



Visual arts: Three Montreal artists win Governor General's awards

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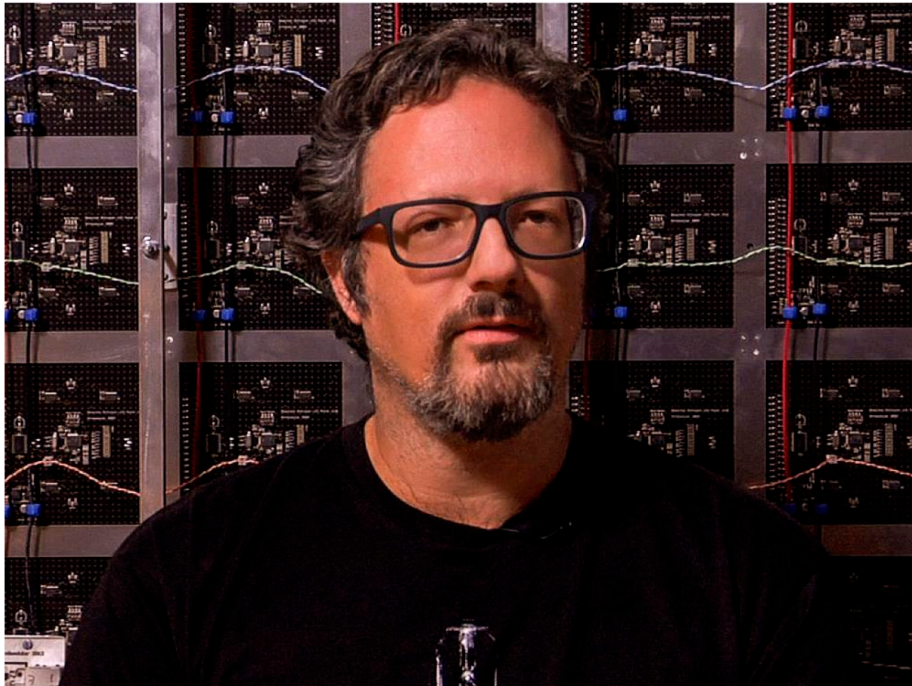


Louise Déry, a curator and director of the Galerie de l'UQAM since 1997, will receive the Outstanding Contribution Award.

Canada Council

Three Montrealers are among eight national winners of Governor General's Awards in visual and media arts, which recognize career achievement and come with a cash prize of \$25,000.

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Rafael Lozano-Hemmer was born in Mexico and represented it in Venice in 2007.

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The other two Montreal winners are Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, a media artist, and Rober Racine, a visual artist, writer and composer.

Other winners include Robert Houle of Toronto, who is represented by Galerie Nicolas Robert and will open an exhibition at the gallery in April, and Paul McClure, a Toronto jewellery artist who won the craft award named after Saidye Bronfman. Micah Lexier, a visual artist from Toronto, Sandra Meigs, a painter from Victoria, B.C., and Reva Stone, a new-media artist from Winnipeg, round out the list.

The winners will receive their awards, including a medallion produced by the Canadian Mint, on April 8 at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. Governor General David Johnston said he looks forward to personally congratulating the artists.

Déry has brought many of Canada's best artists to the UQAM gallery, including Racine, Michael Snow and Shary Boyle, who went on to represent Canada at the Venice Biennale in 2013. Déry led a two-year effort to produce The Painting Project, an overview of painting in Canada, with work by 60 artists in two exhibitions in 2013.

Déry curated the Canada exhibition in Venice in 2007, which featured David Altmejd, a Montreal-born artist who will have a solo exhibition at the Musée d'art contemporain in June. At this year's biennale, she will present several of Jean-Pierre Aubé's interventions on electromagnetic pollution.

Lozano-Hemmer was born in Mexico and represented it in Venice in 2007. He graduated from Concordia in 1989 and makes Montreal his base for media projects that are installed around the world. He brought Pulse Room – a gallery full of lights, each of which responded to individual heart beats – to the Musée d'art contemporain in 2014.

Lozano-Hemmer said the content of his artwork is generated by the people who participate in it. "Without participation, the artwork doesn't exist," he said in an interview.



Rober Racine is a visual artist, writer and composer.

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Racine is a multidisciplinary artist who has created performances and installations based on his interest in the intricacies and nuances of sound, language and literary text, according to a National Gallery biography. The Canadian Encyclopedia described how he explored Gustave Flaubert's *Salammbô* by constructing a set of large wooden stairs that echoed the architectural structure of the novel. He read the novel while standing on the appropriate level of the stairs and finished by jumping from the top level to the floor.

In an interview, he said he was honoured, but that winning the award will not change his life. He noted that after winning Quebec's highest art prize in 2007 – the Prix Paul-Émile-Borduas – his subsequent grant applications to the Canada and Quebec arts councils were rejected.

“Many artists need grants to continue their work, but artists perceive

that the grant system has become a lottery,” he said.

For information about the Governor General’s award winners, go to ggavma.canadacouncil.ca (<http://ggavma.canadacouncil.ca>).

Four-minute video interviews with the winners can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjhCs-hRAvsEGs8ObrD9To4OaKPhh7fWx> (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjhCs-hRAvsEGs8ObrD9To4OaKPhh7fWx>).

An exhibition of work by the winning artists opens April 9 and continues to Aug. 30 at the National Gallery of Canada, 380 Sussex Drive, Ottawa. Info: gallery.ca (<http://gallery.ca>).