

In the midsummer of 2022, I started sleeping with Art. I arrived late one breezy July night and awoke in the morning, staring up at them. From the ceiling hung strange, bulbous wire forms, sheathed in plastic bags. One ballooned out of an orange Solair chair—a dish-shaped patio chair from Quebec motels of my childhood—like a speech bubble, but a cagey, wordless one. What was this studio museum?

Come December, I slept with Art a second time in the room on the other side of the wall. Once again, arriving late and waking up to wire sculptures saying hello, cantilevered off shelves overhead in open storage. I could smell them, the wood and metal, patchouli and something else indiscernible or maybe just a mix of it all.

Little did I know at the time that I'd inadvertently, incidentally, slept with a whole exhibition, the contents of which I would only come to know months later.

Materials for modular making from an archive, an archive. Like ghosts at the ready, waiting to be resurrected at any moment, pulled from shelves and their dust brushed off.

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Hinges repurposed from the studio building's doors connect panels, creaking open and closed, heavy with glue, weighted like lead.

Amputated tree roots turn rotisserie style from funnily shaped plywood bases.

A replicated set of Tyng Toy (1947)—architect Anne Tyng's modular system of plywood and dowel playthings for children—slots together in various combinations: a horse on wheels, a chalkboard, a bench, a low side table.

A collection of souvenir soccer jerseys turns into a wardrobe for invisible players.

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What has been assembled is only a minute fraction of what exists. More objects have been stuffed into rafters—wire wings and a giant fan enclosure-like sculpture encase an entire childhood of shoes—some of which might eventually become absorbed into the bones of the space, might never come out not because they will not, but because they cannot.

At the beginning and end of it all stands the studio, a giving tree and its generational afterlives, reaching across fields and talking through time.

A workshop.  
A story of rooms.  
A family of things.  
An inherited collection.  
A living archive.  
A memory palace.

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**Charlene K. Lau** is an art historian, critic and curator.

DIDIER MORELLI  
(MONTRÉAL)

LA MAISON À JOUER DE S.L.  
(S.L.'S PLAY HOUSE)

April 20th - May 27th, 2023  
Installation



Didier Morelli's multi-disciplinary practice includes performance, print media, video, installation, and site-specific durational actions. *La maison à jouer de S.L.* is an immersive installation that revisits Suzanne Leblanc's solo exhibition, *La maison à penser de L.W.*, first presented at Skol in 1999. Since then, the work has been stored in his father, the artist François Morelli's studio. In March 2020, Didier moved back to live in this space that had been his childhood home, after ten years abroad. The project was initiated through a conversation with Leblanc, who gave Didier the permission to work with the original exhibition material. Didier transforms Leblanc's oeuvre into a new and portable architectural configuration, a constantly shifting installation and a mutable stage for different theoretical interventions.

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**Didier Morelli** is a FRQSC Postdoctoral Fellow whose research project "Street Actions: Women Performing in Montreal (1970-1980)" examines how second-wave feminist performances subverted urban functionalism by imagining alternate modes of embodiment in Montréal and its peripheries during the 1970s in the aftermath of the October Crisis. He holds a PhD in Performance Studies from Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois (2021); Master of Fine Arts from the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver (2014); MA from the Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto (2012); and a BA in Liberal Arts from Concordia University (2011).

Associate editor at *Espace art actuel*, a contemporary arts magazine in Montréal, his writing has also been published in *Art Journal*, *CTR: Canadian Theatre Review*, *C Magazine*, *Esse Arts + Opinions*, *RACAR*, *Spirale*, and *TDR: The Drama Review*, amongst others. In addition to being the curatorial research assistant for the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) career retrospective of the photographer Evergon (2022), Morelli also curated *Traversée/ Crossing*, a group exhibition on the intersections of contemporary art and watersports at Stewart Hall Art Gallery (2022), as well as a forthcoming online video art project on the environment and performance at the Grantham Foundation for the Arts and the Environment (2023).

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