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Baltimore, 2003

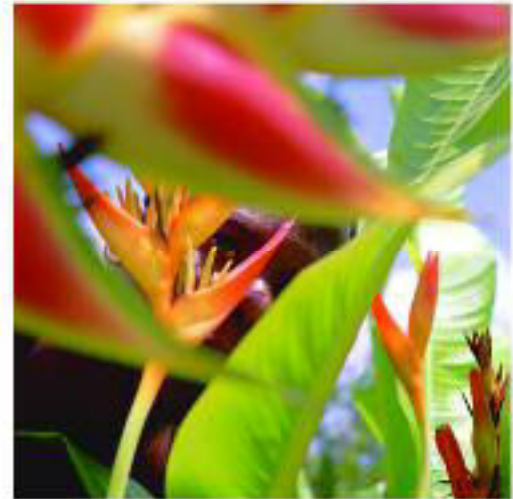
Isaac Julien

Isaac Julien was born in 1960 in London, where he lives and works. He is currently considered one of the most innovative artists on the contemporary scene. His practice, which is broad in its scope and resonance, mainly involves video and film installation and photography. For the artist's first Canadian exhibition, the Musée has organized a presentation of his latest works: *Paradise Omeros*, 2002, *Baltimore*, 2003, and *True North*, 2004. The technique and aesthetic quality of his productions are enlivened by the complexity of the themes and the particular choice of references, which may be literary, poetic, philosophical or cinematic. As he explores subjects related to the world of the Black diaspora, and addresses the resulting issues, Julien manages to break down the barriers between disciplines and genres, and to forge links between art, film, dance, photography, music and theatre. His work may be seen as a dramatic exploration of popular mythologies, using History and narrative. He also combines the methods of documentary and fiction in a presentation that bears the impress of antagonisms between societies and individuals, and raises the problems of confrontations between ideologies to their full extent. Julien's art is marked by a critical and poetic examination of the notions of hybridization and "Creoleness," and the fate of the Black diaspora. The result is an investigation of identity—a defining element of his art.

Cover: *True North*, 2004

Paradise Omeros is inspired by Derek Walcott's epic poem *Omeros*. The artist depicts the protagonist Achille experiencing a unique, disturbing journey, from St. Lucia in the Caribbean to urban England and back to his native island. In it, we see the full psychological and linguistic impact of colonialism and immigration, in the context of globalization.

Like an entire generation of filmmakers who emerged in the 1980s, Julien has used the work of his predecessors to advantage. By referring to the "blaxploitation" movies of the 1970s and developing this dimension in the film *Baltimore*, he suggests a new way of reading his own cinematic language. In addition to integrating art museums as both a theme and a suitable setting for a tribute to the actor and director Melvin Van Peebles, Julien highlights models, gestures and language as well as references to politics and popular culture. A city that falls squarely within society's problems of politics and race, Baltimore serves here as an emblem of Black American social protest. Alienation, assimilation and hybridization form the backdrop of the film's content. *Baltimore* is at once "ironic, nostalgic and futuristic"; at the same time, it shows both refinement and rigour in mounting the struggle, still very much alive, of the emancipation of the Blacks, a subject introduced in film in the 1970s.



Paradise Omeros, 2002

True North is the first film in a trilogy of histories of expeditions. Like *Baltimore*, it is a large-scale installation presented on three screens. It comprises a series of visual investigations of the Far North which tell the story of explorer Matthew Henson, the first Black to reach the North Pole, bringing the expedition metaphorically into the present. The hero is played by a woman. This substitution is a form of catharsis that seeks to restore Henson's historicity through a reinterpretation of his fate. The metaphors develop around a core of images from which a powerful figure, solitary and lost, stands out, strangely entwined in the beauty of the landscape. The film's photography creates visual sensations that are almost like painting; some scenes are reminiscent of the works of Caspar David Friedrich. *True North* offers striking images laden with the weight of history, where time seems forever suspended.

Out of these allusive works flows a sensitivity that fosters a deliberation on the complex situation of the Black diaspora. All three propose a new approach to metaphor, but they are distinguished by the kind of fiction that each in its own way institutes.

Paulette Gagnon

October 8, 2004 to January 9, 2005

Shipbreaking No. 31, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 2000
Dye-coupler print
127 x 102 cm
Collection of Vahan and Susan Kololian



Edward Burtynsky

Manufactured Landscapes. The Photographs of Edward Burtynsky is the first major retrospective of the works of this Toronto-based Canadian artist. Organized and circulated by the National Gallery of Canada, the presentation brings together sixty-two works that illustrate the past twenty years in the career of one of the leading figures in contemporary photography.

This exhibition features large-format works which marry the delicacy of detail with a sense of the sublime, and in which Burtynsky explores unfamiliar sites in the industrialized landscape: quarries, mines, railway tracks, recycling plants, refineries and shipbreaking yards. His photographic series depict landscapes irreparably altered by human activity. Under Burtynsky's penetrating gaze, they reveal the changing relationship between man and nature, despite the industries humans have created.

The 1985 *Railcuts* series, which marks the beginning of Burtynsky's systematic use of a 4" x 5" view camera, offers a provocative, close-up sense of direct physical contact with the land. The *Quarries* and *Carrara Marble Quarries* series, 1991–1992, examine the “organic architecture created by our pursuit of raw materials,” while the *Tailings* series, 1995–1996, brings out the sinister, dangerous beauty of slag heaps. *Urban Mines*, from 1997 and 2001—the series that



comes closest to painting in Burtynsky's work—illustrates waste storage as a symbol of industrial entropy. In the *Oxford Tire Pile* series, 1999, he creates, in an almost elegiac tone, topographies in keeping with the excessiveness of our consumer habits. The series *Oil Refineries*, 1999 and 2001, and *Oil Fields*, 2001–2002, show spaces affected by the development of the oil industry. Here, it is at once the immensity of the sites that fills us with dismay, and the formal order of the visually anarchic structures that holds our attention. While *Makrana Marble Quarries*, 2000, continues a favourite theme of Burtynsky's, the *Shipbreaking* series, 2000–2001, produced in Bangladesh, assumes an apocalyptic character with its disproportionate perspective of dismantled oil tankers.

Along with these series of works included in the exhibition *Manufactured Landscapes*, the Montréal presentation will add a number of photographs from the series produced in China in 2002 and focusing on the Three Gorges dam project on the Yangtze River.

Edward Burtynsky explores the theme of landscape falling into desolation, and his work, neither heroic nor caustic, is tinged with poetry and austerity as well as an uncommon beauty. This superb body of photographs, which evoke the environmental repercussions of industrialization, arouse an uneasy feeling of wonderment before these vast landscapes shaped in the name of the “pursuit of progress.”

Sandra Grant Marchand

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Branle, 2002–2004
Polyester resin and additives, branches

Tympans, 2002–2004
Polyester resin and additives

Couche amoureuse, 2002–2004
Polyester resin and additives

Corps long, 2002–2004
Polyester resin and additives, paper

Photos: Richard-Max Tremblay

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Laurent Pilon

Le cri muet de la matière

The first solo museum exhibition for Québec artist Laurent Pilon features twenty or so newly produced works that mark the culmination of a lengthy consideration of the creative process using polyester resin. Developed, for the most part, at the same time, these pieces offer a kind of synchronous echo of one another in terms of form and material, and make up a grouping in which each component nevertheless has a distinctive configuration and properties, while it also enhances a reading of the others.

The fruit of more than twenty years' experience with polyester resin, these new works are based on one of the major concerns in the artist's practice: the forming of material. Here, the visible undergoes change at the very heart of the material, without restriction as to form. Formally, the artist has approached this body of work as a manipulation of autonomous negative spaces. According to him, these spaces are thus seen as "gaps which lead the movement of the resin to inflect an orchestration of sound, a silent cry of matter."

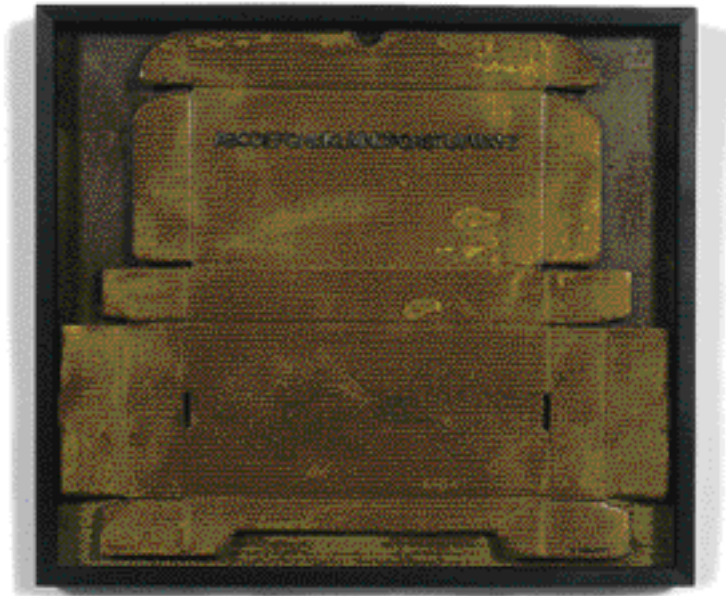
Pilon shows remarkable mastery in his recent work, along with an ever greater and more complete freedom of expression, while also achieving an undeniable refinement in the rendering

and effects of the resin. While this plastic material may suggest a process of sedimentation and fossilization of a constantly changing world, the forms it gives rise to call upon our imagination and our unconscious in subtle ways with their disturbing sense of poetry.

Laurent Pilon is one of those artists who never cease to surprise us with the rigour of their approach and the range of their creativity. Unconcerned with the demands of novelty, he travels off the beaten path to investigate a memory of forms and textures that go back to the dawn of time, using this most contemporary material. Demonstrating great sensitivity and true virtuosity in using the amalgams he makes of chemical substances and in exploiting their phenomenal properties, the artist shapes strange, timeless, hybrid figures and objects in which the animal, mineral and plant kingdoms seem to mysteriously merge together.

Réal Lussier

Brins (de folie), 1997
Cardboard, polyester resin, polymer,
plastic letters
54 x 61.7 x 3.8 cm
Gift of Robert-Jean Chénier
Collection of the Musée d'art contempo-
rain de Montréal
Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay



Part Life, Part Game

Michel Goulet

For more than thirty years, Michel Goulet has devoted himself to a sculptural undertaking focused entirely on the object: the actual object dealt with in his practice, considered in its original state—matter, volume and space—and the recognizable object, chosen rather than found, full of purposely contradictory content. In his ingenious constructions and unusual assemblages, the artist manages to at once suggest and confuse possible paths and signs. But first and foremost, he offers an accomplished expression of the essential: the search for meaning through experience.

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal recognized the originality and relevance of his approach very early on. In 1979, in fact, Goulet participated in the sculpture section of *Tendances actuelles au Québec*, and in 1980, in the exhibition *Sculpture au Québec 1970–1980*. That same year, the Musée organized the duo exhibition *Michel Goulet/Louise Robert*. His works have also been included in major group exhibitions at the Musée, and in the accompanying catalogues: *Les Vingt Ans du Musée à travers sa collection*, in 1985; *Cycles récents et autres indices*, in 1986; *Histoire en quatre temps*, in 1987; *Les Temps chauds*, in 1988; *L'Histoire et la mémoire*, in 1989, *La Collection: tableau inaugural*, in 1992; and *The Eye of the Collector*, in 1996.

In 1988, Goulet, together with Roland Brener, represented Canada at the *XLIII Venice Biennale*; it was the Musée, moreover, that organized the presentation. Goulet was awarded the Prix Paul-Émile-Borduas for visual arts in 1990. Alongside his teaching career, from 1972 to 2003, first at the University of Ottawa and then at UQAM, he is also well known for his major works of public art and for his achievements as a stage designer.

November 11, 2004 to April 3, 2005

The Musée owns twelve works by Michel Goulet, produced between 1976 and 1997. This corpus forms the starting point and the matrix of the first solo exhibition devoted to Goulet by the Musée, and his first major presentation in Montréal since 1997. Taking the form of a critical overview, the exhibition contains some thirty pieces, including sculptures and graphic works, some of them new.

Beyond a certain sense of play, usually associated with the bringing together of objects from everyday life, this will be an examination of the issues involved in a specific sculptural practice, by concentrating more on formal strategies, processes used, plays of balance between the components (and their connections to floor or wall), and notions of horizontality, verticality and frontality. Goulet applies a process of inventory and enumeration; he manages allusions to the cultural, social and political contexts and emphasizes, both in the relations of scale and in his motifs connected to the idea of home and some of the things it contains—tables, beds, chairs, boxes and model houses—the precedence of the body and the conditions of existence.

Josée Bélisle

Trophée, 1986
Steel and various objects
232.5 x 249 x 249.5 cm
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Ron Diamond



The Cremaster Cycle by American artist Matthew Barney is considered “one of the most unique and accomplished projects in contemporary art in terms of its aesthetics, its complexity and its implications.”¹ It is an epic series of five feature-length films, all conceived, written and directed by Barney himself, who also performs several roles in them, often mutant figures struggling against dark forces.

For more than eight years, Barney devoted himself exclusively to this ambitious project at the crossroads of film, performance and sculpture, and in keeping with the concept of total art. He began his *Cremaster Cycle* in 1994, at the age of 27, with *Cremaster 4*. This film was shot on the Isle of Man, an island between Ireland and Scotland that is famous for its annual motorcycle race.² In it, he plays the main protagonist, half-man, half-animal, a kind of satyr dressed like a dandy in a white suit, engaged in a never-ending ordeal that takes him into a long, viscous tunnel, among other places, where he puts on a grand performance as a contortionist.

Matthew Barney



Cremaster 5, 1997
Still picture
© 1997 Matthew Barney
Photo: Michael James O'Brien
Courtesy Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York
Starring Ursula Andress and Matthew Barney

Cremaster 4, 1994
Still picture
© 1994 Matthew Barney
Photo: Michael James O'Brien
Courtesy Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York
Starring Matthew Barney



The complete series of *The Cremaster Cycle* will be presented three times, according to the following schedule:

Saturday, November 20, 2004, 2:30 p.m.: *Cremaster 1* and *2*

Saturday, November 20, 2004, 8 p.m.: *Cremaster 3*

Sunday, November 21, 2004, 2:30 p.m.: *Cremaster 4* and *5*

Wednesday, November 24, 2004, 8 p.m.: *Cremaster 1* and *2*

Thursday, November 25, 2004, 8 p.m.: *Cremaster 3*

Friday, November 26, 2004, 8 p.m.: *Cremaster 4* and *5*

Saturday, November 27, 2004, 2:30 p.m.: *Cremaster 1* and *2*

Saturday, November 27, 2004, 8 p.m.: *Cremaster 3*

Sunday, November 28, 2004, 2:30 p.m.: *Cremaster 4* and *5*

The Cremaster Cycle will be shown in the Cinquième Salle, and is co-presented with Place des Arts.

Barney made a much-noted entry onto the contemporary art scene in the early 1990s. He transformed gallery spaces into exercise rooms for performances in which he subjected himself, most often nude, to trials of physical endurance and continually tested the limits of his own body. The themes of sexual identity and athleticism are at the heart of his work. For the five films of *The Cremaster Cycle*, he took his inspiration from various biological mechanisms, including the absence of sexual differentiation of the embryo in the first six weeks following conception, which provides an implicit narrative structure for the cycle, and the raising movement caused by the contraction of the cremaster muscle,³ which acts as the central metaphor and gives its name to the five films.

With a total running time of seven hours, *The Cremaster Cycle* is a “mythological” fiction, without any true linear narrative and without dialogue, that eludes any single reading. Barney’s unbridled imagination combines biological metaphors and fashions a baroque, fantastical fresco. Each film abounds in symbols and actions that suggest sexual reproduction. Each is identified by an insignia and a colour, and is distinguished by the gender to which it refers. At the beginning of the project, Barney mapped out a geographical route for the cycle as a whole,

which starts off in the U.S. Northwest and ends up in Central Europe, in Budapest. Each film draws on its site, and the history and local culture, to develop a very dense iconography and generate its scenario. *Cremaster 1* was shot in Bronco Stadium at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho, Barney’s home town—and yet this is the only film he does not appear in. *Cremaster 1* is entirely female, with 1930s background music and chorus girl choreographies reminiscent of Busby Berkeley’s extravaganzas. The second film in the series moves back and forth between two stories and places: the glaciers of the Canadian Rockies and the Bonneville Salt Flats in northern Utah. This time Barney takes his inspiration from the whole iconography of the American western: bison, mustangs, cowboys, rodeos, and even the Canadian mounted police. The artist completed his cycle with *Cremaster 3*, in 2002. The longest and most complex of the five films, *Cremaster 3* is set entirely in New York City. The main action takes place at the Chrysler Building and tells the story of the building’s construction. The sculptor Richard Serra plays the Architect. At the end of *Cremaster 3*, in a sequence shot at the Guggenheim Museum, Barney, dressed in tartan, confronts the sculptor who is coating the Museum’s famous ramps with melted Vaseline. Finally, *Cremaster 5*, filmed in Budapest in the romantic settings of the State Opera House, the Gellért Thermal Baths and the Lanchid (or Chain) Bridge, stars Ursula Andress.

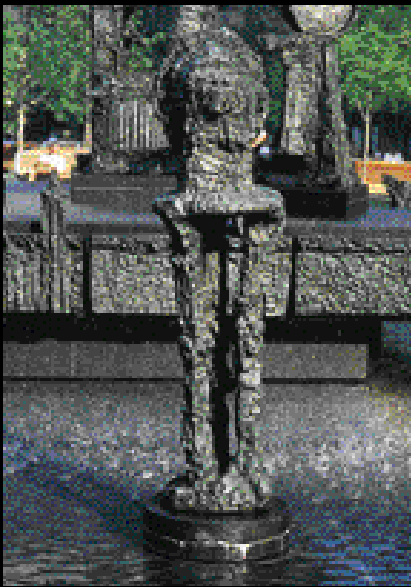
Louise Ismert

1 Charles-Arthur Boyer, “Matthew Barney: A Savage Sport of Nature,” *ArtPress* 283 (October 2002), p. 35.

2 *The Isle of Man Tourist Trophy*

3 The cremaster is the muscle that raises and lowers the testicle; its contraction causes the testicle to ascend, in order to regulate its temperature.

Discovering, or Rediscovering, *La Joute* by Jean-Paul Riopelle



La Joute, 1974

Bronze

Collective gift of doctors André G. Légaré, Champlain Charest, Halim Mheir, Alexis Pagacz, Michel Bolvo, Michel Lafortune, Claude Vallée, Pierre C. Millette, Hubert Grégoire, Simon Charlebois and Henri Martin

Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

Photos: Richard-Max Tremblay

© Estate of Jean-Paul Riopelle/SODRAC (Montréal) 2004

Program schedule

6:30 – 7:05 p.m. (fire lighting at 7 p.m.)
7:30 – 8:05 p.m. (fire lighting at 8 p.m.)
8:30 – 9:05 p.m. (fire lighting at 9 p.m.)
9:30 – 10:05 p.m. (fire lighting at 10 p.m.)
10:30 – 11:05 p.m. (fire lighting at 11 p.m.)

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Pedestrians and drivers passing through the neighbourhood known as the Quartier international will already have noted the recent addition of an imposing sculptural grouping at Place Jean-Paul-Riopelle. Standing majestically in this new public space laid out at the hub of the city's international activities, the artist's only fountain-sculpture, *La Joute*, now enjoys a setting equal to its own originality.

Of all Riopelle's sculptural works, *La Joute* is without doubt the most important, in terms of both its monumental scale and the thematic diversity of its components.

The elements that form *La Joute* were first modelled in clay by the artist in 1969–1970, then moulded in plaster, and finally cast in bronze in an Italian foundry in 1974. Donated to the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal by a group of eleven benefactors in 1976, *La Joute* was

inaugurated on July 16 of that year at the Olympic Park, in celebration of the Montréal Olympic Games. There it remained until 2002, when it was removed for a complete restoration which was completed in 2003. It has now been reinstalled in Place Jean-Paul-Riopelle, where it includes flames dancing on water, as originally envisioned by the artist.

The fountain-sculpture consists of thirty elements: the Tower of Life at the centre, surrounded by three figures—two different Owls and a Fish—sixteen bas-reliefs around the base, four figures arranged in the basin—the Indian, the Bear, the Post and the Owl—and four other elements sculpted in the round. A little off to the side are the Dog and the plaque bearing the title of the work and the emblem of the Olympic rings.

La Joute brings together some of the great mythical figures of the artist's childhood, figures that would also appear in his pieces produced between 1969 and 1973.¹ Shown here in various forms, the Owl, which had featured in the artist's work from the beginning, is also the subject of a major series from the same period. The figure of the Indian, which may suggest Grey Owl through his association with the owl as a totemic animal, symbolizes someone who lives in harmony with nature and has mastered the art of hunting and fishing—someone the artist identifies with. The depictions of the Bear, the Dog and the Fish also relate thematically to these activities, which played an important part in both the imagination and the life of Riopelle. Occupying a central position, the Tower of Life, from which the water springs, evokes the forces of nature as well as the source of life.

The composition created by Riopelle seems to refer to his conceptualization of the world, in which the animal embodies the Other, joined in a symbiotic relationship with nature, whose qualities he hopes to possess, and which he aspires to be like.²

In its new surroundings, *La Joute* is now set off in a very special way. Every evening at specific times, from mid-May to mid-October, a fog and light show brings Place Jean-Paul-Riopelle to life for thirty-five minutes, at the end of which the circle of fire around the fountain basin is lit.

Réal Lussier

1 Guy Robert, *Riopelle, chasseur d'images* (Montréal: Éditions France-Amérique), 1981, p. 240.

2 For an enlightening analysis of this subject, see Louise Vigneault, "Riopelle et la quête ludique de l'Autre," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XVIII, 2, 1997.

The Musée Foundation

Volunteers

The MACM Foundation is actively seeking volunteers to work in the coat check at the entrance to the Musée. If you like meeting people and regularly have a few hours available every week, we would be delighted to welcome you to our team. For more information, please contact Monique Brunelle, by telephone at (514) 847-6270, or by e-mail at: monique.brunelle@macm.org. You will also have a chance to work on our special events. We rely tremendously on the support of our volunteers in carrying out these activities.

Annual Ball

The Musée's eighteenth Annual Ball was held this past Tuesday, September 14, under the leadership of our honorary chair Jean-Claude Baudinet, President of Lumigem Canada Inc. This was also an opportunity to celebrate the Musée's fortieth anniversary in the company of 450 guests. Many leading figures of the business world and the artistic community attended this elegant evening, which offered the guests surroundings of exceptional beauty.

Art Auction

The Foundation will hold its Art Auction on Thursday, November 11, in Beverley Webster Rolph Hall, with Iégor de Saint Hippolyte once again acting as auctioneer. The works will be previewed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, November 9, 10 and 11. We are deeply grateful to all the artists and collectors who responded to our invitation. Through their generosity, they contribute to expanding the reach of our institution and fulfilling our goal, namely to raise funds in order to add to the Collection. Make a note on your calendar now of this upcoming fall event.

Jean Philippe Bolduc



Tribute to Max and Iris Stern

Clarence Epstein, Director of Special Projects, Rector's Cabinet, Concordia University, presenting a cheque for \$250,000 to Marcel Brisebois, Director of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, on behalf of the executors of the Estate of Max Stern, to establish the *Max and Iris Stern International Symposium*.

Photo: Igor Nérison

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is pleased to announce that its series of prestigious international symposiums will henceforth be known as the *Max and Iris Stern International Symposium*. From the time the MACM was founded in 1964, Max and Iris Stern contributed significantly to the Musée's growth by enriching its Collection with 86 gifts, including works by Hans Arp, Paul-Émile Borduas, Emily Carr, John Lyman and Jean-Paul Riopelle. The first *Max and Iris Stern International Symposium* will take place in spring 2005. The goal of this annual event is to make recent research by the top thinkers of the day, in such fields as art history, philosophy, sociology and literature, accessible to the public. Through this gesture, the MACM wishes to pay tribute to the Sterns by carrying on the educational mission they themselves pursued, and so foster a greater understanding of contemporary art on the international scene.

Marc Mayer

New Director of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal



Photo: Adam Husted

This past June 25, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Marc DeSerres, announced the appointment of Marc Mayer as the museum's Director, effective September 15, 2004.

Born in Sudbury, Ontario, Marc Mayer earned a degree in art history from McGill University and has worked since then in a number of major international institutions. Since 2001, he has been Deputy Director for Art at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, where he has organized exhibitions such as Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* and has led preparations for the Jean-Michel Basquiat retrospective and catalogue scheduled for 2005, in collaboration with the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He was also instrumental in establishing the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art which accompanies the gift of Judy Chicago's work.

Mr. Mayer was Director of the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto from 1998 to 2001. There he organized exhibitions including *Kim Adams*, *Shirley Witasalo*, *Jessica Stockholder*, *Christine Davis: Pluck*, *Candida Höfer*, *Chrysanthe Stathacos: The Wish Machines™* and, in collaboration with the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, *Angela Grauerholz: Sententia I-LXII* and *Eugène Leroy*. Another highlight of his time at the

Power Plant was the launch of a major campaign that considerably increased the gallery's membership, as well as its self-generated revenues. Mr. Mayer was also responsible for the Power Plant's breakthrough into the world of prestige sponsorships by such companies as Gucci.

From 1994 to 1998, Mr. Mayer was curator at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, where he organized the major exhibition *Being & Time: The Emergence of Video Projection* featuring works by Gary Hill, Bruce Nauman, Tony Oursler, Diana Thater and Bill Viola. The exhibition subsequently travelled to several other American cities, including Portland (Oregon), Houston and Santa Fe.

Prior to that, Mr. Mayer was Head of Visual Arts with the Cultural Services of the Canadian Embassy in Paris from 1990 to 1993, Paris correspondent for the New York publication *The Journal of Art*, and Assistant to the Director, and then Assistant Director, of the 49th Parallel Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art in New York from 1986 to 1990. Among his various activities, he has also curated exhibitions by Sophie Ristelhueber, Michel Verjux, Fernand Leduc, Guy Pellerin, Richard-Max Tremblay, Will Gorriz, Stan Douglas and Joanne Tod, and sat on visual arts juries in Canada and the United States.

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