

Press release
New exhibitions
June 12 to September 12, 2021

Picasso. Figures
accompanied by the Opening a Dialogue
About Body Liberation exhibition



Parc des Champs-de-Bataille
Québec (Québec) G1R 5H3
418 643-2150
1 866 220-2150
mnbaq.org

Press Contact

Linda Tremblay
Media Relations Officer
418 644-6460, ext. 5532
linda.tremblay@mnbaq.org



Québec City, Friday, June 11, 2021 ✕ The *Picasso. Figures* exhibition, presented by Quebecor, which highlights Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), an artist and an admired, controversial individual, will be the focal point of the summer of 2021. Presented in an exclusive Canadian engagement at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), the masterpieces assembled will celebrate the human figure, the artist's favourite subject, from **June 12 to September 12, 2021**.

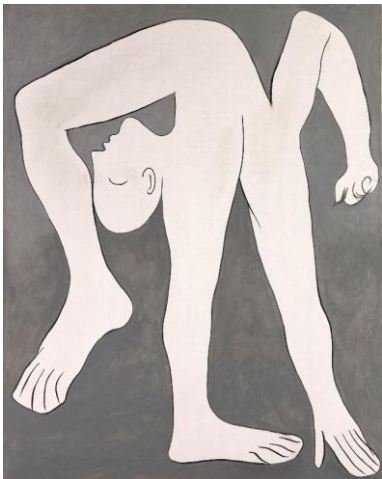
To complement the exhibition, *Opening a Dialogue About Body Liberation exhibition*, a group exhibition in a continuous circuit rooted in the contemporary world, will echo the work of this giant of modernity. Picasso rejected the diktats of the aesthetic cannons linked to the representation of the human figure, which enables the MNBAQ to raise certain contemporary social concerns and offer relevant, thoughtful reflection on body diversity.

Musée national
des beaux-arts
du Québec

To develop this exhibition and ensure the appropriateness of the avenues for reflection proposed, the MNBAQ established an advisory committee comprising journalist and author Mickaël Bergeron, Cassandra Cacheiro and Sara Hini, cofounders of *The Womanhood Project*, and cultural content creator Elizabeth Cordeau Rancourt. The exhibition thus links Picasso’s works with those of contemporary, mainly Québec artists, whose output explores the representation of body diversity. “The complementary approach proposed focuses on openness, rapprochement with others, and active participation in debate in our society aimed at improving it,” noted Jean-Luc Murray, Director General of the MNBAQ.

Infinite exploration of the body

Designed by the Musée national Picasso-Paris in France in collaboration with the MNBAQ, *Picasso. Figures* comprises 76 works, including 47 major paintings, drawn from its remarkable collection, produced between 1895 and 1972.



Presented as a thematic retrospective that explores more than 75 years of the artist’s career, *Picasso. Figures* focuses on the representation of the body in the artist’s work. It is one of the most fertile prisms through which to grasp the numerous metamorphoses inherent in his output.

From portraits, influenced by years of apprenticeship inspired by 17th century Spanish masters, to the representations featuring expressionist, liberated body movements of the final period, the deconstructed, reconstructed, constantly transformed body turns into malleable figures on the path of this unique genius.

Six seminal works illustrate six fascinating themes

The exhibition focuses on six themes: *Female figures*, *Cubist figures*, *Magic figures*, *Sculptural figures*, *Disfigured figures*, and *Late figures*. It mainly comprises paintings, drawings, and prints, ranging from the Spanish master’s formative years to the final paintings in the last period. It also assembles a remarkable collection of sculptures that reflect the artist’s multidisciplinary dimension.



Among the showpieces that illustrate each of themes on the exhibition circuit and the striking periods of Picasso’s career, mention should be made of: *La Lecture* (1932), a masterpiece of the representation of seated women, a theme present in various forms throughout the artist’s career; *Man with a Guitar* (1911), a painting that is characteristic of analytical cubism, which seeks to restore on the same surface a subject’s three-dimensionality by revealing its different facets; *Figure: projet pour un monument à Guillaume Apollinaire* (1928), a sculpture akin to a drawing in space, in which the human figure is made up solely of fine metal stems and a simple disk to represent the head; *The Bathers* (1918), a small painting produced during his honeymoon in Biarritz with his bride, Russian ballerina Olga Khokhlova, far removed from the cubist aesthetic that signalled a return to a neoclassical line and evokes the influence of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres; *Grand nu au fauteuil rouge* (1929), a hidden, cruel portrait of his wife Olga, which takes up again the theme of the seated woman dear to Picasso; and lastly, *Luncheon on the Grass, After Manet* (1960), part of a series of variations centred on major works in the history of western art.

“These women are not simply posed there like a bored model. They are trapped in the chairs like birds imprisoned in a cage. I have imprisoned them... because I am seeking to grasp the movement of flesh and blood over time.”

– Pablo Picasso



A tribute to Picasso’s muses

Picasso is praised for his art. However, many biographies also give an account of his reprehensible behaviour towards women. Must we separate the artist’s life from his work? Picasso himself responded to this ethical and philosophical question: “It is not sufficient to know an artist’s works. It is also necessary to know when he produced them, why, how, and under what circumstances.” The MNBAQ has decided to pay tribute to the women in his life who were his muses since Picasso’s work is closely linked to his love stories, in which passion and violence and destruction meshed.

Fernande Olivier (1881–1966)

Fernande Olivier, whose real name was Amélie Lang, was born in 1881 in Paris. Married against her will in 1899, she fled in 1900 and decided to lead an independent life. Initially interested in a career as a teacher, she eventually became a professional model for a number of Parisian artists. This was how she met Picasso; in fact, one of the women in *Les Femmes d'Alger* would be based on her. Olivier and Picasso were involved intermittently between 1905 and 1912. Passionate about literature, she was herself a writer. Her book *Picasso and His Friends* (*Picasso et ses amis*, 1933) is an account of her bohemian years with the artist. She died in Neuilly in 1966.



Olga Khokhlova (1891–1955)

Olga Khokhlova was born in 1891 in Nizhyn, in the former Russian Empire (present-day Ukraine). As a child, she discovered a vocation for dance, and she joined the Ballets Russes troupe led by Serge Diaghilev in 1912. To rehearse for the ballet *Parade*, she went to Rome in 1917, where she met Picasso, who was working on the costumes and sets. She gave up her career and married the artist a year later. At the same time, the socialist revolution broke out in Russia. Khokhlova was from an aristocratic family and would never return to her homeland. She had a son, Paulo (1921–1975), with Picasso. The couple separated in 1935 but never divorced, because Picasso refused to divide his artworks and wealth with Khokhlova as required by law. She died in Cannes in 1955.



Marie-Thérèse Walter (1909–1977)

Marie-Thérèse Walter was born in 1909 in Le Perreux-sur-Marne. An athletic teenager, she was just seventeen when she met Picasso, a forty-five-year-old married man who was gaining international recognition. The couple's relationship remained secret for several years, although the figure of the young woman gradually invaded the artist's work, and she became the painter's favourite motif throughout the 1930s. In 1935, she gave birth to their daughter, Maya, whom she raised alone. Marie-Thérèse Walter took her own life in 1977, four years after the death of Picasso.



Dora Maar (1907–1997)

Henriette Dora Markovitch was born in 1907 in Paris. She studied photography and chose a pseudonym in the early 1930s: Dora Maar. Her first works, especially the photomontages, linked her to the Surrealists. She combined her artistic career with strong political activism, fighting the rise of fascism in Europe. Picasso began a relationship with her in 1936, while he was still involved with Marie-Thérèse Walter and married to Olga Khokhlova. Maar suffered a breakdown after finding out about Picasso's affair with Françoise Gilot. She once said to Picasso, "As an artist you may be extraordinary, but morally speaking you are worthless." After their breakup in 1943, Maar began working as a painter. She died in Paris in 1997.

Françoise Gilot (1921)

Françoise Gilot was born in 1921 in Neuilly, on the outskirts of Paris. She abandoned her legal studies to devote herself to painting. She met Picasso in 1943 and had two children with him: Claude (b. 1947) and Paloma (b. 1949). She left the Spanish artist in 1953 and later published *Life with Picasso* (1964). Having never put her artistic career on hold, she settled in the United States, where her work met with success.

Jacqueline Roque (1926–1986)

Jacqueline Roque was born in Paris in 1926. After the Second World War, she moved to Cannes, in southeast France. She began working for Suzanne Ramié, a cousin who ran a pottery studio with Georges Ramié, her husband, in the small town of Vallauris. It was there that Roque met Picasso, in 1952, a regular at the studio. She was twenty-seven years old. She married him in 1961, becoming his model and caring for him until his death in 1973. Jacqueline Roque died by suicide in 1986.

A section of the exhibition will also afford an opportunity to hear three of the exhibitions' collaborators, Mickaël Bergeron, Cassandra Cacheiro and Sara Hini, propose avenues for reflection on the possibility of differentiating the lives of artists from their work. They broach this ethical question from different angles to sustain our personal reflection. In an age of cultural boycotts, maintaining a dialogue enables us to better grasp the questions and to highlight the grey areas that have persisted over time.

A unique audio circuit

The audio guide devoted to the *Picasso. Figures* and *Opening a Dialogue About Body Liberation* exhibitions is unique. It enables visitors to not only travel in Picasso's universe but also to foster dialogue on questions such as the relationship between the artist and his muses, cultural boycotts, the representation of non-gendered bodies, or the notion of inner beauty. Mickaël Bergeron, Sara Hini and Cassandra Cacheiro, the MNBAQ's collaborators, share with visitors their reflections and personal experience. They create bridges between Picasso's work and crucial questions in our society to encourage sensitive, intelligent reflection.



Visitors can download the audio guide on their cell phones to listen to excerpts from their exchanges. The full version of their discussion is also available on the MNBAQ website.

To listen:

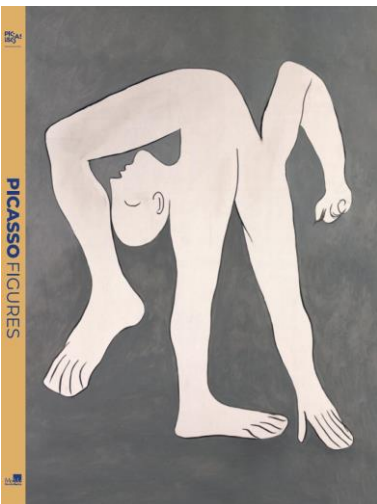
<https://soundcloud.com/user-426041794-859549171/sets/picasso-figures-english>

The catalogue takes a contemporary look at Picasso's work

Was Pablo Picasso a misogynist? Using this straightforward question as a starting point, Emilia Philippot and François Dareau from the Musée national Picasso-Paris, the curators of *Picasso. Figures* exhibition, produced the catalogue.

The 176-page publication includes over 100 illustrations. It spans a period of more than 75 years of artistic output featuring the human figure, Picasso's favourite subject. What is more, the theme is one of the most fertile prisms through which to grasp the numerous metamorphoses inherent in the artist's practice.

In addition to an essay that situates the artist's works in the theoretical context of gender studies, the catalogue focuses on the six sections of the exhibition, which explore female, cubist, magical, sculptural, disfigured,



and late figures. It also includes a complete chronology of Picasso's life. Studio Polpo has overseen the graphic design of the catalogue, published by MondoMostre. *Picasso. Figures* is available exclusively at the Librairie-Boutique of the MNBAQ, in French and in English, for \$49.95.

Credits

Picasso. Figures is organized by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec in collaboration with the Musée national Picasso-Paris and MondoMostre. The contribution comes from the Mesure d'aide financière à l'intention des musées d'État pour des expositions internationales majeures. The exhibition *Opening a Dialogue About Body Libération* is organized by the MNBAQ.

Curatorship

Emilia PHILLIPOT
Chief Curator, Head of
Collections, Musée national
Picasso-Paris

François DAREAU
Associate Curator, Research
Fellow, Musée national
Picasso-Paris

Maude LÉVESQUE
Curator of Exhibitions, MNBAQ

At Musée national Picasso-Paris
Laurent LE BON
President

Louis JACQUART
Director General

Joséphine BRUNNER
Director of Ressources

Daphné BOISSONNET
Legal Officer

Leslie LECHEVALLIER
Director of Communications and
Public Development

Claire GARNIER
Director of Collections,
Production and Education

Sophie DAYNES-DIALLO
Head of Production

Sophie RATAJCZAK
Exhibition Registrar

*At the Musée national des
beaux-arts du Québec*
Marie-Hélène AUDET
Head of Mediation, MNBAQ

Yasmée FAUCHER
Head of Museography, MNBAQ

Catherine GAUMOND
Head of Collections, MNBAQ

Pascal NORMANDIN
Head of Exhibitions and
Curatorial, MNBAQ

*Advisory committee on body
diversity*

Mickaël BERGERON
Author and journalist

Cassandra CACHEIRO
Sara HINI
Co-founders of
The Womanhood Project

Elizabeth
CORDEAU RANCOURT
Creator of Cultural Content

In-house Members

Kasia BASTA
Annie BÉRUBÉ
Marie-Renée BOURGET HARVEY
Laurent DERVAUX
Andréanne LESAGE
Maude LÉVESQUE
Marie-Hélène RAYMOND

Design and Graphic Design
Marie-Renée BOURGET HARVEY

*The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is a state corporation funded by the
Gouvernement du Québec.*

Québec 



An exhibition organized by the Musée
national des beaux-arts du Québec in
collaboration with the Musée national
Picasso-Paris and MondoMostre.

Québec 



Picasso. Figures
Opening a Dialogue About Body Liberation
Pierre Lassonde Pavilion of the MNBAQ
June 12 to September 12, 2021

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

Page 1 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *Reading Woman*, Boisgeloup, January 2, 1932. Oil on canvas, 130 x 97.5 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP137 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau

Page 2 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *The Acrobat*, Paris, January 18, 1930. Oil on canvas, 162 x 130 cm. Musée national Picasso Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP120 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didier jean

Page 3 – From top to Bottom: Photos: Pablo Picasso, *Man with a Guitar*, Paris, Autumn 1911. Oil on canvas, 154 x 77.5 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP34 © Picasso Estate/ Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean // Pablo Picasso, *Head of a Woman (Fernande)*, Paris, Autumn ,1909. Bronze, 40.5 x 23 x 26 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP243 © Picasso Estate/ Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris)/ Adrien Didierjean

Page 4 – From top to Bottom: Photos: Pablo Picasso, *Luncheon on the Grass, after Manet*, Vauvenargues, March 3 – August 20, 1960. Oil on canvas, 130 x 195 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP215 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Jean-Gilles Berizzi // Pablo Picasso, *The Bathers*, Biarritz, Summer 1918. Oil on canvas, 27 x 22 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP61 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Sylvie Chan-Liat

Page 5 – From top to Bottom: Photos: Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Dora Maar*, Paris, November 23, 1937. Oil on canvas, 55.3 x 46.3 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP166 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau // Pablo Picasso, *Jacqueline with Crossed Hands*, Vallauris, June 3, 1954. Oil on canvas, 116 x 88.5 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Jacqueline Picasso, 1979. MP1990-26 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean

Page 6 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *Bather*, Dinard, August 6, 1928. Oil on canvas, 22 x 14 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP106 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau

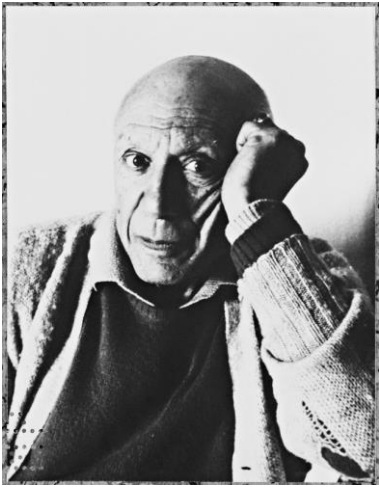
Page 10 – From top to Bottom: Photos: André Gomes (1913-1997), *Pablo Picasso at his Notre-Dame-de-Vie, Mougins studio*, April 1965. Digital image. Musée national Picasso-Paris. MP1999-15, © André Gomes / RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY / Michèle Bellot // Pablo Picasso, *Young Naked Boy*, Paris, Autumn 1906. Oil on canvas, 67 x 43 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP6 © Picasso Estate/ Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau

Page 11 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *The Kiss*, Juan-les-Pins, Summer 1925. Oil on canvas, 130.5 x 97.7 cm. Musée national Picasso. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP85 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau

Page 12 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *Woman in an armchair*, Paris, July 3, 1946. Oil and Gouache on canvas, 130.2 x 97.1 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP197 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean

Page 13 – Photo: Pablo Picasso, *The Young Painter*, Mougins, April 14, 1972. Oil on canvas, 130 x 162 cm. Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP228 © Picasso Estate / Socan (2021) Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau

Chronology of Pablo Picasso



1881

25 October: Pablo Ruiz Picasso is born in Málaga in the far south of Spain. He is the eldest son of Don José Ruiz Blasco and María Picasso y Lopez. The couple go on to have two daughters, Lola (in 1884) and Conchita (in 1887).

1895

Conchita, his younger sister, dies of a contagious infectious disease. The Ruiz Picasso family moves to Barcelona. Young Pablo is admitted to the La Lonja School of Fine Arts, where his father teaches.

1897

He is admitted to the San Fernando Academy in Madrid.

1899

In Barcelona he begins to frequent the avant-garde circle at the *Quatre Gats* tavern, where he meets Carlos Casagemas. A year later, they travel to Paris together and settle in Montmartre.



1901

He meets the poet and writer Max Jacob.

1904

He moves into the Bateau-Lavoir, in Montmartre. He meets the poet Guillaume Apollinaire and Fernande Olivier, a professional model who becomes his companion for seven years.

1907

He visits the Museum of Ethnography at the Trocadéro, where he discovers African sculpture. He paints *Les Femmes d'Alger* (OJ version) (MoMA, New York). He meets the painter Georges Braque, with whom he engages in a pictorial dialogue that culminates in the founding of Cubism.

1913

His father dies in Barcelona.



1914

Outbreak of the First World War. Orders for the mobilization of France are issued on 1 August. As a foreign resident, Picasso is exempt. Braque and Apollinaire are involved in the war effort.

1916

The poet Jean Cocteau introduces him to Serge Diaghilev, director of the Ballets Russes. Picasso works on the ballet *Parade*. A year later, he travels to Italy to create the sets and costumes. He begins a relationship with Olga Khokhlova, a dancer in the troupe.

1918

He marries Khokhlova. Their son Paulo is born in 1921. Apollinaire dies of the Spanish flu two days before the signing of the Armistice.

1927

He meets Marie-Thérèse Walter, aged seventeen, and begins a secret relationship with her. In 1935, she gives birth to their daughter, María de la Concepción, known as Maya.

1935

He separates from his wife Olga, begins writing poetry and stops painting for a year. He meets the photographer Dora Maar, with whom he has a relationship.

1937

He moves to 7, rue des Grands-Augustins, Paris. The Spanish republican government asks him to create a monumental painting for the International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques in Modern Life. In the midst of the Spanish Civil War, he chooses to represent the recent bombing of the Basque town Guernica by the fascist armed forces (Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid).

1939

His mother dies in Barcelona.
 France enters the Second World War.

1940

He makes an official request for French naturalization, which is rejected. France capitulates in June and the German Occupation begins.

1941

He writes his first play, *Desire Caught by the Tail*.

1943

He meets Françoise Gilot, a twenty-one-year-old painter who becomes his new companion and with whom he has two children: Claude (born in 1947) and Paloma (born in 1949).

1944

His friend Max Jacob, who is Jewish, is sent to the Drancy concentration camp near Paris, where he dies.

At the Liberation, a retrospective exhibition of his wartime works provokes violent reactions.

He joins the French Communist Party.

1947

He begins working intensively with ceramics at the Madoura pottery in Vallauris, where he moves two years later.

1951

He paints *Massacre in Korea* (Musée national Picasso-Paris) six months after the start of the Korean War.

1952

He agrees to decorate a chapel in Vallauris around the theme of War and Peace.

1953

Françoise Gilot ends her relationship with Picasso.
Picasso meets Jacqueline Roque, his last lover.

1955

Olga Khokhlova, still officially married to Picasso, dies.

He purchases the Villa La Californie, in Cannes, and moves there with Jacqueline Roque.

Important retrospective at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.



1957

He is commissioned by UNESCO to create a mural for the opening of its Paris headquarters

1958

His sister Lola dies in Barcelona.

He buys the Château de Vauvenargues at the foot of the Montagne Sainte-Victoire.

1961

He marries Jacqueline Roque. The couple move into the Notre-Dame-de-Vie farmhouse near Mougins, the artist's final home.

1963

Opening of the Museu Picasso in Barcelona.

1966

Major exhibition *Hommage à Picasso* at the Grand and Petit Palais in Paris.

1967

He refuses the Légion d'honneur, the highest French order of merit.

1971

He paints self-portraits that evoke his relationship with death.

On the occasion of his ninetieth birthday, a selection of his works is displayed in the Grande Galerie at the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

1973

8 April: Pablo Picasso dies at the Notre-Dame-de-Vie farmhouse, Mougins. He is buried on 10 April in the garden of his château in Vauvenargues. The exhibition *Pablo Picasso, 1970-1972* at the Palais des Papes in Avignon provides the opportunity to see his final works.



General Information

OPENING HOURS OF THE MUSEUM COMPLEX

Until September 6, 2021

Monday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Wednesdays and Fridays until 9 p.m.

ADMISSION

Featured exhibitions

Adults: **25 \$**

Seniors (65 and Over): **23 \$**

Ages 18 to 30: **15 \$**

Ages 13 to 17: **7 \$**

Families (2 adults accompanied
up to 5 children aged 17 and
under): **54 \$**

Group rate (15 people or more)
for hotels, tour operators and
companies: **22 \$**

12 years and under: **free**

Membres: **free**

Wednesdays from, 5 p.m. to
9 p.m.: **half-price**

MNBAQ National Collections

Adults: **16 \$**

Seniors (65 and Over): **15 \$**

Ages 18 to 30: **10 \$**

Ages 13 to 17: **5 \$**

Families (2 adults accompanied
up to 5 children aged 17 and
under): **36 \$**

Group rate (15 people or more)
for hotels, tour operators and
companies: **13 \$**

12 years and under: **free**

Membres: **free**

Wednesdays from, 5 p.m. to
9 p.m.: **half-price**

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Parking, Bookshop-Boutique,
Wi-Fi access, free wheelchairs,
self-service cloakroom and Baby
Changing Room

TO 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!

FOLLOW US

