

MacDonald, Duncan. *Little Revolutions*. St. Catharines, ON: Rodman Hall Centre / Brock U, 2014. 30 p.

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“This catalogue documents *Little Revolutions*, an exhibition of work by Duncan MacDonald that was presented at Rodman Hall Art Centre through the fall of 2010.”

Contents: “Composition for 3 Voices” (Marcie Bronson) / “Little Revolutions” (Duncan MacDonald)

“Duncan MacDonald is [...] Associate Professor in the Department of Visual Arts, Brock University. [...] MacDonald received a BFA from York University and an MFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. [...] MacDonald currently lives and works in St. Catharines, Ontario.”

In the first place, this book offers a tactile experience to its readers. Much care was given to the design and printing process. The result is beautiful. The grain of the high-quality paper and the French fold – which requires from the reader to use a paperknife and cut the pages open before discovering what is inside – accentuate the materiality of the book, an object that one must touch. Also beautiful are the sepia hue of the pages and the unusual size of the photographs – without subtitles – jutting outside the body of text to occupy parts of the left and right margins.

Duncan MacDonald’s creative practice blurs the one separation that most of us keep to maintain in our lives, namely a strict division between private sphere and professional life. As he judiciously comments, the artist nourishes a quite practical intention: by challenging this established convention, MacDonald is saving – managing – time or, in other words, multitasking. His artistic production is in many ways humorous, almost mischievous, and certainly playful. In a nutshell, his videos and sound installations are expertly engineered inventions based on dreamy observations, poetical perceptions, and imaginative geniality. Their titles adequately suggest how well mixing chance, leisure, family life and work functions: *Aluminum Drop*, *Love Taps from Lily*, *Chair Disciplining Itself*, *The Ears Have Walls*, *Pedestals to Put your Kids on*, *Work, Work, Practice, Practice, Reverie 4.0*, *Reverie 5.1*.

Four quotations from the book

“Though he is often characterized as a sound artist, it is notable that MacDonald’s work, while fundamentally about sound, is not confined to aural formats. Working in a range of media, he seeks alternative ways to record, or ‘package’, sound to give a tangible presence to auditory events.”
 (Marcie Bronson)

“MacDonald shares the workload, which enables him to accomplish more and doubles as time spent parenting or teaching. For his children, participating as creators is empowering; for MacDonald, sharing authorship with them makes his labour highly personal, combating the

alienation of work. In its emphasis on structure and repetition, MacDonald's process-oriented approach bears a resemblance to the routine of family and work life." (Marcie Bronson)

"MacDonald describes *The Ears Have Walls* and *Pedestal to put your kids on* as 'subtle performances' in which he establishes a scenario that frames viewers' expected interaction as an art action, though they may not realize it is perceived as such. In this instance, viewers are unaware of their engagement unless the arrangement is revealed by a member of the gallery staff. While MacDonald wryly points to the necessity of monitoring infants and the contents of a gallery, he also calls attention to the increasing lack of privacy in contemporary life, raising broader social concerns regarding surveillance." (Marcie Bronson)

"My current daily routine involves *waking > working > working > sleeping*. To increase efficiencies in the work place, I have introduced *work^{unconscious}* to my *sleep* regime. The quality of work surpasses what I am able to accomplish in the conscious world, largely because I think so. [...] It is my goal to develop a set of metrics that allows daily *work^{unconscious}* to be measured and expressed in the waking world." (Duncan MacDonald)

Clamenç Prades