

Amadeo Azar's studio is filled with delicate hand-made ceramic and wood instruments that feel organic and inviting to manipulate. Bell-like forms, finished in a greenish glaze with their handles formed using a woodturning technique, hang from the wall from custom-made rests. Interchangeable, the ceramic components are modular in a way that signals the potential for these instruments to be made and remade using different parts.

During his time at Est-Nord-Est, Azar has spent a lot of time thinking about the connective topography between his native Mar de Plata, a city by the sea in Argentina, La Pampa, a nearby province, and the river-side scenery of Saint-Jean-Port-Joli in Quebec. In a series of unbelievably detailed and engrossing watercolours the artist has also created during his time in residency, these different landscapes come into harmony with each other. Like portals onto another world, Azar uses the luminescence, fluidity, and richness of watercolours to create environments in which light along the Saint-Lawrence River becomes a character and presence.

One of the most touching works on display in Azar's studio is a diptych: a watercolour depicting maple sugar collection to the left side and another of a hand reaching out for a snowflake on the right. The paintings are in wooden frames, with wood-turned feet, giving them an anthropomorphic quality. Linked by a piece of bent wood, the paintings look like they are holding hands. Describing this as an homage to the painting *Padre e hijo contemplando la sombra de un día* (1962) by the surrealist Argentinian artist Roberto Aizenberg (1928-1996), Azar speaks of his son back home in Argentina whom he misses greatly. A reminder of the isolation of a residency like this one, where artists can produce intensely, but often at a certain cost, this work by Azar encapsulates the familiar homesickness that has come over anyone who travels for their work.

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