

Denys Arcand / Adad Hannah The Burghers of Vancouver

Exhibition from February 11–May 16, Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris

Vernissage, Tuesday, February 10, 6 p.m.–8:30 p.m. (last admission 8 p.m.)

In the artists' presence

Exceptional opening for the European Night of Museums, Saturday, May 16, 6 p.m.–midnight

Exhibition curator: Catherine Bédard



Adad Hannah, *Unwrapping Rodin (Blue)* 6, 2010

Proud of its proximity to one of the most beautiful museums in Paris, the Musée Rodin, the Canadian Cultural Centre will be presenting an exhibition entirely devoted to one of the most famous French sculptors and his monument *Les Bourgeois de Calais* (1885) in particular.

Titled *The Burghers of Vancouver*, the exhibition has been put together by Adad Hannah, a photographer and video artist who works in Vancouver and Montréal, and Quebec filmmaker Denys Arcand whose latest film, *An Eye for Beauty*, was released in France in November 2014. At its heart is a new video installation that revisits the idea of the urban monument by taking apart and putting back together the sculpted group using actors. The play tells the story of six people looking for temporary work who are hired by a mysterious patron to embody Rodin's work in a living sculpture in downtown Vancouver. An anonymous poet, an old Asian lady who only speaks her native tongue, a smuggler, an athlete, a laid-off worker and a former junky meet every day, dress up as actors, pose for the whole day in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery and then go home at the end of the day. Each takes the pose of one of the six figures making up the group *Les Bourgeois de Calais* by Rodin and recounts what led him or her to accept this work and how he or she experiences this remarkable project, which seems to be taking place to the indifference

of the public. The project goes from private lives to an extreme representation of the social mask in which the highlighting of the images of heroic submission and sacrifice represented by the event of 1347 sculpted by Rodin is embodied in a pretence that is theatricalized but devoid of drama. Here, the monument to the glory of the sacrificed burghers becomes a performance subjecting temporary workers to a physical constraint that imposes – in exchange for payment, silence – immobility and anonymity on them. The reference to history or to a foundation myth that goes back to an episode of the Hundred Years' War between the English and the French in that strategic place for the two kingdoms is tempered here, while remaining buried in the memory of the work, by the mixed nature of the group of actors whose suffering comes from the long-term unemployment or the marginalization that affects the powerless in globalized big cities.



Denys Arcand/Adad Hannah, *The Burghers of Vancouver*, courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain (Montreal) and Equinox Gallery (Vancouver)

The installation *The Burghers of Vancouver* will be inaugurated in Paris, a short walk from the famous bronze located at the entrance to the grounds of the Musée Rodin. It will then be the spectacular contemporary component of the major exhibition **Metamorphoses. In Rodin's Studio** that the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts will be presenting from May 30 to October 18. It will also be in Toronto from September 10 to 20 as part of the Toronto International Film Festival. This exceptional collaboration between three Canadian institutions and the Musée Rodin echoes another exceptional collaboration (initiated in 2011 at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in the anniversary exhibition *Big Bang*) between an emerging Canadian contemporary artist and the filmmaker who has been awarded the most prestigious of prizes.

The exhibition will also bring together other creations by Adad Hannah that have been profoundly influenced by the work of Rodin : the series of photographs *Unwrapping Rodin* (2010), which transposes in the studio and using the memory the photographic decompositions produced in the late nineteenth century by Muybridge and Marey, the unwrapping of a copy of the statue of one of the six burghers of Calais, Pierre de Wissant ; a composition made up of screens, *Les Bourgeois de Calais: Crated and Displaced* (2010), which makes us consider our relationship

to the image of a monument known through reproductions; as well as *Age of Bronze*, a series of three tableaux vivants produced in 2004 in a room of the National Gallery of Canada, a reflection on gender/genre (sexual and artistic), hierarchy (roles within an institution) and more generally on the relationship between the gaze and power, all of this focussing on a Rodin's anti-academic male nude, a major work of 1877, which both gave rise to controversy and contributed to Rodin's glory.

BIOGRAPHIES

Adad Hannah was born in New York in 1971. He spent his childhood in Israel and England before setting in Vancouver in the early 1980s. He now divides his time between Montreal and Vancouver. Hannah is interested in the way the body occupies space, in the concept of the tableau vivant, and more generally in the relationship between photography, video, sculpture and performance. He has been commissioned to produce works by museums around the world and his work has been shown in South Korea, the Czech Republic, Chile, Mexico, the United States, Israel, Australia and Canada. He has been awarded several prizes, including the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award of the Canada Council for the Arts. His works feature in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa); Museo Tamayo (Mexico City); Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art (Seoul); San Antonio Museum of Art ; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Adad Hannah is represented by François Ouellette Art Contemporain (Montreal) and the Equinox Gallery (Vancouver).

www.adadhannah.com

Denys Arcand was born in Deschambault-Grondines, in 1941. An Academy Award winning director, Denys Arcand's films have won over 100 prestigious awards around the world. He directed twenty three feature films including *The Decline of the American Empire* (The Director's Fortnight, Cannes Film Festival 1986, nominated for the Academy Awards), *Jesus of Montréal* (Jury's Grand Prize and the Ecumenical Prize, Cannes Film Festival 1989), *The Barbarian Invasions* (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, César Awards for Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay and several Canadian Jutra [Quebec] and Genie Awards in 2004), *Days of Darkness* (Out of Competition Official Selection, Cannes Film Festival 2007) and *An Eye for Beauty* (Toronto International Film Festival 2014).

In addition to his work as a filmmaker, producer, scriptwriter and actor, Denys Arcand is an art lover and member of the international art acquisition committee of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

In partnership with the Musée Rodin, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and the Toronto International Film Festival