

Magazine of the
Musée d'art contemporain
de Montréal

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≡ MAC





EDITORIAL

John Zeppetelli
Director and Chief Curator

I write these words in the morose, grief-stricken aftermath of the U.S. election. With worrying signs of neo-fascist normalization, we realize now what fragile things democracies really are. Further away, but visually and psychologically close at hand, a brutal civil war still rages in Syria, while other conflicts and hardships—including the heart-breaking plight of migrants, among a variety of other tragedies—flare up around the world and also at home.

Political, social, territorial and ecological issues press harshly against our lives. As if that weren't enough, we must now also be vigilant about their depiction, representation and analysis. We must now contend with the purported truthfulness of events and facts. Witness the sinister political machinations of fake news, fuelled and amplified by the potentially distorting ubiquity of the Internet and our 24-hour news cycle.



Photo: John Londrino

In this winter of our discontent, the Musée stages a full-force confrontation with political manipulation while vigorously opposing post-truth politics. Two new socially engaged exhibitions tackle representations of war and conflict as well as the horrors of iniquity, corruption and patriarchal violence. The timing of these shows, which we could not have foreseen, could not be better. Our faith, as a result, can be restored.

Trained as an artist and morgue technician, the internationally acclaimed artist Teresa Margolles has delved into the darkest corners of her native Mexico, exploring the lives of voiceless victims and the afterlife of corpses. For over 30 years, Margolles has developed her practice in response to the endemic violence that ravages her country. Concise, minimalist sculptures and elegant installations variously conceal corporeal traces, bodily fluids or material fragments of buildings and places. She has explored violent deaths from the drug trade, marginalities and exclusions, femicides and social injustice.

At the centre of Margolles's exhibition titled *Mundos* is a work resulting from a broken promise: *La Promesa* is a powerful 16-metre-long minimalist sculpture in the form of a wall made from the debris of an abandoned house the artist acquired and demolished in the border city of Ciudad Juárez. The exhibition brings together works mainly created in the current decade, including sculptural and photographic installations, performative interventions and videos. Spare, yet

powerfully moving, Margolles's work reaches out and brings us into the world of those whose lives have been made invisible.

Montréal artist Emanuel Licha strategically shifts the focus of war reporting to the hotels that hosted the journalists reporting on the conflicts. *Now Have A Look At This Machine* skilfully looks at the pivotal role hotels have played in the distribution, circulation and fabrication of images of war. Themselves near, or indeed inside, the theatres of war, these hotels have provided the needed refuge for security, electricity, communications, food and camaraderie with fellow journalists and all the other players and hangers-on acting out on this large stage. The hotels in Beirut, Gaza, Kiev and other hot spots thus become settings for Licha's creative and critical enactments, hubs that bear witness not only to complicated and always tragic wars, but also to an artist determined, through film and archival material, to arrive at the difficult truth of art.

Teresa Margolles
127 Cuerpos (detail), 2006
[127 Bodies]
Installation, remnants of threads used after the autopsy to sew up the bodies of victims of violent death
Installation view at the Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, 2006
Dimensions variable
Photo: Achim Kukulies
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich

Cover
Teresa Margolles
Pista de baile del "Nightclub Irma's" (detail), 2016
[Dance floor from "Nightclub Irma's"]
Colour print on cotton paper
Transgender sex worker standing on the ruins of the dance floor of a demolished nightclub in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico
125 x 185 cm (framed)
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich

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TERESA MARGOLLES

MUNDOS

John Zeppetelli
(Emeren García, co-curator)

Teresa Margolles's quietly devastating installations, sculptures, photographs and performances are the result of an unflinching humanistic and artistic reflection on social strife, personal tragedy and marginalization. The morgues, dissecting rooms and intermittently violent streets of Mexico City and Ciudad Juárez have been the foundational moments for her important and uncompromising work. The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is very proud to present this pre-eminent Mexican artist's first large-scale museum show in North America, titled *Mundos*, consisting of work mostly from the last decade, and taking its name from a salvaged neon sign from a former bar in Ciudad Juárez.

At the centre of our exhibition is *La Promesa* [The Promise], an arresting sculpture in the form of a long, 16-metre low wall, upon which daily actions take place. A spare and powerful symbol of transmutation, the minimalist work is made with 22 tons of debris from an abandoned house in the border city of Ciudad Juárez which the artist bought and demolished for this purpose. Teams of volunteers will scratch away at the wall and disperse the small fragmented pieces of rubble on the gallery floor. Resonating with ideas of migration and displacement, this Mexican wall also alludes to current border policing debates, especially at this historical juncture. The house was part of a housing development built to

accommodate the thousands of migrants the city attracted to work in its *maquiladoras* (factories assembling goods for tariff-free export to the U.S.) who were then forced to leave after the epidemic of violence and drug-related gang murders in the area. *La Promesa* is the sculptural embodiment of a failed civic promise.

Ciudad Juárez is the setting for other works in this show, beginning with *Pesquisas* [Inquiries], which consists of a grid of 30 large, rephotographed ripped-up posters of missing women pasted on the city's streets, brutally alluding to patriarchal violence and police inaction or indifference and the failure to find the many disappeared women —resonating with Canada's own history of missing

and murdered Indigenous women. *36 Cuerpos* [36 Bodies], a string running the length of the gallery, reveals itself upon closer inspection as something more sinister: knotted suture threads, used for post-mortems on victims of violence. In another installation, *Sonidos de la muerte* [Sounds of Death], violent crimes are eerily evoked by field recordings made at the crime scenes. *En el Aire* [In the Air] encapsulates much of Margolles's methodology, characterized by an uneasy but potent alliance of studied elegance and shocking horror. Here, in a paradoxical appearance, soap bubbles are produced with a mixture of water obtained from morgues after the cleaning of corpses, to create an ethereal shower of bubbles falling gently from the ceiling of a large space. Every bubble bursting on contact is a body, says Margolles, reminding us that we are witnesses.

Teresa Margolles was born in 1963 in Culiacán, Sinaloa, in northwestern Mexico. She studied art, communications and forensic medicine. In the early 1990s at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, she helped found the performance collective SEMEFO; later, she worked independently. In 2009 she represented Mexico at the 53rd Venice Biennale and has participated in many other biennials and international exhibitions, with numerous solo and group exhibitions, mainly in Mexico, the United States and other countries throughout Latin America and Europe. Margolles is the recipient of many awards, including the 2012 Artes Mundi prize in Cardiff, the United Kingdom's most prestigious award for an artist who engages with "the human condition, social reality and lived experience."



Pesquisas (details), 2016

[Inquiries]

Wall installation, 30 colour prints of posters photographed on the streets of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, portraying women who have disappeared, from the late 1990s through to the present
303 x 705 cm (approx. overall)

Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich



Photos: Rafael Burillo

La Promesa, 2012
[The Promise]
Sculptural block made of the ground-up remains of a demolished house in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico
Above: installation view at the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid, 2014; below: installation views of the action performed at the MUAC, Mexico City, 2012
Dimensions variable
Collection Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), UNAM, Mexico City

EMANUEL LICHA

NOW HAVE A LOOK AT THIS MACHINE

Lesley Johnstone
Curator and Head of Exhibitions
and Education

*Now just have a look at this machine.
Up till now a few things still had to be set by hand,
but from this moment it works all by itself.
It's a remarkable piece of apparatus...*

Franz Kafka, *The Penal Colony*





The exhibition *Now Have A Look At This Machine* is a reflection on what Québec artist Emanuel Licha terms the “hotel machine,” examining the role hotels play in the fabrication, analysis and dissemination of images of war. It includes an hour-long creative documentary titled *Hotel Machine*, which was filmed in the hotels that housed foreign war correspondents covering conflicts in Beirut, Sarajevo, Gaza, Kiev and Belgrade. Surrounding the central projection space of the film are five archival stations which, through texts, images, documents and excerpts from news reports and fiction films, investigate the concept of war hotel as proximity, vantage point, security, communication and hub.

The choice of a hotel where journalists will live and work during a conflict is made according to its capacity to provide security, personnel, communications, food and electricity, as well as its situation with regard to the theatre of operations. Although they are in the midst of conflicts, war hotels remain slightly detached; entering a war hotel is like entering a world of its own. The presence of journalists inevitably draws other protagonists: fixers, translators, politicians, negotiators, experts and military officials, along with civilians. The discussions and negotiations that take place on the hotel premises, combined with the fact that it is from the hotel that images and discourses about the war are put into circulation, contribute to transforming it into a pivotal place in the unfolding of events. Consisting of a montage of the architectural spaces of the five hotels and their staff, many of whom recount experiences and memories

of the time when the hotel was a hub of activity, Emanuel Licha’s research-based project is a fictive, but all too accurate, portrait of what is rarely seen yet is integral to our knowledge of conflicts.

Artist and filmmaker Emanuel Licha was born in Montréal in 1971. He studied urban geography and then the visual arts. His work in film, video installation and photography focuses on the role of architecture in the representation of conflicts, leading to a reading of the features of the urban landscape as social, historical and political signs. His recent projects investigate the means by which traumatic and violent events are being witnessed and observed. Recent solo exhibitions have been held in Québec at the Musée régional de Rimouski, as well as SBC Gallery and Galerie B-312 in Montréal; in Europe at *LOOP 09*, Barcelona; Galerie Cortex Athletico, Bordeaux; Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris; Careof, Milan; and EXIT – Institute for Contemporary Art, Peja; and at Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Mexico City.

The exhibition *Emanuel Licha: Now Have A Look At This Machine* is produced and circulated with financial support from the Government of Canada.

Hotel Machine, 2016
HD film, colour, sound, 64 min
Stills

PICTURES FOR AN EXHIBITION

Marie-Eve Beaupré
Curator of the Collection

Pictures for an Exhibition is a new series of projects based on works from the Collection. This evolving cycle will feature various chapters, beginning with the presentation titled “For time is the longest distance between two places.” This exhibition comprises works that express our need to define our relationship to time and space, and that reveal artists’ propensity to want to depict that relationship, from the infinitely large to the infinitely small. It takes a form akin to a colour chart, juxtaposing different conceptions of time—measured, divided, standardized, numbered, accumulated, punctuated, determined, infinite, abstract—as represented by the artists in linear or cyclical fashion. While some temporal measurements coincide with natural cycles, others allow us to locate, on a human scale, places of origin and the distance that separates us from them.



Sarah Sze

Measuring Stick, 2015

Video projectors, fan, light, mirrors, wood, stone, archival prints, speakers, stainless steel, balloon, sand, fruit, egg, plastic, toilet paper, aluminum foil, grass
Collection Giverny Capital

In Tennessee Williams’ 1944 play *The Glass Menagerie*, the characters turn out to be victims of time, faced with its irreversible nature, “for time is the longest distance between two places.” The exhibition takes this quotation as a premise and offers a selection of works drawn from the Musée Collection in which time is a subject of examination. The pieces by Nicolas Baier, Patrick Bernatchez, Eric Cameron, Paterson Ewen, Charles Gagnon, Betty Goodwin, Eadweard Muybridge, Roman Opalka, Alain Paiement, Guy Pellerin, Jana Sterbak, Françoise Sullivan, Serge Tousignant, Bill Vazan and Lawrence Weiner are all presented from this perspective and set in dialogue with a splendid sculpture by Sarah Sze titled *Measuring Stick*, 2015, which looks at the measurement of time and space through the moving image.

From March 2017, a new hanging of works from the Collection will revolve around dialogues between Québec, Canadian and international artists. We will also have the pleasure of rediscovering some outstanding installations, presented in rotation, starting with *On the Banks of the Red River* by Marcel Dzama and *The Sleepers* by Bill Viola. Finally, it will now be possible to follow the latest developments in the Collection and discover some of the works recently added to it, in a space devoted to new acquisitions. This brand-new formula will allow visitors to see the Collection from an evolving viewpoint, as it continues to grow.

The Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal is grateful to Québec’s Ministère de la Culture et des Communications for a grant provided under its program to support permanent exhibitions, which has made this project possible.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Hours

Monday: Closed to the general public;
open to groups by reservation
Tuesday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Saturday, Sunday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Admission

\$14 – Adults
\$12 – Seniors (age 60 and over)
\$10 – Students (age 18 and over with valid I.D.)
\$5 – Youth (age 13 to 17)
Free admission for children under 12 and
MACarte cardholders
\$30 – Families (2 adults with children)
Half-price Wednesday evenings from 5 p.m.



Archives and Media Centre (second floor)

A place for multimedia research and consultation, open to specialized professionals and researchers by appointment, Tuesday to Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1 to 4:30 p.m.

Lucie Rivest (Archives and Collections):

lucie.rivest@macm.org

Martine Perreault (Media Centre):

martine.perreault@macm.org

Musée Boutique

Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Sunday: 12 to 6 p.m.
Closed Mondays

Subscribe to the Musée's e-newsletter at
www.macm.org



EXHIBITIONS

Teresa Margolles
Mundos

February 16 to May 14, 2017

Emanuel Licha
Now Have A Look At This Machine

February 16 to May 14, 2017

*For time is the longest distance between two places*

Until March 12, 2017

Pictures for an Exhibition
(new hanging of works from the Collection)

From March 2017

Arrimage 2017
Time in All Its Forms

April 8 to 30, 2017

Exhibition of work by elementary schoolchildren, cycles 2 and 3, under the program *A Montréal School for All* established by Québec's Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. Beverley Webster Rolph Hall – Admission to the exhibition is free at all times.

ARTIST AND CURATOR TALKS

Teresa Margolles: *Mundos*

Meet co-curators John Zeppetelli and Emeren García
Wednesday, March 1 at 6 p.m. In French
Thursday, March 23 at 6 p.m. In English
Thursday, April 6 at 6 p.m. In Spanish

Emanuel Licha:

Now Have A Look At This Machine

Meet the curator, Lesley Johnstone, and the artist,
Emanuel Licha
Thursday, March 9 at 6 p.m. In French
Wednesday, March 22 at 6 p.m. In English

NUIT BLANCHE

March 4, 2017



SYMPOSIUMS AND LECTURES

Symposium Stay Still, Translate: Performance, Présentation, Conservation du tableau vivant au Canada

Organized by the École multidisciplinaire de l'image,
Université du Québec en Outaouais
Friday, February 17 and Saturday, February 18, 2017

Lecture by David Joselit

Organized by the Department of Studio Arts,
Concordia University
Thursday, March 2, 2017

Climate Realism symposium

Organized by Media@McGill
Friday, March 10, 2017

Eleventh Max and Iris Stern International
Symposium: *Topographies of Mass Violence*

Organized by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
and the Université du Québec à Montréal Faculty of Arts
Friday, March 31 and Saturday, April 1, 2017

INTERACTIVE TOURS FOR ALL

Without reservation, included in the price of admission

Wednesdays at 5, 6 and 7:30 p.m. in French

and 6:30 p.m. in English

Sundays at 1:30 p.m. in English and 3 p.m. in French

Tours are also offered, by reservation,

for all groups of 15 or more.

Reservations and information: 514 847-6253

NOCTURNES

Friday, February 24, 2017

Friday, May 5, 2017



FAMILY WORKSHOPS

Every Sunday at 1:30 p.m. or 2:30 p.m.

The **Family Sundays** program consists of a 30-minute tour followed by a 1-hour workshop. Free for children under 12 (must be accompanied by an adult). No reservation necessary.



Workshops related to the exhibition
Pictures for an Exhibition

Experimental Site

January 15, 22 and 29, and February 5, 12 and 19, 2017
Guided by the dazzling installation *Measuring Stick*, 2015, by Sarah Sze, on display in *Pictures for an Exhibition*, participants will explore the notions of time, space and movement. Working in teams, under subdued lighting, they will carry out different experiments. They will manipulate moving images from the world of science, point light beams and juxtapose and superimpose fragments of transparent and opaque surfaces. The lighting effects are bound to be many and varied.

Tableau vivant

February 26 and March 5, 12 and 19, 2017
Tableaux, 2011, by Claudie Gagnon, casts an amused, ironic, contemporary eye at the art of the past using the *tableau vivant* and video. Workshop participants, in turn, will create their own playful *tableau vivant*. This practice that lies midway between theatre and the visual arts will offer the performers a host of possibilities... but they will have to "hold the pose" for a certain amount of time. Clothes, sets, sound tracks and a camcorder** will help portray the subject and enhance the theatrical sketches to be performed. The themes, genres, compositions, poses and gestures will come from iconic paintings from the 16th to the 21st century, as well as from selected works in the Musée Collection.

**For this option, the parents or guardians of children participating in the activity will have to complete the permission form allowing them to be filmed and/or photographed. This will enable you to view the *tableaux vivants* produced at the Musée in class or at home.

Flower Power!

March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, and May 7, 2017
Taryn Simon's superb 2015 photograph (see below for the title), presented in *Pictures for an Exhibition*, will prompt participants to think about the symbolic, political, artistic and even excessive use of living flowers. In this activity, you will work in teams to create floral compositions which you will photograph against a coloured background to officially commemorate your visit to the Musée. (Please note that we will use artificial flowers.)

Title of the work: *Agreement to Develop Park Hyatt St. Kitts under the St. Kitts & Nevis Citizenship by Investment Program. Dubai, United Arab Emirates, July 16, 2012, Paperwork and the Will of Capital*

ADULT WORKSHOPS

The **Creative Moments** program is offered on different days and at different times.
Dates marked with an asterisk* indicate that the workshop will be preceded by a tour of the exhibition.
Cost: \$16 per workshop.
Registration required: reservation.education@macm.org or 514 847-6266



Workshops related to the exhibition
Pictures for an Exhibition

Compound Time

January 24* and 31, and February 7 and 14, 2017, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. or
January 25*, and February 1, 8 and 15, 2017, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. or from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
The works in the latest presentation of *Pictures for an Exhibition* will lead off a series of activities that will allow us to explore the notions of time, space and movement while trying out a range of approaches, media and techniques.

To Be Discovered

March 28*, April 4, 11, 18 and 25, and May 2, 2017, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. or
March 29*, April 5, 12, 19 and 26, and May 3, 2017, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. or from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
In this group of activities related to works in the Collection that are on display in a new presentation of *Pictures for an Exhibition*, we will discover various artistic possibilities and create our own, original images.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

The **Workshop/Tour Combo** program offered from Monday to Friday is intended for all categories of visitors: preschool, school, college, university, professional, tourist and community groups.
Visit the website www.macm.org/education
Reservations and information: 514 847-6253



MUSÉE DAY CAMPS

March Break

For children age 7 to 11
March 6 to 10, 2017

Summer

For children age 6 to 15
June 26 to August 18, 2017
Visit the website www.macm.org/camps
Information and registration: 514 847-6266



SÉMINARTS

An educational program that consists of five sessions providing an introduction to collecting contemporary art, offered in co-operation with the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation.



In winter 2017, two series will be offered in French:

Series A: February 22, March 8 and 22, and April 5 and 19
Series B: March 1, 15 and 29, and April 12 and 26

Cost: \$225 per series, 15% off for MACarte holders
Sessions take place Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Information and registration:
www.macm.org/en/activities-and-events/seminarts
seminarts@macm.org
514-847-6244



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Free admission to all our exhibitions

Free admission to all Nocturnes

Invitations to openings

15% off at the Musée Boutique

15% off several activities (SéminArts, Creative Moments and children's parties)

Free admission to the Family Sundays art workshops

PRIVILEGES

Enjoy discounts from our cultural partners.
Complete list at macm.org