



la maison rouge – fondation antoine de galbert



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My Winnipeg

A touring exhibition in Europe (June 2011 – May 2012)

**Exhibition presented at la maison rouge, Paris
at the Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète
and at the National Arts Centre (Ottawa)**

General curator of the show : Anthony Kiendl, Plug-In, ICA Winnipeg, director

My Winnipeg is the title of an exhibition and publication project that will examine and document the art and culture of Winnipeg, Canada for international audiences. The focus of the project will be Winnipeg's contemporary visual art scene, which has received burgeoning acclaim with the international success of numerous artists including Marcel Dzama and the Royal Art Lodge, Kent Monkman, filmmaker Guy Maddin, and many more. *My Winnipeg* will also seek to explore the roots and foundation of these creators by looking at previous generations of artists including painters Eleanor Bond and Wanda Koop, photographer William Eakin. Of particular interest will be a focus on contemporary, vernacular imagery, with roots based in a "prairie Surrealism," founded over many years including historical figures such as Ivan Eyre, and the spiritualist photography of J.G. Hamilton. The project will explore parallels in contemporary Aboriginal iconography, based upon the "spirited" work of the "Indian Group of Seven," whose origins were in Manitoba in the 1970s. The province, Manitoba, translated into Cree means "where the Gods live."

For centuries, Winnipeg (from the Cree word meaning "muddy waters") was the site of trading among Aboriginal peoples at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. With the arrival of European immigrants, it continued to be an important centre of trade and commerce until the construction of the Panama Canal drew the massive flow of goods across the continent to the south. Nevertheless, Winnipeg has continued to inspire audiences with its dynamic cultural milieu. It is the site of Canada's first professional ballet company, civic art museum, contemporary dance company and institute of contemporary art. Media theorist Marshall McLuhan was raised in Winnipeg and called it home, and Canada's arguably most internationally celebrated visual artists, General Idea, germinated in Winnipeg with university dropouts AA Bronson and Felix Partz first working together in Winnipeg prior to departing for Toronto. Musician Neil Young grew up in Winnipeg, and first performed some of his timeless compositions at Kelvin High School. Canada's "Indian Group of Seven" a senior generation of acclaimed Aboriginal artists from across the continent first met and worked together in Winnipeg during the 1970s.

In order to draw together such a wide-ranging and diverse array of art and culture, *Winnipeg* will be formed of several "chapters" making up both the exhibition and publication project. The chapters are devised to grasp the depth and scale of cultural accomplishment in Winnipeg, as well as explore and assess its implications, while acknowledging some of its leading artists.

Sections:

Winter Kept Us Warm

Curator: Noam Gonick

This chapter explores Winnipeg not simply as a geographical location, but as a mytho-poetic territory of the body and desire. In presenting the work of multiple generations of artists dating as far back as the 1960s, and up to the present day, this chapter builds upon burgeoning recognition of Winnipeg as a distinctive site of art production that is somewhat outside and yet urgently relevant to mainstream politics and aesthetics. Winter Kept Us Warm, takes its name from David Secter's 1965 film, Canada's first entry into the Cannes Film Festival, which in turn took its name from T.S. Eliot's "Wasteland." In order to create a sense of this "other" place, by turns wasteland and utopia, this chapter features a broad range of artistic media, from video art to sculpture and photography, all in multiple ways connected to the city's physical and erotic aura.

Guy Maddin

This chapter will be an examination dedicated to the "hauntings" of filmmaker Guy Maddin. It will feature a specific body of work, an installation of short films devised to be viewed in custom-built furniture, never exhibited before in Europe.

This space may also contain a series of his single channel films and video available for viewing on monitors with headphones.

There's no place like home

Curator: Sigrid Dahle

This chapter will explore the sense of the gothic that has permeated by Winnipeg and its cultural production. As the coldest city on earth with a population over 600,000, site of repeated floods, insect plagues, rebellion, treason, small pox, and North America's only General Strike (galvanizing the labour movement in North America), Winnipeg's unique geographical, climatic and historical circumstances will be traced.

Marcel Dzama, the Royal Art Lodge, the collectives

Paul Butler Collage Party in the courtyard

The Aboriginal landscape : Kent Monkman and the natives (the Indian Group of Seven), Wanda Koop

And others, Shary Boyle, Daniel Barrow, Bob Kovitz, Eleonor Bond, Sarah Anne Johnson, Simon Hughes, Aganetha Dick, Diana Thorneycroft, William Eakin....

Some images



Guy Maddin, still from *My Winnipeg*, 2008



Diana Thorneycroft, *Group of Seven Awkward Moments*



Kent Monkman, *Kindred Spirits Share Mysteries of the Ancient Ones*



Marcel Dzama



Simon Hughes, *Fortified Coffeeshop*



Wanda Koop, *Banks of the Red River*, 1996