

DESCRIPTION TO THE FIRST ROOM

You are now in the rectangular room located across from the welcome desk.

Displayed on the left wall and on the section of wall where the exhibition's title is written, is the work *Neotropical Migrants* by Maria Ezcurra, an artist born in Argentina, raised in Mexico and now based in Montreal.

For this work, the artist conducted extensive field observation work from 2018 to 2023, documenting neotropical migratory birds which reproduce in the Province of Quebec, and winter in the South. The work includes over one hundred drawings of birds,

representing them according to their actual size, in a wide palette of colours. Some are in white, grey, brown and black, while others are very colourful. 150 drawings were made on recycled packaging materials in different sizes and shades, ranging from white to brown. Some of the cardboard materials show signs of use; some appear to have been used to transport goods. The smallest measures 10 centimetres by 15 centimetres, others are as large as 1.4 metres by 1 metre, depending on the bird.

Dozens of migratory birds are shown next to each other, forming a large mosaic. On each piece of cardboard, the artist hand wrote in pen or pencil the name of the given bird in French, English, Spanish and Latin.

She also classified the drawings according to the conservation status of each bird, using coloured dots. On the left wall are all the drawings marked with a green dot, which means it is of low concern. On the back of the section of wall separating the room, are all the drawings marked with a yellow or a red dot, which show that the birds are respectively in decline or at risk.

With this work, the artist underlines the contradictions of mobility in contemporary geopolitics by raising her gaze to the sky, where migratory animals continue to cross borders amidst the tightening of migratory controls.

On the right side of the room is a work by Sonia Robertson, an Innu artist from the community of Mashteuiatsh. The installation entitled *Umiku Nekau-Assi | Blood of Mother Earth* was created between 2014 and 2019, using rope, polyester net and tulle, fishing line, sand, and wax paper. The work is the material trace of a search inspired by the spirit of the river in an animistic vision. It evokes a translucent blue river, descending from the ceiling to the floor, where it joins a circle of golden sand. On this circle are pieces of light blue wax paper embroidered with words stitched by Indigenous women from Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Lanaudière. These words carry a prayer, or an intention to heal the water. Each time the work is mounted, Sonia Robertson invites women to contribute to it and enhance its imaginary by adding

embroidered words to the sand, at the outflow of the river's current.

The artist's approach, which makes us aware of the fragility of water, is based on the search for unity, gratitude, history and traditional knowledge. With this installation, the artist transforms space into a sacred place and explores the notion of temporary space and movement, represented by the meanderings and flow of the river.

The right side of the room opens to a passage. In this passage, an installation is shown on the left-side wall.

Untitled *Behind Closed Door / The Expanse of Our Breaths*, this work was created in 2020 by Jacynthe Carrier, a Quebec City-based artist.

It consists of a large photograph and a screen playing a filmed performance. It runs 19 minutes, 50 seconds and is played on a loop.

The photograph measures almost 3 metres in length and just over 2 metres wide. It is displayed horizontally on the wall. It shows a crashing white waterfall under a white sky, contrasting against the black rocks around the waterfall. The screen is smaller and hangs over the left side of the photograph, partially covering it. It broadcasts a video composition depicting filmed performances of different dancers, moving in empty, white interior spaces.

With this installation, the artist probes the space between the dancers and the tension that they share, also showing their bodies in relation to the forces of nature.