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FTA Review: 'Oblivion' an arresting exhibit and examination on consumerism

A YEAR OF COLLECTED TRASH MAKES SARAH VANHEE'S GROUNDBREAKING PRODUCTION

May 27, 2018 Camila Fitzgibbon

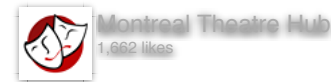


'Oblivion' - devised and performed by Sarah Vanhee © Bernhard Muller

From November 2014 to November 2015, Sarah Vanhee attempted to keep and register all personal garbage that she would have otherwise readily disposed of: plastic and paper bags, wrappers, bottles, lids, cartons – even digital “trash” such as deleted spam emails, image and sound recordings, and a declared “embarrassing” internet search engine history was preserved intact. All life trace, material and intangible (even a detailed daily journal of bodily excrements was maintained), would serve to transform the presupposed nothing into an inestimable something.

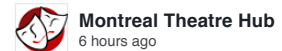
The Belgian artist has here transported 42 boxes of weekly waste (how it all crossed border customs is a spectacular feat in itself) to Montreal's celebrated FTA to present what is a part art installation, part environmental lecture. The outcome of a year's worth of collected

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CASTING CALL for The Arts Undergraduate Theatre Society (McGill University)'s production of "Spring Awakening"!



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refuse, *Oblivion* is a striking scrapbook of one woman's memories that imperatively compels us to reflect on our own ecological footprints.



'Oblivion' © Phile Deprez

In two hours and fifteen minutes without intermission, Vanhee's accumulated inorganic trash is laid out across the space before the audience, piece by piece. What emerges is a fascinating pot-pourri of leavings comprising the likes of yoghurt cups and granola boxes (her daily fuel), bottles of assorted alcoholic beverages (art-making – and, even more so, *selling* – is real hard, friends), and M&M packaging (a yellow, unconsumed unit of product rolls out for a renewed breath of [fresh?] air). The physical proceeding is captioned with the author's multilingual musings on her brainchild, humorous commentary on prescribed social norms, and witticisms on pop culture and consumerism.

In one of the more poignant segments of speech, Vanhee proceeds to acknowledge all of the elements that have contributed towards the realization of the groundbreaking creation. What ensues is a profound deliberation on the sensitive dependency of nature – the idea of how even the smallest of things within a massive, complex system can serve as catalysts with major impact, resulting in the most extraordinary and inconceivable of differences later on. What commences as a gracious gesture towards the project's multitude of stakeholders culminates in a subtle, sophisticated reminder of our own delicate interconnectedness.

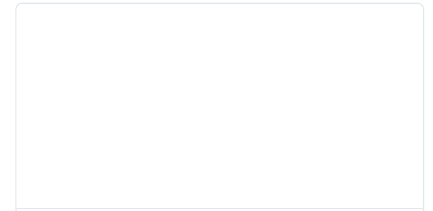
As each box of remnants is sequentially emptied to form an impressive sea of debris, we are overwhelmed by waves of questions targeting our own absentminded consumption habits. The production lacks, perhaps, original propositions of initiatives to rectify negligent behaviours, but it fulfills its calling in rousing the necessary steps of awareness and dialogue.

A spectacular exhibit of chaos and order, *Oblivion* leaves a [conscious] mark at this year's FTA, picking itself up to close on May 28th.

Tweets by @mtltheatrehub



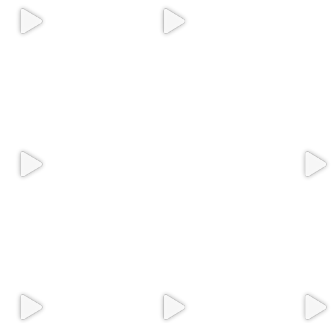
CASTING CALL: Auditions for @AUTSMcGill's 2019 musical production of "Spring Awakening" to be held September 13-19
montrealtheatrehub.com/2018/09/05/aud...



Audition Notice: AUTS presents "Spring Awak...
 Auditions for AUTS's (Arts Undergraduate Theatre Society) 2019 musical production of "Spring

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« SEPTEMBER 2018 »						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

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 06 September 6

THU **Jay Cutler Shelter in Shadows**