



THE CITY OF MANY

March 20 – April 5, 2025

Sanodya Adikari
Yeganeh Bakhtiary
Regie Batac
Hanna Baxter
Alex Chan
Tracey Ho
Misaki Kubo
Naomi Oko
Claire O'Neil
Amrit Randhawa
Natasha Sran
Ella Oriye Tani
Jiani Wang
Emma Wilkinson
Jenny Yu
Kepei Elliana Zheng

Opening
March 19, 6 - 8pm

Artist talk
Sandy Kaltenborn
March 25, 6pm

A Long Table Dialogue
March 27, 5 - 7pm

Student Lead Tour
April 5, 4pm

The City of Many

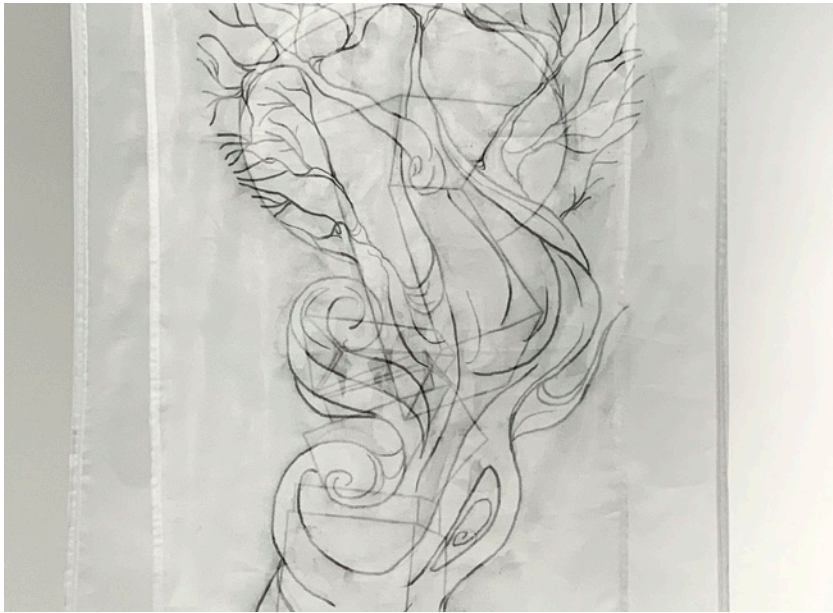
The BFA third-year exhibition, *The City of Many*, explores urban life through themes of identity, diversity, economics, history, and the built landscape. Drawing inspiration from work on urban spaces by Martha Rosler, Margit Mayer, and Rosalyn Deutsche, the exhibition presents a range of perspectives that reflect the urban environment's diverse communities and its role as a creative city.

In *The City of Many*, the urban environment is envisioned as a fluid and multi-layered space – one where histories, cultures, and identities intersect, while underlying power structures seek to shape its transformation. This exhibition focuses on the multiple urban narratives – interwoven memories, the temporality of architecture, and the nuanced relationships between individuals and urban spaces.

The third-year cohort worked in collaboration with Sandy Kaltenborn to explore the role of art and artists in the ever-shifting urban landscape. Kaltenborn's experience using his design practice for urban activism and grassroots organization is reflected in his participatory questionnaire for this exhibition, which encourages visitors to answer questions about local urban issues.

This exhibition is an invitation to rethink the city – not just in terms of its appearance and function but also through the emotions, histories, and social dynamics it carries. In the context of Vancouver and other cities, we invite viewers to listen, question, and engage, exploring how we might redefine the ownership of the city, and imagine a more inclusive and diverse urban future amidst the waves of globalized urban renewal.





Sanodya Adikari
SYNTHETIC CANOPIES

Sanodya Adikari (she/her) is a Vancouver-based artist whose art navigates topics of colonialism, ecology, and identity. The work combines textiles and illustration to explore the complex and often contradictory relationship between nature—specifically trees—and urban environments. In contemporary cities, nature no longer grows organically; instead, it is strategically placed, commodified, and curated to serve specific functions dictated by urban planning. The use of charcoal on polyester fabric further highlights this disconnect. The work highlights the tension between nature's intrinsic value and its use as a symbol in "greenwashed" urban landscapes. By highlighting disparities in access to green spaces, Adikari prompts viewers to reflect on the complexities of nature in cities and question the true function and value of urban trees. This body of work encourages a deeper understanding of how nature is manipulated for aesthetic and socio-political purposes, inviting viewers to consider the ecological and social implications of these carefully curated landscapes.



Yeganeh Bakhtiary
FRAGMENTED WITNESS

In *Fragmented Witness*, Yeganeh Bakhtiary creates a paper collage on a vertical 12x24 canvas to capture the transformative impact of social upheaval on urban landscapes in Iran—tracing the historical lineage from the 1979 Islamic Revolution to the 2022 Women, Life, Freedom protests. The artwork employs a gradient of imagery, transitioning from monochromatic scenes of past damage to intensely red-tinted photographs signifying recent conflicts. As viewers journey down the canvas, they encounter a climax of fiery visuals that culminates in a personal photograph of Bakhtiary in Vancouver. The imagery is distant yet deeply connected, untouched yet tinged with the guilt of an observer from afar. This piece aims not only to raise awareness of the persistent crises but also delve into the complex emotions of those who witness their homeland's strife from a distance, reflecting on both the historical and emotional fragmentation experienced by the diaspora.



Regie Batac

REST STOP

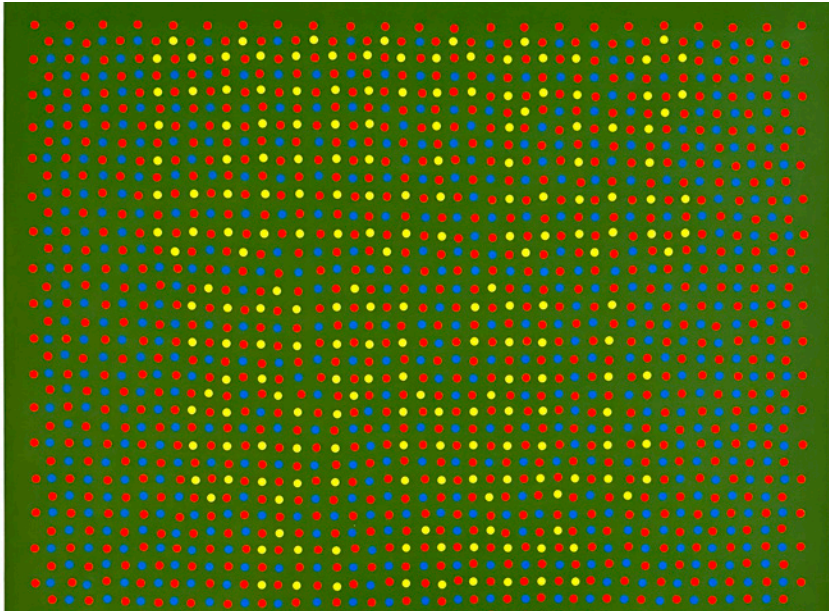
Regie Batac is a visual artist who produces sculptures and installations primarily composed of industrial wood. Throughout his practice, Batac often considers the scale and structure of everyday objects and their recontextualization in a gallery setting. He uses these structures to highlight the process of labor—a quiet testament to human effort and the passage of time. Hostile architecture alienates, enforcing control through discomfort. A hand-built wooden park bench, by contrast however, fosters connection and inclusion. In Vancouver, a city rich with diverse cultures, histories, and identities, the work symbolizes resistance to exclusionary design. It welcomes all, offering rest in a landscape often shaped by various barriers. Built by hand, it embodies care, community, and human touch—qualities often absent in mass-produced urban spaces. Batac's act of creation reclaims public space, reflecting Vancouver's layered past while inviting new interactions, stories, and a shared sense of belonging in an ever-evolving city.



Hanna Baxter

WOMAN AND MAN IN WINDOW

Inspired by the importance of human connection in an increasingly isolated and lonely contemporary digital world, Hanna Baxter's (she/her) work focuses on the everyday interactions that form human life. *Woman and Man in Window* explores the boundaries between public and private space—how the line is drawn and how it can be blurred. Using the transformative space of a window as a canvas, Baxter paints two scenes: on one side of the window, the faces and upper bodies of two people sitting side by side; on the other, the rear view of the subjects. By painting both sides, *Woman and Man in Window* allows viewers to circle the piece and experience the shift from being an outsider met with a questioning gaze to becoming a spectator alongside the subjects looking out at the world before them.



Alex Chan
CAGCOH

Alex Chan's (he/him) artistic practice involves utilizing and investigating text through methods of typeface visualization and signage. In CAGCOH, Chan is influenced by the nature of sight in relation to design, working with patterns and formations of sticker dots to create a landscape of text and shapes. The artwork explores the complexity of perception as it relates to distance and the relationships between the human and the artificially-made. Through vertical signage and adjacent form, Chan explores the language of lists and the coexistence of two seemingly unlikely groups of words within one piece. CAGCOH highlights our relationships to the infrastructural materials that manifest in our everyday lives, as well as the materials of which we are composed.



Tracey Ho
BURNABY MALLS CHANGING BEFORE MY EYES

Tracey Ho Qiao-Yin (She/Her) is a Chinese-Canadian visual and digital artist based in Burnaby, BC. This work demonstrates Ho's interest in changing urban landscapes, the intersection between public and private spaces, and their uses. Having grown up as a witness to Burnaby's rapid development and as a frequent visitor to its three most popular malls, Ho places her point of view of these spaces at the center of the piece. Working with a do-it-yourself approach, she gathers footage using handheld devices and minimal equipment to capture an unfiltered, personal perspective. Her approach emphasizes accessibility and honesty, highlighting lived experience over polished production. As an artist with autism, she chooses to use video as a medium to document her sensory connection to the spaces, inviting viewers to experience these malls as spaces of memory, community, and personal history.



Misaki Kubo BEHIND THE WALLS

Misaki Kubo's (she/her) work is a collection of 45 letter-size posters arranged on a wall, mimicking a public bulletin board, with 14 variations of designs placed throughout the gallery space. Her work explores the concept of public spaces in Vancouver, examining the social issues that shape them. Drawing from her personal experience of living in Canada, Kubo reflects on the challenges defining the city, including the rising cost of living, housing affordability, and homelessness. Through this work, she aims to provoke viewers to reconsider the accessibility and inclusivity of urban spaces in Vancouver. By confronting these pressing issues, she invites the community to engage in a deeper conversation about the ownership and function of public spaces and who truly belongs within them.



Naomi Oko NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

Naomi Chidinma Oko, is a multi-faceted Igbo artist, who transitions seamlessly from pragmatic precision to whimsical creativity, embodying roles from surrealist to socio-cultural anthropologist for enjoyment. Her artwork employs embroidery stitching and punch needling to evoke the simplicity and vibrancy of childhood coloring books, symbolizing the joy that community centers bring. As a young immigrant in Canada, Oko appreciates these centers for their roles in education, socialization, and communal responsibility, contrasting with Vancouver's often isolated and dreary atmosphere. Immersing oneself in such welcoming environments offers a breath of fresh air amidst urban loneliness.



Claire O'Neil
PUBLIC VOID

Claire O'Neil's artistic practice delves into themes of the abject, the uncanny, and social unrest through a feminist perspective. Working with a range of mediums, O'Neil aims to uncover the complexities of the current social landscape and its relationship with existing power structures.

Her painting is a surrealist-inspired installation that critiques the scarcity of third spaces—free, non-work, non-home environments—in cities, highlighting their importance in transforming a lifeless urban sprawl into a vibrant, socially-engaged community. The artwork features a desolate cityscape that lacks defining features, evoking both uncanny familiarity and discomfort while underscoring the role of third spaces in transforming urban areas. As social engagement is fundamental to human experience, the figures in the painting remain undefined and anonymous, reflecting the effect of social isolation. A readymade bench on the opposite side of the wall stands in conversation with the painting, further critiquing the inhospitality of city settings.



Amrit Randhawa
PRECARIOUS STACK AND STACKED DENSITY

Amrit Randhawa's artistic practice emphasizes architectural, sculptural, and theoretical concerns—using abstraction, materiality, and spatial intervention to explore the boundaries between function, art, and institutional authority.

Precarious Stack and Stacked Density reconfigure SFU chairs into pillars that emphasize compression, weight, and balance. This sculptural installation in a white cube gallery space creates tension between art and function, inviting viewers to question where functionality ends and artistry begins. At the same time, these installations aestheticize and misappropriate university property, expressing a complex stance on SFU's institutional authority.

Identical chairs will also be used during *A Long Table Dialogue: Intersecting Knowledges*—an open discussion between artists, researchers, and community leaders. While the material is first framed as sculptural, it does not return to being mere chairs when introduced into this social context. Instead, *Precarious Stack and Stacked Density* imply their logic onto this relational setting to complicate artistic ontology and the nature of aesthetic experience.



Natasha Sran

DO YOU KNOW WHO MADE THOSE CLOTHES?

Natasha Sran is an artist who works with textiles, exploring the intersection of craftsmanship, effort, and labour within the fashion industry. Her work, primarily through crocheting and embroidery, responds to the growing trends of fast fashion and the neglected workers behind the scenes of this industry.

Natasha's piece is a collection of embroidered text on shirts, commenting on the often overlooked labour of garment factory workers who mass-produce clothing under harsh conditions. Each stitch represents the intricate and labour-intensive processes hidden from the public eye behind the cheap clothing of the modern fashion system. Her work challenges the values people hold in the context of fast fashion's overconsumption, inviting us to consider the individuals behind its production and the stories woven into the fabrics we wear.

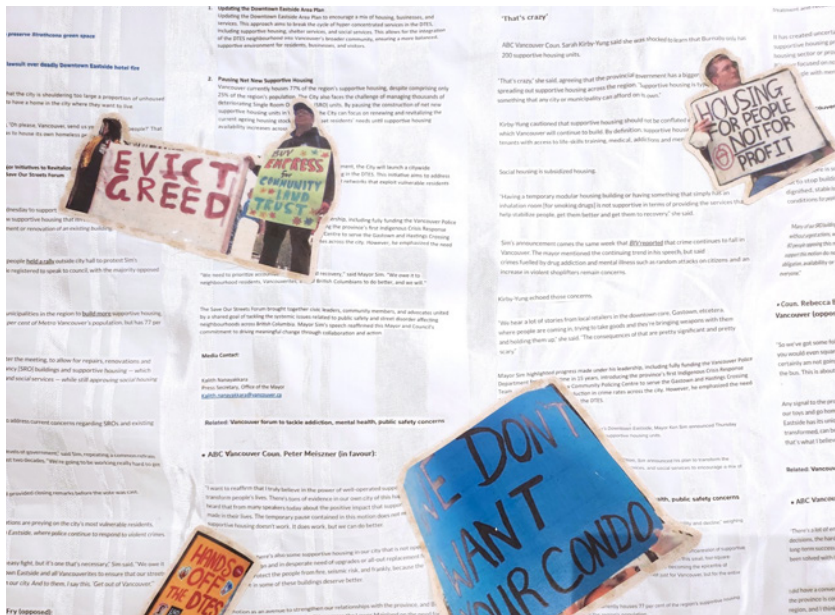


Ella Oriye Tani

JOURNALS OF MAYBELLINE NISHI

Ella Oriye Tani uses illustration and comics to blur the line between fiction and reality. Her newest work explores the history of Vancouver's iconic Powell Street Festival – one of the longest-running Japanese Canadian Cultural Festivals in Canada through a parafictional narrative. The story is told through the journal pages of the fictional character Maybelline Nishi, who documents the progression of the festival in Oppenheimer Park from 1977 to the most recent one in 2024. Each printed journal includes a handwritten entry from Maybelline, collage images, notes reflecting Vancouver, and an inked illustration drawn from real images of the Powell Street Festival.

The Festival Society gave Tani access to their photo archive, enabling her to create this work. Her work touches upon themes of cultural history, community, and activism in the urban cityscape.



Jenny Yu WE NEED HOUSING NOW

Jenny Yu's artwork addresses social issues, particularly housing crises, inspired by her personal experiences and interactions. In her piece, she creates a collage on a tablecloth, carefully placing images and text that reference protests and municipal plans to revitalize Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. This work critiques the government's housing policies and draws attention to the ongoing housing crisis. The second part of her work involves a performance outside the Audain gallery, where Yu welcomes passersby with tea and engages them in conversation about housing. Yu aims to highlight the importance of supportive housing, particularly in a capitalist society where people often ignore social issues. Yu believes that addressing housing issues for disadvantaged communities is crucial for creating affordable housing for all and fostering a more compassionate and equitable society. By interacting with the public, she encourages discussions that can lead to collective action.



Kepei Elliana Zheng 100 METERS TO NOWHERE

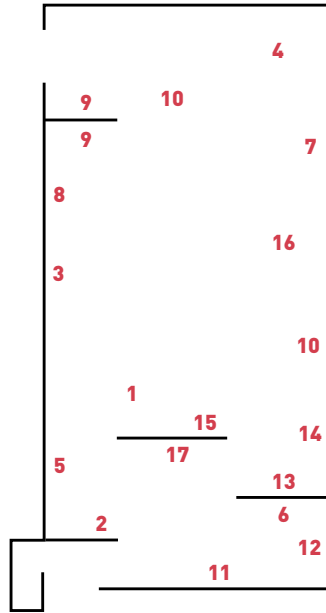
Kepei Elliana Zheng (she/her) is an artist born and raised in China. Now living and working in Canada, Zheng's experience navigating migration, labor, and identity informs her exploration of systemic barriers faced by immigrant women. Her textile installation artwork explores the precarious conditions of immigrant women in Canada's informal economy. Zheng uses fabric strips recycled and cut from work suits to symbolize labor instability, identity fluidity, and social marginalization. The work challenges restrictive immigration policies that push non-permanent residents into low-wage, unstable jobs. It also addresses intersectional discrimination, which funnels non-English-speaking immigrant women into stereotyped labor roles, like domestic work, caregiving, and cleaning. Furthermore, it critiques how community labor networks perpetuate cycles of economic entrapment, particularly within the "closed immigrant labor chain" found in Chinese, Filipino, and South Asian communities.





GALLERY PLAN

- 1 Sanodya Adikari**
Synthetic Canopies, 2025, charcoal on polyester, 35" x 60"
- 2 Yeganeh Bakhtiary**
Fragmented Witness, 2025, thermal paper on canvas, paint, 12" x 24"
- 3 Regie Batac**
Rest Stop, 2025, industrial wood, wood finish, transfer paper, 66.5" x 57" x 29"
- 4 Hanna Baxter**
Woman and Man in Window, 2025, oil paint on found window, 50" x 30"
- 5 Alex Chan**
CAGCOH, 2025, scenic paint, dot stickers, matte varnish on canvas, 24" x 48"
- 6 Tracey Ho**
Burnaby Malls Changing Before My Eyes, 2025, video on monitor, 21:11 minutes, 27.9" x 15.7"
- 7 Misaki Kubo**
Behind the Walls, 2025, 10.5" x 7.5" card stock paper laser prints, 53" x 68"
- 8 Naomi Oko**
Neighborhood House, 2025, embroidery circle, canvas fabric, sewing thread, permanent marker, top coat film, needles, 8" x 8" x 0.5"
- 9 Claire O'Neil**
Public Void, 2025, found bench, oil paint on canvas, 24" x 36"
- 10 Amrit Randhawa**
Precarious Stack and Stacked Density, 2025, red plastic, chrome metal-framed chairs (sourced from Simon Fraser University), 143.5" x 20.5" x 24.75" and 151.5" x 20.5" x 30"
- 11 Natasha Sran**
Do You Know Who Made Those Clothes?, 2025, bamboo rayon yarn, cotton threads, 6 cotton t-shirts, coat hangers, 134" x 67"
- 12 Ella Oriye Tani**
Journals of Maybelline Nishi, 2025, six 16" x 21.50" glossy prints, 111" x 21.5"
- 13 Jiani Wang**
Smearred Nostalgia, 2025, paper mâché, mirror, 8.5" x 11" colour transparency photographs, fishing line, beads, 28" x 28"



- 14 Emma Wilkinson**
Dirty Martini, 2025, ink, paper, printed photos, glue, plywood, tape, 45.5" x 11"
- 15 Jenny Yu**
We Need Housing Now, 2025, 4" x 6" photographs, fabric, transfer paper, table, cups, beverage dispenser, 54" x 78.74"
- 16 Kepei Elliana Zheng**
100 Meters to Nowhere, 2025, cotton, nylon, polyester, linen, denim, PVC, canvas, silicone, terry cloth, rayon, spandex, 13' x 5"
- 17 Sandy Kaltenborn**
Questionnaire, 2025, vinyl, 13' x 4'

EVENTS

OPENING
Wednesday, March 19, 6 - 8pm

ARTIST TALK WITH SANDY KALTENBORN
Tuesday, March 25, 6pm

A LONG TABLE DIALOGUE
Thursday, March 27, 5 - 7pm

STUDENT LEAD TOUR
Saturday, April 5, 4pm

All events at the Audain Gallery

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The class extends its sincere gratitude to everyone who helped make the third-year show possible. Special thanks to the design team—Alex Chan, Ella Tani, Misaki Kubo, and Naomi Oko—for assembling this brochure, and to the editorial team—Amrit Randhawa, Claire O'Neil, and Yeganeh Bakhtiary—for editing the exhibit materials. We appreciate the curatorial team—Hanna Baxter, Sanodya Adikari, Elliana Zheng, and Emma Wilkinson—and the installation team—Jenny Yu, Regie Batac, Natasha Sran, Tracey Ho, and Jenny Wang—for their vital roles. Much gratitude goes to Professor Sabine Bitter and TA Ali Shariq for their dedication, as well as to visiting artist and designer Sandy Kaltenborn for his guidance. We also thank Professor Raymond Boisjoly for his generous support. Finally, we are grateful to Andrew Curtis and Uroš Šanjevi for their essential technical assistance, without which this show would not have been possible.

The City of Many is presented by The Audain Visual Artist in Residence (AVAIR) program.

The AVAIR program brings artists and practitioners to Vancouver who have contributed significantly to the field of contemporary art and whose work resonates with local and international visual art discourses. The AVAIR program is generously funded by the Audain Foundation Endowment Fund.

The School for the Contemporary Arts at SFU is based in Vancouver, Canada. The school offers an innovative interdisciplinary program within a multi-campus university. It is situated in an ultramodern facility in the downtown core of the city. Specialized in providing a dynamic learning environment, the studio classes in dance, film, music, theatre and visual art are taught by practicing artists. Critical courses in art, culture and film are taught by scholars who engage students with the historical, philosophical and political contexts of the arts. SCA's goal is to equip students with the skills, discipline, flexibility, creativity, understanding and acumen to excel in the arts on a global stage.

The School for the Contemporary Arts recognizes that we are on the unceded and occupied territories of the x̱m̱əθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səḻílwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.

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Audain Gallery
SFU at Goldcorp Centre for the Arts
149 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 1H4
Tuesday - Saturday, 12-5pm

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