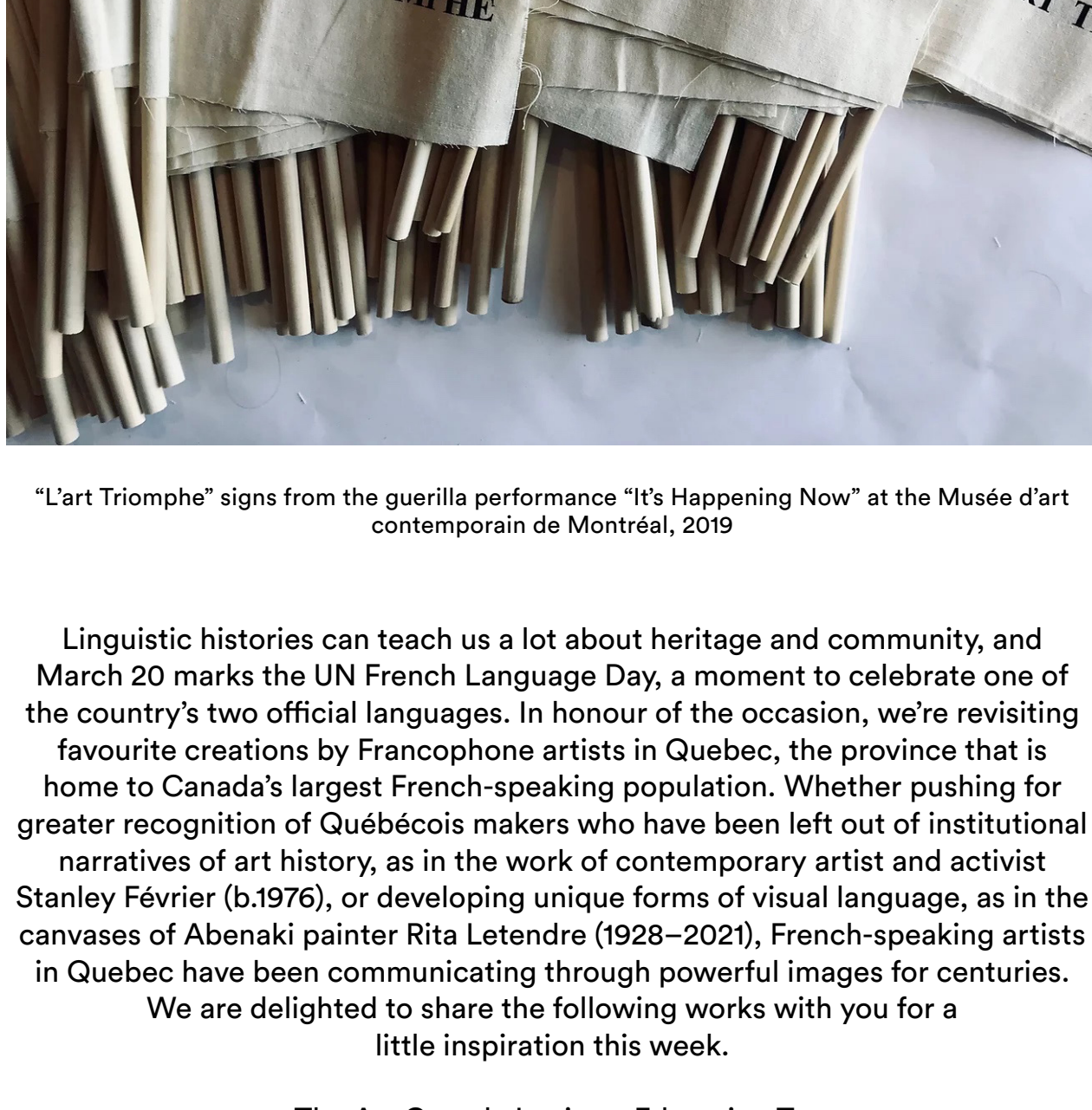


EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

ART AND “LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE”
CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN QUEBEC

With the UN French Language Day coming up on March 20, we are delighted to share the work of five Francophone artists who explore language, history, and cultural heritage



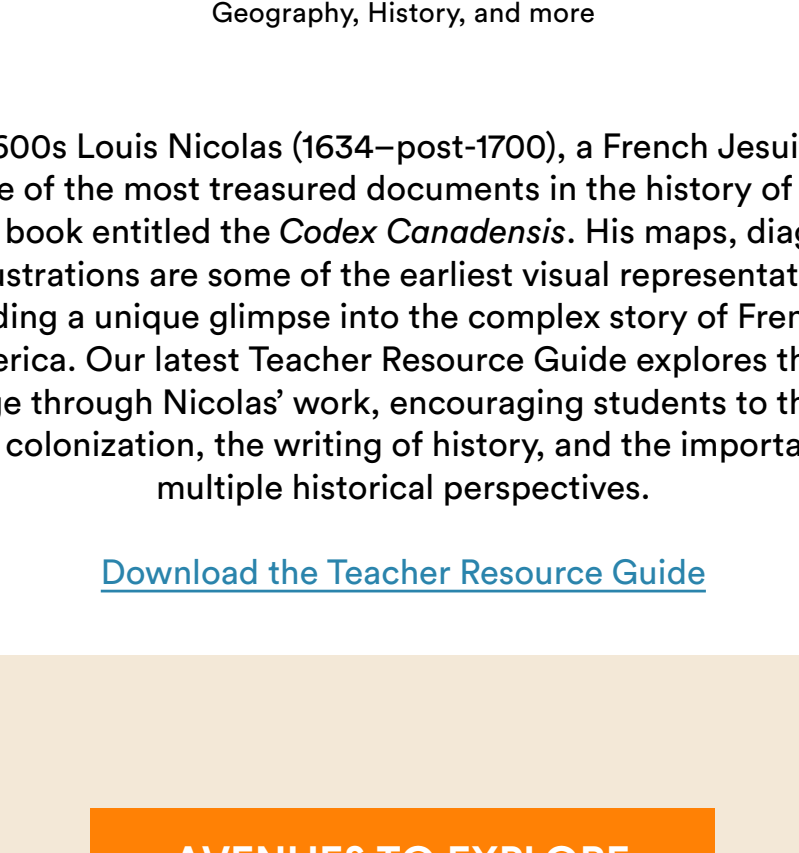
“L’art Triomphe” signs from the guerilla performance “It’s Happening Now” at the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal, 2019

Linguistic histories can teach us a lot about heritage and community, and March 20 marks the UN French Language Day, a moment to celebrate one of the country’s two official languages. In honour of the occasion, we’re revisiting favourite creations by Francophone artists in Quebec, the province that is home to Canada’s largest French-speaking population. Whether pushing for greater recognition of Québécois makers who have been left out of institutional narratives of art history, as in the work of contemporary artist and activist Stanley Février (b.1976), or developing unique forms of visual language, as in the canvases of Abenaki painter Rita Letendre (1928–2021), French-speaking artists in Quebec have been communicating through powerful images for centuries.

We have delighted to share the following works with you for a little inspiration this week.

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

Producing Knowledge



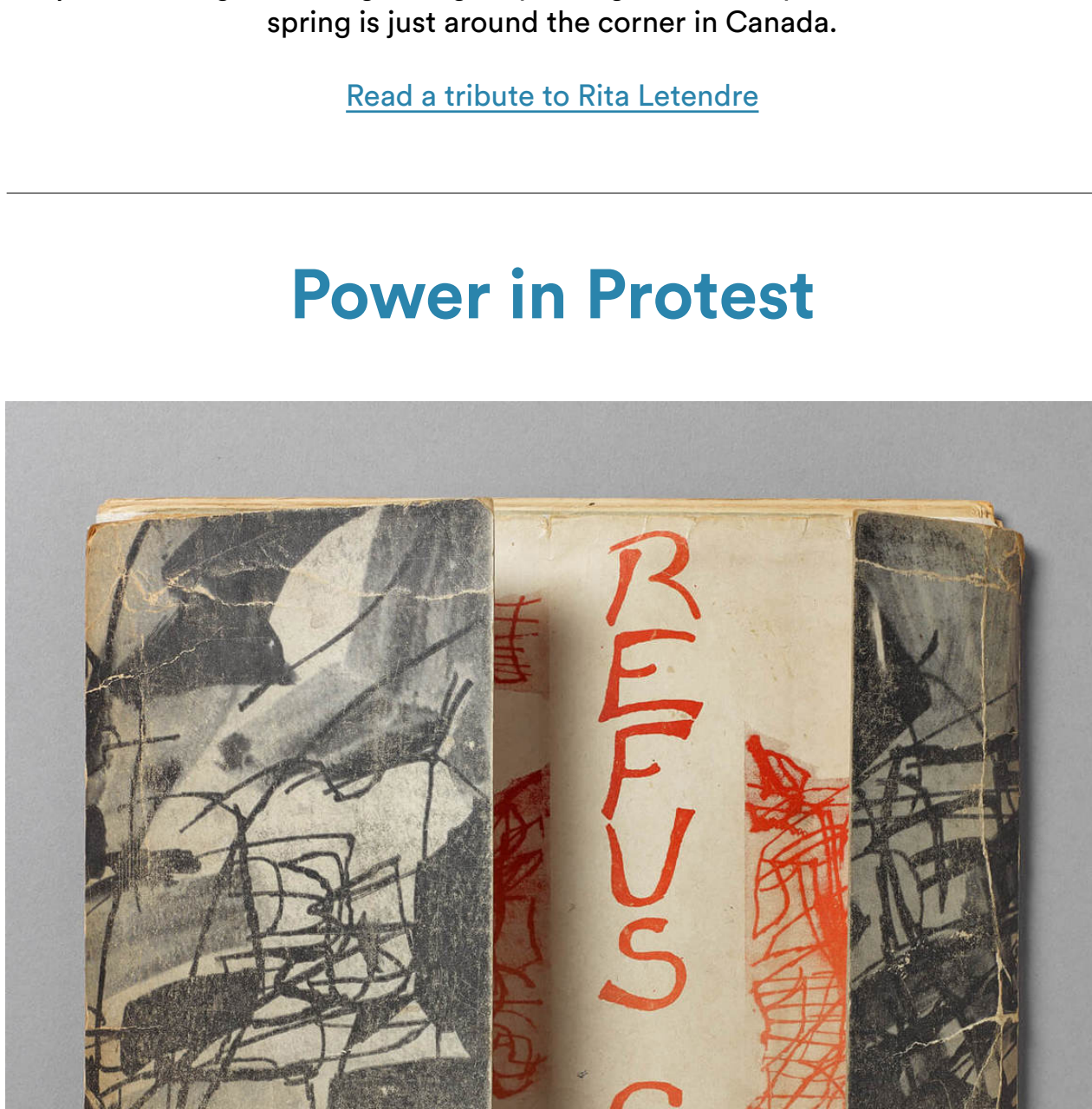
Grades 7 to 12
Geography, History, and more

In the late 1600s Louis Nicolas (1634–post-1700), a French Jesuit missionary, produced one of the most treasured documents in the history of early colonial Canada, a book entitled the *Codex Canadensis*. His maps, diagrams, and intricate illustrations are some of the earliest visual representations of New France, providing a unique glimpse into the complex story of French settlement in North America. Our latest Teacher Resource Guide explores the production of knowledge through Nicolas’ work, encouraging students to think critically about colonization, the writing of history, and the importance of multiple historical perspectives.

[Download the Teacher Resource Guide](#)

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Communicating Freedom

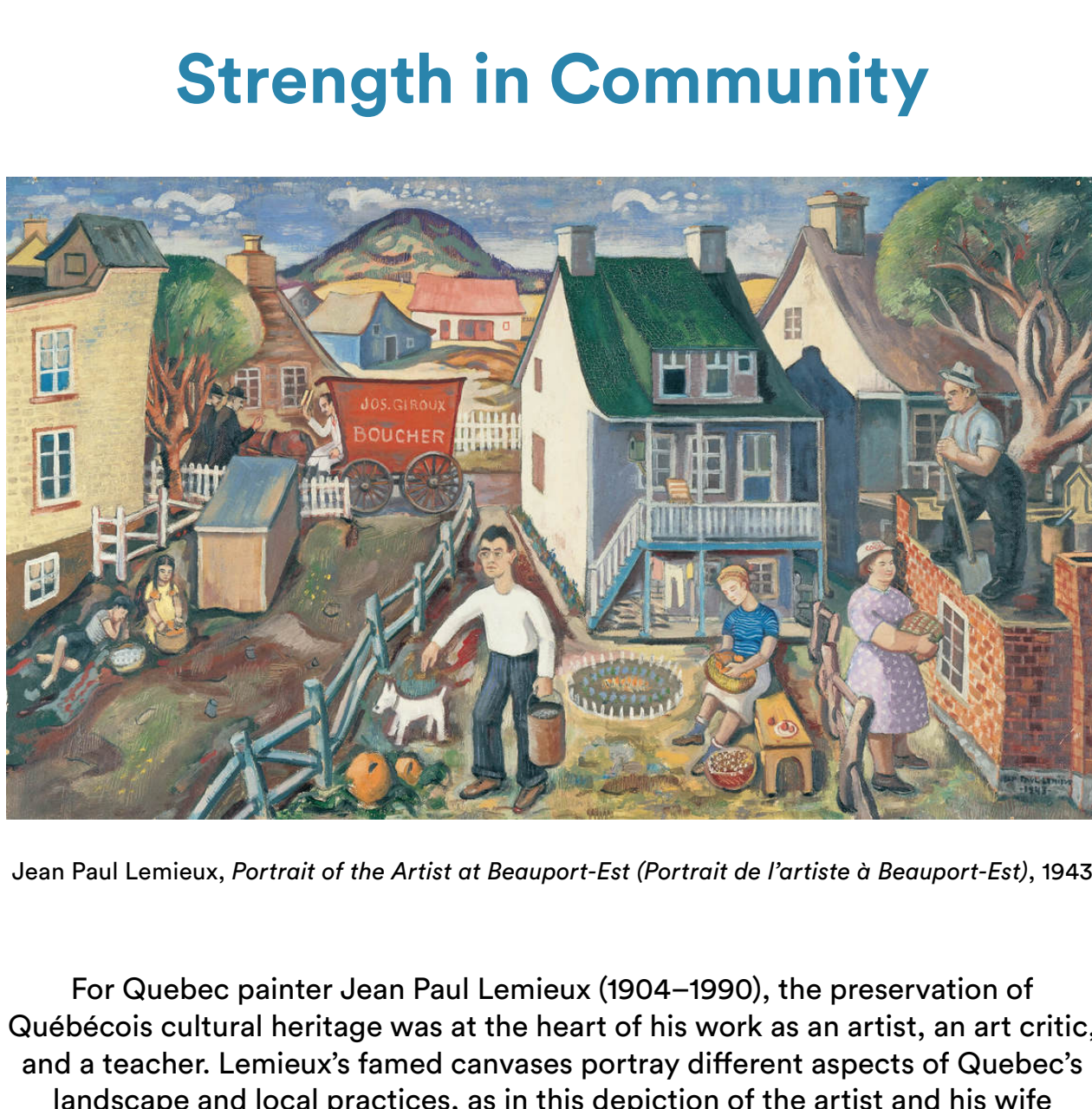


Rita Letendre, *April Time*, 1981

According to Quebec-born Abenaki painter Rita Letendre (1928–2021), “Painting [...] is an experience of wanting to communicate with others and affords us great freedom if we want it. I want it.” Freedom is perhaps best felt in Letendre’s inimitable explorations of colour and form, as in this work, entitled *April Time*, a good example of the artist’s signature expressive abstract language. Letendre’s vision of the dynamic and luminous promise of spring, evoked through warm layers of orange and burgeoning stripes of green, is the perfect reminder that spring is just around the corner in Canada.

[Read a tribute to Rita Letendre](#)

Power in Protest

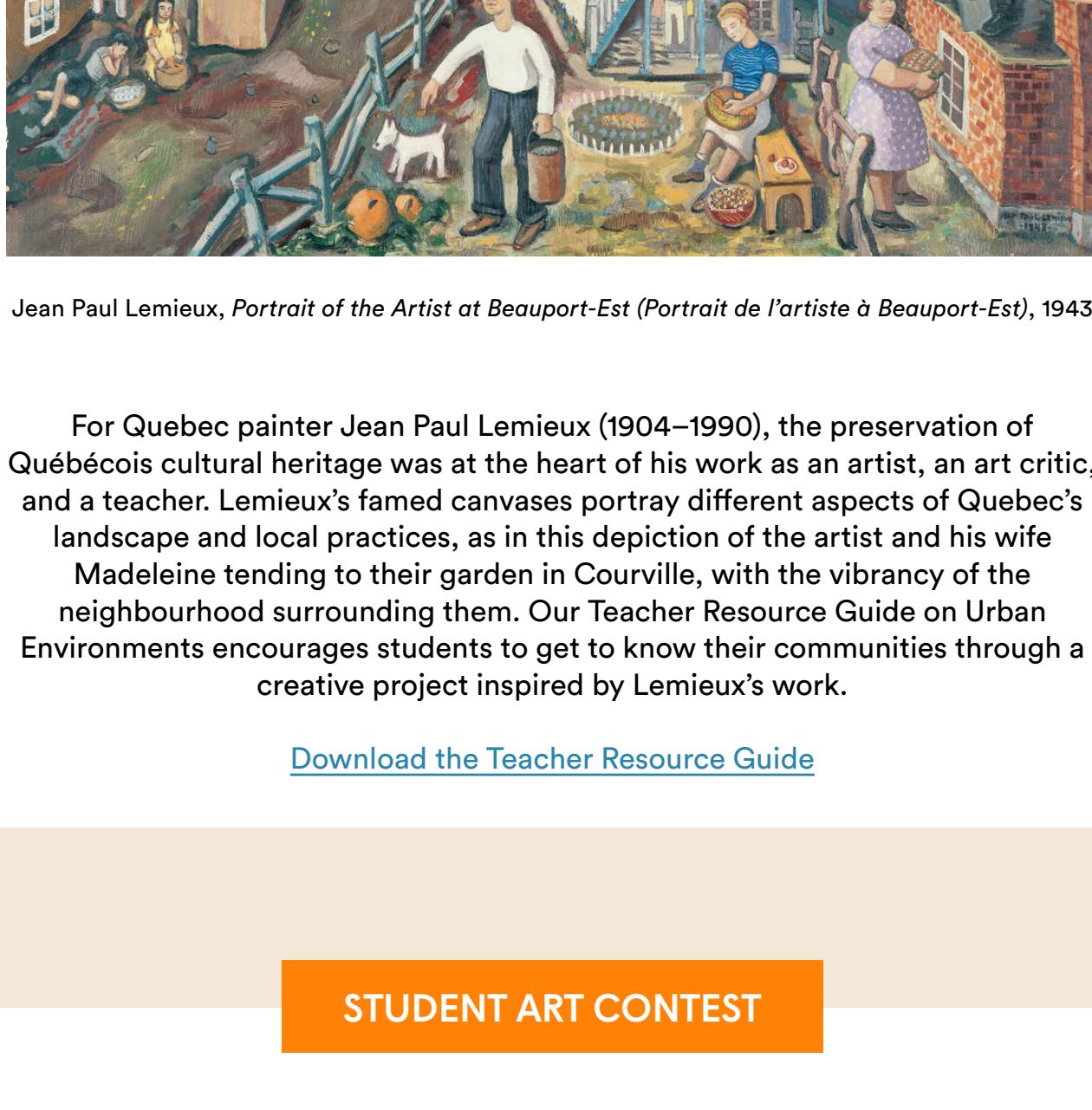


Paul-Émile Borduas, *Refus global*, August 9, 1948

The publication of the *Refus global* is one of the most iconic moments in Quebec’s art history. “Our duty is plain”, reads the text; “We refuse to be confined to the barracks of plastic arts—it’s a fortress, but easy enough to avoid. We refuse to keep silent. Do what you want with us, but you must hear us out.” A manifesto of mighty ambition, it represents a collaborative effort to forge a new direction for modern art and social change in the province, and it was signed by some of the most revered names in Quebec modernism, including Paul-Émile Borduas (1905–1960), Françoise Sullivan (b.1923), and Jean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002).

Interested in leading your students in a Manifesto-writing workshop of your own? You can do so by downloading our Paul-Émile Borduas-inspired [Teacher Resource Guide on Politics and Social Change](#).

Strength in Community

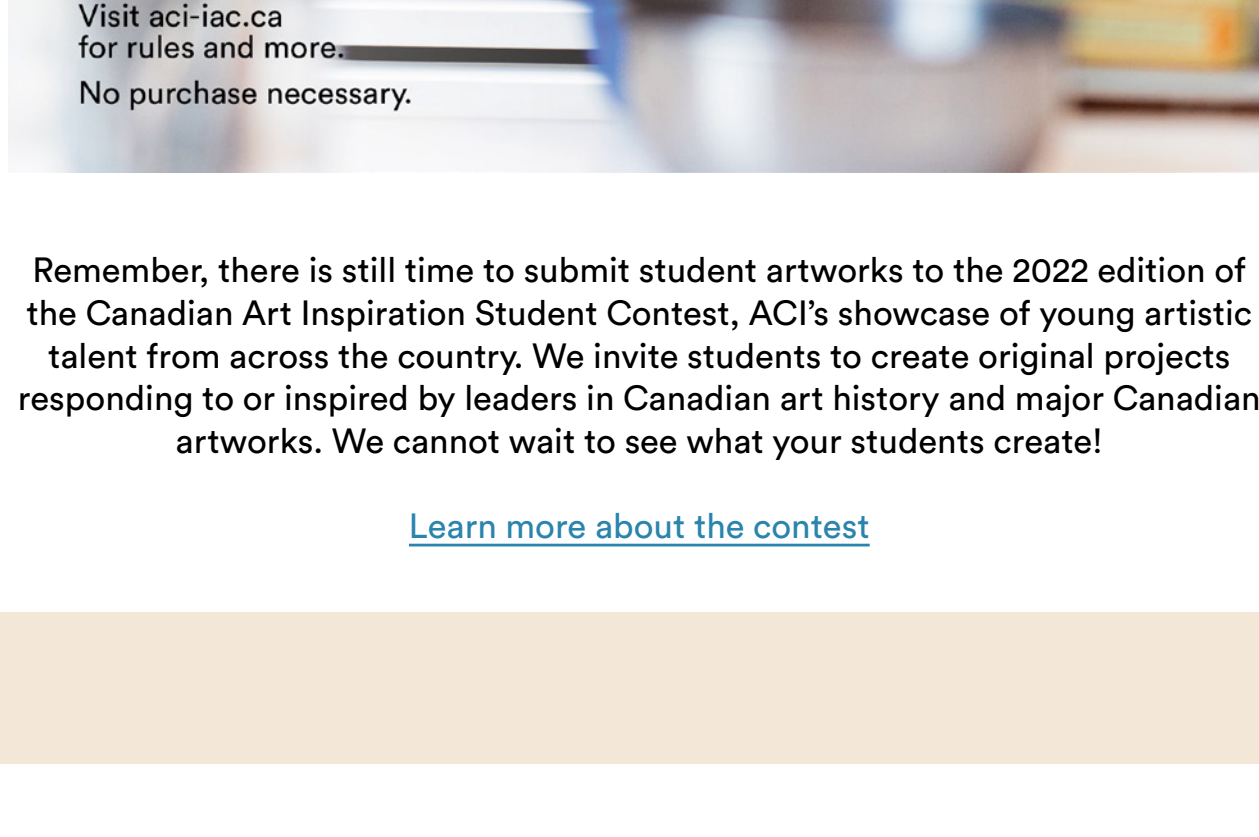


Jean Paul Lemieux, *Portrait of the Artist at Beauport-Est (Portrait de l'artiste à Beauport-Est)*, 1943

For Quebec painter Jean Paul Lemieux (1904–1990), the preservation of Québécois cultural heritage was at the heart of his work as an artist, an art critic, and a teacher. Lemieux’s famed canvases portray different aspects of Quebec’s landscape and local practices, as in this depiction of the artist and his wife Madeleine tending to their garden in Courville, with the vibrancy of the neighbourhood surrounding them. Our Teacher Resource Guide on Urban Environments encourages students to get to know their communities through a creative project inspired by Lemieux’s work.

[Download the Teacher Resource Guide](#)

STUDENT ART CONTEST

Submissions Closing Soon for
ACI’s Student Art Contest

Deadline:
March 31, 2022
Visit aci-iac.ca
for rules and more.
No purchase necessary.

Remember, there is still time to submit student artworks to the 2022 edition of the Canadian Art Inspiration Student Contest, ACI’s showcase of young artistic talent from across the country. We invite students to create original projects responding to or inspired by leaders in Canadian art history and major Canadian artworks. We cannot wait to see what your students create!

[Learn more about the contest](#)

As a bilingual organization, we are proud to offer our materials in both French and English, including this newsletter. Use the sign up links below to receive emails in your preferred language.

SIGN UP

S'INSCRIRE

If you enjoyed this newsletter, please share it.

SHARE

READ PAST NEWSLETTERS

About the
Art Canada Institute

Launched in 2013, the Art Canada Institute is the only national institution whose mandate is to promote the study of an inclusive multi-vocal Canadian art history to as broad an audience as possible, in both English and French, within Canada and internationally. The ACI works with more than fifty of Canada’s leading art historians, curators, and visual culture experts who are dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, places, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada’s most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada’s visual heritage.

Visit us at aci-iac.ca

Thank You to
Our Benefactors

We gratefully acknowledge the Founding Sponsors of
The Canadian Schools Art Education Program:
The Hal Jackman Foundation, The McLean Foundation,
and Power Corporation of Canada.

The ACI is a not-for-profit educational charity that receives no government financing or public support. Our work is made possible by an important circle of [friends, patrons, and benefactors](#).

If you would like to support our important work, please see [this page](#).

Follow us on social media

Facebook
[artcaninstituteeducation/](https://www.facebook.com/artcaninstituteeducation/)

Instagram
[@artcaninstitute_education](https://www.instagram.com/artcaninstitute_education)

Twitter
[@ArtCanInstEdu](https://twitter.com/ArtCanInstEdu)

Image Credits: [1] Stanley Février in collaboration with artists Nuria de Grammont, Marilou Craft, Claudia Bernal, Jannick Deslauriers, My-Yam Dam, Julie-Isabelle Laurin, “It’s Happening Now”, guerilla performance at the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal, 2019. Photo: Michaëlle Sergile & Mike Patten. [2] Rita Letendre, *April Time*, 1981, lithograph on paper, edition of 100, 67.3 x 48.2 cm. [3] Paul-Émile Borduas, *Refus global*, August 9, 1948. [4] Jean Paul Lemieux, *Portrait of the Artist at Beauport-Est (Portrait de l'artiste à Beauport-Est)*, 1943, oil on panel, 63.5 x 106.6 cm. Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Québec City, gift from the collection of Jean Paul Lemieux (1997/137). © Gestion A.S.L. Inc.