



## 13 acclaimed Concordia artists to show work at Montreal biennale

Major exhibition will feature Faculty of Fine Arts grads and instructors

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"Postcard from Bexhill-on-Sea", 2014, video in process by Emmanuelle Léonard. | Courtesy of Le Biennale de Montreal

This year's Biennale de Montréal, BNLMTL 2014, is set to feature 50 international artists — and 13 of them are Concordians.

All 13 are graduates of the university's Faculty of Fine Arts. Their work, which ranges from photographs and installations to videos and prints, will be on display at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and other sites across the city from October 21, 2014 to January 4, 2015.

BNLMTL 2014's theme is *L'Avenir (Looking Forward)*. The idea is to examine recent developments in contemporary art with an eye to what's coming next.

"The artists whose work we're showing all have a different take on the future," says Sylvie Fortin, the biennale's executive and artistic director. "Some of their works explore geopolitics, while others ask ethical questions and suggest alternative solutions for some of society's most pressing problems, like the economy."

While Skawennati (BFA 92, Gr Dip 96) investigates history, future and change through her new-media projects, Lynne Marsh (BFA 92) examines space and architecture through the lenses of performance and moving images. Meanwhile, Étienne Tremblay-Tardif (BFA 09, MFA 13) creates prints inspired by the highways leading into Montreal.

Eric Simon, chair of Concordia's Department of Studio Arts, is proud of the number of graduates are taking part in the exhibition. As he explains, "It says to me that our students go on to be successful and contributing members of the contemporary arts community."

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Catherine Wild, dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, agrees. "The Biennale de Montreal will enhance Montreal's outstanding cultural milieu, and our alumni are at its centre."

This marks the seventh edition of the Biennale de Montréal. In all, 50 artists — 25 from Canada and the rest from more than 22 countries around the world — will take part.

The event, which is co-presented by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, has been a fixture in the national contemporary art scene for 15 years. This year, it is partnering with the Québec Triennial, an exhibition hosted by the Musée in 2008 and 2011.

The aim of BNLMTL 2014 is to highlight the most current and compelling art made in Montreal and elsewhere in Canada.

"It brings experimentation to the fore and raises important lines of discourse," Fortin says. "It brings communities together, and it opens them up to the world."

*The biennale's public program will be announced in September. [Find out more about BNLMTL 2014.](#)*

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#### Concordia artists at BNLMTL 2014

##### **Abbas Akhavan (BFA 04)**

Abbas Akhavan's practice ranges from site-specific ephemeral installations to drawing, video and performance. The domestic sphere, as a forked space between hospitality and hostility, has been an ongoing area of research in Akhavan's work.

More recent projects have shifted focus, wandering out to spaces just beyond the home: the garden, the backyard and other domesticated landscapes.

Akhavan lives and works in Toronto.

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##### **Matthew Biederman (MFA 06)**

Established in 2006, Arctic Perspective Initiative is a non-profit, international group of individuals and organizations founded by Marko Peljhan and Matthew Biederman to promote the creation of open authoring, communications and dissemination infrastructures for the circumpolar region.

Its aim is to work with, learn from and empower Northern and Arctic peoples through open-source technologies and applied education and training.

Biederman lives and works in Montreal, and has been working across media and milieus, architectures and systems, and communities and continents since the 1990s. He also dedicates his time to public interventions relating to the electromagnetic spectrum, which have taken place in Montreal and Barcelona.

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**Nicolas Baier (Att 06)**

Nicolas Baier has exhibited in Montreal, Toronto, Halifax, Madrid and Boston. He has participated in many group exhibitions, including *Oh, Canada* at MASS MoCA in 2012. He has made numerous public works throughout Quebec. Baier's work is included in the collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Gallery of Canada and the National Bank of Canada, among others. He lives and works in Montreal.

Baier's most notable Concordia connection is his contribution to the public art collection — his work "Untitled" (2003) covers 6,000 feet of the Mackay Street side of the Engineering, Computer Science and Visual Arts Integrated Complex (EV Building).

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**Nicolas Grenier (BFA 04)**

Nicolas Grenier received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Concordia University in 2004 and a Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts in 2010.

Recent exhibitions include *The Work of the Work* at the University of California, Santa Barbara; *Building on Ruins* at the Cirrus Gallery in Los Angeles; *Color Consciousness* at the Torrance Art Museum in Torrance, Calif.; *Untitled Tower/Brutalist Treehouse* at Concord in Los Angeles; *Corner-Thru* at the Choi & Lager Gallery in Cologne, Germany and at the Union Gallery in London, England; and *Proximities* at the Art Mûr gallery in Montreal.

His work is found in the Collection Loto-Québec, the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and the CPOA collection, as well as corporate and private collections. Grenier lives and works in Montreal and Los Angeles.

Grenier was awarded the Guido Molinari Prize from Concordia University in 2004.

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**Jacqueline Hoang Nguyen (BFA 94)**

Jacqueline Hoang Nguyen is a French-speaking Quebecer of Vietnamese origin, currently living and working in Stockholm, Sweden. Nguyen completed the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York (2011) and obtained an Master of Fine Arts and a post-graduate diploma in critical studies at the Malmö Art Academy in Malmö, Sweden (2005).

She has been awarded a number of distinguished grants for her research-based practice from the Canada Council for the Arts (2010-2013), the Banff Centre, the Brenda and Jamie Mackie Fellowships for Visual Artists (2012), the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual Arts (2009, 2010, 2013) and the Swedish Research and Development Fellowship in the Arts (2007).

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**Marilou Lemmens (BFA 04) and Richard Ibghy**

Working collaboratively since 2002, Richard Ibghy and Marilou Lemmens have developed a research-based practice that combines a minimalist approach to the form and construction of the art object with a desire to make ideas visible.

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Spanning multiple media, including drawing, installation, video and performance, their work demonstrates an ongoing concern with bringing abstract ideas to materiality, particularly as they are confronted with the human body. Over the last few years, they have explored the rationale upon which economic actions are described and represented, and how the logic of economy has come to infiltrate the most intimate aspects of life.

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#### **Emmanuelle Léonard (BFA 98)**

Emmanuelle Léonard took part in the Québec Triennial at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (2011), and her work was included in the exhibition *À Montréal, quand l'image rôde*, curated by Louise Déry at Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains in Tourcoing, France (2013).

She has been awarded residencies at the Villa Arson in Nice, France; the Christoph Merian Foundation in Basel, Switzerland; and the Finnish Artists' Studio Foundation in Espoo, Finland. Léonard is the recipient of the 2005 Prix Pierre-Ayot. She was nominated for the Grange Prize (now the Aimia Prize) at the Art Gallery of Ontario (2012) and was a finalist for the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec's first Contemporary Art Award (2013).

Léonard was awarded the Print and Photography Prize from Concordia University in 1999.

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#### **Lynne Marsh (BFA 92)**

Lynne Marsh is an internationally acclaimed artist whose practice lies at the intersection of moving image, performance and installation. She invests specific sites and architectures — the spaces of spectacle — through location-based filming and behind-the-scenes views.

Strategically delving into the spaces and performances on the margin of mass consumption and mass cultural expression, the works stage the network of historical, social and political forces that produce the spectacle. Marsh explores how the camera's performance reconfigures social spaces and their ideological orientation, inviting viewers to step on stage, to seize an active role.

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#### **Skawennati (BFA 92, Gr Dip 96)**

Skawennati makes art that addresses history, the future and change. Her pioneering new-media projects, including "CyberPowWow" (1997-2004), "Imagining Indians in the 25th Century" (2001) and "TimeTraveller™" (2008-2013), have been widely exhibited across Canada, the United States and Australia.

A founding member of the First Nations artist collective Nation to Nation, she has been active in the Artist Run Network and sits on the board at the OBORO gallery in Montreal. She is co-director, with Jason E. Lewis, of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC), a research network of artists, academics and technologists investigating, creating and critiquing indigenous virtual environments.

Skawennati is an associate member of Concordia's Technoculture, Art and Games (TAG), an interdisciplinary centre for research and creation in game studies and design, digital culture and interactive art.

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### David Tomas (MFA 75)

David Tomas is an artist and anthropologist whose works explore forms of knowledge produced at the interface of the history of contemporary art, the history and anthropology of media, and the cultures and transcultures of imaging technologies.

From 1994 to 1995, he was appointed Mellon Fellow in Contemporary Arts Criticism at the California Institute of the Arts and was a visiting research fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London in 1997. He was awarded the Claudia De Hueck Fellowship in Art and Science at the National Gallery of Canada from 2001 to 2002.

Tomas is the author of five books, including *Vertov, Snow, Farocki: Machine Vision and the Posthuman* (2013), *Live rightly, die, die...* (2012) and *Escape Velocity: Alternative Instruction Prototype for Playing the Knowledge Game* (2012).

He lives in Montreal, and teaches at the School of Visual and Media Arts at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

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### Althea Thauberger (BFA 00)

Althea Thauberger's internationally produced and exhibited work typically revolves around interactions with a group or community that result in performances, films, videos, audio recordings and books. Her works involves sometimes-provocative reflections of social, political, institutional and aesthetic power relations.

Thauberger was awarded the Print and Photography Prize from Concordia University in 2000.

#### Related Links

- [Faculty of Fine Arts](#)
- [Technoculture, Art and Games \(TAG\)](#)
- [BNLMTL 2014](#)
- [Abbas Akhavan](#)
- [Matthew Biederman](#)
- [Nicolas Baier](#)
- [Nicolas Grenier](#)
- [Jacqueline Hoang Nguyen](#)
- [Richard Ibgby and Marilou Lemmens](#)
- [Emmanuelle Léonard](#)
- [Lynne Marsh](#)
- [Skawennati](#)
- [David Tomas](#)
- [Étienne Tremblay-Tardif](#)
- [Althea Thauberger](#)