

PRESS RELEASE

OUR PEOPLE OUR STORIES
690 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST
MONTREAL (QUÉBEC) H3A 1E9
T. 514 398 7100 F. 514 398 5045
WWW.MCCORD-MUSEUM.QC.CA



THE McCORD MUSEUM INVITES MONTREALERS TO JOIN FORCES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE PURCHASE OF THE KENT MONKMAN WORK *WELCOME TO THE STUDIO: AN ALLEGORY FOR ARTISTIC REFLECTION AND TRANSFORMATION*

Montreal, March 12, 2014 – The McCord Museum has announced it is seeking to purchase *Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation*, the artwork created by Canadian artist Kent Monkman as part of the Museum’s Artist-in-Residence program. The work is currently on exhibition at the Museum. To acquire the work, the McCord Museum is calling on Montrealers and Friends of the Museum to help it raise the necessary funds. A generous donor has already confirmed he is prepared to contribute.

“Created as an homage to Montreal, *Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation* is a work that focuses on the relationship between photography and painting, a theme central to both the Notman studio’s activities and the history of photography in the 19th century,” stated Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum. “For these reasons and to take advantage of this opportunity to show our Notman Photographic Archives collection in a new light, we believe it is important for the Museum to retain and permanently display this work.”

“I would be very gratified to see *Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation* become the property of the McCord Museum, a major museum in a city that has inspired me and provided me with so much,” stated Kent Monkman.

Visitors wishing to be part of the initiative are invited to leave a donation in one of the boxes set up for this purpose as they exit the exhibition hall or at the McCord Museum admission desk. It is also possible to make a donation of \$50 or more by calling 514-398-7100, extension 237, in order to receive a tax receipt. This option will also be available online shortly.

A few words about *Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation*

Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation is 7.3 m (24 ft.) long and 1.8 m (6 ft.) high. It alludes to the celebrated work by Gustave Courbet, *The Artist’s Studio. A real allegory summing up seven years of my artistic and moral life* (1855), viewed by many as a manifesto of the 19th century realism.

Like Courbet, Monkman portrays himself in an imaginary studio studying the artistic practice of painting. In rich allegorical terms, he personifies this reflection through a self-portrait that draws on both Courbet the painter and Notman the photographer. The other figures that surround him, painted from more than 30 portraits in the Notman Photographic Archives, are assembled according to the arrangement of figures in the work by Courbet.

An integral component of the installation, copies of the Notman photographic portraits that inspired the figures painted by Monkman are displayed on a wall in the exhibition hall to enable visitors to discover them one by one. To conclude their experience, visitors can position themselves in the middle of the installation, where the reflection of their face is superimposed over the artist's features, and they can then take a photograph of the effect produced.

About the McCord Museum

The McCord Museum is dedicated to the preservation, study and appreciation of Montreal's history, as recounted by its people, artists and communities living in the city's past and present. The McCord Museum is home to one of the largest historical collections in North America, consisting of First Peoples objects, costumes and textiles, photographs, decorative and visual artworks, and textual archives, totalling more than 1,440,000 artefacts. The McCord Museum produces exciting exhibitions that engage visitors from Montreal, Canada, and beyond by offering them a contemporary look at the world. The McCord Museum also offers educational and cultural activities, as well as innovative projects on the Internet.

McCord Museum: Our People, Our Stories.

-30-

Photographs available on request. Interviews can be arranged with Nathalie Lévesque, Executive Director, McCord Museum Foundation, and with Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum.

Source and information:

Nadia Martineau

Marketing-Communications Officer, Public Relations, McCord Museum

514-398-7100, ext. 239

nadia.martineau@mccord.mcgill.ca

The Museum is grateful for the support of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec and the Conseil des arts de Montréal as well as its media partners, *Journal 24 heures* and *The Gazette*.



Welcome to the Studio: An Allegory for Artistic Reflection and Transformation, 2014, Acrylic on canvas © Kent Monkman