

A major artist in Italy: Galerie de l'UQAM presents *Françoise Sullivan. Works from Italy*, a touring exhibition

Curator: Louise Déry

Dates: September 22 – 30, 2019

Opening: Sunday, September 22, 6 p.m.

La Macina di San Cresci, Greve in Chianti, Italy

Produced by Galerie de l'UQAM in partnership with La Macina di San Cresci

Montréal, August 12, 2019 – Galerie de l'UQAM is proud to present *Françoise Sullivan. Works from Italy*, bringing together works inspired by this great Montréal-based artist's numerous trips to Italy, where she met several important figures in the art world.

Since the 1940s, Françoise Sullivan has created a vibrant and voluminous oeuvre of remarkable versatility and constantly renewed inventiveness. Inspired by the great European and Native North American mythological traditions, passionate about art and poetry, and influenced by the time she spent in New York, Italy, Ireland and Greece, Sullivan has, in her boundless curiosity, never stopped experimenting with form and colour, gesture and movement, figuration and abstraction, not only in sculpture, performance, dance and photography, but also most decisively in painting.

The exhibition and reunion with Gianfranco Sanguinetti

During the 1970s, Françoise Sullivan visited Italy on multiple occasions to immerse herself in the artistic movements being developed around Arte Povera. In Rome, she met several leading figures in the art world such as Jannis Kounellis, Mario Diacono, Emilio Prini, Germano Celant and Graziella Lonardi. Particularly in the summer of 1972, she stayed in Tuscany with her sons, where she regularly met with Gianfranco Sanguinetti, a revolutionary theorist and member of the Italian Situationist International branch. Alongside him and on several occasions, she met Guy Debord, founder of the Situationist movement and author of *The Society of the Spectacle*. In *Françoise Sullivan. Works from Italy*, Sullivan once more visits the sites where these encounters took place, a lesser-known period of the artist's extensive career. Here, she showcases works either created in Tuscany and Rome, or inspired by these moments that embody a true turning point and gave impetus to her artistic vision. September 22 and 23 will furthermore mark the public reunion between Sullivan and famous author Gianfranco Sanguinetti.

An abundant production of performances, choreographies, writings, photographs and paintings marks the artist's career and has earned Françoise Sullivan a place in the pantheon of Canada's greatest artists. Sullivan's trajectories, so radiant, enlighten both our recent history and the present moment. She who still goes to work in her studio every day and continues to think (and think of herself) in and through art, invites us to engage in the vital relationship between the work of art, memory and the world around us.

The artist

Françoise Sullivan, dancer, choreographer and visual artist, was one of the founding members of the Automatiste group and a signatory of the manifesto *Refus global (Total Refusal)* in 1948. From the 1960s on, her work grew more diversified as she turned to photography, sculpture, installation and performance art. However, it is painting that has occupied her interest most intensely over the years, and she continues to devote impressive energy to it today. There are many reasons why Françoise Sullivan is a significant figure in the history of art in Québec and Canada, as is apparent from the range of distinctions she has received, which include the Prix Paul-Émile Borduas, the Ordre de Montréal, the Ordre national du Québec, the Order of Canada, a Governor General's Award, etc. Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (1981-82; 2018-19), the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (1993), the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (2003) and Galerie de l'UQAM (1998; 2018), as well as in a great number of group exhibitions in Canada, Europe and the United States. For thirty years, beginning in 1977, Sullivan taught visual arts at Concordia University in Montréal. She was born and still lives in Montréal where she is represented by Galerie Simon Blais.

The curator

Louise Déry holds a PhD in art history, is the director of Galerie de l'UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal) and an associate professor for the Department of Art History, UQAM. Previously curator at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Québec City and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, as well as director of the Musée régional de Rimouski, she has curated many projects featuring artists such as Giuseppe Penone, Rober Racine, Sarkis, Nancy Spero, Dominique Blain, Françoise Sullivan, Michael Snow, Donatella Landi, Raphaëlle de Groot and Aude Moreau, amongst others. Curator of some thirty exhibitions abroad, including a dozen in Italy where she has collaborated with Sala Uno, La Nube di Oort and RAMradioartemobile, she was curator of the Canada Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2007, with a David Altmejd exhibition. At the 2013 and 2015 Venice Biennale, she curated performances by Raphaëlle de Groot and Jean-Pierre Aubé. Déry has received the first Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence (2007) and the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts (2014). She is also a member of the Royal Society of Canada and Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France.

La Macina di San Cresci

La Macina di San Cresci, established in 2001, is devoted to the creation, presentation and documentation of contemporary art in all its forms. A member of Res Artis, the largest existing network of artist residency programs – numbering over 400 members originating from more than 50 countries –, it is invested in creating a space to accommodate and imagine new forms of dialogue within artistic and cultural contexts. La Macina's mission is to encourage the mobility of artists interested in exploring their ideas in a well-appointed studio far from home; to develop a cultural exchange at local, national and international levels through the involvement and participation of foreign institutions, both public and private; to act as an experimental laboratory where artist-teachers and young artists can work together.

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