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Yin Zhang, Lisa. "Mary Manning." *TheGuide.Art*, 2022, <https://theguide.art/event/mary-manning-ambient-music-canada/>.

## Marry Manning Ambient Music (Review)

The sight-lines that criss-cross Mary Manning's work are reminiscent of, well, ambient music—the apt title of the exhibition. In the titular photograph, a pair of foreshortened forearms reach out to photograph a flower garden so sveltely pretty that it almost looks like a picture itself. Wait, *is* it? The picture planes don't entirely cohere. Another work, titled *Rubric*, appears like a jigsaw puzzle of disparate photographs and is displayed atop a table that's sliced clean through by a pillar. Though the majority of the works are wall-hung, they huddle together as if for warmth, or else oscillate above and below the midline, or appear to crouch behind pillars or cower from corners. The works inhabit the space as if composing a melody, advancing and receding in harmony with the light, the season, the mood.

Manning often tucks multiple 35-mm analog prints within a single frame, and sometimes accompanies these images with found objects. *Sharp Cutting Wings (Song to a Poet)* (2022) includes a pair of moth's wings encased in the matting. Other works feature images set in unusual arrangements that center negative space. The series of photographs in *Milling Around the Village* (2022), for instance, encircle an empty gray-green center, like a village gathered in a mew. The larger of a pair of photographs in *Dandelion* (2022) might bear some relation to the title—it appears to depict a glass of herbal tea on a windowsill. The line of the windowsill is extended by the bottom edge of a second picture, which depicts the El Dorado apartments seen from the JBKO Reservoir in Central Park with an appropriately seasick horizon. The work's title appears not to point to a specific referent, and instead stands in for the plant's process for pollination, its potential for dispersal—ambient music that flows in your head.



Mary Manning, *Dandelion*, 2022. Chromogenic prints, mat board, artist's frame, 20 x 16 inches