

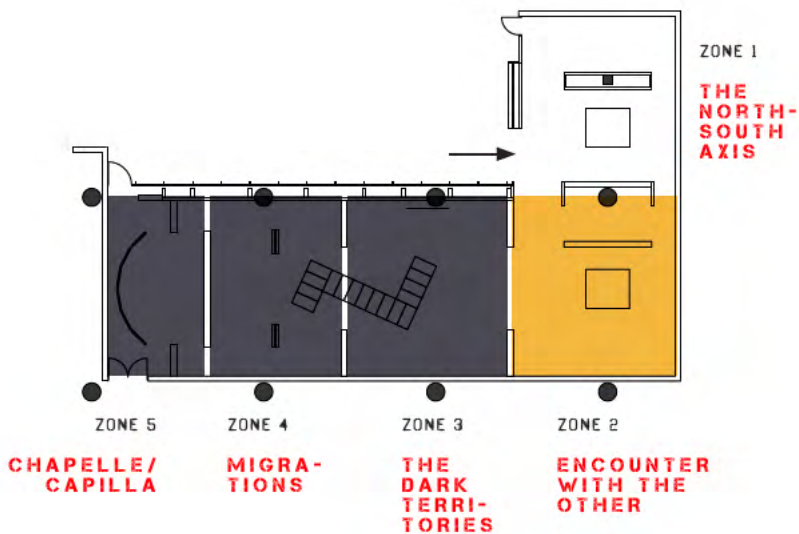


**FLEUVE**  
RENÉ DEROUIN



Casting-off of the 19,000 characters from the work **MIGRATIONS**  
between Île aux Coudres and Baie-Saint-Paul, June 7, 1994

Photo: Jeanne Molleur



*I consider myself to be a “continentalist,” the product of a mixing of influences that draws its meaning from the North-South axis. This exhibit is an invitation to travel on a long river starting from Longue-Pointe, where I was born, and passing through Mexico, the United States and Quebec’s Far North.*

— René Derouin, curator

Multidisciplinary artist and rebel René Derouin has travelled the Americas from north to south in search of his roots. *Fleuve* explores the major themes – identity, memory and place – that have inspired and guided a brilliant body of work built up over close to 50 years.

Drawing from the collections of BAnQ and other major public and private collections, the artist/curator presents several of his greatest works, including the *Nordique*, *Between*, *Échographie*, *Équinoxe*, *Migrations/Largage* and *Chapelle/Capilla* series. The works are exhibited in conjunction with a series of videos, seen here for the first time, that shed light on both the context in which they were produced and the artist’s creative processes.

As a sign of his commitment to the public interest, René Derouin will bequeath his personal archives – drawings, sketches, correspondence, photos and audiovisual documents – to Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec after the exhibit.

# THE NORTH-SOUTH AXIS

I was born in the parish of Saint-François-d'Assise-de-la-Longue-Pointe in east-end Montreal, where the Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine bridge-tunnel is now located. In 1950, my family lived on Rue Saint-Just, site of the winter crossing to the Boucherville Islands. I spent my childhood on the banks of the St. Lawrence, where I grew to know the land by watching boats from faraway lands go past and walking on the ice road in the winter. Yet the river I was so fond of took two members of my family: my brother and my father both drowned.

I found the atmosphere of the time suffocating, but unlike other artists, I wasn't remotely attached to France. I had a strong desire to travel. I was drawn to the South. In September 1955, at 18, I left for Mexico with \$500 in my pocket. I was fascinated by the exploration of the Americas. I was seeking another societal model, different from the one that the upholders of clerico-nationalism offered to the French-Canadian community. There began my journey in search of my roots and my identity.

1 9 5 5 -  
1 9 5 7

**CROSSING  
A  
CONTINENT**

Travelling throughout 1950s America, I discovered the vastness of the land, country music, jazz and segregation. That was my birth as an artist, discovering a continent mixed by successive migrations as well as pre-Colombian art with its 3,000-year history. I'd found a starting point for my attachment to this continent.

I enrolled at the University of Mexico in 1955, then at La Esmeralda art school in 1957 to study murals with Pablo O'Higgins. My instructors would ask me, "Where are you from?" I'd answer, "From the North." I'd tell them about Quebec, which no one was familiar with. That experience fed into my questions about my identity and geographical origins, including the northern culture that is part of my identity.

1.

## **SEA ROCKS**

1967

Woodcut

2/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C ROCHER 006212

2.

## **SEDIMENTARY ROCKS**

1967

Linocut

9/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER R C ROCHES 006210 b

3.

## **SELF-PORTRAIT**

1958

Lead pencil on paper

Collection of the Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta

994.087.014

4.

## **PROVINCIAL BUS**

1955

Charcoal and lead pencil on paper

Collection of the artist

5.

## **SEGREGATION, RICHMOND, SEPTEMBER 18**

1955

Lead pencil on paper

Collection of the artist

6.

## **NEW ORLEANS, SEPTEMBER 25**

1955

Watercolour on paper

Collection of the artist

7.

## **WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 18**

1955

Watercolour on paper

Collection of the artist

8.

## **PEASANTS**

1955

Sanguine on paper

Denis Doré collection

Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain des Laurentides

9.

## **MEXICO D.F.**

1957

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Jean-Pierre Laroche

Collection of the Musée d'art de Joliette

1991.055

10.

## **MEXICO CITY**

1956

Grease pencil and watercolour on paper

Gift of Christian Gélinas

Collection of the Musée d'art de Joliette

1991.045

11.

## **TEOTIHUACÁN**

1955

Watercolour on paper

Gift of Dr. Michel Frenette

Collection of the Musée d'art de Joliette

1991.028

12.

## **MEXICAN WOMAN**

1955

Woodcut

I/II

Private collection

13.

## **WOMAN AND PEASANT**

1955

Linocut

I/III

Gift of Jean Richard

Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

1991.28

14.

**MASK**

1955

Linocut

Collection of the artist

15.

**MEXICAN WOMEN**

1955

Sanguine on paper

Collection of the artist

16.

**17 RIO AMOY MEXICO DF**

1955

Charcoal and lead pencil on paper

Collection of the artist

17.

**EL MERCADO**

1955

Linocut

I/III

Gift of Michel-Pierre Sarrazin

Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

1991.23

18.

**TWO YOUNG GIRLS, MEXICO CITY**

1955

Watercolour on paper

Collection of the artist

19.

**MEXICO D.F.**

1957

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Amyot

Musée d'art de Joliette

1991.053

20.

**MEXICO CITY: LANDSCAPE AND COCONUT PALMS**

1957

Ink and pastel on hard-sized paper

Musée d'art de Joliette

1991.059



1 9 6 6 -  
1 9 6 7

THE  
RIVER AT  
VARENNES

In my old 18<sup>th</sup>-century home/studio, I watched the river as I prepared myself for the winter. One day, I decided that I'd go out every morning to investigate the light of the snow, ice and flurries while observing the river. Back in my studio, I would then concentrate on my morning's discoveries. That's how the *Hiver* series arose. Rarely in my life as an artist have I experienced such osmosis with nature. My senses awakened, I'd make my way along the river in the crystal-clear morning. Those days made me aware of the light of northernness.

21.

**SAWTOOTH V**

Oil on masonite

1965

Private collection

22.

**SKI-DOO**

1968

Woodcut

2/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C SKIDOO 011035

23.

**TWO PEBBLES IN THE EYE**

1968

Woodcut

4/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C DEUXGA 011120

24.

**DE LA VÉRENDRYE PARK**

1981

Woodcut

3/4

Private collection

25.

**CRYSTAL-CLEAR MORNING**

1967

Woodcut

7/10

Lavalin collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

A 92 77 G 3

26.

**JOY**

1968

Woodcut

2/10

Lavalin collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

A 92 399 G 3 (3)

# 1950

## QUEBEC

The Quebec elite of the time rejected America and the hostile nature of the land and its history. The people didn't have a choice; they lived in a mixed land forged by nature in its outsized proportions and extreme seasons. The elite continued to cultivate a nostalgic view of French culture and colonization. As an artist, I couldn't identify with a nostalgic culture that denied our history and amounted to what I felt was a betrayal of the origins that I wanted to remain faithful to.

27.

## LAC DES SABLES

1980

Woodcut

13/15

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B LACDES 006457

28.

## NORDIC SERIES

1979

Six woodcuts

13/20

Gift of Christian Gélinas and Michel Amyot

Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

1991.36

29.

## NORDIC SERIES

1979

Matrix

Gift of Christian Gélinas and Michel Amyot

Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

1991.36

30.

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE CATELLI FOOD PRODUCT COMPANY

1965

Linocut

1/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST C 004972 CON

30.

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE CATELLI FOOD PRODUCT COMPANY

1965

Linocut

2/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C 30ANSND 011119

31.

## **BLACK BUTTERFLY**

1965

Linocut

2/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B PAPILL 011079

32.

## **THE EYE**

1965

Linocut

10/10

Collection of the Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta

994.088.011

33.

## **LA VIDA**

2010

Linocut

Press proof

Collection of the artist

34.

## **VIDA Y MUERTE**

2010

Linocut

Press proof

Collection of the artist

35.

## **TOUBÊTE**

1964

Album of prints including 10 linocuts by René Derouin, cover by Pierre Ouvrard  
Institut des arts graphiques de Montréal

6/25

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/516 Ex.2

36.

## **MADMAN IN THE SUN**

1964

Linocut from the album *Toubête*

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/516 Ex.2

37.

## **VOYAGE**

1964

Linocut from the album *Toubête*

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/516 Ex.2

38.

## **BLACK CAT**

1964

Linocut from the album *Toubête*

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/516 Ex.2

39.

## **DEADLINE**

1969

Artist's book

10 silkscreens by René Derouin, text by Pierre Sarrazin, binding by Pierre Ouvrard, typography by Pierre Pelletier

Éditeur Ronald Perreault, Montreal

6/50

Collections of Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/299 Ex.2

40.

## **BATISTE'S OLD WARDROBE**

1969

Silkscreen from the artist's book *Deadline*

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/299 Ex.2

41.

## **EXPANDABLE MEMORY IN MODULES OF 16K TO 262K**

1969

Silkscreen from the artist's book *Deadline*

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

RES/CA/299 Ex.2

Film.

## I'M A MAN FROM BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH

Filmed on location at La Rolland Studios in Sainte-Adèle, Québec, in the winter of 2013 while the artist completed a work called *The Last Territories*.

Running time: 4 min 16 s

Directors: Catherine Hébert and Elric Robichon

Sound recording and design: Mélanie Gauthier

Images, editing, and music: Elric Robichon

Interviewer: Catherine Hébert

Audio mixer: Bruno Bélanger

Production: Mango Films

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# 1968

## TOKYO

In 1968, I left for Japan with a romantic image in my mind about what my meeting with Japanese master Toshi Yoshida would be like. Tokyo was a total immersion in the Other and a culture shock. In such a hierarchical society, artistic experimentation was unimaginable and freedom absent from the creative process. Yet Japan convinced me that mind and body discipline was necessary for having an art career. There I learned to put all my energy toward my art and to organize my work. I also discovered a Japan profoundly transformed by globalization. Japanese artists dreamed of America. I'd gone so far to find what was already so close to us.

Back from Tokyo, I created the artist's book *Deadline* before travelling across the United States again. America was a cauldron, what with the Vietnam War, the Apollo program's conquest of the Moon, Woodstock and the peace movement. In California, I discovered the realm of technology, harbinger of the 21st century, but also an America deeply divided about what its future would be. I wanted to understand this new world. City by city and day by day, in my Volkswagen bus/studio, I feverishly drew the series *Tecno I* and *Tecno II*.

42.

**ROU-BLOCK (A)  
TECNO II SERIES**

1971

Silkscreen

3/20

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B SERIET 006206

42.

**GRO-BLOCK  
TECNO II SERIES**

1971

Silkscreen

15/20

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B SERIET 006201

43.

**BI-BLOCK  
TECNO II SERIES**

1971

Silkscreen

8/20

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B SERIET 006200

43.

**RE-BLOCK A  
TECNO II SERIES**

1971

Silkscreen

2/20

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B SERIET 006205

44.

**PET'S WAR MEASURES  
TECNO I SERIES**

1970

Silkscreen

Artist's proof, II/V

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B SERIET 011126



# ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER

For many years, my work was almost exclusively focused on northernness until I realized, 20 years later, that I'd also been moulded by the southern sensuality that the Mexican school had taught me. My work *Between* illustrates the coming together of these two sources of influence: northern culture, rational and organized, and Latin-American culture, instinctive and sensual. So I'm not just northern, given that I have much too much affinity for the South. I nurture a feeling of belonging to America but consider myself to be a "continentalist" instead. I'm the product of two cultures; I was and I am between these two cultures. *Between* embodies the ideas of time, memories and duality. In 1983, I allowed myself the utmost freedom to create the series. It was a journey back into memory and time, a blend of painting, engraving and history. The Other came back to me as an essential part of my mixed, hybrid, Baroque culture. The symbiosis between the land contours of the North and pre-Columbian art appeared in the work as an expression of my identity.

IN MEXICO, MY INSTRUCTORS WOULD ASK ME,  
“WHERE ARE YOU FROM? ” I’D ANSWER, “FROM  
THE NORTH.”

— RENÉ DEROUIN

1.

**BETWEEN**

1984

Woodcut on canvas enhanced with oil

Collection of the artist

2.

**BETWEEN**

1984

Matrices

Collection of the artist

3.

**BETWEEN**

1984

Woodcut on canvas enhanced with oil, and matrix

Gift of Denis Doré

Collection of the Université de Sherbrooke

4.

**DEC. 20, MEXICO CITY**

1987

Charcoal and soft pastel on paper

Private collection

5.

**ESCONDIDO**

1991

Soft pastel and coloured pencil on paper

Private collection

6.

**OCT. 24, VAL-DAVID**

1988

Charcoal and soft pastel on paper

Private collection

**THE BAROQUE IS IN SOME CASES AN  
EMANCIPATION FROM CENSORSHIP, POWER  
AND ORDER.**

— RENÉ DEROUIN

7.

**AUGUST 13, '87**

1987

Felt-tip pen on paper

Collection of the artist

8.

**AUGUST 3, '87**

1987

Felt-tip pen on paper

Collection of the artist

9.

**JULY 14, VAL-DAVID, 1987**

1987

Ink and felt-tip pen on paper

Collection of the artist

10.

**JULY 14, VAL-DAVID**

1987

Ink and felt-tip pen on paper

Collection of the artist

11.

**LA TERCERA PARTE DE CHAPULTEPEC**

1990

Pastel and woodcut on paper

Private collection

12.

**JUNE I**

1983

Woodcut enhanced with oil

Lavalin collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

A 92 166 G 3 (3)

13.

## **BETWEEN SOUTH**

1984

Woodcut enhanced with oil

Private collection

14.

## **THE FISH OF PARADISE I**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-454

14.

## **ESCONDIDO – FISHING ON MARCH 20**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-459

15.

## **TONANTZINTLA – ESCONDIDO III**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-453

15.

## **LAS PALMAS**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-462

16.  
**THE FISH OF PARADISE V**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-458

16.  
**TONANTZINTLA – ESCONDIDO II**

1997

Preliminary sketch for the mural *Paraíso – The Duality of the Baroque*

Ink and pastel on paper

Gift of Michel Lorrain

Collection of the Musée de la civilisation

2012-452

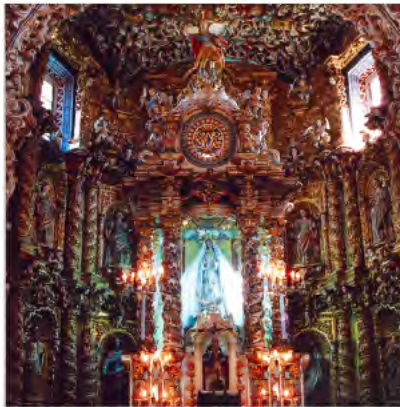


Photo: René Derouin

“MY EYE OBSERVES THE THOUSAND DETAILS OF CHARACTERS SWATHED IN COLOURS AND SYMBOLS OF THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER. THE BAROQUE WAS EVERYWHERE. I WAS DAZZLED AND MYSTIFIED BY IT. THE MAGIC OF THE PLACE HAD AN EFFECT ON ME. I DECIDED TO DELVE FURTHER INTO THE BAROQUE. ABANDONING THE IDEA OF UNDERSTANDING, SINCE I'M NO HISTORIAN LET ALONE AN ANTHROPOLOGIST AND HAVE NO THESIS TO DEFEND, I'M IN SEARCH OF A MEMORY, AND SUDDENLY I FIND PARADISE.”

— RENÉ DEROUIN, *PARAÍSO – LA DUALITÉ DU BAROQUE*  
(MONTREAL: ÉDITIONS DE L'HEXAGONE, 1999)

# THE DARK TERRITORIES

On September 18, 1985, I arrived in Mexico City for the launch of my retrospective *Suite nordica* at the Museo Universitario del Chopo. Organized by the Musée du Québec, the exhibit had already travelled to the Northern Illinois University Art Gallery and the World Print Council Gallery in San Francisco. Its arrival in Mexico City was very important to me; I was returning with an answer to the question that my instructors at La Esmeralda school had asked me 30 years earlier: "Where are you from?" I'd come to tell the Mexicans that I was one of them, trained at the muralists' school, and that I was back from a long journey to the North.

On September 19, 1985, the earth suddenly started to quake. No possible escape. I saw my whole life pass before my eyes. My greatest frustration was staying alive. Inside I was dead along with my northern identity. After the first tremors, I walked around the city without stopping. The seismic shocks made me draw my genetic memories and feel the cries of my ancestors: *Batiste, Charlemagne, Moïse, Diego, Carlos, Tina* and *Benôit* would appear in my works *Heads in Six* and *Heads in Nine*.



I HAD ARRIVED IN MEXICO CITY IN 1955 TO COME INTO THE WORLD. I RETURNED TO MEXICO CITY, EXACTLY 30 YEARS LATER, TO DIE. EVERYTHING HAD BEEN SAID. I WAS DISAPPEARING ALONG WITH MY NORTHERN IDENTITY.

— RENÉ DEROUIN

1.

## EQUINOX II

1990

Polychromatic wood relief

Collection of the National Bank of Canada

2.

## MIGRATIONS

1992

Matrices

Polychromatic wood relief

Collection of the artist

3.

## LONGUE-POINTE

1995

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Collection of the National Bank of Canada

4.

## EQUINOX

1989-1990

Polychromatic wood relief

Private collection

“The equinox lasts a fraction of a second. It’s the central point between what has gone by and what is to come. It’s a transition between light and darkness. Between black and white. Between youth and maturity. Between North and South. The equinox is the place where I stand at the age of 50. In the North, I live in solitude in an outsized land. In the South, I’m caught up in the ebb and flow of an existence stripped down to its essence, exposed to the life force.”

— René Derouin, *Équinoxe* exhibition catalogue (Val-David: Éditions du Versant-Nord, 1990)

5.

## LONGUE-POINTE IV

1995

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Private collection

6.

## LONGUE-POINTE III

1995

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Private collection

7.  
**HEADS IN SIX – MOÏSE**

1986

Enhanced woodcut

8/25

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B TETESÉ 006196

8.  
**HEADS IN SIX – BIG MOUTH**

1986

Enhanced woodcut

16/25

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B TETESÉ 006194

9.  
**HEADS IN SIX – NAZARÉ**

1986

Enhanced woodcut

15/25

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B TETESÉ 006198

10.  
**HEADS IN SIX – CHARLEMAGNE**

1986

Enhanced woodcut

4/25

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R B TETESÉ 006197

11.  
**LONGUE-POINTE V**

1995

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Private collection

Film.

**THE GROUND TREMBLES: MY GENETIC MEMORIES**

Filmed on location at La Rolland Studios in Sainte-Adèle, Québec,  
in the winter of 2013.

Running time: 3 min 32 s

Directors: Catherine Hébert and Elric Robichon

Sound recording and design: Mélanie Gauthier

Images, editing, and music: Elric Robichon

Interviewer: Catherine Hébert

Audio mixer: Bruno Bélanger

Production: Mango Films



# MIGRATIONS, 1989- 1992

The idea for the *Migrations* project came about through my observations of the density of Mexico City, a huge city with a fascinating history. Lost in the streets of the megalopolis, I often experienced the migrant condition. A visit to the Rufino Tamayo Contemporary Art Museum in Mexico City convinced me to create a work of architectural integration. Observing the large windows, I understood that this approach would fall within the continuity of *Between* and *Équinoxe*. Never has a project demanded so much energy; never has one subject so haunted me. I created the work while experiencing the migrant, exiled condition.

I decided to set about creating 25 different ceramic characters every day. These bodies of crushed migrants would carry the burden of history. On some days I felt Asian, on others Mexican, French or African. I walked for three years from north to south and from south to north.

In June 1992, I found myself in Mexico City to install my work at the Rufino Tamayo Contemporary Art Museum. Eight thousand ceramic pieces arrived from San Bartolo Coyotepec, where I'd made them. Add to that the 12,000 statuettes created in my Val-David studio. That's how *Migrations* took its place in the heart of Mexico City.

Film.

## MY MIGRATION

Filmed on location at La Rolland Studios in Sainte-Adèle, Québec, in the winter of 2013.

Running time: 5 min 36 s

Directors: Catherine Hébert and Elric Robichon

Sound recording and design: Mélanie Gauthier

Images, editing, and music: Elric Robichon

Interviewer: Catherine Hébert

Audio mixer: Bruno Bélanger

Production: Mango Films

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1.

## UNDERTOW VI

1997

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Private collection

2 and 10.

## MEMORY OF JEANNE (detail)

Photo mural

1994

Collection of the artist

In the summer of 1994, I was invited to the Baie-Saint-Paul Symposium as an artist in residence. During my time there, I made a photo-mural of 1,152 engraved images as a follow-up to the *Migrations* project, but this time featuring only one person. Over a month, I photographed my wife, Jeanne Molleur, 2,500 times. From day to day, the work evolved according to the variations in the memory of her body, a metaphor for individual migration.

3 and 11.

## RIVER-MEMORIES (detail)

Photo mural of the 19,000 characters from *Migrations* that were cast off into the St. Lawrence River

1994

Collection of the artist

To keep the memory of *Migrations* alive, I took 1,500 photos of the ceramic statuettes before casting them off to make a mural I called *River-Memories*. Each of the photos was engraved to bring out the emulsion, orange-tinted from the paper, as if the statuettes were emerging from the foundry fire.

4.

**MIGRATIONS** Installation, 1989-1992, at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico D.F., in 1992

Photo: René Derouin

5.

Character from the work **MIGRATIONS**, case, photo of Casting-off, and letter addressed to Denis Doré

1990-1994

Ceramic

Denis Doré collection

Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain des Laurentides

I picked 250 personalities from the Americas and sent them a statuette in a black case containing a photo of the Casting-off and a letter explaining the gift's meaning. They learned that what they held in their hands was a migrant from the *Migrations* project and that they could either keep it or pass it on to someone else. My gesture triggered a flood of letters and phone calls thanking me for what I'd done. In a way, I'd shared the memory of our migrations with the Other.

6.

## RIVER-MEMORIES

Reproduction of the poster explaining the stages of the Casting-off

1994

### From Iceland to the Casting-off

In 1994, during a stay in Iceland, that mythical island of great migrations and seismic upheavals, I thought about the reasons why I wanted to cast my characters off and the meaning I wanted to give to the gesture. Back in Val-David, I continued my preparations in total secrecy, because I wanted it to be a ritual rather than performance art. I would return to the river of my childhood and finish mourning the Derouin family's loss in total silence.

In June of that same year, I bequeathed a collection of 19,000 ceramic pieces from the *Migrations* (1989 1992) installation to the St. Lawrence River. By casting off the memory of our migrations since 1635 into the water, I found a second life. With that gesture, I created a work of public art about our migrations, superimposed on the sediment of Native American memories of the "path that walks."

7.

## MIGRATIONS

1992

Matrices

Polychromatic wood relief

Collection of the artist

8.

Characters from the work **MIGRATIONS**

1989-1992

Ceramic

Collection of the artist

9.

## **MIGRANTS**

1993

Sanguine and charcoal on paper

Collection of the artist

10.

## **MEMORY OF JEANNE** (detail)

Photo mural

1994

Collection of the artist

See above

11.

## **RIVER-MEMORIES** (detail)

Photo mural of the 19,000 characters from *Migrations* that were cast off into the St. Lawrence River

1994

Collection of the artist

See above

12.

## **MIGRANTS I**

1993

Woodcut, artist's proof I/II

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C MIGRAN 011151

13.

## **MIGRANTS II**

1993

Woodcut, 1/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C MIGRAN 011153

14.

## **MIGRANTS III**

1993

Woodcut, 9/10

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R C MIGRAN 011152

15.

## **UNDERTOW V**

1997

Polychromatic wood relief and ceramic

Private collection

# CHAPELLE / CAPILLA

The idea for *Chapelle* came to me in 1997, when I was doing research into the Mexican Baroque. Entering the Tonantzintla church, south of Puebla, for an instant I was taken back to the Saint-François-d'Assise chapel of my childhood. Created by 18<sup>th</sup>-century indigenous craftsmen, the Baroque masterpiece of America's first *mestizo* art represents the meeting of two worlds and the mixing of two cultures.

*Chapelle/Capilla* marks a break with the rest of my work, a reconciliation with the sacred aspect of Quebec culture that has nothing to do with religion. Created at the Villa James in Percé, where I was an artist in residence, it is part of a desire to reappropriate the spirituality that up till then I hadn't wanted to name.

A chapel, or *capilla* in Spanish, is a place for meditation, like Percé. Every morning, I'd walk along the beach of that natural site reminiscent of a huge cathedral, examining the kelp, breathing in the odours and studying the textures of the rocks buffeted by the Atlantic winds before going back to my studio, permeated with the place. These strolls gave rise to an investigation into light, a stained-glass window if you will, that we need to contemplate in silence to fully grasp its spiritual aspect.

To me, *Chapelle/Capilla* represents a return to the basics of the creative process.

Film.

## **MY CHAPEL**

Filmed on location at La Rolland Studios in Sainte-Adèle, Québec, in the winter of 2013 while the artist completed a work called *The Last Territories*.

Running time: 5 min 33 s

Directors: Catherine Hébert and Elric Robichon

Sound recording and design: Mélanie Gauthier

Images, editing, and music: Elric Robichon

Interviewer: Catherine Hébert

Audio mixer: Bruno Bélanger

Production: Mango Films

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1.

## **ACATAPEC I**

2007

Linocut

Legal deposit, II/II

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EST DER.R D SERIEP 010751

2.

## **ACATEPEC II**

2007

Linocut

Legal deposit, I/II

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EST D 013409 CON

2.

## **ACATEPEC III**

2007

Linocut

Legal deposit, I/II

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST D 013410 CON

3.

## **CHAPELLE/CAPILLA**

2008

Hard-sized paper, pierced paper

Collection of the artist



4.  
**SAN-ROSARIO – PUEBLA III**

2007

Linocut

Legal deposit, II/II

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R D SERIEP 010753

5.  
**SAN-ROSARIO – PUEBLA I**

2007

Linocut

Legal deposit, II/II

Collections of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

EST DER.R D SERIEP 010752

*I SEE MYSELF AGAIN INSIDE THE CHAPEL, LIKE A TEXTURED FRUIT,  
BETWEEN WARMTH AND COOLNESS. MY EYES SCAN CERTAIN DETAILS  
OF THE VAULT; NOTHING MOVES. I GAZE AT PARADISE – **EL PARAÍSO** –  
IN SILENCE.*



Photo: René Derouin

*A CHILDHOOD MEMORY COMES BACK TO ME. ON A RADIANT MORNING  
ON THE BANKS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER AT LONGUE-POINTE  
APPEARS THE SAINT-FRANÇOIS-D'ASSISE CHAPEL, GONE FOREVER  
AFTER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LOUIS-HIPPOLYTE-LA FONTAINE  
TUNNEL LEADING TO THE BOUCHERVILLE ISLANDS.*

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