
VU, a Center For Photography Production and Diffusion

Ville de Québec 1978-2008

Quebec City 1978-2008

Numéro 100, automne 2008

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/60212ac>

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Éditeur(s)

Les Éditions Intervention

ISSN

0825-8708 (imprimé)

1923-2764 (numérique)

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Citer cet article

(2008). VU, a Center For Photography Production and Diffusion. *Inter*, (100), 132–133.

2000, Version 2.3

Festival international du nouveau cinéma et des nouveaux médias de Montréal (FCMM). Artists: Émile Morin and Jocelyn Robert. Location: SAT, Montreal.

2000, Version 2.4

Outer Ear Festival. Artists: Émile Morin, Daniel Jolliffe and Jocelyn Robert. Location: Chicago.

2001, Version 3.0

The event *Computer Voices/Speaking Machines*. Artists: Pascale Landry, Émile Morin and Jocelyn Robert. Location: Walter Phillips Gallery at the Banff Center for the Arts.

[...] La salle des nœuds 3 becomes in essence an environment for detached contemplation. It's immersive but not interactive. [...] Moreover these works seem to be trying to say something about the one-to-one of the old telephone system and the many-to-many of the new digital but no less human network. (Sarah Cook, *Metamute*, August 2001.)

2006, Avatar @ Vooruit

In May 2005, following an initiative by artist Amy Franceschini from San Francisco, Eva de Groote and Jocelyn Robert are meeting to elaborate the basis for the collaboration between Avatar and Vooruit, a center from Gand, in Belgium. The result of this meeting is the presentation in Vooruit, in 2006, of a program orchestrated by curator Eva de Groote which includes a series of propositions created by artists from the collective Avatar: George Azzaria, Diane Landry, Mériel Lehmann, Louis Ouellet, Émile Morin, Philippe Pasquier and Jocelyn Robert.

The event Avatar @ Vooruit includes conferences, performances, installations and computer pieces diffused on location of in "balladodiffusion".

First international visit of importance for collective of Avatar, the event in Belgium will bring positive offsprings since it will be followed by: artists from Avatar (namely, Diane Landry, Émile Morin, Jocelyn Robert) participating at the event *Québec Numéric* at the Théâtre Le Châtelet in Paris, the following fall, under the direction of Richard Castelli; the participation of Philippe Pasquier at the creation of a sound event in Cologne (Germany); the diffusion of a work by Louis Ouellet, at the *Festival of sound creation* in Belgium; and the participation of Avatar at the *Festival de poésie de Berlin*, in June 2007, where artists from Avatar (Pierre-André Arcand, Christof Mignone, Émile Morin, Jocelyn Robert, Sabica Senez) were offered the best places for their

performances and installations in the section titled « Avatar Digitale Poésie ».

2007-2008 lenomdelachose.org

In the fall of 2007, Avatar redefines its Web space. Since the various aspects of diffusion of our audio and electronic activities are taking advantage of an important Web presence, it has become imperative to reconsider the public platform, rethink its usage and form. This reflection has brought us to improve the whole site, that one can now visit at www.lenomdelachose.org. This new frame in progress gives as good a visibility to Avatar – audio and electronic creation and diffusion – as to OHM Éditions – the editor – and VacuOhm Distribution – a space of audio art distribution and electronics.

This reconsideration of our Web presence is done in conjunction with the reflections that we have pursued in the last two years, notably the conferences *Métamédia* (2007) and *Supervitess* and *Wikimémoire* (2008) which have incited us to reflect on new forms of interventions, forms that we will be able to see in action the winter of 2009. ■

VU, A CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHY PRODUCTION AND DIFFUSION

Since 1981, VU is a center for artists dedicated to the promotion and development of contemporary photography. The center proposes a diverse program of activities in diffusion in order to develop public interests in today's visual arts. Each year, VU presents a dozen of exhibitions by artists from Quebec, Canada and other countries. The center has organized many events of diffusion and helped in the circulation of certain exhibitions on the international scene, only to mention *Mirabile Visu* (1989), *Le réel et ses simulacres* (1991-1995), *La traversée des mirages* (1992), *Trois fois trois paysages* (1997-1999), *La disparition* (2002-2004) and *Habiter* (2006). VU and the Éditions J'ai VU also published over 40 books on the art of photography as well as over 200 texts about the artists involved in the various exhibitions mentioned in the programs of the organization.

VU offers a privilege access to a vast range of equipment for creation in argentic and numeric photography to artists of all disciplines. Each year, the center welcomes many artists in residence and gives them the

means to develop new expertise and interrogate their photography projects. VU supports innovating practices and encourage critical reflection around the relevant issues of today's photography.

Mirabile Visu

From November 1st to 26th 1989, Quebec City was enthralled by the rhythms of *Mirabile Visu*, an event initiated by the center VU with the help of six other center for artists in Quebec City – L'Atelier de réalisations graphiques, La chambre blanche, Le Lieu, Obscure, L'Œil de poisson and VU – to celebrate the 150 years of photography.

This major event gathered ninety artists, among which twenty young people from Europe. There was a range of fifteen collective exhibitions and other manifestations presented in the various spaces of diffusion in the city, including most of the exhibition centers and museums.

The event wanted to show the proliferation of practices in the art of photography in Quebec and elsewhere at the end of the eighties. It has contributed to diffuse and promote the medium of photography, stimulate discourses and exchange on the discipline. It also valorized the particular imagination of photography while confirming the essential role that the medium continues to play on the art actual scene.

Mirabile Visu corresponded otherwise to an important opening for the artistic community in Quebec City. It was the first time that centers for artists were getting together to realize a manifestation of such range, in the respect of their own artistic endeavors and commitments. Since then, the milieu has developed a solid dynamic of exchange, an fruitful collaborations between organisations in the region are since more common. We only have to mention the most spectacular of it all: the opening of Méduse in the year 1995.

Opening of Méduse

Since 1995, ten organizations operating in the visual, media and multidisciplinary arts created a cooperative and share a building of 4000 m² in Saint-Roch: the cooperative Méduse. These organisations – Antitube, L'Atelier de la mézannine, Avatar, La Bande Vidéo, Engramme, L'Œil de Poisson, Productions Recto-Verso, CKIA-FM, Spirafilm and VU – count today more than 1000 members and reach, with more and than 200 events, an estimated public of 30 000 people, each year.

Méduse represents a major center of production and diffusion of live art.

It allows exchange of experimental research, creation, education and presentation of activities of all kinds. Two ideas have been important in the founding of the cooperative: to facilitate access to the equipment for creation and the encounter between the public and the artists. It is important to improve the conditions of artists, the conditions of diffusion of their works and to maximize the available resources while integrating new technologies.

Méduse offers outstanding working tools and services to the artistic communities of the Quebec City region. The center also gives a privilege access to a large range of equipment helpful to all disciplines in the visual and media arts: audio, video, photo, film, etching, sculpture, computers and electronic, radio and the scene. Twenty expert technicians supply the best services to artists of all disciplines, creating a unique context for creation in Canada, especially because of its program of artists in residence.

As an essential component of the cultural and artistic life of Quebec City, Méduse is also one of the symbols of Saint-Roch's revitalization. Pioneer in its domain, it has become, over the years, one of its kind. It is now recognized as a privilege space of creation and exchange in Canada and all over the world.

In 2007, Méduse acquired new equipments (for a value of 1,6 millions) in order to serve better its clientele and the members of the cooperative.

Trois fois trois paysages 1997

From October 1997 to May 1998, the center VU associated itself with Quebec City's cultural community to welcome 33 artists from Quebec, Canada and other countries. They were asked to complete a serie of actions, installations *in situ* and photography exhibitions on the topic of landscape and contemporary urban planning. They were invited to be in residence in Quebec City and to produce works in an urban contexts. The artists participating came here to explore the territory and to formulate audacious and new opinions about it. The event encouraged the free explorations of a potential city, and most people involved were eager to confront the notion of "ordering" in projects around the documentary usage of photography. Each artist thus explored an original aspect of the physical and human geography on the mode of a geographical narrative ranging from the fiction of territory to the invention of landscapes.

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.