

## Artex-te Residency Programme, Montreal, Canada

### Background

As an independent and relatively young organization, Artex-te went through a number of changes, evaluations and adjustments to its mandate. The organization started as a bookstore and book distributor, adjoining a documentation centre in order to improve access to specialised publications on contemporary art. After close to 15 years, and mainly for economic reasons, Artex-te closed its distribution service and bookstore to concentrate on collecting, promoting, and making publications on contemporary art accessible to the professional and general public. With the development of Internet, access to books is very different then it was in 1995. So again, Artex-te decided to adapt to the context and last January 2008, adopted a new mandate putting more emphasis on active research and dissemination activities.

Artex-te's new mandate (see <http://www.artex-te.ca>) positions the organisation within the arts community, but by putting a strong emphasis on its specific competency in documentation and book related issues. This way, Artex-te contributes in both documentation and arts fields. Also, since Artex-te's financial resources are limited, the organization places its efforts in linking people and organizations, encouraging exchanges of ideas and partnering with sister organizations instead of relying on computer related systems and databases (in counterbalance with institutional libraries and documentation centres around the world).

### How it works

Artex-te is just starting its residency programme and is now hosting its sixth researcher. The Residency programme at Artex-te is addressed to researchers, including curators, critics and artists necessitating a working space where they can develop critical inquiries with a personalized support from a flexible and professional staff. Artex-te resources complete other accessible research facilities in downtown Montreal (museums, universities, etc.) as well as the ones accessible on line. Artex-te wishes to support new projects and ideas, especially the ones that do not fit with dissemination organizations or academic criteria.

The main benefit is the understanding of the specificity of Artex-te and its collection. Our role in the community being somehow unique, researchers understand better the type of services we can provide. The one month residency is also a good way for researchers to concentrate on investigating the collection itself. Through this, the staff at Artex-te is able to collect information on research habits, on interests of the community, and perfect its support. Artex-te being a non affiliated organization with a very flexible structure, the residents are encouraged to propose partnership with other resources centres in order to support properly the specificity of their research. Cross-disciplinary and non-dominant approaches are also much encouraged in order to contribute to the renewal of discourses and practices.

Artex-te supports projects by professional artists, curators and writers with an experience in the fields of visual and electronic arts. Students and academic projects are currently non eligible. National and international participants to the programme are selected through:

- calls for submission posted by Artex-te;
- direct invitation to individuals; and
- international institutional agreements (pilot project with CALQ).

## Results

Results include: stronger networking for Artex-te and people involved with the programme, knowledge development for staff, improvement of services to researchers, contribution to the renewal of discourses and practices in the fields of visual arts.

More concrete results are:

### May 2008 Residency: Tim Dallett

#### Reception of Electronic Art in Canada

Timothy Dallett's project is conceived as an interactive study of the reception of electronic art practices in the Canadian artistic milieu during the period 1965-1995. The focus of the research is the theory and history of dynamic technological systems equivalent to artistic experience. Dallett aims to study the electronic artwork's theoretical framework, primary research on the genre and the historiography of the the reception of electronic artworks. The temporal scope of the research is from the beginning of Artex-te's holdings to the threshold of Internet's integration to artistic practices.

### Ryan Rice in Residence

During his residency in November 2007, Ryan Rice investigated the notion of Two-Spirits, a term usually associated with people who embody both masculinity and femininity. This notion recently became commonly used within the Aboriginal LGBT communities of North America. Through his research, Ryan Rice aims to situate and study artists who embrace or reject the two-spirited label, while maintaining a strong attachment to their native identity. This fascinating subject has multiple ramifications for questions of duality, security, identity, sovereignty, as well as gender and sexual politics.

### Anne Thurman-Jajes in Residence

#### Artists' Publications in Canada

Beyond the book form, artists publications represent a variety of formats, including printed matter as well as projects for radio and television. Ms. Thurmann-Jajes' research to be conducted in September 2007 is also concerned with the dissemination networks involving these artistic productions. This project follows a series of similar research for the Weserburg Museum für Moderne Kunst (Bremen, Germany) on publishing in Poland (in 2005) and Spain (in 2001).

### Stephen Wright in Residence

#### Art practices with impaired coefficients of artistic visibility

Invited as researcher-in-residence at Artex-te Information Centre, Stephen Wright's writing and research focuses on art practices with low coefficients of artistic visibility, raising the possibility of a new status for art – in the absence of artworks, authorship or spectatorship. Envisaging art in terms of competence rather than performance, process rather than outcome, poses a distinct challenge for the artworld because in losing its visibility as such, art has only its history to fall back on. For practices whose self-understanding stems from the visual arts tradition, not to mention for the normative institutions that govern it, the problem cannot be merely wished away for if it is not visible, art eludes all control, all prescription, in short, all "policing". If ever more artists seem prepared to deliberately impair their work's coefficient of artistic visibility, is it not in order to give teeth to the sort of consensus-busting power to which art often lays claim? (more / suite ...)

### 2002 Residency: Nicole Gingras

#### Sound in Canadian Contemporary Art

Nicole Gingras investigates how audio practices are used and developed in the Candian art context, and how they link to interdisciplinary forms such as performance, video, sculpture, sound environment , web and radio art. Today, while the use of sound in visual and medi arts develop, it

appears particularly pertinent to analyse the interrelations between these fields. The research looks into historical aspects – particularly through Artex-te’s collection of documentation – and stays firmly attached to the current activity linked to the dissemination of audio art– exhibitions, publications, performances, concerts and festivals. This project’s goal is to underline the development and impact of sound components in a variety of Canadian art practices.

The long term objective is to make Artex-te a unique centre and crossroad for the study of contemporary visual arts and culture and to encourage professional in the fields in their attempts to develop critical practices and approaches.

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