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EXHIBITION

OTIUM #3

DANE MITCHELL

21ST JUNE - 9TH SEPTEMBER 2018

INSTITUT
D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes

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The IAC, which has made research central to its activities since its creation, periodically becomes the time for *Otium**, an intermediary moment dedicated to fostering thought, meditation, and awareness. Both the garden and the interior spaces are opened up to accommodate the projects developed in an “elsewhere” that becomes, over the course of a summer, a “here and now”.

Otium #3 brings together the solo exhibitions of three artists: Jean-Marie Perdrix, Linda Sanchez, and Dane Mitchell who share the desire to examine materials as the basis for their work. Mineral, organic, cosmic, volatile, and shifting materials, each of these artists explores and experiments with their possibilities in different ways.

Understood in a “cosmomorphic” manner (echoing the research undertaken within the framework of the Laboratoire espace cerveau), here, this material stems as much from human activity as from nature, from the moment that such a distinction is no longer meaningful.

In search of substance, these artists use experimentation as the mode of production of their artistic forms. This is how they intend to weave connections with the environment, as though to intensify their relationship to *what is there*.

DANE MITCHELL

The work of New Zealand artist Dane Mitchell probes elusive areas, the transitions between materiality and immateriality, intuition and knowledge, absence and presence. Based on natural elements (light, rain, steam), his research tends to transcend our way of perceiving these events and to explore the limits of our perceptions.

Minimalist and discreet, Mitchell's works are derived from recording or capturing organic and ephemeral substances. Sometimes accompanied by a scientific tool kit (parabola, pumps, measuring instruments), sometimes transformed (metal alloys, perfume), the materials employed are the subject of multiple experimentations through subtle sensorial arrangements (vaporisation of an odour, blocking of sight, illusions) or reconfigurations in space (contextual displacements, plays of scale).

Based on these interventions, Mitchell plays on scientific principles based on vision, the permanence of matter, and the objective conceptions of physical phenomena that we experience in daily life. He light-heartedly reappropriates and reuses scientific vocabulary to hold our discernment at bay and spark our imagination.

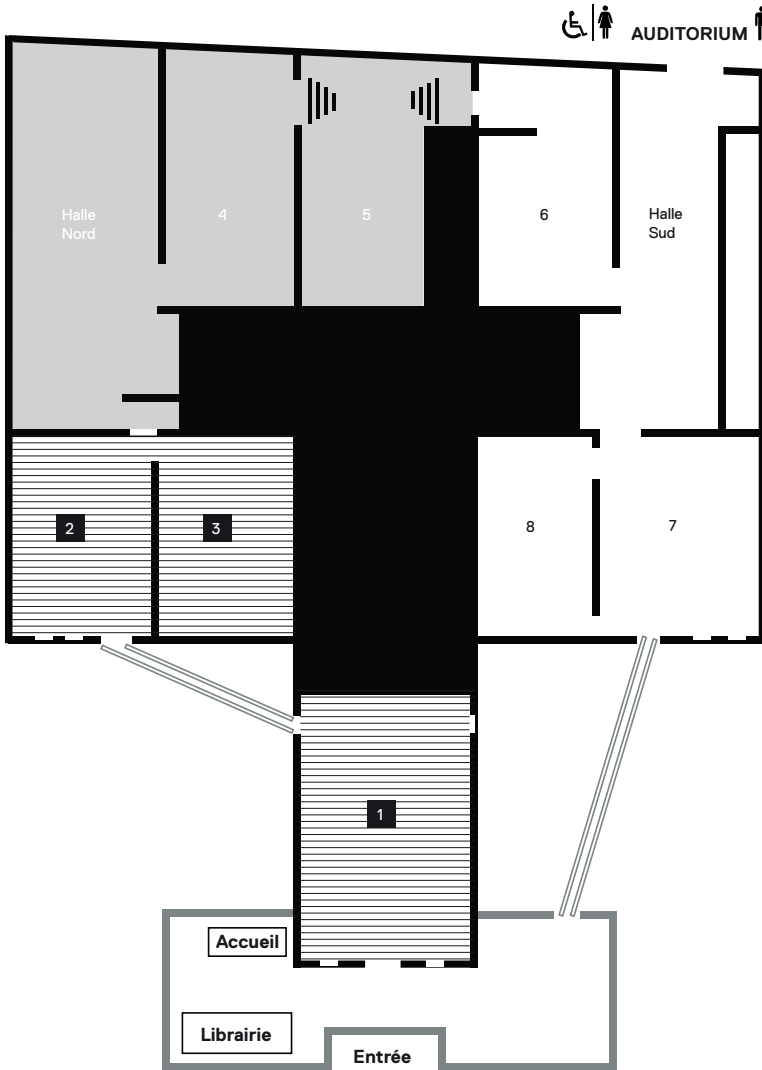
Curator: Nathalie Ergino

Assisted by Juliette Tyran, exhibition production manager.

**Otium*, a Latin term, covers a variety of forms and meanings in the domain of free time. It is the time in which a person enjoys a rest, to devote themselves to meditation and studious leisure activities. It is also the time of retirement following a public or private career, by opposition with active, public life. It is a sporadic or prolonged period of personal leisure with intellectual, virtuous, or immoral implications with the idea of distancing from everyday life, business (*negotium*) and engagement in activities fostering artistic or intellectual development (eloquence, writing, philosophy).

Dane Mitchell was born in 1976 in Auckland (New Zealand/Aotearoa) where he lives and works. His artworks are shown in New Zealand and on the international scene, within the framework of individual and collective exhibitions, including recently at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, Japan (2017) and the Sydney Biennale, Australia (2016).

Exhibition Rooms



-  Jean-Marie Perdrix
-  Linda Sanchez
-  Dane Mitchell

room 6

***Weight of the World (North)*, 2015**

Steel

46 x 36 x 39 cm

Courtesy Beat Raeber, Galerie, Zurich

south hall

***Imponderable, Antimatter*, 2018**

Homeopathic remedy, ultrasonic vapouriser,

60 containers, waterpump, fittings

Variable dimensions

Courtesy de l'artiste

***Clairience (Three Ozone Notes)*,**

2015

Perfume, paper, brass

130 x 50 x 20 cm

Courtesy Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

***From the Dust Archive (MoMA)*,**

2007-2018

Archival injekt print on Dibond

80 x 80 cm

Courtesy Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

***From the Dust Archive (AGNSW)*,**

2003-2018

Archival injekt print on Dibond

80 x 80 cm

Courtesy Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

***Dust Archive (Stedelijk Museum)*,**

2007-2018

Archival injekt print on Dibond

80 x 80 cm

Courtesy Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

rooms 7 & 8

***Aeromancy (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena)*,**

2014-2017

Sand, glass

Variable dimensions

Courtesy Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland

room 6

With Weight of the World (North), Dane Mitchell alerts us to the existence of real yet imperceptible phenomena that we cannot see or measure.

Weight of the World (North), 2015

An object of measurement, *Weight of the World (North)* is a set of scales. It avoids the visitor's gaze and it is only by approaching the artwork that we grasp the nature of the object. On the face, the needle indicates the weight of the world.

Despite a world constantly in motion, the incessant transfers of matter and energy from one form to another, the artwork suggests that the mass of the 'planet object' remains unchanged. It is therefore considered an entity within a closed system.

With this scientific measurement tool, Dane Mitchell proposes a sensitive and poetic vision of the world: a metaphor for the weight of the Earth and an allegory of our failure to encompass the vast proportions of reality.

As in most of his artworks, the artist is questioning what we feel through material, empirical proof, by playing on the activation of what it is difficult to perceive, or what is beyond our grasp.

Dane Mitchell also plays on notions of scale: *Weight of the World (North)* presented in Room 6 is confronted by the grandeur of the exhibition space. The arrangement of the artwork upside down echoes the *Base of the World (Homage to Galileo)* created in 1961 by Piero Manzoni.

With a base represented by an iron and bronze cube and the title engraved backwards and facing the floor, Piero Manzoni thus announced that the whole world was sculpture.

south hall

The artworks of Dane Mitchell explore a form of plastic invisibility by probing territories of transformation between various energy states and by invoking material and sensorial qualities that are both unstable and dynamic.

Imponderable, Antimatter, 2018

Like the sign of geothermal activity, evanescent steam escapes the outside patio adjoining the South Hall of the IAC. *Imponderable, Antimatter* is an artwork produced for *Otium #3*, in which Dane Mitchell explores particular physical phenomena. It is made up of a vaporous sculptural form and a series of oil cans each containing a label that enables the visitor to identify the nature of their contents. This content, a homeopathic¹ solution of *positronium*, constitutes a substance whose materiality can be observed but whose weight escapes our determinations because here it is the subject of a change of state. The solution diluted into water is expelled in the form of steam via a drain connected to an ultrasound humidifier.

Homeopathic dilution relies on the principle that water can contain memory and that through this process, the molecules' memory is

activated. The dilution strengthens as opposed to weakening the power of the contained solution. In other words, the more it is diluted, the more effective the substance becomes. As Dane Mitchell specifies: "the concept of 'water memor' suggests that in the weak concentration generated by dilution, water 'remembers' substances that are mixed into it to beyond any molecular trace".

Through this experience, the artist offers a play of energy transfers that act on the thresholds of the rational by diluting the *positronium* described as antimatter² by definition. With *Imponderable, Antimatter*, Dane Mitchell provides a perspective beyond an anthropocentric understanding of the world.

Clairalience (Three Ozone Notes), 2015

A strip of paper is held vertically between two brass bands. Focusing on the sculptural possibilities of a perfume, on the thought of an object dispersed and dissolved, Dane Mitchell offers a sensitive experience to the visitor. The diffused fragrance contains molecules inherent to the odour of the ozone³, naturally present in the Earth's atmosphere.

1. Homeopathy (from the Greek *hómoios*, "similar" and *páthos* "suffering") was invented in the 18th century by the German physician Samuel Hahnemann. Its production principle is to dilute active substances which, when concentrated, would provoke similar symptoms to those of the patient. Dilution allows a solution to be obtained that no longer contains any molecules of the toxin used. After each dilution, the solution is "shaken up". This phase is called "succussion"

2. Antimatter is a material comprising antiparticles, which have the same mass as ordinary particles of matter but contain opposing charges. When a collision occurs between particles and antiparticles, this leads to their annihilation. The consequence of this annihilation is the liberation of energy.

3. From the German *ozon*, derived from the Greek *ozô*: "to give off an odour".

Just before a storm, the main detectable odour is that of ozone⁴. The term *Clairaliencie* precisely echoes that of *clairvoyance*, that is, extra-sensorial perception. The naturally diffused odour in the atmosphere is pleasant, like a sensation of fresh air, pleasant to breathe and ingrained within our collective consciousness.

For *Clairaliencie (Three Ozone Notes)*, the ozone fragrance is made from the fusion of three synthetic oxygen molecules used in the perfume industry. Akin to architecture, the composition of a perfume is the result of an alchemy of character notes. This is the only “sculptural form”, so to speak, that literally penetrates the brain. The perfumed vapours maintain a singular connection with our emotions. Like olfactive music, we cannot always put into words the emotion that a fragrance reveals. *Clairaliencie (Three Ozone Notes)* takes hold of our sense of smell and somehow convokes certain undefined areas of our perception.

***From the Dust Archive (MoMA),
2007-2018***
***From the Dust Archive (AGNSW),
2003-2018***
***Dust Archive (Stedelijk Museum),
2007-2018***

The three photographic prints presented belong to the project *Dust Archive* developed by Dane Mitchell over about fifteen years.

It consists of the collection and creation of dust archives from museums and galleries all over the world.

A sign of activity and inactivity alike, the dust element becomes a creative force here. Dane Mitchell lends a visible form to an entity usually rendered invisible in supposedly neutral museum spaces. Despite its inoffensive appearance, its troubling content is durable and very often surprising.

As Dane Mitchell specifies, dust is a force capable of settling in almost everywhere and of containing everything: “the particles that hide in nooks and crannies contain fragments of spatial rocks, Saharan dust, mushrooms with bits of modern tyres in them, toxic lead, countless moulds and bacteria as well as micrograms of human skin.” The composition of dust sampled by the artist and its very circulation are due in large part to the human bodies that are moving through museums every day. The *Dust Archive* contains samples taken from over sixty museums and art centres such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and the Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Beyeler Foundation (Basel), or Tate Britain (London). According to a scientific model, each print presents a box of transparent, cylindrical, and shallow *petri* dishes containing the cultivated growth of a dust sample

4. The electrical charges from lightning during storms separate oxygen into several atoms. Some of these can be reformed as ozone, which is then transported by the wind, announcing the arrival of rain. In the absence of lightning, this ozone odour is not perceptible.

from a single venue.

The extract of bacterial growth blooms in remarkably bright colours and surprising forms.

To produce the image, Dane Mitchell uses a flat scanner. The plastic finish differs according to the cultures and gives rise to small coloured dots like a constellation of stars, or to streaks like paintbrush strokes that unintentionally imitate the language of abstract painting.

rooms 7 & 8

With Aeromancy (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena), presented in these two rooms of the IAC, Dane Mitchell continues a study of the phenomena at liminal levels of visibility by enabling a meteorological phenomenon to be perceived that extends beyond the conventional threshold.

Aeromancy⁵ (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena),

2014-2017

Akin to an archaeological discovery or to water that appears to have frozen, the floor is littered with mysterious and delicate sculptural elements that the visitor is invited to walk around.

For *Aeromancy (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena)*, Dane Mitchell canalises invisible forces into concrete forms. The artist creates an environment made up of more than two thousand glass fulgurites. Thin and elongated in appearance, these glass elements are instantly and naturally formed when lightning strikes a sandy ground. From the Latin *fulgur* meaning lightning, fulgurites⁶ or “lightning stones” are pieces of very fragile, amorphous natural glass, generally tube-shaped and quasi-cylindrical, produced by the impacts of lightning on sand.

5. The term “aeromancy” expresses a prediction of the future through the observation of the air and atmospheric phenomena.

6. The first fulgurites discovered date from the 17th century. The most well known come from encounters between a bolt of lightning and a sandy surface (such as desert sand). A single lightning bolt delivers such tremendous energy that it can heat the silica found in sand enough to allow it to attain the 1 800°C required for it to melt and weld the grains of sand together.

The fulgurites in *Aeromancy (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena)* are created from materials with their own alchemical origin: glass, a material that can be both liquid and solid, and sand, from which glass is derived. They have undergone a radical transformation to reach their present state. The artist worked with glass blowers in order to literally “draw” the fulgurites laid out on the floor, to reflect a “lightning field” interspersed with tendrils of fragile and transparent glass.

With *Aeromancy (Sketches of Meteorological Phenomena)*, Dane Mitchell also echoes the work *Lightening Field* by American artist Walter De Maria⁷ in which lightning and energy transfers are also explored. Creating a tension between visible and invisible, Dane Mitchell reconstitutes a physical phenomenon, here, that of lightning and an electrical release accompanied by lightning, in a solid, concrete, and perceptible form.

7. Walter De Maria (1935-2013) produced artworks by intervening directly in natural environments, to the scale of the landscape. He was interested in visual experiences. *Lightening Field*, which he started developing in 1977, is one of his emblematic artworks. The work spans a rectangle of 1 mile by 1 kilometre in New Mexico, where the artist planted 400 rods in stainless steel, each set 67 metres apart. These were arranged to attract lightning.

OTIUM #3

JEAN-MARIE PERDRIX
LINDA SANCHEZ
DANE MITCHELL

21.06.2018 — 09.09.2018

OPENING HOURS

During exhibitions : Wednesday to Friday from 2 pm to 6 pm,
Saturday and Sunday from 1 pm to 7 pm,
Free guided visits on Saturday and Sunday at 4 pm

GETTING HERE

- BUS C3 (stop Institut d'art contemporain)
C9 (stop Ferrandière)
C16 (stop Alsace)
- M LINE A (stop République)

The IAC is 10 minutes walk from Lyon Part-Dieu railway station

PRICES

• Full price: 6€ • reduced price: 4€ • free admission: -18 years old • IAC Pass 2018: 15€

BOOKSHOP

The IAC bookshop, specialising in contemporary art, is both a resource and an outreach tool for the IAC's artistic projects. **Opened during exhibitions opening hours.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, september 7th 2018:

ART BREAKS

Lunchtime mini-visits, two Fridays per exhibition between 12:30 and 1:00 pm with on site foodtruck or catering.

Sunday, september 9th 2018:

FAMILY SUNDAYS

Adapted visits for a young public to view the exhibition as a family and share an afternoon snack. Two Sunday afternoons per exhibition,
3:30 pm. Adult : 7 euros / Child : 2 euros

Saturday, september 8th 2018:

EXPERIMENTAL VISITS

In line with the themes of each exhibition project, these visits feature redefined outreach modalities to address and experience the artworks differently. These visits are currently being tested in the form of «Postures à l'oeuvre» visits, a visit which allows you to discover how to come into contact with artworks by putting your body into action. One Saturday per exhibition, 3:00 pm.

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