



TIME AFTER TIME IS THE TITLE OF CANADIAN ARTIST VANESSA BROWN'S FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION IN FRANCE. BASED IN LUXEMBOURG, BROWN EXPLORES IN THIS PROJECT THE PERSISTENCE OF RECURRING GESTURES AND MOTIFS, AS WELL AS WHAT MIGHT EXIST "AFTER TIME," FROM A MORE METAPHYSICAL PERSPECTIVE.

THE EXHIBITION'S TITLE, BORROWED FROM CYNDI LAUPER'S MELANCHOLIC 1983 POP BALLAD, EVOKES A PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION ON THE NATURE OF TIME—NOT ONLY AS A LINEAR SEQUENCE OR PROCESS OF BECOMING, BUT ALSO AS SIMULTANEITY, EVANESCENCE, OR TRANSITION.

THE SONG'S LYRICS ARE INFUSED WITH THEMES OF CARE, PROTECTION, AND SISTERHOOD, WHICH ARE ALSO PRESENT IN THIS PROJECT. BROWN'S WORK COMBINES CRAFT TECHNIQUES WITH INSTALLATIONS THAT ARE BOTH DREAMLIKE AND GROUNDED IN MATERIALITY, OSCILLATING BETWEEN FRAGILITY AND PRESENCE.

HER PRACTICE NAVIGATES MULTIPLE TEMPORALITIES, BALANCING THE URGENCIES OF THE PRESENT WITH A POETIC ATTENTION TO TRACES FROM THE PAST. RECURRING SYMBOLS FREQUENTLY APPEAR IN HER WORK—A HAND, A MOTH, SEWING KNOTS, AN ARMOR-DRESS, KEYS—SUSPENDED BETWEEN DREAM AND REALITY. MANY OF THE FORMS FEATURED IN THE EXHIBITION DRAW SIGNIFICANT INSPIRATION FROM THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF TROYES: ITS CONNECTION TO HOSIERY, CARE, AND THE PRESERVATION OF HERITAGE STILL VISIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SPACE.

CONCEIVED ENTIRELY FOR THE ART CENTER, THE EXHIBITION TIME AFTER TIME OCCUPIES ALL FIVE GALLERIES OF THE VENUE. IT EXTENDS WITH VAPEURS, AN INSTALLATION CREATED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE APOTHECAIRERIE OF TROYES, A PARTNER IN THE PROJECT AND A RICH SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR THE ARTIST.



Portrait de Vanessa Brown
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"The past lives on in the present."

Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Women, Magic, and Politics*, 1982
– Translated from English (United States) by Morbic, ed.

"The wheel turns and turns and turns: it never stops and stands still."

Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*, 1931

Upon entering the exhibition, we encounter an oversized sculpture of a chatelaine. Historically worn at the waist, chatelaines suspended an array of essential objects—keys, watches, sewing tools, and trinkets—combining utility with ornament. Rooted in both domestic labor and personal adornment, it functioned as a kind of toolbelt, crafted in metal yet often personalized, intricate, and decorative.

Vanessa Brown's sculptural interpretation draws on this tension: the material solidity of metal—its weight, sheen, and durability—evokes both strength and intimacy. Here, metal is not just structural but symbolic, bridging histories of craftsmanship, care, and control. Serving as a symbolic guardian of the exhibition, Chatelaine opens the show as both invitation and threshold, asking us to consider how objects organize lives, hold memory, and shape space.

In the large room, eight robes flank the walls like statues at the entry of a fort. These robes are comprised of collages made from photographs Brown took of mythic and spiritual protectors such as the Amazonians, Juno/Hera, and various saints. Though the robes differ in detail, the silhouette repeats rhythmically around the room, suggesting both continuity and recurrence. Suspended from them are votive-like adornments—gestures of protection, reverence, or offering. Enlarged impressions of these forms extend onto the floor, evoking the feeling of a ritual space, like a prayer asked and answered.

Embedded in the window is a bodiless stained-glass silhouette that merges elements of classic menswear and womenswear. The fitted form and its conspicuous absence ask us to consider the body as both presence and trace. Positioned between inside and outside, it links two states—public and private, past and present—and invites us to read the building itself as a body. This room is framed by an endless rope motif repeated on either side, a reference to Troyes' textile heritage and to this site's former life as the home and storage space of the Marot knitwear family.

In Spin Cycle, a ghostly dress made of tulle is suspended from a cage-like frame that evokes both a bell jar and a laundry rack—fragility and containment, domesticity and display.

For May You Be Welcomed by Good Spirits, Brown draws on research from the historic Apothecary at the Hôtel Dieu-Le-Comte in Troyes. Imagery inspired by the material ephemera at the Apothecary fills the windows of the Wintergarden. The Latin word "Salve," inlaid in mosaic on the floor—meaning both "welcome" and "healing balm"—became the conceptual starting point for the work in this room. Brown created beeswax diffusers that emit carefully formulated essential oil blends, developed in collaboration with clinical herbalist Niki Boghossian. The work connects historical modes of healing with contemporary herbal knowledge, layering scent, memory, and atmosphere to reactivate the apothecary's legacy in the present.

Together, these works trace a passage through material, memory, and myth—inviting us to consider how care, protection, and repetition persist across time. Brown's use of metal, glass, fabric, scent, and light creates a sensorial archive where histories are not only preserved but reactivated time after time.

Vanessa Brown is a Canadian artist based in Luxembourg, who primarily works in sculpture, video, and installation. Her practice involves conveying her subjective experiences through the materials she uses, particularly those associated with craft, such as metal and glass.

Vanessa Brown has exhibited in Canada, Germany, Luxembourg, Denmark, the United States, and Mexico. Her solo and duo exhibitions include venues such as gr_und (Berlin, Germany), the National Audiovisual Centre (Dudelange, Luxembourg), and Artpace (San Antonio, Texas, USA)

