

WITHIN TENSIONS

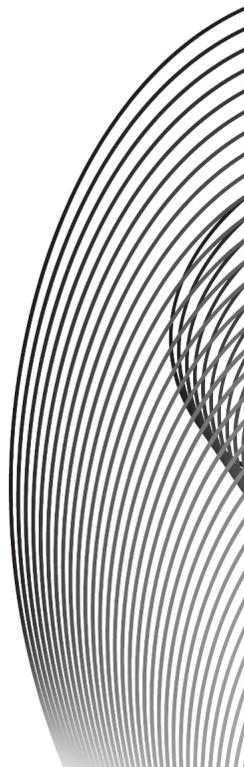


vol.36

WONDER



WITHINTENSIONS



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WONDER

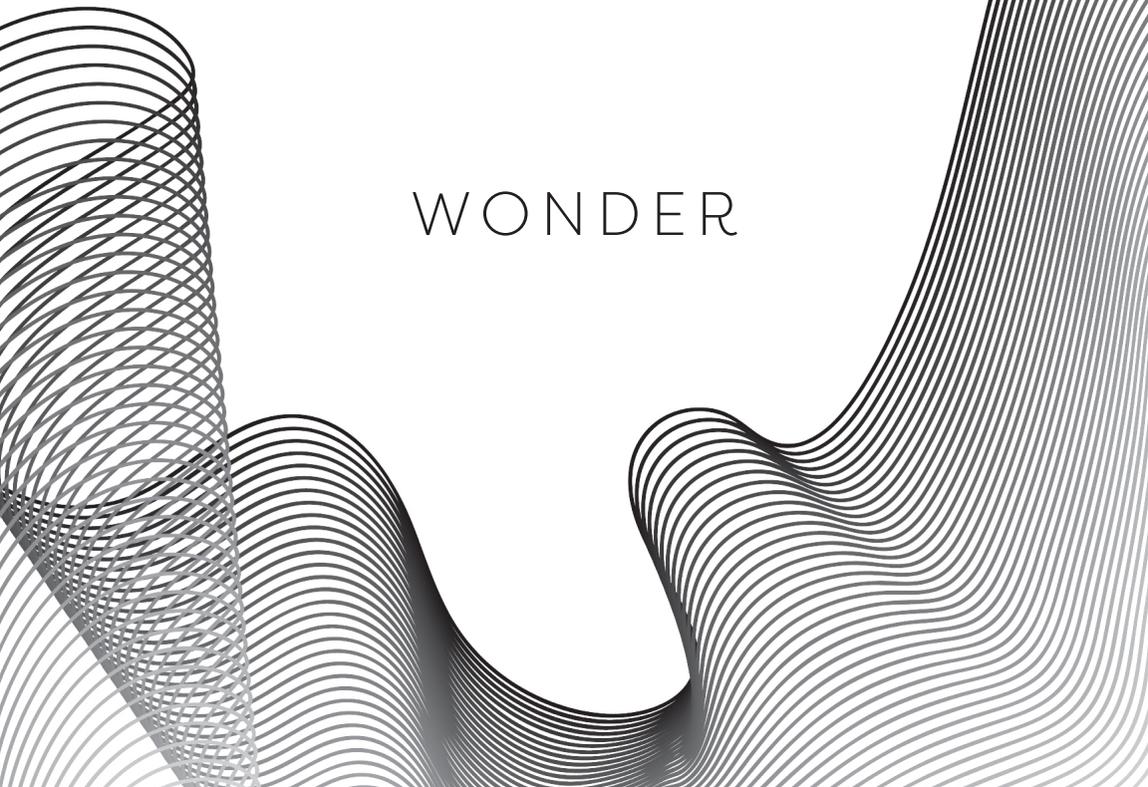


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We at Withintensions want to acknowledge that our work takes place on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xwməθkwə́əm (Musqueam), and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples. We want to recognize that these lands belong to the Indigenous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



Heather Yip, *Starry Fight*, (2022)

Starry Fight (2022)

Heather Yip

This is a wall mounted sculpture I made by destroying an old painting. I was frustrated by the pile of old artworks that had accumulated in my studio, unsold and gathering dust. Wondering what I could do with this painting to make it interesting. I didn't want to give it to the landfill, so I used a skill saw to cut it up in strips and then I remade the painting into a more three dimensional work by re-attaching the cut up pieces and adding a bit more paint.

metamorphosis

Natalie Chan

seasons shift
promised change soaks in
seeps into our skin
searing power pulses
precedes my own heartbeat
the heat uncomfortable
unfamiliar
undulating energy washes over
in small bursts it beckons
to break down my walls
free of all expectations

only it feels as though
my body is being broken
blood and tears pour out
what once held me together is unravelling

will I fade as the process takes over?
in letting go of all I once knew,
will I live life anew?
I wonder
if you'll learn to let the sun in, too
I ask the warmth to melt away my pain
to hold me in a radiant embrace
imbue me with fiery light
searing fever rising to transcendent heights

X-Posure Series (2022)

Photographer: LES666

Model: Jayne Walling









Wonder Plane

Taryn Jay

"but not like an airplane plane.. Like a metaphorical plane."

A short little journal entry I wrote while high on mushrooms one time. It was a summer weekend celebrating a friend's birthday with a camping trip. Little did I know this weekend would solidify a beautiful little crew of queer pals I had been longing for for so long. So. Long.

I was living on Vancouver Island in Lekwungen Territory. Our camping trip took us up past Port Renfrew to Lizard Lake. It was a small lake with a little dock and yes, actual lizards in the lake. For a day trip, we whipped over to Botanical Beach - an indescribably beautiful park with long stretches of tide pools and gnarly rock formations. We walked down to a tucked away beach where we nibbled our mushrooms and readied ourselves for a trip. Except for a couple of us, we were all relatively new friends. Suffice to say, we were a bit nervous. But we did the mushrooms, and it was fucking magical.

We explored an incredible rock out-cropping on the beach. We sat in it's rocky nooks and laughed so hard because our voices were being ridiculously amplified from the nook's shape. Absolutely pure joy.

I'm no expert on mushrooms and their abilities to shape how we relate to people and our world. But on that day, in that incredible environment, I was overwhelmed with a sense of absolute wonder. Such curiosity about this nooky place. How could this many tide pools exist with this much life in such tiny places? Why is this rock the only one outcropped like this in the whole beach? Why have I suddenly landed amongst some of the most beautiful humans I've ever met? Truly indescribable how fortunate I felt in that moment.

Of course, I found my mind wandering to weird depths of social theory, as it tends to often do.

In the social sciences there's a philosophy called phenomenology – a theory that aims to capture our experiences in the world before we start to “make sense” of them. Like that moment when you wake up, and you still don't quite remember that you're a living human. You see your ceiling. Hear the birds. Feel your breath. It's a way of experiencing the world as it first appears to us, in all our human, sensory way. Phenomenology is what comes before the western

science methods 'discover' and 'control for' creating an objective story of our reality. 'This rock outcropping that you're laughing your asses off about is actually this way because storm's do this thing with the sea water..etc..etc.' Western science is the 'Well Actually...' of our philosophical world.

To quote well-known author, David Abrams, phenomenology is "a philosophy which would strive, not to explain the world as if from outside, but to give voice to the world from our experienced situation within it, recalling us to our participation in the here-and-now, rejuvenating our sense of wonder at the fathomless things, events and powers that surround us on every hand"¹

It is one of the many tragedies of colonization and the westernized ways many of us have been indoctrinated to see the world. Western science's methods take us away from a state of wonder and into a state of discovery and conquest.

And this affects us in many ways. We need to take 'calculated steps' to get what we want out of life. We must weigh all our options, think about every detail, in order to make the right choices. To research, and define and justify our experiences for them to be heard and taken seriously. To study, label, and categorize the world in order to control, manipulate and extract from it.

But if we come back to a state of awe and curiosity - this Wonder Plane - maybe we are working against a western, colonized mindset. We have our own, organic, pre-conceptual experiences that we know are completely real and beautiful. We don't need to know why something is the way it is for us to find joy and love and care for it. And in turn, maybe we remain open to other's realities and experiences - and not only believe them, but actually care about them - without needing those experiences to be 'proven' in order to be real.

In other words - taking mushrooms might be a way you can say a big eff you to colonialism. Just saying..

I think about that weekend a lot. I don't live near those friends anymore. I try not to dwell on my decision to move away too much. But it is hard to not want that again. To think about how I got to that place, with those people, and how we could experience so much magic. I long for that again. Coming back to my Wonder Plane state of mind is comforting. Instead of dissecting every detail in order to re-create my past, try to meet those people again and go back to Lizard Lake, I stay curious about what is next for my relationships. I wonder who and what I'll encounter next in my journey. And I trust that I do not need to know everything in order to experience beauty and magic again.

1. The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World, 1997,
pg. 47

Karina Mosser



Magic of the Day (2022)

Sunsets are a true natural wonder, we just need to pause and look.

I really like the way this piece is lighted from within!



Moonlight Kiss (2022)

I love moonlight, pure magic!
It's a very dreamy, fairy tale piece!



Into the Night (2022)

Very textured piece, so many colors are blended here to achieve the desired effect!



Winter Day Dream (2022)

Kendall Cobb

Every season when winter arrives

“There’s just something beautiful about walking on snow
that nobody else walked on.

It makes you believe you’re in another world of possibilities.
Endless glow and sparkling reflections on the white
freshness of snow.

It gives you a reason to snuggle up to get warmth.

Read a good book reflecting on life's work.

Inside a loving home, filled with amazing views and hot
chocolate with a good holiday movie to enjoy with loved
ones.

Winter day dream.

I hope as time goes on by

I'll be remembered as the girl who always loved to write,

Hope to get noticed with my artwork, my dream.

My reality. As an artist.

My winter day dream.

You can always make anything happen if you just believe.

The Present

Aaron Lampitoc

After my shift at work, I returned to my apartment just like any other day. I immediately noticed a wrapped box in my entryway when I entered my apartment. I wondered who would put this here? I live alone and my landlord does not deliver packages to their tenants—they usually leave their packages at their doorstep.

I cautiously approached the box, checking to see if there was anything dangerous around it. There was no label; just a simple box wrapped in typical wrapping paper. I gently picked up the box and it was surprisingly light. I gently shook it. I could not hear nor feel anything inside. I tried unwrapping it. Luckily, there was a single piece of tape holding the wrapping paper together. Once I released it, the wrapping paper outdone itself and revealed the box underneath. Again, it was just a simple cardboard box. There was no special design or packing material on it.

The box was also closed with a single piece of tape. I carefully scraped the edge of the tape with my fingernail and slowly pulled it out. I opened the box and there

was nothing inside. I checked again. I used my cellphone's flashlight and saw nothing inside. I felt around if there was anything embedded at the sides and felt nothing inside. Irritated, I threw the box through the front door and slammed my door shut. Was this just a prank? I was too irritated to think straight. Feeling hungry, I quickly changed out of my work clothes and prepared dinner for myself.

A few hours later, I realized my landlord might scold me for leaving trash outside my apartment. I opened my door and saw the box was where I left it. I went outside and took it back inside.

I still wondered about why someone sent me this box. There was nothing inside it. Then, I noticed something: there was writing at the bottom of the box. How was that possible? I was definitely thorough when I examined the box. How could I have possibly missed an obvious detail?

Disregarding that detail for now, I moved the box under some better lighting. The message was "UNDERNEATH THE BOARD" written in bold, red ink. Curious, I scraped my

fingernails at the inside edges of the box until I could barely latch onto the cardboard. It took several tries to lift the board out, but I eventually managed to remove it.

Underneath the board was a blank card. I slowly picked it up and examined it. There was nothing written on the front or back. I slowly opened it—then suddenly something flew out of it! It flew out of the card and into my apartment.

At the same time, I could hear a recording coming from the card:

"Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again..."

It was my parents' voice and for some reason, the recording kept replaying the same message over and over again. How did they know where I lived? I never contacted them since I moved out of their house. Dismissing that detail for now, my focus immediately went to the card and its infuriating looping audio.

I inspected the card again and did not find any obvious attachments. I ripped apart the card, only to be showered by glitter. I was becoming more agitated. I shook off the glitter and located the recording device. It was small; the battery pack was embedded inside and it was impossible to remove the battery. Frustrated, I threw the device out the door, where it then went through the railing and fell to the ground a few feet below. I shut my door and got myself ready to go to sleep.

A few hours later, someone was knocking on my door. I looked through the peep hole to see my landlord outside. I gingerly opened it and immediately realized why they were here.

("Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again...!")

"Is this yours?" they asked.

I hesitated. "No," I nervously answered.

They sighed. "I know you're lying. I saw in the camera feed that you threw this out of your apartment. We received some noise complaints and I do not appreciate littering on my property, you understand?"

I nodded, embarrassed.

"Alright. I'll let you go this time, but don't do it again you got it?"

I nodded again. They gave the device back to me then left.

I stared down at the device. It continued to play my parent's recording.

("Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again. Hello Dear. We miss you. We want to see you again...")

Irritation and frustration began to bubble up in me again. I rushed towards my toolbox and grabbed a hammer. I then tried smashing the device, but to no avail. The device was durable and to make matters worse, it was

damaged enough that the audio became distorted.

Frustrated again, I threw it against the wall and went to my room. The recording was barely audible, now sounding like a ghostly whisper. I could hear the audio play all night. I could not sleep. But after a few hours, it stopped. I dozed off afterwards and let myself sleep in.

I woke up groggy. It was late morning. Luckily, I did not have a shift today so I did not need to worry about being late for work. The memories of the previous day flooded back to me. I looked at my calendar. I noticed my parents' anniversary was approaching soon.

Contemplating it, I decided maybe I should visit them. Maybe I could even reconcile with them. Maybe they changed over the last few years. Maybe we could be a family again. I did not believe most of these thoughts, but at the same time, these feelings were at the back of my mind.

Gaining my composure, I gathered my things and left my apartment.

You are a WONDER

Nafisa Sayed



You are a WONDER
Happiness wrapped in a
bundle

Your presence has filled our
hearts and lives with warmth
When you cry, we run VROOM
VROOM!

Unwrapping the mystery and
adventure
For us to experience the new
venture

We welcomed you with open
arms,
And you always keep our
hearts filled and warm

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 “Invention” and submissions are now open.

See you next month!

Acknowledgements

Withintensions would not have been possible without the works of Natalie Chan, Kendall Cobb, Taryn Jay, Aaron Lampitoc, LES666, Karina Mosser, Nafisa Sayed and Heather Yip.

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.

