

PARACHUTE

revue d'art contemporain _ contemporary art magazine

Press Release

For Immediate Release

THE CONTEMPORARY ART MAGAZINE PARACHUTE SUSPENDS PUBLICATION

Montreal, 20 November 2006 – The contemporary art magazine PARACHUTE, founded in 1974, has taken the difficult decision to suspend its activities. Despite the success of its new format, introduced in 2000, and its international recognition, funding levels no longer make it possible to ensure a reasonable level of quality and stability.

Despite its determination and efforts to maintain the journal's presence on the contemporary art scene and to continue operations, PARACHUTE's board of directors was obliged to take this last-resort decision after examining all the economic and social factors which would have enabled the journal to extract itself from the impasse facing it. The journal had recently succeeded in increasing its sales by more than 200% while at the same time cutting expenses and trimming budgets. Major fundraising efforts over the last years have produced significant but insufficient results. As well, the repeated demands on government agencies have been unproductive. An overall drop in subsidies, in tandem with the current funding structure of the journal and the media environment today make the task that much more complex. Despite PARACHUTE's exceptional longevity in a highly competitive milieu – a longevity owing to the enthusiasm of its contributors and readers and to the unflagging determination of its director – its suspension of activities at this time highlights the precariousness of cultural organizations in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

In a letter to the journal's readers appearing in PARACHUTE 125 in January 2007, Chantal Pontbriand, director, writes:

"When the bell tolls, the adventure should come to a stop, at least in the way it has been led until now. The economic structure needed to pursue this passionate venture linking actors from around the world is gravely lacking at this point. The situation was never comfortable, but the continuing

withdrawal of government funding for innovation in the arts and the need to cultivate ever-more private funding in a country where sponsorship of contemporary art is underdeveloped and where few private art galleries in the field exist, does not help our effort to raise funds and be self-sustaining. After huge efforts to cut costs and increase fundraising in the private sector in the hope of counteracting a too-fragile economic situation, our endeavour must come to a halt while we reconsider the situation and find other ways of doing what we do. Personally, I do not wish to stop myself, being convinced of the need for the magazine.”

PARACHUTE’s board of directors and director would like to extend their warm thanks to all those who contributed to the journal’s great success over the years: its founding members, its staff and board members over the years, its readers, authors, artists, editors, correspondents, graphic artists, copy editors, proofreaders, translators, printers, subscribers, advertisers, distributors, donors, collectors and federal, provincial, municipal and foreign funding agencies.

Founded in Montreal and published in English and French from its very first issue, PARACHUTE’s mission is to investigate new transdisciplinary and multimedia artistic practices and to develop a critical and theoretical language specific to the new directions art is taking today. Published and edited from the start by the art critic and curator Chantal Pontbriand, PARACHUTE has a track record of more than thirty years in the field of contemporary art. One hundred and twenty-five issues at a rate of four per year have been produced and twenty-four books published. Numerous exhibitions were mounted, including curating the Canadian pavilion at the 44th Venice Biennale in 1990 and multidisciplinary international festivals. Eleven symposia and several discussion laboratories were held in Montreal and elsewhere under the title PARAZONES. With a print run of 4,000 - 5,000 copies, PARACHUTE can be found in more than forty countries and in the libraries of the world’s major institutions. More than 3,000 top-notch writers have published their work in the journal, including art critics, philosophers, scholars in every field and world-famous artists from every corner of the planet.

PARACHUTE is a reference publication both locally and internationally, and essays published there have been reprinted far and wide and remain an important source of information and ideas for the arts community and the general public. In 2004, La Lettre volée in Brussels published *Essais choisis 1975-2000*, a collection of some of the most important articles appearing in the journal since its founding. An English anthology will be co-published by Pennsylvania State University Press and Tate Publishing and a Spanish edition is being prepared by CENDEAC in Spain.

PARACHUTE has been chosen by the *Documenta 12 Magazine Project* as one of the eighty journals around the world which works to link artistic practices, theoretical discourse and the public. These journals are collaborating on the creation of a web site on the theoretical and artistic issues being raised by the next edition of *Documenta* in Kassel in the summer of 2007.

PARACHUTE has extended its examination of the questions facing the contemporary art world today in recent thematic issues such as THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY, DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIE(S), BORDERS and VIOLENCE. Other recent issues have been devoted to “emerging” cities such as MEXICO CITY, BEIRUT, SHANGHAI and SÃO PAULO. PARACHUTE 125 is devoted to HAVANA and will be on sale in January 2007.

TO REACT TO THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, PLEASE WRITE TO: halt@parachute.ca

– 30 –

Source: PARACHUTE, contemporary art magazine: T 514.842.9805

Press kit: www.parachute.ca

Media contact: Joanne Tremblay 514.842.9805 j.tremblay@parachute.ca