



**京都にも行きましょう!!**  
**Let's go to Kyoto, too!!**





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An exhibition of class projects for  
ART290JP: The Art of Kyoto  
University of Regina

Professor Robert Truskowski

Exhibition held at  
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University of Regina  
September - October 2025

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Tylar Dripps  
Taylor Fraser  
Alaynah Hamilton  
Julien Hamon-Fafard

Brandi Heilman  
Krista Heilman  
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David Minh Le  
Morgan McKinnon  
Murphy Stamp  
Royal Steffen

Austin Strickland  
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This exhibition, catalogue, and indeed the whole trip to Kyoto would not have been possible without the support of many people. First, I would like to thank the students who travelled all the way to Kyoto – and for some of them, it was their very first time on a plane! Next, I would like to thank Jen Matheson and her team at UR International who ensured the students were ready to travel, and in most cases, with plenty of Yen 円 in their pocket! The Dean of MAP, and the entire team in the Dean's Office, MAP Student Programme Centre, and the MAP Admin Hub were incredible and gracious, as I navigated the planning of this course and the trip. A special thank you to Dean David Dick is due, once again. Dean Dick ensured that I was able to plan a number of very special events with the students in Kyoto that we won't ever forget. My colleagues in the Department of Visual Arts were endlessly supportive, taking on Acting Department Head duties, as I travelled right after the end of a very busy Winter semester. The Fifth Parallel Gallery, and Director Brandi Heilman and Assistant Director Sidd Basu-Roy have done a wonderful job of supporting this exhibition. I continue to be in awe of the leadership that comes from a student-run gallery. Finally, I'd like to thank my youngest offspring, and last-minute-substitute Grace, for being such an incredible travel companion. (◦>◡<),♡



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*“For hundreds of years, Kyoto has been the centre of traditional arts and crafts production in Japan. On this Study Tour, we will visit sites of artistic and cultural importance, and meet local artists and educators as a means to better understanding the local and global importance of this dynamic city.”*

\*

I wrote that course description for *ART290JP: The Art of Kyoto*, a number of years ago; before the pandemic, actually. I poured over every line, every word, every character. The university has very strict rules about this sort of thing, so I had to make sure it was perfect. I think it holds up, and that sort of careful attention to detail set the stage for the way in which I visualized the trip, and the participants (many of whom I didn't yet know) who would eventually accompany me.

That is a lot of pressure to put on students, but luckily, they did live up to my expectations. In fact, they surpassed them. I marched them all over Kyoto for two weeks, and I barely recall anything other than smiles from the first day to the last. The joy and affection for Kyoto can be seen in the works of this exhibition. These are the final projects – the “Response to Kyoto” assignment – for the course, and seeing how deeply affected they were by this trip makes me certain that it was all worth it.

... and it gives me strength for another one in 2027! (I U I)

Robert Truskowski, September 2025



*From Konbini to Kitchen 2025 Digital print*

Marc Aplao

*From Konbini to Kitchen* is a fictional food magazine created through graphic design. My work was made to appreciate the life and beauty of the world of food within Japan, and to capture what I found to be most interesting and delicious.

The title stems directly from the transition of food from the *Konbini* (Convenience Store) to food in a kitchen and how different they were, but in the end, how they had worked together to keep me fed. I had truly appreciated every piece of food that I ate and left no plate, bowl, or cup empty. Every dish, no matter where it came from told its own story, and was an integral part of my journey through the lovely streets of Japan.

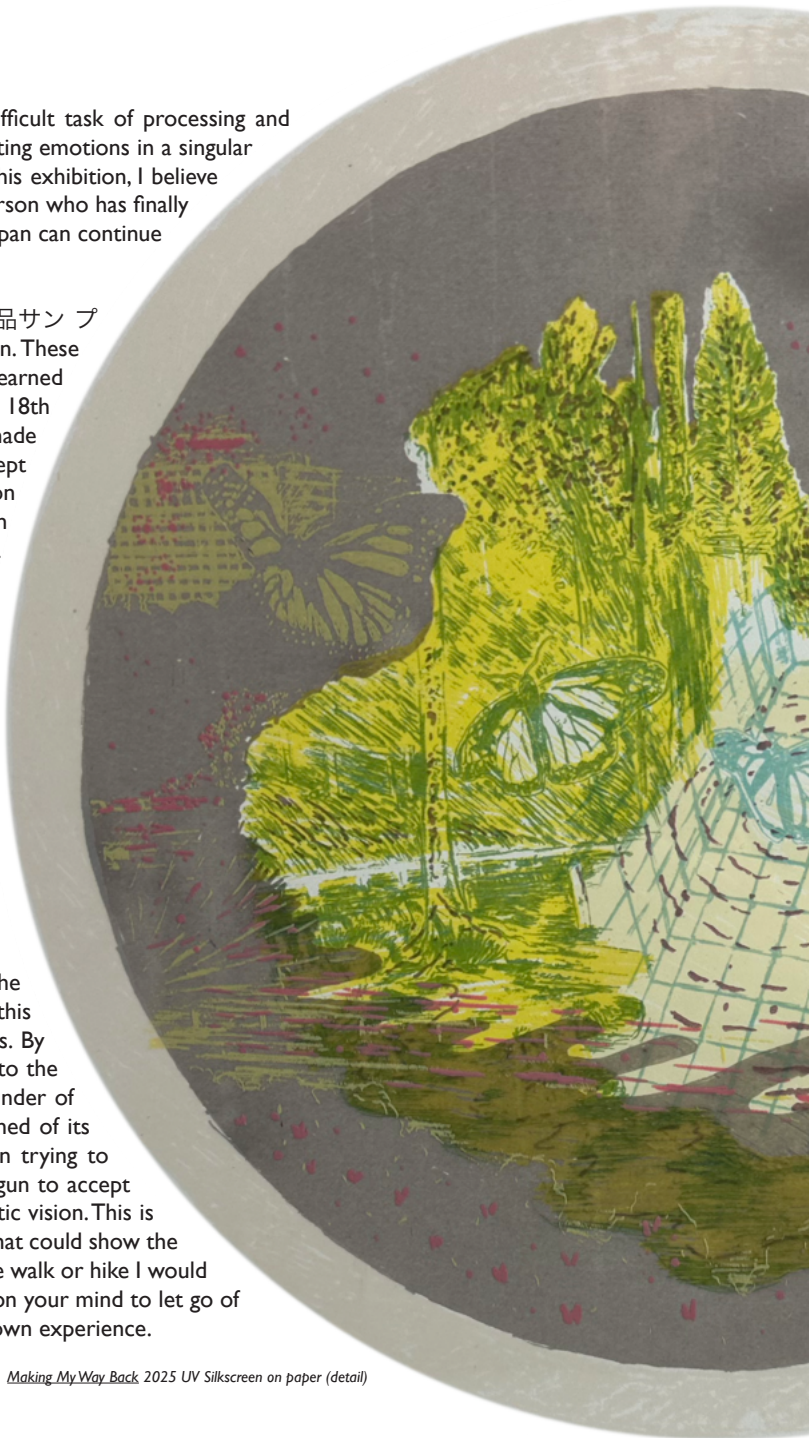
## Spencer Atkins

Upon returning from my trip to Japan I was faced with the difficult task of processing and summarizing the overwhelming amount of memories and conflicting emotions in a singular artistic response. To reach out and connect the two works in this exhibition, I believe they mark two points separated by two months made by one person who has finally begun to trust that the change they saw in themselves while in Japan can continue to exist back in their familiar home city of Regina.

The first work titled *Sampuru* comes from *shokuhin sampuru* (食品サンプル), the art of replicating food dishes using plastic, wax or resin. These models are often seen outside of tourist restaurants, but as I learned later on this is not a new art form. *Sampuru* began during the 18th century and holds high honors for a restaurant or chef who made a meal worthy of commemoration. My relationship to this concept came from my unexpected love and conflicted feeling of intrusion while frequenting *Sentō*, (銭湯) the Japanese public bath houses. In both pieces shown I have referenced the bath house in some way. In the first piece I use the motif of the *Kerorin* (ケロリン) plastic yellow wash basin. This is a yellow bucket particular to the Kansai region where Kyoto is located. I had purchased these buckets and continued to use them as part of my washing ritual at home which brought up my own questions of appropriations and the sanctity of a ritual and its place of origin. I used a hipbone as a placement for myself as I wanted to use a sensual metaphor rather than approaching the loaded history of depicting a nude body in a western art context. The hipbone was used as a literal metaphor for the relief that my body would get by being in the baths and by squatting down to shower prior to bathing. Looking at the work now I see much of the anxiety I was feeling my first month back from Japan.

My second work titled *Making My Way Back* reframes much of the guilt and fear I had in relation to the bath house. While making this second work I had another two months to continue my rituals. By this time I had discovered my true attachment and relationship to the bathing rituals of the bath house. Instead of being a simple reminder of a wonderful experience far away from the everyday, I have learned of its capabilities to help slow myself down. This summer I have been trying to be more present, with the help of a few studio mates I have begun to accept my present state and the length of time it takes to fulfill an artistic vision. This is what brought on my desire to make a second artwork. A work that could show the change of pace in the way I work. *Making My Way Back* depicts the walk or hike I would take before going to the bath house. The time it takes to transition your mind to let go of your preconceived notions. To fully prepare yourself for an unknown experience.

*Making My Way Back* 2025 UV Silkscreen on paper (detail)





### Sidd Basu-Roy

To say the Trip to Kyoto was something that I will remember all my life would be an understatement, but yet here I am, forced into a position to describe it. During my time there, I was kind of confronted with this world of art that made me a bit intimidated and kind of existential in all honesty. I knew that I had to make a response project, and given everything that I experienced, big and small, was something to be remembered by me. In the span of time I had, I decided to paint a mosaic of scenes that were ingrained in my brain without the help of any physical pictorial references. I honestly do not know any other way I can keep my memories of Kyoto intact except this. I mean, pictures and videos are all great in their own ways but personally I feel like they are a bit temporary. I found myself in bouts of introspection, on what kind of art and culture I consume and how it influences me. Japan loves its culture and for the first time I think I saw that celebration through the lens of actual and pure passion instead of perhaps the capitalistic need to push to pop culture for the sake of it. Every small detail has a bit of an homage to something greater and I saw it only fitting that I too am made of things that came before me. I realized that I, too, am a composite of influences, standing on the shoulders of artistic giants. We humans borrow from one another, blending inspiration into our own expressions of joy, because it is what makes us happy. I am glad I could put that as the best I could on the canvas. I would highly recommend walking on the streets of Kyoto while listening to Abbey Road.

*I bought earphones in Kyoto 2025 Acrylic and collage on panel (detail)*



*Past, Present, Future* 2025 Ink on paper (detail)

## Tylar Dripps

*Past, Present, Future* is a personal first step into the world of art. I am not a traditional artist by any means, but being part of this group of talented, inspiring individuals encouraged me to explore creative expression in my own way. This piece marks one of my earliest attempts at Japanese calligraphy (書道, “shodō”), and began with the challenge of writing a *Haiku* using my limited Japanese language skills.

Over the course of practice, I went through nearly 50 sheets of rice paper. Most of those attempts are now pressed into the back of the frame; a record of my effort, failure, and persistence. On the very last sheet, I took a final risk and created my own vision of a *Sumi-e* (墨絵) painting. That last attempt, that final page, became the foreground and main composition of the piece.

If you look closely, the *Haiku* also appears behind the main image, faintly visible on a layer of transparent rice paper. This subtle layering mirrors how self-reflection sits quietly beneath the surface yet is ever present. In my view, it represents what lies beneath one’s outer self: the thoughts, memories, and feelings that emerge when we take the time to look inward.

In Kyoto, wandering the silent paths alone at night, peaceful in my thoughts, I was finally able to pause and think on my own past, my present, and the shape of my future with what felt like true clarity for the first time.

The poem, *Furu Michi o / Ima Aruku Oto / Mirai Saku*, translates to:  
“On the ancient path / The sound of my steps now / The future blooms.”

This piece reflects my view of life’s journey. Each obstacle, each step, is part of the path to growth. Though my brushwork is unrefined, I believe the art lives within the words themselves. Their rhythm, their honesty, and the quiet courage to begin something new.



*Transfixed 2025 Mixed media (detail)*

### Taylor Fraser

I wanted my mixed-media sculpture to encapsulate everyone on the trip. To represent each person, I asked for an image of their favourite gacha or character they found on the trip. If they didn't submit one, I chose one to best represent them, or an interaction I had with them. The pufferfish belly holds all of the characters close, emphasizing our connections to each other through our shared experiences during the trip; whether this was sharing a common interest or memory.

My art style mainly consists of black and white, and I wanted to incorporate that part of myself into the main body of the sculpture. The dark main body has a stark contrast to the small blooms of colour, and I used them to show myself opening up to those around me on the trip. I had quite a few one-on-one conversations that were very personal, and it's comforting to know that people felt comfortable enough to show that part of themselves to me and vice versa. I feel like I really bloomed into my own while in Japan. I made friends while visiting as well, and I truly miss their presence. It felt special and it felt like something that was only mine. I still talk to them and I'm so excited to see them again!

I was obsessed with fish before and after this trip. I've always loved sea creatures and the endless ways of their beauty, so seeing a pufferfish vase in the The National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto really inspired me to make this piece. Water was also a significant part of the trip for me. Going to the aquarium, viewing the ocean while in Osaka, walking to the onsen in the pouring rain and then soaking after a long day of walking. I felt at peace. I created a curtain of "raindrops" to wrap around my pufferfish to show this comfort that I felt. My representation of water is to show my connection with it and the comfort it brings me. I truly don't believe another place or experience could bring me the same peace I felt in Japan. Honestly it's still shocking to me that I finally made it to my dream place. I felt at home and at peace with myself. It didn't matter how early I had to get up or how late I went to bed. None of it mattered. The way of living and the awareness of others' existence felt so refreshing. It felt like seeing the sun for the first time. It was colourful and it felt like I belonged; no judgement, just kindness.



## Alaynah Hamilton

This piece was painted with acrylic paint using my grandfather's prosthetic leg as the canvas. This painting features structures from two of my favorite places we visited during our trip to Kyoto: Kiyomizu-dera Temple and Fushimi Inari. The structures I painted from Kiyomizu-dera Temple are the Sai-mon (West Gate) and the Sanjunoto Pagoda. I chose them because of how beautiful they looked, and because they are the first things you see when approaching the temple grounds. I also painted the Senbon Torii (Thousand Torii Gates) from Fushimi Inari. Although I could not walk the path myself, this temple is known for the Fushimi Inari Hike, a 230-meter hike up Mt. Inari with numerous torii gates along the way.

\*

I was wracking my brain trying to figure out what I wanted to do for my final project. I knew I wanted to paint my favorite locations, but I did not want to use a conventional canvas or do something "normal". Two of my absolute favorite places we visited were Kiyomizu-dera Temple and Fushimi Inari. During our amazing trip, we did A LOT of walking, and as someone with a disability, walking long distances can be very difficult. Funnily enough, it took the most walking to reach these locations. Towards the end of the trip, the lightbulb went off in my head – I have a prosthetic leg!

Now, out of context, that may sound odd. It is my grandfather's prosthetic leg, which I know still sounds weird. For clarity, years ago my grandfather lost his leg due to diabetes resulting in him needing a prosthetic leg. Unfortunately, a few months before our trip to Kyoto, my grandfather lost his second leg (for the same reason) and is no longer able to use his prosthetic. Since he no longer needed it, I asked if I could have it, knowing I would eventually paint it or decorate it and display it as a weird decoration.

Since my favourite places required a lot of walking, and I already had this "leg", why not use it as a canvas?! I figured that by using the prosthetic leg as a canvas, it would represent that although we walked extensively and at times felt like my legs were going to fall off, all that walking led us to these really beautiful places, making it worth it in the end. On the foot of the prosthetic leg, I put on a traditional Japanese sock, called a "tabi", to represent a dance workshop we attended where we were required to wear them. Coincidentally, my grandfather and I have the same foot size. Lastly, although we did not go to Japan during cherry blossom season, I added the cherry blossom bouquet, using the prosthetic leg socket as a vase, to tie everything together.

*Taking the Scenic Route 2025 Mixed media*



### Julien Hamon-Fafard

The ceramic pieces in the exhibition are a series of work I have created influenced by Japanese aesthetics.

The bowl is based on the principle of functional ceramics: simple and well crafted.

The vase is inspired by the architecture found in older temples and shrines.

The rabbit is influenced by the characters from the film *My Neighbor Totoro*, as well as the raccoon figurines found outside the homes of Kyoto residents, also known as *Tanuki*.

## Brandi Heilman

Being a rural girlie in Japan, I was ill-equipped to deal with the intensity of a large, compact, and bustling city like Kyoto. The crowded streets, the busy bus rides, and the sheer amount of things to do left me feeling overwhelmed, scared, and exhausted. There were rarely moments of rest, for we had to make the most of our time in Kyoto. Although stressful, this led to the creation of countless cherished moments and inside jokes among the group.

The backdrop of my piece incorporates a mixture of words that reference both the good and the bad I experienced during our trip. It is riddled with references that I, like any good Westerner, likely poorly translated into Japanese. Inspired by the maximalist style of Japanese advertisements and magazines, I stuffed as many references to my trip as I could to express how busy and overstimulated I felt.

Kyoto may have been incredibly overwhelming in the best and worst ways, but I found that there were always small moments of peace I could find within the city. These often came when we stumbled upon small parks or gardens with little *Tanuki* statues greeting passersby. This miniature was inspired by these moments in which all the craziness of the trip would fade away for brief moments of relief.

The title of this work, 平和 (*Heiwa*), can be found etched into a rock in the miniature scene. 平和 translates to peace in English; however, the term holds a deeper meaning in Japanese culture. It embodies the concept of balance and harmony, which resonates with my feelings toward my Kyoto experience. Despite the fast-paced, chaotic nature of our Kyoto trip, there were always these small slivers of peace to bring balance to my experience.

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*Wabi Loop 2025 Crocheted yarn, wire, and pot*

### **Krista Heilman**

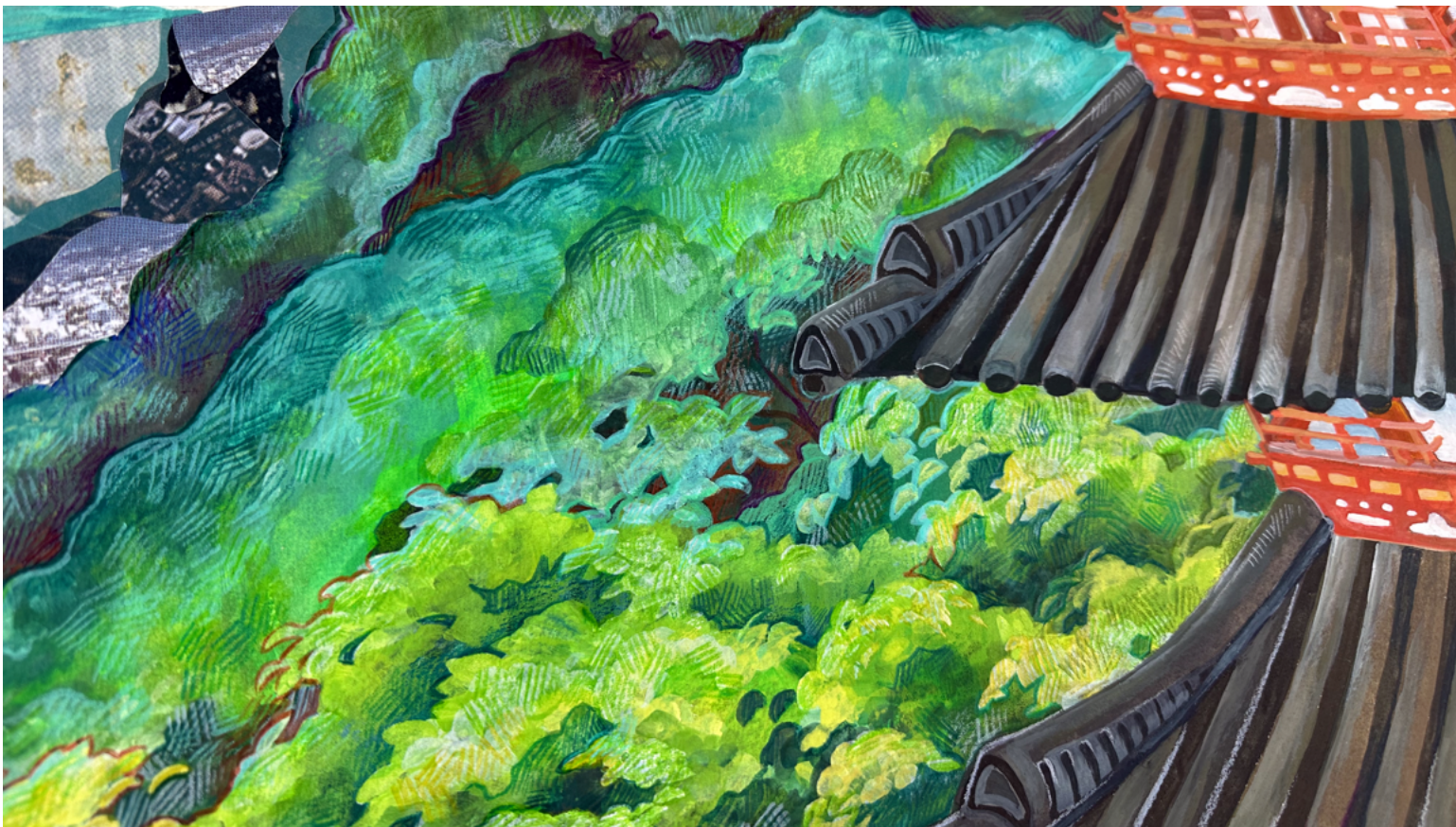
I do not have a formal artistic background, but I've always enjoyed creating things with my hands. Crochet started as a hobby, something relaxing and satisfying but I never expected it would lead me to create something like this bonsai tree.

This piece was inspired by a visit to the *Bonsai* nursery at the Kyoto Botanical Gardens. I was really struck by how much care and time went into each tiny tree. They felt alive, not just in a natural sense, but emotionally, like they held quiet stories in their branches. I wanted to recreate that feeling using crochet, a medium I know and love.

In Japanese culture, *Bonsai* are more than just miniature trees, they are living forms of art that reflect patience, balance, and a deep connection to nature. Each tree is shaped slowly over time, often over generations, and carries with it a sense of calm and quiet contemplation. I wanted to capture this essence through a simple handmade rendition. It's soft but structured, and a little imperfect, just like the real trees themselves.

I also included a small hanging *Omamori*, to honor the symbolism and spiritual meaning found throughout Japanese culture. *Omamori* are protective charms, often carried for good luck, health, or guidance. Including one felt like a natural way to add a layer of purpose and care to the piece.

Crocheting this *Bonsai* was a mindful, meditative process. It's my way of honoring the quiet beauty of Kyoto and showing that inspiration can take root in unexpected places.



*Unwaving Pagoda 2025 Mixed media on paper (detail)*

## Yanique Henry

It goes without saying that Japan as a country and its culture are unlike anything I've ever experienced prior, especially when comparing the differences it shares with Western daily life. Likewise, throughout my stay and journey in Kyoto, one aspect of Japanese life that truly stuck out to me is the close proximity the secular and sacred share in the day-to-day and how they contrast and complement one another in beautifully rich harmony. From the massive temples within and around the city to the shrines one can find around neighborhoods, shopping districts, and busy streets, having the opportunity to get close and personal with some of these cultural landmarks was a unique and, in more ways than one, unforgettable experience.

Thus, my work showcases the hybridity of this observation through not only its subject matter, but also in its materials and processes. Using my usual style and techniques, I recreate and reinterpret the scenery of a traditional Japanese pavilion, adding details such as a hanko stamp featuring my nickname, "Neekquii", and bits of digitally altered photo collage. In making these deliberate choices and using drawn imagery that represents the traditional alongside images of graffiti and landscapes that showcase the everyday, I seek to link Japanese culture to my overarching interest in how culture is created, preserved, and consumed, especially as it pertains to the past versus contemporary times.

This trip has been a monumental stepping-stone in becoming better acquainted with Japanese culture and cultures foreign to me as a whole, and with that, I look forward to the day when my path crosses with Japan again in the (hopefully near) future.

## David Le

This trip meant a lot to me. As someone who has been studying at the U of R for 3 years, I knew this adventure was the last one I would have with my peers before leaving to study fashion design.

The pieces shown have acted as if they were a play. The first *Kimono* represents my internal journey to see if I was good enough to pursue fashion design. The second act shows my apprehension of letting go of my attachment to being around my friends. The third represents that my friendships and goals are meaningful, too, so I could let go of both attachments and genuinely appreciate them both in the moment.

This inspiration came from a *Kabuki* theatre performance, *The Two Lions*, in which the performers displayed a dance that was supposed to represent the idea of passing on power, an acceptance of the cycle of life. The dance consisted of someone wearing a long wig that would reach the roof of a standard room, alongside a garment change called *Hikinuki*. The waves, originally from a Japanese classic painting, are instead given a 21st-century spin, representing the lives of my classmates, in which the colour represents a question I asked them. The question was, "What colour do you strive to be?" I wanted to briefly represent how our lives are interconnected and how we may change tides at any moment.

Japan was a fantastic experience, and I'll reflect on it for the rest of my life. The feelings, the connections, the experience, everything, will be ingrained in my soul for a long time. To all my long-term connections, new connections, and the in-betweens, every part of this trip was super fun. I wouldn't change a thing if given a chance. I hope this piece translates well enough for whoever is reading it so that you may get something out of it. To the individuals who have lingering waves attached to them, those who yearn for companions along their journey, and those who have to say an unfortunate goodbye, I hope you can strive to be the colour you want to be, too. The people on this trip sure were. (๑`□´๑)

*Colourful Kimono 2025 Hand-sewn and dyed fabric*



## Morgan McKinnon

*Minamiza*, named after the theatre in Kyoto, is a piece recreating the movement in the *Kabuki* performance we attended; the lion dance. I was first inspired by the set design, particularly a large tree and bridge that, while entirely two-dimensional, created the illusion of depth on the stage. Seeing this performance, as well as learning about different paper types such as *Washi*, *Yuuzenshi* and *Chiogami* and witnessing their applications in a small paper store, inspired me to create a doll entirely of paper. I crafted the two lion dolls and the tree out of different types of *Washi* and miscellaneous papers. The larger doll is fully articulated with six connection points in the hair to allow full movement, replicating how the performer's hair moves in the show.

*Minamiza 2025 Mixed media (detail)*





*Life In A Moment 2025* Video still

## Murphy Stamp

As someone who generally lives a slow and quiet life, I was mesmerized by the constant movement I experienced and became wrapped up in myself while visiting Kyoto. Although the streets were bustling with people, the trees were brought to life by the blowing of the wind, and the underground trains glided by seamlessly as passengers stood outside waiting to board, there was a still a sense of liminality in the air.

You could stand still in the middle of a congested market — or even at a tourist attraction that sometimes felt overcrowded, and while the noise of everyday people living their own lives echoed through the air, a calming silence was simultaneously paired with an exhilarating excitement similar to the feeling of being a young child on a quiet and hope-filled Christmas morning.

When I took those moments to stand still in a city unfamiliar to me that never seemed to stop, I could feel the echoes of a million different memories — my own and those of strangers alike — dancing around my head before they scattered off again into the distance.

*Life In A Moment* was meant to capture this feeling — it was like watching what would at once become distant memories accumulate in real time. I felt both present and far away from those experiences, and every day was as if I was given the opportunity to visit these soon-to-be memories in real time.

The editing process for this short film was as meditative as the real-time experiences themselves as I re-lived these memories all over again from a different perspective.

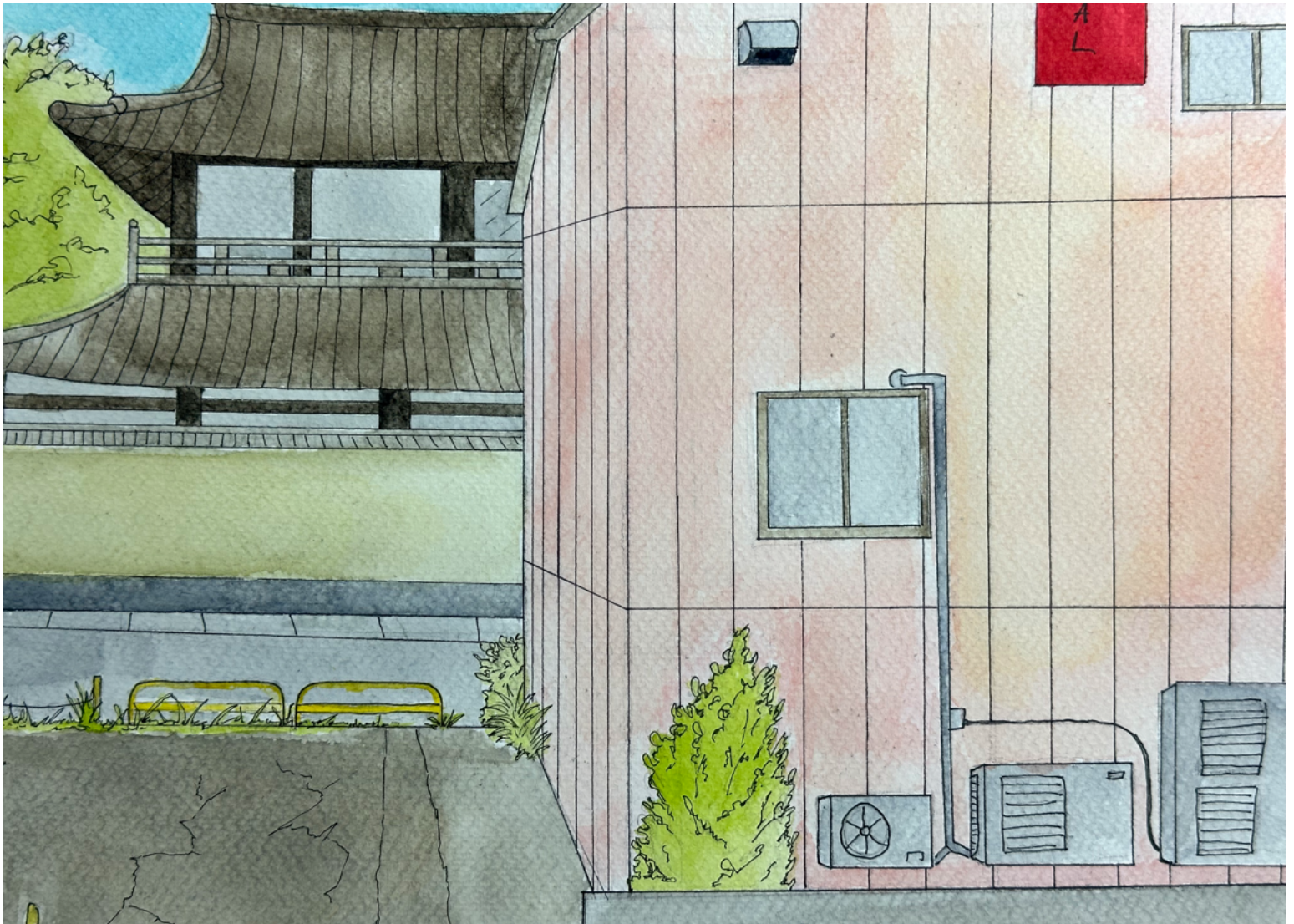


## Royal Steffen

While travelling in Kyoto, I consistently noticed how old cultural traditions and traditional architecture are seamlessly blended with modern society. In hindsight, this may seem like an obvious observation to some, but experiencing it for myself, I was so struck by this reality I came to believe that Kyoto stands out from other historical cities. There is an intimately woven bond between the past and present in Japan that feels distinct from other parts of the world, yet it is hard to express through words.

So, I created these pieces as a way to capture that duality between Japanese heritage and the progress of modernity. Using watercolour, I also attempted to emulate the flat colours of traditional Japanese printmaking, as a way to honour and emphasize the beauty of traditional artwork in Japan.

*絆 Kizuna (Bond) 2025 Watercolour on paper (detail)*





*Kyoto Flash* 2025 Acrylic paint on canvas (detail)

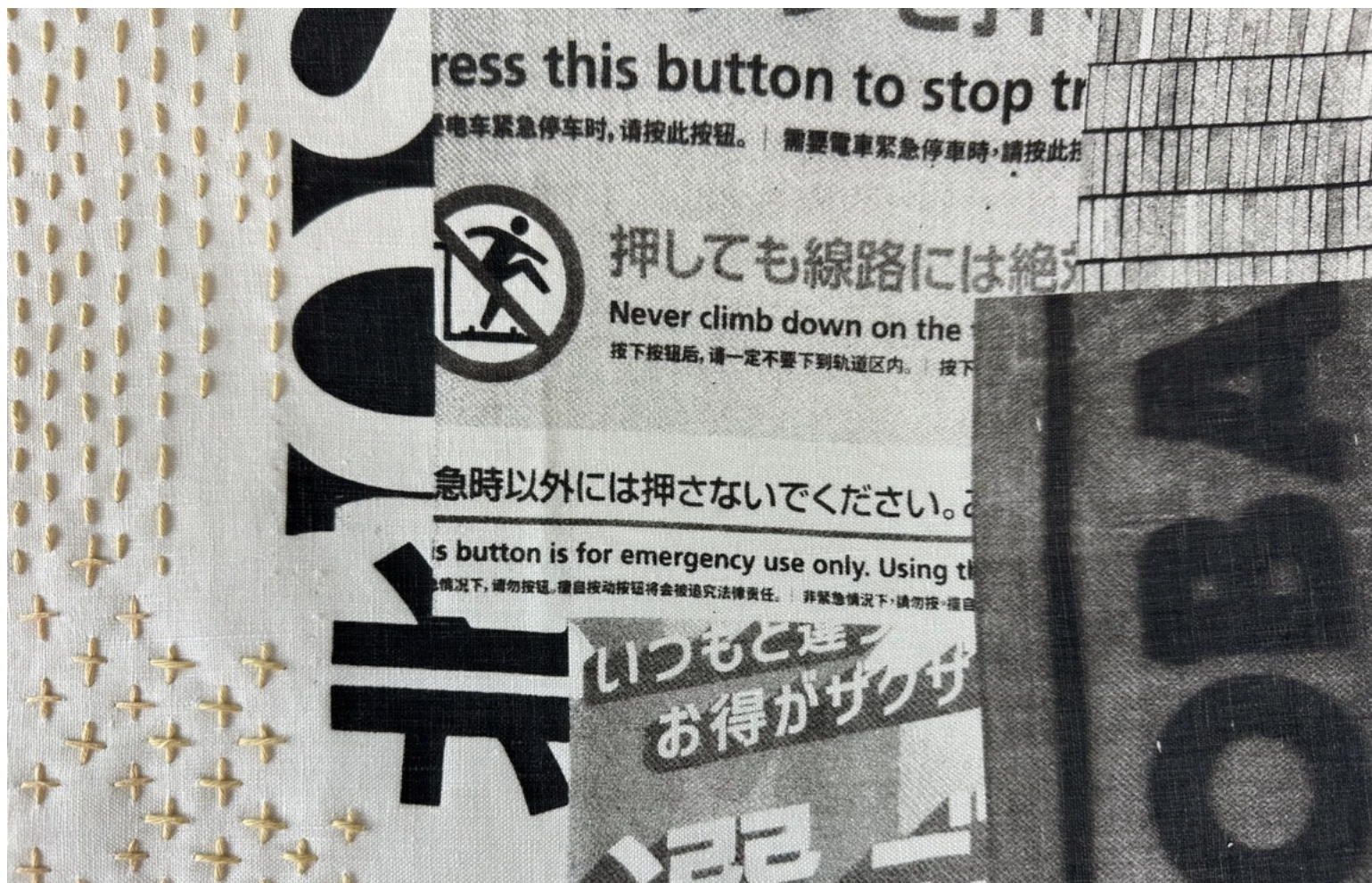
### Austin Strickland

In these pieces I used acrylic on canvas to depict a tiger, dragon, and bird. Prior to this trip, I have always had a fascination with Japanese traditional tattoos and my appreciation of them only grew deeper while visiting. Thus, I wanted to ensure my love for that style was represented in my piece. Additionally while in Kyoto, I found myself amazed by the traditional art pieces we saw in various museums and galleries. The intricacies and subject matter drew me in. At the Kyoto Museum of Crafts and Design, I saw a series of works that became my favorite of the trip. The series was quite old and extremely traditional. This is what I based my own series off of as it depicted a tiger, dragon, and bird. While creating this series it was important to me that my work not just be a carbon copy of the original, but also highlight my love for the Japanese tattoo style. I integrated line work and colours that were faithful to the tattoo style, while also making sure I did not deviate too far from the traditional aspects. Through my series I wanted to combine the traditional and modern sides of Japan that so often oppose each other, into a piece that flows and bridges the gap.

## Bree Tabin

*Between Space* has been a creative reflection work needed for processing lingering thoughts following the ART 290JP class trip to Kyoto. The shape and form is influenced by the hanging fabric works called *Noren*. In Japan, *Noren* hang at the entrances of homes and businesses, a soft barrier to a building, allowing those who enter to feel the spirit of a space in a transitional zone before approaching the hard entrance (the door). Walking in Kyoto, you can see *Noren* along residential, and business lined streets — sometimes peeking through the fabric to see if you can catch a glimpse of the scene inside. You feel the essence of the space as soon as you take in the fabric, or motifs that decorate the work, all unique to the space they represent. The motifs on *Between Space* are scanned, and collaged images from street surfaces — signage, posters, sidewalks, walls, vending machines all captured while walking throughout the city of Kyoto. These collaged images represent examples of what surrounded our every step during the exploration of this city. Parallel to the images along the outside of the *Noren* is embroidery inspired by a traditional Japanese mending technique called *Sashiko*. The addition of this stitching to *Between Space* is recognition of the labour and care that has gone into the continual practice of Japanese traditions like *Noren*, and *Sashiko* that you see everywhere touring around Japan. *Between Space* embodies this post-Kyoto mentality I carry — that I will never live a life where I am not in pursuit of expanding what I have seen, and every moment in the interim is a “between space”.

*Between Space* 2025 UV Silkscreen, Japanese Fabric, Embroidery Floss, Sewing thread (detail)





*Falling Light* 2025 Cyanotype on paper (detail)

## Jayden Thompson

*Falling Light: Kyoto in my Hands* and *Falling Light: Cyanotypes of Kyoto* grew out of a journey through Kyoto and, at the same time, out of a more personal reflection with memory, grief, and the impermanence of experience.

In Kyoto, I collected fallen leaves, flowers, and stones. I never picked them, only received them. Pressed into my notebook pages and later into cyanotype, they became both outlines of place and reflections on what it means to walk carefully in another landscape. These works are deeply informed by Japanese concepts of *mono no aware*, the awareness of life's fleeting nature and *wabi-sabi*, the beauty of imperfection and impermanence. Light, through the cyanotype process, holds onto what is otherwise passing, creating images that are at once fragile, permanent, and incomplete.

*Falling Light: Cyanotypes of Kyoto* are printed as postcards, small in scale and meant to be shared or sent away. Printed on Japanese paper I carried home, they serve as pieces of Kyoto that can travel further than I could carry them alone. Like postcards, they both carry presence and absence, a trace of somewhere I stood, addressed always to someone not there. This gesture connects to the larger themes of my work, the desire to witness, to hold on, and to pass memories between places and people, even as they inevitably shift and fade. At the same time, these works are about carrying memory of a trip, of friendships, of family, of loss. Grief tends to show up through my practice almost unconsciously, memories of my father and pets, their absence press themselves into the work, much like flowers pressed between pages. The cyanotypes become not only records of Kyoto but also photographs of loved ones, moments, and places I may not find again. The poem I wrote alongside these works reflects on that tension, the beauty of what has been, and the ache of what slips away.

Creating *Kyoto in my Hands*, my largest piece to date, was an act of pushing myself the way travel pushes one's boundaries; through loss, readjustment, and acceptance, I found the ability to create something freeing. Stones suspended using thin thread to weigh down my bedsheet, flowers rest across the fabric as if they were still on a path in Kyoto with my words guiding my way through the curves. It is a room-sized memory, heavy and delicate all at once.

Both pieces are a way to show my gratitude, for the inspiration and beauty of Kyoto, for those who support me, and for the chance to witness and remember. They are also reflections on what it means to carry memories, how they fade, how they return, and how, in their fleetingness, they remain.



*Oh, the places you'll go 2025 Watercolour on paper (detail)*

### Sage Triffo

Oh, the places you'll go.

I created this piece for my younger self, for the girl who once believed she was too small to do anything big. Growing up with a heart condition, the world often felt overwhelming, full of unknowns, scary futures, and unpredictable fate. I lived much of my life afraid, convinced that even something as simple as travel was out of reach for someone like me. My younger self didn't believe she could do anything entirely on her own.

But in Japan, I discovered something different. I rode the subway by myself; a moment that might seem small to others, but for me, it was monumental. For the first time, I felt capable in a way my younger self never imagined.

I found myself exploring more and more alone, yet never truly alone. That younger version of me was always there walking beside me, wide-eyed and proud. I wandered through back alleys and met scruffy stray cats. I shared stories with locals. I treated myself to ramen and ventured off to hidden little shops on my own. Each step was an act of independence, a quiet celebration of freedom.

This piece captures how I felt, representing my younger self on the subway, the one who never thought she could. Anna rode with me that day, and she couldn't believe her eyes.



## Grace Truskowski

When I think of Japan one of my favourite parts about it is the food. This piece is a drawing of my favourite *Ramen*. It's my dad's favourite, too. This restaurant in Kyoto is by far the most delicious food we had on this trip. We call it *#1 Ramen*. The pork, the broth, the noodles and everything else was so tasty and mouth-watering! In many *Ramen* shops, they have their own custom bowls that have the name of the restaurant around the edge, so I decided to make my own.

In this drawing, around the circumference of my bowl it says:

グレースちゃんはい! 何がすき? 1番ラーメンよりあなた  
Gracie-chan! Hai! Nani ga suki? Ichiban ramen yori anata  
"Gracie! Yes! What do you like? Number #1 Ramen" (approximately)

This comes from a Japanese song that was trending online when we were in Kyoto! I thought it was so funny, and really reminds me of our trip so I included it!



#1 Ramen 2025 Coloured pencil on paper



*Balance Between Worlds 2025 Mixed media*

## Lila Wharton

### *Balance Between Worlds*

My sculpture is based on the places I saw in Japan, such as the *Torii* gates, temples, and the trains we took, while mixing in little details from the streets we walked. I wanted to show that Japan isn't just big cities, it's also a beautiful mix of nature and modern life.

### *The Beauty Through Quiet Eyes*

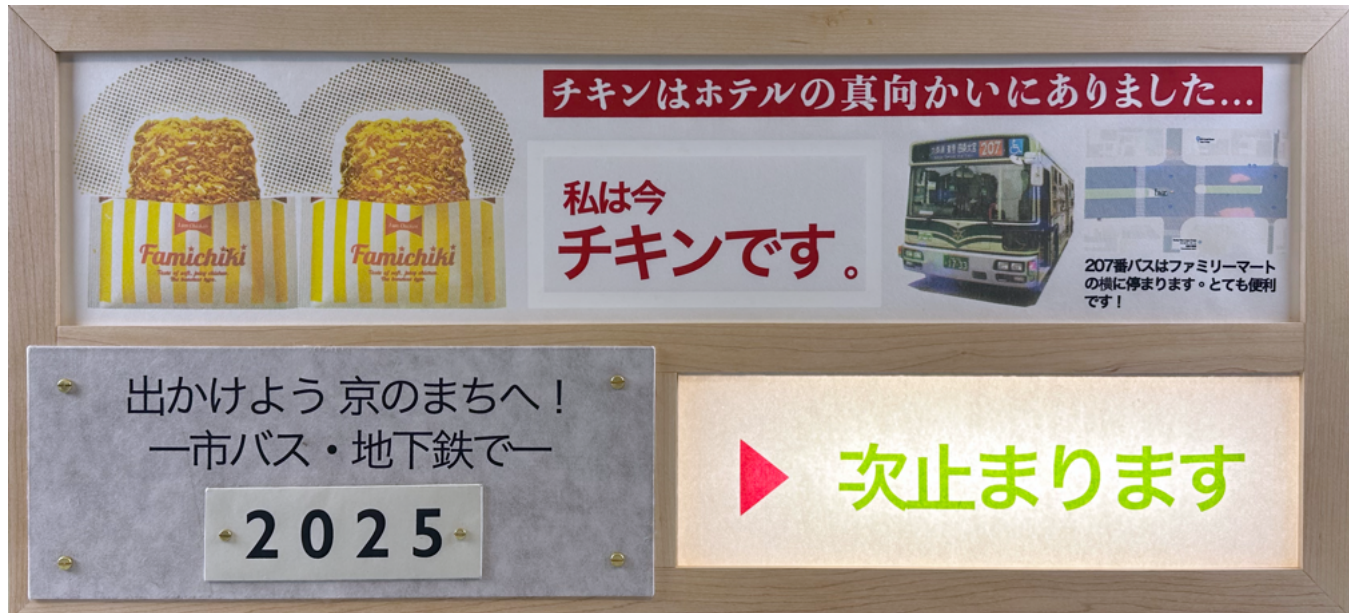
When I hold my camera, I start to notice the little things more, and I see moments of beauty around me. Photography helps me focus and not feel overwhelmed, focussing my view so I can truly appreciate what's in front of me. Through these photos, I wanted to share the lens with my viewers, showing how photography helped me slow down and notice what is often overlooked.

## Elise Masotti

Exploring Kyoto was such a surreal experience. I was continually amazed at how much care and attention to detail the people of Japan give to the littlest of things, which coincidentally is the underlying theme of my artistic practice — inconsequential details. From flower-shaped streetlights to interesting patterns on manhole covers to little designs underneath the label on a bottle of lemonade, these discoveries were everywhere. Relatedly, I fell in love with all the tile, which is an important architectural element in Kyoto, and something I knew I wanted to incorporate in my final print. There were some lovely intricate patterns, but I was immediately drawn towards the beautiful simplicity of the white square tiles that covered many buildings and subway stations. I took a rubbing of these tiles down in our nearby *Gojo* station, resulting in many weird looks from both locals and tourists. But it was totally worth it because after exposing it onto a silkscreen, that is what makes the background of my print! My main imagery is based on one of my favourite photos I took in Kyoto, looking up through the trees at one of the temples at *Kiyomizu-dera*. The trees and temple were recreated through a four-layer hand-drawn CMYK colour separation, aiming for realism while embracing a hand-drawn quality that is additionally impacted by the materiality of exposing graphite drawings onto silkscreens. It's hard to put into words how much this trip meant to me, but I'm sure there will be pieces of Kyoto in many more prints to come.

*Kiyomizu-dera 2025 UV Silkscreen on paper (detail)*





*Now I am Chicken* 2025 Washi paper, UV silkscreen, Wood, Brass, Gold pigment, and LED light

Robert Truskowski

When I was a kid, maybe 7 years old, my brother and I would occasionally ride the bus with my Dad. “With” isn’t exactly the right word, however. We would sit in the bench seat, directly behind the driver, who happened to be my Dad. My mom would drop us off and she would head to work at the Hamilton General Hospital, where she was a nurse. There was an hour or two between the start of her shift, and the end of my Dad’s. So Steve and I would sit quietly, and watch the world go by while my Dad navigated the maze of one-way streets in downtown Hamilton. I even dressed up as a bus driver for Halloween (more than once). All this is to say that buses are part of my childhood, and I hold great affection for them, to this day, despite my vocal and unwavering allegiance to my bicycles!

*Now, I am Chicken* is pretty different from the work that I usually make. I mean, I am using Printmaking and paper, light and wood, and text, of course, so perhaps it’s not all the different. But in my more serious work, I rarely start with a theme and work backwards. Actually, I generally detest being given a theme, which can be tricky, since the world of Printmaking is filled with thematic portfolios and thematic exhibitions and thematic conferences -\_-

But I digress. For *Now, I am Chicken* I took the opportunity to actually respond to my time in Kyoto on this trip, in the same way that I asked my students to respond, in their final projects for this very special course. We spent a lot of time on the bus together, and I admit that I was a little nervous. Putting 22 people on a bus can be a challenge — both for us, and for locals, alike. But in the end, we managed well... we kept respectfully quiet, mostly, tucked our backpacks in front of us, and gave up our seats at the earliest possible moment to anyone who looked like they could use a rest. We became attuned to making eye-contact from across the bus, signalling silently that we would be getting off soon. We developed a Pavlovian response to the chime from the stop button. And almost universally, we hopped off the bus and made a bee-line for Family Mart, which was right across the street from our hotel. After 20,000 steps in a day, and many high-calorie meals and snacks, I always had room for a crisp Coke Zero and a *Famichiki* before heading to bed. *Now, I am Chicken* is my interpretation of the sign that hangs behind the driver on the Kyoto City bus that provides space for advertising, a local map, and of course, the all-important reminder that the bus will be stopping soon (so it’s almost time for *Chiki*)!





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