

# PERSONAL SPACE

PART THREE OF AXE NÉO-7'S NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTALLATION TRILOGY  
EXPLORES THE REGION'S INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

ANITA EUTENEIER

For the third year in a row, Axe NÉO-7 continues its exploration of the vacant lands around the gallery on Hanson Street in Gatineau. This time it's called *Cohabitations: Common Ground?* and it's the final chapter in a gallery trilogy.

In his essay, curator Stephane Bertrand writes that the former industrial lands around the gallery, once the site of the Hanson Hosiery factory, "become the scene of an event where the creative potential of art attempts to reorient the existing framework into a site, and witness, for encounters."

As in the previous two stages of the trilogy, Bertrand brings together professionals — visual artists, architects, landscape architects, sociologists — who create interventions, installations and exchanges that integrate the Gallery with its neighbourhood. And while the possibilities for

spontaneous encounters are many, the most popular aspect for local residents is a fully functioning laundromat.

Pierre Allard and Annie Roy, also known as Action Terroriste Socialment Acceptable, placed ads in local newspapers and posted the neighbourhood advertising their free self-serve Laundromat featuring cold water wash and line drying. *Time For a Load ... In Hull* occupies an entire gallery with two washing machines and a network of clotheslines.

On one wall a video shows a series of still photographs of the former hosiery factory and its mostly female workers. Art history references include Andy Warhol's appropriated Brillo soap boxes. Another wall features a large photograph of clothing fluttering on a line across Brewery Creek, which documents the original installation behind the gallery that was

later cut down by vandals.

But most of the encounters between neighbours and art have been positive, according to artist Martin Simard, who also works as installation technician for Axe NÉO-7.

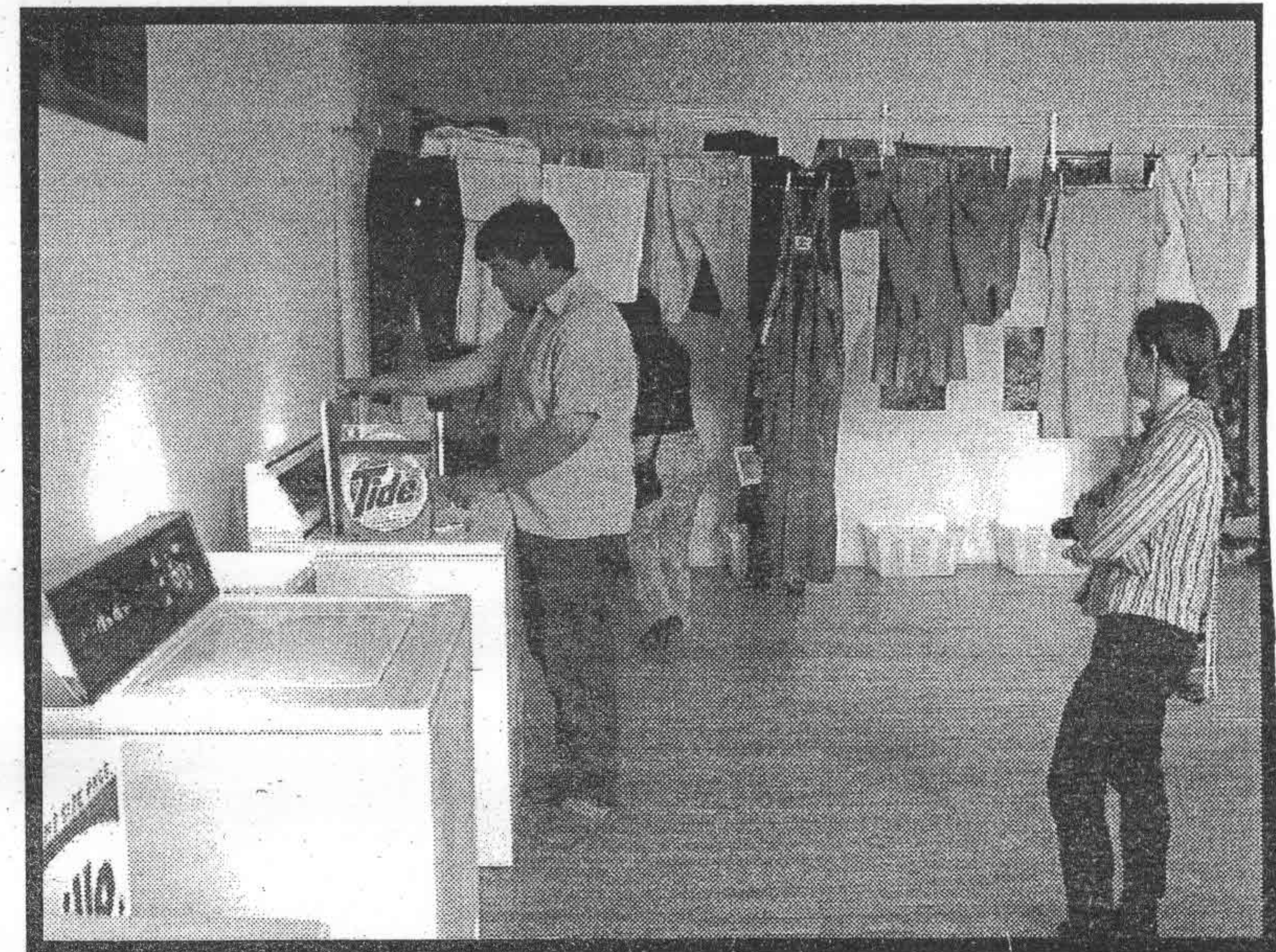
Simard's installation, situated in the gallery and on the land outside, acts as a kind of anchor, visually uniting all the works.

He constructed an 2 1/2-metre-high cube covered on two sides by metallic Mylar. A small passageway enables visitors to enter the cube and look through a recess with a view of the creek. An adjacent warehouse, once used to store wool, is also covered with a reflective surface. The surfaces act like mirrors, recording movement like brushstrokes on a canvas.

"It's painting in movement," said Simard whose usual medium is paint. Inside the gallery another Mylar cov-

exhibition

xarts



PUTTING A SPIN ON ART: ACTION TERRORISTE SOCIALMENT ACCEPTABLE OFFERS FREE LAUNDRY AT AXE NÉO-7

ered surface faces the window providing passersby with visual burst of colour and form.

Ekip, a Montreal architects collective, examines the idea of the "fence" in its outdoor installation titled *The Neighbours*. The wood construction measuring 15 metres in length, with heights from two to 3 1/2 metres, has windows and places to sit and walk. Whereas traditional fences seek to exclude or isolate (think of the wall that divides Israel and Palestine) this installation encourages movement through

and around it.

On Saturday, June 19 Les Fermieres Obsedees, a Québec City collective of visual artists, performs *Jeux de Dames* on the vacant lands beginning at 10 a.m. and from 2 to 4 p.m. A discussion features architects Ben Gianni, Luc Lévesque and sociologist Louis Jacob. x

The exhibition is free and continues until August 8 at Axe NÉO-7, 80 Hanson Street, off Front Street in Gatineau, [www.axeneo7.qc.ca](http://www.axeneo7.qc.ca)