

# Why so many ties?

## Ludovic Boney

April 8 – May 20, 2017

**L**udovic Boney teaches at the Maison des Métiers d'Art de Québec, where he previously studied sculpture, and develops projects both as an independent artist and in collaboration with other creators. Inspired by how art is deeply rooted in the public sphere, he considers the constraints of spaces and materials, as well as the sounds they produce, in conceptualizing his work.

Using a sensitive and intuitive approach, Boney makes sculptures whose formal and sensory characteristics are inextricably connected with the places in which they are located. The aesthetic of his work is without artifice: the robustness of the forms and materials is in harmony with the starkness

of the contours and surfaces, which paradoxically creates the unsettling impression of a delicate balance. The curves, lines, spaces, large volumes, and vanishing points of his artworks draw new horizon lines and reveal unexpected perspectives that recompose the environment in which they exist. His research has increasingly focused on the physical and material interiority that is often hidden in the fullness of the figures he imagines. Drawing on ideas of passage and crossing, already present in his work, this new creative perspective builds on the polyvalent aspect of his artworks.

Invited by OBORO to present his work as part of the centre's year dedicated to Indigenous artists, Boney began his process by visiting the exhibition space. The noises that the floor produced under his feet caught his attention and inspired the new artwork. Echoing the specific vernacular and intrinsic characteristics of the space, he created *Why so many ties?*, an immersive, sculptural landscape where materiality and spatiality anticipate bodies and senses.

The edge of a field. Fifty washcoated pine boards, placed side by side on beams, are installed above the floor. Two thousand flexible metal rods, each six feet high and crowned with bits of recycled plastic bags, are densely planted in the surface of the wood. A path running through the middle of the fixed installation invites visitors to walk through it. Venturing in, they animate the structure. Under the body's weight, the elasticity of the materials creates movement in the assemblage, producing a myriad of unexpected kinetic and acoustic ripples. The boards bounce lightly, making the colourful "plastic tufts," as Boney calls them, waltz as they sway and bump against each other. The muffled creaking of the wood, amplified by the empty space left between the two floors, combines with the noises of the plastic bags and the metallic clinking of the rods as they wobble and clash, producing a sonic ecosystem that hovers above the sculptural landscape.

In the background, a subtle rustling emerges and sediments beneath the sounds produced by the visitors' presence, confusing their perceptions. Emitted by discreetly positioned speakers in the gallery space, the buzzing intensifies as visitors plunge deeper into the field.

To create this sound extension, Ludovic Boney collaborated with composers and audio artists Yannick Plamondon and Benoît Fortier. In the studio, they installed part of the installation. Through exploration and movement, they drew out and recorded the sounds contained in the raw materials. Plamondon and Fortier then used the recordings to compose a minimal sound work, stripped of any theatricality, that is closely tied to the sculpture's natural musical tone.

Advancing on the path, the walker becomes connected to the "physicality" of the work. Destined to undergo a kind of confusion, the body's mass blurs into the accumulation of vertical lines formed by the intersecting and overlapping stalks.

Evocations of landscapes and metaphors abound—poetic, vegetal, mineral, domestic, even political—between moments of listening and attention, between an inside and an outside. Evoking both the chaos of wild nature and the organization of cultivated land, the work proliferates a multitude of imagined places and just as many routes to interpret it. The surface becomes a kind of iteration of the exhibition space—a terrain within a terrain—and the tufts, extensions of multicoloured flags, metallic grasses, exhibited remains. While experiencing or contemplating the work, visitors can imagine themselves inside the hold of a rocking boat, in the middle of a field at harvest time, or in wild grasses swaying in the wind by the seashore.

By superimposing strata of material surfaces and sonic spaces, Boney creates a mechanism that makes the formal and acoustic elements of these layers resonate. By involving their bodies, the artist invites visitors to undergo a physical, spatial, and sensorial crossing, experienced layer by layer in the transfigured exhibition space.

Ariane Plante

Translated by Oana Avasilichioaei

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