



## PRESS RELEASE

### Embracing the unusual: PASSAGES INSOLITES public art circuit is a growing event!

Quebec City, June 25, 2021 – EXMURO arts publics and the Ville de Québec are pleased to invite local residents and visitors to the 8th annual PASSAGES INSOLITES art event, from June 26 to October 11, 2021.

EXMURO arts publics today unveiled the 2021 circuit for PASSAGES INSOLITES, the annual Quebec City art walk showcasing unusual creations. Under the artistic direction of Vincent Roy, more than 20 unique and surprising works by artists from Quebec and around the world will add a touch of magic to the urban experience and transform how we see the city. In its latest iteration, PASSAGES INSOLITES will also create unusual moments through novel approaches for Quebec City including a larger number of boundary-pushing works, a Museum of Bad Art (MOBA), and stealth performing arts pop-ups sure to deliver unscripted off-kilter moments. Expect the unexpected! From ephemeral installations to unanticipated encounters, art is taking over the city on a street corner near you!

#### The main circuit

From Petit Champlain and Place Royale, through the Old Port, and on to Saint-Roch and Saint-Sauveur, a yellow line painted on the road will guide visitors along the 5 km circuit of singular artworks. Intrigue, surprise, unexpected joys, and moments of poetry are the order of the day, as visitors enjoy 21 works that will make you see with fresh eyes. Our 21 participating artists and collectives have risen to the challenge with creativity, humour, and audacity, to make art take over the city and create a space of perpetual enchantment. The art walk is a perfectly safe activity that's ideal for the whole family.

An interactive map of the circuit and a downloadable pdf are available online at [passagesinsolites.com](http://passagesinsolites.com) or at the event's welcome centre at Espace 400e, 100 quai Saint-André.

#### Public art showcases Quebec City heritage buildings

Exclusive to this year's edition, works of public art will challenge how we see Quebec City landmarks:

- *King of the Mountain*, by Charles-Étienne Brochu, presented in front of the **Quebec Parliament Building**.
- *ARENA* by Benoît Maubrey, presented outdoors on the grounds of the **Grand Théâtre de Québec**.
- *Through the Walls* by Collectif Tel quel, winner of the student competition held through our first collaboration with the Maison des métiers d'art de Québec, presented at the **Citadelle of Québec**.

In another exciting collaboration, historian José Doré has partnered with two collectives of emerging artists to provide detailed historical explanations of their exciting works:

- *Last Stop*, by Collectif du Tropique, winner of the student competition organized in collaboration with the Art School of Université Laval, is a sculptural installation featuring reproductions of commercial signage that once enlivened the streets of the Saint-Roch district.

- *Delirious Québec*, by the collective of the same name, winner of the student competition held in collaboration with the Université Laval architecture students' association, is an architectural flight of fancy that reproduces and recombines many of Quebec City's landmark buildings.

### **For the first time, the performing arts are part of the PASSAGES INSOLITES circuit**

Like the artworks along the circuit, performing artists (dancers, circus artists, musicians, theatre artists, and multidisciplinary artists) are taking over the urban space to spark moments of magic in the Petit-Champlain, Place-Royale, and Old Port districts. This brand-new experience straddles the thin border between reality and imagination. *Les embuscades* – stealth performing arts pop-ups in public spaces conceived by EXMURO, in partnership with Théâtre Premier Acte and codirected by Marc Goudreau and Vincent Roy, will take place from July 14 to August 22, in collaboration with Théâtre Kata (theatre), Le CRue (dance), FLIP Fabrique (circus), L'orchestre d'hommes orchestres (multi-arts), and District 7 production (music).

### **Bringing the magic back to Espace 400e**

This emblematic building designed for Quebec City's 400th anniversary will welcome the Museum of Bad Art (MOBA), on tour from its Boston home for a first visit to Quebec City. For a single summer, the building will be transformed into an ephemeral museum housing a unique collection of the very best bad art in the world, work simply "too bad to be ignored." Visitors are sure to find that there is a unique pleasure in work whose intent is serious but whose execution fails lamentably. A stop at Espace 400e also gives visitors the opportunity to get information and maps of the circuit and peruse the gift shop.

### **An international event bringing in public art from around the world**

International artists at PASSAGES INSOLITES this year:

- Benedetto Bufalino (France): *The Lawn Cars*, in Petit-Champlain.
- Benoît Maubrey (Germany): *ARENA*, an interactive sound work, part of the Grand Théâtre de Québec 50th anniversary programming.
- Nicole Banowetz (USA): *An Adaptive Moment* in Bassin Louise
- Mark Jenkins (USA): *Untitled*, characters scattered around the city

PASSAGES INSOLITES is focusing on women artists through our first-ever partnership with the OpenArt biennial of Örebro, Sweden, which has brought work by three Swedish collectives and artists: STYRELSEN FOR STÖR KONST, Ulrika Sparre, and Susanna Hesselberg. In 2022, three Quebec artists will complete the exchange by exhibiting at OpenArt.

### **PASSAGES INSOLITES circulating works**

EXMURO arts publics has also begun circulating works from PASSAGES INSOLITES to other cities in Quebec, Canada, and around the world as a means of promoting its artists, achievements, and expertise designing and presenting temporary public artworks. This year alone, Longueuil, Trois-Rivières, Terrebonne, Montreal, and Gatineau (as part of its Sentier Culturel initiative) are hosting works initially conceived and presented in Quebec City for PASSAGES INSOLITES.

### **The first-ever PASSAGES INSOLITES catalogue makes the perfect souvenir!**

For the first time in our history, we are releasing a PASSAGES INSOLITES exhibition catalogue. Available for pre-sale at Espace 400e starting June 26, the catalog will be published in mid-July, and can be purchased for \$25 at our gift shop and partner boutiques. It's the perfect way to take some art home with you, learn more about the stories, works, and artists, and savour the memory of the 8th edition of this unique public art festival.

*The PASSAGES INSOLITES public art circuit has been presented and funded by the City of Québec and produced by EXMURO arts publics since 2014. The City awarded \$325,000 in funding for project design and production. Of this total, \$80,000 is provided through the Entente de développement culturel agreement between Québec's provincial government and the Ville de Québec.*

The Ville de Québec and EXMURO arts publics wish to thank its flagship partners and also its site partners: OpenArt (Sweden), the Assemblée nationale du Québec, the Grand Théâtre de Québec, the Citadelle de Québec – Musée Royal 22e Régiment, the Port of Quebec, the Réseau de transport de la Capitale (RTC), Quartier Saint-Sauveur and the Maison des métiers d'art de Québec.

- 30 -

### Upcoming events

Public launch weekend: June 26–27, 2021

Next press conference, for *Les Embuscades: Stealth performances in public space*: July 13, 2021

Website: <https://www.passagesinsolites.com>

Download images: [clickable link](#)

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# EXMURO ARTS PUBLICS



Credits: Stéphane Bourgeois\_EXMURO (1) Workshop, (2) Lawn Cars, Benedetto Bufalino, in progress (3) *I am the light*, Ulrika Sparre, in progress.

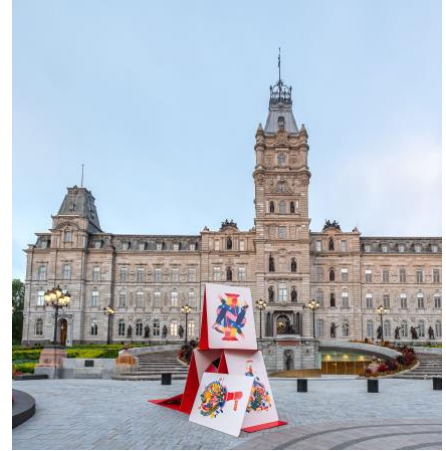
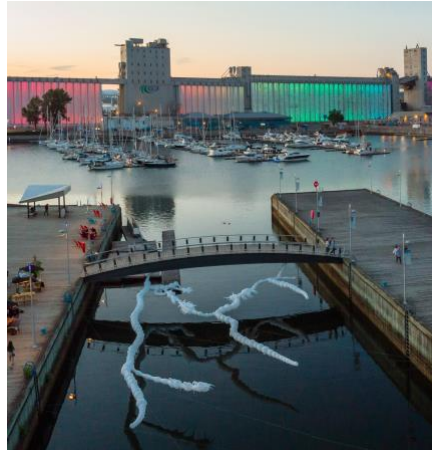
EXMURO arts publics is a non-profit organization whose mandate is to design, create, and disseminate contemporary art projects in public spaces. Since 2007 EXMURO has constantly explored new avenues for presenting public artworks in the city. Through a range of projects, EXMURO works to expand the artistic possibilities of public spaces by reaching out to audiences to spark dialogue and foster critical thinking. For EXMURO, public art affords a freedom of experimentation and expression that is a necessary counterweight to the forces of standardization and pragmatism that govern so many facets of urban life. By weaving artworks into the urban fabric, we create possibilities to break through uniformity and standardization to create original and surprising experiences and encounters.

EXMURO arts publics develops large-scale projects that build community and drive artistic development, and is recognized as an international leader in the world of public art, thanks to:

- Nearly 15 years' experience designing and developing artworks and multidisciplinary projects in public spaces.
- Workshop and production spaces in Quebec City, and an experienced technical team. EXMURO has also successfully led remote co-productions with international artists.
- Presenter of major events such as PASSAGES INSOLITES (since 2014, Quebec City) and HUMANORIUM – The Strange Carnival (since 2016; presented in Quebec City, Montreal (2017), Summerside, PEI (2018), Saint John, NB (2018) and Trois-Rivières (2019)).
- Developer of circulation projects to promote the work of participating artists and its achievements and expertise designing and presenting temporary public artworks in other cities in Quebec, Canada, and internationally.

More Information: [exmuro.com](http://exmuro.com)

# ARTWORKS AND ARTISTS



Credits: Stéphane Bourgeois\_EXMURO (1) *Lawn Cars*, Benedetto Bufalino (2) *An Adaptive Moment*, Nicole Banowetz (3) *King of the Mountain*, Charles-Étienne Brochu

## THE MAIN CIRCUIT

### **Nicole Banowetz (Denver, United States), *An Adaptive Moment*, 2021**

A strange specimen overlooks the Bassin Louise. The inflatable installation reflects and magnifies the anatomical details of the rotifers, microscopic creatures that are able to dry out and be swept up by the wind to escape their predators. As they travel, rotifers absorb the DNA of nearby species and recombine it with their own, ensuring their survival. This exceptional creature with its surreal shape has a great deal to teach us about the transformative virtues of adaptability and resilience in the face of adversity.

### **BGL (Quebec City, Quebec), *The Trap*, 2007**

What artwork can hold us in its thrall like an ice cream stand, singing its siren song to young and old alike? Hold on, though – when you take a closer look, the stand turns out to be completely infested with dead insects! Between attraction and repulsion, the unsettling lure of this trap is a stark reminder that appearances can be deceiving, and what looks like the tastiest of treats may be no more than a mirage.

*This artwork was first created for Artefact Montreal's third edition, presented on Saint Helen's Island by the Centre d'art public to highlight the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Expo 67.*

### **Benedetto Bufalino, (Lyon, France), *Lawn Cars*, 2021**

In a utopic new world where the car has become obsolete, a series of three parked cars are overturned, filled with earth, and covered with an immaculate lawn. It's the perfect site for an afternoon in the sun, or a picnic. Street parking is taken over by a place where people live together playfully while greening the public space. The sight of cars reused and repurposed in this way is also a cogent criticism of consumerism and the climate emergency.

*Produced with support from the Consulat général de France à Québec.*



### **Delirious Québec (Quebec City, Quebec), *Delirious Québec*, 2021**

The Delirious Québec collective let its imagination run wild, reproducing and combining elements from various Quebec City buildings notable for their unique volumetric proportions and strong identity. In a promenade that juxtaposes buildings from hitherto widely separated locations and time periods, the built heritage is broken down to its formal features through a reversal of perspective, and variations in scale and geometric abstraction of shapes complicate our perceptions.

*Delirious Québec* won the PASSAGES INSOLITES competition, organized in collaboration with Architecture Student Association at Université Laval.

*This project is made possible by the Entente de développement culturel, a funding agreement between the Québec government and the Ville de Québec.*

### **Yann Farley (Sainte-Justine, Québec), *Station A*, 2021**

*Station A* is a payment station that blends into the urban landscape, with its familiar interface and pictograms, along with the tantalizing promise of giving you something for free. But all attempts to operate the machine are fraught. The instructions seem increasingly absurd, until we realize the nature of the twisted trial the artist has set out for us. This electroacoustic interactive sculpture pokes fun at our ambiguous relationship with the automated equipment we now interact with everywhere we go.

### **Charles Fleury and the students of École secondaire Vanier (Quebec City, Quebec), *Parade of Imagination* 2021**

This merry menagerie of hybrid people/animal/objects has been exhibited on the walls of Côte de la Potasse. The dynamic composition of the pieces on display is the result of a collective work of collage. Fragments of visual and textual elements have been cut out and reassembled by high-school artists to represent various facets of their identity. Our self-image, and the one we project onto others, come together in this collective self-portrait.

*This project is made possible by the Entente de développement culturel, a funding agreement between the Québec government and the Ville de Québec.*

### **Pascale LeBlanc Lavigne (Quebec City, Quebec), *The bus Shelter*, 2021**

A dozen robotic arms with blue cloths and spray bottles are placed inside a bus shelter, and clumsily attempt to clean the glass walls. But this lacklustre contraption seems only to make the shelter walls dirtier. At a time when the hygiene practices in a sterilized city are growing ever more intense, in the midst of a looming labour shortage, Pascale LeBlanc Lavigne has created an irreverent and ironic attempt to automate the upkeep of urban furniture.

Made possible by the support of RTC.

### **Susanna Hesselberg, (Malmö, Sweden), *When my father died it was like a whole library had burned down*, 2015**

Scarcely visible on the horizon, a library plunges deep into the abyss of an underground shaft. The riveting sight invites further exploration, but the wealth of knowledge and poetry we could fall into remains out of reach. The title references song lyrics by Laurie Anderson to evoke the all-consuming pain of losing a loved one. This buried library, not unlike a tomb, reflects the mourning for transmission interrupted, for knowledge now lost, irrevocably and forever.

*Presented in partnership with the OpenArt biennial (Örebro, Sweden). EXMURO is grateful to the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil des arts du Canada for its financial support.*

**Mark Jenkins (Washington, D.C., United States), *Untitled*, 2021**

The city is a stage set for Mark Jenkins's hyperrealistic characters, who adopt unusual postures and interact with the built environment in surprising ways. They pop up in the alleyways and hidden nooks and crannies of the historic Petit-Champlain neighbourhood, where they are always ready for playful hijinks. Cast at human scale, and dressed in a disarmingly realistic manner, these sculptures fool passersby, who need a double-take to see that they aren't actually real people in alarming positions.

*EXMURO is pleased to present the work of Mark Jenkins in collaboration with Manif d'art – the Quebec City biennial. In 2022, the artist's work will be presented at Le Manif d'art 10.*

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*Made possible by the support of RTC.*

***Art too bad to be ignored*, Museum of Bad Art (Boston, United States)**

Curators: Michael Frank (curator in chief), Louise Reilly Sacco, (executive director)

The MOBA's unique collection has gathered the *crème de la crème* of art that is just too bad to be ignored. It's a celebration of work whose intent is serious but whose execution is lacking. The mostly anonymous paintings have been classified and exhibited using real museum standards, with the occasional irregularity to highlight their uniqueness. Written with a light but mordant touch, each work's description analyzes its imagery and style to pinpoint the source of their endearing badness.

**Wartin Pantois (Quebec City, Quebec), *Phase I*, 2021**

Wartin Pantois makes an empty lot welcoming again by occupying it with a freestanding mural. *Phase 1*, an eclectic group portrait, was spliced together from old photographs. Reminiscent of a tiered wedding cake, or perhaps a joyful Tower of Babel, the work is crowned with flowering plants. The layered construction stands like a lighthouse at the point of entry to the Saint-Sauveur district, a reminder of the inequalities created, then as now, by our hierarchical system of social classes.

*This project is made possible by the Entente de développement culturel, a funding agreement between the Québec government and the Ville de Québec.*

**Valérie Potvin (Quebec City, Quebec), *The Sculptor Herself*, 2021**

A towering figure rises out of the alleyway, with the sculptor's hammer in hand and the aspect of a heroine brandishing arms. The figure depicted in this playfully self-referential work is the sculptor herself, thereby affirming Valérie Potvin's own status as artist. Stoic and unshakeable on its plinth, the alabaster monument is also an homage to the strength of women and their incontestable position in public art.

*Made possible by the support of the Conseil des arts du Canada.*

**Théâtre Rude Ingénierie (Quebec City, Quebec), *Rising Waters*, 2021**

A mysterious village lies in the waters of Bassin Louise. Where did it come from? Was it overrun by rising waters, or purpose-built in these shallows? A plume of smoke, a ringing bell – small signs of life suggest the village is still inhabited. *Rising Waters* is a serene tableau of what may be no more than a becalmed, tide-swept life.

*This artwork includes a portion of the following preexisting work : Le Clocher de la Providence, a creative production by ATSA for Fin Novembre 2011.*

**Ulrika Sparre (Stockholm, Sweden), *I am the Light*, 2021**

Lightboxes with short poetic messages have been placed all around Quebec City, a literary circuit to be discovered during a stroll through town. These lyrical incursions in surprising locations enliven the urban landscape with charming but cryptic statements that are at once personal and evasive. Philosophical in nature, the excerpts open the door to existential contemplation and invite passersby to plunge momentarily into an introspective reverie.

*Presented in partnership with the OpenArt biennial (Örebro, Sweden). EXMURO is grateful to the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil des arts du Canada for its financial support.*

**STYRELSEN FOR STÖR KONST (Stockholm, Sweden), *The Anti Embassy - "The Most Equal Place in the World"*, 2021**

As part of a high-level diplomatic mission, the Board for Grand Art has opened an embassy in the Port of Québec. At first glance, the small structure seems to have everything such a building might need. But closer inspection reveals that the Swedish collective has deliberately subverted institutional codes in order to denounce the inequalities of Sweden's art world. The critical discourse of this fictitious embassy has set out to break the illusions of a country often held up as the most equal place in the world.

Presented in partnership with the OpenArt biennial (Örebro, Sweden). EXMURO is grateful to the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil des arts du Canada for its financial support.

**Sarah Thibault (Quebec City, Quebec), *Monumental Impermanence*, 2021**

Aligned with the central entranceway of the Saint-Roch church, this sculptural arch provides a passageway to the church's forecourt, a central gathering place for neighbourhood residents. The arch is covered with an haut-relief of papier-mâché baguettes. This work combines symbolic elements drawn from the lowly and ornate spheres, while echoing the gilded elements of the church whose ground it occupies.

**Giorgia Volpe (Quebec City, Quebec), *Suitcases*, 2021**

These *suitcases* by Giorgia Volpe, set up in locations throughout the city, seem to have been left on the roadside – perhaps forgotten, or lost, or voluntarily discarded by their owners. But the suspect luggage does not contain personal belongings: they are solid blocks of cast concrete. Thus fixed in their inert, massive state, these unusable suitcases evoke the recent constraints placed on nomadic existences and human migration.



## **SATELLITE ARTWORKS**

### **Charles-Étienne Brochu (Quebec City, Quebec), *King of the Mountain*, 2020**

A monumental house of cards with colourful illustrations stands before the Parliament Building. The work illustrates the precarious nature of social equilibrium, and represents the duality of our precious institutions, which are at once fragile and robust. Much like the fabric of Quebec society, a house of cards requires great care and constant vigilance. All it takes is a gust of wind or one abrupt move to topple everything we have worked so hard to build.

*Presented in partnership with the Assemblée nationale du Québec.*

### **Benoît Maubrey (Berlin, Allemagne), *ARENA*, 2017**

*ARENA* is a mobile, interactive, electroacoustic sculpture. It is built entirely from a mix of recycled speakers, and is open to audience participation: the public can create spontaneous performances or play music by making a phone call, connecting wirelessly, or plugging directly into the installation. This temporary installation imbues the public space with an unbridled spirit of creativity sure to inspire the entire community.

*Presented in partnership with the Grand Théâtre de Québec, as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations.*

### **Collectif Tel quel (Quebec City, Quebec), *Through the Walls*, 2021**

A monumental weaving project framed with interconnected hoops is stretching upwards and taking over the Citadelle de Québec. Its incongruous position on a site marked by martial grandeur and stark emptiness enhances the contrast between the synthetic art objects soaring above the austere face of the stone wall. By inviting us to look closely at this playful domestic universe in the rigid context of fortifications, the Collectif Tel quel gives us a way to momentarily break free from the imaginary fortifications that keep us apart.

*Through the Walls* won the PASSAGES INSOLITES competition, organized in collaboration with the Maison des métiers d'art de Québec.

*Presented in partnership with The Citadelle of Québec – Royal 22e Régiment Museum.*

# CIRCULATING WORKS FROM PASSAGES INSOLITES



(1) *Space Cube*, Marie-Eve Martel (arrondissement Québec 2018) ©Stéphane Bourgeois\_EXMURO (2) *When Paper Planes Stop Catching Wind* (Montréal 2021) ©EXMURO (3) *Happy Castaways*, Demers-Mesnard, (Longueuil 2019) ©Seminaro.

Each year, astonishingly unique works of art travel from the Quebec City public art circuit PASSAGES INSOLITES to other cities in Canada and across the world. Created by contemporary artists from here and abroad, each installation reinvents the urban experience by fostering new perspectives upon the places they inhabit. PASSAGES INSOLITES ignites the imagination through the discovery of unusual art installations that will transform your experience of the city.

Artworks were originally created for PASSAGES INSOLITES, the public art circuit designed by EXMURO and presented by the City of Quebec. The circulation project was made possible by the support of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Canada.

**Ville de Longueuil** is once again partnering with EXMURO to present two public artworks, chosen for their aesthetic qualities and their participatory dimension:

- Marie-Eve Martel, *Space Cube*, produced for PASSAGES INSOLITES in 2017, and presented in Quebec City in 2018 and 2019.
- Fannie Giguère, *Elsewhere*, 2018

**Trois-Rivières** : four works from PASSAGES INSOLITES now form a circuit in downtown Trois-Rivières, as part of the city's *Un été Culture Trois-Rivières* program:

- Charles Fleury (Québec), *Zootheology*, 2016
- BGL (Québec), *The Portal*, 2019
- Brandon Vickard, *Alouette*, 2018
- Max Streicher, *Endgame (Nagg&Nell)*, 2019
- Mathieu Valade (Québec), *Mythe et évidence*, 2017. Produced and presented as part of Manif d'art 8 – the Quebec City biennial, and circulated by EXMURO arts publics.

**Ville de Terrebonne** : until September 6, 2021, in collaboration with the Société de développement culturel de Terrebonne (SODECT). Old Terrebonne comes alive with Détours Culturels, and presents three works:

- Atelier MAP, *When Paper Planes Stop Catching Wind*. Presented in Quebec City in 2017 and 2018, and in Montreal in collaboration with ATSA from May 13 to 17, 2021.
- Demers-Mesnard, *Happy Castaways*. Produced for PASSAGES INSOLITES in 2018, and presented in Ville de Longueuil and Philadelphia in 2019.
- Sculptosaurus, *Outdoor Ball Games*, 2017

**Ville de Montréal** : in collaboration with ATSA, two works were presented from May 13–17 as part of Le grand voyage event:

- Giorgia Volpe, *Suitcases*, 2021.
- Atelier MAP, *When Paper Planes Stop Catching Wind*. Presented in Quebec City in 2017 and 2018, and in Montreal in collaboration with ATSA from May 13 to 16, 2021.

**The Gatineau Sentier Cultural circuit** will present a work by Giorgia Volpe, *Migration Pathway* that was produced and presented in Quebec City in 2016, and in Philadelphia in 2019.

More information: [exmuro.com](http://exmuro.com)