

Biography

Patrick Bernier was born in Paris in 1971.

Olive Martin was born in Liège, Belgium in 1972.

Patrick Bernier studied Art and Philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris and Olive Martin studied Art History and Fine Art at Toulouse University. They met at the École des Beaux-arts de Paris in 1996, and both graduated with honors, in 1999 and 2000 respectively.

In 1998 Patrick was awarded a grant to study for six months at the Institut National d'Art in Abidjan, in the Ivory Coast where he initiated weekly discussions about art and media on an art school internet chat-room. In 2000 he participated in the first session of the Collège Invisible, an online Postgraduate Diploma based at the École des Beaux-Arts de Marseille.

Olive Martin continued her studies thanks to a grant at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1999, where she studied in the Film and Photography department. In 2003 she completed the postgraduate programme of the École des Beaux-Arts de Nantes.

Between 1998 and 2001 they produced numerous projects in collaboration relating to a chat room that they hosted once a week on the internet. They developed several works based on the texts that the chat room generated: a video trailer for a sitcom *Now Talking in #atelierenreseau* (1999, 10 min, part of the media collection of the Pompidou Centre), the solo exhibition *A Nice Showroom* at Seche Galerie, Paris, in 2000; an interactive installation *A Nice Chat-room 2* at the Palais des Beaux-Arts de Paris, 2000; a radio drama, *Résumé des épisodes précédents*, on Radio Aligre in 2001, and a website, *Episodes Précédents*, in 2001.

Patrick Bernier then developed a number of specific projects around issues of hosting (both virtual and real) and hospitality. He experimented with non-material works presented in the context of art exhibitions including *Lascaux 2*, at the Villa Arson, Nice in 1999; the festival *Tranz-Tech*, Toronto, in 2001; *Curatorial Market*, Cuchifritos Gallery, New York, in 2002; and *I am a Curator*, Chisenhale Gallery, London, 2003. He relates these performative projects within a collaboration, ongoing since 2004, entitled *Quelques K de Mémoire Vive (A Few K of Random Access Memory)* with the storyteller Carlos Ouedraogo as an alter-ego narrating his experiences. The project has been presented in a number of different contexts: in an art gallery, the Gallery Maisonneuve in 2003 and 2005; in an art school, the École de Beaux-Arts de Grenoble, in 2005; in exhibitions in Paris (*We Don't Play*, in 2003, at Ménagerie de Verre; *Proposition de Colloque*, in 2007 at the Kadist Art Foundation), and at a live arts festival (Bayonne, in 2005). The project was presented in March 2009 within the framework of a performance programme in the Jeu de Paume gallery in Paris and will be performed at Galerie Entre-deux in Nantes later in the year.

Since 2001, Patrick has been actively engaged in an association dedicated to the solidarity of migrant workers in Nantes where he gives juridical support and help with writing, fighting for equality of rights and the freedom of movement.

Olive Martin approaches in her work the notion of identity, interested in its detours and porosity. She pursues the idea of a 'whatever singularity' (as developed by the philosopher Giorgio Agamben) in her photographs, films and installations. These have been presented in numerous exhibitions: *Voilà* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 2000 for Bertrand Lavier's collective piece *La Peinture des Martin*; *Blow by Blow* at the Zoo Gallery in Nantes in 2001; *Nursery World* at the Jennifer Flay Gallery in Paris; *La Femme au Portrait* in various locations in Nantes, *Time Warp* at the Maisonneuve Gallery in Paris, and *Ce Fût Comme une Apparition...* at the Musée des Beaux-arts de Pau in 2003. In collaboration with April Durham, a writer based in Los Angeles, she published two books relating to a series of photographs:

Common Object (published by Jocas Seria editions in Nantes for the French translation in 2005, and with Beyond Baroque books in Venice, LA for the original American version 2006, with financial support from Culture France); and *Américains d'Amérique*, an artists book in an edition of twenty, produced with the Maisonneuve Galerie in 2007. She had a solo show at Maisonneuve Galerie in 2008, exhibiting a large photographic series *Américains d'Amérique* taken in California which will also be presented in September 2009 in the Ring, Nantes' 'artothèque' (a lending library of original artworks) with the financial support of a regional arts grant.

In early 2005 they completed "Manmuswak", a short 35mm film shot in Nantes with the support of both the film industry and the art community, combining their political engagement with their aesthetic sensibility. The film has been selected for numerous film festivals: Locarno, Rotterdam, Edinburgh, Leeds, Belfort, Barcelona, and Clermont-Ferrand, and won awards in Angers and Douarnenez. It was screened in cinemas and art centers such as the Cinémathèque Québécoise, the Pompidou Centre, the Jeu de Paume, and was shown in exhibition contexts such as the Galerie Maisonneuve in Paris in 2005 for its release, a collective show in Galerie Cortex Athletico in Bordeaux in 2007, and recently in Dublin at Project Arts Centre for the exhibition *Prehistory of the Crisis*.

That same year they received a six-month grant and residency at Studio Cormier in Montreal (supported by Culture France, and the Canadian organizations OFQJ / CALQ). During their stay they worked in collaboration with the storyteller Myriame El Yamani on an oral diary of their stay entitled *Bienvenue Chez Nous (Welcome Home)* which was presented for the first time in January 2006, at the end of the residency at the Studio Cormier, and then in September 2006 at Montreal University, within the framework of a seminar on inter-subjectivity. The project was adapted to a French context whilst in residence at La Box in Bourges in January 2007 and performed at the École des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, as well as at the art space Béton Salon in Paris in November 2007.

In 2007 during a one year residency in Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers they developed *Project for a Legal Precedent* with two specialized jurists Sylvia Preuss-Laussinotte and Sebastien Canevet posing questions that overlap the fields of art and migration. They regularly published their research in the art center's magazine and produced a performance entitled *X and Y v. France, the case for a legal precedent*. The plea has been performed by the two lawyers themselves in many different contexts since 2008: the École des Beaux-arts de Paris; the Centre International Cimade in Massy; the Maison de l'Europe in Paris; Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers; the Extra City Art Centre in Antwerp in Belgium; the Paroles d'Hivers festival in Brittany; and this month at LIFE, the performing arts space in Saint-Nazaire, as well as at the Synagogue Art Centre in Delme. The project is scheduled to appear in Austria for the Linz Subversive Messe in May, in September at the École Sciences-Po in Paris, in November at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and in 2010 at the FRAC Alsace.

During their six-month stay in Montreal they developed the idea of a new film entitled *La Nouvelle Kahnawaké* which combines their interest in new media and questions of identity and territory. They undertook a writing residency in Montreal and Kahnawaké, a Mohawk reservation, in 2007, with support in the form of a writing grant from the CNAP (National Centre for the Visual Arts). They shot the film this autumn with co-production support from the CNAP and the Videographe Multimedia Art Centre in Montreal.

Since 2004 they have been programming monthly evenings entitled 'Contrechamp' dedicated to art, film and video in the independent cinema, le Cinématographe, in Nantes.

Patrick Bernier and Olive Martin were represented by the Gallery Maisonneuve in Paris until it closed in December 2008. They currently live in Nantes.