

FORMICA: an interactive system that ingeniously captivates visitors

Montréal, January 8, 2007 –Groupe Molior presents FORMICA, an interactive video system by Philomène Longpré, at the Parisian Laundry, from January 12 to February 24, 2007. A captivating system, it combines new technologies with unusual materials to create a subtle communication between the physical and virtual worlds.

FORMICA is an androgynous virtual character living in a robotic double-sided screen and made up of a pneumatic system that controls the tension on 16 plastic strips. The visitor is immediately struck by the screen. Formica gauges us, observes us, and solicits our attention and participation. As



FORMICA

soon as the visitor starts to move closer, the process is triggered. The dynamics of the environment change, and links appear in the form of threads and strips of cloth that hold Formica and affect its movements.

Formica responds and interacts with the visitor in 12 different ways through 4 primary phases of communication. The video sequences follow one another and subtly blend image, colour and sound. They create emotional, physical and intellectual connections with visitors.

This interactive video phenomenon demonstrates the importance of interrelations in a society. It reminds us that what connects us with other people and things rarely has to do with content or what we can control.

Philomène Longpré is a multimedia artist who is interested in the complexity of interactions between the physical and virtual world. Since 1999, she has primarily focused on developing interactive video systems. She holds a Masters in art and technology from the *School of Art Institute of Chicago* as well as a BA in Visual Arts from Concordia University. Philomène Longpré's systems have been shown internationally, as part of such exhibits as BUDi (South Korea), FILE (Brazil), INTERPLAY (Chicago), DIGIFEST (Toronto), NATURALMENTE (Italy), PROMO (Montreal), FIFCA (Moncton), NEXUS (Bangkok), and have been recognized by such honours as the Judith Hamel Award for New Media, the Pinsky medal, Hexagram's Prize of Excellence and the Stanley Mills Purchase Prize from Concordia University.

Philomène Longpré's research has earned her a residency at the *Hong Kong Arts Centre* school in March 2007. More news to come...

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General information:

- **Work and artist:**
FORMICA by Philomène Longpré
- **Exhibition:**
From January 12 to February 24, 2007
- **Opening:**
January 11, 2007, from 6 to 9 p.m.
- **Where:**
Parisian Laundry
3550 Saint-Antoine St. West
Montréal, Québec H4C 1A9
- **Hours:**
Tuesday to Saturday, 12 to 5 p.m.
- **General information:**
Parisian Laundry
Phone: 514.989.1056
www.parisianlaundry.com
- **Source:**
Anne Agdantzeff
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- **Groupe Moliior:** www.moliior.ca



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