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Anthropogenic Anxiety

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Anthropogenic Anxiety

Featuring work by Pam Patterson & Sasha Shevchenko (OCADU), Joanna Black & Sarah Paradis (University of Manitoba)

The recent regulated and confining pandemic years have operated to aggravate already existing anthropogenic anxieties. Climate change – oppressive unpredictable heat waves, uncontrolled forest fires, rising oceans levels – have had an impact on the race that both facilitated it and now roils from its effects. Aggressive urban sprawl bulldozes the land, and we search from among the rubble to find what of “land” remains. In Canada, the colonial project created divisiveness, poverty, and an early death for some, but also vast wealth and proprietorship for others. Can this unsettling situation be unraveled, or have we gone too far?

Anxiety became an oft-experienced emotion in our classrooms – mostly online – at our universities over a number of years. A research team, led by Pam Patterson, OCAD University and Joanna Black, University of Manitoba, sought to explore generative potentials found in addressing anthropogenic and Covid-19 anxieties. We worked alongside our students and with community members, galleries, and professional colleagues in a creative investigation. Over 100 people joined to broadly explore in visual mediums, personal narratives of the pandemic and the larger emerging anthropogenic era.

Here in exhibition alongside each other and paired respectively with students, Sasha Shevchenko, OCAD University and Sarah Paradis, University of Manitoba, we provide a glimpse into this complex dialogue.

For more information, you are invited to visit 113Research at <https://www.113research.ca/2022/08/anthropogenic-anxiety-opening-september.html>



Figure 1. Sasha Shevchenko, *Жнець (Reaper)*. Straw, pine wood, black mica paint, digital photography, 32 x 24 cm (2020)

Золото (Golden) rich dense stalks of wheat grew around me. Living timelessly in the Ukrainian flag, living to be value and to be valued. Yellow, awkward plains carved out into the earth, and I could never find the end.



Figure 2. Pam Patterson, *Cholera Room, Grosse Isle* (2020) two rectangular panoramic images are bathed in red light - above the room is a hospital ward with old iron beds and below is a hallway with a beckoning open door

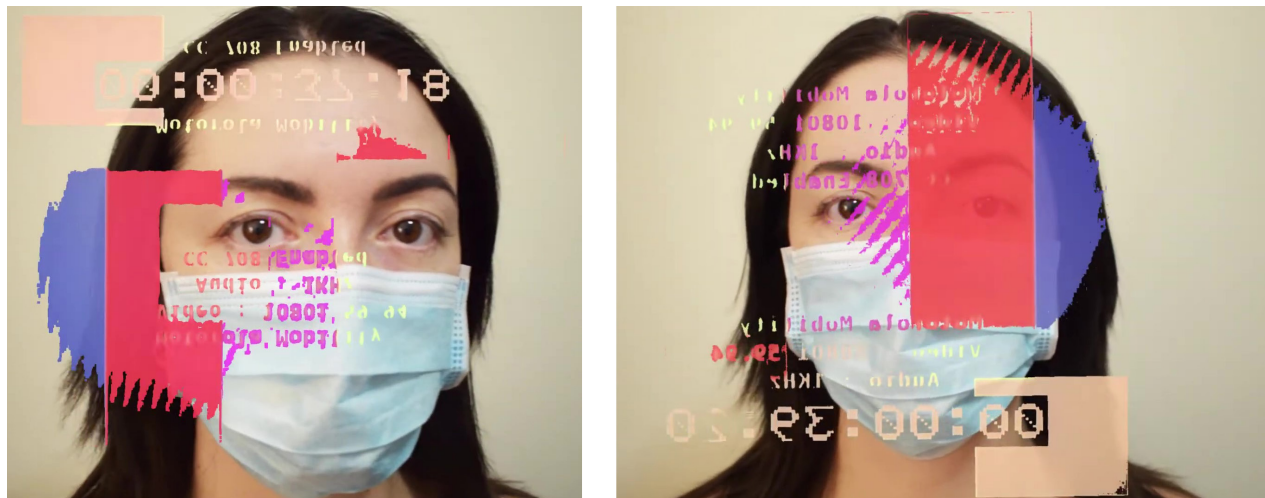


Figure 3. Sarah Paradis, *[Dis]connection 02*. Video stills (2022)



Figure 4. Joanna Black, *COVID Spaces* (2022)



Figure 5. Joanna Black, *Reshifting* (2024) shows the Royal Victoria Hospital: it is an image of change. Increasingly Canadians find themselves without doctors and hospital ERs are overcrowded. Many Canadian patients have died while waiting for surgery. Structural modifications and high costs, resource limitations, and lack of funding challenge meeting the needs of the sick, elderly and disabled. There is more incentivization for private clinics and reshaping public healthcare. *Vital Support* (2024) shows the Montreal General Hospital in winter January 2024 when the COVID-19 virus was raging. Hospitals now have fewer staff than before 2020 putting enormous pressure on the medical system. Media reports say the pandemic is over, but the virus is mutating. We continually navigate ways to respond.