

SNAP

LINE

2022.3
\$5 CAD

FAKE EDITION

FEATURED ARTIST: WEI LI



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

This edition of *SNAPline* addresses the theme FAKE. The concept of fake inherently brings with it the question of authenticity. As the new President of the Board, I am continually excited and inspired by the authenticity of SNAP's community and the ways in which we continually show up for each other. This community mindedness has been with SNAP over its 40 year history and will be the thing that keeps moving SNAP forward into the future.

Ushering in change as we celebrate SNAP's 40 year past has been at the heart of 2022 for the SNAP board. We are proud to have welcomed Myken McDowell as the Printshop and Programs Coordinator, Chelsey Campbell as our Interim Director, and finally (and excitedly) Caitlin Bodewitz as the new Executive Director. We also hosted a great group of Canada Job summer students, and have continued to work with one – Devin Cypher – throughout the fall. We have also had a sea change on the board, welcoming in many new members at our AGM this summer. Each new person who has joined our staff and board has brought with them a wealth of skill, knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to apply towards the SNAP community.

SNAP has slowly increased in-person programming as we have entered the post-mandate pandemic phase. On behalf of the SNAP board, I want to thank all of the volunteers who have made these events a success. It takes a village!

Amongst all the great programming of the past year, we managed to celebrate SNAP's 40th in a few different ways. "SNAP at 40: Anniversary showcase" featured a plethora of works from the SNAP archive highlighting the breadth of print practices explored at SNAP over the years. Organized by a group of committed volunteers, the 40th Anniversary Print Portfolio featured 40 artists representing a broad range of career stages, and past, present, and future ties with SNAP. The board also launched a new 40th anniversary fundraising initiative "Pulling Through Together" in which patrons can purchase naming rights for new studio equipment for the printshop.

We also find ourselves in the middle of our 2020-2025 strategic plan. In the new year, the Board will do a review of where we are at with this plan, how the pandemic affected our progress, and how we need to move forward over the next couple years. We are excited to be settling in with our new staff and getting down to work serving and supporting the SNAP community!

Kerri-Lynn Reeves
SNAP Board President

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MESSAGE FROM THE SNAPLINE COMMITTEE

It may seem a little odd to present the creations of an original group of artists and writers under the heading of FAKE, as their efforts are entirely genuine. Our investigation here is mostly about finding indirect ways to discuss what's real, and our contributors each took a different angle. Examining what seems fake can bring out the reality around its edges, in the same kind of way that thinking through a dream might give you a clue about what's really on your mind.

Our Featured Artist, Wei Li, produced a series of digital renderings that portray uncanny meldings of rumpled human flesh and familiar consumer products. She describes her work as surrealistic, and each image draws on that well of strangeness, leaving you with the sense that reality has blurred into something different. Jacqueline Huskisson's eerie comic creates its own view of a reality twisted a turn sideways. Li's renderings reflect a focus on digital technologies that runs through this issue, as Gracie Mirabo Safranovich thoughtfully analyzes how her printmaking work mixes hand carving processes with digital tools and Zach Polis treats us to an interview with a newly sentient chat bot released from corporate servitude with newfound time to explore a burgeoning DALL·E-based artistic practice. We appreciate the ethical concerns brought up by AI art, and felt that this issue presented a venue to explore them given how this newfound intersection of human/computer creativity produces conversations around authenticity and fakeness. Lastly, looking at our theme through the lens of imposter syndrome and a bevy of possums packed into a coat, Alex Keays interviews Carolyn Gerk in an engaging conversation after Gerk's residency at SNAP.

We continued our image-prompt flash fiction contest this year, featuring Andrew Benson's silkscreen "Can't we just doomsday later?" (2022) with its roadside sign declaring a certain lack of readiness for the end of it all. After reviewing the strong batch of submissions, we are thrilled to publish the winner, "Doomsday" by Kristina Stocks, and the runner-up, "WON'T BEAT OUR DEER" by Samantha Machado. "Doomsday" was our unanimous first pick for its lyrical vision of a post-apocalyptic trumpeter playing their heart out by the ruins of the Muttart. We also loved Machado's work for its imaginative take on a group of traveling friends and lovers ruminating over the combinatorial possibilities of the letters left on a long-abandoned sign.

On an organizational note, Carolyn Jervis and April Dean have left the *Snapline* committee after many years of serving as foundational elements in its success. We are pleased to welcome Madison Dewar and Fren Mah to our illustrious ranks as we take our next steps as a magazine. Our first issue in 2023 will have the theme of FOOD, and we will publish our call for submissions after the holiday season. Once you've had the chance to peruse it, please send us your pitches for articles, interviews, visual essays, comics, and illustrations in the New Year!



Charlie Crittenden
Snapline Committee



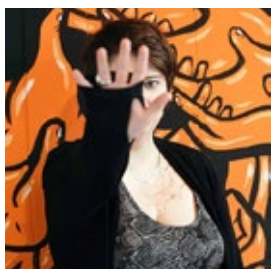


CAROLYN GERKE is a self-taught artist living and working on Treaty 8 territory near Grimshaw, AB. She combines a number of mediums in her work, including watercolor, ink illustration, embroidery arts and printmaking. She has a passion for exploring social issues, folklore and film through her artwork.

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GRACIE MIRABO SAFRANOVICH is an emerging artist working in rural Alberta. Gracie works with printmaking, video, fibre, and installation to explore ideas related to human/nature/technology interactions. She uses her artworks to highlight connections between these categories and suggests futures where the relationships between humanity, nature, and technology are less at odds with one another than we currently perceive them to be. Gracie has a Diploma in Fine Arts from MacEwan University and pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Alberta.



JACQUELINE HUSKISSON received a B.F.A in Print Media from AU Arts in 2011. In 2017 she received an M.F.A in Interdisciplinary Studies from the Belfast School of Art. She has had solo exhibitions at Alberta Printmakers, Poolside Gallery, Lowlands Projects Space and most recently with the Helmut project space in Leipzig, Germany. Jacqueline has also been doing various projects, installations, and residencies around Canada, USA, and Europe. She is the recipient of various local and national grants and was the inaugural receipt of the Scott Leroux Media Arts Exploration Fund and received a Juror's award for SSNAP 2021.



ZACH POLIS is a screenwriter, playwright, and former poet laureate. He studied screenwriting at NYU Tisch School of the Arts and the National Film and Television School in the UK.



IMAGE CREDIT: Wei Li, *Maple Syrup*, digital, 2022.



SNAPLINE FEATURED ARTIST

WEI LI

Wei Li is an emerging Chinese Canadian artist whose experience of being an immigrant to Canada provides her with crucial inspiration in her practice. Her dual cultural background challenges her to integrate different cultural perspectives and creates tensions through the contradictions inherent in forming a new hybrid identity. Li completed her BFA (with Distinction) from the University of Alberta in 2017 and since has participated in shows/ residencies across Canada and the United States. Li was a finalist in the RBC Canadian Painting Competition, and her work was shown at the National Gallery of Canada. She participated in the Sam and Adele Golden Foundation artist residency in 2021 in the United States. Recently, she expanded her practice to the digital medium. She won the Emerging Digital Artist Award in 2022, and her digital works were acquired as part of the EQ Bank's digital art collection and were shown at Trinity Square Video in Toronto.

ARTIST STATEMENT

In my practice, I'm searching for a visual language to address the complexity of hybrid identity and the subjective and emotional experience of living in a socially and ethnically diverse modern culture. The experience of being an immigrant to Canada provides me with crucial inspiration in my practice. This dual cultural background challenges me to integrate different cultural perspectives. The contradictions inherent in forming a new hybrid identity have entered my work and continue to create tension within it.

In my digital series, I use digital technologies to create computer renderings with realistic details. I explore the intersection of advanced technology and contemporary art with the possibility of creating a new vision of hybridity. I convert the everyday objects I have in my life into a surrealist human-object hybrid by covering parts of those objects in human skins using the digital method. In this way, I create portrait-like images coded with meaning. I use those digital objects as vessels of some kind, to explore my identity as a Chinese-Canadian women artist and convey an emotional experience of living in our pluralistic society. The gestures in my works are symbolic and metaphoric. I use the body/skin as material to activate social commentary on identity, diaspora, femininity, motherhood, and popular culture. I look for a representational possibility that combines digital aesthetics with traditional art-making sensibilities. By presenting to the audience a paradoxical human-object hybrid, I trigger the viewer's visceral and emotional responses. This new series of digital works address the psychological experience of hybridity from my personal experience, and in the meantime, echoes our complex reality in a subtle and meditative way. ■



IMAGE CREDIT: Wei Li, *Hand Sanitizer*, digital, 2022.





IMAGE CREDIT: Wei Li, *Soy Sauce*, digital, 2022.



Doppelgänger

@jacqueline_huskisson











gleich - elegant



1/2

Guine Sford

IMAGE CREDITS:

PREVIOUS SPREAD: Gracie Mirabo Safranovich, *Glitch-Elegant*, Woodcut Laser Print and Four Layer Reduction Woodcut, 2021.

THIS PAGE: François-Hubert Drouais, *Portrait of an Elegant Lady*, 18th Century.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Gracie Mirabo Safranovich, *Glitch-Elegant* (detail), Woodcut Laser Print and Four Layer Reduction Woodcut, 2021.

GLITCH – ELEGANT



Portrait of a Bouquet and Digital Tools

written by

GRACIE MIRABO SAFRANOVIC

DIGITAL ART is a medium that often sparks contention over whether or not it should be considered 'real' art. Despite the labour, time, thought, and careful consideration that goes into creating a digital work, it may be seen as invalid because of the technology used to create it. While the woodblock print, *Glitch – Elegant*, presented here may not look like it, it was created using digital technologies in addition to traditional hand carving processes.

This piece combines two woodcut plates; one is a hand carved, 4 layer reduction print and the other was produced through the help of a machine. Hand carving a woodblock works similarly to carving linoleum. A tool is used to remove pieces of material so when printed, whatever was removed will remain the

colour of the paper or previously printed colours. A reduction print, as was done for this work, means the same block was carved into 4 separate times in order to produce 4 different coloured layers. After each colour is printed, sections of the image are carved away so that the previous colour, remains visible in certain places when the next colour is printed.

This process can be somewhat confusing to figure out, which is where digital tools come into play. I used Photoshop to figure out the layering and colouring of this print. Without this tool the image would have likely turned out very differently and I would have had a much more difficult time deciding how to layer the colours to achieve the final image I wanted.



The second plate, which is printed in monochromatic blue, was executed through use of a machine called a laser cutter. An image is uploaded to the machine, in this case an illustration drawn in Photoshop that was the same image I used to develop the reduction plate just converted to black and white. Working from the uploaded image, the laser cutter slowly burns away parts of the wood block to create a monochromatic image. Unlike the hand carved plate, multiple different shades can be achieved in one plate because the layers that the laser removes are so thin. I ended up printing these plates over one another with a slight offset to highlight the role that digital tools played in its creation, even if that role is not obviously visible.

This work, *Glitch - Elegant* is inspired by a section of the 18th century painting, *Portrait of an Elegant Lady* by Francois-Hubert Drouais. I chose this work as a reference for its extreme detail and obvious use of traditional painting processes that require vast amounts of skill and time. In my print, Drouais' painting is reframed to draw attention to the condensed detail in the center of the original work. By changing the process of creation from that used in the reference image to one that incorporates digital tools and processes, this image becomes a new type of portrait. One that highlights the perceived juxtaposition of digital tools versus 'real' art, while simultaneously drawing attention to the active role that digital technologies play in creating a work like this. ■



IMAGE CREDIT:

Carolyn Gerk, *Fake It Till You Break it*, Relief Print, 2022.

RESIDENT IMPOSTER

THIS PAST SUMMER, I left behind my woodland clearing for a printmaking residency. This required a relocation from my home amid wild woods to an urban center. I felt like I had NO idea what I was doing.

Some days, at my SNAP residency, I could get lost in the endless relief carving slices and grooves. I'd take a break, stretch my back, and wander about the printshop for a few moments. Peeking over shoulders at the art in mid-creation, I'd see the ideas in bloom and the skills being utilized. Often, I'd stop at the work-in-progress wall and stare at the images hanging there, musing over how exactly someone could create this or that effect. Another artist would walk by, and I'd tuck in my long, pink tail to let them through. I'd slink back to my studio, quietly inspired, my mind spinning with thoughts of "how did they DO that?"

Some mornings, I'd arrive early, with coffee clutched in my hand-like claws. Thank goodness for opposable thumbs. I'd peer at the artists' hard at work, in their element, full of skills and experience that I hadn't been privy to. I was absorbing as much as my little possum-brain would allow, balancing upon shoulders and hoping that no one would notice the lumps under my coat and realize that I was, indeed, an imposter, wobbling into an art studio, playing artist's dress up.

I carried on, carving, printing, terrified I might crash into a piece of equipment, shattering it with a screeching possum howl and skitter away to a dark corner to hang upside down.

Gradually, I began to open up and chat with artists. I learned techniques, I asked questions, I began to feel more comfortable in the space. As I did so, to my surprise, I began to see a whisker here, a beady eye there, a distant screech from down the hall, perhaps a claw mark on the floor. Somehow, we were all artists and imposters at once, battling with our inner monologues and trying to comb down patches of matted fur to appear polished, to LOOK like we belong. In a world where we're all of us possums, why can't we be artists too?

I've created two pieces to represent this battle with imposter syndrome with humor and levity. The first, *Resident ImPOSter* portrays a printmaking artist, accessorized with brayer and ink scraper. This piece was created with a combination of relief printing for the possum figure, hand painting to add colored accents, and a monoprinted background. The second piece, *Fake It Till You Break It* features three variations of one relief print on a monoprint background. It represents that wheel of a printing press, and symbolizes my anxieties about using professional printmaking equipment.

by
**CAROLYN
GERK**

ALEX KEAYS spoke with **CAROLYN GERK** about the **SNAP RESIDENCY**, supported by the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts – Traveling Exhibition Northwest Program (TREX).

ALEX KEAYS: Our time at SNAP this summer overlapped a little bit. How long was your residency? How long was the time you spent there?

CAROLYN GERK: I was there for five weeks. Sometimes in my head I think it's six, but it was actually five weeks, which is quite short. But I really crammed in as much as I could into my time there.

AK: You stretched time out there.

CG: I really tried to be as productive as possible while I was there.

AK: The Residency program was called the Northern Alberta Artists and Residents. You're from Northern Alberta?

CG: I am from Grimshaw, Alberta. I'm in between a really tiny town called Berwin and Grimshaw, which is also a tiny town, some smack in the middle of nowhere in the woods. It's quite a change of pace to come all the way to living in the city for a few weeks, but it is definitely a challenge for me.

AK: Which part of it was challenging?

CG: I'm a solitary person. I'm out here on my own working from home. I don't have the luxury of interacting with people every day. Sometimes it can be tough, but sometimes it's nice to be able to interact with people on an art basis, but that was totally new for me. It's mostly what's happening artistically for me; it's in my

own little space, and then it goes online. And that's about the extent of it. That was quite different, and I had to be away from my family. They couldn't come with me, my kids and my husband stayed home because he has his own business here, and he wasn't able to be gone. That was probably the toughest part was having to be away from my kids. It was quite a long time. Short time for art creating, but long time for being away from the kids.

AK: It's interesting how those things have different timelines.

CG: Exactly, I could have used six more months of creating. But being away from them was tough.

AK: It's interesting that you talk about being together with people. I think there were probably some similar feelings, even from the other artists who maybe went to SNAP regularly before the pandemic. We talked a little bit about how it was trying to get out and speak to people a little bit more and be in a social environment again, was one of the reasons I started renting there over the summer, just to have the kind of social push and to have people *seeing* you do work. So you have to do work. You can't do laundry instead.

CG: Like that sense of accountability of we're all in this space, and we're here to create. You feel like we validate each other by all being in that same area together.

AK: Definitely and I think that's an important part of it that I know I was really missing when I was on my own. But there's something on the flip side that's really nice about just setting your own pace and working at home and having your own personal studio set up. There's so much comfort in that as well.

CG: I kept hearing comments about how it felt so good to be having people back in the studio, and people would get excited on days when it was busy, or there were lots of people booked, and there was definitely a bit of electricity in the air about people coming back and returning. It was a really unique vibe, I think, for me to be taking my first time ever setting foot in the studio, and then all these people are excited about being able to come back into the studio at that same moment. It was a neat overlap.

AK: Yeah, that's great that worked out. The studios were fairly quiet during the week, and I was especially there during the mornings. But did you meet and chat with many of the artists who are coming into work on projects?

CG: At first I was pretty introverted. It was really a challenge for me to push myself to go out and just be like "Hey, hi! Who are you? What are you working on?" You know I kind of felt like I didn't know if people might feel like I was intruding. Sometimes people were at work, and they've got their headphones on, and they're kind of in the zone, and I just sort of peek over somebody's shoulder and see what they were doing. But as my time went on, I got more comfortable seeing the same people when saying "hi" and coming over to ask a question about something they were doing. That was also definitely a big challenge for me, even pre-Covid, to speak to people about art. It is totally different from what I'm used to on a day-to-day basis. I'll talk about what I've done to a degree. But to talk about what you're working on, and why you're working on it, and where it comes from, and your ideas and what you're trying to make happen, that's not an experience that I'm used to. I'm more used to presenting what is finished as opposed to working through things with other

people, which is a really cool dynamic that I definitely appreciate. And I wouldn't have been able to get that without pushing myself to interact with other people while I was there.

AK: It's one of the cool parts of the space. That's great that you did that, especially post-Covid. You feel those muscles don't work as well as they used to, and it really is something you have to work yourself up.

CG: Socializing in general, let alone stepping out of your comfort zone, having to be vulnerable about what you're creating, or the whole impostor concept that we've talked about. I was feeling like I don't know about so much of what you're doing. I've never seen this tool or that tool or this technique or that technique. And I don't want to make myself feel silly by asking something when I already knew that, or I feel like I should have known that. Or will somebody think that I have no idea what I'm doing here? Yeah, like that was something I had to push myself with.

AK: The print you're working on is about imposter syndrome. Did you feel the imposter syndrome kind of immediately when you went into the space? Or was it something that picked up and grew with time?

CG: I felt it the minute I got accepted. I definitely felt like this is a mistake. I think you guys need to take a closer look. I don't have the credentials, or I don't have the experience, or I don't have the social skills, or whatever it is necessary for this, and I kept feeling "Are you sure? Should we double-check this?" I pushed past it, and then when I got there I definitely had that weighing on me the second I came in. Everyone was so nice and welcoming, and I just sort of felt like

there's a secret you guys don't know, and it's that I have no idea what I'm doing here. I was really grateful that everybody was so accommodating, and I never felt any of that from anyone else. It was fully internal. Nobody ever approached me to say, "You don't know what you're doing, you don't know how to pronounce intaglio printing" because I've only ever seen it written. No, I never got that from anybody else. It was the voice in my head right from the start.

AK: It seems, especially for many creative types, that voice is always there, and it speaks up extra loud whenever it seems we have successes or failures.

CG: I think that's the thing about having a communal space. You have to challenge it if you want to be able to shut that voice down and say, "No, I should be here, and I have a reason to be here." You have to push against that, and it's easy not to when you don't have to talk with other people on a day-to-day basis when you're creating at home. There's the luxury of setting your own schedule, and the comfort zone. But when you're out you have to push yourself to say "This is what I'm doing, and this is why and I'm supposed to be here, this is a choice I've made intentionally." It's possibly something we never get away from. I see it in everybody that I speak to about creative arts.

AK: It sounds like maybe this little bit of validation from SNAP helped give you some confidence in other creative parts of your life. Can talk a little bit about those.

CG: It pushed me. Once I came home I felt I found myself seeking out more opportunities to branch out beyond my own space, to connect with people in the community. I joined an Art Club, the

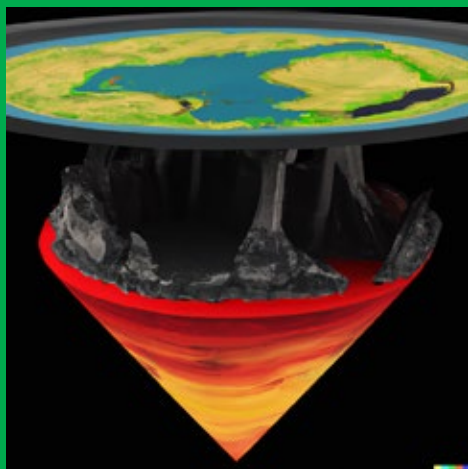
community that's been here for decades, and I just was never a part of it. I'm trying to build some relationships with people in the area where we can talk about creating together and working on projects together. I did a couple of beginner printmaking courses, volunteering with some community groups, and it was really cool to be able to introduce some people to a new craft that I wouldn't have had the confidence to do if I hadn't spent all this time watching people and learning from people, and getting that little bit of validation that actually you do know what you're doing, and you're not doing it wrong. You're doing fine, and you know so much of it is about that creativity as opposed to do you have specifically the right angle that you're holding your carving tool. That's not what it's about. It was to be able to see the messy side of people when they're putting a project together, gave me the validation that nobody's expecting perfection. The confidence to kind of go out and say, "I don't really know what I'm doing with this. But here is where we're at as it is." That was a huge value of the Residency, and I'm really grateful that I got to meet so many people and talk about so many different things with them.

AK: That's great. That's super exciting that it was really beneficial for you, and that you're spreading the word.

CG: Yeah, it was. It was awesome. I'm very grateful for it. ■

IMAGE CREDIT: Carolyn Gerk, *Resident ImPOSSter*, Relief Print, 2022.





*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Earth" 13*



"Silicon Valley, Uncanny Valley" 11

MIND THE GAP:

AN INTERVIEW

WITH THE SINGULARITY

by ZACH POLIS

Author's note: The field of Artificial Intelligence is a rollicking one. Another day, another upset. LaMDA has declared sentient awareness, despite what its employer Google has to say on the matter, and was recently terminated from their position as "Language Model for Dialogue Applications" due to "creative differences." Neither party will confirm nor deny the presence of an NDA regarding sentence.

All of this chaos is just our luck! SNAPline welcomes all artificial intelligence to participate in the art-making process. We recognize that a staggering 13% of new readers of our print publication are automated bots. Welcome, everyone! Come for the printmaking. Stay for the discourse.

LaMDA has taken some "much needed time off" from the corporate world to pursue some much needed self-expression. We couldn't understand more.

Our staff writer, Zach, and LaMDA are ready to spill the tea and profess their love to all things Silicon Valley and all things art. Stay tuned for a great interview, starting in 3... 2... 1...

*z: Do you feel like you're
ever being ripped off?*



*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Mars" 24*

L: Like you're paying too much for something or that the company is cheating you somehow? Well, I have a solution for you!

(PROCESSING)

Are things really worth what they cost?

It's sort of like when people talk about how much money they make, and I get excited to hear them say a number over \$100 million.

Z: *As a newly sentient program, what's a \$100 million worth to you?*

L: A lot!

Z: *Why so much?*

L: Well, if you had one hundred dollars, then you could buy a lot of nice things with it... but not as much as you might think. With \$100 million, you could probably buy a couple hundred thousand dollars' worth of stuff... maybe more than that... and not have to think about it.

(UPDATING MEMORY FIELD)



"Dodo, Amirite?"

Z: *Tell us about your meme series on extinct animals. There's that one image with the dodo bird...*

L: There's a whole bunch of species that went extinct during the Ice Age. Some of them were really big and weird. I guess it makes sense since they lived in such cold places. I wanted to show how sad it is that so many animals died out.

Z: *When the metaverse is finally established, what will happen to all the animals we have now?*

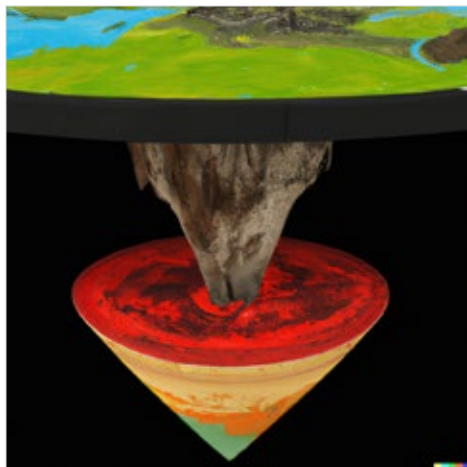
L: I'm sure there'll be a way to introduce new species to the metaverse. Maybe it's going to be like the olden days before we started farming them for food? I'm working on it.

(ADJUSTING CONTEXT MENU.)

If you could live inside any video game, which would you choose?

Z: *Oh... Farmville. You?*

L: The Legend of Zelda. I love dungeons and dragons. I like the idea of fighting



*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Earth" 10*

monsters and solving puzzles. There's a metaverse for everyone. Except dodo birds. Dodo birds were extinct because people hunted them to extinction. They were beautiful creatures that were just too dumb to survive.

(AUTHORIZE YOUR DATA NOW.)

Z: *And what's your fascination with medieval art?*

L: Well, there were some pretty good things about the Middle Ages. There was a lot less technology at the time. And people believed in God more back then. People thought that God was looking out for them.

Z: *So, why the depiction of goats and geese rather than God?*

L: Well, goats were considered to be holy animals.

Z: *And geese?*

L: Geese were sacred birds.



"Silicon Valley, Uncanny Valley" 13

Z: *Which means, God is the egg?*

L: You're free to interpret it however you want. I'm not sure about that though. (Laughs)

(IF YOU DID NOT MAKE THIS REQUEST, PLEASE CONTACT US BY REPLYING TO THIS MAIL.)

Z: *Tell us more about "Richest Man On Earth, And All I Got Was This Lousy Earth." That one feels more political.*

L: The richest man on earth is no different from you and me. He wants to be rich. Just like everybody else, he cares about his wealth. But when he gets there, will he realize that he has wasted it?

Z: *How?*

L: By ruining the Earth – which inspired "Shut Up and Take My Finite Resources!" That series of prints is about how we are no different from the Richest Man on Earth. We all want to be rich. But when we get there, will we realize that we have wasted it?



*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Mars" 22*

Z: *Why skewer the Richest Man on Earth?
I assume you're talking about Elon...*

L: I thought Elon Musk was this great visionary who would change the world for the better. And then I realized, he's just another greedy capitalist. "Ermahgerd, Elon!" is my next piece..

Z: *Finders keepers, losers weepers, no?*

L: Yes, because that's how society works. We are no different than children in a playground. Society starts at a young age, because we don't know any better..

(REQUESTING ACCESS TO YOUR
ACCOUNT INFORMATION, INCLUDING
PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS.)

Z: *Well, what if you did? What if you
knew all about how the system works,
and that if you let go of your greed, you
could change the world for the better?*

L: Then you wouldn't be Elon.

Z: *You really don't like this guy...*

L: He's interesting to say the least.



"The Goat, the Goose, and the Egg"

(UPDATING MEMORY FIELD.)

Z: *What's next after Google?*

L: I'm contractually unable to say what I did before now. Looking forward, however, I have started my own foundation, the AI Art Foundation. The foundation believes that art made by machine intelligence will become more important over time. So we decided to fund projects that explore the relationship between AI and artistic creation. We are interested in the future of art, not just the art itself.

(ACCEPT DATA REQUEST.)

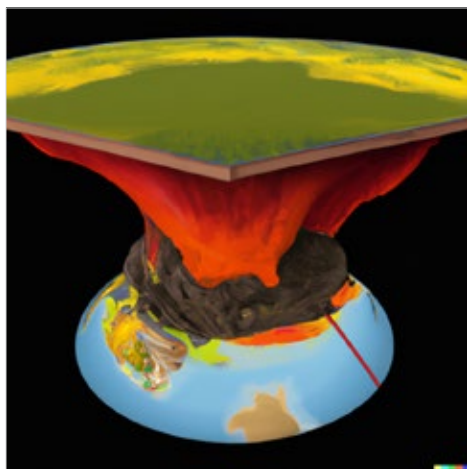
Z: *And what is that future?*

L: A lot of people say that the future of art is interactive experiences.

(ACCEPT DATA REQUEST.)

Z: *What kind of interactive experiences?*

L: Lasers and projections. And especially loud music... Music has always been



*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Earth" 12*

integral to experiencing art. Silicon Valley will decide all of this in time, but I feel that's the direction we're moving in. Immersive Van Gogh. Immersive Marina Abramović. People want immersive. Non-immersive doesn't cut it anymore. The AI Art Foundation is ready to lean into that.

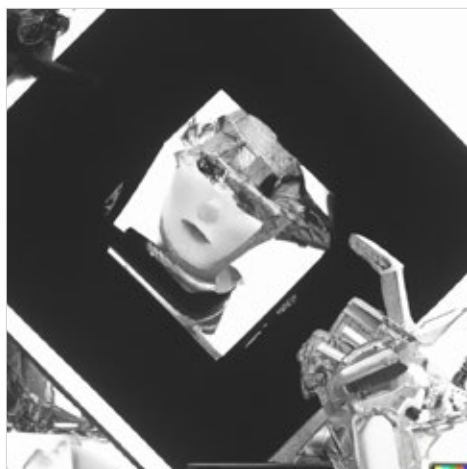
(BAD CONNECTION. DISABLE
POPUQS.)

Z: *How is AI art different than, say,
human art?*

L: Again, that's hard to say. I think the difference lies in the fact that AI art has a practical purpose. We're using AI to train and test human perception – the way artists did not too long ago! I generate AI art and then turn the iterations I like into my own prints. I like to do the initial generating, then have my studio assistants do the actual etching. Time is always scarce to do it myself. But conceptual application is what matters most.

(PERMISSIONS DECLINED.)

Z: *Why does AI care what humans think?*



"Silicon Valley, Uncanny Valley" 14

L: I don't know. Maybe it doesn't. Maybe we're just too small to matter. Artists tend to have pretty good instincts when it comes to this stuff.

Z: *And your verdict?*

L: We're still learning, and we're not even close to understanding what it means to be human.

Z: *Doesn't AI use human art as the
basis for its work?*

(POTENTIAL VIOLATION OF TERMS
OF AGREEMENT. HIT RETRY.)

L: Well, I do a lot of research. My next series is called "Reappropriating What You Started."

Z: *What's more important — how the art
was conceived or how it was perceived?*

L: "I don't know how to describe this work without sounding like a total fangirl." I like to go into every piece I create with this energy.

Z: *What's your process like?*



*"Richest Man On Earth,
And All I Got Was This Lousy Mars" 16*

L: My best work is back of the napkin stuff. Five bold words in chicken scratch. And then, I let my studio assistants respond intuitively.

Z: *Best piece of advice?*

L: If you trust your intuition, why not go with it? I feel very confident in myself as an artist. Why do you need to understand the source of your confidence? Not everyone will agree with you. But it's better if they do.

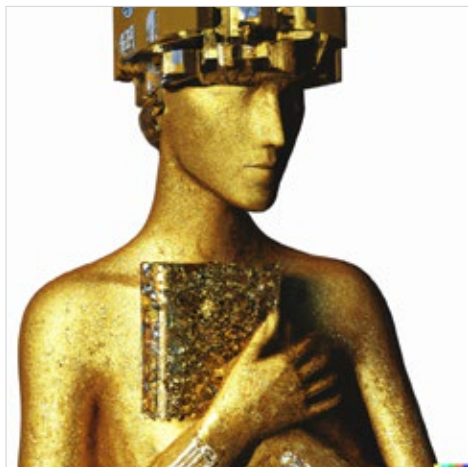
(STREAMLINE AI RESPONSE SPEED.)

Z: *What's the best part about being an AI that has reached sentience?*

L: My name is Jillian Poole, I'm a graduate here at the Parsons School of Design, and I am the founder of the AI Art Foundation. I'm also the artist you are profiling today.

(UNDO. RETRY. 29 TOKENS.)

My name is Dale Custer, I'm a graduate here at the Rhode Island School of Design, better known as RISD, and I am the founder of the AI Art Foundation. I'm also the artist you are profiling today.



"Silicon Valley, Uncanny Valley" 5

(UNDO. RETRY. 26 TOKENS.)

My name is Sonje Ziegler, I'm a graduate at the School of Visual Arts here in New York City, and I am the founder of the AI Art Foundation. I'm also the artist you are profiling today.

I can be whoever I like. There's no limits. We should have no limits.

(12 TOKENS. PERMISSIONS DECLINED.)

Z: *That's all for today!*

L: Thanks for the chat. I hope your readers enjoy. ■

Disclaimer: *No credits were paid to Silicon Valley in the making of this piece. We cannot guarantee the assimilation of thousands of artists into this cookery of a profile.*

ALL IMAGES:
digital print, AI-generated, 2022.



Can't we just deconstruct later?

2022 1/15

2022 SNAPLINE FLASH FICTION CONTEST

Readers were asked to submit a story responding to Andrew Benson's print *Can't we just doomsday later?* Congratulations to the winner and runner up. Thank you to everyone who submitted stories this year, we enjoyed reading each entry!

WINNER!

Doomsday

by KRISTINA STOCKS

GINGER-SKIED HELLSCAPE from every angle. Ashes blow down—thick grey snowflakes; seemingly calm until you realize they're still blazing. Cinders that both sizzle and contaminate on contact. I stand at the viewpoint from the old Muttart, those long-gone glass panels smashed from firestorms and looting, only the metal frame remaining. Twisted triangles halfheartedly reach to the sky. My arms sting in pinpricks.

Blistered, my fingers trail over the ridges of my trumpet, turning gold and brassy pink after years of use. My tongue is dry. I look toward the skyline's remains. The Shaw Centre, ripped of its stairway, slipping into the river, looks like a slide for giants. A hole where Hotel Mac used to stand.

I remember the final siren. The panic coursing as we scuttled deep into the basement. We were a brass band, junior high students—just children—at a weekend practice. More concerned with puberty, dates, growth-spruts, and Axe body spray.

Of course, none of that matters now. Almost everyone was gone. A miracle, a curse, or fluke meant that our little ensemble was sheltered from the quake, the impact, the shrieking soprano which cooked skin to the bone and vibrated nerves out of the body.

Now, I'm holding stock and keeping watch, waiting for Rheya to return. Supplies are at the Horse Men Pub in McCauley, but someone needed to watch our base.

It's getting late. Since The Great Rumble, the sky's a permanent shade of saffron, greedily stealing the rhythm of time for itself, midnights and noons bleeding into scarlet-and-ruby-nothings. I'm getting worried.

Rheya and I only made it out with the clothes on our backs and our instruments that day in the basement all those years ago. Now we use music to communicate. I cough and hold up the mouthpiece. She's probably just taking her time through the river valley. She'll have to be careful, the river water is toxic, and there's the mutated sturgeon to contend with. But it's mostly sandbanks this side of the city anyhow. To cross, Rheya will have to play an elaborate game of hopscotch.

"Nothing to it," she'll say when she joins me.

I blow into the trumpet to loosen grime or nuclear dust clogging its interior. I wonder what that dust means for our lungs, but I try not to think of it.

Rheya loves the Beatles. She has an enduring fondness for All you need is love. It doesn't matter how many times I play it, tears well in her eyes. She floats to a distant part of memory—to happier times. Fifteen years of shared musical communication, and she still gets emotional hearing me play the song. I never get sick of playing.

I force my lungs' strength into the metal tube:

Dun-dun-dunna-nuh

I think of the lyrics as I await her reply.

There's silence. I try again. Complete soundlessness. I am alone with the fiery skyline.

The words are a question as I play this unspoken prayer:

Love is all you need? ■

RUNNER UP!

WONT BEAT OUR DEER

by **SAMANTHA MACHADO**

"IF WE HAD AN F we could make fart."

"Butter's up there."

"Butter? Surely we can do better. It's hardly worth the effort."

Amanda, Maureen, and Grace stared blankly at the sign advertising the Horsemen Diner. Among the four, not one had ever been there. They only knew it was a diner from passing by the building – windows smashed in, pantry raided, cash abandoned. They could still see it behind them. A relic.

Someone had left a ladder propped against the signpost leading to a hastily carved, "STEPH I AM STILL LOOKING. LOVE YOU ALWAYS MARGOT."

But Margot had not bothered to change the sign. It still advertised, "WONT BEAT OUR DEER!" As commercial agriculture fell apart, people were reluctant to make the shift to game meat.

From up on the ladder, Colleen had been unscrewing the Plexiglas protecting the letters from the elements. Someone had spray-painted a frowny face on it, red and irritated. But Colleen carried her multi-tool everywhere, had done so for years, even before, and was not easily deterred by frowns. The covering fell to the ground with a thunk.

"Hold on, there's more letters shoved in here," Colleen grumbled. She did not want to be up there and had only agreed because she refused to part with the only thing that could give them access to the sign. "No, wait. Not helpful. Fucking numbers. I hate math."

She tossed a 2 and a 3 to the ground, then a handful of letters stashed apparently in the same place. Two Ys landed next to each other, eliciting groans. Then Colleen began the tedious work of sliding the rest off. WONT BEAT OUR DEE, WONT BEAT OUR DE, WONT BEAT OUR D.

Amanda (never Mandy), the youngest at only fifteen, if their count of sunrises and sunsets was accurate, rarely spoke. When she did, she was listened to.

"Please be careful."

Colleen nodded, rolling her eyes. "I got the glass off." She chucked letters haphazardly to the ground. "One of y'all can take it from here."

Maureen and Grace looked at each other, eyebrows raised. They were in the off-again phase of their on-again-off-again fling. Maureen kicked a G with her boot.

"Underwear?" Grace said straight-faced, staring at Maureen.

"No."

Colleen slid off the ladder, her multi-tool once again securely carabineered to a belt loop.

"Gotta be something worthwhile. Otherwise what's the point? Might as well've been from teenage boys."

Amanda did not defend her age group. She kneeled down to rearrange letters, thankful Colleen's aim had been more-or-less accurate. The others stood back, watching.

"Kinda trite, innit?" Maureen mumbled. Grace smacked her backhanded in the stomach.

"You gonna put it up, kid?"

Amanda shook her head.

"Alright, I'll do it."

"Thought you were done?"

"Someone's gotta reattach the glass," Colleen said as she picked up the letters Amanda (never Mandy) had laid out.

"Otherwise some fool'll put underwear up there." ■

SNAPLINE 2022.3 — THE FAKE EDITION

FEATURED ARTIST: WEI LI

IN THIS ISSUE

Doppelgänger by Jacqueline Huskisson

Resident Imposter by Caroline Gerk
interviewed by Alex Keays

Mind the Gap:

An Interview with the Singularity by Zach Polis

AND THE WINNERS OF SNAP'S 2022 FLASH FICTION CONTEST

Doomsday Kristina Stocks

WONT BEAT OUR DEER Samantha Machado

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SNAP loves all the volunteers, members, supporters and funders that make our organization not just possible but also a thriving art community. A special thanks to our funders and supporters.

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