

Presented by



Desjardins Group presents
**ALLIES IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT COMPLEXE DESJARDINS AND
THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**

Montreal, May 11, 2015 – Presented by Desjardins Group at both Complexe Desjardins and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), the exhibition *Allies in the Spotlight* is open to the public free of charge from May 12 to June 7, 2015, as part of the activities organized for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (May 17). This exhibition is a production of the Fondation Émergence, in partnership with the MMFA, the Consulat général de France à Québec, Les Deux Mondes theatre company and Complexe Desjardins.

Allies are family members, friends, colleagues, teachers and institutions who value respect for sexual orientation diversity and are committed to defending it when it is threatened, discriminated against or attacked. Sharing these same values of inclusion and diversity, the event partners have joined forces to fight against homophobia and transphobia. The exhibition *Allies in the Spotlight*, which grew out of this partnership, is composed of two parts:

IMAGINARY COUPLES at Complexe Desjardins

Through the lens of French photographer Olivier Ciappa, public figures appear as imaginary same-sex couples, inviting visitors to cast a kinder eye on homosexuality: “When we love, it is the same experience for all of us, regardless of age, origin, religion or sexuality.” First presented in France, the exhibition was reinvented in Quebec on the initiative of Monique Giroux and the Consulat général de France à Québec to feature local personalities, including Mitsou and Sophie Lorain, Claude Legault and Patrick Lagacé, Guy A. Lepage and Dany Turcotte, who is also the project’s spokesman. These real and imaginary couples signed on to this project, revealing themselves as allies in the fight against homophobia and transphobia.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT/TOMBER DANS L’OEIL at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

With a tip of the hat to Olivier Ciappa’s creative process, the MMFA and Les Deux Mondes theatre company are presenting *Love at First Sight/ Tomber dans l’oeil*, in which portraits from the Museum’s collection of Quebec and Canadian art are brought together as couples that are as surprising as they are atypical. Actors voice Sébastien Harrisson’s dialogues through an audio device. Defying a heteronormative installation that would presume the heterosexuality of the figures, the playwright’s fiction proposes a path less travelled, beyond stereotypes on couples and homosexuality.

Activity in connection with the exhibition: <https://www.mbam.qc.ca/en/whats-on/event/the-amina-profile/>

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A selection of visuals is available on the Museum's Web site at: mbam.qc.ca/media

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About the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is currently undergoing exceptional growth. It has one of the highest attendance rates among Canadian museums. More than 1 million people visit its unique encyclopedic collection every year. Its original temporary exhibitions, which combine artistic disciplines (fine arts, music, film, fashion, design), feature innovative exhibition designs and are circulated across Europe and North America. The MMFA is also one of Canada's leading publishers of art books in English and French, which are distributed worldwide. In the fall of 2011, the Museum inaugurated its fourth pavilion – the Claire and Marc Bourgie Pavilion of Quebec and Canadian Art – and a 444-seat concert venue – Bourgie Hall – including an outstanding collection of Tiffany stained glass windows. This expansion also brought about the reinstallation of the Museum's rich holdings in its other three pavilions, which house the world cultures (Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion), medieval to contemporary European art (Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion), and decorative art and design (Liliane and David M. Stewart Pavilion). Music is now an integral part of the Museum, providing another perspective on the visual arts through musical audioguides and other activities. The Studios Art & Education Michel de la Chenelière, which were inaugurated in 2012, have doubled the Museum's facilities for schools, families and community groups, and are visited by close to 200,000 people every year. A fifth building, the Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion for Peace, devoted to international art and education, will open in late 2016, in time for Montreal's 375th anniversary.

About Desjardins Group

Desjardins Group is the leading cooperative financial group in Canada and the fifth largest cooperative financial group in the world with assets of more than \$229 billion. It has been rated one of the 50 Best Employers in Canada by Aon Hewitt. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services to individuals and businesses through its extensive distribution network, online platforms and subsidiaries across Canada. The group has one of the highest capital ratios and credit ratings in the industry. In 2014, Desjardins was named the fourth safest bank in North America by Global Finance magazine and the second strongest bank in the world by Bloomberg News.

About Les Deux Mondes

Les Deux Mondes is one of Quebec's foremost theatre companies and has been engaging in contemporary research and creation for more than 40 years. In 2013, playwright Sébastien Harrisson took over as artistic director and focused the creative endeavours on text. His programming features two-play production cycles consisting of one play geared for young audiences and the other for the general public. Through a creative process focused on research and experimenting, designers from various backgrounds come together and approach these two worlds by creating highly poetic works anchored in humanism. The company is headquartered in Montreal's Villeray neighbourhood and has its own research and production facility.

About Fondation Émergence

Fondation Émergence works to fight homophobia and transphobia, to defend LGBT rights, and to promote the inclusion of LGBT people in society through different programs, including the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia on May 17th: www.fondationemergence.org, www.homophobiaday.org.