

NEW

THE FIRST MNBAQ CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD: THE FIVE FINALISTS ARE...

Québec City, Tuesday 29 October 2013 □ Last spring, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and its Fondation announced a major gift of \$400,000 from the RBC Foundation to establish the MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award for Québec artists. In collaboration with its formidable funding partner, the MNBAQ is especially proud today to announce the five artists who are the finalists in the first edition of this biennial award, the only one of its kind in Canada. Jean-Robert Drouillard, Valérie Kolakis, Emmanuelle Léonard, Diane Morin and Thérèse Mastroiacovo were chosen as finalists by the jury, made up of Marie-Ève Charron, art critic for the newspaper *Le Devoir* and professor of art history, Claude Bélanger, director of the Manifestation internationale d'art de Québec, Eduardo Ralickas, art historian and professor at UQAM, Marcel Blouin, director of Expression, centre d'exposition de Saint-Hyacinthe, François Morelli, artist and instructor at Concordia University, and Bernard Lamarche, curator of present-day art at the MNBAQ.

Apart from a requirement that the artist be more than ten years into their career, the award criteria are the quality and regular output of the artist's work and recognition by the artistic community of their real artistic contribution. The aim of the award is not only to contribute to and support the winner's career but especially to give them an extra boost. Thanks to the contribution of the RBC Foundation, the MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award includes a cash prize of \$10,000, a solo exhibition at the Musée, a retrospective publication and the acquisition of works by the winning artist for the MNBAQ collection, with a value up to \$50,000.

A second jury will meet before the end of the year to determine the grand prize winner in keeping with the established criteria. The winner will be announced at a press conference at the MNBAQ in early 2014. The exhibition of the future prize-winner's work is planned for spring 2015 at the Musée, when the monograph that goes with the award will also be launched.

The MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award will be conferred every two years on a Québec artist. This remarkable partnership between the MNBAQ and the RBC Foundation is the result of a commitment until 2021.

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THE 5 FINALISTS FOR THE MNBAQ CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD

Jean-Robert Drouillard

Born in 1970 in Chatham, Ontario, Jean-Robert Drouillard lives and works in Québec City. Following studies in literature and creative writing, he took up sculpture. In 2000, he obtained a diploma from the École-atelier de sculpture de Québec (Maison des métiers d'art). Whether life-sized or small format, his sculptures are always highly realistic. The self-portrait or "self-representation" is at the centre of his work. He or members of his family become models against a



backdrop of fables and legends, to which he adds a touch of humour. His art is an attempt to blur the boundaries between art and artisanship, claiming a lineage from traditional sculpture in his choice of raw materials and techniques. Since 2004, Drouillard has taught sculpture in wood, metal and concrete at the Maison des métiers d'art de Québec. He was also involved for several years at L'Oeil de Poisson, a showcase in Québec City for contemporary art and practices that cross disciplinary boundaries. In 2002, he founded La Coop Le Bloc 5, a cooperative of visual arts artisans, with the artists Marc-Antoine and Nathalie Côte, Ludovic Boney and Kathy Ouellette. Jean-Robert Drouillard is represented by the Lacerte art contemporain gallery in Québec City and Montréal. His work can be found in several public and private collections throughout Canada.

Valérie Kolakis

Born in 1966 in Athens, Valérie Kolakis lives and works in Montréal. Her work, a familiar feature on the Québec arts scene, has also crossed borders, with exhibitions in Europe in cities such as Berlin, Basel and Paris. She has also undertaken professional sojourns in France, the United States, Norway, Ireland, China, Germany and Switzerland. Her work is resolutely committed to artistic exploration. The materials she collects – poor, raw materials found in the street or on



construction sites – question the relation between time and objects, memory, action, architecture and viewers themselves, who are led to reconsider the use and meaning of these objects placed together in unexpected ways. Kolakis redefines the urban landscape with respect to issues around migration, displacement, change and the construction of identity. In 2007, she participated in a collaborative program involving art and architecture in Berlin. She took part in the eva International biennial in Ireland in 2010 and the Triennale québécoise at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal in 2011. That same year, she undertook artistic residencies in Clisson, France and L'Oeil de Poisson in Québec City. She is represented by the Donald Browne gallery in Montréal.

Emmanuelle Léonard

Born in 1971 in Montréal, where she lives and works. For the past decade, Emmanuelle Léonard's work has developed around representations of public space. For each project she constructs a specific method, blending uses and traditions, photography and video, documentary and conceptual photography. In the early 2000s, she critically explored the world of work, and later the realm of police photography and its techniques. Léonard received the Pierre Ayot award in 2005 and has carried out artistic residencies at Villa Arson in France, the Fondation Christoph Mérian in Switzerland and the Finnish Artists Studio Foundation in Finland. Her work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions at venues such as the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Kunsthau Dresden and the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein in Germany, Mercer Union gallery in Toronto, Glassbox in Paris and L'Oeil de poisson in Québec City. Emmanuelle Léonard holds a bachelor's degree from Concordia University and a master's degree in visual and media art from the Université du Québec à Montréal.



Thérèse Mastroiacovo

Born in 1968 à Toronto, Thérèse Mastroiacovo lives and works in Montréal. She is a multidisciplinary artist whose work employs artistic know-how backed up by a strong methodological approach. Her work is seen as a constant labour of reclassifying and as process and procedure. Ranging across performance, installation, sculpture, photography, drawing and sound art, her work has been seen in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Québec, the rest of Canada, Australia and Mexico. She holds a bachelor's degree from York University and a master's degree in open media from Concordia University. Her most recent solo exhibitions include *Situation: Durée automatique* at the CLARK centre in Montréal in 2011, *Following Following Piece* at the Blackwood Gallery of the University of Toronto in Mississauga in 2011, *Now with duration, contents, duration in common, art now* at the White Box Gallery in Portland in 2010 and *Access Restricted* (in collaboration with Fiona Macdonald) at Light Projects in Melbourne in 2010. Her important series of drawings entitled *Art Now* (2005 - present) was shown in 2007 at Articule in Montréal and at Mercer Union in Toronto, and in 2011 at the Triennale québécoise at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Thérèse Mastroiacovo teaches at Concordia University in the painting and drawing program.



Diane Morin

Born in 1974 in Saint-Joseph-de-Kamouraska, Diane Morin lives and works in Montréal. She studied in Rivière-du-Loup and then at Université Laval, graduating from Concordia University in Montréal with a master's degree in open media in 2003. She has been creating installations using kinetic art and new media since 1998. She works with light, sound, drawings and robotics to make in situ installations in which kinetic, sound and light events take place. She uses different procedures and apparatuses to make these events apparent and to preserve traces of them: photograms, video recordings, sound amplification, projected shadows. Her work has been seen in solo and group shows in Finland, Norway, Montréal and elsewhere in Canada. In addition, she has carried out artistic residencies under the *SUMU* artists in residency program at the Arte artists' association in Turku, Finland (2011), the independent study program at the Konsthögskolan Valand in Göteborg, Sweden (2009-10), and in the Finnish Artists Studio Foundation in Espoo, Finland (2008). In 2012 her work was exhibited in the 6th edition of the Manif d'Art, organized around the topic *Machine*. At CIRCA in 2013 she developed the automatic projection apparatus *Imbrication (machine à réduire le temps)*, a "shadow theatre" in which she explored space, the object and time. In June 2013, at the CLARK gallery, she presented *Le grand calculateur I (apprendre à compter)*, a kinetic installation based on a system of mechanical pulleys and electric current and illustrating the logic of the binary calculation used in computer technology. She is preparing the second version of this work for L'Oeil de Poisson in Québec City, which will be presented in November 2013.



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