



Bernard Glemser, John Gregory Alford, c.1934. (Photo: University of Toronto Archives)

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINE ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 1926-1945

Institutionalizing the 'Culture of the Aesthetic'

The University must not overlook its duty to present and conserve aesthetic values.
The beautiful is linked with the true and the good.

Henry John Cody

In June 1934, John Alford, a British lecturer from the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London, was engaged as the first Chair of Fine Art at the University of Toronto. His appointment concluded an exhaustive search that took over six years; it involved two of the University's presidents Robert Falconer and his successor, Henry John Cody, as well as a host of art specialists in Canada, the United States and England.¹ The appointment of Alford also brought the University into a cultural-funding alliance with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the trust organized by Scottish steel magnate Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to broadly promote "the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding among the people of the United States."²

At the University of Toronto the broadly conceived fine arts program was described by Cody as a "vital agency of civilization."³ The British critic, F.R. Leavis envisaged universities as the last bastion "of cultural tradition...a directing force, representing a wisdom older than modern civilization and having an authority that should check and control the blind drive onward of material and mechanical development."⁴ The University's male students were drawn from society's elite and were thus seen to exercise significant and legitimate authority. They were crucial to the project of sustaining and disseminating forms of high culture to the masses in an age that some heralded as being characterized by crass commercialism and vulgar popular amusements. For Carnegie president Frederick Keppel (1875-1943), university men were the enterprising element behind any successful arts program as they were the individuals most "capable of doing something worthwhile, rather than [simply]...carry[ing] out a predetermined procedure."⁵ University of Toronto presidents Falconer and Cody were in accord with the Carnegie's cultural agendas; their concept of the role of leadership is encapsulated in Cody's references to "the ample knowledge and clear thought of the university-trained man"⁶ and the use of "knowledge, culture, and discipline in the service of the community."⁷ The university's male

elite was popularly acknowledged as embodying the “true academic spirit [that] can help to form sound and strong public opinion.”⁸ With the Carnegie’s offer to fund a Chair in Fine Arts, University administrators began in the late 1920s to look for “a man...who would not only fill the chair acceptably but be a natural leader for the art interests in the community.”⁹ They also heeded Keppel’s suggestion “that the establishment of a professorship at the University of Toronto might have an influence as important outside the academic walls as within them.”¹⁰ After all, Cody described the University as a “servant of the community.”¹¹ The University administration concluded that the “right” man was John Alford.

This is a contextual study of the founding of the Chair of Fine Art and ultimately the Department of Fine Art at the University of Toronto between 1926 and 1945. It focuses on the ideas that supported its foundation and highlights the cultural function of a fine arts education, particularly the ways in which disciplinary knowledge was conceived and produced within community as well as professional artistic discourses, and imagined through gendered categories.¹² In inquiring into the social institutions of art – in this case a university fine art department – I intend to illustrate the way discourses on art were authorized, enabled, empowered and legitimized in what Pierre Bourdieu has called the “field of cultural production.”¹³ I will argue that the power to define what is “art,” who is an “artist,” and especially the cultural and social function of art is not restricted to a discrete clique of artists, critics, curators, dealers and collectors, but must be extended to include a host of community agents: in this case, the university professoriate and its senior administrators.

Any study of fine art education in this period must inevitably be contextualized within issues of cultural policy, the role of art and artists in society, and broader questions regarding the effects of an education in the fine arts. In the 1920s vestiges of the ideas of influential Arts and Crafts movement were still prevalent in Canada. The movement had attempted to redesign society through education in reaction to what its advocates deemed the socially alienating and deleterious effects of nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization.¹⁴ Clearly these discussions, which began to crystallize in the late 1920s, had a significant impact upon the University of Toronto’s establishment of a Chair of Fine Art, and subsequently the Department of Fine Art and its philosophies, staffing, and curriculum.¹⁵ The appointment of its staff helped shape artistic discourses in the community for decades to come, and I would argue that these discourses presaged the themes of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1949-51), commonly known as the Massey-Lévesque Commission. I propose that the centrality of the educational systems at both the school and university level developed and circulated the notion that art is nothing less than the keystone of a democratic social order.

Accordingly, I challenge a view persistently held by many Canadian historians that the Massey-Lévesque Report was the watershed of Canadian cultural policy from which all else originates.¹⁶ I suggest instead that decades earlier cultural nationalists in university art departments, colleges and schools were already engaged in a discourse on the relationship between the arts and nation-building.

American Philanthropy and the Fostering the Fine Arts in the University

In 1923 under its fifth president, Frederick Paul Keppel, the Carnegie Corporation launched an expansive program of funding that focused on libraries, adult education and the arts.¹⁷ These programs were, according to Ellen Lagemann, steered by “the interests, knowledge, circle of acquaintances, and personalities of the Corporation’s trustees, officers, and staff...determining how and to what extent its potential was realized.”¹⁸ Accordingly during Keppel’s nineteen-year term, which ended with his retirement in 1941, the Corporation’s national and international arts funding programs undertook to promote the centrality of the arts within a liberal humanist vision.¹⁹ Keppel oversaw the promotion of the study and appreciation of “Great Art,” and especially art’s role in explaining the human condition, by linking it to social and community regeneration and to national progress.²⁰ It was, in part, a program designed to rarefy and institutionalize a dominant Western cultural and aesthetic heritage. Keppel also wanted to secure the study of art history as an important part of the university curriculum, believing that “Art is deep rooted in human life; it is today as nearly always in the past a most important factor in human behaviour.”²¹ The university meanwhile was the foundation’s “social instrument” for educational and cultural “betterment.” Keppel saw a mutually beneficial relationship between the university and the Corporation, claiming that “the university is constantly bringing to light opportunities for the foundation in the form of enterprises which no institution could carry through unaided, but from which all institutions and all communities might profit.”²²

A former Dean of Columbia College (1910-17), Keppel was well-versed and personally interested in the effects that the fine arts could have on the university, particularly on its male students, and on the broader community. In his biographical account of Keppel’s tenure as an administrator at Columbia, Henry James has suggested that Keppel believed the “business of school and college education...was the making of boys into men.”²³ University administrators in Toronto shared Keppel’s liberal humanist ideals about the place of art in the world, particularly its role in higher education. In a paper originally delivered to the Ontario Educational Association on the role of the university in national life, University of Toronto president Henry Cody argued that “the University must not overlook its duty to present and conserve aesthetic values. The

beautiful is linked with the true and the good. The history and interpretation of art will stimulate an appreciation for the beautiful and will exercise a beneficent influence on every field of human activity. More and more the University will become an apostle of things pure and lovely and of good report."²⁴ For Cody, "no education...[was] complete without seeking to instill a knowledge and love of beauty."²⁵ In his 1934-35 "President's Report," Cody defiantly noted that the cultivation of the critical eye should emphasize traditionalism and adherence to the art historical canon. He remarked that "this department will keep teaching distinct from propaganda in the field of art. It will not be the prophet of any special school or group, but will seek to present to the students the products of successive ages for their understanding and appreciation."²⁶ To authorize the fine arts in a university setting, administrators envisioned a department that severed the theoretical deliberation of academics from the practical work of artists.²⁷ The university appropriated the classical role of training "professional gentlemen" who would one day assume their place in the political elite.²⁸ This was a far cry from Ontario's earlier art education training curricula which had seen the union of mental and manual processes as fundamental to any study of the arts.

Carnegie Funding of the Fine Arts

Throughout the 1920s, the University of Toronto enjoyed relative financial prosperity, but declining funding to higher education institutions in the early 1930s and the encroaching Depression would make the Carnegie's financial contribution crucial to establishing the Chair of Fine Art at the University of Toronto.²⁹ Cody's biographer, D.C. Masters, has suggested that from the beginning of his administration Cody was gravely concerned and "personally embarrassed by the university's finances," and saw Carnegie funding as vital to the realization of a department of fine art. The establishment of the Chair was an important step in this direction.³⁰ Cody assiduously pursued all avenues to secure money from philanthropic organizations, writing extended grant applications that set out the University's needs to establish or maintain programs, and explaining how they would ultimately benefit the broader community, particularly the education of adults and even children.

The Carnegie Corporation's arts funding was readily accepted by cash-strapped Canadian universities. However, by the late 1930s it was viewed by an emerging group of nationalists as nothing less than an invading cultural force.³¹ These misgivings were not without substance. In 1926, the Carnegie Corporation presented several Canadian universities, including the University of Toronto, with an Arts Teaching Set.³² This gift, which included books, prints, textiles, and photographs dealing primarily with the history of Western art, initiated an arts granting program that by 1935 amounted to a little over

\$412,000.³³ Perhaps more crucial than gifts of resources or curriculum materials were the inroads the Corporation made into Canadian universities – with the blessings of their chief administrators. For example, when the University of Toronto appointed Alford to the Chair of Fine Art in 1934, the Carnegie had funded art and aesthetics courses at Acadia University under the American Walter Abell in 1928, a Chair in Music at the University of Saskatchewan in 1931 under Arthur Collingwood, courses in art at McMaster University in 1932 under Lester Longman, and courses in studio art at Queen's University in 1933 under Goodridge Roberts.

To the chagrin of its detractors, the Carnegie Corporation underwrote the 1941 Conference of Canadian Artists in Kingston, the event that resulted in the formation of the Federation of Canadian Artists. However, factions both within and outside the Federation began to argue that a unified high culture was critical to the nationalist ambitions of a democratic society, and to the development of a distinct Canadian identity.³⁴ As Paul Litt has pointed out, these cultural-nationalist ideas found a vocal platform in the early 1950s in the Massey-Lévesque Report. Most of the strident cultural nationalists at the Commission hearings had been intimately involved with the Carnegie Corporation over the previous two decades, but now they charged that “American cultural influences would smother a new Canadianism in its cradle.”³⁵ Chief among them were university faculty members whose own departments and even academic positions were the result of Carnegie funding.³⁶

These shifting alliances indicate that, far from being viewed as an invading cultural force, Carnegie funding and support were adeptly used by Canadian artists' groups and universities to further their own long-term agendas for the arts in Canada and to secure a state-funded program of arts patronage. Keppel would not have seen this as a rejection of earlier loyalties but as a natural evolution of how Carnegie funding would, and should, eventually give way to local leadership in cultural affairs.³⁷ The Carnegie Corporation's funding of university art departments made it possible to establish a grassroots organization of resident intellectuals who were eager to define, authorize, and circulate their own version of cultural nationalism.³⁸ Seen from this perspective, the Corporation's influence on the field of art history in higher education in Canada takes on a significant and not fully acknowledged importance.

The Fine Arts in the University: The Impact of J.W.L. Forster and Arthur Lismer

The proposed establishment of the Chair at the University of Toronto also had a Canadian benefactor. Sometime in the mid-1920s, Canadian portrait artist J.W.L. Forster (1850-1938) offered the University a \$50,000 endowment to fund “a Department of Aesthetics or a Chair of Fine Art.”³⁹ As early as 1894,

Forster had written about the role of art and aesthetics in the university in the context of attempting to establish an art school in Toronto.⁴⁰ He also wrote prolifically on art, history, ethics and education, and had attempted for some six years to promote the formation of a fine arts department at the University of Toronto by sending copies of his writings on the subject to Falconer, making suggestions for suitable candidates, and trying to keep the issue at the forefront of Falconer's agenda.

In a series of letters written in the late 1920s, Forster suggested to Falconer that the proposed department would have the approval of a large group of Toronto's elite who could be counted upon for financial support.⁴¹ Forster wrote to Falconer in December 1928 suggesting John Bickle as a possible candidate to head the department. Bickle seemed an appropriate choice because he "takes an interest in Art, having bought some good pictures. He certainly is active in industries where the arts should have attention...he must soon cast about for [an] opportunity [to acquire] the...more than needful wealth he already possesses."⁴² In Forster's view, a man of wealth and leisure who took an interest in art – a connoisseur, rather than an academic – was an appropriate choice for the position of Chair.

In an earlier article published in *The Week* (Toronto) and Victoria College's journal *Acta Victoriana*, Forster envisaged the contemporary artist not as an isolated bohemian toiling at the margins of obscurity, but as a professional man who served the community morally, spiritually, and aesthetically. He added that "amongst the professions, the one that has received the least assistance from the schools is that of the artist...they are supplying curricula for the miner, agriculturist, manufacturer, electrician, for statecraft, law, healing, morals, music, etc., yet they are merely beginning to consider Art and Aesthetics as fundamentals to the better modes of life."⁴³ The artist, he mused, was often "indifferent to his craft, to the moral influence of his productions, and to the respect...accorded to his profession." Forster added that the artist "has been infatuated with the technique of his work, and forgetful of other paramount qualities."⁴⁴ He continued:

I would ask for my profession the most scholarly instruction in art history to be had, a knowledge of what the art of the world, both ancient and modern, has had to do in influencing the domestic and social life of the nations, and how much of national history may be read in their art. The growth of style, of ornament and design, of the many decorative features that mark tribal kinships; the ethical side of art; the art impulse, its power and direction; beauty and the whole library of aesthetic literature having foundation in the art sense – all these are his birthright, and should be placed before him.

Forster was adamant that artistic feeling was present in varying degrees in the "whole human family."⁴⁵ In the quest for "not more life, but better life...and high ideals," he suggested that the education system should strive to provide an "intellectual and healthy leisure...for the millions who are said to toil incessantly, and also for the thousands who rest continually."⁴⁶ Yet his main concern was against the increasing leisure afforded the very wealthy. In an essay entitled "Art and Artists in Ontario," he delineated how pioneer life had prevented the growth of a culture of the aesthetic.⁴⁷ In another publication, he reasoned that unbridled wealth and a predilection for luxury led directly "to decay and degradation," not aesthetic development. Aesthetic study therefore was seen to "promote the culture of the finer graces of character by some occupations of the mind...and provide a larger mental outlook, particularly for the wealthy."⁴⁸

Forster also distinguished between what he defined as two complementary natures of aesthetic contemplation, one for the professional man and the other for the amateur woman homemaker. For the former, aesthetics would serve to develop taste and the appreciation of beauty, whereas women's interest in art and aesthetics was restricted to the home sphere. These dual "natures" were seen as thriving in the college atmosphere. Forster suggested that: "A place in the Calendar for Art and Aesthetics may be advocated as a blessing to the homes of our country, as an aid to the ideals of our youth, as a moral specific in our social and public life, and as the grace and crown of our national well-being."⁴⁹ He went on to cite several possible curriculum models to follow, including those inaugurated at Oxford by John Ruskin, Slade Professor of Art in 1869.⁵⁰

Forster's understanding of the function of the arts in society, in education, and in daily life clearly invoked Ruskin's social-aesthetic theory of environmental determinism. Ruskin's analysis of visual perception as an educational tool that could encompass democratic social implications, yet train the mental discipline of elite male students, was vital to the philosophical argument that underlay the fine arts in the university within the English-speaking world. For Ruskin, whose ideas were well-known and readily adopted at the University of Toronto, the teaching of art was part of a wider and deeper campaign to halt what he saw as the "destruction of nature and the corruption of men's souls."⁵¹ Ironically, philanthropic organizations run by women became the chief disseminators of Ruskin's theories in Canada and provided, in part, the impetus for his institutional endeavours. However, the university's mandate to produce competent male professionals to undertake the stewardship of local, regional, and national cultural matters, relegated women to the margins of museum appreciation and the traditional domestic crafts.⁵²

For his part, Falconer made extensive use of Arthur Lismer's essay "The Value, Meaning and Place of Art in Education," published in *The Dalhousie Review* in 1928. Lismer, whom Falconer knew from the Toronto Arts and Letters Club, shared Forster's belief that shaping the aesthetic experience of young men was the province of the university. Although better known as a founding member of the Group of Seven and as a proponent of children's art, by the 1930s Lismer was regarded as a notable authority on art education, particularly as it was organized and taught in formal and informal educational settings.⁵³ A prodigious writer on the subject of the arts in education, he served terms as President of the Victoria School of Art and Design (1916-19, now the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design), and as Educational Supervisor of Art at the Art Gallery of Toronto (1927-38). He also attempted, without success, to initiate a national art education program in conjunction with the National Gallery of Canada.⁵⁴ Bemoaning the lack of fine art courses in universities, Lismer stressed that Canadian institutions lagged behind their counterparts in Great Britain, continental Europe and the United States, and claimed that Canadian universities had not grasped the place of art in modern education.⁵⁵ Courses in art were not "for those alone who desire a cultural background," but were also relevant to studies in religion, philosophy, science, and literature. Lismer conceived of the university as a place in which the demands of industrialism would be superseded by an atmosphere of study in which art served "as a pathway, a way of life. Departments of Fine Art would provide a way towards a more complete perception of life: The study of Art in relation to life placed in university training would enable our students to grasp the idea of life as a whole."⁵⁶ He was adamant, however, that the art school, not a university fine art department, was the place to train the artist and the craftsman.⁵⁷

In order to find a suitable candidate for the prospective Chair of Fine Art, Falconer made inquiries in Britain with his former undergraduate professor, G. Baldwin Brown, who was then Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh. James Greenlee, Falconer's biographer, has suggested that it was Brown who first stimulated Falconer's interest in classical sculpture and Christian painting – topics on which Falconer lectured and wrote in the early part of the century.⁵⁸ Falconer also made discrete inquiries through Lawrence Binyon at the British Museum, and with other contacts at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the University of Liverpool.⁵⁹ In May 1932, clearly exasperated with the lack of progress on the founding of a Department of Aesthetics or a Chair of Fine Art, Forster wrote to the Board of Governors withdrawing his offer of the endowment. Falconer expressed his deep regret about Forster's decision, proposed that they meet, and explained that he had been unable to find a suitable candidate.⁶⁰ In considering a prospective Chair of Fine Art and an eventual department, President Falconer (and later Cody)

acknowledged many of Forster's and Lismer's arguments about the function of art in society, its role in the university curriculum and its prospective student audience, although Forster was not in accord with Falconer's understanding of who constituted an appropriate candidate. With Falconer's retirement in 1932, the responsibility for establishing the Chair fell exclusively to his successor, Henry J. Cody.

English Connections

University of Toronto administrators, following traditional hiring practices, made use of local and international artistic contacts to search for a Chair. Under Falconer's (1907-32) and Cody's (1932-44) presidential tenures, hirings at the University were controlled by the president, who either initiated the search or acted as an advisor, or relied upon personal and professional academic contacts to find a likely candidate if one had not been identified from the start. In the first half of the twentieth century the University of Toronto was British in tone, curriculum, and hiring practices,⁶¹ and not surprisingly both Falconer and Cody were predisposed to look for a British male to fit their vision of the appropriate candidate. In the late 1920s and the early 30s and in tandem with circumspect inquiries in Toronto,⁶² Falconer and Cody consulted a variety of British art experts, seeking advice on possible candidates and suggestions for a program of studies. The University's relationship with Edinburgh's Fine Art Department was especially collegial and beneficial. With the death of Baldwin Brown in 1930, Edinburgh was also looking for a Chair for its own department. Once its process for finding a candidate was completed, Thomas Holland, a member of Edinburgh's search committee, confidentially supplied Cody with its list of rejected candidates, complete with original applications and references. Interestingly, three of the approximately thirty applicants were displaced German or Jewish art historians residing in England. Indicative of the discriminatory sentiments against such refugees, in the margins next to the names of Nikolaus Pevsner, Rudolf Wittkower, and R.H. Wilenski, someone had taken care to note the applicants' age, nationality and ancestry. Thomas Holland also sent a copy of a letter they had received from art historian W.G. Constable, who was one of University of Toronto's key advisors on this hiring. Constable had written to members of the Edinburgh committee, strongly urging their appointment of Erwin Panofsky. Although Edinburgh eventually hired Herbert Read in 1931, Holland advised Cody to pursue Panofsky as a candidate for the Toronto vacancy.⁶³ Cody did not take any action, although he hired refugee professors at the University during the 1930s and fully supported the incipient Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning in 1939, organized to offer succour to European emigré scholars, most of whom were Jewish.

If Cody showed little interest in an academic with established ideas and temperament, he apparently had no intention of hiring a woman for the Chair of Fine Art, as Eleanor Shepherd-Thompson discovered. She was a graduate of Trinity College, University of Toronto, and one of the original fourteen residents of St. Hilda's College, the first women's residence at the University. Shepherd-Thompson completed a B.A. and M.A. in Languages at the University of Toronto and in 1934 received only the second Ph.D. in Fine Art (in the double field of Art and Education) awarded by the School of Education at Columbia University.⁶⁴ Before leaving Toronto to undertake her doctoral work in 1929, Shepherd-Thompson was on the teaching staff at Central Technical School and the Toronto Normal School, having done her training at Teacher's College, New York. She seems to have been a member of Cody's congregation at St. Paul's Church, and wrote to him repeatedly between 1931 and 1933, keeping him abreast of her doctoral studies and asking to be considered for the position of Chair in the Fine Art Department. She also mentioned that any teaching position in a fine art department would be acceptable.⁶⁵ In 1932 she tried to allay any concerns the President might have about her dissertation topic, "Training Girls for Art Vocations." She noted that "it has a definite secondary value in giving me first-hand contacts with many different types of Art Schools and the content of their courses of study."⁶⁶ A letter from Carnegie's Keppel to President Cody in 1936 makes it clear that Shepherd-Thompson blamed Carnegie's meddling in Canadian universities for being passed over: "I should warn you confidentially that Mrs. Eleanor Shepherd-Thomson was in New York during the holidays and talked with one of my colleagues.... She is doing her best to misunderstand the intentions of the Corporation in regard to the assistance we have given to the arts at the University."⁶⁷ Shepherd-Thompson was undoubtedly aware that Carnegie had just awarded the University an additional \$4,800 grant to establish a two-year lectureship in fine art under Peter Brieger, a German refugee then working at the Courtauld Institute.⁶⁸ During Cody's tenure as President, the University of Toronto was not inclined to hire women into the higher ranks of the professoriate, reflecting the gender bias in Canadian society. Women who had earned Ph.D.s and had stellar teaching and publication records, rarely rose above the level of instructor or teaching assistant let alone becoming a full professor.⁶⁹

John Alford, Chair of Fine Art, 1934-45

John Alford's appointment in 1934 was accomplished with the support of W.G. Constable, whose success as an art historian had led to him being named Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London, and advisor to both the Carnegie Corporation and the University of Toronto.⁷⁰ At the time of his hiring Alford was a part-time lecturer at the Institute of Education

at the University of London and at the Courtauld, where he was preparing a Ph.D. thesis under Constable. He was also an artist who exhibited with the London Group of Painters. Although he had been teaching at the Courtauld since 1932, his name was not submitted as a possible candidate for the position in Toronto until the summer of 1934, when it was put forward by Constable.⁷¹ Documentary records suggest that although Cody was in England that summer, he did not meet Alford until well after the appointment was made. (It had been negotiated, except for salary, entirely by Constable.) To formalize the process, Constable submitted a reference letter suggesting that "[Alford's] combination of wide interests, well-founded knowledge, and enthusiasm and ability to interest and inspire students would enable...[him] to do first-rate work in Toronto."⁷² Although lacking extensive scholarly experience and the advanced academic credentials that marked most chair-holders at the University of Toronto at the time (Alford never completed his Ph.D.), he was the "president's choice for the position," according to the *Varsity*.⁷³

Alford's elite pedigree undoubtedly appealed to Cody. The son of Sir Edward Fleet Alford and the grandson of Bishop Charles Richard Alford of Hong Kong, he had received his secondary education at Tonbridge School and completed a B.A. and M.A. at King's College, Cambridge, specializing in history and the moral sciences. He enlisted in World War I as an ambulance attendant and later did a year of post-graduate work in psychology at University College, London. At that time he resided in Toynbee Hall, a settlement home well-known to University of Toronto officials and one that had profoundly influenced their own initiatives at Evangelia House.⁷⁴ He had also been on the voluntary staff of the Agenda Club, a social service organization; Cody would have been pleased by his interests in the wider community. Alford's formal academic experience in the arts was his five-year sojourn in Italy and France from 1925 to 1930. Sir Percy Nunn, Director of the Institute of Education at the University of London, suggested that among Alford's other notable characteristics, he was "a cultivated soldier and man of the world."⁷⁵ With the Carnegie's promise to fund Alford's salary for five years,⁷⁶ Cody proceeded to implement a three-year "pass" course similar to that offered by the Courtauld Institute. He adhered to the Courtauld's view that the history of art "had a general appeal, while at the same time [students] are brought into touch with the history of social life and culture in their widest aspects."⁷⁷ Alford's candidacy would enable Toronto to carry out its ambition to establish the first "serious study in this country of the History of Art."

Writing in 1969, Dorothy Farr noted that "Professor Alford was not an art historian, with stress on the word 'historian,' as are the majority of personnel in the department today, but rather was a student of culture, a social philosopher educated in all the arts, with a concentration on the visual arts."⁷⁸ Nevertheless,

Alford's arrival in the fall of 1934 hit all the right chords with local art communities and the University. He promoted the embellishment of public schools and buildings with artwork, publicly complimented the National Gallery on its methods of conserving Old Master paintings and, importantly, he vehemently declined to offer his opinion on Canadian art until he had made a more thorough survey. Acknowledging Alford's training at the Courtauld, his "breadth of vision, acuteness of judgment and catholicity of taste," the *Toronto Mail* echoed Cody's views in proclaiming that "we may safely assume that his statement of policy covers all that is necessary, provided he does not permit his judgment to be unduly influenced by extramural agencies working in the interest of narrow, self-constituted cliques, groups or faddists afflicted with eccentric ideas of contemporary expression."⁷⁹ *Saturday Night* duly endorsed Alford by suggesting that "painting, sculpture, poetry, drama, psychology would seem to be more than sufficient equipment for a Professor of Fine Art."⁸⁰ Alford's attitude to the arts and curriculum programming would, however, be far from traditional despite Cody's wishes and the perspectives of local newspapers and magazines.

Alford soon became a popular speaker inside and outside the University, realizing the University's wish to extend its influence into the community. In his inaugural address, "The Study and Appreciation of Fine Art," delivered at Convocation Hall in November 1934, he charted the development of Western art from the Egyptians through the Greeks, Romans, the Middle Ages, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the moderns. Appealing not only to the educated, the elite, or the specialist, Alford argued that fine art held "a universal and natural interest" for everyone, and he set out a series of lectures to promote the new fine arts program. Lectures for students were scheduled either in the sketch room or the art gallery at Hart House, while a series of fifteen illustrated talks, offered free of charge, was delivered at the department's temporary quarters in the Royal Ontario Museum. *Saturday Night* reported that hundreds of people attended. The magazine marveled at how "Professor John Alford...[in] only a little more than six weeks,...has already made a definite place for himself in the machinery of that immense institution."⁸¹ Alford was also called upon to expound the virtues of art to a number of nearly all-female audiences. He discussed the 1936 Van Gogh exhibition on-site at the Art Gallery of Toronto for the benefit of university women,⁸² and spoke to the Handcrafts Association's annual open meeting at the Toronto Heliconian Club. Here he stressed the importance "of cultivating handcrafts, not only to preserve the arts upon which all art is built, but for personal pleasure and mental comfort."⁸³ He also lectured to the Lyceum Women's Art Association in October 1937 on the effect of environment on art.

In March 1935 the Department of Fine Art was established and the term “Chair of Fine Art” was gradually phased out, with Alford becoming the Chairman or Chair of the newly formed entity.⁸⁴ On Alford’s recommendation Cody proceeded to staff the department with an impressive group of artist-educators. Among those hired on a part-time lecturer or instructor basis were Fred Haines, Charles Comfort, and Peter Haworth. Ruth Mable Home, Supervisor of Education at the ROM, was also hired in 1939 to give lectures on European furniture, textiles, and ceramics; Peter Brieger had joined the department as a lecturer in 1936.⁸⁵ With the exception of Brieger, the Fine Arts faculty had extensive contacts in the educational establishment as well as in local and provincial art communities and professional organizations.

Dorothy Farr later wrote that Alford’s philosophy of the study of the arts in university was primarily directed at assisting students to live “a full life.” Alford believed that a narrowly-defined emphasis on the sciences “deprived the educated person of cultural depth and rendered him uneducated.” The study of fine art at the university could rectify this deficiency by providing an aesthetic education through both art history and practical studies.⁸⁶ He accordingly organized a three- to four-year general survey course that, like his inaugural lecture, spanned the centuries from the pre-classical world to the modern day. This course was neither purely philosophical nor strictly historical, but was instead situated within the broader interdisciplinary contexts of philosophy, history, English literature, and sociology. In 1939 Alford also offered a number of cross-listed courses in conjunction with the Department of Architecture – another example of his interest in multidisciplinary studies. Over time, instructors were drawn from across faculties and disciplines, particularly archeology, anthropology, philosophy and architecture, and members of the Ontario College of Art faculty were also invited to lecture on special topics. Alford would later write that “The curriculum of the Toronto department has been organized during the past six years in response to obvious needs in the cultural and educational life of Ontario.... Circumstances differed so largely from those of the English institutions with which I was previously familiar [and it] was only in the course of time that it became apparent that the Toronto system was approximating a pattern prevalent in the United States.”⁸⁷ Although Cody had sought to exclude the training of artists from the new department, several articles written by Alford on university art education practices in the early 1940s in *Parnassus*, suggest that fine arts faculty members ought to revisit their earlier understandings about the relationship between practical courses and other parts of the academic programs.

In 1945, newly married to his second wife, Roberta Murray Fansler, John Alford left the University of Toronto to become head of Art History and

Aesthetics at the Rhode Island School of Design, a position he held until 1953.⁸⁸ At the time of his death in 1960 he had just been appointed special lecturer in art history at the evening division of Tulane College, New Orleans. His move to the United States was perhaps not unexpected; he had developed strong American connections that included his directorship of the College Art Association (1941-46). Farr has suggested that before his move to the United States, Alford's "position as sole professor in the department until 1936, and as head of [the] department at the University of Toronto until 1945 resulted in an obvious dominance of his pedagogical philosophies in the concepts and practice of the department. These philosophies remain in evidence today [1983].... When Alford's influence was removed, the department could thus develop freely in new directions."⁸⁹ In 1946 the Department of Fine Art was merged with the Department of Archeology to create the Department of Art and Archeology. It was reported that this change was made because the former name "implied something suitable for coeds and frightened off the men."⁹⁰ The change not only reflected the gendered nature of Canadian society, but also the contradictory and complex meanings attributed to the social and cultural function of art – particularly the controversy about the place of practical training in the modern university.

The founding of the University of Toronto's Department of Fine Art and its ties to the Carnegie Corporation would significantly help shape mid-twentieth-century discourses that reaffirmed the traditional liberal humanist notion of the artist as a moral guardian and cultural icon of the age. In response, artists, art educators, art historians, and teachers from all educational systems would seize the opportunity to participate in the social reconstruction of Canada after World War I and the revitalization of cultural nationalism in this country. The emerging professionals who would adopt this form of liberal humanism linked the notion of creativity and aesthetic expression to concepts of political democracy, freedom, individualism, and education. In so doing, they fundamentally revitalized cultural nationalism in Canada in the years leading up to World War II, forging a national discourse on the culture of the aesthetic.

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Notes

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2 Ellen Condliffe LAGEMANN, *The Politics of Knowledge: The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy and Public Policy* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 3. See also, LAGEMANN, *Private Power for the Public Good: A History of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1983).

On the production and circulation of the Corporation's shaping of academic agenda, particularly its effects on the social sciences in Canada see Donald FISHER, "The Philanthropic Foundations in the Reproduction and Production of Hegemony: Rockefeller Foundations and the Social Sciences," *Sociology* 17 (1983): 207-32; and FISHER, *The Social Sciences in Canada: 50 Years of National Activity by the Social Science Federation of Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press in collaboration with The Social Sciences Federation of Canada, 1991). Recently, Jeffrey D. Brison has examined how American philanthropic associations shaped the "arts and letters" in Canada from the late 1920s to the 1950s. See BRISON, "Cultural Interventions: American Corporate Philanthropy and the Construction of the Arts and Letters in Canada, 1900-1957" (Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, Kingston, 1998); and BRISON, "The Kingston Conference, the Carnegie Corporation and a New Deal for the Arts in Canada," *American Review of Canadian Studies* (Winter 1993): 503-22. See also, Sandra PAIKOWSKY, "The Carnegie Collection," *Dalhousie Art Gallery. The Collection* (Halifax: Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2003), 64-68. Despite the Corporation's generous endowments there was considerable local resistance to what many perceived as an encroachment on community structures and cultures. See, Robert Sidney MARTIN, *Carnegie Denied: Communities Rejecting Carnegie Library Construction Grants 1898-1925* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 1993); and Kenneth NEAL, *A Wise Extravagance: The Funding of the Carnegie International Exhibition 1895-1901* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), for discussion outside Canada.

3 Henry John CODY, "President's Report," *University of Toronto Calendar* (1935-36), 12.

4 F.R. LEAVIS, *Education and the University: A Sketch for an "English School"* (Cambridge: Chatto & Windus, 1943), 16.

5 Frederick P. KEPPEL, *The Foundation: Its Place in American Life* (New York: MacMillan, 1930), 63.

6 Henry John CODY, "The Place of the University in National Life," *The University of Toronto Quarterly* IV (1934-35): 429.

7 Ibid., 425. For a similar argument in regard to the formation of the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto in the early decades of the twentieth century, see Sara Z. BURKE, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888-1937* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

8 CODY, "The Place of the University," 429. For an analysis of aesthetic education as fundamental to the construction of the male political elite see E. Lisa PANAYOTIDIS, "'Artist, Poet, and Socialist': Academic Deliberations on William Morris at the University of Toronto, 1896-1925," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 12 (1998): 36-43.

9 Keppel to Robert Falconer, 13 Nov. 1928, Office of the President, A1967-0007/115(01), University of Toronto Archives. Unless otherwise noted references to correspondence cited here can be found in the Papers of the Office of the President at the University of Toronto Archives. See also Maria TIPPETT, *Making Culture: English Canadian Institutions and the*

Arts Before the Massey Commission (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 46. Tippet claims that Keppel wrote to Falconer in 1926 offering to fund a Chair in Fine Art but Falconer declined the grant suggesting instead that it be given to the Ontario College of Art. Tippet suggests that prior to the 1930s "universities were reluctant because of their vocational-professional bent and their problems with funding, to offer courses in art and music or to found departments in these subjects."

10 Ibid., Keppel to Falconer, 13 Nov. 1928.

11 CODY, "The Place of the University," 425.

12 Although there are some histories of art institutions in English Canada, few of them relate strictly to the history of individual Fine Art/Art History departments. One exception, albeit brief, is Virgil HAMMOCK's, *Art at Mount Allison. A History* (Sackville, 1977).

13 Pierre BOURDIEU, "The Field of Cultural Production," *The Field of Cultural Production*, ed. Randal JOHNSON (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 29-73. See also Raymond WILLIAMS, *Culture* (London: Fontana, 1981) especially his chapters on "Institutions" and "Formations."

14 On the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement in Canada, particularly its effects on tertiary formal educational systems see E. Lisa PANAYOTIDIS, "The Bureaucratization of Creativity: The Art and Industry Controversy at Central Technical School, 1931-1949," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 15 (2003): 9-34; and PANAYOTIDIS, "'Every Artist would be a Workman, and Every Workman an Artist': Morrisian and Arts and Crafts ideas and ideals at the Ontario Educational Association, 1900-1920," in *William Morris: Centenary Essays*, ed. Peter FAULKNER and Peter PRESTON (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1999), 165-71.

15 Mary VIPOND, "The Nationalist Network: English Canada's Intellectuals in the 1920s," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 7 (1980): 32-53.

16 Paul LITT, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 5. See also LITT, "The Massey Commission, Americanization, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," *Queen's Quarterly* 98 (1991): 375-87; TIPPETT, *Making Culture*; and BRISON, "Cultural Interventions." These authors have expressed similar critiques of interpretations which situate the Massey-Lévesque Report as the single defining event of cultural policy change in Canada.

17 Keppel was elected president of Carnegie Corporation in December 1922 although he did not assume office until October 1923. LAGEMANN in *The Politics of Knowledge* notes that arts funding was not new but a "re-establishment" of values and ideals first set forth by Andrew Carnegie during his inaugural tenure as president (1911-19).

18 LAGEMANN, *The Politics of Knowledge*, 5.

19 Keppel's interest in art was shaped early on and in part by his father's well-known print dealership, Frederick Keppel and Company for which he worked for a brief time. For an intimate and "admiring" portrayal of Keppel spanning his early administrative career in university, government service, and his tenure at the Carnegie Corporation see Henry JAMES, *Appreciations of Frederick Paul Keppel by Some of his Friends* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951). Keppel's views on the value of the arts in education are set out in several influential works including: KEPPEL and Robert L. DUFFUS, *The Arts in American Life* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1933); and KEPPEL, *The Undergraduate and his College* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917); and his *The Foundation: Its Place in American Life* (New York: MacMillan, 1930); *Philanthropy and Learning, with Other Papers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935); and *Education for Adults and Other Essays* (Freeport: Books for Library Press, 1968, reprint).

20 LAGEMANN, *The Politics of Knowledge*, 7.

21 KEPPEL and DUFFUS, *The Arts in American Life*, 208.

- 22 KEPPEL, *The Foundation*, 10-11.
- 23 JAMES, "President of the Carnegie Corporation," in *Appreciations of Frederick Paul Keppel*, 8.
- 24 CODY, "The Place of the University," 431.
- 25 CODY, "President's Report," 12.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Cody advised J.L. Isley, Federal Minister of Finance, whose daughter wanted to pursue a career in portrait painting, to consider the "broad background of the history of art" at the University and "practical instruction" at Ontario College of Art. Isley to Cody, 19 Nov. 1940, Cody to Isley, 20 Nov. 1940, Department of Fine Art, A1968-0006/046(02).
- 28 For discussion of the relationship between the construction of professional education in universities and gentlemanly discourses in nineteenth-century Ontario, see Robert GIDNEY and W.P.J. MILLAR, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); and Douglas OWRAM, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).
- 29 In a 1939 letter to Keppel, Cody painted a stark picture of the University's financial situation. Cody to Keppel, 12 Apr. 1939, Department of Fine Art, A1968-0006/037(04). While funding was a crucial issue, it was not the sole determinant affecting institutional formation and change at the University. This non-critical and empirical argument has been advanced by contemporary writers on the University and its administrators to the detriment of any socio-cultural contextual analysis. See for example, D.C. MASTERS, *Henry John Cody: An Outstanding Life* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1995).
- 30 A department of art had in fact existed in diverse manifestations as early as July 1918 when the Department of History of Industrial Art was inaugurated. This department was merged with the Department of Archeology in July 1929, bringing it under the control of the Royal Ontario Museum and its director Charles T. Currely. The introduction of a fine art program had been recommended by the Royal Commission of 1906. Cody was a Commissioner on that Committee. See *Report of the Royal Commission on the University of Toronto* (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1906), xxvii.
- 31 Graham MCINNIS, "The Visual Arts. Freedom or Regimentation," *University of Toronto Quarterly* VII (1938): 488-99.
- 32 Dalhousie and Queen's University were also presented with an Arts Teaching Set. In the fall of 1933, a brief but spirited correspondence among Keppel, Professor Michael McKenzie, Cody, and J. Burgon Bickersteth of Hart House reveals that the Carnegie was concerned about the exact whereabouts of the Arts Teaching Set. Although President Falconer had arranged to have it placed in a room at Hart House for the use of the "Department of Architecture and any other teaching of the Fine Arts that we may have in the University," it seems the set never was installed. Keppel to Bichersteth, 18 Nov. 1933, A1968-0006/008(02). Learning that the Arts Teaching Set was awaiting the establishment of a department of art, Keppel wrote promptly to Cody outlining how "the institutions where the set is most actively and successfully used have no formal department of art...I wonder whether the material could not be made available through the library." Keppel to Cody, 6 Dec. 1933, A1968-0006/10(03). Had it been installed at Hart House which was restricted to male students, women at the University of Toronto would not have had access to the Arts Teaching Set.
- 33 L.J. BURPEE, "Canada's Debt to the Carnegie Corporation," *Queen's Quarterly* 34 (1938): 236. Burpee lists financial contributions to the Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto art galleries. The University of Toronto received a total of \$243,250 in grants; for a list of

Carnegie grants to universities, colleges, and schools in Canada between 1911-1949, see: *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, 1949-1951* (Ottawa: Kings Printer), Appendix V, 436-37.

34 BRISON, "The Kingston Conference," 503-22. See: Andrew NURSE, "A Confusion of Values: Artists and Artistic Ideologies in Modern Canada, 1927-1952" (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, 1991).

35 LITT, "The Massey Commission," 375-87.

36 Keppel to Falconer, 13 Nov. 1928, A1967-0007/115(01). Among those who made comments or provided written testimony were John Alford, Peter Brieger, Peter Haworth, and Charles Comfort – virtually the entire Department of Fine Art at the University of Toronto in 1941. Ironically, it was the Commission's chair Vincent Massey, who had first suggested the idea of funding a Chair of Fine Art at the University of Toronto to Keppel. Massey along with H.S. Southam, Clarence Webster, H.O. McCurry and Eric Brown were members of Carnegie's Canadian Committee, which advised on the Corporation's activities in Canada.

37 KEPPEL, *The Foundation*, 64.

38 For a more recent discussion, see John WALKER, *Cross-Overs: Art into Pop/Pop into Art* (London: Comedia Methun, 1987), especially "The art school connection," 14-36.

39 J.W.L. Forster to Falconer, 16 July 1927, A1967-0007/107a. Given the University of Toronto's voluminous archival holdings and the often clandestine workings of the President's Office, the exact timing of Forster's offer is difficult to determine.

40 Foster was an apprentice of Toronto painter John Wesley Bridgman, with whom he later formed a business partnership. Forster went on to study in England at the South Kensington School of Art, and at the Académie Julian under Gustave Boulanger and Jules-Joseph Lefevre (1879) and William Adolph Bouguereau and Tony Robert-Fleury (1880-82). Forster returned to Toronto in 1883 to open a portrait studio and to agitate for the establishment of an art school in Toronto. J.W.L. Forster Papers, Special Collections Centre, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto.

41 Forster to Falconer, 16 July 1927, A1967-0007/107a. Falconer had earlier written him noting that the Carnegie's gift had just arrived.

42 Ibid. Forster to Falconer, 5 Dec. 1928.

43 J.W.L. FORSTER, "The University and the Fine Arts," *Acta Victoriana* 31 (1907): 136, 138. See also, FORSTER, "Fine Arts and the University," *The Week* (Toronto), 3 Aug. 1894.

44 FORSTER, "The University and the Fine Arts," 137.

45 Ibid. A staunch anglophile, Forster argued that groups such as Puritans and Loyalists who adhered to a code of "simplicity, piety and frugality," were more able to overcome the decadent and amoral aspects of the new industrial world than the continental European so fond of the "love of pleasure."

46 Ibid., 138.

47 FORSTER, "Art and Artists in Ontario," in *Canada, An Encyclopedia of the Country*, ed. J. Castell HOPKINS (Toronto: The Linscott Publishing Company, 1898), 351.

48 FORSTER, "The University and the Fine Arts," 138, 139.

49 Ibid., 139. Also in "Art and Artists," Forster excludes women's artistic activities in the home from any notion of aesthetic culture. In his autobiography entitled *Under the Studio Light, Leaves from a Portrait Painter's Sketch Book*, Forster illustrates and discusses the subjects of his paintings – prominent men and women, whom he variously classified under such "professional" titles as "Public Men," "Eminent Collegians," and "Men of Affairs." Interestingly, although many

were professional women, his female portrait subjects were all circumscribed under the heading "Guardian Spirits of our Race."

50 John Ruskin was appointed the first Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford in 1869-1879, and briefly again from 1883-1884. See his inaugural address delivered 8 February 1870: John RUSKIN, "Lectures on Art: delivered before the University of Oxford in Hilary Term, 1870," in *The Works of John Ruskin: Library Edition*, eds. E.T. COOK and Alexander WEDDERBURN, Volume XX (London: George Allen, 1905), 1-179. Ruskin's significant impact on Canadian educational and cultural realms has yet to be critically discussed in any great depth.

51 In the late nineteenth century, one of the key disseminators of Ruskin's theories on campus was Sir Daniel Wilson, President of the University of Toronto between 1880-92. See Robert STACEY, "In Some Form, My Life Pursuit': Daniel Wilson, Artist," in *Thinking With Both Hands: Sir Daniel Wilson in the Old World and the New*, ed. Elizabeth HULSE (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 234-59. Ruskin's social aesthetic philosophies would be evident in his students' thesis work, in periodicals like *Acta Victoriana* and in *Sesame and Lilies*, a Victoria College (U of T) journal.

52 Often given short shrift in the historiography of Canadian art, professional and amateur womens' cultural organizations such as the Womens' Art Association of Canada (established 1892 and still in existence) and the Toronto Heliconian Club had established themselves as viable and significant educational institutions in the early decades of the twentieth century. They offered lecture series, studio classes, annual symposia, and seminar discussions to their members and the broader community. For a description of the WAAC's ideologies and activities, see: E. Lisa PANAYOTIDIS, "The Complexity of 'Seeing' and Doing 'Good': A Canadian Art Education Analysis of the 'Good Society'," *Canadian Review of Art Education* 29, no.2 (2002): 1-18; Ellen Easton MCLEOD, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Canadian Handicrafts* (Montreal: McGill-Queens, 1999); Heather Victoria HASKINS, "Bending the Rules': The Montreal Branch of the Woman's Art Association of Canada, 1894-1900" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1995); Sandra MITCHELL, "Women and Art: Women's Clubs in Saint John, New Brunswick 1896-1907" (M.Ed. thesis, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, 1995).

53 At least one author has noted that Lismer's true vocation was as an educator rather than an artist. See, K. JOHNSTON, "The Professor is a Rebel," *New Liberty* (1951): 32-33, 44, 46-52.

54 Lismer's art-education career was capped by his long term tenure as Director of the Montreal Children's Art Centre (1941-1967), affiliated with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. See Angela Nairne GRIGOR, *Arthur Lismer: Visionary Art Educator* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

55 Arthur LISMER, "The Value, Meaning and Place of Art in Education," *Dalhousie Review* 8, no.3 (1928): 386.

56 Ibid.

57 The distinction Lismer was making here went beyond divisions of theory and practice. As a former college administrator, Lismer understood that given reduced federal educational funding throughout the 1920s and 30s, one had to be cognizant of the need to forge concise educational mandates and curriculum offerings, as duplications of programs were vulnerable to government cutbacks.

58 James G. GREENLEE, *Sir Robert Falconer: A Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 22-23. See for example Falconer's articles in the *Halifax Herald* (21 Apr. 1905), and "Early Christian Art," *Queen's Quarterly* 11 (1904): 225-42.

59 Lawrence Binyon suggested among others Kenneth Clark, although "he was well-off and I fancy would prefer to stay here," Binyon to Falconer, 11 Feb. 1929, A1968-0006/160(1), (1). As early as 1928 Keppel was advising Falconer on curriculum and specifically "instituting

somewhere a study of the relationship between the history of art and the history of thought." Keppel to Falconer, 13 Nov. 1928, A1967-0007/115(01). Meanwhile, the Carnegie continued to make suggestions in regards to hiring American male applicants. Philip McMahon, a Professor of Fine Arts at New York University, apprised that a Department of Fine Art or Art History was planned for Toronto, wrote to Dean of Graduate Studies George Brett, recommending a nearly-completed Ph.D., Robert Goldwater for the position. McMahon to Brett, 3 Jan. 1934, A1986-0006/025(2).

60 Forster to Falconer, 12 May 1932; Falconer to Forster, 13 May 1932, A1967-0007/131a.

61 See Paul STORTZ, "From High School to Hiring," in "Have You Ever Looked Into A Professor's Soul? Academic Culture and Professorial Identity in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Toronto, 1935-1945" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, forthcoming).

62 There is no evidence that Falconer or Cody engaged in a concerted search for a Canadian applicant, although a small number of Canadians applied nonetheless.

63 Thomas Holland to Cody, 25 June 1934, A1968-0006/069(03). It is not altogether clear in the correspondence why Holland would advise Cody to hire Panofsky when the Edinburgh hiring committee was not prepared to do so, especially given Constable's strong insistence that "he would jump at the opportunity of an academic post in this country." John Orr to Constable, 27 Feb. 1934; Constable to Orr, 2 Mar. 1934, A1968-0006/160,(1),(3). After being dismissed from his position as Professor at Hamburg University and Director of Kunsthistorisches Seminar in 1936, Panofsky accepted a position as lecturer at Princeton and New York universities.

64 "Eleanor Thompson: Artist Dictated own Obituary After Stroke," *Globe and Mail* (18 Feb. 1965). Shepherd-Thompson, Graduate File, A1973-0026/411(68).

65 Shepherd-Thompson to Cody, 30 Mar. 1932, A1968-0006/160(1), (3). She indicates that she had taught as a Professor of Art History at Wilson College, Chambersburg. On 26 Nov. 1933, clearly frustrated by her lack of progress in securing a position in the department, she wrote again explaining "Please forgive me for being personal I have been greatly depressed.... However, your sermon this morning has made it seem possible for me, once more, that ultimately these dark shadows will pass and I shall see my way clearly again." A1973-0026/411(68).

66 Ibid. Her thesis was published by Clarke, Irwin & Company Ltd. in 1935.

67 Keppel to Cody, 13 Jan. 1936; Keppel to Cody, 7 May 1936, A1968-0006/025(10).

68 The son of Professor Oskar Brieger (an MD) Peter Brieger was a graduate student at the universities of Breslau and Munich, receiving his doctorate in 1924. He left his Privatdozent position at Breslau University and Assistantship at Kunsthistorischers Institut in 1934, becoming a researcher at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London in 1936. Among his referees Brieger listed W.G. Constable and the Medievalist, Adolf Goldschmidt. "Curriculum vitae of Dr. Peter Brieger," A1968-0006/020(03). A letter from Cody to T. Magladery, Deputy Minister of Immigration, asking him to provide an initial two year visa for Brieger, indicates that Brieger was recommended for the position by John Alford. Cody to T. Magladery, 8 June 1936, A1968-0006/023(01).

69 See Alison PRENTICE, "Bluestockings, Feminists, or Women Workers? A Preliminary Look at Women's Early Employment at the University of Toronto," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 2 (1991): 231-62; and STORTZ, "Have You Ever Looked Into a Professor's Soul?" Peter Brieger had only a secondary school teaching experience.

70 Constable had many ties in Canada having worked as a consultant at the National Gallery of Canada with Eric Brown and later with H.O. McCurry. He was invited to Canada by McCurry to undertake a cross-country lecture tour, intended to stimulate interest in the arts. For

Constable's views on his work in Canada see: W.G. CONSTABLE, "Eric Brown as I knew him," *Canadian Art* 10, no.3 (Spring 1953): 114-19; and the interview conducted with Constable in 1972-73 by the Smithsonian Archives of American Art. <http://artarchives.si.edu/oralhist/consta73.htm>. As early as 1931, Keppel wrote to Falconer that he had had a conversation with Constable who offered several suggestions in anticipation of "the establishment of a strong Department at Toronto." Keppel to Falconer, 14 Apr. 1931; Keppel, Memorandum of Interview, 13 Apr. 1931, A1967-0007/126b.

71 As late as 18 June 1934, Constable was still submitting the names of other applicants to Cody, suggesting both William Gibson who was then working at the Wallace Collection and Lawrence Binyon at the British Museum. Constable to Cody, 18 June 1934, A1968-0006/069(03).

72 Ibid. Constable to Cody, 11 July 1934.

73 "John G. Alford Arrives to fill new Department," *Varsity* (31 Oct. 1934).

74 On Toronto's settlement-home initiatives and particularly its relation to the arts and social regeneration, see BURKE, *Seeking the Highest Good*; and C.L. JAMES, "Gender, Class and Ethnicity in the Organization of Neighborhood and Nation: The Role of Toronto's Settlement Houses in the Formation of the Canadian State, 1902 to 1914" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1997).

75 Nunn to Cody, 4 Sept. 1934, A1968-0006/017(03).

76 Ibid. Constable to Cody, 24 July 1934.

77 Courtauld Institute of Art Program Description. 1932-1933 Prospectus "with the Director's Compliment" along with a three-page detailed summary of the aims and goals of the program. A1968-0006/001(05).

78 Dorothy FARR, "The Fine Art Department of the University of Toronto – A History" (1969), *University Historian*, Fine Art Department, A1983-0036/005(10), 1969, ts, 2.

79 "New Professor of Fine Arts Arrives in Canada," *Toronto Mail* (November 1934). Graduate Records, Personnel Files, A73-0026/04/26. John Alford File. Alford wrote on the relationship between Canadian art and culture in "Trends in Canadian Art," *University of Toronto Quarterly* XIV (June 1945): 168-80.

80 "People who do Things," *Saturday Night* (15 Dec. 1934). See John ALFORD, Graduate Files, A1973-0026/004(26).

81 Ibid.

82 "Alford to Discuss Van Gogh exhibition," *Varsity* (19 Nov. 1936).

83 "Native Handicrafts Attract Attention," *Toronto Mail* (20 Jan. 1936).

84 After March 1935, the term chair does not necessarily refer formally to the Chair of Fine Art but to the *chairman* or *head* of the department. However, in this period usage of terms was often indiscriminate and fluid and it is not unusual to find the terms *Chair of Fine Arts* or *Fine Arts Chair*, in reference to the head of the department.

85 Home was formally appointed "Special Instructor," without salary in 1940. Alford to Cody, 1 Mar. 1940, A1968-0006/041(1). See Ruth Mable HOME, Graduate Files, A1973-0026/154(64).

86 FARR, "The Fine Art Department," 2.

87 John ALFORD, "Practice Courses in College Art Departments," *Parnassus* 12 (November 1940): 11; see also his, "Practical Art Courses Designed for a Cultural Purpose," *Parnassus* 13 (January 1941): 21-25.

88 Roberta Fansler Alford had been with the Education Department of the Metropolitan Museum in New York for eighteen years, and had acted as an art advisor with the Carnegie when she met Alford during the 1930s. In 1945, Fansler Alford became the Director of Education at the RISD museum, and its acting director from 1949 to 1952.

89 FARR, "The Fine Art Department," 2, 5.

90 P. BACON, "Course for Connoisseurs," *Varsity* (24 Nov. 1952). See ALFORD, Graduate Files, A1973-0026/04/26. The name was once again changed to the Department of Fine Art in February 1962. Bacon suggests that this name change was undertaken because President Sidney Smith had been criticized for placing too high an emphasis on the humanities and on the production of critically-thinking intellectuals. UTA, "Corporate Name Authority," August 1988. There had been a Department of Aesthetics in University College in 1896, it was closed shortly thereafter because of funding difficulties.

Résumé

LE DÉPARTEMENT DES BEAUX-ARTS À L'UNIVERSITÉ DE TORONTO, 1926-1945

L'institutionnalisation de la 'culture de l'esthétique'

En 1934, John Alford, formé en Angleterre et professeur au Courtauld Institute of Art de l'université de Londres, était nommé directeur du département des beaux-arts de l'université de Toronto. Sa nomination mettait un terme à une recherche exhaustive et quelque peu capricieuse qui aura duré six ans et impliqué deux des présidents des universités : Robert Falconer et son successeur Henry John Cody. Par cette nomination, l'université de Toronto entrait dans une alliance culturelle et financière avec la Corporation Carnegie de New York.

Vers 1923, la Corporation Carnegie, sous la direction de son cinquième président, Frederick Paul Keppel, lança un programme de financement axé principalement sur les bibliothèques, l'éducation des adultes et les arts. Durant le mandat de dix-huit ans de Keppel, qui se termina avec sa retraite en 1941, la Corporation entreprit, au moyen de ses programmes de financement nationaux et internationaux, de situer la centralité des arts à l'intérieur d'une vision humaniste libérale. L'étude et l'appréciation du «grand art», et particulièrement du rôle des arts dans la découverte du sens de la condition humaine, étaient liées à la régénération sociétale et communautaire et au progrès national. Les universités et leurs diplômés masculins contribuaient de manière décisive à ce projet de soutenir et de diffuser parmi les masses les formes élitistes de la haute culture.

Étant donné le manque de financement des institutions d'enseignement supérieur au Canada à la fin des années 1920 et au cours des années 1930, il est évident que ce qu'on appelait la «philanthropie culturelle» de Carnegie était d'une importance financière cruciale pour la création de la chaire des beaux-arts à l'université de Toronto. Les présidents Falconer et Cody étaient toutefois d'accord avec la vision culturelle de la corporation Carnegie, particulièrement la manière dont elle concevait le rôle de chef de file de ses diplômés masculins et des universités en tant que centres vitaux de la préservation de la culture.

Bien que l'appui financier de la Corporation Carnegie aux arts ait été aisément accepté par des universités canadiennes à court d'argent et salué par beaucoup comme «la marraine fée des arts au Canada», à la fin des années 1930, un groupe émergent de nationalistes le voyaient comme rien moins qu'une force d'invasion culturelle. Leurs appréhensions n'étaient pas sans fondement. Avec des dons de ressources en enseignement des arts à plusieurs universités canadiennes, dont l'université de Toronto en 1926, la corporation entreprenait un programme de financement qui, en 1935, s'élevait à un peu plus de 412 000 \$. Mais, plus important peut-être que les dons en ressources et matériel didactique, la Corporation s'infiltrait dans les universités canadiennes – avec la bénédiction de leurs principaux administrateurs. Au début des années 1940, au grand dépit de ses détracteurs, la Corporation Carnegie donnait son appui intellectuel et financier à la Conférence des artistes de Kingston en 1941 qui a donné lieu à la création de la Fédération des artistes canadiens – important groupe de pression souvent consulté par le gouvernement fédéral. Avec le temps, malgré leurs relations antérieures avec la Corporation Carnegie, les factions à l'intérieur – et à l'extérieur – de la Fédération lancèrent l'idée qu'une haute culture unifiée était cruciale pour les ambitions nationalistes d'une société démocratique et le développement d'une identité canadienne distincte. À leur tête on retrouve Walter Abell de l'université Acadia, John Alford de l'université de Toronto, André Biéler, premier président de la Fédération des

artistes canadiens, et le président de la Commission, Vincent Massey, qui, le premier, avait suggéré à Keppel, président de la corporation Carnegie, de financer une chaire des beaux-arts à l'université de Toronto.

Malgré de subtiles interventions de la Corporation Carnegie, les administrateurs de l'université avaient une influence considérable sur les nominations définitives et le programme du nouveau département. La recherche d'un candidat apte à administrer et à enseigner ce qui était essentiellement un programme préconçu commença sous Robert Falconer, à la fin des années 1920, et prit fin abruptement avec Henry John Cody, à l'été 1934. Entre-temps, Falconer et Cody avaient consulté les artistes canadiens J.W.L. Forster et Arthur Lismer, qui tous deux avaient abondamment écrit sur la fonction culturelle des arts dans l'éducation, et divers experts britanniques en art, recherchant à la fois un candidat possible et, souvent, des suggestions relativement au programme d'études. Parmi leurs relations les plus influentes, on compte G. Baldwin Brown et Watson Gordon, professeur d'arts plastiques à l'université d'Édimbourg – un des professeurs de Falconer qui avait le premier stimulé son intérêt pour la sculpture classique et la peinture chrétienne, sujets sur lesquels il avait écrit et donné des conférences dans la première partie du siècle. Avec la mort de Baldwin Brown en 1930, Édimbourg était – comme l'université de Toronto – à la recherche d'un président pour leur département des beaux-arts. Une fois leur recherche terminée, le comité de sélection des beaux-arts d'Édimbourg remit à l'université de Toronto la liste des candidats rejetés, y compris les formulaires de candidature originaux et les références. Il est intéressant de noter que, sur les quelque trente demandes, trois provenaient d'historiens de l'art juifs allemands résidant alors en Angleterre. Un fait révèle des sentiments souvent discriminatoires à l'égard des réfugiés juifs allemands : en marge des noms de Nikolaus Pevsner, Rudolf Wittkower, et R.H. Wilenski, quelqu'un a pris soin de noter leur nationalité et leur ascendance juive. En dépit du fait que l'université d'Édimbourg avait décidé d'engager Thomas Holland, historien de l'art né et formé en Angleterre, un membre du comité de sélection avait suggéré à Cody de s'enquérir de la disponibilité de l'historien de l'art Erwin Panofsky qui résidait alors aux États-Unis.

En conclusion, les administrateurs de l'université de Toronto ont toujours été reconnaissants pour le financement de la Corporation Carnegie et le comportement affable de Keppel. Le financement du département des beaux-arts de l'université de Toronto par la Corporation Carnegie a transformé de manière décisive le paysage culturel local. En institutionnalisant «l'histoire de l'art» et en séparant la théorie de la pratique, on redéfinissait une tradition de culture esthétique plus généralement accessible qui fleurissait en Ontario depuis la fin des années 1890 et qui était dirigée presque exclusivement par des femmes. Le nouveau mandat de l'université de Toronto de produire des «spécialistes

masculins» compétents qui prendraient la direction des affaires culturelles au plan local, régional et national, marginalisait les femmes. Alors que, jusque-là, les professeurs de l'université de Toronto donnaient des conférences à la Women's Art Association of Canada, les membres de l'Association devaient maintenant céder la place au très politisé nouveau «chef des beaux-arts» – appellation sous laquelle un journal avait désigné John Alford.

En finançant la chaire des beaux-arts de l'université de Toronto, la Corporation Carnegie participait à la construction conflictuelle et contradictoire d'un département et à la légitimation de la discipline universitaire d'histoire de l'art au Canada. Elle participait aussi à la définition de l'étude de l'«art» dans un cadre universitaire comme une entreprise philosophique et théorique dirigée par une élite masculine. À cet égard, l'université cherchait à diffuser un héritage culturel et esthétique spécifique et masculin et un système de valeurs et de significations, privilégiant certains produits et pratiques culturels, et, ce faisant, à constituer la subjectivité et l'identité, les faisant paraître comme «naturelles» et «inévitables». Les administrateurs de l'université, soutenus par l'appui financier et moral de la Corporation Carnegie, avaient le pouvoir de définir et construire avec autorité une théorie institutionnalisée de l'«art» et de sa signification établie dans la société.

Nonobstant les intentions des administrateurs, le département d'histoire de l'art a pris forme de manière significative au milieu du XX^e siècle, alors que fut rétablie la notion libérale et humaniste «traditionnelle» de l'artiste comme gardien moral et icône culturelle de son époque. Ces idées étaient, en partie, des vestiges historiques de l'influent mouvement des Arts et Métiers au Canada, qui cherchait à redessiner la société en réponse à ce que ses promoteurs considéraient comme les effets socialement aliénants et délétères de l'industrialisation et de l'urbanisation au XIX^e siècle. En réponse, les artistes, les professeurs d'art, les historiens de l'art et les enseignants de tous systèmes d'éducation saisirent l'occasion, désireux de se positionner comme parties intégrantes du programme de reconstruction sociale du Canada d'après-guerre. Au cœur de ce discours sur la reconstruction sociale, on trouve l'idée que la culture – et plus spécifiquement les arts en conjonction avec l'éducation – avait un rôle significatif à jouer dans la réorganisation de la nation et du monde d'une manière pratique à l'intérieur d'une réflexion philosophique et pratique. Les nouveaux spécialistes qui avaient adopté cette forme d'humanisme libéral liaient la notion de créativité et d'expression esthétique aux concepts de démocratie politique, de liberté, d'individualisme et d'éducation. Ce faisant, ils ont fondamentalement revitalisé le nationalisme culturel au Canada dans les années avant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, forgeant un discours national sur «la culture de l'esthétique».

Traduction: Élise Bonnette