

University of Toronto
MVS Studio Program
Graduating Exhibition
October 28–
November 21, 2020

Art
Museum

Works by

Emily DiCarlo

Chris Mendoza

Brandon Poole

Jordan Elliott Prosser

Essays by

Dehlia Hannah

Nadim Samman

The graduate exhibition is funded and produced as part of the requirements for the MVS degree in Studio at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, University of Toronto.

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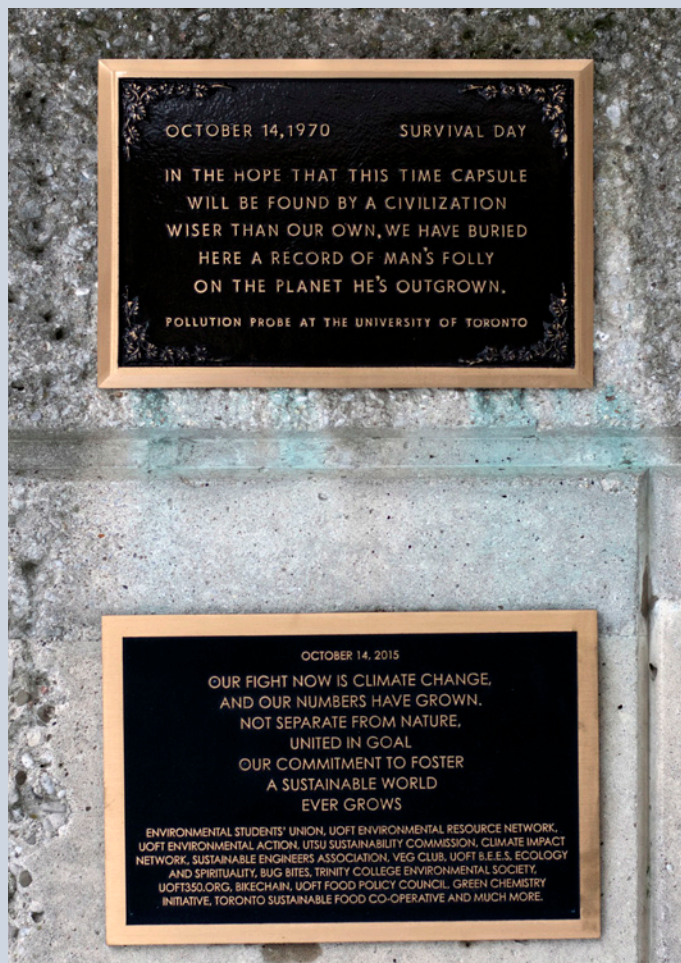




Cover: Brandon Poole, *The Far Splendour of the Yara Birkeland*, 2020. Sculpture. Courtesy of the artist.

Right: Chris Mendoza, *Time Capsule outside of Robarts*, 2019. Coloured photograph. Courtesy of the artist.

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Foreword

"First there is nothing, then there is a deep nothing, then there is a blue depth."

—Gaston Bachelard, *Air and Dreams*, 1943

As part of his many immaterial, and sometimes, apocryphal gestures, Yves Klein would recite this line from Bachelard at exhibition openings as his contribution to the show. While a philosopher of science, Bachelard was just as interested in the poetics of our dreams. Klein recognized Bachelard's unique sensibility and was inspired for an entire career, culminating in his long-term research project *Air Architecture*—a utopian plan confronting the earth's climate. As we move deeper into the twenty-first century, Klein's legacy will grow as artists attempt to wrestle with the intersections of science and art, the environment and the gallery, the material and the virtual. Whether simulating far oceans, intervening in the hydraulics of a river, automating patriarchal labour, or processing atomic time, the revelries of this year's MVS graduating exhibition meld both a *technē* and a *poesis*.

Composed of four individual exhibitions, the collective show opens with Brandon Poole's meditative reflections on the simulation of water, suggesting the atomic image was the precursor to the autonomous image. With a set of twin projections, Poole begins by revealing the first haunting computer-generated images of ocean waves were made on a nuclear laboratory's super computer, which in turn leads into the post-apocalyptic future of drone shipping vessels navigating the seas based on simulated models—reminiscent of ghost ships from a bygone era.

In the following room, the virtual ghost ship has materialized into a mirrored vessel, ambiguously a canoe *and* a coffin, pulled out of the Don River Valley. Chris Mendoza, inspired by a black-and-white photograph of a 1960s protest procession for the polluted

Don River, has carefully attempted via several interventions to resuscitate a community of river spirits—both human and non-human. Resisting an easy morality, Mendoza's project navigates the post-industrial landscape of the river during its neoliberal renaturalization for leisure and real estate.

A left turn in the gallery takes the visitor into Jordan Prosser's immersive video installation showcasing the banal reality of the city of Oshawa and its legacy of a declining automotive industry. Retracing the artist's own biographical cul-de-sacs, the video conflates subjectivities and relationships as it explores downsized middle management in the shadow of a patriarchal tycoon. The workers are leaving the factory; the founder's mansion is now a movie set.

In the final exhibition, Emily DiCarlo performs a time-motion study that instead of optimizing Fordian labour, occupies the National Research Council to protest against the incessant standardization of time. Drawing attention to the network of 82 atomic clocks, DiCarlo crafts an experiential feeling of temporality as contrasted to the official "post-real time" analysis that underwrites our lives. In the precarious labour of our time, are we burnt out? Like the Vietnam War vets, is the best protest not to fight more but to enact the protest of falling asleep?

I close this foreword by introducing the inaugural Visual Studies Scholars-in-Residence—Dehlia Hannah and Nadim Samman—who wrote this year's catalogue essays. Hannah is a philosopher of science and Samman a curator; together their collaborative writing—and constantly cross-pollinating roles—has plumbed the depths of the students' research and speculated upon their poetics, revealing a deep blue hue.

Charles Stankieveh
Director of Visual Studies

Emily DiCarlo

The Propagation of Uncertainty

Emily DiCarlo's exhibition, entitled *The Propagation of Uncertainty*, explores what she terms "the infrastructure of time and the intimacy of duration." With respect to the former, DiCarlo's project investigates a network of governmental facilities (and analytic processes) that uphold Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). Relying on a series of 82 atomic clocks, the nodes frequently find themselves situated in national laboratories (a preponderance of them in Europe, North America, and leading industrial nations). At each, since the 1970s, microwaves or electrons serve as benchmarks for temporal frequency. However, at every data point there are unknown variables: variations in individual clocks, noise delays during data transmission, errors, etc. Regulating and coordinating UTC involves continual analyses of readings taken from each site, using complex algorithms, and is undertaken by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) in Paris. A monthly memorandum—known as *Circular T*—publishes their conclusion, which is then distributed to the network, calibrating *the* time.

The exhibition comprises two works. *Circular T: A Collection of Uncertainties* is an online database and series of 82 red binders sitting on shelves mounted to the gallery wall. Each binder contains a written document (authored by the artist) loosely styled in the manner of the *Circular T*, apparently issued by an atomic clock facility.¹ The texts themselves are variously poetic, idiosyncratic,

and diaristic. Marshalling first-person narratives, they demonstrate the depth of DiCarlo's research through a series of reveries. Sometimes a document recounts the artist's visit to a particular facility. Elsewhere, the artist offers more esoteric reflections. The cumulative effect of this corpus is to highlight local textures and particularities of the "universal" temporal apparatus.

The second work is a three-channel video installation with the namesake title of the exhibition *The Propagation of Uncertainty*. Capturing an array of hardware within the time-keeping laboratory of the National Research Council in Ottawa, the footage bristles with cables, inputs, and blinking lights; inscrutable devices, trusty looking filing cabinets, and a round clock-face that ticks for a full minute. There is something uncanny about these electrical inputs, outputs, and wooden library drawers with handwritten tags. Indeed, despite all the technology, the ensemble looks supremely analogue. Having been established in 1970s, there are very few screens in the laboratory, only a few display panels. To contemporary viewers this collection of high technology looks retro, hardly a going concern. Throughout the work's duration, the voice of Canada's speaking clock reads out the time over and over again. There is something cloying about it—a windowless room, saturated with electricity and repetition. It is monotony raised to the highest technical fact, and if the viewer overcomes resistance to this monotony they are rewarded by a strange

Emily DiCarlo, *The Propagation of Uncertainty*, 2020. Three-channel video detail. Courtesy of the artist.



feeling of calm. Repose, of some kind—perhaps the sense of one’s inner clock being calibrated. In today’s accelerated cultural and digital economy, where even meditation breaks and moments to “stop and think” are offered up in 50-minute hours, slowing down is a difficult concept. Towards the end of DiCarlo’s video the camera pans, and you see the artist lying on the floor—her eyes open in what might be bliss, or boredom’s release into a new thought. Lying on the linoleum floor, at the foot of a bank of aluminum circuit boards, wearing a black worker’s suit, in the midst of the room’s crushing inhumanity, her face is illuminated by a glow. You know it issues from a fluorescent light, but somehow DiCarlo’s expression—upward turned, mouth slightly open—suggests some form of beatitude, like she is being cradled by time, resting in its lap or belly. It is at this point (towards the end of the video) that you, the viewer, have finally slowed down enough to watch it again—at its own pace. Now, there is something deeply comforting about the speaking clock. Perhaps this is because it does not speed up, unlike the rest of your life.

Re-viewed, DiCarlo’s prone figure performs a reverie of interiority: Jonah to an infrastructural and regulative whale; living potential, rather than action or perfect stillness. She seems to demonstrate a lack of yearning, or striving. What makes hers a reverie of repose is the intensity of this stillness. Looking at her, she appears to have overcome any disjunction between her

intimate temporality and that of Ottawa’s national timekeeping laboratory. Where does this leave the rest of us? Her silent figure refuses to say. And yet, the intimacy of her duration finds a voice in the red binders (whose sculptural presentation leans so much on the bureaucratic and the impersonal). If, in the video, DiCarlo’s figure was struck mute by the count of the speaking clock (as if it were speaking for her), her voice returns on the page. Perhaps it can only live here. Why? Because speech as an *account* is qualitatively different from *counting* (the only thing a computer can truly do). The clock can never give an account of time, which is, strictly, the work of narration—and lived relations.

¹BIPM uses the term “post-real time process” to describe the month-long work of reckoning the time data from the 82 sites. Essentially, the past always informs our future present tense. The report can be downloaded here: <https://www.bipm.org/en/bipm-services/timescales/time-ftp/Circular-T.html>

Chris Mendoza

yet you dream in the green of your time

"...the act of imagination is bound up with memory. You know, they straightened out the Mississippi River in places to make room for houses & liveable acreage. Occasionally the river floods these places. "Floods" is the word they use, but in fact it is not flooding; it is remembering. Remembering where it used to be. All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was."
— Toni Morrison, "The Site of Memory," 1995

Chris Mendoza's *yet you dream in the green of your time*¹ is a multimedia exploration of the fate of Ontario's Don River—its modern spatial rationalization in the form of a straightening and canalization from the 1880s to 1920s, and its putative remediation today, as part of a redevelopment scheme affecting its delta. Taking this history as a starting point, Mendoza's project employs various techniques, such as site-specific performance, natural dye extraction, video, and archival readymades, as well as materials collected on numerous site visits. All these elements are brought together in the gallery, which becomes a temporary worksite for their critical deployment.

The exhibition comprises a video depicting a performance action on the re-development site, a brownfield where the river mouth, once straightened, is being "returned" to a serpentine form. Here, the artist, clad in a bespoke high-visibility poncho, a garment that straddles both construction workwear and "athleisure," manipulates a mirrored coffin in an exercise of reflection upon his surrounds. The garb is manifestly theatrical, making the person wearing it an *obvious* performer.

Such emphasis on performativity highlights the fact that, at this worksite, along with the river and the condominiums that will line its banks, identity is *under construction*. Indeed, creating the types of persons who will use this development in the future is an ongoing project—and one where Mendoza finds space for art to intervene. The costume aligns itself to a new regime of discipline—a fad, a fast, or a diet—as much as to fantastical projection into open choreographies. It deflects any impression of derivation from Indigenous or earlier historical iterations of life at the river mouth. By highlighting the entwining of ongoing physical operations upon the land and images of "your lifestyle here," Mendoza gestures towards a politics of artifice, in which futures remain open for negotiation.

The artist's fluorescent yellow poncho, lined in hunter green, offers itself as a universal signifier of being dressed for the Anthropocene. A piece of ready-to-wear all-weather gear, it gestures towards historical outdoor wear, its naturalistic interior hue bringing to mind woodsmen, park rangers, birdwatchers, and other Canadian icons. By contrast, its high-visibility exterior and gender neutral minimalism seem designed to be worn by young professionals of the new economy—the target market for the condos that are due to be built here. A garment for urban preparedness and opportunism, it signifies its wearer's readiness to capitalize on change no matter what the conditions—be they financial or ecological.

As these notes on camping gear imply, what visitors encounter in the gallery are props for variable performances—not only those

Chris Mendoza,
*yet you dream in the
green of your time*,
2020. Video still.



scripted by the artist, but also the many found performances afforded by construing the mouth of the Don River as a stage. For the moment, it appears that Mendoza is the only actor to purposefully or consciously enact the site as a theater. Yet these props, in particular the mirrored coffin, harken back to another historical moment. One of the artist's initial inspirations to activate the site was a protest that took place in 1969, long after the river's straightening. The protest took the form of a funeral procession for the "death of the river," replete with a grim reaper, marching band, and other recognisable figures of political street theatre. Yet Mendoza's coffin questions the possibility of memory, not only that of the river itself, but of the mode of politics. For if there is one critical point that has risen to the level of a banal truism in the Anthropocene, it is that there can be no return to nature. *The river cannot return to itself.*

Needless to say, the mirroring reproduces its surroundings in a critical register. Its iconographic frame would appear to hold the possibility of *reflecting* the site that is being built up around it. Indeed, the coffin stands as a memorialization for its implied content. Is it the Don River? Is it past uses of the waterfront? This would seem to be the case. And yet, at this point in must be pointed out that the coffin shares something of the aesthetic of the buildings which are to be erected there—sleek, modern, reflective, glassy surfaces. One does not have to project too much into the architectural vernacular of condo-land to imagine it as a piece of public furniture to come.

Mendoza's project marks the delta's putative rehabilitation through the reintroduction of a meandering path, and fake "natural" watercourse, in line with the most right-on trends in landscape architecture. But is his pilgrimage from the gallery to the site, and back to the gallery, bearing the mirrored coffin object and additional props another funeral? If so it would appear to be a happy funeral in gay colors. More a pageant of unburying and resurrection. Nevertheless, one doubts that it is a straight celebratory proposal. Something about it suggests that the river just won't be left alone, allowed to run its course. Runners are ready to run a course through it even before the water is allowed to find its own way.

¹ Mendoza's work takes its title from a quotation from the poet Gwendolyn MacEwen. Gwendolyn MacEwen, "Dark Pines Under Water," in *The Selected Gwendolyn MacEwen*, ed. Meaghan Strimas (Toronto: Exile Editions, 2007), 97.

Brandon Poole

Blind Pilotage

"There used to be no house, hardly a room, in which someone had not once died [...] Today people live in rooms that have never been touched by death," wrote Walter Benjamin. These people are, he continues, the "dry dwellers of eternity."¹ Brandon Poole redeploys this phrase in the title of two related works that meditate on the contemporary soul of water and the vessels that carry it.

One of these, *Dry Dwellers of Eternity* (*Carla's Island*), is a 16 mm film loop projection Poole has created sampling the first computer-generated animation of ocean waves. The brightly hued scene was originally created on a Cray 1 supercomputer by Dr. Nelson Max of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (the institution that "stewards" the US nuclear deterrent); it is known as *Carla's Island* (1981)—after Max's roommate. Featuring crystal-blue waves that roll in from a horizon (beyond said island) toward the viewer's perspectival position onshore, it is visually simple and not without meditative appeal. Despite the manifest crudeness of its wave pattern, the ocean's surface flickers under digital sunlight as it rolls towards the viewer, an effect which we can only imagine was even more captivating upon its debut four decades ago.

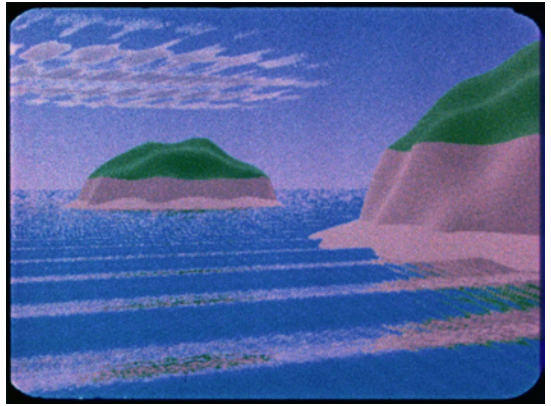
Installed on the opposite wall of the gallery, another projection, *Dry Dwellers of Eternity* (*Offshore Operations Simulator*), sets the retro character of the first projection into stark relief with its clean, contemporary video aesthetic. Documenting a maritime navigation scenario, it was filmed within a ship simulator at Memorial University's Center for Marine Simulation—and features a highly realistic animated ocean, which, instead of islands, laps at the base of a pair of icebergs, echoing

the topography of *Carla's Island*. Convincing and entirely bespoke, registering the current power of motion graphics, the churning waves and overcast sky were generated by a computational engine that applied weather parameters set by the artist. Moving according to sophisticated physics, the water presented here comprises a *state-of-the-art* substitute for the real thing.

Situated between these two aquatic polarities, in the middle of the gallery swings a vintage ship's oil-lamp gimbal—listing and swaying as if registering the passage of an unseen vessel. In fact this modified readymade, entitled *The Far Splendour of the Yara Birkeland*, is operated by a kinetic mechanism that recreates the spatial movement of a virtual passage of the world's first autonomous ship—the *Yara Birkeland*—as it travels along its designated route inside the digital world of the marine simulator.

While offering viewers a genealogy of leading water simulations past and present (including the gimbal's more physical naturalism), the affect of *Blind Pilotage* pushes water away. The editing sequence of the *Offshore Operations Simulator* video signals this distancing. The footage cycles through clips that feature the (virtual) sea, filling the whole frame; that same sea, viewed from the mock bridge; and, finally, the exterior of the simulation vessel—a moving box-room mounted on pneumatic stilts. The cumulative implication of these three perspectives is that of telescoping control over our encounter with the ocean—command that facilitates shipping and marine industries by keeping direct exposure *at bay* (a coastal idiom being apposite). At this stage it is worth noting that the artist, an avid sailor, once

Brandon Poole,
*Dry Dwellers of
 Eternity (Carla's
 Island)*, 2020. 16mm,
 film still. Courtesy of
 the artist.



suffered a traumatic capsizing, an experience he sought, unsuccessfully, to re-enact inside the simulator—itsself designed to train captains how to avoid the very real risk of capsizing a container ship while raising anchor.³ The need for psychic control over bodily exposure to the watery element, however, is just the tip of the iceberg. Beyond the human frame, the issue of *reduced exposure* also has relevant economic and political dimensions.

Financial capital stands to profit from a certain level of hazard—a sweet spot. The wager (and thus profit) is tied to successful management of the margin of uncertainty.⁴ It is not irrelevant that the early insurance industry was born in the underwriting of maritime enterprise. The Operations Simulator is a tool for reckoning how much risk can be taken in navigation, but its economic purpose is to manage capital risk by producing better captains. As the spectre of the autonomous *Yara Birkeland* appears on the horizon, things are about to change: abandoning a human crew does away with all the uncertainties associated with their piloting the vessel—the ship's bridge, the true home of the mariner, eradicated.

At this point one might hazard the significance of Benjamin's "dry dwellers of eternity" passage within Poole's project. Originally ventured in an essay on the fate of storytelling in modernity, it is a cryptic remark, but one whose implication can be approached through the metaphysical import of desiccation—for the image of water is deep, especially when it is deployed in absentia. It was Heraclitus who claimed that the soul arises "out of water." Such a statement would appear to present an *arid forever* as being without spirit. Earlier, in the same fragment, the philosopher states that

"for souls it is death to become water." In this case, dry dwelling would appear to be a matter of a parched soul, *haunting* by way of undeath. Simulators and autonomous ships make possible rooms untouched by death. Ships at sea without a crew, and without a pilot, cannot contain it—precisely because they do not contain life. Such vessels navigate a different kind of oblivion. Charting a course through a simulated sea, the ghost of the worker abides—the ghost of the *sailor as labourer*. But this labour is not only economic. For as long as there have been stories about the sea, the sailor has laboured with soul. Among the first of all recorded sea stories, *The Odyssey* stands as a signal example. It is just such epic narratives that Benjamin casts as endangered by modernity.⁵ In light of Poole's work, we observe that automation eventually eliminates the human and their perceptual needs—ultimately even the very image of water. This may be the *blind* pilotage of the exhibition's title. It also seems to stand for the loss of Odysseus and every sailor who might have followed him—on the deck of the *Yara Birkeland*, amid waves of code. Today, these mariners do not need to return to a partner or muse, be they Penelope or Carla, who stands for land. Their love is untethered, adrift. Abyss.

¹ Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 94.

² Noting paradoxically the discordant echoes of US testing at Bikini Atoll in the figure of a tropical island (re) constituted, so to speak, by an atomic project.

³ Whereas some survivors of trauma practice extreme aversion, others seek exposure therapy. Pursuing a psycho-biographical inquiry here suggests a bit of both.

⁴ In this, there is a curious parallel with the aesthetic of the sublime, which requires just enough distance.

⁵ Benjamin's "The Storytellers" makes general reference to the works of Homer.

Jordan Elliott Prosser

Assembly

Assembly is a film in the key of a dream, a regard that works obliquely—through the rear-view mirrors of slow-moving cars, windscreens and windows—to survey the city of Oshawa, 60 km east of Toronto. First home to Canada's horse-and-carriage industry, and then the nation's largest automobile plant, Oshawa's recent deindustrialization has rendered it a bedroom community, a far cry from its manufacturing heyday and baby boom. The peculiar character of this afterlife is the focus of Prosser's cinema.

Somewhere between elegy and stalking, *Assembly* shadows a suburban dream that is fading, along with the retired workers who once manned its car assembly plant. It is a liquid eye, moving through supermarkets, parks, and roads. *Assembly's* gaze seems to trail the former economic motor of the community depicted onscreen. Indeed, Prosser's film seems to register the fact that his own generation can only view such a world retrospectively, in the rear-view—a drive-by on the way to a different future.

The film contains suggestions of plot—slow moving camerawork, scenes at night, following people, moving along darkened roads, perhaps in pursuit, or haunting. Most of the views are close-ups. The camera's regard seems somewhat threatening, intruding upon and surveilling the city's past and present life. On the other hand, its portent has a reflexive affordance—conveying the anxiety of *the one who is looking*, unsettled by what is seen. Prosser's Oshawa overflows with uncanny.

At the heart of the film a historical *pater familias*, Robert Samuel McLaughlin, looms.

Last scion of a carriage- and auto-maker dynasty, his Parkwood Estate mansion occupies the town's centre, serving as an architectural benchmark and aspirational backdrop. Today it is a museum, as well as a site for wedding photographs, business hospitality, and film shoots. Whereas once Oshawa was a manufacturing town, Parkwood is its present marquee—a posthumous muse and soundstage for a televisual dream factory. At night, Prosser's camera peers through its gates, where a lone figure with a hazer spreads smoke throughout the grounds for a film scene. In the open space of interpretation, this smoke is either a veil or a screen onto which the viewer can project their desire. But the latter is easier said than done. As throughout the rest of *Assembly*, it is unclear to whom the gaze belongs.

In conversation, the artist recalls being a child in the backseat of a car, seeing Parkwood pass by. With this in mind, it is tempting to read the film as a retrospective drift—a filmic recollection of being the city's passenger. With the passage of time, Oshawa is—in some way—winding down, and Prosser has grown up. In this respect, he has gained a different perspective. This may be why there is a pronounced tension between *Assembly's* atmosphere of nostalgia, and, conversely, its intruding look. The latter would seem to indicate Prosser's mature gaze, where time has been short-circuited and the older self takes the younger self for a ride. Both conflicted selves are present in Prosser's film. On the higher symbolic plane, *both* are the ghost of Robert McLaughlin, taking in the town, looking at his once great home—the mansion, the factory campus, the metropole—from

Jordan Elliott Prosser,
Assembly, 2020.
Video still. Courtesy
of the artist.



a position of separation, stalking through it like a melancholy spirit, unable to affect its fate. Once driver, now passenger. This is where *Assembly*'s faint tone of horror and supernatural abides.¹

The tension between driver and passenger also holds between father and son, Prosser's dad standing in for McLaughlin in scenes filmed at Costco where the original automotive factory once stood. Once an executive at the corporate headquarters, we see him mostly from behind, walking the aisles of the bulk retailer, huge shelves towering overhead. Deepening the mundane reality of this visit, the end of *Assembly* features archival footage of an amusement park containing a miniature version of Oshawa, and its visitors. It is footage of relaxed people looking at their town from above—a Lilliputian situation wherein citizens play giants on the weekend. Once upon a time they stood tall, at leisure—the living dream of a postwar middle class. At around this point in the film there is an interesting cut between a fire crew in present-day Oshawa, tending a burned-out tire shop, and footage of a shiny little fire truck, pumping out water in the tiny dream town. It is not hard to decipher: Once upon a time, in another version of Oshawa, everyone was a monument, and things were so safe that even emergencies were sport. Today, people's lives have gotten smaller, even as the city has sprawled.

As the preceding comments indicate, *Assembly* is not just about Prosser, his father, McLaughlin, Oshawa, and cars. It appears to be a meditation on the slow dissolution of twenty-first-century male identity in one little corner of the world. Like Oshawa, the film displays the

flattened affect of whiteness and middle-class masculinity, which finds itself diminished rather than amplified by its intersectionality. Though haunted by past visions (of standing tall, taking the wheel, and so on), it discovers a truly gentle sadness at the point where apparently "neutral" identity (once the implicitly exclusive bearer of rights and privileges) is no longer supersized, or given a positive presence by rewards and opportunity. It is an aesthetic beyond post-industrial resentment and angry entitlement. The garage door is closed. It is the point of disassembly.

¹ In contrast to this impotency, the automotive, time-travel film *Back to the Future* (1985)—filmed pre-NAFTA and during a North American auto industry crisis triggered by Japan—provides the classic Hollywood illusion of agency via the fantastical play with the nostalgic past by literally placing a youth in the driver seat.

From the Artists

Emily DiCarlo: Deepest gratitude to my panel Marla Hlady, Charles Stankieveh, Mitchell Akiyama, and Sue Lloyd for their guidance and genuine care. Special thanks to my close ones—friends, family and fellow cohort—for their unwavering support during times of uncertainty. And finally, to the rest of the MVS faculty for their continual inspiration and encouragement.

Chris Mendoza: A big thank you to the MVS faculty—especially Luis Jacob, Maria Hupfield, Will Kwan, and Charles Stankieveh, all of whom have been incredibly giving with their energy and support. A deep acknowledgment of gratitude to Holly, Emily, Brandon, and Jamie for their help on this project, and to my caring studiomates, friends, family, and many others, the river included, whose support kept me afloat.

Jordan Elliott Prosser: Immense thanks to the MVS program, faculty, staff, and fellow moons—to the guidance of Jean-Paul Kelly, Catherine Telford Keogh, and Luis Jacob—to the foundation that is my partner, friends, and family—and to The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, The Whitby Public Library, and The Estate of Len Cullen.

Brandon Poole: My sincere thanks to Charles Stankieveh, Marla Hlady, Luis Jacob, and Kristie MacDonald for their mentorship; to my peers, Chris, Emily, and Jordan for their friendship; to Nelson Max, Gordon Harris, Mitch Renaud, and Tyler Gamvrelis for their contributions to the exhibition; and to my brother Nicholas and my wife Katie-May, for their enduring support.

This year's projects were supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the National Research Council of Canada.

SSHRC ■ CRSH

From the Faculty

Without a doubt, these exhibitions have been interrupted by the greatest challenges MVS students have had to face in the history of our program. Two weeks before installing, a pandemic shut down the world and suspended their shows. Navigating unknowns, a change of space, and delays in scheduling, they have come out the other side with exceptional work. Our deepest congratulations to this cohort.

MVS graduate faculty who served on thesis panels this year: Marla Hlady (DiCarlo, Principal Advisor), Luis Jacob (Mendoza, Principal Advisor), Jean-Paul Kelly (Prosser, Principal Advisor), Charles Stankieveh (Poole, Principal Advisor), Mitchell Akiyama, Maggie Groat, Maria Hupfield, Will Kwan, Sue Lloyd, Gareth Long, Sanaz Mazinani, and Catherine Telford-Keogh.

Much appreciation goes to the catalogue writers and Visual Studies Scholars-in-Residence Dehlia Hannah and Nadim Samman for their insightful essays and additional advising of the students during their final term.

Ongoing appreciation to the Daniels Faculty administrative and technical staff for their support in making this exhibition happen from workshop production to financial logistics. In particular, thank you to the Visual Studies technician Renée Lear.

Once again thank you to the Art Museum for their continued collaboration with the MVS program in providing a unique experience and platform for interdisciplinary student research that draws on interests from across the university's programs and provides one of the museum's most important exhibitions annually.

Finally, a special thanks goes to Dean Richard Sommer, whose second term at the Faculty has come to an end. His support of Visual Studies has been greatly appreciated over the years. We welcome interim Dean Robert Wright and thank him for this support for this year's shows.

Note: This printed catalogue documents the original plan of the exhibition—layout and final works were modified following the COVID-19 closure.

About the Artists

Emily DiCarlo is an artist and writer whose interdisciplinary work applies methodologies that often produce collaborative, site-specific projects. Evidenced through video, performance, and installation, her research connects the infrastructure of time with the intimacy of duration.

Chris Mendoza is an artist-educator whose work unravels and is entangled in the geographical politics of narration—investigating questions of belonging through embodied and place-based research. Often articulated through material traces, ephemera, and written and oral histories, Chris's work moves between performance, sculpture, video, and writing. Chris currently resides in Toronto.

Jordan Elliott Prosser works with video and sculpture. Employing auto-ethnographic and documentary strategies, Jordan has returned to his hometown to chart a personal and communal identity. His new work explores the precarity of industrialized normativity through an embedded but critical empathy, invoking observational and surreal modes of representation to allegorize the contradictory present of the suburbs.

Brandon Poole is an interdisciplinary artist. Having previously trained in photojournalism and philosophy, his work develops upon the inheritance of archival material to mediate the entwined histories and speculative futures of architecture, cinema, and simulation.

About the Authors

Dehlia Hannah is a philosopher and curator, and Mads Øvlisen Fellow in Art and Natural Sciences at Aalborg University-Copenhagen. She holds a Doctorate in Philosophy and a Certificate in Feminist Inquiry from Columbia University. Her recent book, *A Year Without a Winter* (Columbia University Press, 2018), reframes contemporary imaginaries of climate crisis.

Nadim Samman is a curator and art historian with a PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art. He co-founded and curated the 1st Antarctic Biennale (Antarctica, 2017) and curated the 5th Moscow Biennale for Young Art, 4th Marrakech Biennale, and Treasure of Lima and Rare Earth (at TBA21, Vienna). He is currently curator at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin.

Exhibition Programs

Live Reading: *Circular T: A Collection of Uncertainties*

Wednesday, November 4, 2pm

Online via Zoom

Live reading by Emily DiCarlo

Registration through artmuseum.utoronto.ca

Staff

Barbara Fischer, Executive Director/
Chief Curator

Sarah Robayo Sheridan, Curator

Mikinaak Migwans, Curator, Indigenous
Contemporary Art

John G. Hampton, Adjunct Curator

Seika Boye, Adjunct Curator

Rebecca Gimmi, Program Coordinator

Maureen Smith, Business Coordinator

Heather Darling Pigat, Collections Manager

Esther Simmonds-MacAdam, Exhibition
Coordinator

Marianne Rellin, Communications Assistant


TJ Ediger, Exhibition Technician


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Visiting the Art Museum

Justina M. Barnicke Gallery 
7 Hart House Circle
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3
416.978.8398

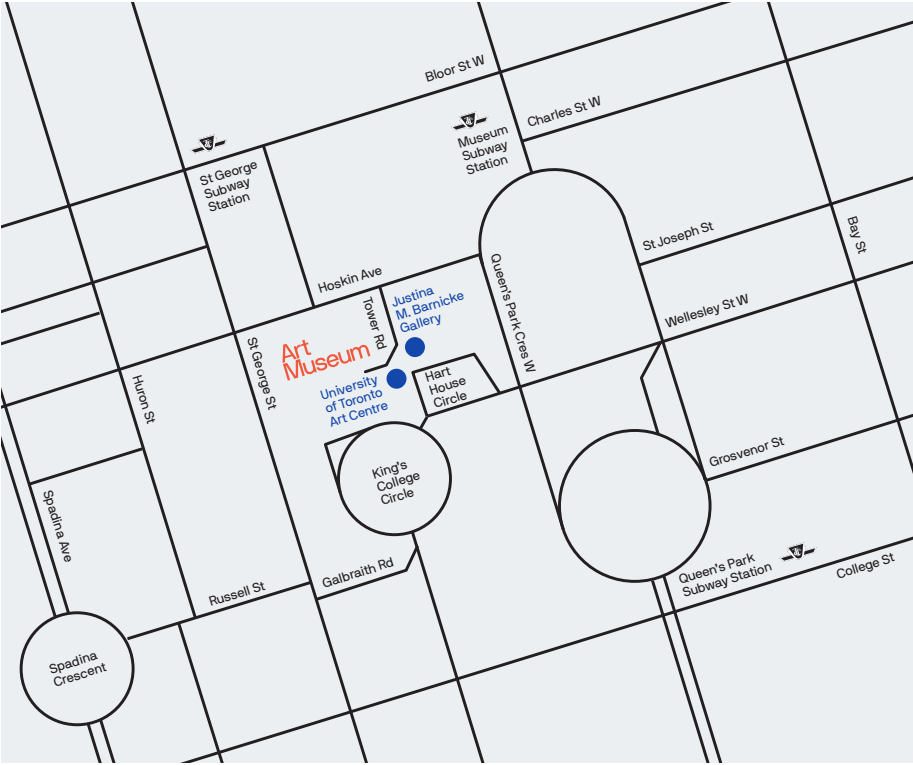
University of Toronto Art Centre 
15 King's College Circle
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H7
416.978.1838

artmuseum@utoronto.ca
artmuseum.utoronto.ca
@artmuseumuoft

Please note that our hours have changed:

Tuesday	Noon–5pm
Wednesday	Noon–7pm
Thursday	Noon–5pm
Friday	Noon–5pm
Saturday	Noon–5pm
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed

Closed on statutory holidays.
Admission is FREE.



Art Museum
University of Toronto

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