

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

Pascal Grandmaison

La vie abstraite

15 October to 21 November 2015

Opening Thursday, 15 October, 7 to 9pm

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present new film work by Pascal Grandmaison, opening Thursday, October 15 from 7 to 9 pm. The main work in the exhibition – *La vie abstraite* – a 45-minute, two-channel video projection, contextualizes the transition from an objective vision of nature to pure abstraction, echoing the working methodologies of Kazimir Malevich, founder of the Suprematist movement, marking the ways in which his vision shifted from observation of the real to spiritual abstraction and back again to a figural interpretation. The Futurist opera, *Victory Over the Sun*, was a collaborative project where Malevich created the set design, including a special black square curtain -- the genesis of the black square monochrome, and the Suprematist movement. *Victory Over the Sun* is a rejection of the imitation of nature in favour of "the supremacy of pure feeling," where the visual phenomena are in themselves meaningless. The theatre piece illustrated the idea of taking down the sun and locking it in a concrete box to create a new form of light, demonstrating technological superiority over the old world. After his brutal arrest in 1930, Malevich returned to a figurative approach to painting, imitating established styles. This transition in his work from figurative painting to abstraction and back again was provoked by the political power of the Soviet Union. Suprematism was a way to evacuate recognizable forms to pure abstraction, in part to avoid usefulness in the Communist propaganda that sanctioned socialist realism.

The *dissolution* film series presents paired images across a bisected square, showing dissolution or the transformation of material from one state to another. In *dissolution #1*, we see a watery form in the air: moving, disappearing, reforming. Similar to the rain and cloud in *La vie abstraite*, air and water transform the scene to an abstract world. In *dissolution #2*, a pebbled landscape is interrupted by the appearance of bricks, placed by a mysterious hand, that settle and after a moment are ejected from the scene. The view is relieved of its impediment, but the bricks return again and again to block that view, suggestive of the constant struggle between obstruction and liberation.

Pascal Grandmaison was born in Montreal in 1975, and earned his Bachelor of Fine and Media Arts degree from Université du Québec à Montréal (1997). His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Casino Luxembourg–Forum d'art contemporain, the Art Gallery of Hamilton (Ontario) Prefix Photo (Toronto), and in numerous group exhibitions, including Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, La Compagnie, lieu de creation (Marseilles), Centre culturel canadien (Paris). His videos have been presented internationally, most recently at Haus der Kulturen des Welt (Berlin), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Edinburgh Art Festival (Edinburgh), Le Fresnoy (Tourcoing), Centre Pompidou (Paris). Pascal Grandmaison is a 2015 recipient of the prestigious Hnatyshyn Foundation Visual Arts Award.

