

Art Museum
University of Toronto
—
Justina M. Barnicke Gallery
University of Toronto Art Centre

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Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3
artmuseum.utoronto.ca

Art Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Centre Cannot Hold: Labourious Memories,
presented by the Art Museum at the University of
Toronto, opens at the Jackman Humanities Institute

On view from September 14, 2022 through June 20, 2023
Opening Reception: Wednesday, September 14, 4pm–6pm

Toronto, Ontario (September 12, 2022)—The Art Museum is pleased to announce *The Centre Cannot Hold: Labourious Memories*, an exhibition that considers artistic labour in relation to community building, activism, and memory. Composed of three sections, the exhibition is curated by three Master of Visual Studies graduate students from the John H. Daniels Faculty of Landscape, Architecture, and Design and is presented in conjunction with the Jackman Humanities Institute’s 2022-23 research theme, *Labour*.

In *Unsettling Sites of War*, curated by Atif Mikhail Khan, Mary Kavanagh’s archival assemblages highlight post-nuclear traces at historic and active sites of military industry, research, and training. Juxtaposing military signifiers such as desert flora, architectural relics, and atomic pilgrims, Kavanagh’s work activates sites of remembering nuclear landscapes of decades past into the nuclear present.

1 of 5



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Curated by **Sherry Chunqing Liu**, *Those Unforgotten* presents **Morris Lum**'s photographs of Chinatowns with a focus on Chinese restaurants that have disappeared over the years. The photographs, spanning different times and geographic areas across North America, unearth the stories and labour behind Chinese restaurants as gathering spaces and as a cultural signifier integral for community building. Lum's artistic labour gestures against the forgetting of local stories of labour, made invisible due to the gentrification of the city and the never-ending transformation of our urban landscape.

Embedded in the histories of protest, the three artists in *These Walls Hold Our Wounds*, curated by **Erin Storus**, invoke craft as an urgent form of women's labour. Textile works (*arpilleras*) by artists **Soledad Fátima Muñoz**, **Bélgica Castro Fuentes**, and **Amaranta Ursula Espinoza Arias** serve as testimonies to their lived experiences during the brutal regime of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet and bring attention to the ongoing destruction of South America as instigated by North American capitalist systems. Often relegated to the realm of vernacular or popular culture, these textile forms of artistic labour quite literally "craft" notions of resistance through the slow threading of discourses of power, gender, and identity.

About the Curators

Atif Mikhail Khan (b. Lahore) is an independent researcher, writer, and curator exploring experimental text, image, and community-based art practice. He is based in what is currently

called Rexdale, Toronto. His research-driven practice develops themes of archiving twenty-first century political violence; questions of memory, land, and evidence; and most recently, what it would mean to inhabit political and spatial (geographic) categories differently via visual experimentation. He is currently a Master of Visual Studies candidate in Curatorial Studies at the University of Toronto.

Sherry Chunqing Liu is a curator, writer, and designer based in Toronto and Vancouver. She holds a BA in Architectural Studies and is currently a Master of Visual Studies candidate at the University of Toronto. Her curatorial practice focuses on community engagement and site-specificity with consideration to social issues. Her recent exhibitions include *Clinic into the Future* (University of Toronto, Canada, 2022) and *We Are Together 2020* (virtual, global, 2020). Liu is the recipient of the 2022 Reesa Greenberg Curatorial Studies Award.

Erin Storus is an independent curator and artist based in Toronto/Tkaronto, the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. She is currently completing a Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies at the University of Toronto. Her curatorial practice is variously informed by investigations into ephemerality, decay, world-building, and spectacle. She previously curated a series of outdoor group art exhibitions entitled *Garden Variety* in her backyard in Summer 2021 and a solo show entitled *Rosalie Lam: Cholon, Not Forgotten* at the John B. Aird Gallery in Spring 2022.

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More information: artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/the-centre-cannot-hold-labourious-memories/

About the Art Museum at the University of Toronto

The Art Museum is one of the largest gallery spaces for contemporary visual art exhibitions and programming in Toronto. The Art Museum organizes and presents an intensive year-round program of exhibitions and events that foster—at a local, regional, and international level—innovative research, interdisciplinary scholarship, and knowledge of art and its histories befitting Canada’s leading university and the country’s largest city.

About the Jackman Humanities Institute

The Jackman Humanities Institute (JHI) advances humanities scholarship, generates interdisciplinary ways to understand human experience, and provides opportunities for scholars to learn from each other by creating new research and study networks (both virtual and physical) that complement and go beyond the mandates of individual disciplines; providing funding to faculty members to bring arts and humanities out of the classroom and into the public domain through events and exhibitions; offering scholarships to students and faculty at all career stages from all three University of Toronto campuses and other universities. The JHI enables humanities research to

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reach outside the university walls and engage with the wider public.

Our Supporters

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