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## Night of Ideas: To Sleep or Not To Sleep – January 25th, 2018 (Toronto)



Bryen Dunn

In partnership with the Cultural Service of the French Embassy in Canada and Hart House, the Art Museum at the University of Toronto is thrilled to present **Night of Ideas: To Sleep or Not to Sleep** on Thursday, January 25, from 7 pm to 7 am. The Art Museum is one of the first Canadian institutions to take part in this French-initiated global, all-night event happening simultaneously in more than 50 cities. **Night of Ideas** will bring together international artists, writers, philosophers, historians, neuroscientists and other restless minds to tackle such wide-ranging subjects as the neuroscience of sleep, the meaning of downtime, the health impact of sleeplessness, the cultural importance of dreaming, and the architecture and politics of sleep.

*“The audience will be able to engage directly in conversation with these thinkers as part an intensive series of keynote lectures, workshops, performances, screenings and readings”,* explains Art Museum Executive Director Barbara Fischer, *“and spend the long winter night, sleepless or soothed by the sounds of a lullaby.”*

Scheduled in conjunction with the Art Museum’s exhibition **Figures of Sleep**, the gathering of award winning, internationally recognized, writers, researchers and performers among many others includes: world-renowned Spanish architectural historian and theorist **Beatriz Colomina**, who examines the bedroom as an architectural space turned modern day office and control room; French Geographer **Luc Gwiazdzinski** considers the ways in which city life is shaped by the 24-hour cycles of day and night; U.S. art historian **Tom McDonough** looks at the role of boredom in the visual arts in a 24/7 world; **Janine Riviere** explores the history of nightmares and their interpretation from medical explanations to political, religious, or supernatural associations; and UofT’s Director of the McLuhan Centre, **Sarah Sharma**’s fieldwork focuses on the differential impact of time on people’s working lives in a globalized economy, from taxi drivers to the jet-setting business class. Additional programming includes workshops for the sleep-deprived; a rare, archival screening of **Andy Warhol**’s 1963 film *Sleep*, and the broadcast of composer **Max Richter**’s phenomenal *Sleep*, an eight-hour lullaby for a frenetic world.

Launched in London and Berlin in 2012 and 2014, the **Night of Ideas** is a concept coined by the Institut Francais and the cultural services of the French Embassies. The 2017 edition was its first simultaneous edition, presented in places of culture and knowledge internationally, attracting more than 180,000 participants and 7 million followers. In 2018 the Canadian cities, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver will join this global initiative.

### **Night of Ideas To Sleep or Not to Sleep**

January 25, 2018, 7 pm to 7 am

Both sites of the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, 7 Hart House Circle, University of Toronto Art Centre, 15 King’s College Circle

[www.artmuseum.utoronto.ca/program/night-of-ideas](http://www.artmuseum.utoronto.ca/program/night-of-ideas), [www.lanuitdesidees.com](http://www.lanuitdesidees.com)

### **Figures of Sleep**

The exhibition, curated by Sarah Robayo Sheridan, will include visual art works such as: a large-scale, slide-dissolve installation by Swiss artists **Peter Fischli** and **David Weiss**, that immerses the viewer in a barrage of mind-wandering questions from a stress-induced sleeplessness; a series of portraits from *Les Dormeurs* by French artist **Sophie Calle**, who asked people to give her a glimpse of their sleep by sleeping in her bed for eight hours while being photographed; a haunting, miniaturized sculpture of an old woman curled up in her bed by Australian artist **Ron Mueck**; documentation from American artist **Chris Burden**’s 22-day long stay in bed, performed for the duration of his exhibition at the Market Street program in San Francisco in 1972; and *Burrow* by Canadian artist **Liz Magor**, a series of cast tree trunks that house sleeping bags, unsettling the association of urban homelessness and outdoor refuge. **Figures of Sleep** will feature Toronto artist **Jon Sasaki**’s remarkable endurance dance work *A Rest*. Performed by **James Phillips**, *A Rest* takes its cue from depression-era dance marathons in which two people sustained a pose by leaning on each other for physical support. When these poses are performed solo, the viewer sees the dancer strain in an unsustainable position without relief, ultimately causing collapse.

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## About the Author

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist with a focus on travel, lifestyle, entertainment and hospitality. He has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities. He enjoys discovering delicious eats, tasting spirited treats, and being mesmerized by musical beats.

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