





Joni Cheung

Faye Harnest

Donna M. Paris &  
David Ofori Zapparoli

Alyssa Pisciotto

Judith Price &  
Grace Salez

Amanda White

**Missing Pages** was a community-centric online project that made space for voices that are underrepresented in our knowledge institutions. Public catalogues of stories—whether an archive, a university, or a library—are intended to tell us who we are. However, they undoubtedly omit and exclude experiences and knowledge. This series of online artworks and public programs focused on personal and collective narratives that shape our communities, both locally and internationally, that are missing from collected records.

September 7 to  
November 30, 2021

Presented by  
BRIDGE Centre  
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Snack Witch, aka Joni Cheung, is a grateful, uninvited guest on the unceded territories of the x̣ʷməθkʷəỵəm, Skwxwú7mesh, Stó:lō, Səl̓ilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh, and Kanien'kehá:ka peoples. They are currently working towards their Masters of Fine Arts in Sculpture and Ceramics at Concordia University and hold a Bachelor of Fine Arts with Distinction in Visual Art (2018) from the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University. She has exhibited and curated shows at the CRES Media Arts Committee, Vancouver; the FOFA Gallery, Montréal; Centre A: the Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Vancouver; the Audain Gallery, Vancouver; and has been featured in CBC Arts, and the Canada Line Transit BC Public Art Program, among other spaces and platforms.

They have been a recipient of numerous awards, including the British Columbia Arts Council Scholarship and the Dale and Nick Tedeschi Studio Arts Fellowship. She was waitlisted for the SSHRC—Joseph-Armand Bombardier: Canada Graduate Master's Scholarship (2020).

Aside from researching and writing, Joni likes doing snack and beverage reviews, medium length walks at the beach, being wrapped into a blanket burrito 🌮 & cinnamon bun 🍩, and her perfect first date involves a thorough walkthrough at multiple grocery stores + Costco, getting bubble tea, and breads + pastries from all the bakeries 🍞.



*But, like, what is it?*

## **!FAST AND EASY! A Short and Sweet Guide to Making a French-Canadian Favourite: ~Pâté Chinois~**

2021

found images,  
found & original text  
variable dimensions

This experimental text piece explores the mythologies and histories that surround pâté chinois or Chinese pie. Using the form of a recipe—an object usually seen as non-threatening, physically and content-wise—I subvert the reader's expectations of the approachable and neutral cookbook form. Interspersed between pages that teach the reader how to make this French-Canadian dish, you will find spaces filled with personal reflections and text, in juxtaposition with documentation presenting the history of anti-Asian sentiments in North America and the recent waves of anti-Asian racism and hate crimes happening today.

(details)



“Where is the glory in this dish? It is really in the story. It is with the memory each person holds of the family around the kitchen table sharing stories of the day, giggling, and digging in, bite after bite, year after year. The taste and texture of this dish is worked into the vivid memories of a happy family life.

[...] 1857, and in the years that followed,  
tens of thousands of [...] hopefuls [...] came

Even when the prosperous period [...] ended in the 1860s

[...] continued to migrate to “Gum San”[...].

the name “Gold Mountain” lasted long after the gold was gone,

[a false promise, an end to] the dream of wealth and a better life.

That

is where the glory is.

(details)

I find no solace in your [apology](#)

Nostalgia changes things

So here's some comfort food to muffle the.





## Missing / Translating / Adaptive Recipes: in the Multi-Cultural Canadian context

(Learnings from *Snack Witch aka Joni Cheung's! FAST AND EASY! A Short and Sweet Guide to Making a French-Canadian Favourite: Pâté Chinois* and *Experimental Recipe Writing Workshop*)

### Recipes to Remember:

Recipe 1: Finding who we are

Recipe 2: Finding what reminds you of home

Recipe 3: To take yourself back to the shore when you are home away from home

In a world with 195 countries, each reflecting varying cultures and traditions, the idea of home is different for each person. Each person, wherever they are in the world, tries to find their version of what makes them feel at “home” in their own unique way. For some it could be celebrating a festival, or for some it could be cooking traditional food. Canada, in 1971, was declared the first country to officially adopt multiculturalism policy. According to the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act (French: Loi sur le multiculturalisme canadien)*, the Government of Canada recognizes and respects its society including its diversity in languages, customs, and religion. As Canada is making progress towards creating a safe and multicultural space for all communities, it is now comparatively easier to find authentic ingredients to prepare recipes that make people feel at home. With development in cultural awareness about varying ethnic groups and their food-related customs, surely, we are more aware of the diverse ethnic food available and its varieties, but are we aware of the:

*Original recipe?*

*Traditional ingredients?*

*Missing story of who invented the recipe and why so?*

*Why is it important to know?*

*!FAST AND EASY! A Short and Sweet Guide to Making a French-Canadian Favourite: ~Pâté Chinois~* is a text piece by Joni Cheung in which they focus on three aspects of recipe-writing and ask important questions like:

Where is it from?

How was it created?

What makes it Chinese?

Cheung's recipe reflects on the traditional Québécois Pâté Chinois recipe, ingredients, preparation, and most importantly the missing story behind it. As we are becoming culturally aware about diverse beliefs, religions, customs, traditions, art, and food, it becomes important for us to know the art of making and innovation and thus, it compels me to cook my own reflection on the Experimental Recipe Writing Workshop led by the artist in conjunction with Missing Pages. Cheung encouraged us to not just think about food related recipes but recipes of stories or instances we'd like to share. Cheung describes the aim of the workshop as to explore together “some of the ins-and-outs and round-about to scribbling down instructional texts and expand on what things we could make a recipe for.” It is now that I realize the need for the community to read about the missing stories from our knowledge institutions—behind these recipes that remind us of home.

### The Art of Making:

In Cheung's Experimental Recipe Writing Workshop, participants discussed their love for food, the joy of cooking authentic dishes that remind them of home, traditional and authentic flavoured dishes available in Canada, struggles to find ingredients, importance of following a recipe, missing dishes on the food map, recipes not known/missing/translated, change of taste from one region to another and most importantly, how a simple object named recipe or the art of making or cooking together can bring together people of diverse nationalities, yet common interests. Food recipes, when shared from and within different regions and countries, are often translated or adapted to create something new. Similar to words used for food like “charred”, which used to be an adjective for spoiled food, is now considered a reflection of great cooking. Canada, with an Asian population of about 17.7%, still has missing context of authentic food heritage of Asian countries. This also urges us to think about the rate of recent waves of anti-Asian racism crimes in our neighbourhoods. Cooking or eating together, on the other hand, are acts of nourishing, an activity to spread cultural awareness amongst communities who live together. It is an act of gathering to appreciate the recipes of struggle, innovation and finding home.

## Missing: My first meal

Location: Little India, Gerrard St., Toronto

(This is a personal story and the characters in the story chose to remain anonymous)

*“It was a take-out order. Since it was a Halal restaurant, we ordered Butter Chicken. When we got home and tried it, it did not taste good. Maybe we expected a familiar taste to satisfy our taste buds but even though the ingredients were the same, the recipe probably was different. So, we added our spices, sauces that we got from our home. It definitely did not taste the same, but yes, once we translated the dish into our version of Butter Chicken, it was more acceptable for our palates.”*

My *take-away recipe* from the Experimental Recipe Writing Workshop by Joni Cheung:

### Manifesting on a full moon night!

Ingredients:

1. You need *you*.
2. *Me Time*
3. OFCOURSE! *Full Moon*

Instructions:

1. Check the *moon* calendar.
2. Make sure you have a window or a door to your backyard/street.
3. Follow the recipe of a nice *hot chocolate* or don't and add *extra chocolate* if you WANTTT.
4. Look for the **most comfortable** couch or lie on the fresh cut *grass*.
5. A comfortable blanket. Maybe the blanket matches the colour of your outfit?
6. Some music, maybe?
7. Oh, I forgot! I need marshmallows too.
8. Runnniiiiinnnggg back.
9. Hmm. What do I think about now? What is it that I Want The Most?
10. Is it the recipe to happiness in general? A happy life?
11. Keep your eyes open, and let your mind do the working.
12. Imagine all the good things that can happen.
13. And the most important ingredient, BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.

## Faye Harnest

Faye Harnest is an artist living in Toronto. Since her brain injury five years ago, disability and mental health has become the subject of her work. Faye has acted as a session panelist for the Ontario Brain Injury Association to educate rehabilitation workers, and her collective, Minds + Hands, is working in collaboration with The Drake's Arts in Health program to help hospital patients create art. Her illustrations can be seen in the AGO's online **Portraits of Resilience** exhibition, and is upcoming in the 2022 **CripRitual** exhibit at Tangled Art + Disability gallery, as well as in A Handmade Assembly's anthology of arts and crafts. She is currently illustrating her graphic memoir on grief, shame, and loss of identity and purpose. Work from this project was featured in Life on the Line, a mental health awareness campaign and public art project that was seen on the Toronto subway and featured in **Colossal** and **Hypebeast**.

[www.fayeharnest.com](http://www.fayeharnest.com)



### I Miss You

2021

digital  
illustrations  
11x8.5 inches each

For **Missing Pages**, I have created three new digital illustrations that began with pages from the unfinished novel I was writing at the time of my accident.

These works are part of a larger ongoing series that represents the destruction my brain injury caused to my life, primarily the end of my ability to read and write books. "Missing Pages" is a concept that is very much tied to my work thematically and literally. Brain injury is an invisible disability. Very little is known and understood about it, and stories about these experiences remain largely invisible as well. My work is an attempt to bring to light the difficulty, confusion, and grieving that others cannot see, and to contribute to a history of disability that barely exists. It is also an effort to understand my own experience, to build a new life through this practice, and to see what experiments and what beauty can result.

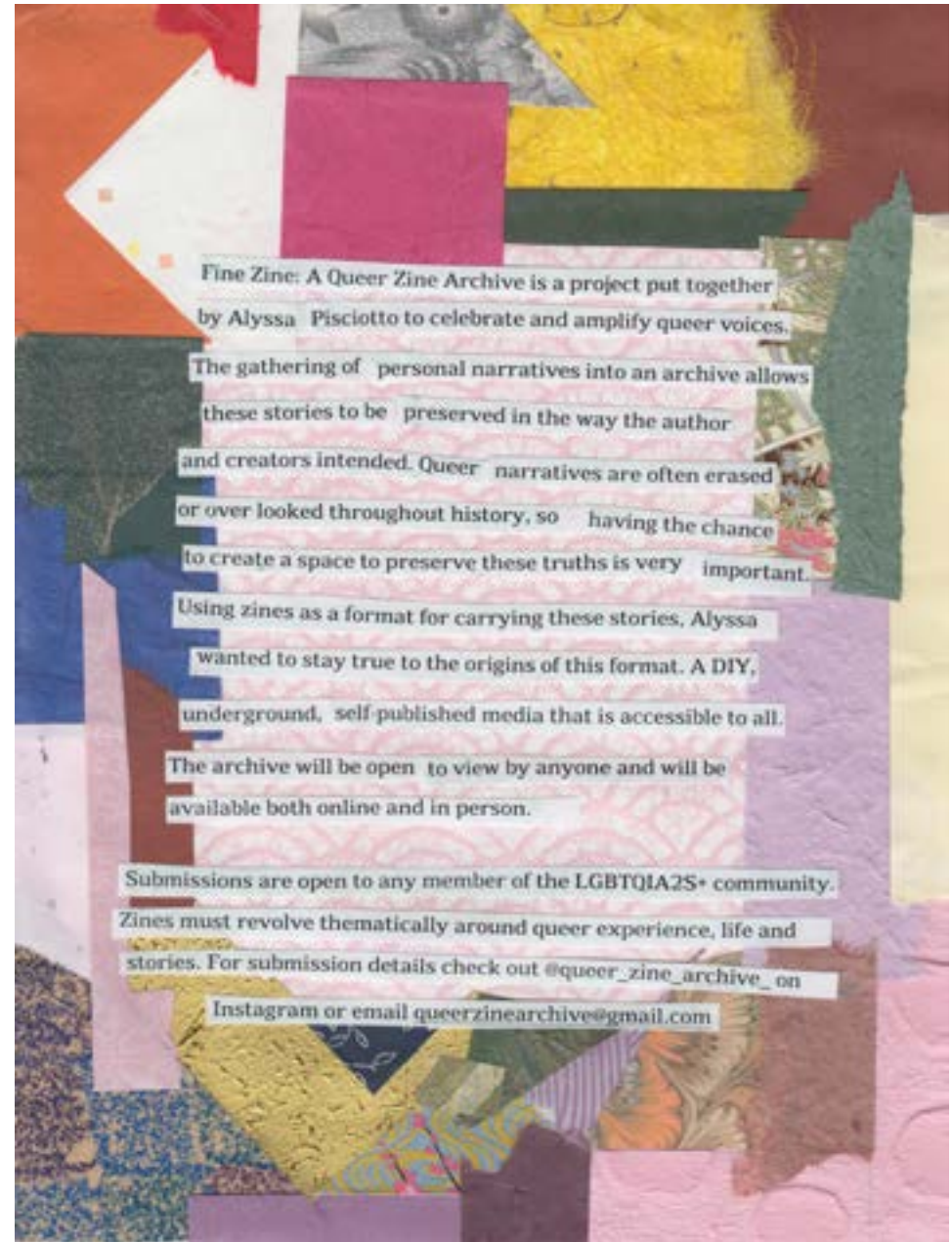






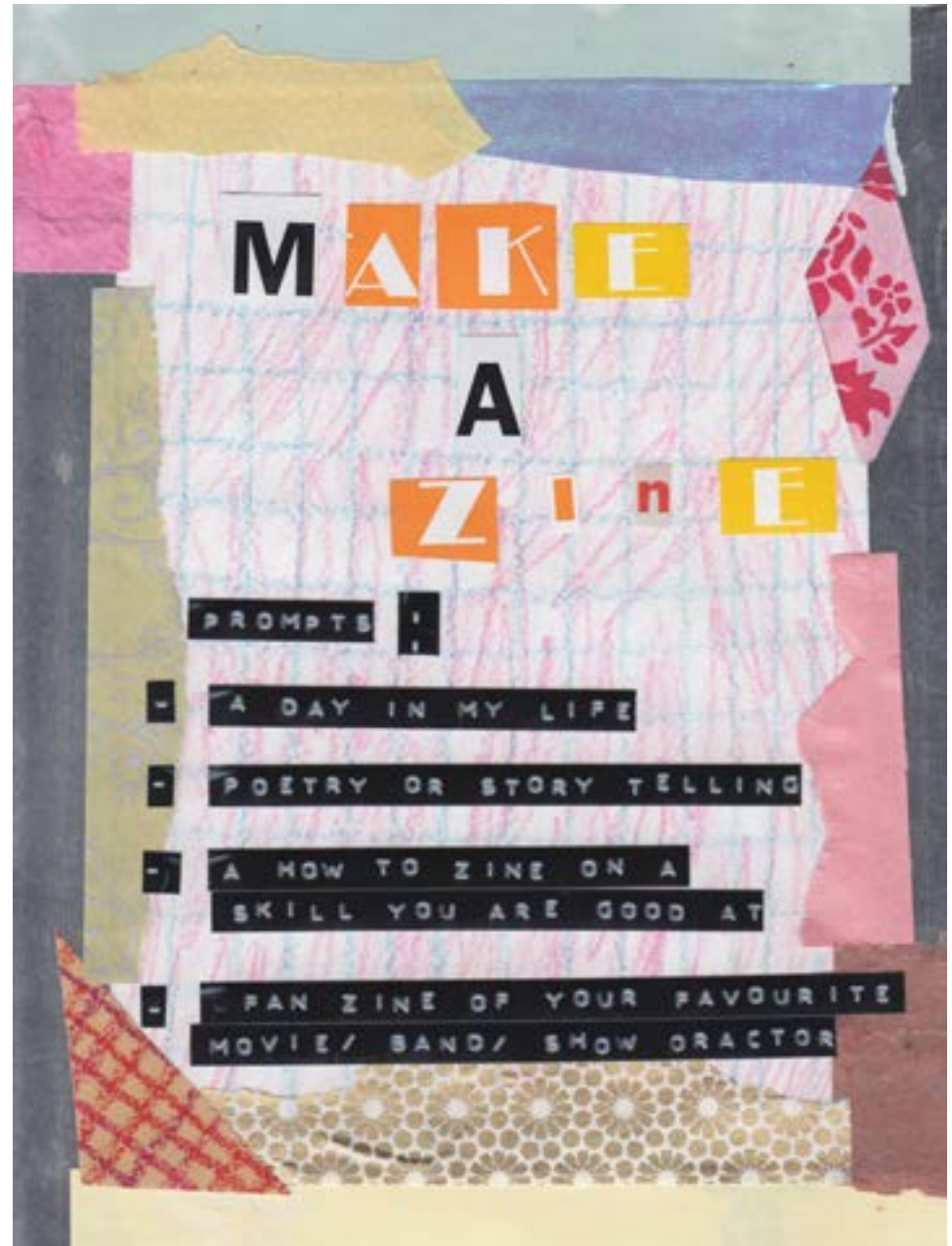
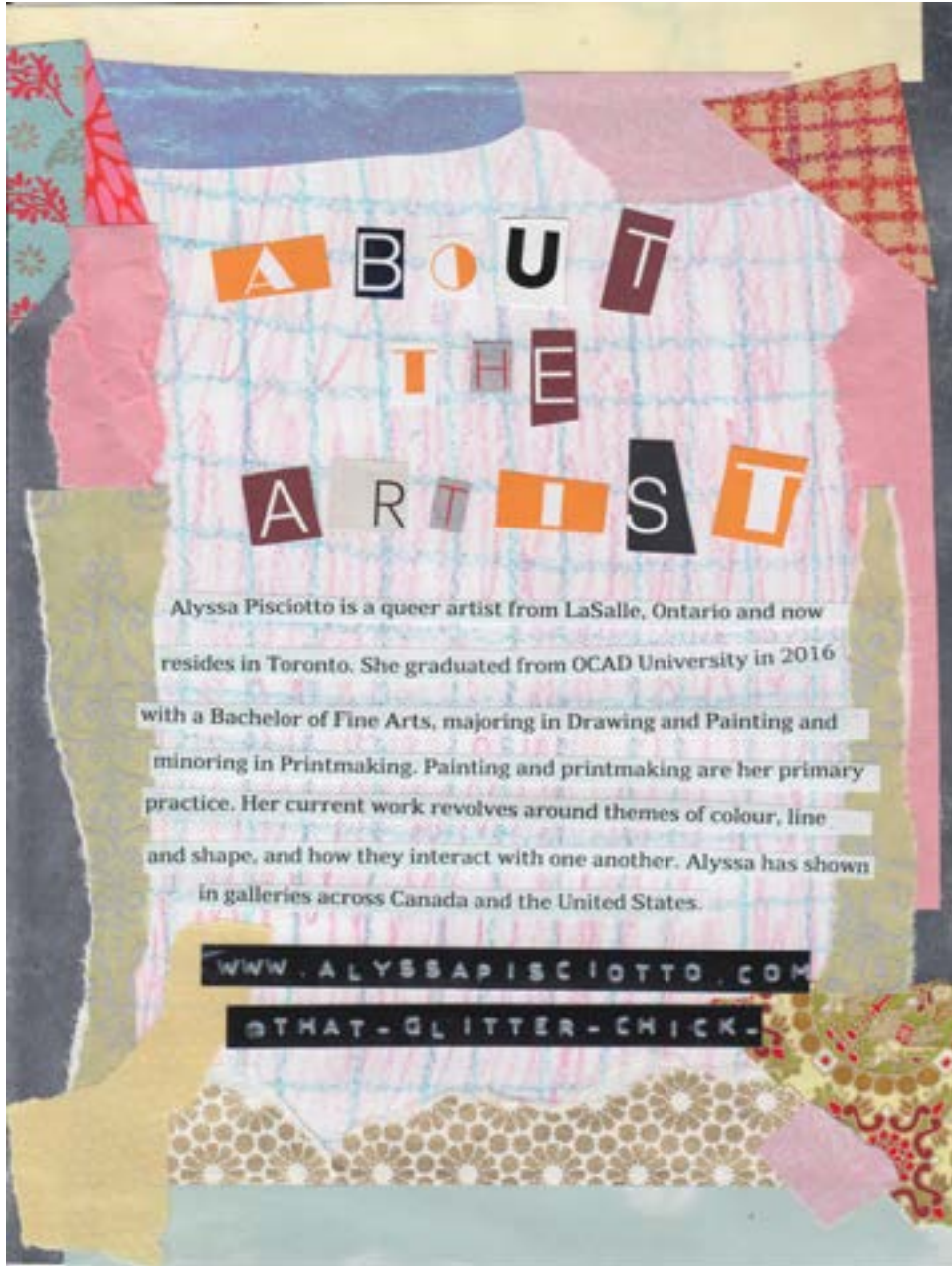


**Alysa  
Pisciotta**











## Judith Price & Grace Salez

Judith Price (MFA, UBC, 1988) combines a 30+ year transdisciplinary art practice with a background in modern dance. Her body of work includes performances (street actions, interventions, and collaborative, durational works), video installations, site-specific installations and short films. She has participated in exhibitions, performance festivals, screenings, and symposiums. Solo performances in galleries and festival events have included still images, video projections, and sculpture, often merging performance and video installation. Over the past two decades, much of her film and video work has focused on the ephemeral, transitory nature of memory and the vicissitudes of the act of remembering. Some of her performances and video/film works have explored the physical and emotional effects of aging on women's experience of agency in society and the impact of cultural perceptions of the function, visibility and value of older women.

The British Columbia Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the City of Victoria have funded her works and they have been shown nationally and internationally. Price is a founding member of the Open Action performance collective, and is retired from post-secondary teaching (time-based art), living in Victoria, BC, Canada. She is an uninvited guest on the Lekwungen/Esquimalt, Songhees WSÁNEĆ territory.

Grace Salez graduated from Emily Carr University of Art & Design in Vancouver, Canada (BFA 1998). Her preliminary works focused on short personal narrative films and videos which led her to be a founding member and past president of MediaNet/Flux Gallery (Victoria, BC) and founder and past director of Dance for Camera Victoria. For the past ten years Grace has been a core member of OPEN ACTIONS PERFORMANCE ART (OAPA) who perform in public spaces once a month. She approaches specific public sites with a curiosity about its history, materiality, and the human demographics that utilize the space. Grace and the entire OAPA performance group expect the unexpected while out in public and often incorporate public response or non-responses. The OAPA performances are video documented and Grace is the editor. She has also done more intentional performance art works with Judith Price at indoor and outdoor events. Both her performances and video documentation of her performances have been exhibited at Victoria artist-run centers which includes The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, at Vancouver artist-run centers, and have been presented at video art festivals throughout Canada, USA, and Europe.

Across most cultures and across centuries, domestic chores have been female centered; most begin with washing. From the repetitive tasks of washing clothes, pots and pans, floors, windows, and walls, to the bathing of children, and eventually bathing elderly parents in need of help, the cycle is never ending. Throughout a woman's lifetime, domestic activities are not particularly honoured because they are seen as being too mundane to be of any importance.

Judith and Grace's film addresses the folding of a sheet, as a shared activity between two older women artists. The viewer is asked to engage visually in the action of folding/unfolding, stretching and pulling, movement of back and forth, in and out, the extension of the sheet into the air; we see the fabric fill with air and swell outward. As they repeat over and over these actions; material and participants become one. This action, sheet folding, allows for reflection, for daydreaming, for planning, for working through issues. As we see their hands perform the task, the spectator is situated into a private discourse on the value, or not, of daily labour, performed mainly by the women in their private domain.

Price and Salez have performed this shared action at five different events. It has become familiar to them as they viscerally signal to each other while engaged in their silent internal monologues. They filmed this activity in an open setting outside of the constraints of four walls; a visual poem to a repetitive mundane activity, made visible as a ritual for contemplation, where the mundane becomes extraordinary.

This film is not a documentation of a live performance as much as a performance for camera. A sound recording of a fragmented spoken text accompanies the film, creating layers of unconnected thoughts; their internal monologues made audible. The camera was handheld to give the film an open feeling of continuous movement, and a close-up intimate look at the shared activity of folding linen/sheets; the movement of their bodies, hands, glances, the movement of the billowing sheet, the precision of folding, is simultaneously more concrete and abstract. This film is intentionally female centered but open to the possibility of other genders finding their own experience of labour being a labour of love filtered through different cultures, different classes, and different geographies, united by the repetitive action of household chores, honouring the mundane as a symbol of our shared histories.



## FOLDING

2021  
performance for  
video  
13:20

*Few tasks are more like the torture of Sisyphus than housework, with its endless repetition: the clean becomes soiled, the soiled is made clean, over and over, day after day.*

Simone de Beauvoir

*Bed-sheets, lily white, starched hard, ironed  
perfection - stiff, how does one dream on  
such a surface?*

*When you touch something it will change.  
Find the layer underneath the layers.*







## Amanda White

Amanda White (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist working at the intersection of art, environment and culture, with a current focus on plant studies. She holds a PhD (Cultural Studies) from Queen's University and a MFA (Visual Art) from the University of Windsor. She has exhibited and published her work with support from SSHRC, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council among others. Amanda's ongoing research includes several studio-based works in progress as well as collaborative projects including a forthcoming co-edited book and a graphic novel. Amanda is currently a SSHRC postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Sustainable Curating in the department of Visual Arts at Western University.

[www.amandawhite.com](http://www.amandawhite.com)



### Rewriting the Wild

**Rewriting the Wild** is an ongoing project in which a series of novels featuring “man-vs-nature” conflict narratives are edited to have female protagonists. For **Missing Pages**, I hosted a reading group around the novel **The Old Woman and the Sea**, adapted from **The Old Man and the Sea**, originally written by American author Ernest Hemingway and published in 1952. Winning the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1953, the original novel has become one of the classic novels of its genre in western literature.

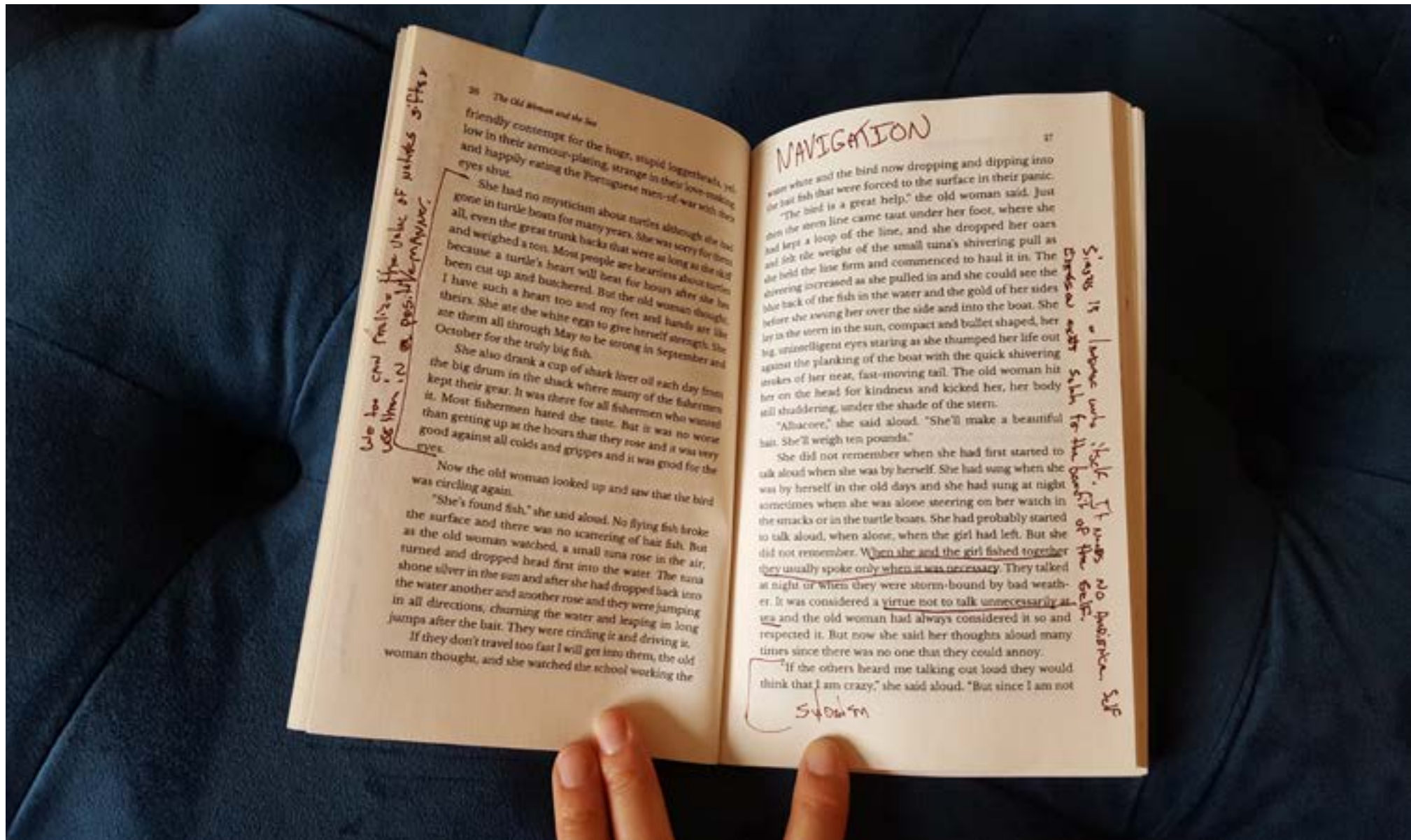
As an artistic experiment, my project is concerned with generating discussion and debate; will this slight but important shift change the story's human-nature narrative in interesting ways? Will it generate new themes, metaphors, and meanings? **Rewriting the Wild** is both a socially engaged project that takes the shape of reading groups and book clubs, as well as a series of art objects, as feminist transformations of cultural artifacts.

The impulse to do this has developed naturally over the course of my current work and research which is centered around imaginings of nature and deconstructing dominant cultural narratives of human/nature relationships. Overall, this experiment attempts to invent a genre missing from the canon of Western literature. While contemporary feminist perspectives create a possible space for changing ideas about human-non-human relationships today, these new readings of classic fictions ask whether different kinds of historical relationships to nature might emerge via the female voice. This work is itself a form of fiction that imagines, what if these perspectives and voices had always been heard, what possible worlds could we live in now?

***The Old Woman  
and the Sea***  
2020

bookwork





She has and realize the value of fishes after use them in a pos. way rather.

friendly contempt for the huge, stupid logheads, yellow in their armour-plating, strange in their low-making and happily eating the Portuguese men-of-war with their eyes shut.

She had no mysticism about turtles although she had gone in turtle boats for many years. She was sorry for them all, even the great trunk backs that were as long as the island and weighed a ton. Most people are heartless about turtles because a turtle's heart will beat for hours after she has been cut up and butchered. But the old woman thought, I have such a heart too and my feet and hands are like theirs. She ate the white eggs to give herself strength. She ate them all through May to be strong in September and October for the truly big fish.

She also drank a cup of shark liver oil each day from the big drum in the shack where many of the fishermen kept their gear. It was there for all fishermen who wanted it. Most fishermen hated the taste. But it was no worse than getting up at the hours that they rose and it was very good against all colds and gripes and it was good for the eyes.

Now the old woman looked up and saw that the bird was circling again.

"She's found fish," she said aloud. No flying fish broke the surface and there was no scattering of bait fish. But as the old woman watched, a small tuna rose in the air, turned and dropped head first into the water. The tuna shone silver in the sun and after she had dropped back into the water another and another rose and they were jumping in all directions, charming the water and leaping in long jumps after the bait. They were circling it and driving it.

If they don't travel too fast I will get into them, the old woman thought, and she watched the school working the

### NAVIGATION

water white and the bird now dropping and dipping into the bait fish that were forced to the surface in their panic.

"The bird is a great help," the old woman said. Just when the stern line came taut under her foot, where she had kept a loop of the line, and she dropped her oars and held the line firm and commenced to haul it in. The shivering increased as she pulled in and she could see the blue back of the fish in the water and the gold of her sides before she swung her over the side and into the boat. She lay in the stern in the sun, compact and bullet shaped, her big, unintelligent eyes staring as she thumped her life out against the planking of the boat with the quick shivering strokes of her neat, fast-moving tail. The old woman hit her on the head for kindness and kicked her, her body still shuddering, under the shade of the stern.

"Albacore," she said aloud. "She'll make a beautiful bait. She'll weigh ten pounds."

She did not remember when she had first started to talk aloud when she was by herself. She had sung when she was by herself in the old days and she had sung at night sometimes when she was alone steering on her watch in the smacks or in the turtle boats. She had probably started to talk aloud, when alone, when the girl had left. But she did not remember. When she and the girl fished together they usually spoke only when it was necessary. They talked at night or when they were storm-bound by bad weather. It was considered a virtue not to talk unnecessarily at sea and the old woman had always considered it so and respected it. But now she said her thoughts aloud many times since there was no one that they could annoy.

"If the others heard me talking out loud they would think that I am crazy," she said aloud. "But since I am not

Sublim

Singing is a pleasure unto itself. It needs no audience. Singing is a pleasure unto itself. It needs no audience. Singing is a pleasure unto itself. It needs no audience.





## Donna M. Paris & David Zapparoli

**Donna M. Paris** is a multi-generational African Canadian, born and raised in Nova Scotia, but has called Toronto home for the past 30 years.

Donna is one of three African Canadian women who started the collective “In The Black:Canada”. Through the collective, they have produced a series of videos entitled **In The Black:Canada – The Web Chronicles** (2015) in which African Canadians speak about their experiences of being Black in Canada. Their video installation **The Windsor Project** (2017), chronicles the history and experiences of African Canadians growing and living in Windsor, Ontario and the variety of journeys it took for them and their ancestors to arrive there. This is now part of the permanent collection at the Art Gallery of Windsor.

Donna co-produced a project titled **I Am Black History**. She was able to travel Eastern and Central Canada in 2019 to collect stories from Black people about their experiences of being Black in Canada. She joined forces with photographer David Ofori Zapparoli who took portraits of the interview subjects.

With a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts in 2020, Donna continued the project in the form of a podcast titled **I Am Black History**. Her recordings now include people from Eastern Canada as well as Quebec and Western Canada.

Since the early 1980s **David Zapparoli** has used lens-based art to document and reveal the lives of the marginalized in society. In the mid to late 1980s he collaborated with filmmakers on productions that focused on the immigration experience, Black female representation, and jazz music in Toronto. In the 1990s he photographed the Regent Park housing development, which resulted in several exhibitions and a book.

In the 1990s he made a series of experimental portraits that addressed the issue of “nature vs. nurture” that related to his African and European heritage. Part of this work travelled internationally and is represented in **The Anthology of African and Indian Ocean Photography**. Earlier this year, he published a book that spans 40 years of his documentary photography. It can be purchased at his website, [dozpicks.ca](http://dozpicks.ca).

For I Am Black History Project, Zapparoli is collaborating with artist Donna Paris, and is providing the portraits of all the interviewees.

[www.intheblackcanada.ca](http://www.intheblackcanada.ca)



## I Am Black History

2019

digital audio recordings,  
digitized photos, links to  
archival & other media

**I Am Black History** explores the unseen, unknown, and undocumented history of African Canadians. The goal is to expand the breadth and depth of knowledge and reorient commonly-held historic narratives of African Canadians (used here to include people who identify as West Indian heritage, Black Canadian, and or multi-racial with African heritage). The result of the misconceptions or omissions of our visibility and participation in the common Canadian narrative has, in part, contributed to the anti-Black racism that has become entrenched in Canadian society. This project collects and animates oral histories of African Canadians through audio recordings and photographs that puts faces to the personal anecdotes of the contributing individuals.

This presentation is an abbreviated version of an ongoing project and collaboration between Donna Paris and David Zapparoli. They are planning a travelling installation that could include archival footage, recording stations, local artist performances, and panel discussions by local participants. They welcome inquiries from curators, art galleries, and other art institutions.

**Mary**

Mary Louise McCarthy was born December 24, 1955 in Woodstock New Brunswick.

“I think one of the forgotten stories of New Brunswick Black history is how long our ancestors have been in the country. So, on my dad’s side I can date my fifth great-grandmother back to the Book of Negroes. I really would like to know more about her, her name was Sabina Grant and she arrived in, actually, Nova Scotia. She’d left a plantation in Virginia, and made her way up through New England and got on a ship in New York and came to Nova Scotia in 1783, and she was brought back to New Brunswick in 1784 with one of the founding loyalist families. And he was a judge, Isaac Allen. And my fifth great-grandmother was his servant and housekeeper. She had two children when she was in New Brunswick. I mean, she would have been in her late forties then. She was 36 in 1783, New Brunswick was formed, it was created in 1784, and she had a child in 1785, maybe even 1784 and 1785, I’d have to look at my family tree to see when those two boys were born, but my father, and I am a direct descendant from those two boys.”





**Lorna**

Lorna Richards was born May 3, 1962 in Handsworth, Birmingham, England.

“When you think about Black people, for the last five hundred years, we’ve been trying to find our tribe. We don’t know who our tribe is. And when you don’t have an anchor, you don’t know who you are. When you don’t know who you are, you’re lost. And what we have, currently, generations of young people that have been lost. Lives have been lost, unnecessarily, though gun violence, drugs, through many other means, cut down real early. And I think that if young people had that sense of identity, it doesn’t mean that what happened wouldn’t have happened, but you know what, when you know who you are, you have a history, you have a sense of pride, you have a sense of belonging, you have a sense of connection, you have a sense of purpose. These stories can help to create that for some future generation of people. I have grand-nieces. They’re biracial, people look at them and will always say to them “What are you?” Just because they can’t put them in a box exactly. But they need to know, regardless of what the hue of their skin is, they need to know, in their DNA, who they are. All aspects of who they are. You know, from their European side to their African-Caribbean-Canadian side. That’s important. So, stories, you know, give you meaning.”

**Scott**

[Listen to Scott's interview here.](#)







## **A Missing Page in Canadian History Textbooks: Anti-Black Racism + Heroic Black Women**

*(What I Learned from I Am Black History & Things My Fore-Sister Saw)*

When discussing about anti-Black racism, Canadians often think of examples from our southern neighbours, the Americans. We criticize their political redlining, reprimand their police brutality, and bash many other systems of inequality baked into their social structures. We tout Canadian multi-culturalism while omitting anti-black racism engrained in our history and our society.

*I Am Black History*, a multi-media project led by Donna M. Paris and David Ofori Zapparoli, asks us to re-examine the common narrative around Black Canadians. A missing but crucial page in Canadian history on racial discrimination is wonderfully presented in this project, by highlighting many Black Canadians' intimate stories and livelihoods in Canada. In conjunction with *I Am Black History*, Leslie McCurdy tells the stories of four Black Canadian women through her powerful performance in *Things My Fore-Sisters Saw*. Her beautiful and emotional portrayal of these four contributing women moves me greatly. It compels me to reflect deeply on my understanding of Canadian history and my perception on anti-black racism in Canada. But more importantly, it prompts me to do my own research on anti-Black racism in Canada, and these important figures whom I did not remember being taught back in school.

### **Slavery in Canada**

In early colonial Canada, the enslavement of African people were legal and helped fuel the colonial enterprise. Chattel slavery was practised in New France in the early 1600s. The Canadian Encyclopedia states that "out of approximately 4,200 slaves in New France at the peak of slavery, about 2,700 were Indigenous people who were enslaved until 1783, and at least 1,443 were Black people who were enslaved between the late 1600s and 1831".

After the British defeated the French, and Montreal was surrendered, the Articles of Capitulation was signed in 1760, and included the following clause on enslavement:

*The Negroes and panis [slaves of first nations descent] of both sexes shall remain, in their quality of slaves, in the possession of the French and Canadians to whom they belong; they shall be at liberty to keep them in their service in the colony, or to sell them; and they may also continue to bring them up in the Roman Religion.*

—"Granted, except those who shall have been made prisoners."

The abolitionist movement in Britain had been fighting against slave trade since 1770s. Numerous legal attempts to abolish slavery have been made in British North America in the early 1800s, but failed. It was not until 1834 slavery was finally abolished throughout British North America, 21 years before the United States added the 13th amendment to their constitution, which abolished slavery.

[Learn More](#)

### **Marie-Joseph Angélique**

Marie-Joseph Angélique (1705-1734) was born in Madeira, Portugal, an active port of the Atlantic slave trade where she was first enslaved. In early teens, she was sold to the Flemish merchant Nichus Block. In 1725, She was taken by boat to North America, and was purchased by the French merchant Francois Poulin de Francheville, who brought her to Montréal to work as a domestic slave. When Francheville died in 1733, Angélique became a property of his widow, Therese de Couagne.

In December of 1733, Angélique asked her mistress for freedom but was denied. In early 1734, her mistress sold her to François-Étienne Cugnet of Québec City for 600 pounds of gunpowder. Upon hearing news of her sale, Angélique threatened to burn down Francheville's house with her in it. Soon after, Angélique tried to ran away with Claude Thibault, a white labourer from France, to Europe, but was tracked down by police and returned to her owner, to be shipped to Québec City.

On the evening of April 10th 1734, a large portion of Montréal was destroyed by fire. Angélique was accused of starting the fire and was arrested by police on the next day. In her jail cell, she was tortured by having her legs crushed. Under torture, she broke down and admitted to setting fire. With no trial by jury, no lawyers, and only an inquisitorial tribunal that lasted for 6 weeks, she was charged with arson and sentenced to death. She was hanged; then her body was displayed for 2 hours, and placed on a pyre and burnt. Marie-Joseph Angélique has become a symbol of Black resistance and freedom.

[Learn More](#)

### **Rose Fortune**

Rose Fortune (1774-1864) was born originally in Virginia, US. During the American Revolutionary War, the British offered freedom to runaways slaves and free blacks from the states if they provided their freedom. Fortune and her parents were among the 3,000 Black Loyalists who were transported from New York to Nova Scotia. In 1783, they relocated to Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, when Fortune was around 10.

Around 1825, when African Canadians and especially women were not encouraged to start businesses, Fortune began carting passenger's luggage between ferry docks and nearby homes and hotels. She soon became a trusted figure for travellers. In 1841, her business became known as Lewis Transfer; and she started using horse-drawn wagons to transport luggage. She helped travellers find accommodation, and woke them up at hotels so they could meet their ferries on time.

Her reputation was known by the town leaders, who entrusted her with safeguarding property and maintaining order in Annapolis Royal, acting as the town's waterfront police officer. She worked into her 70s.

Rose Fortune is now known as an entrepreneur and first policewoman in North America. Her strength, trust, and pride is remembered and honoured.

### Racial Segregation in Canada

Chattel slavery was abolished in 1834; but the idea of racial inferiority justified the segregation of Black people in Canada for many years afterwards. Practises of racial segregation differed from province to province. For example, until 1870, Black people were forbidden from practicing a trade of selling goods in St. John, New Brunswick, barred from fishing at St. John Harbour, and could not live within the city limits unless they were employed as a servant or labourer.

Schools were legally racially segregated by the mid-19th century. If no legal measures were in place, white families often enforced an informal segregation by blocking Black students from attending schools. Canadian universities often rejected applications on the basis of race. If accepted, Black students faced racial restrictions that white students did not. The last segregated school in Canada was closed in 1983 in Nova Scotia.

Housing and home ownership were also restricted for Black Canadians. Black Loyalists did not receive land grants that were promised to them. Those who did received smaller allotments of land of poorer quality and physically segregated from the Whites. Many Blacks were also denied rental accommodations based on their race. Many areas of employment were also segregated. Black Canadians were typically relegated to the service sector. Government agencies did not encourage hiring of Black people. Unions also denied membership to Black workers.

Commercial establishments, such as theatres, restaurants, hotels and recreational facilities, all had various degrees of segregation. There were even segregation in death! The Camp Hill Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia had a "coloured section" for Black veterans; St. Croix Cemetery forbid burials of any coloured person.

Human rights movement in the mid-20th century, such as Black protests, have influenced the introduction of anti-racism legislation in different provinces and cities beginning in 1940s, which was later consolidated into the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms in 1982, entrenched in the new Constitution Act.

### Mary-Ann Shadd

[Learn More](#)

Mary-Ann Shadd (1823-1893) was born to free parents in Delaware, a slave state. She was educated by the Quakers and later taught throughout United States. In 1851, she attended the North American Convention of Coloured Freemen in Canada, at which she was encouraged by Henry and Mary Bibb, activists and publishers of the newspaper Voice of the Fugitive, to take a teaching position in Sandwich (now Windsor), Canada West. In the same year, she established a racially integrated school open to all who can afford.

Regarding the issue of segregation, Henry and Mary Bibb (who favoured segregation) and Shadd (who was against segregation) had numerous debates in the form of editorials on Voice of the Fugitive. Shadd founded The Provincial Freeman on March 24th, 1853, to publicize the success of Black persons living in freedom in Canada. This made her the first Black female newspaper publisher in North America. She edited the paper with Samuel Ringgold Ward, but did not list her own name to conceal the paper's female editorship.

Shadd returned to the United States during American Civil War to work as a recruitment agent for the Union Army. Years later, she pursued law studies at Howard University, and became one of the first Black women to complete a law degree in 1883.

Mary-Ann Shadd is now honoured for her advocacy for the abolition of slavery and for women's suffrage, and of course for being the first Black female newspaper publisher in North America.

[Learn More](#)

## Viola Desmond

Viola Irene Desmond (1914-1965) was born in Halifax. Her parents had an intermarriage (her father was Black and her mother was White), but was accepted into the Black community and highly regarded because of their active involvement in community organizations.

Desmond briefly taught in two racially-segregated schools for Black students. After studying at the Field Beauty Culture School, she opened Vi's Studio of Beauty Culture in Halifax, aspiring to success as an independent businesswoman. She opened a beauty school, the Desmond School of Beauty Culture, to train women and expand her business.

On the evening of November 8th 1946, Desmond decided to watch a movie at the Roseland Theatre. She requested a ticket for a seat on the main floor, but cashier refused and handed her a ticket to the balcony, the seating generally reserved for non-White customers. She decided to take a seat on the main floor, but was then confronted by the manager, to whom she explained that she had attempted to exchange the balcony ticket for a main floor ticket, and was willing to pay the difference in cost but had been refused. When Desmond refused to leave her seat, police was called; she was dragged out of the theatre, injured, and taken to jail.

In the next morning, Desmond was brought to court and charged based on her alleged refusal to pay the difference in tax between upstairs and downstairs ticket prices. Provided with no legal representation, and with no crown attorney present, Desmond was fined \$26; and \$6 were awarded to the manager of Roseland Theatre. After having her injuries examined, Desmond contacted a lawyer in order to reverse her charge. The civil law suit sought to establish that the theatre's manager acted unlawfully when he forced her out of the theatre, and thus needed to compensate her on the grounds of assault, malicious prosecution and false imprisonment.

On March 8th 2016, the Bank of Canada announced that Viola Desmond would appear on the face of the new \$10 note, to be the first Canadian woman to appear on the face of a Canadian banknote. On November 19th 2018, the bill was released. Viola Desmond's face on it represents immense courage and strength against racial segregation in Canada.

[Learn More](#)

## Conclusion

All these women's stories are incredibly inspiring and compelling! It is embarrassing to have only learned about them now. In our knowledge institutions, when we learn about prominent Canadians who had great contributions in Canadian histories, these four women, Marie-Joseph Angélique, Rose Fortune, Mary-Ann Shadd, and Viola Desmond, and their stories should be taught and remembered. Their strength, courage, perseverance, trust, and pride are exemplary and inspiring for the young women and men of the future.

What our knowledge institutions should also address is the history of anti-black racism in Canada that has been omitted and misrepresented. When we discuss about racism, Canadians need to acknowledge our own racist past, that is, in every way, not unsimilar to our southern neighbour. Slavery, segregation, formal and informal discriminations were very much present in our history; but for some reason, these pages were missing in our textbooks.

We also need to acknowledge our racist present, that is still impacting countless lives around us. I Am Black History is an enormously powerful project that invites us all to not only critically examine the common narrative on the lives of Black Canadians, but also, most importantly, reflect on ourselves, on what we can do or change to build a just, inclusive, diverse and beautiful community.

## Leslie McCurdy

## Things My Fore-Sisters Saw

**Presented in conjunction  
with I Am Black History by  
Donna M. Paris and David  
Ofori Zapparoli**

Leslie McCurdy, critically-acclaimed actor, playwright, dancer, choreographer, singer and mentor, eloquently portrays: Marie-Joseph Angeliqne, a slave who was said to have burned down “half” of Montreal from whom we have the first slave narrative in North America; Rose Fortune, the first “policewoman” in North America who helped “freedom seekers” settle in Annapolis Royal Nova Scotia; Mary-Ann Shadd, educator, publisher, and abolitionist: the first North American woman to publish and edit a newspaper and Viola Desmond who refused to give up a seat to segregation well before the celebrated Rosa Parks and who is the new face of the Canadian \$10 bill.

For over 21 years Leslie has toured across Canada with her one-woman play, **Things My Fore-Sisters Saw**. The play, about which noted Nova Scotian historian Graham Reynolds, author of Viola Desmond’s biography says, “put more history into an hour than what I have in my whole book”, is an excellent way to educate audiences on the Canadian history that led up to Viola Desmond’s brave act. Wanda Robson, Viola Desmond’s sister said the performance is “awesome”.



Recipient of the 2014 Elizabeth Havelock Grant from the Windsor Endowment of the Arts, and the 2014 and 2000 Mayor’s Awards for Artist of the Year and Outstanding Performing Artist of Windsor, Ontario respectively, Leslie McCurdy has performed internationally as an actor, dancer/choreographer, and singer. She has several stage film and TV credits but is most famous for the one-woman plays that she writes and performs. The Spirit of Harriet Tubman, her first play, was a finalist for a Canadian Chalmers Award for Best New Play for Young Audiences and was performed at the 2010 Los Angeles Women’s Festival, the 2011 National Black Theatre Festival in North Carolina, the inaugural Living Legacy Series of the DC Black Theatre Festival Washington, DC in 2012 and the inaugural Paul Robeson Art is a Weapon Theatre Festival in London, England. Her second play, **Things My Fore-Sisters Saw**, was filmed for TV and was premiered on the Bravo Network in Canada in February 2006. She is lauded for the brilliance of her works and the messages of social consciousness that are instilled through them. Leslie is the subject of a documentary film entitled **On the Money**, depicting her work as a performing artist/ social activist, that is currently playing on the CBC Gem streaming service under the Absolutely Canadian program.

2021

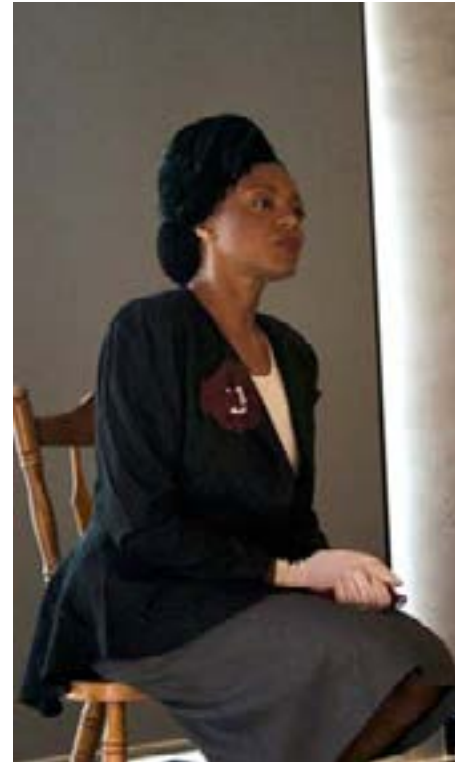
performance  
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**Leslie McCurdy as Rose Fortune**

performance still

**Leslie McCurdy as Mary Ann Shadd**  
performance still



**Leslie McCurdy as Viola Desmond**

performance still



**Leslie McCurdy**

performance still



## Missing Pages

I sat outside Melville Café, reading an interview about “haunting” with the sociologist Avery Gordon, who once began a book by arguing for the importance of the statement “life is complicated”. Haunting, as Gordon uses it, “is an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes directly, sometimes not”.

(Gordon 2020)

As I was reading I watched a crew unload a collection of items into Design at Riverside, the gallery dedicated to architecture and design on the ground floor of the University of Waterloo School of Architecture. After months of closure, I was excited to see that the space would soon open up again. I noticed a stack of pages falling out of place – uncontained amongst containers. Unsettled by a familiarity with the disorder of the pages, I watched for a while.

Shannon Mattern extends the role of knowledge institutions as structures “that constitute and serve communities and function within a public realm”. The gallery sits within the grid of the School of Architecture, taking up a structural bay of the old silk factory. So closely tied to the institutional knowledge of the public library across Queen’s Square and the university library sitting discretely one floor above, the gallery is positioned to connect and collect from both knowledge institutions producing a public face for the public space of the university. The weighty brick buildings on Queen’s Square are in the business of constituting communities.

(Mattern 2014)

I’d all but forgotten to come back and see the new exhibition but the pages took up too many corners in my mind. I walked along the gallery wall expecting to see them, maybe hung up in a grid or spread out amongst other works, but they weren’t there. I doubled back to check if I’d missed them. I asked the attendant, “Have you seen them?” The confusion in her normally welcoming response made me feel a little ridiculous and I left the gallery in an attempt to save face.

In the interview, Gordon says that “Ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer contained or repressed or blocked from view”. I sat with her words by the embankment of the Grand River. The detritus pushed up onto the concrete by the river looked a lot like the pages I was searching for. The hard edge of the embankment forces the river to leave behind parts of its collection to dry up and stain the concrete unceremoniously. I wondered if what I’d seen was really just a pile of junk, leftovers from the past. Maybe the pages were nothing at all. Up and above on the Main Street bridge, the stains look washable. I walked across, convincing myself that the pages I’d seen were, in fact, nothing to look at.

(Gordon 2020, 339)

I stood in front of the storefront where BRIDGE once hosted exhibits and events. Officially BRIDGE Centre for Architecture and Design, the space had been home for the unplaced curiosities and hobbies of architecture students hoping to participate in the community around the School. It was emptied out to become something, a proper store for Main Street. I imagined the pages placed in mismatched frames built for the empty space in front of me, like WANTED posters for something to happen. “There’s always something or someone living and breathing in the place blinded from view.” Gordon’s words propelled me. Pressed up against the storefront glass, I asked the pages where they’d gone. Were they really missing or was I just not seeing them?

(Gordon 2020, 344)

Being missing isn’t like being forgotten. The pages stuck. They kept reminding me of their presence in their absence. This wasn’t a find-the-ancient-treasure-under-the-spot-marked-X kind of haunting. The pages were living and reactive. I joked that they didn’t want to be found so they could continue to live in my mind. They’d make quiet appearances in the in-betweens, underneath, and behinds everywhere I went, underpinning the places I inhabited. Missing, they could be anywhere and anything.

When you notice something is missing, it’s hard not to smother it in the search. As my search intensified I grew attached to an imagination of what they were. I began insisting on the stories the pages would tell once I found them. I made rounds of the gallery searching for something that fit my description. There was no room for the pages to speak and the conversation petered out.

Gordon said, “the ghost and its needs must be treated respectfully, and not ghosted or disappeared again in the act of dealing with the haunting”. I sat outside Melville Café, not able to recall why I’d been so intent on finding the stack of pages. The beauty of the mystery was lost on me.

(Gordon 2020, 339)

Life refused to be decidedly uncomplicated. The pages called out louder, inviting an audience.

Gordon Avery. *Haunting and thinking from the Utopian margins: Conversation with Avery Gordon*. By Katherine Hite & Daniela Jara. Memory Studies, 2020.

Mattern Sharron. *The Signal*. By Trevor Owens. Library of Congress, 2014.

This digital publication is produced in conjunction with Missing Pages, organized by BRIDGE Centre for Architecture + Design and Cambridge Art Galleries | Idea Exchange and presented online from September 7 – November 30, 2021.

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Project website design: Wendy Yuan  
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BRIDGE Centre for Architecture + Design Co-directors, 2020 – 2021:  
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BRIDGE Centre for Architecture + Design is a student-run initiative made to bridge the gap between Waterloo Architecture students, professors, alumni, and the community of Cambridge, Ontario. Working with our friends at Waterloo Architecture Students Association, Treaty Lands Global Stories, and On Empathy, we strive to reach beyond the brick walls of the School of Architecture. We value inclusivity, transparency, and the stories that shape the lives of people around us. We'd love to hear from you—what's your story?

Cambridge Art Galleries | Idea Exchange presents contemporary art from two galleries in the City of Cambridge: Preston and Queen's Square. We serve our regional and broader communities through the delivery of contemporary art programs that foster critical cultural dialogue. Our artistic activities engage, embrace, and empower people of all ages and abilities from diverse backgrounds.

Cambridge Art Galleries is situated on the traditional land of Indigenous peoples dating back countless generations. We recognize that it is part of the Haldimand Tract, the traditional land of the Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

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