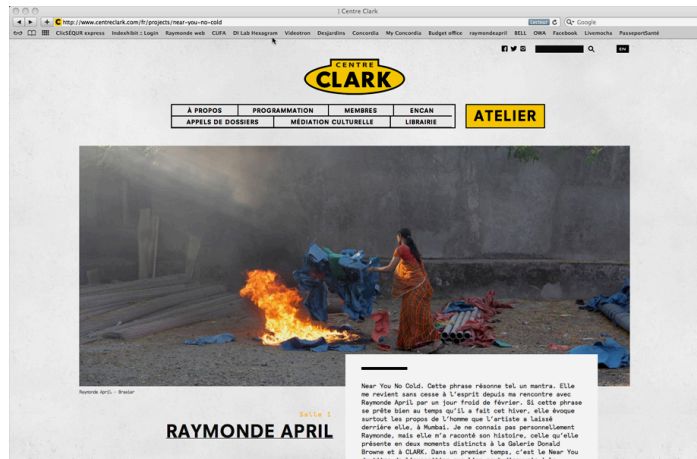


Tourigny, Manon; «Raymonde April: Near You No Cold».— Montreal, Centre Clark, March 2015. —Exhibition text.



Near You No Cold. The phrase resonates like a mantra. It comes back to mind constantly since I met with Raymonde April on a cold day in February. If this phrase seems particularly fitting for this frigid winter, it's especially apt for the story of the man she left behind in Mumbai. I don't know Raymonde personally, but she told me her story, the one she presents in two distinct parts at Galerie Donald Browne and at CLARK.

Beginning at Galerie Donald Browne, one discovers the *Near You* of the exhibition title, and the apartment she shared with the man who hosted her during her residency in Mumbai. Here, the intimate nature of her trip is on view; while at CLARK, we see the reality of the artist's studio, hence the *No Cold* of the title. These two separate spaces mark the distinction between private and public, specifically between domestic life and artistic life. April retraces her path between the two, what she saw and what she experienced, and the fragments she has chosen to reveal.

The studio, a favourite subject of the artist since the beginning of her practice, is at the heart of her presentation at CLARK, and should be considered as one of the two anchor points of her time in India. Her studio experience in Mazgaon illustrates Indian culture and way of life as observed by the artist during her stay there. Among other things, April exhibits two photographic series printed on Tyvek®, a strong, resistant material often found on construction sites. Using this material allows her to hang dozens of images in juxtaposing groups. Presented this way, viewers have two options: they may simply choose to look at the first image, or they can manipulate each series to activate the scenes captured by the artist. It's a game that must be played in order to

rebuild the sequence of images of a woman burning plastic in April's studio courtyard, or the temple built near the Mazgaon highway. The artist also presents videos that allow viewers to witness the reigning ambience of India, namely the constant noise of honking horns, heavy construction, human voices, cackling crows, spice grinding machines, etc.

True to her work, Raymonde April allows viewers to slide into her universe, to follow her movements in a city that is the antipodes of Montréal, and to share a very particular moment in her journey as an artist and as a woman.