

2026 - Hotel Confidential Artist Bios

Room 101: Sarah Cooper & Rob Southcott (Shelter Bay) & Margaret Pryde

Shelter Bay: Sarah Cooper & Rob Southcott

Shelter Bay is a Canadian design studio, co-founded in 2015 by Rob Southcott and Sarah Cooper. Drawing inspiration from our experience in product design, art, interiors, and fashion, we strive to create quality goods for a well-designed life.

Margaret Pryde:

Margaret Pryde is a Prince Edward County based furniture maker and sculptural artist. She is a graduate of SOCAD Furniture Design + Fabrication program and Conestoga's Industrial Woodworker program. Margaret was bitten by the building bug early on and has been working and creating in the industry since she was 17 years old. Margaret's work has been published in Now, Azure, and Design Lines Magazine and been featured Toronto Design shows Come up to my room, Capacity and IDS Studio North. She is a recipient of a Herman Miller Juror's Award and two Design Lines Love Tags.

Room 102: Clara Polanco Talavera, Bay Woodyard and Nanotopia (Tosca Terán (She/Her) and Andrei Gravelle (They/Them))

Clara Polanco Talavera:

Clara Polanco is an interdisciplinary artist from Spain and Mexico whose practice is led by materials and research. Instead of starting with a fixed object or outcome, her work unfolds through sustained inquiry into matter—its origins, behaviors, and the forms it asks to become—so the final piece appears as a consequence of process rather than its goal.

Her investigations often begin in the soil. She grows native Mexican cottons to study fiber, agricultural practices, and transformation, learning to harvest and hand-spin as a way of meeting the material at its own rhythm. Spinning operates as both technique and knowledge-making: a tool for understanding time, labor, ecology, and the ancestral intelligence embedded in fiber.

Alongside textiles, Polanco works with light as a responsive medium that activates surfaces and reveals slow processes and hidden labor. Through installation, world-building, and sensorial inquiry, she creates spaces where materials lead and humans follow—environments shaped by

care, attention, and ecological intimacy—inviting viewers to reconsider the systems that shape the material world.

Nanotopia:

Nanotopia is the experimental electronic collaboration of Andrei Gravelle (They/Them) and Tosca Terán (She/Her). Working with analog modular synthesis, custom Eurorack systems, and live signal processing, they create long-form improvised performances guided by storytelling and oblique strategies.

Often presented in immersive or quadraphonic configurations, Nanotopia builds installation performances in which sound behaves as a living environment rather than a fixed composition. Their sets unfold through evolving textures, spatial movement, and feedback systems, inviting deep listening and expanded perceptions of time.

Central to their practice is collaboration with more-than-human intelligences. Terán has travelled internationally, recording biodata from fungi, lichens, seaweeds, and mosses, translating their bio-electrical activity into control voltages that shape synthesis, visuals, and spatial sound in real time. These bio-responsive systems extend into VR and installation contexts, creating shared sonic ecosystems co-authored by human and biological processes.

Nanotopia's work has been presented internationally, including at Ars Electronica, Venice Film Festival Immersive, and AMAZE.

Bay Woodyard:

Bay Woodyard is an artist who works with traditional craft techniques to create contemporary art inspired by the natural world. She uses local wool as her medium and natural dyes to create her colour palette. Through the meditative act of hand spinning, knitting and crochet, these bits of fluff become emotive organic forms. Her current work explores themes of rewilding and the process of decay and regrowth as nature transforms human attempts at domination into the wild again.

She lives and works on her honey and herb farm in Prince Edward County

Room 103: Dainesha Nugent-Palache, curated by Joséphine Denis and presented by BAND Gallery)

Danisha Nugent-Palanche:

Dainesha Nugent-Palache (b. Toronto, ON.) is a current MFA candidate at Bard College Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, and holds a BFA from Ontario College of Art and Design University, where she was the recipient of The Dorothy Hoover Research Award, and an OCAD University Photography Faculty and Friends Award. Her work has been exhibited Nationally through venues such as Patel Brown, the National Gallery of Canada, The Portrait Gallery of Canada, Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art, Gallery TPW, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and TRUCK Contemporary, and internationally in New York, Finland, and Vienna. Her work can be found in The Wedge Collection, Toronto Dominion Bank Art Collection, EQ Bank Art collection, as well as several private collections. Nugent-Palache was a 2021 recipient of the Scotia Bank New Generation Photography Award. She currently lives and works in Toronto, ON., and is a founding member of Toronto artist collective and gallery the plumb.

Primarily though photography though sometimes employing video and sculptural elements, Dainesha Nugent-Palache explores the dichotomies and paradoxes inherent in representations of Afro-Caribbean femininities. Dainesha's artwork flirts with anthropological and archaeological realms, often produced as a result of her familial digging. Her practice is concerned with visualizations of Black diaspora across pasts, presents, and speculative futures, producing portraits, still life-based works and sculptures. With an exuberant approach colour and display, Dainesha's work often negotiates with forms of glamour, excess, and other photographic strategies inherent to the visual cultures of capitalism.

Joséphine Denis (curator of Room 103):

Haitian curator and writer based in Tkaronto, Joséphine Denis is Co-Director and Director of Curatorial Initiatives at Black Artists' Networks in Dialogue (BAND) Gallery, where she develops programs and exhibitions rooted in experimentation, collective research, and exchange. Her work engages with diasporic practices by attending to material culture, ritual, and sound, tracing how historical narratives and other forms of memory circulate, persist, and transform across geographies and generations. She previously contributed to curatorial and public programs at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery (Tkaronto) and SBC Gallery of Contemporary Art (Tiohtià:ke/Montreal). Selected exhibitions include Other Territories (Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris), Amartey Golding: In the Comfort of Embers, and Sandra Brewster: By Way of Communion (The Power Plant). She has written and edited for various contemporary art publications. Raised in Port-au-Prince and later in New York, she grounds her work in the guidance of her kin.

Room 104: Christopher House

Born and raised in St. John's, NL, Christopher House is a choreographer, performer, director, educator, curator and writer.

He was resident choreographer and a leading dancer with Toronto Dance Theatre from 1979-2020– the last twenty-six years as Artistic Director– creating over sixty works for TDT and collaborating with companies and artists such as The National Ballet of Canada, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Artistic Fraud, Ballet BC, The Hidden Cameras, Jordan Tannahill, and Deborah Hay. His solo *New Tricks* toured across Canada in 2023-2025.

He has received many honours including the Muriel Sherrin Award for International Achievement in Dance in 2009, an honorary doctorate from Memorial University in 2010 and the Silver Ticket Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts in 2012. In 2019, CBC Arts named him as one of sixty-nine Canadian artists who have shaped our country's rich LGBTQ history. He is a Member of the Order of Canada

Hallways & Stairwells (Interstitial Spaces): LeuWebb Projects (Christine Leu and Alan Webb)

Founded by partners Christine Leu and Alan Webb, LeuWebb Projects is the collaborative studio through which they create art that awakens participants to an expanded understanding and connection to place. With a focus on engaging the public realm, their work seeks to address questions of climate, community and accessibility.

Christine and Alan are both artists with prior training as architects who have lived and worked in Montreal, New York, London, Rome and Helsinki, and currently reside in Toronto, Canada. The art of LeuWebb Projects has been recognized by many awards, including the national Royal Architectural Institute of Canada's (RAIC) Allied Arts Medal for artwork integrated with architecture.

Both Christine and Alan are also educators, teaching in the fields of architecture, interior design and public art at the University of Toronto, OCAD University and Toronto Metropolitan University.

Barlow Room: Spark Box Studio (Chrissy Poitras & Kyle Topping) & Joel Gregorio (State Goods)

Spark Box Studio : Chrissy Poitras & Kyle Topping

Chrissy Poitras and Kyle Topping are multidisciplinary artists and co-founders of Spark Box Studio in Prince Edward County (est. 2009). Their collaborative work explores pop-up book structures, sculpture, and installation. They often transform printed multiples into three-dimensional environments that invite interaction and play. Rooted in print media, their practice creates immersive paper installations that blur the line between object and experience. They also develop educational programs in printmaking for schools and arts organizations.

State Goods : Joel Gregorio

State Goods is a Toronto-based art label and creative print studio founded by artist and designer Joel Gregorio, an OCAD University alumnus and Creative Director of Sovereign State.

The practice explores memory, time, and human experience through abstraction, collage, and restrained composition. Each work distills lived moments into considered visual form, emphasizing atmosphere, texture, and emotional resonance.

The works are conceived as quiet anchors within space. They are intended to slow attention and create moments of reflection.

Gregorio brings a systems-based design background to his artistic practice, shaping a disciplined approach to structure, material, and process. Intuition and experimentation remain central to the work.

Radio Confidential

Live Broadcast Performance:

Chip Yarwood with Christina Zeidler & Stacey Sproule

Chip Yarwood:

In the early 70's as a young flautist Chip joined an emerging recording act getting his feet wet observing top music producers at work. Introduced to analogue synthesis of the time and a knack for picking up instruments Chip's own musical voice developed.

Off on his own Chip worked with acts involved in the 80's & 90's QueenWest scene. In studio he composed for underground films, dance works and designed performance arts projects in Germany & Brazil with esteemed curator/art historian, Ihor Holibizky.

A founding member of "Mother Tongue" a collective of players from Ethiopia, Bahamas, Egypt, and Canada the group released Cd's, video and toured festivals.

Chip became involved in visual arts as a preparator in major galleries and sites realizing complex technical installations for local and international artists. Recently relocating in PEC

Chip is quietly integrating into the arts community here and exploring music and experimental radio broadcast from his Consecon studio.

Curators:

Stacey Sproule:

Stacey Sproule is a professional artist living in the County, and has been involved with County Arts since 2022 when she started as an artist facilitator. As Programs Director, Stacey oversees programming including community programs, paid programs, and artist-facing programs including the Artist Fund, County Arts granting program. She is also the Public Art Coordinator for the County's first Public Art Program.

She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Ontario College of Art and Design in Drawing and Painting, and her work has been supported by the OAC, she has received a full fellowship from the Vermont Studio Center, and she has exhibited at Forest City Gallery, FADO, the Art Gallery of Mississauga, and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. Her work has been featured in festivals including 7a*11d International Performance Art Festival, Les Sommets du cinéma d'animation, the Rhubarb Festival, Squeaky Wheel Animation Festival, and Particle + Wave Festival. She is the co-curator of Uncertainty Festival, an experimental media arts festival.

Christina Zeidler:

Christina Zeidler is an artist interested in the creative possibilities of deep collaboration. Her mediums include film, music, photography, textiles, painting, curation, activism, entrepreneurship and creative placemaking.

She has over thirty film and video titles in circulation and released her first feature film, Portrait of a Serial Monogamist in 2015.

She founded and was creative director of the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto from 2003-2020 engaging in creative space-making for artists, queers and BIPOC through the unique lens of a functioning full-service hotel.

She was the founding curator of Come Up To My Room (an annual art and design exhibition at The Gladstone Hotel) which she stewarded through 17 years of presenting the work of artists and designers in an immersive context.

Through the hotel, her mark on the exhibitions landscape of Toronto had the distinct signature of privileging the presence of the artist and exploring intersectional conversations.

