

VIVRE
ENSEMBLE—
THE
CONNECTIONS





VIVRE ENSEMBLE— THE CONNECTIONS

CAROLINE BOILEAU

LUCIE CHAN

ALEESA COHENE

PIERRE DURETTE

SHIÉ KASAI

LEISURE

MARC NGUI

SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON

AND CAROLINE MONNET, AS PART OF VIDEOTANK

CURATED BY GENTIANE BÉLANGER & ZOË CHAN

COMME CHACUN DE NOUS
ÉTAIT PLUSIEURS,
ÇA FAISAIT DÉJÀ
BEAUCOUP DE MONDE.¹

- GILLES DELEUZE AND FÉLIX GUATTARI

KNOWLEDGE IS PRODUCED
THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS—
RELATIONSHIPS TO SPACE,
TIME, PEOPLE, OTHER BEINGS.

- ZOE TODD

1. *Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd.* Translation by Brian Massumi.

TWO YEARS, TWO CURATORS, AND TEN ARTISTS (MULTIPLIED BY COUNTLESS INFLUENCES) LIE BEHIND THE REFLECTIVE MEANDERINGS OF THIS EXHIBITION. OSCILLATING BETWEEN FRENCH AND ENGLISH, SPANNING FOUR CITIES THROUGH A (SPORADIC) FLOW OF COMMUNICATION VIA SKYPE, AND RANGING FROM ABSTRACT MUSINGS AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTS TO THE CONCRETE REALITIES OF DAY-TO-DAY LIFE, A RICH EXCHANGE UNFOLDED BETWEEN US. BELOW ARE A FEW EXCERPTS FROM THIS DIALOGUE—STILL ONGOING—ON THE NOTION OF BECOMING. THROUGH THE EXHIBITION AND ITS RELATED ACTIVITIES, WE HOPE TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION WITH YOU.



MICROBIOME, OR THE OTHERS WHO INHABIT US

ZC – At the risk of being too linear, I'd like to hear your thoughts on the article that provided the starting point for this exhibition—or perhaps I should say, the point of entry?

GB – This entire reflection on otherness and multiplicity began with a 2012 *Scientific American* article entitled "The Ultimate Social Network."² The article described how biologists have shifted their understanding of the human organism as insular (an autonomous, self-regulating, physiologically complete and coherent

entity) to something altogether more systemic (symbiotic, inhabited by exogenous organisms, in constant and vital relation with the surrounding environment, saturated with genetic difference). Recent findings on the human microbiome—the microorganisms that inhabit the skin, mucous membranes and digestive system—have changed our understanding of the human body to that of a heterogeneous habitat or complex ecosystem. It is impossible today to consider our "humanness" without also considering its non-human components. As a species (and like many others, I imagine), we are indebted to diversity, otherness, and multiplicity.

The hybrids and other amorphous beings that populate Caroline Boileau's watercolours embody the full creative potential of perceiving oneself from a heterogeneous standpoint. Labile and polymorphic, unconfined by any nomenclature of the living—the better to make visible the states of transformation and becoming—Boileau's "improbable bodies" overflow beyond the limits of humanness, coalescing fluidly with the environment. Her imaginary creatures drag in their wake a jumble of artefacts and natural fragments (shells, corals, nuts, kernels, etc.). These and various rhizome plants are scattered through the exhibition, serving as agents for the exhibition in much the same way as the authored works. Living matter and conscious (artistic) intent are in symbiosis, engaged in an on-going questioning of what it is to "belong" to the world.

If any one art historical genre has sought to evoke the fleeing nature of existence, it is the still life and its implicit message of mortality. In hunting scenes as in floral arrangements, meat counters, and table tops, life's brevity is often represented through varying degrees of freshness and decay, with certain clues (including carcasses) denoting the finitude of all things and the inevitable return to dust. If the genre of still life has traditionally attempted to capture the eternal *pas de deux* of life and death by imbuing a static image with symbolic devices, Sam Taylor-Johnson broadens its scope by recording the dynamics of decay through time-lapse video.³ Death here is clearly a matter of transition, while decomposition proves to be a vigorous process of striking aliveness.

From a philosophical standpoint, I am fascinated by these manifestations of otherness in living matter and the human phenomenon, as well as by how these discoveries align with posthumanist thinking (in the sense of pushing the search for meaning initiated by humanist philosophy beyond the human realm). If the

2. Jennifer Ackerman, "The Ultimate Social Network," *Scientific American*, June 2012, p. 37-43.

3. In an accelerated video, an exquisitely balanced still-life composition inspired by Jean Simeon Chardin (1699-1779) is first slightly affected, then somewhat disturbed, and then finally violently upended by the decomposing carcass of a hare as it is colonized by larvae and flies.

humanist worldview is tinged with essentialism (defining the essence of the human condition) and anthropocentrism (systematically adopting a human-centric view of things), these precepts become untenable in a world where 90% of our being is not in fact “us,” but “others”: the microorganisms on which our vital functions depend. From this angle, the cohesion of our very anatomy is diluted by a stupefying diversity and multiplicity. Like any other phenomenon of the living and non-living, humans are in fact richly complex amalgams in a heterogeneous soup of exchanges, mutations, and evolutionary developments.

As Maxime Coulombe said (even if he intended it as a critique of posthumanism), it is a question, ontologically speaking, of “entering into the sea”⁴ for humans who have remained for too long on the shore, observing/commenting/conceptualizing/analyzing the world’s complexity without getting their feet wet, so to speak. Humanists mourn the loss of the ontological distinction between the human and nonhuman worlds, while the posthumanists welcome the dissolution of conceptual boundaries between humanity and animality, the living and the non-living, culture and nature, hailing it as a conscious awakening.⁵ As Donna Haraway says, inspired by Scott Gilbert, “we’ve all always been lichens.”⁶ To fully understand ourselves as human is to gain a sense of our hybridity and heterogeneity.

HYBRIDITY, COMPOSITE SUBJECTS AND MULTIPLICITY

ZC – I think for me, what really struck me about that article was the core idea of the other within, and if we were indeed already *other*, that the notion of the external other was not really other at all. I’ve always had that heightened awareness, that I think many immigrants have, where you know that you’re a conglomerate of so many influences on a million different levels, whether or not you integrate or reject them. And I think it’s hard not to imagine, as an immigrant, all the possible versions of yourself, all the lives you could have led, if you had not changed countries. I don’t think you have that “luxury” of imagining yourself as being one way only.

4. Maxime Coulombe, “Entrer dans la mer : post-humanité et dissolution du moi,” *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, n. 50, 2011, p. 141-157.

5. Frédéric Vandenberghe, “Nous n’avons jamais été humains,” *Complexités du posthumanisme : Trois essais dialectiques sur la sociologie de Bruno Latour*, trans. Henri Vaugrand, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2006, p. 57-90.

6. Donna Haraway, “Tentacular Thinking: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene,” *e-flux*, n. 75, September 2016; Scott Gilbert, Jan Sapp & Alfred I. Tauber, “A Symbiotic View of Life: We Have Never Been Individuals,” *Quarterly Review of Biology*, vol. 87, n. 4, December 2012, p. 325-341.

In my own life, novels and films perhaps first helped me to fully grasp the idea of a multiplicity of potential narratives—the idea that a protagonist’s life could totally change because they had encountered someone or something that derails their life from one course and puts them on another trajectory completely. I’m drawn to notions of intertextuality wherein stories are interconnected and interwoven across time and space, or Elena Ferrante’s idea that books are the result of a kind of “collective intelligence.”⁷ I love for instance Leisure’s *Folie à deux* where we watch their hands lay out dozens of seemingly random pictures but which essentially map out their influences (as well as pay homage to these sources of inspiration) in an apparently never-ending flow; there’s an open-endedness to the work where we know that this process continues for them beyond the video.

In this vein, Caroline Monnet’s *Mobilize* video very effectively appropriates images from the NFB archives in order to create a kind of mini-history of Indigenous people in the post-contact era. She traces a trajectory that not only delves into the past but feels equally of the *now*. Additionally, she inscribes herself into a collective history of work by making links between her own artistic practice and the skilled physical labour done by Indigenous persons who are shown actively and concretely shaping the world, whether in urban or rural settings.

This gleaning from a range of sources can also be seen in Aleesa Cohene’s videos through the creation of “composite characters” made up of actors playing various roles in a range of films. A work like *Like, Like* makes one aware of an existing cinematic language that is used to tell a story, but also shows how a seemingly fixed repertoire of gestures from mainstream cinema can be shifted to have a whole other set of significances; Cohene finds those “cracks” in mainstream cinematic imagery in order to do so. In this way, *Like, Like* proposes an alternate and queer history of cinema with all these untapped narratives in dialogue with each other. I think of these protagonists calling out to each other in a chorus of collective longing, pain and desire. Which leads me to think about what can be learned from films—essentially, empathy for others through their experiences, thoughts, and feelings—and how the absorption of these multiple perspectives can influence or become part of you, without you necessarily being aware. And in this regard, I think it’s very interesting how Cohene has started adding scent components to her video works, which perhaps subtly renders her viewers more receptive to the new narratives she proposes.

7. Cited in Sandro and Sandra Ferri, “Elena Ferrante, Art of Fiction no. 228,” *Paris Review* n. 2012, Spring 2015. <http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/6370/elena-ferrante-art-of-fiction-no-228-elena-ferrante>.

GB – There's a complexity to your awareness of potential identities that I didn't experience on quite the same register. As a middle-class white person growing up in a relatively homogenous environment (despite Montréal's self-professed cosmopolitanism), and who moreover benefited from a state system that fosters general access to education, I have to recognize that overall, my personal development was relatively linear, following a pre-defined path with its attendant expectations, instilled ambitions, socially cultivated desires and privileges.

And yet.

This consciousness you evoke, this awareness of the multiple selves we could embody—I experienced these viscerally the first time I travelled solo for a prolonged period. The day after my eighteenth birthday, I flew to Ireland, where I spent a year working in a Dublin café. In an experience that was typically *L'auberge espagnole* (to borrow from the film tropes that Aleesa Cohene so elegantly deconstructs), my contact with the other young people around me led to a dawning awareness of a host of potential identities, a staggering range of possibilities that I could simply actualize through my lifestyle choices.

This first experience of “deterritorialization,” to borrow Deleuze and Guattari's term, was very troubling. How could I find (or avoid losing) myself amidst these myriad possibilities? How best to channel my identity, shape my destiny? Who was I and who should I become? For some time, I longed for the control a self-designed identity would allow me—a tendency that continues to be prevalent today and one that we all follow to varying degrees. I've since come to believe that who we are (and become) results just as much from conscious choice as from circumstances beyond our control. Life—and with it, family, society, politics, geography and nature—flows through us and shapes us, just as the destiny of all living things is carried and shaped by evolution, blindly groping, marvellously accidental.

I find echoes of this reflection in the large suspended frescoes of Lucie Chan, buzzing with the incommensurable network of influences and unexpected encounters experienced during a residency abroad (in Portugal, as it happens). The process of becoming oneself is decentred by a multiplicity of factors found in our environments: social, cultural, ecological, biological, bacteriological. Our “position in society” and our “nature” must be constantly redefined—indeed if they are at all definable—given their continual transformation. And on this point, I appreciate

the work of Shié Kasai who, in her video *Food Immersion*, uses the sole act of eating to suggest the possible identities linked to culinary culture and the biological “otherness” inherent in the ingestion and metabolism of exogenous matter.

RHIZOMES, FLUX AND PROCESS

GB – Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome is an effective image to account for this entanglement of beings and things, energy fields, and the outbursts of desire that give rise to and shape life's events. Deleuze and Guattari perceive and understand reality as consisting just as much of flows of energy, urges, impulses, and desires as of currents of matter, force fields, and so on. The territorialization (or encoding) of these flows gives rise to the actions, events, and beings constituting the world. The world's vitality hinges on perpetual change, which in turn stems from the continual territorialization/deterritorialization of flows.⁹

Pierre Durette's sculptural clusters and “swarm” drawings can be understood as a representation of this reality in flux—of the relations *between* things and their continual transformations rather than of the things themselves. In Durette's world, these “agents” are deeply connected, interdependent, and unstable. His porcelain sculptures unfailingly evoke a certain Baroque excess—recalling Rubens' orchestrated groupings of characters, where human and mythological history can be interpreted as a vortex of complex relations.

The rhizome is a rich metaphor for this systemic paradigm. Its knots and tubers can be understood as the points where flows condense to articulate a given form (individuals, things, events, etc.), while the rootlets shooting out in all directions reflect the infinite circulation of flows in a reality that is constantly “becoming,” perpetually recomposing. This metaphor is very effectively transposed in Marc Ngui's series of drawings. What results are slight semantic shifts, migrations of meaning that, through image, dislodge canonical interpretations of the text. An anti-essentialist work of thought, *A Thousand Plateaus* is even more “nomadic” in its pictorial form.

9. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “Introduction: Rhizome,” *Mille plateaux*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1980, p. 9-37.

Likewise, we continue to feel our way along our shared *dérive*; our ongoing quest to steer this project is at times dizzying (much like the infinite tangents of this conversation). Our “two-headed” approach—and since each of us contains multitudes, that makes for a lot of people!—is decentred, somewhat chaotic, groping, and evolving. But this is ultimately what research is all about: the challenge of, not responding to predefined parameters, but rather remaining open to chance and circumstance and the fertile ground these provide for reflection. Such a process gives us no choice but to make ourselves vulnerable to each other, just as we make ourselves vulnerable through these written lines.

OTHER LANGUAGES AND POSSIBLE SELVES

ZC – To go back to what you mentioned earlier, I can understand your feeling of almost exponential multiplicity that you felt while travelling. I had that almost dizzying feeling of the potential of being someone else while accessing whole other worlds through the learning of a new language. I had a great French teacher in high school who told us that one of the most exciting things was when you first had a dream in another language and how for him, that was a sign that you had succeeded in truly entering the world of another language—or was it that the language had entered you? (You’ll laugh, but I remember my friend Heide and I were so excited to dream in French and incidentally, we both went on to study French in university and to live in Montréal.) The process of learning another language can be so exciting, especially in the early stages: the ecstatic feeling of freedom to express emotions differently through the vehicle of another language, all the thoughts that you might not express in your first language . . . And not just the language with its internal logic but the whole attitude that a language can afford you—the feeling that you can express yourself more poetically in French or more straightforwardly in Italian.

We can’t ignore that our examples speak from places of privilege: we had the choice to travel or to learn a new language, to change milieus, to be tourists . . . *We had a home to return to.*

OTHER LANGUAGES AND IMPOSSIBLE SELVES

ZC – And of course we mustn’t forget such examples as the brutally violent history of Canada’s treatment of Indigenous peoples within the Residential School system, where the oppression of language was one of the strategies to repress and kill connections to family and culture, where to speak one’s own language, something that should be so natural and taken for granted was removed—and the devastating impacts of those strategies that continue to be felt today.

Obviously as I write this on the eve of the US election too, it’s impossible not to think of Trump’s dangerous and derogatory discourse on immigrants,

Mexicans, Muslims . . . It is this devastating current political reality—rooted as it is in a terrible intent to denigrate or obliterate all those who are considered “other”—which paradoxically undergirds our exhibition’s thesis of the necessity of living with others. In a way, the exhibition functions as a kind of reminder of how we need others to survive and grow, and that without them, we literally couldn’t exist. For me, the perhaps inevitably “humanist” thrust of our exhibition (humanist in the sense of its underlying celebration of our universal need for others) risks being trite if it’s not grounded in a desire to refute existing neo-fascist political movements such as Trump’s whose aim is to remove that very interconnectedness between people.

10. Zoe Todd, “Rethinking Aesthetics and Ontology through Indigenous Law: On the work of Val Napoleon and Loretta Todd,” *C Magazine* 126, Summer 2015, p. 11.



LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

ZC – Also undergirding this exhibition is obviously its undercurrents of post-humanist philosophy. We've both read Zoe Todd's critique where she talks about how "the Euro-Western academy is currently captivated by relationships to the other-than-human, the ontological and the cosmopolitical"¹⁰ but how this worldview was already held within Indigenous systems of knowledge. There is so much work to be done in terms of decolonization—starting with ourselves as curators and art historians—as we have been very much shaped by our education.

It's very telling when Todd writes that, because of her education in that very academy, it didn't occur to her at first "that stories and skies and land and Métis histories were a mode of thinking."¹¹ We see these "stories and skies and land" actively played out in some recent videos by contemporary Indigenous artists; there is a focus on landscape but in a completely different way than in the western art historical tradition of landscape, where there is often an underlying feeling of trying to frame and contain the environment. I'm thinking for instance of Caroline Monnet's video *Demi Monde* where we see a figure, the artist, integrated into a landscape that feels vividly alive. And though the aesthetics and approaches of all of the works are very different, I see a similar embodied knowledge playing out in such recent works as Laakkuluk Williamson-Bathory's video *Timiga nunalu sikulu* (*My body, the land and the ice*) or in Brian Jungen and Duane Linklater's *Modest Livelihood* . . .

GB – I agree with you regarding Zoe Todd's reflection. Her critical analysis of posthumanism has made me reconsider my own thinking in its exposure of the blind spots of a highly influential stream of contemporary thought. Todd reminds us (reminds *me*) that the philosophical precepts of posthumanism must be implemented through coherent methodology. In other words, any philosophy centred on the entanglement of all living things must automatically invoke differing cosmologies and perspectives on the world. Euro-American thought

cannot pretend to have sole authority over the systemic paradigm. As such, today's great non-western thinkers, including many Indigenous peoples, have much to contribute and must be recognized and engaged in the discussion. But also listening to others necessarily implies a questioning of one's own patterns of thought and with it, a shaking-up of certain convictions.

ZC – Syed Hussan explains it well, I think: "Decolonization is a dramatic reimagining of relationships with land, people and the state. Much of this requires study. It requires conversation. It is a practice; it is an unlearning."¹²

¹¹ Ibid. p. 12.

¹² Cited in Harsha Walia, "Decolonizing together," *Briarpatch*, January 1, 2012. <https://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/decolonizing-together>.



ANNOTATED LIST OF WORKS

CAROLINE BOILEAU

LUCIE CHAN

ALEESA COHENE

PIERRE DURETTE

SHIÉ KASAI

LEISURE

MARC NGUI

SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON

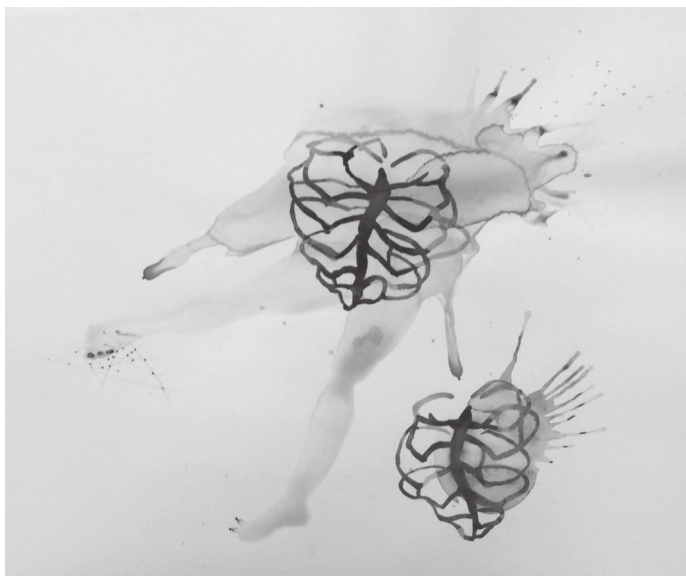
AND CAROLINE MONNET, AS PART OF VIDEOTANK

CAROLINE BOILEAU

Caroline Boileau addresses the body and health through a practice that combines performative action, drawing, video and installation. She is interested in the different ways of inhabiting, representing and talking about the body. Her drawings are represented by the Galerie Robert Poulin in Montréal.



Caroline Boileau, *Ces autres qui nous résident* (selection), 2016. Watercolour on paper, pencil, collage, shells, rocks, coral, bones, dried insects, branches. Courtesy of the artist.



Caroline Boileau,
*Ces autres qui nous
résident* (selection), 2016.
Watercolour on paper,
pencil, collage, shells,
rocks, coral, bones,
dried insects, branches.
Courtesy of the artist.

I APPRECIATE HYBRID, FLEXIBLE, VAGUE IDENTITIES. I PAINT IMPROBABLE BODIES BY IMAGINING WHAT TRANSPIRES BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE SKIN, WHAT IS TRAPPED BETWEEN THE ORGANS, WHAT SHORT-CIRCUITS SYNAPSES AND EATS AWAY AT THE FRAME, BUT WHICH IS READY TO SURFACE AT ANY MOMENT. I LIKE BODIES THAT SPREAD OUT AND OVERFLOW, BODIES WHOSE MEMBERS AND ORGANS PROLIFERATE AND UNSCRUPULOUSLY APPROPRIATE THOSE OF OTHER CREATURES FROM THE ANIMAL OR VEGETABLE KINGDOMS. -CB

LUCIE CHAN

Lucie Chan lives in Vancouver where she teaches at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. She has had solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and MSVU Art Gallery, and has most recently shown at OBORO, TRUCK, the Richmond Art Gallery and the Robert McLaughlin Gallery. She was long-listed for the Sobey Art Award in 2005 and 2010.



Lucie Chan, *Take Me Back (onde eu pertenço)* (selection), 2013.
Watercolour and ink on paper, digital prints, flowers, plastic figurines. Courtesy of the artist.



Lucie Chan, *Take Me Back (onde eu pertenço)* (selection), 2013.
Watercolour and ink on paper, digital prints, flowers, plastic figurines.
Courtesy of the artist.

THIS BEGAN AS A DAILY DOCUMENTING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, AT THE END OF A ONE-MONTH RESIDENCY IN PORTUGAL . . . MY IDEA WAS TO TRY TO HOLD ONTO WHAT YOU FEEL LIKE WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF YOUR USUAL CONTEXT, SPECIAL FEELINGS THAT ONE DOES NOT WANT TO FORGET. I DREW A LOT FROM MEMORY EACH DAY BUT EVENTUALLY MY DAILY LIFE TOOK OVER AND IMAGES BECAME MORE MUNDANE (SITTING AT MEETINGS, TALKING ON THE PHONE, EMAILING). THE RESULTING THREE PANELS ARE INTENDED TO SHOW THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF MAKING SENSE OF ALL THE EXPERIENCES ONE HAS ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS. -LC

ALEESA COHENE

Vancouver-born Aleesa Cohene has been producing videos since 2001. Her award-winning work has shown in festivals and galleries internationally. She has participated in artist residencies in Canada, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. She holds a Masters of Visual Studies from the University of Toronto and is currently based in Los Angeles.



Aleesa Cohene, *Like, Like*, 2009. 2-channel video, paint, scent (Tonquitone, French lavender, bergamot, cyclamen aldehyde, Globanone, Galaxolide, neroli, dihydromercenol, ethylene brassylate, black pepper, ylang ylang, juniper berry). Courtesy of the artist.



Aleesa Cohene, *Like, Like*, 2009. 2-channel video, paint, scent (Tonquitone, French lavender, bergamot, cyclamen aldehyde, Globanone, Galaxolide, neroli, dihydromercenol, ethylene brassylate, black pepper, ylang ylang, juniper berry). Courtesy of the artist.

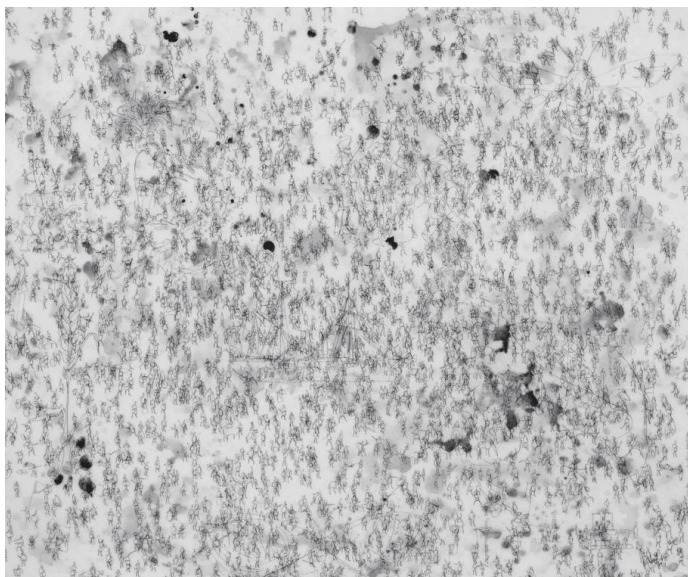
LIKE, LIKE WAS THE FIRST WORK I MADE THAT INCORPORATES SCENT. THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NUANCED CHARACTERS AND THEIR ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP IN VIDEO THAT WASN'T ENOUGH. INTRODUCING A SCENT INTO THE ENVIRONMENT MADE ROOM FOR UNCONSCIOUS IMPULSES TO BE PRESENT. I FIND THAT WHEN THE UNCONSCIOUS COMES OUT (IN MAKING AND EXHIBITING WORK), IT IS MORE THAN I AM, MORE THAN YOU ARE AND BRINGS UP A SMOOTHER SUBJECTIVITY. WE FEEL TRANSPORTED, ROOTED. INSIDE A FEELING AND IT ALLOWS THE EXPERIENCE TO BE LESS PHENOMENOLOGICAL. -AC

PIERRE DURETTE

Pierre Durette is from Causapscal in the Matapédia Valley, where he has lived and worked since 2015. He is a recipient of the Grand Prix Albert-Dumouchel and the Bourse d'excellence Marcel-Bellerive. His work has been exhibited at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, The Power Plant (Toronto), LE Gallery (Toronto), Cuadro Art Gallery (Dubai), and numerous artists' centres in Québec.



Pierre Durette,
Contingent 2.7, 2012.
Porcelain.
Collection of Robert Poulin.



Pierre Durette,
Propagation 3.26, 2012.
Acrylic and ink on wood.
Courtesy of the artist.

MY WORK IS A HISTORICAL FRESCO THAT OSCILLATES BETWEEN SCI-FI AND THE MIDDLE AGES. THROUGH THESE VISUAL FICTIONS, I REVISIT GENRE PAINTING. AT THE JUNCTURE OF GROTESQUE DETAIL AND TIME-LESS POETRY, I PROPOSE A RE-READING OF THE HISTORICAL TIMELINE IN A METICULOUS MIXING OF CENTURIES, CULTURES, AND TRADITIONS. -PD

SHIÉ KASAI

Shié Kasai works in sculpture and site-specific installation. Originally from Sapporo, Japan, she has lived in Montréal since 1998. She has participated in residencies at Raumars (Finland) and OBORO (Montréal). She has presented solo exhibitions at the MAI, Articule and Gallery 101, and been featured in group exhibitions and video screenings in Japan, the Netherlands and Canada.



Shié Kasai, *Food Immersion*, 2008. Single-channel video.
Courtesy of the artist.



Shié Kasai, *Food Immersion*, 2008. Single-channel video.
Courtesy of the artist.



IN THE END THE FOCUS IS NOT ABOUT THE FOOD I ATE, BUT ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE OF EATING, ME TAKING VARIOUS LOCAL FOODS INTO MY BODY. YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT, PEOPLE SAY. AS LONG AS WE LIVE, REGARDLESS OF DIFFERENCES OF RACE, CULTURE OR BACKGROUND, OUR EXPERIENCE IS SHARED THROUGH THE FOOD WE ALL EAT. THE PRODUCTION YEAR IS 2008, AND THAT MARKED FOR ME MY TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF LIVING IN MONTRÉAL. I WONDER WHAT PERCENTAGE OF MY BODY IS MADE UP OF MONTRÉAL FOOD? -SK

LEISURE

Working under the name Leisure since 2004, Meredith Carruthers and Susannah Wesley engage with socio-historical narratives through research, conversation, published texts, curatorial projects and art production. Leisure will exhibit *Panning for Gold/Walking You Through It* exploring Cornelia Hahn-Oberlander's "Environment for Creative Play and Learning" as part of the exhibition *Reimagining/Réinvestir Expo '67* at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.



Leisure
(Meredith Carruthers
and Susannah Wesley),
Folie à deux, 2009.
Single-channel video.
Collection of the Leonard
& Bina Ellen Art Gallery.



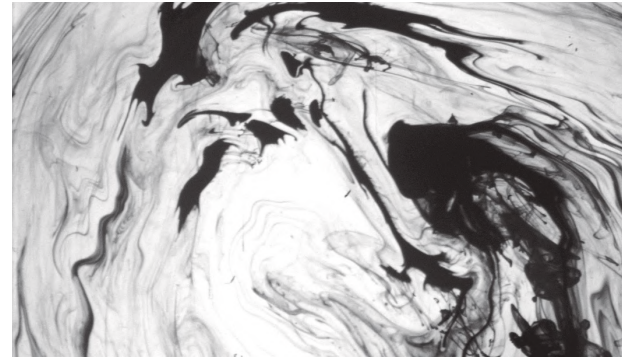
Leisure
(Meredith Carruthers
and Susannah Wesley),
Folie à deux, 2009.
Single-channel video.
Collection of the Leonard
& Bina Ellen Art Gallery.

WITHIN OUR PRACTICE, OUR PROJECTS ARE OFTEN INSPIRED BY IMAGES THAT ENCHANT OR DISQUIET US AND CAPTURE OUR IMAGINATION. THESE IMAGES BECOME FOR US TOOLS TO IMAGINE WORLDS THAT OVERLAP, ECHO OR STRAY FROM THEIR ORIGINAL CONTEXTS. WE ELABORATE ON THESE IMAGES, BUILDING NEW EXPERIENCES, CONCEPTS, EXHIBITIONS, TEXTS AND PERFORMANCES. THE PERFORMANCE/VIDEO *FOLIE À DEUX* EXPRESSES THE ONGOING CONSTRUCTIVE VISUAL CONVERSATION OF LEISURE PROJECTS AS OUR INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTIVITIES AND IDEAS COME TOGETHER TO CREATE AN-OTHER SHARED, ENTITY. -LEISURE

CAROLINE MONNET (VIDEOTANK)

Caroline Monnet works in film, video, installation, and silkscreen printing. Her works have shown at the Toronto International Film Festival, VIDEOFORMES (Clermont-Ferrand, France), Urban Shaman (Winnipeg), Māngere Arts Centre (Auckland, NZ), Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art (Winnipeg) and Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin). Monnet is a member of the Indigenous collective ITWÉ.

The work of Caroline Monnet is curated as part of the Videotank series, in dialogue with *Vivre ensemble — The Connections*.



Caroline Monnet, *Demi Monde*, 2013
Single-channel
Courtesy of the Winnipeg Film Group.

I CREATED A FILM THAT CAN SPEAK OF TRICKSTERS AND DEEPER INSIDE WORLDS. I FEEL LIKE SOMETIMES WE HAVE AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE INSIDE OF US, FILLED WITH MEMORIES, EMOTIONS AND REFLECTIONS. -CM

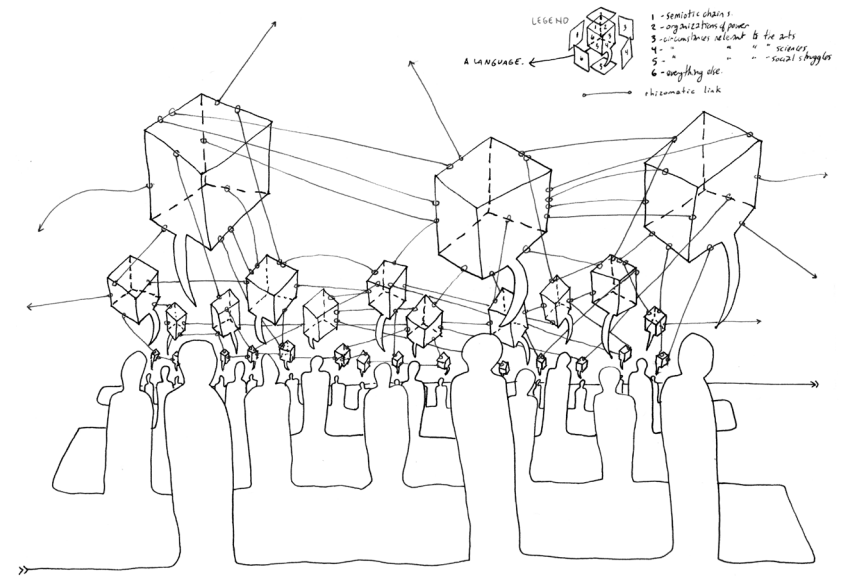


Caroline Monnet, *Mobilize*, 2015
Single-channel video.
Courtesy of the National Film Board of Canada.

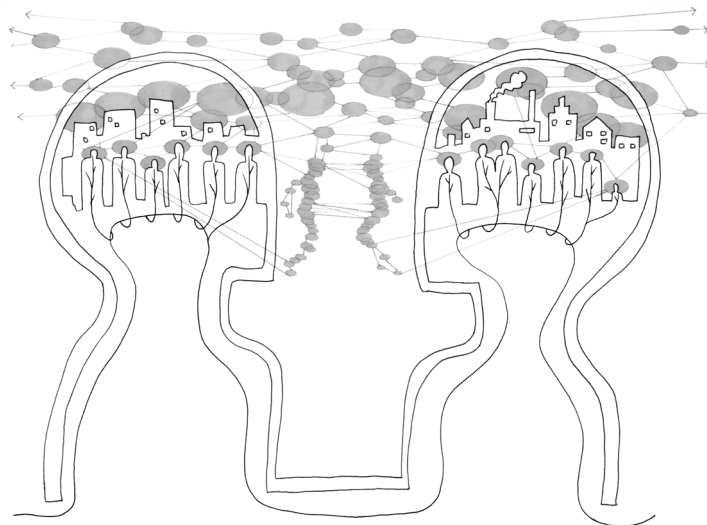
I WANTED TO SPEAK ABOUT A PEOPLE MOVING FORWARD, A PEOPLE THAT MOBILIZES ITSELF AND IS FAR FROM BEING STAGNANT. WE ARE CONTEMPORARY, CULTURALLY ROOTED AND CONSTANTLY ON THE MOVE. I THOUGHT IT WAS INTERESTING TO USE OLD FOOTAGE TO SPEAK ABOUT THE FUTURE, TO EXPRESS AN IDEA OF CONTEMPORANEITY WHILE STILL HONOURING THE PAST. -CM

MARC NGUI

Marc Ngui's practice includes drawing, painting, animation and installation. He has published two graphic novels, *Enter Avariz* (2002) and *The Unexpurgated Tale of Lordie Jones* (2005), and is currently working on a third. Ngui also forms one-half of Happy Sleepy (www.happysleepy.com), a collaborative art project with Magda Wojtyra.



Marc Ngui, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 2007 (selection).
Digital prints. Courtesy of the artist.



Marc Ngui, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 2007
(selection)
Digital prints.
Courtesy of the artist.

I TREAT DRAWING BOTH AS AN ACT OF MAKING AND A MODE OF THINKING. THE DRAWINGS FROM A THOUSAND PLATEAUS ARE ATTEMPTS TO MAKE DIAGRAMS THAT ILLUSTRATE SOME OF THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS THAT THE AUTHORS DESCRIBE AS THEY DEVELOP THE THESIS OF EACH PLATEAU. I THINK OF THE DRAWINGS AS SNAPSHOTS OF THE IDEAS WHICH ARE CONSTANTLY IN MOTION, EVOLVING, DEVOLVING, DIGRESSING. -MN

SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON

Sam Taylor-Johnson began working in photography, film and video in the early 1990s. Taylor-Johnson has been featured in numerous group and solo exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (1997), where she won the Illy Café Prize for Most Promising Young Artist. She was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1998.



Sam Taylor-Johnson, *A Little Death*, 2002. Single-channel video. Courtesy of White Cube. © SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON / SODRAC (2017).



Sam Taylor-Johnson,
A Little Death, 2002.
Single-channel video.
Courtesy of White Cube.
© SAM TAYLOR-
JOHNSON / SODRAC
(2017).

I THINK THE IDEA OF LOOKING AT SAY A CARAVAGGIO PAINTING OR ANOTHER PAINTING FROM ONE, TWO, OR EVEN THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO AND SEEING THAT ARTISTS ARE STILL DEALING WITH EXACTLY THE SAME THOUGHT PROCESS AND THE SAME SORT OF QUESTIONS . . . THESE THEMES THAT EVOLVE AROUND LIFE AND LOVE AND DEATH HAVE OBSESSED ARTISTS FROM DAY ONE . . . FOR ME, REFERENCING IS A WAY OF SHOWING THAT THROUGH THE CENTURIES, THINGS REALLY HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL. WE ARE STILL LOOKING AT AND TRYING TO FIGURE OUT THE SAME GRAND QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR EXISTENCE. -STJ¹³

13. Quoted in "Seline Wendt, "Breaking the Medium of Painting Down, Interview with Sam Taylor-Wood," (2011) *Artpulse Magazine*. <http://artpulsemagazine.com/breaking-the-medium-of-painting-down>.

LIST OF PLANTS

IRIS

REYNOUTRIA JAPONICA

FILICOPHYTA

TRIFOLIUM

HELIANTHUS TUBEROSUS

HEMEROCALLIS

CURATORS

GENTIANE BÉLANGER

Gentiane Bélanger is Director/Curator at the Foreman Art Gallery, and a doctoral candidate in art history at Université du Québec à Montréal. Her research interests lie in the intersection of art theory and environmental philosophy. She sits on the board of directors of the artist-run centre Sporobole and has published in *C Magazine*, *ESPACE*, *ETC*, and *Plastik art & science*.

ZOË CHAN

Zoë Chan's curatorial projects have been presented at MSVU Art Gallery, Foreman Art Gallery, Articule and the MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels). She has written for *C Magazine*, *esse arts + opinions* and *Momus*, among others. In 2015, she received the Canada Council for the Arts' Joan Lowndes Award for excellence in critical or curatorial writing.

This catalogue documents the exhibition *Vivre ensemble*-The Connections and Caroline Monnet as part of Videotank, produced by the Foreman Art Gallery and presented from January 19 to March 11, 2017.

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Artwork by Caroline Boileau, Lucie Chan, Aleesa Cohene, Pierre Durette, Shié Kasai, Leisure, Marc Ngui, Sam Taylor-Johnson.

Text in English and French.

1. Identity (Philosophical concept) in art--Exhibitions. I. Bélanger, Gentiane, 1980-, organizer, writer of added text II. Chan, Zoë, 1972-, organizer, writer of added text III. Boileau, Caroline, 1970-. Works. Selections. IV. Foreman Art Gallery, host institution, issuing body V. Title. VI. Title: Connections. VII. Title: *Vivre ensemble* (2017). English.

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