

PHOTOGRAPHY & LIGHTBOX EXHIBIT

CITY TRIPPING

#acid4yuppies  **@arnie_guha**

Oct 5 - 11 12 - 7 PM

**IDEASINCORPORATED
1081 BATHURST STREET**



Image: Smokers' Corner



I dedicate this show to
Zoe, Adri and Teddy, whose
love sustains me

Image: Blue Guitar | Bathroom Tripping



Arnie Guha wants the viewer to experience a moment.



Kitchen selfie: Fuji and me

Leaning into the grass or the flowers while his Labrador Retriever, Teddy, noses around them, he captures an instant perspective from the ground up.

Growing up in Jadavpur, at the southern edge of Kolkata, India, Arnie found inspiration and fellowship in a local portrait photographer's workshop.

The subtle tones and textures of hand-painted colours that brought to life these otherwise ordinary images—wedding photos, commemorative or school portraits—led Arnie to obsess over his uncle's collection of photography books, where he was introduced to the work of French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson and Indian photojournalist Raghu Rai.

These early influences continue to resonate in Arnie's approach to image-making. The digital tools that he uses to manipulate colours and forms are part of today's alchemy, but the effects and processes that inspire him harken back to older times: multiple exposure, or prolonged exposure; the chemical deformations that led to delicious memes of "ectoplasm" or other ghosts being "captured" on film. The idea of time as a palimpsest on which we layer our experiences – and the ability of a photograph to communicate that experientially – underpins Arnie's work.

Sometimes captured as still life in black and white, and often digitally manipulated with psychedelic, saturated colours, Arnie's images aim to capture our current, digital field of vision—an impression further deepened and informed by Arnie's professional experience as Head of Experience Design at Phase 5.

Educated in Calcutta, Cambridge and Canada, Arnie's images aim to persuade us to take a peek around the edges of our perception and, should we find anyone there, ask them to come in for a chat.

Acid4yuppies.com

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ELECTRIC PEONY

The peony wanted me to take a second look. If you look closely, she said, I will reveal my secrets. So I did, and the light blinded me.

Framed print: 49 x 42 inches
Available as large format Electric Mural





MY NEIGHBOUR'S CANOE DREAMS OF THE LAKE

One day, early this summer, as I was going for a walk, I saw my neighbour's canoe, strapped to the roof of their car. There was something pregnant, potent, expectant about it: the pent-up desire, after a long winter, to splash into a lake. So, I stopped to photograph it.

As I crouched under the canoe to get an upward shot, the sky itself looked like a lake: blue, expansive, inviting. In an upside-down, Acid4yuppies world, that is exactly how one should see it: our own magical Canadian canoe, that we row, together, across these vast Canadian skies.

Framed print: 25.5 x 33.5 inches





PLATO'S CAVE | DALI ON DUPONT ST.

The Dupont St. subway stop is one of my favourite stations in Toronto. Over the years, this station, with its ongoing repairs and renovations, have played both cave and cathedral to me.

For so long, I would come home from work up this escalator: elated on some days, desperately tired on others; occasionally, sad or disappointed. But each time, as I looked up before stepping on to the escalator, I was, and am, filled with a sense of wonder: as though emerging into the world for the first time after having spent a lifetime in a cave, forming ideas of what is real from shadows on a wall.

I felt – I feel – excited to see what might be ahead – at the top of the stairs, on the reified floor of the world.

Framed print: 25.5 x 33.5 inches





FULL MOON BREAKDOWN, DUPONT ST. SUBWAY STATION

When I was a boy, I had an imaginary friend named Puck. Imaginary to others – but very real to me. When I started the Acid4yuppies project, a couple of months into the COVID-19 lockdown, Puck returned to my life.

Puck is a merry trickster, who occasionally puts drops in my eyes that make me see things differently. This is one instance of it: it was a full moon evening and I was coming home by subway and got off at Dupont St. station, one of my favourite subway stations in all of Toronto.

I had a glorious breakdown – there were moons everywhere. Puck was egging me on. "Take a swim in that purple lake that just formed right there in front of you. Go ahead, and touch those moons." And so I did.

Framed print: 26 x 38 inches





MOONRISE KINGDOM, BIRCH HILL, QUEBEC

I spend a lot of time in the village of Hudson, Quebec. It is a magical place, quite outside of this world as we know it. This is a picture that I took as I was waiting for a car to pick me up for my return trip to Toronto. I was desperately sad to leave my woodland friends behind. I was crying.

And the tree comforted me. "You are not going anywhere," they said, "it is space and time that are passing through you: you are what you are, where you are, here, now, eternal. Like me. And as the moon rises and falls behind me, and just as you see the light change through my branches and leaves, though I never move, so does life, and so do all the experiences of places and hours move through you. For you are the prism, as I am, as each of us is, through which Light bends."

And I felt elated. And free.

Framed print: 25.5 x 33.5 inches





THE CARPARK IS A LONELY PLACE AT SUNSET

I was standing in the carpark of Fairview Mall, outside Montreal. It was sunset. The rows of cars stretched out in front of me. Each held the promise of homecoming, of return.

It made me homesick. I thought of all the times in my life when I have found myself in a carpark, feeling wistful and a little lonely, at sunset.

Framed print: 59 x 42 inches
Available as large format Electric Mural





THE CROSSING

I was at the mall with my son on the eve of his nineteenth birthday. As he crossed the bridge from the Bay to the Eaton Centre, I took a series of pictures. Later, when I was going through them, they reminded me of all the Saturdays that I would spend with our sons when they were little.

This picture is for my sons, as they cross over into adulthood. May their lives be full of joy and hope and fulfilment. And spectacular experiences.

Framed print: 59 x 42 inches
Available as large format Electric Mural



LIGHTBOXES | ELECTRIC MURALS

I have been fascinated by light-boxes since I was a boy in Calcutta: the backlit pictures in shop windows, advertising their wares, were, for me, the best part of walking along Gariahat or Park Street during the festive seasons,

In my work, I re-imagine lightboxes and electric murals as both light-source and aesthetic object: the glow of the box extends the picture beyond the frame, and invites the viewer to immerse themselves in the piece, and also in the environment.

As light-source, the box is indispensably utilitarian – yet people in its vicinity are part of its electric aura. This leads to heightened aesthetic engagement and, I hope, a fuller experience of the actual space, as well as the art.





CANARY WHARF

The first lightbox I designed is a picture of Canary Wharf, London. Before COVID, I would travel to Canary Wharf to meet clients several times a year. And this is the view I remember most fondly – what I would see when looking up through the skylight, as I sipped my morning coffee, and went over notes to prep for upcoming meetings.

When all travel stopped, I made this lightbox as an homage to London. The shapes and angle remind me of a new day, full of promise and fulfilment.

Lightbox: : 24 x 36 inches





ROTHKO SUNSET 401

During COVID, I have been splitting my time between Toronto and the village of Hudson, near Montreal. I took the base picture for this lightbox about halfway between the two cities, on the 401.

My friend Fraser was driving. The bands of colour – the sky, the fields, the grass – reminded me of Rothko.

The different colours remind me of different places that I have been fortunate enough to claim as my home: they remain separate, and yet in complete harmony – an ode, if you will, to in-between places. And the bits of ourselves that we find therein.

Lightbox: 24 x 36 inches





THE RED FLOWER: I AM TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING

I was walking by Casa Loma. This red flower was standing tall over the others. Everyone stopped to take her picture. Then they moved on.

I lingered. And listened. The red flower was trying to tell me something.

It was a message of hope – a promise of a new day. I treasure this picture because it promises me a brave new world once we return to post-pandemic normalcy. That is what she told me. And I believe her with all my heart.

Lightbox: 24 x 36 inches





PINK SUNSET

Teddy and I were walking on Bloor Street. It was a crisp winter day. The sun was setting. The colours in the sky stopped us.

And then I saw the flowers: their colour played off the shades in the sky. Teddy knew what I was thinking. He paused and let me take a series of pictures.

I made this lightbox for a shop window exhibit in the winter. This picture is an homage to the joyous beauty that surrounds us in the city ... if only we stop to take a closer look.

Lightbox: : 24 x 36 inches



ENQUIRE

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