

An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada

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A research exhibition and a series
of talks at Artexte

ARTEXTE



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Preface

The enormous task of compiling an annotated bibliography of performance art writings in Quebec and Canada undertaken by Barbara Clausen and her student research group at the art history department at UQAM, which finds, gathers and shares information is important, but it's necessity and significance lies in its deeply inclusive approach.

First, this projects seeks a variety of voices. The continually growing list of publications and annotations brings together writings by artists, students, critics, journalists, historians and curators into one compendious document. Similarly, the choice of artists in the gallery, speaks to the diversity of practices and generations, active then and now in Quebec and Canada. The volume and inclusiveness of this research and display, is a fundamental first for performance research in Quebec and Canada. This mass of documentation opens up a new space in which histories can be traced and understood through the voices of those making, observing, and writing critically about performance works.

Second, it is culturally and geographically exhaustive. The scope and reach of this research goes far beyond the confines of the major cities of Quebec and Canada to include writings that deal with events, galleries, and collectives in regional centres and remote locations. Culturally, it is vital, as it brings together – in one document and space – publications and writings that address culturally diverse experiences of performance. But here again, the approach is important. The documents are all mixed together, not classified under definitions of cultural identity, thus making possible new territories for culturally comprehensive research and writing across performance art's many disciplines.

Beyond the shared interest in making a larger body of writing accessible for performance art research, Artexte's collaboration also forces us to reflect on how performance art is defined and represented – both now and in the past – in our collection. For example, many of the pre-2000 publications selected from Artexte's collection for display, would not be found in keyword searches for 'performance art', because at the time of their acquisition in the 1980s and 1990s they were defined as 'intermedia', 'dance', or 'media art'. The selected publications in the gallery ask us to grapple with our bibliographic taxonomies, old and new, and find a ways to make publications on performance art searchable across the shifting multitude of defining terms and intertwining histories.

An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada also brings Artexte to a reckoning of gaps in our collection that have inspired the acquisition of publications that we hope will support research on performance art for years to come. Similarly, the sharing of documents and bibliographical information with the Bibliothèque des arts de l'UQAM and Concordia University Libraries, has brought about a multi-collection collaboration that inspires shared reflection to assure attention this subject in our respective collections.

Artex te takes care of a constantly developing special collection of documents, donated primarily from artists, historians, writers, art centres and publishers from across the country. As such, it contains the writings, interests and practices of a very particular pan-canadian community that cares about art writing. This project brings many of these publications out of their boxes and shelves and in doing so, inscribes them into the evolving history of performance, and most importantly, brings them together so that new and intersecting readings can be made.

I would like to thank the Artexte staff for their important contributions to this project. On behalf of Artexte, I would like to thank Barbara Clausen and her student research group for the work together and share our best wishes for the future of this research project. The collaboration between library collections and special loan agreements were made possible through the care of Melinda Reinhart at Concordia University Libraries and by Louise Guy and Lucie Séguin at la Bibliothèque des arts UQAM.

Sarah Watson

An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada

A research exhibition and a series of talks at Artexte

An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time is the first presentation of the long term university research project *An Annotated Bibliography: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada*, dedicated to an extensive bibliographic survey on performance based practices in Quebec and Canada since the 1940s. While much has been written on performance art on a local and national level over the last three decades, this presentation is committed to offer a comprehensive over-view of writings, publications and printed matter. By taking account of the wide variety of existing publications by theorists, critics, artists, and curators written in expectation, reaction and response to the performance art they are addressing, this projects hopes to contribute to a better understanding of how the history of performance art has written itself and been received, becoming an integral part of the ongoing discourse and practice.

At the end of this first phase of our research we can see how performance in the Quebec and Canadian context – where the avant-garde to a large extent produces itself in artist-run centers, festivals and publications – is based in a cross-generational generosity and a continuously growing interest in its various histories. It is of particular interest to observe that a large part of the writings can be attributed to the collaborative effort between artists, writers and researchers. This is not due to the disinterest of critics and art historians – on the contrary as this bibliography shows well – but to the fact that the act of writing, much as that of research and reflection, are an integral part of both the history as well as the present and the future of performance art as an avant-garde genre in Quebec and Canada. *An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time* reflects this collective spirit inherent for performance art, shedding light on various modes of production and circumstances of experience as well as the ongoing reception of performance art over more than half a century.

One of the objectives of the curatorial team was to render visible the process of collecting a wide-ranging ensemble of publications and writings, compiled in cooperation with the UQAM art library and Artexte. As a testimony to the vitality of performance based practices, the exhibition space is transformed into a research and discussion hub, making accessible the first results of the bibliographical research as well as a collection of over one hundred publications and documents, selected and explained by Tim Clark, Sylvie Cotton, Doyon/Demers, Michelle Lacombe, Tanya Lukin Linklater, Tanya Mars & Johanna Householder, Clive Robertson, Alain-Martin Richard and Guy Sioui Durand. *An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time* offers the visitors the possibility to contextualize and become aware of the various roles and complex networks that constitute the correlative relationship between the performer, the spectator and his or her given relationship to space and time.

Barbara Clausen, Curator and Research Director
with the curatorial and research group: Jade Boivin,
Emmanuelle Choquette, Joëlle Perron-Oddo, Julie Riendeau

Selection of documents

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Talks within the frame of the exhibition

Sylvie Lacerte

Poésie et storytelling: un itinéraire de la performance chez Vera Frenkel, de la graphie aux nouveaux médias
May 14th at 6 pm (in French)

Trois œuvres marquantes de Vera Frenkel seront examinées à l'aune de son parcours «performatif» tout au long d'une carrière foisonnante. *String Games: Improvisation for Inter-City Video* (Montréal-Toronto, 1974), «...from the Transit Bar /...du transitbar» (1992-2015) et *ONCE NEAR WATER: Notes from the Scaffolding Archive* (2008-2015). Trois œuvres qui figuraient dans l'exposition *Vera Frenkel. Cartographie d'une pratique / Mapping a Practice* à la SBC Galerie d'art contemporain, en 2010. Ces trois pièces créées à des périodes différentes de la pratique de Frenkel, mais présentées encore jusqu'à tout récemment, sont des exemples remarquables de la démarche performative que Frenkel mène depuis les 40 dernières années. Du spoken word avant la lettre, car Frenkel est aussi poète, aux nouveaux médias, en passant par ses installations, l'artiste n'a jamais apprécié les étiquettes pour décrire son travail, afin d'éviter les catégories trop restrictives. Elle préfère se définir comme une artiste multidisciplinaire, faute d'une appellation plus juste. Pionnière de l'utilisation des «nouvelles technologies» en art, tant au Canada qu'à l'étranger, Frenkel a néanmoins tissé un fil conducteur que l'on retrouve dans toutes ses œuvres.

Jacob Wren

An apology that I have not properly documented my early performance work
May 21, at 6 pm (in English)

Starting from his early reluctance to document his own work, this talk will outline the development of Jacob Wren's collaborative performance practice, a mode of working that sees the performance situation as inherently vulnerable and paradoxical, and that struggles with its own failure even as it hopes for possible, inevitable connection.

Richard Martel

Systèmes périphériques et périphérie des systèmes
May 28, at 6 pm (in French)

Cette présentation de Richard Martel ouvre la réflexion sur le potentiel de l'action comme moyen d'investigation d'un avenir non conditionné et ouvert aux périphéries. En échappant au règne des grands centres, en établissant la pratique sur une base de relations en réseau et en laissant l'activité artistique évincer l'œuvre comme une finalité, il apparaît possible de transformer le système de l'intérieur. Richard Martel poursuivra sur le rôle majeur joué par Le lieu, centre en art actuel dans l'organisation et la participation à plusieurs événements de performance d'envergure ainsi que celui de la revue *Inter, art actuel*, dans l'exploration du concept de la manœuvre en relation avec son contexte et son potentiel de remise en cause du modèle dominant.

Sylvie Tourangeau

Quel performatif générons-nous ?

October 6, at 6 PM (in French and English)

Presented in collaboration with VIVA! Art Action

Since the late 1970s, Sylvie Tourangeau has created performances that evade modes of representation and favour an authentic presence manifested in a shifting identity construction, bringing about the bodily transformation of both the performer and spectator. Seeking a better understanding of this transformative function of performance art, she devised, in the early 1980s, workshops that operated on the margins of academic institutions. Derived from her own studio practice, these workshops were bolstered by her research on performers and linked to the circulation of various discourses on performance art. This assiduous practice of performance, intensive collective workshops, and publishing on performance art in Quebec (from the late 1970s to the present), established the parameters of a comprehensive investigation of a vocabulary of action hailing from the performative process itself. In this convivial presentation, which will be punctuated by interrogations, anecdotes, and spontaneous findings, Tourangeau will address the conditions of emergence of a performative of performance art, the presence of a performative of life, as well as the effects of a performative of encounter. Is it possible to develop a consciousness that in turn becomes performative? What performative do we generate?

Biographies

HOUSEHOLDER, Johanna

Johanna Householder has been making performances, videos and other artworks since the late 1970s and teaching performance art since the early 1990s. A member of the notorious feminist ensemble, The Clichettes in the 1980s, Householder practices her own brand of cultural détournement. Her work has been shown widely, from Canada to Indonesia. She is a co-founder and director of the 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art, which held its 8th biennial festival in 2014. She edited, with Tanya Mars, *Caught in the Act: An Anthology of Performance by Canadian Women* (2005) published by YYZ Books, Toronto, as well as the upcoming 2nd edition. She is a professor at OCAD University in Toronto.

CLARK, Tim

Tim Clark has since the late 1970s been invested in photography, performance, and film and video based installations that address issues of philosophical aesthetics, the ethics of social conflict, and, above all, the "argument from apophatic theodicies." His work has been presented in Europe and North America such as at the *Biennale de Paris*, held at the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, France, and the *Okanada* (1982) Exhibition at the Akademie der Kunst, Berlin. In Canada his work has been shown at the National Gallery of Canada, the Musée d'art contemporain, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal and at the Leonard & Bina Ellen Gallery at Concordia University (2008) as well as in *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965 - 1980*, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, University of Toronto (2010).

COTTON, Sylvie

Sylvie Cotton is an interdisciplinary artist, author and curator based in Montreal, Quebec. Her work is tied to performance, art action, drawing and writing-based practices, although installation forms are also regularly used to put together exhibitions. Her work involves the creation of situations that establish a relationship with another, or an infiltration of another person's personal world. The work is generally created in situ in public or private spaces and the results are subsequently presented in galleries and festivals, or are deployed outside in other sorts of public spaces (streets, elevators, parks and restaurants, for example). Residencies are also used as a medium for creative performative activity. She is an active member of the Centre Clark and was the Director of SKOL Centre des arts actuels in Montreal. Her work has been presented internationally including a recent retrospective at the Joyce Yahouda Gallery in Montreal. In 2013 she co-published with Nathalie de Blois *Moi Aussi*. She is a doctoral candidate in the Études et pratiques des arts program at UQAM.

DOYON/DEMERS

Since 1987, without a studio and within an interdisciplinary practice, Doyon/Demers have explored questions of site-specificity, in socius, action based art and the relationship between art and life. As a collective, Hélène Doyon and Jean-Pierre Demers, have published numerous articles, most recently in 2014 *Ratisser le réel* in the monographie Alain-Martin Richard – *Performances, manœuvres et autres hypothèses de disparition* and *Weaving an interdisciplinary research methodology* in the publication *Artes e Seus Territórios*. Their work has been performed and exhibited presented internationally in Canada, Europe, Brazil, Cuba and in Japan.

LACERTE, Sylvie

Sylvie Lacerte is an art historian and critic of contemporary art and museology as well as a critic and independent curator who lives and works in Montréal. Her 2007 publication, *La médiation de l'art contemporain*, is based on her doctoral and she has given numerous talks in Québec, Canada, Europe and in Asia, most recently at the 9 *Evenings* in Istanbul. Her writings have been widely published in academic journals, exhibition catalogues and anthologies. She has taught at UQAM, McGill University and Université Laval in Québec. In 2010 she organised, as a guest curator at the SBC Gallery for contemporary art the exhibition *Vera Frenkel. Cartographie d'une pratique / Mapping a Practice* as well as the catalogue, available in print as well as online.

LACOMBE, Michelle

Michelle Lacombe has developed a unique body-based practice since obtaining her BFA from Concordia University in 2006. Purposefully minimalist, her research-based body art practice begins where bodily gesture and mark making are entwined and her performances, banal yet confrontational, are anchored in radically short actions. Her work has been shown in Canada, the USA and Europe in the context of performance events, exhibitions and colloquiums. Her practice as an artist is paralleled by a strong commitment to supporting the development of critical and alternative models of dissemination for live art and undisciplined practices. She has worked with a number of Montreal artist-run centres including Articule and La Centrale Galerie Powerhouse, and is currently the director of VIVA! Art Action, a local biennial performance art platform. In addition, she has had a number of complimentary experiences in curating, writing and generally resisting dominant culture.

LUKIN LINKLATER, Tanya

Tanya Lukin Linklater's practice spans experimental choreography, performance, video, and text. Her work has been performed/exhibited nationally and internationally. She is compelled by the interstices between visual art and poetry, performance, and pedagogy, indigenous languages, portrayals of women and children in film, and the body. Her work has been exhibited in North and South America a.o. at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santiago (Chile), SBC Gallery (Montreal), Open Space (Victoria), Urban Shaman (Winnipeg), Images Festival + Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (Toronto), Museum of Contemporary Native Art (Santa Fe), TRIBE (Sask-

toon), and at Western Front Gallery (Vancouver). She is Alutiiq with family from the Native Villages of Port Lions and Afognak in southern Alaska and makes her home in northern Ontario, Canada.

MARS, Tanya

Tanya Mars is a feminist performance and video artist and a founding member and director of Powerhouse Gallery (La Centrale) in Montreal as well as editor of Parallelogramme magazine for 13 years, and active in ANNPAC (the Association of National Non-Profit Artist-run Centres) for 15 years. She has performed widely across Canada, in Valparaíso, Chile, China, Mexico City, Sweden, France and Finland. She is a member of the 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art, held biennially in Toronto. She is co-editor with Johanna Householder of *Caught in the Act: An Anthology of Performance Art by Canadian women* (2004) as well as the upcoming *Caught in the Act II* (2015). In addition a book on her work edited by Paul Couillard, *Ironie to Iconic: The Performance Works of Tanya Mars*, was published in 2008. She is the recipient of a 2008 Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts and teaches at the University of Toronto at Scarborough in the Department of Art, Culture and Media.

MARTEL, Richard

Active since 1980, Richard Martel is a key figure in performance. Martel has written and published extensively on performance based practices and he is the founder of the magazine *Inter, art actuel* where he is the chief-editor. He has published widely and his most well known publications include *Art Action* (2005) and *L'art dans l'action / l'action dans l'art – Textes* (2002–2012), (2013). He is the founder and director of the artist run centre Le Lieu as well as the *Rencontre internationale d'art performance* (RIAP) in Québec City. His work has been presented internationally. He is engaged in both practice and theory and is interested in art as a system of experimentation and transgression.

RICHARD, Alain-Martin

Alain-Martin Richard is a performer, artist, editor, and critic. Since the 1970s he has developed a multidisciplinary practice that considers questions of art in society, and of art as poetic action – and as a philosophy enacted. His production has focused on the objective conditions of artistic experimentation, incorporating practices not usually associated with the field of art. He has participated in many festivals and events, performing in North America, Europe and Japan. With Martin Mainguy he is a member of the collective *Les causes perdues*, dedicated the exploration of contemporary poetry. He is co-editor with Clive Robertson of the book *Performance in/au Canada 1970–1990*, and was an active member at INTER/Le Lieu in Québec. In collaboration with *Les Éditions Intervention* he has organised numerous events, such as *Au contraire, la performance* (2013) at the Musée du Québec.

ROBERTSON, Clive

Clive Robertson began making and curating performance art in England in 1970. He co-instigated the Calgary-based international performance and publishing collective, W.O.R.K.S. with Paul Woodrow in 1972. Robertson is a founding editor/publisher of *Voicespondence Audio Art Publishing* (1974) and of *Centerfold / FUSE* magazine (1976). With Alain-Martin Richard he edited the book, *Perfor-*

mance au / in Canada 1970–1990 (Coach House Press / Éditions Intervention, 1991) and in 2007 produced a touring archival retrospective of his collaborations, *THEN + THEN AGAIN: Practices Within An Artist-Run Culture, 1969–2006*. He is currently finishing a feature-length video documentary *I.O.60's* (In Our Sixties) that re-connects with earlier artist communities in the UK and Canada. Clive is recognized as a leading theorist and historian of artist-run culture and currently teaches Performance Art, Art History and Cultural Studies at Queen's University.

SIOUI DURAND, Guy

Guy Sioui Durand is a Wendat (Huron) based in Wendake, Québec. He is a sociologist (PhD), art critic, independent curator, and performer (spoken word). He is specialized in contemporary North American indigenous art practices and contemporary art. He is the cofounder of the magazine *Inter* and the publishing house *Les Éditions Intervention* in Québec. He has published widely and his most well known publications include *Les très riches heures de Jean-Paul Riopelle* (2000), *L'art comme alternative. Réseaux et pratiques d'art parallèle au Québec, 1976–1996* (1997) as well as his essay *Indiens, Indians, Indios* (*Inter, art actuel*, no.104, 2009) and his dossier *Les ruses de Corbeau/Coyote/Carcajou* published in (*Esse, arts + opinions* in 2002). Sioui Durand was Aboriginal advisor for 400^e anniversaire de la ville de Québec 1608–2008 and curator of *Gépég: Souffles de Résistance* (Gatineau, Québec/Ottawa, Ontario, 2009).

TOURANGEAU, Sylvie

Sylvie Tourangeau is an artist, workshop facilitator, writer and independent curator in performance art. Since the late 1970s, she has been involved in individual, duo and collective work that combines performative actions, incidental rituals, relational practices, infiltrative art and furtive actions. She has been involved with numerous artist-run centres, including La Chambre blanche, Québec City (1978–1982), Les Ateliers convertibles, Joliette (1990–1996), DARE-DARE, Montreal (1997–2001) and Praxis Art Actuel, Sainte-Thérèse (2009–2011). Tourangeau has also published artist's books and more than fifty articles on performance art. She is currently working with the collective TouVA (Anne Bérubé, Victoria Stanton, and Sylvie Tourangeau) on a publication entitled *Le 7^e sens: Practicing Dialogues / Practicing Workshops / Practicing the Daily Performative / Pratiquer l'art performance*, scheduled to be published in the spring of 2016.

WREN, Jacob

Jacob Wren makes literature, performances and exhibitions. His books include: *Families Are Formed Through Copulation, Revenge Fantasies of the Politically Dispossessed* and *Polyamorous Love Song*, a finalist for the 2013 Fence Modern Prize in Prose and one of The Globe and Mail's 100 best books of 2014. As co-artistic director of Montreal-based interdisciplinary group PME-ART he has co-created the performances: *En français comme en anglais, it's easy to criticize, Individualism Was A Mistake, The DJ Who Gave Too Much Information and Every Song I've Ever Written*. He travels internationally with alarming frequency and frequently writes about contemporary art.

This is the first presentation of the University research project *An Annotated Bibliography: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada 1940-2014, (2014-2017)*, under the direction of Barbara Clausen, Département d'histoire de l'art de l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

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Barbara Clausen, Curator and Research Director

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With a selection of documents by:

Tim Clark, Sylvie Cotton, Doyon/Demers, Michelle Lacombe,
Tanya Lukin Linklater, Tanya Mars & Johanna Householder,
Alain-Martin Richard, Clive Robertson and Guy Sioui Durand.

Talks within the frame of the exhibition:

May 14, at 6 PM

Sylvie Lacerte: *Poésie et storytelling: unitinéraire de la performance chez Vera Frenkel, de la graphie aux nouveaux médias* (in French)

May 21, at 6 PM

Jacob Wren: *An apology that I have not properly documented my early performance work* (in English)

May 28, at 6 PM

Richard Martel: *Systèmes périphériques et périphérie des systèmes* (in French)

October 6, at 6 PM

Sylvie Tourangeau: *Quel performatif générons-nous?*
(in French and English)

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