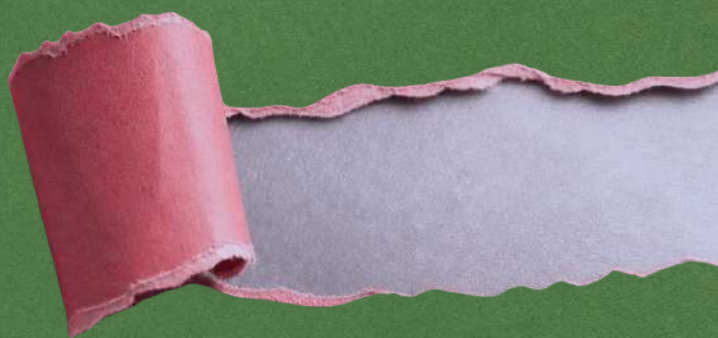


PHOTO VOICE 2.0

Artworks and Project Booklet



Part of the 2026

ROOTS AND ROUTES
NEWCOMER, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ARTS FESTIVAL

Organizer:



Funded By:



United Way
Greater Toronto
FUNDED PROJECT



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



ROOTS AND ROUTES

NEWCOMER, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ARTS FESTIVAL

Welcome to the second year of the *Roots & Routes Newcomer, Immigrant and Refugee Arts Festival*. This festival is a tribute to journeys across borders and cultures, and an exploration of changing identities and paths ahead through artistic expression, story exchange and cultural discovery.

This booklet introduces the artworks and sharing of 18 Photovoice participants, and a snapshot of the dance, theatre and animation activities, showcased at Aaniin Community Centre on August 23.

We hope you will find resonance in participants' expressions of home, struggles and hope. Perhaps you will be inspired to share your stories as well!

2026 Roots & Routes Festival Programs

APR - JUL

Photovoice 2.0 @ TCCSA York & Toronto Center ;
Facilitators - Joseph Wong & Patrick de Belen

JUNE

Arts for Wellness Training in Markham @TCCSA - York Centre

JUL

Animation Lab @ Aaniin Library ; **Facilitators - Cassia Leung & Lin Zhao**

JUL -AUG

K-pop Dance Camp @TCCSA York Centre ; **Facilitator - Eunice Yu**

AUG

Theatre Program @TCCSA York Centre ; **Facilitator - Tin Chan**

AUG 15-28

Photovoice 2.0 Exhibition @**Aaniin Library**

AUG 23

Final Dance, Theatre and Animation Showcase @**Aaniin Community Centre**

Homed

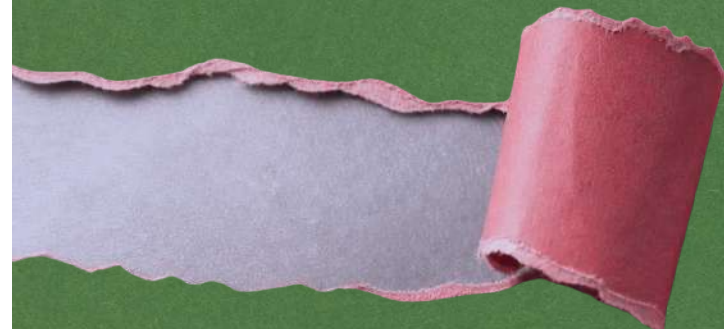
Curatorial Statement

For years, I genuinely believed the word "homed" existed. Whenever friends asked, "Are you home yet?" I'd text back with total confidence: "I'm homed."

It took an embarrassingly long time to realize it wasn't in the dictionary. English boasts over 170,000 words, yet lacks a single word for the space between departure and arrival.

That state of mid-transition is one of the most honest human experiences I know.

This project bridges that gap. Home is a slow-unfolding mark, revealed only when you dare to peel back a layer. When I tear paper by hand, the frayed edge always looks like a bandage, peeling back to reveal a hidden layer waiting underneath.



Whether you were born here, moved decades ago, or arrived last month, we all know the feeling of being not quite "homed", even if the dictionary hasn't caught up yet.

(Instagram: @lws_cassia)

– Curator
Cassia Leung (2026)

A. HM. C.

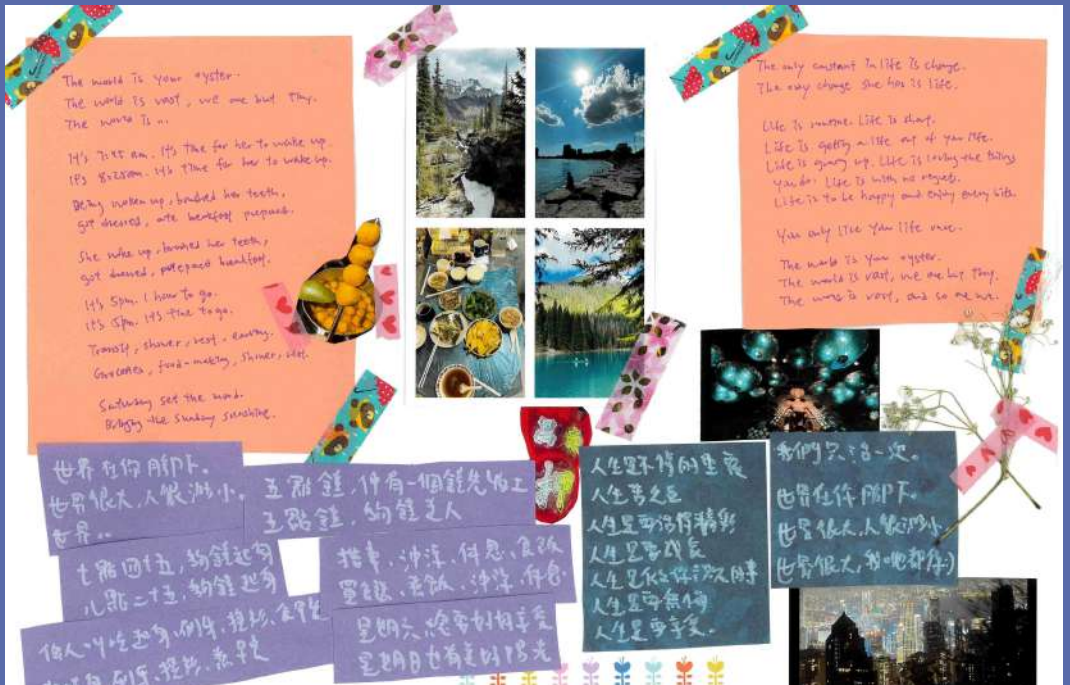
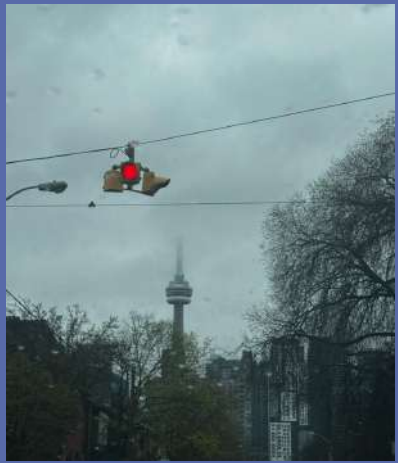
World / Life

My piece is a reflection, or a summary, of my life so far.

By structuring the text around repeated moments, it reflects how ordinary days unfold across different stages of life.

Through the inclusion of recurring elements, it reveals subtle shifts in routine, growth, and identity. I use repetition and alliteration to mirror the rhythm of routine, memory, and notes to myself.

I have always observed how life changes for me, and for other immigrants who move to a new country. This inspired me to create this piece: to share my feelings and find echoes in shared experiences.





AVERY LEE

Lost in nature, found in peace

When I look at these photos, it reminds me of my childhood because, as a child, I felt a sense of freedom. These were taken in the northern Ontario area (Creemore and Collingwood). It was an escape from the city life so it felt liberating, just as I was when I was a child. It brings back a memory of a time I would go out during recess at school. It was essentially free time that I could spend during my day and it was always something I looked forward to.

I chose to put this zine page together using a very minimalistic approach. I wanted to capture the beauty and peacefulness of the photos without adding too much to the design. As you can see, the background is floral-based, and I purposely included that because the theme of this entire artwork is focused on nature.

Through this artwork, I want people to see that my story is that if you explore and go outside of your comfort zone (outside of the city) with intention and immerse yourself in nature, you will truly find yourself at peace.



《A Rose Beneath The Sky》

A single rose stands
tall and bright,
Beneath the soft and
cloudy light.
Its crimson petals
gently glow,
Like love and hope
the heart can know.



The silent trees
watch from afar,
while dreams drift
softly with each star.
Though winds may come
and seasons fly,
The rose still lifts
its face to the sky.

一朵玫瑰高高绽放，
伫立在柔和云光下。
深红的花瓣轻轻闪耀，
如同心中的爱与希望。

寂静的树木远远守望，
梦想随着星光轻轻飘摇。
纵然风来，四季流转，
玫瑰依然向着天空昂扬。

DONGYU

Roses Under the Sky



This work blends nature, photography, poetry, and graphic design. The rose, positioned at the center of the image, symbolizes love, hope, strength, and serene beauty. The cloudy sky and peaceful landscape create a calm atmosphere, reminding us that beauty can still bloom through changing seasons. The English poem expresses resilience and hope, while the elegant layout allows words and nature to complement each other. Through this design, I hope viewers will slow down, appreciate the beauty of nature, and find encouragement in everyday life.

KA YU TSOI

In Search of Home

In Search of Home explores migration, freedom, and the search for belonging through the metaphor of flight. The series contrasts a preserved bird suspended in a perfect yet motionless pose at the Royal Ontario Museum with living birds whose uncertain movements embody the vulnerability of true flight.

The work reflects on the journeys of those who leave familiar places in search of safety, faith, and a better life. While certainty may appear comforting, it can also become a form of confinement. Through movement, uncertainty, and resilience, the series considers home not as a fixed destination, but as something continually discovered along the way. (Instagram: @ky.vpf)



受困於博物館的鳥
被封印於展翅的瞬間
想像自由的模樣
拍翼 翱翔

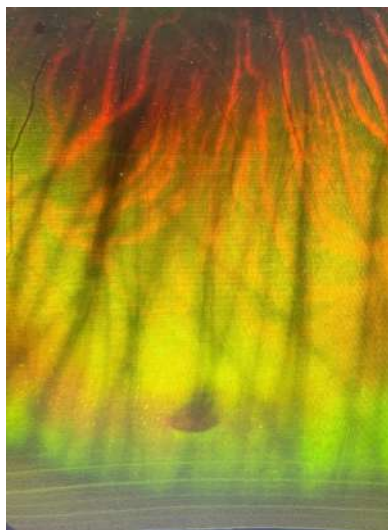
A bird trapped in ROM
hanged mid air, frozen
dreamed the freedom might be
flicker, spread out, soar high

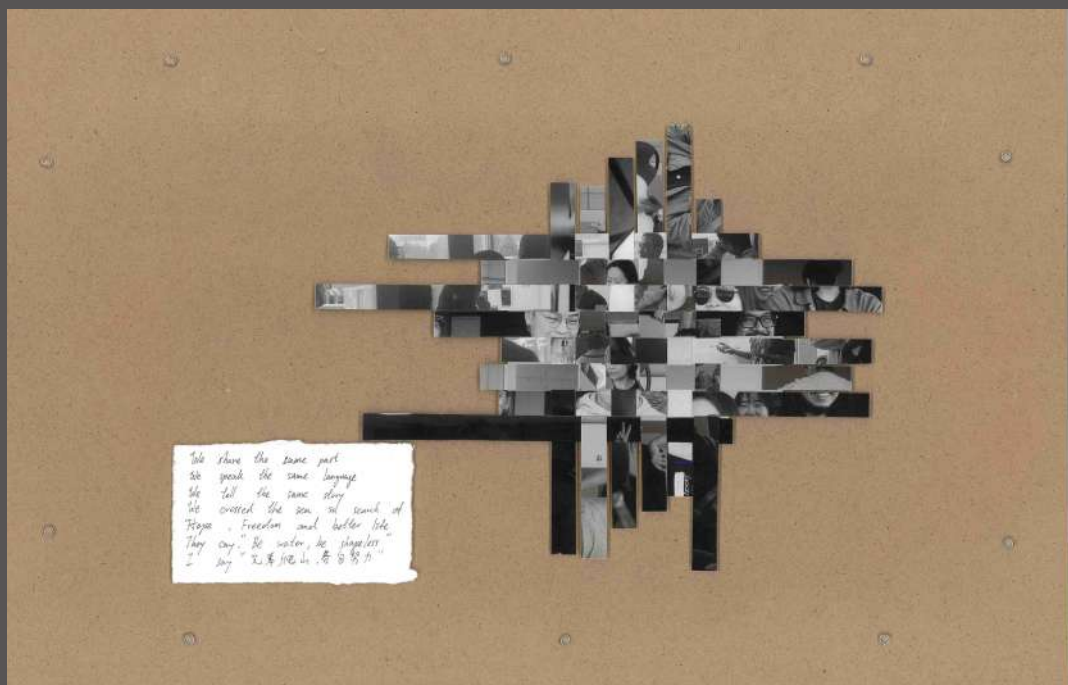


H.

Just for Fun

Settling here has been difficult, and I won't pretend otherwise. But if I have found happiness in this city, it is because of you. To my friends who have accompanied me, played a part in my journey, and cheered me on: thank you. You are the heart of this work. Until we meet again somewhere else. Chao!





JASON HONG

-Weave-

What makes us who we are? This work explores the identity of Hong Kongers living in Canada through the quiet moments of everyday life. Photographs taken during my workshops are cut into strips and woven together, reflecting how memories, culture, and community intertwine. Like the woven image, identity is formed through many small connections —constantly evolving while remaining rooted in shared experiences.
 (Instagram: @jason_hong_wh_)



KATE

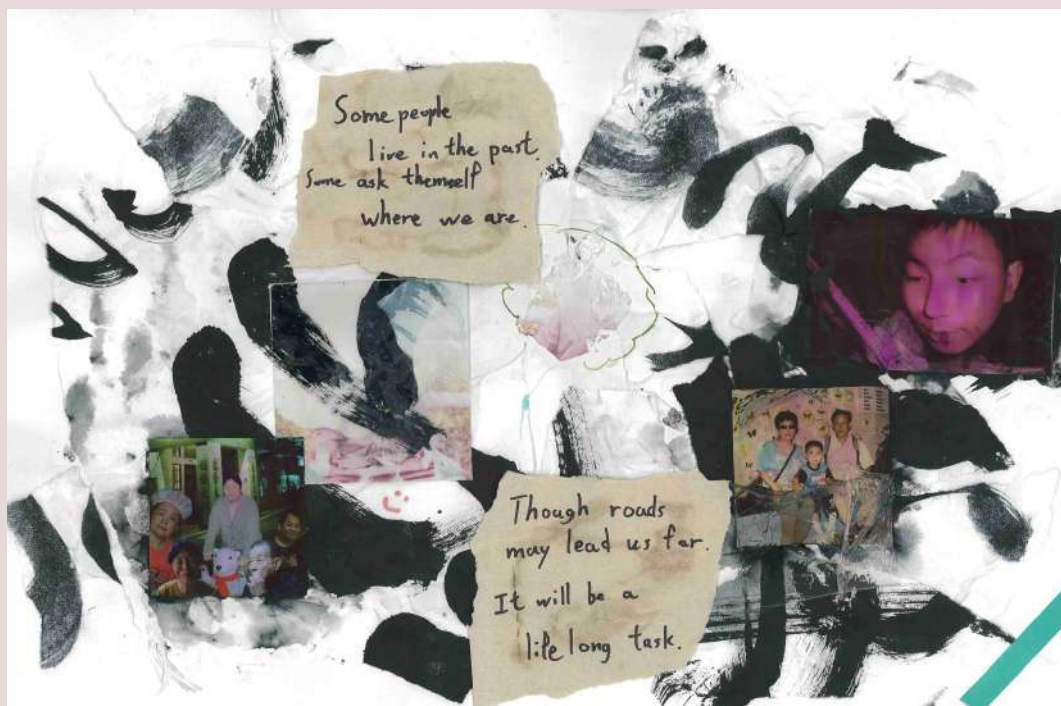
Untitled

Every year, just before Hong Kong's humid summer settles in, the cotton trees that line the streets around my childhood home would bloom, their petals bursting in scarlet before surrendering to the pavement, leaving soft white tufts of cotton drifting through the air.

Years later, beneath the ephemeral bloom of cherry blossoms in Toronto, I found myself looking up with the same instinct. For a moment, the two cities seemed to share the same sky.

I created this visual poem to reflect on memory, migration, and the grief of carrying a home that has outlived the version of itself I once knew.





EASTKUMO

Belongs to...

This collage combines family photographs with an original poem to explore the meaning of home and belonging. The images represent memories, relationships, and moments that have shaped who I am, while the poem reflects on the lifelong search for a place where we truly belong.



KRISTINE YUEN

HOME

As an art lover, I enjoy observing Mother Nature and capturing beautiful moments. My artwork, 'Home' is inspired by the changing beauty of nature surrounding the place I call home. By combining my own photographs, pressed leaves collected throughout the year, and original poem, I wanted to capture the unique colors, feelings and memories that each season brings.

I hope everyone can slow down and enjoy the simple beauty that can be found in everyday life.

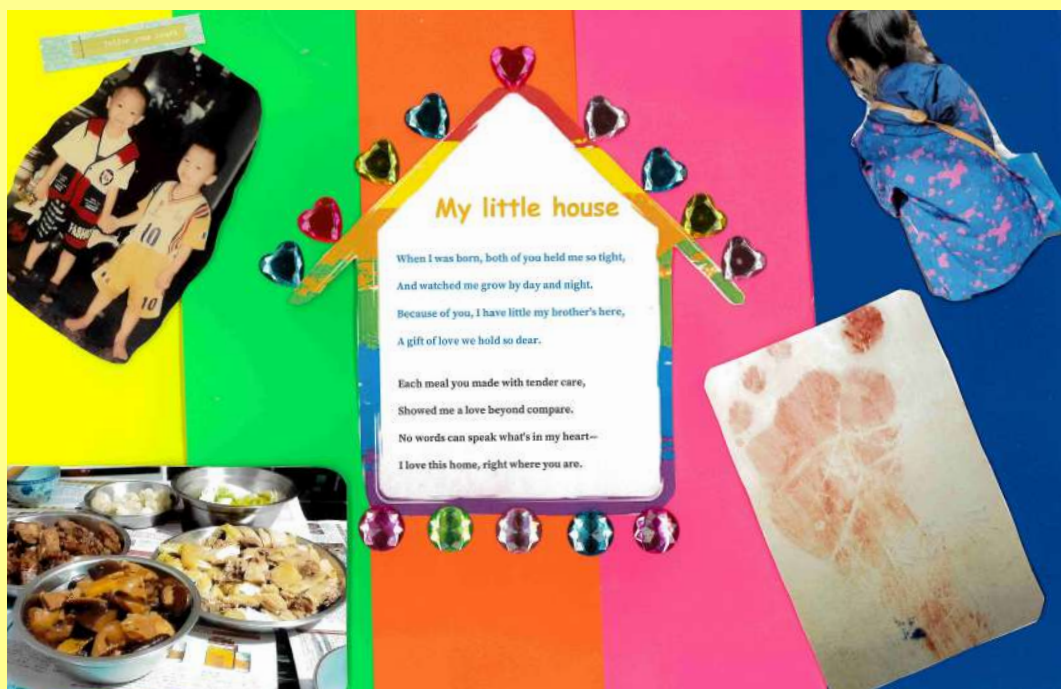




MAN KWAN TONG

My Little House

This artwork features four photos of my family, which I think is very important. Without my family's support, I wouldn't have grown up to become the person I am today. Also, I wanted to use this bell to interact with everyone viewing the zine; I didn't want to just show pictures without any fun elements. This bell serves as a reminder that even as we become adults and move far away, our family is always there to support us.



MARIA HO

Home 家

I love photography. In my youth, it was a luxury; now, with a smartphone in hand, I can frame the world.

That morning, around six, the first light of dawn emerged, and the clouds outside the window were painted in soft hues. I pressed the shutter on my phone, capturing the gentle light—like glimpsing the warmth of home.



I was born in a wooden house and grew up in poverty. Back then, I had nothing, yet I had greenery, fresh breezes, and sincere human warmth—treasures beyond any price. Though those days were the poorest, they remain the richest in my heart.



Home 家

Looking out from my window,
從我的窗外望出去，
I see a beautiful scene unfold.
看見一幅美麗的景色徐徐展開。

This is what a harmonious family feels like—
這就是一個和諧家庭的感覺——
a quiet kind of love, gentle and whole.
一種安靜的愛，溫柔而完整。

2026-5-9

What do I miss about home?
我懷念的家，是什麼？

I miss the world I once grew up in.
我懷念我成長的那片天地。

A small wooden house stood at the foot of Lion Rock in Hong Kong,
在香港獅子山腳下，有一間小小的木屋，
where fresh air flowed gently through every morning.
清新的空氣，在每個清晨輕輕流動。

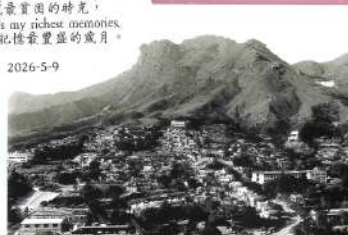
From there, I could see Tse Wan Shan in the distance,
遠遠望去，可以看見慈雲山，
quiet under the sky like a resting memory.
靜靜地躺在天空之下，如同一段沉澱的記憶。

My young eyes would trace Shatin Pass Road,
年少的眼睛，沿著沙田路延伸，
watching tiny figures move like drifting thoughts.
看著行人如流動的思緒般穿梭。

I climbed Lion Rock to meet the wind,
我曾攀上獅子山，與風相擁，
breathing in a sky that felt endlessly wide.
在無邊的天空下深呼吸。

I had kind neighbors. Life was simple.
鄰居和善，生活簡單。
It was the poorest time of my life,
那是我最貧困的時光，
yet it holds my richest memories.
卻也是我記憶最豐盛的歲月。

2026-5-9





MARINA PAU

Ode to Home

A mixed-media exploration of identity, belonging, and the profound contrast between the exhilaration of travel and the deep-seated comfort of returning to where we truly belong.

Combining personal photography, collage elements from worldly travels, and bilingual poetry, this piece serves as a visual and textual narrative of a journey that ultimately leads back to oneself.



致家園的頌歌

思家歸來的時候，
哦，原來我已過了多麼多，
難離在自己的家上，多麼！

星遊後，終於歸家了，
萬分難離難離與你，
的距離，
再壯闊的山河，
再美中的佳釀，
終有千般好，
終失不及自己的家。

星遊後，終於歸家了，
萬分難離難離與你，
的距離，
再壯闊的山河，
再美中的佳釀，
終有千般好，
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再壯闊的山河，
再美中的佳釀，
終有千般好，
終失不及自己的家。



Ode to Home

Wade to the morning light,
back in Toronto's sight,
safe in my bed as night—
oh, what a sweet return!
Miles on the road behind,
now I can rest my mind.
Though wanderers touched the day,
though wanderers passed me by,
and forests were sweet and deep—
home is the truest place.
Where memories softly stay,
where fears all fade away,
my heart will always say:
home is my warm embrace.
Here I can simply be,
there I am truly free,
no mask or mystery—
just who I really am.
Home is the harbor bright,
guiding me through the night,
soft as a lantern light—
home is my resting place.

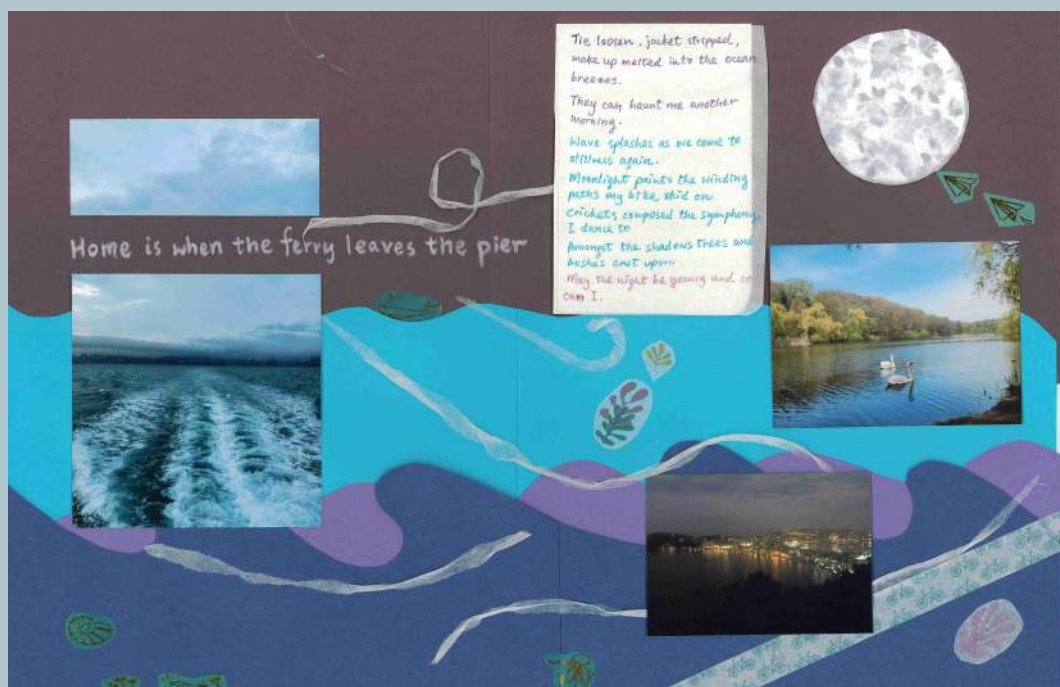




SAM NG

The reality of leaving home for years, perhaps indefinitely, is a quiet weight to carry. It grows heavier as time passes and memories of loved ones linger.

The collected photographs and fragments capture moments of softness and solitude, tracing the footprints of this journey while searching for hope between places.



TIN

Home Is the Time

Tin lives on one of Hong Kong's outlying islands, where the ferry shapes the rhythm of everyday life. The crossing is more than a commute - it is a boundary. Home begins the moment the ferry leaves the city behind. As the skyline fades, traffic gives way to trees, tides, and quieter time. What many see as an inconvenience, Tin experiences as intention: a slower pace, a different measure of time and space. Perhaps home is not a place at all, but the time it takes to arrive.



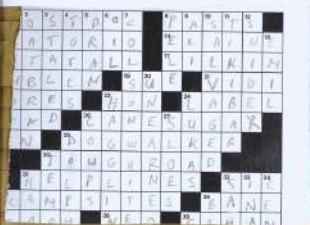
Tyla Anne Beke

Sunflower Girl

A piece that combines the feelings of reverence for cultural memory, community and family meeting delayed grief, love and yearning. Reflecting on the details of life we take for granted and the things we may not realize the importance of until they are gone. A love letter to my Grandmother and how much others are reminded of her through me.



Thinking about Saskatoon,
Peace before the harvest moon.
Prairies kiss the setting sun;
Swaying wheat, my dear loved one.



Sometimes home feels like

The traces of embroidery on your shirt
that whisper the stories of a past life
simpler than the patterns they embolden.

A lilac tree blooming outside by bedroom window,
perfume of my waking and waning hours,
left behind with coming of age and hair golden.

The nostalgia for laying on your floor, watching cartoons,
the taste of brown sugar and cigarette smoke.

Hugs in the kitchen when there is a moment of sadness
that cannot be explained, without any words spoke.

A sticker on the lamp post that makes me think of
rock songs playing from the attic, queerness in our hearts,
and the little details they said noone else would see.

Sometimes home feels like
the bigger picture,
but not to me.





WING YU HO, WINNIE

HOME

Home is a mixed-media collage inspired by my original poem. I enjoy expressing everyday life through writing, photography, and handmade art, and this piece brings these passions together. The combination of handwritten words, printed images, and photographs of my handmade clay food miniatures reflects my belief that home is created through memories, shared meals, and meaningful experiences rather than a physical place. I also hand-painted the frame with an aged wood feeling of home, inviting viewers to reflect on their own understanding of home---what it means to them and the moments that make them feel connected and welcomed. (instagram: winnie_s_workshop_2015)

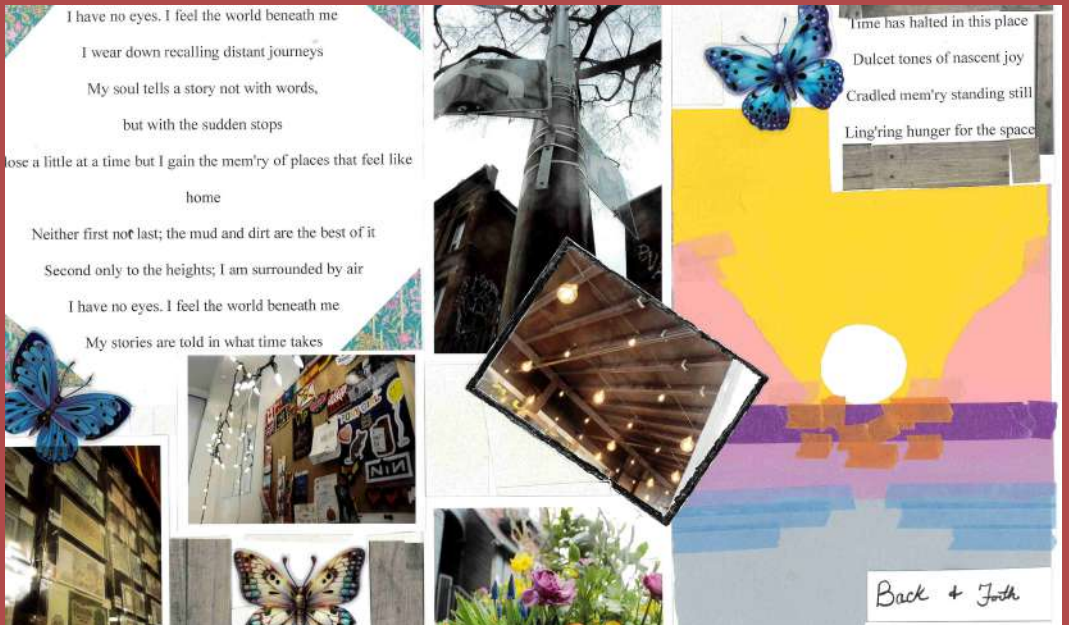




YANNICK TONEY

Back and Forth

The general theme of it is nostalgia and transformation. The butterflies point to a photo or poem except for one, which faces away from a poem about memory, signifying change.





ZERO YU

File

I was born in Guangzhou, and moved to Canada in 2015. After graduated and returned to China to work in the fashion industry. *File* documents my transition after returning to Toronto in 2025 to begin again while supporting my family.

The file folders in these photographs are part of my everyday workplace. Coming from the fashion industry, where I was surrounded every day by creativity, beautiful garments and constant change, I first saw them as repetitive and confined. Through this work, I realized they are more than documents—they are records of change, resilience, and growth.

Each file represents another page in the archive of my life.



ANIMATION LAB

Spanning ages 14 to over 70, our Animation Lab brought generations together to explore technology-based art and healthy social media habits. With special sessions led by professional animation artist Bob Wong and an engaging mental health presentation from HF Care, participants gained both digital art skills and valuable well-being insights.



Artist: @froggi_bottom
(on instagram)
Scan for Animation Video:



Artist: Jason
Scan for
Animation Video:



Artist: Haashini
Scan for
Animation Video:



Artist: Maria Ko
Scan for
Animation Video:





Artist: Hydrobolt
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Animation Video:



Artist: Eko
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Animation Video:



Artist: Sumathy
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Animation Video:



Artist: Moosa Hashmi
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Animation Video:



Artist: YinXin
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Animation Video:



Artist: Ada
Scan for
Animation Video:





★ Weaving the Star Map Wall ★

During our program, language-learner participants practiced basic English while learning about Canadian life, covering fun topics like local Canadian food, travel, public transit, and sports.

Each participant printed photos and wrote stories depicting their daily life or adventures, both before and

after arriving in Canada. The *Weaving the Star Map*

Wall photo installation displays stories and memories that otherwise may remain unshared.

Pictures and writing come together on a collective photo wall in TCCSA's York Centre, that everyone passing by can enjoy.



BODY MOVEMENTS, EXPLORATION & EXPRESSION

K-POP DANCE CAMP

THEATRE WORKSHOP

Re-Imagining Fables for 2026



Our K-Pop Dance Camp is a vibrant celebration where participants used movement as a means of self-expression, coming together in smaller performance groups that let each dancer's individuality shine. It was inspiring to see how sharing the stage brought everyone closer, proving that dance truly connects us all.

Through our Theatre Program, participants created a drama containing themes meaningful to each of them. An individual and shared performances allowed everyone's unique story to shine, creating a deeply supportive environment that brought everyone closer as a community.



Arts for Wellness Training in Markham



We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who took part in our Arts for Wellness Training in Markham!

It was deeply inspiring to observe community members and service providers come together. Participants engaged in creative expression through drama, explored holistic wellness approaches, and a restorative forest bathing session.

Participants exchanged experiences over activities and refreshments, learnt from each other, and also discussed how different organizations can work in-sync to provide holistic services for the community.





THE CROSS-CULTURAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

The Cross-Cultural Community Services Association (TCCSA) is a registered charitable, non-profit organization established in 1973. Our mission is to enhance the well-being and resilience of diverse communities by strengthening competencies and fostering participation through effective and professional human services. We envision a robust and inclusive Canada where people from all backgrounds can realize their full potential and actively contribute to society.

TCCSA delivers a broad range of programs and services across Toronto, Scarborough, Markham, and Mississauga, serving newcomers, immigrants, racialized communities, youth, seniors, women, families, and job seekers. Our core service areas include settlement and integration, language instruction for newcomers (LINC), employment services, youth development, community engagement, volunteer development, and wellness programs.

Through collaborative partnerships with governments, community organizations, educational institutions, and employers, TCCSA promotes inclusion, civic participation, and equitable access to opportunities. Each year, we engage thousands of community members through one-on-one settlement support, workshops, cultural celebrations, volunteer initiatives, employment programs, and community events that strengthen social connections, celebrate Canada's diversity, foster welcoming and inclusive communities, and encourage meaningful intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among people from diverse backgrounds.

For more information about TCCSA's programs and services, please visit tccsa.on.ca.



FOLLOW US



York Centre
Unit 213A,
3636 Steeles Ave. E.,
Markham, On, L3R 1K9
Tel: (905) 948-1671
Fax: (905) 948-9997

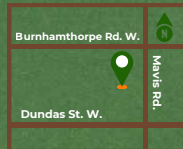
Scarborough Centre

Unit A107,
325 Bamburgh Cir.,
Toronto, On, M1W 3Y1
Tel: (416) 502-9500
Fax: (416) 502-2900



Toronto Centre
247 Spadina Ave.,
4th Floor, Toronto,
On, M5T 3A8
Tel: (416) 977-4026
Fax: (416) 351-0510

Peel Centre
Unit 2, 720 Burnhamthorpe
Rd. W., Mississauga,
On, L5C 3G1
Tel: (905) 615-9500
Fax: (905) 615-0622



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