

CENTRE FOR SENSORY STUDIES



SENSORY PRACTICES IN DISABILITY ARTS AND EVERYDAY LIFE LECTURE SERIES

Wayfinders Exhibition Roundtable

Raphaëlle de Groot, Carmen Papalia,
and Collin van Uchelen

Friday, 10 April 2026

3:00-4:30 PM EST, [Live online from 4thSpace](#)

Please join us for a lively conversation with three artists from the exhibition *WAYFINDERS – Au gré des sens*, on view at Montréal, arts interculturels (MAI) from April 2 to May 16, 2026. Together, the artists will explore ideas of wayfinding and navigation as they relate to contemporary art, sensory experience, and questions of access, offering insight into how we move through—and make sense of—the world around us.

Originally from Montreal, **Raphaëlle de Groot** now lives between Quebec and the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines in Italy. She is interested in aspects of human experience that are difficult to represent, such as sensations, the feeling of belonging to the world, and various states of attention, presence, and engagement. Through performative gestures and participatory processes, her practice produces objects, images, and exchanges that settle and take shape in a variety of forms, materials, and media. A graduate of the University of Quebec at Montreal with a Master of Fine Arts (2007), she has been presenting her work on the Canadian and international scene for over 25 years in numerous events, including the Venice Biennale (2013), Nuit Blanche in Paris (2019), and most recently at Busan MoCA in South Korea (*Seeing with Ten Fingers*, 2025). She is the recipient of the Sobey Art Award in 2012.

Carmen Papalia is a nonvisual social practice artist whose performances, public interventions, and curatorial projects explain aspects of disability culture, such as interdependence, de-medicalization, and creative accessibility. His practice enlivens his 2015 Open Access manifesto—a set of guidelines that undermines dominant institutional frameworks by approaching accessibility as a “temporary, collectively held space.” Often emphasizing the possibilities of living on one’s own terms, his work offers a remedy for the complications of cultural ableism. Papalia’s performances, videos, installations, and curatorial projects have been presented across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, Korea, and Japan. He is a recipient of the 2020 Sobey Art Award. His current work includes *Up in the Clouds, Down in the Valley*, a feature-length documentary about creative accessibility and disability culture that he is co-writing with Vancouver filmmaker Carmen Pollard. The film follows Papalia’s activities between 2022 and 2025 and is set to premiere in fall 2026.

Collin van Uchelen, PhD, is a community psychologist, conceptual artist, and pyrotechnician based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. His artistic practice explores techniques for translating the light of pyrotechnic art into non-visual forms using tactile representations and audio description. Currently, he is designing a multi-sensory pyro-musical display which uses fireworks to depict his own experience of sight loss from a progressive blinding eye disease.