



## MICAH LEXIER

[ARTIST]

“THE MORE SPECIFIC YOU CAN BE ABOUT YOUR REALITY, THE MORE YOU CAN SAY SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HAVE MEANING FOR SOMEONE ELSE.”

Four numbers from the works of Micah Lexier:

*906 coins in a small wooden box*

*1,334 high-school students*

*17,000 custom-printed ceramic tiles*

*75 Davids*

**W**hen I left Micah Lexier’s apartment in downtown Toronto after a three-hour conversation one afternoon, it was with two canvas bags he had given me—both filled to the brim with all his artist books and one-offs that I could carry. I felt he wanted to convey himself to me with as much accuracy as possible. I’d never held a work of his in my hands before. I had encountered his art only in public spaces: a text collaboration with the conceptual poet Christian Bök that covered the windows of a storefront near my home, or the tiled platform of a subway station near the north of the city, which he had designed on commission. The feeling his work had always given me was about the possibility of precision and perfection as an organizing frame for the vulnerable, untamable human element.

Lexier has had more than one hundred solo shows and participated in over two hundred group shows. He works often in series, uses industrial fabricators, and collaborates frequently with writers. His conceptual works tend to play with the passage of time, as in *A* work of art in the form of a quantity of coins equal to the number of months of the statistical life expectancy of a child born January 6, 1995 (1995), on permanent display at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Every month, the museum moves one of 906 coins from a small wooden box of coins, neatly arranged in rows, to a sloppy pile of coins in an adjacent box.

Lexier turns fifty-three this year, and when I visited him, he was planning a major retrospective at the Power Plant in Toronto, *One, and Two, and More Than Two*, which will be exhibited this fall. In addition to old and recent works, it will feature a group show that Lexier curated. As we spoke, we

looked down into a scale model of the exhibition, placed on his dining-room table.

Our conversation revealed an artist whose thinking is constantly, fruitfully swinging between the need to organize and codify and the need to let ambiguities remain—which I saw as reflecting the tension we all experience between needing safe, controlling, codifying, “black-and-white” thinking, on the one hand, and allowing our perceptions and thoughts to inhabit the gray and mystifying areas, on the other. It seemed to be a time of transition for Lexier, a moment of softening into the gray.

—Sheila Heti

## I. LET IT MAKE ITSELF

THE BELIEVER: Can you tell me about the group show?

MICAH LEXIER: So the main room of the gallery is going to be filled with vitrines. You walk into this room [*points down at the model*] and there’s rows of these beautiful vitrines, and sitting in the vitrines are 221 objects by 101 artists.

BLVR: What was your instruction to the artists?

ML: No instruction. I did studio visits and chose the work that I liked. Almost no one made anything new. I started noticing that many artists were interested in found materials and surfaces and abstract shapes, and there was a bit of a zeitgeist moment I was following. There were things that spoke to me, there were things that spoke to other objects that had already been selected, and then as things got selected, I sometimes went back to an artist and said, “I don’t know if that thing I originally picked is right, maybe we could find something else.”

BLVR: What was the original idea for the show?

ML: The original idea was a title by Derek McCormack called *Alphabetical by Artist*, and I liked it because it’s a nice turn of phrase, but it’s also a way to organize. I knew it was going to be a large group show, so I was thinking, Well, how do you organize a large group show? One way is alphabetically by artist. But the problem with the alphabet—

BLVR: Are you still doing it alphabetically by artist?

ML: No. Originally I was looking for systems and order and things that would resonate with that title. The problem is that people started to see it as very determining—and it was. After speaking to an artist for two hours, they’d say, “OK, so I’m the letter C?” It’s like, wait: didn’t we just talk for two hours? Obviously there’s something about that title that makes your brain think more structurally, and the show wasn’t structurally oriented. It was very intuitive and personal. So now it’s called *More Than Two (Let It Make Itself)*, which refers to intuition and allowing things to be what they are—following as opposed to leading.

BLVR: That seems the opposite of *Alphabetical by Artist*.

ML: Exactly. Instead of imposing something, let it make itself.

BLVR: When I think about your work, I always see an attempt to make order out of messiness and chaos. So even though now you’re collecting very organic objects, they’ll all be placed in vitrines. That’s a way of containing. It’s not drawing outside the lines, you know?

ML: Right. And all the objects are really carefully considered. But to me, that’s the art. This group show is not just a curatorial project. It’s almost like—and I know I’m going to get a lot of shit for this—but it’s like I’m making an artwork with other people’s artwork. And the artists are very generous about allowing me to do that. There is a range, but it’s fairly limited. There’s very little language, very little technology, no movement, no light, no sound, no moving images, no figuration.

These last few weeks, I’ve spent a lot of time calling back the artists and asking questions for the checklist. Some artists consider the frame part of their work. They were like, “I thought it through, the frame is part of the work, but I don’t want it in the materials.” Others are like, “Oh no, the frame is part of the work and it is part of the materials.” Some people have their titles all lowercase, some people have their titles all uppercase, and some are not titled.

BLVR: And that drives you crazy?

ML: I just want to know, is the title *Not Titled* or does it not have a title, or is the title *Untitled*? If it's titled *Untitled*, then is it a capital *U* or a lowercase *u*?

BLVR: How do you have time to do all this fine, detailed work—not just in your work, but in your life? I don't understand.

ML: You're asking me at a very interesting moment. It's actually starting to drive me crazy. I want to do as thorough a job as I can. But at a certain point, you let go. It's like anything in life. You do it as well as you can. After that, if there's inconsistencies, well, then it's like the famous Leonard Cohen line: There is a crack in everything. / That's how the light gets in.

## II. EVERYTHING IS CONSIDERED AND DESIGNED AND THOUGHT THROUGH

ML: Another room in the gallery houses a piece that's called *Working as a Drawing*. I spent all last summer working with an assistant every day on this. I'm a really organized guy. I have thirty-two years of files. Every time I work on a project, I keep every little piece of paper—

BLVR: You do? Why?

ML: I'm just a keeper. I'm a collector. I was born a collector. I came out of the womb a collector. I can trace it back to childhood—collecting used keys. And later, when I worked in a restaurant, every day I would come back and write down the number of customers I served and the area they put me in and the tips I made and how much I gave to the busboy—

BLVR: Really? It gives you a satisfying feeling?

ML: I never analyzed it. It's just what I do.

BLVR: That sounds different from being a collector. How many people you served—that's organizing.

ML: Part of it is that I have a really bad memory, so it's a way of remembering. Some people write a diary. Anyway,

all summer long I went through every piece of paper I ever generated for any work I'd ever made. I had probably tens of thousands of drawings. I chose my favorites—things that worked as stand-alone drawings. I'm a really bad drawer, so there's lots of vulnerability there. There is a catalog that accompanies the exhibition and it starts off with every drawing in chronological order: sixteen per page. After that, you get to the coding system. Every drawing has a code number made up of the year it was made and the project, and whether it was from a specific project or if it was just general research or a mistake the laser printer made.

BLVR: So you had to come up with these categories?

ML: Oh my god, yes.

BLVR: That must have been so satisfying—to come up with the right ones.

ML: You know what? The word *satisfying*... it's so frustrating. I wish I could get away from it, but it seems that when you collect stuff, you do need to categorize. I should have taken a library-science course.

BLVR: But when I see your apartment and when I look at your art, it gives me a feeling that anxiety can be tamed.

ML: I can guarantee you, ordering and classifying are very frustrating because there's always exceptions and the exceptions drive you crazy! But I love thoroughness. I respect people that do a job well. When I make work, how I pack the thing up and send it—like, I want to impress the installer. It's not like *The Wizard of Oz*—not “just as long as the front looks good.” The back has to look just as good.

BLVR: What did your parents do?

ML: My mom was an interior designer and my dad was an engineer. He was a structural engineer and he ran an architecture office. My sister is an engineer and my brother is an engineer. We lived in a really neat house. My parents designed their own home and they were always very interested in modernist design. My cereal bowl was Russel

Wright. The cutlery was Georg Jensen. My underwear was Marimekko. We came from that sensibility where everything is considered and designed and thought through.

BLVR: One of the things I'm always wondering about is a person's "deep style," or the aesthetic that connects everything they do. How they feed themselves, dress...

ML: I don't purport to know anything about literature, but I remember reading the first line of Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself," and it had so much resonance for me, and I think it has resonance for any artist who makes things. It says, "I celebrate myself, And sing myself, And what I assume you shall assume, For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you." I think he's saying there's this sort of play between the specific and the general. And the more specific you can be about your reality, the more you can say something that might have meaning for someone else. Because otherwise how could we have *this* kind of artist and *that* kind of artist, but they all have this incredible resonance? To me, that's the goal: to be incredibly true about yourself. Isn't that what we like about a particular artist—their incredible authenticity and honesty? Warhol, he was so true to himself in being so, you know, interested in money and celebrity. You respect that about someone. For me, it's my earnestness. I've got to own that. I know that's not a great trait.

BLVR: Um, how do you shop for groceries?

ML: I don't cook for myself. I eat every meal out. I'm fed by others. I think it's a kind of social thing. I work collaboratively with others. A meal with a friend is my ultimate thing.

BLVR: How do you shop?

ML: I don't shop. Do you want to look at my fridge?

BLVR: No, but how do you shop for clothes?

ML: Well, when I lived in New York, and when I go back to New York, I'd go to these consignment stores. I really like designer clothes. I did get a lot at consignment stores.

BLVR: Clothes that other people wore before.

ML: Yes. And I like well-made clothes, and I don't mind spending a lot of money on something that looks super, super simple. I don't like knockoffs. I like the authentic object, and I have no problem paying sixty dollars for a T-shirt if it fits me really well and it's really well made. I like unassuming clothes.

BLVR: Do you have a lot of clothing, or is it more precise?

ML: You could look in my closet if you want, but I really did not straighten up. [*We walk to the closet and look in—there are stacks of folded shirts, some in labeled bins.*]

BLVR: It looks pretty organized.

ML: I definitely categorize.

BLVR: You have *long-sleeved shirts with prints*.

ML: Yes, so it's like *short-sleeved shirts*, and then within short-sleeved shirts, it's *short-sleeved shirts with things printed on them*, *short-sleeved shirts without things printed on them*, then *long-sleeved shirts without things printed on them*, then *long-sleeved shirts with things printed on them*.

BLVR: Right.

ML: It's again about collecting stuff and being able to retrieve it. There was a questionnaire that I filled out recently that asked, *What is your favorite occupation?* And my answer was: putting things in places so that I can find them later when I'm looking for them. I'm good at organizing things. [*Opens an archival box*] This is my cardboard-box collection.

BLVR: So when you're going through the world, are you always aware of and looking for things?

ML: Yes. There's that Jonathan Safran Foer book and the character is always picking things off the street and putting them in plastic bags. That's me. I carry a knife with me so I can cut images out of cardboard boxes. I'm always

cutting cardboard. Especially every Thursday, which is recycling day.

BLVR: And where would you put this [*a piece of paper*]?

ML: I'd put it in a little sleeve and then put it in a box.

BLVR: Wouldn't it be hard to live with somebody else?

ML: I think someone would have a hard time living with me.

### III. A KIND OF FREEDOM FOR PEOPLE TO BE WHO THEY ARE

BLVR: Tell me about the Colm Tóibín project.

ML: It came out of an invitation from this high-school teacher, Don Ball. He asked me to do a workshop with his students. I thought, I'm not just going to do a workshop; here's an opportunity. Here's a whole high school. Can't we do a project together? How do you teach someone about conceptual art, anyway? So I said to this class of grade-twelve students, "I've hired this writer to write a short story that's 1,334 words long, because that's the exact number of students in this school. But I need you guys to problem-solve: how are we going to get each student to write a different word of the story? Discuss." And they went through it: "Do we print out 1,334 pieces of paper with each person's word on it—but what's going to happen when everyone uses a different pen and the scale changes?" They got down to this idea that they would get permission from the principal, and all the teachers would be informed that during period three on Thursday, the tenth, these kids would come into their classroom and they'd explain the project to the students. So they went around, two people per classroom, and they had a blank piece of paper with a pen, and one would say, "You write the word *Baldy*," and then the other person would check it off: "OK, what's your student ID?"

BLVR: And Colm Tóibín wrote the story?

ML: Yeah, a friend gave me suggestions of writers he knew

and one of them was Colm Tóibín, and I said, "Oh my god, are you kidding? He's, like, one of my favorite writers!" So he wrote him and Colm said yes. Sure enough, two or three days before the deadline, I was freaking out. Like, is he the kind of guy who's going to meet deadline? Or is he going to come back and say, "Oh, sorry, I didn't get to your project." Sure enough, *ping*, his email arrives the day he promised and there was his story, and I did the word count and, sure enough, 1,334 words. It's a wonderful story about this character named Malik who is roughly the age of the kids in the high school. It turns out that Colm has been asked by a number of artists and organizations to write things specifically for them, so he brings Malik out every time. So there are "the Malik stories."

BLVR: Did they all use the same pen?

ML: They all used the same pen.

BLVR: They wrote their words one after another? Was there a line?

ML: Uh, no. The writing does go wonky at certain points.

BLVR: Weren't some kids absent that day?

ML: We knew the ones that were absent and we got them later. But 99 percent were done in that one period. And you'll see: if one person started by printing big, the next person printed big. So it was a really interesting sociological discovery about fitting in. There was a kind of freedom for people to be who they are, but there wasn't that much room to have your own individuality.

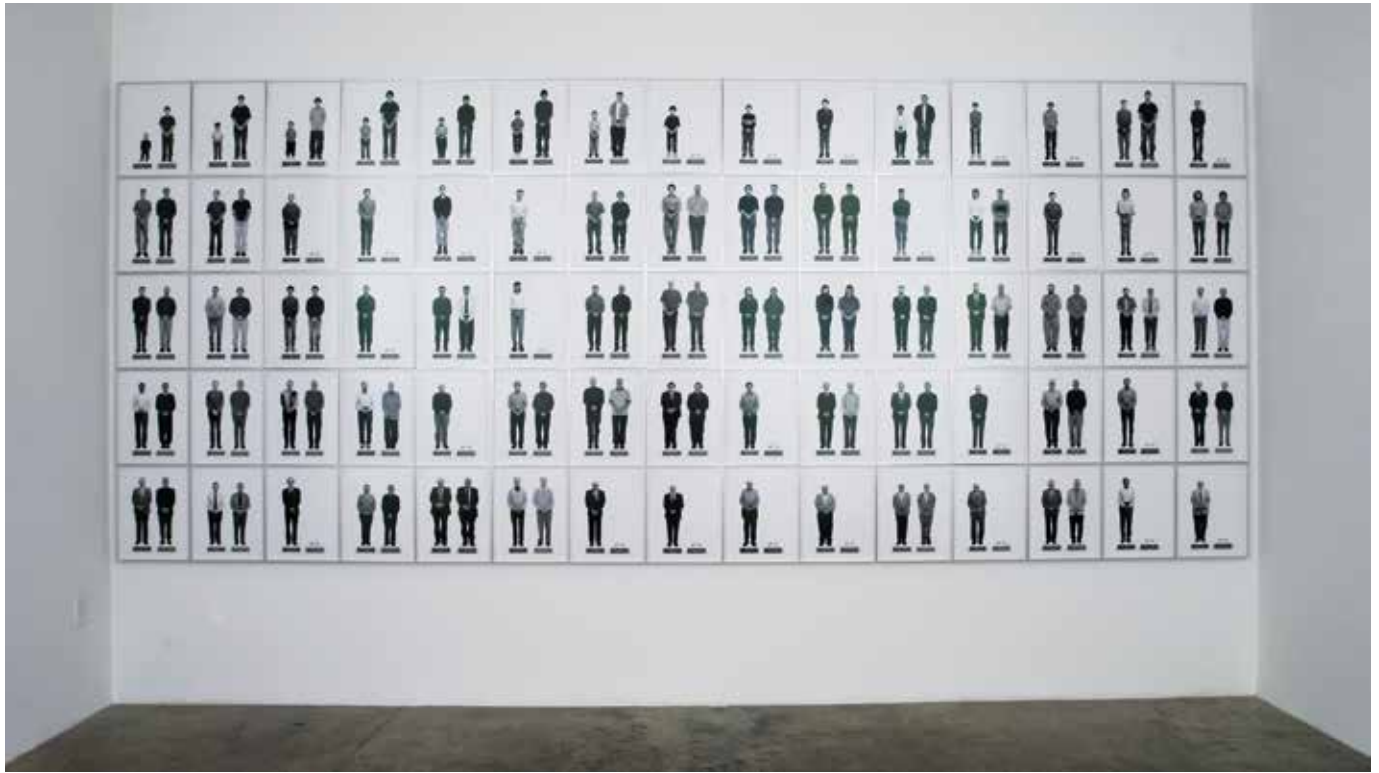
BLVR: Like in school.

ML: Like in school.

### IV. THEY TOOK FEWER FOOTSTEPS

BLVR: Can I ask you about *A Portrait of David*?

ML: Sure.



Micah Lexier, *David Then & Now*, 2004, seventy-five photographs, each featuring an image taken in 1993 beside one taken of the same person exactly ten years later. Photo by Jeff Sturges. Courtesy of Birch Contemporary, Toronto.

BLVR: So in 1993 you shot seventy-five people named David, from ages one to seventy-five. What was your interest in making it? I see that project as classifying. Was it about saying, “Okay, *this* is fourteen, *this* is fifteen, *this* is sixteen”? Was it emotionally satisfying to make?

ML: Yeah, it was shockingly satisfying. The first project was about my interest in increments, my interest in observing what it means to be alive and what does it mean to grow up? It’s this play between the specific and the general. Because each David is also just himself. David age one was just “David Smith” at age one. But when you line up all these very specific Davids, you’re able to make generalizations. Here is the ad in the paper looking for people named David.

BLVR: What city is this? Winnipeg?

ML: Winnipeg. So it’s a portrait of Winnipeg. This idea of

portraiture is a big part of my work.

BLVR: It’s like with *Ampersand*, where you created the seventeen thousand tiles that lined the Sheppard and Leslie subway station from pieces of paper you handed out to commuters, asking them to write “Sheppard” and “Leslie.” I love that piece so much. I love being in that subway. You can be in there for hours, just thinking about individuality.

ML: Right. It’s a kind of portrait of the people who participated. Again, it’s the increment of the individual—

BLVR: Same with the Colm Tóibín story.

ML: Right, it’s a portrait of the school but each individual contributes their little increment. Everyone presides over their own work, but when you look at the whole thing, it’s a portrait of the school—or Toronto—or Winnipeg. [*We begin looking through the book of the follow-up project,*

called David Then & Now, which shows each David as he was when the project was first shot, then each David ten years later.]

BLVR: Is your dad's name David?

ML: No, but I asked my dad for help when we couldn't find a David aged sixty-seven. "Do you not know any guys named David?" I asked him. He was like, "Oh, well, there's David so-and-so," and I was like, "Dad, will you call him and see if he'll do it?" And he did it, but the guy was such a fucking grouch. He came in—you'll see. He had his galoshes on. He wouldn't take his galoshes off, and he's like, "I'm only doing this as a favor for your dad. Your dad's a nice guy; I'm doing it for him."

BLVR: That is so funny.

ML: [Turns the pages] There he is. He's got his galoshes on. Look at that sneer!

BLVR: He really doesn't want to be in your book.

ML: It's sad because in that ten-year interval, six of them passed away, and he was one of the ones that passed away.

BLVR: People seem to change less as they get older.

ML: That's true. Although it's nice—when you get to a certain age, people chill out. Like, the guys that were wearing suits are now wearing sweaters [turns the page]. He's clearly retired and golfing, you know?

BLVR: The older ones haven't changed as much as the younger ones. They seem similar at fifty to how they were at forty.

ML: Yeah, I think you've done a lot of your changing by then. [Turns the page] This one's pretty radical: I think this guy found religion. [Turns the page] It's funny that this guy was fat but he didn't get any fatter!

BLVR: It's so interesting that even though one who's older might look younger than someone who's truly younger, the



Micah Lexier, details from David Then & Now, 2004. Photo by Sheila Spence. Courtesy of Birch Contemporary, Toronto.

march is still forward.

ML: That's exactly the point I'm making. You can make generalizations. You see them get facial hair, you see them get gray hair.

BLVR: Do you know that there's no biological marker of age? Science does not have a way of telling how old somebody is.

ML: You can't be specific?

BLVR: No, and if you think about it, that's crazy. There's *nothing*. You can maybe tell that a person is in their teens, but even then, biologically, you can't really say.

ML: That's wonderful! My work is so fixated on ways to try and define that.

BLVR: It really does change your feelings about age. And it makes sense, because some people seem older and some



Micah Lexier, details from *David Then & Now*, 2004. Photo by Sheila Spence. Courtesy of Birch Contemporary, Toronto.

people seem younger, and maybe even though they were born on the same day, they actually *are* different ages. It's weird. I keep thinking about that.

ML: They took fewer footsteps and therefore are younger. They've taken fewer breaths.

## V. TWO KINDS OF CONFIDENCE

BLVR: What about *Two Kinds of Confidence*? How did that come about?

ML: That's one of my all-time favorite works. Do you know how hard it is to go to a sign-making shop and be afraid that the people will make fun of you? I think being an artist is partly about not being a civilian. Anyway, I went to this sign shop, and I knew that I wanted to make a portrait of the person who made the sign. So I went in and said, "I know this might seem weird, but before I ask you a question, could you tell me who works here?" They were like, What? And I said I wanted to know the names of the people

who worked there. So they said, "OK, we've got David and Frank and Robert." I said I wanted Robert, and they were like, OK... so they brought him out. And I said to Robert, "I have two pieces of glass and I want you to choose a typeface roughly this big, and I want you to sign-paint your own name in your favorite typeface, or a typeface you're confident about doing." He said, "OK, come back in a week." So I came back a week later and it looked great. Then I asked for his signature on a piece of paper, so he gave it to me, and I said, "Now I want you to enlarge it and silkscreen it on the other piece of glass," so he did that. So it's a portrait of the guy who made the work. It's also a self-portrait by him. The title, *Two Kinds of Confidence*, refers to his confidence on the job and the ability to sign things. I saw it as a kind of personal-professional confidence.

BLVR: Why confidence?

ML: I'm not sure, but I guess part of it is a reflection on my not having skills, and I want to work with people who do have skills. I want to use their skills?

BLVR: You admired him in some way for his confidence, or his competence, even?

ML: Absolutely! Someone who can sign-paint? I admire that. It's a skill I don't have.

BLVR: What is it about sign-painting that you admire?

ML: I think it's because you can judge who's a good sign-painter. Is the line straight? Is the paint even? I was able to judge that.

BLVR: It's funny. I was talking to my friend Alex Nagel—who's a Renaissance art history professor—and he was saying that *style* comes from the word *stylus*, which refers to a pen. So on several levels, you've really captured that guy's style.

ML: That's so cool! I have a lifetime project which consists of boxes and boxes filled with envelopes on which people have written my name. I've always thought of it as a kind of double portrait, and a portrait of our relationship, which in some cases means nothing. But it makes me feel connected.





Micah Lexier, *Two Kinds of Confidence*, 1992. Silk-screened and hand-painted ink on glass, engraved metal shelf. In the collection of McCarthy Tétrault, Toronto. Photo by Peter McCallum. Courtesy of Birch Contemporary, Toronto.

BLVR: I want to ask you something. What do you think is the most important thing about a person? When you're experiencing a person, what do you think you're experiencing?

ML: Is that even answerable?

BLVR: I don't know. But your work made me ask this question. It's not a generic question.

ML: *[Pause]* There's this unspoken thing that happens between people all the time, and we're very attuned to it. I have friends, and some of their friends are people I can't stand. They're like, "No, you've got it wrong," and I'm like, "No, I don't have it wrong." And there's nothing they can do to convince me otherwise. Then there are people you're not supposed to like, but you do. There's this circuitry that goes between people. I've had some negative initial interactions with people, but over the years I've realized it's OK. With some people, it's love at the beginning, and you're so soft with each other and gentle. With others, you just have to have a fistfight first and then you can be

friends. Others, you don't ever want to interact with or have anything to do with.

BLVR: Do you think that's chemistry?

ML: It's definitely chemistry.

BLVR: Are you interested in collaborating with people with whom you have different kinds of chemistry?

ML: No. My collaborations have to be very positive. I will never work with a person I fight with.

BLVR: What's meaningful to you in life?

ML: *[Pause]* Having really intimate friendships. I mean, I could drop it all, I could work in a café, I really could. I've been very happy in my life, very lucky. I was a waiter before and I loved it. Sometimes being an artist is a real drag. It can be incredibly bureaucratic. What am I trying to say? I'm very committed to what I do, yet I don't want to be defined by what I do. Sometimes I wonder if it's not some kind of

fault in myself—to try to make things to impress people. Like, *Look how smart I am! Look how clever I am! Look how great my ideas are!* When really, maybe having deep friendships is enough. [Pause] I say that now, but if I only had deep friendships with people, maybe it wouldn't be enough.

BLVR: Would you make work differently if you were in love?

ML: But I do feel love.

BLVR: I mean romantic love from one person. When you've been in those situations, do you not invest yourself in art as much?

ML: This is getting heavy-duty. Um, I think that's possible. I think that's my worry. If you were so connected to one person, and bringing them happiness and joy and making sure there was dinner for them and looking good for them, maybe there would be less need to connect with the outside world. I don't know. Isn't the goal to be the most fulfilled, happy person?

BLVR: Do you think that's the goal?

ML: To be the most fulfilled, happy person? I think that's a pretty good goal. To be loved and love people and bring happiness to other people? I've been fulfilled by looking at other artists' work. I'm aware that we as artists do that for other people—we put something out into the world, then ten or fifteen years later you meet someone who's like, "Oh, you changed my life with that piece you made."

BLVR: Does that touch you?

ML: It keeps me going. Maybe I don't think I'm touching people, but I am. Sometimes I'm sitting there at three in the morning, proofreading something, and I'm thinking, Is this really worth it? Or am I doing this only because my mother taught me never to give up? Then you realize, no, even if it doesn't come back to you, you *are* touching people. We're sending our values into the world.

BLVR: Do you think there are definite values you're

sending into the world?

ML: Yes: that attention to detail is worth it. Thoroughness is great.

BLVR: So do you think when you're putting your work out, it's the quality of care and precision and attention you bring to it that means more than whatever the other meanings might be?

ML: Yes! I'm going to hire you! Yeah, I think that's the overriding search, and that's why I didn't mind going for six studio visits with one artist just to find the right work for my group show. I'm trying to understand that as a value. Doing a job well is the thing. It's its own thing.

BLVR: I get that from your work. It's perfect.

ML: But I wish I was better compensated for it. Like, I feel bad that I'm fifty-two and I don't own a house or a car or have a RRSP [Registered Retirement Savings Plan]. But we make our decisions. I try to be a really, really good friend who remembers birthdays and asks how the doctor's appointment went, because I love when people do that for me. Sometimes I worry that I put it all into the work and not enough into my life. But I'm trying, you know?

BLVR: Could I ask you a totally opposite question? Did you make this tea?

ML: Isn't it the best tea in the world?

BLVR: I feel like this is more perfection.

ML: It's called Bengal Spice. Someone turned me on to it—

BLVR: It's just tea?

ML: No sugar, nothing. The longer you steep it, the sweeter it gets. It's insane.

BLVR: Where'd you get it? Just around the corner?



Open box containing a portion of the artist's collection of envelopes on which his name has been handwritten by others. Photo by Micah Lexier.

ML: Loblaws. Here, I'll show you the box.

BLVR: I'm going to take a picture of it with my phone.

## VI. THERE'S A REAL RANGE

BLVR: Your work has such a sense of humor. That's one of the reasons I've always been drawn to it.

ML: Well, that's nice to hear! I think of myself as being kind of humorless.

BLVR: I don't know you well enough to know, but I'm sure you're not. Your work is witty and funny.

ML: That's nice. I always worried that it wasn't light or fun enough. Like, *Yes, I found seventy-five Davids and I didn't cheat...*

BLVR: But it's funny to show seventy-five Davids at all different ages.

ML: I'm glad to hear it. I worry about what we were talking about earlier: checking the list twice. I get worried that it drains the joy and the love. As I'm getting older, I'm moving away from calculations and measurement. I'm trying to be more open to vulnerability and mistakes. That's why I'm really excited about the curated show. It's got a nice balance between a very heavy-handed structure, like, "There's thirty vitrines, and everything must fit in there, and nothing's bigger than the size of the vitrine," but within that, there's a real range, and I just followed my heart and picked things that sang for me, or were awkward or really intentional or beautiful or mysterious, but I also picked things that were obvious and simple. Because I think we have a range to us. And it's nice to make a project where you can show the full breadth of who you are. ★