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# le journal

 MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL  
Québec 

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# Dominique Blain



*Sans titre, 1987*  
Cigar, rifle cartridge,  
lipstick and wooden case  
40 x 45 x 6 cm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

*Sans titre, 1990*  
Steel, black-and-white photographs,  
acrylic and fluorescent tubes  
55.5 x 290 x 87 cm (boat)  
292.5 x 86.5 (stained-glass window)  
Gift of the artist  
Collection of the Musée d'art  
contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

Relatively absent from the Montréal scene since 2000, when she presented her recent work in the Montréal Télégraphe spaces, Dominique Blain has not been the subject of retrospective exhibition in her home town until now. However, this artist who has built a solid reputation across Canada as well as here in Québec has been featured regularly in exhibitions abroad since the early nineties.

This exhibition is thus an opportunity to highlight the rigour and distinctiveness of the work of an artist who has already enjoyed a career of some twenty years and has become established as one of the most important figures of her generation. Taking as its starting point a selection of works produced over the last decade, which act as benchmarks in determining the main issues addressed in her work, the show also includes a number of pieces not previously seen here or newly completed for the occasion.

Dominique Blain is among the relatively few artists concerned essentially with social and political history, but she has certainly also commanded attention with both the visual and symbolic power of her works and the universality of the subjects she tackles. For her, works of art are not a means of support for a discourse that seeks to denounce or convince, but first and foremost the locus of an artistic investigation of politics. Her analysis of social relations, institutions and ideologies goes hand in hand with her examination of artistic practice itself, of the means and materials she uses in her work process.

While she originally focused more closely on the colonial and military aspects of history, Blain was subsequently drawn to a much broader range of interests such as social and racial inequalities, abuses of power and matters of freedom of expression and human rights. Beyond political rhetoric and the development of ideologies, she is concerned with our perception of reality and observes the gap that exists between the world depicted and the world that is perceived.

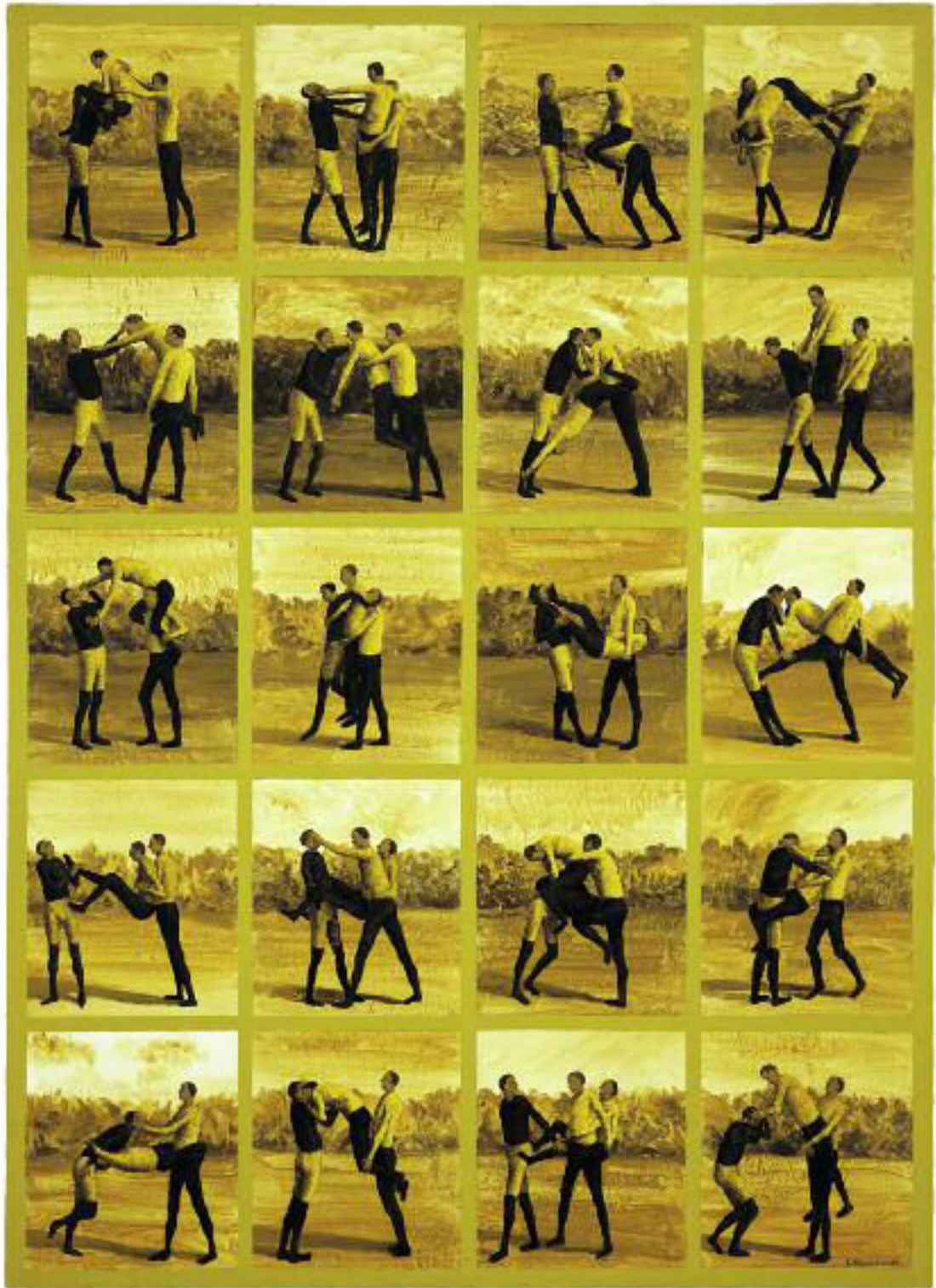
Blain also knows well how to show that history constantly repeats itself and that the decisions that determine the conditions of life in our societies always lie in the hands of a few economic and political powers. Accordingly, without overly deluding herself, she hopes to arouse a somewhat heightened awareness, and share with others the turmoil and unease she feels with respect to certain situations or events that are imposed on us daily by reality.





*Character Assassination*, 1996  
Acrylic on plywood  
183 x 121 cm  
Hydro-Québec Collection,  
Montréal

# Kamila



# Wozniakowska

## “Le monde comme il va”

Although she has kept a relatively low profile until now, this has not prevented Kamila Wozniakowska, a Montréal artist of Polish extraction, from being very active as a painter for nearly twenty years. At first glance, it would appear that she was drawn to the effervescent character of painting at a time that saw a revival of heavily expressionistic figuration – a development attested by the artist’s very first works.

However, members of the public who do not necessarily visit galleries and museums, and who may not even know her name, will likely have had an opportunity to see at least one of Wozniakowska’s public pieces, specifically the large-scale painting produced in 2000 and composed of several images of identical size arranged in a grid pattern, a work that could be seen until quite recently on the north wall of the National Theatre School, at the corner of Laurier and Drolet streets in Montréal. The link between this work and the exhibition will quickly become apparent, so readily identifiable are the formal characteristics of Wozniakowska’s painting, including the use of the grid or variations of the same image that introduce a narrative element, and even the (usually classical) treatment of the image itself. Standing clearly apart from the work of other contemporary Québec artists, it is especially notable for the traces it bears of the etcher’s art, a practice that sporadically parallels that of her painting.

Wozniakowska’s work often takes the form of evocatively titled series: *Figures pour mes amis qui boivent, mentent et me volent*, 1992; *If It’s Painted, It’s True*, 1994; *Impostures*, 1996-1998, and so on. A number of them, along with a brand-new series, will be featured in this exhibition which will offer an initial overview of her art. Some thirty pieces will be on display, most of them focusing, in various ways and sometimes with considerable irony and humour, on the relationships between individuals within society, and consequently probing some of the darker aspects of the human soul. Moreover, drawing aesthetically and philosophically on various historical sources, Wozniakowska seems to view the Age of Enlightenment, in particular, as a veritable crucible for her inspiration, as well as a major foundation for her work as a whole, in which pantomime, theatre and the expression of poses in general play an important role in the meaning generated.

Because of the thematic strength of these works, we tend to overlook the execution itself. In its constant references to the great painting tradition, and in the boldness of its content, concealed beneath the appearance of mechanical reproduction – each unit contained in a painting shows the same backdrop against which the scenes unfold, one after the other – this visual treatment represents a singular and highly ironic examination of the powers of painting and its nature as a one-of-a-kind object.

Gilles Godmer



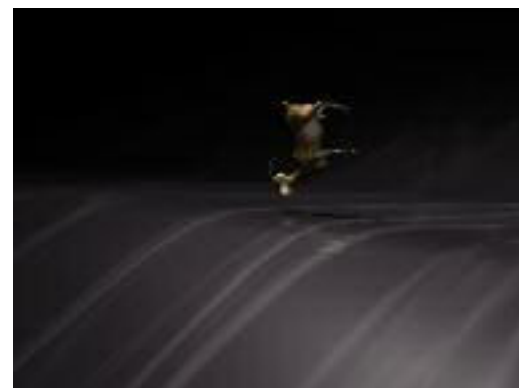
*Colloque particulier*, 1993  
Acrylic on plywood  
65 x 40 cm



# Michel Boulanger

Trainer son lourd passé





*After Monogram*, 2003  
3D animated film  
Colour, sound, 4 min

*Trainer son lourd passé*, 2002  
Oil on canvas  
244 x 368 cm

This first solo exhibition at the Musée is an opportunity for Michel Boulanger to present the fruit of his last two years of work. Already recognized for his extravagant, fascinating compositions, here he reveals the latest developments in a body of work marked increasingly by a narrative approach.

While continuing the transformations effected in terms of representation in the previous corpus of works, which were shown under the title *Bestiaire*, the current series offers much that is new. The recent paintings, now liberated from the world of Disney, are inhabited by a unique menagerie, devised and created using 3D modelling. This new animal population, placed in situations and activities that replicate those characteristic of human life, allows the artist to “teach” us indirectly, in a way, about the behaviour of his fellow creatures.

As Boulanger expresses it, “all this rhetoric comes together through a shaping of the space that undermines the narrative, either by fragmentation or by superimposition.” The resulting dramatization of the space has some echoes of the great pictorial works of the Baroque era, such as their representations of celestial clouds or their allegorical scenes conjuring up hell.

The exhibition features paintings and drawings, along with a 3D animated film, the artist’s first work in this genre. However, knowing that computer modelling has gradually become an integral part of his work process over the past few years, we might say that this animation forms a natural extension of his drawing practice. It is also an undertaking that confirms the ongoing links with the narrative that may be found in Michel Boulanger’s work as a whole.

Réal Lussier

## Rober Racine

A musician and writer, among his other talents, Rober Racine has emerged as one of the foremost multidisciplinary artists on the visual arts scene since the late 1970s, with his performances and installations that are quite spectacular in terms of both event and space.

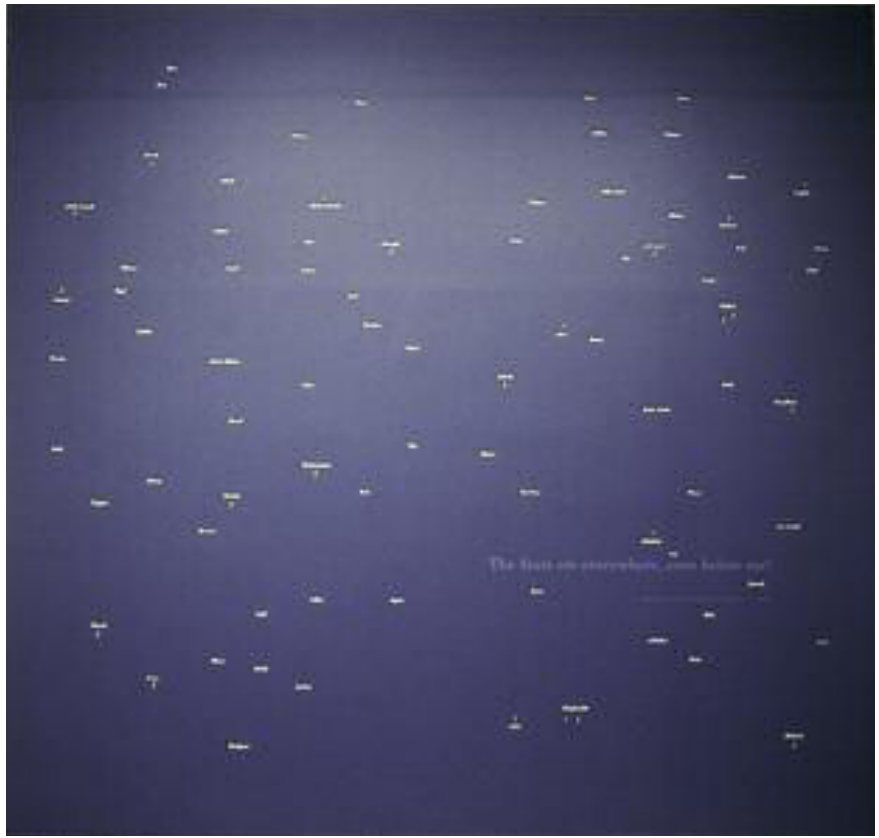
As early as 1979, the Musée recognized the boldness and importance of his artistic practice by inviting him to take part in the *Hors-Jeux* festival, with the performance *Dérouler, dérouler* and the exhibition of the installation *Décomprendre le sourire d'une perle*. With the 1982 acquisition of *Terrain du dictionnaire A/Z*, the Musée gained one of Racine's most important works to date. In this large-scale model for a proposed *Parc de la langue française*, Racine cut out, separated, glued and lined up, in alphabetical order, the 55,000 words in the 1979 edition of the *Petit Robert* dictionary, formalizing as it were, in the subtle shift from linguistic knowledge to a topological vision, a spatiotemporal incursion into the world of the French language.

Acquired some twenty years later, through the Acquisitions Assistance Program of the Canada Council for the Arts, and joining the two other works by Racine already in the Collection – his collaboration with Raymond Gervais and Irene F. Whittome in *Trio pour Samuel Beckett* (1987, donated 1990) and a drawing, *Untitled No. 7* (1994, donated 2000) – the installation *Spica* (1999-2000) is a major work, first shown in November 2001 as part of the artist's "lunar cycle" in his retrospective held at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

# Recent Acquisitions







*Spica* was conceived in 1999 and initially published in *Parachute* magazine<sup>1</sup> as a special project. Now a monumental wall piece, it invites us to explore a galaxy of stars whose names seem to suggest a sidereal kind of music. Literally “star-struck,” fascinated by the moon, stars and other heavenly bodies, especially since Apollo XI landed on the moon in 1969, to much media coverage, Rober Racine recreates on a surface of deep midnight blue the enchantment felt by astronaut Michael Collins, who exclaimed, when he first set foot on the moon: “The stars are everywhere, even below me!” And so we can read, on the immense coloured wall, in addition to this descriptive and poetic quotation, the names of the stars scattered through space like formations of strange, fantastic words, or like a lengthy recitative punctuated here and there with silent notes that are highlighted wherever they appear in the names of the stars: *Sirrah*, *Celaeno*, *Alula Australis*, *Mizar*, and so on.

“What I like is the light of the stars in the night, and contemplation. The mystery of the stellar systems. The origin of the sources of the world and the way they are organized.” These words of Rober Racine, translated from his novel *Là-bas, tout près*,<sup>2</sup> thus express one of his enduring interests.

Further on in the book, however, he adds: “A bird seems to listen to the shadows moving along the ground.... Birds are the spark of humankind.”<sup>3</sup> The artist also admits to a fascination for vultures, which he has drawn forcefully and insistently for years, as is demonstrated by the five drawings acquired in 2003, *Vautour n<sup>os</sup> 81, 94, 96, 97 and 106*, produced in 2001-2002. There emanates from each of them, in their gestural attack and graphic power, a heroic, even tragic, existential dimension, a visual reiteration of the resonance of writing and music through the varied treatment of words and musical scores. These drawings take form as true cries from the heart and from the soul. The work of Rober Racine follows the many different paths of necessity and authenticity.

Josée Bélisle

*Spica*, 1999–2000  
Paint and vinyl lettering  
Variable Dimensions  
Purchased through the Acquisitions Assistance Program of the Canada Council for the Arts  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Courtesy of Gallery René Blouin

*Vautour n° 81*, 2001  
Mixed media on paper  
26.4 x 20.4 cm  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

*Vautour n° 94*, 2002  
Mixed media on paper  
26.8 x 20.6 cm  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

*Vautour n° 96*, 2001  
Mixed media on paper  
22.2 x 13.6 cm  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

*Vautour n° 97*, 2001  
Mixed media on paper  
22.8 x 13.8 cm  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

*Vautour n° 106*, 2002  
Mixed media on paper  
22.4 x 13.8 cm  
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

1. No. 96 (October, November and December 1999).

2. Rober Racine, *Là-bas, tout près* (Montréal: Les éditions de l'Hexagone, 1997), p. 65.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 69 and 80.



## Artist in Residence

Still from the film *Passage* (2002)  
made by Oana Suteu in collaboration  
with Ginette Laurin  
Performed by : José Venegas and  
Herman Goulet-Ouellet

In 2004, for the tenth year of its artist-in-residence program, the Musée will welcome choreographer Ginette Laurin, one of the leading figures in contemporary Québec dance. With more than forty works to her credit, Laurin is well known for the power and originality of her art. Her choreography is inventive, daring and energetic, with a hint of theatricality. At the Musée, she wishes to explore new avenues in dance creation. In 2002, in collaboration with the filmmaker Oana Suteu, she produced a short film titled *Passage*, in which the same choreography is performed by an old man of 81 and a young boy of 8; the movements are identical, but their execution varies from one person to the other. But how can two beings possess the same movements? That is the question Laurin will continue to investigate in her artistic residency at the Musée, curious as she is to grasp the intangible in what distinguishes one person from another. This time, she would like to work with twins. The choreographer is looking for identical female twins between 25 and 60 years of age. An audition will be held at the Musée in May 2004. If this adventure appeals to you, you can send in your photographs now by mail to O Vertigo, 4455, rue de Rouen, Montréal (Québec) Canada H1V 1H1, or by e-mail to [info@overtigo.com](mailto:info@overtigo.com).

Louise Ismert

# The Musée and the Contemporary Creative Endeavour

By its very nature, contemporary art is a movement that seeks and explores. Often, a work lies at the junction of several different disciplines. From the performances of the seventies to the multidisciplinary pieces of the eighties, the Musée has kept in step with the new avenues of contemporary creation and has attached considerable importance to them.

Taking the opportunity of the reorganization that went with its move to downtown Montréal twelve years ago, the Musée reiterated its interest in exploring various forms of artistic expression and incorporated the presentation of what were then called “multimedia creations” into its programming, on the same basis as exhibitions. “Creations” indicates that they were often original projects, while “multimedia” refers to the plurality of artistic disciplines involved in these works. With the advent of new technologies and new media in the nineties, the term “multimedia” expanded to encompass both the device and the mode of expression. This led to the gradual introduction in some contemporary-art museums and circles of the designation “arts vivants/Live Arts” in order to focus on the dynamic nature of current practices and their hybrid, evolving and collective aspect, with a view to maintaining a platform for this important means of expression that is in the forefront of today’s art.

Isabela Oliva Hare and Louise Ismert

Isabela Oliva Hare studied anthropology at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú and audiovisual communications at the Instituto De Comunicacion Y Diseño Toulouse-Lautrec in Lima, Peru. She is now pursuing a master’s in museum studies at the Université de Montréal, and has just completed a three-month internship at the Musée.

*Les Aveugles, fantasmagorie technologique*, a project based on a play by Maurice Maeterlinck, devised and produced by Denis Marleau as artist in residence at the Musée, and presented from February 28 to March 24, 2002  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay





March 1 to 5, 2004, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Camp de jour du  
Musée d'art contemporain  
de Montréal

## March Break 2004

Give in to magic, and come join a program of activities based on the visual and digital arts that is inspired by works that left their mark on artistic modernity in Québec, produced by the likes of Borduas, Riopelle, Pellan, Ferron and Scott.

The young participants will visit the exhibitions *Place à la Magie*, *Recent Acquisitions* and *Transparency*, and will try out various techniques: drawing, painting, watercolour, sculpture, printmaking, stained-glass windows on plexiglass, digital images, transfer process, and more. A vernissage will be held on Friday at 4 p.m. for the exhibition of works produced by the campers.

Space is limited to twenty participants per group (ages 8-9 and 10-11). The fee of \$174.83 (including tax) covers all the materials required and "day-care" service between 8 and 9 a.m. and 4 and 5:30 p.m., except Friday afternoon. Campers must bring their own meals and snacks. You can register your child now for the March Break camp.

Information/registration: (514) 847-6239

*Transparent: Clear and aerial,... like the colours of Titian. It is the antagonism of thickness and muddiness in painting in general, and a valuable qualification in Art.<sup>1</sup>*

# Transparency: The Intrusion of the Eye

13

The subtle transparency effects offered by the use of certain media, materials and colours have fascinated many artists. This didactic exhibition presents a selection of works from the Collection that highlights this much sought-after quality.

In painting, the colours' transparency depends on their tonality and consistency. A fluid colour, i.e., one with a thin consistency (glazes or washes), is more readily penetrated by light than a thick colour, which is called opaque because of the way it covers.

Superimposing layers of paint heightens the intensity of the colours, varies the shades and makes the most of the transparency of the medium. In watercolour, for example, each layer is added on top of the preceding one, from lightest to darkest.

The re-emergence of the surfaces, as a result of transparency, affords various visual possibilities. It allows the artist to link light and dark surfaces or emphasize the connection between them, to distinguish what is hidden behind and to allow the colour of the layers underneath, and even the support, to show through. It suggests form, uncovers structure and reveals gestures. It brings out the subtleties of the chromatic vibrations and nuances. When it allows successive planes to gradually appear, it softens the composition and brings the background to life. Without resorting to perspective, it offers a sensation of depth. Bringing the transparent and the opaque face to face yields interpretations both richly poetic and evocative.

The various printmaking processes, stained-glass windows, photography, filmmaking, holography, the new media and architecture all demonstrate various aspects of this predominance of transparency inevitably pursuing its course.

Luc Guillemette

February 20 to May 30, 2004

1. F. W. Fairholt, F.S.A.,  
*A Dictionary of Terms in Art*  
(Detroit: Gale Research  
Company, 1969), p. 439.



Marian Scott  
*Untitled, 1986-1987*  
Acrylic on canvas  
100.5 x 120.2 cm  
Marian Scott Bequest  
Collection of the Musée d'art  
contemporain de Montréal  
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay

# Fondation of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal



- Models presenting a work
  - Iégor de Saint Hippolyte in action
  - View of audience
- Photos: Roger Aziz

Last October 16, the Musée Foundation held the fourteenth edition of its Art Auction in Beverley Webster Rolph Hall. In all, more than 230 people attended, and sixty-one works were bought by art lovers and collectors. The different pieces offered for sale were on public display the day before, Wednesday the fifteenth. Before the Auction got started, guests sipped on cocktails to a jazz accompaniment courtesy of the A-Zaar trio. When it came his turn, Iégor de Saint Hippolyte put in an outstanding performance as auctioneer. In an atmosphere of great excitement, the audience enjoyed the daring presentation of the works by fashion models who paraded up and down throughout the bidding process. The event was a tremendous success, generating more than \$90,000 in proceeds – a remarkable result. We are deeply grateful to all those who supported us in making this wonderful evening possible.

At the same time, we wish to announce the Musée's Annual Ball, which will be held this coming April 29. As in past years, we look forward to a magical evening lit up with splendour and inventiveness. The organizing committee is putting together an event that is bound to be memorable. Don't miss this highlight of spring!

Jean Philippe Bolduc



# Join in the MACM Experience!

The educational component of the fundraising campaign *The Art of Giving* has set itself the ambitious goal of offering a personal introduction to the Musée to all students in Québec, guided by the slogan “Join in the MACM Experience!” And a most colourful experience it will be: bright orange and blue, dynamic and invigorating, just like the painting by Sasha Woodward-Gagné produced in our workshops, naturally, and chosen to be the campaign’s visual image.

The target of the first year was to double the Musée’s educational clientele. We can now say, mission accomplished! One of the strategies used to reach this goal was to set up a brand-new art workshop. This light-filled space is located next to the Musée’s main entrance. By increasing the area devoted to the workshops, the Education Department has not only doubled the number of participants it can accommodate, it has provided itself with a window on the city and a showcase for the Musée’s educational mission.

The official launch took place this past October 27, in the presence of representatives of the companies financing the educational component of the campaign. The sponsors were introduced to the various activities going on: guided tours, workshops, didactic exhibitions, video program, etc., and all this on a Monday! For of course, to double our educational clientele, we also have to offer new time slots for school groups and develop promotional tools in keeping with our objectives: a practical handbook for teachers; a guide for families, called *Le dimanche au Musée*; and a brochure on the art workshops, for all visitors. Ask for your own copy by calling us at (514) 847-6214, or in person, at the Musée ticket counter, and come join in the MACM experience!

Danielle Legentil



Bell Canada, Hydro-Québec, La Presse, SNC Lavalin, National Bank of Canada, CGI, Saputo Group, Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec, Cascades Inc., CIBC, Succession J. A. DeSève, RBC Royal Bank of Canada, Microsoft Canada, Pratt & Whitney Canada, Métro inc. and Construction Albert Jean are supporters of the educational component of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal fundraising campaign.



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