

Flavourcel I SPY A CITY



Collective Abundance BY MADISON MAYHEW

Biographies FLAVOURCEL MADISON MAYHEW

Flavourcel
I Spy a City, 2021

Digital animation

Image: Brian Giebelhaus

Collective Abundance Madison Mayhew

I Spy a City is first and foremost an invitation, from animation collective Flavourcel, to play. A riff on the classic *I Spy* books from Scholastic Press, the piece challenges passersby to spot, within a collage-like assemblage of looping animations, various landmarks and objects representative of the Whalley neighbourhood of Surrey. Urban skylines, natural environmental features, food items, local wildlife, and other shared cultural touchstones populate the constantly moving image, using familiarity as a tool

Notes

1. As John Berger proposes in his 1972 *Ways of Seeing*, “Every image embodies a way of seeing,” 10.
2. Early film and moving-image works used the specificity of this new artistic medium to capture the urbanization and industrialization of their societies taking place at the time. Examples include: *Man With A Movie Camera* (Vertov, 1929) and *Berlin, Symphony Of A Great City* (Ruttman, 1927).
3. The collective has collaborated on several similarly collage-like animated music videos for multiple Vancouver music artists, and has hosted their own events at Vancouver arts venues, showcasing each member’s individual animation work within a cohesive, collective framework.

 Works Cited

- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin Modern Classics (London: Penguin Classics), 2008
- Vertov, Dziga, and Yuri Tsivian. *Man with a Movie Camera* (London: British Film Institute), 1929.
- Ruttman, Walter, Timothy Brock, Carl Mayer, and Karl Freund. *Berlin, Symphony of a Great City*, 1927.

About the Artists

Flavourcel is an animation collective based in the unceded Coast Salish territories. Born out of a desire to break down the institutional barriers that limit animators and introduce play into their work, Flavourcel produces experimental animations in a variety of styles. From hand-drawn cell-shading to digital doodles, music videos, and gifs, each artist pushes the boundaries of the medium and challenges the preconceptions of how animated art should be made.

Flavourcel includes Harlo Martens, Kat Morris, Josh Neu, Julia Song, Alia Hijaab, Chhaya Naran, Gil Goletski, Laurel Pucker, Lana Connors, and Chris Strickler.

About the Writer

Madison Mayhew is a writer, musician, and cultural worker based on the unceded territories of the **xʷməθkwəy̓əm**, Skwxwú7mesh and **Səlilwətał** Nations, where she sits on the Board of Directors at Unit/Pitt Society and the Toast Collective, and works as the Admin & Governance Coordinator at 221A Artist Run Centre Society. She holds a MA in Comparative Media Arts from SFU’s School for the Contemporary Arts (2021) and a BFA in Critical and Cultural Practice from Emily Carr University (2017).



About UrbanScreen

Imagined by artists and built by the City, Surrey's UrbanScreen is Canada's largest non-commercial outdoor urban screen dedicated to presenting digital and interactive art. UrbanScreen is an offsite venue of the Surrey Art Gallery and is located on the west wall of Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre in City Centre. The venue can be viewed from SkyTrain, between Gateway and Surrey Central stations. Exhibitions begin 30 minutes after sunset and end at midnight.

UrbanScreen was made possible by the City of Surrey Public Art Program, with support from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Surrey Art Gallery Association, and the BC Arts Council Unique Opportunities Program, and is a legacy of the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad project CODE. Surrey Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges funding support from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Province of BC through the BC Arts Council for its ongoing programming. UrbanScreen's 2015 equipment renewal was made possible by the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage / Government of Canada and the City of Surrey.

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