

Press release
New exhibition
From June 9 to September 5, 2022

America

Between Dreams and Realities

Selections from the Hirshhorn and Sculpture Garden Collection

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Québec City, Wednesday, June 8, 2022 ✕ The United States of America is a fascinating country of contrasts. American artists have shaped the past century and revealed all the social and cultural upheavals in their history. The effervescence of this paradoxical culture exemplifies *America. Between Dreams and Realities*, the summer exhibition that the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) is presenting from **June 9 to September 5, 2022**.

The works in this exhibition, a world exclusive tailor-made for the MNBAQ, are drawn from the prestigious collection of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, which proposes a broad spectrum of American art from 1914 to the present. It encompasses 82 artists from all walks of life and 96 paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and videos, which are sure to dazzle and delight visitors.



Musée national
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The exhibition features works by Louise Bourgeois, Edward Hopper, Arthur Jafa, les Guerrilla Girls, Willem de Kooning, Ana Mendieta, Louise Nevelson, Isamu Noguchi, Jackson Pollock, Lorna Simpson, Andy Warhol and several others. The artists illustrate the impact of social and cultural history on artistic creation in the United States, thereby reflecting the broad diversity of 20th and 21st century American art. Some of them rank among the most celebrated artists of the last century, while others offer visitors striking discoveries. All of the artists were born in the United States or settled permanently there.



This outstanding exhibition focuses on seven themes that reveal how the artists have contributed to defining and reinventing the American dream, with particular emphasis on imagined landscapes, celebrating the everyday, technological revolutions, or the challenges that globalization poses. The exhibition presents engaged practices and also highlights the questions of individual and collective identity.

“The works exhibited show that we share the key challenges that contemporary American society is facing. The recent history of Québec and the world is linked to that of the United States and American art can certainly enable us to better grasp our own Americanness,” noted Jean-Luc Murray, Director General of the MNBAQ.

When they arrive at the MNBAQ, visitors encounter *Geometric Mouse* (1971), an iconic sculpture by Claes Oldenburg, which is exhibited in front of the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion at the main entrance to the MNBAQ. The work evokes Mickey Mouse, the most emblematic of all cartoon characters and the quintessential symbol of American popular culture, and thus reflects many of the questions that the exhibition raises. From desert landscapes to New York skyscrapers and including Harlem or California beaches, from a 7-Up can to Mickey Mouse ears, Chubby Checker’s twist, or Marilyn Monroe’s luscious lips, a myriad of striking symbols will punctuate this novel voyage to the heart of the USA. *God bless America!*

Masterpieces featured in the exhibition

Modern art to me is nothing more than the expression of contemporary aims of the age that we're living in.

Jackson Pollock, 1951

This unique panorama proposes a vast selection of works. The exhibition focuses on seven relevant themes: *Dreams and Realities*, *Imagined Landscapes*, *The Social Body*, *Across Borders*, *Celebrating the Everyday*, *New Technologies*, and *Pluralisms*. It proposes a broad diversity of approaches and numerous viewpoints, thereby enabling visitors to discover a host of outstanding works and artists.



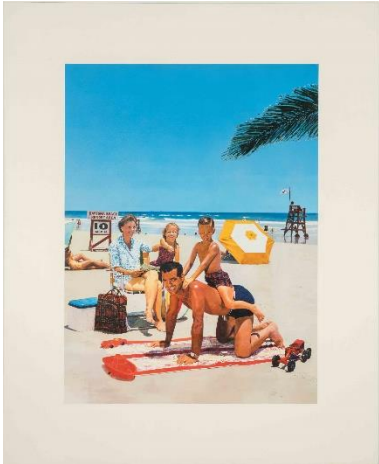
Hotel by a Railroad (1952) by Edward Hopper cannot be overlooked. Hopper favoured realistic painting. He chose to represent the ordinary lives of New Yorkers and New Englanders by transforming banal genre scenes into enigmatic images. Hopper continues to shape the imaginative world with his cinematographic compositions and highly contrasted plays of light.

Visitors can also admire a work by Jackson Pollock, one of the most celebrated 20th century artists. *Number 3, 1949: Tiger* (1949) by the master of abstraction and the designer of a new technique called dripping, which consists in dripping liquid pigment on the canvas placed on the floor and working from the four sides of the canvas.



In *Chubby Checker* (1964), artist, playwright, novelist, and professional wrestler Rosalyn Drexler portrays the celebrated singer doing the twist. This promotion of the Afro-American musician at a time when the civil rights movement was gaining momentum is very moving.

Andy Warhol's fascination with celebrity is apparent in the painting entitled *Marilyn Monroe's Lips* (1962). The artist cut out the mouth of Marilyn Monroe, the iconic American actress, and reproduced it by means of silkscreen printing. The repetition of the lips does not solely reveal Marilyn Monroe's status, reduced to a sexual icon, but also the omnipresence of advertising material in society at that time.



Beach Scene (1968) by Malcolm Morley, a leading proponent of hyperrealism in the 1960s, is sure to charm visitors. This meticulously hand-painted reproduction of a reproduction offers a darkly humorous satire of the commodification of leisure activities in which a family poses, thereby attaining its dream of an ideal vacation in a Florida seaside resort.

The entrancing *Point of Tranquility* (1959-1960) by Morris Louis, a prominent figure in the Washington Color School, a group of abstract painters active in the American capital, belongs to a series of Florals and suggestively hints at the organic abstraction of the first American modernists.

Lastly, Henry Taylor's *If I don't, someone should as you are so deserving* (2020) focuses on complex social issues and proposes a reflection on the Black experience in the United States. The work represents Elan Supreme, a chess champion, member of the Princeton University basketball team, and Fordham Law School student, who confidently expresses the question inscribed in the phylactery: "Are you going to give me what I want?" This painting invites us to more closely look at and listen and respond to Black women.

The audio tour offers freedom and diversity

The audio tour created specially for *America. Between Dreams and Realities* is the ideal tool to enable visitors who like to visit the exhibition at their own pace to enrich their visit. The audio guide examines in greater depth the significant periods in 20th and 21st century American history and thus better places the works exhibited in their context of creation. The exploration of these key events, in the form of essentially historic and artistic informative vignettes, has been produced in collaboration with **Christophe Cloutier-Roy**, Acting Director of the Observatoire sur les États-Unis de la Chaire Raoul-Dandurand en études stratégiques et diplomatiques de l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

Visitors can download the audio guide, available in French and in English, on their mobile devices.



Credits

An exhibition organized by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC. The contribution comes from the *Mesure d'aide financière à l'intention des musées d'État pour des expositions internationales majeures*.

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Québec



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Selections from the Hirshhorn and Sculpture Garden Collection
Pierre Lassonde Pavilion
From June 9 to September 5, 2022

INFORMATION

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Page 1 - Photos from top to bottom: Rosalyn Drexler, *Chubby Checker*, 1964. Oil and acrylic with photomechanical reproductions on canvas, 190.3 × 165.6 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1422) // Mark Rothko, *Blue, Orange, Red*, 1961. Oil on canvas, 229.2 × 205.9 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.4420)

Page 2 - Photos from top to bottom: Charles White, *The Mother*, 1952. Pen and brown ink and graphite pencil on paper, 77.5 × 56.6 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.5533) // Henry Taylor, *If I don't, someone should as you are so deserving*, 2020. Acrylic on canvas, 243.8 × 304.8 × 7.6 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

Page 3 - Photos from top to bottom: Edward Hopper, *Hotel by a Railroad*, ca. 1952. Oil on canvas, 79.4 × 101.9 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2507) // Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Monroe's Lips*, 1962. Acrylic, screenprint ink and graphite on canvas, panel A (left): 210.2 × 205.1 cm, panel B (right): 210.2 × 209.2 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.313)

Page 4 - Photos from top to bottom: Malcolm Morley, *Beach Scene*, ca. 1968. Acrylic on canvas, 279.4 × 228.2 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.207) // Morris Louis, *Point of Tranquility*, ca. 1959-1960. Magna on canvas, 258.2 × 344.9 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3111)

Page 5 - Photo: Nicole Eisenman, *Luck Lines*, 2018. Oil on canvas, 91.4 × 116.8 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Museum purchase with funds provided by The Basil Alkazzi Purchase Fund, 2019 (2019.011)

Page 6 - Photos from top to bottom: Stuart Davi, *Lucky Strike*, 1924. Oil on paperboard, 45.6 × 60.9 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Museum Purchase, 1974 (74.228) // Claes Oldenburg, *7-Up*, 1961. Enamel, plaster, cloth and wire, 140.7 × 99.7 × 14 cm. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase and Bequest Funds, 1994 (94.13)



General Information

OPENING HOURS OF THE
MUSEUM COMPLEX

Until September 5, 2022

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

Wednesday 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 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

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