

Robert Therrien  
*No Title, 1996*  
Metal, wool blankets, various materials  
320 cm x 342.9 cm x 10.6 m  
Photo: Zindman/Fremont, courtesy Leo Castelli, New York

# Head Over Heels

## A Work of Impertinence

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MILLENNIUM  
MY EYE!

TAKING THE TACK OF IMPERTINENCE, IN CONTRAST TO THE CONVENTIONAL GRAVITY THAT MIGHT BEFIT THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED TRANSITION TO A NEW MILLENNIUM, THE EXHIBITION *HEAD OVER HEELS* BRINGS TOGETHER 25 ARTISTS WHOSE WORKS SHARE AN ALTERNATELY ABSURD, DERISIVE, IRONIC OR WITTY CHARACTER. THIS OFTEN INCONGRUOUS ART SETS OUT TO PROVOKE THOUGHT ON QUESTIONS OF A PHILOSOPHICAL NATURE, OR ON SOME OF THE SOCIAL AND AESTHETIC ISSUES THAT ARE CURRENT IN OUR SOCIETIES. THE SELECTED WORKS EXAMINE THESE SUBJECTS IN A SOMETIMES DARING AND GENERALLY MOST UNEXPECTED WAY. THE EXHIBITION OFFERS AN OVERALL PERSPECTIVE OF THE QUESTIONS, LARGE AND SMALL, THAT ARE AT THE ROOT OF CONTEMPORARY ART TODAY. WITH A HINT OF IRREVERENCE, IT LOOKS AT THIS CREATIVE OUTPUT WITH A MIX OF ATTITUDES ABOUNDING IN PARADOXES.

Full of the strange and unusual, the works presented — multiform pieces spanning the last decade — demonstrate art's ability to question its own limits and, at the same time, elicit dialogue with visitors. In its meandering, open presentation, *Head Over Heels* endeavours to capture a spirit, a tone, in a desire to shake off the doom and gloom of this turn of the millennium and reveal reflective attitudes that harbour unsuspected imaginary worlds.

Artists from different generations mingle here — from Ilya Kabakov to Alain Benoit — although most of them achieved full mastery of their expressive means only in the late eighties or even in the nineties. These artists are distinguished by a particular impertinent approach that defies the aesthetic codes which emerged from the various avant-gardes and eludes the postmodernist theories of the day. For some artists, this is an unusual approach; for others, it is the very essence of their work. Artists who have produced works that often incorporate the widest possible variety of practices, and who share an intention to renew a special relationship connections with the viewer, thus see their works meet and interweave in an exhibition setting that gives free rein to poetic expression and to a disconcerting of the senses. With their different perceptive stimuli, these 40 or so works, including a video program, offer a profound sense of humanity and a keen understanding of today's art.

■ PAULETTE GAGNON AND SANDRA GRANT MARCHAND

NOVEMBER 18, 1999 TO APRIL 23, 2000

# Gilbert Boyer

## *Inachevée et rien d'héroïque*

ALTHOUGH HE FOLLOWS A DISCREET, INTIMIST APPROACH, ARTIST GILBERT BOYER NEVERTHELESS DREW ATTENTION TO HIMSELF IN THE MID-EIGHTIES WITH HIS WORKS IN PUBLIC SPACES. WHEN HE PRODUCED *COMME UN POISSON DANS LA VILLE* (1988), HE LAUNCHED A SERIES OF PROJECTS THAT WOULD MARK HIS ARTISTIC ACTIVITY RIGHT UP TO THE PRESENT, FOCUSING SPECIFICALLY ON THE EVERYDAY AND THE EPHEMERAL. AND SO, ALWAYS WITH SUBTLETY AND A POETIC DIMENSION, HIS WORKS HAVE FORMED AN INCURSION BY THE PRIVATE INTO THE PUBLIC, THROUGH THEIR QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION IN PUBLIC PLACES.



*Inachevée et rien d'héroïque* (détail), 1999  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

With *Inachevée et rien d'héroïque*, which constitutes his first solo exhibition at the Musée, the artist has chosen as his subject words and their transitory, precarious or temporary character. While it takes up from a number of earlier works in public places, in which the artist glorified the everyday and the elusive moment, the current project returns to previous strategies by occupying the museum space, which is generally associated with the notion of perpetuity. For Boyer, this is a strategy that underscores, in a more spectacular fashion, the fragmentary, fleeting nature of speech, that "living" material which is constantly being shaped.

Made up of a series of carved marble and granite plaques, reminiscent of

commemorative stones, the installation reveals a group of fragments of language, scraps of writings, conversations and thoughts. These fragments offer no particular comment or narrative, but rather summon up a host of different voices. According to the artist, these words petrified in the material are "an illustration of what has not yet taken form or else is already dissolving as soon as it appears." In a way, the subject and image of *Inachevée et rien d'héroïque* are the grey areas of words, thoughts and writings.

With simplicity, efficiency and economy of means, these etched words are presented as so many private confidences shared with any reader who lingers over them. Although they are most often

ordinary and trivial in content, they still stir up memories and appeal to everyone's imagination. In asking us to show a certain receptiveness, Boyer in return leads us to discover, upon contact with these words and the images they suggest, the poetry of the everyday which we generally overlook.

In addition to his many works produced on public sites both in Canada and abroad, Gilbert Boyer has had a number of solo exhibitions and taken part in group exhibitions in Québec and elsewhere in Canada, the United States and Europe. ■ RÉAL LUSSIER

SEPTEMBER 23 TO  
NOVEMBER 7, 1999



*La Maison à vendre*  
École Saint-Jean-Baptiste-de-Lasalle

# The Musée

## and Montréal Schools

LAST MAY 9 TO 23, AN EXHIBITION CALLED *ARRIMAGE* WAS PRESENTED AT THE MUSÉE, FEATURING WORKS BY STUDENTS TAKING PART IN THE PROGRAM *SOUTENIR L'ÉCOLE MONTRÉLAISE*.

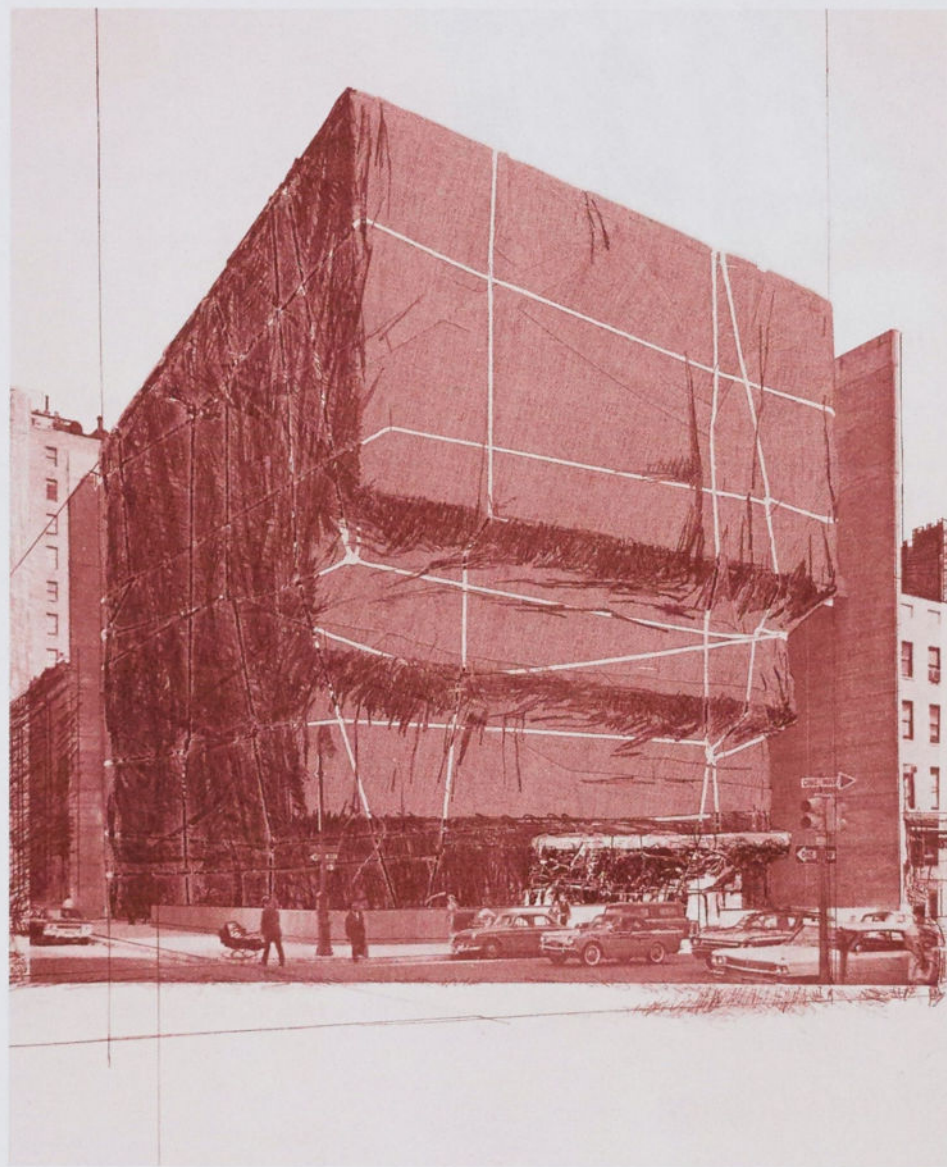
This fruitful cooperative effort between the Musée and the ministère de l'Éducation du Québec has, for the past three years, brought together both scholastic and museological activities. The result was an exhibition marked with sensitivity and creativity. The exhibition was inaugurated by Québec's Minister of Education, François Legault, in the presence of more than 400 "young artists."

Selected works were used to illustrate the 1999-2000 school calendar produced jointly by the ministère de l'Éducation and the Musée. The two organizations are continuing the project *Soutenir l'école montréalaise* for the new school year, with special focus on the theme of *Art and Technology*. The exhibition to be presented at the Musée in May 2000 will reflect the students' artistic approach and show how they personally relate to contemporary art. ■ L. B.

# Didactic Exhibitions

THE DIDACTIC EXHIBITIONS IN THE VISUAL LANGUAGE SERIES SPOTLIGHT WORKS IN THE COLLECTION BY SUGGESTING AN ANGLE FOR READING THEM THAT FOCUSES ON ONE PARTICULAR ELEMENT OF VISUAL LANGUAGE: DOTS, LINES, SHAPE, TEXTURE OR COLOUR.

THESE EXHIBITIONS ON A SPECIFIC THEME ALWAYS EITHER RELATE TO NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN SOCIETY (0002 AND THE TRANSITION TO THE YEAR 2000) OR AT THE MUSÉE (FLORA, AND THE ART AND GARDENS SYMPOSIUM), OR OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY TO GATHER A GROUP OF WORKS FROM THE MUSÉE COLLECTION THAT SHARE CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS.



Christo  
Whitney Museum of American Art Packed (from the album *Some Not Realized Projects*), 1972  
Lithograph, 84/100  
71 x 55,7 cm  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

## *Tangible or tactile lines are lines we can touch.*

They are an inescapable part of our everyday reality: hair, the stem of a flower, rope, thread, telephone wire, a pin, a hanger, an antenna, a straw, bicycle spokes, a garden hose, a dog leash, or even strands of spaghetti!

In this selection of works from the Musée's Collection, we can observe the use of this element of visual language, which becomes a major compositional element in some pictures.

When tangible lines cross, they define surfaces and create shapes or volumes. When they are coiled, they become spirals or spheres. When woven, they turn into fabric. If they are knotted, they connect and bind elements together. If welded, they form the frame of a structure. When stretched tight, they create forces and tensions. However they are used, they always catch our eye.

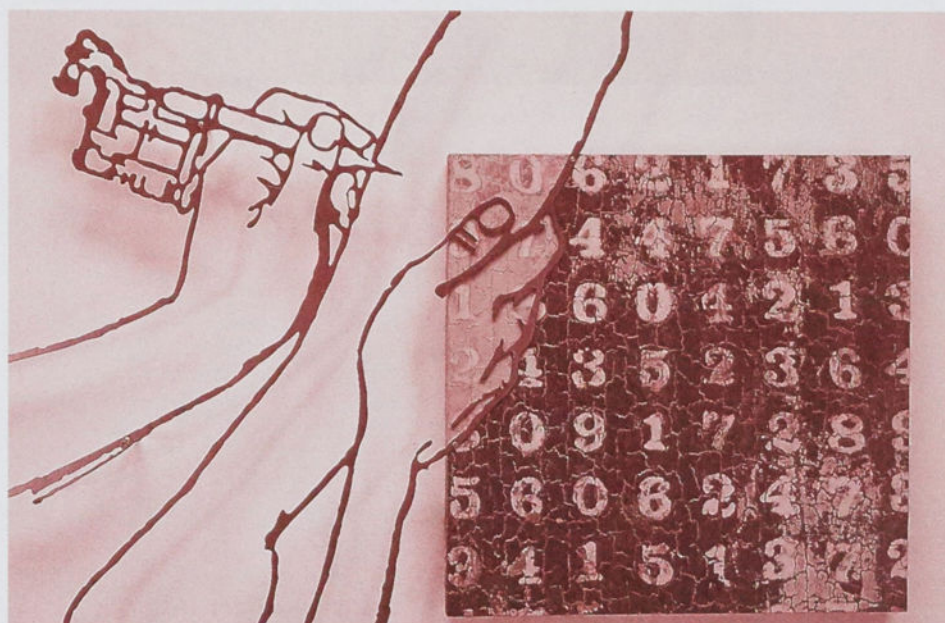
**TANGIBLE LINE  
VISUAL LANGUAGE SERIES  
AUGUST 20 TO NOVEMBER 28, 1999**

## *They bug our computers and digitize our lives...*

Figures are omnipresent in our contemporary everyday world. They mark time, calculate amounts, form columns, measure surfaces, weight indexes, compose numbers of all kinds, correspond to addresses, indicate degrees, establish statistics, number pages, code products, identify objects, generate images and throw electronic chips into turmoil. This didactic exhibition presents a number of works from the Musée's Collection chosen for their figure-related compositional elements.

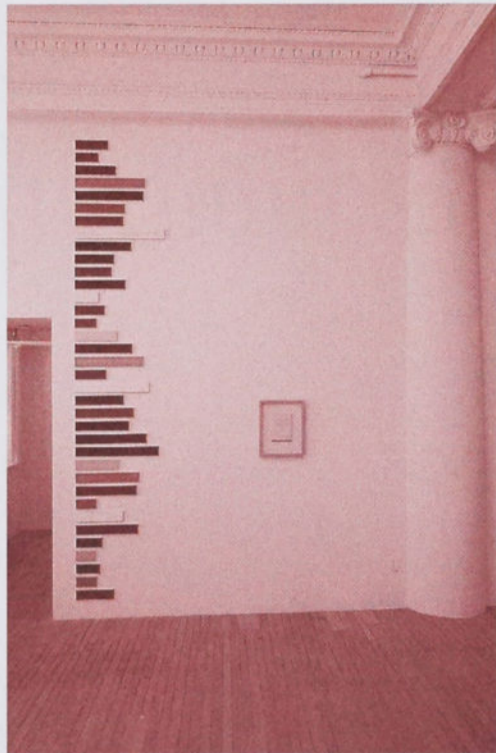
■ LUC GUILLEMETTE

**0002 0200 2000 0020  
DECEMBER 3, 1999 TO FEBRUARY 13, 2000**



Micah Lexier and Regan Morris  
Your Name Here (detail), 1989  
Laser-cut steel, acrylic and shellac on masonite  
50 x 45 x 3 in.  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

# Recent Acquisitions

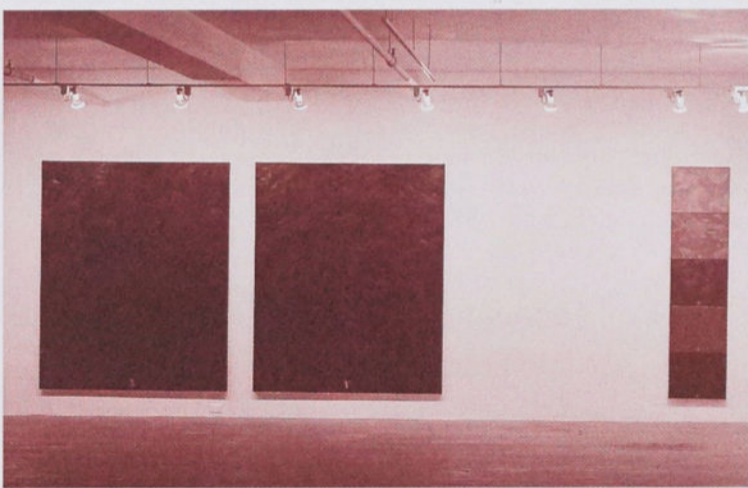


*Les Couleurs de Cézanne dans les mots de Rilke, 36/100-essai, 1997-1998*  
36 small paintings and 1 framed book  
Paintings: vinyl and acrylic on canvas mounted on pine fibreboard  
380 x 66 cm (overall)  
Book: stamped manila paper  
42 x 33 cm (frame)  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

## Francine Savard

Since the early nineties, Francine Savard has produced concise, original works of painting, in the form of canvases and installations, subtly incorporating specific references to the theory and history of painting, certain literary texts, and shrines of learning and culture. Integrated into the outlines and fabric of the work, we may find, for example, the city plan of Rome (*Romanesque*, 1992) or of the Marais district in Paris (*Promenade en 56 tableaux*, 1993), or direct allusions to the world of *libraries* and to methods of codifying knowledge (*La Pharmacie de Platon* 1995-1997, *De la peinture* 1995-1996).

In the pictorial grouping — a fragmented polyptych — *Les Couleurs de Cézanne dans les mots de Rilke, 36/100-essai*, the artist formalizes, in a monumental spectrum of colours, the German poet's admiration and appreciation of the work of Cézanne. Thirty-six small paintings (the group could eventually comprise as many as a hundred) calibrate visually and literally, through the simultaneous use of matching tones and quotation, Rilke's very particular descriptions: "a thoughtful blue," "a buried purple," "a soft, subtle grey"... Paradoxically, from the methodical arrangement of these spare paintings there emanates an extolling of colour, a poetic exuberance that is contained and kept at a distance in the framed, fabricated, eponymous volume, a literary invitation to establish a critical update of aesthetic discourses.



*La Création de l'univers (version abrégée), 1993*  
Polyptych  
Oil on canvas  
2 elements: 203 x 168 cm  
5 elements: 40 x 51 cm  
Purchased with financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts, Acquisitions Assistance Program  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Jean-Jacques Ringuette



*Untitled No. 60 (Drawings of a Tree series), 1993*  
Charcoal and beeswax on paper  
152.4 x 102.9 cm  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Courtesy Peter Blum, New York

## David Rabinowitch

Canadian sculptor David Rabinowitch, who has lived in New York since 1972, produces refined, incisive work that stands at a distance from the strict minimalist aesthetic with its use of hybrid geometric forms (trapezoids, oblongs), breaking with the simplified volumetric modules (cube, sphere, cone). The artist's emphasis of the essential part played by vision in appreciating the work — witness the designation *Construction of Vision* associated with a number of series — takes form in the compression of the vertical in favour of the horizontal, thus anchoring the sculpture's multiple points of view in a relationship with human scale.

In addition to two steel sculptures, *Untitled No. 1*, 1977 and *Conical Plane of Four Masses Round*, 1971, the Musée owns 17 drawings by David Rabinowitch, produced between 1969 and 1995, along with a bound album of 36 drawings dating from 1973.

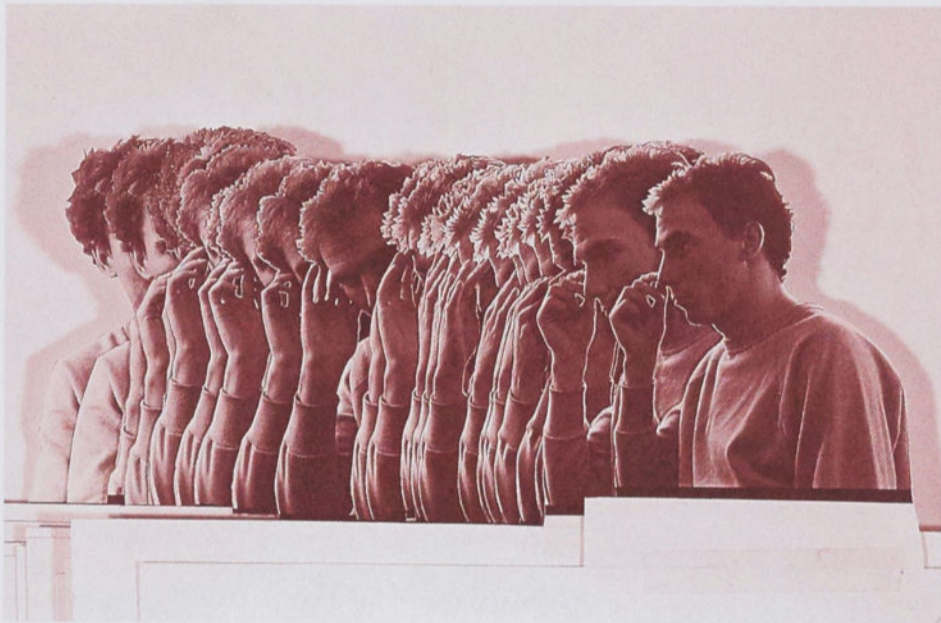
The two *Untitled* drawings recently acquired are part of the major series *Drawings of a Tree* begun by the artist in 1972. Developing over the years — mainly from 1972 to 1982, and again from 1994 on — and parallel to his sculptural practice, these drawings are not preludes or complements to his sculpture, however; they are intended to convey a tree's essence and vitality rather than faithfully reproduce its outward appearance. Unlike the minimal graphic approach of earlier works, these drawings suggest the expressive traces of living linear structures, forcefully spreading out in the physical space of the universe and the mental space of the imagination.

## Charles Gagnon

Whether it is expressed in painting, photography or film, as it has been for some four decades, the aesthetic quest of Charles Gagnon is founded above all on reality. Dwelling variously on the notions of landscape, display case, framing, window and screen, his work outlines a generous, broad vision of the apprehension of space. "It also seemed clear to me that what was happening outside the screen was, in a way, just as important as what was happening on the screen," he once said. Charles Gagnon's work is represented in our collections by 19 pieces produced between 1958-1959 and 1993.

The polyptych *La Création de l'univers (version abrégée)*, 1993, is an accomplished work exploring the contrasting specific natures of monochromy and polychromy, the power of the gesture and the encompassing merits of the alphabetical and numeric codes. The pictorial space *per se* confronts the space that receives it, the gallery wall, that interstitial white which calibrates the shades of subtly broken-up colours. Juxtaposed vertically (for the five small elements, 1 to 5) or side by side (for the two large elements, X and Y), the coloured areas alternately evoke visions of space and landscape, the unfolding of time in space and the apprehension of space in sequences, breaks and cadences. The overall effect is therefore a convincing resolution of the artist's chief concerns with respect to the specific nature of the pictorial space, the relative depth of field and the very qualities of the painted surface. Just beneath the surface, and forming the actual matrix of the work, time takes shape in the suggested succession of the seven elements in the painting — a possible metaphor for the seven days of the Creation. ■ JOSÉE BÉLISLE

# Around Memory and Archive



Thomas Corriveau  
Documents from the film *Kidnappé* (detail), 1984-1988  
Drawing, painting, photography and collage on paper  
Gift of the artist  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

CONTAINING CLOSE TO 6,000 WORKS, THE COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSÉE ARE MONUMENTAL FORMAL ARCHIVES OF CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT. A BIPOLAR SITE INVESTED WITH MULTIPLE MEMORIES, THE MUSÉE DISPLAYS IN ITS PUBLIC SPACES — THE GALLERIES, GARDEN AND CIRCULATION AREAS — A CERTAIN NUMBER OF WORKS CHOSEN ON THE BASIS OF A VARIETY OF READINGS: CHRONOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL, THEMATIC OR MONOGRAPHIC. HOWEVER, IT HOLDS THE LARGEST PART OF ITS COLLECTIONS SHIELDED FROM MOST EYES, IN VAULTS AND ROOMS ORGANIZED IN A PRACTICAL SUCCESSION OF PRIVATE SPACES, DESIGNED FOR STORING AND CONSERVING THE WORKS. THE STUDY OF THESE WORKS AND THEIR METICULOUS, INDEED REASSURING, CLASSIFICATION PRESUPPOSE EXHAUSTIVE DOCUMENTATION COLLECTING WRITTEN, VISUAL, AND NOW ELECTRONIC MATERIAL.



Christian Boltanski  
*Les Archives du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal*, 1992  
Metal shelves, 336 cardboard boxes,  
336 labels, 16 electric lights,  
196 photographic prints  
132 x 380 cm (surface)  
Collection: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Louis Lussier

This exhibition of works from the permanent collection comprises some 10 works by as many artists who have freely explored the notions of memory — in its element of alternately lasting, fleeting and intangible impressions — history — in its sense of retaining and conveying factual information — and archiving — in its simultaneous connotation of finiteness and perpetuity. For many contemporary artists, it is important to counteract the convenient omissions and repudiations of immediate, one-dimensional history by shedding light on some of the mechanisms and strategies that make it possible to crystallize, in the imagination and the object, gestures, situations and recollections laden, to varying degrees, with meanings and significance.

In *Les Archives du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal*, produced in 1992 by Christian Boltanski for the inaugural exhibition *Pour la suite du monde*, identity-related memory and societal memory coexist in this multilevel alignment of labelled cardboard boxes containing personal items belonging to the workers who built the museum. Literally a work within a work, presenting the typical handling of archival holdings, the device refers directly to the museum functions of collection, conservation and dissemination. The transparent structure of the cabinet of photographs *Églogue* or *Filling the Landscape*, 1994, by Angela Grauerholz supports a personal collection of landscapes gathered and hidden, following a poetic logic, in opaque boxes (which can only be consulted, as museum rules require, under close supervision). Conversely, the metal filing cabinet of Claude Hamelin's *Classifié*, 1993, openly reveals, but under glass, piles of blank, white paper, the integrity of which is threatened, however, by the insertion of sheets of lead, that toxic material associated with memory loss. These three works embed absence, presence and possibility within subtly reconstructed museographical processes and settings.

For nearly four decades, Bernd and Hilla Becher have laboriously and systematically documented the evolution of industrial structures, like cultural anthropologists concerned with objectively recording reality. *Walls and Conduits*, 1964-1990, an edition of 12 prints, contains photographic images of precise details of factory pipes, conduits and walls, a virtual typology of relics — portions of monuments — of the industrial age. The two works on paper by Melvin Charney, *Parable No. 9 Series: So Be It... Factories Are Closing, Museums Are Opening, But All the Nudes Have Descended the Stairs*, 1992 and *Parable Series... Clenched Fists, Greased Palms*, 1994, display, through the superimposition of visual means, the accumulation of architectural, historical

and social references combined in effective visual and textual metaphors. Arnaud Maggs freezes in time, a hundred times over, the clinical, unaltered photographic image of the iconic figure of contemporary art with *Joseph Beuys: 100 Frontal Views*, Düsseldorf, 21.10.80, 1980. The practically anthropometric repetition of this representation full of connotations does not lead to symbolic overload, but rather to the affirmation of mnemonic possibilities.

In *Simulation indéfinie, dynamo - 3*, 1993, Raymond Lavoie also employs a serial process. Twelve magazine covers are painted over with a colour that is opaque yet translucent, acting to hide as well as reveal an everyday world (scenery, manners and customs) as conveyed by the media. What is concealed beneath the paint is also what defines painting: the quality of gesture and surface, the subject and process. In a different way — but just as much as the museum/depository and library/archives — the artist's studio, with all the excess, profusion of information and overflow of subjects (and materials) that it implies, represents a place of explicit archives and memories. The thousands of fabricated pictures used in making the film *Kidnappé*, 1984-1988, by Thomas Corriveau embody thoughts on the truth of the image and the structure of the narrative, the complex, non-exclusive relationship between painting and hinting at a story. Finally, with *Les Couleurs de Cézanne dans les mots de Rilke 36/100-essai*, 1997-1998, Francine Savard summons up the poetic prose and the aesthetic reference of two masters of Western culture who died early in the century, in order to offer a disarming, timeless and yet very current demonstration of the remanence and combined expressive power of word and colour. ■

JOSÉE BÉLISLE

DECEMBER 14, 1999  
TO MARCH 26, 2000

# Friends of the Musée

## Monster Ball

Since June, the Monster Ball team has been busy planning the sixth edition of the annual Halloween party. Chaired by Stéphane Brisebois, the organizing committee is made up of Jean-François Germain, Louise Lefebvre, Mélanie Marsolais, Karen McAuley, Hubert Sibre and Laurent Terrasse.

Last year, more than 600 party-goers attended the Ball, and we expect to welcome more than 800 this year. The event will take place on Saturday, October 30, starting at 9:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$45 each. Reservations: (514) 847-6271.



Denis D'Etcheverry  
Photo: Suzanne Langevin

## Annual Meeting

Last June 21, the Friends of the Musée held their annual meeting. The members of the 1999-2000 Board of Directors are:

Jean Saucier, President, Sylvie Boivin, Vice-President, Events, Marie-Claude Desjardins, Vice-President, Membership, Hubert Sibre, Secretary-Treasurer, Manon Blanchette, Stéphane É. Brisebois, Ghitta Caiserman-Roth, Denis D'Etcheverry, François Dell'Aniello, François M. Desjardins, Mélanie Kau, Josée Lacoste, Francine Léger and Carolina Richer La Flèche.

We wish to thank the outgoing members, Claire Beaulieu, David Heurtel and Martha Tapiero-Lawee, along with our outgoing President, Denis D'Etcheverry. Denis has completed his two-year term but remains with us on the Board and will chair the Annual Ball committee. ■ A. L.

## Thank You to Our Volunteers

All year long, our volunteers labour tirelessly, discreetly, and always with a smile. Whether at the Media Centre, the cloakroom or special events, they provide invaluable services.

To all our volunteers, we extend a hearty thank-you.

Pierre Alvarez, Andrée Beaudin-Lecours, Pierrette Bédard, Rolande Bédard, Rose Bédard, Nicolas Berne, Geneviève Bolduc, Fanny de Bonnet, Mélanie Boucher, Nathalie Boudreau, Lise Blouin-Ricard, Marthe Choquette, Colombe Caron, Thérèse Caron, Thérèse Day, Arceli Da Anda, Liliane de Noni, Claire Descôteaux, Lise Desjardins, Édith de Villers, Françoise Dionne, Antoinette Dozois, Rachel Dufour, Thérèse Éthier, Farah Étienne, Marguerite Fillion Tessier, Chantal Fortier, Karine Fortin, Yannick Groulx, Line Guimont, Françoise Habibi, Marie Héroux, Thérèse Houle, Marion Laberge, Robert Lalonde, Nicole Landreville, Réjeanne Lapierre, Jean Lapointe, René Lefebvre, André Lemire, Philippe Letendre, Laurence Mc-Way, Michel Mercé, Denise Montminy, Caroline Morin, Yves Morissette, Mariane Moussaly, Jeannine Nagy, Monique Normandin, Alain Novel, Hélène Pagette, Yolande Pellas, Marie-T. Pettigrew, Jessica Rivera, Mathieu Roy, Ginette Sauvage, Béatrice Schrenzel, Carmen Selanu, Hélène Simard, Maude Smith, Andrée Surprenant, Louise Trommer, Nadia Vella, Marthe Verrault, Puikéi Yeung and Olga Zozoula.



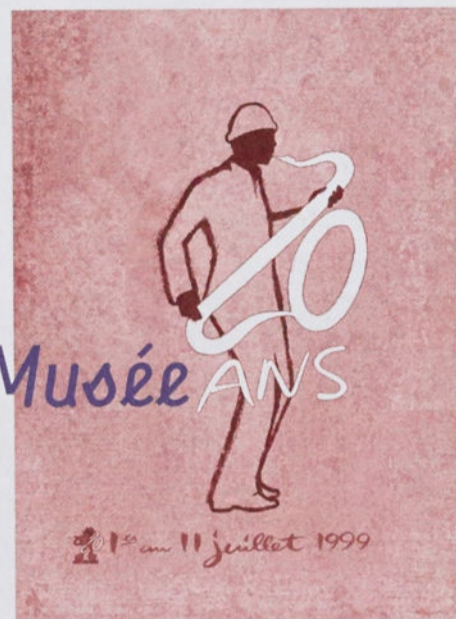
Angéline Guimont  
Photo: Serge Collin

## Happy Birthday!

The sunniest smile in the Musée cloakroom is unquestionably that of Angéline Guimont, who celebrated her 80th birthday last June. Angéline has volunteered in the cloakroom for the past five years. She also helps out at all the special activities.

Cécile de Girardi, our most senior Friend, celebrated her 99th birthday on September 22. Happy birthday from all the Friends!

## Jazz at the Musée ANS



For several years now, the Musée has been the scene of contemporary jazz concerts during the Festival international de jazz de Montréal. Last July 1 to 11, the Festival marked its 20th anniversary, a milestone that called for even greater joint celebration. In tribute, the Musée

presented two exhibitions. The first was held in Beverley Webster Rolph Hall. Titled *20 ans d'affiches de jazz à Montréal*, it offered a retrospective of Festival posters over the event's 20-year history, and at the same time enhanced the ambiance of the hall, which was turned into a cabaret for the occasion. As well, along the stairs leading to the hall and in part of the hall itself, visitors could admire works from the Festival art collection, mainly silkscreens along with a number of the originals by Pierre-Léon Tétrault, Miyuki Tanobe, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Frédéric Back, Miles Davis, and more. These free exhibitions drew large crowds and persuaded some of the more curious to buy tickets to see the other exhibitions! ■ L. O.

## Journées de la Culture and Montréal Museums Day

AT THE MUSÉE THIS PAST SEPTEMBER 24 AND 26, VISITORS LITERALLY GOT ALL WRAPPED UP IN THE THIRD EDITION OF THE JOURNÉES DE LA CULTURE. PARTICIPANTS IN THE ART WORKSHOP *IT'S A WRAP!* TOOK THEIR INSPIRATION FROM WORKS BY CHRISTO PRESENTED IN THE EXHIBITION *TANGIBLE LINE*. OF THE TWO DAYS, SEPTEMBER 24 WAS RESERVED FOR SCHOOL GROUPS, IN COOPERATION WITH PLACE DES ARTS, THE MONUMENT NATIONAL AND THÉÂTRE JEAN-DUCEPPE.

Earlier in the year, last May 30, to be precise, during the 13th edition of American Express Montréal Museums Day, the Musée greeted some 4,000 visitors in a truly festive spirit. The schedule for this very special Sunday included tours of the feature exhibition launching the summer season, *Triggers — Art and Society. Québec in the 60's and 70's*, presented by Benson & Hedges. This was followed by art workshops much enjoyed by the participants, who sauntered out of the Musée with eye-catching hats that attracted considerable attention at the 23 other participating museums. Readers will recall that American Express Montréal Museums Day, organized by the Société des directeurs des musées montréalais, is a crowd-pleasing annual event. The 14th edition will be held on Sunday, May 28, 2000. ■ C. G.

# Le Cœur de Mattingly

A play by Rober Racine premiered  
at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

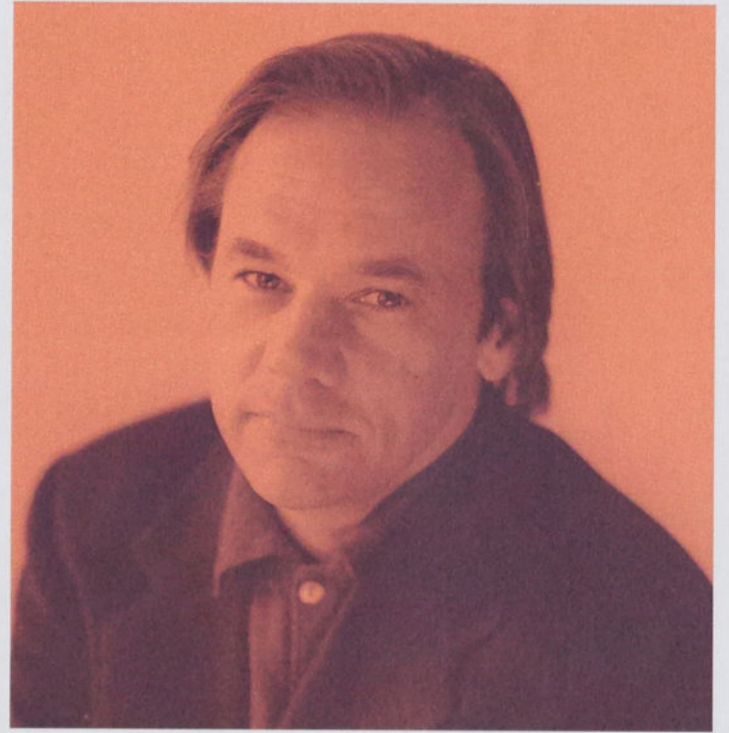


Photo: Josée Lambert

LE CŒUR DE MATTINGLY IS THE STORY OF A MAN WHO, AS HE IS CONCEIVED BY ROBER RACINE, "HAS HAD A LIFE-LONG OBSESSION WITH COLLECTING COLLECTORS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN. HE ACQUIRES PEOPLE WHO HAVE OWNED, CONTEMPLATED, EXPERIENCED AND EMBODIED MASTERPIECES, NATURAL PHENOMENA, UNIQUE, EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS... WHAT INTERESTS HIM IS NOT THE WORKS THEMSELVES BUT THE LOOKS THEY RECEIVE. THE PRIZE ITEM IN OXYMORON'S COLLECTION IS GABRIELLA, THE LEADING INTERPRETER OF THE MADRIGALS OF DON CARLO GESUALDO, A 16TH-CENTURY ITALIAN PRINCE AND COMPOSER."

*Le Cœur de Mattingly* is a play in one act with two characters: a man and a woman. Rober Racine wrote the work for actors Izabelle Moreau and Ronald Houle. Racine's play will be performed by Théâtre Acte 3, in a production directed by Guy Lapierre, with the assistance of Jean-Maurice Gélinas.

*Le Cœur de Mattingly* will premiere in Beverley Webster-Rolph Hall at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal early in the year 2000.

Excerpt:

OXYMORON (*Does not look at her.*) — I don't have to give you a name because you are mine. Calling you by name would mean that you have an identity. But you no longer have one, my lovely. You belong to me.

(*Time passes.*)

GABRIELLA — What are you doing?

OXYMORON — I'm relaxing the Earth. This poor little thing is so tense it's cracking apart all over. It needs to dream. (*Time passes.*)

I'm giving it a shot of *garnopol*.

GABRIELLA — Of what?

OXYMORON — Of *garnopol*. It's a liquid shiver. The name of a new drug. It's injected under the chin. It goes straight up to the brain. It's fantastic for 10 minutes. Then boom! — you're dead. Apparently from a brain hemorrhage.

GABRIELLA — Why have you put this heart in me?

This heart is the inner lining of a soul.

My continuation.

OXYMORON — I've already answered you. (*Time passes.*) You are a votive candle my dear. Mattingly's heart is a little flame that flickers in you.

GABRIELLA — Transplanting a flame is not the same as transplanting a life. It means shifting someone's torment. This heart isn't mine. This life isn't mine. Every night, when I go to bed, I'm afraid it will stop.

(*Time passes.*)

Can a heart forget the person it gave life to?

Can it really adjust to this new life?

A murderer's heart in a woman's body...

How could you...

OXYMORON — In any case, you were a murderer. Waiting for a donor is hoping for someone to die. Don't be a hypocrite. All transplant recipients wish for a potential donor to die. This wish is so selfish that you hope this death will suit you, that it will be a match for you. A match for your weakness.

(*Time passes.*)

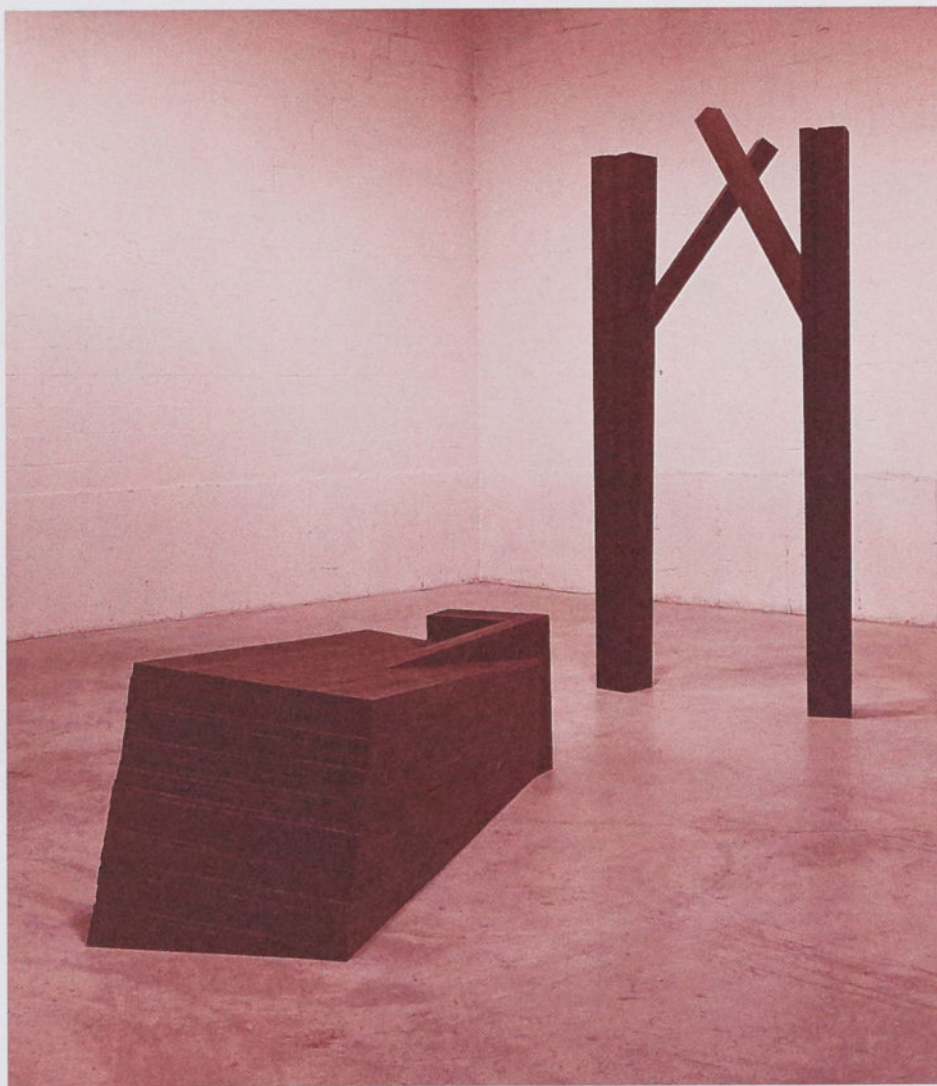
You didn't deserve any better than a murderer's heart because you are a murderer yourself.

GABRIELLA — You don't understand a thing! Waiting like that means living in unbearable circumstances. No one wishes for someone else to die. But for us, someone has to die for us to hope to live. Waiting for someone to die so that you can hope to get a second chance to live is an unspeakable situation. I don't know how to explain it to you...

OXYMORON — If you don't know, then be quiet. Mattingly killed, and was killed. After which you received his heart. Murderers are capable of love and brilliance too, you know. Killing someone is just a moment's carelessness. That's all.

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# Roland Poulin



*Arbres du soir (à la mémoire de Jean Papineau), 1998-1999*  
Polychrome wood  
320 x 153 x 455 cm  
Artist's collection  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS, ROLAND POULIN HAS EXPLORED PLACES CHARGED WITH FORMS THAT ARE SITUATED, EVEN *DISPLACED*, IN SPACE. DELIBERATELY SIMPLIFIED, OFTEN MINIMAL, YET ALWAYS COMPLEX, THESE FORMS HAVE APPEARED, IN TURN, AS LUMINOUS, IMMATERIAL, TRANSPARENT, MODULAR, DENSE AND COMPACT, FAIRLY OPAQUE AND PRACTICALLY MONOLITHIC. SOMETIMES VIRTUALLY NEGATIVE AND SOMETIMES DEFINITELY POSITIVE, THE VOLUMES MAINTAIN IMPLIED RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INTERSTITIAL, ENVELOPING VOID, THE UNDERLYING FABRIC OF THE SCULPTURAL SPACE. IN ADDITION TO THE UTMOST ATTENTION PAID TO THE MATERIALS — NOTABLY CEMENT (1974-1984) AND WOOD (SINCE 1985) — AND THEIR RESPECTIVE PROPERTIES, WHAT STANDS OUT ABOVE ALL ELSE IS A TEMPORAL, IMMANENT DIMENSION, PROMPTING IN THE VIEWER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF APPREHENSION AND, ULTIMATELY, THE EXPERIENCE OF CONTEMPLATION.

The exhibition *Roland Poulin* is one in a series of solo exhibitions which the Musée organizes mainly from its own collections. The Musée owns seven sculptures (1978-1998), one relief (1990), 21 drawings (1974-1998) and two prints (1976-1996) by Poulin. Featuring six sculptures and three drawings produced in the past 10 years and including two major new sculptures not previously shown, *Arbres du soir (à la mémoire de Jean Papineau)*, 1998-1999 and *Le Dernier Jardin*, 1999, the exhibition focuses on the emergence and persistence of archetypal forms rooted in the psyche and the unconscious, and evoking the cycle of life and the passage from life to death.

These works, which share and express certain commemorative and monumental potentialities historically associated with sculpture, are crucibles of meaningful dualities: primacy of the horizontal over the vertical, formal elevation and the attraction of gravity, density of the stratified matter and the inexorability of the void, the abstract and the figurative, the sacred and the profane, the finite and the everlasting, mortality and spirituality.

The unusually deep quality of the surfaces stems from a dark polychromy resonant with the "colours of night" (Novalis), abounding in allusions to nature, the earth and the sea (green), and to fire, blood and love (red). Borrowing from age-old funerary architecture and statuary, from traditional roadside crosses as well as crossroads, the schematic, spare constructions of tombs and vaults, crosses, trees, walls, arches and vessels stand stoically in space or are partially buried in ground that shifts and slips away — inescapable, disturbing reminders of the precariousness of existence and the symbolic function of the artistic gesture. The sculptural space created by Roland Poulin becomes, as well, a place of memory and of ritual. "We've come in from a little boat /Swiftly to heaven's shore."<sup>1</sup> ■ JOSÉE BÉLISLE

1. Novalis, *Hymns to the Night* (New Paltz, N.Y.: McPherson, 1984), p. 139.

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