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THE NEXT 7 DAYS: EVENTS (15) + OPENINGS (10) + DEADLINES (13) + CLOSINGS (12)

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VANCOUVER CALGARY SASKATOON WINNIPEG TORONTO MONTREAL HALIFAX ALL



TORONTO
TERENCE DICK
SHOWROOM AT THE ART MUSEUM
January 28, 2016

Like 34

The year has started off with a bang for Toronto's art scene with a [new curator](#) announced at The Power Plant, a new director hired at the AGO, potential [regime change](#) at MoCCA (soon to be MoCA?), and a new old player on the block with the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and the University of Toronto Art Centre combining forces to form the ingeniously named **Art Museum**. Director **Barbara Fischer** and curator **Sarah Robayo Sheridan** made the strategically sound decision to launch their new directive with a group exhibition of local artists. It feels like it's been a while since we've had one of these (except for Micah Lexier's giant miniatures exhibition within his Power Plant exhibition), but the concerns remain the same: artists in Toronto are forever obsessed with space.



Jeff Bierk

You don't have to be a Marxist to realize the economic roots of this interest. Any account of Toronto's recent history has to be about gentrification because development is all that has happened here since the eighties and the foot soldiers are artists. Truth be told, it's likely that most of the art in this exhibition will be forgotten, but the work the artists did to make neighbourhoods livable for young urban professionals is etched in the fabric of the city, is visible (for those with the memory) on any stroll along Queen West, and is measured by the ingenuity of real estate agents to give formerly forgotten enclaves new names like Brockton Village and Lower Junction. **Corwyn Lund** addresses this directly with a text on hoarding project that memorializes the former Abell building and the artists within, but for my money the ghostly pinhole camera pictures of long gone Liberty Village loft apartments by **Adrian Blackwell** capture the experience of urban creatives to a T. Representing opposite ends of the lifestyle spectrum, **John Massey**, on the one hand, assembles idealized interiors for the ruling class while **Jeff Bierk**, on the other, provides portraits of those displaced people who call the streets their home. The latter makes for a necessary anchor to the whimsy that too often taints art about modern life.

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The influence of Seijun Suzuki films apparent at
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[https://t.co/pQudDdXICK](#)
Mar. 3, 2016
[Details](#)

Pillow Talk at General Hardware moves beyond the arbitrary
[https://t.co/jL794p9Xn](#) #Akimblog
#Art @nikidracos [https://t.co/R7ND9LPipc](#)
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[Details](#)

Submit to #Blink, our super-short video festival. This month's theme is #Collage [https://t.co/RT1atV19t0](#)
[https://t.co/NZOr17PUnk](#)
Mar. 3, 2016
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Oliver Tiura's work-in-progress is this week's #AkimboConnects feature [https://t.co/OeSeooY9HS](#)
#Arts #WIP
Mar. 3, 2016
[Details](#)

Visual Communication program at @MHCCollege seeking design instructor [https://t.co/0gyd28FumW](#)
#Design #Alberta [https://t.co/OdW9EY9Kfr](#)
Mar. 2, 2016
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VSVSVS

But if you're into whimsy, there is plenty to find in **VSVSVS'** Fred Flintstone workout centre with its wooden mouse-wheel running track and barbells slung with cinderblocks. **Jon Sasaki's** documentary about living with an airplane and **Sandy Plotnikoff's** colour-coded hoodie portrait series will also make you smile. Lifestyle marketing is ostensibly the central theme of this exhibition and there's certainly some product placement going on with **Roula Partheniou's** replica stuff and **Jimmy Limit's** commercially photographed things, but lifestyle as a more ethereal quality comes through in the mood of the work, be it **Oliver Husain's** appropriation of atmospheric condo advertising or **Olia Mishchenko's** dense drawing of the quasi-natural liminal space of ravines.

As with all group shows of this size, there are any number of narratives that can be woven in between select works and the curator should be commended for including senior artists and older artwork amongst the crop of youngsters and their fresh creations. An awareness of the past has always been a defining characteristic of these two participating institutions – be it the historical exhibitions at UTAC or the surveys of mid-career artists at the Barnicke – and, for the university as well as the city and its artists, telling and revisiting these stories is the only way to move forward.

The Art Museum: <http://artmuseum.utoronto.ca/>

Showroom continues until March 5.

Terence Dick is a freelance writer living in Toronto. His art criticism has appeared in Canadian Art, BorderCrossings, Prefix Photo, Camera Austria, Fuse, Mix, C Magazine, Azure, and The Globe and Mail. He is the editor of Akimblog. You can follow his quickie reviews and art news announcements on Twitter [@TerenceDick](https://twitter.com/TerenceDick).

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