



ESPACE RIOPELLE MICHAEL AUDAIN PAVILION

OPENING: OCTOBER 22, 2026

1. WORD FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF QUÉBEC

In 2021, as Jean Paul Riopelle's centennial drew near, the Government of Québec took a major step to help preserve and promote the legacy of this illustrious Quebecois painter, sculptor, and lithographer by announcing its support for the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation's Espace Riopelle project. Now, almost five years later, we are delighted to celebrate the opening of this brand-new pavilion at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, which will be home to the largest public collection of works by this key figure in Québec art history.

The opening of the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion marks the start of a new chapter for the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. It will give the Musée new ways to raise its profile and remain a strong pillar of the Capitale-Nationale region's cultural milieu.

The Government of Québec would like to thank its financial partners, notably the City of Québec; patrons Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa, Pierre Lassonde, and André Desmarais and France Chrétien Desmarais; and the Fondation du Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. We hope that this magnificent building will become a true source of pride for all Quebecers, as well as a magnet for visitors from near and far who are eager to discover the iconic work of the great Jean Paul Riopelle.

Québec 

2. MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF QUÉBEC

There are places that, from the moment you enter them, change the way you see a city. The Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion, the newest addition to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, is one of those places.

Created through an architectural competition, this remarkable glass-filled building engages in a dialogue with the blue waters of the St. Lawrence River and the green expanse of the Plains of Abraham, as though the landscape itself had become part of Jean Paul Riopelle's work. Rarely has a museum offered such an exceptional setting for an artistic legacy of this scale.

At the heart of this architectural gem stands *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*, a monumental work that is worth the visit on its own. Displayed in a space designed for contemplation and immersion, it gradually unfolds before the viewer, inviting each visitor to pause, reflect, and let the painting speak of life, love, and death in a way that only Riopelle could achieve.

This new cultural landmark, and an important addition to Québec City's tourism and cultural landscape, is a source of pride for our entire community. I invite residents and visitors alike to immerse themselves in the work of an artist whose vision continues to resonate powerfully today.

Enjoy your visit and the discoveries that await.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Bruno Marchand.

Bruno Marchand
Mayor of Québec



3. MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec has long had a deep connection to Jean Paul Riopelle. We were one of the first museums to acquire one of his pieces, in 1956. Ever since, we have remained committed to sharing this artist with the world, devoting numerous exhibitions and publications to him. Today, we house the largest public collection of works by this Quebecois painter, sculptor, and lithographer.

In the 1980s, Riopelle expressed a desire to establish a foundation within the Musée's current Charles-Baillairgé Pavilion, meant as both a showcase for his art and a bridge between creators from all disciplines. More than four decades later, his dream is taking shape just a few steps away with the opening of the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion, an entire building dedicated to honouring his work and placing it in dialogue with pieces by other artists.

This iconic venue allows us to celebrate Riopelle's impressive contributions to art history in Québec, Canada, and beyond. It is a fitting home for well-known pieces, treasures from the national collection that had been lying dormant in our storage, and remarkable works donated by Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa, as well as by Pierre Lassonde.

What's more, the Espace Riopelle's exceptional location, with its unparalleled views of the park and the St. Lawrence River, speaks to Riopelle's profound relationship with nature and Québec's landscapes. Its distinctive architecture and museological design help foster meaningful connections with the art, creating an immersive space for contemplation like no other, where emotion is front and center.

On behalf of the Musée, I would like to sincerely thank the Government of Québec; the City of Québec; the project's founding patrons Michael Audain, Pierre Lassonde, and André Desmarais and France Chrétien Desmarais; and the Fondation du Musée for the extraordinary generosity that made this historic cultural project possible. I would also like to thank Manon Gauthier, General Commissioner of the Riopelle centennial and Executive Director of the Audain Foundation, for her tireless hard work, creativity, and collaboration.

Riopelle was a larger-than-life artist who embodied the creative passion and global perspective of Québec art. With the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion, he now has a space to keep his priceless legacy alive and within reach.

Jean-Luc Murray

Outgoing Director General, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec



4. PRESS RELEASE

MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC OPENS THE ESPACE RIOPELLE – MICHAEL AUDAIN PAVILION



Entrance to the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion // 3D rendering: Les architectes FABG | Artwork: Jean Paul Riopelle, *The Tower*, 1969–1970, cast in 1974. Bronze, 1/4, 258 × 243 × 85 cm. MNBAQ, acquired with a donation from Pierre Lassonde and a group of patrons (2004.418) © Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle / CARCC, Ottawa, 2026

Québec City, October 21, 2026 — Today, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) began a new chapter with the **grand opening of the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion**. The new building is a lasting tribute from the centennial celebrations for artist Jean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002), **honouring the work of one of the most influential Québec and Canadian artists of the 20th century**.

Designed by multi-award-winning Québec firm **Les architectes FABG**, this three-storey, over 5,600 m² building is the **largest space entirely dedicated to a Canadian artist**. The \$84M project is the result of a major partnership between the Government of Québec, the City of Québec, and the philanthropic community. It is intended to

promote and preserve the artistic legacy of the internationally renowned painter, sculptor, and lithographer.

This building on the historic Plains of Abraham is the fourth in the museum complex. The visitor experience extends both indoors and out: the interior features spacious galleries and pleasant common areas, while the outdoor terraces and gardens are landscaped to reflect the rich diversity of Québec plant life.

With its breathtaking views of the Plains and the St. Lawrence River, the Espace Riopelle offers a unique interplay between art, architecture, and nature, where the grandeur of the landscape amplifies the magnificence of the art to fully immerse visitors in Riopelle's world.

MORE THAN 230 MAJOR WORKS TO ADMIRE

Jean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002) was an artist associated with the Automatiste movement whose body of work, which drew deeply on Québec's natural world, earned him a prominent place in the history of modern art. As early as the 1940s, his free-spirited, gestural style raised the profile of Canadian art around the globe. He remains an important figure in the Automatiste and Abstraction Lyrique movements to this day.

The new space houses **more than 130 works by Riopelle (including paintings, sculptures, and prints) drawn from the largest public collection dedicated to his art.** Visitors can also experience around **100 pieces by other artists who shaped the history of modern art in Québec** in a new display of the national collection.

SPOTLIGHT ON AN EXTRAORDINARY DONATION

The new pavilion, **named in honour of Michael Audain**, features numerous recent acquisitions, including select works **from an exceptional collection of 63 pieces—46 of which are by Riopelle**—donated by the philanthropist and his wife **Yoshiko Karasawa**, as well as by **Pierre Lassonde**. These include extremely rare works by Riopelle, as well as pieces from his early and late career that illustrate the full depth and richness of his body of work. The major donation is now valued at more than \$125M.

AN EMOTIONAL, SENSORY JOURNEY

In the **four inaugural exhibitions** over three floors, innovative outreach initiatives meet immersive exhibition design that puts emotional and sensory experiences at the forefront.

The first exhibition is ***Riopelle. The Expression of Gesture***, a major retrospective that illuminates the breadth and diversity of Riopelle's 50+ year career. Themed sections explore his Automatiste paintings, his famous "mosaics" from the 1950s, and pieces from his bestiary. It also features numerous lithographs inspired by France and Québec—his two home bases—as well as his astonishing mixed-media works from his later years. The sheer depth and breadth of the works on display make this exhibition one of the largest ever dedicated to the artist.

Next, ***Challenging*** offers a new take on the **national modern art collection**, bringing together works from some 50 artists who shaped Québec's modern art scene. The exhibition focuses on the Automatistes and explores the multidisciplinary nature of their practice. Visitors can also use the **Musée's AI-powered chatbot** to dive deeper into the works on display in both exhibitions.

On the third floor, a light-soaked room serves as a stunning backdrop for a nearly 360° display of the monumental ***Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*** (1992), which spans over 40 metres. This new presentation allows visitors to truly surround themselves with the artist's masterpiece. It is complemented by ***Breathing in Riopelle***, an experience developed by **Chartier World LAB**— a leading authority on the science of molecular harmonies —that offers **six olfactory creations inspired by the work**.

Meanwhile, on the ground floor, the ***Art and Emotions*** special exhibition houses an **interactive research project developed by the Université Laval-affiliated Co-DOT Lab** that is studying the public's emotional responses to Riopelle's art. Finally, a new restoration laboratory and storage area give the public a look behind the scenes, providing insight into the little-known work of the Musée's restoration teams.

THE ULTIMATE LEGACY OF THE RIOPELLE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

The centennial celebrations for Riopelle (1923–2002), which ran from 2019 to 2025, were developed and organized by the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation in partnership with prestigious cultural partners in Canada and beyond, orchestrated by General Commissioner **Manon Gauthier**. They constitute the greatest tribute ever paid to a Canadian artist.

The centennial's theme was *Grandeur nature* [Larger than Life], and it included some 50 cultural activities to firmly situate the artist within our pantheon of great artists. Seen as an “ode to freedom, collaboration, and creation” by its designer, the festivities included performing arts shows for the openings of some 20 exhibitions in Canada and beyond, including at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The centennial brought together a wide array of disciplines—from public art and arts education to commemoration, philately, and numismatics—to fully centre Riopelle in our collective memory.

Its crown jewel is the new Espace Riopelle, the ultimate home for the monumental donation that started it all: a treasure trove of Riopelle works from the collections of Michael Audain and Pierre Lassonde.

QUOTES

“The Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion is more than just a space to display art. It's a genuine gathering place and a hotbed of discovery and dialogue around Riopelle's masterful work. Its exhibitions and interactive features engage the senses, creating memorable, emotional experiences that we are excited to share.”

— **Anik Dorion-Coupal**, Director of Exhibitions and International Partnerships, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

“This new building showcases the Musée's collection of Riopelle's art in all its glory. His masterpieces are joined by rarely seen works like his striking enamelled lava sculptures, along with an extraordinary selection of lithographs, archival materials, and pieces from periods that people might not know as well. By sharing this exceptional artistic legacy with the public, we are hoping his work will continue to move and inspire present and future generations alike.”

— **Eve-Lyne Beaudry**, Director of Collections and Research, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

“With its remarkable natural and historic location, the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion is a place of contemplation and discovery like no other. We wanted to design a dynamic and transparent architecture that reflects Riopelle’s energy, his thirst for freedom, and his love of nature. We are proud of this project for the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, which celebrates local craftsmanship and the work of a great artist.”

— **Éric Gauthier**, Associate architect, Les architectes FABG

“Dispersed across over 60 cities around the world, the works of Jean Paul Riopelle now find a true home in Quebec City. Espace Riopelle highlights the freedom and creative audacity of one of our greatest Canadian artists. The ultimate legacy of his centenary celebrations, this visionary space will allow an ever-wider audience to admire his free and powerful work. With my fellow leaders in this great adventure, mainly Pierre Lassonde, André Desmarais and France Chrétien Desmarais, I warmly thank the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec for having realized this ambitious dream: that of building a place that lives up to Riopelle’s timeless legacy.”

— **Michael Audain**, Chair of the Audain Foundation

“More than 75 years after the publication of the *Refus global* manifesto, the Automatiste legacy is still very much alive. Riopelle, one of its most illustrious ambassadors, now has a place to celebrate his work and his immense contribution to modern art. I am delighted that Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion will be able to highlight his legacy and that of the artists who have shaped our culture. This place of memory and discovery will continue to bring together, move and inspire generations to come.”

— **Pierre Lassonde**, president of the Lassonde Family Foundation and major patron of the arts

“The Espace Riopelle proves just how powerful philanthropy can be when it serves a common vision. The +D’ART DANS NOS VIES campaign rallied major patrons and hundreds of donors, and their generosity turned a dream into a tangible piece of heritage that all can enjoy. The Fondation du Musée is proud to have brought these forces together to create a space for Riopelle that is truly worthy of his art and his influence.”

— **Fabrice Alcaide**, President and CEO, Fondation du Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion would not have been possible without the crucial contributions of the **Government of Québec**; the **City of Québec**; patrons **Michael Audain** and his wife **Yoshiko Karasawa**, **Pierre Lassonde**, and **André Desmarais** and **France Chrétien Desmarais**; as well as that of the hundreds of donors mobilized by the **Fondation du Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec** through its +D'ART DANS NOS VIES campaign.

The Musée and its foundation would also like to thank the **Heffel Foundation** for its generous support as a presenting partner of the opening celebrations and the *Riopelle. The Expression of Gesture* exhibition.

The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is a public corporation funded by the Government of Québec.

Québec 

VILLE DE
QUÉBEC 

THE | AUDAIN FOUNDATION

 PIERRE
LASSONDE
FAMILY
FOUNDATION

 FONDATION
MUSÉE NATIONAL
DES BEAUX-ARTS
DU QUÉBEC

FRANCE CHRETIEN AND
ANDRE DESMARAIS FAMILY

 POWER CORPORATION
OF CANADA

MARC SÉGUIN: SPOKESPERSON FOR THE OPENING FESTIVITIES

From October 22 to 25, the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion will welcome its very first visitors with festivities inspired by Riopelle’s creative freedom. Artist Marc Séguin serves as spokesperson for the celebrations. All three floors will be brimming with artistic energy during the four-day celebrations as artists of all kinds take over. Each day will feature dance, musical, and creative performances, along with unique encounters inspired by Riopelle’s work.

<https://www.mnbaq.org/en/programming/special-events>



Fleuve | Espace Danse, *Êtres de Bois*. Performer: Vicky Gélinau // Photo: Paul Brubacher

5. JEAN PAUL RIOPELLE: LARGER THAN LIFE

XJean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002) was an artist associated with the Automatiste movement whose body of work, which drew deeply on Québec's natural world, earned him a prominent place in the history of modern art. He produced nearly 7,000 works over the course of his career and was the first postwar Canadian painter to achieve international renown. He was also a member of the Automatistes and signed their 1948 *Refus global* manifesto, a seminal work of Québec modernism.

He settled in Paris in 1947, where he became one of the most prominent painters of his generation. He began returning to Québec more often in the 1970s, eventually moving back permanently in the early 1990s. This allowed him to stay true to his roots, even as he travelled extensively and kept exploring themes that still resonate today, like nature and the North. He was constantly reinventing himself and relentlessly sought freedom as he produced a body of work that remains as vibrant as ever. His art can now be found in public collections in more than 60 cities across 18 countries on 6 continents.

See the Timeline section for more information.



RIOPELLE AND THE MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC

The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec was one of the first museums to acquire a piece by Riopelle: the 1956 painting *Perce-neige*. In 1967, the Musée presented his first retrospective in Québec, *Peintures et sculptures de Riopelle*. Numerous publications and exhibitions followed, including *Jean Paul Riopelle, Peintures, 1946–1977* (1981), *Riopelle. Impressions sans fin* (2005–2006), and *Mitchell/Riopelle: Nothing in Moderation* (2017). Moreover, in 1985, Riopelle started planning to establish an eponymous foundation in the old Québec City prison, which is now the Charles Baillairgé Pavilion.

Today, it is home to the largest public collection of his work, with over 500 pieces, including *Espagne* (1951), *Garden* (1957), *Pangnirtung* (1977), and *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* (1992). Although the Musée has had a permanent gallery dedicated to the artist since 2000, the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion gives his work a truly fitting home that showcases its full depth and diversity.

I paint all in one go, without stopping, whether it's one canvas or ten, without wondering when it began or when it'll end, completely absorbed by the act of painting. I have no idea if an hour has gone by, or a whole night!

— Riopelle

6. A PAVILION NAMED FOR MICHAEL AUDAIN

While the new building is dedicated to Jean Paul Riopelle's work, it is named after Michael Audain in honour of the Vancouver businessman and legendary patron's extraordinary philanthropic involvement with the artist and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

Michael Audain is an art lover and has harboured a deep admiration for Riopelle since the 1950s. Over the years, he has built the largest private collection dedicated to the artist. He has **donated \$91.3M to the Musée** since 2016, including **\$76.7M in works of art**. That collection includes 37 pieces by Riopelle, among which are the masterpieces *Forestine* (1954), *Garden* (1957), and *Iceberg No. 3* (1977), and another 8 by Paul-Émile Borduas. This major donation became the impetus for building the Espace Riopelle.



Michael Audain continues his philanthropy through his family foundation, the **Audain Foundation**, led by Manon Gauthier. In 2025, the philanthropist's admiration of Riopelle and his contemporaries led to the creation of the **Audain Chair**, which focuses on preserving the Automatistes' legacy and securing their place in the history of Québec, Canadian, and international art. In 2026, the Audain Foundation, through this chair, also made a financial contribution that allowed the Musée to acquire two pieces by Marcelle Ferron.

About Michael Audain

Michael Audain (O.C., O.B.C.) is the Chairman of Polygon Homes and one of the country's most prominent cultural philanthropists. Together with his wife, Yoshiko Karasawa, he founded the Audain Foundation, which is devoted to supporting the visual arts and wildlife conservation in British Columbia. Each year, his foundation awards one of the country's most prestigious prizes, the Audain Prize for the Visual Arts. Since it was created in 1997, the foundation has helped establish the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, the Grizzly Bear Foundation, and the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation. Beyond its artwork donations to museums, it has granted more than \$200M in financial support for the visual arts.

7. A SETTING WORTHY OF RIOPELLE

THE MUSEUM COMPLEX TRANSFORMED

The Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion is the fourth building in the museum complex, built over the former Central Pavilion. It serves as a bridge between two heritage buildings in the complex: the Charles Baillairgé Pavilion (1867), which was the former Québec City prison, and the Gérard Morisset Pavilion (1933), a Beaux-Arts style building that houses the national collection of ancient and modern art.

In addition to the spacious galleries, which are designed with the demands of contemporary art in mind, the new 5,600 m² building features amenities like a **spacious lobby**, a **café**, a **boutique**, cloakrooms for school groups, **multipurpose rooms**, and a **visible storeroom and restoration lab**.

Visitors can access the entire museum complex, including the Pierre Lassonde Pavilion (2016), from the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion, making it a true gathering place and a springboard for the Musée's future. Its layout makes navigation simple and makes the national collection more accessible, in part by providing an international platform for Riopelle's work.

The airy, light-filled space is ideal for serene contemplation and connection with the works on display.



View of the Charles-Baillairgé Pavilion (left), the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion (center) and the Gérard-Morisset Pavilion (right) // 3D rendering: Les architectes FABG

WHERE ARCHITECTURE MEETS NATURE

The new building, designed by **Les architectes FABG**, fits seamlessly with both its natural surroundings and the other buildings in the museum complex. Motion is central to the architectural design. Indoors, a path flows upwards over three floors to reach the literal and figurative high point: a circular gallery devoted to Riopelle's masterpiece *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*, crowned with windows offering spectacular views over the Plains of Abraham and the majestic St. Lawrence River.

Outdoors, cascading angular elements are topped by triangular roofs that appear to take flight, soaring toward the river like the flocks of geese Riopelle loved to paint. In the Grand Hall, the wooden beams and sloped ceiling are a nod to the artist's creative spaces: his studios in Sainte-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson, in the Laurentians, and in Saint-Cyr-en-Arthies, France, a converted hangar. Meanwhile, the limestone cladding on the facades and the zinc roofs—reminiscent of Canadian sheet metal—pay homage to Québec City's historic neighbourhoods.

The building's terraces and generous windows let visitors admire the plains and the river from numerous angles, blurring the boundaries between the interior spaces and the surrounding landscapes. The changing of the seasons and the light, along with the smell of spruce wood, add a sensory dimension to the experience, conversing with the work of an artist who drew endless inspiration from Québec's natural beauty and northern wilds.

PROMOTING QUÉBEC CRAFTSMANSHIP

An emerging Québec specialty allowed the architects to make the bold choice to use solid wood for the ceiling. This wood—black spruce, an emblematic species of the boreal forest—is 90% sourced from Québec, primarily from Chibougamau. It also reflects a commitment to sustainability, as does the extensive reuse of mechanical, electrical, and structural systems from the old Central Pavilion.

About Les architectes FABG

Since it was founded more than 70 years ago, Les architectes FABG has developed extensive expertise in cultural venues, earning it more than 75 awards and distinctions in Canada and beyond. These include the Governor General's Medal of Canada and the Grand Prix d'excellence from the Ordre des architectes du Québec. Its major projects include the Esplanade Tranquille in Montréal's Quartier des Spectacles (2021), the Maison de la culture de Verdun (2017), the restoration of the Musée d'art de Joliette (2016), the Cirque du Soleil headquarters (2007), the Montreal Science Centre (2000), and the Biosphere (1995), which sits under the iconic Buckminster Fuller-Sadao dome. Its lead designer, Éric Gauthier, is the recipient of the Prix Ernest-Cormier, the Government of Québec's highest distinction in architecture.



Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion // 3D rendering: Les architectes FABG

ESPACE RIOPELLE – MICHAEL AUDAIN PAVILION



Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion (at the forefront) // 3D rendering: Les architectes FABG

Floor 3

- Gallery 9 (National collection | *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*)
- Terrasse du Fleuve

Floor 2

- Gallery 8 (National collection | *Riopelle. The Expression of Gesture*)
- Access to the Gérard-Morisset Pavilion and Gallery 14 (National Collection | *Challenging. Modern Art in Québec*)

Floor 1

- Entrance/Central Hall
- Reception/Ticket counter
- Cloakroom
- Café Rosa
- Mini-Boutique
- Gallery 7 (temporary exhibition | *Art and Emotions*)
- Salle des Plaines
- Lobby
- Visible storeroom and laboratory
- Terrasse des Plaines

LANDSCAPING: AN ODE TO QUÉBEC'S NATURAL BEAUTY

The exterior design of the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion was entrusted to **Agence ReliefDesign (aRD)**, a Montréal-based firm that specializes in landscape architecture. The green terraces and gardens surrounding the new building pay tribute to Québec's natural beauty, evoking the Laurentian greenery, the boreal wilderness, and the landscapes of L'Isle-aux-Grues.

On the ground floor, a selection of conifers, deciduous trees, and stones characteristic of the Laurentian landscape decorate the plaza. On the second floor, a colourful carpet of northern plant species—grasses, mosses, lichens, and other ground cover—evoke the Nunavut tundra, where Riopelle spent memorable trips during the 1970s. Finally, the terrace looking over the St. Lawrence captures the spirit of L'Isle-aux-Grues with high-bank plants and rocky outcrops.

This landscaped path creates a sensory experience that continues Riopelle's conversation with the landscape beyond the walls of the pavilion.

RIOPELLE IN NATURE

The outdoor spaces also feature five sculptures by Riopelle. *The Tower* (1969–1970), a bronze sculpture over 2.5 m tall, welcomes visitors at the front plaza. At the other end, near the rear plaza, stands *Victory and the Sphinx*, an imposing bronze sculpture whose bold geometry reflects the power and authority of this legendary mythological creature. Finally, three bronze sculptures adorn the River Terrace at the top of the building: *The Bear*, *Owl A*, and *The Fish* (1969–1970), all from the *Joust* series completed in 1970.

A TALE OF SOURCES: 1% POLICY WINNER

A Tale of Sources is a work by **Fiona Annis** and the **winner of the national competition under the “1% Policy,”** which requires art to be integrated into the architecture and environment of public and government buildings and sites. It adorns the walkway between the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion and the Charles Baillairgé Pavilion.

It consists of **four scenes of cast-bronze sculptures** with steel, granite, and marble elements. Together, they form a procession of creative encounters. The combination of Nordic elements—including migratory birds, birch bark, and granite stones—gives rise to a symbolic world whose vital material is organic.



Fiona Annis, *A Tale of Sources*, rendering of *The Convergence of Time*. Bronze, steel, granite, and marble

The Invitation features a ladder and a circular gate, elements that invite us to jump and dash. They also propose a poetic reflection on impermanence or perpetual transformation. The interplay of the bronze ring's texture brings to mind the visual vocabulary of Riopelle's works.

The Convergence of Time proposes three imaginary figures pierced with a hole that represent transmission and encounters between eras. The configuration evokes story circles and the spirit of campfires.

The Encounter with Territory presents three creatures grouped together around a suspended full moon. They evoke the crane, a recurring motif in Riopelle's work, and include bark from the yellow birch, a species native to Québec that becomes a metaphor to illustrate the resilience of Québec's inhabitants.

The Connection of Knowledge is represented by an inviting raft that symbolizes travel and adventure. This fourth scene conjures up the rafts used by log drivers to transport timber on Québec's river system.

About Fiona Annis

Fiona Annis was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1983 and raised in Manitoba. She lives and works in Tiohtià:ke/Montréal. The artist has a sustained commitment to analogical materials and processes and melds historical and deeply contemporary perspectives. Her work has been exhibited at the Guido Molinari Foundation (Montréal), the AC Institute (New York City), the Canadian Centre for Architecture (Montréal), Goldsmiths University (London), Museo Novecento (Naples), VU Photo (Québec City) and the Art Gallery of Alberta (Edmonton). Her works are part of the collections of the Musée de la civilisation in Québec City, the City of Ottawa's Art Collection, and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.



8. OPENING EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL COLLECTION

RIOPELLE. THE EXPRESSION OF GESTURE

This major retrospective on the second floor celebrates the exceptional career of Riopelle, an artist who was driven by a quest for freedom and self-improvement. As they traverse the gallery, which covers more than 1,000 m², visitors can enjoy a fascinating selection of paintings, sculptures, and prints from every point in Riopelle's career, from the 1940s to the 1990s. This landmark exhibition features select iconic works from the Musée's collections, along with several new acquisitions and a number of impactful loans and archival documents.

Visitors will explore seven themes (including gesture, nature, multidisciplinary, and migration) as they move through the exhibition, which has been carefully designed to emphasize the monumental nature of Riopelle's work. This design is inspired by cycles, a nod to both the thematic sections and the artist's tendency to produce works in series.

1. THE ARTIST IN ACTION

Riopelle always prioritized free, spontaneous gesture in his work, part of his tireless quest for new ways to break with convention and make innovative art. After completing his formal training, he joined the Automatistes—a group led by Paul-Émile Borduas—and developed a non-figurative style inspired by the Surrealists' "automatic writing." This continued after his move to France in 1947. Riopelle would paint with his entire body, attacking the canvas in a frenzy until he was exhausted. The passion that drove his creative process imbued his work with a tremendous energy.



NEW ACQUISITION

Jean Paul Riopelle, *The Raucheray*, 1952–1953. Oil on canvas, 130.3×195.2cm. MNBAQ, gift of Pierre Lassonde (2024.68) ©Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle / CARCC, Ottawa, 2026 // Photo: MNBAQ, Louis Hébert

2. THE MOSAIC EFFECT

In the late 1940s, Riopelle abandoned his brushes to work exclusively with palette knives. He would apply paint directly from the tube, then smooth it out with small strokes that somewhat resembled the tesserae of a mosaic, inspiring the name for the paintings from this period. Riopelle's mosaics were an immediate international success, fetching considerable prices on the art market. They were pivotal in establishing Riopelle as one of the most prominent painters of his time, earning him a place in both the European and North American abstract movements.

3. THE SENSE OF NATURE

By the 1950s, Riopelle's career was in full swing, and his art took a surprising figurative turn. While his work still appeared abstract, it gained a strong sense of nature, with many people recognizing themes like the abundance of organic life or the vastness of the Canadian forest. The artist also travelled extensively, bringing back impressions that he distilled into paintings such as *Espagne* (1951) and *Indian Summer* (1957). His works on paper feature elaborate networks of black lines that resemble calligraphy or a musical score, as if he had invented a new form of writing that has yet to be deciphered.

4. A CONVERGENCE OF ART FORMS

Over the years, Riopelle enthusiastically explored new techniques and experimented boldly with lithography, assemblage, and sculpture. He would go on to produce more than 400 original lithographs during his career. He discovered etching in 1966 when he joined the Galerie Maeght, which gave him access to resources of exceptional quality. It is in his etchings that we first see the plant and animal motifs that would define the rest of his career. He also took an interest in reuse and recycling, often repurposing his earlier works to create new ones.

5. A FABULOUS BESTIARY

In the 1970s, after several decades in France, Riopelle gradually started putting down roots again in his home country. He spent more and more time in Québec and had a large studio built for himself in Sainte-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson, in the Laurentians. He also went on numerous hunting and fishing trips to the far reaches of northern Québec. This is reflected in his work from the period, with animal motifs, especially owls, becoming more prominent. He also created several series that explored themes related to First Nations art and cultures. His worldview aligned closely with that of Indigenous peoples, marked by the importance of ethical interactions with nature and a nearly totemic identification with the animals therein.



On loan from the Centre national des Arts plastiques de Paris (CNAP), the massive polyptych *Meeting Place – Quintet* (1963) was chosen as the official work for the artist's centennial.

6. THE CALL OF THE NORTH



NEW ACQUISITION

Jean Paul Riopelle, *Iceberg No. 3*, 1977, Oil on canvas, 200.7 × 300 cm. MNBAQ, gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa (2025.62) © Estate of Jean Paul Riopelle / CARCC, Ottawa, 2026 // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon

Riopelle was greatly inspired by the North, and he often revisited the Canadian landscape in both his life and his work. Many of his paintings from the 1970s reference winter themes, while others draw on Indigenous place names. In the summer of 1969, Riopelle made his first trip to Pangnirtung, Nunavut, with his friend Champlain Charest. The natural beauty of the Far North left a deep impression. In 1977, upon returning from his latest trip to Baffin Island, it inspired him to create a masterful series of paintings depicting icebergs—a departure from his typical subject matter. He was awed by the incredible vastness of the land and sought to convey that by turning his impressions into abstract gesture.

Flight Over Pangnirtung

This section features an installation by circus company **The 7 Fingers**, adapted from a video display created for the Riopelle centennial celebrations. Evoking the majestic landscape of Canada's Far North, the video simulates the flight of a wild goose over the terrain depicted in *Pangnirtung* (1977), which is also on display in the exhibition.

7. THE FALL MIGRATIONS

In the final years of his life, Riopelle spent every fall in L'Isle-aux-Grues archipelago. He stayed in the middle of the St. Lawrence River to watch the snow goose migration, during which the birds would descend by the thousands onto the flats. His art began to focus on new themes like the beauty of nature, the changing of the seasons, and the cycle of life and death. His later works depict the island's characteristic plants and wildlife: birds, plants, and other items were placed on the canvas and spray painted. Blending techniques with abandon, Riopelle blurred the lines between art and craft, drawing inspiration from graffiti artists, folk artists, and tinkerers alike.

At the end of their journey through *Riopelle. The Expression of Gesture*, visitors can walk through a red-painted passage that serves as a transition to the Québec modern art gallery.

NATIONAL COLLECTION

CHALLENGING. MODERN ART IN QUÉBEC

This sweeping exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the major trends and key aesthetic movements that shaped the history of modern art in Québec, represented by the work of some 50 artists, nearly half of whom are women. Their forms of expression echo European modernism, but their new practices radically transformed Québec's art scene.



(Right) Adrien Hébert, *The Port of Montréal*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 153 × 123 cm. MNBAQ, purchase (1975.289). Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie | (Left) Jeanne Rhéaume, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1947. Oil on canvas, 99.8 × 76.4 cm. MNBAQ, purchase (1949.88) © Estate of Jeanne Rhéaume. Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon

The exhibition includes an impressive selection of portraits by artists such as **Lilias Torrance Newton** and **Prudence Heward**. It also features cityscapes by **Marian Dale Scott**, **Adrien Hébert**, and several others, as the city became a favourite subject in the early 20th century. Finally, it shows how, in the 1930s and '40s, Québec artists like **Alfred Pellán** and **Jeanne Rhéaume** reinvented figurative art, innovatively experimenting with form and asserting absolute creative freedom.

Much of the exhibition is devoted to the Automatistes, who eschewed convention in favour of non-figurative art. It draws several illuminating parallels between Riopelle and his fellow painters in the movement (**Madeleine Arbour**, **Marcel Barbeau**, **Paul-Émile Borduas**, **Marcelle Ferron**, **Pierre Gauvreau**, **Fernand Leduc**, **Rita Letendre**, and **Jean-Paul Mousseau**). Pieces by artists like **Françoise Sullivan**, **Claude Gauvreau**, and **Maurice Perron** illustrate the multidisciplinary practice of the Automatistes, which extended into dance, poetry, and photography.

The exhibition culminates with the famous *Refus global* manifesto, a seminal text in Québec modernism, along with examples of the ways that Automatisme continued to influence artists like **Gilles Boisvert**, **Jean McEwen**, and **Suzanne Meloche** well into the 1960s.



(Right) Marcelle Ferron, *Untitled*, 1963. Oil on canvas, 115.4 × 147.5 cm. MNBAQ, purchase (1962.165) © Estate of Marcelle Ferron / CARCC Ottawa, 2026 // Photo: MNBAQ, Louis Hébert | (Left) NEW ACQUISITION Paul-Émile Borduas, *Schematic Figures*, 1956. Oil on canvas, 130.4 × 195.5 cm. MNBAQ, gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa (2021.184) © Estate of Paul-Émile Borduas / CARCC, Ottawa, 2026 // Photo: MNBAQ, Denis Legendre

NATIONAL COLLECTION

TRIBUTE TO ROSA LUXEMBURG

Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg has been shown in numerous ways since it was painted in 1992 and donated to the Musée in 1996. **This crown jewel of the national collection is now mounted on a circular display thanks to an innovative hanging system developed by the Musée.** It takes pride of place in a light-soaked room, with views of the river that inspired it forming a spectacular backdrop.



View of the room housing *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* (detail) in the Espace Riopelle–Michael Audain Pavilion // 3D rendering: Les architectes FABG. Exhibition design: Philippe Legris.

At more than 40 metres long, **the triptych is Riopelle's largest piece ever**. He created it 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 moving tribute to a woman he loved deeply is now considered his artistic legacy.

This piece depicts the emblematic plants and wildlife of the Île-aux-Oies (cattails, ferns, sumacs, geese, herons, and pheasants), along with a plethora of tools and everyday objects. Its decidedly youthful style, reminiscent of graffiti, speaks to Riopelle's incredible ability to reinvent himself throughout his life.

Riopelle ou la nature de l'espace-temps

The gallery also shows a previously unreleased 2026 short film by Olivier Higgins and Mélanie Carrier, where images of the Québec landscape are paired with archival sound recordings of Riopelle explaining his relationship to artistic gesture and the act of creation.

Today, there's no more Rosa Malheur. There's not even a Rosa Bonheur. All the Rosas are dead...

— Riopelle

9. INNOVATIVE MULTISENSORY EXPERIENCES

BREATHING IN RIOPELLE

To complement *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*, the Musée has collaborated with **François Chartier**, creator of the science of molecular harmonies and co-founder of the **Chartier World LAB**, for an original olfactory experience. *Breathing in Riopelle* is an immersive sensory display that provides a fresh perspective on the piece by creating an interplay of art, nature, memory, sense, and emotion.

AN EXTRAORDINARY OLFACTORY JOURNEY INTO RIOPELLE'S WORLD

The project, which is Chartier World LAB's first collaboration with the Musée, uses scent to take people on a journey through a region that Riopelle loved dearly. At the six stations, visitors can sample different scents inspired by the Île-aux-Oies, where the painting was created, as well as by the story and symbols woven throughout the masterpiece.

François Chartier, who met Riopelle while working as a sommelier in the Laurentians, frequented the artist's creative haunts and even had the privilege of attending the first unveiling of *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* in 1992. His extensive research, which included laboratory analyses of the materials Riopelle used, gave rise to six olfactory creations. His research was made possible by special access to the artist's Sainte-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson studio.

About Chartier World LAB

The Chartier World LAB was co-founded in Barcelona by François Chartier, creator of the aromatic science of molecular harmonies, and his wife and partner Isabelle Moren. It is a multidisciplinary research and creation laboratory dedicated to aromas, smell, and sensory experiences. Since 2018, they have been exploring a new creative frontier: neurosensory fragrances and olfactory signatures. Their recent partnership with Mirari Studio has also given rise to a new generation of immersive experiences where smell, taste, and the senses become true languages of creation. From art to wellness, from fragrance to gastronomy and entertainment, they design experiences where scents, tastes, emotions, memory, imagery, sound, and space interact to bring forth new perceptions.

François Chartier in Jean Paul Riopelle's studio in Sainte-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson in 2022 // Photo: Courtesy of Chartier World LAB



SPECIAL EXHIBITION

ART AND EMOTIONS

A ground-floor space will host innovative projects and exhibitions throughout the seasons. The first, *Art and Emotions*, is a personal experience focused on the senses, echoing Riopelle's close relationships with his loved ones. It consists of a research initiative that studies the emotions people experience in museums.

TELL ME ABOUT RIOPELLE: THE ARTIST THROUGH THE EYES OF HIS LOVED ONES

This exhibition has an oral history component, with a **series of testimonials** from Michael Audain, the Espace Riopelle's main patron, as well as a number of people who got to know the painter at various points of his life and career, such as physician and restaurateur Champlain Charest and French sculptor Roseline Granet. These videos are part of the **Tell Me About Riopelle** project, produced by Concordia University's Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS) in partnership with the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation, the Audain Foundation, and the Jarislowsky Foundation for the centennial.

UNDERSTANDING THROUGH FEELING

Visitors' lived experience also plays an important part in this exhibition. It hosts a research project that is looking to understand the diversity of the emotional responses to art. Visitors are given interactive devices and shown 10 pieces by Riopelle, then asked to pay attention to their feelings and let themselves be guided by their impressions as they answer a series of questions. Their responses are compiled and added to a visual that illustrates the full spectrum of emotions the art can create.

Art meets science in this research project directed by Sébastien Tremblay of the Co-DOT Lab (affiliated with the Université Laval School of Psychology) and Jean-François Lalonde's team at the Institute for Intelligence and Data. By participating, visitors can help improve our understanding of the way people relate to art. The emotional response to artwork is understood as a distinct gateway to the museum experience, so this project opens up a whole new world of potential ways for museums to interact with their visitors.

About the Co-DOT Lab and the Institute for Intelligence and Data

Founded in 2010 by Professor Sébastien Tremblay of Université Laval, the Co-DOT Lab brings together researchers and students interested in human cognition and its relationship with new technologies. As for Université Laval's Institute for Intelligence and Data (IID), it is a gateway for innovation in artificial intelligence and data analytics. The IID builds bridges between the academic, industrial, and public sectors, fosters excellence in research and talent development, and drives sustainable and responsible impact in the field of artificial intelligence for the benefit of Québec and beyond.

DISCUSSING ART WITH A CHATBOT



Since 2024, the MNBAQ has been leveraging technologies like generative AI to bring a **chatbot** to the main exhibition and the national collection. Visitors simply need to scan a QR code with their smartphones, then ask the chatbot anything they'd like about the art. It's a wonderful way to understand the approach of Riopelle and other artists, discover new details, and even talk about how the art made them feel. The chatbot enhances the visitor experience by providing personalized, insightful answers in real time, encouraging people to fully ponder the works they see. It also offers self-guided access to content tailored to each visitor's interests and information needs.

About the Museum Innovation Incubator

The Museum Innovation Incubator is the experimental lab behind projects like the olfactory experience, *Art and Emotions*, and the chatbot. Supported by the **Secrétariat à la Capitale-Nationale**, it fosters the emergence of new experiential, sensory, and technological initiatives within museums. It is a joint effort between the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and the Musée de la civilisation to develop innovative pilot projects by working with the technological, cultural, community, academic, and research sectors to enhance and revitalize the visitor experience.

BEHIND THE SCENES OF A LIVING MUSEUM



The ground floor of the new building is home to a visible storeroom and a cutting-edge art restoration laboratory, a unique showcase where the public can watch MNBAQ conservation and restoration specialists work their magic.

UPCOMING OPENING CAFÉ ROSA

The ground floor also features the Café Rosa, an inviting space where visitors can relax, grab a bite to eat, or enjoy a drink. When the weather is nice, the café will expand onto the Terrasse des Plaines so diners can enjoy the delightful scenery. Café Rosa is open during the Musée's regular hours.

MURAL BY BRIGITTE DAHAN



A clay-and-glass mural by **Brigitte Dahan** adorns the wall of Café Rosa. *Archipels de mémoire* [Islands of Memory] was the Bromont artist's winning entry in a competition for members of the Conseil des métiers d'art du Québec.

It incorporates some of Riopelle's favourite techniques, including stencilling. This abstract landscape unfolds as a triptych, with each section evoking a natural element: earth, water, and sky.

MINI-BOUTIQUE

This satellite of the Librairie-Boutique is tucked away in the Central Hall. It offers a delightful selection of books and more inspired by Riopelle and his contemporaries. Among others, visitors can find reference books, postcard- to poster-sized prints of different works, and a collection of gifts (notebooks, magnets, and tote bags) featuring the new pavilion. Scented candles and room sprays inspired by the Chartier World LAB olfactory experience are also available for those who would like a fragrant memento of their visit.

RENTAL SPACES

The new building offers a number of exceptional new venues to rent at the Musée. Beautifully lit spaces like the Central Hall, the foyer, and the Salle des Plaines make for memorable settings for banquets, cocktail parties, conferences, weddings, and business meetings. Under certain conditions, it is even possible to exclusively reserve the entire Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion for events.

10. AROUND THE ESPACE RIOPELLE



Maurice Perron, *Seconde Exposition des automatistes au 75, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, chez les Gauvreau*, 1947, 1998 print. Gelatin silver print, 33.5 × 26 cm. MNBAQ, Maurice Perron Archives (1999.213) © Courtesy of Line-Sylvie Perron

THE AUDAIN CHAIR: PRESERVING THE AUTOMATISTE LEGACY

The Audain Chair was formed in 2025 as part of Riopelle's centennial celebrations, which inspired more than 50 cultural events between 2019 and 2026. Led by **Guillaume Savard** and made possible by the generosity of the **Audain Foundation**, its mission is to build on that momentum by advancing research and promoting and disseminating the artistic legacy of the *Refus global* signatories. Through exhibitions, publications, and symposia, the Chair will serve as a showcase and research centre devoted to sharing the legacy of the Automatistes and keeping it alive.

SYMPOSIUM

The Audain Chair, supported by the Audain Foundation, is organizing a symposium dedicated to remembrance and heritage preservation, to be held in the spring of 2027. The major gathering will bring the research and creative communities together for enlightening interdisciplinary discussions around the influences that shape artist recognition and the reach of their works. Participants will explore themes ranging from the dynamics of artistic collaboration to the challenges of cultural mediation, including their intersections with land, ecology, and representation. Details of the event will be announced shortly.

LE CAS RIOPELLE: A FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION ON THE ESPACE RIOPELLE AND THE ARTIST'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

Le Cas Riopelle is a two-volume chronicle of the centennial celebrations for Jean Paul Riopelle, spanning from the creation of the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation in 2019 to the opening of the Espace Riopelle. The first volume, *L'architecture d'un centenaire*, is written by **Manon Gauthier**, General Commissioner of the celebrations and Executive Director of the Audain Foundation. It discusses the extensive commemorative activities and examines their philanthropic underpinnings, as well as their impact on culture and memory.

The second volume, *Vers l'Espace Riopelle*, focuses on the culmination of the celebrations: the construction of a pavilion dedicated to the artist. Audain Chair holder **Guillaume Savard** examines the exceptional donations that Michael Audain and Pierre Lassonde made to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec collection. He also reflects on the way that the building's architecture complements a curatorial approach based on innovation and emotion to both enhance the visitor experience and secure a place for Riopelle's work within Québec's art history.

Title: *Le Cas Riopelle*

Volume 1: *L'architecture d'un centenaire*

Authors: Manon Gauthier with sociologist and historian Fernand Harvey

Volume 2: *Vers l'Espace Riopelle*

Author: Guillaume Savard

Publisher: Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

In French

Pre-sale: Fall 2026 / Publication: Spring 2027

List price: \$49.95 CAD

RELATED ACTIVITIES



Rosa mobile workshop // Photo: MNBAQ, Emmanuelle Letendre-Lévesque

FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKSHOPS

Rosa mobile

October 31–November 15

Saturdays and Sundays, 1:15 PM and 3:00 PM

Location: Charles Baillairgé Pavilion

Price: \$7 per person

For everyone. Open to children ages 4 and up, accompanied by an adult.

Brighten up the evocative silhouettes from Jean Paul Riopelle's masterpiece *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* with watercolours, then arrange them into a beautiful mobile to hang up at home.



Guided tour at the Musée // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon

GUIDED TOURS

Guided tours in French*

Starting October 27

Daily at 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM,

as well as at 7:00 PM on the first Wednesday of the month

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion

Price: \$3 per person (with general admission)

Free for Members and visitors aged 17 and under.

Join our guides on a journey through more than 50 years of creation as you explore *Riopelle: The Expression of Gesture*. Next, admire the architecture of the new building and learn how the design reflects Riopelle's creations and the landscapes that nourished his imagination.

**Guided tours in English available for groups on request.*



Greeting card workshop // Photo: MNBAQ, Emmanuelle Letendre-Lévesque

FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKSHOPS

Greeting cards

November 20, 21, and 22, and

December 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, and 20, 1:15 PM and 3:00 PM

Wednesday, December 2, 7:15 PM

Location: Charles Baillairgé Pavilion

Price: \$7 per person

For everyone. Open to children ages 4 and up, accompanied by an adult.

As the holidays draw near, why not create unique greeting cards for your loved ones? In this family-friendly workshop, draw inspiration from the art of Jean Paul Riopelle to create stamped patterns embellished with hand-drawn details.



Photo: MNBAQ, Émilie Dumais

CONCERT AND MEDITATION

Hommage à *L'Hommage à Rosa Luxemburg*

Tuesday, December 1, 7:00 PM

Wednesday, December 2, 9:00 AM

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion

Price: \$26 (\$22 for Members and guests aged 18–30)

This French-language meditation activity is designed to resonate with *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg*. **Marie-Ève Lécine** will lead you through a series of breathing exercises and guided meditations to help you anchor yourself in the space and connect with the artwork. In the background, **pianist and composer Francis Leclerc** will play a special composition, crafted to resonate with the motifs and flow of Riopelle's masterpiece.



Guided Tour of Wonder: Riopelle in Full Presence // Photo: MNBAQ, Emmanuelle Letendre-Lévesque

GUIDED TOURS OF WONDER **Riopelle in Full Presence**

October 27, 2026, to January 10, 2027
Tuesday through Sunday, 1:30 PM
Also offered on Wednesday, November 4
and Wednesday, December 2 at 5:30 PM

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion
 Price: \$3 per person (with general admission)
 Free for Members and visitors aged 17 and under.

What if you visited the Espace Riopelle not to understand, but simply to feel? Engage your senses and practice mindfulness as you take in the architecture and Jean Paul Riopelle's art during this guided tour inspired by the Finding Awe initiative at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. This tour offers you moments of guided relaxation where you can slow down and let the colour, texture, and motion wash over you.

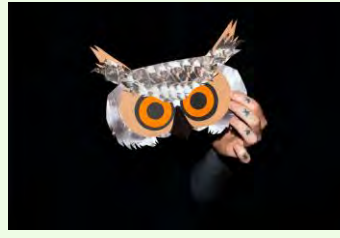


Photo: MNBAQ, Emmanuelle Letendre-Lévesque

SPECIAL EVENT **Riopelle Takes Flight: Family Festivities**

Saturday, November 28, and
Sunday, November 29, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion
 Price: Free with general admission
 No reservation required.

In honour of **Children's Month**, you and your family are invited to celebrate the opening of the new Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion! Discover our new exhibitions that celebrate the majestic work of Jean Paul Riopelle. Make a cute owl hat to wear during your day at the Musée, then stop at the face-painting station for makeup inspired by this famous figure in Québec art history!



Stroller museum tour at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon

GUIDED TOURS WITH BABIES **Stroller Museum Tour**

Thursday, November 19 and Thursday, December 17, 10:15 AM

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion
 Price: Members: \$7 | General admission: \$10

Take advantage of the quiet mornings to tour the Espace Riopelle with your baby and our guide. Enjoy a calmer, more relaxed way to discover the new pavilion.

This tour is for adults with a baby aged 18 months or under, in a stroller or baby carrier.



Photo: MNBAQ, Émilie Dumais

TOUR FOR EXPECTANT MOTHERS **Walking and tour for expectant mothers**

Sunday, November 22, 1:00 PM

Location: Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion
 Price: Members: \$7 | General admission: \$10

Mothers-to-be can enjoy a relaxing break to breathe, move at their own pace, and connect with art and the community. This gentle, accessible experience is perfect for enjoying some self-care before the baby arrives.

A collaboration between the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and the Collectif Les Accompagnantes.



André Gilbert // Photo: MNBAQ, David Canon

CONFERENCE

Riopelle. L'expression du geste

Wednesday, November 4, 7:00 PM

Friday, November 6, 2:00 PM

Location: Sandra and Alain Bouchard Auditorium – Pierre Lassonde Pavilion

Price: \$12 (\$8 for Members and ages 18–30)

Curator **André Gilbert** takes a fresh look at five decades of Jean Paul Riopelle's work in this French-language conference, explaining the decisions and thematic discussions that shaped the major retrospective *Riopelle: The Expression of Gesture*.



Pierre B. Landry // Photo: MNBAQ, Idra Labrie

CONFERENCE

Aimez-vous Riopelle?

Wednesday, December 2, 7:00 PM

Friday, December 4, 2:00 PM

Location: Sandra and Alain Bouchard Auditorium – Pierre Lassonde Pavilion

Price: \$12 (\$8 for Members and ages 18–30)

In this French-language conference, art historian and museologist **Pierre B. Landry** examines the Riopelle pieces that baffled critics and audiences alike, shedding light on the seemingly unusual choices of an artist who never stopped reinventing himself.

Details and reservations: mnbaq.org/en/programming

RIOPELLE STUDIO



Foundation for the artist's centennial.

Riopelle Studio is a free interactive platform with a wide variety of fun tools and educational resources for both schools and the general public. Through five main themes (play, nature, freedom, earth, and trajectories), people of all ages can learn more about Jean Paul Riopelle's artistic approach and take a deep dive into his works. This educational resource, which includes videos, workshops, games, and more, was created by the Jean Paul Riopelle

11. CREDITS

Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

Management

Anne Élisabeth Thibault, Director General
Jean-Luc Murray, outgoing Director General
Eve-Lyne Beaudry, Director of Collections and Research
Anik Dorion-Coupal, Director of Exhibitions and International Partnerships
Josée Duhaime, Director of the Education Through Art Centre
Sophie Lemelin, Director of Communications, Marketing, and Visitor Experience

Exhibition curation

André Gilbert, Exhibition Curator

Curatorial team

Isolda Gavidia, Curator of Decorative Arts and Design
Özlem Gülin Dağoglu, Curator of Ancient Art (origins to 1899)
Bernard Lamarche, Curator of Contemporary Art (1960 to present)

Exhibition design

Loïc Lefebvre, Designer
Philippe Legris, Designer

Construction project management

Jean-François Fusey, Project Director
François Jacques, Architectural Technologist

Lenders

Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris
Marc-André Bovet Collection
Michel Dallaire Collection
Dr. Félix-André Têtu Collection
Galerie Simon Blais, Montréal
Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York
Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
National Gallery of Canada
Power Corporation of Canada
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (archives)
And lenders who wish to remain anonymous

Architecture

Les architectes FABG

Engineering

Atkins-Realis

Project management

CIMA+

Landscaping

ReliefDesign

Scenography (architecture)

Trizart Alliance

General Contractor

Tisseur (from the merger of Tisseur and CONCREA)

12. CURATORIAL TEAM

ANDRÉ GILBERT Exhibition Curator

André Gilbert is a curator at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, where he has organized major exhibitions on several leading figures in modern art: Joan Miró, Alberto Giacometti, Frida Kahlo, Berthe Morisot, J.M.W. Turner, and Rembrandt van Rijn. He is responsible for the four inaugural exhibitions at the Espace Riopelle. During his time as Deputy Editor at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (2009–2015), he produced nearly 30 publications, earning several awards. From 2001 to 2009, he was in charge of VU, an artist centre run by the Méduse artist cooperative, where he put on more than 80 contemporary photography exhibitions. He holds a master's degree in modern art history, has published several essays on 20th-century and contemporary art, and taught art history at Université Laval for around a decade.

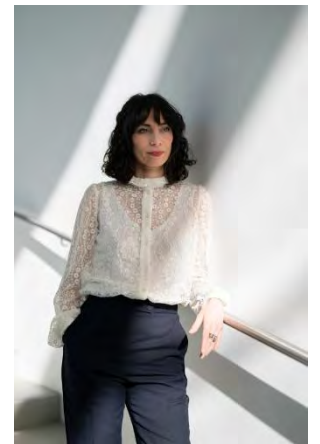
André Gilbert // Photo: MNBAQ, David Canon



ÖZLEM GÜLIN DAĞOĞLU Curator of Ancient Art (origins to 1899)

Özlem Gülin Dağoğlu was originally appointed Curator of Modern Art in 2024. She currently serves as Curator of Ancient Art (origins to 1899) and is collaborating on the reorganization of the national collection. She is a specialist in modern arts with a Ph.D. in Art History from the Université de Montréal and a bachelor's degree from Paris1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University. A frequent speaker at numerous international conferences, she has taught at the Université de Montréal and McGill University. She has also been a researcher at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. Her work focuses in particular on issues of gender, migration, nationalism, and intercultural dialogue. Özlem Gülin Dağoğlu has authored numerous scholarly articles. Her book *A Portrait in Motion: The Global Life of Ottoman-Turkish Painter Mihri Rasim* is scheduled for publication in 2027 by McGill-Queen's University Press.

Özlem Gülin Dağoğlu // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon



ISOLDA GAVIDIA

Curator of Decorative Arts and Design

Isolda Gavidia holds a B.A. and an M.A. in Art History from Université Laval. She has been working in the museum field for more than 20 years. She was appointed Curator of Decorative Arts and Design in 2024, a position she had previously held at MUMAQ—the Musée des métiers d’art du Québec—where she worked for eight years. During her time at that museum, she led projects such as *Savoir-Faire*, *Imaging Quebec Interiors*, and the update of the permanent exhibition *Meaningful Objects: A History of Craft in Quebec* and its companion catalogue. She has also contributed to numerous conferences, conventions, catalogues, and specialized papers that reflect her expertise and passion for Québec craft and design.

Isolda Gavidia // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon



BERNARD LAMARCHE

Curator of Contemporary Art (1960 to present)

Bernard Lamarche is a Québec art historian renowned for his expertise in contemporary art. He has been the Curator of Current Art at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec since 2012. Since 2023, his responsibilities have expanded to cover the period from 1960 to the present. With a master’s degree from the University of Montreal, he served as curator of contemporary art at the Rimouski Regional Museum (2005–2012) and as an art critic and cultural journalist for the daily newspaper *Le Devoir* (1996–2005). Deeply involved in Québec’s contemporary art scene, he has curated numerous exhibitions and is the author of several exhibition catalogues and articles for specialized journals.

Bernard Lamarche // Photo: MNBAQ, David Cannon



13. BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 1923** Birth of Jean Paul Riopelle on October 7, in Montréal. He is the son of Léopold and Anna Riopelle, first cousins.
- 1937-1941** Takes private drawing and painting lessons from Henri Bisson, whose teaching follows the academic tradition.
- 1941-1942** Attends the École polytechnique de Montréal. Paints his first landscapes.
- 1943-1946** Studies at the École du meuble, where he is taught by Paul-Émile Borduas and discovers abstraction.
- 1945-1946** Shares a studio with Marcel Barbeau and other classmates from the École du meuble. Takes part in the first exhibitions held by the Automatiste group.
- 1947** Moves to Paris with his wife Françoise Lespérance, with whom he will have two daughters, Yseult and Sylvie. Meets many artists and writers, including several members of the Surrealist movement.
- 1948** Signs the *Refus global*, the Automatiste manifesto.
- 1949** Holds his first solo exhibition at La Dragonne, a Paris gallery run by Nina Dausset.
- 1953** Shows at Pierre Loeb's gallery and begins making a living from his art. Acquires his first vintage cars, of which he will become a collector.
- 1954** Joins the Pierre Matisse Gallery, in New York, which will promote him for over thirty years.

Represents Canada at the Venice Biennale and the following year at the Bienal de São Paulo.
- 1959** Moves in with the American painter Joan Mitchell, with whom he will live for some twenty years.
- 1960** Exhibits his first sculptures. Buys shares in the Berjac foundry in Meudon, France.
- 1963** Executes the largest painting of his career, *Meeting Place*, for Toronto's international airport.
- 1966** Joins the Galerie Maeght, which also represents such well-known artists as Alberto Giacometti and Joan Miró. Works at the Arte studios, in Paris, where he learns the techniques of printmaking.

- 1967** Holds a major retrospective at the Musée du Québec (now the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec), his first in the province.
- 1968** Becomes friends with Dr. Champlain Charest, with whom he shares a passion for hunting and fishing. From this point on, the artist spends an increasing amount of time in Québec.
- 1974** Has a house-studio built in Sainte-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson, in the Laurentians.
- 1976** *The Fount*, a fountain-sculpture the artist has worked on for several years, is installed in Montréal's Olympic Park for the games of the XXI Olympiad.
- 1980** Establishes a foundation aimed at hosting artists and craftspeople from all over the world in the former prison on the Plains of Abraham, which today houses the MNBAQ's Charles-Baillairgé Pavilion. The project comes to nothing, owing to lack of funding.
- 1981** A retrospective of the paintings is organized by the Musée national d'art moderne de Paris and travels subsequently to Québec City, Montréal, Mexico City and Caracas.
- Receives the Prix Paul-Émile-Borduas, the Québec government's highest honour for achievement in the visual arts.
- 1983** Executes numerous works on the theme of wild geese, which will continue to figure in his practice until the end of his career.
- 1984** An automobile accident leaves him with multiple fractures of the spine.
- 1992** Executes *Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg* following the death of his former partner, painter Joan Mitchell.
- 1995** Purchases the MacPherson-Le Moine manor house on L'Isle-aux-Grues, in the St. Lawrence River.
- 1999** Publication of the first volume of the catalogue raisonné of his œuvre by his daughter Yseult Riopelle.
- 2002** Death of the artist on L'Isle-aux-Grues, at the age of seventy-eight. He is given a national funeral.

14. GENERAL INFORMATION

Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
Battlefields Park
Québec City, QC G1R 5H3

CONTACT
418-643-2150 or 1 866-220-2150 (toll-free)
mnbaq.org

HOURS
Monday Closed
Tuesday 10 AM–5 PM
Wednesday 10 AM to 5 PM (9 PM on the first Wednesday of the month)
Thursday to Sunday 10 AM–5 PM

ADMISSION*
Members Free
Ages 31–64 \$30
Ages 65+ \$28
Ages 18–30 \$23
17 and under Free
Indigenous people Free

AVAILABLE SERVICES
Parking, Librairie-Boutique, Wi-Fi, free wheelchairs,
cloakroom, and nursing room

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR [NEWSLETTER](#)
A great way to stay up to date on MNBAQ news, events,
and activities!

*General admission. Prices as of October 27, 2026.

FOLLOW US

Save \$5 when you buy a ticket [online](#).



ABOUT THE MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC

The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) is the living memory of Québec art and artists. With a rich collection of over 42,500 works, its functions are to make known, promote, and preserve Québec art of all periods, from ancient art to contemporary art, and to ensure a place for international art through acquisitions, exhibitions, and other cultural activities. Its raison d'être is **to bring people together through art**. mnbaq.org

MEDIA IMAGES

[Download media images here.](#)

MEDIA RELATIONS

Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

Patricia Lachance

Communications and Media Relations Advisor

+1 514-235-2044

relations.presse@mnbaq.org

Montréal

Rosemonde Gingras

Rosemonde Communications

+1 514-458-8355

rosemonde@rosemondecommunications.com

Europe

Emmanuelle Toubiana

Emmanuelle Toubiana Communication

+33 (0)7 50 67 66 59

toubiana@hotmail.com

English-speaking Canada and international

Rosemary Thompson

Artful Strategies

+1 613-240-6739

rosemary@artfulstrategies.ca

THE ESPACE RIOPELLE IN NUMBERS



TOTAL FUNDING: \$84M

\$44M	Government of Québec
\$5M	City of Québec, for the creation of the gallery dedicated to <i>Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg</i>
\$25M	Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa, Pierre Lassonde, André Desmarais and France Chrétien Desmarais
\$10M	Fondation du Musée, thanks to the +D'ART DANS NOS VIES campaign

ARTWORKS

504	Works by Riopelle in the national collection
235	Works on display, 131 of which are by Riopelle
57	Artists shown
56	Newly acquired works by Riopelle in the past 5 years
45	Works donated by Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa, 37 of which are by Riopelle
18	Works donated by Pierre Lassonde, 9 of which are by Riopelle
40.42 m	Total length of <i>Tribute to Rosa Luxemburg</i>

SIZE

5,600 m²	Size of the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion
2,200 m²	Gallery spaces
120 m²	Art storage spaces
32,000 m²	Total size of the museum complex (all 4 pavilions)

SPACES

3	New galleries
5	Gathering spaces, including the Central Hall, two multipurpose rooms, and the Café Rosa
2	Outdoor terraces
2	Cloakrooms, 1 of which is for school groups
1	Mini-Boutique
1	Art storage area and 1 restoration lab visible to the public

CONSTRUCTION

17 m	Maximum ceiling height
18.8 m	Height of glass walls
510 t	Steel
334 m²	Granite
1,583 m³	Concrete
1,695 m²	Zinc for the roofs and rear wall cladding
218 t	Black spruce wood
≈ 800	Workers on the construction site
≈ 175	Employees working on the project



View of the Charles-Baillairgé Pavilion (left),
the Espace Riopelle – Michael Audain Pavilion (center)
and the Gérard-Morisset Pavilion (right)
3D rendering: Les architectes FABG