

# PRESS RELEASE

## McCORD MUSEUM PRESENTS THE EXHIBITION *EDWARD BURTYNSKY: OIL* A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT

**Montreal, October 6, 2011** — The McCord Museum is presenting *Edward Burtynsky: OIL*, from October 6, 2011, to January 8, 2012, an exhibition organized by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Consisting of 56 large-scale colour photographs by the acclaimed Canadian photographer Edward Burtynsky, the exhibition explores the topic of oil, the much maligned natural resource that has shaped the world as we know it.

After showings in Washington, D.C., Toronto, Edmonton and St-John's, *Edward Burtynsky: OIL* will now be on display at Montreal's McCord Museum. "We're pleased to be able to present the work of this world-renowned Canadian photographer. His photographs not only captivate us with their beauty, but they also force us to ask ourselves questions about a timely topic that raises a host of social and environmental questions," said Suzanne Sauvage, president and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord.

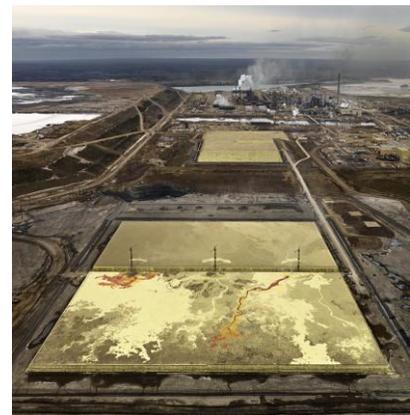
### Humans, nature and industry

Burtynsky's detailed and meticulous work focuses on the relationships among humans, nature and industry: the photos present immense landscapes illustrating the places where oil is produced and distributed. They provide us with rarely seen glimpses of oil fields, oil sands and refineries. Burtynsky's lens also captures the effects of petroleum development on our lives, its hold on us and its consequences for people, cities, the land and the environment. These stunning images deliver a social and environmental message that is both disturbing and thought-provoking.

The exhibition is organized thematically, showing viewers the many different ways oil is used. Visitors first discover remote oil extraction and refining sites that will help them understand the mechanics of its manufacture. They are then immersed in the world of transportation and motor culture, discovering urban zones and people with a genuine passion for the automobile. Burtynsky concludes his exploration by looking at the end of oil. He presents a number of scenes, which, together, portray a new topography of the automobile.

Burtynsky's photographs speak for themselves: they tell the story of humanity through the discovery of oil and everything that has arisen from its development. The exhibition promises to be one of the most influential contemporary photographic projects focusing on oil and the issues associated with it. "In no way can one person encompass the influence and extended landscape of this thing we call oil. These images can be considered notations by one artist – contemplations of a world reshaped by the massive energy force, and the cumulative effects of the industrial evolution," said Edward Burtynsky.

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Edward Burtynsky, Alberta Oil Sands #6, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, 2007. Chromogenic color print. Photograph © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto



Edward Burtynsky, Oil Tanker and Refineries, Pasadena, Texas, USA, 2004. Chromogenic color print. Photograph © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto.

### A talk by the artist and film screenings

Edward Burtynsky will meet the public at the McCord Museum, on October 6 at 6:30 p.m., to talk about the origins of this project and his body of work. The talk will be presented in English with commentary in French. In addition, several screenings of Burtynsky's film *Manufactured Landscapes* (2008) will be presented at the McCord Museum in October, November and December 2011, as well as in January 2012 (the complete schedule is available on the McCord Museum's website). The film will be presented in English, with French subtitles. These activities are free but seating is limited.

Two other films on the topic of oil will also be screened between October 8, 2011, and January 8, 2012, at 1 p.m. 3 p.m. or 6:30 p.m., depending on the day and the films that will be presented (schedule subject to change without notice, available on the website). The public is invited to see *Black Wave* (2008), a feature-length documentary by Montreal filmmaker Robert Cornellier about the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska and its environmental and social repercussions for communities in the region. Also on the program, *Gasland* (2011) by American filmmaker Josh Fox, which explores the effects of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, used by the energy industry and drilling companies, as well as the problems facing people who live in the shadow of this industry in the United States. The talk and film presentations are made possible by support from the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation.

This exhibition is made possible with the generous support of the Scotiabank Group. Its presentation in Montreal was made possible with the financial support of the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation and a partnership with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM).

### About the McCord Museum

The McCord Museum is dedicated to the preservation, study and appreciation of Montreal's history: its people, artisans and communities, and the city's past and present. The Museum is home to one of the largest historical collections in North America, consisting of First Nations objects, costumes and textiles, photographs, decorative and visual artworks, and textual archives, totalling more than 1.4 million artefacts. The McCord Museum produces exciting exhibitions that engage visitors from Montreal and farther afield by offering them a contemporary look at the world. It also offers educational and cultural activities, as well as innovative projects on the Internet. McCord Museum: our people, our stories.

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Photographs available on request. Possibility of interviews with Suzanne Sauvage, president and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum, and Edward Burtynsky, photographer.

### Source and information:

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The McCord Museum thanks the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and its partners Astral, La Presse and The Gazette, for their support.



Edward Burtynsky, AMARC #5, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona, USA, 2006. Chromogenic color print. Photograph © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto.



Edward Burtynsky, Recycling #2, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 2001. Chromogenic color print. Photograph © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto.