

BNLMTL 2016 at the Galerie de l'UQAM: Luis Jacob, Judith Hopf and Thirteen Black Cats

La Biennale de Montréal 2016 – *The Grand Balcony*

Curator: Philippe Pirotte

Dates: October 21 to December 10, 2016

Opening: Thursday, October 20, 5:30 pm

Montréal, October 17, 2016 – La Biennale de Montréal and the Galerie de l'UQAM are presenting the work of Toronto artist Luis Jacob, German artist Judith Hopf and New York collective Thirteen Black Cats, as part of BNLMTL 2016 – *The Grand Balcony*. Jacob will deploy in the Galerie one of his *Albums*, in which he connects hundreds of images taken from the history of art, popular culture and news feeds, while Judith Hopf will show new hybrid sculptures integrating past video pieces. Thirteen Black Cats will premiere *Corpse Cleaner*, a short film that addresses the legacy of atomic power in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The 2016 edition of La Biennale de Montréal calls for a materialist and sensualist approach. It recasts the pursuit of sensual pleasures, making a case for its decisive role in everyday life and political decision-making. *The Grand Balcony* bets on the liberating potential of art and invites us to rethink both the (im)possibility of an emancipation through pleasure – and its urgency.

The exhibition

Luis Jacob's historical and urbanistic considerations are coupled with a philosophical and anthropological approach that characterizes his artistic, literary and curatorial practice. The bank of images found and then assembled by Jacob in *Album XII* (2013-14) highlights the subjective framework of the aesthetic experience, which is projected from the work of art into a broader perception, toward the gaze we cast on what we are made up of individually and collectively. Grouped together according to a principle of free correspondence, the images suggest analogies that are to be constructed, developed or completed by the viewer. Analogy is offered as form and content, both in the dialogue between the images and in the meeting of the perceiving subject and the perceived object. The philosophical extensions of Jacob's research also come through in the silkscreen print *The Demonstration* (2013), whose central subject, a white monochrome held by a pair of anonymous hands, frames the personal, complex experience of the viewer, who is responsible for a large part of the content. These pieces reflect the conceptual basis of Jacob's art, whose many different, unpredictable forms work to neutralize artistic nomenclatures at the same time as they interrogate them.

In her sculptures, installations and videos, **Judith Hopf** transfigures modest settings and ordinary materials into droll, sometimes even stupid expressions of humanistic values. The artist herself describes her working method as an attempt to do something "that doesn't put me in a bad mood". The small scale and low resolution of most of Hopf's works stem from her belief that when it comes to human beings expressing themselves, they should enlist whatever means are at hand. For *The Grand Balcony*, she designed simple, but perforated furniture (a table, a bench, a plinth) that incorporates screens featuring some of her absurdist films that evoke contemporary experience in a society of overstretching, burnout and chronic exhaustion.

Corpse Cleaner, the latest film produced by the research and production collective **Thirteen Black Cats**, focuses on the letters exchanged between Claude Eatherly, the air force pilot whose "all clear" weather report enabled the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and Günther Anders, the German philosopher, theorist and anti-nuclear activist whose work fixated on technology's capacity to outpace human intention. As a voice-over retells the content of the letters, we learn that Hollywood producer Bob Hope approached Eatherly to make a film about his life. Anders actively encouraged Eatherly to refuse the offer. A former movie prop cleaner in the Hollywood Custom Palace, Anders claimed that the Hollywood apparatus would not be able to process this "fatal act".

BNLMTL 2016 – *The Grand Balcony*

This edition of La Biennale de Montréal draws loosely on Jean Genet's *Le Balcon*, in which the play's high porch is a space of contestation between revolution and counter-revolution, reality and illusion. As stated by curator Philippe Pirotte, "*The Grand Balcony* is simultaneously playful and fatalistic in its presentation of rooms, corridors and balconies. Deflecting every attempt to fit in or create an overarching narrative, to be introduced into a system of classification or to be pinned down, the exhibition becomes a place of fallacy, where things can go astray". *The Grand Balcony* was conceptualized and curated by Philippe Pirotte in consultation with curatorial advisors Corey McCorkle, Aseman Sabet and Kitty Scott, and in close collaboration with Sylvie Fortin, Executive and Artistic Director of La Biennale de Montréal. bnlmtl.org

The artists

Born in Lima, Peru, in 1971, **Luis Jacob** lives and works in Toronto. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held at Kunsthalle Lingen, Lingen, Germany (2012); Musée McCord, Montréal (2011); Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto (2011); Art in General, New York (2010); Fonderie Darling, Montréal (2010); Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany (2009); September, Berlin (2008); Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg (2008); and the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (2007). He has also participated in group exhibitions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2010); Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain (2010); Generali Foundation, Salzburg, Austria (2011); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland (2010); Extra City Kunsthall Antwerpen, Antwerp, Belgium (2010); Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX (2012); Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (2009); and dOCUMENTA 12, Kassel, Germany (2007).

Born in Berlin in 1969, **Judith Hopf** lives and works in Berlin. Her works have been featured in solo exhibitions at the Museion—museo d'arte moderna e contemporanea di Bolzano, Bolzano, Italy (2016); kaufmann repetto, Milan, Italy (2015); Neue Galerie—Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (mhk), Kassel, Germany (2015); PRAXES Center for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (2014); Kunsthalle Lingen, Lingen, Germany (2013); Studio Voltaire, London, Britain (2013); Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples, Italy (2013); Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden (2012); Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria (2012); Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe, Germany (2008); Portikus, Frankfurt, Germany (2007); Secession, Vienna, Austria (2006); Casco—Office for Art, Design and Theory, Utrecht, Netherlands (2006); and Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (2006). Hopf has participated in the 8th Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (2014); Contour 2013—6th Biennial of Moving Image, Mechelen, Belgium (2013); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany (2012) and in group exhibitions at Sculpture Center, Long Island City, NY (2014) and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013).

Thirteen Black Cats is a research and production collective based in New York, founded by Lucy Raven, Evan Calder Williams and Vic Brooks. thirteenblackcats.org

Born in Tucson, AZ in 1977, **Lucy Raven** lives and works in New York. Her work has been shown in exhibitions and screenings internationally, including solo exhibitions at VOX – Centre de l'image contemporaine, Montréal (2015); Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, Troy, NY (2015); Portikus, Frankfurt (2014); and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2014). Her work has also been featured in group exhibitions at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013); Whitney Biennial, New York (2012); and the Manchester International Festival, Manchester, England (2011). lucyraven.com

Born in Portland, ME in 1982, **Evan Calder Williams** is a writer, theorist, and artist who lives and works in Woodstock, NY. He is the author of *Combined and Uneven Apocalypse* (2011), *Roman Letters* (2011), as well as two forthcoming books, *Shard Cinema* and *Donkey Time*. His writing has appeared in *Film Quarterly*, *The New Inquiry*, *Radical Philosophy*, *World Picture*, *The Third Rail*, and elsewhere. He has presented films, performances, and audio works at the Serpentine Gallery, London (2014); Images Festival, Toronto (2014); Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, Montréal (2014); Artists Space, New York (2013), Tramway, Glasgow (2012); and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2012).

Born in London in 1979, **Vic Brooks** lives and works in Woodstock, NY. She is a curator and producer at the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY. She has worked at LUX, London, co-founded The Island, London and co-curated at the Serpentine Gallery, London.

The curator

Philippe Pirotte (born in Belgium in 1972) is an art historian, curator, critic, and Director of the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste Städelschule and of Portikus, leading centres for contemporary art in Germany and beyond. Pirotte was one of the co-founders of the contemporary art centre objectif_exhibitions in Antwerp, Belgium. From 2005 to 2011, he was Director of the internationally renowned Kunsthalle Bern in Switzerland where he organized solo exhibitions by artists such as Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, Owen Land, Oscar Tuazon, Jutta Koether, Allan Kaprow, and Corey McCorkle. From 2004 to 2013, Pirotte held the position of Senior Advisor at the Rijksakademie for Visual Arts in Amsterdam. In 2012, he became Adjunct Senior Curator at the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. He also served as Advising Program Director for the Sifang Art Museum in Nanjing and is an advisor for the Kadist Art Foundation (Paris/San Francisco).

Public activities

Guided tours of the exhibition

Available any time, free of charge. Reservations required with Philippe Dumaine:
514 987-3000, ext. 3280, or dumaine_allard.philippe@uqam.ca

Artists' Talk – Thirteen Black Cats (in English)

Panel with Luke Willis Thompson, Michael Blum and Nathalie Melikian

October 19, 2016, 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Société des arts technologiques, 1201 Saint-Laurent Boulevard, Montréal

\$10 / Free for BNLMTL 2016 Passport holders

Organized by [La Biennale de Montréal](#)

Artist's Talk – Luis Jacob (in English)

Panel with Lena Henke, Shannon Bool and Celia Perrin Sidarous

October 20, 2016, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Canadian Center for Architecture, 1920 Baile Street, Montréal

\$10 / Free for BNLMTL 2016 Passport holders

Organized by [La Biennale de Montréal](#)

Support provided by



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Address and opening hours

Galerie de l'UQAM

Judith-Jasmin Pavilion, Room J-R120

1400 Berri Street (corner of Sainte-Catherine East), Montréal

Berri-UQAM metro

Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m.

Free admission

Information

Phone: 514 987-6150

www.galerie.uqam.ca / [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Instagram](#)

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Source: Maude N. Béland, Press Relations Officer

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