

Lise Vézina and I were paired as twins for Jumelage, (2010-2013) a collaborative project between Open Studio members (Toronto) and Engramme members (Québec City). The project involved twelve artists, six from each centre and the creation of six collaborative projects. It took place over a 2 year span and included two residencies, two exhibitions, one in each city and a bilingual catalogue.

The following text is my version of our collaboration:

Mirrors and curiosities began our conversation and through our intriguing and enthusiastic exchanges we discovered we had a mutual interest in collections of textiles, architecture, text, old and new photographs, and curios. At one point we laughed when we discovered that Lise had a collection of keys while I had a collection of keyholes or that sometimes her photographs could have been mine. We also found we had a mutual love of the intaglio plates used to create paper editions and multiples.

With these overlapping and sometimes eclectic interests we decided to explore the metal plate as both sculpture and print matrix. Using the intaglio process, the zinc, metal and stainless steel plates were acid etched with impressions of intricate bits of lace, floor plans, architectural structures, text, photographs, keys and traces of the body. The plates were rusted or highly polished like mirrors and stacked to create sculptural assemblages. Through the material and pattern uncanny relationships were made.

A second project that Lise and I created was *Compact* (Stewart) and *Secrets* (Vezina). This stemmed from a collection of small stainless steel oval plates. We each took twelve plates and agreed to interpret them in our own way within the context of our Jumelage projects. No more discussion between us just the surprise when we eventually showed what we had created.

For me the plates became a haptic experience that reminded me of a powder compact my father had given to my mother. It was silver with a classic motif etched on the top. I decided the oval plates would be hinged, patterned on the exterior and then two images would be etched on each interior face. They would be different but in some way a reflection of the other. Lise created six handmade boxes covered in print images made from the larger etched plates. Each box held two plates and each plate etched with either a pair of eyes or a lace pattern. Further, she created six small books containing secret words and images.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to work and to build a long lasting relationship with Lise Vézina. She is an extraordinary artist who I will continue to learn from for many years to come.

Below is Lise's version of our collaboration.

LISE VÉZINA

Ressemblance et dissemblance, miroir et complémentarité constituent l'essentiel des conversations à l'origine de l'ensemble des œuvres mises en commun pour ce projet de Jumelage entre Penelope Stewart and Lise Vézina. Les ressemblances portent tout particulièrement sur l'intérêt que nous portons aux collections de textiles, dentelles, extraits de texte, photographies anciennes et récentes ainsi que pour les fragments architecturaux. Regarder l'autre dans un effet miroir, se reconnaître dans nos complémentarités, extraire l'essentiel de nos préoccupations artistiques nous a mené à la réalisation de matrices en eau-forte à partir d'impression de dentelles, textes, photographies et d'éléments architecturaux. Ces matrices de zinc, de métal et d'acier inoxydable sont devenues autant des éléments sculpturaux que des impressions sur papier.

La matérialité particulière des matrices de métal montrant des traces de rouille, des étrangetés causés par l'instabilité du matériau contraste avec la délicatesse des images de référence. Nous avons aussi choisi de créer une série de matrices ovales en acier inoxydable dont le fini lustré, tel un miroir vient exacerber la genèse de ce projet de création. Dans la réalisation de cette série de matrices en acier inoxydable la notion d'intimité et de réciprocité m'a amené à créer six boîtiers, tels des intérieurs, ainsi que six livres. Chaque livre tentant d'être le reflet de la personne que je regarde au fond du boîtier et en même temps signifie l'absence de tout repère face à cette altérité.

Le merveilleux de cette rencontre s'est produit autant au moment des premières conversations qu'au métissage de nos œuvres respectives lors de la présentation. Les différences s'estompent en s'enrichissant de la sensibilité créatrice des deux artistes.

[www.lvezina.ca](http://www.lvezina.ca)