

Facing the camera, Wednesday Lupypciw's father slowly and concisely lists all the reasons he can think of for why he stopped making art. He's been asked why, as the title tells us, by his daughter, the woman behind the camera. His reasons are thoughtful, logical and personal. They will be familiar to anyone who works or participates in culture. They, and the man who lists them, betray the exhaustion and confusion associated with the sometimes insurmountable challenge of attempting to contribute to culture with our small individual voices. He continues, "We live in fucking Calgary."

There are a lot of artists in the world. It can make one tired to think about why some get rewards and some don't, why some get to try while others have all their time taken by paying jobs and families, why sometimes making art is a reward in itself, why sometimes the optimism to do so feels delusional. We don't normally need to see a list of the reasons why someone would stop.

But here, in *Why Dad MMXI*, we can be curious about the list and the list-maker because he is the subject and not the artist. Making a list like this is an unpleasant act; he is not making the list for himself or for us, but to oblige his daughter who really wants to know why her dad stopped making art. We can see his love for her in this: his charm, his honesty, her inheritance.

The video concludes with a ritual initiated by the younger artist, who is now sitting next to the older artist. They put their hands on a book and their other hands on their hearts. Together, they start voicing a new list about why one makes art – positive statements that will be familiar to anyone who works or participates in culture. The reasons are thoughtful, logical and personal. They begin, "I am curious..."

Why Dad MMXI is moving and purposeful. And through the specificity of needing this list to make sense for herself and for her father, based on the experiences of her and her father, Wednesday Lupypciw can't help but tell a new story about why one makes art.

Margaux Williamson is an artist and writer who lives in Toronto. Her first movie, *Teenager Hamlet*, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and can now be found on Ubuweb. She contributes criticism for the cultural review site *Back to the World*.



Starting with a series of confessions and ending with a heartfelt ritual, *Why Dad MMXI* explores the emotional and practical hardships of being an artist through the lens of a father/daughter relationship.

“The video was inspired by an unsuccessful grant application of mine. I’d been super excited to make a project that required major funding and was crestfallen to find out that my fellow taxpayers and artist peers didn’t feel the same way. I felt like a part of me had died, and I moped around pathetically for weeks. While visiting my Father’s house during this time I noticed some marked similarities in our moping/coping behaviours. My father’s art practice has been a sensitive topic in the past few years, and making this video allowed us to have an honest talk about what exactly his creative output and challenges are. I realized that most of the reasons why he would stop making art are totally the reasons why I would throw in the towel at any moment. Conversely, or rather most importantly, we discovered that the reasons to keep producing are shared too.” - Lupyciw

Wednesday Lupyciw is from Calgary, Alberta, where she pursues a video and performance art practice. To make money she is a part-time maid. She also maintains a concurrent practice in textiles; weaving, machine knitting, embroidery and crochet, but this is done mostly while procrastinating on other, larger projects. One of those projects is the performance art collective the Ladies Invitational Deadbeat Society (LIDS), a loosely knit group of purposefully lazy womenfolk. She is a Fibre programme undergraduate from the Alberta College of Art + Design, a proud auntie, and a volunteer for various artist-run initiatives. She has shown work and made projects in various spaces throughout Canada including the Textile Museum of Canada, The Art Gallery Of Alberta, TRUCK Gallery, Stride, the Klondike Institute of Arts & Culture, The Banff Centre, Harbourfront, Nuit Blanche Toronto, and EMMEDIA.

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