

SNAPLINE

2023.3 — FAMILY EDITION
\$5 cad — ISSN 2562-9867

FEATURED ARTIST

Nour Bishouty



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

board@snapartists.com

PRESIDENT
Kerri-Lynn Reeves

VICE PRESIDENT
Kelsey Stephenson

TREASURER
Bretton Norenberg

SECRETARY
Michael McInnis

DIRECTORS
Jacky Benjamin Tollestrup
Lindsey Bond
Tamara Deedman
Thea Donovan
Callum McKenzie
Jay Pigeon
Mayada Rahal
Dani Rice
Alex Thompson
Shenali Weera

SNAPLINE COMMITTEE
Cindy Couldwell
Charlie Crittenden
Madison Dewar
Ashna Jacob
Alex Keays
Fren Mah
Mayada Rahal
Sergio Serrano

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Caitlin Bodewitz
director@snapartists.com

PRINTSHOP AND
PROGRAMS COORDINATOR
Myken McDowell
printshop@snapartists.com

COMMUNICATIONS
COORDINATOR
Ashna Jacob
communications@snapartists.com

STAFF MESSAGE

As another year draws to a close and we start wrapping things up in the SNAP office, I look back fondly on a very busy and fruitful year. Throughout the year, we hosted many new and old faces in the studio through various programs, including 5 artists through the In Community Residency: Access edition, 4 SNAP Emerging AiRs, 3 Supertrain Public Art Projects, 2 QMP Poster Project artists, and 1 TREX Northern Alberta AiR (and a partridge in a pear tree!). We had a number of wonderful exhibitions by artists near and far, a great Garage Sale, and a Patio Party series to reconnect with our members and community.

In SNAPline news, we had a year of excellent art and writing that was well recognized. We were invited to the Alberta eMagazine collection, allowing select SNAPline issues to be available in Alberta library catalogues. EPL added our 40th Anniversary issue to their North of 52 collection. Our designers Alex Keays and Sergio Serrano were both honoured as finalists in the AMPA Alberta Magazine Awards for their excellent design work. I want to thank and congratulate our excellent SNAPline team for all of the great work they put into this publication, especially Charlie as he wraps up a long and fruitful term as Committee Chair.

And finally to wrap up the year, we had an unforgettable Print Affair: More is More, where we celebrated the print community in style. We can't thank our community enough for joining us, and our volunteer team who worked day and night to put the event together.

I had to cut a lot from this message, because all the things SNAP did this year would not fit into this page! We couldn't have done it without your support, and we're very excited to show you what we've planned for the new year. In the meantime, I wish you a cozy and restful winter break!

Ashna Jacob
Staff Liason

SNAP

SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ALBERTA PRINT-ARTISTS

10572 115 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5H3K6
780.423.1492 \ snap@snapartists.com \ snapartists.com

MESSAGE FROM THE SNAPLINE COMMITTEE

Despite possessing a solitary disposition, I have always felt a particular joy in working on a creative project with like-minded individuals. It is a form of family, or at least it can be, and I've found it here over the last six years of volunteering with the SNAPline Committee. Through an infinite array of video chats and the occasional beer, through deadlines we stick to and deadlines we blow past like a runaway train, we've produced some beautiful issues and found a valued commonality with each other. Each of our contributors to this issue reflected on the commonality of family in their own way, from their connections to relatives to household objects.

Our Featured Artist for this issue is Nour Bishouty, who has created a vivid set of prints that combine and disarrange her past work with earlier work from her father. Michelle LaSalle dives into the past as well and presents it with a series of books that examine the personal archive of her grandfather through artifacts such as carefully stored Super 8 reels. Teresa Wallsten focuses on the spoon as a familial and familiar object while Joni Cheung examines the Good Morning Towel, a distinctive household item

brought to life through a conversational exploration of its journey through a sauce explosion. Sydney Lancaster interviews Sally Wolchyn-Raab about her artwork in relation to gathering families of choice around the dining table and pushing back against diet culture. Lastly, we are pleased to print the winner of our Flash Fiction Contest (featuring *I'm Fine* by LeeAnne Johnston), with a delightful spelunking into the deepness of a mother's love written by Rebecca Cave.

This 2023.3 issue is my last as a member of the Committee as I am stepping down to pursue other goals. I wanted to take a moment to honour the family-adjacent collective of designers, editors, and SNAP staff who have welcomed me so kindly and worked so hard to make this publication happen each year. Thank you!



Charlie Crittenden
Committee Chair / Editor

Family



JONI CHEUNG 🐸

Snack Witch Joni Cheung 🌸 is a grateful, uninvited guest born—and knows

she wants to die—on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkwəyəm, Skwxwú7mesh, Stó:lō, and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwiltlh peoples. They are a Certified Sculpture Witch with an MFA from Concordia University (2023). She holds a BFA with Distinction in Visual Art (2018) from the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University. As a wicked #magicalgirl ✨ who eats art + makes snacks, they have exhibited and curated shows, off- and online, across Turtle Island. Currently, she is based on the stolen lands of the Kanien'kehá:ka peoples.

They are a recipient of numerous awards, including the Research and Creation Grant: Canada Council for the Arts; the Dale and Nick Tedeschi Studio Arts Fellowship; was waitlisted for the SSHRC - Joseph-Armand Bombardier: Canada Graduate Master's Scholarship. Aside from art-making, Joni likes wandering down grocery store aisles and drinking bubble tea 🌈.



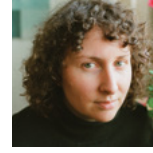
SYD LANCASTER

A queer prairie-born settler artist and writer, Sydney Lancaster works through instal-

lation, print, audio and video work to consider the intersections of place, history, and identity. They received an MFA from Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador and was the recipient of scholarship funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for their MFA Research-Creation. Her work has been shown across Canada, and in the US and UK. Her most recent publication was a chapbook of poetry co-authored with Jannie Edwards, entitled *Learning Their Names: Letters from the Home Place*, published by Collusion Books in Kijipuktuk/ Halifax NS. They feel blessed to call Mtapán/ Wolfville NS home since 2021.

sydneylancaster.com

Contributors



MICHELLE LASALLE

lives and works in Tio'tia:ke - Mooniyang - Montréal. While her practice is

multidisciplinary, she is primarily interested in printmaking and its deployment within a space. She holds an MFA in Print Media from Concordia University (2022) and a BFA in visual and media arts from Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM, 2015). Winner of the UQTR emerging artist prize in 2023, the Denis-Charland bursary in 2021, and the Albert-Dumouchel prize in 2014, her work was exhibited during the Trois-Rivières International Print Biennial, at Arprim in Montréal and at SNAP in Edmonton.

COVER: Nour Bishouty,
Several Scattered Rhymes
(detail), 2023.



TERESA WALLSTEN

has been an artist her entire life. She currently works as a high school art

teacher at St. Albert Catholic High School. She maintains her artistic practice daily and challenges herself with a variety of mediums. Mark making figures prominently in her work and the play between light and dark is of particular interest. Plate lithography, graphite and acrylic are her preferred mediums.

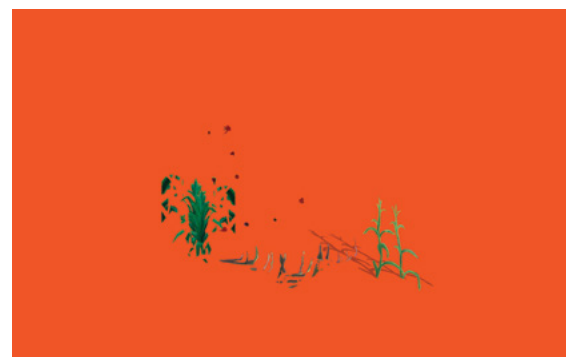
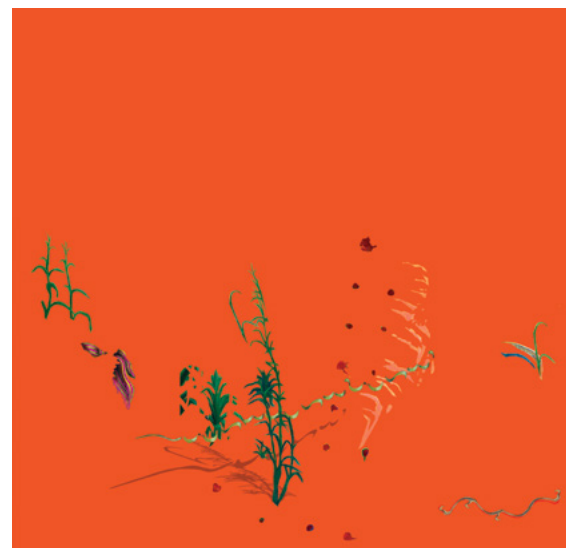
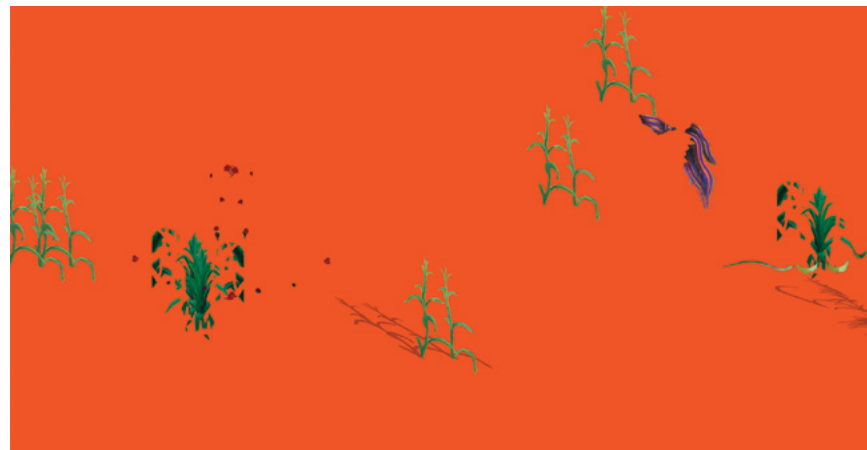
BACK COVER:
Nour Bishouty, *Aḡrāʔ*
Samar, 15 min, HD video
video still, 2018.

Featured Artist:

Nour Bishouty

RIGHT: Nour Bishouty,
Several Scattered Rhymes
(detail), 2023.

SEVERAL SCATTERED RHYMES (2023) is a set of three identical print collages and part of an ongoing series I started in 2018, in which I compose bits and pieces of borrowed imagery in conglomerations of disarranged narratives and landscapes. In these works I consider the implications of engaging the work of another artist as my own material, as I reflect on a kind of relentless production of images, especially the ways they can only be understood as adjacent to, aligned with, or against other images. In *Several scattered rhymes*, I combine small details from painting and drawings I made in previous years with bits of works made by my late father, an artist himself, between the years 1960 and 2004. Dense yet fractured, these images create new rhythms alongside what they resuscitate and simultaneously lose.





TOP: Nour Bishouty,
Visible Regions (detail),
watercolour on
paper, 2022.



BOTTOM: Nour Bishouty,
Ghassan Bishouty, *0°, 0°*
(detail), Installation; oil on
canvas, plywood, laser-
etched glass, 1981-83,
2022. Photo: Darren Rigo.

Artist Biography

Nour Bishouty is an interdisciplinary artist working across media including video, sculpture, works on paper, digital images, and writing. Her work engages with histories and narratives of place and poses questions around dissonance, opacity, legibility, and the generative possibilities of misunderstanding. Bishouty's work has been exhibited in Canada and internationally including at Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography, Toronto (2022); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto (2021); Darat Al Funun, Amman (2017); Casa Arabe, Madrid (2016); Access Gallery, Vancouver (2015); the Mosaic Rooms, London (2015); and the Beirut Art Centre, Beirut (2014). Her artist book *1—130: Selected works Ghassan Bishouty b. 1941 Safad, Palestine — d. 2004 Amman, Jordan*, edited by Jacob Korchynski, was co-published in 2020 by Art Metropole (Toronto) and Motto Books (Berlin).

Carmin's calendars & Guy's calendar

by Michelle LaSalle

Carmin's calendars & Guy's calendar are a series of books designed, written and produced by Michelle LaSalle. The work was printed using lithography, screen-printing and letterpress. The binding, layout and printing were designed and produced by the artist with the precious support of Megan Stein.

Each calendar is 12 x 12 in, 18 pages.
Photo credit: Jean-Michael Seminaro.

Images show the books installed at Arprim in Montreal in April 2023, where the project was part of "Ce que l'on garde – What stays with us – نای سوات", a duo show with Saba Heravi.

RIGHT: Michelle LaSalle, *Carmin's calendars*, lithography, screen-printing and letterpress, varied edition of ten, 2023.

PAGES 14–15: Michelle LaSalle, *Guy's calendar*, lithography, screen-printing and letterpress, 2023.



Carmin Lasalle lived in the same house on Granger street for almost 50 years. He moved there in the 60s with his wife and his kids, one of them my father, who would have been about 10 years old at the time. Carmin was a collector, like my dad and later, me. His garage was meticulously organized. Like a human-sized Tetris game, every box labelled, categorized, and placed with care. Even though he dusted his boxes regularly, I never got the impression that he opened them.

Among these boxes accumulated over time, three were filled with calendars. Some nice, chosen: calendars of landscapes, flowers, or dogs. For the most part, mundane: lots of promotional calendars from realtors or the War Amps. These three boxes covered five decades, and each calendar had remained pristine, unused.

Each one was adorned with a handwritten note. A note on a box from 1975 reads, "Good for : 86, 97, 2003". From 1981, the note reads, "Use again in : 87, 98, 2009". And so on.

For each calendar, he had calculated when to reuse it. Most notably, he had decided until when, in the future, it would be reasonable to stop counting. It's as if he had chosen an approximate moment for his own death, "sometime between 2005 and 2015", and he knew very well that none of his heirs would see the value in reusing his old calendars. The accumulated boxes bear witness to this—he didn't reuse them, either, but he understood their value. He kept them faithfully, just in case.

My grandfather didn't only collect calendars, he kept a bit of everything, but he didn't keep everything. He saved photos, clothes, cards, toys, and VHS tapes. Most were carefully wrapped in tissue paper and placed in boxes, sealed, and labelled. I wonder how he chose to keep one object over another. How he evaluated their value, decided which objects deserved such a level of care and which could be thrown out.

Carmin's calendar was editioned in ten varied copies (they are identical, with the only difference being the white date superimposed on their cover page) — Born in 1927, and passed in 2015, Carmin saw his calendar repeated ten times over the course of his life.

Between 1959 and 1961, each of my uncle Guy's birthday parties were filmed. After, the Super 8 reels were carefully preserved and filed, complete with little handwritten notes from his father.





Carmin LaSalle had filmed weddings, first communions, outings to the park, but curiously not any of my father's or his sisters' birthdays. I don't think Carmin loved Guy deeper or more intensely than his other three children. Instead, I wonder if he felt the minutes with Guy were more precious; if he wanted to capture everything of the time that passed with him – the ritual of years counted around a birthday cake. A little boy clapping his hands, having just blown out his candles.

Guy is the only one of the four LaSalle children who never became an adult, killed in an accident in 1972 when he was only sixteen years old.

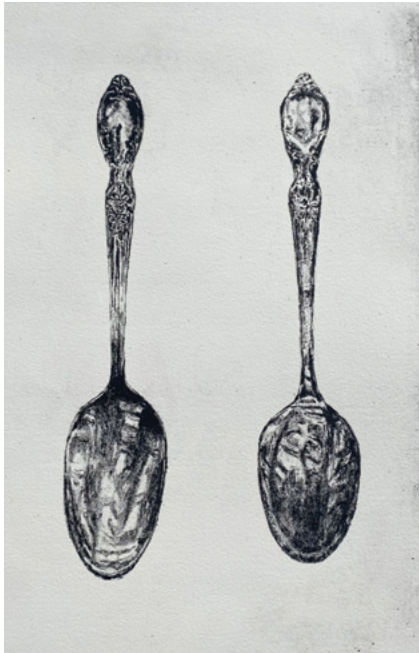
As a child, I knew little about my Uncle Guy; the yellowed photo of a teenager in a football uniform, the whispered stories between adults. It was far too sad a story to tell children about. A story that my father told us as teenagers — the first time I saw him cry — the great tragedy that upended his youth.

Only one copy of Guy's calendar exists — Born in 1956, during a leap year, and passed in 1972, Guy did not live long enough to see his calendar be repeated.

MICHELLE LASALLE'S practice as an artist intersects with her life as a mother and as a human being, they feed and pollinate each other. Her work sits at the fuzzy border between the familiar and intimate space of the home and that of the printshop, with its repetitive, meditative and embodied gestures. From it, she draws the metaphors that give birth to her work. Multiples and their installation devices invite the public to discover, look closer, touch, open, read and also move objects. She investigates bottom-drawer archives — ordinary and banal — as a tool to evoke time, its strange and spectacular softness. Time leaves a trace, set in a photographic moment, which then stretches into the repetitive gestures of studio work and materializes into her pieces: installations, books, objects, or casual performances. LaSalle is interested in the possible slowness of time — which, like her work, is rhythmic and repetitive, accumulated. A sort material time, it that can be seen and felt. Its presence becomes physical as if we could touch it. The paper is creased like a wrinkle, a mark that can be seen and touched, created through attrition — little by little.

DUAL SPOONS

by Teresa Wallsten



ABOVE: Teresa Wallsten,
Dual Spoons,
lithograph, 2023.

Heirlooms contain rich histories that hold value, most substantially when they connect people to the stories and relationships embedded within them. The heritage they hold is exchanged through the passage of time: a conversation between generations. The visceral reality created by each spoon being touched by many hands is transformational. The memory is blessed with the spirit of every moment attached to the spoon, to the hand, to the heart. Holding onto these hidden talismans is a discovery of curiosity; they may soon become stories of the past unless restored by our hands, merging worlds and time: finding new life. The past becomes the present, and with hope and care, the future. Faded memories of our ancestors now have vivid character as these spoons are passed around for discussion, nourishing the next generation.

The items I collect for my body of work are from family members and friends; these spoons and other heirlooms have been gathered throughout my lifetime and reflect stories of my past: nourishing me in very clear and palpable ways. I feel ignited for all of time when I am in their presence; they move me into my future with the

steadiness and determination from my past. As my pieces evolved, I found myself being able to comprehend the importance of connection and I felt time whisper and then disappear. All time was with me. As I created my pieces I recognized that perhaps they were not just mine.

How might we come close to understanding another's experience? These items were collected at first to be a kind of currency to explain energy and experiences which others cannot see. A medium of exchange. But in the collecting, something else transpired. I began to study the history of the objects, the stories that are held within them, and understand my current surroundings. They become an explanation, and an understanding of where I'm standing but also a way to arm myself with family memories and stories, to face the challenges we encounter. They become another sort of protection.

This investigation will continue as the value of family and the knowledge of the past is crucial to who I am. These stories that have spoken from these heirlooms provide direction and advice regarding what type of person I want to be in society. What type of

sister. What type of daughter. What type of mother. Though we tend to shy away from these trademark objects as we feel as they are perhaps weighted memories or kept space in our homes. But within these objects there may well be a memory that unites a family.

The mediums I chose permit me great depth and variety of mark making, so I can express what I hope to comprehend from family and reflect to my future self. This body of work, I feel, will forever evolve into further addition of drawings, lithographs and paintings as I hope to continue to collect objects and stories from my family.



bring back as souvenirs

by Joni Cheung

Foregrounding...

bring back as souvenirs uses the Good Morning Towel, a common object in Chinese restaurants and Hong Kong style cafes to reflect on Chinese migratory patterns. Iconic yet undocumented in academia, my investigation sent me through digital blogs to learn about their origin. From these texts, I screen-printed four phrases that depict their movement in the world.

Leading up to the exhibition, I invite friends to borrow a towel. Collecting dust and dirt with their temporary guests, accumulated stains become documents of care. The towels are hand-washed and hung to dry.





On a Sunday afternoon, steeping tea in a sun-filled kitchen. Soba the calico cat attempts to steal another Chinese bakery bun from the dining table. I open the parcel on the dining table: a Good Morning Towel unfurls into my hands.

Snack Witch: I haven't seen you in awhile!

Good Morning Towel: Really?? Has it been that long?

SW: Well the last time I saw you was...
Two weeks ago!

GMT: Oh! Time really flew by.
It didn't seem that long.

SW: It looks like you went on a lot of adventures:
Look at all those beautiful stains!

GMT: Haha well yes! But it took us a bit of
time to warm up to each other.
The first few days, they were quite gentle with me.

Probably nervous. I think they were very conscious about how important I am to you, and wanted to treat me with the same amount of tenderness that you do (most of the time lol).

But then they made pasta.

They were in a bit of a rush: trying to get dinner ready before 10 pm (it was just one of those nights, you know?) while already extremely hungry and sluggish.

So they were stirring the tomato sauce a bit too enthusiastically and it rickashays, splashing out of the pot and it just

g e t s

e e

v

h

r

y

ro

w

e

e

In a rush to wipe up all the stray sauce before
it would stain countertops, they grabbed me
without thinking.

As tomato soaked into the spaces between
loops of thread,

they watched shades of red flowering,

bleeding,

blending together
into my soft sur/faces.

They were suddenly holding me uncomfortably
tight. A wave of horror crashed into them, thinking
they had ruined my complexion.

I assured them that this was the point: We were
here together to collect these marks and traces of
our everyday.

It is through the messes and the
slightly out of line,
where we notice the spaces that have
been lived in.

The places that allow us to gather and nourish one
another through shared food and stories.

Their grip relaxed. We both took in a deep breath,

e x h a l e d

and finished cleaning before serving the dinner.

IMAGES: Joni Cheung,
bring back as souvenirs,
hand screen-printed
"good morning towels",
clothesline rope, plastic
basins and buckets, and
notebook. Dimensions
vary, 2019 – Ongoing.



Saying Yes

Family, *Permission* and Communities of Care

by Syd Lancaster

The family dinner table: we've all been there, for better and for worse. A site of sustenance, yes — but for some (maybe most of us, on occasion at least?), gathering with family over food can be a less than nurturing experience. Cross-generational dynamics play out at the table through a series of (spoken and silent) exchanges, often based one way or another in consumption and exchange, and thus in power relations. The meal that feeds the body acts as a site of assessment: not only what we eat and how much (or little), but expectations in dress, behaviour, gender identity ... individuals are judged in relation to these (often fluid, often selectively enforced) mores. And so, the family meal can be difficult, if not downright harmful. The question arises, then, what other circumstances can be nurtured in order to nurture ourselves and

our bodies? What can we take from one table, to fill another so that we can offer ourselves and those around us genuine care and community? How does one push against the messaging of diet culture that has so infected social media feeds and marketing copy — and our dinner table politics — to truly embrace the multiplicity of shapes and sizes that are a part of living in and truly inhabiting our bodies? How do we (re)learn to love our bodies as they are, and come to know "family" as synonymous with acceptance and the sustenance of deep care?

On June 13, 2022, Sally Wolchyn-Raab posited a potential answer to these and other questions. Her performance *Permission Lunch*, at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University, brought together twenty people including myself as picked family

around the *Abbie Table* — an artwork commemorating the personal story of Abbie Ellis Whiffen and her family in Caplin Cove. In the same spirit as the table's creation, the people gathered for *Permission Lunch* contributed generous acts of care to help realize this meal-as-healing-ritual. Notably, Grenfell artist-alumnae Kellyann Henderson and Erienne Rennick spent the year leading up to the Lunch creating all the ceramics for the table settings. Other attendees moved and set up the Abbie table and chairs, provided serving utensils, and I assisted Sally in the kitchen.

I spoke with Sally about *Permission Lunch*¹ on June 28, 2022; excerpts of our conversation (edited for length

and context) are included here, as are my thoughts regarding Wolchyn-Raab's *Adipose Series*, the subsequent work developed for her MFA exhibition, parts of which are being shown at Hermes Gallery in Halifax, October 21 - November 19, 2023.

ABOVE: Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Permission Lunch*, performative meal of fats, ferments and sugars, 2022. Photo: Emily Anderson.



¹ Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Permission Lunch*, Sally Wolchyn-Raab Draws, Writes, and Cooks for Humans, 2022, <https://sallywolchynraab.art/#/permission-lunch/>.

SYD LANCASTER: In *Permission Lunch*, there was a triangulation of care, food, and (picked) family. Care informed everything you were doing.

SALLY WOLCHYN-RAAB:

I think it's interesting that you bring up the triangulation of food, care, and family, because I've never thought about it so specifically. I think that is a really good articulation of how I think about this work, because those three elements are inseparable. That relationship of food to care is one that I am re-establishing for myself — because there's also the [triangulation] of food and family and trauma. For me, it's about replacing the trauma with actions of care.

SL: What led to the creation of *Permission Lunch*?

SWR: I wanted to use food to create connection within community, between me and individuals. I was looking at how ways of preparing food are metaphorically rich. In making Amish Friendship Bread, for example, you feed a live culture, and the dough doubles in size. You bake half and give half to a friend. I thought this was beautiful, it's this 'perpetual friendship machine,' and I wanted to do something with that [notion] artistically. The idea that we care for fermented foods, and they care for us; Lauren Fournier's project *Fermenting Feminism* influenced my thinking here. There's this reciprocal relationship between the food and the person who both prepares and eats it. It would be a way of celebrating life, bringing people together, and using

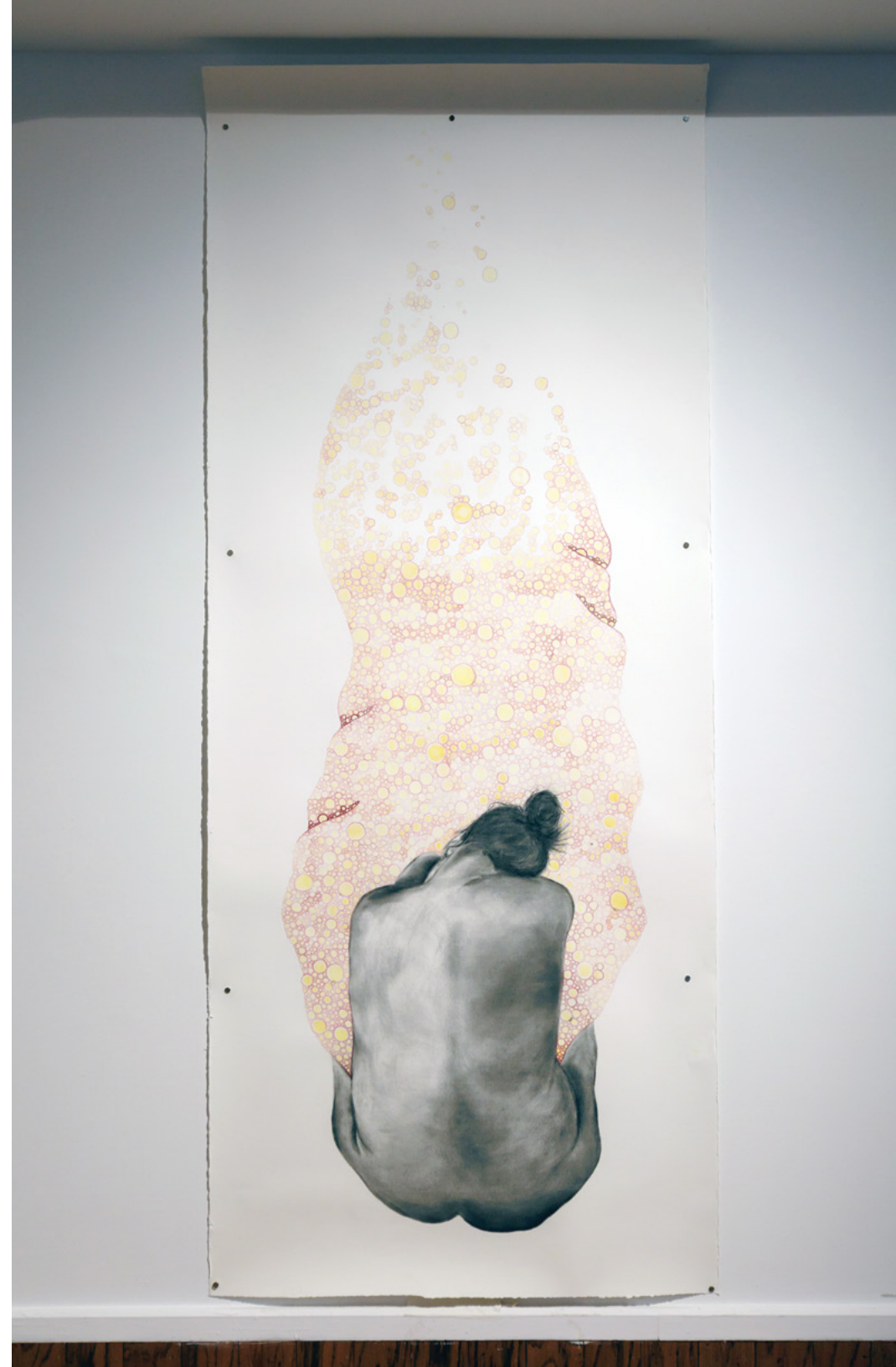
this platform to talk about different kinds of community and culture.

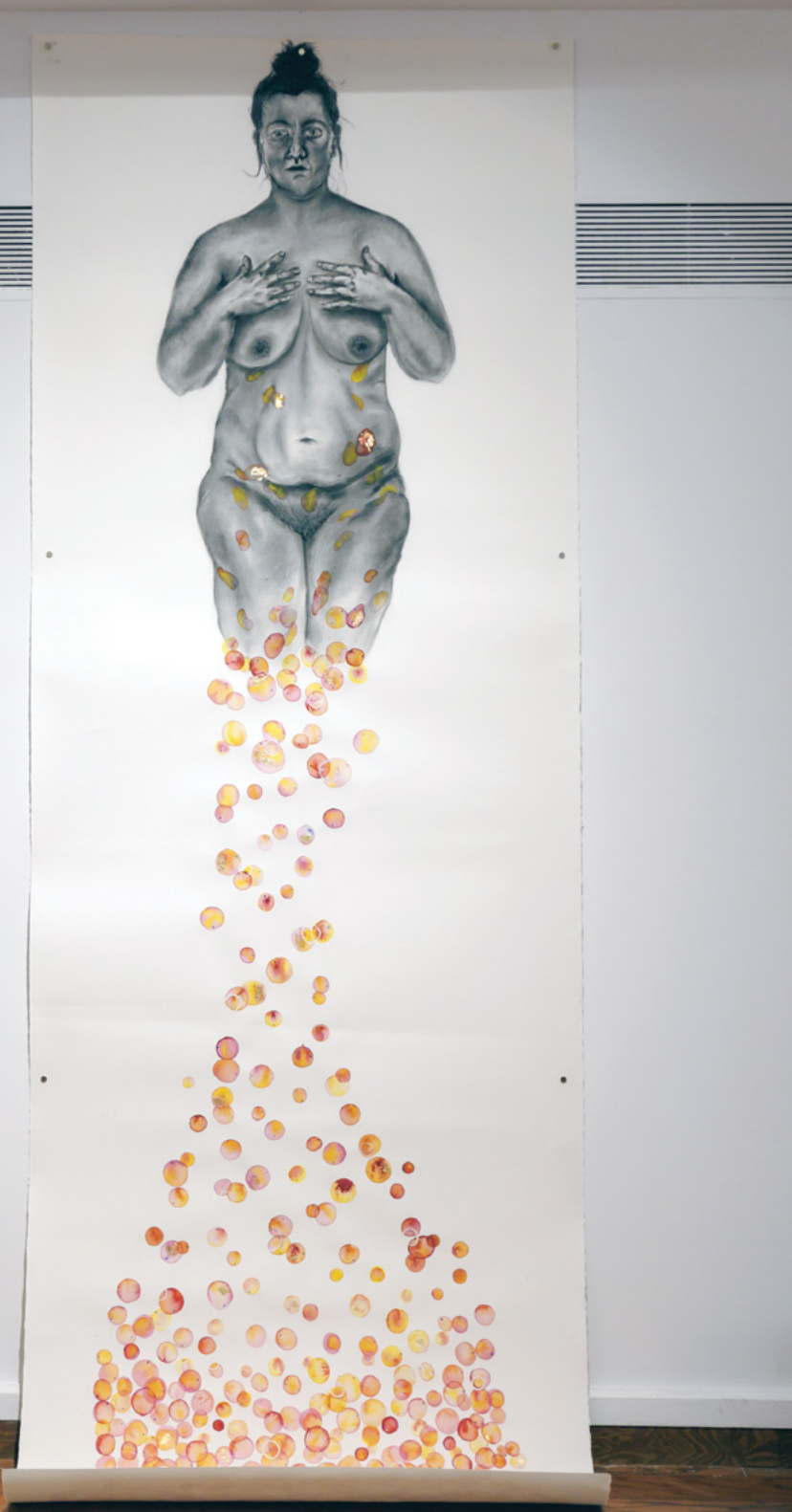
SL: Actively nurturing something [to share and eat] is a direct pushback against all kinds of trauma and isolation. We know hurt people hurt people: it grows. We all know the things in the back of the fridge grow, too.

SWR: That relationship between attraction and disgust is a thread in the research I've done for years about the body. Appeal and disgust and fetish and taboo and sex. In many ways, queering spaces for me is about exploring and re-evaluating what disgusts us and why. Families of choice are huge for me; I have a very strong family of choice back in Calgary. We cook together and eat together very regularly so, for me it is a natural thing to do. Taking care of each other's bodies — taking care of your friends' bodies — is a very queer thing to do, and there's a whole history we can look back to.

SL: Which picks up on the idea of 'picked family': The ability to choose who we nurture and how we get nurtured is empowering. Eating in a space that is free of judgment, like *Permission Lunch*, shifts the discourse to positive ways to deal with the horrible and pervasive messages of diet culture and body shaming.

RIGHT: Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Adipose I*, gouache, charcoal and gold on rag paper, 2021.
Photo: Emily Anderson.





SWR: It starts in the family, and it starts so young. These messages get perpetuated at the dinner table, and that's what I'm trying to reclaim; that's where I first encountered it, and I'm really pushing against that. Until I started *Adipose Series*, I thought that I was maybe too sensitive about the impact that diet culture had on me psychologically, but the more I talked about it, the more I realized this is super f*****g harmful and it KILLS people. It destroys lives, and it touches everyone in harmful ways.

I wanted to speak from what I know; my mother is French-Canadian and my father is Ashkenazi Jewish. French cooking is associated with opulence in a lot of ways. On the Jewish side, I think there's an understated opulence; Ashkenazi food comes from this history of needing calorie-dense food for heavy labour and farm work, and that's been carried into the middle-class lifestyle in the New World. As much as I am celebrating [all] that, meals were still sites of trauma for everybody, places where all of the cousins were assessed: who was skinny, who was fat.

SL: This connection to opulence is also about survival and resilience ... there's a political end to that kind of opulence that is interesting.

SWR: Yes, and I think that is also a queer space, to use opulence for survival. To have opulence bred out of resilience, where it comes to a place of becoming, and then it becomes richness.

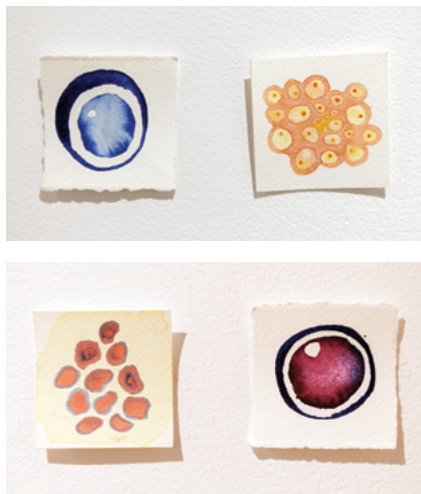
SL: The history of drag for example — that history of necessity, that only in and with community can we survive and work collectively to support, celebrate, and nurture one another in our diversity. That is a very queer space to inhabit.

SWR: I think sharing [the meal] was critical to expressing those ideas, and also made it much more gentle. Leveraging the power of the dinner table as an equalizing force, to create pathways for informal discussion can be magical, and I wanted to access that.

SL: Yes, absolutely! In the same way that there are no good or bad foods, people came to that meal as they were, fully who they were, and that was the *only* expectation. The focus on the individual body and consumption addresses trauma in one way, as you did in earlier work such as the *Eating Honey* performance, but [in this case] flipping that script and bringing bounty to community...

SWR: ... it becomes celebration.

LEFT: Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Adipose IV*, gouache, charcoal and gold on rag paper, 2021. Photo: Emily Anderson.



ABOVE: Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Adipose studies*, watercolour, schmaltz, olive oil and body fat on rag paper, 2023. Photo: Emily Anderson.

Wolchyn-Raab's *Adipose Series* carries forward this fiercely gentle tone. A series of drawings form the core of this body of work, and address ideas of acceptance, community, and isolation through the physical reality of adipose tissue as something we all share. Here, fat is rendered with care and a desire to embrace its vital role in our physical survival. Brightly coloured fat cells float in space, gem-like in their brilliance — a nod to the precious life-giving fuel they store. Marked shifts in scale between works speaks both to personal experience/intimacy and the relational/universal nature of the subject matter. Wolchyn-Raab shares intimate studies of cell-forms; these are isolated, beautiful things — perhaps simultaneously a reference to the psychological isolation caused by eating disorders and body dysmorphia² and her desire to reclaim the beauty in a substance that has become synonymous with shame in diet culture. These same small drawings are recapitulated at wall-sized scale in a looping video to different effect; in this case, the fat cells are dissociated from the human body entirely, transformed into massive, nearly overwhelming shapes that dominate the visual field and dwarf the viewer.

The same luscious palette is employed in a sequence of large mixed media drawings. In these, Wolchyn-Raab situates her own body

as a site of meaning and relation³ in dialogue with these cells. They emanate from her form, flow and float out into the world, into white space. That the human body is rendered in black and white in these works is telling: the lifelessness of grayscale speaks volumes in relation to the false absolutes so prevalent in the social construction of the "acceptable" body. Still, the agency of the body-as-evaluated-object changes from one drawing to the next. In one drawing, the figure's orientation toward the massed, vibrant cells can be seen as a solitary engagement with the process of body acceptance: one that rejects the harmful social gaze of body shaming whilst still recognizing its presence. In a second drawing the figure's upright posture and gaze moves upward and out. Brightly coloured cells again float out into the white field, some of them rendered with gold leaf to emphasize their true value. There's a shift in orientation here; an opening up, a recognition of the potential in sharing fully embodied being with the larger world. A third drawing depicts Wolchyn-Raab with legs extended on the floor, hands grasping feet. This body stretches out on the horizontal plane and takes up space, while larger and more diversely coloured cells drift from it. The fourth of these large works shifts

the body's position, and the figure's relationship to the gaze entirely. Here, Wolchyn-Raab's naked body faces us, eyes fixed impassively on the middle distance. In this moment, the body-as-object (of critique)⁴ ceases to exist; we face (and are faced with) being looked at, while ever-sumptuously coloured fat cells float toward us. We are left with an invitation to dare to commune with our own bodiliness, and thus to become a family of sorts in our shared vulnerability and imperfection.

"... our bodies have this inherent gift to trust and depend on one another. In a time like this, when struggles are so intense and coming so fast, the way we gain strength is in knowing we have one another's backs"⁵

² Sally Wolchyn-Raab, *Adipose-Series*, Sally Wolchyn-Raab Draws, Writes, and Cooks for Humans, 2023, <https://sallywolchynraab.art/#/adipose-series/>. As Wolchyn-Raab notes: Body Dysmorphia "is one of the most pervasive and challenging aspects to overcome for those in eating disorder recovery. I often feel as though I don't accurately know what I look like, where the boundaries of my body are, or how much space I can take up. BDD is our society's extreme fat phobia embodied, and it results in the neverending quest to diminish oneself."

³ Bridget Cauthery and Jonathan Osborn, "Introduction," *Public 67: Return to the Body/Reversus Est Ad Corpus*, 2023. Cauthery and Osborn note that the body functions as a site for "meaning and relation" in the world, and that the "body mediates social spheres - through its absence and presence - as a place of generative dialogue."

⁴ Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2006). I am indebted to Sara Ahmed's discussion of the (dis)orientation of bodies in space pp. 6-8, family inheritance and compulsory heterosexuality pp. 90-91, and her discussion of tables and gatherings (and what it means to be supported) pp. 167-179

⁵ Nora Samaran, "Cultivating Empathy and Shame Resilience," in *Turn This World Inside Out: The Emergence of Nurturance Culture* (Chico CA: AK Press, 2019), 86.

Flash Fiction Winners



ABOVE: LeeAnne Johnston, *I'm Fine*, Linocut, 2016.

FIRST PLACE

What's Above and What's Below

by Rebecca Cave

THERE WERE, admittedly, disadvantages to living at the bottom of a chasm. Terrible cell service, the trek for groceries was a hassle, and every now and then when cleaning some new squamous thing would emerge from the back of a cabinet and try to burrow into the nearest source of heat it could find.

Amanda's luck was that she was always nearest.

Over the years she'd gotten quicker, nimbler, and had tried a dozen different strategies with brooms to keep herself in one piece, but every time without fail the wretched things that lived just outside of her perceptual range tried to crawl under her skin at the first sign of an opening.

They never managed it, hadn't since she was too small to even really understand what they were beyond that they hurt, but still. It would have been nice to not worry about periodic open wounds.

Amanda wasn't being fair, she

knew. Every home had its struggles, and her mother always did her best to help with the cleaning and the bleeding within her own limitations. Holding her responsible when that wasn't enough wasn't fair.

Tonight Amanda didn't feel like being fair.

Tonight her last torch had gone out, and the writhing in the walls was unusually wet, and when she'd gone into the town above there had been a letter from her father in their PO box.

So when something leapt at her from the space behind the microwave, fangs bared and glinting in what ambient light the kitchen clock gave off, Amanda screamed and sprinted to the crevice where her mother nested instead of trying to shepherd the critter back into the abyss. She cried like the child she could not be and her mother crawled out between the stones.

Later, with the thing dead and her mother's many-fingered hand in her hair, Amanda thought again about the letter. She didn't have to open it to know what it said or to know how her mother would react, but that didn't mean she could put the thought of it down for more than a matter of minutes without stumbling over it again. Fifteen letters in two months.

Maybe she'd been wrong. Maybe he meant it?

But even if he did, nothing would change. There were still the things he'd said about her mother when she had tried to show him the teeth behind her smile. Still the things he'd said about her, even if he hadn't known it at the time. And if Amanda had her way, he would never know. So long as he didn't she could still pretend that he would love her if he knew anything at all about her.

There were lots of things Amanda could pretend down here, in the dark.

Just out of sight, something skittered across stone and Amanda pressed her cheek into the chitinous scales of her mother. Maybe tomorrow she would finally write a reply.

At the very least, she'd need to go pick up more batteries.

RUNNER UP

Arachnophobia

by Kathleen MacKay

IT BEGINS EMPTY, blank, as
nothing at all.

I was falling, collapsing —curling into an unrecognisable lump of shapeless existence—crashing straight into a degraded paradise where I was faced with an embarrassment of a family. We were a save-anywhere-you-can kind of people. My clothes were gangly. Our skin was stained with every pigment of earth. My mother accessorised her arthritic limbs with dirt and debris. She reached towards me. Don't ever say I wish you'd disappear, I hoped she'd say.

Instead, my mother's husband threw his hands out in some lame attempt to amuse me, but he quickly turned down his lips at the sight of his wife frowning. Change and premature balding were the only things that could scare him more than my mother. It's amazing how seamlessly a scowl would transform into the flatness of a hand.

Her face darkened. Her body lurched. She was a spider. We were caught in her web. My mother's husband was prey. I was to learn to be the same or else assume his fate. I'd turn away, eyes clasped tight, from her hideous sneer and think about how nice it would be anywhere else

but here because only then could I say the clattering sounds of their bodies crumbling hinted at love.

Until she noted my eyes spilling and his tightening lips, then she'd say, sometimes only to herself, "Stop this now! We're all fine." And saying it out loud must have made it true. After all, there's nothing so influential, so powerful, so natural as a mother's love.

Perhaps she was right. I shouldn't be so unhappy, for what do I lack? Strange how desire and disdain have begun to feel, at least to me, nearly the same. He must love his wife.

SNAPLINE 2023.3: FAMILY

FEATURED ARTIST: Nour Bishouty

IN THIS ISSUE

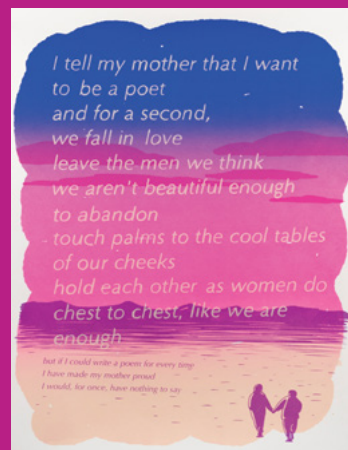
Carmin's Calendars & Guy's Calendar.....images and writing by Michelle LaSalle
Dual Spoons.....images and writing by Teresa Wallsten
bring back as souvenirs.....images and writing by Joni Cheung
Saying Yes.....written by Syd Lancaster
What's Above and What's Below.....written by Rebecca Cave
Arachnophobia.....written by Kathleen MacKay

SNAP PRINT PATRON PROGRAM

The SNAP Print Patron Program has been devised for those who want to continue supporting SNAP in a meaningful way and help the organization achieve its goals through a direct financial contribution. Print Patrons receive all regular benefits of an individual SNAP membership, a limited edition fine art print commissioned specifically for this program and a charitable tax receipt for a \$250 value.

This year's featured print is *I tell my mother that I want to be a poet.*, a collaboration between poet Nisha Patel and artist Michelle Campos Castillo, and printed by Emily Hayes.

★ Learn more and sign up at snapartists.com/membership/



INSTAGRAM: @snapgallery | FB: Society of Northern Alberta Print-Artists

PUBLISHED BY The Society of Northern Alberta Print-Artists (SNAP) in Edmonton, AB Canada. Copyright of published images and written content remains with the artists and writers. All other content belongs to the publisher. **ISSN:** 2562-9867 (Print) | 2562-9875 (Online)

FUNDERS



SNAPLINE SPONSOR



