

Stanley Février receives the MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award

*The fourth edition of the award highlights
social questions*

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Québec City, Tuesday, September 1, 2020 ✕ The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), in collaboration with its financial partner RBC Foundation, is pleased to announce that artist **Stanley Février** is the recipient of the fourth MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award, a unique biennial award in Canada. The prestigious award includes the organization of a solo exhibition at the MNBAQ, a

retrospective publication, and the acquisition of works by the artist worth \$50 000 for the MNBAQ's collection.

“RBC Foundation is pleased to have supported this award, which truly makes a difference to the lives of artists here, since 2013,” noted André Labbé, Regional Vice-president, Québec/Beauce/Centre-du-Québec/Mauricie, RBC. “In addition to celebrating their accomplishments, the award affords the winner an outstanding showcase through an important exhibition in a Québec institution that offers visitors extensive facilitation, and an incisive study and analysis of the artist's career in a major publication,” he added.

Art is a genuine vector for change

Stanley Février perceives art as an agent for social change. The artist says that his works “reflect on the human condition in the 21st century and the value of life against the backdrop of globalization.” He is “keenly interested in the psychological and physical frailty of human beings.” Current environmental and human dramas are themes present throughout his practice, especially police brutality, mental health, citizen disarmament, mass migrations, and questions related to overconsumption. Faced with these key questions related to the political, racial, human, and cultural challenges that are racking societies the world over, Stanley Février's work vibrates with an aptness that the jury members wished to acknowledge. The artist's work spans an array of practices ranging from performance to photography and including sculpture and drawing, and his increasingly astounding reflections on the state of the world. The denunciation of violence that is central to Stanley Février's practice and his grasp of difficult social issues resonate with the MNBAQ's vision. The addition to the MNBAQ's collection of works by Stanley Février will reflect the formal, social and artistic dimensions of the works that it encompasses.

A changing collection

“The MNBAQ has, for several years, adopted concrete measures to enhance the representativeness of its collection from the standpoint of contemporary Québec. Consequently, it has sought to strike a better balance in genres, generations, and artistic practices, and to achieve a broader presence of racialized artists, artists of different cultural origins,

the First Nations, Métis and Inuit,” noted Annie Gauthier, Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the MNBAQ. “Stanley Février’s practice attracted the attention of MNBAQ teams long before the jury convened to award the MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award. What is more, we will work extensively with the artist, who tackles topical issues head-on, and thus draw parallels with historic works in the collection,” Ms. Gauthier added enthusiastically.

The jury of the fourth edition of the award comprised Eunice Bélidor, Director of the FOFA Gallery at Concordia University and a member of the MNBAQ’s external acquisition committee; Marie-Hélène Audet, Mediation Service Manager, MNBAQ; Annie Gauthier, Director of Collections and Exhibitions, MNBAQ; and Bernard Lamarche, Head of Collection Development and Curator of Contemporary Art (2000 to the present), MNBAQ. The jury members would also like to congratulate the finalists, Chun Hua Catherine Dong, Chloë Lum and Yannick Desranleau, Marigold Santos, and Walter Scott. The artists’ captivating work sustained the jury’s discussions throughout the process. Each one raised striking questions on the social body, the construction of identity, inclusion, and the artistic environment. It goes without saying that the choice was a daunting task, given the vivid nature of each artist’s work.

Biographical note on Stanley Février

Stanley Février was born in 1976 in Port-au-Prince. He is a multidisciplinary Québec artist who has lived for over 20 years in Longueuil, near Montréal. He first worked as a social worker before gradually turning to art. He became a full-time artist in 2012. The two practices are now indissociable. In 2018, he obtained a master’s degree in visual and media arts from the Faculté des arts at the Université du Québec à Montréal. The artist’s practice encompasses photography, digitization, drawing, installations and assemblages, sculpture, and participatory art and performance. Since 2007, he has presented more than 20 solo exhibitions and participated in 15 group exhibitions in several cities in Québec and in Ottawa, and in the United States (New York), Cuba, France, Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, and China. He has also been present in public spaces outside exhibition venues in Québec, Greece, and Spain.

Moreover, since 2012, he has participated in 10 contemporary art festivals in Québec, Mexico, Bulgaria, Serbia, and China.

The MNBAQ Contemporary Art Award is granted every two years to a Québec artist through a remarkable partnership between the MNBAQ and the RBC Foundation. The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is a government corporation subsidized by the Québec government.

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