

Press release | For immediate distribution

GABY – MAÎTRE DU PORTRAIT

CELEBRITIES OF YESTERYEAR CAPTURED IN STUNNING PHOTOS

Montreal, September 15, 2014 – Anne Hébert, Félix Leclerc, Dominique Michel, Louis Armstrong, Jean Cocteau, Jayne Mansfield... At the peak of his career, Québécois photographer Gabriel Desmarais (Gaby) had the privilege of photographing the hottest Canadian and international stars. **Starting today**, more than 90 large-format portraits taken from the 1940s to the 1980s will be on display in Quartier des Spectacles: outdoors, on Promenade des Artistes and De Maisonneuve Blvd. (until November 16), and indoors at the Grande Bibliothèque (until June 7, 2015).

"With Gaby, maître du portrait, we are not only showcasing an exceptional artist, we are ensuring that several audiences will have access to his works. Thanks to our collaboration with the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership, thousands of people will have the chance to see Gaby's exceptional photographs during their strolls through downtown or when they visit the Grande Bibliothèque," said Christiane Barbe, Chief Executive Officer of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ).

"Gaby's photos are a treasure, and we consider it an honour to display them in Montreal's cultural heart," said Jacques Primeau, chair of the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership. "This collaboration with Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec – a natural ally in all heritage matters – allows us to build a bridge and create synergies between outdoor and indoor public spaces in the Quartier des Spectacles."

The show is presented by Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) and the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership. The photographs are part of the Gabriel Desmarais archival fonds held at BAnQ Vieux-Montréal, and from the personal collection of Gaby's son, Ronald Desmarais.

The Gabriel Desmarais archival fonds held by the BAnQ contains more than 23,000 digitized images available for online viewing at bang.qc.ca. The fonds includes the works Gaby created in Quebec and consists of portraits of prominent Quebecers and Montrealers.



Anne Hébert, 1962
© Ronald Desmarais
Collections BAnQ

Félix Leclerc, 1951
© Ronald Desmarais
Collections BAnQ

Dominique Michel, 1951
© Ronald Desmarais
Collections BAnQ



Louis Armstrong, 1967
© Ronald Desmarais / Getty Images
Collection Ronald Desmarais

Jayne Mansfield, 1957
© Ronald Desmarais / Getty Images
Collection Ronald Desmarais

Jean Cocteau, 1955
© Ronald Desmarais / Getty Images
Collection Ronald Desmarais

GABRIEL DESMARAIS (GABY)

Gabriel Desmarais (Gaby) was born on January 28, 1926 in Marieville, in Montérégie. He began his life as a photographer by taking snapshots of skaters' faces in Parc La Fontaine, selling the results to his subjects. By the age of 19 he had taught himself English in order to enrol in a correspondence course given by the American School of Photography in Chicago. His fascination with celebrities led him to Montreal's cabarets and theatres, where his mission was to immortalize the faces of any performers he met.

At the age of 21, he opened his first studio, on Sainte-Catherine St. in Montreal's east end. His camera soon started capturing Quebec's most famous faces, including actors, athletes and politicians. In 1950, his career began a meteoric rise. He travelled the world, from Russia and Haiti to the United States and Europe. He met countless people, and earned the privilege of photographing the biggest stars of the day: Liberace, Fred Astaire, Charles Aznavour, Gilbert Bécaud, Serge Reggiani, Rita Hayworth, Yul Brynner, Arthur Rubinstein and Pablo Neruda, to name just a few.

For more than 30 years, he captured each subject's unique features and personality, becoming one of the world's top photographers. After returning to Quebec, having lived in Hollywood and Monaco, Gabriel Desmarais passed away on May 20, 1991 at the age of 65.

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High resolutions photos are available upon request.

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EXPOSITION *GABY, MAÎTRE DU PORTRAIT*

Une exposition en deux volets (extérieur + intérieur). En tout, plus de 90 photographies à voir.

L'idée est de mettre en valeur les artistes (chanteurs, comédiens, écrivains, peintres...) que Gaby a photographié pendant sa carrière.

L'exposition est présentée par Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec et le Partenariat du Quartier des spectacles.

Voir l'expo à l'intérieur

OÙ: dans l'espace de la collection nationale à la Grande Bibliothèque

QUAND: du 16 septembre 2014 au 7 juin 2015

QUOI: 41 portraits d'artistes québécois... et Jean Cocteau!
Notamment: Wilfrid Pelletier, Dominique Michel, Gratien Gélinas, Gilles Pelletier, Alfred Pellan, Rodolphe Duguay, John Lyman, Colette Bocky, Félix Leclerc, Gilles Vigneault, Pauline Julien, Anne Hébert, Marcel Dubé, Yves Thériault, Yvette Brind'Amour, Judith Jasmin...

UN PETIT +: les quelque 23 000 images du fonds d'archives Gabriel Desmarais conservées par Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec sont toutes numérisées et elles sont accessible en ligne à banq.qc.ca.

Voir l'expo à l'extérieur

OÙ: sur la promenade des Artistes (entre le Complexe des sciences Pierre-Dansereau de l'UQAM et la Place des Arts), le Parterre (à l'est de la Place des Arts à côté de la rue Saint-Urbain) et sur le boulevard de Maisonneuve (entre la Grande Bibliothèque et la rue Saint-Urbain)

QUAND: cet automne, du 15 septembre au 16 novembre 2014

QUOI: 56 portraits très grand format d'artistes québécois et internationaux. Notamment: Glenn Gould, Arthur Rubinstein, Zubin Mehta, Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Oscar Peterson, Alys Robi, Fred Astaire, Liberace, Olivier Guimond, Jayne Mansfield, Yul Brynner, Rita Hayworth, Jane Russell, Ludmilla Chiriaeff...

UN PETIT +: sur la promenade des Artistes, une trame sonore de 20 minutes, constituée d'extraits de pièces des artistes représentés, accompagne l'exposition (détails à la fin).

VOLET EXTÉRIEUR

**Portraits grand format (56 photos)
présentés à l'extérieur sur la
promenade des Artistes, le Parterre
et le boulevard de Maisonneuve
(dans l'ordre d'ouest en est)**

PROMENADE DES ARTISTES:

Glenn Gould
Wilfrid Pelletier
Arthur Rubinstein
Zubin Mehta
Cab Calloway
Louis Armstrong
Duke Ellington
Oscar Peterson
Alys Robi
Guilda
Fred Astaire
Liberace
Doris Lussier/Père Gédéon
Dominique Michel
Olivier Guimond
Denise Filiatrault
Hector Charland
Andrée Lachapelle
Jean Duceppe
Denise Pelletier
Gratien Gélinas
Jayne Mansfield
Yul Brynner
Rita Hayworth
Jane Russell
Ludmilla Chiriaeff
Ekaterina Maximova
Celia Franca
Yvette Chauviré
Alfred Pellan
Rodolphe Duguay
Rita Letendre
Guido Molinari
Marc-Aurèle Fortin
Armand Vaillancourt
Françoise Sullivan
Marcel Barbeau

PARTERRE:

Colette Boky
Mario Del Monaco
Renata Tebaldi
Léopold Simoneau
Charles Aznavour
Henri Salvador
Gilbert Bécaud
Serge Reggiani

BOULEVARD DE MAISONNEUVE:

Félix Leclerc
Raymond Lévesque
Jean-Pierre Ferland
Willie Lamothe
Jean Cocteau
André Malraux
Pablo Neruda
Louis Aragon
Norman McLaren
Roger Lemelin
Anne Hébert

TRAME SONORE

promenade des Artistes

Boucle de 20 minutes réalisée par
Antoine Bédard.

Glenn Gould – *Goldberg Variations, BMV 988: Variation 3 a 1 Clav. Canone All'Unisono*
Louis Armstrong & His All-Stars *Struttin' With Some Barbecue*
Cab Calloway – *Zaz Zuh Zaz*
Duke Ellington – *Montreal 1964 (live)*
Guilda – *Je suis la femme*
Alys Robi – *Tico tico*
Raymond Lévesque – *Quand les hommes vivront d'amour*
Charles Aznavour – *La Bohème*
Eleanor Powell and Fred Astaire – *Tap Dance duet*
Denise Filiatrault – *Jeunesse d'aujourd'hui*
Dominique Michel – *Sur l'perron*
Félix Leclerc – *Moi, mes souliers*
Jane Russell – *in The French Line*
Fred Astaire – *Cheek to Cheek (Top Hat)*
Jean-Pierre Ferland – *Le petit roi*
Mario del Monaco – *Recondita Armonia*
Serge Reggiani – *Il suffirait de presque rien*
Oscar Peterson – *Summertime*
Willie Lamothe – *Je chante à cheval*

VOLET INTÉRIEUR

**42 portraits présentés à la Grande
Bibliothèque, dans l'espace de la
Collection nationale (19 portraits +
mosaïque de 23 portraits divers
formats)**

Wilfrid Pelletier
Dominique Michel
Gratien Gélinas
Gilles Pelletier
Alfred Pellan
Rodolphe Duguay
John Lyman
Colette Bocky
Félix Leclerc
Gilles Vigneault
Pauline Julien
Anne Hébert
Marcel Dubé
Yves Thériault
Yvette Brind'Amour
Judith Jasmin
Jacques Beaudry
Robert Choquette
Claude Jasmin
Denise Filiatrault
Jean Duceppe
Colette Boky
Andrée Lachapelle
Jean Desprez
Nicole Germain
Doris Lussier
Willy Lamothe
Gaby
Guilda
Jean Cocteau
Gérard Poirier
Robert LaPalme
Edgard Fruitier
Béatrice Picard
Roger Lemelin
Hector Charland
Monique Leyrac
Olivier Guimond et Paul Desmariaux
Marjolaine Hébert
Françoise Sullivan
Hélène Loiselle
Alys Robi