ALMINE RECH

Toy Story

May 10 — Jun 29, 2024 | CICA Vancouver, Canada

Centre of International Contemporary Art Vancouver (CICA Vancouver) presents a group exhibition, *Toy Story*, featuring selected works by Derek Fordjour & Nick Lehane, Zhao Bandi, Mr., and more.
Toy Story draws inspiration from Pixar Animation Studios' 1995 film, *Toy Story*, a beloved animation that personifies toys as dynamic figurines–both literally and figuratively–to tell a rich and complex narrative of two characters with human-like conflicts. With a similar drive for storytelling, *Toy Story* presents a premise that invites visitors to a journey down their memory lane of childhood, to a time of simplicity, naivety, and unbridled imagination.

As vibrant as Woody's loyal character and Buzz Lightyear's dramatic ups and downs, the selected artworks in this exhibition present a visual stimulation that is often contrasted by a deeper message intended by the artists.
Each artwork serves as a portal to the past, where toys and animation characters are not just mere objects of amusement but carriers of deep, often unspoken narratives about memories, experience and the world we inhabit.
The artists in *Toy Story* use the motif of toys to bridge together the nostalgia of youth and the complexities of life nowadays, challenging viewers to see beyond the surface and to question the norms, beliefs, and divisions that are shaped by our society along the way.

From the playful defiance in Zhao Bandi's *Panda's Olympics* (2005) to the detailed storytelling of Mr.'s *What Shall I Do Today* (2022), *Toy Story* peels away the layers of significance imbued in these familiar objects. This exhibition is a testament to the power of toys as both mirrors and critics of the world, highlighting their ability to evoke a sense of purity and wonder while simultaneously commenting on deeper cultural and personal themes.