



FORÊT/FOREST
8th MANIFESTATION INTERNATIONALE of CHAMP LIBRE
September 24-28, 2008

From noon till midnight @ MONOPOLI, architecture gallery
181 Saint-Antoine Street West, Quartier International de Montréal (QIM), Place d'Armes
metro station

Montréal, Tuesday the 16th of September 2008 - After the Craig Pumping Station, the Des Carrières Incinerator, and the Grande Bibliothèque, Champ Libre continues its exploration of Montreal's significant public spaces in transformation in this 8th edition of its international biennale. This year's event, FOREST, explores more than ever the meeting of art, architecture, public space, and technology by associating for the first time artists and architects in collaborative artworks, which occupy, question, and explore public space in all meteorological conditions, and at all times of the day and night.

A « SUPRA CURATOR »

Cécile Martin, Champ Libre's general and artistic director, has played a major role in the creation of the artworks presented within FOREST. During the Spring of 2008 and following an international call, to which more than 100 projects were submitted, the programming committee composed of Mirko Zardini, director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), Sophie Gironnay, director of the MONOPOLI architecture gallery, Andrée Duchaine, director of Groupe Molior, and Jean Gervais, director of Hexagram UQAM, named Cécile Martin *supra curator* of the event, bestowing her the mandate to select the artists and architects for the event. Martin, herself a trained architect (MArch) and artist, invited and orchestrated encounters between creators whose work or approach had already explored the theme of the forest. The goal of these meetings was to reveal and link different contemporary stances, views, approaches, and spaces of exploration constituting the four axes of the organization's mandate: art, architecture, new technologies, and public space.

A NEW SPACE

The thematic of the FOREST has enabled the creative process of public spaces to be questioned, obliging both artists and architects to position themselves in their personal creative approaches. These have been married to create a field of exploration at the heart of the contemporary physical and imaginary public space.

The pavilions of the 8th Manifestation Internationale de Champ Libre will be presented in the heart of the QIM's interior and exterior space, an innovative inhabited bridge structure that spans a rift within the city, on the former banks of the Saint-Martin River.

Micro-architectures integrating avant-garde technological explorations that service art are proposed within the framework of the event. Each installation is positioned within a common approach defined by its immediate environs - the QIM and its *urban forest* - as well as, in a broader sense, by our contemporary vision of nature and the city.

A MILLENARIAN THEMATIC AT THE HEART OF THE QIM

Beyond the contemporary preoccupation that limits our view of the forest to one of a resource whose management we have inherited, and inspired by the thematic that served in the creation of the QIM's public space at the dawn of the new millennium, FORÊT/FOREST: 8th MANIFESTATION INTERNATIONALE de CHAMP LIBRE honors the complex history of a neighborhood whose landscape has witnessed a succession of major interventions over the past centuries. The perfect example of this is the Saint-Martin River, the largest river crossing the island of Montreal, that runs past the walls of the old city, and now continues its flow underground, below what has become a metro line, a highway, and the Quartier International de Montréal. The QIM, an internationally acclaimed prize-winning architectural urban project and home to Quebec's main financial district as well as many headquarters of the province's major companies and numerous international organizations and corporations, constitutes an emblematic window for contemporary Quebec.

CREATE THE FUTURE

By revisiting the thematic of the forest and its contemporary significance, new perspectives on the future of 21st Century public space are being proposed within the context of Champ Libre. While questioning the use of thematics in creative urban design projects as well as our use of technology, artists and architects have joined forces to propose a new vision of the forest. The goal was not to transpose a natural entity into a cultural site, but to explore the meeting of approaches and a specific site. The forest reveals a collective subconscious full of hopes and fears, transforming it into new spaces of architectural and artistic experimentation, at the heart of the public domain, by using the most recent innovations in new technology.

THREE PAVILLONS

FROM CHERNOBYL TO MONTREAL, THE INCANDESCENT ZEN GARDEN

FALLING FOREST = ROOT LOG, by artist Michael Saup aka Quantengeist (Germany) + CHABLIS, by architects Howard Davies, Randy Cohen and Anne Cormier of the Atelier Big City (Montreal)

FALLING FOREST incarnates a collision in the form of a monumental skewed elevation, occupying a simple sidewalk. This structure stages the fortuitous meeting of city and forest, embodying the moment at which contemporary society suddenly feels the need to preserve the forest and allow it to follow its fragile destiny, so that we do not contribute to its destruction.

CHABLIS, a forest of wooden farms, aligns itself with ROOT LOG in an audio-visual amplification of the eternal traces left by humanity on nature. The natural phenomena of radioactivity and sound waves are amplified, with the Falling Forest illuminated night and day by a red light, the same one that made the forest – the Red Forest - adjacent to the Chernobyl nuclear reactor vibrate.

Michael Saup is an electronic artist, a movie director, and musician. Since the 1990's, he has been one of Europe's major protagonists of computer-generated art. His work, often in collaboration with other established figures of the arts, including Steina Vasulka, Peter Weibel, and William Forsythe, has been presented in many international contexts. He is one of the founding professors of the Hochschule fuer Gestaltung (Hfg), Germany's largest school for arts and new technology, attached to the Zentrum fuer Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (ZKM), where he taught for many years. He works and lives in Berlin.

Atelier Big City (Cormier, Cohen, Davies architects) has a marked interest in the city in all its manifestations. The motto "make architecture a public policy" underlines the importance that the atelier grants to the public role of architecture. Many prizes, publications and invitations to present and exhibit its projects in America and Europe bear witness to its contribution to the dynamism of Quebec architecture. Atelier Big City was awarded the Canada Council for the Arts' Prix de Rome in 1998.

THE MACROCOSM OF FIBER OR THE FILTERING PAVILLON

PNEUS = PNEUMAS, a collective composed of architect Patrick Harrop (Montreal, Manitoba), artist and architect Peter Hasdell (Australia, England, Manitoba, Hong Kong), and artist Sha Xin Wei (USA, Montreal).

Pneus is a suspended forest made of a multitude of sensors and electronic generators surrounding translucent PVC tubes. The latter reproduce the fibers that lend trees their flexibility and regenerative capacity in a structure many meters high. This magic space of sound and light is the outcome of a progressive real-time recording and its transformation that condenses and expresses in one space - a structure and spatial occupation - an immediate experience of all the perceptible phenomena of movement in the context of the occupied neighborhood, including passersby, passing clouds, and the wind.

ESEA, a new version of PNEUS will be presented at the Shanghai E-Arts Festival from October 17-22, 2008.

Peter Hasdell is a British, Australian-born architect, artist, and academic whose practice and research investigate metabolic systems and interactive technologies, with a focus on 'artificial ecologies' and issues of sustainability. He has been a member of various research institutes, including the Chora Institute of Urbanism and Architecture in London.

Patrick H Harrop is architect and associate professor of Architecture at the University of Manitoba. His current work involves developing new approaches to embedded and interactive technology, where immediacy and responsiveness is delayed and translated into autonomous, complex behaviors and environments.

Sha Xin Wei, Ph.D., is Canada Research Chair in media arts and sciences, and Associate Professor of Fine Arts and Computer Science at Concordia University in Montréal, Canada. He directs the Topological Media Lab. His work is dedicated to the study of applied gesture, distributed agency, and materiality on the phenomenology of performance and the built environment.

THE MOBILE BRANCH, A FOREST OF HYPNOSIS AND VERTIGO

MENISCUS = EFFIRTEMENTS, by artist Patrick Beaulieu (Montreal), and HAYSTACK VEIL, by architect Philip Beesley (Ontario)

A raised three-dimensional flooring and a cover propelled at 300 rotations per minute form a vibrating dance of branches and twigs, constituting a human-sized space of the in-between from which humans are nevertheless excluded; a space of vertigo and hypnosis, of presence and disappearance, and of transparency, where together the ground and horizon blur the visitors' perceptions, giving rise to feelings of danger.

Philip Beesley practices new media arts and architecture in Toronto. His creative focus in the past two decades has been sculpture and land art installations, which have been consistently exhibited internationally. He directs the distribution program for the Network of Canadian Design Research/Canadian Research in Design, and is an external examiner for the Bartlett Architecture School, University College, London, the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, and the Canada and Ontario Council for the Arts.

The multimedia installations by Montreal artist **Patrick Beaulieu** have been presented in solo and collective exhibitions in many art centers and institutions across North and South America, in Asia, and in Europe.

During the afternoon of the three *Journées de la Culture* (Friday, September 26 – Sunday, September 28), a team will conduct creative workshops, conferences, and roundtables for the general public and specialists alike. For more details and to register, visit www.champlibre.com
Limited spaces available!

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