

SAM PABOUDJIAN

Thought Block Blues 2025 sculpture 32" x 14" x 12"



() @thementalmaker

Thought Block Blues is a multi-media sculpture that depicts the real-life struggles I have with anxiety, specifically "thought blocking," which is when someone suddenly loses the ability to speak, think, or move. What that looks like for me is I start to shut down mentally, and I can't articulate thoughts. Everything feels overwhelming like my brain is about to explode. It is very frustrating and upsetting because I can't trust my thoughts and I think I come across dumb and inadequate. The more it happens the more it reinforces the negative thoughts and fuels the vicious cycle of anxiety into mental and emotional paralysis.



Sam Paboudjian is a Canadian Egyptian trans/ non-binary neurodivergent artist in Toronto. They love to work with any material they can get their hands on; primarily using recycled/thrifted materials, and as many natural and eco-conscious art supplies as possible! Sam went to university for Theatre Production, carrying over many practical skills learned from set and sound design into their personal art. Their art often focuses on experiences of mental health/illness, queerness and identity. Sam creates as a way to observe, process, better understand our reality in deeply emotional ways.

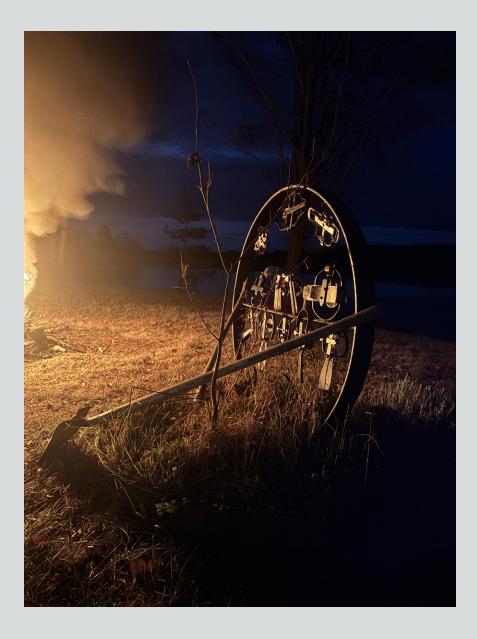
MARISHA **PULA**

Wheels Keep Turning 2024 photography 11" x 14"



(O) @Loonbreak

Wheels Keep Turning reflects a time in my life where I felt my identity had disappeared. I had changed so much and no longer could go back to being who I was. I started to search for anything that would stem the constant chatter from inside my head. Strangely there would be brief moments when small glimpses of happiness are feasible or possible; you could reach out to touch them if you kept reaching past a tipping point.



Marisha Pula has been a practicing artist for over twenty years. Graduating from OCAD University in 2013, she freelanced as an illustrator and graphic designer, and pursued her own artistic adventures in many different media. For the previous seven years she worked as a restoration artist repairing sculptures and artifacts. Currently she still is exploring photography, as well as creative writing, in both poetry, short stories, children stories and a novel. She has showcased her paintings at 401 Richmond during Nuit Blanche, as well as multiple Being Scene shows in the City of Toronto.

MARIE RUISSEAU

En Voyage 2020 set of two paintings 32" x 83 ½" each

The series *En Voyage* of two interconnected acrylic paintings emerged shortly after my escape, as I fled from one state of isolation to another, prompted by the subsequent lock-down situation, my unfamiliar surroundings, and without any social contacts. Drawing inspiration from narrative elements of the Scandinavian storybook "The wonderful adventures of Nils" by Selma Lagerlöf, the paintings delve into themes of isolation, the journey into an unfamiliar world, the exploration into the unknown, and the transformation of perspective and incorporating facets of discovery. It invites the viewers to engage with the narrative of my own past, encompassing the rediscovery and evolution of my own identity while also leaving room to connect to a story of their own.





Marie Ruisseau is a European artist who has been living in Canada since she left her home country, fleeing violence in 2019.

She holds a master's degree in Fine Arts and Art Education. Her professional background includes teaching roles and freelance projects, demonstrating a genuine passion for visual expression.

Her artistic works reflect a blend of skillful craftsmanship and creative empathy as she employs a range of materials and techniques in her creations.

MR alternates between narrative and abstracting approaches. Some pieces tell stories, while others are purely abstracting expressions. This duality enables not only diverse communication but also processing of traumatic experiences. In her artistic works, Marie Ruisseau preserves a contrasting refuge within the image, maintaining an intact visual world against the brutality of reality. This serves as a sanctuary, allowing for the authentic sharing of experiences while countering the violence of the external world.

En Voyage (painting 1 of 2)

SHA

Empty Space no.1 2024 printmaking 7" x 5"

O @dontyuckmyyum.studio

Sha explores the idea of stillness in an eerie sense. After constantly being told to "sit with your feelings" by therapist after therapist, she had used dry etching and acid etching to recreate how that particular phrase feels when one ruminates on their failures. It took years to finally be able to understand what "sitting with your feelings" truly meant. These pieces however were created during a dark time when those words meant nothing to her. These pieces later became a self fulfilling prophecy as she sat with my nothingness for years. From that nothingness these pieces were birthed.





A multidisciplinary artist who specializes in painting, printmaking and ceramics. They are a lover of all things messy and are hoping to try every art medium at least once in their life. Her artistic career went on a brief pause after finishing her Bachelors in Fine Arts at York University. After a brief hospitalization in October 2024, they had decided to pick up where they left off and continue finding meaning in their artistic practices. Today, you can find Sha either at their local pottery studio (Secret Tea Time) or casting a spell in a nearby park! Ready to enjoy life to the fullest, they are here to bring whimsy and wonder into the world.

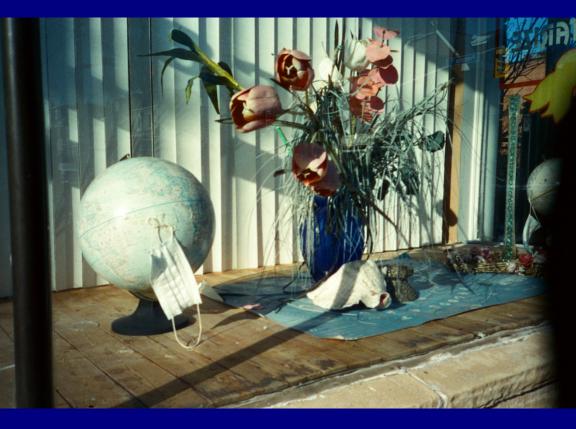
Empty Space no.2 2024 printmaking 7" x 5"

DAVID SHUKEN

Fake Flowers and Globe 2025 photography 11" x 14"

Z davidshuken.com

The images in *Being Scene – Store Window Reflections* consist of a storefront from the East end of Toronto off Broadview. I shot on colour negative with a film that is cinematic quality especially with the highlights. The colour image was shot on 35mm. This photograph has a certain nostalgic feeling of times past and of a travel agency that is on suspended animation! This image is from an ongoing body of work of mine. Because these are reflections of windows, they ask the viewer to notice and look hard! The colour image of the show was printed on 11 Epson Ultra Chrome Archival inks on inkjet paper.



I have been an observer all my life. I was introduced to photography as a child. My early years were filled with art and museum trips. Upon graduating from Ryerson, now TMU, with a BAA, I continued to pursue my passion for photography. I have a particular background in food photography. Later I pivoted my practice to fine art. I have been shown at the Art Gallery of Ontario (a large group show of 3000 artists both local and international), Engine Gallery, Gallery 44, Scarborough Arts Council, and the Thera Gallery.

I have been published in both Canadian and International publications and cookbooks.

Editorial work in local and international publications: Analog Forever Magazine for three separate online shows. Photo Ed Magazine Summer Digital Online Edition 2021, and Canadian Gardening Magazine and reprinted in their own cookbook, of tomatillos photo in "The Cook's Garden", Chatelaine, Corporate Knights, Chart Magazine, and Dubai Traveler.

In May 2024, I was represented in art sales and rentals at the Burlington Art Gallery.

ASHLEY SNOOK

Blinky Drip 2024 pastel on paper 52" x 50"

Z ashleysnook.com **O** @intraspeciatedasno

Informed by biology, scientific research and socio-cultural dynamics, Ashley Snook explores the complexities of diverse living networks and the concept of animality. To Snook, exploring one's own unique position in animality has the potential to open perspective on human existence and relationships with one another, human-animal relationships, and relationality to the morethan-human world. It is a rebellious act against hegemonic forces that have enabled things like environmental degradation, capitalism, hate, overworking, and conformity.

Her practice explores connections through differences, impermanence, composting, and imaginative reworlding, and therefore, animality is a constant theme of contemplation in Snook's





work. Working predominantly in drawing, sculpture and installation, animality is imbued in everything she does. She is fascinated by the micro and macro relationships between human animals, nonhuman animals, bacteria, fungi, and vegetal/botanical life this prompts her to blur distinctions as to what is human, animal, plant, living, or nonliving. Rooted in ecological reverence and intuitive knowledge, Snook's work also draws from green witch magician embodied practice of attuning to the natural world through ritual, herbalism, and sacred reciprocity. This approach deepens her exploration of interconnectivity, guiding her to work with organic materials and ephemeral processes that honour cycles of decay and renewal.

Within these methods of creating, Snook looks to ways in which she can further engage her audience. This often looks like incorporating viewer participation, encouraging presentness, sensory awakening, for example, by incorporating smell, mood lighting, tactility, sound, and playfulness in her work.

Blinky Drip (detial)

BIO

Dr. Ashley Snook is a neuro-divergent, award winning interdisciplinary artist, researcher and educator, and holds a PhD in Art and Visual Culture. Snook was born and raised in the small rural township of Bonfield, Ontario, and currently resides in Tkaronto.

ALSA ST ROSE

Slipping 2024 painting 48" x 36"

7 etsy.com/shop/thegloomyangelshop

(O) @thegloomyangel

Slipping, 2024 uses overlapping of figures and a blending technique to convey the artist's personal experience with dissociation. A strange and disorienting state of mind, where the boundary between the self and the external world becomes blurred, where identity no longer feels fixed but fluid, slipping away from a coherent whole.



Alsa St Rose is a Toronto based visual artist, specializing in drawing and painting. Pulling from her academic background in psychology, and her lived experience with chronic illness and illmental health, Alsa's pieces are inspired by the beauty and complexity of human emotions and aim to communicate a wide range of powerful and sometimes uncomfortable emotions. Through expressive portraiture, fluid, almost abstract brushwork, and bright colour palettes, her work invites viewers to indulge in difficult feelings and explore the relationship between strength and vulnerability.

DINESH SUBRAMANIAN

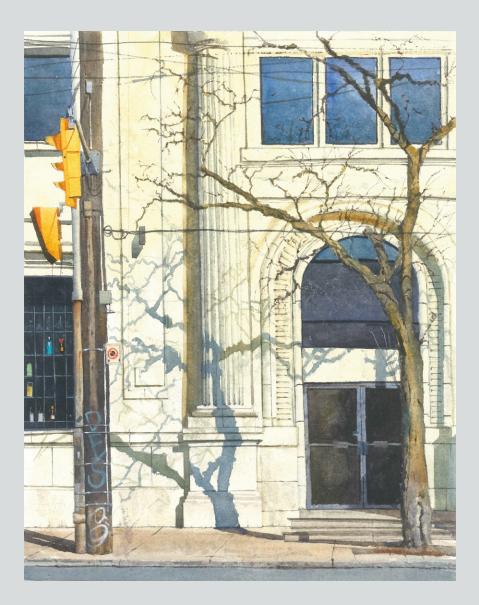
Architectural Veins undated painting 12" x 18"

X watercolorimpressions.ca

O @dinesh.at.toronto

I am drawn to the beauty of light and shadow and how they shape the world around us. My watercolour paintings capture everyday moments in urban life — busy streets, quiet parks, and fleeting interactions. Watercolour is the perfect medium for this, with its fluid and unpredictable nature, allowing me to explore the energy and rhythm of city life.

As a new citizen of Canada, my art reflects my experience of discovering Toronto City and its people. I find inspiration in the ordinary and aim to show how light and shadow can turn simple moments into something meaningful. Through my work, I hope to share my journey and invite others to see the beauty in their everyday lives.



Dinesh is Toronto based Artist and a self-taught watercolourist, He began painting during the pandemic, you can see how much he loves to paint in every piece he creates. He says, "Painting is my way of sharing my joy with the world." After settling in Toronto, he found inspiration in the city's rich culture and diverse inhabitants. His artwork blends vibrant colours with precise details, enhancing the play of light and shadows in each scene. He aims to capture the mood and emotional essence of every moment, creating a deep connection with his audience.

Dinesh pushes the boundaries of watercolours to create his unique style, earning recognition in juried exhibitions and among collectors. One of his artworks is displayed in Toronto's City Hall art gallery earning a place in the esteemed Toronto Collections. He also ventured into Art Battle, winning his first competition and becoming a finalist in the annual Toronto city championship.

He firmly believes that beauty can be found anywhere, whether it's in a worn-out city area or in the stunning natural scenery. He hopes his creations will encourage people to take a little extra time to appreciate the magnificence in their immediate surroundings.

CASPER SUTTON-FOSMAN

Homebody 2024 chiffon, silk thread, glass mirrored panel 12" x 12"

Z caspersuttonfosman.com

(O) @mustmovequickly

Part of a larger body of work utilizing the haunted house as allegory for trans and disabled resistance to nuclear family structures, *homebody* explores these ideas through the symbol of the covered mirror (a common component of funerary rituals, and a trope of haunted house media). Layering translucent black chiffon on top of itself, figures emerge through varied opacities, outlined in handsewn red silk thread. The mirror peeks through in places, confronting the viewer with a glimpse of themselves in the artwork.



Casper Sutton-Fosman is a cross-disciplinary artist, curator, and academic currently based in Toronto, ON. Their work centres conceptions of identity through a trans and disabled lens, pushing boundaries of medium and discipline to open inbetween spaces for being. Casper is interested in troubling linearity and authorship, interactivity and implication, working in spaces between analog and digital, involving craft practices and outdated technology. They hold an MFA in Interdisciplinary Art, Media, & Design from OCAD University and a BA in Liberal Arts from Sarah Lawrence College.

JAN **SWINBURNE**

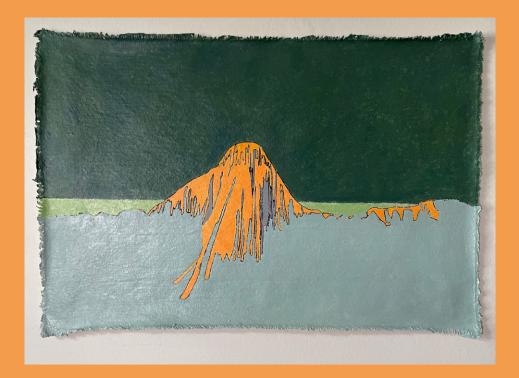
Sound image of my voice saying HOPE undated painting 20" x 13.75"

Z Janswinburne.com

(O) @theswinburnecomplex

This work is part of a series that invokes imagery of my voice saying a word-a word, a code for sound, a wave that is ever common and mysterious.

It allowed me to reflect on sound, language, place and land. I think about how our human sounds have their origins in both natural and constructed environments. How we both consciously and unconsciously reflect what we hear to the manner of how we make sounds. I love colour moving the temporality of sound to form and material. The unstretched canvas echoes sound wave complexity.



Jan Swinburne's intermedia practice overlaps images, sculpture, and experimental moving image art in two streams: Gallery oriented exhibitions, and time based experimental forms. Her thematic focus revolves around speech, language as landscape, degenerated and regenerated images and sounds.

Swinburne has screened/exhibited internationally in Greenwich England, New York City, Brooklyn (Brooklyn Art Museum), (Experi-MENTAL Festival 6), New Jersey (Filmideo/Index Art Centre), South Hampton (TECHSPRESSIONISM: Digital & Beyond),Washington DC (RhizomeDC), Croatia (fu:bar 2k23) and in Canada (MUFF, Vector, Art On The Screens, Trinity Square Video, Photophobia, Pleasure Dome TNW tour, Long Winter and more) and has recently been commissioned by 150 MediaStream in Chicago for a moving image installation.

Her sonic works have been published in The Wire Magazine and through Alrealon Musique record label. Swinburne works and lives in Toronto, Canada.

SHANNON **TAYLOR-JONES**

Underworlds 2024 painting - oil on wood panel 16" x 20"

Z shannontaylorjones.com

@shannontaylorjones

Considering metaphors shared between disability and ecology of rot and ruin, contamination, and the unknown, this work creates space for the understanding of human and more-than-human interactions and experiences, always ecological in nature, in a world in crisis.

Living in contaminated bodies on a contaminated planet, corporeality is haunted by intimate kinship. Through painting, a landscape where growth and decay both thrive is embraced, with the absent body placed in and as an ecosystem; a biome of relationships that are both becoming and unbecoming.

Through layers and intersections of care, this work explores detritus as the answer to one question and the ask of another



Shannon Taylor-Jones is an interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto with a BFA from OCAD University. She works with painting, fibre, and organic matter to explore the entangled biological and creative processes of life and death. Submerged into the underworld of plant and fungal embodiment, she looks to the more-than-human world in consideration of non-linear practices of growth, decay, and grief. Embodying the self as a symbiont, her work exists as an exploration of detritus in ecosystems of collaboration and interdependency.

V VALLIÈRES

Dalmatian Blades 2020 ceramic sculpture 11" x 9" x 14"

O @v.vallieres

I feel as though I am forever cascading throughout the realms of my own lack of understanding: of emotions and choices; of sexuality and gender; of the dualities of life and my place within them. As someone who is neurodivergent I grasp to understand human expression, communication and reasoning, and I create art in an attempt to make sense of this. Striving to give light to the intricacies of the human experience. In my work I draw on personal imagery, symbols and memory to express these definitions of obscurities. Using colourful, tactile, handmade pieces with unique shapes, textures, perspectives and non-normativity. My work is often automatic and intuitive. My art practice is an integral tool I use in an attempt to reconnect this subconsciousness or disconnect of communication and grab footholds of connection along the way. I often see my art as a byproduct of processing the intensities of life that come with being Autistic and Mad.





V Vallières is a Toronto-based, multi-media artist, working primarily in ceramics and textiles. They hold a BFA from Concordia University and have attended residencies in Montréal, Moncton and Winnipeg. 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.

V is a student, teaching assistant, volunteer and a ceramic technician at a community night school. They actively produce work in community studios and identify as non-binary, queer and neurodivergent. They have worked in movie theatres for the past nineteen years and greatly enjoy visual stimuli.

Dalmatian Blades (alternate angle)

RAECHEL WASTESICOOT

autonomy of body 2024 textile 11" x 20"

my skin belonged to someone else everything it contains elsewhere always theirs never mine

(O) @wolfwmnbeads

This body of work explores feelings in relation to place, both internal and external, through beadwork.





Raechel Wastesicoot (Bonomo) is a mixed Kanyen'kehá:ka interdisciplinary artist. Following a teaching passed down to her: from the land, for the land, and by the land, her contemporary beadwork style features upcycled, vintage, and harvested materials. The land and sustainability is at the centre of her practice. The work Raechel creates aims to have as minimal an impact on the environment as possible, often highlighting gifts from the land, including antler, fur, hides, and porcupine quills. She is also passionate about building and healing community through public art praxis and engagement, and is experienced in facilitating beading circles and workshops both in person and virtually.

cedar park 2024 textile 16" x 20"

hot skin concrete shores find me near hallowed trees a fine place for respite

GEORGIA WHIST

Neuropil 9 2023 mixed media 11" x 15"

Z georgiawhist.com



O @georgiawhist

In 2016, Whist created their first "Neuropil" by collaging dried acrylic paint scraps (or skins) onto paper. Marks made with ink pen connect these acrylic fragments, forming a dense network reminiscent of the biological circuitry found in our brains. Otherwise known as the Neuropil. Whist's process is slow to allow for her healing brain. While working on other projects her palettes are left uncleaned; saved for another day, when the layers of paint will be mined for subconscious detritus to create another Neuropil.



Georgia Whist (b. 1995, Vancouver, Canada) is an experimental 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.

PAULINA WISZOWATA

Respectfully, a couch potato embroidering no.1 2024 mixed media 10 ¼" x 10 ¼"

O @p.dubs.rugs

Respectfully, a couch potato embroidering is a new series of experimental abstract embroidered pieces which Paulina has dived into after a year hiatus from her rug-making practice. Still allured by the materiality and processes of textile-based work, she took the Textile Explorations class led by Kat Singer this past autumn. She fell into an enthused frenzy not only over embroidery, but over the potential of what can be created by piecing together upcycled fabrics, misprinted felts, and many more stuff and things, with a bit of thread and yarn. How she brings these materials together comes from a developed palette of abstract painting and the wonderful insights and inspirations from her peers and community. She also mainly now creates on her couch





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 de-skilling 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 more recently, experimenting with textiles. She uses these skill sets 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.

Respectfully, a couch potato embroidering no.2 2024 mixed media 71⁄2" x 8"

BRANDON WULFF

Ring around the Moon 2022 textile 57" x 61"

bwulffandco.com

@justanotherautisticguy

Ring around the Moon is a testament to my experimental approach to quilting, pushing the boundaries of traditional techniques. This biscotti quilt, inspired by the ethereal phenomenon of a lunar halo, embodies the delicate interplay of light and ice crystals in the night sky.

Using only 1-inch strips of Kona solids in 40 different fabrics, I created a diffused, dreamlike canvas. The quilt's composition mimics the celestial ring, with each piece meticulously placed to evoke the scattered refraction of moonlight.

To enhance the crystalline texture, I incorporated a Greek key pattern using the Edge 10 ruler, adding depth and dimension to each 3-inch block. The cross-stitching technique, inspired by Chawne Kimber's work, weaves through the seams, binding the composition like a delicate frost.

This piece represents my ongoing exploration of quilting as a medium for capturing fleeting natural phenomena. By combining precise geometric patterns with organic, flowing designs *Ring around the Moon* invites viewers to contemplate the beauty of transient moments and the intricate connections between earth and sky.



Brandon Wulff is an accomplished artist known for his innovative approach to quilting, blending traditional techniques with contemporary design. As an Autistic artist living in Toronto, Canada, Wulff brings a unique perspective to his work, characterized by a narrow focus and a passion for textiles.

Wulff's journey into quilting began as a means of supporting his sister's quilt shop, but it quickly evolved into a full-time career and a deep exploration of the medium with a background in art and design, including studies in three-dimensional design and textiles at H. B. Beal Art program, Wulff approaches quilting with a fine art sensibility.

His work often incorporates repurposed and damaged textiles, transforming them into visually stunning pieces that tell a story of healing and reinvention. Wulff's quilts have garnered attention in publications such as House and Home magazine and Canadian Quilter, as well as international art competitions and galleries. In addition to quilting, Wulff is also a life coach, motivational speaker, and advocate for the autistic community, further enriching his artistic practice with a commitment to personal growth and social change.

THANK YOU

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Workman Arts

1025 Queen St. W. #2400 Toronto, ON M6J 1H4 Canada

info@workmanarts.com workmanarts.com

