

« Emporte-moi / Sweep me off my Feet »

From May 7 to September 19 2010

Marina Abramovic & Ulay, Bas Jan Ader, David Altmejd, Fiona Banner, Diane Borsato, Rebecca Bournigault, Anne Brégeaut, Kruxey, Sophie Calle, Lygia Clark, Claude Closky, François-Xavier Courrèges, Michel de Broin & Ève K. Tremblay, Tracey Emin, Christelle Familiari, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Douglas Gordon, Kevin Francis Gray, Carsten Höller, Jesper Just, Janice Kerbel, Thierry Kuntzel, Ange Leccia, Melanie Manchot, Ryan McGinley, Monique Moumblow, Hayley Newman, Christodoulos Panayiotou, Cécile Paris, Pierre et Gilles, Prinz Gholam, Smith/Stewart, Jana Sterbak, Sam Taylor-Wood, Jean-Luc Vilmouth, Jorinde Voigt, Andy Warhol, Cerith Wyn Evans.

Press release

MAC/VAL kicks off a season of love on May 7!

“It might seem like a trivial subject at first (...) but it has unsuspected depth. The emotions of being in love are infinitely complex,” say Frank Lamy and Nathalie de Blois, curators of « Emporte-moi / Sweep me off my Feet ». The exhibition deliberately shuns irony, demonstrating how contemporary artists continue to re-work the textbook rhetoric of love through forceful reinterpretations that shuttle between rapture and despair.

MAC/VAL’s goal in this new group exhibit is not so much to investigate Love as it is to give free reign to emotions. The videos, photographs, sculpture, and installations of some forty-odd internationally acclaimed artists provide us with a fresh look at the feelings of love while skirting the pitfall of cheap sentiment.

The exhibit’s evocative title « Emporte-Moi / Sweep me off my Feet » sets the tone: works housed at MAC/VAL for its new season, evoking the intense fervor of love in a way that strikes a chord with visitors. It takes artists to interpret this large repertoire of emotions with such virtuosity. Couples, soulmates, infatuation, passion, love songs, tears, and tales of kissing each in turn play a central role in the exhibition.

The challenge, thus, is to define Love in contemporary terms. What do the outlines of this « map of tender sentiments » look like? It is with that in mind that the curators selected works that spark a compelling, immediate dialogue, distilling the exquisite elixir of powerful emotions. Their shared characteristic is a lasting impact, which reveals itself gradually, morsel by delicate morsel, while maintaining a certain mystery.

The exhibit design offers visitors an abundance of echoes, cross-references and surprises. It is a cartography of Love, or rather of emotions, which at MAC/VAL is not just a sequence of prefabricated experiences, but rather a subtle itinerary of initiation.

Emotion is this exhibition’s shock wave, a form of upheaval, which elicits affect. Also to be found are symbols and mythology. *Rest Energy* by Abramovic and Ulay, for example, which serves as the exhibition’s visual signature, is a modern reinterpretation of Cupid: a couple pulls the arc together, the bowstring taut and poised to shoot an arrow straight to the heart of the innamorata Marina Abramovic.

Sweet love? Love-hate? The ambiguity of emotion is one of the exhibition’s driving forces.

The lightheartedness of love sometimes gives way to the difficulty of loving and being loved.

Love and its transports are explored in every form: photography (Pierre et Gilles, Bas Jan Ader, Lygia Clark), drawing (Jorinde Voigt), video (Andy Warhol, François-Xavier Courrèges, Douglas Gordon, Sophie Calle, Cécile Paris), installations (Ange Leccia, Cerith Wyn Evans), sculpture (Kevin Francis Gray, Fiona Banner, David Altmejd) and objects (Carsten Holler, Christelle Familiari, Jana Sterbak, Anne Brégeaut), in a grand and intimate epic covering the past four decades.

Withstanding all tests, including that of time, the visitor drunk on emotions is granted the rare opportunity to look beyond appearances, at works which are not just skin deep and don't deliver slick, comfortable truths.

« **Emporte-moi / Sweep me off my Feet** » is MAC/VAL's first co-production with a foreign institution, and is jointly curated by Nathalie de Blois, curator of contemporary art at the Musée National des Beaux-arts du Québec, and Frank Lamy, director of temporary exhibitions at MAC/VAL.

The exhibition will be displayed at the Musée National des Beaux-arts du Québec from September 24 to December 13, 2009.

On the Sundays of May 9, June 6, July 4, August 1, and September 5 :

Film screenings accompanying the exhibition will take place one Sunday per month in the auditorium. Free admission.

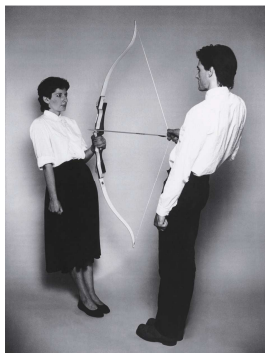
2 PM: *The Lovers: The Great Wall Walk*, Marina Abramovic & Ulay, 1988, 72 min.

5:30 PM: *No Sex Last Night*, Sophie Calle, 1992, produced with Greg Shephard, 1 h 15 min.

« **Emporte-Moi / Sweep me off my Feet** »

« **Emporte-moi / Sweep me off my Feet** » includes the works of some forty artists whose works metaphorize the movement and turbulence of being in love. It deliberately eschews the ironic approach typical of current artistic production, preferring an examination of the value of emotion in contemporary art through works in which crossing glances, movement in harmony, the whiff of a perfume, a soft caress, or an arduous declaration all evoke the exhilaration and despair of love, a transport both exquisite and painful in which lurks the danger of loss. As expressions of thought, yearning, illusion, and withdrawal, the exhibition's works express as much pain and loneliness as hope and the thrill that follow meeting a very special someone. The artworks are not only in and of themselves products of love's fervor, but also in turn stir emotion in the visitor. Covering photography, video, sculpture, installations, and performance art, « **Emporte-Moi / Sweep me off my Feet** » addresses the idea of love's movement as an event and a vehicle of unbounded possibility.

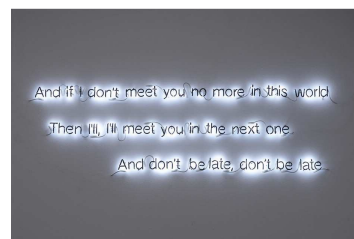
Nathalie de Blois and Frank Lamy, exhibition curators



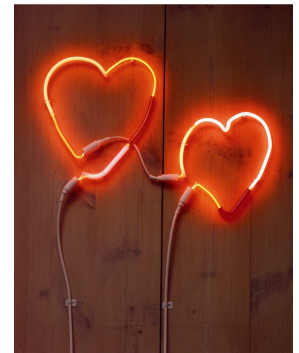
Marina Abramovic & Ulay
Rest Energy, 1980.
Épreuve gélatino-argentique,
100 x 76 cm. Prêt de Marina
Abramovic. Courtesy galerie Serge
Le Borgne, Paris © Adagp, Paris
2010.



Pierre et Gilles, *Casanova*, 1995.
Photographie peinte marouflée
sur aluminium, 75 x 55,5 cm.
Collection Christoph Schweinfurth,
Zurich. Courtesy galerie Jérôme de
Noirmont, Paris.



Cerith Wyn Evans, *And if I don't meet you
no more in this world/Then I'll, I'll meet you
in the next one/And don't be late, don't be
late*, 2006. Néon « en négatif », dimensions
variables. Collection Rita Rovelli Caltagirone,
France. Courtesy Jay Jopling/White Cube,
Londres. © Photo Stephen White.



Fiona Banner, *Unbroken Heart*,
2003. Enseigne néon reconstituée :
tube néon trouvé, fil électrique,
transformateur, 43,5 x 73 x 4 cm.
Prêt de l'artiste. Courtesy Frith
Street Gallery, Londres. © Photo
Stephen White.

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