

For immediate release

**CLAUDE SIMARD**  
***SHEDDING***  
**at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal**

Montréal, October 7, 1998. From October 9, 1998 to January 10, 1999, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will present the exhibition *Claude Simard – Shedding* in the Banque Laurentienne Gallery.

A native of Larouche, Québec, in the heart of the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean region, Claude Simard has lived and worked in New York for nearly 20 years. Although he was initially known as a painter, his highly autobiographical work has gradually become multidisciplinary, employing photography, performance, installation art and, more recently, sculpture.

With works from the last eight years, the exhibition reflects this change. It presents a mural installation entitled *Passé composé (Organized Past)*, 1995, in tribute to the community of Larouche; photographs, including the 365 lunch boxes recorded in the 1998 piece *Lunch*; and wood sculptures, such as the series *Nine Prime Ministers*, 1996–1998, composed of busts representing all the premiers who have led Québec since the Quiet Revolution. Simard's practice reveals an apparent duality, irreconcilable and yet coexisting, of minimalist works and artisanal pieces.

The piece *Gourgane II (The Bean-Head Woman)* offers a metaphor for the dual identity of the artist, and the twofold approach illustrated in the exhibition. Sculpted in the purest tradition of Québec carving, a figure that is half-human, half-plant stands erect, with two broad-bean pods for heads. Is it about the artist divided between Larouche and New York, or his “two-headed” work?

Whatever the answer to the enigma, curator Gilles Godmer points out that “what emerges from this surprising juxtaposition of works is a rather disturbing exhibition whose ambiguity of content and overall strangeness may well leave visitors feeling disconcerted.”

This is the artist's first solo exhibition at the Musée. He previously took part in the group show *Peinture au Québec : une nouvelle génération*, in 1985.

A catalogue entitled *Claude Simard* accompanies the exhibition. The 24-page publication includes a text (in French and English) by curator Gilles Godmer, the list of works, the artist's biobibliography and eight colour reproductions. It may be purchased for \$11.95 at the Musée's Olivieri Bookstore and at other bookstores.

**Meeting with Claude Simard on Friday, October 9**

Claude Simard will meet the public in the exhibition gallery on Friday, October 9, at 5 p.m. The discussion will take place in French.

The exhibition received financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts and Pentacom stratégie-cr  ativit  .