

## News Release

### VISUAL ARTS: CREATION OF [THE JEAN PAUL RIOPELLE FOUNDATION](#)

*A celebration of the visionary artist Riopelle - an icon of freedom and creativity - as we approach the centenary of his birth in 2023*

**Montréal, October 3, 2019** – Michael Audain, O.C., O.B.C., Chairman of the Board of Directors, announces the creation of the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation as a tribute to one of the most important artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in Montréal in 1923, Jean Paul Riopelle cherished the dream of seeing his artwork inspire future generations of artists to explore, innovate and surpass their creative potential.

With an immense legacy collection of over 6,000 artworks, Riopelle, who also lived in France for over 40 years, was an ambassador of a rich Canadian heritage, a modern art visionary, a founding member of the *Automatistes* movement, a signatory of their 1948 *Refus Global* manifesto, and a painter, engraver, and sculptor.

Audain explained, "The Foundation's objective is to promote the rediscovery of Riopelle's legacy as an iconic visionary, a symbol of freedom, creativity and experimentation. We hope that his visual poetry and world view will serve as an inspiration for young people here in Canada and around the world".

#### **The Riopelle Year in 2023: 100 years of vision, pride and creativity**

October 7, 2023 will mark the centenary of Riopelle's birth. This important milestone will provide opportunities to celebrate the life and work of the artist, his contribution to art history and cultural heritage, whether in his hometown of Montréal, in the province of Québec, as well as across the Canadian and international landscape.

Today's announcement paves the way for the development of an ambitious series of national and international initiatives to be deployed over the next four years, culminating with a centenary celebration in 2023. Exploring the path of Riopelle's legacy from Montréal to Paris, New York, and back to Saint-Antoine-de-l'Isle-aux-Grues, Québec, where he spent his last days, Riopelle's journey will reveal his view of society, his exploration of the Great North and Indigenous arts and culture, his passion for nature, and his turbulent relationship with American artist Joan Mitchell. Much will also be said about his legendary companions, including Paul-Émile Borduas, Samuel Beckett, André Breton, Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Pierre Matisse, Joan Miró, Jean-Paul Sartre and the naturalist Archibald Belaney aka Grey Owl.



### **Philanthropy and Cultural Heritage**

Through the creation of the Foundation, businessman, philanthropist and collector Michael Audain is turning Riopelle's dream into a reality, some 17 years after the artist's death in 2002. Audain's passion for Riopelle's art is reflected by a personal collection of over 30 paintings. The British Columbia home builder, who also has a deep affection for Riopelle's Montréal hometown, is behind the creation of the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, an institution dedicated to British Columbia artists.

Audain is joined on the board by fellow directors who share his vision and enthusiasm for the work of Jean Paul Riopelle. Included are Canadian business executives, philanthropists and collectors André Desmarais, O.C., O.Q.; Pierre Lassonde, C.M., G.O.Q.; the Honourable Serge Joyal, P.C., O.C.; as well as art historian Dr. John R. Porter, C.M., O.Q.; and Yseult Riopelle, the artist's daughter.

### **Manon Gauthier's New Mission as Inaugural Executive Director**

Also announced today is the appointment of the Foundation's inaugural Executive Director, Manon Gauthier, an experienced and knowledgeable Montréal-based cultural leader. Her appointment is the result of an international recruitment process. Gauthier is well known for her role in the transformation of the Segal Centre for Performing Arts as well as, from 2013 to 2017, an elected official on Montréal's Executive Committee, responsible for culture and heritage, where her involvement brought a fresh momentum to cultural development in Montréal, resulting in a transformative new cultural policy and an ambitious strategy and action plan for heritage. Gauthier is also a relentless advocate for renewed cultural funding models, namely through the bridging of the public, business, philanthropic, and cultural sectors.

The Board is delighted to welcome Gauthier to the Foundation team and supports her determination to propel awareness and pride in the Riopelle legacy to new heights. Gauthier believes that, "Through the work and reach of the Foundation, the next few years leading to the centenary will allow us to not only celebrate the life and legacy of Riopelle, but also to make his art known, understood and accessible to the general public whether in museums and galleries across the world, on stages and screens, or in the school classrooms. Jean Paul Riopelle's art is timeless and an inseparable part of our history and our heritage. 2023 will be the year of Riopelle".

### **About the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation**

The Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation is dedicated to celebrating and perpetuating the vision and oeuvre of the artist in Canadian and international art, to supporting and inspiring young Canadian and international visual artists, encouraging experimentation in art making and fostering the teachings of basic art-making skills and techniques. The Foundation will also serve as a repository for the Riopelle archives and a centre of scholarship in the documentation, publication and discourse on the oeuvre of Jean Paul Riopelle.



**Source:** Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation [www.riopellefoundation.com](http://www.riopellefoundation.com)

**Link to media kit:** [www.riopellefoundation.com/media\\_kit.zip](http://www.riopellefoundation.com/media_kit.zip)

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