

## Transcript: Transmissions 2

43:14

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### SPEAKERS

Dina Georgis, Erdem Taşdelen, Laura Tibi

#### **Laura Tibi** 00:05

Welcome to "Transmissions," a podcast of the Blackwood Gallery at the University of Toronto Mississauga. My name is Laura Tibi and I'm the Educator in Residence here at the Blackwood. This podcast begins by covering "Burning Glass, Reading Stone," a series of exhibitions across four light boxes on the UTM campus, running from September 2020 through June 2021. As the campus closure extends through a second full lockdown our continued conditions of mediation can cause us to reflect on how the current pandemic has reconfigured nearly every aspect of our collective lives, making more apparent than ever, the social, economic, and environmental disparities in our world. We can begin by acknowledging the land on which the University of Toronto Mississauga operates—acknowledging that this is stolen, exhausted and occupied land that has been inhabited, stewarded, and cared for by the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit River, and that it continues to be the meeting place and home to Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. The campus is even quieter than usual, and the images presented in the "Burning Glass, Reading Stone" series, now, more than ever, demand alternative methods for presentation, from images and videos of the lightboxes, to podcasts about the work in question. This podcast forms one part of our Reader in Residence program, featuring the artist and reader in question driven conversation. The reader will then respond to the image series in the form of a reading, a performance, a musical score, or another form of interpretation. In this episode, reader and resident Dina Georgis will speak with Erdem Taşdelen about his work, presented in part three of the Blackwood's lightbox series, titled "Radical Hope." Radical Hope focuses on challenging, resisting, and reimagining hegemonic structures of knowledge, perception, memory, and time. This series encourages us to think about how we can represent something as collective and as intimate as hope. What different ways of imagining our existing systems can artists offer? What kinds of stories are included in different kinds of documents? And how do these stories shape our political and social space? Erdem Taşdelen is a Turkish Canadian artist whose work questions power structures and culturally learned habits, and Dina Georgis is a professor at the Woman in Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto, who works at the intersections of post colonial and

sexuality studies, specifically in the context of the Middle East. Without further ado, let's hear the conversation between Erdem and Dina.

**Erdem Taşdelen** 02:52

Hi Dina.

**Dina Georgis** 02:55

Hello Erdem. So, let's start this conversation.

**Erdem Taşdelen** 02:59

It's great to be here with you again, today.

**Dina Georgis** 03:01

Yep, same here, Erdem. So yeah, I have spent some time thinking about your work and it has been nice talking to you, for sure, earlier this week. When we spoke earlier, you shared with me some of the layered context of this particular work that we're going to be talking about, "Demagogues," and we also talked about how this particular work has had a few iterations. It would be really interesting, actually, for me to hear about some of this context, but also how the work kind of evolved with its new iterations.

**Erdem Taşdelen** 03:45

Absolutely, I think maybe I'll do is I'll start with a description of the work because I think somebody might stumble upon this conversation without having actually seen it—so, just to give a little bit of context: the work that we're talking about is titled "Demagogues." It is the fifth iteration of what was initially a billboard work that I first made in 2018 in Vienna for the first time. And in this iteration, what we're seeing is a lightbox at the UTM campus, and the image that you're seeing inside the lightbox is a photograph of the lightbox itself, so you're really seeing the lightbox inside the lightbox. It seems as though there's a certain text inside the light box in the image that says this particular sentence: "If a man tells me something I believe to be an untruth, am I forbidden to do more than congratulate him on the brilliance of his lying?" So, what happens in this work is that it looks as though this sentence was inside that lightbox at one point in time, but that's actually not the case because it was inserted there via digital manipulation through Photoshop by me. And so, what you're looking at is, essentially, is an artifice, and the previous four iterations of the work have appeared—well, the first was in Vienna, like I said earlier. The second one was in Ankara in Turkey at Evliyagil Museum. The third was in Saskatoon at AKA and Paved Arts, a billboard space just above their building. The fourth iteration was inside the previous C Magazine issue. And so, this is the fifth iteration, and it's being shown as a lightbox for the first time. Just to give a little bit of context on the the conditions of its making, it actually branched out from two larger projects that I have already completed. The first of these is titled "The Characters," and that work is a series

of three audio installations that is shown in three separate exhibitions—or I call them acts—and in each exhibition, there are ten recorded audio monologues of performances by voice actors. So you're entering into a dark space, and you're hearing all of these characters perform monologues and each monologue is about five minutes in length and they're scripts all written by me, with traits taken from ancient Greek writer Theophrastus. The reason I mentioned this work is because, as I was preparing writing all of these scripts for this work, I was looking into the history of theatre, which is not something that I was or am very knowledgeable about, but as I was doing all of this research, I came across this sentence that ended up being the sentence in "Demagogues"—that "if a man tells me something, I believe to be an untruth..." et cetera, et cetera. When I came across that sentence in a book, I was really struck, because even though the original sentence was kind of pointing at theatre as an artifice, or like, what is the point of making art for art's sake if it's not political—those are the actual concerns of the original sentence—but, I just read the sentence again, and again, and again, because I was thinking about the sense of helplessness in the face of, you know, demagogues who are telling us untruths, day in and day out on television, or, I mean, on YouTube, I suppose. But, there's also a sense of incitement to action in it too, because there's something a little bit sarcastic in the work so I thought it was this really generative thing. I made a note of it in my notebook, to come back to it eventually, and it came back when I was doing a residency in Vienna. I was there for three months in the fall of 2018 and I was working on a video project, titled "I am Manifest Proof of Deviation." That's actually really closely related to "Demagogues," and that's really where it came from, so I'll give you a little bit of an intro to that work as well: that work is inspired by when I was—just happened to be reading a book on the Iranian Revolution. The title of the book is "Revolutionary Iran" by Michael Axworthy. There was mention of a Revolutionary Guard named Mehdi Hashemi who was committed—found to have committed—treason against the revolution and was forced to give a televised confession. So, a script essentially was dictated to him so that he would go on TV and repent and talk about how his soul was captured by the devil. I went to Vienna, I was, I knew that I was going to be making a work in three months, from start to end, which is not something that I do very often, so the residency was kind of an excuse to be able to do that. I was reworking the script of making a shameless confession to eliminate all references to—that were specific to Iran, so it wasn't really about the political situation in Iran, but more about the act of a televised confession. But, something didn't quite feel right to me as I was reworking the script because eventually what I realized is that, let's say if you rework a script like that, and if it were to be done today or in the near future, the people who would force this confession wouldn't necessarily have to make the person perform this anymore because there are facial reenactment technologies, right? So, they could essentially have a performer perform a confession, and their face could be mapped on to the confessor's face. So realizing this, I decided to do sort of a behind the scenes work of, you know, somebody as though they're the actor whose facial expressions will be mapped onto confessor. So, the reason I mentioned this is because I was really thinking a lot about fake images, fake news, authenticity of images in the public realm, you know, the fakeness of all of the information that we're fed through

media. And so, when I was reminded of the sentence, I thought, okay, this actually makes sense, because then how do I make a work that speaks to the fakeness of images and words, but also reenacts it itself? So I decided to make this work that looks as though it was there at one point, but it never really was.

**Dina Georgis** 11:09

Thanks for that. That's really interesting and we can go in many different directions now. Maybe I'll actually begin with asking you more about your interest in theatre and the performative because it's kind of interesting to me that you—it was a sense to me from your description right now that you found your interest by accident. Yeah, I think that really interests me, so, is it true then that it set you sort of on a trajectory around kind of thinking conceptually about the relationship of theatre performance to the visual? And if—and I'm just also, you know, wanting to hear more about what particularly interests you in that way—conceptually, the idea of performance or theatre, like, is it the illusions to spectatorship? Is it the kind of separation that theatre creates between a stage and its audience? Is it the community of people that the stage brings together? Is it the fictional worlds that the stage fabricates? I mean, clearly, that's definitely part of your thinking and a lot of your work these days. Yeah, and these are all dimensions that, as I was thinking about, all this, they're very much, I suppose, part of the visual arts, but not necessarily on our minds when we go to the gallery or look at a piece of work. We're not really thinking of the staging or the theatrical components of it. So yeah, I just kind of wanted you to kind of help us think about theatre conceptually, and perhaps, in particular, how it plays out in "Demagogues."

**Erdem Taşdelen** 13:10

Mm hmm. Thanks for that. Yeah, that's—there's, again, so many things I could say about that, but, one thing I'll start by saying, I guess, is that it's not really—my interest doesn't lie particularly in the field of theatre, but more in the idea of performance. And it feels a bit strange to be saying this at all because even though all of the work that I do involves some trace of performances, like, whether it's recorded audio, or recorded video, or it's script, or creating these situations where there are these various scenarios that one might imagine being performed—I've actually never made a work with live bodies in a space. I've never made a work that was a live kind of spectacle, or a singular event, per se. So, in that sense, I'm really interested in this idea of performance rather than the reality of it. I'm kind of reticent to work with live performance. I think that's because I'm kind of thinking about performance as a way to think about staging something that's self-reflexive, that's thinking about the conditions of its making and of spectatorship, rather than trying to create this like immersive illusion—an event where you would go and watch something and kind of lose yourself in the experience of seeing it. I'm not really interested in that, I'm more interested in thinking about implying the conditions under which something is made. So for that reason, I would say that, yeah, something like theatre, I've looked into it because it relates to the characters specifically. But again, in that work, there aren't really live performance, they're all recorded audio.

But, this is actually something that I've been thinking also a lot about in the context of COVID-19, because I just opened an exhibition at Mercer Union last week, which, after two days, is put on hold because of the current lockdown. But you know, working towards that show—and there's a lot of ideas about performance in the show as well—but, I kind of had to think about, like, how do we think about this experience of, you know, bodies not gathering in a space to see artwork, because you have to go by appointment, you can't be there together with other people—it's not really a shared experience, it's a solo event. So then that kind of became part of the work itself—the experience of the work itself, for me, where I was imagining kind of creating this scenario, this setup, where I'm kind of hoping that people feel a sense of ghostly bodies around them—the sense of togetherness, without actual bodies in that space. And so, that also made me kind of set-up the exhibition in a way where certain components are made to look as though it's a space that's suspended that was maybe being used for workshop or a rehearsal. Rehearsals and auditions are actually something that I worked with in previous video works as well. I'm just really interested in this behind the scenes of what makes the performance happen, rather than putting on that specific performance. I think that the reason that I'm really interested in performance in this way, specifically, is that I'm really not trying to create a singular narrative from one point of view, but trying to imply that any story or historical event can only really be told as a collection of stories and narratives. There's always these different voices coming in—different perspectives—and that's partly what's happening in "Demagogues" as well, I think, because the sentence in that work says "I" and "me," but I think that requires the audience to think about themselves as being that "I" or "me," or think about: who is doing the speaking here? Where is this utterance coming from? And likewise with, again, in that sentence, "a man," who is this man, right? So, who are the actors in this thing? Even though it's not a performance at all, it's really the putting—the looking at it—the spectatorship is a kind of performance, which is of course drastically changed under lock down.

**Dina Georgis 18:00**

Yeah, I guess you're making me think about "Demagogues" and all the different characters that are—could be in conversation with one another, and I'm just thinking back now to your other piece "Characters." Yeah, it's a kind of an interesting way to think about who the "I" is in that. I just also want to pick up on what you said about being in this pandemic, and certainly having a piece of work on a campus that's emptied of people and bodies. There, it's experienced very differently. There's certainly no gathering of people, there's no conversation that's happening around an object, an aesthetic object, and is it—is there a way to, kind of, you know—the conditions of COVID have created, really, of course, terrible things for many of us. But, I'm wondering if this new way of experiencing this piece of work can bring about new conversations, new ways of looking, new ways of thinking, new ways of gathering. Yeah, I'm just wondering what your thoughts are about that.

**Erdem Taşdelen 19:35**

Mm hmm. Yeah, I mean, that's—this is something that I've been thinking a lot about since the work has gone up because there is a certain dimension of the work that has definitely lost, but maybe something else is gained while that happens. What's lost, I think, is the idea of the familiarity of the site. So, with the iterations of this work, basically it's relying on either the audience's familiarity with that site, or a sense of impossibility that this could have actually happened. What I mean by that is, in its first iteration in Vienna, for example, it was just outside of a very busy subway station. So, I would wager that most of the people seeing it, because it was up for three-four months, there's repeated viewing—they saw it multiple times, they pass through that space. They've seen the billboard there before, they've seen other works on it before, but they haven't seen that sentence on the billboard before, so they might do a double take and say: hey, I never saw that there. So that's, there's that, and that might incite them to kind of look into it a little bit more. Or, the sense of impossibility would be, for example, it appears inside the pages of a magazine, like the previous issue of C Magazine. It was done so that the cover of the very magazine that it appeared in was photographed—well it wasn't really photographed, it was photoshopped into a photograph—and then printed inside the magazine as well. So essentially, you're looking at the real cover of the magazine, you're flipping the page, and you're looking at a photo of the magazine that you're holding, which is impossible, right? Because it's already been printed. So I think what happens in this instance, is that you're losing the sense of, like, seeing the site in situ, like, you're not seeing the work in reality because I'm assuming that there aren't really a lot of people on campus at this point in time. I think it's, in a sense, experienced as like a 'there-ness' instead of a 'here-ness,' but maybe that also introduces something interesting because then you're starting to think about the various ways in which this artifice might be presented to you through digital platforms. I thought it was really interesting, actually, when there was a video tour that was filmed by Blackwood Gallery—which is on the website, people can see it—and this is quite brilliant, because the narrator in there is taking a photo of the work through their phone, and you're seeing the work through her phone. Right? So, there's this—what ends up happening—well, and then, of course, we're watching that video through our screens, whether it's a phone or a laptop screen—so, it turns into this weird like Matryoshka doll of, like, you know, of like image, inside image, inside image, and through that transmission, something changes, something gets lost, but something else comes into being, I suppose. I think something interesting was happening—like this has happened in the past before. It's kind of a bit of a conundrum with the market—the PR of this work—is, when I'm asked to send the gallery an image prior to the printing of the promo image, prior to printing the image itself, what I do is, of course, I have to send the image that will be printed into the billboard, but that's not the work, right? You're not seeing the billboard inside the billboard, so you're losing all of that context. So, in that sense, I think each time the work is viewed, depending on where it is, how its presented, the very format that it's shown in, something different is happening. I think it's generative to think about the many ways in which we consume images through this as well—or at least I would hope so.

**Dina Georgis 23:41**

Yeah, I mean, one would hope that that's—that is always happening when we have aesthetic experiences, that there isn't any particular direction an experience should go in, and it's always delightful—you know, I would say, I'm assuming when you're an artist to kind of, you know, to get to hear how other people experience your work—I mean, I can just, you know—and all the different iterations that get reproduced. I'm going to switch gears a little bit here and ask you to think about with me around questions, I guess, of politics—I'm particularly thinking about the fact that I'm assuming you grew up in the Middle East in Turkey. Am I correct?

**Erdem Taşdelen 24:36**

For the most part, yeah.

**Dina Georgis 24:37**

Yes. And I, you know, and I also was born and raised in the Middle East, and I was just, you know, when I was thinking about you and your work, it made me think about how it's really very difficult not to be preoccupied by politics and authoritarian regimes when you've lived in that context. I suspect that those experiences may have left an imprint on you, on your psyche, and on your work. I'm just wondering if—you've already spoken a little bit about your—the ways in which you've been influenced by politics or political situations, so I'm just wondering if you can expand on that too.

**Erdem Taşdelen 25:25**

Sure. I mean, yeah, absolutely. I grew up partly in Turkey, but also in Switzerland and Germany, and I immigrated to Canada twelve years ago. So I'm a first generation immigrant and all of my family's in Turkey. But, also specifically to think about, you know, these political situations and authoritarianism, it's kind of funny that these are— well, not funny, but, you know, not funny 'haha,' but funny—that a lot of this discussion is happening in the place that I live, or like, you know, the countries that I'm kind of visiting these days. But, of course, when you look at a country like Turkey, the current president has been in power for eighteen years—not as a president because he brought the presidency system. He changed the entire regime, basically, to ensure that he would never lose. So, for those reasons, I've been, I had started thinking about authoritarianism and demagogues a lot earlier than my peers in Canada, I would say—well, not all of my peers, obviously, but quite a few of them. There's a sense of—I feel like there's this sense of like this zeitgeist of 'now all these discussions are so relevant, and I can talk about all of these things,' whereas up until a few years ago, when I would speak about something that happened in Turkey, nobody would really listen or care because it was always this idea of something happening over there that's irrelevant to us, or, you know, in places that Donald Trump would call shithole countries, essentially. But I think there's a realization that even among liberals who thought that, you know, Western countries were immune to these forces that erode democracy and institutions, that that's not actually the case. And, you know, there's a requirement for ongoing vigilance to protect institutions and

democracy, particularly in this age of disinformation, which is partly why I wanted to make a work like "Demagogues." In terms of thinking about how my relationship to Turkey influences the work I make, I think that's kind of like an undercurrent that is always there and embedded, but, to be quite honest with you, during the pandemic, I've actually engaged a lot less with news from Turkey just for the sake of my well being. There's so much happening in my world already that I don't really want to know what's happening over there. But, there is this deep sense of constant outrage at things, I suppose, and that's, that is, of course, a driving factor in, you know, why I think about these things—why make such work? I suppose.

**Dina Georgis 28:30**

So, when you make such work, Erdem, are you thinking that you are—maybe this simplifies things, so bear with me—are you thinking that the work is political critique? Is it like an incitement to political action, to do things differently? Is it to engage people's curiosity about some of the questions that you're asking in your work? And, just a phrase that I'm picking up from Jacques Rancière because I taught "The Emancipated Spectator" just yesterday—is it about creating a radical break from representational logic? And so, I'm just wondering what your thoughts are on that, where you see your work located in the world of art and politics—or maybe that category is not even interesting to you, which is also fine.

**Erdem Taşdelen 29:33**

No, absolutely, but I think it really, really depends on the context in which the work is shown. It's entirely about the context, right? So, for example, it's funny that, so, "Demagogues" was shown in Turkey in Ankara, but it had to be inside a museum. The museum thought about the potential of putting it up on a billboard outside, but that wasn't really something that could be done because, in an authoritarian situation, if you put up a sentence in public space that says like "a man, lying, bla bla bla..." Everyone knows who that man is. There's only one man that everyone could be talking about, right? So, it gets put inside a museum, and then there's security at the door, so—and only certain types and classes of people really realistically are coming into the museum anyway. So, in that sense, each time a work is shown, I would say that its engagement with the audience changes based on how it's shown, where it's shown, and who gets to see it. Generally speaking, in terms of my intentions, I would say—I wouldn't necessarily say that the work that I do is an incitement to political action, but maybe more of an incitement to be aware of the circumstances within which such action becomes necessary in the first place. So really, you know, trying to get the audience to think about their situatedness in society, their beliefs, their habits, and how these are culturally learned and shaped. Just even thinking about these circumstances, I feel like, is a very political act, because even though it's not a direct incitement to say 'hey, this is what we should do, or how we should organize,' it's really a way for people to kind of consider their beliefs and where those come from. I think that's partly because of my experiences. Having to think a lot about who I am in different circumstances—and I don't know, this may have been your experience too—just existing in



very different types of situations, living in different countries where you're constantly thinking about how you're being perceived from the outside. So, I mean, growing up in Turkey, I was—I couldn't really express my sexual orientation there, which is, the entire opposite is true right now as an artist in Canada—I feel like I am always expressing my sexual orientation. Or, you know, just in terms of my relationship to class, I come from a middle class background, but I studied on a scholarship at the most elite institution University in Turkey, so I was surrounded by very wealthy people. So, you know, being a chameleon in those types of spaces, and also, my relationship to race as a Turkish person I think is really complicated, because we're often kind of perceived as beige in some way of, you know—in certain contexts we're considered white, but, in certain contexts, we're considered people of color. So, because of this necessity of constantly reinventing myself in different situations, I've—and this is not unique to me, obviously, this happens to a lot of people—but I guess, for the people that it doesn't happen with, maybe it's an incitement for them to think about ways of being, ways of recreating oneself. And also, just one final thing: I feel like just the act of creativity is a political act.

**Dina Georgis** 33:17

Well, it's interesting, you are talking about this, that you—I just want to go back to the quote by—is it Tynan? Is that how you spell?

**Erdem Taşdelen** 33:31

Kenneth Tynan. Mmm hmm.

**Dina Georgis** 33:32

Yes. You know, so, when he uttered those words, which I'll repeat right now: "If a man tells me something I believe to be an untruth, am I forbidden to do more than congratulate him on the brilliance of his lying?" So, it's my understanding that he was—he said that in the context of thinking about that theatre maybe should be political. And so, you just said—it's interesting that you just said that being creative is political. So yeah, so I just kind of want to kind of think about the, again, this idea that the space—the space of performance and theatre—has a political component. Maybe you can just help us think about what the work of that is exactly. What does it mean for creativity to be, really, to have a political—is the politics around creativity, again, motivated by political transformation? Is that what he was getting at? Is that what you're getting at? What is threatening about creativity, especially in the context that we're living in right now—in a very divisive world of black and white, what is—yeah, I think maybe you're knowing what I'm getting at.

**Erdem Taşdelen** 35:06

Yeah, absolutely. So, just to go back to the intentions of the original sentence—I completely took that out of context, I will admit, because Kenneth Tynan is really talking about why do we—it was

part of a debate with another critic about 'why make art at all, what is the purpose of theatre,' right? And part of that debate was this one side—and it doesn't have to be one or two of these sides, I'm not really taking a position on either of these things—but one view is 'art for art's sake,' it doesn't really have to engage with any political realities, and then, of course, the other the other way of looking at it is, well, what is the point, then? If it's not going to engender any kind of, you know, different behavior, or different difference—introduce difference into the world—then why do we engage in this at all? So, it's relevant in the sense that that's exactly what I'm thinking about when I'm constantly making work. I'm thinking about why am I doing this, like, what is the purpose of doing this? Especially, you know, this has been very present in my mind, through COVID—when something as drastic as a pandemic happens, then what is the point of making work at all? But the thing that I keep coming back to is, it's not necessarily about creating art or making work—making art work, looking at artwork—it's just creative thinking itself because, for conservatism to succeed, people need to not be thinking differently, right?

**Dina Georgis** 36:36

Yeah.

**Erdem Taşdelen** 36:37

And thinking differently doesn't necessarily have to be thinking differently in a specific way—just the capacity to question and think critically is something that's trying to be shut down. I think that's possibly the most dangerous thing that's happening in our world at the moment.

**Dina Georgis** 36:57

Yeah, indeed. I think this might be my my last question to Erdem, which is, you know, what this particular quote conjures for me and what "Demagogues" makes me think about. It did really get me thinking about our relationship to illusions and their purpose in culture. It seems to me like in this particular work, there's an ambivalent relationship to truth telling and authenticity. The quote is a provocation to think about the role of theatre in addressing political realities, and as you said, taken out of its context—it's displayed on a billboard, it's understood as an incitement to respond to the lies of regimes and authoritarianism—so, it seems to me that this work is kind of taking a very ambivalent stand around creating illusions, but also being critical of illusions as well. I was wondering if you could say something about that?

**Erdem Taşdelen** 38:08

Absolutely. I think the stance that it's taking maybe is indirect, and again, I'm going to go back to the idea of the "I" of that utterance, and how the sentence situates and implicates the viewer as the "I" of that utterance. So, I guess the question is, who are these actors? Right? Who are the people that are making the sentence possible? Who's the "man"? I think this kind of relies on the audience to think about the site. Potentially, you know, if they're seeing the work repeatedly in its

original context, or, the logical impossibility of how it's appearing in front of you, and I think this might be different in this iteration because of the conditions under which it's made and shown, but I think it really relies on the audience to kind of look up information—like find out whether it was there or wasn't there before and fact check—like why? So, it's an incitement to find the source in a way. This is something I think a lot about in daily conversations as well. When I talk to my mother and she tells me something about the coronavirus that seems obviously false to me, the question that I always have to go back with is: where did you read this? What is the source? Why do you find it credible? Right? So, I think this, just, trying to push people towards this behavior, is becoming more, and more, and more important. In that sense, it's not really saying 'oh, illusions are bad,' or 'illusions are a terrible,' it's more about 'how do I even become aware that illusions are illusions?' Or, I mean, there's also the positive side of illusions, obviously, which you've written about and I wanted to kind of bring up in my conversation with you because you write about creativity being an inherently hopeful act. And so, I was interested in also speaking to you in terms of why, you know, ways that suggest being or imagining otherwise, or, why practices that imagine being or thinking otherwise is important to you.

**Dina Georgis 40:33**

Yeah. That's why I guess I asked you about your relationship to illusion, because it seems to me that the only way out of the conscripts of our representational world is creativity. But, for me, creativity, I conceptualize it in a very particular way around questions of unknowability and our capacity to kind of access unconscious agency, if you will, and how that comes a resource for recreating our world. I don't have time, obviously, to go into those details, but definitely, you know, around questions of devastation, or cultural loss, or—what happens when there's that kind of breakdown? What comes next? And for me, when that, even the representational logic of your life has has fallen to pieces, then we're forced into the otherwise and creating something new. But in contexts where we're not put in that terrible situation, where is there room for that kind of radical hope? And so, yeah, and I think the work, for me, when I'm interested in an artist, that's what I'm interested in. It's the works capacity to take us beyond what we know, what we think is certain about our world, what makes us feel safe, and really to kind of trouble—to trouble us, really—and to take us to new places.

**Laura Tibi 42:38**

Thank you for listening to "Transmissions," a podcast of the Blackwood Gallery. The Blackwood Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and the University of Toronto Mississauga. New episodes are released with each new image set between September 2020 and June 2021. For more information, including installation images, essays, and videos, visit the Blackwood website at: [blackwoodgallery.ca](http://blackwoodgallery.ca).