

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' latest art acquisition

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NEW YORK, Feb 18 — The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) has acquired two pieces by Sarah Anne Johnson, an emerging artist from Winnipeg, from her series “Arctic Wonderland”.

“Untitled (Schooner and Fireworks)” (2012) is an installation featuring a model schooner placed on a wooden table, with an immense multi-coloured storm cloud containing glasses, dishes and sparkling LED lights suspended from the ceiling.

The complementary photograph “Explosion Panorama” (2013) is a panoramic scene enhanced with coloured inks to better reflect the sense of wonder the natural landscape evoked.



An artwork by Sarah Anne Johnson, ‘Untitled (Schooner and Fireworks)’, 2012. — AFP pic

Both pieces were inspired by a residency alongside artists, activists and scientists in the Arctic in 2009; Johnson later developed the installation with the aid of craftsmen during a residency in Canada in 2011.

Nathalie Bondil, MMFA director and chief curator, deemed it “delicate, complex and spectacular”.

Johnson stated, “My art practice often involves an element of adventure... As a photographer, my challenge becomes to record with a camera experiences that refuse to be reduced to a single frame. Often this leads me to paint on or otherwise manipulate the photograph's surface. Occasionally, as with this piece, it prompts me to work sculpturally, and in this case I felt that to capture the vastness — the awesomeness — of the Arctic, I would need...something to make you step back and marvel.”

The two works were gifted by the Cirque du Soleil, which possesses a collection of contemporary works of art by mostly Canadian artists, in addition to its costume collection from its elaborate performances.

Shortlisted for the Sobey Art Award (for Canadian artists under age 40) in 2015, Johnson has works in collections in Canada (Art Gallery of Ontario, National Gallery of Canada) and New York (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art).

— AFP-Relaxnews