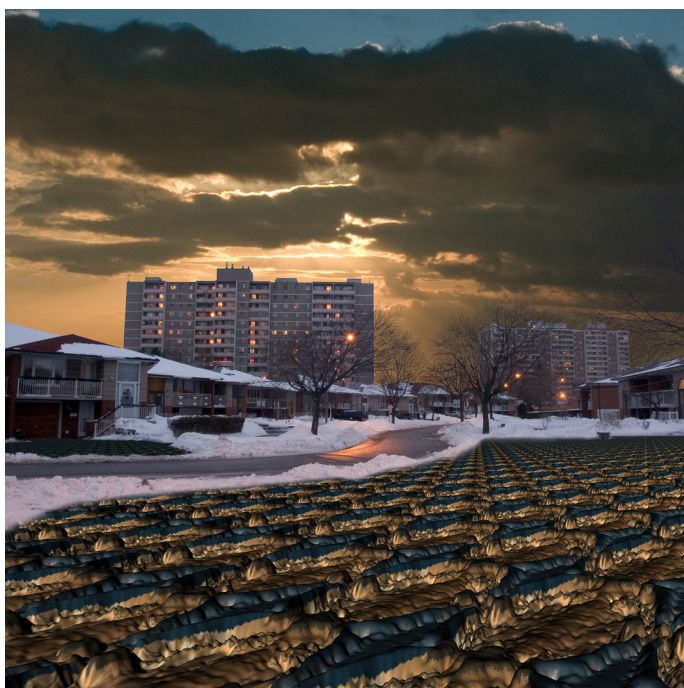


Guillaume Krick/Benjamin Thomas **FLOORING HORIZONS**

Exhibition from June 3 to September 8, 2015 – Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris

Curators: Catherine Bédard and Hélène Jagot

The first part of the exhibition *Flooring Horizons* was presented at the Musée de la Roche-sur-Yon from December 13, 2014 to February 21, 2015.



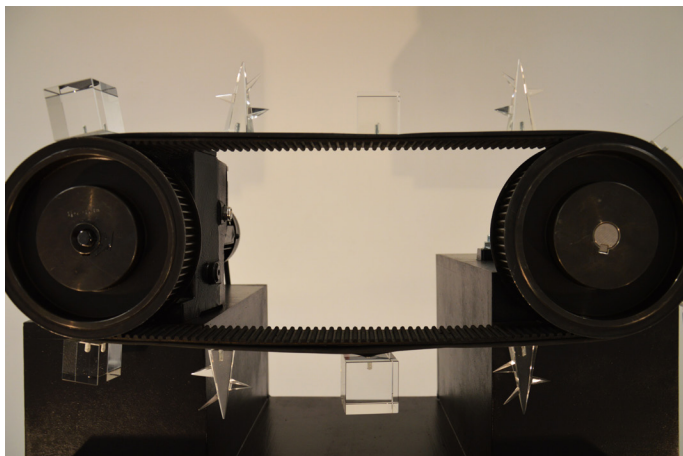
Toronto-Vaughan (Norfinch), detail of Guillaume Krick & Benjamin Thomas, *Érosions, paysages de banlieue*, sound installation, 2008-2012

Young multidisciplinary artists alternating between solo, duo and group practice, Guillaume Krick and Benjamin Thomas get to grips with the realities of the contemporary world with a perspective that is poetic, political and aesthetic. They are members of Extra Muros, a collective of dynamic and politically committed artists founded in 2006, and part of the umbrella organization Pol'n in Nantes. The collective pursues joint reflection on the multiple relationships between norms, social codes, reality and representation that is expressed through artistic creations using theatre, media, music, the visual arts, set design, architecture and writing.

Through photographic, sound and sculptural works, *Flooring Horizons* takes a look at town and country planning and questions the idea of infinite growth in a finite world with limited resources. The universal and lasting appropriation of public space is threatened by a trend towards maximizing flows in the name of a continuous quest for mobility. A meditation on the constructive-destructive machine and the planning of suburbs and cities, *Flooring Horizons* diverts technology from its functional dimension and exploits its fantasy potential. An excavator becomes a prehistoric animal. Part of a power shovel becomes a fossil. Miniature cities spin around on a device similar to an infernal machine. Floors with virtual motifs replace the orderly nature of peri-urban zones.

Guillaume Krick and Benjamin Thomas construct precision works in which sophistication and savoir-faire rub shoulders with the primitive dimension of tools for working the earth and our contradictory relationship with these tools.

The exhibition is organized around three main works. *Excavating the Air* is a motorized monumental steel sculpture displayed like a real machine, a superb work of engineering that is, however, in the service of a meditative function. The rotary motion and whirring of this strange animal detached from the undertaking of digging for which it was nevertheless designed produces a strange tension: the sensation of potential danger (that of being injured by the machine) accentuates the presence of the object and our physical relationship to it while its particular, repetitive dynamic provokes an escape, a numbness, a detachment from reality. The visitor will go from this spectacular machine to an immersive installation, *Mobile Autonomous City*, a room of machines and black machinations that represents the uninterrupted urban flow and the continual construction-destruction of the city in the metaphor of an entrancing circularity. Crystalline forms, miniaturized images of futurist buildings, circulate on driving belts that make them disappear and reappear to the sound of unsettling music composed based on a frequency recorded during the demolition of a building in Nantes. *Excavating the Air* and *Mobile Autonomous City* have a suggestive visual and sonic power that is not a mimetic relationship to reality (in other words, imitation and reproduction) but a perceptual and imaginary (even fantastical) relationship to reality.



Benjamin Thomas, *Ville autonome roulante*, detail, installation, 2014

Conceived jointly, *Erosions*, *North American Suburban Landscapes*, on the other hand, make use of images taken from the real world but which have nevertheless been adulterated. The whole is made up of twelve cement light boxes presented in two groups which also become columns of sound emitting a polyphonic composition produced using sounds recorded on sites evoking the human activity absent from the images. Twelve points of view on the suburbs of Canada, the United States and Mexico were reworked by taking to the extreme the power of manipulation of the contemporary image. The taking into account or the negation of the history of the places, the more or less coherent land development, the various effects of meaning provoked by the juxtaposition of elements of disparate eras, functions and styles come within the framework of the artificial contexts from which all possibility of a normal or natural relationship to the world and to human interaction seems to have been removed. Playing on the extreme, *Erosions*, *North American Suburban Landscapes* gives a singular vision of the discord tolerated – or even cultivated – in peri-urban areas. More than just a review or criticism, the work makes the negative effects of this discord felt.

Guillaume Krick was born in Montreal in 1981; he lives and works in Nantes. A graduate of the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Nantes-Métropole, he also studied at Concordia University in Montreal and in Germany (Kunst Hochschule, Berlin-Weissensee; Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, Leipzig). He has taken part in several group exhibitions in Europe, including *After the Fact*, Berlin photography festival, Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin, in 2005; *Panorama de la jeune création*, Biennale de Bourges; *Le Clou 6*, Lieu Unique, Nantes; *Volume One*, Universal Cube Galerie, Leipzig; *Artskoolgozsouth*, Palacio do Cristal, Porto in 2006; *Domesticalia: The Politic of Repression*, Standpoint Gallery, London, *Croisements numériques*, Galerie des Franciscains, Saint-Nazaire, in 2007; *Black Door File*, Black Door, Istanbul, in 2010; *Ni fixe, Ni fige*, Maison Régionale de l'Architecture des Pays de la Loire, Nantes, in 2011; *Episode 21*, Galerie Genscher, Hamburg, *Camping vor Ort*, Galerie Umtrieb, Galerie K-34, Kiel, *Mémoires d'éléphants*, L'Atelier, Nantes; *3 en Un*, Le Générateur, Gentilly, in 2012; *Episode 21*, Galerie Westwerk, Hamburg, in 2013; *D'ici d'ailleurs*, Espace d'Art Contemporain Camille Lambert, Juvisy-sur-Orge, *Montez im Exil*, Wurzeln Weit Mehr Aufmerksamkeit Widmen, Kunstwerk, Cologne, in 2014.

Benjamin Thomas was born in Nantes, where he lives and works, in 1981. A musician, actor and sound artist, he is a music and dramatic arts graduate of the Conservatoire de Nantes. He also has a master's degree in multimedia content from the Université de Nantes. He worked at Radio France with the Atelier de Création Radiophonique du Grand Ouest for which he produced documentary series (*Le goût de l'exil* in 2008). His sound creations were broadcast on Arte Radio, at sound creation festivals and in galleries. He also created *Madrid Corps Perdu* (2009), *Musique de flux* (2009), *Musique de ruines* (2009), *Czech Traffic* (2011). Between 2013 and 2014, he produced a series of four sonic and visual performances that constituted portraits between fiction and documentary – *Je ne suis pas Henri Ogé*, *Vouloir le scalp de Beckmann*, *Sanders face au chaos du monde* and *Vie et mort de Loyola Sanchez* – by collaborating with collectives of artists such as Poisson Hurlant and Extra Muros. He regularly works with theatre companies and wrote *Textes de voyage* (*Kenya, Tanzanie, Ouganda, Maroc, Guinée, Argentine, Uruguay, Inde, Costa Rica, Nouvelle-Zélande*) between 2008 and 2011, *Paysages désaffectés, poèmes politiques* (2014) and a play on urban planning, *La Grippe*, in 2014.

Flooring Horizons is the third joint exhibition by Guillaume Krick and Benjamin Thomas, who showed together in Vierzon in 2008 and at Galerie RDV, Nantes, in 2009 with the collective Extra Muros.

Exhibition produced in collaboration with the Musée de la Roche-sur-Yon, with the support of the collective Extra Muros (Nantes), the Région Pays de la Loire, FABRIKculture (Hégenheim) and Agelia.

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