In his multidisciplinary practice, **David Hartt** engages with the modernist context through nuanced research that highlights the unique aspects of spaces and the complex entanglements of ideology and history. Far from focusing exclusively on architecture, he uses spatial paradigms (particularly the relationship between centre and periphery) to describe and connect a broader spectrum of subjective positions.

Without taking an autobiographical approach per se in *Horizon*, Hartt draws on his personal experience to examine the intricate relationship between identity, design, architecture, and urbanism within a specific cultural context and time. The film component of the installation explores his sister's family life, a mixed family similar to the one in which she and David grew up in the Montréal suburb of Beaconsfield (of Caribbean descent, they were adopted by white, Jewish, anglophone parents). Hartt explains that the socio-cultural context of his youth fostered "profound feelings of alienation,"[1] against which the modernist buildings of downtown Montréal offered an imaginative refuge.

Primarily based on a documentary approach, Hartt's works also contain various conceptual referents in the form of imaginary or speculative elements. While several scenes in *Horizon* realistically capture the warm, intimate atmosphere of the family environment, the realism breaks down at the film's climax when the characters perform a playful dance in the garden of the artist's mother, in front of an unexpected replica fragment of the curtain wall from Roger d'Astous's Château Champlain (1967). In the corridor next to the MAC's exhibition space in Place Ville Marie, the artist's nephews, reappear as the protagonists in a retrofuturist mural illustrated by British artist Lando. Sections of the mural gradually shift from the private spaces of the bedroom and living room to the public spaces of the arcade, street, and urban horizon.

The end of the film shows Montréal's urban horizon as the nephews re-enact a memory from Hartt's adolescence, in which he gazes at downtown from an overpass over Highway 20. By reconsidering the physical and symbolic horizon through the gaze of the next generation, Hartt's work represents an "assertion and expansion of what it means to be Canadian, Québécois, and Montréalais—a new polyphonic heritage story."[2] The term polyphony also encapsulates one of the most fascinating aspects of his practice: its emphasis on the subject's inner multiplicity. A critique of essentialism runs through his entire body of work, in particular his reading of modernism, as he underscores its progressive ambitions while challenging the nostalgic reification of its forms and its contested political history.

Although Montréal, where Hartt was born in the year of Expo, occasionally appears in his work, it is most explicitly evoked in *Horizon*. Taking up the image

[1] David Hartt, conversation with the author, May 2023.
[2] Hartt, conversation with the author.

of Château Champlain's "eyes" and acting as a lens framing the family sphere, the sculpture in the installation likewise references Dallegret's "environment-bubble."[3] Hartt also pays tribute to him through the bench he has created for *Horizon*, which is based on Dallegret's famous *Chaise ressort* (1967).

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[3] The double reference to the "environment-bubble" and Château Champlain also appeared in the exhibition *for everyone a garden* (Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, 2013), in which Hartt made use of their formal resonance with the stackable multipurpose cells of French architect Jean-Louis Chanéac. The exhibition's title evokes Moshe Safdie's renowned, eponymous book (1974).