

Press release | For immediate distribution

THE FOUNTAIN HOUSE

**BY GERMAN COLLECTIVE
RAUMLABORBERLIN**

AUGUST 27 TO OCTOBER 26, 2014

**ESPLANADE CLARK ON STE-CATHERINE ST.
(CORNER CLARK)**



Photo credit: Antoine Leduc

Montreal, August 26, 2014 – *The Fountain House*, a collaboration between Berlin and Montreal, opens its doors on August 27. Until October 26, this architectural and artistic work will be a place to gather, appreciate art and celebrate water. Situated on the Esplanade Clark in the Quartier des spectacles (Ste.Catherine St., at the corner of Clark), *The Fountain House* can be visited for free every day from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. (opening at 7:30 p.m. on August 27). The public will be able to view original art works made specifically for *The Fountain House*, as well as participate in conferences on water and guided tours by the architect.

Designed by Markus Bader of the German collective raumlaborberlin, the circular installation of 10.5 metres in diameter and 8 metres high, made of wood panels, contains in its main, interior space a small water chute with drinkable water, and is covered by living vegetation which will evolve over the course of the eight weeks. The façades, made of grasses on the outside and mushrooms on the inside, will thus transform this ephemeral structure over time. With an accessible terrace, *The Fountain House* will offer a new perspective on the surrounding landscape.

This first project by raumlaborberlin in Canada – a pioneer in the field of ephemeral interventions in the public sphere – was initiated by the Goethe-Institut and is a co-production with the Quartier des spectacles Partnership.

Background

Markus Bader, a founding member of raumlaborberlin, visited Montreal twice in the last two years. In 2012, he participated on a panel on “New Ways of Envisaging Public Space” and gave a workshop on furniture-building in Place de la Paix. This very positive experience, coinciding with the student strikes and collective mobilization, inspired him to propose a project for the Goethe-Institut. He was struck by all the fountains still available in Montreal – offering free access to clean drinking water– while elsewhere this access is becoming rarer as water is being privatized or has become a scarce resource. With this in mind, he proposed *The Fountain House*, a reflection on the importance of maintaining water as a public good. On his second visit to Montreal in 2013, in conjunction with an international workshop on design at UQAM, he was able to further develop his thoughts on fountains and water, and scout locations in the Quartier des spectacles. He was most taken with Esplanade Clark, a raw, under used site, with ample space and great potential.

PROGRAM

Installations and Performances:

Seven local artists have created original sound and light installations and performances addressing the topics of water and the urban environment on a human scale:

August 27 – October 26

Blue Gold, sound installation, Chantal Dumas

August 27 – October 26

Flow Gate, light installation, Cécile Martin

September 13 at 4 pm and 7 p.m.

Elementary Structures, performances, Magali Babin and Erin Sexton

October 9 – 11 at 8 p.m.

LSCDC (light, sweet, cold, dark, crude), Ælab, Audiovisual performances

October 2 – 26, every hour on the hour

Horologion, sound and light installation

Concept/Direction: Chris Salter & lighting collaboration: Omar Faleh

The Fountain House's artistic program is presented in collaboration with **La Biennale de Montréal** and is part of the "Future Anterior" program of BNLMTL 2014: *L'avenir (looking forward)*.

Guided Tours of The Fountain House with Markus Bader

Thursday, August 28 at 12:15 pm. 30 minutes

Friday, August 29 at 7 pm. 30 minutes

Maximum 20 people; first come, first serve.

Public Reading of Berlin Alexanderplatz by Alfred Döblin

September 16

Two Readings (length-30 minutes: 25 min. in French, 5 min. in German).

Meeting Place at 12:15pm. or at 4:15 pm at the Bibliothèque du Festival international de la Littérature (FIL), located at the Parterre (corner of Ontario and St. Urbain).

The group will then move to *The Fountain House* for the rest of the reading.

Reading by Angela Konrad, Theatre director and professor, UQAM

In collaboration with the Festival international de la Littérature and the École de design de l'UQAM.

Conferences on Water

The Fountain House will host four conferences on various aspects dealing with water, from the quality of our local water and how it is treated, to our access to the shores and waterways of Montreal, to our over-consumption of this precious natural resource.

All conferences are held on **Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m.** and last 20 minutes (in French only).

September 3: *Waste Water and the City* by Coralie Deny of the Conseil régional de l'environnement

September 10: *Montreal, an Island in the Heart of the St. Lawrence* by Valérie Aubin, Zip Jacques-Cartier

September 17: *Greater Montreal Blue Route* by Ariane Cimon-Fortier, Zip Ville-Marie

September 24: *Important issues related to Water* by Martine Châtelain, Coalition Eau secours.

raumlaborberlin

raumlaborberlin was founded by eight young architects in 1999 as a response to the frenetic development in Berlin that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall. Instead of charging full speed ahead to privatize and build on empty spaces created in the wake of the Berlin Wall's destruction, raumlabor sought to reflect on how to better use these spaces. Who should be building them up – the established, most prominent and most conventional architects? Did these structures have to be permanent or could they also be temporary architectural and artistic interventions? And who should be using these spaces? The issues of private and public space and of the re-appropriation of public space by citizens became important themes in their work, as did creating public experiences and interventions in unexpected, under used places, to reveal a new potential for spaces and to encourage citizens to view and use them differently. The collective's works have been presented in cities such as **Berlin** (*The Great World Fair – The World is not Fair*, at the former Tempelhof Airfield, 2012; *Der Berg*, Palast der Republik, 2005), **Venice** Architectural Biennale (*Learning Urbanism*, 2012; *Generator/Kitchen Monument*, 2010), **New York** (*Political: 50 Years of Political Stances in Architecture and Urban Design*, MoMa, 2012; *Spacebuster*, 2011), **The Hague**, (*The Vortex*, Today's Art, 2012) and **Shanghai** (*The International Ghost*, Shanghai Biennale, 2012), to name a few. www.raumlabor.net

Markus Bader is in town from August 22 – September 6, 2014 and is available for interviews.

A co-production of the Goethe-Institut Montreal and the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership, *The Fountain House* has received support from the following organizations:

Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, KLH Massivholz GmbH, Advantage Austria, Hapag Lloyd, Idaho Forest Group, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, Falcon International, Secrétariat à la région métropolitaine, City of Montreal, Toiture Nature, EGP Group and Canadian German Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

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