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It's generally through a series of small steps that Myriam Jacob-Allard envisions the mechanics of a story. Bit by bit, people, things and gestures take shape to form the outlines of counternarratives reflecting that which was said and that which remains to be seen, sketching out funny and sad family stories through fragments that are copied, isolated, repeated or superimposed—basically cut-and-paste.

But about those outlines: the blue and black that lengthen and confine the smaller bits, sometimes arranged onto a fictional grid, sometimes organized into scenarios. These scenarios can be seen as directions to follow “in the case of a film”, like the footnotes punctuating *The North China Lover* by Marguerite Duras¹, who decided to re-write her novel after seeing the film adaptation by Jean-Jacques Annaud, which she saw as overly estheticizing and entirely unlike what she had experienced and felt. For Marguerite and Myriam, the remake of a remake is just as much the symptom of an obsessive perfectionism as it is an admission of failure: the impossibility of recounting what happened fully and truly, and the constant need to dive back into words. It must also be said that Duras—and perhaps Jacob-Allard as well—is a liar: she dreams her plots up, often re-writing events and contradicting herself, but that is what makes her writing so interesting.

The “in the case of a film” notes of Myriam Jacob-Allard are reconstructions of excerpts gathered from vampire movies and embodied by the women who make up the artist's family. Mother, sister, niece—each protagonist chosen from this imposed community is a threat to the narrative and symbolic structure: the nuclear, patriarchal western family with its obsession with legacy, its deadly desire for eternity. In Myriam's films, there are no fathers—no men at all. No predators or prey. Immortality becomes a question of transmission, not contamination, a collective project on a black background.

And then there's the blue: a vain attempt to organize the drip lines of the collected memories of a middle-class family from Abitibi-Témiscamingue². A band-aid job with plenty of facsimiles, an inventory of tchotchkes (some absurd, some gloomy), an exercise in fill-in-the-blanks. These acts of mimicking, of cutting out and recomposing are inevitably awkward, but they reflect the awareness that it's impossible to bring back what is gone, as well as the conviction that it's still worth trying.

Annie Ernaux has said that the important thing in her writing is to “descend into the depths of reality, to achieve that realness that that is so hard to achieve, to go back in time, back to black.” Beyond the scopic drive triggered by Myriam's domestic display of animated sculptures, her physical representations are also based in a movement, a back-and-forth between what has been and what remains.

Pour toujours et toujours doesn't mean much in the language I share with Myriam. It's a clumsy translation, or perhaps a dilemma: to live or let die.

Ugo Ballara
[Translated from the French
by Ellen Warkentin]

1 · *L'Amant de la Chine du Nord*, Paris, éd. Gallimard, 1991 (translated by Leigh Hafrey, published in English by New Press in 2008)

2 · Rural region in northwest Quebec, economically dependent on logging, mining and agriculture.

Myriam Jacob-Allard is an interdisciplinary artist and filmmaker who works primarily with video, performance, craft and installation. Her practice focuses on popular culture and drawing on collected stories as well as on songs and family myths, her work reflects on matrilineal transmission, memory and forgetfulness. Her work has been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions, as well as in international festivals. Screenings of her work include: Ann Arbor Film Festival, IFF Rotterdam, Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris (Jury Prize), Dok Leipzig, Uppsala SFF, IFF Message to Man (Centaur Prize for Best Experimental Film), Tallinn Photomonth, and recent exhibitions include: National Museum of Fine Arts of Quebec, Glassbox-Nord in Paris, Dazibao in Montreal, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Mains d'oeuvres in Paris, La Biennale at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. She is currently in residence at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien as part of a grant from the Studio du Québec in Berlin.

Les immortelles

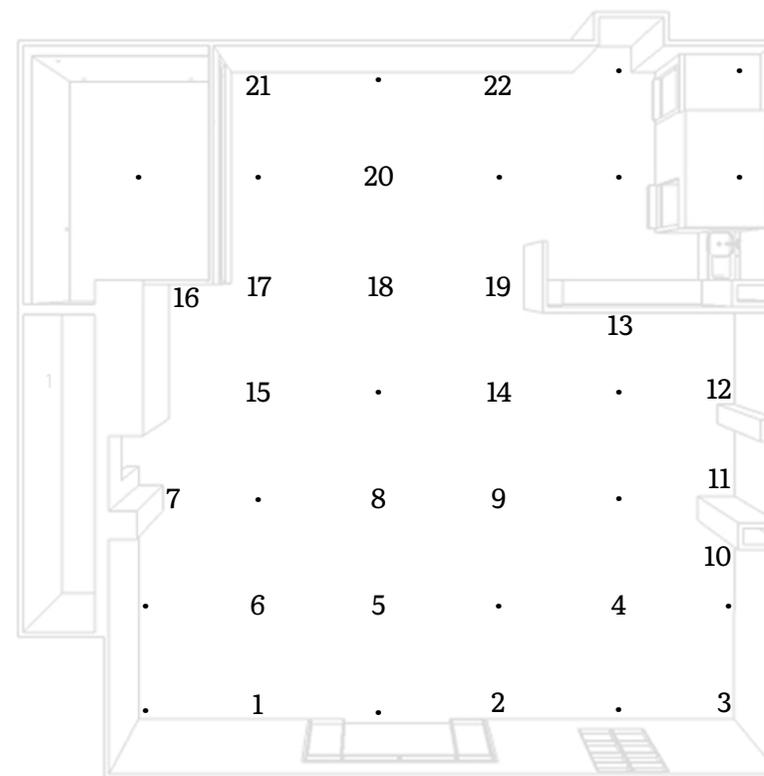
lip sync: Alice Larouche · Émilie Jacob-Allard · Myriam Jacob-Allard · Claire Jacob. **sound and image editor:** Myriam Jacob- Allard. **editor adviser:** Michel Giroux. **image:** Simon Plouffe · Myriam Jacob-Allard. **visuals effects:** Myriam Jacob- Allard · Simon Beaupré · Charles Marchand · Geoffroy Lauzon. **animation:** Myriam Jacob-Allard. **sound mixer:** Bruno Bélanger. **colorist:** Sylvain Cossette. **subtitles & translation:** T&S Coop. **Technical collaborator for the sculptures:** Orlando Helfer Rabaça

For their support in this project, the artist would like to thanks: Alice Gervais, Claire Jacob, Émilie Jacob-Allard, Alice Larouche, Simon Plouffe, Denis Allard, Hubert Larouche, Nicholas Larouche, Michel Giroux, Antonia Hernández, Jean-Philippe Thibault, Anne Golden, Monique Moumblow, Joël Morin-Ben Abdallah, Geoffroy Lauzon, China Wood, Bob Wood, France Choinière, Emma Roufs, Peter Fleming, Paul Griffiths, Sebastiaan Verhees, Louison Gallego, Johanna Perez, Marion Lisch, Ugo Ballara et toute l'équipe de Glassbox, the cinéma Utopia, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, the Conseil des arts du Canada, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, PRIM.

Glassbox-Sud is a not-for-profit association which aims to support emerging creation by all available means. It is supported by the Drac Occitanie and the city of Montpellier, and is associated with the Air de Midi network.

Glassbox-Sud thanks Le Moco and l'Atelier des Cristalliers.

pour toujours et toujours
Myriam Jacob-Allard
13.06 - 28.06



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|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 1 · the finger | 10 · the ipad, Alice,
Claire and Emilie | 18 · the tablet, Myriam |
| 2 · Alice | 11 · the pillow | 19 · the frog |
| 3 · the book | 12 · Alice and the shoes | 20 · the television |
| 4 · the iron | 13 · the immortals | 21 · the white boots |
| 5 · the brown boots | 14 · the television | 22 · Claire |
| 6 · the tv, the remote
control | 15 · the broom | |
| 7 · Alice and the phone | 16 · the black shoes | |
| 8 · the white shoes | 17 · the remote control | |
| 9 · the yellow shoes | | |