

Awards, grants, honours

- 2024 **Canada Council for the Arts** – Explore and Create grant.
- 2024 **National Winner (juried) – Short film category**, Illume National Film Festival, Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, ON.
- 2024 **Ontario Arts Council** – Visual Artist Project grant and Materials grant.
- 2023 **Longlisted: Norval Morrisseau Award for Visual Arts**, Surrey Muse Arts Society. Surrey, BC.
- 2022 **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21** – Artist residency and project grant.
- 2022 **Ontario Arts Council** – Visual Artist Creation Project grant and Materials grant, Career Catalyst grant.
- 2022 **Toronto Arts Council** – Emerging Visual Artist grant.
- 2022 **Toronto TABIA Award** – Creative Solutions Award for Gerrard India Bazaar installation.
- 2021 **City of Ottawa** – Diversity in the Arts project grant; Youth in Culture emerging artist grant.
- 2021 **Ontario Arts Council** – Artist Response Initiative grant.
- 2020 **Canada Council for the Arts** – Digital Originals grant.
- 2020 **Remarkable Alumni Award**, Southridge School, Surrey, BC.
- 2019 **#RisingYouth Community Service Grant** (Canada Service Corps, TakingITGlobal and the Government of Canada).
- 2019 **Silk Road Institute** – Creative Arts grant. Montreal, QC.
- 2019 **Canadian Online Publishing Award** for Best Academic Print & Digital Publication (Contributor to “Art/iculation”).
- 2018 **Artist for Peace (Artist of the Year) Award**, Les Artistes pour la Paix (APLP). Montreal, QC.
- 2018 **Certificate of Achievement** (Top 10), Portrait Society of Canada “Miracle of the Portrait” competition. Toronto, ON.
- 2018 **Official Selection**, Jubilee Arts International Film Festival (juried), Cinema NOS. Lisbon, Portugal.
– **Best Short Film**, Jubilee Arts Canada (juried), Toronto, ON. **Best Mixed Media work**, Jubilee Arts Quebec (juried), Montreal, QC.
- 2018 **Canadian Museums Association Award** for Outstanding Achievement in Art Exhibitions (“Géopoétique” group show). Vancouver, BC.
- 2017 **Michaëlle Jean Foundation** – Digital Art grant, CHAI Program: Combatting Hate Advancing Inclusion. Ottawa, ON.
- 2017 **Provincial Winner**, CANFAR Art Exhibit (juried). Canadian Foundation for Aids Research. Toronto, ON.
- 2016 **Conceptual Illustration of the Year** – National (juried), Applied Arts. Toronto, ON.
- 2010 **People’s Choice Award**, Visual Impact group show (juried). Samuel Bronfman Building, McGill University. Montreal, QC.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 **Aga Khan Museum**: “50 years of Ismaili Migration” in collaboration with Aga Khan Council for Canada, Toronto, ON. (curated)
- 2022 **Centre culturel islamique de Québec**, Hommage aux victimes de l’attentat de 29 janvier, 2017. Québec, QC. (self-produced)
- 2022 **Musée national des beaux-arts de Québec (MNBAQ)**, Salaam. Québec, QC. — cancelled due to pandemic
- 2020 **Online exhibition** supported by Canada Council for the Arts Digital Originals grant: CelebrateHer. (self-produced with catalogue)
- 2018 **Morrice Hall at McGill University**, CelebrateHer in collaboration with Imago Theatre, Montreal, QC. (self-produced)
- 2018 **Collège de Rosemont**, CelebrateHer in collaboration with Imago Theatre, Montreal, QC. (curated)
- 2017 **Arts Underground**, Here is a gift. Whitehorse, YK. (curated)
- 2016 **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21**, Canada’s Self Portrait. Halifax, NS. (curated)
- 2015 **Galerie Mile-End**, Canada’s Self Portrait. Montreal, QC. (self-produced)
- 2012 **Fridge Door Gallery**, Copycat. Montreal, QC. (curated)

Group Exhibitions / Film Screenings (selected)

- 2023 **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21**: “Weaving Cultural Identities.” Halifax, NS. (curated)
- 2023 **Tarragon Theatre**: “The Hooves Belonged to the Deer.” Toronto, ON. (curated)
- 2023 **Illume National Film Festival**: “Our world is made of the stories we tell ourselves.” Aga Khan Museum. Toronto, ON. (curated)
- 2021 **Gerrard India Bazaar**, Street-level installation of acrylic vinyl panels on Gerrard Street. Toronto, ON. (juried)
- 2020 **OCAD U**, Feminist Art Festival: Narrative Healing. Toronto, ON. (juried)
- 2020 **Myseum of Toronto**: Quarantine Qapsule, in collaboration with Tea Base and Nightingale Nguyen. Toronto, ON. (juried)
- 2019 **Musée des beaux-arts de Mont-Saint-Hilaire**, Biennale du dessin. Mont-Saint-Hilaire, QC. (curated)
- 2018 **Cinema NOS (Portugal)**. Jubilee Arts International Festival, Lisbon, Portugal. (juried)
- 2018 **Rialto Theatre**, Archipelago: A living museum. Montreal, QC. (curated)
- 2017 **Peel Art Gallery and Museum Archives**, 150 Muslim Contributions to Canada. Brampton, ON. (juried)
- 2017 **Stewart Hall Art Gallery**, Géopoétique. Pointe-Claire, QC. (curated)
- 2017 **Toronto Reference Library**. Nuit Blanche Toronto: Postering Peace. Toronto, ON. (curated)
- 2017 **Stewart Hall Art Gallery**, The art that inhabits us. Pointe-Claire, QC. (juried)

Community projects, collaborations, commissions, residencies (selected)

- 2023 **ROM (formerly Royal Ontario Museum):** “Things will get better (#MyPandemicStory)” with curator Justin Jenninigs. Toronto, ON.
- 2023 **Vancouver Art Gallery** and the **Aga Khan Council for Canada:** “Stories of Migration,” Ismaili Centre Vancouver, BC.
- 2023 **124** photographs of my hospital journey in support of Ontario’s health care workers struggling against Bill 124, Toronto, ON.
- 2022 **JAYU:** Art and Social Justice Anti-Racism Online Residency and Mentorship, Toronto, ON.
- 2021 **Ismaili Council Edmonton:** Collaborative artwork, “Reach,” with Ismaili Muslim youth, Edmonton, AB.
- 2020 **Southridge School:** 25th Anniversary Mural Commission for Southridge School, Vancouver, BC.
- 2020 **Paul Smith’s College (USA):** Artist residencies. (Recurring: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020.) Paul Smiths, NY.
- 2019 « **La discrimination : c’est comme ça qu’on vit.** » Artistic poster and mailout campaign critiquing Bill 21. Montreal, QC.
- 2018 **Copenhagen Poetry Club (Denmark):** Vi ikke jeg. Intercultural art project and postering campaign. Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 2018 **Musée des beaux-arts de Mont-Saint-Hilaire:** Le Manifeste pour la Paix, Mont-Saint-Hilaire and Victoriaville, QC.
- 2018 **LX Factory (Portugal):** Ela é uma mulher incrível. Street art intervention. Lisbon, Portugal.
- 2017 **Canadian Centre for International Justice:** Commissioned portrait of Homa Hoodfar. Ottawa, ON.
- 2017 **Postering Peace:** Combatting Islamophobia (Film commissioned by the Michaelle Jean Foundation). Montreal, QC.
- 2017 **World Conference on Drowning Prevention:** The Life Jacket Project. Vancouver, BC.
- 2017 **Montreal Vigil for Québec City Muslims,** Parc Metro: Stronger Together. Montreal, QC.
- 2017 **MURAL Festival:** Why support underrepresented artists? Montreal, QC.
- 2017 **#LawNeedsFeminism:** Commissioned portrait of Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré for McGill University. Montreal, QC.
- 2017 **Arts Underground:** Artist residency. Whitehorse, YK.
- 2016 **Toronto Symphony Orchestra:** Love letters. Toronto, ON.
- 2012 **Concordia University’s School of Extended Learning:** University of the Streets, collaborative artwork. Montreal, QC.

Talks / Workshops / Performances (selected)

- 2024 **Queen’s University:** “An Evening with the Artist.” Muslim Societies, Global Perspectives program. Kingston, ON.
- 2022 **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21:** “Canada’s Storytellers: Aquil Virani.” Zoom. Toronto, ON.
- 2021 **Toronto Metropolitan University:** “Art and migration” with Harald Bauder. Graduate program in Immigration Studies. Toronto, ON.
- 2021 **Talisman Theatre:** Moderator and panelist, “Antioch Roundtable: Muslim representation.” Montreal, QC.
- 2020 **OCAD U, Feminist Art Festival:** Panelist, “Magnifying the Unseen.” Toronto, ON.
- 2020 **Human Rights Film Festival, hosted by JAYU:** Panelist, “Arts for Social Change.” Zoom. Toronto, ON.
- 2020 **#JeunesEnAction – Documentary Launch:** Panelist, “Cultures de résilience.” Facebook Live. Quebec City, QC.
- 2020 **Paul Smith’s College (USA):** Guest speaker. (Recurring every year: 2013,– 2020.) Paul Smiths, NY.
- 2019 **Musée des beaux-arts de Mont Saint-Hilaire:** Interactive performance, « Un défi de la paix. » Mont Saint-Hilaire, QC.
- 2019 **Centre for Social Innovation,** Beyond the Single Story Media Retreat: Panelist, “Stories as forces of meaning-making.” Toronto, ON.
- 2018 **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts,** Power of the Arts National Forum: Panelist, “Arts & Discrimination,” Montreal, QC.
- 2018 **Cinema NOS (Portugal),** Jubilee Arts International Film Festival: Panelist, “International Artist & Filmmaker Q&A.” Lisbon, Portugal.
- 2018 **Trampolinhuset (Denmark),** Workshop facilitator, “Asylbørns fremtid.” Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 2018 **The Human Library Organization (Denmark),** Workshop facilitator, “Vi er alle menneske,” Copenhagen Open High School, Denmark.
- 2017 **Arts Underground:** Artist Talk, Whitehorse, YK.
- 2017 **Stewart Hall Art Gallery:** Workshop facilitator, “Participatory portraits.” Pointe-Claire, QC.
- 2016 **Canadian Museum of Immigration:** Artist Talk and Interactive performance, Halifax, NS.
- 2016 **Galerie MX:** Guest speaker, McGill Alumni Association. Montreal, QC.
- 2015 **Southridge School:** Guest speaker. Vancouver, BC.
- 2014 **Canadian Race Relations Symposium:** Panelist, “Art & Canadian identity.” Ottawa, ON.

Publications as Author (selected)

- Virani, A. (2023). Artist publication in collaboration with **Aga Khan Council for Canada.** “Fifty Years of Resilience.” Toronto, ON.
- Virani, A. (2022). Artist publication in collaboration with **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.** “100 immigrant stories.” Toronto, ON.
- Virani, A. (2022). **Living Hyphen Magazine** (Issue: Healing Across Generations). “Maman Andrée” and “Your letter across generations.” (upcoming)
- Virani, A. (2021). Bilingual anthology produced in collaboration with the **City of Ottawa** and the **Silk Road Institute.** “Ottawa Inshallah.” Ottawa, ON.
- Virani, A. (2021). **Muslim American Writers At Home (USA).** “Notre sang, la même couleur II.” Freedom Voices. San Francisco, USA.
- Umezawa, A., Virani, A. (2021). Artist publication in collaboration with **Amplified Opera.** “Microphone.” Toronto, ON.
- Virani, A. (2020). **International Centre of Art for Social Change** (blog). “FUTURES/forward: Collaborating with the OUR Ecovillage.” Vancouver, BC.
- Virani, A. (2016). **UPPERCASE Magazine.** “Why I care that my art is inclusive.” Calgary, AB.
- Virani, A. (2015). **Entitled Magazine (UK).** “Drawing Canadian Identity.” London, UK.
- Virani, A. (2011). **Empty Easel** (emptyeasel.com). “Just one artist statement?” Online.

Press coverage (selected)

2024	Documentary	GAPC Entertainment (CBC Gem) , “So You Want To Be A Muslim?” Ottawa, ON.
2024	Radio	CBC Ottawa , “Visual artist reflects on anniversary of Quebec City mosque shooting.” Alan Neal. Ottawa, ON.
2024	Print	Artany Magazine (UK) , “Artist feature: Aquil Virani.” Taniya Dharani. London, UK.
2023	Podcast	Silk Road Institute , “Muslim Canadian Artists: Aquil Virani.” Tendisai Cromwell. Toronto, ON.
2023	Online	Aga Khan Museum , “The Making of ‘50 Years of Migration’: An interview with artist Aquil Virani.” Toronto, ON.
2023	Print	Ontario Nurses Association Front Lines , “Artist’s Work Decries Bill 124.” Ruth Featherstone. Toronto, ON.
2023	Online	Black Maple Magazine , “Scholar’s Couch: Aquil Virani.” Dr. Charmaine Nelson. Amherst, Massachusetts. USA.
2022	Print	Devyani Saltzman , “Aquil Virani celebrates the stories of everyday people.” Toronto, ON.
2022	Television	CTV National , “Portrait series honours victims of Quebec mosque shooting.” Genevieve Beauchemin. Montreal, QC.
2022	Television	Ici/Radio-Canada , « On ne vous oubliera pas. » Camille Feireisen. Toronto, ON.
2022	Television	CTV Atlantic , “Artist Aquil Virani on his collaborative art project.” Ana Almeida. Halifax, NS.
2022	Radio	Radio-Canada , « L’artiste-en-résidence dévoile les histoires de l’immigration » Isabelle Ménard. Toronto, ON.
2022	Radio	CBC Québec , “Artist Aquil Virani honours victims of shooting at Quebec City mosque.” Peter Tardif. Québec, QC.
2022	Print	Toronto Star , “Show them as people.” Angelyn Francis. Toronto, ON.
2022	Online	La Presse , « Aquil Virani rend hommage aux victimes. » Éric Clément. Montreal, QC.
2022	Online	CBC News , “Portraits honour Quebec mosque shooting victims.” Ainslie MacLellan. Montreal, QC.
2021	Documentary	CBC Radio One: Doc Project , “Thirty.” (40:42). Produced by Alisa Siegel. Edited by Alison Cook. Toronto, ON.
2021	Television	CTV Atlantic , “Sharing stories through art.” Jennifer Grudic. Halifax, NS.
2021	Television	CBC Ottawa News and Our Ottawa , “New Ottawa Art Book.” Adrian Harewood. Ottawa, ON.
2021	Print	Ottawa Citizen , “Stamps of approval.” Lynn Saxberg. Ottawa, ON.
2020	Documentary	Adrijan Assoufi , “Cultures de résilience.” Produced by TakingITGlobal. Montreal, QC.
2020	Podcast	Never Was Average + #RisingYouth , “# 5 – Déterrer l’islamophobie.” Eva Jomphe. Québec, QC.
2018	Print	Le Devoir , « De l’art comme outil pacifiste. » Caroline Montpetit. Montréal, QC.
2018	Print	La Presse , « Aquil Virani célèbre la diversité des femmes. » Éric Clément. Montreal, QC.
2018	Print	TVA Nouvelles , « Aquil Virani, artiste pour la paix 2018. » Montréal, QC.
2018	Television	Global News , “CelebrateHer: Twelve inspiring, everyday women.” Laura Casella. Montreal, QC.
2017	Print	Le Devoir , « Des oeuvres, un silence et des mots. » Odile Tremblay. Montréal, QC.
2017	Online	The Globe & Mail , “The Quebec City Mosque Attack: What we know so far.”
2017	Online	CBC North , “Yukon chiefs’ personalities ‘shine through’ in colourful paintings.” Philippe Morin. Whitehorse, YK.
2017	Radio	NPR (USA) , “Paul Smiths College freshmen collaborate with Montreal artist on new art.” Todd Moe. New York.
2016	Online	Artistorian , “100 artworks in 1 week?” Cassandra Marsillo. Montreal, QC.
2016	Print	The Coast , “Consider your Canada at Pier 21.” Morgan Mullin. Halifax, NS.
2016	Television	Breakfast Television , “100 artworks in 1 week.” Derick Fage. Montreal, QC.
2016	Television	CBC’s Daybreak Telecast , “Free art!” Mike Finnerty. Montreal, QC.
2016	Radio	NPR (USA) , “A new school year and new art at Paul Smiths College.” Todd Moe. New York.
2015	Print	La Presse , « Esquisse de l’identité canadienne. » Éric Clément. Montreal, QC.
2015	Print	URBANIA Magazine , « Autoportrait en 842 fragments. » Julie Chaumont. Montreal, QC.
2015	Online	Canadian Geographic , “Crowdsourced art on Canadian identity.” Carys Mills. Toronto, ON.
2015	Online	Applied Arts Magazine , “Canadian Identity.” Kristina Urquhart. Toronto, ON.
2015	Television	Breakfast Television , “What is Canada’s Self Portrait?” Montreal, QC.
2015	Television	Channel 3 News (USA) , “New Paul Smith’s students welcomed with unique art project.” Rose Spillman. Vermont.
2015	Radio	NPR (USA) , “Pounce!” Todd Moe. New York.
2014	Television	CBC , “Canada’s Self Portrait at Heritage Days.” Edmonton, AB.
2013	Print	Adirondack Daily Enterprise (USA) , “Unifying Freshmen.” Shaun Kittle. New York.
2013	Radio	NPR (USA) , “Revealing the artist in everyone.” Todd Moe. New York.
2012	Online	Leacock’s Magazine , “COPYCAT.” Jessica Prupas. Montreal, QC.
2012	Television	Global News , “Focus Montreal: We Are All Artists” Richard Dagenais. Montreal, QC.

Education (Self-taught)

2024	Participating artist, STEPS CreateSpace Public Art Forum , Toronto, ON.
2023	Member, Drawing Board Collective (drawingboard.info), Montreal, QC. 2016 - present.
2020	International Centre of Art for Social Change : FUTURES/forward program. Toronto, ON.
2012	Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Liberal Arts, Philosophy, Marketing, McGill University, Montreal, QC. 2008 - 2012. – J.W. McConnell Major Scholarship (\$20K), Semiahmoo Rotary Club Scholarship, Jim Ison Shield for Public Speaking