The Montreal Metro: Reflections of a City

by

Melanie Boyne, B.A. Honours Art History

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Canadian Art History

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

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The Montreal Metro: Reflections of a City

Submitted by Melanie Boyne, B.A. Honours (Carleton University)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

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Abstract

In 1967, Montreal hosted the world exposition. As part of the refurbishment of the city at this time, Mayor Jean Drapeau and his officials proposed to showcase its history and enrich the lives of its residents by commissioning an extensive series of art works in the city's newly developed metro system. This thesis examines how the Montreal Metro Project and its art are examples of Drapeau's civic aspirations. For the Metro Project, different architects were hired for the design of the stations, all given the responsibility of selecting artists to create original works for each location. I contend that the accomplishment of the Metro Project demonstrates an appreciation of the heterogeneity of Montreal's citizens, and an understanding of audience reception. The thesis argues that close collaboration between city officials, organizers of the Project, architects and artists resulted in a rich artistic mosaic that embodied the city of Montreal, its inhabitants, pride and culture.

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Introduction

Growing up in Montreal, the metro¹ was something I encountered everyday. It was fast, easy, and by far the most convenient way of getting around the city. More than that, however, it was fun. I remember being told at an early age about the art in the subway. Curious, I would ride the metro with my friends, looking for the art and discovering all the variations. We enjoyed how the benches at Métro Laurier looked like big hamburgers, or how the ones at Métro Plamondon seemed as if they wanted to fold down to trap you inside. We were enchanted by the grand chandeliers over the great stairway in Métro Snowdon and we feared the big spiky metal sculpture that hung high in Métro De La Savanne from fear that it would fall and hurt us. We didn't understand why they were there, what they meant, or even that most other subway systems in other cities did not feature art: all we knew was the enjoyment they provided us as children.

Growing up, I forgot about the art in the metro. It was there, of course, and I saw it constantly; but it was no longer the source of childhood play. It wasn't until I began to study public art and cultural policy that I began once again to consider the art in the Montreal metro. I recognized in the metro system an obvious attempt to integrate art into the daily life of the city. I began to wonder about the stations I had never visited, about their art and how it fit in with the others. I then began to consider the project as a whole and to question its origin and purpose. It slowly became obvious that there had been much more than a child's entertainment in mind with the conception of the metro.

¹ In this thesis, I write "metro" when referring to the underground transportation system, and "Metro" when referring to the specific Montreal Metro Art Project. "Métro" is used when naming specific stations, or when referring the the Paris Métropolitain.

The art in the metro stations ranges from the purely figural to the abstracted. Themes relate to the city of Montreal, the activities of its people and of the metro itself. Some of the art also provides key examples of current art movements. All of these visual clues indicate an interest in the project to communicate something about the city and its citizens. By placing these works in subway stations, sites of heavy daily urban traffic, they became widely accessible.

In 1960s Quebec, when the metro was built, the province was in the midst of the 'Quiet Revolution', a time both of resistance against the Catholic Church's influence in provincial politics and an ever-growing sense of "Québécois" identity. It was also at this time that Montreal was playing host to the world with the 1967 World Exposition. In this context, the enrichment of the everyday with art could be conceived as a bold and innovative idea. Ideally however, art in the metro may have seemed like a way to best communicate a sense of urban pride to the people of Montreal itself and to an international audience. Under Mayor Jean Drapeau, Montreal underwent a complete refurbishment in order to present a glorious and harmonious image to the world. The metro system was part of the reshaping of Montreal, and with it, Drapeau hoped to showcase the city's cultural sophistication.

I am interested in testing the premise that art produced for display in public places at this time, specifically in the Montreal Metro Project under the directives of Mayor Drapeau, was an expression of the city and of its aspirations to international recognition. Drapeau and city officials established guidelines for an artistic project that would communicate ideas of the city to whomever would travel in its underground. With the collaboration of several dozen architects and artists, the art commissioned and produced

for each station of the system illustrated a distinct facet of the city. Artworks displaying rich symbols, figures, forms and colours, sparked interest and communicated the history and activities of Montreal. In this thesis, I will explain how the Montreal Metro Art Project was a manifestation of civic aspirations.

While public art projects have received much attention recently, the Montreal Metro and its art have been neglected by most scholarly literature to date. The Metro is, however, briefly mentioned in many newspaper articles at and around the time of its construction, but the art is referred to only in passing among the many technical facts about the system, its ventilation, its cars, and the reshaping of the city of Montreal.

A 1987 Concordia Master's thesis by Graham Cantieni entitled *Metro Montreal: Integration of Art and Architecture* studies the metro's art and its relationship to the architecture of the stations.² Cantieni's thesis demonstrates that A.C. Sewter's three relationships by which to consider the integration of painting and architecture—art subordinated to architecture, art and architecture in equilibrium and art dominating architecture—are still a valid framework by which to consider the integration of art and architecture in the Montreal Metro. He employs this framework to examine the relationship between the art and the architecture of seven stations: Verdun, De L'Eglise, Viau, Honoré-Beaugrand, Peel, Assomption and LaSalle. While providing a thorough explanation of how art and architecture function together, the thesis does not explain how they, combined in the Metro stations, affect the viewer. Also, the thesis gives basic information on the megastructure of Montreal and the infrastructure of the system, but

² Graham Cantieni, *Montreal Metro: Integration of Art and Architecture*, Master's thesis, Concordia University, 1987.

does not explain the origins of the metro art project, or the significance of the presence of art works in the stations. Cantieni's research remains focused primarily on the structural design of the Metro Project, and offers no information on the Metro's social implications.

While general publications by the Société de transport de la communauté urbaine de Montréal, such as *Le Métro de Montréal*, explain in detail the construction and origins of the subway system itself, the subject of art is barely mentioned.³ Publications and monographs about such artists as Marcelle Ferron and Jean-Paul Mousseau, who have both produced works for the Metro, also include brief descriptions and occasional illustrations of individual projects, but fail to address the context of the grand artistic scheme of the metro.⁴ A recently published book by Benoît Clairoux, entitled *Le Métro de Montréal: 35 ans déjà* also dedicates a chapter to the art in the stations.⁵ This study, too, offers little more than an overview of the artistic project for the stations. This book does, however, provide a more complete framework for the construction of the Metro, as well as descriptions of some of the art. Clairoux also provides numerous maps and photographs illustrating the system's evolution, as well as a more complete history of its administration.

In approaching my thesis, I strongly felt that more needed to be said not only about the art itself, but also about its significance within the stations and the Metro Art Project as a whole. Because of the art's very public position, it surprised me that scholars had not addressed its civic importance more extensively. My thesis therefore does not only

³ *Le Metro de Montreal* (Montréal, Communité Urbaine de Montreal, n.d.).

⁴ Gaston Roberge, *Autour de Marcelle Ferron* (Québec: Le Loup de Gouttière, 1995), Pierre Landry, *Mousseau* (Montréal : Musée d'art contemporain and Editions du Méridien, 1997).

⁵ Benoît Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal: 35 ans déjà* (Montréal: Editions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, 2001).

expose the roots of the Metro's artistic project, but situates it within a contemporary historical context as a reflection of the values and aspirations articulated by Drapeau. My research proposes to situate the Montreal Metro within the important tendency of public art to communicate and enrich the experience of urban life.

In order to achieve these goals, I have extensively used the Société de transport de la communauté urbaine de Montréal archives. Since the origins of the Metro Project, the STCUM has kept numerous records of architectural plans, original drawings, contracts with the architects and artists, information on materials, important correspondences and records of press response. These records—and the assistance of archivist André Vigneau—have been invaluable to me.

To situate the Montreal Metro Art Project within public art, I use a social historical approach. I look at the art of the Metro as part of the social and political context of Montreal at the time of its conception and construction. I establish how the social and political realities of the city in the 1960s have shaped the ideas that inspired this artistic project. I also employ reception theory, principally in the work of Wolfgang Kemp, to explain how the art acted as communicator to the heterogeneous community of Montreal in the 1960s as well as today.⁶ I study how art communicates and what elements aid in reaching a diverse audience in a public setting. I then look at the different ways in which art and architecture speak, as explained by George Baird and Mark Lewis.⁷ The collaboration between architects and artists in the Metro Art Project is thus revealed to be

⁶ Wolfgang Kemp, "The Work of Art and Its Beholder: Methodology of the Aesthetic of Reception" in Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Money (eds), *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁷ George Baird and Mark Lewis (eds), *Queues, Rendez-vous, Riots: Questioning the Public in Art and Architecture* (Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1994).

important in the creation of a coherent communicative space. The writings of Malcolm Miles on ideas of the “public” and of “public spaces” are studied and applied to further understand the Montreal Metro Art Project in its city context.⁸ To fully comprehend the impact of the integration of art in the stations, I look at the writings of André Fortin who examines how the construct of a space is altered by all that enters it.⁹ In addition, the scholarship of Eric Gibson is also studied and expands on this idea of the interdependence of public art and the construct of its environment.¹⁰ In multicultural Montreal, it seems imperative that the art be informed by the social realities of the city. John Guillory’s definitions of the “lay” reader and the “professional” reader are used to help understand the Metro’s audience and the ways in which communication can be achieved.¹¹ Finally, writings on new genre public art, by such theorists as Suzanne Lacy and Suzi Gablik, are helpful in understanding how the Metro’s art might be understood in today’s society.¹²

The First Chapter addresses the historical context for the project. I offer an overview of Montreal in the 1960s including discussions of Drapeau’s vision for the city and Expo’67. I also offer a summary of the politics in Quebec at that time, and a discussion of the importance of the development of the Québécois identity. This political analysis will serve to help understand Drapeau’s motivations, as well as the heterogeneous society of Montreal at the time of the conception of the Metro.

⁸ Malcolm Miles, *Art for Public Spaces* (Winchester: Winchester School of Art Press, 1989).

⁹ André Fortin, *Nouveaux Territoires de l’Art: Régimes, Réseaux, Place Publique* (Québec: Edition Notabene, 2000).

¹⁰ Eric Gibson, “Public Art and the Public Realm,” *Sculpture 7* (January-February 1988).

¹¹ John Guillory, “The Ethical Practice of Modernity: The Example of Reading” in Marjory Garber, Beatrice Hanssen and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (eds), *The Turn to Ethics* (New York: Routledge; 2000).

¹² Suzanne Lacy (ed), *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995). Suzi Gablik, “Connective Aesthetics: Art After Individualism,” in Suzanne Lacy (ed), *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).

Chapter Two discusses the Metro Project specifically. I lay out the foundations of the Montreal Metro Project and its integration of art within the architecture of its stations. I explain the guidelines for the project and the progression of its development as well as outline the roles of the architect and of the artist. In addition, I provide definitions and discussions of issues of public art, and I examine how art in a public context can communicate, and clarify the relationship with the viewer. This chapter also assesses the state and appeal of the Metro in the 1960s, when it was built, and today.

In Chapter Three, I examine three case studies in more detail. Two of the case studies (Place-des-Arts and Champs-de-Mars) were among the initial stations designed for the project; and the third (Pie-IX, inaugurated in 1976) is from a subsequent period of development. These choices illustrate the variety of styles and artistic influences present throughout the Metro system. They also clearly demonstrate the efforts of artists and architects in creating spaces adequately meeting Drapeau and the city officials' expectations. In addition, I study them in terms of their relationship to their physical and cultural environment to better demonstrate how the art became a reflection of civic realities and aspirations.

Through these case studies, archival research, an overview of historical context and a study of reception theory, this thesis aims to demonstrate that the art project of the Montreal Metro was an expression of civic aspirations. With painted, sculptural and textile works, as well as other media, Drapeau and his administration promoted Montreal on the international stage. By conducting this research and analysis, I am at once reviving the Metro Art Project and contributing to the scholarship on this important confluence of civic politics and art production.

Chapter One

The Road to Modernization: Drapeau's Montreal and Quebec's Political Pursuit in the 1960s and 1970s

A Brief History of Montreal

The Montreal Metro Project was an ambitious undertaking. Considered in a cultural and historical context, its realization appears still more impressive. The construction of the metro system was driven by ideas of urbanism. Montreal officials, like those of many cities at the time, were interested in presenting their city as a modern urban center. This urbanism, however, was not solely concerned with the physical construction of the city, but also with the development of a new international urban society. Similarly, the challenge for the Montreal Metro system was not simply technological, but also in many ways social. The metro system was designed to respond to international ambitions. The Montreal Metro thus became a representation of the city's aspirations at that time.

A full discussion of the metro system's significance necessitates an overview of the historical context in which it was conceived and produced. New additions to the city reflected then mayor Jean Drapeau's grand political and cultural ambitions. The metro plan—in its engineering, architecture and art—projected a sense of both sophistication and accessibility. It was intended to appeal to the city's diverse population.

I will examine the political history of the province of Quebec and the city of Montreal specifically in order to provide a broader context for the Metro Project. I will argue that the political and cultural environment of the 1960s and 1970s, a crucial period in the awakening of the possibility of Quebec autonomy—a tumultuous point in the

province's history—gave rise to international aspirations and informed the art that was created for the metro stations. In total, the Metro will be understood in the cultural climate of its time. As the evolution of the Metro continued well beyond its inauguration date, I will show how it continued to reflect the shifting political realities of the city and province.

Quebec in the 1960s

Quebec's complex political history in the 1960s reflects the furious quest for identity of its inhabitants at the time. Beginning with the Quiet Revolution, Quebec in the 1960s began to develop a strong sense of nationalism, which would continue to characterize Québécois culture for decades to come. Embedded in this nationalist sentiment was the idea of identity and of the preservation of a distinct status within Canada and the world. This quest for, first, defining, and, then, maintaining Quebec's unique culture, impacted many moments in provincial and national history, including the celebrations of Canada's Centennial and The Montreal World Exposition, both in 1967. The inauguration of the metro system was part of those festivities, and thus serves as an interesting case study of ventures stemming from this period.

In the 1960s, the Province of Quebec was striving to define and affirm its distinct identity, both locally and nationally. With a French-Canadian majority and with distinctly French cultural roots, the province of Quebec is unique among all others in Canada. It is those differences from the other Canadian provinces that have prompted Quebec and its inhabitants to strive for autonomy. Among other things, the 1960s saw the rise of the Quebec independence movement, strengthened and encouraged by General Charles De Gaulle's 1967 pronouncement "Vivre le Québec libre!" which became a rallying cry for

the Québécois separatist movement as a whole.¹ The “Mouvement Souveraineté-Association”, which later became the Parti Québécois in 1968, emerged as an important political body, furthering the cause of Québécois autonomy.² Also important, the so-called Quiet Revolution, which dates from about 1960 to 1966, marked the end of the Duplessis government, and was motivated by a desire for change and for freedom from the tight restraints of the Catholic Church. Amidst all these changes, however, the province wanted to see itself within an international context. Expo’67 arguably marked Montreal’s most important international spectacle. In preparation for this event, city officials attempted to present Montreal as a sophisticated international metropolis. Accordingly, various urban projects were undertaken including the construction of the underground transportation system.

Quebec Nationalism of the 1960s has been broadly defined as one of “national affirmation,” and the endurance of a French-Canadian and Québécois “sentiment.”³ The period referred to as the Quiet Revolution began with the 1960 elections that saw the defeat of the “Union nationale” and the victory of the “Parti libéral” lead by Jean Lesage.⁴ With this shift of power, a series of major changes that would affect the social, economic and political sectors began. During this period Quebec authorities expressed a desire to be active on the international stage. French-Canadians in particular, thus felt that “their space

¹ Dale C. Thomson, *De Gaulle et le Québec* (St-Laurent: Editions du Trécarré, 1990), 114.

² Marcel Fournier, Michael Resenberg and Deena White (eds), *Quebec Society: Critical Issues* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1997), 9.

³ Patrice Dutil, in Gilles Gougeons, “Histoire du nationalisme québécois: entrevue avec sept specialists”, *Histoire Sociale* 29, no.58 (November 1996): 512.

⁴ Léon Dion, *La Révolution déroutée 1960-1978* (Québec: Les Editions du Boréal, 1998), 8-9.

[was] not confined to the banks of the St Lawrence, but span[ed] the whole world.”⁵

Following liturgical reforms in the Vatican, the Catholic Church, which had for long exerted a dominant role in Quebec society, was also forced to re-examine its principles.⁶ Québécois society as a whole was forced to reconsider prior practices and beliefs before entering into a new era.

Lesage's Liberals won the provincial elections with the slogan “C'est le temps que ça change.”⁷ Soon after the victory, according to Dale C. Thomson, “the government initiated such rapid and profound measures for Québécois society that a journalist qualified them as a “silent revolution.” The phrase remains to designate the objectives of “accelerated modernization” adopted by Lesage's team in 1960.⁸ Four major factors were adopted in Lesage's reconstitution of the State.⁹ Firstly, the government affirmed the power of the State over that of the Church. The Catholic Church had long dominated political and social life in the province, a system which would have to be abolished for any substantive changes to occur. Secondly, Quebec authorities attempted to establish better relations with the Federal government. Responding to the various needs and demands of the province's diverse population, the province adopted various measures offered by the Federal government. The health and welfare sectors were, for example,

⁵ “leur espace ne se borne pas aux rives du St-Laurent, mais couvre le monde entire.” Dion, *La Révolution dérouterée*, 33. All translations are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

⁶ On October 1962, the Vatican Ecumenical Council, under Pope John XXIII, made reforms which centered on re-examining the “inner workings of the Church, its role in the modern world, the vocation of all baptized, the responsibility of bishops and priests, the relationship of the Catholic Church with other Christian Churches, and religious freedom.” George P. Shner (ed.), *The Church Renewed: The Documents of Vatican II Reconsidered* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986), 12.

⁷ “It's time for change.”

⁸ “le gouvernement prit des mesures si rapides et si fondamentales pour la société québécoise qu'un journaliste les qualifia de «revolution tranquille», Le mot demeura pour designer les objectifs de modernization accélérée adoptés par l'équipe de Jean Lesage en 1960.” Ibid.

⁹ Dion. *La Révolution dérouterée*, 77-89.

considered important to develop and maintain within the province of Quebec because they helped to develop a strong link between the public and the private sectors.¹⁰ Harmonious relations between the two governments would facilitate the welfare of Quebec's inhabitants. Thirdly, Quebec officials wanted the province to rise to the forefront of the North American economy. The province had ample resources and enterprises, and the provincial government argued that it had been ignored by the major international economic centers for too long. Lesage, who coined the phrase "Maitre chez nous,"¹¹ encouraged the province to take control over its own economic and social institutions. Lastly, Quebec sought to diminish its dependence on foreign financial syndicates, and develop the province's own economy.

One of the most enduring effects of the Quiet Revolution remains the strong sense of nationalism that was developed among Québécois. Léon Dion has defined this nationalism as one "that ignites in individuals and collective groups an irresistible need for action in every sector."¹² In Claude Savoie's words, it is "a feeling of belonging that is developed within a nation; it's the common will-to-live of a community."¹³ Quebec nationalism is rooted in the belief that the province possesses a distinct nature and culture within Canada, and a desire to preserve that distinctiveness. At the same time, however, authorities wanted Quebec to be able to compete at national and international levels

¹⁰ Fournier, Resenberg and White (eds), *Quebec Society*, 35.

¹¹ "Masters in our own home" Chénier Lavac, *Les Anglo-Québécois de Montréal: Minorité agissante ou Majorité décadente* (Laval: Les Editions Chénier Lavac, 2000), 109.

¹² "... qui déclenche chez les individus et les collectivités un besoin d'action dans tous les domaines." Dion, *La Révolution déroutée*, 58.

¹³ "C'est un sentiment d'appartenance qui se développe à l'intérieur d'une nation; c'est le vouloir-vivre d'une collectivité." Claude Savoie, *Les Crises de Pierre Elliot Trudeau* (Montreal: Editions Scriptomédia Inc., 1979), 27.

economically, technologically, and culturally. Political scientist Roger Levasseur explains that “if the cultural singularity of the province is recognized, it should not slow down its process of integration into the modern capitalist society.”¹⁴ As such, Quebec felt that it should be able to function and develop on an equal level with the rest of Canada internationally, while maintaining its distinct culture. Within this view, culture also became an important aspect of Quebec’s redefinition; it was also critical to changes occurring in the city of Montreal. There were efforts to emphasize cultural achievements to the world in the many events that would take place in the years to come. It was felt that culture, through artistic works and presentations could be an instrument of modernization. New elements of the city, like the Metro system, proved in the end to be just such venues for the display of Quebec’s artistic and cultural achievements.

At the end of the Quiet Revolution, marked by the defeat of the Liberal government in 1966, Quebec’s francophone population had grown to see the empowerment of the State as directly related to the growth of their collective identity. Language, like culture, was at the core of this collective identity. As Michel Sarra-Bournet and Jocelyn Saint-Pierre explain:

The sentiment of national belonging has been able to anchor itself within a common history that, marked as it was by the tenacity and determination of French descendants in America, could build itself only on the basis of a profound attachment to a culture of origin and to the values it represented.¹⁵

¹⁴ “Si la singularité culturelle de la province est reconnue, elle ne doit en aucun cas freiner son intégration à la société moderne capitaliste.” Roger Levasseur, “Les idéologies du loisir au Québec, 1945-1977” *Idéologies au Canada français* (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 1981), 151.

¹⁵ “... le sentiment d’une appartenance nationale a pu se forger au creuset de cette histoire commune, celle-ci marquée comme elle le fut par la tenacité et la détermination des descendants des Français en Amérique, ne pouvait se construire que sur la base d’un attachement profond à une culture d’origine et aux valeurs

Furthermore, at a reception for the Académie française, Jean Lesage was quoted as saying that “language is the expression of the mentality of a population, of its way of thinking,”¹⁶ emphasizing language’s importance and the need for governments to take action to preserve it. Language and nationalism thus were intertwined. With the rapid decrease of the birthrate among francophone Quebecers, and the rapidly increasing multicultural component of the population, a concern for the safeguarding of Quebec as a French society became paramount. As Lavac explains: “It is the destiny of every minority group, in a democratic society, to have to submit to the Majority. A Minority is always on the defensive.”¹⁷ The English majority in Canada was seen as the greatest threat to francophone Québécois society. Whereas the recognition of Quebec’s unique culture was not a threat to modernization, the reality of French as their official language might be. While Québécois had to fight for the right to function in its traditionally spoken language, officials were aware of the need to compete and communicate on various levels, including linguistically, with the rest of Canada. At Expo’67 and within every modernizing project in Montreal, such as the Metro Art Project, language also had to be considered. The city had to be truthful to its residents’ first language, while accommodating the rest of Anglophone Canada and the world. It was at this time that Quebec officials also began to seek recognition as a distinct cultural group within Canada, this idea escalating to a desire for political independence.

qu’elle représentait.” Michel Sarra-Bournet and Jocelyn Saint-Pierre, *Les Nationalismes au Québec: du XIXe au XXIe siècle* (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2001), 168.

¹⁶Thomson, *De Gaulle et le Québec*, 125.

¹⁷ Lavac, *Les Anglo-Québécois de Montréal*, 130.

To understand Québécois attitudes towards independence and sovereignty, it is important to examine the province on cultural, linguistic and historical levels. The idea of independence from Canada was put forward, as Michel Venne explains, with the intentions of “renewing the foundations, in the utopia of a political independence or of sovereignty, of a collectivity that was considered in crisis on the points of view of its global representations and of its collective outcome.”¹⁸ Further concerns seemed to center on industry and employment issues faced by Francophones in Quebec. In a study of documents published by the CCSNM¹⁹, Sarra-Bournet and Saint-Pierre explain that:

On a constitutional level, ‘the political and economic levers, indispensable to its development and growth, have been taken from the *québécois* nation.’ Favoring the English-Canadian bourgeoisie to the detriment of Quebec, the politics of the Canadian State have made it so that Quebec found itself in ‘a situation of regional disadvantage.’ Also, at an economic level, the better paying jobs are often reserved for Anglophones with Francophones taking on ‘subsidiary positions’.²⁰

Sarra-Bournet and Saint-Pierre add that the French also played a subordinate role culturally. Almost exclusively lead by Francophones, the sovereignty movement was aimed in part at reversing the situation of inequality in Quebec. In this regard, they argued that the establishment of a culturally, economically and politically independent State would help rectify that historic inequity. As a reflection of these political desires, the

¹⁸ “...refonder, dans l’utopie de l’indépendance politique ou de la souveraineté, une collectivité que l’on dit en crise du double point de vue de ses représentations globales et de son devoir collectif.” Michel Venne (ed.), *Penser la nation québécoise ...* (Montréal: Editions Québec Amérique, 2000), 104.

¹⁹ CCSNM: Conseil Central des Syndicats Nationaux de Montréal.

²⁰ “Sur le plan constitutionnel, « on a enlevé à la nation québécoise les leviers politiques et économiques indispensables à son développement et à son épanouissement . » Favorisant la bourgeoisie anglo-canadienne au détriment du Québec, les politiques de l’Etat canadien ont fait en sorte que le Québec se trouve dans « une situation défavorisée . » Par ailleurs, au niveau économique, les emplois les mieux rémunérés sont réservés au anglophones alors que les francophones occupent « les postes subalternes.” Comité sur la question nationale du CCSNM, *Le Mot ouvrier et la question de l’indépendance du Québec* (Montréal: CCSNM, 1978), 10, quoted in Sarra-Bournet and Saint-Pierre, *Les Nationalismes au Québec*, 156.

conception of the Montreal Metro emphasized French culture, history, and language in its art and communication.

In 1967, René Lévesque founded the Parti Québécois in response to “a new kind of *indépendantiste* ideology and new social support for the idea of sovereignty.”²¹ Prior to this, Lévesque had served in the federal Parliament as a member of the Liberal Party from 1961 to 1967. The Parti Québécois gained popularity in Quebec eventually winning the provincial elections in 1976 with Lévesque as Premier.²² The PQ’s central platform in 1967—as today—was Quebec’s secession from Canada.

The 1960s in Quebec witnessed the emergence of several separatist groups including more radical parties which rejected the slow movement towards change in the Quiet Revolution. As Jean-François Cardin writes:

The transformations and reforms of the beginning of the 1960s had elicited big hopes and expectations in many layers of the population among students, social commentators, syndicates, salaried and lower classes ... but the manifested will of the government after 1968, of not going further in the way of change, elicited a violent discontent on the part of the progressivist milieus of which resulted periodical confrontations between them and the Power.²³

The Front de libération du Québec (F.L.Q.) was one of the terrorist organizations that sought to provoke a different kind of revolution through violent confrontations. Unhappy with the slow move towards Independence by the Quebec government, it took the

²¹ Fournier, Resenberg and White (eds), *Quebec Society*, 9.

²² Ibid.

²³ “Les transformations et les réformes du début des années 1960 ont suscité beaucoup d’espoirs et d’attentes dans plusieurs couches de la population parmi les étudiants, les animateurs sociaux, les syndicalistes, les salariés et les classes défavorisées ... (mais) la volonté manifeste du gouvernement, après 1968, de ne pas aller plus loin dans la voie du changement, suscitera un violent mécontentement de la part des milieux progressistes et il en résultera des affrontements périodiques entre ces derniers et le pouvoir.” Jean-François Cardin, *Comprendre Octobre 1970: Le F.L.Q., La Crise et le Syndicalisme* (Montréal: Éditions du Méridien, 1990), 57.

revolution into its own hands, complete with many bombings of national institutions and the “Crise d’Octobre”, culminating with the 1970 murder of Pierre Laporte by F.L.Q. member Pierre Falardeau.²⁴

Montreal in the 1960s

Quebec Nationalism was also coded in terms of class. The disaffected working class in Quebec was largely francophone and, as Cardin notes, for many of them at the time, “it [became] evident that francophone Quebecers were victims of an economic segregation in their own country.”²⁵ On the international economic stage, language also put French Canadians at a disadvantage. This was primarily felt in majority Francophone Quebec. In Montreal, where French and English Quebecers co-existed in greater numbers, it seemed natural that the tensions escalated faster and more drastically.

In the middle of the twentieth century in Quebec, the rise of the new francophone middle class, principally in the city of Montreal, demanded that their municipal administration respond more directly to the needs of its citizens. This, in great part, meant the use of the French language signage and literature primarily. In terms of general administration, however, because of the mostly Anglophone municipalities of the greater metropolitan area, language became even more of an issue. Paul-André Linteau explains that, “Being independent, [the municipalities] could offer to their citizens services dispensed principally in the English language, and [feared] all regrouping formula that would reduce those advantages and would make them depend on an administration

²⁴ Pierre Laporte was Quebec's Labor Minister.

²⁵ “il est evident que les Québécois francophones étaient victims d’une ségrégation économique dans leur propre pays.” Jean-François Cardin, *Comprendre Octobre 1970*, 68-69.

dominated by the francophones.”²⁶ The Corporation du Montréal métropolitain, instituted in 1959, was able to dispense many municipal services with first having to obtain “the accord of the concerned municipalities and that of the Commission municipale du Québec,”²⁷ indicating an attempt at maintaining a respect for the municipalities’ independent stances. The Corporation was, however, not able to complete its mandate with the arrival of the Drapeau/Saulnier administration, which began to promote the idea of annexing the various suburbs to the city of Montreal. It was in part with the construction of the metro system that the city of Montreal asserted its position by placing the Commission de transport solely under its jurisdiction. Suburban municipalities, however, were still required to contribute monetarily.²⁸

It was only in 1970, however, with the creation of the Communauté Urbaine, that the island of Montreal officially obtained its status as a regional government. Lucien Saulnier, having left his position at the city’s Conseil municipal, became president of the Communauté Urbaine’s executive committee. He later resigned in 1972, and was replaced by fellow Montrealer Lawrence Hanigan who remained president until 1978.²⁹ The council of this new organization included the mayor and all city advisors, as well as the mayors of all of the twenty-eight island municipalities, including l’Île Bizard. With the suburbs protected by a right of veto, the Montreal city officials had the power they wanted. This new association was helpful in creating an association between the various

²⁶ “ En étant indépendantes, [les municipalités] peuvent offrir à leurs citoyens des services dispensés principalement en langue anglaise et craignent toute formule de regroupement qui réduirait ces avantages et les ferait dépendre d’une administration dominée par les francophones.” Paul-André Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération*, 2nd Edition (Québec: Les Editions Boréal, 2000), 549.

²⁷ Ibid., 550.

²⁸ Ibid., 550.

²⁹ Ibid., 552.

Island communities, and thus accordingly in helping to develop the economy of the city. With the Communauté Urbaine, according to Linteau, “Montreal entered into a new political era that open[ed] the way for the expression of new strengths.”³⁰

In the province of Quebec as a whole, further governing issues also arose. In his book, Cardin notes that “the social discontent and violence which ensued can also be explained by the deficiencies in the traditional democratic process and, more particularly, by its incapacity to make heard adequately the demands of the masses and of its speakers.”³¹ Similarly, the key component of Lévesque’s Parti Québécois government was the adoption, in its first mandate, of the referendum law, which according to Lévesque “meant to ensure the rich couldn’t buy an election victory.”³² It placed limits on individual contributions to political parties and banned corporate donations, therefore, also, ensuring that largely Anglophone centers of wealth did not wield majority power. Lévesque’s first referendum on separation in 1980 won the support of only 40% of the voters.³³ Dedicated followers, however, ensured Lévesque’s re-election in 1982. Lévesque remained Premier until 1985. Subsequent referenda held in 1992 and 1995 did not prove any more successful in obtaining Quebec’s separation from Canada. The closest the so-called “YES

³⁰ Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération*, 552.

³¹ “Le mécontentement social et la violence qui en est issue s’explique aussi par les insuffisances du processus démocratique traditionnel et, plus particulièrement, par son incapacité à faire entendre adéquatement les doléances de la masse et de ses porte-parole.” Jean-François Cardin, *Comprendre Octobre 1970*, 71.

³² “The rich” in this passage, is a euphemism for the English-speaking people of the province, who owned and ran most of the major businesses and corporations in the large city centers, and thus, had more money than the mostly rural French-speaking Quebecois.

³³ Directeur général des élections du Québec, *Rapport des resultants officiels scrutin : référendum du 20 mai 1980* (Québec : Directeur général des élections du Québec, 1980).

camp”³⁴ came to victory, was in 1995 with less than a 1% margin of difference between the two opposing camps.³⁵

In the 1960s, new and more radical Quebec nationalist ideas were also challenged by the beliefs and actions of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who became Prime Minister of Canada in 1968. Trudeau, as a Québécois himself, accorded Quebec a central position within the nation. According to Christian Dufour, “all of his past showed the Québécois roots of a man who did not hide that he would rather be the resident of an independent Quebec than of a Canada from which Quebec no longer belonged to.”³⁶ Trudeau believed in the importance of Québécois identity in Canada and the presence of the Canadian identity in Québécois culture. As such, he established federal bilingualism legislation and strove to renew a Canadian nationalism based on cultural ideals. As Quebec nationalism was concerned with maintaining various elements of its culture, Canadian nationalism in turn strove to identify and promote a cultural identity of its own, primarily based on the idea of multiculturalism.³⁷ Although looking to Quebec as a reference, Trudeau did not however endorse Québécois nationalism that dominated the province in the 1960s and centered on the idea of the autonomous “Belle province”. Rather, he promoted the importance of a unified Canada. Of these types of Québécois Nationalists, Trudeau stated that

³⁴ The “YES camp” was in favor of Quebec’s independence from Canada, while the “NO camp” wished for Quebec to remain a province under it.

³⁵ Directeur général des élections du Québec, *Rapport des resultants officiels scrutin : référendum du 30 octobre 1995* (Québec : Directeur général des élections du Québec, 1995).

³⁶ “Tout son passé témoignait pourtant des racines québécoises d’un homme qui ne cachait pas qu’il aurait préféré être le citoyen dissident d’un Québec indépendant, plutôt que d’habiter un Canada dont le Québec ne ferait plus partie.” Christian Dufour, *Le Nationalisme Franco-Canadien (1960-1982)* (Montréal: Editions de l’Exagone, 1989), 79.

³⁷ Canada. Department of the Secretary of State, *Multiculturalism and the Government of Canada* (Ottawa: Minister of State, Multiculturalism, c1978).

They had but one desire – to survive as a nation; and it had become apparent that parliamentary government might turn out to be a useful tool for that purpose. Consequently, in adopting piece by piece the British political system, their secret design was not merely to use it, but to abuse of it if need be.³⁸

Trudeau recognized the two distinct linguistic and cultural communities that co-existed in Canada, but he denounced the means of French-Québécois separatists. In 1969, “in recognition of the equality between French and English,”³⁹ Trudeau instituted the “Loi sur les langues officielles” which aimed at correcting the evident asymmetry between French and English.⁴⁰ Trudeau hoped, as Claude Couture explains, that “through this policy, we will try to create an institutional collective space favorable to the fulfillment of francophones.”⁴¹ This policy also led to Trudeau’s promotion of multiculturalism in Canada, but as Christian Dufour however notes, “the political thought of Mr. Trudeau was in certain major aspects not within the reality of the Quebec and the Canada of his time.”⁴²

Expo’67 and the Centennial Commission

Quebec in the 1960s was struggling between achieving distinct cultural recognition and being recognized within Canada. This struggle coincided with the selection of Canada, and more specifically, the city of Montreal, as host site for the World Exposition of 1967. Following the mandates of the Centennial Commission, it was a challenge for Québécois and Canadians alike, to identify and promote their ideals, country, diversity,

³⁸ Pierre Elliot Trudeau quoted in James Laxer and Robert Laxer, *The Liberal Idea of Canada: Pierre Trudeau and the Question of Canada’s Survival* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1977), 150.

³⁹ “Dans la reconnaissance de l’égalité du français et de l’anglais.” Claude Couture, *La Loyauté d’un Laïc: Pierre-Elliot Trudeau et le libéralisme canadien* (Montréal: L’Harmattan Inc., 1996), 123.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 123.

⁴¹ “Par cette politique, on cherchera à créer un espace institutionnel collectif favorable à l’épanouissement des francophones.” Ibid., 124.

⁴² Dufour in *Le Défi Québécois*, 79.

and way of life, in a local, provincial, national and international framework. While Quebec was struggling to maintain its character within Canada, it was faced with the challenge of projecting not only that distinctiveness, but also representing Canada to the world in the context of Expo'67. While asserting its own autonomy, authorities at the same time were compelled to display a positive image of a happily unified Canada. The reshaping of Montreal, in its many facets, also reflected those tensions. Projects like that of the Metro system not only had to appeal to a sense of Québécois identity and culture, but also project a positive and international image to the rest of Canada and the world.

The year 1967 also marked the 100th anniversary of the British North America Act, which established Canada as a dominion. Immediately after midnight on January 1, 1967, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson lit the Centennial Flame on Parliament Hill to launch Canada's 100th anniversary. Besides Expo'67, other celebrations marking the Centennial included the fifth Pan-American Games (held in Winnipeg), and the institution of the Order of Canada, awarded to Canadians for outstanding merit and service. Undoubtedly, 1967 was to be a year in which Canada would assert itself on the world stage.

The Centennial Commission mandate notes that:

The Centennial of the Canadian Confederation Act charges the Commission "to promote interests in, and to plan and implement programs and projects relating to the Centennial of Confederation in Canada in order that the Centennial may be observed throughout Canada in a manner in keeping with its national and historical significance". In discharge of this mandate, the Commission is setting up a national program with two basic principles: 1) to achieve participation on the part of Canadians everywhere and 2) to provide a broad balance and variety in programming designed to reach the maximum number of Canadians.⁴³

⁴³ *Canada Centennial Commission Annual Report 1964/65-1966/67* (Ottawa, 1963-1968), 7.

All endeavors of the Centennial Commission were directly linked to this stipulated mandate. The official symbol of the Centennial, in fulfilling this objective, was created to encompass all of Canada. According to the Centennial Commission, “the design is readily identifiable with the world-recognized symbol of Canada—the maple leaf. It contains eleven equilateral triangles, ten representing the provinces and the eleventh representing the territories of the Canadian north.”⁴⁴ The use of the symbol was encouraged wherever the best interests of the Commission would be achieved. Canadian Citizens themselves were called upon to participate actively in the observance of the Centennial of Confederation. Canadian citizens were asked to fulfill two roles: “that of participant and initiator of projects, [...] and that of spectator at formal ceremonies and as witness to the efforts of other individuals.”⁴⁵ Programs would thus be developed in collaboration with the provincial and federal governments, as well as with municipalities and intermediary groups, to encourage the active and able participation of Canadian citizens.

Expo’67 marked the climax of the Centennial celebrations. Diverse performances and activities throughout the country were developed with the collaboration of national and international companies. Promotional literature announced that “at a time when the eyes of the world are turned towards Expo’67, numerous countries have planned demonstrations of friendship towards Canada.”⁴⁶ Ironically, just as Canada’s accomplishments and natural riches were being celebrated around the world, the very province hosting the nation’s key festivities was in turmoil. Nevertheless, Expo’67 was

⁴⁴ *Canada Centennial Commission Annual Report 1964/65-1966/67*, 26.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

promoted extensively and prominently. It offered the promise of a positive impact on the economy of Montreal, Quebec, and Canada as a whole. Many government departments and agencies thus supported the Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. In the official Expo'67 guide, it was noted that "enthusiasm... [was not] lacking! It [had] been spontaneously engendered by all Centennial workers exposed to the inspiration of the tremendous feat of nation-building of our forebears."⁴⁷

Concerned with all aspects of politics and propaganda, "it was felt that, as a universal language and method of expression, it was only proper that the arts should occupy an important place in [the] Centennial celebrations."⁴⁸ Once again, the Commission sought the involvement of Canadian communities, in expressive artistic programs that included performing arts, visual arts, folk arts and folklore. Art as such, would be important to the development of culture in Canada and would be a main focus in the development of Expo'67 and in the refurbishing and shaping of the host city of Montreal. A continuous program of touring artists and performers would enrich the country with life and vitality. Secretary of State Judy Lamarsh announced that in the sole domain of the interpretive arts, the Canada Festival would be the "richest menu of performing arts ever arranged in this country" and would allow Canadians from every province to enjoy performances by the very best in Canada.⁴⁹ It was in everyone's best interest that Canadians and visitors from abroad be able to enjoy and learn more about Canada and Canada's heritage.

⁴⁷"The National Program for the Centennial" *Expo 67: The Official Guide 28 April - 27 October 1967* (Montreal: Les Editions Maclean-Hunter Limited; 1967), 299.

⁴⁸*Canada Centennial Commission Annual Report 1964/65-1966/67*, 12.

⁴⁹John Fisher, Commissioner, "A Message from the Secretary of State" *Expo 67: The Official Guide 28 April - 27 October 1967* (Montreal: Les Editions Maclean-Hunter Limited; 1967), 290.

Jean Drapeau

As previously noted, the visual arts would also hold a major place within the Centennial Commission programmes, and more directly, within the reshaping of the World Exposition's host city of Montreal. Mayor Jean Drapeau had ambitious goals for his city. Seen by many observers as the person chiefly responsible for the reshaping of Montreal, he envisioned a powerful and beautiful city that would appear glorious to the visiting world. Mayor of the city of Montreal, in 1954-1957 and 1960-1986, Drapeau saw Montreal through both difficult and prosperous times. Among the city's greatest accomplishments and victories, he presided over the annexing of the towns of Rivière-des-Prairies, Village du Saguenay, Ville Saint-Michel and Pointe-aux-Trembles, the construction of Place-des-Arts, the 1967 World Exposition, the 1976 Summer Olympic Games and the "Floralies" of 1980, in addition to the building of the metro.

Drapeau's indefatigable enthusiasm allowed Montreal to see some of its most fruitful days. A political chameleon, Drapeau's appeal was widespread. According to Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, "Drapeau had been able to draw English-speaking bankers and businessmen ... because of his reputation as a committed federalist, and nationalists because they remembered the mayor's earlier period."⁵⁰ Since the beginning of his career, Drapeau in fact spoke of nationalism. In a 1959 autobiography, he wrote:

If we want to save Quebec, to ensure the development of Quebec's people, to soon be able to realize the indispensable peaceful revolution, the first priority is to redefine the State of Quebec in the Canadian Confederation and to simultaneously prepare the constitution in light of new requirements and of provincial states and of the confederated whole."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, *Drapeau* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1980), 340.

⁵¹ "Si nous voulons sauver Québec, assurer les conditions d'épanouissement du peuple du Québec, pouvoir demain réaliser la grande révolution pacifique indispensable, la première exigence est de redéfinir l'Etat du

Drapeau already saw Quebec as a State, a unique Nation, which should be recognized in Canada and internationally. Some of his contemporaries, such as political critic J.-Z.-Léon Patenaude, have even said that Drapeau dreamed of becoming the leader of this State of Quebec.⁵² It is with the same fierce dedication that Drapeau governed the city of Montreal as Mayor.

Drapeau recognized Montreal's complex cultural composition, and at the same time, the need for reforms to further unify the city. "If you don't understand that Montreal is a city of minorities," Drapeau once observed, "then you don't understand anything about Montreal."⁵³ Drapeau prided himself on this extensive understanding of Montreal and its inhabitants; this familiarity was the foundation of his various programs for the city. The construction of the metro system is a good example to illustrate Drapeau's self-declared understanding of Montreal's citizens. In its stations, Drapeau proposed to present art that would reflect their unique character and multicultural composition. Consequently, the art also revealed the municipal and cultural aspirations of the mayor.

Drapeau's aim was to "make of the metropolis a big modern city."⁵⁴ In order to achieve the best, he looked at models that he considered to be the finest from all over the world. From architecture and art to transportation, no costs were spared. On a more humanistic level, it is also noted that sometimes "the mayor would get emotional, saying

Québec dans la Confédération canadienne et de préparer simultanément la revision de la constitution à la lumière des besoins nouveaux et des Etats provinciaux et de l'ensemble confédéral." Jean Drapeau, *Jean Drapeau vous parle* (Montréal: Les Editions de la Cité, 1959), 29.

⁵² J.-Z.-Léon Patenaude, *Le Vrai visage de Jean Drapeau*, 2d ed. (Montréal: Les Editions du Jour, 1962), 116.

⁵³ McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 336.

⁵⁴ "... faire de la métropole une grande ville moderne." Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération*, 537.

he had once worked for the social welfare and he knew what it was like to be without a job. That was why he built as much as he did for Montreal, so that people could have jobs.”⁵⁵ Unfortunately, some of Drapeau’s extravagant projects for the city still today, carry a debt. Drapeau felt that no cost was too great for his city and its people, who should, he claimed, always expect the best from everything, regardless of cost. However high the costs may have been, Drapeau’s tenure left Montreal with some important visual and political landmarks. As Marcel Adams notes:

When we compare the Drapeau government to all that went before it since the incorporation of Montreal in the last century, we must admit that Montreal had never known an administration that has given so much, both qualitatively and quantitatively, nor has given to the metropolis such enlightenment, such national and international prestige.⁵⁶

The Drapeau administration was, however, not free from criticism. Although seemingly attentive to the city and its inhabitants, municipal officials were often criticized for being undemocratic. The Drapeau-Saulnier administration saw itself capable of “modernizing and of making more efficient the management of the city and of beginning the reforms that Montrealers had been demanding for a long time.”⁵⁷ However, Drapeau it seems, became much too involved in investing in his big modern projects, and as Paul-André Linteau explains, this eventually led to the neglect “of certain important needs of his citizens.”⁵⁸ Such misdirected priorities seem to have been the Drapeau administration’s

⁵⁵ McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 336.

⁵⁶ “Quand on compare le gouvernement Drapeau à tous ceux qui l’ont précédé depuis l’incorporation de Montréal au siècle dernier, il faut admettre que Montréal n’a jamais connu une administration qui a donné un tel rendement, tant qualitative que quantitative, n’a donné à la métropole un tel rayonnement, un tel prestige national ou international.” Marcel Adam, *La Démocratie à Montréal ou le vaisseau dort* (Montréal: Edition du Jour, 1972), 52.

⁵⁷ “... modernizer et de rendre plus efficace la gestion de la ville et d’amorcer des réformes que les Montréalais réclament depuis longtemps.” Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération*, 537.

⁵⁸ “...certains besoins importants des citoyens.” Ibid., 539.

most recurring criticism. It seems that the inner management, which the administration had set out to make more efficient, along with the inner developments of the city, were neglected for projects with more external prestige.

Drapeau's career itself was wide-ranging, diverse and international. He saw Montreal through the 1970 October Crisis and stood on the balcony of City Hall next to Charles DeGaulle during the French President's famous speech. Later, in 1976, he founded the Fondation Lionel Groulx, to develop research into the history of French North America. Holding the office of Mayor of Montreal until after his seventieth birthday, Drapeau subsequently went on to a job in Paris as the Canadian ambassador to UNESCO. Drapeau accomplished many things during his political career, but his reputation was nonetheless at times contentious; some saw him as more of a dictator than a democratic leader. The MCM⁵⁹ for example, fumed as the mayor boasted the need for "disciplined democracy, in which the people elect a government and are content to leave the running of it to the councilors until the next elections"⁶⁰. They felt that Drapeau's administration lacked sensitivity to public opinion and avoided collaboration in decision-making.

Of all of Drapeau's achievements in the 1960s, it was Expo'67 that stood out as having the most impact on the reshaping of Montreal. Even during uncertain political times, Canada presented an image of solidarity and a rich culture to the world in Expo. Journalist Bill Bantley noted that "Expo'67 is the most significant undertaking in Canada's peacetime history and it has proven the reverse of Parkinson's Law: People

⁵⁹Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) : A new opposition force at the 1974 elections- a coalition of left-wing activists, mostly francophone. McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 292.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 330.

grow to match their jobs.”⁶¹ In this statement, he expresses the pride felt in the total collaboration that was successfully achieved in the planning, construction and running of the sites. Expo’67 is still considered by many to be a great act of enterprise and ability.

Upon the opening of Expo’67, Drapeau sent out the following invitation:

“Montreal, the city where the world is meeting, sends its greetings to all mankind. To you, who do us the honor and friendship of coming here, I extend the warmest welcome.”⁶²

The invitation reflected his delight in the great achievements of Montreal and its people.

The construction of the site and the transformation of the city demonstrated innovation, cooperation and pride. Furthermore, a nationwide collaboration and determination was

visible in the presentation of a positive image of Quebec and Canada, its culture and its

people. Citing this peaceful cooperation between battling nations, Bantley explains that “it is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”⁶³

Because of the mandate of the Centennial Commission, and because of Drapeau’s vision of Montreal as an international city, inhabitants of Quebec and Canada collaborated and set differences aside for the achievement of a common goal in the presentation of

Expo’67. The success of the World Exposition can perhaps be seen largely as a result of this genuine collaboration.

Montreal became more than host of the World Exposition, it was a city to be discovered in itself. Many visitors to Expo fondly remember the city as much as they do the exposition sites themselves. As journalist Pierre Marois, of the Montreal newspaper *La Presse*, notes “whomever has lived Expo’67 has kept a memory permanently marked with

⁶¹ Bill Bantley, *Bill Bantley’s Expo’67* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Company, 1967), 8.

⁶² Mayor Jean Drapeau in Bantley, *Bill Bantley’s Expo’67*, 9.

⁶³ Ibid., 11.

that of the city and that of the style of the urban life.”⁶⁴ In fact, the refurbishment of Montreal has seemed to have had a major impact on the visitors to the city around the time of Expo’67. Their memories often have as much to do with the general atmosphere of the city and its much touted urban sophistication, as with the Expo grounds themselves. People seem to have adopted the city and wanted to lose themselves in it, absorbing all that it could offer. This component was considered a crucial part of the experience of Expo.

As expressed in the Centennial Commission mandate, and reflecting the mayor’s particular views on the aesthetics of a city, artistic value became an important concern. As Kevin Lynch, a contemporary scholar in urban studies, explains “like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of vast scale, a thing perceived only in the course of long spaces of time.”⁶⁵ As visitors would make their way throughout the city and the various sites of Expo, they would immerse themselves in artistic environments. Within Expo itself, art was highly visible in the many pavilions and their architecture. There was however also an interest in bringing this art beyond the boundaries of Expo grounds and into the city itself. There was an effort to take art out of the museums and to bring it to the attention of a more general public. In keeping with international aspirations, Montreal city officials looked at European models to develop ideas to include art into the everyday worlds of the inhabitants of the city. It was thought

⁶⁴“Quiconque a vécu l’Expo 67 en a gardé un souvenir indélébile marqué par la ville et par le style de vie urbaine.” Michel Marois, “La ville Expo 67: l’art d’appriivoiser la ville et le monde”, *La Presse Dossiers*.

⁶⁵ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960), 1.

that art should be included in many aspects of the expanding metropolis, in order to enhance its beauty and the interest of its residents and guests.

At the time of Expo, the quality of life for citizens and visitors to Montreal became an important goal. This goal appears to have been met on the grounds of the Exposition sites. Just as Lynch explains “every citizen has had long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memory and meanings,”⁶⁶ the enterprise of Expo has been embedded with the initiatives and collaborations of the many people who were involved in it, as well as with the impressions and recollections of its many visitors.

In the years surrounding the Montreal 1967 World Exposition, the Montreal underground transportation system was also being developed. In terms of public art, the idea of integrating art into the construction of the individual stations of the metro system seemed like an interesting experiment. In having to travel to and from Expo daily by metro, a majority of visitors would then be exposed to a community of artists and their work. Whether consciously or not, passengers of the metro would be exposed to art and new images of the city and its character. It is perhaps this presence of expressive content in an otherwise mundane travel to and from Expo and other sites around the city of Montreal that has remained in the minds of people, for many of whom fond memories of Expo often revolve around the city in its entirety.

Immersed in political upheaval and a quest for identity, the city of Montreal in the 1960s became a world center. Montreal became one of the great cities, known for its beauty, its people, its charm and its culture. At the same time that Quebec was emerging from religious dominance into secular self-control, Montreal was being redefined as a

⁶⁶ Lynch, *The Image of the City*, 1.

sophisticated and international city. Technology came hand in hand with the development of urbanism, and proved essential to the expansion of the city. Montreal thus was faced with having to combine new technologies with fresh ideas about culture and the city. With its sleek design and state of the art machinery, it is perhaps in the Montreal Metro system that both these ideas were most successfully intertwined.

The Montreal Metro System Project is therefore a crucial aspect of Montreal's political and cultural milieu in the 1960s. Not only was the metro to be a functional aspect of the city, but Drapeau transformed it into an artistic statement of the quality of life in the city. Having looked at European centers for inspiration, Drapeau and his team concentrated various collected ideas into this specific metro project. These very ideas were now to materialize into something representative of the city of Montreal, its people and their cultures.

Chapter Two

The Montreal Metro

Introduction of the Project

It was in the 1960s that Montreal made official its plans to construct an underground transportation system. The idea had been debated since the end of the Second World War, when the city's rapid expansion into suburbs overtaxed its highways. An underground transportation system, aided by bus routes, seemed the most efficient solution. Mayor Jean Drapeau announced the project for the construction of Montreal's Metro on November 3rd, 1961.¹ Upcoming municipal elections may also have been an impetus in Drapeau's initiation of the project; the successful completion of the Metro was envisioned in part to aid in his re-election. To ensure its popularity and triumph, no expense would be spared in the construction of the Metro system. According to McKenna and Purcell, "Drapeau believed that in the same way that they buy the most expensive cars in Canada, Québécois and Montrealers alike wanted the best from their public officials. And in Drapeau's mind, this meant that cost was never an overriding factor."² The prospect of the World Exposition, which would be held in Montreal in 1967, was also taken into account when planning for the construction of the Metro system. Expo'67's exposition site was partly made possible because of the Montreal Metro. In fact, much of the 15 million tons of rock and earth needed to construct Ile Ste-Hélène and Ile Notre-Dame, future sites for the various pavilions of Expo'67, was recovered and recycled from

¹ *Le Metro de Montreal* (Montreal, Commune Urbaine de Montreal, n.d.), 12.

² McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 140.

the construction of the Montreal Metro.³ The underground system would also allow easy access to and from the Exposition sites, as well as to various locations on the island of Montreal. In the beginning, however, there was no mention of any art as part of the system.

Initially, the Metro's designers were chiefly concerned with practical issues: cars, routes, fares and prices. Expo'67, because of its worldwide audience, also became a principle influence on the guidelines for building the system. Because most people would travel to Expo by the metro, the city, its mayor, the organizers and developers of the project wanted the system to be convenient and accessible. In addition, each subway station was intended to be of a memorable design. They wanted the Metro to showcase the city, not merely to offer transportation. It was thus conceived that the system as a whole was to project a modern and positive image of Montreal. To this end, Montreal officials looked to various international cities as models, examining how civic history was reflected in their undergrounds and learning from their mistakes. A historic overview of the development of the Metro, and a discussion of the methods by which art may communicate, will be helpful tools in understanding how the project was conceived and realized.

Paris quickly became a point of interest because of its historic link to Montreal and the province of Quebec as a whole. For the conception of the Montreal Metro system, Quebec engineers consulted with colleagues from the Régie autonome des transports parisiens. In the end, it proved to be the art incorporated into the architecture of the

³ Benoit Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal: 35 ans déjà* (Montréal : Editions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, 2001), 34-35.

Parisian métro stations that was of particular interest for the design of Montreal's system.⁴ This art was said to be in the "interest of the city,"⁵ helping to provide a more cultured and pleasant environment for the people travelling by metro everyday. In a letter to the Montreal committee, it was suggested that "for the public, the Metro, it is man in an environment usually detestable; the underground. The architect is there to create a volume, the artist to add this last sensibility which renders the space enjoyable."⁶ The committee agreed, and with this in mind, the project of integrating art into the architecture of the Metro system was born.

The Montreal Metro Project took form and was effective as a manifestation of civic aspirations because it utilized the communicative potential in public art. Because of the cultural heterogeneity of Montreal itself, broadly accessible symbolism was employed. Overall, the project illustrated a sense of Quebec history and of a general unified identity. This chapter will contextualize the project by providing a historic overview of its development, as well as discuss art as a form of communication by drawing on reception theory.

International Models

As noted above, Paris provided the key model for the Montreal Metro. Like the Montreal Metro, the Paris Métro, inaugurated on July 19th, 1900, was built in part to ensure the success of the World Exposition of that year. Although upper class citizens

⁴ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 136.

⁵"*Dans l'intérêt de la Cité*" STCUM Archives. "Statement by the Organizing Committee Pointing out the Positive Effects of the Integration of Art Within the Metro Stations", n.d.

⁶"Pour le public, le métro, c'est l'homme dans un environnement traditionnellement détestable, les sous-sols. L'architecte est là pour créer un volume, l'artiste pour y ajouter cette dernière sensibilité qui rend l'espace plus agréable." STCUM Archives. "Demande d'intégration d'un artiste au Comité chargé du choix des oeuvres d'art dans le métro", n.d.

already had personal means of transportation to the Exposition site, the Paris Métro would allow for the middle class to travel to the spectacle. Of the approximately sixty million visitors to the World Exposition, it was presumed that a majority of those would be working middle class people who would travel by Métro to the Exposition site.⁷ The Métro itself was originally very simple, with initial stations having only one public access that led to a ticket booth and downstairs to a well-lit platform. The exterior entrances of the stations eventually, however, developed more of an aesthetic appeal.

As Baumert Hallsted notes in his book about the development of the Parisian subway, “though it may seem strange, the beauty of the Métro was an extremely important factor for the Parisians.”⁸ In fact, many people at the time thought of the Métro not only as a product of the industrial age, but also as an artistic adornment to the city. Because of the historic importance of aesthetics to the city, there was initially a debate about whether or not the exterior entrances of the Métro should even be visible at all. The Société des amis des monuments parisiens, headed by Charles Garnier, architect of the Paris Opera House, began a campaign against the “destruction of France by France.”⁹ He spoke in opposition to all externally visible Métro stations. Garnier himself had proposed in 1866 to decorate the interior of the stations with bronze and marble sculptural decorations, but it seemed that an exterior artistic impression, in his opinion, would interfere with the beauty of the city itself. His cries were, however, ignored and architect Hector Guimard was commissioned to design the first stations’ exteriors.

⁷ Baumert Hallsted, *Métro-Cité: Le Chemin de fer métropolitain à la conquête de Paris 1871-1945* (Paris: Paris musées/Editions de musées de la Ville de Paris/RATP/Archives de Paris, 1997), 183.

⁸ “Cela peut sembler surprenant, mais la beauté du métro est un facteur extrêmement important pour les Parisiens.” Ibid., 186.

⁹ “La destruction de la France par la France.” Hallsted, *Métro-Cité*, 184.

Guimard was known for his interest in a populist architecture. Gillian Naylor describes Guimard as a person who “tended to present himself as a practical man, an inspired rationalist, whose aim was to demonstrate ‘logic, harmony and sentiment’ throughout his work, qualities, he maintained, that were inherent in natural form.”¹⁰ His Art Nouveau design, inspired largely by organic forms, won widespread acceptance. As noted by Malcolm Miles, his designs for the Paris Métro “suggest cosmopolitan ease, using the design style favoured by the progressive taste of the time—Art Nouveau—in which form and decoration are fused.”¹¹ Art Nouveau monuments, like the Métro stations, have become prized as part of Paris’ artistic heritage. In 1965, André Malraux, then minister of Culture in France, classified the remaining Guimard stations as historical monuments.¹² Guimard’s structural designs united architecture and decoration. He was interested in the harmony of elements and a language of symbols that were in a constant state of flux. His facades engaged the viewer in a series of connected organic patterns and juxtaposed designs, and of his architecture Naylor has written, “there remains the ability ... to engage the attention and surprise.”¹³

The Moscow Metro system also influenced the design of the Montreal Metro. Inaugurated in 1935, Stalin had ordered that every station be designed and decorated by the country’s leading architects and artists.¹⁴ The stations were decorated with marble, colonnades and chandeliers. Stalin’s goal was to build the most beautiful Metro in the

¹⁰ Gillian Naylor, “Hector Guimard –Romantic Rationalist?”, *Hector Guimard: Architectural Monographs 2* (London: Academy Editions, 1978), 11.

¹¹ Malcolm Miles, *Art Spaces and the City: Public Art and Urban Futures* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 133.

¹² As Art Nouveau loses its appeal in France, many of the Guimard stations are destroyed and replaced with more discrete stone balustrades. *Ibid.*, 186.

¹³ Naylor, *Hector Guimard*, 7.

¹⁴ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 136.

world. Montreal officials adopted Moscow's model of distinctive designs for each station in its system.¹⁵ In fact, by the 1960s, the trend of uniform metro stations was waning, with Montreal and Stockholm at the forefront of the new movement to make each station a distinctive environment.¹⁶ As in the Montreal and Moscow underground transportation systems, Stockholm's metro stations were varied in sizes, materials, and artistic expressions. Built in the 1970s, Stockholm's *tunnelbana* retained an underground quality with its cavern-like appearance. Jennifer Hardenne explains, "In the grotto stations, the rock was left virtually naked, covered only by a thin layer of reinforced concrete."¹⁷ Different from any usual cave however, eighty of the one hundred stations of the system were adorned with works of over 130 artists.

Paris, Moscow, Stockholm and Montreal all introduced art within their underground transportation systems. This trend was to grow; by the 1980s, cities such as New York and London also commissioned artists to create works for their subway stations. In fact at this time, as Miles remarks, "public transport became a growth area for public art."¹⁸ As Miles also notes, these ideas of public art [were] closely tied in with ideas of "international modernism" and "progress,"¹⁹ and were usually instituted following the implementation of cultural policies in these cities.

The Montreal Metro Art Project

Although Montreal city officials examined other underground transportation systems, chiefly that of Paris, they wanted their project to be exceptional. The idea of

¹⁵ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 136.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁷ Jennifer Hardenne, "Underground Art, Stockholm" *R.O.B.: Report Business Magazine* (October 01, 2001): 120.

¹⁸ Miles, *Art Spaces and the City*, 132.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 141.

including art in the exterior as well as interior stations throughout the whole structure was proposed and investigated carefully. The approach was at first cautious: art within the architecture of the stations was supported, so long as the art did not become repetitive or dull.²⁰ The City of Montreal's planning director, Claude Robillard, accompanied by his assistant, Guy Legault, thus came to Lucien Saulnier²¹ with the original idea of hiring a separate architect to design each station. As McKenna and Purcell note:

All wanted to avoid the ugly uniformity of the world's subway systems—London's noisy “tube”, Toronto's subway of the time where the stations resembled public washrooms, New York's hell hole of dirt, graffiti and terror.²²

As a result, architects and artists were carefully selected for each station of the Montreal Metro, and were given the task of imagining designs to create a favourable environment in an otherwise drab setting. Because of the subway's very nature, its spaces might, without decoration, seem dark, unpleasant, and even claustrophobic. Another goal was to make the travelling experience interesting instead of a mere necessity, convenient instead of tiresome. In the end, officials proposed to make the system beautiful and welcoming as a whole. They attempted to make every individual station a memorable stop along the way.

To avoid uniformity, a different architect was appointed to design each individual station.²³ This architect then selected an artist or group of artists for the conception of the art in the station. With each its own architect and artists, every station would have a distinctive character and design. This plan for the Metro suggests a belief in the power of

²⁰ STCUM Archives. “Statement by the Organizing Committee Pointing out the Positive Effects of the Integration of Art Within the Metro Stations”, n.d.

²¹ Saulnier was Drapeau's executive committee chairman.

²² McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 139.

²³ STCUM Archives. “Statement by the Organizing Committee Pointing out the Positive Effects of the Integration of Art Within the Metro Stations”, n.d.

art to transform one's space and to create within it a more attractive environment. As artist

Vito Acconci proposed in another context:

Mass transit must entice people out of their cars and into the trains, buses and trolleys. The convenience, lower costs, and higher goals of a cleaner environment are not enough to convince people to sacrifice their autonomy. Art plays a part in creating an environment that attracts riders; it has the ability to soothe, surprise and challenge.²⁴

Because of the diversity of the decor of each station, the Montreal Metro has indeed accomplished this element of surprise and interest. As a result, George Adamczyk notes that the Montreal Metro became more than a mere technical marvel, "it was the genius of men to have imagined a succession of happy spaces in the city's underground."²⁵ The previously stated intent of embellishing the mundane and turning it into something noteworthy for everyone was thus achieved. It was also through the creation of notable spaces that the art was able to communicate to its audience a sense of the city.

The Role of the Architect

The satisfactory completion of the Metro Art Project depended on successful collaborations between artists and architects. The architect, whose primary objective was to conceive a practical station, then had to find modest ways of integrating art within his construction.²⁶ Graham Cantieni offers that the three possible relationships between art and architecture—"subordination of painting to architecture, compromise between artist and architect, and superiority of the artist."²⁷—are valid frameworks by which to examine

²⁴ Vito Acconci, "Down the Tube: A Rapid View of Underground Art" in *Stroll Magazine* (June/July 1988): 84.

²⁵ George Adamczyk, "La Vie et le métro", *Vie des arts*, 68 (1972): 39.

²⁶ Architects involved in the project were generally men.

²⁷ A.C. Sewter, *A Lecture on the Relationships between Painting and Architecture in the Renaissance and Modern Times* (London: Alec Tirani, 1952), in Graham Cantieni, *Montreal Metro: Integration of Art and Architecture*, Master's thesis, Concordia University, 1987, 23.

the integration of art in the Montreal Metro. In his thesis, Cantieni examines the aforementioned relationships, as first proposed by A.C. Sewter at a lecture to the Manchester Society of Architects in 1951,²⁸ and applies them to a selection of seven Metro stations: Verdun, De L'Eglise, Viau, Honoré-Beaugrand, Peel, Assomption and LaSalle. The art was in fact at times planned as an addendum to station designs while at others, the art was developed together with the architecture. While these relationships provide tools with which to look at the art in the Metro, they remain observations of formal relationships. In the Montreal Metro, however, as symbolic manifestations of civic aspirations, the art and the architecture extend such material limitations. Cantieni quotes Sewter as explaining the application of these principles as a result of the "intimacy of relationship between the two arts, a perfection of separate achievement and of combined effort."²⁹ This intimate relationship was in fact present in the Montreal Metro, and was made possible through collaboration of artists and architects. It is through this careful teamwork that the art was able to communicate symbolically rather than simply interact in its physical environment.

As part of their training, architects examine spatial qualities and properties to construct functional three-dimensional spaces. They must be aware of circulation patterns, structure and control of the environment. While some of the visual artists selected were generally more comfortable with the two-dimensionality of the canvas, the architect is perhaps more comfortable working in three-dimensional spaces. The challenge for the architects of the Metro stations thus became the combination of these two notions of

²⁸ Cantieni, *Montreal Metro*, 23.

²⁹ A.C. Sewter, *Ibid.*

space. Artists who created three-dimensional works also faced challenges. Their collaboration with the architects would ensure proper positioning of the works in order to create the best possible effects and viewpoints. Fundamentally, the practices of the artist and the architect are different. The architect, though aware of space, is not necessarily familiar with concepts of viewpoint and display of a work of art, and so partnership between artists and architects would allow a sharing of strengths and ideas.

The architects selected for each of the Metro stations seemed not only to have a clear idea of the concept for their designated station, but of the artistic works they wanted to include in the site. Thorough knowledge of contemporary artists and current art movements, or a close collaboration with their commissioned artists, would also have been needed to create harmony. Documentation for the Montreal Metro Project does indeed indicate close communication, if not cooperation between architects and artists.³⁰ The simple fact that the appointed architect himself was responsible for the selection of artists for his station indicates an understanding on his part of the works of art and their significance within the system. The architect was aware not only of the functions of his building, but of the potential artistic expressions within it. This complete understanding allowed for a more cohesive whole. The architect thus ensured that art became an integral part of the project. Architects and artists then collaborated on communicating with their audience. Furthermore, they responded to their surroundings within the city environment in order to convey a sense of its history, ideology, and artistic ideas. As such, artists and

³⁰ Various letter between Marcel Raby, architect of the Pie-IX station, and Jordi Bonet, the commissioned artist for the same station, are examples that confirm a close communication between architects and artists in the Metro Project. STCUM archives. "Letter from Marcel Raby to Jean Dumontier concerning the mural by Jordi Bonet for the Pie-IX Metro station", 23 June 1972. STCUM Archives. "Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby concerning the mural project for the Pie-IX Metro station", 13 July 1972.

architects were sensitive to the social implications intrinsic with a public space, as well as the interactions and activities that took place within it. Art and architecture thus complemented, rather than challenged, a place's nature.

The Public and Public Spaces

To reiterate, the initial interest in using art to communicate a sense of belonging and identity is predicated on the belief that art makes a viable contribution to a society's cultural life. Miles argues that "the role of art is to transform spaces into places, the public into people."³¹ As such, art has the capacity to give meaning to a place, which can be read and comfortably understood by individuals and collectively. In a city like Montreal during the 1960s, immersed in political struggles and at the centre of worldwide attention, questions of "the public", the grouping of individuals of which this city is comprised, arise. It is important, therefore, to develop a profile of the people who actually circulate through various public spaces. Montreal at the time was defined as a heterogeneous society, a gathering of various communities each with its own cultural character. This heterogeneity complicated the problem of civic communication. In his book *Nouveaux Territoires de l'art: Régions, Réseaux, Place Publique*, André Fortin concludes that a community becomes a social gathering of people contributing to its transformation, and in optimum circumstances, this gathering becomes a place of redefinition of collective identities. He explains:

That which circulates through (a public space) doesn't do it as a fluid runs following the accidents of the terrain ... but according to *ad hoc* circuits built

³¹ Malcolm Miles, *Art for Public Spaces* (Winchester: Winchester School of Art Press, 1989), 4.

by members of the circuit. This circuit can become the places for the formation of identities and even for the meeting of different identities.³²

Art that is inserted within a public space is thus seen as a contribution to the newly defined collective identity. It also adds to the space and communicates within it. It is responsive to the many elements of which it is composed, and of the combined product which has resulted. For the realization of a public art project like that in the Montreal Metro, it is imperative to understand how the organizers intended art and architecture to communicate.

As George Baird and Mark Lewis explain, art and architecture, by their very nature and the way the public perceives them, communicate in different ways:

It seems that the contention in respect to the significance of a work of art – particularly a work of “public” art – will tend characteristically to focus predominantly on its iconography, that is to say, on the perceived ideology of its typical modes of representation, whilst that in respect to a work of architecture will characteristically focus primarily on disclosure of its subconsciously manipulative effects – or, to put it another way, on its discernable ideological relationship to a putative social or political praxis.³³

As Baird explains, while a public interacts with architecture through structure and circulation patterns, the artist presents a series of discernable signs to its audience. In looking at art, viewers “look for signs or symbols that communicate meaning and aid in fostering aesthetic, intellectual, or emotional connections with the art.”³⁴ In public spaces especially, where various communities interact to create a collective reality, as in the

³² “Ce qui y circule ne le fait pas comme un fluide s’écoule en suivant les accidents du terrain ... mais selon des circuits *ad hoc* construits pas les membres du réseau. Ces réseaux peuvent devenir des lieux de formation d’identités, voire de rencontre d’identités différentes.” André Fortin, *Nouveaux Territoires de l’Art: Régimes, Réseaux, Place Publique* (Québec: Edition Notabene, 2000), 256.

³³ George Baird and Mark Lewis (eds), *Queues, Rendez-vous, Riots: Questioning the Public in Art and Architecture* (Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1994), 6.

³⁴ Catherine Anderson-Dolcini, *One-Percent for Whom? Canada’s Public Works Fine Art Programme, 1964-1978: Its Rise and Demise*, Master’s thesis, Carleton University, 2001, 91.

Montreal Metro, awareness of the various social experiences that co-exist in this same space is necessary when considering the placement of art. It is also important to understand the idea of “public” in order not to disrupt the familiar quality of the space. The Montreal audience, the public in this case, in the 1960s, was understood as eclectic, unpredictable and variable. The art selected was then not to be directed at one specific group, but at a diverse crowd of individuals with varied interests.³⁵

In contemporary art, there is often a tension between artist’s intent and audience perception. As Marie Arbour explains: “artistic culture is not uniformly dispersed and it is safe to think that the majority of the population of a city like Montreal is generally indifferent to what artists propose, unless they are minimally guided in their approach and their contact with contemporary art.”³⁶ Artists had thus to find ways to communicate to the public in a simple and easily understood manner. As Suzi Gablik explains “there is a distinct shift in the locus of creativity from the autonomous, self-contained individual to a new kind of dialogue structure that frequently is not the product of a single individual but is the result of a collaborative and interdependent process.”³⁷ Art production does become a collaboration of sorts, not a communication directed an audience, but one *with* an audience.

³⁵ Although beyond the scope of this thesis, the study of the varied “horizons of experience” (as described by Hans Robert Jauss in the context of reception theory) of the artists, architects and viewers in Montreal in the 1960s, such as architectural or art magazines and publications, would also be interesting to better understand the art selection for the Metro, as well as the viewers’ reactions.

³⁶ “La culture artistique n’est pas uniformément répandue et on peut penser que la majorité de la population d’une ville comme Montréal est passablement indifférente à ce que les artistes proposent, à moins d’être minimalement guidée dans son approche et son contact avec l’art contemporain.” Rose-Marie Arbour, *L’Art qui nous est contemporain* (Montréal: Editions Artexes, 1999), 108.

³⁷ Suzi Gablik, “Connective Aesthetics: Art After Individualism,” in Suzanne Lacy (ed), *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), 76.

To communicate effectively, the architects and artists of the Montreal Metro had to consider the viewer's perspective. As noted in *Critical Issues in Public Art*, Senie and Webster argue that, "The very concept of public art, defined in any meaningful way, presupposes a fairly homogenous public and a language of art that speaks to all."³⁸ When this group, however, as in the case in Montreal, is greatly varied, this language then either extends boundaries or finds common ground. The Metro Project seems to have alternated between both options, sometimes reaching out to teach about Quebec and at other times bonding people by providing generally understood symbols. This relationship between the artist and the viewer, the "public", is curious and unique. Suzanne Lacy goes so far as to say that "the inclusion of the public connects theories of art to the broader population: what exists in the space between the words public and art is an unknown relationship between artist and audience, a relationship that may *itself* become the artwork."³⁹ It may be this "unknown relationship" that also remains to be questioned and examined in a project like the Montreal Metro.

Art as Communicator

In order for any communication to occur, the recipient of the message must be considered in terms of his/her level of familiarity with the codes and the language used to communicate. As Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson explain in the article "Semiotics and Art History," "Human culture is made up of signs, each of which stands for something other than itself, and the people inhabiting culture busy themselves making sense of those

³⁸ Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (eds), *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers 1992), 171.

³⁹ Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*, 20.

signs.”⁴⁰ To allow communication, these signs must be easily read and understood by the viewer. Following Charles Peirce’s semiotic model, a sign either represents (icon), points to (index) or stands for (symbol) the idea it tries to communicate.⁴¹ In a broad and varied artistic project like that of the Montreal Metro, not only does each individual station have meaning for the viewer, but the project in its entirety is significant as well. The Metro planners encouraged the use of signs that were not too narrow and that could be understood by the public to convey a sense of civic pride.

In art, as in literature, there are, according to John Guillory, two general kinds of readers or recipients of the message: the “professional” reader and the “lay” reader. The professional reader is characterized by discipline, whereas the lay reader is associated with leisure.⁴² While the professional reader will spend time assimilating the codes that will enable him to understand and read a text or an image, the lay reader will not. In the public realm, audiences will largely consist of lay readers who will simply pass by and barely glance at a work of art, not interested in spending time deciphering its significance. Passers-by will not necessarily possess the vocabulary, experience or even desire to engage with art. In a space meant especially for circulation, as in an underground subway system, encounters with individual works will generally be brief. As Adamczyk explains, the Metro “is an architecture that is walked, circulated according to routes regulated by a rhythm of sequences where can appear strong and weak moments.”⁴³ In Montreal,

⁴⁰ Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History”, in Donald Preziosi (ed.), *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 176.

⁴¹ Bal and Bryson, in *The Art of Art History*, 189.

⁴² John Guillory, “The Ethical Practice of Modernity: The Example of Reading” in Marjory Garber, Beatrice Hanssen and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (eds), *The Turn to Ethics* (New York: Routledge; 2000), 31-32.

⁴³ “C’est une architecture qui se marche, se parcourt selon des cheminements réglés pas un rythme de sequences où peuvent apparaître des temps forts et des temps faibles.” Adamczyk in *Vie des arts*, 68: 40.

architects and artists had to consider the aforementioned property of the metro to present messages and images to Montreal's heterogeneous audience that would reflect the various experiences of the different kinds of readers in a direct and efficient manner. The Metro Project's architects and artists thus tried to present accessible works.

John Guillory explains the need for more varied communication through art by noting that:

The fact that the cultures of intellectual expertise fail to communicate across the gap between themselves and the cultures of consumption evacuates the public sphere of any discourse that is not merely entertaining; the political can be admitted into this sphere only in the entertaining form of moral spectacle.⁴⁴

In the case of the Montreal Metro Art Project, the art was indeed intended to be more than entertainment; the architects, artists and city officials sought to communicate an account of the city and its people. It was important for them that the art be a product of the city, appropriately depicting its values and reflecting its character. In order to communicate these ideas about the city to a broad audience, a more general language of art thus had to be examined in this context.

Wolfgang Kemp, in his essay "The Work of Art and Its Beholder" explains that various forms of address are satisfied when a work of art is significant to its viewer.⁴⁵ Firstly, the relationship between the elements of the work itself is understood as either including or excluding the beholder of the work. In the case of public art, where the principal goal of the art seems to be communication or at the very least interaction, hermetic works, where the inner elements completely exclude the beholder, are

⁴⁴ Guillory in *The Turn to Ethics*, 43.

⁴⁵ Wolfgang Kemp, "The Work of Art and Its Beholder: Methodology of the Aesthetic of Reception" in Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey (eds), *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 187.

ineffectual. Ideally, a work of art commissioned for a specific public contains elements that interact with each other in such a way that is interesting and significant. Secondly, the work of art allows for a personal perspective on the part of the beholder. "Vehicles of identification",⁴⁶ found among the formal elements of the work, are used to interact with the beholder, and to guide his thoughts towards understanding the art. The viewer then not only recognizes the elements and their interaction with each other, but the viewer also recognizes that these elements are speaking to him or her as well. These vehicles of identification in a sense may become extensions of the viewer into the artistic space, by including the viewer and his or her thoughts within the significance of the piece. Thirdly, the viewer is taken into consideration in terms of his or her positioning. This is often done through perspective or consideration of the beholder's viewing position in front of the work of art. A viewer makes the appropriate connections between elements and between the work and him/herself when circulation around the art is allowed and when the art is accessible from the most favourable vantage point. Finally, the beholder reacts to the placement of the formal elements of a work. Colours, lines, shapes and the way in which they interact affect the viewer in different ways, both negative and positive. Formal elements are carefully considered in order to elicit the desired effect. When applied to a work meant for a public space, such as the works commissioned for the Montreal Metro stations, the previously mentioned conditions are carefully examined in order to get the appropriate message across and the adequate reaction in return.

⁴⁶ Kemp in *The Subjects of Art History*, 187.

A viewer relates and understands a work of art when a “sense of relationship” is established.⁴⁷ This relationship is based primarily on a chain of communication between the work and the viewer on an aesthetic level. When looking at art, communication seems, at first glance, asymmetric: the work of art is the communicator while the beholder appears to hold a mere passive position. But with careful attention to formal elements capable of including the viewer in the work and its message, this asymmetry becomes relative. Just as a public space is transformed continuously by the people who circulate through and interact with it, the work of art may impart elements of its meaning through the gazes and interpretations of the various beholders who consider it. Kemp acknowledges this reality by stating that “In the case of aesthetic communication, relative asymmetry proves to be the impetus for not only situating the beholder (...) but also for stimulating, for activating the beholder to take part in the construction of the work of art.”⁴⁸ Art thus becomes fully communicative when the viewer is involved, not only in formal relation to the work, but also in its aesthetic construction of symbolic significance. According to Kemp, “the function of beholding has already been incorporated into the work itself.”⁴⁹ “Conditions of access” on the part of the beholder and “conditions of appearance”⁵⁰ on the part of the work of art are present through its size, medium, form, spatial compositions, and other formal qualities.

Suzanne Lacy perhaps best summarizes the relationship between viewer and art in a simple diagram illustrating the sequence of events that occur with communication and

⁴⁷ Kemp in *The Subjects of Art History The Subjects of Art History*, 185.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 186.

the elements necessary within this sequence.⁵¹ The diagram (reproduced in Appendix A) indicates how approved cultural ideas and available resources serve to inform the conception of a work of art. This work is then inserted within a public setting, transforming it by infusing the meaning of the work or art within it. As previously stated, the character of a space is inevitably altered by the presence of people and objects passing through it. The experience of the space is then transformed as well. How a viewer chooses to interact with the new elements within this space shapes his or her experience. This interaction will then affect the meaning this object or artwork will take on for each individual viewer. Here, Lacy reiterates what Kemp had emphasized, that “the first mandate for attributing meaning to a work of public art is to recognize that meaning-making is a shared activity between artist and observer.”⁵² This meaning can be both public (shared) in experience and private (personal) in significance.

The Public Environment

Communication is widespread and audiences relate to artworks when the effects of site specificity are considered. As explained by Senie and Webster in *Critical Issues in Public Art*:

The reciprocity between artwork and site altered the identity of each, blurring the boundaries between them and preparing the ground for a greater participation of art in wider cultural and social practices. For public art, the alteration, rather than affirmation, of the site required that the urban space occupied by a work be understood, just as art and art institutions had been, as socially constructed spaces.⁵³

⁵¹ Appendix A: “Model for Elements in Public Art” by Suzanne Lacy.

⁵² Suzanne Lacy, “Fractured Spaces”, in *Art in the Public Interest*, edited by Arlene Raven (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 299.

⁵³ Senie and Webster (eds), *Critical Issues in Public Art*, 160.

Like museums, public spaces impact the meaning of art situated in their environments. In the case of the Montreal Metro system, art was not simply inserted into a pre-existing space, as is often the case with public art; instead, it was conceived for and constructed directly within the newly designed space. Even so, the public was faced not only with an unfamiliar system of transportation, but also with curious artistic interventions. This art may have been perceived as intrusive because of the inability of an uninformed public to relate to it in the same way it would to another public setting.

Art inserted in a public space becomes part of social milieu: the activities of the place and of the people within it. The art communicates not by directly addressing the beholder as an individual but rather as a member of a broader society. The artist also then considers the needs of the society as a whole through his/her art. The administration, architects and artists of the Montreal Metro had to concern themselves with the many political debates of the time, as well as with the various cultural communities that would circulate through the system. The Project's art was structured in a meaningful way so as to communicate the various histories and common values of the city to its audience. This art thus became, in a way, part of the city's fabric and identity. As Eric Gibson, in the article "Public Art and the Public Realm," states: "[Public art] needs to be thought of in relation to, rather than insulated from the numerous other functions, activities and imperatives that condition the fabric of city life."⁵⁴ Like urban planning, art must be in unison with the municipal environment.

The Montreal Metro Art Project had much to do with the definition of the city itself, its history and culture. It aimed at communicating not only a sense of heritage and

⁵⁴ Eric Gibson, "Public Art and the Public Realm," *Sculpture 7* (January-February 1988): 32.

identity, but also a sense of the civic realities and aspirations of the city. As Miles states: "In giving a sense of place, art can celebrate or remember."⁵⁵ The art of the Metro does just that: it celebrates the diverse culture of Montreal and remembers its distinctive cultural history. Through the use of visual communication, the art created for the various stations of the Metro system has been noticed and remembered by its public. Through the years, it has indeed become integrated into the urban fabric of the city.

Financing the Artworks

Organizers of the Montreal Metro looked to Paris not only as a model of design but financing as well. At the time of the construction of the Paris Métro, French legislation devoted a certain percentage of costs of construction for public buildings towards the installation of art. Such policies and programmes are now in place, not only in many European countries, but also in various other places, such as Australia, and many US states with a fairly consistent figure of 1% of the total building cost of public buildings being allocated for the artworks.⁵⁶ At the time of the planning of the Montreal Metro system, however, this concept was foreign to North America. Montreal, became at that time the first North American municipality to adopt a policy on art in building programs.⁵⁷ This policy aimed to "sensitize the population to art."⁵⁸ Just as Paris city officials considered the vibrant colours and artistic elements that adorn its city as a reflection of its rich history and culture, organizers of the Montreal Metro also hoped that their introduction of art into public spaces would be a reflection of the city's cultural richness

⁵⁵ Miles, *Art for Public Spaces*, 9.

⁵⁶ Miles, *Art Spaces and the City*, 145.

⁵⁷ D. Paul Schafer and André Fortier, *review of Federal Policies for the Arts in Canada (1944-1988)* (Ottawa: The Canadian Conference of the Arts, 1989), 7.

⁵⁸ "...but de sensibiliser la population à l'art." Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 138.

and diversity. Once the idea of the integration of art within the architecture of the metro system was developed and presented to the mayor and his council, it was enthusiastically embraced and Drapeau became the catalyst for the development of the project. At a time when Montreal was redefining and affirming itself within Quebec and Canada, the Metro Art Project and its art became a showcase for the city.

In September 1963, Bernard Beaupré, engineer and technical consultant for the project, wrote to Lucien L'Allier, chief engineer of the Metro, stating his opinion that "such an attitude on the part of the city of Montreal [to incorporate art into the project of the Metro] would be in accordance with the desire of the administration to encourage, in every way possible, the evolution of culture in our city."⁵⁹ The Centennial Commission mandate would later emphasize that the arts were an important factor in the promotion and expression of the pride of any society. Following European building programmes and art policies, Beaupré suggested that 0.5% of the construction cost of every station, up to a maximum of \$20 000 per station, be reserved for the construction of the works of art. L'Allier agreed, but then decided that 2%, instead of the proposed 0.5%, of the cost of each station, to a maximum of \$20 000/station would be allocated to art works. Ultimately, however, the costs of the individual stations proved to be quite higher. Regardless of Drapeau's initial claim that there would be no monetary restrictions for any project contributing to the embellishment of his city, the budget became too tight to accommodate the proposed added costs for the artworks. It was thus decided that artworks

⁵⁹ "Une telle attitude de la part de la Cité de Montréal serait conforme au désir de l'administration d'encourager de toutes manières possibles l'évolution de la culture dans notre ville." SCTUM Archives. "Letter from Bernard Beaupré to Lucien L'Allier concerning the art in the Metro", September 1963.

would have to be donated by sponsors. Later, in 1965, Metro organizers hired Marcel Goethal, an artists' agent, to recruit sponsors to help finance the conception and installation of the works of art.⁶⁰ Corporations and organizations, such as Steinberg Limited, the Regional Montreal Union of the Caisses populaires Desjardins, the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste and even the Régie autonome des transports parisiens as well as many others, all came forward to sponsor and donate works for the project.⁶¹ Finding support for the unconventional incorporation of art within the underground metro system proved easy and was embraced with support and enthusiasm.

The addition of artworks to the stations of the Metro was a practice that continued throughout the Metro's construction. It is thus interesting to examine the costs allocated to artworks and the stations themselves throughout the years.⁶² While the total costs of the stations for the initial system averaged around \$198,214.37/station, the price of artworks for these same stations averaged around \$39,088.75/station. The art therefore amounted to around 20% of the value of the stations, exceeding well beyond L'Allier's initial proposition. In total, stations averaged around \$3,912,942.66/station, with prices per station rising after the initial project, and the artworks, around \$41,598.49/station. While the costs invested in the artwork for the stations remained rather consistent, their value now amounted to 1% of the stations' total cost, an average that is closer to the initial proposed percentage, but well exceeding the total allocated maximum price.

According to archival records funds—particularly for the initial system—were allocated according to traffic density. With the exception of Métro Jean-Talon, downtown

⁶⁰Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 139.

⁶¹ Ibid., 140.

⁶² Appendix B: Costs of Stations and Artworks.

stations were granted more funds. Métro Berri-UQAM, in the core of downtown Montreal, and the centre of the Metro system at the time, was the most costly station, with a total construction cost of \$753,520.55. While less expensive than several stations built later, Berri-UQAM still cost almost \$500,000 more than Métro McGill, its closest rival at the time. In subsequent stations, as can be seen in Appendix B, it seems that stations in which system lines crossed were more costly. The necessity of creating bigger circulation spaces might simply have contributed to the more elevated costs. In fact, in all other stations, overall prices are generally equivalent.

There were great variances in the cost of art for the Metro both within the stations of the initial system and throughout the subsequent ones. While there were some efforts to create significant works in some of the most circulated stations of the system, such as Place-des-Arts or Berri-UQAM, there appears to be no real explanation for why the art for Métro Fabre cost \$410,000 while Métro Angrignon's cost \$2,000. Neither station is in the downtown core of the city but both are situated in populated neighbourhoods where it is safe to say that a significant number of people would be circulating in both of these stations. In fact, it even seems unreasonable, that less money be spent in the Angrignon station when it is situated in the Town of Westmount, one of the most affluent of the Island of Montreal. The price of artworks must then be mainly attributed to costs of materials, size of the work, and basically the designs of the architects and artists.

In 1965, Robert Lapalme, an artist, caricaturist and personal friend of Drapeau, became the first artistic director for the Metro system. He announced that art selected for the project would illustrate the "big and little story of Montreal": the history of its own

people and its history within Quebec and Canada.⁶³ This, according to Lapalme, excluded abstract works of art for they did not clearly illustrate history in a way that viewers would understand. He did, however, later make exceptions for the Peel and the Champs-de-Mars Metro stations, which featured respectively, large colourful ceramic circles and stained glass windows. While it is known that Lapalme was not involved in the decoration of the Peel station, it is unclear in documents why an exception was made for the Champs-de-Mars station.⁶⁴ It is possible that Marcelle Ferron's stained glass windows, featured at the Champs-de-Mars Metro station, simply appealed to him personally.

Regardless of the abstractness of some of the works included in the Montreal Metro, the colours and shapes used seem to have effectively spoken to the people. After Lapalme lost his power of input on the art of the Metro upon the establishment of the Bureau de Transport Métropolitain in 1970, the concept of movement slowly replaced the historical theme initially proposed for the artworks, and this made the inclusion of abstract art acceptable.⁶⁵ Both the art and architecture, under the new Metro artistic advisor Jean-Paul Mousseau,⁶⁶ had to reflect those themes. As André Fortin states: "the role of the artists is important ... in the measure in which they practice more and more an art of communication."⁶⁷ Sculptures, murals, tiles and windows were designed following the patterns of traffic through the tunnels, or of the trains rolling along the tracks. Bright and vibrant colours were used to complement the activity and energy of the people. Whether

⁶³ "La grande et la petite histoire de Montréal" STCUM Archives, "Directives concerning the Metro art project by Robert Lapalme", 1965.

⁶⁴ The architectural firm of Papineau, Gérin-Lajoie and Leblanc left full artistic liberties to its artists, Jean-Paul Mousseau and Claude Vermette. Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 141.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Jean-Paul Mousseau had also been the commissioned artist for the Peel Metro station.

⁶⁷ "Le rôle des artistes est important ... dans la mesure où ils pratiquent de plus en plus un art de la communication." Fortin, *Nouveaux Territoires de l'Art*, 261.

figural or abstract, the works used formal elements with which the public would be familiar and could relate to easily. In this sense, a relationship between the artwork and the viewer, which is a conduit of communication, was successfully established.

Artworks for the various stations were to be sponsored by a society or company and donated without cost to the city. It was understood also that the final work would become the property of the city of Montreal and that no royalties would be given to the artist for reproduction of the work. Because the administration of the city wanted the Metro to be “the most beautiful in the world,” it was important that the Bureau du Métro be informed of the choice of location, medium and installation of the works of art, before any contract was signed with the city, artist or donor.⁶⁸ This allowed for a general agreement on a project, so that the final and overall product would be coherent and deemed acceptable in response to the guidelines. As Vito Acconci argued of subway art projects in general:

Whether obvious or subtle, and subway systems can and should accommodate many approaches, the art that is integrated into an underground system, art that becomes part of the ceiling, floor, wall, often becomes part of the mind and soul of the people who use it, they would miss it if it were gone.⁶⁹

The art that would be finally agreed upon and set up in the stations was to have a visual and historical significance to its viewers. It was also to enhance the experience of the space and to make the experience of the Metro more comfortable and more memorable.

⁶⁸“le Métro le plus beau du monde” STCUM Archives. “Les Oeuvres d’art—Métro—letter from Gérard Gaston, assistant chief of the metro, to M. Lucien L’Allier, chief engineer of the metro”, 7 March 1968.

⁶⁹ Acconci in *Stroll Magazine*: 88.

The Art

In 1970, the Bureau de Métro became the Bureau de Transport Métropolitain (BTM), and Lapalme lost his power over the choice of the works of art to be included in the project. In consequence, future commissioned artworks were less restricted in appearance and content. It was at this time that abstract art became more prominent among the commissioned works. It was understood that “the artist and the architect would agree to a work with a popular appeal, easily accessible to a large audience, while maintaining a real artistic level, which does not exclude abstract art.”⁷⁰ Because abstract art was very much at the forefront of the art that was produced in Montreal at the time, it was deemed equal in artistic value to figural art in the context of this project.

As a reflection of the city, the art in the Montreal Metro was informed by important Quebec art movements of its time. The Refus Global, an automatist manifesto by Montreal artist Paul-Emile Borduas dating from 1948, had a huge impact on the Montreal scene of the 1960s. Ideas of a “resounding anarchy”⁷¹ and of “a civilization that had been dying from Christianity”⁷² appealed to artists coming out of Quebec’s Quiet Revolution. Essentially political, the manifesto, as explained by Gaston Roberge, “questioned the traditional values, and denounced, in a sometimes naïve ... way, the social and cultural dead-end where the Québécois society had ended up.”⁷³ As a movement that

⁷⁰“L’artiste de l’architecte s’entendront pour que l’oeuvre ait un cachet populaire, facilement accessible au grand public, tout en restant à un niveau artistique réel, ce qui n’exclut pas nécessairement l’art abstrait.” STCUM Archives. “Description of new ideas on the works of art for the Metro”, 1970.

⁷¹“Anarchie resplendissante” Jacques Allard, “*Refus Global* ou l’Art contre l’Histoire?” in *La Litterature, au Quebec* Mars, 113, (1999): 46.

⁷²“d’une civilisation qui se mourrait de christianisme” Ibid.: 55.

⁷³“Il remet en question les valeurs traditionnelles, et dénonce, de manière à la fois naïve ..., le cul-de-sac social et culturel où aboutit la société québécoise.” Gaston Roberge, “Le Refus Global”, *Autour de Marcelle Ferron* (Québec: Le Loup de Gouttière, 1995), 15.

sought to express the social and political aspirations of the Québécois people, it also reflected the cultural climate in Montreal at the time of the Metro's construction. Much more than a simple aesthetic, the movement was also "a philosophy, a political engagement and, most importantly, an ethic, a way of life."⁷⁴

Marie Cariani explains that Borduas' initial ideas were situated somewhere between Breton's Surrealism and Sartre and Camus' existentialism: "he chooses internally the Surrealist manner of dreams, that of mystery, and externally its provocative vocabulary, its logic of exclusion, that refuses 'the world arbitrarily imposed'."⁷⁵ Borduas proposed an art that was more than aesthetic; it was intended both as a political and a cultural combat.⁷⁶ His followers called themselves "Automatistes", and favoured a spontaneous and compulsive form of art guided by passion rather than thought. Quebec artists, through the Automatistes, became aware of André Breton in Europe and his ideas on Surrealism but kept some distance from it. Instead, they adhered more directly to the teachings of Borduas, who "from then on proposed an art of passion rather than of reason, or sensibility rather than of rationality."⁷⁷ Léon Degand of the Galerie du Luxembourg remarked at the inauguration of an exhibition on Borduas and his followers:

"Automatism? More exactly: advantageous submission to the solicitations of spontaneity, of pictorial indiscipline, of technical hazard, of romanticism of the paintbrush, of lyrical

⁷⁴ "... une philosophie, un engagement politique et, surtout, une éthique, une façon de vivre." Patricia Smart, *Les Femmes du Refus Global* (Québec: Editions du Boréal, 1998), 61.

⁷⁵ "Il choisit intérieurement la manière surréaliste du rêve, celui des mystères, et extérieurement son vocabulaire provocateur, sa logique de l'exclusion, qui refusent 'le monde imposé arbitrairement'." Marie Cariani, *Les Lieux de Mémoire: Identité et culture modernes au Québec 1930-1960* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1995), 10.

⁷⁶ *Borduas et les automatistes, Montréal 1942-1955* (Montréal: Musée d'art Contemporain, 1972), 18-19.

⁷⁷ "Borduas se propose désormais un art de passion plutôt que de raison, de sensibilité plutôt que de raisonnement." Allard in *La Littérature, au Québec* 113: 49.

overflowing.”⁷⁸ Because art projects for the Metro were to reflect the city and its culture as completely as possible, the inclusion of works from artists, including those of the Automatistes, who adhered to the principals of influential, though sometimes controversial art movements of the time, was appropriate.

By the 1970s, the art in the Metro Project became even more fully integrated into the architectural plans for each station, leaving perhaps more of an opportunity for both figural and abstract art. From then on, art could be extended to the use of colourful tiles or even brick patterns on the walls, and was not restricted to the addition of possibly disconnected works of art. Money became less of a concern as well, and the initial idea of allocating 1% of the cost of construction for art works, without the pressing need for sponsorship, was reinstated.⁷⁹

As previously outlined, for each station, an appointed architect would decide the nature of the work of art and its location, and would then select one from a group of three artists. Because art was a high priority in the project as a whole, the choice of artists became crucial. The process was tedious, with the proposed artwork required to go through various steps of approval before it was allowed to be set up. The architect would first have to propose themes and a selection of works, and then sponsors and donors would have to be found if and when necessary. The architect(s) of the station would then officially submit the project, which would then finally be approved or rejected by the selection committee. This committee was made up of a board of representatives from the

⁷⁸ “Automatisme? Plus exactement: soumission avantageuse aux sollicitations de la spontanéité, de l’indiscipline picturale, du hazard technique, du romantisme du pinceau, des débordements du lyrisme.” *Borduas et les automatistes, Montréal 1942-1955* (Montréal: Musée d’art Contemporain, 1972), 9.

⁷⁹ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 143.

Service d'Urbanisme, from the Service des Travaux publics and from the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal. Ultimately, the committee had the final word as to which artist and project was suitable for each station, while keeping in mind the goals and purpose of the project. The final choice was to best represent the values and artistic achievements of the city of Montreal at a time when it became a showcase to the world.⁸⁰ It was only after this final approval from the committee that the works could be produced and installed.

The Inauguration and the Metro's Beginnings

The Montreal Metro was officially inaugurated on October 14, 1966. With this, Montreal became the eighth city in North America and the twenty-sixth in the world to have its own underground transportation system. The ceremony was led by dignitaries of the Commission de transport de Montréal and of the municipal, provincial and national governments, along with Cardinal Paul-Emile Léger and representatives from France. When the first trains began rolling, Drapeau was quoted as saying, "The most modest of labourer has reason to raise his head and say, 'I worked on the metro!' His pride is justified."⁸¹ Of the twenty-eight initial Metro stations, only four were unfinished at the time of the Metro's inauguration. Of those not yet completed, Line 4, which was to lead to Expo'67 sites, was inaugurated on April 1, 1967, shortly before the start of the Exposition.

Each station in the system had a lateral embarkation dock of 152 meters in length, and a distance between them of an average of 700 meters. This relatively short distance between stations was calculated according to population density and presumed traffic, and allowed a possible walking distance aboveground between each station. The initial Metro

⁸⁰ Appendix C: Final Choice of Artworks and Artists by the Architects for Each Station.

⁸¹ Michael Harris, "A Proud Symbol: Montreal's Superb Subway" *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 June 1967.

was composed of twenty-six stations, eighteen of which were to be decorated. Of the twenty-six, four had a ground-level mezzanine, eight had underground mezzanines and were built in trenches, and fourteen were built in rock with access through trenches. Another notable accomplishment of the Montreal Metro system is its use of rubber tires instead of more traditional metallic wheels. This idea, forwarded by Mayor Drapeau, allowed the rolling material better adhesion, facilitating the starting and the braking of cars, as well as their uphill ascensions.⁸² The concept also allows for a smoother, quieter ride for the passengers.

Today the Montreal Metro has sixty-five stations along four lines that span the entire Montreal metropolitan area. (Figure 1) The different Metro lines are easily identified on transit maps by their discernable colours: orange, green, blue and yellow. The orange line runs from Métro Henri-Bourassa, in the town of Ahuntsic near the northern part of the island of Montreal, makes its way through the city's downtown core along St-Catherine's street, and ends at Métro Côte-Vertu in Ville-St-Laurent. The green line goes from Montreal-East to the Southwest of the Island, from Métro Honoré-Beaugrand to Métro Angrignon. The blue line runs parallel north of the green line, crossing from East to West, from Métro Saint-Michel to Métro Snowdon. Finally, the yellow line extends from downtown Métro Berri-UQAM to Métro Longueuil on the South Shore of the city. An adult fare is \$2,25, and travellers under 18 years of age pay half price with a valid transportation bureau-issued pass. The Metro runs from approximately 5h30am to an average of 12h30am every day, and are frequent, coming every 3-5 minutes

⁸² *Le Métro de Montréal* (Montréal: Communauté Urbaine de Montréal, n.d.), 24.

at rush hour and every 6.5-10 minutes at other times during the day and on weekends.⁸³ Of the sixty-five stations, forty-two feature works by various artists commissioned specifically for the Metro, and twenty feature ornamental structures designed by the architects of the stations. (See appendix C.) Fifteen stations do not display any specific commissioned works but still distinguish themselves in architectural design.

Careful consideration of the art included in the Metro stations did not, however, go without debate. Complications could not completely be avoided when dealing with Montreal's heterogeneous community. With the previously discussed issues of public art, it is now understood that the "very principle of public art, defined in any meaningful way, presupposes a fairly homogenous public and a language of art that speaks to all."⁸⁴ So as not to offend one group or another, the effort then to create inoffensive and apolitical works should have been stronger. Small but significant details such as political leanings, race and languages issues could have been avoided, but were somehow at times overlooked in the grand ambition of presenting works deemed to be a reflection of the multicultural city of Montreal. The use of the French language, for instance, was strongly encouraged in terms of the planning of the Metro Art Project, as well as for its use in advertising within the system, for texts on the cars and in the organization of the project. Although the French language was by no means universally spoken, its presentation in the context of the Metro Art Project was considered imperative as a reflection of its importance in the definition of Quebec identity. In a 1969 newspaper article on this issue, Lucien L'Allier commented that "Anglicism came to us through the eye and through

⁸³ *Plan du réseau 2001* (Montréal: Société de transport de la communauté urbaine de Montréal, 2001).

⁸⁴ Senie and Webster (eds), *Critical Issues in Public Art*, 171.

advertisement, and it is through the same that it must end.”⁸⁵ It was thought that the use of a proper French in the entirety of the project, its planning, execution and written word, would result in a pride in the language, and in turn, a pride in Quebec’s Francophone identity. In the end, the Project in its entirety was the subject of little criticism. There were, however, some objections and strong reactions to specific works of art right from the start.

A good example of such a controversy was the public outcry prompted by Kelvin McEvoy’s tapestry for the McGill Metro station.⁸⁶ Donated by the Compagnie d’assurance Canadienne Universelle, and installed on February 3, 1969, this large tapestry honoured James McGill, first mayor of Montreal from 1789-1860 who financed the creation of McGill University. (Figure 2) The controversy in this case did not revolve around the subject matter or style, but the fact that the text it contained was written solely in English. This oversight was undoubtedly seen by some as a further threat to the maintenance of Quebec’s francophone identity in an English-speaking Canada, especially at a time of struggle for the recognition of this distinctiveness. People who already felt threatened were even more offended in this case where the perceived affront to their francophone identity was made visible to the whole world. It wasn’t long before vandals had broken the Plexiglas protecting the tapestry and defaced it. Subsequently, the donors of the work asked to have it taken down or moved to another location, a motion that was rejected by the Bureau du Métro so as to not change the architectural aspect of the

⁸⁵ J.-Alphée Gagné, “Le Métro a été une leçon de français”, *Montréal Matin*, (11 December 1969).

⁸⁶ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 140-141.

station.⁸⁷ Almost a year later, the donors took the tapestry down under the pretext of cleaning it, and refused to give it back until a new site had been assigned for it. The tapestry was never returned and instead was replaced in 1974 by a stained glass window by Nicolas Sollogoub that illustrated the history of Montreal's two first mayors, Jacques Viger and Peter McGill. (Figure 3)

The Experience of the Metro

Although public response to the Metro Art Project was generally positive, there were a few negative remarks. One example of voiced criticism came from Henri Barras, director of the 1969 exposition entitled "Alchimie Nouvelle" at the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal. In a newspaper interview appearing in the Montreal newspaper *La Patrie* that same year, Barras openly criticized the Metro's artistic achievements. A believer in natural occurrences as artistic works, and in the collective production of art, Barras explains that "the atrocity that is the Montreal Metro, a 100% success on the a technical level, but garbage on an artistic level because of the fact that works from everyone, not bad in themselves, were reunited without having previously established an overall plan. We must think of art in a global way."⁸⁸ The overall unity for the artistic project of the Metro was thus perhaps not, as Barras' comment indicated, as apparent as it was intended. For most however, the Metro's artistic project did seem coherent as a whole. In a 1967 article, Michael Harris in fact criticizes this same aesthetic

⁸⁷ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 140.

⁸⁸ "C'est de la creation collective et cela (...) nous éviterait de voir cette chose atroce qu'est le metro de Montréal, réussite à 100 p.c. sure le plan technique mais poubelle sure le plan artistique du fait que l'on a réuni des oeuvres de tout le monde qui ne sont pas mauvaises en elles-même, mais sans tenir compte ou sans avoir établi de plan d'ensemble au préalable. Il faut penser l'art de manière globale." Henri Barras quoted in "L'art est dans les oeufs ou comment on voit les choses d'un oeil nouveau au Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal", *La Patrie*, (14 December 1969).

uniformity by commenting, “The result is excellent. The Montreal Metro stations are beautiful, different and at times cute. Those who soon will use this Metro and these stations will perhaps only be able to formulate one critique to the project: the uniformity of the tones of each stations.”⁸⁹ It is however noted in the same article, that once the public became more familiar with each station, an appreciation for the individuality and subtle differences would develop. Besides Barras’ complaint, published reports about the artworks and the project were overwhelmingly positive. The public’s chief worries seemed to concern the ventilation and other structural elements of the system rather than with the art itself. Harris lists the Metro’s flaws as “the need for better ventilation in some stations, more insulation in the cars and an improved loudspeaker system,”⁹⁰ all of which, he explains, “are a matter of dollars and cents”⁹¹ and could be easily solved.

In the same article, Harris also notes that “the shiny Montreal Metro has received such great doses of affection and pride that it has, like the exuberantly successful Expo’67, become a busy symbol of what the city proudly calls ‘our first golden decade’.”⁹² This pride was indeed resounding and resulted in the Metro becoming an important attraction within any visit to the city. As such, French General Charles DeGaulle, upon his visit to Montreal at the time of Expo, was invited to ride the Metro. He was subsequently quoted as saying, “Your *métrobus*; it’s the most modern... it’s colossal.”⁹³ DeGaulle’s remarks

⁸⁹ “Le résultat est excellent. Les stations du metro de Montréal sont belles, différentes et souventes fois coquettes. Ceux qui, bientôt, utiliseront ce metro et ces stations ne pourront probablement formuler qu’un reproche à l’ensemble: l’uniformité des teintes d’une station à l’autre.” Michael Harris, “Le Métro. Ce n’est plus un projet... c’est une réalité”, *La Presse*, (3 August 1966).

⁹⁰ Harris in *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 June 1967.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ “Votre métrobus; c’est le plus moderne... c’est colossal”. Charles DeGaulle quoted in “Votre metro est le plus moderne”, *Le Journal de Montréal*, (27 July 1967).

are just one of the many positive responses and observations on the Montreal Metro's artistic program around the time of its inauguration and since then.

While some commentaries have noted the overall project, others have noted the individual works adorning each station. G. Richard Parks writes that: "The décor of the stations avoids the conformity as the outcome of a deliberate decision that this would arouse public interest as well as please the eye,"⁹⁴ and that stations "have been designed with the 'Montreal look' – soft pastels, waiting areas, rest rooms and spacious architecture,"⁹⁵ proving that the effort put into the design of each station has not gone unnoticed by critics and passengers alike. Parks also recognizes the intentions of communicating a sense of the city's heritage in the project. Joseph Bourdon, editor of the *Montréal Matin*, and frequent commuter on the system, reflects this sense of the Metro as civic pride, "Today that we have a Metro that stuns the entire world – even when it is hot inside it – and that Expo solicits an unprecedented enthusiasm in the entire universe, we love proclaiming that we are from Montreal."⁹⁶ The Metro has indeed since its inauguration become part of the Montreal experience, and element of the Montreal identity.

With the Metro Project, Montreal's underground public space has been enriched with a sense of beauty and pride. Its decorations reflect the history of its people, its city and its artistic practices. While serving as a highly practical and efficient means of transportation, the Metro as a whole appears first and foremost pleasant to the eye. Close

⁹⁴ G. Richard Parkes, "New Commuter Railway in Canada: Montreal's Rubber-Tyred Metro", *Modern Railway* (September 1966), 420-421.

⁹⁵ "Hooray Down There!", *Toronto Daily Star*, (6 July 1967).

⁹⁶ "Aujourd'hui que nous avons un metro qui épate de monde entier – même quand il y fait chaud – et que l'Expo suscite un enthousiasme sans précédent à travers l'univers, nous aimons proclamer que nous sommes de Montréal." Joseph Bourdon, "Fierté légitime", *Montréal Matin*, (25 August 1967).

collaboration between architect, artists and organizers have allowed for the creation of a unified system made up of diverse components. This collaboration along the familiar elements, shapes and inviting colours can surely be held responsible for the general positive public reaction. As published commentaries indicate, in a heterogeneous society, the Metro project has managed to reach out to the masses to leave a lasting impression. Finally, of the Metro's diversified and original decoration, Adamczyk fondly expresses that it has surpassed "the strict functional order and, why not, has considered the smile of children."⁹⁷

A Continuing Project

The Montreal Metro Project has continued to change since its inauguration. There are constant improvements within the structure and its construction to this day. In the 1970s, under the direction of the BTM, more lights, open spaces, natural ventilation, varied lighting and the use of concrete enhanced new stations. The artists' and architects' works have continued to be encouraged and admired. In 1969, the Institut Canadian d'architecture awarded the architectural firm of Papineau, Gérin-Lajoie et Leblanc a Massey Medal for design excellence for their work on the Université de Montréal's student residence and on the Peel Metro station. In 1979 the Ordre des Architectes awarded a *prix d'excellence* to Jean-Louis Beaulieu, architect of the Angrignon station. (Figure 4) After this latest honour, artists were given *carte blanche* for their projects for the Metro stations. There was thereafter a more complete trust in their capabilities to create significant works for the stations without so much supervisions and strict

⁹⁷"...l'ordre strictement fonctionnel et, pourquoi pas, de faire entrer dans les calculs de rentabilité le sourer des enfants." Adamczyk, "La Ville et le metro": 39.

guidelines, and more works continued to be added to the stations. In 1987, the Square-Victoria station acquired a mural by Robert Savoie, and since 2000, two statues, one of Mother Emilie Gamelin, founder of the order of Les Soeurs de la Providence, and the other of Jacques Cartier by Joseph-Arthur Vincent dating from 1893 have stood respectively in stations Berri-UQAM and St-Henri. Also, in 1989, the Société de Transport de la Communauté Urbaine de Montreal (STCUM) and Galerie Powerhouse organized “Métro d’Art”, a temporary exhibition that showcased a series of contemporary works in six of the Metro station.⁹⁸ This exhibit was inspired by Drapeau’s initial concept of the Metro as an underground museum. Still more recently, there have been organized performing arts shows in the Metro. Often, these are associated with the various art festivals of Montreal, but independent performers also regularly contribute to the ambiance of the underground transportation system.⁹⁹ Spaces for performances in the Metro are either rented through the metro’s *Media Plus* for professional organizations, or simply allocated by the STCUM’s Public Affairs to non-profit associations or performers on an available basis. Today, the Montreal Metro continues to accomplish its goal to enrich the city of Montreal with art and culture in every possible way, by bringing it into the everyday lives of its inhabitants.

Station names have also changed since the Metro’s inauguration. Originally, officials at the City of Montreal named each station; but since 1980, the Communauté Urbaine de Montréal (CUM) has been vested with the authority to provide their appellations. As a result, (see Appendix D.) some stations have been renamed to

⁹⁸ Raymonde Lamothe, *A Propos du métro* (Lasalle: Hurtubise HMH, 1993) .

⁹⁹ Festivals include the Montreal International Jazz Festival, the Just For Laughs Festival, the Fringe Festival, as well as many other smaller dance, music and artistic festivities.

accommodate new priorities or associations.¹⁰⁰ This changing of names still continues. For example, in 1987, Station Guy became Guy-Concordia, and Station Berri-de-Montigny became Berri-UQAM, following the request of the universities located at their respective stations. Lastly, in 2001, station Ile-Ste-Hélène was renamed station Jean-Drapeau in honor of the former Mayor's role in establishing the Metro system.¹⁰¹

Changes have also been made to the infrastructure of the system since its inauguration. Certainly the biggest initiative for renovation of the metro system was the *Réno-Métro* project that begun in 1997 and ended in 2000. \$60 million dollars was raised by the STCUM, the Ministère de transport du Québec and the Agence métropolitaine de transport (ATM) for the project, which included the construction and renovation of fourteen station exterior entrances, the building of two external stations and the amelioration of three others, the installation of a security, electrical and pumping system, the installation of ninety-five “portes papillon,”¹⁰² and the modification of artificial and natural lighting. It however seems that within this budget, there was no percentage allotted to the restoration of the works of art of each station. The focus seems primarily to have been on the basic technical structures themselves. It is thus sad to note that the initial concept of the Metro system was in some cases not respected. Benoît Clairoux, for example, notes that: “during the renovations, many stations of the initial system’s appearances were changed, sometimes for the best, but most often for the worst.”¹⁰³

Unlike Paris and other European systems, the Montreal Metro’s renovation initiatives did

¹⁰⁰ Appendix D: List of Name Changes.

¹⁰¹ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 110.

¹⁰² “revolving doors,” STCUM Archives. *Description of the Réno-Métro project*, n.d.

¹⁰³ “Durant ces travaux, plusieurs stations du réseau initial ont changés d’apparence, parfois pour le mieux mais souvent pour le pire” Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 138.

not have the care, attention and money needed to contract quality restoration for all aspects of its building projects. However, the more recent addition of sculptural works in some of the stations of the Metro such as in stations Berri-UQAM and Place-Saint-Henri, perhaps indicates a renewed interest in the artistic component of the project.

In its entirety, the Metro's organizers made clear efforts to include within their projects various elements of the Montreal identity. A selection of contemporary Canadian artists accurately reflected the tendencies in the art of the time and place. The works themselves served to inform both Montrealers and visitors to their city about its history, people and culture. Every attention to detail, including the language of written and spoken communication, reflected the political reality of Quebec's inhabitants at the time. Continuing projects within the Metro system, both structural and artistic, still serve to maintain the high level of quality intended by Drapeau upon the initial presentation of the project.

Chapter Three

A Closer Look

The overall goal of the Montreal Metro Project was to create an aesthetically engaging underground environment that would also enrich the daily experience of Metro users. Artists and architects collaborated to create vibrant spaces for travellers throughout the system. As a whole, the project aimed at communicating various aspects of the history and culture of Montreal. Individually, each station presented a distinctive picture of Montreal and Quebec life. Through a closer look at two stations from the initial system, Place-des-Arts and Champs-de-Mars, and a station later designed during the Metro's expansion, Pie-IX, it will be possible to understand how the varied artistic approaches contributed to the grand scheme of the Project. While completed at different times, for diverse occasions and in varied styles with assorted media, each station communicated to the viewer in an effective way. As a whole, each station contributed in presenting an overall sense of civic pride.

While all stations were built under the same artistic mandate, each station's approach is unique. All stations were basically different in shape, size, and in the structural elements from which they were built. For most stations, aesthetic accents occurred in all aspects of the construction: in the texturing of concrete, in the light fixtures, in the tiling of the floors and in the arrangement of staircases. For many, however, the art that truly stood out was that which was commissioned to be added to the station. This art would be shown as in a museum, as part of Drapeau's "underground

gallery”, and would often reflect not only the political and historical themes, but also contemporary artistic trends.

In each study, it is important to be reminded of how art communicates to better understand the choices made by the architects and artists in each example. Such elements of design as colour, light and form were considered carefully in order to capture the audience’s attention and elicit the favoured response. Whether working with figural or abstract traditions, artists considered their diverse audience carefully. There were attempts at using familiar symbols in easily decipherable ways, and efforts made to keep the audience involved and interested. The following examples will illustrate how the different artists and architect of the Metro collaborated to create engaging contemporary spaces while respecting the overall theme of the Project.

Métro Place-des-Arts

The first station to acquire an original work designed for the Metro Art Project was Place-des-Arts. As a venue for the performing arts, Place-des-Arts was believed to have been the best setting for such a project. Place-des-Arts, situated in the core of downtown Montreal, houses several theatres and performance spaces for drama, dance and music. Métro Place-des-Arts was originally designed with a mezzanine allowing commuters to cross the station from the exterior of the embarkation docks while presenting an ensemble view of the general volume. It had a generally clear ambiance with walls covered by a pattern of grayish-blue bricks that were in harmony with the blue of the ceramic squares of the floors. Finally, it featured an illuminated window tracing the history of music in

Montreal.¹ Because of its association with culture, music and art, Place-des-Arts' art-enhanced Metro station could readily be seen as a natural extension of the establishment itself. The integration of the artworks would not seem as intrusive because they could be accepted as part of the whole complex extended to the underground station.

During the planning of the Place-des-Arts station, the Metro Project was under the artistic direction of Lapalme. As previously mentioned, Lapalme's stated aim was to showcase the "big and little story of Montreal"² and this first station became the perfect location for that proposed representation of the history of music and of the arts themselves. Originally, the station was to commemorate, in sculpted concrete, figures of various artists and the four arts: music, drama, literature and visual art. There was also to be a ceramic mural, over the stairways, dedicated to opera and dance.³ The project was changed to focus on music primarily, and more particularly on the evolution and history of music in Montreal.

Architects David, Boulva & Cleve commissioned artist Frédéric Back, a professor of drawing at L'Ecole du meuble and L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and an illustrator of children's books and film animation, for the project.⁴ Back's completed work, entitled *Les*

¹ SCTUM Archives. "Technical Fiche for the Place-des-Arts Metro Station", 18 August 1983.

² "La grande et la petite histoire de Montreal" STCUM Archives. "Discussion of the themes of the Metro art project", n.d.

³ STCUM archives. "Description of the look and design of the Place-des-Arts Metro station", n.d.

⁴ L'Ecole du meuble was later integrated into the CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal, and L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts is now the Department of Plastic Arts of the Université du Québec à Montréal. Examples of the his illustrated works are in books: Jean Giorno, *L'Homme qui plantait des arbres* (Montréal: Gallimard, 1980), and David A. Morrison, *Inuit, glimpses of an Arctic past* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1995), and on film: "The Man who Planted Trees" (*L'Homme qui plantait des arbres*), which won some forty awards including the Oscar for best animated film given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Los Angeles, U.S.A., April 11, 1988. National Film Board, *Film/Video Canadiana 1987-1988: A Guide to Canadian Films and Videos produced in 1987 and 1988* (Montreal: National Film Board, 1990), 144.

Arts Lyriques (Figure 5) shows the evolution of music, and is described in the project's technical fiche as:

... telling the story of music in Montreal from Jacques Cartier, through the traditional songs of the "coureurs des bois", and noting also the musical awakening of the 1850s with Calixa Lavallée, Guillaume Couture, Alexis Contant, without forgetting the many performers such as Emma Lajeunesse, "la grande Albani" and many others that have honoured Montreal on European and American stages. The whole is crowned by Canadian contemporary music of which a great merit is due to Montreal artists.⁵

The work is also described as a "painting on glass" measuring 9' x 44' (2,74 m x 13,72m). It was donated by the grocery chain Steinberg Limited in honour of the project and of the fiftieth anniversary of its own inauguration.⁶ The work was to be hung on the east wall of the station's mezzanine level, and was commissioned and installed in 1966, the same year as the Metro's inauguration. At a cost of \$32,400.00, it represented approximately 11% of the total cost of the station (\$295,574.57).⁷ (Appendix B) This work is an example of art that would not have been possible had the organizers of the Metro restricted themselves fully to the financial limitations originally set out. In this case, support from Steinberg Limited was instrumental in commissioning the work.

⁵ "...raconte l'histoire de la musique à Montréal à partir de Jacques Cartier, en passant pas les chants traditionnels de nos courreurs des bois, et soulignant également l'éveil musical des années 1850 avec Calixa Lavallée, les Guillaume Couture, les Alexis Contant, sans oublier la pléiade d'interprètes comme Emma Lajeunesse, "la grande Albani", et plusieurs autres qui ont fait honneur à Montréal comme sur les scènes d'Europe et des Etats-Unis, Le tout se couronne par la musique canadienne contemporaine dont une grande part de mérite revient à des artistes de Montréal." STCUM Archives. "Métro de Montréal: fiche technique", 22 July 1983.

⁶ Sam Steinberg, upon presenting the work to Léon Lortis, president of the Arts Council of the metropolitan region, who accepted the work on behalf of the city, explained: "we could not find anything better [than sponsoring Back' work for the metro station] to close the year of the fiftieth anniversary of Steinberg Limited founded in Montreal in 1917." "Nous ne pouvions trouver mieux ... pour clore l'année du cinquantenaire de Steinberg Limitée fondée à Montréal en 1917". Sam Steinberg cited in "La Galerie d'Art du Métro reçoit sa première oeuvre", *L'Épiciér* (Montréal, January 1968).

⁷ STCUM Archives. "Métro de Montréal: fiche technique", 22 July 1983.

The detailed contract agreement between the city of Montreal and Frédéric Back is revealing. The artist was obliged, among other things, to create the stained glass window representing *Les Arts Lyriques* (the lyrical arts) precisely following the drawings submitted and approved by the city. He was then to install the work at the Place-des-Arts station after having received authorization by the engineers and directors of the Metro regarding lighting and procedure.⁸ The city guaranteed a prompt response to the artist in choice of work, material and help in installation. The city also agreed to install two accompanying plaques, one in English and one in French, identifying the title, artist's name and name of the donor. As noted in the preceding chapter, the work of art, once installed, would become the property of the city of Montreal, and the artist would renounce all rights of ownership to the work. In so doing, the city would take on the responsibilities for the maintenance and security of the work of art.⁹ Similar contracts were issued for the various works created and installed in every station.

It seemed that no one could resist attending the unveiling of Back's work in the mezzanine of the Place-des-Arts on December 20, 1967. Three-hundred guests, including representatives of art galleries, museums, art councils, the city council, the Place-des-Arts and Steinberg Ltd., stood anxiously in front of the veiled work. Drapeau, who had initially refused the invitation to attend was also spotted admiring "the first work of art permanently shown in the first underground museum in the world, that of Montreal."¹⁰

⁸ STCUM Archives. "Contract for the production and installation of the Place-des-Arts work by Frédéric Back and donated by Steinberg Limited", May 1967.

⁹ STCUM Archives. "Letter from Lucien L'Allier to G. Gagnon, associate chief engineer of the Metro concerning the Place-des-Arts Metro station", 3 May 1967.

¹⁰ "La première oeuvre d'art exposée en permanence dans le premier musée souterrain au monde, celui du metro de Montréal." "Le Maire a visité en cachette la Galerie d'art du metro", *Dimanche Matin* (Montréal, 24 December 1967).

Dusty Vineberg, writing for *The Montreal Star* described the work as appearing at first dark and undecipherable. However, as Steinberg's president, Sam Steinberg, and city councillor, Léon Lortie, switched on the permanent lighting, "a gasp of astonished delight followed by sustained applause, swept through the station as jewel-like yellows, browns, reds and blues glowed with life."¹¹ The mural designed by Back is comprised of six sheets of painted glass glued together. The work is lit from behind to enhance the intensity of the colours and give the illusion of depth. Visible from almost everywhere across the station, a reporter from *Le Courrier de Laval* writes that: "the richness of the drawing and of the colours of this mural decoration will add to the beauty of the architectural whole of the station."¹²

For visitors, the work is busy, and the included figures, as previously described, are not easily identifiable. The characters are rendered in luminescent tones of yellows, oranges and reds, and shine in contrast to the dark blue background, seemingly representing sky and water, of the glass mural. At the top left is a sun shining down on what look like mountains or caves from which slowly emerge figures, animals, musical instruments and various nature elements. Following the work from left to right, some aspects seem to resonate with clarity while most remain obscured. There is no discernable perspective, making the spatiality of the work at times confusing. While upon close examination, the costumes of the people and some of the present architectural elements—buildings and churches in styles that can still be seen in the older parts of Quebec city and

¹¹Dusty Vineberg, " 'Music' mural starts art along the Metro", *The Montreal Star* (Montreal, 21 December 1967).

¹²"La richesse du dessin et du coloris de cette decoration murale ajoutera à la beauté de l'ensemble architectural de la station." "La Galerie d'Art du Métro reçoit sa première oeuvre", *La Courrier de Laval* (Chomedey, 27 December 1967).

Montreal—are identifiable as examples of historical Québécois design, the identity of the figures, their activities and locations are, at first glance, less readily decipherable. Closer inspection reveals the names of the people represented written underneath each—Calixa Lavallée, Guillaume Couture, Emma Lajeunesse, “la grande Albani”, etc.—and thus the significance of the work begins to take form. The figures themselves are often full portraits, but a few faces surface from the chaotic background intermittently.

Although not completely naturalistic, the work is a scattered composition of figural elements arranged to chronologically recall Quebec’s musical history. While the theme is clarified, there is no explanation however, for example, as to why some figures are larger than others or more prominently shown, or as to why, on the far right, they appear to be bursting with light and flames. The chronology is established in the sequence of the figures shown, but no elements directly situate these figures in time or history. The work is assembled with pieces of painted glass cut and arranged to fit into one another to render the image whole. The scattered effect created adds to the chaotic appearance of the window, but allows the eye to focus more directly on specific sections. Perhaps it is these techniques of kaleidoscopic light, colour and composition that immediately attracted the viewer’s eye.

It was with this work, that Drapeau’s dream to make the Metro a kind of “underground art gallery” was realized. An article in *The Gazette* notes the Mayor’s efforts by stating that: “The imaginative determination to make Montreal a still more interesting city will be carried a long way forward by the mayor’s plans to have murals

decorate all the stations of the Métro.”¹³ The writer of the article further explains that it is perhaps efforts like these that create and reinforce the pride that Montrealers have in their city. He writes: “It is in the pleasant appearance of the stations that largely explains the pride of Montrealers in their Métro and the unusual cleanliness in which the Métro is kept.”¹⁴ Visitors to Montreal also began to notice the Metro designs and contrast them with the dismal stations in their own cities. Drapeau’s vision has thus been successful in creating an engaging series of spaces that did not go unnoticed.

Although it is true that the Place-des-Arts Metro station and Back’s mural did not go unseen, it is questionable whether or not they could adequately communicate to the daily commuters using the system. Many written reports expressed the belief that Expo’67 was successful in making art “functional and part of the visitors’ experience”, and that in the same vein, “the addition of murals [in the Metro stations, would] add something more: the evidence that art can and should be mingled with everyday things.”¹⁵ As noted in the preceding chapter, many argue that to be a successful communicator, art should be comprised of elements familiar and communicative in themselves to the intended viewer. Critics of the Project, who started voicing their concerns early after the unveiling of this first permanent work, believed that the art commissioned for the Metro stations, such as Back’s mural, belonged to a category of art which was inaccessible to the every-day public circulating through the system. A reporter for *La Presse* explains that upon seeing Back’s work for the first time, viewers would “easily identify the characters—their names are written underneath each one—note the technique used, but would further be

¹³ “Mural For Métro”, *The Gazette* (Montreal, 22 December 1967).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

uninterested.”¹⁶ The author succinctly complained that this piece “has nothing to do with life anymore.”¹⁷ As previously described, although featuring figural representation of musicians and Quebec landscapes, the mural possesses a confusing composition that can be distracting.

Just as Drapeau was sometimes criticized for his autocratic management style, he and the organizers of the Metro Project were similarly accused in this case. They were alleged to have followed a less than democratic process in the selection of works for the various stations. It was noted at the time of the installation of the Back work that the selection committee and Lapalme himself, were mostly academics and untrained in the fine arts. Their choices may have thus been biased and perhaps unconventional. In various written commentaries, the existence of such associations as the Association des Peintres du Québec and the Association des critiques d’art, publicly announced their desire to join the Metro’s selection committee.¹⁸ Although the colours in Back’ mural were engaging and the light effects captivating, crucial details for a good understanding of the work needed careful examination to even be noticed. A public in a hurry, circulating through the station would probably not stop to examine such details that exposed the theme, story and significance of the work. Had specialist organizations been considered in the choice of artist and/or artwork for the station, perhaps familiar and more evident elements might have been included to facilitate a quicker, effortless and more obvious consideration of the work.

¹⁶ “Ils identifieront bien une fois les personnages –leurs noms sont écrits en dessous de chacun –remarqueront la technique employée, mais s’en désintéresseront par la suite.” “Le grand Art pompier station Place des Arts”, *La Presse* (Montréal, 23 December 1967).

¹⁷ “...n’a plus rien à voir avec la vie” Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Among other considerations faced with this first permanent commission, theft became a major concern. This concern was also present at other stations where the displays were, like Place-des-Arts, easily accessible to the public. Documented correspondence between Lucien L'Allier and Howard M. Baker, director of the Security Department, indicated this concern and the possible need for increased security.¹⁹ L'Allier firmly stated that the responsibility should no longer have been that of the committee, but should have become that of Metro security itself. Baker responds in proposing the need to install glass partitions making it impossible for the public to reach the display. Twenty-four-hour guard was also recommended, however, the elevated cost of hiring additional Metro security was undesirable, meaning that current staff was asked to work longer hours to assure the security of the works. In other stations, this problem was countered by sponsors and donors insuring the work they had donated, provided that it had been successfully and securely installed. This was the case of Superseal, corporate donor of the work for the Champs-de-Mars station, but it was not the case of Steinberg Ltd. with the Place-des-Arts mural. To help with this problem, the Bureau de transport métropolitain, in March of 1968, insured all of the works. They provided for civil responsibility, to the amount of \$500 000 (Les Prévoyants du Canada), and installation risks insurance, to the amount of \$52 000 (Compagnie d'Assurance Provinces-Unies).²⁰

Insurance and added security however, proved not to be enough. As in the previously mentioned case of the McEvoy tapestry for the McGill station, vandals still managed to inflict their opinions and objections on works in various stations of the Metro

¹⁹ STCUM Archives. "Montreal Transport Commission Office Correspondences Regarding Concerns for the Safety of Artworks in the Place-des-Arts Metro Station", May 25 1967.

²⁰ STCUM Archives. "Insurance documents", March 1968.

over time. However, today most of the original works remain in excellent physical conditions.

Métro Champs-de-Mars

A reporter from *La Presse*, noting the inaccessibility of the artwork installed in the Place-des-Arts Metro station, expresses his concern for the entirety of the Metro Art Project. This reporter writes: “Back’s window inaugurated what we now call ‘the Metro’s art gallery’, which, at the beginning, was a very good idea. This art gallery will quickly become, if it continues in this way, the ‘Underground Museum’ of horrors.”²¹ Although the administration and selection committee did not change, the various aspects of the works commissioned for the Metro stations in many cases did. Whether or not the works became more accessible to a wider audience is still debated in the many documented reports on the project. But it still seems that throughout its history, positive comments on the metro’s art dominate. Champs-de-Mars Metro station is a good example of an early work that received general acclaim perhaps in spite of its abstract nature.

The Champs-de-Mars Metro station rests between City Hall, La Place Vauquelin, and the Vieux Palais de Justice. Its name derives from the Latin expression *Campus Martius* (“Field of Mars”), which was originally used in Roman times to designate fields used for military purposes. The name was given to the Metro station as a reminder of the destruction of the old Jesuit buildings, and their surrounding fortresses, that were destroyed at the end of the 17th century at the same location. This levelling of this land created a flat terrain that was hence referred to as the “Champs-de-Mars”. According to

²¹ “La verrière de Back inaugurerait ce qu’on appelle maintenant ‘la galerie d’art du métro’, qui, au départ, est une très bonne idée. Cette galerie d’art deviendra vite, si elle continue en ce sens, ‘l’Underground Museum’ des horreurs.” “Le grand Art pompier station Place des Arts”, *La Presse* (Montréal, 23 December 1967).

the initial art project lead by Lapalme, stations should have been decorated by figural works illustrating the history of the city and be linked to either the location or the name of the station; this was not the case for the Champs-de-Mars station. Instead, the station featured large colourful abstract stained glass windows, created by Montreal artist Marcelle Ferron. (Figure 6)

Lapalme, a proponent of figurative art, at first adamantly refused any art submission featuring abstract features, causing uproar in the artistic community. Many artists, including Mario Merola, Guido Molinari, Jordi Bonnet and Marcelle Ferron, wrote letters to Drapeau encouraging him to allow abstract art in his underground art gallery.²²

As Clairoux notes:

For the partisans of non-figurative art, the metro is a place of passage where one must create a climate of pure beauty and establish a rhythm from a rich and vibrant medium; the municipal administration must live with its era and promote a dynamic art, instead of favouring figurative works that will soon be surpassed.²³

Lapalme did not however budge, and continued to refuse proposals for abstract works. For unknown reasons however, he did make an exception for Ferron's stained glass window at the Champs-de-Mars station.

Architect Adalbert Nicklewicz commissioned Ferron to create a design for the station. Situated all around the exterior entrance building of the station, Marcelle Ferron's stained glass window is representative of the artist's own expression suited to function in a

²² Ironically, some of these artists themselves would go on to create works for the Metro stations, such as for the Charlevoix and Sherbrooke stations (Merola), Pie-IX station (Bonet), and Vendôme and Champs-de-Mars (Ferron).

²³ "Pour les partisans de l'art figurative, le métro est un lieu de passage où l'on doit créer un climat de beauté pure et établir un rythme à partir d'un matériel riche et vivant; l'administration municipale doit vivre avec son époque et faire la promotion d'un art dynamique, au lieu de privilégier des oeuvres trop figuratives qui seront bientôt dépassées." Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 139.

particular location. Location was definitely considered by the artist, and the created glass work adeptly opened up onto the city. Abstract shapes in bright coloured glass fill the large encompassing window of the exterior station. While not directly narrating the story of Montreal and its people, the colourful stained glass windows echo the dynamism, energy and activities surrounding the Metro itself. The bright yellow, purple, green, blue and red forms of the windows twist and intertwine with each other in bold patterns. Transparent glass is also used and combined with the colourful shapes to allow a glimpse of the exterior of the station. The work is constructed of independent and moveable elements, fitting within one another as in a jigsaw puzzle,²⁴ perhaps indicating the interlocked metro cars. Like the cars, various elements of stained glass must be assembled to create a functional and coherent whole.

One of the last to join the Automatiste movement of the Refus Global, Ferron—like her colleagues—questioned traditional social values. Through spontaneous and non-figurative works, she nourished her enthusiasm for change. As signatures of the Refus Global, artists advocate the right to exist and to speak out. It is through automatism that many artists of the Refus Global decided to express their ideas and creativity. Through the act of spontaneous creativity, these artists believed they would achieve an underlying truth, honesty and free expression.²⁵ Here, however, Ferron has managed to create a work for the Champs-de-Mars station that is comprehensible to the general audience. Patricia Smart has observed that, “her passion of transforming the lives of ordinary people by

²⁴ STCUM Archives. “Technical fiche for the Champs-de-Mars station”, 18 August 1983.

²⁵ Patricia Smart, *Les Femmes du Refus Global* (Québec: Editions du Boréal, 1998), 212.

colour and light has found its highest expression in these windows.”²⁶ Through colour, shape and line, Ferron also creates an illusion of movement echoing the familiar activities of the city.

Critic Gaston Roberge quotes Ferron as saying that she discovered the justification of abstraction by “looking at the ground from above.”²⁷ According to Roberge, although automatist painting stems from a spontaneous and individual approach, Ferron’s works remain guided by maintaining a strong sense of coherency. Montreal judge Philippe Ferland, art enthusiast, wrote of Ferron’s windows to Lucien L’Allier, noting that “they are of great splendour and give a completely different atmosphere to what was a simple rail station window.”²⁸ Ferron’s brightly coloured windows allow a pattern of light to project into the station instead of a simple view of the sometimes grey Montreal streets. Unfortunately, buildings and highways now overshadow the once open site for the station, making it almost invisible among the surrounding chaos. From inside the station however, the windows protect and perhaps even allow the commuter a respite from the commotion of the city.

In order to understand the reception of Ferron’s stained glass window, it is necessary to explore how non-figurative works communicate with their audience. As explained in the previous chapter, it is important to consider the heterogeneity of the audience when creating a work for a public space. In this particular case, though the pattern of glass was abstract, its individual elements were generally understood. Colour,

²⁶ “Sa Passion de transformer la vie des gens ordinaires par la couleur et la lumière trouve sa plus haute expression dans ces verrières.” Smart, *Les Femmes du Refus Global*, 224.

²⁷ Gaston Roberge, “La Peinture Automatiste” in *Autour de Marcelle Ferron* (Quebec: Le Loup de Gouttière, 1995), 13.

²⁸ “Ils sont de toute splendeur et donnent une toute autre atmosphère à ce qui était un caravansérail vitré.” STCUM Archives. “Letter to Lucien l’Allier from Judge Philippe Ferland”, 15 July 1968.

for example, is a common means of communicating emotion. Simple shapes are elements also widely used to create various imageries that may then be personalized. In the case of the Champs-de-Mars station, basic shapes were modified, elongated and combined to create energetic patterns. This energy of the patterns, combined with the brightness of the colours (most of them primary colours), communicated to the viewer the every day movement in the Metro. In this way the work, even if abstracted, spoke to the viewer with simple and familiar formal elements.

The imagery used in the Champs-de-Mars Metro station was also appealing because it functioned according to Kemp's principles of aesthetics of reception. Kemp's principles work by providing signs that communicate with a viewer. They represent an understanding of what will be of significance to an intended audience when in contact with a work of art in a specific context and with specific conditions. In the case of the Montreal Metro in general, the works of art notably had to be indicators of both the history of Montreal but also of the activities of the people and of the Metro system itself. Movement, chaos, repetition, noise and energy thus became important communicative elements. Art therefore communicated by constructing the codes that would be deciphered by a viewer upon contact with the work of art. These codes were composed of formal elements—bright colours, sharp lines, clear forms—understood by the viewer to hold the initial message of movement. Once decoded by the viewer, the image retained its aesthetic appeal but was also enriched with significance. While other stations used figural elements to illustrate history, the Champs-de-Mars Metro station used purely formal elements, to explore the ideas of motion associated with the correlated mode of transportation.

As noted previously, a work of art becomes significant to a viewer when it is open to many issues of address. Within these issues, various conditions must be carefully examined and weighed in the conception of a work meant for a public space. As Anne Cauquelin explains: "It is however not certain that the explanations of a philosopher suffice in making the spectator go from use to representation."²⁹ This seems true in some cases with abstract art. A spectator's personal relationship with a work may in some cases clarify its significance for that particular individual. Interaction between the elements of the work, their relation to the viewer, and consideration of the viewer in terms of positioning are all necessary components for communication. In the case of the Champs-de-Mars Metro station, it would seem that these fundamental visual elements were met. The various shapes and colours of the stained glass window not only interact with each other to create a sense of harmony and movement, but engage the viewer by highlighting visual clues associated with moods and feelings. Finally, their situation within the exterior architecture of the station functions to encircle the viewer. The windows give a view of the city and its reality, while the stained glass shields and helps to create an alternate world within.

The design for the Champs-de-Mars Metro station is a good example of a work of art appealing to contemporary artistic values and tastes while considering its intended audience. Unlike the figurative murals of the Place-des-Arts Metro station, the Champs-de-Mars station exhibits a bright and colourful stained glass window. More than a mere historical depiction, there is also a strong abstract expression. In such, a viewer's reaction

²⁹ "Il n'est pas certain, toutefois, que les explications (d'une) philosophe suffisent à faire passer le spectateur de l'usage à la représentation" Anne Cauquelin, SCTUM Archives. "Montréal, débat de la place Roy", n.d.

to the piece will be quite different from that same viewer's reaction to the figurative and historical work. While a viewer may read and understand rationally a figurative work, one may relate to an abstract work on a more expressive, visceral level.

Métro Pie-IX

Over the years, the Metro project continued to reflect the city and its activities. Various new stations proceeded to reflect the history, both old and recent of the city, as well as the activities of the people of Montreal. Pie-IX Metro station is a good example of the art commissioned after the first phase of the project. While Métro Place-des-Arts illustrated a past history and Métro Champs-de-Mars reflected the fast-paced activity of the Metro itself and of the city in general, Métro Pie-IX stood as a symbol of the present.

Conceived in 1972, Pie-IX Metro station was planned in anticipation of the Montreal Olympic games of 1976. The station was in fact going to be one of the main stations with access to the Olympic sites. As such, it was to represent the various themes and symbols related to the Olympic Games. In the end, these symbols were visible throughout the various structures and artworks of the station, and served as a whole to commemorate the occasion. Like the 1967 World Exposition, the Olympics Games offered an occasion for Montreal to play host to the world. Again, the city sought to project a positive and culturally rich image of the city, and once again, the Metro became a tool for this cause.

A letter from Marcel Raby, architect of the station, to Jean Dumontier, Metro architect, revised the discussions of a recent meeting between himself, Aimé Desautels, Planning Director of the Communauté urbaine de Montréal (C.U.M.), and Montreal artist

Jordi Bonet, and described the main elements of the artistic plans for the station. After having viewed the first sketches by Bonet, Raby summarises the commentaries on the proposed art:

- a) The themes of "CITIUS", "ALTIUS", "FORTIUS", representing the Olympic slogan, will be expressed and exploited in the concrete integrated in the grand work without, however, exceeding a maximum of 6" of depth.
 - b) The artist will be able to use all of the textures that he judges appropriate to render lively the Olympic devise, which will be discretely identifiable in each respective part.
 - c) All are unanimous in their recognition that Man must also be present in the second part of the mural identified as "ALTIUS" and that the parts "CITIUS" and "FORTIUS" will complete it to form a whole, the challenge and glowing of man in his environment.
- To underline the predominance, the sensibility and the fragility of Man; a material different from concrete can be used to accentuate his importance in his environment.
- Some materials, such as ceramic, glass and others, were considered appropriate to represent the integrated Man. However, the artist will be able to pursue his own research in this domain.³⁰

A last notice in the letter outlined the following steps of the process: the artist's obligation then was to submit a presentation dossier to the Executive Committee of the C.U.M. in the following week. This dossier was to include the examples of previous works realised by the artist that were similar to the desired product, along with original sketches and written

³⁰ "a) Les thèmes 'CITIUS', 'ALTIUS', 'FORTIUS', représentant la Devise Olympique, seront exprimés et exploités dans le béton integer au gros oeuvre sans, toutefois, dépasser un relief maximum de 6" de profondeur.

b) L'artiste pourra utiliser toutes les textures qu'il jugera appropriées pour rendre vivante la devise olympique, laquelle pourra aussi être identifiée discrètement dans chaque partie respective.

c) Tous sont unanimes à reconnaître que l'homme doit être présent dans la seconde partie de la murale identifiée 'ALTIUS' et que les parties 'CITIUS' et 'FORTIUS' compléteront pour former un tout, le défi et le rayonnement de l'homme dans son environnement.

Pour souligner la predominance, la sensibilité et la fragilité de l'homme; un matériau différent du béton pourra être utilisé afin d'accentuer davantage l'importance de celui-ci dans son milieu.

Quelques matériaux, tels que la céramique, le verre et autres, furent considérés appropriés pour traduire l'homme integer. Cependant, l'artiste pourra poursuivre sa recherche dans ce domaine." SCTUM Archives. "Letter from Marcel Raby to Jean Dumontier concerning the mural by Jordi Bonet for the Pie-IX Metro station", 23 June 1972.

descriptions of the Metro mural. The artist at this time would also have to give precise costs for the work to the contractor.

The artistic project for the Pie IX Metro station provides useful information about the process of selection and installation of a work of art. Various documents record meetings and conversations between Metro organizers, architects and artists describing every aspect of the project in detail. Every person involved was assigned specific roles in the realization of the station. In a letter to Raby, Bonet clearly defined these roles. He wrote:

Here are a few comments about the sharing of responsibilities in the mural project for the Pie-IX metro station.

I understand by:

Architect: The one responsible for the project and in such, the only intermediary between on one part, the artist and the contractor, and on the other part the artist and the client.

Contractor: The one who realized the work and signs the contract with the artist.

Artist: The one who prepares the forms³¹ that will serve to the realization of the work.³²

In the same letter (see Appendix E.), he then went on to clearly describe each person's respective responsibilities.³³ Responsibilities of the artist included, among others, to create the forms for the mural as indicated by the submitted drawings and in delivering the works in due time to the contractor. The contractor's duties then included transporting the works

³¹ These forms would be used the concrete medium Bonet used.

³² "Voici quelques commentaries de ce que pourrait être le partage des responsabilités dans le projet de murale pour la station Pie IX.

J'entends par:

Architecte: Le responsable du project et à ce titre, le seul intermédiaire entre d'une part l'artiste et le contracteur et d'autre part l'artiste et le client.

Contracteur: Celui qui realize l'oeuvre et signe le contrat avec l'artiste.

Artiste: Celui qui prépare les formes devant servir à la realization de l'oeuvre." STCUM Archives. "Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby concerning the mural project for the Pie-IX Metro station", 13 July 1972.

³³ Appendix E: Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby outlining the responsibilities of the artist, contractor and architect.

to Montreal and installing them in their correct locations. The contractor also assumed all responsibilities for damages that may occur after having obtained the works from the artist. Finally, the architect was responsible for visiting the artist in his studio and for approving the works as soon as the artist was ready. He was also in charge of ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract and agreements concerning payment.

In addition, Bonet recognized the right of refusal of his work by the architect at any time during the project. In consequence, Bonet in his letter requested the right not to produce a full-scale model of his work and instead to work directly from the submitted drawings. He proposed to do the final work directly to scale. Bonet writes:

If this proposal is accepted, mutual trust will allow artistic freedom in the creation of the work without the need for a full-scale reproduction. Following, if upon presentation, there are different parts of my work that are unacceptable to you, we will look together for ways improve upon it. I want to be happy and enjoy the work that I have to do in addition to being proud of the final result.³⁴

Extensive correspondence between the artist and architect in this case was also evident throughout. It is this close collaboration that would allow the construction of a final unified space. The artist's involvement in all aspects of the artistic process are evident in this example. Close collaboration with the architect was also clearly felt throughout the project. Drawings and sketches would be proposed, then discussed, modified and altered according to the visions of both artist and architect for the appointed station.

Attached to the technical fiche for the station, the various symbolic elements of the Bonet work are clearly explained. In terms of materials used, the concrete was intended to

³⁴ "Si cet échange est accepté, la confiance témoignée permettra que l'oeuvre s'accomplisse librement et qu'elle ne soit pas une reproduction agrandie. Par la suite, si lors de l'acceptation il y avait différentes parties de mon travail que vous ne puissiez accepter, nous regarderons ensemble afin de trouver mieux. Je veux être heureux et aimé le travail que j'ai à faire en plus d'être fier du résultat final." STCUM Archives "Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby concerning the mural project for the Pie-IX Metro station", 13 July 1972.

symbolize the physical world next to aluminium that symbolizes the psychic presence within every movement. The elements of the central aluminium panel (Figure 7) are explained as:

- 1) The sex: the vital energy
The heart: love
The head: the thoughts
The circle above: the supramental
- 2) The position of the arts and the hands, the gift of the self.
- 3) The tunic, the respect towards all of the traditional knowledge of the roads leading to the realization of this gift.³⁵

As a whole, the concrete walls created by Bonet display the ideas of CITIUS (farther) with a circle in the centre symbolizing unity, ALTIUS (higher) with the aluminium panel looking at Man in his environment, and FORTIUS, interpreted as the effort made inside of us towards the exterior that provokes a surge of energy.³⁶ These highly symbolic elements are characteristic of Bonet's oeuvre. Throughout his career, the Spanish-born artist has been renowned for working with sensual themes in stylized representations of the body. Guy Robert writes of Bonet's work "in a dialectic fashion, the contradictions and paradoxes constitute the organic fabric, which reveals the artist's economy and the radical elimination of accessories, concessions and ornaments."³⁷ His belief in the tradition of

³⁵ "1) Le sexe, l'énergie vitale

Le coeur, l'amour

La tête, le mental

Le rond au dessus, le supramental

2) La pose des bras et des mains, le don de soi.

3) La tunique, le respect envers toutes les connaissances traditionnelles des chemins menant à la réalisation de ce don." STCUM Archives. "Technical fiche for the Pie-IX station addition on the Jordi Bonet mural", 25 August 1983.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Guy Robert, *Jordi Bonet* (Sainte-Adèle: Editions du Songe, 1975), 15.

painting and sculpture as an ancient one have perhaps in this way also influenced his technique and subject matter.³⁸

Visually, the piece displays a landscape of textures created by the working of the concrete. As in most of his other works, it is possible to recognize in his Montreal mural “the high polish of his [...] aluminums, [and] the raw mat finish of concrete”³⁹ that have characterized Bonet’s art. The central panel shows a figure emerging from a rough concrete background. This figure displays the elements described above: the sex, the heart, the head, the circle on the head, the upward position of the arms, the open hands and the tunic. These elements are more or less clear, but the figure as a whole is easily distinguished from the rocky background. The handling of the concrete around the central panel is less rough, more linear, and clearly serves to isolate this central panel. The walls extending on both sides are also carved, alternating between low and high relief to create a series of forms and textures that appear almost organic. As with most of his art, Bonet built this mural from a few preliminary carved lines on the surface from which, as Robert describes, “colours and forms are born from the organic development of these original lines.”⁴⁰

Armed with a description of the symbolism of the work, one may be able to relate the aforementioned symbolic elements to the many qualities of an Olympic athlete. The heart and body of the male figure may come to symbolize the strength and determination of the competitor. The work thus becomes appropriate for its location and emblematic of the occasion. Without this description, however, the work remains an abstract

³⁸ Guy Robert, *Jordi Bonet* (Sainte-Adèle: Editions du Songe, 1975), 7.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 15.

representation of a figure within the wall. The figure's pose, gestures and features would not speak out on their own to the lay readers. While the surrounding concrete, symbolizing the physical world, does evoke organic notions, it remains abstracted as well. There are no clear depictions of nature, simply allusions to it in texture and form. While perhaps intriguing to look at, its importance within its location would remain lost due to the lack of generally understood communicative elements. Bonet's mural was apparently aimed at a very specific audience, a professional reader, capable of deciphering the offered signs. The typical passenger of the Metro would most likely not allow himself or herself the time to examine and understand the work. Its significance would thus generally be lost.

Accompanying the Bonet mural however, were various additions provided by the architect, such as ventilation grids and Olympic inspired decorative patterns. These elements were included directly within or were closely added to the architecture of the station. They provide several clear indications of the Olympic celebrations commemorated by this particular station. Present throughout the station, these additions function both symbolically and functionally. On a functional level, the ventilation grids for example, were built as decorative patterns inspired by symbolic elements of the Olympic Games. Their colour and design were easily reminiscent of the Games and other images associated with them. With no need for careful attention and detailed reading, upon first glance the reference to the Olympics would have been clearly evident. However still abstracted, unlike the Bonet mural, these grids would more easily have communicated to the viewer a familiar reference to a historical Olympic tradition.

With absolutely no functional value, other decorative elements added by the architect also reflected the Olympic symbols. For example, five round interlaced bronze

rings, reflecting the Olympic symbol, were added to the north wall of the dock of the station. The proportions and the representation used replicated those of true official Olympic symbol, and had been approved by Pierre Charbonneau, then responsible for the Twenty-first Olympic Games.⁴¹ Not only was the image itself symbolic, but careful thought was also included in the choice of materials for the work. In a note by Raby, the bronze material was described as symbolic of “the permanence of the Olympic Games, which will live on forever regardless of obstacles.”⁴² In addition, five colourful prefabricated concrete circles mounted on ceramic joints were added near the Stadium access to the Metro, to symbolize the “worldly spirit of the Olympics.”⁴³ As described by the architect, the ceramic elements represented “the participation of each continent during an Olympiad,”⁴⁴ and the five Olympic colours symbolized these five continents.

Again, whether every symbolic element was understood by the viewer or not, the main reference to the Olympic event, through the architectural additions, would have been evident to the everyday user of the Metro system then and still is today. The overall artistic project for the Pie-IX Metro station becomes an interesting study in different levels of significance and understanding. Different types of readers, observers, would have been able to react and respond to the various works throughout the station to varying degrees. Because of the simplicity and familiar symbolic references of most of the architectural additions, an inattentive viewer would still have been aware of the Olympic theme of the station. The use of colours and direct references to previously learnt symbols, icons and

⁴¹ STCUM Archives. “Technical fiche for the Pie-IX station”, 25 August 1983.

⁴² “... la permanence des jeux olympiques qui vivront toujours malgré les obstacles.” Ibid.

⁴³ “l’esprit Olympic mondial.” Ibid.

⁴⁴ “... la participation de chaque continent lors d’une olympiade.” Ibid.

logos, such as those of the Olympic rings, would have been accessible and sufficient visual communicators. On the other hand, a more knowledgeable viewer might have also grasped or enjoyed deciphering the many other less evident symbols presented by the artist and architect. As a whole, the Pie-IX Metro station's artistic scheme offered different levels of accessibility, while being able to communicate to all.

Other Approaches

As seen with the preceding examples, various techniques and approaches were used in the different stations of the Metro system to communicate to the viewer and to foster a sense of civic pride. The selection of a different architect for each station contributed greatly to the striking individuality of the stations. It seems that through time, the Metro has continued to explore new ways of manipulating space and communicating through various elements.

Some stations, such as Radisson and Verdun, began to take on impressive dimensions. Some achieved such height that they are at times compared to "immense underground cathedrals."⁴⁵ A striking detail perhaps, but these stations may additionally reference Quebec's extended religious history. Other architects have decided to unravel parts of the city otherwise never shown. Of the more physical examples of this, the architect of the Jean-Talon Metro station, Gilbert Sauvé, decided to leave uncovered a part of the underground rock foundations of the site. Properly shown and surrounded, this natural element became art within the context of this particular station and of the city.⁴⁶ Finally, some stations involved the community more directly, such as the Henri-Bourassa

⁴⁵ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 144.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 147.

station, which featured a mural entitled “L’enfant dans la ville,” which was executed by 330 elementary school-aged Montrealers.⁴⁷ It seemed that there was no better way to engage the viewer than to have the viewer physically participate in the artistic process. It is through these various processes and creative ideas that the Montreal Metro project was able to capture worldwide interest, and stand as a reflection of the values of the city.

⁴⁷ Clairoux, *Le Métro de Montréal*, 147.

Conclusion

With its underground Metro system, Montreal has contributed to a prominent trend in public art that strives to communicate and translate ideas of the city. Viewed as an important contribution to the city and its inhabitants, the Metro Project was approached with much dedication and great ambition. Mayor Jean Drapeau, in his quest to make Montreal a worldly and modern city, invested time and energy into making every aspect of the Metro a memorable experience. The Montreal Metro was a key element in promoting Drapeau's vision for the city, and thus became a manifestation of civic pride.

In this thesis, I have examined the process of development and the evolution of the Montreal Metro system in order to place it within the cultural context of Montreal and the province of Quebec in the 1960s and 1970s. A brief historical review of the city and the province at this time, has unveiled the Metro Project as an integral part of Drapeau's reshaping of the city on an international level. As such, it was important to study the political realities in and around the time of the construction and evolution of the system to fully understand the significance of the Project. In unveiling Drapeau and the Montreal city officials' efforts to showcase various cultural aspects of the city through art in the Metro stations, my research has shown how the Metro Project became one example of how the mayor's high civic aspirations took form.

I have provided a historical overview of the development of the Metro, and a discussion of the methods by which art may communicate, as helpful tools in understanding how the project was conceived and realized. At a time of great political shifts in the province, I have explained how the system was constructed with the objective

of projecting a positive image of Montreal on local and international levels. To this end, I have explained how Montreal officials looked to various international cities as models, examining how civic history was reflected in their cities and underground systems. A look at the examples that Montreal followed and at the changes and initiatives they made in their own project were then provided. These initiatives taken on by Montreal officials included strategies that would make every station of the Metro an enriching aesthetic experience. The examination of the various elements of the Metro that I have provided prove the successful creation of a series of distinctive circulation spaces that communicate, through its art, a real sense of the city.

I have provided individual case studies to further illustrate how the project was developed and accomplished. A look at the unveiling of the art commissioned for Métro Place-des-Arts indicated the enthusiasm surrounding the project, as well as the efforts and initiatives that went into it. As the first to acquire a separate commissioned work, Métro Place-des-Arts was a good indicator of the values and goals of the Art Project. Also part of the initial system, Métro Champs-de-Mars became an interesting case study with its inclusion of abstract art. Informed by the contemporary art movements of the city at the time, Ferron's Métro Champs-de-Mars project provided a glimpse into the world of automatism while creating an enchanting environment for metro user. This example also served to demonstrate the shifts in themes and predilections for the Metro's artistic program. Finally, Métro Pie-IX was a good example to demonstrate the creative and collaborative process that went into the creation and commission of a work for a station. I have used these three examples to demonstrate the various communicative tools that were used throughout the system to achieve Drapeau and the Metro organizers' goal.

Throughout the thesis, I have also explored issues of reception to better understand the validity and significance of such a venture. With ambitious communicative goals, I have shown that an understanding of the audience and of their relationship to art integrated into their public spaces, was imperative. I have also distinguished the different possible levels of readers, viewers, of the works to better explain communication. In each case study, I have examined the signs and symbols provided by the artists in their works and their capacity to communicate with an audience. Specific examples have shown that the heterogeneity of Montreal's inhabitants and visitors were acknowledged. This directly affected the way that the art and the project as a whole was perceived by Metro passengers. The many letters and published accounts of reactions from various people that I have uncovered in my research, have proven that the project did not inspire indifference. Quite the opposite, people reacted and interacted with the metro's art in very specific and personal ways. Through signs, colours and forms, the art conversed with its audience in meaningful ways, gradually revealing assorted aspects of the city.

Through careful planning of the project, Drapeau and his committee accomplished their goal of creating a metro system that reflected the city. Montreal and Quebec history were considered in themes and subjects, and local materials were used in construction. Local artists were commissioned to include an overview of current local art movements, and art works were suitably created with awareness and in harmony with Montreal's heterogeneous and multicultural population. Finally, themes and signs that were familiar to Metro users were displayed to facilitate communication. In sum, every aspect of the project was geared towards accommodating and representing the many facets of the metropolis.

While academic literature on the art of the Montreal Metro is sparse, the art has been acknowledged in passing in many texts and publications about the Metro in general. Popular press and newspaper clippings at the time of the inauguration of the Metro and of several of its stations do however admirably note the art and its contribution to providing a more pleasant underground environment. Passing quotes from Expo visitors and tourists to the city in general also note the beauty and originality of the Metro stations. Whether the art communicated the sense of civic aspirations it aimed towards is however never clearly addressed. It is my contention that it did, in the sense that it provided a memorable circulation space that became a revealing and distinct facet of the city.

As an important part of the fabric of the city of Montreal, it seems curious that no further care has been taken to maintain the stations and the quality of their art. Rno-Mtro, a grand restoration project that took place in the late 1990's, did not reserve a portion of its budget for the art.¹ In fact, not only did it not work at restoring or preserving it, on the contrary, it contributed to the destruction and further deterioration of some of the artworks.² Some of Ferron's stained glass, for example, was broken with no intention of replacement. It is a shame that a project taken on with such care and attention to detail no longer seems to hold pride and importance in today's city officials' minds, that they would let it be destroyed and go to waste.

Many other buildings and areas of the city of Montreal have been involved in development and restoration programs in the last few years. There has also been a re-evaluation of recent trends in urbanism, with several debates surrounding the conditions

¹ STCUM Archives. *Description of the Rno-Mtro project*, n.d.

² Clairoux, *Le Mtro de Montral*, 138.

and destruction of Montreal buildings and landmarks.³ France Vanlaethem, professor in the design department of the Université du Québec à Montréal, also notes an alarming tendency in today's cities where, having been transformed by modern urbanism, the streets and public spaces of the city have been reduced to a purely functional purpose.⁴ Keeping all of this in mind, having previously defined the Metro as part of an important historical time in Montreal, I would now be interested in understanding the Metro's value in today's society. Has it now been reduced to the drab and simply convenient means of transportation its creators had wanted to avoid, or are there innovative plans for its future? A more in depth study of the state of public art and of restoration and development projects in the city of Montreal today would be an interesting follow-up to this thesis study.

At its conception, the project aimed at recognizing and illustrating the culture and identity of a city and its inhabitants. How this cultural identity has evolved since the 1960s and 1970s would help in providing new frameworks by which to evaluate the Project's validity today. As Jean-Claude Marsan explains, "to realize a better architecture that represents a real rapport for this city [Montreal] and this society, the architects must re-establish contact with the population by the means of issues of culture."⁵ Because of Montreal's cultural diversity, a study of its population would be valuable in understanding the interest in, or lack thereof, of the state of the Metro today.

³ Notably the transformation of Old Montreal's Place d'Youville into a public parking lot in the early 1990s. France Vanlaethem (ed), *La Place publique: dans la ville contemporaine* (Montréal: Les Editions du Méridien, 1995), 14-16.

⁴ Ibid., 14.

⁵ "Pour réaliser une meilleure architecture, qui représente un apport réel pour cette ville et cette société, les architectes doivent reprendre contact avec la population par le biais de la problématique de la culture." Jean-

It is with even more curiosity today that I consider the art in the Montreal Metro stations. I have perhaps now become more of a professional reader myself, wanting to spend time understanding each works. Still enchanted by them, I currently also want to learn from them. I now see railway tracks in the Côte-des-Neiges murals by Claude Bettinger, possibly reminiscent of the raw material and work invested in the construction of this very system, and I now recognize images of generations of Québécois in the wood engraving by Jean-Charles Charuest in Métro De Castelnau. The art has become meaningful, exactly as it had been intended. While there remains many aspects of the project to be studied in order to grasp a full understanding of the continuity of its importance in the history of public art, it remains that the Montreal Metro was an unprecedented accomplishment which will continue to arouse interest and intrigue for years to come.

Appendix A

MODEL FOR ELEMENTS IN PUBLIC ART

Suzanne Lacy, "Fractured Spaces", in *Art in the Public Interest*, edited by Arlene Raven (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 295.

Appendix B

Costs of Stations and Artworks

Stations	service	total cost of stations	Cost of Art works	conception of work
Atwater*	1966	\$191 907.05		
Beaubien*	1966	\$83 016.15		
Beaudry	1966			
Berri-de-Montigny*	1966	\$678 520.55	\$75 000.00	1966-69
Bonaventure*	1966	\$96 608.55		
Champs-de-Mars	1966		\$52 000.00	1966
Cremazie	1966		\$36 000.00	1968
Frontenac*	1966	\$125 684.71		
Guy	1966			
Jarry*	1966	\$78 774.40		
Laurier*	1966	\$77 093.78		
McGill*	1966	\$222 964.51	\$70 400.00	1964-66
Mont-Royal*	1966	\$66 444.84		
Papineau*	1966	\$61 927.65	\$30 000.00	1966
Peel*	1966	\$281 470.01	\$24 000.00	1964
Place d'Armes	1966			
Place-des-Arts*	1966	\$295 574.57	\$32 400.00	1966
Rosemont*	1966	\$94 553.83		
Sauve	1966			
Sherbrooke*	1966	\$256 696.63	\$16 800.00	1967
Square Victoria	1966		\$5 500.00	1976
St-Laurent*	1966	\$173 046.29	\$8 110.00	1966
Ile-Ste-Helene	1967		\$20 000.00	1964
Longueuil	1967		\$8 000.00	1965
Jean-Talon*	1968	\$74 436.35	\$56 000.00	1982
Cadillac	1976	\$3 118 051.43	\$16 400.00	1974
Honore Beaugrand	1976	\$7 626 832.98	\$22 000.00	1975
Joliette	1976	\$3 316 619.84	\$33 000.00	1973
Langelier	1976	\$3 647 024.18	\$20 000.00	1974
L'Assomption	1976	\$7 035 748.01	\$8 500.00	1975
Pie IX	1976	\$4 335 812.24	\$51 000.00	1972-74
Prefontaine	1976	\$3 111 303.83		
Radisson	1976	\$7 030 741.96		
Viau	1976	\$3 948 969.60	\$5 000.00	1975
Angrignon	1978	\$11 150 632.93	\$2 000.00	1977
Charlevoix	1978		\$46 885.00	1976
de l'Eglise	1978		\$33 600.00	1976
Jolicoeur	1978	\$4 733 879.89	\$7 500.00	1976
LaSalle	1978		\$40 867.00	1975

Lionel Groulx	1978	\$10 314 995.05	\$15 000.00	1965-77
Monk	1978	\$4 727 070.75	\$24 500.00	1976
Verdun	1978	\$8 509 603.08	\$18 000.00	1976
George Vanier	1980		\$12 000.00	
Lucien L'Allier	1980		\$26 750.00	1975
Place-St-Henri	1980	\$4 836 308.89	\$35 000.00	1976
Snowdon	1981	\$9 958 349.62	\$60 000.00	1979-80
Vendome	1981		\$37 500.00	1979
Villa Maria	1981	\$3 379 912.89	\$25 000.00	1977
Cote-ste-Catherine	1982	\$4 109 413.39	\$30 000.00	1977
Namur	1982	\$4 495 489.56	\$86 000.00	
Plamondon	1982	\$4 810 017.19		
de la Savane	1983	\$4 268 811.19	\$45 000.00	
du College	1983	\$8 107 653.02	\$98 470.00	1982
de Castelnau	1984	\$5 511 963.74	\$18 250.00	
Fabre	1984	\$4 977 043.87	\$410 000.00	1980
Iberville	1984	\$4 422 925.05	\$40 000.00	
St-Michel	1985	\$6 105 893.78	\$9 000.00	
Acadie	1986	\$7 327 850.00		
Cote-des-Neiges	1986	\$5 692 980.00	\$40 000.00	
Cote-Vertu	1986	\$5 710 000.00		
du Parc	1986	\$5 350 000.00		
Outremont	1987	\$5 266 200.00		
Henri-Bourassa	1981-3		\$48 500.00	1980-83
Universite-de-Montreal	1986		\$23 000.00	
Edouard Montpetit		\$7 711 720.00		

*: the costs of the initial stations does not include the cost of the artworks.

Source: STCUM archive documents (1967-1969)

STCUM Archives. Denis Chagnon, engineer, cost reports (January 17 1989)

Appendix C

Final choice of art works and artists by the architects for each station.

Station	Architects	Artists	Art works
Acadie	Mercier, Boyer-Mercier & Poirier	Jean Mercier	mural, hardened enamel on steel
	Jean-Louis Beaulieu (BTM)	Michel Morelli	benches in granite and steel
		Jean-Francois Jacques & Pierre-Marc Pelletier	clock and benches in stainless steel
Angrignon	Jean-Louis Beaulieu (BTM)		
Assomption	Duplessis & Labelle	Guy Montpetit	four panels in laminated plastic two murals in laminated plastic
Atwater	David, Boulva & Cleve		
Beaubien	Roger d'Astous		
Beaudry	A. Niklewicz (VM)		
Berri-UQAM	Longpre & Marchand	Pierre Gaboriau & Pierr Osterrath	stained glass window
		Robert Lapalme	three murals in paint on canvas
		Architects Longpre & Marchand	twelve ceramic tile murals
		Raoul Hunter	bronze statue
Bonaventure	Victor Prus		
Cadillac	Longpre, Marchand, Goudreau, Dubush & Stewart	Jean Cartier	two murals in hardened enamel on steel
Champs-de-Mars	A. Niklewicz (VM)	Marcelle Ferron	stained glass window
Charlevoix	Ayotte & Bergeron	Mario Merola & Pierre Osterrath	two stained glass windows
Cote-des-Neiges	Tetrault, Parent & Languedoc	Bernard Chaudron	sculptures incised with bronze and steel
Cote-ste-Catherine	Gilbert Sauve (BTM)	architect Gilbert Sauve	murals and prefabricated panels

Cote-Vertu	Iodoin, Lamarre, Pratte & Associates Cayouette & Saia - south access	Yves Trudeau	two relief murals in stainless steel
Crenazie	A. Niklewicz (VM)	George Lauda & Paul Pannier	low-relief in ceramics and cast iron
D'Iberville	Brassard & Warren	Eddy Tardif	mural in anodized aluminium
De Castelnau	Goyer, Collette, Hamelin & Lalonde	Jean-Jacques Charuest	travertine mural
De l'Eglise	Lemay & Leclerc	Claude Theberge	mural in etched concrete
De la Savanne	De Varennes & Mathieu	Maurice Lemieux	sculpture in stainless steel
Du College	Gilles Bonetto	Architect Gilles Bonetto	ionic column and limestone
	Jacques Garand	Pierre Gaboriau & Pierr Osterrath	five stained glass windows
Edouard-Montpetit	Patrice Gauthier (BTM)	architect Patrice Gauthier	concrete benches
Fabre	Bedard, Averna	Jean-Noel Poliquin	murals in coloured concrete
Frontenac	Robillard, Jette & Beaudoin		
Georges-Vanier	Pierre W. Major	Michel Dermet	concrete sculpture
Guy-Concordia	J.A. Chicoine (VM)		
Henri-Bourassa	J. Warunkiewicz (VM)	Oeuvre collective	concrete mural
	Andre Leonard (BTM) - est access	Architect (Jean Dumontier)	four murals in textured concrete
		Jacques Huet	concrete mural
Honore-Beaugrand	Yves Bernard (BTM)	Jean-Paul Mousseau	two murals in ceramic tiles
Jarry	Lemoynne, Bland, Edwards & Shine		
Jean-Drapeau	Jean Dumontier	Architect (Jean Dumontier)	four murals in textured concrete
Jean-Talon	Duplessis, Labelle & Derome - line 2 Gilbert Sauve (BTM) - line 5	Judith Klein Architect (Gilbert Sauve)	mural, paint on metal
		Architect (Gilbert Sauve)	four murals in prefabricated concrete
Jolicœur	Claude Boucher	Architect (Claude Boucher)	ground motifs, Sialex squares
Joliette	Marcel Raby (VM)	Architect (Marcel Raby)	42 circles of ceramic tiles
			mural in glass and stainless steel

Langelier	Victor Prus	Charles Daudelin	two sculptures-grids in stainless steel
Lasalle	Andre G. Dionne		
Laurier	Didier Gillon & Larouche	Peter Gnass	mural in stainless steel
	Jean- P. Pothier		
Lionel-Groulx	Yves Roy (BTM)	architect (Yves Roy)	two murals in stainless steel
		Joseph Rifesser	wood sculpture
Longueil	Jean Dumontier (VM)	Architect (Jean Dumontier)	two murals in textured concrete
Lucien-L'Allier	David, Boulva & Cleve	J. Jacques Besner	aluminium grids
McGill	Crevier, Lemieux, Mercier & Caron	Nicolas Sollogoud	stained glass window
		Maurice Savoie	four terracotta murals
Monk	Blais & Belanger	Germain Bergeron	two sculptures in painted metal
Mont-Royal	Victor Prus	Charles Daudelin	32 vertical bands in textured aluminium
Namur	Labelle, Marchand & Geoffroy	Pierre Granche	three-dimensional brushed aluminium structures
Outremont	Dupuis, Chapuis & Dubuc	Gilbert Poissant	mural of clay tiles
Papineau	Bolduc & Venne	Jean Cartier	three murals hardened enamel on steel
Parc	Blouin, Blouin & Associates	Claire Sarrazin	sculpture. Lucite
		Huguette Desjardins	polychrome mural, hardened enamel on steel
Peel	Papineau, Gerin-Lajoie & Leblanc	Jean-Paul Mousseau	54 ceramic tiled circles
Pie-IX	Marcel Raby (VM)	Jordi Bonet	mural in textured concrete and aluminium
		Architect (Marcel Raby)	relief mural in bronze
		Architect (Marcel Raby)	grid in painted iron
		Architect (Marcel Raby)	mural in prefabricated concrete
Place-D'Armes	J. Warunkiewicz (VM)		
Place-des-Arts	David, Boulva & Cleve	Frederic Back	stained glass window

Place-St-Henri	Hebert & Lalonde	Jacques de Tonnancour Architect (Julien Hebert)	motorized sculptures in painted aluminium mural in coloured and polished brick bronze statue
Plamondon	Patrice Gauthier (BTM)	Architect (Patrice Gauthier)	ground motifs in ceramic tiles
Prefontaine	Henri Brillon (BTM)		
Radisson	Papineau, Gerin-Lajoie, Leblanc & Edwards		
Rosemont	Duplessis, Labelle & Derome		
Saint-Laurent	Brassard & Warren	Architects (Brassard & Warren)	murals in ceramic bricks
Saint-Michel	Lemoyne & Associates	Marcelin Cardinal, Laureat Marois, Normand Moffat & Charles Lemay	pictorial painted work on asbestos panels
Sauve	A. Niklewicz (VM)		
Sherbrooke	Crevier, Lemieux, Mercier & Caron	Gabriel Bastien & Andrea Vau Mario Merola Mario Merola	Venetian marble mosaic mural circular mural in melted cement and grout brick mural and porphyry
Snowdon	Jean Dumontier	Claude Guite Architect (Jean-Louis Beaulieu)	four painted murals in asbestos panels two metallic grids in metal
Square Victoria	Jean-Louis Beaulieu (BTM)	Hector Guimard Jean-Paul Mousseau Robert Savole	metal doorway mural in laminated plastic two murals in reinforced steel
Universite-de-Montreal	Irving Sager (VM)	Architect (Andre Leonard)	two murals in terracotta blocs
Vendome	Desnoyer, Mercure, Leziy, Gagnon, Sheppard & Gelinas	Marcelle Ferron	stained glass window and iron tube sculpture
Verdun	Jean-Maurice Dube	Antoine D. Lamarche	mural in etched concrete in low-relief painted concrete
Viau	Irving Sager (VM)	Jean-Paul Mousseau	mural in ceramic tiles

Villa-Maria	Andre Leonard (BTM)	Architect (Andre Leonard)	twelve circles in polymer concrete
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BTM: Bureau de Transport Métropolitain

VM: Ville de Montreal

Some of the stations do not have artworks added to their structure. In some cases, the architect himself created the station without the help of commissioned artists. This may be the case for most of the stations where no artists or architects are mentioned.

Source: Clairoux, Benoît. *Le Métro de Montréal: 35 and déjà* (Montréal : Editions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, 2001).
STCUM archive documents

Appendix D

List of name changes for various metro stations

After 1980, the CUM chose the names of the Montreal metro stations. This has caused the renaming of various stations of the system. Here is a list of stations whose names have been changed since their inauguration:

<u>Proposed name at the inauguration</u>	<u>Definitive name given by the</u>
<u>CUM</u>	
Albert	Lionel-Groulx
Allard	Monk
Amherst	Beaudry
Aqueduc	Lucien-L'Allier
Arnoldi	Namur
Barclay	Plamondon
Centre	Charlevoix
Champlain	LaSalle
Chauveau	Assomption
Cherrier	Sherbrooke
Les Tanneries	Place-St-Henri
Maisonneuve	Vendome
Monkland	Villa-Maria
Moreau	Prefontaine
Ontario	Frontenac
Palais du Commerce	Berri-de-Montigny*
Rive-Sud	Longueuil
Saint-Denis	Berri-de-Montigny* (ligne 4)
Saint-Joseph	Laurier
Vincent-d'Indy	Edouard-Montpetit
Windsor	Bonaventure

* later renamed Berri-UQAM in 1987

Source: Clairoux, Benoit. *Le Métro de Montréal: 35 and déjà* (Montréal : Editions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, 2001), 110.

Appendix E

Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby outlining the responsibilities of the artist, contractor and architect

VOICI QUELQUES COMMENTAIRES DE CE QUE POURRAIT ÊTRE LE PARTAGE DES RESPONSABILITÉS DANS LE PROJET DE MURALE POUR LA STATION PIE IX.

J'ENTENDS PAR:

ARCHITECTE: LE RESPONSABLE DU PROJET ET À CE TITRE, LE SEUL INTERMÉDIAIRE ENTRE D'UNE PART L'ARTISTE ET LE CONTRACTEUR ET D'AUTRE PART L'ARTISTE ET LE CLIENT.

CONTRACTEUR: CELUI QUI RÉALISE L'OEUVRE ET SIGNE LE CONTRAT AVEC L'ARTISTE.

ARTISTE: CELUI QUI PRÉPARE LES FORMES DEVANT SERVIR À LA RÉALISATION DE L'OEUVRE.

LES RESPONSABILITÉS DE L'ARTISTE:

- A-1 L'ARTISTE EXÉCUTERA TOUS LES DESSINS, RELIEFS, TEXTURES ET AUTRES À SON ATELIER, AVEC LES MATÉRIAUX QU'IL JUGERA À PROPOS: URATHAME, POLYTHÈNE, BOIS, ETC. SUR DES PANNEAUX DE CONTRE PLAQUÉ.
- A-2 IL ACHÈTERA ET PAIERA À MÊME SON BUDGET TOUS LES MATÉRIAUX NÉCESSAIRES À L'EXÉCUTION DE SON OEUVRE.
- A-3 IL S'ENGAGERA À LIVRER APRÈS NEUF MOIS D'AVIS ET À LA DATE CONVENUE TOUTES LES FORMES SCULPTÉES.
- A-4 IL AURA DROIT EN CAS D'INCAPACITÉ PHYSIQUE DE FAIRE SUIVRE LE TRAVAIL PAR MONSIEUR JACQUES HÉBERT DE SON ATELIER SANS QUE LES TERMES DU CONTRAT SOIENT CHANGÉS.
- A-5 IL AURA DROIT DE RETOUCHER LE BÉTON COULÉ EN VUE D'AMÉLIORER SON OEUVRE.
- A-6 IL AURA DROIT DE DÉCOFFRER LES FORMES CHAQUE FOIS QU'IL LE CROIRA UTILE.
- A-7 IL RESTERA LE SEUL PROPRIÉTAIRE DES FORMES OU DÉBRIS DE FORMES APRÈS LE COULAGE.
- A-8 IL S'ENGAGERA À NE JAMAIS LES EMPLOYER OU REPRODUIRE DANS D'AUTRES RÉALISATIONS.
- A-9 IL FOURNIRA DES GARANTIES D'ASSURANCE FEU SUR LE TRAVAIL EN MARCHE OU COMPLÉTÉ ET ENTREPOSÉ À SON ATELIER, COUVRANT LA TOTALITÉ DES MONTANTS REÇUS D'AVANCE.
- A-10 IL FOURNIRA DES GARANTIES D'ASSURANCE VIE SUR SA PROPRE VIE EN VUE DE PROTÉGER LE PROPRIÉTAIRE POUR LES MONTANTS QU'IL AURA PAYÉS D'AVANCE.
- A-11 IL PERMETTRA EN TOUT TEMPS L'ACCÈS À SON ATELIER AU PROPRIÉTAIRE, À L'ARCHITECTE ET AU CONTRACTEUR.
- A-12 IL ACCEPTERA D'APPORTER À SON OEUVRE LES CHANGEMENTS QUE L'ARCHITECTE JUGERA NÉCESSAIRES.
- A-13 L'ACCEPTATION FINALE DE LA MURALE NE SERA PAS CONDITIONNÉE PAR L'ACCEPTATION DE L'ENSEMBLE DES TRAVAUX EXÉCUTÉS PAR LE CONTRACTEUR GÉNÉRAL.

LES RESPONSABILITÉS DU CONTRACTEUR:

- B-1 LE CONTRACTEUR VERRA AU TRANSPORT DE MONT ST-HILAIRE À MONTRÉAL, À L'ENTRÉPOSAGE DES FORMES SCULPTÉES PAR L'ARTISTE AUTANT POUR UNE PARTIE COMME POUR LA TOTALITÉ DE CELLES-CI.

JORDI BONET

MANOIR CAMPBELL, MONT ST-HILAIRE, QUE., CANADA, (514) 467-0237

25 AOÛT 1983

LES RESPONSABILITÉS DU CONTRACTEUR: (SUITE)

- B-2 IL SERA RESPONSABLE DES DOMMAGES OCCASIONNÉS AUX PANNEAUX SCULPTÉS APRÈS RÉCEPTION DE CEUX-CI.
- B-3 IL INSTALLERA LES PANNEAUX SCULPTÉS DANS LES FORMES SERVANT AU COULAGE.
- B-4 IL DEVRA VOIR AU COULAGE DU BÉTON ET AU DÉCOFFRAGE.
- B-5 IL NE PARTAGERA PAS SES RESPONSABILITÉS AVEC L'ARTISTE SUR LA QUALITÉ INTRINSÈQUE OU APPARENTE DU BÉTON.
- B-6 IL SERA RESPONSABLE DES DÉPENSES ENCOURUES PAR L'ARTISTE EN VUE DE RÉPARER TOUTES MALFORMATIONS OCCASIONNÉES PAR LE COULAGE.
- B-7 IL DEVRA COLLABORER AVEC L'ARTISTE EN TOUT CE QUI SE RÉFÈRE À LA RÉUSSITE TECHNIQUE EN SUIVANT LES TRAVAUX À L'ATELIER DE CELUI-CI.
- B-8 IL PAIERA À L'ARTISTE LE MONTANT TOTAL DE \$27,000.00 EN CINQ PAIEMENTS COMME SUIV:

20%	\$5,400.00	EN DEDANS DE 15 JOURS DE LA SIGNATURE DU CONTRAT.
20%	\$5,400.00	IMMÉDIATEMENT APRÈS LA TERMINAISON ET ACCEPTATION DE LA PREMIÈRE MURALE.
20%	\$5,400.00	IMMÉDIATEMENT APRÈS LA TERMINAISON ET ACCEPTATION DE LA DEUXIÈME MURALE.
20%	\$5,400.00	IMMÉDIATEMENT APRÈS LA TERMINAISON ET ACCEPTATION DE LA TROISIÈME MURALE.
20%	\$5,400.00	APRÈS LE DÉCOFFRAGE ET L'ACCEPTATION DE L'OEUVRE.

LES RESPONSABILITÉS DE L'ARCHITECTE.

- C-1 IL SE RENDRA À L'ATELIER DE L'ARTISTE AUSSI SOUVENT QUE L'UN OU L'AUTRE LE JUGERA NÉCESSAIRE.
- C-2 LUI SEUL POURRA EXIGER DES CHANGEMENTS AVANT LA LIVRAISON.
- C-3 IL VERRA À L'APPROBATION DE L'OEUVRE AUSSITÔT QUE L'ARTISTE LUI EN FERA LA DEMANDE.
- C-4 IL VERRA À CE QUE LES PAIEMENTS AIENT LIEU INDÉPENDAMMENT DE TOUTES CAUSES NON-RELATIONNÉES AVEC LES TERMES DU CONTRAT ET CELA AU PLUS TARD QUINZE JOURS APRÈS SON APPROBATION DE CHAQUE FACTURE.

P.S.

- B-9 LE CONTRACTEUR VERRA À LA PROTECTION DE L'OEUVRE APRÈS LE DÉCOFFRAGE JUSQU'À LA COMPLÉTION ET ACCEPTATION DE L'ENSEMBLE DE LA STATION.

JORDI BONET

25 AOÛT 1983

Source: STCUM Archives. *Letter from Jordi Bonet to Marcel Raby concerning the mural project for the Pie-IX metro station, 13 July 1972.*

Figure 1
Map of the Metro System

Figure 2

Kelvin McEvoy

James McGill

c.1966

tapestry

McGill Metro station

(the tapestry was photographed in Montreal City Hall)

Figure 3

Nicolas Sollogoub
Jacques Viger et Peter McGill
1974
stained glass
McGill Metro station

Figure 4

Jean-Louis Beaulieu
Angrignon Metro station
1978

Figure 5

Frédéric Back
Les Arts Lyriques
1966
stained glass
Place-des-Arts Metro station

Figure 6

Marcelle Ferron
stained glass window
1966
Champs-de-Mars Metro station

Figure 7

Jordi Bonet
CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS
Textured concrete and aluminium
1972-1974
Pie-IX Metro station

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