

TINY
TAKEOVER
kid critics.



Tiny Takeover: kid critics

Opening: Saturday, August 11th, 2018
August 14th - 31st, 2018
Curated by Tori Fleming

Presented by the Centre for Art Tapes in
collaboration with A Tiny Lab for Early Learning

About CFAT

CFAT is an inclusive artist-run centre that supports artists who use video, audio, and electronic media to express ideas and stories that are under-represented in mainstream culture. CFAT is devoted to the exchange of ideas among diverse artists through experimentation, mentorship, presentation, and research.

CFAT supports artists working with media technologies by providing subsidized public access to professional equipment, facilities, technical expertise, educational resources, mentorship, and other forms of professional and creative support. Through its organizational structure and its activities, CFAT strives to put marginalized artists into the centre of discourses and practices of media art. CFAT is transparent and accountable in its decisions, governance and finances.

Catalogue design by Tori Fleming.

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HALIFAX



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INTRODUCTION



Since first moving to our Maitland Street location in 2013, Centre for Art Tapes (CFAT) has been neighbours with A Tiny Lab for Early Learning: a local daycare. During the day we are surrounded, above and on both sides, by the kids and their teachers. The soundtrack to most of my day is songs, a lot of creative make-believe and the odd cry over a scraped knee. After working here for a number of years, I've begun to fall into their routine, using their tiny little stomps as markers of time throughout the day.

Every morning and afternoon they line up against CFAT's window – preparing either to go on one of their many adventures, or to head on home. This is usually the time when I get asked the same question over and over again: "What are you doing in there?"

Before I am given the chance to answer, the kids inevitably will share their myriad of answers. "You do nothing all day!" "You just sit there!" "Most of the moms don't wait here all day."

The real answer is the tricky part. I'm not sure how to actually tell them what I'm doing. Is there a quick way to explain what curating and arts administration looks like?

I told them I was planning an art show. Then they were confused about why I didn't have art in front of me. I'm helping an artist make something! But where was the artist? I'm not a firefighter, I'm not a doctor, I'm not a racecar driver. I was faced with a problem many people are familiar with: my job is completely unexplainable to kids.

After thinking about how to simplify my explanations I realized that I often have this conversation with adults, too:

"I work in the arts:"

"So like paintings?"

"No."

"Sculptures?"

"No, media art."

"So like movies?"

"Sometimes."

At some point after trying my best to explain that 'media art' is a growing, ever changing thing, I invite the confused individual to CFAT's next event. I'm often met with "Oh, I don't know. I don't really know anything about art."

The public seems to feel intimidated by art galleries, particularly with respect to contemporary work. They're worried about feeling stupid or tricked. At CFAT we are always working to bring artists' work to new audiences, but often a person coming from outside the arts community needs a little convincing after they hear the words 'video performance piece.'

It occurred to me that I have the perfect audience sitting outside my window every day. Just like adults, the Tiny Lab kids are confused and skeptical about video performance, but they're not scared of it. So, we invited the Tiny Lab kids to CFAT, and with the help of their encouraging teachers and local artist Em Lawrence, they became art critics.

I curated this collection of works specifically with the Tiny Lab kids in mind. I wanted to bring them technology they may have never experienced like Andrew Coll and Craig Lang's projection-mapped work *Prism*, or obsolete machines like Emily Hamel's video hacking work *Bending* which is displayed on a CRT monitor. I knew the kids loved painting and drawing so I wanted to show them how far painting can go with April White's *Interactive Yawn*. Em Lawrence and Kyle Dymont's video *Mouthfeel* seemed like an obvious choice because it feels like pure joy, boxed up: much like those kids.

The final piece I picked specifically for Ellis and Esther, who I know share with me a love of animals and a very silly sense of humor. *Around the Park* is one of my favourite works by William Wegman; an artist you probably remember from his segments using Weimaraner dogs dressed as humans on Sesame Street. Wegman came straight out of the 70's conceptual era of video art and often straddles the line between children's programming and contemporary art. I like to think of him as the artist that first introduced millennials to video art.

In the following catalogue you will find the kids' unedited thoughts and associations about the work. Not all of the Tiny Lab kids are featured in this catalogue, but every single one of them had hilarious, insightful and intelligent thoughts about the work. I'd encourage everyone at the show to take a minute to ask any of the kids you might be with for their opinion, and let them show you something you didn't see before.

Tori Fleming
Tiny Takeover Curator

MOUTHFEEL

Em Lawrence and Kylie Dymont, 2016

Viewing tips from our tiny critics: Our critics were alarmed at how the subjects of this video played with their food. Although Milo admitted to previously playing with his food on one occasion, they believe it's important to keep in mind that playing with your food is not cool, ever.

This music reminds me of spaghetti. You don't eat spaghetti with your hands. That's not good. Ew! gross!
- Ellis

You're supposed to eat spaghetti with a fork. Why doesn't she put the food in her mouth?
- Milo

A pie! With hair! Hair is disgusting. There's a nail in her food. Yucky. She's not blowing balloons up right. How did she get in the TV in the first place?
- Stella

Curator's note: Stella was confused about why anyone would put shoes on their hands. When asked if she had tried this before she admitted "...actually yes, at snowtime."

It makes me wanna dance!
- Lola

I don't like cake.
- Ben



Still from *Mouthfeel*, Em Lawrence and Kylie Dymment, 2016. Video, 7:30 min.

Kylie Dymment graduated from NSCAD in 2016 with an Interdisciplinary BFA. She focused on performance, sculpture and eating a lot of snacks. Kylie now lives and works in Toronto managing a super cute bar downtown. Her dream is to open her own freaky/arty cocktail bar that will terrify anyone who seriously refers to Toronto as “the six”.

Emily Lawrence is a NSCAD graduate and interdisciplinary artist and facilitator based in Halifax NS. Emily’s experiential approach to creating immersive environments often employs humour, food and the five senses as conduits to the underlying curiosities that fuel her work. Emily is currently one of the artists in residence at the Macphee Centre for Creative Learning in Dartmouth NS.

Why are no dogs eating the food?
- Madeline

Gross!
- Peter

It was funny because of the cake in hair. She put nail polish instead of a cherry!
- Lola

Ew not mint! I never wanted mint on ice cream! Sometimes I have ice cream in a bowl.
- Ellis

This made me feel ZERO!
- Madeline

We asked Rocky if he liked this one. He shrugged.



Still from *Mouthfeel*, Em Lawrence and Kylie Dymont, 2016. Video, 7:30 min.

“This was
yucky. Putting
cake on hair is
yucky.”

- Stella

BENDING

Emily Hamel, 2017

Viewing tips from our tiny critics: What is this box? Is it a TV or a computer? Are there things inside of it? Our critics suggest you take a moment to consider the structure of the piece before viewing the video.

I have a big TV at my house.

- Ellis

It's coming from the back room! It's the colours of the boxes!

- Madeline

Strawberries!

-Lola

I love strawberries!

- Madeline

I love strawberries. This is my favourite dessert.

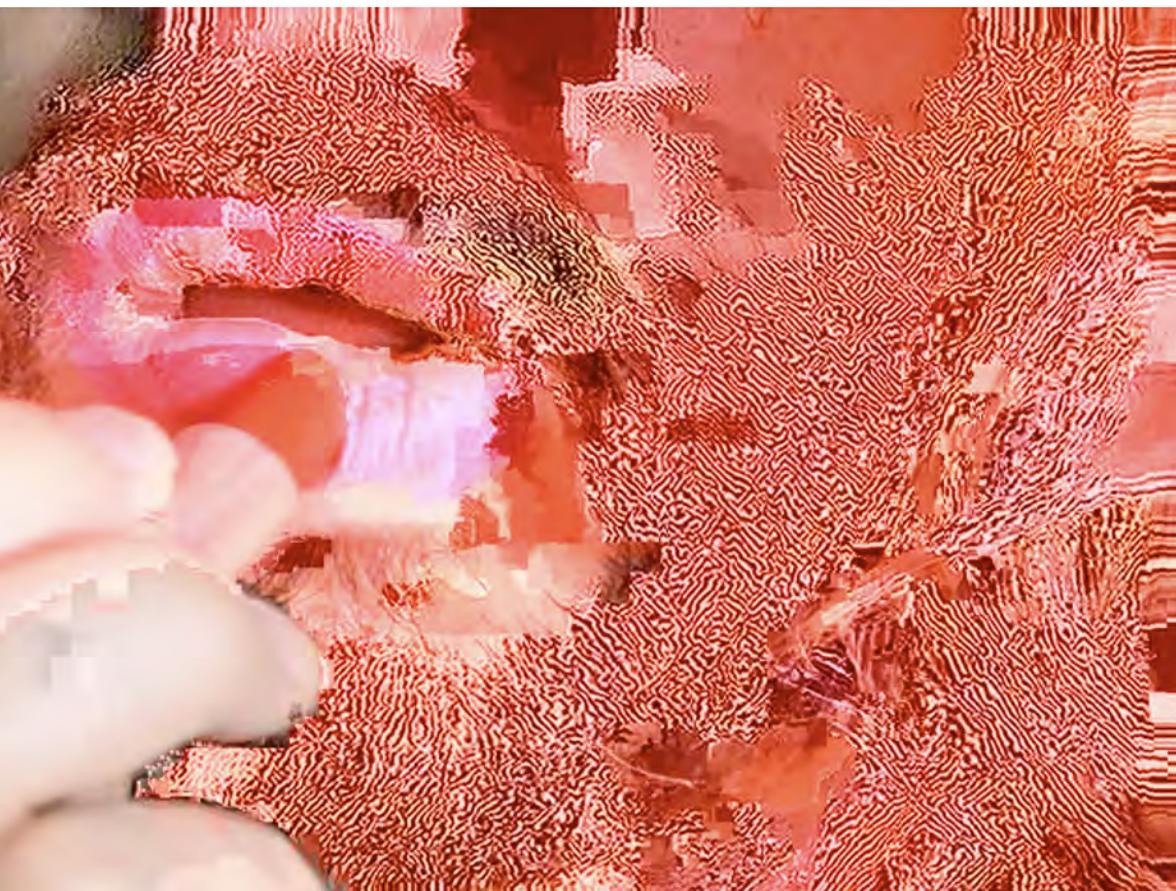
- Ben

It reminds me of strawberries. It sounds like juice strawberries.
(The artist) made it because they were hungry *and* thirsty.

- Ellis

It's like a computer.

- Peter



Still from *Bending*, Emily Hamel, 2017. Looping video on CRT monitor.

Emily Hamel is an interdisciplinary artist currently practicing in Hamilton, Ontario, where they recently earned their BFA from McMaster University. During their time at McMaster, they were awarded the Ignition Award for distinction in the Studio Art program. They have shown their work in numerous exhibitions across Ontario.

**“You miss it if
you look away.
It’s best to hold
your face right
in front.”**

- Stella

Are those red meatballs? I think they are red meatballs. This is black and white and red. It's strawberries. I love them a lot.

My mummy and daddy love strawberries. Emily and Chris love strawberries. My daddy's going to pick me up and we're going to sell the black car for a blue truck. This work is red but there is pink inside. I like the pink better. It might not taste good. It would taste better with orange.

- Stella

Can we try to change it to something else?

- Peter

We asked Rocky if it was his favourite. He nodded yes.



Still from *Bending*, Emily Hamel, 2017. Looping video on CRT monitor.

INTERACTIVE YAWN

April White, 2016

Viewing tips from our tiny critics: This work has no audio. Although intended to be a yawn, our critics found that standing in front of the work and yelling at the top of your lungs was a great way to transform the piece into a scream. They recommend viewers add their own sound effects while controlling the movement.

Madeline would like to suggest viewers to line up in single file for their turn to interact with this piece.

What the heck is happening!?! How do you put a drawing in a computer? I'm an expert at this stuff because I draw all the time.

- Max

This reminds me of people falling asleep.

- Rendall

I don't yawn when I fall asleep.

- Max

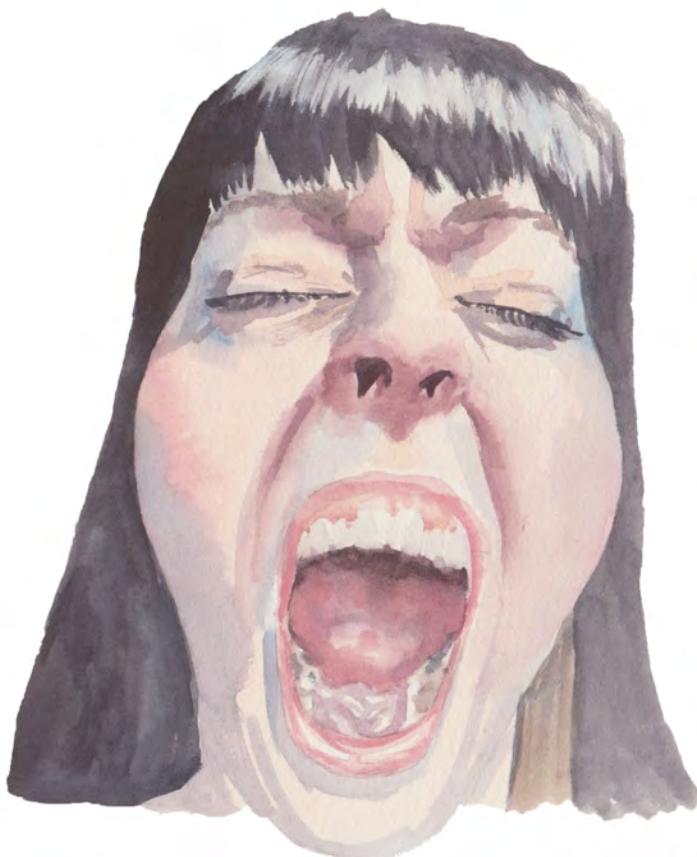
Curator's note: Max yawned immediately after finishing this sentence.

My favourite part was when she yawned . People yawn because they're sleepy.

- Parker

I'm going to Newfoundland tomorrow.

- Max



Still from *Interactive Yawn*, April White, 2016. Interactive animation installation.

April White is a St. John's, NL-based artist who works with performance, watercolour, and animation to examine involuntary bodily actions that are commonly seen as vulnerable or embarrassing such as yawning, waking up, sneezing, laughing, and crying. She holds a BFA from Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, and in 2017 won the VANL-CARFAC Emerging Artist Award.

“It’s not
funny, but
I like the
hair.”

- Harlan

AROUND THE PARK

William Wegman, 2007

Viewing Tips from our Tiny Critics: This would be a good time to reflect on all the dogs you have in your life. Thinking about dogs made some of our critics sad, but mostly very happy. Our critics know some very good dogs.

I have a question. My question is that I have a dog that likes to burp. Whenever I give him a dog treat he just walks away and burps.
– Peter

My dog likes to sleep all day. This reminds me of my dog.
- Ellis

I don't know what this is about.
- Ben

It reminds me of donuts at Vandal.
- Lola

Half person, half dog!
- Rudy

Maybe is a dog is a person? Maybe the dog is a person because he has hands. Maybe the dog is *turning* human. Because he's a magic dog. It makes me feel good because it's silly to see the dogs drinking.
- Ellis

Is the dog a firefighter or a policeman?
- Peter



Still from *Around the Park*, William Wegman, 2007. Video, 7:22min.

William Wegman is a video artist, photographer and painter most known for his work with his Weimeraner dogs. He began working in the 70s making comedic performance videos, often in collaboration with his dog, Man Ray. He created a wide variety of children's programming in the 80s and 90s, which became iconic through his work on Sesame Street. He currently lives and works in New York.

“ I think that they’re mascots. Mascots are people who wear costumes and try to trick people to think they’re different animals. One time I saw a panda.”

- Peter

The dogs look like humans. In a movie I saw a dog skateboarding.
– Milo

This looks like Lego land. I think that probably (the dog)'s waiting for the bus. I'm getting a dog when I turn 5. I think the tractors going to run over the other dog-human's foot. The dog is going to run over a different dog! Why is he going around in circles? He's not going anywhere but he has to cut the whole grass! ... IS THAT DOG PAYING?!
– Stella

Curator's note: Of all the anthropomorphized qualities the dogs had, using currency was by far the most disturbing to Stella. She mentioned this many times.

Dogs like human foods. The dog is waiting for the other dog. I think they're going to get hit by a car.
– Madeline

The human dog is doing things real dogs do! Human's don't bark.
– Milo

I think it's actually a puppy who actually lives in a hole and it falls on its face.
- Lola

I don't think its funny. Everyone looks at the dog and just walks away.
- Madeline

We asked rocky if he liked this one. He shrugged.

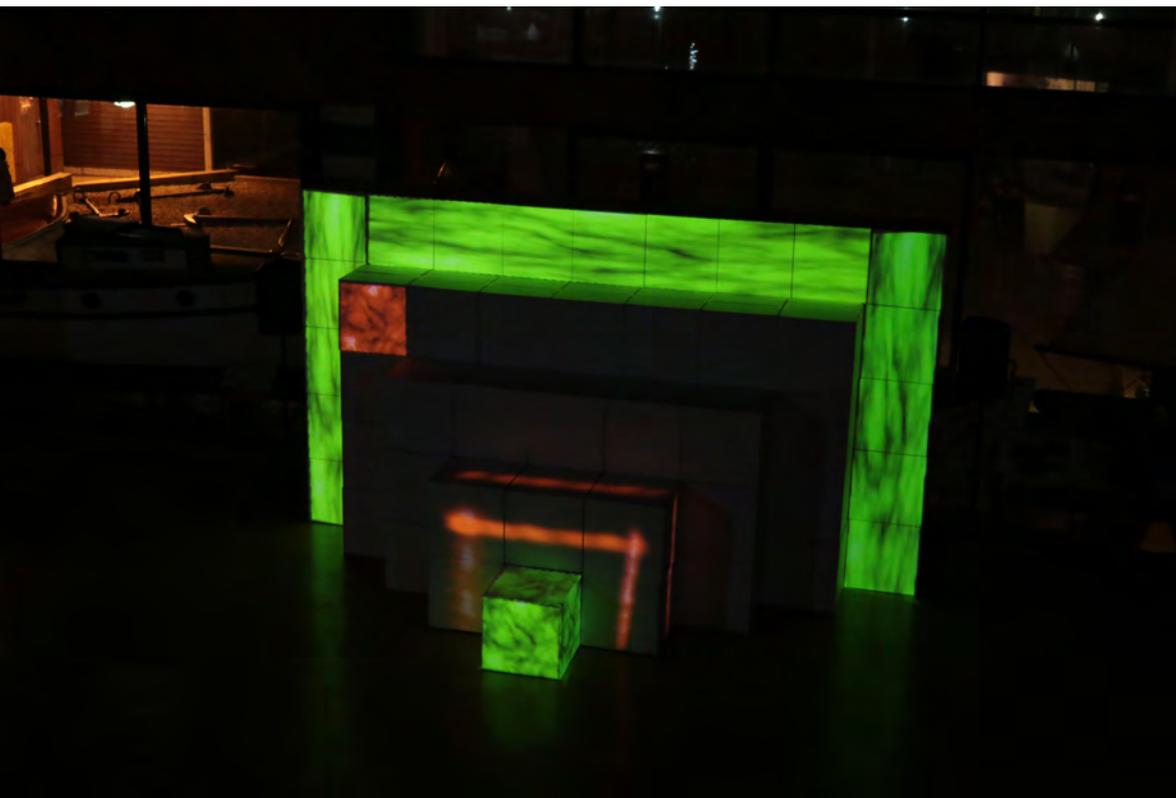
PRISM

Andrew Coll and Craig Lang, 2016

Viewing tips from our tiny critics: Most of our critics agree the best way to view this piece is to dance in front of the pyramid. They suggested perhaps finding some friends and playing Ring Around the Rosie in front of it. The critics generally agreed that the pyramid was too big.

“This
reminds me
of a green
pickle.”

- Esther



Installation shot of *Prism*, Andrew Coll and Craig Lang, 2016. Projection mapped cardboard boxes.

Andrew Coll is a filmmaker, musician, and multimedia artist whose works frequently explore elements of all three disciplines. His large-scale multimedia installations have been seen by thousands, and his recent short film "Duet" is a current finalist on CBC Television's "Short Film Faceoff". For more information, visit www.andrewcoll.ca.

Craig Lang is an Atlantic Canadian composer recognized for crossing music of the heart and of the mind, frequently blending musical and mathematical ideas. His diverse portfolio includes solo and orchestral works, multimedia projects, conducted improvisations, musicals, and popular songwriting. Visit www.ellipsisproductions.ca for more information.

They're like a triangle. It reminds me of ancient Egypt.
– Rendall

It looks like steps that are spooky from a movie. It would lead to a cave with an evil bear. Is there gold in it? Or maybe trolls? Like box trolls?
- Max

This reminds me of a square.
– Nora

These are the sounds that make me go to sleep.
– Parker

This reminds me of a bright music player.
– Max

You know what I would do? I would make an iPad for it. And you know what it would be? It would be a box all stuck together a huge box, and you can only choose rainbows and it has all the colours. Turn it into a rainbow box.
- Max

It makes me think of a pig farting in my face! I would run away.
– Peter

Cool Purple! It is sooo pretty.
– Rendall

I love all the colours!
– Parker

My mummy likes turquoise.
– Nora

But what's inside!? I knocked on the box and no one said hello!
- Madeline

I wish there was something in the boxes that popped out.
– Parker

I would put bedtime sculptures in the boxes.
– Rendall

Does something in the box make a noise?
- Max

I like the music. It makes me think I'm at a concert.
– Peter

I like it with the sound.
- Rendall

Can you please make it only red?
- Nora

Why did Andrew make this?
- Rendall

It's too big. It might fall down.
- Arlo

I like it. There's so much stuff about it I like!
– Ben

What's so cool about a stack of boxes?
– Peter

We asked rocky if he liked this one. He shrugged.

We asked our critics:
Did you like this show?

"I like to feed make up to my dog."
- Madeline

"Why is the floor so dirty?"
- Rendall

"I would like to see a painting."
- Arlo

Featuring work by:
April White, Andrew Coll and Craig Lang, Em Lawrence and Kylie
Dyment, Emily Hamel and William Wegman.

Curated by Tori Fleming, 2018