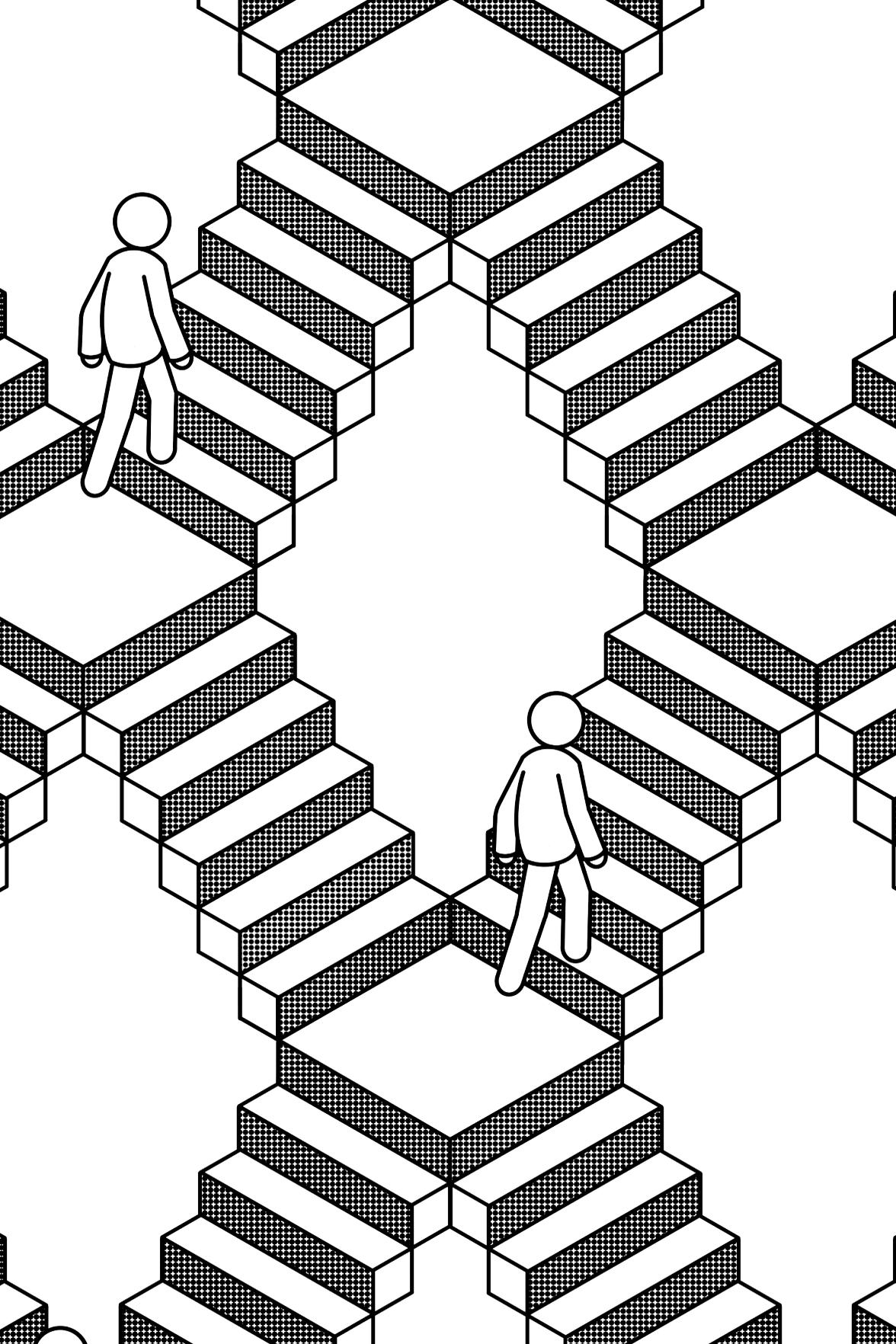
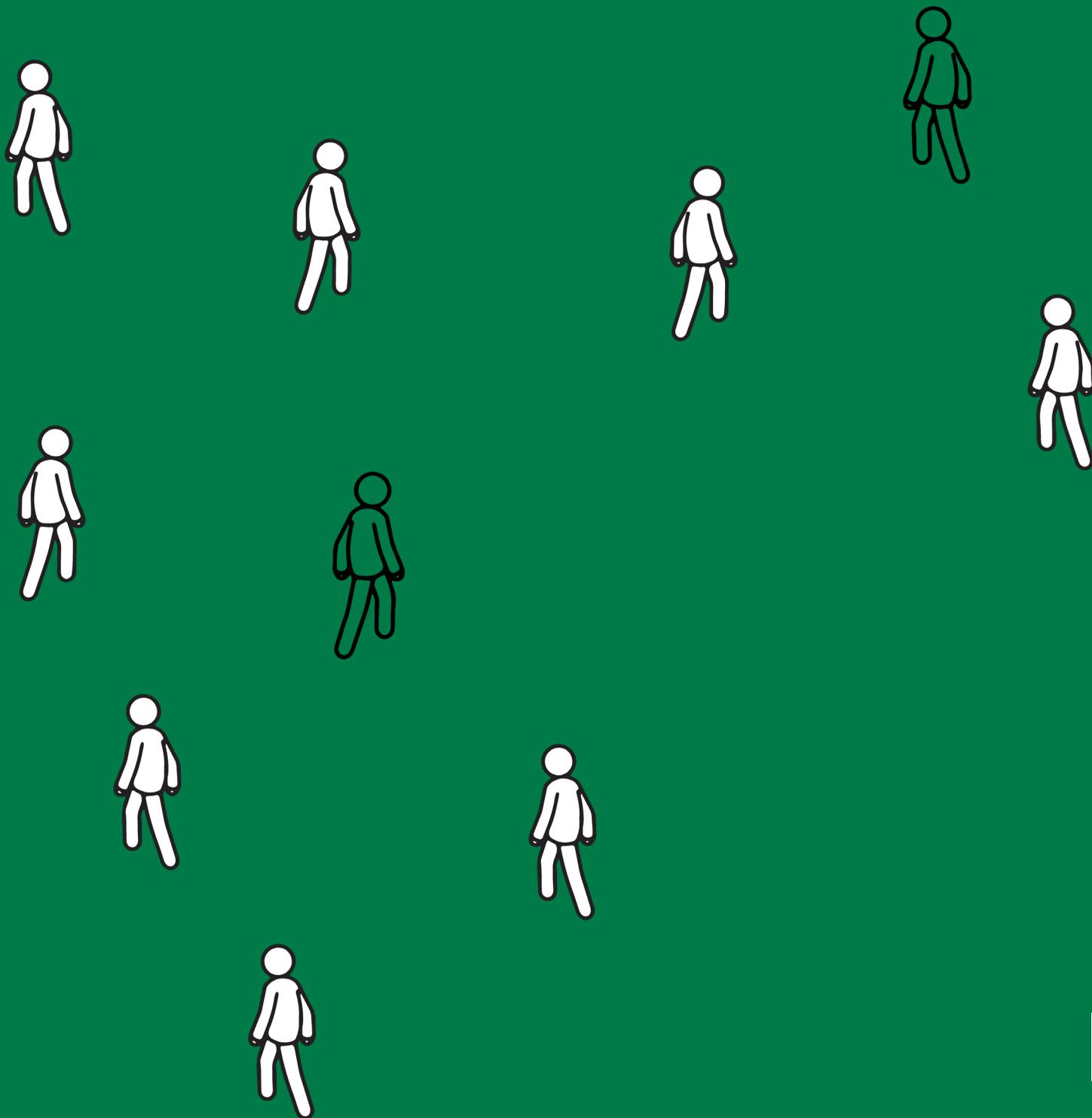




PROLOGUE

2023 University of Toronto Scarborough
Studio Art Graduating Exhibition





Neville Avila
Cynthia Bao
Gregory Quinn-Benoit
Cai Xinyi
Christiana Ceesay
Dubu
Keita Fujiyama
Sharyn Goncalves
Chloena Kouyoumdjian
Erin Lam
Joyce Law
Li Yifan
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Myuri Srikugan
Sun Fan
Sun Qin Zheng
Tang Kun Peng
Nicole Tang
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Preface

Each year when the graduating student exhibition is taking shape, there is an energy in the Studio Art Program at University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) that is unmistakable. Students are collectively working towards the final, culminating exhibition of their undergraduate degree. They are making art, but they are also creating promotional materials, planning an opening event, and designing a publication. I am always surprised, excited, and amazed at what these young artists imagine. Welcome to *Prologue*.

Students enter the Studio Art Program through two foundational courses, then disperse to find their own way through the program's many discipline specific courses: drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, performance art, video, digital art, animation, sound art and conceptual and curatorial practices. They then progress from the medium-specific to interdisciplinary courses that examine themes such as globalization, materiality, the body, the everyday, social justice, and place. Throughout this process, students develop a combination of technical, theoretical, conceptual and critical skills enabling them to express and communicate their ideas confidently in a variety of visual languages. Indeed, when they come back together as a group in their final year, students use all of this experience: the artworks in *Prologue* have been made over the last four months but it is a result of a four-year journey.

The graduating exhibition highlights collective effort and community. The students have been supported by an indispensable community at UTSC made up of the Department of Arts, Culture and Media (ACM), home to the Studio Art Program, and the Doris McCarthy Gallery (DMG). This year I am in the position of being both the Program Director and one of the instructors working with the exhibiting students, together with my colleague, Professor Will Kwan. Professor Kwan has been an inspired and fearless course leader keeping all the parts moving together. He also used his impeccable design skills to support the students' work on this publication. Installing forty works would not be possible without the guidance and expertise of our installer, Josh Cleminson. The behind-the-scenes support for the students throughout the semester by ACM's

technical team has also been critical. Thank you, Josh Cleminson, Christopher Dela Cruz, and Manolo Lugo. ACM staff members Sydney Cabioc and Claudia Wong provided invaluable support for exhibition events and communications respectively. The DMG is UTSC's professional gallery and Studio Art's cherished partner. The DMG provides our students with this special opportunity to present work in a professional gallery. Thank you to Erin Peck, Sandy Saad-Smith, and Helen Su for supporting the artists in the exhibition with your mentorship and encouragement.

As Studio Art Program Director, I am truly proud of these young artists as they prepare to pursue careers as media and tech designers, creative entrepreneurs, teachers, media consultants, arts festival organizers, curators, practicing artists...

Marla Hlady
Studio Art Program Director

Introduction

It is with great pleasure that we present *Prologue*, the 2023 exhibition featuring works by graduating students in the Studio Art program in the Department of Arts, Culture and Media at the University of Toronto Scarborough. The exhibition is graciously hosted by the Doris McCarthy Gallery, a partnership that our program is immensely grateful to have.

As the instructors who worked with the graduating cohort this year, we are astonished once again by the heterogeneity of our students' creative vision and imagination, by their drive and tenacity, and by their camaraderie and community spirit. It can be an anxious and destabilizing time on the cusp of graduation, with a light at the end of the tunnel but uncertain what awaits on the other side. Nevertheless, the students embraced this final endeavor with grace, good humor, and unwavering dedication.

The title of the exhibition, *Prologue*, describes a liminal zone, a space where context is established, history is reckoned with, character is developed, but also where we are offered a glimpse of a world to come. The 40 artworks in the exhibition and documented in this publication excavate different points in this temporal continuum, from poignant engagements with the past through personal history and memory, to sober assessments of current technological, social, and ecological conditions, to hopeful, forward-looking imaginings of recuperation, sanctuary, and survival.

As teachers, we feel privileged to have accompanied our students this semester as their artworks evolved from concept through to the exhibition installation. We are proud of the incredible work they put into preparing the materials for this publication that you hold in your hands. The results of our students' efforts are diverse, bold, challenging, thoughtful, witty, moving, poetic, and confidently finished. And this is just the beginning.

Marla Hlady and Will Kwan, Studio Art Program Faculty

ARTWORKS

Neville Avila

My work consists of digital illustration and design. I am interested in the materials and addictive qualities of popular culture and fan culture, and their associations with escapism and consumption. I explore these popular forms to get at the broader issue of cultural obsessions—our attachments to the things we collect and their impact on our lives. At the same time, I am also interested in the routines, repetition, and mundanity of North American capitalism: the 9-to-5 work culture, consumerism, and the notion of feeling like a cog in a machine. My artworks seek out human patterns in the everyday and serve as an outlet to document my observations. I find beauty in the ordinary. I find myself to be a part of it.



Sanctuary

Digital illustrations on photo paper
24 inches x 17 inches each

Sanctuary is a series of digital illustrations of my room and the collection of objects in it. The scenes are dimly lit but there are small sources of light that bathe the space. This room is filled with popular culture: anime figures, posters, plushies, manga, and video game systems. The objects overwhelm, but they are also gateways to a utopic realm—a place that is separated from the outside world. *Sanctuary* is a retreat that is primed for escape into fictional worlds.



Neville Avila

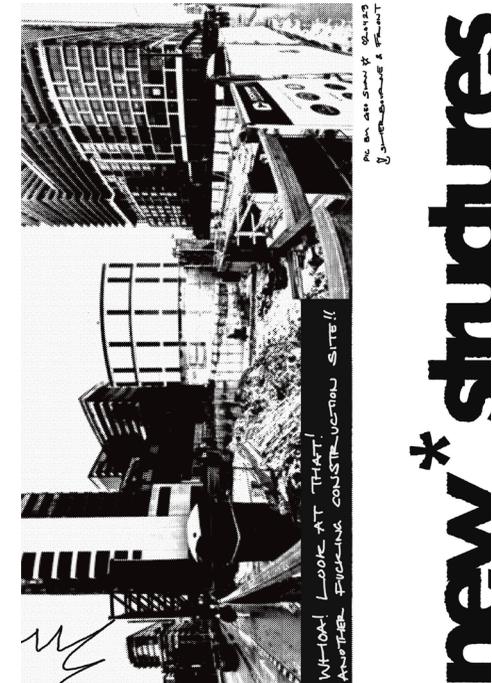
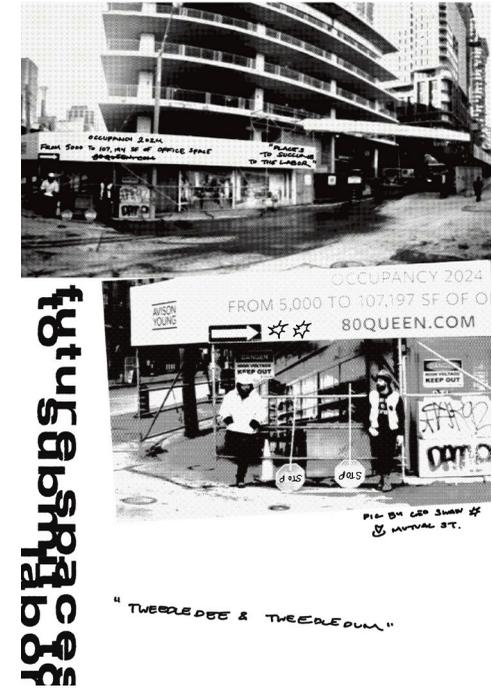
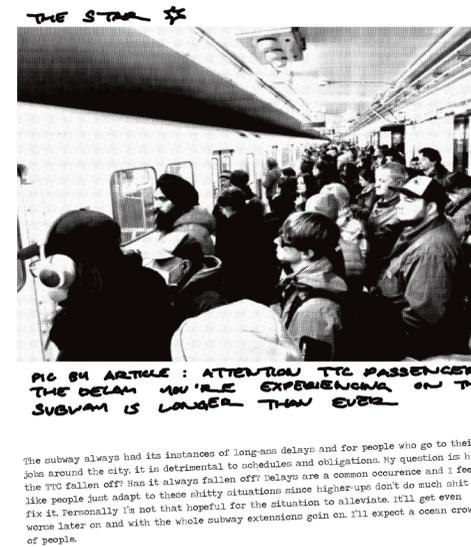
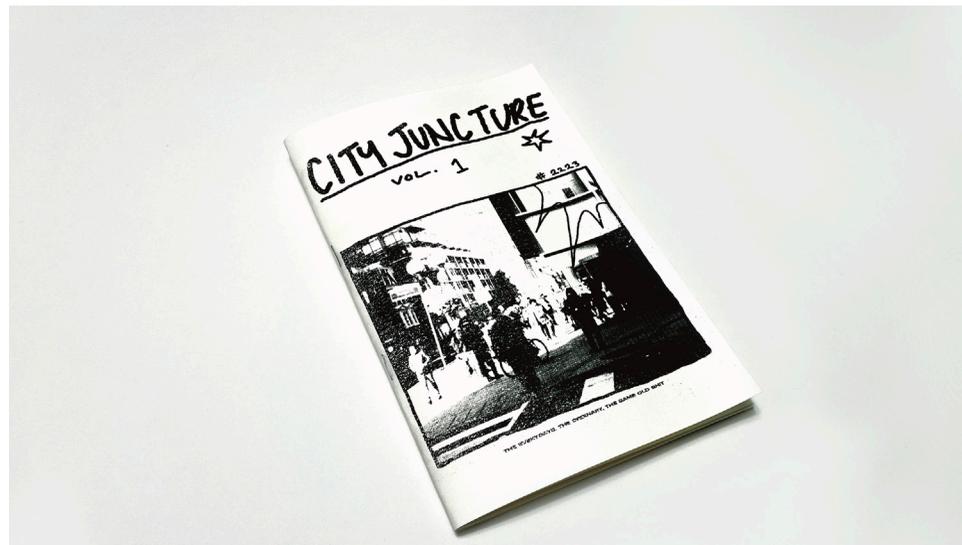
City Juncture Vol. 1

Zine with saddle stitch binding

8.5 inches x 5.5 inches each

Edition of 40

City Juncture Vol. 1 is a zine series that offers a cynical yet documentative commentary on the metropolitan and suburban areas of Toronto. The work is compiled in a D.I.Y. approach, incorporating halftone, monochromatic layers of appropriated and original imagery; crudely drawn abstractions and graphics that are formulated into new compositions; narrative text and idioms that are typed and handwritten. A disarray of elements is created reflecting the chaos of urban life. I continuously spotlight happenings in the city that would often be overlooked or ignored. *City Juncture Vol. 1* provides a bystander's voyeuristic glimpse of the repetitive routines of the proletariat and the masses, intertwined with my viewpoints as a spectator of these moments. My lethargic but receptive routine in the city gives me some mental nourishment and gives readers a retrospective view on their own experiences of the city. By presenting a critical and satirical perspective on these experiences, the zine invites viewers to consider their own relationship with the city and the ways in which their experiences may be shaped by larger societal forces.



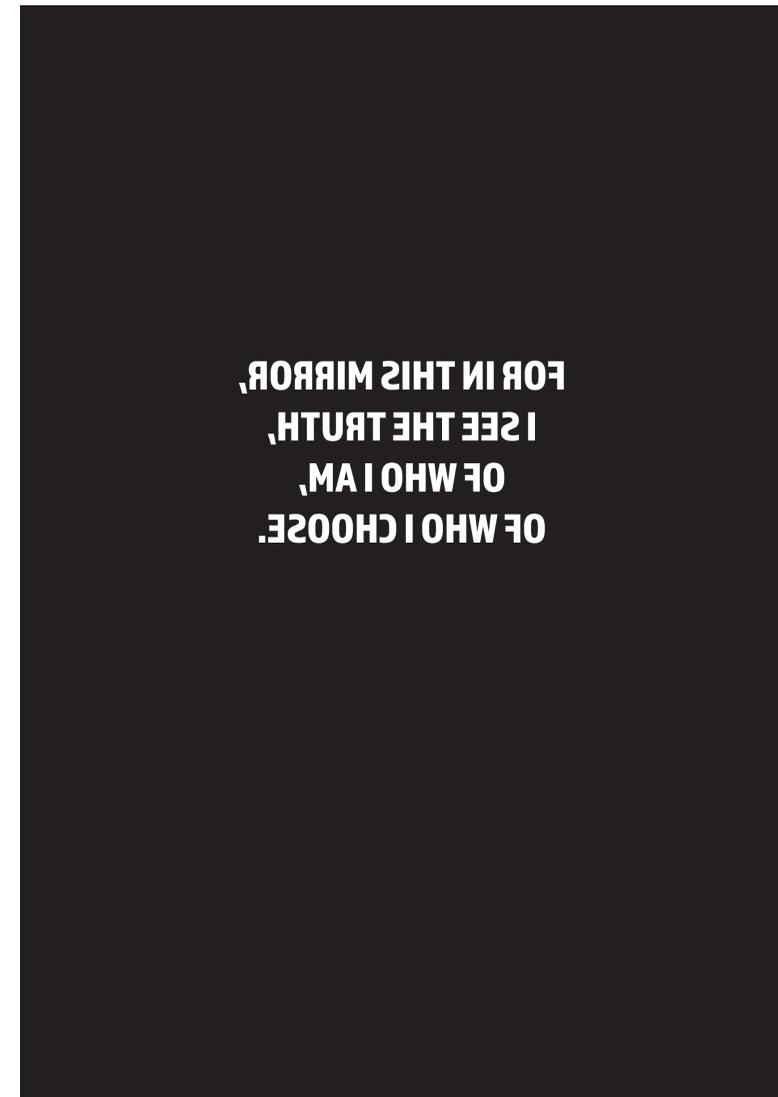
Cynthia Bao

As a multidisciplinary artist, I explore how changing political views, capital, marketing, and international relations affect people's living standards and attitudes toward consumerism. My work analyzes the challenges of modern society within the context of economic globalization, including health effects such as depression and loneliness. I engage viewers through interactive objects, audience participation, and reflective surfaces. I use words and photography to arouse the imagination and encourage deeper engagement. The tone of my work is intentionally not neutral. As an artist, my aim is to challenge the status quo and bring attention to underrepresented issues. While recognizing the potential of capitalism, I also explore its negative side—monopoly, immobility, and inequality—which affect trust and morality. Through a focus on social responsibility, my art encourages critical reflection and prompts viewers to engage with current systems more thoughtfully.

Shareholder/Stakeholder Handbook

Mirror, printed books, wall shelf
42 inches x 32 inches x 10.5 inches

My installation consists of a mirror, shelf, and books for the audience to pick up and flip through freely. This interactive component aims to prompt reflection on the far-reaching influence of money and materialism in contemporary society. The books feature intentionally inverted text that is meant to be read through the wall-mounted mirror. I want the audience to engage with the work in a contemplative and immersive manner, prompting a shift from a passive shareholder role to an active stakeholder position. By including the viewer and the environment in the same frame, the installation aims to promote a critical and nuanced understanding of our current economic and social systems.



Gregory Quinn-Benoit

I am a multimedia artist who works with performance, sculpture, and drawing. I take inspiration from my personal experience, using my works to create an empathetic connection to the viewer. I also use art to explore mental health, my relationship with school, and my relationship to my body. My work is introspective—I feel I am better able understand my relationship to the world by being reflective about my self. My creative process involves a lot of time thinking and letting myself just be in my own mind as I do other tasks. It's in the passive planning where I find my best ideas. It can take me a long time before I put anything to paper, but then I allow the work to flow naturally. Some things will work out well while others will fail. But I embrace failure and allow it to help guide each piece I create. My work comes from a freeform way of creating, because it reflects my freeform way of being.

Monolith

Custom-built wall and found objects
84 inches x 44 inches x 44 inches

Monolith is a memorial to my grandfather, whom I called Opi. The work consists of a collection of objects I selected to represent our relationship. The objects are arranged on a wall that I built with the skills Opi taught me. Arranged on the back of the wall are photos of moments when we worked together and the last letter that he wrote to me. Opi taught me skills to make and fix things: woodworking, electrical wiring, plumbing, and many other practical skills. We were a team. He would often say that he was the brains and I was the muscle. The artwork is meant to evoke a wall “sliced” from one of the many spaces we built together, from the color palette to the layout of how he organized things in his living space. The wall is painted with the same blue and white that adorned his home, a hobby car that he never finished, his house in Florida, and his cottage, where we did a lot of our work together. I found making this work to be therapeutic, a way for me to reckon with my grief. But I hope the work reaches out to the viewer too, prompting them to recall those they have lost. *Monolith* is also a reflection on the memorial. Many memorials are large sculptures that depict the grand values that a person held. But for me remembering is embroiled in the little things, the objects that a person used, the things they enjoyed, and the world they created.



Cai Xinyi

I am a multimedia artist working with photography, digital painting, and video. My approach to creating art is rooted in the desire to capture the current sentiment of pressing social issues through a distorted, ironic, and surreal style. My work often focuses on major topics such as environmental pollution, feminism, and interpersonal relationships, highlighting the devastation caused by human behavior and the complex power relationships in society, particularly from a female perspective. I seek to combine reality and emotion to convey both message and mood. For example, I aim to convey the unease and discomfort of seeing a destroyed environment through toxic colors and visual cues. Similarly, my feminist artworks use quirky and enlightening poses to communicate visually the injustices and inequalities that are often taken for granted. Through my art, I hope to encourage others to think critically about the world around them.

Artificial Color

Digital prints

12.5 inches x 12.5 inches each

Artificial Color is a series of digital prints exploring the devastating effects of chemical pollution on rivers worldwide. The series contains four representative rivers in striking colors. *Sodium Sulfite Pink* (2021) shows Argentina's Corfo Lagoon, where sodium sulfite used in fisheries as an antimicrobial agent causes the lagoon's water to take on an alarming pink color. *Iron Oxides Brown* (2016) depicts the Lan Yi River in China, which has a deep reddish-brown color due to the iron oxide in the discharge from aluminum factories. The highly corrosive river water destroys crops and contaminates underground drinking water. *Phosphorous Green* (2014) shows the green color of Lake Erie in the United States due to an outbreak of cyanobacteria caused by the phosphorus industry. Cyanobacteria deplete dissolved oxygen, suffocate fish, inhibit beneficial algae, and release biotoxins. *Oil Black* (2012) portrays an oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico where the oil took on a toxic-colored appearance due to light refraction. The oil that seeps into the ground is challenging to remove and can have catastrophic long-term effects on marine life and humans.



Cai Xinyi

Conformity's Cost

Photographs

19.5 inches x 27.5 inches each

Conformity's Cost is a photographic series where I explore the social pressures to conform to unrealistic and harmful beauty standards while delving into the physical and emotional toll such expectations can take on my body and mind. Through a series of photographs, I explore distorted postures, restrictive gestures, and grotesque makeup to reveal the violence and destruction caused by societal expectations around beauty and gender. Each image represents an attempt to manipulate or transform a part of my body. By exposing how conformity harms women's bodies and minds, I seek to spark a conversation about the issues of beauty, gender, and power. My project is a call to action, urging viewers to question their beauty assumptions, resist the pressure to adhere to rules, and join the fight for a more equitable and compassionate world.



Christiana Ceesay

I am a digital image artist who consistently explores themes related to social norms and personal experiences. As a settler originally from Sierra Leone, I want to know how my own emotions and experience relate to others. My playful approach to artmaking serves as a tool for documenting my discoveries and making sense of the world around me. One of the primary motivations for my work is a cultural saying that translates roughly to: "if you don't know where you're going, you should at least know where you're from." This adage inspires me to reflect on the past and contemplate how it has shaped the present. Through my work, I seek to answer questions such as "how did we get here?" and "where are we going?"

I think I'm fading, but I hope to live in your lightest memories

Mixed media installation with photo albums, wood side table, lightbox, photographic transparency
20.5 inches x 24 inches x 32 inches

I think I'm fading, but I hope to live in your lightest memories is a mixed media installation that explores the idea of nostalgia and fading memories. In this work, an image emanates from a stack of albums and is cast on the wall. The snapshot is transformed into a projection, a hazy representation of a fleeting, happy moment. Snapshots are a part of most everyone's memory-making. *I think I'm fading, but I hope to live in your lightest memories* attempts to connect with viewers on a deeply personal and emotional level through the snapshot. By utilizing the projection technique, the installation draws attention to the emotional weight of memories and the impact they have on our lives, even as they fade with time.



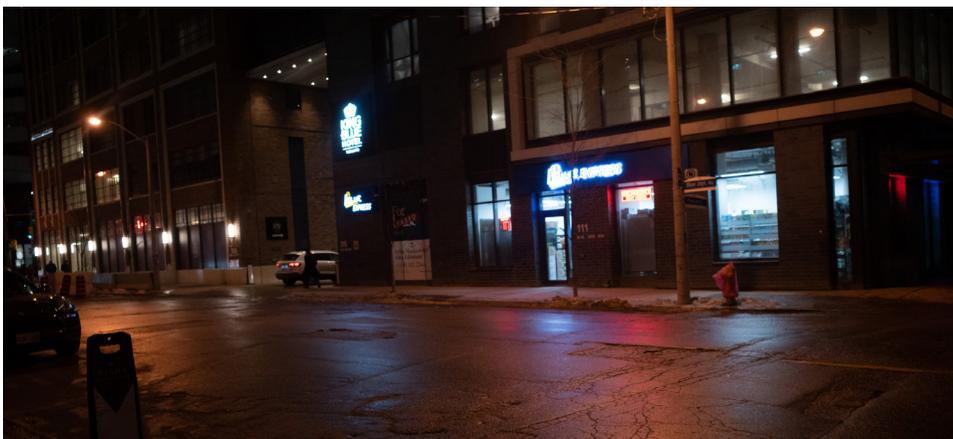
Dubu

I am a photographer that practices film and digital photography. My work focuses on spontaneous encounters in my daily life. I often collaborate with friends by having them influence me while I work. My style fluctuates between aiming to capture realism-style photographs and allowing the viewer to be immersed in the nostalgia of heavily grained, warm film.

Untitled

Digital photographs
16 inches x 24 inches each

Untitled is a digital photo series printed on matte photo paper exploring the relationship between dark and light through Toronto at night. The city's multitude of lights resemble a sea of stars often overlooked in the commotion of everyday city life. The series aims to capture my romanticized views of these stars, contrasted against the harsh night-time cityscape.



Keita Fujiyama

Working at the intersection of traditional arts and technologies— photography, installation, and coding—my artworks problematize the idea of the self, create immersive experiences that prompt viewers to question their assumptions and beliefs, and inspire people to think critically about the world around them and recognize the interconnectedness of all things.



Loneliness: Collection of Connection

Digital drawings

23.5 inches x 16.5 inches each

Loneliness: Collection of Connection draws attention to the issue of youth suicide in Japan and emphasizes the urgent need for more support and resources to address mental health issues facing young people. This artwork uses a series of six panels to explore themes of loneliness. The use of only black and white throughout this artwork conveys a sense of emotional intensity and highlights the starkness of the issue at hand. The abstraction of the drawings also evokes a sense of despair and emptiness, emphasizing the emotional toll that loneliness can take on an individual.

Keita Fujiyama

Waste of Beauty

Interactive website using Flutter

Waste of Beauty is a thought-provoking generative artwork about how everyday action with everyday items contribute to environmental pollution. Created as an interactive website accessed through a mobile phone and QR code, participants are invited to decide where trash on their mobile phone screen should go. Knowledge is tested by choosing the appropriate coloured bin following Ontario's trash rules of black, blue, or green to dispose of everyday items, such as hot drink cups, jars, or plastic bags. Once all selections have been made, the website tallies the results, and provides a real-time, accumulative snapshot of engagement with pollution on a screen in the gallery. Importantly, the generative program provides this as colour-based feedback: a colourful tree has branches converted to black and white when the trash is incorrectly sorted; colourful branches are added if consciously sorted. Will there be a gap between action and intention? The results will become apparent as data from viewer interaction accumulates over the week. Will the tree be thriving and colourful at the end of the exhibition? *Waste of Beauty* highlights the importance of responsible waste disposal by encouraging viewers to consider which bin each trash belongs in. It encourages viewers to think more deeply about their consumption habits.



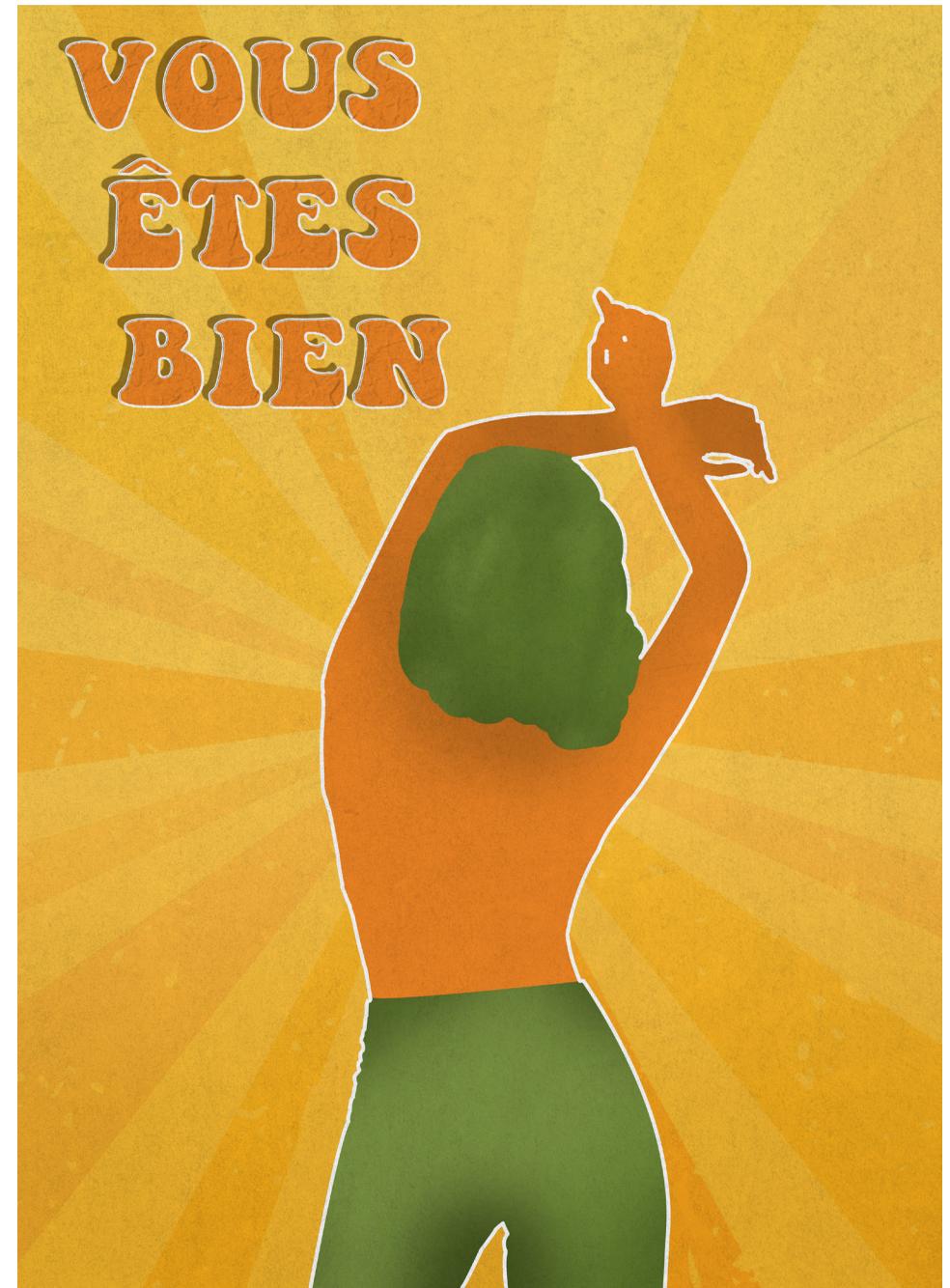
Sharyn Goncalves

I am an interdisciplinary artist, but I specialize in photography. My artworks confront topics related to the human condition: the body, the dynamics of intimate relationships, and the passage of time. The images I make emphasize space, use abstract configurations to provoke curiosity, introspection, and contemplation, and guide the viewer through complex themes and emotions. Despite the discomfort that may arise, the essence of art lies in defying societal norms and challenging pre-conceived notions. Through my art, I create a platform for reflection and dialogue, stimulating an examination of complex issues that we often struggle to articulate but feel deeply as individuals.

SANS

Framed digital prints, latex paint, wire, plastic
Dimensions variable

SANS seeks to challenge the stereotypical portrayal of women's bodies in advertising media such as billboard ads. The graphics used in the work emphasize the natural qualities of the female body and critique the objectifying lens of the male gaze and reflect a departure from the beauty standards that have long dominated advertising media. By harkening back to traditional advert displays, the project seeks to challenge the narrow and objectifying ideals that have been perpetuated in recent years. Women's bodies are often over-sexualized in the media, while male bodies are typically portrayed as fully realized characters. By depicting the activities of a normal body, my artwork encourages viewers to re-evaluate the natural beauty of women's bodies and reject the unrealistic and harmful standards imposed on them.



Sharyn Goncalves

As far as everyone knows (we are a nice normal family)

Digital photographs on paper

72 inches x 36 inches

Family traditions intended to create togetherness can also create feelings of exclusion. *As far as everyone knows (we are a nice normal family)* is a three-part photographic work that delves into the complexities of my family relationships and the interplay between tradition and individuality. Through enigmatic imagery, the project explores the impact of a nightly dinner routine that became a tradition in my childhood home. The artwork's panels offer a subtle portrayal of the forces that shaped our familial roles and the impact tradition had on our lives. By offering a nuanced exploration of the intricacies of family relationships through the state of the individual dinner plate as portrait of the person, *As far as everyone knows (we are a nice normal family)* prompts reflection on the hidden undercurrents that drive our most intimate connections. The work serves as a tantalizing invitation to delve into the mysteries of family dynamics at the dinner table, to explore the nuances of familial relationships, and to reflect on the value of tradition and its impact on our individuality.



Chloena Kouyoumdjian

I use a variety of media to create art, but I constantly return to sculpture and mixed-media drawings. I like to experiment with new media and techniques in order to learn how to adapt them to my works. Even when a work does not go the way I want it to, there is still something to be learned from the experience. I make work that is experiential and large-scale, often with subjects such as wildlife and mystical creatures. When creating an artwork, I try to find a way to evoke feelings of curiosity or wonder in my audience. I feel that when an artwork combines the experiential, the perceptual, and the cerebral, the encounter is a powerful one.

Feel my Fur, Feel my Feathers

Pencil crayon, paint, and charcoal on board
96 inches x 96 inches

Feel my Fur, Feel my Feathers is a large-scale drawing that depicts a number of at-risk species: birds such as the Acadian flycatcher, the Canadian warbler, the Black tern, the Piping plover, and the Loggerhead shrike and flowers such as the wood poppy, the dense blazing star, and the bird's-foot violet. In the middle of the work stands a majestic Boreal caribou as the centerpiece. The species portrayed in this work are found in Canada, more specifically in Ontario and are all on the brink of extinction. The use of charcoal is intentional and allows for the work to be inherently fragile, while alluding to an eventual disappearance. The composition's tone is melancholic, reflecting a sense of loss that follows from losing these important species.



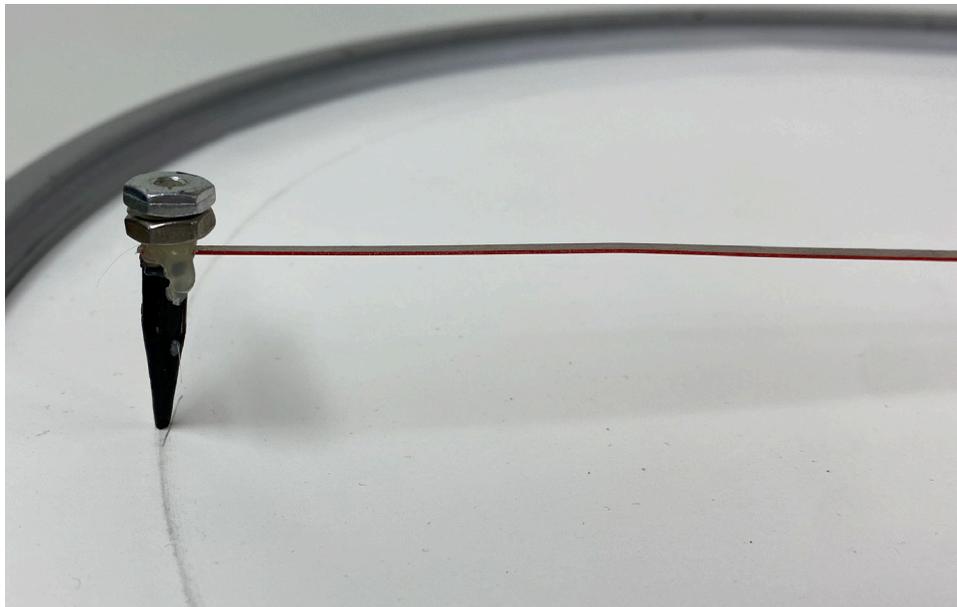
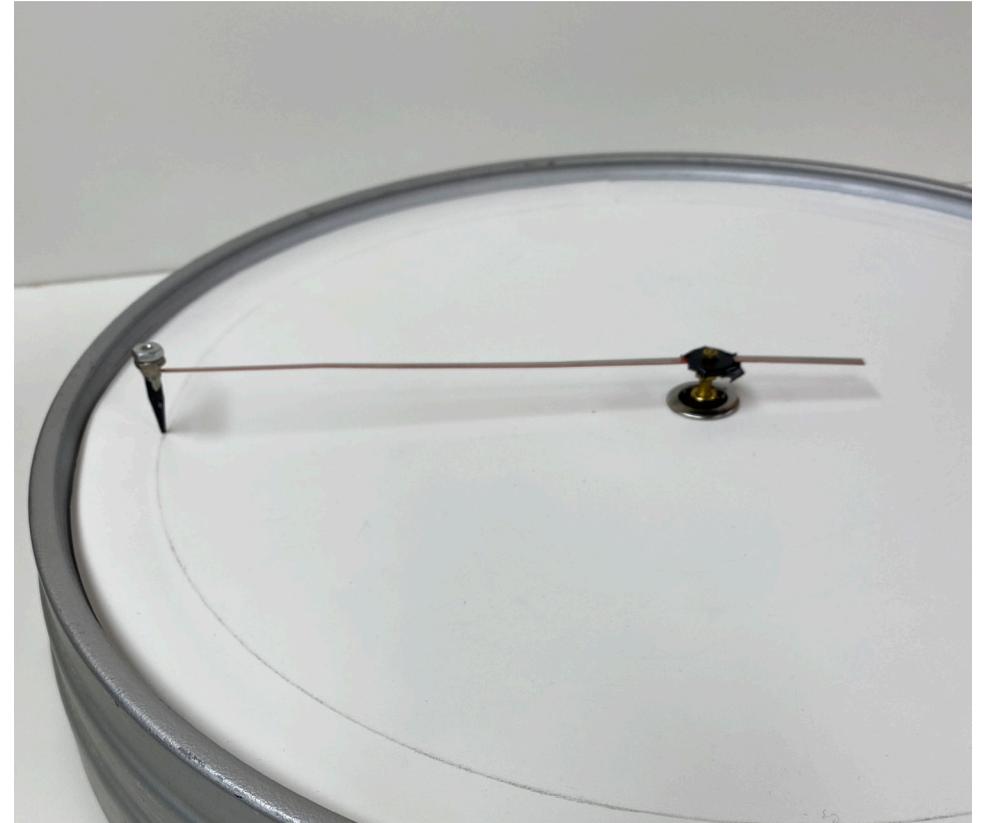
Chloena Kouyoumdjian

Clocking Out

Clock machine, graphite

15 inches x 15 inches x 4 inches

Burnout is seen in all corners of the world and in all walks of life, but it is specifically on the rise for students around the end of the semester. *Clocking Out* enacts the never-ending cycle of work without a break through a kinetic clock-spinning-pencil machine. The pencil, a tool frequently linked to creativity, is now a metaphor for the loss of passion from non-stop demands. *Clocking Out* raises awareness about the value of self-care, advocating that our mental and emotional health should come before societal expectations, as the clock and pencil reminds us. By participating in vital debates, art can spark a conversation on burn-out and the value of self-care in the hectic society we live in today.



Erin Lam

I am a Mississauga-born, Chinese-Canadian artist who has a deep passion for storytelling through art. I create using both visual and performing arts, including sculpture, video, and dance. As a child, I was privileged with access to many different art forms that fostered my love for art. My art inspiration has always been my mother; a passionate, covert artist who deviated from her traditional Chinese parents and encouraged me to pursue opportunities she never had when she was younger. I have always wanted to make her proud with my artworks and let her connect with her inner child artist through me. My mother's encouragement has always been the constant driving force for my art creation.

Trespasser In My Own Home

Mixed media sculpture, 25 inches x 18 inches x 59 inches
Video projection, 6 minutes and 48 seconds

Trespasser In My Own Home is a scale model of my childhood living room that incorporates sound with projections of digitalized VHS home movie tapes. The empty living room space features images of myself and my beloved family spending time together. Though these images stimulate treasured memories, they now represent a life to which we cannot return. We believed we were a picture-perfect family until my father revealed his life-long secret gambling addiction. This craving tore my family apart and has permanently altered our family dynamic. We abruptly separated and left our sacred space. This work is a call for closure between my father, my family, and my childhood home.



Joyce Law

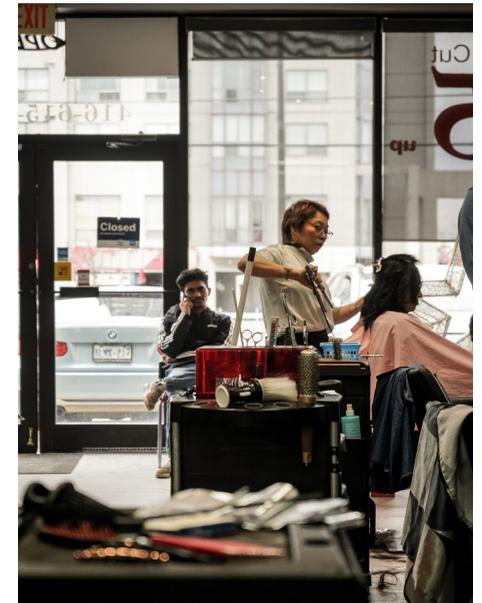
I have always been interested in photography. I feel that although photographs record only a single image, they can often directly or indirectly reflect the story and significance of a culture, a generation, or a political environment through the actions, expressions, and relationships between subjects in the image. Whenever I go to a new place, I take my camera with me. I observe and feel with my eyes first before I press the shutter. In our age of social media, we receive a huge variety of information every day. In this state we only have the patience for the first five seconds of a short video, and photos become a flash in the electronic device, increasingly ignored. In my work, I hope to develop people's patience for photography, to slow the viewer down so that they can understand the cultural significance behind a frozen moment.

Details of a life

Digital photographs

12 inches x 16 inches each

My aunt, who moved to Canada from Hong Kong twenty-three years ago, is the focus of my project. She makes her living by running her hair salon in Scarborough. Through this photographic series, I hope to convey some of the minutiae of her everyday labour. My photos depict my aunt's daily work activities and routine: styling hair, eating in the storage room, cashing customers out, tidying up. The images also reveal some of the Chinese influences in her salon and in the surrounding neighborhood. Close-ups and other camera angles increase the impression of a narrative at play. My artwork depicts my aunt's professional life in her mid-life. The labour is hard. Her hands and body are hurried and sometimes not apparent in each image. This is to imply that her tasks are challenging, similar to her life. It may be hard to be happy and at ease while working, but this could be the purpose of life.



Li Yifan

As an artist, I work primarily in two-dimensional media such as video, photography and digital painting. For me, the motivation and satisfaction in creating artworks is in the process of doing research, in the deeper look into particular aspects of a society and reflecting on my own beliefs, in exploring the characteristics, contradictions, and ethics that emerge from social phenomena, and then attempting to present these aspects through different artistic media. There are many social issues where people's attitudes are very certain. Understanding these issues is in essence like walking on a tightrope: there is no definitive right or wrong, only a continuous attempt to weigh and balance. But I strongly believe that by exploring and presenting different perspectives, the audience will have a better understanding of society and themselves.

Frame

Digital prints
8 inches x 8 inches each

Human societies have for a long time searched for a system of punishment that can be precise in bringing justice. My artwork is a reflection on the most controversial punishment in the modern legal system: the death penalty. In the late 1990s, the legal system in China entered a period of reformation and normalization. What was known as the "1997 No. 180" case involved the murder of Chen Zhenhua in Shanghai and it became one of the most influential cases when the court proceedings and documentation were featured in a 2007 documentary film called *Love and Death in Shanghai* by the filmmaker Phil Agland. The Chen Zhenhua case became a prominent example of how the death penalty was practiced in China after the reformation of the legal system. *Frame* is a collection of the different perspectives and attitudes of the victim's family, the convicted murderer, the court, and the police system in the No.180 case. I hope this work will allow audiences to consider the different perspectives and to linger in a hesitant state of mind.

"I thought I could rely on the government and the law, but it failed me."

— Victim's mother

"我认为我的判决量刑过重和罪名不当。"

— 陈振华

"I believe the court has given me excessive sentencing and an improper accusation."

— Chen Zhenghua

"严惩是最有效的手段来保护被害者家属。"

— 检察院

"Severe punishment is the best means to protect the rights of the victim's family."

— Procuratorate

"故意杀人的犯罪事实清楚证据确实充分。"

— 最高人民法院

"There is sufficient evidence to establish that this was intentional homicide."

— Notice of the Supreme People's court

Liu Xiaozi

As an artist, I often work with media such as sculpture and photography, but I am also keen to expand my knowledge of different artistic methods. My creative process and artistic pursuits are driven by a desire to investigate the world around me and utilize the resources available. I am continually inspired by the changes in the objects and things in my environment. I try to draw attention to the overlooked details in everyday life.

Feel it

Digital photographs
18 inches x 24 inches each

Feel it captures the essence of depression in the form of photographs. The pictures depict melancholy and loneliness under different circumstances. The subject's body language in the photographs is simple but strong enough to convey a feeling. The figures are surrounded by vast spaces, adding to the distinct atmosphere of isolation.



Liu Xiaozi

Paradox

Mirrors, rubber hammer, feathers
33 inches x 54 inches x 15 inches

As I was creating the artwork *Paradox*, I made a conscious effort to seek out distinct and disparate objects from daily life and combine them to explore the language of found objects. The soft delicate feathers contrasts with the hard rubber hammer, each object with a considerable difference in materiality and intended use. When these two items are juxtaposed with a mirror, a distinct play with the hard reflecting surface of the mirror is produced. My intention is to explore incongruous object pairings from the everyday.



Qin Yiyun

As a multimedia artist, I consistently use photography and video to create artworks that are inspired by my personal experiences. My focus is on storytelling and portraiture that conveys extreme emotions such as anxiety, memory, depression, and fear. I aim to create a connection with the audience by capturing specific moments in a particular atmosphere. By carefully depicting the details of an experience through exaggeration and sharp contrast, I amplify the unknown emotions that often go unnoticed. My ultimate goal is to create a deep impression on the viewer, to fully integrate them into my works.

Dilemma

Digital photographs

18 inches x 24 inches each

There are always negative emotions in our lives: irritability, pain, depression. My artwork explores how we deal with these emotions by building shelter and isolating ourselves from the outside world. In the photographs, the strange sculptural form of the body, the settings, and the use of different costumes and props become metaphors for imprisonment, oppression, and dilemma. The photographs are meant to arouse in the viewer an “inner resonance” of anxiety, pain, and restlessness.



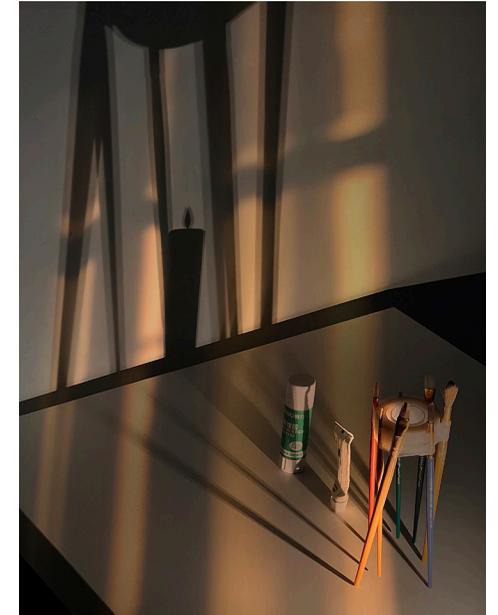
Qin Yiyun

Map of My Life

Photographs

18 inches x 24 inches each

Map of My Life uses everyday objects arranged in a play of illusion to explore the progressive and narrative growth stages of childhood, teenage years, middle age, and senior years. Art materials such as crumpled paper, pigments, glue, brushes, pencil leads, eraser, and paper boxes are carefully arranged and illuminated to create shadows, constructing specific and unique atmospheres. The shadows in the artwork represent the expectations and pressures of society, while the objects themselves represent personal interests and passions. I have lost myself in other's voices before. These light and shadow works are cautionary. The shadows warn me to follow my heart. The shadows also might inspire viewers to pursue their own interests and passions and not be swayed by external pressures.



Audrey Shen

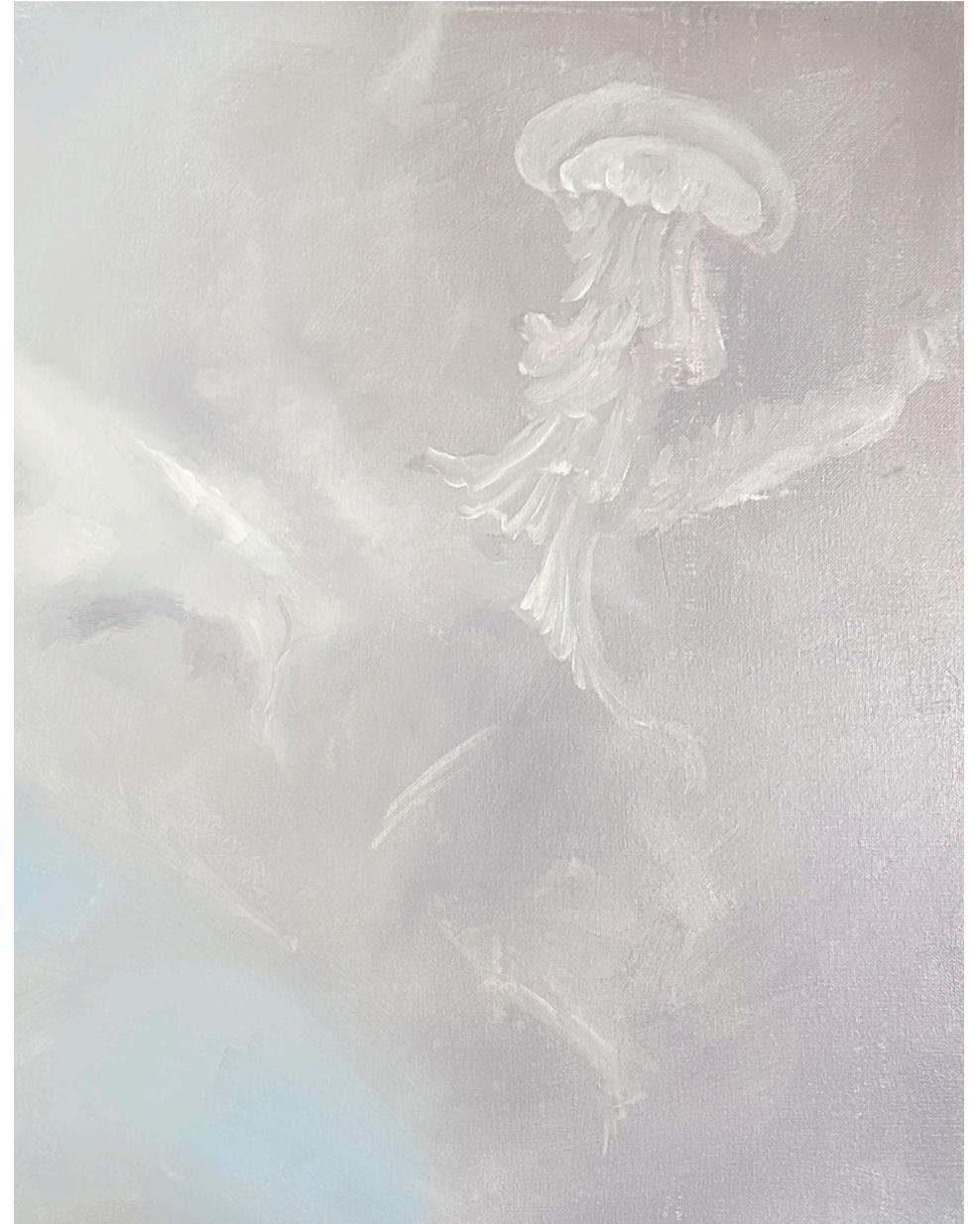
As an artist, I believe that art has the power to heal and bring peace to individuals and communities. My work is inspired by spirituality and holistic healing. I aim to create art that is not only aesthetically pleasing but also has a deeper, more profound purpose. Through the use of color, texture, and symbolism, I create pieces that evoke a sense of harmony and balance, inviting the viewer to experience a moment of stillness and inner peace. My work draws from a variety of spiritual traditions and practices, including meditation, yoga, and mindfulness to create a sense of connection among people of different backgrounds and beliefs. Whether through a painting or sound art my hope is that my art brings a sense of connectedness to those who engage with it.

Akkal

Paint on canvas

16 inches x 24 inches each

Akkal is a series of paintings about the life-cycle of the jellyfish as a metaphor for loss and renewal. The tone of the paintings is serene and peaceful. The abstract images show the gradual disappearance of a jellyfish into the sea. The death of a jellyfish is extraordinary. When a jellyfish dies, it sinks to the ocean floor and begins to decay. Its cells then regenerate into polyps, and from these polyps a new jellyfish emerges. The jellyfish has returned to an earlier life stage to begin again.



Audrey Shen

Awaken

Audio recording, powered speakers
10 inches x 50 inches x 4.75 inches

Awaken is a seven-part sound work with each sound positioned at different height to correspond with the seven chakras of the human body. I have produced different sound waves to correspond with each chakra generated from various sources including a crystal healing bowl, wind chimes, a tuning fork and a handpan. Each sound has a different frequency and style. The sound waves are designed to create a sense of deep relaxation and inner peace; vibrations are believed to have a healing effect on the body and mind, promoting physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The chakras are believed to be seven energy centres within the body, each with its own unique function and association with different physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of our being. By understanding and working with the chakras, we can become more aware of our own energy and the ways in which it influences our lives. *Awaken* offers an experience that engages the senses and promotes a sense of inner calm and balance. The viewer is invited to step out of the noise and chaos of daily life and into a space of serenity and renewal.



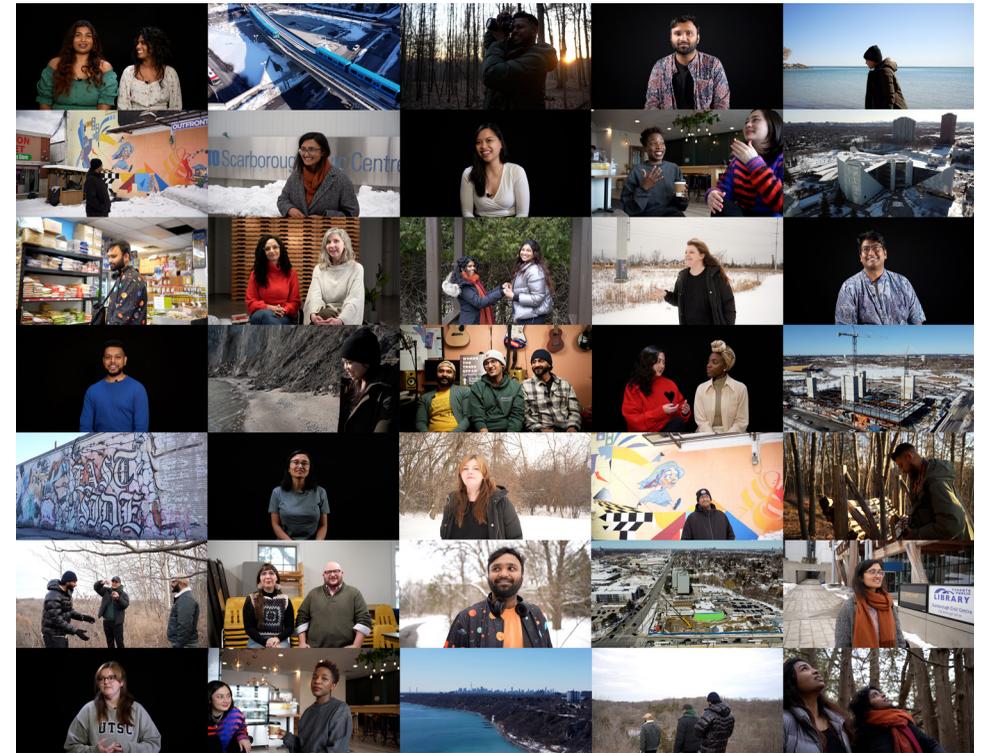
Myuri Srikugan

I am a Tamil-Canadian digital artist based in Scarborough. My work focuses primarily on documentary digital media, video, and photography. I am fascinated by the ability of photography and video to capture fleeting moments, and for these moments to be shared with a global audience through digital platforms. Artistically, I focus on capturing stories that are often overlooked or untold, both from my own life and those of others who are willing to share their narratives with me. Collaborating with individuals and communities is an integral part of my creative process, and I draw inspiration from the people and environment around me, who guide the outcome of my work. Addressing conflicts faced within my neighborhood and communities is a constant journey of self-discovery.

Imminent Visions

4-channel video installation
50 minutes in total, colour, sound

My work captures Scarborough at a moment when this Toronto suburb may soon no longer be suburban. Development projects, changes to transit systems, and growing popularity is dramatically changing the way people see Scarborough and the people that live there. With this uncertain future for a place once dismissed as “Scarberia,” creatives tied to this suburb all have perspectives on the future. My video work *Imminent Visions* documents Scarborough artists, collectives, and arts organizations including: Nithursan Elamuhilan, Faizaan Khan, Maria Patricia Abuel and Rimaz Mohamed, creatives based in Scarborough; Tiffany Schofield from Y+ Contemporary a now closed artist-run space; Roshni Raveenthiran and Faith Rajasingham from the community organization Tamil Reads; Ann MacDonald and Sandy Saad-Smith from the Doris McCarthy Gallery; Elizabeth Mudeny, and Melissa Daly-Buajitti from The Group Project collective; Vasuki Shanmuganathan from Tamil Archive Project; Kevin Ramroop, Aman Sandhu, and Raj Mann from Wave Art Collective; and Derek Spooner and Emily Peltier from Scarborough Arts. With help from the art community within Scarborough, my work tries to capture the potential of what can be accomplished through supporting, funding, and creating more accessible communal spaces, for artists to come together and create in “Scarberia.”



Myuri Srikugan

Replenishing Waters

Photographic series

9.5 inches x 13 inches each

Replenishing Waters is a series of photographs documenting a performance for the camera where I incorporate my belief in the healing powers of turmeric water as an attempt to wash away bad energies and replenish myself. Ever since I can remember, I have witnessed the practice of turmeric water being sprinkled all over the floor of my home and on the heads of everyone that needs a form of spiritual cleansing. The use of turmeric is often seen as cultural by Tamil Hindus. With the loss of identity through genocide, displacement, and immigration, I have witnessed some of the Hindu Tamil Diaspora in Canada taking on Hinduism as a defining element of being Tamil when in reality, there is so much versatility among Tamils: we cannot be defined and categorized into a single group. I wonder how I can find faith in God while being conscious of the oppressive nature within religious systems including Hinduism. I do not want to take part in promoting discriminatory customs. In my practices of healing, I pursue my faith by gleaning aspects of religious customs I find comfort in, ones I learned through my Tamil Hindu household. I create new ritual practices for myself that allow me to pursue my faith independently.



Sun Fan

Most of the artworks that I make are paintings or photo-based works. My work often carries a slightly humorous undertone that is disassociated from myself, while focusing on the environments and realities around me that I find interesting. One of my approaches is to repurpose ordinary things, to take mundane happenings out of context to make them “new.” Inviting audiences to interpret the “out-of-context” to develop their own understanding is a goal of mine. I do not believe that all art must be deep or sophisticated. Art that is humorous and involves storytelling can also be sophisticated if it can analyze and dissect social beliefs.

Tattoo Cleansing

Digital photographs

13 inches x 20 inches each

I got my first tattoo without my parents knowing. Having ink on my skin in a conservative Chinese family is considered very inappropriate because it is a permanent mark on my body. My artwork is about my relationship with my parents. I remember many of the harmful phrases they have said to me and how they minimise the harm by always saying: “You only remember the bad stuff. We don’t remember saying that to you.” My artwork consists of six photographs of things said to me during conversations or arguments with my parents. The words are painted on my arm, neck and face. It is not only tattoo ink that stays forever, but also the words that are deeply rooted in my memory. I hope the act of cleansing, though never complete, can still be an effort at thinking beyond.



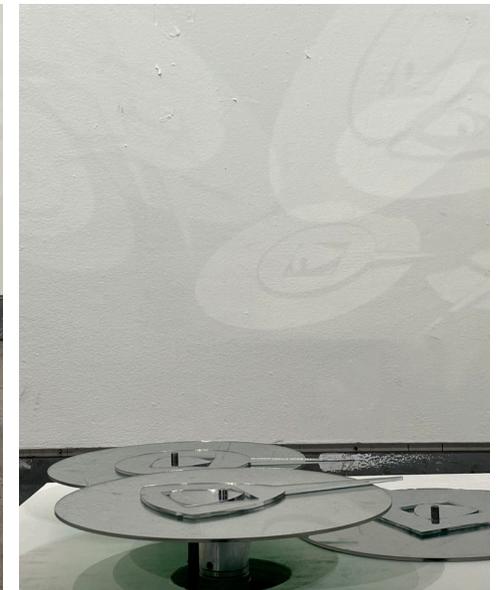
Sun Qin Zheng

As a Studio Art and New Media major, my artistic practice spans a range of mediums, including kinetic sculpture, coding, painting, and drawing. I am particularly fascinated by machines and mechanical devices, which serve as a constant source of inspiration for my work. Through my art, I strive to explore the intersection of technology and creativity, melding the precision and efficiency of machines with the expressive potential of the human imagination. Whether through the intricate movements of my kinetic sculptures or the intricate lines of my drawings, I seek to convey the beauty and complexity of the mechanical world while also infusing it with a sense of wonder and possibility.

Me, Myself & I

Transparent mirrored acrylic, DC motors, motor controllers
22 inches x 22 inches x 7 inches

My sculpture is a visual exploration of the nature of time, using the circle as a symbolic representation of this concept. Through carefully calibrated movements and precise engineering of three Reuleaux triangular mechanisms, my sculpture creates a mesmerizing display of interlocking cycles that change in intensity with speed. When viewed from above, the sculpture appears to be a single, interconnected form, with the rotating parts of each triangle creating a sense of unity and harmony. In designing the machine, I was inspired by the triangle and the number three—three timelines of my life stages at three different locations: China, Brazil and Canada. The circle represents family unity, the square represents family in all four corners of the world, and the triangle represents the complex relationships I have formed across the sea, away from home. Significantly, the Reuleaux mechanism uses a turning triangle as the central driving mechanism. Altogether these three shapes form the separate but connected mechanism. By creating a work that speaks to the fluidity of time and the beauty of mathematical forms, I hope to encourage viewers to consider the intricate and interconnected nature of the world around us.



Tang Kun Peng

I am a photographer and documentarian from China presently majoring in the Studio Art and Media programs at the University of Toronto Scarborough. I am currently focusing on urban environments and natural landscapes.

Why

Digital photograph
24 inches x 36 inches

Why is a photographic work that captures everyday littering as an environmental activist's gesture. As I walk through Toronto, I photograph litter. Once these many small gestures of litter are assembled into one large image, will the viewer see the impact that disregard for garbage has on the city? Will the quantity of litter have enough of an impact to encourage the viewer to question their own behaviour? Does the small act of littering contribute negatively to the environment? I hope to influence behaviour and contribute to the protection of the city's environment.



Nicole Tang

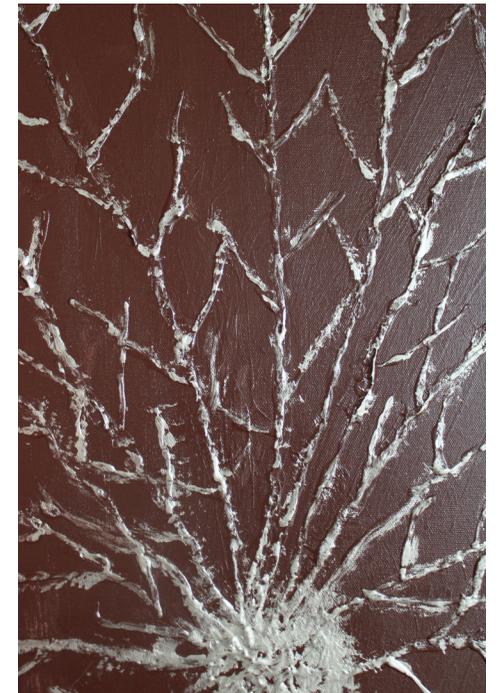
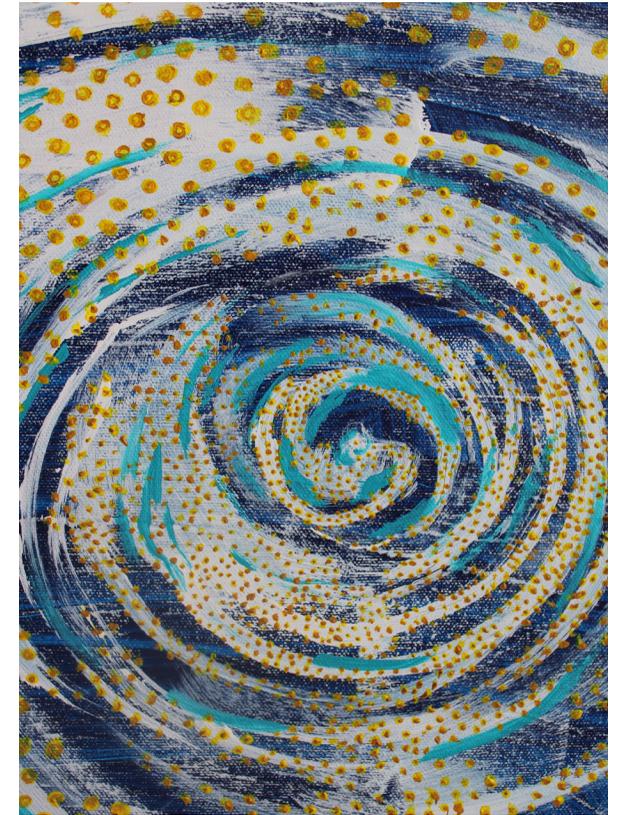
I am a Hong Kong born, Toronto-based artist that uses drawing, painting, site, and installation to express visually what I cannot vocalize with words. My creative inspirations explore questions of gender identity, collective memories, social power, and mental health. In the end, I find myself wandering in my works to break through the boundaries and limitations of the invisible sphere that engulfs me.

The Self-Portrait Series

Acrylic on canvas

36 inches x 48 inches each

The Self-Portrait Series consists of three abstracted landscape paintings. In making *The Self-Portrait Series* I embarked on a healing journey to find nature. Exploring natural environments is my way to get away from the negativity that surrounds my everyday life. Urban living has made this impossible. As a remedy, I instead imagine myself in nature and translate the subsequent feelings of peace and joy into my gestures and into the paint itself. Every successive mark during the painting's creation is pivotal in unifying my nature and studio space. Albeit landscape paintings, *The Self-Portrait Series* is barely pastoral. It is process embodied that is the focal point.



Teng Jing

I was born in Shanghai, China, and I am an artist working with sculpture, illustration, 3D modelling, photography, and digital illustration. In the fast pace of life, people are used to frequently changing information. People do not seem to keep old things. I am interested in old things, looking back at the past to collect objects bearing human memories to create works with the memory traces contained in them. I want to interpret and understand the establishment of memories and intimate social spaces between people through the secondary creation of objects.

Memory Engram

Sculpture made with used clothing
45 inches x 28.5 inches x 20 inches

Memory Engram is a sculpture composed of old gifted clothes ripped and then woven together as a method to splice the clothes' memory content. The act of gifting clothes strengthens the social relationship between the giver and receiver by linking shared memories. Old clothes were gifted to me by relatives and friends. On the one hand, the clothes have traces of the owner's use, what I call memory information – clothes develop smells, stains, or holes whether they are stored for a long time or changed frequently. On the other hand, the style, size, and pattern of the clothes can reveal the personality traits and preferences of the owner. I use the flat knot weaving method to combine the clothing: cutting, twisting, finding support points and center points, knotting in reverse, tightening. Then repeat. This method uses fragments of the old clothing interspersed with each other to reflect on the mutual support of memories.



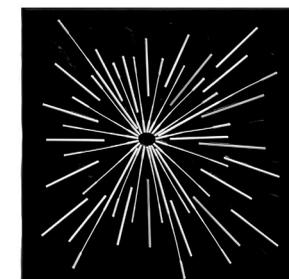
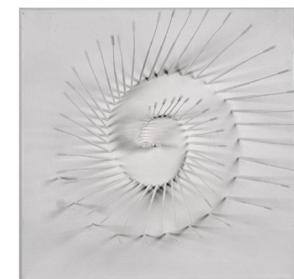
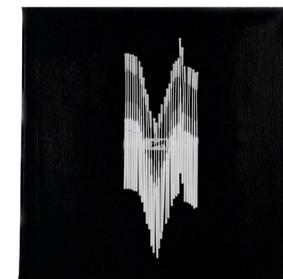
Tiger Wang Kunyuan

I am a multidisciplinary artist from Jiamusi, China. I work with a range of media including video, photography, and sculpture, to explore themes of activism and realism. My works are informed by my observations of the world around me, particularly social and political issues that affect individuals and communities who are often marginalized and underrepresented in mainstream media. I am particularly interested in contemporary China's policies, economic structures, international relations, and its social, cultural, and environmental transformation. My works are often pessimistic and critical in tone, but my approach to art is one of experimentation, exploration, and open-mindedness.

Somedays

Nasal swabs on canvas, 12 inches x 12 inches each
Video, 5 minutes and 11 seconds, color, sound

Somedays delves into the impact of social and political structures on Chinese residents' lives during the three years of China's strict pandemic management by using two distinct materials: the nasal swab and found video footage. Nasal swabs have been applied to four canvases which serve as platforms for creating three-dimensional textures and forms that break the surface of the canvas. The specific use of black and white surfaces references social movements in China, thus mirroring the experimental break from established norms. The video consists of found footage, still images, and underground folk music to depict the feelings of helplessness and pessimism experienced by Chinese citizens during the implementation of the "Zero-Covid" policy. The video images depict top-down authoritarianism, the harshness of lockdown measures, and mandatory nationwide nucleic acid testing. *Somedays* allows us to gain a deeper insight into how social and political structures shape our lives and violate bodily autonomy. The policies have left a lasting impact on Chinese citizens, becoming a part of their history and leaving behind a deep emotional scar. Through this work, the hope is to encourage reflection and remembrance of that tough time.



Tiger Wang Kunyuan

Glimpse of Winter

Plaster sculpture, 19 inches x 17 inches x 3.5 inches

Photographs, 8 inches x 10 inches each

Glimpse of Winter is a series that uses my first-hand memories of winter to call attention both to the fragility of the natural environment and to the impact human activities have on our planet. As an artist born in Jiamusi, China, the Canadian landscape is a proxy for my wintery hometown. The photograph documents a site work, a snow sculpture made in Copeland Forest, Ontario. The immersive feeling of being alone in this snowy landscape surrounded by trees and untouched snow offered an opportunity for introspection and reflection as I playfully made my snow sculpture. The low-quality photographic documentation emphasizes the sentimental impact, the feeling of loss as I consider how climate degradation is everywhere. The plaster sculpture, made with snow and plaster, is made to mimic the buckets of snow in the photographs. I attempt to make my playful sculpture permanent. This work invites viewers to rethink, to be introspective about the relationship between human activities and the environment.



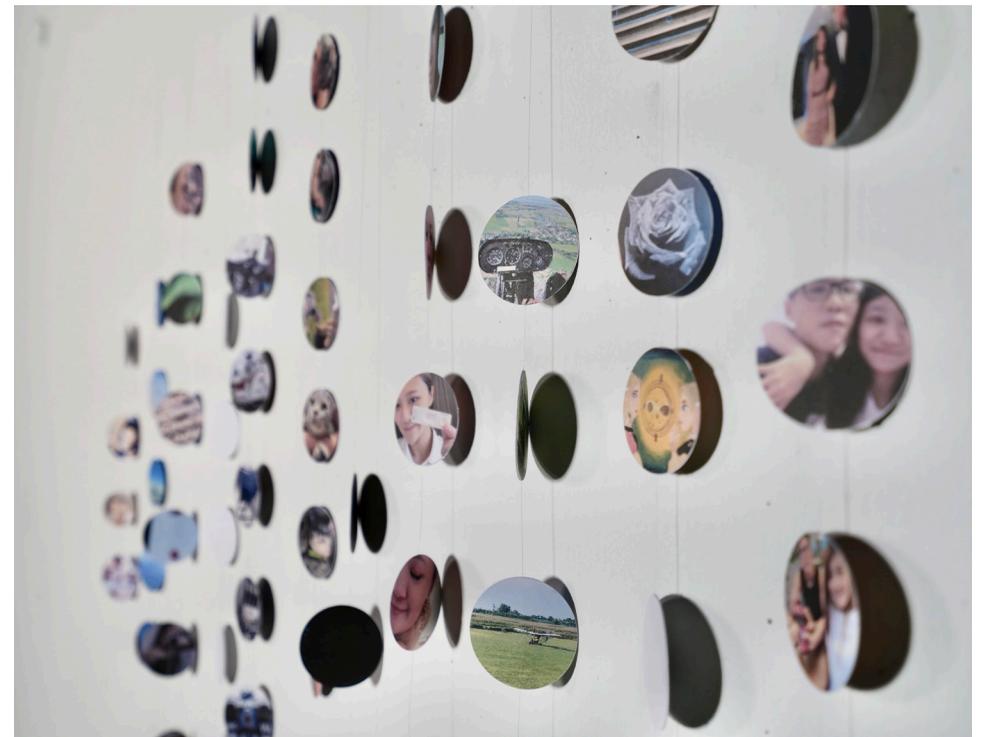
Lemon Wong

I am always wondering where life begins or ends. I started as a silhouette line drawing artist and a painter, but for now I would describe myself as a photographer. When I reflect on my past artworks, the topics are often about death, relics, memorial, aircrafts, and clouds. There are two extreme criteria of subject matter: life and death are the ones that I embrace while clouds and aircrafts are the ones that I enjoy. I always put myself into the space that is related to my subject matter, to immerse myself in its atmosphere and surroundings. I then refine those details and highlight them in my artworks. Life and death interest me because it has always been taboo to have a conversation about it, especially within Asian culture. I would like my audience to reflect on their own lives: have they wasted any time with unimportant things? On the other hand, I personally love aircrafts and clouds so much that it just brings out the playful side of me.

Evaporation

Suspended sculpture made of paper and filament
Dimensions variable

Evaporation is a free-hanging cloud-like sculpture with circular photos tied with fishing line. The artwork is an unconventional timeline that captures moments in my life and reflects the passage of time. I am inspired by scientists today who believe that water has a memory. I would like my memories and past moments to be as sublime as a cloud. Life is full of unknowns. I was feeling lost after my parents passed away, and my first love couldn't deal with my negativity at the time; we broke up. I suffered from depression after these events. It was a dark period in my life, but looking back there are also moments that I will never forget. Memories are like steam: they evaporate but come from a place of warmth.

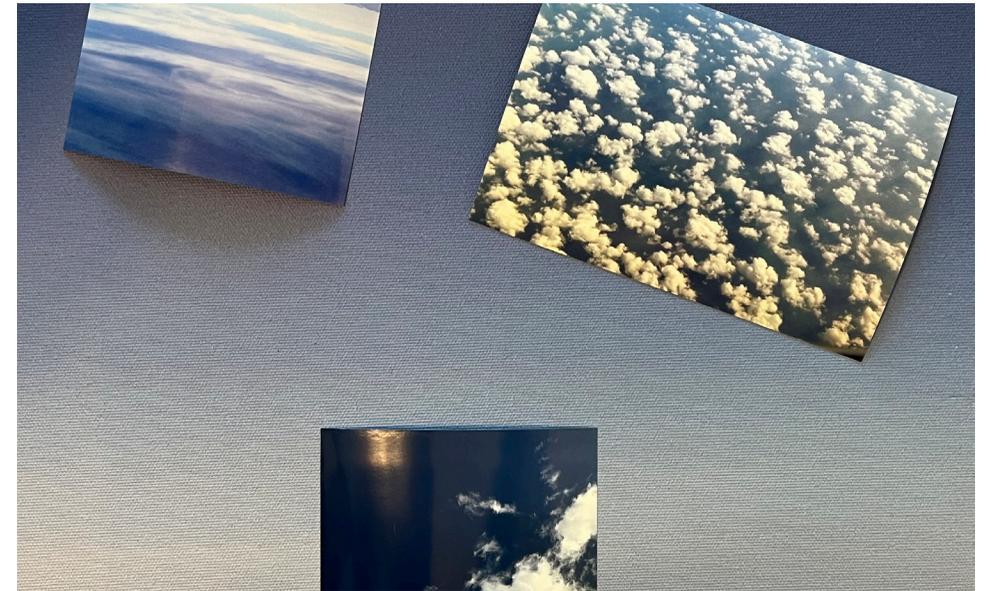


Lemon Wong

Head in the Clouds

Digital photographs on canvas
40 inches x 60 inches

Head in the Clouds is a four-panel photograph of clouds taken while working as a flight attendant on an aircraft. This photograph brings the clouds down to an altitude that can be experienced without a plane. Clouds are more than an object to me; they are like my friends. I feel safe when in amongst the clouds. Whenever I feel stressed, or puzzled, I look at the clouds and they calm my nerves, my problem seems solvable and inspiration and innovation are possible. My cloud obsession urges me to bring the clouds from the sky to the ground, where I can be with them, close and intimate.



Wu Siying

I am more than willing to describe myself as a recorder rather than an artist. My inspirations usually come from my family and living abroad. My artistic approach is to contain my feelings in any artwork, especially through the combination two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements, for example, through a fusion of photos and drawings with sculpture. I want to create multiple perspectives for the audience, to create resonances. Most importantly I want to help my audience to pay attention and think deeply about little things happening around them.

Rebuild

Lego sculpture, photographs
Dimensions variable

My work uses Lego pieces to explore the process of memory formation and loss. I spent most of my time as a child with my grandfather. I miss him so dearly and I often recall beautiful memories of him. I fear forgetting him so I force myself to remember his face. The photograph of my grandfather in the artwork was taken by me when I was ten years old and living in Shanghai. I pressed the shutter randomly with my grandfather lying on the sofa. The second and third photos record my use of Lego pieces to construct and reconstruct the image relying only on my memory. I imagine the process as the neurons in my brain forming the memory.



Yin Letian

My work explores the intersection between my identity and social phenomena. I work with two-dimensional media such as photography, video, and painting. My work incorporates storytelling, semiotics, abstraction, or montage. I seek to disrupt stereotypes and explore strong emotions such as embarrassment, confusion, sadness, and anger. I am also passionate about contemporary issues such as feminism, generational change, multiculturalism, and Chinese politics. As a media studies student and having lived and studied in different countries (China and Canada) I have begun to understand ideological differences which allows me to see social issues from a unique perspective.

MaTric's Tok

Video

1 minute, colour, sound

This work starts from my feeling of spending too much time watching online videos, a common experience for young people. TikTok's immersive experience, algorithmic push, high density of information, and simple manipulations trigger the dopamine feedback mechanism, like a spiritual matrix that provides infinite pleasure and stimulation. For *MaTric's Tok*, I collected one hour of video footage recommended to me by TikTok's algorithm and collaged them into a 1-minute video frame to create an intense sensory impact. An hour of online immersion often feels like a single minute. At the same time, one minute is the time limit for short video content, which constantly inspires creators to create shorter content, with more fragmented information, and more exaggerated emotional performances. After an hour online, what will you remember?



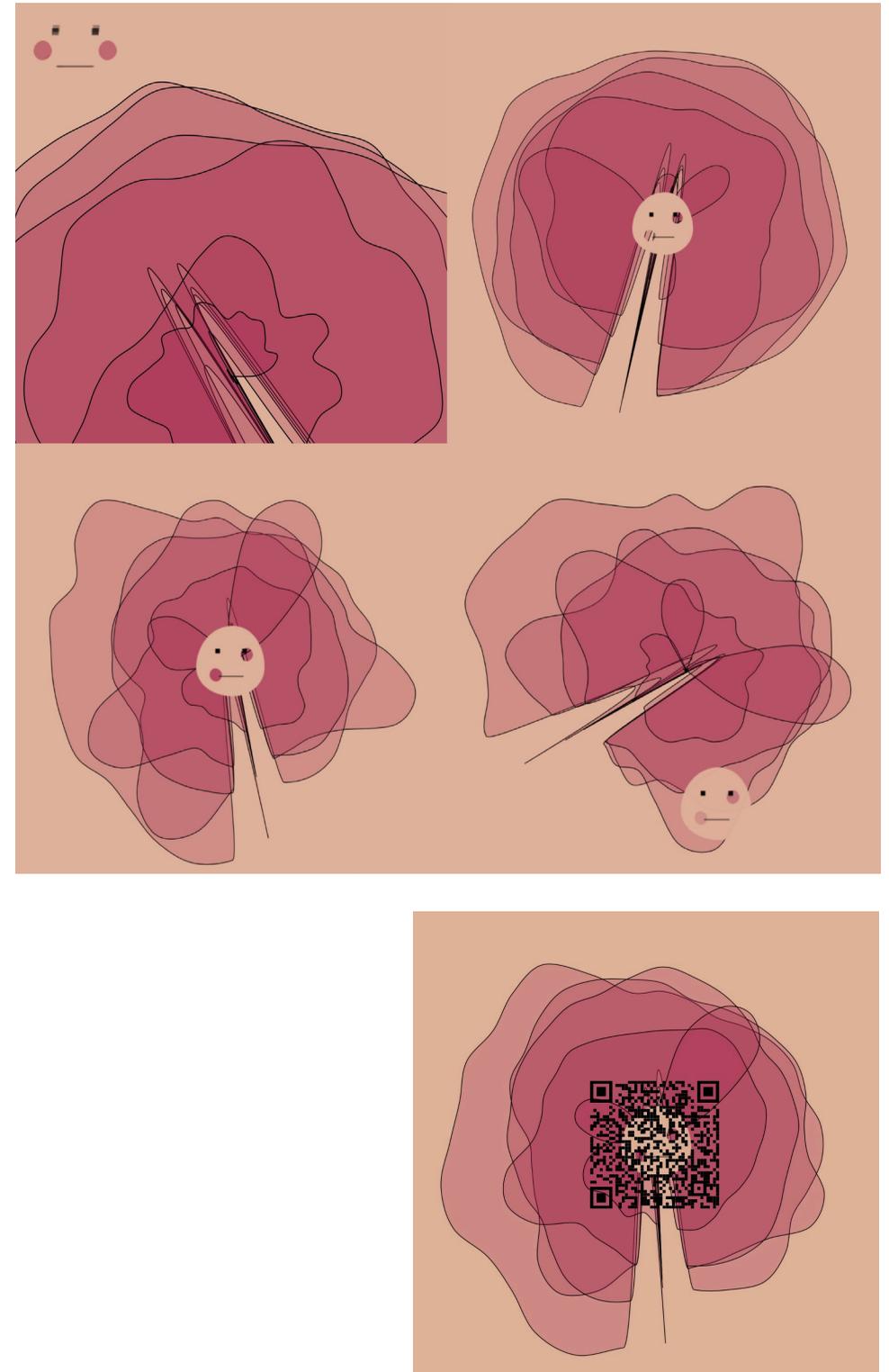
Zhang Luyan

I am a digital media artist specializing in coding and game development with a focus on creating digital artwork, including AR/VR games and interactive websites.

Lotulence

Interactive website using p5.js

Lotulence is an interactive website that uses sound visualization to explore the serious issue of domestic violence, aiming to raise awareness and inspire action. A lotulence is a Chinese lotus flower famous for growing out of muddy or dirty water yet remaining beautiful. In Chinese culture this flower is a revered symbol of rebirth representing triumph over adversity and spiritual awakening. It is also a powerful metaphor for women's strength and resilience. Many women who have experienced domestic violence draw inspiration from the lotus and emerge stronger, more courageous, ready to embrace their own rebirth. Viewers can scan a QR code printed on an provocative image that is both flower and the face of a wounded woman simultaneously, to experience the website's interactive elements. Once in the website, viewers control a changing face icon to navigate a space where their icon is at risk of experiencing domestic violence. Through *Lotulence*, I hope to make the heavy and critical topic of domestic violence accessible and impactful to a wide audience. User engagement is essential to the artwork, as it gives viewers the opportunity to become more involved in the experience, to feel empathy and understanding towards the issue. I believe that art has the power to raise awareness and create change, and *Lotulence* is no exception.



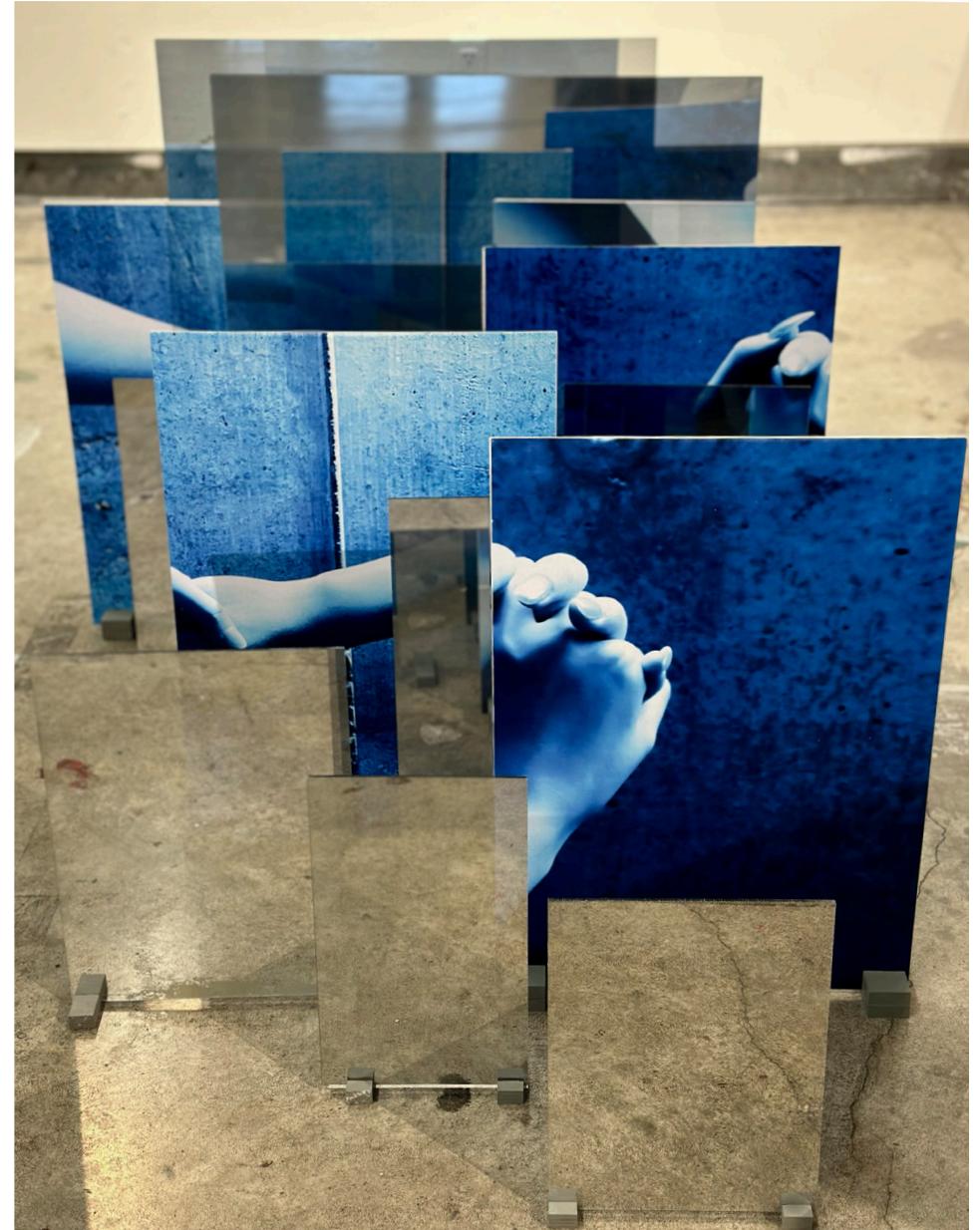
Zhang Xiaoyu

I am a multidisciplinary artist working with video and photography, living in Toronto, born and raised in China. My current specialization in documentary photography allows me to reflect on social issues, including but not limited to Chinese immigration, personal cognition, and feminism.

Connect

Mixed media sculpture with mirrored acrylic, plastic board, photographs, wood
Dimensions variable

Connect explores fragmentation by using space to explore how the mirrored and photographic surfaces are constantly changing—coming together, falling apart, reforming—based on where the viewer stands or moves. My research into modern sciences' approach to nature restoration, including the repair of the environment and the repair of the human body, led me to question whether human feelings and perceptions can also be repaired. Trauma is known to be repairable. For example, we wore masks repeatedly and kept our distance from each other for years. Did this make us less sensitive and less complete than before? Have our senses been altered? And if so, can they too be restored? Or it is simply a habit that has changed? Through this artwork, I hope to encourage visitors to reflect on these questions, and to connect with their own emotions, memories of being kept apart.



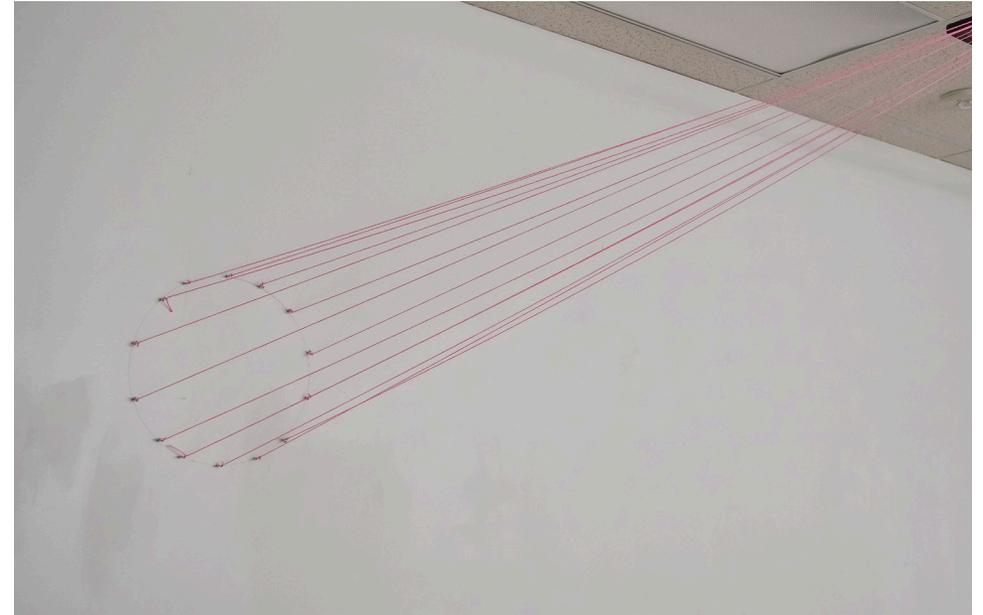
Zhao Yuwei

As a site-specific installation artist, my recent work focuses on the relationship between space and line. I am interested in the concept of “space painting,” creating art that involves minimal mass and weight using linear materials to outline planes and volumes in space. What results is an interaction with the physical environment. Architecture is my starting point; it has prompted me to establish a dialogue with specific locations, to develop distinctive sculptures.

Line Across

Neon pink nylon string, hardware
Dimensions variable

Line Across is a site-specific installation that focuses on the interplay between line and space. Multiple, tightly strung, neon pink nylon string is used to draw conical shapes from the Doris McCarthy Gallery’s ceiling to adjacent walls, as if stage lighting is emanating from the ceiling. Neon pink is highly visible on spools but starts to disappear when stretched. This spatial drawing explores the intricate relationship between the architectural peculiarities of the site and the surface that the lines form. When a two-dimensional line in art is defined simply as a path made by a moving point. When line is pulled into sculptural space, it becomes imbued with an added dimension of time. The movement of the point through space and time creates a dynamic relationship between me and artwork—each line represents the hidden path of my movement. It is also a dynamic relationship between the viewer and artwork as it challenges traditional notions of static forms and fixed perspectives.



Jay Zhou Zhehan

I am a multidisciplinary artist from China based in Toronto. I explore people's everyday thoughts and dreams on mundane subjects in abstract or humorous ways using a variety of digital media including sound, posters, digital paintings, animations, and videos. These artworks can envision a utopian city, allow me to embody a superhero to save the world, or indulge in an erotic fantasy. Digital media helps me illustrate how these everyday thoughts and dreams can be strange and bizarre. My work reflects my fascination with the human psyche and sparks conversation to encourage people to reconsider their assumptions about the world.

Unconsciousness

Digital painting on paper
24 inches x 18 inches each

Unconsciousness is a series of digital paintings based on my unconscious thoughts, desires, and fears from my dreams. Drawing inspiration from Sigmund Freud's theories of dreams, which suggest that dreams represent the direct expression of the unconscious, this artwork aims to visually express the images that are created in my mind. The language of *Unconsciousness* is inspired by the Rorschach Inkblot Test, a projective psychological test that uses abstract images to gain insight into a person's personality characteristics and emotional functioning. Can my dream images that are now inkblot-like abstractions be interpreted by the audience to gain insight into their own inner thoughts? *Unconsciousness* aims to explore the potential of creating artwork from my unconscious mind.



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ARTS, CULTURE AND MEDIA

