EXHIBI Conseil interculturel Montréal Montréal ##

CREDITS

This art exhibition is presented by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal.

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Nathalie Maillé — Executive director of the Conseil des arts de Montréal — and all those involved at the Conseil des arts de Montréal

INTERWOVEN

OCTOBER 29 to NOVEMBER 22, 2018

Group exhibition of visual arts presented by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal in collaboration with the Conseil des arts de Montréal

ARTISTS:

lfeoma U. Anyaeji Chadi Ayoub Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Farzaneh Rezaei

CURATUR: Kevin Calixte



Montréal ∰

CONSEIL DES **ARTS** DE **MONTRÉAL**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| A Word from Magda Popeanu | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| A Word from Moussa Sène | (|
| Introduction | |
| Ifeoma U. Anyaeji | 8 |
| Chadi Ayoub | .12 |
| Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux | |
| Farzaneh Rezaei | 22 |
| About the Curator | 26 |

INTERWIVEN is a group exhibition of visual arts that interweaves the artistic universe of four Montréal artists that hail from diverse backgrounds and whose work evokes and captures the cultural richness of Montréal. This exhibition is presented by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal in collaboration with the Conseil des arts de Montréal.



Magda Popeanu

City Councillor, Côte-des-Neiges Borough Vice President of the Executive Committee Responsible for housing, property management and planning as well as Montréal's diversity

Montréal's democratic life is built by the free expression and circulation of all its ditizens' different points of view. The Inferwoven exhibition offers a great opportunity to highlight and reflect on the complexity of the daily and historical ties interwoven throughout Montréal's public space.

The works presented by the four artists emphasize the rich rine works presented by the four artists emphasize the for-contributions of diversity to Montréal's cultural life. By drawing inspiration from their individual journeys, these artists display the worth of intercultural exchanges and their ongoing enrichment to our city.

Therefore, I congratulate the Conseil interculturel de Montréal and the Conseil des arts de Montréal for creating this exhibition, which demonstrates Montréal's artistic vitality and greatly enhances the city's cultural calendar.





Moussa Sène

President of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CIM)

In close collaboration with the Conseil des Arts de Montréal, the Interwoven exhibition confirms the Conseil interculturel de Montréals commitment to ensuring that the Ville de Montréal reflects the life all its citizens. Indeed, this group exhibition ensures that Montrealers' sensitivity to the dynamism and multiplicity of the city residents' journeys is reinforced.

The contributions of four Montréal artists from diverse backgrounds – l'écoma U. Aryaeji, Chadi Ayoub, Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux, and Farzaneh Rezaei – illustrate paths that, although singular, are able to represent the richness of the contemporary urban experience. Through the artists' inspired work, we can see

the international links that are being forged every day across Montreal - here, especially with Benin City, Beirut,

The variety of artistic languages presented, and the reuse of traditions, symbols or materials, also highlight Montréal's social and cultural dynamics. These diverse practices invite us to reflect on the connections that cross and enrich our own personal journeys and our collective history. This is therefore an artistic production that fits perfectly with the dynamism of intercultural relations as conceived by the CIM.

The Conseil interculturel de Montréal is very proud to present *Interwoven* and would like to acknowledge the remarkable work of the curator, Kevin Calixte, and to thank him for his enthusiasm in dealing with a theme so close to the concerns and interests of the CIVI.

Mouna Sene

Introduction

INTERWOVEN

In a city where interculturality is part of everyday life, the representativeness and visibility of Montréal's diverse communities is a current and unavoidable societal issue. Art has always been a conveyor of change and evolution, since it is a significant medium for expressing points of view and positions, for questioning and dialogue. Through their respective practices, it allows artists to affirm both their identity and their self-expression and to share them with others.

The exhibition Interwoven highlights and ties the artistic universe of four Montréal artists hailing from diverse backgrounds and whose work evokes the value of this diversity. This exhibition presents a part of our cultural heritage by bringing together works from different fields of artistic creation. It merges various techniques of visual expression as well as singular pictorial languages and invites the viewer to engage with perspectives of coming together, space appropriation and transcending borders.

Whether it is the captivating wall sculptures made of recycled paper pulp by the artist Chadi Ayoub, the Haitian mythology inspired paintings by the artist Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux, the graceful and feminine identity traits in the paintings and drawings by the artist Farzaneh Rezaei or the meticulous work of neo-traditional braiding of plastic bags by Ifeoma U. Anyaeji, this exhibition invites us to travel through a body of organically-mixed contemporary works.

This selection of works offers us, in a way, an example to follow. It invites us to question our own human relationships.

Kevin Calixte Curator





from the U

Ifeoma U. Anyaeji

Bom in 1981, Benin City (Nigeria), Ifeoma U. Anyaeji is a Neo-traditional artist who explores her boundaries as an African Igbo female beyond societal beliefs and the expected conventions of her initial academic training in painting. She holds an MFA degree in sculpture from Washington University in St. Louis, US; a BA. in painting from the University of Benin, Nigeria (where she also teaches) and is currently an Interdisciplinary PhD candidate at the Concordia University.

Anyaeji is pursuing her artistic path in sculpture, engaging further her passion for non-conventional art making and repurposing discarded objects. An interest stimulated by the constant environmental problems she encountered, and still encounters around her community particularly from non-biodegradable plastic bags and bottles that were in abundance. Anyaeji developed a style of art she calls "Plasfo-Art". This is an eco-aesthetic process of remaking, where she transforms her primary medium — used non-biodegradable plastic bags — by applying her crafting skills in a receding traditional Nigerian hair plaiting technique called *Threading*, combined with traditional basketry and fabric weaving techniques. Using this technique she spontaneously creates very conceptually complex and organic sculptures and installations, with intricate textures and colours.

Ifeoma has participated in several exhibitions, artist residencies and art fairs in Africa, Europe and North America, including: "1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair," in London, "Les Éclaireurs – sculpteurs d'Afrique" at the Palais des Papes, Avignon, France; "Horne: Contemporary African Artists Consider Place and Identity in Our Connected World" at the The Miller Gallery, Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio. Her work is also part of a traveling exhibition titled "Plastic Entanglements: Ecology, Aesthetics, Materials" which opened February 2018 a the Palmer Museum of Art., Pentand State University, Portland, Oregon; Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA and the Chazer Museum of Art, Northampton, MA and the Chazer Museum of Art, Indiversity of Wisconsin-Madison, WI. Commissions and collections include Fondation Jean-Pierre Blachere, Apt, France, US Embassy, Abuja, Nigeria, Art in Embassies Program, US State Department, Washington DC as well as other private collections in Africa and across Europe and the US.

Artist Statement

Growing up as an artist, I have always been intrigued by the intricacies of traditional craft processes and the use of non-conventional materials as art mediums. I also envisioned creating forms that communicate with and integrate elements from my environment, using the language of lines to replicate and transcribe societal and political occurrences and my experiences of nature. These visions and interests still abound, continuously shaping my existence and creative attitude to life. Now identifying as a Neo-traditional artist, my creative practice is about the transitions of African culture, within a globalized society, particularly Nigerian traditional aesthetics and cultural environmental ideologies. Such as material and non-material object reuse and repurposing – an ideology that focuses on formulating "new values" and extending the significance for objects assumed to have lost their "newness.

As a visual artist my primary media are discarded non-biodegradable plastic/polyethylene bags and bottles As a visual artist my primary media are discarded non-biodegradable plastic/polyethylene bags and bottles which are two main global environmental pollutants especially in my home country Nigeria Using a concept I developed, called Plasto-art' (coined from the words plastic and art), I repurpose these bags and bottles with a receding traditional Nigerian hair-plaiting technique, called 'Threading' (also known as Ikpa Owu – in Igbo language'). I visually express the narrative of this domestic object's possible transition from discarded to the aesthetic or functional – an evolution from redundancy to utility while retaining the hair craft's technique or object's physical state. The aesthetic metamorphoses of these discarded plastic bags, first crafted into Plasto-yams, are usually in form of very instinctive, conceptual, and sometimes complex yet organic sculptures, characterized by lines, circles and loops, with installations that reference domestic spaces, furniture, architectural from references of my cultural expressors. forms, reiterations of my cultural experiences, and discourses about the human body. Thematically, there is interplay of symbolic ideas drawn from traditional folklore, fashion, music and poetry. Through these sculptures and installations, I examine modern and contemporary portrayal of value and value systems most times formed by elements that uphold social abnormalities such as compulsive material excessiveness. Furthermore, I constantly reflect on the implications of our modernity's: consumptive systems of mass accumulation, waste generation or social attitude to value and the expiration-date syndrome, cultural assimilation and colonial orientations on beauty, authenticity and newness. In addition to metaphorically and spontaneously engaging these "old" plastic objects, I try to emphasize the potency of traditional crafting methodologies, highlighting the mark of the hand through supposedly menial obsolete techniques such as Threading and loom weaving. This is evident in my repetitive physical manipulation of the ubiquitous materials.

I. Plasto-art is a Neo-traditional reuse concept that transforms and repurposes discarded non-biodegradable plastic bags and bottles using the techniques of a receding traditional Negerian hair -plating craft, known as Threading. The initial transforming process of the plastic bags is known as Plasto-yarning.

2. Threading is a beautiful traditional hair plating technique and an elaborate hair architectural process, also known as African hair threading, which was predominantly practiced in some West African countries, Nigeria in particular. Sady, it is becoming an obsolete hair craft.

My works are sculpted to encourage multiple interpretations from the viewer, with the aim to any works are sculpted to encourage multiple interpretations from the vewer, with the aim to convey the importance of value preservation while, hopefully, stimulating a positive catalytic collective response towards eco-cultural issues. Furthermore, it joins other similar aesthetic practices interested in probing the psychological and material appreciation of African (and minority) cultures in post-colonial contemporary societies. Noting the reductive effects of the very politicized historical study and archiving of the continent, including today's compulsory ethnic assimilations disguised as globalization, on the composition of our varied identities, whether gender or racial evidence.

Part of the general motivation of this Neo-traditional concept of reuse is to highlight the universal environmental impact of material object accumulation. Its intent is to offset the growing obliteration of traditional African aesthetic values by global cultural pressures and to encourage the sustenance of these values within global cultures. Plasto-art is an exploration on the intensity and adverse magnitude of contemporary value systems and my interpretation of traditional material culture reuse in Nigeria But the concept should not to be mistaken for recycling, which is a different waste reclamation process, neither should it be considered as "upcycling." These are more modern and contemporary terminologies that tend to conflate, through erroneous generalizations, all related reuse art practices from all parts of the world.

...Used and discarded plastic bags or bottles may be tagged an environmental pollutant but to me It is a rich viable resource that must be exploited beyond its predesigned use, by everyone, including artists.



Title: Eze Fuo eze anochie [When a king leaves anofher replaces him – no condition is permanent]
Artist: Tieoma U. Aryaeji
Artist: Tieoma U. Aryaeji
Medium: Repruposed non-biodegradable plastic bags ("Plasto-yarns" threads - about 4000 threaded bags), mesh string and "bubblies."
Size: 40887 cm x 24.38 cm x 16154 cm
Year: 2013 / 2016
Photo credit: Ifeoma U. Aryaeji

11

Chadi Ayoub

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1972, Chadi Ayoub is a visual artist specialising in sculpture. Graduate of the National School of Fine Arts in Beirut and the School of Design at UQAM, he began his professional career as a set designer in a troupe of children's puppet theater.

Since 1999, his artistic approach and preoccupations have mainly focused on recycled materials, especially the paper pulp from recycled newspapers. From then on, the artist developed a technical process that allows him to make large sculptures that are robust yet light and resistant to bad weather.

In 2016, he began an exhibition tour across Quebec with his project *TRIPTYQUE*. This project has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Espace Cascades (TOHU), at the Galerie Renée-Blain in Brossard, at the Maison des arts Desjardins in Drummondville, at the Maison de la culture in Beloeil and soon it will be on display at the Centre d'exposition Lethbridge in Montréal.

Ayoub's visual research explores the notion of identity. The artist proposes the illustration of large faces, whose expressive and morphological components invite multiple interpretations from the public.



Photo credit

Artist Statement

My plastic research is autobiographical. The notion of identity and relations of intimacy with the people around us or those we have left are a starting point for my work. Modeling faces with newspapers that I pick up at metro stations allows me to bring back fragments of collective memory and of daily life that are doomed to oblivion. This is the case with many of these 'paper people'; it is from all these lives traced in black ink that my sculptures are born. By combining different facial features and opposing them in a rhythmic and repetitive way, I propose ways to create a transitory sculpture. Mutual relations between selected facial expressions suggest to the viewer different readings that emerge from the interaction of volumes.

The use of newspapers that I turn into a pulp is an ecological alternative to overexploitation of the raw material and corresponds to the ethics of my practice: recreating the world, recycling the everyday and its multiple faces from what already exists. I take the newspaper, I transform it into pulp and I start to shape a volume. I create my faces and let them air dry without intervening to leave all the space to the memory which is revealed through the black ink and all these shades of gray, and which are the witness of a previous life. The daily newspaper tells the story of people and documents the ties that we are trying to weave. It is a diary of a society, of the city... So it is not a question of creating forms, 'new' faces, devoid of all previous life, but to represent, to offer, for a second time, the world as it was given to me. Through this technique, I mix all these lives, these stories. I reconstruct and interweave journalistic anecdotes to identify a face that witnesses for all the others.

OVIS-ALEXANDRE DESVARIEUX FARZANEH REZAEI CHADI AYOUB RZANEH REZAEI CHADI AYOUB IFEOMA U. ANYAEJI CLOVIS-ALE IADI AYOUB IFEOMA U. ANYAEJI, CLOVIS-ALEXANDRE DESVARIEU



Title: TRIPTYQUE - Série n°1 TRIO [TRIPTYQUE - Series n°1 TRIO] Artist: Chadi Ayoub Medium: Wall sculpture from recycled paper pulp Size: 110 cm x 170 cm x 20 cm Year: 2016 Photo credit: Adriana Garcia Cruz





Title: TRIPTYQUE - Série n°3 Solo n°1 [TRIPTYQUE - Series n°3 Solo n°1]
Artist: Chad Ayoub
Medlum: Wal suptuur from recycled paper pulp
Size: 10 cm x 60 cm x 20 cm
Year: 2016
Photo credit: Chad Ayoub

Title: TRIPTYQUE - Série n°3 Solo n°2 [TRIPTYQUE - Series n°3 Solo n°2] Artist: Chadi Ayoub Medium: Wali Sculpture from recycled paper pulp Size: 10 cm x 60 cm x 20 cm Year: 2016 Photo credit: Chadi Ayoub

15





Clovis-Alexand Desvarieux

Born in 1986 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Clovis-Alex Desvarieux moved to Montreal in 2006 to pursi studies in Building Engineering at Conx University. During his studies, he develope interest in arts. The artist first devoted hims the technical development of the medium photography. He then collaborated with the a team of the student newspaper l'Organe, as wa journalist in The Concordian. His poi illustrates his various interests in different from architectural, to sport, to portraiture ar favourite, abstract photography.

In 2013, driven by a desire for synthesis, the produced a collection of photographs titled (an achievement that encouraged him to pusl limits of his artistic work. Henceforth, he decid dedicate himself to painting and drawing, a pro

through which his artist name "Séadé" came to be. In 2014, he organized with a group of friends the collective Good People Workshop in which he holds the function of artistic dir

Driven by the need to grasp the enigma of the individual in the universal, the artist devot time to developing his pictorial language. He is inspired by the great masters of Art Histor contemporaries, but also by masterpieces of ancient arts.

In his paintings, Séadé personifies spiritual entities of Haitian mythology by painting syr aspects that appear in the form of facial features and bodily forms. These artworks externalize the expression of an emotional need, sometimes through faces, sometimes thi a blend of coloured abstract strokes that reflect the artist's inner universe.

Artist Statement

I paint, I draw, I photograph.

Through the visual arts, I create a universe that allows me to discover the nuances of space and time unbeknownst to me. I escape into material and immaterial spaces to commune with the ancestral matrix until I reach the communal ONE, from which springs all beings, all Forms of consciousness.

This practice allows me to reduce the difference between identity construction of the individual and that of the social body. Through the prism of mythology and Haitian history, and through a syncretic strategy that is sometimes illustrative and sometimes abstract, I explore the universal concepts necessary for the development of the full potential of humanity and therefore of the full social potential. I thus suggest icons, painted mainly with acrylics, to our shared reality, which is prone to implement the perception and the manifestations of the archetypes orchestrating the symphony of the property.

For that, I select narrative tactics from the work of the great masters of Haitian painting such as Hector Hyppolite, Jean-Claude Garoute, or Philomé Obin, that I then combine deliberately with the plastic interests expressed in the whole history of Western painting and its various movements such as modernism, abstract expressionism and psychological cubism.

These methods free my imagination and become keys that open the doors of my subconscious, thus welcoming the revelation that celebrates the beauty of our entanglements.

Through the visual arts, the elementary particles by which I navigate my human experience, find a platform to enrich their presence in the world.

17



19

Title: Les cendres de Samdi [Ashes of Samdi] Artist: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Medium: Acylic en canvas Size: 106.68 cm x 12192 cm Year: 2018 Photo credit: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux





Title: Selebrasyon Artist: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Medium: Acrylic on carivas Size: 4068. cm x 50.80 cm Year: 2018 Photo credit: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Title: Annone Artist: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Medium: Acrylic on canvas Size: 40.64 cm x 50.80 cm Year: 2018 Photo credit: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux

20



Title: Faveur de brave [Favour of brave] Artist: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux Medium: Acrylic on carivas Size: 91.44 cm x 121.92 cm Year: 2018 Photo credit: Clovis-Alexandre Desvarieux



hoto credit:

Farzaneh Rezaei

Born in Iran, in 1983, Farzaneh Rezaei has been living in Montréal since 2014. She obtained a Visual Arts College degree in Iran in 2000. Her passion for the French language led her to pursue a Bachelor's degree in French Language and Literature in Tehran. During this period, the artist published *The Darkness under the Ups*, a collection of poetry in her native language, Persian.

In 2014, she moved to Canada to further her artistic career. She became a member of the Diversité artistique Montréal (DAM) organization and completed her training at Montréal, arts interculturels (NAI). During this period, she gave drawing workshops as part of the World Social Forum in collaboration with the Society for Arts and Technology (SAT).

In 2016, she won the *Vivacité* career development grant from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ). She also obtained a training grant in lithography from Atelier Circulaire in Montreal. Her work was displayed at several solo and group exhibitions, notably in the exhibition *Nulle part ailleurs* organized by Diversité artistique Montréal (DAM) and TOHU, in collaboration with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

The artist is currently pursuing her Master's degree in Visual and Media Arts at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and she continues to develop her various creative techniques.

Rezaei's paintings were first inspired by the symbolic iconography of the tree and then evolved towards the representation of the woman's body. The symbolism of the tree was transformed with time into bodies, and the branches into ropes leading to the creation of the series Bodies and Ropes. As such, Rezaei's artistic approach draws inspiration from a constant questioning of woman's place in society.



Artist Statement

I am particularly interested in the role of the woman, the obstacles that do not allow her to be free as she desires, her efforts and her struggle to make it happen. The series Bodies and Ropes brings together many works that all have a symbolic value. The main figure is surrounded by ropes that symbolize the limits that women face in their efforts towards freedom. In many respects, the rope is symbolic It does not only represent a chain but also an equilibrium or a playful game. I continued my pictorial research in the form of drawings and also with mixed-media on cardboard.





Tide: N. 1-Les corps et les cordes [N. 1-Bodies and Ropes] Artist: Farzaneh Rezaei Medium: Drawing, acrylic, ink and pencil on cardboard Size: 30.48 cm x 381 cm Yeard Portion Gredit: Farzaneh Rezaei

23



Title: N.2-Les corps et les cordes [N.2-Bodles and Ropes] Artist: Farzaneh Rezael Medium: Drawing, acrylic, ink and penal on cardboard Size: 30.48 cm x 381 cm Year: 2016 Photo credit: Farzaneh Rezael



Title: N.3-Les corps et les cordes [N.3-Bodies and Ropes] Artist: Farzaneh Rezaei Medium: Drawing, acrylic, ink and pencil on cardiboard Size: 30,48 cm x 38,1 cm Year: 2016 Photo credit: Farzaneh Rezaei





Title: N.4-Les corps et les cordes [N.4-Bodies and Ropes] Artist: Farzaneh Rezaei Medium: Anglic on canvas Size: 10.414 cm x 127 cm Year: 2016 Photo credit: Farzaneh Rezaei Title N.S-Les corps et les cordes [N.S-Bodies and Ropes] Artist: Farzaneh Rezaei Medium: Acrylic on carruss Size: 10.4k cm x 127 cm Year: 208 Photo arest: Farzaneh Rezaei

25

About the Curator

Kevin Calixte

Born in Montréal, Kevin Calixte is a visual artist specializing in fine art photography. He lives and works in his hometown. Having first studied in the field of psychosocial psychology, he began his photography career in 2015 in a self-taught way. Throughout his career, Calixte refined his unique technique by developing his critical and aesthetic sense.

In his work, the artist is interested in the question of the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual balance of Western world citizens. His approach focuses on how a person's individual state and equilibrium affects his interpersonal relationships. His work fits into the context of relational art. It questions the complexity of the societal balance related to human relationships.

Since 2015, the artist has worked on various exhibition projects, including the *Pierre fragile* photography project, a collection harmonizing and contrasting humanity and mineral matter whose compositions are decontextualized by a shooting technique which emphasizes textures, polychromy and photographic material.

Recipient of the *Artch* grant for Emerging Artist in 2018 and of a travel grant from the Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec (CALQ) in 2017, his work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in Canada, United States, and Senegal among others at the Montréal City Hall, at the Centre d'Artistes Voix Visuelle in Ottawa, at the galerie Ethiopique in the City of Saint-Louis in Senegal. Amongst others, the work was presented at the Chicago SOFA Fair, as well as at the *Affordable Art Fair* in New York.



Photo credit:
Gardine Gelmas

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