

# PRESS RELEASE



***Gabor Szilasi: The Art World in Montreal, 1960–1980***

**A new McCord Museum publication on photography**

**Montreal, November 12, 2019** – Expanding on the success of the 2017–2018 exhibition devoted to a series of photographs by renowned photographer Gabor Szilasi, the McCord Museum is proud to announce the publication of *Gabor Szilasi: The Art World in Montreal, 1960–1980*. The book features over one hundred images that, with the artist's characteristic candour and perspicacity, capture some of the radical changes that marked the Montreal art scene in the 1960s and 1970s.

*Gabor Szilasi: The Art World in Montreal, 1960–1980* is being published in conjunction with McGill-Queen's University Press, under the direction of Zoë Tousignant, photography historian and Associate Curator, Photography, at the McCord Museum. The book contains 107 photographs, three essays by Zoë Tousignant, Martha Langford and Andrea Szilasi, as well as an interview with the photographer. The exhibition, which ran at the McCord in 2017–2018, featured 43 photographs, including 40 previously unpublished ones, specially printed for the occasion.

“As a museum of social history with collections documenting life in Montreal, past and present, we are very happy to provide Montrealers with an opportunity to discover a hitherto unknown side of Gabor Szilasi's work, attesting to the cultural vitality of the Montreal art scene at a pivotal time in the history of Quebec and our city. It was the right time to make a more expansive selection of his work accessible to the public, in a publication that reveals the central role he played in the history of the visual arts in Canada,” notes Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum.

Born in Hungary in 1928, Gabor Szilasi emigrated to Canada in 1957 and was soon taking photographs at the art show openings he attended with his companion, the artist Doreen Lindsay. While his photography helped him integrate into the local arts scene, his pictures eloquently reflect his very human fascination with people and artists. Twenty years' worth of art show openings were held in Montreal galleries that no longer exist, including the Godard Lefort, Dresdnere and Martal galleries. Some of the major figures in the visual arts—Guido Molinari, Jean McEwen, Edmund Alleyn, Rita Letendre, Jean-Paul Mousseau, Ulysse Comtois, Marion Wagschal, Cozic, Yves Gaucher, Armand Vaillancourt, Irene F. Whittome, Marcelle Ferron and Charles Gagnon—attended those events and can be seen conversing, in an initially formal, elegant atmosphere that by the 1970s had become considerably more relaxed and irreverent.

The graphic design of this 160-page book is the work of Jean Doyon and René Clément. Its publication was made possible thanks to the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. *Gabor Szilasi: The Art World in Montreal, 1960–1980* is available in both French and English, as a printed book or an ebook, at the Museum Boutique and in bookstores through the distribution network of McGill-Queen's University Press.

This publication was made possible by the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

## **McCord Museum, museum of photography**

The McCord's photography collection encompasses over 1,300,000 photographs that primarily document the social history of Montreal, but also that of Quebec and Canada. Ranging from a series of daguerreotypes from the 1840s and 1850s to modern digital images, the collection illustrates the development of the art of

photography along with the great transformations that have marked the city over the last two centuries. The Notman Photographic Archives constitute the core of the collection, with some 450,000 photographs from the Montreal studio founded in 1856 by William Notman (1826–1891) and run by his sons until 1935 under the name Wm. Notman & Son. The archives were added to the prestigious Memory of the World Register of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO in the fall of 2019.

### **ABOUT THE McCORD MUSEUM**

The McCord Museum is the museum of all Montrealers, a social history museum that celebrates life in Montreal, both past and present— its history, its people and its communities. Open to the city and the world, the Museum presents exciting exhibitions, educational programming and cultural activities that offer a contemporary perspective on history, engaging visitors from Montreal, Canada and beyond. It is home to over 1.5 million artefacts, comprising one of the largest historical collections in North America, organized into the following departments: Dress, Fashion and Textiles, Photography, Indigenous Cultures, Paintings, Prints and Drawings, Material Culture, and Textual Archives. McCord Museum: Our People, Our Stories.

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Possibility of interviews with Gabor Szilasi, Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Zoë Tousignant, Associate Curator, Photography, McCord Museum.

### **For interview requests**

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[Photos available](#)

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