

## PERMANENT CLOSURE OF THE STEWART MUSEUM

**Montreal, February 16, 2021.** The McCord Stewart Museum announces the permanent closure of the Stewart Museum, located in the Fort on St. Helen's Island in Parc Jean-Drapeau. This decision, approved by the Museum's Board of Trustees, was made in an extremely difficult financial context with uncertain prospects ahead. There are several reasons for this move:

- A decrease in financial contributions from foundations that support the Museum;
- A steady increase in operating costs;
- The need to close the museums due to the pandemic, which has resulted in a 95 per cent reduction in self-generated revenues from ticket sales (visitors and school groups), space rentals and boutique;
- The difficulty of regaining a significant clientele since the Stewart Museum reopened in 2011. Due to its island location, the Museum has continued to face this problem despite all the efforts and resources invested in it since 2013.

"A particularly challenging financial context and uncertainty about the future led us to make this sad decision. We felt it would be preferable to accelerate the physical integration of the two museums, which was already planned and announced as part of our new museum project, and bring together their collections and programs in one location downtown at the McCord Museum," said Monique Jérôme-Forget, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the McCord Stewart Museum.

The Stewart Museum's collection has been integrated with those of the McCord Museum since the merger of the two museums in 2013. The collection will continue to be preserved and disseminated through virtual programming, exhibitions and a new digital platform that will be launched in the fall of 2021.

"Closing this museum is heartbreaking for us," said Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer. "But the soul of a museum is its collections, and fortunately, with the support of our teams, we'll be able to increase public and research access to this precious collection. We'll keep alive the legacy of David and Liliane Stewart, the founders of the Stewart Museum."

The closure of the Stewart Museum will take effect immediately, but the relocation of its collection will take place over the coming year, which will maintain jobs for several months. Every effort will be made to limit layoffs by reassigning some affected employees to the McCord Museum.

## **ABOUT THE McCORD STEWART MUSEUM**

The Stewart Museum is a private, non-profit history museum that was founded in 1955 by philanthropist David M. Stewart. It has a unique collection of close to 27,000 artefacts, archival documents and rare books related to the European history of North America, from the establishment of New France up to the present day. The Museum's chief mission is to preserve and showcase these artefacts that bear witness to the voyages of exploration, scientific advances, feats of arms, beliefs and daily lives of our ancestors. The Museum, located in Parc Jean-Drapeau, is housed in the arsenal of the fort on St. Helen's Island, a 19th-century military building that is listed in the Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec.

## **ABOUT THE McCORD MUSEUM**

The McCord Museum is the museum of all Montrealers, a social history museum that celebrates life in Montreal, both past and present—its history, its people, and its communities. Open to the city and the world, the Museum presents exciting exhibitions, educational programming and cultural activities that offer a contemporary perspective on history, engaging visitors from Montreal, Canada and beyond. It is home to over 1.5 million artefacts, comprising one of the largest historical collections in North America, organized into the following departments: Dress, Fashion and Textiles; Photography; Indigenous Cultures; Documentary Art; Material Culture; and Archives.

## **ABOUT THE McCORD STEWART MUSEUM**

Established in 2013 following the merger of the McCord Museum and the Stewart Museum, and enriched by their merger with the Fashion Museum when it closed in 2017, the McCord Stewart Museum is the administrative unit that manages and develops the two museums and their collections.

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Interview opportunities with Monique Jérôme-Forget, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the McCord Stewart Museum, and Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer

[Photo available](#)

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McCord Stewart Museum

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