

BNLMTL 2014

Press Release - For Immediate Release

BNLMTL 2014 *L'avenir (looking forward)* **Artists Announced**

October 22, 2014 to January 4, 2015

76 days

50 artists and collectives

25 Canadian artists (16 from Québec)

23 new works

22 countries (Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Palestine, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States)

4 curators: Gregory Burke, Peggy Gale, Lesley Johnstone and Mark Lanctôt

3 publications

Montréal, May 6, 2014—La Biennale de Montréal is pleased to announce the artists who will take part in its next edition BNLMTL 2014 which will be on view from October 22, 2014 to January 4, 2015. Entitled *L'avenir (looking forward)*, BNLMTL 2014 looks at the ways in which contemporary artists give form to the idea of “what is to come.” It combines a multisited exhibition, publications and a dynamic series of performances, film screenings, talks, tours, conferences and experiences. *L'avenir (looking forward)* was conceptualized by **Gregory Burke** and **Peggy Gale**, and developed by a team of four accomplished curators including **Lesley Johnstone** and **Mark Lanctôt** of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, who worked in close collaboration with Sylvie Fortin, Executive and Artistic Director of La Biennale de Montréal. BNLMTL 2014 is presented by La Biennale de Montréal and co-produced with the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

AN EVENT OF UNPRECEDENTED AMBITION

This fall, Montréal residents and visitors will have the opportunity to encounter works by some 50 artists working in 22 countries. Of these, 23 are new productions. At the Musée d'art contemporain, BNLMTL 2014's main venue, *L'avenir (looking forward)* will propose some 35 experiences.

L'avenir (looking forward)

New projects by **Krzysztof Wodiczko** and **Isabelle Hayeur** are being coproduced with Quartier des Spectacles Partnership. Other works will draw artistic itineraries around the city, in different art organizations and in public space.

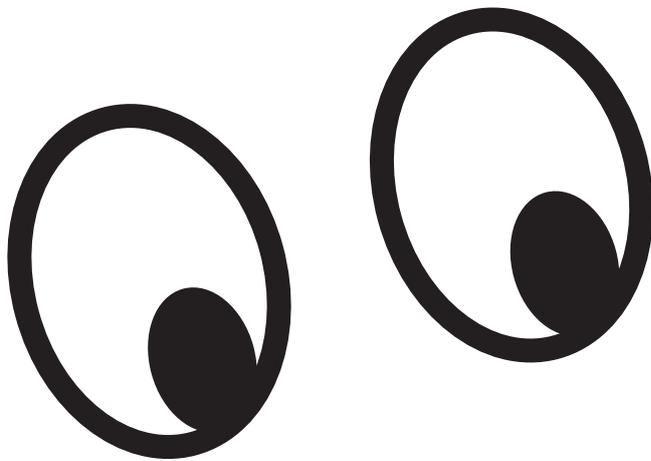
The exhibition includes many new productions, variously supported and funded by BNLMTL 2014. “Biennales are gateways to international contemporary art networks. However, in order to create international opportunities for Québec artists, one has to develop a sophisticated, strategic approach. This involves thoughtful curatorship, editorial input, production support, lively exchanges with other artists and the attention of curators and critics,” remarks Fortin. “As Artistic Director of BNLMTL 2014, I am very proud of the exhibition that Gregory, Peggy, Lesley and Mark have put together. It’s a truly compelling group of artists. This is an exhibition I’d want to see because it defies expectations, and that means that these curators have done their research and created something truly unique for Montréal.”

L'avenir (looking forward): AN INVITATION TO PONDER “WHAT IS TO COME”

BNLMTL 2014 examines how contemporary artists give form to the idea of “what is to come.” This theme is particularly well suited to the development of an intriguing exhibition. It also builds on a common practice, for who has never puzzled over the future?

“Working from different histories, artistic traditions, cultural contexts and mobility, the artists of BNLMTL 2014 inevitably propose vastly different futures,” observes Fortin. “Many works address geopolitical concerns, insinuate ethical questions and hint at economic alternatives. Others point to the ‘what is to come’ of art, that is, how effective is it and what will it become?”

The exhibition shifts between assessment and anticipation. Clearly grounded in the “now,” informed by echoes of the past, it looks forward to “what is to come,” striving to open up an expanded range of options and rekindle some that may have been prematurely extinguished. Through a broad range of works and media, including film and video, sculpture, photography,



21.10.14
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painting, installation, performance and new media, *L'avenir (looking forward)* promises viewers powerful experiences: moments for contemplation, invitations to wonderment and occasions for exchange. Some works issue a call to action. Others give us the opportunity to glimpse the extent of our own power, to imagine new worlds and new ways of being in the world.

Polish-born, US-based artist **Krzysztof Wodiczko** received the Hiroshima Prize in 1998 for his contribution as an artist to world peace. He is world-renowned for his large-scale slide and video projections on architectural facades and monuments. He has realized over eighty such public projections, which often give visibility and voice to precarious or marginalized communities. **Isabelle Hayeur** is a digital image artist recognized for her large-sized photographic montages, videos and site-specific installations, in which she highlights urban blights and sprawl, as well as post-industrial society's pitfalls.

Montréal audiences will have a chance to renew their acquaintance with some of their favourite international artists. They will be treated to the North American premiere of **Shirin Neshat's** latest film and a recent installation by Thomas Hirschhorn. There will also be exciting discoveries and welcome rediscoveries. From the **Arctic Perspective Initiative** collective to the Second Life sci-fi-aboriginal narratives of Skawennati, from the playful economic speculations of **Richard Ibghy and Marilou Lemmens** to **Hajra Waheed's** new archi-sculptural explorations, BNLMTL 2014 will provide the opportunity to discover the works of Montréal artists who have, thus far, remained largely invisible in their home town despite having significant international profiles.

Miami artist **Jillian Mayer** and Los Angeles's **Andrea Bowers** take on the ethos of our camera-phone and social media universe, delving into the texts and images that we produce and trade with our communities. A simple selfie or a few characters can have dire consequences in this high-stakes, fast-paced new frontier.

The environment figures prominently in the exhibition. Global warming, the Arctic, biodiversity and water rights connect the work of a number of artists in BNLMTL 2014 and much of con-

temporary practice. In her recent video essay *Deep Weather*, 2013, Ursula Biemann beautifully connects tar sands exploitation in Northern Canada to the impending submersion of Bengla and the related notion of water as territory of citizenship. Berlin artist **Klara Hobza**'s open-ended quixotic project, *Diving through Europe*—a lifelong project that will take her from Rotterdam to Constanța, Romania—deftly and humourously touches on old histories of conquest, shifting political alliances and water quality.

The economy—as prophecy and speculation—is taken on in a number of projects. **Richard Ibbghy and Marilou Lemmens**'s *The Prophets*, 2013, an installation of small whimsical sculptures made from ordinary household materials, turn graphs into models, giving physical form to economic abstractions. **Goldin+Senneby** propose an interplay between two modes of speculation: theatre and algorithmic trading models. For BNLMTL 2014, they directly, literally connect the exhibition to financial trading: they use the exhibition as a “laboratory” for developing algorithmic trading models with their collaborator Paul Leong, a New York-based investment banker working for Blackstone, who developed a trading strategy identifying early signs of mergers and acquisitions. This speculation's financial performance determines the duration of their exhibition.

Accordingly, BNLMTL 2014 will offer us varied opportunities to see the latest works of world-famous artists and immerse ourselves in the universe of artists from here and elsewhere. “This is an exciting, surprising selection of artists. Some are very well known; others will be discoveries for all but a few specialists. It's been a privilege to work with the curatorial team and see them develop this selection of works. Their process was shaped by absolute rigour, curiosity and generosity, a willingness to stretch beyond their comfort zone, and a total commitment to deliver an event that will leave its mark,” adds Fortin.

NEW VISION, NEW DIRECTION

The 2014 edition of BNLMTL marks a radical shift in a bold direction. It is the first step in the vigorous repositioning of BNLMTL, a biennial event, as an international reference. Building on a strategic multiyear co-production partnership with the Musée d'art contemporain, and engaged in innovative collaborations with over 15 local, national and international institutions, BNLMTL 2014 is an event of unprecedented artistic ambition and scale in Canada. Its 2016 edition will further confirm BNLMTL's importance and position it as North America's foremost international biennale. By 2018, BNLMTL will play an influential role in the network of international biennales and will be on the short list of must-sees.

“Successful biennales are stages from which a city shines. They promote experimentation, raise timely questions, mobilize the assets and strengths of a community and openly welcome the world,” notes Sylvie Fortin. They build on an informed, original and compelling artistic vision to enlist a city's various institutions to combine their expertise, experiences and resources. They produce and present unexpected works while inviting diverse audiences to join in the adventure of contemporary art. As such, biennales foster artistic inquiry and are powerful engines of sustainable growth for entire communities. For local residents, they are eagerly awaited events that occur every two years, offering memorable experiences, conversation topics and a sense of participating in something exciting. For art enthusiasts, biennales provide a compelling reason to visit. “La Biennale de Montréal's special partnership with the Musée d'art contemporain a collaboration between two prominent Montréal institutions lays a solid foundation for the development of such a broad-based and potent event. La Biennale's collaborations with other arts, academic and civic institutions, in Montréal and elsewhere, demonstrate the potential of this model. This foundation means that we now have the complementary expertise and resources, and the responsibility, to support ambitious artistic and curatorial undertakings and bring well-deserved attention to Montréal and its arts communities. Ultimately, however, it all begins and ends with the art.”

Remerciements

BNLMTL 2014 is presented by La Biennale de Montréal and co-produced with the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.



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La Biennale de Montréal sincerely thanks its public sector partners for their strategic investment and support.

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Mission

ABOUT LA BIENNALE DE MONTRÉAL

The mission of La Biennale de Montréal is to foster, support, interpret and disseminate the most current visual arts practices by producing the biennial event BNLMTL. All of the initiatives of La Biennale de Montréal are premised on risk and experimentation. Its goal is to support daring, thought-provoking art practices and curatorial projects while offering the public a diversity of experiences.

www.bnlmtl.org

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