

401
RICHMOND

update

Spring 2025 Volume 32, Issue 1





The 401 Richmond Update is a community-building initiative of Urbanspace Property Group. The newsletter began in June 1994 and over the years has documented the eclectic activities and fascinating people who make a home in our historic factory in downtown Toronto. If you would like to be added to the 401 Update mailing list, please email: UPDATE@urbanspace.org.

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COVER IMAGE

Contemporary Textile Studio's
Munira Amin, Erin MacKeen and
Lizz Aston welcoming attendees
at 401's 2024 Holiday Open House.
Photo: Tomasz Adamski



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The artistry of **Bill Greaves** is featured in the **Tenant Profile** (see page 4).



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MOVING IN

Please welcome artist and instructor **Jon Chau** of **North Light Studios** to the 2nd floor. Jon comes to 401 with experience in animation, printmaking, commercial illustration, and classical realism, and as North Light Studios offers portfolio development workshops.

Also, **Metro** into 401 on the 3rd floor, led by **Executive Manager William Huffman**. Working in partnership with **West Baffin Cooperative**, Metro situates contemporary Inuit art from the Kinngait community in a dynamic global conversation. William also holds the role of 401's Curator, Special Projects, spearheading Nuit Blanche and the 401 Career Launcher Prize.

MOVING ON

We bid a fond farewell to **Pleiades Theatre** and the **Architectural Conservancy of Ontario** as they move on from 401. And, the community wishes the **Black Artists' Networks in Dialogue (BAND) Gallery and Cultural Centre** all the best for their move back to a newly renovated Brock Street building.



Sign up for monthly *What's On* updates to your inbox at www.401richmond.com.



SANDRA OH DOUBLES REEL ASIAN DONATION TO \$100K

Canadian actor **Sandra Oh** doubled her support for the **Reel Asian Fire Horse Award** during a Toronto International Film Festival reception, adding another \$50,000 to make her overall contribution to the festival's Reel Asian Fire Horse Award \$100,000 over five years. The Reel Asian Award was created in 2021 to honor the organization's founder **Anita Lee**, also the **Chief Programming Officer** for the Toronto Film Festival. Says Oh, "Even though there is a place and a space for us now, it's so important that we develop people, and this is the place where we can do it."

CBC ARTS LOGO ARTIST CITES ABOZZO AS INSPIRATION

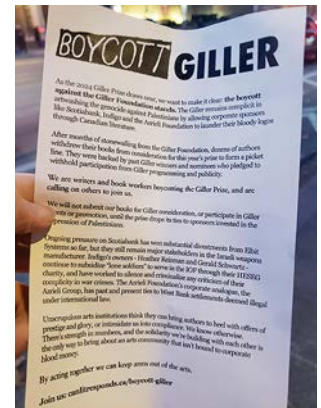
One of CBC Arts' latest artists to re-interpret the national broadcaster's logo cited 401 Richmond and Abbozzo Gallery as some of her art destination inspirations. Now based in Toronto, **Adrienna Matzeg** studied photography at the **Nova Scotia College of Art and Design** and started working in punch-needle embroidery during the pandemic. Her CBC Arts logo took 20 "slow but meditative" hours to complete, she says.



Adrienna Matzeg's embroidered interpretation of the CBC logo



Above 'Toronto scented' candles at Spacing
Left Sandra Oh (centre) with Deanna Wong (right) at TIFF
Right Boycott Giller memo from canlitresponds.ca



SPACING SELLS TORONTO SCENTED CANDLES

Needing a hobby during the pandemic, **Émeraude Domingos-Mbuku** ordered a candle-making kit that turned into a business. After six years working at the Queen and Spadina McDonald's in downtown Toronto, she started with a candle that captured the unique location's smells: freshly brewed coffee, cigarettes, and exhaustion. More hyper-specific Toronto scents include High Park Cherry Blossoms and Sneaky Dee's. Domingos-Mbuku's candles are appropriately available at **Spacing's** store.

GILLER BOYCOTT BOOK LIST

37 Canadian authors in the running for the **2024 Giller Prize** withdrew their novels for consideration citing the award sponsor's international investments. Four of the books on the resistant list include **Book*hug Press** publications including **Erin Brubacher's** *These Songs I Know By Heart*, **Daniel Sarah Karasik's** *Disobedience*, **Jess Taylor's** *Play*, and **Jacob Wren's** *Dry Your Tears To Perfect Your Aim*.

spotted & applauded



REEL ASIAN LEADER HONOURED

Reel Asian Executive Director Deanna Wong was honoured with the Community Harmony and Diversity Award at the **2025 Hua Cai Awards**. The Hua Cai Awards pay tribute to individuals and groups who have outstanding social influence and made outstanding contributions in the Canadian multicultural community.



ARTIST TALK & DEMO FOR LOCAL YOUTH

Gagné Contemporary hosted close to 30 students from 401 neighbour Alpha Alternative School who came to see Rocky Dobey's exhibition *Civilization and its Discontents*. Rocky spoke with the children about how and why he makes his artwork and gave each student a small piece of copper to scratch and engrave into themselves. Gallery owner John Gagné then installed the young artists' work as part of Rocky's show.



A SPACE EXHIBITION WINS GOG AWARD

Galleries Ontario/Ontario Galleries (GOG) celebrated the 47th edition of the GOG Awards recognizing outstanding achievement, artistic merit, and excellence across Ontario's public art gallery sector. **A Space Gallery** received the award for best **Exhibition Under \$20,000 Monographic** for *Sila / Siya / Ako – Julius Poncelet Manapul*, curated by **Dr. Marissa Largo**.

GLASS ORCHESTRA @ X AVANT FESTIVAL

The iconic Toronto-based **Glass Orchestra** that includes 401 musician and founding member **Eric Cadesky**, closed out the 19th edition of the **Music Gallery's X Avant Festival** series, titled *Texture*. The 5-day festival highlights thoughtful approaches to music, heritage, and how texture, textile, and text can impact the ways we musically translate past, present, and future. The Glass Orchestra, founded in 1977, is the only ensemble in the world whose musicians create and perform contemporary compositions entirely with glass instruments.



tenant profile



BILL GREAVES Studio 276

“The practice of architectural model making and drawing informs my ceramic work more than the practice of making buildings,” says ceramicist and architect **Bill Greaves**. Born and raised in Toronto, Bill’s inspiration for his first career in architecture started at **Ontario Place** where he spent all his childhood birthdays. His friends and family would begin at the Children’s Village to play and picnic, and then head to the Cinesphere for a film. “There was a sense of excitement about the world through architecture and landscape that had an influence on me,” recalls Bill.

Bill eventually headed to Connecticut to train as an architect at **Yale University**. Following graduation, he spent the next 15 years working for prominent architecture firms in New York City. In 2005, Bill decided to take a break to travel and headed to southeast Asia for a few months sketching ancient ruins in Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia. While wandering through Cambodia’s capital city of Phnom Penh he happened upon an impressive collection of late modernist concrete buildings all by the same architect named **Vann Molyvann**.

Appointed as state architect in 1956 in newly independent Cambodia, Vann Molyvann went on to design many of the country’s most ambitious and well-known public buildings constructed as part of a nation-wide modernization project. Forced to leave at the outbreak of the country’s civil war in 1971, most of his drawings were lost after his departure and subsequent governments made no efforts to preserve his buildings or legacy. This marked the beginning of Bill’s work towards architectural documentation and heritage conservation, including co-leading the **Future of Ontario Place** project team years later.

Determined to save the Cambodian architect’s legacy, Bill founded **The Vann Molyvann Project**, an international team of architects, architecture students and other researchers working in Cambodia to document the buildings of Vann Molyvann and other modernist architecture. Under Bill’s leadership, the team measured and documented Molyvann’s buildings and mounted an exhibition of models and drawings of his work at the French Cultural Center in Phnom Penh.



Opposite page (clockwise from left) Bill in his studio during *Doors Open 2024*; a vessel from Bill's *Haptic* series; test tiles
Above Bill lecturing on Cambodian architect Vann Molyvann at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

In 2012 Bill made the decision to move back to Toronto, “When I lived in New York originally, I felt like I couldn’t live anywhere else. It felt like the centre of the world; I just had to be there. Something about being in Cambodia broke that spell.” Settling back in his hometown, Bill enrolled in an introduction to pottery class with his niece at the **Gardiner Museum**. His niece enjoyed the class well enough, but Bill was hooked, “It never actually felt like a hobby. My connection to it felt stronger than that. I didn’t want to do anything else.”

Bill continued taking classes at the Gardiner but eventually realized they wouldn’t satisfy his new creative focus. One of his instructors connected him with master ceramicist **Alex Yeung**. He signed up for so many of Alex’s classes that he ended up spending most of his time in Alex’s studio on Spadina Avenue for a few years.

In the beginning of Bill’s journey into ceramics, he was drawn to the raw surface of the clay after it was fired in the kiln. He resisted Alex pushing him to apply glazes to his pots, claiming “I love the material of clay. I want to see the clay.” Alex impressed upon Bill how important the glazing process was to a finished piece. He likened it to a painter spending months building up the surface of a canvas. “I really took that to heart, and my work came to be about the surface,” explains Bill.

In Alex’s studio, Bill learned to integrate the practice of regularly making test tiles to track the results of different glaze combinations and experiments with surface texture. Bill remembers when “Alex would push me to try lots of different things. I was influenced by everything around me.”

While Bill learned how to make pots with a potter’s wheel, it’s not his preferred method to make a ceramic object. He connected with the alternate process of hand building, especially coil building, which involves the layering of rolled tubes of clay with their surface scratched and scored to encourage the coils to adhere

to each other. For Bill, “Coil building frees you up to make decisions as you go. It creates these organic, natural shapes coming from the material itself and the making technique.”

Bill’s time learning with Alex came to a close as the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns arrived. He headed to his family’s farm in Prince Edward County, setting up a pottery studio above the garage. Bill joined the active community of artists in the area and began to refine his studio practice. “When I moved to the country, I immediately narrowed down my focus without trying and started working with one clay body and about five core glazes. That was a bit of an evolution,” Bill explains.

With the isolation and focus of being in the country, Bill honed his approach to creating his pots’ surfaces. He began to create texture by scraping and carving into the clay, and then applying multiple washes of different glazes, pulling a brush across the top to deepen the texture.

As pivotal as his time in the countryside was to move his ceramics practice forward, in the spring of 2024, Bill jumped at the chance to occupy a studio at 401 Richmond, “I thought maybe I was a rural person. As it turns out, I’m not. I love being in the city. It was me and the trees out there. The first few weeks I was back in Toronto, the level of stimulation was amazing and intense. It felt like where I needed to be.”

For the past few years, Bill has been exhibiting his vessels at **Oeno Gallery** in Prince Edward County, **Craft Ontario** in Toronto, **Dobrinka Salzman Gallery** in New York City and with **Vessels + Sticks**, an online Canadian-based international dealer of contemporary ceramics who also show Bill’s new ceramic lamps and stools. Recently, Bill was also invited to show work at the Gardiner Museum shop and has been included in a group show organized by the shop and hosted by **Ingram Gallery** in Yorkville, Toronto.

Back in the city, Bill continues to take inspiration from his immediate environment. A test tile is made with the impression of a wooden chopstick from a neighbouring sushi spot. The chopstick is labelled and added to his mark-making tool kit that includes building and design samples from his former architecture practice. And, his work is moving in a new – or perhaps a past direction – into collaborations with an architecture firm he used to work with who saw the potential in incorporating Bill’s two-dimensional ceramic panels into custom furniture and cabinetry. Speaking to these new commissions, Bill reflects, “It feels very full circle. My architecture world and my ceramics world are coming together in a way that I love. I really want to focus on that moving forward.” @BillGreaves

listings March to May 2025

The Listings Board is your opportunity to communicate with other tenants and keep them informed about what's happening in your organization. If you are having a sale, exhibition, or event you would like advertised, email details to communications@urbanspace.org. Open to all tenants.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: April 15, 2025

GALLERY DIRECTORY

A Space Gallery (Studio 110)
aspacegallery.org

Abbozzo Gallery (Studio 128)
abbozzogallery.com

Artspace Gallery TMU (Studio LL106)
artspacetmu.com

Critical Distance Centre for Curators (Studio 122)
criticaldistance.ca

Gagné Contemporary (Studio B20)
gagnecontemporary.com

Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography (Studio 120)
gallery44.org

Museum of Toronto (Studio LL01)
museumoftoronto.com

Open Studio (Studio 104)
openstudio.ca

Red Head Gallery (Studio 115)
redheadgallery.org

Simon Bentley Fine Art (Studio 133)
simonbentleyfineart.com

TAG (Tangled Art Gallery) (Studio 124)
tangledarts.org

Trinity Square Video (Studio 121)
trinitysquarevideo.com

Urbanspace Gallery (Studio 117)
urbanspacegallery.ca

YYZ Artists' Outlet (Studio 140)
yyzartistsoutlet.org

EXHIBITIONS

continues to MARCH 22

A Space Gallery

Suzanne Morrissette: *ENTENDRE*

Red Head Gallery

Geoffrey Cheung

Art Space TMU

Group Exhibition: Mina Keykhaei, Azadeh Monzavi,

Munachiso Nzeribe

Curated by Almudena Escobar Lopez

continues to APRIL 4

Tangled Art Gallery

Helen Kong: *ReHoming*

A Trip Through BEING Studio's Archive: *It was a different world altogether*

continues to APRIL 19

YYZ Artists' Outlet

James Rollo: *I let the intrusive thoughts win*

Henrjeta Mece: *The Scientist*

MARCH 12 – APRIL 19

Urbanspace Gallery

SvN: *Deconstructing TOD: Transit Roots*

MARCH 14 – MAY 10

Open Studio

Main Gallery Victoria Day

Project Space Rachel Dodgson

EVENTS



MARCH 13, 5 pm

401 Richmond Art Hunt

APRIL 10 – 16

Images Festival

MAY 2, 7 pm

New Music Concerts

MAKEWAY 2025 CONCERT: An Empowerment Program for Early Career Creators

MAY 15 – 22

Open Studio

FUTURE PROOF 55

In-Person & Online Fundraiser

MAY 24, 10 am – 5 pm

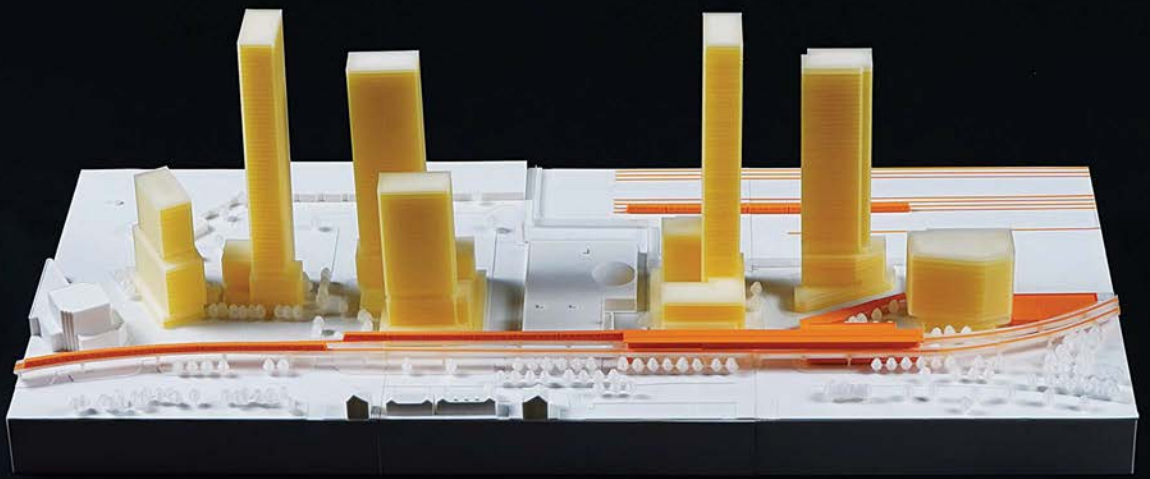
401 Richmond Doors Open

JUNE 3 – 8

25th imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival

Location: TIFF Lightbox

iNdigital online streaming: June 9 – 15



Above SvN at Urbanspace Gallery (March 12–April 19) Below James Rollo at YYZ Artists' Outlet (until April 19)

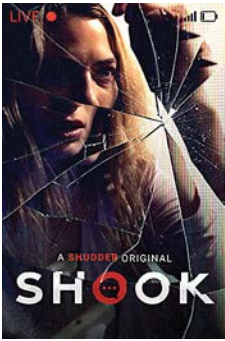


press check



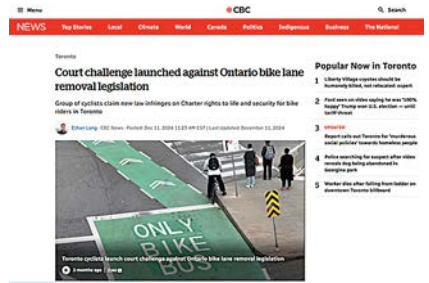
GUIDO CONSTANTINO

Designlines Magazine was impressed with **Guido Constantino Design's** revitalization of an old carriage house – most recently a mechanic's garage – into a new restaurant called **Occhiolino** in Toronto's **Little Italy** neighbourhood. Architect **Guido Constantino** and designer **Domenica Rodà** chose to maintain the former blue-collar history of the building, using a minimalist approach contrasting the rustic style of its Italian eatery counterparts in the neighbourhood. The reviewer **Dylan Muñoz** observes, "Occhiolino serves as a sensorial emulsion of past and present that seamlessly harmonizes the dynamic between simple Italian cuisine and imaginative design."



AMAR WALA

401 filmmaker **Amar Wala's** submission to the 2024 edition of the **Toronto International Film Festival** made a curated list in *The Grind*. Filmed in Toronto, *Shook* tells the story of an aspiring writer living in Scarborough, torn between a desire to move downtown to pursue his career and his sense of obligation to reconnect with his estranged father after the older man's Parkinson's diagnosis.

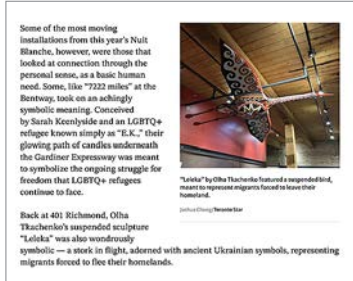


CYCLE TORONTO

CBC reported that **Cycle Toronto** launched a Charter challenge against the Ford government's recent legislation that takes aim at Toronto's bike lanes. In a lawsuit filed in Superior Court, Cycle Toronto argues that a section in the provincial government's Bill 212 "puts lives at risk." **Michael Longfield**, Executive Director of Cycle Toronto, was unavailable for an interview for the article as he sustained a broken leg that required immediate surgery after "getting doored" in a painted bike lane on St. George Street earlier that week. Longfield texted *The Star* that his injury is "an all too common reminder for the need for protected cycling infrastructure on Bloor, Yonge and University."

401'S BUILT FOR ART

The Star's **Joshua Chong** included 401 in his full page coverage of Toronto's all night art event *Nuit Blanche*. Chong made specific mention of artist **Vladimir Kanic's** *Living Algae Cyborg* at **Abbozzo Gallery**, and **Oiha Tkachenko's** *Leleka* in 401's west entrance representing migrants forced to leave their homeland.



PROGRESS TORONTO

Left-wing advocacy group **Progress Toronto** caught the attention of *The Star* for their possible role in the defeat of a right-wing candidate in the Don Valley West municipal byelection last fall. The organization's **Executive Director, Saman Tabasinejad**, explains that the group got involved in the race in an attempt to avoid a conservative win that might "embolden the right."

CINECYCLE

The Grind's **Winnie Wang** encouraged filmgoers to take in the work of independent curators, filmmakers and programmers animating the city's arts scene. Calling out arts enthusiasts keen on finding underground cinema, Wang suggested **Pleasure Dome** and the **Feminist Recycling Group's** co-presentation of *Club Classics*, a collection of short films on queer nightlife and gentrification at **CineCycle** in 401's **Coach House**.



the back page

LINDSAY CHAMBERS

“Paper is a material designed for manipulation by us, and through my practice, I delve into how paper’s inherent qualities – its texture, form, and gesture – are shaped by human intent and action.”

lindsaychambers.ca / [@lindsaychamberspainting](https://www.instagram.com/lindsaychamberspainting)



Reinforced Energy, 2024, oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in.



LINDSAY CHAMBERS

2nd floor artist Lindsay Chambers oil on canvas artwork, *Window to Another View*, was included in the UK edition of **Vanity Fair**.

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