

# Thin Spaces:

## the porous places between

May 8 - August 1, 2026

Curated by Elwood Jimmy

Work by Christine De Vuono,  
Justine Langille,  
Kwentong Bayan Collective,  
and Sal(t) Collective

Presented in partnership with the Musagetes Foundation  
at the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre, Hamilton ON



### Exhibition essay by **Elwood Jimmy**

Almost a year will have passed since I was invited by the Workers Arts & Heritage Centre to curate this exhibition in their space. The initial invitation expressed a malleable concept for an exhibition that touched up broad themes of social work, care work, or caregiving as work and/or emotional labour.

After some preliminary conversations with the Centre, I accepted the invitation to curate this exhibition. Soon after, I suddenly became very ill. This illness would end up being the most life-changing moment of my life. Over the course of a week, I went through multiple surgeries that ultimately saved my life. That was followed by five months of recovery and rehabilitation in hospital, and presently, subsequent months of at-home rehabilitation and healing. Consequently, these events have left me with a different and disabled body that I must establish a new relationship with – concurrently metabolizing and regularly recalibrating the experience of navigating the world physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

I briefly mention my personal health crisis as context, as it has contributed to a more robust lens to look and feel through the world, as well as generatively informing my practices as a curator and a writer. Prior to this invitation, my curatorial interests lied within practices – artistic, life, or otherwise – that strived to enable us to move wiser within the inherent dissonance in Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships, climate emergency and polycrisis/global instability. Entangled within those practices are the politics and complexities of care, labour, and capacity – by humans, but also the non-human and the beyond human.

It is important to me to presence the non-human and beyond human in an exhibition and conversation around labour, in particular care work and caregiving. Pre-colonization, the land we now know as Canada nourished and influenced many practices, ceremonies, languages, and rituals for its inhabitants that in turn provided guidance and governance with regard to wiser relationships, communities, and care. An integral part of the colonial project was to outlaw all of these for several decades during the incubation and formation of the colonial state. While most see these exiled capacities and practices as a loss for Indigenous communities, it is actually a loss for everyone.

We are currently living in a moment of polycrisis. At this juncture, we may not have, or may have lost the capacities or solutions to address the unprecedented depth of our current collective problems. Maybe all we can do is ask ourselves who are we, or who do we become in this critical moment of unprecedented global challenge?

The artists in this exhibition employ a diversity of experiences and knowledges to sit with the complexity of these questions. They all have been or are directly connected to frontline care/caregiver work, a type of work that is often undervalued and underappreciated within an arbitrary, hierarchal system of labour. The Sal(t) Collective provides an invitation to presence and cultivate wiser, reciprocal relationships and practices with our non-human relations, whose often-invisibilized labour sustains us. Both Christine De Vuono and Kwentong Bayan Collective's works address the pervasive and systemic undermining that prevents us from fully holding space for both frontline providers & recipients of care. Justine Langille's intimate and personal work documenting her mid-life gender transition provides insight into grappling with the capacity of showing up for community as your most authentic self when systemic barriers can willfully work to obstruct that generative journey.

All of this work gestures toward reclaiming an exiled agility and capacity for working at both the margins and thresholds of experiences and worlds severed by the separability that modernity has fostered. And in their own ways, the artists/works are both documenting and offering possibilities for being present and living wiser, in order to have the capacity to co-imagine as-yet unimaginable wiser futures.



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WAHC is located on the original territories of the Huron, Wendat and Neutrals, and later, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe.



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