



Taryn Simon, *Agreement to develop Park Hyatt St. Kitts under the St. Kitts & Nevis Citizenship by Investment Program. Dubai, United Arab Emirates, July 16, 2012*, from *Paperwork and the Will of Capital*, 2015 © Taryn Simon



Taryn Simon, *Contract to rehabilitate the Lebanese postal system. Beirut, Lebanon, July 22, 1998*, from *Paperwork and the Will of Capital*, 2015 © Taryn Simon

MOMENTA | Biennale de l'image (formerly Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal) presents, in collaboration with the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, *Taryn Simon – Paperwork and the Will of Capital* from September 7 to November 19. The opening is being held on September 7 at 7:30pm, in the presence of the artist.

In signings of political accords, contracts, treaties, and decrees, powerful men flank floral centerpieces curated to convey the importance of the signatories and the institutions they represent. In *Paperwork and the Will of Capital*, Taryn Simon recreated these centerpieces, photographing each against background and foreground colors keyed by the original decor of the historic ceremonies.

Using as a point of departure the historic United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire in 1944, *Paperwork and the Will of Capital* reexamines subsequent accords drafted to influence aspects of governance and economics, from nuclear armament to oil deals and diamond trading. By pairing her own photographs of the reconstructed floral arrangements with texts describing the individual accords, Simon's work examines how the stagecraft of power is created, performed, marketed, and maintained.

Each of the recreated floral arrangements represents an "impossible bouquet"—a concept that emerged in Dutch still-life painting parallel to the country's seventeenth-century economic boom, which ushered the development of modern capitalism. The impossible bouquet, a collection of flowers that could never bloom naturally in the same season and geographic location, is an artificial fantasy made real in Simon's photographs thanks to the globalization of the modern flower industry.

Simon worked with archival records and a botanist to identify all the flowers present at the signing of each accord. She imported more than 4000 floral and plant specimens from Aalsmeer Flower Auction, the world's largest flower auction, to her studio where she remade, as far as possible, the floral arrangements from each signing. After each arrangement was assembled and photographed twelve times afresh, the specimens were dried, pressed, and sewn to archival herbarium paper. A set of these botanical collages were then placed in concrete presses, juxtaposed with archival inkjet prints of their photographic likenesses and text references in a race against time.

Guided by an interest in taxonomic systems, *Paperwork and the Will of Capital* involves extensive research into the power and structure of secrecy and the precarious nature of survival, as well as the reliability and endurance of records: the accords and their far-reaching effects, Simon's photographs, and the preserved botanical specimens. As time advances, so do these artifacts transform, revealing mutable and unstable versions of themselves.

Taryn Simon (b. 1975) is a multidisciplinary artist working in photography, text, sculpture and performance. Guided by an interest in systems of categorization and classification, her practice involves extensive research into the power and structure of secrecy and the precarious nature of survival. Simon's works have been the subject of exhibitions at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen (2016-17); The Albertinum, Dresden (2016); Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague (2016); Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2016); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2015); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2013); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); Tate Modern, London (2011); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2011); and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2007). Permanent collections include Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles. Her work was included in the 56th Venice Biennale (2015). Simon's installation, *An Occupation of Loss* (2016), co-commissioned by the Park Avenue Armory and Artangel, premiered in New York in 2016. Simon is a graduate of Brown University and a Guggenheim Fellow. She lives and works in New York.

MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL

185 Ste-Catherine Street West

Sept. 7 – Nov. 19, 2017

Tuesday: 11am – 6 pm

Wednesday – Friday: 11am – 9pm

Saturday – Sunday: 10am – 6pm

Opening: Thursday September 7,
2017 at 7:30pm

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MOMENTA 2017

For its 15th edition, MOMENTA has joined forces with curator Ami Barak, who has developed an outstanding program on the theme *What Does the Image Stand For?* The 2017 edition of MOMENTA explores the concept of photographic and videographic evidence for the prosecution, whether images are still or in motion, raising the question of images as avatars, and focusing on the fantastical and sublimated aspects of the reality that they convey. The 38 artists in this biennale invite us not to accept their testimony uncritically. The biennale comprises three segments. The first, which corresponds to the central exhibition at our headquarters, focuses on the work of 23 artists and is being presented at two sites: Galerie de l'UQAM and VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine. The second consists of 14 solo exhibitions spread throughout the city. And the third is an exhibition of documents located at Arttexte.

MOMENTA is also a vast program of public activities, talks, projections, and encounters, as well as many opportunities to meet the artists and see their works. The biennale would be incomplete without its catalogue, co-produced with the prestigious publishing house Kerber Verlag, which brings together texts by the curator and five authors who address the question *What Does the Image Stand For?*

Tour

A tour of the exhibition with Taryn Simon and the curator, Ami Barak, takes place on October 8 at 12pm.

Portfolio Discoveries

The public is invited to discover the portfolios of 15 off-program artists on October 14 between 11am and 4pm at the Beverley Webster Rolph Hall of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. This activity offers a different view of the vitality of the local art scene.

So you won't miss anything in the 2017 edition, a detailed program is available for free at all of our exhibition partners and on momentabiennale.com.

Providing access to all biennale activities, MOMENTA Passports are available at La Vitrine box office (online: lavitrine.com).

About MOMENTA

For nearly 30 years, Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal has been offering a stimulating framework within which to study current practices, evolutions, and issues associated with the still and moving image in Western culture, and to take the pulse of trends in contemporary image making. Renamed MOMENTA | Biennale de l'image in 2017, the organization plays a crucial role in the local, national, and international ecology of the visual arts community. Through its curatorial approach, renowned guest curators develop rigorous artistic programming based on relevant themes; the biennale enjoys a well-established reputation in its city and country, as well as abroad. It actively contributes to the recognition of Canadian artists – who comprise more than 50% of the artists in each edition – by presenting their work within an international context, in association with 15 exhibition partners. In 7 editions, the organization has exhibited more than 2,000 works by 400 artists, and welcomed almost 22 million visitors.