

Bios

Nathalie van Bockstaele is Clovis' mother, a writer, and an independent researcher in human interactions and non-verbal thinking. She has an ABD in Linguistics from MIT (1980) and an ABD in Industrial Engineering and Technological Innovation from Ecole Centrale de Paris (1982). <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nathalie-van-bockstaele-205060135/>

Clovis is now 30 years old. He was diagnosed with PDD autism at age 4. He has a younger brother named Gustave. His father is Joachim (Kim) Theilhaber. Clovis paints and manipulates audio-visual material. Both activities began when he lost vocal speech and both have been supported and reinforced. He remains bilingual French/English in his own way. He also has an extensive international social network. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/133541986@N05>

“ My vision of Clovis is one of partnership. It is a demanding one. It is also a bold one. I could easily appear as denying Clovis' “condition” (a typical mother like attitude) or as using him for my own research (a not so unusual attitude in research). I cannot claim to be immune to either of those predicaments, or to be free of the guilt they generate. Being Clovis' mother complicates matters, yet being a researcher in an area tied to another human being's “condition” creates serious problems too. Clovis cannot be turned into a research topic. The dual nature of my relationship to Clovis (mother/researcher) has been the strongest protection against either source of pitfalls. My being his mother gives me the infinite motivation to believe in what he does and my being a researcher gives me the distance required to survive the trial. “

Nathalie van Bockstaele 1997

Jason O'Keefe is a sculptor and innovator with a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art & Design (2000). He has spent part of his week participating in the lives of Clovis and his family since 2007. <https://www.patreon.com/MyCreachas>

Elise L'Herault is a fused glass artist and teacher, with a BFA in painting from Boston University (2008). She has been working with Clovis in his home and on trips with the family since 2012.

Michael Jauquet is a musician and artist with a BFA in Art Therapy from Emmanuel College (2012). He has been working with Clovis in his home, out in the community, and on trips with the family since 2012.

Noa Alon is a scientific illustrator with a PhD in Bioengineering from Bar-Ilan University, Israel (2015). She is currently studying toward a certificate in illustration at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University. She started working with Nathalie and Clovis a year ago, studying different ways to artistically visualize the interactions and activities with Clovis. She enjoys painting, drawing, and exploring different ways of communication with Clovis. She finds great inspiration in this collaborative work.

Pablo Friedmann is an artist, educator, and community art activist with an MFA in painting from the Royal College of Art, London UK (1987). He has a long record of working with underprivileged populations (prisons, community colleges, homeless shelters, and people with disabilities). When he has time, he also gives tours for children at the MFA. Currently he is the Art Director of the Roxbury Yawkey Boys and Girls Club in Boston. As an artist, he has exhibited his paintings in Mexico, London, Paris, and the USA. He has been working weekly with Clovis since 2005. Both of them share their passion for painting.

Jocelyn Odón Holm is an English teacher at Prince George's Community College and an education researcher, working on a PhD at the University of Maryland. She was first inspired by Nathalie's work with Clovis in 2001 while working on a BFA in theatre education from Emerson College (2001). Though she moved from Boston after her initial year of relating closely with them, she has remained intimate with the family and continues to follow the unique network of relationships that have evolved around Clovis' learning and development.

Jackie Lee is working on an education startup, which uses virtual reality to demonstrate scientific discoveries. He has a PhD from the Affective Computing Group at the MIT Media Lab (2011). During his studies, he attended Wendy Jacob's Autism Studio in 2008 where he was paired with Clovis and Nathalie. After 2008, he continued working with them and eventually drew inspiration for his dissertation on autism, internal states, and technology from his work with Clovis, Nathalie, and Kim.