



Savard\_001 **Platters** laser cut paper, paint, pins 2022 50 x 40 x 2 inches

Pattern 2451

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Art

in

Intermedia

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## **Acknowledgements**

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This work would simply not have been possible without my family. I am deeply thankful for my parents' support, driving me places, picking up materials, and helping me move heavy things. I would like to dedicate this exhibition to my grandfather Lawrence Peter Lavkulik (February 1, 1937 - June 1, 2020) and grandmother, Charlene Gail Lavkulik (October 30, 1938 - February 28, 2022). In addition I would like to thank my partner, Connor, for his 3D modelling and professional art installation skills, as well as honest feedback, and constant support.

Finally I would like to acknowledge that this work was made in Treaty 6 territory. A traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saukteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. I am thankful for the space this work has given me to learn more about my family's Métis heritage.

## **Abstract**

*Pattern 2451* is a research and process-based exploration of a tea set that I was given from my grandmother. The project is in response to my experiences of moving and packing my own things, and the objects from my grandparent's house. I began this work wanting to know what it means for an object to be valuable enough to keep, and how we decide what to throw away. In this exploration of personal value, *Pattern 2451* investigates the origins of middle-class objects of luxury, the tension between the duty of safe keeping and guilt of discarding, and the current overwhelming abundant need to buy, as a form of self-improvement/optimization marketed in consumer culture.



## Introduction

Moving is hard work. Through packing/unpacking, personal objects become subject to scrutiny and limitations. There are physical and time limitations of what you can fit into a truck, suitcase or backpack, and how much time you have to do so. In this process personal objects undergo a scrutiny of their worth and value; is this valuable enough to pay for shipping, when you can buy a mattress for the same as it costs to ship one? I am interested in what these choices say about the ecosystems of production and consumption that dominate our economic and social systems.

In sum, my work is an examination of this decision process. I approach with sincerity and curiosity everyday objects that I have chosen to take with me. If I am average in my lifetime, I will undergo this process approximately 11.7 times<sup>1</sup>, moving between apartments, cities, and maybe countries. In the exhibition *Pattern 2451*, I have altered the objects I have chosen to take with me as I move locations during my lifetime into lightweight, flat packed paper structures, covered them with patterns, and made bespoke wrappings to explore the value system behind this decision. *Pattern 2451* renders the mass production of household tools as an intimate act of individual labour that confronts their value as status objects and their promise of a healthier and fuller life.

My MFA experience has moved in parallel with the COVID-19 pandemic. They both began as I started putting together my application in December 2019 and I have it in my head that when I complete the work this is how to end the pandemic. After I accepted my offer of admission, I was given the option to defer if I wanted to. I considered it, but what I would do instead, was as much of a factor as any. As a pandemic project, Zadie Smith, wrote in her collection of essays *Intimations*, that writing was as much as “something to do” as it was work.<sup>2</sup> During the past two years I’ve thought about what it means to have a creative practice during a global pandemic, what it means to experience grief mediated through a screen, and the unbearable lightness of it all. How to engage in an artistic practice when the world has been broken down into “essential and non - essential,”<sup>3</sup> and my chosen interest feels decidedly in the non-essential category. Journalist Emmanuel Dzotsi talks about growing up and “fearing for the

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau, “Calculating Migration Expectancy Using ACS Data,” Census.gov, December 3, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/migration/guidance/calculating-migration-expectancy.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Zadie Smith, *Intimations* (Penguin Books Ltd, 2020), 20.

<sup>3</sup> Zadie Smith, *Intimations*, 22.

end of the world”<sup>4</sup> and he “somehow thought it would be all - consuming.”<sup>5</sup> He asks the question, “what does free time look like in the apocalypse” and “how [are you] supposed to heal by not thinking you’re sitting on the deck of a sinking ship?”<sup>6</sup>

The beginning of the pandemic felt like an especially boring, slow, sinking ship. It was before I started graduate school. I worked from home, which meant logging in for a 9am meeting, and then nothing. I worked on a team planning the World Triathlon Championships in August 2020, the Olympics had just been cancelled, and it felt silly that our event was going to power through. I would go for walks and listen to the same song on repeat. I was living at home and still making my same salary so I had more available income than ever, the world economic report published that consumption was down<sup>7</sup>, but for me it was the opposite. I would order things online to make me feel better, and be better: yoga accessories, a fitbit, yellow wool for a blanket, I learned how to crochet, and would drink multiple shots of espresso while I waited with my mom’s small dog for the FedEx truck. My parents both work in health care but in Spring 2020 hospitals reduced surgeries, in anticipation of what was happening in Italy and New York, but nothing happened. My mom had heard from colleagues how bad it was elsewhere in the world, and the conditions they were describing didn’t seem real. ER patients dropped off to a trickle, people put off going unless it was an absolute emergency, and my dad, working in a small hospital, rarely saw anything extremely urgent anymore anyways. But the looming general threat and uncertainty caused my mom to make my dad change his clothes in the garage, and would bleach our groceries in the kitchen sink.

My mom and I got bored. She was doing all tele-health and follow up care for cardiovascular disease patients over the phone. She had ordered hair clippers and a pair of sharp scissors. I had always had long hair, and we decided to cut it just above my shoulders. The excitement lasted for a day and we were back to our boredom.

My mom would drive down to Lethbridge.

Her dad, Lawrence Peter Lavkulik, was dying of multiple things. He had staved off cancer for years because of treatment, but it had eventually migrated into his pelvis and spine, permeating his skeleton. My grandmother, Charlene (Dawson) Lavkulik, was living with a rapid and aggressive form of dementia. Lawrence spent the last winter with frequent trips in and out of the hospital for infections brought on by wounds that were too slow to heal, from frequent falls, bladder infections that travelled in his blood and manifested in his mitral heart valves. It

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<sup>4</sup> “Pandemic Be Damned,” *Reply-All* (Spotify, September 16, 2021), 44:42.

<sup>5</sup> “Pandemic Be Damned,” *Reply-All*, 44:42.

<sup>6</sup> “Pandemic Be Damned,” 44:42.

<sup>7</sup> J. B. MacKinnon, *The Day the World Stops Shopping* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2022), 20.

was this infection that killed him, not the cancer. In the early days, they weren't allowing visitors. My mom wrote to the head of Alberta Health Services, and cc'd Deena Hinshaw. She was allowed to visit and was there with him when he died, she rubbed his hands and sore feet, and played his favourite music. The palliative care physician told my mom someone always helps, and patients often see someone before they go. The doctor believes Lawrence saw his sisters; I think my mom believes it too.

After he died, I went with her on one of the trips because they were clearing out the house. It was weird being back there, it looked really different. I had hardly ever been in the backyard, we usually visited in the winter. I polished a silver set on a picnic table, and watered the grass seed, which my aunt was aggressively trying to sprout under the acidic reach of the large, blue pine tree. She wanted the lawn to be lush and expansive to potential buyers; Lethbridge is basically a desert, and the house backed onto the *coulee*. A coulee "refers to a kind of valley or drainage zone" and it comes "from the Canadian French Coulee, from French couler 'to flow.'"<sup>8</sup> I would go walking and spot cactuses.

I liked my grandmother's tea set in the china cabinet. It was one of the few colourful things in a brown and beige house. We found a blue cardboard notebook, and in her even, looping, handwriting, there was a list, and my name listed beside some of the porcelain items. I chose a set of cups and plates, with a navy blue, red, and gold pattern. I didn't know what the pattern was called then, I just liked it best.

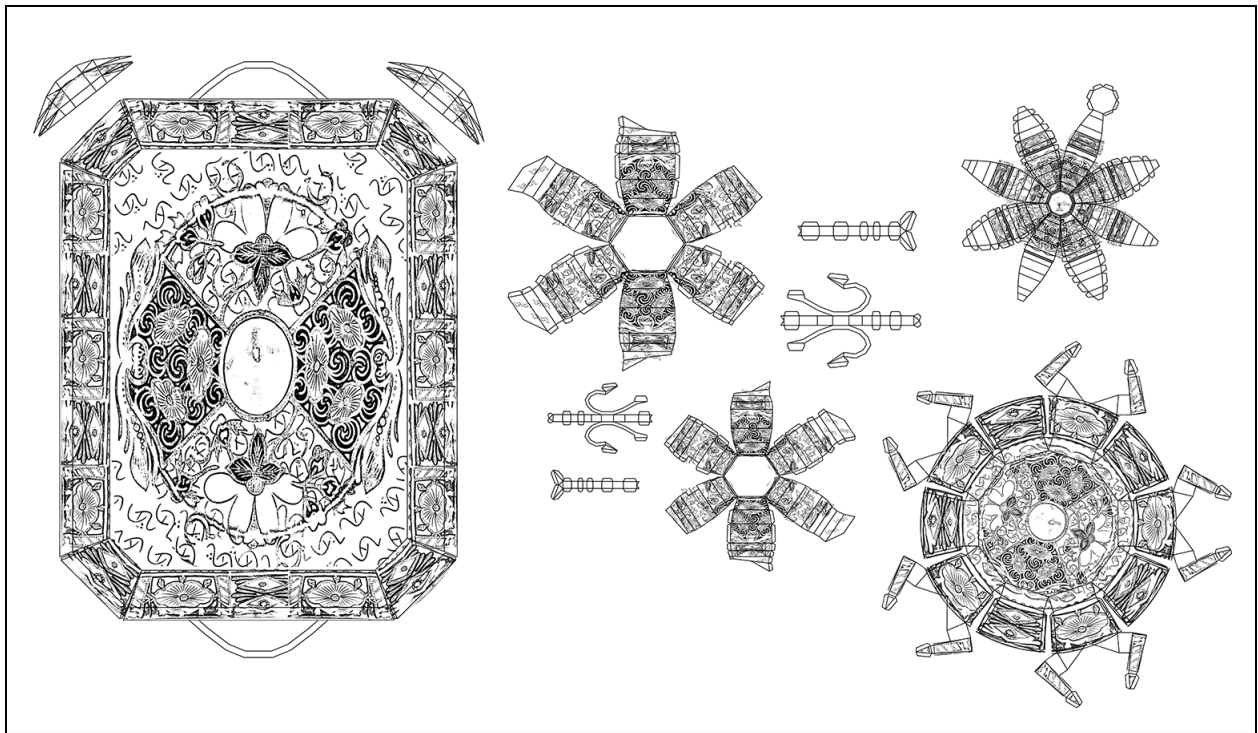
## **Pattern 2451**

I brought the chinaware home from Lethbridge and in my room I imagined how I could make it as transportable as possible. I imagined how to make it easier for my mom and aunt to transport and disseminate the tea set. My first instinct was to make a paper version of my grandmother's tea set. Items that could be packed flat, reproduced, and that wouldn't break. This was the first project I started and I worked with 3d modelling software, or more aptly my partner Connor worked with 3d modelling software while I supervised on Zoom, holding up sketches up to the camera, and giving instructions. We developed the language of polygons, creating the 3d models based on my grandmother's pieces, and later I sourced online images of pieces that were not in her collection but a part of the greater Royal Crown Derby Pattern 2451 set, to expand the collection. The strategy involved breaking down the curved surfaces into angled geometric shapes, creating a faceted version of the porcelain pieces. The software then allows the shapes to be unfolded onto a single plane. Subsequently the pattern of the original

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<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia (Wikimedia Foundation, January 16, 2022), <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coulee>.

tea set is scanned, manipulated in Photoshop, and digitally overlaid onto the geometric blueprints. These structures are cut out using a laser engraver and reconstructed by hand. The result is a paper facsimile of my grandmother's tea set that I have expanded and built into a collection of a little over a hundred pieces. From 3d dishes, to 2d digital paper images, back to 3d paper vessels, I am trying to understand their value through a translation of dimensions.



Savard\_002 **Paper Vessel Layouts** 2022 digital image

The personal emotional relationship of objects can be a burden; this idea is reflected in the work of artist Liz Magor's *One bedroom apartment*. This work is an installation where the entire contents needed to furnish a one bedroom apartment are gathered together by a curator and the artist. Magor "[recognizes] that even if you're moving your own belongings, it's an uncomfortable time [and] everything that once felt like a really natural extension of yourself suddenly becomes foreign, uncooperative and a burden."<sup>9</sup> I wanted my paper collection to be unbearably light compared to the emotional and physical task my mom, and my aunt had to undertake in emptying out their parents' house. In creating duplicates, I draw attention to the economic, political and social story that can be told through this specific mass produced

<sup>9</sup> Tess Edmonson et al., "Life of Objects," Canadian Art, November 25, 2020, <https://canadianart.ca/interviews/life-of-objects/>.

British-made porcelain that was made affordable to the masses in the 19th century, and its relationship with quotidian life, status, and imperial/colonial history. The question of what to do with life possessions that are amassed over a lifetime, is something that I think of every time I make something, when it seems absurd to make more things in this world. The strategy that has resulted from this thinking is to make things that can either be collapsed or incorporated into my own domestic space and be useful.

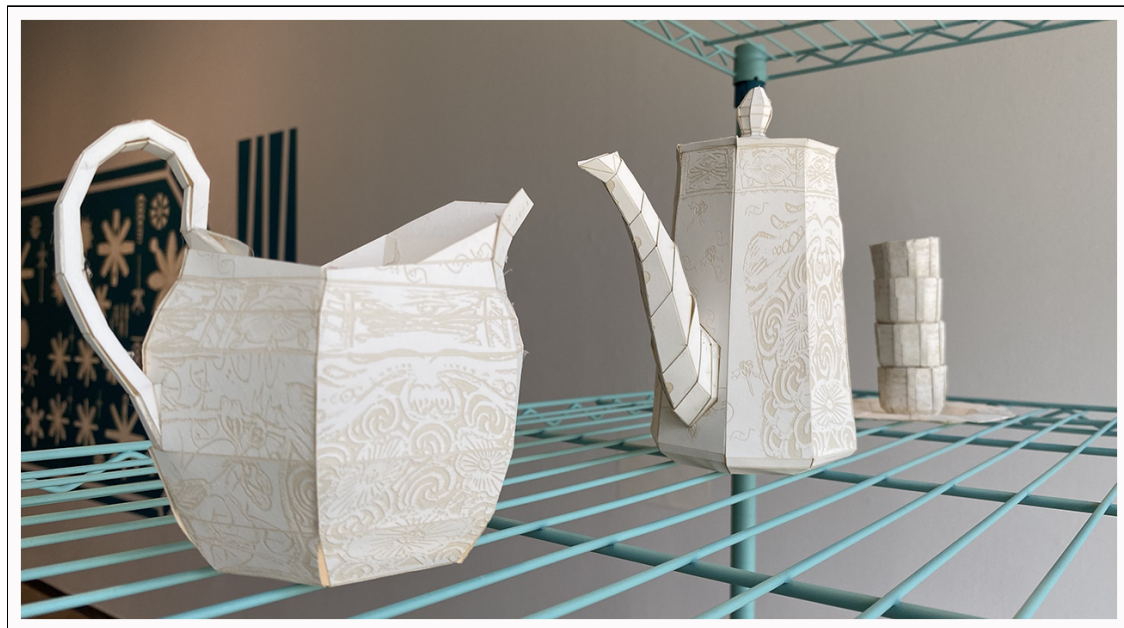


Savard\_003   **Pattern 2451**   laser engraved paper   2022   72 x 90 x 18 inches





Savard\_004  
**Pattern 2451**, Detail  
 laser engraved paper  
 2022  
 72 x 90 x 18 x inches

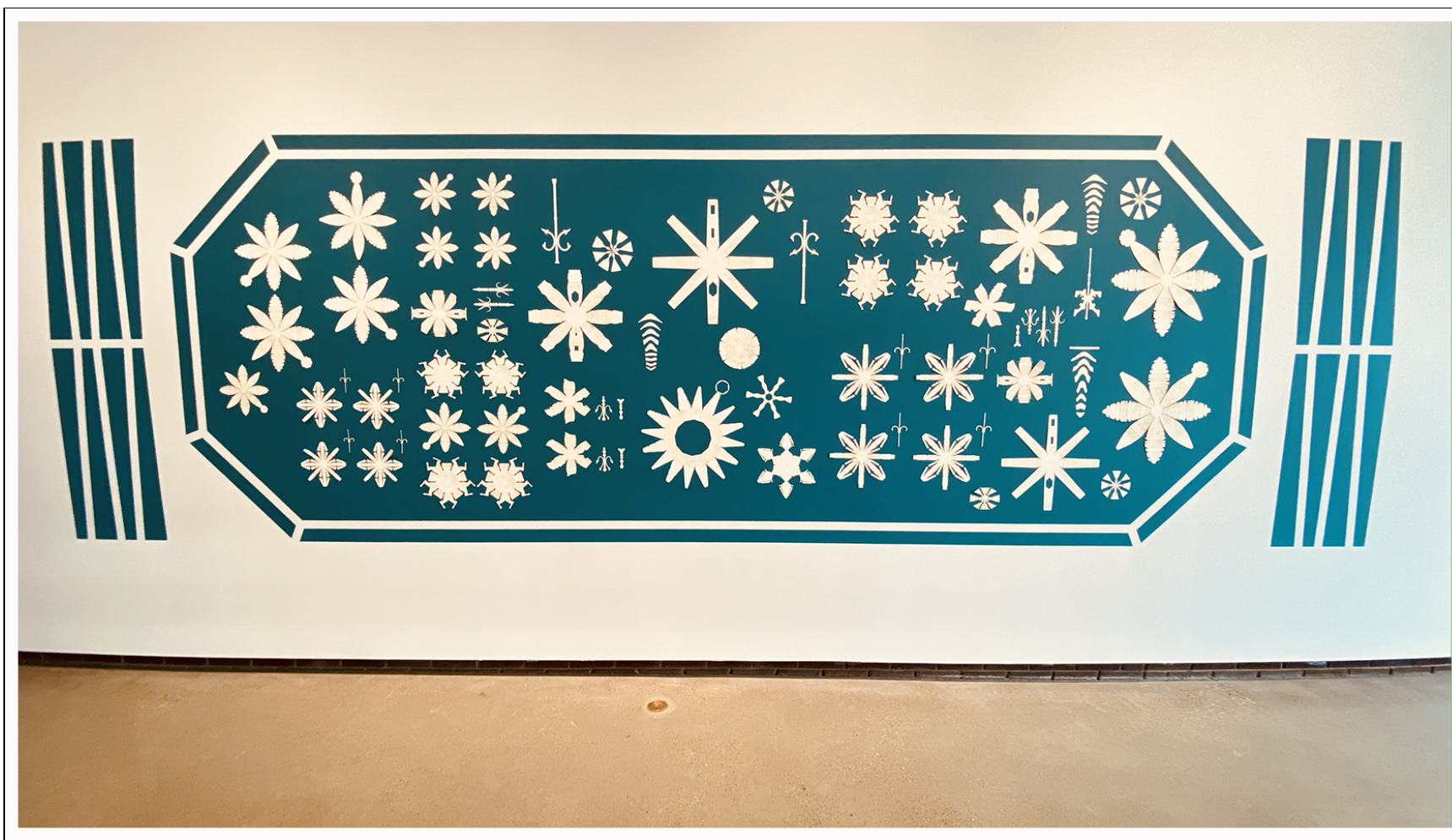


Savard\_005   **Pattern 2451**, Detail   laser engraved paper   2022   72 x 90 x 18 x inches



Savard\_006 **Table setting for four** laser engraved paper, paint, pins 2022 50 x 40 x 2 inches





Savard\_007   **Taking stock**   laser engraved paper, paint, pins   2022   65 x 225 inches

## Custom Packaging for Broken Pieces

In the fall of 2021, I completed a two month artist residency at Duplex Art Centre in Lisbon, Portugal with my partner, Connor. We paid for the extra flight insurance, and accompanied by vaccination status, manageable border entry requirements, and falling case numbers, we went for it. I flew to Lisbon with two large backpacks as my carry-on baggage. I knew what I made in Portugal would have to fit back with me in my suitcase. It would have to be light enough that I wouldn't be charged overweight baggage fees. These physical limitations informed the work that I created in Portugal and I approached my task of creating a transportable tea set but from a different angle. I developed a custom packing solution that would prevent porcelain items from breaking. My inspiration was the mottled or sometimes smooth brown sturdy cardboard egg cartons engineered to secure and protect eggs against the weight of being stacked upon one another, jostling trips from farm to grocery store, and finally home. I collected/saved egg cartons, cereal boxes, and purchased whole porcelain dishes from the centuries old Flea Market, Feira da Ladra, operating 700m from our Portuguese apartment/studio front door. I soaked the cardboard, and ripped it up into pieces, liquified it in a blender to create paper pulp. I created my own paper and would drape the sheets over the pieces purchased from the Feira Da Ladra<sup>10</sup>. I would press the fresh paper gently into the grooves of the plates, trying to capture as much detail as possible. I would move the sheets outside on the patio to dry in the afternoon sun. Once dry, I would peel the paper off the glass I used as backing, pop the dish out, and pin it to the wall. I completed 29 paper castings, experimenting with pigment and the addition of gold leaf. I packaged them in the plastic bin that I was using to hold my paper pulp. The bin was exceedingly light; it wouldn't even register on the airport's baggage scale.

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<sup>10</sup>How to make paper castings of whole dishes: **STEP 1:** Buy two frames, use one as the mould, and stretch a screen across the other to make a deckle. **STEP 2:** Hold the mold tight to the deckle and with a scooping motion towards you pull it through, scooping up the water/paper pulp mix. **STEP 3:** Shake it a bit, holding it level, allowing the excess water to drain. **STEP 4:** Remove the mold that has kept the paper square, and flip the deckle onto a absorbent flat piece of fabric (I used felt/canvas). **STEP 5:** Taking a towel, apply as much pressure as possible to the back of the deckle, removing excess water. **STEP 6:** Lift the deckle up, from one end like a book, the paper should stick to your felt/fabric. **STEP 7:** Press the paper further, removing as much water as I could. **STEP 8:** Lift the corners of the felt, holding it vertically, and carefully drape the sheet over top of a dish lying, eating surface flat on a sheet of glass. **STEP 9:** Gently press the paper into the dish to capture detail using a small piece of felt. **STEP 10:** Leave to dry.



Savard\_008 **Paper castings (Portugal)** recycled cardboard 2022 90 x 2 x 14 inches



Savard\_009 **Paper castings (Portugal)** recycled egg cartons, pigment 2022 90 x 2 x 14 inches





Savard\_010

**Paper Castings (Portugal), Detail**

recycled cardboard

2022

90 x 2 x 14 inches



Savard\_011

**Paper castings (Portugal)**

recycled egg cartons, pigment

2022

90 x 2 x 14 inches

In December 2021, when I returned home from Portugal, I had moved my grandmother's teacups from a shelf onto my desk, clearing some space. Whilst working on nothing in particular, I pushed aside some books which made contact with the teacups, sending the farthest one sliding over the edge and breaking into four pieces on the dirty linoleum floor in my studio. I hid the broken pieces in a piece of canvas. In the new year, I unwrapped them and noticed how clean and sharp the broken fragments were. It made sense that the packaging I had made in Portugal from the whole plates and cups should/could be adapted and created for these broken fragments. I had failed as their owner to keep them safe. I didn't want to replace it from the vast number of porcelain chinaware that I have seen scrolling through the auction house lists, or in Feira da Ladra laid out in old yellowed table cloths that might have belonged to someone else's grandmother. This particular cup, that had remained safe for decades, had landed in my care and I broke it. It made sense to me to create a series of paper castings of the broken pieces that were related to the whole plate castings that I had brought home with me.

There are more disruptions in *Custom Packing for Broken Pieces* that I made in Edmonton than the paper casts made in Portugal where I had Connor to help me and the hot sun to dry them on leftover glass sheets. The larger paper casting I have created in Edmonton reflects this change in environment and working alone. Paper has a physical memory. It reminds me of Kirsty Robertson's analysis of Allyson Mitchell's, *Hungry Purse*. Robertson writes how "textiles are often replete both with memories and more physical traces of ownership; holes, tears, moths, bacteria, mould and mildew."<sup>11</sup>

I was struck how different the Edmonton paper castings are than the Portugal castings, made from our recycling of cardboard and egg cartons, bits of gold flecks from a sheets of gold leaf I stole from Connor, and the bits of blue powder I cannot erase that turned my hands, floor, and permanently stained my shoelaces blue. There is a different history in the paper that I made in Portugal than the paper I made in Edmonton. In Lisbon I used leftover grey felt to press my new paper sheets between, in Edmonton I used my dad's (unused) surplus surgical rags. The loose weave of my dad's rags create a weave that in combination with the whiteness of the paper, looks like a plaster bandage. In this new version I was discontent with the discoloration that would appear in the paper, and it seemed like dirt found its way easily into its surface. I kept picking out gravel.

I decided to paint *Custom Packing for Broken Pieces* to erase the discolouration, and to make them more resilient. Covered in latex house paint, they become more resistant to

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<sup>11</sup> Anthea Black, Nicole Burisch, and Kirsty Robertson, "Secret Stash: Textiles, Hoarding, Collecting, Accumulation and Craft," in *The New Politics of the Handmade: Craft, Art and Design* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021), 138.

fingerprints, and damage. The paint forms an exterior shell, an extra layer of protection that additionally merges the packaging reminiscent of the 2010 Pantone colour of the year Turquoise.<sup>12</sup> I own a fitbit watch strap in this colour and a Lululemon half-zip sweater. In selecting this colour I think as Liz Magor points out that I am making a “private choice.”<sup>13</sup> However I am directed towards selecting this colour from the section of paint swatches marketed as the most popular choices. As Magor suggests “there is nothing very personal about it”<sup>14</sup> and it is representative of participating in an economic and marketing system where I have little agency. The broken pieces were collected from previous accidentally broken pottery. I didn’t want to purposefully break pieces, so I collected them from a few people who I had explained the project to. I am interested in the personal stories embedded within those pieces that were gifted to me, but that I also do not have access to.



Savard\_012 **Custom packaging for broken pieces** recycled paper, paint 2022 45 x 141 x 3 inches

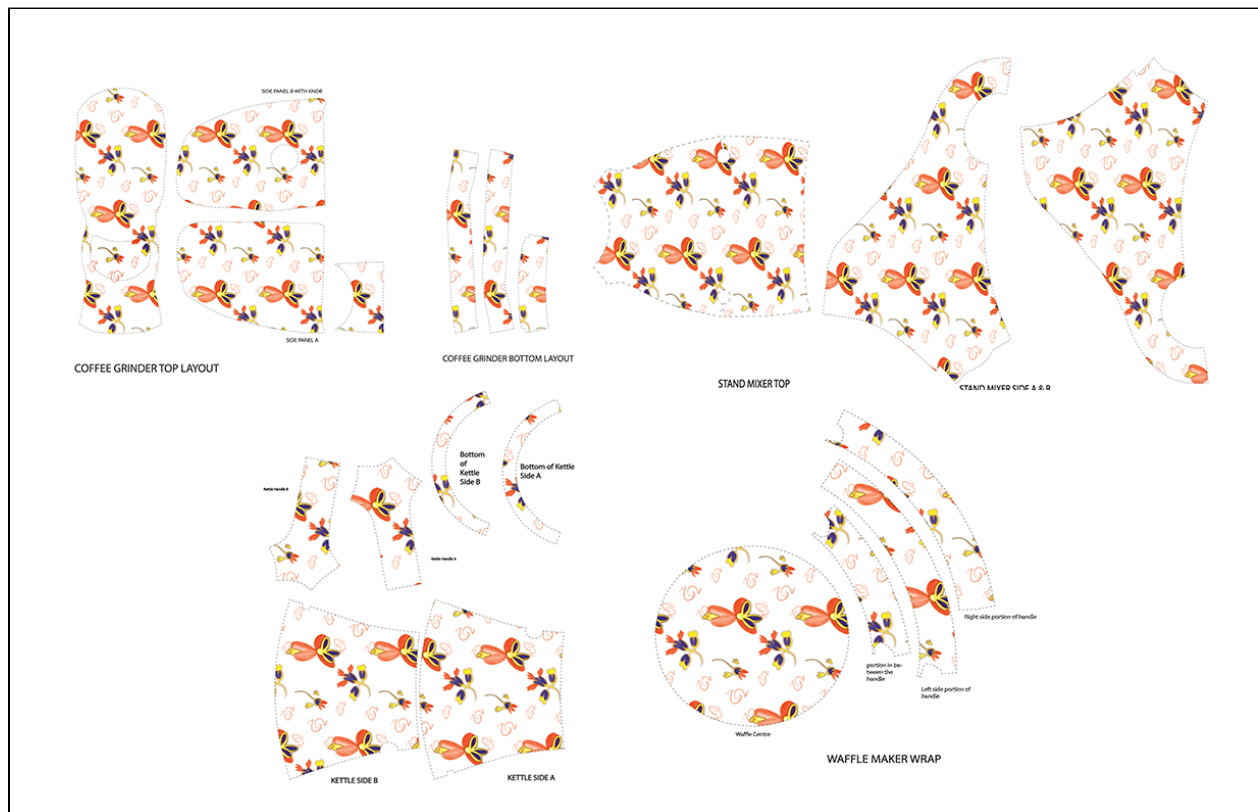
<sup>12</sup> Pantone, “Pantone Past Colors of the Year,” Pantone, accessed April 29, 2022, <https://www.pantone.com/color-of-the-year-archive>.

<sup>13</sup> Tess Edmonson et al., “Life of Objects,” Canadian Art, November 25, 2020, <https://canadianart.ca/interviews/life-of-objects/>.

<sup>14</sup> Tess Edmonson et al., “Life of Objects,” Canadian Art, November 25, 2020, <https://canadianart.ca/interviews/life-of-objects/>.

## Mini-Machines

*Mini-Machines* is a series of work comprising a kettle, burr coffee grinder, Kitchen-Aid stand mixer, and Cuisinart waffle iron. Creating the paper facsimiles and bespoke packing for broken pieces lead me to question what I covet in the realm of kitchen items today. My answer was my Delonghi espresso machine. It was one of my first purchases when I moved out from my parental home and I use it everyday. In this work, the mini-machines have been 3d scanned, and reconstructed in digital space. A texture map is then generated from the form, as well as a 2d pattern similar to a sewing pattern. On these 2d outlines, I created an interpretation of Pattern 2451 created from digital illustrations using the software Procreate and Illustrator. The patterns are then printed on vinyl and adhered to the appliances.



Savard\_013 Custom vinyl wrap layouts for mini machines 2022 digital image

In her podcast, *Nice Try*, Avery Trufelman interrogates crock pots, vacuums, free weights and doorbells, “products that determine the ways we clean, cook, exercise, and sleep – as we attempt to sail to the unreachable shore of a better life.”<sup>15</sup> Trufelman describes her daily routine of eating, sleeping, working out, feeling guilty about working out and “feeling the pressure to do it all better.”<sup>16</sup> The second season of the podcast, *Interior*, focuses on the “genre of domestic technology designed to turn our homes into little personal utopias.”<sup>17</sup>

My mom’s dad made his living repairing mini-machines. He left Lethbridge to attend the Radio College of Canada in Toronto and returned to work for AGT (Telus), starting off as a microwave technician. He was always interested in new technology and growing up my mom had a dishwasher and a colour TV.

In contrast, my dad did not have indoor plumbing until he was sixteen. Whenever we visit a *pioneer house* or historical site interpreting the time period of the late 19th century, my dad excitedly points out features, such as the wood stove or coal trap. He remembers growing up heating the bath water on the stove and creeping downstairs to get the coal from the cellar. In my imagination my dad grew up like Laura Ingalls<sup>18</sup> churning butter, an Ingalls/Métis hybrid.<sup>19</sup> The difference in my parents’ childhood is indicative of the industrialization that Ruth Cowan Schwartz described “that transformed every American household sometime between 1860 and 1960.”<sup>20</sup> Swartz characterizes the difference between generations that would have occurred slowly, “each generation lived in homes that were just a bit more modern than the generation that lived before it” as well as rapid transition “result of immigration, urbanization or sudden affluence.”<sup>21</sup> In this time period the domestic shape shifted from a site of “production to consumption.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Nice Try* (New York Magazine, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> *Nice Try*, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> *Nice Try*, 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Laura Ingalls, *Little House on the Prairie* (Harpercollins Childrens, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> My dad is Métis and grew up on scrip land outside of Carvel, Alberta. My great-grandfather, Moses Savard, spoke French, Cree, and English and 1880 my great great grandfather Antoine Savard was a part of a group of Métis men who petitioned the government to survey the lands because “only once the land was surveyed and divided into quarter sections could individuals begin the process of obtaining land” (Nathalie Kermoal et al., “RMCR-Scrip-Booklet” (Edmonton, August 10, 2018), 10).

<sup>20</sup> Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008), 3.

<sup>21</sup> Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Cowan, 3.



## *Prosperity & Consumption*

“I think it would be useful for young married people who are setting up house together to know what they have to get in the way of knives, forks, and spoons. I mean, of course, a complete service, so as not to cut a sorry figure when the duchess comes to dinner.”<sup>23</sup>

My friend got married right before I started grad school. I also moved out of my parent's home. So we were simultaneously setting up our domestic spaces. My friend with the help of wedding gifts, her own means, parents, in-laws, and me, a combination of self-funding, my brother's leftover things in my parent's garage, Amazon and Ikea. I sent her a picture of my kitchen with a baby blue toaster. That at \$50, was a bit of a splurge.

“Is that a Smeg?” she asked me.

“No,” I said apologetically, “It's an Amazon knockoff.”

This scenario is an example of “positional consumption,” where “we constantly use consumption to position ourselves in relation to those around us.”<sup>24</sup> I am guilty of this *all the time*. Just when I think I have enough, I discover there is something else I absolutely need. This morning I read a recipe for “Salt-Crusted Potatoes with Cilantro Mojo” by Jose Pizarro that calls for a mortar and pestle to grind “the garlic, chili, and salt” into a paste<sup>25</sup>. I don't have a mortar and pestle. In sending a snapshot of my kitchen I have participated in making my interior private space something to be “visibly consumed.”<sup>26</sup> As American sociologist Juliet Schor points out, “peer group influence is always higher for visibly consumed products than for those we consume in private.”<sup>27</sup> The Kitchen-Aid sitting on my countertop is a signifier that I have attained a level of social status amongst my peers, many of them own Kitchen-Aid's.

Dolce and Gabbana has a custom line of small kitchen appliances in collaboration with Smeg. Their retail price is drastically higher compared to what the plain solid colour appliances sell for. The D&G/Smeg citrus juicer costs \$799 Canadian on The Bay's website.<sup>28</sup> The exact

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<sup>23</sup> Bruno Munari and Patrick Creagh, *Design as Art* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 138.

<sup>24</sup> J. B. MacKinnon, *The Day the World Stops Shopping* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2022), 116.

<sup>25</sup> Kristen Miglore and James Ransom, *Food52 Genius Recipes: 100 Recipes That Will Change the Way You Cook* (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2015), 49.

<sup>26</sup> J. B. MacKinnon, *The Day the World Stops Shopping* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2022), 75.

<sup>27</sup> J. B. MacKinnon, *The Day the World Stops Shopping* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2022), 74.

<sup>28</sup> “Dolce & Gabbana by Smeg Citrus Juicer CJF01DGUS | Thebay,” accessed April 29, 2022, <https://www.thebay.com/product/dolce-gabbana-by-smeg-citrus-juicer-cjf01dgus-0600090245327.html>.

same juicer, without the pattern, is \$280 Canadian on Wayfair.<sup>29</sup> I presume the quality of juice extracted is the exact same. The pattern on display increases the price value of these objects, it does not alter use value. This phenomenon I've attempted to replicate using a variation of Pattern 2451 to wrap my small household appliances. I am using the technique of customization to render the machines more desirable without altering its function. Celebrity lifestyle presents many examples of customization as the next level of affluence. Nicki Lisa Cole, outlines in her article, *On Feminism in The Age of Consumption*, how current digital media platform allows an in depth look into celebrity homes and lifestyles that further propagates the desire in individuals to pursue a similar lifestyle "and all the consumer trappings that come with it."<sup>30</sup> To own a Birken Bag is a status symbol, but Ye (Kanye West) gifted Kim Kardashian a customized Birken painted by artist George Condo. Customization becomes the next thing to aspire to and is marketed as a tool to establish identity and social status. As Liz Magor detailed in an interview about her work *One bedroom apartment* "[these] objects go through a life history that's completely dependent on, or parallel to, an economic and sociological history that's going on at the same time."<sup>31</sup> To have extended my grandmother's tea set pattern onto my mini-machines, I have articulated the relationship that I have built with my small household appliances. This relationship exceeds the typical link with personal machines that allows for easy disposal of them once they are no longer functional. I will continue to care for them, restricting the chinaware pattern not to the past, but letting it be reinterpreted and live out through the pattern onto items that I will continue to use, as I grind coffee, bake something, make waffles, and boil water for tea.

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<sup>29</sup>"Smeg Smeg 50's Retro Style Citrus Juicer," Wayfair.ca, accessed April 29, 2022, [https://www.wayfair.ca/SMEG--SMEG-50s-Retro-Style-Citrus-Juicer-CJF01BLUS-L829-K~SGME1075.html?refid=GX185538885499-SGME1075\\_33486015&device=c&ptid=514361686704&targetid=pla-514361686704&network=g&ireid=60550088&PiID%5B%5D=33486015&gclid=CjwKCAiA1JGRBhBSEiwAxXblwSv\\_U1a9mx0\\_16lm3gTqBZwEKoaWq0jeBttU741VnIKAOjG1W\\_pzphoCsxEQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.wayfair.ca/SMEG--SMEG-50s-Retro-Style-Citrus-Juicer-CJF01BLUS-L829-K~SGME1075.html?refid=GX185538885499-SGME1075_33486015&device=c&ptid=514361686704&targetid=pla-514361686704&network=g&ireid=60550088&PiID%5B%5D=33486015&gclid=CjwKCAiA1JGRBhBSEiwAxXblwSv_U1a9mx0_16lm3gTqBZwEKoaWq0jeBttU741VnIKAOjG1W_pzphoCsxEQAvD_BwE)

<sup>30</sup>Nicki Lisa Cole, "On Feminism in the Age of Consumption," *Consumers, Commodities & Consumption* 11, no. 1 (November 2009),

[https://doi.org/https://csrn.camden.rutgers.edu/newsletters/11-1/cole\\_crossley.htm](https://doi.org/https://csrn.camden.rutgers.edu/newsletters/11-1/cole_crossley.htm).

<sup>31</sup> Tess Edmonson et al., "Life of Objects," *Canadian Art*, November 25, 2020, <https://canadianart.ca/interviews/life-of-objects/>.



Savard\_014   **Mini-machines**   small kitchen appliances, vinyl wrap   2022   14 x 36 x 10 inches

## Conclusion

In April 2022, my family gathered in Lethbridge for the burial of both my grandparents. I sat at gate G39 in Calgary airport. There was a woman with pink hair and a black mask, and a couple wearing KN95 masks, the man would occasionally lower his mask to cough into his hand. A grandmother paced with her grand baby, a pink cheeked toddler with a high fountain ponytail. There was a blonde family, the dad in a baseball cap which under the brim contained the silver sticker. I was sitting facing the window, looking at my reflection in the black glass. In the reflection I saw my uncle come sprinting in with his mask pulled down, dressed in a navy suit, and out of breath. He rushed over and gave me a hug, I could feel the small sleepy airport lounge Lethbridge stare at us. He was breathing loudly, and ripped off his mask completely, dropped off his guitar case, and went to the ticket stand. The gate attendant had dyed black hair, roots visible, tightly center parted, and heavy eyeliner. She tells him that he was removed from this flight, and his baggage is outside of the secure zone. He cannot board the flight without his baggage.

"I am sorry sir it is against the law for you to fly without your baggage."

"Show me the law," said my lawyer-uncle, he stepped away from the counter shook his head, his body angled towards the passengers.

My aunt ran up in white sneakers, and all black loungewear. Her hair was blonde in a shoulder length cut.

"I am going to the burial of both my parents. I have court at 10am in the morning, so I cannot be on the 9:45am flight."

"Court is like surgery," my aunt argued, "he has to be on this plane."

They oscillated between a good cop and bad cop, frequently switching roles.

The gate attendant called the manager.

They started boarding the plane. I got on last. My aunt shooed me on, half forgetting I was on the plane and didn't have to stay behind.

To the manager my aunt asked, "Can I stay behind with the baggage, and can he go? The baggage is in my name."

The same attendant with the tightly parted hair checks my ID. I'm glad we don't have the same last name.

"Thank you, have a nice flight."

The plane was small. A row of two seats on the right side and a single seat on the left. It sat low on the tarmac, I could see a different angle, the underbelly view of lights and lines of planes waiting to take off from the runway. I placed my backpack in the above compartment,

and sat in 9A. I could hear women's voices behind me, "Same thing happened to my son coming back from the Island going to a funeral."

"What a shame."

Five minutes later my uncle boarded the plane, guitar case, suit jacket in tow.

He was a victim of physical possession of property being codified into air transport law as a means to prevent the threat of undiscarded baggage, presumably done as a anti-terrorism prevention method. On my way back to Lethbridge I recognized a woman with short grey hair, purple crew neck with three penguins on it. Seated a couple rows in front I hear her retell the story to her seatmate, "There was a gentleman coming from Toronto who wasn't allowed to board. His luggage hadn't made it and he had a court appearance the next morning."

I texted my mom, how famous uncle Dave had become.

I am bringing back with me one of five Royal Doulton China Dolls that belonged to my grandmother; each one went to one granddaughter. Mine is a light aqua green with a pink parasol. My sister remembers these dolls more than I do, they were something not to be touched, as she stares at me with big eyes and eyebrows raised. My brother-in-law immediately tries to distinguish how much they would go for on eBay. On average the dolls sell for \$300 to \$400 dollars. He finds one in a similar posture to the one I've chosen for \$10,000. I chose mine because the dress matched the pigeon blue of my powder coated shelves, and tables. I sent a

picture to Connor and he commented that the doll is more tasteful than he imagined it to be, as long as you only have one.

This work has been an investigation of value, what it has meant to me and what value has meant to previous generations of women in my family. The labour and time that I have embedded within the work has added another kind of personal value into the work, and they straddle the spheres of both art objects and personal belongings. The next step will be to figure out how to incorporate and reabsorb the contents of this exhibition back into my home until I have to move again and it'll all come spilling out.



Savard\_015 Royal Doulton doll 2022



## Gallery Layout



Savard\_016  
**Gallery Layout**  
2022



Savard\_017  
**Gallery Layout**  
2022

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