

**The Tongue of Shadows**  
(take two)

**Fall 2008, Gallery Artists Studio Projects, Boston.** A small space, but a prestigious one, founded by Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons<sup>1</sup>, a renowned Cuban artist with an interdisciplinary yet unclassifiable practice, welcomes artists of similar character. Quebec-native sculptor Danielle Sauv , based in Boston for some time, one day shared with her the ideation of a project... The exhibition *The Tongue of Shadows* opens September 12th. There is a pamphlet including a statement by the guest curator:

What a wonderful adventure: three sculptors from Quebec, Catherine Bolduc, Danielle Sauv  and Louise Viger, have chosen to present a project together in two cities: in Montreal, where they are well known and highly regarded, and in Boston, where one of them resides and where they all could forge new ground.

Of course, there are risks, but they are calculated. These three artists are equally outstanding. They come from different generations but their work as a whole reveals both maturity and freshness. They are resolutely multidisciplinary and use the most diverse and at times most unexpected materials, which they choose for both their sensuous and poetic effects. At the same time, they are down to earth and not afraid of working with the most mundane materials, altering them with some simple technology to produce an innovative and exciting language.

Thus comes into being “The Tongue of Shadows,” a title evoking the multiple facets of the sculptors’ individual processes: ambiguity and opacity, displacement and disorientation, mirroring and fragility, night and confinement, silence, interpretation and... the physicality of sculpture, among others; and in more luminous directions, balance, magic and transformation, in particular, a whole constellation of meanings that the appropriateness and elegance of the installations create.

As these lines are being written, the three works are still in the development stage and decisions remain to be made before they can be presented effectively: Danielle Sauv ’s trilingual syntagmas and their supports in the form of shelters, Louise Viger’s solemn coat and its improbable shadow, and Catherine Bolduc’s discerning cubes and their inner disorder. And because these artists have the reputation of being unpredictable—which is a virtue—one cannot be sure of anything. This is all the more so because the three projects must coexist and interact while adapting to the configuration of the exhibition space.

Indeed, this is a wonderful adventure.

Verification complete, Danielle Sauv ’s idea was ascertainably a fruitful one. Granted, the GASP gallery space was capricious, but these sculptors are undeniably adaptable. The works were aptly exhibited, each shining individually, while also coalescing for a collective evocation of this ‘Tongue of Shadows’ the artists so relish.

**Winter 2010, Joyce Yahouda Gallery, Montreal.** The Montreal presentation of *The Tongue of Shadows* was part of the artists’ initial proposition, and the Director of Joyce Yahouda Gallery immediately accepted to welcome this ‘risky’ exhibition. It must be said that the house had seen many in that category over the years. The works would therefore not feel out of place.

That being said, it is known that the re-exhibition of contemporary art almost always becomes a new adventure for the works. At the moment these lines are being written (once more), one can presume that Catherine Bolduc’s magical volume, in the shape of an IKEA armoire, more lone and less confined than in Boston, will constitute a more enigmatic, more Kafkaian nocturne; that Danielle Sauv ’s ‘loquacious lanterns’, following the awnings and scaffoldings that occupied the backyard of GASP in fall 2008, will now interiorize its discourse about roving and refuge; that Louise Viger’s ‘immense bird beaked coat’ made of molts and dust, will this time give the impression of being less blue, with 650 little lambs ingenuously drawing its shadow at its feet.

Still, these are but presumptions.

**Gilles Daigneault**

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<sup>1</sup> Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons. *Everything Is Separated by Water*, Edited by Lisa D. Freiman, Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2007, 183 p.