

## BROKEN MUSIC, AN EXHIBITION IN PROGRESS

URSULA BLOCK



**I**N THE SMALL SPACE at gelbe MUSIK, in the beginning, I just showed a few essential works. Hamburg's larger space made it possible to present different aspects of the idea of artists' records. Artists' records I would define as works by visual artists created with and for the medium of the record.

The next exhibition at the daadgalerie, *Broken Music*, was accompanied by a catalogue. The inspiration for the new title I took from Milan Knizak: "In 1965 I started to destroy records: scratch them, punch holes in them, break them. By playing them over and over again (which destroyed the needle and often the record player too) an entirely new music was created — unexpected, nerve-racking and aggressive. Compositions lasting one second or almost infinitely long (as when the needle got stuck in a deep groove and played the same phrase over and over again). I developed this system further. I began sticking tapes on top of records, painting over them, burning them, cutting them up and gluing parts of different records back together, etc. to achieve the widest possible variety of sounds."

"I was not interested in any kind of music already existing — so I had to make my own," explained Jean Dubuffet. He "made" it with the simplest mechanical aids: "Having set up one of the rooms in my house as a music studio, in the intervals between my sessions with Asger Jorn, I undertook to do the whole orchestra by myself, going one by one through all my instruments (a good fifty or so), using the tape recorder's capacity to superimpose recordings, that is, playing and recording all the parts one after another onto the same tape, which then reconstitutes them all simultaneously. I worked by small fragments, erasing and redoing the bad sequences and cutting, joining and sticking the tape back together with the aid of scissors and sticky paper."

Besides Knizak and Dubuffet, artists such as Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Duchamp, John Cage, Nam June Paik and Lawrence Weiner, and also younger artists such as Christian Marclay and Piotr Nathan, are key figures in the creative use of records. This exhibition tries to define their positions and, as far as possible, determine their historical roots.

It shows examples of original record works by Knizak, Marclay and Boyd Rice, among others. These were preempted theoretically and practically by Moholy-Nagy, who sought to engrave his composition directly onto the uncut record surface. "I have suggested changing the gramophone from a reproductive instrument to a productive one, so that on a record without prior acoustic information, the acoustic phenomenon itself originates by engraving the necessary *Ritzschreibung* ("rows of scratches")."

Many of the records in this exhibition function simply as acoustic memories or documents as by Schwitters, Yves Klein, Allan Kaprow, Wolf Vostell or the *selten gehörte Musik* (music seldom heard). Other object-records come out of a play on the word *Sound-Disc* (in German *Schall-Platte*) or from a literal translation of technical terms: *Single taken from LP* (Claus Böhmler), or *Lissten!* (Stuart Sherman), a record which is part score, part recording of a composition by Franz Liszt.

John Cage's *33 1/3*, a composition for 12 record players and 100 records (different records but all with the same label), is a discrete installation. Visitors to the exhibition are directed to a compositional game: out of the concrete material,



**Künstlerschallplatten,  
Artists' Records.  
gelbe MUSIK, Berlin, 1986**

**Künstlerschallplatten,  
Artists' Records.  
Galerie Vorsetzen,  
Hamburg, 1987**

**Broken Music.  
daadgalerie, Berlin, 1989**

**Broken Music.  
Autour du disque.  
Magasin, Grenoble, 1989**

**Broken Music.  
Artists' Records.  
A Satellite Exhibition  
of the 8th Biennale  
of Sydney at the  
Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 1990**

**Broken Music.  
Musée d'art contemporain  
de Montréal, 1990**

LEFT: Milan Knizak.  
*Destroyed Music*,  
1963-1979.  
Photo: Werner Zellien.  
RIGHT: Nam June Paik.  
*Random Access*,  
1963-1982 (detail).  
Records and record players.  
Photo: Margret Nissen.

# Suzanne Giroux's *Giverny, le temps mauve*

*Contemplating History... Beyond Modernism*

DANIEL CARRIÈRE

**F**ROM A STARTING point of figurative painting and revelations from her teaching of the subject, Suzanne Giroux has now gone on to tackle, in video, the work of Monet and the foundations of modernism.

After setting up the visual arts department at the Séminaire de Saint-Georges de Beauce in the mid-eighties, Suzanne Giroux obtained a post-graduate diploma in aesthetics at the Sorbonne, which followed a master's in art history at the Université de Montréal. She taught creative practice at the Université du Québec à Montréal, among other places, until 1988, and is now writing her Ph.D. thesis under the direction of René Passeron, once again at the Sorbonne.

*Revisiter le modèle*, her first exhibition, presented at the P.R.I.M. Vidéo gallery in March 1989, faithfully repeated the compositions of Goya and Matisse – the fabrics, the svelte, nude women, with their dark gaze – and began to plunge, although timidly perhaps, into the hypnotic shimmerings of Impressionism. The exhibition was a great success, and the artist achieved an unexpected impact.

The conclusion of this video experiment, which managed to create the illusion of a traditional painting through an installation that concealed its technology, without, however, totally denying it, was fascinating. Between the three million-odd points of light in the cathode ray tube screen and the pointillism of the neo-Impressionists, it was only a short, easy step, if (for those who remember it) you look at the shimmering river that reflected *L'Odalisque au bain*.

With *Giverny, le temps mauve*, instead of the mirror of the mind, so dear to Monet, we have the



ABOVE: Suzanne Giroux. *Étang et pont japonais*, 1990. Video projection. Photo: Denis Farley.  
BELOW: Suzanne Giroux. *Pont japonais No 4*, 1989. Video projection. Photo: Denis Farley.

screen of the soul. The large video-paintings (giant screens) by Suzanne Giroux – two boats, three ponds and three water lilies – are even more immobile than painting, and more animated than video. They jostle the fragile borderline between pigments and ions... and call into question our relationship with the imaginary and the abstract.

Giroux has examined the Giverny subjects through the light of art history, but she has above all drawn from an aesthetic which, long ago, turned our conception of beauty upside down, so that it was suddenly subjective, suddenly impenetrable.

"I play quite consciously on beauty," she explains, "but for *Giverny* I needed more 'nerve,'

if I can put it that way, because the beauty becomes even more pronounced. I think that after Clemente and company, after the depressive phase of recent years, people are ready to see beautiful things. I do it a little by way of provocation – 'you want beauty, well, you've got it!' That's one aspect of my work.

"I didn't go to Monet's house because it was any old garden. I went there for the reference, the quotation. With my camera, with the way I work, I am looking, years later, for the foundations of modernism. I transpose elements of modernism to our world, to our own time."

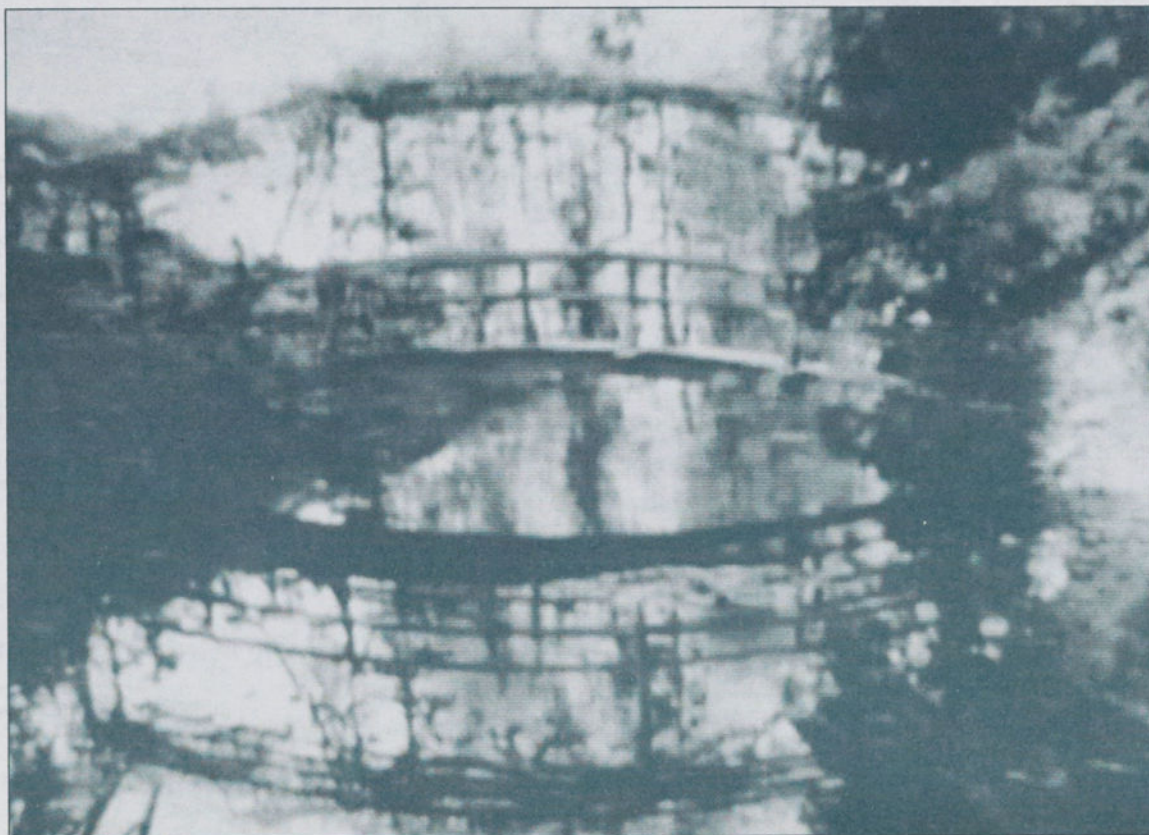
Faithful to her original concerns, her work always involves representation, a representation

in which visitors, who never have the work right in front of their eyes, because it is always moving past them in real time, are solely

**With *Giverny, le temps mauve*, instead of the mirror of the mind, so dear to Monet, we have the screen of the soul.**

responsible for its reality. Her work using light is then continued by the scattered flashes of sun, the evanescent outlines of objects, and the way they dissolve into the dying day.

*Daniel Carrière is the editor of Etc. Montréal magazine and has written on video art since 1986, mainly for Le Devoir and for Ciné-bulles film magazine. He is also the author of biographies of filmmakers, written for teenagers.*



**HAVE WORKED WITH RECORDS** and record players in the visual arts field since 1975. In this connection, I have carried out several performances and installations questioning the relationship between sound and image and placing the history of art and music in context with various components (and live musicians, too, on occasion), always using that basic tool, the record player (a way into the work, and something everyone has in common, because everyone has records and a record player at home — both children and adults, at all levels of society).

The record player is a key object of our modern age, just like the camera, and its influence on artists in all categories of expression has been considerable throughout this century. The record player was described by Jacques Perriault as being, originally, the equivalent of a "dark-room" for sound (see his *Mémoires de l'ombre et du son*, Flammarion, 1981). Indeed, its use has profoundly shaped modern sensibility and the contemporary collective imagination.

The present exhibition speaks, in its own (non-didactic) way, of the evolution of the vinyl record and the record player in the twentieth century (the latter device as a small, visual theatre of sound), and of their eventual disappearance in these last years of the century with the advent of the compact disc, although this new technology is itself likely to be overtaken by another, more sophisticated apparatus in the future, and so on. The 20th century will thus have been the century of the record player and of sound as an object, the music object, a new raw material to be used in a creative way to reinvent the universe.

In this exhibition, I present 15 or so new pieces of various sizes, mostly smaller and more stripped-down, if you like, than my usual installations. The basic materials include a wide range of devices (from Edison's cylinder phonograph to Berliner's gramophone, and the latest turntables), records of all kinds (from the 78 to the compact disc), and various objects and photographs in different contexts.

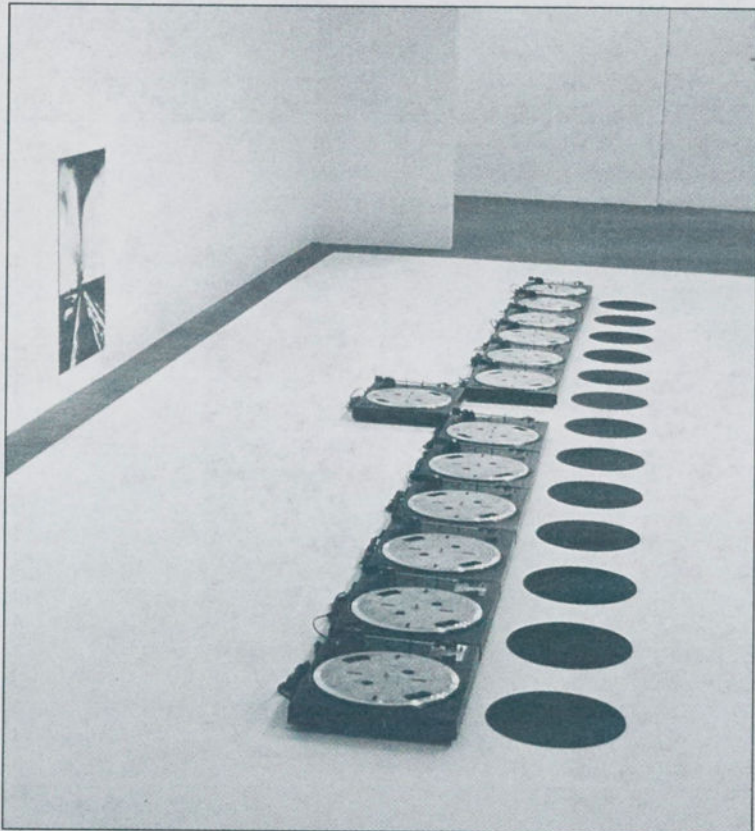
There is no sound in the exhibition, no movement, no text. Everything is on the floor, and everything operates in silence, everything talks about sound in silence. What is special this time is that the subject of the exhibition is the medium itself, the record and the record player, whereas previously, the initial themes were often exterior to the medium (Ives, Rousseau, Debussy and Beckett, for example) and used the record player as a means of investing these themes, without, however, making it the prime subject of the investigation.

Nevertheless, some of my pieces in this exhibition once again evoke human figures, but starting this time from the record player and the record, from what these suggest, and not the other way around. That is the case with Emile Berliner, for example, the inventor of the phonograph disc, who lived in Montréal around the turn of the century, the painters Robert and Sonia Delaunay and their son Charles (the first discographer of the history of jazz), as well as the artist Robert Smithson, reinterpreted through the record player, and the famous tenor Enrico Caruso (already in 1902 the first superstar of the still-young record industry).

Finally, this panorama is completed by a series of "still lifes with record player," along with the creation of a record jacket that is accessible to the public, to accompany an imaginary record bringing together sound-poet Claude Gauvreau and composer Pierre Mercure (éditions Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal). The record (or its jacket, in this case) is like a small portable installation that travels easily, like a letter in the mail, a particular acoustic concept sent off into the world to communicate with other individuals.

In fact, the record player has enabled us to partly reconstruct our planet, the earth, in our own homes and at a distance, via the accessibility, which has been constantly growing throughout this century, of the musics of the world, from the five continents and every category. For some musicians, moreover, these musics sparked the invention of new types of music, and the record and record player themselves (as well as the compact disc today) have become, with time, full-fledged musical instruments, which no longer merely reproduce past sound but are now used to directly produce a different music, by methods other than that of their original function. They consequently also contribute to creating a new listening audience.

Along the same lines, my work in performance and installation involves, in its own way, two complementary types of listening experience: sound listening (constantly renewed, on the site), and visual listening, according to a set of devices that allows visitors to see sound and listen to the exhibition.



Exhibitions

## Disques et tourne-disques

RAYMOND  
GERVAIS

Raymond Gervais. *Disques noirs*, 1990.  
13 record players, 13 black turntables, photograph.  
5.48 x 2.74 m. Photo: Louis Lussier.

the 100 records, something unexpected and new can be created every time.

"... Though people think they can use records as music, what they have to finally understand is that they have to use them as records. And music instructs us, I would say, that the uses of things, if they are meaningful, are creative; therefore the only lively thing that will happen with a record is if somehow you would use it to make something which

(Continued)

## BROKEN MUSIC

it isn't. If you could for instance make another piece of music with a record, including a record and other sounds of the environment or other musical instruments, that I would find interesting..."

Nam June Paik's sound sculpture *Random Access* (record-shaslik) allows anyone to try similar methods of "composing," in this case with a hand-held stylus.

A constant confrontation takes place between the visual and the acoustic, as medium and tool converge "to sculpt a noise/sound," capturing sound in plastic form, at the same time using shaped "frozen" sound as plastic material. "It is time as transitoriness, unending in muted music" (Adorno).

Whereas Ben Vautler uses the record as an acoustic set piece to compose a sculpture, Christian Marclay covers the floor with records, making some visitors to the exhibition (who still play along enthusiastically with Cage and Paik) hesitate; the conditioned impulse to leave no traces on a record is too strong. Piotr Nathan covers the walls with hundreds of *Snowflakes* cut out of records.

Claus Böhmler shows us his record archive on video in one single take in a medium that is normally reserved for motion. K.P. Brehmer — inspired by Tim Wilson, who can read his records — depicts acoustic signals in a drawing.

The medium of the record seems to fascinate "folk artists" as well. A showcase filled with all kinds of curiosities demonstrates this. Peter Cochrane, a critic in Sydney, wrote about *Broken Music* that: "... it is a mixture of the weird, the wonderful and the whimsical. The latter is represented by a display cabinet containing, among other things: packets of cat food, which include a 2½-minute-long plastic recording for children; a rack of 15 scorched singles, which look like burned toast; records made of pure chocolate, for those melting moments with your loved one."

Record covers as original art works, such as those designed by visual artists, give additional information. They comprise a list of artists' names that represents something like a history of art of the 20th century.

In Montréal this list will be enriched by Québec and Canadian artists involved in the subject. Special installations, for example by Raymond Gervais, will complete the exhibition in a decisive way.

Ursula Block is co-curator of the *Broken Music* exhibition, originally produced in Germany. Ms. Block will be present at the closing of the exhibition at the Musée, on February 10, 1991.

Raymond Gervais' recent works will be presented at the Musée starting November 4.

## GUIDO MOLINARI

In Retrospect

JAMES D.

CAMPBELL

**I**N THE 1950s, in Montréal, without warning, there emerged an artist whose work would soon become epochal in the history of Canadian painting. Not only the incredibly high calibre of his work but the extraordinary eloquence and polemical zeal of his theoretical positions would guarantee him ascension into the firmament of high art. This painter would in 1952 execute paintings in darkness, and later while blindfolded, acts construed as exemplars of — and admired for — their extreme creative anarchy. The artist's name, as many readers will have guessed by now, is Guido Molinari.

Molinari was compelled, from the first, to accomplish a real radicalization of painting, by which I mean the systematic and uncompromising eradication of those presuppositions and assumptions that had weakened and rendered archaic so much of the painting, including the abstract painting, that had preceded it. Molinari pursued this radicalization in and through extensive

through Friedrich Nietzsche, the Russian anarchists, and much poetry — had a very considerable impact not only on his thinking processes and his values, but on the very way that he would conceive the task of painting from then on, i.e., that it should represent a complete break from the past.

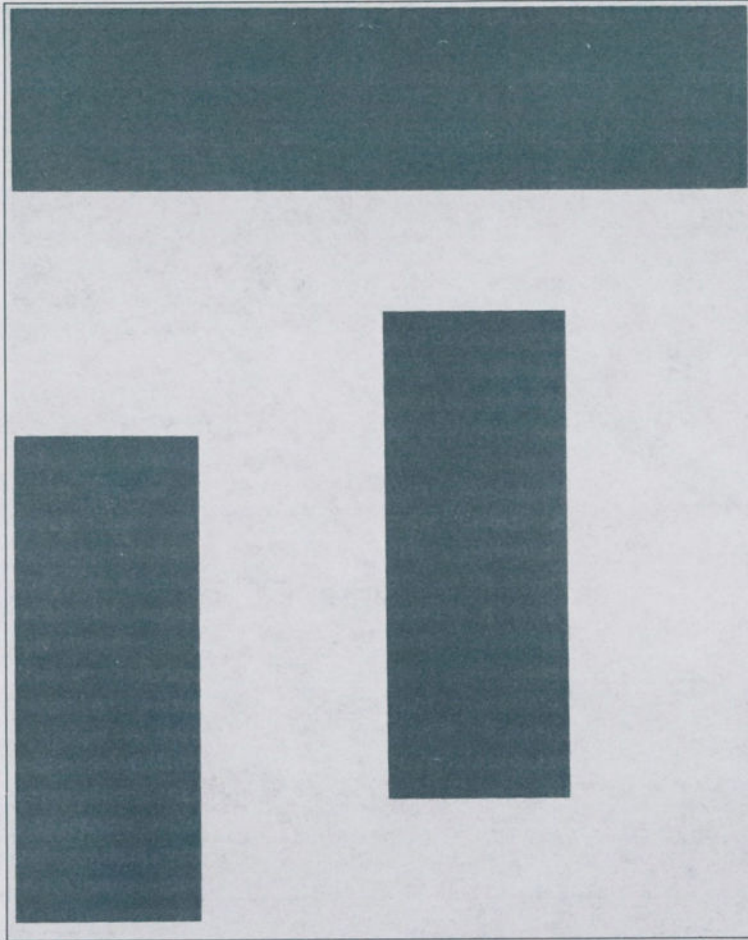
It was in the summer of 1951 that Molinari discovered James Johnson Sweeney's seminal article, entitled "Mondrian the Dutch and De Stijl" in *Artnews*. The article included letters Mondrian had written in the 1940s, which voiced most of his central concerns in painting. Molinari was immediately taken by Mondrian's ideas. The distinction that Mondrian made between static balance and dynamic equilibrium was one that seemed both intellectually and intuitively right to the young artist. Given his anarchic nature, Mondrian's emphasis on the methodological use of the *destructive element* in painting was especially formative. However, Molinari was not uncritical in his reading of Mondrian, both his theory and his practice. He held that Mondrian had failed to utterly eradicate the "linear, pictorial energy" of the line. In other words, he held that Mondrian had not pushed his own destructive practice far enough.

Molinari's radicalization of painting itself had its true genesis in 1951 with the execution of *Émergence II* and related paintings in his studio on Mentana Street in Montréal. They were painted in darkness, and these works, as well as others executed later while blindfolded, remain as fresh and seminal, as provocative and uncompromising today as they were when first executed. These works are remarkable for critically addressing both the presuppositions and programmatic claims of more traditional preceding work and the relentless dynamism that characterizes their volatile surfaces. As historian Robert Welsh once noted, these works registered an original desire to transcend the automatist technique of spontaneous improvisation by carrying that technique to an ultimate extreme. Molinari was also driven to realize Mondrian's imperative to destroy cubistic space.

In the fall of 1951, his exemplary researches already well under way, Molinari enrolled as a student at the School of Art and Design of the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, after having finished an extension course given by the painter Marian Scott. He remained at the school until the end of the second semester in 1952. In 1951, Molinari was well

aware of the works of Québécois painter Paul-Émile Borduas and the automatists. Molinari admired Borduas greatly. But he was one of the first to seriously question both Borduas' approach

Alfred Jarry]. . . What does Molinari want? Is Molinari a madman? No. Very simply, Guido [or Guidon] is a noble prophet of freedom. . . Molinari is a prophet of freedom and intellectual fertility."



Guido Molinari. *Noir ascendant*, 1956-1957. Serigraph, 8/90. 80.5 x 64 cm. Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

to painting and the central tenets of automatism. More specifically, Molinari was critical of the vestigial illusionism in Borduas' painting. He saw it as an attenuating factor, and unnecessary and archaic presupposition carried over from cubism and used in an unquestioning way. In perpetuating the illusion of three-dimensional space, Molinari held that the work of the automatists had finally to be construed as somewhat reactionary.

The paintings that were executed in darkness continued into 1952 and betray what was to become Molinari's unique style of structuration. As he has since expressed it:

"A constancy in my compositional structuring of space, e.g., a more

During the next several years, Molinari would be preoccupied with painting and drawing. He exhibited his work widely. He was the indisputable leader of the *Plasticien* school of painting in Montréal, wresting authority from the *Automatiste* group. In 1955 he would write an important essay entitled "*The 'Blob' or the Automatism Situation*." In this important article, Molinari drew some significant distinctions between Canadian and American automatism. It also served as an early vehicle for articulating his own approach to painting. One senses his ongoing affinity for the theory and practice of Piet Mondrian. In mid-to-late 1955, Molinari made a crucial breakthrough in his work. In the series

**The work of Guido Molinari represents abstract painting at its most sophisticated and its most human; his paintings qualify as the *sine qua non* of human understanding and need.**

static left side, a rather vertical movement at left, then a movement towards the top right corner, with a counterbalance mass towards the bottom right corner."

This abstract structuring of space is implicit throughout all of the early work, and the thematic left-right asymmetry betrays the primordial presence of the asymmetric "glance curve." This central, reflexive perceptual process — a left-right movement and a left-right scanning process — is a most important discovery in these paintings.

In 1953, the automatist poet and polemicist Claude Gauvreau wrote what is still the most revealing assessment of the young artist:

"In Montréal in 1953, with my own eyes, I saw Guido Molinari, Canadian painter and poet, fall guilty of the same heroism [as

of small brush and ink drawings, *mass*, rather than line, becomes the cardinal element. The works exploit the possibilities of multiple mass and directional relationships and the presence of a dynamic equilibrium in these works is still remarkable to observe.

He was then compelled to continue his exploration of the implications of the black masses on white paper. He was drawn to experimenting on a larger scale, and embarked on the *Black and White Paintings* which must count among being the most important he has executed. In a painting like *Abstraction* (1955) the declarative black form, rather than receding into the plane as one might expect, instead achieves a radical equivalence with the white form, interlocking together with it in the plane and forming a dynamic surface equilibrium

which is awesome and absolute. This painting was followed by many others in which a virtual spatial reversibility obtains, strongly implying the primordial relational structure of subject and world. The next several years were to be fertile ones for Molinari, who drew and painted feverishly. A work like *Contrepoint* (1960) expresses a totally open structure. It was the last to use the implication of the horizontal line. In the *Serial paintings* which followed Molinari would thematize the formal structure of hard-edged coloured stripes. He became increasingly sensitive to the spatial "personality" of various colour-terms, and the infinite possibilities of their interactions. In a painting like *Sérial Bleu-Orange* (1968), a sequence of eight colours is repeated twice across the painting plane, and the outer colours, blue and orange, interact in the centre. We are here engulfed by the dynamism of the painting space which seems to shift relentlessly in the seeing, expanding and contracting, and opening up to the enquiring eye an immeasurable space that ensnares us. But it is a space that we, embodied subjects, supply. Molinari has often held that there is no space inside painting, but that "space [is] something created by the spectator." The *Serial paintings* were to preoccupy him throughout the 1960s, but at the end of that decade and into the early 1970s he utilized a wide spectrum of formal structures, including triangular and square forms. Mass of colour now takes on a primacy it never had before. These paintings led Molinari to embark upon a series of works that are becoming increasingly appreci-



Guido Molinari



reflection, not only on the act of painting but also on what painting can *mean*, what sense and experience it can still hold in store for us, jaded observers, today.

Molinari's model for emulation at the time — and his admiration has been unwavering since — was Piet Mondrian. His reflection was also helped along by the unusual and even provocative researches he was carrying on both within and outside painting.

In terms of his personal development, it should be pointed out that the year 1950 marked a turning point for the artist. He was sixteen years of age and was struck down by tuberculosis. Convalescing at home, he read omnivorously, and what he read — including a wide spectrum of philosophic thought, from the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre

A WORK BY  
ARNAUD MAGGS

MANON BLANCHETTE

**A**RNAUD MAGGS has created and worked with images since 1950, but it is only since 1965 that he has devoted himself to commercial fashion photography, and since 1975 that he has produced works con-

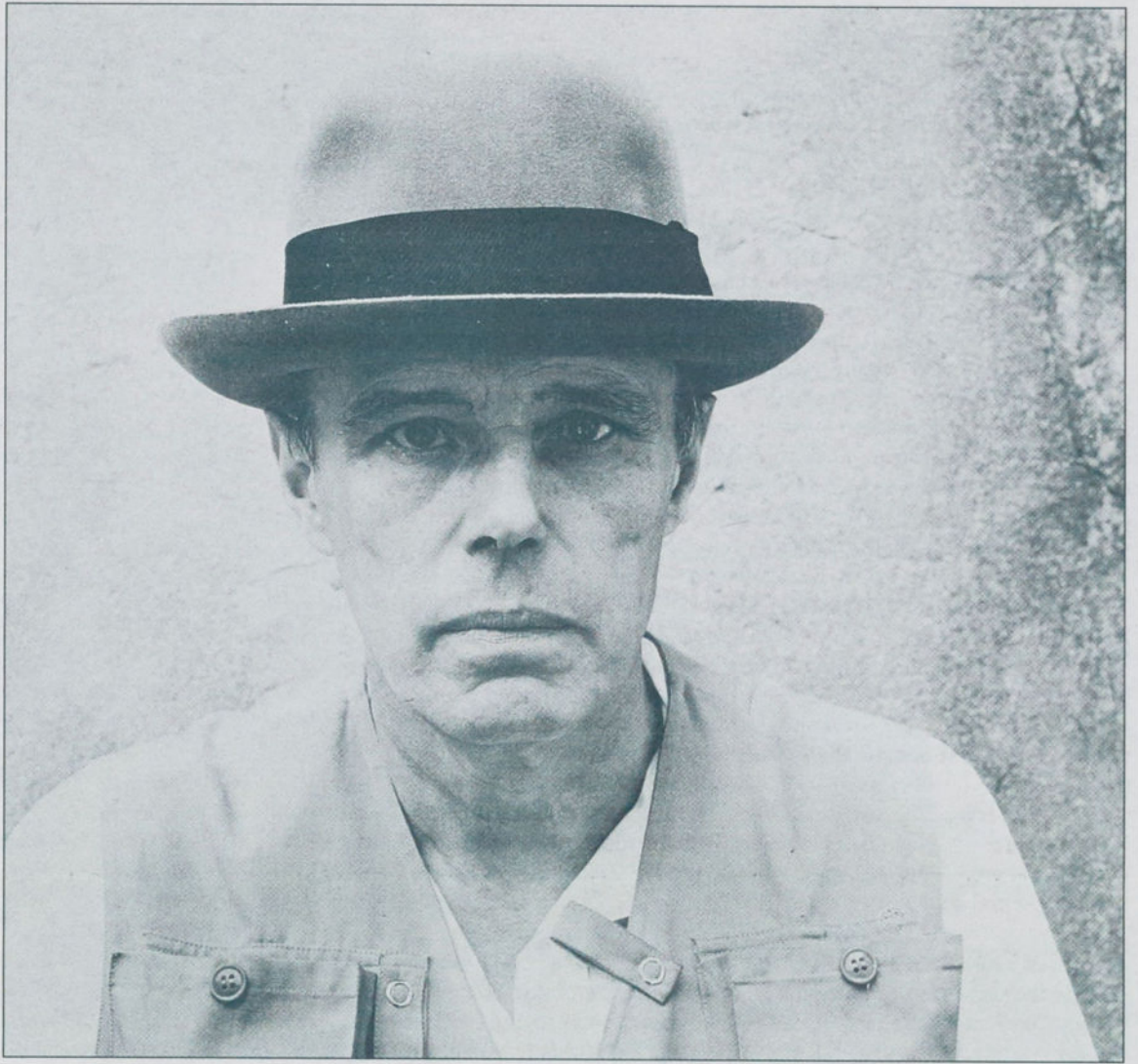
intense concentration and we are rewarded by being granted passage over the threshold where colour is no longer colour as we ordinarily perceive it, but rather more completely itself, a relentless colour/space dynamism that stakes an unavoidable claim upon us. His exhibition of the *Quantificateurs* at the Musée d'art contemporain early in the fall of 1979 has justifiably been called the single most important artistic experience of the decade in Montréal; historian and curator Dennis Reid has called it "the triumph of painting."

Over the course of the last decade, Molinari has continued to extend the possibilities inherent in the series called *Quantificateurs*. Recent series include *Quantificateurs bleus*, *Quantificateurs rouges* and, lately, paintings marked by more uniformly subdued colour-schemas which call to mind the classic early *Quantificateurs* of the late 1970s. These recent series also exercise a powerful somatic claim on the engaged viewer. A dynamic planar movement is created that has nothing whatsoever to do with the constraints of linear perspective. Molinari enhances the density of certain zones in a given painting, thereby catching the observer up in a primordial and rhythmic pulse that is perpetuated as our eyes are swept through zones of lighter and darker value.

The development of Molinari's work always bears the imprint of, as psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut once said of Pablo Picasso, an "eternally restless search to find some tactile-visual orientation." This perennial search is reflected in every painting that Molinari has executed, and his success in finding it attests as much to the formal strength of his work as to the promise that that work holds in store for us, as human beings relentlessly searching for our own tactile-visual orientation. The work of Guido Molinari represents abstract painting at its most sophisticated and its most human; his paintings qualify as the *sine qua non* of human understanding and need.

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will present a retrospective of Molinari's works in 1995.

James D. Campbell is an independent curator and writer on art living in Montréal. He has written extensively on abstract painters and painting, including *Molinari Studies* (1987), a selection of essays on different series in the career of Guido Molinari, and a major essay on the painter's early work in *The Black and White Paintings* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 1989). He has also written monographs on Gerhard Merz and Ron Martin, among others.



sisting mainly of portrait series. ■ A prime example of these portraits, which was recently acquired by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, pays tribute to one of the most illustrious of German artists, Joseph Beuys. As he does in most of his previous works, Maggs shows us a sense of system and order here. By repeating a similar image of Beuys over and over, in *Joseph Beuys: 100 Frontal Views Düsseldorf October 21st 1980*, he leads viewers to a perception of the details of this artist's face. Beuys, a legend of contemporary German art, is shown to us in his most human, most specific, aspect. Through a closer examination of each portrait, the viewer becomes aware of the notion of time implicit in the work, since each shot is at once different and the same. ■ Taking in the whole work in a single look yields an objective surface effect, while an apprehension of each image, in turn, has the opposite effect of bringing out the subjective dimension of Beuys' face. Each portrait, which is nevertheless unique in time and space, loses its capacity for meaning with the strategic effect of repetition. ■ Arnaud Maggs successfully uses this method to serve his purpose, which is to offer a lesson – a lesson on perception and its limits, a lesson on the appearance of things. He suggests, finally, that only a certain attention to detail assures us of a proper reading of the message conveyed by people and things. ■ Manon Blanchette has been Chief Curator of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal since 1986.

Arnaud Maggs. Joseph Beuys: 100 Frontal Views Düsseldorf October 21st 1980, detail, 1980. Black and white photograph. Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

## TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

CHRISTINE BERNIER

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal's travelling exhibitions have enjoyed a remarkable boom in recent years. They effectively contribute to asserting the Musée's presence on the international scene.

**A LITTLE BACKGROUND** The Musée set up a travelling exhibitions department in July 1976. The goal was then to meet a serious challenge, by introducing a province-wide network of travelling exhibitions devoted exclusively to contemporary Québec art. Understandably, the first objective of this department was educational, as the target audience was made up in large part of students. From 1976 to 1979, exhibitions consisting essentially of works from the permanent collection thus toured Québec, visiting museums, cegeps and high schools. Still with a teaching goal in view, the department then devised an instruction manual intended to make work easier for the exhibition centres. In these early years, it was a matter of bringing contemporary art to the regions, as well as of contributing to the development of museum equipment that was clearly inadequate at the time.

**THE MUSÉE'S SPREADING INFLUENCE** Ten years later, Québec had acquired a solid network of accredited museums and exhibition centres with proper museological equipment. The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, for its part, offered the host museums, which had become more autonomous, more complex exhibitions: works that had been recently produced and were not necessarily part of the permanent collection, international works, large pieces, etc. Because the Musée's travelling exhibitions were meant to contribute to the Musée's outreach beyond its walls, it further became important to develop the circulation network with a view to Canadian and international presentation.

**THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE** To promote its exhibitions outside the province as well, in order to make Québec artists known on the international scene, the Musée has organized more than 60 presentations of eight different exhibitions since 1987. Of this large number of stopping places, 47 were located in Québec, 11 elsewhere in Canada and five in the United States and Europe. Notable examples include the *Les temps chauds* exhibition, which was presented in Toulouse, France and Mons, Belgium, and will end its tour in Regina, Saskatchewan, from November 6, 1990 to January 3, 1991, and the exhibition *Ewen, Gagnon, Gaucher, Hurtubise, McEwen: À propos d'une peinture des années soixante*, which has been seen in New York City, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

**OPERATING SYSTEM** The travelling exhibitions sector also endeavours to offer the maximum range of services to Québec museums and exhibition centres, by covering the main presentation costs. In return for quite modest rental fees, the Musée provides free catalogues as well as press kits with photographs, and looks after all transportation of the works. Regional museums may thus take advantage of major exhibitions relatively inexpensively.

Each exhibition travels for about two years. The travelling exhibitions sector presents two new exhibitions, on average, every year. A travelling exhibitions catalogue distributed yearly to the curators of a large number of museums and exhibition centres enables them to learn about the exhibitions offered and reserve any that interest them. The sector also remains in contact with various agencies that book travelling exhibitions, such as The American Federation of Arts, the Humanities Exchange (Florida), and the international exhibitions division of Communications Canada.

The *Propos d'art contemporain — Figures d'accumulation* exhibition, soon to be presented in Lyon, France, is now concluding a Montréal tour organized in cooperation with the Conseil des arts de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal. By such collaborative efforts, the travelling exhibitions sector can provide the opportunity for productive new associations between the Musée and other organizations.

Looking ahead to the Musée's move to downtown Montréal, the travelling exhibitions sector is carefully planning the growth of its network. It is establishing a dynamic operating system that will allow major exhibitions to be regularly exported internationally, while continuing to support Québec exhibition centres and develop new projects designed for its partners who, with their enthusiastic reception of the travelling exhibitions program, have greatly contributed to the expansion of this sector.

Christine Bernier has been the Coordinator of Travelling Exhibitions at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal since 1987.

## Activities for Families and Friends Sound Machines

FRANCE AYMONG

**SOUND PROCESSORS** and synthesizers tempt the voices and hands of visitors, whether they are interested in sound, technology, or just plain curious. ■ For the artists of *Broken Music*, records and discography seem to be no longer mere means of reproduction, but rather, new means of production. In a similar spirit, the activity entitled *Machines à sons* (sound machines) reproduces, reproduces and produces over again from that reproduction, creates and even sculpts concrete sounds (human voice, surrounding noises, etc.) and, finally, explores the world of digital sounds, that is, the sounds produced by the equipment that has emerged from current music technology. ■ Come explore the possibilities of a sound processor or synthesizer, imitate a sound you have heard by altering the parameters of a program, create acoustic textures using the repetition of sequences of sound, or try any of the other experiments on this very current menu of sound-related activities.

December 2, 1 to 5 p.m., at the Studio du Musée

All are welcome to attend this free activity. Children 13 and under should be accompanied by an adult.

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## Corridor Exploring the World of Sound

*A Long Play for Broken Music  
and Raymond Gervais*

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DANIELLE LEGENTIL

**FROM NOVEMBER 4**, 1990 to February 10, 1991, the Musée will offer visitors to the exhibitions *Broken Music* and *Raymond Gervais, travaux récents; disques et tourne-disques* a workshop exploring the world of sound. ■ Originally conceived for the Musée de la civilisation in Québec City, to accompany the exhibition *Du cylindre au laser*, the exploration corridor has been altered to suit the needs of a series of themes specifically relating to the phonograph record. ■ The workshop, which is a kind of self-guided tour, invites visitors of all ages to see, touch and understand certain physical phenomena surrounding the propagation of sound and the making of a record. Each of the themes is illustrated by a written text and a photograph and verified by a scientific experiment. The first section deals with how sound waves are transmitted, and the second, with the characteristics, or signature, of this transmission. The third looks at auditory perception, while the final section explores analogue and digital recording. If your time is short (for those in a hurry . . . the 78 rpm version), you absolutely must observe the grooves of a record under a microscope and see the video of how a record is made. For those slightly less rushed (the 45 rpm version): follow the 78 rpm itinerary, plus measure the intensity of your voice using a sonometer, and observe on an oscilloscope the signature of a musical instrument of your choice, selected by means of a synthesizer keyboard. And for the really keen, the 33 rpm version: the 78 and 45 rpm itineraries, plus trigger a ringing inside a vacuum bell jar, identify the different parts of the ear using a model, and a few other points of interest that are worth a detour . . .

## CHRISTIAN MARCLAY MARTIN TÉTREULT PERFORMANCE

Artists Christian Marclay, from New York, and Martin Tétréault, from Montréal, will give an improvisational performance using the medium of the phonograph record, in the *Broken Music* exhibition space. D.L.

November 4 at 2 p.m.



Christian Marclay. Photo: Leonhard Mühlheim.



Martin Tétréault. Photo: Danielle Bérard.



ABOVE: Mécanique Générale. *Michel hurlait*, 1990. Photo: Rolline Laporte. BELOW: Photo: Rolline Laporte.



## MICHEL HURLAIT

*Experimental Theatre*

S U Z A N N E L E M I R E

**T**HE YOUNG MONTRÉAL theatre company Mécanique Générale will present a new production called *Michel hurlait* at the Musée on November 16, 17, 18, 24 and 25.

Based on a brief news item that appeared in the French newspaper *Libération*, the play tells the unbelievable but true story of a family which, following the death of the father, decides to cut itself off from the outside world and live in total seclusion. Cooped up with his mother and brother for over 10 years, Michel, aged 41, was living naked and covered with filth in the family home. He no longer spoke, but had taken to screaming in the night. His howls ended up alerting a neighbour, who called the police. The police officers found an old woman and her two sons, one of whom had a long black beard, hair dangling down his back and a wild look in his eyes.

Beyond the story itself, the originality of *Michel hurlait* lies in the treatment of this strange tale. The protagonists from Mécanique Générale – Luc Dansereau, Ginette Martel and Gaétan Nadeau – want to create a new kind of theatre: documentary theatre. Here, personal testimony is the means used to bring the audience to understand the milieu in which the drama is being played out. Neighbours and friends, in turn, state what they have seen and heard, and over the course of their confessions, the audience is gradually drawn into the stifling world of this family that nevertheless, at first glance, seems completely "normal." The more we learn about the family, the more we are able to reconstruct the thread connecting the events, up to the final moment when we are literally present as the mother and her two sons are arrested, to be put in an institution. This scene is experienced in all its horror and ghoulishness. The drama explodes, and grabs us, like a moment of truth.

Enlisted as witnesses, the viewers feel directly involved in this family tragedy, and are entitled to wonder to what extent a person may intervene in a family's private life. Where does "public" begin and "private" end? *Michel hurlait* makes us aware of the fragility of life and of human nature. Things that seem to be going along perfectly naturally can, in time, end in a terrible reality.

Directed by Luc Dansereau, who has a master's degree in film from the Université de Paris III (the new Sorbonne), *Michel hurlait* is constructed like a documentary film. Each sequence or scene of the play is finely worked to create a tight, crescendo-like progression. A little super-8 movie showing a family vacation before the father's death is also incorporated into the production. In Luc Dansereau's approach, every possible means is applied to bring out emotion: "The viewers must not only be informed of an event (the seclusion of a family), they must above all relive, through the senses (visual, auditory, olfactory), the emotions, the heartbreaks and the anguish connected with that event."

Mécanique Générale is a collective founded in 1986 with the mission of creating theatre productions that maintain close relations with film. In its pieces, Mécanique Générale enjoys mixing up the signs of these two media, film and theatre, in order to create a new code of expression, film-theatre.

The first production by Mécanique Générale, *Armand*, which was chosen to represent Québec at the Festival International du Jeune Théâtre Universitaire in 1986 in Paris, was presented at the Musée in March 1987. This will therefore be the second visit for this group of young artists who, through the experimental nature of their work, toss out a new challenge to test the limits of theatre.

For those willing to take on the risk of discovery, and share, for the time it takes to perform, a very special, lively, new theatre experience.

November 16, 17, 18, 24 and 25 at 2 p.m.  
Reservations required.

*Prix René Payant aux jeunes artistes  
en arts visuels du Québec*

**THE FIRST EVER** *Prix René Payant aux jeunes artistes en arts visuels du Québec* was awarded this year by the *Fonds Les Amis de l'art de l'Université de Montréal* to Montréal artist **MARC LAROCHELLE**.

The jury, made up of Manon Blanchette and Josée Bélisle, representing the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Lise Lamarche and Alain Laframboise, representing the Université de Montréal, and Louise Robert, artist, examined more than 30 entries.

The award consists of a \$2000 scholarship. Every year, the jury will comprise two curators from the Musée, two professors from the art history department at the Université de Montréal, and one artist.

*Christmas for the Homeless*

*Jean-Jules Soucy*



DANIELLE LEGENTIL



**THERE WON'T BY ANY CHRISTMAS TREES**, any lights, any wreaths, or any Nativity scenes. But somewhere off in different parks and on the site of the future museum, you will be struck by an image: a little wood-burning stove with a patched-together stovepipe will send out a message of peace and humour. These are the greetings of artist Jean-Jules Soucy, of Ville de La Baie, to the people of Montréal.

Soucy is that wonderful dreamer who poeticizes constructions and constructs poems. His dreams are immoderate, tender and incisive. He puts tuques on stones along the Saguenay River to protect them from wastewater, he forms circles out of chairs made of canned goods, instituting his own "Cannes" festival, playing on words in order to denounce an (over)consumer society.

For Christmas for the homeless, Jean-Jules Soucy hopes to reach the man (and woman) in the street, invite them to think along with him and perhaps pitch in to help all those who will take turns keeping the stoves hot on December 9.

*Information: 873-4844*

**MUSÉE D'ART  
CONTEMPORAIN  
DE MONTRÉAL**

Cité du Havre, Montréal  
Québec H3C 3R4  
Tel. (514) 873-2878

**Free Admission**

All voluntary contributions will be added to the Musée's art acquisition fund.

**Access to the Museum**

**By car:** Bonaventure auto-route south of University Street, "Cité du Havre - Port de Montréal" exit, then Pierre-Dupuy Avenue. Free parking.  
**By bus:** Daily STCUM bus service via line 168 from McGill, Bonaventure and Square Victoria metro stations.

**Museum Hours**

Exhibitions: daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Mondays.

Documentation Centre: Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Boutique: daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Mondays.

Café: daily from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., closed Mondays.

**The Musée will be closed on Tuesday December 25, 1990, and Tuesday January 1, 1991.**

**La Fondation des Amis du Musée**

A non-profit organization providing essential support for the mission of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Individuals, associations and corporations can help the Fondation des Amis du Musée reach its objectives as contributors, members and volunteers. Annual membership in the Fondation, including free mailing of *Le Journal du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal*: \$25 (students and senior citizens: \$15).  
Information: (514) 873-4743.

Space Reserved for Artists

J E A N L A U Z O N

PHOTOGRAPHS  
GALERIE D'ART DU CENTRE CULTUREL,  
DRUMMONDVILLE

*November 18 - December 16*

J E A N - M A R I E D E L A V A L L E

SELECTED WORKS  
GALERIE GILBERT BROWNSTONE, PARIS

*October 20 - November 13*

*Le Journal du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal* is reserving this space for artists who wish to publicize their professional activities. Artists whose works are included in the Musée's collection, or who have exhibited at the Musée, are invited to inform us of the places and dates of any upcoming exhibitions.

The deadline for inclusion in the January-February-March 1991 issue is November 1, 1990.

The artist's name and the title, place and date of the exhibition or presentation will be mentioned. Please send all information to:

*Le Journal du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal*

Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Cité du Havre, Montréal, Québec H3C 3R4

 **MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL**

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The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is a provincially owned corporation funded by the ministère des Affaires culturelles du Québec. The Musée receives additional financial support from Communications Canada and the Canada Council • Director: **Marcel Brisebois** • Members of the Board of Directors: **Mariette Clermont, Sam Abramovitch, Luc Beauregard, Léon Courville, Manon Forget, Claude Hinton, Claudette Hould, Paul Noisieux, Marissa Nuss, Monique Parent-Dufour, Robert Turgeon.**

The functions of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal are to make known, promote and preserve contemporary Québec art and to ensure a place for international contemporary art through acquisitions, exhibitions and other cultural activities.

National Museums Act, Section 24

**CALENDAR**

*November - December 1990*

**EXHIBITIONS**

**GIVERNY, LE TEMPS MAUVE**

*November 4, 1990 - January 27, 1991*

Recent works by Suzanne Giroux  
A catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

**BROKEN MUSIC**

*November 4, 1990 - February 10, 1991*

An exhibition organized by gelbe MUSIK and Berlin's daadgalerie. The Montréal presentation has benefited from the assistance of Distribution Trans-Canada, a division of Groupe Quebecor inc., L'Échange, Esso Petroleum Canada and CKUT.  
A catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

**RAYMOND GERVAIS, TRAVAUX RÉCENTS**

DISQUES ET TOURNE-DISQUES

*November 4, 1990 - February 10, 1991*

The openings of these three exhibitions will take place on Sunday November 4 at 3 p.m.

**TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS**

**PROPOS D'ART CONTEMPORAIN**

**FIGURES D'ACCUMULATION**

*Until November 11*

Maison de la culture Marie-Uguay, Montréal, Québec

*December*

Villa Gillet, Lyon, France

**LES TEMPS CHAUDS**

*November 6, 1990 - January 3, 1991*

Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan

**EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Activities for Families and Friends**

**MACHINES À SONS**

*December 2 from 1 to 5 p.m.*

**Workshop**

**CORRIDOR D'EXPLORATION**

**SUR L'UNIVERS DU SON**

*November 4, 1990 - February 10, 1991*

The corridor is a production of the Musée de la civilisation, Québec City.

Presentation of the corridor at the Musée has benefited from the assistance of Esso Petroleum Canada.

**Films**

**LES JARDINS DE MONET À GIVERNY**

(Jacques Barsac, 1987, France, 2 min, 59 s o.v.)

**MEMORIES OF MONET**

(Meredith Martindale and Toby Molenaar, 1985, United States, colour, 28 min o.v.)

*November 11 at 2 p.m.*

**Meetings**

**À LA RENCONTRE DU TEMPS MAUVE**

*December 2 at 2 p.m.*

Meet the artist Suzanne Giroux

**Visits**

Reservations: 873-5267

**PERFORMING ARTS**

**Performance**

**CHRISTIAN MARCLAY - MARTIN TÊTREAU**

*November 4 at 2 p.m.*

Free admission

**Experimental Theatre**

**MICHEL HURLAIT**

*November 16, 17, 18, 24 and 25 at 2 p.m.*

A Mécanique Générale production

Reservations: (514) 873-2878

Tickets: \$10 (adults), \$8 (senior citizens and students)