

PRESS RELEASE

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The Island of Toys **Explore a fantasy island**

Montreal, November 19, 2014 – Adventure awaits children aged 3 to 9 at ***The Island of Toys***, from November 16, 2014 to April 5, 2015. Young visitors to the 5th edition of the annual *Toys* exhibition at the McCord Museum will search for a crew of shipwrecked monkeys who have taken refuge on an island of lost toys. The highly anticipated annual event is entertaining for young and old alike. “We are happy to offer once again a family activity that will create great memories for children and parents. The exhibition and its particularly original staging will allow them to have fun and discover toys and decorative art objects from our collection, most of them on display for the first time,” says Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum.



Model ship
1875-1900
© McCord Museum

The Museum is pleased to welcome l'école des loisirs as guest publisher for the exhibition. L'école des loisirs, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, is a natural partner because of our shared vision, reflected in the books and the exhibition. As the author Geneviève Brisac says, “Children’s books offer a possibility, an unexpected opening – access to others in their incredible mystery. A secret passage. A hope. A strength”. For Claude Ponti, l'école des loisirs author “Children’s literature is the most intimate of conversations between the soul of the reader and the soul of the author”.

To celebrate the publisher’s anniversary, the Museum is holding a mini-exhibition and a festive weekend in conjunction with *The Island of Toys*.

Captain Gustav, known by his real name *Yes/No Bellhop Monkey*, is a mechanical monkey from the German company Schuco who navigates the oceans selling fruit. His vessel hits an iceberg during a northern voyage, and he is shipwrecked. The crew sails to The Island of Toys aboard lifeboats, leaving Captain Gustav all alone behind them. This is where the search begins to find survivors who have taken refuge on the island.

The exhibition brings together some 170 toys, selected from 10,000 in the McCord Museum collection, spread around different parts of the island, such as the seashore, the magic forest and the giant's garden. After arriving on the island, the children are given a mission to find scattered crew members. Equipped with a map of the island, they cross a bridge between the real and the imaginary and discover a magic forest full of amazing characters, a world out of a fairy tale. The children must search this fantastic world to find crew members hidden among toys from the collection. Their expedition ends in the kingdom of the crab Lancelot after they have found the missing officers and sailors.

Exploration activities are suggested to the children throughout their visit. They observe displays to find the missing monkeys, but also use their dexterity, test their knowledge of fairy tales and engage their imaginations to create fictional characters. The quest allows children to discover a museum while having fun

The exhibition was developed by the exhibition's team and Guislaine Lemay, Curator, Ethnology and Archaeology and Interim Curator, Decorative Arts. Matthieu Goyer and Renaud Plante wrote the scenario and Jonas Veroff Bouchard designed the scenography.

Admission to ***The Island of Toys*** is free for children 12 and under, thanks to the generosity of the Fondation J.A. DeSève.

The McCord Museum thanks its partners, the Société de Transport de Montréal (STM), the guest publisher École des loisirs and the Santa Claus Parade.

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 1.4 million 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.***

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Photographs available at: <http://bit.ly/1smst0n>



Bellhop Monkey
1946-1950
Made by Schuco
© McCord Museum



The Little Mermaid
© Musée McCord

Interview possibilities with Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum and Guislaine Lemay, Ethnology and Archeology and Interim Curator, Decorative Arts.

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