

Press release
New exhibition
Starting April 20, 2023

Us
*A philosophical voyage through works from
the collections of the MNBAQ*

Parc des Champs-de-Bataille
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Québec City, Wednesday, April 19, 2023 & Starting April 20, 2023, the exhibition *Us*, which stems from an outstanding collective effort led by the mediation team, in collaboration with the exhibition and conservation teams of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), will present a multitude of converging views of oneself, the other, and us. From their time of birth, human beings assume different forms of “us,” whether a family, a culture, a nation, or a generation, which can be viewed through the prism of art.

A philosophical approach

In its ongoing quest for innovative practices to offer different and, above all, meaningful experiences to the public, *Us* hinges on a philosophical approach on which Lynda Champagne, a philosophy consultant, has collaborated. The new exhibition at the MNBAQ is meant to be a unique



Musée national
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philosophical voyage devoted to the notion of “us” and focusing on the themes of identities, migrations, and territories. It thus offers a different path to examining the artworks from the MNBAQ’s collections by navigating through major themes related to contemporary society and people.

Visitors who discover the 69 works presented can enjoy answering the philosophical questions that the works raise. The voyage, which is at once playful, emotional and, indeed, critical, is accessible to everyone and should enable visitors to assemble, reflect, and marvel, but, above all, to be open to the world.

Three sweeping, universal themes

Identities



Marie-Claude Pratte’s *Portraits de société* (1999-2000) is central to the reflection surrounding the exhibition’s genesis. It comprises 50 little pictures representing stereotypes of different actors in society. It enables visitors to reflect on or broach current issues such as caricature and the impact of prejudices on society and to arouse extensive universal questioning.

To this series of paintings has been added a vast selection of works from the MNBAQ’s collections by Jori Smith, Mimi Parent, Sam Borenstein, Jean-Baptiste Roy-Audy, John Heward, Raphaëlle de Groot, Françoise Sullivan, Manuel Mathieu, Manasie Maniapik, Regilee Piungituq, Eddy Firmin and Alfred Pellan, produced by artists who also wonder about the theme of identity. This unique collection raises vital questions: “What defines me?” “What is identity?” “What would we be without other people?”

Migrations

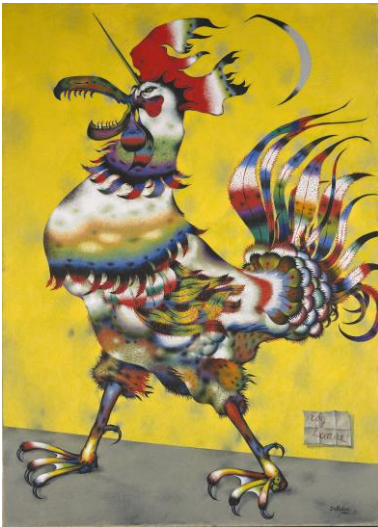


The exhibition reveals another extremely topical question, i.e., forced or voluntary massive population shifts. Works from the MNBAQ’s collection by Jinyoung Kim, Pitseolak Ashoona, Davidialuk Alasua Amittu, Couturier-Lafargue, and Ari Bayuaji examine this sensitive topic. The

works raise a number of highly relevant questions: “What is being ‘at home’ for a nomad?” “What conditions would govern a successful exile?” “How does the territory influence the culture that inhabits it?”

Territories

Lastly, the themes of the territory and its inhabitants naturally round out the exhibition. “How do human beings, animals, and vegetation share real or imaginary territories and what relationships exist between them?” “What is the human being’s place in nature?” “Where does the territory that I inhabit and that inhabits me start and end?” Several works, ranging from **Théophile Hamel**’s 19th-century painting *Adolphe, Auguste, Eugène et Alphonse Hamel, neveux de l’artiste*, to **Caroline Elijassiapik**’s delicately woven sand ryegrass basket produced between 1970 and 1990, to **Jean Paul Riopelle**’s *Sans titre* (1992) with its emblematic symbols, encourage reflection on these intriguing questions.



The MNBAQ’s rock stars

To enrich the selection, which assembles works from all periods in the MNBAQ’s collections (ancient, modern, and contemporary art), *Us* includes several inescapable works that are popular with the public at large but also those that promote an array of activities for school groups during the construction of the future Riopelle Space.

These include: Marc Aurèle- Fortin’s *L’Orme à Pont-Viaux* (1928), Jean Paul Riopelle’s *Sans titre* (1992), Jean Dallaire’s *Le Coq licorne* (1952), Fernand Leduc’s *L’Alpiniste* (1957), Alfred Pellan’s *Conciliabule* (1945?), and David Altmejd’s *The Quail* (2008), to mention but a few.

Pellan, the seminal artist of recognition for the Fondation du MNBAQ

Us also enables the Fondation du Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec to acknowledge the donors who made an outstanding contribution to financing the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion. These philanthropists, who sponsored artworks at the MNBAQ, are the mainstays of the *Coup de cœur*



fundraising campaign. They were honored in the exhibition *Le Rêveur éveillé* devoted to Alfred Pellan from 2014 to 2022 in the Charles Baillairgé Pavilion and will now be recognized in a section of the exhibition devoted to the artist.

To this end, 30 works by Pellan have been assembled, including *Girouette* (circa 1975), a sculpture that the artist constructed and painted, which he installed on the roof of his house around 1975 and the MNBAQ acquired in 2006.

A selection of 16 masks displaying vivid colours and striking motifs related to the presentation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, which was put on again in 1968 at the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde in Montréal and the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris in Paris, is also presented.

Lastly, 10 mobiles from the *Satellite* series comprising an assembly of sundry objects sprayed with silver paint round out this area. The works permanently revolved in Pellan's studio.

Exploration in the workshop space

A special space was created for school and cultural activities when the *Us* exhibition was elaborated. Artist Claudie Gagnon's *Lustre* (2008) illuminates the room.



Somewhat like a blank page, this 60-seat space will serve as a laboratory for the cultural mediation team to explore a myriad of activities. For example, a big white wall in the room could briefly become an exhibition space to showcase the work that visiting students produce during creative workshops at the MNBAQ.



Moreover, the MNBAQ will welcome school groups starting May 1, 2023. Three school visits have been elaborated to satisfy the needs of different age groups: *Ma première visite au Musée* (nursery school to Grade 1), *Complètement bête* (Grades 2 to 6), and *Portrait de société* (Secondary I to V). Several hundred groups visit the MNBAQ each year, thus enabling thousands of young people to encounter art.

Credits

Nous is an exhibition organized by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

Curatorship

Valérie ALLARD
Manager, School Programs

Maude LÉVESQUE
Curator of Exhibitions

Coordination

Eve-Lyne BEAUDRY
Curator of Contemporary Art
(1950-2000)

Management

Marie-Hélène AUDET
Head of Mediation

Yasmée FAUCHER
Head of Museography

Catherine GAUMOND
Head of Collections

Isolda GAVIDIA
Registrar

Didactic Texts

Valérie ALLARD
Manager, School Programs

Lynda CHAMPAGNE
M.A. in Philosophy

Design and Graphic Design

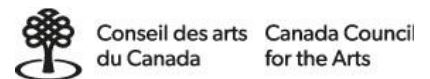
Marie-France GRONDIN
Designer

Gallery Mediation

Valérie ALLARD
Manager, School Programs

Andréanne LESAGE
Manager, Adults Programs

The MNBAQ and its Foundation would like to express a thank you the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec for its commitment to supporting the Museum's educational programs. The Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec is an MNBAQ education ambassador.



Us
Pierre Lassonde Pavilion
Starting April 20, 2023

INFORMATION:

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Page 1 - Photos from top to bottom: Marie-Claude Pratte, *Portraits of Society*, 1999-2000. Acrylic on wood panels, 140 x 260 cm (set). Purchased for the Musée du Québec Prêt d'œuvres d'art collection (CP.2002.14) Photo: MNBAQ, Jean-Guy Kerouac // Théophile Hamel, *Adolphe, Auguste, Eugène and Alphonse Hamel, the Artist's Nephews*, 1847. Oil on canvas, 68,3 x 84,2 cm. Purchase. Conservation treatment by the Centre de conservation du Québec (1967.05) Photo: MNBAQ, Denis Legendre

Page 2 - Photos from top to bottom: Mimi Parent, *Self-Portrait with Cat*, 1945. Oil on canvas, 76 x 79 cm. MNBAQ, Purchase (1947.170) © Mimi Parent Estate Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie // Eddy Firmin, *aka Ano, [pictogram] (Recherche)*, 2016. Ceramic, metal and gold, 34.4 x 20 x 9.8 cm. Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Purchase (2019.859.03) © Eddy Firmin Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie

Page 3 - Photos from top to bottom: Marc-Aurèle Fortin, *Elm Tree at Pont-Viau*, 1928 (or earlier). Oil on canvas, 137 x 168,4 cm. MNBAQ, Purchase (1937.20) © Marc-Aurèle Fortin Fondation Photo: MNBAQ, Jean-Guy Kérouac // Jean Dallaire, *Unicorn Rooster*, 1952. Oil on canvas, 127,5 x 92,3 cm. MNBAQ, Purchase (1968.201) Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie

Page 4 - Photos from top to bottom: Alfred Pellán, *Masque 41*, 1971. Acrylic on plastic mask, 21.7 x 17 x 11 cm. Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Bequest of Madeleine Polisenio Pelland (2011.420) © Estate of Alfred Pellán Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie // Children at MNBAQ. Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie

General Information

OPENING HOURS OF THE
 MUSEUM COMPLEX

Until May 31, 2023

Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday until 9 p.m.

Closed on Monday

**During the construction of the Riopelle Space, only the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion is open.*

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**

First Sunday of every month: **free**

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**

First Sunday of every month: **free**

SERVICES AVAILABLE

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

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 activities at the Musée!

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