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Exhibit riffs on changing cityscape at U of T's Art Museum

#### BY FRAN SCHECHTER

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VSVSVS's gym gear lets you pretend to be toning up in a condo.

**SHOWROOM** at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto (7 Hart House, 15 King's College), to March 5. 416-978-8398, 416-978-8387. See **listing**. Rating: **NNNN** 

In this large show at the Art Museum at U of T (a merger of Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and U of T Art Centre), curator **Sarah Robayo Sheridan** gathers more than 30 locals artists to comment in a variety of media on our rapidly changing built environment and the marketing driving its expansion.

Some make pointed critiques: **Oliver Husain** projected condo sales videos featuring vapid young professionals and bland architecture onto a cloth drape, re-photographing them to increase their creepy unreality. **Adrian Blackwell**'s exploded-box cruciform photos document a series of studios, including his own, from which artists have been evicted. (A recent Star article profiled two other Showroom artists forced out of their studios by rising rents).

Decor gets strange in **Annie MacDonell**'s geometric black-and-white photos of garish hair salons and **Lili Huston-Herterich**'s photos of knick-knacks printed on textiles and hung on a coat rack.

Among the more abstract interpretations of construction-zone aesthetics are **Miles Collyer**'s huge photo print of black holes in rubble and **Ryan Ferko**'s square tiles inlaid with salvaged material from the Leslie Spit with accompanying text.

Especially amusing is the gym of DIY exercise equipment made by collective **VSVSVS** from plywood and chunks of cement, where you can pretend to be one of the toned condo residents in Husain's video.

Not everything here is completely on topic, but the show gives a good picture of how a community is grappling with the paradoxical role of artists in a gentrifying city.

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Tags Art Museum, Hart House, University of Toronto

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