

CAC Brétigny

Desk Set

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Press file [1–13]

Centre d'art contemporain  
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Madison Bycroft  
Marvin Gaye Chetwynd  
Kelly Jazvac  
Ayoung Kim

Opening  
Saturday 10 February at 5pm

Curator: Céline Poulin

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## Desk Set, by Céline Poulin

“Petra Genetrix from Porosity Valley, date of birth unknown, gender not applicable. Welcome to the Immigration Data Center.” Arriving through a secret door, the machine begins to glow in the dark. Further on four women surrounded by books endlessly chatter from one door to another. The telephone rings, unheeded, once again. Sorting through microplastics, they talk about the ways of protecting oneself against human contamination. Others, sporting an octopus wig or a face crudely painted and wearing a paper costume, transform images, writing and bodies to become lyrical translators. All of them know the weight of the earth and the name of the customs. Between them and the machine the nature of emotional and objective knowledge plays out. Such is the flow that is exchanged, mutant, mute or talkative, and forever repeated, forever ritualized.

A little further along, a three-headed woman looks on, appearing to indicate different directions to go in. The choice is up to the observer, the gazes of the three heads imparting the tonality of the path to take. She is made of stone which is dripping slightly, contrasting with the group of bodies at work, dressed in Peter Pan collars, filing, sorting and stacking things at the other end of the room.

The dark makes seeing easier, although you still need to be able to pass, move in close enough to make out the precision of the criteria and decipher part of the codes. The signal is occasionally lost, the machine jams, unless it is an intentional system of encryption. By one’s wandering about, the consistency of the site—rhizomatic and hard to chart—enters the flesh; yes, eventually it should be possible to simplify it. Maybe simply sit there, next to those plastic and coral stones, on the composite slab mixed with vinyl and the blood of sacrifices. Breathing in the air they tried to sterilize—from which there arises nevertheless the smell of glue, powder and moldy earth, sewing up images and mixing the sources to produce new ones.

## Artists



Walter Lang, *Desk Set*, 1957, film still. D.R.

The exhibition “Desk Set” gets its title from Walter Lang’s 1957 film of the same name which starred the talented Katharine Hepburn. The story takes place in a business department staffed by four women whose job is to answer a broad range of questions asked by the public over the phone. The plot begins when a machine is installed in their office, threatening to replace these transmitters of knowledge, the human ancestors of the internet, with a mechanized device...

The exhibition features four women artists whose own practices consist of producing knowledge and transmitting information involving affects and emotions. “Desk Set” brings together Madison Bycroft (1987, Australia), Marvin Gaye Chetwynd (1973, United Kingdom), Kelly Jazvac (1980, Canada) and Ayoung Kim (1979, South Korea). These artists’ practices, stamped by scientific methodology and science-fiction imagery, also recall each other in terms of the subjects they treat, i.e., the construction of human identity in connection with other entities while laying down as a principle that identity is necessarily double or multiple and conditioned by its constructive or destructive relationship with the surrounding world.

## Madison Bycroft (1987, Australia)



Madison Bycroft, *Afternoon*, 2018, digital video with colour, sound, courtesy the artist. Photo: Madeline Parry.

Madison Bycroft is an artist who lives and works between Adelaide, Australia, and Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Bycroft works in video, performance and sculpture. Madison is a graduate of the Piet Zwart Institute of Fine Art, in Rotterdam, an undertaking which was supported by the Anne and Gordon Samstag Scholarship. Along with Natalia Sorzano and Kari Robertson, Bycroft co-founded GHOST, a platform for new collaboration and facilitation. Recent International presentations have taken place in Liveworks performance act award and in the framework of Sharjah Biennial, Beirut, Lebanon; at Adelaide, Marseille in association with Triangle France where she has been in residency in 2017; at Westfälischer Kunstverein in Muenster, Germany; at Yellow Brick, Athens, Greece; at Physics room, Christchurch, New-Zealand; and at Microscope Gallery as part of residency at the ISCP in Brooklyn, New York. Bycroft's Australian exhibitions include shows at Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide; at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia in Sydney; at The Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide and at the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide.



## Marvin Gaye Chetwynd (1980, United Kingdom)



Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, *Uptight Upright Upsidedown*, 2016, CCA Glasgow, Glasgow. Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, Londres. Photo: ©Julia Bauer.

Marvin Gaye Chetwynd lives in Glasgow, UK. Chetwynd's practice intertwines performance, sculpture, painting, installation and video. Her work incorporates elements of folk plays, street spectacles, popular culture and Surrealist cinema. Her performances and videos often employ troupes of performers—friends and relatives of the artist—and feature handmade costumes and props. She has performed and exhibited internationally, and was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2012. Recent solo projects have taken place in Art Basel Parcours, Basel, Switzerland (2017); in frac île-de-france, le plateau (Paris, 2017 and upcoming in 2018), CCA Glasgow, UK (2016); Bergen Assembly, Norway (2016); Liverpool Biennial, UK (2016); Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany (2016); Edinburgh Art Festival, UK (2015); Open House Glasgow, UK (2015); Studio Voltaire, London, UK (2014); and Nottingham Contemporary, UK (2014). Recent group exhibitions have been organized in Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (2017); Liverpool Biennial Tour, Tate Modern, London (2017); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany (2017); Sadie Coles HQ, London, and Mead Gallery, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK (2017). She is represented by Sadie Coles HQ, London; Galleria Massimo de Carlo, Milan; and Gregor Staiger, Zürich.



## Kelly Jazvac (1980, Canada)



Kelly Jazvac, installation view of PARK, Oakville Galleries, Canada, 2013.

Kelly Jazvac works in collage, sculpture and installation. Simultaneously, she engages in interdisciplinary plastic pollution research with a team of scientists, artists and writers. A result of this work has been the description and study of “plastiglomerate”: a new hybridized stone made from molten plastic debris and naturally occurring sediment such as sand, wood and rock. Jazvac’s recent exhibitions have taken place in Fierman, New York; at The Berman Museum, Philadelphia; at Koenig and Clinton, New York; at Prosjektrom Normanns, Stavanger, Norway; at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto. She is represented by Fierman Gallery, New York.

## Ayoung Kim (1979, South Korea)



Ayoung Kim, *Porosity Valley, Portable Holes*, video still. Courtesy the artist.

The work of Ayoung Kim stands as experimentation focused on various types of writing and the narrative structure, on visual, sonic and linguistic levels. Ayoung Kim had solo shows at Melbourne Festival (2017); Palais de Tokyo (2016) and created a performance at the national opera house in Paris, Palais Garnier (2016). She presented her works at the Venice Biennale, Italy (2015); Maraya Art Centre, Dubai, UAE (2015); Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2012); Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea (2012); Museum of Arts and Design (MAD), New York, US (2011); Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM), Brazil (2011); 176/Zabludowicz Collection, London, UK (2011); Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2010) and many others. She was a resident artist at Pavillon Neuflyze OBC Research Lab of Palais de Tokyo (2015-2016), and Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2012). She was awarded The British Institution Award from the Royal Academy of Arts in the UK in 2010 and Young Artist of the Year Award from the Ministry of Culture in Korea, 2015.



## Events

Saturday 10 February

5 pm-9 pm

Opening of the show and performance by Madison Bycroft

Free Paris-Brétigny shuttle is available by request at [reservation@cacbretigny.com](mailto:reservation@cacbretigny.com). Pick-up at 5 pm at 104 avenue de France, 75013 Paris (the Bibliothèque François Mitterrand metro stop).

Saturday 3 March

4 pm

Digital storytelling

Open to groups and individuals aged 3 years and up. In partnership with Médiathèque of Brétigny-sur-Orge. Reservation is recommended: [reservation@cacbretigny.com](mailto:reservation@cacbretigny.com) or +33 (0)1 60 85 20 78.

Saturday 24 March

4 pm

Performance by Madison Bycroft, launch of the publication *Translating Medea* and of Desk Set at Théâtre Brétigny with Céline Drouin-Laroche and Charlotte Houette

The "Taxitram" shuttle route: Ecole et espace d'art Camille Lambert—CAC Brétigny—Immanence. Information and registration: [taxitram@tram-idf.fr](mailto:taxitram@tram-idf.fr) or +33 (0)1 53 34 64 43.

Friday 6 April

6 pm

Readings in the framework of Desk Set at Théâtre Brétigny, before the show F(l)ammes by Ahmed Madani (Théâtre Brétigny, 8.30 pm)

Friday 20 April

7.30 pm

Performance by Marvin Gaye Chetwynd at frac île-de-france, le plateau in the framework of *L'Homme aux cent yeux* (revue)

Saturday 21 avril

4 pm

Collective translation workshop by Madison Bycroft, in partnership with the Médiathèque of Brétigny-sur-Orge

Every Wednesday

2.30 and 4.30 pm

«Portrait-robot d'avatar», practical art workshop conceived by Alexia Foubert

In resonance with the show that is currently running, Alexia Foubert has developed a workshop that will focus on a contemporary version of the self-portrait via the avatar, often used in video games and on some of the social networks. Children participating in the workshop will describe their avatar to their partner, who will then have to draw it. Each one in a pair will draw the other according to what is said, writing a story whose characters will be the avatars developed during the workshop. The story will take shape as a paper fanzine that is to be printed up at the end of the workshop

Open to children aged 3 years and up. Registration is required for the groups: [reservation@cacbretigny.com](mailto:reservation@cacbretigny.com) or +33 (0)1 60 85 20 78.

Tours and workshops (for groups)

By appointment

We organize guided tours with commentary and workshops for groups by appointment, mornings from 10 am to 1 pm, and during regular opening hours.

For any information: [reservation@cacbretigny.com](mailto:reservation@cacbretigny.com) or +33 (0)1 60 85 20 78.

Upcoming in March

Launch of the online review on [cacbretigny.com](http://cacbretigny.com).

The inaugural exhibition titled "JUMP" (2016) highlighted the drive to make the internet site a published counterpart of the life of the art center, creating a link between the exhibition space and the virtual one. Activated starting in March 2018, the review will make it possible to invite artists and writers to imagine a specific content for the internet. Sometimes on, sometimes alongside the show, the content is an extension of our exhibitions and residencies in textual form, following a publication schedule that will be adapted to the specificity of each project.

With: Charlotte Houette, Clara Pacotte, Barbara Sirieix, Anne-Lou Vicente, ...

## Desk Set at Théâtre Brétigny

In co-production with Théâtre Brétigny

“Desk Set” continues with a specific project designed for the reception areas of Théâtre Brétigny and in conjunction with the theater’s theme for the season, “La femme est l’avenir de l’homme” (Woman Is the Future of Man). The young French artists Charlotte Houette and Céline Drouin-Laroche, whose work is steeped in feminist science fiction, will be taking over the space with works, performances and texts.

The show will be on display in the theater’s reception areas on days and evenings of stage performances starting 24 March.

Born in 1986 in Mâcon, Céline Drouin-Laroche lives and works in Montreuil. Her work is a personal, private exploration of the political driven by the concepts of narrative of the self and the world. The artist’s theoretical experiments (incorporating sociology, anthropology and political philosophy) give her work its direction as she devises projects in which she looks to meet individuals or groups and investigate their identities, imagination, knowledge, practices and the places they inhabit. Her projects notably deal with the question of our future of post-human interactions with other forms of life, opening oneself to flows that have neither the same source nor the same rhythm as our own biological rhythm—and the queer body, viewed not only as something beyond gender but especially as crossing every kind of limit, as what opposes norms and challenges them constantly by recomposing preexisting codes and patterns. A critical approach underlies her work, especially in its relationship to timeframes and the spaces she chooses to throw together in dialog, between realism and speculation, documentary and fiction. Through her video and performance installations, Drouin-Laroche develops a polymorphic style. Since graduating from the Ecole nationale supérieure d’arts of Paris-Cergy, she has focused on transmission, joining the Palais de Tokyo outreach team and in 2016 the staff of La Galerie, centre d’art contemporain of Noisy-le-Sec as a participating artist.

Charlotte Houette was born in 1983 and studied at both the Beaux-Arts de Paris and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. Her work has been exhibited at Shanaynay (Paris), Espace Louis Vuitton, Bodega (Philadelphia) and the Beaux-Arts of Rennes. Her paintings, which are generally done on both sides of the support and included moving parts attached to the main picture with hinges, cannot be taken in by the viewer at one glance. This deliberate lack of distinction between the front and the back of pictures favors their displacement and rearrangement within installations that can serve as sites for collective readings, performances or events. Certain areas of these paintings are even occasionally left blank for interventions by other artists, as if to challenge or thwart “the figure of the painter,” generally male, white and proclaiming the “autonomy” of his painting. Before these attitudes (which are far from being confined to the last century), Houette offers up in contrast a desire for ambiguity, collaboration, and self-effacement, revealing her wish to produce a relational painting. She is also the cofounder of The Cheapest University, an experimental school created by artists where she heads the EEAPS workshop, which is based on collective readings and written translations of queer and feminist science fiction. She is also taking part in the French translation of texts by Amy Sillman, a project begun by After 8 Books and The Cheapest University, with the aim of publishing the results in 2018.

For further information on Théâtre Brétigny’s programme (French): <http://www.theatre-bretigny.fr/>.



## The ABCC of CACB, by Charles Mazé & Coline Sunier

For “Desk Set,” the ABCC of CACB has grown to include the drawings of the bibliographer and “internet visionary” Paul Otlet (1868-1944). In Brussels in the 1920s Otlet created his Mundaneum, which aimed to integrate all of the world’s knowledge in a Répertoire bibliographique universel, or Universal Bibliographic Repertory, which is characterized today as a “paper Google.” He designed numerous plates exposing his theories, notably the Encyclopedia Universalis Mundaneum, from which we have borrowed 24 emojis [📖📚📄📑📔📕📖📗📙📚📛📞📟📠📡📢📣📤📥📦📧📨📩📪📫📬📭📮📯📰📱📲📳📴📵📶📷📸📹📺📻📼📽📾📿📠📡📢📣📤📥📦📧📨📩📪📫📬📭📮📯📰📱📲📳📴📵📶📷📸📹📺📻📼📽📾📿] referring to certain key words from the introductory text to the exhibition. This group forms a partial rebus that resonates with the themes tackled in the American film Desk Set (1957) and the practices of the four artists featured in the show, such as the transmission of knowledge and the connections between man and machine:

«📖 from Porosity 📚, 📄 of birth 📑, gender non applicable. Welcome to the Immigration 📔.» Arriving via a hidden 📕, the 📖 begins to shine in the 📗. Further on, 📙 surrounded by 📚📛, from one 📞 to the next. The 📟 rings with no one around, yet again. 📠 of micro-plastic materials, they go back and forth over the ways to protect yourself from contamination 📡. Others, a bewigged 📢 on their heads or the 📣 sketchily painted in a costume of 📤, transform 📥, 📦 and body to become lyrical interpreters. All of them know the weight of the 📧 et le nom des coutumes. and the name of the costumes. Between them and the 📨 the nature of the 📩, both emotional and objective, plays out.

As part of their residency, Coline Sunier & Charles Mazé create an alphabet based on a collection of letters, signs, and symbols from a variety of contexts and time frames involving both CAC Brétigny and the larger territory covered by the art center, as well as artists invited to exhibit their work. This corpus is now embodied in a new typography called LARA. LARA has been activated on each communication supports, which are considered publication and dissemination points for the collection. By associating multiple voices within the same typography whose glyphs continue to grow in number, with writings that are by turns vernacular, institutional, personal, and public, the ABCC of CACB is an attempt to publish the geographic, political and artistic context in which CAC Brétigny is found. The alphabet is online at [www.cacbretigny.com/en/lara](http://www.cacbretigny.com/en/lara).

## General information

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Free admission.  
Open from Tuesday to Saturday, 2 pm–6 pm.  
Late openings during evening performances at Théâtre Brétigny.

By RER C from Paris (30 minutes):  
Every 15 minutes, trains BALI, DEBA, DEBO, to Dourdan and Saint-Martin d'Étampes, the Brétigny stop.  
From Brétigny station, follow the direction of Espace Jules Verne, take boulevard de la République, continue on Pl. Chevrier, take slightly to the right on rue Danielle Casanova, and at the rotary take the first exit to rue Henri Douard.

By car:  
From Paris: A6 toward Lyon, exit Viry-Châtillon, Fleury-Mérogis, then Brétigny Centre.  
From Evry: Francilienne toward Versailles, exit 39B, toward Brétigny.  
From Versailles: Francilienne toward Evry, exit Brétigny centre.

For car-sharing, join the group [BLABLACAC\(B\)](#) on Facebook.

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This project has been carried out in partnership with the Iimin Museum of Art (South Korea), the Arts Council Korea, the Melbourne Festival, INA, the TPW Gallery in Toronto, frac île-de-france, Théâtre Brétigny and the Médiathèque of Brétigny-sur-Orge.