

If our impulses were confined to hunger, thirst, and desire, we might be nearly free; but now we are moved by every wind that blows and a chance word or scene that that word may convey to us.

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 1818

Time is a relentless force, but it is up to the individual as to how we *feel* it. From clocks to wrinkles every measure has a unique texture, like granules of sand falling through one's fingers. Diane Landry coyly explains that when someone asks how long a project took her to complete, she answers 20 years. That is to say, while each respective production may take a matter of weeks, the content of the work accumulates from every project preceding it.

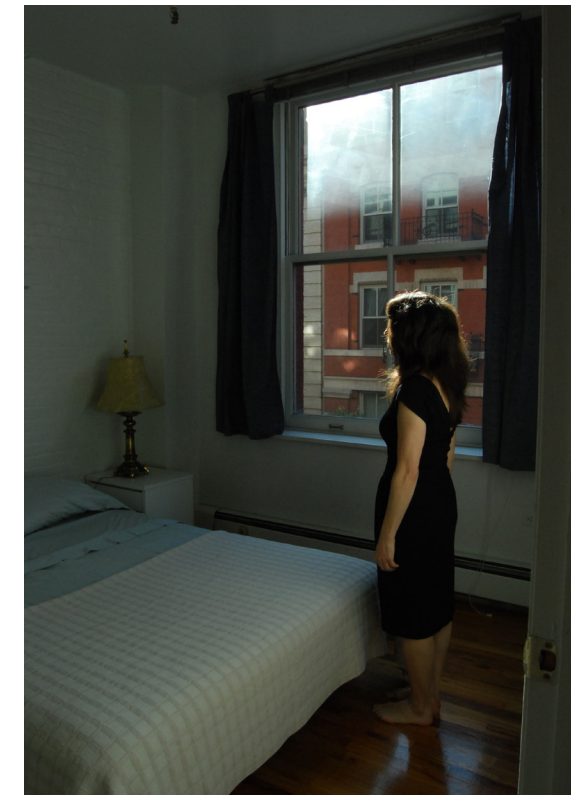
In this exhibition, the methodical rise and fall of *Exhaustion* speaks to the growing toll of disposable, plastic fork culture upon both the environment and human wellness. *The Magic Shield* and *Mandala Perrier* shift course by seeking greater purpose in what we habitually throw away – turning lost keys and plastic water bottles into elemental calendars that entwine man and universe. It is therefore fitting that *Icebreaker* begins and ends this exhibition, first as a performance in the CAC Lobby, and last as a projection in perpetual

loop. For it is here that Landry most explicitly employs her body as the engine of her artwork; unflinching and expressionless as the machine that makes it all go. Unlike art made to endure, both performance and technology are finite in presence: living and dying under the gavel of time. By stretching out every second in her work and savoring every cycle, Landry pushes forward while remaining firmly in place—finding meditation in motion.

When British novelist Mary Shelley (1797-1851) first penned the now mythical novel *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* in 1818, she could have no idea how far astray the machine would wander from the hand of its maker. As a tale of a scientist horrified by the artificial life he had created, the slow-moving, sympathetic figure of the monster seems quaint by today's accelerated standards of technological advance. The pace of being human has pushed insistently forward in the decades to follow, launching us into a hyperreal place where speed stands for substance, and nary a backwards glance is cast. Antiquity is abandoned, time is money, and those who linger are lost in a 21st century survival of the fittest and fastest. The Industrial Revolution, the Machine Age and the Information Era



Left: Diane Landry. *Mandala Naya* (detail), 2002. Mixed media.
Right: Diane Landry. *A Radio Silence* (still), 2008. Video.



have progressively hastened our desires to the point we feel regression without constant stimulation. We expect technology to be faster, brighter and bigger than ever before—which is precisely why Diane Landry's kinetic work is so unusual and so necessary. Landry's machines are literal and figurative vehicles of *deceleration*: slowly performing rituals that lull the viewer into an increasingly unfamiliar state of reflection.

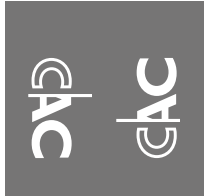
Her list of materials includes all manner of mechanics and moving parts, but Landry's foundation is in the passage of time. And while the units of measurement have changed over the course of her career, the seemingly antiquated act of record-keeping has fundamentally informed over two decades of the artist's work. From a collection of objects to mark a cross-Canada bike trip, to the minute-by-minute self-portraiture of *A Radio*

Silence, to spinning like a clock in the performance *The Raincoat*, to turning oneself over to the cosmic mapping of *Mandala Naya*, her body (and body of work) have served as abstract archives. In the pools of time that subsequently gather, meaning is never fully present or past—floating instead in a continual state of becoming. Turning against attention-deficit-society with the very tools of its swelling amnesia, Landry coaxes ambiguous, efficiency-killing second thoughts out of the machine to cultivate productive detours. Rarely has getting lost been so rewarding.

– Steven Matijcio, 2013



Above: Diane Landry. *Icebreaker* (detail), 2013. Live performance.



CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

DIANE LANDRY

by every wind that blows

November 9, 2013 - March 2, 2014

Curated by Raphaela Platow and Steven Matijcio

Diane Landry was born in 1958 in Cap-de-la-Madeleine and maintains her studio in Quebec City, Canada. She initially studied Natural Sciences and worked in the agricultural field for five years. At age 25 she shifted course, feeling it would be easier to change the world through a career in the visual arts. Landry received her BA in Visual Arts from Laval University, Quebec, in 1987 and an MFA from Stanford University, California in 2006. She has exhibited and performed extensively in Canada, USA, Europe, China and Australia. Landry has also worked as artist-in-residence in New York City, Montréal, The Banff Centre (Alberta), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Marseille (France) and Utica (NY). In 2009 the Musée d'art de Joliette in Quebec published a monograph marking the first retrospective exhibition of her work, *The Defibrillators*. Her first American retrospective *The Cadence of All Things* is currently on view at the Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington, NC. Landry is represented by Galerie Michel Guimont (Quebec city) and Carl Solway Gallery (Cincinnati, Ohio).

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HEAR THE ARTIST:

Diane Landry discusses the making of her individual works, and the motivations behind their manufacture.



Exhaustion
1:32



Mandalas
2:00



The Magic Shield
2:03



Icebreaker
3:09



Caravanserai
:55



A Radio Silence
1:29



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Cover: Diane Landry, *Exhaustion* (detail), 2013. Mixed media.
Courtesy the artist.