

VOLUME 17 catalogues the
exhibitions on view at XPACE CULTURAL CENTRE
between 09.2025 – 07.2026.



ABOUT XPACE

Xpace Cultural Centre is a not-for-profit artist-run centre dedicated to providing emerging and student artists, designers, curators and writers with opportunities to showcase their work in a professional setting.

Xpace Cultural Centre is committed to maintaining an anti-oppressive, queer positive environment, prioritizing marginalized, racialized, Black and Indigenous folks.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge this sacred land on which Xpace Cultural Centre operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. The territories include the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations, and the Métis Nation. The territory is the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Tkaronto is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.

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Abby Kettner (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist and arts-administrator based in Toronto. Kettner graduated with a BFA in Cross-Disciplinary Art: Life Studies from OCAD University, and her artistic practice continues to evolve as she explores concepts of memory and loss through her unique visual language. Recent exhibitions include Hearth (2026), Niagara Artists Centre (2024), and Ignite Gallery (2023).

VOLUME 17

VOLUME is Xpace Cultural Centre’s annual anthology cataloguing the exhibitions and exhibition essays across all three of our exhibition spaces from September 2025 – July 2026. This publication demonstrates the breadth of emerging artists, designers, and writers who contribute to our programming, situating Xpace as a prominent artist-run centre in the Toronto Arts community at large.

The typeface for this edition of VOLUME uses Bodoni Ornaments. “✿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿🌿” is seen throughout the publication in full or in part and translates to “Xpace loves you”. Other fonts used include Minion Variable Concept, Neue Haas Unica and Neue Haas Grotesk.

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Digital Bodies: Loops of Desire by Lingxiang Wu was generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

Dimtsi Daro (ደምዳራ) by Wintana Hagos was generously supported by Partners in Art under its Artist-Direct Program.



If My Eyes Could Screenshot

SEPTEMBER 13 – OCTOBER 25, 2025



WORDS BY MEGAN MACLAURIN

WORKS BY ERICA GIBBS

Your phone's camera is lying to you. If you have a smartphone released in 2018 or later, it's likely that your phone's image processing software automatically enhances

the pictures you take, adjusting their colours and lighting to capture what it determines is the sharpest, brightest, most colour-balanced version of what its camera sees. "Your phone is doing a lot more computer work than camera work," says recent OCAD painting and drawing graduate, Erica Gibbs. "If I could screenshot with my eyes, I would. I try to document the things I see and they don't look the same, but they can still evoke the same memory."² Gibbs is an astute observer and obsessive chronicler of the world around her. Through photos and screenshots, Gibbs archives her online life in meticulous visual detail. Applying a painterly approach to social media aesthetics, she defies the trickery of her phone camera to more authentically represent the emotional truth of her digital experiences.

Digital communication is deeply ingrained for Gibbs, who has been active on Instagram since the age of 10. While she is critical of Meta platforms, she also recognizes the important role they play in sustaining relationships online. Gibbs acknowledges that Instagram invades our privacy and uses

our personal data to manipulate our purchasing decisions and other online behaviours. However, on a personal level, she also regards this platform as being fundamental to her own social life. Gibbs' work emphasizes the silliness, absurdity and fallibility of social media platforms by sharing moments that, for her, have sparked humour and connection.

Gibbs' lighthearted technological critique is reflected in her process. Gibbs begins by gathering digital images of all kinds. She has a particular fondness for screenshots, which are rendered exactly as they're seen. Always documenting the world around her, Gibbs' photo library far exceeds what is shown in her work. Sometimes Gibbs takes a picture and feels immediately motivated to represent it in her work, while other times, she will revisit her archive, scrolling through images that revive old feelings and memories. She then edits the files in Photoshop, adding layers of distortion and pixelation. This digital manipulation represents her own feelings about these scenes, conveying these moments through her own lens while also exaggerating the inaccuracy of digital imaging in the first place. Finally, these remixed images become references for her paintings. Using acrylic, Gibbs recreates her digital sources by hand, usually on canvases that match the ratio of a phone screen.



Her gestural, painterly approach accentuates the inseparable link between on- and off-line experience, the labour that lies behind online posts, and the distinctly human, imperfect nature of representation itself. Her layered, mediated process directly opposes the logics of digital immediacy and computer-generated imaging. Gibbs' fundamentally manual technique is akin to buffering: it slows down and stalls time. "Everything feels like it's changing at a rate much faster than it used to,"³ says Gibbs, who often feels nostalgia for moments as they're happening. Through her work, the artist extends and preserves the online experiences that are, all too often, fleeting and forgotten.

Gibbs draws inspiration from the people in her life, pulling images and quotes directly from their interactions. She sees her practice as being collaborative; without her friends, these works wouldn't exist. For Gibbs, painting serves as "a way of communicating how much I love these people in a way other than words,.... A lot of emotional labour goes into making the images," Gibbs says, "it's a sort of love language."⁴ In the history of art, painting has been a way of memorializing and monumentalizing important things—and this is exactly what Gibbs is doing.

“ SHE USES PAINTING TO MONUMENTALIZE THE SMALL MOMENTS THAT CHARACTERIZE HER MOST CHERISHED RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH JUST HAPPEN TO TAKE PLACE ONLINE. ”

Through her residency at Xpace, Gibbs has begun to explore new materials: metal, mirrors, and other reflective surfaces that mimic the material substrates of technology itself. Layered metal mesh and screens create a three-dimensional filter, without the use of digital tools. The reference images selected for this project are, however, digitally manipulated in the artist's standard fashion. Panoramas, already noticeably warped at the time of their creation, are distorted further in Photoshop. A self-portrait of Gibbs, drawn from a selfie taken with Instagram's age-accelerating "old filter", is painted on a mirrored surface. The addition of these metallic elements yields an installation that dynamically interacts with both light and viewers, tying the work to the unique and ever-changing conditions of the present. In *If My Eyes Could Screenshot*, Gibbs begins to embrace ephemerality and impermanence. Building from the artist's longstanding distrust of digital photography, the work expresses the impossibility of accurately capturing experiences in an image. Instead, it invites our participation and guides us toward the most authentic experience of her work: through our own eyes, in the current moment.

1 Erica Gibbs, in a virtual interview with Megan MacLaurin (September 1, 2025).

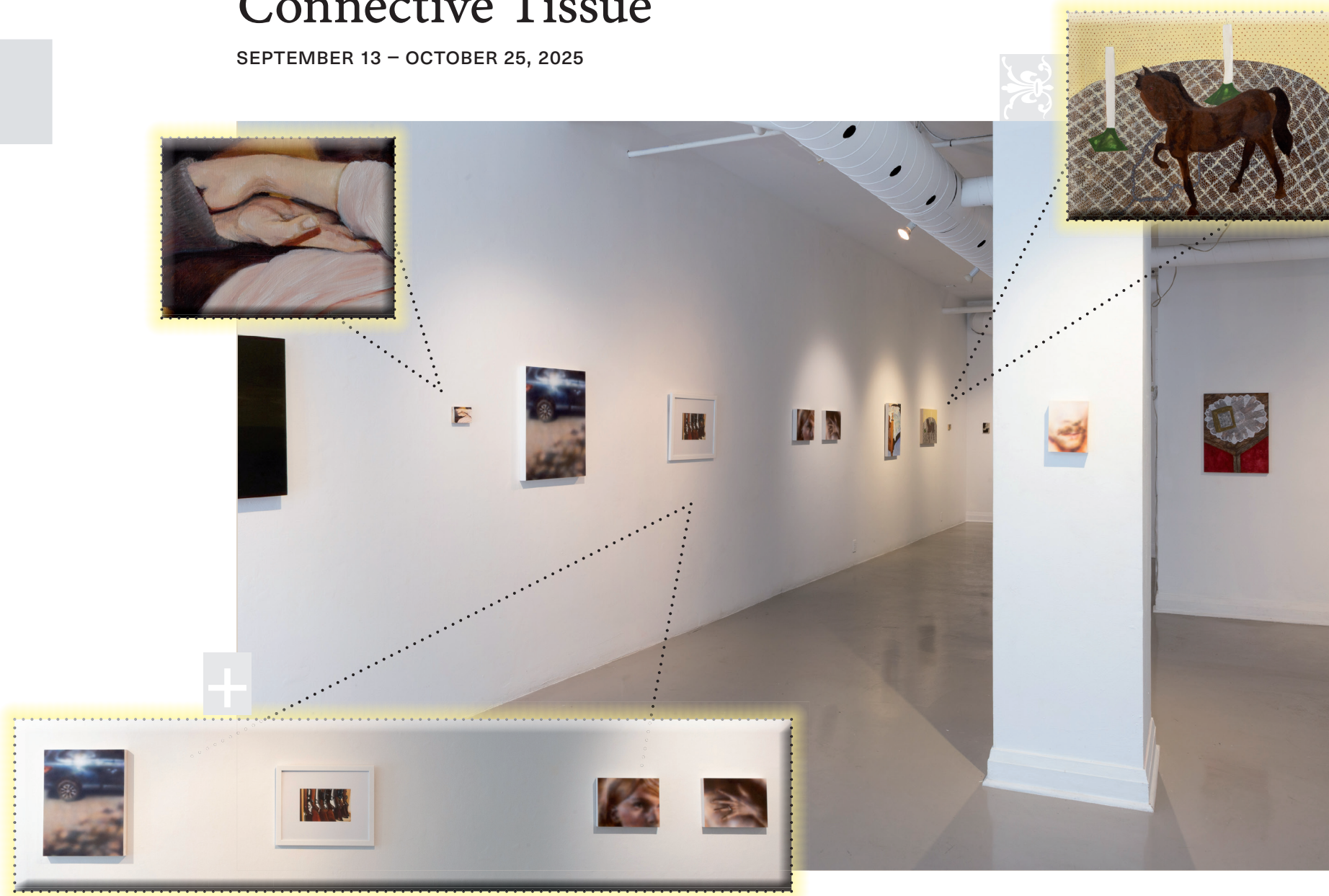
2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

Connective Tissue

SEPTEMBER 13 – OCTOBER 25, 2025



CURATION & WORDS BY
REILEY WHELEN

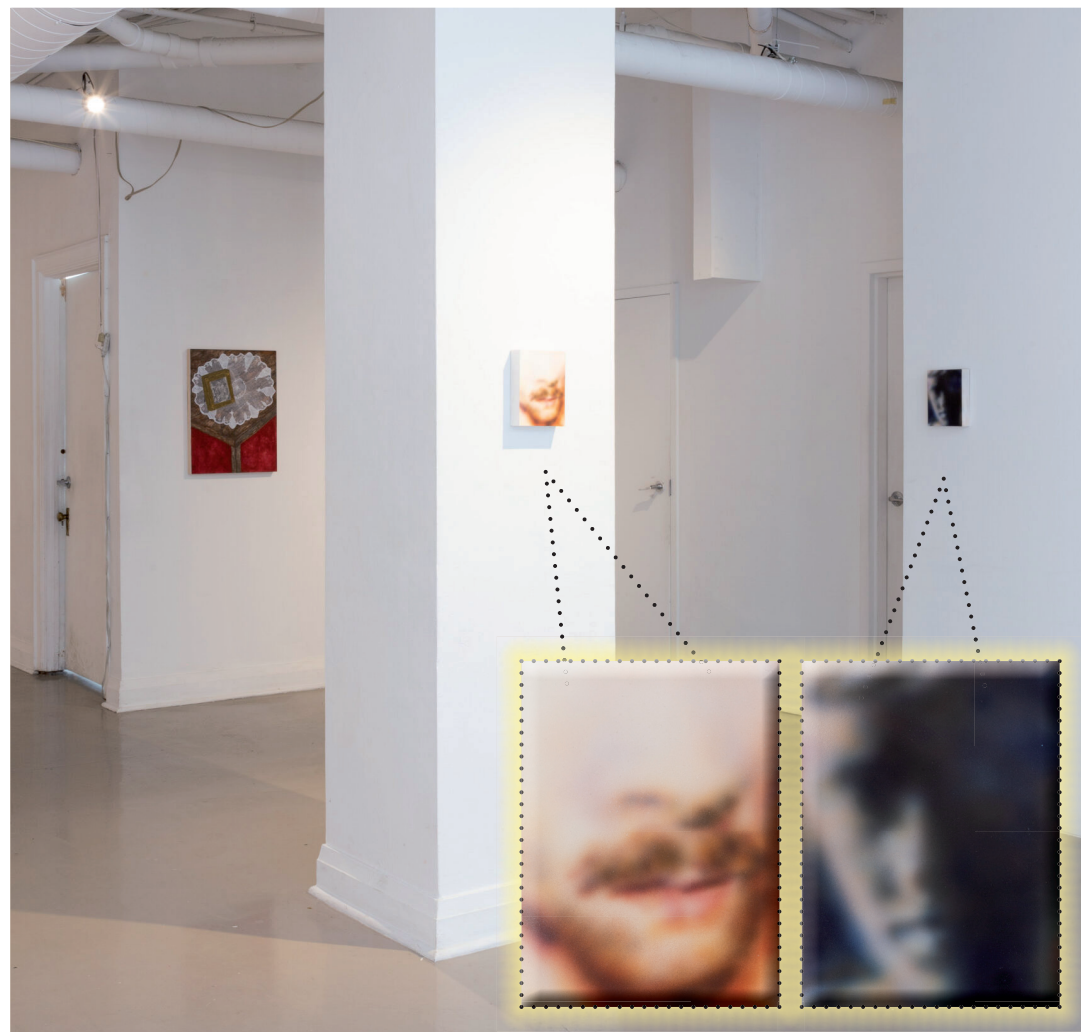
WORKS BY BEN CROMIEN, JAKE SANTOS, CIARA PREMI,
LAAYA TABELI, DANIELLE VINCENT

This exhibition, Connective Tissue, locates our current moment in contemporary painting, informed by my thesis project, Affairs. Affairs researched what precisely constitutes new wave contemporary painting, expressed through the work of emerging artists, clarified through interviews and criticism. Five painters featured in Affairs exhibit in this show. Benjamin Cromien, Jake Santos, Ciara Premi, Laaya Tabei, and Danielle Vincent uniquely position themselves in the painting world, demonstrating an approach to engaging in the new wave of contemporary art. Their works, distinctive in terms of practice, process, and visual appearance, represent courageous experimentation and aesthetic assertion. And yet, even in this diversity in content and form survives a notion of something to achieve; dynamic and attractive, unserious yet critical for our moment. They set a standard as a reference to budding aesthetics and to what has come before. References seen in the fabrics of content, medium and scale collectively remain aesthetic choices that support a reflection of our contemporary world.

Functioning akin to connective tissues in our bodies. Connective tissue supports and binds other tissues, protecting existing frameworks in the body. It exists in constant reference and interaction with other systems and their processes. *Connective Tissue* addresses new visual language through shifting aesthetics and experimentation. Works become reference points to the current culture, in dialogue with one another, the medium, the subject, and the viewer. They are in constant connection and regeneration through metaphorical connective tissues. Think Venn diagrams and hyperlinks, in reference to something larger, something said before, thought up tomorrow.

Among these connective tissues, themes of irony, kitsch, mundanity, and memory surface, depicted in a representational nature.

To address the shaping of beauty and aesthetics, it is necessary to note what we are looking at. Themes are not solely depicted in their representational or abstract façade but are located within the medium and scale. A range of mediations [of medium] is exhibited, from traditional acrylic to its thinner counterpart, suitable for airbrushing, to oil and charcoal. They are painted upon micro, medium and massive canvases, those of cradled wood and stretched cotton.



Medium implies themes and associations in these works; to read and feel a painting is to understand its deliberate choice in material. There are made-up boundaries and allowances of medium, where acrylic is subservient to oil for its juvenile associations and relative ease of application, whereas oil is a bodily act and serious channel. The sizing of canvas, too, where a large canvas conveys grandeur one could dive and be lost in, to a micro piece that can be regarded as votive and intimate. *Connective Tissue* displays work that embrace contradictory materials, framed feet and flat abstracts, reinforcing the shifting plates in contemporary aesthetics and artistic choice. What remains is the feeling of some transcendence, a positioned importance upon a sliver of a moment. Washed in the paint, there is this awareness of greater sensations, how to arouse the feeling of being deeply human, seeing and feeling deeply human. Unique in content but familiar in substance, one can locate themselves in a piece and find a connection in the content, material, and artist. Visually, the work is refreshing and punching;

“YOU CAN FEEL IT, YOU HAVE SEEN IT REFERENCED ON A CRACK IN THE GROUND OR IN THE FACE OF THE STRANGER, OR NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE EVER.”

It is confronting and allusive, a quiet proof of exploration, not pushing the boundary but bending it conceptually.

Arranged in a flow of tight and distanced spacing, clashing with large and small canvases, *Connective Tissue* finds balance in the variation through these major contrasts. Cohesion and reference remain a curatorial focal point to create an atmosphere that not only questions what is contemporary, but to witness shifting aesthetics; the exhibition is the documentation of such. Walls become bearers for work, and arrangement pulls together contexts and connections. For Ciara Premi's large pieces, space and lighting were a focus. Her work, *Untitled Bedroom*, required the privacy of its own wall. The dark red, in contrast to the white bedspread, held a Rothko-like vision in my mind; it required the space to live alone for pondering. Conversely, Jake Santos' portraits are covert; there is a particular closeness you can feel, but a mesh lies between the subject and viewer, perhaps shielded by the artist or a figment of our imagination. Such mystique often travels in twos throughout the show, exhibiting a duality to mystery; what is seen and what is known. Laaya Tabei held a similar duality when contrasting medium to scale, painting delicately rendered oil onto micro canvases that can fit in the palm of your hand. The subjects are uncanny but lively; you will find her work close together and diffused throughout the exhibition, punctuating the space. Benjamin Cromien paints in colour-scapes; these tones comprise abstract washes and form portraits in total aesthetic expression. It is a return to abstract, contemplative pieces. His pieces, intentionally hung across each other, embody connection. Lastly, Danielle Vincent's paintings are symbols that evoke memory. Like looking back on a sliver of a moment, looking with ache, intensity or curiosity, they feel called upon, vivid and magical in detail, one could replay the very moment rendered.

Connective Tissue is to be referential and defining. Connective tissue like relationships, material interaction, being inspired by your world; your roommate, your coworker, a found object, the letter you could never toss, a sentence half forgotten, a rancid experience, connective tissue like process and practice, systems and existing frameworks, connective tissue like beauty and aesthetics, or starving and desire.



Lamprey

SEPTEMBER 13 – OCTOBER 25, 2025



WORKS BY JASON MENDIOLA

WORDS BY BAILEY BORNYK

Sea lampreys, of which Jason Mendiola's installation is named after, are jawless fish with skeletons made of cartilage. They attach to rocks on the bottom of the ocean—

blending into the surrounding algae—waiting for trout to latch onto. Sea lampreys do not register as overt predators upon first glance, but are vicious in their approach. According to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, “sea lampreys feed on the fish’s body fluids by secreting an enzyme that prevents blood from clotting,”¹ ensuring that once they have latched on, the trout has no chance of surviving.

Mendiola's site-specific kinetic installation, *Lamprey*, first confronts the viewer with a choice: follow a path to the left or right of a centrally placed installation that extends 7 feet tall. As one wanders around they are made aware of a dichotomy between the walls and the central structure. The walls are clad in sharply pointed pieces of wood, but the mounts are hidden so as to give the illusion that they are floating. Upon closer inspection, the sharp pieces are the jagged off-cuts of the wood used in the rest of the exhibition. The inverse of the softer curved modular pieces is a more severe and abrasive shape—with teeth.

The central installation is a skeletal structure, made up of uniform pieces of curved plywood with three slots in each for fastening hardware. Each piece has been dipped in an iron-acetate dye, altering the bright tan plywood to

a muddled brown—while some of the pieces produced an ochre colour from oxidation. Wheat stalks are arranged in a fan shape and connected to spinning motors set at random intervals in the centre of the curved wooden pieces. The wheat is treated with the same dye as the wood pieces, transforming the materials into a shadowed version of their former selves. The wood and wheat feel worn, with irregular dyeing—suggesting a shared history. The entire structure is modular with the ability of adjusting to other shapes and sizes—suggesting a future. The wood pieces are affixed to each other by steel bolts and fasteners while the vertical and horizontal planes are connected with black steel brackets.

The interior of the structure is exposed and reveals the means by which it was fabricated. The structure's assembly is intentionally vulnerable to the viewer, and because one can identify the power supply at the centre, it can be recognized as an architecture of exteriority. The structure is designed to perform for the viewer—confronting them. The wheat affixed to the installation is familiar, but removed from any context it causes a “Verfremdungseffekt (V-effekt),” often translated as “distancing effect” or “alienation effect.”² Bertolt Brecht describes that a representation producing the V-effekt, “allows us to recognize an object, but at the same time makes it appear strange.”³ One can identify the elements in Mendiola's installation—wood,



steel, electronics, and wheat—but the presentation subverts our expectations of these materials. The viewer is placed within a performance that alienates one from themselves, but simultaneously demands them to be painfully present. One can witness the performance, but may be disillusioned by its exposed organs. Brecht explains that to produce V-effect, the viewer should be reminded of the fact that they are witnessing a play performed by actors that has been rehearsed many times.⁴ The construction of *Lamprey* exposes itself to remind the viewer of the very process by which the effect is being delivered.

“EVERYTHING IS LAID BARE: THE ILLUSION AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE ILLUSION IS ACHIEVED.”

The walls at the front and back of the space utilize the same construction as the structure at the centre to alter the shape of the room. The assembly of the walls—with static wheat sheaves and a more sparse construction—resembles a deconstructed cyclorama. In theatre, cycloramas utilize a seamless curved construction to perform an illusion for the viewer of an infinite landscape. *Lamprey's* walls, however, are laid bare without finishings and one gets a look behind an infinite space to somewhere unknown. *Lamprey* thrives in the unknown and keeps the viewer guessing as to what they are presented with. One is both alienated and placed within oneself to dwell in

the installation and wrestle with their own experiences. One grasps onto what is familiar, while being pushed away by that which they cannot identify.

The physicality of the wheat is knismatic, producing a light-tickling sensation. Knismesis contains both a sensual and disturbing quality. Lauren Berlant explains that “cruel optimism” can produce a similar duality; defining it as, “a relation, when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing.”⁵ She explains that our attachment to an object may not be immediately cruel, but becomes cruel when “the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially.”⁶ There is an inherent ambivalence, where the relationship can be both satisfying and obstructive. The wheat, in *Lamprey*, can act as a buffer space between the viewer and the structure, producing an effective margin before the object of desire. It is the most confronting material in the work, but it is also forgiving and fragile.

Lamprey is contained within one room, but the viewer feels as if they are placed on the outside of something. As one moves about the space their proprioception—or, the method one uses to determine their physical self-awareness—is heightened. Whether they brush against the spinning wheat or not, one may be inclined to back up so as to not disturb the installation. If one is not acutely aware of their surroundings they might be

touched by the wheat affixed to the sharp off-cuts mounted onto the side walls. The intervention is stealth-like in its persuasion and gently guides the viewer towards the outer walls. The subtle suggestion almost evades recognition, and one only realizes it once they have already moved. The red lights emanating from the motors seem to take on a new, more sinister meaning and they become the source of the persuasion.

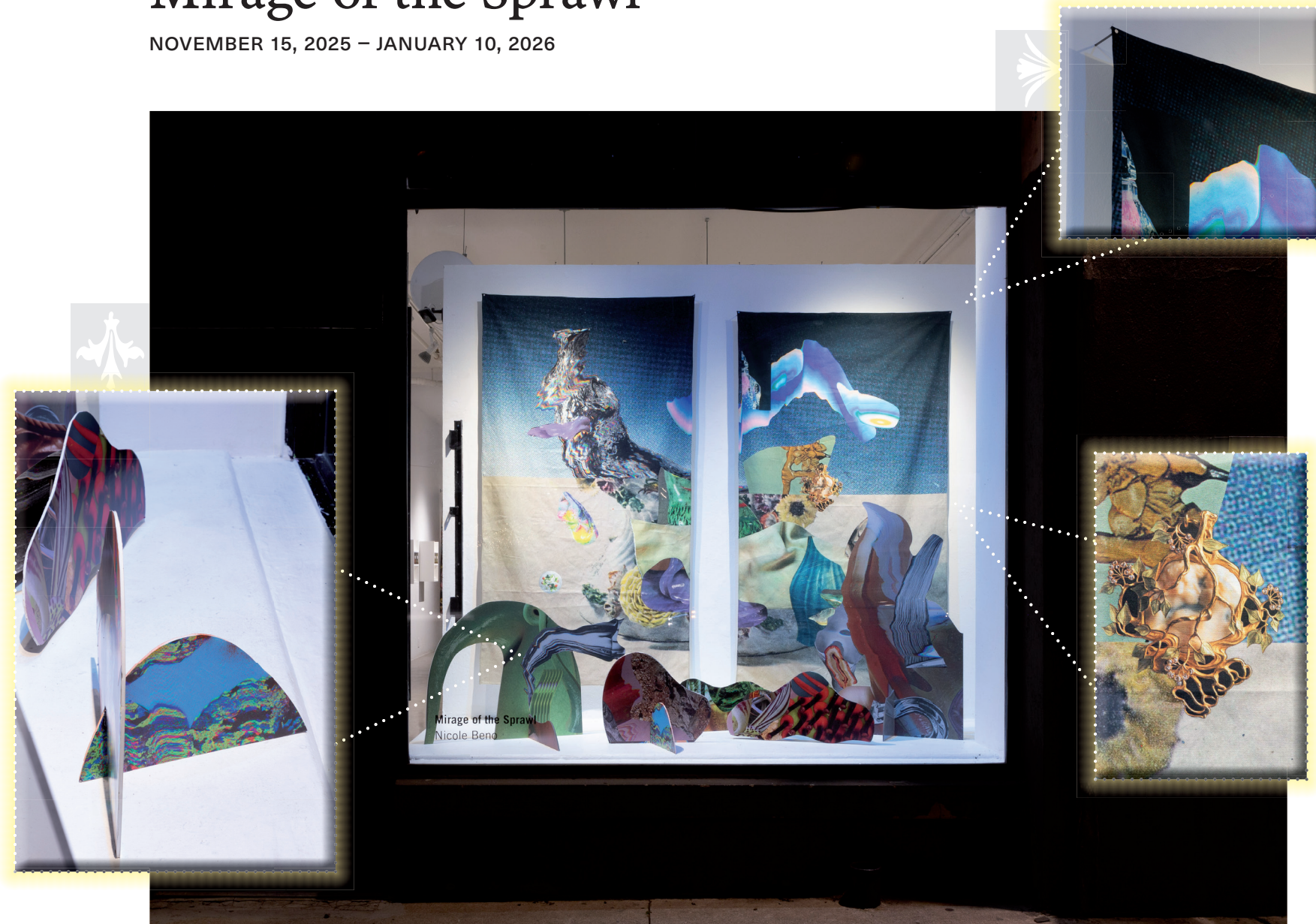
Mendiola's *Lamprey* continues to spin and hum as the viewer exits the room—wading on the rock as if it is algae drifting in the current, waiting for the next trout to swim by. Mendiola utilizes adumbration—or, vague representations and faint foreshadowing—in his installation, to intentionally open the possibilities of interpretation. *Lamprey* is subtle in its execution, forcing one to grapple with their own individual existence and the loneliness that comes with it.

“WHAT MIGHT FEEL UNRESOLVED, IS ONLY ONE'S DESIRE FOR MORE.”

- 1 Ted Lawrence, “Sea Lamprey,” Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, accessed on September 5, 2025, <https://www.glfc.org/sea-lamprey.php>.
- 2 Bertolt Brecht, “Short Organon,” in Brecht on Theatre, ed. Marc Silberman, Steve Giles, and Tom Kuhn, (London: New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 14.
- 3 Ibid, 14.
- 4 Ibid., 16
- 5 Lauren Berlant, “Cruel Optimism,” (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 1.
- 6 Ibid 1.

Mirage of the Sprawl

NOVEMBER 15, 2025 – JANUARY 10, 2026



WORKS BY NICOLE BENO

WORDS BY COCO ZHOU

When Eve walked among the animals and named them—nightingale, red-shouldered hawk, fiddler crab, fallow deer—I wonder if she ever wanted them to speak back, looked into their wide wonderful eyes and whispered, Name me, name me.

—“A Name,” Ada Limón

Is the practice of design about revealing nature or inventing it? What do human representations of nature, found throughout the intertwined histories of art and science, tell us about ourselves and our desires? These are the key questions surfacing in Nicole Beno’s playful and mesmerizing murals, sculptures, and installations. Beno is an artist who uses the language of design to collapse boundaries between the familiar and the strange. The natural world—a source of both contemplative pleasure and existential anxiety for human subjects—is a recurring motif in her work. In *Mirage of the Sprawl*, Beno’s installation in the Window Space of Xpace Cultural Centre, Beno has created an otherworldly landscape that seems to resist interpretation as much as it compels the viewer to name it: I think I know

what I’m seeing, but what is it? A garden, an aquarium, an extraterrestrial form, a nightmare?

“THE MOMENT ONE LANDS ON AN ANSWER, THE WORK APPEARS TO SHAPESHIFT, WOBBLING OUT OF ONE’S GRASP AGAIN.”

For the Surrealist movement in the early 20th century, collage was an experiment in articulating unconscious desire, particularly as it mapped onto consumer culture. In an era marked by the ascendancy of the department store, figures like André Breton, Max Ernst, and Man Ray appropriated consumer media like magazines and shop windows to develop aesthetic strategies of anticapitalist critique. As a window display, *Mirage of the Sprawl* participates in this tradition, transforming every passerby into a consumer and, at the same time, revealing the objectifying logic of that form of identification. Just as the unconscious is always already filled with images and objects of desire from the ambient visual culture, the viewer-as-consumer can’t help but see themselves represented in Beno’s piece, as a fragmented thing made up of sensuous blobs who is struggling toward coherence in the act of looking and consuming—a self that is alienating to behold consciously but is nevertheless embodied.



Collage is the technique that shapes the experiential effects of Beno’s work. For this piece, Beno has chosen images from archival magazines and manipulated them in a repetitive scanning process that involves making a chain of copies, producing glitches and distortions. Scrambled, decontextualized, and made into fragments, the resulting images are then arranged and layered on a virtual canvas, producing forms that crystallize into a composition. While the magazine artifacts index a bygone era of print advertising and image circulation, Beno’s process has resurrected them in a cyborg body. As fragments, their shapes and textures suggest just enough for us to imagine the lifeworlds they once represented. Is that a vase, and did it come from an antique or lifestyle magazine? Are those flower petals or the folds of a protein? Eliciting a sense of teetering between failure and recognition, *Mirage of the Sprawl* can be understood as a speculative archival practice, concerned not with rescuing any authentic meanings from its source materials but rather with activating their latent aesthetic potential.

In dialogue with the department store window, another visual apparatus that *Mirage of the Sprawl* engages with is the diorama. A technology of display central to natural history museums, each diorama—with its collage of taxidermied animals, rocks, soil, and plant reproductions—is a theatrical staging

of entire habitats frozen in time, presented as if a neutral window into knowledge. Donna Haraway, in her seminal analysis, notes that in every diorama there is at least one animal who looks back at the viewer, holding forever “the gaze of meeting, the moment of truth, the original encounter.”¹ The dead animal’s gaze interpellates the viewer into this scene of discovery as its ideal subject—the white Euro-American man of science, whose “fatal desire to represent, to be whole” is thus fulfilled.² Perhaps what’s so jarring about *Mirage of the Sprawl* is its capacity to invoke the materiality of the diorama while turning its ideological function on its head: I look and everywhere there is nothing that meets my gaze and confirms my humanity, my wholeness, only strange artificial shapes that whisper to me, ‘you are just like us.’

“THE ABYSS LOOKS BACK, AFTER ALL, IN THE SAME MOMENT IT ENGULFS US.”

Writing on the allure of symmetries and patterns found in nature and the human tendency to represent them through form, the art historian T. J. Clark notes that form is “a way of capturing nature’s repetitive-ness and making it human, making it ours—knowable and dependable.”³ At the same time, though it may be tempting to conclude that representations merely duplicate the world, Clark emphasizes with a nod to Marx, “the point is that form [...] is change.”⁴ Coordinating the rhetorics of the

shop window and of the diorama, *Mirage of the Sprawl* illuminates design practice as a process of representing the world that reveals the nature of that representation to be consumption, a historically specific way of being and knowing for particular kinds of subjects. But its collage aesthetic, its amorphous and unsettling vibrancy, also temporarily breaks the circuit of self-making that relies on consuming the other, throwing the very self that beholds it into uncertainty and potential dissolution.

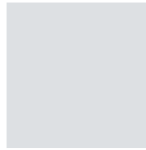
Such a break doesn’t need to involve a bad feeling. It can be pleasurable, too. Through the form of the collage, *Mirage of the Sprawl* refracts the graphic vocabulary of magazine advertising to create a scene of nature where fragments of desire come alive. Shattering any self-affirming illusions of mastery over the other, Beno’s piece and the world it calls into being, with its glossy, metallic, fabric-like surfaces, nevertheless shimmer with potentiality. It invites us to indulge our senses, anticipate being changed and, like Eve in Limón’s poem, be open to being named otherwise.

1 Donna Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908–1936,” *Social Text*, no. 11 (Winter 1984–1985), 25.

2 Ibid.

3 T. J. Clark, “More Theses on Feuerbach,” *Representations*, vol. 104, no. 1 (Fall 2008), 7.

4 Ibid.



I scrub myself until my skin is raw

NOVEMBER 15, 2025 – JANUARY 10, 2026

WORKS BY
WORDS BY
MADDY YOUNG, PATRICK STOCHMAL, WU JING
MASON SMART

The home is a container for the rhythms of life, each anxiety and hope in its place, transitioning into each other through doorways that prompt the question “why did I come in here?”. New beginnings, activities and selves are encouraged and accepted by the design of the next space. Maddy Young, Patrick Stochmal, and Wu Jing reconfigure the Main Space at Xpace Cultural Centre in the image of domesticity, altering its design to accept and encourage behaviours that depart from the solitary analysis fostered by white walls and open space. Here, in this transposed bathroom, you are the world splitting open: you are grotesque, not a spectator of it. Their installation-based exhibition, *I scrub myself until my skin is raw*, explores the displacement of postmodern anxiety onto the body, finding an actionable form in the aspiration to an impossible and ephemeral purity.

As one enters the exhibition, Maddy Young’s shower curtains hang from the ceiling, dividing the room, printed with searching imagery: evidence of a virtual journey motivated by desire for truth/happiness/stability. The curtains welcome you to lose yourself in the indexical, in the complexities and overwhelming interconnectedness that build the walls that contain our reality and frame what happens within it. Find yourself paralyzed by searching, but you must keep moving.

Young’s first two printed curtains titled *form* and *sensation* anchor the series in the 1960s, a critical period for mass

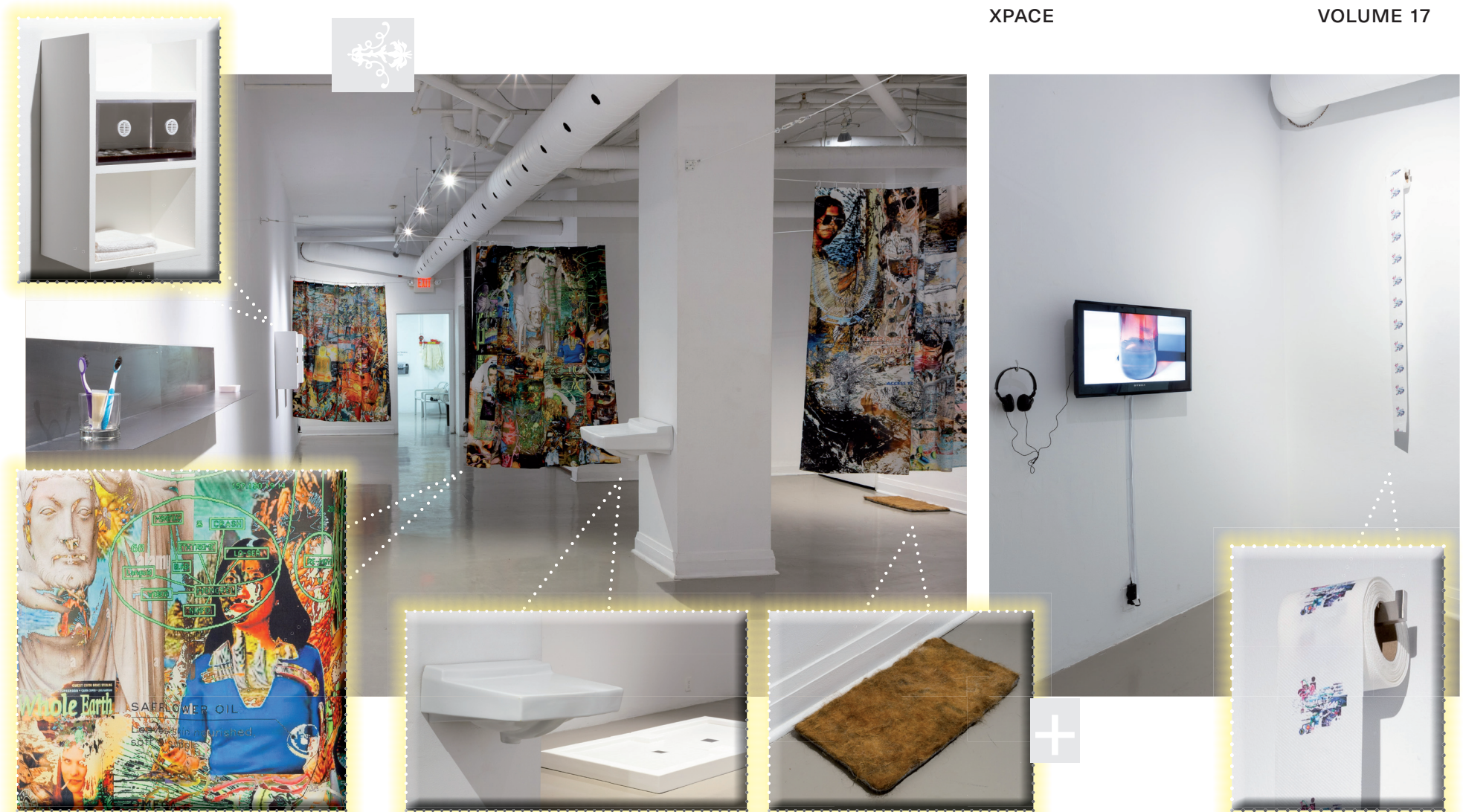
media and neoliberal policy, mixing symbols of technological progress and the expense of the rhetoric of neoliberalism. The third curtain, *perceptions*, expands from the astral projection imagery in *sensation*. It creates a connection between bodily maintenance and worship. Self-care becomes devotional, part of a narrative of connection through individualism, created through choices referential to one’s own body. A fourth curtain, *formations*, calls in the physical and metaphysical to illustrate metabolic processes to digest fallibility in the face of complexity. Young charts the overwhelm of the present moment and the strategies for mitigating its god-like expanse and entanglement in her curtains.

Behind a curtain at the far end of the gallery, you encounter Patrick Stochmal’s procedurally-focused advertisement for a rejuvenating cream. Its essence is symbolic rather than strictly medicinal. Using saplings from a nurse log—a fallen one that nurtures new growth in the forest—he processes this material into an abstracted image of itself: rejuvenation, creamed. The mediation of process between the unaltered saplings and their final product speaks to a discomfort that is soothed by evidence of processing. It has been made uniform for manipulation. Stochmal does not let you perceive the final product in a vacuum: he resists the aspirational sterility of the pharmaceutical, presenting the cream as alive with exchange.

Alongside Stochmal’s ad, Young has hung a printed roll of toilet paper. Its imagery includes computation, digestion, and water processing diagrams. Its nature is that of a processed paper product designed for sublimation into the series of manipulations that is the sewage process. Its visual and material aspects share a common ancestor in the messy materialism of process, obscured by the infrastructure built to conceal it until a finished product is achieved, whether toilet, skin, or hard drive.

Peeking back around the curtain towards the front of the gallery, Stochmal continues to explore interspecies exchange through the bacteria fed by his and his partner’s blood that live in his bathroom cabinets, titled respectively *Slow Prolapse I* and *Slow Prolapse II*. His relationship to the bacteria is devotional in the way he surrenders his body to it. Keeping bacteria like a family, like a loved one that inspires sacrifice, also proposes an intense kinship. The continuum of energy from the blood to the bacteria is reminiscent of epigenetics, the study of experiences altering genomes that are then passed down through generations. The bacteria and blood are also tied through the parallel journeys of their matter: the bacteria originates from their swabs from their bodies and extended areas of contact for their bodies in their homes. Around these axes of connection, kinship between all parties emerges.

The blood could also be read as transformed by contact, itself the external interloper to the bacteria, its contamination understood as nourishment in the bacteria’s own scale. The binary of help/harm is reframed over and over as the viewer shifts whose story they want to read: Stochmal’s, his partner’s, the blood’s, the bacteria’s. The cabinet’s content casts doubt on the fixedness of the boundaries of the body and its acceptable uses. The blood-fed bacteria hold in simultaneity, growth and degradation, wildness, opportunism, and control. These ever changing boundaries are symptomatic



of queerness. Queerness can manifest as “symptoms”—feelings and acts that deny heterocapitalist hegemony.

Back towards the vitrine in the front of the gallery, exploring behind another curtain, lies Stochmal’s sculpture, *(W)hole*. These conjoined shower basins can be read as calcified relational anxieties manifested physically to unburden the mind. Stochmal uses dust from his childhood home in the basins’ grout. It contains cells from his suburban nuclear family, creating a cellular salt ring around the basins as if to protect their heteronormative anxiety with a material that serves as a symbol tied to, by virtue of its origin and journey, heterocapitalist ‘success’. The basins, conversely, serve as a nod to the bathhouse as they, visually, could be a graft to the gallery from part of a bathhouse floor. There, connection is expected to be transient: the open area allows for connections to arise and dissolve. The basins are only the base of a shower that expands into the gallery space, bounded by the shower curtains. The sense of privacy extends beyond the shower and can create accidental intimate spaces where viewers crowd or where a viewer is isolated in close proximity with a work.

Stochmal’s paired cabinets located on the north gallery wall also reference the duality of “his and hers” bathroom accessories, especially when understood alongside the shower basins. Stochmal subverts this reference by filling each cabinet identically, visually rejecting the expectation of gendered objects in paired cabinets, and by inserting instead the contention of contamination

into a simulated domestic space, mirroring the disruption of queerness in the nuclear family structure.

Turning one’s back to the conjoined basins and looking past the curtain to the opposite wall on the north side of the gallery, Wu Jing’s *Grooming Each Other* stretches in front of the viewer. It is made of steel, reminiscent of surgical surfaces. The objects displayed upon it contain disassembled corporeal matter (bone, fat, and hair), dressed up as familiar and intimate in their forms as foreign objects deemed safe to enter the body. Internal, external, with the promise of internality again. Jing’s practice focuses on changing the use value of an object through symbolic intervention, underlining the susceptibility of affectual relationships to convention(al objects) to the power of symbolism, troubling the objectivity of standardized sites of behaviour.

Marking the entrance to the concise functional bathroom of the gallery, Jing’s human hair mat makes the shedding nature of the bathroom palpable and explicit. (My bathroom floor is covered in hair. We all politely agree to not interrogate if it is pubic or not.) The materiality and design of the bathroom are inextricably bound with shedded parts of the human, all to conceal and contain waste without interrupting the flow of productivity.

Jing also denotes the bathroom as a site for “processing” with his bleached hair mat laying centrally on the south side of the gallery. Jing has processed the hair by bleaching it - he lingers at a turning point

in preparation. The bathroom is declared as an initiatory site for change that is deeply intertwined with personal identity and its politics. Bleaching also depersonalizes the hair: the hair becomes standardized, the body becomes just material, stripped of its most legible connection to the person who grew it. Knowing there is an identity and story severed from this material, with its absence made glaring by the unnatural bleach colour, makes it uncanny.

The bathroom normalizes these uncontrollable aspects of the human experience: it is allowed to mix hair with its carpet and persist like that, its occupant knowing that the bathroom can never be contaminant free, despite cleaning. It is built to be contaminated and to process that contamination “away”, into the void of the drain or behind its closed door. Jing activates the anxiety of being faced with lingering contamination in his basinless and drainless sink adhered to the centre column of the space. Together these pieces celebrate the permissiveness of the bathroom to not aspire to cleanliness.

Infinite change and the strategies for keeping its paranoia at bay define the postmodern era. Young, Stochmal, and Jing make this dense knot of experience parsable in the frame of the bathroom. *I scrub myself until my skin is raw* describes the character of the activities staged in the bathroom for converting uncertainty to control, for navigating the pull of alienation, and interrogating our relationship to adulteration. It is so special that humans have a domestic cell dedicated to our fallibility, otherwise, it would be inescapable.

Mothers / Gardens

NOVEMBER 15, 2025 – JANUARY 10, 2026



WORKS BY MIGUEL CABA

WORDS BY HANNA GUIANG

Every year, a *balikbayan* box is sent back home to the Philippines. It is a large cardboard box that is packed with items of purpose, luxury, and souvenirs; items that

are specifically requested for or are thought to be useful or needed. Senders spare no expense, the *balikbayan* box becoming so filled that packing it is often a performance: two or more pairs of hands pushing the flaps down as another hurriedly tapes it shut. It sits in the corner of the living room, practically bursting at the seams, awaiting the day that it will make its journey back home.

Balikbayan is loosely translated as ‘returning home,’ and a *balikbayan* box has become customary in Filipino households abroad, so much so that its practice is now a cultural norm. Its terminology is quite intriguing: its choice of words and its English translations betray its more emotionally resonant connotations that transcend its purpose as a care package. It asks: what—or, rather, *who*—is returning home when a *balikbayan* box is sent? It cannot merely be that the box itself and its contents are participating in this act of homecoming. Rather, the phrasing suggests that the box has become representative of Filipinos abroad, embodying the senders and their desires of returning home themselves.

Mothers / Gardens, Miguel Caba’s exhibit in the Project Space of Xpace Cultural Centre, interrogates and positions itself as an answer to these definitions of *balikbayan*. Caba’s sculptural paintings are deeply engaged in dialogue with each other as much as they are with what they recreate, reimagine, and redefine. Each painting is completed using the incisively precise technique of laser engraving, the images of its referents—gardens, flower pots, and parts of the house—incised onto their carefully crafted canvases. Caba receives these images from their mother and grandmother, who reside in Toronto, Canada and Kalinga, Philippines respectively; these images constitute a means of connection and closeness that they otherwise cannot have in light of their separation from one another. *Mothers / Gardens* responds to this challenge, contemplating the nature of the box as a container and the mediating role of technology with which these acts of care and connection are nurtured within and beyond corporeality.

Its eponymous series *Mothers / Gardens* consists of forty-eight sculptural paintings laser-engraved with images of gardens. Each painting bears the unconventional shape of a curved surface, like bellies protruding from the base of the wood on which snippets of flourishing flora are depicted. Upon closer inspection, it becomes evident that



the precision of these curves allows each painting to fit into each other. Freed from the limitations of a four-cornered two-dimensional plane, these paintings can be freely arranged according to the needs and wishes of the artist: separately along rows and columns to evoke the referent, that is, the garden, or put together to form the familiar shape of a box.

Much of Caba’s work engages with modularity, conceptualising it into reality as these sculptural paintings are separate and interchangeable entities that can be read—and felt—independently as much as when they are put together as a whole. *Mothers / Gardens* is fascinated with this act of materialising the intangible, particularly that of the digital into reality. It examines the tension between real and non-real as well as the role of technology in facilitating connection. By curving the surfaces of these paintings, the images bulge past the two-dimensional planes of the image and the screen on which it is viewed. Although they bear human affectations of unsteady hands with their tilted angles and blur of motion, their originating images have already been transformed by the journey undertaken through the digital spheres of iMessage and Facebook Messenger. Low camera quality, image sharpening, and file compression signify the spatial distance between mother, grandmother, and child, which are then consequently embodied in the paintings upon incision. Caba elucidates that these paintings are “recreations that want to be the real thing but fail to do so,” describing them as “mimicries of reality,”

which scrutinizes how technology gives a false sense of connection.

Yet, it would be remiss not to consider the technique employed in producing these sculptural paintings that alludes to their nature as decidedly *not just* a mimicry of the real thing. Laser-engraving is an immediate and irreversible technology, deliberately altering the properties of the wood to transfigure it almost entirely. As a mediary, it circumvents the deletion of the image file and all it contains and consequently brings them *back* into the three-dimensional *real* world.

“ IN THIS PROCESS, A SCULPTURAL PAINTING BECOMES LESS OF AN IMAGE AND MORE LIKE THE REAL, ACTUAL THING. ”

How does this recontextualize the understanding of *Mothers / Gardens*, then? Is the recreation of the image onto the material a means of grasping the referent—the real garden, the real house and its windows and flower pots—before it had all been transformed by time and space? Is it to reach out towards mother and grandmother behind the camera lenses, to bring them forth and exist in the same space that you occupy? Or is it a means for you to occupy *their* space—to situate yourself in the moments preceding the image, even just for a second, before the shutter clicked and the moments became a static repository of memory and remembrance? *Mothers / Gardens* is certainly underpinned by a longing for reunion. Caba says as much as they explain how this longing informs their artistic practice: “I long for [my mother’s



and grandmother’s] presence, yet I am only able to feel close to them through images sent through text or video calls.”¹ Beyond the fascinating and masterfully crafted works that offer a distinctly dynamic viewing experience, the exhibit is centred on the search for and manifestation of a remedy to spatial distances that can transcend the limitations of borders and plane ticket costs and the vastness of an ocean.

In this light, *Mothers / Gardens* is less about recreations of their real referents but more so about how these referents propel connections between each other and ourselves. Drawing on modularity, it reimagines the *balikbayan* box and its qualities of shape, function, and movement to negotiate longing and presence. Unlike the gardens they depict, these paintings can be packed and transported to occupy a shared space.

“ IN SO DOING, THEY IMAGINE A REALITY WITHOUT DISTANCE. ”

Recall the *balikbayan* box in its original conception: a three-dimensional container that carries all things wanted, needed, and appreciated that is sent back home. This act of care is an experience of bodies in motion that the *balikbayan* box embodies, by which senders subconsciously fit themselves inside it to participate in an act of homecoming themselves. To put together and send a *balikbayan* box is to reach across the distance between ourselves and our loved ones. In this, a *balikbayan* box is ultimately an act of reunion.

¹ As described by Caba in their Artistic Practice Statement written for Xpace Cultural Centre

Butterfly Ate That Dream

JANUARY 24, 2026 – MARCH 7, 2026



WORKS BY YUIJIE WANG

WORDS BY SHERRY CHUNQING LIU

When viewing *Butterfly Ate That Dream*, it becomes clear that Yujie Wang transformed Xpace Cultural Centre's Window Space into a threshold, a place where longing and uncertainty meet, and where the ordinary is quietly charged with the sublime.

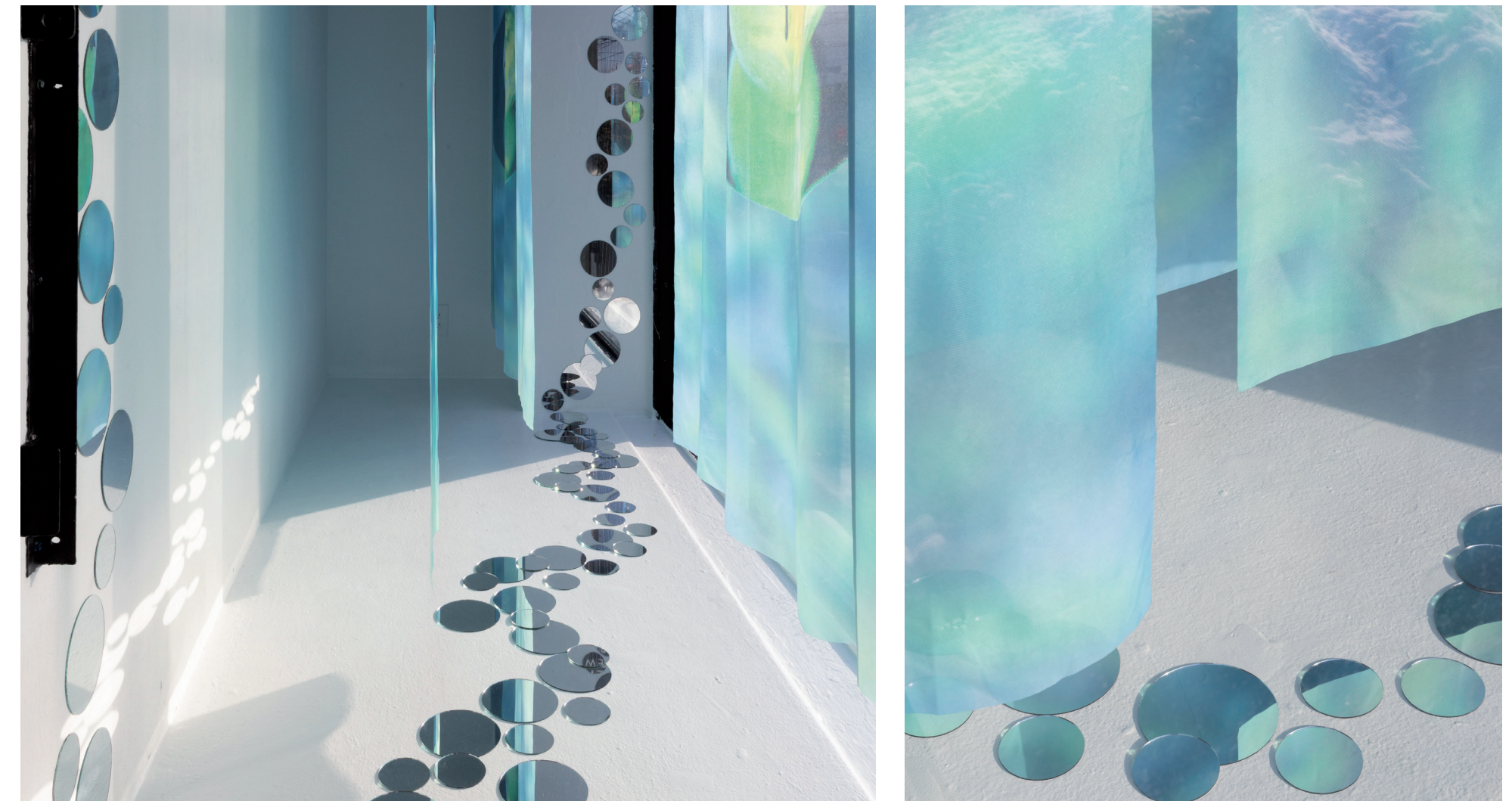
Here, the window does not simply frame the street outside. It breathes. Silk surfaces hover in the light, catching and releasing it as if exhaling. Mirrors glint softly along the floor and walls, scattering fragments of reflection that never quite settle. Images blur, overlap, return. Are we looking at a single suspended moment, or at time itself thinning and folding as it passes through us?

The installation is composed of three identical photographs printed on sheer fabric and hung from the ceiling. From the front, the fabrics intersect and partially obscure one another, producing a gentle visual drift as viewers shift their position. At the center of the image sits a green apple placed atop a circular mirror. The apple is doubled by its reflection, while the mirror itself reads as a dark opening, suggestive of a void or a passage. A black butterfly with blue accents rests lightly on the apple's surface, poised in stillness. Behind this arrangement, the background dissolves into softened hues of blue, green, and black, tree branches stretching against a spring sky. For this Window Space installation, Wang extends the photograph's internal logic

outward. Circular mirrors, identical to the one pictured, are laid across the west and south planes of the space, allowing image and environment to echo and refract one another.

Wang's work often dwells in states of passage, and this installation emerges from a deeply felt experience of inhabiting the in-between. Born and raised in Dalian, China, a city shaped by long winters and heavy snowfall, she recalls the charged moment when winter begins to give way. Snow melts unevenly, ice loosens into trickling streams, droplets gather and fall. Mud appears alongside a sense of promise. It is not a conventionally beautiful scene, yet it is filled with quiet anticipation. For Wang, this seasonal shift mirrors a recurring mental state, one marked by tension between hope and uncertainty. It is a feeling she associates with growth, with moments in life when change is underway but its destination remains unclear.

That sensation is embedded in the work's visual language. The green apple carries the freshness of early summer and the sense of something just beginning. It is unripe, vibrant, and alive with possibility. Wang associates it instinctively with youth and emotional sincerity, recalling how green apples appear in Japanese and East Asian cinema as symbols of tender, awkward, and slightly sour forms of love. The butterfly, by contrast, introduces fragility and risk. Beautiful and fleeting, it gestures toward transformation while refusing any promise of permanence. Wang notes



its short lifespan, and the faint danger that always accompanies change. Beneath it all, the mirror anchors the image with a darker gravity. It reflects, but it also absorbs, reading as a hollow or a tunnel. The mirror suggests that growth often requires passing through something opaque, even painful.

The photograph itself is the result of a careful, tactile process. Wang began by constructing a physical collage. She took two photographs, printing them separately. One image, featuring the apple, butterfly, and mirror, was cut out and layered over another photograph of trees and sky. This composite was then photographed again. Early experiments placed the central image against a black background, but Wang found herself drawn instead toward light. She wanted the final image to feel open, brighter, capable of holding hope without denying complexity. This method of layering and re-photographing mirrors the work's conceptual structure. Memory accumulates slowly, through small gestures and repeated encounters. Wang describes the original photograph as yeast, something living and active, fermenting over time. The installation becomes the bread that emerges later, shaped by duration and reflection.

Time is essential to how *Butterfly Ate That Dream* unfolds. The work does not point to a single event or a fixed narrative. While the background photograph was taken in spring, the impulse to create the image arose during a late winter in Oakville, where the thaw reminded Wang of her

childhood in Dalian. The installation resists specific geography or time. Instead, it gathers layers of lived experience. The three suspended fabrics suggest overlapping chapters of a life. Moments that may feel heavy or painful while unfolding can later reveal themselves as sites of growth. As viewers move through the space, the images align and misalign, offering no stable vantage point, only gentle shifts and partial clarity.

Wang's practice balances intuition with structure. Photography, she explains, is an instinctive act for her, a way of responding quickly to a feeling that demands to be seen. Installation requires a more deliberate logic. The transition from photograph to installation felt to her like writing a novel, a process of giving shape to something poetic and abstract until it can stand on its own. This balance lends the work a sense of calm. There is a meditative stillness beneath the uncertainty it holds. Rather than being overwhelmed by feeling, Wang approaches it with awareness, allowing sensitivity and control to coexist.

At the heart of the work is the act of naming a feeling. Wang describes this liminal state as a recurring condition, one she has encountered at different ages and expects to meet again in the future. It is a period defined by not knowing, by the absence of clear direction. By recognizing and naming this state, she suggests, it becomes more possible to endure it. The feeling does not disappear, but it becomes less suffocating.

“ AWARENESS ITSELF BECOMES A FORM OF AGENCY, EVEN IF CONTROL REMAINS ELUSIVE. ”

There is a quiet heroism embedded in this gesture. Not the triumph of overcoming hardship, but the resolve to continue alongside it. Wang speaks ambivalently about the myth of Sisyphus, questioning whether it romanticizes suffering or simply offers a way to survive it. If the stone cannot be removed, perhaps it can be adorned. Perhaps making it beautiful is not denial, but care. In this sense, the butterfly is not a symbol of escape. It is a companion to persistence.

For viewers navigating distance, instability, or transition, the work may offer particular solace. For diasporic subjects, for those in their twenties, or for anyone living through uncertainty, the installation resonates as a shared emotional terrain. Yet its reach extends beyond any single life stage. Uncertainty returns again and again, each time we believe we have found solid ground. This is the rhythm of time passing. In *Butterfly Ate That Dream*, Wang captures this recurring condition with tenderness and restraint. The installation does not promise resolution. Instead, it holds space for becoming, reminding us that every winter is different, and that spring, in one form or another, will come.

1 Yujie Wang, in an in-person interview with Sherry Chunqing Liu (December 17, 2025).

circling back, (work about working)

JANUARY 24, 2026 – MARCH 7, 2026

CURATION & WORDS BY
CASPER SUTTON-FOSMANWORKS BY ANGELA ATKINSON, CHRISTINA OYAWALE,
CAMILLE-ZOÉ VALCOURT-SYNNOTT, JUSTINE WOODS

“OKAY, LET’S TRY AGAIN.”

This is a group exhibition, mounted in the Main Space of Xpace Cultural Centre in Toronto, ON, featuring Angela Atkinson, Christina Oyawale, Camille-Zoé Valcourt-Synnott, and Justine Woods.

This is a gallery show that is trying to critique gallery shows, or really, trying to critique what we don’t see in a gallery show. The day job to make ends meet, the endless rotation of proposals and rejections, the grant applications, contracts and invoices, emails, emails, emails.

This is me trying to talk about the same thing again, labour, with a different set of restrictions, a different lens, a different curatorial statement.

No one becomes an artist for the money: this is reflected by the fact that the number of artists who can do art full-time, as their only source of income, is uncomfortably small.¹ Because we are passionate, we care about art-making, we are viewed through a lens of fantasy: how lucky you are that you get to do what you love.

Because we love it, we are asked to show our work for free, to pay submission fees, to spend hours on proposals that are never accepted, to do things for exposure and experience. We buy into this fantasy, too: maybe I’ll get the next grant, if I have this show on my CV, or if I clean up my website, or if I go to this opening. We don’t really have another choice if we want to keep making. It’s exhausting.

This is what Camille-Zoé Valcourt-Synnott’s work attempts to document, to reveal. In *To-do lists*, brightly colored paper tiles the column in the centre of the space, inviting visitors to fill in to-do-lists, forming a collective picture of the work we all do that goes undocumented everywhere except our phones, calendars, planners – and here.

On the east wall, Valcourt-Synnott’s *10 SIGNS OF BURNOUT* regurgitates text from an article found while googling “burnout”, living in the mundanity of overwork. The signs take the form of, well, signs, imprinted on paper through the repetitive process of screenprinting: paper, ink, squeegee, paper, squeegee, paper, ink again. Valcourt-Synnott has made the exhaustion of the process the expression of her process – but she invites us into it, asks us to reflect on our own exhaustion, to witness the exhaustion of others.

Nearby, Justine Woods’ works hang on a coat rack as if waiting to be worn. In the form of two garments – *a love that creates land and shapes water*, a pair of bib pants, and *we carry our homeland(s) close to our heart*, a connected pair of gauntlets, both edged with beadwork – Woods reminds us that to put this much effort into something is itself an act of love. The love it takes to learn to make something, to do it over and over again until you understand it, to keep doing it through setbacks and mistakes and frustrations. Woods’ workwear guides us back, towards the impetus of making at all: what we do because we care. “The number of beads stitched on each garment is equal to the amount of love that garment holds”, writes Woods.²

In their making, Woods has imbued them with relationality, connecting threads to her family, community, and self.

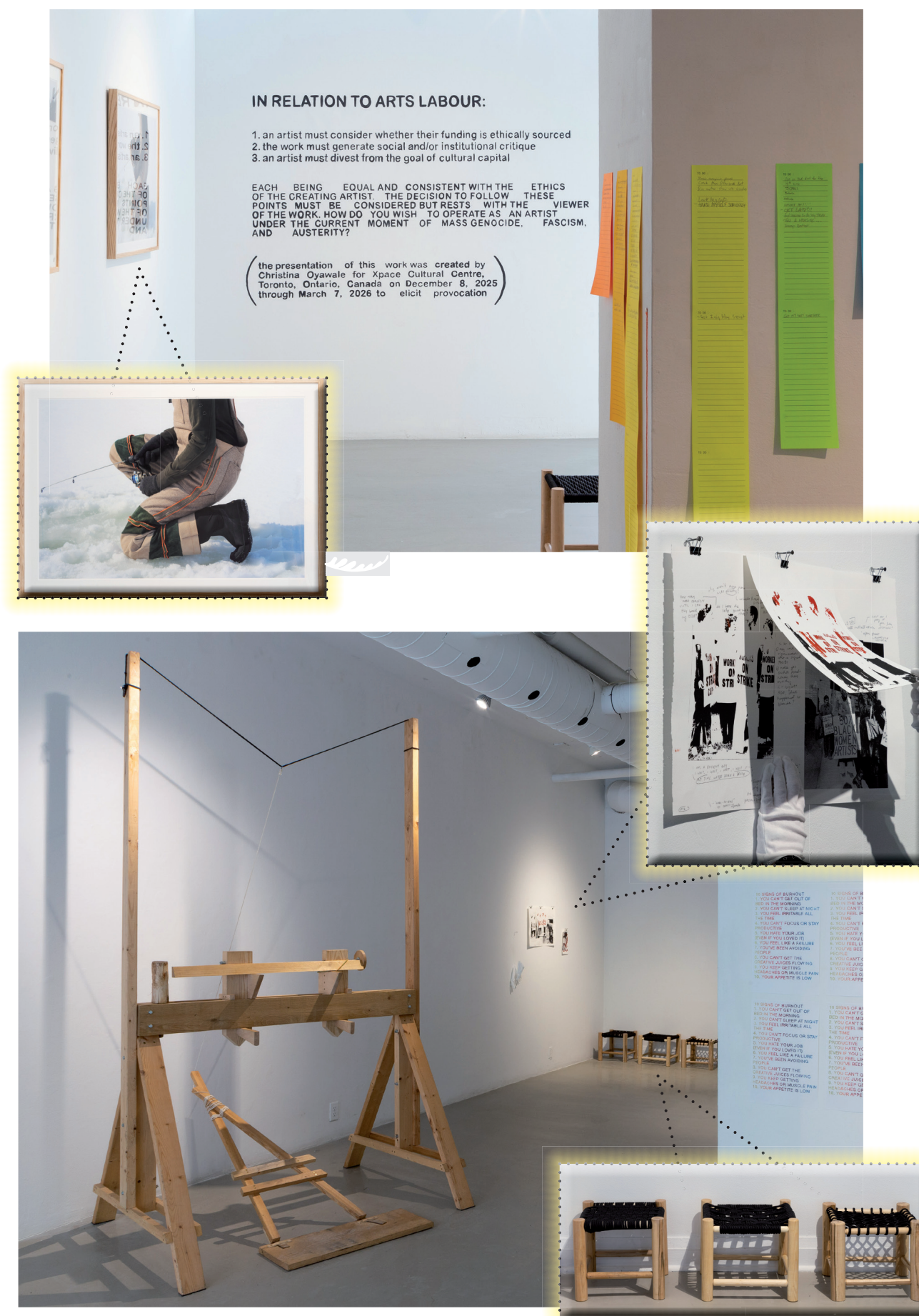
Complicating a reading of the garments as solely works of art, Woods provides us with images, hung on the wall opposite the coat rack: they show the bib pants and the gauntlets in action, on the artist’s body while carrying wood and ice fishing in the snowy winter of Tiny, Ontario, Woods’ hometown. She shows us not only the work that went into the creation of the garments, but the work that they were made for; their use facilitating the next part of a cycle of community care.

Christina Oyawale’s *Wall Mural Piece (After Lawrence Weiner)* occupies the west wall, facing Woods and Valcourt-Synnott’s work. Oyawale reminds us of our own agency; asking what responsibility we have to each other and to ourselves in a moment when art is censored, commodified, trapped within the late-stage-capitalist hellscape we find ourselves living through. The institution won’t save you, Oyawale maintains: they draw from their own experiences in the cyclical catch-22 of artist run centres, pointing to the failed promise of charity that relies on funding tied to political neutrality.³

Further into the gallery, on the north wall, Oyawale’s *Work-to-Rule* reproduces found images of protest and labour performed by artists and their allies. Like Weiner, the conceptual artist whose work they invoke in the mural, Oyawale reminds us that “art is made by people and for people”.⁴ If Valcourt-Synnott’s work reminds us that we are not alone, Oyawale pushes us to act like it – to build coalitions, to care for each other, to not only imagine a more equitable world but to work towards it. Oyawale annotates their own work with musings on labour, funding, and their own to-do-lists, incorporating their research and thought process into their works.

Scattered throughout the gallery is the sometimes-inconspicuous work of Angela Atkinson. Her wooden stools masquerade as ready-mades, belying the effort and precision she puts into shaping each leg, weaving the seats, working with the wood as it dries, warps, cracks. On the south wall, the residue of this labour takes the form of wood-shavings, carefully sorted and salvaged from the floor of Atkinson’s workshop.

Towards the center of the room sits the least inconspicuous of Atkinson’s works – a pole lathe which she built by hand, used to create all of her other pieces in the exhibition. Atkinson engages with what we take for granted: the chairs we sit on, the unseen studies and unusable prototypes, the waste generated in the practice of making. The



lathe is both a tool and a representation of the relationship between maker and practice, a gesture towards Atkinson’s own efforts to question a contemporary culture of convenience and disposability. Her process is slow, methodical, at odds with the expectation of artists to consistently produce new work.

These four artists hold different focuses, expressed through varied practices, but echoing a desire to draw attention to labour:

“WHAT WE KEEP DOING
BECAUSE WE WANT TO, WHAT WE
KEEP DOING BECAUSE WE HAVE
TO. ALL THE SPACES IN BETWEEN.”

This exhibition lives in that both-and, finding the love and care inherent in labour alongside the frustration with what goes unacknowledged or undervalued. We keep going, towards something better, while honoring what came before.

“AND WHEN IT DOESN’T WORK, TRY AGAIN.”

- 1 Depending on the year and area, numbers vary, but a high-end estimate from a 2024 Canadian survey puts the number of artists who don’t work another job at 29%; estimates in the US place it closer to 10%.
- 2 “I love you as much as all the beads in the universe”, MDes thesis, April 2021.
- 3 Oyawale, “The Institution Won’t Save You”, presented at UAAC 2024.
- 4 Weiner in an interview with Vice Magazine, June 2017.

In my end is my beginning

JANUARY 24, 2026 – MARCH 7, 2026



WORKS BY

ANDRIA KEEN

WORDS BY

DR. AADITA CHAUDHURY

In my end is my beginning is a dynamic meditation on movement, meaning-making and becoming: a slow curving turn that carries the viewer back to where they started, but altered, displaced, and made newly aware of their own participation in the act of seeing. In this interactive installation in the Project Space at Xpace Cultural Centre, Andria Keen asks us to inhabit time and space not as a defined and constrained set of parameters, but as a fold, a loop, and a re-turn; as an invitation to encounter ourselves, matter, and the dynamic passage of time and the meanings we give to our collective becomings as entangled rather than separate.

At the heart of the exhibition are the hand-made oloid sculptures in various scales, with their delicate attendant imperfections and irregularities signalling their human and material origins. These non-orientable forms are akin to a Möbius strip - a mathematically paradoxical surface created by giving a band a half-twist and joining its ends, producing a shape that has only one side, one continuous edge, and no stable inside or outside. Oloids are distinct in their rolling, continuous motion, inviting curiosity and play through their tactility. They have no fixed top or bottom, no clear beginning or end. When touched, pushed, or turned, they seem to carry the viewer along with them, dissolving the boundary between object and observer. The oloid refuses stability; instead, it performs perpetual transformation. Each rotation offers a slightly different face, a shifted perspective, a new relation between surface, depth, and orientation. Through this dynamism, Keen's work becomes a quiet pedagogy of perception, movement and temporality. As one interacts with the oloid shapes, one learns through touch and movement, that what we know is always partial, situated, and incomplete.

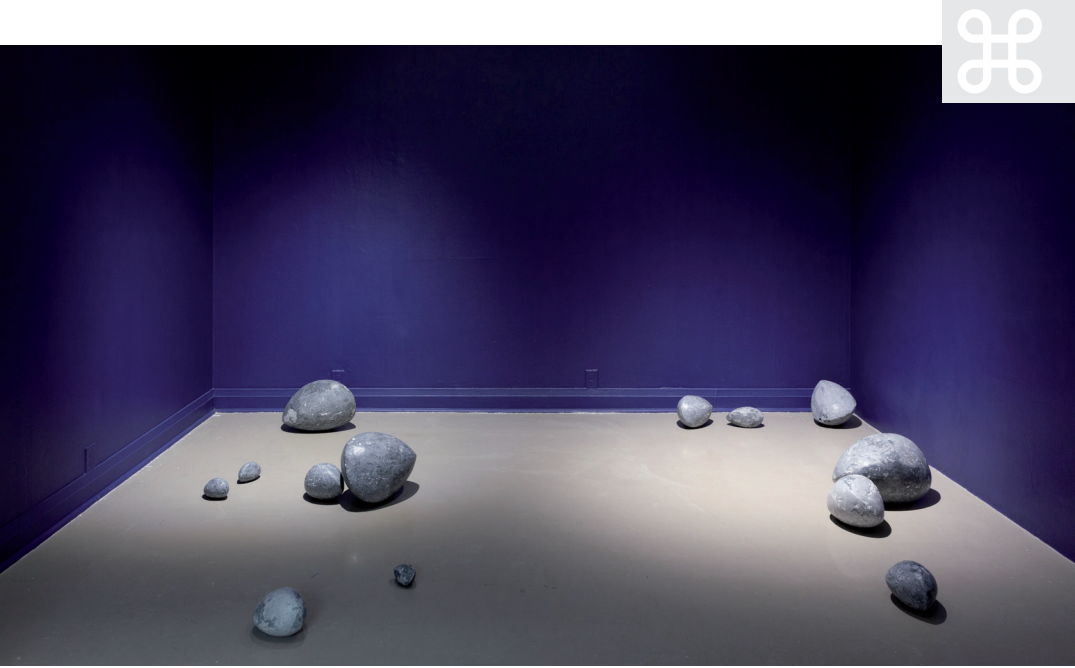
My first encounter with these oloid shapes did not occur in a gallery but in a Parkdale coffee shop, where Keen brought them as a way of opening a conversation between our distinct but interconnected realms of work. Amid the familiar rhythms of urban life, their presence felt both strangely out of place and uncannily at home. Solid and potentially animate, they seemed to slow time itself as one engaged deeper with their forms and their textures. In that moment I was unexpectedly reminded of dinosaur eggs: rounded, weighty, and charged with dormant life, tethered to an almost unfathomable deep history. In contending with their stillness, I was also reminded of the famed pitch drop experiment: a material that looks solid to the human eye but, across decades, drips and flows. This too embodies a quiet demonstration that what we call permanence is often only movement slowed beyond our perception.

These associations are not incidental. The sculptures appear to carry within them a memory of deep time, sedimented eras, extinct worlds, and the slow planetary processes that precede and outlast human presence. Like fossilized eggs, the oloid shapes hold both stillness and potential, evoking geological epochs that humble the human scale while situating us within a far broader, more-than-human continuum. They feel at once prehistoric and futuristic, as if they belong equally to the age of dinosaurs and to some as-yet-unimagined world to come.

This experiential indeterminacy resonates with Karen Barad's notion of "re-turning," where turning is not mere repetition but a process of becoming-with the world, which has been influential to Keen's framing of her practice. To re-turn is to move differently because the world has moved with you. Keen's oloid sculptures materialize this idea, as each roll subtly reshapes both object and observer. Accordingly, the gallery space can become more than a container for art and more a field of relations in motion, where thoughts and perception take on weight, texture, and momentum.

The exhibition's title, *In my end is my beginning*, drawn from T.S. Eliot,² amplifies this sensibility and suggests that endings are not closures but thresholds. They are sites where transformation germinates. Keen extends this insight beyond the human, inviting us to consider how matter itself cycles through change: with object becoming relation, and viewer becoming participant. Time here is neither linear nor finite but recursive, pulsing, and alive.

The oloid might be imagined as a cosmic dancer rolling through space, but it is also unmistakably terrestrial. Shaped by human hands, marked by earthly gravity, the oloid urges us to consider the cosmic history of the mundane. It embodies a paradox: we are tiny within the universe and yet deeply implicated in its unfolding. Our gestures, whether they include turning, nudging, attending, matter.



Keen's broader inquiry, developed as part of her MFA project at York University, *How the Light Gets In: The Atom and the Organism*,³ moves fluidly between quantum physics, existential philosophy, and embodied experience. She navigates scales from the cosmic to the microscopic, asking what it means to be a sensing organism in a universe that is vast, indifferent, and yet strangely intimate. Rather than providing answers, she stages conditions for wonder, curiosity, and play. Here, artist Robert Morris's ideas about scale⁴ become crucial. For Morris, scale was not simply size; it was a relational experience shaped by the body in space. Keen's stone oloid sculptures activate this insight. Their heft recalls geological durations that dwarf human life, yet their smooth surfaces invite touch, proximity, and care. We are suspended between awe at deep time and the tenderness of tactile encounter.

Crucially, *In my end is my beginning* refuses hierarchical divisions between human and nonhuman worlds. The sculptures do not sit passively before a viewing subject. Instead, they invite mutual responsiveness. The viewer acts upon the oloid, and the oloid, in turn, acts upon the viewer, thereby shifting balance, provoking reflection, and unsettling certainty. Agency circulates rather than belonging to the human alone. This relational ethic feels especially urgent in a time of ecological crisis. As planetary systems destabilize, Keen's work suggests that survival depends not on domination but on attentiveness, humility, and reciprocity with more-than-human worlds.

“THE OLOID BECOMES A METAPHOR FOR ECOLOGICAL INTERDEPENDENCE: MOVEMENT RIPPLES OUTWARD; NOTHING EXISTS IN ISOLATION.”

Yet the exhibition is not meant to be solemn or didactic. There is place for humor, pleasure, and delight here. Watching the oloid forms roll is quietly hypnotic; their motion is both gentle and insistently strange. Children and adults alike may be drawn into their rhythm. In this way, Keen aligns with artists who treat play as a serious mode of inquiry that functions as a way of knowing that bypasses rigid rationality and opens the senses.

Ultimately, *In my end is my beginning* asks a deceptively simple question: What would it feel like to live as if we were always already in relation, to each other, to matter, to time, to the cosmos? Keen does not prescribe an answer. Instead, she offers a practice: turn, re-turn, touch, listen, and notice how your perspective shifts. The oloid's endless motion reminds us that existence is a process, not a destination. Beginnings and endings blur; we find ourselves suspended in a living present. To engage with Keen's work is to learn, gently, that being is not something we possess. It is something we do, together with the world. And in that doing, we may discover that our end, indeed, is our beginning.

1 Karen Barad, "Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart," *Parallax* 20, no. 3 (2014): 168–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927623>.
2 T.S. Eliot, "Four Quartets - Extract," Poetry Archive, n.d., accessed January 16, 2026, <https://poetryarchive.org/poem/four-quartets-extract/>.
3 Andria Dianne Keen, "How the Light Gets in: The Atom and the Organism, Artistic Reflections on the Complementarity of Being" (MFA Thesis, York University, Canada, 2025), <https://hdl.handle.net/10315/43025>.
4 Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture," *Artforum*, New York, NY, United States, 1967 1966, <https://www.artforum.com/features/notes-on-sculpture-211706/>.

Sweetest Girl in the World

MAY 15, 2026 – JUNE 27, 2026



WORKS BY OLIVIA AGUIAR

Girl as commodity...
Girl as cultural code...
Girl as image...

The Girl exists as a subject that is both
Everywhere and Nowhere.

"She is triangulated according to her position and her actions, and, most of all, whatever one thinks is happening to her. The 'rigorous, compulsive submission to technique,' as Andrea Long Chu writes, shapes her as a category and a status, not as a body or group of individuals. And yet, she is not a 'pure abstraction.'"

—Alex Quicho, *Girl Intelligence*, 2025.

Both obsession and impossibility coalesce within the image. In *Sweetest Girl in the World*, a Window Space exhibition at Xpace Cultural Centre, Olivia Aguiar takes this as form—fleshing out the entanglement between desire, grief, and the feminine experience. Reflecting on the passing of her beloved childhood dog, Journey, Aguiar plays on the double meaning of the work's title, "Sweetest Girl in the World," to expose the social desires of softness, innocence, and purity that are projected onto the feminine. Aguiar's painting embraces confrontation—its rich ruby and jewel-tone colors resist muted, fragile preconceptions of femininity while seducing and enchanting our attention in their depth. Her figures do not make eye contact with you. Their gazes are turned neither outward nor completely inward, instead transfixed as part of a larger, languid dance the bodies

WORDS BY YOONA

perform together within the metaphysical world Aguiar has summoned onto the canvas.

To exist in our world today is to constantly be mediated through the digital. The image is perhaps a force we can never escape, yet it offers a site to enshrine what we may long for and what we may grieve. For Aguiar, revisiting childhood videos playing with Journey (and a Youtube video of Fiona Apple dancing and playing with her dog) became a means of grasping at something that isn't actually there—the joy in these precious moments perhaps lost even in memory yet digitally permanent. Aguiar recognizes how this abundance of affection "with nowhere to put it" renders love into a feeling *displaced*. To ask an image to hold our grief is impossible. There is a tragic yet beautiful futility in loss. It is an act of holding onto nothingness—desire itself is a similar act. Aguiar explores this Derridean notion of desire (as a force inherently tied to lack and impossibility) to coalesce the relationship between girlhood, grief, and images. In Aguiar's piece, the wooden words that frame the inner painting read: "I can make a shrine out of anything. Infinity shines so brightly because of its nothingness." The dogs and feminine figures swirl together within the painting, almost entranced in a cosmic choreography that symbolizes this idea of worshipping the non-existence of something lost—creating something out of nothing in the way that the concept of the Girl endures and is remade with every projection of fantasy and societal prescription. Aguiar's work asks

“ HOW MUCH OF THE GIRL'S EXISTENCE IS
PRECURSORY? WHERE DOES AUTONOMY AND
SELF-DEFINITION LIE WITHIN THE IMAGE? ”



The medium of paint exists in opposition to the pristine sterility of image pixels. However, Aguiar's paintings are tethered to their digital birth. Her artistic process begins with image production—performing with her own body in front of the camera—the self as the reference. Aguiar's process echoes the sentiment of Susan Sontag's notion of the *feminine as a kind of theatre* as she embodies the Girl as performer, the painting itself as performance (On Women, Susan Sontag, 2023). She plays with the tension between body and image, flesh and pixel, as she feels out her own physicality within the image plane. Paint transforms skin to liquid. The subject of Aguiar's piece is a girl that is half image half painting—a girl that grapples with her own becoming.

Sweetest Girl in the World maintains a mysticism in its portrayal of girlhood. Aguiar's visual language speaks to the divine feminine, unconcerned with the distinction between reality and fiction to instead engage with the Girl as almost a metaphysical construct. Her human and dog figures prance, twist, and curl—their gestures are lyrical and fluid as if they existed within a dreamworld, afterlife, or childhood memory. The magenta, gold, and deep purple hues evoke a longing, anguish, and sentimentality that is rooted in nostalgia yet perhaps distrustful of nostalgia too. Both grief and girlhood are arenas of intense, often incomprehensible emotions. These affective complexities find themselves in Aguiar's painting, presented neither as a question nor answer to these complexities, but as a means of fleshing out the liminal corner where grief and the feminine meet.

"Girls are everywhere and nowhere; fetishized but neglected; in our faces yet disappearing from view."

—Heather Warren-Crow, *Girlhood and the Plastic Image*, 2014.

Girlhood is endlessly excavated and recontextualized as a subject—fluid yet exhausted. The trap of girlhood is this perpetual allure that transcends time and age. The concept of the Girl constantly folds back into itself, betrayed while rewarded by its own recursivity. Aguiar traces what it means to be enmeshed within this infinite cycle of cultural construction / deconstruction and reduction / proliferation—understanding girlhood itself as a tempting subject of escapism. She frames *Sweetest Girl in the World* as having a satirical distance from the very constructs it grapples with in order to be critical of this escapism while recognizing her own entanglement within it. This is perhaps the greatest task for the Girl, at large.

LEAVE/ENTER/STAY

MAY 15, 2026 – JUNE 27, 2026

CURATION & WORDS BY TRIPTYCH

WORKS BY WINTA HAGOS, TRÂM ANH NGUYEN, BAHAR ENSHAEIAN,
SABINE SPARE, FARIDA RADY, DARIAN RAZDAR

*my whole past seemed filled up.
So I started answering all the questions
regardless of consequence:
Yes I hate dark. No I love light. Yes I won't speak.
No I will write. Yes I will breed. No I won't love.
Yes I will bless. No I won't close. Yes I won't give.
Love is on the other side of the lake.*

– “New York Address” by Linda Gregg

LEAVE/ENTER/STAY welcomes you. It holds you, it turns away from you, it reaches back for you. Will you accept this? How will you respond? LEAVE/ENTER/STAY is tethered by the works of six artists—Winta (Wintana) Hagos, Trâm Anh Nguyễn, Bahar Enshaeian, Sabine Spare, Farida Rady and Darian Razdar—that share processes rooted in repetition, spatial perception, and gestures of intimacy. Spanning across film, textile, sound installation, sculpture, and photography, the exhibition collectively stages a shifting choreography that invites you to encounter each artwork in a procession personal to you.

Imprinted across the floor are footprints as markers for pause, pulling you inside a cyclical poetics of leaving, entering, and staying; a reminder that space is always dually indexed by our movements and our dwelling. The gallery door swings open and a blue trail cuts towards each artwork, delineating—no, suggesting, an approach. A consideration. More than a map or a direction to follow, these tracks implore us to understand that a choreography of space begins first with feeling one's feet pressed to the ground.



As you move across the segmented room, think about

where you pause, linger
drift towards and away
look, listen
collapse in time, entangled
between the artwork and yourself

When you enter the gallery and turn right past the sheet of black curtains, we invite you to sit and turn towards Trâm Anh Nguyễn's poetry film, *Hoa* (2022), projected onto a West-side facing wall in the main space with an accompanying scrolling letter. Over the course of *Hoa*'s fourteen minute run-time, a gentle dialogue unfolds between the narrator, Nguyễn, and his grandmother, Tuyết Hoa, who was suffering from a memory disorder. She has written an autobiographical book that she reads every day and revisits with Nguyễn in the film. As Nguyễn is pulled into his family history, his grandmother's ailment intensifies a need to resurface forgotten thoughts. “Do you remember feeling?” Nguyễn asks, tightly holding the daily ritual of his grandmother's re-remembering. The film moves between

contemporary footage of the streets of Huế, and Hoa in her home, interspersed with old photographs from Hoa's younger years; the present shrouded in the past, the lives of grandmother and grandson coalescing in the certitude of a lineage connected by body. The porous nature of memory carries within it a departure and a return, the inherent gaps of one's recollection are filled with assumptions, abandoning accuracy. Is leaving a form of returning? Ultimately, *Hoa* honors the value of presence shared with an elder; the present being the crux of future and past, the deepness of love that sprouts from loss.

We exit the makeshift screening room by swiveling behind to enter *solar tonal / tidal spiral*, a pair of two cotton canvas textiles by Farida Rady and Darian Razdar. A collaboration on the fabric dyeing techniques of shibori dye-cyanotype, *solar tonal / tidal spiral* is not an outcome, but a creative experimentation that was borne between two artists and writers, beginning to weave a friendship together. Conceived on Razdar's rooftop and yard one hot afternoon in the summer of 2022, the artwork marks the buzz of entering into a new phase

of a relationship: the first time you hang out alone with a new person you hazily anticipate becoming a dear friend. In a text message prompting the artists to reflect on the origins of their shared making, Rady writes, “There's something special about a friendship that grows from collaboration: it carries a certain kind of trust, respect, and curiosity that allows us to move both towards each other while honouring our own instincts and preferences as we create... a commitment to experimentation and wandering” together.¹ Razdar notes that the process of working with Rady was marked with note-taking, laughter, and a desire to expand elements of their practices by firstly, “learning to know each other better: It's like walking past a mirror or reflective vitrine along a quiet sidewalk and lingering to see one's reflection, and realizing the space between your self and your reflection... when Farida and I get together, it's like playing,” in the collective hope that intuition melts into a new poetic rendering.² The artists offer the title *solar tonal / tidal spiral* not as a name for each particular panel hanging side by side from the ceiling, but as a reflective gift for each viewer who passes by and through the work, because after all, “doesn't the act of looking at an object become also one of its definitions?”³

As one progresses into the centre of the space, a hum seeps into the gallery from the North wall and reverberates against pooled water and skin. *Dimtsi Daro* (ደምዳሜ) is a sound and living-tree installation by Wintana Hagos that acts as a set of lungs, absorbing the frequencies ringing around it; sounds of Eritrean communal assembly: the Annual General Meetings of the Eritrean Canadian Community Centre, the institution Hagos' father founded in Toronto and ambient recordings Hagos made during gatherings of Eritrean cultural platforms in Sweden. The tree itself is connected to a plant synthesizer that translates its bio-electric activity into sound. These layered sounds are trails of history stripped of the legibility of speech, leaving us with only traces of a gathering. They form a swarm of fragments “that become audible momentarily... haunt[ing] our listening significantly as ghosts that linger.”⁴

The Pencil Cactus, *Euphorbia tirucalli*, is native to East Africa and known as a guard-ian. In this space, the Cactus, stands in place for the Daro, an Eritrean plant from the same soil as the Cactus, but not present in Canada. The Daro is a gathering tree. As Hagos writes, “The substitution is not a compromise. It is the form of the work: you use the plant that can make the crossing, and you ask it to do what the original tree did. To stand at the center. To anchor a gathering.”⁵ We gather in the gallery

around the Pencil Cactus, at times rubbing up against one another, physically aware and unaware of where one person ends and another begins, where one sound wave starts and stops, where we all come together in the waves of small pools of water and bioelectric activity. Is a vibration coming from outside of ourselves or inside of us? No pool is too small to carry us all in some way, shape or form. All the ways we can sense, feel, and see a sound become the sound itself. Hagos asks, “is this enough to begin again?”⁶ We continue to reflect on leaving as a beginning. To ‘leave’ a space after all, requires us to go elsewhere.

Protracting over a plinth against the East wall is Sabine Spare's *Nodules*. Her piece is part of an ongoing series that considers the fixtures of temporality and how to cast an arrow upon an eternally moving target. *Nodules* plays with this tension by thickening time: sculptural metal drops sprout outwards from a flexible sheet of paper covered in circular dyed hoops, creating a trancelike meditation that evokes the looping repetitions of time. Each metallic droplet in *Nodules* curves and bends, offering a different point of orientation. Arriving at the work, it looks as though several hands have touched and twisted the droplets into new shapes, forming a bridge between your moment and another's moment to come. If the passage of time is dissolvable, in constant danger of evaporating once we acknowledge its existence, then a moment of touch might concretize an encounter, offering a way to stay in place through the haptic. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney theorize hapticality as “the interiority of sentiment. A way of feeling through others, a feel for feeling others feeling you,” hapticality as “inherited caress, its skin talk, tongue touch, breath speech, hand laugh.”⁷ To hold is to return to form, to whatever form feels most true to you.

Returning home to a memorized footwork between rooms and hallways, a familiar assembly of furniture and imprints of gatherings (ادى نومدم) (over the years, Bahar Enshaeian maps out the architecture of houses by photographing their walls and connecting them together in a floor plan. *Construction-graphy* is the pulling apart of a familiar whole into the obscurity of fragments. On the North and Eastern gallery walls, we are tasked with an equation: to imagine how each photograph and pathway is linked to create a home. Enshaeian brings to life what is otherwise flat and lifeless, the skeletal blueprint that is beneath the surface of our every day, whether concrete or wood or dirt. Images of the daily residential mundanities form an outer border in *Construction-graphy* that creates a filmic sense of the camera lingering in place to

catch the ticking of a clock, the stillness of kitchen utensils, the breeze pulsing a curtain's edge. The spirit of the home is activated—do you see your own home? The scent of dry air snapped shut by a bright sun. Can you feel it on your face? Arranging the pieces of Enshaeian's map to assemble a space to welcome family and friends over tea and sugar cubes, to wake up in the early morning with feet pressed against the cold tile floor of a humid bathroom. James Baldwin wrote in *Giovanni's Room*, “You will go home and then you will find that home is not home anymore. Then you will really be in trouble. As long as you stay here, you can always think: One day I will go home.”⁸ The disintegration of a home's memory over time is perhaps what solidifies it in one's mind. Baldwin continues: “You don't have a home until you leave it and then, when you have left it, you never can go back.”⁹ But to this, we push back, and we continue hosting and playing and organizing in the house we currently reside in, and in that way the home is transitory, it is remixed, it is the directional prongs of its insides stretching outwards to photographs of tomorrow.

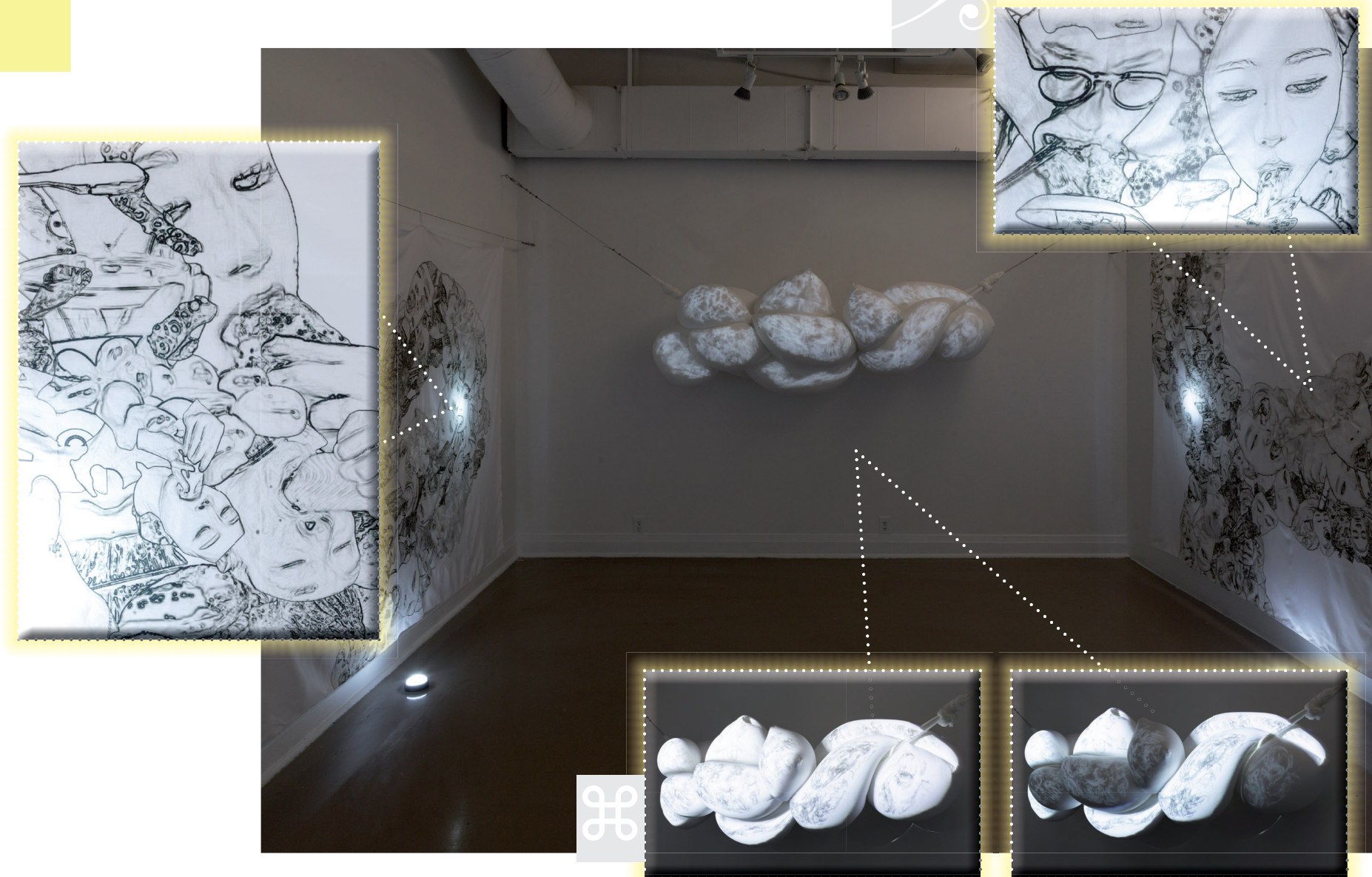
Slipping between states of presence, the previous feeling trailing into the next, and finding a future behind our backs. Grief is remembering a presence, remembering is forgetting an absence, and each lingering sensation welcomes a new feeling. The rupture of oneself within a cycle of love and loss is rebuilt and clarified with the reference and stability of those alongside us. Although a beginning and its end is often abstracted and left open, the trust in relationships brings a clarity that allows for another step ahead.

So where do we go from here
when each day lasts forever
ending and beginning again?

- 1 Farida Rady and Darian Razdar, *text message to author*, April 24, 2026.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Writer Aditi Machado quotes a passage from Etel Adnan's *Of Cities and Women* in a recent essay pamphlet on thenotion of ‘endings’ in poetry, from closure to epiphany. See Aditi Machado, *The End* (Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2020), 12.
- 4 Dylan Robinson, “Toward Listening in Redress,” in *What Happens between the Knots?*, ed. Jeanne Gerrity and Anthony Huberman (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2022), 279-280.
- 5 Winta (Wintana) Hagos, note to the author, April 29, 2026.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013), p. 98.
- 8 James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room* (New York: Delta Trade Paperbacks, 2000), p. 116
- 9 Ibid.

Digital Bodies: Loops of Desire

MAY 15, 2026 – JUNE 27, 2026



WORKS BY

LINGXIANG WU

WORDS BY

YANTONG LI

The screen is the retina of the mind's eye. Therefore, the screen is part of the physical structure of the brain. Therefore, whatever appears on the screen emerges as a raw experience for those who watch it. Therefore, it is reality, and reality is less than the screen.¹

As a quasi-allegory for the soon-to-emerge digital space, David Cronenberg's 1983 film *Videodrome* offers a hailing mantra to the recursive digital strata of the present day through its striking finale: "long live the new flesh." The transmogrification between the corporeal and the digital points to a recursive feedback loop that was already latent in television transmission, but has since become far more omnipresent in today's media ecology. The ceaseless algorithmic thirst-traps via TikTok, OnlyFans culture, mukbang videos and YouTube shorts have made images into agents of desire, and the process of image consumption has become a psychotic wrestling of vital signs produced via cloning, with the proliferation of bodies online making quantifiable flesh regurgitated as animated beings.

As a critical reflection on the biocybernetic reproduction underpinning present-day image culture, Lingxiang Wu's installation *Digital Bodies: Loops of Desire* in the Project Space at Xpace Cultural Centre attempts to trap the new digital flesh in its own echo chamber through the line of

thinking on what he calls "the itch"—a condition born out of the compulsive cycles of consumption within the contemporary attention economy. It is a phantom sensation that emerges at the void between the consumption of immediate stimuli and the premature gratification that it promises. However, these expectations of fulfillment are never truly granted.

Entering the gallery space you immediately encounter Wu's experimental video, *Work It* (2026), comprises a set of GIFs created from TikTok footage, organized into a sequence of actions premised on the uncanny similarities of their content, actions, and movement. A set of slogans cast over Wu's video collage—"the internet says, WORK IT for me," "the internet says BOUNCE IT for me," while blobs of TikTok dance videos come to form imageries eerily similar to a Rorschach inkblot test. Like the VHS in *Videodrome* that breathes and demands action, these images behave like "quasi-agents" endowed with desire—bodies that no longer function simply as representations of identity, but operate



as animated entities that solicit, seduce, and demand attention.

Mounted at the rear wall of the gallery, *The Mist* (2026), a series of thirst trap videos from TikTok pulsate upon a soft sculpture, lumpy, bulging and made of pillows, almost resembling an inflamed organ that is alive. It speaks to a certain futility of training social media algorithms and the inevitable succumbing to one's own desire, with an unscratchable itch that pulsates along our bodily fibres. The corporeality to which the thirst-trap videos come to form almost suggests an eerie process of transmogrification between the body and machines, which render our psyches malleable and penetrable to the allure of the algorithms.

Hanging on the north and south gallery walls, *Digital Insatiability* (2026) features a series of Mukbang video stills sublimated on polyester fabric and organza. If *The Mist* speaks to the allure of lust, *Digital Insatiability* forms a gluttonous body horror where the algorithmic feedback loops are caught in its own autophagic cycle. The repetition of bodily motions renders what was previously isolated as a form of identitarian expression into a machinic rehearsal, and acts of consumption become quite literal via infinite clones of Mukbang stills, constantly devouring and excreting themselves with no beginning or end.

On the one hand, Wu's work makes visible the process of image consumption in which both our corporeal and virtual bodies have become the performer as well as the infrastructure for consumption, endlessly optimizing themselves for visibility while dissolving into abstraction. The exhibition encloses a cybernetic feedback loop that flatlines any progression of meaning, trapping the spectator's desire through the infinite cloning of visual stimuli, while foreclosing genuine novelty and escape. It prompts a compulsive search for the new, only to produce variations of the same. On the other hand, Wu's work is a quiet resistance to mindless consumption perpetuated by the "unscratchable itch." In an eerily erotic and voyeuristic manner, the multimedia installation attempts to turn Medusa's head back to itself, petrifying moments where desires are kept in suspension, revealing the hollowness of a digital Cornucopia with false promises of abundance and relief, delivered through the aesthetics of immediacy, while withholding depth.

¹ A line reappropriated from David Cronenberg's 1983 film *Videodrome*. The original line was spoken by the character Brian O'Blivion, and goes as follows: "The television screen is the retina of the mind's eye. Therefore, the television screen is part of the physical structure of the brain. Therefore, whatever appears on the television screen emerges as raw experience for those who watch it. Therefore, television is reality, and reality is less than television."

