

# Re-Politiser Borduas

Oli Sorenson

5-15 October 2017

**Mainline Gallery**  
3905, Saint-Laurent boul.  
Montreal, H2W 1X9  
Wednesdays - Sundays, 12-8pm

**Vernissage:**  
Saturday 7 October, 5-8pm  
\*Performance: 6pm

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Deliberately balancing his sense of irony with a flair for controversy, Oli Sorenson will deliver his latest performance entitled *Re-Politiser Borduas* at 6 pm on Saturday October 7, at Mainline Gallery. During his vernissage, the artist will cut through several reproductions of Paul-Émile Borduas' paintings, then exhibit these for ten days in the busiest section of St-Laurent Boulevard. Sorenson will thus re-submit an essential body of Quebecois art works to large audiences, to accentuate its democratic appeal as well as to exalt its political dimension.

Sorenson proposes an entirely self-funded exhibition, that is freed from the commercial constraints of private galleries, the acquisitions protocols of corporate collections, and the extended deliberations of artist-run centers that too often defuse the political charge of works of art. Through this maneuver, Sorenson subtly reminds us how writing the Refus Global cost dearly to Borduas, who lost his position as professor, and his health, before benefiting from the social transformations generated by his manifesto. When damaging copies of Borduas' works, Sorenson aspires to reinvest an aesthetic of protest into the originals, transmit a more shocking visual experience to the viewer, and re-capture the initial reaction that these paintings provoked in the 1950s.

Nonetheless, Sorenson resolutely pursues a contemporary practice, when appropriating the creative gestures of other artists to question their current markers of identity. Here he created then lacerated copies of paintings without examining the material qualities of the originals in the museums that shelter them, but instead relied exclusively on jpeg found on the Internet. Through this combination of iconoclastic acts, Sorenson outlines the ubiquity of digital networks in his own cultural world, even when producing strictly tangible works. He again emphasizes electronic means by adding neon tubes to frame his paintings with a halo signaling the light sources of computer screens. On the other hand, these halos denote the archetypal iconography of Catholic icons, whose partial destruction, during the performance of the artist, could only evoke a feeling of sacrilege.

For more information (videos, images, etc.), please visit: [olisorenson.com/borduas](http://olisorenson.com/borduas) or contact Oli Sorenson directly: [oli@olisorenson.com](mailto:oli@olisorenson.com) - 514 589-2001