

Arts & Entertainment

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The art of falling

UTM's Blackwood Gallery presents its newest exhibition, *Fall In*

PATRICIA FIGUEIREDO

To fall encompasses a multitude of actions: to fall in, to fall out, to fall through. This season, the University of Toronto Mississauga's Blackwood Gallery invites its visitors to explore the complexity of falling and the many ways a person or object may fall.

Fall Out/Fall In—a two-part show—showcases art works by eighteen distinguished artists. According to Christof Migone, the Blackwood Gallery's director and curator, the show explores falling as a transition process. "Falling often implies a transition where there is no turning back," said Migone. "It is a theme that is richly layered, from the physiological to the metaphorical."

When asked about the theme of the show, Migone explained that his starting point came from the fundamental understanding that "gravity holds us in place no matter how much we attempt to circumvent it." According to Migone, "to fall is to enter the reality of our condition on this planet."

Fall Out, which opened on September 14, features the works of nine artists exploring gravity and breathing. For the second part of the show, Migone selected nine new artists to respond to the works of *Fall Out*'s nine original contributors.

Some of *Fall In*'s most impressive works include those by U of T art and art history graduate Alison S.M. Kobayashi. Kobayashi's *Self-Made Parachute* is a handmade 15-foot by



Kobayashi's *Self-Made Parachute* and Gillian Collyer's snowflake as seen in the Blackwood Gallery.

30-inch parachute. This work responds to Paul Litherland's skydiving videos in *Force of Attraction* and *Freefall Fighters*.

In addition to creating the parachute, Kobayashi was commissioned by the Blackwood Gallery to produce an image to be displayed in the Bernie Miller Lightbox—the billboard located outside of the South Building at the end of the Five Minute Walk. In keeping with the theme of falling, Kobayashi created *The Seven Inch Fall*—a self-portrait of the artist collapsed flat on her face—which will be

on display for the duration of the academic year.

Annie Onyi-Cheung, another U of T graduate, was also invited to contribute to *Fall In*. Cheung was chosen to respond to Simone Jones' *Perfect Vehicle*—a remarkable 11 foot-long, three wheeled vehicle, controlled by the passenger's breathing. Cheung's response: a poetic video depicting the rise and fall of human bodies as they breathe.

Gillian Collyer created a massive, beautifully intricate, crocheted snowflake in response to Kristiina

Lahde's *Delete*. The latter is a long piece of computer paper, hole-punched several times with the word 'delete.'

Sophie Bélair Clément responded to Tom Sherman's *Hyperventilation piece* (1970)—a controversial video in which Sherman makes himself hyperventilate and eventually collapses. Although the original video has been lost, the Blackwood Gallery displays Sherman's detailed description of his self-inflicted agony as part of *Fall Out*. In *Fall In*, Clément responds with a written description of the interesting process it

took to obtain information about Sherman's three performances of *Hyperventilation piece*.

Bringing a touch of comedy to *Fall In*, Roula Partheniou created *Caution Yellow*, a to-scale replica of a banana peel responding to the Zilvinas Kempinas' *O Between Fans*, a flimsy cassette tape flying indefinitely between two large metal fans. Partheniou's work suggests perhaps a different way to fall: the all-too-famous slip our favourite comedy and cartoon characters can never seem to escape.

U of T's Master's of Visual Studies graduate Josh Thorpe created *Bachelor On and Off*, a viewer activated on-off switch as a response to Don Simmons' *Bachelor Forever*. The latter is a vertical line painted on the wall, through which a small magnet fluff made from iron filings travels up and down. Once Thorpe's switch is tuned on, Simmons' "masturbating machine" is activated and a loud sound, which resembles a vacuum cleaner, comes on. Interestingly enough, Thorpe's switch has been painted black on the outside and pink on the inside to resemble the female anatomy.

Thorpe also created *Bachelor Stick*, a single stick painted pink that has been purposefully dropped outside of the Blackwood Gallery's conventional exhibition space with the purpose of inviting visitors to explore the inner works of the exhibition.

Fall Out/Fall In runs until December 13. For more information, including the Blackwood Gallery's hours of operation, visit <http://blackwoodgallery.ca>.

Tying the knot on campus

Art student marries cat in a performance piece

REINA SHISHIKURA

Who gets married on campus? And who gets married to a cat for that matter? A fourth-year art and art history student did last week. Around 30 friends got together at McLuhan Court to witness the marriage of Jennifer Chan and George Bateye, her feline companion. After four months in love, they finally tied the knot.

"I'm 21, and I just thought it was time. I've dreamt of this day since I was a little girl," exclaimed Chan as she showed off her 200-karat diamond ring. Sterling silver bangles sparkled on George's left paw.

"I think they're perfect for each other. I'm so glad George found someone—he's one of the most wonderful, you know, 'people' I've ever met. He's my best friend," said Derek Friesen, the groom's best man. After the ceremony, Friesen rushed to his philosophy class.

Robert Carriere, the couple's mutual friend, acted as the pastor. "I only got my license just a few weeks ago. I registered online and

bam! I'm a pastor now," said Carriere, who wanted to contribute to the wedding somehow, and not just as an attendee. "I love this couple. They're so great—they're the definition of diversity. I just had to help out one way or another."

Jessica Valentine, Chan's friend,



Mark Andrew Shannon/Photo

The happy couple.

baked cupcakes. They were served at the ceremony along with Chan's sponge cakes. Guests devoured both treats as they discussed the ceremony.

"I've been friends with Jen since the fifth grade, and...oh, I'm so happy for her! I just can't believe she got married before I did," laughed Eva Yeung, the bridesmaid, as she fixed Chan's veil.

"Honestly, it's perfect. My parents didn't get to come, but whatever. This will show them that I'm free now and that I get to be with whoever I want, not who they want for me," explained Chan.

Other guests included Daisuke Takeya, *Gendai Gallery*'s programming director. He rushed in from downtown Toronto in a three-piece suit. Students from nearby houses stopped to observe the union of the couple as well, and made calls to get their friends to attend.

"I'm married! I'm married now, bitches!" screamed Chan, as she twirled in her thrift store Vera-Wang-lookalike dress. Bateye did not blink an eye as he stared at his new wife.

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