

---

**Codes**  
double-sided

**Université du Québec en Outaouais**  
Language Technologies Research Centre

**Pierre E. Leclerc**

---

## BACKGROUND



LTRC building, use of space and lighting



Horizontal and vertical gardens

The piece that I'm presenting here is part of my recent work on transparency and reflection developed specifically for the new information technology building at McGill University. It is also a part of an ongoing research project on rhythms, technological imagery and invaluable communication and coding tools.

Contextually, this piece is not descriptive, but rather evocative; it works into the architectural and functional aspects of the building. It's a permeating piece that reflects university life and encourages reflection, a piece that, because of its front-facing location, has become a city landmark.

### **Architectural features**

The pavilion, with its architectural qualities, is an ode to research. From its west-facing side, with its vertical strips of aluminum, to its gardens, everything breathes the very purpose of the site. The architects even codified their work; from the barcode style to the punch card images, they incorporated iconographic research elements in the architecture of the building.

### **The piece's location**

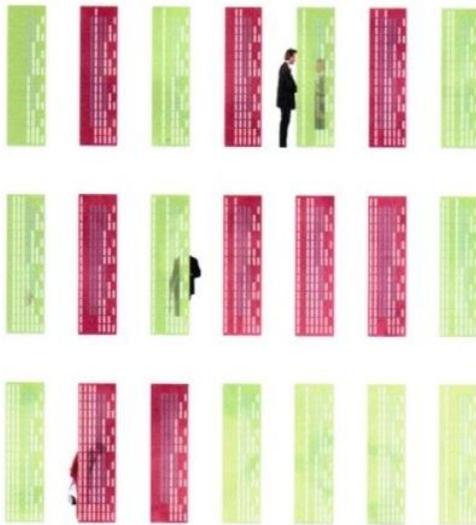
The piece is situated inside the building, on the north-facing side on the three upper levels. It consists of 21 pivoting 800 mm x 2900 mm wood panels. This piece acts as an identifier not only for the Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC), but also for the Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO). It acts as a filter both inside and outside the building with different views during the day and at night. The wood panels are enveloped by glass and aluminum cases and transformed into an information network: they come together to display a 256-byte ASCII code, going from 8 to 24 bits. The piece reproduces into increasingly more complex networks through meandering reflections and transparencies. This piece both highlights the role of the site and helps to define it.

**Codes**  
double-sided

**Université du Québec en Outaouais**  
Language Technologies Research Centre

**Pierre E. Leclerc**

**THE PIECE: ITS PRESENCE AND PURPOSE**



This piece highlights the tasks associated with both teaching at the university and research at the LTRC through its various codified references to an encodable and decodable language. It also represents a transcription tool: decryption, the link between the researcher and information technology tools. In this way, the piece represents not only the LTRC, but also the entire university community at UQO, and it becomes a landmark for the city and region.

**ON/OFF: BETWEEN TRANSPARENCY AND REFLECTION**

In the ON position, the cases are perpendicular to the façade and reveal the coloured transparent byte networks that extend, overlap and are coloured by various reflections. In the OFF position, the cases are parallel to the façade and filter the external environment while reflecting the interior environment. The building's lighting at night adds a new dynamic to the piece, which becomes even more transparent when viewed from outside. The wood panels have vertical openings reminiscent of a punch card that reveal the colours on the front and back as well as the byte networks that correspond accordingly to any internal activity. In this way, the glass' transparency and reflection encompass the environment. During the

Cases – exterior facade  
The reds and greens codify the facade.  
The piece reflects UQO and the LTRC, as well as their research and teaching functions.  
It is inclusive: it reflects and filters the environment.



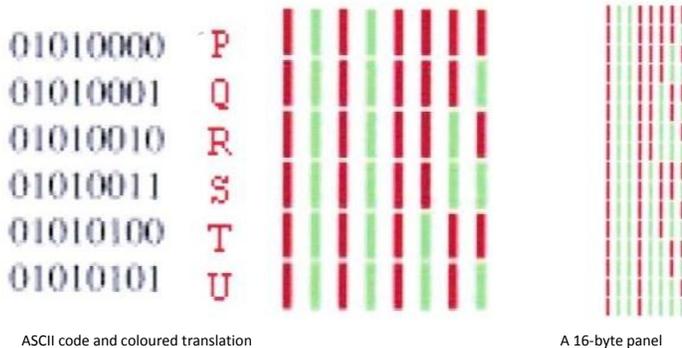
Cases – interior facade  
The piece filters, colours and reflects the interior environment.  
The people, the furniture and the lighting are reflected and filtered by the exterior.



21 cases on three floors filter and reflect the codified blue, green and red backgrounds.

day, the piece acts as a mirror on the outside and a filter inside the building. The piece acts the way users think; it either clearly appears or surreptitiously slips in and out like a shadow. As the light moves through these elements, it alters the piece's content and meaning. For a moment, these reflections and shadows become the subjects and objects of the piece. Along these lines, the piece becomes inclusive. While defining itself, it embraces the users as well as the architectural and environmental elements. It establishes a dialogue between art, architecture and the surrounding environment.

#### THE PIECE: REFERENCES AND TRANSLATIONS



ASCII code and coloured translation

A 16-byte panel

#### Language translations and the binary system

The piece and its reading levels:

First level – The piece, through its use of colour and spacing, reflects and helps create the site's identity. The binary code becomes chromatic and spells out **UQO**.

Second level – The binary codes are translated into the piece in a series of rectangular bits that make up the ASCII code bytes. The 1 bytes are found on the front of the red and green glass cases on the facade,

while the 0 bytes are printed on the backside of the blue glass cases. The ASCII code is written using both sides of the 21 panels that make up the vertical 16-byte network (each byte consists of a transparent rectangular silkscreen print on top of coloured and reflective glass). This code has become the basis of computer code that allows for human-computer information transfer.

Third level – Openings around each byte bit (rectangle) of the 16 vertical bytes form coded words (translation, communication, information and language are all examples of possible codes).

Fourth level – The networks and codes are reproduced through transparency and reflection. Each section of the piece completely redefines itself; the codes become increasingly and endlessly complex and open the door to various interpretations. The piece is open to interpretation, and that is where its meaning originates. It provides a gateway for researchers and students to new associations and discoveries.



First level – The binary code becomes chromatic and illustrates the site's identity.