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CollectiveEYedentity: Connecting Community Curation

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collectiveEYEidentity

connecting community curation

BY SUSAN
BENISTON

Long fascinated and inspired by the history of eye miniatures as relational mementos that were carried or worn, I chose to invite others' reflections on this motif of attachment through an open call. I sought art contributions from those within the Faculty of Animation, Arts and Design (FAAD) in order to deepen both personal and professional connections to inclusive community-building at Sheridan College.

The *collectiveEYEidentity* miniature works were originally shown in an exhibition titled *Community*, which was held in The Gallery at Sheridan College in Oakville, during October 2018. The EYE-invitational was open to all artists: faculty, students, staff and administrators in FAAD who chose to contribute an eye or two, in any media on a miniature scale using a re-purposed tin or small container.

These *collectiveEYEidentity* miniatures are shown as intentional and attentive observers: in close eye-to-eye context, within a relational proximity that is integral to our sense of Community.

The second iteration of the miniatures involved a three-month exhibit in Sheridan's Trafalgar Library Learning Commons in 2019 from mid-May through August. It opened with a pop-up Art Hive, complete with eye-themed art objects, which included a large, interactive eye zoetrope to focus and kick off the event.

This Art Hive invited the broader community at Sheridan to engage and participate in the making process, to create their own EYE-identity works and thereby contribute towards building a more inclusive *collectiveEYEidentity*.

Stay tuned, new iterations of *collectiveEYEidentity* are in the works! >>>



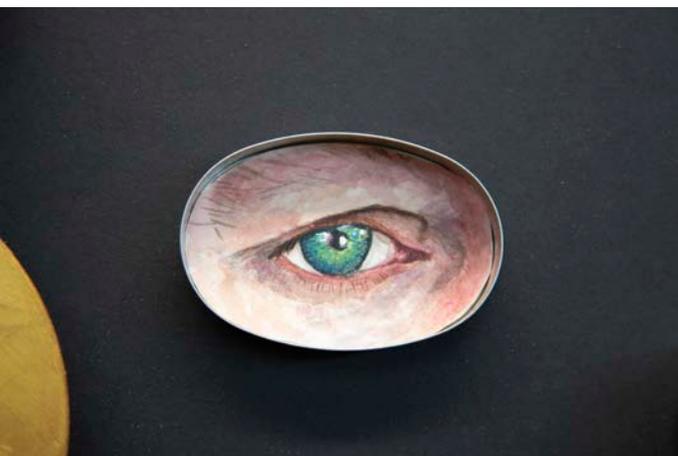
Previous page: Oil paintings in two round tins, each 2.5"W x 1.5"D, by Katherine Cogill.

Left: Acrylic painting with jeweled rhinestones and feathers, 8"W x 6"H x 3"D, by Shelagh Armstrong-Hodgson.

Below: Watercolour on paper in an oval tin, 3.5"W x 2.25"H x 0.5"D, by Sheila Greenland.

Above: *collectiveEYEdentity*, artists listed alphabetically: Kirsten Abrahamson, Shelagh Armstrong-Hodgson, Elaine Brodie, Antonio Cangemi, Katherine Cogill, Isabel Cruz, Junk Drawer of a Long-Forgotten DADAist, Barb DiPietro, Virginia DiRuscio, Sheila Greenland, Thea Haines, Sherry Lawr, Mary E. Libby, John McCartney, Kristin Mesley, Natasha Nootchtai, Peter Palermo, Kim Ramsahoye, Nicolas Salisbury, Winsome Tse, Cheryl Vallender, Sydni Weatherson, Borbala Wellisch.

Photos by Julie Pasila.



Susan Beniston MFA, ATR-BC, RCAT lives in Toronto, and has been registered as a board-certified art therapist for 25 years. She has extensive experience in sensory-based attunement and trauma-informed art therapy practices. Currently promoting the arts and well-being through FAAD, Susan founded Sheridan's Art Hive Initiative in 2017. She adapted the model's flexibility, generating Art Hives with internal partners to meet compelling needs within Sheridan's learning community and to augment existing health and

wellness services at the College. As well as being an art therapist, Susan is a sculptor and an arts educator with significant expertise in all three spheres. Her inquiries include: art-practice as research, public creativity in community, and co-building relational knowledge and resilience through arts-based social engagement. ●