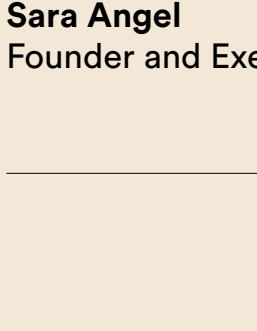
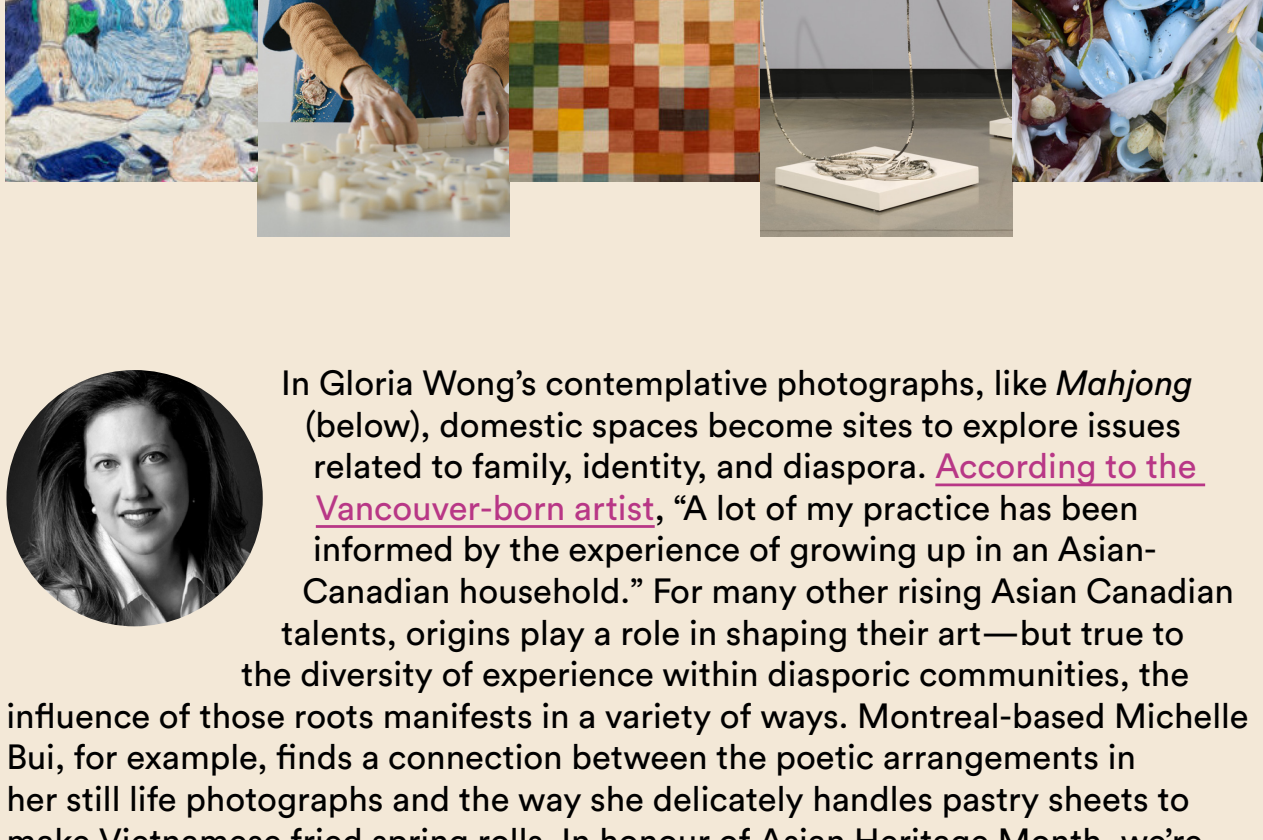


MAY 5, 2023

SIX ASIAN CANADIAN ARTISTS VISIONARIES ON OUR RADAR

May is Asian Heritage Month. To celebrate, we're looking at some of today's most innovative emerging and early-career Asian Canadian artists.

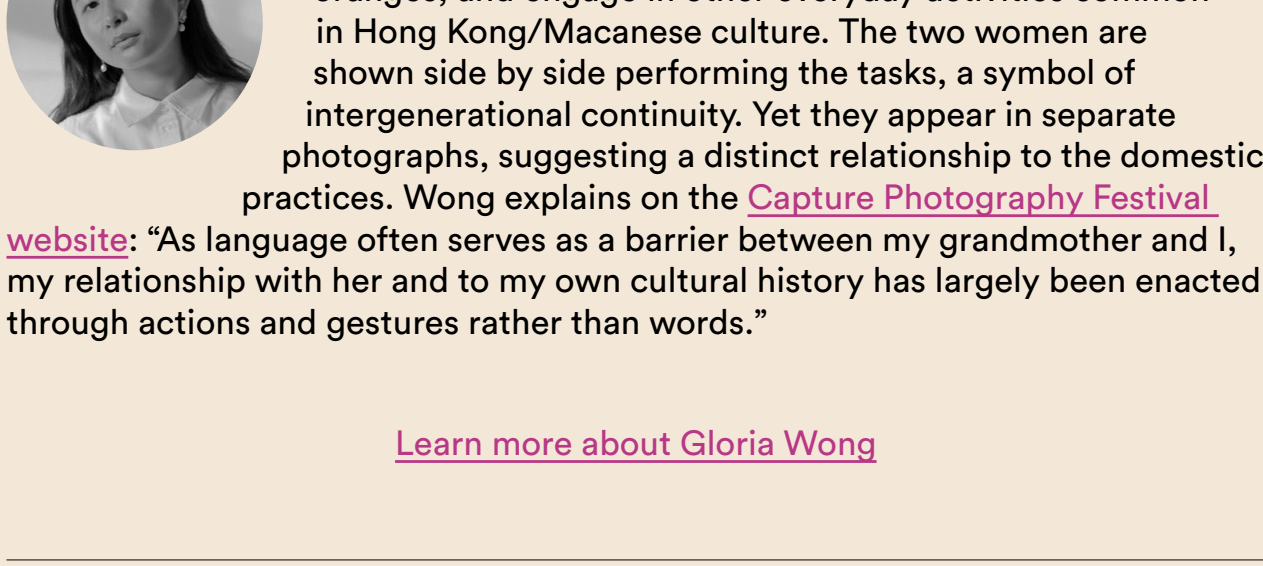


In Gloria Wong's contemplative photographs, like *Mahjong* (below), domestic spaces become sites to explore issues related to family, identity, and diaspora. [According to the Vancouver-born artist](#), "A lot of my practice has been informed by the experience of growing up in an Asian-Canadian household." For many other rising Asian Canadian talents, origins play a role in shaping their art—but true to the diversity of experience within diasporic communities, the influence of those roots manifests in a variety of ways. Montreal-based Michelle Bui, for example, finds a connection between the poetic arrangements in her still life photographs and the way she delicately handles pastry sheets to make Vietnamese fried spring rolls. In honour of Asian Heritage Month, we're highlighting works by Wong, Bui, and other emerging artists that reveal, in both obvious and subtle ways, the longstanding presence and vital contributions of Asian Canadian communities to the arts and culture of Canada.

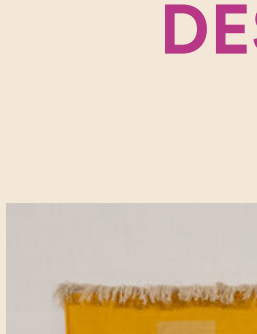
Sara Angel
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

MAHJONG

by Gloria Wong



Gloria Wong, *Mahjong*, from the *Rituals* series, 2019, courtesy of Gloria Wong.

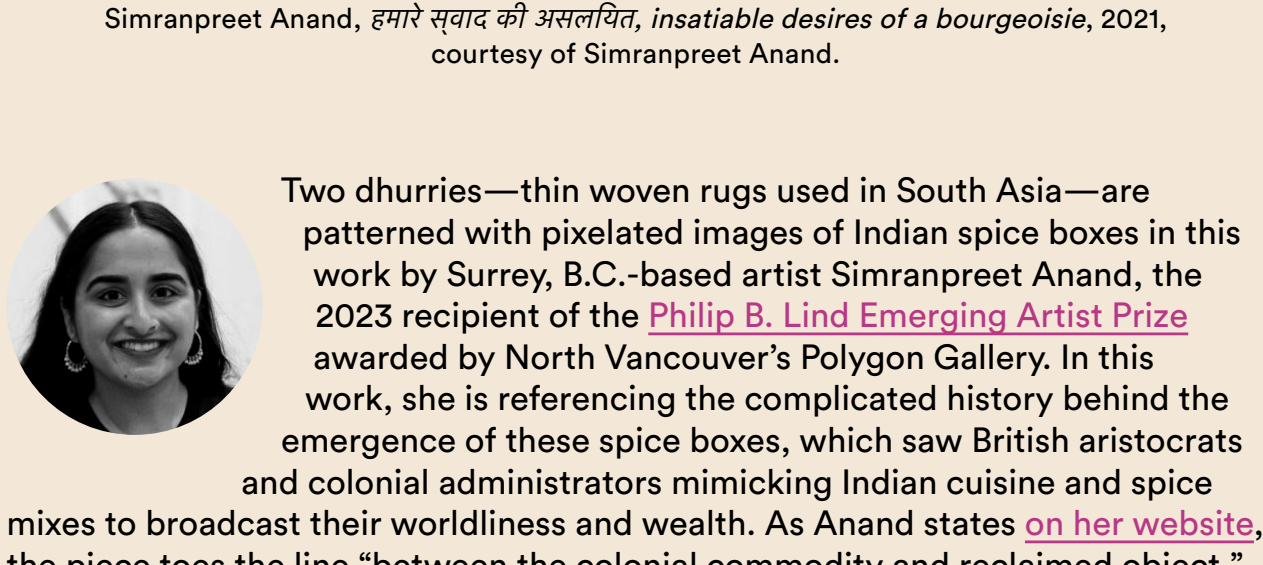


In the photographic series *Rituals*, 2019, artist Gloria Wong and her grandmother play mahjong, make dumplings, peel oranges, and engage in other everyday activities common in Hong Kong/Macanese culture. The two women are shown side by side performing the tasks, a symbol of intergenerational continuity. Yet they appear in separate photographs, suggesting a distinct relationship to the domestic practices. Wong explains on the [Capture Photography Festival website](#): "As language often serves as a barrier between my grandmother and I, my relationship with her and to my own cultural history has largely been enacted through actions and gestures rather than words."

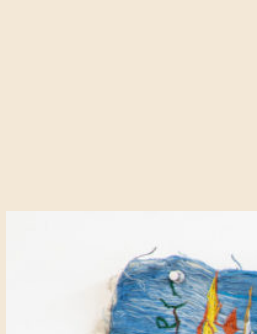
[Learn more about Gloria Wong](#)

हमारे स्वाद की असलियत, INSATIABLE DESIRES OF A BOURGEOISIE

by Simranpreet Anand



Simranpreet Anand, *हमारे स्वाद की असलियत, insatiable desires of a bourgeoisie*, 2021, courtesy of Simranpreet Anand.

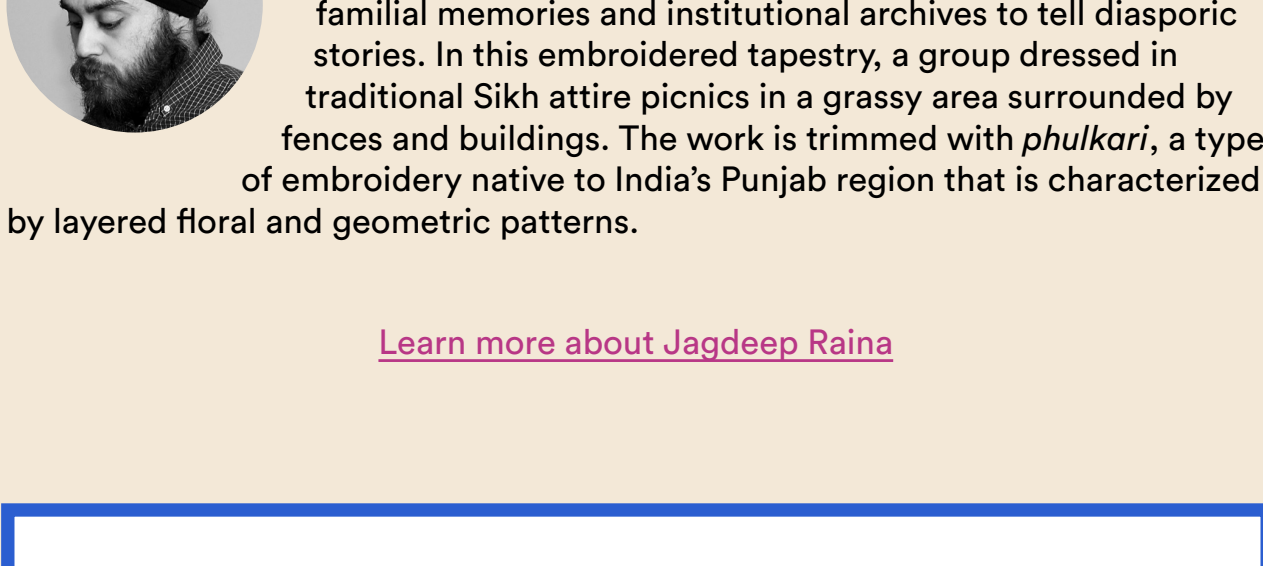


Two dhurries—thin woven rugs used in South Asia—are patterned with pixelated images of Indian spice boxes in this work by Surrey, B.C.-based artist Simranpreet Anand, the 2023 recipient of the [Philip B. Lind Emerging Artist Prize](#) awarded by North Vancouver's Polygon Gallery. In this work, she is referencing the complicated history behind the emergence of these spice boxes, which saw British aristocrats and colonial administrators mimicking Indian cuisine and spice mixes to broadcast their worldliness and wealth. As Anand states [on her website](#), the piece toes the line "between the colonial commodity and reclaimed object."

[Learn more about Simranpreet Anand](#)

PARADISE LOST

by Jagdeep Raina



Jagdeep Raina, *Paradise Lost*, 2019, courtesy of Jagdeep Raina and Cooper Cole, Toronto.



Currently based in Texas, where he is a Fellow at the Core Program at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Ontario-born Jagdeep Raina (b.1991) is known for his ability to draw on familial memories and institutional archives to tell diasporic stories. In this embroidered tapestry, a group dressed in traditional Sikh attire picnics in a grassy area surrounded by fences and buildings. The work is trimmed with *phulkari*, a type of embroidery native to India's Punjab region that is characterized by layered floral and geometric patterns.

[Learn more about Jagdeep Raina](#)

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STILL LIFE UNDER ROLLING PIN

by Michelle Bui



Michelle Bui, *Still Life Under Rolling Pin*, 2019, courtesy of Michelle Bui and McBride Contemporain, Montreal.



First, Montreal-based artist Michelle Bui fashions uncanny sculptural tableaux from organic and readymade materials. Then she photographs them, creating richly textured still lifes that prompt us to question our own excesses and reliance on commodities and consumption. The artist, who recently won Montreal's [2022 Prix Pierre Ayot](#), explains the driving ethos behind her work in an [interview for Vancouver's Capture Photography Festival](#): "That constant feeling of overload and overstimulation, with things and images coming at us and assaulting our senses to a point of disorientation, is a starting point for my practice."

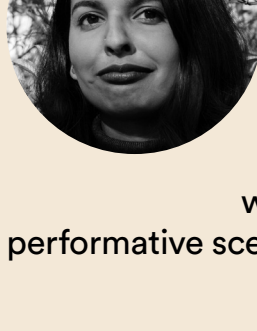
[Learn more about Michelle Bui](#)

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH NANI IN THE GARDEN

by Zinnia Naqvi



Zinnia Naqvi, *Self-portrait with Nani in the Garden*, 2017, courtesy of Zinnia Naqvi.



Posing in a garden, Toronto-based artist Zinnia Naqvi creates a blurred self-portrait that is superimposed with a black and white image of her maternal grandmother. Taken in Pakistan, the snapshot shows Naqvi's "Nani" cross-dressing as her new husband during their honeymoon. This image is part of a photobook published by Naqvi entitled *Dear Nani*, 2017–22, in which the [2019 New Generation Photography Award](#)-winning artist attempts to embody and explore gender-bending, performative scenes from her family archives.

[Learn more about Zinnia Naqvi](#)

SUNKEN GARDEN (FAMILY ALBUM)

by Karen Zalamea



Top: Karen Zalamea, *Sunken Garden (Family Album)*, 2022–ongoing, installed at the Reach Gallery Museum, Abbotsford, 2023, photograph by Rachel Topham Photography. Bottom: Karen Zalamea, *Sunken Garden (Family Album)* (detail), 2022–ongoing, installed at the Reach Gallery Museum, Abbotsford, 2023, photograph by Rachel Topham Photography.



To create this monumental installation, Karen Zalamea (b.1980) used images from family albums located in her ancestral home in the Philippines, which she printed onto canvas, cut into strips, and weaved into thick ropes. Strewn across the gallery space, the ropes symbolize the process of passing down memories and the transfer of intergenerational experiences. Speaking about her practice in an [interview with Burrard Arts Foundation](#), the Burnaby, B.C.-based artist explains that one of her driving interests is exploring "how photographs can exist in space."

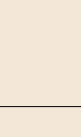
[Learn more about Karen Zalamea](#)

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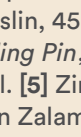
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