

# STANDS IN THE STREAM

Curatorial Incubator v.19



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# Introduction

Kiera Boulton

The call for this year's Curatorial Incubator, "Islands in the Stream," draws from one of the first guiding principles I learned about the Vtape distribution collection: once a work comes into distribution, it can be contextualized within the entirety of the Vtape catalogue. This quickly became one of my favourite ways of thinking about our holdings, and is one of the first details about Vtape I like to pass on to young artists coming into the collection. The idea that a distribution collection—spanning from the 1970s to the present, with work from all over the world—is always shifting to make a place for new understandings. Drawing from this approach, the call for Curatorial Incubator v. 19 invited applicants to sift through our catalogue for unexpected connections, to look for ways in which works come to rely on each other, and to ask how we can create moments of refuge in the never-ending streams of a growing collection.

In August of 2023, a committee of two external jury members and I selected this year's participants. The jury was comprised of Safia Siad, an independent curator and writer whose work deals with rhythm, geography, and creating space for Black aliveness, and Sanaa Humayun, a curator, writer, and artist whose work explores non-narrative storytelling and the histories held within objects. Both jurors approached the submission process thoughtfully and rigorously, finally selecting two applicants: Muriel N. Kahwagi and Kai Trotz-Motayne. Following the selections, the incubatees were given access to Vtape's entire distribution collection, and to our Critical Writing Index, artists' files, and other research materials. Both participants visited Vtape for on-site research, where they met with staff and reviewed artists' ephemera. In addition to research support, curators also receive a workshop from a professional in the field. This year's workshop facilitator was Jordan King, an artist and curator who generously shared her experiences of independently archiving for her community, and the process of developing her Fall 2024 exhibition at The ArQuives, "ON STAGE/ OF STAGE," which involved researching the ArQuives holdings.



Both participants' approaches to this year's call found them searching for works that piece together an image or sense of place, with each work in their programs offering a fragment gesturing toward a more complete perspective. Muriel N. Kahwagi's program, *What happened to produce these ruins?*, looks at how individual moving-image works can become accidental archives that record disappearing landscapes from the cities of Beirut, Cairo, and Windsor-Detroit. Each work in this selection captures fleeting documentation of the ever-changing cityscapes as they deteriorate under varying historical forces. Kai Trotz-Motayne's *Where do our memories go?* searches for belonging through works from the Caribbean diaspora, piecing together an image of home through shared traditions, recipes, and first-hand depictions of return. Each of these programs poses a question that—like Vtape's collection—can only really be understood through the sum of its parts.

I would like to thank the incredible community of folks who have helped to make this year's program possible. Firstly, my Vtape colleagues: Wanda vanderStoop, Director of Distribution, for her guidance (no small feat), and for coordinating with the artists; Dustin Lawrence, Technical & Collections Manager, for assembling the program, and for his ongoing care for the collection (another massive assignment); Deirdre Logue, Director of Development, for her encouragement (and making me laugh), and for keeping Vtape moving toward the future; Madeleine Scott, Submissions & Distribution Coordinator, for ensuring that the works in our collection are catalogued and available (and for her moral support); and Chris Gehman, Managing Director, for supporting me through every step of this project, including this publication, and for all the work he does for Vtape (the list is too long). I want to thank our founders, Kim Tomczak and Lisa Steele, who, although retired, generously continue to mentor the younger staff. A very special thank-you to Lisa Steele for her mentorship for this year's Incubator; I hope it makes you proud. And many thanks to Michael Barker, of Acme Art & Design, for creating this beautiful publication.

A special thank-you to the artists featured in these programs: your work guides us, and we are honoured that you have entrusted us with its care. Finally, thanks to Kai Trotz-Motayne and Muriel N. Kahwagi for your thoughtful programs, for the time you spent with the collection, and for your excitement. I am so grateful to have worked with you both.

WHERE  
DO OUR  
MEMORIES  
MEMORIES  
GO?

Curated by  
**Kai Trotz-Motayne**



## What's scarier than not being able to return is not being able to remember.

As a child of immigrant parents, the idea of “home” has always been complex for me. Growing up in Toronto, I was tasked with memorizing two national anthems: *O Canada* and *Dear Land of Guyana*. Revealing my national allegiance would depend on the person who asked me to sing. Adults in my life, many of them from the Caribbean, would find amusement in my unwavering support for the country I knew little about. Placed in the middle of a circle of adults, my sister and I would be prodded with questions and tantalized<sup>1</sup> for our faulty Guyanese accents. This would usually happen on a Sunday—the day we woke up to calypso music and were told to clean because people coming over. Sometimes the house would smell of saltfish and bake<sup>2</sup>—which was a rare occurrence, as my dad hated the tediousness of both the rolling of the dough and the cleanup. Slowly, the house would come alive with noise that filled every corner. Being a child—and much smaller than everyone else—my memories are filled with the loud laughs of my uncles and the yelling of my aunts.<sup>3</sup> The night would be at its best when they took out the bottle of El Dorado rum, which meant it was storytime. Unsure if I was welcome,<sup>4</sup> I would



often sneak into the room and sit in silence, nestled into one of my parents. These were the moments when I was not confused about where I belonged. This was what it meant to feel at home.

As an adult, I find myself thinking about those Sundays and how they have shaped me. As I get older, so do the elders in the community, bringing to light the precarity of memories like this. Reflecting on the remembrance of the past, Stephen Best asks us to reconcile with the loss of our histories through reclamation and repossession.<sup>5</sup> I see the works in this program as acts of reclamation and repossession, ensuring that our histories are remembered and documented. Coming from a people whose culture is dependent on the oral passing-down of histories, I have found myself preoccupied with how we (and I) remember. For Caribbean folks, film can materialize these

moments. A new generation of Caribbean people, who like me have been raised in Canada, are capturing their oral histories before the memories are lost forever.

Sociologist Robin Cohen, writing on Caribbean diasporas, says there is always “a literal or symbolic interest in return.”<sup>6</sup> I was fixated on returning through my grandmothers’ cooking, accent and stories. After they both passed, I felt like I had no path of return for myself. As descendants of immigrants, looking toward our future, we (the Caribbean community in Toronto) will soon be the holders of these histories. Through this program I ask, how do we (the second-generation children of the Caribbean) return, if ever? My intention is to document this return in its many forms.

Opening the program with Donna James’s *Maigre dog* (1990) (pronounced



*magga dawg*) is important to understanding the ethos of a Caribbean household and the centrality of Caribbean women. Audio is laid over black and white images of a kitchen and colour videos of indoor and outdoor spaces; I imagine the women sitting together around a kitchen table or an old floral-patterned couch. Projecting my own experiences onto the video, the imagined conversation is a remnant of many I have had before. Caribbean upbringings often come with unprovoked proverbs that throughout your childhood you learn to understand and decipher. When explaining the phrase “stay pan-cooked and cut straight,” one of the voices says, “You don’t just give up, you work hard.” For Caribbean people, who are taught that hard work fixes all problems, proverbs are often used to ease or extinguish pain and hardships. Many of these proverbs

have never been written down, but are passed on through fleeting conversations. The intro and outro of the film are bookmarked by the song *Remember*, by calypsonian Lord Creator, as though James is reminding us that these moments are not forever.

In his 2004 short documentary *Home*, Jason Ebanks answers my question through conversation with his community of Black artists. Mostly Caribbean people, their responses are littered with a sense of uncertainty, because what is home? For Black folks whose existence in the West is tied to forced movement, “home” has always been tied to precarity. Home was where we got taken from, home was then where we were transported to as enslaved people, and for many, like my family, home was later the place our parents left in search of “a better life.” Home, then, is complex. A seemingly straightforward



question does not conjure a simple answer. At the beginning of the video, someone says while riding the TTC, “Home is now a journey of finding my history.” Once again, we are struck by the importance of immaterial connections. Toward the end, while standing on the corner, a man in a red shirt lays his hand on his heart and says, “We carry home in here.” When I first watched Ebanks’s film, I smiled to myself. Above the sink, in the kitchen in the Toronto house I grew up in, reads a sign, “Home is where the heart is: Guyana.” Home is a heart-space—a place, or a thing, or a person that conjures affect.

Racquel Rowe’s audio work *Making Sweetbread with Gran* (2020) holds a space of change in the program as the only film that actively addresses the inevitable death of a living archive, showing the importance of keeping and documenting moments such as this

one. Rowe’s grandmother’s recipe for sweetbread, never written down, is now documented by Rowe. The beauty in Gran’s recipe (and other Caribbean recipes) is that there is no failure because each person makes the dish their own. Maybe this flexibility is something we could learn from Rowe’s Gran.

Shaunna Beharry’s poetic *Seeing is Believing* (1991) addresses the intimacy of death and how garments (in this case a sari) act as items of memory that bring one closest to those who are gone. The Guyanese British Canadian filmmaker asks, “Why didn’t they tell me when I was a child that feeling is believing?” Though Beharry may seemingly be attached to the physical item, through her grief she shows how culture is inherited and how it becomes an important part of what we keep when someone passes. Understanding her mother’s identity as a multiracial

woman — Guyanese with a Chinese father — Beharry faces the complex question of her own identity in the wake of her mother's death. As the audience, we bear witness to the complications Beharry experiences when she puts on her mother's sari, and becomes suddenly aware of the physical traits she has inherited from her mother. It is tied again to the question of home — without her mother, where, then, is her home? In her grief, Beharry is forced to ask herself the question I have been asking throughout this essay: In the search for others, am I just attempting to find myself?

Spending time around my grandmother and her sisters, who were raised by a Lokono<sup>7</sup> mother, it was instilled in me from a young age that spirits visit you in your dreams. From the start of my research for this program, I knew that Natalie Wood's dream-like 2007 video *Homesick* would be the final work. Winding through the hills of Maracas (Trinidad and Tobago), Wood takes us on a journey through her place of birth. Weaving through the complex entanglement of identities exemplified throughout this program, Wood's film acts as a final meditation. Through her pilgrimage to her birthplace, we too are taken home. A jumbie<sup>8</sup> overlays the image, as if to remind us that our ancestors walk with us wherever we go. People whose names and stories are forgotten, but whose spirits live on, are represented through our constant retelling of the ever-present jumbie. A reminder that within us, they are carried, whether intentionally or not — because as any Caribbean person knows, *yuh na have no control ova no jumbie* (you can't control a ghost).

In Donna James's *Maigre Dog*, a woman says, "Don't forget where you coming from. If you forget I'll tell you about it." Before the recent deaths of both of my grandmothers, I would have felt comfort in that statement. Now, understanding the loss of those living archives, I myself feel lost. I think of how identities shift, and people are remembered. My living memory of my family begins and ends with Guyana — but the violent origin<sup>9</sup> of my people begins with our (forced) movement across oceans. As a product of transnational movement, I find myself reflecting often on how forced movement has persevered. Climate change, civil unrest, and genocide have forced people out of their homes with no hope of return. In acknowledging that repatriation is not an option afforded to everyone, memory and the continued longing to return stand as acts of protest.

1 Tantalize (v.): to tease, in Caribbean vernacular.

2 Bake (n.): a fried dough (the best recipes are held in people's heads).

3 Yell (v.): something Caribbean people seem to do every time they are around each other or on the phone.

4 Caribbean children are taught to tread carefully: for example, they might be told, "You don't involve yourself in grown people's business."

5 Best, Stephen Michael. *None like Us: Blackness, Belonging, Aesthetic Life*. Duke University Press, 2018.

6 Cohen, Robin. "Cultural Diaspora: the Caribbean Case." *Caribbean Migration: Globalized Identities*, Routledge, 1998, London, pp. 27.

7 The Lokono are Indigenous peoples native to northern South America and the coastal areas of the Caribbean.

8 Jumbie (n.): A spirit.

9 Palmer, Tyrone S. "Otherwise than Blackness: Feeling, World, Sublimation." *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 29, no. 2, Duke University Press, 2020, pp. 247–283.

# Where do our memories go?

Curated by **Kai Trotz-Motayne**

## **Maigre Dog**

**Donna James, 1990, 07:50**

The intention in making *Maigre Dog* was to celebrate the Jamaican women who nurtured Donna James growing up and surrounded her with their vernacular language. James wanted to present the voices of these women and evoke the warmth of countless hours spent in steamy kitchens filled with the smell of food cooked with love. Listening to them “talk that talk” about their lives, their men, and their pain, James wanted to acknowledge the roles that oral history and circular thinking have played in her own development. The tape reveals layers of thought, whispers of memories, and circles of knowing, which together evoke the complexity of the life process.

## **Home**

**Jason Ebanks, 2004, 14:30**

A documentary exploration of the word “home,” as told by Black artists living in Toronto.

## **Making Sweetbread with Gran**

**Raquel Rowe, 2020, 07:40**

Racquel Rowe: “*Making Sweetbread with Gran* is one of my works where I focus on the matriarch of my family as she does different tasks. I was fortunate enough to spend the summer at home in Barbados where I spent time learning how my granny makes traditional Barbadian dishes. This work examines the relationship between culture, food, history, and the passing on of traditions.”

## **Seeing is Believing**

**Shaunna Beharry, 1991, 08:27**

The artist’s camera searches a photograph of her mother, following the folds of the silk sari in the photograph as they dissolve into grain and resolve again.

## **Homesick**

**Natalie Wood, 2007, 03:14**

*Homesick* is an experimental and dream-like video that documents a drive over the Maracas hills. The drive is winding and scary and conveys the artist’s struggle with her relationship to her homeland. The viewer comes along for the drive and we both end up hitting a wall that takes us into another space populated by a Moko Jumbie—a spirit healer—who moves us in a dance in a non-linear time and space that heals.



WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO PRODUCE  
THESE  
RUINS?

Curated by  
**Muriel N. Kahwagi**



Playing Ball, 2013

**In what ways do video works  
function as archival records  
of a specific place and time?**

**What version of “reality” is  
recorded through artists’ films?  
What do these films reveal  
about the world we inhabit?**

*What happened to produce these ruins?* presents six films that reflect on moving-image works’ ability, consciously or otherwise, to leave a material trace of places, becoming accidental archives that document disappearing landscapes. Looking at the cities of Beirut, Cairo, and Windsor-Detroit, this program explores video works as sites of investigation through which we can excavate remnants of the past, reflecting on the ways in which these works may (or may not) function as archives for the future, and on the role of artists as (unwitting) keepers of history. More specifically, the films selected here look at different states (and traces) of decay in the wake of late capitalism, revealing layers of corrosion, both visible and hidden, that either mirror or foreshadow latent collapses.



**Saving Face, 2003**

This program opens with Detroit—a city that lies right across the river-border from Windsor and a mere fifteen-minute drive from where I live, but which I cannot visit without a U.S. visa—and ends with Beirut, the city where I was born and raised, and whose inherent familiarity, once a source of comfort, had become devastatingly oppressive. Sandwiched in between is Cairo, a place as real as it is fabled, a land so ferociously mythologized that it has become brutally etched in our minds through dreamlike and bastardized imagery: you don't need to have been to Cairo to convince yourself that you have.

What would it mean for us to take video works apart and inspect them as archival records? What can we hope to learn by viewing them through a forensic, rather than a poetic, lens? *What happened to produce these ruins?*

considers these possibilities by looking at films in which the city itself is the main subject—a central character around which everything else revolves. Each one of these cities has a story and history of its own—indeed, a temporality of its own—and though these histories and temporalities may differ, the five artists selected here seem to have captured them at a decisive moment in and through their films. There's something uncanny about these places—revelatory, almost. The people that inhabit them are as haunted as the ruins that pervade them, with remains of decay seeping into their very fibre, taking on different forms and manifestations. Which ever way you look, you get the deafening sense that something is amiss. Things seem to be falling apart at the seams, revealing the horrific and the grotesque, but also the painfully



**Night Visitor: The Night of Counting the Years, 2011**

mundane and ordinary. Something is on the brink, but of what, we don't quite know.

This program opens with Detroit—and with good reason. It's a more or less accepted fact that the best thing about living in Windsor is Detroit. Windsor is a small city—secluded and isolating in more ways than one—but for many Windsorites, its saving grace is its proximity to the U.S. The DIA and the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit are a short drive away—some might say they're even closer than the local Windsor Walmart—but Canada has its own advantages, too, in the form of Ruffles all-dressed chips and a lower legal drinking age. But for me (and countless others), Detroit is something of a forbidden city, despite its staggering proximity. A third-world citizen with permanent resident status, I'm privileged enough to live here, but not

privileged enough to go anywhere else. In my ten months of residing in Windsor, I have not once been able to visit Detroit, a city that is and continues to be a complete stranger to me. Borders are a man-made thing, and they serve those who draw them—not those who sit on the wrong side of the colouring lines. This program began with a simple premise: what would it mean to access a city like Detroit through artists' films? How can video works function as postcards of a place? These questions are the building blocks of this program's larger inquiry about video works' function as (accidental) archival records of a specific place and time; and the role of artists as (inadvertent) archivists.

Corinna Schnitt's *Playing Ball* (2013) opens with a man and woman playing basketball in Detroit's Michigan Building, though we don't quite know it yet. Though dressed in business attire,



they're engaged in an activity that's very un-businesslike — the dissonance between what they're wearing, what they're doing, and where they seem to be is eerie at best. For the first eight minutes out of ten, the pair are playing ball in what seems to be an abandoned factory, rotting away as the echoing sound of the ball hitting the concrete floor fills the frame. But as the camera pulls out, the space reveals itself to be the Michigan Building, a once-imposing, now-decayed renaissance revival structure that has become synonymous with Detroit's economic devastation. The building, initially conceived as a theatre, now serves as a parking lot in America's former motor city, a ruin in and of itself. That Schnitt created this video the year that Detroit filed for bankruptcy is lost on no one — *Playing Ball* is not nearly as sinister and disquieting as it is prophetic.

In *Saving Face* (2003), Jalal Toufic films scores of posters of parliamentary candidates that had all but devoured Beirut's city walls during the parliamentary campaign of 2000. Their faces dominate the city — Toufic makes sure that we make note of that — seemingly smiling at one another, their rivalry notwithstanding. But their virulent presence is as ephemeral as it is exasperating, as we see their faces being scraped off the walls until all that we are left with are fragments of paper and deteriorated faces. In some instances, the physical removal of parts of a poster reveals another effaced poster underneath — another face distorted beyond recognition or identification. What seems to be a bottomless pool of featureless faces suggests that there is no escaping the all-consuming nature of the political decay and corruption that has engulfed Lebanon for decades.



Most Fabulous Place, 2008

Set during the spring of 2011, Maha Maamoun's *Night Visitor: The Night of Counting the Years* (2011) brings together mobile phone footage found on YouTube, documenting the break-in at the state security buildings in Cairo and Damanhur after the first wave of the Egyptian revolution. Shot in near-complete darkness, the various clips guide us into the belly of the beast, where shaky phone cameras reveal lavish furniture and opulent chandeliers, bearing witness to the corrupt wealth of the oppressive ruling class. Up in the offices are cabinets and drawers chock full of different forms of decay — official state documents of a fallen regime and framed photographs of those in power, the latter of which are reminiscent of the washed-out faces that haunt Toufic's film.

Christopher McNamara's *What to do? Part 1 of a Triptych* (1992) is a filmic

portrait of Windsor, Canada's automotive capital, at the height of its industrialization drive. In the upper part of this split-screen video, a baby's face looms against the city's deserted, late-capitalist surroundings. The lower half shows us a carousel of middle-class dwellings, a succession of less-than-ordinary single-family homes and familial decay that stand in sharp contrast to the Michigan Theater's majestic ruins right across the border, which we see in Schnitt's film. Wavering between the austere and the whimsical, the film hints at the fallacy and downfall of the ideology of the family unit that has plagued North America for centuries, epitomized through the single-family dwellings that consume the frame.

The program closes with Haig Aivazian's *All of your Stars are but Dust on My Shoes* (2021), a visual essay that reflects on the use of light as a

All of your Stars are but Dust on My Shoes, 2021



tool to illuminate, but also to police and exert control. Comprised almost entirely of found footage and material from Aivazian's own phone, the video moves across more cities than one—we see glimpses of New York and Paris, among others—with shots of Beirut during and after the 2019 popular uprising scattered throughout. Though by no means focused on Lebanon's uprising and the devastating collapse of its economy, the darkness (both literal and figurative) that governs much of the film is not unlike the one that pervades Maamoun's *Night Visitor*—and the corruption that Jalal Toufic's *Saving Face* obliquely hints at nearly twenty years prior is highlighted here front and center. But at its core, Aivazian's film forces us to confront the weaponization of light—who has the power to use it, and what it's being used for—and to reflect on the

layers of decay and corrosion that surround us—some of which we may be made aware of, and some of which may never see the light.

# What happened to produce these ruins?

Curated by **Muriel N. Kahwagi**

## **Playing Ball**

**Corinna Schnitt, 2013, 10:00**

Set in Detroit, Corinna Schnitt's *Playing Ball* (2013) depicts a man and a woman playing a game of pick-up basketball inside what looks like a factory. As it draws to a close, the film reveals a former grand theatre now pressed into service as a lowly parking lot, where civilization itself seems to be dissolving before our eyes.

## **Saving Face**

**Jalal Toufic, 2003, 07:19**

Jalal Toufic's *Saving Face* (2003) depicts posters of the 2000 parliamentary campaign in Lebanon being scraped off the walls one by one. In the process, parts of the faces from other older posters appear underneath, revealing distorted figures.

## **Night Visitor:**

### **The Night of Counting the Years**

**Maha Maamoun, 2011, 08:30**

Maha Maamoun's *Night Visitor: The Night of Counting the Years* (2011) is a snapshot of a population in a moment of upheaval. Away from the crowded masses and fervent protests of Tahrir Square that populated the media, Maamoun's video captures multiple first-person experiences of walking and sifting through state archives.

## **What to do? Part 1 of a Triptych**

**Christopher McNamara, 1992, 05:00**

Christopher McNamara's *What to do? Part 1 of a Triptych* (1992) is a travel brochure of sorts, an invitation to travel beyond the literal meanings of the narrative and the visuals. Set in Windsor, Ontario, this video depicts the desolate structures and dwellings that occupy the city.

## **Most Fabulous Place**

**Maha Maamoun, 2008, 01:12**

In Maha Maamoun's *Most Fabulous Place* (2008), postcards of Egypt's prime historical and touristic monument, the Pyramids of Giza, are flipped through to a soundtrack composed from dialogues occurring by the pyramids, sampled from a variety of Egyptian films.

## **All of Your Stars**

### **Are but Dust on My Shoes**

**Haig Aivazian, 2021, 17:35**

Haig Aivazian's *All of Your Stars Are but Dust on My Shoes* (2021) reflects on the public administration of light and darkness as a surveillance tool. Creating an associative genealogy that moves from whale oil lamps to gas lanterns to LED bulbs, from blackouts to curfews, the film generates a sensorial meditation on how the fundamentals of human vision — light hitting the retina — were mechanized into tools that capture our movements, be it in everyday life or on screen.

# Artists' Biographies

**Haig Aivazian** is an artist living in Beirut. Working across a range of media and modes of address, he delves into the ways in which power embeds, affects, and moves people, objects, animals, landscape, and architecture. Between 2020 and 2022, Aivazian was Artistic Director of the Beirut Art Center, where he was founding editor of *thederivative.org*.

**Shaunna Beharry** is an interdisciplinary artist who began her practice in 1984. Beharry uses her own body and identities as primary sites for interrogation, exploring the female body in relation to architecture and the experience of “the sacred,” time/space, and cultural identity.

**Jason Ebanks** grew up in a family house that listened heavily to reggae, jazz, and soul. Ebanks moved to Toronto in 1996 from his hometown, Kitchener, to study at Sheridan College, graduating in 1997 for film production. He started directing short films for his demo reel in 2001, again heavily inspired by music. Ebanks has shot projects for Adidas, LOOP, LAPUZ, and Wolves for their fashion launch soirées. Completed eleven 11-second short films. He's been showcased in a number of film festivals in Toronto such as Images, Toronto Online, Moving Pictures, Rendezvous with Madness, and Rehab.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1960 and raised in Nova Scotia, **Donna James** is

now an Ottawa-based multidisciplinary artist known for her video and photographic body of work, which spans over 30 years. She attended the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (BFA 1984) and undertook graduate studies in Architecture at the University of Calgary. Her art practice has evolved from documentary portraiture to a more personal exploration of storytelling, oral history, language, and the construction of self through experimental video and film/video installation.

**Maha Maamoun** is a Cairo-based artist. She's interested in examining the form, function and currency of common cultural visual and literary images as an entry point to investigating the cultural fabric that we weave and are woven into. She also works collaboratively on independent publishing and curatorial projects. She co-founded an independent publishing platform called Kayfa-ta in 2012. She is also a founding board member of the Contemporary Image Collective—an independent non-profit space for art and culture founded in Cairo in 2004.

**Christopher McNamara** is a video-, sound- and photo-based artist who lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan and Windsor, Ontario. He has exhibited and performed his work extensively in Canada, the United States, and Europe. His most recent film, *A Miscellany of Places That Will Not Appear*, premiered at Experiments in Cinema (Albuquerque,

New Mexico) in April, 2023. McNamara teaches video, animation, sound design, and digital media in the Department of Film, Television and Media at the University of Michigan.

**Racquel Rowe** is an interdisciplinary artist who works across various mediums. She considers performative action as a form of exploratory, open-ended research that is constantly evolving. Investigating first action and then causation is a common method of research for her: essentially, working backwards. She is often compelled to do things and then spends a long time investigating and contextualizing what it is that possesses her to do them. After a performance, rather than before, she finds herself uncovering deep-rooted memories of home that become stronger the more a performance is repeated.

**Corinna Schnitt** is a German video artist who lives and works in Braunschweig. In 1995, she received her master's degree at the Kunstakademie (Art Academy) in Düsseldorf. In 2002, she received the Media Art Award of Wiesbaden and has completed numerous artist's residencies, which include: Villa Aurora (U.S.); The Chinati Foundation (U.S.); Olevano Romano (Italy); Oldenburg (Germany); Hamminkeln (Germany); and Stuttgart (Germany). Since 2009, she has been teaching as the Professor for Film/Video Art with specific attention to documentary

approaches at the University of Art Braunschweig.

**Jalal Toufic** is a thinker, writer, and artist. He was born in 1962 in Beirut or Baghdad and died before dying in 1989 in Evanston, Illinois. Many if not all of his books, most of which were published by Forthcoming Books, continue to be forthcoming even after their publication. He was most recently a participant in the Sharjah Biennial 11, the 9th Shanghai Biennale, Documenta 13, "Six Lines of Flight" (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art), and "A History: Art, Architecture, and Design, from the 1980s Until Today" (Centre Pompidou). In 2011, he was a guest of the Artists-in-Berlin Program of the DAAD; and in 2013–2014, he and Anton Vidokle led Ashkal Alwan's third edition of Home Workspace Program, based in Beirut.

Born and raised in Trinidad, **Natalie Wood** obtained her studio training at the Ontario College of Art and Design and went on to complete a master's in Art Education from the University of Toronto in 2000. Her works have been presented nationally and internationally in several group exhibitions, and at film and video festivals around the world.

# Curators' Biographies

**Muriel N. Kahwagi** is a writer and cultural worker from Beirut, currently operating out of the U.S.-Canadian border. Her research is centred on the politics of collecting and archiving the performative, and the act of listening as a form of preservation in and of itself. She is currently Assistant Curator at Contemporary Calgary and a programmer at the Toronto Arab Film Festival.

**Kai Trotz-Motayne** is a Guyanese-Canadian researcher and writer from Tkaronto/Toronto, Canada. Driven by histories of movement and migration within her own family, her research focuses on the making and meaning of diaspora and how histories are transferred through generations. She holds a joint honours degree from McGill University in History and African Studies. Kai's practice is grounded in the archive—both traditional and non-traditional.

## V tape

Operating as a distributor, a mediatheque, and a resource centre with an emphasis on the contemporary media arts, Vtape's mandate is to serve both artists and audiences by assisting and encouraging the appreciation, pedagogy, preservation, restoration, and exhibition of media works by artists and independents. Vtape receives ongoing support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Government of Ontario.

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