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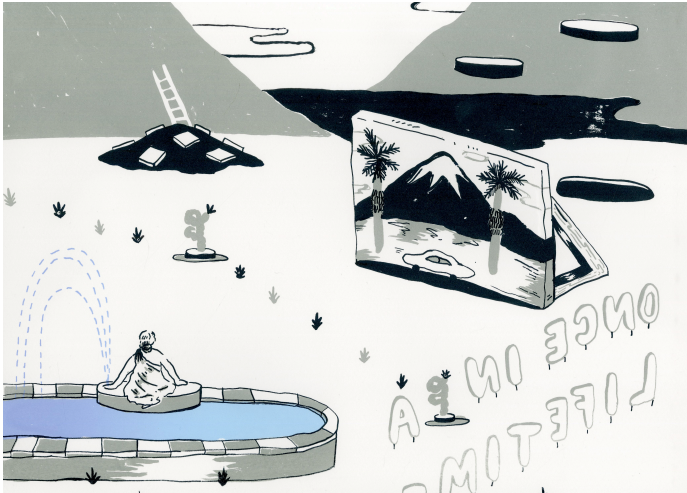
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Discover a place where anything can - and will - happen



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It is so refreshing to have an event like this



AMERY SANDFORD

Once in a Lifetime (Une fois dans une vie)

Exhibition

April 11 - May 18, 2019

Opening

Thursday, April 11, from 5:30pm

As part of MTLPAF

For her exhibition at the Atelier Circulaire, Amery Sandford presents *Once in a Lifetime* (Une fois dans une vie), an installation that envelops the space of the gallery through the use of screen printing and sculpture.

Through this artwork, the artist explores the fabrication (or dismantling) of a singular event. The scenes depicted in the prints could take place in an ambiguous public space that evoke the environment of a doomed festival trying hard to impress its attendees, a calamitous celebration of national identity, or a highly anticipated concert that ends in complete chaos.

The drawings in the screen printed banners that face outwards of the gallery windows recall a naive stylistic approach used in children's illustrations. They provide a series of clues: an empty grandstand, a derelict worksite, set decorations lying in the middle of nowhere, security cords installed to welcome an absent crowd. The course of the misfortunes resulting in this scene is unclear. It is up to the visitor to construct the narrative leading up to catastrophe.

The ruins of this great celebration instead display what is behind the scenes. The chaos described in the drawings translates in the scenography of the exhibition. From the outside of the gallery, the intentional awkwardness in the hanging of the screen

prints contrasts the glittering and newly renovated interior of the Pôle de Gaspé. The posters painfully hide what is taking place inside the gallery : an orgy of sagging sculptures that try desperately to embody images in the exterior panorama. The haphazardness of their layout adds to the general confusion, yet the soft material and printed patterns invite the viewer to handle them as they see fit.

In *Once in a Lifetime* (une fois dans une vie), Amery Sandford disrupts the diffused spectacle we live in by excessively exposing its factitiousness. With a perspective both critical and humorous, the artist draws a parallel between the underbelly of the ceremonial surrounding grand public events and the event-driven aspect of the exhibition itself. Through this strategy, she steers the visitor away from his/her habitual role as a passive contemplator and invites him/her to question the symbolic construct of events. In a world where "spectacle has permeated all reality, irradiating it **", Amery Sandford thus highlights the Being failing in the Appearing.

Gauthier Melin
translated by Louise Inkel

* Guy Debord. *Commentaires sur la société du spectacle* (1988), éd. Gallimard, Paris, 1992, p.23

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