

anxious yet familiar world

December 18, 2024 - January 21, 2025

There are many layers and traces on our surroundings both subtle and visible, including human and non-human history hidden in corners, shadows, holes, waste, objects, landscape and more. Whether we are conscious of them or not, these layers of life leak both joy and tension into our everyday moments. Anxious yet familiar world is a group exhibition curated by Gizem Candan featuring a diverse selection of artworks by Emily Chudnovsky, Sydney Lad, Francis Pitsadiotis, Deepikah RB, Anile Vincent, and Chaoran Zhou, whose practices explore a range of concepts and materials, such as body, ruins, animate and inanimate objects, climate change, memory, emotions, hope and more. This exhibition offers an environment where pleasure and pressure coexist and often interplay.

The artists examine the hidden state of discomfort in everyday life, juxtaposed with the comfort found in the familiar through diverse mediums and conceptual frameworks.

This dichotomy is reflected in forms such as the uncanny appearance of Lad's salvaged wood sculptures and the state of transition in places that depicts both familiarity and alienation in Vincent's paintings. The works in the exhibition appear both grotesque and playful. Pitsadiotis illustrates sex as giving and receiving in both literal and symbolic ways in their painting, I've seen half of god's face here, composting the merged bodies beneath the layers of the conscious and subconscious mind.

Human waste has become omnipresent in today's world, even in the deep waters and soils that sustain life. Chudnovsky's recent work captures this conflict by using both synthetic and organic decay, creating an intersection where the two converge to form patterns. RB's immersive installation and painting, Nature Not Mother, form a web of life's fragments, inviting viewers to move beyond a human-centric perspective. With its multiple layers, Zhou's sculpture, Brother, reflects the traces people left in places, evoking a sense of familiarity.

Anxious yet familiar world invites the viewer to embrace the often overlooked feeling of oneness found in everyday moments. The exhibition aims to manifest the spirit of hope by encouraging visitors to reconsider how they engage with and find beauty in the subtle aspects of their daily lives.

Text by Gizem Candan

Artists:

Emily Chudnovsky's artistic practice consists of collecting organic remnants and synthetic decay in order to draw out new iterations, connections and regenerations through sculpture-based installations. Her carefully considered use of discarded materials in her immediate environment calls into question our human-made demarcations of nature and waste. Her site specific research has taken place in the Scottish Highlands, Southern California, Yukon Tailing ponds, and Lake Ontario. Chudnovsky is currently living and working in Toronto, Canada.

Sydney Lad is a multimedia artist originating and working from Toronto, Canada. She began her practice with a focus in drawing and painting, soon discovering a love for sculpture during her undergrad at OCAD University. Through her painting and sculpture work, Sydney examines the human body as an antipolitical site and has used her sculptural skills in collaborative projects such as Anwebi Aki for the Aaniin Community centre located in Markham. Expanding her practice every day, Sydney is looking to bring her art to new audiences and platforms.

Francis Pitsadiotis (b. 2000) is a queer, interdisciplinary artist currently based in Toronto, Canada. With an undergraduate degree from OCAD University, and experience with both juried and self-curated group shows, Pitsadiotis uses the artmaking process as sublimation, where anxieties or uncertainties can be funnelled into meticulous painting and sculpture techniques. Interested in worldbuilding, Pitsadiotis creates personal narratives within dynamic figurative compositions that reel with hybridity, intimacy, and eroticism.

Deepikah RB is an Indian interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto. She graduated from OCAD University with an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts. She creates speculative narratives about ecology, climate crisis, and perception using materials like algae, kombucha, plants, gelatine, and found plastics. Her thesis show, "a pace to fall apart," exhibited 8 collaborative artworks with more than humans at Ignite Gallery in April 2024. Deepikah was selected to showcase her work at an international residency in CDMX during Art Week 2024, curated by the Mexican artist duo Tony Macarena. Recipient of the Ontario Graduate Scholarship in 2023, Deepikah organised and participated in group shows, "Aliens Aren't Coming" in July 2023 and "Too Big To Fail" in April 2023. Before moving to Canada, she had exhibited across India.

Dariele Vincet is a Toronto-based artist specializing in oil painting. Her practice concerns the search for certainty and stability in the unknown of transitional periods. With her realistic renderings of familiar, domestic spaces, she creates an entrance and personal narratives and reflect on their thoughts and feelings about change and transition.

Vincet has exhibited her work across Ontario and has been awarded first place in multiple juried exhibitions. She is a recipient of the First Grant from the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation. Vincet completed her BFA in Drawing and Painting at OCAD University.

Chaoran Zhou (b. 2002. Xiamen, China) is a current undergraduate student in the Drawing Painting Department at OCAD University. Zhou's work has spanned installation, Painting, Video, audio, and photography, primarily concerned with the conceptual possibilities of the visual arts, with themes expanding from social and cultural realities, and with exploring the impulses, passions, and wills of the human heart, through which the idea of beauty is expressed.

Curator:

Gizem Candan (b. Istanbul, Turkey) is a visual artist and curator based in Montréal, with a focus on painting, interdisciplinary practices and climate change. She recently graduated from OCAD University in Toronto with a MFA in Criticism and Curatorial Practice, where her thesis explored tangible and metaphysical aspects of composting and life inside compost piles while seeing it as a metaphor for transformation of mind and body. She also studied her BFA, one in Plastic Arts and Painting and one in Graphic Design, at Veditepe University in Istanbul. Her artistic and curatorial practice delves into the tensions and interactions between humans and their surroundings in the ecological crisis, envisioning a reimagined harmony based on her own experiences.

Candan has exhibited her work in Canada and Turkey at spaces such as Sivarulrasa Gallery, Alomonte; TD Gallery at Toronto Reference Library; Elgiz Museum; Pera Museum; Akbank Sanat, Istanbul; Arkas Art Center, Izmir; and Cermodern, Ankara. Candan has also curated two-person and group exhibitions at Ingite Gallery and Xpace Cultural Center, Toronto.