

# WITHIN TENSIONS



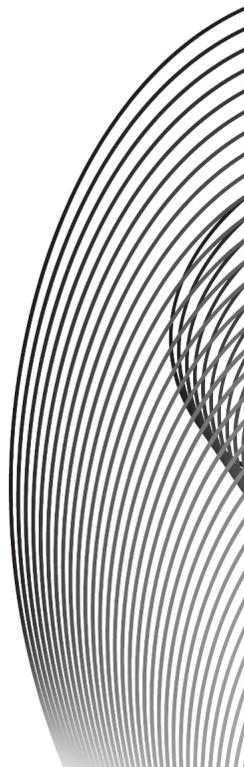
vol.16

NATURE





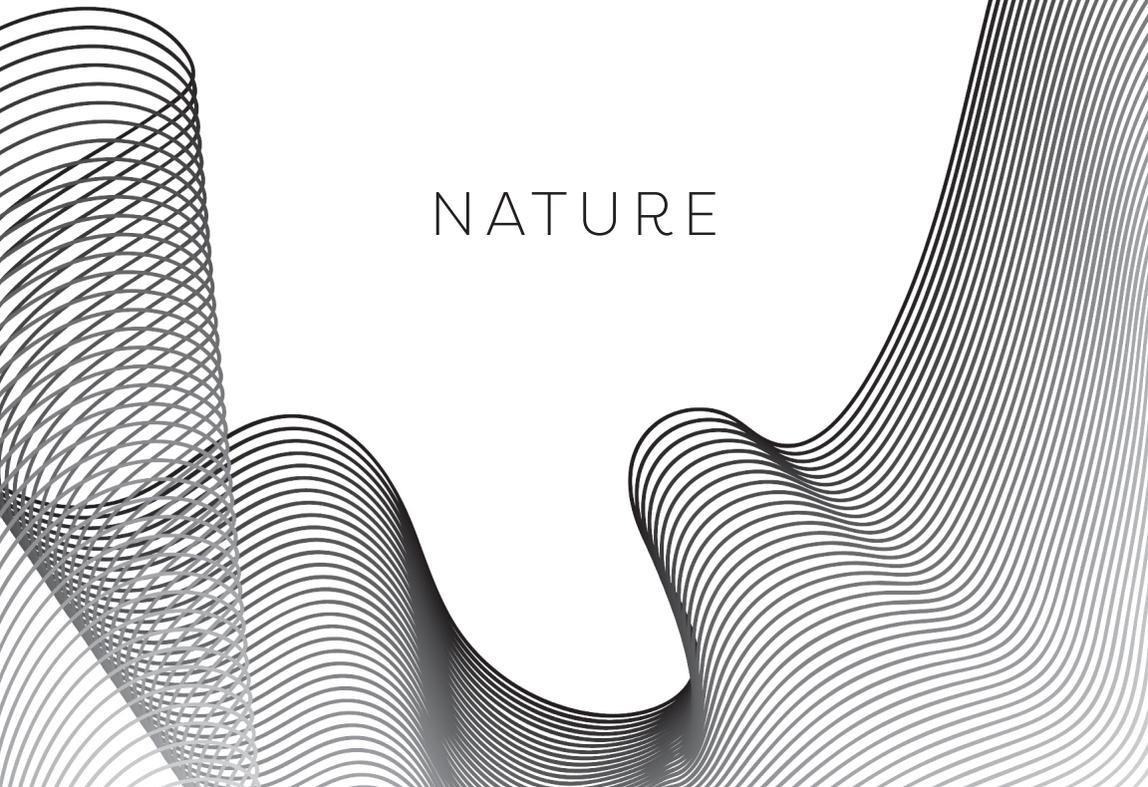
WITHINTENSIONS



# WITHIN TENSIONS

April 2021  
vol. 16

NATURE



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We at Withintensions want to acknowledge that our work takes place on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xwməθkwə́əm (Musqueam), and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples. We want to recognize that these lands belong to the Indigenous peoples who have lived here far before the arrival of settlers. We also want to push beyond land acknowledgements to further encourage acts of reconciliation. Recognition is great but it is nowhere near where we need to be. Reconciliation is comprehensive and takes more than an acknowledgment for occupying land. We always support marginalised peoples right to protest.



Audrey Shiu, Mixed Media, *Mother Nature* (2021)

# Nature

Audrey Shiu

“Nature”, derived from the latin word “Natura”; essential qualities, innate disposition, in ancient times, literally “birth”.

“Mother Nature” is a conceptual artwork of how I perceive the theme of Nature, where the personification of Mother Nature herself is synonymous. I chose to use the model of a (pregnant) female body as the personification of Nature, not only to link it to Mother Nature, but also because I wanted to explore the phenomena of Nature, but more specifically how humans are also part of nature. This is further highlighted by how unnatural I made the model look to separate her from the human body, while also giving it colours that would connect with Nature itself.

From my personal observations, there is an odd phenomenon where humans believe they have no correlation with Nature; denying it as if they are exempted from the consequences of such thinking. This also includes our own biological attributes, both psychologically and physically.

Mother Nature is also referred to when something biologically human occurs, specifically when the female body begins their menstrual cycle; a natural phenomenon, yet I question why so many shun it? As if the menstrual cycle is unacceptable. If people accept the forces and consequences of Nature as natural and inevitable, why is the female body and the biological attributes to be rejected?

This is why I chose to use a red flower due to its metaphorical connection with womanhood and sexuality, as well as to virginity. I deliberately made the flowers look like they're drooping/bleeding to represent the menstrual cycle the female body experiences. Nature consists of the natural, physical, material world, the universe. Within all these realms, all of humanity is also part of it.

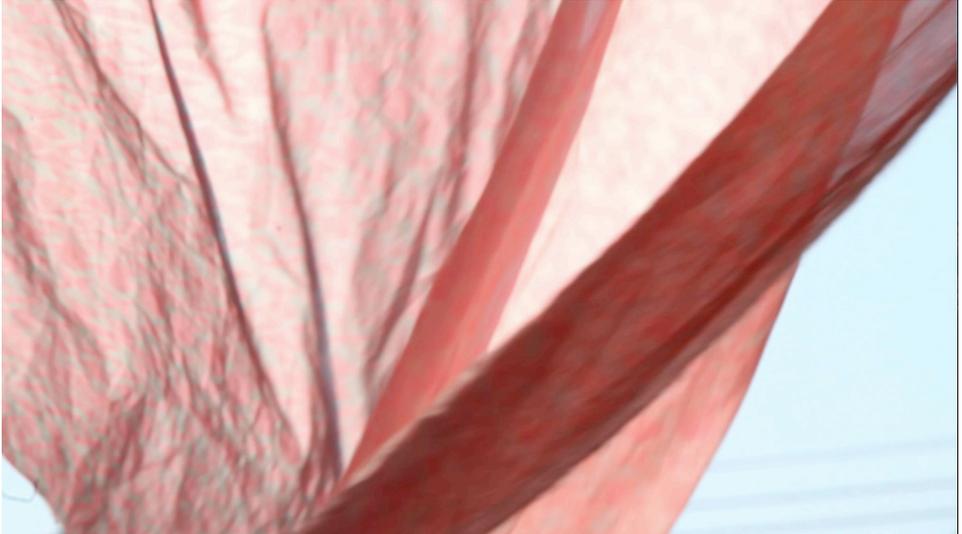
Yet why are we ignorant of our bodies that nature provided us with?

# Se te aclara con el Sol (2021)

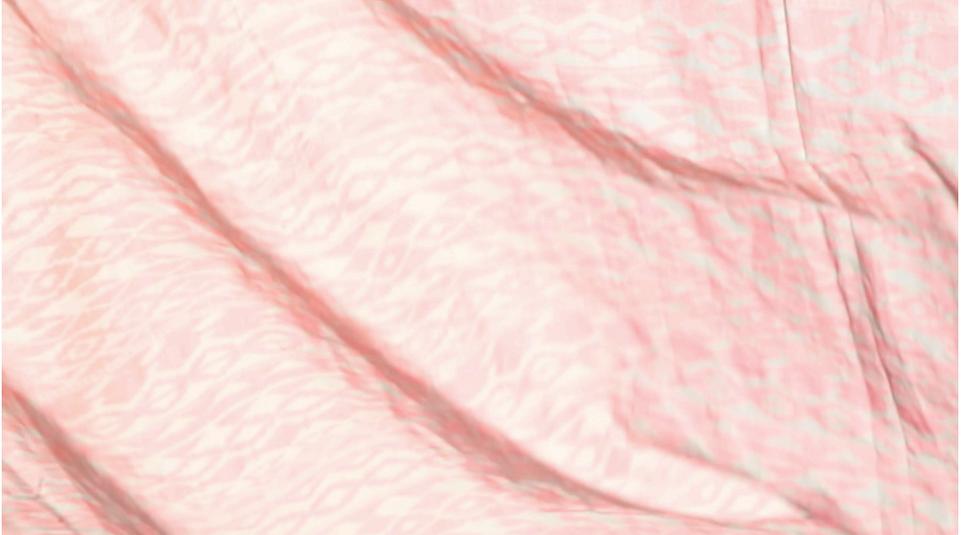
Francisco Berlanga

The wind picks up a bit and the sun starts to shine. When I was a kid, every year when spring started, my mom would tell me that my hair would get lighter with the sun. She would cover my head in manzanilla and send me out to play in the sun. I was always so excited for my hair to change colour as the sun slowly bleached to a half shade lighter of dark brown. It wasn't all that noticeable of a change but, for me, I felt like a new person each summer.

In 2020, I came across an odd piece of fabric. I was drawn to it because it reminded me of some pillows my grandma once made that she had embroidered in a rich pink. The fabric was a thin loose cotton with a geometric pink and white pattern that smelled of dust. As I began to unfurl the fabric, the pink shades slowly drifted to pale peach and off white. I was disappointed since the peach tones reminded me much less of my grandma's pillows, I can only assume that the fabric had been sitting in the store for so long without any use that the sun sneaking through the store windows had bleached it. Maybe the fabric also wanted to change for the summer? Maybe in a way to feel more authentic to its pattern that seemed to derive from Mexico, on its salvage some faint wording read Aztec muslin. I wanted to give this fabric the chance to fulfil its change, I hung it in the sun for a couple days and hopefully soon it will be fully pink. For now, I can just document its slow change as it tries its best.



View  
Se te aclara con el  
Sol (2021) videos  
[here](#)





## Angela Seear

Healing Tides is a larger, less gestural work. The beach scene has been reduced down to more simple shapes and colours that overlap creating texture and depth. The simplified landscape allows the viewer to associate their own memories with the scene, making it more personal thus creating a different experience for each viewer. The colour palette has been chosen to create a specific feeling which also, is another aspect to help the viewer enter the scene.



Angela Seear, *Healing Tides*, Acrylic on Wood Panel (2021)

In this colour study, I tried to capture the setting sun over a desert landscape. The strokes are intentional and bold to bring life to the scene. A scraped paint layer adds an expressive element; encompassing a gestural mark which has been formed by a reaction to the environment. It is unchangeable and locked in. The colour palette aims to tell the entire story of the desert in that moment: the weather, the wind, and the vibe of the entire setting. I want the viewer to feel themselves there, not just see a painting of a landscape.



Angela Seear, *Desert Colour Study 6*, Acrylic on Paper (2021)

This colour study is dawn breaking over desert grasslands and is much more gestural because I wanted to capture the entire scene before the light changed. This scene has a painted background and then three layers of scraped colour on top of each other. The scraped layers are uncontrollable in their outcome and result in each colour layer being a reaction to the results of the previous one. There is an element of fate: what will be will be and there is only so much we can ever control. There is also an element of expressionism, which is a reaction to the environment that the painting is trying to capture. The colour choices are aimed to capture not only the light but the feeling of the entire scene, hopefully drawing the viewer into the entirety of that environment.



Angela Seear, *Desert Colour Study 1*, Acrylic on Paper (2021)

## Untitled (2020)

Kinsey Deakin

This photo, taken with a Pentax 35mm, is of a door frame I came across while roaming around a forest on the Sunshine Coast in B.C. I assumed it was an art installation yet who the artist is remains a mystery to me. The door frame, glassless and bound by a wood frame mounted in the ground, was inviting me in as though to tell me that nature was endless. And, of course, it is.

I was inspired by this mysterious forest door and collaged in another photo I had taken on film from Isla Mujeres in Mexico. This collage was made during the first lockdown when I was missing the freedom of travel and adventure. It acts as a portal to another side of nature and demonstrates the contrast of the mossy forests of the west coast of British Columbia to the tropical breezy palms of the east coast of Mexico. One of my favourite things about traveling anywhere is capturing the unique surroundings of nature on my film camera.



# Find your Nature

Opal Mclean

The most natural form of writing, for me at least, is free writing that flows straight from the mind to the page. Maybe this is because I spend most of my life trying to translate my own experiences for others. I try my best to communicate what I am feeling in order to connect, to be my most authentic self. Sometimes, it comes out in the form of literal nonsense and is met with a blank stare in response. It's the moments where I find a genuine connection-- someone who is willing to share on this same level-- that makes it all worth it in the end.

Sometimes I feel like I'm speaking gibberish. I find myself asking what the hell I'm doing wrong? How do you go about communicating something that is entirely a feeling? How does a feeling properly translate into words? Sure, it is something that comes easily to me but I had to unlearn years of hiding. I had to learn new ways of speaking that others could understand. It was less about letting the feelings fall out of my head and more about translating them into a medium that I find suitable. Maybe it's an image, maybe it's a sound, or maybe it's an action, or a performance. The only thing that stands in my way; I never know if it translates until it is too late.

Sometimes everyday life feels like a performance. We all have these moments where we have to put on a smile and fit the part even just for a little bit. It is only in the moments of complete privacy that these walls fall down. How do you let the people you love see these vulnerable parts of you without seeming like too much? What is the fine line between sharing and oversharing? Life seems to be about finding a balance between caring for yourself and caring for others.

I have never understood balance. I have always been a 0% or 100% kind of person. It is only natural for me to give all parts of myself to the things that I want. Maybe this is obsessive, unhealthy, or just plain absurd but it is the tipping point that my life has reached. I am right on the precipice of ultimate change. My life feels like it is only beginning but, at the same time, I feel there is an end. There is an end to who I once was; this person who stumbled around trying to figure out who the hell she is. Someone who constantly needs answers in order to carry on. Someone who has to spend the majority of their days translating what is going on inside their head just to find these answers.

I might still be stumbling but there are no answers for me. There is no true formula to creating the life that I want. There is no way to ensure that I get the things that I want. All I can do is put myself out there. Maybe that isn't in this same formula of 0% or 100%. Maybe every encounter requires a different percentage. It is realizations like these that make me question the natural patterns I find myself falling into. Feelings are great until they grow so large they swallow you whole. Ignoring them is even better until I'm lying on the ground unaware of what weight keeps me there.

My nature has never been natural to others. It requires chemical balance, it requires constantly checking in with myself and with others, it requires swallowing a giant rock to make it through the things that most can do in the blink of an eye. My nature has been developed over times of failure, over times of hardship, and over years of heartbreak. I still haven't found something that feels entirely natural to me but there is one thing that gets me close.

It's this. It's writing. It's art making. It's the sharing of myself in such a deep but indirect way. It's exactly what I have always needed. It's leaving all the remnants to see who actually picks it up. Some people take a glance and walk away, others pick up the pieces and wonder what there is to be done, then there are the few who take the time to put it all together. This is what I need from others in order to be understood. It is not my job to scream my sorrows until others understand. All I can do is share myself and hope that someone shares in response.

I must say I have been lucky up until this point but everyday becomes a new opportunity to build upon this nature that I have revealed within myself. Something so natural that I didn't even understand it until I took the time to sit with it. My art becomes a deeply vulnerable act of translation in order to show viewers that this is something natural. I want to show people that it is okay to have feelings, it is okay to be weird, and there are truly no rules when it comes to this life that we create.

All I can say now is: Find your nature and live it.

## Mark Ollinger

Green Sphere and Red Pyramid were created as a kind of set, both aesthetically and conceptually tied together. These two pieces focus on the idea of man's relationship with our surroundings. Green Sphere has the word eco hidden in pattern representing the human being in the center of a circle and all of the plants and animals surrounding them: That's also why the sphere was painted green. Green Sphere represents man's interconnectedness. Red Pyramid, on the other hand, is representative of a hierarchy pyramid of earth's creatures and man being the apex predator at the top of the pyramid. The colour red and shape of a pyramid symbolizes man's ego. The word ego is hidden within the pattern on the red pyramid: That's also why the colour red was chosen for that piece.

When they are shown together, the place the human would sit in the shape lines up horizontally making the top of the pyramid line up with the middle of the sphere.



Mark Ollinger, *Green Sphere*, (2021)



Mark Ollinger, *Green Sphere*, (2021)





Mark Ollinger, *Green Sphere*, (2021)



Mark Ollinger, *Red Pyramid*, (2021)



Mark Ollinger, *Red Pyramid*, (2021)



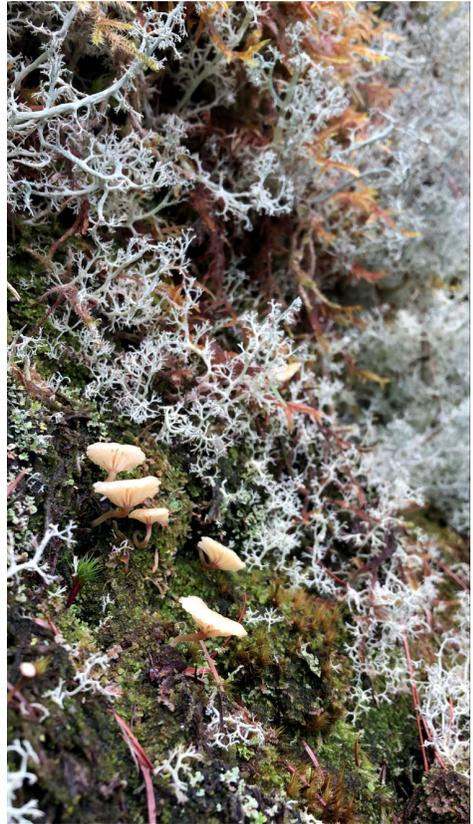
# Embodied Landscape

Natalie Chan

I.

your soft veins wind  
and soak in  
last nights' torrential rain  
dew drops drip  
with morning light,  
steady  
engrained

in ancient grounds,  
ancestral shrouds  
watch where your roots take hold  
an entangled mess,  
renewal of breath  
the restoration of your soul





II.

the waters tell their story  
in undulating rumbling and murmurs  
speaking often, they can be heard  
in conversation with the land  
where the waves dance along the  
border

their voices, a gentle lull  
lap over one another  
softening the landscape  
they swell in melodious moonlight  
humming of life's possibility,  
the rhythm of their pulse  
speckle the enduring terrain

the land replies with written letters  
embedding each exchange within  
their skin  
microcosms adorn them with their  
traces  
mark making to declare existence  
carving out the space to subsist

III.

as the season colours herself anew  
I watch as the light coaxes life out  
once again,  
gaining back her hue

sun shines,  
leaves rustle,  
buds blossom, but I

I wonder  
if it's easier to stay hidden within my  
shroud,  
peeking out to see others blossom  
if the shadows held me for just a  
moment longer,  
could I simply melt away  
if the fruit I might bear would even  
compare

...

the light holds fast,  
shining brighter still  
reaching to meet me where I am  
with a gentle embrace  
my tightly wound layers  
begin to unfurl





IV.

drawn out by the warm beams,  
tiny tendrils grow defiant  
they push themselves through the  
cracks  
they stretch their hands to the sky  
they demand to take up space

even if gone unnoticed  
even if their bloom is brief  
to bask in the warmth,  
for even a moment,  
it would be enough

## Olivier Salvat

It is shortly after the passing of my father-in-law and going through his house, his belongings, and his pictures that I realized there were elements of his life that I was not aware of: What were his whereabouts? Who were the people that surrounded him? What's in the neighbourhood he lived in? For all that I remember, prior to his passing, going to Vancouver Island was an event that was scheduled, organized, and spent visiting my boyfriend's family including my father-in-law. It is in this instance that I realized that my view of his life was narrowed to what I witnessed and that there was a bigger picture that made his life and who he was, which had me thinking about the layers from my environment that shaped my queer life that I often do not let others see. I have been reflecting on this tunnel vision and on the mindset of "think simple, go deep" and exploring the layers of the simple things that we take for granted, that we don't question, or pay attention to, that shape someone's identity. As we spent more time in Saanich after his passing, I decided to explore the area and I

discovered Swan Lake. This natural heaven right in his backyard that, after 15 years of visiting, I had never explored but also that this space shaped my partner, who grew up in Victoria. I sat there for a while, taking in the beauty of the nature around me, yet I kept paying attention to the people, wondering about if these people would have known my father in law. Who were these people? How does the park affect their identity? Can nature impact queerness? That is when I had this idea to create a project called “Discovering Your Story” where I created fictional characters based on the people I saw frequently in the sanctuary through the seasons. “Discovering Your Story” contains paintings of Swan Lake in Saanich, B.C. through the eyes of different queer characters. Each painting is named after that character. Most names are inspired by the name of the roads around the lake. Each painting has a short film/ video that accompanies it with footage of the Swan Lake Sanctuary, like you are viewing the park through their eyes.



Olivier Salvas, *Hayes*, (2021)



Olivier Salvas, *Timothy*, (2021)



Olivier Salvat, *Hayes*, (2021)

## Vancouver Scenery and Lost Lagoon (2019) Olivier Salvat

These paintings represent the duality of nature vs the city and how both are working and living together. It is a tribute to the natural beauty around us in Vancouver but also a reminder to take care of our ecosystems and as a reminder that we have built these towers on an unceded land.



Olivier Salvas, *Vancouver Scenery*, Acrylic and Watercolour on Canvas (2021)



Olivier Salvat, *Lost Lagoon*, Watercolour on Canvas (2021)

## Nature/Nurture

Patti Henderson, Nadia Gale, Kat Thorsen

Born of Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn. The first pandemic lockdown in British Columbia.

Between April 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, Filmmaker, Multimedia artist, Patti Henderson, made a deal to support her friend, Poet and Health Care Worker, Nadia Gale, by taking photos every day and sending them to Nadia. It was meant to bring the beauty of Nature into Nadia's day and also to Nurture her wellbeing. Nadia was dealing with COVID death rates on a daily basis and this symbiotic, yet socially distanced support system helped get through the isolation and uncertainty of that time.

Patti also benefitted from the daily connection and commitment to a purpose, as well as the actual health benefits of daily exercise. The task of taking photos daily gave Patti an opportunity to see her neighborhood in new ways and gave her a sense of freedom during a time that was understandably filled with boundaries. The connection of sharing a daily text message of images and receiving poetry, kept both Nadia and Patti



engaged in life, being, connecting. A true lifeline.

Artist Kat Thorsen, has had a working relationship with Patti for over 25 years and she also connected sharing her artwork. Another Lifeline.

Nature/Nurture is the combination of these three human beings who supported each other through the first Lockdown of the COVID 19 pandemic, when everything was different, and nothing was certain.

The solitary time of taking photos, writing, embroidering -- transforms slowly as we start to emerge from our isolation -- culminating in a public exhibition in 2022. A collection that looks back and observes the emotions and changes in ourselves through all the disruptions of a pandemic.



I felt nothing

meanwhile, as the polite facade of normality slowly cracks apart

beauty and horror

a commentary on the indomitable course of nature

portrait of

set free from our daily lives

early sense of displacement and loss

restless narrative experimenter, and the subsequent work owes little debt to linearity.

these parts mirror each other in many ways

a way of binding together and a reminder that we aren't merely watching a series of random images but entering a densely filled with time of connections.



wide-angle lensing, while deftly emphasizing the emotional distance, making the images almost alienating.

embrace beautiful and arresting imagery for its own sake alone

surely, we've all had that sense of being in and feeling it whoosh irrelevantly by because we're so caught up in our own feelings.

extending the visual and aural language to pull audiences into this timeframe's emotions

claustrophobic apartment hallways and shadowy, nocturnal streets

so little is actually said  
so seductively beautiful that it would be easy to write it off as all facades. Yet the essence of the art lies in the disjunction between the allure of the surfaces and the yearning, disappointment, and failures that lie beneath. the images may draw us in with its stylistic opulence, but



it holds us with the complicated feelings - in hindsight a  
"Kind of like the most beautiful times."

continue to shape our present.

a novelistic sense of intimacy and detail,

focuses relentlessly on the quotidian, and on the well of  
emotion that lies underneath deceptive surfaces.

absorbed the demands of survival

dull, persistent tension

The narrative and emotional balls in the air throughout,  
the long, tense build of isolation

creates a fluid continuum, where we pass from ordinary  
reality, via odd details, to an immersion in unconscious

constant interweaving of foreground and background  
leaving a landscape with no people in it.



## Roshan Cardoza

I had drawn a rough sketch of this in the early days of April of last year, that's when the pandemic had just begun. This illustration basically portrays how I spent my time in quarantine, making illustrations and drinking a lot of chai. This illustration established the style of depicting me doing various activities. I wanted to make this as a personal style of my art. Using nature (indoor plants) as props. And even in reality, I have a lot of plants in my room so i wanted to showcase that as well.



Roshan Cardoza, *Still Life*, (2020)

An illustration I drew in the late months of summer. The summer of 2020 was the first summer where I wasn't working or taking any classes. I wanted to portray how I spent most of my time in the summer, sitting in my backyard getting closer to nature.



Roshan Cardoza, *A Quiet Afternoon*, (2020)

I drew this illustration coming home after spending the winter in the hospital. It simply depicts me, how I've been spending my time at home. An ordinary activity like playing the guitar brings me immense joy.



Roshan Cardoza, *Ordinary Bliss*, (2021)

## The Garden (2020)

Sean Sikorski

This is my modern interpretation of old Dutch paintings, in which sinners were cast down into hell.

Only here, the figures are being cast down into an 'edenic' garden.

Nature has replaced Hell as a metaphor for the climate crisis.

The figures are stylized after Jack Kirby - the artist who created most of the Marvel Universe so prominent in film and pop culture. Jack Kirby has replaced the Dutch masters.

The picture can be enjoyed on a few levels.

The simple comic book / graffiti influences.

Or, if the historical references are picked up on, there is a much deeper meaning rooted in history.



Acrylic, gauche and oil on panel 36 x 48

## Trading Portraits for Landscapes

Cherie Crocker

Steven Shearer's sleeping people photo series, *Untitled*, 2020, was met with a myriad of responses at Vancouver's Capture Photography Festival 2021 before they were obscured. Shearer, who had represented Canada in the Venice Biennale in 2011, has a primarily painting, drawing, and found-image collage based practice. His digital archive of photos, culled from various internet sources, is larger than 63,000 images. The shots for the festival were carefully chosen from this archive. They depicted portraits of people in varied conditions of repose; appearing similar to representations of states of exaltation, as seen in classical paintings of saints. However, as a member of the general public pointed out, they also evoked chilling symbolism given the context of Vancouver's opioid crisis.

As one artist put it, "A friend raised a valid point about the eeriness of what some people took to be images of dead people during the pandemic, which has caused considerable casualties and sickness, and a fair bit of

stress and anxiety. I suppose this is more an issue for the curators, who could've maybe better 'read the room.'" The photos were installed in Vancouver on billboards March 28th, and the exhibition was set to run from March 30th to May 21st, but the owners of the billboards, Pattison Outdoor Advertising, covered them up with stock pictures of landscapes April 1st, the day before the official opening of the festival, due to vitriolic public response.

The public distaste for the series was poignant; some argued that the people complaining about the images did not even consider them 'art'. There was an amateur aesthetic to the snapshots as the images were taken from online sources, which did not sate a communal standard of what art should look like. Shearer has followed this vein of collecting found images of people sleeping for some time. For instance, his digital C-print photo collage of numerous slumbering individuals entitled *Repose*, 2004; this collage includes likenesses

used in the billboards. Repose maintains a similar aesthetic to Untitled from Capture Photography Festival, revealing a long held interest in the subject matter and an incisive intention which Shearer uses in employing these portraits.

Arguably, like with all good art, audiences found the imagery provoking enough to form an opinion and a strong response, albeit a response that resulted in obfuscating the pieces. As one architect put it, “I love that the everyman were able to affect change in removing the billboards.” While covering the photos brings up discussions about who decides what is publicly displayed and censorship in art, it also highlights the ethics of using people’s images in the first place. An artist said, “They were boring when I saw them, they didn’t make me want to ask more.” They were very disinterested in the appropriation conversation around the works, though they were more piqued when they heard that the shots employed classic poses that referenced saints in

ecstatic states. Regarding appropriation, another artist put it, "... people raised the inevitable issues of privacy... these found-images of people in a 'heightened level of vulnerability and intimacy,' are not only made to be very public, but also now controversial. For me, the most offensive part about all of this is Jim Pattison." It seems, for some, that different concerns outweigh the privacy dialogue, while others argued that the images were already available for mass consumption due to them being online.

On its face, the insult is that renown works of art were covered with three tepid stock pictures by an advertising agency. However, these generic images do not just obfuscate, they provoke a dialogue as well. One depiction is of a goose with wings outstretched in sunlight water and trees behind; the second, a forest landscape with a river centrally cutting through it, a moose, and a big sky; and finally, the third depicts a teardrop hollow in rocks which reveals a beach and the ocean through

it. It is political enough that these three stock photos of paintings hide a renown Canadian artists' series of work, but this substitution makes a statement in spite of every attempt made to depoliticize the billboards. While they offend many's artistic sensibilities, the loaded gesture of landscapes displayed on unceded land is, as one artist puts it, "... the demand these get covered up and replaced with landscape images is absurd. Landscape is perhaps the most political genre in unceded territories." Consider where the landscapes are situated: on the Arbutus Greenway, in Musqueam territory, which runs from the Fraser River to False Creek in Vancouver. It is in the last quarter of a mile in False Creek, along the Arbutus Greenway, that the billboards are dispersed throughout community gardens, following the pathway. False Creek is Musqueam territory; however, the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish peoples traditionally inhabit it as well - many nations often occupying it year-round as it is a shared waterway. This place of meeting, in the environment and the cultural heritage of the site,

is in stark contrast to the slapped up images of 'wild' and 'untouched' landscapes, which allude to a colonial romantic conception of the land and, by extension, its' inhabitants. The decision to go with these three images to cover Shearer's work seemed to have been made in haste to sate public dissatisfaction, resulting in a sloppy execution.

The strength of Steven Shearer's series Untitled as part of Capture Photography Festival 2021 lies in that they evoked a distinct response, whether it was studied apathy or scorn. The rare chance to see Shearer's art publicly installed in Vancouver has been vetoed as the imagery has been considered too challenging. However, what conceals them has made an important political statement and, perhaps, the general populace's response reveals something about the neighbourhood and city these billboards are situated in, and why people are so uncomfortable with images of people sleeping in public.

## CONTRAST (2020)

Alex Masse

In 2020, I had the honour of working with local theatre company The Only Animal in Arts of Resistance, a protest art workshop for youth. While the COVID-19 pandemic meant extremely limited resources, they persevered and saw the film through even after the mentorship went remote. "CONTRAST" is the finished product, a commentary on the climate crisis.

The backing track, all visuals, and the costumes are all originals.



Alex Masse, still from *CONTRAST* (2020)

View  
CONTRAST (2020)  
[here](#)

# Trust

@beetricks

I walk outside, leaving the comfort of my bedroom walls;  
inside a sort of safe prison I've created for myself, feeling  
alienated.

People walk past me but I feel like they don't see me.  
I don't feel a connection to the world.  
Community seems so far away, even if right next to me.

I feel displaced from the world, much like wildlife that has  
been pushed out by a big city. I don't fit this paradigm, so  
I have to fend for scraps of belonging.

What if I don't want to belong?  
Does that mean my soul won't eat?

What if I don't want to be part of this concrete jungle,  
that is set up just like a rat race. Comparing myself to my  
neighbours, and making sure I'm doing better than them.

What if that doesn't matter to me? What if all I want is  
equality? Will I be left behind by those that don't want  
these things? Those that only want to be on top?

I step out onto the snow covered sand, and I watch the  
world for a moment in its silent, icy splendor.  
Feeling forlorn, feeling numb.

Suddenly, hundreds of crows unexpectedly take flight and circle above me, before taking off into the sunset.

I am left speechless, with a tingling feeling at my crown.

For, in my loneliest hour, I discover I'm never truly alone. As long as I have two legs that hold me upright, a head that is screwed on tight, and a heart that speaks the truth, I can fall back into the Earth Mother, and she will catch me.

I simply have to be willing to stand by her and continue to trust she is there, even when all I see is darkness..



## Stop and smell the flowers (2021)

Emmett Jojo

Often, many parts of nature are left to become weed ridden or filled with rocks. With this project, I am taking these two parts of the city and adding perennial flowers and sunflowers. I'm trying to achieve a flower garden that can return year after year, grow as nature grows around it, and make it a beautiful place for people to come and enjoy.





## Doorway to Canada (2019)

Josie Dawson

This collage took a very scientific approach into exploring Canada's extinct, endangered, and invasive species. I used a categorizing system for not only the research into this project but the visualization of it. Plants and animals are placed according to their environments; from the sky to the sea, all these environments make up the planet we live on and essentially what we call nature. All the coloured images I pulled from National Geographics, while all the black and white photos I printed from home, as a way to hint at an extinction of these animals in photographic print media as well. Invasive species have been outlined in red as a warning to viewers.



# Clips

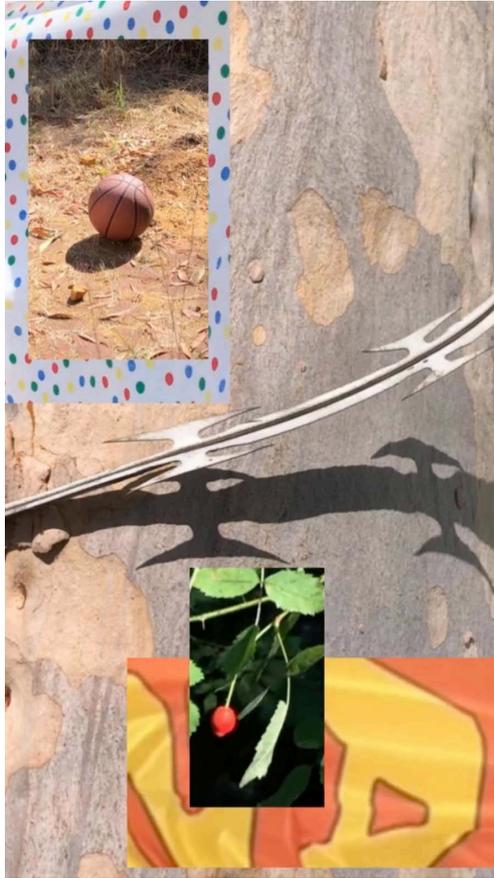
Simon Bermeo-Ehmann

Last year, I began sorting through the personal archive of short videos I have taken on my iPhone. Shooting these videos, I've been particularly intrigued by moments of calm, peaceful banality—moments that you want to live in, that you want to relive, moments that draw you into a trance like state. Initially, I took these videos to remember flashes of serenity; they existed only for myself, floating in the cloud, never to be looked at again until Apple reminded me that “on this day 5 years ago you took this video.” Around the same time, I discovered that Instagram offered a feature to layer videos on top of one another, creating an aggregate of layered footage. These often disparate clips, when combined, create a work that is disjointed while at the same time harmonious, as attention is split between multiple narratives at once. By compiling videos from my personal archive into composites, I breathe life into otherwise “dead” footage. The clips are given new meaning and purpose, echoing the remix culture that exists today in apps like TikTok, memes, the music industry, GIFs, ads, movies and a myriad of other media.

View full videos  
[here](#)



Simon Bermeo-Ehmann, *Pink Flowering Tree in LA* (2021) Video



Simon Bermeo-Ehmann, *Jesus?* (2021)  
Video



Simon Bermeo-Ehmann, *Making Waves* (2021) Video

## Where Crocodiles Bathe (2021)

Thiseni Krishthorubadu

I created this piece as a way to reminisce about my "atypical" childhood. I spent the first half of my life in Sri Lanka which meant I had a very different childhood from my peers here in the West. I always felt othered when people would reminisce about the good old days filled with Dunkaroos and Britney Spears while I am constantly told I missed out. I began to only speak of the parts of my childhood that were similar to my peers who grew up here on Turtle Island to avoid being othered.

But, recently, I have been thinking back to my non-western childhood experiences and how they continue to influence my art practice today. I grew up in the city but I would often visit family that lived in the more rural parts and the experiences I had there were beautiful and vibrant. And it breaks my heart to know that these spaces of nature are being industrialized over time. However, they will continue to survive in my memory in their original glory with added vigour and vitality.



## Quakin II (2021)

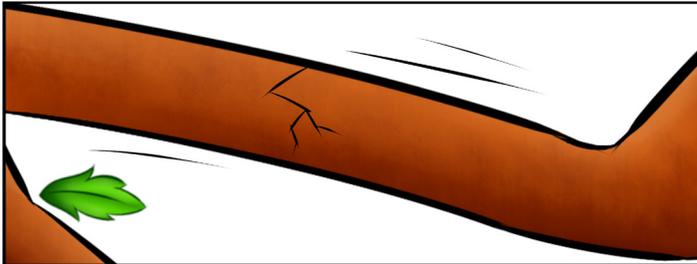
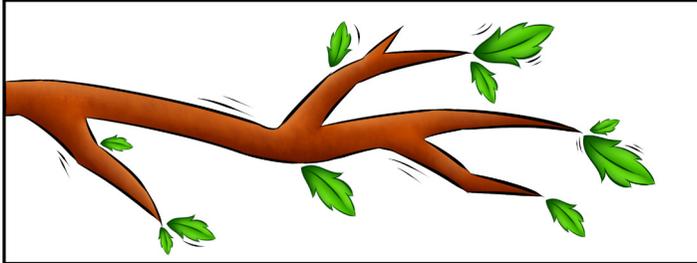
Victoria Mulja

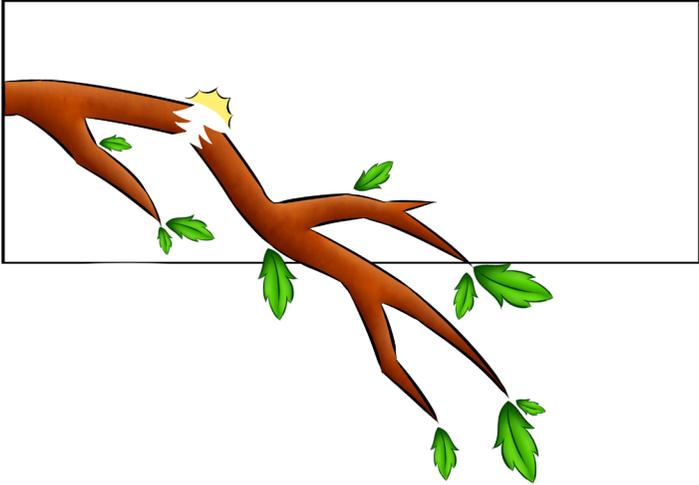
so. the other day,

nature quaked

nature was quakin so hard

that it caused so much destruction.







Francisco  
Berlanga



## Meet the Team

We write with intention & dwell within tensions. We are artists who have been left without an aim for how to continue engaging with art in the absence of institution. Our goal is to provide a place where we can write about new ideas, old ideas, and bad ideas. We are by no means professional writers, we inhabit a place between the seriousness of academic writing and the frivolity of passing thought. We will often succumb to cliches and trends as they pass us as we all often must.

We hope to present unique thoughts for you to consider. Our writing speaks for no one but ourselves. We do not reduce the similar experiences of others to what we have experienced. We invite you to critically engage with the content, to challenge and be challenged, to test the tensions in question.

Francisco Berlanga is a contemporary artist who studied at Simon Fraser University. He obtained his BFA in Visual Arts with a minor in Interactive Arts and Technology. His practice is based on questioning identity, particularly his connection with his own Mexican culture and how one can inhabit a culture while being partially absent from it. He engages in discourses with his own identity through the creation of traditional Mexican “manualidades” or crafts, his work makes connections between traditional Mexican aesthetics and contemporary visual language. His practice engages with concepts of inaccessibility and the role memory and language can play when someone is distanced from their own culture. He attempts to bridge the gaps between his personal and cultural identities by forcing connections between them and by trying to understand the limitations that these identities impose upon each other.



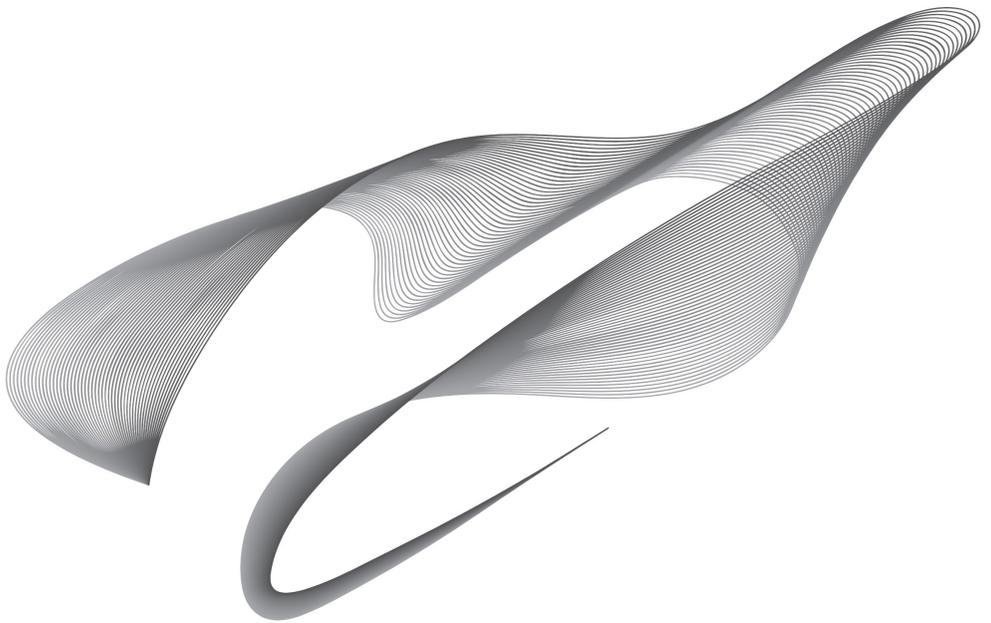
Natalie  
Chan

Natalie Chan recently completed her BFA in Visual Arts at Simon Fraser University. Her practice often focuses on the relational aspects of people & places, as well as the inner turmoils & complexities of the human condition. In the creation of her works, she aims to highlight the ideas of reflection, healing, and reconciliation as tangible possibilities in each encounter. Her latest interests include learning how to tattoo, in understanding both the technical skills & intimate relation between artist and the livelihood of their canvas.



Opal  
Mclean

Mclean is best described as the “selfish artist” meaning her practice entirely revolves around herself. Her work often relates back to a mental psyche that cannot be described by words alone. Instead, it can be described by an action. A reference to a state of being or a performance that leads to the way her brain functions. This manifestation and documentation of different processes becomes her tool to relate to the outside world. Her own existence comes into question in a way that so many experience in their own daily life. This experience becomes a social, cultural, and political connection to her projects. Her work becomes both alienating but connecting in a shared experience that translates through different media.



We put out new issues every month with a different topic.

We are always looking for submissions and opportunities to collaborate so check out our social medias.

on instagram:  
@withintensions

or email us at:  
within.tensions@gmail.com

If you want more information, feel free to contact us.

Our next issue will be on the topic of “Vision“ and submissions are now open.

See you next month!

## Acknowledgements

Withintensions would not have been possible without the works of Beetricks, Francisco Berlanga, Simon Bermeo-Ehmann, Roshan Cardoza, Natalie Chan, Josie Dawson, Kinsey Deakin, Nadia Gale, Patti Henderson, Emmett Jojo, Thiseni Krithorubadu, Alex Masse, Opal Mclean, Victoria Mulja, Mark Ollinger, Olivier Salvat, Angela Seear, Audrey Shiu, Sean Sikorski, and Kat Thorsen

We would also like to thank Francisco Berlanga for his design and social media contributions, Natalie Chan for her assistance in coordinating and Opal Mclean for her editorial work.

We are excited to share our future works with you and we hope to provide more opportunities for artists alike.

