

City of Québec's 414th anniversary: Presentation of the Médaille de la Ville de Québec and the Ordre des mécènes to outstanding individuals

City of Québec, July 3, 2022 – On the occasion of the city of Québec's 414th anniversary, Mayor Bruno Marchand awarded the Médaille de la Ville de Québec to outstanding individuals for their significant contribution to our community. They are:

- Anne-Marie Olivier (cultural sector)
- Godelieve De Koninck (social sector)
- Peter Simons (economic sector)
- Robert Dubreuil (sports sector)

“It was very important to me to recognize people who have helped make Québec the open, diverse, and dynamic city we know and love,” said Bruno Marchand, Mayor of Québec. “Day after day, through their dedication and selflessness, these four recipients are building a better city culturally, socially, economically, recreationally, and in its community spirit. My heartfelt thanks to them all!”

Anne-Marie Olivier

Known both as an actress and playwright, Anne-Marie Olivier is an important figure on Québec's theatre scene. She was the co-executive director and artistic director of Théâtre du Trident from 2013 to 2022 and is now the artistic director of the company Bienvenue aux dames. In 2004, her solo play *Gros et détail* earned the Paul-Hébert performance award at the Prix d'excellence des arts et de la culture de Québec. She subsequently performed in France, Russia, and Brazil as an actress and continued to write plays, including *Venir au monde*, which won the Governor General's Literary Award for French-language drama in 2018. Ms. Olivier has 12 publications as well as a number of awards and distinctions.

Godelieve De Koninck

Godelieve De Koninck, an active retiree and trained remedial teacher, founded Liratoutâge, a non-profit organization whose dedicated volunteers read to seniors in residences on a weekly basis. The idea came to her while she was looking for a residence for her mother and noticed that some residents were bored. The Government of Québec honoured her with the Prix Hommage Aînés award in 2021. The fourth of twelve children in the De Koninck family, she felt a need to help starting in early childhood, following her parents' example. After becoming a mother, Ms. De Koninck earned a PhD in French didactics and taught troubled youth, in addition to publishing various books. As president of the University Women's Association, she has also actively supported First Nations women.

Peter Simons

Peter Simons is a well-known Québec businessman. After studying economics and administration, he began his career in the family business in 1986. Ten years later, he became president and CEO, a position he held until March 2022. Simons is a successful, well-known company that employs over 3,500 people in 16 stores across Canada and a state-of-the-art distribution centre recently opened in the city of Québec. Throughout his career, Mr. Simons has received many honours in recognition of his business vision and core values. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration by Université Laval in 2009, the Québec Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Exceptional Merit, and the Order of Canada.

Robert Dubreuil

Speed skater and 1980s and 1990s Olympic athlete Robert Dubreuil has been executive director of Fédération de Patinage de vitesse du Québec since 1995. His commitment to and passion for speed skating led him and a few volunteers to set up the city of Québec's new Centre de glaces Intact Assurances, which opened in 2021. It is the only building of its kind in eastern North America and is helping to change the face of the sport that Québec and Canada excel in. The impact of Mr. Dubreuil's leadership is undeniable, as the city of Québec will host a Canadian championship and an international event for the first time in 2022. As the father of three children, including Olympic medallist and world champion Laurent Dubreuil, he makes a personal contribution to the sport that transcends all borders.

The Ordre des mécènes, for exceptional gifts

This year, the mayor also presented the Ordre des mécènes to major donors who contribute to the city's reputation. They are:

- Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa
- André Desmarais and France Chrétien-Desmarais for the Chrétien-Desmarais family
- Yseult Riopelle for the Yseult Riopelle family

Last December, the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation made an exceptional gift of \$120 million from patrons and collectors to Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ). This gift is unprecedented in the history of Québec philanthropy and includes some 60 works valued at \$100 million, as well as \$20 million for the construction of Espace Riopelle, a new world-class pavilion. Four of the founding families of the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation (Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa, André Desmarais and France Chrétien Desmarais, Pierre Lassonde, and Yseult Riopelle) have made history and significantly enriched MNBAQ's Québec art collections.

Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa

A philanthropist and avid collector of Canadian art, Michael Audain is an active supporter of the visual arts in Canada. This real estate developer from British Columbia is chair of the Audain Foundation, the Jean Paul Riopelle Foundation, and the Audain Art Museum Foundation. He is also a director of several foundations, including that of the National Gallery of Canada. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada and the Order of British Columbia, has received honorary degrees from five universities, and is a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee and Diamond Jubilee Medals. Yoshiko Karasawa, who wishes to encourage the Asian community to participate in the arts, has been a board member of the Audain Art Museum since 1997. She has also been a long-time supporter of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the Karasawa Museum at the Nikkei Cultural Centre in Burnaby.

Chrétien-Desmarais family

Seasoned, well-known businessman André Desmarais held the highest positions at Power Corporation from 1983 to 2020 and served on the boards of several of the group's companies. He is active on the international stage and is honorary chair of the Canada China Business Council. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada and Ordre national du Québec and has received honorary doctorates from several Québec universities. France Chretien-Desmarais, a founding member and the executive vice-president of Precinomics Health Solutions Canada, is currently co-chair of the Riopelle Centenary Celebrations and chair of the international committee for the Celebrations. She also serves on numerous boards of directors of health, research, and social development organizations. She received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Concordia University and is a member of the Order of Canada.

Yseult Riopelle family

Yseult Riopelle, an accomplished, multidisciplinary artist and daughter of Françoise Lespérance and Jean Paul Riopelle, has been working since 1986 to trace all of her father's roughly 7,000 works scattered throughout the world. She is director of Hibou Éditeurs and Kétoupa Édition and serves as an expert on Riopelle's work for Canadian museums and leading international auction houses. Riopelle's artistic and cultural footprint spans the globe under the admiring eye of many collectors and museum institutions. His works are part of public collections in over 60 cities, in 18 countries, and on 6 continents. The Riopelle collection at Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) is the largest public collection of his works in the world.

About the Médaille de la Ville de Québec

The Médaille de la Ville de Québec is traditionally awarded each year to particularly deserving residents on July 3, the anniversary of the city's founding. Designed in 2022 by Ville de Québec in collaboration with Les Artisans du Passage, this latest version of the medal is a handcrafted creation cast in stainless steel. The finish is reminiscent of the city's rustic aspect and rich history, while the accent reflects its modernity and its influence throughout the Americas.

About the Ordre des mécènes

The Ordre des mécènes is awarded on an exceptional basis to recognize outstanding acts of philanthropy that benefit residents of the city of Québec.

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Source: **Julie Dubois**
Ville de Québec
418-641-6210
julie.dubois@ville.quebec.qc.ca

Interviews: **Thomas Gaudreault**
Press Secretary
Mayor's Office
418-456-2282
thomas.gaudreault@ville.quebec.qc.ca

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