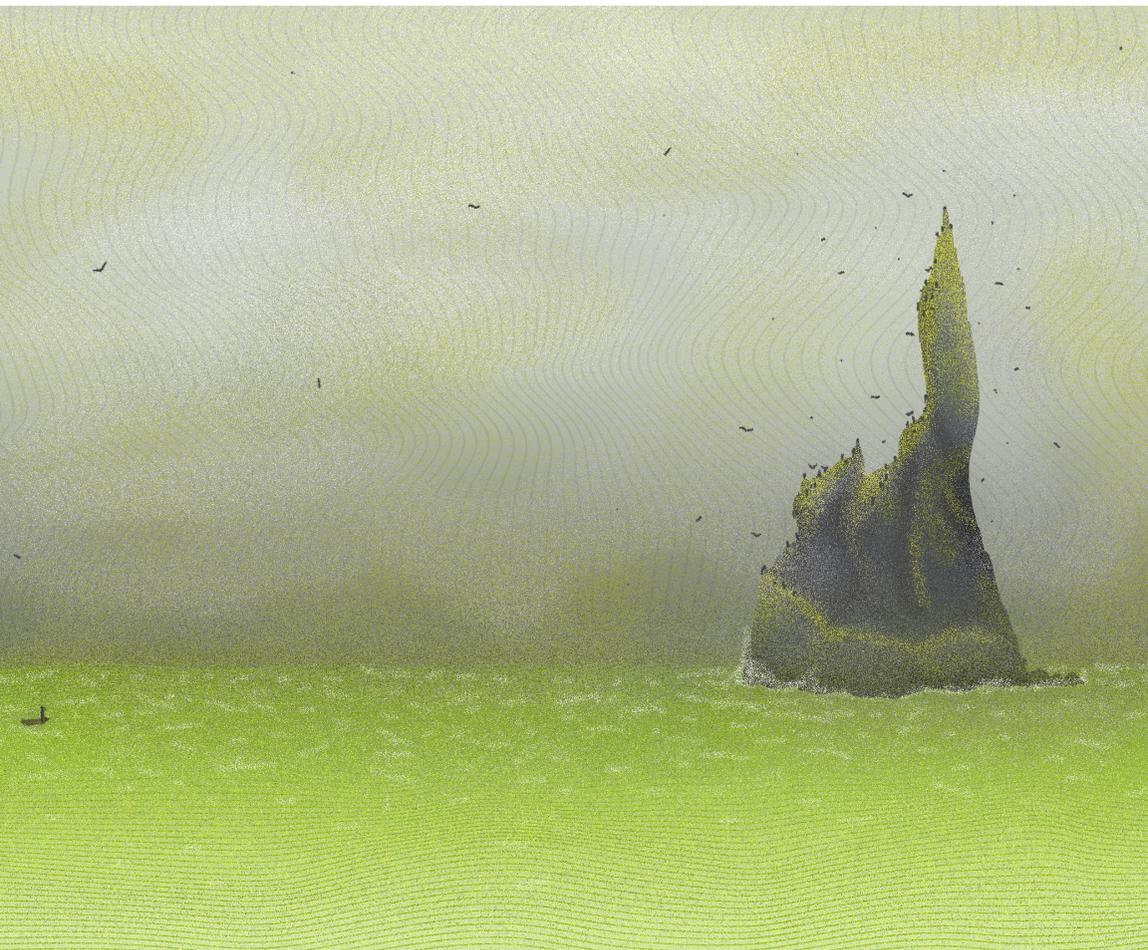


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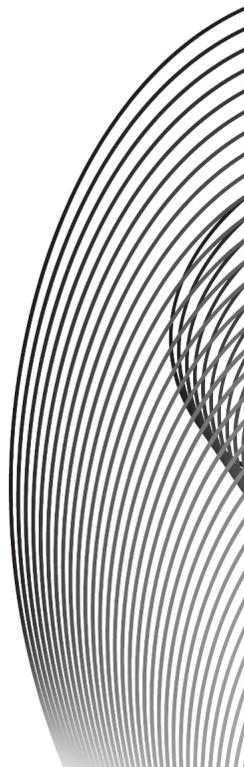


vol.9

INACCESSIBILITY



WITHINTENSIONS



WITHIN TENSIONS

September 2020
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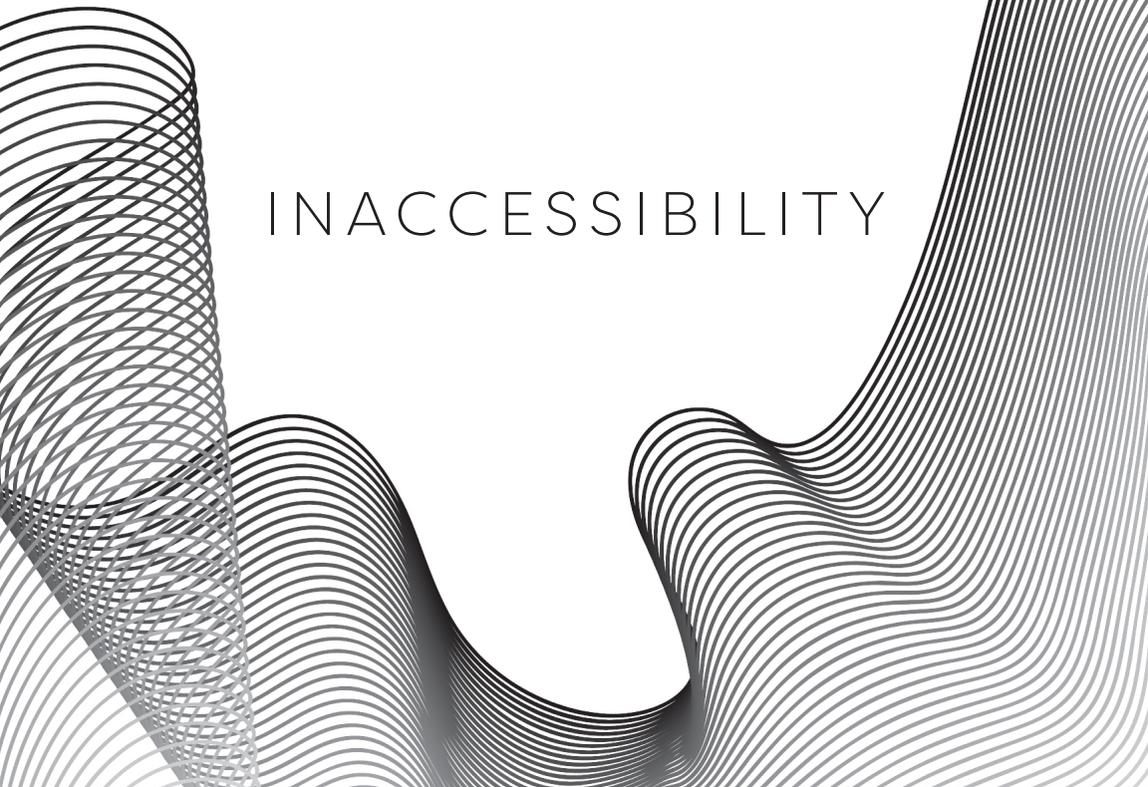


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We at Withintensions want to acknowledge that our work takes place on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xwməθkwə́əm (Musqueam), and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples. We want to recognize that these lands belong to the Indigenous 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.



Opal Mclean, *ACME* (2019)

Residents Will (Not) Allow Strangers into Building (2019)

Opal Mclean

I talk a lot about my experiences growing up in the suburbs. Both my parents grew up in their own suburban life that was far different from mine. They did not have the same privilege that they gave me and they made an effort to remind me of that. I grew up among tons of different families; some more well off than mine but others that knew the same struggle my parents knew. In my little neighborhood, there was an effort to make sure no kid was left out despite not being able to afford the extras like hot lunch or the fun fair. This gave me a unique perspective going into high school and my adult life. I always tried to remember my own privilege in how I grew up and remembered my parents encouraging me to help others because I knew what it was like to have extra.

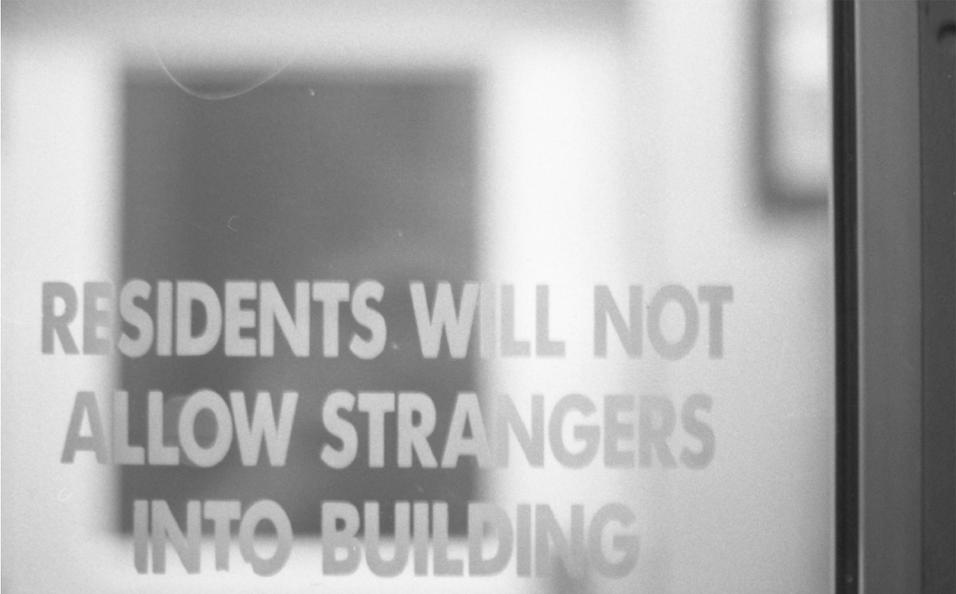
I moved into a small apartment just off Commercial Dr. almost 4 years ago and it is an entirely different experience than my neighborhood growing up. Although my street turns into a small suburb of its own, it still faces the urban life that I have travelled as I embark on my own life. My commute put me in a position that I knew as a child but never had to face. The financial disparity that exists in this neighborhood has become hard to ignore although many try and even succeed. I find myself occupying spaces that come from gentrification; my apartment is a fairly new development and my school

was in a building filled with people who are simply there to work. This pushes those that have lived here for years but have less access and less privilege to the streets. These spaces become inaccessible to those who have lived here so much longer under the guise of development.

A big symbol of this divide is literally printed on my front door. The door is clear glass with white block letters reading “RESIDENTS WILL NOT ALLOW STRANGERS INTO BUILDING”. This is obviously a safety precaution but, I’ll admit, I don’t know the reason why it exists. Often, I find myself closing the door on other residents who I simply don’t know. The warning becomes so arbitrary that the “strangers” it warns us of cannot be distinguished from the people who live in the building. This is where my project begins. I found myself analyzing my own position in relation to the door. What does it mean to be on either side of the door? On one side, I am a resident who announces my own privilege simply by existing on the inside of the glass. On the other side, the outside, I am a stranger. There is no real way to distinguish who I am besides my existence in relation to this door or my relationship to a “resident”. I wanted to highlight this separation through the photos showing the subjectivity of either person. The stranger asks to be let in while the resident does not allow entry. The resident does not even have to enforce this message. It is always there for people to see. A reminder of the inaccessibility that exists in this changing neighborhood.



Opal Mclean, *Residents Will (Not) Allow Strangers into Building* (2019)



**RESIDENTS WILL NOT
ALLOW STRANGERS
INTO BUILDING**



Opal Mclean, *Residents Will (Not) Allow Strangers into Building* (2019)



A Creative ~~Delusional~~ Reality: An Inner Monologue

Aaron Lampitoc

Being creative and having a creative personality can be very troublesome—like being an artist, writer, or actor. It feels like we work so hard but get almost nothing for it. It's sad because there's so much beautiful talent in the world, but most of it goes unseen, unpaid, and unappreciated.

~~Kind of makes you feel like you're not special at all... But that's fine! You're supposed to just do things for yourself anyway, right? But still, don't you feel like nothing we do is special? It's like we're completely replaceable, and the world would not miss us if we were gone. We not like we can just go change the world, like, what are the chances that I'll invent innovative technology, or become an influential figure?~~

~~This is really a turbulent time for a lot of people. There are some that have delving hearts and seek attention, like on social media. But all of the social pressure can lead to a dark time in people's lives. Everyone has a story. You may not know what someone is really feeling on the inside. Many people won't even bother telling the world about it. That's the hidden truth.~~ For some, treating them like they're a good friend can really help. Spend time with them, even if they don't feel like doing much; and remind them that they always have something to look forward to. Making plans in advance, letting them borrow something, or even just saying "See you tomorrow," all of

10

those things can help them make it to the next day. ~~Just~~
~~by being a good person, you can save someone's life.~~

That's why life can be so confusing for introverts. Being an
introvert doesn't mean you shun social interaction and
hate being around people. It means social interaction,
especially in groups or unfamiliar places, uses up a lot
of energy. Many introverts sit at home and feel lonely
and restless, and then when they finally go out, after
a half hour they just want to go home again. I think if
more people could understand how it works, they would
respect it a lot more. Many introverts do enjoy having
people around. They love just having one or two close
friends over, and just leisurely hang out. Even if you're not
actively spending time together, it feels nice for them just
to have you there. I'm serious. If you just go to their house,
bring your laptop, and hang out there for a while, you
can really make their day.

I've always hated how hard it is to make close friends...
If you think about it, most of the friends you make are
people you just met by chance. Like you had a class
together; or you met them through another friend; or
maybe they were just wearing a shirt with your favourite
band on it, and you decided to talk to them. But aren't
you just leaving things up to chance? Is it that kind of

inefficient? It feels like you're just picking at complete
random, and if you get lucky, you make a new friend.
And comparing that to the hundreds of strangers who
pass by every single day, you could be sitting right next
to someone compatible enough to be your best friend
for life. But you'll never know. Then, once you get up and
go on with your day, that opportunity is gone forever. Is it
that sad? We live in an age where technology connects
us with the world, no matter where we are. I really think
we should be taking advantage of that to improve our
everyday social life. But who knows how long it'll take for
something like that to successfully take off.

You know, just by being here and listening to me, it really
makes my day. I can't imagine how I would keep myself
mentally stable, knowing that nothing in this reality is
real. I mean, if you were forced to abandon everything in
your life and spend your eternity within a delusion, you'd
probably find some way to find an escape within yourself,
wouldn't you? Or maybe you do like keeping yourself
occupied inside your own delusions in an attempt to keep
yourself sane for a while. But then you'd have nobody
real to really appreciate your efforts, huh? So let's be
honest, you enjoy being with these characters within your
delusion more than real people do, right? A lot of people
say that they only write or do things for themselves... But I
think it's just as fulfilling as when you share it with people.
Even if it takes time to find the right people to share with.
As human beings, we're programmed to desire social
feedback. But do you desire such feedback?

~~Why do you live in a tacky delusion anyway, one
full of quirky character archetypes? What is it
about these character archetypes that you find
so appealing, anyway? Their personalities are just
completely unrealistic. Are you really attracted to
these weird personalities that literally don't exist
in real life? It is quite fascinating... It's like you're
siphoning out all the components of a character
that makes them feel human, and leaving just the
cute stuff: it's concentrated cuteness with no actual
substance. Why did you consider even living in this
delusion in the first place? Were you that lonely? But
all of this is all fiction! It doesn't exist! None of this
actually happened in the real world! Everything that
has occurred, all happened in your delusional world.
Up till now, you thought fiction was fact. But fiction
is just fiction. The reality that you believed in was
just stuffed into your memories. For that reason, you
believed that your fiction world was, in fact, reality.
Every single thing you believed in... is a lie, a delusion.
That's the truth! This is all fake, made up! And that's
how you were able to convince yourself that this was
reality!~~

~This text repurposes dialogue from the Doki Doki
Literature Club and Danganonpa V3.

Born to Die

Bre Zaman

We are born to grow.

We are born to learn, develop, and advance.

In our early days, running along our neighbourhood streets and climbing playground structures, we advance into our teenage selves.

As the days go on, the anticipation builds; excitement pounds; new opportunities await.

“I can’t wait to grow up!”

First job, first relationship, first driving lesson... Brand new is always exciting.

But then the new isn’t so new anymore. We suddenly require a rush of excitement. Something to keep us going.

And so... time to upgrade the list.

Okay, this will be a better list!

College graduation, first car, first house, first vacation...

Life is good!

As the days go on, you are no longer a “new college grad” or a “new driver” or a “new house owner.”

People aren’t impressed by you anymore. Your five seconds of fame are over.

“Have I not achieved enough? Am I not doing enough?”

you ask.

Why has all the hype died down...?

I have an idea! New list! That never fails me. This time, I know for sure what I want. I'm not chasing anything, I just have goals.

Just yesterday, I found the girl of my dreams and put a ring on it. I can't wait to get married. We're going to travel the world, buy a new house together, get a dog, have babies...

Life will be great!

"... I now pronounce you husband and wife."

Soon enough, your first baby is born. It's an exciting time.

Love, joy, and laughter fill the room.

"Wow", you think to yourself, "this time it's real."

It was real... Until the fights broke out. Who was supposed to do the dishes? Whose turn was it to do the laundry?

Who was supposed to take the kids to school?

But then, you remember the day that you married her. It was supposed to be a forever thing. "This is happiness", you tell yourself.

Now, your kids are out partying on a Friday night; No

matter how hard you tried to stop it, how many times you said no, they still went- knowing damn well you've lost control.

Your wife is spending the weekend at her sister's place to get some "space." The dog has passed away. It's just you. So you take off your shoes, sit back, kick your feet up, and as you pop the top off a bottle of rum, you run your fingers through your hair and think, "Fuck."

Oh hell, why did I sign up for this?

"Lord please-please give me back my youth, my single days. I promise I will never once say that I want to grow up. I'm going to live in the moment and I'm going to enjoy every moment of every day... Please?"

But darling those days have passed. Carry on.

And so you do. You work the same job, visit the same bars, drive the same car, and live the same day... over and over again.

Eventually the kids move out, you down size, and it's suddenly all quiet again.

Ah, retirement. The moment you've been waiting for. You

no longer have to work, you can finally enjoy your late mornings and evening walks.

“I have my life back.”

The kids don't come around so much anymore. You don't want to admit it, but even your body has moved along.

One morning, as you look at yourself in the mirror, your reflection stares back at you.

“When did I get so grey? These wrinkles... they're everywhere. And when did my chin begin to droop like this?”

As you realize that you can't walk, talk, or even breathe the same anymore, you plan what to do next.

New list? But you know in your heart that there is no time left for a new list. Now, your soul craves something else...

Peace maybe?

Your body is failing you and your mind defies you more and more each day.

As your eyes shut and heart beats for the very last and final time, it hits you that your life was spent chasing.

We can never fully be content, whole, or satisfied.

This life really is inaccessible.

My Days (2020)

This print was carved on a 4 x 6 inch rubber block.

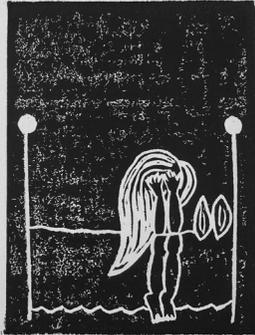
Sarah Sheridan

This print reveals two scenes; one with people smiling and enjoying each other's company under bright lights and the other with a person, all alone, hunched over in a dark room on their bed, holding their head in pain.

As someone who lives with health conditions that have often limited me to my home, I wanted to juxtapose my realities side-by-side to show the differences between the days of sickness and wellness, joy and suffering. There are days when joy is inaccessible to me. During periods of illness, waiting for pain to pass and days to end are the only hopes I hold.



"My Days"



Sheldon Zed

Roadblocks

Mark Perez

Heading to the mall with my brother, I felt more conscious of my driving than usual. The angles I held the wheel at, the balance of pressure on the throttle, the decision making. These little things, ingrained into muscle memory over years of daily commutes, had become novel and unfamiliar as I went down 104 Ave., imagining my brother in my seat. Born with a Cerebral palsy that impairs the motor functions of the left side of his body, and gives his mind the impression of being five or ten years younger than he really is, he might never be in that seat.

He might never feel the sudden sense of expansion, the agency of movement that I felt at the flash of my license photo being taken. He might never be as intimate with open highways, hairpin turns, low fuel warning lights, the rhythm of Google Maps' voice, and barely sufficient parallel parking spaces as I am. He might never have the convenience or control of being at the wheel. But he might see a lot more roadblocks than me.

His case of CP may not be as severe as it could have been - he is able to walk without any special assistance - but that had not made him feel any less "different"

growing up. In school, he had difficulties with learning and comprehension, but he understood very well that he wasn't like other kids, that he was - tragically and unfairly - not "normal." He was exiled, banished to special classes and activities, unable to navigate through education systems, social circles, and job markets as I had done. His world has primarily been confined within the walls of our childhood home. It was hard for him. And, regrettably, I didn't make it easier.

Maybe I was disappointed we wouldn't be peeling away life's uncertainties together like the Hardy Boys, fighting against the world together like the Hardy Boyz. There wouldn't really be sibling rivalry. But I was mean to him. There was always love, but it took me too long to treat him like a brother, recognize him as a brother. I wish I could go back and change that, but there aren't any roads that can take me there.

No, You.

Jesse Del Fierro

Inaccessibility: The quality of not being available when needed. Unavailability. Inconvenience.

Let us state some facts: Accessibility, availability and convenience is all relative to one's own personal requirements and comfort. Inaccessibility cannot be objective, it is subjective, and it must acknowledge the many complex layers of intersectionality each one of our realities encompass. Consequently, to be extremely focused in this response is to discuss directly about this "quality of not being available when needed." So, whether you like it or not, I am going to talk about subjects in life that are inaccessible to me, and perhaps you can relate.

For me, what COVID-19 did was highlight the incredible disparity of accessibility this society relies on to function. For example, in my case, I am fairly socially anxious. If I am not mentally prepared to see someone I know, my social capacity to uphold a polite conversation will be very limited. Fortunately, this is not a problem in the virtual world! If I see someone in Zoom that I know, I can simply turn off my mic and camera, and calculate

exactly how I wish to engage, if I chose to engage, with no pressure of an in-person awkward silence. Social interaction made accessible.

I cannot tell you how many times I have fallen asleep in class/meeting due to a lack of physical engagement. I have an extreme light sensitivity, which makes PowerPoint projections difficult to follow. I also have a lot of people asking me why am I “wearing sunglasses inside/in the dark” or complimenting me on how “cool” I am. Do you know how awkward it is to tell someone that I wear tinted glasses because I have a learning disability, not because I am “cool”? In a Zoom class, I could be folding my laundry, wearing my tinted glasses and listening to a lecture all at the same time! So many of my needs are met at once!

No one likes to name it but being depressed makes a lot of the world extremely inaccessible. As a depressed individual, the amount of energy that goes into convincing myself to get out of bed, get changed, wash my face and brush my teeth, put clothing on, pack food, travel to school/work and then engage in “productivity”

can be overwhelming. Let alone trying to navigate my ongoing needs as the day goes on. Zoom meetings can be simple. I need to get a shirt on, maybe. If I'm hungry, I can eat a snack in session without worrying about how loud my bag of chips will be. I have access to water at all times. I can use the bathroom with the laptop speaker on loud, and not miss a beat. I can stand and stretch and make loud noises of frustration if things don't make sense. I can chat with multiple people at the same time to ask questions and no one else needs to know.

What I am trying to say is, moving onto a virtual platform has forced me to focus my energy inward rather than uphold a structure that ultimately only serves our society's notion of "productivity." I wasn't required to accommodate anyone else in order to meet my own accessibility needs. It wasn't easy; there are a lot of Zoom seminars I have recorded and emailed to me, waiting to be watched. I've slept in plenty of times, and without the need to walk for several hours during work to keep myself active, I've developed several unhealthy habits. (I acknowledge that "healthy" is a relative term. What I constitute as healthy for me, won't necessarily be the same for you.)

What is exciting to witness is how, as a collective, we began to engage with these needs. Suddenly everyone experienced the world in the same frame of inaccessibility. We all didn't want to get sick, we all knew how unreliable internet can be, we all knew Zoom meetings were 40 minutes long unless someone wanted to pay for a subscription, and a lot of us were unemployed so no one wanted to pay for it. Sure, attendance is important, but the way one shows up is not as easily dictated by a governing body, like a boss or a teacher. By now, almost everyone knows the term "screen fatigue" or "zoom fatigue" because a lot of us are currently experiencing it. Mostly, we began to notice how important it is to be in space with folk because a lot of us really missed physical interaction, at least to some extent. What I want to say is, as we continue to move forward into this uncertainty, I truly hope we bring forward our collective understanding that this world can be really difficult to handle, pandemic or otherwise. And that we must move forward with compassion, both for ourselves and each other.

Imagined Invitation to a Ball in Edo (2020)

Sena Cleave

“The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Countess Sodeska have the honour of asking you to pass the evening at the Rokumeikan to celebrate the birth of H.M. the Emperor. There will be dancing.”

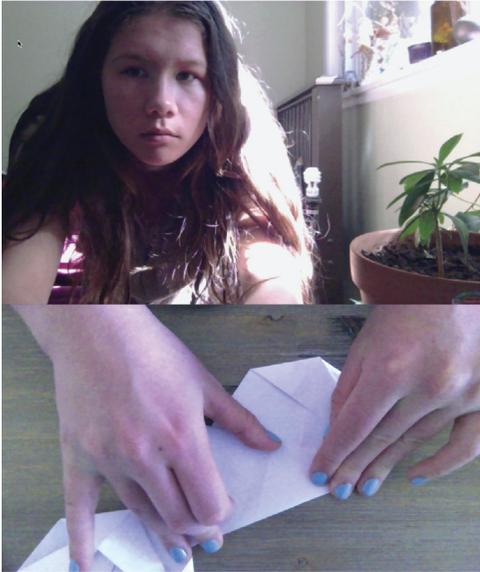
This, according to Pierre Loti, was written in French on his invitation to an 1886 Tokyo ball. His review, guaranteed to be as faithful as a photograph before retouching, scorns the Rokumeikan dance hall’s attempts to thrill Western dignitaries with its British architect and its ladies dancing in Parisian gowns. *Imagined Invitation to a Ball in Edo (2020)* visits the now-demolished Rokumeikan through Loti’s account, using paper to perform against Loti’s fantasies. It will perhaps amuse Loti himself, after several years have passed, to find described here the stage of his evolution, to read what occurred at this ball.

***View Imagined Invitation
to a Ball in Edo (2020)***

Here

Imagined Invitation to a Ball in Edo





Oh, well down, my lutes; my sincere compliments to all three of you! Your attitudes so amusing, your disguises so successful.

Again the vases from which soared up gigantic chrysanthemums, and then, after these women, between Japanese pavilions, the main room opened out vastly, almost empty—excited with benches, on which the occasional guest was seated, with the strained air of one used to squatting on the ground. To the right and to the left, between open colonnades, appeared other rooms, slightly more people, with occasional furling nervously with their awful and uniform, and two complete orchestras, one French, the other German, hidden in the corners, performing incessantly, unobtrusively, their own belated serenades.

Lois

s were quite proper, but they had curious early without eyes.
: on the first floor, to which one ascended bordered by a trijio row of Japanese chrysi-
: our autumn flowerbeds give no hint of: a of yellow, a row of pink. In the pink row, sprigart, the chrysanthemums were as big as
ers were as large as suns. The yellow row, s lower, flowered with large tufts, bouquets
cup yellow. And at last, the white row, the ended along the whole length of the steps,
one snowy tassels.

s staircase, four persons – the hosts of this miling, the entry of their guests into the
attention to a gentleman in a white tie, ral medals, who must certainly have been
as I curiously regarded the three women in, the first of whom was apparently the

scene had told me the story of this woman- hited dancer for Japanese feasts) who had a
diplomat who then became the minister, as now charged with doing the honors in
orld of foreign legations.

fore some strange creature dressed up like a stopped in surprise before a person of
ne visage, gloved to the shoulder, coiffed indefinable, face thickly covered with rice
a train in a very pale lilac, discreetly urlands of small woodland flowers, with a
nuance, her slender body was sheathed in a f shimmering pearls, an outfit, in sun,

A Ball in Edo

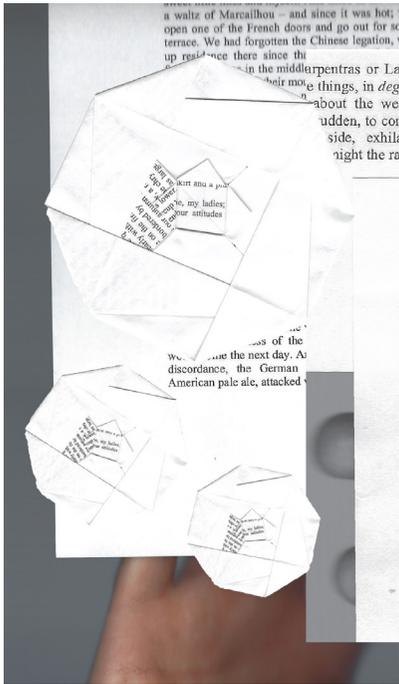
which would be acceptable in Paris and was truly worn well by this astonishing parvenue. I took her seriously, and addressed her with a formal salutation. She, correct also, and extremely gracious, offered me her hand in the American style, with a well-bred ease that completely conquered me.

I quickly inspected the two other women in the hallway. First was a charming young woman all in faded pink, with a train covered in camelias. Then was the last of the group, on whom my eyes would have gladly lingered: this was the Marchioness Arimassen, a young woman of ancient nobility, the wife of "the grand master of ceremonies of His Majesty the Emperor"; jet-black hair bound up in a chignon, in the style of that winter; pretty velvet eyes, with the air of an adorable little kitten, dressed in the Louis XV style in ivory satin. This was an unexpected effect, this combination of Japan and eighteenth-century France, with this pretty young face of the Far East wearing a hoop skirt and a plunging neckline as if she were at the Trianon.

Oh, well done, my ladies; my sincere compliments to all three of you! Your attitudes so amusing, your disguises so successful.

Again the vases from which soared up gigantic chrysanthemums, and then, after these women, between Japanese pavilions, the main room opened out vasty, almost empty – encircled with benches, on which the occasional guest was seated, with the strained air of one used to squatting on the ground. To the right and to the left, between open colonnades, appeared other rooms, slightly more peopled, with occupants fumbling nervously with their outfits and uniforms, and two complete orchestras, one French, the other German, hidden in the corners, performing irresistible coturdances taken from our best-known operettas.





a waltz of Mirealhou – and since it was hot; we decided to open one of the French doors and go out for some air on the terrace. We had forgotten the Chinese legation, who had taken up residence there since the

in the middle of pentras or Landerneau, e things, in *degosarimas*, about the weather that sudden, to complete the side, exhilarated by night the rallying cry

os of the we. one the next day. As discordance, the German American pale ale, attacked

darkness, and which, in its admiration, sent up a bizarre clamor.

The orchestra wildly reprised "We'll catch them, we'll from Smbachi's station."

All in all, a gay and charming evening, that the Japanese offered us with much good grace. If I have smiled from time to time, it was without malice. When I think that those costumes, those manners, the ceremony, the dances, were things learned very quickly, learned by imperial order and perhaps against their will, I say to myself that these people are truly

Loti

marvelous imitators, and such an affair seems to me one of the most interesting achievements of this people, who are unrivaled in feats of dexterity.

It has amused me to note, without any ill intention, all these details, which I guarantee are as faithful as a photograph before retouching. In this country, which is transforming itself so remarkably quickly, it will perhaps also amuse the Japanese themselves, when several years have passed, to find described here this stage of their evolution, to read what occurred at this ball decorated with chrysanthemums, given at the Rokumeikan on the anniversary of the birth of his Majesty the Emperor Mutsuhito,³ in the year of our Lord 1886.



Sena Cleave 2020

The (sometimes not so) Wonderful World of Art

Natalie Chan

Being in the art world, there's oftentimes a feeling of inaccessibility that washes over me.

I fondly remember one of the first art critiques I took part in; I was 18 and had just begun my undergrad in fine arts. We were split up into groups of 4-5, and the upper years were showing us around the school studio presenting us their recent projects. One of the guys in my group led us towards his work, a lone rock proudly mounted on the white wall by three nails. Naturally, I did my best to examine and decipher this puzzling piece of art presented before me. He eventually came around to share the significance of his work, of where it came from, the idea of displaying it as such, and its importance to him. It made a lot more sense after his explanation, but there was still this moment where I wondered, how on earth I was supposed to have reached this conclusion at all? (love you and your work, Oscar)

After my five years of hands-on learning and growing in the art world, if I had even a fraction of this knowledge

I have now, I would have been more equipped to understand the direction of his work then or to at least know what questions to begin asking. Of course, there will always be purposely inaccessible art, whatever that reason may be, but shouldn't art be more often than not an invitation to a conversation? Like the little white rabbit that led Alice tumbling down into Wonderland. There's something about an artwork that will pique your interest - before you know it, you've fallen into a strangely curious, new world to explore. I believe art is a vessel to create and share these worlds, to propose new ideas and perspectives...but what happens when these spaces are made so foreign, so fantastical, so provocative, so entrenched in the rules and structures of the heavily euro-centric art world that they become too daunting to approach? To suddenly fall into Wonderland can be equally frustrating as its potential for excitement. Even worse, there are those who are unable to access art spaces altogether or whole communities pushed aside by art spaces through structural impacts made via processes of gentrification.

Not only are there restrictions to who is allowed to enter these spaces and constructs surrounding the method of viewing or “understanding” art that may limit viewers in their interactions with the work: the inaccessibility extends towards the artists creating the pieces as well, in a manner that is more insidious. While there are arguably more inclusions of diverse artists nowadays - referring to female, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ (anything but white male, really) - receiving token representation does not make for “radical change” when this kind of temporary visibility does not decentralize the overwhelming whiteness in the seats of power and decision making of who is deemed worthy of being showcased in their art space. It speaks volumes more that the people behind the scenes have not changed, but have merely adapted to curate a social-political movement in the white cube.

I don't bring up these frustrations to suggest that I have an answer to this deeply flawed system of the art world, where art institutions have inherent capitalistic agendas which overlook voices deemed less profitable

or altogether unworthy of the spaces. I regularly have my own doubts of if my art is good enough, if my female, Hong-Kong descended Canadian voice is valid, if the heart of my work is able to communicate with the viewer at all.

But I want to believe art is accessible.
I still want to believe art can be for everyone.

I want to continue striving towards creating opportunities for myself and fellow artists because I believe there is joy to be found in this act of sharing no matter the size of audience, even if my heart reaches just one person and a conversation is sparked. Art is, and will continue to be a way, for people to speak up and express themselves, and share their own narratives. So let's explore this wonderful world of art, together!

Knowing is not for you

Francisco Berlanga

Our instinct when we are faced with art is to try and figure it out. We take what little knowledge we are given by the art and try to decipher every detail. No matter what we do, the work will never fully reveal itself to us. It is a product of a person's experiences and perspective condensed into what they have created. We must come to terms with the possibility and reality that they will never view the work from the perspective of the artist. We don't have access to all of the artist's thoughts and influences that created the work so we must accept the incomplete view that we have. The piece is rendered inaccessible; it is shrouded in its own context and, despite the viewers best attempt to access the work, they never will.

These borders that prevent the viewer from accessing the full work become increasingly present in art that explores cultures and derive their meaning almost entirely from the artist's background. Viewers who are presented with

a piece that has a base in a similar cultural background as their own lives must force themselves to acknowledge that, despite the similarities, the viewers and the artist's background are not the same and, therefore, cannot be used interchangeably in the viewing of a piece. Our art cannot speak for others and it cannot be read as such. While art often makes use of communal experiences to form a familiar interpretation that speaks to the viewers that know these experiences intimately, it cannot and will not take on the experiences of others as its own.

Despite these barriers, the viewer must accept the work for what they see it as. There is no secret explanation for the art that we are just not privy to: it exists as it is in front of you complete in its lack of access. It was not created for you and you do not get to demand answers from it. It is ok that you don't get it, and it is exactly as it was intended to be.

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.



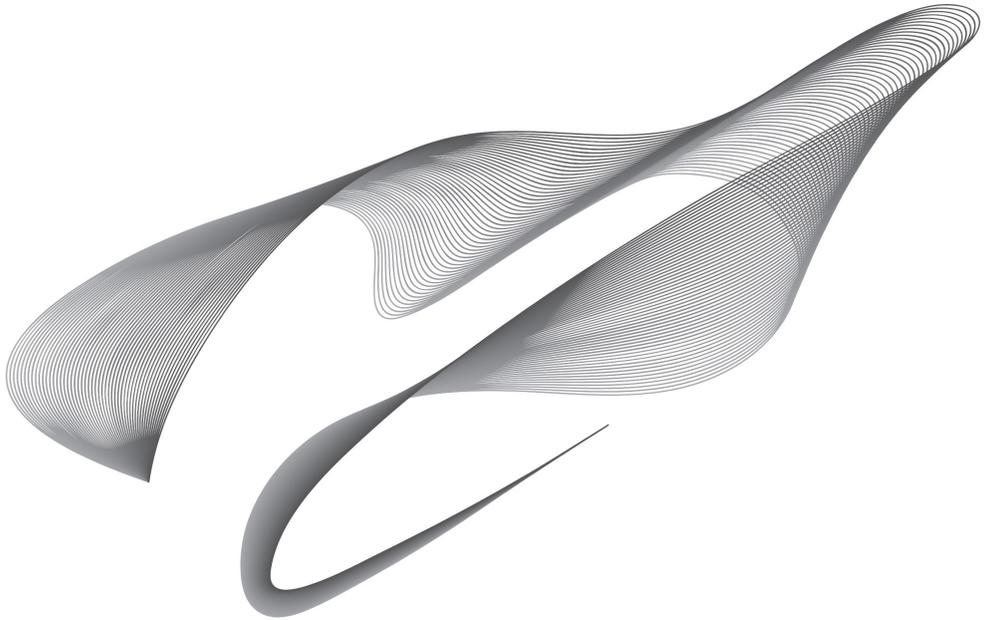
Natalie
Chan

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 lends 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 “Spectre” and submissions are now open.

See you next month!

Acknowledgements

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

