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Magazine of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

www.macm.org

Volume 19, Number 3 — Winter 2008–2009

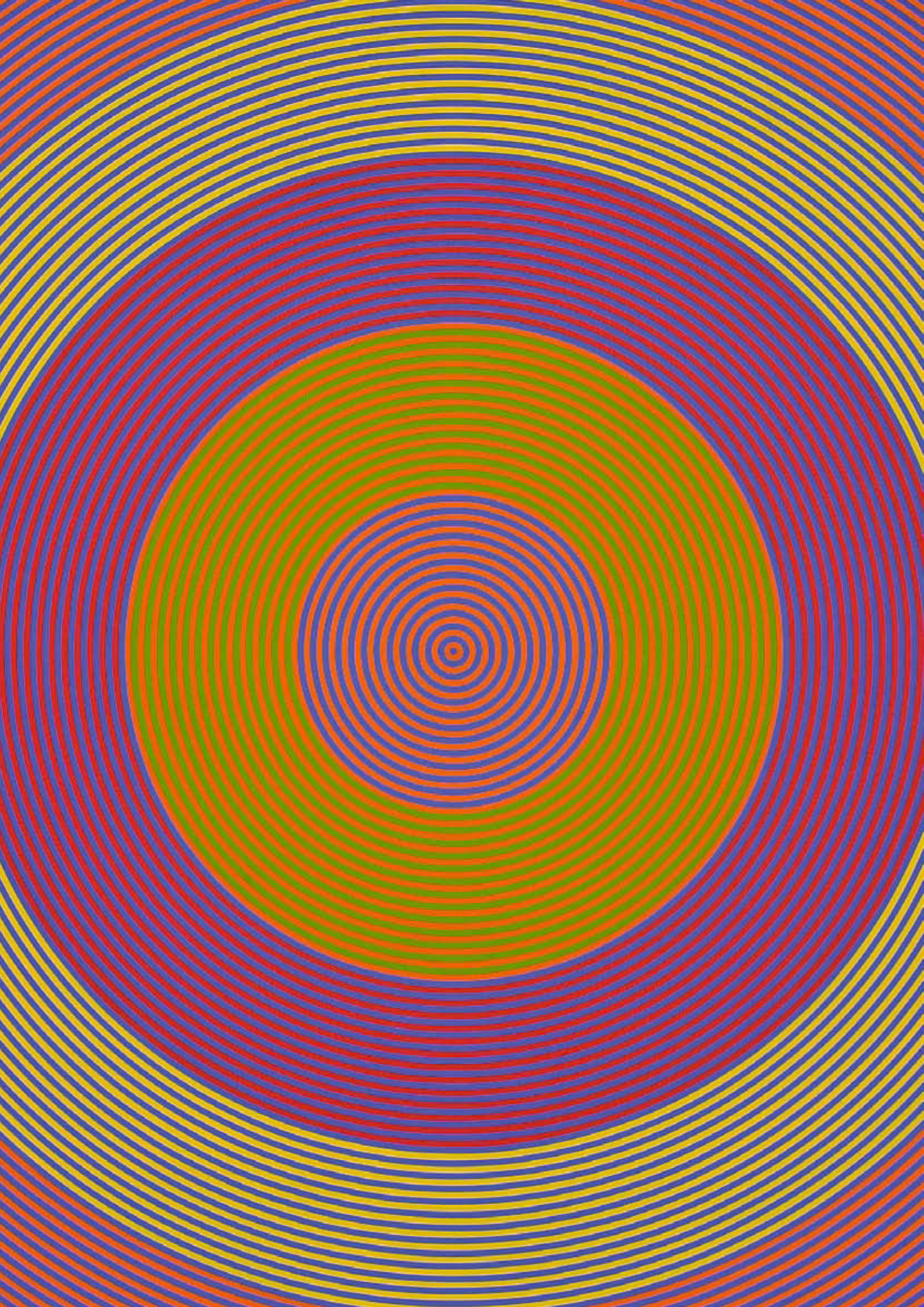




Photo: Nat Gorry

Over twenty years ago, when I worked at the 49th Parallel, Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art, in New York City, my boss France Morin organized a timely exhibition of recent work by Claude Tousignant. It was 1987, perhaps the last moment in art history to boast an artistic movement; in fact, a veritable orgy of final movements preceded the great stylistic free-for-all we know today. The latest strategy, called “Appropriation,” was the source of much of the ink being spilled in high-brow art journals at the time for the simple reason that nothing seemed more original (or more commercially shrewd) than blatantly copying a previous generation’s blue-chip art. There was also the by-then post-peak and wildly overpopulated Neo-Expressionism, largely forgotten today save for the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat, who is still regarded as some-

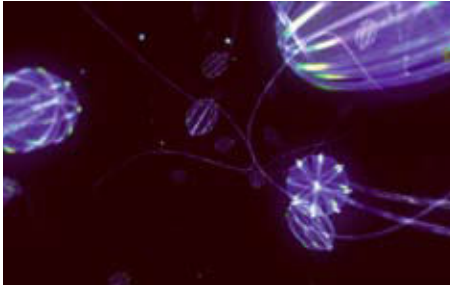
thing of a genius. In between we’d had Neo-Geo, which, as its silly name suggests, was less a revival of geometric abstraction than an ironic rearticulation. In my four years at 49th Parallel, where my desk faced the exhibition space, I cannot remember a single show attracting more fashionable New York artists than Tousignant’s. I like to think it was the novelty (for that generation of notorious “quoters”) of a classic primary source they had not heard of and could not exploit because he was not part of the American canon on which their work was based. I don’t recall seeing Basquiat (he died later that year), but Sherrie Levine, the Queen of Appropriation, and Peter Halley, the King of Neo-Geo, both came and lingered. Perhaps they were encouraged by Peter Schuyff, Canada’s international painting star at the time, who visited frequently and always struck me as being a bit overstimulated by the work. I know the feeling well.

This is the point where I might be expected to say that it has been my dream ever since to organize an enormous Tousignant survey. But the truth is, the *succès d’estime* of that show in New York merely confirmed my notion of Tousignant as an important artist, albeit one whose work I didn’t fully understand (and still don’t, thank goodness). It had been a previous and quite magnificent exhibition I saw in 1982 at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts when I was a student that first caught my attention. But Tousignant’s permanent “national treasure” status in my pantheon was earned several years later in Paris, where my friend the late Guy Huot had a very small target diptych over the bar in his living room. I loved it as you’re probably not supposed to love an object — certainly not one that doesn’t belong to you. On Fridays, Guy would usually hold a dinner party, and I was a frequent guest. So hopelessly mesmerized was I by his modest Tousignant that it became something of a joke with my host, who asked me more than once to sit with my back to the work so I could join in the party. It was that bad.

The idea for this exhibition came to me within my first year as Director of the MACM, and I freely admit that it is the single most selfish project that I have undertaken in Montréal. I thought exclusively of my own personal pleasure when I asked Claude Tousignant to let me fill the museum with his work. The desire to move slowly and repeatedly through room after room, decade after decade, of his magical paintings and sculptures was so strong that I abandoned my objectivity and, yes, abused my power. You can imagine how grateful I was, and frankly not surprised, that my colleague and collaborator Paulette Gagnon shared my enthusiasm for such a project. The fact that she also took the opportunity to pen one of the finest essays ever written on Tousignant as evidence of her own passion may well justify our self-indulgence. Being both of us rather busy people, we were not a little relieved that our colleague Mark Lanctôt, who just happened to have written his master’s thesis on Tousignant’s monochromes, could contribute his energy, knowledge and enthusiasm to this project. Not only has he been a resourceful co-curator of this complex exhibition, as a representative of a younger generation, he also bears witness to the timelessness of Tousignant’s unique achievement.

If beauty is your Achilles heel, as it is mine, don’t miss this experience. You are unlikely to feel this way again. **Marc Mayer, Director**

Gong 64, 1966
Acrylic on canvas
164 cm (diameter)
Collection of the Musée d’art
contemporain de Montréal



Exhibitions

Claude Tousignant A Retrospective

February 5 to April 26, 2009

Point[s] of View series

Curators Paulette Gagnon and Mark Lanctôt will lead a tour of the exhibition on Wednesday, February 11 at 6 p.m. Free. In French

The Collection: Some Installations

February 28 to August 16, 2009

Multimedia Events

Beverly Webster Rolph Hall (lower level)
In connection with the *Projections* series

Takashi Ishida and Yuki Kawamura

January 14 to March 15, 2009

Kelly Richardson

May 6 to June 20, 2009

International Festival of Films on Art (FIFA)

March 19 to 29, 2009

Nocturnes

The first Friday of every month — don't forget!

Friday, February 6, March 6, April 3 and May 12 at 7 p.m.

A different way to visit the Musée and its exhibitions. The Nocturnes offer evenings of discovery of today's art with, as a bonus, the best bands around, bar service, and more.

Open to all. No reservation necessary. Admission with regular Musée ticket or our \$10 Wired card, valid for one year.



Art Videos

Gazoduc-TQM Room
Daily screenings of videos on art

An excellent way to round out your visit to the Musée!

February 5 to April 26, 2009

Tuesday to Sunday at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., plus 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays
Additional screenings during Friday Nocturnes at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. on February 6, March 6 and April 3, and also Easter Monday, April 13 at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 and 3:30 p.m.

February

Driven to Abstraction: Canadian Abstract Art and the Turbulent '50s

Director: George Mully.

Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, 1992

32 min 25 sec

Using newsreel footage from the 1950s, this film incorporates comments from Canadian artists about abstract art in that period in the context of popular culture and world events. Artists interviewed include Jack Bush, Fernand Leduc, Marcelle Ferron, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Guido Molinari, Claude Tousignant, William Ronald, Harold Town, Ronald Bloore, Marion Nicoll, B.C. Binning, Jack Shadbolt, Gordon Smith and Takao Tanobe.

<http://www.nfb.ca/collection/films/fiche/?id=29558>

March

Modern and Abstract Painting in Canada

Director: George Mully. Montréal,
National Film Board of Canada, 1992

37 min



Art Videos (continued)

This compilation consists of two videos from the National Gallery of Canada:

Modern Art in Canada – The Beginnings shows how modern art came to Canada and flourished here. Looking at artworks from 1900 to 1940, it examines the influence of the European avant-garde on the work of some Canadian artists including James Wilson Morrice, Bertram Brooker, Emily Carr, Marc-Aurèle Fortin, Lawren Harris, Adrien Hébert, John Lyman, David Milne and Alfred Pellán (18 min).

The Painter Speaks – Canadian Abstract Painters is composed of archival radio and television footage and film clips, and presents the following Canadian artists: Lawren Harris, Paul-Émile Borduas, Jack Bush, Fernand Leduc, Kenneth Lochhead, Guido Molinari, William Ronald, Jack Shadbolt, Gordon Smith, Claude Tousignant and Harold Town (18 min).

<http://www.nfb.ca/collection/films/fiche/?id=26006>

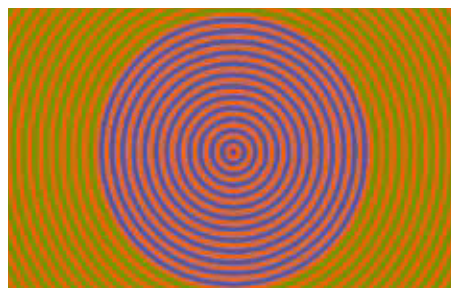
April

Blanc de mémoire

Director: Jacques Giraldeau. Montréal,
National Film Board of Canada, 1995
99 min

A postcard from Vienna triggers a widespread operation in search of a mysterious character, the painter Évariste Quesnel. An enquiry offering commentary from art critics, theorists, philosophers and artists builds up a fascinating account of the major developments in the history of modern art in Québec. Featuring Dominique Blain, Maurice Blain, Serge Gagnon, Édouard Lachapelle, Johanne Lamoureux, Guido Molinari, Richard Purdy, Normand Thériault, Phu Qvoc Truong (Dr Kim), Claude Tousignant and Monique Régimbald-Zeiber.

<http://www.nfb.ca/collection/films/fiche/?id=55055>



Art Workshops

Main floor

In the invention-friendly surroundings of the Musée's art workshops, participants give free rein to their imaginations by creating their own artworks inspired by a piece on display at the Musée, while trying out different techniques, media and materials.

For all, with family or friends

Every Sunday at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Free for children under 12 (must be accompanied by an adult). No reservation necessary.

For school groups

Tuesday to Friday, at 9, 9:30, 10:30 and 11 a.m., and 12:30, 1 and 2 p.m.

Information/reservations: 514 847-6253

Workshop: \$3 per participant. Tour/workshop combo: \$4.50 per person

Reservation required: 514 847-6266

Ding Gong!

February 6 to April 5, 2009

Make colour sing by taking part in an abstract-art activity inspired by Claude Tousignant's series of *Gongs* (1966). For this workshop you will work with a roller, not a brush, to create a circular painting in vibrant colour.

Emergence

April 10 to May 17, 2009

The works *Chameleon* (2004) by Franz West and *Blue Table and Chairs* (1957) by Michael Snow, presented in the exhibition *The Collection*, will inspire participants to paint their own original picture featuring these pieces of furniture.

Art Workshops (continued)

Creative Tuesdays

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Art workshops for adults who want to add a little creativity to their Tuesday afternoons. Every Tuesday, a different activity will be offered. On the day of the activity, come to the museum a little earlier and you can visit the exhibitions free of charge (just show your workshop admission ticket).

Cost: \$12 per workshop. Space is limited.

Registration required: 514 847-6266

Chromatic Resonance

February 10 and 17, and March 10 and 17, 2009 (series)

Participants will experiment with various aspects of Claude Tousignant's approach to painting, taking inspiration from series such as *Transformateurs chromatiques*, *Gongs*, *Accélérateurs chromatiques* and the *Diptyques circulaires*. Colour and its many effects are the object of the exercise.

Dynamic Duo

April 14 and 21, 2009

This pair of activities will prompt participants to create images inspired by works in the Musée's collection.

Information and registration:

Manon Guérin, by phone: 514 847-6266

or, preferably, by e-mail:

manon.guerin@macm.org

Practical Information

Hours

Tuesday to Sunday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Wednesday: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. (free admission from 6 to 9 p.m.)

Open holiday Mondays

Admission

\$8 adults

\$6 seniors (aged 60 and over)

\$4 students (aged 30 and under with student I.D.)

\$16 family package (maximum 4 persons including at least 1 adult with adolescents aged 12 to 17).

Free admission for children under 12 and members of the Musée.

Free admission every Wednesday evening from 6 to 9 p.m.

Subscribe to the Musée's E-mail Newsletter at www.macm.org

To find out more about the activities of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, add your name to our mailing list and get weekly updates on our exhibitions and events. Simply enter your contact details in the "e-mail newsletter" window on our website's home page.

Wired to the MAC Card \$10

Enjoy unlimited admission to all our exhibitions for one year.

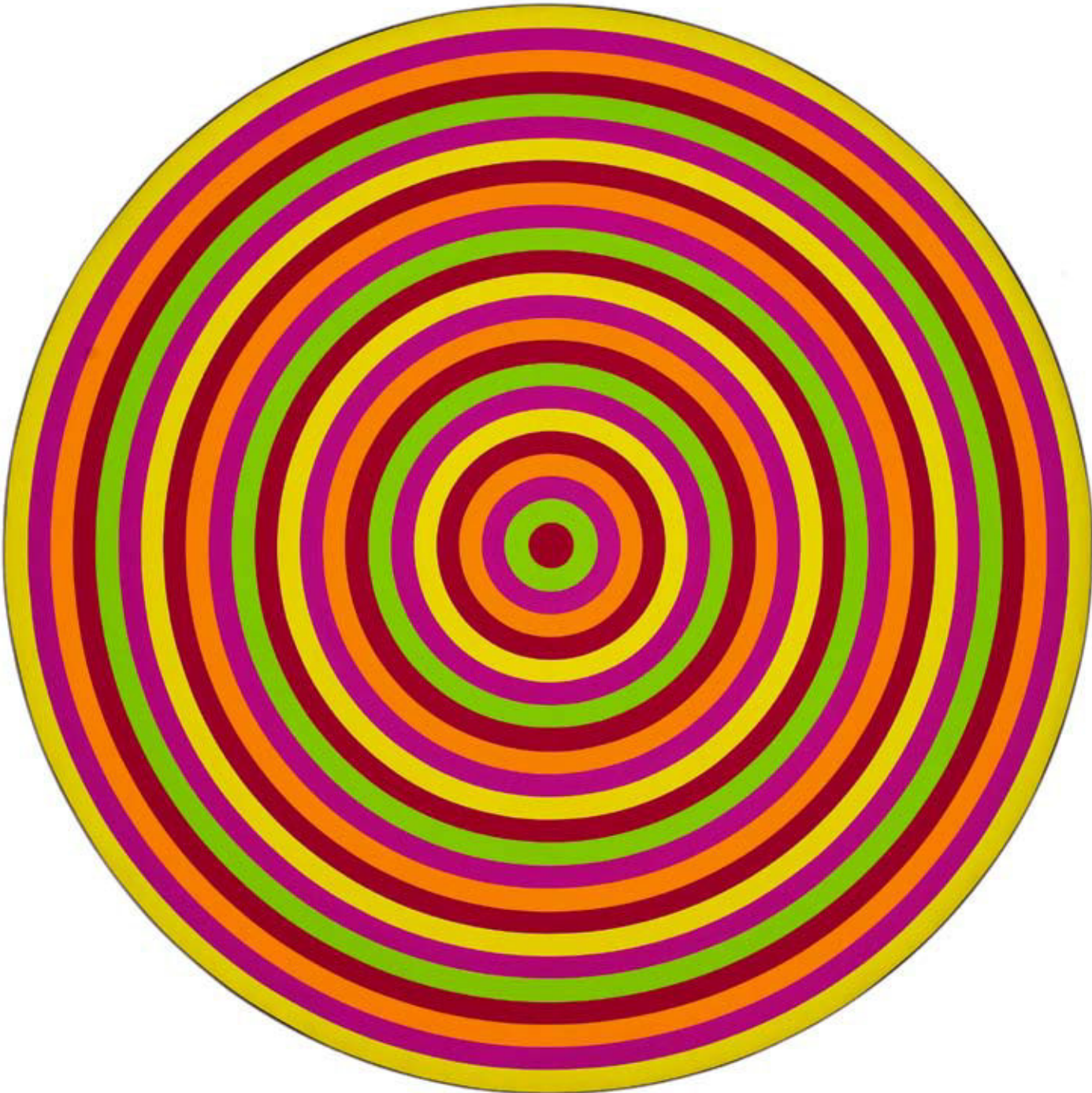
Also valid for access to Friday Nocturnes.

Available at the museum ticket counter.

Media Centre

Second floor

One of Canada's largest reference centres devoted to contemporary art. An ideal place for multimedia research and consultation, open to the public, free of charge, Tuesday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays till 8:30 p.m.



Claude Tousignant

February 5 to April 26, 2009

This exhibition of over eighty works offers a retrospective survey of the career of an artist widely acknowledged as a leading light of abstraction. Claude Tousignant's practice, unique in the history of Canadian art, has unfolded over a period of fifty years, beginning with his early abstract experiments of 1951 and continuing in the painting series entitled *Transformateurs chromatiques*, *Gongs* and *Accélérateurs chromatiques*, the *Diptyques circulaires*, the *Polychromes* and, ultimately, the *Monochromes*. Over the years, remaining steadfastly true to his original goal, the artist has developed a rigorous synthetic approach that encompasses not only painting, but also drawing, collage and sculpture.

Accélérateur chromatique 48, 1967
Acrylic on canvas
122.7 cm (diameter)
Collection of the Musée d'art
contemporain de Montréal



Born in Montréal in 1932, Claude Tousignant was still young when he became a prominent figure in the world of abstract painting, closely identified from the outset with the development of a resolutely non-representational form of Canadian art. He moved quickly towards a hard-edge approach, which he used to explore the potential of the colour field and the pure geometric form. Distinguishing himself from most of his contemporaries, he began creating serial compositions in which the whole picture plane is dynamized by the intrinsic and expressive properties of colour. The exhibition's chronological circuit begins with a number of tachist paintings, in which dabs of pure colour are juxtaposed on their canvas support. Next come works from the series shown at the Galerie L'Actuelle in June 1956, paintings conceived as coloured objects in their own right. These are followed by a number of "post-Plastician" pieces — paintings, sculptures and reliefs openly inspired by the work of Piet Mondrian. It was during the 1960s that Tousignant executed his series of circular paintings, characterized by their concentric rings of saturated and/or fluorescent colours. The circle remained a central feature of his production until the late 1970s, when he first began experimenting with the monumental monochrome. Since then, he has continued to explore all the expressive possibilities of the genre. The early monochromes, posited as "object-paintings," are the product of a chromaticism that establishes close relations with both the space in which the work is presented and the spectator.

Throughout his practice, the artist has simultaneously explored the realm of sculpture, producing a corpus that ranges from the modest wood constructions of the 1960s to the recent series of monumental sculptures in painted aluminum, where the intense colour cloaking each piece seems to vibrate in the surrounding space. In these, and even more notably in his most recent sculpture, *L'Œuvre au noir*, Tousignant continues to probe the relationship between colour and light.

Aside from providing new insights into the development of abstract art in Montréal during the second half of the twentieth century, thereby more clearly rooting current abstract practices in that process, the presentation of this body of work marks a major landmark in the historiography of Québec art while at the same time setting forth an aesthetic vision of singular significance to the history of Canadian culture. In recognition of the importance of Claude Tousignant's *oeuvre* within the history of abstract art, this retrospective confirms its place at the national and even international level.

The exhibition, the first comprehensive survey of Tousignant's production since the retrospective organized and circulated by the National Gallery of Canada in 1973, offers a new look at the work as a whole. Among the most important of the many previous public presentations of Tousignant's work are his first exhibition at the café L'Échourie, in 1955; *Dyptiques 1978-1980*, presented at the Musée d'art contemporain in Montréal, in 1980; a major exhibition of his sculptures, held at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 1982; and an exhibition of the monochromes executed between 1978 and 1993, shown at the Musée du Québec in 1994.

A comprehensive and richly illustrated bilingual catalogue is being published to accompany the exhibition. It includes essays by Paulette Gagnon, Mark Lanctôt, Daniel Lanthier and Denise Leclerc, together with a detailed chronology and a select bibliography.

Paulette Gagnon and Mark Lanctôt

Double Céphéide mai-juin 1997, 1997

Acrylic on canvas

2 elements, 173 x 260 cm (each)

Collection of the artist

Double quatre-vingt-un, 1970

Acrylic on canvas

2 elements, 204.6 cm (each) (diameter)

Collection of the artist



February 28 to August 16, 2009

The Collection:

Christine Davis
Adad Hannah
Franz West



Now comprising almost 7,500 works executed mainly between 1939 and today, the Musée Collection offers a relevant panorama of the main trends in contemporary art. Although it is strongest in paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures and photographs, it also holds a significant number of works of installation art, exemplary pieces by artists whose individual practices combine the personal and the universal.

Among them are creators like Bill Viola, Gary Hill, James Turrell, Louise Bourgeois, Christian Boltanski, Thomas Hirschhorn, Geneviève Cadieux, Barbara Steinman and Marcel Dzama. Continuing the dynamic policy of presenting the collections in rotation — a policy imposed by a lack of gallery space — the Musée is now displaying three major installations acquired over the past two years: *Not I/ pas moi* (2006-2007) by Christine Davis, *Cuba Still (Remake)* (2005) by Adad Hannah and *Chameleon* (2004) by Franz West. Together they are the focus of the exhibition *The Collection: Some Installations*.

For over twenty years, Vancouver-born Christine Davis, who now lives and works in Toronto, has been creating an original body of work forged from high-quality images projected in the form of slides, a photographic medium threatened with obsolescence in an era greedy for new technology. The targeted subjects and literary references are inscribed on material supports often of a slightly magical kind: flowers, feathers, butterflies... In *Not I/ pas moi*, the continuous rhythmic projection of extracts from texts by Samuel Beckett and Simone Weil on a hanging screen covered with vintage buttons is reflected on two mirrors framing (embedding) the screen. The sequences of words are screened alternately in French and in English, and thus become readable backwards and forwards in turn on the screen and on the mirrors. The tragic beauty of the words re-positions viewers within their own subjectivity, but still unremittingly faced with the negation of the “I” and the impossibility of grasping the continuous flow of a silent and powerful dialogue.

Some Installations



Born in New York in 1971, Adad Hannah lives and works in Montréal. *Cuba Still (Remake)* is in a way a continuation of his “Stills” series of *tableaux vivants*, which he commenced in about 2000. Starting with a publicity still for a banal forgotten film which he purchased in Havana in 2003, Hannah restored to the screen, for the purposes of video capture, the six characters from the original image. The resulting six videos were then screened simultaneously side by side so as to remake, in a single cinematic image, the fabricated sequence of the apparently motionless images of the *tableaux vivants*. An ingenious projecting mechanism — six wooden lecterns and a system of cutout masks — plus the original photograph and the images of the six characters complete this installation, which crystallizes the notions of the photographic moment and of duration, the respective merits of the fixed and the moving image, and the particular nature of photography and film.

Franz West was born in 1947 in Vienna, where he lives and works. Since the early 1970s, he has been creating sculptures and installations that feature familiar objects and pieces of furniture given back their archetypal dimension. A chair, a table, an armchair, a sofa, a bed, a carpet, upholstering fabric... each in turn becomes the basis for a critical, provocative and deliberately insolent meditation on the nature and scope of the act of making art. In *Chameleon*, West uses one of his favourite strategies, that of disguising the utilitarian nature of the objects, in this case, a round table and eight chairs. It is colour that rules within this austere installation: the solid colour, which varies according to the choice of those displaying the work, covers the walls, the tabletop, and the backs and seats of all the chairs. By requiring this participation on the part of the collector or museum, on the one hand, West is insisting on the real importance of colour as opposed to the falsely decorative function often accorded to it, and on the other hand, he is giving this installation, this skilful combination of painting and sculpture, a conceptual and existential dimension that is reasserted each time it is exhibited. **Josée Bélisle**

Franz West
Chameleon, 2004
1 table and 8 chairs, wood, metal, colour
80 x 180 cm (table)
84 x 45 x 45 cm (each chair)
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Courtesy Galeria Juana de Aizpuru, Madrid

Christine Davis
Not I / pas moi, 2006-2007
Diaporama loop projected on a hanging screen of buttons, mirrors, 18 min
180 x 121.9 cm
Purchased with the support of the Acquisitions Assistance Program of the Canada Council for the Arts
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Courtesy the artist

Adad Hannah
Cuba Still (Remake), 2005
6 DVD videos, 6 supports for video projector, 6 video projectors, 6 frames, edition of 3
13 photographs mounted under Plexiglas, edition of 5
Collection of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Courtesy Pierre-François Ouellette Art Contemporain

Projections Series



Yuki Kawamura
In My Hand, 2008



Kelly Richardson
Exiles of the Shattered Star, 2006
High-definition colour video loop,
29 min 51s, sound, 5/5
Collection of the Musée d'art
contemporain de Montréal
Photo: Courtesy Birch Libralato



Takashi Ishida
Unasaka, 2007

The *Projections* series, screened in Beverley Webster Rolph Hall, features productions by local and international visual artists and directors who are committed to and enrich the art of film. Following the presentation of the works of Mariana Vassileva, in the next few months we will see films by Kelly Richardson, Takashi Ishida and Yuki Kawamura.

Takashi Ishida and **Yuki Kawamura** were both born in Japan, Kawamura in Kyoto in 1979 and Ishida in Tokyo in 1972. Both steeped in Japanese culture, they each nevertheless left home to pursue their commitment to art in another country. Ishida now lives and works in Toronto; Kawamura chose to complete his studies at the École supérieure des Études cinématographiques in Paris, where he still lives.

January 14 to March 15, 2009

Takashi Ishida began to paint at the age of fourteen, and his originality and artistic integrity were recognized at once. In 1995 he began to make films. He made his name with *Gestalt*, a 16-mm film shot in 1999 which he created by taking image-by-image photographs of his own paintings. He also used the traditional Japanese roller for painting, a method that enabled him to analyze the time required for the image. In 2001, he shot the 19-minute film *Art of Fugue* with the idea of transforming sound into image. *Art of Fugue* reveals his entirely personal way of understanding and analyzing music. Takashi Ishida has also been presenting live painting performances since 2001.

After studying French at the Kyoto University of Languages, Yuki Kawamura continued his studies in film in Paris. A visual artist and filmmaker, Kawamura also creates performance art and is involved in the electronic music scene. Since 2005, while continuing to make numerous videos, he has produced three short films that demonstrate his interest in stories and in narrative film in general. His videos since then have become spaces of pure creation. Kawamura composes fleeting, floating images that mingle nature and dreams, elusive thoughts and poetry.

May 6 to June 20, 2009

Kelly Richardson's *Exiles of the Shattered Star*, recently acquired by the Musée, will be screened as a solo presentation. *Exiles of the Shattered Star* is a video lasting almost 30 minutes shown as an unending loop. In June 2006, Richardson filmed a sunrise in the Lake District, England, a region famous for the staggering beauty of its landscape. Into this fixed-sequence, almost unreal, footage the artist inserted a rain of fireballs, composing a surrealist picture that demonstrates her love of the eerie. The title, *Exiles of the Shattered Star*, suggests a distant catastrophe, the explosion of a star whose fragments have come to "find exile" in this corner of paradise. Kelly Richardson was born in Burlington, Ontario, in 1972. Since 2003, she has lived and worked in Gateshead, England. **Louise Simard**

National Bank Financial Group

Collectors Symposium

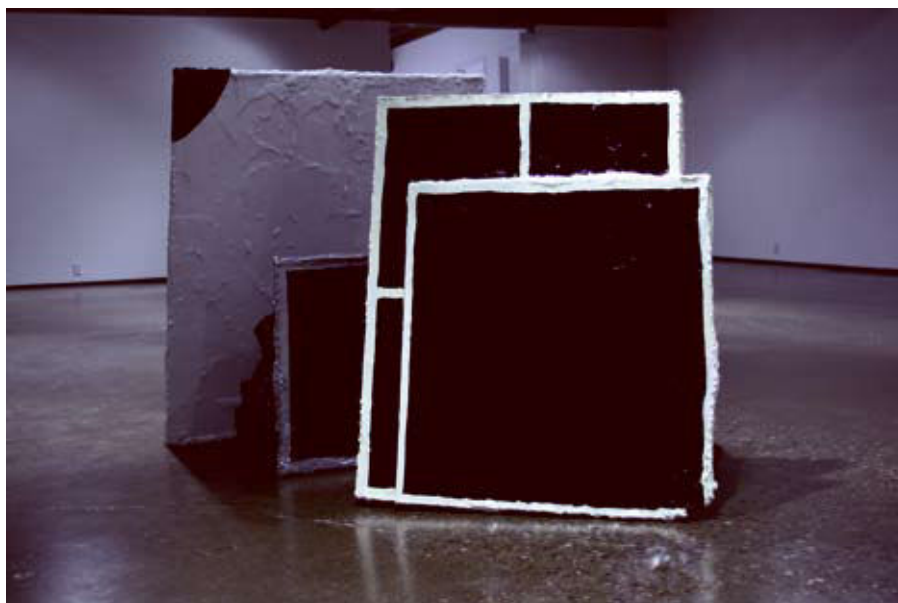
The second Collectors Symposium, sponsored by National Bank Financial Group for a period of three years, was held on November 6. The Honorary Chairperson of this benefit event, organized by the Foundation of the Musée, was Niky Papachristidis, and the symposium was chaired by Diane Vachon. The proceeds from the event will go to the Musée for the acquisition of one or more of the works suggested to the participants.

The Foundation offers its warmest thanks to National Bank Financial Group for its support.

Since the early 1980s, **Pierre Dorion** has been executing paintings in which the ideas of quotation and reference are explored in an original and novel manner. *Intérieur (fenêtre)* is a prime example of the specific data of a rigorous and concise pictorial quest that tackles with exquisite exactitude the notions of subject and representation, light and shadow, opacity and transparency, and, because it is used so sparingly, colour. Open to the dazzle of the outside world and altogether discreet in terms of its visibility, this canvas, through the skill of its hyperrealist rendering, evokes both the potential and the omnipresence of the photographic image, a recurrent resource of this artist. The interior depicted here, a significant element, is that of a celebrated art gallery in the Chelsea district of New York. **Josée Bélisle**

Pierre Dorion
Intérieur (fenêtre), 2008
Oil on linen canvas
182.9 x 137.2 cm





Rhonda Weppler and Trevor Mahovsky
Prop, 2007
 Hydrocal on metal and foam-rubber
 frame, enamel paint
 117 x 127 x 122 cm

Prop, by the team of **Rhonda Weppler** and **Trevor Mahovsky**, comes from the series *Clutter Sculptures* launched in 2007. The title of the work has a double sense: as a verb, it means to support vertically; as a noun, it is an accessory used in shooting movies. Thus *Prop* refers to the objects that make up the work and also to the fact that it is these objects that keep it standing. What these objects are (reproductions), their apparently random arrangement and the way in which they relate to each other (and to the viewer) thus become apparent.

Rhonda Weppler (born in 1972 in Winnipeg) and Trevor Mahovsky (born in 1969 in Calgary) have been working together since 2004. They were both studying at the University of British Columbia when they met. They continue to live and work in Vancouver. **Mark Lanctôt**



Barbara Probst's photography is the art of seeing things and people in a different way. The diptych entitled *Exposure #44: Barmsee, Bavaria, 08.18.06 4:37 p.m.*, 2006, is one of a series of photographs taken in New York and Bavaria. In its ability to tell a story, this work challenges the viewer's insight. The photographer's viewpoint is not the one we immediately think of; for the young woman who moves before a backdrop identical to the idyllic landscape in which the illusion takes place is seen from two different angles and at exactly the same moment. Questioning the notions of time and space, Probst gives us a work in which the images are directly linked to one another in the simultaneousness of distance and proximity. Barbara Probst was born in Munich in 1964. She lives in New York and Munich. **Paulette Gagnon**

Barbara Probst
Exposure #44: Barmsee, Bavaria, 08.18.06, 4:37 p.m., 2006
 Ultrachrome ink print on cotton paper
 2 elements
 114.5 x 170 cm (each)

Over the years, the Musée's Day Camp has been awarded three prizes for excellence by the Association des camps du Québec: for Innovation in 1997, and for Best Program in 1998 and 2006.

The Musée d'Art Contemporain Day Camp



School Break March 2 to 6, 2009 Camp for children aged 6 to 11

A colourful school break in the light and airy studios of a downtown museum. The impressive Claude Tousignant exhibition will introduce participants to one of the most important painters in the field of contemporary Canadian art. The program will consist of a wide range of activities.



Summer 2009 Camp for children aged 6 to 16

This summer, get your fill of great new ideas and have fun with a team of enthusiastic, award-winning camp counsellors. Create your own original images in the stimulating company of contemporary artists. Give free rein to your imagination as you experiment with a variety of techniques, processes, media and materials: drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, print-making, silkscreen, and, for the teenagers, exciting projects with digital arts. Bring your creativity to life: on the last day of camp your parents and friends will be invited to an exhibition to admire the many artworks you have created.

**To find out about dates and cost of the camps, log on to www.macm.org
Information and registration: 514 847-6266**

After completing a BFA at Concordia University and courses in art history, sociology and communications, in 1989 Sylvie Alix obtained a master's in Library and Information Science from McGill University, focusing on the development of image-researching systems. As a librarian specializing in contemporary art, she has been Head Librarian at the Media Centre of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal for just over a year. Before taking up this position, she worked for fifteen years at Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec as head of the collections of prints and artists' books, and was also director of the special collections division from 2002 to 2005.

Contemporary Art from A to Z

A conversation with Sylvie Alix, Head Librarian at the Media Centre

M. G.: For whom is the Media Centre intended? And what is its function?

S. A.: To make known and promote contemporary art for the benefit of the general public, from experts to beginners. Founded in 1965, the Media Centre was initially known as the *Library* of the Musée d'art contemporain. It took on its new title of *Media Centre* in 1987 with the arrival of Michelle Gauthier. The name change came about because of the increasing importance of audiovisual media in its collection and the ongoing effort to provide access to as many electronic resources as possible. Under the aegis of Michelle Gauthier, head librarian from 1987 to 2006, the Media Centre expanded and became more accessible to the public. The Centre is also indebted the Musée's directors for their determination to maintain, in-house, all the documentary resources necessary for fulfilling its mandate and developing its program, in addition to providing a unique collection of contemporary art for the general public to discover.

The evolution of the Media Centre is also a response to the growing demand for relevant documentation on contemporary art, a demand that has been rising since 1980. For example, in 1971 the library welcomed 1,800 researchers and its staff answered 182 reference requests. In 2007 it received over 11,000 researchers and responded to more than 10,000 reference requests.

M. G.: What are the means you employ to achieve your objectives?

S. A.: We use all possible means to offer a large, specialized collection in the forefront of today's art, an up-to-date reference service and effective research tools. The Media Centre aims to be a place of interchange for research into contemporary Québec, Canadian and international art as well as an accessible and proactive venue for its community. The Centre, which occupies 450 square metres on the second floor of the Musée, has a seating capacity of forty and four computer terminals. It is open to all, no appointment necessary, twenty-eight hours a week, having extended its opening hours on Wednesday evenings to accommodate a wider public of researchers.

The Media Centre is building up and expanding its collection, one of Québec's largest in the field of contemporary art. It comprises 35,000 books (exhibition catalogues, books on art theory and reference works, publications by artists); 400 current periodical titles; 1,000 audiovisual documents (videos, films, recordings and CD-ROMs); and 10,000 documentary files. These collections contain some almost priceless items, such as out-of print publications, mail-art works, multiples and limited-edition publications by artists, rarely if ever distributed commercially. Our visitors also have access, free of charge, to a wide range of research tools and electronic resources, including eleven databases facilitating specialized research in art.

M. G.: What makes the Media Centre different from other Montréal libraries?

S. A.: The Media Centre of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal plays a unique role in the field of research into contemporary Québec and Canadian art and in the international scope of its collections. Since 1996, the Centre has been the only museum library in Québec that is always open to the public without appointment.

The Centre's special focus is closely linked to that of the Musée, which is to say, contemporary art from 1939 to the present day. It covers all of the disciplines, practices and movements in the arts: painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video, performance, installation and media arts. Its coverage extends to current developments in film, dance and music. The Centre collects works on art history, museology, management in the arts and the issues raised by contemporary arts, the philosophy of art and aesthetics. Its uniqueness also stems from its ability to stay at the cutting edge of today's art and even to anticipate new trends, spot imminent ones and understand the interaction between different practices.

M. G.: What are the challenges the Media Centre faces?

S. A.: We cannot underestimate the profound technological changes that libraries have seen in the past decade and a half. Part of the Media Centre's success is due to the fact that it adopted the new technology at an early stage, computerizing its collections and using new data processing systems for the benefit of both scholars and the general public. The Centre's innovative online catalogue was launched in 1991; and in 1996, it opened its own website (<http://media.macm.org/>), which proved immensely popular right from the start. No fewer than 557,654 visitors consulted it in 2007. Our website has also elicited high praise from the critics, notably on the website of the French Government's Ministry of Culture and in the newspaper *Le Monde*.

The range of services available to the different clienteles reflects the pragmatic and technological aspects of document management systems. These require a high degree of specialization and an in-depth knowledge of information systems and technology. With this technology, the Media Centre can offer its clientele such on-site and online services as research support and training, thematic scan, online catalogue and reference, specialized databases and electronic resources, web reference tools and digital archives, and a daily press review.

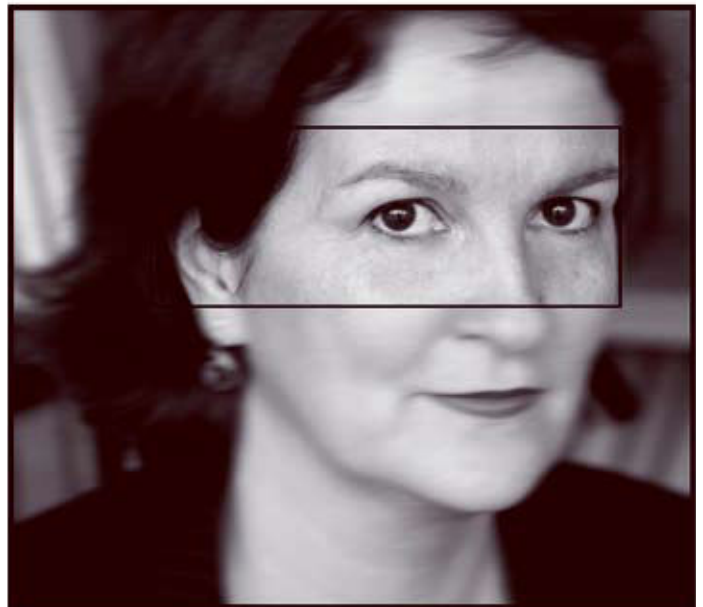


Photo: Nat Gorrry

M. G.: What are your future projects?

S. A.: In the short term, the Media Centre hopes to expand its services by offering programs tailored to various audiences. We wish to establish a program of educational laboratories and theme-based workshops for artists, historians, educators and students in the field of contemporary art. We also intend to set up an online subscriber service for documentary products such as abstracts of periodicals, a list of new releases of books and documentary videos, and so on. These projects will involve, among other things, a complete overhaul of the Media Centre website.

In the medium term, the Centre must solve the problem of space to house its collections and enlarge its service areas for our various clienteles.

Our greatest challenge, as always, is to provide cutting-edge services and technology to reach the widest possible public. The Media Centre will undoubtedly continue to realize its projects, and its enthusiastic staff enjoys tackling such challenges. **Monique Gauthier**

Geneviève Borne, exhibition spokesperson and TV host, DJ Richard Petit, singer-songwriter, and Anik Jean, singer, in front of the work by Adam Pendleton

Gregory Charles, Geneviève Borne and the work of Christian Marclay

A Stunning Preview!



The opening of the exhibition *Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967* on October 9 was a raving success. After the charming TV host and DJ Geneviève Borne, spokesperson for the event, led the way, the crowd of over a thousand got down and boogied through the galleries, including the one carpeted with LPs, by Christian Marclay.

Photos: Philippe Casgrain



All-Nighter

at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

Photo: Stéphane Côté / Échos vedettes

The night of February 28 to March 1, 2009, will see the sixth successive All-Nighter, part of the Montreal High Lights Festival. From 6 p.m. to 5 in the morning, festival-goers will be able to visit the exhibition *Claude Tousignant, a Retrospective* and take in the opening of a new show that evening, *The Collection: Some Installations* (Christine Davis, Adad Hannah and Franz West). The *Projections* series will screen its latest program, with works of Takashi Ishida and Yuki Kawamura. Enjoy music from DJ Abeille Gélinas from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. in the Atrium, and a Grandbois Chocolatière chocolate “shop” in the foyer!



To Round Off Your Visit to the Musée

The Musée restaurant La Rotonde has launched a new menu for your dining pleasure.

In addition to the set menu at lunchtime and on performance evenings at Place des Arts, a new fast-food counter for panini, sandwiches, salads, desserts, beverages, beer, wine and coffee is now open all week until 4 p.m. Takeout is also available.

Photo: Nat Gorry



Winter Art Events



In 2009, the art world will start being about art again. After a multi-year spree of glamour and parties, status and trophies, everyone is taking a deep breath. Economic uncertainty, while bad for art dealers and fundraisers, has the positive effect of focusing people's attention on what's really important. Next year's art events are likely to be about quality rather than quantity.

Right now, countries around the world are getting ready to send their top artists to the *Venice Biennale*, which takes place in June. The *Biennale* is rather like a World's Fair for avant-garde art. This year, the Canada Council for the Arts named Mark Lewis to represent Canada. Musée-goers may remember his work from the museum's *Projections* series in 2007. For the *Biennale*, Lewis is creating a new, silent, short film called *Romance*.

Another MACM alumnus—Brazilian artist Vik Muniz, who had a solo show here in 2007—is trying his hand as a curator at New York's Museum of Modern Art. No, he's not giving up his day job; he's taking part in MoMA's "Artist's Choice" series, which invites artists to select any works from the permanent collection to create their own exhibition. Muniz's show runs from December 14, 2008, through February 23, 2009.

Meanwhile, the commercial side of the art world goes on, but with some new players: Russia's Moscow-based Mercury Group has bought a controlling share in the prestigious auction house Phillips de Pury, which specializes in contemporary art. Dubai, sloshing in oil money, looks to be the go-to spot for contemporary art in the Persian Gulf as it hosts the Art Dubai fair March 18-22. Can emerging markets like Dubai make up for skittish collectors in Western Europe and North America?

In London, Christie's evening sale of Contemporary and Post-War Art on February 25 will be a test of the art market's strength. In a booming market, almost anything can sell, and auctions are stuffed with second-tier work. In hard times, collectors are usually pickier. It's top quality or nothing. Of course, a recession can nudge collectors to sell major works that wouldn't otherwise come on the block. Already, Kathy Fuld, wife of the CEO of the now-defunct Lehman Brothers, has put her museum-quality collection of drawings up for auction, and this surely isn't the last distress sale we'll see.

Another major test of the market's strength comes in March, when New York City hosts a half-dozen art fairs, all on the same weekend. The prestigious *Armory Show* takes place March 5-8, as do the somewhat more affordable contemporary fairs *Pulse*, *Scope* and *Bridge*. Thousands of artworks will be bubble-wrapped and carted across town as dealers hope for the best.

Again, the focus is likely to be on quality. The years of anything goes are over. For art enthusiasts who disliked the hype and distractions of the past few years, 2009 may be very interesting indeed. **Lisa Hunter**

Pulse art fair in New York.
Photo: Courtesy Pulse Art Fair

Massimo Vignelli
New York Subway Map, 1970
Lithograph
149.9 x 118.7 cm
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Gift of the designer
Photo: The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Philip-Lorca diCorcia
Igor, 1987
Chromogenic colour print
39.8 x 58.1 cm
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Gift of Carol and Arthur Goldberg
Photo: Philip-Lorca diCorcia

Ellsworth Kelly
Yellow, from the series *Line Form Color*, 1951.
Ink on paper and gouache on paper
19 x 20.3 cm
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Gift of the artist and purchased with funds provided by Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder, Sarah-Ann and Werner H. Kramarsky, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Hedges, IV, Kathy and Richard S. Fuld, Jr. and Committee on Drawings Funds
Photo: Ellsworth Kelly

Mark Lewis
Photo: Courtesy Mark Lewis.

Friday Nocturnes



Photo: 2008 Benjamin Wong, www.lintrigue.com

What do *Cœur de Pirate* and Lynne Marsh, *Think About Life* and *Sympathy for the Devil*, *Beast* and *The Québec Triennial* have in common? You and your friends, Friday night at the Musée!

The first Friday of every month, the Musée stays open until 9 p.m. and a party atmosphere fills the galleries with live music as you take a lightning tour of the exhibitions. Nocturne evenings offer you bar service with original drinks concocted by Mixoart and a new way of seeing the world of art. The Nocturnes are occasions for meeting your friends and the artists and musicians who make Montréal such an outstanding place for artistic discovery. The Nocturnes have been running for almost two years now, and over 7,000 guests have attended and returned to these lively gatherings. Are you one of our regulars? If so, we'll see you there in the next few months, with Socalled, The Besnard Lakes, Pawa Up First, and Plants and Animals, among other groups. No reservation necessary. Admission with regular Musée ticket or our \$10 Wired card.