Art and Biotech, Montreal 5-8 October 04

Ingeborg Reichle

Workshop: Art and Biotech, Montreal 5.-8. October

Organized by:
Louise Poissant, Professeur à l'UQAM

Ernestine Daubner, Université Concordia, chargée de cours. Responsable de la section : Art génétique. Co-responsable de la préparation du manuscrit et du DVD.

Christine Bernier, Musée d'art contemporain, responsable de la logistique globale. Co-responsable de la préparation du manuscrit.

Biotechnologies announce the emergence of major breakthroughs and fresh insights into various fields of knowledge in the near future: new medical treatments, improvements in agriculture, the mapping of the genomes of various species, the customized reconfiguration of bodies. Such potent promises are both fascinating and disquieting, raising many uncertainties and posing questions difficult to resolve. During this colloquium, international theorists and artists will explore these issues by presenting research and artworks situated at the intersection of art, science and artificial systems.

Information:

http://www.colloquebioart.org/english.html

Programme du colloque: 5, 6, 7 et 8 octobre 2004
MARDI, LE 5 OCTOBRE 2004

9 h Accueil et inscription

10 h Mot de bienvenue
Louise Poissant (UQAM) & Ernestine Daubner (Concordia)

Présentations d'ouverture :
Marc Mayer, Directeur Musée d'art contemporain (à confirmer)

Animatrice : Christine Bernier, Musée d'art contemporain
Sara Diamond, Artist; Banff Center

LIVING WITH THE ANIMALS

Louis Bec, Zoosystémicien, CYPRÈS
LEÇON D'ÉPISTÉÉMOLOGIE FABULATOIRE

12 h Lunch
14 h

RENCONTRE DU BIOLOGIQUE DE L'ESTHÉTIQUE ET DE L'ÉTHIQUE
INTERSECTIONS OF BIOLOGY, AESTHETICS AND ETHICS

Animateur : Shawn Bailey, Artist; Concordia

Stephen Wilson, Artist; San Francisco State University
POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF BIOARTISTS TO RESEARCH

Lucia Santella, Université catholique de Sao Paulo
ART AND SCIENCE : THE CONTROVERSIAL FIELD OF BIOART

15 h 30 - 15 h 45 Pause

Annick Bureaud, Leonardo/Olats, Paris
LE VIVANT "MANIPULÉ" EN TANT "QU'OBJET" D'ART

Hervé Fischer, Artiste; UQAM, Montréal
LE MYTHE ET SES DOUBLES

18 h Cocktail

MERCREDI • WEDNESDAY 6 OCT 2004

8 h 30 Accueil

9 h VIE ARTIFICIELLE
ARTIFICIAL LIFE

Animatrice : Louise Poissant, UQAM, Montréal

Louis-Claude Paquin, UQAM, Montréal
LE CORPS AUGMENTÉ

Jean Décarie, UQAM, Montréal
LE CORPS COMME MEDIA : LE CAS DU BIOFEEDBACK

10 h 30 - 10 h 45 Pause

Guy Théraulaz, Université Paul Sabatier, Toulouse
INSECTES SOCIAUX : CONCEPTION PAR ASSEMBLAGE

Éric Bonabeau, Icosystem Corporation, Cambridge, USA
EXPLORATORY DESIGN OF COLLECTIVE PATTERNS

12 h Lunch
14 h

Animatrice : Nicolas Reeves, Artiste; UQAM, Montréal

Nell Tenhaaf, Artist; York University, Toronto
ARTIFICIAL AGENCY

Ken Rinaldo, Artist; The Ohio State University, Colombus
ARTIFICIAL LIFE, INTELLIGENCE AND SYMBIOSIS

15 h 30 - 15 h 45 Pause

Eduardo Reck Miranda, University of Plymouth, UK
ARTIFICIAL LIFE MUSIC

Julien Nembrini, EPFL, Toulouse
INTELLIGENCE COLLECTIVE POUR ROBOT MULTI-CELLULAIRE

18 h Soirée

JEUDI • THURSDAY LE 7 OCT 2004

8 h 30 Accueil
9 h

ART GÉNÉTIQUE • HYBRIDES

GENETIC ART • HYBRIDS

Moderator : Ernestine Daubner, Concordia University, Montreal

George Gessert, Artist
ANTHROPOCENTRISM AND GENETIC ART

Bioteknica (Shawn Bailey & Jennifer Willet, Artists; Concordia University)
3D ORGANIC TISSUE PROTOTYPES (SOFT SCULPTURES)

10 h 30 – 10 h 45 Pause

Adam Zaretsky, Artist; Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY
pFARM : ORGANIC BIOTECHNOLOGY AND POWER FARMING

Roy Ascott, Artist; University of Plymouth,UK
MOIST MEDIA AND MEDIATED MIND

12 h Lunch

14 h Animatrice : Christine Palmiéri, UQAM, Montréal

THE TISSUE CULTURE & ART PROJECT : Oron Catts & Ionat Zurr), Artists;

University of Western Australia
TISSUE TECHNOLOGIES FROM AN ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Diana Dominigues, Artist; Université de Sao-Paulo
EXCHANGES OF ELECTRIC HUMAN SIGNALS IN ARTISTIC IMMERSIVE POETICS

15 h 30 - 15 h 45 Pause

Ted Krueger, Architect; Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY
SYNTHETIC SENSES : AN APPROACH TO AN EXPERIMENTAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Eduardo Kac, Artist; The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
GFP BUNNY

17 h Vernissage

VENDREDI • FRIDAY 8 OCT 2004

9 h REPRÉSENTATIONS ET STRATÉGIES CRITIQUES
CRITICAL AND REPRESENTATIONAL STRATEGIES

Animatrice : Dalia Chauveau, Artiste, UQAM, Montréal

Ellen K. Levy, Artist; Brooklyn College
ART AND THE BIOTECH INDUSTRY: ADAPTATION AND INNOVATION

Joe Davis, Artist; MIT
DNA MANIFOLDS

10 h 30 - 10 h 45 Pause

Charles Halary, UQAM, Montréal
FUSION ENTRE ÉLECTRONIQUE ET BIOTECHNOLOGIE

Suzanne Anker,
REPROTECH: BUILDING BETTER BABIES?

12 h Lunch

14 h Animatrice : Christine Bernier, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

Olliver Dyens, Université Concordia, Montréal
LE CORPS NUMÉRISÉ : CHIRURGIE ESTHÉTIQUE ET CHAIR SANS MÉMOIRE

Michaël Lachance, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi
UNE FICTION BIOPLIQTIQUE : LE CORP LARVAIRE

15 h 30 - 15 h 45 Pause

Inga Svala Thorsdottir, Artist
FROM THOR'S DAUGHTER PULVERIZATION SERVICE TO THE CITY OF BORG

Critical art ensemble (Steve Kurtz) Artist; State University of New York
USELESS WETWARE AND DEMENTED STRATEGIES

Mot de clôture • Closing Statements:
Ernestine Daubner & Louise Poissant

Concept:

Biotechnologies announce the emergence of major breakthroughs and fresh insights into various fields of knowledge in the near future: new medical treatments, improvements in agriculture, the mapping of the genomes of various species, the customized reconfiguration of bodies. Such potent promises are both fascinating and disquieting, raising many uncertainties and posing questions difficult to resolve.
For already 15 years now, artists have illustrated their interest in this domain. Readopting thy Pygmalion myth, certain artists seek to reinvent life, to create new hybrid life forms or to animate matter by creating intelligent automata. Other artists raise important questions as to the manipulation, reification, instrumentalisation and commodification of life. Situated at the intersection of science, technology, and artificial systems, this emerging art form necessitates serious consideration. In this colloquium, artists and theorists will explore various issues by presenting their research and art practices.
The presenters will address four broad themes:

Intersections of Biology, Aesthetics and Ethics

Biotech artworks are produced within a contemporary art context, employing materials and techniques that cross over into the realm of new media art. Also based on genetic engineering and other biotechnologies, many art practices are direct interventions into living matter and can be interpreted as material manifestations of postmodern notions of hybridity. These emerging art practices produce new aesthetics that deal with important theoretical, cultural and ethical issues, considered by the presenters: What is the nature of the art experiment and its theoretical framework? How does such art practice relate to science? What changing contexts motivate these art practices? What are the problematics underlying such artworks? What is the significance of art practices that seek to reinvent life or to animate matter by creating artificial intelligence?

Artificial Life

Artists working in the field of artificial life follow through on an age-old dream found in the ancient practices of Egyptian priests who

sought to amaze crowds with statues that spoke and moved. Since then, we have witnessed numbers of attempts to simulate life: the golem, automata, robots and a whole spectrum of increasingly intelligent electronic gadgets. Contemporary artificial life artworks continue to astonish and prompt one to reflect upon the nature of artifice and life, on intelligence, communication, and on the evolution and the uniqueness of the human species. While many artworks strive for a certain physical, physiological or psychological resemblance to human life, others explore innovative adaptational behaviors, oftentimes casting insights into the nature of human conduct. Artists and theorists will present their artworks, research and reflections on an array of artificial life works.

Genetic Art / Hybrids

The number of genetic artworks produced in the last few years has significantly increased, revealing a changing relationship with nature. Employing diverse living organisms (bacteria, animals, plants, human cells and tissue), artists invent new kinds of life forms. Sometimes these are grounded in a search for a new aesthetics, as in the creation of beautiful hybrid flowers or plants, or in the manipulation of phenotypes of certain animals; others address ecological, ethical and political concerns. The most controversial manifestations of this new realm of art are those based on bioengineering techniques, as they often trigger critical reaction, even indignation on the part of the spectator. For example, transgenic art employs genetic engineering techniques to create synthetic genes or to transfer natural genetic material from one species into another, in order to create unique living beings. Tissue art, based on cloning and tissue-engineering techniques, produce semi-living entities by means of cell or skin cultures. Such art practices create new hybrid life forms, often fusing the organic with the non-organic. Certain hybrids are intermediaries between biological interventions as such and research into artificial intelligence. They are, at times, organisms implanted with nanotechnologies whose behaviors are influenced by a particular program. Such practices also enter into the realm of architecture whereby smart materials, made of organic tissue cultures, are employed to render architecture both receptive and interactive. Artists and theorists working in these emerging fields will present their artworks and ideas.

Representational and Critical Strategies

Through imagery (photographs, films, Internet and other traditional media), performances, interactive and multi-media installations, as well as the employment of living matter, artists deal with the aesthetic, cultural and ethical implications of scientific interventions into life. New conceptions and perceptions of the body and of nature emerge. Some

artists create images of chromosomes, the DNA helix, genetic blueprints, including genetic self-portraits; or they address issue relating to the human genome and to heredity. Certain artists incorporate cultural codes into their creation of synthetic genes. By so doing, they cast fresh insights onto the relation between biology, culture and signifying processes. Others ground their work on the interconnections between biotechnological research and socio-cultural attitudes, particularly on the debates regarding the instrumentalisation and commodification of life by corporate powers. Many such artists bring to the fore the serious problems relating to eugenics, reproductive technologies, gene patenting, and issues of biowarfare. The artworks of such artists serve to deconstruct and to demystify readymade ideas on biotechnological practices.

Co-organisateurs :
Dalia Chauveau, UQAM, étudiante au doctorat et artiste. Co-responsable de la section : Vie artificielle et co-responsable de la préparation du DVD.Jason Martin , UQAM, étudiant au doctorat. Concepteur du DVD. co-responsable de la préparation du DVD.
Christine Palmieri, UQAM, stagiaire post-doctorale et artiste. Responsable de la section : Hybrides. Co-responsable de la préparation du DVD.
Nicolas Reeves, UQAM, professeur. Co-responsable de la section : Vie artificielle.

Reference:
CONF: Art and Biotech, Montreal 5-8 October 04. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 20, 2004 (accessed Jul 16, 2025), <https://arthist.net/archive/26634>.