

The development of ARTSTAGE is the result of a collaborative effort by Arts & Communications, Curator Andrew Davies, The Greater Toronto Airports Authority, Hillside Communications and four corporate sponsors: AEROPLAN, CAPITAL ONE, THE HOME DEPOT CANADA and SAMSUNG.

ANDREW DAVIES

Toronto-based artist, designer and curator Andrew Davies is the founding partner of the Art and Design consulting firm No.9. A graduate of the Southern California Institute of Architecture, Davies moved to New York in 1995 to work for the Museum of Modern Art. Utilizing his artistic and design expertise, Davies has been actively involved with ARTSTAGE since its inception and chaired the jury art selection committee. As curator of ARTSTAGE, Davies works with the artists on an ongoing basis and is responsible for the installation and exhibition of the three artworks.

ARTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Arts & Communications is a leading North American partnership consulting firm with over 30 years of experience in creating partnerships with the corporate sector and the arts community. Arts & Communications was responsible for developing a sponsorship program to secure four corporations to support the funding of ARTSTAGE and the commissioning of the artworks by Canadian artists.

GREATER TORONTO AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (GTAA)

ARTSTAGE is situated at Toronto Pearson International Airport and is a natural extension of the airport's commitment to presenting works of art for the enjoyment of the travelling public. The GTAA Art and Exhibitions Program offers a wide variety of engaging exhibits showcasing art and culture from museums, galleries, institutions and private collections in Ontario and Canada. A representative from the GTAA participated in the jury art selection committee for ARTSTAGE.

HILLSIDE COMMUNICATIONS

Toronto-based Hillside Communications developed and maintains the landmark corporate gardens on the Gardiner Expressway including the *City of Toronto* floral display. Hillside is responsible for the construction, landscaping and maintenance of the ARTSTAGE site.

THE SPONSORS

ARTSTAGE would not be possible without the assistance of its four corporate sponsors: Aeroplan, Capital One, The Home Depot Canada and Samsung, who are all proud to support a public stage to showcase Canadian artistic talent.

Since the beginning of civilization, the staircase has made it possible for man to fight against terrestrial attraction by offering him the means of rising vertically. Until the emergence of the first flying machines, the staircase was the most common way for vertical ascent. I chose to use the staircase as a symbolic form, which carries out towards an ideal, towards an ultimate goal. The ascending form of the staircase has existed in our collective unconscious long before the airlines proposed to carry us into the sky. From time immemorial, one has needed great quantities of energy to fight against terrestrial attraction to rise into the sky. This is what undoubtedly makes the sky so divine and attractive. In my work *AIRLINE*, the intertwined staircases symbolize the idea of an effort to rise up and to reach the other. This effort makes it possible to transcend terrestrial obligations. The paths of the staircases act like an arrow thrown in the sky that twists and swirls like a airplane in an air show. The central idea symbolized by *AIRLINE* is the meeting of two distant worlds. At the end of a journey one becomes the other, symbolized by the central node of the work, in which circulating energy reaches a state of fusion. This union resulting from this intimate combination of two beings is the radical reduction of the distance that separates the subjects. The bridge form in *AIRLINE* represents the distance to be crossed and heightens this sacred and/or erotic moment. Finally, in *AIRLINE*, I see a sculpture performing with its contagious imaginative power on others, a passage allowing to cross the distance which separates one from the other.



MICHEL DE BROIN

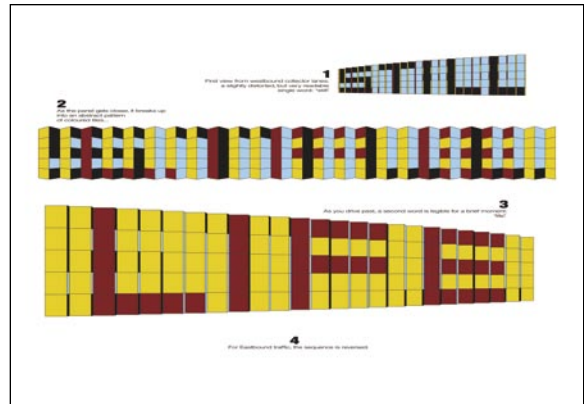


Since 1993, significance in Michel de Broin's work lays on recognizable patterns of experience. Such borrowings from art history, allusions to social mores are not ends in themselves, rather, they produce contexts likely to prompt semantic reversals, transformations that seem to accept constructed identities only to turn them inside out like a glove through a metaphorical process potentially open. Through multiple forms and means of expression, de Broin puts irony to work in a strategy by which he first examines the possible conditions of a given context, then posits an absolute, and finally, invents an unprecedented outcome.

Born in 1970, Michel de Broin lives and works in Berlin, and he obtained his master's degree in visual arts from Université du Québec à Montréal in 1997. His most recent solo exhibitions have been at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2006); Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec; Réparations (2006), Galerie Isabella Bortolezzi, Berlin (2005); Tenir sans servir c'est résister, BF15, parcours associé à la biennale de Lyon (2005); Galerie Pierre-François Ouellette, Montreal (2005); La Vitrine, Paris (2003); Galerie 44, Toronto (two-person show with Ève K. Tremblay, 2003); Villa Merkel, Esslingen, Germany (2002) and the Centre des arts actuels Skol, Montréal (1999).

STILL LIFE is intended to respond to its circumstances: long sight lines, a drive-by experience that is by and large going to be experienced many times by people who travel that road on a daily basis, albeit at very different speeds according to traffic conditions, and in very different states of mind, not to mention from a wide variety of cultural perspectives.

In the first instance, *STILL LIFE* is a gentle pun on the situation: a work of art where a billboard would normally be. Any number of artists have pastiched or deconstructed Billboard advertising... this is simpler, a play on the ironies of the phrase's constituent parts, "still" and "life".



Still

Under these viewing conditions, anything ARTSTAGE includes will be un-still: the works of art may not be "kinetic" in their construction, but they certainly must be in their public's experience. If you only see the work from the highway, it's effectively kinetic unless you stop the car. On the other hand, the work is hyper-still too: it is a regular reminder that no matter what else has happened since the last time you drove by, this pocket of reality is "still" what it was, unchanged at least provisionally. That characteristic, of anticipating and yet stepping out of the flux of change surrounding us, is fundamental to art's role in both public and private spheres.

Life

"still life" is a simple tag line, but it has a lot of layers to play with. At one level, the aggregate of all the installations that add up to ARTSTAGE itself will be a large-scale still-life arrangement. At another, the phrase will evoke an incredible variety of specific experiences of works of art in the minds of drivers and passengers on the 401. One can almost see a cloud of memories of still life paintings forming in the minds of people as they pass, and then dispersing through all the different trains of thought down the road. As the genre most typically associated with details of daily life, and most broadly experienced as historical "ART" in mainstream culture, "still life" will be just about the exact contrary of most of the genre and associations it names... the other end of the spectrum of what a work of art can be in relation to time, space, and place.

Still Life

What proportion of the millions who will drive by, how many times, will the reading actually not even register as an "Art Thing"? Out of context, the simple reminder that whatever you think is all change, speed, instability... something in the way of the world is actually not changing. In some small measure, the piece responds to Heraclitus- where his saying that "you never step twice into the same river" describes the instability of the phenomenal world as an absolute, *STILL LIFE* implies something quite different. The viewing of it will unfold differently every time, for every person, from the first sight of "STILL" in the distance, to the breaking-up and re-resolving of the letters and words across the lenticular surface, to the much shorter span of time "LIFE" can be read at the other end of the viewing sequence. In some of the minds, all of the time, the question will seem to come from nowhere: what HASN'T changed since the last time you passed this way?

CARL SKELTON



Carl Skelton, born in Toronto in 1961, now lives and works in New York City. In his spare time, he's the founding director of the Integrated Digital Media Institute at Polytechnic University, Brooklyn. The Institute's current initiatives, besides its academic programs, include partnerships with people and organizations as diverse as Philip Glass, Nokia, and the Ontario College of Art and Design. Watch out for Hyperpolis 3: Really Useful Media, a hybrid conference/festival to be held October 19 and 20 on the campus of the Polytechnic in Brooklyn. Carl's exhibition record is international, but includes a variety of temporary and permanent public installation projects in Ontario, including the very discreet "Living Stones" on Wellington Street West, and the rather more conspicuous "Begging Bear" in front of the MacDonald Stewart Art Centre in Guelph. "Still Life" will be Carl's largest piece to date, and the one with the prettiest colo(u)rs.

THE BOOK is a steel sculpture with two pages torn away from its spine. The spine is perpendicular to the ground, the covers are open, and the pages appear to blow in the wind. From the highway viewers see an enlarged book that looks as if it were lifted by the wind and engaged in a dance with a sheet that has already escaped its binding. This dance suggests a drama between pages and books, readers and words, languages and alphabets, as well as writers and ideas. From the vantage point of the highway, the sculpture looks like a representation of a literary struggle: despite the attempt to bind ideas together, a page of thoughts escapes and runs away.



Although most books tend to be read from front to back, *THE BOOK*'s gesture can be absorbed by viewers in an instant as they drive by the installation. However, viewers who have an opportunity to get closer to the site will recognize that the holes in the steel pages form clusters of words. The clustered texts link the letters of the Latin alphabet to its predecessors, including the Phoenician alphabet that emerged from Egyptian hieroglyphs. The Phoenician letters that developed from Egyptian hieroglyphs were used to represent the syllabic sounds of Semitic languages dating to approximately 2000 B.C. Carvings of a twenty-two character Phoenician alphabet from 1000 B.C. have been linked to earlier carvings from approximately 1750 B.C. (known as the Wadi el-Hol script) that were inspired by particular Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Each cluster of letters on the page ripping out of *THE BOOK* contains symbols that were developed from architectural and technological innovations. The letters on the freed page were derived from parts of the human body. As light passes through the outlines of the characters in the book their projections continue to change and the letters and symbols shift into forms that are less familiar. The future imprints of text on a page are dependent on their ancestral roots as well as the symbolic languages, codes, and alphabets that are evolving out of our contemporary society. The steel book is a monument poised between eras in the evolution and presentation of thought.

ILAN SANDLER



Ilan Sandler has received numerous awards including grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Nova Scotia Department of Culture and Heritage. Recent solo exhibitions of his sculptures, installations and videos were in the US and Canada.

Born in Johannesburg (South Africa) in 1971, Ilan Sandler and his family emigrated to Toronto six years later, in 1977. Ilan studied at the University of Toronto, where he received a B.Sc. in Physics, and at the Ontario College of Art and Design, where he completed an Honours Fine Arts certificate. In 2000 he was awarded an MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. Ilan then went on to teach at the University of the Arts and Moore College of Art and Design, and most recently at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He is currently living and running a studio in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He is the Executive Director of the Centre For Art Tapes.