

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

7 Hart House Circle
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3
artmuseum.utoronto.ca

Art Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Art Museum at the University of Toronto presents the 2023 MVS Curatorial Studies Graduating Exhibitions

Toronto, April 24, 2023—The Art Museum at the University of Toronto is proud to present the graduating projects of the 2023 Master of Visual Studies Curatorial Studies program students **atif mikhail khan, Sherry Chunqing Liu, Erin Reznick, and Erin Storus**. Opening on **Wednesday, May 3**, the four distinct curatorial projects explore the nuances and contradictions within our contemporary condition: the tension between preservation and decay; the in-betweenness of inhabiting the conceptual “diaspora space”; artists traversing the visual edges of prayer, spirit, and body; and the persistence and commodification of the posthumous online self.

In *acts of preservation / acts of decay*, curated by **Erin Storus**, artists **Marli Davis, Shannon Garden-Smith, and Sara Maston** consider the various forms of decay and its impacts on virtually all aspects of life. Creating three site-specific installations that will decompose throughout the cycle of the exhibition, the artists draw attention to the University College courtyard as a site at once carefully maintained and susceptible to the decomposing force of the natural environment.

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Curated by **atif mikhail khan**, *my final prayer* weaves a collective story across shifting borders, geographies, and histories illuminating the presences of embodied spirits. Such presences are activated in response to Martinique-born political philosopher Frantz Fanon's closing lines in *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952) of the urgency of embodied transformations. Against the wheel of catastrophic political violence, works by **naakita f.k.**, **Jasmine Gui with Abby Ho and Justine Wong**, **Thomas Haskell**, and **Pejvak** stage prayer through different kinds of materials, bodies, and spirit—from the granular and non-human to the wider living landscapes in which the artworks are placed.

Where have I arrived?, curated by **Sherry Chunqing Liu**, explores the themes of food/kitchen, translation, and body through the conceptual lens of “diaspora space,” which is defined by sociologist Avtar Brah as a conceptual category that “includes the entanglement, the intertwining of the genealogies of dispersion with those of ‘staying put.’” Artists **Lotus Laurie Kang**, **Brubey Hu**, and **Patrick Cruz** echo one another as they render palpable the personal and untranslatable feelings in moments of longing and disorientation that emerge from their inhabitations of the conceptual diaspora spaces and their literal lived environments. This exhibition explores the relation between arriving in a gallery space and in diaspora space, and opens up the complexity of the idea of “Asian Diaspora.”

As death is increasingly ritualized through social media platforms, where the posthumous online self persists, the promise of digital afterlife becomes a sought-after commodity.

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Curated by **Erin Reznick**, *Tumbling in Harness* brings together a group of artists—**Oreet Ashery, Common Accounts, Charlie Engman, Stine Deja, Russell Perkins, and Vunkwan Tam**—whose works inquire into the sociopolitical, practical, and emotional implications of online death in the age of platform capitalism—a phenomenon that has only recently emerged and, for the moment, the consequences of which are yet to be fully understood. This exhibition is presented in partnership with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival.

These projects are produced as part of the requirements for the MVS degree in Curatorial Studies at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, University of Toronto.

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2023 MVS Curatorial Studies Program Graduating Exhibitions

acts of preservation / acts of decay

Curated by Erin Storus

May 3–31, 2023

Clark Quadrangle, University College

Works by Marli Davis, Shannon Garden-Smith, and Sara Maston

artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/acts-of-preservation-acts-of-decay/

my final prayer

Curated by atif mikhail khan

May 3–July 22, 2023

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Works by naakita f.k., Jasmine Gui with Abby Ho and Justine Wong, Thomas Haskell, and Pejvak
artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/my-final-prayer/

Where have I arrived?

Curated by Sherry Chunqing Liu
May 3–July 22, 2023
University of Toronto Art Centre
Works by Lotus Laurie Kang, Brubey Hu, and Patrick Cruz
artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/where-have-i-arrived/

Tumbling in Harness

Curated by Erin Reznick
May 3–July 22, 2023
Justina M. Barnicke Gallery
Works by Oreet Ashery, Common Accounts, Charlie Engman, Stine Deja, Russell Perkins, and Vunkwan Tam
artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/tumbling-in-harness/

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Public Programs

Opening Reception: 2023 MVS Curatorial Studies and MVS Studio Program Graduating Exhibitions
Wednesday, May 3, 6pm–8pm
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Curatorial Tour: *Where have I arrived?* with Sherry Chunqing Liu

Friday, June 23, 2pm–3pm
University of Toronto Art Centre

For more information about public programs, visit
artmuseum.utoronto.ca/programs/

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About the Curators

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. Currently completing a Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies at the University of Toronto, Erin’s curatorial practice is variously informed by investigations into ephemerality, decay, world-building, and spectacle. She curated a series of outdoor group art exhibitions entitled *Garden Variety* in her backyard in Summer 2021 and Summer 2022; a solo show entitled *Rosalie Lam: Cholon, Not Forgotten* at the John B. Aird Gallery in Spring 2022; a group exhibition at the Jackman Humanities Institute presented in conjunction with the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, entitled *These Walls Hold Our Wounds*, open until June 2023; and a two-person show at the plumb, open from April to May 2023. She is the recipient of a 2021-23 University of Toronto Fellowship, a 2022 Art Museum Curatorial Residency Award, and a 2023 Canada Arts Council grant.

Erin Reznick is a curator and publisher whose research tends to the sociological space around the assembly of community, specifically negotiating the social space that occurs in both public and private domains. Erin is the co-editor in chief of *Phile Magazine*.

atif mikhail khan (b. Lahore) is a curator, writer, and researcher based in Rexdale, Toronto. His recent research looks at the intersections between transnational militarization, the edges of visual practice and themes of spirit in contemporary social and political thought. Previously, he co-curated *The Centre Cannot Hold: Labourious Memories* at the Jackman Humanities Centre alongside Erin Storus and Sherry Chunqing Liu.

Sherry Chunqing Liu is a curator, writer, and artist based in Toronto and Vancouver. She holds a BA in Architecture and is currently a Master of Visual Studies candidate at the University of Toronto. Her recent exhibitions include *Morris Lum: Those Unforgotten* (2022-23) and *Clinic into the Future* (2022). Sherry's curatorial practice focuses on community engagement and site-specificity with consideration to social issues. Her work has been published and featured on *U of T News*, *The Varsity*, *Richmond News*, *Demo Magazine*, *The Strand*, and more. (sherryliu.ca)

About the Art Museum at the University of Toronto

The Art Museum is one of the largest gallery spaces for 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 Master of Visual Studies Curatorial Studies Program

Initiated in 2008, the Curatorial Studies stream in the MVS program at the University of Toronto is currently in its 15th year. Embedded within a rich environment of study, teaching assistantships, internships, and mentorship within the internationally renowned Daniels Faculty and the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, students immerse in recent developments in the visual arts, theory, and critical writing in an interdisciplinary context to support their research interests and curatorial engagement. In particular, the program focuses on the presentational challenges arising from the diverse and complex modes of contemporary art—from material and historical artefacts to installation, from performance to image, text, sound, and digital media—within the broader context of contemporary global culture. Significantly, the program offers students the opportunity to produce their own Graduating Exhibition for public presentation within the professional context and support of the Art Museum on the downtown campus of the University of Toronto, and at the centre of Canada’s largest city.

The highly respected degree affords students access to a sustained professional network and mentorships. With an outstanding history of accomplishments of Graduating students’ exhibitions, graduates of our program continually achieve successful curatorial careers and institutional positions

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in Canada and internationally. They include directorial, curatorial, and related positions at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the MacKenzie Art Gallery, the Toronto Biennial of Art, the Esker Foundation, and many other art institutions across Canada and around the world.

Our Supporters

The Art Museum gratefully acknowledges additional project support from the Reesa Greenberg Curatorial Studies Award and International Travel Fund and The Graduate Architecture, Landscape, and Design Student Union (GALDSU).

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