

**Curating Exhibitionary Affect: The importance of creating space to feel in a contemporary curatorial practice.**

A thesis paper to support the exhibitions *Process* (October 2022) and *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end* (March/April 2023).

**By**

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A thesis presented to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Criticism and Curatorial Practice.

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**Abstract.**

The answer as to why and how art makes us feel is elusive. This thesis does not intend to answer this question in full, but rather point to curatorial strategies that can aid in this outcome. I begin by defining affect as the space created between the viewer and the artwork that when engaged with, can allow for an intuitive emotive response. I then discuss methodologies of curating exhibitionary affect that transform the exhibition into an event site and the viewer's encounter with art towards a dynamic experience. My practice-based curatorial research resulted in two exhibitions: *Process* (2022) featuring works by Beverley Freedman, Erin Stripe, mihyun maria kim, Reshmi Bisessar, Sara Shoghi, and Vicky Talwar; and a *series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end* (2023) featuring the work of Ella Gonzales, Meg Ross, and Meichen Waxer. The works exhibited engage tactics of tension, revealing and resolve to encourage affect, as well as site-sensitivity and site-specificity to encourage the event. Both exhibitions ask the viewer to actively engage. Through a discussion of these works my thesis posits that by curating for exhibitionary affect one can disrupt hierarchical ways of viewing art – where the exhibition provides only one reading – to instead privilege the viewer's individual interpretation based on an affective experience. I also argue that curating affective experiences acknowledges a multitude of ways of knowing and seeing, and is a way of curating towards accessibility.

Keywords: *art, affect, exhibitionary affect, feeling, curation, curatorial practice, contemporary, exhibition.*

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Bright Future.

**Dedication.**

To all the people who choose to feel.



## Table of Contents.

1. Creative Commons Copyright notice .....	p 1
2. Abstract .....	p 2
3. Acknowledgements .....	p 4
4. Dedication .....	p 6
5. Table of Contents .....	p 8
6. List of Figures .....	p 10
7. Thesis Paper .....	p 12
Introduction. ....	p 13
Context and Background. ....	p 17
Exhibitions and Practice Based Research. ....	p 26
8. Bibliography .....	p 42
9. Appendix A, Figures .....	p 45
6. Appendix B, Curatorial Essay, <i>a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.</i> .....	p 62
8. Appendix C, Artist Biographies and CVs .....	p 69
Beverley Freedman .....	p 70
Ella Gonzales .....	p 74
mihyun maria kim .....	p 76
Meichen Waxer .....	p 80
Meg Ross .....	p 84
9. Appendix D, Floor Plan <i>Process</i> .....	p 86
11. Appendix F, Promotional Material <i>Process</i> .....	p 88
10. Appendix E, <i>Floor Plan a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end</i> .....	p 92
12. Appendix G, Promotional Material <i>a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.</i> .....	p 94

## List of Figures.

## List of Figures.

Image 1a. Exhibition entrance <i>Process</i> .....	p 46
Image 1b. Exhibition install - <i>a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end</i> ...	p 47
Image 2a. Exhibition Installation - <i>Feelings</i> .....	p 48
Image 2b. Exhibition Installation - <i>Feelings</i> .....	p 48
Image 3a. <i>Marbles</i> , Beverley Freedman installation .....	p 49
Image 3b. <i>Marbles</i> blanket ladder detail .....	p 49
Image 3c. <i>Marbles</i> blanket + chair detail .....	p 50
Image 3d. <i>Marbles</i> blanket detail .....	p 50
Image 4a. <i>Textures of han</i> , and <i>Reaches of han</i> install .....	p 51
Image 4b. <i>Reaches of han</i> install .....	p 51
Image 4c. <i>Textures of han</i> install .....	p 52
Image 4d. <i>Reaches of han</i> grasps detail .....	p 52
Image 4e. <i>Texture of han</i> hands detail .....	p 53
Image 5a. <i>...and the sky</i> installation .....	p 54
Image 5b. <i>Hours</i> when lit .....	p 55
Image 5c. <i>... and the sky</i> installation with <i>Reflection of a Doorway</i> .....	p 55
Image 5d. <i>...and the sky</i> installation with <i>Blue Read</i> .....	p 56
Image 6a. <i>Blue Read</i> Installation .....	p 57
Image 6b. <i>Blue Read</i> interaction .....	p 57
Image 6c. <i>Blue Read</i> Installation side view.....	p 58
Image 7a. <i>Reflection of a Doorway</i> installation .....	p 59
Image 7b. <i>Reflection of a Doorway</i> Jusi-silk detail .....	p 59
Image 7c. <i>Reflections of a Doorway</i> small paintings .....	p 60
Image 7d. <i>Reflections of a Doorway</i> folded paintings .....	p 60
Image 7e. <i>Reflections of a Doorway</i> installation view .....	p 61

**Thesis Paper.**

## ***Introduction.***

In this thesis paper I will examine curatorial methodologies for producing exhibitionary affect, by which I mean creating moments to feel in an exhibition and approaching the exhibition as a territory of experience. My practice-based research into exhibitionary affect resulted in two shows that I mounted over the course of my studies at OCAD University: *Process*<sup>1</sup> (*image 1a.*), at the OCAD University Graduate Gallery located at 205 Richmond Street, Toronto, from October 7th to 18th, 2022; and *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end*<sup>2</sup> (*image 1b.*) presented at Xpace Cultural Centre, Toronto, from March 10th to April 22nd, 2023. Between these two exhibitions I was able to deploy and examine curatorial methods that I identified as having a heightened ability to facilitate exhibitionary affect. I was also able to provide further insight into why exhibitionary affect is an important and critical curatorial methodology.

It is first important to define affect. Affect is pre-cognitive. It is in feeling; it is not logical but felt. Affect is imminent, highly relational, and arises as a result of an encounter between a body and space, or between a subject and object. Because of this, affect is ephemeral. It is a space of potential that sits in the in-betweenness of things or, as the Canadian philosopher and social theorist Brian Massumi argues in his essay, *The Autonomy of Affect*, it is “...a marked gap between content [cognition] and effect [act]”<sup>3</sup>. Affect is energetic in nature, and because it relies on a relational

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<sup>1</sup> [www.avalonmott.com/process](http://www.avalonmott.com/process)

<sup>2</sup> [www.avalonmott.com/aseries](http://www.avalonmott.com/aseries)

<sup>3</sup> Brian Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect”. *Cultural Critique*, No. 31, The Politics of Systems and Environments, Part II. (Autumn, 1995). pp. 84.

experience it cannot be stored. Furthermore, although affect and emotion are closely tied, it is important to delineate their differences. Massumi posits that “...emotion is a subject content...qualified intensity [but] affect is unqualified...[and] is not ownable or recognizable”<sup>4</sup>. I am concerned with affect because of its sensorial qualities<sup>5</sup> and its ability to lead to an emotive response, rather than emotion directly which relies on subjective interpretation of external stimuli. It is precisely affect’s reliance on a relational experience between body (self) and space (object) that draws me towards curating for affect.

In the context of an exhibition, affect emerges from the meeting of an artwork and a beholder and the feelings that result from their encounter. What exhibitionary affect allows for is the multifaceted experience that each viewer can encounter when they are able to have a relational experience in the gallery space, and it is by curating towards exhibitionary affect that curators are able to privilege the feelings of the viewer in the gallery. Curators play an integral role in establishing the context and orchestrating the conditions for experiencing art, and therefore, it is important to develop an understanding of the tools curators can use to facilitate such affective encounters. The art historian and curator, Jennifer Fisher, in her text “Exhibitionary Affect”, suggests that curators should think about the exhibition as an event site<sup>6</sup> in which the transmission of exhibitionary affect takes place<sup>7</sup>. She speaks to the importance of an affect-informed

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp 88.

<sup>5</sup> Sara Ahmed also offers the term sticky to describe the lasting effects of affect in her essay “Happy Objects”.

<sup>6</sup> Because affect is relational it is an experience. To have an experience there must be an active site where the experience can take place which, in this instance, is termed the event site.

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Fisher, “Exhibitionary Affect”, in *n. Paradoxa*, vol. 18, 2006. pp 27.

curatorial approach from her lens as both an academic and curator<sup>8</sup>. Fisher warns that exhibitionary affect is an under-acknowledged topic in contemporary curatorial research and practice, but that it is critical to address because it allows for the consideration and inclusion of “feeling states” in the gallery<sup>9</sup>. These feeling states are moments where the viewer’s intuitive responses and feelings become their usher through the exhibition<sup>10</sup>. Positioning the feelings of the individual as the priority of a viewing experience allows curators to create meaning in their exhibitions that transcend the group or mass, and register within the individual’s own constructs of lived experiences, opinions and curiosities. Exhibitionary affect is still very much an emerging field of study, which is why this thesis does not support absolutes in its investigation, but rather intends to add to the discourse surrounding this contemporary<sup>11</sup> curatorial methodology. Throughout this

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<sup>8</sup> Like myself, Fisher has taken a research-based approach to examining exhibitionary affect, which has resulted in exhibitions that specifically explore this curatorial methodology. Her exhibition, *Museopathy* (2001), for instance, which she co-curated with Jim Drobnick, was a multi-venue exhibition staged in the city of Kingston, Ontario. Working across multiple municipal sites – including hospitals, a hockey hall of fame, and a maximum security prison – Fisher aimed to encourage exhibitionary affect by working with affectively-charged contexts, and invited artists to respond to those contexts with site-specific works that resonated with the affective qualities of those spaces. In this example, the event site, artist, and resulting artwork are all working in concert towards a common goal, which is exhibitionary affect. For example, Anne Ramsden’s *Garden* (2001) was a feminist intervention into the Murney Tower, a tower built in 1846 to defend the border with the United States, a site of military significance in Kingston. Ramsden sought to subvert the tower’s overtly masculine military history by introducing feminine-coded symbols and motifs, like displaying tea cups alongside in the gunners’ platforms and faux flowers in the ditch surrounding the tower. The work referenced the site’s lesser-known history as a home for soldiers’ families and the invisible history of women in this site (*ibid* 31).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* pp 27-28.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* pp 28.

<sup>11</sup> I am curating contemporary art and so by addressing the term contemporary it allows me to acknowledge the danger in its perceived permanence. What the term contemporary fails to acknowledge is that the here and now is contextual to a historical, societal and cultural specificity which cannot be universally recognized. Rather than an assumption of the contemporary, I have found that curating towards exhibitionary affect is a powerful tool in displaying an approach to the here and now, rather than a declaration of one. British art historian Clair Bishop introduces the term “dialectic contemporaneity” in her book *Radical Museology*, which speaks to exactly this - a moving towards rather than an articulation of permanence. Dialectic contemporaneity’s inclination for fluidity and affirmation of numerous viewing audiences mirrors affect’s distinctive desire to make the individual feel. There is a flexible quality in both these terms, exhibitionary affect and dialectic contemporaneity, which breaks free of the rigid constraints that are apparent in the gallery.



thesis I will discuss a number of exhibitions, including my own, which highlight techniques of curating with exhibitionary affect, while also outlining the opportunities and challenges that curators face when working in this way. It is important to talk to both to acknowledge the complexities of working within this sphere of influence.

## ***Context and Background.***

My interest in exhibitionary affect as a curator has been informed by my experience of affect in the gallery space and the aim to provide moments of feeling for the viewers of my exhibitions. There are numerous exhibitions that I could cite as providing an affective viewing experience; *Kevin Schmidt* (2014) shown at the Contemporary Art Gallery of Vancouver, BC, challenged the gallery space with a high-octane, EDM-driven sound and video installation; *The Oasis* (2015), mounted at FIELD Contemporary in Vancouver, in which sculptural objects were redesigned as mini-golf holes and viewers were provided with a putter upon entering the gallery to 'play' a round of mini golf; *Looking Forward, Thinking Back: Patrick Cruz* (2017) at Centre A, in which the artist completely covered the gallery with his works, taking a maximalist approach as if the gallery was a wrapped present; *Another World That Sounds Like You* (2023), a group show exhibited at Gallery TPW in Toronto, co-presented with the South Asian Visual Arts Centre, transformed the gallery space into an informal living room, complete with couches and carpets that aimed to support a close listening of sound works that played throughout the gallery. It is important to note that all of these exhibitions were presented at artist-run centres<sup>12</sup>, which have a

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<sup>12</sup> As writer and journalist Gabriele Detterer speaks to in her essay, *The Spirit and Culture of Artist-Run Spaces*, the artist-run centre has a direct lineage to the rebellious spirit of the 1960's which supported a new creativity. The emerging art practices the ARC supported extended the boundaries of fine art and redefined aesthetics, while simultaneously supporting ways of thinking that were in contrast to driving forces of the contemporary art gallery. The ARC privileged the community of which artists felt they were a part. This sense of community allowed for shorthand - pictorial art was no longer required as the space itself was a space of art. Exchange of ideas, projects and performances were art to the ARC the same way paintings, sculpture and photographs were to the contemporary art gallery. As the ARC was less concerned about the finality of its art, process became a key action supported by the space, and also the definition of the ARC as a site.

longstanding tradition of prioritizing the exchange of ideas amongst community, as much as the artwork that is being shown - a natural setting for exhibitionary affect to be on display.

That said, I have also encountered deeply affective exhibitions at museums. For instance, *The Matter of Time: Richard Serra* (2005) is a permanent site-specific installation at the Guggenheim Bilbao in Spain, which channels the magnitude and strength of steel to build an affective space. *Joseph's Coat: Skyspace by James Turrell* (2011), a permanent installation at the Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida, activates the temporal nature of daylight as a backdrop for display; *Lost in the Memory Palace: Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller* (2014), which was shown at the Vancouver Art Gallery, BC, gave the viewer space to encounter affect through the curation of a multi-sensory installation; *Cy Twombly* (2019), displayed at the Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Germany, used curved canvases to exemplify the grandiose nature of the paintings on display making them all-consuming for the viewer.

Another example that I recently had the chance to experience was *Hrafntinna (Obsidian)* (2022) by Jónsi currently on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. This installation encourages a multi-sensory experience for the viewer by exploiting darkness as an affective tool, privileging the viewer's relationship to sensory stimuli rather than visual evaluation. However, in its curation and displayed context at the AGO it fails to exemplify exhibitionary affect because the display does not support a relational viewing experience. Firstly, upon entering the space where the installation is situated, before I

was met with the piece I was met with a didactic. This didactic was a thorough and illustrative explanation of the context of the piece. In providing the viewer (myself) with this specific context prior to exploring the work, my viewing experience became drastically less relational because I have been told what the work means and how to relate to it. I was not relating the experience to myself. I was relating my experience of the piece to Jónsi and the fact that he was not able to visit the Fagradalsfjall Volcano erupting in the spring of 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the ideal conditions to be able to experience this installation cannot and are not controlled at the AGO; no capacity count which would allow all viewers to be able to experience the vibrating circular bench in the middle of the installation that heightened the subwoofer base sound; no timed entry that would ensure the audience is able to experience the build up to the imagined eruption sequentially; no re-infusing of the scent that defuses with each viewer moving in and out of the space, but is noted as a highly considered element in the didactic. With each of these disruptions, the affective quality of *Hrafntinna (Obsidian)* lessens. At best, the audience has read the didactic and spends their time with the piece imagining what they think they should feel, or what Jónsi felt. At worst, the audience is not able to read the didactic at all and is left stranded in their experience because the curatorial considerations mentioned above do not allow for a relational experience with the work. This is how exhibitionary affect is able to enhance the accessibility<sup>13</sup> of an exhibition. If the curatorial considerations for

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to acknowledge the expansive nature of the term accessibility in relationship to exhibitionary affect. Accessibility in this context speaks to opening an understanding of the work on display in exhibitions by transcending the group or the mass. This can be through the assistance of educational aids as discussed, but the limitations of these aids must be recognized (i.e. language and knowledge). It can also be through providing context in which to view the work through, but by providing context a viewer's intuitive relationship to the works can be influenced. And of course, this also

the display of this piece would have been made to enhance affect, the piece and its impact on the viewer would not have needed to rely on the substantial didactic. It could have relied on the relational viewing that exhibitionary affect allows for to create an individual emotive response from the viewer and a meaningful relationship to the work.

An important quality that is shared by the exhibitions mentioned above is that they all take place in museums, which, unlike most small artist-run centres, have a particular relationship with the public. Public galleries have a tradition of using models of education in the gallery to create a supportive viewing environment. These models range from didactic panels, to introductory wall texts, and most recently, to guided audio tours of the gallery. However, all these educational assists create contexts for the artworks that pre-exist the viewer's relationship to the pieces. They also rely on a perceived knowledge base and privilege the viewer's comprehension of the language that these tools are provided through. This complicates curating for exhibitionary affect as it is a relational experience between the viewer and the artwork. As exhibitionary affect continues to solidify as a point of research in contemporary curatorial practice, curators will need to continue to examine how they can support their audiences through alternative learning methods that provide an affective experience.

In addition to their display in a public museum, there is also an element of site-sensitivity in many of these exhibitions. In an effort towards producing an exhibition that involves site-sensitivity and site-specificity, the white cube gallery space is openly

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incompasses physical and socioeconomic barriers that are often present in a gallery space. This is all to say that the term accessibility is multi-dimensional in relation to exhibitionary affect and will be a dynamic term in continuum.

acknowledged. In his seminal book, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, the late Irish-American art critic and scholar, Brian O'Doherty, argues that the white cube design of the contemporary art gallery is a disembodied and emotionally detached space. The viewer assumes the role of spectator – a disembodied eye – rather than participant in an encounter with the work. O'Doherty posits that our presence before a work of art means that we absent ourselves in favor of the eye, which is in direct opposition to a multi-sensory encounter with exhibitionary affect<sup>14</sup>. As discussed through O'Doherty, the audience holds an expectation of the gallery to operate a certain way and reflexively they expect to be given a level of information which they are able to perform towards - namely context for the work they are viewing. This double bind of needing to push against the context of the contemporary art gallery to be able to affirm exhibitionary affect is emblematic of the emerging nature of this curatorial methodology. As such, it is imperative for curators to acknowledge the limitations of the gallery space as a white cube, and its insistence on optics, in order to challenge such notions by curating for exhibitionary affect.

O'Doherty speaks to how the audience's expectations of the white cube have been challenged, beginning as early as 1833 with Sameul F.B. Morse's exhibition, *Exhibition Gallery at the Louvre*, which presented masterpieces in a salon hang which "passed [the viewer's] understanding"<sup>15</sup>. Fast forward to the Fifties and Sixties, and the space around the work became a concern. Although the salon hang and giving artworks

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<sup>14</sup> Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2010.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* pp 15.

room to breathe on the walls appear to be antithetical, they hold a similar demand from the viewer in their implication of the wall of the white cube as a method for display, and therefore reinforce a disembodied experience in the gallery. As O'Doherty states, 'there is a particular uneasiness in watching artworks try to establish territory but not place', which is true in both the salon hang and the placeless modernist gallery<sup>16</sup>. In the Sixties and Seventies however, the Eye and the Spectator are given space to come together in the gallery as the turn to "minimal objects often provoke[d] perceptions other than the visual", leading to feeling and emotions in the gallery space<sup>17</sup>. Here is where we start to see affect in the gallery, and the desire to enhance feeling states, as the Eye and the Spectator both simultaneously "acknowledge the direct desire for experience"<sup>18</sup>.

A particularly pointed example of affective curating is the 2018 exhibition entitled *Feelings* (*image 2a.*, *image 2b.*), curated by Bernhart Schwenk and Nicola Graef, at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich. Its successes and challenges occur in the contradiction that an encounter with affect requires the body of the viewer and a relational experience with space, but the white cube favors the viewer as spectator. This exhibition, which consisted of 100 paintings, objects, and films from 40 international contemporary artists, is noteworthy because of the curators' direct acknowledgement of curating for feeling in the gallery space, as the name suggests. As described above, exhibitionary affect is an emerging field of study, and to have an experimental curatorial methodology positioned so prominently in a gallery of this prestige is notable. One way

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* pp 27.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* pp 50.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* pp 61.

this exhibition was able to harness exhibitionary affect was by not providing any wall didactics, which challenged the tradition of using extensive wall labels in the gallery to inform viewers about the content and context of the exhibition and guide the viewer's way of looking at the artworks on display. The curatorial ambition of Schwenk and Graef was to invite the viewer to intuitively approach the art displayed from a purely subjective position. The exhibition was curated to encourage a direct dialogue between artwork and viewer in order to stimulate an individualized emotional engagement. What this act did was remove the hierarchical approach to looking at art that is often relied upon in a gallery setting, where the success of the work relies on the viewer understanding the work in a prescribed way. Without a didactic presence to affirm or reject an intuitive reading that the viewer might have, all interpretations of the works displayed are correct. There is no wrong or right way to understand the artwork in this exhibition<sup>19</sup>. The curation of *Feelings* is a strong example of curating for exhibitionary affect because it produces an atmosphere of curiosity and privileged intuitive feelings towards the artwork on display.

As modeled in the success of *Feelings* and its privileging of a relational viewing experience, exhibitionary affect can play a role in curating for varied audiences, perspectives, and ways of knowing. Fisher states that "...curatorial initiatives that engage the communicative function of affect embrace not only relational, but also somatic and cognitive ontologies of exhibition experience"<sup>20</sup>, which speaks directly to

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<sup>19</sup> The Pinakothek der Moderne is a large, public, contemporary art gallery. In Toronto, ON, where this paper was written, it could be compared to an institution such as the Art Gallery of Ontario in its relationship to the public.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* pp 28.



exhibitionary affect's power to provide a deeply emotive experience. This happens independent of the usual hierarchy whereby the narrative and explanation laid out by the artist, curator, and gallery are paramount and the viewer is expected to learn or understand. It is a top down approach to education in which an audience is spoken to uniformly. This model implicitly privileges one correct way of understanding the work, which is often prescribed on a didactic beside the work, or in a curatorial text. In contrast, exhibitionary affect is able to subvert the ways in which we expect art to communicate, and who we expect it to be able to communicate with, by prioritizing the individual's feelings towards a work.

This power of affect to promote the accessibility of the gallery has not gone unnoticed, as Ann Temkin and Naomi Beckwith, chief curators at the Museum of Modern Art and Solomon R. Guggenheim, respectively, discussed in a recent interview with the New York Times titled, "Sharing Ideas on the Path Towards Change". They note that now is an unprecedented time in contemporary art as the model of expertise which privileged the scholar is no longer applicable<sup>21</sup>. Instead, as Temkin states, "...we became much more interested as a culture in many voices," pointing to a marked shift in the traditional model of gallery viewing towards promoting a new way of engaging in the gallery that is collaborative in nature between audience and artwork, facilitated by affect<sup>22</sup>. This is inline with a cultural turn, especially within the recent past and the rise of the #MeToo movement, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Black Lives Matter. These events have shifted culture and venues of discussion, of which the art gallery is one. And so, if

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<sup>21</sup> Ann Temkin and Naomi Beckwith. "Sharing Ideas on the Path Towards Change". The New York Times. January 4, 2023. Print.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

curators are to curate ethically in contemporary cultural moments, they must leave room for affect to emerge in curatorial practices. Curators must allow space for affect because when used as a curatorial methodology, exhibitionary affect is able to promote an accessible entry point into the event of the exhibition that can create conversation and foster an emotive response amongst and with a diverse public<sup>23</sup>.

By the omission of didactics and historical contexts in *Feelings*, the curators were able to ask open-ended questions of the audience. They were also able to encourage feeling as the primary outcome of the exhibition. However, in doing so they needed to turn a deliberately blind eye to the context of the Pinakothek der Moderne as a major contemporary art gallery. The Pinakothek der Moderne intersects with an incredibly vast audience demographic and in removing didactic, or what can be assumed as wayfinding tools for some people, this exhibition can read as opposite of the intended outcome; an example of inaccessibility rather than radical inclusivity. This is not to say that *Feelings* is not an important attempt at curating for exhibitionary affect, but rather that it leaves room for curators to think through additional accessibility measures that should be considered when engaging in experimental curatorial practices. This could include the construction of an exhibition website where viewers can choose to learn more information about the works on display or a heightened commitment to support supplementary programming such as curatorial tours and artist talks in favor of supporting a multifaceted understanding of the artworks in the exhibition.

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<sup>23</sup> To have an exhibition be able to connect with a diverse audience means that the audience is not assumed in their persona. They are acknowledged as individuals with varied backgrounds which inform their relationship to the works on display. No two audience members are alike and therefore no two audience members will have the exact same relationship to the exhibition.

## ***Exhibitions and Practice-Based Research.***

My two curatorial research exhibitions, *Process* (2022) and *a series of actions or steps taken towards a particular end* (2023), directly explore the curatorial methodology of exhibitionary affect. Across these exhibitions I worked with nine interdisciplinary artists who had both fine art and design practices. Although each exhibition was different in scope and outcome, I will first speak to the similarities between them. My aim across both exhibitions was to enhance the affective qualities of the works on display. To do so, I found that considering art and space was a powerful tool. Attention to site-sensitivity in *Process*, and site-specificity in *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end*, promoted exhibitionary affect. By acknowledging the white wall of the gallery spaces as posited earlier, and curating against display expectations that use this wall as a primary display support, the artwork was able to create conversation with its environment. This encouraged a life force to develop within the works that shifted them from static object to an extra-textual entity and encouraged the event site as discussed by Fisher<sup>24</sup>.

Furthermore, by curating for a relationship between the art and the space, I had to accept the premise of the exhibition as an event site, or area of experience, and curate considering the art and viewers' relationships. This was critically important as it gave me, as the curator, permission to ask my audience to engage with the works presented. I was not relying on passive viewing or display to be able to enhance the communicative functions of the artworks, and what this resulted in was a curation of

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<sup>24</sup> Jennifer Fisher, "Exhibitionary Affect," in *n. Paradoxa*, vol. 18, 2006. pp 28.

works that asked for activation by the audience. This eagerness of the works to engage with the viewer ensured that an affective space was created between the viewing public and the displayed artworks. The desire for stimulation of the works reflexively could be seen as an unfinishedness; this is to say that the works are not able to be fully activated to their potential without the viewer's presence and engagement. In some cases this engagement resulted in moments of tension between artwork and audience, and in some cases it provided a sense of resolve. Curating to enhance these moments is one of the strategies that I implemented to curate for exhibitionary affect.

While there were similarities in my curatorial approach to foster exhibitionary affect in both exhibitions, unique qualities to each show emerged. *Process* (2022) featured new works by Beverley Freedman, Erin Stripe, mihyun maria kim, Reshmi Bisessar, Sara Shoghi, and Vicky Talwar. It was a unique curatorial experience, as I first engaged with the artists as part of the ArtScape Ontario College of Art + Design University residency in the summer of 2022. I was acting as the curator-in-residence for this residency, and as such had the responsibility to work with any student who was interested in participating in the exhibition. This meant that I was not able to select the artists, and instead, I had the curatorial responsibility to produce a cohesive exhibition from a broad cross-section of creative practices. *Process*, therefore, became much more of an informal space to explore my curatorial approach. It was natural for this exhibition to have an air of experimentation in both the works presented and the curatorial questions I was asking. Many of the artists had not considered affect in relation to their work, but they were all aware of my research and chose to work with

me as they were invested in discovering how a consideration of affect could enhance their artworks for the exhibition as well as their artistic practice at large. What this resulted in were deep and exhaustive individual discussions and studio visits with each artist that centered around affect and how, through my curatorial input, affect could be teased out of their pieces. I worked closely alongside the artists throughout the development of their works, but it was not my role, within the scope of this residency, to determine their final outcomes. It was by turning towards curating for exhibitionary affect that I was able to create cohesion between the works exhibited and enhance the affective qualities of the works on display. In this, my curatorial process is also displayed within each piece and the exhibition as a whole. Two artists' works emerged as being particularly strong examples of how curating for exhibitionary affect can elevate a viewer's experience of affect in the gallery space.

Through Beverley Freedman's installation *Marbles* (*image 3a.*) I was able to explore curating the exhibition as an event site. The installation featured a faux-living room mock-up of an overstuffed armchair, carpet, and a side table adorned with a copy of the *New York Times* and a porcelain cup of glass marbles. Alongside that was what appeared to be a soft, knit blanket, positioned on a blanket ladder, that is at first suggestion plush and inviting (*image 3b.*). In the staging of this particular environment, the viewer is encouraged to sit in the chair and curl up under the blanket, as one would in their living room (*image 3c.*). The positioning of the installation to face away from the

rest of the gallery, looking out the front window, provides a separation of sorts from the gallery space. The viewer has an impression of being in a living room, intimate and cozy, but as they reach for the blanket this sensation is fractured. The blanket, which one might expect to be made of a soft and warm material, is actually constructed from jute and synthetic raffia, which feels rough and disrupting (*image 3d.*). As the viewer sits with the blanket they discover that the blanket has holes in the knitted pieces. For this artist, these represent the altered neural pathways found in the brains of people with dementia, areas in the brain where neural connections have been lost. By engaging with the material aspects of *Marbles* the audience experiences a disjunction between what they might expect (soft) and what is provided (rough) which somatically alludes to the difficulties experienced by people experiencing neurodegeneration.

Freedman comes to her creative practice through a multi-faceted career in pharmacy work, education, and research, specifically working at the intersection of memory and dementia. She identifies as a designer, rather than artist. Through our discussions, *Marbles* crystallized for her as a piece to reproduce what it can feel like to have dementia and the feeling of losing one's sense of self (Freedman)<sup>25</sup>. As the curator I was able to encourage this affective encounter between the viewer and Freedman's installation by helping her stage a scene. We did this by considering the placement of one chair, which encouraged a singular encounter with the work, and intentionally turning the chair away from the exhibition itself which further isolated the beholder. Locating this piece in the corner of the gallery created intimacy and a sense of

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<sup>25</sup> Beverley Freedman. Avalon Mott. Toronto. September 2022.

perceived privacy in an otherwise open-plan gallery space. The physicality of the chair, its color, material and cushioning, was also critically important. By way of the chair's aesthetics, I wanted to encourage the viewer to sit in it, which is an ask of an audience in a gallery because it requires participation in the work. The installation as a whole needs the viewer to touch and feel the various objects (blanket and chair) to be able to engage. Setting a scene that is able to bypass the direct looking that gallery audiences are often accustomed to practicing in the gallery, and instead encourage movement and participation, was the result of intentional curation towards exhibitionary affect.

Unlike Freedman's event-site, mihyun maria kim's multi-media installations *Textures of han* and *Reaches of han*, required attention to site-sensitivity to reflect the artist's extensive artistic research into the untranslatable Korean psychosomatic affect *han* (image 4a.). In our conversations, Kim quoted Cathy Park Hong's definition of *han* as talked about in her book *Minor Feelings*, as a "combination of bitterness, wistfulness, shame, melancholy, and vengefulness, accumulated from years of brutal colonialism, war, and U.S.-supported dictatorships that have never been politically redressed. *han* is so ongoing that it can even be passed down: to be Korean is to feel *han*"<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup>. Both *Textures of Han* and *Reaches of Han* consist of a large, mirror-tiled surface, upon which are attached a series of ceramic forms. *Reaches of han* is installed on the ceiling (image 4b.) and *Textures of han* (image 4c.) is installed on the floor directly beneath it, creating an echo-chamber of reflections between them. The viewer's eye is drawn upwards towards the ceiling in *Reaches of han* by a series of ceramic casts created by the artist's two

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<sup>26</sup> Cathy Park Hong. *Minor Feelings*. One World. 2020.

<sup>27</sup> mihyun maria kim. Avalon Mott. Toronto. September 2022.

hands tightly grasping a clay form (*image 4d.*). These grasped forms are hung from the mirrored ceiling tile like a mobile, moving ever-so slightly in response to changes in air pressure and the presence of people. Positioned directly below *Reaches of han*, *Textures of han* draws the viewer's eye towards the floor with a raised, mirrored platform, upon which sits a different series of cement cast hands (*image 4e.*). These hands are extended into arms and the gesture of an upper torso by a stuffed set of silk appendages. The material play between the silk and the cement creates an intriguing tension that holds the gaze.

For this show, the installation of the two works above and below one another, on the ceiling and floor, placed the viewer in an affective space between them. *Textures of han* and *Reaches of han* are always reflected in themselves, so that the viewer cannot view one piece independent of the other. Furthermore, the audience is not able to view either of the works in their entirety independent of their own reflection. By creating this triangulation of the viewer's body and works, the installation directly implicates the viewer in an embodied viewing experience, and gestures towards the infinite nature of *han*. For Kim, this notion of *han* has been a key theory in her Master of Fine Art studies at OCAD University. The infinite reflection mirrors the never-ending nature of *han* specifically, but also affect in general. There is a direct visual representation in both *Textures of han* and *Reaches of han* of the subject-object relationship that affect requires.

The artworks I've discussed are cursory examples of curating for the exhibition as an event site, as well as site sensitivity, which I further developed in my second



thesis exhibition, *a series of actions or steps taken towards a particular end* (2023). In contrast to the experimental nature of *Process*, *a series of actions or steps taken towards a particular end* represents the culmination and refinement of my research, resulting in a succinct exhibition mounted at a professional gallery. If *Process* were considered a sketch, *a series of actions or steps taken towards a particular end* would be the finished piece. *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end* is the result of artist research, extensive studio visits, and a considered collection of works. For this exhibition I knew that I wanted to be intentional in my selection of artists and artworks so that I could proactively curate exhibitionary affect, rather than the reactionary state that I took in *Process*. My research resulted in twelve studio visits with artists located in both Toronto and Vancouver, all of whom had parallel research interests to affect. I found that this created a short hand in talking about the intentions of the works, and a commonality between my ambitions as a curator and the artists' individual aspirations for their pieces. Additionally, I had resources with this exhibition that I did not have with *Process*. I was able to consider the physical size of the gallery space when selecting the number of artists that I would work with to ensure that ample room was left for the ambient atmosphere between the works. This helped facilitate a conversation between the works and the heightened sense of exhibitionary affect. I was also able to move away or towards working with artists based on how eagerly they accepted the premise of the exhibition and my curatorial suggestions in support of enhancing affect in their work. Finally, I was able to pay the artists that I exhibited a CARFAC fee, as well as provide a material budget. This was supported by Xspace

Cultural Centre<sup>28</sup>. The resulting exhibition features three distinct works by three artists - Ella Gonzales, Meg Ross, and Meichen Waxer - which channel affect in various ways.

Meichen Waxer's installation *...and the sky* (2023) evokes a seduction through reflection that relies on a site-specific installation in the gallery space (*image 5a.*). In the middle of the main room, the artist has partially covered a load-bearing column in a skin of thin, mirrored adhesive. By hanging the adhesive only between where the crown molding and the chair rail would be, Waxer invites a specific reading of Western domesticity and class. This calls us to think of colonialism's tradition of ornamentation motifs, and how they rely on illusion, as they are not able to provide anything deeper than the surface they present. On the four opposing walls, Waxer has applied strips of mirrored adhesive with the same dimensions as the column, and installed a temporary baseboard below them. The column which Waxer has covered is the prominent architectural feature of the otherwise rectangular space. Dividing the room into quadrants, this intervention disrupts the pristine character of the gallery's white walls. In the corner of the gallery, the circular beeswax candle, *Hours* (2022), gently glows (when its wick is lit) from atop a mirrored plinth (*image 5b.*). As *Hours* melts away throughout the duration of the exhibition, the mirrored surface below it emulates the reflective surface elsewhere in the space. As viewers move through the exhibition, they're made aware of

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<sup>28</sup> 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 approaches programming as a form of world-building: providing exhibitions, events, panels and workshops that respond to the direct needs and interests of their communities and membership. Expanding notions of theory and aesthetics, they seek to hold space for thought-provoking and experimental collaborations. Xpace Cultural Centre is committed to maintaining an anti-oppressive, queer-positive environment, prioritizing marginalized, racialized, Black and Indigenous folks. Xpace is supported by the OCAD Student Union, and its programming is open to students, as well as emerging practitioners of any educational background. Xpace is not affiliated with OCAD University or the OCAD University gallery system.

themselves and the other works in the gallery as their fragmentary reflections create a moving 'wallpaper' which destabilizes the wall space (*image 5c.*, *image 5d.*). Fracturing the viewer's expectations further, the mirrored skin articulates the texture of the various surfaces that it has been applied to - rough, inconsistent and irregular - and distorts any objects which are reflected. The irregular reflection denies the viewer the pleasure of feeling the gaze directly reciprocated and ignites an obsessive desire to see what won't be fully mirrored: the self. Affect lies in the unrequited desire to be seen by ...*and the sky*, the audience's presence acknowledged by a reflected soft-self which will never crystallize into a recognizable form. In the space created by exhibitionary affect, Waxer asks what preconceptions we subconsciously bring into the space that surrounds us and our way of seeing.

In selecting Meichen's work for this exhibition, I was immediately drawn to her use of reflection to fracture a self-state and call it into question. Initially Meichen was set to display the solo form of *Hours* in the gallery, but through our curatorial conversations, the entirety of the installation ...*and the sky* emerged. This shifted her work from a sculptural object that was affective, to a site-specific installation that amplified affect to the scale of the gallery space of Xpace Cultural Centre. The installation does so by its use of mincing reflection which denies the viewer the desire to be seen in these contemplative surfaces. The site-specific tension that is created in the reflected texture of the gallery wall is where the enhanced exhibitionary affect lies in Meichen's work; the tension between desire and being denied.

A longing for deep engagement is also abundant in Meg Ross's work, *Blue Read* (2023). Mounted along the front wall of the gallery, when encountered the work resembles a grouping of thirty-nine books on a metal shelf (*image 6a.*). As the viewer chooses and pulls one of the 'books' from the shelf to read, they may recognize the intimate feeling of selecting a volume at a library or bookstore (*image 6b.*). The covers of the books are made from cyanotypes - either digitally manipulated, or in some instances, entirely constructed with Photoshop. Ross has adhered the cyanotypes to MDF blocks which wear gently as the compressed pages of a book would (*image 6c.*). The artist's use of cyanotypes represents her ongoing investigation into photography's relationship with light. The blue-toned colour fields are non-representational; they provide deep, indefinite contours to hold the viewer's gaze, highlighting colour, space and form. By using a photographic image as the jacket of the book, Ross presents the viewer with a rare opportunity to form a kinetic relationship with a typically two-dimensional medium. Viewers are able to touch the image and leave a trace of their presence through their fingerprints, stirring a visceral relationship to the art objects which couldn't be obtained by simply viewing the images. The work asks the viewer to read rather than view - a familiar act which leaves room for private contemplation and favors individual comprehension. By allowing the viewer to encounter a cyanotype in such an intimate way, Ross creates a space in her work for reflection at an interpersonal and emotional level.

Meg's sighting of affect as a key theory in her practice prior to our working together immediately drew me to her practice. Although she had already created two

previous series of 'photo books', *Blue Read* and its intentional use of cyanotypes to evaluate photography's relationship to light, and beyond that, how we use visual language to understand, was a new work created specifically for this exhibition. There is an inherent affect quality to this work, as it is deeply layered with meaning - from its meaning as a photo, to its presence as a book, to its nostalgic recall of the library or bookstore or home bookshelf - which I aimed to foster and highlight in its display. By utilizing a system for display that had clear signifiers and signs that pointed the viewer towards a library, or bookstore, and more generally the act of removing a book from a shelf, the ask of the work to be read rather than viewed was affirmed. This performance of the 'photo book' highlights the exhibitionary affect stored in *Blue Read*.

Hung on a diagonal from the ceiling in the main space corridor is Ella Gonzales' large-scale painting, *Reflection of a Doorway* (2022) (*image 7a.*). The work is a 9-by-8.5 foot painting made on semi-transparent Jusi-Silk<sup>29</sup> fabric sent to the artist from the Philippines by her family (*image 7b.*). At first glance, the painting depicts the architecture of Gonzales' former family homes, which lends to a reading of memory and nostalgia. Behind and through the painting, additional works by Gonzales become visible: a folded painting on a shelf and two small-scale paintings situated on the floor, all on Piña-Silk<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Jusi-Silk fabric is from the Spanish "jusi" and the Tagalog "husi". It refers to a delicate fibrous dress fabric woven in the Philippine Islands. It is made with hemp warp and pineapple fiber filling or pineapple fibre warp and silk, cotton, or fine abaca after filling. (<https://skosmos.silknow.org/thesaurus/en/page/298>)

<sup>30</sup> Piña-Silk fabric (Piña-Seda or Pineapple-Silk) is a type of fabric that combines pineapple fibers and silk fibers. It was first historically used in the Philippines at the beginning of the 17th century. It is found in the province of Pampanga, which is known for its pineapple plantations. The Piña-Silk weaving was introduced to Pampanga by Spanish missionaries, where they were taught how to weave this type of material. The Piña-Silk fabric is not only beautiful to look at, but also very strong and durable. (<https://barongsrus.com/barong-tagalog-fabric/>)

fabric (*image 7c., image 7d.*). In this deferred revealing, *Reflection of a Doorway* provides a secondary viewing experience in which the creases and traces from human touch and the gallery space become subtly apparent. In her understanding of this phenomenon, Gonzales references Lisa Robinson's theory of soft architecture<sup>31</sup> and its detailing of the ephemeral qualities of space. The organic creation of this soft architecture privileges form, shape and light - all qualities with which the transparent texture of the jusi-piña fabric is in concert. In this, the painting becomes a vessel which carries history in both its surface and imagery, while simultaneously addressing its present context. The Jusi fabric is thin and semi-transparent, with a refined weave that allows for light to travel through the sheer coat of paint, while the imagery remains semi-opaque. In its opacity, the painting situates the viewer in Gonzales' domestic familial past. Yet in its transparency, *Reflection of a Doorway* invites the viewer in on an intimate conversation about the shifting nature of diasporic movement and the longing for something that will never be as it once was.

I was drawn to Ella's work specifically because of how she leans into the concept of opacity. By doing so, her work is perpetually site-sensitive in nature because it relies on the environment it is installed in to support the revealing of the secondary viewing of the soft-architecture. In the work, this is where the affect lies, and by displaying the work in a way in which the playground of opacity is fostered, I am able to curate for the exhibition - or in this case installation - as event site. At Xpace Cultural Centre this

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<sup>31</sup> Lisa Robinson uses the term soft architecture to describe the incorporeal aspects of architecture, like memory, light, form, colour, furnishings, and social space in her essay *Seven Walks from the Office of Soft Architecture*. In speaking with Ella she noted that the heightened attention to these abstract forms gives texture to her experience of having called 12 places home.

relates to the decision to hang the painting on a diagonal so that an active space is created between the wall and the painting, rather than relying on the passive support of the gallery wall which is what the audience often encounters when viewing two-dimensional mediums in the gallery. To activate this constructed event site it was important for me to invite the viewer into the space between the diagonally-hung painting and the wall. To do so, the placement of smaller, more intimate paintings along the baseboard of the wall, along with a folded painting displayed on a shelf along the back wall, entices the viewer's curiosity and leads them intuitively into this space (*image 7e.*).

In all three of these works, there are layers of meaning that the viewer is able to access. These layers ensure that the works are able to participate with all the viewers of the exhibition, and simultaneously encourage exhibitionary affect in their tie to supporting an intuitive relational connection to the works. Meichen's work has been mapped through social media by an abundance of mirror selfies, but for some viewers they might appreciate the site specificity of this work – noticing that even the moldings are carried over and through the gallery. Meg's cyanotypes as the cover for her books allows for a specific denotation of the work if the viewer is familiar with photographic practices. If they do not carry that knowledge, there is still a connection in the vast deep colour fields articulated. Ella's work is layered as it is a painting, but is not hung on the wall as may be expected. If the viewer has a knowledge of the history of display, they realize that there is something being questioned here. If they do not come with this knowledge, they are still able to engage with the deferred revealing that this display

allows for. In these layers, all three pieces are catering to a spectrum of experience in the exhibition.

Although both of my exhibitions helped me to better understand the curatorial methodology of exhibitionary affect, there were challenges that arose; one of which was the lack of supplementary programming for *a series of actions or steps taken towards a particular end*. As this exhibition was mounted at Xpace Cultural Centre, it did not have didactics, and as I discussed through *Feelings*, this can lead to a sense of disorder for the viewer in the exhibition. I did write a curatorial essay that was available in the space, both physically and via QR code, as well as create an exhibition website, which included a promotional blurb, project statement from each artist, artist biographies, and an exhibition essay, but due to funding and the programming structure at Xpace Cultural Centre, I was not able to formally activate the exhibition. Meg and I had extensive conversations about what it would look like to stimulate *Blue Read* through guided participation, such as a reading circle or book club. We also discussed having this piece act as a lending archive where viewers could check out a book and return the book with a written recording of their time with the book - their feelings, experiences and thoughts. Meichen and I also discussed how we could hold close lookings or meditative times that would coincide with the burning of *Hours*. These activations would give participants a constructed space to have an even more heightened affect experience with the piece as it burned. Ideally, I would also have liked to hold a panel discussion with my artists so we could talk about exhibitionary affect, and affect in general, in relation to their works in accessible terms. These moments between artist, curator, and audience are important in creating a relational experience and for fostering a sense of belonging in the gallery



space. As *Process* was more informal in nature, and the exhibition run was only for one week, I did not consider supplementary programming for this exhibition. Additionally, I did display project statements in the gallery, and created an exhibition website, so that viewers could feel as if they were part of my on-going research. It was clearly noted that *Process* was part one of two of my thesis exhibitions.

Throughout my research into exhibitionary affect, as well as my practice-based curatorial investigations, what crystalized is that this topic is non-exhaustive. Because it is based in a relational experience, because it centers the viewer and creates space to feel in the exhibition, because it is experimental, it will never be static. It cannot be perfected or replicated exhibition over exhibition with the same result. Recently, there have been some exciting movements towards curating exhibitionary affect that I have viewed; specifically *The New Alphabet* by Anna Papadopoulos at MOCA Toronto, and *Outside the Palace of Me* by Shary Boyle at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver. Both of these exhibitions used specific wall color and strategic lighting to create an atmosphere that completed the works. Additionally, the didactics were positioned in such a way that the viewer did not need to encounter them before the work - rather they were given a choice to read them. Both exhibitions also provided extensive exhibition texts for take away if viewers were interested, but there were no didactic panels or title cards in the exhibition itself. What these exhibitions highlight is that curators are beginning to adopt curating towards affective experiences of exhibitions, and that there are ways to do so that can support a varied audience in their viewing experience. Curating for exhibitionary affect will be an ever-evolving field. By accepting this, I

position this thesis not as the end to something - the completion of my MFA - but rather the start of something; a commitment to investigating how I can continue to foster exhibitionary affect in my curatorial practice.

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**Figures.**

Image 1a. Entrance to Graduate Gallery - *Process* Exhibition. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



Image 1b. Installation of *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end*. 2023.  
Alison Postma.





Image 2a. Installation of *Feelings*. 2019.

<https://artmap.com/pinakotheek/exhibition/feelings-2019?print=do>



Image 2b. Installation of *Feelings*. 2019. <https://www.mahokubota.com/en/news/2165/>



Image 3a. *Marbles* by Beverley Freedman. Process. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



Image 3b. *Marbles* by Beverley Freedman. Process. 2022. Philip Ocampo.





Image 3c. *Marbles* by Beverley Freedman, blanket detail. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



Image 3d. *Marbles* by Beverley Freedman, blanket detail. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



Image 4a. *Texture of han* and *Reaches of han* by mihyun maria kim. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



Image 4b. *Reaches of han* by mihyun maria kim. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.





Image 4c. *Texture of han* by mihyun maria kim. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.

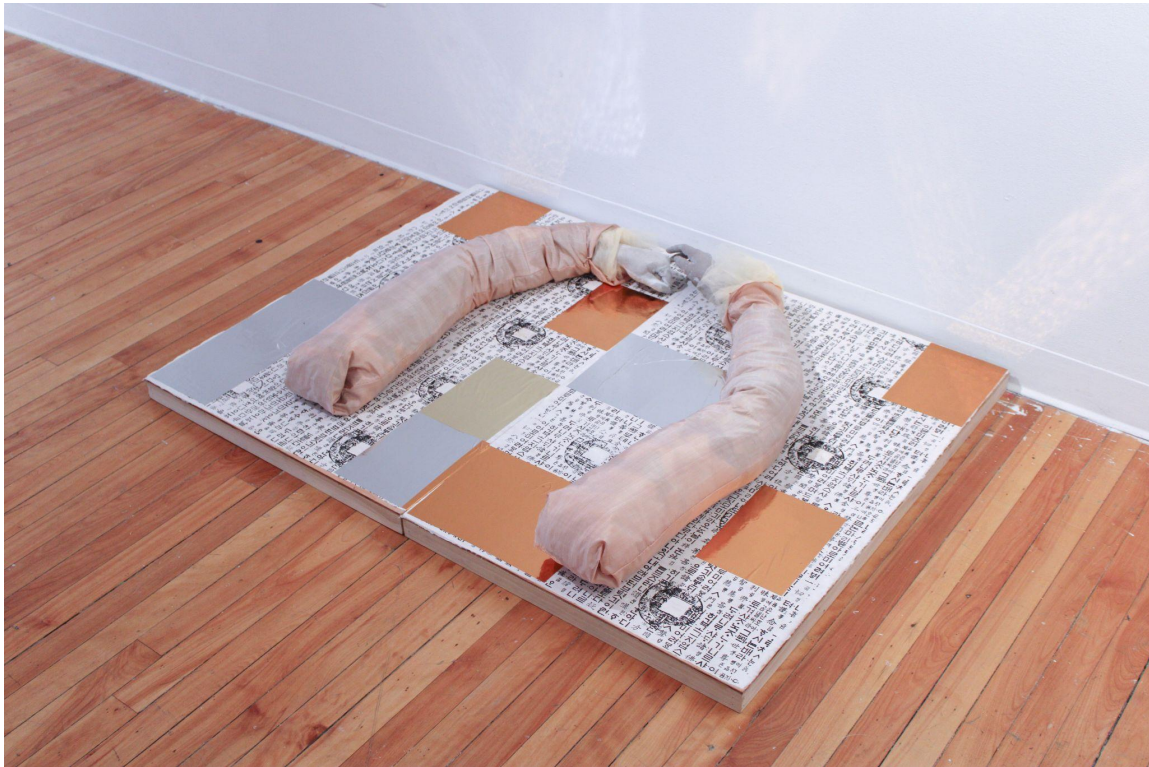


Image 4d. *Reaches of han* (detail) by mihyun maria kim. *Process*. 2022. Philip Ocampo.



*Image 4e. Texture of han (detail) by mihyun maria kim. Process. 2022. Philip Ocampo.*



Image 5a. *...and the sky* by Meichen Waxer. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.





Image 5b. *Hours* (detail) by Meichen Waxer. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 5c. *...and the sky* by Meichen Waxer with *Reflections of a Doorway* by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.

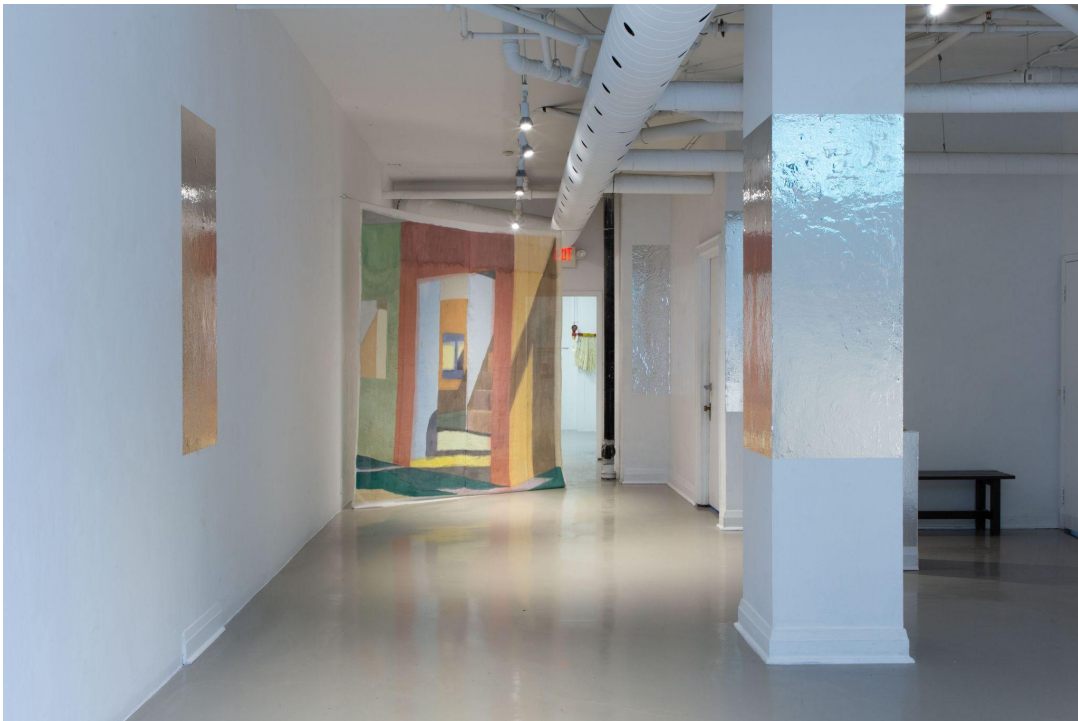




Image 5d. *...and the sky* by Meichen Waxer with *Blue Read* by Meg Ross. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 6a. *Blue Read* by Meg Ross. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 6b. *Blue Read* by Meg Ross. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Meg Ross.



Image 6c. *Blue Read* by Meg Ross. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 7a. *Reflections of a Doorway* by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 7b. *Reflections of a Doorway* (detail) by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.

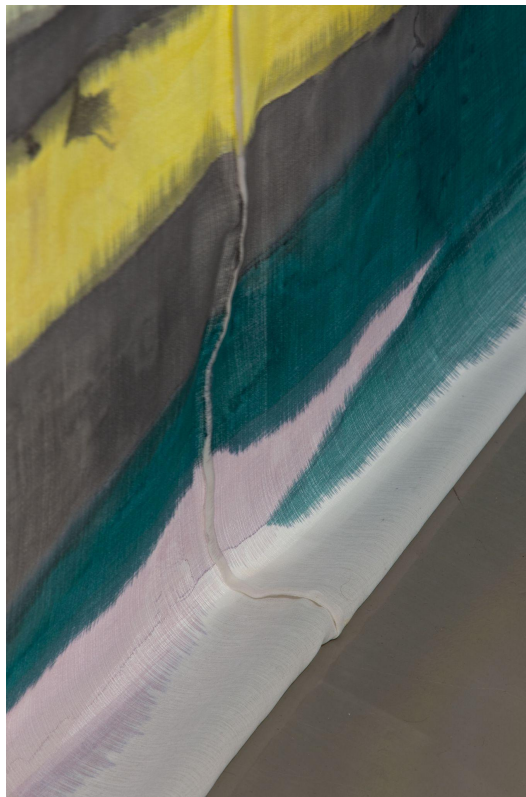


Image 7c. *Reflections of a Doorway* by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



Image 7d. *Reflections of a Doorway* by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.





Image 7e. *Reflections of a Doorway* by Ella Gonzales. a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. 2023. Alison Postma.



**Curatorial Essay: a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.**

To tell you about the works in this exhibition, I must first talk about a work that isn't in it—piece-x. I won't give you the expected specifics about piece-x; no title, didactic or dimensions. I won't provide a medium or colour palette to envision. I can't describe piece-x to you, because for each reader of this essay, piece-x is different. Piece-x is an enigma, a work that you've already encountered that spoke an untranscribable language which felt as if it was only spoken between the two of you. You might've encountered it visually, it might've had sensory components as well, but you knew you were in front of piece-x when the hair on your arms stood on end, when the pace of your breath might've altered, when your eyes might've misted. Piece-x is an artwork that has channeled exhibitionary affect to move you at your core.

There is no formula for piece-x, although artists and curators alike are in perpetual search of its outcome. Throughout this exhibition, *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end*, I'm examining how curating for exhibitionary affect can create the conditions to allow for piece-x to reveal itself to the viewer. Exhibitionary affect is a curatorial methodology focused on generating emotive responses towards art through strategic arrangements and relationships between works in the gallery space, and an acknowledgement of the atmosphere of the exhibition. When scholar and curator Jennifer Fisher writes about exhibitionary affect, I can only imagine that piece-x is her prototype. As she states, 'curatorial initiatives that engage the communicative function of affect embrace not only relational, but also somatic and cognitive ontologies of exhibition experience'<sup>32</sup>, which in turn extend the artworks' ability to communicate beyond its representational self (Fisher 28). I have defined affect as the

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<sup>32</sup> Jennifer Fisher, "Exhibitionary Affect," in *n. Paradoxa*, vol. 18, 2006, pp. 27-33.



charged space of potential between the artwork and the viewer; a space that when entered, can lead to curiosity and learning. This challenges the traditional hierarchy of a viewer's experience in a gallery, in which they are made to feel as though they must understand the work through a particular lens.

Exhibitionary affect is integral to art's accessibility; it acknowledges that works communicate to a varied public through many languages. It recognizes different ways of knowing and seeing and leaves room for the viewer to form meaningful and resonant relationships with works. *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end* is an exhibition of three distinct, site-specific works by three artists—Ella Gonzales, Meg Ross, and Meichen Waxer—which channel affect in various ways. The Irish critic Brian O'Doherty writes about the convention of 'hanging' in his text *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* warning that, 'the way pictures are hung makes assumptions about what is offered. Hanging editorializes on matters of interpretation and value'<sup>33</sup>, which would have immediate effects on the transmission of exhibitionary affect (O'Doherty 23). The exhibition seeks to disrupt traditional ways of display to spark and uphold affect. By turning towards site-specificity, the works ask for relational readings that privilege viewers' individual curiosity, rather than one of detachment reinforced by an absence of conversation between the works on view and the stark gallery space.

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<sup>33</sup> Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

Meichen Waxer's installation *...and the sky* (2023) evokes an air of enticement. In the middle of the Main Space, the artist has partially covered a load-bearing column in a skin of thin, mirrored adhesive. By hanging the adhesive only between where crown molding and chair rail would be, Waxer invites a specific reading of Western domesticity and class. This calls us to think of colonialism's tradition of ornamentation motifs, and how they rely on illusion, as they are not able to provide anything deeper than the surface they present. On the four opposing walls, Waxer has applied strips of mirrored adhesive at the same dimensions as the column, and installed a temporary baseboard below them. The column which Waxer has covered is the prominent architectural feature of the otherwise rectangular space. Dividing the room into quadrants, this intervention disrupts the pristine character of the gallery's white walls. In the corner of the gallery, the circular beeswax candle (*Hours*, 2022) gently glows (when its wick is lit) from atop a mirrored plinth. As *Hours* melts away throughout the duration of the exhibition, the mirrored surface below it emulates the reflective surface elsewhere in the space. As viewers move through the exhibition, they're made aware of themselves and the other works in the gallery as their fragmentary reflections create a moving 'wallpaper' which destabilizes the wall space. Fracturing the viewer's expectations further, the mirrored skin articulates the texture of the various surfaces that it's been applied to; rough, inconsistent and irregular, and distorts any objects which are reflected. The irregular reflection denies the viewer the pleasure of feeling the gaze directly reciprocated, and ignites an obsessive desire to see what won't be fully mirrored: the self. Affect lies in the unrequited desire to be seen by *...and the sky*, the audience's presence acknowledged by a reflected soft-self which will never crystallize

into a recognizable form. In the space created by exhibitionary affect, Waxer asks what preconceptions we subconsciously bring into the space that surrounds us and our way of seeing.

Mounted along the front wall of the gallery is Meg Ross's *Blue Read* (2023). At first glance, the work resembles a grouping of thirty-nine books on a metal shelf. As the viewer chooses and pulls one of the 'books' from the shelf to read, they may recognize the intimate feeling of selecting a volume at a library or bookstore. The covers of the books are made from cyanotypes—either digitally manipulated, or in some instances, entirely constructed with Photoshop. Ross has adhered the cyanotypes to MDF blocks which wear gently as the compressed pages of a book would. The artist's use of cyanotypes represents her ongoing investigation into photography's relationship with light. The blue-toned colour fields are non-representational; they provide deep, indefinite contours to hold the viewer's gaze, highlighting colour, space and form. By using a photographic image as the jacket of the book, Ross presents the viewer with a rare opportunity to form a kinetic relationship with a typically two-dimensional medium. Viewers are able to touch the image and leave a trace of their presence through their fingerprints, stirring a visceral relationship to the art objects which couldn't be obtained by simply viewing the images. The work asks the viewer to *read* rather than view—a familiar act which leaves room for private contemplation and favors individual comprehension. By allowing the viewer to encounter a cyanotype in such an intimate way, Ross creates a space in her work for reflection at an interpersonal emotional level.

Hung on a diagonal from the ceiling in the main space corridor is Ella Gonzales's large-scale painting, *Reflection of a doorway* (2022). The work is an 9-by-8.5 foot painting made on semi-transparent jusi-silk<sup>34</sup> fabric sent to the artist from the Philippines by her family. At first glance, the painting depicts the architecture of Gonzales's former family homes, which lends to a reading of memory and nostalgia. Behind and through the painting, additional works by Gonzales become visible: a folded painting on a shelf and two small-scale paintings situated on the floor, all on piña-silk<sup>35</sup> fabric. In this deferred revealing, *Reflection of a doorway* provides a secondary viewing experience in which the creases and traces from human touch and the gallery space become subtly apparent. In her understanding of this phenomenon, Gonzales references Lisa Robinson's theory of soft architecture<sup>36</sup>. The organic creation of this soft architecture privileges form, shape and light—all qualities of which the transparent texture of the jusi-piña fabric is in concert. In this, the painting becomes a vessel which carries history in both its surface and imagery, while simultaneously addressing its present context. The jusi fabric is thin and semi-transparent, with a refined weave that allows for light to travel through the sheer coat of paint, while the imagery remains semi-opaque. In its opacity, the painting situates the viewer in Gonzales's domestic familial past. Yet in its

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<sup>34</sup> Jusi-silk fabric is from the Spanish "jusi" and the Tagalog "husi". It refers to a delicate fibrous dress fabric, woven in the Philippine Islands. It is made with hemp warp and pineapple fibre filling or pineapple fibre warp and silk, cotton or fine abaca after filling. (<https://skosmos.silkknow.org/thesaurus/en/page/298>)

<sup>35</sup> Pina-silk fabric (Piña-Seda or Pineapple-Silk) is a type of fabric that combines pineapple fibers and silk fibers. It was first historically used in the Philippines at the beginning of the 17th century. It is found in the province of Pampanga, which is known for its pineapple plantations. The Piña-Silk weaving was introduced to Pampanga by Spanish missionaries, where they were taught how to weave this type of material. The Piña-Silk fabric is not only beautiful to look at, but also very strong and durable. (<https://barongrus.com/barong-tagalog-fabric/>)

<sup>36</sup> Lisa Robinson uses the term soft architecture to describe the incorporeal aspects of architecture like memory, light, form, colour, furnishings, social space, etc, in her essay *Seven Walks from the Office of Soft Architecture*. In speaking with Gonzales, and as discussed in her thesis paper, the heightened attention to these abstract forms give texture to her experience of having called 12 places home.

transparency, *Reflection of a doorway* invites the viewer in on an intimate conversation about the shifting nature of diasporic movement and the longing for something that will never be as it once was.

The stage for affect has been set through the curated arrangement and relationships between the works. This creates a stirring atmosphere composed of textural elements, and opportunities for engagement. Affect also is roused through resistance—by leaning into the tensions between the viewer’s expectation of the pieces to perform and their actual functions. Affect binds the three works together across their disparate subject matter and mediums. In their display, the three works subvert the dominance of the two-dimensional picture plane and turn instead to three-dimensional site-specificity to facilitate feeling. What we’re with are the sticky<sup>37</sup> remains of our experience with the works, the feelings we have after we leave the gallery, the images in our mind’s eye. The active contemplation that is required in all three pieces to stimulate the works on display is also a home for affect. *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end* is open to relational viewing through the lens of exhibitionary affect, and provides the viewer a supported space to feel inside the gallery.

-Avalon Mott

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<sup>37</sup> Sara Ahmed uses this term to describe the lasting feelings of affect in her essay “Happy Objects”.

**Artist Biographies and CV.**

*BEVERLEY FREEDMAN* comes to her creative practice through a many-faceted career in pharmacy practice, education, and research. She has taught speech and drama and the performing arts and writes creative non-fiction and poetry. Her work began in ceramics creating large scale architectural planters while living in her country of birth, South Africa. Freedman completed her masters degree in design for health (MDes) in 2022 as a sexagenarian. Her work has included mixed media collage with fabric and painted paper and has a strong inclination to immersive art experience involving the senses. She currently splits her time between Southern California and Toronto, Canada. This is her first exhibition.

## **Beverley A. Freedman**

[bncfreedman@gmail.com](mailto:bncfreedman@gmail.com)

<https://www.avrilartandalzheimers.com>

### **Research Interests**

Art and Health [Alzheimer's disease], Education and Art in Healthcare, Design for Health, Ageing in Place, Educating Healthcare Providers, Communication Skills for Healthcare Providers, Empathy and Compassion in Medical Education, Systems Design in Medical Education, Design Development in Healthcare Education, Design for Health.

### **Education**

2022 MDes - Masters in Design for Health - Ontario College of Art and Design University, Toronto, Canada.

1993-current Pharmacy State License-California State Board of Pharmacy Exam

1989 B.A. incomplete in Sociology – University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

1984 Teachers Diploma LTCL Speech and Drama - Trinity College of Music, London, UK

1982-1985 B.A incomplete in Psychology - University of South Africa (UNISA), Pretoria, South Africa.

1981 Dip. Pharm -Diploma in Pharmacy – Witwatersrand Technikon School of Pharmacy, Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **Employment/Appointments**

Affiliate Faculty UCSD Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Non-salaried.

Retired 2016 – present, Assistant Professor Health Sciences; University of California, San Diego.

2007-2016 Assistant Clinical Professor of Pharmacy - Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of California

2001-2008 Investigational Drug Pharmacist,,UCSD Mother, Child and Adolescent HIV Center, UCSD Antiviral Research Center, University of California, San Diego

1993-2003 Pharmacist Staff, UCSD Medical Center, San Diego, CA

1993 Pharmacist, San Diego Hospice, San Diego, CA

1991-1993 Intern Pharmacist, UCSD Medical Center, San Diego, CA

1988-1990 Teacher of Drama and Performing Arts, Performing Arts Workshop School (PAW), Johannesburg, South Africa.

1983- 1986 Lecturer (Microbiology), Witwatersrand Technikon, School of Pharmacy, Johannesburg, South Africa. University of the Witwatersrand Medical School.

1981-1986 Speech and Drama Teacher, Beverley Panovka School of Speech and Drama, Springs, South Africa.

### **Publications/Research**

Independent Study - Creation of a health literacy and design literacy teaching module to be implemented as a requirement for students entering the Design for Health and related masters programmes.

Canadian Cardiovascular Harmonized National Guideline Endeavour (C-CHANGE) guideline for the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease in primary care: 2022 update. Acknowledgements: CMAJ November 07, 2022 194 (43) E1460-E1480; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.220138>

Cancer: In Our Words. The Writers of Moores UCSD Cancer Center, Volume 1, 2014

Cancer: In Our Words. The Writers of Moores UCSD Cancer Center, Volume 2, 2013

Cancer: In Our Words. The Writers of Moores UCSD Cancer Center, Volume 1, 2013

Atayee RS et al. (2012). An active-learning assignment involving peer-to-peer presentation to improve pharmacy students' attitudes and knowledge of dietary supplements. Am J Pharm Educ. 76(6) Article 113.

Independent Study Project – Faculty committee member and mentor to 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student at UCSD School of Medicine; on a research project: “Changes in HIV- related healthcare costs during the HAART era for a perinatally infected pediatric cohort.”

Co-investigator as investigational drug pharmacist on numerous multi-site Phase I, II and III clinical research studies for the Pediatric Aids Clinical Trials Group (PACTG), International Maternal Pediatric Adolescent Aids Clinical Trial Network (IMPAACT) through UCSD Antiviral Research Centre (AVRC) together with the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).



### **Teaching/Presentations/Key Contributions**

Canadian Cardiovascular Harmonized National Guideline Endeavour (C-CHANGE) guideline for the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease in primary care: 2022 update Acknowledgement for insights and expertise on aspects of health design on C-CHANGE implementation projects.

Poster presentation at annual Relating Systems Thinking & Design Symposium, RSD11, Brighton, England, October 2022. Poster title: The Hidden Curriculum in Medical Education: Exposing the Loss of Empathy through a systems map

Exhibition: Process, Process, Process. Contributing piece titled: Marbles- an interactive art piece created to heighten awareness for those with neurocognitive decline. Toronto, Canada, October 7-16<sup>th</sup> 2022

Created a virtual art exhibition: Avril Art and Alzheimer's depicting neurocognitive decline through documented artwork of one individual with Alzheimer's Disease. Visit [www.avrilartandalzheimers.com](http://www.avrilartandalzheimers.com)

Preceptor to UCSD SSPPS Pharm D pharmacy students – outreach and presentations on campus and community-wide; ASCP (American Society of Consultant Pharmacists); topics including poison control, smoking cessation and vaping, blood pressure monitoring and support, diabetes monitoring, vaccinations  
Implemented a teaching module and full course curriculum for Intravenous Preparation and Aseptic Technique at UCSD SSPPS together with evaluation

Senior Centers – assist and precept health fairs and education programs for seniors

Started up a lecture series as part of “communication skills for pharmacists” with orientation towards marginalized communities and those with reduced access viz hearing compromised patients, mature patients and those with language, literacy and comprehension needs

Committee member and mentor for the global health initiative between UCSD-SSPPS and Namdi Azikiwe University in Nigeria with establishment of a student-pharmacist run free clinic in Nigeria and a student and faculty exchange program

Assist and mentor students in varied outreach events and assignments

Mentor students widely revising and editing presentation slides, notes

Act in an advisory capacity for many students one-on-one giving advice and support and follow up with meetings and phone calls; mentor to students at SSPPS, support for mental wellbeing in times of stress and crisis and loss

Invitation guest lecturer to Pharm D students years 1 - 4 at UCSD SSPPS and faculty on various topics e.g., Annual Survivorship lecture to Oncology Elective; Coming to practice with heart; Communicating with Seniors; Alzheimer's disease [AD] and how to connect with patients with AD and their primary care giver and loved ones

Talk on surviving cancer at UCSD Moore's Cancer Center, part of a panel for cancer patients answering questions and providing an hour-long talk.

Lecture series on available pediatric HIV medications. Invitation by PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan For Aids Relief) and the Department of Defense (DOD) to deliver material to visiting MDs from developing countries

Educational talk to MDs, pharmacists: Setting up a research pharmacy in a developing country. Kericho, Kenya

Lecture on "Nosocomial Infections: cause and control"; "Importance of Patient Compliance in Treatment of Tuberculosis". Witwatersrand University Medical School, South Africa

### **Teaching Experience**

Affiliate Faculty- UC San Diego, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Preceptor for Pharmacy Students Community Outreach Programs

Assistant Professor Pharmacy Practice (SPPS 201, 202,203) UC San Diego, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Conference and Workshop Leader and Co-Ordinator- UC San Diego, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Lecturer of Microbiology – Witwatersrand University, School of Pharmacy

Speech and Drama Teacher – Beverley Panovka School of Speech and Drama

Performing Arts Teacher – Performing Arts Workshop Elementary School, Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **Licenses/Affiliations**

California State Board of Pharmacy License R.Ph. 46103. Received 1993.

South African Pharmacy Council License R.Ph. 8091. Received 11 January 1983

ATCL and LTCL Teacher's Diploma in Speech and Drama. Received 1981 and 1984 respectively- current

Guild of Speech and Drama Teachers, 1982

*ELLA GONZALES* is a Filipina-Canadian artist working between painting and Computer-Aided Design programs, as led by her interest in space making. Gonzales holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Studio Art from the University of Guelph and was the recipient of the 2021 Nancy Petry Award in painting.

## **Ella Gonzales**

[ellaggonzales@gmail.com](mailto:ellaggonzales@gmail.com)

<https://gonzalesella.com/>

### **Education**

2019 - 21 MFA in Studio Art, School of Fine Arts & Music, University of Guelph, Guelph

2012 -16 BFA, Honors Specialization in Studio Arts, Minor in Art History & Criticism, Western University, London

### **Solo/Two Person Exhibitions**

2023 The Louvre, curated by Subtle Invitation and a project by Henry Heng Lu. Unit 17, Vancouver

2022 Soft Smoke, with Azadeh Elmizadeh, curated by Adam Whitford. Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Lethbridge

2022 Reflection of a window, curated by Carina Magazzeni. Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre, Kingston

2021 Dumating, Boarding House Gallery, Guelph

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

2023 a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end, Xspace Cultural Centre, Toronto

2023 Suggested Reading, Christie Contemporary, Toronto

2022 appairage, peering, pairing, AXENÉO7, Gatineau

2022 goodtime, the plumb, Toronto

2022 Tattarrattat, Hunt Gallery, Toronto

2022 X Marks the Spot: Filipinx Futurities, Gales Gallery, Toronto

2022 A Rhythm, Not a Plot, Galerie Nicolas Robert, Toronto

2021 Coverture/Cover Story, Art POP, Montreal

2021 Fractal Exotica, Floral Erotica, Pumice Raft, Toronto

2021 Grass Taps, the plumb, Toronto

2021 Personal Space, Patel Brown East, Toronto  
2020 No Name, Boarding House Gallery, Guelph  
2020 As the snail takes the shape of its shell, the plumb, Toronto  
2020 Wanderer, Zalucky Contemporary, Toronto  
2019 Preface, Boarding House Gallery, Guelph  
2018 Re:Member, Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre, Kingston  
2018 Exactly Right, Dead On Collective, Kingston  
2018 kin, HAVN Gallery, Hamilton  
2017 Modern Fest, Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre, Kingston  
2017 Salon IV, Project Gallery Toronto, Toronto  
2016 Future Desserts, ArtLab, London  
2016 A PARTY ||, Forest City Gallery, London

### **Awards**

2022 Research and Creation, Visual Arts, Canada Council  
2021 Visual Artists Creation Project, Ontario Arts Council  
2021 Nancy Petry Painting Award, The Joe Plaskett Foundation  
2019 Tony Scherman Graduate Scholarship, University of Guelph  
2018 Nan Yeomans Grant for Artistic Development, Kingston Arts Council

### **Collections**

Agnes Etherington Art Centre  
Private collections

*mihyun maria kim* is an interdisciplinary artist currently based in Tkaronto, researching affects of transmitted post-memory *han*, gaps in collective narratives, perception of time, and residual impacts of intergenerational trauma (through experiences of war, displacement, poverty and family divide). Her works take the form of text, paintings, performative videos, audio, site-specific installations, community-based round tables and public art.

## **mihyun maria kim**

[maria.kim@ocadu.ca](mailto:maria.kim@ocadu.ca)

[www.mihyunmariakim.com](http://www.mihyunmariakim.com)

### **Education**

MFA, Integrated Art Media and Design, Ontario College of Art and Design University, expected 2023

BFA, Drawing and Painting, Ontario College of Art and Design University

### **Solo Shows**

2023 Ignite Gallery, April, Toronto, CA

2022 Gibson House Museum, Tea Cups for a Cuppa Tea, Toronto, CA

2020 Collision Gallery, Single Out, Toronto, CA

2019 S1 Vinyl & Kaffee, im Schatten (In the Shadows), Leipzig, DE

2018 La Figurativa, Sin Rostro (Faceless), Curated by Martina Garcia Durendez, Seville, ES

### **Selected Group Shows**

2022 OCAD U Graduate Gallery, Process, Curated by Avalon Mott, Toronto, CA

2022 Mayten's Gallery, Circularity of (un)knowing, Curated by Farnoosh Talaei and artists, Toronto, CA

2020 Collision Gallery, Curated by AKIN Collective, Toronto, CA

2020 Art Gallery of Mississauga, VAM's 42nd Annual Juried Exhibition, Mississauga, CA

2019 Cedar Ridge Centre, INTROSPECTION: Scarborough Arts' 34th Juried Exhibition, Scarborough, CA

2019 Din A [>], A und V, Leipzig, DE

2019 Westapotheke Künstlerkollektiv, V O C A B: for Annual Lindenow Festival, Leipzig, DE

2019 The Room, The Body Language, Curated by Luca Curci, Venice, IT

2018 Pilotenkueche Studios Spoor, Curated by Viviane Tabach, Leipzig, DE

2018 Alte Handelsschule Speech Bubble, Curated by Maeshelle West-Davies, Leipzig, DE  
2018 Krudebude Rutschbahn Curated by Martin Holz & Viviane Tabach, Leipzig, DE  
2018 Ping Pong I accept the cookies, Curated by Viviane Tabach, Leipzig, DE  
2017 CAMAC La Terre vue de la Terre, Curated by Jean-Yves Coffre, & EIGHT Marnay-sur-Seine, Paris, FR  
2015 Artscape Youngplace, Distinguished Artists Group Show, Toronto, CA

### **Public Art and Commissioned Works**

2021 Ttae, OCAD U Board Members Collection Commission, Toronto, Canada  
2020 Maps of Mississauga, City of Mississauga Commissioned Video Public Art, Mississauga, Canada  
2020 Remembering Four Sisters, Lakeview Village X Artscape Atelier Commissioned Mural, Mississauga, Canada  
2005 Rise Up, Educandario Sao Vicente de Paulo– orphanage exterior, Itarare, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
2005 Swim, Health Centre interior mural, Itarare, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
2004 Map, Massai Church interior mural, Maisikiria, Rift Valley, Kenya  
2002 Wave, Orphanage exterior mural, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

### **Artist in Conversation/ Symposiums/ Conferences**

2023 Introducer, Documentary Screening: Comfort by Emmanuel Moonchil Park, OCAD U  
2022 Speaker, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Breath: Concerning Air & Atmosphere Graduate Symposium  
2022 Coordinator, Aki (Land) Symposium, presented by the Indigenous Creation Studio (UTM), Gibraltar Point, Toronto  
2022 Team Coordinator, NAISA North Conference, presented by Dechinta, Yellowknife, North West Territories  
2022 Panelist, Hart House ArtWORK Symposium, Art Relations in Urban Spaces, University of Toronto  
2022 Guest Artist, Visual Strategies course, University of Toronto  
2021 Co-presenter, Multisensory Museum: Los Carpinteros, La Montaña Rusa, Art Gallery of Ontario  
2021 Guest Artist, Art and Social Change course, OCAD University  
2021 Artists-in-Conversation, *Subjectivity*, OCAD University 2021

### **Residencies and Fellowships**

2022 - 2023 RBC Emerging Art Network (EAN) X The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada  
2022 La Napoule Art Foundation (LNAF): Canadian Artists at La Napoule, France  
2022 OCAD U X Artscape Launchpad Waterfront Residency, Toronto, Canada  
2022 GLADSTONE HOUSE, 3-month residency, Toronto, Canada  
2022 MODS MANUAL WRITING LAB, 5-week online writing residency co-creator, ZOOM

2020 AKIN X COLLISION GALLERY, 6-month residency, Toronto, Canada  
2020 MODS, VIRTUAL LAB, 6-week online Pilot residency co-creator, ZOOM  
2020 Can Serrat, ES with guion\_bajo, CO: REMOTA, 2-week invited observer for pilot residency, ZOOM  
2019 – 2020 Mississauga Living Arts Centre (MLAC), 1-year painting residency, Mississauga, Canada  
2018 PILOTENKUECHE, 3-month Stipend Award, Leipzig, Germany  
2018 AIRGENTUM, 3-month Stipend Award, Seville, Spain  
2017 Centre d'Art Marnay Art Centre (CAMAC), 3-month Bursary Award, Marnay-Sur-Seine, France  
2015 Can Serrat Centro de Actividades Artisticas, 2-month Stipend Award, El Bruc, Barcelona, Spain

### **Professional Activities**

2022 Research Coordinator: Non/Citizenship, PI: Dr. Patricia Landolt (UTSC), Dr. Luin Goldring (York U), Min Sook Lee (OCADU)  
2021 – 2022 (UTSC) Outreach Coordinator: Art Museum, under Executive Director/Chief Curator Barbara Fischer, UofT  
2021 – 2022 Coordinator: Indigenous Creation Studio, under Maria Hupfield, University of Toronto Mississauga  
2021 Project Coordinator: Tree Protection Zone (TPZ), Art Museum X Hart House, University of Toronto  
2021 Graduate Exhibition Monitor: Outreach for GRAD EX 106, OCAD University, Toronto  
2020 – 2021 DRPT Catalogue Committee Member: Administrative Coordinator, OCAD University, Toronto  
2019 Assistant Director: PILOTENKUECHE, Leipzig, Germany  
2018 Curator: Santa Angela Gallery, Rootless [Artist: Noemi de Bruijn] Seville, Spain  
2018 Assistant Director: AIRGENTUM, Seville, Spain  
2017 – Present Co-Founder: MODS collective Barcelona, ES (c.2017) Leipzig, DE (c.2019) Mississauga, CA (c.2020)  
2017 Artistic Coordinator: Can Serrat Centro de Actividades Artisticas, El Bruc, Spain  
2017 Artist Chef-in-Residence: CAMAC centre d'art, Marnay-Sur-Seine, France

### **Grants, Awards, Scholarships and Bursaries**

2023 Canada Council of Art, Explore and Create, Research and Creation Grant  
2023 Charles Pachter Bursary  
2022 Fondation David R. Graham X Fondation de France Grant for Canada-France cultural exchange at LNAF  
2022 OCAD U Graduate Student Project and Travel Grant  
2022 Canada Council of Art, Explore and Create, Concept to Realization Grant  
2022 Ralph M. Barford Foundation, Barford Family Bursary  
2021 – 2022 Toronto Art Council, Animating Historic Sites Grant for Gibson House Museum

2021 OCADU Interdisciplinary Art Media and Design Graduate Entrance Bursary 2021  
Mrs. W.O Forsyth Award Scholarship, OCAD U Fourth Year Awards & Medals  
2021 OCAD U X RBC CEAD Career Launcher Fund  
2021 PARTIAL GALLERY X OCAD U Career Launcher  
2021 OCAD U (TSA) Bursary  
2015 Queen West Art Crawl Award of Distinction

### **Teaching and Workshops**

2023 DRPT-2023 Contemporary Painting assisting Vladimir Spicanovic, OCAD University  
2021 – 2023 GART-1041 Form & Time assisting Simone Jones, Judith Doyle, Heather Frise, OCAD University  
2021 – 2022 CROS-3001 Professional Practice assisting Amish Morrell, OCAD University  
2021 Public Art 101, Adult Workshop and seasonal course, Visual Arts Mississauga  
2021 INVC-2003 Language and the Land assisting Susan Blight, OCAD University

### **Media Publications**

<https://femmeartreview.com/tag/artcriticism/>

<https://www.shedoesthcity.com/exploring-asian-heritage-through-art-korean-canadian-artist-mihyun-maria-kim-on-transgenerational-trauma/>

<https://mylakeviewvillage.com/artist/mihyun-maria-kim/>

<https://culture.mississauga.ca/content/maps-mississauga-mihyun-maria-kim>

<http://westside.pilotenkueche.net/index.php/nggallery/thumbnails?p=15130>



*MEICHEN WAXER* is a queer visual artist, curator and arts worker living in Toronto. She holds a MFA from Emily Carr University of Art + Design, as well as a BFA from the Ontario College of Art and Design University. Recent exhibitions include *The Plumb*, Toronto, *Ministry of Casual Living*, Victoria, Canada; *CSA Space*, Vancouver, Canada, *Mr. Lee's Shed*, Vancouver Canada; *#3 Gallery*, Vancouver Canada; *halka sanat projesi*, Istanbul, Turkey; and *Open Studio*, Toronto. Artist residencies have included Treignac Projet, France; Anvil Centre, New Westminster and Halka Sanat, Istanbul, Turkey as well as Turkish Cultural Foundation Fellow.

Meichen is a Vice President of the Board of Directors at Art Metropole, Toronto, Canada. Meichen is Co-Director and Co-Founder of Arts Assembly. Arts Assembly is a community-focused arts organization that emphasizes artistic collaboration, discursive research and reciprocal exchange.

## **Meichen Waxer**

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[www.artsassembly.ca](http://www.artsassembly.ca) | [meichen@artsassembly.ca](mailto:meichen@artsassembly.ca)

### **Education**

2014 - 2016 Master of Fine Arts, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Vancouver, BC

2003 - 2007 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Photography, OCAD University, Toronto, ON

### **Solo Exhibitions**

2019 A Scene of Jouissance, Ministry of Casual Living, Victoria, BC

2019 If the red is rose and there is a gate surrounding it..., CSA Space, Vancouver, BC

2017 In Good Time, #3 Gallery, Vancouver, BC

2016 Aurora – MAA Thesis Defense Exhibition, Concourse Gallery (ECU), Vancouver, BC

2013 Alcor + Mizar, Milk Glass, Toronto, ON

2012 Half Mourning, Roadside Attraction, Toronto, ON

2011 Quarter Mourning, Fine and Dandy, Toronto, ON

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

2023 a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end, XPACE, Toronto, ON

2022 What we Leave Behind, Fort Gallery, Fort Langley, BC

2022 Libations for Liberated Living, The Plumb, Toronto, ON

2022 Living Room, Fabricated Gallery, online

2020 Main St. Primetime, Vancouver, BC

2018 Micro-Wave, Mr. Lee's Shed, Vancouver, BC

2016 Evdeymiş gibi, halka sanat projesi, Istanbul, Turkey

2016 see level, Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver, BC

2015 Embellish, Open Studio, Toronto, ON

2015 Flight Lines, Concourse Gallery (ECU), Vancouver, BC

2014 Advent Show, Fine and Dandy, Toronto, BC

2014 Open Studio (Summer AIR Exhibition), 33OC, Toffia, Italy

2013 Phases, Milk Glass, Toronto, ON

2012 Only in Dreams, Studio 407, Toronto, ON

2011 Nuit Blanche Devereaux 2, High Park, Toronto, ON

2010 Enslave Your Planet, Lo & Behold, London, England

2010 Fiber Works 2010, Cambridge Galleries, Cambridge, ON

2009 Welcome to the Dollhouse, Truck, Calgary, AB

2009 Hard Twist- New Twist, Gladstone, Toronto, ON

### **Selected Residencies**

2018 Plot, Access Gallery, Vancouver, BC (Arts Assembly)

2017 Treignac Projet, Treignac, France

2017 Anvil Centre, New Westminster, BC

2015 halka sanat projesi, Istanbul, Turkey

2014 33 Officina Creativa, Toffia, Italy

2012 Triegnac Projet, Triegnac, France

2010 Summer Creative Residency, Parson's Paris, Paris, France

### **Selected Publications**

2022 Childhood, Creatures, online

2019 red turns to blue, blue turns to red, Access Gallery, Vancouver, BC

2016 Aurora, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Vancouver, BC

2013 Go Home Print, Issue 4, Page 22, Toronto, ON

### **Artist Talks and Speaking Engagements**

2023 CARFAC BC Panel Discussion, online [forthcoming]

2018 Zine Zone, Vancouver Book Art Fair, Vancouver, BC

2017 Process of Assembly (on ARTS ASSEMBLY), Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC

2016 see level Panel Discussion, Charles H Scott Gallery, Vancouver, BC

2014 33OC Residency Presentation, Toffia, Italy

2013 Alcor + Mizar Talk, Milk Glass, Toronto, ON

### **Solo Curatorial Projects, Arts Assembly**

\*for full curatorial and organizational activity see [www.artsassembly.ca](http://www.artsassembly.ca)

2021 The Longest Way Round is the Shortest Way Home, Toronto, ON

2019 Rianne Svelnis | Dance + Moving Bodies + Politics + Action, Vancouver, BC

2018 // In Session, in partnership with SFU Vancity Office of Community Engagement and Or Gallery, Vancouver, BC

2018 A saturated space: a mumbling | Nicole Killian, Vancouver Book Art Fair, Vancouver, BC

2018 Meat and Marginalia | Nicole Killian, partnership with Duplex, Vancouver, BC

2018 Merve Ünsal and Lara Ögel | Ne Sana Ben, Ne Bana Sen, in partnership with halka sanat projesi, Istanbul, Turkey

### **Select Awards, Scholarships and Grants**

2018 Project Grant, British Columbia Arts Council

2015 Travel and Research Award, Emily Carr University of Art + Design

2015 Presidents Research Fund, Emily Carr University of Art + Design

2015 Cultural Exchange Fellowship, Turkish Cultural Foundation

2008 Emerging Artist Grant, Toronto Art Council

### **Professional Affiliations and Community Involvement**

2019 - present Board of Directors, Art Metropole, Vice-President, 2021 – present Toronto, ON

2015 - 2019 Studio Collective Member, Dynamo Arts Association, Vancouver, BC

2016 - 2017 West Vancouver Arts + Culture Steering Committee, West Vancouver, BC

2015 - 2019 Board of Directors, Or Gallery, Vancouver, BC

- 2016 - 2018 Vice President,

- 2018 - 2019 President and Fundraising Chair

### **Relevant Employment**

2021 - present Lead, Graduate Recruitment, Alumni & Community Engagement, School of Graduate Studies, OCAD University, Toronto, ON

2020 - 2021 Graduate Recruitment Coordinator, School of Graduate Studies, OCAD University, Toronto, ON

2019 - 2020 Program Coordinator, Writing & Learning Centre (Ontario Postsecondary Access and Inclusion Program contract), OCAD University, Toronto, ON

2018 - 2019 Youth + Transition Coordinator, Continuing Studies, (maternity leave contract) Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, BC

2016 - present Co-Founder and Co-Director, Arts Assembly, Vancouver and Toronto, BC + ON

2016 - 2017 Education Coordinator, Rennie Museum, Vancouver, BC

2015 - 2016 Seminar Leader and Teaching Assistant, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, BC

2011 - 2013 Administrative Assistant, Craft, Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, ON

*MEG ROSS* lives and works near Toronto. She completed an MFA at the University of Guelph (2022) and a BFA at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (2015). Recent solo installations include *Nearest Neighbour* at the Art Gallery of Guelph and *Make Your Mark for Nuit Blanche*. She has presented her work with the Boarding House Gallery, Plumb Gallery, Gallery 44, Khyber Center for the Arts, Eyelevel Gallery, and the Cookhouse Gallery in London, England.

## **Meg Ross**

[megs37@gmail.com](mailto:megs37@gmail.com)

<https://meg-ross.com/>

### **Education**

2022: Master of Fine Art: Studio Art, University of Guelph

2015: Bachelor of Fine Art: Intermedia, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions**

2022: "Nearest Neighbour", Art Gallery of Guelph, Guelph, Canada

2019: "Make Your Mark," Sheridan College B-Wing Gallery, Oakville, Canada

2018: "Make Your Mark," Toronto Coach Bus Terminal, Toronto, Canada

2015: "Erase, Erase, Repeat," NSCAD, Halifax, Canada

2015: "Elmer's Guide to Nostalgia," Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax, Canada

### **Group Exhibitions**

2023: "a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end" Xpace Cultural Centre, Toronto, Canada

2021: "7 or a Jack" Boarding House Gallery, Guelph, Canada

2021: "Grass Taps" PLUMB Gallery, Toronto, Canada

2020: "No Show," Boarding House Gallery, Guelph, Canada

2019: "Tele-Tales," Robert Kananaj Gallery, Toronto, Canada

2019: "Tele- Tales," Cookhouse Gallery, London, England

2018: "EITHER/OR," Gallery 44, Toronto, Canada

2017: "ERI 6 Labour & Leisure," Touring Exhibition Across Canada

2016: "Chang School of Photography," Art Square Gallery and Cafe, Toronto, Canada

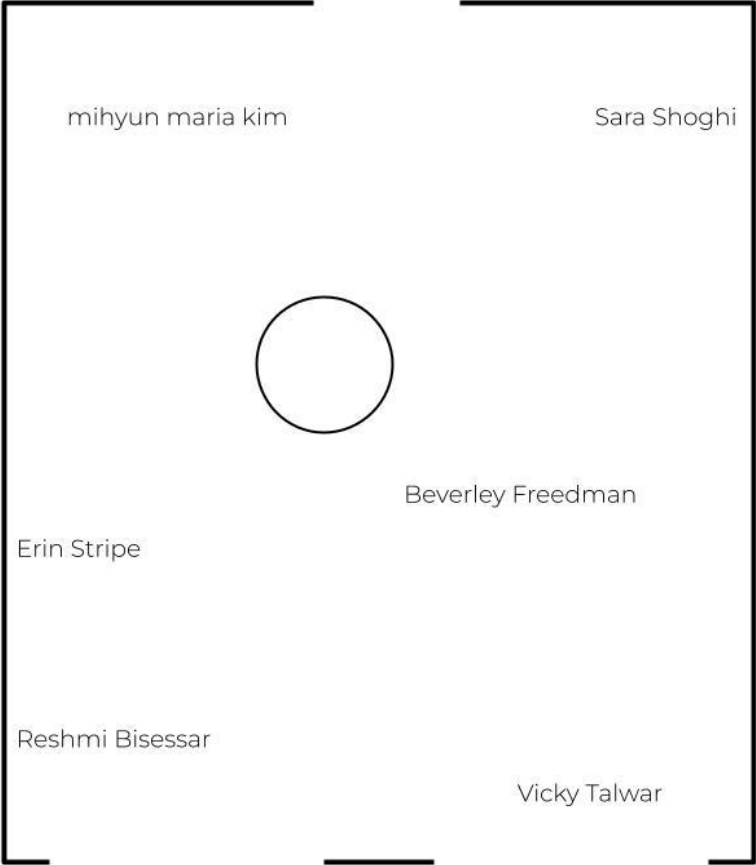
2015: "#wetooksomepics," Artzone Gallery, Halifax, Canada

2015: "Some Photographs: A Pop-Up Show," Khyber Gallery, Halifax, Canada

2015: "Inter/Media," Khyber Gallery, Halifax, Canada

**Floor Plan - *Process.***

Grad Gallery, 205 Richmond Street, Toronto, Canada.





**Promotional Material - *Process.***

[www.avalonmott.com/process](http://www.avalonmott.com/process)

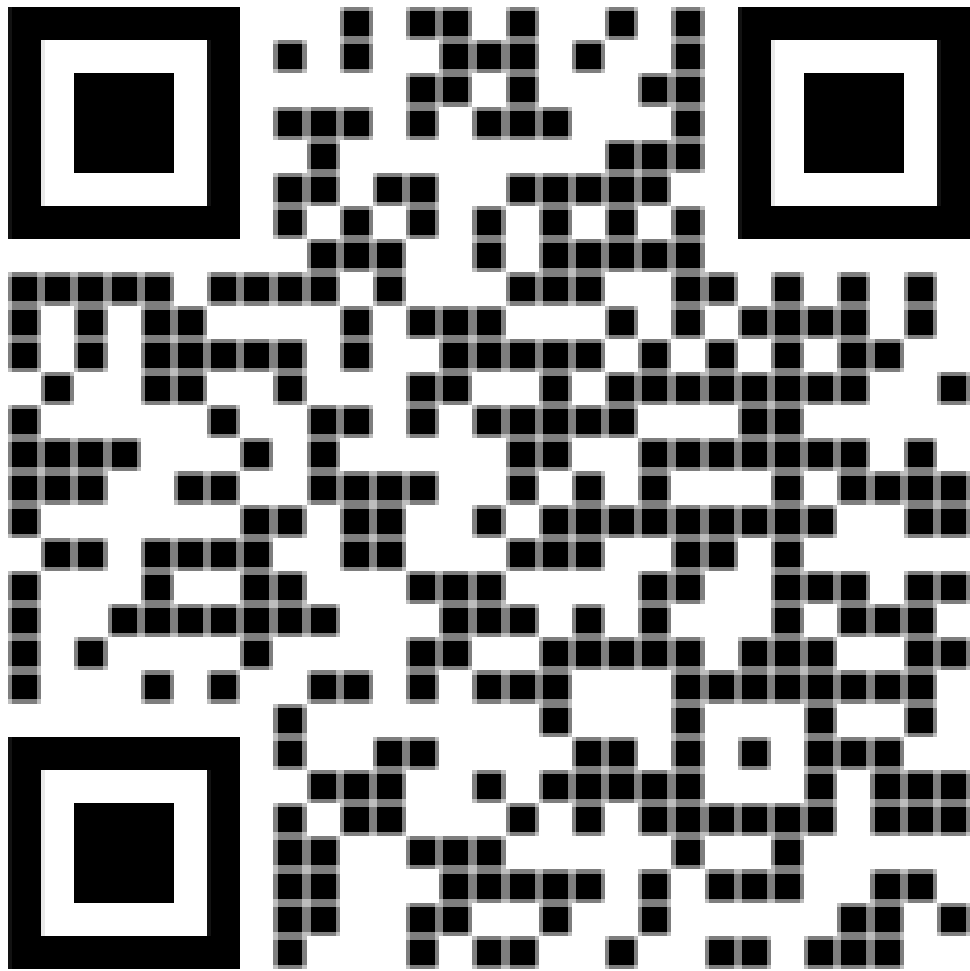


Opening October 7, 6pm - 8pm  
205 Richmond Street, Toronto ON

October 7 - October 16, Thursday - Sunday, 1pm - 5pm

Curated by Avalon Mott





## Exhibition Texts

*Process* features new work by Beverley Freedman, Erin Stripe, mihyun maria kim, Reshmi Bisessar, Sara Shoghi, and Vicky Talwar, that was created as part of an ArtScape residency collaboration with OCAD U in Summer 2022. The artist's works are representative of current themes and investigations occurring in their individual practices, but all respond to the idea of process. This notion of process speaks to the work of the artist in creating an artwork; conception, experimentation, revision, articulation, finalization. This work is generally confined to the studio and not welcomed into the gallery.

*PROCESS* aims to explore the potential for engagement that occurs when these elements are allowed to exist in an exhibited work and be presented in a gallery space. The works on view ask for viewer activation, and encourage play, rather than rely on passive viewing in their display.

Curated by Avalon Mott.

The Grad Gallery

205 Richmond St, Toronto

October 7 - October 16

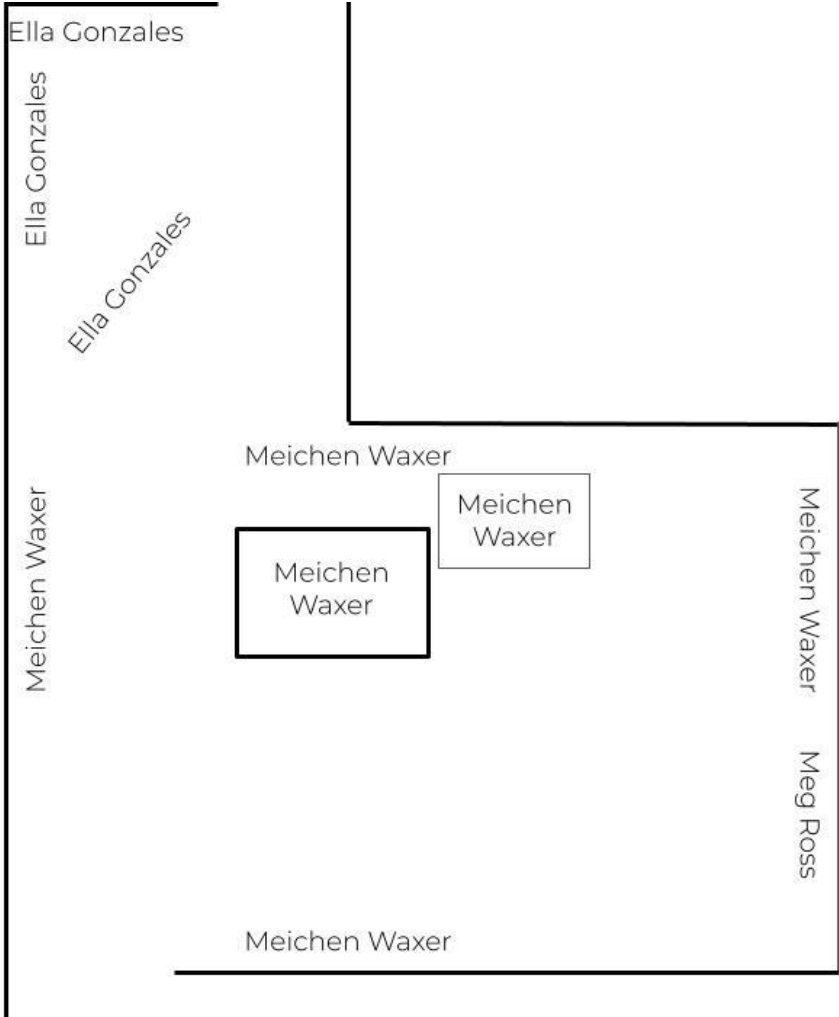
Thursday - Sunday, 1pm - 5pm

Opening Friday October 7 from 6pm - 8pm.

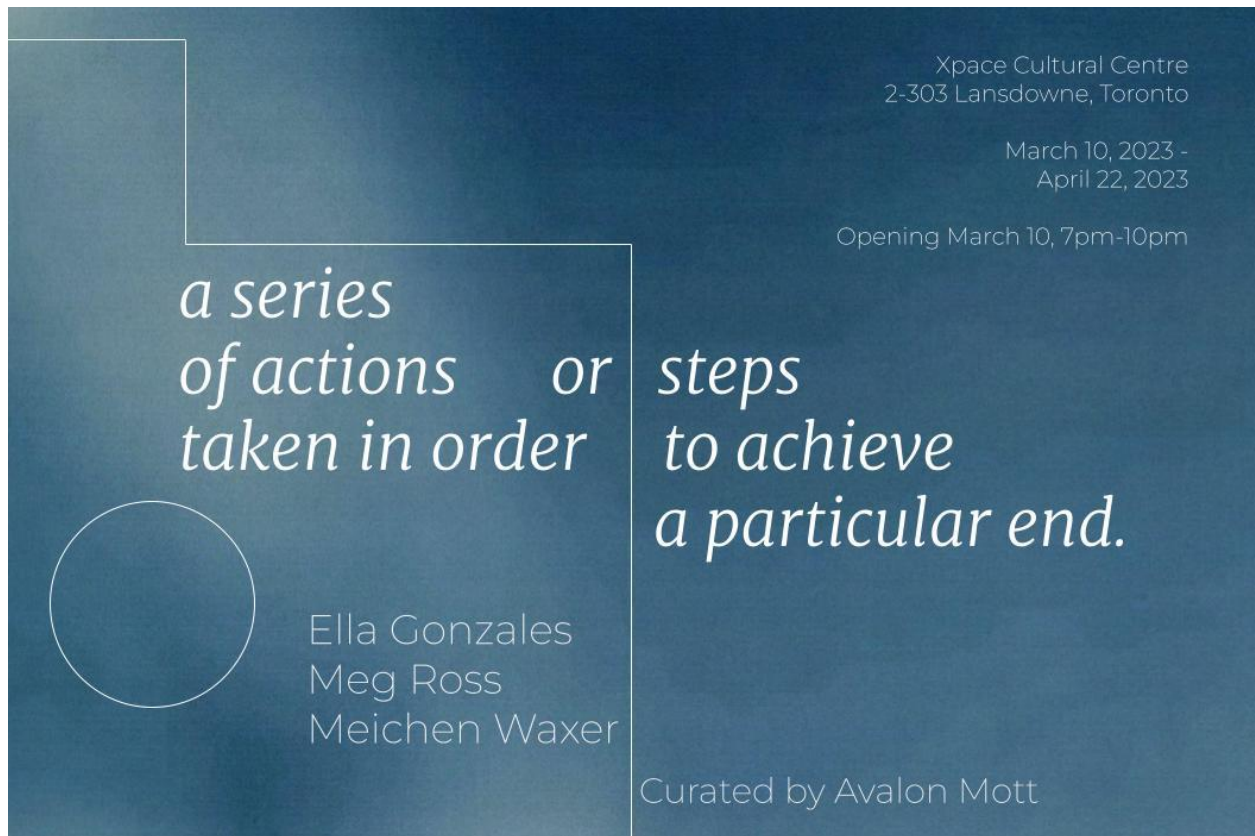
*This is the first of two Thesis exhibitions exploring the theme of Process, and the relationship between artist, viewer, and gallery space. The second will be mounted at Xspace Cultural Centre in March 2023.*

**Floor Plan - *a series of actions taken in order to achieve a particular end.***

Xpace Cultural Centre, 2-303 Lansdowne Ave, Toronto, Canada.



**Promotional Material - a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.**



Featuring works by Ella Gonzales, Meg Ross and Meichen Waxer; *a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end*, curated by Avalon Mott, aims to encourage a positioning of exhibitionary affect. This curatorial methodology places the viewer at the center of the exhibition, and fosters the space of potential for contemplation and curiosity between the artwork on display and the viewer.

Through a heightened relationship to site specificity, the works exhibited encourage the viewer to approach them intuitively. This fosters an emotional relationship to the pieces



that is highly individual, while providing a bridge of understanding to the larger concepts explored by each artist. Themes of tension, revealing and resolve are omni-present throughout the works.

*a series of actions of steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.*

Xpace Cultural Centre

2-303 Lansdowne Ave, Toronto

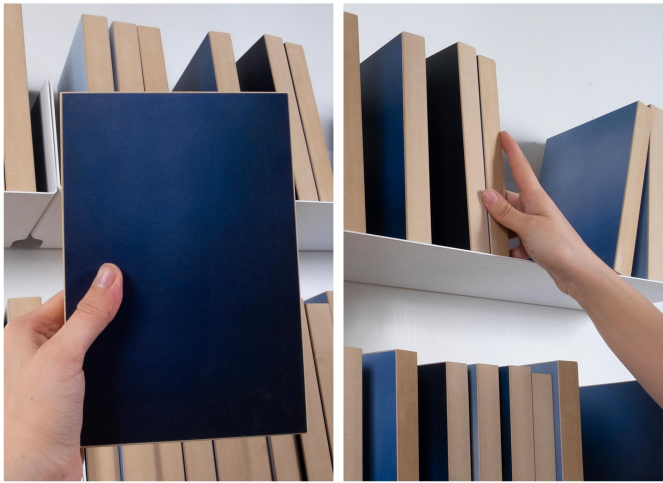
March 10 - April 22

Wednesday - Saturday, 1pm - 5pm

Opening Friday March, 10 from 7pm - 10pm.



*Reflection of a doorway* (photo by Blaine Campbell)



*Blue Read* (photo by Meg Ross)



*...and the sky* (2023), *Hours* (2022) (photo by Alison Postma)