

Trajectories – Detours – Resistance
International Symposium of Site-Specific Art at the Jardins du Précambrien, Val-David, 2014

Trajectories – Detours – Resistance. Each of these words holds an intrinsic power. Put together, they suggest a place of extraordinary imaginative worlds. The very concept of *trajectories* seems to encompass the words *travel* and *territories*.

Trajectories

Once an arrow has been released, its trajectory moves toward a target, indicates a direction. But we have entered an age of intelligence assisted by missiles and missives, whose paths are increasingly remote-controlled. Now, a linear, predictable straight line—which we might associate with a conjoining of *travel* and *territory*—invents and imagines itself, variable and changing, continually eluding any form of definition. Its borders become permeable, open to multidisciplinary and all possibilities. These trajectories are those of art. Detours are being taken.

Detours

If we consider, as a hypermodern backdrop, the analysis of art historian and sociologist Yves Michaud—describing current art as a “realm of disappearance,”¹ in the sense of a permeability or evaporation of art which, being present everywhere, is at the same time nowhere—we can indeed imagine sinuous, wandering forms scattering their symbolic expressivities along the trails of the Jardins du Précambrien, like so many *in situ* detours, both unpredictable and intriguing. Far from being merely playful or aesthetic, these diversions of usage, these subterfuges of materials and poetic displacements are significant of the very attitude of the guest artists and their works, which contain within them an ethics that is characteristic of a broader framework, in the general spirit of the time: an ethics of resistance.

Resistance

Resisting the established order has always been one of the principal leitmotifs of modern, postmodern and hypermodern art. Numerous thinkers, including Deleuze,² constantly remind us that art gives rise to acts of resistance. The successive avant-garde movements since the nineteenth century are clear evidence of this, as are recent major social movements³ and other events related to contemporary art.⁴

¹ Yves Michaud, *L'art à l'état gazeux* (Paris: Stock, 2003), p. 9.

² Gilles Deleuze, “L'acte de création,” lecture given as part of the Fondation Femis Tuesdays. 1987: <http://www.webdeleuze.com/>

³ From the pro-democracy *Arab Spring* to Canada's Aboriginal *Idle No More/Fini l'inertie* movement, and from the worldwide *Occupy/Indignés* protests against financial speculation to the marches by Québec student demonstrators wearing the “red square,” the vitality of social protest movements is a prominent feature of the beginning of the twenty-first century.

⁴ For example, last spring in Québec City, the Manif d'Art 7 event was titled *Résistance*.

Whether on the macro-political scale of the major movements or on a relational scale, this attitude has infiltrated the “permeability of borders”⁵ of the places we live and those we imagine.

The resilience of this place—the Jardins du Précambrien—and the continuity of its International Symposium of Site-Specific Art along three kilometres of forest trails, outside of walls and beyond all conventions, are indicative of one of those remarkable sites of resistance by art.

Nineteen years after *Les territoires rapaillés*, the theme of the first Symposium, the 2014 edition carries on in the same spirit, connecting geographic and imaginary territorialities of the Americas, this time taking into account the complexity of their configurations as *Trajectories – Detours – Resistance*. The *meeting* of public and artists will form *paths* and *detours* along the trails, and the idea of *resistance* will be expressed in *traces* and *imprints* added to past editions. An intense, enjoyable experience will be offered by the highly diverse installations by the guest artists, through Aboriginal resonance—Rebecca Belmore (Ojibwa), Nadia Myre (Anishinaabe/Algonquin) and Nicholas Galanin—Québec women’s contribution—Caroline Cloutier and the Collectif les Ville-Laines—and South American Latinness (Rafael Gómez Barros of Colombia).

In other words, it is an invitation to experience, feel and reflect today’s art through this 2014 edition of the International Symposium of Site-Specific Art at the Jardins du Précambrien in Val-David.



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⁵ Marie Fraser, “Aux bords de l’art,” in *L’indécidable/The Undecidable*, ed. Thérèse Saint-Gelais (Montréal: Esse, 2008), p. 24.