



PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Configurations: Photographic Memory on McGill College Avenue

Two views of Montréal and Quebec society

Montréal, June 15, 2007 — The McCord Museum's new outdoor exhibition, *Configurations*, will be on view from June 15 to October 15, 2007. Ideally situated in the heart of downtown Montréal, *Configurations* is displayed along McGill College Avenue, between de Maisonneuve Boulevard West and Sainte-Catherine Street West. Be sure to visit this free exhibition of large-format photographs selected from the Notman Photographic Archives and from contemporary artists' collections.

Montréal in the spotlight — Twenty-nine pairs of exceptional black-and-white photographs provide a glimpse into Quebec society from the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the late 20th century. Photographs from William Notman's 19th-century studio are juxtaposed with more recent images representing the photographic documentary tradition of the 1970s and 80s. These contemporary, politically engaged photographs witness the social changes and upheavals of those decades, especially in the city of Montréal. Some of these photographs were exhibited by the McCord in response to an invitation by the Museum and curator Stanley Triggs.

If you visit the exhibition heading north along McGill College Avenue, you will see these images that document everyday life in the 1970s and 80s. Heading south, you will discover the photographs of William Notman and his contemporaries.

Configurations explores the vitality and diversity of social relations in Montréal and measures how the city's architecture has changed; it is an expression of Quebecois life. "If the contrast between the Notman Studio photographs and those from a more recent past shows how the city has changed over the course of the last 100 years, it also illustrates a certain continuity surrounding questions of identity," explains the curator of the Notman Photographic Archives, Dr. Hélène Samson. A link is made between two seemingly disparate eras.

The McCord's first outdoor exhibition *Transactions*, presented in 2006, was an inspiring success. In addition to the numerous awards won by the exhibition - including an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Canadian Museums Association - more than 650,000 people visited McGill College Avenue to view *Transactions*. "These exhibitions are a unique opportunity for the McCord to present its collections to a much greater audience, on a much larger scale," states Dr. Victoria Dickenson, the Museum's Executive Director.

The photographs selected for this year's outdoor exhibition will transport you to another time in Montréal society, and another era of life in Quebec. *Configurations* will stimulate your imagination and will re-configure your image of Quebec society. Those who are passionate about photography or curious about Montréal and its history won't want to miss this engaging exhibition.

We thank our partners, without whom this exhibition would not have been possible.

The McCord

The McCord is home to one of the finest historical collections in North America. It possesses some of Canada's most significant cultural treasures, including the most comprehensive collection of clothing made or worn in Canada; an extensive collection related to Aboriginal history and art; and the renowned Notman Photographic Archives.

The Notman Photographic Archives

The McCord Museum is home to the celebrated Notman Photographic Archives, an invaluable historic collection comprising some 1,250,000 photographs from the 1840s to the present. A Canadian cultural treasure, the Notman Photographic Archives are consulted by institutions and researchers from all over the world. The McCord's conservation, preservation and promotion of this collection ensure that the public has access to our collective history and brings this important part of our heritage to life.



Photographs available upon request.

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