

The Year Ahead: Top Art Picks for 2010 Across Canada Jan to Dec 2010

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As 2009 fades into memory, many are turning their attention to fresh starts and resolutions. And if getting out to the galleries and museums is on your “to do” list, you’re in luck: institutions across the country recently released their programming for the coming year, which features considerable range—thoughtful retrospectives of some of Canada’s A-list artists, blockbuster group exhibitions borrowed from international institutions and ambitious projects by emerging artists. Here’s a season-by-season preview of 2010’s most promising exhibitions.

WINTER



Luanne Martineau , *Form Fantasy*, Detail ; Courtesy TrépanierBaer Calgary / photo John Dean

Following a quiet holiday hibernation, galleries across the country are reopening this month with an abundance of new programming (and, in some cases, new buildings as well). Starting January 23 at the Sherwood Village branch of Regina's Dunlop Art Gallery, a new installation by printmaker and sculptor Lyndal Osborne recreates a seed bank—a type of storage unit designed to protect seeds of indigenous plants and crops—on a massive scale, employing colourful, visceral materials for pod-like sculptures which visitors can handle at a nearby lab table. Meanwhile in Edmonton, a different kind of growth cycle is celebrated with the opening of the newly redesigned Art Gallery of Alberta on January 31. Revamped by Los Angeles architect Randall Stout, the expanded building plays host to an impressive list of inaugural exhibitions, including surveys of work by Edgar Degas and Francisco Goya and the North American premiere of Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's sound work *The Murder of Crows*. In the east, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal showcases recent works by three noteworthy Canadian artists, including paintings by Étienne Zack, new sculptures and drawings by Luanne Martineau and the largest-ever Canadian survey of Marcel Dzama. (All three Montreal shows open February 4.)

In the prairies, March 6 marks the start of the Winnipeg Art Gallery's spring season and the opening of the family-friendly blockbuster "The Art of Warner Bros. Cartoons." Widely shown in the United States, including elements at the Museum of Modern Art, this historical survey includes more than 165 drawings, paintings and animation cels that highlight the transformation of Bugs Bunny and his ilk from the 1930s through to the 1960s. On March 27, Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery in Halifax debuts "Oriental Ornamental," a two-person exhibition that creatively responds to outmoded but persistent stereotypes of "exotic" Asian culture through the multimedia installations of Karen Tam and Jihee Min. In Toronto, perennial festival favourites take over galleries in the spring, with the film and video-focused Images Festival running from April 1 to 10 and the CONTACT photography festival, organized under the theme "Pervasive Influence," showing throughout the month of May. Running concurrently with these two festivals (and sure to be a highlight) is the Power Plant's solo show devoted to the surreal, absurdist videos of award-winning experimental filmmaker Ryan Trecartin, which debuts March 26 and runs to May 24.

SUMMER

Whether your taste reaches to the whimsical or the weighty, there will be plenty to take in over the hotter months. A blockbuster organized by Tate Modern arrives at our nation's capital this summer with the group show "Pop Life: Art in a Material World," which is opening at the National Gallery of Canada on June 11. Featuring international heavyweights including Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, Keith Haring, Damien Hirst, Takashi Murakami and Tracey Emin, among others, this timely show will explore the legacy of Warhol's provocative maxim "good business is the best art." It runs through to September 19. Another important show is bound to be Edward Burtynsky's extensive solo exhibition "Oil" at the Rooms in St. John's. Organized by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, this Canadian premiere opens May 7 and runs to August 15. (In

2011, “Oil” is also slated to tour other regions of Canada, with the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Ryerson Image Arts Gallery currently on the schedule.)

FALL

In British Columbia, September offers the last chance to see Ken Lum’s site-specific work at the Vancouver Art Gallery’s public art space, Offsite. Based on huts on the Maplewood mud flats in North Vancouver, Lum’s scale models, situated in the hubbub of downtown, are poised to once again probe the uneasy relationship between modernism and the quotidian. (Last day to see the work is September 6.) Later in the season, Toronto’s all-night art event, Nuit Blanche, returns on October 2. With the most recent festival drawing an estimated one million spectators, many will be anticipating the announcements of fest curators and artists in spring and summer. Finally, as part of their 150th anniversary programming, the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal will present works by renowned German artist Otto Dix in his first major North American exhibition. Organized in concert with Neue Galerie in New York, the exhibition will feature 40 paintings and over 100 graphic works, surveying the artist’s prolific career and his astute observation of the world, which he described as “frightening and beautiful.” The Dix show opens September 24, 2010, and will round out the year, closing January 2, 2011.