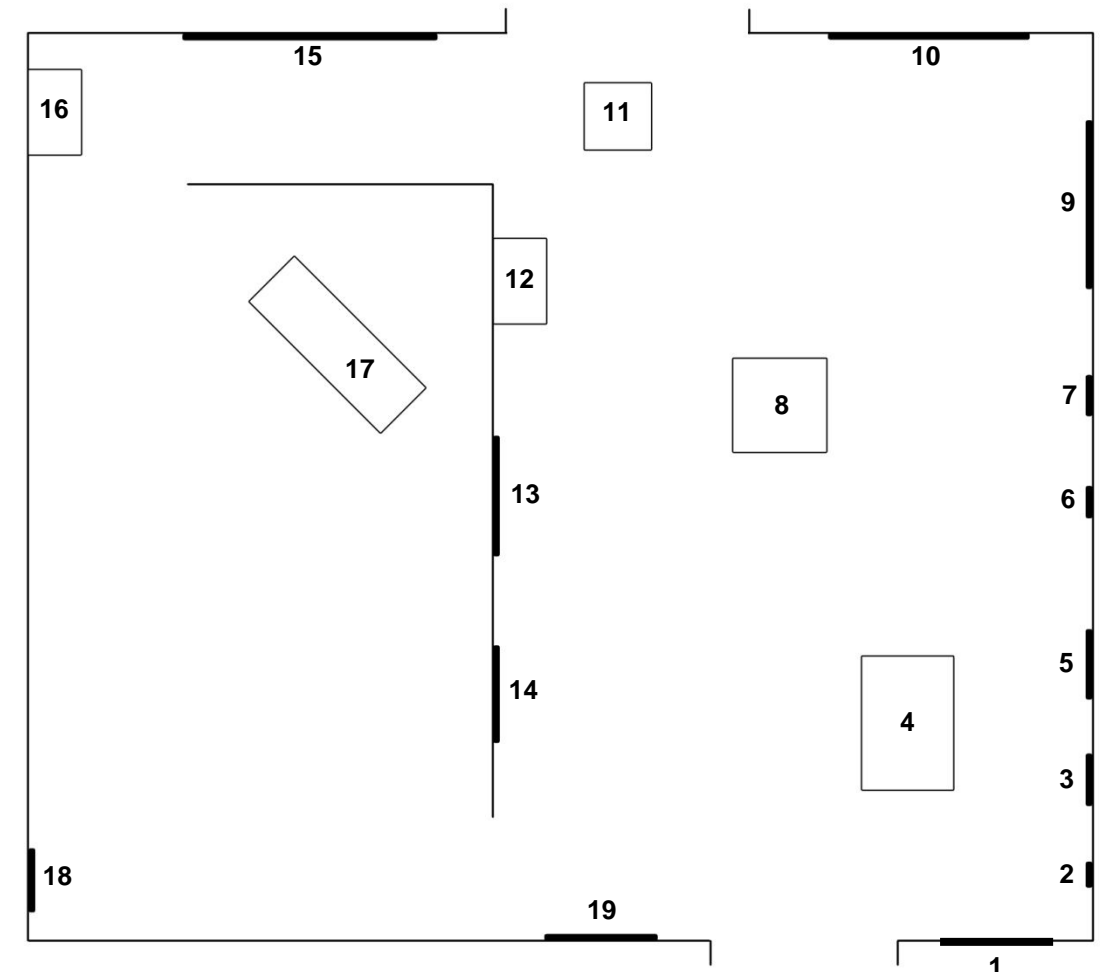


For time is the longest distance between two places

Pictures for an Exhibition is a new series of projects based on works from the Collection. This evolving cycle will feature various chapters, beginning with the presentation titled “For time is the longest distance between two places.” This exhibition comprises works that express the need to define our relationship to time and space, and that reveal artists’ propensity to want to depict that relationship, from the infinitely large to the infinitely small. It takes a form akin to a colour chart, juxtaposing different conceptions of time — measured, divided, standardized, numbered, accumulated, punctuated, determined, infinite, abstract — as represented by the artists in linear or cyclical fashion. While some temporal measurements coincide with natural cycles, others allow us to locate, on a human scale, places of origin and the distance that separates us from them. In Tennessee Williams’ 1944 play *The Glass Menagerie*, the characters turn out to be victims of time, faced with its irreversible nature, “for time is the longest distance between two places.” The exhibition takes this quotation as a premise and offers a selection of works drawn from the Musée Collection in which time is a subject of examination. The pieces by Nicolas Baier, Patrick Bernatchez, Eric Cameron, Paterson Ewen, Charles Gagnon, Betty Goodwin, Eadweard Muybridge, Roman Opalka, Alain Paiement, Guy Pellerin, Jana Sterbak, Françoise Sullivan, Serge Tousignant, Bill Vazan and Lawrence Weiner are all presented from this perspective and set in dialogue with a splendid sculpture by Sarah Sze titled *Measuring Stick*, 2015, which looks at the measurement of time and space through the moving image.

The Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal is grateful to Québec’s Ministère de la Culture et des Communications for a grant provided under its program to support permanent exhibitions, which has made this project possible.

Marie-Eve Beaupré
Curator of the Collection



1
NICOLAS BAIER
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1967
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Trou noir, 2005
Inkjet print, 1/2

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 06 11 PH 1

“I work with dust as something that reveals fleeting time.” - N. B.

Nicolas Baier offers us the image of a dusty blackboard covered with a now-erased mathematical formula attempting to explain a black hole, like a screen showing all possibilities. This photograph looks at dust as a material that acts as a marker of time. In astrophysics, a black hole is defined as a celestial object that is so compact its gravitational field prevents any form of matter or radiation from escaping. Such objects can neither emit nor reflect light. They are black, hence invisible. Representing this subject with photography, a process that uses light to record an image on a surface, is both poetic and paradoxical.

2
LAWRENCE WEINER
New York, New York, United States, 1942
Lives and works in New York, New York, United States, and Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Required Factors in the Determination of Distance, 1983
Ballpoint pen, graphite, ink, watercolour on paper

Gift of Luc LaRocheIle
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 99 6 D 1

With this image, Lawrence Weiner sets out to measure and depict our perception of a physical phenomenon: distance. The work basically shows an arrangement of flat, rectangular motifs, each marked with a notch. No caption accompanies the drawing. The artist thus keeps silent about the “required factors” mentioned in the title. Questioning the nature of art, the conventions of representation and art display practices, here he presents a diagram suggesting a form of conceptual measurement.

3
FRANÇOISE SULLIVAN
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1960
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Marche circulaire, 1979
Gelatin silver print

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 81 50 PH 1

This photographic work is the result of a performative action carried out by Françoise Sullivan in collaboration with David Moore. It suggests a dialogue between visual arts and choreography, and shares certain formal interests with the Plexiglas sculpture *Avec entre*, on display nearby. Inspired by the myth of the eternal return, the image depicts a continual choreographic movement performed by the artist on the site of a ruin. Bringing together past and present, memory of a culture and current nature of a practice, *Marche circulaire* challenges the permanence of art by making it current again.

4
FRANÇOISE SULLIVAN
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1960
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Avec entre, 1968
Plexiglas

Gift of Jean leFebure
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 11 17 S 1

For this sculpture, the artist examined plastic possibilities using a simple, organic form, that of the spiral. She refers to the very origin of life, to he structure of DNA, and represents that ultimate moment from which time is repeated indefinitely. Presented so as to echo the work *Marche circulaire*, the sculpture lays out formal interests that are characteristic of the artist’s practice.

5
BILL VAZAN
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1933
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Holding the Globe (from the “Land Work Series”, 1966–1979), 1971–1974
Chromogenic print

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 81 15 PH 1

In this series, Bill Vazan also works directly in the landscape, but in contrast to Françoise Sullivan’s work, it is not his presence but the trace of his action that is captured by the photograph. In the centre of the two superimposed images, fingerprints sixteen metres wide have been traced: in the top half, the form was produced in the snow, in Montréal; and in the bottom half, the process was performed on a sandy beach on Grand Bahama Island.

6
GUY PELLERIN
Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Québec, Canada, 1954
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Passé-fonction-présent, 1988
Oil on canvas mounted on wood

Lavalin
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 92 1252 P 1

7
ALAIN PAIEMENT
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1960
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Croissants-décroissants de lunes, 2012
Colour inkjet print on paper mounted on Alupanel, 3/5

Gift of Collection Loto-Québec, acquired in partnership with the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 16 33 PH 1

The artist produced this image by superimposing photographs that represent two different phases of the moon. Markers of a natural cycle, icons in our calendars, in rhythm with the tides and seasons, these crescents offer an image of time shrinking.

8
ERIC CAMERON
Leicester, United Kingdom, 1935
Lives and works in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Alarm Clock (3295) (from the “Thick Painting” series, 1979-1994), 1979-1994
3,295 half-coats of acrylic gesso on an alarm clock

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 94 6 MD 1

In 1979, Eric Cameron began his “Thick Painting” series by covering everyday objects with thousands of coats of acrylic gesso. The objects painted over and over undergo a slow, gradual transformation, turning into sculptures with organic forms whose outlines are subject to the law of gravity. This work is made up of 3,295 half-coats of paint obsessively, systematically, meticulously applied to an alarm clock over a fifteen-year period. Through this repeated gesture, the object is both frozen in time and concealed by time.

9
SERGE TOUSIGNANT
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1942
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Réflexion intérieure, 16 variations, 1982
16 chromogenic prints mounted overall on cardboard

Gift of the artist
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 03 69 PH 16

“For me, photography is a medium that allows you to work in all disciplines.” – S. T.

This photographic work documents a phenomenon observed by Serge Tousignant in his studio, in a form he calls “solar drawing.” This set of sixteen photographs represents the same subject, namely the movement of the reflection of light from a wood cube placed on a table covered with a blue mirror. The movement of the object’s shadow is perceptible over a period of two hours. Presented in the shape of a grid, the grouping reconstructs the path of the light, which divides time into movement we can follow.

10
PATERSON EWEN
ontréal, Québec, Canada, 1925 – London, Ontario, Canada, 2002

Star Traces Around Polaris, 1973
Acrylic on gouged plywood

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 87 10 P 1

This painting offers a depiction of the vault of heaven inspired by a photograph of Polaris, viewed through a device trained on the polestar for several minutes. The traces of stars revolving around Polaris are represented by lines that mark their trajectories. The colour is treated in keeping with scientific data. Here the artist’s interest in the cosmos gives rise to an observation of astronomical phenomena related to the earth’s movement.

11
JANA STERBAK
Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1955
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Standard Lives, 1988
Laser print on vinyl and metal

Gift of Réal Lussier
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 06 51 TM 1

The artist has printed, on vinyl tape, the passage of a human life on earth as if she proposed to measure its various phases. Representations of infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and the aging body follow one another. Just as a film unfolds according to a sequence of images, the artist asks us about time passing and calls into question the meaning we give to the different stages in our lives.

12
JANA STERBAK
Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1955
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Sans titre (For Terry Last), 1993
Fountain pen, HIV-positive human blood, anticoagulant, notebook, paper tissue, 1/2

Anonymous gift
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 02 85 TM 3

The materials gathered and laid out in a display case here become vivid metaphors for the body and its finiteness. Presented in the form of a *memento mori* (“remember that you have to die”) characteristic of the *vanitas* genre, this work consists of a Montblanc fountain pen filled with HIV-positive human blood, a notebook in which a few words are written with this blood and a paper tissue stained with the blood. Death is omnipresent in this work that reminds us of the precariousness of human life.

13
ROMAN OPALKA
Abbeville, France, 1931 – Chieti, Italy, 2011

OPALKA 1965 / 1 - ∞ Detail 4273405 - 4293153, about 1990-1993
Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Jacques Lapalme
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 00 157 P 1

Roman Opalka undertook his major work in 1965, the year he began his enumeration of the sequence of numbers, from 1 to infinity (1 - ∞). This project, part of an immense quest for time as it passes, was a lifelong program conducted under the heading “Description of the World.” Every year, using a brush, the artist painted the numbers in white on monochrome canvases. At the start of the project, the canvases had a black background, which then became grey as he added 1% more white to the preparation of each canvas. A time thus came when the artist was working in white on white. In this project, each painting, or each number painted on the canvas, bears the mark of a certain duration, that of a time irrevocably past.

14
BETTY GOODWIN
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1923-2008

Beyond Chaos, No. 7, 1998
Oil stick, charcoal, Chronaflex print on translucent Mylar

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 98 101 D 1

In this work, Betty Goodwin tackles existential and metaphysical considerations. She examines memory and the human condition, actualizes her thoughts on life and death, and conjures up the mysteries of the vault of heaven—those of the cloudy, threatening skies of a grand pictorial tradition as well as those of infinity and timelessness confronting the realities of humanity.

15
CHARLES GAGNON
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1934-2003

Histoire naturelle VI (Nubilae), 1988-1991
2 gelatin silver prints and oil on pressed wood

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 93 4 MD 2

“I used colour in a totally different way from how I had handled it till now. I wanted it to have mass, to be a dense material, and for it to convey meaning within the material itself.” - C. G.

This work is made up of a photographic image juxtaposed with an expanse of colour, so that the two photographs of clouds are contrasted with a painted material that looks rather like them. Acting as both detail and enlargement, colour here suggests a palpable representation of landscape. It enables us to interpret the materiality of the subject, deconstruct its representation and produce a timeless portrait of it.

16
PATRICK BERNATCHEZ
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1972
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

BW, 2009-2011
Wristwatch that measures millennia, tinted-glass and stainless-steel podium, microphone, speakers, edition of 10

In the process of acquisition

“I am grappling with time, like everyone else. This watch is an anti-time object meant to call into question our relationship to time, regulated down to the second.” - P. B.

The starting point of a cycle titled “Lost in Time”, this watch shows neither hours nor minutes, but a millennium. Marked by time and the distortion of our perception of it, the work gives form to the vertigo induced by the countdown that has already announced the end of a millennium. The artist uses this object to broach the many different dimensions of time—space-time, cosmic time, imaginary time. Pondering time this way intrinsically suggests an anticipation of its finality.

17
SARAH SZE
Boston, Massachusetts, United States, 1969
Lives and works in New York, New York, United States.

Measuring Stick, 2015
Video projectors, fan, light, mirrors, wood, stone, archival prints, speakers, stainless steel, balloon, sand, fruit, egg, plastic, toilet paper, aluminum foil, grass

Collection Giverny Capital

Under subdued lighting, a myriad of objects are laid out on a glass table: archival reproductions, perishable foods, grass, an egg in a cage, a fountain. Projected onto pieces of torn-up photographs are videos showing a cheetah running, balls making objects explode or the real-time distance between Earth and the Voyager 1 space probe. Citing the Charles and Ray Eames film *Powers of Ten* as an inspiration for her work, Sarah Sze explores the measurement of time and space through the moving image. She encapsulates reality and representation, density and immensity, precariousness and eternity.

18
EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE
Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom, 1830-1904

Animal Locomotion, 1887
Collotype, plate no. 616

Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
A 77 62 PH 1

Eadweard Muybridge was the first photographer to analyse the locomotion of living beings. In 1887, he published eleven volumes of photographs under the title *Animal Locomotion*. Each plate shows views of the same subject captured in successive phases of motion. These images, made possible by a series of automatic cameras, created a great sensation in Europe and the United States. Scientists and artists alike were deeply influenced by these snapshots.

19
SERGE TOUSIGNANT
Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1942
Lives and works in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Le Long Voyage, 1986
Chromogenic print, 4/5

Gift of the artist
Collection of the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal
D 03 70 PH 1

Borrowing from the codes of still life, this work represents a group of boxes and objects laid out on the floor in the artist’s studio and draped with a dust cover – a step we take before a long journey. *Le Long Voyage* is also a metaphor for the creative endeavour. “When we look at an artist’s work over a long period of time, we see that it is a long journey the artist takes through himself. Making art, in a way, is a long journey.” – S. T.