

## INTERACT

DECEMBER 7 AND 8 2023

CHERYL PAGUREK

PERFORMANCES 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

PATRICK MIKHAIL is pleased to present INTERACT, a special two-evening project by gallery artist CHERYL PAGUREK. In this site-specific event, Pagurek presents an interactive performance featuring dance, video, and technology featuring dancers from Montreal's RUBBERBAND contemporary dance company animating the installation. Viewers will also have an opportunity to interact with the installation.

### STATES OF BEING INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION

States of Being reimagines expressive self-representation in the Internet age. The interactive installation's video and music components are mapped spatially to respond to peoples' movements. Instead of the online identities that we craft and perform via social media platforms, avatars, and video calls, States of Being offers an alternative, experiential and experimental mode to enact virtual creations of ourselves. Straddling both real and digital worlds, the installation expands the artistic potential of interactivity by inviting dancers and the public to engage with it.

Participants navigate and synthesize the evocative videos and rhythmic audio tracks through their actions, determining which of the paired videos appears within their moving body silhouette and which in the background of the projection, as well as how the musical layers build up into a soundscape.

Projected video imagery evokes fleeting sensibilities: built environment and vast natural space, rushing speed and slow contemplation, immediacy and distance, isolation and freedom, past and present, public and private realms. The resulting immersive video and sound compositions uniquely express our precarious human condition amidst the fluctuating states of being we strive to balance. Composer Jesse Stewart contributed the musical tracks in the installation.

Also presented are a series of short videos exploring dancers' interactions with the installation, which have screened internationally in Canada, USA, France, Brazil and Colombia.

### WINTER GARDEN INTERACTIVE COLLAGE

Winter Garden offers joy and solace in an age of anxiety. The viewer becomes a participant in the growth and regeneration of the interactive collage. Its concept developed out of still life photographs taken during the Winter 2021 lockdown, about a small oasis of indoor growth that evoked hope and resilience. The collage continually renews itself, growing compositions of still life motifs against a changing backdrop of winter imagery. The collage fragments play with opacity and transparency, as well as positive and negative space. Viewers influence the composition by their location and movement. The build-up of imagery follows people's positions, and the changing pace is determined by how many people are present and how much they move.

## STATEMENT

Cheryl Pagurek's early training in sculpture and printmaking is key to her constructive and layered approach to artmaking. Her path to photography originated in the documentation of her ephemeral installations; these explorations continued in video, eventually leading to the embodied experience of interactive media, where movement guides navigation through the artwork. Based in Ottawa, Pagurek's artistic practice now highlights the constructed nature of lens-based media, while embracing the creative expression offered by computing and technology.

She interweaves contrasting streams of imagery and sound from many sources, while accentuating the abstract qualities of colour, form and movement to create a dynamic, cohesive whole. Works in video, photography, digital and interactive media feature interconnections and tensions between public and private, past and present, representation and abstraction, urban and natural spaces, the many opposing facets of contemporary life. Ongoing learning and exploration are vital to her process. She integrates technology into her practice in service to the artistic content, while prioritizing the continuity of her visual vocabulary and the aesthetics of her work. She welcomes the exciting possibilities of 'controlled randomness', introduced into her work through coding and interaction. The invitation to engage in the ongoing evolution of her artworks brings participants into the creative triad of artist, viewer, and technology. As a woman in the cross-over area of art and tech, she aims to broaden approaches and themes presented in the field.

## BIO

Since receiving an M.F.A. from the University of Victoria, Pagurek's work has been shown widely across Canada including exhibits at Patrick Mikhail Gallery (Ottawa and Montreal), Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery (Halifax), Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, Vu (Québec City), Gallery 44 (Toronto), Carleton University Art Gallery (Ottawa), and internationally with numerous video screenings in France, Brazil, Columbia, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, and the USA. She was commissioned to create Currents, a permanent outdoor video display for the Marketplace Transit Station in Ottawa. Her works have appeared in public art events in several cities, including Nuit Blanche Ottawa Gatineau, Kamloops Art Gallery's Luminosity program, Toulouse's Rencontres Traverse Vidéo, and Kingston's Next Door public art exhibit. Her solo exhibit Connect/Connexion at the Ottawa Art Gallery in 2019 featured an interactive video and audio installation. Upcoming in 2024, she will present a new interactive installation, States of Being, in a solo exhibit at Art-Image Gallery in Maison de la culture de Gatineau, Québec. In 2020, she received the Corel Endowment for the Arts Award celebrating the integration of technology and the arts, and a Canada Council for the Arts Digital Originals grant for an online project. Her work is in several collections including Global Affairs Canada, the Canada Council Art Bank, the Library of the National Gallery of Canada, Cenovus Energy Inc., the Ottawa Art Gallery and the City of Ottawa, and has been written about in international publications, including The Globe and Mail, Esse, Ciel Variable, BlackFlash, Vie des Arts, Canadian Art online, Next Level (UK), Turbulences Vidéo (FR), and Afterimage (USA).

## RUBBERBAND DANCERS BIOS

RION TAYLOR established his roots in dance through the hip-hop culture of Newcastle upon Tyne, England. He has performed throughout Europe, Canada and the USA, and has been a dancer with Montreal's RUBBERBAND company since 2018, where he is currently the Artistic Coordinator.

WYETH WALKER is a dancer and choreographer from Virginia Beach, Virginia. He has choreographed site-specific and multimedia work, and after completing his BFA at USC in 2022, moved to Montreal to join RUBBERBAND

Cheryl Pagurek gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Ottawa

