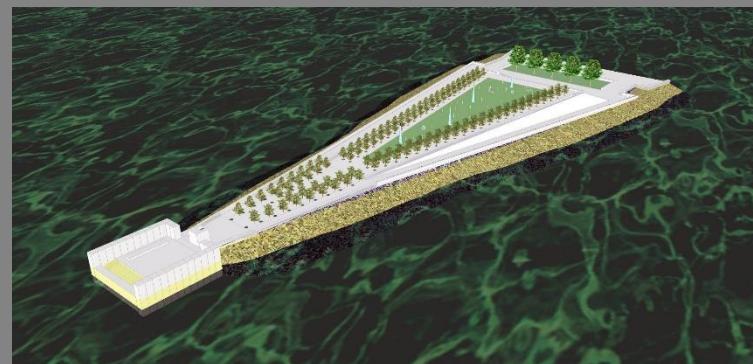


selected work

thom sokoloski

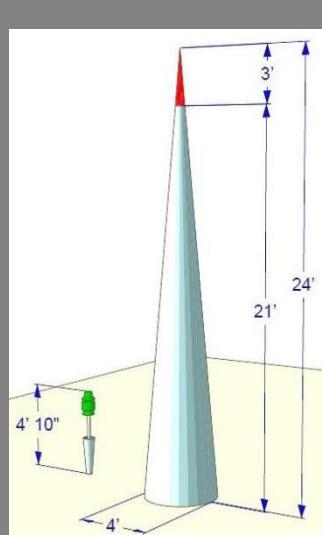
installation art

thom sokoloski
&studio



Since 2007, after creating the NYC version of The Encampment on the southern tip of Roosevelt Island, Louis Kahn's Four Freedoms Park (FFP) was finally realized after decades of delays. The park commission contacted me to consider returning and creating a new work inspired by the FDR's Four Freedoms. At the end of 2013, the proposed design of the sculptural installation was presented to the executive staff. The project in principal was approved and would include FFP cooperation in providing the grounds, education collaboration, public relations, grounds personnel, security, etc. In addition to this both Socrates Sculpture Park and Urban Glass have expressed interest to partner on the artwork's production.

Though the work is inspired by Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, the content also examines and reveals the impact of the Federal Artist's Project (FAP) and its kick-starting of an entire generation of artists birthed from this national program that was part of the FDR's New Deal Works Projects Administration (WPA).



The four cones which rise above the park's tree-line act as beacons and can be seen from Manhattan and Queens. Each beacon signals each freedom through a luminous interface of Morse Code. The smaller sculpted glass-blown standing vessels encase miniature studies which represent 40 artists from that period.

This is a work in progress with a team of people working to see it realized for the autumn of 2017-18 in time of the UN's General Assembly.

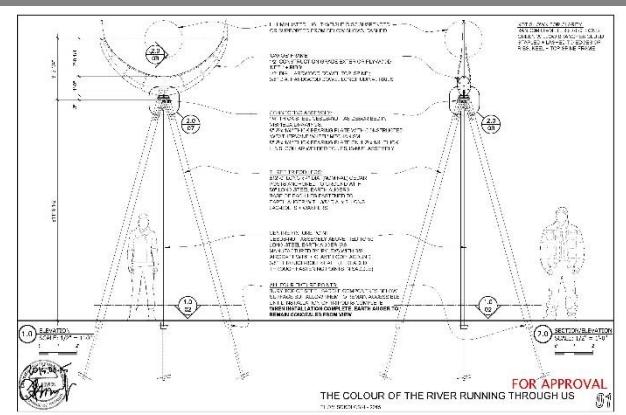
In negotiation.

Colour of the River Running Through Us (2015-16)

A commission from the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario to create a sculptural installation in theravine located on the grounds of the museum. It will remain up until June 21, 2016.

For this work I brought together Evan Webber as Production Director/Designer, Jenny-Anne McCowan as Choreographer and Alfred Engerer for glass production. David Bowick and Blackwell Structural Engineering came in to seal the final drawings for production and the install crew of McMichael. Pierre Menard, an engineer and artisanal steel worker, did the build on the tripod housing and adapted the weather vane mechanism for the canoe structures.

Colour of the River Running Through Us has a natural vulnerability and impermanence, where the sculptures are less about design and more about blazing a public and personal space for the five senses and memories, a meditative portage on the nature before us and our nature within. It is about being in a space that can be as intimate or public as one would like; from walking through the installation to following the ceremonial process of meditation and creative writing to express one's own response to river water and then sharing it to become part of the artwork.



All The Artists Are Here (2013)



A commission from Art Toronto to conceive and execute a large-scale site-specific suspended art installation celebrating all the artists participating in Art Toronto 2013. ALL THE ARTISTS ARE HERE is large-scale installation that explores the visual impact of all the artists exhibited at Art Toronto 2013. Each artist is represented by a red-framed black and white photographic portrait which they or their gallery participated in selecting.

While the galleries display the artwork of artists from all over the world, ALL THE ARTISTS ARE HERE brings the represented artists together as a group by offering Art Toronto and the viewing public the impact of all of their portraits in a suspended, larger than life optical work.

Interactively, ALL THE ARTISTS ARE HERE allows engagement with both the artwork and the artists through the use of an everyday device, a smartphone. Searching for and registering a connection with the artists and their works by scanning a legend of associated QR-Codes which can be bookmarked, used during the art fair and taken home.



As part of ALL THE ARTISTS ARE HERE, Thom collaborated with Jenny McCowan to design and lead an arts education program, entitled HANDS ON WITH THE ARTISTS. It invite a collective of new Canadians, at-risk and art high school students to participate in realizing a large-scale installation and experience Art Toronto first-hand. From workshops in conception and production of their own initiatives to the install of ALL THE ARTISTS ARE HERE, all the participants had the opportunity to learn, practice and apply new skills in art making, while exploring the galleries and artistry at the fair and leave with a new awareness of the contemporary art world.

Scarecrows (2013)



Development workshops and support for The Scarecrows from Socrates Sculpture Park in New York City (2012) and Nuit Blanche North in Huntsville, Ontario (2013) provided the opportunity to realize prototypes of The Scarecrows as well as to design a public participation and education programme in collaboration with Jenny McCowan around the performance and production process of this river installation. The Scarecrows is a sculptural river installation inclusive of dance performance and canoe choreography that creates a contemporary ceremony.

Throughout history, the scarecrow has been a figure or effigy made of found materials to ward-off the incursion of unknown and unpredictable threats. Through ceremony, they are empowered with a collective soul of the community to conjure mystery and warning to all that approach.

For Nuit Blanche North Thom Sokoloski created three eighteen 20ft. tall Scarecrows that floated on the Muskoka River representing earth, wind and water. Those who participated created 'spirit bottles' containing a memory assemblage. They were chauffeured by canoe to the floating Scarecrows, where they handed their bottles in a ceremonial exchange with a *dance guardian* stationed on each floating Scarecrow.

Work-in-progress.





The Encampment (2006-2012)

The Encampment acts as a metaphorical archaeological dig into the memory, history and stories of a specific site. It involves a public participatory process with the artists: taking the stories of individuals from history and transposing them into experiential installations within each tent. Its nocturnal setting results in a sculptural landscape that can be seen from afar and experienced up close.

In 2012 Thom received a commission from the Luminato Festival and the War of 1812 Bicentennial in 2012 to create a new version focusing on the civilian history. Previous commissions of The Encampment were by Scotiabank Nuit Blanche 2006 (Toronto – history of mental health); Independent 2007 (New York City – history of quarantine, and Canadian Association for Community Living and the National Capital Commission 2008 (Ottawa): history of intellectual disability.

The Encampment remains an entirely new way to address historical political and social situations around the world through creative public engagement.



Funhouse (2012)

A commission from Scotiabank Nuit Blanche and Chevrolet to realize a large-scale contemporary funhouse that would be set-up on Bay Street between Adelaide Street West and Temperance Street.

Besides the design and production of the Funhouse installation itself, undertaken by Nuit Blanche and production director Steve Lucas, the work involved the creation and execution of a 12-hour durational choreography, six-screen video installation and soundscape. The installation was designed to compliment a Chevrolet test-drive that concluded with a drive through experience of Funhouse.

The video work was a mash-up of Tobe Hooper's classic film and soundtrack by the same title. The video was projected on the sides of the installation and on a drive-thru screen within it.

The choreography by Jenny McCowan was inspired by the theatricality of Hooper's direction of the actors and the dynamism of his scenes.

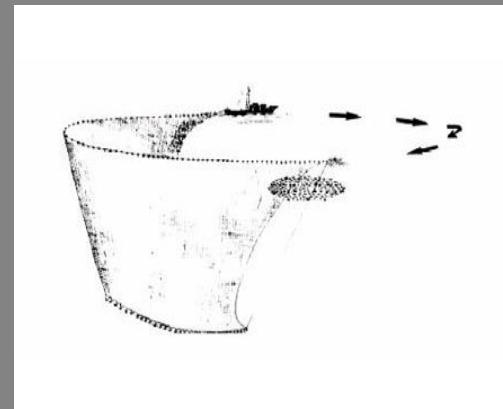


Ghost Net (2011)

The initial concept of Ghost Net was developed in 2009 when I found myself fascinated, if not disturbed, by how little was known of marine debris. We have all heard of the floating islands of meshed plastic bottles, flip-flops, plastic bags, etc. which have been compared to the size of Holland. Part of this debris are 'ghost nets' which were once fishing nets (drift nets) deliberately discarded, or simply abandoned at sea after time. Rather than amassing into islands of nets, they actually travel the ocean currents continuing to catch marine life, trapping and transforming them into a massive graveyard until washed ashore.

The residency that I undertook with Jenny McCowan in May 2011 was facilitated by the Gulf of Carpentaria Ghost Nets Program, The Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts and the Mapoon Shire Council in Queensland. We worked with the aboriginal community of Mapoon, artists and Gulf Rangers to gather nets and finally create the first draft of the installation Ghost Net in the abandoned remains of a park.

Though this first workshop of Ghost Net was inspired by the stories, images and materials surrounding the effects of marine debris n Mapoon, the eventual goal and on a much larger scale is to transpose this remote experience of physical and mental entanglement into a meaningful sculptural experience within an urban landscape, especially within those cities where marine realities do not exist.





Ghosts in the Machine (2010)

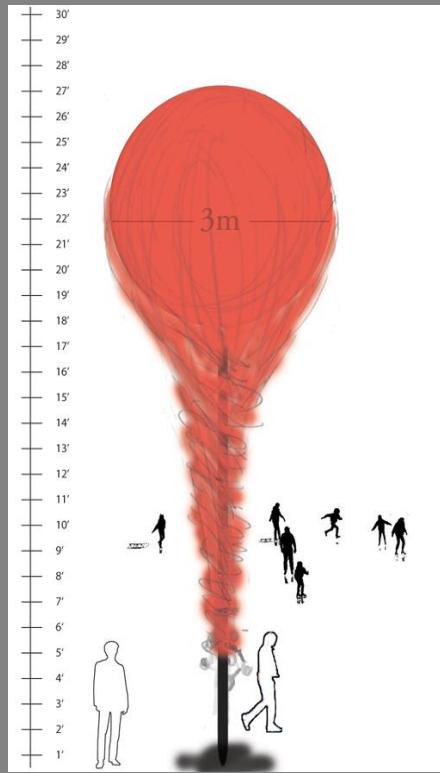
Proposal for a video projection installation for the opening of the Toronto International Film Festival's new home, the Bell Lightbox for the 2010 festival.

The content of the projected imagery was to be drawn from early cinema of the 1800's and the early mechanics of film projection. The idea was to create a similar sense of wonder that the public experienced when seeing cinematic imagery for the first time, i.e. the Lumière Brothers 50-second silent film showing the entry of a train into a station where film expressed more an experience over narrative.



The concept was to wrap the upper floors of the Bell Lightbox in video projected imagery, creating a virtual electronic canvas using 5-50k projectors that would have been installed on the rooftops of the surrounding buildings and allowed for high quality projection images. The looping imagery was also meant to draw attention to the architectural design of the building itself. Project was never realized due to TIFF budget constraints.





The Balloons (2006)

A commission from National Capital Commission to develop a national interactive installation for the 150th anniversary of Ottawa as Canada's capital. The concept: 150 balloon structures were to be set-up along the length of the Rideau Canal. The public could visit the Balloons website and design a 15-second lighting schematic that would be timed by a server for a live and on-line presentation. Millions of Canadians from across the country could participate.

Residency established at La Société des arts technologiques [SAT] to create and program internet interface, build prototype, define production portfolio and budget. Final work was not realised due to budget constraints at NCC. Structural engineering by Cleland Jardine.

curatorial

thom sokoloski

Propeller Centre for Visual Arts (2013)

Darkness at the edge...

There are places we find ourselves where light fades and darkness arrives. That edge, precipice, or boundary, where the light meets the dark, can become a threshold into an unknown abyss or terrain. It might be the moment after opening the door to reveal the darkness of your home or studio. Entering a cave on a bright day. Looking out at a moonlit lake of dark water that you would never dare dive into, the end of an affair, marriage or friendship. We have all looked into the darkness at the edge, the place where we let go of what we had, knew or cherished.



Darkness at the edge is about those moments of liminality; the quality of ambiguity or disorientation that occurs in life and dream when you no longer hold what you held, but have not yet begun the transition to what you will hold. During a ritual's liminal stage, a participant "stands at the threshold," often in a state of contemplation of what was and what could be.

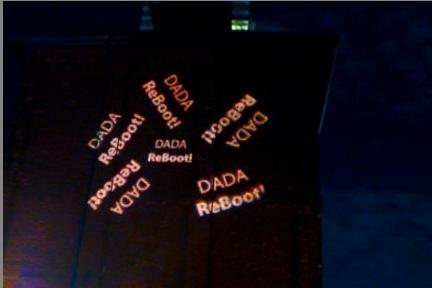
With over 130 submissions, Darkness at the Edge, hit a chord with a wide spectrum of international artists of fine art, photography, installation, sculpture, glass art, fiber optics and video. My hope was that the 36 selected works the public experienced would conjure up not only each artist's response to liminality but also provoke a momentary mirror into each of their own.

Exhibition dates: June 13 - July 7, 2013



Scotiabank Nuit Blanche (2012)

Dada Reboot! (Independent Curatorial Project)



Dada Reboot! Projection



Witteman + Wong + Jones



Terry McGlade



Jolie Fejer +Viliam Hrubovcak



Jacob Niedzwiecki / Rhonda Nolan



Kristiina Ladhe



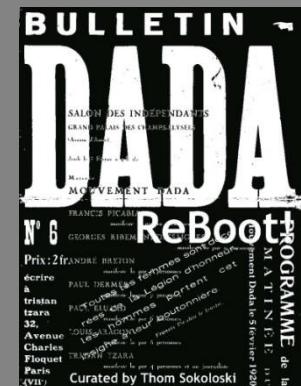
Ana Vujcuf



Roger A. Galvez



John Notten



Programme Cover

'Dada Reboot!' examined the artistic originality of the Dadaists and how it could be reinterpreted today as a relevant and significant art movement of inventiveness, creativity and insight into the zeitgeist of our times.

An open call was announced three months prior to which over 34 projects were selected and over 65 artists participated. The works ranged from public art to gallery works, inclusive of video, sculpture, performance art, fine art, projections and hybrid works.

Over 15,000 people attended and explored the artistry positioned throughout The Distillery Historic District.

Scotiabank Nuit Blanche (2011)

Futurism Today or NOT! (Independent Curatorial Project)

"Futurism Today or NOT!" examined the artistic originality of the Futurists and how it could be reinterpreted today as a relevant and significant art movement of inventiveness, creativity and insight into the zeitgeist of our times, or not.

An open call was announced three months prior to which over 32 projects were selected and over 56 artists participated. The works ranged from public art to gallery works, inclusive of video, sculpture, performance art, fine art, projections and hybrid works. Over 18, 000 people attended and explored the artistry positioned throughout The Distillery Historic District.



Programme



Scenocosme



St. James Circus – Benecorpo Community



Shannon Dobbs



Nouveau Futurist Art of Noise Group



Rebecca Leonard



Tatiana Jennings + Kadozuke



Kristen Webb



Barbara Astman



Paula John

Scotiabank Nuit Blanche (2009)



Paulette Phillips, AS COULD BE
(Old Bank of Toronto Building)



Gordon Monahan, Space Becomes The Instrument
(Massey Hall)



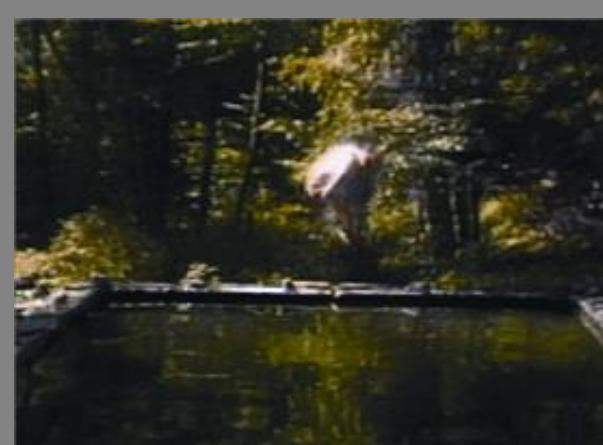
Erwin Redl, SPEED SHIFT Toronto
(Eaton Centre Concourse Tunnel)

What were we before? (Zone A)

The idea was to create a nocturnal urban fantasia through which the moving crowds of Nuit Blanche could ponder their individual pasts and present within the context of Toronto's own history and the larger expression of art on a grand scale.

The artists selected situational practices that allowed for the re-examination of a familiar space when re-invigorated with unfamiliar confluences of image, performance, design and motivation.

"Any revolutionary project today, whether utopian or realistic, must if it is to avoid banality, make the re-appropriation of the body, in association with the re-appropriation of space, into a negotiable part of its agenda." —
The Production of Space, Henri Lefebvre, 1974



Bill Viola, The Reflecting Pool & Ancient of Days
(LED screen at Dundas and Bay Streets)



Shaun El C. Leonardo, Battle Royal
(Toronto Bus Terminal)

Interactive-05 (2005)

Art Toronto Partnership



'As Yet Untitled' by Max Dean
(Susan Hobbs Gallery)



'Tribute to a Barking Dog' by Jean-Pierre Gauthier (Museum of Canadian Contemporary Art)



'Where are you? (T'es où?)' by Luc Courchesne (La Société des arts technologiques)



'Perversely Interactive System' by Lynn Hughes and Simon Laroche (Elektra Festival)



'New Creatures' by Kevin Krivel and David Warne (Trinity Square Video)

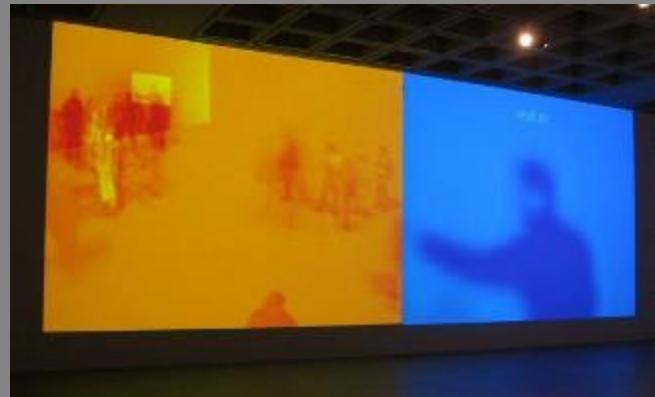


'Swansong' by The Centre of Attention (Mercer Union)

The best of interactive art combines computer technology with dance, theatre, light, poetry, music, video, and digital images through an interdisciplinary dialogue that creates its own unique environment and experience. Never before have the lines between the avant-garde and mass culture been so effectively blurred as in interactive art.

In collaboration with 12 artists and their galleries from across Canada, the public architectural spaces of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre were transformed into a spectacle of interactivity engaging the public in various spaces as they found their way to Art Toronto's exhibition hall.

Partnership with Art Toronto (Toronto International Art Fair), with support from the Toronto Arts Council.



'Taken' by David Rokeby (InterAccess)

theatre-opera-event

thom sokoloski

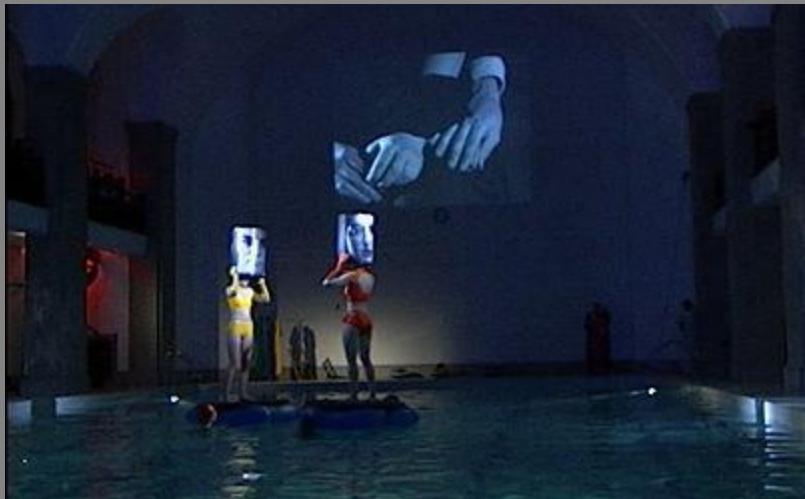
The Royal Flush (2006)

A Fallsview Casino Resort commission to design and create a public performance event integrating their 4 fountain spaces into a unified free experience for the general public inside and outside of the Casino.

The ensemble of circus artists, choreographed by Jenny-Anne McCowan animated the exterior and interior public spaces of their retail Galleria which included a performance and a reveal of each Royal Flush, interacting with families and tourists.

It was performed three times a day throughout the summer and was seen by over 100,000 spectators.





KAFKA IN LOVE : 2003 - Toronto
Hart House Swimming Pool
World Stage Festival



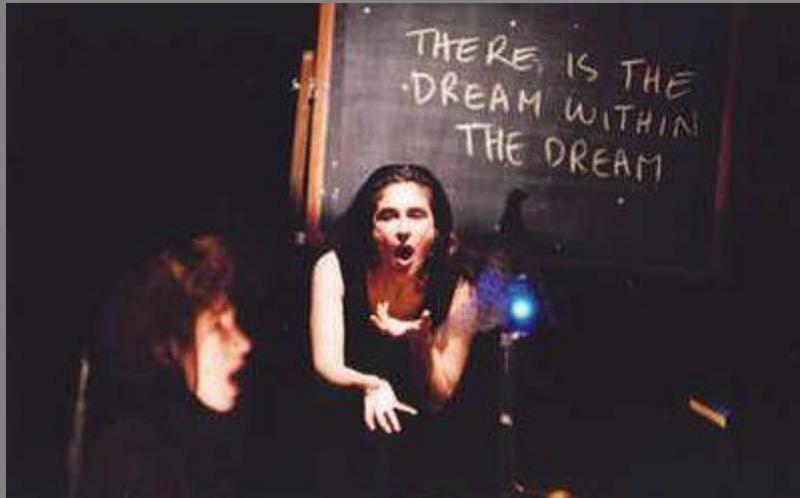
ELECTRIC FLESH : 1999 - Lyon
Opéra de Lyon
Musique en Scène Festival



PIERROT LUNAIRE : 1998 -Toronto
Artword Theatre
1996-Brussels & 4 city tour with I Fiamminghi)



DOWN HERE ON EARTH : 1996 - Toronto
Factory Theatre Lab
1998-Montreal



ARTAUD'S CANE : 1994-Toronto
Music Gallery



REQUIEMS FOR THE PARTY GIRL : 1993 – Toronto
Harbourfront Centre
1995 – Tel Aviv



DEATH OF VIRGIL : 1999 - Toronto
The Theatre Centre



HERMES TRISMEGISTOS : 1989 - Liège
Festival de Liège & Brussels Ars Musica Festival
1992 World Stage Festival inside Union Station

&Studio

Thom Sokoloski : Artist & Director

Jenny-Anne Mccowan : Public Engagement & Choreographer

Evan Webber : Production Director

David Bowick (Blackwell) : Structural Engineering

Studio Consultants

Rob Sandolowich (Westbury National) : Lighting Production

Alfred Engerer : Glass Production

For more information on projects and artists please visit the website below

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