

Le Lieu, centre en art actuel

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Trois fois trois paysages was launched in October of 1997 with ten installations *in situ* on ten exterior sites downtown. The manifestation was open until May 1998 with the presentation of about twenty exhibits in galleries and diverse activities of diffusion in collaboration with a dozen of organizations in Quebec. The propositions were seen by a large public: thousands of people came to see the works of Patrick Altman on the Québec-Lévis ferry; hundreds of car drivers observed the intelligent construction done by Michel Bélanger, over Sherbrooke Street; and many citizens walked on photographs by Karole Biron glued on public roads.

As the first edition of a collective project presented during the season *Trois fois trois paysages* wanted to reunite the artistic community and the large public around a thematic program associated with the new faces of contemporary photography. Heavily supported by the milieu and the critics, the event has contributed to celebrate a city where creativity has no equivalent. It also reinforced the presence of artists within its walls. Since 1998, VU has produced three other major events based on the work presented and realized in the contexts of a visit in Quebec City: *Vertige de l'évidence* (2001), *Habiter* (2006) and *o6Émissaire* (2008).

Invited artists were: Patrick Altman, Danielle April, Richard Baillargeon, Claude Bélanger, Michel Bélanger, Claude-Philippe Benoit, Josée Bernard, Ivan Binet, Karole Biron, Pierre Blache, Jennifer Cadero, Nathalie Caron, André Clément, Serge Clément, Marlene Creates, Denis Farley, Pierre Gauvin, Gaëtan Gosselin, Danielle Hébert, André Jasinski, Nicole Jolicœur, Marie-Josée Lafortune, Diane Landry, Martin Mainguy, Alain Paiement, Suzanne Paquet, Reno Salvail, Denis Thibeault, Èlène Tremblay and Joanne Tremblay.

Foundings of Éditions J'ai VU

Since 1990, the center VU has started a regular program of publications in order to give artists more range of diffusion and to create a space for reflection on contemporary photography. The desire to intensify its editing activities and to establish a specific editorial vision forced the collective to start the Éditions J'ai VU in 1999.

The Éditions J'ai VU has the mandate to make contemporary photography from Quebec and Canada visible and known. It produces books offering new possibilities of expression to artists and researchers. J'ai VU privileges an opening to literary forms and transdisciplinary

researches and established its editorial platform around the relations between artists, writers, photographers and specialists in the humanities.

J'ai VU has published twenty books since its inception, including artists monographies, photographic fictions and thematic collectives. The publishing house has also developed an expertise within three collections, creating a dialogue between photography, literary creation and pluridisciplinary perspectives:

- the collection « L'image amie » explore the relations between photography and writing. Writers and artists enter a dialogue in order to generate works deeply located in the two disciplines where their territories are connected;

- the collection « Livres d'artistes » proposes works which give a space to creators to speak. The texts open privilege spaces for the artists and their universe and offer a perspective situated at the core of their practices;

- the collection « L'opposite » is for authors coming from other disciplines. We invite researchers to reflect on today's photography practices and to change the critical discourses on contemporary art.

The three collections propose exploratory texts, original in form and content. Most of our books dedicated to artists are the first to manifest new ways of writing as much as new ways to engage with photography.

Some artists published by Éditions J'ai VU are: Raymonde Arpil, Ivan Binet, Matthieu Brouillard, Ève Cadieux, Michel Campeau, Alexandre David, Janieta Eyre, Sandra Fillion & Steve Leroux, Michael Flomen, Vera Frenkel, Angela Grauerholz, Milutin Gubash, Geoffrey James, Valérie Lamontagne, Michel Lamothe, John Max, François Lamontagne, George Legrady, Alain Paiement, Josée Pellerin, Reno Salvail, Richard-Max Tremblay, etc.

Studio for Numeric Impressions VU

VU is a center of artists dedicated to creation. It offers a special access to a large range of equipment for production in numeric and argentic photography, to all photographers.

In the fall of 2007, the center has open a new studio for numeric printing in acquiring three ink printers of 44 and 60 inches (112 and 152 cm) each, some high definition scanners as well as few computers and specialized logiciels. This important project of development (corresponding to 200 000\$) will help in the offering of superior quality and big format printing services, on all types of papers and supports.

Since the inception of Méduse, in the middle of the nineties, VU has established a vast laboratory with complete equipment to realize works in photography. That includes four individual dark rooms, a color processor and many accessories. In 2003, we acquired our first ink printer and thus developed an exceptional expertise in the production of numeric proofs.

These unique installations in Quebec, with the help of three expert technicians, constitute the spaces available for research and exchange to serve artistic creation of all types. Our equipments are beneficial to a large community and, each year, welcome up to a hundred artists from Quebec and elsewhere to spend few days or longer periods to work in our facilities. The center receives artists in residence coming from all discipline in the visual and media arts while encouraging the realization of new works in an environment utterly open to experimentations.

The laboratory at the center VU plays an important role in Quebec's artistic community. It firmly contributes to the evolution of photography practices in the country. The center supports emerging practices by interrogating new technologies in images and the more innovatives tendencies of today's photography. Our new studio in numeric printing allows us to better support advanced research in numeric imaging and multidisciplinary productions.

Few artists that have recently used our laboratories are: Jocelyne Allouche, Danielle April, BGL, Ivan Binet, Pierre Bourgault, François Chevalier, Serge Clément, Lynne Cohen, Donigan Cumming, Doyon-Rivest, Evergon, Joan Fontcuberta, Clara Gutsche, Paul Lacroix, Hélène Matte, Sylvie Readman, Jocelyn Robert, Reno Salvail, Madeleine Samson, Giorgia Volpe and many others. ■

LE LIEU, CENTRE EN ART ACTUEL

Latinos del Norte From March 28th until April 6th 2001

In the spring of 2001, Le Lieu, centre en art actuel, with other center for artists in Quebec City (namely Avatar, Engramme, La Bande Vidéo, L'Œil de Poisson, La chambre blanche and VU) gave 32 artists from Quebec City the privilege of realizing various projects in Mexico City's three majors institutions: the Museo Universitario del Chopo, the Muca Roma and Ex Teresa Arte Actual. Drawing, painting,

video, installation video, installation, photography, engraving and etching, multimedia, performance, sculpture, conference, dance, DJ: a complete range of fields to exhibit the essential of Quebec City's artist productions. There was also the launch of a special edition of the review *Inter, art actuel*, with a presentation by Guy Sioui Durand on Quebec City's art scene followed with article on the alternative art system, its identity and its network written by Richard Martel, in French and Spanish. Add to this a conference by Guy Sioui Durand on Quebec City's art scene and a video selection presented by Yves Doyon.

The list and activities read as follows:

March 28th 2001, at the Museo Universitario del Chopo: a dance by Lydia Wagerer and the opening day for works by Patrick Altman, BGL, Ivan Binet, Karol Biron, François Lamontagne, Richard Martel, François Mathieu, Michel Saint-Onge, Carlos Sainte-Marie, Joanne Tremblay, Raynald Tremblay, Bill Vincent and Giorgia Volpe.

March 29th 2001, in the same museum: a conference by Richard Martel on alternative art in Quebec City and presentations of the various centers for artists participating in the program; at the Muca Roma, a dance by Lydia Wagerer and the opening day for works by Carole Baillargeon, Claude Bélanger, François Chevalier, Murielle Dupuis-Larose, Jean-Claude Gagnon, pierre hamelin, Karen Pick and Chantal Séguin.

April 4th 2001, at the Museo Universitario del Chopo: Conference by Guy Sioui Durand and a video selection presented by Yves Doyon.

April 5th, 2001, at Ex Teresa Art Actual: performances by Jean-Claude Gagnon, Diane Landry, Richard Martel, James Partaik and Jean-Claude St-Hilaire, and the opening day for works by Henri-Louis Chalem, Yves Doyon, the sœurs Couture, Diane Landry, James Partaik, Jean-Claude St-Hilaire and Odile Trépanier.

April 6th, at Ex Teresa Art Actual: presentation of a video selection, this time more experimental, by Yves Doyon. Musical Fiesta with DJ Gengis Dhan.

Latinos del Norte proposed a complete program of activities. Mexican critics have covered diverse activities in the n° 79 of the review *Inter, art actuel*. Twenty-one Mexican artists came to Quebec City, in September 2002. It would also be the end of this exchange between Quebec City and Mexico City. A special edition of the review *Inter, art actuel* (82) in French and Spanish, testify to the artistic situation in Mexico.

Latinos del Norte, aside the expedition into the Mexican capital and the outstanding media coverage it received, has created a sense of a strong community for the Quebec artists whom, after the event, gained coherence and showed solidarity. It also illustrated the professionalism of centers for artists in the art actuel network, at the international level.

Following: Cracovie in 2004 and La Habana in 2008.

Curators for *Latinos del Norte*: Claude Bélanger, Yves Doyon and Richard Martel.

Art Action October 20th-25th 1998

Art Action 1958-1998, as an international meeting and interactive conference has been the single most important gathering for art in action, over the last twenty years, and this, internationally.

This meeting offered a summary of the historical years between 1958 and 1978, the latter being the year of George Maciunas' death and the inception of the review *Intervention* (now, *Inter, art actuel*). Great performative axes were discovered, happening, Fluxus, actionnism. Poetry in action, body art, zaj, with the participation of Jean-Jacques Lebel, Eric Anderson, Charles Dreyfus, Dick Higgins, Danièle Roussel, Julien Blaine, Jacques Donguy, Esther Ferrer and Pierre Restany. Each participant brought some documentation, often very rare and priceless, about protagonists of art action and performance art in the sixties such as: Yves Klein, Joseph Beuys, the Festival de la libre expression, Viennese actionism, artists devoted to body art such as Gina Pane, Michel Journiac...

Art action, the second angle of investigation 1978-1998, covered the practice of living art in sixteen geographical zones: Mexico (Felipe Ehrenberg), Australia (Anne Marsh), Latin America (Victor Munoz), Japan (Seiji Shimoda), Hungary (Laszlo Beke), Scandinavia (Veronica Dresen), Poland (Lukasz Gusek), Germany-Austria and the Netherlands (Elizabeth Jappe), Canada (Bruce Barber), Quebec (Alain-Martin Richard), east coast of the United States (Martha Wilson), Spain (Bartolomé Ferrando), Italy (Giovanni Fontana), United Kingdom (Simon Herbert), France (Arnaud Labelle-Rojoux) and Ireland (Slavka Sverakova).

Furthermore, four evenings of art action were presented: the sixties with Larry Miller for a special "happening" and Fluxus Friends, the seventies with Charlemagne Palestine, the eighties with the *Bal No Future* by Istvan Kantor Monty Cantsin Amen and its friends, and the nineties with Jean-Claude

Gagnon and Réparation de poésie. Furthermore, it was the evening of Thursday October 22nd that will remain historical with more than thirty plays by Fluxus and the last participation of Dick Higgins, who died during this historical meeting.

Truthfully, it is the publication on the subject that makes this meeting important as an historical moment in art action. The Institute Valencia d'Arte Modern (IVAM) has published in Spanish, following this event, the essential and historical documentation launched in 2002, in Paris, Belfast, London, Cologne, Barcelona, Bangkok, etc.

This meeting on art action 1958-1998 positioned Le Lieu, centre en art actuel, as one of the center for artists promoting, acting and diffusing this type of practice. Our proposition to use the conception of art action more than performance will establish itself further in other various occasions. It is in constant progress, here and elsewhere in the world.

Manœuvre nomade May-June 1994

In 1994, five members of the collective Inter-Le Lieu went to Europe for an artistic itinerary. They would visit Berlin, Cracow, Budapest, Geneva, Marseille, Barcelona, Valencia and Aranda de Duera. The five members were: Jean-Yves Fréchette, Richard Martel, Nathalie Perreault, Alain-Martin Richard and Jean-Claude St-Hilaire.

The core of this multimedia excursion consisted in giving out passport, on location, of an imitation of the Canadian passport. Four hundred and thirty-nine passports were given during the whole event, out of one thousand. Others were mailed. The previous passport was dated 1996.

Various newspapers, reviews and other venues covered this manœuvre. It raised the question of identity, in Germany as well as in ex-communist Hungary where it remains a contentious issue.

In each city, the collective would start with a press conference when passport would be given out, and, in 1996, 17 embassies in 17 cities, such as Barcelona (Valentin Torrens), Belfast (Catalyst Arts), Berlin (OZWEI), Budapest (Artpool), Chicoutimi (L'oreille coupée), Cracow (Fort Sztuki), Genova (La Arie del Tempo), Hull (Roddy Hunter and Julie Bacon), Lublin (BWA), Marseille (V.A.C), Nagano (NIPAF), Nonhaburi (Concrete House), Salernes (Mediavox), Toronto (TNT), Sfantu Gheorghe (Ann Art), Valence (Bartholomé Ferrando) and Vilnius (Kuno Dimensiya).

In each occasion, we presented the activities by using exhibition, installation, manœuvre outside, performance, video, etc. We started with a presentation of the passports in Berlin. In Cracow, we produced an action of about four hours, ending with an installation. The next day, we accomplished an action outside, for roughly five hours. In Marseille, at the International Center of Poetry, we have done individual actions. In Barcelona, we have realized a collective performance and, in Valencia, in the cloisters, we performed an action that was considered by many as the most important. At last, in Aranda de Duero, aside the collective action, we have realized the machine nomade, an installation conceived to end the process of this artistic nomadic excursion.

These nomadic activities were also realized by embassies, like in Belfast during *Enroute* and in Hull during the festival *Time Based Art* (in October 1997). Our passports have circulated thanks to the free participation of nomadic citizens. We have published on the Manœuvre nomade in the review *Inter, art actuel*, n° 61 (winter of 1995). This publication explains the whole project and details what is "art action", in four languages, French, English, Spanish and German (it is a 185 pages well illustrated document). A 43 minutes video comments on the performances that took place, discusses the various activities and the giving out of passports, in the spaces and the cities that we visited.

Above all, the manœuvre nomade would stimulate the artistic act in a process of network productions, a network that will gain credibility afterwards.

Art et société October 1981

This event, viewed as a catalyst, will have a real impact on Quebec City's territory and will serve as a laboratory. It will be an example for other similar events in Quebec afterwards. A series of activities here as well as elsewhere, in institutions as well as in alternative zones was born.

After the *Symposium international de sculpture environnementale* in Chicoutimi, *Art et société* was interested in urban spaces. It has been a landmark in establishing theoretical venues and proposed exhibitions, performances and *in situ* installations.

In the first, with the Musée du Québec and some artists from Montreal, we realized an exhibition with the theme of art and politics in Quebec, from 1975 until 1980. The title was: *Pratiques sociales et engagées en art au Québec, 1975-1980*. Then,

at the Galerie du Musée, there was a photographic exhibition investigating the social.

The Éditions Intervention along with the Musée du Québec produced a catalogue. It included an analysis and some general information on the subject of art and its relations to the social, in Quebec, between 1975 and 1980. The text was called *Questionner l'art avec les catégories de la société* and was written as a commentary about the event, by Andrée Fortin.

During three days, October 30th, 31st and November 1st, it was the occasion to gather people to discuss the institutionalization of social movements, from the point of view of the economy of the sign and the political. The following people were involved: Suzanne Lemerei, René Lourau, Richard Martel, Francine Saillant, Guy Durand, Francine Couture, Hervé Fisher, Paul Warren, Marcel Rioux, Herménégilde Chiasson, Jean Paquin and Yves Robillard.

We also presented performances by Marie Chouinard, Tim Clark and Elizabeth Chilty at the Musée du Québec, as well as exterior manœuvres by Monty Cantsin with a collection for the Red Cross, one by Alain Snyers with an artistic bus and one by Hervé Fischer dealing with an imaginary signal system which ended by having him arrested by the police.

We can also mention the activities of people like Diane-Jocelyne Côté, Louis Haché and Pierre-André Arcand with the *Faux catalogue*, as well as the plural writing performances of *Physitexte* by Jean-Frédérique, before and after the event. Fréchette would go up and down a small ladder over 16 periods, during 10 hours, 13 minutes and 58 seconds, that is 30 000 steps.

Also, *Ear it live* was the first of its kind as an evening of improvised music in Quebec City, with the Julius Hemphill Trio, Oliver Lake, Nobua Kubuta and the trio Robert Leriché with Claude St-Jean and Raymond Houle. Finally, the activities of the group Insertion, with its museum minute at D'Youville square and performances by Jean-Claude Gagnon, Jean-Claude St-Hilaire and Francine Chainé completed *Art et société*.

A publication of about 120 pages will be produced, while the review *Intervention*, n° 14th, will recall the important points of this event covering many directions in 1982.

Other events considered as important:

- *Neo(Son)g Cabaret* (1984)
- Le Lieu à la Galerie Donguy (Paris, April 1985)
- *Espèces nomades* (October 1986)

- Le Lieu à la Saw Gallery (April-May 1988)
- *Immédia concerto* (October 1988)
- 1^{re} *Biennale d'art actuel de Québec* (October 1990)
- *Polyphonix 16: Oralités* (June 1991)
- *Inter/Le Lieu, Manœuvre en Europe centrale* (July 1991)
- *Interzone* (October 1992)
- *Le Lieu au Mes de la performance à Mexico* (October 1993)
- *Rencontre internationale d'art performance et multimédia* (1996)
- *Inter/Le Lieu, Exercice de déplacement en France* (June 1999)
- *Rencontre internationale d'art performance* (October 2000)
- *Arts d'attitudes* (September 2001)
- *Biennale des Couvertes; Festival de l'Insulte* (December 2001)
- *Rencontre internationale d'art performance* (September 2002)
- *Échange Québec-Kraków, Villes anciennes/Art nouveau* (July 2004)
- *Pan! Peinture* (August 2006) ■

PRODUCTIONS RECTO-VERSO

Created by the will of a group of artists to rethink the way we conceived the theater event, Productions Recto-Verso encourages the meeting and the confrontation of artists coming from different disciplines. It also valorizes bonds facilitating the development of untold creative schemes. Productions Recto-Verso is a founding member of Méduse in Québec City. To produce, to diffuse and to support: three words that encompass today the main mandates of this organization dedicated to the creation and diffusion in the multidisciplinary arts.

To Produce

Since its inception in 1984, artists of Productions Recto-Verso have produced a great number of monumental scenic works exploring the interweaving of various artistic languages, mostly around one central element: the scenographic space. If the nature of these works, scenic creations or scenographic installation varies, they all are punctuated by a dramatic content crossing, in time and spaces, the quest for resonance. While affirming the necessity to write and to see an echo of our time with codes and tools of the present day, the integration of new technologies is of the first importance in their aesthetic of complexity.

The works prevailing are nourished by the most adventurous practices in audio and video arts, scenography, sound poetry, electronic

art, visual arts and the theater. The creators were able to develop a kind of meta-language, which often provoke in the audience a sense of *never seen*. This is done not by a simple juxtaposition of these approaches but by their intertwining effects.

Parcours scénographique and *Un paysage/Ein Landschaft/A Landscape* illustrates very well the potential of this multi-interdisciplinary around which Recto-Verso's mission is elaborated.

Scenographic Trajectories

"It is impossible to tell the story (of this production), to tell you "what it is about". We have to experience it. Because the collective of Productions Recto-Verso invites us, concretely, to live theatrical representation in a new way. It disturbs our habits and it is capable of destabilizing all our senses by claiming them by force. We literally plunge into this spectacle, and we surely are shaken when we come out of it".

Made out of images of spaces filmed in various forms (super 8, 16 mm and video) during a voyage from Québec to New York and showing a wandering in Montreal, *Parcours scénographique* is one of the most important creations in the history of Productions Recto-Verso. A road, some industrial relics, a ciné-parc, a vague home-movie with subtitles, a forest, a bridge, etc. All are orienting the research process and the creation of work in a big book of 57 pages. To this book you can add a sound mechanic with the objective to cut the space in three distinct levels: on the ground level, a graves floor on the ground, the actors voices in the middle and the high voices up on the roof. The book and the sound track constitute the limitations imposed by two creators in charge of the project elaboration. One takes care of the sound envelope (John Oswald) and the other, takes care of the text (Gilles Arteau). This is how a drama was born: the disappearance which destroys the characters, alienated by an impossibility to communicate, using sterile monologues, while, among them, a young woman tells her death, her endless collapse into emptiness. The division of the sound framework is done in three superposed independent frames imposing the disappearance of synchronism as such. It also suggests a blending of references, one of top of the other. The meeting of each of the level is done thanks to the life given to the text by actors, the transcriptions of the elements for the scene, the same ones constituting the final

assembling of this spectacle to create a minimalist theater that provokes strong destabilizing sensorial shocks for the audience.

Parcours scénographique was also presented at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (1990), in Matane (1990), in readings at the occasion of the *20 jours du théâtre à risque* at the Espace Libre in Montréal (1990), in Québec City (1991), at the Théâtre La Chapelle in Montreal (1994). This work has been recorded on a cd published by Ohim Editions, and realized thanks to the contest put together by Obscure, Avatar and Radio-Canada radio. It was played on Radio-Canada radio station and CKIA.

Un paysage/ Eine Landschaft/ A Landscape

Un paysage/Eine Landschaft/A Landscape was a free and audacious adaptation of the work of German dramatic author Heiner Müller, *Paysage sous surveillance*, which is the minutious description of a screen with death as its main subject. To create an impression of constant mutation, the space is broken in three distinct zones. The first isolates the audiences in a hermetic box with a great window made of an electronic film of liquid crystals, which symbolically refers to the frame of Muller's painting. Sometimes the opacity of the film allows the projection of video images as much as the transparency stimulates scenic actions. The resonant spatialization is guaranteed by the acoustic isolation of space and by the presence of shifting panels modifying its resonance. The second zone, the area of play for actors, is formed of rotating metallic structures on which a circular screen projects videographic images. These images, recorded before the event in different locations, are superposed to images perceived in real time in the third zone of this space: the blue room. As an extension of the space to play, this room, entirely in blue, contains a camera, which makes 360degree rotations and creates an effect of surimpression of the actors' image to different landscapes. The captive looks of audiences are forced to redefine their perceptions, constantly. The result? It becomes a unique work, a metissage of forms, a poetic charge based on the play of oppositions and the refusal of what is univocal in a disturbing multi-sensorial environment.

This multidisciplinary exploration has been presented at the studio *In Vitro* at Méduse, in 1996 and 1997, at the theater La chapelle de Montréal in 1998, at the Studio d'essai in 2000, in the context of the 5th edition of the

Carrefour International de théâtre de Québec and at the Banff Center, in the context of the *High Performance Rodeo Festival*, also in 2000. *Un paysage/Eine Landschaft/A Landscape* was numerized on cdrom in February 1999 and was the topic of a videographic editing realized by videast Eric Gagnon, and presented in different festivals.

To Diffuse

Productions Recto-Verso assumes a mandate of specialized diffusion. Annually, it presents the *Mois Multi*, a rare festival solely dedicated to the multidisciplinary creation and electronic arts. The *Mois Multi* offers a new vision about creation by exploring the crossroads of different discourses, methods and languages. It does it by this encounter with new forms of creation coming out of the artist's works, on national and international scenes. The *Mois Multi* has also a unique stature because it remains a structuring project for the artistic community. It brings new meanings and hopes in a city where research, interdisciplinary, electronic and media creations are in expansion.

The perfect translation for each year of the intense and varied program of the *Mois Multi* could be "We have to know to take risks". The *Mois Multi* is audacious. It speaks about the range of some of its artistic propositions, the originality of their contexts of presentation or the diffusion of the first works of importance. It is a unique occasion to discover works with a multiplicity of forms and languages that can change our rapport to the world.

Since its humble beginnings in 2000, the *Mois Multi* has become an essential and unavoidable venue for the multidisciplinary and electronic arts, not to mention that it is the principal event of its kind in Canada.

MM6 2005 « Hybridation »

Productions Recto-Verso elaborates its program around a new theme, every year. It has put forward, in 2005, the contribution of multidisciplinary practices to the « hybridation » movement. A movement that we can observe at the core of a wide range of artistic disciplines. The great variety of works presented is coming out of the creation processes made out of this fertile blending of genres, which lead to a new approach in discourse as much as in method.

The MM6 began with the renowned collective of the independent artistic scene in Russia called AKHE Russian Engineering Theater. They had presented two plays, *White Cabin* and *Plug-n-Play*.