

Memory & Reclamation



What is our responsibility to the future when it comes to the waste we leave behind? This tour explores Parc Frédéric-Back, a former dump and quarry. The park, named after the Québécois film animator and environmentalist, is a compelling example of a large-scale reclamation. From the bimethanation wells covered in spheres that dot the park, to the massive rock pit that once served as the quarry itself, each location in the park tells a story about the past, and about efforts to remedy the damage done.



INTRODUCTORY:
1 hour 6 km



Suggested Itinerary

- **A- MEMORIES**
Sphere 2327
- **B- GUARDIEN ANGELS**
Sphere 2269
- **C- ANAMNESE**
Center East
Near benches at highest site of the park
- **D- ACTIVISM**
Sphere 2139
- **E- HIDDEN COSTS**
Sphere 2111
- **F- GARBAGE JUICE**
Sphere 2133
- **G- QUARRY**
Northwest corner of the park
(Papineau & Charton avenue)
- **H- NATURAL WASTE**
Southwest corner of the park
Near the overpass
- **I- SORTING**
2240 Michel-Jurdant

MEMORIES



● SPHERE 2327

What does it mean to tell the history of a place from the ground up? Workers like Patrick Sorel have seen first-hand the transformation of this land over time. Patrick remind us of the layers of history and the variety of species that have made this place home.

GUARDIAN ANGELS



● SPHERE 2269

Patrick Sorel has been working on this site for 17 years. He monitors the hundreds of gas wells that are distributed through the park and are concealed by the futurist orbs. Measuring gas is a balancing act. Patrick has to ensure that the gas levels are high enough for energy production but not too high to be toxic for park visitors and other resident species.

ANAMNESE

● CENTER EAST: NEAR BENCHES
AT HIGHEST SITE OF THE PARK

This sculpture was made in 2017 by artist Alain-Martin Richard in collaboration with neighboring communities. The title Anamnese 1 plus 1 - “Against Forgetting” includes thirty companion stones found on the grounds nearby.

ACTIVISM

● SPHERE 2139

During the 1970's, the residents of the Saint-Michel area used letter writing campaigns to address the problems of dust, noise and stench. The residents applied so much pressure that the City of Montreal eventually reclaimed the site and began plans to build a park.

HIDDEN COSTS



● SPHERE 2111

The footprint of the Frederic-Back park is big, covering 172 hectares of land. At least 3 waste programs operate here: a sorting centre for recycling; an eco-centre for large household and construction waste; and natural compost - like leaves. But any building project can have its down side: the erasure of history, the gentrification that follows new green spaces.

GARBAGE JUICE



● SPHERE 2133T

This park is an experiment-in-progress, a state-of-the-art design lab and a test-case for environmental reclamation. Managing the leachate, or “garbage juice,” made by the 40 million tonnes of rotting landfill below is one of the biggest challenges.

QUARRY



● NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE PARK
(PAPINEAU & CHARTON AVE.)

This giant pit, once a limestone quarry, tells the story of 20th century industrial growth and its trail of waste. From the 1920s to 1968, the quarry was operated by the Miron brothers. Today, looking down into the pit, you might see trucks or signs of green waste disposal. As you contemplate the view, what catches your attention? Industry, or nature?

NATURAL WASTE



● SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE PARK
NEAR THE OVERPASS

How does the city manage “natural waste” like fallen leaves, branches or trees that have been cut down? Many of them end up here. Composting is a vital and relatively easy first step in managing food and natural waste and it’s one simple way to address greenhouse gas emissions.

SORTING



● 2240 MICHEL-JURDANT

Any time we put something in the garbage we make a decision. Many of the items we sort - and put into our recycling bins - end up here at this sorting centre, owned and managed by Groupe Tiru, an international waste recovery company. But then what happens? Where do recyclables end up? The challenge is to stop waste at the source - to create policies that hold the very producers of plastics and disposable products responsible for the waste they create.