

Press release

For immediate release

CACHES FROM THE LANDSCAPE **CE QUE CACHENT LES MONTAGNES** 风物缓存

The Nomadic Department of the Interior

January 16 – April 12, 2025

Opening reception on Thursday, January 16, from 5 PM, in the presence of the collective, as part of the Winter Season Rentrée of the Belgo Building.

The exhibition is organized by the curatorial team:

Manolis Daris-Bécotte, Adrien Guillet, Clara Lacasse, and Florent To Lay

The exhibition will be accompanied by texts written by:

Zihao Li

** A new limited-edition publication by Centre SKOL dedicated to this exhibition will be launched during the opening reception. **

MONTREAL, MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025 — The Centre des arts actuels SKOL is pleased to present the first-ever solo exhibition by the artistic collective The Nomadic Department of the Interior, titled **CACHES FROM THE LANDSCAPE / 风物缓存 / CE QUE CACHENT LES MONTAGNES**

The exhibition unfolds as a visual travelogue, inviting visitors to uncover hidden stories nestled within the majestic mountains of Guizhou Province, a remote region in southwest China.

Through videos, photographs, and printed textiles, the exhibition explores the deep relationship between the inhabitants of Guizhou and the landscapes surrounding them—particularly the mountains—while, in turn, reflecting on our own intimate connections to the environment.

Amid remnants of buildings or abandoned complexes constructed during the Cold War and the relentless hum of active construction sites erecting ultra-modern structures, Guizhou presents a landscape full of contradictions.

Today, Guizhou's mountains are being reshaped by technological advancements. Ancient rock formations have given way to modern infrastructures, such as the data centers of China's Big Data Valley—the province's new identity. In this era of new technologies, these millennia-old mountains no longer solely preserve the memory of centuries past.

Through the works on display, the exhibition sheds light on the layering of temporalities that defines the Guizhou mountains. It unveils the tensions between nature and industry, past and present, permanence and change. How can we inhabit our environment and live with the temporal entanglements it holds?

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Nomadic Department of the Interior (NDOI) is an art collective exploring the conflicts between land stewardship and the extraction of resources through films, websites, and publications. Their work examines technological systems within geological, ecological, and human history. At the moment four people are part of the collective: Ann Chen, Leon Eckert, Yutong Lin and Yufeng Zhao. NDOI has exhibited at Guiyang University (2021) and Beiqiu Contemporary Art Museum, Nanjing (2024). *Caches from the Landscape* at Centre des arts actuels SKOL, Montréal (2025) is their first institutional solo exhibition.

Ann Chen (b. 1981, New York, USA) is an artist and filmmaker working between Brooklyn, NY, and Taiwan. She explores ecological and geological systems, focusing on lived histories in the landscape. Chen collaborates on projects addressing ecological conservation, indigenous cosmologies, and diasporic experiences. She writes for *The New York Times* and *Logic Magazine* and teaches at The New School, Parsons School of Design.

Leon Eckert (b. 1993, Munich, Germany) is an artist in Shanghai and a Professor of Media Art at NYU Shanghai. His work documents the gradual changes in everyday life due to technological progress. Eckert shares fragments of his practice through the Instagram account @loquepasa.

Yutong Lin (b. 1998, Kunming, China) is a writer and video artist based in Montreal and Yunnan, China. Their work explores forgetfulness and misremembrance in archiving, often tracing family histories and folk legends. Lin's video works have been exhibited in Montreal, New York, and Guiyang. They are currently curating an editorial project on Western botanical expeditions in Southwest China at the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

Yufeng Zhao (b. 1998, Harbin, China) is a media artist and technologist based in Brooklyn, NY. His work examines how digital tools shape our understanding of culture and the environment, focusing on data visualizations, web-based experiences, and hidden patterns within digital archives.

ABOUT THE CURATORIAL TEAM

Manolis Daris-Bécotte (b. Montreal, Canada) is an artist and cultural worker living in Montreal. He is the co-founder, alongside artist Thomas L. Archambault, of the experimental cinema collective Primordial Dismemberment, whose works have been presented in group exhibitions at InterAccess (Toronto) and Centre SKOL (Montreal), as well as in numerous film and media art festivals, including Currents New Media (Santa Fe) and Fantasia International Film Festival (Montreal).

Adrien Guillet (b. 1986, Vitré, France) is a French visual artist and cultural worker living and working in Canada. A graduate of the Geneva University of Art and Design, he structures his work around a reflection on the formation and use of visual signs in the commercial field.

Clara Lacasse (b. 1993, Montréal, Canada) is an independent photographer and visual artist living in Montreal. She is the recipient of the New Generation Photography Award (2022) presented by the National Gallery of Canada and Scotiabank. Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at VU Photo (Quebec) and DRAC (Drummondville), as well as in group exhibitions at the National Gallery (Ottawa), Arsenal (Toronto), and Centre SKOL (Montreal).

Florent To Lay (b. 1991, Aubervilliers, France) has been working in the cultural sector for nearly ten years, first as a project manager and now as an independent curator for the past five years. He was recently appointed as the director of Centre SKOL.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE EXHIBITION TEXT

Zihao Li (b. 1997, Nanchang, China) is a writer in Toronto with a master's in Film and Moving Image Studies from Concordia University. His research focuses on Chinese independent documentaries, particularly their technological developments and engagement with emerging media forms.

OUR PARTNERS

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SPECIAL THANKS

As the Executive and Artistic Director of Centre des arts actuels SKOL, I sincerely and warmly thank **Lucile Constant**, **Youssra Mejd**, and **Léo Rivest**, my dedicated team members, for their invaluable contributions to organizing the exhibition. My heartfelt gratitude also extends to our members, artists, committees, friends, and



volunteers associated with SKOL, as well as the 2024–2025 Board of Directors: **Fanny Latreille-Beaumont** (President), **Félipe Goulet-Letarte** (Vice President), **Laurianne Lalonde** (Treasurer), **Laurence Beaudoin Morin** (General Secretary), **Niki Jessup** (Administrator), and **Johanne Gauthier** (Administrator).

Special thanks to Zihao Li and Yutong Lin for the exhibition text and its Chinese translation, as well as to Sébastien Larivière and Catherine Labonté from the Canadian Centre for Architecture, and Chris Lloyd from VOX Centre de l'image contemporaine, for their technical assistance. Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to the artists of the collective—Ann Chen, Leon Eckert, Yutong Lin, and Yufeng Zhao—for their trust and collaboration throughout this process.

EXHIBITION DETAILS

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 16, 2025, from 5 PM to 9 PM, with the presence of the art collective

Exhibition Dates: January 16 — April 12, 2025

Location: 372 Sainte-Catherine W Street, 3rd floor, #314, Montreal, QC H3B 1A2

Opening Hours: Wednesday to Saturday, from 12 PM to 5 PM

Parallel Activities and Conferences: Artist talk on Saturday, January 18, 2025 from 2 PM to 4 PM. Other dates and activities to be announced soon.

Admission: Free

Accessibility: Wheelchair accessible

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Name: Centre des arts actuels SKOL

Phone: +1 (514) 398-9322

Email: skol@skol.ca

Website: www.skol.ca

Centre des arts
actuels Skol

SKOL

372 Sainte-Catherine W Street
Belgo Building, Space 314
Montréal, QC H3B 1A2

+1.514.398.9322
skol@skol.ca
skol.ca

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