

ART

# The 10 most exciting artists to check out at Art Toronto

BY EMILY LANDAU | OCTOBER 26, 2016 AT 1:49 PM



La Fête (Cambodia). Photograph by by Lauren Guérin, courtesy of Mira Godard Gallery

The Art Toronto mega-fair, running from October 28 to 31 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, is a glorious smorgasbord of eye candy, with thousands of sculptors, painters and photographers from all over the world showing off their work. It's also the best place for deep-pocketed collectors

and museums to discover new artists and snag new pieces. Here's are 10 creative geniuses to catch at the fair.



*Under the Surface.* Photograph by by Tania Brassesco and Lazlo Passi Norberto

## The Pre-Raphaelites

The New York art duo **Tania Brassesco** and **Lazlo Passi Norberto** create lush, painterly photographs inspired by classic lore and literature. Their images include recreations of lavish Klimt portrait, a twisted *Sleeping Beauty* where a woman slumbers in a shadowy tomb blanketed with dead foliage, and this shot, which conjures *Hamlet's* Ophelia, if she somehow ended up in a a watery fin de siècle garret. *Galerie Isabelle Lesmeister, Regensburg, Germany.*



*Becoming Sky Woman.* Image by Skawennati, courtesy of the artist and Ellephant

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## The Machinimist

The Montreal-based Mohawk artist **Skawennati** specializes in machinima, an art form that uses video-game-style CGI to create cartoonishly beautiful imagined worlds. This moody

piece gorgeously combines old legends with new technology, depicting the Sky Woman, a figure out of indigenous folklore who falls to earth through a hole created by a celestial tree.

*Ellephant, Montreal.*

*Mascara 010.* Photograph by Carlos Colin, courtesy of Fazakas Gallery

## The Masked Man

This year's festival includes a special focus on Latin American artists, including **Carlos Colin**, a photographer from Guadalajara, Mexico, who's now based in Vancouver. In his striking image series, his subjects have obscured their faces with vibrant, traditional South American scarves, meant to demonstrate how young people are fighting to preserve their culture. *Fazakas Gallery, Vancouver.*



*Unexpected Call.* Image by Andrew Valko

## The Hollywood Hero

**Andrew Valko** is part portraitist, part landscape artist. His nostalgic, '50s-style renderings of old-fashioned drive-ins feature contemporary screening subjects—Natalie Portman, Angelina Jolie and, here, Scarlett Johansson, taking an emotional phone call in the 2014 thriller *Lucy*. *Mayberry Fine Art, Toronto.*

*Chandelier.* Silkscreen by Cynthia Dinan-Mitchell

## The Silkscreen Artist

The fantastical worlds of Quebec artist **Cynthia Dinan-Mitchell** evoke an abandoned secret garden, cohabited by billowing Victorian flora, fluttering birds and butterflies, and ornate household items, like candelabras, doorknobs and dishes. She draws each design using coloured pencils, then silkscreens them onto textiles—they're equally stunning whether hanging on a wall or printed on a tote bag. *Galerie D'Este, Montreal.*

*Still Life Squirrel Mask.* Painting by Carollyne Yardley, courtesy of Fazakas Gallery

## The Quirk Queen

The Vancouver-based artist **Carollyne Yardley** paints just like the Dutch Golden Agers, except every piece features

squirrels instead of humans—she calls it “squirrealism.” She paints squirrely society ladies with feathered hats and jewels; squirrel mermaids, with flowing hair and seashell bras; and here, a squirrel mask, presumably for a human to wear to a ball. *Fazakas Gallery, Vancouver.*



*Untitled (pine, recycled, hatchback).* Painting by Mike Bayne

## The Realist

At first glance, each of **Mike Bayne**'s pieces look like the kind of five-by-seven photo you'd get printed at a one-hour kiosk. Look closer and you'll see that they're tiny perfect photorealistic paintings depicting the desolate doldrums of suburbia—garages, pick-up trucks, cheap motels and abandoned liquor stores. *Katherine Mulherin Contemporary Art Projects, Toronto.*



*Canadian Papilionumismia*. Artwork by Erika Harrsch

## The Money Maker

With every piece she creates, **Erika Harrsch** commits a felony. The Mexican-American artist collects banknotes from across the world and cuts them into the shape of monarch butterflies. She then arranges them on the wall in a migratory formation that mimics the motion of real wind vectors. *Rofa Projects, Potomac, Maryland.*

La Fête (Cambodia). Photograph by by Lauren Guérin, courtesy of Mira Godard Gallery

## The Traveler

Originally a fashion photographer, the Montreal artist **Laurent Guérin** has shifted his focus to photojournalism over the past decade, shooting geishas in Japan and ritual bathing in the Ganges River. This shot transforms a shabby night market in Cambodia into a fairyland of lights and revelry.

*Mira Godard Gallery, Toronto.*

*You Are Standing in an Open Field (Arctic).* Photograph by Jon Rafman

## The Kitsch King

Each of of **Jon Rafman's** clever prints features a classic Bob Ross–style landscape in the background, and a still life of ephemera in the foreground. In this shot, he's paired an Arctic iceberg with a garage sale's worth of junk: Febreze dispensers, Sudoku puzzle books, old keyboards and the dregs of a glass of rosé. *Galerie Antoine Ertaskiran, Montreal.*

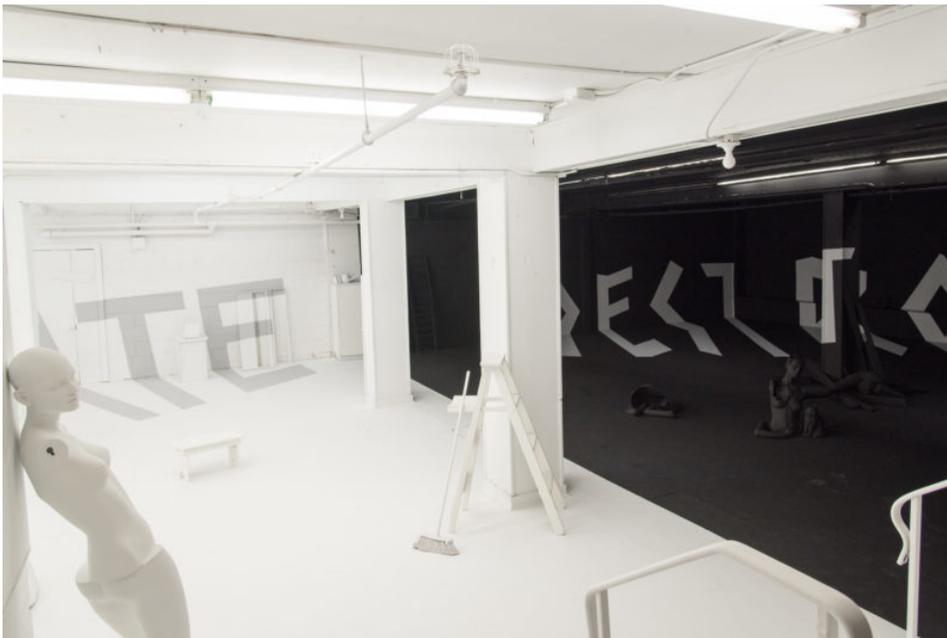


ART

# A look inside the

# wacky art maze that's taking over Honest Ed's this weekend

BY SAMANTHA EDWARDS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY GABBY FRANK |  
FEBRUARY 24, 2017 AT 4:20 PM



Honest Ed's was for everyone—a place where a newly arrived immigrant from the Philippines could buy his first pair of jeans, or where a broke university student could stock her kitchen with pots and pans. When Hungarian artist Tibor Hargitai arrived in Toronto in 1993, he sought out Honest Ed's because of its welcoming reputation. Now, just weeks before the store's demolition, Hargitai is one of more than 100 artists and community groups celebrating the beloved department store's legacy with *An Honest Farewell*, a weekend-long last

hurrah for the blinking landmark at Bathurst and Bloor.

“We don’t often have the opportunity to say goodbye like this,” says Adil Dhalla, the executive director of the Centre for Social Innovation, the organizers of the fest. “We thought, what would happen if we created a space for that?” The CSI began speaking with Honest Ed’s customers, former employees and neighbours to better understand its significance. “On the surface, the love affair that Torontonians have with Ed’s is about the signage, the self-deprecating humour and, of course, the turkeys,” says Dhalla. “But the underlying magic is that it brought dignity to so many people. It was a community hub.” Accordingly, the four-day festival is actually the beginning of a new campaign, Toronto For Everyone, which will support individuals and organizations working for inclusion and diversity.

On top of the art maze, which features installations from more than 40 multidisciplinary artists, the festival also includes a marketplace—“one final opportunity to get a bargain at Ed’s!” says Dhalla—and a series of free town halls, panels and lectures about gentrification, bike lanes on Bloor and the history of Mirvish Village. “We’re paying testament to the Ed’s experience. It’s different and it’s eclectic, and you’re going to get a bit lost,” says Dhalla. Here, a look at our favourite installations.

## Eds-ibition

**THE HONEST 6IX RESIDENCY (ALICIA PAYNE, ANA JOFRE, LAURA BARRETT, MING-BO LAM, PAUL MOLEIRO, ROMANA KASSAM)**

This is just one part of a massive art project by a group of six artists from diverse disciplines (such as contemporary dance, visual art and music). Their homage to Honest Ed’s features

interactive video art, an abstract recreation of Ed Mirvish's first store and these giant deconstructed signs. They made the signs from foam, hand-painted them and then lit them up with marquee-style lightbulbs.

## ARTIST

### **DAIS**

Multi-disciplinary media company Dais built a collaborative piece that's equal parts sculpture, light installation, mural and collage. Artist MissMe wheat-pasted her drawings of women onto one wall, while the signs on the other were collected from actual protests in Toronto.

## Anamorphicism

### **BIRDO X GETSO**

Street artists BirdO and Getso created this space to explore the birth and death of Honest Ed's. The "Create" side is supposed to have a heavenly aura, while the "Destroy" side, with its Slayer-esque font, represents the end of an era. BirdO and Getso sourced all the props—like a bicycle wheel, ladders, mannequin and cat statue—from the store after it closed.

## The Walk

### **TIBOR HARGITAI**

In 1993, newly immigrated Hungarian-Canadian Tibor Hargitai met Ed Mirvish, who invited him into the store. Now, more than two decades later, Hargitai is celebrating how welcomed he felt during that encounter with *The Walk*, a kilometre-long plastic pathway that spells out “Love.” It’s stamped with 3,000 footprints, which took Hargitai and his son more than eight hours. Visitors are encouraged to take home their own piece of the pathway to show how art can be inclusive. On the final day of festival, what remains of the pathway will be reconfigured into the word “Life.”

## Time and Place

### **NESS LEE AND TESSAR LO**

Presented by the art auction non-profit Timeraiser, this mural by Toronto artists Ness Lee and Tessar Lo doubles as an interactive art canvas. Visitors can make their own relief drawings by rubbing crayons over raised illustrations on the mural. Those compositions will be repurposed for Timeraiser’s auction at the Power Plant on May 24.

# Faded Stories

## **LAUREN VAILE**

*Faded Stories* reflects on Toronto's evolution through archival images of iconic spaces like Sunnyside Beach, the CNE, the Eaton Centre and Sneaky Dee's, as well as photos from Occupy Toronto and the 2017 Women's March. Artist Lauren Vaile transferred faded versions of the photos onto the pages of roughly 100 books.

# A Soft Mirvish Village

## **THE SOFT CITY COLLECTIVE (ROSE BIANCHINI, JASON VAN HORNE, CATHERINE STINSON, SARAH COUTURE MCPHAIL, YVONNE NG)**

The Soft City Collective is known for its plush cityscapes like this one. It includes a stitched mini Mirvish Village (complete with an adorable, bedazzled Honest Ed's), a stuffed CN Tower and the Royal Cinema.

# Life After Utopia

## **ALEXANDRA HONG, WILLIAM PEMULIS AND SHERAZ KHAN**

Visitors fill out colourful slips, each of which has prompt for sharing a memory, and then tie them to balloons. The artists hope their piece creates a conversation about the stories,

experiences and places that connect Toronto.



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