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Jérôme Bouchard
"Près des lignes"

November 12th to December 23rd 2016

The exhibition title, *Près des lignes* (Close to the Lines) evokes three main interpretive possibilities that can influence, complete, or cancel each other.

Près des lignes refers to an aspect of my working process that began in 2011. Using *microstencils* that I compare to Japanese paper cutout stencils (*katagami*), my process is to tear off, peel away, and pierce surfaces as close as possible to existing outlines so as to generate *microsurfaces*. Thus, close up, the remaining marks that constitute my paintings, make evident the use of glues and cutting tools, but also the precise, repetitive, and programmatic gestures that incorporate traditional and industrial skills, and in so doing, revisit certain aspects of painting that have been historically taken for granted.

Près des lignes also invokes the border separating Canada and the United States. The drawings used in making the paintings come from data about the border between Quebec and its neighbouring states (New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine). I worked from images, objects, and numerical data in order to question the representation of borders and, more broadly, issues connected to the increasing use of geomatics.

Furthermore, *Près des lignes* refers to my own median position between a discipline -- painting -- and, outside the discipline, my interest in geomatics. Clearly, my pictorial practice is informed by the influence of geomatics in constituting landscape without, however, being subject to the principles and methods of cartography. Far from seeking a perfect equation between a visual language (that of geometric science) and my formal painting strategies (working with colour and the use of *microstencils*), my works are predicated upon differences. They seek to obscure the distinction between a discourse springing from my extra-disciplinary interest and painting's complete ability to autonomously generate meanings.

Jérôme Bouchard