

Manif d'art 10 – The Quebec City Biennial : Between illusion and reality, Steven Matijcio raises questions on the deceptiveness of everyday appearances.

Quebec, March 12, 2020 — Manif d'art is pleased to unveil the theme and announce the international guest curator for the tenth edition of its flagship event, the Quebec City Biennial. The guest curator Steven Matijcio, Director at the Blaffer Art Museum in Houston (Texas), will question the ties between art and its mirages under the theme *Illusions Are Real*.



Produced in collaboration with the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), Manif d'art 10 will once again infiltrate the Quebec City cultural circuit from January 22 to March 21, 2021, with many surprises awaiting. For the occasion, Steven Matijcio will bring together artists from around the world in order to reflect collectively on the concept of illusion through engaging practices. In order to do so, he's teaming up with Claude Bélanger, General and Artistic Director at Manif d'art, Bernard Lamarche, Curator of Contemporary Art at the MNBAQ, and Michelle Drapeau, Assistant Curator of the Biennial for a second term.

"For this anniversary edition, Manif d'art promises a biennial based in unexpected places. All I can say for now is that Manif d'art is consistently more and more present in the City, putting our beautiful capital on the map of prominent contemporary art destinations." Declares Claude Bélanger, General and Artistic Director at Manif d'art. "Audiences will certainly be won over by the selected artists' various proposals around this theme blending illusion and reality." Concludes M. Bélanger.

Annie Gauthier, Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the MNBAQ, comments on the innovation put forward regarding the

visitors' experience at the Museum : " *For Manif d'art's next edition, the group exhibition at the MNBAQ will include a roving experience, a true contemporary art circuit starting in the public spaces of the Pierre Lassonde building and leading up to the ground floor of the Gérard-Morisset building.* "

At the Heart of the Theme : Magic Realism

The theme of Manif d'art 10 is inspired by Magic Realism, an artistic movement seeking the spontaneous manifestation of seemingly magical, supernatural or irrational elements that arise in the realm of reality. The biennial will be an opportunity to explore artistic practices making use of the trompe-l'œil, strategies of misdirection and sleight of hand as vehicles. This reflection on illusions will also reassess many sociopolitical issues steeped in our reality. By defamiliarizing the everyday, the selected artworks will highlight and reveal the illusory mechanisms invading our contemporary world, from artificial flavours to misinformation campaigns.

"We've always had this hierarchy where reality was seen as somehow superior to illusion. The distinction doesn't seem as clear now. In a society which welcomes artifice with open arms, where we give in to the wonderment and pleasure of being constantly deceived and misdirected, what are the political ramifications? The curatorial proposal is twofold : the works of the biennial will unveil the workings of illusion from a critical perspective, just as they will revel in the magic that these illusions can inspire in our everyday lives." Says Steven Matijcio, Curator of Manif d'art 10.

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Biography of Steven Matijcio

Steven Matijcio has been the Director and Chief Curator of the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston since 2019. Before that, he was the head of the curatorial department at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati since 2013. During his tenure there, he has curated solo shows of Firelei Báez (2018), Kahlil Joseph (2018), Glenn Kaino (2017), Andrea Bowers (2017), Do Ho Suh (2016) and Titus Kaphar (2015), among others. He also served on the curatorial team of *After the Moment : Reflections on Robert Mapplethorpe*, which opened in November 2015 to mark the 25th anniversary of the CAC Mapplethorpe retrospective.

Manif d'art – The Quebec City Biennial

A staple of the Canadian art scene, Manif d'art — The Quebec City Biennial is the only winter biennial in North America. The event presents the work of over 100 local, national and international artists. Besides its many exhibitions, the event offers a plethora of activities based on its global theme renewed for every iteration. Since its first edition in the Fall of 2000, more than 50 cultural organizations have contributed in

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making this international festival a must. Year after year, Manif d'art's program delights neophytes as well as visual art specialists. Manif d'art has been collaborating with the MNBAQ since Manif d'art 8 — The Quebec City Biennial (2017).

MNBAQ

Located at the heart of the Champs-de-Bataille Park, one of the most prestigious urban parks in the world, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is a unique museum complex that links art, architecture and nature. The Museum's vast collection, which includes more than 40,000 works produced since the 17th century, is displayed in four separate buildings. Paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs and prints are presented throughout the Historical Art building, while the work of key artists Jean Paul Lemieux, Alfred Pellan, Fernand Leduc and Jean-Paul Riopelle shine in the Modern Art building. Inaugurated in June 2016, the fourth building showcases the contemporary art collection (after 1960) including Inuit Art, Decorative Arts and Design. The glass pyramid connecting all the buildings offers a space of artistic discovery for children.

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