

## Sahar Te

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## STRUCTURES OF ANTICIPATION

Guest Editors: Yoke-Sum Wong, Karen Engle, Craig Campbell

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## SAHAR TE



How do you prepare for something you can't identify?

**Train #75 – Toronto to Windsor:** Zoned out, gazing at the window, imagining what is to come. I've never been to Windsor, yet somehow had an image of it in my head. Flat, two-dimensional definitions, single notions meant to capture an entire city. Wikipedia called it "*Industrial!*"

*O, city of industry!*

In my mind, I cut a large portion of the trees I had planted there, expanded the immigrant neighbourhoods, replaced century homes with monolithic buildings, automobile headquarters, blue suits.

*Captains of industry!*

The hyperlinked words on Wikipedia are a bright blue to appear more important; they are beacons, begging you to click on them. After wading through a series of cerulean clicks, I realized I was looking at Manuel Moroun's *Simpsons*-style caricature on the Detroit Metro Times landing page.

**30 minutes to Windsor:** We approach a scrap yard. For the next 30 seconds, I get to take my phone out and capture some poor-quality images of the yard. I think to myself: *I will come back here for sure.*

### **“The Actual”**

Upon arriving in “actual” Windsor, I see a procession of old cars; a cortege for the heyday I seem to have missed—the opposite of what I expected from the “automotive capital of Canada.” During the eight-minute-long drive from the train station to my hotel, I see a few Arabic store signs and restaurants. Wikipedia has already educated me about the Arab population in Windsor.

### **Day one – elevator:**

They must be smart, prepared and intimidating.

### **Day one – 3:30 pm:**

A shared sense of confusion followed by curiosity and excitement. It seems like a good recipe for the theme of anticipation.

### **Artist as tourist**

The eye peers into the camera visor, each subject a potential topic of interest. I resist falling into a theme. It's hard to stop. My lens sees tropes everywhere, my brain wants composition.

Walking, walking, walking ... pause (zoom in), focus—“click!”

Walking, walking ... stop! The bridge! (zoom), focus—“click!”

Walking... stop! The flag! (Focus) and ... “click!” The sound of the shutter reverberates in my head with every photo.

I feel a drop of rain on my forehead. No more shutter sounds; only the muted, repetitive beat of footsteps. The camera weighs on my



shoulders. The entire day has passed. Hours of walking through the streets of Windsor allowed me to capture specific visual details, but the burden of reflecting someone else's landscape made my own presence heavy and burdensome.

**Day two – 11 am:**

Delete all!

**Day two – 1 pm:**

On my way back to the hotel, I see tiny creatures on the ground. Upon closer inspection, they turn out to be date pits. I eagerly wait for sunset to capture the date pits. I imagine the choreography of someone intentionally placing them on the ground. They almost look staged.

**Day three – 10 pm:**

With each mouse click, there is anticipation... then suspension, disappointment, eagerness... the adjectives are endless. If you pay attention to the rhythm of your clicks, you can get a good sense of how close you are to where you want to be.

**Death**

The date pits replaced the scrap yard. What is your topic of interest?