

The MNBAQ pays tribute to the memory of Raymond Brousseau, a major collector



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Québec City, Tuesday, July 6, 2021 ✕ The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) was saddened to learn of the death at the age of 83 of Raymond Brousseau, a major donor, artist, and avid collector. In half a century, Mr. Brousseau assembled an outstanding, unique Inuit art collection comprising 2 635 works and objects. “We are deeply saddened to learn of the death of collector and philanthropist Raymond Brousseau. His generosity, confirmed through significant gifts of works, especially Inuit art, expanded the MNBAQ remarkably. A connoisseur and visionary,

he hoped in this way to share with everyone his passion for art. The permanent exhibition *Inuit Art. The Brousseau Collection. Ilippunga*, which presents the outstanding Brousseau collection of Inuit art, attests to his tremendous legacy to Québec society. Our thoughts at this difficult time are with Lyse, his wife and collaborator for 63 years, and the family, loved ones, and friends of this remarkable man,” noted Jean-Luc Murray, Director General of the MNBAQ.

Mr. Brousseau was appointed a Chevalier de l’Ordre National du Mérite de la République française in 2005 and a Knight of the Ordre national du Québec in 2008. He was also a member of the Grands Québécois 2011. What is more, he served on the Board of Directors of the Fondation du MNBAQ in the years preceding the construction of the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion.



The MNBAQ has for several years enjoyed privileged relations with the great Québec City Inuit art collector and dealer Raymond Brousseau. “Over the past 15 years, repeated contacts with Raymond Brousseau significantly stimulated knowledge and the development of Inuit art at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec,” Daniel Drouin, Curator of Early Art (before 1900) and Head of the Inuit Art Collection from 2005 to 2020 at the MNBAQ, added. “The joy that the hundreds of works in his collection afforded him is shared with the thousands of visitors to the permanent Inuit art exhibition room.”



His collection, one of the most prestigious in the world, is showcased in the exhibition *Inuit Art. The Brousseau Collection. Ilippunga*, which presents some of the most outstanding works. They include *La Maternité* and *Hommage aux animaux*, two major sculptures by Manasie Akpaliapik that delight visitors.

“My wife Annie and I would like to send our sincere condolences to Lise and Jean Francois Brousseau. The passing of a Great Man, husband and father, a gentleman and a scholar. Raymond Brousseau opened my eyes to the realization that I could make a career out of my carvings as an Inuit Sculptor. I will always be forever grateful for his genuine appreciation of my art. He will always remain a source of inspiration for me. Manasie and Annie Akpaliapik



In 2018, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), in collaboration with Varia, published Raymond Brousseau and Inuit Art: The Remarkable Journey of an Artist and Collector, in English and French editions, a biography by author John R. Porter, which retraces the outstanding career of Raymond Brousseau, an avid, unclassifiable artist and collector. “Raymond Brousseau was an avid, fascinating collector who was interested in African art, Inuit art, Québec folk art, and the works of Jean Paul Riopelle,” noted John R. Porter, Director General of the MNBAQ from 1993 to 2008 and a friend of Raymond Brousseau. “I feel privileged to have enjoyed his unfailing friendship since I collaborated in 1978 on his medium-length film on painter and collector Joseph Légaré (1795-1855),” John R. Porter, a great friend of Raymond Brousseau said.

The extraordinary destiny of Raymond Brousseau



Raymond Brousseau was born in 1938 in Montréal and came from a modest background. He engaged in numerous experiences and feats of daring to find his way in the world. By way of an example, he was a math teacher, painter, projectionist during performances, filmmaker at the NFB, sculptor, antique dealer, and gallery owner. As a collector, he was as insatiable as he was unpredictable, and indeed, rash, assembling impressive groups of decoys, children’s sleighs, contemporary prints, and works of African art.

In the course of his career, he also mixed with individuals as varied as writer Pierre Vallières, choreographer Jeanne Renaud, Maryvonne Kendergi, founder of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, the undefinable Raoul Duguay, Paris gallery owner Claude Vérité, actor Philippe Noiret, and former French President Jacques Chirac.

From the time of his first acquisition in 1956, Raymond Brousseau maintained an unfailing passion for the works of those he affectionately dubbed his “cousins from the North.” He experienced growing anxiety over the future of the Inuit’s world because of the global warming that is accelerating the melting of the ice floe. In this context, the luminous space that houses his bequest in the northern portion of the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion at the MNBAQ serves as a call to safeguard and transmit a heritage that is equally mysterious and captivating, one that transcends the boundaries of time and space.

The Manasie Akpaliapik. Inuit Universe. The Raymond Brousseau Collection *exhibition*

Inuit art is fascinating and engaging. Thanks to Raymond Brousseau, the MNBAQ has, since June 18, 2021, celebrated the diversity of this age-old culture in a striking manner, through the work of Manasie Akpaliapik, one of the foremost Inuit sculptors of his generation. The Manasie Akpaliapik. Inuit Universe. The Raymond Brousseau Collection exhibition will enable visitors to undertake a unique trip to the northern territory.

The Inuit Art. The Brousseau Collection. Ilippunga *exhibition*

Since the opening of the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion, the Inuit Art. The Brousseau Collection. Ilippunga has presented 100-odd works drawn from the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ)'s wide-ranging collection, the fourth largest of its kind in Canada, which was assembled in 2005 through a gift from collector Raymond Brousseau and a financial contribution from Hydro-Québec.



Raymond Brousseau, collector

Raymond Brousseau was only 18 when he acquired his first sculpture, *Esprit de l'igloo* in 1956, which spurred his passion for modes of artistic expression in the North. The MNBAQ's Brousseau collection of Inuit art now includes one of the country's foremost collections of Inuit sculptures. It comprises more than 2 100 works produced by dozens of artists from Northern Canada since the Thulé Period (500-1000 AD) and the Dorset Period (500 BC-1350 AD).

Raymond Brousseau was one of the first collectors of Inuit art in Québec and his enthusiasm spurred a lasting movement to promote and recognize Inuit art in Canada and abroad.

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

Page 1 – Raymond Brousseau Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie

Page 2 – Photos: Annie Akpaliapik, spouse of Manasie Akpaliapik, Manasie Akpaliapik, artist, Daniel Drouin, Curator of Ancient Art and in charge of the Inuit Art Collection from 2005 to 2020, MNBAQ, Raymond Brousseau, collector and artist, and Jean-François Brousseau, son of Raymond Brousseau Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie // Raymond Brousseau among the sculptures in his collection, Monday April 20, 2009. To his right are four sculptures by Manasie Akpaliapik, including *Composition hibou-chaman*, a work produced 10 years earlier

Page 3 – Raymond Brousseau and John R. Porter at the launching of *Raymond Brousseau and Inuit Art: The Remarkable Journey of an Artist and Collector* // Raymond Brousseau Photo: MNBAQ

Page 4 – Raymond Brousseau Photo: MNBAQ