

# EVENT



## **VibraFusionLab: Bridging Practices in Accessibility, Art and Communication**

Curated by David Bobier

IN THE BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

@401 Richmond St. W., 4th floor

Opening Reception Saturday January 13, 2018, 1:00pm – 5:00pm

Exhibition runs January 13 to February 10

Open Monday – Friday, 11:00am – 5:00pm, Saturday 12-5pm

VibraFusionLab (VFL) began in 2014 in London, Ontario, growing out of an artist residency and collaboration between media artist David Bobier and the Inclusive Media and Design Centre at Ryerson University. The vision, to provide access to emerging inclusive or adaptive technology and design to artists of all disciplines and abilities, will be illustrated in the upcoming retrospective: VibraFusionLab: Bridging Practices in Accessibility, Art and Communication. Vtape is proud to host this immersive exhibition, which will feature educational ephemera in the Commons Research Centre, and works by seven artists involved in the residency program: Marla Hlady; Gordon Monahan; Lindsay Fisher; Alison O’Daniel; Ellen Moffat; Lynx Sainte-Marie; and David Bobier. The seven artists in the exhibition self-identify as either abled or disabled and all have been affiliated with VibraFusionLab over the past 3-4 years.

The works specialize in the exploration of “vibrotactility” in technology, investigating it as a creative medium, with a capacity to combine visual, audio and tactile elements into a highly emotional and sensorial art practice. Viewers can expect wearable devices, and new approaches to art-making that champion the senses beyond vision and hearing, to build new methods of communication and language.

An online catalogue has been published at [www.vflvibrations.com](http://www.vflvibrations.com) with essays by Eliza Chandler, Evan Hibbard and David Bobier.



**Marla Hlady** draws, makes sculpture, works with sites and sounds and sometimes makes video. Hlady’s kinetic sculptures and sound pieces often consist of common objects (such as teapots, cocktail mixers, jars) that are expanded and animated to reveal unexpected sonic and poetic properties often using a system-based approach to composition. She’s shown widely in solo and group shows. She has mounted site works in such places as the fjords of Norway, a grain silo as part of the sound festival *Electric Eclectic*, an apartment window in Berlin, a tour bus in Ottawa, the Hudson’s Bay department store display window and an empty shell of a building. She also, at times, collaborates. She currently lectures at the University of Toronto.

**Ellen Moffat** is a media artist who works with sound, image and text. Rooted in the vocabulary of sculpture – space, the body and materiality – her primary media is sound. Her

practice spans independent, collaborative and interdisciplinary projects. Her independent production ranges from multi-channel installations, to electroacoustic instruments, to performance, to community projects. Since 2002, she has worked with fragmented language and field recordings using up to 24-channels of sound. More recently her work employs methods and strategies for live sound generation with physical interfaces, transducers, real-time sound processing and interactivity. Her investigation also includes the visualization of sound as image, transcription and translation.

Her work has been presented throughout Canada and internationally. Selected exhibitions include: *rhubarb, rhubarb, peas and carrots*, Regina (2015); *Playing with Gertrude*, Toronto (2015); *pingtingtootle*, CAFKA (2013); *Place Markers: Mapping Locations and Placing Boundaries*, Halifax (2012); *Marking Space*, Brooklyn (2011); *Seasonal Waves*, Calgary (2011-2012); *Night Trains*, Tel Aviv (2008); *COMP OSE*, Toronto, Chatham, and Saskatoon (2008-09); *ICMC*, Copenhagen (2007); *Sounds Nervouse*, Vancouver (2006); *Future Cities*, Hamilton (2004); *Sprawl*, London, Ontario (2003); *Utopia Station*, Venice Biennale (2003). Collaborative performances include: *(un)quiet d*, Toronto (2015), *Book Chair Table*, Saskatoon (2014), and *Marking Space*, Brooklyn (2011).

Moffat holds a MFA (Sculpture) from the University of Regina, a BFA (Studio) from Concordia University and a BA (Anthropology) from the University of Toronto. Born in Toronto, she is based in Saskatoon. She is a Professional Affiliate of the University of Saskatchewan.

**Lynx Sainte-Marie**, Afro+Goth Poet, is a multidimensional artist, activist & educator of the Jamaican diaspora, with ancestral roots indigenous to Africa and the British Isles.

A disabled/chronically ill, non-binary/genderfluid person, they currently reside in Tkaronto (commonly known as Toronto, Canada) in the Dish With One Spoon Territory. They identify within queer and trans, femme, boi, gender non-conforming, crip and spoonie communities, as well as a survivor of abuse and intergenerational trauma.

A poet across mediums, Lynx utilizes multiple art forms – writing, performance, visual art, storytelling, multimedia art installation, short film and song – to engage audiences around issues of identity, adversity, liberation, resiliency and survival at the intersection.

As a public speaker, Lynx has presented, lectured and served as a keynote speaker at several colleges, universities, conferences and symposiums at the national and international level. As a workshop facilitator and consultant, they have trained a plethora of individuals and organizations on various issues related to marginalized communities including but not

limited to intersectionality, anti-oppression, sexuality, disability and accessibility, gender diversity, anti-Blackness and decolonization.

Lynx's work is informed by their chosen families, afrofuturism, Black feminisms, social justice, disability justice, healing justice movements and collective community love.

**Gordon Monahan's** works for piano, loudspeakers, video, kinetic sculpture, and computer-controlled sound environments span various genres from avant-garde concert music to multi-media installation and sound art. As a composer and sound artist, he juxtaposes the quantitative and qualitative aspects of natural acoustical phenomena with elements of media technology, environment, architecture, popular culture, and live performance.

Monahan began performing in public as a member of various rock bands in Ottawa, Canada (1968-73). Since 1978, he has performed and exhibited at numerous performance spaces, museums, galleries, and festivals, including Hamburger Bahnhof (Berlin), the Venice Biennale, the Secession (Vienna), Haus der Kunst (Munich), MAK Museum (Vienna) The Kitchen (NY), the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), Merkin Hall (NY), and Massey Hall (Toronto). Early in his career, he specialized as a pianist, performing John Cage's Etudes Australes, premiering pieces by James Tenney and Udo Kasemets, and composing extended works for acoustic piano (Piano Mechanics, 1981) and amplified prepared piano (This Piano Thing, 1989). The renowned composer John Cage once said, "At the piano, Gordon Monahan produces sounds we haven't heard before."

**Lindsay Fisher** is a multi-disciplinary artist with various practices in digital media, painting, illustration, textiles, graphic arts and curatorial arts. Her work often questions representation and identity, the construction and fragmentation of gender, feminism and the body, and notions of disability and difference.

She is the founder and director of Project Creative Users, a community arts project that brings artists with disabilities and embodied difference together to creatively explore social, cultural, and individual understandings of disability and accessibility through the process of exploring what it means to be a "user" in the environments we inhabit.

Lindsay holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr University and a Bachelor of Graphic Design from OCAD University. She currently works in Toronto.

**Alison O'Daniel** is a Los Angeles-based visual artist from Miami, Florida. Her work weaves narratives of aural sensitivity and experience between the mediums of film, object-making,

and performance. Through her collaborations with deaf and hearing composers and artists, her work invites sensitivity to loss and abundance of sound and its impact on social situations. O'Daniel has a manifesto. "Sound is primary; but other materials and sculptures play out cinematically in a three-act structure of emotional landscapes — a jarringly non-linear experience of simultaneous time that rises through the body." Using a collaborative, cross-platform process, she makes her strange, fascinating, and lyrical work in interdependent video, sculpture, and sound.

O'Daniel—who is inspired by her own hearing impairment—uses sound as a way to inform the visual grammar of her films and sculpture. Her work evolves through situations of missed information, absence of detail, and blank spaces, which strive to open up new relationships between the body and knowledge: "Knowing is different when you don't have access to information. [It] becomes abstract, psychedelic, profound, broad, exciting – a precipice where the imagination steps in to round out capability."

**David Bobier** is an HOH media artist and the parent of 2 deaf children living in London, Ontario. His creative practice is researching and developing vibrotactile technology as a creative medium and led to his establishment of VibraFusionLab (VFL) in London, Ontario in 2014, a creative multi-media, multi-sensory centre providing inclusive technologies for supporting accessibility in the arts. VibraFusionLab has gained a reputation as a leader in the Deaf and Disability Arts movement in Canada and abroad.

He is Founder and Past Chair of London Ontario Media Arts Association(LOMAA), Secretary of the Board of Media Arts Network Ontario(MANO/RAMO) and Founder and Co-chair of Tangled London which is dedicated to developing opportunities for Deaf artists, artists with disabilities and artists experiencing isolation to engage in artistic practice and cultural enrichment. He is also partnered with artist Leslie Putnam as o'honey collective.

Bobier's work has received funding from Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Ontario Centres of Excellence, Grand NCE(National Centres of Excellence) and British Council Canada.

Bobier has served in advisory roles in developing Deaf and Disability Arts Equity programs for both CCA and the OAC and was an invited participant, more recently, in the CCA – The Arts in a Digital World Summit and a panel presenter at the Global Disability Summit in London, UK. Bobier has twice received Canada Council for the Arts funding to do ongoing research of the Deaf and Disability Arts movement in the United Kingdom and the United States.

***Image credit:*** David Bobier, 2017