



2026 AT THE MUSÉE: A FESTIVE, EXCITING YEAR!

THE ESPACE RIOPELLE'S OPENING IS SET TO BE THE CULTURAL EVENT OF THE YEAR!

Québec City, Wednesday, January 7, 2026

At the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), 2026 will be a year to remember! The October opening of the remarkable Espace Riopelle will mark a new chapter for the museum and the city of Québec. The cultural event of the year will also offer an exciting and diverse program for all its audiences. Essentially, 2026 can't come soon enough!

The year will begin with a week of celebrations focusing on **Suzanne Meloche**, a lesser-known Québec poet and painter. **From January 27 to February 1**, a series of special events (encounters, creative and writing workshops, live readings, concerts, and dance performances) will pay tribute to the work of a woman who was close to the Automatistes during the heady age of the famous *Refus global* manifesto.

From February 26, the spotlight will be on the spectacular with the international exhibition *Hyperrealism: This Is Not a Body*. The fascinating sculptures will appeal to anyone who can appreciate an intimate relationship with a work of art, particularly given the striking realism of these pieces. Thrills are guaranteed!

GATHERING AROUND RIOPELLE

The month of October will be a milestone in the history of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. In addition to transforming the destiny of the museum complex, the opening of the Espace Riopelle is sure to attract a large and enthusiastic audience. The festivities surrounding the unveiling of the new building, designed by Les architectes fabg, will take us all on an exceptional architectural adventure in the heart of the Plains of Abraham. The beautiful setting, dedicated to the work of Jean Paul Riopelle, will host three spectacular exhibitions.

The reference room dedicated to the artist, located on the second floor of the new pavilion, will allow visitors to appreciate the prolific career of a man who helped Québec shine on the world stage. This striking panorama will illustrate Riopelle's multifaceted oeuvre, which spans more than 50 years. At the entrance to the Espace Riopelle, the *Art and Emotions* exhibition will immerse visitors in an unsuspected museum experience created in collaboration with Université Laval. This experience is based on a special selection of works by the painter, sculptor, and lithographer. Exploring this gallery will be an emotional journey, encouraging unexpected encounters with the artist. Finally, Riopelle's ultimate masterpiece, *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*—its presence magnified by its circular base and enriched by an olfactory adventure designed by the Chartier World LAB—will take pride of place at the top of this pavilion, whose many lines of sight to the river and surrounding landscapes bathe it in natural light.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSÉE

A new feature of the building will be a **visible storeroom** and a cutting-edge **art restoration laboratory**. As in many of the world's great museums, this privileged behind-the-scenes access will be sure to delight the curious. Featuring various MNBAQ specialists, this distinctive 235-square-metre showcase will raise public awareness of the invaluable efforts involved in conserving and protecting works from the national collection, as well as visiting pieces from our international partners. The specialists' work will demystify the processes of unpacking, framing, and restoration for observers, who will have a front-row seat to the daily routine of a living, vibrant museum.

THE MODERN ART ROOM GETS AN UPDATE

The completely revamped collections room devoted to Québec modern art will serve as a link between the Espace Riopelle and the Gérard Morisset Pavilion. The Automatistes, of which Riopelle was a member, will occupy a prominent place in this major display of our art history. The exhibition will feature around 50 Québec artists who made a significant contribution to this global artistic movement.

In 2026, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec will surprise people, move them, and bring them together! Join us on this wonderful journey!

DISCOVER 2026'S RICH VARIETY OF EXHIBITIONS



TEMPORARY EXHIBITION | HYPERREALISM: THIS IS NOT A BODY. February 26 to October 12, 2026

One word will be on everyone's lips in February as they tour *Hyperrealism: This Is Not a Body*—**fascinating**. This intriguing exhibition was conceived and circulated by the Institute for Cultural Exchange and adapted by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. Its North American premiere will be in Québec City.

It features a selection of around 30 sculptures created by over 25 international and Québec artists, some of which are from the Musée's own collections, and chronicles the evolution of the human figure in hyperrealist sculpture since the 1970s. It reveals the extent to which representations of the human body are constantly shifting. Works by leading figures of the hyperrealism movement, including **Duane Hanson, George Segal, Ron Mueck, Patricia Piccinini, and Maurizio Cattelan** will be displayed in the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion, alongside pieces by Québec artists to offer a local perspective to complement the original selection.

The sculptures are both fascinating and touching, and invite us to think deeply about our own realities. These works, which use biological materials such as hair, are made from silicone, fibreglass, and resin. They confront us with alter egos that challenge the distinction between genuineness and artifice, and make us question our relationship with our bodies.

The works are divided into six sections and address universal themes: childhood, old age, solitude, the passage of time, and death. They blur the boundaries of art and science to explore topics of simulacra, genetic manipulation, and self-awareness. Lastly, the artists also offer critical visions—sometimes humorous, sometimes scathing—of the state of our societies.

DRAMATIZING MONUMENTALITY

To make this adventure even more surprising, the exhibition will have a theatrical atmosphere with large, open spaces. This will encourage visitors to engage with the works and create the perfect setting for appreciating the hyperrealists' different approaches. **Breathtakingly lifelike sculptures will make for an unforgettable visit!**



NATIONAL COLLECTION | RIOPELLE October 2026

The new pavilion is set to **open in October 2026**, and the work of Jean Paul Riopelle, **one of the most prominent Québec artists of the 20th century**, will shine within it. A vast reference exhibition, **one of the largest ever presented on the artist**, will celebrate all the diversity and richness of his work.

This exhibition will showcase **an exceptional donation from philanthropists Michael Audain and Pierre Lasse**, alongside several iconic works from the Musée's collection. The selection will be rounded off by a few essential pieces from our prestigious partners. Designed for the general public, the impressive 1,000-square-metre exhibition will offer an overview of Riopelle's work. It will feature around 100 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper from all periods of his career. On display will be his Automatiste paintings, his famous "mosaics" from the 1950s, his magnificent bestiaries, his many prints inspired by the Québec landscape, and the surprising mixed-technique works of his last years.

The exhibition is organized around seven themes that provide essential reference points for appreciating the artist's creations. It will address topics such as the exploration of gesture, the feel of nature, the dialogue between abstraction and figuration, recycling and reclamation, and interpretations of the North. Its ambitious design will highlight the full scope and monumental character of Riopelle's work, using technologically innovative mediation devices.

We will demonstrate how Riopelle constantly reinvented himself, producing a body of work that remains vital to this day and reflects an eternal quest for self-improvement driven by an

uncompromising spirit of freedom. Faithful to his Québec roots, he was nonetheless open to the world and tackled highly topical themes such as the environment and nordicity. Above all, however, **Riopelle was a profoundly authentic artist whose vibrant spirit left an indelible mark on everyone who encountered him. Driven by an inexhaustible vitality, his passionate work still impresses to this day.**



TEMPORARY EXHIBITION | ART AND EMOTIONS

October 2026

This new temporary gallery, designed to encourage private encounters with Jean Paul Riopelle, will use emotion as a guiding principle. *Art and Emotions* will provide a highly intimate and sensitive experience, reflecting the artist's relationship with those closest to him.

The visit will begin with video testimonials from Michael Audain (the Espace Riopelle's main patron) and others who crossed paths with the artist at various stages of his life and career. In these, Riopelle's family, friends, and other acquaintances tell his story, sharing memories and anecdotes and offering visitors different, very personal perspectives on both the artist and the man.

WHEN EMOTION SERVES ART

The exhibition will also feature a pioneering research project examining the emotions experienced at the Musée, conducted in partnership with the Co-DOT laboratory at Université Laval's School of Psychology. The aim of this initiative is to gain a better understanding of the emotional responses evoked by artworks and design new artificial intelligence-based tools to personalize exhibition pathways.

And so, the gallery will be transformed into an experimental space based on a dozen of Riopelle's works. This amusing activity will encourage visitors to actively contribute to research in real time. Participants will be invited to express their feelings about the works using interactive devices scattered throughout the exhibition. This survey will measure people's responses to the work of an artist who allowed intuition and emotion to guide his creative process.

The *Art and Emotions* research project's holistic approach, which actively engages the public, will bring innovation to the field of museum experiences.



NATIONAL COLLECTION | TRIBUTE TO ROSA LUXEMBURG October 2026

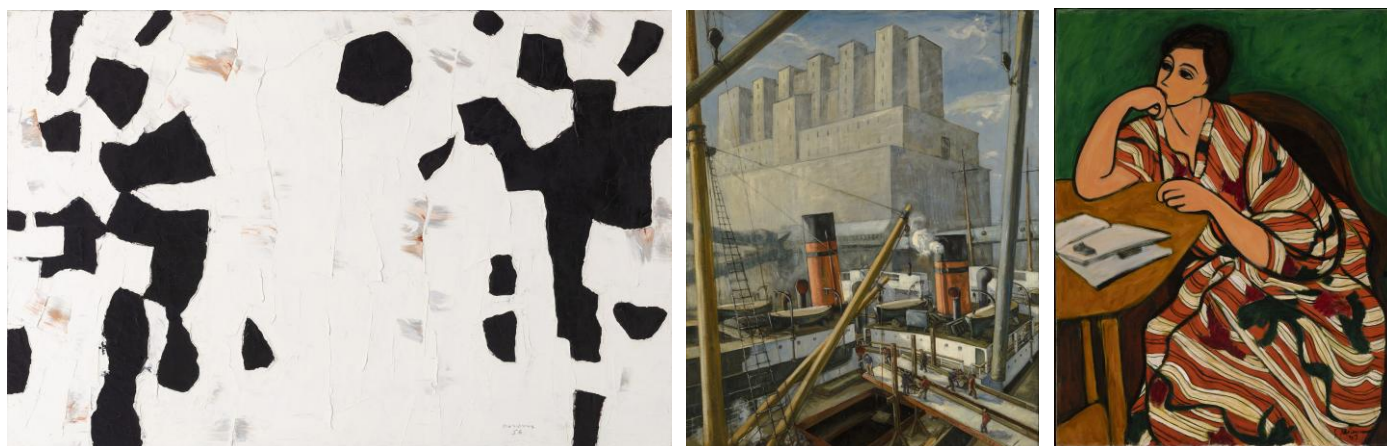
The Espace Riopelle offers a new, immersive presentation of the famous *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* alongside an updated interpretation of the work's history and meaning.

The artist created this enormous painted work in his Île-aux-Oies studio in the fall of 1992, after learning that American painter Joan Mitchell, his companion of roughly twenty years, had passed away. This is Riopelle's largest work ever, and the masterpiece of his last period. By combining love and death, Riopelle provides us with an extensive reflection on his life, evoking the connections he had with his departed friends.

Created in the twilight of his career, this spectacular work is a testament to Riopelle's remarkable ability to reinvent himself. The artist stayed in a secluded house in the middle of the St. Lawrence to observe the snow goose migration, during which the birds would descend by the thousands onto the flats. The work features the island's characteristic flora and fauna. Birds, plants, and other objects were placed directly on the canvas and then covered in spray paint. Adopting a resolutely youthful style reminiscent of graffiti, Riopelle offers a passionate insight on his life story and the world around him.

In the Espace Riopelle, *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* will have its own specially designed room, where it will be displayed for the first time on a circular surface using a novel hanging system. **From now on, the work will be showcased in a particularly spectacular setting atop the building dedicated to the artist. A huge glass wall will offer visitors a breathtaking view of the river that witnessed its creation.**

In addition, this new presentation of *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* offers an original olfactory experience created in collaboration with the Chartier World LAB, world leaders in the field of aromas. The public will be able to discover and sample six different fragrances inspired by the biodiversity of Île-aux-Oies, as well as by the history of the work and its symbols. **A truly unique sensory adventure!**



NATIONAL COLLECTION | MODERN ART October 2026

Following its complete redesign for the opening of the Espace Riopelle, the gallery devoted to the national modern art collection will offer an extensive overview of art from this period, focusing on artistic subjectivity and appreciation of form. Around 50 artists will be featured, including 24 women. They will be grouped into thematic sections that present the major trends and events in the history of modern art in Québec.

The exhibition will open with a rich selection of portraits and urban scenes, as the city became a popular subject for artists in the early decades of the 20th century. It will also show how, in the 1930s and 40s, Québec artists reinvented figurative art, pursuing innovative formal experiments and asserting absolute creative freedom.

It will showcase the work of the Automatistes, a group of artists led by Paul-Émile Borduas who rejected traditional values in favour of non-figurative art and the dynamics of gesture. Specifically, it will draw several illuminating parallels between Riopelle and the other painters of the movement, directly comparing some of his works with theirs. It will also explore the Automatistes' multidisciplinary approach, illustrating their work in dance, poetry, and photography. Lastly, it will

present the famous *Refus global* manifesto, which is considered one of the founding texts of Québec modernity, and show how the influence of automatism was distilled in the art of the 1960s.

The exhibition design, built around an exceptional selection of sculptures representative of the period's various currents, will offer a remarkable overview of modern aesthetics, bridging the gap between the Espace Riopelle and the Gérard Morisset Pavilion.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

Visit the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec website:

[Link](#)

Follow the news on the Espace Riopelle:

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SOURCE

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PHOTO CREDITS

Page 1 – Entrance to the future Espace Riopelle | Pavilion model: Les architectes fabg. Graphic design: Philippe Legris

Page 3 – From left to right: Sam Jinks, *Woman and Child* (detail), 2010. Silicone, silk, human hair, acrylic, nylon, polyurethane foam, wood, edition of 3, 145 × 40 × 40 cm. Collection of the artist © Sam Jinks | Photo: Courtesy of the artist, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and the Institute for Cultural Exchange, Tübingen // Tony Matelli, *Josh*, 2010. Silicone, steel, hair, urethane and clothing, 77 × 183 × 56 cm, edition of 3. Collection of the artist © Tony Matelli | Photo: Courtesy of the artist and the Institute for Cultural Exchange, Tübingen // Alain Benoit, *Stalion*, 2003. Urethane and metal, 1/3, 170 × 80 × 70 cm. MNBAQ, purchase with a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts (2008.77) © Alain Benoit | Photo: MNBAQ, Denis Legendre

Page 4 – From left to right: Maurice Perron, *Jean Paul Riopelle*, c. 1947, printed in 1998. Silver gelatin print, 33.5 × 26 cm. MNBAQ, fund Maurice Perron (1999.209) © Courtesy of Line-Sylvie Perron // Jean Paul Riopelle, *Garden*, 1957. Oil on canvas, 129.7 × 162.5 cm. MNBAQ, gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa (2025.64) © Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle, CARCC | Photo : MNBAQ, Louis Hébert // Jean Paul Riopelle, *Suite Guerrière*, 1972. Lithograph, H.C., 159.9 × 116.5 cm. MNBAQ, gift of Jean-Marie and Hélène Roy (1997.121) © Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle, CARCC | Photo : MNBAQ, Louis Hébert

Page 5 – Overview of the Initiative gallery to the future Espace Riopelle | Graphic design: Philippe Legris.

Page 6 – Overview of the gallery that will house Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg to the Espace Riopelle | Graphic design: Philippe Legris.

Page 7 – From left to right: Paul-Émile Borduas, *Figures schématiques*, 1956. Oil on canvas, 130.4 × 195.5 cm. MNBAQ, gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa (2021.184) | Photo: MNBAQ, Denis Legendre // Adrien Hébert, *The port of Montréal*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 153 × 123 cm. MNBAQ, purchase (1975.289) | Photo : MNBAQ, Idra Labrie // Jeanne Rhéaume, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1947. Oil on canvas, 99.8 × 76.4 cm. MNBAQ, purchase (1949.88) © Succession Jeanne Rhéaume | Photo : CCQ, David Cannon

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Québec 

GENERAL INFORMATION

MNBAQ OPENING HOURS*

As of September 8, 2025

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

Wednesday until 9 p.m.

** Only the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion is open during construction on the Espace Riopelle.*

ADMISSION*

Adults aged 31 to 64: \$25

Seniors (65+): \$24

Adults aged 18 to 31: \$18

Children aged 13 to 17: \$8

Family package (2 adults and up to
5 children aged 17 and under): \$54

Children aged 12 and under: Free

Members: Free

Wednesdays 5–9 p.m.: Half-price

First Sunday of the month: Free | 19 and under

Indigenous communities: Free

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cloakroom, and nursing room

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