

Sculpturing Minds at the Douglas : Mental health institution adds to its art repertoire

“The only time I feel alive is when I’m painting,” said Vincent van Gogh. This sentiment is one that the Douglas Hospital is hoping to convey by the addition of three new structures to its Sculpture Garden. These works of art, completed by artist-sculptor Maurice Lemieux, will be unveiled during an inauguration ceremony Wednesday, November 1, 2006 on the Douglas Hospital grounds, 6875 LaSalle boulevard in Verdun.

“We are fortunate to have Lemieux’s beautiful art displayed on our grounds, says Jacques Hendlisz, director general of the Douglas. “Edward Cohen, the founder of the Sculpture Garden, created a calm, relaxing place where the patients, our staff and the public can heal and reflect. Lemieux’s sculptures have added a depth that is unparalleled.”

Lemieux, 1931-1994, is a world-renowned artist from Quebec and his art is displayed worldwide, including around the city of Montréal. Most notably his sculpture Enterspace can be seen at the entrance of the Peel metro station. Musical Resonance, Oriental and Embrace, will be added to the Douglas gardens in celebration of its 125th anniversary

Walking onto the Douglas grounds, Ghislaine Lemieux, the artist’s widow, knew she had found a special place. “It was so serene and beautiful. We knew that we’d feel good about having the sculptures displayed here.”

The Douglas has taken an innovative approach to healing by creating a sculpture garden to help people suffering from mental illness. Edward Cohen, a retired nursing assistant, founded the garden in 2002. He wanted to create a haven of peace and comfort for patients. The garden, which is continually evolving, now displays 16 sculptures, donated by Quebec artists such as Glen LeMesurier, Claude Millette and Esther Wertheimer.