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ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN



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fig. 5 Yvonne McKague Housser, *Evening-Nipigon River*, (detail)
1943, private coll., Ottawa. (Photo: National Gallery of
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ENVISIONING NATION

Nationhood, Identity and the Sampson-Matthews Silkscreen Project: The Wartime Prints

Between 1942 and 1963, the firm of Sampson-Matthews produced over one hundred silkscreen prints which were widely distributed throughout Canada and abroad and played an important role in shaping the notion of Canadian art. This article, the first of two focussing on the Sampson-Matthews prints, deals with the wartime project undertaken in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada. A future article will consider the post-war phase of the partnership, the last commercial phase of the programme undertaken after 1955 when the Gallery ceased to participate in the programme, and related silkscreen series which have been identified with the Sampson-Matthews/National Gallery project.

INTRODUCTION

Writing which has dealt with the role of reproductions in Canadian history has generally accepted that the wartime Sampson-Matthews Ltd. silkscreen project, undertaken in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada, was largely responsible for shaping our notion of Canadian art and Canadian identity. It also established the Group of Seven and landscape painting as the *sine qua non* of Canadian art, creating the lens or aesthetic filter through which Canadian identity would be defined.¹ In 1948, Blodwen Davies described the wartime silkscreens as an "example of the way in which art becomes a community asset."² As Dennis Reid has pointed out, "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

Of the one hundred and eighteen images associated with the Sampson-Matthews project over its thirty year history, only thirty-six were actually part of the wartime series, the focus of this essay. (See Appendix for the complete list of wartime prints and dates of publication.) Thirty-six other prints were created as part of the post-war partnership with the National Gallery. After the Gallery's withdrawal in 1955, another fifteen were printed by Sampson-Matthews as a continuation of the project. In addition, images printed by Sampson-Matthews, using the same process and formats as the wartime series, were produced for the Federation of Canadian Artists and the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association and marketed along with the National Gallery/Sampson-Matthews series in the post-war years.

The originators of the project described it as an “incalculable service to the armed service” which would, “at the same time, greatly aid in spreading an understanding and appreciation of Canadian art.”⁴ The original target market and *raison d’être* for the silkscreen project was the military. The prints were circulated to military bases across Canada and throughout the world. From the outset, it was proposed that the project be expanded to include schools and “club rooms.”⁵

This essay is a sequel to “Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity and the National Gallery’s First Reproduction Program of Canadian Art.”⁶ Indeed, that text started out as an article about the Sampson-Matthews silkscreens. During my research, however, I was sidetracked by the discovery of the earlier National Gallery reproduction series of Canadian art. The present article, which returns to the Sampson-Matthews project, is intended to address many of the questions about the wartime prints — including how the project was conceived and executed, which and how many prints it included, the artists involved and the audience for the prints. A comprehensive view of the silkscreen project will enable us to better understand the role the Sampson-Matthews prints have played in defining Canadian art in this century.

In an attempt to understand how the project shaped the public understanding of Canadian art and identity, this phase of my research examines the individual works which comprised the wartime series and the manner in which they were selected and disseminated. It identifies the ongoing tension between the need to please sponsors, the military and the general public, and the aesthetic goals that were perceived to underlie the project. It also considers the influence of a small group of well-placed artists, administrators and business people who collaboratively created an institutionalized aesthetic that subsequently appeared as a natural development of an emergent nationalism. In particular, it examines the role of the National Gallery as a partner in the Sampson-Matthews project.

The paper also considers the promise which the silkscreen medium appeared to offer Canadian artists. H.O. McCurry, Director of the National Gallery, and A.Y. Jackson were central to the creation and development of the project. Each strongly believed that original prints were the answer to the limited market for original works of art and that the medium would provide artists with a new source of remuneration, at the same time creating a new audience for Canadian art.⁷

The earlier reproduction programme of National Gallery lithographs had been an essential tool in the Gallery’s project to educate Canadians about Canadian art and, in tandem with the nation-building effort of the period, played a critical role in shaping Canadian identity. H.O. McCurry, the Gallery’s Director after 1939, would list the original (1928-42) series of colour reproductions as one of his principal achievements in the over forty years he spent at the Gallery. However, the small size of the lithographic images made them more suitable for the classroom than for the wartime quarters of Canada’s troops. With reduced

government support for the Gallery during the War, the idea of having “artists paint and donate to the services works which could be reproduced by sponsors” offered a unique solution to a number of problems.⁸

The Sampson-Matthews project, as it came to be known, differed from the earlier reproduction programme in a number of crucial ways. Rather than reproducing works already in the National Gallery collection and the consequent development of a canon of works easily recognizable and identifiable, the wartime programme’s stated goal was to create works of art by contemporary Canadian artists specifically designed to reflect the various aspects of Canadian life. Yet even in its earliest phase, the project would include works from public collections by deceased artists, such as Tom Thomson, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Clarence Gagnon. While the earlier series featured a limited number of central Canadian artists, in the wartime project it was considered important to represent Canada geographically in terms of both artists and subject matter. However, as in the 1928 project, landscape was perceived to be the raw material of Canadian identity and the majority of artists would be Ontario-based.

Instead of relying on the relatively small (8” x 10” and postcard-size) lithographic images and expensive printing processes of the 1928-42 project, the Sampson-Matthews serigraphs were based on artists’ designs and printed from large, relatively inexpensive screens. Colourful (at least ten oil-based colours) and large (30” x 40” or 40” x 30”), the artist’s original painting had to be transferred by a designer to a silkscreen stencil for printing. (In the case of paintings already in public collections, a copy of the painting had to be made in flat colour to guide the screen expert.) Artists were instructed “to work in ten colors, flat and opaque, a blue overlying a yellow or a red remained blue, but a certain amount of variety could be obtained by cross-hatching or dry brushing.” Generally, the prints were brightly coloured and attractive. While the first several were relatively simple in the drawing and the number of colours used, by 1943 the prints “progressively became more involved.”⁹

Rather than the teacher’s guide prepared by Arthur Lismer for the earlier series, the silkscreens, which were intended to be hung in public spaces, were accompanied by “description card[s].” Each card was to be hung alongside the print, briefly describing the subject matter of the image, its stylistic concerns, and biographical information about the artist.¹⁰ More elaborate information sheets containing material similar to that in the earlier publication would later be prepared for teachers’ use.¹¹

A.Y. Jackson was generally acknowledged as the guiding force in the development and direction of the programme. He saw it as a unique way to support Canadian artists who had not been selected as official war artists and who had found the limited market for their work further reduced during the war years.¹² In late 1942, observing that artists were being urged by “all the societies” to paint

war pictures for no remuneration, he argued that the silkscreen project represented a much more sensible approach and a “possible solution to the artist’s [financial] problems.”¹³ Though few of his artist-colleagues shared his faith, Jackson firmly believed that silkscreen prints would revolutionize the art market.¹⁴ He was committed to the potential of the silkscreen medium and, like McCurry, envisioned art created for a “great[er] purpose,” an artistic product “along the lines developed under the Works Project Administration in the United States during the previous decade.” The project would enhance public access to excellent quality original works of art and provide new markets and new sources of revenue for hard-pressed artists.¹⁵

The National Gallery embarked on the project in large measure to address the numerous requests it had received to supply “suitable pictures for the decoration of recreation rooms in the camps and barracks of the armed forces.”¹⁶ For both financial and marketing purposes, the project included a parallel school programme.¹⁷ Sampson-Matthews, the printing firm responsible for the project, argued that combining print runs to serve both the war effort and the educational market would save substantially on the cost of the prints that were destined for the schools. This strategy would also enable the firm to acquire the funds required to pay artists whose work was to be used for the school series.¹⁸ Except for the absence of a credit line recognizing the sponsors in the wartime scheme, the educational prints were identical to those designated for the military.¹⁹

Although Jackson proposed a smaller format for the schools (24” x 30”), in the first instance economies of scale required a single print size from the already prepared screen.²⁰ It was only in late 1943, when the first series of twenty-five was virtually complete, that Matthews advocated the reproduction of the most popular subjects in a smaller size. This, along with a reduced price, “might make for wider distribution — especially in country schools.”²¹

By April 1943, the National Gallery was promoting *Canadian Pictures for the Schools* not only to school boards and individual schools but also to other galleries. The Art Gallery of Toronto, Hart House, the Vancouver Art Gallery and the art museum in London, Ontario, were among those that had purchased complete sets.²² A.J. Casson’s mockup of the promotional booklet was in McCurry’s hands with a recommendation that, although only eight subjects were currently available, the catalogue should be produced and circulated to the schools before the end of term.²³ Matthews suggested that process should be described as the “Colourcraft” [variously spelled “Colorcraft”] process in oil paint, rather than the term silkscreen because the “silk screen process is somewhat in disrepute in some quarters because of poor reproductions.”²⁴ In the fall of 1943 a twelve-page brochure with information pertaining to each of the twenty-five prints was in preparation, although the final five prints of the first wartime series would not be completed before March 1944. The brochure described the effects of the prints as

"decorative rather than detailed" (given the requirement for simplification), insisting that each was a "faithful copy of the artist's original [tempera design]."
The 40" x 30" size was determined to be excellent for classrooms; prints of this size could be inexpensively framed with a 1 1/2-inch molding, did not require glass and were washable.²⁵ The prints were boxed in sets of five, ensuring some diversity in each group of prints acquired.

The Key Players

Although the roles of the key players would vary over time, it appears that A.Y. Jackson was responsible for the conception of the programme and for providing the initiative and credibility required to get it started.²⁶ A March 1943 article in *The Star Weekly* describes him as a veteran of the Great War reminiscing about the drabness of soldiers' surroundings and of the need to brighten up their living quarters.²⁷ The author of the article recounts that Jackson and A.J. Casson "went to talk to the National Gallery and discussed with the curator the possibility of the Gallery publishing reproductions of famous Canadian paintings."²⁸ However, the artist Peter Haworth wrote to McCurry to "set the record straight," stating that Jackson had first raised the idea in a meeting of the Canadian Group of Painters and that "it was intended as a Canadian Group project." Haworth wrote, "When it was found necessary to expand it (and quite rightly so) I suggested that the project was so universal that it be disassociated from the Group but that the Group co-operate in any way possible."²⁹

In 1942, Jackson contributed the first work to the series which, at every phase of the project, included more works by him than by any other artist. In addition to recruiting other artists, Jackson offered his stamp of approval or concern, consulting regularly with both the Gallery and Sampson-Matthews. He, along with Casson and the staff at Sampson-Matthews, also translated works by other artists into silkscreen designs. Jackson's influence on the project was enormous. Indeed, he regularly discussed Gallery policy with McCurry, advising on all aspects of Gallery business from the silkscreen project to acquisitions and the contents of exhibitions.³⁰

The project was quickly adopted by Sampson-Matthews, which, during the depression years, had seen very little business despite the fact that it was the best equipped commercial studio in Toronto and "probably Canada's leading silkscreen poster-printing establishment between the wars."³¹ It was only in 1941, in large measure due to business generated by the war effort, that the firm returned to prosperity. During the 1930s, A.J. Casson had worked on the refinement of the silkscreen process and he would supervise the production of the prints as well as contributing his own images to the series. A 1944 essay prepared for the Gallery by Jackson described how a medium used primarily for advertising had been transformed to create large quantities of relatively low-cost, large-size designs for

broad distribution by artists who were not experienced in the medium.³² Well-aware of the potential market for low-cost art prints, the firm was prepared to take immediate ownership of the project, with Chuck Matthews managing the financial end and A.J. Casson handling the production side of the operation.³³ They realized that the costs associated with a significant production line for schools and the general market could be covered by sponsorship from businesses anxious to support the war effort and that production for an educational market would provide business opportunities long after the war had ended.

The participation of the National Gallery was crucial. Although it was not prepared to take ownership of the project, it offered the required legitimating imprimatur and credibility. Each of the sponsored wartime prints would bear the imprint "Produced in co-operation with the National Gallery of Canada."³⁴ However, the Gallery made it clear from the beginning that "there is to be no suggestion made that Sampson-Matthews Limited have been specifically commissioned by the Department of National Defence or the National Gallery to undertake this work."³⁵ Jackson and McCurry saw an additional role for the Gallery. Concerned from the first that Casson (and Sampson-Matthews) might take the project in too commercial a direction, Jackson urged the Gallery's Director to ensure quality control. As it turned out, his fears were well-grounded.

In May 1942, before the National Gallery had become an official partner in the programme, Jackson outlined a modus operandi. He would head the committee to secure artists who would donate work for reproduction.³⁶ The National Gallery agreed to contribute several works from its collection for reproduction and to be responsible for distribution of the prints. Sampson-Matthews would be responsible for obtaining sponsors for the reproductions and for delivery of the designs.

Obtaining government approval presented a potential problem. McCurry and Jackson were both members of the committee charged with appointing official war artists and the process was an arduous one. In view of this, McCurry expressed concern that they might be "tied up in a military straight-jacket."³⁷ As Jackson described the situation, government efforts to employ art and artists to support the war effort were disorganized at best. (The Army, Navy and Air Force acted independently of one another, as did each of the related departments.)³⁸ Yet without government approval, the programme could not proceed. Co-operation and support were solicited and eventually obtained from the Department of Defence but it was a complicated and time-consuming process. Matthews was in regular correspondence with J.W.G. Clark, a public relations officer in the Department of National Defence. When problems arose, Jackson and McCurry consulted Albert Cloutier, an artist who served as Chief of Graphic Design for the Department of Defence in the early 1940s.

When the Army granted formal approval to the programme in January

1943, the first prints were already in production. Colonel C.R. Hill, Director of Special Services, observed,

From a morale standpoint these pictures have a tremendous value. Perhaps particularly in the case of men who have been away from Canada for two or three years, the display of Canadian scenes will make them conscious of the land and cause for which they are called upon to fight. To those men who are still in Canada but who have to live under Camp conditions the pictures will bring a touch of beauty badly needed to counteract the dullness of their environment.³⁹

Charles Power, the Minister of National Defence for Air, wrote to express his "sincere appreciation for the completion of a plan which will bring beauty and colour into the rather severe interiors of Navy, Army and Air Force recreation rooms in the camps and units in Canada, Newfoundland, and Great Britain...[t]he artists...have made a fine contribution to the war effort."⁴⁰

Interest in the project grew quickly. Shortly after the beginning of production, Jackson received a letter from a Major Macpherson, who had read the article describing the project in *Saturday Night*.⁴¹ Since instructions had been issued that the prints were to be hung only in spaces frequented by enlisted men, Macpherson asked if he might personally purchase prints, promising to share them with his fellow officers.⁴² Not every senior officer was so supportive. In 1943 McCurry would note that "at least three reports had been received from camps that the pictures had not been put up but ... otherwise disposed of by the commanding officer."⁴³ When the British War Office asked for several thousand prints, Jackson gloated that news of the request "should have been published in every paper in Canada. That would choke off the Col. Blinks and the bottlenecks."⁴⁴ He saw an aggressive publicity campaign as a means of consolidating the project's position, conjecturing that publication of the fact that "these prints are already in all the camps" would make any "chumps ... holding them up ... as popular as a skunk."⁴⁵

In response to the request of the British War Office, two thousand prints were made available to the British army through the generosity of corporate benefactor J.S. McLean of Canada Packers.⁴⁶ The Treasury Board approved payment of \$2000 to the National Gallery as its share of the cost. (It was noted that thirty-five percent of the British R.A.F. was, in fact, Canadian).⁴⁷ An additional \$800 to be used for distribution abroad was authorized by the Wartime Information Board.⁴⁸ Indeed the international distribution programme was so successful that, by May 30th 1944, 2600 pictures were on order and only 2400 prints available. To meet the demand, McCurry recommended reducing the Canadian requirements, given the erratic use that had been made of many of the prints in Canada, and sending one thousand prints to Vincent Massey, Canada's High Commissioner to Great Britain: "After all the prints have made a far better impression and are far more appreciated in England than they evidently are here."⁴⁹ Prints were also

sent to American bases in Newfoundland and to prison camps in Germany, and a collection of the prints was also circulated in Russia.⁵⁰

Not all artists supported the silkscreen project; in many cases, individual artists and associations were involved in their own projects to support for the war effort. As Jackson noted, every art society in Canada was being asked to lend works or put together original exhibitions for the troops and each had its own particular project. The National Gallery put together an "Army Show" of about 75 works in 1944.⁵¹ It also assembled a small exhibition of pictures relating to the Army by artists who were not enlisted.⁵² In one of the earliest documents associated with the Sampson-Matthews project, Harry McCurry bemoaned the quality of the original government scheme to provide posters for the war effort which involved only reproductions and offered few opportunities to Canadian artists. He called for "a comprehensive plan covering posters for all the war departments." It was only in 1942, when Harry Mayerovitch took over the design department of the National Film Board and commissioned original works to "inspire, exhort and inform," that a consistent programme of propaganda posters got underway.⁵³ The President of *The Montreal Star*, J.W. McConnell, declined an invitation to sponsor a silkscreen. He reasoned that the National War Services Board, of which he was a member, had "quite a fine collection of pictures which [were] being shipped and exhibited to all the Services throughout Canada ... wherever the Services manifest an interest in having it set up."⁵⁴ Arthur Lismer envisioned a "scheme for the collaboration of the Canadian Federation of Artists, the Y.M.C.A. and the National Gallery, organizing exhibitions of work by men of the armed forces — a splendid idea [which] must be carried out somehow."⁵⁵ At the same time, the armed forces employed four hundred and fifty war artists to document and record the experience of war.⁵⁶

The fact that the silkscreen project required artists to donate their work was a strong disincentive to participation for already impecunious artists. To convince them to participate, Jackson advised that they should be informed that only two to three hundred prints would be made and that the originals would be returned to the artists and the screens destroyed. Artists were given ten prints for their own sale and were to receive a royalty of fifty cents on each print sold in the school programme.⁵⁷

Production of the Wartime Series

As early as May 1942, the project was in high gear. Assured of the required government approval, production began on Jackson's and Charles Comfort's submissions. It appears that the earliest works associated with the project were selected by Sampson-Matthews — generally in consultation with Jackson. Full-size paintings were created specifically for the project. Jackson believed that once other artists witnessed the success of the project, they would be interested in becoming involved.

Jackson's proposal for the first set in the series included the work of Charles Comfort (*Bon Echo* [fig.7]), A.J. Casson (it would ultimately be an improved version of his *Ontario Village*), Thoreau MacDonald's *Wild Geese* (fig.9), his own *Quebec Village* (fig.8), (in the collection of the National Gallery) and Tom Thomson's *Northern River* (fig.10), (also in the National Gallery's collection and already widely known from the Gallery's first reproduction series of Canadian art), which "lent itself perfectly to the project."⁵⁸ The proposal would be altered slightly, apparently for reasons of geographic representation, replacing the Thomson with Toronto-based B. Coghill Haworth's Cape Breton scene, *Port au Persil* (which Canada Packers had agreed to sponsor).⁵⁹ Writing to McCurry during production, Jackson described Comfort's "very lively [painting] of Bon Echo" and Casson's "very colourful Haliburton" scene. He deemed his own Québec village in winter "too pretty though it should please the boys."⁶⁰

In May, Jackson informed McCurry that the "pictures for the troops business is going right over the top."⁶¹ By July, Jackson had asked McCurry to solicit permission to use an image by the recently deceased Clarence Gagnon, which he felt that was essential to the project.⁶² Later in the month, Sampson-Matthews had received "good" designs from Ethel Seath (*Tadoussac Pier (Dock Scene)*) and Anne Savage (*Sunflowers* and *Apple Orchard*). Although these were the first prints submitted and Jackson had probably solicited the design from Savage, whose work he respected, none of these would find sponsors or be printed. He also noted that Franklin Carmichael was working on "a good one" (*White Water*).⁶³

The discussion concerning Prudence Heward's *Indian Girl* provides insight into the selection process. Although Jackson deemed Heward an excellent artist, he rejected McCurry's suggestion that the painting, which was in the National Gallery's collection, should be used in the series, arguing that the image was better suited for a "French poster."⁶⁴ There would be no risk-taking. Sponsors also had to be pleased, although it is not clear whether, as Jackson suspected, Sampson-Matthews determined not to actively seek sponsorship for potentially controversial works. These works included Ann Savage's *Sunflowers* (which some thought included the representation of an outhouse), Philip Surrey's *Cabaret*, variously called *Juke Box* and *Dancers* (which suggested that Canadians might be guilty of carousing), and Fritz Brandtner's *Potato Pickers* (fig.4), which its critics suggested did not portray the "true" Canadian.

In the early phase of the project, McCurry had reassured the Department of Defence regarding the "excellence" of the programme by stressing that each of the artists who had created work for the project was a full or an associate member of the Royal Canadian Academy. Although this was never an official policy and non-members such as Brandtner, were selected, it appears that this unstated preference imposed a considerable limitation on the range of choice of participants. (In the case of members of the Contemporary Arts Society, the only condition for artist membership was that one not be a member of the RCA.)



fig. 1 Art appreciation class using silkscreen prints from the National Gallery of Canada. Classes sponsored by the Sydney, N.S., Art Club and held Saturday mornings in the Y.M.C.A. building. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada)



fig. 2 London Library, London. Choosing paintings from the Art Gallery for a school display are Principal P.L. Pickles of Byron School, and two of his students. (Photo: National Film Board of Canada)



fig. 3 London Library, London. In the Gallery, a Canadian Girl Guides art group supervised by Laura Gray (standing).
(Photo: National Film Board of Canada)



fig. 4 Fritz Brandtner, Potato Pickers, 1944, private coll., Toronto. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada)



fig. 5 Yvonne McKague Housser, *Evening-Nipigon River*, 1943,
private coll., Ottawa. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada)

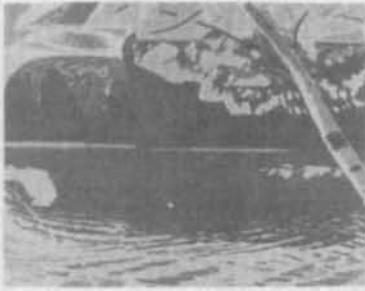


fig. 6 Sydney Hallam, *The Plowman*, 1943, private coll., Ottawa.
(Photo: National Gallery of Canada)

NATIONAL GALLERY SERIES - (SIZE 30" x 40")



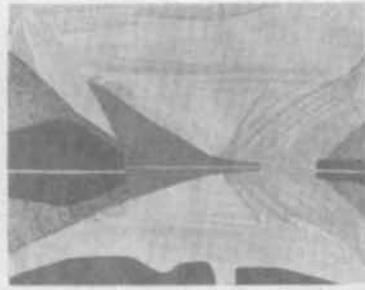
Albert Cloutier, *Sugar Time*
Blue, pink, grey



Charles F. Comfort, *Bon Echo*
Brown, grey, yellow



F. S. Haines, *Beech Woods*
Green, grey, dull purple



Lawren Harris, *Maligne Lake*
Blue, grey, beige

Illustrations of Sampson-Matthews,
Catalogue of Canadian Colour
Reproductions, National Gallery
Series, Ottawa, Department of
External Affairs, Ottawa, c.1948,
p.6, 7, 8, and 9. (Photo: National
Gallery of Canada)



Y.McK. Housser, *Poplar and Spruce*
Light and dark greens
(available only in size 20" x 27")

fig. 7

NATIONAL GALLERY SERIES - (Size 30" x 40")



Jack Humphrey, *Grand Manan, N.B.*
Blue, green, dull yellow



A.Y. Jackson, *Quebec Village*
Blue, white



A.Y. Jackson, *Peace River Bridge*
Dull yellow, red, blue



Arthur Lismer, *Isles of Spruce*
Green, brown, yellow



J.E.H. MacDonald, *Mist Fantasy*
Grey, blue, red



J.W.G. Macdonald, *B.C. Indian Village*
Blue, green, brown

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fig. 8

NATIONAL GALLERY SERIES - (Size 30" x 40")



Thoreau MacDonald, *Wild Geese*
Yellow, dull blue



Thoreau MacDonald, *Winter Morning*
Blue, green, white, brown
(also available size 20" x 27")



Isabel McLaughlin, *Blossom Time*
Green, pink, grey



J.W. Morrice, *The Ferry, Quebec*
Green, cream, grey
(also available size 20" x 27")



L.A.C. Panton, *Windswept*
Brown, grey



L.A.C. Panton, *Silver Stream*
Brown, white, lavender, grey
(also available size 20" x 27")

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fig. 9

NATIONAL GALLERY SERIES - (Size 30" x 40")



W.J. Phillips, *Victoria Glacier*
Blue, violet, green



Albert H. Robinson,
Return from Easter Mass
Grey, dull reds, pinks
(also available size 20" x 27")



J.E. Sampson, *Veterans of the Sea*
Warm brown, blue, green



R. York Wilson, *Auction Sale*
Brown, dull red, blue



Yvonne McK. Housser,
Indian Children
Red, brown, green, grey



Tom Thomson,
Northern River
Blue, green, red

fig. 10

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Sets of five prints (the minimum number considered necessary to satisfy the goals of the project) were created to include geographically diverse subject matter and the series was promoted as representing "typical Canadian scenes from the Atlantic to the Pacific."⁶⁵ Group A was completed in May 1942. Groups B and C were available by the first of June 1943.⁶⁶ Group B comprised Leonard Brooks' *Haliburton Village*, Yvonne McKague Housser's *Evening-Nipigon River* (fig.5), Sydney Hallam's *The Plowman* (fig.6), Fred Haines' *Beech Woods* (fig.7), and L.A.C. Panton's *Windswept* (fig.9), (deemed a fine design by Jackson).⁶⁷ Group C comprised J.E.H. Sampson's *Veterans of the Sea* (fig.10), Walter Phillips' *Victoria Glacier* (fig.10), J.W.G. Macdonald's *B.C. Indian Village* (fig.8), J.E.H. MacDonald's *Mist Fantasy* (fig.8) and Albert Robinson's *Return from Easter Mass* (fig.10), both in the collection of the Art Gallery of Toronto.⁶⁸ The fourth complete set comprised J.W. Morrice's *The Ferry, Quebec* (fig.9) and Tom Thomson's *Northern River* (fig.10), (both in the National Gallery's collection), Arthur Lismer's *Isles of Spruce* (fig.8) in the Hart House collection, Clarence Gagnon's *March in the Birch Woods*, and Jack Humphrey's *Swallow Tail, Grand Manan* (fig.8). This set had been distributed by the fall of 1943 and Sampson-Matthews was working on the fifth set, which would eventually include two prairie subjects.⁶⁹ This last set included Lawren Harris' *Maligne Lake* (fig.7) in the collection of the National Gallery, Herbert Palmer's *Maple Lake, Haliburton* and Franklin Carmichael's *White Water*. Though these prints were in production by November 1943, the Gallery was unable to find appropriate subjects to meet the needs of two committed sponsors from the west, the Paterson Grain Company and the Western Grain Pool, which sought prairie subjects.⁷⁰ When Sampson-Matthews finally issued the fifth set of prints in March 1944, Fred Brigden's *Assiniboia Valley* and A.Y. Jackson's *Pincher Creek, Alberta* were included to meet the requirements of the western sponsors. (Neither of these works would be reproduced after the war.)⁷¹ W.P. Weston's *Vancouver Lions*, which was ready for distribution, was set aside for the short term.⁷²

Twenty-five prints had been produced of works by twenty-four artists. There were two by Jackson, who had been pressed into service to produce the prairie scene.⁷³ But Sampson-Matthews had new designs (and in some cases prints) available and a ready market. An additional group of five new subjects comprising Leonard Brooks' *North and Barrington Streets, Halifax (Halifax Harbour)*, a new Thoreau MacDonald, *Winter Morning* (fig.9) Isabel McLaughlin's *Blossom Time* (fig.9), W.P. Weston's *Vancouver Lions* and Fritz Brandtner's *Potato Pickers* (fig.4) was issued as the first set in a second wartime series in late September 1944.⁷⁴ Jackson had recommended using Bertram Brooker's contribution, *Laurentian Village*, because he believed it would be of great use to the schools. Although a design was made from it, it was not included in the wartime series.

The image was later included in a post-war series of prints organized by the Federation of Canadian Artists and promoted by the National Gallery in association with the Sampson-Matthews project.⁷⁵

Late in 1944, a seventh set of prints was ready. This second group of the second wartime series comprised Albert Cloutier's *Sugar Time* (fig.7), Yvonne McKague Housser's *Indian Children* (fig.10), R. York Wilson's *Auction Sale* (fig.10), a new design by L.A.C. Panton, *Silver Stream* (fig.9), and a third work by A.Y. Jackson — his *Peace River Bridge* (fig.8), which resulted from his government-sponsored trip to cover the building of the Alaska Highway. By January 1945, the outstanding orders had been dealt with and only a design by Paraskeva Clark, recruited to the project by Harry McCurry in the spring of 1944, remained to be finished.⁷⁶ Paraskeva Clark's *Caledon Farm* was completed in February 1945; it was the thirty-sixth and last work in the wartime series.

Modus Operandi

From the beginning it was understood that each work included in the project would have to obtain government approval and find sponsors prepared to associate their product with the particular image. To meet these conditions, Jackson recognized that the works would have to be "somewhat conventional."⁷⁷ Concerned about the potential interference of sponsors in the selection process, McCurry warned that "the greatest care will have to be exercised now to keep the standard of the works up because many of these firms will try to [have] their own type of thing done and that is what we do not want."⁷⁸ It was clear that the "obvious designs [would] be sponsored more readily than artistic ones." Compromises were also required to prevent the military authorities from "chok[ing]... off [the project] before it gets going."⁷⁹ To address this problem, the programme focussed on landscape paintings that would be suitable for use in service quarters in Canada and overseas. In early 1943, Jackson observed to McCurry that "Chuck Matthews is getting cold feet, worrying about imaginary camp commandants who will refuse to put up anything but Leonard Brookes [sic]."⁸⁰ Jackson's response was that they could "get enough publicity to stop any fatheads in the army from acting in an arbitrary way."⁸¹ Jackson's public relations strategy was put in place almost immediately. A rapid succession of articles appeared in the *Standard*, the *Toronto Star* and *Saturday Night*, and later a "notice in *Newsweek*." However, Sampson-Matthews continued to lean heavily on attractive, sometimes mediocre designs (including the majority of work in the second series) that catered to the general market, thus avoiding controversy and ensuring popularity.⁸²

In November 1943, McCurry wrote to Jackson:

There is a real difficulty in keeping up the standard of the designs and I am wondering if we shouldn't tighten up a little on the Selection Committee so that nothing will be accepted that doesn't come up to the standard you and

I should both like to see upheld. There is a tendency to rush out designs to please sponsors, but as the long term effect of those prints on the schools is what we have our eyes on we should see that they are of lasting quality. This is just for your own ear of course because I know Chuck Matthews is doing a great job and Casson too but in spite of themselves their commercial tendencies sometimes get the better of them.⁸³

In 1944, McCurry would describe the work in the Sampson-Matthews series as "commercial products ... turned out for the forces [though] all very well for the purpose for which they were in intended."⁸⁴

McCurry fended off unsolicited designs with the reply that a design must "first pass the committee and then be found acceptable to a sponsor." Though publicity referred to an official National Gallery Committee composed of Jackson, McCurry and Casson, there is no record of a formal committee structure.⁸⁵ Sampson-Matthews referred most prints to the Gallery for final approval but in several instances Jackson, McCurry and the printing firm each authorized prints individually — a cause of some concern to Jackson and McCurry. McCurry was, however, given the official responsibility for turning down proffered prints that were deemed unsuitable.⁸⁶

Issues of Representation

The lack of geographic diversity in the selection of artists and subject matter presented ongoing problems. The artists represented in the first two groups of prints were all Toronto-based, and Jackson and McCurry would both express concern that Casson's selection of artists was based more on an Ontario Society of Artists' old boys' network than a serious attempt to broaden the base of artistic representation. In early 1943 Jackson wrote, "it is too bad we have no Maritime artists represented [and] too much Toronto."⁸⁷ The Naval Department of the Department of National Defence would chide that "as far as Naval Establishments are concerned, marine subjects would be in great demand." However, the offer of a marine design by a naval officer was politely refused on the basis that the set of prints was complete.⁸⁸ When the wartime project was complete, Jack Humphrey would be the only east-coast artist in the series, although four works represented east-coast subject matter.

The search for a prairie subject was particularly problematic. Although from early in 1943 at least two sponsors had been willing to reproduce a "typical scene," no appropriate subjects had been identified. Matthews inquired whether these firms really had to have western subjects and proposed switching the Carmichael and the Palmer to their accounts, noting that they could easily find two subjects that would be agreeable to the sponsors. He went on to say that other sponsors "had not been concerned about getting subjects ... related to their business." The Wheat Pool, however, remained adamant. Although C.W. Jefferys'

A Prairie Trail was discussed, it was not included.⁸⁹ In April, Jackson wrote "We need a good western one badly"⁹⁰ McCurry followed up with a letter to Illingworth Kerr observing that there was "a special problem connected with the prairies."⁹¹ He elaborated that though Campbell Tinning had submitted a "charming little water colour of a prairies slough with a village and an elevator in the distance," he [McCurry] was "dubious about its silkscreen possibilities." McCurry wrote, "If it can be successfully used the Wheat Pool will take it but they would like the elevators to be just a little more visible and also the criticism is offered that the sky is not a typical Western one. They would like the sky clearer and the clouds more remote."⁹² (Commenting privately to McCurry, Jackson found it "rather empty.")⁹³ McCurry asked Kerr to "take a shot at something ... using a prairies subject which [would] appeal to the Western boys overseas."⁹⁴ Kerr responded that the "difficulty may be that only prairie people understand prairie pictures.... There is no way to explain the effect of space. It is mystic."⁹⁵ In June, Casson announced that he had made "a small sketch which might be used either by the Paterson Grain Company or the Grain Pool." He acknowledged that he had been influenced by a watercolour by Walter Phillips but assured McCurry that he had "departed in composition far enough so that there could be no feeling of copying." In it, he said, he had tried "to create a feeling of large spaces, bountiful crops and harvest weather."⁹⁶ McCurry, always polite, reported that he would talk the matter over with the grain people; however, a typed note on the letter indicates that he had no intention of doing so. He subsequently advised Matthews that the subject was not acceptable to either sponsor.⁹⁷

The search continued. In July 1943 McCurry wrote Ernest Lindner, soliciting a "good western scene which could be sponsored by the Grain Pool or some grain company. Something of good design showing a typical prairie scene with perhaps wheat stooks, elevators, railway, small town, etc. etc."⁹⁸ A few months later, Lindner forwarded with apologies a sketch, *The Golden West*, which though not yet what he would have liked, could, he felt, be developed into a large painting.⁹⁹ It was not acceptable either. In January 1944 Jackson provided a new sketch, *Pincher Creek, Alberta*, which the Paterson Grain Company agreed to sponsor, though not without observations about how they believed the work might be improved to better represent the west.

Reflecting on the representation of national and provincial parks as a potential marketing angle, Jackson wrote, "We have the Harris which is Jasper Park, the Phillips — Banff ... then there is Thomson's of Algonquin Park and I think the Weston is a provincial park."¹⁰⁰ Seeking to expand the market for the prints, McCurry would follow up with a report to the Lands, Parks and Forest Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources' Superintendent of Publicity and Information that the series included representations of both Banff and Jasper National Parks.¹⁰¹

By December 1942, discussion was underway concerning the need for representation from French Canada. The situation was complicated by the conflict between the National Gallery and John Lyman over the American-curated exhibition of contemporary Canadian art, held in Andover, Massachusetts that year, which stressed the “vital new scene and deliberately played down Group landscape ideals.”¹⁰² Jackson had written to McCurry: “There are a lot of distinguished people who would like to make trouble for the National Gallery ... I think that bird Lyman would like to use the French Canadians to make trouble by insisting they are not getting their share of patronage ... I am glad the Andover show is not going to have official sanction.”¹⁰³

In fact, Lyman and the “moderns,” as Jackson called them, were never really considered for the wartime silkscreen project, in part out of concern for marketability but also because of the aesthetic rifts in the Canadian art community. Unlike their Québec counterparts, Jackson, Casson, and the Sampson-Matthews staff were quite clear that “Canadian” did not include artists who were influenced by contemporary European developments. Concerning a 1944 art exhibition, Jackson advised McCurry, “I think it is important to make [the exhibition] feel Canadian.” He added, “Lyman calls it *provincialism*.”¹⁰⁴ It would later be suggested that Philip Surrey’s antagonism to the silkscreen project was based on his position as a member of the Contemporary Arts Society and its derision of the Group of Seven.¹⁰⁵ However, it is far more likely that he was responding to the rejection of his own work, which he believed to be appropriately representative of the Canadian experience. Artists whose work was influenced by European art, the “French derivatives” as Jackson called them, were still considered too foreign for the project.¹⁰⁶ Writing to McCurry in 1944 about contemporary Montréal painting, Jackson mentioned the “Jewish School” whose interests are of “French derivation.” He went on to suggest that they might include “a Pellan and a Borduas to show that we have followers of the French school too.”¹⁰⁷ Not surprisingly, no action was taken. (Pellan was the only one of the “moderns” to be included in the entire series and that was in the 1950s.) A wartime description of the programme makes this cautious stance clear: “The style of painting selected by the committee is one which avoids extremes either of photographic realism, on the one hand, or of modernism on the other. The aim has been to enable the soldiers to get *wholesome understandable* pictures that they would be most likely to appreciate.”¹⁰⁸

Rather than the “moderns,” Québec was once more to be represented by the rustic image of the jolly habitant. (Jackson had originally proposed including a Krieghoff in this series designed to support contemporary artists!) Seeking a French-Canadian artist, Jackson recommended Albert Cloutier, who was Chief of the Graphic Art Section in the Department of National Defence. Cloutier had been responsible for the production of Canadian war posters between 1940 and

1943 and had helped get Jackson and McCurry through the Defence Department bureaucracy when the silkscreen programme was initiated.¹⁰⁹ Rather than a “serious landscape,” Jackson suggested Cloutier provide one of “those amusing farm scenes in gay color slightly verging on caricature.”¹¹⁰ In fact, Cloutier would be the only living French-Canadian included in the wartime series. His work complemented the other habitant scenes in the series which were accompanied by descriptions that reinforced stereotypical notions of Québec and habitant life. Jackson’s *Quebec Village* (fig.8) was described as portraying “a typical Habitant Village ... a picture which has quiet contentment and natural charm.”¹¹¹ A later text, probably dating from 1945, emphasized Jackson’s Québec roots, stating that “most of his work and much of his reputation has been created in Quebec, where he is affectionately known as *Pere Raquette*, Old Man Snow Shoe.” This text describes *Quebec Village* as a depiction of “the legendary quaintness of rural Quebec in winter.”¹¹² Albert Robinson’s *Return from Easter Mass* (fig.10) was described as a “sympathetic glimpse of French Canada [which] recalls the opening scenes of Hémon’s famous novel, *Maria Chapdelaine*.”¹¹³ In 1943, Clarence Gagnon’s *March in the Birch Woods* was added to the series. It was described as “the complete story of rural Canada ... [with] a picturesque setting for this homely illustration of the habitant busy at his task of hauling wood.”¹¹⁴ Jackson reported on the task of turning Gagnon’s painting “into flat color ... quite a job [since] there is not a square inch of flat colour in the original.”¹¹⁵ He would later agree with Gagnon’s widow that the print was less than faithful, describing it as “greatly simplified” and “awfully woolly in treatment.” Although he had emphatically requested that the imprint should read “Adapted from the Painting of Clarence Gagnon,” this never happened.¹¹⁶ In December 1942 Jackson had advised that rather than a Gagnon illustration from his *Maria Chapdelaine* series, they consider Morrice’s *Quebec Ferry*.¹¹⁷ The Morrice would, he wrote, “push the whole thing in the right direction, away from commercial art.”¹¹⁸ By the end of 1943, *March in the Birch Woods* was in print and the Morrice was being reprinted in a second edition.

Jackson’s concern about lack of representation of artists from Québec was evident in his support of Brandtner’s *Potato Pickers* (fig.4).¹¹⁹ Not surprisingly, the Brandtner which Jackson deemed the most radical work in the series, was not endorsed by Matthews.¹²⁰ Jackson worried, however, that without the Brandtner, Montréal would not be represented at all unless Anne Savage’s *Sunflowers*, which had not yet found a sponsor, was used.¹²¹ Brandtner was frustrated by the lack of action on his design and wrote an angry letter to McCurry about the poor treatment afforded artists and the long delay in payment.¹²² He must have been particularly upset, given what Jackson described as the unfair handling of his original submission. Because of its complicated design and colour, Sampson-Matthews had determined that eighteen colours would be required. According to Jackson, instead of asking Casson to simplify the design as he had with a number

of other works, Matthews sent it back to Brandtner to "flatten out the colour."¹²³ McCurry wrote, "the Brandtner has been butchered (by Sampson-Matthews). It has very little relationship to the original charming sketch ... I think Brandtner will have to do it again."¹²⁴ At McCurry's diplomatic urging, Brandtner did indeed rework the design and the result was eminently more satisfactory. Reflecting on the process, Jackson blamed Sampson-Matthews for not properly explaining what needed to be done or simply asking Casson to work on it, as had been done in other cases.¹²⁵

The situation was exacerbated when Matthews suggested that Brandtner's figures looked European rather than Canadian and asked him to prepare a description of the work emphasizing its "Canadian" aspect to provide a convincing argument for prospective sponsors as to its relevance to the project. The request solicited an impassioned response:

As regards to the people in the picture I just think of them as good Canadians. The sketches to this picture have been done in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The background of these people working the fields may be European (Poles, Ukrainians, Rumanians, Norwegians, Scotch, etc.) but when I painted this picture I only saw Canadian peasants harvesting from the rich soil of Canada. If we talk so much about the new Democracy, any sponsor should be happy and glad to have an opportunity to show that he is really believing in a new and better future. Narrow nationalism will not do the job. Throughout the West of Canada (and there is where our main power lies) you see thousands of these mixed nationalities working together in the fields and on the farms to produce food for this new country they have chose to live in; and to me this is the new democracy we are fighting for.¹²⁶

After unsuccessful attempts to obtain a local sponsor for the Brandtner print, Dr. C.F. Martin, the President of the Art Association of Montreal, wrote to McCurry: "I am feeling pretty hopeless about trying to get a sponsor for the silk screen reproduction and am very much humiliated."¹²⁷ In the end, although McCurry had agreed that the Gallery would sponsor the print if no one else could be found, he persuaded Harry S. Southam, the Chair of the National Gallery's Board of Trustees, to sponsor it.¹²⁸

Commercialization and Control

Although the Gallery did not want ownership of the project, it was prepared to lend its authority on the understanding that it would have final control. To encourage sponsorship among the business elite, McCurry wrote a letter for Sampson-Matthews' use, indicating the Gallery's approval of "this constructive undertaking" and its willingness to participate: "I feel confident that Canadian businessmen and others in a position to do so, will gladly lend their support to complete what we have started, having full assurance that such contribution

will do an incalculable service to the armed forces and at the same time greatly aid in spreading an understanding and appreciation of Canadian art.”¹²⁹

From the beginning, the business as well as the artistic potential of the project was evident, influencing the original decision to focus on landscapes and the unwillingness to develop unconventional designs. Although Matthews claimed that this would not be the “ordinary run of commercial art,” his actions were largely determined by his belief that “the project [had] a ‘big future’” and significant market potential.¹³⁰ Jackson recognized immediately that for Matthews, “it [was] a straight business proposition.”¹³¹ McCurry and Jackson were not appeased by the design firm’s reassurances and worried that the project would “fall to the commercial artists.”¹³² McCurry would later complain of the “difficulties that arise from lack of adequate control of the project.”¹³³ And Jackson regularly reiterated his concerns about artistic quality:

a stricter supervision should be kept over the artists invited to make designs. Sampson is a bad influence... he likes all the obvious stuff. Matthews had no idea when it started where it would lead to.... They make much more effort to find sponsors for cheap designs than for good ones. Matthews is a real good head but he has been selling commercial art all his life, and he likes things that we loathe.¹³⁴

Sampson’s work was, according to Jackson, “good in its way, very competent, but there is always something lacking, no divine spark, the kind of thing an advertising man would fall for but which would repel a person who was sensitive.”¹³⁵

Control of the project was an ongoing issue. Decisions were made without Gallery approval and Jackson regularly complained about works that had been included. Jackson was particularly concerned that McCurry had been persuaded to purchase an additional one hundred copies of each print for sale to schools. Worried that the Gallery might end up with “a load of junk,” he urged McCurry not to buy anything he had not seen and approved: “One way to check this is to refuse to have extra prints made for the National Gallery of any designs you don’t think worthy.”¹³⁶ The complaints were ongoing:

On several occasions [Matthews] has gone over our heads and asked for designs from artists we don’t want. I believe he has one now by Brigden and he has talked of Manly Macdonald. We can’t stop it but you [McCurry] can by refusing to allow the National Gallery to endorse them. The whole series is such a success that it is possible to slip in a weak artist and carry him along with it. The game they will work is to have a punk design sponsored before we see it.¹³⁷

Despite the limited number of submissions received, a number of designs were never printed, some because they did not find sponsors, others because they were rejected on artistic grounds. Works by Anne Savage and Ethel Seath, Mabel Lockerby, Philip Surrey, Pegi Nicol Macleod and Rowley Murphy which did not

find sponsors were never produced.¹³⁸ McCurry vetoed John Hall's submission and rejected two designs by Jack Shadbolt, pending Jackson's comments. Although Jackson was generally impressed by Shadbolt's work, his designs were never included in the series.¹³⁹ In the case of Charles Scott, Jackson concurred with McCurry that "we must reject Scott's feeble effort."¹⁴⁰ Although Jackson had suggested that unsponsored works might later prove useful in the school programme, none of these works was included in later production runs.

In addition (and as already noted), McCurry had earlier rejected prairie scenes submitted by Campbell Tinning and Ernest Lindner, as well as A.J. Casson's reworking of Walter Phillips' image. It is likely that McCurry's objections also precluded the production of Joachim Gauthier's design, although Gauthier was employed by Sampson-Matthews. (His work would be included in the post-war series after the Gallery had withdrawn its participation.)

Jackson had proposed that artists whom he felt were capable of meeting the design requirements should be asked to submit works. They included Jack Humphrey, Lawren Harris, B. Coghill Haworth, L.A.C. Panton, Yvonne McKague Housser, Thoreau MacDonald and J.W.G. Macdonald. While many of the invited artists did submit designs, a number of prominent artists did not respond to the request for work. They included André Biéler (from whom they had sought a Québec rural scene), Henri Masson (who, Jackson, wrote, "took no notice of [the request for a Gatineau subject or Quebec genre])," Edwin Holgate (who was asked for a Labrador subject or lumbering), and LeMoine FitzGerald who was asked for a Manitoba landscape).¹⁴¹ The difficulty of obtaining what were considered appropriate subjects seems to have contributed to the reliance on tried and true subjects by Group members and their contemporaries, despite the stated mission of the wartime project to provide new opportunities for Canadian artists.

Although the sponsorships required for the war prints had led to artistic compromises in the selection of the work, Jackson projected a "higher standard" for the schools series.¹⁴² Rather than the "commonplace designs" Sampson-Matthews had included to satisfy sponsors' requirements, he proposed that the school series should employ "only the best designs," a number of which did not find sponsors for the war effort.¹⁴³ J.E. Sampson's view of a fishing village, *Nova Scotia (Veterans of the Sea)* [fig.10], was accepted for the war project but wouldn't, Jackson suggested, be good enough for the schools. The print was, however, used regularly to illustrate the series. The list of questionable works also included Fred Haines' "poisonous" *Beech Woods* (fig.7). Although Jackson reported he had "lied to [Haines] about the technical difficulties" the work presented, so as to explain its possible exclusion, he appears to have been overridden by Casson.¹⁴⁴ There was also "a hell of a looking thing" — Leonard Brooks' *Haliburton Village* (which had already found a sponsor in Christie Brown and so could not be rejected). Jackson

also had strong reservations about the "pretty bad" design by Syd Hallam — *The Plowman* (fig.6).¹⁴⁵ Jackson would later write that it was a "poor design" which "look[ed] like an advertisement."¹⁴⁶ Casson had approved Brigden's *Assiniboia Valley* (which would not be reprinted in the 1950s) without consulting McCurry or Jackson.¹⁴⁷ The list of problem works also included York Wilson's *Auction Sale* (fig.10), which neither McCurry nor Jackson liked, though Jackson noted it had subsequently been reworked and improved.¹⁴⁸ On May 30th, 1944, an exasperated McCurry wrote that he had vetoed Matthews' proposal to add a portrait of the King by Sampson and asked Jackson to back his decision.¹⁴⁹

Broadening the Audience: The School Programme and Marketing the Prints

With sponsorships for the promised twenty-five prints for the Department of National Defence in place by May of 1943, Matthews was anxious to formally launch the school programme. In early 1944, he wrote to McCurry, urging him to encourage Martin Baldwin at the Art Gallery of Toronto to mount an exhibition of framed school prints to coincide with the forthcoming meeting of the Ontario Association of Teachers of Art. He suggested that Walter Abell, Supervisor of Education at the National Gallery (1943-44), should present the "proposition" to the group.¹⁵⁰ Earlier Jackson had expressed concern that the listing of the prints in the 1943 National Gallery of Canada catalogue of reproductions implied that they were available to the public. In fact, participating artists had been assured that they would benefit from individual sales and that those sales would be the responsibility of either the artist or Sampson-Matthews, acting on the artist's behalf. McCurry assured Jackson that the silkscreens handled by the National Gallery were to be sold only to schools.¹⁵¹ Moreover, in response to Jackson's concern, McCurry recommended that the National Gallery suspend sales for a period of six months to allow the artists to dispose of their prints.¹⁵² At the same time, Matthews advised that the Gallery should deal only in the sale of complete sets, though he included sales to the private sector and other public institutions as well as schools.

Initially Sampson-Matthews' over-the-counter sales were taken from the artists' personal stock and the artists were reimbursed for each print sold.¹⁵³ Additional prints from "surplus quantities" (print runs which exceeded the military and institutional and schools requirements) were also sold on an individual basis.¹⁵⁴ The early sales of the prints appear to have been brisk. McCurry wrote Jackson that "it is a poor day that doesn't see a couple of dozen silk screen reproductions placed somewhere in a public institution."¹⁵⁵ By the fall of 1943 the prints were being promoted for private sale across the country in venues such as Eaton's display windows.¹⁵⁶ At the end of May 1944 the Gallery considered printing 500 additional copies of some prints for its own use and, in September 1944,

ordered between 190 and 300 copies of each of the 25 images in the first series.¹⁵⁷

In keeping with the project's initial goal to offer new opportunities to Canadian artists and to make Canadian art more widely known and appreciated, Jackson worried that the images would become stale if there were too many in circulation. Consequently, he advised commissioning new designs rather than reprinting existing works. However, it is clear that Sampson-Matthews did not share these concerns. In a number of cases works that found sponsors' approval were reprinted, despite both Jackson's and McCurry's reservations. Insisting that there was more value in producing new works, Jackson started work on his *Peace River Bridge* (fig.8) in early 1944. The sketch was the result of a government-sponsored trip in late 1943 to document the construction of the Alaska Highway. Convinced that the construction of the bridge had important political connotations and that it "should be known all over Canada," he wanted to commemorate "a fine gesture on [the] part of the Americans to build it under such difficult conditions and then present it to Canada."¹⁵⁸

Reruns and new editions were marketed simultaneously. In an annotated list, Jackson proposed revisions to improve the artistic merit of second editions.¹⁵⁹ By February 1944 the Lismer, Morrice, Phillips, Thoreau MacDonald, Casson and Thomson prints were being rerun.¹⁶⁰ (Matthews suggested a rerun of 300 of the Morrice for the armed services and another 300 for the National Gallery use.)¹⁶¹ The Humphrey, Sampson, Robinson, Haines, Housser, Haworth, Comfort and J.E.H. MacDonald prints were also scheduled for reprinting at that time.¹⁶² Jackson and McCurry considered reprinting the other works to be questionable or unadvisable.

Always on the lookout for new opportunities to promote the prints, Jackson suggested that Matthews should bid to place a selection in the new Ontario government offices that were being opened in London, England.¹⁶³ Willing to adapt his argument to the most expedient position, Jackson, who had publicly championed the series as a "national" programme, now recommended promoting it on the basis of the preponderance of Ontario-based artists and the significant number of subjects representing Ontario scenes. In May 1944 McCurry confirmed that the "Prime Minister of Ontario" was sending Ontario House in London a set of twelve reproductions.¹⁶⁴

Conclusion

Paraskeva Clark's *Caledon Farm*, the final print in the wartime series, was run in January 1945. Matthews wrote to Joseph Clark, Director in Chief of Public Relations for the Armed Forces, that the requests from the Navy, Army, Air Force and Auxiliary Services had been "fully taken care of."¹⁶⁵ Thirty of "Canada's leading artists" were represented by a completed series of 36 different subjects, of which 29 were painted for the project and seven were adapted from paintings in

the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Toronto and Hart House.¹⁶⁶ The National Gallery sponsored five of the reproductions, four firms each sponsored two different subjects and seven firms sponsored a second reproduction of the same subject. A total of 30 individual firms contributed approximately \$33,000. 2000 prints were sent to the British Army Overseas courtesy of Mr. J.S. McLean; 1000 were shipped to the R.A.F. by the National Gallery of Canada. The Navy received a total of 1781 prints, the Army 3000, the R.C.A.F. 3000, and the Auxiliary Services 2727. The balance went overseas.¹⁶⁷ In addition, "a very considerable quantity ha[d] been supplied by the National Gallery for Government Offices in various parts of the world including Russia, China and South American countries."¹⁶⁸ Thirteen of the thirty-six subjects had been rerun. In addition to the sponsored prints the Gallery had ordered a total of 17,111 reproductions with its own imprint. In January 1944 Chuck Matthews calculated that the Gallery's profit on the 1,300 prints remaining would be over \$3000.¹⁶⁹ In October 1944 he calculated the Gallery's indebtedness to Sampson-Matthews for productions of the prints and Matthews estimated the Gallery's total volume of sales to date to be over \$36,000. He argued, "Those subjects now out of print or in short supply should be put into work at once. They will still further add to your potential profit."¹⁷⁰

The way in which the wartime print series has been remembered is particularly striking. Several generations of Canadians recall "Group of Seven" silkscreens that were displayed in exhibitions across the country or hung in the corridors and the classrooms of their schools, in public buildings, in banks and in private offices. Few remember the other artists associated with the project. It is true that Jackson, J.E.H. MacDonald, Lismer, Harris, Carmichael and Casson, as well as Thomson, were all represented by at least one print in the wartime series. Indeed, only one of the first five groups of prints in the series did not include at least one work by an actual Group member, though it did include Housser's *Evening - Nipigon* and Panton's *Windswept* — images reminiscent of the Group in subject and style.¹⁷¹ Despite the fact that, in the early years, schools were required to purchase the prints in sets in which the classic "Group" images were always complemented by a prairie scene, an east coast image or a western mountain scene, it is the Group images that are most imprinted on our collective memory.

Retrospective conflation of the wartime prints and the post-war series certainly accounts for some of the confusion. Popular images such as Emily Carr's *White Church*, Harris' *Algoma Country* and five of the Thomson adaptations, as well as familiar works by artists like Jackson and Thoreau MacDonald were printed in the late forties and early fifties. Yet they, as well as silkscreens created by the Federation of Canadian Artists in the late 1940s, which included two works by Harris, one by Jackson and one Thomson, have been associated with the wartime project. As well, in the post-war years schools and public institutions were no

longer required to purchase the works in sets, and sales records affirm the popularity of works by members of the Group.

Abstraction, social realism and any work that might be considered politically or aesthetically controversial were outside the parameters of the project which, as Jackson had clearly stated, sought a middle ground. No thought at all appears to have been given to the possibility of including Native artists. Jock Macdonald's *B.C. Indian Village* (fig.8) and Housser's *Indian Children* (fig.10) reinforced the dominant colonial rhetoric, representing "the Native" in the Canadian imagination through depiction of a picturesque lifestyle and adorable children. These images were disseminated widely in classrooms across the country, affirming the social construction of the Native experience as outside of contemporary life and practice, codifying and legitimizing the construction of Native as Other.

Despite Jackson's interest in the work of a number of women artists, proposed works by Mabel May, Ethel Seath, Anne Savage and Pegi Nicol Macleod were never printed. The representation of women artists does, however, suggest incremental progress since the Gallery's earlier lithographic series. Unlike the earlier reproduction series, this project included women artists from the beginning. The works selected, however, reinforced the dominant aesthetic: Yvonne McKague Housser was the only woman artist to have two works included in the wartime series. Isabel McLaughlin's *Blossom Time* (fig.9) and Paraskeva Clark's *Caledon Farm* were printed in limited quantities. In March 1943, Princess Alice visited the National Gallery and admired the prints, asking what arrangements had been made to supply the women's barracks to which she was "devoting special attention." Although McCurry followed up with a letter asking Matthews whether the women's quarters were "being covered," there seems to have been no particular consideration for this concern and the question remained unanswered.¹⁷² In the post-war period Carr's *White Church* would be included, along with an additional work by Housser. Still anxious to include prairie imagery, Jackson was thrilled, in the early 1950s, to discover the "young Saskatchewan artist" Ruth Pawson, whose prairie design he translated for the silkscreen process. The audience for the wartime series was, however, perceived as primarily male. The "Canadian scenes" were intended to enhance the consciousness of "the land" amongst our men at war, far from home.

Jackson would have been the first to admit that his dream of a series of prints representing Canadian artists from coast to coast had not been fully achieved. Although the text for a public address on the prints stressed that the committee had "taken care to see that all parts of Canada were covered" in its selection of "both the artists and their subjects," 26 of the 36 wartime images were by artists then based in Ontario.¹⁷³ The cautious, market-driven stance of the printing house effectively determined the selection of the works. Compromises were the order of the day. The need for works that would reproduce

well in "poster" form contributed to what McCurry deemed the "commercial" nature of the work, favouring images by artist-illustrators or designers rather than more gifted artists who were unskilled in the requirements of designing for the silkscreen process. Jackson's professed commitment to ensure that the later school series would accommodate the more artistic and innovative images which had not found sponsors during wartime would be overridden by the continuing need to provide popular, saleable images.

The conservative nature of the programme was certainly influenced by Casson's and Sampson-Matthews' concern for the marketability of the work selected. However, it was also affected by the dominance of the Group, by the landscape tradition in Canadian art, and especially by the roles of both Jackson and Casson and their unwillingness to include the "moderns" within their definition of what was Canadian. Jackson was concerned about quality, but his definition of Canadian art remained narrowly conventional and landscape-oriented. The implementation of the programme was also driven by the projected responses of sponsors, the military, and the general public.

Other voices challenged the project for grounding nationalism in nature. Philip Surrey's somewhat plaintive cry that servicemen might like to see a reflection of their own experience rather than stereotypical landscape images was reinforced in a letter to the editor of *Canadian Art* by National Film Board editor Harry Mayerovitch.¹⁷⁴ He urged the Gallery to canvass servicemen for their reactions to the silkscreen prints in order to establish a guide for future work. No survey was ever undertaken, nor was Surrey's work included. The position of those Canadian artists who believed that art must be integrated more fully into everyday life remained unheard. In 1942, before taking up his position at the National Gallery, Walter Abell had articulated this position. He criticized Canadian artists for their failure to depict the human condition, treating "the human being, if at all, as a 'figure' rather than a spirit, an object to be composed rather than a being to be interpreted" — a critique most certainly applicable to the figurative subjects included in the series.¹⁷⁵ In Montréal, John Lyman and the Contemporary Arts Society offered a very different definition of what constituted Canadian art. Despite the fact that the Gallery's own collecting policy, particularly in the post-war years, was much more broadly based, that breadth was not reflected in the silkscreen project.

For the artists, institutions and critics who endorsed the silkscreen programme, particularly during wartime, the landscape defined a cultural expression that was uniquely Canadian. Uninfluenced by European modernist trends, it represented the logical fulfillment of the historical evolution of Canadian art. For Jackson and his colleagues, landscape paintings embodied the essence of the Canadian experience. This nationalistic defensiveness was a key element in the ongoing search for cultural definition during a period in which national unity and

the enhancement of patriotism were clearly espoused goals. As a military officer observed, "through the display of Canadian scenes, [the silkscreen project will make our men] conscious of the land and the cause for which they are called upon to fight."¹⁷⁶

Indeed, although the project professed that its mission was to broaden the representation of artists and subject matter, proposing a diverse rather than a homogeneous view of the Canadian experience, the series would continue to be dominated by the Group and the landscape tradition. In the Sampson-Matthews project, the nation/nature paradigm was reasserted in large and attractive images that would be disseminated to public places, especially primarily schools, throughout the country.¹⁷⁷ Although the politically charged notion of the "wilderness" aesthetic was contested by artists and critics in various parts of the country and some alternative approaches to landscape representation were included in the series, they were less important to the larger project. The images of works by Group of Seven artists and Tom Thomson would remain the most popular subjects throughout the life of the series, reinforcing commonly held notions of identity and reaffirming the popular understanding of Canadian art.

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Notes

1 I am indebted to Cyndie Campbell, Archivist; Murray Waddington, Head, Library, Archives, Fellowship Program; and Charles Hill, Curator of Canadian Art, at the National Gallery of Canada; Randall Speller, Documentalist at the library of the Art Gallery of Ontario; and Cynthia Storey, research assistant, for their invaluable assistance. I would also like to thank Fred Turner who has generously shared his collection and documentation with me.

2 Blodwen DAVIES, *Youth Speaks its Mind* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1948), 161-2. I am indebted to Alicia Boutilier for this reference.

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 Jackson to McCurry, 8 Oct. 1942. Unless otherwise noted, all citations refer to documents in the library of the National Gallery of Canada. (See Sampson-Matthews files and individual artists' files.)

5 *Ibid* and, 13 May 1942.

6 Joyce ZEMANS, "Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Program of Canadian Art," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XVI, no. 2 (1995): 6.

7 Jackson to McCurry, 21 May 1942. McCurry to Lawren Harris, 26 Oct. 1943.

- 8 Gregory CLARK, "Dominion's Art and Artists," *The Star Weekly*, 27 Mar. 1943.
- 9 Matthews to McCurry, 20 Dec. 1943. According to Matthews who was responsible for the printing, "Simple = Comfort, Casson, Humphrey, Jackson, Palmer, Panton and Housser. Complicated as to drawing and number of colours = Carmichael, Morrice, Thomson, Robinson, Sampson, J.E.H. Macdonald and Haworth. Between the two were Haines, Phillips, Lismer, Thoreau MacDonald, J.W.G. Macdonald, Hallam, Brooks, Harris and Gagnon."
- 10 The copy for these texts was prepared in most cases by the National Gallery.
- 11 Matthews to McCurry, 19 Jan. 1945.
- 12 McCurry was a significant voice in establishing the war artists programme in World War II and was chair of the Canadian War Artists Committee in 1942. See Maria TIPPETT, *Art in the Service of War* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1984), 111.
- 13 Jackson to McCurry, 2 Dec. 1942. See also 10 and 27 July 1942.
- 14 Jackson to McCurry, 6 Jan. 1944. Jackson writes that he and Casson think they "must keep making new designs and not reprinting the others, it will make them commonplace." He wrote, "if we saturate the market people will lose interest in them and the artists will not gain the experience in a new medium which may revolutionize the artist's way of living." Jack Humphrey appears to be one of the few artists who continued to explore the medium on his own (Humphrey to McCurry, 27 Oct. 1943).
- 15 McCurry to Lawren Harris, 1 May 1944, MG30 D208, Vol. 1 Corr., National Archives of Canada, 1941-47.
- 16 *National Gallery Annual Report 1942-43* (p.10) notes that the problem has been "engaging the Board and it is expected that with the generous aid of Canadian artists and public spirited Canadian firms, a satisfactory series of silk-screen prints will shortly be developed without expenditure of public funds." The *Report* also noted (p.4), "A series of prints was commenced in 1928, mainly for schools but have been found to be very popular with the general public also. Already more than 200,000 prints have been distributed and the sale this year was 20% greater than the high figure of last year."
- 17 Matthews to McCurry, 18 Nov. 1942.
- 18 *Ibid.* Matthews strongly recommends that the NGC include 100 prints to be used for the school project in their standard order. He points out that a re-run of a screen requires all the work for the original run to be repeated. An additional 100 prints added to the first run could be produced at a price of \$1.00 (plus sales tax). Whereas the original Jackson run of 300 prints cost \$525, a later run of 100 would cost \$325.
- 19 Jackson to McCurry, 21 May 1942.
- 20 *Ibid.* On 11 Dec. 1942, Jackson wrote to McCurry, "I was thinking about the prints for the schools. They should not go too cheap as it would lessen the value of the gift to the troops if the prices were publicized. They might be sold for \$2.00, forty cents going to the artists, or for \$2.50 with fifty cents going to the artist."
- 21 Matthews to McCurry, 1 Nov. 1943.
- 22 Matthews to McCurry, 9 and 13 Apr. 1943. A "P.S." (9 Apr.) refers to articles in the *Standard*, *Saturday Night* and the *Toronto Star* discussing the wartime project. Individual orders were referred directly to the artist concerned.
- 23 Matthews to McCurry, 8 Apr. 1943.
- 24 Matthews to Jackson, 8 Apr. 1943.

25 Jackson to McCurry, 27 Oct. 1943. The brochure was 6" x 9" to conform with "other pieces." There were 12 pages, a foreword and general information. The last page was to have notes on each artist and space for 24 small reproductions. (*Northern River* the only upright image was illustrated on page 4.) The *General Information* sheet prepared on the process notes that an average of eleven colours were used in these earlier prints.

Matthews to McCurry, 14 May 1943. Matthews reported that in light of their success in attracting sponsors, 24 prints would be available for the 1943-44 school year. The label on the reverse of the prints reads: "This art print is a facsimile of the artist's original painted for this series. Its reproduction has been a matter of pride to the craftsmen who have worked on it. Pure oil colours have been used to give brilliance and lasting qualities. Should the surface become soiled it may readily be cleansed by sponging with soap and water."

26 Philip SURREY, "Canadian Silk Screen Prints Enlist," *Canadian Art* I, no. 2 (December 1943/January 1944): 59. Accounts would vary. Philip Surrey suggests that McCurry initiated the project and consulted Jackson who "promptly suggested the silkscreen process."

27 Gregory CLARK, "Dominion's Art and Artists: Brush and Easel now help to Transform Drab Service Huts," *The Star Weekly*, 27 Mar. 1943.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Peter Haworth to McCurry, 4 Feb. 1943. Haworth also urged that certain artists — the impecunious ones in particular — should be paid.

30 McCurry to Jackson, 3 Mar. 1944 and Jackson to McCurry, 9 July 1945.

31 Robert STACEY, *The Canadian Poster Book* (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), xii.

32 A.Y. JACKSON, "Silkscreens," typescript, dated by hand 1944. Jackson points out that as a stencil process, it is much less expensive and that "the initial costs of plates in printing by ordinary methods is prohibitive for small runs."

33 STACEY, *The Canadian Poster Book*, xii. Jackson went to great trouble to assure McCurry (21 May 1942) that Sampson saw this as an important contribution to bring art to the general public and "not a racket to get business." As early as 1942, Matthews, apparently looking for more business from the silkscreen project, noted that "the various reproductions which we are making in 30" x 40" size could be reduced to a size more acceptable for the schools. The proportions could be reduced to 14 1/2" x 19 1/2" and 19 1/2" x 26."

34 CLARK, "Dominion's Art and Artists." On 26 June 1943, Jackson wrote to McCurry that it was important that, "this project is endorsed by the National Gallery and the Department of National Defence" to give it "official standing."

35 Matthews to McCurry, 18 Nov. 1942. Text for information on silkscreens prepared for the Gallery by Sampson-Matthews titled, "Reproductions of Canadian Paintings." Under the heading "Notes," Matthews records, "The work will be sold by Sampson-Matthews Ltd. and invoiced by same."

36 Jackson to McCurry, 13 May 1942.

37 McCurry to Jackson, 20 Nov. 1942. See also Jackson to McCurry, 13 May 1942.

38 McCurry to Jackson, 11 June 1941.

39 Colonel C.R. Hill, Director of Special Services to Matthews, 14 Jan. 1943.

40 Charles Power, Minister of National Defence for Air to McCurry, 30 Jan. 1943, C.A.G. Matthews, MG 30 D 230, Vol.1, National Archives of Canada.

41 R.S. LAMBERT, "Bringing Canadian Art to Our Armed Forces," *Saturday Night*, 3 Apr. 1943, 4 & 18.

- 42 Copy of letter from Major Alex Macpherson to Dr. A.Y. Jackson, 30 May 1943. See also Matthews to McCurry, 18 Nov. 1942, "Reproductions of Canadian Paintings," Under the heading "Notes," Matthews advised, "the pictures are not for use in officers' and sergeants' messes but are for the men."
- 43 McCurry to Matthews, 3 June 1943.
- 44 Jackson to McCurry, 11 June 1943. See also Philip SURREY, "Silk Screen Prints Enlist," 58-61.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 Matthews to McCurry, 25 June 1943. "It would not be difficult to convince sponsors of the first series of prints to support the production of additional prints for the British army." In a letter from McCurry to Harold Beament, 24 Nov. 1943, McCurry states "we are sending 2000 prints to the British War Office at their request for the British Services."
- 47 Matthews to McCurry, 6 May 1944. See also Wartime Information Board, R.D. Boyd, Administrative officer, to McCurry, 16 May 1944.
- 48 Boyd to McCurry, 17 May 1944.
- 49 McCurry to Matthews, 30 May 1944.
- 50 A.Y. JACKSON, "Silk Screens" typescript, 1944, 2. Paraskeva Clark to McCurry, 17 May 1944. "I would be feeling unhappy to have missed opportunity to have my work in the collection going to Russia."
- 51 Jackson to McCurry, 3 Mar. 1944.
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 McCurry to Jackson, 11 June 1941. See also STACEY, *The Canadian Poster Book*, xi.
- 54 J.W. McConnell, Office of the President, *The Montreal Star* to McCurry, 31 Mar. 1944.
- 55 McCurry to Jackson, 19 Mar. 1943.
- 56 McCurry to Jackson, 19 Mar. 1943. In reference to the need for war artists, McCurry says "the R.C.A.F. need[s] [an] artist. Having failed to get Pellan, who do you suggest. Roberts is on our list and Surrey was too but wasn't actually rated. Can you think of a good Frenchman?"
- 57 Document titled "Artists' Rights," handwritten, undated.
- 58 Matthews to McCurry, 8 Oct. 1942 and 19 June 1944. Jackson requested a reproduction of the work on which to base the silkscreen design. Later they would require the painting itself to ensure fidelity to the colours, etc.
- 59 Memo from McCurry, May 1944, re first series. See also Jackson to McCurry, 23 Nov. 1942.
- 60 Jackson to McCurry, 13 May 1942.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 Jackson to McCurry, 6 July 1942; see also McCurry to Lucille Gagnon, 10 July 1942. Lucille Gagnon wrote to McCurry, 24 Oct. 1943, she asked how *March in the Birch Woods* (which she considered to be an unsatisfactorily flat reproduction of her husband's painting) could have been reproduced without permission. McCurry replied that the National Gallery had nothing to do with the selection or processing of the work.
- 63 Jackson to McCurry, 23 July 1942. It was Jackson's belief that Matthews had not tried to get sponsorship for Savage's work, despite the fact that producing her work might have provided an incentive for other Montréalers to participate (Jackson to McCurry, 20 Feb. 1944).

- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 McCurry to Brooke Claxton, M.P. Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister, 6 Oct. 1943.
- 66 Jackson to McCurry, 1 June 1943. Fifteen prints had been completed.
- 67 Jackson to McCurry, 23 Nov. 1942.
- 68 Matthews to McCurry, 16 July 1943.
- 69 Matthews to McCurry, 28 Oct. 1943. "I am afraid that waiting for these two [western scenes] is going to cause this fifth set to be very late."
- 70 Matthews to McCurry, 2 Nov. 1943.
- 71 McCurry to Brigden, 18 Apr. 1944. Brigden's 1944 *Assiniboia Valley* was sponsored by the Western Grain Pool and the General Manager of the Alberta Wheat Pool had earlier offered to sponsor an appropriate subject. The Wheat Board was "anxious to know where the picture was done" and if it represented any particular village. The original offer of sponsorship came from W.A. MacLeod, Director of Publicity, Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Ltd., Winnipeg. McCurry had replied on 19 Apr. 1943 that "at the present" there were no subjects available with a "western atmosphere and preferably by a western artist of distinction." On 15 Apr. 1944, Sampson Matthews shipped six reproductions of *Pincher Creek* by A.Y. Jackson, along with leaflets, to Senator Paterson. A memo to Matthews from McCurry re "Armed Forces Reproductions - First 25 Pictures, May 15 1944," lists the first five complete sets and the numbers of National Gallery prints in stock. It also indicates that the Weston had been printed and the Thoreau MacDonald, Lismer and Phillips rerun.
It is important to note that a number of works bore various titles over the life of the programme. Brigden's *Assiniboia Valley* was sometimes called *Assiniboine Valley*. Jackson's *Pincher Creek, Alberta Farms* was also known as *Alberta Farms* and *Pincher Creek, Alberta*. Brooks' *North and Barrington Streets* was often called *Halifax Harbour*. Housser's *Indian School* was also known as *Indian Children*. Morrice's *Quebec Ferry* was occasionally titled *Ferry from the Levis*, Hallam's *The Plowman* was sometimes spelled *The Ploughman*. Isabel McLaughlin's *Blossom Time* was also called *Blossom Time*, *Hog's Hollow* and Paraskeva Clark's *Caledon Farm* was sometimes titled *Caledon Farm in May*.
- 72 Matthews to McCurry, 6 May 1944.
- 73 Matthews to McCurry, 16 Sept. 1944. Document titled, "Reproductions of Canadian Paintings — First Series 25 Pictures."
- 74 Matthews to McCurry, 6 Oct. 1944.
- 75 Jackson to McCurry, 24 July 1944 from Calgary. On 7 Jan. 1943, Jackson wrote to McCurry that "Brooker made a good one. gay and happy." Noting that there was nothing similar in the series, he encouraged McCurry to approve it.
- 76 Jackson to McCurry, 11 May 1944 and Clark to McCurry, 17 May 1944. Clark was recruited to the project by Harry McCurry in the spring of 1944 and her work was sent to Sampson Matthews on 12 Feb. 1945. Though she had originally hesitated, saying that she had no subject matter and had not been out of Toronto in three years, the invitation to participate led to a Caledon sketching trip and the design for *Caledon Farm*.
- 77 McCurry to Jackson, 12 Apr. 1943. In reply to McCurry's suggestion that they impose tighter control, Jackson echoed the same concern: "Agree with you that we must push up the standard," Jackson to McCurry, 8 Nov. 1943.
- 78 *Ibid.*
- 79 Jackson to McCurry, 13 May 1942; see also Jackson to McCurry, 21 May 1942.
- 80 Jackson to McCurry, 7 Jan. 1943.

- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 Jackson to McCurry, 28 Mar. 1943. He was disappointed in the *Star Weekly* article since they had promised a much more indepth article. He was still trying to get *LIFE* to write it up. "If *LIFE* gave it a boost, that would make all the knockers sick." See also a reference to *Newsweek*, Jackson to McCurry, 15 Apr. 1943.
- 83 McCurry to Jackson, 4 Nov. 1943, S. 42 G-K, Canadian War Artists, Jackson, A.Y.
- 84 McCurry to Lawren Harris, 1 May 1944, MG30 D208, Vol. 1, Corr., National Archives of Canada, 1941-47.
- 85 McCurry to John R. Spendlove, 13 Sept. 1943. He described the series as "includ[ing] reproductions of original paintings in public collections and also a number of designs done specially for the silk screen process by prominent Canadian artists who were invited to do them [and who] have given their designs free for this purpose."
- 86 Jackson to McCurry, 8 Nov. 1943.
- 87 Jackson to McCurry, 15 Apr. 1943.
- 88 Alan B. Beddoe, Special Services Officer, Department of National Defence, Naval Service, Ottawa to Matthews, 30 Apr. 1943, ref. N.S. 450-13-3.
- 89 McCurry to Matthews, 3 June 1943.
- 90 Jackson to McCurry, 27 Apr. 1943.
- 91 McCurry to Illingworth Kerr, 7 June 1943.
- 92 McCurry to Jackson, 9 June 1943. McCurry forwarded the watercolour to Jackson (and Casson) for consideration.
- 93 Jackson to McCurry, 11 June 1943.
- 94 McCurry to Illingworth Kerr, 7 June 1943.
- 95 Illingworth Kerr to McCurry, "On the train somewhere west of Moose Jaw, 15 June 1943." He went on to say that he did not believe he could arrive at the desired quality "with the means at [his] disposal."
- 96 Though Casson's prairie scene was never printed, the tempera design he had created, titled *Wheat Fields, Alberta* was part of the L.H.R. Matthews gift to the McMichael Gallery in 1968.
- 97 Casson to McCurry, 25 June 1943. See also McCurry to Casson, 30 June 1943 and Matthews to McCurry 3 Nov. 1943.
- 98 McCurry to Lindner, 27 July 1943.
- 99 Lindner to McCurry, 29 Sept. 1943.
- 100 Jackson to McCurry, 9 Apr. 1943.
- 101 Robert J.C. Stead, Superintendent, Publicity and Information, Department of Mines and Resources, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch to McCurry, 20 Apr. 1943.
- 102 Dennis REID, *A Concise History of Canadian Painting* (Toronto: Oxford Press, 1973), 204.
- 103 Jackson to McCurry, 23 Nov. 1942.
- 104 Jackson to McCurry, January 14 1944. (Italics this author's.)
- 105 John SLYKHUIS, "Silkscreen visions of Canada now on view at Aurora Library," *Topic* (8 Jan. 1980).

- 106 Jackson to McCurry, 14 Jan. 1944.
- 107 *Ibid.*
- 108 N.G.C. undated typescript titled, "Art Reproduction of Canadian Pictures," 3. References to the artists indicate that this text dates to late 1943 or early 1944. (Italics this author's.)
- 109 Cloutier was appointed a war artist in 1944.
- 110 McCurry to Matthews, 30 Mar. 1944. When he wrote this letter, McCurry had a design from Cloutier in hand.
- 111 "Colour-Craft' Reproductions of Canadian Paintings," c.1943.
- 112 Untitled typescript with descriptions of silkscreens, c.1945.
- 113 *Ibid.*
- 114 "Colour-Craft' Reproductions of Canadian Paintings."
- 115 Jackson to McCurry, 28 Mar. 1943.
- 116 Jackson to McCurry, 26 Nov. 1943.
- 117 Jackson to McCurry, letter is undated; received 8 Dec. 1942. McCurry had written to Mrs. Gagnon (10 July 1942) apologizing for not having attended the Gagnon Memorial Exhibition in Quebec City and asking for permission to include a work by Gagnon in the silkscreen series. He suggested that a "Maria Chapdelaine illustration would be very suitable."
- 118 Jackson to McCurry, 11 Dec. 1942.
- 119 Jackson to McCurry, 20 Feb. 1944.
- 120 McCurry to Jackson, 4 Feb. 1943.
- 121 Jackson to McCurry, 19 Feb. 1943.
- 122 Brandtner to McCurry, undated, received 23 July 1943.
- 123 Jackson to McCurry, 16, 20 and 27 Feb. 1944.
- 124 McCurry to Jackson, 28 Feb. 1944
- 125 Jackson to McCurry, 19 June 1944.
- 126 Brandtner to Jackson, undated, received 11 Feb. 1943 at the N.G.C.
- 127 C.F. Martin to McCurry, 14 July 1943.
- 128 McCurry to Brandtner, 26 May 1944.
- 129 McCurry to Sampson-Matthews, 16 Nov. 1942.
- 130 Matthews to McCurry, 21 May 1942.
- 131 Jackson to Matthews, 2 June 1942. "I am more concerned with the standard of the designs than I am with the advertising of them. They will not all be good but if you remember the series of silk screen Christmas cards we worked out about eight years ago it was a remarkable group of designs and I think we can do as well with this. If we can persuade advertisers to use works of art instead of the usual commercial junk it will mean a lot to the artists."
- 132 Jackson to McCurry, 23 Nov. 1942.
- 133 McCurry to Jackson, 16 June 1943. Marked PRIVATE.
- 134 Jackson to McCurry, 6 Jan. 1944.
- 135 Jackson to McCurry, 10 Feb. 1943.

- 136 Jackson to McCurry, 23 Nov. 1942.
- 137 Jackson to McCurry, 6 Jan. 1944.
- 138 MacLeod wrote to McCurry that, having seen the other silkscreens, she did not think much of the paintings she had submitted; McCurry replied that although they were "charming," it was unlikely that they would be able to secure a sponsor for any of them. MacLeod to McCurry, undated, received 15 Apr. 1943. McCurry to MacLeod, 30 Apr. 1943.
- 139 McCurry to Matthews, 23 Nov. 1944. Jackson to McCurry, 23 Mar. 1943: "That chap Shadbolt is doing some very able stuff. We bought a drawing at the Gallery [Toronto] the other day."
- 140 McCurry to Jackson, 19 Mar. 1943 and Jackson to McCurry, 23 Mar. 1943. Scott had submitted *A British Columbia Coast Line*.
- 141 Jackson to McCurry, 15 Apr. 1943. Untitled list in N.G.C. files dated 20.5.42.
- 142 Jackson to McCurry, 21 May 1942. He noted that for the schools "you would not want Sampson's design at all."
- 143 Jackson to McCurry, 21 May 1942.
- 144 Jackson to McCurry, 23 July 1942.
- 145 Jackson to McCurry, 2 Dec. 1942.
- 146 Matthews to McCurry, 22 Jan. 1943.
- 147 Jackson to McCurry, May 1944. It was described as representing in a "general way" the country between Winnipeg and Regina.
- 148 Jackson to McCurry, 11 June 1943.
- 149 McCurry to Jackson, 30 May 1944.
- 150 Matthews to McCurry, 20 Mar. 1944.
- 151 McCurry to Jackson, 12 Apr. 1943 and Jackson to McCurry, 9 Apr. 1943.
- 152 McCurry to Jackson, 12 Apr. 1943. McCurry proposed an honorarium of \$50.00 for each original design used in the school programme, with an additional \$50.00 payment if a second edition were required.
- 153 Matthews to McCurry, 2 Nov. 1943. The artists were given ten prints and the firm undertook to sell any which the artists might wish to dispose of at \$5.00 per copy. By November 1943, these were sold and the artists appropriately remunerated.
- 154 Matthews to McCurry, 2 Nov. 1943. Matthews reports on the individual sales the firm has made and the basis for these sales. See also Matthews to McMillan, McMillan Export, 23 Feb. 1944. Matthews to McCurry, 30 May 1944: Sampson-Matthews Ltd. notifies McCurry that they will forward a cheque for \$50 to A.Y. Jackson for the sale of ten prints.
- 155 McCurry to Jackson, 4 Nov. 1943.
- 156 Jackson to McCurry, 8 Nov. 1943. Jackson refers to the strength of the prints which were displayed in Eaton's window in Edmonton.
- 157 Matthews to McCurry, 30 May 1944. See also Matthews to McCurry, 16 Sept. 1944. Document titled, "Reproductions of Canadian Paintings- First Series 25 Pictures."
- 158 Jackson to McCurry, 27 Feb. 1944.
- 159 Jackson to McCurry, undated, received 21 Jan. 1944. This was a list of works by 22 artists whose original, revised, or new designs were scheduled for a second print run. Of the Phillips, he noted "Railway bolder"; of the Gagnon "Could be improved with stronger blues"; of the Hallam, "Poor design, looks like advertisement."

- 160 Matthews to McCurry, 28 Feb. 1944.
- 161 *Ibid.*
- 162 Matthews to McCurry, 10 Feb. 1944.
- 163 Jackson to Matthews, 4 Mar. 1944.
- 164 McCurry to James F. Cassidy, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, 2 May 1944.
- 165 Matthews to Joseph W.G. Clark, Director-in-Chief, Public Relations, Armed Forces, re *Pictures for the Armed Services*, dated by hand, January 1945, See also Matthews to McCurry, 1 Mar. 1945, document titled, "Reproductions of Large Paintings." The prints requested by the Armed Forces included Jackson's adaptation of the Gagnon, Hallam's adaptation of the Morrice and Robinson, A.J. Casson's adaptation of the Haines, the Lismer and the J.E.H. MacDonald and the Tom Thomson (Matthews to McCurry, 16 Sept. 1943). In January 1945, before the completion of Paraskeva Clark's *Caledon Farm*, Sampson-Matthews was holding over 8000 gallery prints of thirty images. (Memo to Matthews, subject Armed Forces Reproduction, 8 Jan. 1945, from W.) Three hundred copies of each of five prints, all endorsed with sponsorships, were used to complete the outstanding request for 2400 prints from Auxiliary Services, the Air Force and the Navy.
- 166 Matthews to McCurry, "Reproductions of Large Paintings," General Notes, 1 Mar. 1945.
- 167 In a letter of 24 Oct. 1945, McCurry outlines the history of the wartime project to the Chairman of his Board, Harry S. Southam. He here posits that 35,000 prints had been supplied to the Canadian Navy, Army and Air Force as well as two thousand prints supplied to the British Army and 1000 prints supplied to the R.A.F. by the National Gallery with the help of the Wartime Information Board. He states that about 17,000 non-sponsored imprinted works were issued by the National Gallery.
- 168 McCurry to Southam, 24 Oct. 1945.
- 169 Matthews to McCurry, 28 Jan. 1944. Inventory document titled, "Reproductions of Paintings."
- 170 Matthews to McCurry, 1 Mar. 1945, "Reproductions of Large Paintings." See also Matthews to McCurry, 13 Oct. 1944 in which Matthews outlined the costs to the Gallery and the income on the sale of prints owed to the Gallery by Sampson-Matthews. At that time, the Gallery's outstanding balance totalled over \$25,000 for the first series of 25 prints, the second series, and the coats of arms of Canada and the provinces which they were also producing in silkscreen format. The Gallery's credit on the sale of prints by Sampson-Matthews totalled \$3,668.
- 171 This was the second group of prints. The first group included Casson's *Ontario Village*, Jackson's *Quebec Village*, the third MacDonald's *Mist Fantasy*, the fourth Lismer's *Isles of Spruce* and Thomson's *Northern River* and the fifth Harris' *Maligne Lake*, Jackson's *Pincher Creek, Alberta* and Carmichael's *White Water*.
- 172 McCurry to Matthews, 8 Mar. 1943.
- 173 Matthews to McCurry, "Art Reproduction of Canadian Pictures," undated typescript.
- 174 "The Art Forum: Silk Screen Prints" *Canadian Art* I, no. 3 (Feb./Nov. 1944): 126.
- 175 Walter ABELL, "Canadian Aspirations in Painting," *Culture* (June 1942), 172-82. See also Hélène SICOTTE, "Walter Abell au Canada 1928-1944," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XI, nos. 1 & 2 (1988): 88-108.
- 176 Colonel C.R. Hill, Director of Special Services, to Matthews, 14 Jan. 1943.
- 177 *Catalogue of Reproductions; Colour Reproductions, Postcards, Silk Screen Prints, Publications*, National Gallery of Canada, c.1955-57, 1.

APPENDIX A

THE NATIONAL GALLERY/SAMPSON-MATTHEWS The Wartime Prints

Dates of original publication and wartime sponsors. This information is gleaned from the January 18, 1944 National Gallery of Canada list "Silk Screen Reproductions of Canadian Paintings: Sponsor Imprints," from general correspondence regarding sponsorships, and from the prints themselves.

SERIES I

ARTIST	WORK	SPONSOR
Group A (May 1942)		
Charles Comfort	<i>Bon Echo</i>	The Canada Life Assurance Co.
A.J. Casson	<i>Ontario Village</i>	The Rowntree Company Ltd.
Thoreau MacDonald	<i>Wild Geese</i>	Shell Oil Co. of Canada
A.Y. Jackson	<i>Quebec Village</i>	National Gallery of Canada/ Canada Life
B. Coghill Haworth	<i>Port au Persil</i>	Canada Packers Ltd.
Group B (June 1943)		
Leonard Brooks	<i>Haliburton Village</i>	Christie Brown and Co. Ltd.
Yvonne McKague Housser	<i>Evening-Nipigon River</i>	The Southam Company/ John Northway & Son, Ltd.
Sydney Hallam	<i>The Plowman</i>	Massey-Harris Co. Ltd.
Fred Haines	<i>Beech Woods</i>	Mutual Life Assurance Co. of Canada
L.A.C. Panton	<i>Windswept</i>	The Canadian Bank of Commerce
Group C (June 1943)		
J.E.H. Sampson	<i>Veterans of the Sea</i>	The Tuckett Tobacco Co. Ltd.
Walter Phillips	<i>Victoria Glacier</i>	E. and S. Currie Ltd./ Imperial Optical Company
J.E.H. MacDonald	<i>Mist Fantasy</i>	Art Gallery of Toronto/ National Gallery of Canada
J.W.G. Macdonald	<i>B.C. Indian Village</i>	Jantzen Knitting Mills of Canada Ltd.
Albert Robinson	<i>Return from Easter Mass</i>	Quaker Oats Co.
Group D (October 1943)		
J.W. Morrice	<i>Quebec Ferry</i>	Cook Clothing Co. Ltd.
Arthur Lismer	<i>Isles of Spruce</i>	Gordon MacKay and Co. Ltd.
Tom Thomson	<i>Northern River</i>	Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. Ltd.
Clarence Gagnon	<i>March in the Birch Woods</i>	Regent Knitting Mills
Jack Humphrey	<i>Swallow Tail, Grand Manan</i>	Belding-Corticelli Ltd.

Group E (March 1944)

Lawren Harris	<i>Maligne Lake</i>	National Gallery of Canada/ Beardmore and Co.
Herbert Palmer	<i>Maple Lake, Haliburton</i>	Canadian General Electric/ The Robert Simpson Co. Ltd.
Franklin Carmichael	<i>White Water</i>	Canadian Bank of Commerce?
Fred Brigden	<i>Assiniboia Valley</i>	Western Grain Pool
A.Y. Jackson	<i>Pincher Creek, Alberta (Alberta Farm)</i>	Paterson Grain Company

SERIES II

Group A (September 1944)

Leonard Brooks	<i>North and Barrington Streets, Halifax (Halifax Harbour)</i>	Christie Brown and Co. Ltd.
Thoreau MacDonald	<i>Winter Morning</i>	National Gallery of Canada
Isabel McLaughlin	<i>Blossom Time</i>	R.S. McLaughlin
W.P. Weston	<i>Vancouver Lions</i>	British Columbia Electric Railway Co. Ltd.
Fritz Brandtner	<i>Potato Pickers</i>	The Southam Company

Group B (September 1944)

Albert Cloutier	<i>Sugar Making</i>	Canada Life
Yvonne McKague Housser	<i>Indian Children (Indian School)</i>	National Gallery of Canada
R. York Wilson	<i>Auction Sale</i>	R. Laidlaw Lumber Co.
L.A.C. Panton	<i>Silver Stream</i>	Sponsor not indicated
A.Y. Jackson	<i>Peace River Bridge</i>	H.J. Heinz Co. of Canada Ltd.

(January 1945)

Paraskeva Clark	<i>Caledon Farm</i>	Canada Packers Ltd.?
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Résumé

UNE VISION DE LA NATION

La nation, l'identité et les sérigraphies du temps de guerre de Sampson-Matthews

Entre 1942 et 1963, la maison Sampson-Matthews a imprimé plus d'une centaine de sérigraphies qui connurent une large diffusion à travers le Canada et à l'étranger. Ces sérigraphies jouèrent un rôle important dans l'élaboration du concept de l'art canadien. Ce premier de deux articles portant sur les sérigraphies de Sampson-Matthews, traite du projet entrepris conjointement avec la Galerie nationale du Canada (maintenant Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) pendant la guerre.

Des cent dix-huit reproductions réalisées au cours des trente années que dura le programme, seulement trente-six font effectivement partie de la série du temps de guerre. (Voir l'Annexe pour la liste complète des sérigraphies et des dates de publication). Trente-six autres sérigraphies furent créées dans le cadre du projet conjoint d'après-guerre. Une autre série de quinze fut imprimée par Sampson-Matthews, pour continuer le programme après que la Galerie nationale s'en fut retirée en 1955. De plus, des reproductions imprimées par Sampson-Matthews pour la Federation of Canadian Artists et la Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, selon le même procédé et du même format que la série du temps de guerre, furent commercialisées en même temps que les séries Galerie nationale/Sampson-Matthews, durant les années d'après-guerre.

Le second article étudiera la phase d'après-guerre du projet conjoint, la dernière phase commerciale après 1955, année où la Galerie nationale mit un terme à sa participation, et la série connexe de sérigraphies identifiées au projet Sampson-Matthews/Galerie nationale.

L'article aborde plusieurs des questions concernant les gravures du temps de guerre — y compris la manière dont le programme a été conçu et réalisé, quelles gravures il comportait et leur nombre, les artistes qui les avaient créées et leur public cible. Il étudie le processus de sélection et de diffusion des gravures, ainsi que ce que le médium de la sérigraphie pouvait avoir de prometteur pour les artistes canadiens.

L'article identifie la tension continue entre le besoin de plaire aux commanditaires, aux militaires et au grand public et les objectifs esthétiques perçus comme étant à la base du projet. Il tient aussi compte de l'influence d'un petit groupe d'artistes en place, d'administrateurs et de gens d'affaires qui collaborèrent pour créer une esthétique institutionnalisée qui devait, par la suite, apparaître comme l'évolution naturelle d'un nationalisme émergent. Il examine le rôle de la Galerie nationale comme partenaire du projet Sampson-Matthew et, particuliè-

ment, le rôle de H.O. McCurry, directeur de la Galerie nationale, A.J. Casson, qui supervisa la production des gravures par Sampson-Matthew et A.Y. Jackson, qui favorisa l'ébauche et l'élaboration du projet.

Lorsque la dernière gravure de la série du temps de guerre fut tirée, en janvier 1945, trente des «plus grands artistes du Canada» avaient été représentés par une série complète de trente-six sujets différents, dont vingt-neuf avaient été peints spécialement pour le projet et dont sept étaient des adaptations de tableaux des collections permanentes de la Galerie nationale du Canada, de la Art Gallery of Toronto et de Hart House. La Galerie nationale du Canada avait commandité cinq des reproductions, quatre compagnies avaient commandité chacune deux sujets différents et sept compagnies avaient commandité un second tirage d'un même sujet. Au total, trente compagnies individuelles contribuèrent à hauteur de 33 000 \$ approximativement, et 16 500 œuvres furent données aux forces armées; 17 000 reproductions, portant le sceau de la Galerie nationale, furent distribuées à des écoles et établissements publics au Canada. De plus, la Galerie nationale distribua un certain nombre de gravures aux bureaux du gouvernement dans diverses parties du monde, dont la Russie, la Chine et l'Amérique du Sud.

Il est toujours frappant de constater à quel point on se rappelle les sérigraphies du temps de guerre. Plusieurs générations de Canadiens se souviennent des sérigraphies du Groupe des Sept, exposées à travers le pays ou accrochées aux murs des écoles, des établissements publics, des banques et des bureaux privés. Peu de gens se rappellent les noms des autres artistes associés au projet. Il est vrai que Jackson, J.E.H. MacDonald, Lismore, Harris, Carmichael et Casson, ainsi que Tom Thomson, étaient tous représentés par au moins une gravure de la série de guerre. En fait, un seul des cinq premiers groupes de gravures de la série ne comportait pas au moins une œuvre signée par un membre du Groupe, mais on y retrouvait *Evening Nipigon* de Housser et *Windswept* de Panton, dont le sujet et le style rappelaient ceux du Groupe. En dépit du fait que, dans les premières années, on demandait aux écoles d'acheter des séries de gravures où, à côté des reproductions du Groupe, on retrouvait des scènes des Prairies, de la côte atlantique ou des Rocheuses, ce sont les images du Groupe qui sont restées le plus profondément gravées dans notre mémoire collective.

En intégrant, par la suite, les gravures du temps de guerre aux séries d'après-guerre, on a certainement créé une certaine confusion. Des images populaires, telles *White Church* d'Emily Carr, *Algoma Country* de Harris et cinq gravures d'après Thomson, de même que des œuvres connues d'artistes tels Jackson et Thoreau MacDonald, n'ont été imprimées qu'à la fin des années quarante et au début des années cinquante. Elles ont pourtant été associées au projet du temps de guerre, tout comme les sérigraphies créées à la fin des années quarante par la Federation of Canadian Artists, et qui comprenaient deux gravures de Harris, une de Jackson et une de Thomson. De même, lorsque, après la guerre, les écoles et

établissements publics ne furent plus tenues d'acheter les gravures en série, les registres de vente confirment la popularité des œuvres des peintres du Groupe.

Tout comme l'art abstrait, le réalisme social et les œuvres dont le caractère politique ou esthétique aurait pu être controversé ne correspondaient pas aux paramètres du projet qui, toujours, se tenait dans une position intermédiaire. On ne semble pas avoir songé à la possibilité d'inclure des artistes autochtones. *B.C. Indian Village* de Jock Macdonald et *Indian Children* de Housser renforçaient le discours colonial dominant, en présentant les autochtones dans l'imaginaire canadien à travers un mode de vie pittoresque et d'adorables enfants. Ces représentations, largement diffusées dans les écoles du pays, en démontrant que l'organisation sociale autochtone se situait en dehors de la vie et de l'expérience contemporaines, codisaient et légitimaient une vision de l'autochtone comme étant «l'autre».

Malgré l'intérêt d'A.Y. Jackson pour le travail de certaines femmes artistes, des œuvres présentées par Mabel May, Ethel Seath, Ann Savage et Pegi Nicol McLeod ne furent jamais imprimées. Il semble toutefois y avoir un progrès variable dans la représentation d'artistes femmes, car elles ont fait partie, dès le début, d'un projet antérieur d'une série de lithographies de la Galerie nationale. Cependant les œuvres choisies confirment l'esthétique dominante: Yvonne McKague Housser était la seule femme peintre à avoir deux œuvres dans la série du temps de guerre. *Blossom Time* d'Isabel McLaughlin et *Caledon Farm* de Paraskeva Clark eurent un tirage limité. Lors de sa visite à la Galerie nationale du Canada, en mars 1943, la princesse Alice admira les gravures et demanda si on avait prévu d'en fournir aux quartiers des femmes, auxquels elle «apportait une attention spéciale». Bien que le directeur de la Galerie nationale eut fait suite, par lettre, à la demande princière, il ne semble pas qu'on y ait apporté quelque considération et la demande est restée sans suite. Le public de la série du temps de guerre était perçu comme essentiellement masculin. Du point de vue militaire, les «scènes canadiennes» servaient à raviver le souvenir du «pays» dans l'esprit des hommes partis à la guerre.

Jackson aurait été le premier à admettre que le rêve d'une série de gravures représentative des artistes canadiens d'un océan à l'autre n'avait pas été pleinement réalisé. Bien que le texte d'un discours sur les gravures ait insisté sur le fait que le comité «avait pris soin de voir à ce que toutes les parties du Canada soient représentées» dans le choix des artistes et des sujets, vingt-six des trente-six reproductions du temps de guerre venaient d'artistes demeurant en Ontario. L'attitude des éditeurs, prudemment orientée vers le marché, a effectivement déterminé le choix des œuvres à imprimer. Le compromis était à l'ordre du jour. Le besoin d'avoir des œuvres faciles à reproduire sous forme d'affiches a contribué à la nature commerciale du travail, en favorisant des reproductions par des illustrateurs et des dessinateurs plutôt que par des artistes plus doués, mais sans expérience dans la technique de la sérigraphie. L'engagement avoué pris par Jackson, de faire une place, dans les séries ultérieures destinées aux écoles, à des reproductions plus artistiques et innovatrices

qui n'avaient pas trouvé de commanditaires durant la guerre, fut oublié au profit du besoin de fournir constamment des images populaires qui se vendent bien.

La nature conservatrice du programme était certainement due à l'influence de Casson et de Sampson-Matthew, soucieux de la rentabilité des œuvres choisies, mais elle était aussi affectée par la domination du Groupe des Sept et par la tradition paysagère de l'art canadien, et particulièrement par le rôle de Jackson et de Casson et leur refus d'inclure les «modernes» dans leur définition de ce qui était canadien. Si Jackson se souciait de la qualité, sa définition de l'art canadien demeurait étroitement conventionnelle et tournée vers le paysage. De plus, la mise en œuvre du programme avait été motivée par l'accueil espéré de la part des commanditaires, des forces armées et du grand public. Les voix alternatives qui critiquaient le projet de fonder le nationalisme sur la nature furent ignorées. À Montréal, John Lyman et la Contemporary Art Society présentaient une définition bien différente de ce qui constituait l'art canadien. Ils ne furent pas inclus dans les séries du temps de guerre.

Aux yeux des artistes, des institutions et des critiques qui appuyaient le programme de sérigraphies, particulièrement durant la guerre, le paysage canadien définissait un secteur d'expression culturelle spécifiquement canadien. Loin des tendances modernistes de l'art européen, il représentait l'aboutissement logique de l'évolution historique de l'art canadien. Pour Jackson et ses collègues, le paysage incarnait l'essence de l'école indigène. Cette position nationaliste de défense était un élément clé dans le processus de définition de la culture à une époque où l'unité nationale et la promotion du patriotisme étaient des objectifs déclarés. Comme le faisait remarquer un officier: «par la présentation de scènes canadiennes [le projet de sérigraphies fera que nos hommes seront] conscients du pays et de la cause pour laquelle on leur demande de combattre.»

Bien que la mission déclarée du projet ait été d'élargir la représentation des artistes et des sujets en proposant une vision diversifiée, plutôt qu'uniforme, de l'expérience canadienne, les séries allaient continuer d'être dominées par le Groupe et par la tradition du paysage. Dans le projet Sampson-Matthew, le paradigme nature-nature était réaffirmé par de grandes et attrayantes images, diffusées dans des lieux publics, surtout les écoles, à travers le pays. Bien que l'idée implicitement politique de l'esthétique de la «nature sauvage» ait été contestée par des artistes et des critiques de différentes parties du pays, les alternatives au paysage, quoique présentes dans les séries, ont diminué d'importance dans le plus grand projet. Pendant toute la durée de la série, les reproductions d'œuvres du Groupe des Sept et de Tom Thomson allaient demeurer les sujets les plus populaires, renforçant les idées reçues concernant l'identité et réaffirmant la conception populaire de l'art canadien.

Traduction: Élise Bonnette

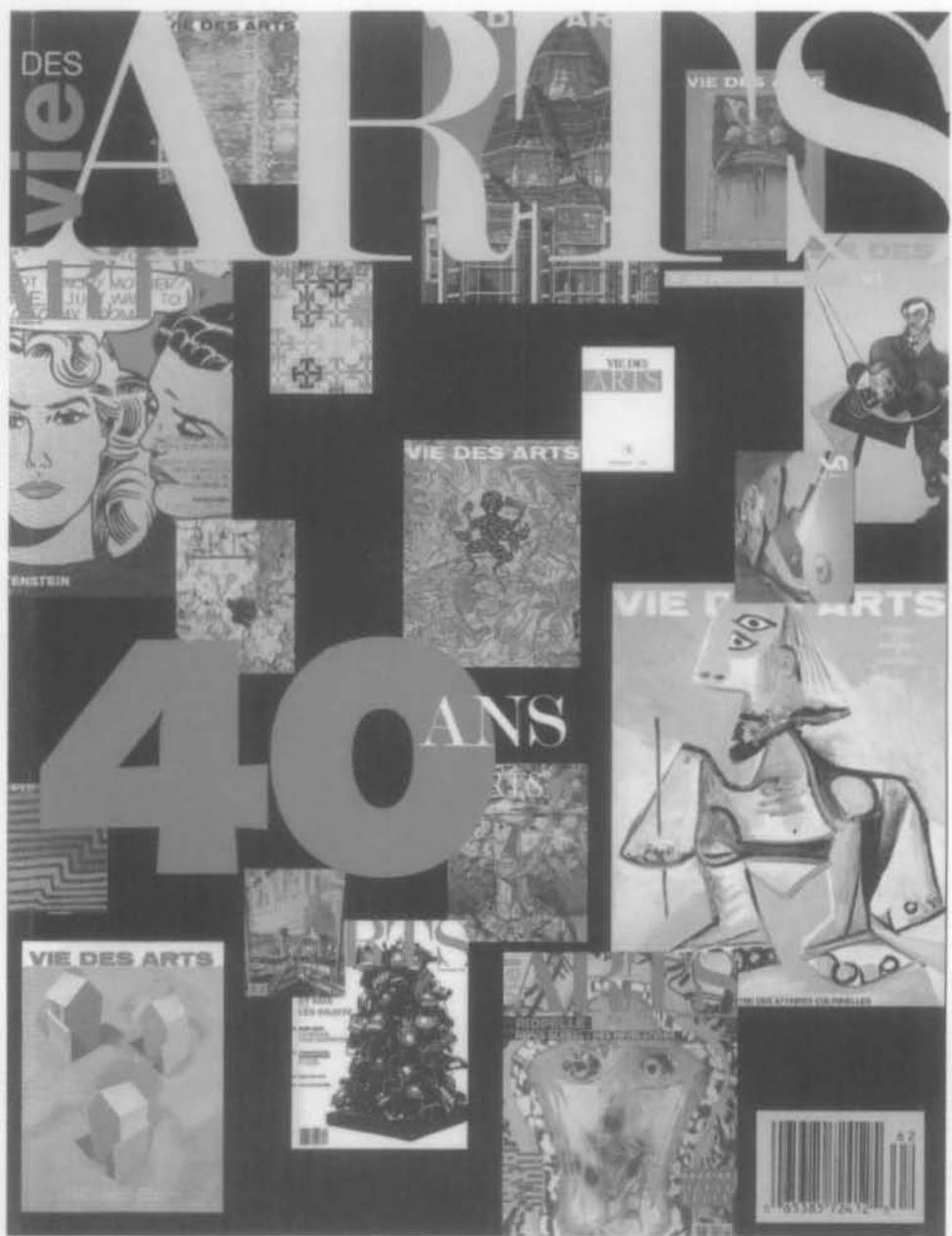


fig.1 Couverture, Vie des Arts, Vol. XL, n° 162, Printemps 1996.

L'ART DE LA MODERNITÉ

La revue *Vie des Arts* et sa contribution au discours sur les arts visuels au Québec dans les années 1950 et 1960

Si l'auto-référence fut acceptée comme idée centrale du modernisme dans l'art, l'autonomie de l'art moderne n'était possible qu'avec l'émergence d'un champ de soutien. L'autonomie de l'art moderne reposait sur deux critères: un champ de réception bien informé, et, afin d'encourager une liberté artistique sans restrictions, un public plus vaste que le mécénat traditionnel¹. À mi-siècle, la presse culturelle joua un rôle essentiel dans la création et le maintien d'un public réceptif aux œuvres modernistes, en ne se limitant pas au réseau traditionnel des galeries, des musées et des collectionneurs. À la fin des années cinquante, les revues d'arts visuels étaient en plein essor à travers l'Amérique et l'art moderne devenait accessible à un éventail de lecteurs plus diversifié que jamais. Le dynamisme et l'enthousiasme qui, durant cette période, nourrissaient des revues telles que *Canadian Art* et *Vie des Arts* reflétaient le désir de la communauté artistique de participer à l'évolution de la collectivité. De plus, l'avènement de la société de consommation, avec la prospérité économique de l'après-guerre, s'avéra un terrain fertile pour la diffusion culturelle, par l'entremise de revues accessibles au grand public. C'est dans ce contexte que *Canadian Art* et *Vie des Arts*, les deux seules revues d'arts visuels qui existent encore jusqu'à ce jour au Canada, furent fondées².

Les revues de type «magazine», en tant que véhicules de culture, se démarquent par une certaine facilité propre à leur nature. N'offrant ni l'immédiateté d'un reportage dans un journal quotidien, ni la profondeur d'un exposé dans une revue spécialisée, une revue de ce type doit à la fois informer, divertir et, dans le cas de *Vie des Arts*, servir de lieu d'apprentissage à ses lecteurs³. En traitant de sujets variés et en les présentant de manière inédite et actuelle, la formule magazine permet la diffusion d'informations qui autrement ne seraient disponibles qu'à travers des réseaux spécialisés. L'accessibilité inhérente du magazine est en fait ce qui lui permet d'être à la fois démystificateur et bâtisseur de culture. Non seulement *Vie des Arts* épousait-elle un discours moderniste représentant des valeurs progressistes, mais, par sa formule influencée par les revues à grand tirage, elle cultivait une esthétique de communication typique d'un modernisme évolué favorisant l'image aux dépens du texte⁴.

Andrée Fortin, analysant le rôle des périodiques culturels dans l'histoire intellectuelle du Québec⁵, définit la revue comme espace de débat, tremplin de nouvelles idées et véhicule d'engagement⁶. La revue, simultanément, crée et sou-

tient le discours. Fonder une revue est un acte intellectuel conçu pour donner, d'une façon complètement autonome, le droit de parole à un groupe d'individus; l'exercice du contrôle éditorial, lorsqu'il est respecté, décrit les paramètres de son discours et donne voix à sa spécificité.

La revue *Vie des Arts* fut à la fois témoin et participant à l'accession à la modernité culturelle du Québec dans les années cinquante et soixante. *Vie des Arts* offrait un espace où le milieu professionnel des arts et un public intéressé mais non initié pouvaient se croiser. En ajoutant à ses revenus l'aide du nouveau système de subventions d'État du Conseil des arts du Canada, *Vie des Arts* put présenter à ses lecteurs une vue d'ensemble des arts visuels qui était moderne et accessible. En devenant, pour ses lecteurs au Québec ainsi qu'ailleurs au Canada et à l'étranger, un porte-parole de la culture québécoise, *Vie des Arts* influença la réception des arts auprès du public canadien.

Si l'on applique la définition de la modernité selon Baudrillard - les enjeux de la modernité ne sont pas sociaux, politiques ou historiques, mais la modernité est plutôt un procédé d'opposition aux valeurs traditionnelles - on comprend l'importance du point de vue moderniste dans le contexte de la société québécoise des années cinquante⁷. Bien que la modernité culturelle, déjà bien implantée en Europe, tardait à s'imposer au Québec de façon générale, le milieu des arts visuels québécois s'engageait à promouvoir l'individualisme inhérent à l'esthétique visuelle moderniste, dans le contexte d'un projet de société nationaliste⁸. C'est ainsi que *Vie des Arts* dut jouer un double rôle: exercer son mandat d'éduquer et de sensibiliser les Québécois à leur propre culture à la lumière des valeurs de la modernité, tout en mettant de l'avant les théories modernistes en arts visuels qui avaient cours sur le plan international. La revue épousa donc les incidences sociales, au niveau de la collectivité, de son rôle de communicateur, tout en appuyant l'individualisme fondamental de la pensée moderniste. Ce double rôle reflétait les conflits qui allaient apparaître entre le désir du milieu artistique québécois de se faire reconnaître sur la scène internationale, et l'aspiration à une identité culturelle québécoise.

Plus d'une vingtaine d'années avant la publication du premier numéro de *Vie des Arts*, le besoin d'un champ de soutien pour la vie culturelle canadienne se faisait déjà sentir. Lorsque André Biéler et plusieurs autres artistes se réunirent pour la conférence des artistes canadiens à Kingston en 1941, en temps de guerre mondiale, le rôle de la communauté artistique canadienne dans la préservation de la démocratie était au premier plan de l'ordre du jour. Cette préoccupation incita les délégués à la conférence à débattre de maintes propositions et résolutions sur la place de l'art dans la société canadienne, dont une proposition pour une revue culturelle à l'échelle nationale. Deux années plus tard, en 1943, le premier numéro de la revue *Canadian Art* était publié sous la direction de Walter Abell.

L'importance de la conférence de Kingston pour le développement d'une

politique culturelle canadienne se discerne aussi dans certains événements qui firent évoluer le discours sur les arts visuels au Canada et au Québec: le *Artists' Brief* adressé au Special Committee on Re-construction and Re-establishment; la Royal Commission Inquiry into National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, dont le résultat fut le rapport Massey en 1951; et la création du Conseil des arts du Canada en 1957. À un pays dont on pouvait dire, en 1951, année de publication du rapport Massey, qu'il n'avait pas encore d'histoire nationale ni de réelle conscience de son passé⁹, la commission Massey-Lévesque soulignait l'absence de contenu canadien dans tous les aspects de la culture au Canada. En effet, la Periodical Press Association fit remarquer aux enquêteurs de la Commission que le Canada était le seul pays de quelque importance au monde où il se lisait plus de revues provenant de l'étranger que de revues d'origine canadienne¹⁰. Les résultats de l'enquête démontraient le besoin de former une conscience historique afin de permettre à la culture canadienne de refléter une mythologie nationale. Le désir du gouvernement canadien de créer une identité nationale moderne fut bien servi par les recommandations du rapport Massey. Celui-ci donnait raison à la création d'une politique d'identité nationale culturelle pour repousser la vague d'américanisation et de matérialisme qui menaçait déjà une culture canadienne profondément fragile. Cependant, certains soutiennent que la méfiance exprimée dans le rapport à l'égard de la culture de masse américaine forgea le profil d'une culture nationale qui allait dorénavant polariser l'art et la culture populaire, élargissant le gouffre entre l'artiste et la collectivité¹¹. Néanmoins, le rapport Massey réussit à mettre en place une infrastructure qui, au moins au niveau de l'aide financière, encouragerait la diffusion de la culture (souvent sans se soucier de sa provenance), à une époque où la création d'une identité canadienne était une priorité à l'ordre du jour gouvernemental. De plus, la contribution du sociologue Georges-Henri Lévesque, de l'Université Laval, en tant que directeur adjoint de la Commission, signalait la reconnaissance du rôle que le Québec devrait jouer dans la création d'une politique culturelle nationale. Lorsque le premier numéro de *Vie des Arts* apparut, en 1956, le Canada de l'après-guerre se dessinait comme un État moderne et prospère, et la disposition envers les arts reflétait, du moins vaguement, un sentiment d'approbation générale à l'idée de l'appui public de la culture.

Les événements qui ont aidé à forger la politique culturelle au Québec étaient liés de près à l'établissement de l'infrastructure de la politique culturelle canadienne. Néanmoins, dans le climat politique particulier aux années cinquante, la culture québécoise conservait en grande mesure son caractère autonome. Le passage du Québec d'une société conservatrice dominée par l'Église à un État moderne et laïque s'accomplit sur plusieurs décennies, mais ce n'est qu'au début des années soixante que l'idée se réalisa pleinement. L'émergence d'une classe moyenne qui associait ses aspirations sociales à celle de la collectivité québécoise permit l'articulation d'un nationalisme renouvelé¹². Cela coïncidait

avec la fin du régime Duplessis et l'accession au pouvoir du gouvernement Lesage. La Révolution tranquille marquait une nouvelle ouverture d'esprit intellectuelle et culturelle informée des besoins et des désirs de la modernité. Sans les anciennes contraintes du clergé et d'une élite politiquement conservatrice, la synthèse des arts et de la société entrevue par Borduas dans *Refus global*, en 1948, se matérialisa dans la détermination des architectes de la Révolution tranquille d'aligner la production culturelle avec le progrès social. Pendant les années cinquante, les écrivains et les artistes québécois exprimèrent ouvertement leur engagement social - les premiers en abordant le discours à travers leurs œuvres écrites, les autres en adoptant le rôle de pédagogues¹³. Le milieu des arts visuels fit d'importantes démarches auprès du public pour faire avancer leur cause: écoles, collèges, universités, théâtres, restaurants et librairies se virent transformés en lieux d'exposition temporaires; des manifestes furent publiés et distribués; la presse quotidienne s'impliqua dans des débats passionnés sur la peinture contemporaine; et la critique d'art trouva sa place dans les médias¹⁴.

Vie des Arts se trouvait à la fois à participer à ce discours et à le créer. Cependant, comme le démontre Marie Carani, l'association d'un projet de société nationaliste avec l'évolution d'un langage moderniste dans les arts visuels créa au Québec ce qu'elle nomme un conflit des codes. Le désir de participer à un programme social réformiste/nationaliste se vit confronté aux idéaux humanistes/internationalistes du modernisme dans l'art. Le *Refus global* de Borduas signifiait un refus anarchique des contraintes imposées par un ordre social allié au pouvoir de l'État¹⁵. L'ambiguïté de cette position se ferait aussi sentir à la rédaction de *Vie des Arts*, où la promotion de l'art contemporain serait toujours contrebalancée par la promotion du patrimoine. Cette situation ne serait modifiée qu'avec l'émergence de revues traitant exclusivement d'art contemporain, telles que *Parachute*, dans les années soixante-dix.

En 1966, le critique et historien de l'art Jean-René Ostiguy décrirait l'année 1956 (la première année de publication de *Vie des Arts*) comme un grand tournant pour la culture québécoise: «le début d'une totale remise en question de toutes les structures de la société québécoise¹⁶». Le Conseil des arts de Montréal, fondé en 1956, et le ministère des Affaires culturelles, institué en 1961, furent essentiels à la création d'une nouvelle politique culturelle au Québec, et contribueraient tous deux à la survie de *Vie des Arts* durant sa première décennie.

Dirigé par le ministre libéral Georges-Émile Lapalme, le ministère des Affaires culturelles était responsable de l'administration de quatre secteurs culturels (l'Office de la langue française, le Département du Canada français outre-frontière, le Conseil provincial des arts, et la Commission des monuments historiques¹⁷) et faisait partie de l'infrastructure créée par le parti libéral pour appuyer sa marque particulière de nationalisme progressif. De ce fait, le gouvernement se trouvait à répondre aux attentes des artistes vis-à-vis leur désir de reconnaissance

de leur rôle dans la société québécoise, comme l'avait fait le gouvernement du Canada au niveau fédéral avec le Conseil des Arts. Au Québec, cependant, les attentes dépassaient une simple action directe de la part du gouvernement: les artistes cherchaient une reconnaissance publique et officielle de leur lutte contre la répression du régime Duplessis. Alors que les arts devenaient monnaie courante dans le programme politique d'un nouveau Québec, le discours entre la communauté artistique et l'État se transformait. Les artistes ne sentaient plus le besoin d'utiliser la confrontation afin d'être écoutés: si la cause devait être avancée, toute négociation suivrait dorénavant le protocole gouvernemental. Le nouveau Québec embrassa les arts visuels comme pierre fondamentale de son identité culturelle, et le milieu des arts, quelles que soient ses différences internes au niveau esthétique ou théorique, se trouva impliqué dans les enjeux politiques. L'un des plus importants résultats de cette collaboration fut la création du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal en 1964, qui servirait à bâtir la première collection d'État d'art contemporain, établissant ainsi le patrimoine des générations futures¹⁸.

Vie des Arts devait aussi sa création et son existence même à cette interaction entre la politique culturelle du gouvernement et l'affirmation des enjeux sociaux de la communauté des arts. Le besoin de reconnaître et d'avaliser l'internationalité de l'art contemporain, à l'intérieur d'un contexte de portée relativement régionale compte tenu du lectorat de la revue, résultait sans doute du climat culturel particulier à cette époque au Québec. La culture québécoise, depuis toujours alimentée par la langue et l'histoire françaises, se réalisait à travers une esthétique européenne dont l'empreinte se faisait encore sentir dans la revue *Vie des Arts* plus d'une centaine d'années plus tard.

Au Québec, les revues culturelles jouissaient d'une longue tradition datant du XIX^e siècle (bien que la majorité d'entre elles furent éphémères). L'une des premières revues à intégrer les arts visuels dans ses pages fut *L'Abeille canadienne* (1819-1820), dont le contenu incluait des rubriques sur l'art et la littérature. Au tournant du siècle, la *Revue de l'art, littérature, esthétique, peinture, sculpture, architecture*, publiée à Montréal en 1895, alla encore plus loin en exploitant dans ses pages les nouvelles techniques de reproduction mécanique, offrant ainsi des exemples visuels d'œuvres d'art à ses lecteurs, et de ce fait allant chercher un plus grand public. «Notre revue peut être regardée comme un recueil des plus belles productions de l'art à l'aide de la photographie et de la gravure», remarquaient ses éditeurs¹⁹.

Durant la même période, deux revues sur les arts étaient publiées au Canada anglais: *Arion: Canadian Journal of Art* (1880-81), qui s'intéressait surtout à l'Ontario, et *Arcadia: Bimonthly Journal Devoted Exclusively to Music, Art and Literature* (1892-93), qui portait sur l'art canadien et sur l'art international²⁰.

Ce ne serait cependant qu'en 1918, avec la publication du *Nigog*, qu'une revue culturelle québécoise défendrait la cause de la modernité dans les arts. Bien

que *Le Nigog* ne parut que pendant une année, il est souvent cité comme étant la première revue moderne du Québec. Son adhésion à l'esthétique du formalisme dans les arts ainsi que son antirégionalisme et son antinationalisme avoués apportèrent à la scène culturelle québécoise une alternative à l'insularité culturelle épousée par un grand nombre des membres de l'élite culturelle et politique du temps. Ce respect pour l'autonomie de l'art et pour l'indépendance de l'artiste, avec ses sous-entendus d'internationalisme, se trouvait en opposition directe avec l'idéologie qui, à cette période, dominait l'opinion publique au Québec. Le mandat adopté par *Le Terroir* (1918), revue culturelle contemporaine du *Nigog*, reflétait le traditionalisme de l'idéologie de la survie: afin d'assurer la survivance de la langue et de la culture françaises au Québec, il faudrait empêcher l'infiltration d'influences étrangères. En tant qu'organe de diffusion pour la Société des arts, sciences et lettres du Québec, *Le Terroir* proclamait ouvertement son nationalisme et défendait l'art québécois exclusivement²¹. Par contraste, *Le Nigog* cherchait à examiner tous les aspects de l'art et imaginait un art québécois prenant sa place sur le champ international. La publication du *Nigog* signalait aussi l'arrivée des «experts» dans le domaine du journalisme culturel. On signale, entre autres, Louis Bourgoin et Fernand Préfontaine, tous deux collaborateurs à la revue et collectionneurs d'art moderne²².

La création de *Arts et Pensée*, l'éphémère précurseur de *Vie des Arts*²³, en 1951, par le père Julien Déziel, professeur à l'École des Beaux-arts de Montréal, signalait une démarche vers le lecteur «grand public», cherchant à l'initier aux arts visuels en décrivant des parallèles entre la culture et les enjeux sociaux. *Arts et Pensée* se positionnait clairement comme défenseur de valeurs spirituelles, en opposition à ce que ses éditeurs et collaborateurs décrivaient comme la vague envahissante du matérialisme nord-américain de l'après-guerre. La régénération de l'esprit humain par la contemplation de la beauté alimentait sa politique éditoriale: les bénéfices salutaires de l'art feraient échec aux influences négatives qui menaçaient tous les aspects de la culture contemporaine. Typiquement, la revue comprenait des reportages sur l'art religieux, l'art canadien, des études sur la psychologie et la pédagogie de l'art et, en 1955, un numéro spécial sur Ozias Leduc. Elle comptait parmi ses collaborateurs les peintres Jean Paul Lemieux, Ozias Leduc, John Lyman et Paul-Emile Borduas, ainsi que les critiques et écrivains André Jasmin, Claude Robillard et Robert Élie²⁴. Bien que certains dans le milieu intellectuel ne supportaient pas la préférence d'*Arts et Pensée* pour les œuvres à caractère religieux²⁵, la revue était appréciée pour son appui de l'art vivant et de sa diffusion auprès du public:

...la nouvelle revue *Arts et Pensée* dès son premier numéro s'avéra excellente.

Elle correspond à un besoin de notre milieu artistique et si son directeur veut réellement en faire le carrefour vivant de tous les courants d'idées qui surgissent un peu partout dans le pays, cette revue peut rendre à coup sûr de grands services²⁶.

Contrairement au *Niggog*, *Arts et Pensée* croyait vivement à l'importance du rôle des arts dans la société et ses aspirations pédagogiques en témoignent²⁷. Cette approche humaniste, cependant, était alimentée par une idéologie religieuse qui, avec son appui traditionnel de l'art sacré, reflétait encore la forte main de l'Église dans la culture et l'éducation québécoises. Il faudrait attendre l'arrivée de *Vie des Arts* cinq années plus tard (1956) - et ce après plusieurs numéros - pour sentir diminuer cette influence et voir à sa place une critique artistique indépendante de la tradition imposée par des intellectuels et éducateurs religieux - un changement qui d'ailleurs s'effectuait parallèlement dans la société entière lors de ces années de préparation à la Révolution tranquille.

La disparition d'*Arts et Pensée* fut le résultat d'un manque de ressources monétaires: ne voulant pas voir souffrir la qualité de la revue, ses directeurs décidèrent de cesser la publication²⁸. Jacques Simard, rédacteur en chef de *Vie des Arts* en 1957, remarquerait au sujet d'*Arts et Pensée*: «le vide créé par sa disparition fut vivement ressenti dans les milieux favorables au développement des arts²⁹». Les fondateurs de *Vie des Arts* et la Société des Arts étaient en effet intimement liés au groupe qui avait mis en place *Arts et Pensée*. Un mot de Gérard Morisset, datant du 12 janvier 1955, à Andrée Paradis (qui deviendrait une collaboratrice régulière de *Vie des Arts* et, en janvier 1964, son directeur), l'invite à participer à une réunion pour discuter du futur d'*Arts et Pensée*. Le père Julien Déziel ainsi que Claude Beaulieu, futur directeur artistique et membre fondateur de *Vie des Arts*, étaient aussi conviés. «...Il s'agit de renflouer la revue et de lui donner une nouvelle orientation» notait Morisset³⁰.

Le premier numéro de *Vie des Arts* parut en janvier 1956, suivant la dernière parution d'*Arts et Pensée*. *Vie des Arts*, à ses débuts, fut publiée par la Société des Arts, dirigée par Gérard Morisset, regroupement voué à l'appui, à la promotion et à la diffusion de l'art au Québec par l'organisation d'expositions et par la publication d'une revue qui se nommerait *Vie des Arts*. La Société se concentrat spécifiquement sur l'art qu'elle définissait comme «d'inspiration latine³¹», qui sans doute représentait l'art d'origine non anglo-saxonne, ou, plus précisément, l'art du Québec, de la France et de l'Europe continentale.

Vie des Arts devait en grande partie l'élaboration de son profil initial à Gérard Morisset. En plus d'être le fondateur de la revue, celui-ci était aussi le directeur du Musée provincial de Québec. Reconnu pour ses travaux sur l'architecture française au Québec, Morisset croyait fermement à la valeur sociale des arts et regrettait le peu d'attention portée à l'époque aux arts dans le milieu intellectuel: «En général, nos historiens ont ignoré l'art - cette manifestation collective et spontanée d'un peuple sensible et sain, dont le langage et les formes plastiques, les objets usuels et d'agrément jouent un rôle primordial dans l'évolution de sa culture. ...On néglige la valeur sociale de l'art et l'action éminente qu'il exerce dans toute civilisation³².» Morisset dirigea la revue pendant un peu plus d'une année,

quittant le poste en juin 1957 «pour des raisons de santé et de géographie³³». Le premier numéro de *Vie des Arts* nomme comme membres du conseil de rédaction Gérard Morisset, directeur, Julien Déziel et Claude Picher, secrétaires de rédaction; et Claude Beaulieu, directeur artistique (celui-ci conserverait le poste pendant plus de trois décennies).

Le premier numéro reflète de près les opinions de Morisset sur le rôle de l'art dans la société. On y retrouve, entre autres, des articles de fond tels «Les concours artistiques de la province de Québec», par le critique et directeur des expositions du Musée de la Province de Québec, Claude Picher, dans lequel il fait le bilan des concours officiels au Québec depuis 1945, avec photos d'accompagnement; «Nos monuments historiques» par Paul Gouin, président de la Commission des Monuments historiques, qui fait un appel pour la préservation de l'architecture du régime français au Québec et explique la position de la Commission à ce sujet; «La Société des Arts Plastiques» par Jean Paul Lemieux et Claude Picher dans lequel le fondateur (Picher) et le président (Lemieux) de la Société des Arts Plastiques de la ville de Québec décrivent les fonctions et les objectifs de la Société; «Portraits de cadavres» par Gérard Morisset, étude des portraits de religieuses et de membres du clergé décédés pendant le régime français; et «Auguste Perret» par l'architecte André Blouin, portrait de l'architecte et théoricien français. Une série de chroniques sur les expositions, les livres, la musique et le théâtre fut aussi instituée dans ce premier numéro et un espace fut réservé au courrier des lecteurs.

Bien que l'adresse de *Vie des Arts* fut celle d'une boîte postale à Montréal, plusieurs des collaborateurs de la revue habitaient ou travaillaient dans la ville de Québec, y compris Gérard Morisset, et le contenu éditorial était en grande partie basé sur du matériel ou sur des événements provenant de ou ayant eu lieu à Québec. Le contenu des chroniques démontre cette circonstance géographique: des quatre expositions notées dans la section «Expositions», trois eurent lieu au Musée Provincial de Québec, et l'autre dans une galerie de Québec³⁴. La chronique sur le théâtre décrit la plus nouvelle compagnie théâtrale de la ville, et deux des lettres à la rédaction sont signées par des lecteurs de la région de Québec. Le résultat fut un premier numéro avec des tendances vers un style bureaucratique et académique, et une approche de communication assez désuète comparativement à l'importance que les fondateurs de la revue semblaient placer sur le rôle social de l'art. En tout et pour tout, le premier numéro de *Vie des Arts* était axé sur l'art et l'histoire à caractère régional. Les courants d'internationalisme et de modernité qui définiraient *Vie des Arts* au cours des années qui suivirent n'étaient pas encore en évidence.

Le message éditorial du premier numéro, intitulé «Au lecteur» et signé «La Direction», définit les objectifs de la revue. (Ce message serait le seul éditorial publié jusqu'au dixième anniversaire de la revue, en 1966, sous la direction d'Andrée Paradis.) Dans son analyse des intellectuels québécois et de leurs revues,

Andrée Fortin fait remarquer que le premier numéro d'une revue est le plus important, car il présente ses fondateurs aux lecteurs et sert à contextualiser la revue dans le champ intellectuel et social. Avec la parution d'une nouvelle revue, ses fondateurs cherchent à combler un vide³⁵ - dans le cas de *Vie des Arts* un vide créé par la disparition de son précurseur, *Arts et Pensée*. Le premier message de la rédaction révèle un plan d'action, un mandat par lequel les fondateurs cherchent à changer une situation préexistante. Il ressemble à un manifeste par le ton et par l'intention: ses signataires communiquent en tant que groupe, ils déterminent un appel à la cause et offrent une position critique vis-à-vis du statu quo³⁶. Le premier message éditorial de *Vie des Arts*, par son propre style, rejoint admirablement ces critères.

Dès le début, le message compare deux périodes artistiques au Québec: les années 1910 à 1930 et la période du temps de rédaction, les années cinquante. La première période est décrite comme étant celle d'un arrêt du progrès dans l'art québécois, alors que de nombreuses disciplines s'effacent et que la production de l'art subit un ralentissement marquant. La période plus récente est associée à un renouveau dans tous les aspects de l'art: «Il s'agit donc d'une renaissance, et le mot n'est pas trop fort». En tenant compte de l'importance de cette renaissance artistique, les rédacteurs affirment qu'un lien doit s'établir entre les artistes et le public - un contact qui ne peut se faire que dans les pages d'une revue:

Un tel mouvement ne peut se soutenir ni s'épanouir s'il n'existe un contact étroit entre les artistes et le public, c'est-à-dire entre les producteurs et les consommateurs de la chose artistique. Ce contact étroit, seule une revue d'art peut l'assurer avec plénitude et efficacité, à condition qu'elle ouvre ses pages à tous les éléments de la culture humaine. C'est le rôle qu'entend jouer *Vie des Arts* dans la nation.

Vient ensuite une description des méthodes dont la revue se servirait pour arriver à ses objectifs: *Vie des Arts* deviendrait une source d'information, couvrirait toutes les disciplines artistiques, du passé au présent, et examinerait objectivement les courants de l'art contemporain afin d'encourager la compréhension de ses diverses pratiques. Les fondateurs de *Vie des Arts* se feraient éducateurs, promettant de refermer le gouffre entre l'art et le public: «À l'heure où le fossé se creuse plus profond entre un certain art, qui est légitime, et un certain public qui ne demande qu'à comprendre mais qui n'en a pas toujours le pouvoir, le moment n'est pas à la querelle plus ou moins stérile, mais à l'action éducative». En réalité, *Vie des Arts* ne faisait que démontrer l'existence des conflits inhérents dans la réception de l'art actuel par le public. La revue présentait son mandat: encourager auprès du grand public le désir et la capacité de participer au discours sur l'art moderne et, comme corollaire, de créer un plus nombreux public capable d'appuyer l'évolution de la «renaissance» artistique québécoise³⁷.

Le *Nigog* et *Arts et Pensée* avaient aussi cherché à initier leurs lecteurs aux

complexités du discours moderniste. Dans le cas du *Nigog*, on peut dire qu'en considérant les données démographiques du temps, l'auditoire ciblé était beaucoup moins large. *Arts et Pensée* se rapprochait beaucoup plus de *Vie des Arts* par son contenu et ses objectifs, et *Vie des Arts* est souvent cité comme étant une continuation sans rupture du projet d'*Arts et Pensée*³⁸. Il existe par contre une différence appréciable entre les deux revues - différence qui se fit ressentir de plus en plus dans *Vie des Arts* au cours de son évolution, et qui est issue autant de la transformation sociale et culturelle du Québec que de la vision personnelle des fondateurs et des collaborateurs de la revue. À l'encontre d'*Arts et Pensée*, dont la philosophie sur l'art était inséparable de la tradition religieuse dans la culture et dans l'éducation, *Vie des Arts* représentait une alternative aux moyens de diffusion traditionnels qui s'agençait idéalement avec le processus de sécularisation déjà en cours. Reflétant ces courants d'évolution sociale, le mandat que s'était donné *Vie des Arts* de démocratiser le discours sur l'art et de bâtir une tribune pour les artistes québécois lui permit de trouver son plein essor dans les années à venir³⁹.

Très peu de revues peuvent compter uniquement sur la qualité de leur contenu ou sur le travail acharné de leurs rédacteurs et collaborateurs pour assurer leur survie. Ceci est d'autant plus vrai pour les périodiques et revues culturels au Canada, et il en était ainsi pour *Vie des Arts* depuis ses débuts. Indépendamment des efforts investis dans la production d'une revue intègre et de haute qualité, ou du fait que les collaborateurs n'étaient souvent pas rémunérés pour leurs travaux⁴⁰, des infusions monétaires provenant de l'extérieur étaient nécessaires pour financer tout au moins le coût du roulement des presses. *Vie des Arts* dépendait à la fois de subventions gouvernementales et de ses revenus publicitaires pour assurer la parution de chaque numéro, ainsi que d'abonnements et de quelques dons privés et corporatifs quiaidaient à arrondir ses revenus⁴¹. Le fonds d'archives de la revue démontre que, par exemple, dans sa projection budgétaire de 1958-59, les abonnements couvriraient moins de 25% des dépenses; les revenus publicitaires couvriraient un autre 25%, et les subventions gouvernementales (fédérales, provinciales et municipales) devraient régler la moitié restante des coûts de publication. En 1962, le pourcentage des coûts compensé par les abonnements demeurait équivalent à celui de 1958, et même si les abonnements et les revenus publicitaires combinés arrivaient à couvrir les deux tiers des coûts, la revue dépendait encore fortement des subventions pour couvrir le reste de ses frais⁴².

La relation entre *Vie des Arts* et le Conseil des Arts du Canada s'établit dès le début de l'existence du Conseil. La nomination d'Andrée Paradis au Conseil pour une période de quatre ans, dans sa première année d'existence, accéléra sans doute l'établissement d'une bonne relation avec la revue. Dans la première demande de *Vie des Arts* au Conseil, en juin 1957, le rédacteur en chef Jacques Simard plaide sa cause en citant l'importance de la survie de la seule revue sur les arts en Amérique du Nord. Il souligne fortement que *Vie des Arts* pourrait élargir la

portée de la culture canadienne au Québec. Il note aussi la nécessité d'ajouter des pages de couleur à la revue, un aspect qu'il croit primordial à une revue sur les arts visuels. Astucieusement, il envoie personnellement, à l'automne, une copie de sa demande à tous les membres du Conseil des Arts québécois (Eugène Bussières, le docteur Eustace Morin, Georges Vanier et Andrée Paradis). Le 15 octobre, Bussières lui confirmait une subvention de 4 500 \$ pour la prochaine année, qui serait payée en deux versements. Le document stipulait aussi que les sommes reçues ne devraient en aucun cas diminuer les subventions provenant d'agences régionales ou municipales - un défi qui, à la lumière des subventions reçues régulièrement du Conseil des Arts, s'amplifierait lorsque *Vie des Arts* aborderait ses négociations avec le ministère des Affaires culturelles du Québec.

Vie des Arts et le ministère des Affaires culturelles établirent une relation aussitôt que le ministère fut créé en 1961. Cependant, la première lettre dans le fonds d'archives qui documente une demande de subvention auprès du Ministère date du 10 février 1964⁴³. Signée par Jacques Simard, la demande se termine sur l'appel suivant: «J'espère, cher Monsieur, que vous prendrez en considération la place unique qu'occupe notre revue au Canada.... Elle est cependant, à cause de son marché restreint dans le domaine culturel, dépendante des subventions de l'État⁴⁴».

En général, la correspondance après cette date démontre que le Ministère semblait plus hésitant que le Conseil des Arts du Canada à donner son appui financier à *Vie des Arts*. Cependant, le processus de demande de subvention pour l'année 1964-65 semble avoir été accéléré par un danger venant de l'extérieur. En 1964, le conseil de rédaction de *Vie des Arts* apprit que la revue *Canadian Art* (vue comme étant la contre-partie anglophone de *Vie des Arts*), à la suite d'une année pendant laquelle elle ne put arriver à assumer ses obligations financières, serait relancée et refinancée par l'éditeur de journaux montréalais John McConnell. Dans une lettre au Ministère, Jacques Simard décrit cette situation et lance un appel au Ministère pour qu'il vienne en aide à *Vie des Arts* en raison de la privatisation et de la possibilité d'expansion de *Canadian Art*. Simard, sans doute découragé par le fait qu'un riche Montréalais anglophone se préparait à dépanner *Canadian Art*, écrit au Ministère: «...Il est tout de même curieux de constater que l'Anglo-Saxon qui criait si fort contre l'invasion américaine ... s'impose par son 'impérialisme de l'argent' dans le Québec⁴⁵.» Le résultat de cet envoi fut une réplique rapide du Ministère, signée par Romuald Miville-Deschênes, dans laquelle il remarque que «L'attitude de nos compatriotes anglo-saxons ne surprend nullement la Direction générale des arts et des lettres.» Après un échange de lettres entre *Vie des Arts* et divers représentants du Ministère, on reçut une lettre du ministre des Affaires culturelles, Pierre Laporte, accompagnée d'une subvention de 5 200 \$ à échanger contre 1 300 abonnements pour la délégation générale du Québec à Paris et pour le Ministère à Québec⁴⁶.

Après cet incident, la correspondance entre *Vie des Arts* et le Ministère, à partir de 1965, démontre une certaine tension dans les relations. Andrée Paradis, maintenant directrice de la revue et ex-membre du Conseil des Arts du Canada, réprimandait constamment le Ministère pour son peu d'appui au niveau financier - les subventions n'étaient jamais suffisantes et n'atteignaient pas celles du Conseil des Arts. Consciente du sens politique de la situation, elle associait *Vie des Arts* à l'effort du gouvernement Lesage de bâtir pour le Québec une culture autonome et moderne: «...nous croyons ... que nous pouvons aider à la longue à créer un véritable milieu artistique au Québec; nous croyons aussi, que nous pouvons amener nos artistes à réaliser leur part de responsabilités⁴⁷.» Des subventions furent accordées pour la plupart des années, mais jamais sans un torrent de correspondance entre les deux parties.

Il est important de signaler que les relations que *Vie des Arts* entretenait avec le Conseil des Arts du Canada et le ministère des Affaires culturelles étaient représentatives, dans les deux cas, de politiques récemment adoptées en matière de culture. D'un côté, la création du Conseil des Arts donnait raison à l'idée de la culture canadienne comme antidote à la culture de masse américaine; et de l'autre, l'étatisation de la culture québécoise tentait d'inscrire les arts et la culture dans le champ d'un discours politique public et démocratique. Au Québec, la Révolution tranquille avait préparé la voie pour la reconnaissance des arts comme élément essentiel à la création d'une identité nationale. Georges-Émile Lapalme, ministre des Affaires culturelles de 1961 à 1964, percevait le modernisme dans les arts comme complément idéal à la modernisation de la société québécoise et comme symbole de la lutte pour l'émancipation du Québec⁴⁸. *Vie des Arts*, durant cette période de grands tournants culturels au Canada et au Québec, se trouvait en position avantageuse pour bénéficier des nouvelles politiques d'État, tant au niveau fédéral que provincial. Démontrant une aptitude pour l'assimilation des points communs ainsi que des contradictions inhérentes aux objectifs de chacun des deux gouvernements, la revue créa un précédent au niveau des négociations entre le secteur des arts et celui des deux gouvernements.

La publicité représentait pour *Vie des Arts* l'autre source de revenus qui pouvait assurer sa survie. Pendant sa première décennie, le nombre, sinon la diversité, de ses annonceurs grandit, alors que la revue trouvait sa voix et stabilisait son lecteurat. Depuis ses débuts, avec son contenu de reportages régionaux et de reproductions en noir et blanc - lorsqu'elle ne faisait que remplir le vide laissé par *Arts et Pensée* - jusqu'à son émergence comme revue culturelle à l'échelle du Canada tout entier, montrant dans ses pages les plus récentes techniques d'impression en couleur, *Vie des Arts* vit évoluer son contenu publicitaire au même rythme que son contenu rédactionnel. Au milieu des années soixante, la revue en vint à contenir l'éventail typique d'annonces de galeries d'art et de messages corporatifs que l'on retrouve dans la plupart des revues d'arts visuels. Une analyse du contenu

publicitaire de trois numéros de la première décennie (numéro 1, hiver 1956; numéro 14, printemps 1958; et numéro 39, été 1965), montre une croissance rapide du nombre d'annonceurs dans les premières années et un nivelingement vers la fin de la décennie: le contenu publicitaire, en regard du contenu rédactionnel, affiche seulement 1% dans le premier numéro, augmente jusqu'à 22.5% dans le numéro 14, mais montre une faible croissance jusqu'à 25% dans le numéro 39. Il est évident que l'amélioration de la présentation visuelle de la revue, la qualité de la reproduction couleur et un plus grand nombre de photos jouaient un rôle lorsqu'il s'agissait d'attirer des annonceurs. L'analyse souligne aussi l'importance de certains secteurs publicitaires. Par exemple, dans le premier numéro, le contenu publicitaire est réparti également entre le secteur des arts (galeries et institutions culturelles) et le secteur commercial (boutiques, librairies, etc.), chacun occupant 44% de l'espace publicitaire de la revue. Dans le numéro 14, le contenu publicitaire est réparti comme suit: 33% pour le secteur des arts, 29% pour le secteur commercial, et un autre 29% pour le secteur corporatif. Dans le numéro 39, cependant, les annonces du secteur des arts augmentent jusqu'à 59%.

Dans le premier numéro de *Vie des Arts*, le contenu publicitaire reflète l'héritage religieux d'*Arts et Pensée* par ses annonces pour Willis Montreal, distributeur d'instruments de musique annonçant sa sélection d'orgues et de cloches, et pour Les Ateliers Saint-Grégoire de l'Apostolat liturgique, distributeur de livres et d'art religieux. Les premiers numéros de la revue comptent aussi un certain nombre d'annonces d'organismes du gouvernement du Québec: du Secrétariat de la province, pour inviter le public à consulter le fonds d'archives provincial; de la Commission des monuments et sites historiques du Québec, pour affirmer son soutien à la préservation du patrimoine, ou encore simplement pour décrire des services éducatifs tels le Conservatoire de musique ou l'Institut des arts appliqués.

Dans les années soixante, alors que la publicité visant la masse des consommateurs devenait omniprésente dans tous les médias, *Vie des Arts* imagina des stratégies plus intéressantes pour attirer des annonceurs, dont celle (maintenant surutilisée), du numéro spécial. Les annonceurs étaient souvent réunis autour d'un thème général, tel un événement saisonnier ou une grande exposition, comme par exemple les numéros 32 (automne 1963) et 38 (printemps 1965) sur la France et sur l'Italie. Le premier contient des reportages sur des expositions d'art français à Montréal, sur l'école de Paris, sur Delacroix et sur le design industriel français, ainsi que des annonces pleine page de la Compagnie Transatlantique (navigation), et du Comité national des Vins de France; le numéro sur l'Italie comprend des articles de fond sur l'art italien, de la mosaïque romaine à l'art et à l'architecture contemporains, et son contenu publicitaire soutient cette démarche avec des pages de la compagnie alimentaire Gattuso, des vins Italvine et de la compagnie aérienne Alitalia («Le seul bon chemin qui mène à Rome»).

Les revues sur les arts visuels ont toujours compté sur les galeries d'art pour

combler une partie de leur contenu publicitaire, et *Vie des Arts* n'y faisait pas exception. La relation fonctionne évidemment au profit des deux parties, car les galeries bénéficient d'un marché captif et étroitement ciblé. Durant les années cinquante et soixante, *Vie des Arts* jouissait d'une relation particulièrement enrichissante avec les galeries montréalaises, car, à part les grands quotidiens, la revue était probablement le lieu le plus prometteur au niveau d'un tirage ciblé. De plus, l'arrivée de *Vie des Arts* coïncidait avec un «boom» de galeries au centre-ville de Montréal, sans doute justifié par l'importance de la peinture comme médium d'expression à cette période du modernisme. D'un petit nombre de galeries à la fin des années quarante, le milieu des galeries d'art à Montréal s'accrut dans les années cinquante et en 1956, année de la parution de *Vie des Arts*, la ville comptait autant de galeries qu'il était nécessaire pour accommoder la grande diversité de styles qui marquait la peinture de cette époque⁴⁹. La Galerie Agnès Lefort fut la première à annoncer dans le premier numéro de la revue, et elle fut suivie par bien d'autres qui formeraient un groupe fidèle d'annonceurs tout au long de la première décennie de la revue, entre autres les galeries Denyse Delrue, Waddington, Dominion et Monique de Groot. Une aussi heureuse symbiose apporte cependant le soupçon de patronage: *Vie des Arts* accordait-elle à son groupe d'annonceurs les plus dévoués plus d'espace rédactionnel dans ses chroniques d'expositions? Il semblerait que les annonceurs réguliers jouissaient d'une attention particulière, mais il serait impossible de déterminer si cela était effectivement dû à une forme de traitement préférentiel ou simplement à l'apport important de ces galeries au milieu des arts visuels.

La présentation visuelle et la qualité de la production graphique d'une revue sont souvent inextricablement liées à sa santé financière. Durant les années cinquante et soixante, le marché de l'édition de revues vit d'énormes améliorations au niveau de l'impression et de la reproduction, mais ces nouveaux avantages avaient un prix. *Vie des Arts* ne pouvait se payer de telles améliorations que si elle obtenait des subventions, faisait fructifier ses revenus publicitaires et continuait de maintenir un tirage adéquat. Avec le temps, la position de la revue auprès de ses lecteurs et de ses annonceurs devenait de plus en plus stable, et elle put se payer le luxe de rehausser son apparence - préoccupation prioritaire, il va sans dire⁵⁰. La reproduction couleur apparut pour la première fois dans *Vie des Arts* dans le troisième numéro de la deuxième année (numéro 7, été 1957), grâce à la générosité de la compagnie de promotion théâtrale Festivals de Montréal. L'insertion de leur programmation d'automne permit à *Vie des Arts* d'inclure huit pages de pleine couleur⁵¹. La disponibilité de l'impression couleur, une meilleure qualité de reproduction, et l'accès à des outils de graphisme de plus en plus performants (caractères typographiques, agrandisseurs de photos, couleur intermitente, etc.) ainsi que des méthodes d'impression de plus en plus efficaces, aidèrent à améliorer l'apparence de *Vie des Arts* au cours de ses dix premières années. Afin

de bien se présenter aux yeux de ses lecteurs, *Vie des Arts* épousa les tendances actuelles du design imprimé: à partir d'une allure de périodique académique à grille graphique sobre et régulière, d'impression noir et blanc, en 1956, la revue avait évolué, en 1966, vers un plus grand format rempli de couleur et d'images, le tout d'un graphisme séduisant et tout à fait actuel. Limitée quand même aux contraintes d'un budget assez restreint, *Vie des Arts* présentait une allure moderne, avec un équilibre bien articulé entre l'intérêt visuel et un contenu percutant, soutenant à la fois sa crédibilité en tant que publication culturelle et offrant à ses lecteurs un moment de lecture agréable.

En 1955, dans le manifeste des Plasticiens, le critique d'art Rodolphe de Repentigny, (qui serait plus tard chroniqueur dans *Vie des Arts*) reconnaissait l'effet libérateur et l'influence que pouvait avoir l'art dans la société: «Une œuvre peut être le moment de vérité d'un peuple, d'une civilisation⁵².» Cette même qualité d'humanisme avait donné forme à *Vie des Arts*. L'analyse de son contenu rédactionnel de 1956 à 1966 démontre l'importance croissante que *Vie des Arts* donnerait à l'art contemporain. Comme seule revue s'étant donné le mandat spécifique d'apporter un témoignage visuel de l'art vivant à ses lecteurs (et la seule ayant à sa disposition les moyens de reproduction nécessaires), *Vie des Arts* se trouvait dans la position enviable d'influencer l'opinion publique en matière d'arts visuels.

Afin d'établir la qualité de la contribution de *Vie des Arts* au discours sur la culture canadienne et québécoise, il est nécessaire de tenir compte, comme enjeu important, du lieu d'origine du contenu rédactionnel. Durant la première décennie de la revue, le lieu d'origine géographique peut aussi être interprété, dans le contexte culturel et politique canadien, comme lieu d'origine culturel: les zones géographiques s'interprètent naturellement comme une délimitation entre le Québec et le reste du pays. De même, étant donné les paramètres linguistiques et historiques du Québec, l'Europe continentale (surtout la France) doit faire partie de l'interprétation, et l'Amérique (États-Unis) doit être admise comme élément essentiel, à cause de l'importance de son influence sur les tendances artistiques de l'époque et aussi à cause de sa proximité physique. Les articles sur l'art des peuples indigènes et sur l'art des cultures non occidentales doivent aussi être regardés afin de déterminer la portée de la politique rédactionnelle de la revue.

Une analyse de la répartition géographique/culturelle du contenu de *Vie des Arts* lors de sa première décennie montre un pourcentage assez élevé (37%) d'articles de fond sur l'art québécois (historique ainsi que contemporain). Le pourcentage d'articles sur l'art européen est aussi assez élevé (27.5%), tandis que le pourcentage d'articles sur l'art canadien (non québécois), 12% seulement, est, comparativement, beaucoup moins considérable. Les articles sur l'art des peuples indigènes et sur l'art non occidental forment la plus grande partie du reste. Le fait que l'art canadien soit représenté par moins de la moitié du pourcentage alloué à

L'art européen démontre l'importance des liens culturels et linguistiques avec la France - et reflète peut-être aussi une perception persistante de la culture européenne comme modèle supérieur. Ce qui n'explique pas entièrement, toutefois, la faible représentation de l'art canadien dans *Vie des Arts*. Par l'analyse du contenu de la revue *Canadian Art*, à la même époque, on remarque des résultats comparables lorsqu'il s'agit de l'art québécois: seulement 8% des articles de fond apparaissant dans *Canadian Art* entre 1956 et 1966 traitent de l'art québécois. Cependant, afin d'éviter de faire un parallèle trop simpliste, il faut souligner que *Canadian Art* devait couvrir un beaucoup plus grand territoire, s'étant donné le mandat d'inclure le Canada entier dans son optique. Néanmoins, si l'on accepte l'importance des événements du milieu artistique montréalais dans la période de l'après-guerre, depuis le *Refus global* jusqu'au manifeste des Plasticiens, ainsi que de ceux de l'ouest canadien et de Toronto à la même époque (on pense à Emma Lake et à Painters Eleven), le manque de couverture réciproque de ces événements par les deux revues reflète la différence de leurs objectifs⁵³.

La statistique la plus remarquable de cette analyse, par contre, est celle de la catégorie de l'art américain, qui ne compte que 1% du total pour la décennie. Seulement deux articles, à la fin de la période (excluant les chroniques), décrivent les tendances importantes de l'art américain: «Le monde du Pop», par Melvin Charney (numéro 36), et «Vers une nouvelle esthétique industrielle», par Fernande Saint-Martin (numéro 39). Aucune discussion sur les artistes américains ou sur l'expressionnisme abstrait ou l'école de New York n'est présentée. Ce manque d'attention envers l'art américain dans les pages de *Vie des Arts* peut s'interpréter comme l'évidence d'une préférence pour un modernisme vu à travers une optique européenne. À l'époque où l'Amérique redéfinissait l'art moderne à son image⁵⁴, alors que la suprématie de l'art européen était contestée par les déclarations en faveur de l'art américain par des critiques influents comme Clement Greenberg⁵⁵, le milieu artistique au Québec semblait vouloir conserver ses racines et avaliser son propre modernisme par la réinterprétation du modèle européen. Par exemple, en 1956, dans un article sur Jean-Paul Riopelle, Rodolphe de Repentigny critique l'œuvre de Jackson Pollock (et en sous-entendu l'entièvre production de l'art américain contemporain) pour ses traces de figuration biomorphique qui, pour de Repentigny, reflétaient un attachement facile aux atavismes de la figuration aux dépens de l'abstraction pure⁵⁶. En général, il reprochait à l'art abstrait américain son indifférence aux principes géométriques élaborés par Mondrian. Ce refus de l'esthétique de l'expressionnisme abstrait américain influencerait aussi son opinion sur l'œuvre des Painters Eleven de Toronto, qu'il décrirait comme étant influencée par une sensibilité new-yorkaise⁵⁷. Rodolphe de Repentigny, membre de l'avant-garde intellectuelle montréalaise, critique au quotidien *La Presse* et chroniqueur pour *Vie des Arts* (1956 à 1959), jouissait d'une importante cote d'influence auprès du milieu artistique⁵⁸. Si sa préférence pour

l'abstraction géométrique représente un effort concerté envers la validation de la tradition de l'influence européenne, aux dépens des tendances américaines, l'exclusion de l'art américain par *Vie des Arts* peut s'entrevoir comme un endossement de ces valeurs. On remarque que la politique d'acquisition du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal reflétait aussi ces mêmes valeurs lors de ses premières années: pendant les années soixante, alors que Guy Robert était directeur du Musée, 59% des œuvres acquises par le MAC provenaient de l'extérieur du Québec et du Canada et, de ce pourcentage, seulement 5% des œuvres provenaient des États-Unis. Cependant, 34% provenaient de la France, 6% de la Belgique et le reste d'autres pays européens⁵⁹. Guy Robert, dix ans plus tard, décrirait cette période ainsi: «.... la scène artistique québécoise se trouve désormais coincée entre la traditionnelle vénération de l'art européen, surtout français, et l'arrogante pression d'un art américain qui s'enivre de son récent triomphe⁶⁰.»

Étant donné que plus que la moitié (52.5%) des articles dans *Vie des Arts*, de 1956 à 1966, traitaient de l'art contemporain, et reconnaissant l'intensité du débat portant sur l'art vivant au Québec à cette époque, il est nécessaire d'analyser à fond la perspective de *Vie des Arts* sur l'art contemporain afin de déterminer l'impact de la revue sur le discours. L'analyse démontre que durant la première décennie de *Vie des Arts*, 39% de ses articles de fond portent sur l'art non figuratif. Environ les deux tiers de ce pourcentage sont constitués d'articles sur l'art influencé par l'expressionnisme et l'automatisme, et le reste est fait d'articles sur l'abstraction géométrique.

Pendant les années de la Révolution tranquille, les efforts de la société québécoise pour se distancier de son passé (en commençant, au niveau culturel, par le *Refus global* en 1948), amenèrent une série d'oppositions et de ruptures qui polariseraient la communauté des arts visuels, surtout à Montréal⁶¹. Il est important de noter que le transfert de l'autorité intellecuelle de l'abstraction lyrique à l'abstraction géométrique ne put se faire sans débat - de nombreux articles et chroniques dans les journaux de l'époque en témoignent passionnément⁶². *Vie des Arts*, avec son mandat de publication généraliste, évita les aspects les plus incendiaires de ces débats, mais fut quand même impliquée dans les plus grandes lignes du discours. On remarque que Claude Picher, qui dénoncerait passionnément l'art abstrait (tant d'origine expressionniste que géométrique) tout au cours des années cinquante, jouissait d'une place d'honneur à la direction de *Vie des Arts*, lors de sa première parution (à partir de l'été 1957, le nom de Picher n'apparaîtrait plus dans la revue), et qu'aucune œuvre abstraite n'apparaissait dans les pages de ce premier numéro. Cependant, deux années plus tard, en 1958, *Vie des Arts* comptait régulièrement des articles de fond sur l'expressionnisme abstrait et sur l'automatisme et, en 1960, la revue publiait un numéro souvenir sur Borduas à la suite de sa mort la même année.

Fernande Saint-Martin fut la première à présenter aux lecteurs de *Vie des*

Arts, dans les années soixante, une interprétation théorique de l'abstraction géométrique⁶³. Ses articles à ce sujet incluent «Vers une nouvelle esthétique industrielle: l'illusion optique de l'Op art» (été 1965) et «Le dynamisme des Plasticiens de Montréal» (automne 1966). Ses liens rapprochés avec les seconds Plasticiens et sa vive compréhension de leur approche innovatrice aida à renforcer l'emprise de l'abstraction *hard edge* sur le milieu artistique de Montréal, et *Vie des Arts* servit à véhiculer ses idées. Cependant, en général, et malgré les écrits de Rodolphe de Repentigny, la critique québécoise hésitait à appuyer le mouvement - ce qui explique peut-être sa venue tardive dans les pages de *Vie des Arts*.

L'évolution de *Vie des Arts* de l'expression lyrique, à la fin des années cinquante, vers l'abstraction géométrique, au milieu des années soixante, reflétait une pareille démarche dans le milieu artistique montréalais. Le Musée d'art contemporain, par exemple, sous la direction de Guy Robert, de 1964 à 1966, n'ajouta aucune œuvre d'abstraction géométrique à sa collection, préférant se concentrer sur l'art d'influence expressionniste et automatiste. Le Musée se tourna vers l'abstraction géométrique quelques années plus tard, sous la direction de Gilles Hénault⁶⁴. Il faut reconnaître, cependant, l'ouverture de *Vie des Arts* envers les tendances du formalisme dans la peinture. Par ses chroniques sur les expositions et les articles de Fernande Saint-Martin et Rodolphe de Repentigny publiés dans ses pages, *Vie des Arts* s'avéra un véhicule important pour la diffusion des idées les plus innovatrices de la peinture montréalaise - et ce dans un contexte tout à fait différent de celui des débats prenant place dans les journaux et les revues littéraires du temps.

Une analyse de l'art représenté dans les pages de *Vie des Arts* par catégories de disciplines artistiques peut sembler de peu d'importance dans le contexte général d'un discours sur la culture. Cependant, une telle analyse démontre que certaines disciplines (outre les catégories usuelles de la peinture et de la sculpture), qui reflétaient les aspirations d'une société en transition entre son passé et son accession à la modernité, reçurent une présence spéciale à l'intérieur de la revue. Bien entendu, la peinture était toujours dominante à cette époque: plus de 35% des articles, dans la première décennie de *Vie des Arts*, portaient sur la peinture contemporaine ou historique. La sculpture (10%) et l'architecture (15.4%) représentaient un quart du contenu et environ 5% du contenu était alloué à des catégories diverses telles l'art religieux et l'art folklorique, le théâtre, la danse, la musique et le cinéma. Mais les arts appliqués (gravure, céramique et tissage) ainsi que le design industriel, regroupés ensemble, représentaient 19% du contenu - un pourcentage plus important que celui alloué à la sculpture ou à l'architecture.

La place allouée à la sculpture dans les pages de *Vie des Arts*, étant donné l'importance accordée aux débats sur la peinture à l'époque, peut être conçue comme le reflet d'une dichotomie entre la tradition et la modernité qui caractérisait la société québécoise durant les années cinquante et soixante. Dans *Vie des Arts*, cette tendance se remarque par une vive préoccupation autant envers la recon-

naissance et la préservation du patrimoine architectural, qu'avec le nouveau paysage urbain représenté par une architecture d'influence moderniste et internationale. *Vie des Arts* publia, au cours de sa première décennie, des articles sur les nouvelles structures telles la C.I.L. (Canadian Industries Limited) et la Place Victoria, qui transformaient la silhouette de la ville. Avec la participation croissante de l'État dans les affaires culturelles de la province, dans les années soixante, l'architecture adoptait de plus en plus un profil public et présentait à des créateurs comme Jean-Paul Mousseau et Micheline Beauchemin l'occasion d'articuler leur sens de la modernité par des projets conçus pour intégrer les arts visuels dans un contexte architectural. Murales, vitraux et tapisseries se retrouvaient intégrés dans des projets d'envergure dans les années soixante - une direction que de Repentigny avait déjà fortement appuyée dans les années cinquante⁶⁵.

Cet effet de tension entre la tradition et la modernité, entre le régional et l'international, était reflété dans la renaissance de certains des arts décoratifs - ce qui, d'après Rose-Marie Arbour, était un symbole transitionnel particulièrement québécois⁶⁶. Cette résurgence de métiers d'art, tels le tissage et la poterie, sous forme d'art moderne, établissait un lien entre l'héritage des traditions québécoises et une vision moderne de la société. Des articles sur la tapisserie par Micheline Beauchemin et par Mariette Rousseau-Vermette (numéros 14 et 36, respectivement), et sur la céramique, par Suzanne Guité (numéro 40), entre autres, reflétaient cette tendance. Ce mariage des valeurs modernistes et de l'artisanat traditionnel reçut l'appui d'un gouvernement à l'affût d'une identité culturelle à la fois moderne et respectueuse du patrimoine. Paul Gérin-Lajoie, ministre de la Jeunesse du gouvernement Lesage en 1960, note:

Le gouvernement du Québec a l'intention de prouver qu'il ne reste pas indifférent à la renaissance de l'art décoratif chez nous, dont la tradition s'était perdue depuis longtemps.... Le public acheteur se tourne vers les œuvres de chez nous, qui ne sont pas inférieures à une multitude d'œuvres étrangères⁶⁷.

La gravure est une autre discipline qui fut bien illustrée dans les pages de *Vie des Arts* et qui, elle aussi, encourageait un lien particulièrement québécois avec une tradition artisanale, notamment celle de la France. La revue publiait dans son numéro de Noël 1959 un reportage clé qui allait faire connaître à ses lecteurs la tradition française de l'atelier de gravure. Dans, «Aux ateliers Desjoberts», par Roland Giguère, il donne une description détaillée des techniques de la gravure accompagnée de reproductions d'œuvres d'Albert Dumouchel, Léon Bellefleur, Paul Vanier Beaulieu et Bernard Vanier, tous des artistes québécois ayant fait un stage à l'atelier français. La gravure moderne québécoise occuperait une place importante dans le milieu des arts visuels durant les années soixante - autre manifestation du lien vital entre le Québec et l'Europe, malgré la popularité croissante de la gravure chez nos voisins américains⁶⁸.

L'objectif que s'était donné *Vie des Arts* de créer un public québécois pour les

arts visuels se définit encore plus clairement lorsqu'on examine le style de présentation de la revue. Au cours de sa première décennie, de 1956 à 1966, la revue cherche à attirer un lectorat général. Les types d'articles sont nombreux et portent sur la critique, la théorie de l'art, les entrevues, les articles sur l'histoire de la peinture, les collections et les marchés de l'art. Le contenu se divise assez naturellement entre les articles de fond à thème (60%) et les monographies d'artistes (40%). Des numéros spéciaux comme ceux de Noël, misant généralement sur l'art et l'artisanat religieux, ou des numéros thèmes sur des événements spécifiques, étaient fréquemment publiés afin de piquer l'intérêt des lecteurs. Tout au long de sa première décennie, *Vie des Arts* se servit de cette tactique pour attirer le public, consacrant des numéros complets à des événements d'ordre d'intérêt général comme l'Exposition universelle de Buxelles (numéro 11, été 1958). Le numéro de printemps 1958 (numéro 10), consacré à la tapisserie européenne, avait comme point de référence les tapisseries canadiennes de la résidence de l'ambassadeur du Canada à Paris, et le numéro du printemps 1964 (numéro 34), sur l'art de l'Espagne, soulignait une exposition de cinq peintres canadiens au Musée Galléria. Le pourcentage relativement élevé d'articles sur l'art traditionnel ou historique (38%), qui s'étend à toutes les disciplines, de la peinture à l'architecture, jusqu'aux métiers d'art, reflète encore non seulement l'approche généraliste de la revue, mais aussi son intérêt à conserver des liens solides avec le passé tout en raliant le public à l'art contemporain. Des entrevues avec des artistes et des visites d'ateliers (4.3%) ajoutaient une note d'intérêt ainsi qu'un certain degré d'accessibilité au contenu, aidant à contebalancer le style descriptif ou critique du reste des articles.

La critique (18.7% des articles) et les questions d'art contemporain (10%) forment tous deux presque 30% du contenu de la revue. Des articles sur l'architecture contemporaine («Enquête sur l'architecture contemporaine», numéro 2) et sur les tendances locales en peinture («L'École de Montréal existe», numéro 23), jusqu'aux présentations de musées par leurs directeurs («La Galerie nationale, un musée vivant!» par Jean-René Ostiguy, numéro 19, et «Premier bilan du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal», par Guy Robert, numéro 41), *Vie des Arts* traita d'un éventail de sujets portant sur la critique et les questions de l'art contemporain, se taillant une place comme alternative réfléchie au style plus conflictuel des chroniqueurs qui écrivaient dans la presse quotidienne. On peut citer, par exemple, la présentation de la Société des arts plastiques par Claude Picher et Jean Paul Lemieux dans le premier numéro, ou le reportage de Rodolphe de Repentigny sur le Groupe des Onze (numéro 12).

Environ 7% du contenu porte sur les collections d'art au Canada, au Québec et à l'étranger. Les reportages sur les collections de Georges P. Vanier («Autour d'une collection», numéro 13), et du Dr Paul Larivière («Un collectionneur présente sa collection», numéro 20, et «Dernières acquisitions du Docteur

Larivière», numéro 25), ainsi que sur les collections étrangères («Réflexions sur la Collection Robinson-Niarkos», numéro 8; et «La Chase Manhattan Bank, un écrin monumental pour œuvres d'art», numéro 42) firent connaître aux lecteurs de *Vie des Arts* les collectionneurs du pays et leur donnèrent un aperçu des grandes collections à l'échelle mondiale. Cependant, l'état du marché des collections d'art contemporain à Montréal, pendant les années cinquante et soixante, n'était, d'après Guy Robert, ni trop spectaculaire ni trop spéculatif⁶⁹. Robert décrit le marché comme imprévisible et loin d'être pleinement développé, malgré le grand nombre d'expositions et d'ouvertures de galeries, et note que les jeunes acheteurs étaient ceux qui démontraient le plus vif intérêt. L'importance du rôle de *Vie des Arts* dans le développement d'un marché montréalais de l'art ne peut être calculée, mais sa présence comme lieu d'exposition complémentaire et comme véhicule publicitaire pour les galeries d'art contribua sans doute à stimuler l'activité commerciale dans le milieu de l'art contemporain.

Tout en discutant du style de présentation de la revue, il est nécessaire d'aborder la question de la langue. Pendant les cinq premières années de *Vie des Arts*, la revue ne pratiquait aucune restriction sur le choix de la langue rédactionnelle: des articles en anglais par des anglophones furent publiés sporadiquement, de 1956 à 1961 (un total de 2.5%). On note des articles tels «Painting in Quebec, The Older Traditions», par Robert Ayre (numéro 5); «The Twentieth Century Discovers the Object», par Evan H. Turner, (numéro 17); et «Norman McLaren - Artist with Film», par Anne McDermot (numéro 16). Après 1961, cependant, les articles en langue anglaise cessent de paraître et, à partir de l'hiver 1962, une section allait être dorénavant réservée à la fin de chaque numéro pour des traductions en forme de résumé (en anglais). Cette politique est demeurée en vigueur jusqu'en juin 1986, lorsque *Vie des Arts* adopta une formule exclusivement francophone.

Tout au long de sa première décennie, *Vie des Arts* publia des chroniques et des comptes rendus comme complément à ses articles de fond. La revue élargissait ainsi son champ d'intérêt, à certaines périodes et plus sporadiquement, vers la littérature québécoise, le théâtre, la musique et le cinéma. Cependant, l'attention portée à ces domaines n'égalerait jamais ni en nombre ni en profondeur, l'importance accordée dans les pages de la revue aux comptes rendus d'expositions et, à la fin des années cinquante, les arts visuels constituaient l'élément principal du profil de la revue. Les livres sur l'art étaient notés régulièrement, et le milieu littéraire québécois fut commenté par Wilfrid Lemoine du numéro 7 (été 1957) au numéro 15 (été 1959). Les comptes rendus de pièces de théâtre se retrouvent du premier numéro, à l'automne 1956, jusqu'au numéro 19, à l'été 1960, et une chronique sur le cinéma, rédigée par le cinéaste Jacques Godbout, apparut brièvement, du numéro 32 (automne 1963) au numéro 39 (été 1965). Les commentaires sur les concerts (musique «sérieuse» seulement), furent inclus de temps à autre au cours de la décennie.

Plusieurs comptes rendus d'expositions apparaissaient régulièrement dans

chaque numéro de *Vie des Arts* et, au cours des dix premières années, ils étaient souvent rédigés par des membres de la direction de la revue: Claude Beaulieu, Jacques Folch-Ribas, Eddy MacFarlane, Gérard Morisset, Andrée Paradis et Claude Picher, à un moment ou l'autre, auraient tous contribué à la tâche. De ceux-ci, Jacques Folch-Ribas s'avéra le plus prolifique: il écrivit sur les expositions à partir du numéro 11 (été 1958) et continua de manière régulière jusqu'à son départ en 1965; de 1962 jusqu'à 1965, il apparaissait dans la revue sous le titre de secrétaire des chroniques (en 1962) et chef des chroniques. Andrée Paradis écrivit des comptes rendus de livres sur l'art assez régulièrement, à partir du numéro 4 (automne 1956). La revue attira aussi des critiques influents tels de Repentigny, Guy Robert et Yves Robillard. De Repentigny écrivit des comptes rendus d'expositions d'art canadien et québécois à partir du deuxième numéro de la revue (printemps 1956), jusqu'à l'automne 1959, année de sa mort⁷⁰; Guy Robert signa environ 35 comptes rendus, du numéro 20 (automne 1960) jusqu'au numéro 35 (été 1964); et Yves Robillard, qui en 1966 se joindrait à la direction de *Vie des Arts* et deviendrait plus tard critique d'art à *La Presse* et membre, à la fin des années soixante, du groupe d'avant-garde Fusion des Arts, collabora à *Vie des Arts* du numéro 37 (hiver 1964) au numéro 41 (hiver 1966)⁷¹.

La position critique de *Vie des Arts*, telle qu'énoncée dans ses chroniques et comptes rendus, et la relation de ses collaborateurs avec le milieu des arts visuels de Montréal, demande sans doute une analyse en profondeur qui dépasse les paramètres de cette étude. Alors que *Vie des Arts* s'intéressait aux mêmes expositions que les journaux quotidiens, il serait injuste de comparer la revue à ceux-ci étant donné leur fréquence de parution comparativement à celle de *Vie des Arts*. Nous pouvons conclure, par contre, par une analyse des sujets des comptes rendus d'expositions (incluant non seulement les œuvres et les artistes mais aussi les galeries), que *Vie des Arts* s'intéressait presque exclusivement à l'art contemporain comme sujet de ses comptes rendus, et plus particulièrement aux œuvres d'artistes exposant à la Galerie Agnès Lefort, à la Galerie Libre et à la Galerie Monique de Groot, ainsi qu'à la Galerie XII du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal⁷². Les œuvres canadiennes provenant de l'extérieur du Québec étaient aussi bien documentées, avec des comptes rendus d'expositions de galeries à Toronto, par exemple les galeries Moss et Roberts, et de musées dans nombre d'autres villes canadiennes comme la Public Library Art Gallery de Régina et la Public Library and Art Museum de London, en Ontario. En tout, de 1956 à 1966, *Vie des Arts* documenta les expositions d'un total de 16 galeries différentes à Toronto et 25 dans le reste du pays - des chiffres, qui, lorsqu'on les compare aux 34 galeries montréalaises documentées durant la même période, démontrent que la revue se préoccupait de présenter l'art canadien à ses lecteurs. Les comptes rendus d'expositions à l'étranger étaient peu nombreux en comparaison, sans doute à cause des distances: deux galeries européennes seulement, en dix ans, furent documentées,

toutes deux en France. Les galeries américaines, malgré la proximité de New York et des villes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, étaient aussi presque absentes de la revue: on y retrouve seulement trois comptes rendus d'expositions américaines, fait peu surprenant, étant donné la pauvreté du nombre d'articles de fond sur l'art américain dans *Vie des Arts*.

À l'heure où le fossé se creuse plus profond entre un certain art, qui est légitime, et un certain public qui ne demande qu'à comprendre mais qui n'en a pas toujours le pouvoir, le moment n'est pas à la querelle plus ou moins stérile, mais à l'action éducative.

- La direction, *Vie des Arts*, premier numéro, janvier-février 1956

L'art, comme à toute époque de transition, est un catalyseur de premier plan. S'il n'est pas toujours facile de défricher son langage, il n'est pas moins vrai que les formules d'évolution plastique correspondent au stade d'évolution des sociétés qu'elles tentent de refléter...

-Andrée Paradis, *Vie des Arts*, numéro du dixième anniversaire, printemps 1966

La revue *Vie des Arts* affiche un parti pris de clarté. Elle fait œuvre de vulgarisation en refusant la contamination par le vocabulaire «savant» ou celui que dictent les modes.

-Bernard Lévy, *Vie des Arts*, numéro du quarantième anniversaire, printemps 1996

Les trois citations ci-haut, chacune extraite d'un message de la direction de *Vie des Arts* à ses lecteurs à d'importantes époques de son histoire, illustrent la cohérence du mandat de la revue au cours de ses quatre décennies. De 1956 à aujourd'hui, *Vie des Arts* a su rester fidèle à sa vision d'origine, se positionnant dans un champ pédagogique et antiélitiste. Au cours de ses quarante années d'existence, la revue a toujours cherché à éclairer le public sur la «difficulté» de l'art contemporain, jouant le rôle de médiateur afin de gagner le public à sa cause. De «l'heure où le fossé se creuse», en 1956, au besoin de «défricher son langage», en 1966, jusqu'au refus de la «contamination par le vocabulaire «savant» en 1996, *Vie des Arts* défend l'art contemporain comme contribution valable et nécessaire à la collectivité. *Vie des Arts* a su conserver, au cours des années, l'idéologie humaniste qui favorisa sa création et de ce fait, encouragea la réception des arts visuels par le grand public.

Cette vision a cependant servi différents objectifs dans son interprétation du rôle de l'art dans la société. De 1956 à 1966, à l'époque de la Révolution tranquille et de la libéralisation de l'État, la reconnaissance par le gouvernement

Lesage du modernisme dans l'art comme représentatif de sa propre marche vers un Québec moderne et progressif, résulta dans la création du ministère des Affaires culturelles, en 1961, et du Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, en 1965. Dans ce contexte, la fonction pédagogique de *Vie des Arts* faisait écho au désir de la société d'accéder à la modernité avec la complicité d'un gouvernement pour qui l'intervention de l'État en matière de culture représentait une stratégie essentielle. Le nationalisme québécois, instrument de l'accession du Québec à la modernité, influençait également le rôle *Vie des Arts*, surtout durant ses toutes premières années. La revue soulignait à cette époque autant l'importance de la conservation du patrimoine que le rôle de l'art comme instrument essentiel à la création d'une identité québécoise moderne.

En 1966, la «difficulté» de l'art moderne restait encore une hypothèse autour de laquelle *Vie des Arts* pouvait articuler son mandat. Le contexte de sa mission pédagogique était cependant différent de celui des années précédentes. Des changements dans le climat politique et social annonçaient, pour le milieu des arts, une ouverture sur l'art au-delà des frontières québécoises. À l'automne 1966, *Vie des Arts* consacra un numéro complet à la peinture canadienne contemporaine, incluant des articles de fond non seulement sur la peinture au Québec, mais aussi sur les autres régions, des provinces atlantiques à la Colombie Britannique, en passant par Toronto et les provinces de l'ouest⁷³.

L'Expo 67 de Montréal, qui deviendrait le symbole d'un humanisme d'aspect international mais tout à fait canadien, fut aussi un signe de l'apogée de la modernité au Québec. Cette manifestation de l'esprit d'internationalisme et d'ouverture sur le monde, (et il va sans dire la qualité d'accessibilité publique qui caractérise les événements de cette envergure) fut vivement appuyée par *Vie des Arts*, chez qui l'accès du public à l'art avait toujours été une préoccupation majeure. La perspective d'Andrée Paradis prévoit le rôle de l'art comme véhicule, sinon comme catalyseur, pour le progrès et l'évolution sociale - rôle dans lequel l'art québécois pourrait franchir les bornes du régionalisme pour rejoindre un champ d'ouverture à l'échelle internationale.

Trente ans plus tard, Bernard Lévy, dans le numéro du quarantième anniversaire de *Vie des Arts*, souligne de nouveau le mandat pédagogique de la revue. À la lumière de l'ère postmoderne et de la fragmentation des arts visuels en une multitude de disciplines à bases théoriques (et de la multiplication de revues spécialisées), l'antiélitisme exprimé par Lévy revendique la clarté des idées et le langage simple comme instruments prioritaires afin d'effectuer l'inscription de l'art contemporain sur la portée croissante de la culture de masse. Il semblerait que le rôle de *Vie des Arts*, aujourd'hui, ne serait plus joué sur une toile politique ou sociale, mais plutôt sur le champ idéologique de l'appropriation culturelle.

En 1966, à la fin de la première décennie de *Vie des Arts*, le projet d'accession à la modernité du Québec et le modernisme dans l'art seraient perçus comme

s'étant acheminés vers leur fin. La lueur de nouvelles tendances avançait déjà sur l'horizon. L'axe modernité/modernisme est d'autant plus remarquable dans le contexte québécois à cause de son aspect compressé: alors même que la transformation sociale du Québec atteignait son point culminant, le modernisme dans l'art commençait à perdre souffle. Le point d'intersection de ces deux manifestations - l'accession du Québec à la modernité et les dernières grandes manifestations du modernisme - s'exprima dans l'adoption, par le gouvernement du Québec, du modernisme comme monnaie courante dans le champ culturel des années soixante.

La synergie entre *Vie des Arts* et le paysage socio-culturel de sa première décennie est évidente, mais que dire de sa contribution aux courants déterminants de l'époque? La réponse se trouve dans l'acceptation de l'idée des médias comme conducteurs ou bien, pour reprendre la phrase-clé de McLuhan, dans les années soixante, dans la transformation d'un média en son message. L'influence de *Vie des Arts* ne peut être démontrée qu'à travers la fenêtre spéculative de l'histoire de l'art et du degré d'importance accordé non seulement à l'art mais à son interprétation. *Vie des Arts* véhiculait l'art comme élément influent dans la société, et signalait la démocratisation de la culture à une époque où les arts étaient perçus comme appartenant à une élite minoritaire. Vue sous cet angle, *Vie des Arts* se démarque par une vision progressiste, malgré les fluctuations de ses préférences esthétiques. *Vie des Arts*, du moins durant sa première décennie, dans une conjoncture culturelle importante, constituait un signe pour les valeurs modernistes de l'époque.

Pour *Vie des Arts*, l'approche du postmodernisme allait marquer l'éloignement du milieu artistique des aspirations pédagogiques qu'il avait épousées durant les années cinquante et soixante. En acceptant à la fois l'idéologie moderne de l'après-guerre et le projet de société québécois, *Vie des Arts* adoptait une vision démocratique et progressiste du rôle de l'art dans la société qui, appliquée au contexte québécois, aiderait à fabriquer une identité culturelle. Dix ans plus tard, au sein d'une culture pleinement éveillée à son identité, le milieu des arts québécois découvrirait, d'un côté, un plus grand champ d'action en s'intégrant à l'arène internationale et, de l'autre, réduirait sa portée en limitant son discours à ceux qui étaient en mesure de participer de façon directe à son évolution. En 1975, la revue *Parachute* concrétisait ces tendances: vouée à «l'art de recherche» et se positionnant comme «révélateur d'idéologies contemporaines», la revue cherchait à se distancier du mandat pédagogique des revues «populaires» telles que *Vie des Arts*, et ciblait un nombre limité de spécialistes de l'art à l'échelle internationale⁷⁴. De même, la revue montréalaise *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* publiait son premier numéro en 1974, se décrivant comme un lieu d'investigation et d'analyse, en appliquant les méthodologies de l'histoire de l'art à l'art canadien⁷⁵. De plus, l'art québécois avait à ce moment-là moins besoin de validation et d'explication que d'être montré. De ce fait, le mandat

pédagogique des années cinquante et soixante fut adopté par le réseau des musées, qui à son tour chercha à créer des liens avec le public⁷⁶. *Vie des Arts* et son objectif de refermer le gouffre entre l'art, les artistes et le public ne disparaîtraient pas, mais leur sphère d'influence se trouverait limitée à une seule facette d'un public fragmenté par les enjeux d'une nouvelle époque.

LOUISE MOREAU

Montréal

Notes

- 1 Esther Trépanier discute sur ce sujet dans Yvan LAMONDE et Esther TRÉPANIER, *L'Avènement de la modernité culturelle au Québec*, Québec, Institut québécois des recherches sur la culture, 1986, p.69-71.
- 2 *Canadian Art* parut en 1943 et continua de publier sous ce titre jusqu'en 1967, lorsque la revue prit le nom de *Artscanada*. *Vie des Arts* fut fondé en 1956 et paraît encore aujourd'hui sous son nom d'origine.
- 3 Le premier message éditorial de *Vie des Arts*, vol. 1, no 1, janvier 1956, p.2-3, élabore clairement le rôle pédagogique de la revue.
- 4 Andrée FORTIN, *Passage de la Modernité: Les intellectuels québécois et leurs revues*, Sainte-Foy, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1993.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 Karen MCKENZIE et Mary F. WILLIAMSON, dans *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada: Two Centuries of art magazines*, Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, 1979, p.30, décrivent les revues d'art commerciales, c'est-à-dire celles imprimées sur papier glacé et remplies d'annonces de galeries d'art.
- 7 La définition de la modernité selon Baudrillard est examinée dans ce contexte dans FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.3.
- 8 Voir la présentation de LAMONDE et TRÉPANIER dans *L'Avènement de la modernité culturelle au Québec*.
- 9 Hilda NEATBY, «National History», *Royal Commission Studies*, 1951, cité dans Dot TUER, «The Art of Nation Building: Constructing a 'Cultural Identity' for Post-War Canada», *Parallélogramme*, vol. 17, no 4, 1992, p.28..
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Voir TUER, «The Art of Nation Building».
- 12 Pierre ANCTIL, «La Révolution Tranquille: vers une réinterprétation», conférence, 31 octobre 1990, *Études sur le Québec à McGill*, bulletin no 8, p.2.
- 13 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.165.
- 14 La Librairie Tranquille, le restaurant Hélène de Champlain et l'Université de Montréal furent quelques-uns des sites qui devinrent des lieux d'exposition temporaires; et les débats sur la peinture contemporaine avaient cours dans les grands quotidiens montréalais (*La Presse* et *Le Devoir*). Pour un compte rendu plus détaillé, voir l'étude de Marie CARANI sur cette époque dans *L'œil de la critique, Rodolphe de Repentigny, écrits sur l'art et théorie esthétique 1952-1959*, Sillery, Éditions du Septentrion, 1990.
- 15 Voir Marie CARANI, éd., *Des lieux de mémoire, Identité et culture modernes au Québec, 1930-1960*, Ottawa, Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1995. Présentation: «D'un conflit de codes, sous la modernité, entre l'artistique et le social», p.3-26.
- 16 *Ibid.*, chapitre par Rose-Marie ARBOUR intitulé «L'apport des femmes peintres au courant post-automatiste: une présentation critique (1955-1965)», p.29.
- 17 D. Paul SCHAFER, *Aspects of Canadian Cultural Policy*, Paris, UNESCO, 1976, p.11-12.
- 18 Francine COUTURE, éd., *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante: La reconnaissance de la modernité*, Montréal, VLB Éditeur, 1993, p.14-15.
- 19 MCKENZIE et WILLIAMSON, *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada*, p.36.

- 20 Pour un compte rendu complet de l'historique de la revue *Arcadia*, voir Carol LOWREY, «Arcadia and Canadian Art», *Vanguard*, vol. 15, n° 2, 1986, p.19-22.
- 21 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.103-104.
- 22 TRÉPANIER, «L'émergence d'un discours de la modernité dans la critique d'art», dans LAMONDE et TRÉPANIER, *L'Avènement de la modernité culturelle au Québec*, p.106.
- 23 On peut mentionner ici la revue *Qui*, revue culturelle publiée à Montréal de 1949 à 1954. Cependant, son approche était strictement biographique (portraits d'artistes, d'écrivains et de musiciens québécois, etc.). *Qui* traitait de tous les arts à part égale, des arts visuels à la littérature et à la musique, ce qui rend son contenu moins important dans le contexte de cette discussion. Voir André BEAULIEU, Jean BOUCHER, Jean HAMELIN, Gérard LAURENCE, Jocelyn SAINT-PIERRE, *La Presse Québécoise: des origines à nos jours*, vol. 8, 1945-1954, Ste-Foy, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1989, p.135-36.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p.179-81.
- 25 *Ibid.* BEAULIEU, *et al.*, citent cette observation sur *Arts et Pensée* de la revue culturelle *Place Publique*, contemporaine de *Arts et Pensée*: «Des malins lui reprochent une forte tendance vers l'art sacré. Vu que c'est le milieu où nous voyons le plus de camelots, de laideurs, nous n'avons pas du tout objection, tout au contraire, à ce que notre ami Rolland Boulanger veuille d'abord instruire nos zouaves, nos bedeaux et nos marguilliers».
- 26 BEAULIEU, *et al.*, *La Presse Québécoise*.
- 27 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.162-64.
- 28 *Fonds Vie des Arts* (UQAM, Service des archives); lettre de demande de subventions de Jacques Simard au Conseil des Arts du Canada; la section citée décrit l'historique de *Vie des Arts*. «Au Conseil des Arts: Demande de subvention pour la revue *Vie des Arts*», avec lettre de couverture, 30 septembre 1957.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 Gérard MORISSET, dans une note à Andrée Paradis, *Fonds Andrée Paradis* (UQAM, Service des archives).
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 Gérard MORISSET, *La peinture traditionnelle au Canada français*, Ottawa, Le Cercle du Livre de France, 1960, p.8.
- 33 SIMARD, dans la demande de subventions de 1957 (*Fonds Vie des Arts*). D'après la correspondance entre Andrée Paradis et Gérard Morisset (*Fonds Andrée Paradis*), à l'automne 1956, Morisset fut impliqué dans un accident assez sérieux lorsque sa voiture plongea dans une rivière près des Éboulements. Il était alors accompagné par Jacques Simard, qui deviendrait directeur de la revue au printemps 1957. La correspondance suggère aussi que les projets variés de Morisset devenaient de plus en plus nombreux.
- 34 Les expositions du Musée de la Province qui furent notées sont les suivantes: une rétrospective de David Milne; une exposition d'œuvres sur papier de Jacques Villon; et une rétrospective d'Ozias Leduc organisée par la Galerie nationale du Canada. La galerie de Québec était «L'Atelier», qui exposait une série d'aquarelles de Jeanne Rhéaume, artiste montréalaise résidant en Italie.
- 35 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.8.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p.17-18.
- 37 Voir COUTURE, *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante*, p.10-11.
- 38 Par exemple, BEAULIEU, *et al.*, *La Presse québécoise des origines à nos jours*.

39 D'après BEAULIEU, et al., un niveau de culture assez élevé était quand même demandé du lecteur de *Vie des Arts*, mais le style rédactionnel était cependant très accessible à la majorité. BEAULIEU, et al., remarquent que «Les collaborateurs de la revue évitent le jargon et l'hermétisme, de sorte que cette revue contribue à l'éducation artistique du grand public.» *La Presse québécoise des origines à nos jours*, vol. 9, p.38.

40 Ceci est documenté par le *Fonds Vie des Arts* dans la première demande de subvention de Jacques Simard auprès du Conseil des Arts, en septembre 1957: «...la collaboration était gratuite et (qu'il) fallait bien placer la revue au second plan du travail des collaborateurs....»

41 Par exemple, la compagnie pharmaceutique Rougier, annonceur régulier depuis les premières années, fit un don de 500 \$ en 1966; les archives montrent aussi des échanges de lettres entre la revue et la compagnie Steinberg Limitée concernant des dons d'argent. (*Fonds Andrée Paradis*).

42 Voir le fonds *Vie des Arts*, états financiers 1958-1962.

43 La première instance de reconnaissance publique pour de l'aide financière apparaît seulement à l'hiver 1967 (vol. 12, no 45), à la page du sommaire: «La revue *Vie des Arts* est publiée avec l'aide du Conseil des Arts du Canada et du Ministère des Affaires culturelles du Québec.»

44 Fonds, *Vie des Arts*, lettre de Jacques Simard à Romuald Miville-Deschénes, 10 février 1964.

45 Fonds, *Vie des Arts*, lettre de Jacques Simard à Romuald Miville-Deschénes, 4 mars 1964.

46 Fonds, *Vie des Arts*, lettre du 19 novembre 1964.

47 Fonds, *Vie des Arts*, lettre à Pierre Laporte, 21 janvier 1965.

48 COUTURE, *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante*, p.13.

49 Voir Hélène SICOTTE, «Un état de la diffusion des arts visuels à Montréal: Les années cinquante: lieux et chronologie», *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol. XVI, no 2, 1995, p.40-76.

50 Jacques Simard, dans son exposé de 1957 au Conseil des Arts sur l'état de la revue, insiste sur l'importance de la couleur pour une revue d'arts visuels: «La direction de la revue voudrait dans chaque numéro étudier l'œuvre d'un peintre influent. Comment le faire sans couleur? La couleur est essentielle.»

51 *Ibid.*

52 «Aphorismes Plasticiens» dans «Manifeste des Plasticiens», 1955, ref. CARANI, *L'oeil de la critique*, p.233.

53 À la fin de la décennie, vu l'enthousiasme généré par le centenaire du Canada et l'Expo '67, *Vie des Arts* publierait de nombreux articles sur l'art canadien à travers le pays. Voir vol. 10, no 44, par exemple.

54 Un aperçu de quelques numéros du début des années soixante de la revue américaine *Art in America* offre un bon exemple d'une revue américaine s'exerçant à promouvoir l'art local en impliquant directement la communauté, par la commandite de compétitions artistiques: «Coins by Sculptors, Painters' Playing Cards», vol. 51, no 2, avril 1963; «Ceramics by Twelve Artists», vol. 52, no 6, décembre 1964.

55 La vision de Greenberg rejoignit le grand public lors de la publication par *Life Magazine* d'un article par Greenberg sur Jackson Pollock, à la fin des années quarante. Voir Denise LECLERC, *The Crisis of Abstraction in Canada, the 1950s*, Ottawa, The National Gallery of Canada, 1992, p.39-40.

56 «L'art tellurique de Riopelle», *Vie des Arts*, vol. 1, no 5. Voir aussi CARANI, *L'oeil de la critique*, p.156-57.

- 57 CARANI, *L'oeil de la critique*, p.159. De Repentigny appréciait, cependant, l'œuvre de Nakamura pour son aspect plus géométrique.
- 58 Pour une biographie de de Repentigny, voir *L'oeil de la critique* de CARANI.
- 59 Voir Jocelyne CONNOLLY, «Le Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal: Décideurs et tendances socio-esthétiques de la collection», *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol. XVI, no 1, 1994, p.36.
- 60 Guy ROBERT, *L'art au Québec depuis 1940*, Montréal, Les Éditions La Presse, 1973, p.13-14.
- 61 Voir CARANI, «Les débats esthétiques au sein de la critique d'art montréalaise», premier chapitre, *L'oeil de la critique* (p.21-46), pour un compte rendu détaillé de la situation.
- 62 Pour un bon aperçu de ces débats, voir CARANI dans *L'oeil de la critique*, deuxième chapitre, p.47-73.
- 63 HÉBERT, «La réception de la peinture formaliste à Montréal» dans COUTURE, *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante*, p.165.
- 64 CONNOLLY, «Le Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal», p.37.
- 65 Voir CARANI, *L'oeil de la critique*, p.192.
- 66 Rose-Marie ARBOUR, «Intégration de l'art à l'architecture» dans COUTURE, *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante*, p.227-73.
- 67 Cité par ARBOUR, p.262.
- 68 Voir Michèle GRANDBOIS, «Les ateliers de gravure parisiens et les artistes du Québec», dans CARANI, éd., *Des lieux de mémoire: Identité et culture modernes au Québec*, p.205-206.
- 69 Guy ROBERT, *École de Montréal: situation et tendances*, Montréal, Éditions du centre de psychologie et de pédagogie, 1964, p.4.
- 70 Pour une description complète de l'œuvre de de Repentigny, voir CARANI, *L'oeil de la critique*, p.239-61.
- 71 HÉBERT dans *Les arts visuels au Québec dans les années soixante*, p.134.
- 72 Voir SICOTTE, «Un état de la diffusion des arts visuels à Montréal».
- 73 Les articles sur l'art canadien énumérés dans le sommaire du vol. 44, no 11, 1966 sont: «L'âge nouveau de la peinture canadienne» par Jean-René OSTIGUY; «L'art des provinces de l'Atlantique: variations sans thème» par Louise ROMBOUT; «À l'origine de l'explosion picturale au Québec» par Jacques FOLCH-RIBAS; «Génération 1950-60» par Guy ROBERT; «Le dynamisme des Plasticiens de Montréal» par Fernande SAINT-MARTIN; «Montréal aujourd'hui» par Claude ROBILLARD; «L'art nouveau des jeunes peintres de Montréal» par Claude JASMIN; «Le renouveau de la peinture à Toronto» par Paul DUMAS; «Trois peintres torontois» par Arnold ROCKMAN; «Les Prairies» par Andrée PARADIS; «La peinture à Winnipeg» par Illi-Maria HARFF; «Les peintres de la Colombie-Britannique et leur environnement» par Jacques DE ROUSSAN. De plus, la revue incluait dans ce numéro ses chroniques et comptes rendus réguliers, portant le nombre de pages au-delà de cent.
- 74 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.214.
- 75 Sandra PAIKOWSKY, «A Scholarly Journal of Our Own», *ACS Bulletin AEC*, vol. 18, nos 2-3, p.16.
- 76 FORTIN, *Passage de la modernité*, p.215.

Summary

MAKING ART MODERN

Vie des Arts magazine and its contribution to the discourse on the visual arts in Québec during the 1950s and 1960s

In the mid-20th century, the art press played an essential role in creating and sustaining a receptive audience for modernist works. By the late 1950s, art magazines flourished throughout North America, displaying and explaining modernism to a broader readership than ever before. In Canada, *Vie des Arts*, one of the country's two longest-running art periodicals (the other is *Canadian Art*), was part of this trend, reflecting that desire of the post-war arts community to become a participant in the wider life of the nation. Because of the accessibility of its form and content, the magazine became an ideal vehicle for demystifying and building culture. Magazines generally seek to inform and entertain, and sometimes, as the case of *Vie des Arts*, to educate the reader. They can also become sites for debate and a forum for new ideas, simultaneously creating and sustaining discourse, while giving voice to a group's specificity.

Vie des Arts was both witness to and participant in Québec's accession to cultural modernity during the 1950s and 1960s. Within this context, and with the aid of newly established grant systems at both the provincial and federal levels, it provided an overview of the visual arts scene in a modern, accessible format. Serving the Québécois, Canadian and international communities, it helped shape the reception of art in the public sphere. It espoused a modernist discourse and through its format, modeled on the mass-circulation magazine, cultivated a late-modernist communication aesthetic which came to favour the pictorial over the written word. In the Québec context, however, *Vie des Arts* adopted a dual role: to educate and sensitize Québécois to their collective culture, while at the same time promoting the values of individualism inherent in high modernism. This duality reflected the near impasse which the Québec arts community faced: a desire for recognition on the international playing field of modernism and the longing for a home-grown, modern cultural identity.

The federal impulse for a modern national identity and unity in cultural matters was well served by the establishment of the Canada Council in 1957 and the events leading to its creation. Modern cultural policy in Québec was in many ways moulded by the establishment of a Canadian policy infrastructure, yet it had its own set of priorities to address. Québec's passage from a conservative, clergy-dominated rural society to a modern, secular state was accomplished over several decades, but the change began to crystallize only during the late fifties and sixties, when the Quiet Revolution and the end of the Duplessis regime signaled a new expansiveness where

cultural and intellectual life could openly shape itself to the demands of modernity. During this period, inroads were made by the visual arts community to educate and inform the public, and *Vie des Arts* was both product and participant in this flood of activity. The year in which *Vie des Arts* published its first issue, 1956, also saw the establishment of the Conseil des Arts de Montréal. The Ministère des Affaires culturelles was subsequently established in 1961. Both agencies contributed to *Vie des Arts'* survival in its first decade and both played an important role in solidifying Québec's new cultural policy.

Vie des Arts' need to respond to international art in the context of a relatively regional readership was without doubt a result of the overlying cultural climate in Québec. From its beginnings, culture in Québec was nurtured through language and history by a continental European aesthetic - one that would still inform *Vie des Arts* more than two centuries later. From the early 19th century, cultural periodicals had enjoyed a long tradition in Québec. It was not until 1918, however, with the appearance of *Le Nigog*, that modernity would find a voice. Compared to contemporary publications such as *Le Terroir*, which reflected a traditional brand of insular nationalism, *Le Nigog* represented a progressive cultural voice with an anti-regionalist stance, and pioneered expertise in cultural journalism in Québec. *Vie des Arts'* direct predecessor was *Arts et Pensée*, a short-lived magazine which sought to initiate a general audience into the visual arts by drawing parallels between culture and social concerns, and it promoted the regeneration of the human spirit through the contemplation of beauty. *Vie des Arts'* founders and the group which had founded *Arts et Pensée* overlapped, and *Vie des Arts* is often seen as the seamless continuation of its predecessor. However, as the decade progressed, *Vie des Arts* came to reflect the secularized, modern aspects of a new Québec.

Vie des Arts was founded by the Société des Arts, a group dedicated to the support and dissemination of the visual arts, headed by critic and curator Gérard Morisset, whose views on the social function of art and the preservation of the *patri-moine* are well-represented in the magazine's first issues. The currents of internationalism and high modernism which would become a defining characteristic of *Vie des Arts* were not apparent at this time. The magazine's first editorial shows its desire to foster in a general readership the interest and ability to participate in the discourse of modern art and, as a corollary, to establish a broader audience to support the continuing evolution of Québec's artistic 'renaissance'.

For its survival, *Vie des Arts* depended on regular grants from the Canada Council beginning in 1957 and from the 1960s on, the Ministère des Affaires culturelles. The situation between the magazine and the Ministère des Affaires culturelles, however, was tenuous: funds were granted in most years, but were never won without a great amount of ink flowing between the two. *Vie des Arts* benefited from the new cultural policies at both levels of government, and played out the similarities and contradictions inherent in each government's goals and objectives.

Advertising revenues also played an important part in the magazine's finances. As it evolved from a black-and-white journal-style publication to a full-color magazine, its advertising content grew and changed, resulting in the typical art magazine mix of gallery advertisements and corporate messages. The magazine attracted advertisers with special seasonal issues and theme issues. The Montréal gallery boom in the 1950s was also important in increasing the magazine's advertising revenues. By the mid-sixties, *Vie des Arts'* appeal to advertisers was certain: it had developed a balanced mixture of visual and textual content, upholding its credibility as an art publication and delivering a pleasurable reading experience to its growing audience.

An analysis of *Vie des Arts'* content reveals that in its first decade the magazine published a high percentage of articles on Québec art (37%) and European art (27.6%), but comparatively fewer articles on Canadian art from outside Québec (12%). American art was almost entirely disregarded by the magazine, with only 1% of its content representing this area. Considering the importance of American art in the post-war period, this statistic reflects, on the part of *Vie des Arts*, a desire to interpret modernism via a European model, rather than a North American one. More than half of the articles (52.5%) were devoted to contemporary art, and of those, 39% were devoted to non-figurative art, with approximately two-thirds of this percentage dealing with expressionist and Automatisme-derived painting and the remaining third devoted to geometric abstraction. By the mid-sixties, the magazine enthusiastically supported hard-edged painting, which had become closely identified with Montréal. The magazine also supported decorative and applied arts, categories that would find renewed interest among artists during the period - a trend that seemed to recognize the value, in the Québec visual arts context, of traditional media (for example, tapestry and ceramics) applied to modernist aesthetics. Printmaking also enjoyed a resurgence during this period and *Vie des Arts* documented and promoted its revival. The magazine carried a variety of articles, from feature articles to artists' interviews to issue pieces and criticism. It consistently reviewed shows and exhibitions, centering on local events, with some forays into the rest of Canada.

Over its first decade, *Vie des Arts* stood by its pedagogical and anti-elitist mandate, and has carried the same mandate through to this day. During the forty years of the magazine's existence, it has attempted to demystify modern and contemporary art, acting as mediator between the visual arts community and the general public. In the 1950s and 1960s, *Vie des Arts'* educational function mirrored a politics of modernity which saw state intervention in cultural matters as an essential strategy in Québec's accession to full modernity. At the end of the decade, Québec's *projet de modernité* would be perceived as having reached a modicum of closure as new forces gathered strength. *Vie des Arts'* synergy with these events is confirmed, and it can be said that at least during its first ten years, the magazine constituted a sign for modernist values in Québec's changing cultural climate.

Louise Moreau



fig. 1

Landing of the Prince of Wales Under the Triumphal Arch Erected By The Harbor Masters At The Bonsecours Market, Montreal — From a Photograph by Notman, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (New York), 8 September 1860, 246.

CONCORDIA SALUS

Triumphal Arches at Montréal, 1860

“Montreal was in a state of mud - of unmitigated mud” when Queen Victoria’s son, Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, landed at Bonsecours Wharf on 25 August 1860 to inaugurate the Victoria Bridge.¹ The Prince was greeted by an elaborate pavilion of welcome, constructed on the wharf by the Harbour Commissioners. Two weeks later, on September 8, *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* of New York published an engraving of the pavilion made from a photograph by “Notman of Montreal” (fig.1). The engraving presents the scene of a busy harbour where three steamships have docked and a fourth, the *Victoria*, is just pulling in. The Prince of Wales had arrived on the *Kingston*, already at rest at the foot of the pavilion. It was a scene of order, ceremony, and anticipation; rows of honour guards lined the wharf, crowds gathered on the quay and ships docked alongside awaiting the disembarkation of the Prince.² Dwarfing all of this is the welcoming pavilion.

From Bonsecours Wharf the Prince proceeded through a series of nine temporary triumphal arches to his ultimate destination: the new Victoria Bridge - a two-mile-long tubular steel railway bridge spanning the St. Lawrence River from Point St. Charles in the west end of the city.³ The spectacle of the procession was recorded in a series of stereographs of the arches made and sold by the William Notman photographic studio of Montréal and by engraved illustrations of the arches published in newspapers in Canada, the United States, and England. These visual records are complemented by literary accounts published in installments in newspapers in Montréal, New York, and London and compiled in a book form typical of travel journals at mid-century.⁴ However, the surviving documentation forms a largely visual archive: the triumphal arches constructed for the event, the stereographs of the arches, and the engravings made from photos and drawings of the arches. It is my contention that the historical significance of these visual forms is not as a record of the Royal visit. Rather, the imagery served to picture a complex concept for diverse but equally interested audiences: that Montréal, the metropolitan centre of British America, was a model city of the British Empire, with ethnic dissension but also concord and ultimately defined as having a vibrant industrial economy.

Civic Concord: The Commissioning and Placement of the Arches

In *The Tour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales Through British North America and the United States, by a British Canadian*, Henry James Morgan describes the landing

site at Bonsecours Wharf as a

massive pavilion...[which] although made of wood, was gilded and painted in a neat and masterly style. It was surmounted on the four sides by groups of flags, while at the top floated the royal standard. It looked really grand, contrasting with the wharf, which was laid out with trees, and carpeted where the Prince was to walk. The regular lines of soldiers, and the gay uniforms of the officers gathered there, gave the affair quite a festive appearance.⁵

The *Montreal Witness* reported on August 29 that:

At the landing-place on Bonsecours Wharf, the Harbor Commissioners erected a magnificent pavilion, or colonade [*sic*] of 60 square feet for the Prince's reception, supported by 12 Roman Doric pillars, beautifully panelled [*sic*] and covered with cloth of all colors, the whole surmounted by a beautiful device of Venetian flags, while on each side were appropriate mottoes. The illuminated effect of the structure was unique and striking.

Two days later, Montréal's *La Guêpe* also expressed admiration:

Pendant la lecture de l'adresse, le spectacle qui s'offrait à nos regards était charmant. Le pavillon, où se trouvaient réunis tous ces personnages, offrait un coup d'œil magnifique. Pour rendre un hommage au vrai mérite, disons, en passant, que l'habile décorateur, M. Gauthier, s'est surpassé en cette occasion; on ne pouvait pas réunir plus habilement l'élégance à la majesté, qu'il ne l'a fait dans ce chef-d'œuvre de décoration.

The *Daily Globe* of Toronto on August 28 cited details:

[The canopy] is very large in size, and the most beautiful of the temporary structures I have yet seen built to do honour to his Royal Highness. The roof is supported by twelve large pillars, three at each corner. On all the four sides an arch is represented to view, bearing appropriate inscriptions, and hung with the British and French banners. The roof is flat, and made of alternate squares of red and white drapery. The pillars are also square, with red and blue panels, the remaining portions being left white, with the exception of the bead-work in different parts of the structure. On the right hand side of the canopy was a slightly elevated dais of red cloth, and the long broad wharf was ornamented by spruce branches placed along the edges.

The "appropriate inscriptions" above each arch defined the location and purpose of the pavilion: "Welcome to Montreal," on the north side and "Vive La Reine," on the west. These were the facades visible to the people standing on the wharf; an engraving made from a photograph by the Notman studio was published two weeks later in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of New York. "Vive la Reine" proclaims the allegiance of French Canadians to the British sovereign. The distinguishing characteristics implied by this motto are reinforced by the French and British ensigns described by the *Daily Globe* as flying side-by-side on the

pavilion. In *The Tour*, Henry James Morgan casually mentions that the ensigns were surmounted by the Royal standard, but these are absent from the *Frank Leslie's* engraving. A peaceful, unified and harmonious co-existence of Montréal's two linguistic communities is implied both by the manner in which the mottoes blend within the architectural whole and by the implication that these works, which had required significant sums of money to erect, could only have been accomplished in such a grand manner with a great deal of civic will. Not only the loyalty but the unity of the citizens was being proclaimed by this magnificent display.

The themes of civic harmony, loyalty and the city's economic prosperity and power were implied in Mayor Charles S. Rodier's address of welcome at the disembarkation ceremony on the landing pavilion. He made three points in this address which was delivered in both French and English. First, he expressed "to your Royal Highness our devoted loyalty and attachment to the person and government of our most Gracious Sovereign;" and second, that the "fame and prosperity" of Montréal would henceforth be linked to the Victoria Bridge, "that magnificent monument of enterprise and skill." His third point was that the bridge had been built in spite of "material obstacles, almost insurmountable in their ponderous strength" and with "complicated capital" and "Canadian energy and skill."

The Prince of Wales' reply in English acknowledged Montréal's agenda:

Deeply will the Queen be gratified by the proof which it [the Prince's welcome] affords that the interest which she takes in the welfare of this portion of Her Empire, and which she has been anxious to mark by my presence amongst you, is met in their part by feelings of affectionate devotion to herself and her family.

For myself, I rejoice at the opportunity which has been afforded me of visiting this city - the great emporium of the trade of Canada - and whose growing prosperity offers so striking an example of what may be effected by energy and enterprize under the influence of free institutions.

That this prosperity may be still further enlarged is my earnest hope and there can be little doubt that by the completion of that stupendous monument of engineering skill and labor, which I have come in the name of the Queen to inaugurate, new sources of wealth will be opened to your citizens and to the country; new elements of power developed, and new links forged to bind together in peaceful co-operation, the exertions of a widespread and rapidly increasing population.⁶

The triumphal arches were erected in the recently revived British tradition of commemorating a visit of the monarch.⁷ The size and finish of these structures made them appear solid and permanent attributing an age and stability to the city, then just over two hundred years old. A call for tenders by the Corporation of Montreal to build "six triumphal arches to be erected in different

parts of the city" for the procession from the landing wharf to the Prince's accommodations on Mount Royal had been issued in the French- and English-language newspapers on 12 June 1860. The notice specified that

Three kinds of Arches with Transparencies, Mottoes and Devices, &c., will be necessary to secure variety of style, construction and difference in cost....

The Tender will include the cost of material, construction, ornamenting, &c., also the fittings for being lit with gas, and the maintenance of the whole in good order during the whole time of the visit.... The whole of the six arches should not be of less value than four and not over five thousand dollars.⁸

The commission was awarded two weeks later to Montréal stained-glass manufacturers John McArthur and John C. Spence. The acceptance of their proposal came with "the understanding that the Committee of the City Council may make any alteration in the mottoes and devices that may appear to them expedient."⁹ The building of the arches had been undertaken by a Special Committee appointed by City Council to oversee arrangements for the reception of the Prince of Wales. Its responsibilities included a display of fireworks "of a style of grandeur commensurate with the occasion," illuminating public buildings and the triumphal arches, and "the erection of Floral and Triumphal Arches at the place of landing, and along the route therefrom to the intended residence of the Prince: the same to be ornamented with appropriate emblems, mottoes and devices and adapted for being lighted with gaz [sic]."¹⁰

The route selected to introduce Queen Victoria's representative to British North America's metropolitan centre paralleled an image of the city constructed by guidebooks published between 1857 and 1871. Civic and financial institutions, and sites of industry, transportation, education and religion were prominent along the route. The procession "representing the various trades of the city" was organized by the Committee of Citizens in cooperation with the Special Committee.¹¹ It departed from the quay by way of an arch west of Bonsecours Market at the foot of Jacques Cartier Square, then turned east along St. Paul Street past Bonsecours Market (which also housed the city's offices) and through an arch at Dalhousie Square where the British military barracks were located. It then turned back west along Notre Dame St. and the northern side of Jacques Cartier Square. This elevated side of the square afforded "a magnificent view of the Victoria Bridge and St. Helen's Island."¹² At Place d'Armes, across from Notre Dame Church, it turned north and passed through an arch towards Great St. James Street and the business district. Continuing east to an arch at a site of civic controversy, the newly-named Victoria Square (formerly Commissioners' Square), it then turned north along Beaver Hall Hill and St. Radegonde Street to St. Catherine Street. The procession then turned west, passing through an arch at University Street, arriving at the newly-built Exhibition Hall, called the "Crystal Palace" in reference to London's Great Exhibition of 1851. The procession was



fig.2 Arch, "Victoria," "Concordia Salus," 1860, stereograph,
Coll. Notman Photographic Archives, McCord Museum of
Canadian History, Montréal. (Photo: McCord Museum)

originally scheduled to continue through an arch at Simpson Street to the Prince's temporary residence on Mount Royal, where there awaited a crowning panoramic view of the City. Weather had delayed his landing by a day, however, and so after inaugurating Exhibition Hall, the Prince was conveyed with minimal ceremony to the Victoria Bridge in the west end of the city by way of the Wellington Street Bridge arch.¹³

Concordia Salus: Jacques Cartier Square

The arch of entry to the city of Montréal, at the foot of Jacques Cartier Square at Commissioners Street, most closely resembles the Constantinian form. Like all of the arches erected for this occasion, it was constructed in wood, painted, and adorned with evergreen boughs (fig.2). The imperial theme was amplified by inscriptions in English, French and Latin that paid tribute to the ruler. The Latin welcome, "Concordia Salus," was Montréal's corporate motto and the foundation of the theme of the celebration: civic harmony and well-being. On the south side,

the direction from which the royal procession approached, was written "Welcome to Our Future King;" the north side, visible from Notre Dame Street, was inscribed "Victoria, Notre Auguste Et [...] Reine," which was translated by the *Montreal Transcript* as "Victoria the Great and Good."¹⁴ The message evoked by this arch and its inscriptions, is couched in old-world tradition and suggests the transference of that tradition to the new world. Jacques Cartier Square was further decorated with a series of images addressing a theme of unity between Europe and America, and between those of French and British origins in Montréal:

Jacques Cartier had four transparencies. - The base of the Nelson Monument was surrounded with evergreens; and facing Notre Dame was a transparent bust of the hero, with the motto, 'Honor to the Immortal Nelson.'

The other was a portrait of Jacques Cartier in the costume of the time, and the motto, 'Honneur de Jacques Cartier, decouvreur du Canada.' The next was an allegorical representation of the Union of Europe and America. The centre figure was her Majesty the Queen, holding a wreath over the head of an Indian warrior and European girl, who stand below with hands clasped. The motto, in French and English was 'Union of Europe and America.' The fourth transparency was the Prince of Wales' Plume, with the motto 'Ich Dien [I Serve].'¹⁵

In 1861, 48% of the population of Montréal was French-Canadian and 24% was of British origin (two-thirds of whom were Irish).¹⁶ Every arch was inscribed with mottoes in both French and English suggesting that both linguistic communities participated equally in the festival. The response to this display was varied, however. The *Daily Globe* of Toronto, for example, bitterly reported that at the Bonsecours landing wharf:

large quantities of bunting were flying; but this fact all British people noticed - that, with the exception of two or three Upper Canada steamers which were there, the French tri-colour shone most conspicuous and completely eclipsed the limited number of Union Jacks which were shown. Indeed, judging from appearance, we might well imagine that to France Montréal belongs - that the British flag had been occasionally hung up, out of compliment to our Fatherland, by some few liberal-minded Frenchmen....¹⁷

The presence of the city's large French-speaking population was also noted by Kinahan Cornwallis of the *New York Herald*. The city:

is more than half French, and this French element seems ineradicable. When you speak to a cabman he answers in a French patois, or with an accent which tells you that French is the mother tongue; as you pass a group of children you hear them chattering French; whenever you look up at the name of a street painted on the walls, the chances are twenty to one that it is French also;...in fact, wherever you turn, you are constantly reminded that Montréal

was once a colony of France, and the features of the people, as well as of the city, confirm you in the impression.¹⁸

The mixed press response to the visibility of the French-Canadian citizenry suggests that all was not as harmonious as the official display implied. A tension crept into Cornwallis' lengthy description of the pervasiveness of a French culture that suggests not so much a cosmopolitan flavour as a view of French Canadians as a curiosity. The image of Montréal as a bilingual community did not rest easily with some English-speaking observers in 1860. The union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841 had been recommended by the Durham Report of 1839 as the best means for consolidating English power and accelerating assimilation of French Canadians in the wake of civil unrest in 1837-38. While an expectation of assimilation was revealed by editorial comments, dissension was veiled by the show of unity produced by the decorations and addresses of the event itself - and nowhere more so than at the newly-named Victoria Square.

Civic Dissent: Victoria Square

The *Montreal Transcript* of 28 August provided an elaborate description of the Victoria Square site:

The Square was ornamented by transparencies at each corner. The first was a portrait of the Queen with the motto, 'Vivat Regina.' The next a portrait of the Prince Consort with the motto, 'Promoter of Arts and Manufactures.' The next was a likeness of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales with his plume, and groups of flags at each corner. A shield at the bottom exhibited the British and Prussian Arms. The other represented Canada, with the City Arms. There was also a figure of Britannia, and the motto, in both languages, professed homage to the Prince of Wales. This Square, after the new improvements and the heavy rain, presented as brilliant appearance as any other in the city.

The "brilliant appearance" presented by this arch and square was one in which Montréal and Canada were tightly entwined with Britain: Montréal was cast as a distinctively British city. Moreover, the solid Roman arch and the exclamatory "Bien Venu!!!" suggested a happy conciliation of cultures.

The Notman studio's photograph of the Victoria Square arch was made as the Prince of Wales' procession approached (fig.3). A guard of honour lines the street in front of the arch and awaiting crowds of people have gathered along the street behind. Large flags fly from the buildings, filling the top of the archway. The monumental size of the arch is emphasized as it extends beyond the frame of the stereograph so that the small side gates are excluded. The coats of arms and the oversized figures in the niches between the columns rise well above the heads of the honour guard formed below. The August 27th. *Montreal Gazette*, declared itself at a loss for words to describe the reception given Prince Albert at this square:



fig.3 Arch, "Bien Venu!!!," 1860, stereograph, Coll. Notman Photographic Archives, McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montréal. (Photo: McCord Museum)

St. Lawrence Hall, the Banks, and the dwellings in the vicinity were filled with ladies who, with the spectators, cheered most lustily and drew from the Prince another acknowledgment for their enthusiastic reception. A little further down the street, at the Wesleyan Church, the cheering was taken up, and, for a time, was deafening — description would be useless to convey an idea of the reception thence to the Victoria Square. Prancing onward, the horses drew the royal carriage through a multitude who gave his Royal Highness a perfect oration.

But consider the following *Times* editorial published on 31st August, the day of the Prince of Wales' departure from Montréal: "[In Canada] the English are the conquering race, and another people of the same European family sit down close beside them.... In fact, we are unable to point out any single grievance under which Lower Canada can even pretend she suffers, unless it be that she now remains, as she was a hundred years ago, a dependency of the British Crown." The editorial went on to explain that the Prince of Wales had travelled to Montréal with a specific purpose:

to honour with his presence the inauguration of a magnificent bridge, constructed almost entirely with British capital - not the least of the many advantages which Lower Canada has reaped from her connexion with Great Britain - by which the capital of the French province will be brought into communication with the trade of the United States. It was not unreasonable to suppose that such a compliment, shown to a people whose good will we have done so much to conciliate, would call for corresponding expressions of loyalty and affection.

The editorial continued, however:

We are by long experience hardened to any amount of ingratitude. We have protected some nations in their own country, and they turn upon us with the most furious and unprovoked hatred. We have made our own Island an asylum for all the fugitives and oppressed of the earth, and what reward have [we] received except the bitterest hatred and animosity? When we consider the feelings with which England is regarded by the senior, and we may add by the junior branch of the Bourbons, we have no reason to be surprised at this outbreak of impotent malignity and ingratitude on the part of a portion of the *habitans* of Canada.... Why, then, should we be surprised that this little people, whose very existence is owing to our kindness, our forbearance, and our protection, should, in its turn, lift its unarmed heel against us? It is the privilege of a great country to confer many benefits, but he who confers many benefits must expect a corresponding amount of ingratitude and hatred.

This latest debate about French-Canadian loyalty to Britain was sparked by a civic dispute three weeks prior to the Prince of Wales' arrival. On 3 August 1860, a resolution had been presented and passed at a Montreal City Council meeting changing the name of Commissioners' Square, named for the group that had dismantled Montréal's old city walls fifty years earlier, to Victoria Square in honour of the Queen and the upcoming visit of the Prince of Wales. The French-Canadian councillors, who usually formed a majority on council, were outnumbered by British-Canadian councillors that evening. The French Canadians disputed the change using language that was considered inappropriate by English and French newspapers alike, although the French-language papers were united in the opinion that, if inappropriate, such language was justified.¹⁹

Newspaper accounts of the matter reflected the views of the opposed sides. *La Guêpe*, on 7 August, interpreted events as a vigorous and legitimate defence of cultural symbols:

Quand on voit, par exemple, les Anglais venir proposer de changer les noms français des places publiques et des rues pour leur substituer des noms anglais, il serait vraiment difficile aux conseillers canadiens-français de restreindre leur indignation et leur juste colère dans les formes prescrites par

les règles parlementaires.... Quoi les conseillers anglais auront usé d'intrigue pour avoir une voix de majorité, à une séance; forts de cette majorité ils oseront essayer de proscrire la langue française, et les conseilleurs qui parlent cette langue ce bondiraient pas de fureur;...Ils voulurent aussi montrer aux Bretons que les Canadiens ne se soumettraient jamais aux lois injustes que l'on pourrait réussir à passer contre notre nationalité....

Allez-vous reprocher à nos conseillers d'avoir eu recours à un moyen violent, mais au seul moyen qu'il y eût de conserver à la ville son aspect français.

Six days later, the *Daily Globe* in Toronto saw it another way in an editorial entitled "Lower Canada Domination!:"

Is Canada a British or a French Province? But as if to show that no amount of favour and patronage, no unjust preponderance of power and privilege, no degree of servility on the part of the English, will ever excite feelings of gratitude or make them loyal subjects of the British Crown, the French inhabitants of Lower Canada have, through the Municipal representatives of their principal city, seized the occasion of this happy visit, to insult the Queen and pour contempt upon her loyal subjects of English origin, and even to threaten the existence of British power in this country!...the insolent language, and violent behaviour of the French speakers, the treasonable cries and threats of a French mob in the galleries, and the bold justification of these extraordinary proceedings, by French newspapers after the occurrence, are evidence of a state of feeling, and of the existence of hopes and designs in Lower Canada against British power and British institutions, on this continent, which cannot be mistaken and ought not to be overlooked....

The British population of Canada, as well as the people of England, will learn from this incident the direction and the force of the current which has during the last few years been gradually effacing those land-marks which told the stranger that Canada was a British colony.

The Toronto newspaper went on to call for the replacement of the Union Act of 1841 with something more "equitable." Although the object of that Act, according to the newspaper, had been "to enable the English to subdue and control the rebellious French, the effect now is to enable the French to rule over, insult, and plunder the loyal English."

The *Montreal Witness*, responded to the dispute on 11 August 1860, arguing that the dispute over the renaming of Commissioners' Square:

places our Corporation in a most awkward predicament at this time. Will the other members [of City Council] tolerate the presence of the coarse, malignant ruffians in question, or of the Mayor, who is the head of that party, when the address of welcome is presented to the Prince of Wales; and if not, how can the address of the city be presented? How will the Prince feel among those who have shown that they would spurn him with personal indignity if they durst.

The *Witness* followed its account with translated reprints of reports of the event from *La Guêpe* and *La Minerve*, as well as from the *Montreal Herald*. Sarcasm laced the *Herald's* description of events:

Her Majesty forsooth was only a British sovereign, and, therefore not good enough to serve for the title to a Canadian square, devoted to the commemoration of the office of two or three gentlemen, who had superintended the destruction of the old walls of the city.... Furthermore, it was the British, who desired to make this change, and it must, therefore, be opposed by all good French Canadians. This last reason was, we understand, supported by the most offensive observations against all those immigrants to whom the city owes its chief developments.

James McGill and John Richardson were the two anglophone commissioners appointed to oversee the demolition of Montréal's walls between 1801 and 1817; the third was Joseph-Dominique-Emmanuel LeMoigne de Longueuil, who was replaced on his death in 1807 by Jean-Marie Mondelet. As in the renaming of Victoria Square, the issue at stake was the visual imprint on the city of one cultural group at the expense of the other. In *Opening the Gates of Eighteenth-Century Montréal*, Phyllis Lambert argues that tearing down the walls "represented an extraordinary opportunity for urban planning, which was seized by the British colonial authorities. Symbols of the French régime would be replaced by powerful images to represent the British crown."²⁰ The commissioners who had been commemorated and whose memory the French-Canadian members of City Council were defending had, in fact, assisted in a prior dismantling of French-Canadian monuments. On 18 September 1860, the *Pilot* and *La Minerve* of Montréal took conciliatory approaches in their responses to the controversy. The *Pilot* noted and refuted the *Times'* claims:

That there are French papers whose "every article breathes hostility to British rule and institutions," is unfortunately too true. But they are the exception, not the rule; for, as a whole, the French press can vie with the British in its loyalty and devotion to the throne. ...Nor ought the whole French people in Canada to be made answerable for the ravings of a few unmitigated fanatics.... The writer is also wrong in his observations concerning the Mayor. That his Worship is a Frenchman is true; but his loyalty was never doubted nor suspected. He was elected by as many British as French votes.

La Minerve, which from the mid-1850s represented the interests of the Cartier-Macdonald Liberal-Conservative alliance, noted that accounts of the City Council incident by British-Canadian newspapers, such as the *Daily Globe*, aligned with the conservative English-speaking bourgeoisie, had led the London *Times* to question the loyalty of French Canadians to the Crown. According to *La Minerve* on 18 September:

Mais il est bien établi que le langage des fauteurs de désordre a été désavoué



fig.4 Page of Gates, 1860, Visit to North America, Captain Dawson's Album, Coll. Notman Photographic Archives, McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montréal. (Photo: McCord Museum)

par tous les Canadiens-Français....

Avant d'en venir à la conclusion qui forme la dernière partie de son article, le Times fait un longue énumération des bienfaits dont nous sommes redevables au gouvernement de la métropole.

Certes, nous savions apprécier la conduite de l'Angleterre à notre égard: le gouvernement représentatif, la liberté de la presse, la liberté de gérer à notre guise nos affaires privées, sont autant de présents que la métropole nous a généreusement accordés.

La Minerve concluded that:

la conquête ne donne pas le droit de déchirer l'âme d'un peuple en le forçant d'adopter une langue étrangère, de renier la foi de ses ancêtres, pour pratiquer une religion que répugne à ses sentiments les plus intimes. Dieu a donné à chaque peuple une nationalité distincte; les hommes ne peuvent modifier à volonté cette loi du créateur. Lors que cette modification est nécessaire à l'harmonie universelle la Providence la prépare insensiblement par une suite de circonstances dont elle seule à le clef....

Lorsque le *Times* connaître la vérité sur la conduite que les Canadiens-Français ont tenu pendant la visite du Prince de Galles...il prendra pour thème l'ingratitude des Anglo-Canadiens de l'autre section de la province qui ont voulu faire violence aux sentiments intimes de l'héritier présomptif de la Couronne d'Angleterre.

The examples of the *Pilot* and *La Minerve*, are in keeping with the theme of loyalty emphasized by the arch at Victoria Square. The dispute over the change of its name is absent from all visual and textual descriptions of this contentious site.

Refusing subordinate status for its constituency, *La Guêpe* of 14 August countered the stances of the *Witness*, the *Herald* and the *Daily Globe*. Nevertheless, this show of unity was taken up and defended by both language groups in Montréal and by the press elsewhere. *The Illustrated London News* of 15 September reprinted the *New York Herald's* remarks that "the brilliant reception given to the Prince of Wales at Montréal has given a thorough refutation to the silly stories started some time since that the French-Canadians entertained no feeling of loyalty to the heir of Britain's throne." Québec's *Morning Chronicle* of 1 September agreed that Montréal had acquitted itself magnificently:

Considering that, on the eve of the Royal Visit, outsiders endeavored to persuade the public that a difference existed between the population here, as to the manner of receiving the Prince, it certainly cannot but be highly gratifying to the citizens of Montréal, to know that, in the eyes of the twenty thousand strangers who visited the city during the past week, every proceeding appeared so thoroughly successful.

The Visual Archive

The pageantry did not stop there, however, as the visual records of the event were then packaged and distributed. Photographs made by the Notman studio and the engravings carried in the papers of Montréal, London and New York were repackaged to present the pageant in a manner that differed in function, effect and scope from the original. Notman's photographs of the triumphal arches came into the possession of the Notman Archives of the McCord Museum in 1984 through the acquisition of a private photograph album.²¹ One page near the end is devoted to an array of photographs related to the visit of the Prince of Wales to Montréal (fig.4). An unattributed portrait of the Prince is surrounded by nine single frames cut from Notman stereographs of the arches, an interior of the Grand Ball Pavilion, Notman's group portrait of the Prince and his entourage outside their accommodations on Mount Royal, and Mathew Brady's studio portrait of the group made while in New York.

A list of stereographs made of the triumphal arches is included in the Notman studio's c.1861 sales catalogue.²² The images' unusual subject matter and their mass distribution as stereographs and, subsequently, as engravings mark

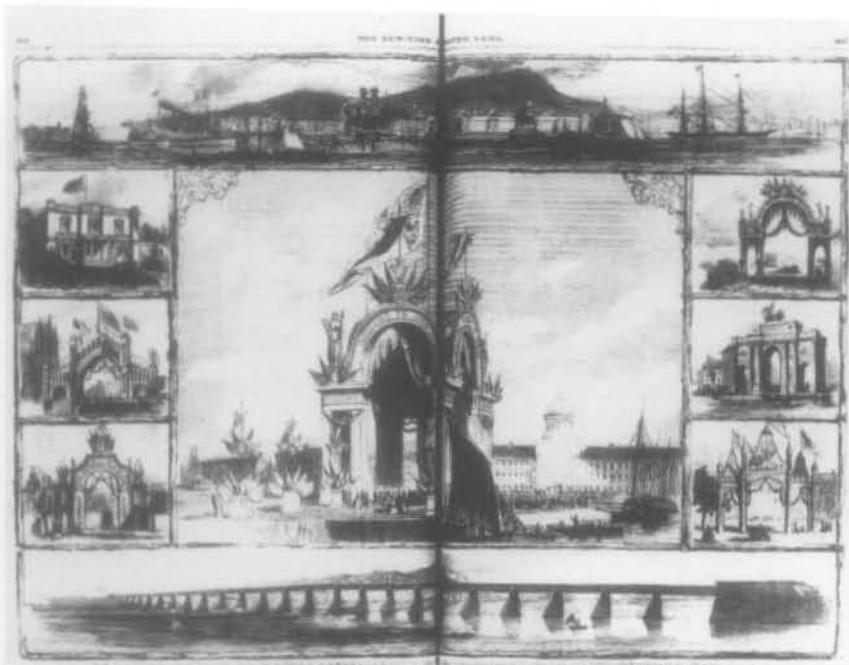


fig.5 The City of Montreal, *Demorest's New York Illustrated News*,
1 September 1860, 264-265.

them as significant visualizations of the kind of city Montréal's leaders wanted to portray.²³ Readers of the illustrated papers in Britain and North America became the extended audience of Montréal's pageant - or, more precisely, of a particular portrayal of that pageant. Much of this audience was the economic peer group of the Montréal businessmen and politicians who had organized the spectacle and had a vested interest in the promotion of Montréal as a place to do business. The programme's purpose was to advance Montréal as a stable metropolis where it was safe and wise to invest one's funds (the Victoria Bridge being a spectacular demonstration of that concept) and as a major city with the human resources to bring an investor's dreams to fruition.²⁴

Demorest's New York Illustrated News of 8 September 1860 published a two-page composite of the arches at Montréal, as well as a city view and a view of the Victoria Bridge (fig.5). One week later it printed a large and more elaborate engraving of the landing pavilion at Bonsecours Wharf (fig.6). The earlier *Demorest's* of 1 September shows a lavish two-page display of engravings that captures the splendour of the preparations made by the city to receive the Prince of Wales.²⁵ The top of the page offers a panorama of Montréal, taken from the har-



fig.6 The Prince's Visit to North America, *Demorest's New York Illustrated News*, 8 September 1860, 276.

bour. Mount Royal rises darkly in the background, offsetting the well-lighted city whose major landmarks, Bonsecours Market, Notre Dame Church and the harbour - made familiar to the readers by descriptions of the procession - are prominent. These pages are anchored by a panorama of the Victoria Bridge. The city of Montréal, suggested most clearly by Mount Royal, is sketched in the background.

Prominent at the centre of the illustrations is an elegant image of the welcoming pavilion constructed on Bonsecours Wharf. Again, the view is from the harbour, showing the domed Bonsecours Market and the inscription on the pavilion, which clearly marks the location of this event. The pavilion rises monumen-tally above the gathered crowds; the corner figure of Britannia is many times life-size and the standards surmounting the structure are massive. Framing each side of the main illustration are smaller images. One shows the Prince's accommoda-tions in Montréal: "Rosemount," the home of John Rose, Commissioner of Public Works for the Canadas and one of the men responsible for the visit. The other five are of the triumphal arches. The first arch, at Jacques Cartier Square, is not shown, but included, clockwise from the upper right, are those built at Dalhousie Square, Victoria Square, Place d'Armes, Simpson Street, and St. Catherine Street. The

1 September issue of the *Demorest's New York Illustrated News* accompanied the engravings of the arches (fig.5) with the following remark: "This beautiful group of pictures cannot fail to be doubly interesting to our readers in connection with the historic drama which is being enacted in the Canadas."²⁶

Two weeks later, *The Illustrated London News* commented that:

We are making history in Canada, and it is the business of the great journals of the world to record it.... But intelligent Englishmen cannot be uninterested spectators of an event which proclaims to the world the sympathies of the four millions of people who uphold British power and maintain a British system of government over half the continent of North America.

Elaborate productions such as that of *Demorest's New York Illustrated News* imply the scale of Montréal's enterprise. \$10,000 was granted by the Corporation of Montreal for the celebration of the Prince's visit. The arches alone consumed half of this sum: \$4,992 was paid to McArthur and Spence for their work and \$150.97 to the New City Gas Company for illumination. Other significant expenses included \$2,000 for fireworks, \$1,500 for lighting public squares, and \$500 for a torchlight procession.²⁷

The costliness of the pageant is represented in turn by the size and splendour of the engravings produced from sketches made by *Demorest's* "own artist." The display published by *Harper's Weekly* (fig.7) on 25 August has much the same aim and effect as *Demorest's* but in a more simplified format. The top half illustrates the six official arches, seen without frames or backgrounds, surrounding a sketch of the temporary building constructed for the grand ball held for the Prince. Copy describing the construction of the Victoria Bridge flanks this illustration. The bottom half carries an elaborate panoramic engraving of the west side of the Victoria Bridge. The bridge cuts across the composition at a diagonal, and is viewed from a low angle. The city of Montréal, identified as was customary by Notre Dame Church and Mount Royal, fills the background beneath the bridge's span. This image is marked by attention to detail: the stonework of the bridge supports, the atmospheric effects of the sky, the small buildings of the city in the distance and the vessels making their way along the river.

The "traditional" arches mark the education and erudition of the segment of Montréal society that commissioned these works. This adaptation of ancient and early-modern traditions to a new age and continent provides a dual impression of Montréal's business elite: conservative and stable; imaginative and forward-thinking. The magnificence of the pageant and the worthiness of the city to host such an event are clearly evinced in this representation. These same themes compose the programme of the arches produced for the Prince's visit and run through the texts of guidebooks to the city. The images of the pageant decorations in both *Harper's Weekly* and *Demorest's New York Illustrated News* in turn took up this programme without critical analysis of its contents. Rather, these newspapers

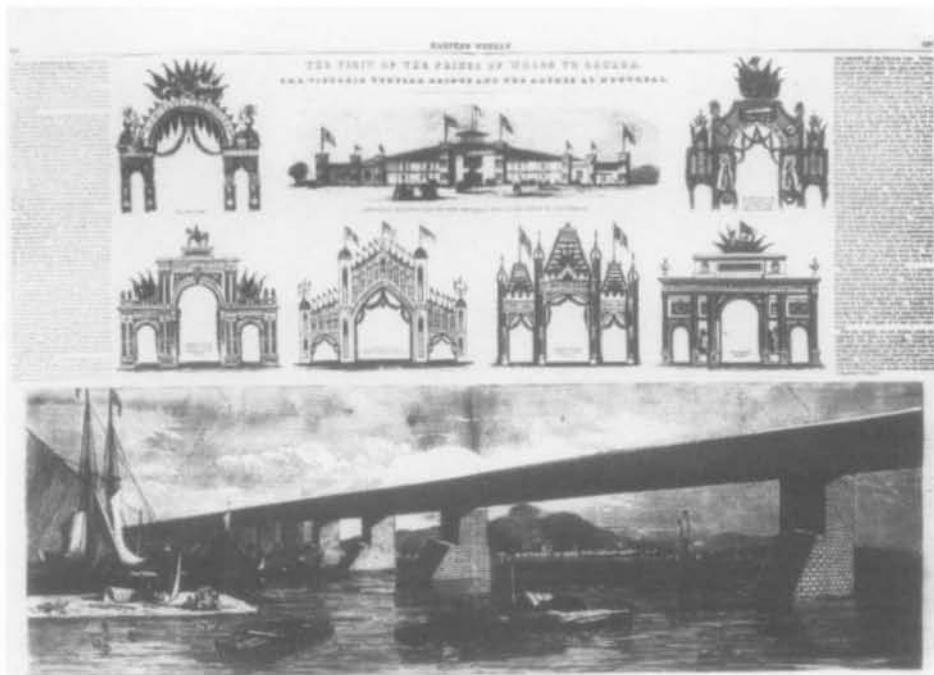


fig.7 The Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada, engraving, *Harper's Weekly*, 25 August 1860, 536-537.

became enthusiastic contributors to the spectacular nature of the event. Ironically, *Harper's* commented on this fact in the same edition that ran the decorative engravings:

Our humorous poets have thus far forgotten to seize the humors of the Prince's tour through the Canadian Provinces. The exuberant loyalty of the colonists; the funny servility of some learned bodies; the desperate partisanship of some petty politicians...the lavish expenditure of money in honor of this youth, who will probably gaze with more interest on Canada's natural beauties than on her triumphal arches - all these are rare topics for a humorous pen, and we hardly understand how they have been neglected so long.... Perhaps there never was a royal progress which left so little room for serious criticism.

The images printed in the *Montreal Gazette* suggest that the primary visual concern was the style and inscription of each of the arches.²⁸ These are modest illustrations, interwoven with an extensive text which describes the procession of the Prince of Wales through the city two days earlier. The *Gazette* rarely carried illustrations and that it felt compelled to do so suggests both its enthusiastic

THE PRISONER OF WALES AT MONTFORT.



THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES: TOWARD THE 2000 NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND BEYOND

As my brother was born the same year as myself, he and I have had the same education up to the time of his death.



THE PRACTICAL USE OF THE COMPUTER IN THE FIELD OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION

A spokesman for architect Bill Strojny stated, "The [proposed] building of Justice will be a great addition to our community." The architect recommended that the new building be built on the same site as the old one, located on the northeast corner of Main Street and 10th Avenue.

The next day we



第1章 基本概念

the following year. A new edition was published in 1902, and a third edition in 1905.

more easily communicate those new conditions of office than can be done by the written word, the personal contact is far more effective.



第六章 機械運動的統計物理



fig.8 The Prince of Wales at Montreal, engraving, *The Illustrated London News*, 22 September 1860, 271.

participation in the pageant and the pragmatic recognition that it must be competitive with the many papers covering the event. The Prince of Wales was still in Montréal when the *Gazette* and its rival the *Montreal Herald* published their illustrated numbers. The *Herald* printed finer engravings and more carefully detailed descriptions of each arch. These engravings were the same as those published two days earlier in *Harper's Weekly*. Neither newspaper credited the source of the engravings.

In contrast, *The Illustrated London News* did not print engravings until a month after Prince Albert's progress through Montréal, when much of its issue of 22 September 1860 was dedicated to an elaborate visual account of his tour through North America. One page was set aside for Montréal (fig.8). Six unattributed engravings included two of the Exhibition Building, one of the Grand Ball Pavilion, and three of arches: the Pavilion at Bonsecours Wharf, the arch opposite Notre Dame Church at Place d'Armes, and one described as "at the head of M'Gill Street," which was in fact the arch at Victoria Square.²⁹ *The Illustrated London News* engravings are distinguished by the amount of detail they include; in contrast, the accompanying articles made no mention of the arches.

The authority of these artists' sketched versions of the events in *Demorest's*, *Harper's* and *The Illustrated London News* was none the less exceeded however by the images of the arches reproduced on 8 September in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of New York. *Frank Leslie's* images were engraved from "Photographs by William Notman of Montreal" (fig.9). Included are the six arches commissioned by the city, a view of the Prince of Wales' residence in Montréal and two images attributed to the newspaper's "special artist:" an exterior and interior view of the Grand Ball Pavilion. Text describing the visit and the participants in the procession is interspersed with these illustrations.

Comparison of the *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* engravings with original Notman photographs, however, demonstrates that liberties were taken when making the engravings, although basic architectural styles and elements remained the same. For example, the engravings were produced to represent the most exciting moment in the pageant when the procession passed by spectators and through an arch. In the engraving, crowds are gathered, honour guards positioned, and various riders and carriages depicted at every arch. In fact Notman photographs captured this moment at only two sites. This and other changes seen in other newspapers can be attributed in part to the need to concentrate as much information as possible in single views. Therefore, details such as the inscriptions were altered to adapt the engravings to the perceived needs and interests of the reading audience. For example, the photograph of the first arch at Jacques Cartier Square, shows the north side inscription "Victoria, Notre Auguste Et [...] Reine" (fig.2). This was changed for the American, English-speaking audience to the south side inscription "Welcome to Our Future King," clarifying that the visitor

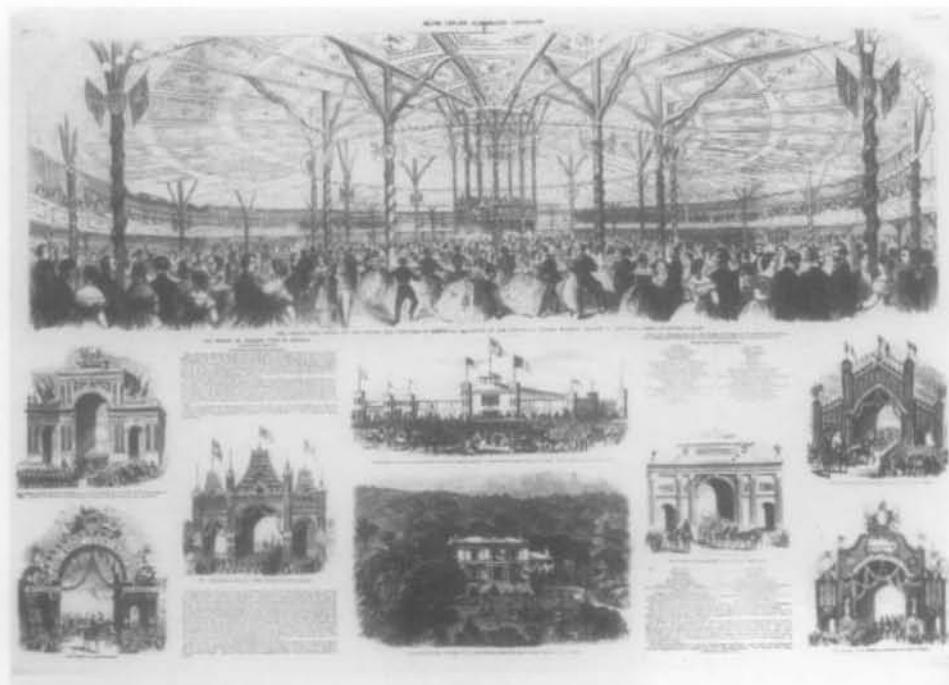


fig.9 The Prince of Wales's Tour in America, engraving, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 8 September 1860.

was the Prince of Wales and not, in fact, Queen Victoria. The exuberant French inscription, "Bien Venu!!!" on the arch at Victoria Square (fig.3) was translated to read "Welcome to Canada." And the city motto in Latin on the arch in the photograph of the Exhibition Building was replaced by the English inscription from the reverse side: "Arts, Agriculture and Commerce."

On the surface, these changes served to locate the pageant geographically for the audience, to clarify that the Prince of Wales rather than the Queen was the object of the display, and to allow those who read neither Latin nor French to understand the arches' inscriptions. The effacement of French from the photographs, however, substantially changed the meaning of these decorations. The social nuances and variety in the original programme of decorations contrived to display harmony and unity but this is nowhere evident in the *Frank Leslie's* engraved representations published for an American audience.

In his description of the Prince of Wales' tour, Henry James Morgan subsequently drew a link between the issues of loyalty, civic harmony, progress and prosperity, labour, and the decorations made for the occasion:

Montreal is to Canada what London is to Great Britain - the metropolis....

No wonder, then, that, as the richest city in British North America, she should give the Heir Apparent to the British Throne a reception so magnificent, which cannot but be always remembered, by, not only the Prince himself, but by all that had the good fortune to witness it.³⁰

The magnificence of the pageant and its decorations impressed upon viewers such as the British-Canadian Morgan the idea that Montréal was a city of opportunity and prosperity. Nor was it surprising to Morgan that such an obviously prosperous city should demonstrate its loyalty to its sovereign so ostentatiously. Morgan cites the arches as the outstanding representatives, in a particular way, of this magnificence: "The whole city was beautifully ornamented with flags, banners, trees, flowers, evergreens, transparencies, and arches, which for taste, skill, architecture, and varied beauty, can hardly be excelled; they appeared so very neat, beautiful, and substantial, and were adorned and painted so very elaborately."

As carriers of "taste, skill, architecture, and varied beauty," the arches portrayed an image of the cultural sophistication expected of any city with pretensions to metropolitan status in a global empire. Nicholas Woods, writing primarily for a London audience, agreed: "At such a capital, and among a people so celebrated, colonially speaking, for their wealth, taste, and refinement, it may readily be guessed that the preparations for doing honour to the heir apparent were made on a scale of unusual grandeur and magnificence."³¹

Visual representation is potent. Montréal could not have chosen a better means to engage the attention of an international audience and to persuasively articulate an identity engendering abstract values of loyalty, diversity, concord, and progress.

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Notes

1 "The Prince in Montreal," *Daily Globe* (Toronto), 28 Aug. 1860, 2. Although the Prince's ship arrived on 24 August the landing was delayed a day because of heavy rain.

2 40 000 persons were estimated in "The Prince of Wales at Montreal," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 8 Sept. 1860, and in Henry James MORGAN, *The Tour of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales Through British North America and the United States, by a British Canadian* (Montréal: John Lovell, 1860), 93. The crowd was estimated at 60,000 in "The Prince of Wales in Canada. The Prince at Montreal," *The Illustrated London News*, 15 Sept. 1860. 90,000 in "Arrivée du Prince à Montréal," *La Guêpe* (Montréal), 31 août 1860.

3 A civil engineer involved with the construction of the Victoria Bridge characterized it as "the addition of an eighth wonder to the world's museum;" see Charles LEGGE, *A Glance at the Victoria Bridge and the Men Who Built It* (Montréal: John Lovell, 1860), 30. See also Stanley TRIGGS, "The Bridge," in Stanley TRIGGS, et al., *Victoria Bridge: The Vital Link* (Montréal: McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1992), 36-73.

4 At least six books recounting the Prince of Wales' tour to North America were published. See Robert CELLEN, *Visit of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to the British American Provinces and United States in the Year 1860: Compiled from the Public Journals* (Toronto: Henry Rowsell, 1861); Kinahan CORNWALLIS, *Royalty in the New World: or The Prince of Wales in America* (London: A. Hall, Virtue, 1860); [Sir John] Gardner D. ENGLEHEART, *Journal of the Progress of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales Through British North America; and His Visit to the United States, 19th July to 15th November, 1860* (London: Chiswick Press, c.1860); Henry James MORGAN, *The Tour of H.R.H.; Relation du Voyage de Son Altesse Royale le Prince de Galles en Amérique: reproduite du "Journal de l'instruction publique du Bas-Canada" avec un appendice contenant diverses addresses* (Montréal: Eusebe Senecal, 1860); N.A. WOODS, *The Prince of Wales in Canada and the United States* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1861). For an overview of a variety of activities and visual materials manufactured for the event see Conrad GRAHAM, "The Celebration," in *Victoria Bridge: The Vital Link*, 74-95.

5 MORGAN, *The Tour of H.R.H.*, 91.

6 *Montreal Transcript*, 28 Aug. 1860. See also the *Daily Globe*, 27 Aug. 1860, 2; and MORGAN, *The Tour of H.R.H.*, 92-93.

7 For a history of British royal entries see Robert WITTINGTON, *English Pageantry: An Historical Outline*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918; New York and London: Benjamin Blom, 1963).

8 "Corporation of Montreal: Tenders for Arches," *Pilot* (Montréal), 13 June 1860. This as well as a French call for tender is found in a photocopy "Corporation de Montréal: Soutmissions pour Arcs-de-Triomphe," dossier, VM1/B1-1860-3, Ville de Montréal, Gestion de documents et des archives.

9 Charles Glackmeyer, City Clerk to Messrs. McArthur and Spence, 26 June 1860, dossier, VM1/B1-1860-3. McArthur and Spence's original proposal and designs have not been located.

10 "Report from the Special Committee on the celebration in honor of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales," 12 June 1860, dossier, VM1/B1-1860-3. Building the welcoming arch at Bonsecours Wharf was later taken on as a project of the Harbour Commissioners who had been asked to make necessary arrangements to accommodate the Prince's arrival. Four additional arches were reported to have been erected by private citizens: one at the entrance to McGill College, photographed by the Notman studio; one at St. Lawrence Main Street and Dorchester, erected by "Messrs. Morrow, Walker and other spirited tradesmen." Although discussion of the "private" arches falls outside the purview of this essay, they were described in the local press: "Preparations for the Prince in Montreal," *Montreal Gazette*, 13 Aug. 1860. See also "The Arch in St. Lawrence Main Street," *Pilot*,

- 22 Aug. 1860; another on Wellington Street at Nicholas, put up by Griffintown residents "Preparations," *Gazette*, 13 Aug. 1860, and "The Illuminations. The Triumphal Arches," *Montreal Witness*, 29 Aug. 1860; and a fourth on the Wellington Street Bridge installed by the Canal Commissioners and photographed by the Notman studio, "The Triumphal Arches," *Montreal Witness*, 4 Aug. 1860.
- 11 "Report from the Special Committee on the celebration in honor of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales," 12 June 1860, dossier, VM1/B1-1860-3.
- 12 *Chisholm's Stranger's Guide to Montreal* (Montréal: Chisholm and Bros., 1871), 31.
- 13 The most complete description of the route is found in an advertisement headed "Prince de Galles" placed by the City of Montreal in *La Guêpe*, 7 août 1860. See also MORGAN, *Relation du Voyage*, 38; *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 8 Sept. 1860; and "The Prince of Wales at Montreal," *The Illustrated London News*, 22 Sept. 1860.
- 14 *Montreal Transcript*, 28 Aug. 1860.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 *Census Report of the Canadas 1860/61* (Québec: S.B. Foote, 1863-64), Table No. 1, 4-5. Montréal's population was 90,323 persons.
- 17 "The Prince in Montreal," *Daily Globe*, 28 Aug. 1860.
- 18 Kinahan CORNWALLIS, *Royalty in the New World; or The Prince of Wales in America* (London: A. Hall, Virtue, 1860), 4-5.
- 19 "Counseil-de-Ville," *La Guêpe*, 7 août 1860; "Continuation de l'Itinéraire du Prince," *La Minerve*, 18 septembre 1860; "Regret et étonnement du Globe etc.," *Le Canadian* (Québec), 27 août 1860.
- 20 Phyllis LAMBERT, "Removing the Fortifications: Toward a New Urban Form," in *Opening the Gates of Eighteenth-Century Montréal*, ed. Phyllis Lambert and Alan Stewart (Montréal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1992), 80.
- 21 The album was acquired from Captain John P.T. Dawson, R.C.N. (Retired) of Victoria, B.C. The volume contains images of various sizes, from 3" x 3" single stereograph frames to 8" x 10" prints of Canadian views made by the Notman, Henderson and Livernois studios between 1860 and 1872, as well as photographic portraits of politicians including Abraham Lincoln and D'Arcy McGee and photographic copies of paintings and sculptures.
- 22 Notman's stereograph catalogue lists twelve photographs of Montréal's arches as well as eleven of the arches at Québec. See #539-545, #553-555 and #559-560 in [William] Notman, (...) *Victoria Bridge, Niagara Falls, Principal Cities and Places of Interest Throughout Canada, c.1861*, 25-26.
- 23 The engravings, like the stereographs, served a secondary purpose as souvenirs.
- 24 The *Times* of London was the only paper to acknowledge the financial problems of the Grand Trunk Company (which was receiving much attention in the Canadian press) in connection with the Prince's visit, commenting that "we certainly could have wished that the journey of the Prince had some better chosen object than the opening of a work the proprietors of which were notoriously in a state of insolvency," 31 Oct. 1860.
- 25 These illustrations would have been especially provocative in New York where the press indulged in a great deal of hand-wringing prior to Prince of Wales arrival there. Their concern that the welcome accorded him be of sufficient splendour was not in deference to his title but for the good of New York's reputation. Judging by the accounts in the New York press, the performance there did not measure up to the pomp at Montréal.
- 26 "The Triumphal Arches at Montreal in Honor of the Prince of Wales," *Demorest's New York Illustrated News*, 1 Sept. 1860.

- 27 "Statement of the expenses incurred by the Special Committee appointed to make arrangements for the reception of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales," 10 Sept. 1860, dossier, VM1/B1-1860-3. The total cost of the reception, as outlined in this statement, was \$10,669.86.
- 28 "The Prince's Progress," *Montreal Gazette*, 27 Aug. 1860, front page. Reprinted in the *Montreal Weekly*, 1 Sept. 1860. The poor quality of these engravings precludes reproduction here.
- 29 This arch was called "Haymarket" in *Harper's Weekly* and the *Montreal Herald*. There was some confusion in the coverage between the official arches and two privately-subscribed arches at the entrance to McGill College and at Haymarket Square in the Irish section of Griffintown west of the Victoria Bridge. No photograph or illustration of the latter arch has been found.
- 30 MORGAN, *The Tour of H.R.H.*, 93-94.
- 31 WOODS, *The Prince of Wales*, 112-113.

Résumé

CONCORDIA SALUS

Des arcs de triomphe à Montréal en 1860

D e la visite du prince de Galles à Montréal, en 1860, et du spectacle du défilé sous une enfilade de neuf arcs de triomphe temporaires, il nous reste un important fonds d'archives visuelles. Elles se composent d'une série de stéréographies des arcs, réalisées et vendues par le studio de photographie William Notman de Montréal, ainsi que de gravures reproduites dans des journaux au Canada, aux États-Unis et en Angleterre. Cette abondance de vestiges visuels est complétée par des rapports dans des journaux de Montréal, New York et Londres, réédités sous forme de livres. Je voudrais démontrer que la signification historique de ces témoignages visuels ne se trouve pas dans ce qu'ils semblent rapporter mais qu'ils devaient plutôt servir à présenter, à certains auditoires divers mais également intéressés, un concept abstrait complexe: celui que Montréal, métropole de l'Amérique du Nord britannique, était une ville modèle au sein de l'empire britannique, culturellement diversifiée mais loyale, où l'on trouvait des dissensions ethniques mais aussi la concorde, et finalement définie comme une économie industrielle. Bien en évidence sur les inscriptions des arcs de triomphe, ainsi que sur les descriptions et représentations subséquentes des arcs, se retrouvent les thèmes de la loyauté et de l'harmonie civique au milieu de la diversité linguistique. De plus, les arcs, par leur taille et leur splendeur, donnaient l'image de la prospérité économique et de la puissance.

L'accueil mitigé devant la visibilité des deux communautés linguistiques suggère, cependant, que tout n'était pas aussi harmonieux que pouvait le laisser croire le spectacle officiel. Une certaine tension s'insinue dans les commentaires britanniques, américains et du Haut-Canada à propos de la place envahissante de la culture française de Montréal. Ainsi, une attaque cinglante du *Daily Globe* de Toronto, à propos de l'image de Montréal comme ville essentiellement de langue française, exprime le souhait et montre l'espoir que le défilé, et ce qu'on en raconterait, ait un caractère résolument britannique. Au lieu de cela, les décorations le long du parcours suivi par le prince, lors de sa réception par la ville, montraient une juxtaposition harmonieuse de groupes français et anglais. Alors qu'à l'extérieur les commentaires éditoriaux révélaient l'espoir de l'assimilation, à Montréal toute dissension était occultée par l'apparence d'unité produite par les décorations et les allocutions au cours de l'événement, tout particulièrement au nouveau *Victoria Square*.

Lors d'une réunion en 1860, le conseil municipal de Montréal avait adopté une résolution visant à changer le nom du *Commissioners' Square*, qui rappelait les responsables de la démolition des vieux murs de la ville cinquante ans auparavant, en *Victoria Square*, en l'honneur de la reine et de la visite prochaine du prince de Galles. Les conseillers canadiens-français s'opposèrent au changement en utilisant un langage jugé inapproprié dans les journaux anglais aussi bien que français, bien que les journaux français aient été unanimes à trouver que leur comportement, bien qu'inapproprié, était justifié. Ironiquement, le changement de nom du square pour honorer la reine était dans la ligne de pensée des anciens commissaires. Néanmoins, la vigoureuse polémique au sujet du changement de nom est absente de toutes les descriptions visuelles et écrites de ce site, objet d'une dispute passionnée.

Au milieu du siècle dernier, à Montréal, la presse et la photographie permettaient la diffusion d'images de la visite royale bien au-delà de la portée géographique et publique de l'événement. Les lecteurs des journaux illustrés, en Grande-Bretagne et en Amérique du Nord, devinrent le public élargi du spectacle montréalais - ou, plus précisément, d'une certaine représentation de ce spectacle. La plus grande partie de ce public appartenait à la même classe économique que les organisateurs de l'événement de Montréal et avait un intérêt matériel dans la promotion de Montréal comme endroit propice aux affaires. L'intention de présenter la ville comme une métropole économiquement stable et pourvue d'amples ressources humaines se retrouvait sous une forme modifiée et concentrée au moyen des images diffusées internationalement.

Une liste des stéréographies des arcs de triomphe est incluse dans le catalogue de vente du studio Notman, vers 1861. Le sujet inhabituel des images et leur large diffusion, d'abord sous forme de stéréographies puis comme gravures, montrent qu'elles sont des représentations significatives de la sorte de ville que les édiles montréalais voulaient représenter. C'est ainsi que *Demorest's New York*

Illustrated News publie un luxe de gravures, sur deux pages, pour faire voir aux lecteurs la splendeur des préparatifs mis en œuvre par la ville pour recevoir le prince de Galles. Des productions aussi soignées que celle de *Demorest's* donnent une idée de l'envergure de l'entreprise montréalaise. Les rédacteurs qui ont rapporté l'événement l'ont fait visuellement avec une emphase comparable, laquelle, à son tour, embellissait et amplifiait le spectacle original. Les images des décorations du défilé reprenaient ce propos sans donner une analyse critique du contenu. Ces journaux ont plutôt contribué avec enthousiasme à l'aspect spectaculaire de l'événement.

La valeur des croquis d'artiste de l'événement, reproduits dans *Demorest's*, *Harper's* et *The Illustrated London News*, était cependant contestée par les représentations des arcs gravées à partir des photographies de William Notman, de Montréal, et reproduites dans *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* de New York. Une comparaison des gravures de *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* avec les photos originales de Notman montre qu'on se permettait des libertés en faisant les gravures.

On peut attribuer les modifications en partie au besoin de concentrer autant d'information que possible dans une seule image. On a, par conséquent, modifié certains détails, comme les inscriptions, pour adapter les gravures aux besoins et intérêts supposés des lecteurs. À titre d'exemple, l'inscription sur le premier arc, square Jacques-Cartier, qui, sur la photo, se lit: «Victoria, Notre Auguste Et [] Reine», a été changée en: «Welcome to Our Future King», et l'inscription française «Bien Venu!!!» sur l'arc du square Victoria a été traduite en: «Welcome to Canada». Ainsi, alors que les nuances sociales et la variété du programme décoratif original tendaient à démontrer l'harmonie et l'unité, cela n'est nulle part en évidence dans les représentations gravées de *Frank Leslie's*.

La représentation visuelle était très efficace. Montréal n'aurait pu choisir de meilleur moyen d'attirer l'attention de la classe moyenne internationale et de formuler de manière persuasive une identité porteuse des valeurs abstraites de loyauté, diversité, concorde, modernité et progrès.

Traduction: Élise Bonnette