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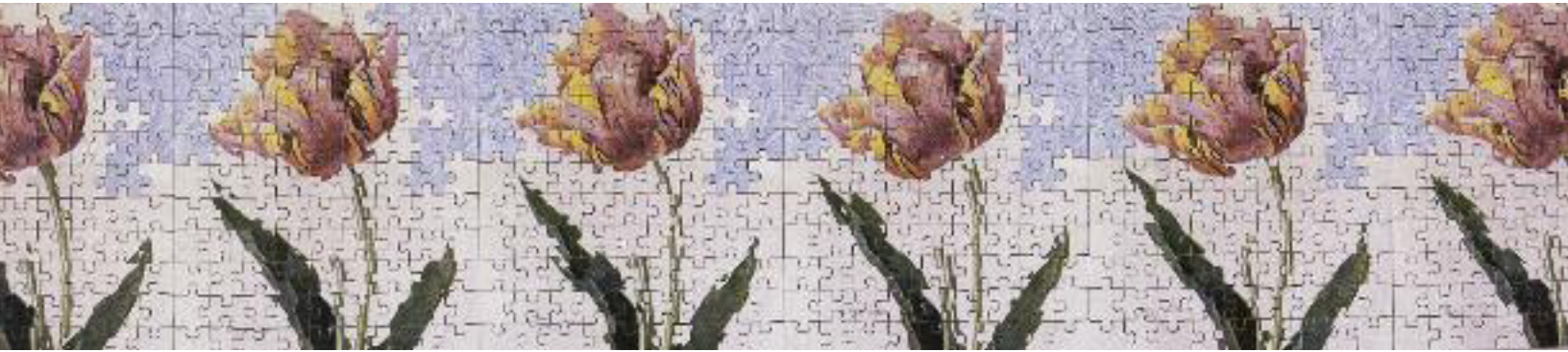


MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL
Québec ::

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In recent decades, we have seen the image proliferate and gradually invade us from all sides, until today it has taken on considerable importance in our lives. This exhibition sheds light on the particularities of perception and reading that are encountered in looking at today's art and that figure, to varying degrees and in different forms, in the practices of eleven Québec and Canadian artists. The work of each of these artists, who are still mainly in the early part of their careers, is by and large relatively unknown or has a fairly low profile with the Montréal public, although several of them have already exhibited outside the country.

Appearances



Cover:
Ana Rewakowicz
Inside Out (detail), 2001
Inflated latex module
300 x 250 x 225 cm
Collection of the artist

Jean-Marc Mathieu-Lajoie
Tulipa culta, 1995-2003
Nanopuzzle
6.2 x 49.4 cm
Collection of the artist

Tim Lee
Untitled (*James Osterberg*, 1970),
2004
Light jet print on
photographic paper
183.5 x 229.2 cm
Edition of 5
Collection of the Shiplake
Management Company, Toronto

To various extents, these artists' works are intimately connected with appearances: the image which each offers at first glance, in the moments when visitors make their initial contact with the works in the specific exhibition context. Often deceptive, this first impression becomes a kind of bait or lure held out to viewers, a visual trap, a near-enigma at times, which they must penetrate and move beyond if they want to tap the full meaning and critical import of the pieces. The resulting revelation may be a performative gesture that forms the very basis of the work, a discreet homage to an artist or sports star or one of that person's particular accomplishments, or the artist's own surprising and notable presence. Prompting a two-stage reading—an immediate but partial one to begin with, and a later one, when the full meaning gradually unfolds or even changes—these works stem from very different creative sources, yet all cover the whole spectrum of the visual dynamic which they express and which each exploits in its own way.

This form of reading, both challenged and challenging, concrete and interpretive, is reflected in all of the works, which consist of accumulations and combinations of various elements as well as the operations they have undergone, and which are steeped with references to the history of art. As deciphering the works reveals, they make use of failing certainties about them, thwarted expectations and, usually, a surprise effect, often emanating from a shock: a shock from the meeting of two worlds, two entities or two realities of some sort. In addition, they tend to make even more porous the already fragile boundaries between some forms of expression or artistic disciplines (architecture and sculpture, for example), as well as between art object and consumer product or, quite simply, between art and life.

Contrary to the values conveyed by today's society (facility, superficiality, overconsumption), the work of these artists promotes a change in our behaviour. It urges us to invest a greater effort in forming a connection with the art and makes us aware of the value of looking rather than just seeing, by placing the emphasis more than ever on the search for meaning, and by cultivating a kind of effort that tends above all to empower the art lover, through strategies that rely especially on humour, sensibility and intelligence.

In these pieces, which variously refer to illusion, perception, the ready-made, anticipation, appropriation and transformation, as well as identity and popular culture, different types of discourse emerge through a certain formal audacity. They provide a picture, albeit very fragmentary, of one of the places where today's Québec art and Canadian art intersect in their respective sensibilities. The exhibition features the following artists: Annie Baillargeon, Jérôme Fortin, Germaine Koh, Tim Lee, Euan Macdonald, Kelly Mark, Jean-Marc Mathieu-Lajoie, Damian Moppett, Yannick Pouliot, Taras Polataiko and Ana Rewakowicz.

Gilles Godmer



The thirteen works on view in this selection from the Musée collection share a common feature: Each in its own way suggests particular connections to the space-time continuum, through representations or narratives in which the notions of personal space and territorial ground, historical time and present moment, private and public, geopolitical, poetic and didactic contexts freely intertwine. Produced by thirteen artists and acquired over the past three years, they reflect current concerns and display strong aesthetic and formal qualities: clarity and intelligence of subject matter, economy and efficiency of means, subtlety and depth of monochrome fields, and an inexhaustible range of references.

Seven of them explore the specific nature and multiple possibilities of photography. American artist James Casebere's fictional *Parlor*, 2001—spare, anonymous and without any distinctive attributes apart from the many large, grid-shaped openings for light—is somehow alluring yet disconcerting. This no man's land finds a contemporary counterpart in Lynne Cohen's very real *Spa*, 2000, in which, through the framing and specific point of view, an organized space devoid of any human presence is seen from a distance. Placing himself in the middle of the image, Denis Farley measures a tranquil landscape in his own way, becoming a minuscule yardstick on the far-off horizon in *Paysage étalonné, Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, Québec*, 1997. In *Sans titre n° 17 – Chapitre... du prince, Les Lieux maîtres*, 1999, Claude-Philippe Benoit continues his investigation of the institutions of power. His concise depiction of the opulent, anachronistic offices of the Chief Magistrate at the Palais de Justice in Paris offers a striking demonstration of the way the handing down of authority and its privileges has evolved over the ages.

Matters of Time and Space



Claude-Philippe Benoit
Sans titre n° 17 – Chapitre... du Prince,
Les Lieux maîtres, 1999
 Gelatin silver print, 2/3
 145 x 100 cm
 Purchased through the generosity
 of the Fondation du Musée d'art
 contemporain de Montréal
 Collection of the Musée d'art
 contemporain de Montréal
 Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay



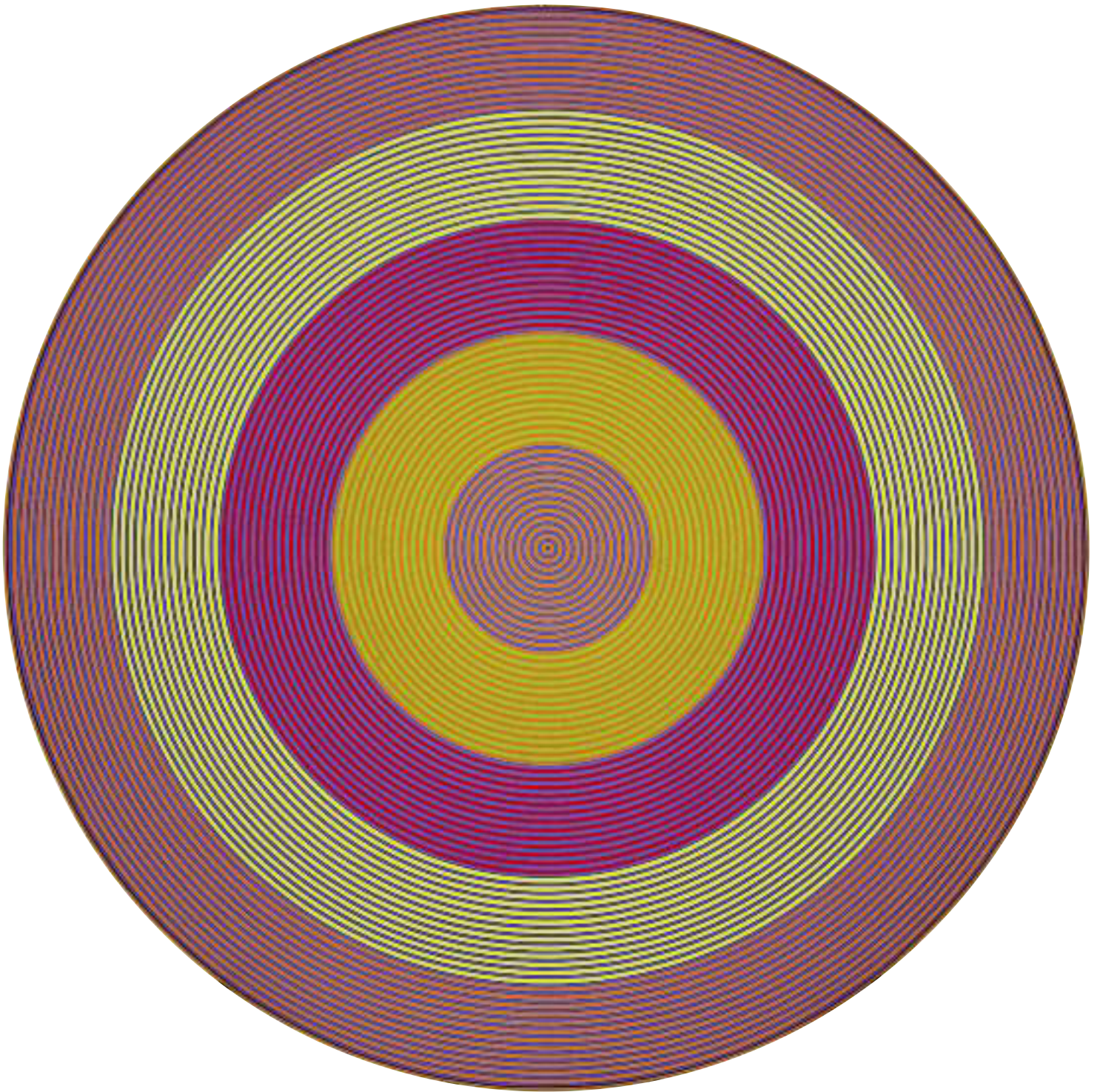
Another continent, another hemisphere: In *Il primer día* (2003), Argentinean artist Sergio Vega formulates a project that involves relocating the Garden of Eden to South America, reversing the magnetic poles and debating the merits of an inspired cartography. With *Ouragan Fran*, 1996-1997, Serge Tousignant goes beyond the private realm by tackling the intimate nature of bed sheets, whose configuration of folds and creases recalls the charts and diagrams used in weather forecasting. The relative atmospheric quality that emanates from these two works also energizes Henri Venne's four diptychs *Nothing Ever Stays the Same, n° 1-4*, 2004. A remarkable examination of memory and landscape, these works deliberately blur the boundaries between painting and photography, between the past captured in the shot and the continually updated present of the actual experience of the work. Francine Savard's polyptych *Ici/là-bas* and *Toi/moi*, 2004, is based on the extremely evocative geography of the Canadian land mass, but turning it over sideways from east to west. A vast, bare field of whiteness, this work makes direct reference to the notion of landscape, both abstract and figurative, and moves the individual to the centre of a larger-than-life physical space. Also taking inspiration from the history of painting and painting genres, Martin Bourdeau explores the portrait theme in *Fig. 62 (Le déjeuner sur l'herbe de Manet)*, 1999, by associating it with the hollowed-out geometric form of the ovoid set within a monochrome pictorial surface dotted with subtle reference marks.

In *Le monde dans notre ville : les cent dernière années. Jardin botanique, Montréal 1997*, Trevor Gould recreates landscape features illustrating the social and cultural history of economically important plants: tea, rubber, sugar cane, cinchona. Presented in the form of light boxes, these watercolours accompanied by detailed texts have the same metaphorical didactic quality that lies behind William Kentridge's installation *Learning the Flute*, 2003, a poetic ode to the great archetypes of artistic and cultural knowledge set against a timeless musical backdrop, the overture to Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Firmly rooted in the present day, Pascal Grandmaison's video installation *Solo*, 2003, offers five portraits of young people: fragmented close-ups of faces, and drum, electric guitar, mini-keyboard, "melodica" and vocal solos. Facing their own image reflected in a gallery of mirrors, viewers may roam at will between image and sound, the void and the noises of solitude. Finally, forming either a conclusion or an epigraph, Greg Curnoe's *America*, 1989-1990, summons up, with its fanciful bricolage, the gravity and importance of notions of history and territory.

April 23 to October 9, 2005

Lynne Cohen
Spa, 2000
 Chromogenic print
 122.5 x 158 cm
 Collection of the Musée d'art
 contemporain de Montréal
 Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Josée Bélisle



Claude Tousignant
Gong '64, 1966
Acrylic on canvas
164 cm (diameter)
Collection of the Musée d'art
contemporain de Montréal
© Claude Tousignant
Photo: MACM

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will soon launch a virtual exhibition titled *Viewing Claude Tousignant*, which will present all of this artist's works that are part of its collection. The digital reproductions of these thirty-five paintings, accompanied by texts and biographical notes, will be available online, providing Internet users with high-tech access to the works.

The Musée received support from Québec's Ministère de la Culture et des Communications to carry out this project, a follow-up to the exhibition *Place à la magie! The Forties, Fifties and Sixties in Québec*. A logical starting point for this online exhibition of Claude Tousignant's work is therefore *Gong '64'*, 1966, a piece that is currently on display in the galleries devoted to the permanent collection.

Claude Tousignant is a major figure in abstract painting in Canada who played a significant part in establishing Québec contemporary art. His paintings are resolutely abstract and non-figurative; they make no allusion whatsoever to the world outside them, referring only to themselves as autonomous objects. The artist himself says:

What I want is to purify abstract painting, make it even more abstract. I think that the way to get there lies in liberating the action of the coloured form, giving it multiple and personal possibilities. What interests me is the relationship between colours and not the form taken independently, in all its narcissism. What I want is to objectivize painting, bring it back to its source, to where there's just painting, emptied of all that's foreign to it, where painting is just sensation and nothing else, where it's comprehensible to everyone. What I want is evidential painting!¹

Viewing Claude Tousignant

A virtual exhibition coming soon online

The virtual exhibition of Claude Tousignant's work will be hosted by the Musée website, <http://www.macm.org/>. The visual identity is being designed by lab)idéecl! so as to faithfully reflect that of the Musée and the subject presented. The specific technology has yet to be chosen, but lab)idéecl! is proposing to develop the environment using HTML as the basic language, with additional animated components produced with Macromedia Flash. These devices would allow visitors to view certain parts of the works in greater depth and from more than one angle.

Boris Chukhovich, a researcher with a Ph.D. in art history who produces virtual projects and is attached to Université Laval's laboratory of museology and cultural engineering (LAMIC), has already joined the Musée team. He will be in charge of the more biographical aspect of the texts on the artist.

We hope to create a virtual environment that will accurately represent Tousignant's work in the collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and spark Internet users' interest in visiting the site. Keep an eye on the Musée website for the launch date of the virtual exhibition *Viewing Claude Tousignant*.

Christine Bernier

¹ Claude Tousignant, comments quoted in the audioguide to the exhibition *Place à la magie!*

Vik Muniz

Recent Acquisition

Born in São Paulo in 1961, Vik Muniz has lived and worked in New York since the late eighties. We could say, first off, that he photographs what he draws, exhibiting in the immediacy and clarity of the image the extremely meticulous and rather unexpected methods used to produce it. In this way, he develops remarkable series that include still lifes made of wire (*Pictures of Wire*, 1995), portraits made of sugar (*Sugar Children*, 1996) and landscapes made of thread (*Pictures of Thread*, 1997). By focusing more on “representing representation” than on being totally faithful to a subject which he has nevertheless chosen with great care, Muniz demonstrates the undeniable power of photography in our general and media-based understanding of the world. “There are two things that are constant in my work. I’m always portraying things that represent other things. And I’m always representing things that exist just for a limited amount of time. I’m a photographer.”¹

Even more than the clearly metaphorical appropriation of the materials of these representations—dust for the drawings of minimalist sculptures by Richard Serra, Donald Judd and Carl André (*The Things Themselves: Pictures of Dust* at the Whitney Museum in 2001), air for the skywriting of *Clouds*, over Manhattan in 2001, and gingerbread and other candies to reproduce the façade of the Brooklyn Academy of Music (*Candy BAM* in 2002-2003)—it is first and foremost the ephemeral nature of their subjects that stands out and emphasizes the illusionism, precariousness or urgency, evanescence and, occasionally, humour of the image re-created out of almost nothing.

In *Irisies, After Van Gogh (from Pictures of Magazines)*, 2004, Muniz moves from the line to dots and pixels. “I photograph what I can paint and I paint what I can photograph.”² This greatly enlarged reproduction of the famous painting by Van Gogh summarizes, in the photographic instant, the pictorial pointillism and pixellization of the image. Cut out from magazine pictures, the circular fragments of coloured matter suggest rather than illustrate the tremendous expressive power of this luminous still life. This clever bricolage similarly shapes what now relates to digital composition, and skillfully reconciles a precise, recognized moment in art history, the great painting tradition, current events as reported in the print media and the overabundance of information.

Josée Bélisle



- 1 Quoted by Deborah Solomon, in “Ars Brevis,” *The New York Times Magazine* 11 (February 2001).
- 2 “Nature Pictrix,” conversation between Peter Galassi and Vik Muniz, in *Vik Muniz* (Rome: MACRO, Museo di Arte Contemporanea, 2004), p. 105.

Irisies, After Van Gogh (from Pictures of Magazines), 2004
Chromogenic print, 5/6
240 x 180 cm
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Courtesy Brent Sikkema Gallery, New York



Fiona Tan

Saint Sebastian

Fiona Tan's artistic practice, begun in the early 1990s, has developed primarily around the key notions of identity and memory. Combining a critical gaze and a poetic vision, her film and video pieces are immediately distinctive for their highly controlled editing and the remarkable balance they find between form and content. With great sensitivity, her work tackles the issue of the perception of cultural differences, calling into question the supposed objectivity of sciences such as ethnology which borrow extensively from the documentary approach.

Produced after the artist's first trip to Japan, the video installation *Saint Sebastian* consists of two looped projections shown back to back on either side of a screen hung diagonally across the exhibition space. The work revolves around the traditional ceremony of *Toshiya*, a coming-of-age ritual that involves an archery competition held every year in Kyoto for young adults of both sexes. For *Saint Sebastian*, Tan chose to focus on the women's part of the event, emphasizing the participants' concentration rather than the eventual hitting of the target—which, incidentally, remains invisible throughout the scenes.

Beyond the motifs and themes that pervade and sustain the work (traditional ritual and modern-day young Japanese women, religious practice and military inheritance, youth and cultural history), *Saint Sebastian* also offers an examination of the way our perception of others is formed: "This work," says Tan in an essay written during the work's production, "will be as much about my projections onto this ritual as it will be about the event itself." Pierre Landry

Saint Sebastian
Video installation, 2001
Two 16:9 video projectors, 2 DVD players,
2 amplifiers, 8 hi-fi audio speakers, 1 white
double-sided projection screen 4.5 x 2.53 m
© Fiona Tan. Courtesy the artist and
Frith Street Gallery, London

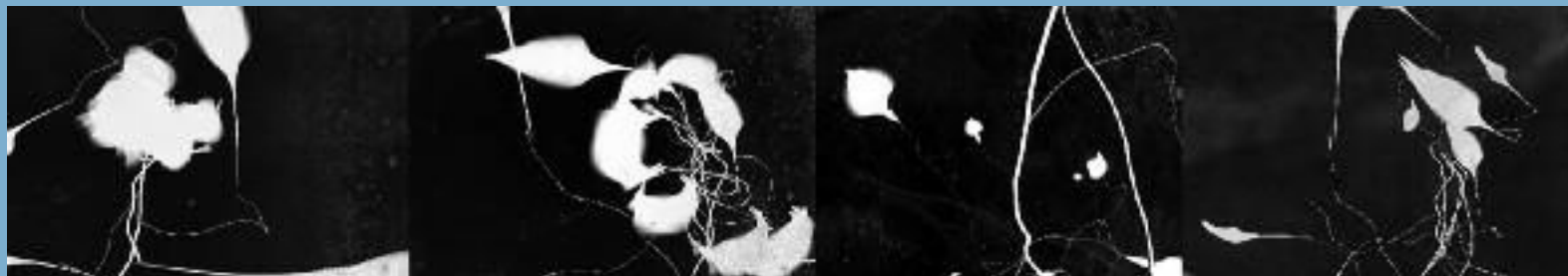
Frequency and Volume

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer



The installation *Frequency and Volume*, by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, consists of a projection of monumental shadows on a 160-square-metre wall. As visitors roam through the piece, they project their shadows onto the wall and scan the city's electromagnetic spectrum from 150 KHZ to 1.5 GHZ. Their bodies become tuners and pick up all kinds of signals: short wave, cell phones and pagers, police, taxi dispatchers, and more. The audio environment evolves with the visitors' movements. Mexican-born artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer lives and works in Montréal and Madrid. Even before he completed his studies in physical chemistry at Montréal's Concordia University, he was already launched on a sustained artistic career. Since 1990, he has taken part in numerous events on the international scene and garnered several prizes for his work, including a British Academy Award (BAFTA), Interactive Arts Category, recently handed out in London for *Frequency and Volume*, which we are now presenting in collaboration with ELEKTRA, from May 10 to 15, 2005.

Performances and New Media



Askaa

Skoltz_Kolgen

Askaa is the latest work by Dominique T. Skoltz and Herman W. Kolgen, two Montréal multidisciplinary artists who have worked together for the last eight years under the name of Skoltz_Kolgen. Following an aesthetic approach inspired by organic images and the subtle properties of microtonal sounds, they create films, installations and performances. The two artists explore the relationship between the acoustic and the optical on a microscopic scale.

In each of their works, Skoltz_Kolgen attempt to revitalize and extend the relationship between viewer and screen, and break the convention of frontality and the single point of view. *Askaa* is both an installation and an open platform for artistic performances. The public can move around and through the device made up of curved, translucent, giant video screens tossing computer-generated images, combined with sound particles, back and forth in a random pattern. The dialogue between the screens creates a constantly changing audio and visual environment. *Askaa* is presented as part of a collaborative undertaking with the MUTEK Festival, to be held from June 1 to 5, 2005.

Louise Ismert

Photos

Frequency and Volume: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

Askaa: Skoltz_Kolgen, 2005

Projections



Projections, the title we have chosen for our video and film program, is the common denominator in all these works based on light and moving pictures projected on a screen. Put together, these two elements have been variously referred to, over the years, as cinematographic art, film or digital video, terms that denote the different methods used and the passage of time in what has become a major component of contemporary creative art. Many artists from a variety of backgrounds—video makers, visual artists, photographers, choreographers and musicians—are drawn to the poetic power of the projected image. One notable example is the artist Thomas Köner, a musician and composer engaged in an intensive investigation of sound who has moved from composing movie sound tracks to creating his own “video” works, including *Suburbs of the Void*, which was presented in our inaugural program and has since won the *Transmediale.05* Award in Berlin.

Projections also refers to the energy of a thrust forward, toward the future, designed to offer a new connection with the image projected on the screen, in a space that keeps both the video installation device and the movie theatre’s sense of time. In the coming months, we will be presenting brand-new works and recent creations by Marie Brodeur, Arthur Kleinjan, Alex Morrison and Catherine Sullivan.

Thomas Köner
Suburbs of the Void, 2004
Collection of the Musée d’art
contemporain de Montréal

Moments choisis des Histoire(s) du cinéma
Jean-Luc Godard, 2000, 84 min, colour
September 14 to October 2, 2005



Moments choisis des Histoire(s) du cinéma expresses the desire of one of the most celebrated contemporary filmmakers to write and hand down a “living” history of cinema. Jean-Luc Godard’s first major feature film, *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*), came out in 1959. A tremendous critical and audience success, it went on to become the seminal film of the New Wave. For Godard, it was the beginning of a lengthy, 80-film career in which he has continually rethought and reinvented cinema and its narrative forms. In the late 1990s, he offered us his *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, a fascinating essay revealing a highly personal and emotional vision. Godard spent ten years, from 1988 to 1998, working on this huge project, which totals over five hours in running time. After his *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, “full of sound, fury and flashes of intensity” and hailed by critics, Godard now presents his *Moments choisis des Histoire(s) du cinéma*, a regular feature-length film. More than a summary or conclusion to *Histoire(s)*, *Moments choisis* is a melancholy, poetic dream

Louise Ismert

sustained by the thoughts of the celebrated director.

Good News!

The Musée is now open on holiday Mondays throughout the year

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will now be open on holiday Mondays (not to be confused with regular Mondays when the Musée will remain closed, as usual). This way, on Easter Monday, as well as Victoria Day, Labour Day and Thanksgiving Day Mondays, you will be able to visit the museum together with family or friends. Tourists and the city's art lovers will certainly appreciate the change, as these are very popular days for visiting.

Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



The Metamorphoses of Olivieri

Photos: Yves Medam

Since the beginning of fall 2004, Olivieri-Musée has found a brand-new home in the Atrium, on the lower level of the museum. Already a bookstore-café, Olivieri-Musée has now added a bistro menu: burritos, empanadas, calzone, quesadillas and Viennese pastries are available.

Open the same hours as the museum, Olivieri-Musée offers an extensive selection of monographs on Québec, Canadian and international artists from World War II to the present, along with a wide array of exhibition catalogues. This bilingual bookstore also carries a large stock of essays on trends of thought in contemporary art and the social sciences, reference works, independent publications, magazines and journals.

Add it to your list of favourite spots for browsing, and come have a look, and a bite, on your next visit to the Musée. Tel.: (514) 847-6903.

A Montréal All-Nighter at the Musée



Photo: Philippe Casgrain

Once again this year, the Musée joined in the Montréal All-Nighter as part of the sixth edition of the *Montreal High Lights Festival*, and kept its doors open all night long. The event was a success beyond all expectations: 10,135 festival-goers visited the Michel Goulet, Cynthia Girard and William Kentridge exhibitions and admired the *Ondulation* installation.

For the second year in a row, the Musée participated in a Radio-Canada radio show, *Macadam tribus*, hosted by Jacques Bertrand. Marc Mayer, Michel Goulet and Cynthia Girard took part in this live broadcast from the Musée foyer from 8 p.m. to midnight.

We are delighted with the event's tremendous popularity with Montrealers and tourists alike. This year, the Musée program was by far the best-attended indoor event of the All-Nighter. And so we'll be back, next February 25, 2006.

Danièle Patenaude

Sunday, May 29 Montréal Museums Day



The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and thirty-two other museum sites throughout the city will welcome the public free of charge on Sunday, May 29 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free STM shuttle service will provide transportation between the different museums and to and from the information centre set up for the day at the *Journal de Montréal* offices on Frontenac Street. The event is made possible by the sponsorship of Quebecor and L. M. Sauvé.

At the Musée, guide/interpreters will be on hand in the exhibition galleries to answer your questions. Better yet, you will have a chance to talk with some of the artists in the exhibition *Appearances*, which opens a few days earlier. Free art workshops, for you and your family or friends, are also on the afternoon schedule. You'll see that contemporary art can be truly amazing.

Expect plenty of excitement and atmosphere on this special day, when the city's museums open their doors to visitors of all ages, with the welcoming theme *Check Us Out!*



QUEBECOR INC.





Volunteers at the coat check on the evening of the Annual Ball, September 14, 2004
Photo: Philippe Casgrain

The Musée Foundation

The Foundation supports the Musée in its growth, mainly by helping enrich its permanent collection. It provides financial assistance through its activities. As well, by recruiting new members and managing the teams of volunteers, it plays an active part in maintaining the museum's vitality and its visibility in the community.

By becoming a member and Friend, you help us fulfil this mission and support the cause of Canada's premier museum devoted exclusively to contemporary art. On top of enjoying free admission to the exhibitions and many other privileges, you will receive invitations to openings and special events, the Musée's *Journal* and the seasonal calendar. You will have direct access to an adventure packed with emotion and surprises. You will find a collection that boasts more than 6,000 works, spellbinding temporary exhibitions and special events all year long. You will also promote the awareness and dissemination of works by today's artists, who come from right here, across the country and around the world.

If you are interested and have a few free hours a week, you can become actively involved as a volunteer, working at the coat check or for special events. Volunteers play an essential part in the Musée's operation. They act as our ambassadors, convey a commitment to the museum better than anyone else could, and contribute to making it a place of discovery where people feel comfortable and where they look forward to returning.

If you would like to know more about the Foundation, you can contact us at (514) 847-6270 or by e-mail at: fondation@macm.org

Jean Philippe Bolduc

Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal Day Camp Summer 2005

Discover a place conducive to the creative impulse. Explore techniques that are out of the ordinary: acrylic painting, watercolour, coloured ink drawing, sculpture, model making, transfer process and silk-screening on T-shirts. Not to mention, for 12 to 16-year-olds, the very popular digital art workshops. Experience unforgettable moments, full of humour, creativity and friendship, under the guidance of specialized counsellors with a passion for contemporary art. Inspired by the amusing works in the exhibition *Appearances*, the images you create will summon up all the powers of your imagination!

SPACE AVAILABLE

For children aged 6 to 11, 5-day sessions: \$184.04 (tax included)

For children aged 12 to 16, 10-day sessions: \$322.07 (tax included)

Information and registration: (514) 847-6239



Message from the Director

It was shocking to learn from Auden, in my youth, that poetry is useless. And I have always disagreed. Recently, I found fresh ammunition at a symposium we held at the Musée on the subject of Mallarmé. There, it was made brilliantly clear that, if nothing else, the arts are definitely useful to each other! But our inquiry can proceed further. As Gilles Godmer's aptly titled *Appearances* demonstrates, art's use value has social implications beyond its stimulations of the senses and the mind. For one thing, it helps distinguish generations by throwing them into high relief, stimulating those of us whose once shiny ideas may be starting to dull by encouraging us to rearticulate our position against a new and second front held by a fresh and hopefully unpredictable adversary. This spectacle of cultural and personal regeneration that art provides needs to be better understood as it can be useful to those of us who function in realms where the march of the generations may be far less evident. In any case, the eleven young artists whose work makes up *Appearances* have been gathered together to show us, specifically and generally, that art itself is not what it appears, and certainly not useless.

With Fiona Tan we deepen our conviction that art is indeed useful. It has beneficial side effects, for example. Who would argue for the futility of making a work that so effectively leaves viewers more fascinated by Japanese history and culture than we were before we saw it, even if that wasn't the point? It seems that in Japan, and for hundreds of years, girls must master archery before entering adulthood. I don't know about you, but that information has qualified my general perception of this already fascinating people. I suddenly want to know more about Japan! But I am equally enticed to consider the implications of this exquisite work's provocative title, *Saint Sebastian*. Is it a cunning joke? Or a sardonic evocation of the battle of the sexes? Or is this masterful young artist pouring metaphorical salt in the cleavage between East and West? Please, don't miss this extraordinary work.

Auden may well be rolling his eyes in Purgatory at these hopeless protestations. If he is right and art is ultimately as useless as poetry after all, your Musée need not be. It is changing precisely to be more useful to you. Please let us know how we can turn the Musée into the cultural resource of your dreams. And don't send us notes and e-mails, come in person to our openings and events so that we can meet you, if we haven't already. Although it's our happy job to run this marvellous place for you, our best ideas are usually yours! Soon,

Marc Mayer

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