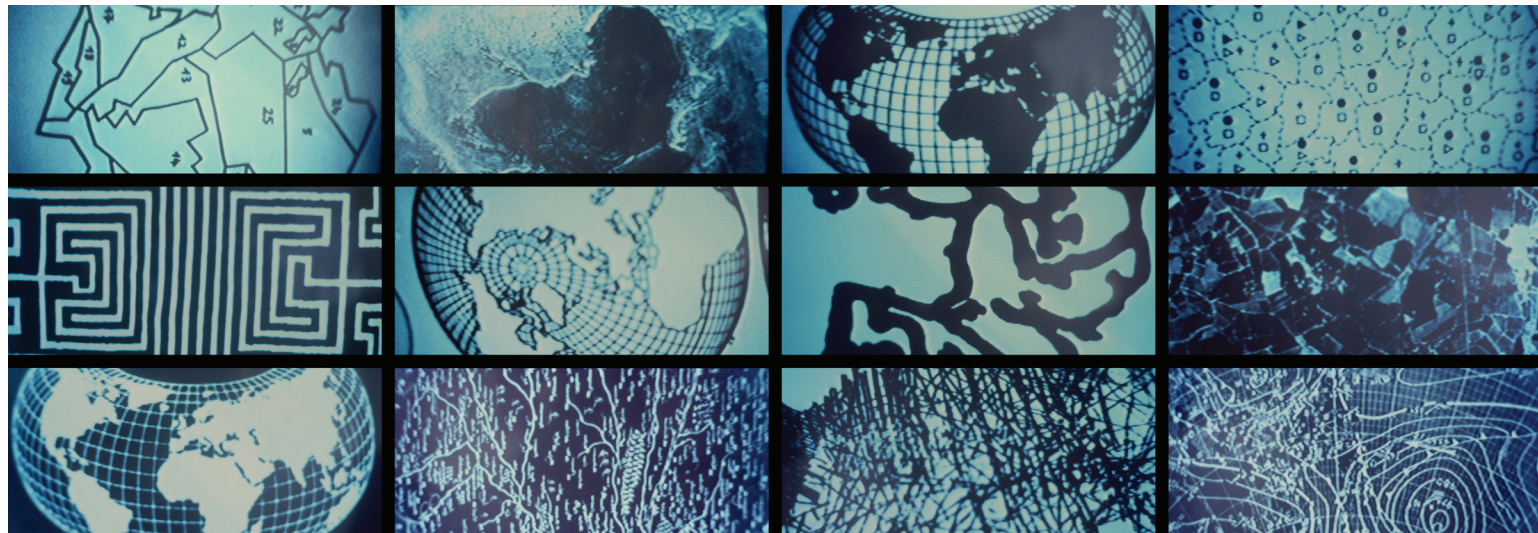




Elements from the multimedia installation by Barbara Steinman, *Borrowed Scenery*, 1987, Collection Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Photo: MACM © Barbara Steinman

MAX AND IRIS STERN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 18

CONNECTIONS IN THE 1980s: THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF QUÉBEC ART (1975–1992)

With the participation of : Vincent Bonin, Geneviève Cadieux, Abigail E. Celis, Louise Déry, Olivier Fabry, Ji-Yoon Han, Johanne Lamoureux, Gabrielle Larocque, Marie J. Jean, Lani Maestro, Diana Nemiroff, Alayn Ouellet, Chantal Pontbriand, Kitty Scott, Sherry Simon, Guy Sioui Durand, Johanne Sloan, Kessie Theliar-Charles, Michèle Thériault, and Normand Thériault.

Curators:
Katrie Chagnon, Director and Editor-in-Chief, *Spirale*
François LeTourneux, Curator and Head of public programs, MAC

The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is pleased to present the next Max and Iris Stern International Symposium at Usine C, in collaboration with the magazine *Spirale*. Focusing on the artistic production of the “long” 1980s in Québec (1975–92) and on the discourses and institutions that accompanied it, the symposium aims to open new avenues for reflection based on recent work and to fill in some gaps in the history of this particularly productive decade.

In keeping with the international perspective of the Max and Iris Stern symposiums, this edition will address certain significant aspects of the 1980s in Québec not as simple markers punctuating a linear and self-contained history, but as a set of complex “nodes” whose rhizomatic ramifications extend well beyond the local territory, engaging the intervention of multiple (human, cultural, sociopolitical, economic, media, institutional, and other) factors. The event will focus on different networks of connections in order to understand how this pivotal moment has contributed to the development of important vectors of internationalization of Québec art before the decisive threshold of the emergence of the Internet.

In an open and unifying spirit, the symposium will bring together people who have shaped our recent art history, as well as artists and art historians of subsequent generations who are rethinking the heritage of this period. In this sense, it will also pave the way for the inaugural programming of the new MAC, planned for 2028, which will present a major exhibition that puts in dialogue contemporary Québec art and major historical works from the museum's collection.

October 29 to 31, 2026

Usine C, 1345 Lalonde Avenue, Montréal, QC H2L 5A9

MAC

PROGRAM

The sessions will be conducted in both French and English.
Simultaneous interpretation is available.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

6 p.m.

WELCOME

Audrey Genoïs, Senior Director of Museum Affairs, MAC
Katie Chagnon, Director and Editor-in-Chief, *Spirale*
François LeTourneux, Curator and Head of Cultural Programming, MAC

6:30 p.m.

The Energy of Discourse and Rapid Growth of Publications
[in French]

Katie Chagnon, Director and Editor-in-Chief, *Spirale*
Chantal Pontbriand, Field practitioner

This conversation with Chantal Pontbriand will provide an overview of the history of *PARACHUTE* (1975–2007), her editorial approach, and the events she organized at the same time (symposia, art events, Festival international de nouvelle danse). It will try to capture the particular intellectual energy of the early 1980s that contributed to the rapid growth of discourses and publications on local and international contemporary art, looking at the new practices, thinking, and writing that marked the beginning of this geographic, artistic, and theoretical period.

7:30 p.m. – OPENING RECEPTION

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

10 a.m.

INTRODUCTION

François LeTourneux, Curator and Head of Cultural Programming, MAC

10:15 a.m.

Situated Discourse: Between Here and Elsewhere [in French]

Ji-Yoon Han, Curator, MAC
Vincent Bonin, Independent researcher and curator
Johanne Lamoureux, Full Professor, Department of Art History, Cinema, and Audiovisual Media, Université de Montréal
Sherry Simon, Professor Emerita, Department of French Studies, Concordia University

This panel discussion will focus on the issues of cultural transfer, translation, and hybridity in the artistic, literary, and theoretical landscape of Montréal in the 1980s, recreating various contexts of reception of artworks, beyond linguistic divides and fantasies of internationalization. It will bring Johanne Lamoureux and Sherry Simon into dialogue, both of whom have examined the political dimension of *situated* language and interstitial spaces from the perspective of their respective disciplines, that is art history and art criticism for Lamoureux and literature and social sciences for Simon.

The MAC would like to thank *Spirale* magazine, the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Concordia University's Faculty of Fine Arts, the Comité Art contexte d'AECS HEC Montréal, the Regroupement des centres d'artistes auto-gérés du Québec (RCAAQ), Artex, and the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) for their invaluable collaboration.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

12 p.m. – BREAK

1:30 p.m.

Infiltrations: From documenta V to Aurora Borealis, New Ways of Thinking and Doing [in French]

Michèle Thériault, Independent researcher and curator
Normand Thériault, Exhibition curator and art critic

The curator and art critic Normand Thériault attended *documenta V* in 1972. This significant experience subsequently influenced his way of thinking and doing things. By focusing on four important events that he organized or co-organized, namely *Québec 75* (1975), *03.23.03* (1977), *Yesterday and After* (1980), and *Aurora Borealis* (1985), this discussion will focus on internationalization as a manifold and flexible form of infiltration.

2:45 p.m. – BREAK

3:15 p.m.

Curatorial Practice and Internationalization [in French]

Marie J. Jean, Executive and Artistic Director of VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine and Associate Professor, Department of Art History, UQAM
Louise Déry, Director of Galerie de l'UQAM, exhibition curator, and art historian
Diana Nemiroff, Art historian, author, and exhibition curator

This panel discussion will look back at a period when curatorship had not yet been fully recognized as a methodology, even though it already constituted an active manner of producing narratives, connecting art scenes, and expanding opportunities for artists to circulate internationally. Based on the unique trajectories of Louise Déry and Diana Nemiroff, Marie J. Jean will examine the way in which some of their exhibitions were conceived, realized, and circulated, as well as the institutional contexts, cultural policies, and professional alliances that made them possible. The discussion will try to show the less visible history of a curatorial practice that is both conceptual and relational, in which the exhibition becomes a framework for thinking and a vehicle for international recognition.

PROGRAM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

10 a.m.

INTRODUCTION

Katrie Chagnon, Director and Editor-in-Chief, *Spirale*

10:15 a.m.

Travel and International Networks

[in English and French]

Johanne Sloan, Professor Emerita, Department of Art History, Concordia University

Lani Maestro, Artist and co-founder of *Harbour Magazine of Art and Everyday Life*

Geneviève Cadieux, Artist and Associate Professor, Department of Studio Arts, Concordia University

Kitty Scott, Independent curator, Director of Fogo Island Arts, and Director of The Shen Foundation

This panel features three women—Geneviève Cadieux, Lani Maestro, and Kitty Scott—who have forged remarkable, international careers as artists and curator. Our discussion will touch on how their projects, travel, professional contacts, and friendships resulted in international networks that helped transform Montréal’s art scene in the 1980s.

12 p.m. – BREAK

1:30 p.m.

Creating Networks Outside Montréal [in French]

Gabrielle Larocque, Head of Art and Communities, MAC LAU – Musée d’art contemporain des Laurentides and PhD student in museum studies, cultural mediation, and heritage, School of Visual and Media Arts, UQAM

Guy Sioui Durand, Wendat, art sociologist, independent curator, and author

Alayn Ouellet, Exhibition curator, founder of the Langage Plus centre (Alma), and college teacher

This conversation will examine the characteristics of a *methodology of movement* common to two key figures in the contemporary art world involved in artist-run centres in Québec and Alma: Guy Sioui Durand (Inter-Le Lieu) and Alayn Ouellet (Langage Plus). How did the transnational and intercultural circuits that they explored affect their respective or shared terrains? What did it mean to *create networks* from perspectives outside the metropolis in the 1980s? There is every reason to believe that an unstoppable rhizome of contacts and places has shaped their commitment to different artists and art events.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

3:15 p.m. – BREAK

3:45 p.m.

Emerging Research [in French]

MODERATOR:

Abigail E. Celis, Associate Professor in art history and decolonial museum studies, Department of Art History, Cinema, and Audiovisual Media, Université de Montréal

SPEAKERS:

Olivier Fabry, PhD candidate, Department of Art History, Cinema, and Audiovisual Media, Université de Montréal

“L’art est un virus”: The 1980s in Québec Through the Lens of René Payant’s Thinking

This presentation will offer a rereading of the essay “L’art est un virus,” written by René Payant in 1986. It will explore the critical potential of the conceptual metaphor of the virus in the analysis of art practices in Québec in the 1980s and examine what this metaphor reveals about how Payant describes local practices vis-à-vis international references.

Kessie Theliar-Charles, Artist-researcher and community archivist affiliated with CIDIHCA (Centre international de documentation et d’information haïtienne, caribéenne et afro-canadienne)

Diaspo-Art: A Group of Haitian Painters from the Diaspora

This paper will focus on Galerie Diaspo-Art, a meeting place for creation and dissemination for Haitian artists living in exile in Montréal. In the context of the Duvalier dictatorship, it will examine how the gallery contributed to reconfiguring artistic and transnational networks.

Since 2006, the prestigious international symposiums held by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal have been known as the Max and Iris Stern International Symposium. From the time the Musée was founded in 1964, Max and Iris Stern contributed significantly to its growth by enriching the Collection with many gifts, including works by Hans Arp, Paul-Émile Borduas, Emily Carr, John Lyman and Jean-Paul Riopelle. The goal of this annual event is to provide a public forum for research by practitioners and theoreticians working in diverse fields, in connection to the Musée's programs. Through this commitment, the Musée wishes to foster a greater understanding of contemporary art and pay tribute to the Sterns by carrying on their vision on the international scene.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Usine C

1345 Lalonde Ave., Montréal, QC, H2L 5A9

General Admission: \$25

Student Admission: \$10

Information: info@macm.org

Reserve your tickets online:

Tickets are reserved through the MAC's electronic ticket office.

<https://macm.org/en/activities/colloque-18/>

Tickets give access to all three days of the symposium.
