The Power Plant Partners with Vega Foundation to Present the Work of Meriem Bennani at the Toronto International Film Festival

This exhibition will mark Moroccan artist Meriem Bennani’s Canadian premiere of *Life on the CAPS* and the viral sensation *2 Lizards*, made in collaboration with Orian Barki.
effects, her videos mix visual references drawn from reality television, advertising, music videos, phone recordings, documentary, and science fiction.

Set in a supernatural, dystopian future, the trilogy *Life on the CAPS* (short for “capsule”) features a fictional island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. In the world of the CAPS, teleportation has replaced air travel, and displaced populations utilize this mode of transportation to cross oceans and borders. Enclosed by a magnetic shield, the CAPS houses migrants who have been caught teleporting illegally. Settled into bustling enclaves, citizens of the CAPS have developed their own hybrid culture and modes of defiance in opposition to the US troops that patrol the island.

*2 Lizards* reflects the unfolding realities of the COVID-19 pandemic in real time. Each roughly three-minute episode illustrates the mundanities of quarantine life: rooftop hangouts, Zoom birthdays, the 7 PM clap for essential workers, the thrill of breaking social-distancing rules with a new lover. The process of Bennani and her collaborator Orian Barki was mostly inspired by their daily events and conversations with friends, whose viewpoints are included in the series through a cast of animated characters.

“We are looking forward to welcoming film lovers to the gallery this September to experience something new. We’re grateful for the support from Vega Foundation to make this possible, as we strongly believe that Bennani’s work about resilience in the face of alienation and displacement will resonate strongly with our audiences in Toronto.”
—Gaëtane Verna, Director & Artistic Director, The Power Plant

“We are delighted to launch Vega Foundation with the Canadian premiere of Bennani’s work at TIFF. The Power Plant is an important institution in Toronto that continuously presents thought-provoking contemporary art by both Canadian and international artists, which makes it the ideal space to show Bennani’s work as part of Wavelengths.”
—Elisa Nuyten, Founder, Vega Foundation

About Meriem Bennani
Meriem Bennani was born in Rabat, Morocco. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Whitney Biennial, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; and Palais de Tokyo, Paris. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

About Orian Barki
Orian Barki was born in Tel Aviv, Israel, and lives and works in New York. Barki shoots and edits most of her raw and character-driven documentaries herself, and she has also directed short documentaries for The Fader, Vogue, Nike, and Art21. Her work has been featured in Le Cinéma Club and Dazed.

About The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery
The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery is Canada’s leading public gallery devoted exclusively to contemporary visual art. It is a vital forum for the advanced artistic culture of our time and offers an exceptional facility and professional support to diverse living artists, while also engaging equally diverse audiences. The Power Plant pursues its activities through exhibitions, publications, and public programming that incorporate other areas of culture when they intersect with visual art. For more information, please visit thepowerplant.org.

About TIFF
TIFF is a not-for-profit cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world through film. An international leader in film culture, TIFF projects include the annual Toronto International
Film Festival in September; TIFF Bell Lightbox, which features five cinemas and learning and entertainment facilities; and an innovative national distribution program, Film Circuit. The organization generates an annual economic impact of $200 million CAD. TIFF Bell Lightbox is generously supported by contributors including Founding Sponsor Bell, the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto, the Reitman family (Ivan Reitman, Agi Mandel, and Susan Michaels), The Daniels Corporation, and RBC. For more information, visit tiff.net.

About Vega Foundation
Vega Foundation is named after one of the brightest stars in the Northern Hemisphere. Established by Elisa Nuyten, Vega is dedicated to supporting and promoting artists through the production and acquisition of new moving-image works and to facilitating their presentation through institutional collaborations.

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