

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

A Matter of Abstraction: New Permanent Exhibition at the MAC

Montréal, April 11, 2012 – A personal encounter with the artists and artistic movements that have defined the development of abstraction since the 1940s in Québec and across Canada: that's what is in store for visitors to the exhibition *A Matter of Abstraction*, on view at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal starting April 12, 2012. Following a chronological and thematic approach, the exhibition showcases key works from the museum's Permanent Collection, which today form a priceless public heritage. The presentation of *A Matter of Abstraction* was made possible by a substantial grant from Québec's Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine under its program of support for permanent exhibitions. This major exhibition will run until March 2016. After *Place à la magie*, it is the second permanent exhibition since 1992 of works from the MAC Collection.

110 works, 60 artists, 7 decades

The broad overview provided by the exhibition covers the period from 1940 to 2010, in a display of 110 pieces produced by 60 artists. This multidisciplinary selection encompasses painting, drawing, video and sculpture, with particular emphasis on Québec works in the Collection.

A Matter of Abstraction is laid out in a series of groupings, the first of which features works by **Borduas** and **Riopelle**, which are clearly indispensable. The circuit continues with a space devoted to pieces by the **Automatists**, including Fernand Leduc, Pierre Gauvreau, Jean-Paul Mousseau, Claude Gauvreau, Marcel Barbeau and Marcelle Ferron. In the next section, we learn how the **Early Plasticians**—Jauran, Louis Belzile, Fernand Toupin and Jean-Paul Jérôme, as well as Guido Molinari, Claude Tousignant and Fernand Leduc—developed an abstract, geometric visual language during the 1950s and 1960s. Further on, we explore the marriage of **gestural expression** and **structural dynamics** as represented in the works of artists like Yves Gaucher, Charles Gagnon, Jacques Hurtubise and Jean McEwen. Nearby, **sculptures** by artists such as Armand Vaillancourt, Robert Roussil, Françoise Sullivan, Peter Gnass, Henry Saxe and Roland Poulin reveal different forms of abstraction. To conclude, *A Matter of Abstraction* presents works by **new generations of artists** who have been motivated and inspired by the search for abstraction, among them Christian Kiopini, Richard Mill, Louis Comtois, Stéphane La Rue and Francine Savard.

On Abstraction

Throughout the run of *A Matter of Abstraction*, two adjacent galleries will periodically explore other, international and current, ramifications of abstraction, with temporary exhibitions under the heading *On Abstraction*.

Organization

Josée Bélisle, curator of the Musée Collection, is the curator of the exhibition *A Matter of Abstraction* and the related temporary exhibitions *On Abstraction*.

2013: A Year Dedicated to Abstraction

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will bring out a scholarly publication next year that will include several different authors as well as essays arising out of the discussions revolving around the matter of abstraction in Québec and across Canada. This anthology-type publication will be launched at the next Max and Iris Stern International Symposium, which will be held at the MAC in March 2013. A microsite on the theme of abstraction will also be launched, allowing visitors to further enhance their knowledge of abstraction, as expressed in the remarkable Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is a provincially owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec. It receives additional funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts. The museum gratefully acknowledges their support and that of Collection Loto-Québec, the MAC's principal partner.