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ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN



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SPRING ICE

EDM THOMSON, 1877-1917

*The National
Gallery of
Canada*

fig. 1 Mounted 4-colour lithograph of Tom Thomson's, **Spring Ice** (1916), c. 1930, image 16 x 22 cm, mount 38 x 33 cm. From first National Gallery series of reproductions of Canadian art, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada)

ESTABLISHING THE CANON

Nationhood, Identity and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Programme of Canadian Art

Introduction

In most of the writing which has dealt with the role that reproductions have played in the history of Canadian art, it has been assumed that the Sampson-Matthews Ltd. silkscreen project was largely responsible for shaping our notion of Canadian painting and establishing the Group of Seven and landscape painting as the *sine qua non* of Canadian art.¹ The silkscreen project was conceived by A.Y. Jackson and undertaken in co-operation with the National Gallery of Canada during the Second World War. Presented at a meeting of the Canadian Group of Painters, it was initially discussed as a project of the Group. However, given the scale and work involved in soliciting artists to contribute their work and finding corporate sponsors for that work, the administration was essentially left to Sampson-Matthews. The project received both the Department of National Defence's endorsement - the work was intended to raise the morale of Canadian troops - and that of the National Gallery of Canada. The Gallery's role was very carefully defined. It would provide some works in its collection for reproduction and would sponsor the adaptation of the works by living artists. The Gallery established a selection committee which, at least nominally, was responsible for approving submissions.²

In his work on the Group of Seven, Dennis Reid has drawn attention to the importance of reproductions of their work and especially the wartime silkscreen project: "A whole generation of Canadians who grew up following the Second World War learned of the Group almost entirely from reproductive silkscreen prints that seemed to hang in every school library, bank, and doctor's waiting room in the country."³ In her history of the National Gallery, Jean Sutherland Boggs also acknowledges the Sampson-Matthews project, remarking on the large quantities of reproductions distributed to the armed services and "others overseas and throughout Canada." She describes, as well, the Gallery's attempt to maintain a national presence during the Second World War through educational films on Canadian artists (with the National Film Board) and collaboration "on broadcasts on art to schools for which the Gallery printed and distributed over 120,000 small reproductions in 1944-45."⁴ Neither she nor Reid, however, discusses the origins of these projects or the fact that the first programme of reproductions to create a nation-wide consciousness of Canadian art was initiated by the Gallery in the 1920's. By 1940 it had placed hundreds

of thousands of images of Canadian art in classrooms, libraries and homes throughout the country and abroad.

This paper will examine the National Gallery's *original* Canadian reproduction programme and the largely unidentified cultural transactions in which surrogate images played a critical role in defining Canadian art. I will argue that the reproduction programme which was largely responsible for constructing our notion of Canadian art was conceived by the National Gallery almost two decades *earlier* than the Sampson-Matthews project. Complementing the thrust of the Gallery's programme of acquisitions, exhibitions, lectures and articles, it influenced the entire country's idea of what was Canadian about Canadian art.

To understand the importance of the first reproduction programme dedicated to Canadian art and the light it sheds on the Gallery's philosophy, I will look at a number of intertwined histories: the evolution of the programme; the selection of works that were reproduced; how those reproductions were marketed and an audience built; as well as the public response. Each represents an important element in the construction of a national Canadian art.

Early History of Reproductions at the NGC

On December 14, 1913, before the second board meeting of the new National Gallery, Director Eric Brown wrote to Edmund Walker, Chairman of his Board:

I am hoping to lay before the forthcoming meeting of the Trustees an idea regarding the sale of reproductions of the National Gallery pictures which I believe will materially advance the value and importance of the National Gallery throughout the continent

I believe there would be a ready sale in the book stores throughout Canada of both postcards and 5 x 7 reproductions in the Vandyck process and I suggest that with an expenditure of about \$1000 over a term of 18 months we can not only have on sale here all the reproductions we require but we can also have them on sale in every important city in the Dominion and lastly make considerably more than the original outlay from their sale.⁵

Walker wrote the next day from his Toronto office at the Canadian Bank of Commerce to encourage Brown in the enterprise.⁶ At the December 15th meeting, the Trustees approved the recommendation and the Director was instructed to obtain proofs.⁷ On May 5, 1914, the proofs were shown to the Board, prices were approved and Brown was instructed to have them on the market as soon as possible. In 1915, the Gallery obtained "several thousand photogravure reproductions of [its] pictures" from the British firm of Vandyck Printers Ltd.⁸ Twenty-four 5" x 7" plates were made; the first run was 1000 prints on 12" x 10" marked, medium cream stock. Another 5000 postcards of eighteen different subjects were printed. By September the prints were on sale individually and in portfolios of six.⁹ We have, at present, little evidence of the range of paintings from

the collection that were included in the 1914 reproduction programme but there does not appear to have been any particular focus on Canadian works. By September 1921, when the Gallery attempted to re-order, the company replied that they had discontinued printing on hand-presses and were devoting themselves entirely to the more rapid and very economical machine photogravure.¹⁰

The Gallery's commitment to the use of visual surrogates was not limited to making reproductions from its own collection. It also acquired the full set of 142 Medici Prints, representing masterpieces of European collections, which it advertised and circulated throughout the country for educational purposes. For libraries, galleries and schools which could not offer museum-standard security or display conditions, these prints provided an excellent way to familiarize Canadians with the masterpieces of European art.¹¹

It is however the second phase of the National Gallery of Canada's reproduction programme, begun in 1927, and its focus on Canadian art that is the principal subject of this paper. As early as 1929, Arthur Lismer, writing in the *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, remarked on the:

excellent reproductions in colour of well-known Canadian paintings, especially the Tom Thompson [*sic*] northern landscapes, which are available at a very low price to the public. These prints are to be seen nowadays on the walls of a great many public schools in Canada. The national gallery, or any gallery, can be a source of educational enlightenment to thousands, old and young, who never get a chance to enter its doors.¹²

Hansard records a 1930 discussion about the reproduction programme in the House of Commons, emphasizing the programme's enormous popularity with the general public and its effect in "making available to the people of Canada at very low cost, colour reproduction [*sic*] of Canadian pictures hitherto unattainable anywhere...."¹³

Describing the important role which the Gallery had played through its extension work, the 1951 Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences reported retrospectively:

In 1922 [*sic*] the present Director [Eric Brown], on tour in Western Canada, discovered the need for reproductions of Canadian pictures. A year or two later a series of reproductions in large and in postcard sizes was begun. These were sent out to the schools with lesson leaflets prepared by an expert in art education. This educational programme was carried further with the development of radio which made possible broadcasts from the Gallery over the national network. The National Gallery has also taken an active part in the production of films dealing with the work of Canadian artists.... The officials of the National Gallery consider that broadcasts and films on art undertaken at national expense are a legitimate and essential part of the Gallery's responsibilities.¹⁴

With the development of advanced techniques for mechanical reproduction, both the public and the private sector quickly recognized the opportunities that such images could provide.¹⁵ Elected President of the American Association of Art Museum Directors in 1924, Eric Brown would have been familiar with the colour reproduction programmes upon which his American colleagues were embarking and the educational thrust of those projects, as well as the growing business in reproductions of Canadian art which was centred in Toronto. In 1926, Rous and Mann advertised the *Portfolio of Canadian Art*, with a text by Brown and Fred Jacobs, as "prints suitable for framing" with special terms for boards of education and teachers. That collection, described by a contemporary reviewer as works by "dead painters - exquisitely done," included Krieghoff, Jacobi, Kane, Fowler, Brymner, Peel, Blair Bruce, Morrice and Thomson.¹⁶ There were as well, individual artists whose popularity had warranted the publication of reproductions. Colour lithographs of Cornelius Krieghoff's paintings were popular and Nelson's Ltd. had published a large-size series of Canadian historical paintings by C.W. Jefferys. Dennis Reid has discussed the interest in original prints among the Group of Seven in the 1910's and '20's, describing Lismer's war lithographs and Casson's silkscreen work. In 1925, Rous and Mann published a limited edition set of signed photolithographs of drawings by Group members. In 1931, A.Y. Jackson worked with William E. Couatts Company on a silkscreen Christmas card project, entitled *Painters of Canada*, of forty-six different cards by twenty-six artists.

In 1930, Brigden's in Toronto described itself as an "art reproduction house," and not as "merely colour engravers or printers." Toronto-based Claudius Gregory Fine Arts Prints combined distribution of reproductions from the National Gallery's collection with the marketing of original prints and signed limited-edition photolithographic reproductions of works by Canadian artists. The British Empire Art Company, which advertised black-and-white etchings, exclusive colour prints and original colour woodcuts principally by non-Canadian artists, also included the work of Winnipegger W.J. Phillips who had established a significant reputation in the United States.

The development of techniques for the production of relatively inexpensive high-quality colour lithographs of art works coincided with the National Gallery's recognition that outreach would have to play an even greater role in the fulfillment of its national mandate to support Canadian art. Thus its 1927 reproduction programme focused on Canadian art and targeted the school population as its principal market.

To contextualize the focus of the reproduction programme, the shape it would take and the role it would play within the larger framework of Gallery activities, it is important to understand the philosophy of the Gallery and its directors. As the Gallery had defined its purpose in its 1921-22 *Annual Report*, it

was first to build a "collection of the standards of all art, ancient and modern, by which contemporary standards might be judged and sound artistic education obtained." Secondly, to fulfill its civic responsibility, it would "do everything possible for the art of its own country, by purchasing it, exhibiting it, and bringing its importance as a national asset and an influence for good before the people generally, and by creating and cultivating in them correct artistic taste."¹⁷ The directors saw their task as establishing the country's patrimony by determining what was significant production in Canadian art and bestowing value upon it through acquisition and recognition. Nurturing and promoting that art, the Gallery could educate and elevate Canadians through Ottawa-based exhibitions and a national programme of loan exhibitions, lecture tours, prepared slide-lectures, and the dissemination of reproductions of works in its collection. The 1927 reproduction extension programme was constructed in such a way that, as well as providing information and education about the history of western art, it would validate Canadian art by locating it in its rightful context within that history.

Nationalism and identity would be related determining factors in shaping the Gallery's Canadian reproduction programme. Describing art as "closely interwoven with the history of nations and the geography of countries" and noting that "the story of its growth is the story of all that is intellectual and moral," the Gallery saw nation-building and the establishment of a common heritage for Canadians as key responsibilities.¹⁸ As its 1925-26 *Annual Report* observed, "Canadian art is passing through a period of self-establishment as a national factor Nationalism in art is the result of climate, geography, religion and national character superimposed, however unconsciously, on the individual's desire to paint or to express himself in any one of the art's forms."¹⁹

National unity, the promotion of a common understanding of Canadian life, along with the expression of "national feeling" and vigorous Canadianism would be the motivating factors in the establishment of each new national institution in this period. The visual arts, and more specifically painting, like radio and, later, film, were believed to have the capacity to mold public taste, to create proper moral values and identify the basic truths required to establish a sense of nationhood. Classrooms across Canada offered an ideal means of reaching the new generation of Canadians, including those in remote areas. As Arthur Lismer stated, "Prints of Canadian pictures, wisely used, will go far in establishing a knowledge and love for the work of our own artists and our own country the art of our own country is no less important a medium of study, if our children are to be made conscious of the beauty and character of Canada."²⁰ In a 1931 letter of support for the classroom use of reproductions of Canadian art, Lawrence A.C. Panton, President of the Ontario Society of Artists and Head of the Art Department at Toronto's Western Technical School, wrote:

There is every reason why school children should know of the great achieve-

ments in art of the world in the past; but it will be readily acknowledged that Canadian school children should know of the art and artists of their own country, and of their own time, that their patriotic interest and sympathy may support Canadian art effort, and that they may develop a love for, and understanding of the beauties of their own country, as expressed in Canadian Art.²¹

The Canadian artists series

As the Gallery's promotional material described it: "The National Gallery has prepared a series of colour reproductions of pictures, chiefly by Canadian artists, in the National Gallery collection. The series is designed primarily to furnish a basis for the teaching of art appreciation in Canadian public and high schools."²² Canadian art reproductions would be marketed to schools along with examples from the Gallery's collection of "British and Foreign Artists." The non-Canadian works originally selected included Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Jeffrey, Lord Amberst*, George Romney's *Joseph Brant* and Arnesby Brown's *In Suffolk*. Spencer Watson's *Mary and Guido* and Bernardino Luini's *Infant Jesus and St. John with a Lamb* were added later, as was George Henry's *The Connoisseur*.²³ However, the key element in the process was the Gallery's selection of Canadian art for a reproduction programme which, through images and accompanying study guides prepared by Arthur Lismer, would integrate National Gallery prints into curricula across the country and significantly shape several generations' understanding of Canadian art. In contrast to the European works, the Canadian works selected focused primarily on the landscape and appear to have been chosen to reinforce the idea of artistic progress culminating in the new "national school" of Canadian painting represented by the work of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven.

Although there is little hard evidence about the process of selecting works for reproduction it seems clear that Eric Brown was the guiding force. He used it to reinforce his effort to position Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, as he had done at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.²⁴ According to Brown, authentic Canadian painting began with Thomson and the Group:

There is no doubt that the most significant thing about Canadian art today is its group of younger landscape painters From a centre which may be said to be in a certain studio building in Toronto ... these apostles of the decorative landscape have gone forth into the wilds of Canadian nature and have found a veritable wonderland which holds them enthralled.²⁵

In a 1927 article titled "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," Brown concluded that the nineteenth-century origins of Canadian painting were essentially derivative and second-rate.²⁶ Although the Gallery was collecting broadly in the field of Canadian art, Brown's faith in the redemptive power of art, his commitment to art education as a tool for instilling national pride and his belief in the ability of the work of Thomson and the Group to achieve these aims, would shape the

Canadian artists series much more narrowly. For the school reproduction programme, the works appear to have been selected primarily for their ability to create the requisite sense of identity and to serve as icons for a still young nation.²⁷

A similar project, the Picture Study set, illustrating the development of Canadian art, was initiated by the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1930. The companion study guide was, like those of the NGC, written by Arthur Lismer, who had served as the AGT's Education Director since 1924. But the AGT's selection of work for reproduction was very different, presenting a much broader survey of nineteenth and twentieth-century Canadian painting than the National Gallery series. Series I included works by Krieghoff, O'Brien, Walker, Reid, Cullen, Williamson, Beatty, Thomson, Jackson and Gagnon. Series II included work by Fraser, Peel, Watson, Robert Holmes, Herbert Palmer, Jefferys, Robinson, Gagen, Lawren Harris and J.E.H. MacDonald. (A 1930 note to the file offers a sense of the volume of business; in the Picture Study set, there were 20,000 copies of each of the Canadian prints in stock.)

In December 1927, the National Gallery trustees authorized a special expenditure of \$2500 "to provide colour reproductions of National Gallery pictures," considered "a departure of far reaching importance."²⁸ The justifications for this new phase in the reproduction programme were clear - educational value; access to Canadian works of art in a country whose population was geographically dispersed; prestige for the Gallery; and revenue generation.²⁹ The Canadian prints were issued in two sizes, 8" x 10" and 4 1/2" x 3 1/2".³⁰ The smaller post-card size prints could be obtained on thin paper suitable for mounting in scrap-books. Bulk orders and educational clients were given special rates. It was intended that individual teachers could obtain a large print of a subject for teaching and display purposes while the rates for the smaller prints were such that every school child could begin a personal "collection of Canadian art." Each of the works was accompanied by an "Outline for Picture Study," prepared for the Gallery by Arthur Lismer (except in the case of Lismer's *September Gale* for which Lawren Harris wrote the introductory notes). Essential to the project, the study guides articulated the series' "aim to present an idea of Canadian Art and Artists." Each guide included a page of biographical information on the artist, a page of notes on the companion reproduction, and a page of lesson plans for the specific work with instructions for teaching both public school pupils and high school students. While strategies for formal analysis represented a significant part of the text, the emphasis throughout was on the Canadian experience and Lismer regularly suggested the reproductions could be employed in teaching other subjects and the "discussion of things Canadian." While the objective was to use the National Gallery's collection as the basis for teaching art in Canadian schools, the general public was also a target market for "low cost, colour reproductions of Canadian pictures hitherto unavailable anywhere."

It would take several years before the full Canadian set was complete, although the Gallery began to sell prints as they became available. By September 1928, four subjects were ready; two months later, more than 5,000 copies each were available for Krieghoff's *Winter Landscape*; Clarence Gagnon's *Village in the Laurentians*; and two works by Tom Thomson, *The Jack Pine* and *Northern River*; as well as Romney's *Joseph Brant*.³¹ (By February 15, 1929, there is already reference to a second printing of *Northern River*.) The Brant image is the only one listed which is not by a Canadian and it seems to have been included for its representation of Native Canadian subject matter. No works by Native artists and no images of Native people by Canadian artists were included in the series. While Brown had praised the art of West Coast Native artists in "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," he considered only painting for the reproduction series. Although Paul Kane was a logical choice for the series and must have been considered, Brown tended to stress the ethnological significance of his work.³² By September 24th, Horatio Walker's *Oxen Drinking*, Homer Watson's *Flood Gate*, and J.E.H. MacDonald's *Solemn Land* were also available. The immediate and "most enthusiastic response" led to the announcement that the study series would be extended.³³ On April 26, 1930, Franklin Brownell's *Beach, St. Kitt's* was ready and the 1929-30 *Annual Report* announced that the series also included Tom Thomson's *Spring Ice* (fig. 1).³⁴ Lismer's *September Gale, Georgian Bay* was available before 1932.³⁵

Thus the original series of ten Canadian pictures from the National Gallery included only two nineteenth-century works: Krieghoff's 1849 Québec habitant winter scene and Horatio Walker's 1899 *Oxen Drinking*. From the twentieth century, there were Homer Watson's Doon landscape, *The Flood Gate* (1900-01), Clarence Gagnon's rural Québec scene, *Laurentian Village* (c.1924); and Franklin Brownell's *Beach St. Kitt's* (1913) which may have been chosen for its representation of a somewhat exotic locale. Brownell had been the subject of a National Gallery retrospective exhibition in 1922. Lismer's study guide describes him as a popular Ottawa painter, neither conservative nor "daringly modern" and notes (establishing the American-born artist's Canadian credentials) that the "picture is not a Canadian subject although it is by a Canadian painter, one who has painted nearly all his life in Canada." The representation of modern Canadian expression in the series was left to Thomson, remarkably represented by three works, J.E.H. MacDonald and Arthur Lismer. During the 1930's, the series would be augmented to include Varley's *Stormy Weather, Georgian Bay*, Jackson's *Algoma Lake*, and Thomson's *The Artist's Hut*, as well as J.W. Morrice's *The Ferry* and *The Beach, Dieppe*.³⁶ Although Brown had high praise for Lawren Harris and singled out the importance of artists such as William Brymner and Maurice Cullen, as well as the Beaver Hall Group, none of them was included in the series, although some of their work was reproduced as postcards.³⁷

The decision to focus upon Thomson was clearly a calculated one, likely

based on Thomson's already legendary stature as an artist and a folk hero as well as on the popularity of his work. In Ottawa, his *The Jack Pine* was a feature attraction, as was *The West Wind* in Toronto.³⁸ Memorial exhibitions of his work had begun the year of his death. The Group's hagiographer, Frederick Houser, drew an analogy to the Native Canadian experience to establish Thomson's spiritual attachment to the landscape: "He knew the woods as the red indian knew them before him.... Never before had such knowledge and the feeling for such things been given in paint.... His master was Nature."³⁹ Blodwen Davies described Thomson as a hero, a North American genius and her 1930 *Paddle and Palette*, published by Ryerson Press, was cited as a reference in Lismer's study guide for *Spring Ice*.⁴⁰ The Gallery had promoted Thomson's posthumous international recognition, documenting favourable reviews from abroad in its annual reports, and quoting from the London *Times* (1924) which called *The Jack Pine* "the most striking work at Wembley";⁴¹ and from *Le Figaro* (1927): "Thomson never fumbles ... his painting is strong and without subterfuge, the painting of a man immensely concerned with the nature he depicts."⁴² Brown himself wrote of Thomson's genius and his international reputation, at the same time establishing his unsung hero-at-home-in-nature credentials: "He is one of the pioneers of the new movement and a very great artist, unable to earn a living from his art (such is the popular encouragement of genius) ... he found his artistic home in the northern Ontario wilderness."⁴³ For Brown, Thomson and the Group of Seven had ushered in Canada's epic period in which the heroism and vitality of its artists would contribute as much to the construction of a national spirit as the labours of its explorers, politicians and giants of industry.⁴⁴

In the case of Thomson, Brown offered confirmation of the artist's work as the product of genius - an essential component, as Carol Duncan has pointed out, in establishing the museum as the repository of the spiritual wealth of the new nation.⁴⁵ Adopting the conventions of the romantic myth, Brown's account centred on the notion of linear progress, the rejected avant-garde fighting for recognition, and the masculine artist/hero mystically at one with the land. Although he acknowledged in his 1927 article that their work might not be considered unique elsewhere, Brown described the Group of Seven as "the most expert and most original landscape artists in the country" who "sustained attacks on them and still do today." He assured his readers: "We are not exaggerating....The ideal vision of young Canadian painters is expressed through a school which has no direct roots anywhere else and which, at least up to a certain point, is indigenous and spontaneous."⁴⁶

The selection of work for the Canadian series was as remarkable for what it excluded as for what it included. Although the Gallery was collecting nationally and the reproductions were intended for a national audience, all of the works selected to represent Canadian art were by Ontario or Québec artists. Despite the

fact that the Gallery had acquired L. LeMoine FitzGerald's *Williamson's Garage* in 1929 and FitzGerald had exhibited with the Group, no prairie artist or image was included. Nor did the series include artists or subject matter from either the east or west coast, although Varley was already living in British Columbia and members of the Group had regularly travelled to the Rockies since 1924. While Brown had been supportive of Emily Carr's work on his 1927 visit west, subsequently exhibiting it and in 1929 purchasing three of her watercolours, she was not represented in the series.⁴⁷

No urban scenes were included, although forty years earlier *Picturesque Canada* had employed a very different visual rhetoric, portraying an industrialized Canada representing a "catalogue of the resources, visual and material, in which the middle-class of Victorian Canada could take pride."⁴⁸ With the notion of progress inherent in the linear construction of the series, its fulfillment lay in the landscape and the wilderness aesthetic which had captured the North American imagination.⁴⁹ The northern scenes, empty of people, emphasized the grandeur of the landscape and, metaphorically, the Canadian spirit. None portrayed the intrusion of industry into no longer pristine forests (a major source of Canada's growing prosperity), despite the fact that Harris' *The Drive* had been the first of the Group's work to be acquired by the Gallery. Lismer later recounted:

We felt at that time that our job was to make people see what the land looked like and to make them understand that it was not just a place to be exploited industrially. Men like Thomson, Jackson and Harris, going up to the North Country, were trail blazers in a new sense. The Group had felt the need to get away from the cities. Their great contribution was that they had seen and shown a pattern in Canadian landscape.⁵⁰

The rural scenes by Gagnon, Watson and Walker reflected an alternative mythology. They portrayed Canadians at home in their environment, at one with the land in their labour and reaping its fruits. With twentieth-century industrialization, North American urbanization and the subsequent urban degeneration, the pastoral ideal had become an almost utopian vision. It was also a geographically narrow vision of the country; except for Brownell's Caribbean scene, only Québec and Ontario sites were represented. Images of Québec appear to have been selected to convey an idyllic rustic image of French *habitant* life to English Canadians. Lismer described Krieghoff as painting "happy and sympathetic creations of a genial and socially amiable disposition. His keen observation of peasant character enables him to interpret the habitant in his native setting with singular expressiveness and quaint humour."⁵¹ In his description of *Winter Landscape*, Lismer used the word "little" six times in a single long paragraph, creating a storybook mood in describing *habitant* life. Gagnon is cited as a painter who knows and "feel[s] his native environment ... [whose] subjects are interpretations of the life of the French Canadian [and whose work] helps to draw together the differ-

ent racial types in mutual understanding.”

Heightening the contrast between the urban wilderness and the solid values of rural life, Lismer described Horatio Walker as: “above all a great Canadian artist by birth, the character of his work, and by the fact that ... the Canadian scene forms the essence of the subjects of his brush ..., [he] paints the habitant farmer [who] still makes and uses primitive tools in his husbandry and his women folk employ them in domestic affairs.”⁵² His subject matter is “primitive,” a bygone age of “rustic simplicity, quaint and interesting” in the eyes of “[c]ity dwellers who move about in automobiles and street cars, do their shopping and telephone and receive their entertainment from the air.” This simple and honest nature of farm life, along with Homer Watson’s “Canadianness,” are the dominant themes in Lismer’s account of *The Flood Gate*. Despite international honours, “he remains the Canadian artist - interpreter of rural Ontario. Founder of no style of painting, his studio is in the field and groves of trees - his life devoted to simple expression of the beauty of the environment.” Although industrial communities and wealthy towns have grown up, his work portrays the “old spirit of frugal simplicity and good craftsmanship so typical of early Ontario settlers.”⁵³

Lismer’s narrative contrasts the traditional approach of Québec artists and their portrayal of the pastoral ideal with the powerful quest for identity in modern English-Canadian art, where the moral order of nature and the mythic notion of the heroic wilderness shaped the new Canadian icon.⁵⁴ Little matter that the site of the wilderness was often, in reality, cottage country to the Toronto (and American) elite or had been designated national parkland decades earlier. The American transcendentalist vision of the land as the spiritual site of nationhood would equally serve Canada’s twentieth-century search for national symbols. There is no doubt that these were conscious choices. That the goal was to construct a coherent history and an autonomous identity through the aesthetic construct of the landscape is clear from the selection of work and Lismer’s companion study guides. Thomson and the Group of Seven were presented as the culmination of that tradition and the texts are permeated by the notion of Thomson, “the first Canadian painter to capture the real spirit of the north country.”⁵⁵

In 1933, the Québec government expressed enthusiasm for the reproductions and agreed to purchase 2000 sets of eight images. The series was adjusted to accommodate Québec’s interests. The province’s selection of work revealed a preference for narrative imagery and rural scenes; but there was no shift towards a stronger Québec orientation in the choice of artists or images. The set eliminated the work of Brownell, Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Thomson’s *Spring Ice*, but retained the Krieghoff, Watson, Walker, Gagnon, and the other two Thomson reproductions. It also included William Cruikshank’s image of pioneer farm labour, *Breaking A Road*. It is difficult to explain the addition of *The Connoisseur* by the Glasgow School artist George Henry in a series ostensibly devoted to

Canadian art.⁵⁶ Lismer's study guide compares Henry to Whistler, noting the Japanese influence on his work and stating that "The subject is not important." Although Suzor-Coté and Cullen were represented in the general edition of post-card reproductions and two works by Morrice were later added to the Canadian series, their work was not included in the francophone edition of the series.

Marketing the Canadian Reproductions

Marketing was a critical aspect of the Gallery's strategy for the popularization and dissemination of the prints to achieve the goal of broad national participation. Advertisements were placed in educational journals and strategic contacts made. *The School* regularly carried advertisements promoting the National Gallery's Canadian series and Lismer's study guides, offering discount rates for teachers and for bulk orders.⁵⁷ Private-sector agents were contracted to sell the Canadian reproductions across the country.⁵⁸ These included Mortimer Company, which actually produced the prints, as well as distribution agents such as J.M. Dent and Claudius Gregory Fine Arts Prints (later known as The Canadian Fine Art Guild). All worked in the school and the retail markets.⁵⁹ The British Empire Art Company also distributed the Gallery's reproductions and lobbied for the right to reproduce Thomson's *The Jack Pine* in a much larger format.⁶⁰

The marketing strategy for school audiences included contacting teachers and teachers' associations, principals and superintendents, school boards and provincial ministries of education, and the direct lobbying of politicians, in addition to an advertising campaign geared particularly to educational publications and magazines such as *The Canadian Forum*.⁶¹ In 1931 James MacKenzie of Claudius Gregory Fine Arts Prints solicited Arthur Lismer's assistance in promoting the prints. Lismer (without declaring his interest in the project) offered his endorsement for the public record: "I think your scheme for introducing Canadian paintings into the schools and homes of Canada is an excellent one. As school decorations they are admirable - as examples of Canadian Art they are good in colour and well-selected - making them of great value in the study of Art appreciation."⁶² The Gallery provided glowing support for the reproduction programme's importance for MacKenzie's fall 1931 campaign to capture Ontario's education market. This included meetings with Ontario's Director of Education, the Toronto Board of Education's Management Committee and the head of art at the College of Education.⁶³

In November, 1931, J.M. Dent & Son, publishers of *Everyman's Library* and *The Canadian Forum*, wrote, "As I expected, the portfolio is taking the schools by storm when shown to them personally - the teachers are so interested in the pictures, they don't take time to look at our books. Our trade travelers are convinced they can sell the portfolios complete to dealers in goodly quantities."⁶⁴ A month later he wrote, "We are piling up lists of requests for pictures large and small....

In January, there will be 4 of us on the 'warpath' in the field and we want to get the pictures well established so that we can make a real 'killing' with the 1932-33 school year."⁶⁵ Competing for the line, MacKenzie, of The Canadian Fine Art Guild, wrote to the Gallery, "We have many interested customers for your prints.... I am going to advertise in school magazines.... I hope that much may be done through stores. I take it I shall have the agency for the Province at least."⁶⁶ In February 1932 he wrote to H.O. McCurry, "I have arranged a good many shows in smaller school towns and these sell well.... It is rare that I do not get an order for at least some of the sets."⁶⁷ A list of accounts receivable, documented at the time of the firm's bankruptcy in 1933, indicates sales to schools and businesses throughout Ontario, Québec, Alberta and Nova Scotia, and to galleries in Detroit and Buffalo.⁶⁸

Promotional efforts by the Gallery's agents were augmented by the Gallery's own work. Throughout his tenure as Director, Eric Brown conducted an advocacy campaign of lecture tours and travelling exhibitions to promote Canadian art, the Gallery and the reproduction programme. Lismer also publicized the reproduction programme widely; his praise of the National Gallery's initiative in the 1928-29 *Yearbook of the Arts* was the first official acknowledgment of the project on a national basis. In the spring of 1932, Lismer gave three lectures in Vancouver and Jock Macdonald, teaching at the newly-founded B.C. College of Art, wrote to the Gallery praising the talks and requesting some of the "new National Gallery colour prints."⁶⁹

Despite the Depression, sales of the reproductions were brisk. At the May 1932 meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Assistant Director reported on the Mortimer Company's proposal to purchase 60,000 prints as payment for the current Gallery debt for plates and prints owing from the 1931-32 budget year.⁷⁰ This allowed the Gallery to continue the development of its reproduction programme without significant cash expenditures in a year when its Parliamentary appropriation had been reduced because of the Depression. The same meeting also approved J.M. Dent's offer to purchase about 50,000 prints at 10 cents each for school purposes.⁷¹

Requests for the reproductions were continuous from both rural and urban centres in all parts of the country and would continue throughout the 1930's into the 1940's. That there was a hunger for such material was clear. In March 1935, the *Prairie Farmer* ran an article in the form of a letter, titled "New Scenes Charm" and signed "Color Kate." Discussing her selection of National Gallery colour prints for 1934 Christmas gifts, she remarked, "We certainly needed some change from calendars and the two framed pictures of 'The Gleaners' and 'The Angelus' which we're tired to death of looking at, especially as they were all in brown....[It is] so nice for the children to live with these pictures of other parts of Canada. Of course this new way of painting things with a sweep seemed odd to me just at

first, but now I like them better than the old kind...." Her article brought requests for prints from individual readers in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta, as well as British Columbia.⁷²

Framing the Curriculum: Working the Provinces

The Gallery did not rest on the success of its agents. To enhance distribution and to lobby for the inclusion of its prints in their curricula, the Gallery contacted provincial governments directly. There is correspondence on file with Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Québec, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, encouraging them to adopt a curriculum that would include the series of Canadian reproductions.⁷³ To gain political support for the project from the ministries in Québec and Ontario, J.M. Irving, a senior manager at Mortimers, arranged to provide members of the legislatures with sets of reproductions from the Gallery.⁷⁴

Looking for support from Alberta, McCurry wrote to the Minister of Education in the fall of 1931, "Our school reproductions have been wonderfully received everywhere by Departments of Education. In Regina the Commissioner of Education decided to circularize all the schools of the province with information about them.... I offered as our share to send out a sufficient quantity of the small prints to include a sample with each circular."⁷⁵ In response, the School Book Branch of the Department of Education in Edmonton included a full-page circular about the programme in its communication with teachers. In May the Book Branch wrote to McCurry, "We have given considerable space in the new catalogue to these pictures [and] considerable advertising has been done ... particularly in Calgary at the last Teachers' Convention."⁷⁶ Alberta's response was excellent but it came in the form of irregular monthly orders. In an attempt to encourage greater volume, McCurry wrote to the head of the School Book Branch, "The reception to the National Gallery's reproductions by your Department and in Alberta generally has been so encouraging that I am anxious to give you the best terms possible." His letter encouraged the Branch to order in bulk and made provisions for the return of works that did not sell.⁷⁷

In January 1934, McCurry was negotiating directly with the Ontario Department of Education to supply every public school with a set of Canadian reproductions along with the study guides. Information about the series was sent to school inspectors in both the public and private schools. To garner political support for the project, a lobbying strategy was designed and a meeting arranged with the Premier of Ontario.⁷⁸ In his letter to the Premier, McCurry noted that distribution plans were already in place in Alberta and Québec was considering a similar proposal. The reproductions, he added, "have received world wide approbation and are being adopted by the Board of Education of the City of New York."⁷⁹

As noted earlier, the Québec government purchased 2000 sets of eight sub-

jects, in a series designed for the Québec market, in the spring of 1934.⁸⁰ In 1934, Prince Edward Island's Premier and Minister of Education agreed to order a small number of sets for the larger schools and to have some on hand for interested teachers, although he was not prepared to distribute them to every school: "If teachers have no appreciation for them, it would do more harm than good."⁸¹ In 1938, Manitoba's Minister of Education wrote to the National Gallery requesting reproductions and assistance for an experimental programme in art education being developed in partnership with the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Arts at the University of Manitoba, indicating "a large number" of the prints were being used.⁸²

It is striking that of all the provinces contacted, only Saskatchewan responded with a request for reproductions of works by local artists. In 1933 John Huff, Deputy Minister of Education, asked the National Gallery to "reproduce *The Ferry Trail* by Gus [Augustus] Kenderdine, a typical Saskatchewan scene, painted by a Saskatchewan artist" and a work which the Gallery had just purchased. But the Gallery begged off for financial reasons, saying that it was not making any new plates at that time.⁸³ In 1941, the Chair of the province's Art Revision Committee examined the Saskatchewan course of studies and indicated particular interest in artists from her province. She requested that the Gallery reproduce James Henderson's *The End of Winter* which was being incorporated into the Grade VI curriculum. In this case, the Gallery acquiesced and the Henderson painting was reproduced in postcard size.⁸⁴

In February 1934, the Gallery Board approved a new strategy for popularizing the prints and making them more accessible to the general public. At their 55th meeting, the Trustees agreed that complementary sets of the reproductions of Canadian art should be presented to important public libraries in the province of Ontario.⁸⁵ This programme, begun in March 1934, met with enormous success. It appears that every public library approached responded positively. As a condition of the gift, the libraries were required to frame and hang all of the reproductions in their public rooms, publicizing the fact that the prints had been presented by the National Gallery of Canada. Recipients were required to confirm that the conditions had been met. Correspondence from libraries such as those in Niagara Falls, Sault Ste. Marie and Chatham, often included newspaper articles reporting on the installation, indicating the enthusiasm with which the initiative was greeted. A resident of Amherstburg wrote to the Gallery requesting information about the programme for his local library which, despite being "a lovely modern Carnegie Library ... lacks the culture which pictures on the wall give like the watercolours I saw at the Owen Sound Library and Huron Institute at Collingwood."⁸⁶ In 1936, Amherstburg's library was added to the list of recipients of the reproductions. In a speech that same year, Eric Brown reported:

Quite a large business is ... growing up in the sale of both large and small

coloured reproductions of National Gallery pictures, both to the public schools and commercially. They are made available to the schools and sent out complete with lesson plans which can be used in class and I am glad to say that the use of them is spreading rapidly and cannot fail to bring to the children a better knowledge of the work of Canadian artists and the program of the arts in Canada.... The greatest need in Canada for the growth of the arts is active public awareness... [and] the National Gallery is the radiating centre for art knowledge.⁸⁷

The Gallery's reproductions of Canadian art also found an audience much further afield, thanks to such advocates as Canada's Acting Trade Commissioner, M.T. Stewart, who presented the Western Australia Department of Education with a set of the Canadian artists series. The spring 1935 edition of the *Education Circular for Western Australia* carried an article extolling the importance of the arts in education and listing the works in the series with the following comments:

The Canadian pictures referred to above are accompanied by instructive pamphlets which give not only a brief account of the artist concerned but contain in addition material highly suggestive as a basis for discussion of the pictures in question. Some of the pictures tell a story and would thus prove useful to our middle groups and especially to children whose course in geography includes Canada. The most striking...are mainly decorative. Prominent amongst the latter are those by Tom Thomson and "September Gale" by Arthur Lismer. In these, one immediately realizes that the artist has ably fulfilled his purpose of conveying to others his own impressions of the beauty and order in Nature; and through his eyes we are made aware of the beautiful forms and colours which may easily be, and very commonly are, passed unnoticed.

One teacher wrote that through these works which had been framed and shown throughout his school, his students had come to truly understand the Canadian experience.⁸⁸

Extended Impact: The Domination of the Images

The broad dissemination of these reproductions as quintessential images of Canadian art was reinforced by contemporary journal articles and books examining the arts in Canada. These publications, as often as not, selected the same works to illustrate their themes. It was natural for an author to look first to a country's national art collection for examples of the best that country had produced. The fact that plates and progressive proofs might be obtained free of charge from the Gallery, saving time and expenditures certainly contributed to the frequency with which works in the National Gallery's Canadian series were chosen to illustrate texts on Canadian art. The Gallery's working relationship with Albert Robson, author of *Canadian Landscape Painters* (1932) and a number of monographs on

Canadian artists published by Ryerson Press during the 1930's, offers a case in point. Robson was Director of Rous and Mann in Toronto and thus had the capacity to print colour reproductions, but Ryerson's inventory of plates for reproductions in the texts was, in large part, built up through the generosity of public galleries.⁸⁹ (The fact that Robson was also Vice-President of the Art Gallery of Toronto during this period was helpful to his project.) *Canadian Landscape Painters* reproduced all of the works in the NGC's Canadian series and a large number of the works from the AGT's study collection. To encourage the National Gallery to lend Rous and Mann the plates, Robson stressed the benefits that it would derive by having works from its collection reproduced in these texts.⁹⁰ The case of Donald Buchanan's article "The Story of Canadian Art" for the *Canadian Geographical Journal* is also typical. His article is broadly comprehensive, stylistically and geographically, in terms of the artists included. However, nineteen of the thirty reproductions were from the National Gallery's collection and seven were from the Canadian artists series.⁹¹

Sales of the Canadian reproductions remained steady throughout the decade. In March 1938, the Gallery re-ordered 5000 each of five images and 10,330 of Thomson's *Spring Ice*.⁹² The demand for Romney's *Joseph Brant*, which was reprinted in October of that year, also remained constant. In October, the Gallery ordered 5060 large and 35,568 small prints of J.W. Morrice's *The Beach, Dieppe* which had originally been reproduced in 1936.⁹³ Correspondence from the early forties indicates that prints like Thomson's *Spring Ice* sold quickly, "though we have taken no trouble to push it."⁹⁴ In 1941, McCurry wrote requesting new editions of 5000 each of the large prints of *The Jack Pine*, *September Gale* and *Oxen Drinking*, adding "We need them quickly as, in many cases the stock is exhausted and departments of education want the prints."⁹⁵ Although the Sampson-Matthews silkscreen project, developed during the war years, would significantly enhance the number and quality of the images of Canadian art available to the public, the Gallery continued to rely on lithographic reproductions for its education programmes. They could easily be produced in large quantities and were extremely inexpensive. Moreover, they could be reproduced in various sizes according to use and cost.

Young Canada Listens

In the early forties, the original programme of Canadian reproductions for schools became the basis for a joint venture which the Gallery embarked upon with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.⁹⁶ The idea stemmed from discussions between the CBC and H.O. McCurry, regarding the importance of capturing the school audience through broadcasts on art appreciation.⁹⁷ Called *Young Canada Listens* in its first incarnation, the three annual series of broadcasts on Canadian art were aired from 1945 through 1947. The intention was to base the series on the small reproductions in the National Gallery and Art Gallery of Toronto Canadian

series; and early plans analyzed the number of works available for reproduction, whether there was extant literature on the artist, and whether lesson leaflets already existed.⁹⁸

Radio offered the ideal medium for extending the impact of the reproduction programme. Broadcast throughout the country and into the most remote areas, it had the capability through the CBC's education offices, to develop support material and to reach an enormous audience of children and adults alike. Credit for *Young Canada Listens* was given to the National Gallery. But in R.S. Lambert, the Supervisor of Educational Broadcasts, Harry McCurry found an enthusiastic partner who, as a would-be writer on Canadian art, had a personal interest in the topic.

Correspondence between McCurry and Lambert suggests that McCurry's original idea (a significant departure from the strategy the Gallery had adopted for its original educational reproductions series) was to focus on the nineteenth century. He proposed a series that included Kane, Krieghoff, O'Brien, Sandham, Cruikshank, Watson and Walker.⁹⁹ Seeking more dramatic hooks to capture its audience, the first series actually featured Kane ("adventurous life and journey across Canada to paint the Indians"), Krieghoff ("life in Quebec among the British officers and the habitants"), Morrice ("colourful career in Paris, North Africa and West Indies as well as Canada"), Gagnon ("whose life alternated between Old and New France"), Thomson ("Canada's greatest native-born painter") and Jackson ("who has explored Canada from coast to coast and almost to the North Pole").¹⁰⁰ McCurry's notes suggest that Walker and Watson ("a pioneer Ontario painter") would have been included if there had been the opportunity to cover eight rather than six artists.¹⁰¹ Lismer was also considered for this series but Jackson was selected as the "living artist," most likely in light of the northern theme of "The Beothic at Bache Point, Ellesmere Island," and actually participated in the programme.

The creation of a parents' guide was an important strategy to capture the interest of adults through their children. Reaffirming the pre-eminence of Thomson in the Canadian art firmament (only he was the subject of two broadcasts) and the hagiographic style of earlier writers, the parents' guide began: "Everyone acknowledges Tom Thomson as the Canadian artist *par excellence*." It went on to ask: "What makes him so? What connection is there between living in the wilds, and interpreting wild nature by painting pictures?" And, shifting from fact and earlier positioning, "Why do many European critics fail to appreciate Tom Thomson's art at first sight?"¹⁰² Here he is portrayed as a figure only fully appreciable by those who know and understand the Canadian experience as opposed to Brown's depiction of him as an artist recognized abroad but unappreciated at home. Thomson was the subject on February 9, 1945 and again on March 28, 1947.

Through Lambert's CBC office an exchange of correspondence between departments of education across the country, prospective audiences, writers and collaborators shaped the *Young Canada Listens* programme.¹⁰³ The National Gallery took responsibility for providing the core material on each artist and work of art and suggested lines of treatment. Dorothy McCurry "assisted in the preparation of the music material," and CBC writer Earle Levy prepared the text.¹⁰⁴ Like Lismer's study guides, the texts lacked any critical focus. They offered popularized accounts focusing on the Canadian experience represented in the art work and the creation of a national consciousness. One caustic letter from a knowledgeable listener asked McCurry if he thought it appropriate that the script should be so simple-minded as to not even mention Impressionism or Post-Impressionism in its discussion of J.W. Morrice's *The Ferry*.¹⁰⁵ Listeners offered their viewpoints on such subjects as gender and geographical representation, as well as the quality of the broadcasts. Catherine Venables, an art instructor from Neepawa Public School (Manitoba), wrote:

The children enjoyed the adventures and dramatizations, preferring the Thomson broadcast best, and next the one on Jackson. They liked the buffalo hunt and the Indians singing in Paul Kane, and the Habitant songs in Cornelius Krieghoff. The disliked the poor acting of French parts in Morrice. *They would like to hear some stories about Canada's Women artists*¹⁰⁶ [italics mine]

The programmes were broadcast over forty stations of the CBC Trans-Canada Network and were heard in an estimated 3500 schools with a pupil audience of at least 125,000. 120,000 postcard-size colour prints were distributed and a quantity of larger prints was also available for teaching purposes. While some of the reproductions were already available from the Gallery's stock, others were produced for the programme. The suggested reading list for each of the artists in the first series included Albert Robson's short monographs published by Ryerson Press and Lismer's texts for the Art Gallery of Toronto's *Canadian Picture Study* and for the National Gallery's *Outline(s) for Picture Study*, as well as general sources of information.

Lambert's report, which he proposed as an article for *Canadian Art* magazine, outlined the success of the programme in glowing terms: "The recent series of national school broadcasts on *The Adventure of Canadian Painting* planned by the National Advisory Council on School Broadcasting at the request of and in close cooperation with the National Gallery of Canada has proved the most successful series yet put on the air by the CBC Education Department."¹⁰⁷ The obvious success of the first series led McCurry to write to Lambert with a proposal for the following year, "covering much of the same ground historically, but dealing with other painters."¹⁰⁸ Later broadcasts included Robert Harris, Antoine Plamondon, Homer Watson, Maurice Cullen, Horatio Walker, Tom Thomson (again), J.E.H.

MacDonald, Lawren Harris, Emily Carr, Carl Schaefer and Charles Comfort. Of the eighteen broadcasts, six covered artists associated with the Group of Seven.¹⁰⁹ In the early 1950's, the Gallery and the CBC again embarked on a joint initiative: *Our Canadian Painters*.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

Although circulating exhibitions were the most direct way in which the National Gallery's presence was manifested in communities across the country during the first decades of this century, such exhibitions depended on the existence of an adequate venue. The reproduction programme, however, required only a receptive ministry of education, school board, individual teacher or committed citizens to provide classrooms and individual students across the country with their own "collections" of Canadian art.

While works by artists from other parts of the country represented a significant part of the Sampson-Matthews silkscreen project of the 1940's, the selection of the images seems to have been motivated more by the politics of the art world, geographical requirements and sponsorship concerns than by aesthetic criteria. In contrast, the Gallery's reproductions which decorated classrooms and were integrated into *curricula* between 1929 and *circa* 1950 were almost exclusively central Canadian and landscape-based, representing paintings created before 1930.¹¹¹ Although the Sampson-Matthews project greatly increased the quantity, size and quality of reproductions available, its focus on living artists and their work, however conservative, did not translate into a heavy demand for these prints. The real attraction was still Thomson, the Group of Seven and the Canadian wilderness aesthetic which had been consolidated by the earlier programme.

The impact of the early reproductions of Canadian art was heightened by the lack of other reference points. Those who frequented galleries in most major centres would have had the opportunity to see loan exhibitions of original works. But for most, the surrogate images, framed by text, classroom experience and the authority of the Gallery, came to represent Canadian art. Subject matter linked the works in a coherent narrative; meaning was conferred through the verbal descriptions.¹¹² Issues of scale, of texture, of painterly quality could only be imagined.

That more artists (or audiences) did not raise their voices at the narrowness of the reproduction programme and the lack of commitment to artists from across the country reflects the dominance of the central institutions. Saskatchewan's admonishments that the National Gallery had some responsibility to make known the work of that province's artists appear to have been unique. It was only in response to the *Young Canada Listens* series that questions were raised about the lack of representation of women artists in an aesthetic construct in which ruggedness, vigour and drama (terms regularly employed by Lismer in his description of works included in the National Gallery series) were considered the highest praise.

Today the validity of the meta-narrative has been rejected; but at the time, the creation of a linear history designed to position Thomson and the Group of Seven at the apex of Canadian artistic achievement and to establish the pivotal role of the National Gallery in the minds of Canadians was a central purpose of the programme. The Gallery aspired to provide an aesthetic education for the country's expanding population, "creating and cultivating... correct artistic taste."¹¹³ Through its education programme, it offered aesthetic sustenance to nourish the nation, providing the requisite "sense of beauty" and the "intellectual and moral" impetus that would create a great society. Nationalism and patriotism were key elements in the project, and Lismer's texts suggest that it was also intended to improve understanding between English and French Canadians.

Carol Duncan might well have been writing about the National Gallery of Canada and in particular its first Canadian art reproduction programme, when she described how art museums serve as repositories for the higher authoritative truths of our society and how they bind the community into a civic body. As such, Duncan argues the museum was seen to identify society's "highest values, its proudest memories and its truest truths."¹¹⁴ The National Gallery of Canada's reproduction programme was a critical component in that institution's attempt to position itself and the conceit of a national art in the minds of Canadians. Establishing the basic truths essential to the ritual of nation-building, the Gallery established a Canadian art canon whose iconography would dominate the Canadian psyche for more than half a century.

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Notes

1 National Gallery of Canada Archives, *1.8 Reproductions of Paintings (1.8 R.P.)*, *Sampson-Matthews Ltd.* Note that Sampson-Matthews letterhead varies; occasionally the firm's name is written Sampson, Matthews Ltd., and on other occasions, Sampson-Matthews Ltd. I am using the hyphenated version as it is most commonly used in written documents concerning the firm and this project. Unless otherwise noted, archival material referred to in this paper is in the collection of the NGC Archives. I am indebted to Cindy Campbell, Archivist at the National Gallery, for her assistance.

2 *1.8 R.P., Sampson-Matthews.* Letter to H.O. McCurry from Peter Haworth, 5 Feb. 1943, Sampson-Matthews would sell the work and invoice clients. An excerpt from a letter from McCurry dated 16 Nov. 1942, and included in the Sampson-Matthews promotional literature, reads, "The National Gallery cordially welcomes the generous offer of a number of artists to design and donate for reproduction by your 'Colour Craft' process suitable pictures which might be distributed ... to the

armed forces of Canada." As well, "Each picture which is presented for sponsorship has been submitted to the Curator of the National Gallery in Ottawa." The Gallery wrote Sampson-Matthews that the text that appeared with the reproductions should read, "Produced in Co-operation with the National Gallery of Canada."

3 Dennis REID, *The Group of Seven: Selected Watercolours, Drawings and Prints from the Art Gallery of Ontario* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989), 23.

4 Jean Sutherland BOGGS, *The National Gallery of Canada* (Toronto: Oxford Press, 1971). Boggs credits McCurry, then Director of the Gallery, with the implementation of these projects.

5 Brown to Walker, 14 Dec. 1913. (Fisher Rare Books Library, Toronto: Walker [Sir Edmund] Papers, Manuscript Collection 1, Box 12, File 11) Brown also wrote: "There is a very excellent profit to be made upon the sale of reproductions both large and small and I have found a way by which we can order the necessary large numbers of prints yet not be hindered with either the cost or the material."

6 1.8 R.P. Walker to Brown, 15 Dec. 1913.

7 NGC, Meetings of the Board of Trustees, vol. I, 102.

8 *Ibid.*, 105. In a note dated 9 June 1914, the Director, observing the 1912 introduction of copyright law in England, noted: "We must have the copyright with every picture we possess and in future must be careful to mention the fact when we buy." Correspondence from Brown to Walker, 1 Apr. 1914 (Fisher Rare Books Library, Toronto: Walker [Sir Edmund] Papers, Manuscript Collection 1, Box 12, File 11) indicates that the total cost for the first edition was \$978. The wholesale price was 7.25 cents to be retailed at 50 cents each; the postcards cost half a cent each and sold at two for five cents. "So the profit is considerable," Brown writes, "I am anxious to demonstrate the value of the reproductions to the National Gallery."

9 Walker Papers, 30 Sept. 1914, Box 27B, File 21. A complete set of the postcards was on sale and "being bought freely" by the end of October (29 Oct. 1914).

10 1.8 R.P., *Vandyck Printers Ltd.*, 22 Sept. 1921; reply dated 3 Feb. 1922. They recommended printing large sheets of images and cutting and tipping the pictures, which were engraved on a copper cylinder rather than plates.

11 *The National Gallery of Canada Annual Report of the Board of Trustees for the Fiscal Year 1921-22* (Ottawa: The King's Printer, 1922). This Annual Report offers evidence of the interest shown in the Medici print collection. That year it had circulated in whole or part to, among other places, public schools in Ottawa, the art galleries of Hamilton and Toronto, the Tillsonburg Library, Collingwood, Port Arthur, Fort William, Regina, Medicine Hat and Vancouver's B.C. Art League.

12 Arthur LISMER, "Art Appreciation," 1928-29 *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, ed., Bertram Brooker (Toronto: MacMillan, 1929), 64.

13 *Hansard*, vol. LXV, 36-1930-2 1/2 (Friday, 11 Apr. 1930):1557. A Western M.P. recommended that "the Gallery should cooperate with some of the large departmental stores throughout western Canada," noting that the T. Eaton Co., was "responsible for most of the art which appears upon the walls of our homes." It was noted that "Those stores are being stocked with etchings [sic] at a very reasonable price with a view to encouraging and fostering interest in Canadian art."

14 *The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951* (Ottawa: The King's Printer, 1951), 78-79. The report submitted by the National Gallery to the Massey Commission describing the first reproduction programme contained inaccuracies. For example, the Massey submission implies that the Gallery was responsible for the Sampson-Matthews project but, in fact, while it worked in co-operation with them and lent its imprimatur to the project, its direct contribution of works was limited. Documents suggest that the Gallery wanted to limit the appearance of responsibility for the venture. Despite the fact that these prints remained in distribu-

tion into the post-war years, the programme was never fully documented.

15 In *The Publications and Reproductions Program of The Metropolitan Museum of Art: A Brief History* (N.Y.: Metropolitan Museum, 1981). Regina Maria Colourman notes that by 1920 colour reproductions of paintings by several firms were being sold on a commission basis. Postcard-size colour-collotype prints of objects in the Museum were produced by 1927. In 1928 the programme was extended to included 8" x 10" prints. These were also issued in a series of eight portfolios, each containing six prints at \$6.00 per portfolio. The first in this series, *Metropolitan Museum Color Prints*, was offered in 1928.

16 "In the Galleries," *Toronto Globe and Empire*, 18 Dec. 1926. Rous and Mann, along with numerous other agents, became distributors for the National Gallery's 1927 Canadian reproduction series and the works were listed in their catalogue.

17 NGC, *Annual Report*, 1921-22, 7.

18 *Ibid.*

19 NGC, *Annual Report*, 1925-26, 5. Charles Hill confirms that the annual reports were written by Eric Brown.

20 Arthur LISMER, *Canadian Picture Study* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1930) written in conjunction with the Art Gallery of Toronto's reproduction programme. The most widely circulated reproductions of Canadian art, other than those of the National Gallery, were those of the Art Gallery of Toronto which Dent and some of the other companies also marketed. In 1929, the AGT advertised a set of twelve coloured reproductions of Canadian work at \$1.00 per set (75 cents for teachers) and the availability of larger images, sold individually, including Paul Peel's popular *The Tired Model*. In 1930, the AGT introduced its Canadian Picture Study set.

21 1.8 R.P., *Claudius Gregory Fine Arts Prints*. Lawrence A.C. Pantou to James MacKenzie, 2 June 1931.

22 1.8 R.P. Undated promotional material titled "The National Gallery of Canada." The document is "Obtainable through the School-Book Branch, The Department of Education, Edmonton."

23 Veronese's *The Repentant Magdalene* was also one of the earliest colour prints available but was not included in the series and was published only in a larger size.

24 Although Lismer wrote the texts for the Canadian study guides, it seems likely that Brown was instrumental in selecting the work. The representation is very different in spirit from that of the Art Gallery of Toronto's more conventional reproduction programme for which Lismer also wrote the text.

25 Eric BROWN, "Canadian Art and Artists," undated typescript (c.1919-21).

26 BROWN, "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne" *L'art et les artistes*, no. 75 (March 1927): 181 ff. (There is a typescript copy similar to this article in English titled *Canadian Art* which Brown probably wrote for translation.)

27 BOGGS, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 12. Describing the essentially Victorian belief that art's role was to uplift and not to shock as being at the heart of the Gallery's purpose during Brown's mandate, Boggs notes Jackson's description of Brown as very conservative, believing that Picasso, the German Expressionists, Mondrian and Kandinsky were "unhealthy."

28 NGC, *Annual Report*, 1928-29, 15. Minutes of the Board of Trustees 42nd Meeting, 21 Dec. 1927, 304.

29 NGC, *Annual Report*, 1926-27. Discussing a recent acquisition, the board report stated that "writers of books on this period must include work in reproduction" and that the prestige is invaluable.

30 1.8 R.P., *Mortimer Co., Ltd.* L. Campbell, Sales and Service Dept., Mortimer Co., Ltd., to the NGC, 27 Sept. 1927, quoting prices for photographing and making a set of four colour plates 5" x 6 1/2", at \$130 per set in quantities of 5000. On August 27, 1928 an order was placed for 60,000 mounts, 10" x 13". The Gallery's 1928-29 *Financial Statement* shows that up until November 29, 1928, Mortimer Co., received \$1,625.59 for colour prints. Revenues from the sale of colour prints were listed as refunds to the 1928-29 appropriation in the amount of \$309.10. Expenditures since April 1, 1929 to Mortimer Co. for engraving, printing and colour prints were \$1,170.82.

9.21B, *Board of Trustees, Minutes of Meetings, January 17, 1923 to May 12, 1932.* The minutes of the 46th Board meeting on 29 May 1929 record, under the heading "Reproductions," "A statement of the progress of the series of colour reproductions being reproduced by the Mortimer Co., was submitted. Authority was granted to continue the work in accordance with previous minutes." On January 23, 1930, the Trustees received and approved a report of the project and "Authority to proceed was granted as means became available."

31 1.8 R.P., *Canadian Forum 1929-1930.* McCurry to Barker Fairley, 25 Feb. 1929. (Fairley had expressed interest in publicizing the Canadian reproduction series in *The Canadian Forum.*)

32 In the typescript *Canadian Art* (p.4), Brown described Kane's work as "usually more topographical and anthropological than artistic but contributing an invaluable aboriginal record."

33 NGC, *Annual Report, 1928-29.*

34 The minutes of the Board of Trustees indicate that by this time, they had given permission for the project to go ahead as money became available.

35 A mid-1940's typescript list of Gallery reproductions indicates that all ten of the works remained in print, as did their study guides, throughout the thirties and forties. Several differently numbered editions were published and there are variations in the numbers assigned to the texts. In the series in the National Gallery Library, the three Thomson works are the first three numbers of the study guides, Gagnon is #4, MacDonald #5, Walker #6, Brownell #7, Watson #8, Krieghoff #9 and Lismer #10. Postcard-size prints were added for Cullen's *Ice Harvest*; Lawren Harris' *Snow II*; James Henderson's *The End of Winter*; Edwin Holgate's *Totem Poles, Gitsegwikelas*; Jackson's *Early Spring* and *The Edge of the Maple Wood*; Paul Kane's *Blackfoot Chief and Subordinates, Indians Playing At Alcoloh* and *White Mud Portage*; J.W. Morrice's *Dieppe, The Beach, Grey Effect*; and J. Henry Sandham's *Hunters Returning with their Spoil.*

36 1.8 R.P., *Mortimer Co., 1946 inventory statement of holdings of NGC reproductions.* The reproduction of Jackson's *Algoma, November (1935)* was titled *Algoma Lake*. There is no record of study guides for the later 1930's reproductions.

37 BROWN, "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," 188ff. By 1932 postcard format prints were available of Lawren Harris's *Snow II*, Cullen's *Ice Harvest*, Suzor-Coté's *Settlement on a Hillside* and Gagnon's *Street Scene, Quebec.* (1.8 R.P., James MacKenzie, Canadian Fine Art Guild to McCurry, 15 Jan. 1932 noted that, had these been available on thin stock, he would have ordered 1000 of each.)

38 W. PERRY, "The West Wind," *The School XVII* (November 1928): 226.

39 F.B. HOUSSER, *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the "Group of Seven"* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1926), 119-120.

40 LISMER, *Outline for Picture Study*, "Spring Ice by Tom Thomson," Series I, no. 3 (Ottawa: NGC, c.1930). Lismer's text misnames Davies' book, referring to it as *Palette and Paddle.*

41 "Palace of Fine Arts, Dominion Tendencies," *The Times* (London), 6 May 1924 (excerpt reprinted NGC, *Annual Report, 1924-25*, 7).

42 "At the Musée de Jeu du Paume Exhibition of Canadian Art," *Le Figaro Artistique* (Paris), 5 May 1927 (excerpt translated NGC, *Annual Report, 1927-28*, 12).

43 BROWN, "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," 191. The same year the Canadian artists series

was published, Merrill Dennison, describing the RCA exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto, wrote in "No More Pyrotechnics at Painting Exhibitions," *The Toronto Star*, 22 Dec. 1928, of "the end of an epoch of splendid dissension in Canadian painting.... No longer can the Group enjoy the vilification that is the reward of the precocious few, because the many have now joined them and the calliope has become merely an overcrowded band wagon.... The revolutionary movement in Canadian painting has ceased to be."

44 BROWN, "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," 181.

45 Carol DUNCAN, "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship," *The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1991), 90.

46 BROWN, "La Jeune Peinture Canadienne," 192.

47 BOGGS, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 37. Emily Carr wrote to Dorothy Brown, "I owe him so much for I was overwhelmed by despair about my work when he came west [in 1927] and pulled me out and made me start again."

48 REID, *Our Own Country Canada*, 303.

49 Roderick NASH, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1982), offers an excellent description of this movement.

50 Lismer speaking to the Massey Commission, c.1950; *The Royal Commission on Arts, Letters and Sciences*, 205. See also Paul WALTON, "The Group of Seven and Northern Development," *RACAR* 17, no. 2 (1990): 171-79.

51 LISMER, *Outline for Picture Study*, "Winter Landscape by Cornelius Krieghoff," Series I, no. 6 (Ottawa: NGC, c.1928).

52 *Ibid.*, "Oxen Drinking by Horatio Walker, R.C.A., N.A.," Series I, no. 9 (Ottawa: NGC, 1929).

53 *Ibid.*, "The Flood Gate by Homer Watson, R.C.A., O.S.A.," Series I, no. 8 (Ottawa: NGC, 1929).

54 LISMER, *A Short History of Painting With A Note On Canadian Art* (Toronto: Andrews Brothers, 1926). He compared Québec's quaint simplicity to Ontario's sense of design and its focus on lakes and rivers, and to the West's ample sense of space and pioneer life.

55 The sentence appears in all of the study guides which discuss Tom Thomson.

56 Cruikshank's *Breaking A Road* is listed as #2 in Series I and there is also a Series II in which *The Connoisseur* is #1. Since both of these were commissioned from Lismer in 1932, I presume the original set was renumbered at that time (to include the Cruikshank) and Series II developed (perhaps as English-language guides for the Québec series).

57 In "Studies in Canadian Art," *The School* XVII, no. 4 (December 1928): 331, S.W. PERRY reproduced Gagnon's *Village in the Laurentian Mountains* and noted that a large coloured print of *Village* could be purchased from the National Gallery for fifty cents.

58 1.8 R.P., *Canadian Forum*. McCurry wrote to Fairley at *The Canadian Forum* (25 Feb. 1929), that agents would not be contracted until the series was more extensive.

59 1.8 R.P., *Mortimer Co.*, and 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild*, 1931-34.

60 1.8 R.P., *British Empire Art Co.* H.C. McInnes to McCurry, 15 Nov. 1932: "When the matter of our making large copies of *The Jack Pine* comes up may we say that they will hardly be much competition to the prints you put out at present. The smallest size will be 16 x 20 inches and retail at \$9.00 a print."

61 A generic ad in the Gallery's files, dated 16 Apr. 1930, intended for educational journals across the country, began: "Secondary School teachers should visit the Gallery - the only representative collection of Canadian art in existence and its collection of British paintings and old masters is one of the most important in America." In September 1929, Rous and Mann advertised, "Be sure to send Christmas cards of the Canadian Artists Series all designed by Canadian artists and made in Canada. They include reproductions in full colour of paintings from the National Gallery collection. Teachers will find them useful in class work," *The School* XXIII, no. 1 (September 1929) and no. 2 (October). The selection of ten was advertised at \$2.00. The British Empire Art Company placed ads in the 1930 fall issues of *The Canadian Forum* promoting "Art Appreciation" X, no. 120-121(30 Sept. and 30 Oct.).

62 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. Lismer, Educational Superintendent of the Art Gallery of Toronto to Mr. MacKenzie, 15 May 1931.

63 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. McCurry to MacKenzie, 15 Sept. 1931. MacKenzie was selling both the National Gallery reproductions and original lithographs of Canadian artists' work which he had produced. He noted, "I had the first proof of Jackson's picture *Winter St. Fidele* and I think it will be one of the best I have done so far." A letter from MacKenzie dated 2 Oct. 1931 mentions his afternoon with Mr. Rogers, Director of Education, at Queen's Park and Miss Marsh at the College of Education: "In order to put this plan across in its entirety [*sic*] it is essential that I get at least 200 Collegiates, Technical Schools, Universities, and Private Colleges interested."

64 1.8 R.P., *Dent & Son, J.M., 1931*. Henry Button, Trade Dept., Canadian Director, J.M. Dent, Toronto, to McCurry, 2 Nov. 1931. The letter requested one hundred portfolios, fifty of each subject loose and twenty-five portfolios for those who order six or more at a time and one thousand each of the teachers' notes, "As soon as the question is settled, we'll start advertising in school journals."

65 1.8 R.P., *Dent & Son, J.M., 1931*. Button to McCurry, 1 Dec. 1931. This letter was an urgent plea for a better organized promotional strategy, requesting order forms with lists of the works available. It also indicated that Dent saw the end of the 1931-32 academic year as their basis for establishing the programme and their long-term approach to marketing the prints.

66 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. MacKenzie to McCurry, 5 Dec. 1931. On 29 Dec. he requested his consignment, noting great interest from schools. On 15 Jan. he informed McCurry that 3000 small prints had already been parceled and inquired if there "will be Jackson and Lismer in small Canadian sections."

67 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. MacKenzie to McCurry, 24 Feb. 1932.

68 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. Maurice Long to MacKenzie, 28 January 1933, Auditors' statement as of Dec. 31, 1932.

69 1.8 R.P. J.W.G. Macdonald to McCurry, 9 Apr. 1932. Macdonald's request included reproductions from both the NGC and the AGT series. It is likely that Lismer did not distinguish between the sets but was perceived to be representing the National Gallery. Moreover, the National Gallery appears to have handled the Art Gallery of Toronto's prints - at least on a selective basis. In 1942, McCurry wrote to Martin Baldwin at the AGT to congratulate him on his *West Wind* project, adding, "We will list your reproduction and keep it in stock."

70 Minutes of the Board of Trustees 51st Meeting, May 12, 1932, 367. The Assistant Director explained that unpaid accounts payable to Mortimer for plates and prints equaled \$4415.20. The proposed contract would take care of this debt and leave a considerable balance in the National Gallery's favour which it proposed to use to continue preparation of prints and plates. In this way development of further reproductions could be continued without drawing on the reduced vote.

71 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild, 1931-34*. The Canadian Fine Art Guild would complain to McCurry on February 24, 1932 that Dent was undercutting their school prices since

Dent was "selling the larger size in the teachers' magazines at 19 cents." MacKenzie argued, "I promote them in the schools, then they say they'll order from Dents since their price is cheaper." He noted he had arranged a good many shows in the smaller school towns and that these sold well.

72 1.8 R.P., *Prairie Farmer Free Press*, 1934-35. Orders started arriving in January. There is a checklist of those requesting prints after the article was published.

73 Eaton's, apparently interested in reaching future buyers through identification with a project of this status and breadth, approached the Gallery about the possibility of corporate support. Correspondence [25 July 1936] suggests that Eaton's proposed to contribute a relatively minimal amount to the reproductions and lesson plans for schools in Ontario, Québec and the Maritime provinces. McCurry rejected the proposal, which hinged on Eaton's imprint appearing on the reproductions, on the basis that the real cost of production had been borne by the Gallery and not by Eaton's.

74 1.8 R.P., *Mortimer Co., Ltd.*, 1932-34. "Folio: The National Gallery of Canada Reproduction of Pictures: Canadian Series" (13" x 15"). M. Irving to McCurry 18 Apr. 1934. Irving ordered folios for 110 sets of works for the Ontario Government. Correspondence dated 3 Apr. 1934, from Irving deals with colour reproductions for the Québec legislature.

75 1.8 R.P., *Alberta Dept. of Education*, 1930-32. McCurry to Hon. Perren E. Baker, Minister of Education, Edmonton, 12 Nov. 1931.

76 1.8 R.P., *Alberta Dept. of Education*, 1930-32. NGC to School Book Branch, Alberta Dept. of Education [1931]. A letter to McCurry 25 Nov. 1931 says they will include a circular about the school reproductions of Canadian pictures as recommended, and requests a copy of the Saskatchewan circular. On May 16, 1932 they wrote McCurry and enclosed a catalogue (p.10 and 11 of which featured additional advertising). Letters dated 18 Jan., 18 Feb., and 5 May, 1932 indicate significant numbers of orders filled.

77 1.8 R.P., *Alberta Dept. of Education*, 1930-32. McCurry to Mr. Noble, School Book Branch, Alberta Dept. of Education: "Would it be feasible for you to complete an order for 1000 prints and make returns quarterly instead of paying cash? Prints that are slow selling could be returned and replaced by others. In January the NGC shipped 4000 circulars and 4000 small prospectuses." On February 18th, the NGC sent 1100 small prints, 80 large prints and 12 portfolios with leaflets, etc.

78 1.8 R.P., *Public Schools of Ontario*, 1934. Irving of Mortimer Co. had compiled a list of MPP's to contact which he conveyed to McCurry as part of the lobbying strategy to promote the reproduction programme.

79 1.8 R.P., *Public Schools of Ontario*, 1934. McCurry to Mr. Henry, 15 Jan. 1934.

80 1.8 R.P., *Public Schools of Quebec*, 1934. Irving to McCurry, 2 Apr. 1934. Re: discussion of the translation and printing in French of the study guides. See also memo to McCurry from Tom Davey, 1936, re: French study leaflets, which lists those works and indicates that translations were ready and that french mounts were in the hands of Mortimers.

81 1.8 R.P., *Public Schools of New Brunswick*, 1934. W.J.P. MacMillan, Charlottetown, P.E.I., to E.A. Tough, Mortimer Co., 26 June 1934. (This is filed with the New Brunswick correspondence.)

82 1.8 R.P., *Manitoba Department of Education*, 1938. Minister of Education, 12 July 1938.

83 1.8 R.P., *Saskatchewan Department of Education*, 1931-36. John Huff to McCurry, 13 June 1933.

84 1.8 R.P., *Saskatchewan Department of Education*, 1931-36. Elsie Dorsey, Chairman, Art Revision Committee, Regina Public School Board to McCurry, 7 Apr. 1941.

85 Minutes of the Board of Trustees 55th Meeting, 8 Feb. 1934, 391.

- 86 1.8 R.P. The letter stating the conditions of the gift was dated March 15, 1934 and addressed to Ontario's librarians. An August 19, 1934 letter from McCurry explained to the Publicity Director, A.W. Marsh of Echo Printing Co., of Amherstburg, Ont. the terms under which the library gifts occurred.
- 87 BROWN, *The National Gallery and Art in Canada*, NGC, 1936 Brown lecture file.
- 88 1.8 R.P., *Australia, Canadian Trade Commission 1934-42*. L.M. Cosgrave, Canadian Trade Commissioner, Melbourne to McCurry, 17 June 1935. The file contains letters from head teachers, etc. in a number of schools in different parts of the province. Though McCurry informed Ontario's Premier that the reproductions had been adopted by the Board of Education of the City of New York, I have not, to date, found any records of sale to substantiate this claim. 1.8 R.P., *The Canadian Fine Art Guild*. Bankruptcy documents of Claudius Gregory Fine Arts Prints indicate that they had sold work to galleries in Buffalo and Detroit.
- 89 1.8 R.P., *Rous and Mann, 1937-38*. B. MacDougall for Rous and Mann to McCurry, 5 Aug. 1937. In some cases, the cost of production of plates was shared between the National Gallery and Rous and Mann. The NGC Archives contain 1937/38 correspondence with Rous and Mann concerning the plates.
- 90 1.8 R.P., *Rous and Mann, 1937-38*. Robson to McCurry, 7 Dec. 1937. "The reproductions of the National Gallery paintings certainly publicize the splendid work you have been doing down there."
- 91 Four colour electros and progressive proofs were received from Mortimer Co., on the instructions of the NGC for the December 1938 issue.
- 92 Purchase Order NGC from Mortimer Co., 28 Mar. 1938. Lawren Harris' *Snow II* had been added to the list, although only in postcard-size.
- 93 Purchase Order NGC, Mortimer Co., 31 Oct. 1938. 5 Oct. 1936, correspondence on National Gallery letterhead signed by Mortimer Co., acknowledges receipt of Morrice's painting from the NGC for reproduction.
- 94 1.8 R.P. McCurry to Baldwin, AGT, 13 Aug. 1942.
- 95 1.8 R.P., *Mortimer Co., 1937-1941*. McCurry to Mortimer Co., 6 Oct. 1941. On November 14, 1941 he approved new formats for the mounts with the title on the left and the artist's name on the same line on the right with affiliation and dates; the next line to read Canadian school; and the last to read NGC, Ottawa.
- 96 7.4C, *Outside Activities/Organizations, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, File 1*. McCurry to R.S. Lambert, 12 Jan. 1943. "I think there are unlimited possibilities for broadcasts to schools on art appreciation built around the small reproductions which are issued by the National Gallery. These prints are approximately postcard-size and are printed on thin and inexpensive paper so that they can be supplied to schools in quantities [at] about 1 1/2 cents each."
- 97 *Ibid.*, File 1. Lambert to McCurry, 20 Oct. 1943. Jean Boggs, makes reference to this project but suggests that it was limited to 1944-45; BOGGS, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 39.
- 98 *Ibid.*, File 5. "Re Series of Radio Talks based on small reproductions in the National Gallery and Toronto 'Canadian Painting'."
- 99 *Ibid.*, File 1. McCurry to Lambert, 12 Jan. 1943.
- 100 Letter from CBC confirming conversation for programme dated 21 March 1944. Note the earliest suggestion for this programme predates this by about two years.
- 101 See also printed programme for National School Broadcasts 1944-45.
- 102 *The Adventures of Canadian Painting: Hints to Parents on Co-Study* (5 and 6).

- 103 7.4C, *Outside Activities/Organizations, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, File 2*. Lambert to McCurry, 25 June 1945, discusses letters from Superintendents of Schools in Manitoba and Alberta commenting on the proposed strategies for the school broadcasts.
- 104 *Ibid.*, File 2. McCurry to Lambert, 21 June 1945 and Lambert to McCurry same date.
- 105 1.8 R.P. ? James, Toronto, to McCurry, 26 June 1945.
- 106 15 March 1945. Quoted in LAMBERT, *Radio and Art Appreciation in School and At Home, A Report*, 3. The original notes for the programme suggest that, had prints been available, Emily Carr and Prudence Heward might have been included.
- 107 *Ibid.*, the phrase "at the request of" was added in pen and indicates Lambert's recognition of the political importance of crediting the Gallery with the idea for the series.
- 108 7.4C, *Outside Activities/Organizations, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, File 2*. McCurry to Lambert, 13 March 1945.
- 109 List of Canadian Artist Broadcast Series.
- 110 Summary of Sales for CBC series *Our Canadian Painters* as of 31 Oct. 1952. British Columbia, Alberta, New Brunswick and Ontario were the largest subscribers. This inventory suggests there was a 1948 series as well.
- 111 1.8 R.P., *Sampson-Matthews Ltd., Files 1-12*. This file includes correspondence and public relations statements regarding the silkscreen project. An undated public relations statement titled "Art Reproduction of Canadian Pictures" notes that "in selecting both the artists and their subjects, the committee has taken care to see that all parts of Canada were covered. The collection as a whole (predominantly landscape) reflects different types of scenery...the East is represented...[there is] a study of maritime fisherfolk...the far West...the North and other districts...." A letter from Jackson to McCurry, 15 Apr. 1943 discusses the unevenness of the submissions and the problem of sponsors who want calendar art; an excerpt from a letter from Jackson to McCurry 27 Apr. 1943 reads, "We need a good western one badly...."
- 112 In the *1928-29 Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, 89. Fred HOUSSER described the work of Yvonne McKague: "Her compositions have masculine strength and intellectuality, showing much intelligent feeling and consideration for structure, design, form and spatial qualities."
- 113 NGC, *Annual Report*, 1921-22, 7.
- 114 DUNCAN, "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship," 90-91.

COMMENT ON A FIXÉ LE CANON

Le sentiment national, l'identité et le premier programme de reproductions d'art canadien de la Galerie nationale

Dans la plupart des écrits traitant du rôle des reproductions dans l'histoire de l'art canadien, il était admis que le projet de sérigraphies Sampson-Matthews, conçu par A.Y. Jackson et entrepris en collaboration avec la Galerie nationale durant la Seconde guerre mondiale, avait largement contribué à former notre conception de la peinture canadienne, et à établir le Groupe des Sept et la peinture paysagiste comme composantes *sine qua non* de l'art canadien.

Le présent article étudie un programme de reproductions commencé par la Galerie nationale en 1927 et ignoré jusqu'à maintenant, et les transactions culturelles, pour la plupart non identifiées, dans lesquelles les images substitués ont joué un rôle décisif pour la définition de l'art canadien. Il veut démontrer que le programme de reproductions qui a été en grande partie responsable de notre conception de l'art canadien a été créé par la Galerie nationale près de deux décennies avant le projet Sampson-Matthews, et que l'édification de la nation et la création d'un héritage visuel commun aux Canadiens ont été des facteurs majeurs dans la détermination du contenu. Complément essentiel du programme d'acquisitions, d'expositions, de conférences et d'articles de la Galerie, le projet a influencé les conceptions de tout un pays sur ce qui était «canadien» dans l'art canadien, et a fait du paysage, de la nature sauvage et du Groupe des Sept les icônes qui ont continué à dominer la psyché canadienne.

L'étude du programme de reproductions révèle plusieurs histoires qui s'entrecroisent: l'évolution du programme, la sélection des oeuvres à reproduire, la mise en marché des reproductions et la formation d'une clientèle, et la réaction du public. Comme on pouvait le lire dans la documentation promotionnelle: «La Galerie nationale a préparé une série de reproductions en couleurs de tableaux, principalement d'artistes canadiens, de la collection de la Galerie. La série est destinée en premier lieu à servir de base à l'enseignement de l'appréciation de l'art dans le public et les écoles secondaires au Canada.» Destinées aux écoles, avec des modèles tirés de la collection «d'artistes britanniques et étrangers» de la Galerie, les images du Canada sélectionnées pour être reproduites étaient surtout des paysages, ce qui renforçait l'idée d'un progrès artistique culminant dans la nouvelle «école nationale» de peinture canadienne représentée par Tom Thomson et

le Groupe des Sept. La Galerie collectionnait dans tout le champ de l'art canadien, mais le directeur, Eric Brown, responsable pour une grande part du projet, se concentrait sur ces oeuvres qui, croyait-il, pouvaient susciter la fierté nationale. Sa conviction que les oeuvres de Thomson et du Groupe pouvaient produire ce résultat a donné à la série une structure beaucoup plus restreinte.

Les lithographies canadiennes étaient produites en deux formats, 8" x 10" et 4 1/2" x 3 1/2". Les plus petites étaient disponibles en format carte postale sur papier mince afin de pouvoir être mises dans des albums. Les enseignants achetaient d'ordinaire des gravures grand format pour les exposer en classe, alors que le coût peu élevé des petites permettait à chaque écolier d'avoir sa «collection d'art canadien». Chaque oeuvre était accompagnée d'un guide d'étude préparé pour la Galerie par Arthur Lismer.

Bien que l'objectif ait été d'utiliser la collection de la Galerie nationale comme base pour l'enseignement de l'art dans les écoles du Canada, on offrait aussi au grand public «des reproductions de tableaux canadiens, en couleurs et à bas prix, qu'on ne pouvait auparavant obtenir nulle part.» La Galerie nationale et ses agents à travers le Canada développèrent des marchés (particulièrement les maisons d'enseignement à travers le Canada) qu'ils pénétrèrent au moyen de campagnes stratégiques.

En étudiant la manière dont la série a été élaborée, et son intérêt marqué pour l'oeuvre de Tom Thomson, représenté par trois tableaux sur dix, nous voulons démontrer que le choix des oeuvres était aussi remarquable par ce qui était exclus que par ce qui était inclus. Bien que Brown ait souligné dans des textes antérieurs l'importance d'artistes comme William Brymner et Maurice Cullen ainsi que le Groupe du Beaver Hall, leurs oeuvres n'étaient pas représentées. La Galerie collectionnait dans tout le pays et les reproductions étaient destinées à un marché national; cependant toutes les oeuvres sélectionnées pour représenter l'art canadien dans la série, provenaient d'artistes de l'Ontario ou du Québec.

La notion de progrès artistique était inhérente à la construction linéaire de la série: elle se réalisait dans le paysage et dans l'esthétique de la nature sauvage qui s'était emparée de l'imaginaire nord-américain. Les scènes nordiques, vides de personnages, mettaient en relief la majesté du paysage et, symboliquement, de l'âme canadienne. Les scènes rurales dépeignaient une autre mythologie. La série représentait les Canadiens dans leur environnement, en harmonie avec la terre et récoltant ses fruits. Avec l'industrialisation du XX^e siècle, l'urbanisation nord-américaine et la dégénérescence urbaine qui s'ensuivit, l'idéal bucolique était représenté comme une vision presque utopique. Les scènes du Québec donnaient une image rustique idéalisée de la vie de l'*habitant*, mettant en contraste l'ambiance pastorale et la puissante quête d'identité nationale dans l'art canadien anglais contemporain, où l'ordre moral de la nature et la notion mythique de la

nature héroïque façonnaient le nouvel icône canadien. Les femmes peintres étaient exclues d'une imagerie considérée comme «héroïque».

Les oeuvres d'artistes d'autres parties du pays formaient une part importante du projet Sampson-Matthews, dont les décisions concernant la représentativité étaient motivées davantage par les politiques du milieu artistique, les exigences de la géographie et les commanditaires que par des critères esthétiques. Par contraste, les reproductions de la Galerie nationale qui décoraient les salles de classe et faisaient partie du programme d'études, de 1929 jusque vers 1950, provenaient presque exclusivement des provinces centrales, étaient centrées sur le paysage et avaient été créées avant 1930. Bien que le projet Sampson-Matthews ait considérablement accru le nombre, le format et la qualité des reproductions, son accent sur les artistes vivants et leur oeuvre, si conservatrice qu'elle ait été, ne se traduisait pas par une demande populaire. On continuait de préférer Thomson, le Groupe des Sept et l'esthétique de la nature canadienne qui avaient été solidement implantés par le premier programme de reproductions.

En plus de tracer le développement des reproductions, leur diffusion et leur impact, l'article examine la durée du programme et de ses successeurs. L'association entre la Galerie nationale du Canada et la station radiophonique CBC pour la série *Young Canada Listens*, de 1945 à 1947, et celles qui lui ont succédé a étendu le programme de reproductions et son impact jusque dans les années cinquante en rejoignant un vaste auditoire d'adultes et d'enfants.

Bien que les expositions itinérantes aient été la façon la plus directe de rendre la Galerie nationale présente dans des communautés à travers le Canada durant les premières décennies de ce siècle, ces expositions dépendaient de lieux adéquats. Le programme de reproductions, par contre, ne demandait rien d'autre qu'un ministre de l'Éducation réceptif, une commission scolaire, des enseignants ou des citoyens intéressés à fournir des salles de classe, et des élèves dans tout le Canada avec leurs propres «collections» d'art canadien.

L'impact des premières reproductions d'art canadien était augmenté par l'absence d'autres points de repère. Les images substitués, situées dans le système de référence du texte, de l'expérience pédagogique et de l'autorité de la Galerie, ont fini par représenter l'art canadien. Le sujet était l'élément qui reliait les oeuvres entre elles dans un récit linéaire cohérent. Le sens était donné par les descriptions verbales qui les accompagnaient. L'ensemble de la connaissance visuelle de l'art canadien était fondé sur ces images.

La création de la «méta-imagerie» de l'art canadien complétait l'objectif de la Galerie nationale d'occuper une place centrale dans l'esprit des Canadiens. Par son programme de diffusion et d'éducation par l'art, la Galerie offrait une nourriture esthétique à une nation encore jeune, lui fournissant l'indispensable «sens du Beau» et l'élan «intellectuel et moral» qui devait créer une grande société. Le nationalisme et le patriotisme étaient les éléments clés de l'entreprise, et les textes

de Lismer suggèrent qu'il entrevoyait aussi comme un résultat souhaitable, une meilleure compréhension entre Canadiens anglais et Canadiens français. Le fait que peu d'artistes (ou d'auditoires) aient protesté contre les limites du programme de reproductions et le manque d'intérêt pour les artistes des régions, reflète la domination et la relative maturité des institutions centrales.

Carol Duncan aurait aussi bien pu parler de la Galerie nationale du Canada, et en particulier de son premier programme de reproductions, lorsqu'elle décrivait l'évolution du musée d'art jusqu'à devenir le dépositaire des plus hautes vérités de notre société et son rôle dans la formation de la communauté en une entité civique. Duncan dit que le musée en est venu à représenter «les plus hautes valeurs de la société, ses plus fiers souvenirs et ses vérités les plus vraies». Le programme de reproductions de la Galerie nationale a été une composante majeure dans la tentative de cette institution de se situer elle-même dans l'esprit des Canadiens et de l'éveiller à la conscience d'un art national. En établissant les vérités fondamentales essentielles au rituel de fondation d'une nation, la Galerie a construit un art canadien dont l'iconographie allait dominer la psyché canadienne pendant un demi-siècle.

Traduction: Élise Bonnette



fig. 1 Galerie L'Actuelle. Vernissage de l'exposition de Jean-Paul Mousseau en mars-avril 1956. On y voit, en partant du centre, en avant: Rolland Boulanger et, derrière lui, Sam Abramovitch; au centre: Jean-Paul Jérôme discutant avec Françoise et Rodolphe de Repentigny; plus bas, caméra à la main, Robert Millet et, à sa gauche, de dos, Henriette Fauteux-Massé avec Denyse et Georges Delrue; derrière eux: Paterson Ewen, Françoise Sullivan; au centre, à l'arrière: Robert Blair, une femme non-identifiée et Claude Tousignant; derrière lui: Ulysse Comtois, une dame en noir (?) et devant elle: Rita Letendre, Gilbert Langevin, Dyne et Jean-Paul Mousseau et, enfin, Jean et Louise McEwen. (Photo: Louis Jaques)

UN ÉTAT DE LA DIFFUSION DES ARTS VISUELS À MONTRÉAL

Les années cinquante: lieux et chronologie

Deuxième partie: 1955 à 1961

Voici la suite et fin de la chronologie, dont la première partie (période 1950 à 1955) a paru dans le numéro précédent de cette revue (vol. XVI, n° 1), où elle était accompagnée d'une série de notes sur des galeries montréalaises de cette période. La partie qui suit comprend un relevé des expositions d'art moderne et contemporain tenues à Montréal de 1955 à 1961 et une deuxième série de notes sur des galeries et lieux d'exposition créés après 1955. Les raisons qui ont motivé la production de ce texte ont été explicitées dans le premier volet et nous vous invitons à y référer.

Tel que déjà précisé, cet inventaire ne prétend pas être un relevé «complet et définitif» des expositions tenues dans la région montréalaise au cours des années cinquante. Néanmoins, le tableau proposé s'avère suffisamment vaste et détaillé pour rendre compte des changements qui se produisent dans le domaine de la diffusion des arts visuels à cette époque, et pour mettre en évidence certains phénomènes et développements particuliers révélateurs de tendances nouvelles. Un rapide coup d'oeil du côté des galeries permettra d'en juger et de voir aussi comment évolue la diffusion de l'art contemporain.

Elles croissent et se multiplient...

On remarque tout d'abord un accroissement progressif du nombre de galeries tout au long de la décennie et une nette accélération de ce mouvement après 1955. Dans un premier temps, soit de 1949 à 1955, six nouvelles galeries sont mises sur pied: West End et Antoine en 1949; Agnès Lefort en 1950; Waldorf et Mont-Royal en 1953; Klinkhoff en 1954. Une deuxième étape est franchie après 1955 avec la création de treize autres galeries majoritairement vouées à la diffusion de l'art contemporain. Ce sont: L'Actuelle en 1955 (fig.1 et 2); Prédilection et Waddington en 1956; Ars Classica, Denyse Delrue, Monique de Groote, L'Échange et Laviguer en 1957; Artek en 1958; la Galerie Libre (fig.3), L'Étable (fig.4), Simon Dresdnère en 1959 et la Galerie 1640 en 1961.

Sauf erreur, Montréal ne comptait à la fin des années quarante que cinq galeries d'art de quelque importance, soit: Watson, Dominion, Continental, L'Art français et Morency. Plus tôt dans les années trente, la ville avait vu naître quelques nouvelles maisons dont celles de Frank Stevens et de Sydney Carter, mais ce regain fut brusquement ralenti avec l'entrée en guerre du Canada en 1939. Par



fig. 2 À la Galerie L'Actuelle (278, rue Sherbrooke Ouest) son directeur, Guido Molinari, discutant avec le peintre Jean G. Bertrand. (Photo: Louis Jaques)

la suite, seule la Galerie Dominion, créée en 1941, s'implanta durablement. Après la guerre, la relance ne devait débiter véritablement qu'en 1949. Entre-temps, la Galerie Parizeau avait été inaugurée, mais elle ne survécut que quelques années¹.

En comparaison, les années cinquante furent une période autrement plus fertile et Montréal, un terrain fort propice à la multiplication des lieux de diffusion. En dépit de quelques expériences de courte durée, la ville fut donc témoin durant ces années d'un véritable «gallery boom». Poussée de régénérescence qui n'indiquait pas d'ailleurs qu'un changement quantitatif. Certes, le nombre de galeries s'était accru, mais dans une pluralité de formes et de contenus qui annonçait, pour le fond, une différenciation des positionnements quant aux objectifs poursuivis. Nous viendrons. Pour le moment, situons le lieu de ces transformations.

À l'ouest toutes!

Sur les quelque vingt galeries fondées à Montréal de 1949 à 1961, trois seulement s'installent en dehors du centre-ville: la Galerie Mont-Royal à Outremont, L'Échange sur Prince-Arthur et la Galerie Laviguer à Côte Saint-Luc. Toutes les autres, sauf la Galerie Antoine sur Victoria, se regroupent sur Sherbrooke Ouest, autour de Crescent et Drummond, ou un peu plus à l'est près de la rue Union. En

douze ans, seize galeries d'art ont ainsi envahi ce secteur de la ville qui n'était occupé au départ que par les galeries Watson, Continental et Dominion. Une telle concentration à l'ouest est due en grande partie à la présence du Musée des beaux-arts dans ce quartier et au type d'activités qui se déploient sur cette portion de la rue Sherbrooke. Les galeries veulent en effet bénéficier de la proximité du musée en s'attirant la clientèle locale et touristique qui le fréquente. Aussi bien, les grands hôtels, magasins, boutiques et restaurants qui peuplent ce secteur et lui confèrent son élégance, sont-ils autant de points d'attrait supplémentaires pour le public qu'elles convoitent.

Autre fait à noter: l'ouest n'est plus le fief attiré des marchands de langue anglaise; des galeries d'expression française ont maintenant fait une percée au centre-ville. L'expression «conquête de l'Ouest» vient à l'esprit et elle ne paraît pas exagérée, surtout si l'on pense que le milieu canadien-français avait été caractérisé jusqu'alors par la rareté de ses galeries d'art, lesquelles s'étaient installées dans des quartiers francophones: Morency sur Sainte-Catherine Est, puis sur Saint-Denis, et L'Art français sur Laurier Ouest. À notre connaissance, seule la Galerie Parizeau fit exception en élisant domicile au 2029 rue Peel vers 1944. Fait d'autant plus intéressant quand on sait que son propriétaire, Lucien Parizeau², y accueillit jusqu'en mai 1945 les «jeunes» Léon Bellefleur, Jacques de Tonnancour, Albert Dumouchel, Suzanne Duquet, André Jasmin, Lucien Morin, Mimi Parent, Jeanne Rhéaume et Guy Viau³. Bien que très éphémère, l'expérience préluait à de plus amples changements.

Bientôt, en effet, ce sera au tour des galeries Agnès Lefort, Artek, Denyse Delrue, L'Actuelle et de la Galerie Libre de prendre d'assaut ce quartier stratégique et d'y planter qui le drapeau de la «jeune peinture», qui celui de l'art non-objectif. Le centre-ville y gagna en couleur et c'est bien le moins, car ces galeries y entraînaient avec elles leurs «écuries» d'artistes bohèmes et, pour certaines, remplies de «jeunes loups» à qui il ne dédaignait pas de «choquer le bourgeois». Plus sûrement, les artistes francophones y trouvèrent, et en plus grand nombre, des galeristes qui se montraient sensibles à leur démarche et les accueillirent favorablement.

Rose, Agnès, Denyse et les autres

Un phénomène vaut d'être noté car il était relativement nouveau, celui de l'accession d'un nombre de plus en plus grand de femmes à la direction des galeries. En ce domaine, Rose Millman peut être considérée comme une pionnière⁴ puisqu'elle fonda sa première galerie en 1941, donc bien avant le «boom» des années cinquante, et qu'une fois la Galerie Dominion vendue au D^r Stern, elle repartit de plus belle avec la Galerie West End, en 1949. Forte de cet exemple et de celui d'autres femmes qu'elle avait vues à la tête de galeries françaises, Agnès Lefort se lance en affaires en octobre 1950. Denyse Delrue et Jessie Lavigneur lui emboî-

tent le pas, mais pas avant 1957. À peine un an plus tard, Hélène Mercure devient propriétaire et directrice de la Galerie Morency. Entre-temps, Fernande Saint-Martin s'est associée à Guido Molinari dans la mise sur pied de L'Actuelle en 1955. Enfin, Estelle Hecht ouvre la Galerie 1640 en 1961.

Le rôle de ces femmes fut crucial dans la mesure où leur action participait d'un mouvement qui devait transformer le milieu des galeries et, aussi, parce que loin de se déclarer partisans des sentiers battus, plusieurs d'entre elles effectuèrent un travail d'éclaireur en privilégiant et faisant connaître des pratiques qui renouvelaient le langage plastique. Aujourd'hui, la participation des femmes aux différents aspects de la vie sociale et économique est un fait largement accompli, mais dans le Québec de 1950, qui ne leur avait accordé le droit de vote que depuis dix ans, le travail de telles femmes «d'affaires» était loin d'aller de soi.

Percée de l'art contemporain

Considérons maintenant les domaines de spécialisation. Sur les six galeries créées avant 1955, quatre se rapprochent, de par leurs objectifs et le créneau qu'elles se sont choisi (c'est-à-dire principalement les courants modernes de l'art canadien et européen), de galeries déjà établies comme Dominion ou Watson. En ce sens, les galeries Antoine, Klinkhoff, Waldorf et West End obéissent davantage à un projet de continuité avec la tradition et leur implication, quant à une réorientation



fig. 3 Une exposition de Jordi Bonet à la Galerie Libre, au début des années soixante. L'espace au 2100, rue Crescent, avait été occupé auparavant par la Galerie Denyse Delrue. (Photo: Jean-Pierre Beaudin, La Galerie Libre)



fig. 4 À la Galerie de l'Étable, quelques «jeunes associées» du Musée en compagnie de Mme Jehanne Benoît. Les oeuvres de Henriette Fauteux-Massé, que nous voyons aux cimaises, nous incitent à croire que cette photo a été prise lors de l'exposition *Les Lyriques formalistes*, en janvier-février 1960. (Photo: Posen, Archives du Musée des Beaux-arts de Montréal)

des stratégies de diffusion, se situera dans cette perspective. Nous en savons trop peu sur la Galerie Mont-Royal pour nous prononcer sur son apport particulier. Quant à la Galerie Agnès Lefort, le fait qu'elle expose des oeuvres contemporaines et modernes, qu'elle s'intéresse surtout aux artistes canadiens et prospecte également du côté européen, ou encore, qu'elle accueille des productions abstraites sans négliger pour autant les recherches figuratives, tout cela la situe d'emblée dans le mouvement de renouveau, voire à l'origine de celui-ci, tout en lui conservant un lien avec des expériences plus traditionnelles de diffusion³.

Le pas vers une intégration plus radicale des pratiques contemporaines est franchi en 1955 avec la création de la Galerie L'Actuelle qui opte pour la diffusion exclusive de l'art non-objectif. L'expérience, bien que singulière et de courte durée, ne sera pas sans effets. Et si, parmi la douzaine de galeries qui naissent ensuite, aucune ne reprend à son compte une telle position de rupture, plusieurs cependant situent désormais l'essentiel de leur démarche en regard des recherches contemporaines et exposent majoritairement des artistes québécois. Ce sera le cas de la Galerie Denyse Delrue, de la Galerie Libre et d'Artek, encore que le projet de diffusion de cette dernière soit très proche de celui de la Galerie L'Actuelle. De leur côté, les galeries L'Échange et Laviguer semblent avoir privilégié elles aussi, du moins à leurs débuts, les productions des jeunes contemporains, mais l'informa-



fig. 5 Restaurant Hélène-de-Champlain, Île Sainte-Hélène. Une vue de l'exposition *Panorama de la peinture montréalaise*, tenue du 4 juin au 3 septembre 1956. On reconnaît à droite *Bleu-éclats* de Mousseau; sur la cimaise du fond: *L'oiseleur* de Paul-Vanier Beaulieu et *Iconic No. 4* de Marian Scott. Au fond, sur le mur de pierre, un tableau de Pellan et à la droite de l'homme assis, sans doute une des deux œuvres de Pierre Gauvreau intitulées *Peinture 1956*. (Photo: Ville de Montréal, Gestion de la documentation et des archives)

tion nous manque pour juger de leur trajectoire globale. Quant à la Galerie de l'Étable, son lien avec le Musée et sa polyvalence lui assignent une place à part, ce qui ne réduit en rien la portée exploratoire de son travail. Des expositions comme *Les Lyriques formalistes*, *La peinture non-figurative à Montréal* ou *L'internationalisme dans l'art canadien*, en 1960 et 1961, en sont la preuve.

Un tout petit pan de rideau

Ce bilan, bien que sommaire, démontre que les années cinquante ont été pour le milieu montréalais des galeries une période d'expansion et d'ouverture aux pratiques contemporaines. Ce développement particulier procédait d'un vaste mouvement de fond qui devait avoir des effets sur le plan des politiques de diffusion. C'est ainsi que plusieurs des galeries nouvellement créées s'intéressèrent aux pratiques d'avant-garde et s'en firent les porte-parole. Ce faisant, elles donnèrent surtout priorité aux productions québécoises et contribuèrent également à une certaine ouverture aux courants internationaux.

Le bilan semble donc positif encore que très général, car nous n'avons fait ici que cerner quelques grandes lignes qui se dégagent de cette chronologie. Pour en savoir davantage sur les modes et aboutissements des pratiques de diffusion dans

les années cinquante, il faudra nécessairement poursuivre le travail qui vient d'être amorcé, soit puiser aux faits déjà relevés et compléter l'information partout où cela s'avère nécessaire. L'étude attentive de ces données permettra de dire, par exemple, quel fut le rôle joué par les galeries pour la reconnaissance de l'art abstrait; quels types de recherches abstraites furent le plus favorablement accueillies; et aussi, où et comment elles ont été diffusées. Une telle analyse aiderait également à déterminer comment s'est faite l'ouverture aux courants internationaux; où et quand ont été présentées les productions contemporaines d'autres provinces et quel accueil leur a été réservé, etc.

La liste de questions pourrait s'allonger si notre but n'était non pas de l'épuiser, mais de rappeler plutôt, en terminant, que l'établissement de cette chronologie n'était en somme qu'un premier pas. La recherche est donc à poursuivre car le champ d'investigation est vaste et quasi intouché.

Quelques précisions sur l'organisation de la chronologie

Avant d'en venir aux notes de présentation sur les galeries et à la chronologie comme telle, voici en rappel quelques précisions sur le mode de notation des données et le type de renseignements qui y sont consignés.

À l'intérieur d'une année, nous indiquons, non pas les dates précises de chaque exposition, mais simplement le ou les mois durant lesquels elle a été présentée. Une entrée sur deux mois n'est pas une indication de durée. Elle signifie plutôt le chevauchement d'une exposition d'un mois sur l'autre. Après la date vient le nom du lieu inscrit sous forme abrégée. Pour faciliter la recherche, nous avons opté dans cette deuxième partie pour un classement des lieux par ordre alphabétique. Lorsque plusieurs expositions ont lieu de façon consécutive dans un même endroit et au cours d'une même période, nous les distinguons en les faisant précéder d'un tiret. Les lieux que nous appelons «improvisés» (*LI*) sont regroupés à la fin de chaque période et l'entrée de l'information inclut les adresses des différents lieux. Pour les expositions collectives, nous donnons, quand cela est possible, la liste de tous les exposants par ordre alphabétique, en précisant l'initiale pour le prénom et le patronyme, sauf s'il s'agit d'artistes moins connus ou ayant un homonyme. Pour les petites expositions de groupe, les noms apparaissent en entier. À la fin d'une énumération, «etc.» peut signifier que nous la savons incomplète ou que nous doutons qu'elle soit complète. Les contenus (peintures, dessins, sculptures) sont précisés dans la mesure de nos connaissances. Les titres des expositions sont placés entre guillemets et écrits tels que trouvés (i.e. en français, en anglais ou dans les deux langues). Un point d'interrogation indique un doute, par exemple, face à la tenue ou non d'une exposition à la date mentionnée, ou une lacune, par exemple, un prénom inconnu.

HÉLÈNE SICOTTE

Montréal

Notes brèves sur quelques galeries et lieux d'exposition

Artek

Magasin de meubles scandinaves, tissus et objets d'art décoratif contemporains sis au 278, rue Sherbrooke Ouest. En octobre 1958, Michel Lortie y organisa à l'étage une galerie d'art dont l'adresse, au 2020, rue Union, était distincte de celle du magasin. Des expositions faisant appel à toutes les tendances de l'art contemporain québécois y furent présentées jusqu'à la fin de l'été 1959⁶.

Centre Canadien d'Essai

Le Centre Canadien d'Essai (CCE) fut fondé par Natan Karczmar, en 1956, dans un but d'expérimentation théâtrale et littéraire. Des pièces du répertoire international y furent créées (Strindberg, Tchekhov, Courteline, Cocteau, Giraudoux, etc.), ainsi que des oeuvres inédites de jeunes auteurs canadiens. Il accueillit également des chorégraphes, des poètes et des chansonniers, comme Félix Leclerc et Hervé Brousseau, et publia les *Cahiers d'essai* à partir de janvier 1958.

Le Musée Canadien du Film d'Art était une autre réalisation de Karczmar. Il fut lancé en 1956. Durant la première année, les séances de films canadiens et étrangers avaient lieu dans des salles paroissiales ou à l'ONE, sur la rue Atwater. Puis, vers la fin de 1957, le Musée déménagea ses pénates à l'ÉBAM où des locaux lui furent prêtés, sans doute jusqu'en 1963⁷.

Enfin, le CCE fut l'instigateur du «Concours» et du Salon de la «jeune peinture», tous deux lancés en 1958, en collaboration avec l'ÉBAM et la Galerie Denyse Delrue⁸. Les règlements du concours stipulaient que tout artiste-peintre, âgé de moins de 30 ans, pouvait soumettre deux oeuvres n'excédant pas 12 pieds carrés. À la clôture des soumissions, un jury de trois personnes sélectionnait les pièces et accordait trois premiers prix de peinture, consistant en une exposition commune à la Galerie Denyse Delrue⁹. À partir de 1959, le Salon et le Concours furent élargis aux jeunes sculpteurs.

École des Beaux-arts de Montréal

L'École, logée au 628, rue Saint-Urbain depuis sa fondation en 1923, fut relocalisée au 125, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, en 1955, où elle demeura jusqu'à son annexion à l'UQAM, en 1969. À notre connaissance, rien de particulier n'est à signaler sur le plan des expositions au cours de la première moitié de la décennie, hormis les traditionnelles présentations annuelles de travaux d'élèves. Cette situation change au printemps 1957, lors de la mise sur pied d'un programme d'exposition d'art contemporain. Outre les Salons annuels de la jeune peinture et de la jeune sculpture, l'ÉBAM accueillit, entre autres, les deuxième et troisième Biennales de la peinture canadienne, en 1957 et 1959; le groupe torontois des «Painters Eleven», en 1958; l'exposi-

tion *Art Abstrait*, consacrée à sept peintres plasticiens québécois en hommage à Malévitch, Tauter-*Arp*, Mondrian, Van Doesburg et aux premiers Plasticiens de Montréal, en janvier 1959¹⁰, ainsi que la dernière exposition annuelle de l'Association des artistes non-figuratifs de Montréal (AANFM), en 1960.

Toute soudaine et radicale qu'ait paru cette action, elle n'en était pas moins retardataire par rapport à d'autres initiatives de collèges et universités de la région montréalaise. On se rappellera que c'est à l'automne 1955 que la Société artistique de l'Université de Montréal amorça son intervention dans le domaine des arts visuels et que l'École des Hautes études commerciales organisa sa grande *Exposition de peinture canadienne* (voir la première partie de cette chronologie). À l'ÉBAM toutefois, l'entreprise de diffusion ne fut pas d'abord l'oeuvre des étudiants, mais celle de son directeur, Robert Élie, entré en fonction à l'automne 1957¹¹. Dès le printemps suivant sa nomination, les expositions furent inaugurées dans une salle spécialement consacrée à cette fin¹². Cette activité se poursuivit jusqu'en 1961, c'est-à-dire pendant toute la durée du mandat de Robert Élie au poste de directeur.

Galerie Ars Classica

Cette galerie, qui annonçait une spécialisation en art classique, débuta vers 1957 au 1454, rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Elle exposa également des artistes canadiens contemporains.

Galerie de l'Étable

Galerie-annexe du MBAM, elle était située dans une ancienne étable, au 3424 de l'avenue Ontario, juste à l'arrière de l'édifice principal. Elle fut mise sur pied en avril 1959, grâce à une initiative des Jeunes associés du MBAM / *Junior Associates of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts* (JAMM). Transformée bientôt en galerie-restaurant¹³, elle offrit un programme annuel d'expositions, de concerts, de petits récitals et de pièces de théâtre jusqu'à la fermeture temporaire du Musée, en juillet 1973. Les travaux d'agrandissement et de rénovation entrepris à ce moment incluèrent, en effet, la démolition de l'édifice qui l'abritait¹⁴.

Notre couverture des activités de la Galerie, bien que très incomplète, puisque la chronologie s'arrête en 1961, met en évidence la diversité d'intérêts des jeunes associés. En témoignent les contenus d'expositions qui incorporent la peinture et la sculpture - surtout dans leurs formes contemporaines - de même que le design, la photographie, les arts graphiques et le théâtre.

Galerie Denyse Delrue

Cette galerie, inaugurée en septembre 1957, au rez-de-chaussée du 1520, rue Crescent, dans la maison du joaillier Georges Delrue, était dirigée par son épouse, Denyse Delrue. Pour cette galeriste, le but était d'abord de promouvoir les productions des jeunes artistes québécois, tout en appuyant la diffusion des arts graphiques, de la photographie, du film et de la poésie¹⁵.

En 1959, la galerie fut relocalisée et réaménagée sur deux étages au 2080, rue Crescent¹⁶. Quatre ans plus tard, la maison ferma ses portes. Denyse Delrue mit alors sur pied, avec d'autres associés, la Galerie du Siècle, une entreprise qui fut menée collectivement de 1963 à 1967¹⁷.

Galerie Lavigneur

Elle ouvre en octobre 1960, au 5817, rue Wolsley à Côte Saint-Luc, et prend le nom de sa propriétaire, Mme Jessie Lavigneur¹⁸.

Galerie l'Échange

Cette galerie, inaugurée le 3 décembre 1957, au 207, rue Prince-Arthur, se proposait d'organiser des expositions de peinture, sculpture et photographie, ainsi que des causeries et auditions musicales¹⁹. Henry Saxe et Yves Gaucher y exposèrent à leurs débuts.

Galerie Libre

Elle fut créée par Georges Delrue, en octobre 1959, et installée au 2100, rue Crescent, dans l'espace précédemment occupé par la Galerie Denyse Delrue. Suivant la politique établie par son propriétaire, la galerie se voulait «libre» d'accueillir toute forme de peinture sans qu'aucun critère, autre que le talent, ne préside au choix des artistes²⁰. Cette politique, telle qu'appliquée aux recherches contemporaines, s'avéra heureuse puisque la galerie renouvela ses calendriers d'expositions jusqu'en 1982. Georges Delrue s'occupa lui-même du travail de direction, de 1959 à 1961, puis il

fut relayé à cette tâche par Paul Mercier (1961-1962), Henri Barras (1962-1964), Marie-Hélène de Montjoye (1964-1973) et Hugo Delrue (1973-1982)²¹.

Galerie Monique de Grootte

Cette succursale montréalaise de la Galerie Monique de Grootte, une maison établie à Paris et à Bruxelles, ouvrit à l'automne 1957, au 1540, rue Crescent, sous la direction de Simon Dresdnère²². Sa spécialité était surtout l'art européen, mais elle s'attacha également les noms de quelques artistes canadiens contemporains. Ce nouvel intérêt devait être de courte durée puisque la galerie ferma ses portes en 1959.

Galerie Prédilection

Yves Groulx, un ancien de l'École du Meuble, était propriétaire de cet atelier de décoration intérieure et y présentait des expositions à l'occasion. Il instaura son commerce au 1494, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, vers 1956²³.

Galerie 1640

Galerie fondée en 1961 par Estelle Hecht et dédiée à la diffusion de la gravure contemporaine, canadienne et internationale. Elle logeait au 1640, rue Sherbrooke Ouest.

Galerie Simon Dresdnère

En 1959, peu après la fermeture de la Galerie Monique de Grootte, son directeur, Simon Dresdnère, ouvrit sa propre galerie au 2170, rue Crescent²⁴. Il lui conserva sensiblement la même

orientation axée sur la diffusion des «jeunes maîtres de l'École de Paris et (de) la peinture vivante du Canada²⁵».

George Waddington Gallery

Son propriétaire était originaire de Dublin (Irlande), où il avait dirigé une galerie en association avec son frère Victor. Il ouvrit ce nouvel espace au 1452, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, peu après son arrivée au Canada, en novembre 1956. Il y présenta surtout des artistes britanniques, irlandais et européens contemporains, puis s'intéressa aux productions canadiennes, dont celles de Derek May, Moe Reinblatt, Tom Hodgson, Harold Town, Karl May, Takao Tanabe, Ralph Allen et Tony Urquhart. Des travaux d'agrandissement et de rénovation, entrepris en 1958, firent dire au critique Rodolphe de Repentigny que cette galerie était «l'une des mieux aménagées de Montréal²⁶».

Restaurant Hélène-de-Champlain (Île Sainte-Hélène)

Au mois de novembre 1955, le Comité exécutif de la Ville de Montréal adopta une résolution visant à faire du grand hall du restaurant Hélène-de-Champlain un lieu d'exposition.²⁷ (fig.5) Suivant une proposition de Claude Robillard, directeur du Service des parcs, de grandes expositions collectives annuelles compléteraient la programmation durant la saison touristique. Elles comprendraient une section peinture dans le restaurant, une section sculpture à l'extérieur et de l'artisanat dans l'enceinte des

casernes²⁸. Un jury annuel, composé d'artistes et de représentants du Service des parcs, était prévu²⁹. Quant au projet plus général, il fut lancé en janvier 1956, avec une exposition de Normand Hudon, et poursuivi, en février, avec la présentation inaugurale de l'AANFM. Au terme de la première saison, on estima que 75 000 visiteurs avaient vu les quelque dix expositions mises à l'affiche³⁰. L'année suivante, 491 oeuvres provenant de 180 artistes furent exposées³¹. Après l'été 1959, le programme sembla perdre un peu de sa vitalité première, mais n'en fut pas moins poursuivi jusqu'au début des années soixante.

Studio 9

Il s'agissait tout à la fois d'un groupe et d'un lieu. Le groupe prit ce nom car l'atelier du 1325, rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest, où il se forma vers 1952, ne pouvait recevoir plus de neuf personnes. La composition du groupe et le nombre de ses membres varièrent au fil des ans, mais la participation féminine y demeura toujours prédominante. Marjorie Bird Avison, Mary Bruce et Edna Tedeschi figuraient parmi les membres-fondateurs. Aucun médium particulier n'y était privilégié, ce qui explique le contenu multidisciplinaire de ses expositions qui, précisons-le, n'avaient pas toujours lieu au Studio 9³².

Notes

- 1 La *Robert Oliver Gallery*, signalée par le critique Robert AYRE en 1947, nous incite à croire qu'il faudrait y regarder de plus près car les années trente et quarante demeurent, à maints égards, des périodes encore mal connues. Voir «Montreal as an art centre», *Canadian Art*, vol. IV, n° 4, été 1947, p.173.
- 2 Lucien Parizeau avait d'abord été journaliste à *La Patrie* (Montréal) et au *Canada* (Montréal), puis éditorialiste à *L'Ordre* (Montréal). En 1943, il avait fondé sa propre maison d'édition où venait de paraître, en 1944, *Les Îles de la nuit* d'Alain Grandbois, illustré par Pellan.
- 3 Ajoutons que François Hertel, Marcel Parizeau, de Tonnancour, Borduas et Pellan siégeaient sur le jury du «Salon de la jeune peinture», organisé par cette galerie, en 1945. Paul ROCHON, «Au pinceau jeune chez Parizeau», *La Patrie* (Montréal), 21 avril 1945, p.36 et Éloi de GRANDMONT, «Exposition d'un grand intérêt chez Parizeau», *Le Canada* (Montréal), 16 avril 1945.
- 4 Lucienne, épouse de Louis Lange de la Galerie L'Art français, l'aura peut-être précédée, bien que son rôle dans la mise sur pied de cette galerie, en 1934, ne nous soit pas très bien connu. Il faut souligner que, contrairement à Mme Lange, Rose Millman s'était lancée seule dans l'aventure.
- 5 Tel que précisé dans la première partie de cette chronologie, nous sommes actuellement à préparer une exposition sur la Galerie Agnès Lefort. Si la publication escomptée prend forme, elle contiendra une analyse de la trajectoire de cette galerie.
- 6 Lortie y accueillit entre autres les Plasticiens qui, de son avis, «étaient considérés avec méfiance par les autres galeries». Cité dans un article anonyme, «Une nouvelle galerie d'art: Artek», *La Presse syndicale* (Montréal), 15 octobre 1958, p.9.
- 7 Un «comité d'honneur» appuyait le travail de Karczmar. Le premier fut composé de: MM. Jules Bazin, Maurice Blackburn, Trefflé Boulanger, le juge Fabre-Surveyer, Claude Janin, Norman McLaren, Jean Papineau-Couture, Rodolphe de Repentigny, le marquis de Ruzé d'Effiat, Claude Robillard et Jacques de Tonnancour. Anon., «Un Musée Canadien du film d'Art», *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 15 décembre 1956.
- 8 Agnès Lefort avait déjà tenu un «Salon de la jeune peinture», en décembre 1950 (voir la première partie de notre chronologie), mais elle n'était pas la première à reprendre cette formule parisienne. La Galerie Parizeau avait, en effet, créé son propre Salon en avril 1945, soit un bon cinq ans avant celui de Lefort et douze ans avant celui du CCE.
- 9 Un comité spécial, dit «de patronage», composé en majorité de personnalités du milieu artistique, secondait le CCE dans l'organisation du Salon. Celui de 1958 réunissait: Denyse Delrue, Jacques de Tonnancour, Léon Bellefleur, Stanley Cosgrove et Robert Élie. Anon., «Salon et concours de «la jeune peinture»; un concours de poésie», *La Presse* (Montréal), 3 mars 1958.
- 10 Voir Fernande SAINT-MARTIN, *Art Abstrait*, catalogue d'exposition, Montréal, École des beaux-arts de Montréal, 12 au 27 janvier 1959.
- 11 Romancier, ancien journaliste et professeur, membre du Conseil des arts de Montréal, Robert Élie fut aussi, dès les années quarante, un fervent défenseur de l'art moderne à Montréal. Il participa à la Société d'art contemporain et publia, en 1943, une étude portant sur Paul-Émile Borduas. Sous sa direction, l'ÉBAM accéda à une plus grande liberté académique et elle s'ouvrit aux courants modernes internationaux. Ce directeur, qui avait lui-même été élu par les professeurs, vit également à rajeunir le corps professoral en embauchant des gens comme Albert Dumouchel, Jean-Paul Mousseau, André Jasmin, Mario Merola et Robert Wolfe. Sur le tournant opéré à l'École dans le domaine des expositions, voir Rodolphe DE REPENTIGNY, «Expositions. Coup d'oeil sur la saison dernière», *Vie des Arts* (Montréal), n° 11, été 1958, p.44. Et, du même auteur, un article sous-titré «Virage à l'École des Beaux-Arts», *La Presse* (Montréal), 30 mai 1959.

- 12 Rodolphe DE REPENTIGNY, «Dans les galeries», *Vie des Arts* (Montréal), n° 14, printemps 1959, p.32.
- 13 Au grand déplaisir d'ailleurs de Guy ROBERT, qui mentionne le fait dans *L'École de Montréal: situation et tendances*, Bruges, Saint-Augustin, 1964, p.4-5.
- 14 Nous remercions Gilbert Caron, chef du Service de la gestion de la documentation au MBAM, qui nous a fourni cette précision.
- 15 Très rapidement, de par son orientation et la modernité de son concept d'aménagement, cette galerie se gagna la sympathie des critiques. De Repentigny la décrivait ainsi: «Les murs sont blancs - mais grâce à la pierre ronde dont ils sont faits, ils ont une texture «naturelle» qui empêche toute monotonie. Le plafond en liège brun empêche également que l'on se sente captif dans un bloc de lumière; le tapis gris qui recouvre le plancher a une valeur intermédiaire entre plafond et murs et empêche ainsi que le plafond ait un effet écrasant». À l'unisson avec ses confrères René Chicoine et Paul Gladu, il vanta l'originalité du travail de l'architecte Jean-Paul Pottier, mais divergea d'opinion avec eux quant à la qualité de l'éclairage. Les lampes mobiles au plafond avaient «bonne allure», selon lui, mais elles ne permettaient pas un éclairage homogène. Voir DE REPENTIGNY, «Échos d'événements futurs», *La Presse* (Montréal), 7 septembre 1957 et «Une galerie adaptée à la peinture», *La Presse* (Montréal), 21 septembre 1957. Paul GLADU, «La Galerie Denyse Delrue, un nouveau temple de nos artistes», *Le Petit Journal* (Montréal), 22 septembre 1957 et René CHICOINE, «Formes et couleurs. La porte secrète», *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 25 septembre 1959.
- 16 Des salles étaient réservées à la collection permanente, d'autres aux expositions temporaires. Des commentateurs firent valoir cette amélioration et la nouvelle apparence physique des lieux. Jean SARRAZIN, par exemple, vanta la sobriété du décor de style classique qui tranchait avec le modernisme précédemment adopté et dénotait, selon lui, un souci de complaire à une clientèle plus conservatrice. Dans l'opinion du critique, ce recul des anciennes visées avant-gardistes n'avait rien que de très positif, car, en liquidant son penchant «bohème», la Galerie démontrait avoir enfin «franchi le cap de l'adolescence», dans «La nouvelle galerie Denyse Delrue ouvre ses portes», *La Presse* (Montréal), 10 octobre 1959. Il va sans dire que cette idée, suivant laquelle c'est le critère de rentabilité économique qui atteste, au premier chef, de la maturité d'une galerie (entendons de la validité de ses objectifs de diffusion) a fait long feu.
- 17 En 1968, Denyse Delrue ouvrit une nouvelle galerie sur la rue Saint-Sulpice. En 1983, elle devait revenir s'établir dans l'ouest de la ville. Il faut noter, cependant, que ce travail de galeriste ne fut pas mené de façon continue. Yves ROBILLARD nous apprend, en effet, qu'elle occupa divers emplois en 1972-1973 et travailla en Afrique, de 1976 à 1980. Dans «L'histoire des galeries Denyse Delrue», *Cahiers des Arts visuels au Québec*, vol. 7, n° 27, automne 1985, p.3.
- 18 GLADU, «À la (nouvelle) galerie d'art Lavigueur. Peinture canadienne de Lemieux à Bellefleur», *Le Petit Journal* (Montréal), 30 octobre 1960.
- 19 Anon., «Une nouvelle galerie d'art est inaugurée», *La Presse* (Montréal), 4 décembre 1957.
- 20 GLADU, «La Galerie Libre. Le rendez-vous du talent», *Le Petit Journal* (Montréal), semaine du 23 août 1959 et CHICOINE, «Formes et couleurs. Une nouvelle galerie», *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 20 octobre 1959.
- 21 Cette précision nous a été apportée par Monsieur Georges Delrue, lors d'une entrevue téléphonique, le 26 avril 1994.
- 22 La publicité unilingue anglophone émanant de cette succursale d'une maison française fit dire à Rodolphe de REPENTIGNY: «J'avoue que lorsqu'une «Gallery of Paris and Brussels» invite à un «show of contemporary French paintings», cela ne me dit rien qui vaille». Voir «Une galerie adaptée à la peinture», *La Presse* (Montréal), 21 septembre 1957.
- 23 On sait que Claude Vermette y exposa au début de 1957. Toutefois, une annonce placée

dans le numéro de novembre-décembre 1956 de la revue *Vie des Arts* (p.43), pourrait indiquer la date probable de création de l'atelier-galerie.

24 Originaire de Roumanie, Dresdnère avait d'abord été romancier. Il dirigea cette galerie à Montréal pendant quelque temps, puis transféra ses activités à Toronto. Voir Gerry MCNEIL, «Simon Dresdnere (*sic*), un prospecteur de peintres», source non identifiée (*Le Devoir* ?), 8 août 1961.

25 Suivant une annonce publiée dans *Vie des Arts* (Montréal), n° 14, printemps 1959.

26 Il précisa: «...c'est même la seule (galerie) où une exposition collective puisse être présentée sans crainte d'encombrement (...) Quant à l'éclairage et à la couleur des murs, cette galerie privée l'emporte bien sur le Musée...». René Chicoine rétorqua: «Du strict point de vue de l'harmonie, on eût pu souhaiter un gris moins affirmatif, cernant moins les tableaux». Voir DE REPENTIGNY, «Quelques noms à retenir», *La Presse* (Montréal), 21 mars 1959 et CHICOINE, «Formes et couleurs. La rue Sherbrooke s'agrandit...», *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 13 août 1959.

27 Ce restaurant, baptisé ainsi par le Conseil exécutif de la Ville de Montréal, en octobre 1954, avait été inauguré en juillet 1955. Anon., «Ouverture du restaurant Hélène de Champlain», *La Patrie* (Montréal), 3 juillet 1955.

28 Outre Claude Robillard, qui fut l'organisateur et le principal artisan de cette réalisation de l'administration Drapeau, mentionnons, parmi ses proches collaborateurs, Bernard Beaupré, dont le travail fut remarqué par de Repentigny en 1956, ainsi que Jean Bertrand, qui l'assista aux expositions et qui, nous précisa Paul Gladu, était le frère de Reynald (alias E.R. Bertrand, critique d'art à *La Presse* dans les années trente). Entrevue du 6 mai 1993 avec M. Gladu. Le commentaire de DE REPENTIGNY, se trouve dans «Images et plastiques. Notre jeune sculpture fait son bilan», *La Presse* (Montréal), 9 juin 1956.

29 Sur les débuts du programme, voir un article anonyme intitulé «Projet visant à développer l'Île Ste-Hélène comme centre culturel», *Montréal-Matin*, 26 novembre 1955. Voir également aux archives de la Ville de Montréal, le dossier 112.624 contenant le projet de convention entre les exposants et le Service des parcs. On y prévoyait, entre autres, que les artistes devaient accrocher et décrocher eux-mêmes leurs oeuvres. Merci à M. Mario Robert, responsable du Centre de documentation de la Ville de Montréal, qui a facilité nos recherches.

30 DE REPENTIGNY, «L'art à la portée d'un vaste public», *La Presse* (Montréal), 24 novembre 1956.

31 DE REPENTIGNY, «L'an dernier, 180 artistes ont exposé à l'Île Ste-Hélène», *La Presse* (Montréal), 18 janvier 1958.

32 Anon., «Le Studio 9 à l'Île Sainte-Hélène», *La Presse* (Montréal), 4 avril 1957.

Abréviations

GALERIES, INSTITUTIONS ET AUTRES LIEUX D'EXPOSITION:

AC	Arts Club
Ak	Artek
CG	Continental Gallery
DG	Dominion Gallery
ÉBAM	École des Beaux-arts de Montréal
GAC	Galerie Ars Classica
GAF	Galerie L'Art français
GAL	Galerie Agnès Lefort
GDD	Galerie Denyse Delrue
GÉ	Galerie L'Échange
GÉta	Galerie de l'Étable
GL	Galerie Libre
GLA	Galerie L'Actuelle
GLav	Galerie Lavigueur
GMdG	Galerie Monique de Groot
GNC	Galerie nationale du Canada (Musée des beaux-arts du Canada)
GP	Galerie Prédilection
GSD	Galerie Simon Dresdnère
GWG	George Waddington Gallery
G12	Galerie XII du MBAM
G1640	Galerie 1640
ISH	Îles Sainte-Hélène
MBAM	Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal
McGILL	Université McGill
RÉ	Restaurant L'Échourie
RHdC	Restaurant Hélène-de-Champlain
UdM	Université de Montréal
UdS	Université de Sherbrooke
WAG	Watson Art Gallery
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
LI	<i>Lieux improvisés d'exposition</i>

Chronologie des expositions

Deuxième partie: 1956 à 1961

1956

- janvier **DG**
«La peinture canadienne depuis
Krieghoff»
GLA
Ulysse Comtois (peintures)
UdM
Ozias Leduc, organisée par Jean-
René Ostiguy à la GNC
- janv.-fév. **GLA**
«Art d'aujourd'hui»: P.-É. Borduas,
G. Corbeil, P. Ewen, S. Francis,
J. McEwen, J.-P. Mousseau,
J.-P. Riopelle
G12
Louis Archambault et Jacques de
Tonnancour
RHdC
Normand Hudon
UdM
Réal Arsenault
- février **GAL**
Rowell Bowles (peintures)
GLA
Louis Belzile et Fernand Toupin
(peintures)
G12
Frances-Anne Johnston et
Frederick Taylor
MBAM
Rétrospective de l'oeuvre de
David Milne
UdM
Jesus C. de Vilallonga
- fév.-mars **GLA**
Rita Letendre
RHdC
Anne Greenstein, Eva Landori,
Sonia Waldstein
- fév.-avril **RHdC**
«Premier Salon des non-figuratifs»
de l'Association des artistes non-
figuratifs de Montréal (AANFM)¹:
M. Barbeau, J.-P. Beaudin,
L. Bellefleur, L. Belzile, R. Blair,
G. Botremans, P. Bourassa,
U. Comtois, G. Delrue, P. Ewen,
P. Garneau, P. Gauvreau,
R. Giguère, J. Goguen, J. Iliu,
A. Jasmin, Jauran, J.-P. Jérôme,
N. Lajoie, P. Landsley, F. Leduc,
R. Letendre, J. McEwen, R. Millet,
G. Molinari, L. Morin,
J.-P. Mousseau, M. Raymond,
T. Simard, C. Tousignant,
F. Toupin, G. Tremblay, R. Truchon
et G. Webber
- mars **MBAM**
Barbara Hepworth (sculptures et
dessins)
UdM
André Jasmin, 1943-1955
- mars-avril **DG**
Ghitta Caiserman
GLA
Jean-Paul Mousseau
G12
Gisela Lamprecht et Moe Reinblatt
- avril **GAL**
Georges Spiro (peintre français)
GLA
Jean Bertrand (aquarelles)
- avril-mai **MBAM**
73^e Salon du printemps
RHdC
Arthur Lismar
- mai **GLA**
Serge Charchoune (peintre français)
G12
James B. Shearer et Peter Whalley

- mai-juin **GAL**
 Paul-Émile Borduas (28 aquarelles de 1950-1955)
GLA
 Claude Tousignant
MBAM
 «A Half-Century of Picasso» (gravures)
RHdC
 Adrienne Hébert
LI
 Exposition dans le nouveau développement domiciliaire de Prévilles, organisée par la Société des arts plastiques de Québec, en collaboration avec la municipalité de Prévilles et Claude Picher du Musée de la Province: E. Alleyne, R. Briansky, C. Coleman, G. Denis, F. Desrochers-Drolet, D. Duncan, H. Fauteux-Massé, P. Garneau, J.-P. Jérôme, A. Kahane, M. Laliberté, E. Landori, J.-P. Lemieux, M. Maltais, D. Matte, M. Merola, C. Picher, A. Pinchuk, R. Roussil, M. Scott, E. Tedeschi, F. Toupin, R. Truchon, A. Vaillancourt, G. Webber, etc.
- juin **GLA**
 Robert Blair (peintures et encres)
MBAM
 Salvador Dalí (sculptures et bijoux de la collection de la Fondation Catherwood)
- juin-juil. **GAL**
 «Gravures européennes et canadiennes contemporaines: H.G. Adam, P.-V. Beaulieu, G. Braque, Carzou, Cézanne, A. Clavé, Y. de Lucca, R. Dufy, A. Dumouchel, J. Friedlander, P. Gendron, H. Hartung, A. Kahane, V. Kandinsky, E. Landori, Le Corbusier, S. Lewis, D. Matte, K. Minami, J. Miro, Picasso, M. Vertes, O. Zadkine, Zao Wou-Ki
- juillet **ISH**
 Sculptures en plein air:
 L. Archambault, M. Bartolini, M. Bellerive, P. Bourassa,
- M. Braitstein, C. Daudelin, C. Fainmel, André Gauvin, H.W. Jones, A. Kahane, S. Kennedy, Maurice Lemieux, S. Lewis, Yvon Meunier, Elizabeth Palfreeman, R. Roussil, Louis Salette, Hans M. Schlee, J. Ivor Smith, F. Toupin. Et, dans l'enceinte des casernes: peintures murales de Sylvia Lefkowitz
RHdC
 «Panorama de la peinture montréalaise»: H. Beament, P.-V. Beaulieu, J. Beder, L. Bellefleur, R. Blair, P.-É. Borduas, L. Bouchard, G. Caiserman, A. Cloutier, S. Cosgrove, Françoise Dansereau, C. Daudelin, J. de Tonnancourt, John Ellison, H. Fauteux-Massé, P. Gauvreau, A. Hébert, H. Heimlich, F. Leduc, I. Legendre, Émile Lemieux, A. Lismer, J. Lyman, R. Mount, J.-P. Mousseau, L. Muhlstock, L. Torrance Newton, F. Pagnuelo, A. Pellan, Robert W. Pilot, A. Pinsky, Roland Proulx, M. Raymond, M. Reinblatt, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Roberts, M. Scott, Leslie Smith, Christo Stefanoff, F.B. Taylor, G. Tremblay
- juil.-août **LI**
 Exposition en plein air au Carré Saint-Louis, organisée par Marc Pilon de Radio-Canada, en collaboration avec le Service des parcs: L. Ayotte, P. Bourassa, F. Déziel, P. Gauvreau, G. Ouvrard, C. Picard, G. Sined, etc. (certains de ces artistes seront sélectionnés pour une exposition au RHdC)
- août **MBAM**
 «Arts du Québec» dans le cadre du Festival de Montréal (14 membres de l'AANFM y participent)
- août-oct. **YWCA**
 H. Beament, G. Caiserman, S. Cosgrove, D. Duncan, E. Goldberg, W.J. Kinnis, P. Landsley, J.-P. Mousseau, L. Muhlstock, R.W. Pilot,

- A. Pinsky, G. Roberts, D. Ruddick,
M. Scott, L. Symons, etc.
- septembre **GAL**
Normand Hudon (collages)
G12
Jean-Paul Riopelle et Jean Cartier
MBAM
«Canadian Artists Abroad»:
17 peintres canadiens dont Roloff
Beny, A. Biéler, L. Brooks, J. de
Tonnancour, J. Humphrey, F. Leduc,
James MacDonald, A. Pellan, Joe
Plaskett, G. Roberts, William
Roberts, T. Tanabe, ? Willer,
Y. Wilson
- sept.-oct. **GLA**
«Peinture américaine contempo-
raine»: Paul Brach, Fritz Bultman,
Frank Celentano, Sanford
Greenberg, James Harvey,
Raymond Henler, Felrath Hines,
Hans Hokanson, Robert Keyser,
Franz Metz, Hans Moller, Earl
Olsen, Neal Thomas (de la Galerie
Parma de New York)
MBAM
Murales de Dorothy Cole Ruddick
pour le *Montreal Children's Hospital*
RHdC
Première exposition annuelle des
«Moins de 30 ans»
- octobre **DG**
Marian Scott
GAL
Denys Matte
G12
Louis Belzile et Fernand Toupin
RHdC
Alfred Monros (peintre espagnol)
UdM
Philippe Émond
YWCA
André Zadorozny, Thelma Lee et
Marc Singleton
- oct.-nov. **GLA**
Fernand Leduc (ses peintures et une
tapisserie de sa conception, exécutée
par Mariette Rousseau-Vermette)
- G12**
René Content et René Durocher
- novembre **DG**
Peintres français contemporains:
R. Bezombes, Jean Dufy, Edzard,
Eizendieck, Foujita, Gall, Gomery,
M. Laurencin, Adrien le
Boulevardier, Mané-Katz, Roland
Oudot, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Van
Dongen, etc.
GAL
«Gravures européennes modernes»:
H.G. Adam, B. Buffet, E. Degas,
M. Estève, J. Friedlander, E. Goerg,
S. Hayter, M. Marini, Matisse,
Picasso, O. Redon, G. Rouault,
Toulouse-Lautrec, etc.
GLA
Jean McEwen
MBAM
«Negro Sculpture» (oeuvres des col-
lections du D^r Aimé Pelletier, de
M. et Mme J. Justin Lang, de M. et
Mme René Chicoine, du D^r et de
Mme Paul Dumas et d'autres collec-
tions anonymes)
UdM
«Peintres italo-canadiens», organi-
sée par le Centre canadien de cul-
ture italienne *Dante Alighieri*:
Mario Aitomi, Umberto Brandigi,
Umberto Bruni, Giuseppe Damiani,
Giuseppe Fiore, Francesco Iacurto,
G. Nincheri et Alberto Tommi
UdS
«Exposition de peintures et sculp-
tures canadiennes», organisée par
Monique Voyer et Fernand Toupin:
L. Bellefleur, L. Belzile, P. Ewen,
H. Fauteux-Massé, A. Jasmin,
J.-P. Jérôme, H.W. Jones, A. Kahane,
E. Landori, F. Leduc, M. Raymond,
R. Roussil, M. Scott, F. Toupin et
M. Voyer
LI
Rétrospective d'Alfred Pellan dans
le hall de l'Hôtel de Ville de
Montréal (exposition du Musée
d'art moderne de Paris)
—
Françoise Pagnuelo à l'Hôtel
Ritz-Carlton

- nov.-déc. **GLA**
Léon Bellefleur (dessins)
G12
Irène Legendre et Pierre Clerk
RHdC
Douze femmes peintres:
C. Coleman, C. Fauteux, L. Gadbois,
L. Genush, E. Landori, Anne
Levine, Ethel Lindsay, F. Pagnuelo,
N. Pervouchine, Anne Salzedo,
A. Savage et Sonia Waldstein
- décembre **G12**
Le Studio 9: Mary Bruce, Louise
Cimon, Malenka Hruby, Pat
Kingsmill, Betty Palfreeman et
Edna Tedeschi
YWCA
Brodie Shearer
- 1957
- janvier **GLA**
Nathalie Pervouchine (collages)
GWG
Gérard Dillon, J.J. Gaillard, Nevil
Johnson, André Lhote, Daniel
O'Neil, Paul Pauchal
G12
Cecil Buller et Cleve Horne
RÉ
Kornell Bibor (reprise des exposi-
tions après un an d'interruption)
RHdC
Léo Ayotte, Joseph Giunta, John C.
Little et Byron Randall
LI
Claude Gauvreau (dessins) au 75,
rue Sherbrooke Ouest
- janv.-fév. **G12**
Art Price et Sylvia Lefkowitz
MBAM
- Ossip Zadkine (sculptures et
gouaches)
- «Trente-cinq peintres dans l'actua-
lité / 35 Painters of Today», orga-
nisée conjointement par les étu-
diants de l'Université de Montréal
et de l'Université McGill:
- E. Alleyn, P.-V. Beaulieu,
L. Bellefleur, S. Bergeron, J. Bonet,
P.-É. Borduas, G. Caiserman,
S. Cosgrove, J. Dallaire, J. de
Tonnancour, A. Dumouchel, P. Ewen,
P. Fillion, J. Fox, André Garant,
P. Gauvreau, J. Iliu, A. Jasmin,
H.W. Jones, F. Leduc, J.-P. Lemieux,
D. Morisset, J.-P. Mousseau,
A. Pellan, C. Picher, M. Reinblatt,
J. Rhéaume, J.-P. Riopelle,
G. Roberts, Éliane Roy, M. Scott,
P. Surrey, G. Tondino, M. Voyer et
G. Webber
- février **DG**
Paul-Vanier Beaulieu
GLA
Marcelle Maltais (encres)
RÉ
A.A. Olssen
RHdC
«Artistes officiels des Forces armées
du Canada (1939-1945)», organisée
en collaboration avec la GNC:
E. Aldwinckle, A. Bayefsky,
H. Beament, B. et M. Bobak,
M. Brittain, L. Brooks, A. Cloutier,
C. Comfort, O. Fisher, M. Forster,
C. Goldhamer, L.P. Harris,
E. Holgate, E. Hughes, A. Law,
T.R. MacDonald, J. Nichols,
W. Ogilvie, M. Reinblatt,
G. Roberts, C. Schaefer, C. Tinning
et T. Wood
LI
René Durocher, Gilles Gauvreau et
Betty Sutherland au Monument
National
- fév.-mars **GAL**
Marcel Barbeau, Yolande Paquette
et Pierre-Paul Riou
GLA
Guy Borremans (photographies)
G12
Gilles Derome et Jeanne Rhéaume
MBAM
L'AANFM (deuxième exposition
annuelle): 33 exposants dont
3 artistes invités (50 oeuvres)

- RHdC**
 «Cinq peintres de Calgary»:
 M. Bates, R. Kiyooka, J. Mitchell,
 R. Spickert et W.L. Stevenson
UdM
 «Photographies 57»: 23 photographes:
 R. Arsenaault, M. Brault, Jauran,
 C. Jutras, B. Longpré, R. Millet,
 J.-P. Mousseau, etc.
WAG
 John Fox
LI
 Denise Couture-Beaudin (dessins) et
 Janine Leroux (gravures) dans le hall
 du théâtre du Gesù
- mars **DG**
 James Wilson Morrice
GLA
 Harold Town (monotypes)
G12
 T.R. MacDonald et Clare Bice
RÉ
 Rita Risemarin
RHdC
 «Première exposition des Arts
 Plastiques de la Télévision»: dessins
 et costumes de la télévision de
 Radio-Canada
UdM
 Le Retable, groupe de renouveau de
 l'art sacré, fondé à Joliette par
 Wilfrid Corbeil, c.s.v.
WAG
 John Steegman
LI
 «Aspects de la peinture canadienne
 de Krieghoff à Mousseau», au
 Collège Saint-Laurent
- mars-avril **GLA**
 Gérard Tremblay (aquarelles)
G12
 Graeme H. Ross et Rose Wiselberg
- avril **GAC**
 Janine Leroux
GAL
 Marcelle Ferron (peintures 1953-
 1957)
GLA
 Guy Ouvrard (céramiques)
- GWG**
 - William Armstrong
 - Stanley Cosgrove, Moe Reinblatt,
 Goodridge Roberts, Jori Smith et
 Gentile Tondino
RÉ
 Barbara Barchovzeff
RHdC
 «Peintures, sculptures, gravures et
 céramiques du Studio 9»: Marjorie
 Bird Avison, Mary Bruce, Louise
 Cimon, Malenka Hruby, Pat
 Kingsmill, Betty Palfreeman et
 Edna Tedeschi
- avril-mai **GLA**
 Mashel Teitelbaum
MBAM
 - 74^e Salon du printemps
 - «Canadian Ceramics 1957 /
 Céramiques 57»
- mai **AC**
 Luba Genush et Thomas K. Kessler
GAF
 S. de Belabre, J. Bonet, S. Lefkowitz,
 H. Masson, J. Rhéaume et
 C. Robert
GAL
 - Allan Harrison (dessins)
 - Dorothy MacLennan (peintures)
GLA
 Guido Molinari (calligraphies) et
 Claude Tousignant (aquarelles)
GP
 Jean-Paul Mousseau et Claude
 Vermette
MBAM
 Projets de décoration murale pour le
City Centre Building de Montréal
 par 31 artistes canadiens (premier
 prix à Alfred Pelland dont le dessin a
 été réalisé par le muraliste Josef
 Iliu)
RÉ
 L. Jacques Marchand
RHdC
 Catherine Gensonnet et Roland
 Lebrun
- mai-juin **ÉBAM**
 «Deuxième Biennale de peinture
 canadienne» (en collaboration avec

- la GNC où s'est tenue la première Biennale en mai 1955): parmi les exposants: L. Bellefleur, P.-É. Borduas, A. Colville, A. Dumouchel, J.-P. Lemieux, J.-P. Riopelle, W. Ronald, J. de Tonnancour et H. Town
- GAL**
«Gravures et dessins de maîtres français»: H.G. Adam, P. Bonnard, G. Braque, Cézanne, A. Clavé, M. Chagall, R. Dufy, M. Estève, H. Fantin-Latour, J.L. Forain, J. Friedlander, F. Léger, J. Miro, Picasso, G. Rouault, Y. Tanguy, M. Vlaminck, etc.
- juin-juill. **GAC**
Naracha Wrangel
- juin-sept. **ISH**
Exposition de sculptures en plein air dans l'enceinte des casernes
RHdC
«Les peintres de Montréal»: L. Bellefleur, G. Caiserman², S. Cosgrove, J. de Tonnancour, J. Lyman, A. Pellan, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Roberts et M. Scott
WAG
«Peintres canadiens»: H. Beament, L. Brooks, S. Cosgrove, J. Fox, E. Goldberg, A.Y. Jackson, J. Lyman, R. W. Pilot, J. Rhéaume, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Roberts, P. Surrey, etc.
YWCA
LAANFM
- août **MBAM**
«Les arts du Québec»
- septembre **GWG**
George Wallace (peintre irlandais)
- sept.-oct. **DG**
«Quatre peintres canadiens à l'étranger»: P.-V. Beaulieu, P.-É. Borduas, L. Petley-Jones, J.-P. Riopelle
GDD
Exposition inaugurale: P.-V. Beaulieu, L. Bellefleur, P.-É. Borduas, J. Dallaire, C. Daudelin, J. de Tonnancour, A. Dumouchel, P. Émond, P. Ewen, ? Fillion, R. Giguère, A.Y. Jackson, A. Jasmin, D. Juneau, A. Kahane, F. Leduc, J. McEwen, J.-P. Mousseau, A. Pellan, J.-P. Riopelle et G. Tremblay
MBAM
«Young Contemporaries 1957», organisée par le *London Public Library and Art Museum* (33 tableaux d'artistes ayant de 20 à 30 ans): P. Landsley, J.-P. Mousseau, etc.
- octobre **GAL**
Henry Wanton Jones (28 peintures et 8 sculptures)
GDD
André Jasmin
GMDG
«Peintres européens contemporains»: Bernard Buffet, Antoni Clavé, André Marchand, etc.
GWG
«Six peintres canadiens»: Robert Hedrick, Tom Hodgson, Kazuo Nakamura, Marthe Rakine, Takao Tanabe et Harold Town
G12
Patrick Landsley et Gentile Tondino
RÉ
Kornell Bibor
UdM
«Céramiques, sculptures, émaux, orfèvrerie et joaillerie»: Louis Archambault, Jacques Barbeau, J.-B. Bergeron, J. Bonet, J. Cartier, S. Daoust, G. Delrue, G. Derome, F. Desrochers-Drolet, S. Guité, H.W. Jones, A. Kahane, S. Kennedy, Gabriel Lucas, R.A. Monna, D. Morisset, P. Normandeau, R. Roussil, J. Ivor Smith, F. Toupin, A. Vaillancourt, etc.
YWCA
Klaus Spiecker
LI
Pierre de Ligny Boudreau (huiles et aquarelles) au 1093, de la Côte du Beaver Hall

- oct.-nov. **GAC**
René Chicoine
GAL
Anne Kahane
GDD
Roland Giguère
McGILL
Exposition en plein air sur le campus,
près de la bibliothèque Redpath:
Pierre Bourassa, Romualdas
Bukauskas, Sarah Jackson, Sybil
Kennedy, Art Price, etc.
RHdC
Jean-Antoine Demers et André
Jasmin
UdM
Eaux-fortes, gravures sur bois, litho-
graphies et sérigraphies récentes
d'artistes canadiens, organisée par le
Conseil des arts des étudiants des
universités du Canada: E. Alleyn,
P.-V. Beaulieu, L. Bellefleur,
B. Bobak, A. Colville, J. de
Tonnancour, A. Dumouchel,
A. Jasmin, H. Town, etc.
L'exposition sera présentée à la
bibliothèque de l'Université McGill,
du 10 au 17 novembre
- novembre **ÉBAM**
Exposition du Concours artistique
de la Province de Québec
GDD
- Léon Bellefleur
- Gérard Tremblay
GWG
Karl May (de Toronto)
G12
Frances Benjamin et Monique Voyer
MBAM
The Canadian Group of Painters
RHdC
«Canadian Housing Design Council»
LI
Gérard Brault au 70, rue
Fairmount Est
—
Yargo de Lucca au 1442, rue
Sherbrooke Ouest
—
Stanley B. Wilson au 231,
avenue Elm, Westmount
- nov.-déc. **GWG**
Moe Reinblatt (dessins et pastels)
G12
Marcelle Maltais et François Soucy
MBAM
«Contemporary British Lithographs»
RHdC
Deuxième exposition annuelle des
«Moins de 30 ans» (jury: R. de
Repentigny, J. de Tonnancour,
Mme Rudden du Conseil des arts de
Montréal et G. Viau): L. Belzile,
G. Boisvert, G. Constant,
P. Daglish, P. Fillion, Léonard Fligel,
P. Gendron, Carroll Guérin,
Heather Hope, J. Hurtubise,
R. Letendre, M. Maltais, D. May,
G. Molinari, J. Nesbitt, Y. Rajotte,
Gérard Savoie, Shklar-Ballon,
F. Soucy, Titus, F. Toupin,
G. Tremblay, M. Voyer, etc.
LI
Jordi Bonet à l'Hôtel Ritz-Carlton,
par le soins de Mme Marcoux-
Caillé
- décembre **ÉBAM**
Projets de murales pour le Pavillon
canadien à l'Exposition universelle,
qui doit avoir lieu à Bruxelles en
1959
GAL
Les artistes de la galerie: E. Alleyn,
J.-M. Atlan, P.-V. Beaulieu,
L. Bellefleur, S. Bergeron,
R. Billmeier, P.-É. Borduas,
R. Bowles, J. Dallaire, J.-A. Demers,
O. Dominguez, A. Dumouchel,
A.Y. Jackson, H.W. Jones,
A. Kahane, E. Landori, D. Matte,
H. Schlee, B. Shearer
GDD
Sérigraphies de L. Bellefleur,
A. Dumouchel, P. Ewen, R. Giguère,
A. Jasmin, J.-P. Mousseau,
A. Pellan, M. Raymond,
G. Tremblay des Éditions Erta,
imprimées par J.-P. Beaudin
GÉ
Exposition inaugurale: Marcel
Bellerive, André Couture, Peter
Daglish, Henry Saxe, Armand
Vaillancourt, etc.

WAG
John Little
YWCA
Ethel Seath
LI
Guy Ouvrard au 4269, rue Boyer

1958

janvier DG
V. Huszar 1884, membre du groupe
De Stijl
GDD
«Images animées» de Norman
McLaren
G12
Rita Briansky, Nathalie Pervouchine
et André Zadorozny
MBAM
«Peintres américains contemporains/
Contemporary American Painters»
deuxième exposition organisée con-
jointement par les étudiants de
l'Université de Montréal et de
l'Université McGill: 44 peintres
représentés dont M. Avery,
W. Baziotres, P. Blume, S. Davis,
A. Dove, S. Francis, L. Feininger,
A. Gorky, A. Gottlieb, M. Graves,
H. Hoffman, E. Hopper, W. de
Kooning, J. Levine, J. Marin,
G. O'Keefe, R. Pereira, J. Pollock,
A. Rattner, A. Reinhardt, B. Shahn,
C. Sheeler, T. Stamos, M. Tobey,
B.W. Tomlin, M. Weber et A. Wyeth
YWCA
Georgianna Paige Pinneo

janv.-fév. GDD
Jean McEwen
G12
Eric Goldberg et Yvonne McKague
Housser
RHdC
Campbell Tinning et Joseph Giunta

février AC
John Ellison
DG
Henry Moore, Anne Kahane et
Sybil Kennedy

ÉBAM
«De l'esquisse à l'oeuvre achevée /
From Sketch to Finished Painting»,
organisée par Clare Bice du *London
Public Library and Art Museum*

GDD
Paterson Ewen
GÉ
Lise Poisson (dessins et aquarelles)

G12
Paul-Vanier Beaulieu et Jean
Dallaire
MBAM

Collection Ayala et Sam Zacks
UdM
Oeuvres appartenant aux membres
de la Société artistique de l'Associa-
tion Générale des Étudiants de
l'Université de Montréal: J.-P.
Mousseau, J.-P. Riopelle,
G. Roberts, M. Voyer, etc.

LI
Marie-Anastasia au Collège Basile-
Moreau, à Ville Saint-Laurent

—
L'AANFM au *St. Joseph Teachers'
College*

fév.-mars G12
Françoise Desrochers-Drolet et
Claude Picher
MBAM
«Contemporary Australian Painters»
RHdC
- Femmes-peintres: Brenda Bury,
Christina Coleman, Catherine
Gensonnet, Anne Greenstein, Eva
Landori et Sonia Waldstein
- John Ellison (1913-1957)
UdM
25 sculptures d'August Wiedmann

mars GDD
- Jacques de Tonnancour
- Marcelle Ferron
GAL
Tobie Steinhouse
(peintures parisiennes)
GWG
Artistes européens contemporains
UdM
Klaus Spiecker et Marcelle Maltais³
YWCA
Edith Chatfield

- LI**
Georges Delrue, au 1520,
rue Crescent
- mars-avril **ÉBAM**
«Art suisse contemporain», organisée par la Fondation Pro Helvetia de Zurich en collaboration avec la GNC
GÉ
Yves Gaucher (linogravures) et Jean Faucher (encres)
MBAM
75^e Salon du printemps
RHdC
The Independant Art Association
- avril **AC**
- Albert Cloutier
- Maurice Lemieux (sculptures)
ÉBAM
«Premier Salon de la jeune peinture». Le jury, composé de Ghitta Caiserman, Rodolphe de Repentigny et Albert Dumouchel, retient 32 des 80 tableaux soumis
GDD
- Denis Juneau et Philippe Émond
- Alfred Pellan
GAL
Pierre L'Amare
GWG
Fang Chao Ling
G12
Luba Genush et Natacha Wrangel
- avril-mai **GAL**
Richard Billmeier
GDD
Charles Daudelin
RHdC
Jeanne Rhéaume
- mai **ÉBAM**
Le Groupe des Onze / *Painters Eleven de Toronto*: Jack Bush, Oscar Cahén, Hortense M. Gordon, Tom Hodgson, Alexandra Luke, Jock MacDonald, Ray Mead, Kazuo Nakamura, William Ronald, Harold Town et Walter Yarwood
- GAL**
William Koochin (sculpteur de la Colombie britannique)
GDD
Jean-Antoine Demers et Roland Truchon
MBAM
«The Lionel Lemoine FitzGerald Memorial Exhibition»
- mai-juin **GAL**
«Cinq années de Borduas»
GDD
Fernand Leduc (tapisseries)
RHdC
«Le costume à travers le monde», organisée en collaboration avec Michel Cartier
- juin **GDD**
- Les artistes de la galerie
- Les lauréats du premier «Salon de la jeune peinture»: Barry Clark, Peter Daglish et Fernand Toupin
GMdG
Trois peintres de l'École de Paris
LI
«Le Square des arts» au square Dominion (première exposition annuelle)⁴
- juin-sept. **ISH**
Sculptures en plein air dans l'enceinte des casernes: J.-P. Boivin, P. Bourassa, R. Bukauskas, P.-R. Dinel, A. Kahane, Augustus Arnold Kopmanis, A. Price, J. Rochefort, F. Soucy, A.E. Stapells, A. Vaillancourt, etc.
RHdC
«Quelques peintres de Montréal»: L. Bellefleur, P.-É. Borduas, R. Briansky, G. Caiserman, S. Cosgrove, J. Dallaire, J. de Tonnancour, A. Dumouchel, P. Ewen, M. Ferron, J. Fox, L. Gadbois, R. Giguère, E. Goldberg, A. Hébert, A. Jasmin, H.W. Jones, E. Landori, P. Landsley, F. Leduc, A. Lismer, J. Lyman, M. Maltais, J. McEwen, J.-P. Mousseau, L. Muhlstock, R.W. Pilot, M. Raymond, M. Reinblatt,

- J. Rhéaume, J.-P. Riopelle,
G. Roberts, M. Scott, P. Surrey,
G. Tondino, etc.
- juillet **GAL**
Keiko Minami (graveure de Paris)
- août **MBAM**
Troisième exposition annuelle de
l'AANFM, dans le cadre du Festival
de Montréal: 18 membres et un
artiste invité exposent 40 oeuvres
- septembre **GAL**
Jean-Paul Brusset (peintre français)
GDD
Les artistes de la galerie: Pat Ewen,
Alfred Pellan, Robert Roussil,
François Soucy, Armand
Vaillancourt, etc.
GMdG
Françoise Adnet
GWG
Kazuo Nakamura
- sept.-oct. **GDD**
Léon Bellefleur
RHdC
Tang Hay-Wen et Jean Lamouroux
- octobre **Ak**
Exposition inaugurale: 21 peintres
contemporains
GDD
Marcelle Maltais et Armand
Vaillancourt
G12
Albert Cloutier et John Walsh
- oct.-nov. **Ak**
Rita Letendre
DG
Marian Scott
GAL
Eva Landori (peintures)
GDD
Louis Jaque
G12
Gilles Gauvreau et Guy Michon
- MBAM**
Deuxième Biennale d'art canadien,
organisée par la GNC
- novembre **ÉBAM**
- L'Art nègre
- Concours artistiques de la
Province (section peinture)
GDD
- Albert Dumouchel
- Jesus Carlos de Vilallonga
GMdG
Jean-Paul Lemieux
RHdC
Photographies du Québec de Jean-
Paul Morisset
UdM
Virginia de Vera au Centre social
- nov.-déc. **Ak**
Guido Molinari
GDD
Jean McEwen
GWG
Ghitta Caiserman
G12
Jack Beder et Ethel Planta
RHdC
Troisième exposition annuelle des
«Moins de trente ans»
- décembre **ÉBAM**
Jacques Lipchitz (bronzes, gouaches
et dessins)
GAL
Les artistes de la galerie: E. Alleyn,
P.-V. Beaulieu, S. Bergeron,
R. Billmeier, P.-É. Borduas,
R. Bowles, J.-P. Brusset, J. Dallaire,
J.-A. Demers, P. Gendron,
A. Kahane, Duncan de
Kergommeaux, Yargo de Lucca,
W. Koochin, M. Maltais, D. Matte,
F. Mays, H. Schlee, B. Shearer,
T. Steinhouse, M. Voyer, etc.
GDD
Les artistes de la galerie: exposition
des Fêtes
G12
Graham Coughtry et Tom Hodgson
UdM
- Andrès Salgo (peintre mexicain)
au Centre social
- Gravures et dessins, organisée par
le Conseil des arts des étudiants des
universités du Canada: J.-P.
Beaudin, F. Bujold, P. Daglish,
J. Dallaire, A. Dumouchel,

- J. Faucher, R. Giguère, A. Kahane,
J. Leroux, F. Lipari, G. Tremblay, etc.
- déc.-jan. **MBAM**
Rétrospective du peintre et graveur
Ernst Neumann
- 1959
- janvier **Ak**
Dessins, encres et lithographies
ÉBAM
«Art abstrait», organisée par
Fernand Saint-Martin: L. Belzile,
J. Goguen, D. Juneau, F. Leduc,
G. Molinari, F. Toupin et
C. Tousignant
GDD
Quatre peintres grévistes de Radio-
Canada: René Derouin, Guy
Gaucher, Graeme Ross et Roland
Truchon
G12
Stephen Andrews et John Korner
YWCA
André Zadorozny
- janv.-fév. **GDD**
Semaine de la poésie canadienne
G12
Anne Kahane et Louis Muhlstock
MBAM
- «African Sculpture / Sculpture
africaine»
- «*Canadian Watercolours /*
Aquarelles canadiennes»: troisième
exposition organisée conjointement
par les étudiants de l'Université de
Montréal et de l'Université McGill:
L. Archambault, M. Bates, P.-V.
Beaulieu, L. Bellefleur, R. Beny,
B. Bobak, P.-É. Borduas, C. Carette,
G. Coughtry, J. Dallaire, A.
Dumouchel, P. Gendron, J. Hass,
R. Hedrick, T. Hodgson,
J. Humphrey, A. Jasmin,
K. Nakamura, W. Newcombe,
G. Rayner, G. Roberts, W. Ronald,
M. Snow, J. Shadbolt, T. Tanabe,
M. Teitelbaum, H. Town,
G. Tremblay et T. Urquhart
- RHdC
«Femmes peintres»: Jo Bastin,
K. Bruneau, H. Fauteux-Massé,
Edith Hyoth, E. Landori,
R. Letendre et V. de Vera
- février **CG**
John Fox
ÉBAM
- «Savoir Voir / Look This Way»
organisée sous les auspices de la
GNC en collaboration avec le
National Industrial Council Design
Centre pour la Foire industrielle de
Colombie-britannique de 1958
- «Deuxième Salon de la jeune pein-
ture et de la jeune sculpture». Le
jury, composé de Gérard Beaulieu,
J.-P. Mousseau et Guy Viau, sélectionne
50 des 106 oeuvres soumises.
Exposants: Fernand Béboux,
J. Bertrand, U. Comtois, Arist
Gagnon, R. Letendre, L. Major,
M. Maltais, G. Molinari, John
Nesbitt, Julien Patenaude, ? Ruby,
Louis Salette, A. Vaillancourt, etc.
GDD
Micheline Beauchemin
- fév.-mars **Ak**
Suzanne Meloche et Charles Gagnon
GAL
Suzanne Bergeron (peintures
récentes)
GDD
Jean Goguen et François Soucy
G12
R.P. Egerton et Curtis Fields
MBAM
«Canadian Ceramics 1959 /
Céramiques 59»
RHdC
Mario Merola (graffiti et dessins)
LI
L'AANFM, au Collège Basile-
Moreau de Ville Saint-Laurent
—
Marcel Gendreau et Claude
Théberge, à l'Hôtel Reine-Élisabeth
Hannah Hiams et Patrick
Robertson, au *Montreal Repertory*
Theatre

- mars **Ak**
 - Ulysse Comtois
 - Fernand Leduc
ÉBAM
 «Art graphique allemand», organisée par la GNC en collaboration avec le gouvernement de la République Fédérale allemande et le *Deutsche Kunstrat*: E. Barlach, M. Beckmann, O. Dix, L. Feininger, V. Kandinsky, P. Klee, O. Kokoschka, F. Marc, E. Nolde, K. Schmidt-Rottluff, etc.
GAL
 Rowell Bowles
GDD
 Jean-Paul Mousseau
G12
 Richard Billmeier et Jordi Bonet
RHdC
 Albert Cloutier, RCA
- mars-avril **GAL**
 - Denys Matte
 - Pierre Gendron
GDD
 Lauréats du deuxième Concours de la *Jeune peinture et de la jeune sculpture* du CCE. Prix de peinture: J. Bertrand, L. Major et M. Maltais. Mentions honorables à R. Letendre et G. Molinari. Prix de sculpture à A. Vaillancourt
RHdC
 Louis Belzile
- avril **G12**
 Sylvia Ary et Roslyn Swartzman
RHdC
 Michèle Bastien
LI
 Seize refusés du 76^e Salon du printemps exposent à la Centrale d'artisanat, au 72, rue Sherbrooke Ouest: Lise Barrette, Fernand Béboux, Jacques Chapdelaine, Pierre Gendron, Camille Houle, Janine Leroux, John Nesbitt, etc.
- avril-mai **GAL**
 Claude Carette
GDD
 Gérard Tremblay
- GÉta**
 «History of Montreal / Histoire de Montréal» (peinture)
GWG
 Derek May
G12
 Stanley Lewis et Tobie Steinhouse
MBAM
 76^e Salon du printemps
- mai **GAL**
 Frank B. Mayrs
GDD
 - Jacques de Tonnancour
 - Jean-Paul Jérôme
- mai-juin **GÉta**
 Emily Carr
RHdC
 Michel Kouliche et Frank Lipari
- juin **GAL**
 Luis Filcer (gravures et dessins)
GDD
 Marcelle Ferron
GMdG
 Jeunes peintres italiens contemporains
- juin-juil. **GAL**
 «Gravures de maîtres européens et canadiens»: H.G. Adam, P.-V. Beaulieu, G. Braque, Carzou, Cézanne, A. Clavé, R. Dufy, A. Dumouchel, M. Ernst, L. Fini, J. Friedlander, P. Gendron, E. Goerg, H. Hartung, A. Kahane, V. Kandinsky, E. Landori, Le Corbusier, S. Lewis, H. Matisse, D. Matte, K. Minami, J. Miro, Picasso, R. Rosewarne, G. Singier, M. Vertes, Zao Wou-Ki, O. Zadkine, etc.
GÉta
 Sculptures et photographies de Sam Tata
- juillet-août **RHdC**
 «Aspects de la jeune peinture»: L. Belzile, J. Bertrand, R. Billmeier, J. Bonet, C. Carette, P. Daglish, P. Ewen, H. Fauteux-Massé, M. Ferron, P. Gendron, R. Giguère, A. Jasmin, J.-P. Jérôme, H. W.

- Jones, P. Landsley, R. Letendre,
L. Major, M. Maltais, D. Matte,
G. Molinari, J.-G. Mongeau,
J. Nesbitt, C. Théberge, F. Toupin,
G. Tremblay, etc.
- LI**
«Square des arts» au square
Dominion (deuxième exposition
annuelle)
- août **GDD**
Les peintres de la galerie
GÉta
«Media»
- septembre **RHdC**
- «Art graphique de Yougoslavie»
- «Typographie 59»
- sept.-oct. **GÉta**
«Automatisme»: M. Barbeau,
P.-É. Borduas, M. Ferron,
P. Gauvreau, J.-P. Mousseau et
J.-P. Riopelle
GWG
Moe Reinblatt
MBAM
«Art and the Found Object / L'art
et l'objet trouvé»: A. Burri,
J. Cornell, M. Duchamp,
L. Nevelson, R. Rauschenberg,
K. Schwitters, Richard Peter
Stankiewicz et A. Vaillancourt
- octobre **GAL**
Nancy Petry Wargin
GDD
- Lancement de la nouvelle galerie
au 2080, rue Crescent: L. Bellefleur,
M. Bellerive, L. Belzile, P.-É.
Borduas, B. Côté, P. de Ligny
Boudreau, J. de Tonnancour,
A. Dumouchel, P. Ewen, M. Ferron,
H. Fauteux-Massé, R. Giguère,
J. Goguen, L. Jaque, P. Landsley,
? Leboeuf, J.-P. Lemieux,
R. Letendre, L. Major, M. Maltais,
J. McEwen, S. Meloche, G. Molinari,
J.-P. Mousseau, A. Pellan, C. Picher,
M. Raymond, J.-P. Riopelle,
S. Rivard, R. Roussil, P. Scribe,
F. Soucy, T. Steinhouse, G. Tondino,
C. Tousignant, F. Toupin,
- G. Tremblay, R. Truchon et
A. Vaillancourt
- Fernand Toupin
- Pierre de Ligny Boudreau
G12
Harold Beament et Adrien Hébert
RHdC
«La jeune peinture»: Kittie Bruneau,
Marcelle Maltais, Jean-Guy
Mongeau, etc.
UdM
«Tapisseries, céramiques et émaux»:
G. Beaudin, G. Derome,
F. Desrochers-Drolet, Riedl Ursin et
d'autres au Centre social
- oct.-nov. **ÉBAM**
«Troisième Biennale d'art canadien».
Parmi les exposants: Stanley
Arkauskas, P.-É. Borduas, P. Clerk,
P. Daglish, A. Dumouchel,
J. Hurtubise, S. Meloche, J. Nesbitt,
H. Town
GDD
- Paterson Ewen
- Armand Vaillancourt
GÉta
«Nous des JAMM», peintures de
quelques membres du groupe dont
Kittie Bruneau et René Derouin
G12
Eva Landori et Marjorie Winslow
MBAM
«Exhibition of Works by Canadian
Jewish Artists»: M. Aronson,
S. Ary, A. Bayefsky, J. Beder,
A. Bercovitch, S. Borenstein,
R. Briansky, G. Caiserman,
H. Charney, L. Flancer,
E. Frankenberg, E. Freifeld,
L. Freiman, A. Goldberg,
E. Goldberg, R.S. Goldberg,
B. Goodwin, A. Greenstein,
H. Heimlich, N. Hendel,
A. Kahane, D. Lauterman,
S. Lefkowitz, S. Lewis, I. Malamud,
J. Markell, H. Mayerovitch,
L. Muhlstock, H. Orenstein,
J. Prezament, W. Raphael, A.B.
Rappaport, M. Reinblatt,
M. Ryshtpan, J. Sher, T.T. Steinhouse
et R. Wiselberg

- RHdC**
«Exposition rétrospective des peintres, membres de l'Arts Club de Montréal»
- novembre **ÉBAM**
- Concours artistiques de la Province (section sculpture)
- Hommage au critique d'art Rodolphe de Repentigny décédé durant l'été (exposition de ses photographies de montagne). Le CCE prévoyait publier un volume consacré à ses écrits sur l'art. La première séance de la nouvelle saison du Musée Canadien du film sur l'Art fut également dédiée à sa mémoire³
GAL
René Derouin (gouaches)
GDD
- Rita Letendre
- Patrick Landsley
- Marcel Bellerive
GWG
Kit Barker (Angleterre)
RHdC
Société canadienne de l'éducation par l'art (peintures)
- nov.-déc. **GDD**
Marcelle Ferron
GÉta
«Their Humour»: Jean Dallaire et Louis Archambault
G12
Helmut Gransow et Gordon Webber
RHdC
Quatrième exposition annuelle des «Moins de trente ans»
UdM
Yvon Cassiri, au Centre social
- décembre **GAL**
Les artistes de la galerie dont: Ted Biéler, R. Derouin, G. Rackus et N. Wrangel
GDD
- Léon Bellefleur
- Exposition des Fêtes (petits formats)
GWG
Bruno Bobak
- déc.-jan. **G12**
G. Lamartine et Sam Borenstein
- 1960
- janvier **ÉBAM**
L'AANFM
G12
Alex Colville et Pierre Gendron
- jan.-fév. **GÉta**
«Les Lyriques Formalistes / Formal Lyricists»: Virginia de Vera, Pat Ewen, Henriette Fauteux-Massé et Ray Mead
G12
Arthur Lismer, David Silverberg et Armand Vaillancourt
- février **ÉBAM**
«La Relève» (peintures et oeuvres graphiques d'un nouveau regroupement de jeunes artistes réunis par les soins de Paul Mercier):
R. Arsenault, L. Barrette,
K. Bruneau, M. Charbonneau,
R. Derouin, C. Dulude, Y. Gaucher,
P. Gendron, C. Houle, J. Hurtubise,
R. Lacroix, J. Leroux-Guillaume,
L. Marchand, P. Mercier, J.-G. Mongeau, Y. Rajotte, S. Rivard, etc.
GAL
George Rackus
GDD
- Marcel Bellerive
- Marcelle Ferron
GÉta
Donald W. Buchanan (photographies)
RHdC
Femmes peintres
- fév.-mars **GAL**
Arist Gagnon (peintures et émaux)
GDD
Laure Major
G12
Suzanne Meloche et Jean McEwen
RHdC
L'Association des artistes du Lakeshore

- mars **GAL**
 Edmund Alleyn (48 gouaches, monotypes et dessins, 1955-1960)
GDD
 Edmund Alleyn (peintures), organisée parallèlement à l'exposition à la Galerie Agnès Lefort, avec présentation, le soir du vernissage, d'une création de danse corporelle de Suzanne Rivet inspirée de l'oeuvre du peintre, sur une musique concrète de François Morel
G12
 Oscar Cahén et André Jasmin
UdM
 Micheline Beauchemin, Jordi Bonet, Françoise Bujold, Micheline Couture, Michel Lacombe, Richard Lacroix, Janine Leroux-Guillaume, Marie-Anastasie, Guy Ouvrard, les Éditions Goglin, etc.
- mars-avril **ÉBAM**
 «Troisième Salon de la jeune peinture et de la jeune sculpture» (sur le jury: Denyse Delrue, André Jasmin et Maurice Raymond).
 Rita Letendre reçoit le prix Rodolphe-de-Repentigny (\$275) récemment institué par des amis du critique. Parmi les exposants: Stanley Arkauskas, Barry Clark, Peter Daghish, Yves Gaucher, Carole Guérin, Camille Houle, Jacques Hurtubise, Richard Lacroix, Marcelle Maltais, Gilbert Marion, Jean-Guy Mongeau, Louise Parent-Vidal, Claude Rajotte, Robert Venor, etc.
GDD
 Léon Bellefleur
GÉta
 «Graphics»: quelques artistes de Radio-Canada dont René Derouin
RHdC
 Jean-Guy Mongeau
- avril **GAL**
 Marcelle Maltais
GDD
 - Jean-Paul Mousseau et François Soucy
 - Suzanne Rivard
- GL**
 Gérard Tremblay et Jean-Pierre Beaudin
GSD
 Jean Dallaire (gouaches)
G12
 Sarah Jackson et Marian Scott
MBAM
 «Troisième exposition annuelle et vente d'oeuvres d'art canadienne / Seventh annual exhibition and sale of canadian art 1960»: E. Alleyn, M. Bates, A. Bayefsky, L. Bellefleur, W. Ogilvie, D. Partridge, A. Pellan, C. Picher, M. Rakine, M. Reinblatt, G. Roberts, C. Schaefer, etc.
- avril-mai **GDD**
 «Hommage à Pellan»
GÉta
The Painters Eleven
GL
 Joseph Prezament
GWG
 Derek May
G12
 Frank Lipari et Umberto Bruni
MBAM
 77^e Salon du printemps
- mai **GAL**
 Monique Charbonneau (peintures)
GDD
 Benoît Côté
GÉta
 «La physionomie changeante de Montréal / City Planning»
GL
 - Kittie Bruneau
 - André Jasmin
RHdC
 Jordi Bonet
LI
 Jean Cartier à l'Hôtel Ritz-Carlton
- mai-juin **GDD**
 Tobie Steinhouse
- juin **GDD**
 «Dynamique 1960»: Stephen Andrews, Andrew Hudson, Ray Mead, ? Meares, Tony Onley et Harold Town

- GÉta**
Sculptures (en plein air)
- juin-juillet **LI**
«Le Square des arts» au square Dominion (troisième exposition annuelle avec, sur le jury: Françoise de Repentigny, Paul Gladu et Lucien Saucier): M. Bartolini, M. Bellerive, P. Bourassa, K. Bruneau, P.-R. Diné, P. Ewen, H. Fauteux-Massé, M. Ferron, Gilbert Fillion, Frère Jérôme, R. Letendre, S. Lewis, F. Limoges, L. Major, M. Maltais, Y. Mondor, M. Rostand, F. Toupin, A. Vaillancourt, etc.
- juillet **GL**
Marcelle Ferron
- août **GL**
Joseph Prezament
LI
Femmes peintres dans le foyer du Cinéma Élysée: H. Fauteux-Massé, R. Letendre, L. Major, M. Maltais, S. Meloche, etc.
- août-sept. **GDD**
Les peintres de la galerie
GÉta
«Quebec Master Sculptors / Maîtres québécois de la sculpture»
- septembre **GAL**
Gravures et lithographies d'artistes français et canadiens
GDD
Lauréats du troisième «Salon de la jeune peinture et de la jeune sculpture»: Jean-Guy Mongeau, Robert Venor, Gilbert Marion et André Lavallée
MBAM
«Contemporary French Tapestries»
- sept.-oct. **GAL**
Leslie Schalk
GDD
- «Espace Dynamique»: Denis Juneau, Guido Molinari, Luigi Perciballi et Claude Tousignant
- GÉta**
«Contemporary Artists of Japan and China / Artistes contemporains du Japon et de la Chine»
MBAM
«Eleven Artists in Montreal / Onze artistes à Montréal 1860-1960»: de Kriehoff à Riopelle, en passant par P.-É. Borduas et G. Roberts
- octobre **ÉBAM**
«Sept peintres de la Côte ouest»: Peter Aspell, Herbert Gilbert, Don Jarvis, John Korner, Jack Shadbolt, Gordon Smith et Takao Tanabe
DG
Hans Schlee (sculptures)
GAL
Monique Voyer
GL
- La collection d'art africain de Léon Lippel
- Serge de Belabre (peintres français)
GLav
L. Bellefleur, H. Fauteux-Massé, J.-P. Lemieux, S. Lewis, G. Tondino, etc.
GSD
Bernard Buffet
GWG
«Contemporains britanniques»
G12
Micheline Beauchemin et Art Price
- oct.-nov. **ÉBAM**
Concours artistiques de la Province (section arts décoratifs et esthétique industrielle)
GDD
Charles Gagnon
GL
Jean-Paul Jérôme
G12
Kazuo Nakamura et Harold Town
MBAM
- Vincent Van Gogh
- Yves Trudeau (sculptures), commission des Jeunesses Musicales d'Orford
RHdC
«La jeune peinture»: K. Bruneau, R. Derouin, C. Dulude, M. Maltais, J.-G. Mongeau, etc.

- novembre **GAL**
Marie-Thérèse Krafft
GDD
Denys Matte
GWG
- Joe Plaskett
- Ralph Allen
MBAM
- J. Dubuffet, L. Feito, H. Hartung,
H. Hoffman, J.F. Koenig, A. Masson,
A. Tapiés, V. Vasarely, etc.
- *The Canadian Group of Painters*
- nov.-déc. **ÉBAM**
«Impact: l'affiche à travers le monde»
GAL
Yvette Mercier-Gouin (émaux),
Patrick Morgan et Maud Cabot-
Morgan (peintures)
GDD
Louis Jaque
GÉta
«Trends 1960: Non-Figurative
Painting in Montreal / La peinture
non-figurative à Montréal»:
E. Alleyn, Lise Barrette, S. Bergeron,
K. Bruneau, P. Daglish, H. Fauteux-
Massé, M. Ferron, C. Gagnon,
P. Gendron, J. Hurtubise,
A. Jasmin, R. Letendre, L. Major,
M. Maltais, D. Matte, J. McEwen,
S. Meloche, J.-G. Mongeau, J.-P.
Mousseau, S. Pasquin, Y. Rajotte,
S. Rivard, L. Salette, T. Steinhouse,
G. Tremblay, R. Venor et N. Petry-
Wargin
GL
Claude Dulude et Yves Rajotte
GWG
Nova
G12
Jean Goguen et François Soucy
MBAM
Sélection de la collection Larivière
(art contemporain)
- décembre **GDD**
Roland Truchon
GL
- Louis Jaque
- Georges Delrue
- Richard Lacroix
- déc.-jan. **GDD**
Les peintres de la galerie: E. Alleyn,
L. Bellefleur, J. de Tonnancour,
C. Gagnon, J.-P. Lemieux,
R. Letendre, J. McEwen, A. Pellan,
etc.
GÉta
La Société des peintres-graveurs de
Montréal: P. Daglish, J. Faucher,
L. Forest, Y. Gaucher, R. Lacroix,
J. Leroux-Guillaume, Marie-
Anastasie, G. Marion, G. Ouellet,
H. Saxe, R. Wolfe, etc.
G12
Betty Goodwin et Oscar de Lall
- 1961
- janvier **ÉBAM**
«Peinture canadienne du 20e siècle»:
exposition didactique, à l'aide
de reproductions, photos et textes
explicatifs, organisée par la GNC,
sous la responsabilité de Jean-René
Ostiguy
GAL
Dessins, collages, gravures, encres,
gouaches et aquarelles: L. Bellefleur,
P. Daglish, M. Ferron, ? Loranger
(d'Ottawa), A. Dumouchel,
Y. Gaucher, A. Jasmin, R. Lacroix,
M. Maltais, G. Marion, J. McEwen,
J. Reppen, etc.
GDD
- Pierre Gauvreau
- Les lauréats du Prix Guggenheim:
E. Alleyn, L. Bellefleur, P.-É. Borduas,
J.-P. Riopelle et H. Town
GL
- Réal Arseneault
- André Zadorozny
G12
Eric Freifeld, Julius Griffith, Ann
MacIntosh-Duff et William Roberts
MBAM
- Rétrospective du peintre Alfred
Pellan
- Retable de Jean-Paul Mousseau
LI
Quarante peintres canadiens au

- Collège Basile-Moreau,
Ville Saint-Laurent
- jan.-fév. **GDD**
Pierre Gauvreau
GÉta
«Jeunes associés du MBAM / Junior Associates of the Montreal Museum Collects»: oeuvres tirées de collections des JAMM: P.-V. Beaulieu, P. Bonnard, J.-P. Brusset, B. Buffet, G. Caiserman, J. Dallaire, R. Dinel, Foujita, L. Genush, S. Kennedy, P. Landsley, J.-P. Lemieux, É. Manet, G. Molinari, J.-G. Mongeau, J.-P. Mousseau, S. Pasquin, A. Pellan, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Rouault, G. Smith, D. Sylverberg, A. Vaillancourt, J. Vilallonga, etc.
UdM
Réal Arsenault (peintures et photos)
- février **ÉBAM**
- «La relève»: Réal Arsenault, Kittie Bruneau, Monique Charbonneau, Claude Dulude, Pierre Gendron, Derek May, Jean-Guy Mongeau, Guy Montpetit, Yves Rajotte, Louis Salette, etc.
- Michel Régnier
GL
- Claude Théberge
- Le Studio 9: Mary Bruce, Jacques Chapdelaine, Luba Genush, Maya Lightbody, David Silverberg et Edna Tedeschi
G12
Jacques Hurtubise et Nova
- fév.-mars **GAL**
Marcel Braitstein (sculptures, dessins, lithos)
GDD
Lise Gervais
GÉta
«Seldom Seen Pieces From the Museum Collection / Pièces rarement vues de la collection du Musée»
G12
Albert Dumouchel et Joyce Rose
MBAM
Art mexicain, de l'époque pré-colombienne à nos jours
- mars **ÉBAM**
«Quatrième Salon de la jeune peinture et de la jeune sculpture» (sur le jury: D^r Paul Dumas, Yves Lasnier et Alfred Pinsky): S. Arkauskas, M. Braitstein, G. Contant, P. Daglish, C. Dulude, ? Germain, L. Gervais, J. Hurtubise, G. Marion, D. Matte, J.-G. Mongeau, C. Tousignant, Anne Treize, R. Venor, etc.
GAF
Henri Masson
GAL
Albert Dumouchel (peintures et gravures, 1958 à 1961 environ)
GDD
Marcel Barbeau
GL
- Jean-Guy Mongeau
- Louis Belzile et Fernand Toupin
GWG
Arthur Villeneuve
- mars-avril **GÉta**
«Women Artists of Cape Dorset» (gravures)
GAL
Normand Fillion (céramiques et émaux)
G12
Giuseppe Fiore et Philip Surrey
- avril **DG**
Stanley Cosgrove
ÉBAM
«L'Art et le Livre»: livres d'art de la collection de la bibliothèque de l'École
GAL
Colin Haworth
GDD
- Lucien Morin
- Laure Major ?
GL
Roland Giguère
GSD
Michel Ciry
GWG
- Claude Venard et Pierre Lavarenne (peintres français)
- Iris Ballon

- G12
Guido Molinari et Claude Tousignant
- avril-mai **GAL**
Yvonne Thomas (peintures, New York)
GDD
Jacques de Tonnancour
GWG
David Messer
G12
Jack Beder et Mary Filer
G1640
«Gravures canadiennes contemporaines»
MBAM
78^e Salon du printemps
- avril-juin **GÉta**
«Theatre, The Art of Illusion / Théâtre, l'art de l'illusion»
- mai **GAL**
Romualdas Bukauskas
GDD
Suzanne Meloche
GL
Clément Picard et Stanley Rozynsky
GSD
E. Alleyn, J. Dallaire, Gécin, J.-P. Lemieux, A. Pellan, R. Roussil, H. Town
GWG
Yoshio Aoyama
RHdC
«Première exposition internationale d'œuvres de maîtres graveurs contemporains de la Guilde Internationale de la gravure»
- mai-juin **GDD**
Claude Carette
MBAM
«Canadian Ceramics 1961 / Céramique canadienne 61»
- juin **GAL**
«Gravures européennes et canadiennes»: G.H. Adam, E. Alleyn, P.-V. Beaulieu, L. Bellefleur, R. Bissière, P. Bonnard, M. Braitstein, F. Bujold, Carzou, A. Clavé, J. Cocteau, H. Daumier, R. Dufy, A. Dumouchel, J. Faucher, M. Ferron, L. Feininger, Fiorini, S.W. Hayter, J. Hurtubise,
- Y. Gaucher, R. Giguère, A. Jasmin, V. Kandinsky, R. Lacroix, A. Lanskoj, F. Léger, G. Marion, J. Miro, R. Pichet, Picasso, A. Renoir, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Rouault, H. Saxe, T.A. Steinlein, Toulouse-Lautrec, B. Vanier, Zao Wou-Ki
GDD
«Dynamique 1961»
- juin.-juil. **GÉta**
«Young Painters from Quebec City/ Jeunes peintres de Québec»: E. Alleyn, B. Côté, A. Gagnon, D. Matte, D. Morisset, etc.
- juil.-août **MBAM**
Stanley Cosgrove, exposition des Jeunesses Musicales d'Orford
- juil.-sept. **GÉta**
«One Hundred Years of Montreal» (photographies, gravures et dessins)
YWCA
L. Muhlstock, A. Pellan, J.-P. Riopelle, G. Roberts, etc.
- août-sept. **MBAM**
«Recent British Sculpture / Sculpture britannique contemporaine»: R. Butler, L. Chadwick, B. Hepworth, H. Moore, etc.
- septembre **GAL**
Pierre Gendron
GÉta
«Artists Collect / Les artistes collectionneurs»
GL
Réal Arseneault
GWG
Gordon Smith
MBAM
«20th Century American Painting from the Whitney Museum / Le Musée Whitney d'art américain, toiles maîtresses du 20^e siècle»
- sept.-oct. **G1640**
Molly Bobak (dessins)
MBAM
«Selected Works from the Hydro-Quebec Mural Competition»

- octobre **DG**
 Foujita
GAL
 Nancy Petry Wargin
GDD
 Rita Letendre
GL
 - Claude Girard
 - Suzanne Guité
GSD
 Robert Roussil
GWG
 Jack B. Yeats (Irlande)
G12
 Henry Wanton Jones et Jan Menses
LI
 Mario Marola dans l'atelier d'Alfred
 Laliberté au 3531, rue Sainte-Famille
 —
 Alexis Chiriaeff, au Café des artistes
- oct.-nov. **GAL**
 Monique Charbonneau
G12
 Ulysse Comtois et Rita Letendre
G1640
 Bruce Head, Frank Mijuska, Tony
 Tascona (dessins)
- novembre **DG**
 Jean Arp, César, Juan Gris, André
 Marchand, Rodin, Ossip Zadkine,
 etc.
GAL
 Françoise Labbé (émaux)
GL
 - Gérard Tremblay
 - Henriette Fauteux-Massé
 - Marcel Bellerive
GSD
 Jean Dallaire
GWG
 André Derain
- nov.-déc. **GAL**
 Marcelle Ferron
GDD
 Paterson Ewen
GÉta
 «Internationalism in Canadian Art /
 L'internationalisme dans l'art
 canadien»: S. Bergeron, P.-É.
 Borduas, A. Dumouchel, L. Feito,
- S. Francis, P. Gendron, J.F. Koenig,
 R. Letendre, G. Mathieu, J. McEwen,
 K. Nakamura, J.-P. Riopelle,
 W. Ronald, P. Soulages, A. Tapiès,
 H. Town, etc.
G12
 Jean-Paul Mousseau et Mariette
 Rousseau-Vermette
G1640
 Maxwell Bates et John Snow (lithos)
- décembre **GAL**
 Yvette Gouin (émaux) ?
GDD
 Les lauréats du quatrième «Salon de
 la jeune peinture et de la jeune
 sculpture»: Marcel Braitstein, Lise
 Gervais et Jean McEwen
GL
 Ronald Chase
GWG
 Kit Barker (Angleterre)
G12
 Edouard Clerk et Lise Gervais
- déc.-janv. **GDD**
 Les peintres de la galerie

Notes

- 1 Pour certaines des expositions de l'AANFM, nos informations proviennent de Sandra PAIKOWSKY, *The Non-Figurative Artists' Association of Montreal / L'Association des artistes non-figuratifs de Montréal*, catalogue d'exposition, Montréal, Galerie d'art Concordia, 1983.
- 2 Le carton de la Ville indiquait erronément Ghitta Cousineau.
- 3 Deux informations contradictoires nous sont parvenues sur cette exposition. *Le Quartier Latin* (Montréal) du 6 février 1958 annonçait Spiecker et Marian Scott, tandis que dans l'édition du 29 mars 1958 de *Notre Temps* (Joliette), on parlait d'une exposition de Marcelle Maltais et Klaus Spiecker. Or, la courte biographie figurant au nom de Maltais dans *Panorama de la Peinture au Québec 1940-1966*, Montréal, Musée d'art contemporain, mai-août 1967, mentionne bien une exposition au Centre social de l'UdM, en 1958 (p.35).
- 4 D'après une idée des peintres René Durocher et François Déziel et avec l'aide du Service des Parcs de la Ville de Montréal. Voir GLADU, «Une galerie en plein air à Montréal. Le «Square des arts», *Le Petit Journal* (Montréal), 3 juillet 1960.
- 5 Anon., «Quatrième saison du Centre canadien d'essai», *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 10 novembre 1959.

LES SOLITUDES CANADIENNES

Réflexions à partir de quelques publications récentes

La lecture de certains ouvrages et catalogues d'exposition parus dans les deux dernières années nous rappelle, comme si besoin était, que le concept «d'art canadien» conçu comme une entité demeure assez problématique et qu'en termes d'art le Canada est en fait constitué de plusieurs solitudes. Malgré la volonté de la Galerie nationale du Canada (GNC) d'imposer, dès les années dix, une vision unifiée de la peinture canadienne reposant principalement sur l'interprétation paysagiste du Groupe des Sept - comme le démontre admirablement Joyce Zemans dans le texte qu'elle publie dans les pages du présent numéro des *Annales*, *Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Program of Canadian Art* - il semble bien que les problématiques artistiques se soient développées d'abord sur une base régionale que l'on tente, dans le meilleur des cas, de greffer à un courant «national» qui n'est, somme toute, que celui des régions centrales du Canada.

En fait, les régions, voire les provinces canadiennes, présentent des démarches en arts visuels qui semblent répondre à des conditions matérielles et à des temporalités extrêmement différentes. Cela ressort de manière particulièrement évidente à la lecture du texte rédigé par Sandra Paikowsky pour le catalogue de l'exposition *Images néo-écossaises. L'art de la Nouvelle-Écosse de 1940 à 1966* (1994) dont elle était la commissaire.

Si certains critiques d'art montréalais des années vingt et trente (les Jean Chauvin, Henri Girard, Reynald et compagnie) déploraient l'académisme encore dominant aux Salons du Printemps de l'*Art Association of Montreal*, s'ils fustigeaient les goûts «bourgeois» ou conservateurs dont faisaient preuve encore trop de collectionneurs ou de propriétaires de galeries, s'ils critiquaient la qualité de certaines expositions présentées au Musée, à l'École des beaux-arts, au *Arts Club* ou dans les galeries de Montréal, s'ils soulignaient le nombre insuffisant de galeries et d'amateurs favorables à «l'art vivant», s'ils s'en prenaient au manque de professionnalisme de la critique d'art et du milieu de l'art en général, tout au moins écrivaient-ils cela dans des revues et des journaux qui ouvraient leurs pages à la critique d'art, parlaient-ils d'une ville qui avait depuis des décennies un musée et qui, même durant la période antérieure à la fondation de la Société d'art con-

temporain de Montréal (1939), comptait tout de même un certain nombre de collectionneurs et de galeries intéressés à l'art moderne!

Par comparaison, la situation néo-écossaise était désolante comme le démontre la minutieuse analyse que fait S. Paikowsky des institutions et associations artistiques de cette province entre 1940 et 1966. Théoriquement dotée d'un *Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts*, la Nouvelle-Écosse ne possède dans les faits qu'une institution principalement «mondaine» puisqu'il n'y aura pas de véritable musée provincial avant 1975. La création d'un poste de conservateur honoraire, en 1942, chargé de la surveillance et de l'inventaire de la collection, démontre sans doute une attitude plus professionnelle, comme le souligne Paikowsky (p.23), mais reste bien problématique en l'absence d'un lieu muséal. En fait, le portrait que dresse l'auteure de la situation du milieu des arts visuels en Nouvelle-Écosse inscrit cette province tout à fait en marge de ce qui se passe dans les autres provinces du Canada à la même époque, en particulier au Québec, en Ontario et même au Nouveau-Brunswick, comme nous le verrons plus loin. Sans musée et sans lieu d'exposition à caractère professionnel, sans conservateur ni critique d'art, les artistes néo-écossais avaient un problème de visibilité et souffraient également, écrit Paikowsky, d'une pénurie d'artistes réputés qui auraient pu constituer des modèles. Certes, entre 1940 et 1966, la situation s'est quelque peu transformée. Paikowsky reconstitue d'ailleurs à la fois l'histoire de l'évolution de la *Nova Scotia Society of Artists*, qui s'était donnée comme fonction d'encourager et de promouvoir, par des conférences et des expositions, un art original et particulier (*original and native*, p.7) à la province de la Nouvelle-Écosse, et celle des différents regroupements et projets qui visent à la promotion des arts. Elle s'intéresse entre autres à la formation, en 1943, du *Dalhousie University Art Group* qui réussit à exposer en divers lieux de l'université, mais n'inaugurera une véritable salle d'exposition qu'en 1954. De même, dans la deuxième moitié des années quarante, divers projets, comme les bourses du *Nova Scotia Talent Trust*, le programme d'exposition annuel du Ministère provincial de l'Éducation (*Nova Scotian Pictures*), la création de la *School of Community Arts* à Taramagouche et celle du *Nova Scotia Festival of the Arts*, sont autant d'initiatives que l'auteure retrace et qui ont tenté d'améliorer la condition des arts. Mais, malgré ces initiatives, malgré les interventions gouvernementales, malgré l'activité déployée par Walter Abell, tant à l'Université Acadia que comme fondateur de la revue *Maritime Art Magazine*², malgré les efforts dans les années quarante de la galerie LeRoy et Marguerite Zwicker pour présenter un art contemporain qui soit aussi, à l'occasion, moderne, il ressort de la lecture du texte que le milieu de l'art néo-écossais de la période 1940-1966 reste en deçà des normes institutionnelles et professionnelles qui sont celles que l'on est en droit d'espérer à cette époque. Quant à la production des artistes de cette province, elle se caractérise au mieux par une «ardeur dépourvue de plaisir» et, au pire, par une «confortable médiocrité³», si l'on en croit les ter-

mes de certains critiques de l'époque. Qui plus est, l'art néo-écossais de ces décennies semble aussi vouloir, sauf rares exceptions⁴, s'inscrire en marge des courants artistiques canadiens majeurs auxquels les artistes de cette province avaient néanmoins accès, tant par les publications que par les nombreuses expositions canadiennes présentées chez eux⁵.

Ainsi, par exemple, à la fin des années trente et dans les années quarante, on voit émerger dans plusieurs provinces canadiennes une tendance artistique qui s'interroge sur la fonction sociale de l'art et qui, autour de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, s'inspire des projets artistiques américains et mexicains pour proposer au gouvernement des formes d'art engagé. Avec la guerre, celles-ci s'incarneront dans le travail des artistes qui illustreront aussi bien les activités militaires que les efforts des ouvriers et ouvrières du front industriel. Or, Halifax était durant le conflit mondial un port d'embarquement où séjournèrent nombre d'artistes officiels de la guerre et qui voyait son activité industrielle s'accroître considérablement. Pourtant les artistes de la Nouvelle-Écosse ne semblent guère s'être intéressés à cette problématique de l'art engagé, pas plus qu'ils ne semblent avoir partagé avec d'autres de leurs confrères canadiens cet espoir que la guerre pouvait être l'occasion d'un progrès démocratique et culturel (voir Paikowsky, p.22-23).

Le paysage a dominé l'art néo-écossais. Certes, les oeuvres choisies par la commissaire pour l'exposition nous montrent une certaine variété de thèmes et de procédés et, à côté des paysages des Maritimes, on trouve un certain nombre de portraits, de paysages urbains, de natures mortes qui, de surcroît, n'excluent pas toujours une certaine exploration formelle plus moderne. On pense, entre autres, à *Halifax Looking North* (1959) ou *Grafton Street* (n.d.) de LeRoy Zwicker, à *Hommage to Braque* (1958) de Helen Weld, aux interprétations semi-abstraites du paysage de Carol Fraser (*The Wave and the Rock*, 1962), de Joan House (*Old Piers*, n.d.) ou Tom Mackay (*Rock Pond with Reflected Sun*, 1965) et enfin aux quelques oeuvres non objectives d'artistes comme Ruth Wainwright (*Memory Image*, 1963). Par contre, le texte du catalogue fait bien ressortir l'importance du paysage, particulièrement celui inspiré de Peggy's Cove, comme «fondement d'un art régional» durant toute la période étudiée. En cela aussi l'art néo-écossais se démarque de celui d'autres provinces canadiennes. Si le paysage avait aussi constitué au Québec, par exemple, ou en Ontario, les bases d'un art régional (qui dans ces deux cas précis prétendaient également, pour des raisons diverses, avoir le statut d'art «national»), il n'en demeure pas moins que la lutte contre le régionalisme et le nationalisme en art s'était amorcée dès les années vingt et trente au Québec (un peu plus tard en Ontario) et que les questionnements formels propres à la démarche moderne avaient déjà, à l'aube des années quarante, modifié considérablement la pratique artistique, particulièrement au Québec. Ainsi, au-delà des oeuvres choisies pour l'exposition, il ressort à la lecture, passionnante mais consternante, du catalogue *Images néo-écossaises*, que «l'arrivée de la modernité» - pour employer les ter-

mes de la traduction française du titre du catalogue *Achieving The Modern* (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1993) - ne se soit pas faite, en Nouvelle-Écosse, tant du point de vue institutionnel que du point de vue artistique, avant la fin des années soixante.

Évidemment, si l'on associe «l'arrivée de la modernité» avec la seule abstraction, on pourrait en dire autant du Nouveau-Brunswick. En effet, Tom Smart écrit dans son ouvrage publié à l'occasion de l'exposition itinérante *The Art of Fred Ross, A Timeless Humanism* (1993):

The move to non-figurative abstraction in art, felt in Canada and along the eastern seaboard of the United States by 1945, did not hold way in Saint John. The relative intellectual insularity of Saint John, coupled with the influences exerted by the work of Humphrey, Brittain and Campbell, created a fertile region of figuration in Canadian art during the 1940's. (p.19)

Cette affirmation exigerait quelques commentaires, à commencer par celui qui rappellerait que le déplacement vers l'abstraction non figurative n'est pas généralisé au Canada dans les années quarante, ni même cinquante, comme on l'a vu avec l'exemple néo-écossais. Même au Québec, une interprétation moderne de la peinture figurative se maintient en parallèle aux approches automatistes. L'Ontario, pour sa part, n'est pas non plus passé directement du Groupe des Sept et de ses émules à celui de *Painters Eleven*. Cette province a aussi eu son école d'artistes figuratifs socialement engagés dont le «*Studio Group*» de *Hayden Street* comme le démontrait Christine Boyanoski dans le catalogue *The 1940's: A Decade of Painting in Ontario*⁶.

De ce point de vue, «l'insularité intellectuelle» et artistique de Saint John est en effet relative, et c'est d'ailleurs ce que démontre aussi l'ouvrage de Tom Smart, qui a l'immense mérite d'aborder la production de Fred Ross non du strict point de vue de sa vie et de sa démarche artistique, mais en la situant dans le contexte qui est le sien, celui du milieu des arts visuels du Nouveau-Brunswick, dont l'histoire de l'art reste encore largement à écrire, comme le souligne dans sa préface Ian G. Lumsden, le directeur de la *Beaverbrook Art Gallery*.

Si on le compare à celui de Montréal ou de Toronto, il est certain que le milieu artistique de Saint John semble, à la fin des années trente et à l'aube des années quarante, peu développé et isolé. Toutefois, sa situation est plus enviable que celle de Halifax. Smart nous rappelle en effet l'existence d'un cercle artistique dynamique composé de poètes, de gens de théâtre (*Theatre Guild of Saint John*) et d'artistes tels Jack Humphrey, Miller Brittain, Avery Shaw et d'autres qui avaient leurs ateliers près du port, autour de la rue Prince William. Ils se réunissaient dans ce qui devint au début des années quarante une véritable institution: l'atelier de Ted Campbell, figure marquante de ce cercle artistique⁷. Campbell, qui sera le professeur de Fred Ross à la *Vocational School*, enseignait entre autres à ses élèves les principes de composition des muralistes mexicains contemporains (p.17). Il partageait avec Humphrey et Brittain le sentiment que l'art devait être sociale-

ment engagé. D'ailleurs il participe avec ces derniers et Pegi Nicol MacLeod à la Conférence de Kingston en 1941 (p.19). Ces artistes du Nouveau-Brunswick, à l'instar d'autres artistes canadiens, s'intéressent aux modèles américains et mexicains de démocratisation de l'art. Ils effectuent des voyages d'études aux États-Unis et au Mexique et leur production des années trente et quarante témoigne de ces influences. Fred Ross s'inscrit dans ce courant, comme le démontre l'ouvrage de Smart. Il réalise diverses murales comme *Annual School Picnic*, 1946, *Destruction of War* et *Rebuilding the World through Education*, entre 1946 et 1948, qui s'intègrent tout à fait à cette problématique d'un art réaliste et démocratique. Il effectuera divers voyages d'études au Mexique (le premier à l'été 1949, p.29) tout comme plusieurs autres artistes canadiens, dont Harry Mayerovitch, Fred Taylor et Stanley Cosgrove⁸.

On se souviendra également que, pour certains des artistes du continent américain qui s'impliquèrent dans ce mouvement de démocratisation de l'art appuyé par les initiatives et projets gouvernementaux, la Renaissance italienne faisait figure de modèle⁹. Il en sera de même pour Ross, dont Smart analyse l'influence sur les oeuvres qu'il peint dans les années cinquante. Le surréalisme aura aussi une influence sur son travail (voir *Portrait of Martha*, 1957) tout comme il viendra modifier l'approche réaliste de Miller Brittain dans l'après-guerre¹⁰. Il faut aussi souligner que Ross emprunte aussi beaucoup au peintre français Balthus dans le traitement qu'il donne à ses portraits d'enfants et d'adolescents à partir de la fin des années 1960 comme *The Yellow Dress*, 1969, *The Red Skirt*, 1972, *Young Girl Resting*, 1970.

Tout ceci témoigne tout au moins d'une ouverture de Ross et des artistes de Saint John à divers aspects de la scène artistique internationale - comme canadienne - ouverture qui, à la même époque, n'a pas son équivalent en Nouvelle-Écosse. Cependant, l'auteur du catalogue prend soin de nous rappeler qu'il y a une spécificité à ce qu'il identifie comme «l'est du Canada». En effet, à propos de l'exposition *Six East Coast Painters* de 1961 (M. Brittain, J. Humphrey, A. Colville, Lawren P. Harris, R. Wainwright et F. Ross), Smart écrit:

It drew attention to a figurative mode of representation that was common to all six artists. The exhibition lent credence to the growing perception that there existed a school of realist painters in Eastern Canada and that Ross was one of Canada's significant figurative artists. (p.59)

Voilà qui peut amener de l'eau au moulin d'une réflexion sur les spécificités régionales et plus encore provinciales dans la construction d'un concept tel que «l'art canadien».

Je serai enfin tentée de faire un bref commentaire à l'effet que c'est aussi dans ce milieu particulier du Nouveau-Brunswick, où se maintient dans l'après-guerre une tradition figurative qui s'ouvre cependant à cette «inquiétante étrangeté» véhiculée par des artistes contemporains internationaux comme les surréalistes, les

réalistes magiques, Balthus et bien d'autres, que s'inscrit aussi la production d'un Alex Colville dont on n'analyse peut-être trop souvent la démarche qu'en fonction de ses propositions formelles intrinsèques et/ou de ses seules «vertus» psychologiques¹¹!

Mais il n'y a pas que l'est du Canada, et une autre publication récente vient contribuer à notre brève réflexion sur les particularités régionales. Il s'agit du catalogue *The Urban Prairie* (sous la direction de Dan Ring, 1993) dont Brian Foss a fait un compte rendu dans le précédent numéro des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* (XVI/1, p.98-106). Je ne m'attarderai donc pas sur le contenu de cette publication comme tel, mais plutôt sur un aspect particulier à l'art «canadien» que soulève sa problématique, à savoir que même si certains thèmes sont abordés - ou peu abordés - par des artistes de différentes régions du Canada, le traitement de ces thèmes s'ancre souvent dans des différences culturelles ou idéologiques majeures. Ainsi, par exemple, il semble bien, si l'on en croit les diverses publications et études effectuées à ce jour sur la question, que dans l'ensemble du Canada, tout au moins jusqu'à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, le rapport à la ville dans l'imaginaire visuel comme littéraire a toujours été assez problématique. La nature et le paysage, on l'a dit et répété - c'en est devenu une platitude comme dit B. Foss - ont monopolisé les artistes et poètes du Canada, encore qu'on doive, une fois de plus, souligner que cette nature et ces paysages furent investis par des déterminants fort différents. Entre les représentations picturales de Peggy's Cove, celles des forêts de la Colombie Britannique, celles du Bouclier pré-cambrien, celles des plaines du Manitoba et celles des rangs de la Côte de Beaupré, de l'île d'Orléans ou de la région de Charlevoix, il y a des différences qui ne sont pas que formelles ou stylistiques et qui renvoient à des positions socio-culturelles extrêmement variées. Même les représentations paysagistes d'une seule région dans une même période donnée peuvent s'inscrire dans des problématiques souvent aussi contradictoires que celles qui se réfèrent à la tradition et à la modernité, à la conservation du patrimoine et à l'industrie touristique, comme le souligne fort pertinemment François-Marc Gagnon dans le catalogue *Charlevoix, Histoire d'art, 1900-1940*, paru en 1994.

La représentation urbaine, pour sa part, n'a pas eu au Canada la fortune qu'elle a connue par exemple aux États-Unis avec des groupes comme ceux de la *Ash Can School*, des Précisionnistes ou de la *Fourteenth Street School* qui, avant 1940, ont inscrit la ville dans l'ordre pictural comme espace proprement américain. Certes, il y eu à travers l'histoire de l'art canadien différents types des représentations de la ville, quelques publications en ont témoigné, mais celles-ci restent relativement restreintes par rapport à l'ensemble des représentations paysagistes. Ce n'est donc peut-être pas uniquement pour des raisons d'ordre théorique ou par souci de «multidisciplinarité» que les conservateurs d'expositions comme *The Urban Prairie* (Dan Ring), ou comme - il y a quelques années - *Images industrielles*

(Rosemary Donegan, 1987)¹², ont eu recours, à côté de la peinture, de la gravure et d'autres oeuvres sur papier, à l'image publicitaire, à la photographie, voire à la carte postale et au dessin architectural pour constituer un corpus substantiel de représentations visuelles de l'industrie au Canada ou de la ville dans les Prairies. Mais, dans ce domaine aussi, on touche à des particularités qui relèvent du contexte propre à chaque région et province. Ainsi, au Québec, le rapport à la ville chez un peintre comme Adrien Hébert s'élabore, dans les années vingt et trente, à l'intérieur d'une première réflexion québécoise sur la modernité et dans la foulée de la constitution d'une fraction de l'intelligentsia canadienne-française ouverte à la culture européenne et en lutte contre le clérico-nationalisme en art (voir, entre autres, le catalogue récent réalisé sous la direction du conservateur Pierre L'Allier, *Adrien Hébert*, 1993). De même, l'émergence du thème urbain chez les artistes des communautés anglophones et juives¹³ de Montréal dans les années trente répond à des facteurs autres qui ne sont pas sans rapport avec la crise économique, avec le développement d'une réflexion sur la fonction sociale de l'art et avec la critique que l'on fait du nationalisme en art parallèlement à une approche plus moderne qui s'ouvre sur l'expérimentation formelle et aboutit, en 1939, à la création de la Société d'art contemporain de Montréal. De même, le texte de Dan Ring nous indique la complexité et les transformations conjoncturelles qui affectent la représentation visuelle de la ville dans les Prairies. Si nombre de ces déterminants appartiennent en propre à cette région du Canada (les cités du rail, de l'empire de l'Ouest et le mythe de la cité idéale), il en est d'autres cependant qui offrent des points communs avec la démarche d'autres artistes canadiens. Ainsi, la Crise et la guerre amènent, en particulier au niveau des représentations picturales, des scènes de la misère urbaine ou des scènes militaires dont on trouve des équivalents au Canada ou encore aux États-Unis. Mentionnons, dans cet ordre d'idées, que le mode de construction du tableau de H.G. Glyde, *The Exodus* (1941), n'est pas sans rappeler celui qu'utilise à la même époque l'artiste américain Thomas Hart Benton. De même, comme ce sera le cas dans d'autres régions du Canada, au Québec et en Ontario particulièrement, l'ouverture des artistes à des thèmes autres que celui du paysage se fait parallèlement à une plus grande attention aux recherches formelles. Le sujet peint devient neutre, voire secondaire, conséquence logique d'une démarche moderne qui débouche souvent sur l'abstraction. Le modernisme et l'internationalisme en art auront dans les Prairies le même effet que dans les autres régions canadiennes qui y sont sensibles et, dans ce contexte, on ne s'étonnera pas de voir figurer au catalogue des représentations abstraites de la ville de Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald (*Untitled*, 1954) ou de Marion Nicoll (*The City - Sunday*, 1960)¹⁴. On serait tenté de conclure que cette région du Canada présente sur ce thème précis des particularités régionales, tout en participant au courant moderniste pancanadien d'après-guerre comme en témoigne d'ailleurs le nombre relativement important d'artistes de cette région sélectionnés pour des

expositions comme *The Crisis of Abstraction in Canada, The 1950's* (1992), et *Achieving the Modern, Canadian Abstract Painting and Design in the 1950's* (1993)¹⁵.

Toutefois, on pourrait aussi s'interroger sur l'existence d'une telle chose qu'un modernisme pancanadien, et cela non sans souligner au passage que le formalisme a encore son importance chez certains de nos historiens de l'art puisque perdure toujours l'association, pourtant contestable et contestée, entre modernité, modernisme et abstraction. En effet, même si des catalogues comme *Achieving the Modern, Canadian Abstract Painting and Design in the 1950's* et aussi *The Crisis of Abstraction in Canada, the 1950's* semblent *a priori* ramener à quelques dénominateurs communs l'avènement véritable de la modernité «canadienne» - ces dénominateurs étant l'abstraction et les années cinquante - force nous est de reconnaître qu'ici encore l'évolution des démarches artistiques - fussent-elles considérées du seul point de vue de l'abstraction - obéit à des temporalités et à des problématiques différentes selon les provinces et les régions.

Cela apparaît clairement à la lecture des textes de Robert McKaskell («*Changing Academies: The Rise of Abstraction in Canadian Painting*») d'une part et de Sandra Paikowsky («*Vivre dans la cité: Québec Abstract Painting*») d'autre part. Le texte de Paikowsky démontre bien que, même si la scène artistique québécoise offrait encore quelque résistance à l'égard du modernisme et de l'abstraction, la théorisation même de ce concept (sous les vocables d'art non objectif, d'art abstrait, etc.), la richesse, tant du point de vue de la diversité que de la complexité des approches abstraites chez les artistes québécois, le support critique, institutionnel et même privé à l'art moderniste situent le Québec à part des autres provinces canadiennes. D'ailleurs, les peintres d'origine québécoise représentés dans cette exposition sont plus nombreux que leurs collègues ontariens. L'Ouest canadien toutefois se taille la part du lion pour le nombre d'exposants, ce qui est sans doute normal pour une exposition organisée par la *Winnipeg Art Gallery*, mais n'est pas sans poser problème en regard de l'histoire même de l'abstraction au Canada. Se confirme par ailleurs la particularité des Provinces maritimes en ce qui a trait à «l'arrivée de la modernité», puisque seulement trois artistes de cette région sont présents, Marion Bond (N.-É.), Ruth S. Wainwright (N.-É.) et Jack Humphrey (N.-B.) dont on sait que la démarche est loin d'être uniquement abstraite (ou même semi-abstraite)¹⁶.

Ainsi, ce catalogue, comme d'autres du même type, confirme bien la nature précaire voire illusoire d'une appellation telle que «art canadien» fut-elle assez restrictive pour n'inclure que la «*Achieving the Modern*». En effet, les oeuvres produites, aussi bien que les réflexions théoriques, esthétiques et critiques qui les ont supportées, présentent d'importantes différences.

Dans cet ordre d'idée, je recommanderais enfin la lecture de l'ouvrage écrit en collaboration sous la direction de Francine Couture (*Les Arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante, La reconnaissance de la modernité*, 1993) qui non seulement

aborde la question de la modernité, sous l'angle de la multiplicité des productions artistiques (abstraites comme «figuratives») caractéristique de la modernité dans le Québec des années soixante, mais aussi sous l'angle des particularités institutionnelles, culturelles, idéologiques et esthétiques qui font de l'art issu de la formation sociale québécoise un art qui, au-delà de certains dénominateurs communs à l'art contemporain international, a une spécificité et une temporalité propres et cela en dépit des liens que cet art a pu entretenir avec la scène «fédérale» ou les divers nationalismes s'exprimant sur la scène canadienne.

Or, le Canada étant constitué de plusieurs formations sociales différentes, les historiens de l'art de ce pays ont encore bien du pain sur la planche!

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Notes

1 Ainsi, par exemple, sont présentées à Montréal, si l'on se fie aux couvertures des critiques du *Standard*, de *La Presse* et du *Canada*, près d'une soixantaine d'expositions en 1937 et autant en 1938. Outre les expositions de peintres et d'associations d'artistes canadiens, on dénombre des expositions de tableaux français des XIX^e et XX^e siècles chez *Scott and Sons*, en décembre 1937 (Gauguin, Van Gogh, Cézanne, Utrillo, Degas, etc.), chez *Sidney Carter Gallery*, en août 1938 (Picasso, Modigliani, Utrillo, etc.), chez *Watson Art Gallery*, en octobre 1938, chez *Johnson Art Galleries*, en novembre-décembre 1938, et *Scott and Sons (Delacroix to Dufy)* en octobre 1938. Ceci sans compter les expositions d'artistes français ou britanniques modernes à l'*Art Association* de Montréal. On se rappellera aussi qu'il y avait suffisamment d'oeuvres modernes et contemporaines internationales dans les collections privées pour que la Société d'art contemporain puisse présenter, en 1939, l'exposition *Art of Our Day*. Le lecteur intéressé à cette histoire de la modernité au Québec avant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale pourra se référer à ma thèse de doctorat, *Peinture et modernité au Québec: 1919-1939*, Université de Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne, juin 1991. Il trouvera aux pages 497 à 503 la liste (non exhaustive) des expositions présentées en 1937 et 1938. Une copie de cette thèse est déposée à la réserve de la Bibliothèque des arts de l'UQAM.

2 *Maritime Art Magazine* va devenir *Canadian Art* en 1943 et la revue déménage à Ottawa. Paikowsky explique en page 24 qu'Abell rencontra en Nouvelle-Écosse de plus en plus d'opposition au contenu national croissant du *Maritime Art Magazine*.

3 Ces commentaires sont pour le premier d'Eric Newton, critique d'art britannique de passage dans la région et, pour le second, de l'historien de l'art britannique Martin Kemp qui enseignait à Dalhousie. Ces opinions quant à la médiocrité d'une grande partie de l'art néo-écossais sont mêmes partagées dans les années soixante par le président de la *Nova Scotia Society of Artists*, John Reppeteaux, et par bien d'autres (voir PAIKOWSKY, p.28, 32 et 33).

4 C'est le cas par exemple de Ruth Wainwright et Aileen Meagher. Wainwright sera la seule représentante de la Nouvelle-Écosse à la biennale de la Galerie nationale en 1957 et 1959 et la seule femme et artiste néo-écossaise à faire partie de l'exposition itinérante de la Galerie nationale *Six East Coast Painters* en 1961 (PAIKOWSKY, p.28, 29-31).

5 Entre autres, des expositions de la *Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour*, de la *Canadian Society of Graphic Art*, du *Canadian Group of Painters* et nombre d'expositions d'artistes contemporains canadiens organisées notamment par la GNC. Cela, sans mentionner les expositions d'art français, britannique et américain qui ont aussi circulé en Nouvelle-Écosse. Il est vrai, comme le souligne Paikowsky, que les lieux d'expositions laissaient souvent à désirer, que les expositions étaient parfois scindées en des lieux différents, etc. Mais il est tout de même surprenant que ce milieu artistique ait, jusqu'à la fin des années soixante, vécu à ce point en marge des développements de l'art contemporain.

6 Christine BOYANOSKI, *The 1940's: A Decade of Painting in Ontario*, Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, 1984.

7 Selon Tom SMART, c'est lors d'une réunion tenue dans l'atelier de Campbell, qui avait été actif lors de la fondation de *Maritime Art*, que s'est effectuée la transformation de *Maritime Art*: «*which became Canadian Art magazine during a meeting held at his studio with Gillet and Walter Abell [...]*» (p.17).

8 Sur le rapport des artistes canadiens au Mexique, voir Christine BOYANOSKI, *The Artists' Mecca, Canadian Art and Mexico*, Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, 1992.

9 La notion de «renaissance» était d'ailleurs fréquemment invoquée pour justifier l'aide gouvernementale aux arts durant la période du *New Deal*. Certains artistes, plus académiques, espéraient assister à une «*American Renaissance*». Voir Marlene PARK et Gerald E. MARKOWITZ, *New Deal for Art*, Hamilton, New York, The Gallery Association of New York State Inc., 1977, p.14.

10 Le symbolisme religieux eut aussi une influence importante chez cet artiste. Voir le catalogue *Miller Brittain - Painter*, Sackville, Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University, 1981.

11 Rappelons que Colville a été formé à la *Mount Allison University* (Sackville, N.-B.) et qu'il y enseigna de 1946 à 1963.

12 Rosemary DONEGAN, *Industrial Images/Images industrielles*, Hamilton: Art Gallery of Hamilton, 1987.

13 Voir, entre autres, Esther TRÉPANIÉ, *Peintres juifs et modernité/Jewish Painters and Modernity, Montréal 1930-1945*, Montréal, Centre Saidye-Bronfman, 1987.

14 Puisqu'il est question de la modernité artistique dans les Prairies, on se souviendra qu'au début des années vingt, se retrouvent à Winnipeg quatre peintres qui allaient compter parmi les artistes les plus audacieux de la décennie à venir: L.L. FitzGerald, Caven Atkins, Fritz Brandtner et Bertram Brooker. Mais cette réunion n'est que conjoncturelle et trois de ces artistes allaient par la suite vivre dans d'autres provinces.

15 Des versions françaises de ces catalogues sont publiées sous les titres *La crise de l'abstraction au Canada. Les années 1950*, Denise LECLERC, dir., Ottawa, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, 1992, et *L'Arrivée de la modernité* dont on trouvera la référence bibliographique complète avec celle des ouvrages commentés dans ce compte rendu.

16 Dans *Achieving The Modern* particulièrement on retrouve des oeuvres comme *Halifax Harbour*, 1957, de Marion Bond, *Aerial Tension*, 1958, de Lawren P. Harris, *Still Landscape*, 1956, de Dorothy Knowles, *Italy #2*, 1957, de Greg Arnold et autres qui présentent des connotations paysagistes. Les tableaux diffèrent des oeuvres résolument abstraites d'autres artistes, en particulier québécois.

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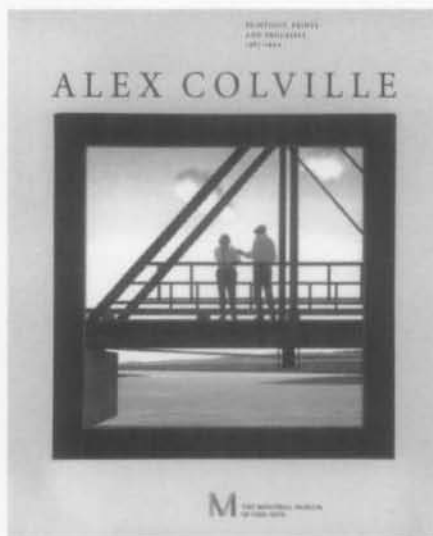
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ALEX COLVILLE
Paintings, Prints and
Processes 1983-1994

Philip FRY

Montreal: Montreal Museum of
Fine Arts, 1994

184 p., 61 col., 347 b/w illus.,
\$59.95

(Version en française: *Alex Colville:
peintures, estampes et processus
créatifs 1983-1994*)

ALEX COLVILLE
The Observer Observed

Mark A. CHEETHAM

Canadian Biography Series

Toronto: ECW Press, 1994

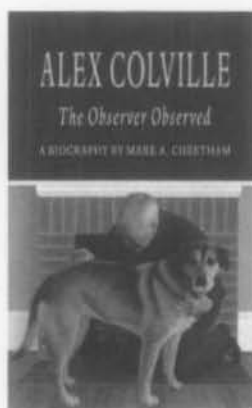
140 p., 1 col., 21 b/w illus., \$14.95

A decade ago - in the year Alex
Colville's retrospective exhibition
opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario

before travelling to other sites in
Canada and Europe - Robert Fulford
described the artist's works as "icons of
Canadianism, the visual expression of
our spirit."¹ A decade before *that*, one
German critic claimed that the Nova
Scotia artist might be "the most promi-
nent, indeed the most important realist
painter in the Western world."²

Times are still very good for
Colville. At age 74 he is perhaps the
best-known and most popular of living
Canadian artists. He is an Officer and
Companion of the Order of Canada, a
Member of the Privy Council of

Canada, a re-
cently retired
member of
the National
Gallery's
Board of Tru-
stees, the reci-
pient of sever-
al honorary
degrees, and
the subject of
major mono-
graphs by



Helen Dow (1972) and David Burnett
(1983).³ His paintings and serigraphs
seem ubiquitous, adorning everything
from a Bruce Cockburn record jacket to
the cover of David Burnett and Marilyn
Schiff's *Contemporary Canadian Art*
(1983).

However, Colville's reception by
critics and historians has often been dis-
tinctly lacking in enthusiasm. Few

have been as unremittingly dismissive as John Bentley Mays who, in his review of the 1983 retrospective, anathematized the works as irredeemably minor and utterly irrelevant to the development of art in Canada, likening them in interest to "a painting of the Last Supper on a thumbtack."⁴ A markedly more positive stance has been struck in a small flurry of recent publications.

These publications range from an exhibition brochure (James Redpath, *Colville: Beings in Time*, 1992) and a short catalogue (Gemey Kelly, *Alex Colville: Selected Drawings*, 1993) to the comparatively substantial *Colville Being Seen: The Serigraphs*, by Michael Bell (1994).⁵ Bell's ambitious and complex fifteen-page essay is laced with quotations from several of the moral and political philosophers most admired by the artist: Martin Heidegger, Iris Murdoch, Simone Weil, Hannah Arendt and others. However, *Colville Being Seen* is overshadowed by two more in-depth studies, also published in 1994: Philip Fry's lengthy and profusely illustrated catalogue for a 376-item exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; and Mark Cheetham's biography of the artist.

In *Alex Colville: Paintings, Prints and Processes...* Fry deals with all the paintings (twenty) and prints (ten) produced by the artist over the eleven-year period from 1983 (the year of the Art Gallery of Ontario retrospective) to 1994. Fry's

selection of preparatory drawings for the paintings and prints comprises only a tiny part of Colville's total output in this medium from the years 1983-94. Still, the catalogue's 341 drawings - ranging from tentative ink sketches to full-colour studies in acrylics - are more than sufficient in number to convey, with breadth and clarity, the artist's working processes.

Alex Colville: Paintings, Prints and Processes... consists of an extended introductory discussion of two paintings dating from before 1983, both from the collection of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts: *Cyclist and Crow* (1981) and *Church and Horse* (1964). In this section Fry introduces aspects of Colville's art that are explored throughout the rest of the catalogue: technique, authorial intention, and communication with the viewer. Painstaking formal analyses of the two paintings' surfaces and their underlying compositional organization highlights, above all, the complex web of mutual influence and reinforcement that Fry perceives between these aspects. Such analyses also allow Fry to make insightful references to a host of issues that have dogged Colville scholarship since the early seventies: naturalism; photography; narration; particularity versus generalization of subject; and the relationship between temporality and space.

In the remainder of the catalogue Fry groups together first the paintings, then the drawings, and finally the

prints. Each of these sections is prefaced by brief remarks on medium and technique. Within the sections on the paintings and prints, each work is the subject of a one- or two-page essay. This was obviously impossible and undesirable for each of the 341 drawings, which are instead accompanied by a single eleven-page essay. This essay discusses the evolution of theme and format in series of drawings in order to explore, *inter alia*, the techniques and reasoning behind the three aspects of Colville's work as a draughtsman: "embodiment of the subject matter through life drawings and diagrams...; geometric structuring through the determination of format...; and the authentication of the image to hold it in the sphere of likelihood by verifying its relationship to the world of everyday experience" (p.103).

Within the sections of the catalogue devoted to the paintings and the serigraphs Fry groups the works not by date ("since serial development does not apply in Colville's case") but by "family affinity." The latter is based in part on the works' immediate subject matter and in part on their broader, more transcendent themes. "This is one of many possible groupings..." Fry notes, "each of which would reflect the life experiences, conditioned perceptions, biases and hopes of those responsible for the [exhibition's] display" (p.28). The fact that Fry relies upon a form of reception theory to give

Colville's *oeuvre* a meaningful structure is singularly appropriate. In 1988 Colville was quoted as confirming his interest in reception theory: "I am a great believer in thinking that ... every individual brings to the examination of any given work of art a different experience, so that the work is different for everybody who looks at it."⁶

Previous writing on Colville's art, while sometimes directing attention to these factors, has rarely pursued them to their logical conclusion. Fry, however, does exactly that. The brief essays that constitute each painting's and serigraph's entry feature narratives and excurses by Fry, recording the personalization of his reactions to, and relations with, the works. "I see the couple standing above as my rowboat drifts slowly towards the bridge, rocking gently," he writes in his discussion/analysis (p.56) of *Couple on Bridge* (1992), thus unabashedly putting himself into the picture. "Have you ever been to Cape Breton?" he asks (p.90), in an effort to involve the reader in the sensations evoked by the view through the car window in *Taxi* (1985). "I," "you," "we" and "us": the personal pronouns recur, signalling Fry's own reactions to the images and his encouragement of the catalogue's readers to make proactive their own viewings of the works.

Fry takes equally seriously Colville's claims that the goal of his art is "to illuminate and enhance the human condition" (Cheetham, p.119). Thus his

discussion of *Target Shooting* (1990) is representative of his sensitivity to these twin concerns - the active role played by the viewer in the production of meaning, and Colville's philosophical ambitions for his work. In this analysis Fry attempts to account for how a nagging sense of uneasiness creeps into what is otherwise a subtly moving scene of a man initiating his adolescent son into target shooting - a sport that does not, despite its equipment, involve bloodshed:

It seems to me - and I hope you can agree - that the urgency that weighs upon us ... is the realization that teaching, that all forms of guidance, or sharing our collective ways and personal experiences, are precariously balanced on an edge that separates love and violence. (p.60)

There exists a distinct danger in this approach to pictorial interpretation. Taking Colville at his word that his art is "not ... a means of soliloquizing but ... a means of communication,"⁷ and that he strives "to render visible the mysteries of the supra-natural world,"⁸ might easily result in texts that are only weakly anchored in the visual evidence of the artworks. In a worst-case situation such texts risk doing more to familiarize the reader with a critic's loose-cannon psyche than to elucidate the paintings and serigraphs themselves.

Fry, however, avoids this. His reading of each painting always comprises

the last paragraph of a three-paragraph description/analysis of the work in question. In every case, this paragraph grows organically out of the two preceding ones. The first paragraph of each text is descriptively straightforward, focusing for the most part on what all viewers can agree they see in the images: figures, actions, setting, composition, colour, and physical positioning of the viewer in relation to the scene. The second paragraph, at least for the essays on the paintings, always discusses the mathematical grid engineered by the artist as a basis for the physical organization of the figures and objects within the images.⁹

This sort of rigorous geometric analysis is long overdue. In their monographs, Helen Dow and David Burnett include only sporadic and brief references to the complex skeletons of squares, rectangles, circles, hexagons and other geometric shapes that flower across Colville's drawings and that underlie his paintings and serigraphs. Fry, on the other hand, gives several specific examples of how the underlying geometries generate, and are generated by, the expressive relationships between the visual elements of the images, and of how they support the speculative "narratives" that he (and we) are required to weave from the paintings and serigraphs. Fry also includes, early in the catalogue, a very useful explanation of the four devices most commonly used by Colville in his

geometric grids: the golden section, the golden rectangle (with its related root-2 to root-9 rectangles), Le Corbusier's "Modulor," and the Fibonacci series (in which each successive number is the sum of the preceding two).

None of this makes for easy perusal; readers will need rulers and protractors to benefit fully from Fry's analyses of the artworks' geometric layouts. They will also require a significant degree of faith that the effectiveness Colville claims for his elaborate mathematical fabrications actually exceeds that of less rarefied instances of compositional structure reinforcing thematic content. The artist insists that it is because the organization of the images is largely determined by rigorous mathematical bases that he can deal convincingly with universal themes, generalized by the active viewer from the comparatively particularized figures and objects represented in the paintings and serigraphs. As he states, "Form and content ... are inseparable; neither one can be isolated effectively from its companion for individual examination."¹⁰

It is therefore fitting that the greatest strengths of Fry's texts on individual paintings and serigraphs are to be found in the implicit and explicit links that he establishes between form (mathematical structure) and content - both particularized content (the surface "narrative" of the image) and generalized content (the image's more transcendent implications). In the 1991

painting *Arrival*, a man pilots a pleasure boat (only his hand, guiding the tiller, is visible, in the foreground) towards a woman waiting on a dock. The idea of water as an agent of separation is an old one in Colville's art, dating back at least to *Four Figures on a Wharf* (1952), a visual memento of his wartime yearning to leave Europe and return to his wife in Canada. In the catalogue Fry identifies the underlying themes of *Arrival* as the binary phenomena that he believes animate the relationship between the man in the boat and the woman on the dock: separation and reunion, dependence and independence, longing and fulfillment. At the same time he considers how the geometry of the painting's composition generates and reinforces these binary opposites, by means of contradictory visual cues grounded in the painting's mathematical structure:

The distance that remains to be covered by sailing into the depth of the picture is clearly indicated by the emphatic change of scale between the hand and the woman; but the boat and wharf are both tied into a strong geometric pattern that tends to compress the pictorial gap by pulling the wharf forward from the middle ground towards the picture plane. ... [In addition, the] vertical divisions correspond to elements of the image - the right side of the mast, the posts rising above ground level and the right side of the ladder - effectively making the boat and wharf

part of the same pattern. (p.31-32)

As in *Arrival*, so in the other paintings and serigraphs: Fry discerns a series of universal themes suggested by imagery drawn from Colville's local environment and, in many cases, imbued with his trademark evocation of unease and foreboding. That the universal is implicit in the particular is hinted visually through the eradication or blurring of specific identity. Figures do such things as shield their faces or turn their backs; in *Arrival* we see only the hand of the man, while the woman is too far away to be discerned clearly. Among the universal themes intimated by Fry are: the complex bond between dependence, independence and individuality (*Looking Down*, 1988); the conditions of inter-relationship between human ideals, the non-human world and technology (*Floating Woman*, 1990); and the nature and conditions of human action (*White Canoe*, 1987).

All such evaluations are, of course, largely unquantifiable, and therefore open to objections. "The slight puzzles built into these pictures invite many fantasies and prohibit none," claimed John Bentley Mays in 1983, "so art-historical fantasies become as plausible as any other sort."¹¹ Nonetheless, Fry's thorough interweaving of description, formal analysis and judicious speculation - all grounded in Colville's own insistence upon the ambitious purposes he has set for his art - represents a sincere attempt actually to come to terms with

the works at a profound level. He thus goes well beyond merely describing surfaces and superficial effects, while at the same time adhering to the strictures that David Burnett outlined in 1983 to avoid "misreading" the works as mere slices of narrative: "The picture ... is the whole of its meaning, rather than one moment for which we must construct the prior and succeeding moments."¹²

In an unintended but fortuitous pairing, Fry's catalogue is neatly complemented by Mark Cheetham's book, *Alex Colville: The Observer Observed*. Unlike Fry's catalogue, Cheetham's book is primarily biographical in approach. And, in the same way that Fry takes seriously the artist's statements about communication and meaning in his art, Cheetham steers close to a comment Colville made to him in a 1992 letter: "I am inclined to think that the divisions between 'the life' and 'the work' are false, at least in my case - I have tried to work at both" (p.13). Cheetham therefore sets out on an exploration of the links between biography and art:

I am not the first person to have noticed the correspondence between Colville's life and art. ... I argue, however, that there is more than a resemblance, that Colville has explicitly fashioned his life after his artistic ideals. (p.132, note #1)

"Increasingly his life resembles one of his carefully planned and meticulously executed paintings," Cheetham states elsewhere in his book. "So har-

moniously intermingled are Colville's life and work that we learn more about him if we view his life as one of his paintings" (p.12). The assertion that life imitates art (rather than *vice-versa*) is never as well-established as Cheetham claims. But, this caveat aside, his book argues convincingly that both phenomena - Colville's life and his art - have been shaped by remarkably similar overarching concerns.

To his credit, Cheetham's treatment of this subject never slips into the trap identified by Gemey Kelly in her *Selected Drawings* catalogue: "Attempts to explain the meaning of Colville's figures are often premised on the facts of autobiography, an approach which conflates the figure with the model...." Cheetham is obviously in agreement with Kelly that "the drawings suggest that it is the human condition rather than the human form, either real or ideal, which interests [Colville]...."¹³ He accordingly builds his comparison between Colville's life and art not by searching out literal correlations, but by exploring three broad themes: "self-presentation, the fragility and affirmation of life, and the art of philosophizing" (p.14).

An integral aspect of self-presentation is what the artist refers to as self-fashioning. In this he has been strongly influenced by philosophers such as the French Existentialists, with their vision of the rational individual exercising freedom of choice within a universe

without rules. In Colville's case, according to Cheetham, this has had an impact on both his life (in his concern for systematically acquiring sufficient financial security and power to have the luxury of making his own decisions within an inherently unpredictable world) and his artworks (which exemplify methodical rationalism in their development and execution). As Cheetham tellingly phrases it, Colville affirms that we can "make our lives conform to our choices, just as a finished painting will follow from careful preparatory drawings" (p.22).

Cheetham's additional comments on how Colville's life and art have both been molded by his convictions about "the fragility and affirmation of life" and his fondness for "the art of philosophizing" are comparably absorbing. In these regards he sees Colville as someone whose approach to life and art owes much to his experiences with war and illness, his knowledge of his father's disappointments, and his intense sense of rootedness and place, as well as his favourite authors, artists and philosophers.

However, the tightness of the argument in support of Cheetham's central thesis about the echoing relationship between life and art can lead to the occasional *lacunae* in his text. Specifically, he sometimes tends to see the character of Colville's art as being determined almost exclusively by the artist's personal history and predilections when

in fact more general influences - well beyond Colville acting as an isolated rational agent making his own choices - may be operative. For example, Cheetham is intrigued by Colville's remarks on his two-year tenure as a war artist during the Second World War (1944-46): "In a certain sense I was writing letters home for these people [soldiers], depicting their lives, the dugouts, tanks, where they lived" (p.33). Cheetham proposes that this conception of Colville's war work encouraged an interest in everyday objects and events that accorded well with his personal interests:

Colville's detached observation of what surrounded the soldiers in World War II, as well as the world in which he now lives, is fundamental to his way of being in the world. Although he did see action in the war - and vividly recalls an assault in the Mediterranean in which he took part - he has always tended to celebrate the routine. 'It's very difficult to describe what war is like,' he says.... 'Much of nothing happen[s].' (p.37)

Precisely: much of nothing happens. For most soldiers on active duty the War consisted of long stretches of boredom, punctuated by bouts of bloodiness; and the bloodiness often happened so quickly, in such chaotic circumstances and on such a colossal physical scale, that it could be very difficult to capture in sketches or paintings. In addition, sketching horrific

scenes was not something that art students were trained to do. Indeed, the nihilistic nature of the War contradicted what many held to be the essentially life-affirming nature of the fine arts. Certainly Cheetham must be right: the fact that Colville favoured undramatic scenes says something important about his character and is almost without doubt linked to his continuing preference for quotidian subjects. Nonetheless, it is also true that selecting subjects showing "the emptiness and tedium of war, not its drama or the heroism of its combatants" (p.41), distinguished the work not only of Colville, but of most other Canadian as well as British war artists who had direct exposure to the devastation and plentiful evidence of inhumanity in Europe. Other, more general contributing factors must therefore be proposed to provide a more global account of Colville's records of the Second World War.

In Cheetham's defence it must be noted that elsewhere in his book he demonstrates that he does not subscribe to a reductivist approach in which Colville's personality is seen as the sole or single most important well-spring for his art. For example, he expresses reservations about the idea, proposed by others, that the artist's emotional numbness when he went to sketch at Belsen was a specifically personal emotional reaction, and therefore inherently "of a piece with his later aversion to the depiction of human

emotion, witnessed by ... [his] preference [for] ... averted faces."¹⁴ Cheetham agrees that "Colville does distance himself emotionally," but adds an important qualifier: "In the face of such cruelty and suffering, who wouldn't?" (p.38). Colville's reaction is here seen within its proper frame: the larger reality of a war powerful enough to either determine or alter less compelling contexts.

Overall, *Alex Colville: The Observer Observed* is a lively and informative study, even if its scholarly usefulness is sometimes compromised by the fact that it reads as a book written for a general audience. Although the narrative contains intriguing references and some difficult-to-trace quotations, there are only eleven notes for some one hundred pages of text. There are also a few factual errors, the two most surprising being a reference to "Goodrich" Roberts (p.108) and the claim that Colville relies upon one-point perspective (p.107). In fact - as Fry's analyses of the structural organization of the paintings and prints demonstrates - Colville does not necessarily restrict himself to a single vanishing point.

One final concern is the fact that the book tends to tip the balance between discussion of art and discussion of biography decisively in favour of the latter, even though Cheetham wishes to argue that Colville "has explicitly fashioned his life after his artistic ideals." Fully ten of the twenty-one illustrations are

photographs of the artist. Of the remaining eleven, all but one are reproductions of paintings; the exception is a wartime drawing not showing the trademark geometric gridwork of Colville's subsequent drawings. More sustained discussion of the art, and especially of these later drawings, would seem to be more fundamental to Cheetham's overall thesis than is the case in his book. Such a discussion could concentrate more deeply upon three topics in particular: how the extraordinarily complex mathematical schemata are constructed (for this we must turn to Fry's catalogue); how the grids are specifically intended to reinforce the same ideals of control and rationality that Cheetham shows to be integral to Colville's life as a whole; and how the drawings' evolutionary development in long series systematically and painstakingly pins down even minute details of future paintings and prints.

Although both Cheetham and Fry deal with Colville's work in terms of the artist's intentions and goals, they approach their subject from markedly different standpoints and use significantly different methods of description and analysis. Reading them in tandem can thus be illuminating. Perhaps the clearest example of this may be obtained by scrutinizing their respective treatments of *Western Star* (1985). In this painting a man standing by a freight truck ("Western Star") is photographing a woman, who has

turned her back to the viewer. Both figures' faces are invisible to us, thus minimizing any temptation to address the painting as if it were principally a representation of an autobiographical - or other, comparably specific - situation.

For Fry, the scene opens up larger questions intimated in other of Colville's paintings: loneliness, consolation, illusion, and the strange mixture of dependence and independence that leaves its stamp on all human relationships. He writes:

The [truck] stop ... [is] an intersection where solitary people meet, recognize their loneliness without actually admitting it, then go on their way encouraged by the unassuming gentleness of smiles and a bit of conversation. The man almost steps forward in his eagerness to try and capture some moments of joy in the memory of an image; she hesitates to respond, knowing that what was precious in those moments is already past. (p.86)

This reading is bolstered by Fry's analysis of the painting's geometry, which "tends to accentuate the couple's bilateral relationship while setting up the red truck as an intruder or at least the potential agent of separation." And this, in turn, is bound up with the baggage of personal experience that Fry brings to the painting. Indeed, he even alerts us as to how the image evokes for him memories of one truck stop in particular. His reading of the painting is thus rooted in the formal organization

of the image, in his own reactions to it, and in Colville's claims of philosophical content.

Conversely, Cheetham's discussion of *Western Star* concentrates on the interface between Colville's biography and his art, with the focal point being the concept of power. The representation in *Western Star* of a woman held captive by the gaze of her male companion is seen as one of many instances of the artist's fascination with power. This is something that Cheetham has already established as a basic theme that informs the organization of Colville's life as much as it does the content and structure of his art. The painting is then examined as an instance of disjunction between contemporary social thought and Colville's own views - a splendid example of how the artist's self-fashioning and self-presentation can be at variance with social trends not contained within the intellectual framework he chooses for himself. The artist's bewildered reaction to charges of misogyny, after *Western Star* appeared on the cover of Acadia University's academic calendar, confirms earlier references to the essential conservatism of his nature. He had actually wanted to show, quotes Cheetham, "[that] women [are] mysterious, attractive.' 'I don't consider women ... ordinary people'...." (p.76)

Colville's art has long provoked markedly different reactions and interpretations, from the adulation of Helen

Dow to the contempt of John Bentley Mays. The paradigmatic case of *Western Star* makes it clear that Fry and Cheetham each suggest insights, points of view and avenues of interpretation that are not necessarily presented, or developed at comparable length, by the other. Whatever one's opinion of the merits of the paintings, serigraphs and drawings, there is much in Fry and in Cheetham to foster the development of richer, more fully rounded ways of looking at them.

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Notes

1 Robert FULFORD, "Painter Laureate," *Saturday Night* (July 1983), 5. Richard A. PERRY took sharp exception to this view; see "Alex Colville: Why Have We Made Him Head Boy of Canadian Painters?," *Canadian Forum* (March 1985), 6-12.

2 Hans OHFF, "Provinziell wie Caspar David Friedrich," *Der Tagesspiegel/Fenilleton* (Berlin) (25 Aug. 1971): 4.

3 Helen J. DOW, *The Art of Alex Colville* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1972); David BURNETT, *Colville* (Art Gallery of Ontario/McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1983).

4 John Bentley MAYS, "Colville's Importance Exaggerated," *Globe and Mail* (23 July 1983), E-13.

5 REDPATH's brochure was for an

exhibition at the W.K.P. Gallery (North Bay, Ontario) of selected paintings, serigraphs and drawings produced from 1952 to 1992 and including all the preparatory drawings for the 1992 painting *Traveller*. KELLY's catalogue accompanied a travelling exhibition of 61 drawings (1949-92), organized by the Owens Art Gallery of Mount Allison University as an overview of Colville's principal thematic concerns. *Colville Being Seen* (Ottawa: Carleton University Art Gallery, 1994) deals with the thirty-two serigraphs produced by Colville over the past four decades.

6 Alex COLVILLE, quoted in Mark A. CHEETHAM, "The World, the Work, and the Artist: Colville and the Communitality of Vision," *RACAR* 15, no.1 (1988): 59.

7 Alex COLVILLE, "My Experience as a Painter and Some General Views of Art," printed in DOW, 207.

8 Alex COLVILLE, quoted in *Statements 18 Canadian Artists, 1967* (Regina: Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1967), 36.

9 After using this approach in his descriptions of twenty-two paintings Fry has made his point, and largely abandons it in the essays on the ten serigraphs. The second paragraphs of these latter essays concentrate primarily on how the visual elements within the images evolved in the preparatory drawings for each of the prints.

10 COLVILLE, "My Experience as a Painter and Some General Views of Art," in DOW, 206. DOW and BURNETT include some analyses of this type, but not as consistently or in as much detail as Fry.

11 MAYS, E-13.

12 BURNETT, 19.

13 Gemey KELLY, *Alex Colville: Selected Drawings* (Sackville: Mount Allison University, Owens Art Gallery, 1993), 2.

14 Cheetham is quoting PERRY, 9.

THE MICHAEL SNOW PROJECT
Visual Art 1951-1993

Dennis REID, Philip MONK, Louise
DOMPIERRE

Art Gallery of Ontario and The Power
Plant, Toronto

Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 1994

528 p., 23 col., 309 b/w illus.,

\$37.00

Michael Snow and his work have been called many things over the years - not all of them favourable - but there is no denying that he is the most voracious, prolific and restless artist that Canada has produced this century. As a sculptor he is responsible for some of Canada's most influential and widely-known works, including *The Audience* (1989) which shouts at, applauds and otherwise confronts all those entering Skydome; and *Flightstop* (1979) which lumbers through the rather stale air of Toronto's Eaton Centre. As a filmmaker, he has produced work that in 1971 provoked British film critics and historians to call him one of the world's ten greatest film directors (along with, among others, Alfred Hitchcock, Jean-Luc Godard and Orson Welles). As a musician he has been a part of, at last count, twenty-one commercially produced recordings, many with his legendary band CCMC (Canadian Creative Music Collective). And as a painter and producer of photo-works, he has created among the most memorable and defining images of contem-



porary Canadian art, including his ubiquitous and endlessly mutable *Walking Woman*.

How then to address the multifarious work of an artist who refuses to be bound by convention and discipline? Louise Dompierre, Chief Curator at the Power Plant in Toronto, proposed to the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1989 that there be a city-wide examination and celebration of Snow's many talents. The result was that Toronto was virtually Snow-bound from March 11 to June 5, 1994. Three exhibitions occurred at the AGO: Dennis Reid, Curator of Canadian Art, examined the artist's first fifteen years of art production, 1951-1967; Philip Monk, Curator of Contemporary Art, concentrated on the three pivotal years 1967-

1969; and Jim Shedden, Assistant Curator, Film and Video, organized a complete retrospective of Snow's films. At the Power Plant, Dompierre explored Snow's photo-based and holographic images over the past twenty-two years.¹

The curatorial documentation for the show was as inclusive and free-ranging as Snow is himself. Four major catalogues have so far appeared: one on Snow's "Music/Sound," one on his films, one which collects his writings, and the visual art catalogue under discussion here.² *Visual Art 1951-1993* is in fact three catalogues rolled into one. Dennis Reid's contribution, "Exploring Plane and Contour: The Drawing, Painting, Collage, Foldage, Photo-Work, Sculpture and Film of Michael Snow from 1951 to 1967," is primarily a descriptive and historical review of Snow's formative and early years, with brief reference to his very early childhood. Reid begins the long essay with his own memories of Expo '67. There in the midst of all the new-found technology saturating "man and his world" strides Michael Snow's *Walking Woman*, as Reid describes her: "that bold figure, striding briskly this way and that, confident, contained, secure in her identity, yet open, engaged" (p.21). We may now think of her as a quaint and rather belittling masculine view of what another generation thought of women, but to many artists and critics she was "a venerable

icon of the imagination that for many of us in the early Sixties had represented a stable base from which to venture into the maelstrom of contemporary art" (p.23).

The strength of Reid's essay is its extensive documentation of inaccessible texts and reviews on Snow's early career. Reid works backwards from the 1967 *Walking Woman* sculptures to early work, influences, education and, ultimately, birth. Along the way we get a great deal of description of his vast production, large chunks of quotations from various reviews and extensive swaths of relevant Snow writings. Robert Fulford was one of Snow's early champions and at times it seems as though Reid does little more than quote Fulford for pages on end. Although many of Fulford's articles were bound for ephemeral newspapers, they remain among the most incisive and insightful comments on Snow. Here, for example, is Fulford on the first *Walking Woman* exhibition, at the Isaacs Gallery in 1962: "In [*Venus Simultaneous*] Snow sums up all the ambiguities of the exhibition as a whole - the use of shallow, varying space; the play of light and shadow; and the nervous, restless activity of his art, exemplified in this case by a painting which seems to be on the point of turning into sculpture. . . . Whenever you believe you know all he has to say, he quickly changes the conversation" (p.44-45).

Reid documents many fascinating biographical and aesthetic slices of Snow's early history, including the "knife-drawn works" which were the real precursors of the Walking Woman image; his first solo show at the Greenwich Gallery in October 1956; the early history of the media's response to Snow; the first showing of the film *New York Eye and Ear Control*, where 300 of the 400 present stormed out of the showing at the University of Toronto; and Snow announcing his arrival in New York by papering the streets in the middle of the night with posters of his Walking Woman.

One of the most intriguing sections of Reid's essay is his discussion of Snow's first public exhibition with Graham Coughtry at the Hart House Gallery. When an early viewer complained about the work, the newly-elected mayor, Nathan Philips, demanded the removal of three "obscene" drawings. Thereafter the show became a public spectacle "garnering more press and visitor attention than either Coughtry or Snow would see again for a decade or more" (p.115). No checklist from the show survives, and despite the extensive press coverage there was only one review, in the *U of T* student newspaper. In an interview the day after this review, Snow discussed his ambitions and artistic desires, which sound as though they could be taken from almost any period of his practice:

"Although the process is free from rules, after it is born I expect it to be a statement, something one can stand on, not just a helter-skelter salt and pepper effect. . . . Actually all I want to do is present some kind of moving image using all the cement [elements] of painting, colour, line, form, texture. It must end up being an object which rewards, invites, provokes contemplation, awareness. A painting is a small experience in feeling and thinking, that is, living" (p.116).

While Reid's essay is most helpful as an historical document tracing fifteen years of early Snow, Monk's is primarily a theoretical and contextual assessment of three years within his pivotal New York period where he and Joyce Wieland lived from 1962 to 1971. Monk's essay, "Around Wavelength: The Sculpture, Film and Photo-Work of Michael Snow from 1967-1969," traces this sliver of his middle years. His primary filmic concerns at this time (although of course the concerns are present in contiguous years) included an examination and obsession with process, a desire to structure and localize time, and an attempt to explore and, in some sense, explode the notion of seeing. Snow's films and sculptures of the period attempt to dissociate themselves from anything outside of themselves, partly as a way of focussing the attention of the audience and partly from a need to examine the role and difficulties of rep-

resentation itself. Monk quotes the critic P. Adams Sitney on Snow and other New York artists such as Meredith Monk and Philip Glass in 1969: "These artists tend to use *duration*, repudiate psychology, and retard and elongate the few actions they employ. Their materials are consistent (not diversified); extensive repetition is common, and where it is not found, one can expect stasis" (p.298).

This concern for duration is perhaps best seen in *Wavelength* (1967), the film that garnered Snow the Grand Prize at the Fourth International Experimental Film Festival in Knokke-le-Zoute, Belgium in 1968 and remains one of the most influential and widely-discussed avant-garde films ever produced. As Snow describes it, the film "is a continuous zoom which takes 45 minutes to go from its widest field to its smallest and final field. It was shot with a fixed camera from one end of an 80 foot loft, shooting the other end, a row of windows and the street." Snow has referred to *Wavelength* as "a summation of my nervous system, religious inklings, and aesthetic ideas" (p.322).

Dompierre's essay, "Embodied Vision: The Painting, Sculpture, Photo-Work, Sound Installation, Music, Holographic Work, Films and Books of Michael Snow from 1970 to 1993," is primarily a personal and impressionistic view of Snow's recent work. Dompierre discusses the various

ways that he uses his body and the bodies of others. In *Venetian Blind* for example, Snow photographed himself with a hand-held camera, eyes squinting into the camera and into the sun, while behind him the topography of Venice passes by. In *Egg*, one of his best-known holographic works, he breaks an egg into a cast-iron frying pan, the only "actual" object in the piece. For Dompierre, Snow's work examines the idea of a "de-centered subject, the questions of the status of the image and its relationship to the Real, the role of the image in the shaping of identity and understanding, the reliance on techniques of reproduction in the making of art objects, and . . . the denial of the notion of the creating subject and its replacement by the idea of the artist as *auteur*" (p.401).

Dompierre's primary critical concern is Snow's struggle with representation: how reality and illusion can or cannot be represented; how process influences the way things are represented; how the relationship between the self and representation of the self is a perpetually intangible conundrum; and how the world simultaneously encourages and resists representation. Snow remains somewhere between his desire to explain the world and his realization that such a task is beyond his or anyone's ability: "If we consider the direction of Snow's practice until now, it is easy to understand his need to reconnect in a very tangible way

with the world and to try to surmount, perhaps, the gulf that seems to be expanding in his apprehension of objects" (p.459).

At the end of the catalogue are two shorter essays: Richard Rhodes' "Michael Snow: The Public Commissions" and Derrick de Kerckhove's "Holography, 'mode d'emploi': On Michael Snow's Approach to Holography." Rhodes provides an overview on why there has been a dearth of public-commission art in this century, and then goes on to provide a compressed and rich discussion of Snow's contributions, with particular emphasis on *Flightstop* and *The Audience*. To Rhodes, the work demonstrates "a wisdom about the flux at the end of things" (p.484), "a uniquely circumstantial focus" (p.485), and "a supremely ambivalent state of animation" (p.490). De Kerckhove's quirky piece discusses Snow's holographic works, their distinct "commentary on representation" (p.499) and their ability to give an appearance of objectivity to time, rather than to space (p.506). De Kerckhove sees Snow as someone "at the forefront of a paradigmatic shift from space to time concerns in the immediate subconsciousness of the world culture" (p.507). This technology brings on an inkling of a new way to see the world (or a new vision of the world), and in de Kerckhove, the most elemental kind of wonder: "Looking at some of Michael Snow's work, I am reminded that I am a newcomer to this

world - or maybe it is the world itself that has just sprung up from nowhere" (p.508).

What we are left with at the end of this extensive and inclusive catalogue is very much what we are left with after we have spent time with Snow's considerable body of visual work. Within the catalogue there are chunks of text that are repeated, others that are derivative, others that are poorly-constructed and still others that circle upon themselves but manage not to say very much. There are also many crystalline insights and complex intuitions, primarily within Monk's essay, that provide new ways of addressing Snow. Similarly, Snow's work itself can be repetitious, redundant, not particularly well-crafted and a sometimes unsuccessful attempt at achieving profundity of thought. It is also often curious, engaging and disruptive to the way we normally see the world, and riveting in its ability to scrutinize and disturb the way we attempt to understand the world.

Snow is an artist who confounds, who persistently explores and who resists the facile and the predictable. His work, as represented by this most recent retrospective, is a study of the endless task of focussing: the continuing desire to both narrow and expand the view and then to examine the strange world that bursts into life. Particular elements are sometimes thrown into sharp relief while others

remain out of sync or out of focus. Snow is obsessed with the rhythms of the ordinary, with the slightly changing repetitions that lie within the individual imagination. There is a ferocious ego at work here. But within his work there seems never to have been the desire to demonstrate that he has found the true answers, or that he knows the only way to see, or that he has made a discovery to eclipse all others. Snow demands that we think on our feet, although thinking, appreciation and discovery are slippery entities at best. Throughout his work there is a flexing of aesthetic sinews, a flutter of abstractions in the air and the realization that ideas can be approached but never captured.

This profusely illustrated catalogue and the others produced for *The Michael Snow Project* cannot hope to answer all questions, nor discuss the myriad complexities of his work. But they do demonstrate his protean talents. They also point to his ability to bridge the concerns of, for example, Painters Eleven, with those of such artists as Genevieve Cadieux, Barbara Steinman and Ian Carr-Harris. Snow will be remembered for his tenacious and boundless energy, the eclecticism of his artistic reach, and his desire to explore the imperative processes within artmaking.

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Notes

1 As part of *The Michael Snow Project* there were also programmes for students, teachers and families; videotapes on Snow; music performances by Snow and by CCMC; talks and lectures; an architectural tour of Snow's public commissions; Walking Woman pin sets and T-shirts for sale; and an InfoSnow telephone line.

2 *Music/Sound: The Performed and Recorded Music/Sound of Michael Snow, Solo and with Various Ensembles, His Sound-Films and Sound Installations - Improvisations/ Compositions from 1948 to 1993*, ed., Michael Snow with texts by the artist, David Lancashire, Raymond Gervais, Bruce Elder *et al.* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, The Power Plant and Alfred A. Knopf, 1994); *The Collected Writings of Michael Snow* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press, 1994); and *Presence and Absence: The Films of Michael Snow 1956-1991*, ed., Jim Shedden with texts by the artist, Bart Testa, R. Bruce Elder, Regina Cornwell, Jonas Mekas, Steve Reich and Kathryn Elder (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).