

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

Artist First commissions are made possible with the generous support of:

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Artist First is Mercer Union's commissioning platform, and the first of its kind among artist-run centres in Canada.

We gratefully acknowledge our 2024–25 Donors, Sponsors, and Funders:

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In-kind support for Mercer Union's 45th
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Beverage Sponsor: Burdock Brewery



Mercer Union acknowledges the support of its staff, volunteers and members, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council, and the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council.



Mercer Union is a non-profit, artist-run centre dedicated to commissioning and producing new works of contemporary art, and providing an engaging program that encourages critical inquiry and conversation. We champion ambitious exhibitions that empower diverse Canadian and international artists in formative and established stages of their practice.


Mercer Union
a centre for contemporary art

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Curator & Head of Exhibitions: Aamna Muzaffar
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ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT FY2024–25




Mercer Union
a centre for contemporary art

Paul Maheke: *In spite of my own desire to see you disappear*. Installation view: Mercer Union, 2024. Courtesy the Artist. Photo: Vuk Dragojevic.



New Mineral Collective: *The Pleasure Report*. Installation view: Mercer Union, 2025. Courtesy the Artists. Photo: Vuk Dragojevic.



Suneil Sanzgiri: *An Impossible Address*. Installation view: Mercer Union, 2025. Courtesy the Artist. Photo: Vuk Dragojevic.

SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

In 2024–25, Mercer Union presented *M****** by Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill; new commissions by Paul Maheke, New Mineral Collective, and Suneil Sanzgiri; and a yearlong SPACE billboard commission by Ella Gonzales. Across our exhibitions and public programs, we supported:

24 CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS

23 COMMISSIONED ARTWORKS

\$55.3K ARTIST, PRODUCTION, & WRITER FEES

This year's artistic programming benefitted from sponsorship and project support from RBC Insurance; the Consulate General of France in Toronto; Trampoline Association; TD Bank Group; K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation; the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ottawa; Gamma Foundries; the Canada Council for the Arts; and the Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts. *Artist First* Commissions were generously supported by:

14 INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

\$24K COMMISSIONING CONTRIBUTIONS

Artist First COMMISSIONS

Paul Maheke: *In spite of my own desire to see you disappear*
28 September–30 November 2024
First institutional solo exhibition in North America by the French artist, that toured to co-commissioner the Southern Alberta Art Gallery Maansiksikaitapiitsinikssin, Lethbridge in Winter 2025.

New Mineral Collective: *The Pleasure Report*
25 January–22 March 2025
First institutional solo exhibition in Canada by the collaborative practice of Canadian artist Tanya Busse and Lithuanian artist Emilija Škarnulytė, coinciding with the launch of their first monograph.

Suneil Sanzgiri: *An Impossible Address*
12 April–14 June 2025
First institutional solo exhibition in Canada by the Brooklyn-based artist, and an international co-commission with EMPAC—Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, New York, where the project travelled in Fall 2025.

PARTICIPATION & REACH

We offered diverse entry points for our communities to engage with contemporary art, delivering a suite of hybrid programs, artist-led video walkthroughs, interpretive aids, and events to animate each exhibition.

6.5K IN-GALLERY VISITORS

23.8K ONLINE VIEWERS

9 TALKS, SCREENINGS & WORKSHOPS

355 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

6 COMMUNITY EVENTS

945 EVENT ATTENDEES

7 COMMISSIONED ESSAYS & TEXTS

5.5K WORLDWIDE READERS

We engaged local audiences through partnerships with CONTACT Photography Festival, Images Festival, TIFF Wavelengths, Oakville Galleries, Art Metropole, and DemocracyXChange; and hosted tours for 411 visitors from 27 educational and community groups. Our exhibitions received coverage in *C Magazine*; *Esse*; *Blackflash Magazine*; and *Mousse*, among others.

BUILDING ARTISTIC CAPACITY

Mercer Union's activities this year highlighted the value of investing in artistic capacity and risk. Across our commissioned projects and exhibitions, each artist we worked with tested novel material approaches and presentation strategies under our dedicated curatorial and technical guidance.

A \$94.7K Capital Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation supported the purchase of vital digital equipment for the presentation of moving-image projects and public programs. This investment ensures Mercer Union's ability to provide high-calibre technical resources for our artists, deliver exceptional exhibitions for visitors, and expand digital access to our discursive programs and in-person events.

Last December, Mercer Union celebrated our 45th Anniversary with a free community party, *45 DEGREES*. Hosting 234 guests, the late-night celebration featured a lineup of local DJs, refreshments from local businesses, and installations reflecting on Mercer Union's history. The celebration was preceded by a Board-led peer-to-peer fundraising campaign, that introduced over 150 new supporters to Mercer Union, and harnessed the power of our extended community to raise over \$20K in support of our 2025 exhibitions and programs.