

BIOPHILIA

The climate crisis, whose effects we must deal with every day, is forcing us more than ever to question our individual and collective behaviour. While we certainly need to adjust our lifestyles, we must also rethink our way of *being part of the world*. This is precisely what the works assembled in this exhibition invite us to do.

To be part of the world: this expression, which is also the title of an important book on ecofeminism [*Faire partie du monde : réflexions écoféministes*], supports the notion that to stop destroying the planet, we must first break the ideology of domination underlying our societies: domination over individuals, domination over people and territories, domination over nature and what we consider “inferior” forms of life. This involves examining and undoing the power relations and inequalities that arise when it comes to environmental issues. Because although we all, to varying degrees, have a role to play in this, our ability to act in the context of this crisis is far from equal.

The works presented here explore the ways in which we come in contact with nature from the specific angle of desire, with all of its ambivalence and contradictions. How do we reconcile our yearning to know and discover, to grow and enrich ourselves and our quest for ever-increasing physical and material comforts, with the restraint that, from now on, must be at

the centre of our concerns? How can we undo the complex entanglement of land and resource exploitation and appropriation our post-industrial and post-colonial societies still rely on? These works address the limits of regeneration and fertility, but also the intrinsic strength of living beings and their transformative capabilities.

Biophilia means “love of nature.” It’s our innate attraction, our human desire to be in touch with living things and to bond with nature. This term sets the tone for the exhibition and encourages respect and kindness towards all forms of life—microscopic organisms, plants, and animals—and every element of nature. It also marks a paradigm shift from the concept of a nourishing Mother Earth—whose resources we exploit—to a loving Earth that we unite with, care for, and love, but don’t seek to possess.

Biophilia offers a truly spiritual and sensual communion with nature that goes well beyond our gaze; it’s a union with our entire being. It means beating to the rhythm of nature, to permeate ourselves with it. To introduce ourselves to the forest. To smell the leaves on the trees, caress the moss, feel the flow of a stream on our skin. To feel the substances that shape our environments by and through our bodies, to sense that we form a whole—that we *are* nature.

Marianne Cloutier, Interim Curator of Contemporary Art
Anne-Marie St-Jean-Aubre, Guest Curator

1. KATHERINE MELANÇON, OSTRICH FERNS, ELECTROMAGNETISM, OUTARAGAWE SIPI (L'ASSOMPTION RIVER), SOIL AND SUN

Montréal, Québec, 1977

Vers un parlement du vivant IV - Fossilisation du soleil, 2023

[Towards a Parliament of the Living IV - Fossilization of the Sun]
Coal (Drummond mine, Nova Scotia), ferns (Common staghorn fern, Bird's-nest fern, Blue star fern, Boston fern, Japanese Birds Nest Fern, Kimberley queen, Lady fern, Leather leaf fern and Rabbit's foot fern) monitors, microcontrollers, sensors, Grantham Foundation fern scans (Bracken fern, Christmas fern, Cinnamon Fern, Hay-scented fern, Interrupted fern, Lady fern, Narrow beech fern, Ostrich Fern, Royal fern and Sensitive Fern), visual programming, earth and cast glass, 161 x 364 x 383 cm

Produced in collaboration with Pascale Tétrault (electronics), Denis Le Breton (garden) and Jérémie St-Onge (glass).

The artist thanks Bernard Landriault, Michel Paradis (Fondation Grantham pour l'art et l'environnement) and Ji-Yoon Han, Elektra, Enrique Enriquez and Mario Tremblay, as well as the entire team at the Musée d'art de Joliette.

As if she were giving a voice to the living and staging its narrative, Katherine Melançon focuses here on the history of the fern and its connections with the transformation of human societies. Present on Earth since time immemorial, the fern once thrived under ideal climatic conditions, enabling it to reproduce at a phenomenal rate and intensity. This geological layer, which became coal, powered the industrial era.

Towards a Parliament of the Living IV ties this geological history to the history of Joliette and its transformations, from 1850 to the present day, and more specifically to the exploitation and trade of various natural resources. Sensors installed in key locations around the city transmit real-time data of the territory to the installation. The flow of the river and the luminosity captured by the plants, variations in the pH levels of fern-inhabited soils and the edges of the old railway tracks, or the magnetism of the Museum's digital operations—formerly the site of a public market—dictate the slow movement of the digitized ferns. Melançon thus evokes a past when people

lived to the rhythm of the log drive and sawmills, locomotives and coal mines, when life was still considered an exploitable resource. This previous time is superimposed against the city of today and our digital societies, where this concept is no longer feasible. The work thus gives shape to a "thick present"—where past, present and future coexist—a notion borrowed from the Yarralin Indigenous people of northern Australia. Melançon invites us to perceive the living differently, to become aware of its temporality, its agency, and its transformative power.

2. LAWRENCE PAUL YUXWELUPTUN

Kamloops, British Columbia, 1957

Untitled (Landscape), 2020

Acrylic on canvas, 213.4 x 243.8 cm

Private collection

Courtesy of Macaulay & Co. Fine Art Gallery

A descendant of the Coast Salish community of northern British Columbia, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun revisits the motifs and iconography of Canadian West Coast Indigenous masks and sculpture. In surrealistic, grandiose landscapes of bold, vibrant colour, ovoid forms, eyes, mouths and beaks meld with and envelop elements from the natural world. While Yuxweluptun's aim is to imbue nature with a kind of spiritual vision, this symbiosis also testifies to the Indigenous community's sense of belonging to this territory and their responsibility to preserve it. Undeniably political and assertive, Yuxweluptun's art is a reminder to respect nature, its territories, and its inhabitants: reappropriating the voice and discourse of managing and preserving the country's natural resources is inseparable from the genuine emancipation of Indigenous communities from all forms of colonial oppression.

3. MONTSERRAT DURAN MUNTADAS

Terrassa, Spain, 1984

***Des amours microscopiques 2*, 2018**

[Microscopic Loves 2]

Blowtorched glass, blown glass and fabric with silkscreen print
by artist Ilana Pichon, 115 x 70 x 28 cm

Property of the artist

Montserrat Duran Muntadas' practice focuses on issues around fertility and reproduction. Here, her work evokes the complexity of the female reproductive system and celebrates its potentially diverse forms. Unlike any normative representation, it celebrates the various configurations of organisms that are inherent in nature. The cell-patterned fabric, created by silkscreen artist and illustrator Ilana Pichon, brings to mind the continuum of life and gives material form to the imperceptible. Its evocation of the infinitely small creates a parallel between the fragile equilibrium of our bodies, where cells, viruses and essential bacteria coexist, and that of our ecosystems.

4. JOSHUA SCHWEBEL

Toronto, Ontario, 1980

***Transactions*, 2023**

Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60.9 x 60.9 cm each

Property of the artist

The artist thanks the Canada Council for the Arts for their support and the students of the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts at Mount Allison University.

Schwebel's practice examines the infrastructures, as well as the political and financial contexts involved in the presentation of art, particularly in the museum world. While sponsorship has contributed to art's survival for centuries, only recently have artists used their freedom of speech to openly criticize it. Here, Schwebel raises these questions more specifically, showing the complex network that links artists to the Capitalocene, the idea that capitalism, as an economic system and social organization, is the primary cause of our current ecological crisis (Malm). Schwebel boldly tackles the thorny issue of the lack of public funding for art institutions by literally demonstrating its effects on the current art ecosystem. Through the conceptual example of *Transactions*, which links mining profits to the world of art and

education, Schwebel illustrates the mechanics of a system in which we are all stakeholders: he questions the ambiguity of our desires in relation to our individual and collective responsibilities in the environmental crisis, and the social role of the artist within it.

1. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Charles Huot, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to be unnamed.
2. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Ozias Leduc, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Jessica Weiland, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.
3. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Fernand Leduc, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Jessica Weiland, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.
4. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of James Wilson Morrice based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Elia Robinson, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.
5. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to be unnamed.
6. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Robert Pilot, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to remain unnamed.
7. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Franklin Brownell, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Sarah Rogers, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.
8. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of A.H. Robinson, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Jaden Ward, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.
9. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of W.H. Clapp, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Ella Webber, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

10. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Clarence Gagnon based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to be unnamed.

11. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Helen McNicoll, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Teagan Stewart, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

12. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Jean Paul Riopelle based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Jade Pinder, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

13. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Kathleen Moir Morris, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Kellie Mattatall, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

14. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Fritz Brandtner, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Jade Pinder, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

15. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Alfred Pellán, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Emma Jones, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

16. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Paul-Émile Borduas, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Elia Robinson student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

17. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Jean McEwen, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Joshua Stagg student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

18. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Jean Dallaire, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by Sarah Rogers, student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts.

19. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Maurice Cullen, based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to be unnamed.

20. An AI-generated image of a goldmine in the style of Joseph-Charles Franchère based on a landscape painting in the collection of Pierre Lassonde, painted by a student in the Pierre Lassonde School of Fine Arts who prefers to be unnamed.

5. JUMANA MANNA

Princeton, United States, 1987

***Wild Relatives*, 2018**

2K video, 64 min

Property of the artist

Written, Directed and Produced by: Jumana Manna

Director of Photography: Marte Vold

Editor: Katrin Ebersohn

Coproduction: Elisabeth Kleppe (Aldeles AS)

Executive Producer in Lebanon: Malek Hosni

Sound Recording: Rawad Hobeika

Sound Design and Mixing: Philippe Ciompi

Additional Sound Design and Mixing: Jochen Jezussek

Composition: Mari Kvien Brunvoll

Additional Sound Engineering: Karine Bacha, Øyvind Rydland and Rune Baggerud

Driver and Fixer Svalbard: Friad Zada

Coloring: Christian Berg-Nielsen

Title and credits design: Fadi Baki

Mastering: Knut Erik Evensen

Featuring:

ICARDA administrative assistant: Ghinwa Salhab

Van driver: Youssef Amer

ICARDA researcher: Sawsan Tawkaz

ICARDA documentation specialist: Mohamed Fawzy Nawar

ICARDA day laborers: Ola, Sawsan, Amal, Reem, Bayan and Alya

Youssef's Guest: Khaled 'Eraji

Svalbard Church Priest: Leif Magne Helgesen

Director of the Norwegian Polar Institute: Kim Holmén

Agricultors: Walid El-Youssef and his family: Fadda, Mahmoud, Areej, Hamid, Ibrahim and Ali

Supported by Arab Fund for Arts and Culture - AFAC, Henie Onstad

Museum Norway, Public Art Norway - KORØ, Vestnorsk Filmsenter, Fritt Ord, Fogo Island Arts, Arts Council Norway - Kulturrådet, Jeu de Paume, Paris, Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques and CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux.

Through sculpture and documentary filmmaking, Jumana Manna explores the complexity and paradoxes of preservation practices in fields such as archaeology, law and agriculture, as seen here in *Wild Relatives*. The film focuses on events related to the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011 and forced an international agricultural research center in Aleppo to move to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. As a result, researchers will have to plant new crops using their "emergency" seeds, stored thousands of kilometers away in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Located on the Norwegian island of Spitsbergen, this underground vault is designed to store the seeds for the entire planet's subsistence crops, and acts both as a seed bank in the event of disaster and as a place to conserve genetic diversity. The film follows the seeds from the Arctic to Lebanon, and shows the people involved in this long journey and the work required up to their harvest. It also looks at different approaches to cultivation and conservation in the current context of climate change.

6. MONTSERRAT DURAN MUNTADAS

Terrassa, Spain, 1984

Dissection rigoureuse de Fallope, 2019

[Rigorous Fallopian Dissection]

Blown glass, blowtorched glass and fabric, 115 x 50 x 30 cm

From the series *Ce que le tissu fibreux de ton amour a créé*

[What the Fibrous Tissue of Your Love Has Created]

Leio My Oma (Pink Big), 2020

Blown glass and fabric, 180 x 55 x 45 cm

Leio My Oma (Pink Medium), 2020

Blown glass and fabric, 170 x 50 x 35 cm

Leio My Oma (Pink Little), 2020

Blown glass and fabric, 135 x 30 x 25 cm

***Leio My Oma (Poils Long)*, 2020**

Blown glass and fabric, 345 x 40 x 35 cm

***Leio My Oma (Poils Medium)*, 2020**

Blown glass and fabric, 300 x 40 x 35 cm

***Leio My Oma (Poils Short)*, 2020**

Blown glass and fabric, 150 x 35 x 40 cm

Property of the artist

In this series, leiomyomas—or uterine fibroids—and fallopian tubes are transformed into magnificent, sensual monsters that are half-animal, half-plant hybrids. Flowers and bunches call to mind the reproductive system of plants and evoke manifestations of desire, creating a correspondence between the reproductive system of plants and of the human body. Together, the seven pieces form a mutant forest that references both the abundance of nature and the limits of fertility in an ecosystem where bodies act on the environment, but the environment also affects bodies, right down to their internal systems.

9. ZHENG BO

Beijing, China, 1974

***Le Sacre du printemps (Tandvärkstallen)*, 2021-2022**

[The Rite of Spring (Tandvärkstallen)]

4K color video, stereo sound, 16 min 17 s

Courtesy of the artist and Kiang Malingue (Hong Kong)

Ecosensitivity: Zheng Bo

Production: Rickard Borgström and Rebecca Chentinell

Dancers: Paolo de Venecia Gile, Andreas Haglund, Mikko Hyvönen

Paolo de Venecia Gile, Andreas Haglund, Mikko Hyvönen,

Adriano Wilfert Jensen and Ossi Niskala

Direction of Photography: Adam Nilsson

Post production: Wu Ping-Chung

Supported by Hong Kong Arts Development Council, DACE - Dance Art Critical Ecology, Finnish Cultural Foundation, Frame, Swedish Arts Council, Swedish Arts Grants Committee, Nordic Culture Fund, Nordic Culture Point, Färgfabriken and SKH.

For over 10 years, Zheng Bo has been working with plants and promoting

ecosensitivity. *The Rite of Spring (Tandvärkstallen)* is part of a series of four films shot in different parts of the world, in environments as grandiose as they are diverse: a luxuriant fern forest in Taiwan; the Arabian desert, where a lone, majestic acacia thrives; a forest near a splendid beach in Germany; and in this piece, a forest of Tandvärkstallen pines in Sweden, which, in local folklore, are said to have magical healing powers.

For Zheng Bo, our knowledge of nature cannot be limited to theoretical or even empirical knowledge, and must necessarily pass through the body and through genuine feeling. Like the other films in the series, *The Rite of Spring (Tandvärkstallen)* explores human-plant intimacy and thus is in line with the ecosexuality movement. This sensual, even libidinal relationship with nature is transformed into a metaphysical connection, as the dancers' naked bodies vibrate in contact with the vegetation. Gradually, they enter a kind of trance, reminiscent of the movements choreographed by Nijinsky in the early 20th century for Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Through his work, which gives trees and plants the status of subject rather than object, Zheng Bo invites us to a true communion with nature, and consequently to a new awareness of living things.

FLOOR PLAN

1st floor

Salle Després-Liard



