



PRESS RELEASE

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MY 2,000-YEAR-OLD DOUBLE: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN ANCIENT HISTORY AND MODERNITY

Québec City, October 23, 2018 – Part art, part digital experience, this bold and cutting-edge new exhibition running at Musée de la civilisation from October 24, 2018, to May 12, 2019, explores the idea of image through the ages. Featuring works by internationally renowned artist photographer François Brunelle and pieces from the collections of Musées d’art et d’histoire de Genève and Fondation Gandur pour l’Art in Geneva, it brings together some twenty modern faces from all over the world and pairs each one with an ancient work of art that bears a striking resemblance to them.

Portraits from yesterday and today

In all, some twenty antique works and their contemporary counterparts are placed side by side. The dialogue between past and present unfolds through a narrative discourse that’s both biographical and archeological. The modern black and white portraits have been immortalized by photographer and lookalike specialist François Brunelle. In addition to these photographs and the ancient busts on loan from the two renowned Swiss institutions, the CHU de Québec–Université Laval 3D epithesis lab, directed by dental surgeon Dr. Gaston Bernier, produced all the 3D printed masks for the exhibition. The laboratory does a remarkable job of reconstructing faces in a medical setting, and the masks are veritable modern-day masterpieces that recreate the features of the doubles taking part in the exhibition.

A look at the theme of lookalikes

My 2,000-year-old Double offers visitors a non-linear route with four themed areas. The first presents photographer François Brunelle, introduces the project, explains the origins of the term “sosie” (or double), and includes a video on the making of the project. The second area is made up of seven virtually identical doubles, i.e., pairs of people so physically similar that the connection is clear as day. The third area explores the life stories and backgrounds of the modern-day lookalikes by looking at similarities between their lives and those of their ancient counterparts. Lastly, the fourth area presents the art of portraiture and how it has evolved from Antiquity to today through portraits of memory, portraits of influence, and even two portraits of babies— My 2,000-year-old Baby— from a contest conducted in collaboration with the daily newspaper Le Soleil in May 2018. Visitors will have the chance to contemplate figures from Greco-Roman and Egyptian antiquities and their modern-day doubles in this one-of-a-kind exhibition that sparks a dialogue between past and present. Who knows? As they explore the exhibition, they may even see their own likeness among the Roman athletes or Greek nymphs.

Avec la collaboration



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Quotes:

“Musée de la civilisation is known for presenting original exhibitions that shed light on the human experience. My 2,000-year-old Double is first and foremost a reflection on image in the age of selfies. What’s interesting is how physical resemblance can bring people together. With this exhibition, we wanted to combine modernity and historicity by taking a look at the role image plays in our society.”

Stéphane La Roche, Executive Director

“I’m very proud to work with such a prestigious institution as Musée de la civilisation and to have embarked on this great quest to find modern-day people who look like ancient sculptures and faces dating back more than 2,000 years. After developing the **I’m not a look-alike!** I put all my expertise into action so my photos could reveal the similarities between the sculptures and the human faces featured in this bold exhibition.”

François Brunelle, Artist Photographer and Lookalike Specialist

“Polycor is a world leader in natural stone, a material humanity has always inscribed as a way to commemorate its memory, glory, and failures. We’re based in Québec City and are a part of people’s daily lives. And that’s why we were a natural partner for this exhibition at Musée de la civilisation.”

Patrick Perus, President and CEO of Polycor

Highlights:

- My 2,000-year-old Double is above all an amazing example of public participation and cultural outreach. Over 108,000 participants from around the world—including Québec, the United States, Russia, and South Africa—submitted their portraits as part of the online call for doubles launched in 2016;
- The monsosie.mcq.org website earned a NUMIX 2018 award for its bold use of facial recognition technology;
- The photographs were shot in Québec City (Musée de la civilisation), Montréal (François Brunelle’s photography studio), Paris (Québec Government Office in Paris), and at Musées d’art et d’histoire de Genève;
- A “making-of” documentary, which started shooting in 2016, was produced to offer a step-by-step look at how the exhibition project was created;
- Facial recognition software was used to match modern-day faces with statues from 2,000 years ago;
- An interactive game (matching faces with statues) is being set up to create a fun experience for visitors;
- Flagship items on display include:
 - ✓ 18 sculptures (including two mummy masks) from the Greco-Roman and Egyptian collections of Musées d’art et d’histoire de Genève;
 - ✓ 7 works, statues, and headstones, as well as an antique bronze mirror borrowed from Fondation Gandur pour l’Art in Geneva;
 - ✓ 24 sculptures paired with 25 participating doubles from various countries from around the world, including a young boy, a four-year-old child, and two toddlers;
 - ✓ A miniature terracotta sculpture paired with two modern-day lookalikes;
 - ✓ Some 40 antique (Roman) coins from the Séminaire de Québec collections, – odd miniature portraits (small paintings), a few ferrotypes and old photos, and a recent-model iPhone.

My 2,000-year-old Double is an exhibition designed and produced by Musée de la civilisation, presented by Polycor, with photographs by François Brunelle and with the collaboration of Musées d'art et d'histoire de Genève and Fondation Gandur pour l'Art in Geneva, in partnership with Fairmont Le Château Frontenac (as official hotel) and the daily newspaper Le Soleil.

Related links:

Musée de la civilisation: www.mcq.org and www.youtube.com/user/mcqpromo

François Brunelle, Artist Photographer: www.francoisbrunelle.com

Musées d'art et d'histoire de Genève: www.ville-geneve.ch/MAH

Fondation Gandur pour l'Art: www.fg-art.org

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