Reclaiming self-care and enacting new practices of mutual aid are not separate tasks but reciprocally constituting responses to the crisis of care. Rather than abandon self-care to upmarket consumerism or dismiss it as a supplement to hyper-productivity, Take Care’s third circuit, Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid, retains a commitment to a resistant concept of self-care. It is a survival strategy of bodies, desires, and forms of community which forces of domination continually work to erase, deny, or marginalize. In confronting systemic oppressions, exceeding the bounds of the individual, and centring marginalized collective ways of knowing, self-care blurs with mutual aid. “Mutual contest” (competition for limited and shared resources) coexists with a countervailing law of “mutual aid” (reciprocal exchange of resources and co-operative services for mutual benefit), which is vital to the “maintenance of life.” Redressing needs that a prevailing order fails to meet, mutual aid is anchored in affective bonds, manifest in practices of co-operation, formalized in institutions, sustained by beliefs and customs, and rooted in the recognition that mutual support is necessary to adapt to and survive adverse material conditions. If the crisis of care atomizes and strains caring capacities, the persistence of mutual aid not only fills care gaps but also affirms an excess of caring capacity and infrastructure-making, tangible and intangible, for an aesthetics of living, carefully, in common.

Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid opens space for autonomous determinations of care, defiantly performs the precarization of labour and life, rehearses temporary communities of support, and hosts rituals of communication between artist and audience through which the gallery is refigured as a site of mutual aid. – Letters & Handshakes

The Sustenance Rite
Curated by Lauren Fournier

Anthea Black, Thirza Cuthand, Erika DeFreitas, Petrina Ng, Zoë Schneider, Kara Stone, Evan Tyler, Justice Walz, Jessica Lynn Whitbread

Radiodress
MKV: Credit River Immersion

Circo Zero
Turbulence
(a dance about the economy)
The Sustenance Rite: Rituals of Catharsis, Healing, and Care in Contemporary Feminist Practice
Lauren Fournier

In a time of generalized anxiety, precarity, and upheaval, how do artists sustain themselves? What do we make of self-care imperatives in light of our late-capitalist, neoliberal, neocolonial context? How do we care for others while also caring for ourselves? The Sustenance Rite is a group exhibition featuring work by emerging and mid-career Canadian artists that engages issues of health, wellness, healing, care, and survival from queer, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour), and inter-sectional feminist perspectives. The works in this exhibition proffer alternatives to dominant discourses of health that are critical and reparative. Reflecting on the rites and rights of mental, emotional, and physical healthcare in the contemporary moment, these artists make space for the rituals that sustain us.

In Erika DeFreitas’ and every tear is from the other (2014–present), the artist stitches around her tears on white tissues, marking the trace of her affect. DeFreitas often works using the form of a series, repeating a conceit, a material pattern, or a method in a body of work, here exploring themes around breathing, crying, survival, and loss. Crying can be a cathartic, nourishing, and necessary

In Petrina Ng’s Heirloom Facsimile (detail), 2013. Cross-stitch on aida cotton, three panels, each 48in x 35in. PHOTO: JAY SHUSTER. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

Erika DeFreitas, and every tear is from the other (detail), 2014–present. Tissue, embroidery thread, embroidery needle, five tissues, each 8in x 8in. PHOTO: TONI HAFKENSCHEID. COURTESY THE ARTIST.
Ng’s grandmother. Throughout this process of sharing information the text degraded, and accumulated the digital noise that Ng represents in her rendering of each pixel as a cross-stitch. The work is as much a grieving process as it is a meditation on the ways that both dominant and alternative medical information is communicated cross-culturally and inter-generationally. There is a looming sense of ambivalence around the status of the information: Is this medical knowledge that we should take seriously? Or, better, how seriously should we take any medical knowledge? What determines the seriousness of medical information? Do we trust our General Practitioner? Our Naturopath? Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner? Osteopath? Psychic? Family friend? Websites like Web MD? Heirloom Facsimile resides in a liminal place that complicates the usual recourse to binaries such as Western medicine versus Eastern/alternative medicine. Ng’s work bears resemblance to the artist multiple The Ten Cognitive Distortions (2015) by Anthea Black and LIDS (Ladies Invitation-al Deadbeat Society), which was included in my zine project, Self Care for Skeptics (2015), a curatorial precursor to The Sustenance Rite. Both Ng and Black use material practices to draw attention to the ways in ritual: some days it might begin as that feeling of a lump at the back of your throat that you try to hold back all day at work, only to let it all out into a box of tissues when you get home, or upon encountering a friend that you feel safe crying in front of. With every tear is from the other, DeFreitas, who often works in textiles, uses the material process of stitching to commemorate the space where the tear hits the tissue. The tissue becomes evidence of a scene, the site of an event that maybe no one else witnessed, and an act that might seem ephemeral and elusive after the fact. Here and in other work—for example, the video Her body is full of light (often, very often, and in floods) (2016), where the artist drinks her mother’s tears—DeFreitas draws attention to the physicality of crying and the through-lines that connect the tears of one day, or one person, to another.

In Heirloom Facsimile (2013), Petrina Ng intricately cross-stitches enlargements of a notice, originally published by the Hong Kong government, which provided information on how to cure cancer from the perspective of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Ng received the document as a low-resolution scan from her father, who had himself received it as a fax from his mother-in-law, Ng’s grandfather. Throughout this process of sharing information the text degraded, and accumulated the digital noise that Ng represents in her rendering of each pixel as a cross-stitch. The work is as much a grieving process as it is a meditation on the ways that both dominant and alternative medical information is communicated cross-culturally and inter-generationally. There is a looming sense of ambivalence around the status of the information: Is this medical knowledge that we should take seriously? Or, better, how seriously should we take any medical knowledge? What determines the seriousness of medical information? Do we trust our General Practitioner? Our Naturopath? Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner? Osteopath? Psychic? Family friend? Websites like Web MD? Heirloom Facsimile resides in a liminal place that complicates the usual recourse to binaries such as Western medicine versus Eastern/alternative medicine.
which medical information, like all informa-
tion, is mediated and constructed. In *The
Ten Cognitive Distortions*, Black takes a hand-
out given to her by her psychotherapist and
uses it as a material to create a conceptual
work that resembles concrete and visual
poetry. The original document given to Black
by her therapist was, in fact, a copy of a
copy. Like the notice in Ng’s *Heirloom Fac-
simile*, it appeared to have been photo-
copied and faxed a number of times before
she received it. As an artist who often works
across screen-printing, bookworks, and
other practices, Black then scanned, printed,
copied, and sent the document to fellow
members of the LIDS collective. The collec-
tive continued to copy the handout until the
text became virtually illegible. By mirroring
the distortion that the document seeks to
describe and remedy, and by perpetuating
that distortion through the material pro-
cesses of analog and digital copying, the
artists play with, and subvert, psychother-
apeutic notions of distortion.

Black’s work returns in *The Sustenance Rite*
in her ongoing collaborative relationship
with artist and community organizer Jessica
Lynn Whitbread. Whitbread’s *Tea Time: Map-
ing Informal Networks of Women Living with
HIV* (2011-present) is a transnational, com-
community-building, cross-media project that
functions as an interpersonal space for
women with HIV to network, self-advocate,
and share their experiences. During the tea
parties that compose the project, each
woman brings a teacup and a letter that
they have written, which they exchange for
a teacup and a letter brought by someone
else. On December 1, World AIDS Day, Whit-
bread will host a tea party at the Blackwood
Gallery. Though it takes place in the insti-
tutional space of UTM, the tea party makes
space for privacy, confidentiality, intimacy,
and communion between women living with
HIV. By having the gallery function as a
space to host women from surrounding
communities, the installation becomes less
a static sculpture and more an active trace
of both past and present tea parties. The
installation that Black and Whitbread have
created, which includes prints by artists
Jess MacCormack and Johnny Nawrajac,
is a living space, surrounded by the queer
warmth and gender play of Black’s wallpa-
per *Eat Me Drink Me Take Tea With Me (After
Alice Austin)* (2017), the *Tea Time Bookworks*
(which evolved out of both Whitbread’s re-
search and her ongoing community-driven
art project), and letters and teacups from
past tea parties.

Kara Stone’s *Medication Meditation* (2014) is
an interactive digital game that transmutes
mindfulness meditation, psychotherapy, and
other methods of mental and physical health
care into the form of a self-care app. Created
during the artist’s residency with Dames
Making Games, *Medication Meditation* makes
care accessible to a greater number of
people while it simultaneously, and subtly,
criticizes the ways in which neoliberal cap-
titalism commodifies self-care. Prompted
by the screen to take deep breaths, those
interacting with the app can engage with
therapeutic rituals, like mindfulness, in the
form of a game. Instead of playing *Candy
Crush* or scrolling through their social media
newsfeeds during their morning commutes,
students and other Blackwood publics can
use an offer code, available in the gallery,
to download Stone’s app to play on their
phones. *Medication Meditation* bleeds out
of the gallery and into the virtual spaces of
students’ digital devices and UTM’s video
screens, where the work is transmitted as
still images across campus. Stone’s piece
rhythmically intervenes in the advertisements
and student notices with image and text
pairings that provide prompts like: “Touch to
Inhale; Release to Exhale; Take 20 Breaths.”

*“New to the Two-Spirit lifestyle? ... We have
just the introductory special for you!”*,
Thirza Cuthand announces to the camera
with a sprightly smile on her face. The play-
ful exploration of the commodification of
health and care takes the form of satire
in Cuthand’s single-channel video *2 Spirit
Introductory Special $19.99* (2015). In her
performance for the camera, Cuthand makes
space for a sex-positive and Two-Spirit-cen-
tered First Nations space that is life-affirm-
ing and self-determining. Appropriating the
form of a television call-in advertisement
to promote things of particular interest to
queer and Indigenous people, Cuthand en-
dorses speculative objects and community


support structures that could contribute to the well-being of Two-Spirit folks today: these include a beaded whisk, a non-slip lube mat, and a telephone line staffed by counsellors responsive to problems specific to Two-Spirit people living in Canada. Both cheeky and sincere, Cuthand’s performance uses humour and play to flesh out the intersections of Indigeneity, queerness, and mad-pride central to her work. Even as the conceit of commodification is used performatively, Cuthand’s concluding note is the importance of relationships, community, and kinship to the health of queer First Nations people.

Zoë Schneider’s sculptural practice is lushly material. Schneider works with materials like rocks, denim, sand, dough, rhinestones, gemstones, spandex, and foam to create imaginative sculptures that could be described as delicate maximalism. In Schneider’s Adipose series (2016), the materiality of foam exceeding the bounds of denim fabric becomes a metaphor for fat-positive feminisms. The adipose tissue—symbolized here as polyurethane foam—expands out through abstracted denim fabric, a subtle movement that preemptively provokes Western culture’s obsession with “self-control.” Responding to the oft-repeated corporate advertising of Calvin Klein jeans from eras past, Schneider, a self-identified fat woman, states, “for us, something crushingly tangible comes between us and our Calvins: the shape and size of our bodies.”

Varying in shape and size and playfully populating the gallery, Schneider’s Adipose sculptures, seated on red, pink, and white satin plinths, straddle the seductive—and the defiant. They resist being relegated to any straightforward notion of objectification: while appearing as static, sculptural objects, on closer look, the foam appears to move ever so slowly, affirming agency and exceeding those definitions that have been projected onto them. There is a self-satisfied joy in Schneider’s sculptures, which revel in their own materiality.

If you have experienced anxiety disorders or panic attacks, you might be familiar with the overwhelming desire to escape, whether it’s the desire to run screaming from a jam-packed art opening, slip away unseen from a classroom, or somehow get out of the limits of one’s own skin. Justice Walz’s Anxiety Escape Kit (2017) imagines what an escape kit for people with anxiety disorders might contain. An emerging POC, queer, and mad-identifying artist, Walz integrates humour with somber subject matter and politicized impulses to create interdisciplinary work like Anxiety Escape Kit. A work of practical conceptualism, each kit comprises a suitcase and its contents, which include an escape plan, a disguise (hats, sunglasses, scarves, jewelry), and a set of distractions and coping mechanisms (games, teddy bears, candy, neck pillows, accessible books like children’s literature), or what Walz refers to as an “activity set.” The sculptures suggest each kit can easily be packed up in its suitcase for ease of travel and use. Organized in neat and tidy rows, the arrangement of the contents in Anxiety Escape Kit counters the often chaotic and disorganized feelings that can characterize the lived experiences of those with mental health issues.

There is a childlike quality to Walz’s work that gestures to how the desire for escape might also be a desire to return to a time of less responsibility and insecurity: the disguises in the kits are not thorough disguises, but are more akin to what a kid playing dress up in their parents’ clothes might put on. This desire to return to a previous era or time in one’s life, and the complications of nostalgia and romanticizing the past, also features in queer artist Evan Tyler’s performance and video work. In his recent video, I’M FULL OF MYSELF (2017), Tyler gives a highly performative, humorous self-help lecture at the Danforth Music Hall in the role of the Life Coach, a self-branded motivational speaker, performance artist, spiritual psychiatrist, and violently charismatic persuader from 1992. As part of Tyler’s ongoing conceptual project GRAND SYN-ERGY, as well as his own personal work as an addict in recovery, a student, and a facilitator of recovery meetings, this work is an incisive critique of, and a strangely seductive appeal to, the human desire for self-actualization that pervades Western
culture. Shot to VHS, I’M FULL OF MYSELF enacts a playfully anachronistic impulse, appropriating the energy and potentiality of the early 1990s as part of a drive to both theatricalize an era through performance and do the emotional work of psychotherapeutic processing: as the Life Coach, Tyler enacts the repetition of trauma, memory, release, and desire.

In The Sustenance Rite, we find artists’ practices that flesh out the space of health and care—self and collective—from autobiographical stances grounded in experiences of oppression and stigmatization, colonial violence, mental health issues, physical illness, trauma, addiction, mourning, and grief. The artists unhinge dominant conceptions of health and illness, making space for more capacious conceptions of what it means to be well.

Notes
1 “Mad pride” is a self-determined act of reclaiming the words “mad” and “madness” by those who have experience with mental health issues, who have been labeled as mentally ill, and/or who have survived the psychiatric system. In The Sustenance Rite, the artists Thirza Cuthand and Justice Walz explicitly self-identify as “mad” in their work, as does the curator Lauren Fournier. As a widespread social movement, “mad pride” is not unlike other self-determining, reclamation movements, like “queer pride.”


Following spread:
Radiodress, MKV (ceremony documentation), 2016. Presented as part of the Centre for Incidental Activisms #3 at the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU). Photo: Katherine Fleitas. Courtesy the artist.
options
saliva
tears
pee
menstrual blood
sweat
ejaculate
injectable hormone
other medication
salt
Malathion
rainwater
snow
your choice
Radiodress
MKV: Credit River Immersion, 2017

As part of Radiodress’s ongoing research around the queer body as a material site of resonance and empathy, MKV: Credit River Immersion acknowledges the physical toll that social justice work, migration, and climate change takes on marginalized bodies. Basing MKV upon the Jewish ritual bath ceremony of mikvah, the artist queers the traditional process, leaning towards an embodied and multi-dimensional spirituality. Traditionally, the mikvah bather is naked and immersed in water that comes from a natural source. The Shomeret, or guide, sits beside them and offers prayers suited to the purpose of their immersion. MKV: Credit River Immersion incorporates a localized awareness of the colonial footprint on our local water sources, and, in line with the mikvah tradition, some of the water is gathered from melted snow or rain around the gallery site.

Radiodress and MKV participants will connect with the waters of the nearby Credit River, outline their goals for the ceremony, and select the materials with which they wish to immerse themselves, possibly including saliva, tears, pee, menstrual blood, sweat, ejaculate, injectable hormones, medications, salt, rain water, snow, or other bodily fluids of their choice. Ultimately, each participant will take a private bath, in the gallery space, while Radiodress offers specific words to guide their attention towards healing and transition. Together, they decide how Radiodress’s presence as a guide will be manifest—either in person, in the gallery, or remotely, through radio communication. During the ceremony, participants reflect upon a personal change they are going through, which could include working through gender transitions, dealing with questions of fertility, or coping with the struggles of aging, illness, and death.

MKV: Credit River Immersion is part of a larger project within the Jewish world to re-inscribe the often misunderstood and patriarchal practice of the mikvah ceremony. Here Radiodress is curious about the ways in which critical queer and trans Jews both change and evolve Jewish traditions and play a role in proposals for human interconnection, or “inter-being,” a term taken up in Buddhist and mindfulness practices. Radiodress is interested in how non-normative bodies can offer alternatives to homonationalist impulses—impulses that subject LGBTQ2S people to the usual violence of capitalism, colonialism, and militarism.

Through participatory artworks in public space, Radiodress asks how erased and invisible knowledge(s) might inform a new era of social governance, with queer and trans people at the forefront of this change. Working with what Sara Ahmed describes as “queer orientations,” Radiodress explores how private and public performance can shift the ways in which performers and audiences stand, sit, lie, and exist in space with others, including the spatial and temporal experience of being underwater. MKV: Credit River Immersion offers a comforting and transformative marker of shifting circumstances for queer- and trans-identified people, while suggesting that “queer orientations” have much to offer civic life.

Notes
1 Sara Ahmed, Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).
A collaborative creation, *Turbulence (a dance about the economy)* is an experimental hybrid of contemporary dance, improvised happening, and political theatre; it is a bodily response to economic crisis. Initiated before Occupy and engaging with questions of debt, value, and exchange, *Turbulence* is intended as both a provocation and an affirmation of global movements for economic justice. The work is instigated by San Francisco-based artist Keith Hennessy and produced by Circo Zero, an international performance company that Hennessy directs. Since its inception in 2010, *Turbulence* has received wide acclaim in the United States and Europe, and this is its premiere presentation in Canada, building upon Hennessy’s performance-lecture as part of the Blackwood Gallery’s 2016 exhibition, *I stood before the source*.

*Turbulence* is not only an experiment in performance but also in alternative modes of producing performance, positioning improvisation as both a survival strategy and a political tactic. Integrating new cast members as generative collaborators for local iterations, the work resists predetermined outcomes. This process of involving local performers supplements *Turbulence*’s conceptual underpinning: it provides the opportunity to build an international queer community in the face of precarity. For the Canadian presentation, performers have been selected with an eye to the diversity of lived experiences they bring to issues of immigration, settler colonialism, and accumulation by dispossession.

For Hennessy, *Turbulence* recognizes “the critique that contemporary dancers embody a neoliberal subject: dedicated to individual freedoms, we are always working and rarely paid; prioritizing career over community, we are internationally mobile, serving corporations that acknowledge us only as free content-providers… And still, we play, theorize, dream, and struggle in a queer utopia of our own collective imagining and embodiment. Without delivering a coherent critique or a totalizing vision of resistance and reconstruction, we hope to inspire public engagement, discussion, and action with regards to the economy, particularly its violence, corruption, and injustice.”

**Performers:** Laura Larry Arrington, Ruairí Donovan, Empress Jupiter, keyon gaskin, Keith Hennessy, Jesse Hewit, Jassem Hindi, Jorge de Hoyos, Shaista Latif, Emily Leap, Allyson Mitchell, Julie Phelps, Brian Solomon, Gabriel Todd, Ravyn Wngz.

**Production Manager:** Alley Wilde

Friday, November 24, 8pm
Saturday, November 25, 8pm, followed by a post-performance open discussion

Collective Space
221 Sterling Road, Unit 5, Toronto


Acknowledgment
*Turbulence* is funded in part by the Jackman Humanities Institute Program for the Arts and USArtists International, a program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Notes
Public Programs

FREE Contemporary Art Bus Tour
Exhibition tour to Blackwood Gallery, Oakville Galleries, Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery
Sunday, November 19, 12–5pm

_Dames Making Games_
Workshop with Kaitlin Tremblay
Thursday, November 23, 9–11am
Communication, Culture, Technology Building, University of Toronto
Mississauga

_Kaitlin Tremblay_ from Dames Making Games will facilitate a workshop on the intersections between mental health, body theory, feminist advocacy, and game creation. The workshop is presented in collaboration with CCT405: Ethics and Code, taught by Professor Tero Karppi in the Institute of Communication, Culture, Information & Technology.

_MKV: Credit River Immersion_
Nine private ceremonies will be offered by Radiodress between November 20 and December 3
elgallery

Reader-in-Residence Session with Art Metropole
Public reading by Lisa Myers
Wednesday, November 22, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery

_Turbulence (a dance about the economy)_
Circo Zero
Friday, November 24, 8pm
Saturday, November 25, 8pm, followed by a post-performance open discussion
Collective Space
221 Sterling Road, Unit 5, Toronto

_Feminist Lunchtime Talks_
_Mapping Informal Networks of Women Living with HIV_
Jessica Lynn Whitbread and Mercy Lillian Gichuki
Wednesday, November 29, 12–2pm
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with Women and Gender Studies (UTM)

This event is the second in a series of _Feminist Lunchtime Talks_ featuring artists, writers, activists, and academics working across issues of labour, gender, race, and identity in the context of the crisis of care. The talks put artists participating in _Take Care_ and other guest speakers into conversation with UTM faculty and local respondents.

Tea Time: Mapping Informal Networks of Women Living with HIV
Facilitated by Jessica Lynn Whitbread
Blackwood Gallery
Private event only open to women with HIV

On December 1, World AIDS Day, Jessica Lynn Whitbread will host a private tea party in the Blackwood Gallery. Each woman is invited to bring a teacup and a letter that they have written, which they exchange for a teacup and a letter brought by someone else. Though it takes place in the institutional space of UTM, the tea party makes space for privacy, confidentiality, intimacy, and communion between women living with HIV.

Tea Time: Mapping Informal Networks of Women Living with HIV
(2011–present). COURTESY THE ARTIST.

Participant Biographies

Laura Larry Arrington is a dance-artist working in hybrids of idea and practice. Her work in dance (time/space/body/whole) pivots around a desire to orient towards the capacities in us all that can glimpse unseen and unutterable horizons. Her body is her life and her life is her work.

Anthea Black is a Canadian artist, writer, and cultural worker based in San Francisco and Toronto. Her work addresses feminist and queer history, collaboration, materiality, and labour. She has exhibited and published in Canada, the United States, the Netherlands, France, and Norway. She is the co-editor of *Handbook: Supporting Queer and Trans Students in Art and Design Education* with Shamima Chherawala, and *Craft on Demand: The New Politics of Handmade with Nicole Burisch*. Black is an Assistant Professor of Printmedia at the California College of the Arts.

Thirza Cuthand was born in Regina, Saskatchewan and grew up in Saskatoon. Since 1995 she has been making short experimental narrative videos and films about sexuality, madness, youth, love, and race, which have screened in festivals and galleries across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Brazil. She completed her BFA in Film and Video at Emily Carr University of Art and Design, and her MA in Media Production at Ryerson University. She is of Plains Cree and Scots descent, a member of Little Pine First Nation, and currently resides in Toronto.

Erika DeFreitas is a Scarborough-based multidisciplinary conceptual artist. Placing an emphasis on process, gesture, and document, her work explores the influence of language, loss, and culture on the formation of identity, with the use of textile-based works and performative actions. Her work has been exhibited across Canada and the United States. Longlisted for the 2017 Sobey Art Award, a recipient of the Toronto Friends of Visual Arts’ 2016 Finalist Artist Prize and the 2016 John Hartman Award, DeFreitas holds a Master of Visual Studies from the University of Toronto.

Jorge De Hoyos is an American dancer and choreographer from Southern California based in Berlin since 2012. He studied Cultural Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz and was active for five years in the dance/queer/etc. performance community in San Francisco. He has presented his work and performed in collaborative projects in both Berlin and San Francisco.

Ruairí Donovan has been making dances since 2008. He splits his time between Oileán Chléire, a remote Gaeltacht Island off the south coast of Ireland, and Amsterdam. His work has been presented internationally to critical acclaim at venues including SummerWorks Toronto, CounterPulse San Francisco, New York Live Arts, Project Arts Centre Dublin, Chapter Cardiff, HAU Berlin, TanzHaus Zurich, and Zodiak Helsinki. A language activist and a choreographer, he is making ritual objects for a tribe which doesn’t exist.

Empress Jupiter is a two-spirit shamanatrix storyteller, performance artist, wordsmith, stylist, and fashion influence. Born in Houston, Jupiter now lives in Miss West Oakland. Jupiter has performed in a wide range of venues, with the mission to support queer and trans people in their self-esteem through fashion, ritual, and performance. Jupiter is the originator of Cunty Calisthenics, a communal improvised workout, and is the curator of the Miss Androgyny Pageant.

Lauren Fournier is a writer, artist, curator, and researcher. She is a doctoral candidate at York University, where she is completing a SSHRC-funded cross-disciplinary study of auto-theory as a contemporary mode of feminist practice. Her prior work as a front-line mental health and harm-reduction worker informs her research. Her work has been exhibited across Canada and in Berlin, Athens, and Houston, and her writing has appeared in numerous arts and academic publications.

Keyon Gaskin prefers not to contextualize their bio with their credentials.

Mercy Lilian Gichuki received her MPH from the University of Waterloo and a BA in Women and Gender Studies from UTM. Mercy works as a Public Education and Community Collaborator at Interim Place. For the past 10 years, Mercy has worked in public health, working with women living with HIV, survivors of gender-based and sexual violence, newcomers, refugees, and non-status women. Mercy works from an anti-oppressive, integrated feminist lens with a deep understanding of the many intersections that women face.

Keith Hennessy is a performer, choreographer, teacher, writer, and activist. Born in Sudbury, he lives in San Francisco and tours internationally. Ideas and practices inspired by anarchism, critical whiteness, punk, and queer-feminism motivate and mobilize Hennessy’s creative and activist projects. Hennessy directs Circo Zero, and was a member of the collaborative performance companies Contraband with Sara Shelton Mann, CORE, and Cahir-caha, cirque bâtard.

Jesse Hewit is a three-way cross between a diabolical valedictorian fatboy at a therapy intake session, a fussy-but-useful little baby bear who can make a fierce sandwich, and a really old and mostly unremarkable leather shoe. His work, curations, collaborations, and teachings have happened in various parts of the US and Europe, and he currently serves his local community as curator of Aggregate Space Gallery’s *Friction/Function* series (Oakland), and as Program Manager for the ODC Theater (San Francisco).

Jassem Hindi was born in Saudi Arabia and studied philosophy at the Sorbonne, Paris. As a performer and sound-maker, his work extends internationally, involving mostly politically engaged work and the study of strange objects. As a musician, he is using mainly broken machines and lo-fi field recordings, in the spirit of experimental music. He collaborates widely in writing, performing, and sound-making, and teaches various workshops about sound, performance, and theory.

Shaista Latif is a queer Afghan-Canadian artist, writer, and facilitator. Her works have been actively presented in Canada by festivals and platforms like Ontario Scene, SummerWorks, Halifax Queer Acts, and *Why Not Theatre’s RISER Project*. Latif’s work centers on exploring the politics of inclusion and advocating for spaces and processes that support agency and care. She is currently artist-in-residence at STO Union and was named a 2016 Siminovitch Protégé. Her play *Graceful Rebellions* will be published in 2017.

Emily Leap was inspired by her work with *Turbulence* to enter into her own personal economics experiment. With one year left before graduation, she’s accumulated $150,000 in student loans. And counting. But soon she will be a doctor. Or merely in debt. Or fall back into work as an aging trapeze artist.

Letters & Handshakes is a collaboration of Greig de Peuter (Department of Communication Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University) and Christine Jawah (Blackwood Gallery and Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga).

Allyson Mitchell is a maximalist artist working in sculpture, performance, installation,
and film. Her practice melds feminism and pop culture to investigate contemporary ideas about sexuality, autobiography, and the body. Her works have been exhibited in galleries and festivals across Canada, the US, and Europe. She is based in Toronto, where she is an Associate Professor in the School of Women’s Studies at York University. She runs FAG Feminist Art Gallery with Deirdre Logue.

Lisa Myers is an independent curator and artist with a keen interest in interdiscipli- nary collaboration. Her curatorial practice considers values placed on time, sound, and knowledge. Myers has an MFA in Criticism and Curatorial Practice from OCAD University. Her writing has been published in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society and Curatorial Practice from OCAD University. Her writing has been published in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society in many exhibition publications including Senses and Society and Curatorial Practice from OCAD University.

Petrina Ng is a visual artist and cultural worker based in Toronto. Her multi-form feminist practice connects intimacy, discomfort, and absurdity. Previous projects have been shown in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Ng received a BA from the University of Toronto and an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art (London). She is the Exhibition Co-ordinator at the Blackwood Gallery.

Julie Phelps engages the hybrid strategies of producer, artist, and community activist to generate new knowledge for a world that is more complicated and less capitalistic. Phelps is the Artistic Director of CounterPulse in San Francisco, a performing arts venue and community hub. When not at work, Phelps is (literally) a mover and shaker in the field of contemporary dance, touring nationally and international-ally as a speaker and dance artist.

Radiodress is an artist, Priestess, and Prison Chaplain. In her creative practice, she uses live and recorded ritual, singing, yelling, talking, and listening to consider bodies as sites of knowledge, and communication as a political practice. Exploring the relationship between collective voice and the empathic act of listening, her work engages with consensual ceremony as a site of vulnerability, and an entry point to sensation and emotion-based transformation. Radiodress’s projects have been performed widely in North America, Europe, South Asia, and the Middle East.

Zoe Schneider is a sculptor, curator, and arts administrator who transforms found and fabricated materials into artworks that investigate corporeality within social systems. Schneider’s works explore various phenomena and experience, invoking responses ranging from quiet contemplation to interactive engagement. Schneider is currently completing an MFA at the University of Saskatchewan.

Multiple Dora and Gemini Award-nominated Brian Solomon is of Anishnaabe and Irish descent, from the Northern Ontario community Shebahonaning-Killarney. Solomon is a graduate of the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, and has an MA in Performance from the Laban Center (UK). He has presented his multidisciplinary works and performed for a multitude of companies and creators in Canada, the US, and Europe. He has taught for many arts institutions and companies, including H.F.S. Ernst Busch, Berlin.

Kara Stone is an artist and scholar inter- ested in the affective and gendered experi- ences of mental illness, wellness, and healing as it relates to art production, video games, and traditional crafting. Her artwork has been featured in The Atlantic, Wired, and Vice. She is a member of the Different Games Collective. She holds an MA from York University in Communication and Culture and is pursuing a PhD in Film and Digital Media with a designated emphasis in Feminist Studies at University of California, Santa Cruz.

Gabriel Todd is a dance- and music-based performing artist, choreographer, and sound designer living in Denver, Colorado. He received a BFA in Performance from Na- tropia University and an MFA in Dance from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has performed and collaborated musically across the US and abroad with various artists. He is currently working on a collection of songs, texts, and dances called organ donor.

Kaitlin Tremblay is a writer and narrative designer, living in Toronto. She is the author of the book Ain’t No Place for a Hero (ECW Press, 2017), about subversive storytelling, and the lead writer of the narrative-driven and death-positive video game 4 Mortician’s Tale (Laundry Bear, 2017). Kaitlin’s work explores mental illness, queerness, feminism, and community in video games.

Evan Tyler is an artist, musician, occa- sional curator, and a writer of fiction living and working in Canada. Tyler has exhibited and curated both nationally and internation-ally. From 2010-2014 he ran gallery west on Toronto’s Queen Street West. His artwork focuses on voice and perfor- mance, blending the fictional and autobiographical. Tyler is a graduate of Masters of Visual Studies (MVS) in the studio program at the University of Toronto, with a collaborative graduate specialization from the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies.

Justice Walz is an interdisciplinary, Toronto-based artist. She is currently completing her BFA in Ryerson University’s RTA New Media program. Her work spans a variety of media including installation, illustration, clay, and digital art. At age 11 she was diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis—a condition that causes her chronic pain and fatigue. Today, Walz uses art to con- front past traumas and has embraced her voice as a queer, mad-identifying, inter- sectional feminist—these themes resonate loudly in her work.

Jessica Lynn Whitbread is an activist and artist who has worked in the HIV move- ment since her diagnosis in 2002. She works in social practice and community art, engaging a diversity of audiences in critical dialogue. Her primary interests are bodies, sexuality, and desire, and her work explores how gender, s/er-status, and criminalization impact the navigation of sexual relationships. In 2014 Jessica pub- lished her first book, Tea Time: Mapping Informal Networks of Women Living with HIV, a photo collection of her Tea Time community arts practice.

Alley Wilde is an arts and culture worker based in San Francisco. They create dance- based solo shows, perform drag as He/She Degenerate, and co-founded the queer performance collective Yum Yum Club. As an administrator, they work with Keith Hennessy/Circo Zero and Jess Curtis/Grav- ity doing grant writing, production management, marketing, and bookkeeping.

Ravyn Wngz is an African, Bermudian, Mohawk, 2Spirit, queer, and transcendent individual. Ravyn aims to challenge main- stream arts and dance spaces, sharing her stories while continuing to create opportu- nities for marginalized LGBTIQ2S people with a focus on African/Black com- munities. Ravyn is a co-founder of ILL NANA/DiverseCity Dance Company and the artistic director of Outrageous Victo- rious Africans Collective. Ravyn is part of the Black Lives Matter Toronto steering committee, a group committed to erad- icate anti-Black racism, supporting Black healing, and liberating Black communities.
**Acknowledgments**

**Take Care**
September 11, 2017–March 10, 2018
Curated by Letters & Handshakes

Encompassing a five-part exhibition series, performances, and workshops, *Take Care* mobilizes more than 100 artists, activists, curators, and researchers confronting the crisis of care. *Take Care* unfolds as a series of five exhibition themes, or circuits of care.

**Staff**
Christine Shaw, Director/Curator
Jayne Wilkinson, Assistant Curator
Petrina Ng, Exhibition Coordinator
Alison Cooley, Curatorial Assistant
and Collections Archivist
Fraser McCallum, Outreach and Publications Assistant*
Joy Xiang, Curatorial Research Assistant*

**Installation Technicians**
Carmen Schroeder, Matthew Tegel

**Micropublication Design**
Matthew Hoffman

**Micropublication Printing**
Thistle Printing Ltd.

The Blackwood Gallery gratefully acknowledges the operating support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and the University of Toronto Mississauga.

**The Blackwood Gallery**
University of Toronto Mississauga
3359 Mississauga Road
Mississauga, ON L5L 1C6
905–828–3788
blackwoodgallery.ca

**Gallery Hours**
Monday–Friday: 12–5pm
Wednesday: 12–9pm
Saturday: 12–3pm

The Blackwood Gallery promotes LGBTQ2 positive spaces and experiences and is barrier-free. The gallery is FREE and open to the public.

---

**CIRCUIT 1**

*Labour of Curation*
September 11–30, 2017

**CIRCUIT 2**

*Care Work*
October 16–November 4, 2017

**CIRCUIT 3**

*Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid*
November 20–December 9, 2017

**CIRCUIT 4**

*Stewardship*
January 8–27, 2018

**CIRCUIT 5**

*Collective Welfare*
February 12–March 10, 2018

---

*Funding for additional staff support was made possible through the Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations program, Department of Canadian Heritage. The Canadian Museums Association administers the program on behalf of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

*The Blackwood Gallery and Letters & Handshakes are indebted to mutual aid and knowledge-sharing. Brandy Leary, Supriya Nayak, Danny Russell, Danielle St-Amour, Joan Simalchik, and Alley Wilde helped make Circuit 3 happen.*