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artcité

When Montréal Turns Into a Museum

August 10 to
October 8
2001

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A8124
2001a

MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL
Québec ::

SAAB

presents

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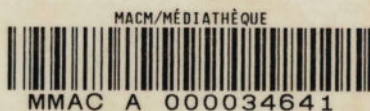


MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL
Québec ::

A publication of the Direction de l'éducation
et de la documentation of the Musée d'art contemporain
de Montréal.

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Produced in conjunction with the event *Artcité*, a presentation of
SAAB Canada, held from August 10 to October 8, 2001.

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is a provincially
owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture et des
Communications du Québec. The Musée receives additional
financial support from the Department of Canadian Heritage and
the Canada Council for the Arts.

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Legal deposit: 2001
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
National Library of Canada
ISBN 2-550-37641-2

The works *Colonne*, 1970, by Ulysse Comtois, *Tour sublunaire*,
1965, by Ivanhoë Fortier, *La Cité*, 1962, by Yves Trudeau, and
The Life and Times of Mountain Woman #96, 1985, by Janet
Cardiff, come from the Lavalin Collection of the Musée d'art con-
temporain de Montréal. All the others are part of the Collection
of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

Musée d'art contemporain
De Montréal/Médiathèque

19 JUL, 2001

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Foreword

Artcité, a major event of summer 2001, encompasses many facets, in my opinion. For the Musée, which organised it, *Artcité* rallied the energies of its various constituent parts: from the members of the Board of Directors and the advisory committees to the employees in the museum's different departments — no one was left out. Quite the contrary, everyone was enthusiastically involved. For the artists, *Artcité* was readily understood as an ideal opportunity to breathe new life into their creations. The Musée adopted a radical change in its habits by opening up its collection to people who work in the city every day. Taking the works outside the museum walls and exhibiting them in unusual places helps rectify the image held all too often of a museum as a final repository for works of art. All this would not have been possible, however, without the spontaneous, whole-hearted agreement of those in charge of the sites, companies, office buildings, churches, and so on, which, for a period of several weeks, will host works of art — works that were not designed for these venues and that consequently will take on a new dimension in an unpredictable but, we hope, productive relationship with the regular users of the various sites.

I wish to extend the Musée's gratitude to all our partners in this project. My thanks also go to the Québec government and, in particular, to the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications which, from the very start, believed in the project and provided it with generous financial support. We are also indebted to all the sponsors who played an essential role in the success of this venture. We hope that all our visitors will see in *Artcité* an expression of the vitality of art and its contribution to the life of our city.

Marcel Brisebois
Director

The *Artcité* project, displaying some fifty major works from the Musée's collections, will highlight their unusual presentation outside the museum space itself while, at the same time, offering a formal or thematic counterpoint to each of them in the galleries devoted to the Permanent Collection. Each work included in the city-wide route is thus paired — through free association with respect to content, colours and their symbolism, medium, material, etc. — with another work with which it shares certain characteristics. For visitors touring the city or the Musée, the selected works as a whole will consequently paint a living picture of some of the fundamental concerns in contemporary art.

Josée Bélisle
Curator of the Permanent Collection

Paulette Gagnon
Chief Curator



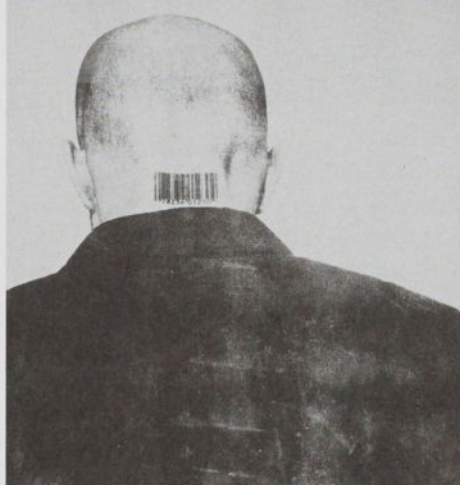
La Voie lactée, 1992

Light billboard, aluminium case, computerised printing process by ink jet onto translucent and flexible canvas printed on both sides, 1/2
183 x 457 cm.
Gift of the artist
Photo: Louis Lussier

Geneviève Cadieux

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1955.
Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Most often privileging large-size photography to create the iconography of a dramatised, fragmented and variously treated body, Geneviève Cadieux's work never ceases to question identity, incommunicability, desire, loss and wound. A permanent installation on the roof of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal since the inaugural exhibition of the museum's new downtown location in June 1992, *La Voie lactée*, like the cross on the Mount Royal, has become an emblem of the city's landscape. Beyond its references to art history (the motif of lips suspended between earth and sky borrowed from Man Ray's *À l'heure de l'Observatoire — Les Amoureux [The Lovers]*), Greek mythology (the episode where Hera, Zeus' wife, annoyed by the infant Heracles, pulls out her breast from his mouth — the spilled milk becoming the Milky Way) and also the private life of the artist (the lips are her mothers'), the work evokes the theme of communication, indeed the difficult communion between beings.



***Generic Man*, 1987-1989**

Durafran display slide, fluorescent light, aluminium case and plexiglas

213.4 x 152.4 x 15.3 cm.

Acquired thanks to the generosity of the staff of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

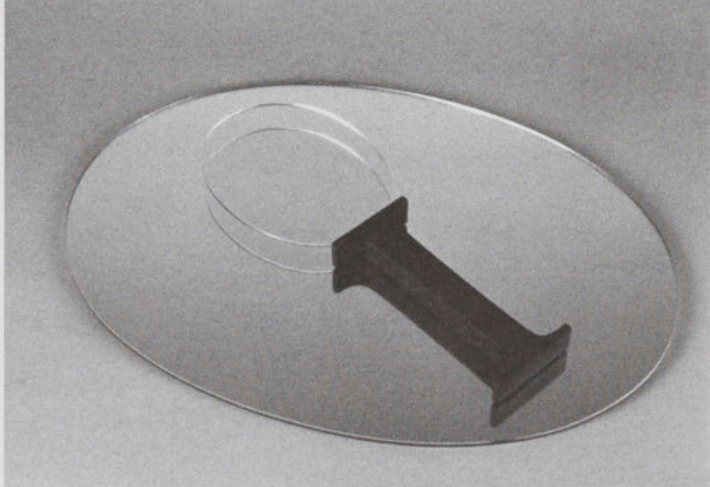
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Jana Sterbak

Born in Prague, Czech Republic, in 1955.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Identity — not only personal but also social and cultural — is a central theme in Jana Sterbak's work. Fleeing from the repression in Prague, she emigrated to Canada with her parents in 1968. Born of a family of intellectuals active within Czech cultural and political life, Sterbak addresses through various mediums — installation, sculpture, video and photography — issues introduced by wide-ranging debates on human freedom. Charged with strong social and political connotations, her work oscillates between derision and provocation. With *Generic Man*, Sterbak acknowledges the perverse effects of consumer society and conformism.



***Discover a Lovelier You*, 1991**

Mirror, glass and clay

4 x 53.2 x 38.3 cm.

Gift of Ms. Sylvie Bouchard in memory of the artist

Jeannot Blackburn

Born in Dunham (Québec), Canada, in 1959.

Died in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1996.

Trained in ceramics, traditional fine arts and design, Jeannot Blackburn soon decided to give back to ceramics the place it deserved within visual arts. From the 1980s, he mostly worked at transforming ordinary containers (salad bowls, teapots) by giving them unorthodox, at times erotically connoted shapes, and unusual decorative motifs. *Discover a Lovelier You* is an exception in the artist's production where representation plays a key role. Here, the conceptual dimension of the work is foregrounded. The title, an invitation of sorts, sheds light on the meaning of the piece's two components. In a very simple manner, the artist invites us to have a new, more positive look at ourselves. The handle of the object resting on the mirror — a capital "I" in ceramics — refers to the "self." The glass on top of it suggests transparency: the truthful gaze which the artist asks us to cast on ourselves.



Bonbons bijoux, 1996

Colour videotape, 12 min. 25 sec., sound

Sylvie Laliberté

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1959.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Trained in theatre, Sylvie Laliberté began her artistic career in the middle of the 1980s doing performances. Video, performance, photography and engraving meet today in her production where language holds a key position. "Words are my instrument," she says. In her work, each sentence delivers unexpected plays with words and meanings. *Bonbons bijoux* sets us in a private tête-à-tête with the artist. Within a collage of short scenes and monologues, Sylvie Laliberté abruptly goes from one subject to another. In the candid tone of a character halfway between woman and child, she evokes human shortcomings and life's small worries with a great dose of humour. Sylvie Laliberté's seeming lightness conceals great depth and a surprising sensitivity. And yet as she puts it: "I don't think that things have to be serious to be serious."



The Life and Times of Mountain Woman #96, 1985

Etching, 2/10

72.5 x 57 cm.

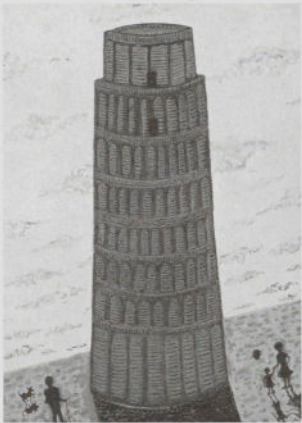
Photo: Centre de documentation Yvan Boulerice

Janet Cardiff

Born in Brussels (Ontario), Canada, in 1957.

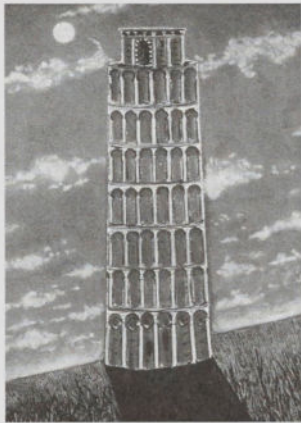
Lives and works in Lethbridge (Alberta), Canada.

In the mid-1980s, Janet Cardiff resided at the Malaspina Print Shop in Vancouver as a guest artist. Upon her return, she abandoned large-size silk-screen printing to dedicate herself to the production of small-size etchings. At this time and probably inspired by the imposing landscapes of British Columbia, she created two prints on the subject of the "woman-mountain." Followed by numbers (No. 37 and No. 96), the works' titles suggest that these are two episodes in a narrative, a legend probably invented by the artist. The prints manifest Cardiff's interest in fiction and mythologies, two themes she has continued to explore in her multimedia installations. Here, through the use of raw, hatched lines, the artist shows us a woman with powerful hands and thighs, whose monumentality is enhanced by a low-angle view. The outline of a mountain stands out behind her. Somewhat like a comic strip, the writing offers an explanation for the image: we are witnessing the mysterious "woman-mountain"'s last moments whose life the artist leaves open to our imagination.



Tour de Pise [jour], 1994

Oil on canvas
96.5 x 73.6 cm.



Tour de Pise [nuit], 1994

Oil on canvas
96.5 x 73.6 cm.

Sylvain P. Cousineau

Born in Arvida (Québec), Canada, in 1949.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Through an artistic approach that includes painting, assemblage, photography, Sylvain P. Cousineau questions the practice of art as such, its relationship to the real and representational techniques in a somewhat impertinent and humorous manner. The works *Tour de Pise [jour]* and *Tour de Pise [nuit]* are composed so that the famous campanile seems to stand perfectly straight on a slanted ground. Also, just because one of the scenes is taking place in the daytime and the other at night, several elements of the composition have been modified, even what should not be affected by the time of day — the architecture of the tower and the ground it rests on. In so playing with representation, the artist proposes a reflection : not on the tower itself but on how we look at it. This monument is precious not because of its appearance but due to its flaw, and there lies its poetry. For the artist, the tower “is fragile because it’s leaning and, as such, what we are cherishing is a mistake since it leans more than it’s straight. And this fragility, in a sense, perhaps makes us more humble.”



Tavolo, 1978

Metal, glass and stone

66.5 x 471 x 157 cm.

Photo: Denis Farley

Mario Merz

Born in Milan, Italy, in 1925.

Lives and works in Milan, Italy.

At first a painter, Mario Merz turned to sculpture and installation in the mid-1960s when *arte povera*, the Italian artistic trend with which he is associated, was beginning. He is particularly interested in contrasts between materials — natural or stemming from human activity —, in their potential for transformation and their symbolic value. *Tavolo* is a work comprised of simple and concrete elements in a dynamic interaction between transparency and opacity, smoothness and roughness. Whereas the glass reveals the curves of the metal structure, the circular stone favours the work's movement and opening. A familiar symbol of abundance and social interaction, this table is however surprising because of its irregular shape. A recurrent motif in the artist's practice, it is in direct contact with nature in that it represents a portion of the earth rising. The asymmetrical sculpture recalls shapes found in nature — organic, open, constantly growing. The work thus creates an expanding space, the beginnings of a spiral: the symbolic form par excellence of regeneration and the passing of time.



***Sculpture III*, 1987-88**

Wood

205 x 180 x 45 cm.

Gift of the artist

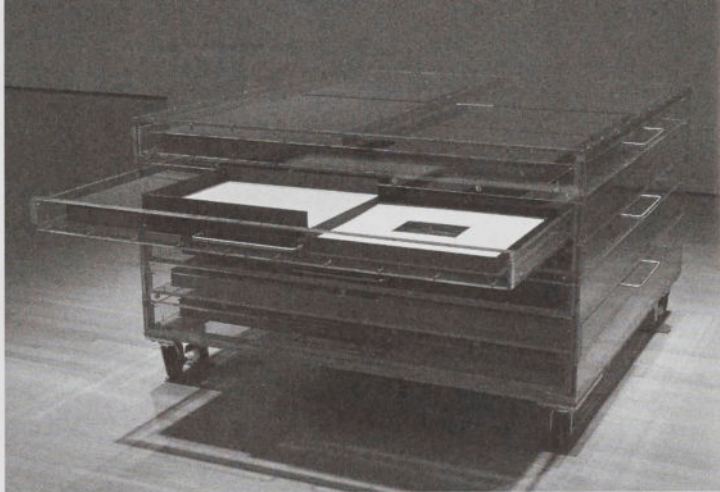
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Christiane Gauthier

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1958.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

During the 1980s, Christiane Gauthier produced a series of works where she favoured the use of wood as raw material. Her half-figurative, half-abstract sculptures evoke at times metaphorical landscapes, at others enigmatic and dreamlike images. *Sculpture III* is part of this approach. Thrusting into the air, the work oscillates between contrasts and metamorphoses. The artist gives fragility, fluidity and dynamism to wood — a dense and rigid material. The shape of the sculpture and the work on its surface recall the quivering of a wing, the flow of a veil, the undulation of a wave. The fine stratum of plywood, superimposed then sculpted, recall the passing of time inscribed within the wood. The stratum emphasise the lateral movement of this mysterious, changing sculpture which suggests, in subtly figurative fashion, the curves of a body but also a hilly landscape.



***Églogue ou Filling the Landscape*, 1994**

Filing cabinet with 6 drawers, 27 cases and 216 silver prints
87 x 150 x 150 cm.

Acquired with the help of the Canada Council for the Arts
Acquisition Assistance Program

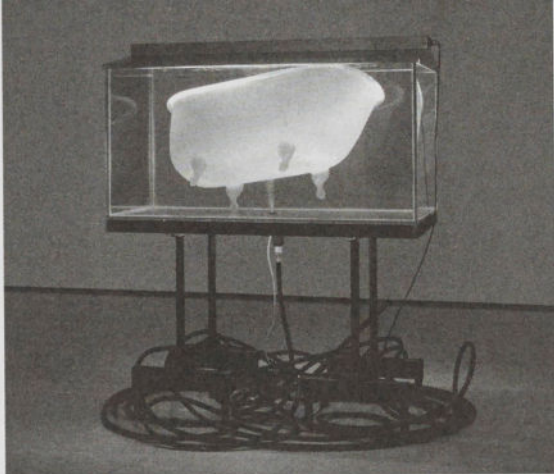
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Angela Grauerholz

Born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1952.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

With her photographic work, Angela Grauerholz captures the real in such a way that it seems to emanate directly from our dreams. From these evanescent, blurred and ambiguous images, a vague impression of time passing always emerges. With the piece *Églogue ou Filling the Landscape*, the artist proposes a reflection on the spaces of memory. The installation presents itself as an imposing cabinet where photographs of landscape are stored inside various boxes. The space of the museum as a site of archived memory, both shown and hidden, is thus evoked. The transparency of the cabinet suggests the presence of art works, but the opacity of the boxes conceals their content. The closed drawers slow down our desire to explore, and remind us of the inaccessibility of reserve collections in museums. Lists of words on each of the boxes also suggest a will to identify and classify the photographs therein. However, with their emotional connotations and poetic rhythms, these words offer open and mysterious associations between what is written and the image, similar to those created by the mind — the shifting site of memory and oblivion.



***Silence and Slow Time*, 1994**

Glass, steel, aluminium, fibreglass, rubber tubing, pump, fluorescent light and water

151 x 127 x 68.2 cm.

Gift

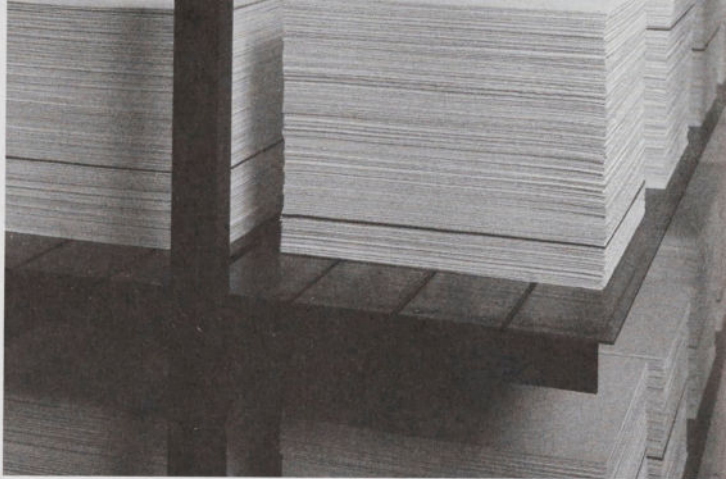
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Catherine Widgery

Born in Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania), USA, in 1953.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

With her poetic sculptures, Catherine Widgery explores the deep yet fragile links between human beings and their environment. The work *Silence and Slow Time*, which illustrates the unseemly encounter between a miniature bathtub and a fake aquarium, creates a world where the familiar is diverted, slipping into the dreamlike and the surreal. The attributes of the strange bathtub — its four legs, round shape, translucent sides — evoke the presence of a body, cradled and nourished by a bubbly liquid. Both source of life and symbol of the unconscious, this liquid, or water, submerges the bathtub, yet the overflowing is contained by a steel and glass environment with smooth and rigid sides, humanly regulated and controlled. The balance between the elements is tenuous and unstable, oscillating between drifting and suspension, between what is alive and what is technological, between the natural and the manufactured. In this built and transparent space, shaped like an aquarium — or perhaps an incubator — a fragile and mysterious thing is shown to us. Like the substance of our dreams, it both escapes and fascinates us.



***Classifié*, 1993**

Steel, glass, handmade cotton paper and lead leaves
180.3 x 198 x 90 cm.

Photo: Denis Farley

Claude Hamelin

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1948.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Claude Hamelin's sculpture work, often the result of building and assembling techniques, shows a precise and concise construction. The artist gives great importance to the properties of the various materials he uses — weight, texture, composition, uses, expressive charge — and is interested in how they interact. The work *Classifié* comprises heterogeneous elements — steel, glass, handmade paper, lead sheets — combined to make up a huge cabinet. At first, the imposing structure radiates a sense of order and rigour. The steel and glass, with their smooth and cold surfaces, unite to create a hermetic space whose content is composed of stacks of dazzling white paper. A support for knowledge and thought, the paper seems to be archived for eternity within this enclosure. However, the presence of randomly disseminated lead sheets insidiously undermines the purity of the ensemble. Lead — a substance capable of intoxicating and of provoking the loss of memory — represents a threat for this space of conservation. Apparently solid and immutable, the work thus reveals the fragility and disorder that lie in all things.



***Le 6 avril 1944*, 1999**

Silver print, mirrors and papers, 18/44

16,5 x 25 x 10 cm. (case)

Photo: Michel Dubreuil

Jacques Fournier and Edward Hillel

Born in Granby (Québec), Canada, in 1950.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1953.

Lives and works in New York (New York), USA and Paris, France.

The work *Le 6 avril 1944* is the result of a collaboration between two artists: designed and produced by publisher and bookbinder Jacques Fournier, it incorporates a photograph and text by Edward Hillel, a photographer, writer and filmmaker. With its title, *Le 6 avril 1944* bears the marks of war. The yellow coloured cover of this book-box recalls the Jewish star, while the striped paper evokes the outfits worn in concentration camps. Concealed at the bottom of the book, a weight conveys the significance of this heavy past. The photograph of a landscape draws our attention and pulls us in deeply, towards a hidden house, surrounded by bare trees: it is the house at Izieu where forty-four Jewish children took refuge during World War II before being deported to Auschwitz. The name and age of each of these children are hot printed all over the paper-mirror, much like the tattooed wrists of millions of prisoners. Each an imagined face, the names are reflected ad infinitum in the landscape, deeply engraved in this land, these trees, this house. A place of rest for the children, the book is their memory inscribed in the hearts of the living.



***Red Sea*, 1984**

Oil pastel, dry pastel, oil and charcoal on vellum paper
304.8 x 213.3 cm.

Gift of Mr. Charles S. N. Parent

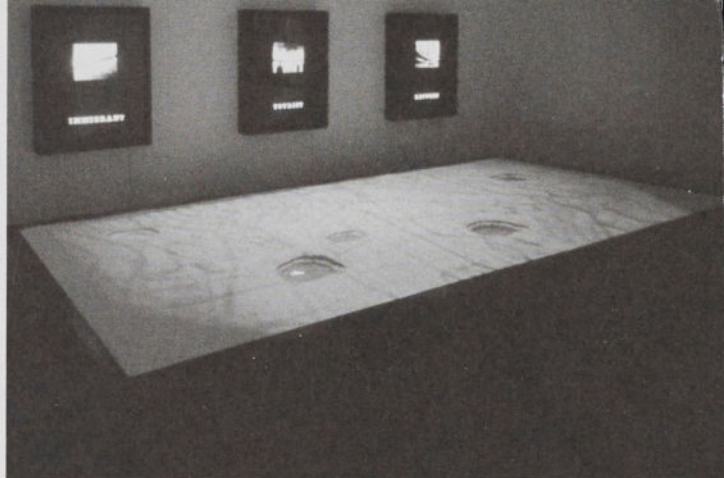
Photo: B. M. J. H. Inc., Montréal

Betty Goodwin

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1923.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Although she has worked with various mediums, Betty Goodwin has always had a particular attachment to drawing. During the 1980s, it is with this technique that she explored, through the theme of swimmers, the various dimensions of the human figure. From this period, the work *Red Sea* illustrates the precariousness and paradox of the human condition. Two anonymous, fragmented bodies drift away together. The effect of transparency given to the paper, and the red and green tonalities evoke a deep and menacing sea where life flows out and spreads. The deliberately imperfect adjustment between both parts of the work suggests a notion of passage while emphasising the dislocation of bodies and space. The free and vibrating line of the drawing unites the two human figures in the same quavering as much as it initiates a motion of unavoidable separation. There is in these beings' bruised bodies a struggle for life, but also abandonment, resignation, appeasement. This monumental work is a powerful as well as compassionate portrayal of human suffering — of the body, of the soul.



***Borrowed Scenery*, 1987**

3 light panels with black and white Duratran display slides, painted wood platform, raked salt, slide projector, slides, mirror, video player, 5 monitors and colour videotape
4 x 12 x 8 m. (minimum exhibition surface)

Photo: Courtesy Galerie René Blouin

Barbara Steinman

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1950.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

In her installations where photography, video and sculpture are often integrated, Barbara Steinman investigates the place of the individual within History — the official version of peoples' past, woven with indifference, manipulation, power struggles and forgetfulness, which absorbs individual memory. The work *Borrowed Scenery* is in line with such concerns, exploring the notion of territory as a site of welcoming or rejection. On the outset, a sense of calm emanates from the piece with its raked salt and images of peaceful, blue water. However, the successive projections of maps transform this anonymous location into a delimited and regulated territory where passing through is controlled, where individuals are categorised. On the wall, old images of ships re-emerge from oblivion, evoking a journey or passage. There are also clear and precise words which remind us that whereas passing from one land to another is leisurely and relaxing for some, for others it is a nightmare where each border is a potential barrier. To explore this work is also to experiment a crossing: from peace and quiet to discomfort, from indifference to uneasiness.



Débâcle, 1992

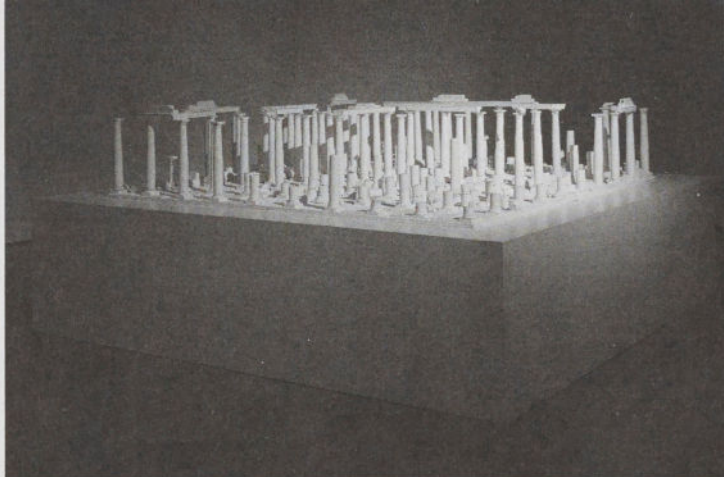
Colour videotape, 16 min., sound

Michèle Waquant

Born in Québec City (Québec), Canada, in 1948.

Lives and works in Paris, France.

Whether she explores video, photography, water-colour, drawing or writing, Michèle Waquant looks attentively and patiently at everyday events, places and gestures, with an open mind that is always ready to grasp the exact quality of a moment. The work *Débâcle* — as its title “breaking-up of ice” suggests — shows a precise period of spring, a time of passage and transformation when nature gets the upper hand and breaks away from the stillness of ice and the silence of winter. Now based in France, the artist returns to Québec to capture images of her native land. For her, the people’s faces, their gestures and smiles merge into the country’s landscape. Views of the river freeing itself, the crackle of the ice breaking and the clear sound of water follow the rhythm of a particular music — that of the Québécois accent, the words of those who both like and fear the breaking-up, and tell its story. Michèle Waquant comments: “When ice departs... it’s ambivalent, it’s like a yoke thrown off. It’s similar to certain moments in life when you lose control.”



***Le Temple aux cent colonnes*, 1980**

© Anne and Patrick Poirier / SODRAC (Montréal) 2001

Construction and casting in plaster on wooden base
40 x 300 x 300 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Anne and Patrick Poirier

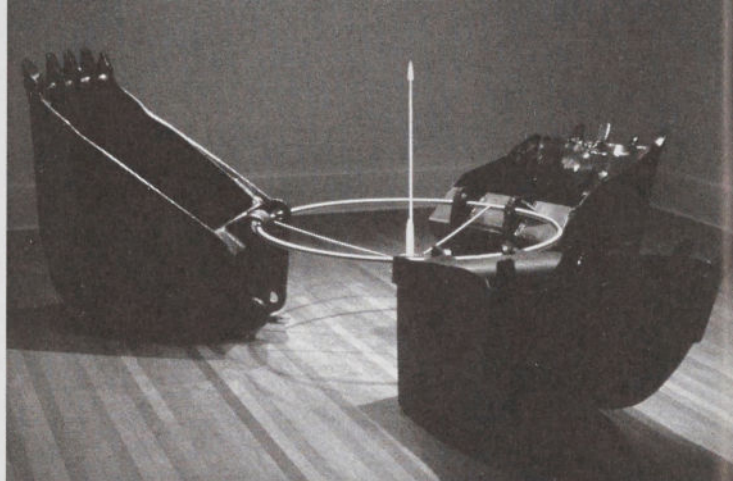
Born in Marseilles, France, in 1942.

Born in Nantes, France, in 1942.

Live and work in Paris, France and Treviso, Italy.

Collective formed in 1967.

As sculptors, architects and archaeologists, Anne and Patrick Poirier explore the sites and vestiges of ancient civilisations and revive them through miniature reconstruction. Their works — composed of herbariums, drawings, photographs and models — are a reinvention of the past where real sites and dreamlike landscapes, imaginary ruins and archaeological fragments merge. The work *Le Temple aux cent colonnes* — an integral part of a series titled *Les Archétypes perdus*, extracts of the Villa Adriana — participates in this approach. These ruins are more revealing of our gaze on the past than of the past itself. Through scaling down, the artists appropriate the vestiges of ancient architecture to create a new work to which they refer as “parallel archaeology,” or “mental architecture.” The piece — a temple excavated from the depths of the mind — presents a harmonious composition, and plays with the irregularity of volumes. To this unity is added the dazzling whiteness of plaster, a symbol of the rational according to the Poiriers. Like memory, this temple expresses a desire to rebuild fragments from the past which escape us and to make them into a coherent whole where dream supplements lapses of memory, and invention offsets the real.



***Venus' Flytrap (Dionæa muscipula)*, 1988**

Steel backhoe buckets, copper wire, plate and springs,
paraffin wax, water-colour on paper

300 x 300 x 120 cm. (sculpture)

68.8 x 49 cm. (water-colour)

Gift of Mr. Robert-Jean Chénier

Photo: Rod Demerling

Laurie Walker

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1962.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Since the mid-1980s, Laurie Walker has explored the connections between science, nature and mythology. In her work *Venus' Flytrap (Dionæa muscipula)* — comprising a sculpture and a water-colour —, several analogies are woven between the insectivorous plant illustrated in the water-colour and three steel digger shovels, united with a copper spiral ring at the centre of which a wax-made arrow rises. A feeling of tension emanates from the sculpture; at any moment, the shovels might close up again, like the leaves of the insectivorous plant, and the arrow gush forth to catch its prey in a loving or destructive impulse. The presence of Venus, goddess of love and fertility, hangs over this piece. However, as evoked by the digger shovels with their organic-looking and smooth surface that invites touch, seduction might imply vengeance, disorder, violence. Such is our relationship with nature: although it fascinates us, we still fiercely destroy it. Our insatiable appetite threatens to draw us, like an insect, inside a trap set by nature itself — a trap worthy of its power.



***Les Jeux de jarres II*, 1993**

© SODART 2001

2 vitrified clay jars, silk and linen carpet, light
112 x 167 x 116 cm. (overall)

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Marie A. Côté

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1955.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Simple forms, pure volumes and the plastic qualities of materials are central in Marie A. Côté's production. Since the mid-1980s, the artist has thrown bridges between contemporary and decorative arts, combining pottery and sculpture in her practice. *Les Jeux de jarres II*, a sober and elegant sculptural installation, is a balancing act between two clay jars that allows for the re-discovery of ordinary objects. Freeing these containers from their functional nature, the artist reveals their formal value and incredible poetic charge. In this work, light is a material in itself. It underlines the surface of shapes and emphasises their round volumes. As for the shadow cast on the carpet, it echoes the shape of the jars and almost becomes their material extension. In a sense, the light projects the sculpture onto an imaginary stage, distancing it somewhat like an actor under spotlights.



Rose, 1991

Metal rods

353 x 70 x 70 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

François Morelli

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1953.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

According to François Morelli, it is impossible to grasp the complexity of our era through a single approach which would have art history as its sole reference. A multidisciplinary artist, he has worked over the years with drawing, painting, sculpture, installation and performance. The sculpture *Rose*, comprising bent and twisted coat hangers whose drawing is somewhat geometric at the top and organic at the bottom, suggests a mutating shape. The upper portion evokes both a human torso and a piece of clothing. Linked to the lower part by a sort of rod or umbilical cord, it seems to have emerged from it, unless it is the opposite. The lower shape in turn evokes a sort of plant bulb, or amniotic bag. The open-work, permeable border between the inside and outside of both containers allows the gaze to penetrate their secret, and reveals their vacuity. The simplicity of these shapes and their evocative power raise them to the level of archetypes and give the work universal significance.



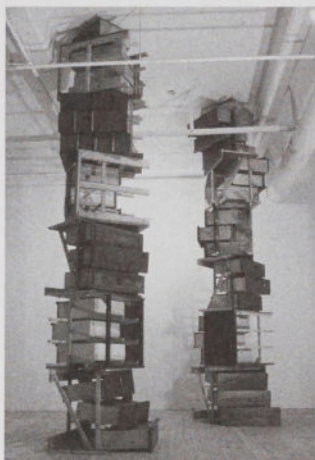
***Spiral*, 1983**

Mixed media and found objects
131 cm. (height) x 239 cm. (diameter)

Tony Cragg

Born in Liverpool (England), UK, in 1949.
Lives and works in Wuppertal, Germany.

Since the mid-1970s, Tony Cragg has explored the emotional and narrative potential of raw materials and used manufactured objects in his assemblages and installations. The deterioration of natural environments as well as the dehumanisation of urban contexts are among his main concerns. By accumulating and recycling disused materials, he casts a critical look at our relationship with the environment and at consumer society. The artist chooses objects according to their colour and shape, and completely ignores their original function. At the beginning of the 1980s, he arranged their accumulation to create recognisable shapes — a spiral in this case. Despite its fragmentary aspect and the heterogeneous materials that compose it, the work produces a strong impression of unity due to the judicious assembling of its parts. According to the artist, materials and objects are given all sorts of poetic, metaphorical and metaphysical qualities which add on to their physical properties. And so for him, apparently banal objects — cultural remains — are as capable as more traditional art works of conveying information and of arousing powerful emotions.



***Untitled*, 1997**

Furniture cut and reassembled in 2 columns
365 cm. (minimum height)

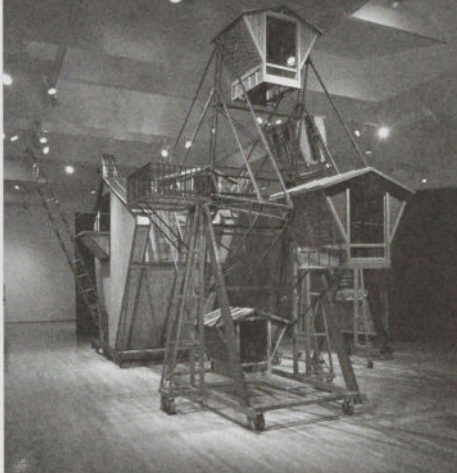
Photo: Benoît Clermont

Mario Duchesneau

Born in Lévis (Québec), Canada, in 1958.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Mario Duchesneau focused his artistic practice on action-performances at the beginning of the 1980s, then moved on to the production of sculptural pieces and site-specific installations. Among mediums, the artist favours the assemblage of elements of old furniture. He deliberately chooses very banal furniture; the new life he invests them with is thus more obvious. Through manipulation, the artist doctors their meaning and diverts them from their original function; their practical value is cancelled in favour of plastic qualities. Here, the drawers become units for the erection of huge columns. Due to their colour and patina, they maintain part of their original identity. The artist does not use these furniture pieces for their metaphorical value but rather for the theatricality of their forms once assembled. Here, two vertical structures whose balance might seem precarious unite the room's ground and ceiling, suggesting that the motif created by the accumulated drawers continues beyond its architectural limits.



***Dash-Hound*, 1995-96**

Steel structure and mixed media

4.8 x 14.6 x 4.5 m.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Kim Adams

Born in Edmonton (Alberta), Canada, in 1951.

Lives and works in Grand Valley (Ontario), Canada.

Whether in his models filled with miniature figurines or his large format sculpture-assemblages, Kim Adams creates with a great sense of humour and imagination, parallel worlds located at the border between the familiar and the strange. A hybrid construction, half-way between habitat, construction site and amusement park, *Dash-Hound* is not easily categorised. The objects that compose it, whose origins are at times retraceable, are generally found on the shelves of hardware stores and similar businesses. Once fitted into each other by the artist, these manufactured products lose their original function yet their bright colours maintain the appealing aspect of brand-new objects. Life in the post-industrial era is evoked by references to consumer society, mobility (the entire installation is set on wheels), living in limited spaces and a marked inclination toward celebration and other leisure activities. This somewhat carnivalesque description of contemporary life is coupled with a more critical side. The carousels as well as the living units of the construction are unable to accommodate anyone; they are only outwardly functional.



***The Sleepers*, 1992**

7 metal barrels, 7 black and white monitors, 7 videotapes and
385 gallons of water, 1/2
524.5 x 584 cm. (floor space)

Photos: Louis Lussier

Bill Viola

Born in New York (New York), USA, in 1951.

Lives and works in Long Beach (California), USA.

Since the beginning of the 1970s, Bill Viola has explored various levels of human consciousness with video. His videotapes are often part of installations which thwart our habitual ways of addressing and gazing upon a work of art. The themes of the body and time are at the core of Viola's production. In his work *The Sleepers*, black and white video projections, submerged at the bottom of barrels filled with water, show in close-up the face of seven sleepers. The recordings, presented in real time, were practically not edited. As we lean over to observe the sometimes agitated, sometimes peaceful sleep of these strangers, we are faced with an extremely familiar yet disconcerting image, that of a sleeping person. Within the museum, an environment where civilisation prevails, the artist brings us back to the basis of human experience. Through these sleepers, one of which is on his way to the "final sleep," we are called upon to contemplate our own precariousness, our own mortality. The bluish light emanating from the barrels plunges us into a dream-like atmosphere that invites a meditation on the transient dimension of human existence.



***Dædalus' Dream*, 1986**

Steel, aluminium, varnish and water
343 x 220 x 102 cm.

Photo: Gilles Savoie

Andrew Dutkewych

Born in Vienna, Austria, in 1944.

Lives and works in Ormstown (Québec), Canada.

Although Andrew Dutkewych produced several sculptures in the minimalist manner at the beginning of his practice, he progressively invested his work with a poetic charge by drawing themes from mythology and nature. In *Dædalus' Dream*, an aluminium tower composed of three cylinders stands on a monumental steel head. While an integral part of the sculpture, the latter acts as a pedestal for the tower. A tension is at work in this piece where two lines of force — one vertical, the other horizontal — meet yet never merge. The mass of materials and the force of gravity are major concerns for the artist. Although one can feel the weight of the head on the ground, the tower in turn seems to thrust up into the sky in an upward movement. The two elements of the sculpture might thus echo those of the work's title — Dædelus and his dream. A trickle of water leaks from the top of the tower, gently running down the character's cheeks. Could it be that Dædelus, himself an architect and a sculptor, is crying the loss of his son Icarus?



***Bearings*, 1996**

2 elements: silk organdie veiling, motors, steel rods and rings
Variable dimensions

Photo: Courtesy Sean Kelly Gallery

Ann Hamilton

Born in Lima (Ohio), USA, in 1956.

Lives and works in Columbus (Ohio), USA.

American multidisciplinary artist (performance, video, photography, sculpture, installation) Ann Hamilton quickly distinguished herself on the international art scene with her “theatrical-like” environments where the public is invited to take part in sensory and poetic experiments. Privileging a sensitive approach to reality, Hamilton creates devices that allow us to explore our perception of objects, space and time through our visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile faculties. In entering the mobile veiling world of *Bearings*, visitors will experiment the ambivalent and complementary data gathered by their senses (exterior/interior, dynamism/stasis, intermittence/continuity, transparency/opacity, lightness/heaviness, presence/absence, exposure/protection, etc.) and how they participate in the acuteness of their perception of the world.



***La Nativité*, 1995**

Waxed plaster, wood, wax and cowhide
212 x 250.5 x 207 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

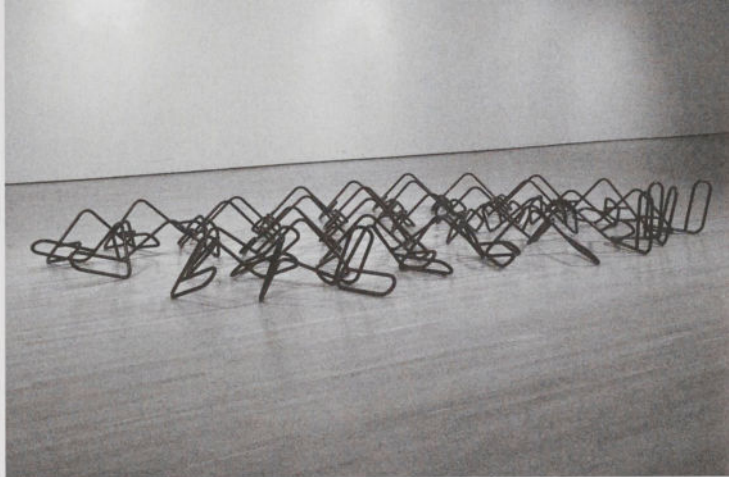
***L'Anxiété*, 1971**

Ping-Pong balls, safety pins, plastic sequins and pearls, paint and
wood piece
19 x 23 x 30 cm.

Gilles Mihalcean

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1946.
Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Since 1968 Gilles Mihalcean has created playful and poetic sculptures governed by the notion of assemblage. Made with recycled materials, manufactured and sculpted objects, his composite works articulate ideas or narrative fragments — private or historical — whose elucidation is hinted at by the title. Through juxtaposed and even condensed symbols of religious, pagan and “spatial” imagery, Mihalcean invites us with *La Nativité* to reflect upon the effect of space conquest on our perception of the world. Exploring the potentialities of introspection as another mode of investigation of consciousness and the world, Mihalcean addresses with *L'Anxiété* the complex sphere of human feelings and psychology. Diverted from their original function and multiplied so as to form an organically structured unit — akin to a sort of molecular formula —, are the work's components, through repetition, accumulation and dense combination, expressing the obsessive and oppressive nature of anxiety? Exhibited in a religious environment conducive to contemplation, this metaphorical work takes a singular connotation.



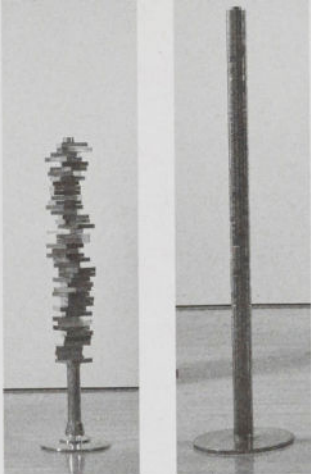
Seaplex, 1970

Steel covered with vinyl
48 x 76 x 34 cm. (each element)
Gift of the artist
Photo: Denis Farley

Henry Saxe

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1937.
Lives and works in Tamworth (Ontario), Canada.

Like several of his contemporaries, Henry Saxe began as a painter and engraver before abandoning these mediums in the 1960s to dedicate himself to sculpture. Indeed, echoes of his early production can be found in his sculpture practice of the 1970s. Pencil strokes seem to have conquered the third dimension to materialise into vinyl covered, steel rods. Here, the sculpture is composed of units which recall knitting stitches, each simply consisting of a rod folded at both ends. Thus the identical units can fit into each other without the need of hinges. By placing the piece directly on the ground, the artist proposes a new form which negates verticality — sculpture's traditional attribute. Efficiently simple, the resulting composition is however quite dynamic due to the wave movement created by the unit's configuration. Moreover, the stitches being relatively independent, the structure's ensemble remains rather flexible and can adapt to the specific conditions of its exhibition space.



***Colonne n° 6*, 1967**

Aluminium

170 cm. (height) x 39 cm. (diameter)

***Colonne*, 1970**

Aluminium

181.5 cm. (height) x 8.6 cm. (diameter)

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Ulysse Comtois

Born in Granby (Québec), Canada, in 1931.

Died in Saint-Hyacinthe (Québec), Canada, in 1999.

Before turning to sculpture, Comtois was a painter, keeping company with Paul-Émile Borduas' Automatistes group with which he exhibited in the mid-1950s. At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of 1970s, his sculptures showed the influence, among others, of American sculptor Alexander Calder's assemblage work. With *Colonne n° 6*, we stand before a structure comprising forty-six identical, square aluminium plates, each pierced but not centred and evolving around a central axis. By repeating identical elements, Comtois created a geometrically assertive shape, thus distancing it from the anthropomorphic figurative art which marked the history of sculpture. In his 1970 *Colonne*, one can activate each of the rings articulated around a central axis. We are thus invited to take part in the work, to turn the elements as we please to produce our own arrangement. This way, the artist encourages an active approach to the work, quite different from the usual contemplative attitude before works of art. The work is not only something to observe; it is rather a tool which allows us to experience an aspect of human activity — creativity. In so doing, the artist stands for a removal of the sacred aura surrounding art: to release art objects from their inviolable aspect. For Comtois, art can be amusing without resulting in lack of respect for the artist or the work.



***La Cité*, 1962**

© Yves Trudeau / SODRAC (Montréal) 2001

Weld iron

303 x 51 x 45 cm.

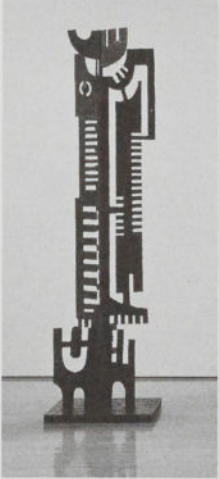
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Yves Trudeau

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1930.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Trained in artistic disciplines as a teenager, Yves Trudeau specialised mainly in ceramics before beginning his career as a sculptor at the end of the 1950s. He privileged bronze as a material at first, then explored the possibilities offered by weld iron. *La Cité* is part of the first works he did using this material which allows for the production of refined shapes and volumes, reduced to their main lines of force. In hollowing them out, he sets a dichotomy between inside and outside, positive and negative. The material also offers him the possibility of creating thrusts into space, giving vertical momentum to the sculpture. In *La Cité*, one can still recognise actual shapes among others more abstract. Yet, with the title chosen for the work, the artist refers explicitly to our urban environment. The theme already announces his future concern for the place of man in the cosmos.



***Tour sublunaire*, 1965**

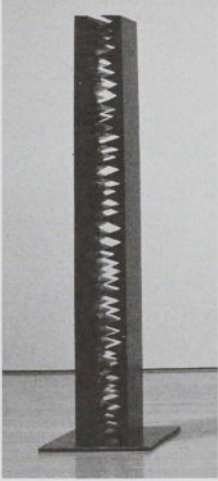
Cut and weld metal
247 x 60 x 60 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Ivanhoë Fortier

Born in Saint-Louis-de-Courville (Québec), Canada, in 1931.
Lives and works in Terrebonne (Québec), Canada.

Ivanhoë Fortier began as a painter before working with sculpture at the beginning of the 1960s, upon graduating from the École des Beaux-Arts de Montréal. He was also a founding member of the *Association des Sculpteurs du Québec*. During the 1960s and the 1970s, he explored various materials, creating works where the inherent qualities of each were always respected. *Tour sublunaire* is composed of cut metal, a technique particularly favourable to the unfolding of shapes into space. Moreover, the work thus created by crossing cut metal sheets can be grasped quickly, requiring no careful examination for its spatial articulation to be understood. Not figurative in style, Fortier's sculpture presents geometric forms with sharp edges.



La Colonne, 1973-1978

© Succession Charles Daudelin / SODRAC (Montréal) 2001

Bronze

236.2 x 29.2 x 30.5 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Charles Daudelin

Born in Granby (Québec), Canada, in 1920.

Died in Kirkland (Québec), Canada, in 2001.

Charles Daudelin's career is punctuated with the most diverse experiences. At first a painter, he became interested in the theatre in the 1940s, creating posters, sets and costumes for the productions of Les Compagnons de Saint-Laurent. In the same spirit and with his wife Louise, he made puppets that toured extensively across the province. However, his most important contribution remains his sculpture production, in particular the numerous works that embellish public places. At the same time, he did research on the integration of art works into architectural contexts, and created such works. Indeed, Daudelin's sculptures will always retain their monumentality, whatever the scale. Here, the artist returns to a preoccupation present in his 1940s terracotta works: the association of two distinct masses. By splitting up the bronze casing, he creates a central space, establishing a play between solid and void. As a result, he proposes a virtual volume which becomes as important as the two actual volumes circumscribing it. Daudelin thus offers a column where the vertical thrust is clearly asserted while being a departure from the expected shape.



***Untitled*, 1988**

Dolomite

251.5 x 144.8 x 106.7 cm.

Photo: Donald Young Gallery, Chicago

Ulrich Rückriem

Born in Düsseldorf, Germany, in 1938.

Lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany.

Trained as a stone-cutter, Ulrich Rückriem is a sculptor who has worked exclusively with stone since 1970. He has been steadfast in his artistic practice. He begins with a quarry stone block; he divides, pierces and saws it, treats its surface, then reassembles all the elements to restore the original unity. The work *Untitled* from 1988 was produced this way. The structural work done inside the monolith, although hidden by the reconstruction, is now revealed on the surface which bears its traces. The unity of the block is thus irreparably fractured; our gaze infiltrates into the interstices, travelling from the contours to the centre of the mass, from the clean and polished surface to areas left raw and intact, from the fragment to the whole, trying to reconstitute the transformation process to which the sculptor submitted the matter. Thus, the stone does not only carry the imprint of time immemorial and testify to the effects of natural forces, it now reveals human intervention.



***Chute en rouge*, 1966**

Painted steel

212.6 x 124 x 49 cm.

Françoise Sullivan

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1925.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Associated with the automatist movement when she began her career in the 1940s, Françoise Sullivan never limited herself to a single form of art, practising dance, painting, sculpture, photography and performance. *Chute en rouge*, while belonging to the field of sculpture, is informed by dance, its rhythm, energy and balancing acts. The artist plays on oppositions and contrasts within the work. She knows how to give lightness, fluidity and movement to steel — an industrial, rigid and dense material. Seemingly chaotic, the assembly of welded circles is however organised in a precisely drawn, oblique line that creates at once the effect of a waterfall and of taking off into the sky. What is offered is a playful dance of pure shapes in space, wavering between balance and imbalance, deconstruction and attraction, ascending and descending movement. The circle, a shape favoured by the artist for its plenitude, is repeated and gives a regular and dynamic rhythm to the ensemble. As for the colour red, it emphasises the structure of the work as such and the simplicity of its elements, thus increasing the overall expressiveness of the piece.



***I Can't Hear You (Autochthonous)*, 1995**

Tripods, clothing, rag heads, chain, lamp, video player, projector and colour videotape, 16 min. 46 sec., sound
197 x 216 x 105 cm. (variable dimensions)

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Tony Oursler

Born in New York (New York), USA, in 1957.

Lives and works in New York (New York), USA.

In his video installations, Tony Oursler deals with psychological states and human behaviour, and reflects upon how they are influenced by technologies and the media. The work *Autochthonous* stages two human figures — one male, the other female — their faces projected onto rag heads and lying on clothes empty of bodies. The man is whispering in an inaudible manner; the woman is protesting in an irritated and fierce tone. An alienating, repetitive psychological battle seems to be taking place between them — taking the form of a strange soliloquy. Twisted by anguish and aggressiveness, the faces perhaps belong to a couple grappling with a gloomy, aimless life; or perhaps they are the mirrors of a single split conscience, taking refuge in itself, caught in its own madness. A gulf lies between the two characters, even though they are prisoners of one another, condemned to immobility, like two dangling puppets. Before this private drama of cries and silences, we remain powerless witnesses.



***The Quarrel*, 1988 (1989 print)**

Cibachrome transparency, fluorescent light, aluminium case and plexiglas, 2/3

119 x 175.6 cm.

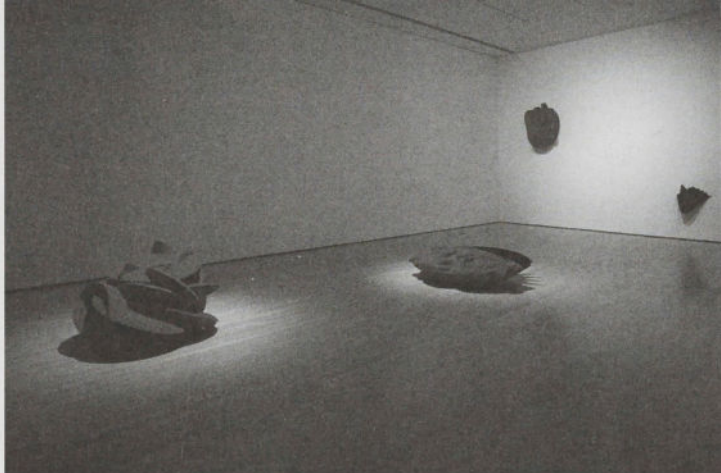
Photo: Jeff Wall

Jeff Wall

Born in Vancouver (British Colombia), Canada, in 1946.

Lives and works in Vancouver (British Colombia), Canada.

Through a body of work that integrates principles of painting, photography and cinema, Jeff Wall has developed a critical portrait of contemporary society. Mounted in huge luminous display boxes, his images recall both Western pictorial tradition and the spectacular dimension of our era. The work *The Quarrel* illustrates with gripping realism a dramatic moment in a couple's life. The carefully planned and controlled mise-en-scène gives the representation a static and artificial aspect, shifting it from the familiar to the strange. The internal tension of the protagonists, their solitude and silence are echoed in a clenched hand, a turned back, a disquietingly banal set. Like a freeze-frame in a film plot, the scene here represented seems out of sync with reality, closer to fiction than authenticity. Jeff Wall thus questions the illusion of representation and opens a reflection on the image's potential for manipulation and travesty.



***Untitled*, 1984**

Concrete, pigment, polystyrene and soil

4 elements: 122 x 91 x 61 cm., 91 x 61 x 61 cm.,

183 x 183 x 122 cm., 122 x 122 x 122 cm.

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Anish Kapoor

Born in Bombay, India, in 1954.

Lives and works in London (England), UK.

In 1979 Anish Kapoor made a trip to his native land, India. He rediscovered Indian architecture, philosophy, mythology and art which now inform his work where Eastern and Western cultural traditions meet. Captivated by the flaming colours of the powder spread at the entrance of Hindu temples, he decided upon his return to cover his own sculptures with pure colour pigment. The meaning of each colour varies from one work to another: for the artist, red is often a male symbol, and black is both destructive and creative. The polystyrene shapes, which evoke the natural world, are covered with pigment in the pure state. The four elements, echoing one another through shape and colour, produce an intricate network of relationships which transforms according to the point of view. The arrangement of these elements, both on the wall and on the ground, evokes the union of the material and the spiritual, and testifies to the artist's interest in what is opposed and united. Kapoor's works have a strange, immaterial presence. Their surfaces, which seem made of light, invite touching and awaken desire.



***Manifestare*, 2000**

Oil and tar on canvas
285 x 733.5 cm.

Photo: Louis Lussier

Marc Séguin

Born in Ottawa (Ontario), Canada, in 1970.

Lives and works in Montréal, (Québec), Canada.

Marc Séguin's work is at the cross-roads of abstract and figurative art. In his paintings and drawings, large monochrome surfaces combine in innumerable ways with gestural manner and academic draughtsmanship. *Manifestare* is the inaugural painting in a series of works that draw inspiration from the medieval motif of the rosette. Attracted both to the shape and symbolic value of the gothic rose, the artist has made it a starting point for a reflection on light. Here, a man standing on a rosette seems to be emerging from darkness. With a black bulb giving out a dim light, he peers into the pitch-black surroundings. A ghostly figure comes to meet him. Is he the man's own reflection, his double or a figment of his imagination? No one knows. The vast black surfaces of the painting create the impression of a space into which the eye is ready to plunge, yet they are first and foremost picture planes where painting presents itself in all its materiality. The format and the characters' poses give a theatrical dimension to the work whose mise-en-scène can only stimulate the imagination.



***Two Plate Prop*, 1986**

© Richard Serra / SODRAC (Montréal) 2001

Hot rolled steel

2 elements: 182.8 x 304.8 x 5 cm., 137.1 x 137.1 x 5 cm.

Photo: Courtesy of The Place Gallery

Richard Serra

Born in San Francisco (California), USA, in 1939.

Lives and works in New York (New York), USA.

Richard Serra's work is usually linked with minimal art, a trend which began in the United States during the 1960s. Artists of this movement sought to obtain the most effects possible with very limited means, using industrial materials and leaving no visible trace of their work. Occasionally site-specific, Serra's works are designed to be shown sometimes outside, sometimes inside. *Two Plate Prop* is composed of two hot-laminated steel plates, that is steel made into plates using two rotary cylinders. Requiring elements that existed prior to the piece itself (walls, floor), the sculpture proposes a new perception of space. Though quite heavy, the steel plates hold each other up in seemingly precarious balance, revealing the artist's mastery of the laws of gravity. Fascinated by this unlikely stability, we are drawn to move around the work to become aware of its contours and of the spaces thus defined by the play between solid and void.



Neubrückewerk Düsseldorf gewidmet, 1976

© VAGA/SODART 2001

Red cedar

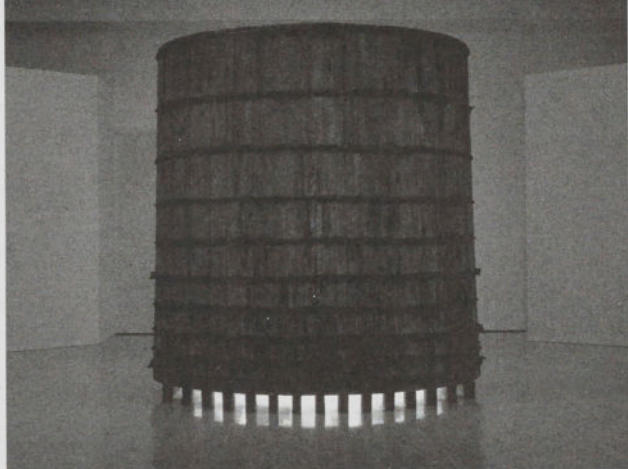
19 elements: 121.9 x 30.5 x 823 cm. (overall)

Carl Andre

Born in Quincy (Massachusetts), USA, in 1935.

Lives and works in New York (New York), USA.

Minimal art is a trend characteristic of American art in the 1960s and 1970s, which advocated the reduction of forms to their most simple expression. The sculptors who followed the trend thus produced works with simple geometric forms, often repeated to make up a sequence of similar elements. Sculptor Carl Andre is one of the pioneers of the genre. Here, nineteen segments of red cedar beams — usually building material — are all cut exactly in the same dimensions. By using such a unit, the artist leaves no visible trace of his work on the sculptures as such. The various elements combine to form an ensemble recalling an architectural creation, here for example a bridge, as suggested by the title (*Construction of a New Bridge Dedicated to Düsseldorf*). With its horizontal configuration, the shape is in opposition to the vertical forms of traditional sculpture, often associated with the human figure. While it does not include affective or anecdotal connotations, the work still invites us to run our gaze over it to grasp its development in space.



Château d'eau: lumière mythique, 1997

Cedar, metal, dimer and light

Photo: Denis Farley

Irene F. Whittome

Born in Vancouver (British Columbia), Canada, in 1942.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

For over thirty years, Irene F. Whittome has proposed an almost anthropological reflection which has materialised in the creation of artefacts from contemporary civilisation. In this spirit of conservation characteristic of museums, the artist has decided to use an old water tower as the principal piece of her installation. Wishing to respect its specific history, she has chosen not to intervene on the object. However, by placing it in a new context, she has changed its role and given it a symbolic meaning. From water tank it has become a tank of light that escapes from both top and bottom. For the artist, as it emanates from the top it represents mystic light and leads to a questioning of our human condition; coming out of the bottom, it represents the energy within that allows us to act. Rich with its important symbolic charge, the object also stands out because of its monumental dimensions; its massive presence invests the space, forcing us to move around to perceive it in its entirety.



***Le Commandeur et la Maison rose*, 1985**

Oil on canvas

249 x 293 cm.

Photo: Denis Farley

Gérard Garouste

Born in Paris, France, in 1946.

Lives and works in Marcilly-sur-Eure, France.

A representative of new French painting in the 1980s, Gérard Garouste defines his work as a "mental thing." Labelled by art theoreticians as a post-conceptual artist, Garouste attaches great importance to quotation in his work. He proposes images where characters similar to those found in history painting are staged, without our being able to clearly identify them. Here, although the character recalls a hero, the scene illustrated does not seem to represent a particular passage from a text, as is the case in traditional painting. The quote remains ambiguous. The same uncertainty prevails at the formal level. The painting techniques echo the style of past painters but one cannot pin down any precise reference to a painter. The vivid colours and small strokes vaguely evoke sixteenth-century Venetian painting, although it is not formally expressed as such. With this collection of deliberately imprecise quotes, Garouste gives us a memento of Western painting, a synthesis of what it might have left in our collective memory.



***Ruby, It's You*, 1998**

Oil on canvas
183 x 244 cm.

Leopold Plotek

Born in Moscow, Russia, in 1948.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Since the 1970s, Leopold Plotek's work in painting has stood outside the mainstream. Whereas at the beginning of his career he questioned the medium's conventions by working with unstretched canvas and irregularly shaped frames, his more recent, enigmatic and dense paintings reveal a significant concern for colour and the evocative power of abstraction. Colour plays a key role in *Ruby, It's You* where the highly contrasted, dark or vivid tones saturate the entire surface of representation. Vaguely organic figures, juxtaposed rather than superimposed, create a complex ensemble. The ambiguous space that results from this maze of planes prevents us from grasping the overall composition at a glance. The image recreates itself as the gaze moves across the painting's surface, lingering over shapes or colours, and making strange and baroque landscapes appear then fade away. Despite their abstract vocabulary, Plotek's paintings do not exclude references. They are rather like screens where each person is invited to project at will.



***Reliquat*, 1996**

Acrylic on canvas
180 x 240 cm.

François Lacasse

Born in Rawdon (Québec), Canada, in 1958.
Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Part of a new generation of Québec painters, François Lacasse works with traditional media while proposing a new field of pictorial exploration. Drawing his subjects from the infinite repertory of critically acclaimed works — covering art history from the Middle Ages until today — he superimposes fragmented images on a single plane. Although Lacasse chooses images produced with various techniques (mosaic, drawing, painting, engraving, etc.), he always reproduces them in painting and with a screen effect. The resulting work is thus at the limit of legibility, at the frontier between figurative and abstract art. The shapes seem to emerge, then dissolve into the image, in a play activated by our gaze. Through this process, the artist also establishes a back-and-forth motion between what we perceive and the images that remain in our memories. Moreover, this confusion built upon well-known illustrations provides a sociological comment: the mass of history-honoured art works dispels the power of each image since it is seen separated from its production context.



Rejouer la mort, seulement pour vous plaire I, 1985

© SODART 2001

Cotton canvas, glue, acrylic and fibreglass

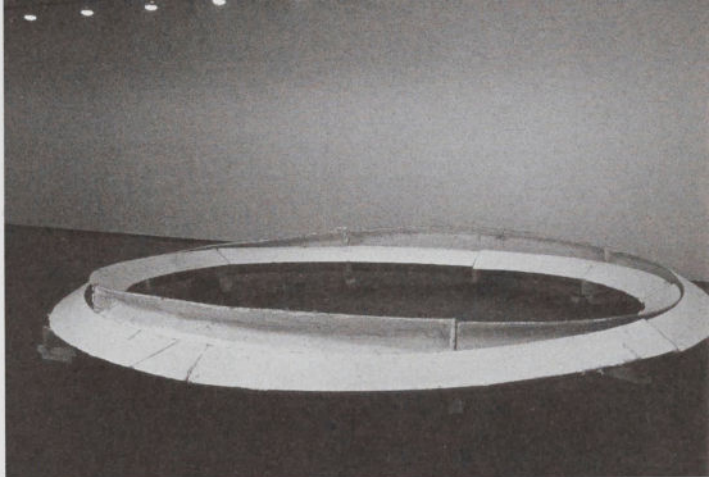
210 x 293.5 cm.

Joseph Branco

Born in Sainte-Foy (Québec), Canada, in 1959.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

In the 1980s, the young Québec painter Joseph Branco was noticed for his work which took painting as its subject matter. He explored the medium in terms of history as well as its inherent conventions. Thus the history of painting informs his works. For example in this case, the vertical strips may remind us of the geometric work of Québec painter Guido Molinari, whereas the red strip covered with blue spirals duplicate a Matisse motif. Branco's work is also a critique of painting's conventional modalities: what seems at first a framed canvas hung on the wall is in fact a single cast and cut out object. Often used in painting, the illusion serves here to cast a critical look at the medium's constraints: the work is both a cast object belonging to the sculptural domain, and a surface almost entirely covered with painting. This gives the work a hybrid aspect, making it definitely post-modern.



***Smoke Rings: Two Concentric Tunnels,
Skewed and Noncommunicating*, 1980**

© Bruce Nauman / SODRAC (Montréal) 2001

Plaster and wood

61 cm. (height) x 462 cm. (diameter)

Bruce Nauman

Born in Fort Wayne (Indiana), USA, in 1941.

Lives and works in Galisteo (New Mexico), USA.

Multidisciplinary artist Bruce Nauman has worked with sculpture as well as video, performance and even installation, using the most diverse materials to produce his pieces. As a result, his almost forty-year long artistic production might seem heterogeneous. The present sculpture is part of a series of works on the theme of rings where he explores how structures occupy closed spaces. Two concentric rings, one of which has a concave section while the other's is convex, spread out across a large surface of the ground, yet are no higher than a meter. Slightly tilted in relation to one another, each ring leaves room for the other, creating a play between solid and void that varies according to the point of view. The tension thus established between both circles produces the illusion of movement, beckoning and driving us to run our gaze over the work in order to grasp the interweaving of the rings.



***Thalès au pied de la spirale*, 1988**

Galvanised iron and wood

235 cm. (height) x 800 cm. (diameter)

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Pierre Granche

Born in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1948.

Died in Montréal (Québec), Canada, in 1997.

Thales of Miletus, the oldest and best known of the Seven Sages of Greek antiquity, was a mathematician, physicist, astronomer and philosopher who lived at the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth century B.C. He apparently introduced the basis of geometry to the Western world. His figure inspired Granche to create this huge sculpture in galvanized iron, made of a spiral rising as it unfolds in space. The surrounding eighteen sculptures illustrate monuments of modern civilisation as well as interpretations of some of Western culture's founding myths. Wishing to integrate his art into the environment where it is located, Granche makes specific references to our urban environment. One can thus recognise certain elements such as the tower of beliefs depicted as a church steeple — examples of which abound in Montréal — and the tower of knowledge represented by the tower of the University of Montréal. The artist proposes a journey through the garden of artefacts of our culture, in search of our collective memory.



***L'Impossible Verticale*, 1995**

Oil on canvas
200 x 150 cm.

Purchased with funds from the Fondation des Amis du Musée
d'art contemporain de Montréal

Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Michel Boulanger

Born in Montmagny (Québec), Canada, in 1959.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

L'Impossible Verticale seems like a freeze-frame on a changing space. With virtuosity and a deft touch recalling traditional landscape, Michel Boulanger constructs a peculiar scene drawn directly from his unbridled imagination. For him, our increasingly fragmented and changing world refuses to be confined within rigid definitions. And so he cannot imagine representing it "using clear and precise contours." In his paintings, especially those produced since the beginning of the 1990s, the sign "does not have a stable designation" — its identity is in flux. The artist thus invites us to carefully examine the painting in order to detect its various elements and possibly assign them an identity. However, the task is not an easy one. The shapes are all ambiguous. Where one sees abstraction, a character emerges; where one thinks he or she recognises something familiar, forms resist and slip away. The painting is then in large part created by the gaze of the spectator who alone can discover all the hidden figures.



Barque n° 6, 1990

Video projector, screen, frame, videodisc player
and colour videodisk, 30 min.

152.4 x 213.4 cm. (screen and frame)

Photo: Denis Farley

Suzanne Giroux

Born in Saint-Georges (Québec), Canada, in 1958.

Lives and works in Saint-Georges (Québec), Canada.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Claude Monet settled in Giverny where he undertook to capture and transpose in painting the play of light in his garden. A century later, Suzanne Giroux travels to Giverny on three occasions to capture the same light but on videotape. Using a slightly out-of-focus camera as an easel, she takes a series of still shots of the garden including *Barque n° 6*. Although the camera is static, the image is not still: as we linger before it, we notice it is constantly changing. The barely perceptible movements are those of nature on a quiet day. The artist calls her works "videopaintings." Neither videotapes nor paintings, they stand at the border between both mediums. The screen becomes a huge canvas where light floats with the evanescence sought-after by the Impressionists. While they wanted to represent the effects of light and the ensuing optic sensations, Giroux's work is light itself. In this sense, she continues and gives new meaning to their quest.



Great Moments in Modern Art II: Joseph Beuys Crashes His Stuka, Russia, 1943, 1983-1984

Corrugated cardboard, acrylic, rice paper, vinyl paper and light
170 x 216 x 233 cm. (dimensions variable according to exhibition
space)

Photo: Denis Farley

Robert Adrian X

Born in Toronto (Ontario), Canada, in 1935.
Lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Robert Adrian X's work is informed, among other things, by anecdotes taken from the life of contemporary artists. Here, he refers to World War II and the time when Joseph Beuys crashed with his aeroplane in Crimea during a snowstorm. Beuys was rescued by the local people who used grease and felt to keep him warm. The anecdote later became extremely important for this artist who used the very same materials in several of his works. The episode was widely circulated in the media which contributed to give it a mythical dimension. This is how a private anecdote becomes a significant moment in art history. Adrian X's work is composed of two elements: the model of a plane in corrugated cardboard, rice paper and acrylic, and a black plastic shadow cast on the wall. This shadow would symbolise the work of art as seen through the prism of the media. Thus the artist invites us, as spectators, to question how works of art are conveyed through the media and, consequently, how the history of art is written.



***Interdit*, 1991**

Acrylic on canvas

167.8 x 355.7 cm.

Gift of the artist

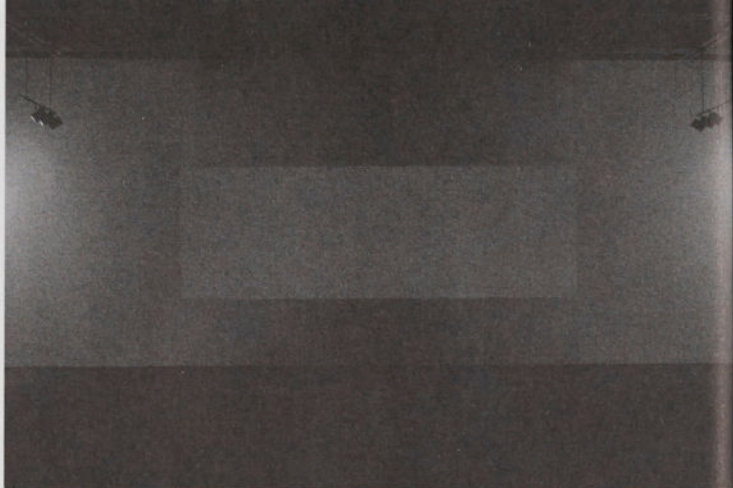
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Richard-Max Tremblay

Born in Bromptonville (Québec), Canada, in 1952.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Richard-Max Tremblay is a photographer and a painter. In his practice, both disciplines follow parallel courses, sometimes uniting in hybrid types of work. Their mutual influence is however apparent in several pieces. Such is the case of *Interdit* where painting shows the use of photographic devices. The overall composition recalls a photo-montage of two elements that have not been put together in real space, but have rather been spotted separately, and then united through a process similar to those used by photographers. The connection between a sacred place and an emblem of modern technology leads to a reflection on the faith we have in science and how it dominates our daily lives. Like communities in the Middle Ages spending time and energy to erect religious buildings, we expend a lot of effort for technological development which in turn becomes an engine in our socio-economic life.



***Atlan*, 1986**

Ultraviolet and light (tungsten)
425 x 888 x 370 cm.

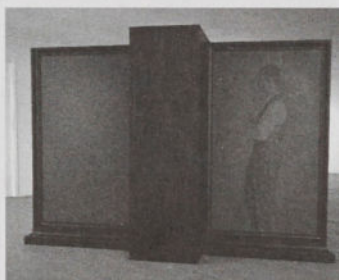
Photo: Denis Farley

James Turrell

Born in Los Angeles (California), USA, in 1943.

Lives and works in Flagstaff (Arizona), USA.

Since the end of the 1960s, James Turrell's installations — also called "perceptual environments" — have been made out of a single material: natural or artificial light. Aside from drawings and plans for his larger sized projects, his entire production presents no objects as such. Turrell explores human vision. In the spaces which he designs, he tries to give material presence to light. In *Atlan*, it becomes almost palpable. Before, or rather within, this work, we hesitate, questioning ourselves on the nature of what we are seeing and interrogating our perceptions. We suddenly become aware of the limits of our vision since it cannot clearly inform us on the nature of this illuminated rectangle before us. And this is the artist's aim: by making us mindful of our perceptions, he is trying to return us to our individual experience of the world. He is not in any way seeking to produce fiction, but rather wishes to leave all the room to the reality of our existence here and now.



***Transept*, 1992**

Oil on canvas and lacquered wood

237 x 343.8 x 99.3 cm. (overall)

Gift

Photos: Richard-Max Tremblay, Jean-Jacques Ringuette

Pierre Dorion

Born in Ottawa (Ontario), Canada, in 1959.

Lives and works in Montréal (Québec), Canada.

Pierre Dorion first presented his paintings inside installations, then left architectural contexts to offer paintings-objects. Here, the form of the work is explained by the title, *Transept*, which refers to the transverse section crossing the principal nave in religious architecture. On two of the four painted panels, the artist proposes his self-portrait. Taking a critical stance, the artist borrows from various artistic trends that have punctuated the history of Western painting. Here, for example, he offers an almost photographic rendition of a character yet situated in an abstract location. Moreover, this space fully expands in the opposite paintings as indefinite colour fields where five perforations have been made on the canvas within a circle symbolising infinity. Thus, the character's gaze seems to be turned toward infinity, in search of some mystical truth. However, since the figure is the artist himself, one might also interpret it as his own observation of the work. The work is resolutely contemporary since it is a reflection on painting illustrated through the medium itself.

Alcan House ■ 1188, rue Sherbrooke Ouest

Opened in 1983, the Alcan House was built by architects from Arcop et associés. It signals the rediscovery of Montréal's urbanity in its architectural and historical diversity, following years of demolition. The ensemble combines the conservation of heritage buildings, such as Lord Atholstan's residence, with the construction of new buildings and the creation of inner and outer public spaces.

Banque Nationale ■ 600, rue de la Gauchetière Ouest

Built in 1983 on the former site of the General Electric Co. head office, the National Bank tower and its twin, occupied by Bell Canada, enclose Victoria Square and offer, from the angle of Beaver Hall Hill, a geometric view emphasised by the outline of the volumes and the stack of glass and aluminium bands designed by architects David Boulva Cleeve.

The Casino de Montréal ■ 1, boulevard du Casino

The Montréal Casino occupies two privileged witnesses of Expo 67 by the river. Designed by the architect Faugeron, the former French pavilion presents a sculptural volume which is echoed in today's architecture; its inner empty space was host to an installation by the composer Xenakis. As for the Québec pavilion, architects Papineau Gérin Lajoie and LeBlanc & Durand explored the transparency of its glass plates to give its refined volume two looks: diurnal and nocturnal.

The Cathedral-Basilica of Mary Queen of the World ■ 1085, rue de la Cathédrale

Following the fire that destroyed the city's Quartier Latin, Bishop Bourget chose to have the cathedral reconstructed near the former Saint-Antoine cemetery (today Dorchester Square), among the Protestant churches which he wished to impress by taking as a model Saint Peter's Cathedral, summoning his architects, Victor Bourgeau and Father Michaud, to Rome to take some measurements. The construction lasted from 1870 to 1894.

Christ Church Cathedral ■ 635, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest

Destroyed by fire, the Anglican Christ Church Cathedral, then located next to the Notre-Dame Basilica, was rebuilt between 1857 and 1859 on Saint Catherine Street, among the Square Mile residences in what was to become the downtown core. Designed by the British Frank Wills, its neo-gothic shapes inspired the architects of the skyscraper and underground shopping centre which have surrounded it since 1988. The stone spire, too heavy for the clayey ground, was dismantled and reproduced in aluminium in 1940.

Cirque du Soleil ■ 8400, 2^e Avenue

The new head office of the Cirque du Soleil was inaugurated in 1997. It received an Orange award in urbanism, which signals this cultural institution's intent to participate in urban renewal. Designed by the architect Dan S. Hanganu in a context requiring the constitution of an inner life for the building, the original head office, since then enlarged several times, testifies to current explorations in architecture, on the theme of volume and metal cladding, inspired by industrial buildings. Its outer lay-out and gardens are also a result of this experimental approach.

The Cité Multimédia ■ 111, rue Duke

The Cité Multimédia has one of Montréal's oldest neighbourhoods — the Faubourg des Récollets urbanised by the developer McCord at the beginning of the nineteenth century — leap from the industrial era to the age of new technology. Its Phase IV occupies part of the former site of the Darling Brothers foundry, built gradually from 1888 to 1941, integrating its 1909 office wing located at the corner of Prince and Ottawa Streets.

Gestion Georges Coulombe: Molson Bank ■ 288, rue Saint-Jacques Ouest

Erected in 1889 at the core of the financial sector, this remarkable building, whose rich ornamentation sculpted in Ohio sandstone draws from the Italian Renaissance, bears at the bottom of its side wall the signature of its architect, George Browne, who also designed the Molson mausoleum on Mount Royal. Above the ground floor openings, money bags express banking activities while figures represent members of the Molson family.

Hydro-Québec ■ 75, boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest

An emblem of Québec modernisation, the building of the Commission hydroélectrique du Québec, renamed Hydro-Québec, was designed by the architect Gaston Gagné in the shapes and colours of the "international style" and was inaugurated in 1962. From the beginning, the lobby was animated by the changing play of light produced by the work of the artist Jean-Paul Mousseau, *Lumière et mouvement dans la couleur* ("Light and Movement in Colour").

Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal ■ 185, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest

Following its location at Château Dufresne near the Botanical Garden and then, for a long time, at the art gallery of Expo 67 at Cité du Havre, the Musée moved downtown in 1992, reinforcing the Place des Arts quadrilateral. In 1984, its design was entrusted to architects Jodoin Lamarre Pratte by competition. The Musée's colonnade and roofs as well as the Métro's shelter, rebuilt for the occasion, reflect an intent typical of the 1980s to re-establish, through figurative elements, scale and relationships within the urban context.

MusiquePlus ■ 355, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest

Built at the beginning of the 1970s in what is often called the "international style," this office building is characterised by its straightforward architecture and steel wall/curtain which also covers the blind common wall, in the spirit of Mies Van Der Rohe, the last director of the Bauhaus who also designed Westmount Square in Montréal and participated in the Nuns' Island project.

Omer DeSerres Inc. ■ 334, rue Sainte-Catherine Est

Like several other 1940s buildings, the former bank evokes, with the symmetric composition of its façade and the treatment of the granite or stainless steel details of its original entrance, the transition taking place at the time between ornamental architecture, stemming from an art deco style, and the barer shapes of modern architecture.

Oxford Québec ■ 1250, boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest

Built on the former site of a bus terminal by New York architects Kohn Pedersen Fox in collaboration with the Montréal firms of Cardinal Hardy and Larose Laliberté Petrucci, this ensemble received an Orange award in 1991 for its development — inner garden, a pergola to soften the wind effects of the tower —, sculptural volume and details which express a desire to redefine Montréal's skyscrapers.

Oxford Québec: Tour L'Industrielle-Vie ■ 2000, avenue McGill College

Built in 1986 from plans by architects Tolchinski Goodz Brian Borroughs, this tower is one of the first examples of post-modern architecture in Montréal. Its façade presents various volumes, an arched entrance and an almost graphic treatment that reuses the idea of individual windows, drawn here on the building's gleaming granite surfaces and contrasting with the glass cliffs of modern buildings. Its introduction contributed to the widening of McGill College Avenue.

Oxford Québec: Tour La Maritime ■ 999, boulevard de Maisonneuve Ouest

This tower was erected in 1986 for Canada Trust whose emblem appears on the pediment. It was designed by architects Tolchinski Goodz who used a post-modern vocabulary, playing with different colours of granite, shapes of openings and elements such as the clock or the cornices, simplified to produce scale effects on its façades and in the remarkable lobby.

Pepsi Forum ■ 2313, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest

The original Forum was built in 1924 by architects Ross & Macdonald, one of Canada's most important firms at the time. A mythical site for sport, entertainment and civic activities, it underwent major renovations in 1968. It was then, between two hockey seasons, that gigantic steel structures were installed to suspend the roof and clear the inner area of the former columns. Closed in 1996, it has become an urban leisure activity centre, thanks to Canderel and the ScénoPlus agency.

Place des Arts ■ 175, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest

The project for a cultural complex inspired by New York's Metropolitan Center came with the arrival of Jean Drapeau at City Hall. Designed by the architects of Arcop et associés, Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier was inaugurated in 1963 on the former site of the Commercial Academy and the mount called Plateau. It is the first part of a huge urban project which would extend to the Congress Centre twenty years later. It is a key component of underground Montréal as well as a venue for festivals.

Quebecor inc.: Vidéotron ■ 300, rue Viger Est

This building, designed by architects Provencher Roy for the National Bank, received in 1990 one of the Orange awards given each year by Sauvons Montréal to underline excellence in architecture. Vidéotron won it for having contributed to close up the gap left by the Ville-Marie autoroute. Like other projects in the 1980s, the building is characterised, inside, by an atrium and the search for natural light and, outside, by a colonnade which translates a desire to establish better relationships with the street.

Saint Patrick's Basilica ■ 454, boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest

Inaugurated on March 17th 1847, Saint Patrick's Basilica testifies to the presence of Irish people in Montréal. Turned towards Victoria Square — at the time a major centre for urban activities — it was built from plans by Pierre-Louis Morin et Father Félix Martin in neo-gothic style, more affirmed on the outside, and decorated under the supervision of Victor Bourgeau. Its painted decorations and panelling were recently restored.

SITQ Immobilier ■ 1981, avenue McGill College

A pioneer in the transformation of McGill-College into a prestige avenue for offices, this former site of the Banque Nationale de Paris was constructed in 1982 from plans by architects Webb Zerafa Menkès Houdsen. The complex outline of its volume, increased by the choice of mirror glass as cladding, makes it a particularly flamboyant modernist building.

Sun Life Financial ■ 1155, rue Metcalfe

Founded in Old Montréal, Sun Life chose to move to Dominion Square, on the former site of the YMCA and the Knox Presbyterian Church. The construction of what was to be the Empire's most impressive building for a short period, was entrusted to Toronto architects Darling & Pearson who provided a neo-classic style to the ensemble, and lasted from 1914 to 1931. Behind its 50,000 tons of Stanstead granite, the Sun Life Building conceals the beginning of an inner city foreshadowing the multipurpose buildings of underground Montréal.

Ville de Montréal: Édifice Lucien-Saulnier ■ 155, rue Notre-Dame Est

The former Courthouse was built between 1851 and 1856 from plans by John Ostell, an English architect and surveyor established in Montréal, and Henri-Maurice Perrault; its neo-classical, grey stone volume was supplemented in 1894 with a storey topped by a dome, designed by Alphonse Raza and Maurice Perrault, to house the judges' library. Among others, it accommodated the Olympic Games' Organising Committee. Its interior was recently restored and still has several rooms whose decoration dates back to the nineteenth century.

World Trade Centre Montréal ■ 393, rue Saint-Jacques Ouest

Inaugurated in 1992, the World Trade Centre transformed a complete city block in Old Montréal, which it connected to Montréal's underground network. An immense atrium over the Ruelle des Fortifications follows the original line of the old city walls built by the French and demolished in the early nineteenth century. Some of the outside façades were kept, and at 363 Saint-Jacques, where archaeological remains were discovered, the old Nordheimer piano store built in 1888 by John J. Browne was restored.

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