

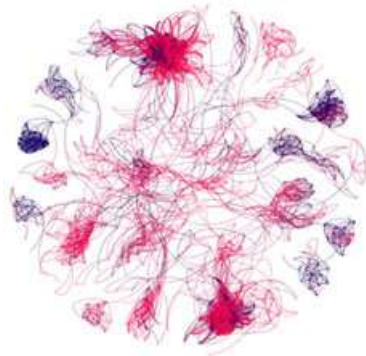
Nonhuman Subjectivities**The Other Selves. On the Phenomenon of the Microbiome**

**François-Joseph Lapointe, Tarsh Bates, Joana Ricou,
Saša Spacal with Mirjan Švagelj and Anil Podgornik**

Opening of the exhibition: 26 February, 2016, 8PM

Artists' Talk: 28 February, 2016, 3PM

Exhibition runs: 27 February – 30 April, 2016 || Fri-Sun 2-6PM and by appointment. Closed Easter weekend (25 – 27 March)



left: François-Joseph Lapointe, *Microbiome selfie*, 2014, center & right: Saša Spacal, Mirjan Švagelj, Anil Podgornik *Mycophone Unison*, Responsive installation: electronics, sound, and biological material, 2013; Petri dish, detail of installation 2013

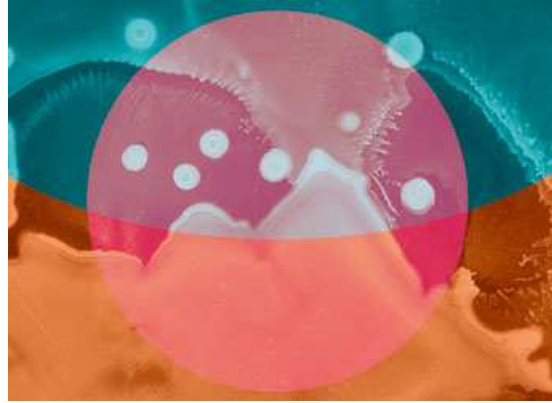
The exhibition, the first of our new exhibition series *Nonhuman Subjectivities*, presents various artistic reflections on the complex microbial environment found on and within the human body. Scientists say that bacterial cells are as numerous as human cells in our body. The phenomenon of the microbiome also brings forth many complex questions about human identity and our relation to our multiple selves.

François-Joseph Lapointe connects his biological research with performance art. His latest works of art deal with the microbiome in our daily lives and physical connections to others. Lapointe sequences his microbiome to produce metagenomic self-portraits, *Microbiome Selfies*, which illustrate the metamorphosis of his bacterial self. The show will present works from his performance *1000 Handshakes*, performed at the opening night of the 2016 transmediale. The final images visualise the microbial change from interacting with someone else's microbiome – by shaking hands, a basic and ancient act of networking.

Saša Spacal together with **Mirjan Švagelj** and **Anil Podgornik** are interested in the contrast between the oneness of the human body as biological entity and the multiplicity of the human microbiome. In their installation *Mycophone_unison* the artist-scientist-designer collective has developed a sound map of intra-action between their microbiomes and the recipient. By leaving a fingerprint the viewer sends a signal to the map that processes it through the central celestial plate to the microbiomes. The polymodal sonification stresses the multiplicities of the makers.



Left: Tarsh Bates working in the science lab for artistic production, School of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, The University of Western Australia, 2015

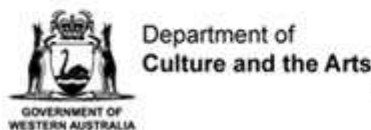


Right: Joana Ricou, Other landscape no. 1, microbiome of the artist and environment, C-print, 89 × 140 cm, 2014

Tarsh Bates artistically explores what it means to be human when we recognise our bodies as composed of over one trillion cells, of which only around half are human. Her new work *Surface dynamics of adhesion* is a flocked wallpaper sampler. Encased in acrylic boxes, living *Candida*, with blood from Bates herself, form patterns from wallpaper popular in the parlours of Victorian Britain. The work offers aesthetic experiences from the contact zones between the two different organisms, and highlights the unconscious relation we have with *Candida*.

Joana Ricou's works blur the fundamental boundary between organism and environment, taking the shape of photographs of microbial paintings or performance. Ricou collected samples of her own microbiome and that of her environment and cultured these in the lab to visualise them. Out of this two portraits emerged: *Other-self Portrait*, a composite of cultures derived from her body, and *Non-self Portrait*, a composite of environmental cultures.

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