



PRESS RELEASE
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SPRING HURLBUT AT THE MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL
May 22 to September 7, 2009

Montréal, May 20, 2009. The moving sight of 140 cribs and cradles lined up in orderly fashion in the Musée's largest gallery will summon up memories of hospitals, orphanages, dormitories, schoolrooms, cemeteries—images that telescope the cycle of life: birth, life and death. The Musée d'art contemporain presents the exhibition *Spring Hurlbut* from May 22 to September 7, 2009, and the work laid out before you is called *Le Jardin du sommeil*.

Le Jardin du sommeil (1998) is a remarkable installation, recently acquired by the Musée d'art contemporain, by Canadian artist Spring Hurlbut. The work evokes both childhood and the loss of childhood. It is made up of 140 antique, found, metal cribs and cradles, simply and soberly arranged in rows. The discreet presence of a few ceramic funeral wreaths at the beginning of the journey through this “garden of sleep” introduces the idea of a memorial, a notion heightened by the walkways that wrap around it.

Spring Hurlbut was born in 1952 in Toronto, where she lives and works. Since the late seventies, she has developed a painstaking, intimate art that employs strategies from architecture and museology to guide us through the labyrinth of the human psyche. Various reappropriating artifacts, colour illustrations and taxidermy specimens, the artist picks out objects that represent archetypes of the life cycle. For *Le Jardin du sommeil*, Hurlbut, a passionate collector, sought out and found 140 different examples of metal cribs and cradles from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The geometric layout of the installation and the lining up of the motifs recall the structure of a garden, and the accumulation of objects, that of a cabinet of curiosities. At once similar and unique, the beds symbolically express the individual yet universal nature of the human destiny.

Catalogue

A bilingual, 24-page catalogue will be published a few weeks after the exhibition opens, in order to include reproductions of the work *in situ*. In addition to extensive visual documentation, it will contain an essay by Josée Bélisle, curator in charge of the Musée Collection, and a biobibliography. The publication will be available at the museum's Olivieri Bookstore or from your local bookseller.

Meet the artist

Meet Spring Hurlbut (in English) as well as artists Christine Davis and Robert Polidori (in French) on Thursday, May 21, from 5 to 6 p.m. in the exhibition galleries.

Reading room

A reading room devoted to the artists featured this summer at the MAC has been set up in the Mariette-Clermont Lounge adjoining the exhibition galleries.