

FRANCIS O'SHAUGHNESSY

Artistic approach

Since 2002, he did over 120 performances in 22 countries in Europe, Asia, North and South America. His research focuses on the *performative haiku*, an artistic process that demands that love becomes again an extension of one's self. He has gained both maturity and notoriety, which allow him to hold conferences, guide college and university level artists and lead theoretical-practical workshops on performance art in Quebec and around the world. Since 2007, he has been the artistic director of 20 major events, including *Art Nomade, rencontre internationale d'art performance au Saguenay*. His writings were published in art magazines, such as *Inter, art actuel, Zone occupée* (Quebec), *Ligeia* (France), *Performatus* (Brazil). He is currently a PhD student in Art Studies and Practices at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Since 2010, the focus of my research has been on the love letter (the discourses about the indescribable). I chose to perform living visual poetry: an artistic ceremony expressing the creation of a poem as an event. I work within the haiku philosophy in order to lighten the performative love letter in its meaning, its structure and its logic. This version of the performative love letter is condensed to one style, which I call the performative haiku. It is based on the transposition of a short poem in the present and it highlights poetic images echoing internal feelings. It is an act of faith of love: an illusion that awakens the imaginary world around the discourse of love. It is not a representation or an illustration of the state of love, but the construction of images inspired by love¹. In today's artistic landscape, my love letters are separated from their literary genre (epistolary communications) to become the completely corporal expression of a haiku. This shift from literature to live art allows a completely new "reading" of the love letter, which becomes a visual poem.

¹ My research is not on relationships (man/woman attraction), but on self-discovery. For me, love is lived internally and alone; it is the meeting and uncovering of one's self.