The Power Plant wraps its 30th anniversary year with three major exhibitions by Amalia Pica, Sammy Baloji & Filip De Boeck, and Michael Landy

This Fall 2017 Season, on view from 28 September until year end, The Power Plant invites the public to discover new work by Amalia Pica, Sammy Baloji & Filip De Boeck and Michael Landy.

Amalia Pica's work explores the nature of communication, semiotic systems, metaphor, and the shaping of thought through language. Her exhibition ears to speak of will include a new body of work produced specifically for the site, and will continue her investigation into obsolete technologies and the failures and impossibilities of communication.

Constructed as a visual essay, Sammy Baloji and Filip De Boeck's exhibition Urban Now: City Life in Congo offers an artistic and ethnographic reflection on what living might mean in Congo’s urban worlds. Urban living in today’s complex postcolonial context constantly attempts to “suture the city,” stitching together pasts and futures in the “urban now”: an attempt to form and capture a more inhabitable and inclusive urban world, where the possibilities of present, collective action and dreams of a shared future continue to thrive in an often divisive urbanscape.

Michael Landy continues his process-based approach in his project Demonstration, this time inviting the public to actively participate in creating a wall of protest. Landy will transform the public’s submissions of images, words, texts or slogans that map their feelings, reactions and experiences within Canada’s social and political landscape into drawings of protest that will be pinned directly onto the walls of The Power Plant’s Fleck Clerestory.

Join us as we launch the season with a FREE Public Opening Party on Thursday, 28 September 2017 from 8-11PM.

Amalia Pica
ears to speak of

Curator: Carolin Köchling, Curator of Exhibitions, The Power Plant
Assistant Curator: Nabilah Abdel Nabi, RBC Curatorial Fellow, The Power Plant

The nature of communication, semiotic systems, metaphor, and the shaping of thought through language have been ongoing threads in Amalia Pica’s work. The artist is interested in antiquated and analog systems of technology, and her
work has previously addressed both verbal and nonverbal modes of communication and the translation that takes place between ideas and objects, artist and audience.

For *ears to speak of*, her first solo exhibition in Canada, Amalia Pica will develop a new body of work titled *Ears* (2017), which continues her engagement with obsolete technologies and the failures and impossibilities of communication. The artist will create cardboard reconstructions of acoustic radars, also referred to as "listening ears," found in Denge near Dungeness in Kent, England. These devices were built along the northern and southern coastlines of England between the 1920s and 1930s to pre-empt aerial attacks by detecting the sound of incoming aircraft. The structures now stand as ruins; monuments to failure. By rendering these outmoded technologies in cardboard—a material that absorbs sound—Pica highlights the uselessness and ephemeral quality of the structures. The exhibition also features works from Pica’s series *In Praise of Listening* (2016), large-scale sculptures of hearing aids rendered in marble, granite and soapstone. At the heart of these devices is the intention to make listening possible on a personal level, rather than a public one.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication co-produced by The Power Plant, Toronto and the IMA Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, where Amalia Pica will present a solo exhibition from 18 November 2017 – 10 March 2018.

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**Sammy Baloji & Filip De Boeck**

*Urban Now: City Life in Congo*

**Guest Curator:** Devrim Bayar, Curator, WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels

Focusing on the “urban now,” a moment suspended between the broken dreams of a colonial past and the promises of a neoliberal future, this exhibition by photographer Sammy Baloji and anthropologist Filip De Boeck presents an artistic and ethnographic investigation of what living—and living together—might mean in Congo’s urban worlds. As elsewhere on the African continent, Congo’s cities increasingly imagine new futures for themselves. Often depicted in billboards and advertisements that tell of the city that is to come, these idealistic, neoliberal reimaginings exist in sharp contrast to Congo’s current infrastructure: echoes and reminders of a colonial legacy in shattered form, affecting the quality of the city’s social life and pushing it to the limit of what is considered liveable.
Yet Congo’s urban residents constantly invent new social spaces to bypass or overcome the breakdown, exclusion, poverty and violence. It is in this complex postcolonial context that Baloji and De Boedk explore what “urban” means. Urban living constantly attempts to “suture the city,” finding ways to stitch together spaces and losses, or pasts and futures in the moment that is the “urban now.” The photographs in this exhibition capture this more inhabitable and inclusive urban world, where the possibilities of present, collective action and dreams of a shared future continue to thrive. Shaped over the past years, the archive renders visible the elusive ways that people manage not only to survive, but to transcend that basic level of bare life; where they have built a more inclusive urban commons, and where collective action and dreams of a shared future can be explored. Constructed as a large visual essay around selected sites, forms of urban life, and contrasting topographies and terrains, the exhibition reflects upon the city and the processes of colonization, occupation, mobility and dislocation that are giving form to a new urban terrain.


Urban Now: City Life in Congo is initiated by WIELS, Brussels; in collaboration with The Power Plant, Toronto; The Open Society Foundations, New York; and Galerias Municipais/EGEAC, Lisbon.

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Michael Landy

DEMONSTRATION

Curator: Nabila Abdel Nabi, RBC Curatorial Fellow, The Power Plant

Michael Landy’s practice explores attitudes toward materialism, consumption and the cultural value of objects. He is known for his large-scale commissions including Semi-detached (2004), an exact 1:1 replica of his parent’s home, and Break Down (2001): the systematic destruction of each and every one of his personal belongings. Over the course of two weeks, audiences watched as Landy, aided by an assembly line of workers, shredded and crushed all 7,227 of his personal possessions. The work was a monumental emptying of the artist’s material possessions as a critique of consumerism. In a later work, Art Bin (2010/14), Landy created a giant receptacle for discarded works as a “monument to creative failure.”

Landy’s process-based approach continues in his installation at The Power Plant, the artist’s first exhibition in Canada and the third edition of the gallery’s Fleck Clerestory Commission Program. Through an open call distributed to the public, DEMONSTRATION offers a space for the urgent voices of today and the multiplicity of narratives and histories that define Canada. The artist invites the
public to actively participate in the installation by sending in images, symbols, texts and slogans that represent their hopes and fears, what makes them happy, angry or sad, issues they want to oppose or champion. Over the course of the exhibition, these submissions will be translated into red and white drawings which will be pinned directly on to the wall of the Fleck Clerestory as an in situ installation evolving over six months. Through collaboration, the demonstration will grow, thus capturing Canada’s social and political landscape through the eyes of its inhabitants.

**OPEN CALL:** Participate in Michael Landy’s exhibition by sending in your own submissions. Learn more about the open call and submission guidelines [here](#).

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**Fall 2017 Season Programs and Events**  
**PRIMARY EDUCATION SPONSOR:** CIBC

The Power Plant’s public programs provide numerous opportunities for the public to engage deeper with the artwork, its makers, curators and other cultural producers. Visitors can hear directly from artists in talks with Michael Landy and Amalia Pica, engage with Pica directly in an intimate master class, join art-making workshops or participate in a book discussion, all within the context of the exhibitions. The Power Plant will also co-present the annual Creative Time Summit, an international convening to discuss art and politics, and for the 11th year in a row, Art Toronto’s Power Talks series. As always, The Power Plant continues to host the ongoing Sunday Scene series of gallery talks, Power Kids art workshops, public tours and much more.

**OPENING PARTY & CREATIVE TIME SUMMIT KICK-OFF PARTY**  
**Thursday, 28 September 2017, 8 PM**  
Be among the first to experience the new exhibitions. Celebrate the launch of the gallery’s Fall 2017 Season and kick-off the Creative Time Summit, cash bar available all evening.

**CREATIVE TIME SUMMIT: Of Homelands and Revolution**  
**Thursday, 28 September - Saturday, 30 September 2017**  
Co-presented with non-profit Creative Time, the Creative Time Summit is an annual convening for thinkers, dreamers and doers working at the intersection of art and politics. This year, participants will consider the many-layered political and aesthetic understandings of home alongside social movements—revolutionary ones at that—which have sought to summon a broader dream of social justice. Present in both of the Summit’s main thematic threads are ongoing movements led by indigenous peoples across continents and the multiple
relations between home, land, culture, and community that they bring to bear.

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ARTIST TALK
With Michael Landy: Tuesday, 12 September 2017, 7 PM
With Amalia Pica: Thursday, 21 September 2017, 7 PM
Hear from Fall 2017 exhibiting artists Michael Landy and Amalia Pica, as they speak on the evolution of their work and the lead-up to their respective exhibitions at The Power Plant. Landy’s talk is presented in partnership with OCAD U.

SUNDAY SCENE
Various Sundays, October to December 2017, 2 PM
Hear from speakers from the art world and other disciplines as they draw provocative connections between the exhibitions and broader cultural and intellectual debates and topics. Guests include the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane’s (IMA) Executive Directors, Aileen Burns and Johan Lundh; Colleen Lipinski, owner of Toronto Audiology Associates; Darren Copeland, Artistic Director of New Adventures in Sound Art (NAISA); writer, researcher and curator Amy Fung, Waterfront Toronto’s Ilana Shamsoon; and more.

WORKSHOP: Art-Making with Akin Projects
Saturday, 7 October & 11 November 2017, 1 PM
The Power Plant partners with Akin Projects to present a pair of workshops inspired by Amalia Pica’s exhibition ears to speak of, during which participants will explore the value of experimentation and failure in art and design. Participants will tour the exhibition, then create works inspired by the show under the guidance of workshop leader Atanas Bozdarov.

STUDENT NIGHT: No. 5
Tuesday, 17 October 2017, 7 PM
Calling all university and college students to The Power Plant’s fifth annual student night! Converse with established artists and other professionals from a wide range of industries, and engage with an interactive art experience and musical performance by Bedroome, a collective of Toronto-based producers and artists. Complimentary snacks provided; cash bar available all evening.

POWER TALKS at Art Toronto
Friday, 27 October - Sunday, 29 October 2017
Since 2006, The Power Plant has partnered with Art Toronto to present influential art-world figures who discuss their projects, preoccupations and ideas in the context of Toronto’s largest art fair. This year’s speakers include artist Charles Gaines; Mari Spirito, curator and founding director of Protocinema, a non-profit that organizes exhibitions travelling between Istanbul and New York; and Courtney J. Martin, Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the Dia Art Foundation.

For a full list of programs and events: thepowerplant.org/ProgramsEvents.aspx
About The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery

The Power Plant is Canada’s leading public gallery devoted exclusively to contemporary visual art. It is a vital forum for the advanced artistic culture of our time that offers an exceptional facility and professional support to diverse living artists, while engaging equally diverse audiences in their work. The Power Plant pursues its activities through exhibitions, publications and public programming that incorporate other areas of culture when they intersect with visual art.

Director: Gaëtane Verna

ADMISSION: ALL YEAR, ALL FREE
presented by BMO FINANCIAL GROUP

Providing as many people as possible with access to these programs and events remains the gallery’s top priority. The initiative leading these efforts is a renewed partnership with BMO Financial Group, whose support of the ALL YEAR, ALL FREE initiative is vital to expanding and diversifying audiences by eliminating the cost of admission to The Power Plant’s exhibition program.

For bios, images, interview requests or more information please contact:
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For more information please visit:
thepowerplant.org

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