

**Nathalie Talec**  
**Retrospective**  
**October 10, 2008 to January 25, 2009**

*For her first retrospective at MAC/VAL from October 10, 2008 to January 25, 2009, Nathalie Talec will install an exhibition framework which in itself becomes a work of art. An iconoclastic artist, Nathalie Talec veers between explorer, performer, scientific experimenter, singer, and painter. For thirty years, she has developed her emotionally-charged « sentimental art », proclaiming her ambition to re-enchante our daily lives. Her work questions human existence by reshuffling emotional affects, redistributing them to objects, words, and heroic characters, creating scenarios which blur the boundary between science and fiction. The artist thus lays claim to the Val-de-Marne contemporary art museum as a new frontier of experimentation, notably through a slate of performances.*

**Five minutes on the way to the North Pole with Nathalie Talec**

Nathalie Talec's oeuvre creates a portrait of the artist as explorer, a self portrait that may or may not include a storm microphone or special distance-gauging glasses for chilly climates. Polar exploration (discovery, wandering, cartography, and a survival kit for extreme conditions) here serves as metaphor for art, or the quest for the absolute and elementary.

From her initial expeditions, real or imagined, to the Far North to explorations of systems of representation (Science, Songwriting, the Sitcom), Nathalie Talec examines intermediate states of being, the not-quite, the ill-defined. What she probes, through accumulations and agglomerations of different sources (the histories of art and science, personal stories), are fictional versions of reality.

The central character in these, starting with her first works in 1979, is the artist. Nathalie Talec has used cold in its varying forms (ice, snow, snowflakes), its stories and mythologies, as well as water vapor and condensation as tools for self-searching, analysis, and localization - and metaphysical philosophizing.

Paradox : cold is a state rich with imaginative and symbolic possibilities, but also one which repels, distances, halts, and immobilizes.

The constant use of ruse, falseness, artifice, simulacra, and dubbing contribute to this dual gesture of immersion and withdrawal.

*« Cold is something I've always thought about, as a plotline / Tales of polar explorers, bedtime stories... It became a subject and driving narrative force. Cold is a state of abstraction : snow is one of its forms, light and soft as opposed to frost and freezing. Cold is not a metaphor for death (as it was for Dante) or hell, it is a fixed state of being which stops time and gives an object duration. It is a state of pause - like video pause. It is a state of sensation : measured by chills or frostbite. It is a state of duality : it burns when too strong (fire under ice). It is a state of absorption : absorbing sounds, scents, shapes. It is also a state of physical reality which can be measured by a thermometer... \* »*

This first retrospective of the French artist born in 1960 recounts a thirty-year adventure in artistic creation. The display is non-chronological and non-exhaustive, including some thirty works (drawings, photographs, sculptures, performances, and projects) which serve as fictional markers, narrative catalysts, openings, and lures. Historic works, updated versions, and new productions are brought together in a new setting, a décor which itself becomes a work of art borrowing from cinematic and industrial imagery.

**Frank Lamy,**  
Director of Temporary Exhibitions

*\*In L'abécédaire de Nathalie Talec, catalogue de l'exposition Nathalie Talec, Solo intégral, My Way (Nathalie Talec A to Z, exhibition catalogue of Nathalie Talec, Complete Solo, My Way) », Frac Franch-Comté, 2006*

Based on an interview with Claire Le Restif, in the catalogue « Comment s'appelle la partie immergée de l'iceberg ? » [How do you call the underwater part of an iceberg?], 2003.

### **Schedule of performances at MAC/VAL**

As part of the MAC/VAL Sunday Series, three performances will accompany the exhibition :

- Sunday November 16 2008 : « Winter Sunday » from 3:00 to 6:00 PM
- Sunday December 7 2008 : « Boreal Sunday » from 3:00 to 6:00 PM
- Sunday January 18 2009 : « Sentimental Sunday » from 3:00 to 6:00 PM

Program details can be found at [www.macval.fr](http://www.macval.fr).

### **Practical information :**

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