

# **A LIGHT THAT NEVER GOES OUT**

**Omar Castillo Alfaro,  
Camille Charbonneau,  
Jesús Hilarío-Reyes,  
Simon Petepiece,  
Jeremy Shaw,  
James Webb**

## A LIGHT THAT NEVER GOES OUT

In a famous 1975 essay, Pier Paolo Pasolini laments the sudden disappearance of the fireflies from the Italian countryside due to increased air pollution and pesticide use. For him, this loss becomes a metaphor for the disappearance of the pre-war agrarian and proletarian world and its ritual gestures, swept aside by the cultural homogenization that came along with the rise of consumerism. This disintegration of the sacred as a result of a productivity-oriented mindset is consistent with the *disenchantment of the world* described by the philosopher and sociologist Max Weber, which also refers to the tragic loss of meaning and mystery resulting from an escalating rationalization of reality.

In his book *Survival of the Fireflies* (2009), the philosopher and art historian Georges Didi-Huberman revisits Pasolini's essay thirty-four years later in order to challenge its pessimism. Objecting to the idea of certain extinction, he suggests that fireflies have not disappeared but remain visible to those whose eyes have gotten accustomed to the ambient darkness. He asks us to pay attention to the faint and wavering glimmers that keep part of the invisible and the sacred alive, at the margins of power.

The exhibition *A Light That Never Goes Out* is dedicated precisely to these narrow spaces that keep glowing in the gloom. It pays homage to the light that nourishes hopes of healing and watches over parties in the dead of night, re-establishing connections and teaching us how to no longer be alone together, like in those fleeting, radiant moments that allow us to glimpse a beyond and hold the promise of a shared transcendence.

The exhibition opens with a work by Jeremy Shaw, a constellation of votive candles that flicker hypnotically, creating a hallucinatory filter for dreams and meditative wanders. Although detached from their liturgical framework, the flames retain their symbolic density: they summon the invisible sedimentation of prayer, mourning, and vows taken by candlelight, over which their flickering glow keeps watch. This entry into the subject matter sets the tone of an encounter in which the sacred keeps fluctuating and reinventing new forms.

A few steps away stands the architectural installation *Trinity (North Walk)* by Simon Petepiece, a monumental structure that acts as a threshold and turns movement

into a ceremonial experience. Inspired by the architecture of medieval cloisters, which ritualize the passage between worldly and spiritual life, the work uses the most ordinary materials: drywall panels, metal studs, and industrial screws. Reduced to the essentials, the installation converts the poverty of these materials into a form of meditative austerity. This sparseness resonates with a long theological tradition, which views asceticism as a way of reaching the divine.

Petepiece's installation leads to the fragment of a dancefloor from a New York nightclub that the artist Jesús Hilario-Reyes has transposed into the context of the exhibition. Scattered and disordered traces cover the checkerboard pattern of the floor. Created by dancing feet, these marks translate the chaotic and unruly mass of bodies. The dancefloor becomes one of the rare contemporary spaces in which a shared transcendental experience is still possible: no longer before the altar but in the communal, pulsing beat, when the night temporarily renders us porous to one another.

In response to this vestige is *Salt Tolerance*, a sculpture by Hilario-Reyes in two parts: a sound system and, facing it, an interweaving of metal trumpets and mangrove roots, a symbol of a rhizomatic and open identity. From the sound system emanates a techno composition created from the piercing song of the osprey, a bird whose high-pitched calls announce hurricanes, and geophonic data of the seismic activity generated by a rave. A celestial breath and an earthly beat, the storm and the party convey, each in their own way, the intensity of vibrations that pass through bodies and bring them together.

Hanging above this soundscape, the installation *Naab* by Omar Castillo Alfaro features a series of stalactites composed of paraffin flowers. In the Mayan language and culture, *naab* refers to the white water lily, a symbol of the connection between the terrestrial and aquatic worlds. The organic form of the stalactite evokes the cenotes, natural, sacred sinkholes in which waterlilies thrive and that the Maya considered as thresholds to the underworld *Xibalba*. Suspended above the traces of dancing bodies, the installation superimposes two kinds of transcendence, one horizontal and collective, the other vertical and cosmological.

In the adjacent Small Gallery, the work *Al Madat* by James Webb plays the recording of a *dhikr*, a Sufi chant recited by patients at the Sultan

Bahu Rehab Centre, located in Cape Town, South Africa. Brought to the Cape by the enslaved Malay peoples during the colonial era, the *dhikr* (which means “remembrance” in Arabic) is a ritualistic practice of reciting divine names, the vocal and breathing techniques of which can induce a trance-like state. Converted into a therapeutic tool, this practice supports patients in their recovery from addiction. On the floor, Webb has placed a series of Karachi rugs, on which visitors are invited to sit or stand shoeless to experience the rhythmic voices and join, in quiet contemplation, a community of breath woven between absent and present bodies.

In the same gallery, the work *Infinite yearning met with a finite world* vibrates to the rhythm of the heartbeats of a woman and her unborn child, the pulsations of which go in and out of sync. We are encouraged to take the speaker and place it against our chests in order to become part of this intimate fusion. The communion between mother and child shows birth – and with it the emergence of individuality – as a deeply relational process, blurring the boundaries between self and the other.

The surrounding space is populated by thousands of bees that the artist Camille Charbonneau made by hand. According to Mormon tradition, from which they had to step away to live their queerness, the bee embodies unity in faith. Separated from the hive and freed from its moorings, the bee becomes open to new interpretations, hence the installation’s title of *Unmoored*. At the back of the space, a sculpture reproduces a fragment of a baptismal font, a central element of Mormon temples. Near and remote at the same time, these symbols draw their strangeness from a dual relationship: familiar enough to recognize, but too distant to reach, like an old acquaintance whom we think we recognize from afar without being sure.

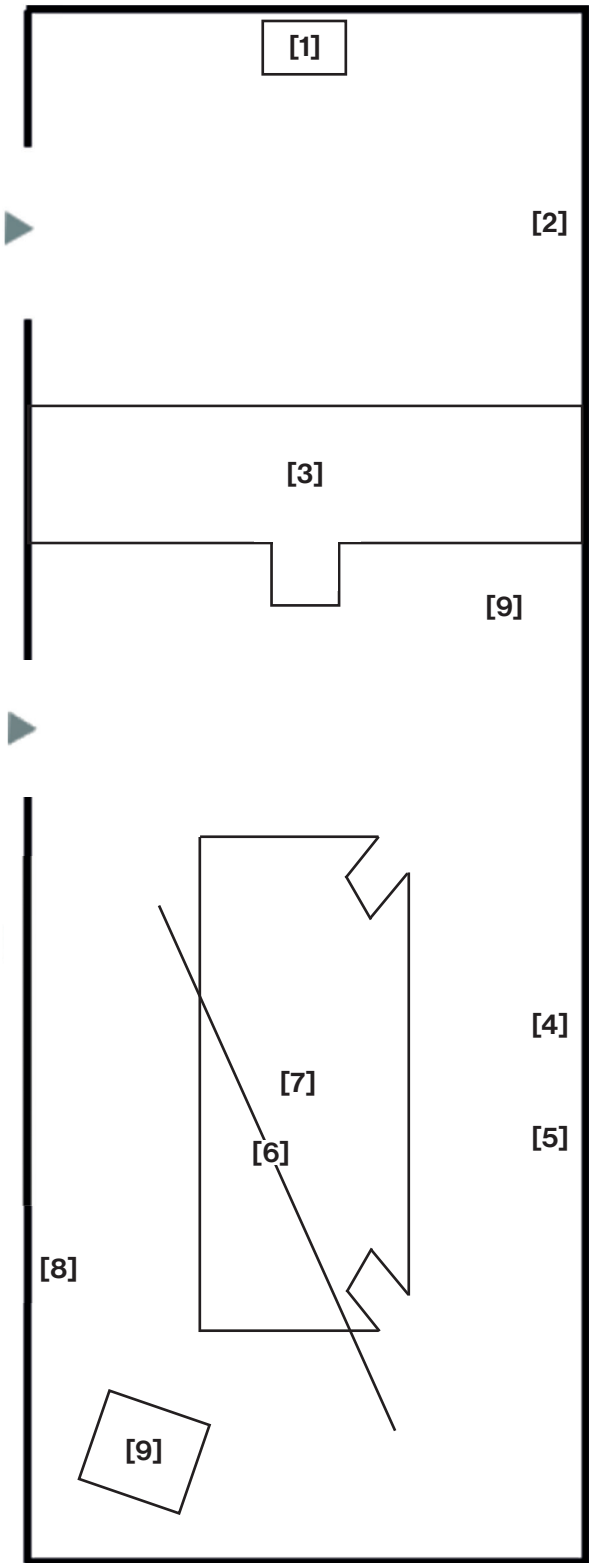
An intuition underlies the entire exhibition: the sacred is always present, distributed in new and sometimes unexpected forms. It attests to the diverse rituals that bring us together and show us glimpses of the beyond. The fireflies continue to glimmer for those who have learned how to see them. It is sometimes difficult to see the light in a world that seems to be getting darker under the cumulative effect of identity retrenchment, climate disruption, and an extractive economy bent on conquering all

that still resist it. Flame, altar, breath, temple,  
or swarm: the works in the exhibition represent  
multiform lights whose brilliance marks the  
night, not to dissipate its darkness but to teach  
us how to see through it

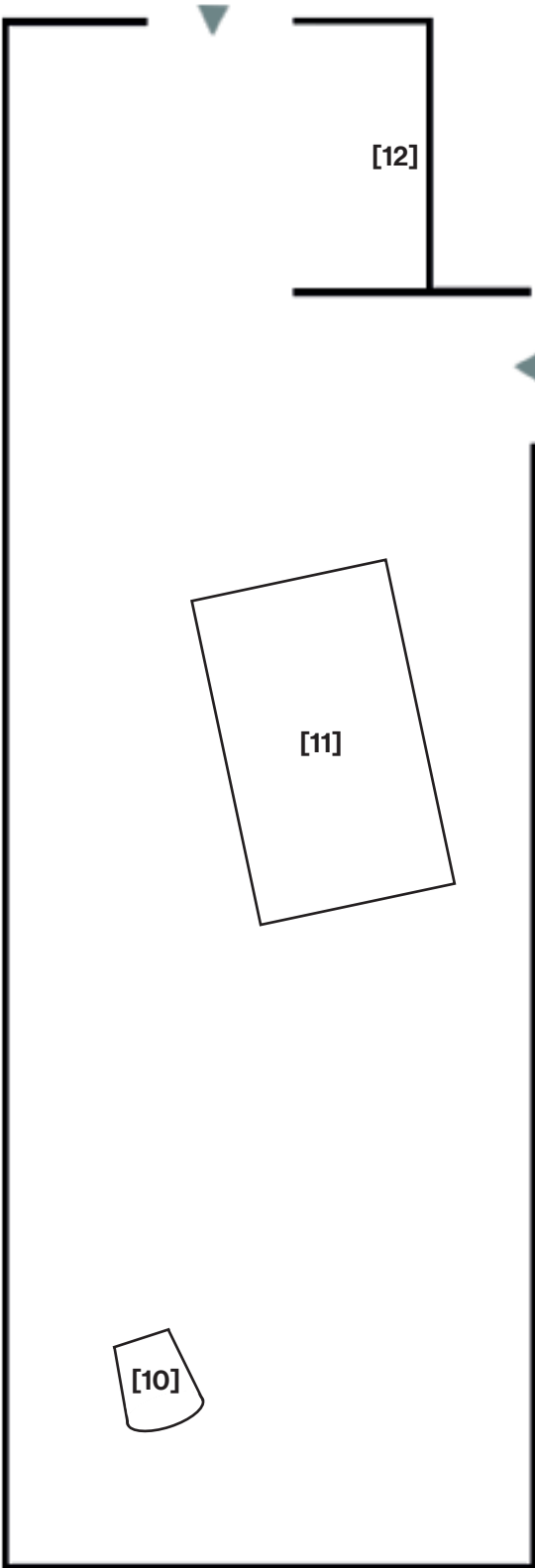
Renaud Gadoury

Translated by Oana Avasilichioaei

# FLOOR PLAN



# FLOOR PLAN



[13] located near the front desk

[1]

**Jeremy Shaw, *Untitled (Accumulated resonance of devotion)*, 2024**

**Electronic candles, glass, metal, audio**

**Courtesy of Bradley Ertaskian**

*Untitled (accumulated resonance of devotion)* is composed of 156 electric candles arranged on a steel stand, which rises like an altar beneath the large windows in the Main Hall. The flames flicker intermittently at first, seemingly chaotic, then become organized into an oscillating, hypnotic pattern that gets exponentially faster and dizzying. Time seems to dilate with this synthetic flickering, inviting us to lose ourselves. Every flame acts as a silent oration absorbing our prayers, dreams, and silences.

[2]

**Simon Petepiece, *Christ Bridge*, 2026**  
**Drywall, primer, joint compound**

Carved out of a drywall panel, the structure models an archway whose pillars are shaped like Christlike figures with arms outstretched, while a draped silhouette makes its way along the arches. By multiplying the figure of Christ, which is supposed to embody the uniqueness of the divine, the work turns the body into an architectural medium and reveals the edifice as a congregation in which the individual blurs into the group, the singular into the many, and stone into flesh.

**Simon Petepiece, *Trinity (North Walk)*, 2026  
Drywall, steel studs, screws**

Dividing the space in two, the installation *Trinity (North Walk)* marks a threshold to be crossed: from a narrow, intimate space, we move into a much vaster area. The work draws inspiration from the medieval cloister, which orchestrates the passage between worldly life and spaces dedicated to prayer and devotion. Its architectural vocabulary blends Gothic, Art Nouveau, and Modernism. Depending on which side we stand, the structure presents either a bare facade or a bench from which to contemplate Jeremy Shaw's work facing it.

The installation is made with the most ordinary materials: the usually hidden drywall and steel studs are here shown unfinished. This austere approach of rejecting the superfluous and retaining only the essential finds resonance with Christian theology, which views asceticism as a way of reaching the divine. The sacred comes to the surface in the bare framework of the structure. Inside, the space condenses, light fades into shadow, the walls are reversed and reveal the backside of the drywall panels. It reminds one of being under the roof of a cathedral, between the rafters, or inside the thickness of its walls.

**James Webb, *There is a light that never goes out*  
(Farsi version), 2010 – ongoing**

**Neon**

**Courtesy of Galerie Imane Farès and blank projects**

*There is a light that never goes out* is an ongoing series of neon text works in which the title of the 1986 song by The Smiths is translated into selected languages. Materialized in neon, the evocative lyric is transformed from its musical reference into a visual sign that conjures open-ended, cultural, and site-specific associations. The original version of the artwork was produced in Arabic for the facade of Dar Khalid at the Darat al Funun in Amman, Jordan, in 2010. Subsequent versions have included isiXhosa, isiZulu, Mandarin, Mixe, Sesotho, and Tupi-Guarani translations.

The use of Farsi in this specific iteration echoes the presentation of *Al Madat* in the adjacent gallery, creating a resonance between the two works through their shared connection to the Persian language in the writings of Sultan Bahu. Lending its title to the exhibition, the work holds light as a polysemic figure – at once material and symbolic, profane and votive, fleeting and enduring.

*Typography by Golnaz Baharnouri*

**Omar Castillo Alfaro, *Naab - nikte'o'ob Mirror*, 2026  
Rebar, UV print on stainless steel mirror plate, paraffin**

A poem written in Mayan by Castillo Alfaro is engraved into the surface of a steel mirror. Verses populated by flowers, myths, and hair are interwoven with fragments from "Como la flor," a song by the American singer Selena about love and loss, which has become a true Latin American anthem. As the poem progresses, the feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl and the mythic bird quetzal appear, while nearby, the black jaguar lies in wait.

English translation of the poem:

*I make flowers to decorate my soul in the middle  
of the sea.  
The blue of the jade gives no more tides that can  
sweep away  
the petals made by my fingers to be able to  
shape the warm air of my hair..*

*In the meantime, the sand knew other strokes,  
strokes far from Quetzal feathers and creations  
of Itzamná.  
From that moment the red of the flames did not  
cease to die out  
And the violet of the shells could not return to  
gray.  
Yet the flower flies over the black sea of the  
jaguar.*

*- "Ah ah ah ah ay how it hurts me," we sing  
in unison,  
"Like the flower, with so much love, you  
gave me," we continue to sing while I  
decorate my  
headdress. -*

*The flames grew, the sand was transformed and  
the red dust of Kukulcan lost its toxicity.  
Sea and sand are synonymous with oblivion.  
Flowers and underworld are synonyms of  
creation.  
We were left with only ruins and flames.  
The traces of flowers painted on the walls will  
possibly wither.*

*The hair will be the tide of flowers,  
the wax will strengthen the metal ruins and the  
Quetzal feathers...  
Those will no longer exist.*

*-I am leaving today, I know how to lose," we  
sing.-*

Quetzalcoat's teeth tangle my hair,  
His feathers irritate my skin and wither my  
headdress.  
My waves of hair are furious and want to drown  
the flowers,  
Possibly the jaguar will drown, Possibly I will  
drown with him.  
Venus stopped shining and the white flowers  
lose their color on the walls.  
The sand perceived everything, it was those  
traces far from the plumage of the Quetzal.

*- "But ah ah ah ay how it hurts me," I cry and  
I can't finish decorating my headdress. -*

*I don't know if I can make my headdress again  
and take up again the swell of my hair.  
And it hurts me because the flowers wither.  
Little by little my fingers lose their voice and  
follow the pain.*

*Ah naab blows my hair and asks us to be saved.  
His air makes it possible for me to recover the  
flame and decorate the metal threads.*

*- And we will continue to sing "Like the  
flower, with so much love, you gave me, it  
withered [...] ah ah ah ay how it hurts me." -*

*Here there is no more sea, here we must  
descend to ascend to another world, possibly to  
another body.  
And my hair no longer exists.*

Omar Castillo Alfaro

Translated into Yucatec Maya from Spanish  
by Francisco Chimal Chan

**Omar Castillo Alfaro, *Naab*, 2022-2026**  
**Rebar, paraffin**

Slender, pendulous paraffin flowers hang in the space and compose the installation *Naab*, named after the Mayan word for the white waterlily. This aquatic flower, a symbol of the passage between land and water, was adopted as a signature by a school of painters during the Late Classic Period (600 to 900 CE) of the Maya civilization. Made by hand, the installation echoes the flower candles that have watched over the departed since the colonial era.

The stalactite motif also evokes the cenotes, limestone sinkholes filled with water, found in the Yucatán Peninsula, in which the *naab* thrive and that the Maya considered as a passage to the underworld *Xibalba*. The work revives an ancient memory, which Castillo Alfaro inscribes into a recollective archeology oriented toward past and future alike.

[7]

**Jesús Hilario-Reyes, *Nowadays Fragment*, 2025  
Screen-printed floor vinyl**

First installed for a night on the dancefloor of the prominent queer nightclub Nowadays in Brooklyn, the piece acts as a physical membrane that literally archives the kinetic energy of a party. Removed after a night of dancing, the vinyl floor bears various marks and smudges on its surface, transforming collective movement into a visible archive of communal intensity. Displayed as a sculptural form in the centre of Fonderie Darling's Main Hall, it acts as both a literal and an ontological slippage of the accumulated information representing this shared experience.

**Jesús Hilario-Reyes, *So Many Ribbons Like A Choir*,  
2026**

**Steel, salvaged wrought iron gate**

The lines formed by steel rods intersect, accumulate, and become entangled in a membrane evoking a Gothic window with its lacework of stone through which light passes.

**Jesús Hilario-Reyes, *Salt Tolerance*, 2026**  
**Sound system, horn, mangrove roots, wood**

The sculpture *Salt Tolerance* unfolds in two parts.

At one end of the space stands a sound system playing a techno composition created from the song of the osprey, a bird whose whistling calls announce hurricanes, and from geophonic data of the seismic vibrations generated by a rave. Hilario-Reyes seizes upon the imprint of these tremors, this “seismic shadow zone” located below the threshold of hearing, in order to modulate the bird’s calls and bring the invisible forces around us into a perceptible dimension. The call gradually morphs into an ethereal timbre of transcendental resonance.

At the opposite end, stands a hybrid tangle of metal trumpets and mangrove roots. For the poet and philosopher Édouard Glissant, the mangrove represented a porous and rhizomatic identity, formed by coming into contact with others. In contrast to a unique, vertical root that smothers whatever is nearby, mangrove roots grow in all directions, coexisting with their environment.

**Camille Charbonneau, *Unmoored*, 2025**  
**Cotton pulp, wire mesh, beeswax, resin, polyamide fiber, acetate, acrylic**

*Unmoored* is composed of thousands of handmade bees dispersed throughout the gallery. According to Mormon culture, from which Charbonneau stepped away to freely live their queerness, the bee embodies unity in faith. Here, it takes on a more ambivalent meaning, evoking both kinship with a community and the loss of meaning that occurs when one breaks away from it. Repeated in the thousands and dissociated from worship, the bees acquire a strangeness created by distancing the familiar.

At the back of the space, a sculpture reproduces a fragment of a baptismal font, a central element of Mormon temples symbolizing community belonging. Covered in bees, the bull supporting it could evoke a farm animal plagued by flies. Separated from their initial context, the bees and the bull become open-ended, independent signs whose meanings fluctuate depending on who is looking.

**James Webb, *Al Madat*, 2014**

**Karachi carpets, tripods, speakers, audio**

**16:32 min**

**Courtesy of the Rennie Collection**

A recording of a Sufi *dhikr* undertaken by patients at the Sultan Bahu Rehab Centre in Westridge, Mitchell's Plain. *Dhikr* (literally, "remembrance") is a traditional Islamic recitation, where sacred names are chanted with special breathing techniques, often creating trance-like effects. This practice was brought to the Cape in South Africa with the enslaved Malay peoples, and is now used by the rehabilitation centre as an augmentation to the curative process. "Al Madat," the specific *dhikr* used for this installation, translates as "help," and is here used to implore the Prophet for assistance.

Started by Shafiek Davids in 2005, the Sultan Bahu Centre is a non-profit organization in the field of substance abuse – mainly heroin and methamphetamine – in both Mitchell's Plain and Bonteheuwel. The centre operates as a drug treatment facility in lower socio-economic communities, offering a six-week, intensive day program with continual care thereafter. Sultan Bahu (1628–1691) was an Islamic scholar, poet, Sufi saint, and founder of the Sawari Qadiri Sufi Order.

Four Karachi rugs are laid out across the floor; visitors are invited to remove their shoes before standing or sitting on the carpets.

*The installation features the recorded voices of Anwar Bhoyd, Hassiem Nusterdien, Luqmaan Swartz, Mahier Bashier, Marawaan Arabie, Moegammat Shafiek Davids, Moegammat Rossier, Shuaib Hoosain, Shukri Arendse, and Suleiman Samuels. The artist expresses special thanks to Sheikh Saeed Ali and Ahmed Akoob for their guidance and support in the creation of this project.*

**PLEASE REMOVE YOUR SHOES BEFORE  
STEPING ONTO THE RUGS**

[12]

**James Webb, *Infinite Yearning Met With A Finite World*, 2018**

**Speaker, audio**

**01:30, looped**

**Courtesy of Galerie Imane Farès and blank projects**

Hanging on the wall, a speaker plays an audio recording of the simultaneous heartbeats of a mother and her unborn child. We are invited to lift the speaker and place it against our chests to feel the sound.

*Recorded with Trina Hines, November 2018.*

*Thanks to Trina Hines, Megan Young, and SPACES, Cleveland.*

[13]

**James Webb, *Untitled*, 2006**

**Morse code unit, lightbulb**

**Courtesy of Galerie Imane Farès and blank projects**

This covert installation consists of an electrical light reconfigured to flash an undisclosed message in Morse code.

## BIOGRAPHIES

### OMAR CASTILLO ALFARO

Omar Castillo Alfaro (born in 1991, Mexico) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice is rooted in the traditional craft skills passed down through his family. He initially studied metallurgical chemistry at the Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México (2014), where he also earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts (2018), before graduating from the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon in 2022. His research has led him to collaborate with ethnographic institutions such as the Musée du Quai Branly (Paris), the Museo de América (Madrid), and the British Museum (London).

### CAMILLE CHARBONNEAU

Camille Charbonneau, born in a Mormon family on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation/Gatineau, moved to Tiohtià:ke/Montréal in 2010 to study fine arts at CÉGEP Marie-Victorin from which they graduated with the Bourse Arts Plastiques. They graduated with distinction from Concordia University's Painting & Drawing BFA program in 2020 and completed their MFA in the same program during 2025 while being awarded the Shirley Reed Graduate Scholarship and the Tom Hopkins Memorial Graduate Award on multiple occasions.

### JESÚS HILARIO-REYES

Jesús Hilario-Reyes, currently based between Brooklyn and New Haven, holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from Yale University. Hilario-Reyes has presented their work at several major venues and events, including BOFFO Performance Festival (Fire Island), Frieze (London), e-flux (New York), Gladstone Gallery (New York), The Kitchen (New York), Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Black Star Film Festival (Philadelphia), Mana Contemporary (Chicago), Real Art Ways (Hartford), Rudimento (Quito), and Parasol Unit (London).

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **SIMON PETEPIECE**

Simon Petepiece (b. 1992, Ottawa, ON) is a self-taught artist living in Montreal. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Galerie Nicolas Robert, Montreal (2026, 2024, 2023), Espace Maurice, Montreal (2023), and group shows at Gallery 12.26 - Dallas (2026), DS Gallery, Paris (2024), Centre d'exposition L'Imagier, Gatineau (2024). His work can be found in the City of Ottawa Art Collection, and he holds a Master's degree in architecture from Carleton University (2018). Simon is represented by Galerie Nicolas Robert.

### **JEREMY SHAW**

Jeremy Shaw (b. 1977, North Vancouver, Canada) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Solo exhibitions have been presented at Centre Pompidou (Paris), MoMA PS1 (New York), Kunstverein Hamburg, Schinkel Pavillon (Berlin), Secession (Vienna), MOCA Toronto, and the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, among others. Shaw has been featured in international surveys such as the 57th Venice Biennale, the 16th Lyon Biennale, Manifesta 11 (Zurich), and the Taipei Biennial. His works are included in numerous public collections around the world.

### **JAMES WEBB**

James Webb has had solo exhibitions at, amongst others, Webb has had solo exhibitions at, amongst others, Slowly slowly and then all at once at Kabuso Art Centre (Norway, 2025), The Moon Will Not Stay Hidden Forever at Liljevalchs Stockholm (Sweden, 2024), blank projects (South Africa, 2020, 2016, 2014, 2010, 2006), Winnipeg Art Gallery (Canada, 2019), Imane Farès Gallery (France, 2019, 2016), the Art Institute of Chicago (USA, 2018), SPACES, Cleveland (USA, 2018), Norrtälje Konsthall (Sweden, 2018, 2016 and 2019), Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (UK, 2016), Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen (Norway, 2015).

## EXHIBITION CREDITS

The exhibition “A Light That Never Goes Out” is presented by the Fonderie Darling from June 18 to August 16 2026.

Curator: Renaud Gadoury  
Technical Director: Kara Skylling  
Assistant Curator: Joss D’Alton  
Technicians: Rían Adamian, Pierre-Luc Brouillette, Mati Contal, Martin Cyr, Michael Eddy, Philippe Garneau, Daniel Gutiérrez Galicia, Gaétan Hamel, Robert Hamel, Carl Marin, Cynthia Roy, Hugo Tremblay, Robert Tita, Romane Viot  
Label Text: Joss D’Alton, Renaud Gadoury  
Text Translation: Oana Avasilichioaei, Marilyn Coleslaw

### The Fonderie Darling Team

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Director of Administration and Operations: Clara Déry  
Director of Development and Public Relations: Jade Boivin  
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