Press Release
New Exhibition
November 15, 2018 to May 12, 2019

White Mirage

Québec City, Wednesday, November 14, 2018 — “My country is not a country, it’s winter” poet Gilles Vigneault sang with conviction. Whether we love, detest or fantasize about it, the season that is the key to the Québec identity does not inspire writers alone. Indeed, it is the focus of a new exhibition presented at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) in conjunction with the reopening of the Gérard Morisset Pavilion. From November 15, 2018 to May 12, 2019, White Mirage, which is part of the major reorganization of the collections of ancient and modern art and the MNBAQ’s recent acquisitions presented in the ground floor exhibition rooms, assembles more than 70 works from the national collection produced by more than 40 artists. The assembled works are from different periods and encompass paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculptures, ceramics and glass and evoke northern environments or delight visitors through their evocative power.
Micheline Beauchemin’s *Mirage blanc*

The exhibition opens with a strikingly beautiful textile creation. *Mirage blanc* is the lyrical title of a work by Micheline Beauchemin, a tapestry that the artist produced in the wake of a lengthy stay on Baffin Island in Nunavut. The blue monochrome and the mother-of-pearl threads used for the weaving recall the sparkling light on the frozen expanses of the Far North.

*Exhibition highlights*

Whether they are poetic, historical or humorous, all of the works in the *White Mirage* exhibition evoke winter. The photographs of Montminy & Cie, including *Le Raquetteur* (1894), will delight visitors, who will appreciate the beauty of painter Edmund Willoughby’s *Iceberg dans le détroit de Belle Isle* (1875), or the strength emanating from Manasie Akpaliapik’s *Sedna, déesse de la mer* (2000). Other exhibition highlights include François Lacasse’s fascinating work *Grandes pulsions I* (2007), *B.r.e.e.z.e.*, Susan Edgerly’s remarkable wall-mounted sculpture comprising disks of glass and paper evoking frost and ice, and Pascal Grandmaison’s spectacular installation *Desperate Island* (2010).

*Reflection on the Québec winter*

A thematic exhibition has the power to move us but also to foster reflection. Whether we appreciate it or not, winter is part of who we are and demands resilience and adaptation. It acts as a social binder that assembles us under the same wool tuque. Regardless of our origins, gender, age, education or language, in Québec we must all live our winter. It is the source of great joy, complaints and anxiety and it pervades conversations from December to March.

Outside the country, our winter experience intrigues and fascinates: How do we survive cold snaps? We contribute to sustaining the imaginative universe linked to northern latitudes by relating our adventures, thereby transforming our exasperation into pride. Climate change is now threatening this white season that we simultaneously love and loathe. Réjean Ducharme’s *L’hiver de force (Wild to Mild)* (1973) could one day be
nothing more than a *White Mirage* whose disappearance takes with it part of what we are.

A space to speak out on winter

As they visit the exhibition, visitors can appreciate a *vox pop* that assembles testimony from individuals of all ages and backgrounds questioned about their relationship with winter. The participants shared their recollections and impressions of the Québec winter, which inhabits our landscapes, defines our ways of life and enlivens our imaginative universe. Winter can be synonymous with pleasure, adversity or discovery, whether we have lived through several winters or are encountering our first one.

An enveloping space has been set aside to enable visitors to express their personal experience of winter. Cards are available on which they can record their stories and impressions, to be deposited in a box. MNBAQ staff will collect the cards and, over time, display the participants’ impressions, stories and words on the walls of the exhibition rooms. They will create a vast mosaic of murmurs that illustrate our collective imagination.

Credits

*Mirage blanc* is an *exhibition developed by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec*.

**Project Directorship**
Annie Gauthier  
Director of Collections and Research, MNBAQ

**Curatorship**
Maude Lévesque  
Curator of CPOA and public engagement, MNBAQ

**Project Manager**
Kasia Basta

**Operations Management**
Yasmée Faucher  
Department Head, MNBAQ

**Exhibition and Graphic Design**
Danièle Lessard  
Nathalie Racicot
In Gallery Programs
Marie-Hélène Audet
Mediation Coordinator,
MNBAQ

Catherine-Eve Gadoury
Coordinator of Cultural Action,
MNBAQ

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White Mirage
November 15, 2018 to May 12, 2019
Gérard-Morisset Pavilion of the MNBAQ

INFORMATION: 418 643-2150 or 1 866 220-2150 /mnbaq.org


General Information

OPENING
HOURS OF THE
MUSEUM COMPLEX

Until May 31, 2019
Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Wednesday till 9 p.m.
Closed Mondays (except December 31, 2018, March 4, April 1 and May 20, 2019)
Closed December 24 et 25

ADMISSION

Adults: $20
Seniors (65 and Over): $18
Ages 18 to 30: $11
Ages 13 to 17: $6
Families (2 adults and 3 children 13 to 17): $44
Families (1 adult and 3 children 13 to 17): $24
Children 12 and under: free
Members: free
Wednesdays from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.: half-price
Reduced rates for groups

CONTACT US

418 643-2150 or
1 866 220-2150
mnbaq.org

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter at mnbaq.org. An excellent way to stay up to date on news, events and activities at the Musée!

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Parking, Librairie-Boutique, café, restaurant, free Wi-Fi and Cloakroom

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