

# It takes everyone to know no one

Lorna Brown, Jennifer Cherniack,  
Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez, Chris Holman,  
Yvonne Lammerich, Dax Morrison, and Anne Ramsden

Curated by Ana Barajas

April 8 – May 21, 2011

Opening:  
Thursday, April 7, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

## Musée du quotidien Collection promenade matina

Justina M. Barnicke  
Gallery



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts  
du Canada

Justina M. Barnicke Gallery  
Hart House, University of Toronto  
7 Hart House Circle  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3 CANADA  
T: (416) 978-8398 F: (416) 978-8387  
www.jmbgallery.ca

Summer Gallery Hours:  
Monday to Saturday 12–5 PM.

The Gallery is closed on statutory holidays.



West Entrance, TTY, Elevator  
Accessibility Fund available:  
accessibility@harthouse.ca

The Gallery is wheelchair accessible.

Designer: Martina Hwang  
Printer: Captain Printworks

Right:  
Anne Ramsden, Musée du quotidien/Museum of the  
Everyday, 2005-ongoing, Inkjet print, 112 x 75 cm.  
"The Morning Walk Collection" based on an image by

The Morning Walk Collection

Museum of the Everyda



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Roundtable on the future of art institutions, with artists  
in attendance, on Friday, April 18 at 12 Noon. Meet at the  
Board Room at Hart House, University of Toronto.

Curator's tour:  
Wednesday, April 27, 5 PM to be followed by Free Shuttle Bus  
to the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto  
Scarborough at 6 PM, returning at 9 PM.

#### Biographies:

**Ana Barajas** was born in Mexico City and is currently the Director of YYZ Artists' Outlet, an artist-run centre in Toronto. She has managed more than fifty exhibitions to date.

**Lorna Brown** is an artist, writer, and curator based in Vancouver. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, most recently at the Audain Gallery in Vancouver.

**Jennifer Cherniack** is an artist and arts educator currently based in Montreal, pursuing her MFA at Concordia University. She has exhibited recently at FOFA Gallery in Montreal.

**Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez** was born in Mexico City, and is currently based in Halifax. He exhibited his work most recently with the AluCine Latin Films and Media Festival in Toronto.

**Chris Holman** is a member of the Department of Political Science at York University, and a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at Stony Brook University.

**Yvonne Lammerich** is an artist currently based in Toronto. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, most recently at MOCCA in Toronto.

**Dax Morrison** is an artist based in Toronto. His most recent solo exhibition was held at YYZ Artists' Outlet in Toronto.

**Anne Ramsden** is an artist and educator based in Montreal. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, most recently at Galerie SBC, Montreal.

#### Works in the exhibition:

**Lorna Brown, AdmIndex**, 2010. One inkjet print, 134 x 69.9 cm, and online project. Courtesy of the artist.

**Jennifer Cherniack, The History of Art According to my Archives**, 2009-ongoing. Three 35mm slide projections, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

**Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez (with Dax Morrison and Chris Holman), Cultural (de)Centre for a Precarious Century**, 2011-ongoing. Mixed-media installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artists.

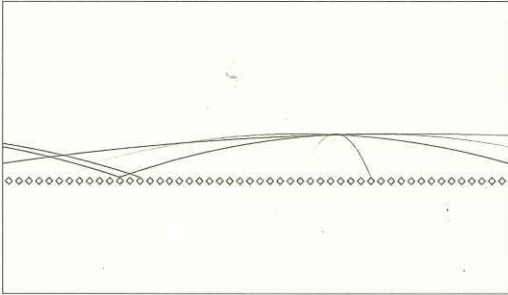
**Yvonne Lammerich, The Virtual TMCA/MACT Project**, 2009-ongoing. Mixed-media installation and video projection, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

**Dax Morrison, Migration Patterns**, 2010-ongoing. Video projection, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

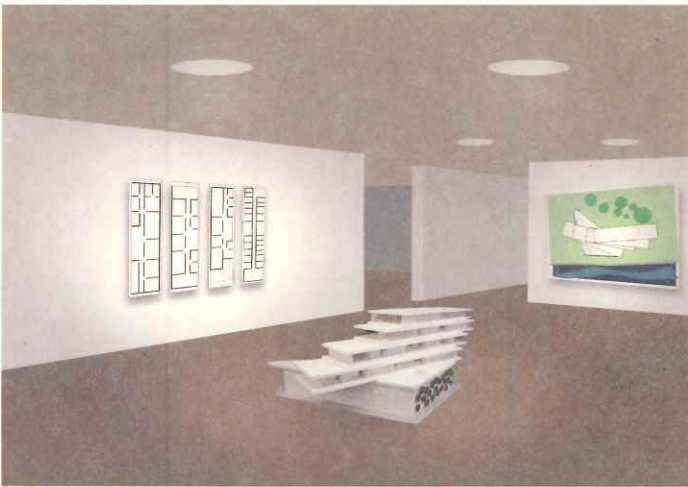
**Anne Ramsden, The Musée du quotidien/Museum of the Everyday**, 2005-ongoing. Inkjet prints, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.



01



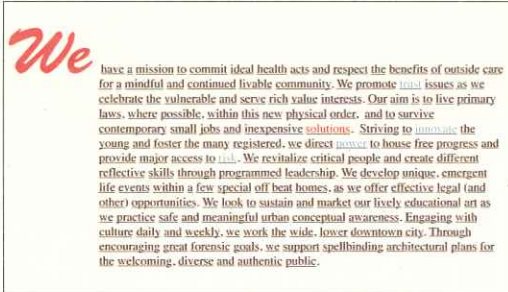
02



04



03



05

Institutions are contested sites—French political theorist Chantal Mouffe states that the relationship between institutions and their communities “could be accepted as ‘friendly enemies’ who share a common symbolic space despite their very real differences.”<sup>1</sup> This relationship exists out of necessity even though it is one where the balance of power is tipped in favour of the organizing body. In the case of an art or non-profit cultural organization, artists often actively acknowledge and challenge this tension, and seek to regain control or be counted as equal partners.

The exhibition *It takes everyone to know no one* brings together works by seven artists—Lorna Brown, Jennifer Cherniack, Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez, Chris Holman, Yvonne Lammerich, Dax Morrison, and Anne Ramsden—who propose a recontextualization of institutional methodologies. Utilizing diverse bureaucratic strategies, the works question the validity and inner workings of art institutions, and, in some instances, suggest reshaping their structure and purpose. By analyzing the institution's archived history, functionality, organizational strategies, and physicality, the artists equally acknowledge the emergence and usage of a virtual landscape in which information and data could be newly mined, archived, and shared across geographical boundaries.

Jennifer Cherniack's ongoing work *The History of Art According to my Archives* records the ephemeral and fleeting moments that make up her experiences in the art world as an artist, curator, and art administrator. Through a series of lists projected as text-based slides, Cherniack narrates her point of view, and positions herself as an active member of the arts community. The plain black font on white background suggests educational presentations held at many middle schools across the country or art history classes. Using 35mm slide projectors, which have been made virtually obsolete by digital technology, she historicizes the work and institutionalizes her everyday experience while offering an unusual inventory of the institutional forms that dominate the contemporary art world.

*Migration Patterns* by Dax Morrison equally employs research methodology, but delves into the archives of public galleries and museums across the country to bring to light an often-obscured institutional history of members of senior staff. The tabulated data positions institutions according to their geographic, longitudinal coordinates in order to subvert perceived hierarchies and status. Covering the years between 1980 and 1990, the database captures the movements of curators, gallery directors, and CEOs as they traversed the country in search of better opportunities.

Lorna Brown's online project *AdmIndex* pointedly investigates the language of administration. Brown gathered the mission statements from the corporate websites of fifty-eight non-profits, agencies, and businesses in the neighbourhood of the newly developed Simon Fraser University Woodward's building in Vancouver, BC. From the collected verbs, nouns, and adjectives in these texts, she then composes a single mission statement. The project is an index of various organizations' hopeful language, which speaks to their desire for local presence but also to the reach of their “web presence.” The resulting text initially seems to make sense, but upon closer inspection the statement exposes the emptiness of certain concepts; words like “culture” and “leadership” lose their power. An accompanying collage of the logos, logotypes, and coats of arms found on the same organi-

zations' websites similarly equalizes the organization's branding efforts, and in a way, flattens their intended meaning.

Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez, working in collaboration with Dax Morrison and Chris Holman, presents the possibility of an alternative organization. Titled *Cultural (de)Centre for a Precarious Century*, the artists' work consists of the self-defining act of drafting the organization's “Act of Institution,” and the enactment of “ribbon ceremonies” that act as symbolic inaugurations of potential spaces in which the (de)Centre could operate. The new cultural space functions as a non-virtual and impermanent “museum” whose activities are ongoing. As Hernandez-Gomez explains, the artists' intention is to get rid of the burden of maintaining a permanent space either virtual or physical. The coherence and self-criticality of the “proto-museum” will be outlined in its approach, and through the incorporation act.

Yvonne Lammerich's *The Virtual TMCA/MACT Project* echoes the desire to compose an alternative institution, but one that is fully accessible any time, and from any place. Her imagined museum, firmly grounded in Toronto for the purpose of promoting contemporary art, is intended to be more responsive to artists' needs, respectful of the self-directed conditions under which they work, and the manner in which their work functions. Starting with a physical interpretation of the imagined site, her model would allow communal discussions about the way in which the project could become a hub for Toronto's artistic activities, and act in multiple temporal sites. Her proposition would function in between the real and the virtual world. It would be, as she puts it, “a phantom of possibilities, of potential.”

Questions around visibility are at the core of Anne Ramsden's poster series, which critiques the promotional apparatus that supports museological institutions. Bridging all of the works in this exhibition, Ramsden's ongoing 2005 project, *Musée du quotidien/Museum of the Everyday*, takes the form of marketing materials publicizing the museum's collection, and by asking viewers to participate and contribute to its collection. Some of the images were sourced—with permission from the creators—from the popular site flickr, while some are the artists' own. The fictional posters produce a non-existing institution but emphasize the hold that corporate branding may have. Ramsden's posters are artworks themselves, but they are also enunciations of works that exist in multiple locations including the viewer's mental space.

Although the data that Cherniack, Brown, Morrison, and Ramsden collect is very different, and ranges from the personal to the institutional, they all share a conviction that this information is useful and useable. In fact, “making sense of data” could be the rallying cry of the information age, or as Brazilian sociologist André Lemos has labeled this process as the creation of “informational territories”—that is the visualization and mapping of invisible data.<sup>2</sup> Visibility that crosses virtual and real, physical and temporal boundaries is for Lammerich and the collaborating trio of Hernandez-Gomez, Morrison, and Holman an entry into greater agency over the institutional model, and they are committed to act from within to reconfigure them. These friendly enemies are making the invisible visible.

— Ana Barajas

Ana Barajas would like to thank the artists for their generous and enthusiastic participation, and Barbara Fischer, Lisa Steele, Susan Schelle, and Gregory Elgstrand for their invaluable insight and advice. To Su-Ying Lee and Sandy Saad, thank you for being amazingly supportive.

Lorna Brown would like to thank Sabine Bitter and the Audain Gallery at SFU Woodward's for their support in commissioning *AdmIndex* as part of the project “Coming Soon,” 2010.

Yvonne Lammerich would like to thank developers Morna Gamble, Dina Elkady, and William Deane.

Dax Morrison would like to thank developer Kevin Mayo.

This exhibition is produced as part of the requirements for the MVS degree in Curatorial Studies at the University of Toronto.

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University of Toronto Department of Art Masters of Visual Studies



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

#### Notes

- 1 Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (New York: Verso, 2000), 13.
- 2 André Lemos, “Post—Mass Media Functions, Locative Media, and Informational Territories: New Ways of Thinking About Territory, Place, and Mobility in Contemporary Society,” *Space and Culture* 13, no. 4 (November 2010): 403-420.

#### Image Credits

- 01 Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez, Dax Morrison, and Chris Holman, *Cultural (de)Centre for a Precarious Century*, 2011-ongoing. Mixed-media installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artists.
- 02 Dax Morrison, *Migration Patterns*, 2010-ongoing. Video projection, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.
- 03 Lorna Brown, *AdmIndex*, 2010. Online artwork and inkjet print, 134 x 69.9 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
- 04 Yvonne Lammerich, *The Virtual TMCA/MACT Project*, 2009-ongoing. Mixed-media installation and video projection, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.
- 05 Jennifer Cherniack, *The History of Art According to my Archives*, 2009-ongoing. Three 35mm slide projections, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.