

# Care Work

CIRCUIT 2/5, *Take Care*October 16–November 4, 2017
Blackwood Gallery

Work is a primary scene of the crisis of care. *Take Care*'s second circuit, Care Work, confronts the systemic undervaluing of caring labour by a capitalist political economy whose living foundation is nonetheless maintained by this labour. The work of care is unbound, yet it tends to be associated with private spaces and enclosed institutions. Making care public, *Care* Work renders the performance of care visible, audible, and haptic. Continuing Take Care's effort to name care gaps within art institutions, Care *Work* centres the position of cultural workers with caring responsibilities for children, elders, communities, languages, land, and water. Traversing this circuit are multiple formations of care work: cultural formations circulating visual communication strategies to counter gendered and racialized stereotypes of the figure of the caregiver; political formations tracking transnational movements of care work and profiling practices of solidarity within local communities; technological formations—probing the power relations that course through care's machinization; and corporeal formations—choreographing the affective rhythms and recompositional possibilities of care work. Expanding what counts as the work of care, Care Work responds to the extractivist attitude that care is perpetually available for the taking, a point on which the crises of care and ecology converge, with the proposition that attending to the work of care is integral to a transformational project to reframe "care as infrastructure." 1 - Letters & Handshakes

k.g. Guttman

Hands become Ears

Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-)

CareForce

Kwentong Bayan Collective
In Love and Struggle

Onaman Collective

Land and Water Protectors

The Let Down Reflex
Curated by Amber Berson
and Juliana Driever

Lise Haller Baggesen and Deirdre M. Donoghue, Cevan Castle / The Center for Parenting Artists, Dillon de Give, Home Affairs with Ozlem Ozkal, Leisure, LoVid, Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn, Shani K Parsons, Kerri-Lynn Reeves, Shane Aslan Selzer

#### Notes

1 Letters & Handshakes, "Care as Infrastructure: An Interview with Ai-jen Poo," *The Blackwood* 1 (July 2017): 6-7.

#### Front cover

k.g. Guttman, I asked the audience to close one eye (performance rehearsal documentation), 2016. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

# k.g. Guttman Hands become Ears, 2017

Artist-in-Residence in Student Residence. October 16-November 4 Performances: October 25-November 4

To engage choreographically is to position oneself in relation to another, to participate in a scene of address that anticipates and requires a particular mode of attention.

- Jenn Joy, The Choreographic

A collaboration with Terrill Maguire, Coman Poon, and local seniors, Hands become Ears is a two-part performance, commissioned by the Blackwood Gallery, exploring "affective virtuosity" in site-specific encounters. The performance cultivates techniques of talking, listening, moving, smelling, tasting, and touching in order to probe the space between performer and audience. Guttman considers attention to be a combination of all bodily senses—a participation of the senses in each other.

In Part I, invited seniors accompany a student audience member on a walk through the University of Toronto Mississauga campus. This gesture unites the hospitality of two strangers meeting, and the rhythm of walking with the exchange of personal narrative, memory, and conversation. The student audience member is then dropped off at the door of a campus residence, and Part II begins: a private indoor performance that accelerates and enhances the everyday tempo of things.

Intertwining modes of performance in private and public sites. Hands become Ears collapses the everyday gesture and the choreographed encounter to situate social codes of engagement within unfamiliar circumstances. Guttman asks of her audience a small surrender of autonomy in order to attune to an ethics and poetics of interdependence, in which care involves fluctuating exchanges of power that are continually renegotiated.



k.g. Guttman, I asked the audience to close one eve (performance rehearsal documentation), 2016, COURTESY THE ARTIST.



k.g. Guttman, / asked the audience to close one eye (performance rehearsal documentation), 2016. COURTESY THE ARTIST

Accompanying seniors: Rosemary (Rosie) Horsley, Audrey Joyal, Carol Lim, Diane Milliard, Lynn Shaw, Lorna Williams

Presented in collaboration with students in Sociology 352: Gender and Care, taught by Alexandra Rodney and designed by Cynthia Cranford.

#### Notes

"[A]ffective virtuosity: this is a matter of a criterion of social ecology, which breaks with the idea that care happens because someone loves you and presents it more as an ethical element that mediates every relation." Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike -Four hypotheses," trans. Franco Ingrassia and Nate Holdren, in The Commoner, no. 11 (2006): 40.

# Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-)

CareForce, 2013-2017

CareForce is a transmedia public art project, mobile studio, and web-series amplifying the voices of America's fastest-growing workforce-caregivers.

For the past six years, Morán Jahn has collaboratively developed work with caregivers and care-receivers to produce knowyour-rights tools, an episodic film, and artworks that dignify care work. Produced in partnership with a dozen grassroots organizations, these works have reached over 20,000 workers and employers on the ground and millions more through international media presence. In the United States, Morán

Jahn's key partners include Ai-jen Poo (National Domestic Workers Alliance and Caring Across Generations) and organizers on municipal, regional, and statewide alliances in Chicago, New York, California, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Florida, and stops in between. She combines her training in the visual arts, her professional experience as an advocate for low-wage workers (street vendors, immigrants, teens), and twenty years' vocational background as a K-12 educator to produce works that converge culture-shifting strategies, long-term legislative and structural change, and movement building.



Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-), *CareForce Disco* (documentation of a rally on the steps of City Hall, Los Angeles), 2016. With the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), Pilipino Workers Center, National Domestic Workers Alliance, PHOTO: MARC SHAVITZ, COURTESY STUDIO REV.

A new work commissioned by the Blackwood Gallery, Choreography of Carework explores how care work involves remarkable bodily labour and often-repetitive motion, yet in many jurisdictions care workers are excluded from the labour protections available to other workers. Choreography of Carework chronicles Morán Jahn's collaboration with domestic workers to choreograph a dance whose booty-shaking gestures narrate the movement for domestic workers' rights, joyfully reclaiming the caring body as one that has been historically proscribed from US labour law, and insisting on the visibility of undocumented care workers and care work writ large. Through personal reflection and interviews with Vero Ramirez. Guillermina Castellanos, and Marcia Olivo, Choreography of Carework generates unlikely

connections between ergonomics, domestic labour, immigration, and the politics of space.

Since 2013, Morán Jahn has been recording songs sung by domestic workers that she meets while travelling in her custom-designed jalopies, the *NannyVan* and *CareForce One*. In 2017, Morán Jahn gave Diana Nucera (a.k.a. Mother Cyborg) her recordings of caregivers singing the hymn and labour-movement song, "Amazing Grace," for her to remix into electronic dance music. For *Take Care*, Morán Jahn will use this song in a collaboration with care workers to choreograph a dance inspired by the global diaspora of domestic workers.



Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-), CareForce Disco (documentation of a rally on the steps of City Hall, Los Angeles), 2016. With the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), Pilipino Workers Center, National Domestic Workers Alliance. PHOTO: MARC SHAVITZ. COURTESY STUDIO REV-.

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### **Kwentong Bayan Collective**

In Love and Struggle, 2017, illustrations and text

In Love and Struggle: A Visual Timeline of Careaiving Work in Canada (2017) examines the history of care work performed by Indigenous and racialized women in Canada. The Canada 150 celebrations by encouraging a critical examination of history in support of struggles for radical change. Caregivers have made invaluable contributions to Canada's social, economic, and political history, yet they have consistently had to fight for their labour to be respected and recognized, and won shifts to justice and equity rooted in caregivers' perseverance and resistance as a community.

The 90's: Philippine National Day, Seaton Park (2014) is drawn from a comic book that Kwentong Bayan Collective is currently developing. This project, *Kwentong Bayan*: Labour of Love, involves collaboration with caregivers, advocates, and community allies about the real-life stories of Filipinx migrant After the founding of the Live-in Caregiver caregivers working in Canada under the federal government's Caregiver Program.

In connection to Kwentong Bayan Collective's work, Ethel Tungohan writes:

Canadian families have always relied on dotimeline intervenes in conversations about mestic workers. This was true before Confederation, when Canadian families used Indigenous and Black women as slaves. This was also true afterwards, when the Canadian government recruited women from overseas to work as domestic workers. Due to its 'white settler' policy, the Canadian government recruited British and Western European women to come as domestic workers because they were 'mothers of the nation' and gave these women Canadian citizenship. In contrast, in the early and mid-1900s, women from the Caribbean came to Canada and were either individually sponsored by Canadian families or came under the Caribbean Domestic Scheme.

> In the ensuing years, domestic workers continued their campaigns for better policies. Program in 1992, domestic workers lobbied for improvements. In 2001, their efforts led



Kwentong Bayan Collective, In Love and Struggle: A Visual Timeline of Caregiving Work in Canada (installation view), 2016. Illustrations by Althea Balmes, text by Jo SiMalaya Alcampo. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

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from the British colonies, mainly Jamaica and Barbados. These women receive low pay and no permanent residency.

Kwentong Bayan Collective, In Love and Struggle: A Visual Timeline of Caregiving Work in Canada (detail), 2016. Illustrations by Althea Balmes, text by Jo SiMalaya Alcampo. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

the Ontario government to include domestic work in the Employment Standards Act. In 2010, the Juana Tejada Law, which eliminated the required medical test for caregivers who want to apply for permanent residency (PR), was passed.

In 2015, because of domestic workers' lobbying, the live-in requirement was eliminated. Nevertheless, the new Caregiver Program (CP) severely constrained the ability of domestic workers to get PR. Under the CP, caregivers are either 'babysitters' or 'high-medical needs' workers, and they have to complete language and licensing requirements before being eligible for PR. In addition, a quota of 2,750 applicants in each stream was established, which means that caregivers who fall outside this quota cannot apply for PR. As always, domestic workers are active in contesting these policies.1

#### Acknowledgment

Our work would not be possible without the caregivers, advocates, and other community allies who share their stories with us. We honour your labour. May you be surrounded by love.

- Kwentong Bayan Collective

#### Notes

In Love and Struggle builds upon Kwentong Bayan Collective's contribution to the Graphic History Collective's Remember | Resist | Redraw: A Radical History Poster Project, 2017. The poster includes a contextual essay by Ethel Tungohan, which is excerpted here.

### **Onaman Collective**

Land and Water Protectors, 2016–2017

Onaman Collective is an Indigenous, grassroots, land-based art initiative founded by Michif artist Christi Belcourt, Michif artist Erin Marie Konsmo, and Anishinaabe artist Isaac Murdoch to share traditional knowledge and language with youth. On the name of the collective. Sâkihitowin Awâsis writes: "Onaman is the name of the red ochre paint used by Anishinaabek, Nehiyawak, and Michif peoples. It is also used as a clotting agent for wounds in traditional medicine-a telling metaphor for the intergenerational healing associated with the land-based knowledge and language revitalization cultivated by the collective's wide-ranging creative projects and community collaborations."1

With the belief that the arts are the most powerful medium to create positive social change within communities, collective artists Belcourt and Murdoch have been making banner images freely available for land and water protectors and organizers to use for land or water protection actions.<sup>2</sup> Thunderbird Woman, a recurring figure in the banners, has appeared on the frontlines of Standing Rock, on the edges of the Alberta Tar Sands, at a rally against Enbridge Line 5 pipeline along Highway 17 near Espanola, Ontario, and on the lawn of the Supreme Court in Ottawa.

Presented alongside the banners in the Blackwood Gallery are three videos by Onaman

WATER IS SACRED NO PIPELINES!

Isaac Murdoch, Water Is Sacred, No Pipelines!, 2016. Digital image, dimensions variable. COURTESY THE ONAMAN COLLECTIVE.

Collective that form part of #Resistance150, a project "intended to highlight the many ways Indigenous peoples have historically resisted, and continue to resist, what many see as discriminatory and assimilationist policies of the Canadian government, such as those regarding pipeline construction, access to drinking water, and child welfare funding gaps. Perhaps most importantly, the Indian Act itself."

I Am Not A Number captures Elder Mary Wemigwans of Wikemikong First Nation cutting up her status card in a symbolic gesture, and rejecting the Canadian state and the oppressive laws of the Indian Act by doing so. Nimkii Aazhibikong showcases an Ojibway language immersion camp for youth, which is working towards producing the next generation of fluent speakers on the land. For the Water features Autumn Peltier, a 12-year old Anishinaabe girl from Wikemikong, and her call to join protesters fighting the Dakota Access Pipeline on December 5, 2016 at noon across Turtle Island:

I am a just a kid. 12 years old. And I shouldn't be worrying about adults' problems. Kids all over the world have to pay for mistakes we didn't even make. This is our future. We are the next Elders. We are the next leaders. This is our future. I cry watching videos of Standing Rock and knowing that we shouldn't have to fight for our water, we should just be able to have clean drinking water. We are only given one planet and we are destroying it. It's not just in North America where we need the clean drinking water. It's all over the world. I want to know that my great grandchildren and my children are able to have clean drinking water and they won't have to worry about having clean water. They should just have it. I want us to stand together and we are going to shut down all the highways in North America for a whole hour on December 5th. I am inviting everyone to join us. Bring your shaker, bring your drums, bring your vessels, bring your feathers. Let's pray together.

- Autumn Peltier



From top: Onaman Collective, I Am Not a Number (video still), 2017; Onaman Collective, For the Water (video still), 2016; Onaman Collective, Introducing Nimkii Aazhibikong (video still), 2017.

ALL IMAGES COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

#### Notes

- 1 Sâkihitowin Awâsis, "Keep it in the Ground!," *Canadian Art* (Summer 2017), 63.
- Onaman Collective, Banner Images for Land and Water Protectors, 2017. Banner downloads are available here: http://onamancollective. com/murdoch-belcourt-bannerdownloads/
- 3 Alicia Elliot, "#Resistance150: Christi Belcourt on Indigenous History, Resilience and Resurgence," CBC (February 22, 2017): http:// www.cbc.ca/2017/resistance150christi-belcourt-on-indigenoushistory-resilience-and-resurgence-1.3992226

# The Let Down Reflex: Addressing the Spaces of Art, Labour, and Parenthood

Amber Berson and Juliana Driever

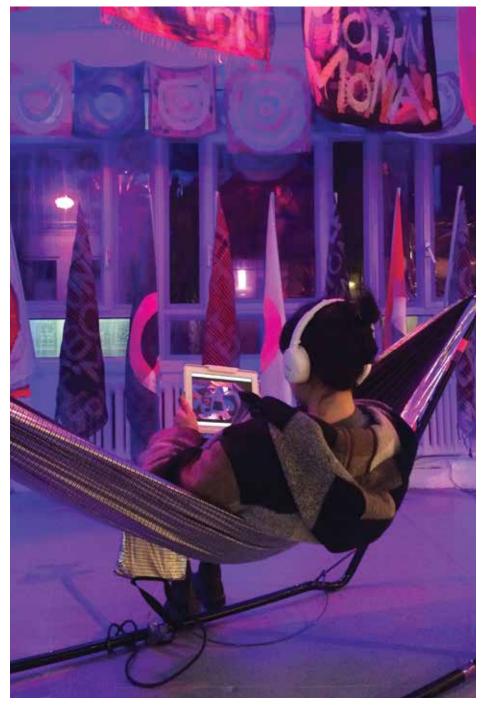
The question of who is welcome in the art priate, because as a woman, a mother, and world is at the core of *The Let Down Reflex*, an ongoing project that explores institutional issues of accessibility. The machinations of the art world favour players who either do not have family responsibilities or have the means to assign familial duties to others (whether through paid assistance or the constant unpaid labour of a partner). From the high-commitment and low-pay opportunities that often come with the promise of "exposure" through to the demanding calendar of social events (often during evening hours), the cost of being present in both professional and personal realms as an artist or cultural producer is prohibitive to parents, particularly for those in the emerging and mid-career stages of their work life and for those working multiple jobs to make ends meet.

At the 2012 conference Institutions By Artists, in Vancouver, Skeena Reece gave a performance that was profound, rattling, beautiful—and disconcerting.1 Bringing her post-partum body and her baby into the "sacred" institutional space of the university, Reece disrupted the audience's comfort with her breast and breast milk, breast pads, maternity clothing, diet, weight, finances, and other equally messy and publicly unseen or unspoken aspects of her life. In the first part of the performance, Reece changed in front of the audience and asked for help with her child. No one offered. In the second part, she addressed her double-discrimination as an Indigenous woman and challenged the associated stereotypes. Unfortunately, much of Reece's performance is cut from the documentation, and much of the hesitation and discomfort felt in the room is lost. For some, her participation was considered inapproan Indigenous person, her body and her experience are not ones that are commonly included in academic spaces.

The Let Down Reflex is not only an exhibition about children in gallery and museum spaces, or about the position of the parent-artist, it is about access in a larger sense, and about the disregard of alternative bodies of knowledge. Creating a space for the maternal and, more generally, the parental—in cultural institutions is an accessibility issue with which we should all be concerned, regardless of our parental status.

"Let Down Reflex" is a medical term that refers to the involuntary reflex that causes nursing mothers to produce breast milk. The term takes on a double meaning in this exhibition, referring simultaneously to this bodily function and also to the reflexive tendency of the art world's flawed labour system to let down (or fail) parents, particularly mothers. The Let Down Reflex creates a radical presence for families where they are typically absent: residency programs, low-pay/high-demand exhibition opportunities, panel discussions, and so on. Of course, parents are not the only people excluded from the art world. We perceive the current reality as one in which the young, single, white, typically male, able-bodied, and high-rolling artist is awarded the most opportunities.

The Let Down Reflex highlights the need for a more flexible system in which artist-parents would find advocacy in the art world, encouraging a model that promotes sustainable practices for those actively caring for young children. We invited artists to create works that critique the perception



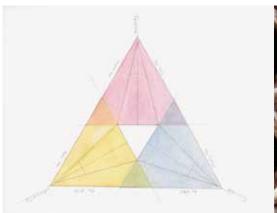
Lise Haller Baggesen, Mothernism (2013-2017), 2016. Flags (textile paint on silk and found fabrics), audio/video on iPad with headphones, Mindmap (Silver Sharpie and map pins on photo mural), Disco Hammock, mirror ball, LED party light, courtesy the ARTIST.

of parenthood—and, more specifically, motherhood—as a liability, and to move towards building a feminist space for the flourishing of labour-based practices that dovetail with the realities faced by families. This forces a confrontation with a universal sense of vulnerability in the balancing acts of family life and art practice, while simultaneously soliciting non-parents to reflect on the status quo and strengthen a system of support and community. We want to effect lasting change in the art world, and to begin conversations around reasonable accommodations for families. We want art spaces to know who to contact if they would like to offer childcare and to understand how their liability insurance affects where and when they offer care services. We want institutions to have a plan in place for storing strollers, and to understand the importance of creating a "chill-out room" for over-stimulated kids as well as a safe space for breastfeeding. We want public programming, openings, and installation/ de-installation efforts to be scheduled at family-friendly times. In short, we want art administrators to shift their consideration of these issues as matters of accessibility and hospitality.

The Let Down Reflex models its protocols on the writings, ideologies, and efforts of several key influences. The essays in Don't

Leave Your Friends Behind: Concrete Ways to Support Families in Social Justice Movements and Communities, for example, give voice to activists' experiences and struggles of remaining a part of their community after parenting and caretaking responsibilities take hold.<sup>2</sup> The writings of Silvia Federici and the Wages for Housework movement are also influential on the way we consider care work as labour and as essential to cultural production. We are moved, too, by the work of Christa Donner and the Cultural ReProducers, a community organization with a mandate to help make "the art world a more inclusive and interesting place by supporting arts professionals raising kids."3 In addition to offering a digital platform for parent-artists to connect and update each other on relevant opportunities, Cultural ReProducers has written a manifesto and a set of demands for institutions to expand access for families and parents. Their guidelines state that events should be interesting and relevant to arts professionals as well as child-friendly and accessible in terms of scheduling and cost.

The work included in the iteration of *The Let Down Reflex* for the Blackwood Gallery reflects the multiple needs and desires of parents, their individual challenges and successes, and their calls to action. The





Kerri-Lynn Reeves, The Mother (sketch and detail), 2017. COURTESY THE ARTIST.



Home Affairs, Artsit (sketch for prototype), 2017. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

artists work from a variety of approaches. Some claim space as parents. The Mothernists (2017) combines Lise Haller Baggesen and Deirdre M. Donoghue's separate projects concerning maternal (aest)ethics into an installation that includes books and flags from Haller Baggesen's nomadic *Mothern*ism camp, video documentation of lectures presented at *The Mothernists I*, and their manifesta, UMAMI 2.0. Together, the project references their co-organized conference of the same name, which "attempts to open up philosophical, political, aesthetic and social questions made visible through the co-existing practices of mothering and cultural re-production, bringing these into the diverse discourses that the participants professionally as artists, writers, philosophers, curators, historians and educators are part of."4

In Kerri-Lynn Reeves' *The Mother* (2017), a macramé hammock designed for three people creates a gently cradled space for social interaction and relaxation. Here the hammock becomes a metaphor for the body of the mother, the family unit, and the community (as a whole and as separate parts.) It proposes the mother's body as a social

site in which the physicality of the space encapsulates a biological space and a social definition. The handmade nature of *The Mother* subtly disrupts the hammock's symmetrical and repetitive structures, highlighting the precarious balance and immense labour that make up the familial body.

Responding to the question "Does Your Gallery, Museum, Conference Center or Festival Provide Childcare?," posed by their 2015 work And Everything Else, Home Affairs (Arzu Ozkal, Claudia Pederson, and Nanette Yannuzzi in collaboration with Ozlem Ozkal) designed an assistive device for use by families and caregivers in museum and gallery settings. Based on conversations with parents and gallery and museum personnel, Home Affairs' prototype, Artsit (2017) offers a possible solution to expand access to those who might be otherwise disinclined to bring their children to a museum. Home Affairs' design not only serves as an engaging means of conveyance, but also considers the needs of families more holistically, allowing parents and children the opportunity to experience an exhibition in a way that considers their physical comfort.

Similarly, Cevan Castle, as The Center for Parenting Artists, proposes a design-oriented solution for families who use the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) campus. Beginning her project *Map of Family Spaces* on Campus (2017) with research from the UTM Family Care Office and from canvassing members of the UTM campus, Castle asked: Where do families play, nurse, work, eat, read, and gather? Castle then designed and installed temporary signage, based on the American Institute of Graphic Arts' universal symbols, to identify these familyfriendly public locations across UTM. It affirms the presence of families on campus and identifies spaces that families can access for practicalities, like breastfeeding.



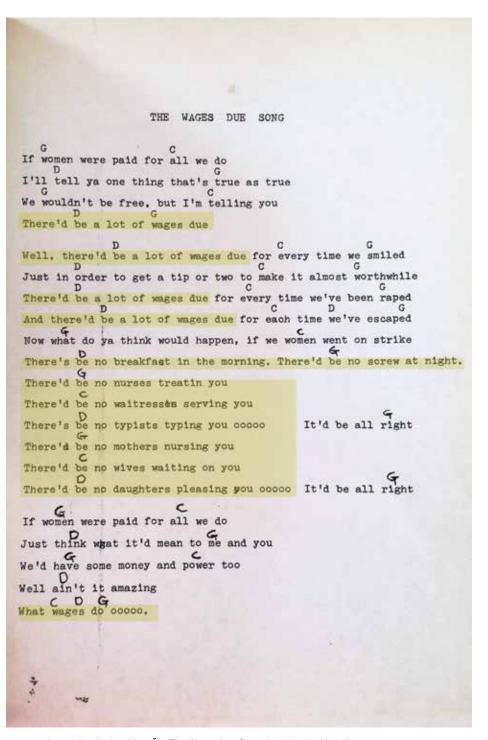
Universal Signage, Breastfeeding Symbol

Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn's *The Wages Due Song* (2015) and Leisure's (Meredith Carruthers and Susannah Wesley) installation *Conversation with Magic Forms* (2015-2016) both work through historic precedents of feminist calls to action, and each attempts to see where new shifts in the politics of gendered labour and social reproduction can occur. In the 1970s, the collective Wages

Due Lesbians supported the Wages for Housework campaign, which demanded compensation for domestic work and called attention to how capitalism exploits the affective labour of women. Feminist campaigners had protest songs to go with their demands: "If women were paid for all they do, there'd be a lot of wages due," they sang. Based on the lyrics of The Wages Due Song, written by Boo Watson in 1974, Nguyễn presents a version of this sound piece made in collaboration with Thunder Tillman. As part of Care Crisis, Care Connective: An Open Forum on Cultural Work during Take Care's first circuit, Hoàng Nguyễn and Watson led a songwriting workshop for a new version to reflect today's struggles.

Leisure's work investigates the studio practice of Barbara Hepworth, a UK sculptor and mother of four, including triplets, who integrated family life into her studio in the St. Ives artist colony. Hepworth's model for playfulness in children and in the studio had a secondary effect, living on in the work of her son, Simon Nicholson. In the 1970s, he penned The Theory of Loose Parts, a childled learning theory, which argues that environments with a large number of variables and moveable parts foster greater creativity, inventiveness, and discovery. Taking its name from a series of sculptural "forms" undertaken by Hepworth after the arrival of triplets in 1934, Leisure's Conversation with Magic Forms evaluates the environment in which Nicholson's text might have been imagined—the active space of Hepworth's studio, where work and life were intertwined in a chaotic, creative, and materially diverse environment.

Shane Aslan Selzer's work, *Horizonline: Gowanus* (2013-2016), and Dillon de Give's performance, *By Our Own Admission* (2016-2017), both make visible the tensions between being a parent and an artist. In Selzer's work, the artist takes photographs from her bedroom window, with the aim of producing at least one composition each day. The project explores the sense of isolation many parents



Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn, The Wages Due Song, 2016. Lyrics (detail). COURTESY THE ARTIST.



Shane Aslan Selzer, Horizonlines: Gowanus, 2013-2016, HD Video. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

experience while home with their child. whether on supported parental leave or forced to leave their work because their jobs pay less than the cost of childcare. Selzer's work speaks to the very real ways in which the art world keeps parents isolated and how we, as artist-parents, are forced to adapt to survive. de Give's work was originally performed as a staging of his nightly bedtime routine with his two-and-a-half year-old son, Peregrin, within a gallery space. Conceived as a way to combine childcare with artistic duties, de Give makes apparent the juggling required to perform the everyday labour of caring for a child (which, as primary caregiver, is a way he tangibly contributes to the economy of his household) and to act as an artist. For this iteration of The Let Down Reflex, de Give invites parents and caretakers to discuss the details of their bedtime routines in front of a live audience, allowing for catharsis, information sharing, and a sense of community.

In their work, LoVid (Tali Hinkus and Kyle

Lapidus) combs through their archives to assess the components of art spaces and institutions that welcomed them as artistparents. Their video, Kids at a Noise Show (2016), includes interviews with artists, curators, and administrators they have worked with since the birth of their three children, highlighting the ways in which they were able to integrate their family and their professional commitments. In a new collaboration highlighting the fluidity of family and art, LoVid and their children (Rama, Dlisah, and Lo'am) will perform together during A Day of Affectionate Actions at the Blackwood Gallery, with the children contributing by dancing, jewellery-making, or computer programming, while the parents play live music with their handmade synthesizer.

Finally, Shani K Parsons' carefully curated video program brings together the work of many types of parents in the art world, with special attention to those less visible. In Parsons' words, the chosen works reside



LoVid, Kids at a Noise Show (video still), 2016. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

at the "intersections between motherhood and artistic practice as they relate to issues and themes of care."

There are numerous ways that the art world can become a better reflection of the world that we want to see. As artists and cultural workers, we can urge the organizations we work with to offer childcare to both artists and visitors. If our funders do not know that childcare is a priority, then it is up to us to let them know in our applications and in our feedback. Addressing this matter of accessibility benefits everyone: when more people can attend because barriers are reduced, art institutions will have more robust and diverse visitor participation. And while providing access is critical, we must also develop methods by which audiences are engaged once they arrive. Do families attend a sponsored museum event only to have parents watch their children make crafts in a seguestered space? Or, is the engagement of children and families considered carefully and holistically, allowing for the fullest encounter with the venue's offerings? At this moment of reclaiming and owning feminist identities in all of their possible variations, it is a matter

of urgency for anyone invested in feminist futures to stand up and build supports for mothers, parents, and families of all stripes.

#### Notes

- 1 "Session 04: Institutional Time: Facts & Fictions," Institutions by Artists, co-organized by Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres, (PAARC), Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference (ARCA), and Fillip magazine, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, SFU (Vancouver), November 3, 2012. https://vimeo.com/52731419
- 2 Victoria Law and China Martens, eds. Don't Leave Your Friends Behind: Concrete Ways to Support Families in Social Justice Movements and Communities (Oakland: PM Press, 2012).
- 3 Cultural ReProducers, "About." n.d.: http://www.culturalreproducers. org/p/about.html
- 4 Lise Haller Baggesen and Deirdre M. Donoghue, "The Mothernists," M/Other Voices. July 19, 2017: https://www.mothervoices.org/the-mothernists/

#### Following spread:

Leisure, *Conversation with Magic Forms*, 2017. Colour digital print on paper, 3' x 4'. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

years with Sen Nicholson

Creativity is for the gifted few: the test of an arecompelled to live in environments constructed by the gifted tions and art, and read the poems, fantasies and plays by the gifted few.

This is what our education and culture conditions us to believe, and this is a culturally induced and perpetuated

Building upon this lie, the dominant cultural elite tell us that the planning, design and building of any part of of their lives and life-style. This is particularly true of young the environment is so difficult and so special that only the children who find the world incredibly restricted a world gifted few-those with degrees and certificates in planning, engineering, architecture, art, education, behavioral psychology, and so on - can properly solve environmental problems.

**How NOT** Children All these things have one thing in common, which is variables or 'loose parts'. The theory of loose parts says. The Theory Parts

By Simon Nicholion

The result is that the vast majority of people are not allowed (and worse-feel that they are incompetent) to lew, listen to the gifted few's music, use gifted few's inven-experiment with the components of building and construction, whether in environmental studies, the abstract arts, literature or science, the creativity—the playing around with the components and variables of the world in order to make experiments and discover new things and form new concepts—has been explicitly stated as the domain of the creative few, and the rest of the community has been deprived of a crucial part where they carnot play with building and making things, or play with fluids, water, fire or living objects, and all the things that satisfy one's curiosity and give us the pleasure that results from discovery and invention; experiments with alternatives, such as People's Park, Berkeley, have been crushed or quashed by public authorities.

The simple facts are these:

I. There is no evidence, except in special cases of mental disability, that some young babies are born creative and inventive, and others not

2. There is evidence that all children love to interact with variables, such as materials and shapes; smells and other physical phenomena, such as electricity, magnetism and to Cheat specific media such as gases and fluids; sounds, music, and inotion; chemical interactions, cooking and fire; and other people, and animals, plants, words, concepts and ideas. With all these things all children love to play, experiment, discover and invent and have fur-

All these things have one thing in common, which quite simply, the following:

In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it.

it does not require much imagination to realize of Loose that most environments that do not work (i.e. do not work in terms of human interaction and involvement in the sense described) such as schools, playgrounds, hospitals, day-care centers, international airports, art galleries and museums, do not do so because they do not meet the "loose parts" requirement; instead, they are clean, static and impossible to play around with. What has happened is that adults in the form of professional artists, architects, landscape architects. and planners have had all the fun playing with their own materials, concepts and planning-alternatives, and then builders have had all the tun building the environments out of real materials, and thus has all the fun and creativity been stolen; children and adulm and the community have been grossly cheated and the educational-cultural system makes sure that they hold the belief that this is right. How many schools have there been with a chain-link and black-top playground where there has been a spontaneous revolution by students to dig it up and produce a human environment instead of a prison?

> If we look for a moment at this theory of loose parts, we find that some interesting work supports it and in particular, that there has been a considerable amount of outstanding recent research by people not in the traditional fields of art architecture and planning. Much of this research firs into the following five categories:

#### Design by Community Interaction and Involvement

Ten years ago a special issue of the magazine Anarchys was published in which nearly all the fundamental

Ben and I went to the cinema in Belitze Park, and my Margaret Gardiner had supper with so. Ben had le bit that I seemed withdrawn and concentrated over my middenly I said 'Oh dear', and in next to no time I saw ten at the foot of my bed - looking pretty determined and This was an event even my doctor did not suspect, and stement that, no washing in the garden, and a kitchen-20 in the bank and only one cot.

The day before he had done a three-form white relief another relief. He was a tower of strength, and rung late friends at dawn, who said. Shut up Ben, this is no

if fear for the first time in my life, as I was very weak, ow on earth we were to support this family on white triving I was doing

itely right and, supported by his faith, our work the right direction, and miraculously we made our way, rful help given to us by our friends and patrons



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# **Public Programs**

**FREE Contemporary Art Bus Tour** 

Exhibition tour to Blackwood Gallery, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Art Gallery of York University, Y+ contemporary Sunday, October 15, 12–5pm

Carework as Choreography

Wednesday, October 18, 1–4pm 12–2pm: Feminist Lunchtime Talks with Marisa Morán Jahn, Cynthia Cranford, Kwentong Bayan Collective, Pinky Paglingayen 2–3pm: Exhibition Talk & Tour 3pm: Dance Rally Blackwood Gallery

This event is the first in a series of **Feminist Lunchtime Talks** featuring artists, writers, activists, and academics working across issues of labour, gender, race, and identity in the context of the crisis of care. The talks put artists participating in *Take Care* and other guest speakers into conversation with UTM faculty respondents.

During Carework as Choreography, the Kwentong Bayan Collective (Althea Balmes and Jo SiMalaya Alcampo) and Marisa Morán Jahn (CareForce) will present their projects in Take Care, UTM faculty Cynthia Cranford will speak to her research on personal care work in California and Ontario, and local activist Pinky Paglingayen (Caregivers in Transition) will discuss her advocacy work as a former caregiver and now settlement counsellor with the Caregivers in Transition Program. Exploring themes such as artistic and academic modes of inquiry into care work, collaborating with caregiving communities, representing care labour processes, and workers' responses to care crisis, the talk will be followed by an exhibition tour of Care Work with the artists and a dance rally led by Morán Jahn in collaboration with the Kwentong Bayan Collective and local caregiver communities.

The Feminist Lunchtime Talks are presented in partnership with Women and Gender Studies (UTM).

#### Care, Automated

Workshop with Amelia Abreu, Marc Böhlen, Ian Roderick, Sarah Sharma Hosted by Letters & Handshakes Saturday, October 21, 11am–3pm McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology, 39 Queen's Park Cres. E., Toronto

The habit of attaching "care" to innately positive attributes obscures its entanglement with dominant systems of power and control. The ambivalence of care is crisply reflected in technological configurations of care/work. In this workshop, five researchers share their inquiries into intersections of care and technology, in particular, automation. Questioning technological fixes to care crisis, Care, Automated examines how care work's ongoing machinization coexists with and deepens, rather than disrupts, entrenched social hierarchies and prevailing economic imperatives. Beyond providing critical diagnostics, however, the workshop also sets out to consider how technologies of care/work might be ethically and collaboratively reimagined.

Sarah Sharma takes current discussions of caring robots as an opportunity to highlight the already robotic forms of care and intimacy that comprise gendered commitments and forms of normativity tied to capital. Ian Roderick examines how social robots, programmed to intercede between therapist and patient in Autism Spectrum Disorder behavioural therapy, function as metaphors and mediators of caregiving. Amelia Abreu proposes axioms for understanding the relationship between care and technology, and explores the meaning of the automation of care in a service-oriented economy. Imagining a future in which machines and not people are the last sentient entities a dying person will see before death, **Marc Böhlen** presents speculative designs for a "robot to die with."

Workshop presented in partnership with and funded by the McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto.

# Reader-in-Residence Session with Art Metropole

Public reading by Alize Zorlutuna Wednesday, October 25, 12–1pm Blackwood Gallery

#### Hands become Ears

Performances led by k.g. Guttman In collaboration with Terrill Maguire, Coman Poon, and local seniors For students, by appointment only October 25–November 4 (not including Sundays) University of Toronto Mississauga campus

#### Love's Labours

A moving image program Saturday, October 28, 1pm The Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Avenue, Toronto

Curated by **Shani K Parsons**, *Love's Labours* is a 50-minute video program on intersections of motherhood and artistic practice as they relate to issues of care. Including historical film excerpts, experimental film and video, mini-documentary interviews, and spoken word/music, *Love's Labours* explores how a number of artists have wrestled with obligations, aspirations, and transformations that the physical, mental, emotional labours of motherhood bring to bear upon their inner worlds and identities as they negotiate the intensities and intimacies of maternal and artistic life in the face of systemic pressures and inequities.

#### Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollens,

Riddles of the Sphinx, 1977, 6:10 min.

Lu Heintz, Lead, Follow, 2016, 2:12 min.

Mary Kelly, Post Partum Document, 1973-79, TateShots, 2015, 4:17 min. Mirha-Soleil Ross, Lullaby, 2001, 4:00 min.

Melissa Mollen Dupuis, *Nitanish* (*To my Daughter*), 2015, 3:03 min. Jules Arita Koostachin,

Niso kakastesinowin, 2011, 2:30 min. Tracey Kershaw, Dropping peas picking up peas, 2011, 0:45 min. Megan Wynne, My Puppet, 2014,

1:54 min. **Megan Wynne**, *Floor Birth*, 2016, 0:09 min.

Betye and Alison Saar, Similar Differences, 1990, 9:30 min. Alison Saar, Bearing, 2015-16, 6:41 min.

Cara Mumford and Leanne Simpson, *Leaks*, 2013, 2:42 min. Lu Heintz, *I love you*, 2014, 3:00 min.

Kelly O'Brien, How Does Life Live?, 2017, 3:31 min.

#### A Day of Affectionate Actions

Saturday, November 4, 1–4pm 1pm: Introduction by Amber Berson and Juliana Driever 1:30pm: *HouseHold* by LoVid 3pm: *By Our Own Admission* by Dillon de Give MiST Theatre, UTM

This event brings together two live performances that highlight the fluidity of family and art. In a new collaboration, **LoVid** and their children (Rama, Dlisah, and Lo'am) will perform together, using a range of instruments and objects, and **Dillon de Give** invites parents and caretakers to share the details of their bedtime routines in front of a live audience. Children of all ages welcome.

# Participant Biographies

Amelia Abreu is a writer and design researcher based in Portland, Oregon, and the founder of UX Night School. Her writing on technology and culture has appeared in various publications. She holds a BA from Evergreen State College, an MSIS from the University of Texas-Austin, and an MS from the University of Washington.

Lise Haller Baggesen studied painting at the AKI in Enschede, the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam and completed her MA in Visual and Critical Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has exhibited her work internationally, is the author of *Mothernism* (2014), and the co-organizer of *The Mothernists* in Rotterdam (2015) and *The Mothernists 2: Who Cares for the 21st Century* at Astrid Noack's Atelier and at the Royal Academy for Fine Art, Copenhagen (2017).

Amber Berson is a writer, curator, and PhD student conducting doctoral research at Queen's University on artist-run culture and feminist, utopian thinking. She most recently curated *The Let Down Reflex* (with Juliana Driever) and was the 2016 curator-in-residence as part of the France-Quebec Cross-Residencies program at Astérides in Marseille, France. She is the Canadian ambassador for the Art+Feminism Wikipedia project.

Artist-engineer **Marc Böhlen** (a.k.a. Real-TechSupport) imagines and designs information systems that reflect on automation as cultural currency. Böhlen is Professor of Media Study at the University at Buffalo and is co-creator of the online resource "Robots for Last Days." His projects query the relationship between people and automation at large, generating unexpected qualities from quantitative processes.

**Cevan Castle**, founder of The Center for Parenting Artists, is an architectural designer, artist, and principal of a firm working in urban landscape and exterior architecture. Castle teaches professional practices in art and design, as well as pre-kindergarten and early childhood education. She holds a Master's of Architecture from Columbia University (New York) and a BFA from the College for Creative Studies (Detroit).

Cynthia Cranford is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto Mississauga, where she leads the research project "Understanding and Improving Immigrant Labour Markets for Personal Care Work: A Comparative Analysis of Public Sector Personal Care Work in North America." She is currently writing a book comparing personal care in California and Ontario from the vantage points of workers, service users, labour and disability activists, employers, and state officials.

**Deirdre M. Donoghue** lives and works in Rotterdam. She is a performance and visual artist, mother, doula, founding director of the international m/other voices foundation for Art, Research and Theory / Dialogue / Community Involvement, PhD candidate at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry, University of Utrecht, and a founding member of ADA: Area for Debate and Art, Rotterdam.

Juliana Driever is a curator and writer focused on collaborative practices, public space, and site-specificity. Recent curatorial work includes *The Let Down Reflex* (2016, with Amber Berson, EFA Project Space, New York), *Socially Acceptable* (2015, Residency Unlimited/InCube Arts), *Art in Odd Places* 2014: *FREE* (with Dylan Gauthier, New York), and *About, With & For* (2013, Boston Center for the Arts).

**Dillon de Give** is an artist and educator working with performance, film, publication and documentary forms. He is a co-founder of the Walk Exchange, a cooperative walking group, and organizes the annual Coy-

ote Itinerancy, a retreat that traces a footpath between New York City and the wild.

k.g. Guttman is an artist, educator, and research candidate in the PhD Arts program of Leiden University and the Royal Academy of Art in the Hague, the Netherlands. Her work considers how territoriality and choreography are intertwined in site-specific practices and has been shown in performances, exhibitions, residencies, and commissions throughout Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Europe.

Founded by Arzu Ozkal, Claudia Pederson, and Nanette Yannuzzi, **HOME AFFAIRS** is an interdisciplinary art collective focusing on creative projects about a range of issues impacting women's lives. The group has exhibited and performed at diverse venues including Spaces Gallery (Cleveland), EFA Project Space (New York), Project Goleb (Amsterdam), and Art Produce Gallery (San Diego).

An artist and transmedia producer of Ecuadorian and Chinese descent, Marisa Morán Jahn founded Studio REV-, a nonprofit organization whose key projects include El Bibliobandido, Video Slink Uganda, Contratados, the Nannyvan, an app for domestic workers that CNN named as "one of 5 apps to change the world," and the CareForce. She is a graduate of MIT and teaches at MIT, Columbia University, and The New School.

Kwentong Bayan Collective is a collective of two Toronto-based artists, Althea Balmes and Jo SiMalaya Alcampo. Their work explores critical and intersectional approaches to community-based art, labour, and education. They are currently developing a comic book, *Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love*, in close collaboration with caregivers, advocates, and community allies about the real life stories of Filipinx migrant caregivers working in Canada under the Caregiver Program (formerly known as the Livein Caregiver Program).

Leisure is the Montreal-based conceptual collaborative art practice of Meredith Carruthers and Susannah Wesley. Working together under the name "Leisure" since 2004, they engage with cultural-historical narratives through research, conversation, published texts, curatorial projects, and art production. Leisure exhibits regularly at Erin Stump Projects (Toronto) and has work in the permanent collection of the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery (Montreal).

Letters & Handshakes is a collaboration of Greig de Peuter (Department of Communication Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University) and Christine Shaw (Blackwood Gallery and Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga).

**LoVid** is a New York-based artist duo comprised of Tali Hinkis and Kyle Lapidus. LoVid's work includes immersive installations, sculptural synthesizers, single channel videos, textiles, participatory projects, mobile media cinema, works on paper, and A/V performance. Collaborating since 2001, LoVid has performed and presented works at venues throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.

Award-winning choreographer **Terrill Maguire** has had an extensive and wideranging career in dance and related arts. Her creation and performance life has been located in her native California, in New York, Toronto, and Ottawa; she has also danced in London England, Ireland, and Paris, France. Her work has been presented in theatres large and small, on television and in film; in trees and forests; in fountains, galleries, city streets and historical sites, among other places.

Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn is a researchbased artist based in Stockholm. Using a broad range of mediums, her artistic practice investigates issues of historicity, collectivity, utopian politics, and multiculturalism within the framework of feminist theories. Nguyễn is the 2017 Audain Visual Artist in Residence at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver and will participate in the fourth cycle of NTU Center for Contemporary Art Singapore's Residencies program.

Onaman Collective is a community-based social arts and justice organization founded in 2014 by Christi Belcourt, Isaac Murdoch, and Erin Konsmo. Onaman Collective is interested in helping Indigenous communities, particularly youth, with reclaiming the richness and vibrancy of their heritage. The collective combines land-based contemporary art with traditional arts, anishnaabemowin immersion, and Elders' and traditional knowledge.

**Pinky Paglingayen** is a former caregiver and is currently a Settlement Counsellor with the Caregivers in Transition program at Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office.

Shani K Parsons is an independent curator, designer, and founding director of Critical Distance Centre for Curators (CDCC) in Toronto. With degrees in architecture (Temple University) and design (Rhode Island School of Design) she has pursued a transdisciplinary practice within independent and institutional contexts such as the American Museum of Natural History, Museum of Chinese in America, Museum of Modern Art, and Mixed Greens (New York).

Coman Poon is a Toronto-based interdisciplinary artist, activist, curator and producer working within contexts of decolonization and intercultural exchange. He actively collaborates with artists, social and environmental justice activists, academics, filmmakers, photographers, video and sound technicians, poets and writers, architects and builders to realize his diverse local and transnational initiatives.

Kerri-Lynn Reeves is a Canadian arts labourer working as an artist, writer, educator, curator, and administrator. She holds a BFA from the University of Manitoba and a MFA from Concordia University in Fibres and Material Practices. Her work explores the relationship of the social and the material, especially as it relates to the construction of social space, the marking of physical place, and the activation of embodied site.

lan Roderick is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. He is the Special Issues Editor for *Critical Discourse Studies* and recently published *Critical Discourse Studies and Technology: A Multimodal Approach to Analysing Technoculture* (2016). His research interests include technology and culture, militarism, and critical discourse studies.

Shane Aslan Selzer is an artist, writer, and organizer whose practice develops microcommunities where artists can expand on larger social issues such as exchange, critique, and failure. Selzer is a founding member and Co-Director of Global Crit Clinic, an international peer learning network for artists working to diversify the field by sharing tools for participation.

Sarah Sharma is Associate Professor of Media Theory at the Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology and Director of the McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics* (Duke University Press, 2014) and is currently working on a new book that explores the gendered politics of exit and refusal, or what she terms the "(s)Exit" within contemporary techno-culture.

Born in Toronto, **Boo Watson** began playing and composing music at the age of five, and played in bands for over three decades. In the 1970s she joined the Wages for Housework Campaign and co-founded Wages Due Lesbians. She wrote songs for the movement, many of which were published in Wages for Housework International's *Conference Song Book* (1975). She is now the

owner of a hundred-acre art farm, producing organic food, music, theatre, and other arts in Manitoulin Island, Ontario.

Alize Zorlutuna works with installation, video, performance, and material culture. Her work investigates themes concerning identity, queer sexuality, settler-colonial relationships to land, culture and history, intimacy with the non-human, and technology. She received her MFA from Simon Frasier University and currently teaches courses in contemporary sculpture, installation, performance, and hybrid media practices at OCADU in Toronto.

Dillon de Give, *By My Own Admission* (performance documentation), 2016.

PHOTO: RAMSAY DE GIVE. COURTESY EFA PROJECT SPACE AND THE ARTIST.



# Acknowledgments

#### Take Care

September 11, 2017–March 10, 2018 Curated by Letters & Handshakes

Encompassing a five-part exhibition series, performances, and workshops, *Take Care* mobilizes more than 100 artists, activists, curators, and researchers confronting the crisis of care. *Take Care* unfolds as a series of five exhibition themes, or circuits of care.

#### Staff

Christine Shaw, Director/Curator Jayne Wilkinson, Assistant Curator Petrina Ng, Exhibition Coordinator Alison Cooley, Curatorial Assistant and Collections Archivist Joy Xiang, Curatorial Research Assistant\*

Installation Technicians
Marco Cheuk, Matthew Tegel

**Micropublication Design**Matthew Hoffman

### **Micropublication Printing** Thistle Printing Ltd.



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#### **Gallery Hours**

Monday–Friday: 12–5pm Wednesday: 12–9pm Saturday: 12–3pm

The Blackwood Gallery promotes LGBTQ2 positive spaces and experiences and is barrier-free. The gallery is FREE and open to the public.

CIRCUIT 1

Labour of Curation

September 11–30, 2017

CIRCUIT 2

Care Work

October 16-November 4, 2017

#### **CIRCUIT 3**

Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid November 20–December 9, 2017

CIRCUIT 4
Stewardship
January 8–27, 2018

CIRCUIT 5

Collective Welfare
February 12–March 10, 2018

