Stitched: Merging Photography and Textile Practices

Full Audio Tour
Written by: Sarah Danruo Wang

Welcome

Welcome to *Stitched: Merging Photography and Textile Practices*, a Featured Exhibition of the 2025 Capture Photography Festival. Curated by Capture Photography Festival's Executive Director and Chief Curator Emmy Lee Wall and Assistant Curator Chelsea Yuill, this exhibition is on view at the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art from April 3 to June 21, 2025.

My name is Sarah Wang and I am Capture's TD Assistant Curator of Engagement. We are so excited to present this audio tour of the exhibition in the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art in North Vancouver, on the unceded territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. Before we get started, here are a few words from the curatorial team.

Emmy's Introduction

Hi, my name is Emmy Lee Wall and I am the Executive Director and Chief Curator at Capture Photography Festival. This year's Featured Exhibition, *Stitched: Merging Photography and Textile Practices*, explores the intrinsic, conceptual, and material relationships between photography and textiles.

This exhibition is co-presented by the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art and Capture Photography Festival. It is sponsored by Parc Retirement Living and is generously supported by the Audain Foundation, the Timothy A. Young Family Foundation, the City of North Vancouver, the District of North Vancouver through the Arts & Culture Grants Program of the North Vancouver Recreation & Culture Commission, Artist for Kids, the Gordon and Marion Smith Foundation for Young Artists, and the North Vancouver School District.

I had the pleasure of curating this project with my colleague Chelsea Yuill, Capture's Assistant Curator. Here's Chelsea to share more about the exhibition.

Chelsea's Introduction

Thank you, Emmy! It's been a pleasure co-curating *Stitched* alongside you.

Hello, I am Chelsea Yuill, the Assistant Curator at Capture. The driving force behind this exhibition came from my affinity for both photography and textiles. Over the past few years, I've been observing how artists are blending these two mediums to chart new territories of visual culture. I love this hybridity and rethinking of technology and materials that are ubiquitous in our day-to-day: think of the smartphones we carry and clothes we wear. Through these material explorations the artworks speak to empathy, ritual, memory, aesthetic inheritance, immigration, and colonial and embodied archives. It has been a gift, collaborating with each of the 9 artists and the team at Gordon Smith Gallery to realize this exhibition.

Now back to the TD Assistant Curator of Engagement, Sarah Wang.

Introduction

Thank you Emmy and Chelsea!

This exhibition includes the works of 9 artists, some emerging some established, working and living in Canada as well as the United States. We'll follow a path along the exhibition space to weave in all artists' perspectives and consider some of the key thematic elements including: aspects and assumptions of gender in artistic production, natural and synthetic materials that constitute textiles and photography, domestic and international labour in the industrialization of textiles, and how both these mediums become canvases for exploring historical and personal narratives.

Whenever possible, we'll practice slow looking to describe and appreciate the formal and contextual aspects of the work in front of us. The title wall include general information and the QR code to start this audio tour in full. Each artist's wall includes QR codes to hear the audio guide of that particular artist's work.

Let's get started.

Michaëlle Sergile

The textile industry's raw materials and manufacturing were central drivers of the global commodity trade and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. The Jacquard Loom patented near the start of the nineteenth century revolutionized the textile industry. Using paper cards perforated in accordance with the pattern design, the weaving apparatus would understand each puncture as a set of instructions for textile production. This technology was later adapted by mathematicians and engineers to form one of the first prototypes of computing hardware.

Haitian-Canadian Montreal-based artist Michaëlle Sergile uses the jacquard loom, a method in her words that is "often perceived as a medium of craftsmanship and categorized as feminine" to reproduce family photographs, particularly those of her parents' generation in Haiti. It is notable that both these methods of image production on the jacquard loom and

analog photographic printing techniques now seem archaic in the supremacy of digital imaging. The most obvious difference is the speed at which the image emerges since the printing of analog photography required time for chemicals to interact and the combination of each thread to create an image on a textile takes repetitive labor to weave.

The loom is also the physical place where Sergile's family histories meet and intersect. These otherwise nondescript portraits hold multiple stories and experiences, converging on the textile plane. Like the reproduction of images in photography, Sergile adapted errors and glitches into the weave. In *Ombre Portrait (Tante Rose)*, *Ombre Portrait (Gaze)*, and *Ombre Portrait (Zanmi)*, the rows of colors distorting the bottoms of the woven pictures reproduce mechanical errors by hand so that both the machine and the human remain present.

Other than dress and names in the titles, our inability to find identifying features in Sergile's portraits reminds us of the two *Headdress* works by Dana Claxton in this exhibition. Yet both Claxton and Sergile allude to a deeper, intensely personal identity in these works if only one knew to look for beaded motifs signifying a clan or heritage in Claxton's works, or the totality of narratives and multiplicity of memories layered to create such an opacity in Sergile's portraits. Simply, the sitters of these portraits wear their identities on their bodies.

Liz Ikiriko

Canadian literary historian and theorist Karina Vernon wrote that "above all, the black prairies…is an open-ended and still-unfinished space". For Nigerian Canadian artist, curator, and educator Liz Ikiriko, the prairies via Saskatchewan, her family's adopted home after immigration, is not so much a fixed destination but rather a porous site, forever in a dance with the past, with origins, with histories.

Her three works in the exhibition, *Facing the Precipitous*, *Descent*, and *Idakro*, ask the central question to perhaps all immigrant experiences: when does one actually arrive? Whereas migration uproots the individual, severing them from the hearth of their existence, a full integration in the new community or to legitimize a claim to one's new land, are often described as "staking one's flag". The medium upon which Ikiriko's imagery is printed, organza and satin, are framed as banners or flags, whose traditional use was to visibly declare a certain identity. Upon closer look at the images, a disintegrating passport-like picture of her father tenuously nestled within her hand, languid sunlight fading upon a dense forest, the entrance to a village whose landscape feels like a hazy memory of an ancestral home, these flags become less and less a declaration of identity and more an invitation to mine the collective and unconscious experiences along the migratory journey.

The angles of the banners frame otherwise free-flowing lines in the hair and fibre fringe that adorn these works. The gold fringing igniting the bottom edge of *Descent* seems to set the image alight, beckoning to the physical landscapes lost in the erosion of human settlements and usage of natural resources. Her father's face sits at the nexus of the palm creases, lines often used in fortune telling to illustrate a person's fate. The locks of hair woven neatly into the banner or spilling forth from the image as in *Idakro*, also call attention to the ideas of

rootedness and distances. *Idakro* from the Kalahari, one of Nigeria's many languages, means electricity, is beautifully juxtaposed with the golden snake, whipping through the overcast sky, like a surge of lightning among the static atmosphere.

Ikiriko answers the question of when we actually arrive by pointing us to the act of forgetting. To forget is as organic as it is artificial. The distances that separate homes from the vast oceans to the generations displaced from the cultures of origins, erodes our relationship with past identities too tenuous to grasp. Then there is a systematic, willful forgetting to exclude or erase people as if they never did set foot, stake their flag, or simply arrive. Bertrand Bickersteth, Sierra Leonean poet now living in Edmonton, observes how black identity could be compartmentalised and erased in such short-distance adjacent spaces within North America in his poem "The Invisible Man on the Prairies", where he cheekily retorts "What a sight not to behold!"

Perhaps it is a haunting, these physical and abstract vestiges that exist in the in-between space of a home lost and a home gained. The Nigerian poet Ibiwari Ikiriko, a cousin of Liz Ikiriko, wrote in the poem "Baseless Compass," "Hope leaks out/From our insides/Leaving us empty/As a basket of water." From the vast expanse of the Atlantic Ocean to the vast expanse of the prairie sky, the migrant is forever a traveller between the no longer and the not yet.

Barbara Astman

The three works by Toronto-based artist and professor emerita, Barbara Astman, are an ode to the fast and the slow of creative production. Astman, whose biography highlights her commitment to "defining new ways of seeing" since the 1970s through "[radicalizing] visual culture," challenges us to negotiate the speed of the familiar image with the slower process of textiles on which these iconographies emerge.

Stuck at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, Astman returned to her creative output by experimenting with materials she had handy: the newspaper. Using packing tape, she transferred the proliferation of the female form in the papers' advertisements to the adhesive, with much clarity lost in this process. Then she experimented with printing these vestiges on paper which then led to the idea of literally weaving them onto fabric. Outsourcing this part of the process to a facility in India due to so many local businesses halting operations during the pandemic in Canada, Astman had to learn the digital tools necessary to collaborate across continents so that the tiles could be produced and put together into the final tapestries we see in front of us.

Parts of these anonymous figures are geometrically assembled, a torso, magnified eyelashes, patterns of fashions, the glare of a supermodel, create a homunculus of signifiers we immediately decode as relating to the feminine. A century ago, Georg Simmel pronounced modernity in terms of the speed of stimuli that propels urban life. Postmodernism proved an even greater acceleration of capitalist images of consumption demanding instantaneous visual literacy and recognition of gender and beauty. Even the isolation of the pandemic

could not obstruct the porosity of the screens on which these images continue to flow: via the news print we flip or the Instagram tiles we scroll.

Yet, up close, the images blur to an effervescent static. Astman's process of peeling the image off onto adhesive only accentuated the nature of print and photographic images composed of dots or pixels. That these images take shape relative to the distance of the viewer also alludes to an earlier revolution in seeing that radicalized visual culture: the neo-Impressionist theory and technique of pointillism where images are not produced through continuous linear shapes but rather innumerable dots or points and their distance and colour relations that together make concrete shapes.

To have all of these considerations on a textile, woven together via cotton and nylon threads, provides us a novel screen to project our understanding of the permanence of images and to balance the speeds of the shutter and the loom.

Maya Beaudry

Ask any Vancouverite the biggest driver of change to the city and many will note the fever that is real estate development. The land goes through iteration after iteration, sold block at a time as land assemblies so that another glass grid can be erected in due time.

Vancouver-based multidisciplinary artist Maya Beaudry says she "explores recollection, architecture, dream time, growth, trip space, entropy and loss" in her practice that combines sculpture, painting, installation, textile, and video. She first documents Vancouver's "continuous deconstruction and construction" via photography which is then transferred to fabric. In both *Trellis* and *Lattice* we can see the skeletal remains of a building in what remains of the steel frames and wooden beams. Here Beaudry's imagery seems adaptable to the viewer. Either these buildings are being consumed by something infernal, a capitalist greed to redevelop, or opportunity triumphantly rising from the ashes, a capitalist drive to redevelop.

These flamelike shapes come from Beaudry's distortion of the image through stuffing, sewing, cutting, and painting, and such textile manipulations jut out towards the viewer, entering our space, and beckoning us to interact with its tactile qualities. Throughout the real estate boom, many have profited or at the very least could afford to be indifferent. By elevating the two dimensional image with three-dimensional textile accents, Beaudry collapses the polite distance of an indifferent spectator: we are now forced to witness, to participate.

The exponential increase of real estate development speaks to Vancouver's place in the country's immigration and trade policies. Internal migration west and foreign immigration to Vancouver have increased the demand for housing to address density concerns. From foreign investments to the imported construction materials that financially and physically prop up these building projects, the infernal flames of consumption become unforgiving of what it displaces and erodes.

Gateway is a site-specific commission that spans the width of the gallery from wall to wall. The constructed wooden two-by-fours are wrapped with an enlarged fabric photograph of a demolished residential building in Vancouver. Given that most sites under construction display a plethora of signs advertising the various parties of the project - the roofers, framers, plumbers, developers, brokers - who receive opportunity from development, what becomes of this textile? Is it a burial shroud to a past life? A banner of resistance?

And in an environment of almost unregulated opportunity, what becomes of opportunity cost? These angels that ornament the structure, are they here to guard or to haunt? Floor plans may be reconfigured, zoning laws may be relaxed, a city's skyline can be redrawn, but some things, memories especially, can never be displaced.

Simranpreet Kaur Anand

Collective action and the urgency of social activism are at the centre of the photo and textile collages by Punjabi artist, curator, and cultural worker Simranpreet Kaur Anand. Her work centres the experiences of Sikh immigrants to the Greater Vancouver region which is one of the two largest Sikh populations in the world outside of India. Mirroring the current immigration policy that greatly curtails those arriving from India, Anand proves that old colonial habits truly die hard.

In the installation *Wake of Departure*, the legacies of Sikh labour protests within the past few generations in British Columbia juxtaposes the individual with communal strife,
elevating protestors with megaphones and paper signs as sirens for better working conditions, particularly in the agricultural industry. Black and white found and archival photographs are juxtaposed with contemporary coloured counterparts, the colourful threads stitching together not only the continued struggle across generations, but the greater labour movement across Canada. Two works that are titled *A True Story of Government Neglect* and *A True Story of Direct Action*, force the viewer to contend with lasting legacies of action and inaction, change and stagnation, in our all-too brief collective memories.

Anand's images float between the textures of the textiles (cotton, silk, canvas) and their fine embroidered details. These animate the picture and the civic responsibility of documenting calls to action. Even in the two *Untitled* works, the two individuals, in pixelated form after being printed on fabric, still retain the emotional nature of witnessing protests: the jubilant gestures of victory and progress and the unwavering conviction of demanding justice.

The texts used in the rug from the *Magic Carpets* series and in the photograph titled *IELTS Bazaar* critique the reality of postcapitalist fatigue. The works harken back to the nineteenth century bombastic advertisements calling for immigration to what colonialists at the time noted as empty, virgin lands in North America. They play upon the pathos of wealth and opportunity to lure the poverty-stricken; *100% No Guarantee! DREAMWORLD* is both sarcastic but nevertheless a brutally honest appraisal of the fates of those who are still arriving from the Global South. Rather than acres, we get crumbs. Rather than dreams, we

get sobering reality. In dialogue with *IELTS Bazaar*, this reality is a lot muddier. Where does the eye even look among the sea of signs to prep a prospective migrant on the linguistic, legal, and economic criteria necessary for landing in Canada? Here immigration is nothing but an assembly line, devoid of individual impetus, subsumed to the mold of the model minority.

Like the questions asked in Liz Ikiriko's works, what is the afterlife of a culture that has been dislocated? In another section of this exhibition, we have the poignant video work, ਮੁਕਤਿ ਮਾਲ ਕਨਿਕ ਲਾਲ ਹੀਰਾ ਮਨ ਰੰਜਨ ਕੀ ਮਾਇਆ ॥ *mukti maal kanik laal heera man ranjan kee maaiaa* || (2021) the artist and her collaborator Conner Singh VanderBeek stack and fold fabrics to reenact the Sikh practice of donating sets of *rumala sahib* to gurdwaras, Sikh places of worship. This tradition occurs on special occasions like births, deaths, weddings, and holidays when the textiles are opened and placed atop the Guru Granth Sahib. Textiles, like photographs, enshrine the personal. Sikh funerary practices uses cremation as the method to transition the body in the cycle of life, and this practice was prohibited in the early days of Sikh immigration by the City of Vancouver. Here, objects and textiles which have touched the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred scripture of the Sikh faith and regarded as a living entity, retains the Guru's "sacred energy". The once natural fibres of the textiles burned in this process, are now mass-produced synthetic ones which linger after the cremation process via toxic gas fumes. Drawing a parallel to surplus textile production in Canada being stored and then destroyed via burning, Anand and Singh VanderBeek sought permission from the Canadian textile facility and fellow Sikh community members on utilizing these fabrics for this process in this work. This work is as visual as it is tactile, tenderly holding on to a pivotal process within the Sikh community.

Jayce Salloum

"I saw a sticky yellow thread,
A thread of the history that clings to me.
A hand mulls over my life, ties my days together
Time and again, a hand that was heir
To the race of dolls and the progeny of rags."

recalls Adonis, one of Syria's greatest poets, in the poem "A Vision". A succession of images of movement, displacement, and alienation, become monuments to a future hurtling towards the writer.

Vancouver-based artist Jayce Salloum's four works in this exhibition present photography in sculptural form. Fabricated by studio assistants by tearing the papers on which Salloum digitally printed his photographs and then strung onto a fishing line, viewers can only access these images through their peripheral edges. The main narratives are missing, only the white corners framing a strip of cobalt sky or the suggestion of a beige beachfront.

Human nature does not grasp very well what is granular. We don't see atoms, we see contiguous shapes. We don't see fibres, we see the fabric. We don't see pixels, we see the

entire image. When these wholes are then once again torn and repurposed, we gravitate to the new whole, here in Salloum's installations as a single continuous set of shapes.

As the photographs are torn, they are multiplied in pieces ranging from a quarter to seven inches, and then strung together by size. The bulges and recessions reflect natural forms like the helix of DNA or the amplitude of waves. At eye level, these serrated layers feel like detritus from an industrial scrapyard, metallic, shiny even. Hung from the ceiling, they are reminiscent of stalactites, monuments to "the reworking, repurposing and condensing of the material" which Salloum notes as carrying "inherent references to a previous life and the one that it is heading towards."

Like the future as presented to Adonis, it is hard to visualize the totality of the narrative, of this sequence of events we understand to be history. It was noted in a previous exhibition Salloum had at the McCord Stewart Museum Montreal titled *location/dis-location(s): beyond the pale* that "Salloum challenges the spectator's capacity to grasp the many facets of continuous realities." If, as Salloum noted his positioning of "himself as an anthropologist of the present", what becomes of us, the spectator in front of his torn narrative pieces? What is our relation to these fragments of time and content? It seems that we are outside of it all, as if we are omnipotent, at the very Archimedean point that constitutes objectivity.

Dana Claxton

The history of photographic portraiture with Indigenous peoples as the subject has a deeply problematic, racist, and colonial nature. Often relegated to the disciplines of ethnography, anthropology, and archeology, these images carry a sense of what has passed. The very apparatus of the camera assumes a violent function highlighting the power differences between who is in front of and behind the camera, the lack of consent of the subject to the elaborate and falsified staging of scenes. The very act of photographing becomes a statement of archiving what is assumed to be or become extinct devoid of all causal context, the cause of which is often instigated by the very culture that photographs. From tattoos to regalia to artistic motifs, the individual is reduced to a collection of signs so the white man could easily identify categories.

Artist and academic Dana Claxton, who is of the Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation, has flipped this historical imbalance on its head. In her work, Indigenous people are both the photographed and the photographer, and such images emphasize lasting presence, rather than impending absence, of Indigenous life. Through text, video, photography, performance, Claxton, as noted by curator Grant Arnold, "[reclaims] history and [asserts] an Indigenous presence within it." Arnold continues that even in Claxton's early works, there was a usage of disrupting familiar imagery.

The two works within the exhibition from the *Headdress* series ask us to directly confront this disruption. We are so familiar with the immediacy of the face and thus the sitter's identity within the genre of portrait photography. Here, in *Headdress – Connie* and *Headdress – Jeneen*, the only immediate identifying features of the individuals is in the name

attributions of the works' titles. They are obscured by the beaded fashions proliferating from the face and torso with animal, floral, and geometric patterns. As if masking the individuals, Connie and Jeneen, the viewer must contend with only the beading which traditionally have transmitted individual, family, regional, and national histories and stories. Connie's image exemplifies her own handbeaded pieces and Jeneen's image exhibits beaded designs spanning three generations from Old Crow, Yukon, and Vuntut Gwich'in First Nations.

Claxton pays tribute to the legacies of the Sioux peoples of the Great Plains of North America through transmission rather than through archive. The history of beading in Native American cultures predates European contact and colonization for thousands of years. Historically beads made of stone, bone, and shells were traded and used as currency, along with being fundamental to textile innovations with the porcupine quill work of the Plains Indians. In the nineteenth century, European traders brought glass beads, also known as "seed beads", produced in South and Central Europe, to exchange with Indigenous peoples in North America leading to its use in a variety of textile objects, for example headbands, saddles, bandoliers. As beadwork was within the domain of women's work, it gave Indigenous women avenues for actively participating in cultural production and transmission via beaded regalia as well as economic opportunities through trading other beaded works beyond their own communities. And through Claxton's *Headdress* series, we can see that beadwork is celebrated beyond the Great Plains, as with Jeneen's heritage from the Yukon, Connie's Okanagan and Tsartlip heritage, and contemporary beadwork resurgence in the eastern seaboard of North America.

These almost lifesize images are projected on what Claxton calls a "firebox", a color transparency photograph mounted and backlit on a lightbox, giving these images a monumental feel. Unlike the archival portrait, these portraits literally bring the subject to the forefront, creating an immediacy for the viewer. Anishinaabe author Gerald Vizenor's idea of "survivance" comes to mind, in which when situated within a continuous program of erasure, Claxton's portraits are an act of assertion of Indigenous existence, active refusal of traditional power structures, and bold challenge to the image of Indigeneity in the minds of the oppressor.

Michelle Sound

The colonial portfolio includes many instruments to destroy the line. The lines in a map used to redraw boundaries and redistribute and alienate the land's original people. A line of text in a title document to dispossess and displace, or in an identification card to determine lineage, or in a law to dispute lineage or to remove one generation from another. Chief among these weapons is the camera to document their conquest. To conquer is to rupture so to speak, so that discontinuities require the conqueror to promote their own narratives, to streamline what they have severed.

Michelle Sound is a visual artist of Swan River First Nation and Metis descent. Sound's black and white photographs and archival images are torn and stitched with colourful beading, pompoms, threads, porcupine quills, and caribou tufts as an act of repair and healing. To

Sound, the "images are ripped to show the colonial violence" too common to Indigenous families, wounds that are often picked open again in the neocolonial structures that remain. The materials that interrupt the surface speak to a resilience, a refutation. The seams are not closed so much as a joined, some tightly, others more tenuous, gathering the generations dispersed from colonial chaos. The textures of the tears are preserved, some undulating underneath the beading, others naked as scars lacerating the surface. These threads and beads almost feel like arms, travelling great distances over these images, to bring what was displaced back together, or in the words of Louise Bourgeois, "the act of sewing is a process of emotional repair."

The work *Michel Band* juxtaposes a survey map of the Michel Band, an Indigenous nation in central Alberta with a photo of the territory. Here, we are reminded that the map is not the territory, and perhaps neither is the photo. Although both images are historical records of a place, neither tell the full story of division and dispersal. While the map illustrates the subdivisions of land, it omits the full story of this new ownership, how colonial desire and legal instruments ushered a process of the land's surrender to settlers. While the photograph shows the generations of Indigenous stewardship of the terrestrial and celestial domains of the land, it fails to fully illustrate the insidious nature of "enfranchisement", a government policy made under Section 112 of the Indian Act that in reality disenfranchised the Michel Band, whose members "ceased" bearing Indigenous status so that their land could be divided and sold. The long legacy of colonial trauma remains today as the Michel Callihoo Nation Society continues its search for descendants of previous Michel Band members and to push for Canadian government recognition of their harmful assimilationist policies. Sound is a direct descent of Michel Calliho, then chief of the Nation when it signed Treaty 6.

The work *mother land* is a side by side view of how rooted land is to the family, particularly in the ideas of motherhood, nature, caregiving, and kinship. The play on this word of our biological and earthly origins inserts a space, splitting this word in two, detaching the individual from the familiar. In the span of this space is a widening gulf, simultaneously natural as when we mature our growing autonomy creates distances between who we are and where we come from yet also deeply artificial as in the systematic severing of one's relations through the loss of land to settlers, language and culture through residential schools, and even families through the Sixties Scoop. What threads are long enough, strong enough, to bridge these immeasurable divides, these wounded ruptures?

Author Billy-Ray Belcourt, whose book *A Minor Chorus* highlight's Michelle Sound's artistic practice on its cover and whose subsequent book *NDN Coping Mechanisms: Notes from the Field* empathizes, "Some nights my body feels like a torn photograph - a very NDN feeling. Sound knows that our grief is both private and public. She sanctions our grief. Like the photographs, we too are sites of both trauma and possibility. Ultimately, Sound is an emotional historian of the future."

Lan "Florence" Yee

The Montreal and Toronto-based interdisciplinary artist, Lan "Florence" Yee, explores the commodification of artists and their artworks, blurring the line between the creative and the commercial. Images, experiences, and artistic ownership are detached, decontextualized, and discarded.

Like Barbara Astman's ode to the immediacy of commercial imagery necessitating almost automatic recognition and association of gender roles and beauty standards, Yee also calls to the familiar patterns and textures of the ephemera that accompany the fruit crates and newspaper wrapping that ornament the community stores in their neighbourhood of Toronto's Chinatown. These types of packaging, discarded as the goods of which they contain are unpacked and sold, become the thread, or plastic twine, on which Yee wove their photographic misprints. Misprints are themselves discards in photography, iterations of photographic prints that contain mistakes and discrepancies from their original, due to mechanical error, human error, or a mixture of factors. Reminiscent of Jay Salloum's process of tearing personal photographs and reassembling them in another line of logic, Yee reassembles their personal photographic images through these weavings in their *RECOVERED* series. The image sinks below the surface of the material. We, the viewer, see the texture and colour first, and as if a fog lifting from our sightline, the familiar shapes emerge. As the image is reiterated in new mediums, it loses a bit more information, clarity, and context, and thus becomes less legible, a vestige of something that is lost, that has detached. *RECOVERED-Recipe Book* plays on this idea of "being lost", as the original artwork that it alludes to was physically lost in shipping in 2022. The red, green, and blue threads mimic RGB digital image rendering and create a glimmering mirage, a monumental tribute to a work not yet found.

To lose oneself in work is perhaps one of the most romantic views of labour, to the point where one's identity is subjugated by the product itself. *Please do not touch* is both a ribald observation and an incisive admonition of the artist-consumer relationship in a commercial gallery space. This ornamental rug, made of hand-embroidery on printed cotton, slides off a platform, almost in a dejected manner, and sprinkled with red hand-embroidered cotton canvas confetti. The manifest content of this image is a work that has sold, as any gallery-goer, owner, and artist knows the relief of the red dot sticker indicating the work has sold, completing its cycle of conception to ownership. On the other hand, the latent content of this image is evident through the text embroidered on the rug declaring "THE GALLERY LEFT RED DOT STICKERS OUT FOR BUYERS TO PURCHASE PIECES / A STRANGER CAME UP TO ME AND STUCK ONE ON MY CHEST THEN COMPLIMENTED THE QUALITY OF MY FRENCH." While Yee does not indicate any pronouns in this statement, it is easy to tie this back to the terminally imbalanced art industry, where the body, especially the female body, is not just held by an objective, often male gaze, but in this instance, marked by an outsider as well. The otherwise triumphant red dots take on a more sinister appeal as the body that the rug represents is scarred, tagged, diseased, colonized. Ultimately rather than a celebratory transaction to capitalize on, the artist dies many deaths, detached from their work's meaning, othered in their identity, devoid of autonomy for their own bodies, and their bodies of work.

Conclusion

The many stories, identities, and social critiques woven in this exhibition's works of art ask us to contemplate the entirety of how an image comes together. There is the tangible imagery that we wear on our bodies and in our histories - through the beads and stitching connecting disparate experiences and identities together in Dana Claxton and Michelle Sound's works. There are the varying speeds through which we understand and experience gender, beauty, and history in the works of Michaëlle Sergile and Barbara Astman. The social fibres that connect us span oceans and continents in the social and personal images by Simranpreet Kaur Anand and Liz Ikiriko. The brutality done unto the body of Lan "Florence" Yee's work, and done unto the body politic of Michelle Sound's work. And finally, the ebbs and flows of remembering and forgetting, the reiterations of sites and iconographies of our memories, this general force of impermanence quilted, threaded, and braided together in the works of Lan "Florence" Yee, Jayce Salloum, and Maya Beaudry. Ultimately we are to appreciate the labour invested in both the image and the textile, pixels and threads interlacing to fabricate a novel medium that conveys boundless visual narratives.

Thank you for listening to this audio tour of Capture Photography Festival's Featured Exhibition *Stitched: Merging Photography and Textile Practices* at the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art on view from April 3-June 21, 2025. Please be sure to take a Festival catalogue with you. The catalogue includes a full overview of this year's Festival program of Featured Exhibitions, Selected Exhibitions, public art projects across Metro Vancouver, and essays on lens-based art.

The next activation of this exhibition is on Saturday, April 5, 2025 where TD Assistant Curator of Engagement Sarah Wang will lead an in-person tour of the exhibition. Then on April 15, some of the artists in the exhibition will share more about their works in a panel talk at the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art.

For more information on our organization, annual Festival, and upcoming events, please visit capturephotofest.com.