

Press release
Announcement

Construction to begin of the Riopelle Space

The construction firm has been selected, the budget adjusted, and a new series of images produced

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, Thursday, April 4, 2024 ✦ Three firms responded to the call for tenders that the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) launched on December 7, 2023, for the construction of the Riopelle Space. Having analyzed the compliance and eligibility of the tenders, the MNBAQ is proud to announce that the contract to the lowest compliant bidder for the construction of the future pavilion will be awarded to CONCREA.

A precise time frame will be established once the contract has been officially signed. Work should, therefore, begin this spring with the opening of the future pavilion slated for 2026.

It is worth noting that during the integrated design process, the final stage in the architecture competition, which took place from October 2022 to December 2023, a comprehensive assessment of project costs was conducted.

Now that the essential drawings and specifications stage has been completed, the MNBAQ has a more accurate estimate of the cost since the state of advancement of preliminary plans was only on the order of 40%.

As a result of this rigorous, detailed process, the initial budget has been adjusted to give concrete expression to this flagship project for Québec culture and Québec City.

The Riopelle Space will cost \$84 million

The budget earmarked for the construction of the Riopelle Space stands at \$84 million.

Demonstrating the exemplary commitment of public decision-makers to this major cultural project for Quebec's real estate heritage, the Quebec government, through the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, will inject \$44 million. For its part, Québec City will increase its financial support to \$5 million.

The generous patrons of the arts from the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation have reiterated their commitment and desire to see this tremendous bequest to Quebecers completed. Their financial support, established in principle at \$20 million, could be increased to a maximum of \$25 million subject to certain conditions and according to the project's final cost in order to satisfy the needs that the rigorous integrated design process established.

The Fondation du MNBAQ, which had pledged to complete the financial package, is increasing its contribution to \$10 million. A major fundraising campaign will be launched next autumn, to reach even higher financial targets with donors, patrons of the arts and the business community, and



to ensure the sustainability of all educational activities surrounding the creation of the future Riopelle Space.

Des Behind-the-scenes work carried out to prepare the site prior to construction

Since January 2023, the MNBAQ has witnessed a major ballet of artworks in anticipation of the construction of the Riopelle Space. Nearly 9 000 artworks have been moved to protect them or to satisfy the needs of impending exhibition projects.

All the exhibition rooms on the construction site have been dismantled, including the Family Gallery, David Altmejd's monumental work *The Flux and the Puddle*, the *Challenging* room of the *350 Years of Artistic Practices in Québec* exhibition, and the temporary rooms in the Gérard Morisset Pavilion. Five works on the MNBAQ's land situated on the worksite had to be moved, including Bernard Venet's *Deux Arcs de 245,5° chacun*. Jean-Pierre Morin's *Trombe* has been put into storage before its eventual repositioning.



Several MNBAQ teams have been relocated, including the design, collections, exhibitions, and mediation teams, the restoration workshop, the paper workshop (framing, preparation of works for lending), the photo studio, and the transportation workshop (to maintain our links with the outside).

This behind-the-scenes work that is necessary to prepare the worksite will give way in the coming weeks to the construction of the future Riopelle Space.

[A virtual tour of the future Riopelle Space: \(lien à ajouter\)](https://youtu.be/3xdkQ-6tsN8)
<https://youtu.be/3xdkQ-6tsN8>

Quotes from partners :

Mathieu Lacombe, Minister of Culture and Communications, believes that the artistic heritage of Jean Paul Riopelle, a prolific artist, is of inestimable value and that the Québec government has a responsibility to

participate in this major, striking project. “With a total investment of \$44 million, the Québec government is making a contribution commensurate with its commitment to our culture. The Riopelle Space will transcend time and generations to enrich our cultural heritage, in keeping with the giant that Jean Paul Riopelle represents in our collective imagination.”

Québec City Mayor **Bruno Marchand** is delighted to witness the biggest investment in culture in the Capitale-Nationale since the opening of the Pierre Lassonde Pavillon. “The future Riopelle Space will afford an remarkable showcase for our culture and offer an additional attraction for residents and tourists visiting Québec City. We are privileged that the collections of this outstanding artist are being entrusted to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.”

Jean-Luc Murray, Director General of the MNBAQ, expressed his thanks to the Québec government, Québec City, and the generous patrons of the arts from the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation and the team from the Fondation du MNBAQ. “Our partners’ exceptional resolution in pursuing this infrastructure project reflects their deep-seated conviction of the value of the bequest that they will leave to all Quebecers. This project propels the MNBAQ toward the future by offering a unique building that will highlight the work of an outstanding artist and illuminate it as never before.”

Manon Gauthier, Executive Director and General Commissioner of the Centenary Celebrations of the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation, is convinced that the MNBAQ’s expertise will enable it to successfully carry out this unique project. “The partners overseeing this project share the same passion and determination that inspired Jean Paul Riopelle over time in his quest for the absolute. It is worth noting that in the 1980s Riopelle expressed the desire to establish his foundation on this very site. His dream is becoming a reality. The artist and his work will continue to instil in future generations his creative momentum, thereby offering to this immense bequest a unique, long-term site.”

Julie-Anne Vien, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Fondation du MNBAQ, is delighted with the recently completed steps. “On the eve of the launching of the biggest fundraising campaign in our history, our enthusiasm is directly proportional to the ambition that inspires us. What could be more thrilling than to mobilize not only Québec businesspeople but everyone who values this institution in respect of such a mobilizing



project? The donors and partners are already actively engaged in the construction of a pavilion that will coalesce remarkably with the MNBAQ’s unique environment and experience.”

The Riopelle Space in a nutshell

More art in our lives



The future Riopelle Space in Québec City stems from a major philanthropic and cultural initiative aimed at celebrating and perpetuating the eminent artist’s heritage. Nestled at the heart of the MNBAQ museum complex, the project consists in the creation of a space dedicated to art that will house a vast public collection of the works of the painter, sculptor, and engraver. Visitors will have the privilege of exploring the vivid artistic universe of Jean Paul Riopelle by immersing themselves in his fascinating creations, including his masterpiece *Homage to Rosa Luxemburg*.

The new pavilion in the museum complex will also serve as the gateway to a space devoted to research and education that will propose educational programs for the public at large, students, and researchers aimed at heightening awareness of the importance of art in our society.

A priceless legacy and a transforming adventure

The project reflects a vision centred on inclusion and accessibility and will shape the MNBAQ museum complex.

The transformation will facilitate the construction of state-of-the-art rooms adapted to the needs of current art, thereby enabling masterpieces

in giant format to finally radiate. It will also allow for greater numbers of innovative projects, especially in digital art. The Riopelle Space will become a meeting point that fosters dialogue between contemporary or emerging artists and Riopelle’s work.



The new building’s expanded reception areas and spectacular vista clearings opening on to the park will afford visitors a unique overall contemplative experience. Furthermore, the amenities surrounding the pavilion will facilitate outdoor exhibitions, whether an artistic garden or interactive installations, offering visitors immersive adventures that can enable them to discover and appreciate Riopelle’s art in a genuinely inspiring environment.

The inauguration of the Riopelle Space, slated for 2026, will mark the culmination of the celebrations surrounding the centenary of Jean Paul Riopelle’s birth.

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

Québec 

Photos: © Les architectes fabg