

**NAPOLEON, PICASSO AND CALDER
IN A NEW LIGHT
AT THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS IN 2018**



Montreal, November 28, 2017 rev. March 13, 2018—The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) has announced its 2018 program, featuring three major exhibitions that will shed new light on a number of artistic movements and major historical figures. This season will highlight the little-known Imperial Household, an important institution during Napoleon’s reign, Picasso’s exploration of non-Western art, as well as the inventive genius of Alexander Calder.

The 2018 season will continue to support Quebec, Canadian and non-Western contemporary artists who represent cultural and artistic diversity, through various exhibitions. Artists of African Canadian origin will prompt visitors to reflect on their place in our society, and seven emerging and established artists embodying our artistic diversity will engage with the world cultures collections at the MMFA. The Museum is also presenting the first solo survey exhibition of Quebec Indigenous artist Nadia Myre, on display until May.

Graphic arts will also be featured in three rarely seen collections: the collection of Dr. Sean M. Murphy, which was donated to the MMFA; remarkable illustrations from Vasari to Matisse, from the most important private collection of drawings in Canada; and for the first time, rare illuminations and books of hours dating back to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, selected from Quebec collections.

Nathalie Bondil, Director General and Chief Curator of the MMFA, says: *“Historical rereadings and transhistorical perspectives will allow visitors to discover works, collections and even great artists and historical figures, thanks to in-depth academic research. Traditional narratives will be examined, and even disrupted, by renewed and current perspectives in anticipation for the future we are imagining for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Our efforts are focused on artistic diversity and intercultural dialogue, in preparation for our new wing devoted to world cultures and togetherness, which will be inaugurated in 2019.”*

Three highlights of the 2018 season

The year begins on a lavish note with ***Napoleon: Art and Court Life in the Imperial Palace***, which invites visitors into the heart of the Imperial Household, from Napoleon’s coronation in 1804 to his exile in 1815. With an innovative design that includes mapping projections, the exhibition offers an exceptional panorama of 400 works and objets d’art, many exhibited in North America for the very first time.

In the summer, ***From Africa to the Americas: Face-to-face Picasso, Past and Present*** will explore the complex question of “primitivism” in art history, focusing on the well-known example of Picasso. The exhibition will take an anthropological approach combined with re-readings of cultural appropriations by contemporary artists – both women and men – particularly of African descent. The MMFA’s insightful and offbeat approach will present additional perspectives on the question of modernity. Some 200 works from the Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac and the Musée national Picasso in Paris, as well as from private European and Canadian collections, will be part of this exhibition.

In the fall, the MMFA will present the first Canadian retrospective of the work of American artist Alexander Calder. ***Alexander Calder: Radical Inventor*** will explore an exciting new thesis concerning the unified nature of Calder’s practice and contribution. As a radical inventor, he not only added a new dimension to sculpture, but also created a new way – a whole new set of precepts – for art to be experienced in the modern world.

Educational activities in connection with major exhibitions

Upon the initiative of Nathalie Bondil, the MMFA has been offering educational exhibitions and cultural mediation for families, where visitors of all ages can reflect on current topics. In connection with *Napoleon. Art and Court Life in the Imperial Palace*, the construction of image and the culture of self-portraits will be explored. Inspired by *From Africa to the Americas: Face-to-face Picasso, Past and Present*, students at risk of dropping out will present an exhibition on otherness in partnership with the organization Youth Fusion. Lastly, Calder’s passion for the circus and social art will be explored in *Calder. Radical Inventor*.

Contemporary art

Nadia Myre: Scattered Remains – Tout ce qui reste will be on view until May, presenting 20 works produced by Quebec Indigenous artist Nadia Myre between 2000 and 2017. In the summer, ***Here We Are Here: Black Canadian Contemporary Art*** brings together a dozen artists of African origin from Quebec and elsewhere in Canada with installations that explore questions of race and identity. ***Connections: Our Artistic Diversity Dialogues with Our Collections*** unveils the installations of seven artists in anticipation for the 2019 opening of a new wing dedicated to world cultures. Echoing the Calder exhibition and following the installation of *The Peony Knot* (2015), a massive glass sculpture acquired in 2016 for the inauguration of the Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion for Peace, artist **Jean-Michel Othoniel** will return to Montreal to present his imposing metal ***Tornadoes***.

Graphic arts

The Graphic Arts Centre will present three remarkable collections of works on paper with ***Commemorating Dr. Sean B. Murphy (1924-2017): Drawings and Prints from Five Centuries*** and ***From the Hands of the Masters II: From Parmigianino to Matisse***, which will present drawings from the most important private collection in Canada, dating from 16th-century Italy to 20th-century France. ***Resplendent Illuminations: Books of Hours from the 13th to the 16th Century in Quebec Collections*** will be a rare opportunity to admire richly illuminated religious manuscripts dating to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, conserved in Quebec.

– 30 –

Press Room: mbam.qc.ca/en/media

Information

Patricia Lachance
Press Officer | MMFA
T. 514-285-1600, ext. 315
plachance@mbamtl.org

About the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

The MMFA welcomes a million visitors annually. Quebec’s most visited museum, it is one of the most popular museums in Canada, and ranks eighteenth among art museums in North America. The Museum’s original temporary exhibitions combine various artistic disciplines – fine arts, music, film, fashion and design – and are exported around the world. Its rich encyclopedic collection, distributed among five pavilions, includes international art, world cultures, decorative arts and design, and Quebec and Canadian art. The MMFA complex includes Bourgie Hall, a 460-seat concert hall. The MMFA is one of Canada’s leading publishers of art books in French and English, which are distributed internationally. The Museum also houses the Michel de la Chenelière International Atelier for Education and Art Therapy, the largest educational complex in a North American art museum, enabling the MMFA to offer innovative educational, wellness and art therapy programmes. mbam.qc.ca

MAJOR EXHIBITIONS

NAPOLEON

ART AND COURT LIFE IN THE IMPERIAL PALACE

February 3 – May 6, 2018

Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion – Level 2



Welcome to the Palace! The Imperial Household was a key private institution during Napoleon's reign. It was responsible for staging and orchestrating the daily lives of the Imperial family: from the throne room to the banquets, from the study to the bedrooms. For the first time, the exhibition will explore the role the Imperial Household played in shaping the regal identity of former general Bonaparte, Emperor Napoleon.

Meticulous to a fault, Napoleon wanted to establish his new dynasty. The Imperial Household consisted of six departments, each headed by a grand officer. Each was involved in orchestrating every minute of the pageantry in the Court. Follow each of these high-ranking dignitaries: the grand chaplain, grand master of ceremonies, grand marshal of the Palace, grand master of the hunt, grand chamberlain and grand equerry. The exhibition brings together works – many of which have never presented in North America – lend of by some the greatest museums. It also celebrates the 10-year anniversary of Ben Weider's donation to the MMFA, a rich selection of works from the most important museums were collected to recount the staging of power under the First Empire.

Comprising several pieces by renowned artists of the time (David, Ingres, Gérard, Gros) and some the best manufacturers, more than 400 artworks and objets d'art were used for official propaganda purposes. The operation of the Imperial Household bears witness to the influence of political communicators, from Napoleon's life in the palace to his exile to Saint Helena.

The exhibition was organized and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, with the participation of the Château de Fontainebleau and exceptional support from Mobilier national of France. Presented in Montreal by National Bank, in collaboration with Metro and Tourisme Montréal. The Museum acknowledges the essential support of Air Canada.

On tour: Virginia Museum, Richmond (June 6 – September 3, 2018), Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City (October 22, 2018 – March 3, 2019), and Château de Fontainebleau, France (April 13 – July 15, 2019).

Image: Joseph Franque (1774-1833), *The Empress Marie-Louise watching over the sleeping King of Rome*, 1811 © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY / Daniel Arnaudet

FROM AFRICA TO THE AMERICAS

FACE-TO-FACE PICASSO, PAST AND PRESENT

May 12 – September 16, 2018

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level 3



From Africa to the Americas: Face-to-face Picasso, Past and Present presents a comparison of Pablo Picasso's works with those of non-Western artists, based on an anthropology of art. This juxtaposition raises questions on both sides (nudity, sexuality, impulses and loss) via plastic parallel solutions (disfiguring or deconstructing the body, for instance). It also explores traditions, tasks and major works of art defined as "tribal."

In Montreal, it is an opportunity for the MMFA to put into question a history of aesthetic appropriations and re-appropriations between a master of modernity (Picasso), ancient non-western arts and contemporary art. How does an ethnological artifact become an aesthetic object? How has so-called primitive art gradually taken a place in our aesthetic pantheon? How do we view yesterday's objects today? How did Picasso view them and how do contemporary artists view them?

In its quest for an intercultural approach, the MMFA enhances the journey by including and acquiring contemporary works, African art in particular, and confronting this post-colonialist heritage, including photographs by **Edson Chagas**, **Omar Victor Diop**, **Samuel Fosso**, and video artists **Theo Eshetu**, **Mohau Modikaseng**, and also visual artists **Romuald Hazoumè** and **Masimba Hwati**. Female or feminist artists like **Zanele Muholi** and **Zina Saro-Wiwa** also bring into question stereotypes contained in primitivist imagery of black women.

An exhibition organized by the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac in collaboration with the Musée national Picasso-Paris, adapted by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

On tour: Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas (October 20, 2017 – April 8, 2018).

Image: Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Mother and Child*, Paris, summer 1907. Musée national Picasso-Paris, Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. © Estate of Picasso / SODRAC (2017). Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / René-Gabriel Ojéda

ALEXANDER CALDER RADICAL INVENTOR

September 22, 2018 – February 24, 2019

Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion – Level 2



The first major retrospective of Alexander Calder (1898-1976) since 1998, this exhibition will present the work of one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. It will highlight Calder’s role as a “radical inventor”—a sculptor who forged a practice in dialogue with the world in motion and the motion in things—during a time of rapid industrialization and social change comprising what many have termed the “Americanization” of culture.

By introducing the fourth dimension of time into sculpture, he entirely transformed the way objects energize space with his invention of the mobile. Coined for Calder’s first motorized works in 1931 by Duchamp, the word mobile means both “motion” and “motive” in French. Calder also created stationary abstract works, which Jean Arp dubbed “stabiles” in 1932. From Paris to New York, Calder moved in premier artistic and intellectual circles (Cocteau, Duchamp, Le Corbusier, Léger, Mondrian, Miró, Prévert, Sartre, Varèse, among others) and established himself as a forerunner of the international avant-garde.

Comprising over 100 works, the exhibition will examine the evolution of this inventive artist’s extensive means of expression through the experience of a series of four environments installed to communicate the emotive power of selected formal and chronological sequences of objects and archival film projections.

An exhibition organized and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with the Calder Foundation.

Presented in collaboration with Pembroke and with the vital support of Air Canada.

On tour: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (April 5 – August 4, 2019)

Image: Alexander Calder (1898-1976), *Little Spider*, about 1940. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Perls. © Calder Foundation, New York / (ARS) New York / SODRAC (2017)

CONTEMPORARY ART

NADIA MYRE

SCATTERED REMAINS – TOUT CE QUI RESTE

Until May 27, 2018

Contemporary art square,

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



Nadia Myre: *Scattered Remains – Tout ce qui reste* features five series of some twenty works – including photographs, sculptures and videos – created since 2000. It is the first-ever Canadian presentation of *Code Switching*, produced during an artist residency at Darling Foundry from 2016 to 2017 under the MMFA's patronage. Myre is a Quebec artist and a member of the Algonquin First Nation Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg. She examines the official history of Indigenous peoples, as well as their political and social struggles. She combines their skills and symbolic objects to reappropriate and shift the codes to reveal multiple interpretations. These symbolic reversals in a transhistorical context form part of her recurring approach. Some are the result of personal research, while others result from community collaborations. Her works act as invitations to contemplate, to reflect and to reconcile.

Born in Montreal in 1974, Myre was the 2016 winner of the Banff Centre for Arts Walter Phillips Gallery Indigenous Commission Award and received the prestigious Sobey Art Award in 2014. Her works have been presented and collected in local and international museums.

First survey exhibition by Nadia Myre, organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Image: Nadia Myre (born in 1974), *Meditation on Red #4*, Edition of 7, 2013. Loan, courtesy of Art Mûr © CARCC

HERE WE ARE HERE

BLACK CANADIAN CONTEMPORARY ART

May 12 – September 16, 2018

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level 3



The MMFA will highlight contemporary art by Black Canadians. *Here We Are Here: Black Canadian Contemporary Art* invites visitors to reflect on works by a dozen artists of African-Canadian origin. Reviewing the deep-rooted histories associated with Black Canadians, the exhibition confronts visitors with the persistence of the narratives. It examines the place of this community in our society through the multiple expressions of voices and perspectives. Touching on current and historical interpretations of Black culture and identity in Canada, issues of inclusion and belonging to a community are explored.

This exhibition created by the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) includes works by Canadian artists **Sandra Brewster, Michèle Pearson Clarke, Chantal Gibson, Sylvia D. Hamilton, Bushra Junaid, Charmaine Lurch, Esmāa Mohamoud, Dawit L. Patros** and **Gordon Shadrach**. The Montreal edition will also include works by Quebec artists, including Manuel Mathieu.

An exhibition presented at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, created and curated by the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM).

Image: Chantal Gibson, *Souvenir*, 2017

CONNECTIONS

OUR ARTISTIC DIVERSITY DIALOGUES WITH OUR COLLECTIONS

August 29, 2018 – June 16, 2019

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, the MMFA invited seven artists representing our cultural diversity to create a work inspired by its collection of world cultures. Emerging or established artists were invited to create a work representing transhistorical and contemporary dialogue in connection with the MMFA's collection of Ancient African, Asian, Mediterranean, Oriental and pre-Columbian art. The winners of the competition will be announced shortly and their works will be displayed as a prelude to the new wing dedicated to world cultures and togetherness. This major reinstallation of the collections is planned for 2019, on the upper level of the Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion.

An exhibition organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and supported by the Canada Council for the Arts program New Chapter.

Image: Arwa Abouon (born in 1982), *I'm Sorry / I Forgive You* (detail), Libye-Canada, 2012. © Photo Courtesy of Arwa Abouon

OTHONIEL

June 20 – November 11, 2018

Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion for Peace and Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



Echoing the exhibition devoted to Alexander Calder, the MMFA presents the final series "Tornadoes" by French artist Jean-Michel Othoniel in the Contemporary Art Square. Suspended in space, these impressive monochrome spirals of painted steel and aluminium, massive and twisting, allude to the violence of climate change. Since it opened in 2016, the MMFA's Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion for Peace has housed Jean-Michel Othoniel's *The Peony Knot* (2015). This sculpture comprises 212 mirrored glass and stainless steel beads and is the only work by Othoniel housed in a Canadian museum. The exhibition includes seven ink stamps on white gold leaf mounted on canvas, which reflect the artist's career from *The Peony Knot* to "Lotus" and "Tornadoes."

Othoniel was born in 1964 and is best known for his monumental glass sculptures. The artist's primary focus is the metamorphosis, sublimation and transmutation of materials with reversible properties, such as glass or metal. He is regularly invited to integrate his works in historic settings or contemporary buildings, and is exhibited in major museums.

An exhibition organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with the Perrotin Gallery.

Image: Jean-Michel Othoniel (born in 1964), *Tornado #1*, 2017, aluminium beads, steel. © Jean-Michel Othoniel / SODRAC (2017)

GRAPHIC ARTS

COMMEMORATING Dr. SEAN B. MURPHY (1924-2017): DRAWINGS AND PRINTS FROM FIVE CENTURIES

December 12, 2017 – April 1, 2018

Irwin and Freda Browns Graphic Arts Centre

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



This exhibition commemorates a man of great generosity, Dr. Sean B. Murphy, who died in 2017. A highly esteemed ophthalmologist, the Museum's President (1968-1978), tireless volunteer and gentleman collector, Dr. Murphy contributed to the acquisition of 123 works for the Museum. This exhibition presents a selection of drawings and prints from this collection. Italian works include Canaletto, Piranesi and Bison. The collection from the 20th century features extraordinary drawings by Moore, works by international artists (Bellows, Lewis, Marini, Marsh, Picasso, Tamayo and Oldenburg) and Canadian masters (Pellan, Riopelle, McEwen and Pratt), as well as works by Dr. Murphy's two artist parents, the Canadian Cecil Buller and the American John Murphy.

An exhibition organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Image: Henry Moore (1898-1986), *Two Draped Reclining Figures* (detail), 1961, watercolour (or ink), ink, wax crayon, coloured pencil. MMFA, gift of Dr. Sean B. Murphy. Reproduced by permission of The Henry Moore Foundation.

FROM THE HANDS OF THE MASTERS II FROM PARMIGIANINO TO MATISSE

April 12 – August 12, 2018

Irwin and Freda Browns Graphic Arts Centre

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



The MMFA is presenting some 60 drawings from the most important private collection of ancient and modern drawings in Canada. This exhibition, the second part of a presentation from 2013, encompasses a wide range of subjects: academic art, landscapes and still lifes by Parmigianino, Vasari, Agostino and Annibale Carracci, Castiglione, Watteau, Boucher, Géricault, Courbet, Millet, Victor Hugo, Morisot, Pissarro, Degas, Moreau, Whistler, Matisse, Picasso, Gris, Modigliani, Hokusai and others. Close to 20 drawings by masters including Greuze, Romney, Delacroix and Ingres, which were recently donated to the MMFA by an anonymous collector, will be included in this selection.

An exhibition organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Image: Edgar Degas (1834-1917), *Study of a Dancer*, about 1890?, charcoal. Private collection

RESPLENDENT ILLUMINATIONS

BOOKS OF HOURS FROM THE 13TH TO THE 16TH CENTURY IN QUEBEC COLLECTIONS

September 4, 2018 – January 6, 2019

Irwin and Freda Browns Graphic Arts Centre

Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion – Level S2



This is the very first exhibition at the MMFA dedicated to books of hours in medieval and Renaissance art. It is an opportunity to discover an overlooked legacy through a remarkable selection of illuminations and bound manuscripts conserved in Quebec, dating from the 13th to the 16th century. Books of hours were created for laypeople and were popularized by the Christian faithful. These manuscripts were for the most part personalized and illuminated with miniature paintings – or illuminations – illustrating the life of Christ, the saints or the Virgin Mary. They included a calendar of holy and religious feasts, passages from the gospels and prayers. The result of extensive academic research, the exhibition includes more than 50 artifacts (sheets, complete manuscripts, prints) offering a closer look of these treasures, which come from seven collections.

An exhibition organized the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, in collaboration with Université du Québec à Montréal and McGill University.

Image: Simon Bening (1483-1561), Leaf from a Book of Hours: *Saint Sebald of Nuremberg*, about 1515-1525 MMFA, purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest. Photo MMFA, Christine Guest

... AND ON TOUR

LOVE IS LOVE

WEDDING BLISS FOR ALL À LA JEAN PAUL GAULTIER

March 21 – July 15, 2018

Kirchner Cultural Centre, Buenos Aires, Argentina



After Montreal, the exhibition *Love Is Love. Wedding Bliss for All à la Jean Paul Gaultier* travels to Buenos Aires. This installation, which celebrates the end of the tour of the exhibition *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*, brings together 35 of the French designer's haute couture and prêt-à-porter bridal creations.

Produced by the MMFA in collaboration with the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier, this exhibition will present wedding gowns and suits created between 1991 and 2017 by this humanist and inclusive couturier. The daring lines and exquisite artistry of these outstanding creations reveal a highly original designer and the virtuosity of his ateliers. An installation evoking a monumental wedding cake presents wedding apparel for all: heterosexual, homosexual, intercultural and interracial couples to celebrate love in diversity and peace.

The exhibition is produced and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, in collaboration with the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier.

Image: Jean Paul Gaultier (born in 1952), *Punk Parisienne* collection, women's prêt-à-porter spring/summer 1997 © Rindoff-Garcia / Angeli