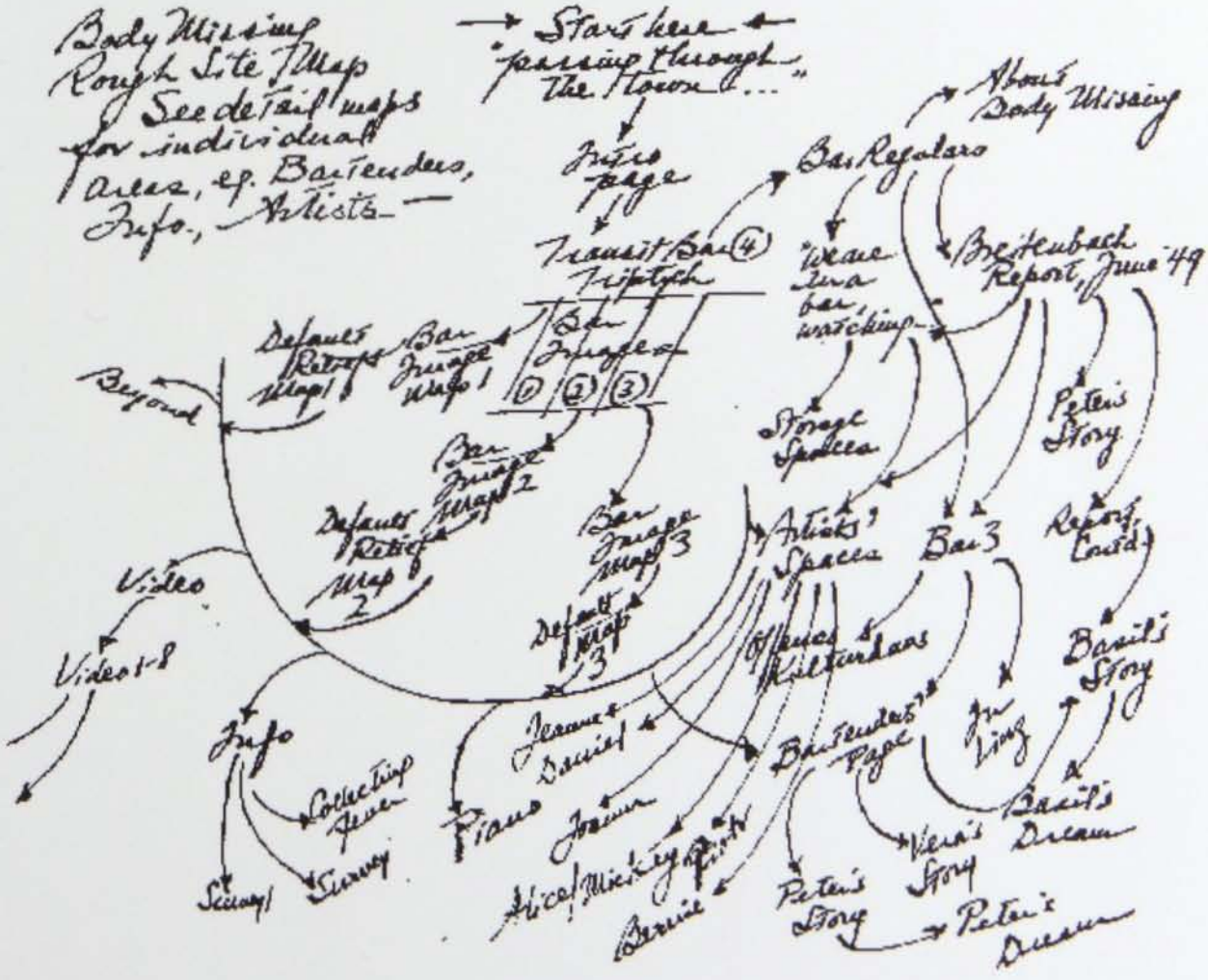
THE JOURNAL OF CANADIAN ART HISTORY
ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN



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Studies in Canadian Art, Architecture and the Decorative Arts

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Les rédacteurs annoncent l'institution des Amis des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien.* Un don minimum de 300 $ vaudra un abonnement de trois ans au donateur.

The Editors wish to announce the institution of the category of Patron of *The Journal of Canadian Art History.* A donation of $300 minimum to *The Journal* will entitle the donor to a three-year subscription.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This volume of *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* is a return to our normal process of publishing scholarly articles in their own right, rather than within any wider thematic context. Nevertheless, these texts cannot help but share those concerns that tend to be of importance in recent times. Loren Lerner's investigation into the reasons for and denial of George Reid's mural project for the Central Block building in Ottawa suggests a paradigm for the problem of defining national identity in Canadian art. It also points to the difficulties in producing relevant imagery for an ever-evolving country. Elizabeth Legge positions Vera Frankel's websites and installations, *Body Missing* and *The Institute: Or, What We Do for Love* within the wider context of international imagery of parody. The article further demonstrates that the identity of Canadian contemporary art is attuned to wider societal references and the detrimental forces and implications of institutional bureaucracy from the past and the present. Martin Bressani and Marc Grignon's article on the church of Saint-Joachim reminds us that cultural symbols are both mimetic and metaphorical. Visual unity can also disguise the multi-layered identity of the tensions within the building's original audience and their own conflicting ambitions. Jean Trudel's study of the lesser-known years of the Art Association of Montreal demonstrates that archives continually divulge hidden histories and that the past was as complex as the present in asserting its identity and its values. That history will be continued in the next volume of *The Journal/Annales.*

Our four book reviews indicate that *The Journal/Annales* is interested in bringing to scholarly attention various types of Canadian art publications. It has been our practice to both commission reviews and to welcome those initiated by writers. We urge any of our readers to submit the titles of publications that they are interested in reviewing, either single books or several texts that have common concerns. As always, we continue to encourage both senior and younger scholars to submit articles for publication in future issues of *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien.* Our inclusive editorial policy encourages all the methodological approaches at work in current art historical practice. We are now in our thirty-forth year of continuous publication and remain the only scholarly periodical solely dedicated to the history of Canadian art. This has been and will continue to be an achievement that we share with all of our contributors and all of our readers.

Sandra Paikowsky
Publisher and Managing Editor

NOTE DE L'ÉDITRICE

Dans ce numéro des *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* nous retournons à notre formule habituelle de publier des articles savants pour eux-mêmes, plutôt que dans un contexte thématique plus large. Toutefois, ces textes ne peuvent que rendre compte des préoccupations qui ont pris de l'importance au cours d'un passé récent. L'enquête de Loren Lerner sur les raisons du rejet du projet de George Reid de murales pour l'édifice du centre de la Colline du Parlement à Ottawa, suggère un paradigme pour le problème que pose la définition d'une identité nationale de l'art canadien. Il indique aussi la difficulté de produire une iconographie pertinente pour un pays en constante évolution. Elizabeth Legge situe les sites web et installations de Vera Frenkel, *Body Missing* et *The Institute: or, what we do for love* à l'intérieur du contexte plus large de la parodie iconographique internationale. L'article montre, de plus, que l'identité de l'art canadien contemporain est en accord avec les références sociétales plus larges et les forces et implications préjudiciables de la bureaucratie institutionnelle, d'hier et d'aujourd'hui. L'article de Martin Bressani et Marc Grignon sur l'église de Saint-Joachim nous rappelle que les symboles culturels sont à la fois mimétiques et métaphoriques. L'unité visuelle peut aussi dissimuler les nombreuses couches de tensions entre les personnes engagées dans la réalisation de l'édifice et leurs propres ambitions conflictuelles. L'étude de Jean Trudel sur les années moins connues de l'Art Association of Montreal montre comment les archives ne cessent de révéler des histoires cachées, et que le passé était aussi complexe que le présent lorsqu'il s'agissait d'affirmer son identité et ses valeurs. Cette histoire se poursuivra dans le prochain numéro *The Journal/Annales.*

Nos quatre recensions de livres montrent que *The Journal/Annales* ont le souci de porter à l'attention des chercheurs divers types de publications canadiennes sur l'art. Nous avons pris l'habitude de solliciter des recensions et aussi d'accueillir celles qui nous sont proposées par des auteurs. Nous invitons nos lecteurs à nous soumettre les titres de publications dont ils aimeraient faire la recension, que ce soit des livres ou plusieurs textes autour d'intérêts communs. Comme toujours, nous continuons d'encourager les chercheurs, aussi bien seniors que débutants, à soumettre des articles pour publication dans de futurs numéros des *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien.* Notre politique éditoriale inclusive encourage toutes les approches méthodologiques dans la pratique actuelle de l'histoire de l'art. Nous sommes maintenant dans notre trente-quatrième année de publication continue, et nous demeurons le seul périodique savant consacré exclusivement à l'histoire de l'art canadien. C'est une réalisation que nous continuerons de partager avec tous nos collaborateurs et tous nos lecteurs.

Sandra Paikowsky
Éditrice et rédactrice-en-chef

fig.1 François Baillairgé et Thomas Baillairgé, choeur de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, paroisse Saint-Joachim de Montmorency, MRC de la Côte-de-Beaupré, 1816-1830. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

UNE PROTECTION SPÉCIALE DU CIEL

Le décor de l'église de Saint-Joachim et les tribulations de l'Église catholique québécoise au début du XIX^{e} siècle

L'église de Saint-Joachim, située dans la paroisse du même nom à la limite est de la Côte-de-Beaupré, est reconnue comme une œuvre capitale de l'architecture religieuse du Québec (fig.1)[1]. D'une part, son décor exceptionnel établit les assises du «néoclassicisme québécois», style associé aux très célèbres Baillairgé – à la fois architectes, peintres et sculpteurs – qui influenceront tout le XIX^{e} siècle au Québec (figs.2, 3 et 4)[2]. D'autre part, l'église constitue, dit-on, un élément central du «trésor de la Côte-de-Beaupré», l'aboutissement d'une recherche sur l'expression formelle du culte catholique qui traverse le régime français[3]. Il s'agit sans aucun doute d'une œuvre charnière qui couronne une tradition et s'ouvre sur une autre, entièrement réalisée pendant une période de crise prolongée, ces «années difficiles[4]» pour le Québec et son clergé, qui va de la fin de la Guerre de Sept ans jusqu'à la rébellion de 1837. La partie du décor qui fait l'objet particulier de notre article est le produit d'une campagne d'embellissement qui s'est échelonnée de 1816 à 1830, mais le bâtiment lui-même date de 1779, érigé sur un nouveau site après la destruction de l'ancienne église paroissiale pendant la guerre de 1759. La nouvelle église, symbole concret d'une reconstruction à la fois spirituelle et politique, est pour ainsi dire l'œuvre d'un seul curé, Jean-Baptiste Corbin, qui a exercé son ministère dans cette paroisse durant une période exceptionnellement longue : de 1769 jusqu'à son décès en 1811. Grâce à son généreux legs testamentaire, les travaux ont pu se poursuivre et même redoubler d'intensité après sa mort. En outre, le décor intérieur de l'église de Saint-Joachim est très largement l'œuvre de la famille Baillairgé : François livre le tabernacle en 1783, et son fils Thomas donne quittance à la paroisse pour l'ensemble des travaux du grand retable, de la voûte, et des chapelles latérales en 1829.

L'église de Saint-Joachim est donc le produit d'une entreprise qui rassemble, autour de François et de Thomas Baillairgé, les principaux acteurs religieux de l'époque : le curé et ses paroissiens, le Séminaire de Québec, dont les dirigeants sont d'office seigneurs de la Côte-de-Beaupré, et l'Évêché de Québec, dirigé à partir de 1806 par Mgr Plessis, en grande effervescence autour du *modus vivendi* à établir avec les autorités britanniques et protestantes. En outre, derrière tous ces intéressés se profile l'ombre imposante d'un homme dont la présence sera déterminante. L'abbé Jérôme Demers joue sur tous les tableaux : tour à tour procureur du Séminaire de Québec, supérieur de la même institution et vicaire général du diocèse, il sera aussi

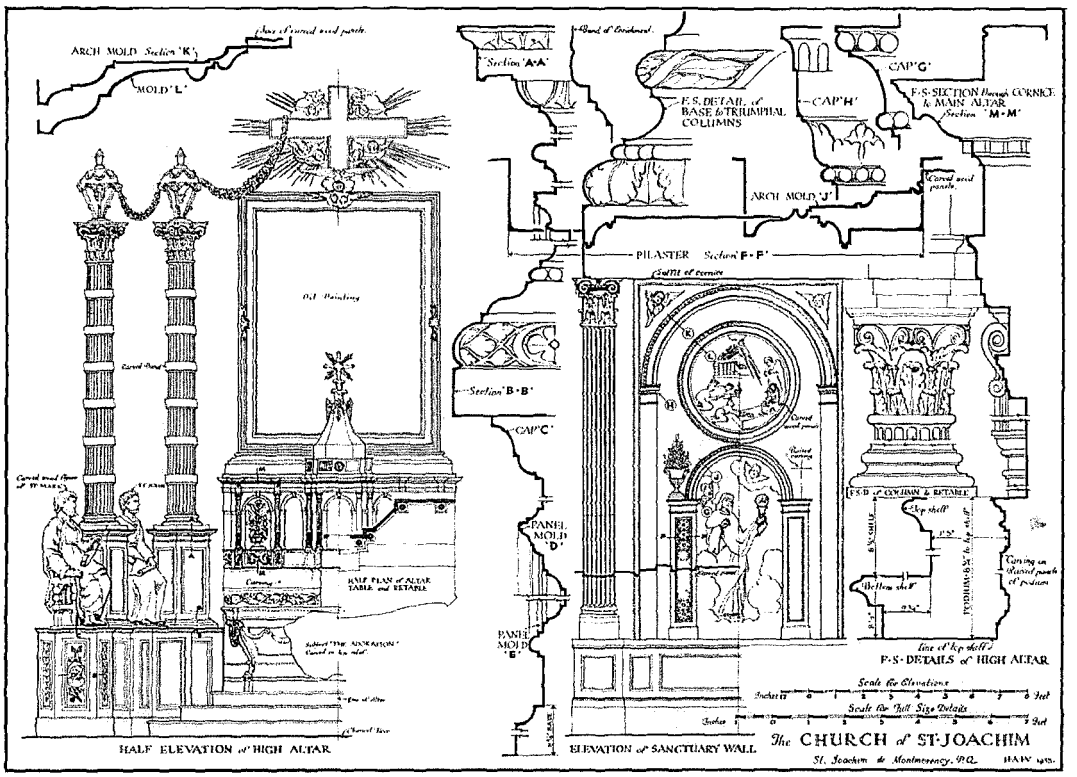

fig.2 Ramsay Traquair, élévations et détails du retable et de l'autel de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, 1933. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill. (Photo: L'Université McGill)

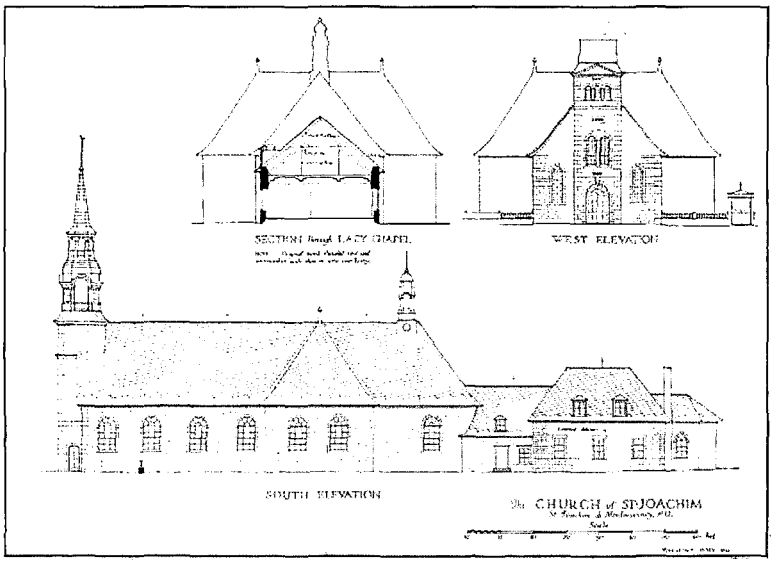

fig.3 Ramsay Traquair, élévations et coupe transversale de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, 1933. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill. (Photo: L'Université McGill)

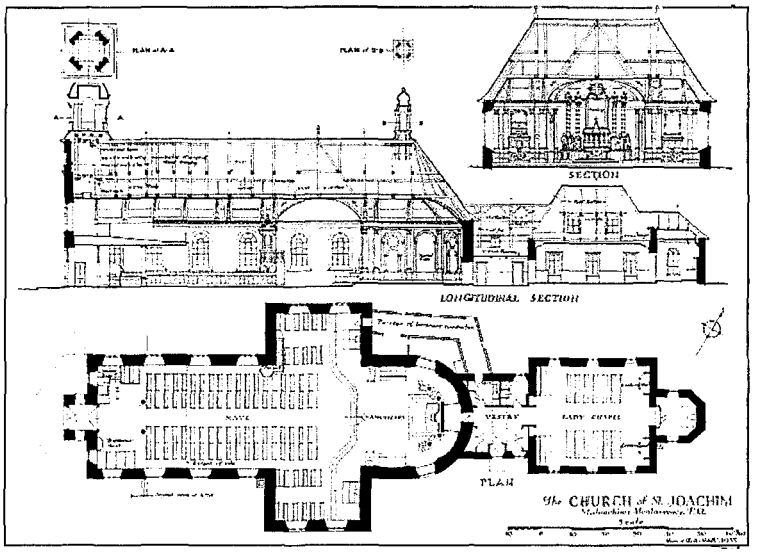

fig.4 Ramsay Traquair, plan et coupe longitudinale de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, 1933. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill. (Photo: L'Université McGill)

chargé de veiller aux dernières volontés du curé Corbin. Mentor de la famille Baillairgé, il voit dans l'église de Saint-Joachim l'occasion de créer une œuvre modèle pour la mise en scène du rituel religieux québécois. Ce professeur du Séminaire de Québec rédigera vers 1828 un minutieux cours d'architecture à l'intention des jeunes séminaristes et futurs curés où il présente le décor de Saint-Joachim comme un exemple phare, aux côtés de la cathédrale Notre-Dame-de-Québec. L'abbé Demers est de toute évidence la figure clé qui apporte aux arts et à l'architecture une esthétique réfléchie, et aussi une orientation religieuse précise, définie en accord avec le haut clergé diocésain.

L'étiquette stylistique qu'une histoire de l'art strictement formelle a pu accoler à l'église de Saint-Joachim ne rend pas compte de l'importance et de la complexité de cette œuvre capitale. Pour mieux comprendre l'unité du décor de l'église, et pour en saisir les failles et les limites, il est essentiel de faire un examen rapproché du cadre idéologique et culturel dans lequel elle a été réalisée. Ainsi, en dépassant les considérations formalistes qui ont jusqu'à maintenant caractérisé les études sur François et Thomas Baillairgé, nous espérons présenter l'église de Saint-Joachim sous un nouvel éclairage, qui mettra en relief la manière selon laquelle l'œuvre cristallise un moment historique particulièrement riche dans l'histoire du Québec.

Dans un contexte colonial, l'église de Saint-Joachim offre le rare exemple d'une production architecturale étayée par un discours théorique explicite – une sorte de Monticello où la question de la place de l'*individu* dans le paysage, qui préoccupait Thomas Jefferson, est remplacée par le problème de la construction d'un espace sacré rituel tourné vers l'intérieur, au centre duquel se trouve le *paroissien*. Comme à Monticello, cependant, la dimension théorique n'existe pas d'entrée de jeu : le bâtiment est d'abord conçu par Corbin comme une église de campagne plutôt habituelle. Ce n'est que progressivement que l'église acquiert une importance particulière, au gré des croisements entre les points de vue des divers intervenants. Nous suivrons donc tour à tour les différents protagonistes de cette histoire – le curé, l'évêque et le Séminaire, le professeur d'architecture aux multiples fonctions – et, de cette manière, nous montrerons comment l'église et son décor sont traversés par plusieurs grands enjeux de l'époque. C'est en effet dans la rencontre des multiples «voix», parfois à l'unisson et parfois discordantes, que l'œuvre a pris forme, et c'est en revêtant simultanément une variété de significations qu'elle trouve place dans son époque.

Nous voulons donner une vue d'ensemble du décor de l'église de Saint-Joachim – en prenant bien soin de ne pas isoler la peinture, la sculpture et l'architecture en disciplines autonomes. Selon l'historiographie dominante, l'unité architecturale du décor intérieur constitue en effet la caractéristique la plus originale de l'église[5]. Mais, à notre avis, cette unité ne doit pas se concevoir comme une plate cohérence stylistique, qui est d'ailleurs toute relative. Il faut envisager le travail de François et de Thomas Baillairgé dans le contexte des conseillers qui ont de toute

évidence guidé les deux artistes, et des intérêts multiples que ceux-ci ont dû tenter de satisfaire. Plus concrètement, il semble que la volonté des concepteurs d'unifier et de concentrer l'expérience religieuse était une réaction à des forces centrifuges réelles qui menaçaient de disperser l'attention du paroissien. Nous voulons donc mettre en évidence cet ensemble hétérogène de forces sociales et discursives que l'apparente unité formelle du décor cherche à contenir et à maîtriser. En effet, malgré les formes architecturales classiques et l'«ordre» qui les caractérise, le décor intérieur de l'église de Saint-Joachim doit être fondamentalement compris comme un énoncé «plurilingue[6]», pour reprendre l'expression de Mikhaïl Bakhtin : l'œuvre comme produit d'une négociation entre des discours nombreux dont les tensions sont exprimées ou réprimées selon le cas.

Le curé bâtit son église

Jean-Baptiste Corbin est nommé curé de Saint-Joachim en 1769 – huitième en titre depuis l'érection canonique de cette paroisse en 1721. Il n'a que 28 ans et restera jusqu'à sa mort, en 1811, à la tête de cette paroisse qui sera, au propre comme au figuré, toute sa vie. Ces quarante-deux années constituent de très loin le ministère le plus long dans l'histoire de la paroisse[7]. Nous savons malheureusement peu de choses sur ce personnage pourtant central dans notre histoire. Né à Québec le 24 septembre 1741[8] d'une éminente famille de charpentiers navals – son père Étienne Corbin est associé à son grand-père David et à son oncle Joseph-Marie, qui furent tour à tour maître charpentier du roi[9] –, il semble déjà jouir d'un certain bien à son arrivée à Saint-Joachim en 1769. Tout au long de sa carrière il concédera une série de prêts (sans intérêts) assez importants au Séminaire de Québec, à l'Hôpital général ainsi qu'à la fabrique de Saint-Joachim et à sa famille proche. La lecture de son testament – un document remarquablement bien détaillé – nous fait saisir les contours d'une personnalité impressionnante : d'une grande dévotion, Corbin est aussi un homme de culture, habité d'un intérêt particulier pour les sciences. Sujet «à de fréquentes infirmités» – et vu «son éloignement de la ville» – il se voit dans l'obligation «de faire quelqu'étude de la médecine» dans les livres qu'il peut se procurer[10]. Mais il se montre aussi un homme d'action efficace, dévoué au bien-être de «tous ses paroissiens», dont la réputation restera dans les annales de la paroisse[11]. Son projet le plus urgent et le plus cher : construire la nouvelle église, ce qu'il entreprend dès son arrivée. Après la destruction de l'ancienne église sise près du fleuve, que l'armée anglaise a incendiée le 23 août 1759, la nouvelle sera érigée en plein centre de la paroisse sur un terrain qui appartenait déjà à la fabrique, et qui avait été donné par le Séminaire de Québec en 1705 (fig.5)[12].

Le gros œuvre du nouvel édifice est réalisé entre 1771 et 1779, date qui est alors inscrite sur la façade, et l'église est bénie le 8 juillet 1779[13]. Mais le plus important est à venir : l'élaboration d'un riche décor intérieur, qui s'échelonnera sur toute la vie de Corbin et se poursuivra après sa mort grâce à son généreux legs testamentaire.

fig.5 Anonyme, vue de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, sans date. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill.
(Photo: L'Université McGill)

La succession des aménagements intérieurs, que l'on suit grâce aux livres de comptes de la paroisse, révèle l'attitude du jeune curé face à son église. À part une première chaire installée en 1780 et remplacée dans les années 1830, tous les éléments importants mentionnés aux livres de comptes entre 1780 et 1785 sont encore en place aujourd'hui. L'élément le plus ancien est vraisemblablement le tableau du maître autel : une œuvre de l'abbé Jean-Antoine Aide-Créquy qui illustre *Saint Joachim présentant la Vierge au temple* (fig.6). Peint l'année de la bénédiction de l'église, le tableau assure la présence du saint patron de la paroisse au milieu du sanctuaire, qui n'avait encore aucun retable et ne disposait sans doute que d'un autel sommaire adossé à une cloison intérieure derrière laquelle se trouvait la sacristie. Le tableau d'Aide-Créquy est un bricolage iconographique, empruntant à des œuvres conservées à la paroisse voisine de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, soit le *Saint Joachim présentant la Vierge au temple* (1676) du Frère Luc, pour la figure principale, et l'ex-voto de Marie-Anne Robineau de Bécancour (1675), pour la figure de la Vierge[14]. Le tableau se démarque cependant par son arrière-plan architectural, comme si le peintre (ou Corbin, qui a vraisemblablement passé la commande) avait voulu assurer à l'église, encore à l'état de gros-œuvre, une noblesse monumentale, ne fût-elle encore que fictive. Quelques années s'écouleront avant que le tableau soit doté d'un cadre composé de moulures classiques partiellement dorées à la feuille d'or, d'une richesse appropriée à sa situation. Il s'agit du premier travail de François Baillairgé effectué à Saint-Joachim – en fait une de ses toutes premières œuvres suivant son retour de France la même année[15]. Puis vient le tabernacle, pièce centrale du culte et point de convergence de toute l'église, et un peu plus tard les chandeliers et la croix d'autel (fig.7)[16]. Sculpté par François Baillairgé en 1783, ce tabernacle, qui témoigne du séjour de l'artiste à Paris, est aujourd'hui reconnu comme une œuvre majeure dans l'histoire de l'art canadien[17]. Délaissant les motifs rococos des tabernacles réalisés à la fin du régime français, Baillairgé introduit ici des rinceaux antiques et des motifs végétaux inspirés de la flore locale. La composition est fortement architecturée, marquée par le retour à l'ordre caractérisant le style Louis XVI, avec sa riche colonnade accentuée par des ressauts et des avant-corps, mais sans aileron ni fronton, et un couronnement qui peut faire penser aux toitures d'un château de Mansart.

Pour ces premiers travaux, Corbin suit une pratique quasi incontournable dans les paroisses de campagne au Québec à l'époque, celle d'investir année après année les sommes que la fabrique peut se permettre de consacrer au bâtiment, à son ornementation et aux objets de culte, en commençant par le plus important. Créer au milieu des terres agricoles un espace à part, d'une richesse distinctive, est essentiel à la manifestation du sacré dans la paroisse. En faisant appel à François Baillairgé, sans conteste l'artiste le mieux formé au Québec, le curé Corbin démontre cependant une ambition particulière et affiche son lien avec les cercles plus raffinés de la ville de Québec. Cet effort spécial que Corbin fournit pour l'ornementation

fig.6 Jean-Antoine Aide-Créquy, **Saint Joachim présentant la Vierge au temple**, 1779 (tableau du maître-autel de l'Église de Saint-Joachim). (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

fig.7 François Baillairgé, **Tabernacle du maître-autel**, Église de Saint-Joachim, 1783. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

de son église ne doit pas être envisagé comme vanité ecclésiastique, mais plutôt comme une dimension centrale de sa mission apostolique, et le reflet d'un grand dévouement à sa paroisse et à ses paroissiens. Mais, par la même occasion, l'effort de Corbin peut être aussi vu comme une réaction à une période difficile dans l'histoire de l'Église au Québec, moment où toute l'organisation de la colonie était en mutation profonde. La foi catholique était toujours fortement ancrée dans les campagnes canadiennes, mais la pratique religieuse s'était fortement relâchée suite aux bouleversements de la conquête. L'historien Nive Voisine parle d'un «affadissement de la foi», et Lionel Groulx va jusqu'à parler «d'indifférence religieuse» et même «d'abandon de la pratique religieuse[18]». Rappelons d'ailleurs que la paroisse de Saint-Joachim fut privée d'église de 1759 à 1779, vingt années où la population s'entassait tant que bien que mal le dimanche dans une salle du presbytère aménagée en chapelle. L'instabilité de la colonie et du monde paroissial en particulier marque donc le début du ministère de Corbin. Dès lors, la reconstruction de l'église paroissiale prend un relief particulier. Elle devient le symbole le plus concret de la restauration du pouvoir spirituel traditionnel, autant pour les paroissiens que pour les autorités ecclésiastiques à Québec.

Les seigneurs et l'évêque entrent en scène

Avant même de s'attaquer aux premiers éléments à proprement parler *décoratifs* de l'église, le curé Corbin a l'occasion de démontrer sa solidarité avec ses paroissiens, à propos d'une affaire concernant les bancs de l'église. Au moment de la consécration du bâtiment et de l'ouverture de l'église au culte, comme à l'habitude les bancs sont installés et vendus ensuite à la criée aux familles de la paroisse, selon une coutume établie dès le début du XVIII^e^ siècle[19]. Les bancs les plus proches du sanctuaire sont naturellement les plus chers et sont donc, en principe, dévolus aux notables et à leur famille, c'est-à-dire «les cultivateurs les plus riches et dont les unités de production sont généralement les plus proches du centre de la paroisse[20]». Font exception le banc des marguilliers et aussi les deux bancs seigneuriaux situés tout à l'avant de la nef, qui reviennent d'office à la famille du seigneur local. L'historien Ollivier Hubert voit dans toute cette organisation «une sorte de mise en scène de la microsociété paroissiale» représentée dans le rite[21].

Or, en 1779, d'après un rapport du curé Corbin, les paroissiens s'offusquent de la hauteur du banc seigneurial installé par le Séminaire de Québec. Le curé Corbin prend alors le parti des paroissiens, comme cela apparaît nettement dans la lettre qu'il envoie au procureur du Séminaire le 7 octobre 1779 : «[J]e ne puis m'empêcher de vous dire que votre banc seigneurial, outre qu'il défigure toute l'Église au jugement de tout le monde et de vos fermiers mêmes, par son excessive élévation, ôte entièrement la vue des bancs de derrière et du banc d'œuvre même par le pont élevé de six pouces que vous y avez fait mettre[22]». Corbin poursuit sa lettre sur un ton plutôt exaspéré : «[...] je ne puis croire, Monsieur, que votre titre

de Seigneurs vous donne droit d'ôter la vue de l'autel et du sanctuaire à ceux qui sont derrière[23]». À la suite de quoi il demande d'enlever le «pont», c'est-à-dire la plateforme sur laquelle est surélevé le «banc des seigneurs», et menace qu'en cas de refus la fabrique fera rehausser tous les autres bancs de l'église d'une hauteur comparable.

Comme toute réponse, le Séminaire dit s'en remettre entièrement au jugement de l'Évêque Jean-Olivier Briand[24]. La lettre de ce dernier suit de près; elle constitue sans doute le document le plus intéressant du dossier. Intransigeant, l'évêque n'admet aucune concession, démontrant même une très grande condescendance envers les paroissiens qu'il qualifie de «grossiers», de «peuple méconnaissant et ingrat», démontrant «peu de respect» envers les Saints Mystères du culte catholique : «Si ces gros Messieurs, tranche Mgr Briand, veulent s'élever vis-à-vis du Seigneur ou même au dessus, car c'est assez l'esprit de notre peuple, ce serait à eux à le faire à leur frais[25]».

La réponse de Mgr Briand révèle la profonde inquiétude du haut clergé catholique au Québec à cette époque qui, confronté aux menaces répétées du gouvernement colonial britannique d'interdire le culte catholique au Canada et à l'indifférence, voire à l'insubordination, religieuse des habitants, manque de ressources ecclésiastiques pour ramener ceux-ci dans le droit chemin. Mgr Briand est d'ailleurs reconnu comme celui qui le premier a aiguillé l'Église sur la voie des compromis avec le gouvernement britannique. Mais il s'agissait là de la seule stratégie possible pour maintenir le pouvoir de l'Église, et, pourrait-on soutenir, assurer la cohésion du Canada français. Une chose est sûre, l'évêque ne souffre pas que l'ordre des hiérarchies traditionnelles de la colonie soit critiqué, quand les assises de son Église restent si mal assurées. Si les habitants persistent dans leur requête, Mgr Briand suggère qu'ils aillent devant les tribunaux civils, sachant bien que ces derniers auront recours à son arbitrage de toute façon.

Cet épisode nous renseigne aussi sur Corbin et sa façon d'envisager son ministère : entièrement dévoué à ses paroissiens, il risque sans hésiter de s'aliéner ses patrons qui siègent à Québec. Il aura d'ailleurs bien d'autres occasions de les défendre face aux réprimandes de l'évêché, par exemple, lorsque Mgr Briand a voulu punir les habitants qui avaient montré de «la sympathie envers les protestants» lors de l'attaque américaine de 1775-76[26].

L'affaire des bancs est révélatrice de la signification sociale attribuée à l'aménagement intérieur de l'église. Dans sa lettre du 11 octobre 1779 adressée à l'évêque, Corbin insiste sur «la propreté», entendue dans le sens de décorum, de l'église. La trop grande élévation du banc seigneurial est «une difformité» qui défigure la nef écrit-il. On pourrait penser qu'il s'agit là d'un simple supplément rhétorique pour appuyer sa requête sur l'iniquité du rehaussement pour les paroissiens «de derrière». Mais, en fait, dans l'esprit d'ancien régime, ces deux questions sont inextricables, la hiérarchie sociale étant fondamentalement tributaire de son

expression visuelle et publique[27]. Corbin n'a bien sûr aucune objection à ce que le banc seigneurial se distingue dans l'espace de l'église, qui est le seul et unique lieu où le corps social se rassemble et se représente donc publiquement dans sa totalité. Ce qui, par contre, le choque profondément est que sa trop grande prééminence cause, un déséquilibre, voire une *difformité*. Une parfaite coordination – autant visuelle que spatiale et matérielle – doit régir l'espace jusqu'au tabernacle, seul élément en droit de dominer l'enceinte sacrée. L'église est voulue comme le symbole de l'harmonie restaurée d'un corps social qui a été menacé.

Cette menace, on le constate facilement, n'est pas la même aux yeux du curé et de l'évêque, car si le premier craint la discorde dans sa paroisse, le second se méfie plutôt de la contestation du prestige des seigneurs ecclésiastiques. Ainsi, l'évêque ne manque pas de rappeler à Corbin que ses paroissiens «ne paraissent guère reconnaissants de ce qu'a fait le Séminaire pour la bâtisse de leur église[28]», jugeant que le Séminaire a bien rempli son devoir seigneurial. L'évêque situe donc le problème entièrement au niveau du maintien des hiérarchies, fermant les yeux sur les éventuels «excès» des seigneurs. Corbin a une perspective inverse : comment conserver la cohésion de la paroisse tout en rendant les hommages dus aux seigneurs de la Côte-de-Beaupré? Il semble évident que le programme esthétique établi lors de la seconde campagne d'embellissement, après la mort de Corbin en 1811, doit être examiné à la lumière de cette préoccupation d'unification symbolique. Mais, alors que le curé n'avait à cœur que la «propreté» de l'église de ses paroissiens, Jérôme Demers et ses architectes, responsables des travaux exécutés entre 1816 et 1830, voudront manifester cette unité à travers une structure formelle pouvant être érigée en norme générale pour un pays en reconstruction.

De Jean-Baptiste Corbin à Jérôme Demers

La phase capitale – et la plus novatrice – dans la réalisation du décor de Saint-Joachim se situe entre le décès de Corbin en janvier 1811 et le début du ministère du curé Georges-Hilaire Besserer en 1828. Durant ces dix-sept années, période où François-Ignace Renvoyzé, curé de Sainte-Anne, dessert la paroisse de Saint-Joachim laissée sans curé permanent, l'abbé Jérôme Demers prend les commandes des opérations architecturales de la paroisse[29]. Soulignons d'emblée que Corbin avait déjà tracé les grandes lignes du programme décoratif à compléter dans son église. D'abord, c'est lui qui laisse les ressources requises pour relancer les travaux : «J'ai amassé des épargnes que j'ai faites sur mes dépenses depuis plus de trente sept ans que je suis en cure la somme de dix mille livres argent de France ou environ qu'on trouvera dans une petite cassette particulière destinée à cet usage [...] laquelle somme sera employée comme il est dit ci-dessus à la décoration de l'église[30]». Ensuite c'est lui, toujours en 1806, qui précise le type de décor envisagé : «[F]aire faire ou un retable dans le rond point, ou si l'on trouve l'usage aussi propre et moins dispendieux quatre colonnes rondes chargées de quelques

beaux ornements de sculpture surmontées d'un entablement avec son architrave, frise et belle corniche, dans lesquelles le tabernacle sera enchâssé et au dessus duquel entablement sera aussi enchassé le tableau de saint Joachim dans un cadre d'architecture chargé aussi de divers ornements et qui s'élèvera jusqu'à la voûte, ce qui sera facile à faire à présent qu'il y a une sacristie batie[31]».

On voit clairement dans ce passage que Corbin a bien préparé le terrain. Ces colonnes surmontées d'un entablement ne constituent rien d'autre qu'un baldaquin, choix de décor prévisible bien qu'assez ostentatoire pour couronner le tabernacle – on en retrouve quelques exemples dans les églises du régime français. Corbin veut ainsi poursuivre ce qu'il avait commencé, suite naturelle des travaux déjà accomplis de son vivant[32] et auxquels il a occasionnellement contribué de ses propres deniers[33].

Le legs considérable de Corbin peut nous apparaître bien spectaculaire aujourd'hui, d'autant qu'il a permis la réalisation d'un ensemble marquant pour l'art religieux québécois de la première moitié du XIX^e siècle. Mais le geste n'est pas exceptionnel. Pour la plupart des curés de l'époque, l'ornementation de l'église est capitale[34], et certains n'ont pas hésité à y aller de leur poche[35]. Probablement la meilleure indication de la tendance à investir dans les riches décors d'église, outre les décors mêmes, provient des critiques qu'elle a soulevées dans certaines parties de la population à l'époque. En effet, au début des années 1830, Louis-Joseph Papineau se plaint, par exemple, de la lenteur du clergé à créer des écoles de paroisse après la promulgation de la *Loi des écoles de fabrique* (1824), retard qu'il attribue au désir du curé de garder tout l'argent possible pour les «dorures» :

> Une loi pour la fondation d'écoles de fabriques est en force depuis plusieurs années; combien peu en ont profité : il existe à peine une douzaine de ces écoles qui devraient être vingt fois plus nombreuses. Après que des dorures et des ornements de mauvais goût auront été prodigués jusqu'à ne laisser plus de place pour en recevoir d'autres, les pères de familles doivent-ils rester à la disposition des marguilliers, privés du droit de délibérer[36].

Pour Papineau, chef de file de la bourgeoisie libérale, cet investissement dans les «dorures et ornements de mauvais goût» est signe d'abrutissement de la population laissée aux mains de l'Église. Mais pour Corbin et les curés qui, comme lui, ont cette propension à faire passer l'ornementation des lieux de culte avant toute autre considération, ou presque, il s'agit d'une pratique normale, au service de leur tâche la plus essentielle : l'élévation spirituelle de leurs paroissiens à travers une convergence de l'espace paroissial sur l'église, et plus précisément sur le chœur, habituellement l'élément le plus riche. Ainsi, malgré l'intérêt de Corbin pour les Baillairgé et son ouverture aux raffinements venus d'Europe, son attirance pour les baldaquins et surtout sa conception «à la pièce» du décor restent proches d'une vision traditionnelle et populaire de l'église, vision à laquelle nous pouvons aussi associer la place centrale qu'il accorde à la figure du saint patron de la paroisse.

L'unité que désire maintenir Corbin dans son église n'est pas celle d'un système architectural régi par des règles précises; elle renvoie plutôt à un décorum général et, dans la mesure où elle possède une dimension esthétique, à l'absence d'éléments perturbateurs.

La conception du décor qu'amène Jérôme Demers, par contre, donne meilleure prise aux critiques émises par Papineau. Le travail architectural théorique et pratique de Demers est avant tout l'expression d'une volonté de normalisation. Il cherche à forger des outils de propagande, en utilisant une esthétique «du bon goût» pour promouvoir une véritable orthodoxie religieuse. Cette rectitude, on le verra, cherche autant à faire obstacle aux désordres paroissiaux des habitants qu'aux idées d'une bourgeoisie libérale montante. La fonction prophylactique du décor s'accomplira par une unité formelle capable d'engendrer une expérience immersive forte, mais aussi par la création d'une fiction où l'architecture royaliste d'ancien régime s'allie à une mise en scène de l'orthodoxie religieuse favorisée par l'évêché de Québec.

Jérôme Demers et la stratégie iconographique

Le document clé pour l'élaboration du décor de Saint-Joachim est le contrat octroyé à François et Thomas Baillairgé en mars 1816, soit cinq ans après le décès de Corbin[37]. Produit d'une longue période de gestation au cours de laquelle Jérôme Demers fait la navette entre Québec et Saint-Joachim plusieurs fois par année, le devis accompagnant le contrat témoigne d'un important travail de conception qui, à partir des idées sommaires de Corbin, développe, à quelques variantes près, l'ensemble que nous connaissons. Le devis détaille en premier lieu les éléments entourant l'autel, puis ceux qui doivent orner le périmètre du chœur. Parmi les transformations et les ajouts par rapport aux dernières volontés de Corbin, on trouve notamment les quatre «colonnes triomphales» libres (sans entablement) posées sur des piédestaux, les «quatre statues des Évangélistes assis» entre ces quatre colonnes puis, sur le mur du retable, «cinq bas-reliefs représentant autant de tableaux de l'enfance du sauveur dans les cadres circulaires[38]». Les statues, entièrement dorées, seront sculptées légèrement plus grandes que nature, en position assise sur d'autres piédestaux décorés des emblèmes de chacun des évangélistes. Quatre grands bas-reliefs en médaillon (au lieu des cinq mentionnés au devis) seront placés sur le retable en arrière-plan, dans les arcades qui rythment le chœur. Ils illustreront les scènes de la *Nativité*, l'*Adoration des mages*, la *Présentation au temple*, et le *Christ au milieu des docteurs*. Deux grands panneaux en bas-relief illustrant la *Religion* et la *Foi* seront insérés dans l'arcade du chœur en dessous des médaillons du devant.

Le premier apport de Jérôme Demers au décor de Saint-Joachim est donc avant tout de nature iconographique : l'ensemble du chœur est maintenant dévolu entièrement au Nouveau Testament. L'élément dominant sont les quatre statues

posées entre les colonnes triomphales (fig.8). De part et d'autre de l'autel, on trouve, à gauche, les statues des évangélistes saint Marc et saint Mathieu, et, à droite, saint Jean et saint Luc. Cette mise en évidence des auteurs des textes canoniques sur la vie du Christ sculptés en aussi grandes dimensions est exceptionnelle au Québec. Le seul antécédent connu – mais il est d'importance – est celui de l'église de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, où le sculpteur Amable Charron avait installé, en 1813, des statues des quatre évangélistes dans le chœur[39]. Ils n'y resteront pas longtemps. Lors de sa visite pastorale à l'été 1814, Mgr Plessis «se montre horrifié par la présence des quatre évangélistes[40]», comme l'expliquent les historiens John R. Porter et Jean Bélisle. Ce n'était pas l'iconographie qui faisait problème, mais la qualité des sculptures d'Amable Charron. En effet, Plessis demande qu'on retire immédiatement ces statues difformes «faute de quoi la messe ne se célébrera plus au maître-autel, passé la présente semaine[41]».

L'incident nous montre bien l'intérêt que l'évêché porte à la décoration des églises. Mgr Plessis semble avoir été particulièrement sensible à la dimension esthétique du décor dans le rituel religieux, ce qui rejoint tout à fait le nouvel intérêt pour l'architecture dans l'enseignement de Demers au Séminaire de Québec. Il est bien possible que ce dernier, qui élabore le programme iconographique de Saint-Joachim au moment même où se déroule le petit scandale artistique de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, ait voulu faire une démonstration de bon goût en demandant à François Baillairgé de sculpter *correctement* les évangélistes. Mais la complexité du thème iconographique et sa mise en scène particulièrement puissante à Saint-Joachim dépassent de beaucoup la simple question de l'habileté du sculpteur.

Mis à part les évangélistes auxquels l'ensemble est subordonné, les quatre médaillons autour du retable suivent une séquence narrative logique. Selon la chronologie de la vie de Jésus, ils doivent être lus de gauche à droite, d'abord au premier plan, à l'entrée du chœur, puis au second plan, derrière les colonnes. Au premier plan, la scène de la *Nativité* montre la sainte Famille entourée de deux anges et de Dieu le Père, sans le pittoresque habituel des animaux dans la crèche (fig.9). Cette version épurée du sujet – version pour laquelle il existe une tradition iconographique bien établie dans l'Europe des XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles – met l'accent sur le geste du Père qui donne son Fils, et elle s'associe aisément à l'allégorie de la *Religion* qui occupe la grande arcade située juste au-dessous (fig.2). De l'autre côté du chœur, la scène de l'*Adoration des mages* (fig.10) matérialise, de la même façon, l'idée abstraite représentée dans l'allégorie de la *Foi*, placée juste en-dessous. Viennent ensuite les deux épisodes de la vie publique de Jésus, peu visibles derrière l'écran des quatre colonnes triomphales. Enfin la lecture se termine logiquement sur le devant de l'autel, dont la scène des *Saintes Femmes au tombeau* représente le moment où la résurrection du Christ est révélée à l'humanité (fig.11).

Cette organisation des sujets autour des évangélistes est significative. On en trouve l'explication dans un ouvrage publié par Demers en 1835 intitulé *Institutiones*

fig.8 Anonyme, vue du retable de l'Église de Saint-Joachim (détail de la partie gauche, avec saint Marc et saint Mathieu), sans date. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill. (Photo: L'Université McGill)

fig.9 François Baillairgé, **Médaillon de la Nativité**, Église de Saint-Joachim, 1816-1820. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

fig.10 François Baillairgé, **Médaillon de l'Adoration des mages**, Église de Saint-Joachim, 1816-1820. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

fig.11 François Baillairgé et Thomas Baillairgé, **Saintes Femmes au tombeau**, Église de Saint-Joachim, 1816-1820. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2006)

philosophicae ad usum studiosae juventutis. Il s'agit de son cours de philosophie enseigné au Séminaire de Québec, et qui établit clairement sa vision chrétienne de toute question philosophique[42]. Comme son précis d'architecture, ce texte emprunte à de nombreuses lectures, toujours dans l'esprit de dénoncer les égarements et les abus de la philosophie moderne. Il est suivi d'un appendice «Preuve de la religion révélée[43]», texte visant à établir par un argument logique et rationnel l'authenticité de la révélation. La preuve la plus fondamentale demeure la Résurrection du Christ, mais la clé de la démonstration réside dans le fait qu'au troisième jour, le tombeau fut trouvé vide : «Jésus est véritablement ressuscité, il est sorti vivant du tombeau où personne ne doute qu'il n'ait été placé mort. Il est constant que dès le troisième jour, son corps n'était plus dans le sépulcre[44]». Outre le fait qu'il conclut la vie terrestre de Jésus, l'épisode des saintes femmes qui découvrent le tombeau vide constitue donc pour Demers un élément clé du catholicisme. On comprend ainsi l'importance du magnifique bas-relief placé devant l'autel, point de fuite de l'axe central de l'église.

Le saint patron paroissial

Un élément majeur du retable, cependant, ne trouve pas place dans le programme iconographique de Demers : le tableau de saint Joachim isolé au centre, sans arrimage

narratif quelconque au reste de la composition. L'importance donnée aux évangiles laisse perplexe, puisque saint Joachim – époux de sainte Anne et père de Marie – est totalement absent des évangiles canoniques, l'enfance de la Vierge étant le sujet de textes apocryphes, et en premier lieu du *Protévangile de Jacques*[45]. Il est donc extrêmement curieux que le programme iconographique de l'église de Saint-Joachim, tel que développé entre 1811 et 1816, soit dominé par les quatre évangélistes. Il n'y a pas foncièrement de contradiction théologique dans un tel arrangement, mais une iconographie vraiment unifiée aurait dû mettre l'accent sur la Sainte Famille, à laquelle se rattacherait naturellement les grands-parents sainte Anne et saint Joachim. Pourquoi Demers, qui favorise l'unité avant toute chose, a-t-il choisi de mettre l'accent sur les évangiles et admet-il une telle incohérence?

Porter et Bélisle, qui ont bien étudié les programmes iconographiques des anciennes églises du Québec, ont voulu démontrer cette unité à Saint-Joachim en faisant un lien entre la figure du saint patron et les scènes de l'enfance de Jésus représentées sur les médaillons du retable : «Dans le prolongement du tableau, on a cherché à mettre en évidence le rôle joué par saint Joachim, père de la Vierge Marie et grand-père du Christ, dans l'histoire du Salut[46]». Mais le seul lien qu'ils trouvent repose sur une spéculation à propos d'un sixième personnage ajouté aux cinq «protagonistes habituels» de la *Présentation au temple* : «Au milieu de la scène, à l'arrière-plan, on voit en effet apparaître un homme âgé qui dépose l'enfant dans les bras de Siméon. Ce personnage énigmatique pourrait bien être saint Joachim[47]». Porter et Bélisle ont bien raison de signaler qu'un sixième personnage n'est pas identifié dans l'évangile de saint Luc, le seul qui rapporte l'épisode de la *Présentation au temple*. Mais ils négligent de mentionner qu'à peu près toute la tradition iconographique de la *Présentation au temple* ajoute des personnages aux cinq dont parle saint Luc sans jamais évoquer saint Joachim. En outre, nous concevons mal comment un élément si obscur (et de plus masqué par un écran de colonnes), pourrait suffire à unifier le programme iconographique de toute l'église. Le choix de mettre bien en vue la vie du Christ et les quatre évangélistes dans une église dédiée à saint Joachim demeure donc étonnant. À moins, bien sûr, qu'on ait voulu faire diversion. De fait, si on regarde la controverse importante que suscite à l'époque la dévotion aux saints patrons des paroisses, on comprend que la représentation de ces derniers pouvait être sujette à caution.

Un des problèmes les plus embarrassants auxquels se trouve confronté l'évêché de Québec depuis l'épiscopat de Jean-François Hubert, et qui s'aggrave sous Joseph-Octave Plessis, est la tenue des fêtes populaires en l'honneur des saints patrons des paroisses, fêtes que l'évêché perçoit comme autant d'occasions de conduites contraires à la religion. Comme l'a bien étudié Ollivier Hubert, le calendrier religieux préoccupait grandement l'évêché, qui a voulu mieux encadrer les fêtes patronales en adoptant diverses mesures, du changement de date jusqu'à l'interdiction des fêtes dans certaines paroisses. Mgr Plessis en donne la raison dans

le mandement qu'il écrit en décembre 1810 et par lequel il regroupe les fêtes patronales de toutes les paroisses le même jour, soit le premier dimanche suivant la Toussaint, de manière à en contenir les débordements :

> Depuis longtemps, Nos Très Chers Frères, les désordres introduits à l'occasion des fêtes patronales des paroisses, sont devenus pour vos évêques un objet d'amertume et de sollicitude [...]. Ces jours vénérables [...] sont devenus [...] des jours de promenades et de débauches, des jours de querelles et d'ivrognerie, des jours de blasphèmes et de batailles, dont la plupart d'entre vous ont entendu les affligeants récits, lorsqu'ils n'en ont pas été personnellement témoins[48].

Le caractère licencieux des fêtes patronales est le sujet d'un débat houleux au début du XIX^e^ siècle. La question intéressait même les autorités britanniques, qui cherchaient à réduire le nombre de fêtes chômées au Bas-Canada pour des considérations aussi bien sociales qu'économiques. Les évêques, suivant leur politique d'accommodation avec le gouvernement colonial, étaient bien tentés de faire des concessions à l'égard de ces fêtes souvent irrévérencieuses et empreintes de superstition. Mais la question n'était pas simple, puisque leur célébration était au cœur de l'attachement populaire à la paroisse et donc à la religion en général.

Afin de mieux connaître la situation, Mgr Hubert avait ordonné une enquête en 1790, visant à connaître l'opinion des curés sur la question. Les résultats, consignés dans deux documents intitulés respectivement «Raisons pour supprimer les fêtes» et «Raisons pour conserver les fêtes», laissent deviner l'esprit de ces événements. D'un côté, certains prêtres argumentent en faveur de la suppression :

> On voit la veille de ces fêtes la place de l'église garnie et les chemins bordés de boutiques de petits marchands, qui sont autant de caffés et de cantines. Un mélange de filles et de garçons de différentes paroisses passent la nuit à boire et à chanter [...]. Le matin de la fête se passe à vendre, à acheter, à boire, à voler. Le peuple n'est pas à l'Église, mais à la foire. Il n'est pas rare de voir, l'après-midi, l'église infectée par les vomissemens des gens qui s'y retirent. Un grand nombre de personnes ivres sont couchées le long des chemins, exposées à divers accidents, un plus grand nombre encore concernées dans des querelles et dans des batailles qui durent jusqu'au soir. S'il y a une procession attachée à la fête, on la fait au milieu des blasphèmes et des champs de bataille sur un chemin ensanglanté. Sur les habitans de 10 paroisses assemblés à une telle fête, il ne s'élève pas une seule voix pour demander que l'on prévienne ou que l'on punisse les désordres qui l'accompagnent [...]. S'il y a le lendemain, une autre fête de paroisse dans le voisinage de la première, les mêmes champions s'y retrouvent et les mêmes excès s'y commettent[49].

De l'autre côté, plusieurs curés pensent qu'il faut plutôt conserver ces fêtes, qui sont parmi les plus importantes aux yeux de leurs paroissiens :

> Les fidèles paroissent fort attachés à la conservation de leurs fêtes de paroisses. Leur suppression générale effectuée tout à coup pourroit produire parmi eux des murmures qui ne s'appaiseroient pas facilement [...] ils croiraient n'avoir

> plus de patrons dans le ciel s'ils ne les honoraient pas sur la terre [...]. Plusieurs demandent déjà quel portrait faudra-t-il mettre à la place de celui de notre saint[50]?

Les documents de 1790 n'identifient aucun curé ni aucune paroisse, peut-être parce que le but de l'enquête était de formuler une politique générale pour l'ensemble du diocèse. Mais un second recensement d'opinion, réalisée autour de 1807 au tout début de l'épiscopat de Mgr Plessis, dresse un tableau plus précis. Sur vingt-neuf curés recensés, neuf sont en faveur de la suppression des fêtes patronales, alors que dix-huit souhaitent les conserver. Seul deux curés, dont Jean-Baptiste Corbin, restent indécis[51]. L'ambivalence de Corbin est révélatrice puisqu'elle démontre qu'il y avait, comme ailleurs, des désordres à Saint-Joachim (sinon pourquoi ne pas voter nettement contre la suppression?)[52]. Mais son hésitation à supprimer les fêtes confirme nos conclusions sur la nature de son ministère : elle démontre son attachement au patron de sa chère paroisse (qu'il compte parmi ses propres patrons, comme l'affirme son testament[53]) et, surtout, elle témoigne de son refus d'adopter des mesures répressives pour résoudre un problème de paroisse[54].

Nous pouvons ainsi mieux comprendre l'hiatus entre le tableau du maître-autel, représentant le saint patron de la paroisse, et le reste du retable, consacré aux évangiles canoniques et à la vie du Christ. Demers conçoit le décor dans l'esprit du raffermissement de la religion que souhaitait le haut clergé du diocèse. Il veut donc investir dans les valeurs les plus sûres et les plus fondamentales du catholicisme. Il doit cependant composer avec la représentation du saint patron déjà accrochée dans l'église : se débarrasser du tableau aurait soulevé inutilement l'ire des habitants, comme en témoigne ce paroissien anonyme qui s'inquiétait, en 1790, du portrait qu'il faudrait mettre «à la place de notre saint». Mais il était évidemment hors de question de s'appuyer sur des textes apocryphes pour développer un thème iconographique autour de saint Joachim.

Si le nouveau retable envisagé par Corbin devait mettre en valeur le tableau, le projet de 1816 vise plutôt à amenuiser son importance : les quatre évangélistes, comme autant de sentinelles, «encadrent» saint Joachim par la religion officielle, celle régie par l'évêché, dont les dévotions à des saints particuliers, et tout particulièrement celles aux patrons des paroisses, sont graduellement éliminées[55]. On peut attribuer la même fonction au couple iconographique formé par les deux grands bas-reliefs représentant la *Foi* et la *Religion*, situés stratégiquement de part et d'autre de l'entrée du chœur : il rappelle qu'il n'y a expression de la foi véritable que par l'intermédiaire du culte officiel de la liturgie catholique. Toute autre forme de dévotion n'est que superstition.

«Le Signe des quatre» : la dimension architecturale du décor intérieur

Outre la représentation des évangélistes et de la vie du Christ, le devis de 1816 comprend un certain nombre de nouveautés proprement architecturales. Il décrit entre autres

ces «quatre colonnes triomphales sur [...] piédestaux[56]» qui, encadrant l'autel, forment une composition si particulière à Saint-Joachim. Ces colonnes soutiennent magnifiquement l'autorité triomphante des quatre évangélistes, qui s'appuient sur elles. Une interprétation symbolique s'impose. Il semble donc prudent de ne pas aborder l'aspect proprement architectural du décor intérieur en s'éloignant trop rapidement des questions iconographiques. Que penser de l'ordonnancement classique à Saint-Joachim, que les historiens de l'art ont signalé comme étant particulièrement novateur? Faut-il y voir un symbole religieux ou une conception rationnelle de type néoclassique? Ou encore, la fusion des deux aspects est-elle possible?

La colonne comme motif symbolique est tellement répandue dans le christianisme qu'il est difficile de reconnaître les sources précises qui auraient pu orienter l'abbé Demers et les Baillairgé. On pense naturellement au baldaquin de Gianlorenzo Bernini à Saint-Pierre de Rome, dont la portée hautement symbolique des célébrissimes colonnes torses en bronze est reconnue depuis toujours. Selon l'historien du baroque Irving Lavin, ces colonnes doivent être vues en unisson avec les quatre statues colossales des saints que le Bernin a nichées dans les piliers du dôme de la basilique, entourant le baldaquin[57]. L'association colonne-statue du Bernin est donc assez comparable au dispositif, plus modeste, mis en œuvre à Saint-Joachim. Mais la symbolique des colonnes du *baldacchino* renvoie à une iconographie complexe et propre au lieu, qui n'a aucun lien direct avec les évangélistes[58].

Que les auteurs des évangiles puissent être conçus comme les «*piliers* essentiels de la foi chrétienne» [nous soulignons] ainsi que l'écrivent Porter et Bélisle dans leur analyse du décor de Saint-Joachim ne fait, par ailleurs, aucun doute[59]. Les quatre médaillons du retable renforcent d'ailleurs une telle lecture symbolique de la colonne. La scène de la *Nativité*, imitée d'une gravure attribuée à Jean Jouvenet[60], se déploie dans un champ de ruines antiques, signe que l'apparition du divin sur terre implique la destruction d'un ordre ancien[61]. L'association entre Nativité et ruines antiques est un thème iconographique répandu dès le début de la Renaissance, comme on le voit, par exemple, dans la fresque de Filippo Lippi à la cathédrale de Spolète (1466-69). Dans la scène de l'*Adoration des mages*, représentation qui suit aussi un type iconographique bien connu[62], on retrouve la colonne classique mais cette fois son statut de ruine n'est pas accentué. Il s'agit en fait d'un lieu en reconstruction, signalé en particulier par l'auvent qui, comme Joseph, prend appui sur le puissant socle de la colonne. La Sainte Famille elle-même est réunie sur une plateforme visiblement liée à l'architecture de cette colonne. Ainsi l'Église se bâtit selon le mode consacré d'une destruction suivie d'une restauration. Plusieurs des représentations de l'*Adoration des mages* jouent sur cette dialectique entre ruines et reconstruction, la plus éloquente étant sans doute celle peinte par Botticelli en 1482, conservée à la National Gallery de Londres. Les deux autres médaillons situés à l'arrière du retable suivent naturellement cette restauration de l'ordre architectural, des éléments

classiques, bien qu'en retrait, fournissant le cadre des deux scènes bibliques plus avancées dans la vie de Jésus. Mais ce n'est vraiment que dans l'espace réel de l'église de Saint- Joachim, celui occupé par les quatre évangélistes, que la colonne classique recouvre toute sa puissance: l'ordonnance architecturale, dont la cohérence est restaurée par les Baillairgé, devient le signe du nouvel ordre religieux.

Dans cette perspective, on peut conclure sans risque que la colonne classique est un symbole général de la régénération du monde par l'Église. Mais le groupement de quatre colonnes autour des évangélistes est un type iconographique beaucoup plus spécifique. On le retrouve dans l'architecture byzantine, et plus rarement dans la tradition catholique occidentale. Il s'agit pourtant d'une symbolique qui remonte aussi à l'enseignement des premiers pères de l'Église. Saint Irénée, notamment, a associé quatre colonnes aux «évangiles tétramorphes» dans son texte le plus connu, l'*Adversus Haereses* (*Contre les hérésies*), au IIième siècle. L'ouvrage de saint Irénée, divisé en cinq livres, nous intéresse particulièrement, puisque, dans le corpus chrétien, il constitue l'étude fondamentale pour la défense de l'orthodoxie de la Bible chrétienne et pour la prémunition contre toute tendance hérétique. Le texte sera utilisé dans les cercles ultramontains en France, notamment par l'abbé Lamennais dans son *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion* (1817-20), livre diffusé au Québec dès sa parution et sur lequel nous reviendrons plus loin. Voici un passage très éloquent de l'*Adversus Haereses* où Irénée décrit les évangiles comme les quatre colonnes qui soutiennent l'Église chrétienne :

> Par ailleurs, il ne peut y avoir ni un plus grand ni un plus petit nombre d'Évangiles. En effet, puisqu'il existe quatre régions du monde dans lequel nous sommes et quatre vents principaux, et puisque, d'autre part, l'Église est répandue sur toute la terre et qu'elle a pour colonne et pour soutien l'Évangile et l'Esprit de vie, il est naturel qu'elle ait quatre colonnes qui soufflent de toutes parts l'incorruptibilité et rendent la vie aux hommes. D'où il appert que le Verbe, Artisan de l'univers, qui siège sur les Chérubins et maintient toutes choses, lorsqu'il s'est manifesté aux hommes, nous a donné un Évangile à quadruple forme, encore que maintenu par un unique Esprit[63].

Ce sont donc les quatre évangélistes qui, réunis, gardent contre l'erreur et l'hérésie. Dans le sanctuaire de l'église de Saint-Joachim, les statues dorées sont en effet, comme nous l'avons souligné, placées en vigiles. Elles forment aussi une sorte de tribunal de la religion catholique. Les deux figures au premier plan, saint Marc et saint Luc, déroulent le rouleau des textes canoniques, prêts à énoncer leur sentence. Mais c'est l'association colonne-évangéliste qui développe avec le plus de puissance l'expression d'autorité. En ce sens, les colonnes triomphales célèbrent la victoire du Christ sur la mort, comme l'avaient souligné Porter et Bélisle[64], mais aussi le triomphe du catholicisme contre les hérésies. La rhétorique du classicisme se met au service du catholicisme, fonction qui lui a d'ailleurs toujours été conférée dans les cours des souverains d'Europe.

Demers connaissait bien les idées de saint Irénée qui sont au cœur du texte «Preuve de la religion révélée» inséré en appendice à son *Institutiones philosophicae*. Une phrase du texte renvoie d'ailleurs au passage de l'*Adversus Haereses* que nous venons de citer : «Saint Irénée, disciple de saint Polycarpe, [...] assure qu'il n'y a ni plus ni moins de quatre évangiles, et il en donne une raison mystique tirée des quatre parties du monde, dans lesquelles l'Église est disséminée[65]». Demers a pu d'ailleurs s'inspirer directement du texte de saint Irénée à l'époque où il formulait le programme iconographique de Saint-Joachim, car plus d'une édition était disponible au Séminaire de Québec[66]. Ajoutons que pour l'auteur de la «Preuve de la religion révélée», comme pour son éditeur québécois, l'authenticité des quatre évangiles canoniques et leur fidélité aux faits historiques est ce qui les distingue des textes apocryphes, et qui condamne donc irrémédiablement les textes qui présentent le personnage de saint Joachim[67].

La théorisation de l'architecture religieuse

Vu le lourd contenu symbolique des quatre colonnes, peut-on attribuer par extension une dimension évangélique à l'articulation classique du décor intérieur de l'église dans son ensemble? Nous le pensons. Mais pour bien saisir la façon dont Demers conçoit cette symbolique, il faut nous tourner vers son propre «Précis d'architecture», petit traité rédigé justement au moment où le décor de l'église de Saint-Joachim s'achevait.

Demers ne fait aucune association explicite entre la vérité évangélique et le système de l'architecture classique dans son ouvrage. Il ne parle même pas du mythe du Temple de Salomon, pourtant assez répandu dans l'interprétation chrétienne de l'architecture classique. Comme Noppen et Grignon l'ont déjà bien établi, le texte de Demers n'est en fait qu'un traité de décoration abrégeant certaines des règles classiques énoncées par Jacques-François Blondel dans son *Cours d'architecture* (1771-1777) et dans l'article qu'il écrit pour l'*Encyclopédie* de Diderot et D'Alembert[68]. Noppen, en particulier, prend bien soin de noter que les règles de Blondel sont chez Demers entièrement mises au service de la décoration des églises. Bref, le système de l'architecture classique est entièrement redirigé vers la zone rituelle catholique et, partant, il peut devenir un outil d'action institutionnelle de l'Église au Québec.

Noppen décrit aussi avec beaucoup de pertinence ce qui a pu attirer Demers vers Jacques-François Blondel. Il note entre autres que le *Cours* de Blondel dénonce largement les abus du style Louis XV et prône un retour à l'ordre. Cet aspect est particulièrement bien relevé dans la lecture que Demers fait de Blondel, alors que d'autres, plus novateurs, ne le sont pas. L'objet principal du «Précis d'architecture», destiné entre autres aux futurs prêtres, est en fait de montrer comment «juger sainement du mérite d'un édifice ou d'une décoration[69]». La distinction entre règle, licence et abus ponctue l'ouvrage, alors que toute la recherche sur la notion de caractère en architecture, qui fait en grande partie l'originalité de Blondel dans le contexte des débats européens, est largement négligée. Pour Blondel, une des questions les plus urgentes était de trouver à même l'architecture classique les

ressources expressives «pour varier à l'infini [les] différentes espèces de productions [des architectes]» à l'instar du peintre, du poète ou du musicien[70]. Mais Demers ne s'intéresse pas du tout à cette question, puisqu'il se préoccupe exclusivement de la décoration d'un unique type de bâtiment, l'église. Il semble toujours trouver suspecte la force expressive, à moins qu'elle ne soit totalement asservie au rituel religieux, comme c'est le cas à Saint-Joachim. Ainsi, la règle et la prévention contre les abus sont les principaux thèmes qu'il retient de ses sources. Et c'est sur la liste des abus, incluant la description précise de leur nature, que Demers termine, comme il se doit, son traité.

Une bonne partie du «Précis» consiste en une série de définitions, où, curieusement, chaque paragraphe est numéroté pour former un ensemble de quatre cent quatorzearticles. Le modèle n'est pas à chercher dans les traités d'architecture européens, mais plutôt dans la méthode d'enseignement du Séminaire de Québec. S'il ne s'agit pas d'une présentation «catéchistique» au sens strict (sous la forme de questions/réponses), les paragraphes numérotés du «Précis» sont à rapprocher de ces petits manuels d'instruction de la foi chrétienne utilisés dans la religion catholique. L'esprit est le même, l'auteur du «Précis» ne se lassant pas de prescrire, de paragraphe en paragraphe et avec force détails, la règle *canonique* de l'architecture classique. Demers condamne les imaginations qu'il qualifie de «vagabondes», «capricieuses» ou «déréglées», selon le degré de la faute de l'architecte ou du sculpteur. La censure frappe partout où les éléments prêtent à certains excès, tels que les ordres cariatides, les colonnes torses, les acrotères, les amortissements, les baldaquins, etc. Demers nuance parfois son propos, comme lorsqu'il mentionne, au sujet du placement des niches, que «ce qui serait un véritable abus dans certaines circonstances, peut devenir une licence permise dans d'autres[71]». Mais ce relativisme, essentiel chez Blondel, est plutôt rare chez Demers, qui préfère à l'évidence l'énonciation d'une règle stricte. Sa crainte la plus grande – qui justifie son «Précis» et l'existence même d'un enseignement sur l'architecture au Séminaire – est de laisser un trop grand arbitraire dans la décoration des églises du Québec.

Devant son engouement pour la norme, on pourrait trop vite conclure que Demers se situe dans la lignée du néoclassicisme européen, épigone de Blondel et même de Laugier ou de Soufflot. Cependant, comme nous essayons de le démontrer, le contexte dans lequel la règle de Demers s'inscrit est bien loin du rationalisme des Lumières. Demers s'attache plutôt au conservatisme de Blondel, à sa synthèse critique de l'architecture classique française basée sur les œuvres des maîtres tel les Mansart, Perrault, et Le Vau[72]. Ce retour à la tradition correspond parfaitement bien aux formes mises en œuvre par François Baillairgé imprégnées de l'esprit Louis XVI, comme l'ont souligné plusieurs historiens de l'art[73].

Pour bien comprendre la nature du conservatisme de Demers, il est aussi utile de comparer son «Précis d'architecture» à ses autres ouvrages, en particulier celui sur la physique. Le titre complet du traité d'architecture est d'ailleurs «Précis

d'architecture pour servir de suite au traité élémentaire de physique[74]». À première vue, le lien explicite à son cours de sciences signalerait une affinité avec le rationalisme moderne. Les articles de l'historien Claude Galarneau sur l'enseignement de Demers, et particulièrement sur son intérêt scientifique, donnent à penser que le professeur du Séminaire nourrissait effectivement ce penchant[75]. Mais il nous apparaît nécessaire d'apporter des nuances, car Demers avait un esprit paradoxal. Amoureux des sciences, apparemment admirateur enthousiaste des génies les plus représentatifs de la modernité tels que Copernic, Newton et même Bonaparte, il maintient cependant la plus stricte orthodoxie religieuse. Il rejette la thèse rousseauiste du contrat social et déclare sa foi dans l'origine divine du pouvoir temporel[76]. Dans son enseignement, il soutient les idées contre-révolutionnaires et ultramontaines radicales de Louis de Bonald et du premier Lamennais, celui de l'*Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion*. À cet égard, on peut peut-être détecter chez Demers un romantisme embryonnaire, à la recherche d'une réconciliation ultime entre religion, science et histoire.

Le parallèle le plus révélateur entre le précis d'architecture et le traité de physique ne concerne donc pas le rationalisme. L'ouvrage qui servait de base à l'enseignement de la physique au Séminaire de Québec est bien sûr avant tout une présentation compétente des développements scientifiques modernes. Mais il se termine sur un chapitre consacré à l'astronomie qui détonne sur l'ensemble. Débutant par les notions de base habituelles, il clôt sur une section spéciale consacrée au calendrier, dont le propos essentiel est d'établir la méthode avec laquelle déterminer les dates des principales fêtes mobiles chrétiennes. La connaissance des lois astronomiques est ainsi mise au service d'une meilleure compréhension du temps religieux. Voilà une récupération qui n'est guère surprenante dans un cours de science destiné à des futurs prêtres[77]. Il est permis de supposer que, pour Demers, la rigueur néoclassique française peut, de la même façon et tout naturellement, servir l'orthodoxie catholique. Ce n'est pas qu'il voit dans les proportions classiques la révélation de l'harmonie divine ou cosmique – Demers n'a pas le moindre intérêt pour cette interprétation trop superstitieuse de la tradition architecturale. Il faut plutôt chercher du côté de l'analogie *décorative*, édifiante, entre la rectitude ordonnatrice du vocabulaire classique bien maîtrisé et l'orthodoxie religieuse. L'espace sacré se subordonne de façon quasi-ontologique à la liturgie officielle de l'Église catholique. Ou, dit autrement, la dimension catholique s'articule au décor architectural comme le monde fictionnel au monde de référence d'un lecteur qui s'immerge dans une œuvre littéraire[78]. L'unité architecturale qui, selon Gowans, Noppen et plusieurs historiens à leur suite, est la caractéristique la plus novatrice du «néoclassicisme québécois» à Saint-Joachim, n'est donc pas le produit d'une réflexion stylistique autonome ou d'une concurrence artistique avec l'école montréalaise de Quévillon, mais plutôt un essai de médiation religieuse.

fig.12 François Baillairgé et Thomas Baillairgé, vue d'ensemble du décor intérieur de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, 1816-1830. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2005)

Le décor de l'église de Saint-Joachim comme fiction monumentale

Un des aspects les plus éloquents de cette médiation religieuse apparaît dans le rôle que joue l'ordonnancement architectural classique pour centrer le sacré dans l'église. En effet, le décor intérieur de l'église de Saint-Joachim établit une véritable gradation de l'espace – gradation que l'on retrouve, moins développée, dans des églises plus anciennes, où la décoration se concentre habituellement dans le chœur, mais que les Baillairgé érigent en véritable principe architectural. À Saint-Joachim, des pilastres rythment les travées du chœur, débordent légèrement dans les croisillons, et s'interrompent au-delà des autels secondaires. La corniche qui les surmonte se poursuit, quant à elle, tout autour de l'église jusqu'à la tribune arrière. Une fausse-voûte en bois recouvre tout cet espace intérieur, avec de grandes lunettes qui établissent la jonction avec les bras de transept. Cette fausse-voûte possède un caractère architectural très marqué – d'autres ont déjà souligné l'originalité de son ornementation dans la tradition québécoise : fortement dépouillée, elle est articulée

en grands segments délimités par des arcs doubleaux et comporte quelques écussons qui lui conservent un certain mouvement rococo, une gloire au-dessus de la croisée et une autre au-dessus du chœur (fig.12)[79].

L'argument de l'unité intérieure de Saint-Joachim prend fortement appui sur l'effet de cette voûte dans l'espace de l'église[80]. Cela dit, si l'on considère le décor dans sa totalité, des nuances s'imposent. Il y a une véritable intensification du décor à mesure que l'on s'approche du chœur : d'abord les pilastres, puis les quatre colonnes libres et, au-dessus, les doubleaux de la fausse-voûte qui se resserrent et rayonnent dans l'abside.

Une nécessaire économie de moyens peut bien sûr expliquer le fait que la nef soit plus dépouillée que les parties hautes de l'église. Mais le dispositif exprime parfaitement «cette gradation en intensité du sacré dans l'espace, par succession de cercles concentriques» décrite par Ollivier Hubert[81]. D'après l'historien des pratiques religieuses, les églises paroissiales du Québec représentent concrètement le pôle d'une force sacrée qui irradie de l'autel vers l'extérieur, jusqu'à la périphérie de l'église, incluant le cimetière, le presbytère, etc. Tout autant qu'elles cloisonnent le sacré par une série de «seuils», limites physiques ou visuelles, les églises manifestent une rayonnement du sacré qui s'étend à toute la paroisse.

Ainsi, à Saint-Joachim, non seulement l'ordre classique sert à démarquer le chœur du reste de l'église, mais, dans le chœur même, il «s'intensifie» aux abords du tabernacle. Les colonnes libres qui encadrent l'autel étaient, jusqu'à la restauration des années 1960, magnifiquement «marbrées», ce qui leur donnait un chatoiement tout particulier (fig.13). Demers et les Baillairgé vont jusqu'à jouer avec les proportions de l'ordre composite : la hauteur de 20 modules des piliers du retable passe à vingt deux pour les colonnes triomphales. Demers avait pris soin de souligner dans son précis d'architecture que l'ordre composite n'a pas de proportions qui lui soient propres. Mais faire varier les proportions d'un ordre dans un même intérieur, et sur un même niveau, est étonnant. C'est comme si la colonne, par sa gracieuse élongation, exprimait la proximité du foyer du sacré.

L'utilisation correcte des ordres et des proportions du système classique reste cependant une discipline plutôt abstraite, qui ne fournit pas, en soi, de type général pour la composition de l'ensemble. Alors, l'architecture classique demeurait-elle à ce niveau d'abstraction pour Demers, ou avait-il en tête des modèles plus concrets pour la forme à donner à une église? Contrairement à Blondel, Demers cite peu d'exemples dans son traité, mis à part Saint-Joachim et la cathédrale de Québec, dont il parle continuellement. Quand il aborde la question des voûtes, cependant, Demers évoque un type à imiter. Bien que ce type reste très général, il est très important, à notre avis : «[L]a voûte d'une Église, de quelque matière qu'elle soit, n'est et ne peut être que l'image d'une voûte en maçonnerie. Dans les grandes Églises d'Europe, ces voûtes se font ordinairement en pierres tendres ou en briques; et on

fig.13 Anonyme, vue du chœur de l'Église de Saint-Joachim, sans date. Source: Fonds Traquair, Collection d'architecture canadienne, Bibliothèque de l'Université McGill. (Photo: L'Université McGill)

fig.14 Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Église Saint-Louis des Invalides (Église des soldats), commencée en 1676, Hôtel des Invalides, Paris. (Photo: Marc Grignon, 2005)

les soutient de distance en distance, par des arcs doubleaux[82]». Demers établit ainsi une «image» précise, et dans le même chapitre, il conclut franchement à la nécessité d'imiter ces arcs doubleaux des voûtes des églises européennes :

> Le moyen le plus sûr de rendre les voûtes de nos Églises vraiment intéressantes, c'est de les orner d'arcs doubleaux et de compartimens distribués et enrichis avec la discrétion, le choix, la prudence et le goût qui doivent présider dans la décoration d'un édifice. Ces ornemens, quand ils sont traités d'une grande manière, semblent se rapprocher d'avantage de la vraisemblance, et concourent admirablement bien à établir entre le tout et les parties cette unité de ton et de style qui font le charme des décorations intérieures[83].

L'ensemble de ces prescriptions est très significatif parce qu'il propose non seulement un système architectural ordonné, mais un modèle pour atteindre une «unité de ton et de style» dans l'architecture religieuse québécoise[84].

De façon générale, l'église européenne représente le modèle du bon goût architectural et constitue sans surprise l'exemple à suivre. N'oublions pas, par ailleurs, que l'Église catholique a son siège en Europe, et que Saint-Pierre de Rome a *de facto* valeur de prototype. Cependant, même si Demers reconnaît ce statut

à l'Église du Vatican, ce sont plutôt les exemples du classicisme à la française qu'il décrit lorsqu'il cherche des modèles concrets. Les modèles à suivre sont ceux qui possèdent ce décor de pierre nue, articulé par des éléments strictement architecturaux, comme l'intérieur et la voûte de l'église Saint-Louis à l'Hôtel des Invalides (1676) (fig.14), ou ceux de l'église Saint-Paul-et-Saint-Louis (1629), à Paris. Ces bâtiments possèdent en effet les éléments architecturaux que les Baillairgé adaptent à l'intérieur de l'église de Saint-Joachim, dont les grands arcs doubleaux ponctuant la voûte. La comparaison avec ces églises parisiennes, cependant, permet de mieux saisir les limites de la notion «d'unité de ton et de style». En effet, dans les églises françaises en question, les doubleaux sont jumelés à des piliers le long de la nef, ce qui crée une ordonnance uniforme dans tout l'espace intérieur. Dépouillés de tout ornement à caractère religieux, les doubleaux et les pilastres correspondants articulent l'espace architectural de manière régulière et continue.

Chez Demers, par contre, la référence architecturale est fortement mise au service du caractère religieux de l'espace intérieur, comme il le dit lui-même : «Que l'on oublie jamais, qu'une Église construite avec soin et dans de belles proportions, et tenue dans un grand état de propreté, est réellement plus belle, plus religieuse et plus imposante que celle qu'on a décoré sans choix, sans discrétion et sans convenance, comme on en voit malheureusement en trop grand nombre dans toutes les parties de la province[85]».

Ainsi, on peut effectivement dire qu'apparaît, chez Demers, un souci d'unification de l'espace intérieur de l'église, mais l'unité demeure profondément ancrée dans le religieux et elle se plie à la hiérarchie spatiale du sacré, comme pour la rendre plus explicite. D'un point de vue strictement architectural, l'unité à Saint-Joachim est effectivement douteuse, ou à tout le moins incomplète, mais si on prend en compte la dimension religieuse, une nouvelle interprétation émerge. La référence aux églises françaises, avec leurs voûtes dépouillées, permet de prolonger l'orthodoxie catholique du chœur dans toute l'église, selon une graduation que le paroissien peut aisément percevoir. La règle est toujours là, même si l'ordonnance riche et bien visible du chœur évolue vers un «ordre absent» dans la nef. Voilà pourquoi la petite guerre que Demers et les Baillairgé livrent contre le mauvais goût – comme cette condamnation des «figures d'anges découpées en profil, que quelques uns de nos soi-disant architectes, ont ridiculement attachées sur le nu de certaines voûtes d'églises» et plusieurs autres dans le même genre[86] – dépasse les questions purement formelles et stylistiques. Cette guerre s'inscrit dans le rejet par le haut clergé de l'époque de la religion populaire, qui passe de plus en plus comme une forme de superstition. C'est de toute évidence un moyen de lutter contre le relâchement de la foi et de répondre aux désordres paroissiaux décrits plus haut.

Demers se tourne donc vers une France qui n'existe plus, la France d'avant les «philosophes» et des idées qui ont conduit à la Révolution. Ce qui s'accorde

parfaitement avec l'esprit du haut clergé catholique québécois. En effet, ce clergé n'en finit pas de condamner la Révolution «qui renversa en France le trône et les autels[87]». La France de Demers, comme celle de Mgr Plessis, est la France catholique et royaliste. Avant même la Restauration de 1814, le clergé canadien maintenait l'impression que cette France continuait d'exister au Québec, grâce au secours «providentiel» et pour le moins paradoxal de la couronne britannique qui la protège : «[P]ar une protection spéciale du ciel [...] cette partie du monde [est] à l'abri des fléaux qui désolent ailleurs l'église de Jésus Christ, quoique par la bienfaisance et la saine politique du gouvernement sous lequel la Providence nous a placés[88]». C'est donc «par une protection spéciale du ciel» que le classicisme peut survivre au Québec, expression d'une volonté d'implanter un catholicisme expurgé des éléments populaires et superstitieux par trop vivaces dans les paroisses de campagne.

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Notes

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2 Voir Alan GOWANS, «Thomas Baillairgé and the Québécois Tradition of Church Architecture», *Art Bulletin*, vol.34, nº 2 (juin 1952), p.121-23; Luc NOPPEN, *Les églises du Québec (1600-1850)*, Montréal, Fides, 1977, p.248-51; Luc NOPPEN, «L'architecture intérieure de l'église de Saint-Joachim de Montmorency : l'avènement d'un style», *RACAR*, vol.6, nº 1 (1979), p.3-16; John R. PORTER et Jean BÉLISLE, *La sculpture ancienne au Québec*, Montréal, Éditions de l'Homme, 1986, p.365-66. David KAREL, Luc NOPPEN et Claude THIBAULT, *François Baillairgé et son œuvre (1759-1830)*, Québec, Musée du Québec, 1975, développent un argument similaire.

3 Voir Madeleine LANDRY et Robert DEROME, *L'art sacré en Amérique française. Le Trésor de la Côte-de-Beaupré*, Québec, Septentrion, 2005, p.13-17; Gérard MORISSET, «Une église de style Louis XVI : Saint-Joachim», *La Patrie* (Montréal), 2 septembre 1951, p.19-33; Gérard MORISSET, *L'architecture en Nouvelle-France*, Québec, Éditions du Pélican, 1980 (1949), p.66-67. Ces deux points de vue ne s'excluent pas nécessairement l'un l'autre : voir GOWANS, «Thomas Baillairgé», p.123; Luc NOPPEN et Lucie K. MORISSET, *Les églises du Québec. Un patrimoine à réinventer*, Montréal, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2005, p.28.

4 Lucien LEMIEUX, *Les XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles, Les années difficiles, 1760-1839* (Nive Voisine dir., *Histoire du catholicisme québécois*, vol.1), Montréal, Boréal, 1989.

5 Gowans parle d'un «nouvel esprit». caractérisé par «that subordination of detail to the whole» : GOWANS, «Thomas Baillairgé», p.123. Noppen fait de l'unité la caractéristique majeure de cet ensemble : NOPPEN, «L'architecture intérieure de l'église de Saint-Joachim», p.5. Par la suite, l'argument est repris couramment dans l'historiographie jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Voir LANDRY et DEROME, *L'art sacré en Amérique française*, p.57-58.

6 Ou *heteroglot* dans la traduction anglaise. Michael Holquist définit «heteroglossia» de la manière suivante : «It is that which insures the primacy of context over text [...]; all utterances are heteroglot in that they are functions of a matrix of forces practically impossible to recoup, and therefore impossible to resolve. Heteroglossia is as close a conceptualization as is possible of that locus where centripetal and centrifugal forces collide». Michael

HOLQUIST dir., *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays by Mikhaïl Bakhtin*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1986, p.428.

7 Pour la liste des curés de Saint-Joachim, nous avons consulté Aurore RACINE et Josaphat PARÉ, *Notre église, Saint-Joachim de Montmorency, 1779-1979*, Saint-Joachim, Fabrique de Saint-Joachim, 1979, p.73-83.

8 Extrait de baptême de Jean-Baptiste Corbin, Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Musée de l'Amérique française, Québec (ASQ), Polygraphie 25, nº 33.

9 Peter N. MOOGK, «Corbin, David», *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada en ligne*, Toronto/Québec, University of Toronto Press/Université Laval, 2000, Internet : www.biographi.ca (consulté le 11 août 2006); Cyprien TANGUAY, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu'à nos jours*, Montréal, E. Sénécal, 1871-1890, vol.3, p.127; Réal BRISSON, *La charpenterie navale sous le régime français*, Québec, IQRC, 1983, p.45.

10 Jean-Baptiste Corbin, testament olographe, 1 octobre 1806, fol. 3, Archives nationales du Québec, Québec (ANQ), greffe du notaire Joseph-Bernard Planté, no 5589, déposé le 5 février 1811.

11 RACINE et PARÉ, *Notre église*, p.79.

12 *Ibid.*, p.21-22.

13 Quinze livres sont payées pour une inscription au portail en 1779. «Livre de comptes de la Fabrique de Saint-Joachim, 1766-1783», Archives de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim, Saint-Joachim, MRC de la Côte-de-Beaupré, Québec.

14 DEROME et LANDRY, *L'art sacré en Amérique française*, p.129; John R. PORTER, «L'abbé Jean-Antoine Aide-Créquy (1749-1780) et l'essor de la peinture religieuse après la Conquête», *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol.VII, nº 1 (1983), p.59, 61.

15 «Paié à Mr Baillargé pour cadre d'autel...72.0.0. Paié pour dorure du cadre d'autel...90.0.0». Dépenses pour l'année 1782, Livre de comptes 1766-1783, Archives de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim. Pour le séjour de François Baillairgé en France, voir David KAREL, «La formation de François Baillairgé à Paris», dans KAREL, NOPPEN et THIBAULT, *François Baillairgé*, p.51-57.

16 Les dépenses de la fabrique pour 1784 comprennent la mention «Païé à Mr. Baillargé pour restant du tabernacle...698.3.0». Livre de comptes 1784-1815, Archives de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim. En 1786, «païé pour les chandeliers de la chapelle au sculpteur...48.0.0». *Ibid.* D'autres mentions concernant les chandeliers se trouvent dans le livre de comptes du sculpteur. Au 1 avril 1785, on y lit : «Finit de tourner les chandelliers de St Geoachim». François Baillairgé, Livre de comptes, fonds François Baillairgé, ANQ.

17 René VILLENEUVE, *Du baroque au néo-classicisme. La sculpture au Québec*, Ottawa, Musée des Beaux-Arts du Canada, 1997, p.69.

18 Nive VOISINE, *Histoire de l'église catholique au Québec (1608-1970)*, Montréal, Fides, 1971; Lionel GROULX, «La situation religieuse au Canada français vers 1840», *Rapport de la société canadienne d'histoire de l'Église catholique*, 1941-42, p.56. Ces deux textes sont cités dans Ollivier HUBERT, «Beaucoup de bruit pour quelques fêtes. Pourquoi, en 1791, une réforme du calendrier des fêtes suscita la passion?», *S.C.H.E.C. Études d'histoire religieuse*, vol.60 (1994), p.119-20. Voir aussi : Jean-Pierre WALLOT, «La religion catholique et les canadiens au début du XIX^e siècle», dans *Un Québec qui bougeait*, Montréal, Boréal Express, 1973, p.203-04; Jean ROY, «Un siècle de changements religieux», dans Serge COURVILLE et Normand SÉGUIN dir., *Atlas historique du Québec : La paroisse*, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2001, p.40-45.

19 Voir Ollivier HUBERT, «Espaces sacrés et groupes sociaux dans le Québec rural (XVIII^e-XIX^e siècle)», *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, vol.110, n° 4, 2003, p.115-24.

20 *Ibid.*, p.120.

21 *Ibid.*, p.115.

22 Jean-Baptiste Corbin à Thomas-Laurent Bédard, Procureur du Séminaire, Saint-Joachim, 7 octobre 1779, ASQ, Polygraphie 19, n° 29.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Henri-François Gravé, Supérieur du Séminaire, à J.B. Corbin, Québec, 12 octobre 1779, ASQ, Polygraphie 19, n° 29b.

25 Jean-Olivier Briand, Évêque de Québec, à J.B. Corbin, Québec, ASQ, 13 octobre 1779, Polygraphie 19, n° 29c.

26 «Quoiqu'il en soit, je vous prie de ne pas vous offenser que je fasse encore un dernier effort pour fléchir votre grandeur et l'engager à user de clémence envers ces pauvres aveugles». Lettre de J.B. Corbin à J.O. Briand, 28 février 1777, Archives de l'Archevêché de Québec, Québec (AAQ), 61 CD Saint-Joachim 1.

27 L'ouvrage essentiel sur cette question reste toujours Jürgen HABERMAS, *L'espace public*, Paris, Payot, 1988. Pour la France d'ancien régime, Nobert ELIAS, *La société de cour*, Paris, Gallimard, 1983, est tout aussi fondamental.

28 J.O. Briand à J.B. Corbin. Un an auparavant, Corbin avait pourtant rédigé un billet disant : «Je soussigné certifie en mon nom au nom des syndics préposés a la batisse de l'eglise et au nom de toute la paroisse que les Messieurs du Séminaire de quebec ont abondamment et genereusement contribué a la batisse de la dite eglise et qu'outre la charpente et la couverture dont ils avoient dabord bien voulu se charger qu'ils ont encore de plus fait le clocher a leur frais et autre choses dependantes de la dite eglise et nous leur en temoignons par ces presentes notre reconnaissance». J.B. Corbin, 24 juillet 1778, ASQ, Séminaire 122, n° 319. Y avait-il déjà des contestations au sujet de la place des «Messieurs du Séminaire» dans l'église?

29 L'historiographie le corrobore (Gowans, Noppen, Porter et Bélisle, Landry et Derome, Villeneuve). Voici les principaux éléments qui nous permettent de faire cette affirmation : procureur du Séminaire au moment du décès de Corbin, Demers devient son exécuteur testamentaire (tâche qu'il partagera avec Antoine Robert, lui aussi tantôt procureur, tantôt supérieur du Séminaire). En outre, Demers signera les paiements aux Baillairgé durant toute la période des travaux. Entre 1812 et 1816, moment où est finalement établi et signé un devis extrêmement précis, Demers effectue des visites à Saint-Joachim à une fréquence inhabituelle (ASQ, Livre de comptes du Séminaire de Québec, vol.C-39, 1812-1821, *passim*). Enfin, le décor intérieur de Saint-Joachim est au centre du petit traité d'architecture que Demers rédige vers la fin des travaux (Jérôme Demers, «Précis d'architecture pour servir de suite au traité élémentaire de physique», 1828, ASQ, M-131 + planches, M-1040). Bref, Demers, procureur du Séminaire (et son supérieur après 1815), semble vouloir faire de Saint-Joachim un décor religieux modèle, chose sur laquelle s'entendent les historiens d'art ayant examiné l'œuvre des Baillairgé, tant en sculpture qu'en architecture.

30 J.B. Corbin, Testament, 1 octobre 1806, fol. 4r.

31 *Ibid.*, fol. 4r-v.

32 En effet, on sait qu'une sacristie extérieure avait été construite au début des années 1800 de manière à dégager complètement le rond-point du chœur. Noppen a bien montré comment ce type de réaménagement est devenu une étape caractéristique dans la réalisation d'un nouveau retable occupant tout l'espace de l'abside, comme le faisaient les Baillairgé. Voir NOPPEN, *Les églises du Québec*, p.34. Le testament précise des mesures de rechange pour l'éventualité où «cette décoration se trouvait déjà faite et payée», mesures consistant en l'achat de vêtements liturgiques et d'instruments de culte, ainsi qu'en la réalisation d'un «nouveau banc d'œuvre, si je ne l'ai pas fait de mon vivant».(J.B. Corbin, Testament, 1 octobre 1806, fol. 4v.).

33 Comme cela semble le cas avec les chandeliers de 1783 : le 12 octobre 1785, François Baillairgé a «reçu de Monsieur Corbin payement des chandelliers de l'église de St Geoachim...350». F. Baillairgé, Livre de comptes, ANQ. Cette somme n'apparaît pas aux dépenses de la fabrique (Livre de comptes, 1784-1815, Archives de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim).

34 Voir Richard CHABOT, *Le curé de campagne et la contestation locale au Québec (de 1791 aux troubles de 1837-38)*, Montréal, Hurtubise, 1975, p.65-69. Si l'image générale que l'auteur donne du curé de campagne dans cet ouvrage demande à être fortement nuancée, les points qui démontrent l'intérêt des curés pour la décoration d'église paraissent assez justes.

35 En ce sens, l'attitude de Corbin peut se comparer à celle de Vincent Charles Fournier, curé de la Baie-du-Febvre, dont une lettre de juillet 1817 à Mme de Loynes de Morett est citée par plusieurs historiens qui se sont penchés sur l'église québécoise de cette période. Il y est même question de l'apport de deniers personnels. Fournier écrit : «Les dépenses de l'année [1816] se montait à 6,500 francs, elle doublera cette année par les embellissements que je fais faire à l'intérieur de l'église. J'avance moi-même à l'église, plus

de 200 louis pour de beaux tableaux de France dont deux de huit pieds de haut sur six de large, doivent être mis dans les chapelles que je fais orner de sculptures. Une des chapelles sera dédiée à la Très sainte Vierge, et l'autre à l'Ange-Gardien, à ce précieux ami qui a veillé sur moi dès le moment de ma naissance». «Lettre d'un curé du Canada», *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, vol.17, nº 1 (1911), p.8.

36 Louis-Joseph Papineau, «Intervention à la Chambre d'Assemblée», 26 mars 1831, dans Yvan Lamonde et Claude Larin éd., *Louis-Joseph Papineau : Un demi siècle de combats. Interventions publiques*, Montréal, Fides, 1998, p.183.

37 Contrat sous seing privé entre F.I. Renvoyzé, curé desservant, les marguillers de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim et Antoine Robert, procureur du séminaire, d'une part, et François Baillairgé, architecte, et Thomas Baillairgé, son associé, d'autre part, pour la décoration du chœur de l'église de Saint-Joachim, 22 mars 1816, ASQ, Paroisses diverses, nº 85.

38 *Ibid.*, p.2.

39 PORTER et BÉLISLE, *La sculpture ancienne au Québec*, p.218.

40 *Ibid.*

41 Cité dans *Ibid.*

42 [Jérôme Demers], *Institutiones philosophicae ad usum studiosae juventutis*, Québec, T. Cary, 1835.

43 Texte anonyme que Demers dit avoir légèrement édité, tiré du *Cours élémentaire de philosophie à l'usage des collèges*, Lyon, 1823.

44 Anonyme, «Preuve de la religion révélée», appendice à [Demers], *Institutiones philosophicae*, p.377.

45 «Les Évangiles canoniques ne nous disent rien de la naissance ni des années d'enfance et de jeunesse de la Vierge Marie antérieurement à l'Annonciation qui, seule, les intéresse; ils ne connaissent même pas les noms de ses parents» : Louis RÉAU, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, vol.2.2, Paris, PUF, 1957, p.155.

46 PORTER et BÉLISLE, *La sculpture ancienne au Québec*, p.268.

47 *Ibid.*, p.269.

48 Joseph-Octave Plessis, Évêque de Québec, «Mandement concernant les fêtes de paroisses», 22 décembre 1810, dans H. Têtu et C.O. Gagnon éd., *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des Évêques de Québec*, Québec, Côté, 1888, p.55-59.

49 «Raisons pour supprimer les fêtes, tirées des réponses des Archiprêtres à Monseigneur de Québec», 1790, AAQ 963 CD, Temps sacré, vol.1 (1790-1976).

50 «Raisons pour conserver les fêtes, tirées des réponses des Archiprêtres à Monseigneur de Québec», 1790, AAQ 963 CD, Temps sacré, vol.1 (1790-1976).

51 «Pour les fêtes» et «Contre les fêtes», vers 1807, AAQ 963 CD, Temps sacré, vol.1 (1790-1976).

52 Les comptes rendus des visites pastorales de l'évêque à Saint-Joachim ne soulignent aucune «débaucherie» particulière. Nous avons consulté les documents pour les visites faites à Saint-Joachim en 1789, 1798, 1806, 1814 et 1823. AAQ, Visites pastorales 69 CD 1, 3, 7.

53 Il demande «l'intercession de la très sainte Vierge Marie Mère de Dieu, de mon St Ange gardien et de tous les SS Anges, de mes glorieux patrons St Jean Baptiste et St Joachim, et de tous les Saints et Saintes du Paradis» : J.B. Corbin, Testament, 1 octobre 1806, fol. 1r.

54 Cette attitude nous semble assez typique du personnage. À d'autres mandements épiscopaux visant à interdire les pratiques médicales à caractère magique et superstitieux (comme le «Mandement contre les pratiques superstitieuses» de J.O. Plessis, 17 mars 1808, dans *Mandements*, p.35), on peut comparer l'intérêt que Corbin a développé pour les livres de médecine, non seulement pour son bien personnel, comme on l'a dit plus haut, mais aussi pour «la conservation de leur santé aux pauvres gens de ma paroisse» (J.B. Corbin, Testament, 1 octobre 1806, fol. 3r).

55 Tendance générale bien résumée dans Louis ROUSSEAU et Frank W. REMIGGI, *Atlas historique des pratiques religieuses. Le Sud-Ouest du Québec au XIX^e siècle*, Ottawa, Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1998, p.171. Voir aussi Ollivier HUBERT, «La disparition des fêtes d'obligation au Québec, XVII^e-XIX^e siècles», *Sciences religieuses / Studies in Religion*, vol.23, n° 4 (1994), p.404-12.

56 Contrat pour la décoration du chœur de l'église de Saint-Joachim, p.2.

57 Irving LAVIN, *Bernini and the Unity of the Visual Arts*, New York, Oxford University Press, vol.1, 1980, p.20-21.

58 Irving LAVIN, *Bernini and the Crossing of Saint Peter's*, New York, New York University Press, 1968, p.10-18.

59 PORTER et BÉLISLE, *La sculpture ancienne au Québec*, p.270.

60 *Ibid.*, p.278.

61 Pour une discussion du thème de la ruine dans les représentations de la Nativité et de l'adoration des mages, voir Frédérique VILLEMUR, «La demeure du verbe : nativités et adorations du quattrocento», *Signes, histoire, fictions. Autour de Louis Marin*, Paris, Éditions Arguments, 2003, p.28-49.

62 On retrouve une composition semblable dans les toiles de Jean Tassel (l'*Adoration des mages*, vers 1640, Musée du Louvre, Paris) et de Giambattista Tiepolo (l'*Adoration des mages*, 1753, Ancienne Pinacothèque, Munich).

63 Pour notre recherche, nous avons utilisé l'édition préparée par JesusMarie.com et Antoine Beltrano : *Irénée de Lyon, Contre les Hérésies. Dénonciation et réfutation de la gnose au*

nom menteur, Internet, http ://www.jesusmarie.com/irenee_de_lyon.html (consulté le 19 juillet 2006).

64 PORTER et BÉLISLE, *La sculpture ancienne au Québec*, p.269.

65 Anonyme, «Preuve de la religion révélée», p.359.

66 Le catalogue sur fiches de l'ancienne bibliothèque du Séminaire de Québec mentionne plusieurs exemplaires des principales éditions modernes des textes de saint Irénée, celles de 1576 et de 1710. Nous avons pu consulter un exemplaire qui porte la mention manuscrite «Séminaire de Québec» sur la page titre : Saint Irénée, *Detectionis et eversionis falso cognominatae agnitionis, seu Contra Haereses libri quinque*, Paris, Coignard, 1710. Bibliothèque du Séminaire de Québec, Musée de l'Amérique française, Québec.

67 Anonyme, «Preuve de la religion révélée», p.360.

68 Luc NOPPEN, «Le rôle de l'Abbé Jérôme Demers dans l'élaboration d'une architecture néo-classique au Québec», *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol.II, n° 1, été 1975, p.19-33; Marc GRIGNON, «Le 'Précis d'architecture' de Jérôme Demers : une théorie déchirée», *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol.XI, n^{os} 1-2, 1988, p.1-22.

69 Jérôme Demers, «Précis d'architecture», par. 14.

70 Jacques-François BLONDEL, *Cours d'architecture*, Paris, Desaint, 1771, tome 2, p.231. Voir toute la section «Du caractère qu'il conviendroit de donner à chaque genre d'édifice», p.229-31.

71 Demers, «Précis d'architecture», par. 333.

72 Ce que Jean-Marie PÉROUSE DE MONTCLOS nomme «la dernière leçon de l'école française» : *Histoire de l'architecture française. De la Renaissance à la Révolution*, Paris, Mengès, 1989, p.403.

73 Voir en particulier VILLENEUVE, *Du baroque au néo-classicisme*, p.76.

74 Voir note 29.

75 Voir surtout Claude GALARNEAU, «Demers, Jérôme», *DBC en ligne* (consulté le 31 mai 2006).

76 Dans la mesure où on peut penser qu'il endosse les idées essentielles du texte «Preuve de la religion révélée».

77 À partir du décalage entre le cycle annuel du soleil et celui de la lune, Demers explique comment le calcul des épactes permet de situer la date de la fête de Pâques pour n'importe quelle année du calendrier moderne, et de là celle de la Pentecôte, de l'Ascension, de la Fête-Dieu, etc. Jérôme Demers, «Traité élémentaire de Physique revu et rédigé d'après les meilleurs auteurs, où l'on trouve les expériences les plus récentes et les mieux confir-

mées», 1828, 3 vol. + 1 vol. planches, M 1040, ASQ. Le chapitre 15 «De l'astronomie» est le dernier du troisième volume. Ce chapitre est lui même divisé en 14 sections, dont la dernière s'intitule «Du calendrier».

78 Voir Thomas PAVEL, *Univers de la fiction*, Paris, Seuil, 1988, chap. 2: «Des univers saillants».

79 Cette voûte est le dernier élément du décor réalisé par les Baillairgé : un acompte «des ornements de la voûte», versé à Thomas Baillairgé, apparaît dans les dépenses de la fabrique en 1822, puis les paiements se suivent jusqu'à celui de 1829 «pour parfait payement des ouvrages de l'église» : Livre de comptes et des délibérations de la Fabrique de Saint-Joachim, 1816-1901, Archives de la paroisse de Saint-Joachim.

80 Voir NOPPEN, «L'architecture intérieure de l'église de Saint-Joachim», p.5-6.

81 Ollivier HUBERT, *Sur la terre comme au ciel. La gestion des rites par l'Église catholique du Québec (fin XVII^e – mi-XIX^e siècle)*, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2000, p.246.

82 Demers, «Précis d'architecture», par. 384.

83 *Ibid.*, par. 392.

84 *Ibid.*, par. 392.

85 *Ibid.*, par. 340.

86 *Ibid.*, par. 398.

87 Vincent Charles FOURNIER, «Lettre d'un curé du Canada», p.5-6. Voir aussi le texte de Joseph-Octave PLESSIS, *Discours à l'occasion de la victoire remportée par les forces navales de sa Majesté britannique dans la Méditerranée le 1 et 2 août 1798 sur la flotte françoise*, Québec, 1799. Ce texte fournit des exemples éloquents de cette position. Disponible sur Bibliothèque et archives du Canada, *Notre mémoire en ligne*, Internet: www.canadiana.org (consulté le 25 novembre 2005).

88 Plessis, «Mandement de l'Évêque pour des prières publiques», 25 octobre 1810, dans *Mandements*, p.53.

SPECIAL PROTECTION FROM HEAVEN

The Decor of the Church of Saint-Joachim and the Tribulations of the Roman Catholic Church in Early Nineteenth-Century Quebec

The church of Saint-Joachim in the Côte-de-Beaupré region near Quebec City is considered a major work in the history of Quebec religious architecture. Its interior decor – produced by François and Thomas Baillairgé between 1816 and 1829 – is unanimously recognized as a turning point in the history of Quebec art. For the first time, the many elements of a church interior were conceived as an ensemble rather than separate entities as was the usual practice during the French Regime. This search for a unified decor, characteristic of the work of the Baillairgés and their disciples, has already been emphasized by most historians because it had a widespread influence on Quebec religious architecture during the first half of the nineteenth century. This article demonstrates however that this unity is only a relative one, masking in fact the real socio-cultural tensions at play in the parish of Saint Joachim.

The first detectable signs of such conflict can be found at the level of the iconographic program of the church interior. Indeed each of the different actors who influenced the Baillairgés' work at Saint Joachim held, in one way or other, different views concerning the correct form of a Quebec church interior. The curé of Saint Joachim, Jean-Baptiste Corbin who initiated the decorative program around 1780, believed that one of the main ways of elevating the souls of his parishioners was through the use of sumptuous ornamentation. It is to this end that he secured the services of François Baillairgé, who had just returned from Paris and was the most prominent artist in Quebec City. When Corbin died, he bequeathed money for the completion of the project; his will contained guidelines for a decor that remained deeply imbued with traditional ways of thinking. The local community also held to tradition, notably demonstrating an attachment to their patron saint – an attitude that was characteristic of rural parishes of the period. Meanwhile the Séminaire de Québec, whose directors were *ex officio* seigneurs of Côte-de-Beaupré, saw the decoration of Saint-Joachim as an occasion to enhance their own social standing by installing a conspicuous seigneurial pew. However its height blocked the view of the choir, thereby infuriating the parish priest and his congregation.

In 1811 a new actor entered the scene: Abbé Jérôme Demers who began supervising the project in his capacity as the executor of Corbin's will.

A professor at the Séminaire de Québec, Demers held the post of Procurator and then Superior of the institution, as well as being a renowned connoisseur of architecture. He made significant changes to the decoration project of the Church of Saint-Joachim by developing a new iconographic program based on the life of Christ and the Four Evangelists. This implied a significant rupture with the image of St. Joachim hanging above the altar since the latter figure is absent from the Gospels. Joachim is only mentioned in apocryphal texts, a non-canonical corpus that Demers rejected and associated with superstition. Demers' distrust echoed the concerns of Quebec bishops over popular celebrations of patron saints at parish festivals, which were perceived as occasions for drunkenness, debauchery and excess. Such unruly festivities were considered a dishonour to religion and harmful to the Roman Catholic Church's dealings with the British colonial administration. As a result, steps to control and even abolish village festivals increased during the decade of 1810 to 1820.

But Demers went even further: working with the Baillairgés, he developed a total decor whose religious significance was in perfect harmony with the clergy's reformatory intentions. Texts by the church father Saint Irénée, which had been published under the title *Contre les Hérésies*, provided the theological basis on which Demers conceived his celebration of the Four Evangelists in opposition to the apocryphal figure of Saint Joachim. The Evangelists literally became the four pillars on which the true religion rested. Saint Irénée also provides an interesting framework for interpreting Demers' peculiar adaptation of French architect Jacques-François Blondel's architectural theory to the decoration of Quebec churches in his 1828 text *Précis d'architecture*. Demers expurgated all original aspects of Blondel's thought and retained only the latter's rigid classical orthodoxy, thereby turning architectural theory into a sort of catechistic list of prescriptions.

In light of these considerations, the formal unity of the Church of Saint-Joachim's interior can now be re-evaluated. Not merely a stylistic importation of neo-classical motifs from France, it is the co-optation of classical rules to stand for religious orthodoxy. In this sense, the intensification of the classical decor towards the altar, a traditional practice that Demers consciously incorporated into his own "system," perfectly conveys the idea of the "sanctity" of the rule. The interior of the parish church is thus suffused with the spirit of religious reform bred in the spheres of the higher-level diocesan clergy at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Translation: Janet Logan

fig.1 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, 1906-1918, oil on canvas, 89 x 52 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

CANADA RECEIVING THE HOMAGE OF HER CHILDREN

George Reid's *Ave Canada* and Gustav Hahn's *Hail Dominion*: A Proposal of Murals for the Entrance Hall of Canada's Parliament Buildings

In April 1904, Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier received a letter from the executive of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. Written by George Reid (1860-1947) and signed by Reid, Franklin Brownell (1857-1946) and William Brymner (1855-1925), the letter praised Laurier for his words of encouragement at the opening of the Academy's 1903 annual exhibition and expressed the hope that the government would provide more support for the arts. Reid also proposed a scheme of mural paintings for the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.[1] The murals were intended for the main entrance hall, the Commons and Senate chambers and the library.

This article explores Reid's proposal from his initial plan for the main entrance hall in 1904 through the steps taken to advance the project until its final rejection in 1907. It also examines the two preparatory murals for the project: *Ave Canada* (figs.1, 2, 3 and 4) by George Reid and *Hail Dominion* (fig.5) by Gustav Hahn (1866-1962), both produced at the artists' own initiative. Rounding out this discussion is a look at the *zeitgeist* of the times as it pertained to the politics and purposes of Canadian art. This will help to explain why the project failed despite serious attempts by Reid to convince the government and the Canadian public of the merits of mural decoration for expressing a national spirit.

Reid's letter to Laurier outlined his "suggestions for the decoration of the Parliament Buildings" as follows: "1st: The main entrance with a symbolic subject in processional form; 2nd: the separated panels of the chambers of the Commons and Senate with historical subjects; 3rd: The Library with an encircling frieze, representing great men of literature in periods appropriately accented. The ceiling, or dome, of the library treated with decorative ornament combined with figures." "For the purpose of making a definite beginning," Reid proposed that the project should commence with the mural scheme for the main entrance hall of the Centre Block, which would be entitled *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Faithful Sons*:

> This is intended to treat in processional form, or semi-processional form, as would be found best when trial sketches have been made. The various sections of the Dominion could be appropriately represented with their

fig.2 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the center.

> various occupations, and to make a picturesque effect the typical products could be borne in various ways, allowing the introduction of animals and vehicles; these with figures of men, women and children would combine into a pageant of brilliant colour with a centre where a figure symbolical of Canada, supported by figures representing the Provinces, and pages bearing the coats of arms, receives with acclaim the homage of her children.

Reid also explained that he would execute the series of canvas panels for the entrance area with the help of Hahn, Brownell, Brymner, Frederick Challener (1869-1959), William Cruikshank (1849-1922), and Edmond Dyonnet (1859-1954). By listing the artists ready to participate in the project, he hoped to persuade the government that more of the Parliament Buildings' walls could be decorated over time. With the involvement of a number of painters, "the result would be representative of the works of Canadian artists, thus constituting an important means for the encouragement and stimulation of Canadian art." He continued: "in order that the best results be secured we think it would be desirable that the Royal Canadian Academy should appoint committees to supervise such work as may be undertaken at any time, to pass

fig.3 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the left.

fig.4 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the right.

fig.5 Gustav Hahn, **Hail Dominion**, 1906, oil on burlap, 203 x 137 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

upon such subjects as may be chosen, or upon sketches made for these subjects." The letter also described the current status of mural decoration, pointing out that "during the past ten years there has been a great increase of interest, almost world-wide, in the art of mural decoration, and among the members of the Royal Canadian Academy there has been a corresponding tendency to a revival of that branch of painting."[2]

The idea to decorate the Parliament Buildings with mural art was not new. A year earlier, Robert Harris (1849-1919), president of the RCA, had sent a similar letter to Laurier: "Again, it might be strongly recommended indeed, naturally following from previous suggestions, that as there are at least some places in the Parliament Buildings which with advantage lend themselves to schemes of mural decoration, an attempt should be made to utilize them for the portrayal of subjects connected with the history of the country and so forth."[3] Harris recommended that the RCA coordinate the project and work with a group of qualified artists to develop a mural scheme, but he is not as specific as Reid.

On 12 June 1905,[4] Reid prepared a statement entitled "Report of work done in connection with the proposed decoration scheme for the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, made for the information of the artists interested." He related that after receiving his April 1904 letter, Laurier had asked the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department David Ewart[5] to write a report on the mural project. In fact, knowing that the Chief Architect was in charge of preparing the plans and estimates for federal public works projects and of determining whether or not a project should proceed, Reid had already recommended to Laurier that Ewart be an *ex-officio* member of the RCA committee. According to Reid, Ewart had promised to do his utmost to have the proposal adopted since work had already begun to renovate the entrance hall with a new mosaic floor, a marble dado and other improvements; but Reid was aware that, by the fall of 1904 no definite progress had been made.[6] His "Report" also explained that at meetings with Ewart held in Brownell's Ottawa studio on 24 and 25 May 1905, the proposal had been discussed and Reid had shown Ewart his pastel sketch for the mural panel that would decorate the north wall of the entrance hall. As a result, Ewart suggested that the artists complete their sketches and bring them to him the following Christmas, after which time he would present the mural scheme to the government. Reid concludes the "Report" by saying that he had met with most of the participating artists on 28 May in his Toronto studio, where they outlined the specifications for the project and revised the estimated cost from $15,000 to $25,000.

On the same day, he sent a copy of the "Report" to Challener who had been unable to attend the artists' meeting in Toronto.[7] Reid also included his

"Specifications for Decorations for the Main Entrance Hall of the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa." He had already presented this plan to the other painters, but the mural scheme now had a new title and description:

> Subject:
> The subject to be Canada Receiving the Homage of her Children.
>
> Composition:
> The composition to consist of an open air procession, with attention directed towards a central enthroned figure symbolical of Canada, having supporting figures symbolizing the Provinces and attendants bearing coats of arms, banner, etc.
>
> General arrangement:
> The procession to be formed of groups of figures of men, women and children of all types and ages, showing their occupations in the Arts and Industries by the bearing of various emblems. The phases of Canadian history to be expressed by representing the people belonging to the different periods. The main setting to be a [varied] Canadian landscape, composed of forest, fields, bodies of water and mountains, having habitations so arranged as to appropriately accompany the different scenes depicted. The figures representing Canada and the provinces to have an architectural setting. The style of the setting to be Gothic. The costumes to be conventional.
>
> Arrangement of the subject on the walls:
> The symbolical figures to occupy the centre and middle foreground of the north wall. The right and left wings to show the western and eastern development, reaching toward the centre in the foreground. The figures representing the early beginning of Canada to be in the centre and semicircular part of the south wall. The panels on the right and left of the same wall, and those of the east and west walls to show by gradual steps the development to the present time; the west side to represent the west, the east to represent the east.[8]

The memo also specified the "method of execution" of both the preliminary studies and the mural decorations. Based on a scale of one inch to the foot, the studies would be made on a sized cotton surface and mounted on stretchers that could be joined to form a model of the walls of the entrance hall. Using oil paint with turpentine and wax to ensure a matte surface, the colour would be thinly applied, leaving as much pale surface as possible to allow for retouching and

fig.6 Print of painted photograph, study for **Ave Canada**, George Agnew Reid fonds, *Scrapbook*, vol. 1, 274, 1907, Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario, A-23582. (Photo: AGO)

repainting when the sketches were brought together. The mural panels were to be placed "on a heavy canvas of a uniform texture" and mounted on the wall in "a thick bed of white lead and varnish." The panels would be painted separately in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal in the various artists' studios and then brought together in the entrance hall where "the tone, colour and treatment" would be "brought into harmony as far as possible by the artists working together for that purpose." After the murals had been positioned, painted borders would be attached at the top and bottom of each painting, creating a continuous line around the sides of the entrance hall except where interrupted by doors and windows. Reid also drew a diagram of the entrance hall indicating which parts of the mural scheme would be allotted to each of the artists in the group.

One of Reid's scrapbooks contains a photograph of the entrance hall dated 1907, which he had over-painted with a small but detailed sketch of the painting now titled *Ave Canada* (fig.6). It shows that he originally intended to place his mural along the full length of the north wall and a few metres of the east and west

walls. The mural would have been positioned above a large central platform and between the two flanking staircases that lead to the doors of the public stairs and to a circular landing and doors of the Senate and Commons chambers. However, this placement would have obscured the five large tracery windows on the north wall – an important part of the Gothic Revival interior, which also included several columns with elaborately carved capitals, an ornamental stone balustrade, a ceiling formed of sunken panels, and two large decorative windows on the south wall.[9]

According to Reid's biographer Muriel Miller, at approximately 3 metres high and 21.3 metres long, *Ave Canada* would have been the largest panel in the scheme. Miller also describes Reid's plan[10] in greater detail than he had outlined in his memo in June 1905. For example, the sidewalls were to be a similar height but only 9.1 metres long; panels painted by Brownell would have depicted various industries representing the development of Canada East, and Canada West would show Dyonnet's image of the harvest. Three panels with figures of Canada's early history would have been painted by Brymner and placed on the central and semicircular parts of the south wall, which was broken by a doorway. On the rounded wall above the entrance door, in a space about 3 metres high by 15.2 metres long, Brymner would also have painted the arrival of Jacques Cartier. Views of settlers and hunters by Challener and Cruikshank were intended for the flat sections of the wall to the left and right of the large main doorway. In addition, painted sculptural figures in semi-classical costumes were to embellish the areas between the beams and arches. While Miller does not mention Hahn's *Hail Dominion* in her description, Reid's diagram shows that it would have been situated close to *Ave Canada*, in front of the columns at the north end of the hall. Immediately visible upon entering the Centre Block, these two murals would have created the context for the rest of the images on the adjacent walls.

It is no surprise that Reid and his fellow artists hoped to decorate the main entrance hall of Canada's most imposing building with mural paintings. In both Europe and the United States, commissions for murals in public buildings increased significantly during the decades preceding the turn of the century. Reid was well aware of their popularity, and he was also familiar with the American examples displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893,[11] which were very different from the genre and landscape works on view in its Fine Arts Building.[12] Paintings in the Canadian section such as Reid's *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*,[13] *Lullaby* and *The Visit of the Clockmaker*, Challener's *Forty Winks on a Sunday Afternoon*, Cruikshank's *Drawing the Mast* and Brownell's *Lamp Light* focused on the everyday life of Canadians. They stood in sharp contrast to the majestic grandeur of nationhood presented in the American murals.

In the American public art at the Exposition, allegorical female figures represented civic ideals such as justice, law, government, tradition, progress, commerce and religious liberty. Their monumental forms dominated the fair grounds and the numerous art and industrial exhibitions celebrating America's material and visual culture. For example, in *Columbian Fountain* by Frederick MacMonnies (1863-1937), the Barge of State was guided by a female personification of Fame and propelled by eight female allegorical figures representing Music, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Agriculture, Science, Industry and Commerce. *The Republic*, designed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907) and sculpted by Daniel Chester French (1850-1931), was a twenty-metre high female goddess; wearing a chiton and a laurel wreath and she held a staff in one hand and an orb with a perched eagle in the other. On the inside of the dome of the Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building, Edwin Blashfield's (1848-1936) allegorical female figures showed the arts of the goldsmith, the ironworker, the armourer and the worker in bronze. Mary Cassatt's (1844-1926) now-lost mural *Modern Woman*, on display in the Woman's Building, was a contemporary parable where women and girls harvest the fruits of knowledge and science in an Arcadian garden.[14] Reid's belief in the importance of the symbolic representations of mural decoration was further reinforced by his association with Blashfield and other American mural artists such as Carroll Beckwith (1852-1917), Will Low (1853-1932) and John Alexander (1856-1915), who were producing murals for the Library of Congress and new courthouses, state capitals and public libraries across the United States. For these artists, mural painting had an educational role: to arouse patriotism, inspire American virtues and teach the history of the nation.[15] Beginning in the summer of 1891 and every summer for the next twenty-five years, Reid met with these painters at Onteora Park, an artist's colony in the Catskill Mountains where he had purchased a home.[16]

Reid was soon convinced that mural art was equally essential for the full expression of Canadian nationhood. In 1894 he was instrumental in forming the Society of Mural Decorators with the purpose of lobbying for the decoration of the new Toronto Municipal Buildings (now the Old City Hall). The Society's mural plan for the Council Chamber of the Municipal Buildings was conceived in 1895 and to some extent it could be seen as a precedent for the scheme Reid would later propose for Ottawa. The murals included depictions of industry, integrity and intelligence by Reid, Wyly Grier (1862-1957) and William Cruikshank, and another of peace, government and prosperity by Cruikshank and Frederick Challener. In the Council Chamber's entrance hall, Hahn and Reid also intended to paint classical personifications of Science and Art. Unfortunately, the entire mural scheme was rejected due to a lack of funds. Nevertheless, in an

attempt to convince the public of the importance of murals and in hopes of encouraging future commissions, Reid returned to the entrance hall in 1899 to paint, free of charge, *The Arrival of the Pioneers* and *Staking a Pioneer Farm*. At the same time Gustav Hahn decorated the wide border of the Council Chamber with designs of flowers and fruit, and painted classical personifications of Truth and Justice[17] in the spandrels of the arches over the gallery.

As one of the founders in 1876 of the Ontario School of Art (now the Ontario College of Art and Design) and the president of the Ontario Society of Artists between 1897 and 1902, Reid was well-known in the province. Over the years, his commitment to mural painting also became widely acknowledged in Canada. In her article on Reid in the November 1907 issue of *Canadian Magazine*, Margaret Fairbairn writes that, "after two lengthy trips abroad" and "due in part to foreign influence," all of Reid's art since the 1890s "has been confined to mural decoration."[18] She continues: "Not a few of the artist's admirers, have expressed a wish that he would return to his earlier manner.... Do they in the least, realize how impossible is growth without change...there is no standing still or turning back."[19]

George Reid's *Ave Canada*

There is a good reason for the apparent "foreign influence" in Reid's *Ave Canada*: in searching a prototype for the entrance hall mural, he borrowed freely from Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Allegory of Good Government*. Painted between 1338 and 1340, the fresco expressed traditional civic virtues and coincidentally evoked what Reid also believed to be Canadian ideals of nationhood. It is situated on the sidewall of the Council Room (*Sala dei Nove*) of Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, opposite *Allegory of Bad Government*. Together, they show the positive and negative aspects of political governance on city and village life, expressing the will of the Sienese government under the rule of the nine chief magistrates of the executive council.[20] At the centre of *Good Government* a male personification of Siena is flanked by seven female allegorical figures: the cardinal virtues of Magnanimity, Temperance and Justice on the right, and Prudence, Fortitude and Peace, and a second Justice, to the left. Small winged theological virtues – Faith, Hope and Charity – hover above the male personification; below, Ascius and Senius, the founders of the city, play at the feet of Remus their father. Representatives of Siena's citizenry move in a stately procession along one portion of the fresco; on the other, soldiers from the cavalry and infantry stand guard. The arrangement of the figures was derived from the pageantry associated with the *jocundus adventus*,[21] the street procession of clergy, town officers, bourgeoisie and guild members that greeted the sovereign entering a city or territory. The route was often lined with paintings and *tableaux vivants* that dramatized local legends and historical events, and symbolized the judicial and administrative characteristics of government.

In referencing Lorenzetti in *Ave Canada*, Reid was aware that he was creating a pageant;[22] in fact, he described the mural's theme as "A pageant of brilliant colour" in his 1904 letter to Laurier. In *Ave Canada* a maternal queen is the central symbolic image of Canada, medieval symbols of good government have been replaced by the Canadian provinces depicted as princesses,[23] and the religious virtues are now two winged figures representing Britain and France. These angels crown the personification of Canada with a wreath and each holds a scroll signifying the code of law of the two founding nations. The small naked gods nestled at Siena's feet have become infants in the arms of the "provinces" and standing children offer a harvest of Canadian fruits and vegetables. Instead of the mace-like sceptre and shield held by Siena, a young knight standing to the side of "Canada" holds the country's official flag. Siena's male citizenry has been transformed into numerous family groups; they portray the civic, industrial, rural and artistic occupations of Canadians and pay homage to a sovereignty envisioned as an extended royal family.

While the initial impetus for Reid's *Ave Canada* may have been the Lorenzetti, it is also directly linked to another important influence on both Reid and his American counterparts: the work of Puvis de Chavannes.[24] *Ave Canada* reflects a careful study of his murals that Reid saw in Paris in 1888 and 1889 while studying at the *académies* Julian and Colarossi. In 1892, during a second visit to Paris, he made a further study of Puvis' decorations in the Hotel de Ville, the Pantheon and the Sorbonne. *Ave Canada* mirrors the French murals in its simplified forms, limited use of muted colours and a non-rigorous use of allegory. In such public commissions, Puvis often focused on the concept of patriarchy, implying that the organization of a nation is analogous to that of a "nuclear" family.[25] France is sometimes represented as Fecundity, with a young child symbolizing future generations and a father or mother as an embodiment of civic education. The stability and continuity of the French Republic are often expressed through evocations of parental love and tenderness. For example, in *Summer* (1891), a mural in the Hotel de Ville, France is symbolized by the nude woman in the centre of the painting as well as by the nursing mother and fertile landscape. In *Ave Canada*, Reid idealized the nation by evoking a similar sense of childhood and familial belonging.

Here, children would have reminded the public of the young people in Reid's successful earlier paintings. At the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, his three works – *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*, *The Visit of the Clockmaker* and *Lullaby* – all pictured children, a particularly popular subject in North America as well as in Europe. Reid had been a student at the Ontario School of Art when Robert Harris painted *The News Boy* in 1880 and *The Young Genius* a year later; and one of Reid's teachers in Paris, William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905) was renowned for his paintings of idealised peasant girls. While in France, Reid had also befriended the Canadian artist Paul Peel

(1860-92), who was just beginning a series of paintings of his own two children titled *After the Bath*. During this time Reid made several sympathetic paintings of rural children and pioneer life and began working on *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*, all of which were recollections of his youth on an Ontario farm. The Canadian public responded with enthusiasm to the narrative qualities of family pictures like *The Foreclosure*:

> In front of the chair stands the tall form of the man who has come to formally announce the foreclosure of the mortgage.... Directly in front of him is the heirloom – the old wooden cradle – and in it lies a sleeping infant with its face toward the window. The flushed and rounded cheek, the noble brow, the golden hair, the finely-formed head, the peaceful sleep.... The wonderful effect of the light on the child, cover, cradle and rug show the genius of the artist.... Happy should the artist be who uses his God-given talents to touch the hearts of humanity.[26]

Mural painting presented Reid with a new challenge: the visual integration of children and families into a large-scale allegorical composition in which he could represent the various sectors of Canadian society while maintaining the atmosphere of warmth and intimacy associated with his genre paintings. Although his attention was now focused on mural art, he believed that: "The Canadian brush is bound to have for its ultimate end the expression of Canadian life, sentiments and characteristics; the expression in art, by genre pictures, and by symbolic and historical conceptions of the idea of nationality, and the development of a country so vast as ours."[27] While Puvis offered a starting point with his classical subject matter, he had rejected the aura of realism that Reid believed *Ave Canada* required.

Reid may have also looked to the sentimental realist paintings of rustic provincial life by Jules Breton (1827-1906); his clustering together of Canadian families of a specific occupation is reminiscent of Breton's family groupings of peasants, bourgeoisie and uniformed *gendarme* in *Plantation d'un calvaire* (1858). Diego Velazquez was an equally important influence; Reid had copied hi's paintings of royal children and dwarves when he travelled to Spain in 1896.[28] A variation of his *Copy after Velazquez: Portrait of a Dwarf with a Dog* appears on the right side of *Ave Canada* in the figure of the boy with a large goat. The posture and facial expressions of the children, who are turned sideways and glance at the viewer, recall Velazquez's *Las Meninas* (1657), which Reid had copied in detail. Similarly, the group on the left side of *Ave Canada* mirrors the compositional density of the figures in Velazquez's *The Surrender of Breda* (1635) and Reid also adapted some of their poses. Furthermore, the slender trees of *Ave Canada* recall the rhythmically arranged spears of *The Surrender*, while the humbled figure of Justinus of Nassau is transformed into the medieval knight paying homage to Canada. Finally, the architectural backdrop that separates the

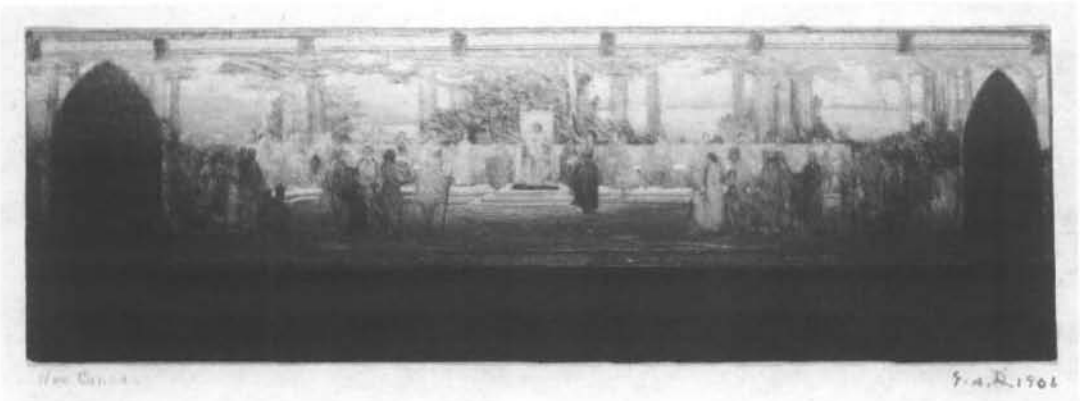

fig.7 Photograph of study for mural **Ave Canada**, 1906, George Agnew Reid fonds, *Scrapbook*, vol. 1, 273, 1906, Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario, A-23581. (Photo: AGO)

foreground and distant landscape in *Ave Canada* resembles another Velazquez painting, the *Villa Medici in Rome* (1630). These references reflect the traditional practice of copying to cultivate compositional ideas and techniques that was an important part of Reid's academic training in Paris.

In his execution of several preparatory studies for *Ave Canada*, Reid also made use of the processes he had learned in Paris;[29] they helped him compose the various elements of *Ave Canada*, to adapt certain segments, and to leave others relatively unchanged until he arrived at a design that could serve as the basis for the figure drawings and the under-painting of the mural canvas. The first of these studies was probably a freely painted pastel sketch with groups of figures drawn with wide brushes and calligraphic strokes. Although it is dated 1906 in Reid's scrapbook, this may be the work he refers to in his letter of 12 June 1905 to Challener: "I am sending you a photograph of my pastel sketch.... I have sent copies of these enclosures and the photograph to each of the artists who are to undertake sketches."[30] Reid's scrapbook also contained a photograph of the

fig.8 George Reid, **Central Figure of Canada from "Ave Canada,"** c1907, oil on canvas, 30 x 22 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario. Transferred from the Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives to the permanent collection, 1982. (no. 82/159.16) (Photo: AGO)

entrance hall onto which he had painted a sketch of *Ave Canada* (fig.7). It clearly shows that he considered the spaces between the columns when balancing the three distinctive parts of the composition. The figure of "Canada" is seen in yet another study (fig.8) originally pasted into the scrapbook now at the Art Gallery of Ontario. In this small sketch Reid focused on particular details such as her simple Greek drapery, youthful facial features and the outstretched hand, suggestive of benevolent leadership.

The scale of an oil study entitled *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters* (fig.9) at the London Museum corresponds to the original dimensions of *Ave Canada* and the composition is more developed, with the foreground groups more completely rendered than the "provinces," still in outline. Given that the central platform, staircases, doors and cornice treatment were included in this study, it is obvious that the relation of *Ave Canada* to the architectural features of the entrance hall was his major consideration. The large oil sketch of *Ave Canada* (fig.1) at the National Gallery of Canada, begun in 1906, is the most advanced of all the studies.[31] Compared to the London sketch, the colours are more varied, the figures of the provinces better defined, the foliage more complete, and the figure grouping is more compact and reaches further into the background. The design also accommodates the arched doorways at the top of the two staircases that would be to the far left and right of the installed painting. When Reid revised the canvas sometime before exhibiting it at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1918, he extended the wooded landscape into these lateral spaces.

These studies clearly show that Reid regarded the Canadian landscape as a central element and recognised its potential to embody the national spirit of Canada. In 1894, the artist and cultural critic William Sherwood had asserted that Canadian landscape painting was of utmost importance in representing the diverse scenery of a homeland and the sentiments of nationhood.[32] Four years later Reid would further argue that mural painting expressed "a genuine love for the perfect, the beautiful; and as the air, the soil, the climate of our country colour our blood and stamp our natures, our art must be native to be healthy."[33] In *Ave Canada*, the landscape assumes a stronger role than in the two murals Reid had painted for the Toronto Municipal Buildings in 1899, where the trees and terrain serve primarily as supporting elements for the organization of the painting.[34] In the mural for Ottawa, the landscape occupies the upper half and full width of the composition; tree trunks are a rhythmical accompaniment to the figures, and the leafy foliage acts as a sheltering canopy. The serenity of the forest, lake, hills and sky complements the dignity of the people who are gathered in the meadow. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the landscape allegorizes the nation as a rural family nurtured by the fecundity of the land.

fig.9 George Reid, **Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters,** 1904, oil on linen, 58 x 176 cm, London Museum. (Photo: London Museum)

Reid believed that in addition to its placid rural setting, *Ave Canada* had medieval overtones in its costumes and composition that would also appeal to many Canadians. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when European and North American society became more urbanized as a result of industrialization, there was an accompanying revival of idealized medievalism.[35] Ideas drawn from medieval life permeated politics, economics, social attitudes and aesthetics. Pre-Raphaelite art, Gothic Revival architecture, and the Arts and Crafts movement were all widely embraced. Magazines often portrayed city life as artificial in contrast to rural life, which was envisioned as a refuge and a source of family values. According to James Mavor,[36] Chair of Political Economy and Constitutional History at the University of Toronto, and a vocal member of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art,[37] industrial development

had led to the disintegration of village communities and the break up of extended families. An ideal society, he argued, had both modern freedoms and the stability and security that come from a medieval way of life in which each member of the community demonstrates a concern for the group as a whole. Mavor, a native of Glasgow, Scotland where he had been a member of the Socialist League founded by William Morris, befriended Reid soon after his arrival in Toronto in 1892.[38] In his lectures and writings Mavor called for the reform of art and design as advocated in Morris's teachings. It is likely that Reid agreed with Mavor's sentiments.

Gustav Hahn's Hail Dominion

Today, Gustav Hahn's *Hail Dominion* (fig.5) hangs next to Reid's *Ave Canada* in the Canadian section of the National Gallery of Canada. In *Hail Dominion*, the nation is symbolized by the grouping of Mother Canada and her nine provincial "daughters." "Canada" is part goddess, part queen and part mother; a tall and imposing figure, she is powerful in her statuesque beauty as she embraces her two daughters at her side. Looking directly ahead to suggest visionary power and strong leadership, "Canada" embodies the promise of the nation and the assurance of future growth. The girls are in casual poses that imply the ease and devotion of a caring family. Holding fish, wheat, fruits and flowers to symbolize the provinces and Canada's natural resources, the figures are positioned on a flat rock in a forest setting. Evergreens in the background compliment the upright posture of several figures while vines of maples leaves frame the composition in a configuration reminiscent of an altarpiece. It is clear that in developing the form and composition of *Hail Dominion*, Hahn responded to *Ave Canada* to ensure a visual relationship between the two works. Similarly, the title *Hail Dominion* is obviously a variation of *Ave Canada*, and Canada and her provinces are allegorically represented by female figures in both murals. Hahn also uses medieval-like costumes and similar tones of green and blue.

Nevertheless, the treatment of the figures and aspects of the composition of *Hail Dominion* suggest a different visual approach, which is partly the result of Hahn's art training. He was born in Germany and had studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Stuttgart when *Jugendstil* artwork was flourishing. Educated in painting, interior design and the applied arts, he also trained in a range of activities from the ornamental decoration of household objects to the mural art of domestic and public buildings.[39] In 1888, soon after arriving in Toronto with his parents and siblings, Hahn found a job at the decorating firm of Elliott & Sons. His assignments included painting murals in the halls and dining rooms of private houses as well as on the ceilings of churches such as Saint Paul's United and Saint James Cathedral. In 1893, he also produced murals on the ceiling and north and south walls of the Legislative Chamber of

the new Ontario Legislative Building,[40] where classical female personifications of Moderation, Justice, Power and Wisdom are entwined by a maple vine motif. Over the next twelve years, Hahn continued to favour the classical dreamlike forms, symmetrically arranged spaces and floral patterns typical of the *Jugendstil* movement. These tendencies are exemplified by *Decoration*, painted in 1899 and now at the National Gallery of Canada.

By 1906 when Hahn painted *Hail Dominion*, his composition had changed significantly. The allegorical figures of his earlier works had evolved into more realistic contemporary females. This change may be related to the influence of such British artists as John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), Arthur Hacker (1858-1919) and Byam Shaw (1872-1919), whose popularity was based on images of actual girls in mythological and allegorical roles. Hahn had seen their work during a visit to London, England in 1905[41] and had collected magazine articles on their painting.[42] In *Hail Dominion*, Hahn recast these young British women to evoke the innocence of youth in a visual parable of Canada. He distanced his work from the more exaggerated gestures of the British painters by creating figures that were more natural in appearance and pose. Using his daughters Hilda, aged eight, and Freya who was two years older, as models, he transformed their pre-adolescent bodies and facial features into the young women representing Canada's provincial daughters.[43] The girls gaze fondly at Mother Canada, whose face is a classical interpretation of their own mother, Ellen, and they wear dresses she created especially for the painting. While *Hail Dominion* portrayed Hahn's wife and daughters, it was also an ideal image of a Canada where female virtues signify concepts of private and public life.

At the RCA annual exhibition of 1906, *Hail Dominion* was listed in the catalogue as a "decorative panel" and was displayed with pastel studies of Hilda and Freya posing for the work.[44] Two studies at the National Galley of Canada (figs.10 and 11) and others held privately, demonstrate Hahn's elegant line and soft touch, and reveal the special attention he devoted to his daughters' faces. *Hail Dominion* was also the diploma work that led to Hahn's promotion from an Associate to an Academician of the RCA in 1906.[45] Painted two years after the death of his father, *Hail Dominion* may have held further significance for Hahn. Otto, a lawyer and geologist with a doctorate in natural sciences, had come to Canada in 1879 on the invitation of the Dominion Minister of Agriculture. Appointed by the Canadian government to encourage emigration from Germany and Switzerland, Otto devoted his working life to promoting Canada and published numerous books and articles on the subject.[46] It is possible that Hahn's *Hail Dominion* paid tribute to his father by venerating the country that offered refuge to their family and others escaping the oppressive political climate of Germany.

fig.10 Gustav Hahn, **Young Girl (Study for "Hail Dominion!")**, 1906, red and white chalk and graphite on blue grey wove paper, 34 x 44 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

fig.11 Gustav Hahn, **Two Heads (Study for "Hail Dominion!")**, 1906, pastel, graphite, and red chalk on blue grey wove paper, 36 x 33 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

Aftermath

The government's refusal to support the mural project was communicated to Reid in 1907. As Muriel Miller writes: "The sketches were submitted to the government and the plan approved, but the matter had to be held in abeyance for the time being since there was no appropriation available."[47] Closer to the truth is the explanation that Reid provided in a report he submitted to the RCA[48] in December 1917, two years after most of the Centre Block had burned to the ground. (The fire may also have destroyed the other artists' sketches if they were then in the possession of the Public Works department.) Reid explained that the government's newly formed Advisory Arts Council made the negative decision. As president of the RCA, Reid had earlier recommended that, "there should be an advisory council of the Fine Arts composed of painters, sculptors and architects, such council to be appointed by the Royal Canadian Academy."[49] However, the government ignored Reid's suggestion and appointed prominent Montreal businessmen and art collectors, William Van Horne, Sir George Drummond and Senator Arthur Boyer to assess works being considered for purchase by Ottawa. In 1907 "the sketches for an initial part of the proposal were placed before the Council." Reid related that although two of the members were favourably disposed, the Council refused to support the project because "the Chairman had grave doubts about the ability of Canadian Artists to undertake such an important work, and the matter was deferred."[50]

Reid did not mention that the Council had also been presented with another mural painting for the Parliament Buildings: *Jacques Cartier rencontre les Indiens à Stadaconé 1535* (1905-6) by Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté (1869-1937). The artist, who was living in Paris, had recently taken up Canadian historical subjects and Prime Minister Laurier had suggested that he submit the painting for the Council's consideration. However, it was deemed unacceptable because it was not sufficiently realistic. In a letter to Suzor-Coté of 22 November 1907, Laurier explained that they felt Cartier was too handsome and well dressed, "décidément trop beau,"[51] and he agreed that the explorer could not have worn such fine clothing. When Suzor-Coté was informed that he would have to rework the painting to ensure a more authentic record of the event, he refused to make the changes. Given their concerns for "historical" realism, it is hardly surprising that the Council was not sympathetic to Reid's allegorical mural.

Hahn also was a vocal supporter of mural art, particularly in his capacity as head of the Department of Interior Design at the Ontario School of Art, where he had been teaching interior architecture and design since 1892. In March 1913, a review of Hahn's work shown at the Ontario Society of Artists annual exhibition[52] stated that there were "few exhibitions in Toronto at which

Mr. Gustav Hahn, R.C.A. does not exhibit one or more sketch designs of mural decoration or the decoration itself. Sad to relate, this class of work, while it holds promise for the greatest art of the future, is in this corner of the world done oftener than not for the commercial decorator." After mentioning several of his murals in private residences, including a frieze of female figures in a music room, a lunette over a doorway and a triptych over a mantel, the reviewer misnamed *Hail Dominion* as "Canada and Her Daughters." However, he noted that it was one of Hahn's "large and important decorations," as it demonstrated his feeling for "flowing line, balance of design, and brilliant colour, along with a strong imaginative quality."

Around this time Hahn gave a talk on mural art in which he stated that few countries could boast a romantic age of pioneers and reiterated his belief that the ideals of citizenship should "be expressed in allegorical representation."[53] Tragically, Hahn's role as a proponent of mural art ended abruptly during the First World War when a wave of anti-German sentiment left him without commissions. Faced with the increasing difficulty of earning enough money to support his family, they were forced to move in 1918 to Brooklin, a small village outside Toronto where they made ends meet by growing their own fruits and vegetables. Despite these hardships Hahn was able to keep his Toronto studio as he secured occasional work as an art teacher. When resentment towards German immigrants subsided in the 1930s, he returned full-time to the Ontario College of Art where he revitalized the Department of Interior Decoration.

The First World War reinvigorated Reid's attempts to convince the government, the public, artists, and his students at the Ontario College of Art of the merits of allegorical art. Despite having virtually no support, in a memorandum sent to the RCA in December 1917 he strongly encouraged the use of mural painting in its art programme as a means to commemorate Canadian soldiers who had fought and died in the war. Reid hoped the government would call upon Canadian artists "to pour forth their national feeling in expression of the heroic deeds of their fellow countrymen in France and Flanders." But he also noted that the failure of his earlier efforts to promote mural painting "may have been due to some lack in the mode of presentation or to the lack of public spirit and national pride."[54] Reid was possibly referring to the general opinion that allegorical art was no longer relevant. As early as 1894, James Mavor[55] had questioned the use of classical imagery in murals, recommending that layered allegorical themes be replaced by straightforward contemporary subjects: "A laboured attempt to illustrate a recondite allusion or to express in paint that which is probably not susceptible on any terms of being so expressed is apt to miss its point so far as concerns the average observer, while the story which is so simply told on canvas as to be intelligible to a child may also be the

most interesting to the cultivated intelligence." While Reid's *Ave Canada* demonstrated that he was receptive to the idea of a modern nation that could embrace medieval ideals, just as Mavor himself had once advocated, Reid could not abandon his belief that classically inspired allegorical imagery was perfectly suited to expressing Canada's national spirit.

In the United States, there was also a shift in attitude toward mural decoration. At the close of the nineteenth century when Reid was emulating American muralists, a more direct and practical language was replacing allegory as a means to depict the nation. Defenders of American cultural nationalism were concerned that artists who were academically trained in Paris lingered over the themes and techniques of the past rather than exploring new ideas. Arguments against classicist mural paintings pointed to the need for naturalism, the importance of portraying historical subjects in real terms and the use of a direct and unaffected style.[56] Canadian art critics were also voicing an increasingly negative reaction to European influences in Canadian art. In 1894, J.A. Radford the art critic for *Canadian Magazine*, wrote that the "greatest fault with many Canadian artists is that after they travel abroad to study they lose their individuality."[57] He also believed that "Artists ought to paint as they themselves see Nature" and recognize that as important chroniclers they should be "modelling the country's patriotism, sentiment and taste" with the "correct pose of the figures, the folds of the drapery, the variety of costume." Radford was relentless in his criticism and in 1907, when the Advisory Arts Council rejected Reid's mural, he wrote that many Canadian paintings "are painted through foreign spectacles."[58] Nonetheless, Reid maintained his belief that the nation should be portrayed symbolically and he never budged from the view he had articulated in a 1906 interview in *Acta Victoriana* that that "the symbolic treatment of the patriotic idea" and "all those ideas which demand imaginative treatment"[59] was the best way to represent Canada. Although he also stated that "the depiction of historical episodes in our development" was an important element within the "patriotic idea," such events actually played a minor role in *Ave Canada*.

Reid's *Ave Canada* and Hahn's *Hail Dominion* reflected a symbolic content that had already lost its aesthetic and political viability. Both artists appear to have disregarded imagery that would have effectively expressed the current state of the country. "Canada" was a generic symbol of Canadian nationhood in much the same way as female allegorical figures had symbolized France and the United States. Moreover, the central figure of *Ave Canada* was more than a classically-inspired image: it was based on portraits of Queen Victoria such as on the first Great Seal of Canada issued in 1869 for use on all formal documents that carried the name of the monarch.[60] Dressed in her royal robes, Queen Victoria is seated on the coronation throne holding the orb and sceptre of supreme authority. Despite her youthful visage and less commanding

presence, did the personification of Canada in *Ave Canada* too closely resemble this regal image? Perhaps the allegorical language adopted by Reid and Hahn was ultimately confusing because of its similarity to the visual symbolism that had defined the relationship between Great Britain and Canada, but no longer adequately reflected its new nationhood.

The practice of forging Canadian images in the likeness of British royalty began with Confederation. On one side of the *Canadian Provinces Confederation Medal*, minted in 1867, is a bust portrait of Her Majesty the Queen and on the obverse is Britannia, pictured in profile as a warrior-woman with a lion at her side. Britannia presents the charter of Confederation to four allegorical female figures that represent the original provinces and each holds an implement that symbolizes the later provincial entrants to the united country.[61] Thus Reid and Hahn had chosen an allegorical motif that illustrated a longstanding paradox: Canadians who were proud of their nation also remained loyal to the British motherland. Jean Blewett (1862-1934), a popular poet born in Scotia, Ontario, reflected this sentiment in her poem, *The Native Born* (1907):

> Well we love that sea-girt island, and we strive to understand
> All the greatness, all the grandeur, of the glorious Mother Land:
> And we cheer her to the skies, cheer her till the echoes start
> For the old land holds our homage, but the new land holds our heart![62]

In concert with Blewett's poem, Hahn and Reid portrayed Canadians' belief in a "new land" in their representations of the Canadian landscape. But by emphasising the concept of tribute, both artists even more strongly articulated Canada's allegiance to Britain and the notion that "the old land holds our homage."

While the 1867 Act of Confederation had created a federal authority, the provinces nonetheless expected to run their own affairs. By the time Hahn and Reid's paintings were created in 1906, the Canadian public had become quite adept at reading political cartoons that exploited the tensions between Ottawa and the provinces. These cartoons often employed the motif of family seen in Reid and Hahn's work, but without any suggestion of harmonious feeling. For example, the cartoonist and public figure John William Bengough (1851-1923), who was also the publisher of the weekly *Grip* magazine and a later contributor to *The Globe* and *The Montreal Star*, consistently depicted Canada and the provinces as members of a decidedly disorderly family. In an 1879 cartoon, "Miss Canada" is in her carriage (the Constitution) with six boys who, according to the inscriptions on their hats, represent the provinces of the Dominion and the horse's face is that of Sir John A. MacDonald. "Canada" remarks to the coachman: "It may be a good safe horse as you say, but still, I don't like to be left at his mercy." In another cartoon of the same year (fig.12), the provinces are little girls who watch "Mademoiselle Quebec" order Sir John A. MacDonald to "Mind your own Federal business, and permit us to manage our local affairs to suit ourselves."

fig.12 John William Bengough, **Dominion Day**, *Grip* 13, no.6 (28 June 1879). (Photo: the author)

During the Depression of 1892 Bengough depicted Canada as a poor woman surrounded by her children; unable to handle her own affairs, she asks Prime Minister Sir John Abbot: "Can't You Do Something Sir, to Help a Poor Woman, Whose Children are in Distress?" (fig.13). Political cartoons often pictured Canada as a disgruntled, worried, destitute, aggressive or overly cheerful mother, characteristics that were also evident in satirical drawings of the prime minister. Her provincial family was frequently cast as rowdy boys or unruly girls, and also as children who were poverty-stricken or sarcastically dutiful. Such popular satire reflected Canadian political reality more accurately than Reid and Hahn's idealized images of the country and in turn gave their work a certain aspect of banality.

In July 1908, during Quebec's tercentenary celebrations, Reid viewed the pageantry from a grandstand on the Plains of Abraham where he sat in the company of Frank Lascelles,[63] the British pageant-master who was the director of the event.[64] This modern spectacle with over four thousand participants had none of the ennobling of civic virtue that Reid had borrowed from Lorenzetti for *Ave Canada*. In its place, appropriately dressed actors re-enacted moments

fig.13 John William Bengough, **Abbot to the Rescue**, *Grip* 38, no.7 (13 February 1892), 103. (Photo: the author)

from history as part of a pageant-play that Lascelles had based on a model originated by Louis Napoleon Parker[65] in 1905. Except for the final march, the processional features of earlier pageants had been replaced by a single performance.[66] Reid made drawings of several scenes from the play including Champlain's arrival in Quebec, Cartier at Fontainebleau, and the Iroquois returning after the massacre of Dollard, some of which he developed in later works.[67] Despite his introduction to new concepts of pageantry, Reid continued to believe in traditional modes of imagery and in 1918 he showed a slightly revised version of *Ave Canada* at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition.[68] What may be the only review of the work was written by Hector Charlesworth for *Saturday Night* magazine;[69] and Reid placed it in his scrapbook under the 1906 photograph of *Ave Canada*.[70] According to Charlesworth,

> I was very much interested in the study for a mural decoration 'Ave Canada' by the noted painter George A. Reid of Toronto. Mural decoration is an art very much neglected in this country. Mr. Reid's study shows a fine quality of thought and imagination, and has both balance of arrangement and variety of conception. It is to be hoped that some day Mr. Reid and a group of assistants have an opportunity to develop it on a large scale.

Although Charlesworth's apparent lack of knowledge of the history of the project lends an ironic tone to his comments, his last sentence accurately reflects Reid's own hope that *Ave Canada* would be placed in a public building. However, the mural was never again exhibited in Reid's lifetime and remained in his possession until his death. While it did not become a great national symbol, Reid achieved his ambition to provide civic edification through mural art when he decorated the walls of a Toronto school building. Two factors contributed to the realisation of this goal; the first was his role as an advisor to public schools on the educational merits of art. In 1914 Reid had helped prepare a pamphlet for the Ontario Department of Education on selecting works that were appropriate for the study of art and the decoration of schools.[71] Never having strayed from his belief in the didactic value of mural art, Reid ensured that a full chapter of the pamphlet was devoted to the subject. Secondly, Reid was chairman of the Ontario Advisory Committee on War Memorials in 1919 and his input is obvious in the committee's statement that war memorials contain allegorical themes and be placed in public buildings that are "educational or humanitarian."[72]

Between 1928 and 1929, Reid painted a series of eleven murals for the auditorium of the Jarvis Collegiate Institute in Toronto.[73] They were part of a war memorial that also included a bronze tablet listing the names of the Jarvis students killed in the war, a "chalice of undying light" under the tablet, and panels listing the names of students who returned from the war. Nine of Reid's murals, which realistically illustrate the early explorers of Canada and related events, are

fig.14 George Reid, **Patriotism** and **Sacrifice**, Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929. (Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

based on sketches he had made during the Quebec pageant of 1908.[74] The two largest murals, which measure 4.2 metres by 4.6 metres, extol the ideas of heroism, patriotism and self-sacrifice associated with the First World War (fig.14).[75] In the centre of *Sacrifice* (fig.15), a cenotaph is guarded by cadets holding the drooping flags of Great Britain and Canada, while a Girl Guide kneels to place a wreath at its base. Cadets and Boy Scouts also stand at attention on either side along with groups of families, students, educators, artists, and national leaders. Other children approach the monument bearing flowers and wreaths in homage to the dead. *Sacrifice* extols the virtue of offering one's own life in the service of a nation and as such, suggests the ultimate tribute of *Ave Canada*.

The second large work, *Patriotism* (fig.16), makes more direct reference to the original composition of *Ave Canada*. Canada is symbolised by a female figure standing on a raised dais; she holds the document of Canadian Confederation in her left hand and a wreath as a token of merit in her right hand. The figure is clearly modelled on *Ave Canada*'s seated regal figure but she now joins the rest of the nation in venerating the fallen soldiers. In a similar spirit, male cadets carrying provincial banners replace the princesses who

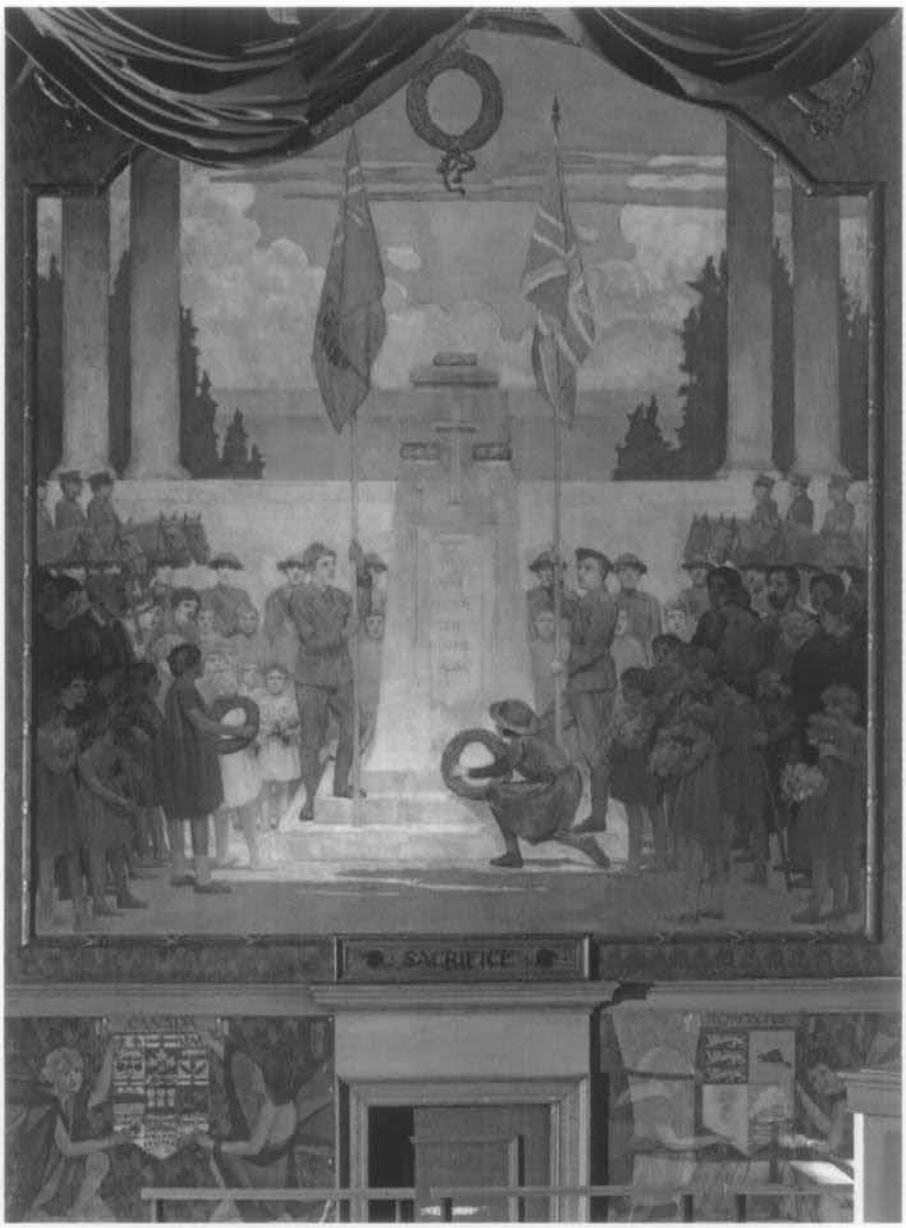

fig.15 George Reid, **Sacrifice,** Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929.
(Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

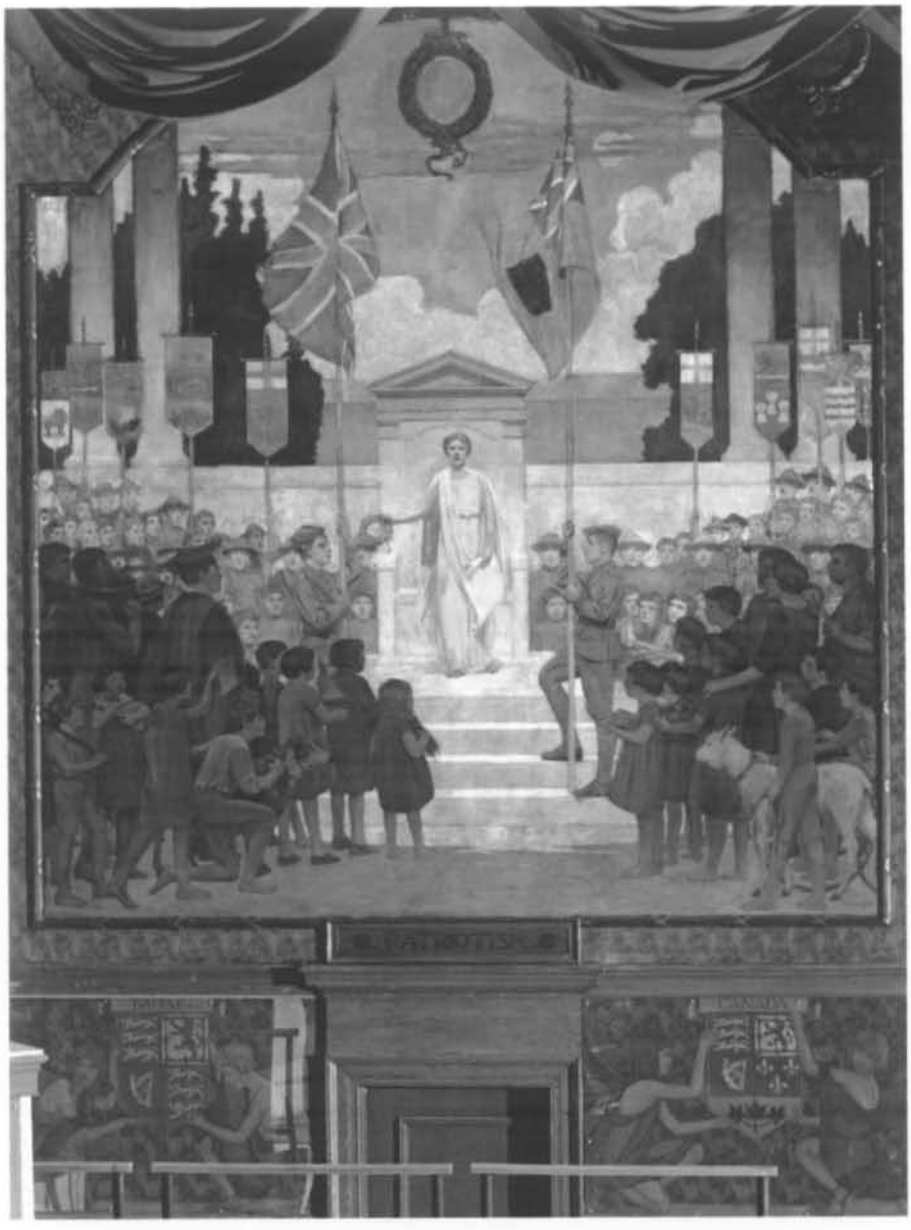

fig.16 George Reid, **Patriotism,** Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929. (Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

once symbolized the provinces. Around the figure of Canada groups representing the family, law, education, labour, government and defence, pay homage to the nation. School cadets bear the flags of Great Britain and Canada, while in the near background soldiers and Boy Scouts fill the width of the composition. The only uniformed figures are soldiers on horseback in the far distance. Following the war, many Canadian teenage boys enrolled in the cadet corps or became members of the Boy Scouts, a movement that was militaristic in ideology but at the same time dedicated to constructive citizenship and community service.[76]

At Jarvis Collegiate, Reid's allegorical image of Canada and her children was expanded to envision Canada's youth as the nation's future defenders. A transformed *Ave Canada* finally found its place in the setting of the public school, where for a short time mural painting emerged as a suitable means to educate Canadian children. Finally, Reid was able to offer what he long considered was the greatest gift of mural art: painting that aroused patriotism, inspired virtues and taught the history of the nation to its people.

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Notes

1 George A. Reid et al., to The Right Honourable Sir Wilfred Laurier, Ottawa, April 1904, National Archives of Canada, Prime Ministers' Fond, Wilfred Laurier, 225911-225913.

2 See REID, "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Architect and Builder* 11, no.1 (1898): 12-15; and "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Magazine* 10, no.6 (April 1898): 501-08, for his overview of mural painting and recent projects in Europe and the United States.

3 Although Harris was President of the RCA, his signature is conspicuously absent from Reid's letter. See Robert Harris, letter to Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, 20 April 1903. NAC, Prime Ministers' Fond, Wilfrid Laurier, 72338-72343.

4 Reid, "Report of work done in connection with the proposed decoration scheme for the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, made for the information of the artists interested," 12 June 1905. *George Reid Scrapbooks* (c.1880s-1947), compiled by Reid and housed in the E.P. Taylor Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario, vol.1, n.p.

5 David Ewart was Chief Architect from 1897 to 1914.

6 See Margaret ARCHIBALD, *By Federal Design: The Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works, 1881-1914* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1983). She explains that the Chief Architect's Branch did not initiate public building projects. The mural proposal was very different from the type of work supervised by Public Works, which related to the construction and improvement of public buildings.

7 Reid to Challener, 12 June 1905, *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.1, n.p.

8 Reid, "Specifications for proposed Decorations...," *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.1, n.p.

9 John PAGE, *Report of John Page, Esq. Chief Engineer Public Works on the Public Buildings at Ottawa* (Ottawa: Hunter, Rose, 1868). According to the report, the entrance hall, which was approached through a large doorway situated under a carriage porch, "consisted of two parts: the first being a semicircular space, 32 feet by 11 feet...beyond this is the principal part, measuring 72 feet by 39 feet and 24 feet high." See also Carolyn A. YOUNG, *The Glory of Ottawa: Canada's First Parliament Buildings* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995).

10 See Muriel MILLER, *G.A. Reid: Canadian Artist* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946).

11 See Howard Mumford JONES, "The Renaissance and American Origins," *Ideas in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944), 140-51. According to Jones, in the spirit of the "American Renaissance," architects, painters, sculptors and decorators had collaborated to produce a uniquely American art with national ideals inspired by the art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance.

12 See *World's Columbian Exposition, Official Catalogue* (Chicago: W.B. Gonkey, 1893); and *Canadian Department of Fine Art. World's Columbian Exposition, 1893, Catalogue of Paintings* (Toronto: C.B. Robinson, 1893).

13 Reid's *Foreclosure of the Mortgage* (1893) won a medal at the Chicago Exposition.

14 See Sally WEBSTER, *Eve's Daughter/Modern Woman: A Mural by Mary Cassatt* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004) and Bailey VAN HOOK, *Angels of Art: Women*

and Art in American Society, 1876-1914 (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 110-15.

15 Edwin Howland BLASHFIELD, *Mural Painting in America: the Scammon lectures, delivered before the Art Institute of Chicago, March 1912, and since greatly enlarged* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913).

16 Rosalind PEPALL, "Architect and Muralist: The Painter George Reid in Onteora, New York," *Canadian Collector* 86 (July/August 1984): 44-47.

17 See Marylin MCKAY, *A National Soul: Canadian Mural Painting 1860s-1930s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 40, and Rosalind PEPALL, "The Murals by George A. Reid in the Toronto Municipal Buildings (1897-1899)." MA thesis, Concordia University, 1982.

18 Margaret L. FAIRBAIRN, "The Art of George A. Reid," *Canadian Magazine* 22 no.1 (November 1907): 6.

19 Ibid., 8.

20 See, among others, Joseph POLZER, "Ambrogio Lorenzetti's War and Peace Murals Revisited: Contributions to the Meaning of the Good Government Allegory," *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no.4 (2002): 63-105.

21 See Lawrence McBride BRYANT, "The French Royal Entry Ceremonys: Politics, Society, and Art in Renaissance Paris." Ph.D. thesis, The University of Iowa, 1978. The concept of *jocundus adventus* implied both the actual entry of the king or lord and his right to certain honours and gifts on his arrival. See also BRYANT, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual and Art in the Renaissance* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1986).

22 For a discussion of the relationship between pageants and mural painting in the United States during this era, see Trudy BALTZ, "Pageantry and Mural Painting: Community Rituals in Allegorical Form," *Winterthur Portfolio* 15, no.3 (January 1980): 211-28.

23 Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces in 1905.

24 Rosalind PEPALL, "The Murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings: George Reid's Debt to Puvis de Chavannes," *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* IX, no.2 (1986): 142-60. See also Laurier LACROIX, "Puvis de Chavannes and Canada," *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* IV, no.1 (1977): 6-12.

25 Claudine MITCHELL, "Time and Idea of Patriarchy in the Pastorals of Puvis de Chavannes," *Art History* 10, no.2 (June 1987): 188-202 and Jennifer L. SHAW, "Imagining the Motherland: Puvis de Chavannes, Modernism and the Fantasy of France," *Art Bulletin* 79, no.6 (December 1997): 586-610.

26 Unsigned, "Canadian Art in the Palace of the White City," *The Montreal Weekly Witness* (30 August 1893). For a contemporaneous discussion of Reid's paintings of children see Hjalmar Hjorth BOYESEN, "Boyhood and Girlhood," *The Monthly Illustrator* 4, no.12 (April 1895): 3-8.

27 Unsigned, "A Canadian Artist," *Home Magazine* (21 May 1908): 906.

28 "Art," *Saturday Night* 9, no.50 (31 October 1896): 9. "Mr. G.A. Reid has brought with him from Spain a number of very fine copies of Velazquez."

29 For a discussion of the French academic curriculum see Albert BOIME, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Phaidon, 1971).

30 Reid, *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.2, 272.

31 The date in the National Gallery of Canada registrar's files is 1918. Reid made slight alterations to the painting when he installed the mural in his Toronto home in 1918. The completion date in MILLER, *G.A. Reid*, 104, is 1916.

32 William A. SHERWOOD, "A National Spirit in Art," *Canadian Magazine* 3, no.6 (October 1894): 500.

33 REID, "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Magazine* 10, no.6 (April 1898): 504.

34 PEPALL, "The Murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings," 155.

35 See Ramsay COOK, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) and T.J. Jackson LEARS, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

36 SHORTT, S.E.D., "James Mavor: The Empirical Ideal," *The Search for an Ideal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 119-35.

37 Fern BAYER, "The 'Ontario Collection' and the Ontario Society of Artists Policy and Purchases, 1873-1914," *RACAR* 8, no.1 (1981): 42. The Toronto Guild of Civic Art Committee, a group of laymen were responsible for the selection of art for the "Ontario Collection" from 1900 to 1907.

38 Rosalind PEPALL, "Under the Spell of Morris: A Canadian Perspective," in *The Earthly Paradise: Art and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections*, ed. Katharine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr and Carole Silver (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Key Porter Books, 1993), 19-35.

39 George K. WEISSENBORN, "Gustav Hahn, Beloved Teacher and Art Nouveau Pioneer (1866-1962)," *German-Canadian Yearbook*, vol. 6 (Toronto: Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada, 1981), 238-40.

40 MCKAY, *A National Soul*, 39.

41 The visit to London followed Hahn's brief return to Germany, where his father had died suddenly while visiting family. Kathy Hooke, "Gustav Hahn in Europe." Unpublished paper, Hahn Family Archive, Peterborough, Ont.

42 Hahn Family Archives.

43 Kathy Hooke, interview with the author, 16 October 2003. Kathy Hooke is the wife of Gustav Hahn's grandson and the Hahn family archivist.

44 Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Exhibition Catalogue* (Toronto: Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 1906), 15.

45 WEISSENBORN, "Gustav Hahn, Beloved Teacher," 238. Hahn was made an Associate of the RCA in 1901.

46 Otto HAHN's writings on Canada include *Canada: meine Reise an den Nipissing (Ontario) und die Schweizercolonie* (Reutlingen: Carl Rupp, 1878); *Canada: ein Auswanderungs-Ziel für Deutsche* (Reutlingen: Eduard Schauwecker, 1880); *Canada: die Berichte der vier deutschen*

Delegirten über ihre Reise nach Canada im Herbst 1881/zusammengestellt und eingeleitet (Reutlingen: Eduard Schauwecker, 1882).

47 MILLER, *G.A. Reid*, 104.

48 See Reid, "Note on Mural Painting in Canada Prepared for the Information of the Council of the Royal Canadian Academy for Use at Its Meetings Called for the Consideration of the Work Now in Progress in England and France to Commemorate the Operation of the Canadian Forces in the War by Means of Paintings 1917." *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.2, 347.

49 REID, "Royal Canadian Academy of Arts: Memorial Regarding the Present Conditions and Needs of Canadian Art." This document was sent to the Governor General and signed by Reid on behalf of the Council of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 7 Jan. 1906. It was published in the *Canadian Architect and Builder* 20, no.6 (1907): 98, with the addition of this comment: "the Government did not see its way clear to carry out the plan as proposed and themselves appointed a permanent Commission of three."

50 For Reid's reaction to the decision, see p.6, *Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. Report for 1907-08*: "It should not be thought, however, that the appointment of the Advisory Council relieves the Academy of its responsibilities connected with the Public Art, or takes from it opportunities for exerting its influence on the patronage of Art by the Government; but it should be looked upon as the beginning of a more adequate encouragement and patronage of the Fine Arts in Canada."

51 Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Suzor-Coté, Ottawa, 22 November 1907, National Archives of Canada (132598); quoted in Laurier LACROIX, *Suzor-Coté: lumière et matière* (Québec: Musée du Québec, 2002), 144.

52 M.L.A.F. "Easel Picture To-day, Mural Vogue Coming: Gustav Hahn, R.C.A. of Gifted Family is Talented Contributor," *Toronto Daily Star*, 19 March 1913.

53 Gustav Hahn, "The Development of National Interest in Mural Work," unpublished talk, c.1913. Hahn Family Archives.

54 Reid, "Note on Mural Painting in Canada...," 347.

55 James MAVOR, *Notes on the Objects of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art and on the Exhibition of Prints of Mural Paintings with Condensed Catalogue* (Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison, 1898), 6.

56 See Sarah MOORE, "In Search of an American Iconography: Critical Reaction to the Murals at the Library of Congress," *Winterthur Portfolio* 25, no.4 (January 1990): 231-39.

57 J.A. RADFORD, "Canadian Art Schools, Artists and Art," *Canadian Magazine* 2 no.5 (March 1894): 462-66.

58 RADFORD, "Canadian Art and Its Critics," *Canadian Magazine* 24, no.3 (September 1907): 517.

59 J.L.R., "George Agnew Reid, an interview," *Acta Victoriana* 30, no.3 (1906-7): 125.

60 When the Statute of Westminster granted Canada legislative independence in 1931, the Great Seal became that of the King or Queen of Canada and is in the custody of the Governor-General.

61 The *Canadian Provinces Confederation Medal* depicted the four provinces that originally formed the Dominion of Canada, through the British North America Act of 1867: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The medal is discussed in the *Canadian Illustrated News* 1, no.6 (11 December 1869): 93.

62 Jean BLEWETT, "The Native Born" in *The Call of the Homeland*, ed. R.P. SCOTTT and Katharine T. WALLIS (London: Blackie & Sons, 1907), 96. See also R.G. MOYLES and Doug OWRAM, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 19: "It was this basic paradox...that faced British imperialists throughout the Age of Imperialism, and which they either rejected or strove hard to understand. And it manifested itself not only in the poetry but in the politics as well."

63 H.V. NELLES, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 280-82.

64 Frank LASCELLES, *Quebec Ancient and Modern: Containing Over 150 Illustrations and A Short History of the City Founded by Champlain* (Montreal: Cambridge Corp., 1909).

65 See Anthony PARKER, *Pageants: Their Presentation and Production* (London: Bodley Head, 1954).

66 "Mr. Lascelles in forecasting the pageant, said that not only were the incidents from early Canadian history full of picturesque possibility, but nowhere could there be found a setting to excel in beauty or historic interest the corner of the Plains of Abraham upon which the gigantic grand stand had been erected, at a point overlooking the St. Lawrence. The spectacle opened with the arrival of Cartier, three-quarter of a century before the coming of Champlain, and closed with Montcalm and Lévis, Wolfe and Murray, with their regiments, parading amid salutes from the guns of the warships in the bay." *Our King and Queen: A Pictorial Record of Their Times*, vol.1, ed. J.A. Hammerton (London: Educational Book Co. Ltd., 1929), 386.

67 Reid's painting, *The Arrival of Champlain at Quebec*, National Gallery of Canada, 1909, oil on burlap, 182.7 x 274.2 x 2.3 cm, is based on drawings such as *Fur Traders at Montreal*, C-11013A; *Fur Traders at Montreal*, C-11014A; *Arrival of Champlain at Quebec*, C-11015A; *Champlain*, C-11016; *Return of the Indians from Long Sault*, C-3137; *Jacques Cartier erects a Cross*, C-96999; and a triptych, *The Pageants at Quebec for the Tercentenary Celebration, 1908*, C-142814-6, at the National Archives of Canada.

68 *Catalogue of Department of Fine Arts, Canadian National Exhibition* (Toronto: Saturday Night Press, 1918); "Ave Canada. Study for Mural Decoration" is #184.

69 Hector CHARLESWORTH, "Toronto's New Art Gallery: Its First Exhibition Provided by the Royal Canadian Academy," *Saturday Night* 31, no.2 (20 April 1918): 3.

70 *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol. 2, 273.

71 See *List of Reproductions of Works of Art. A Selected List of Reproductions of Works of Art Suitable for Art Study and for the Decoration of Schools: Information Concerning the Purchase of Pictures, and Suggestions for the Decoration of Schools. Prepared by the Committee on Art Instruction Appointed by the Ontario Society of Artists at the Request of the Department of Education.* Educational Pamphlets no.5 (Toronto: The Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 1914).

72 Ontario Advisory Committee on War Memorials, "War Memorials: Circular of Suggested Proposals as to Their Treatment and Form," Toronto, April 1919.

73 REID, *Descriptive Notes of Mural Decorations. Designed and Painted by G.A. Reid, R.C.A., O.S.A., assisted by Lorna Claire, A.O.C.A.* (Toronto: Jarvis Collegiate Institute Auditorium, undated); L.G. MCKERRACHER, "Our Canadian Art Section: Jarvis Collegiate Murals," *Teachers' Bulletin* (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Bulletin) 2, no.2 (April 1931): 39-42.

74 The subjects are *Ericson Discovering North America, 1000 A.D.*; *Groups of Discovers from Eric the Red to Columbus*; *Groups of Discoverers from Cartier to Hudson*; *Cabot Erects a Cross in Nova Scotia, 1497*; *Cartier Erects a Cross at Gaspé, 1534*; *Founding of Hudson's Bay Company, 1668*; *The United Empire Loyalists Ascending the St. Lawrence, 1784*; *Mackenzie Discovers the Pacific, 1793*; *Patriotism*; *Sacrifice.*

75 Reid's murals are among many World War I memorials commissioned in the 1920s and 1930s by private citizens across the country and by the Canadian government. See Alan R. YOUNG, "'We Throw the Torch': Canadian Memorials of the Great War and the Mythology of Heroic Sacrifice," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 24, no.4 (1989-90): 5-28.

76 For a discussion of the boy scout movement and the cadet corps see Allen WARREN, "Popular Manliness: Baden-Powell, Scouting, and the Development of Manly Character," in *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, ed. J.A. Mangan and James Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 199-219.

LE CANADA RECEVANT L'HOMMAGE DE SES ENFANTS

Ave Canada de George Reid, et *Hail Dominion* de Gustav Hahn : Un projet de murales pour le hall d'honneur du Parlement du Canada

En avril 1904, le premier ministre du Canada, sir Wilfrid Laurier, recevait une lettre de la direction de l'Académie royale des arts du Canada. Cette lettre, rédigée par George Reid et signée par Reid, Franklin Brownell et William Brymner, proposait une série de peintures murales, intitulée *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Faithful Sons* (titre modifié plus tard en *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Children*) pour le hall d'honneur de l'édifice du centre de la Colline du Parlement à Ottawa. Reid expliquait qu'il allait réaliser les murales avec le concours de ses confrères artistes Brownell, Brymner, Frederick Challener, William Cruikshank, Edmond Dyonnet et Gustav Hahn. Le présent article étudie la proposition de Reid et la progression du projet jusqu'à son rejet final en 1917. Il étudie également les murales préparatoires exécutées par Reid et Hahn de leur propre chef : *Ave Canada* (1907-1918, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) et une version apparentée, *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters* (1904, London Museum) par Reid; et *Hail Dominion* (1906, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) par Hahn. Le présent texte explore aussi les raisons pour lesquelles Reid et Hahn ont choisi d'idéaliser le Canada en évoquant un sentiment d'appartenance familiale, et pourquoi le projet a échoué, malgré de sérieuses tentatives de convaincre le gouvernement du Canada et le grand public de la capacité d'un décor mural allégorique d'exprimer un esprit national.

Le prototype de l'*Ave Canada* de Reid était la fresque *Allégorie d'un Bon Gouvernement*, peinte par Ambrogio Lorenzetti, entre 1338 et 1340, dans la Salle des Neuf du Palazzo Pubblico de Sienne. Cependant, le concept et le mode d'exécution de Reid sont liés plus directement à d'autres sources : les procédés qu'il a appris aux académies Julian et Colarossi, en 1892; les murales de Puvis de Chavanne qu'il avait vues à Paris; l'art public des peintres américains à l'exposition colombienne mondiale de Chicago en 1893; et les portraits d'enfants royaux et de nains par Diego Vélasquez, que Reid avait copiés au cours d'un voyage en Espagne en 1896. Dans *Ave Canada*, l'accent mis sur la progéniture symbolique de la patrie faisait sens pour Reid, car les Canadiens se rappelleraient ses populaires

œuvres antérieures sur la vie de famille, particulièrement *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage* (1891).

En développant la forme et la composition de *Hail Dominion*, Hahn répondait au thème et aux éléments picturaux d'*Ave Canada* afin d'assurer un rapport harmonieux entre les œuvres. Toutefois, le traitement des figures et des aspects de la composition suggèrent une approche visuelle différente. Hahn est arrivé à Toronto en 1888 venant d'Allemagne, après avoir étudié la peinture, la décoration d'intérieur et les arts appliqués à la *Kunstgewerbeschule* de Stuttgart, à l'époque où le style Art Nouveau était florissant. Pour transformer les personnages allégoriques de ses murales antérieures en femmes plus contemporaines, Hahn s'est servi de sa femme et de deux de ses filles comme modèles. *Hail Dominion* était l'image idéale d'un Canada où les vertus féminines exprimaient des concepts communs de la vie privée et publique.

À l'époque où Hahn et Reid réalisaient leurs tableaux, les critiques d'art s'élevaient contre les influences européennes sur l'art canadien, et en particulier l'utilisation d'allégories classiques dans la décoration murale. Les tableaux d'Hahn et de Reid reflétaient un contenu symbolique qui avait déjà perdu sa viabilité esthétique et politique. Ils avaient tous deux ignoré des images qui auraient efficacement exprimé la souveraineté du Canada par la Confédération. Au lieu de cela, leurs images évoquaient les représentations symboliques bien connues de la reine Victoria et ses filles du Canada, et ne reflétaient plus le nouveau sentiment national du pays. De plus, les Canadiens avaient pris l'habitude de regarder des caricatures politiques qui exploitaient les tensions entre le Canada et ses provinces. Ces caricatures représentaient constamment le pays comme une famille décidément désorganisée, comme on le voit dans l'œuvre du caricaturiste et éditeur John William Bengough. La satire politique représentait souvent le Canada comme une mère maussade, inquiète, dépourvue, agressive ou d'une bonne humeur excessive, et reflétait plus justement la réalité politique canadienne que les images idéalisées de Reid et de Hahn qui donnaient à leur œuvre une certaine banalité.

Le rôle de Hahn comme promoteur de la peinture murale, en tant que directeur du département de design d'intérieur de l'Ontario School of Art, prend fin abruptement pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, alors qu'une vague de sentiments anti-allemands le prive de commandes. Après la guerre, Reid continue de faire la promotion de la peinture murale en tant que président de la Royal Canadian Academy et professeur au Ontario College of Art. Vingt-quatre ans après avoir écrit au premier ministre Laurier pour lui proposer une série de murales, Reid voit enfin les onze tableaux d'une version modifiée d'*Ave Canada* trouver place dans l'auditorium du Jarvis Collegiate Institute de Toronto entre 1928 et 1929. Neuf des tableaux représentent les premiers explorateurs du Canada et les événements connexes, et sont fondés sur les croquis d'un spectacle qu'il avait

vu des gradins érigés sur les Plaines d'Abraham lors des célébrations du tricentenaire de la ville de Québec, en 1908. Les deux plus grandes murales exaltent les idées d'héroïsme, de patriotisme et de don de soi associées à la Première Guerre mondiale. *Sacrifice*, avec son cénotaphe central, exalte la vertu du don de sa vie au service de la patrie et suggère ainsi l'hommage ultime rendu au Canada par ses enfants. *Patriotism* fait encore plus directement référence à la composition originale d'*Ave Canada*. La figure royale du Canada, qui était assise dans *Ave Canada*, est ici debout sur une estrade et se joint à la patrie pour vénérer les soldats tombés au champ d'honneur. Des cadets masculins portant les bannières des provinces remplacent les princesses qui représentaient les provinces dans *Ave Canada*. À Jarvis, la figure allégorique du Canada a été développée par Reid pour exprimer la jeunesse des futurs défenseurs de la patrie. Reid a enfin pu offrir ce qu'il avait depuis longtemps considéré comme le plus grand don de la peinture murale : une peinture qui suscite le patriotisme, inspire la vertu et enseigne l'histoire de la patrie à son peuple.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

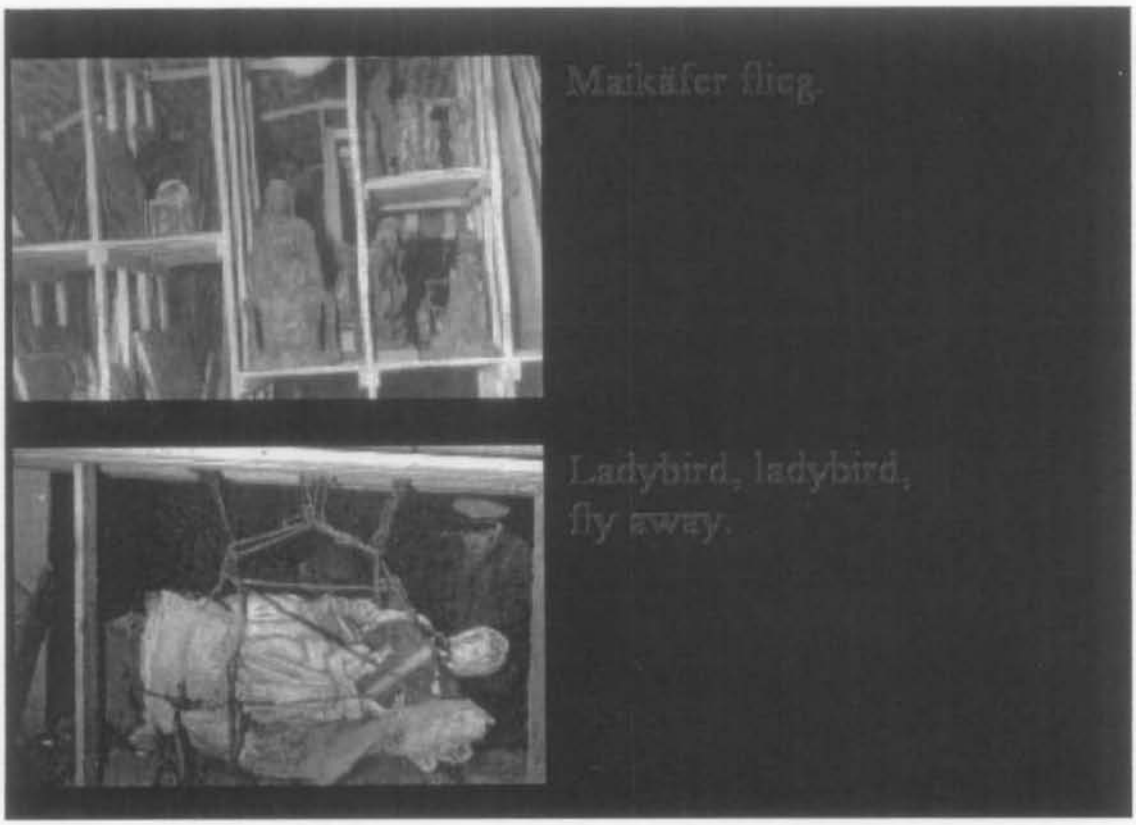


fig.1 Vera Frenkel, "Storage Spaces" (Salt Mines, Alt Aussee, Austria), in **Body Missing**, Website, 1994-ongoing. http://www.yorku.ca/bodymissing/history/salt_mines.html

"A BETTER PLACE"

Bureaucratic Poetics in Vera Frenkel's *Body Missing* and *The Institute*

> He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging.... He must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil. For the matter itself is only a deposit, a stratum, which yields only to the most meticulous examination what constitutes the real treasure hidden within the earth: the images, severed from all earlier associations, that stand – like precious fragments or torsos in a collector's gallery – in the prosaic rooms of our later understanding.[1]

As we click through the hotlinks of Vera Frenkel's websites, *Body Missing* (1994-ongoing) and *The Institute™: Or, What We Do for Love* (2003-ongoing), again and again we end up at places we have been before, like lost travellers walking in circles.[2] Of course, we belong to that group of world-weary travellers who are capable of self-recognition: we know all about recurrence as an eruption of the Freudian uncanny, as a revelation and misrepresentation of repressed traumatic psychic events. We also know that any self-recognition must be misrecognition. In the absence of an actual navigation of Frenkel's websites, however, all that someone writing about them can offer is a series of elliptical allusions to those circles within circles. Immediately upon entering *The Institute* we are told that this will be "an investigation in the shape of a fugue." Any bearings we might hope to take from the highly structured musical fugue are subsequently flummoxed as we are presented with alternative dictionary definitions: a "fugue" can mean a pathological mental state in which a "loss of awareness of one's identity is often coupled with flight from one's usual environment." In Frenkel's websites we are meant to be disoriented.

The *Body Missing* deals with a catastrophic disorientation and displacement: the *Kunstraub*, the Nazis' unprecedented theft of hundreds of thousands of works of art before and during the Second World War. The complexities of navigating the website, with its elaborate virtual layers of different spaces and disruptive hotlinks, shadow the elaborate and repetitive procedures and the reams of papers associated with the administration of the theft; this in turn evokes the Holocaust. The displacements and losses in both *Kunstraub* and the Holocaust involved a massive machinery of theft, forced labour and transportation, and attendant bureaucracies.

Within *Body Missing*, the page of two of the contributors to the project, Betty Spackman and Anja Westerfrölke, especially frames the issues that will play through *The Institute*. They begin with the image of a spade and a kind of anxiety dream of digging in a garden for a secretly buried gun and ammunition:

> But recently when I returned to dig it up, it wasn't there. I tried again, a little further to the left, but I still couldn't find it. Then it occurred to me that I had been watched. Someone had seen me! I became very nervous. I tried again, this time further back and to the right. It was not there either. Perhaps I don't have the right place, I thought. Perhaps the garden has changed so much I don't recognize the exact location. No, I'm sure I remember. It was right there. I must keep digging.[3]

This passage pays homage to one of the iconic victims of the Nazi regime, Walter Benjamin, who called for a constant and vigilant excavation of remembrance that would take the form of a "fruitless searching," which he recognized was as important as "succeeding." Benjamin enjoined us to take up our spade in "ever-new places" and beyond that, to "delve ever-deeper" in old familiar places. In *The Institute* Frenkel turns the frantic virtual digging in *Body Missing* away from the service of a traumatically misremembered past to the service of an expediently overlooked present.

The *Body Missing* website is collaborative, with contributions from a number of artists and writers. As viewers of the website, we too become collaborators in the project, "regulars" of a fictional "Transit Bar," assuming fluid and possibly shady identities. Frenkel's *Transit Bar* began as the installation at the *documenta IX* exhibition in Kassel, Germany, in 1992, and was subsequently installed at the Power Plant in Toronto and at the National Gallery of Canada. In its various venues, we – the spectator – entered and had a drink in what seemed to be a real bar, with a bartender (often Frenkel herself), and a piano player. In an ordinary bar we expect to see a sports TV; in the *Transit Bar*, we see videos of various people's accounts of displacement. Also available are newspapers from the various cities where the video was presented (Kassel, Halifax, Toronto, Ottawa and Stockholm). Alongside there is a *Transit Bar* tabloid, which includes accounts and memories, ranging from the experience of immigration to Canada to deportation to Auschwitz. Gradually, we realize that we are both in the museum and in a bar somewhere during the Second World War, reminiscent of the movie version of *Casablanca*, where visas, identities, and stolen valuables are sought-after, dangerous commodities. In the bar, we join the representations of real and fictive displaced people, artists, writers, spies and black marketers, occupying a time and space in which our participation and knowledge could influence (and, more worryingly, may already have influenced) the course of events; and "collaborator" has an anxiously double meaning. A quotation from the policy of Jörg Haider's Austrian Freedom party in Spackman and

Westerfrölke's site is a jolting reminder that Nazi cultural policy shades into the contemporary fashion for "retro," nation-based cultures:

> Contrary to how it is generally understood, the community of people is not a given, but must rather be produced. "Blood ties" must first be culturally acquired, before they can become organic, natural bonds. The community must therefore be realized primarily on a level of culture, as a cultural community. Traditional nationality, which can only exist in traditional national customs, turns the sideline of "culture" into an essential "location and mission" of the politics of community.[4]

Nation-based culture leads us out of *Body Missing* into its blandly uncanny double: the Canadian arts "institute," which houses elderly, or at least superannuated, artists.

To move from *Body Missing* to *The Institute* may seem bathetic, but there are strange mutual inflections as the epic bureaucracies of cultural Nazism wash against their contemporary, atrophied, weakly volitional form in Canadian nationalized arts administration. State bureaucracy is of course still crucial to our compromised western democracies, seemingly at the service of a number of vaguely dissimulated ideological positions all of which camouflage their respective insincerities. The only firm reference is a vanishing point, not on the horizon of ethical possibilities, but on the "bottom line." In Frenkel's reverse apotheosis, Nazi bureaucratic excess is punished by being resituated in humiliatingly reduced circumstances.

In *Body Missing* the Linz Führermuseum inevitably encompasses the other buildings and spaces, real and imagined, past and present, nested within the heterotopic website. These spaces include the "Transit Bar," the Linz Offenes Kulturhaus (housed in a former Wehrmacht prison), the dismantled and buried Reichschancellery, Hitler's bunker, the secret tunnels and hiding places, the salt mines at Alt Aussee, the planned but unbuilt Linz *Führermuseum*, and, implicitly, the concentration camp. In *The Institute* Frenkel again addresses the museum and social policy, broadly proposing that no corporate or government institution or policy statement or spending cut (or museum or website) can be innocent. There is a kind of bureaucratic original sin.

Frenkel's websites might be thought to be in the tradition of the magnificently and enigmatically illustrated Renaissance allegory, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.[5] It is an account of a dreamer's journey punctuated by strange encounters and mythic incidents in elaborately symbolic buildings and gardens, where monuments, statues, ruins, riddles and hieroglyphs all require endless deciphering.[6] The layered architectural conceits of allegory may be plotted from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* through utopian eighteenth and nineteenth-century visions of an ideal geometrical city, embodying a perfected social order such as Charles Fourier's harmonious phalansteries,[7] through Baron Hausmann's plans

for the massive reconfiguration of Paris, to Hitler's architect Albert Speer's proposals for Berlin and the Linz *Führermuseum*. Those imagined architectures lead to the architectural warrens of *Body Missing* and *The Institute*. That "hypnerotomachia" means "the struggle for love in a dream"[8] and *The Institute* is subtitled "or what we do for love" enhance the affinity of the Renaissance allegory to Frenkel's websites.

Body Missing and *The Institute* include diagrams and layouts of imagined spaces and ambiguous architectural photographs. The websites tap into the dream of non-Euclidean spaces that have underpinned the architectural visions of modernism from the constructivist romance of the "fourth dimension" through Archigram's dystopian inversions. If the "heterotopia," as a site standing for all other sites, embodies a quest for some lost original monument or architecture such as the Ark, the Tower of Babel, or Solomon's Temple, then *Body Missing* stands for the Linz *Führermuseum* whose "storage spaces" are embedded within the website and ghosted by famous images of Buchenwald (fig.1). In *The Institute*, the bitterly ironic nesting of the concentration camp and the museum mutates into the hospital as arts institute and as nursing home. As allegories, both websites rely on the scaffoldings of imagined governmental and bureaucratic operations and structures.

Hannah Arendt proposed the onion as a metaphor for the spatial configuration of the social order of the totalitarian state. Successive layers of operational bureaucracy communicate information, which while pretending to declare the aims of the system, actually distort and refract both the hollowness and the evil of the dictator at its core.[9] Kafka's *Trial* offers a comparable conception of state bureaucracy, which Slavoj Zizek theorized as the deployment of an "immense machinery of totally useless, superfluous knowledge, running blindly and provoking [in us] an unbearable feeling of irrational guilt" for acts we know we did not commit.[10] Bureaucracy, then, is both Freudian Superego as punishing father and Lacanian unconscious as a reservoir of fragments of cruel and capricious laws, prohibitions, and injunctions, housing the immoral god, just as Arendt's onion houses the dictator.[11] Zizek points out that, as all-knowing agency, bureaucracy may be materialized as paranoia, finding plots in the surrounding symbolic network of meanings.[12]

Of course, any work of fiction is itself aptly allegorized by such a system, as Kafka demonstrates. There is a tradition of setting out the novel itself as a reflexive feat of over-interpretation; and nowhere, with more historical influence, than in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and in the novels (now rarely read) of the German Romantic Jean-Paul Richter. These texts established a model of digressive writing in ironical bad faith, full of miscues and feints. Frenkel situates herself as a narrator in that tradition. With particular relevance to the matter of administration, the narrator of Richter's *Titan* is a court official at the

centre of a ring of spies; he must constantly decode the volumes of material sent to him and then make ciphers of his own material. This endless encoding and decoding mocks the novelist's endeavour: the master-spy narrator must try to spin a web of mystery and a sequential narrative at the same time. Richter's narrator laments that just writing and deciphering reports would occupy all his time and that the resulting volume would be so large that it could not be read by men nor pulled by horses. This enterprise, in which the author must write and document that writing simultaneously, presents a model of the bureaucratic report as a self-reflexive work of art. At the core of Richter's novel is the facetious recognition that his text as a 'history' is a paradox: it cannot betray real persons, it cannot accurately portray false ones and, in fact, can depict no one at all. The spymaster, the bureaucrat and the novelist mirror and undo one another. In the tradition of this predicament, Frenkel's work has always recognized "plot" as both narrative and conspiracy. In fact, we learn that one inhabitant of *The Institute* is working on a libretto for an opera of Kafka's *The Trial*.[13]

The categories and accumulations of loss within *Body Missing* take the form of lists, which like all lists, are potentially incantory and possibly expiatory. Frenkel's "master list," the "list of lists," intends to be a set that includes all other sets but which is, therefore, paradoxically, incomplete. It opens out precisely into what it cannot contain: "what was collected, what was stolen...what was hidden, what can only be shown privately, what is heirless, what is still in dispute in the courts, what was unsuccessfully claimed, what is still missing...." This recalls Bertrand Russell's mathematical-logical paradox: could the "set of all sets which are not members of themselves" be a member of itself? If not, the set of all sets is orphaned; the metacategory is itself at a loss. Of course, this is a bureaucratic as well as mathematical philosophical problem. In 1966, the quintessentially Canadian comedian Max Ferguson reported that there was a Department of Forms and Procedures in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in which one "little guy" spent his time designing an order form for ordering forms.[14]

As a bridge between *Body Missing* and *The Institute*, it is useful to consider the theorized features of a bureaucracy, within and without its fictional allegorization. There is, for a start, the figure of the ideal, dehumanized, purely objective bureaucrat, with his "little tools of knowledge" made up of "images, graphs, lists, questionnaires, dossiers, tables and reports,"[15] on whom the authority of the institution depends. In industries associated with the mass production of standardized units, such objective, systematic, protocols are enmeshed with the ethos of modernism as *Taylorism*.[16] The bureaucratic and Taylorized features of modernism have of course been implicated in the functioning of National Socialism. Zbigniew Libera's scathing "LEGO" concentration camp was constructed entirely from *existing* LEGO kits intended for the construction of

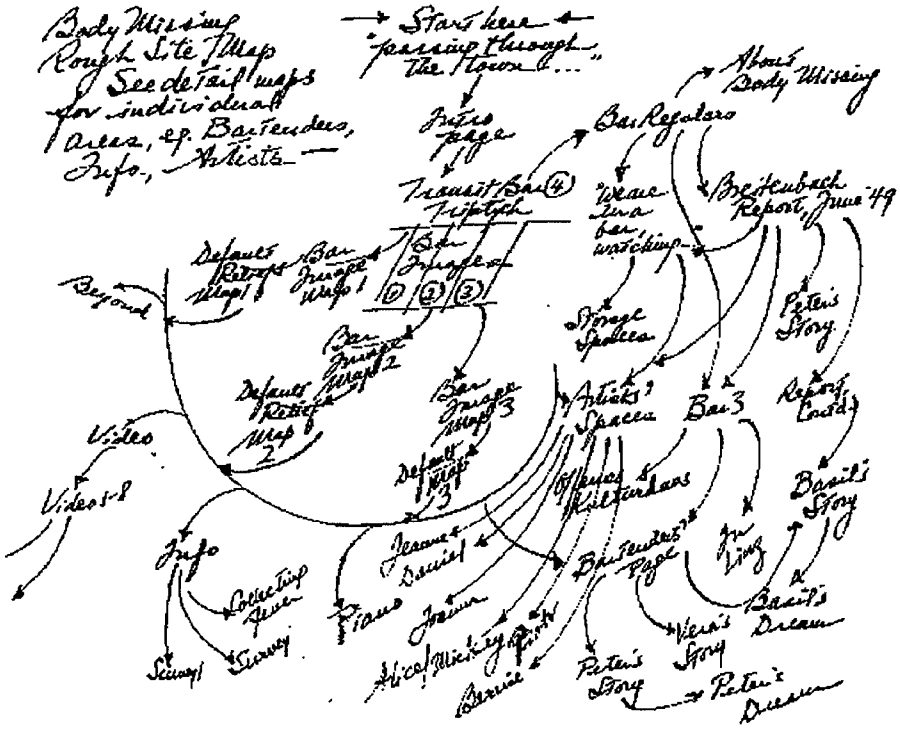


fig.2 Vera Frenkel, "Site Map," in **Body Missing**, Website, 1994-ongoing. http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing/barspace/site_map.html

a range of paracosms, such as the imagined worlds of pirates, knights, Star Wars, Harry Potter and so on, and brings together these associations of modernist mass production and mass destruction.[17]

Shortly after the Second World War, the Austrian novelist Heimito von Doderer wrote a lyrical novel about a bureaucrat, *Die erleuchteten Fenster* (1951), in which it is proposed that a bureaucratic protocol with its supposedly "independent and autonomous existence," is "just like a work of art."[18] Certain conceptual art has always capitalized on the rhetoric of impersonal procedure to counter the persistence of the idea of subjective creativity and genius.[19] Its anti-bravado techniques rely on the deployment of seemingly arbitrary systems, statistics, and the lexemes and number sets associated with filing. Such "bureaucratic poetics," also operate in Frenkel's websites. Consider the site map of *Body Missing* (fig.2): Frenkel's handwriting evokes the once standard, now archaic, fine clerical copperplate handwriting, which supported the rhetoric of neutral

fact, tabulation, precision, and authority.[20] Its legibility personified the bureaucratic suppression of character, where the only virtuosity lay in the degree of one's neutral compliance to the standard model. As narrator of *Body Missing* and *The Institute*, Frenkel also borrows elements of the functions of the bureaucrat as a tabulator whose authority is enhanced by the objective, quasi scientific, "persona of the observer."[21] Frenkel too deploys the rhetoric of fact for she wryly assures us in *Body Missing* that everything she tells us is "true." *Body Missing* is littered with virtual documents: Hitler's personal will, archival photographs, floor plans, and extracts from typewritten official military reports are interspersed amongst artists' narratives and images, raising the question as to what might constitute the factual, authoritative, reliable version of things.

Von Doderer's fictional bureaucrat Julius Zihal hilariously conducts his private life according to the procedures and language of the official "Handbook of Administrative Practices" of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, assigning categories and numbers to non-quantifiable criteria. Indeed, the handbook is Zihal's lifeblood. He finds himself reinvigorated by the discovery that a subsection of the regulations is exactly applicable to his case: "He felt himself summarized and substantiated in the most exacting way."[22] Von Doderer lards his novel with subsections taken directly from the handbook, and he plays this dense and achingly opaque prose against his own poetic, simile-filled, narration. It becomes clear that the bureaucrats who wrote the handbook envisioned a text that could anticipate and regulate every conceivable contingency that might ever arise. These official excerpts reveal the lurking sublimity of their ultimate task: the imagining of a bureaucratic code that would exist in a one-to-one relationship with all potential events in the world and history. This undertaking recalls the predicament of the narrator of Jean-Paul Richter's *Titan*, snarled in his comprehensive reports. Frenkel mitigates this writing of narrative as bureaucratic report. As a storyteller, she has always recognized the importance of narrative threads that cannot be tied up but that simply fray. To return to Walter Benjamin's terms, evoked in the "Garden" section of *Body Missing*, "remembrance must not proceed in the manner of a narrative or still less that of a report," but "in the strictest epic and rhapsodic manner," it must proceed episodically; or to use Benjamin's metaphor, digging here and there, again and again.[23] It is as allusive decontextualized fragments that bureaucratic reports assume their poetic strangeness.

Frenkel's *Body Missing* is also a parodic repository of bureaucratic procedure and prose conceived as an all-permeating, randomly erupting, gratuitous mechanism of information-gathering, and as paranoid spectre. We learn, for example, that each stolen work of art transported by the Nazis had a numeric code consisting of an acquisition number, inventory number, insurance number, source of sale number, and numbers representing country, region, district, city, public

museum and private collection. These numbers could tell us everything about the history of a work – except that the key to the codes has been lost and the numbers now have no function. This neatly turns the thoroughness of the filing system inside out and strangely anticipates another icon of systems technology, the bar code.[24]

"Statistics" as carried out by state bureaucracies was a German invention allied to Enlightenment communitarian concerns and making government operations quantifiable, legible, and accountable.[25] One inadvertent effect of statistics, however, is a tendency to interpret anomaly as abnormality, and individuality as malfunction. Statistics lend themselves to use as a "moral" tool and instrument of persecution. That is, the bureaucracy of record keeping has a dangerously predictive or prescriptive, as well as a recording function. We record what we are looking for and information may be graphed to project inevitability.[26] Through its gathering of censuses and statistics, the Nazi bureaucracy was able to project its own paranoiacally projected double, the "worldwide Jewish conspiracy" hidden behind different national identities.[27]

Spackman and Westerfrölke's pages in *Body Missing* contain a telling meditation on the banality of the bureaucratic "phraseology of death" preserved in the "orders, statistics, timetables...daily logs, letters, reports of compliance etc." of the administration of the Holocaust.[28] The apparatuses of murder and death are concealed within a normalizing bureaucratic jargon: "accumulated totals, appeasement, being emigrated, child deportation, cleansing, disinfection, disinfestations, GV (meaning gassing vehicle), J-A actions, J-shipments, Jew clearance, pacification, processing, round-ups, special accommodation, special passenger rail traffic, ST (meaning special treatment)...."[29]

This lead us to Frenkel's recent project, *The Institute*, as the apotheosis of Canada's nationalized vision of the arts. At the same time it represents the reduction of the academy into a euphemized and bureaucratized "care facility" through the process of governmental attrition. This vision is in keeping with the Canadian tradition of an empowered civil service, in which any conspicuously wielded political power must be displaced into administration. In his defining essay on Canadian identity, *Lament for a Nation*, George Grant argued that the civil service was an "essential instrument by which nationhood is preserved."[30] In contradistinction to the United States, Canada's own historical formation owed a great deal to pragmatic accommodation rather than to nationalistic ideals.[31] As a kind of remediation for this unromantic administrative history, in 1957 the Canada Council was established to provide state funding of the arts; in the words of Brooke Claxton, the first Director of the Canada Council, it was directed toward promoting the national "unity of Canada."[32] Interestingly, given Frenkel's conflation of hospitals and cultural policy, Brooke Claxton had also been a federal minister of Health and Welfare.

One probable prototype for *The Institute* is the Banff Centre for the Arts, where Frenkel has been an artist-in-residence and where she worked on *The Institute*. There is logic to *The Institute* being conceived as a variant virtual version of the Banff Centre for the Arts. Banff's geographic location embodies the nationalist mythology of Canada's unification by the railways. Its very name resonates with the Scottish origins of senior officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway and with a sentimental imperial history of Canada.[33] A favourite of picture postcards, set against the backdrop of foothills and wilderness, Banff was originally a tourist destination because of its hot springs; now it is, appropriately for Frenkel's purposes, an art centre with historical associations with hostel and hospital. The Banff Centre equally embodies matters of contemporary Canadianism. It contains, as well as its Centre for the Arts, a Banff Centre for Management, which has hosted conferences dealing with issues that recur in discussions of Canadian identity – water policy, forest and national parks management, and, crucially, nationalized medical care. As a federally sponsored chain of "centres," Frenkel's *Institute* is set out as a typically Canadian spatial order, recapitulating the dispersed regionalist model of Canadian nationalism.

Fictively located in a former hospital, *The Institute* represents, amongst other things, the contemporary anodyne institutionalization of the nationally (un)funded artist. Here, the *Transit Bar* artists' role as covert operatives in *Body Missing* is neutralized. The e-mail greeting card section of *The Institute* offers a "wish you were here" card that features a generic scenic field, which may equally imply greener pastures or being put out to pasture. Frenkel also inverts the avant-garde traditions of artists' collectives, especially in a Canadian context: *The Institute* is the collapse of the collective communitarian ideals of many artist-run centres supported by government grants in the heyday of the 1970s.[34] The Canadian artists' collective General Idea had operated, in part, as a parody of the roles available to the Canadian artist. In his essay, "The Humiliation of the Bureaucrat," AA Bronson wryly described General Idea's strategy to embody the "reticent" collective Canadian consciousness in order to fulfill the "national destiny" (shades of Brooke Claxton). This would generate "a Canadian story" with "elaborately Canadian characters dreaming the Canadian dream of one community, that is, a network of communities, sea to sea," calling upon the national attributes of "bureaucratic tendency" and "protestant work ethic" in order to structure "artist-run" galleries, video, and magazines. That bureaucratic mustering, Bronson writes, "allowed us to allow ourselves to see ourselves as an art scene. And we did."[35] Frenkel carries this 1970s' "network of communities" into its euphemized "golden years."

The Institute also epitomizes the urban transformation cycle in which disused industrial warehouse spaces become artists' lofts, then galleries, then lofts and condominiums that the artists cannot afford. Art is a gentrifying dung beetle.

Hamilton, Ontario, the supposed site of *The Institute*, is a steel town trying to weather the shift from heavy manufacture to the post-Fordist economy, and attempting to enhance its "profile" as an "arts destination." As elsewhere, but on a minor scale, its arts institutions function as a kind of front, laundering real and traumatic economic and social disruption.[36]

If Frenkel's *Institute* existed, what administrative form would it take and to what stresses would it be prone? We might return to the ideal communities envisioned in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Fourier's phalansteries, in which each individual finds fulfillment through work and sexual congress. In *The Institute* these should be refracted, in the Canadian manner, through the less idealistic lens of management studies. *The Institute* displays the complexities and hybridization of all professional bureaucracies, tapping into what we might think of as a managerial romance: the notion of the centralized, cross-fertilizing, on-site, on tap, ferment of intellectuals in one space.[37] It fits the category of "combination bureaucracy/adhocracy" in which the professional has "the best of both worlds;" she is attached to an organization yet free to function in her own way, and potentially evades all the "pressures and politics" that peer interaction entails. But, of course, as everyone in any institution knows, peer interaction is necessary since we know that some peer, somewhere, is up to something with negative implications for us, for our funding, for our status. In *The Institute*, the horrifying implications of gossip, spying and concealment that wove through *Body Missing* become the petty insider tattle-tale of artists and intellectuals.

The problem of an adhocracy, according to the Canadian management guru Henry Mintzberg, is that because it avoids standardized categories and standardized outcomes, it is not bureaucratically efficient; it is "not good at doing ordinary things."[38] Further, Mintzberg's observation (fig.3) that all bureaucratic institutions are liable to being pulled apart and contrarily that all fluid adhocracies tend to become rigid bureaucracies, is borne out by the passage from *The Transit Bar* to *The Institute*.[39]

In a fictitious 1997, in the wake of the dismantling of both the public health system and arts funding in Canada, Frenkel has imagined the federal government passing a bill to transform hospitals into *The Institute*, a corporate chain housing "mature" artists. The hospital reference raises the ambiguous status of the artist, who has been put – as the euphemism goes – into a "home" of some kind. Rhetoric associated with hygiene and health has underpinned the imagining of utopian communities such as Hausmann's Paris, Lever's Port Sunlight and, with particular relevance to *The Institute*, William Bullock's "Hygeia," a planned retirement community in Kentucky. Apropos of this analogy to planned utopias, the free love envisioned in Fourier's phalansteries is revoked in *The Institute* by Frenkel's reminder that sex, euphemized as the exchange of bodily fluids, is to

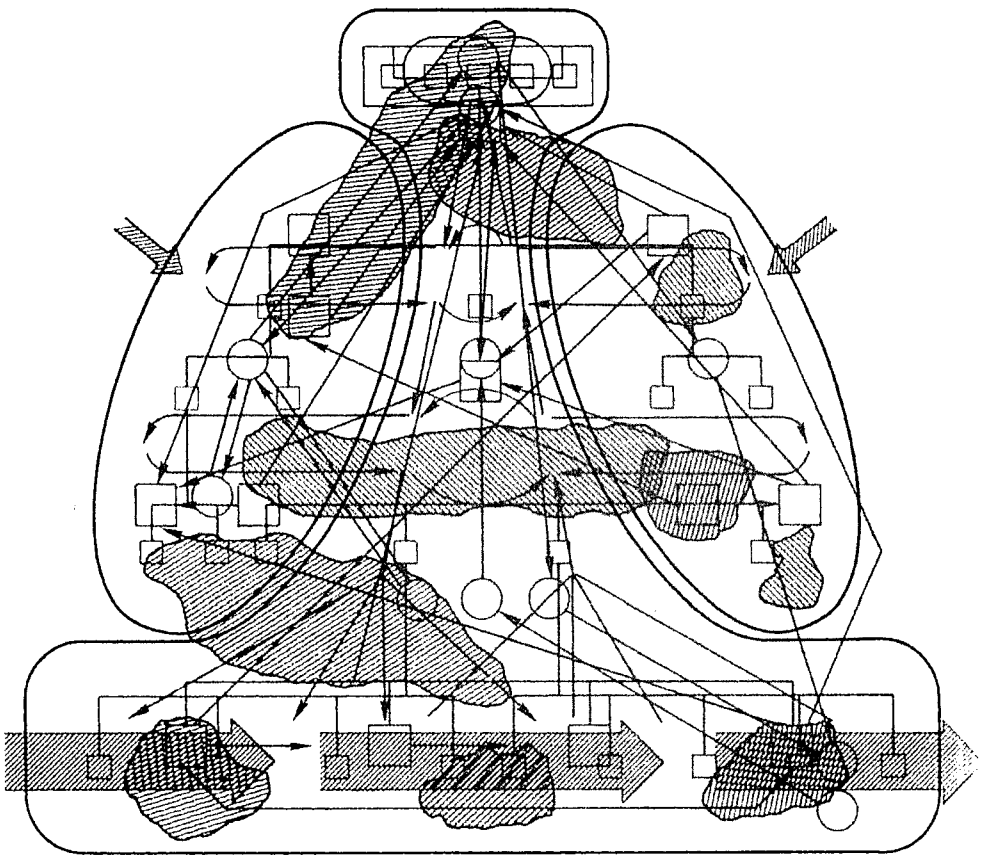


Figure 3-13. *A Combined Overlay: The Functioning of the Organization*

fig.3 Henry Mintzberg, "A Combined Overlay: The Functioning of the Organization," in **The Structuring of Organizations: A synthesis of the Research** (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1979).

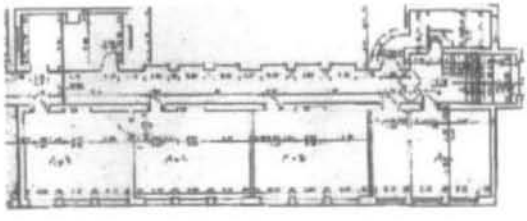
be monitored and administered. The chorus of Institute Bureaucrats chants: "Everyone knows that artists/ like children or madmen/ Are powerless or nuts/ Or both."[40] Frenkel represents the Liberal politician Sheila Copps, who was the Member of Parliament for Hamilton East for several decades, as the fictional Minister of Health and Culture. Copps praises this infantilizing of artists: "Mindful of the need of hard-working artists for wise attention to health matters, and of their selfless tendency, sometimes, to neglect their own well-being when immersed in a new project, *The Institute* has developed a unique Training Facility for its employees and as a result can guarantee a superior staff of care-givers." The subheading of a 1966 article on the CBC bureaucracy in the Canadian news magazine, *Maclean's*, was: "These are Creative People. They bear watching. These are CBC Administrative Personnel. They watch Creative People."[41]

This mad, infantilised, institutionalized spectre of the artist takes us back to the untenable management models of creative professional bureaucracies. It also takes us again, with a brutal bathos, from the contemporary Canadian disuse and misuse of hospitals to the Nazi's heinous abuses of hospitals.[42] Frenkel's attentive virtual planning of *The Institute* reminds us of the maps and architectural plans that permeate the *Body Missing*. Just as the artist Melvin Charney has overlaid the design and layout of Auschwitz onto the rational modular grid of various historical envisionings of the utopian hygienic community, Frenkel has overlaid the bureaucratic structure onto all these architectural ghost towns and schematic diagrams of management studies. (figs.4 and 5).[43]

Theories of the postmodern have tended to examine modernity's "world of organizational bureaucracy," of mass production and of standardization from which any social referent has been deleted. In this model of the modern, bureaucracy functions as an unhinged apparatus, or it substitutes for the dream that the abstract ideals of a state could take an administrative form.[44] Frenkel's institutionalized artists, presented within *The Institute* as interactive "personae," are the epitome of the decontextualized, decentred subject inhabiting a virtual, substituted environment. These personae also parody the collectivity of an avant-garde. They are marginal, not because they are thought to be radical, but because they are ever so slightly out of date, as their poignantly predictable achievements (in Canadian terms) suggest: "Actor, 55, female. Stratford, Shaw, CBC experience. ACTRA member," or " Governor General's Awards winner. Planning autobiography," or, "Landscape photographer, 66, male. Large format," and "Painter, 67, female. Student of Borduas."

The Institute is staffed by equally stale-dated cultural bureaucrats who have been left behind by the downsizing of federal government culture agencies such as the Canada Council and the CBC. These *Institute* bureaucrats have

The Artists' Spaces



The Loading Dock / The Ground Floor Studio / The Kitchen / The Garage
The Garden / The Metal Shop / The Computer Centre / Martin's Office
The Great Hall / The Upstairs Landing

fig.4 Vera Frenkel, "Artists' Studios, Plan of Linz Offenes Kulturhaus," in **Body Missing**, Website, 1994–ongoing. http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing/artists/artists_ind.html

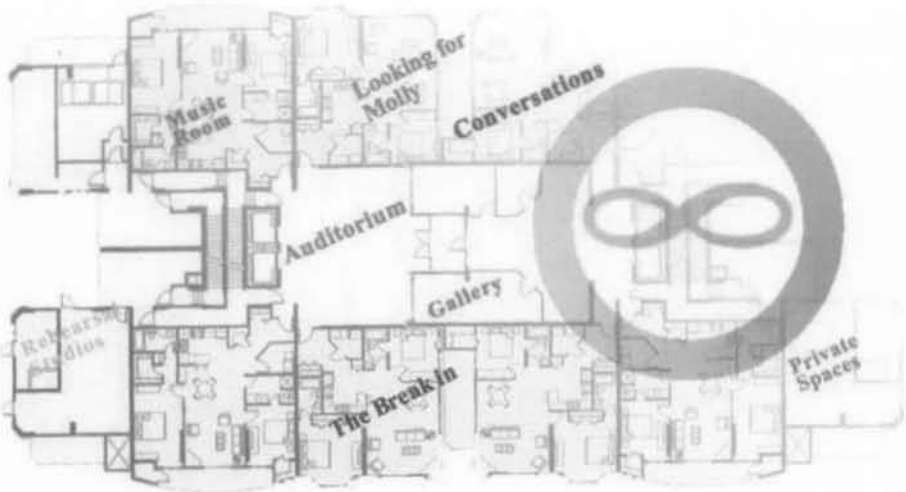


fig.5 Vera Frenkel, "Site Map," in **The Institute™: Or, What We Do for Love,** Website, 2003-ongoing. http://www.yorku.ca/theinst/site_map/map4.html

displayed exemplary post-Fordist flexibility and a zeal for reinventing themselves; they have been "retrained" in order to play a part in the brave new showcase world of *The Institute*. In Frenkel's preliminary radio play, we gather that the residents of *The Institute* are already anxious that *The Institute*, like the hospital it replaced, will be closed down by funding cuts. The chorus of administrators reveals bureaucratic method to be effectively functionless, except as a mode of avoidance and deferral: "We manage.... We manage...this branch/Of a country-wide chain.... In the course of which we..../Make no decisions/Escape all responsibility/Invent valid objections?/.... To any proposed solution/We have no power/Which gives us/.... Endless Authority."[45] This also reminds us that theorized bureaucracy exists outside of the constraints of ordinary time, and imposes a grid of simultaneity onto different times;[46] equally, the theorized heterotopia, like theorized language, exists as a place of perpetual deferral.[47]

The Institute website also is a masterpiece of cheesy corporate design, embodying both the governmental longing to be a "real" corporation (i.e. a multinational capitalist), with the status and power that go beyond national boundaries. The website design also invokes the history of Canadian cultural

aspirations and policies. Among the many lovingly observed details is *The Institute*'s logo (fig.6), which recalls the "dynamic" slant of the Banff Centre logo (fig.7); this in turn owes something to Canada's CN (Canadian National Railways) logo, which was once praised by Marshall McLuhan as a Canadian "icon."

A statist bureaucracy is an odd economy in which it is difficult to evaluate the cost-benefit ratios and it is therefore necessary to imagine that if something is administered, it must have value in itself. This problem is compounded in the case of the administration of art, a commodity whose value is pegged to the prestige of having no intrinsic use-value. In the case of the works confiscated by the Nazis that are Frenkel's subject in *Body Missing*, valuation is vexed by the surrounding illicit history. Their having been stolen, having been lost and having been intended for Hitler's collection, all constitute paradoxical "value-added" factors that put them outside of the realm of ordinary market value. In the case of *The Institute*, problems of valuation are attached to matters of national health care and national culture. At stake in *The Institute* is the prestige of Canada's national health care system, which is enshrined in identity debates as the thing that differentiates us from Americans. As a tool of national identity, national health care is a metaphor for Canadian culture.

To some extent, Frenkel approaches *The Institute* through the problem of administering it. In *Body Missing* she recognized the massive labour of the *Kunstraub*; its sublimely bureaucratic administration, like the ignominious military operations it subtended, paradoxically came to nothing – there is no Hitler museum. A website is a suitable locus for works that deal with bureaucratic method: the apparently endless possibilities for navigational clicking allow us to imagine the indefinite as infinite. We enter a bureaucratic nightmare in which we might find that at the end, nothing could be done. The papers could not be processed in time, there were no applicable subsections or protocols, the processes could not be stopped, everything was out of our hands, or it was the responsibility of another department, and we have ended up in the same place, with nothing and with less than nothing, to show for it.

On the implications of corporate websites, and their applicability to Frenkel's work, we could consider the following passage on the website of the international accounting and management firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers:

> Aided and abetted by powerful advances in communications technology and international financing, many corporations are growing into transnational giants with far-ranging influence on national and international economies. Much less analyzed is the fact that *critics*, in the form of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), are also globalizing and *using the same communications technology* to organize and coordinate their activities. The purpose of these NGOs is to call attention to corporate behaviour in the most remote corners of the world.[49]

fig.6 Vera Frenkel, "Logo for The National Institute for the Arts," in **The Institute™: Or, What We Do for Love,** Website, 2003-ongoing. http://www.yorku.ca/theinst/level_one/index_l1.html

fig.7 Logo for The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada. http://www.banffcentre.ca/zberg

The perception that "corporations have grown too powerful," it goes on to say, is exacerbated by "recent trends *in government downsizing*, privatization, and self-regulation." The NGO, therefore, takes up technological tools to demand "greater transparency and disclosure." Frenkel's *Transit Bar* regulars and *The Institute* could be taken as types of NGOs; though the ironies of Price Waterhouse pitching the services of NGOs – surely a sign of their tendency to become corporation-like – are not lost on her.[50]

The artist's resistance must involve recognition of the rhetoric of persuasion used by government and other corporations; hence Frenkel's language and design parodies corporate euphemisms and clichés. The subtitle of *The Institute*, "or what we do for love," directs our attention not only to the bureaucratic administration of sexual encounters in *The Institute*, but more generally to the pious notion that government institutions exist benevolently for our own good. In Canada, at least, this rhetoric masks the privations caused by slashed health and welfare funding. In *One-Dimensional Man*, Herbert Marcuse analyzed the linguistic practices of the media and government, and the "managerial mode of thought" that suppresses any real attention to history or to the "factors behind the facts." The "functionalized" simplified terminology used by media and government resists any subtlety, analysis, qualification or negation of what it pronounces.[51] This manipulated language becomes a blunt instrument of political control. Frenkel was partly inspired by the Ontario government restructuring of hospitals, as described in the "Health Services Restructuring Commission Summary Report on Hospital Restructuring" brochure, from the heyday of late 1990s government cuts. In the report, the use of the word "better," for example "better hospitals," "better healthcare," and "restructuring" to describe hospital closings, embodies just such "abridgement of meaning."[52] Cuts must be described as "change," and change must in turn described as being neither "bad," nor "good," but, "*better*." (fig.8)

Body Missing offers us the possibility of being virtual resistance workers, envisioning something actual as a consequence of our contact with the website. Similarly, in *The Institute*, we are meant to be doing something: but what? One of the contributors to *The Transit Bar* and *Body Missing*, was the Toronto psychoanalyst Jeanne Randolph, who has written on the operations of art in and on technology. In her 1986 essay, "Ambiguity and the Technical Object,"[53] Randolph discussed various psychoanalytic accounts of artists' engagement with technology. She focuses on two foundational essays by Victor Tausk and Hans Sachs published in 1933, coincidentally the year of Hitler's rise to power. Within this psychoanalytic narrative, the artist cannot merely situate technology as an alienated external danger because that attitude leads to helpless rage. Nor can the artist simply capitulate to the self-interested "usefulness" or "redemptive gadget" pitch made by manufacturers of technology. So how, Randolph asks, is

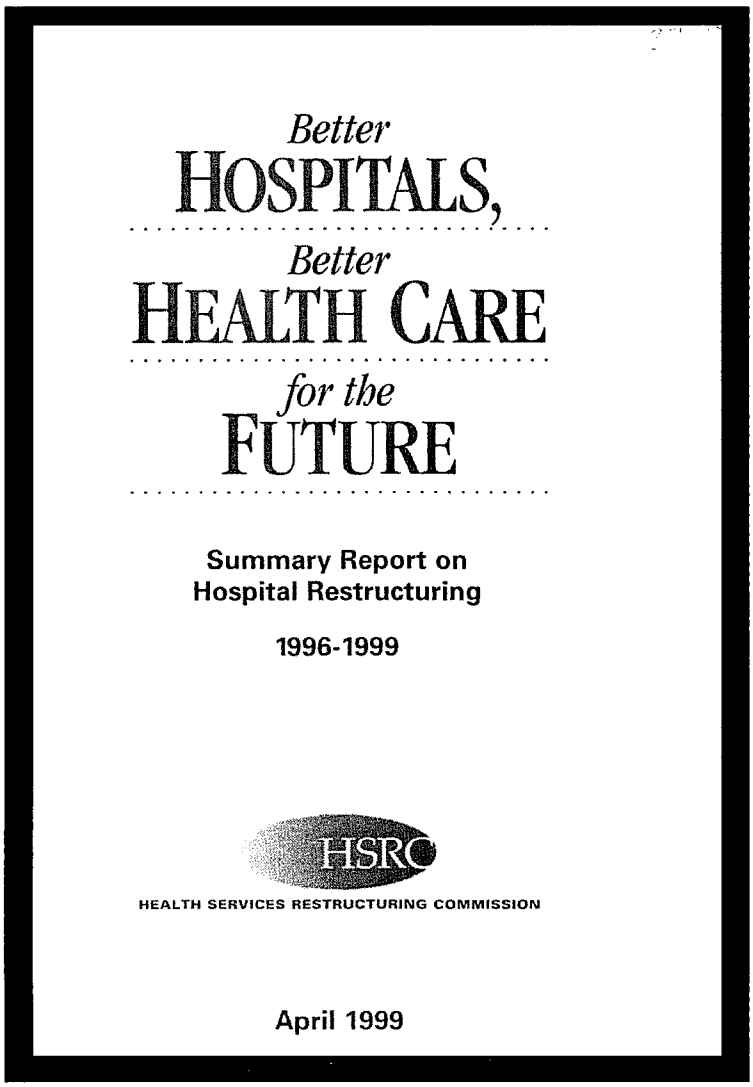


fig.8 "Summary Report on Hospital Restructuring," Ontario Health Services Restructuring Commission. April, 1999.

the artist to plot a course that avoids "determinism, escapism or despair"? For Randolph, the answer lies in the recognition that we project our own ambivalences onto technology: it is we, and not the tools, who want to destroy. Yet coexisting with this destructive impulse is the countervailing desire to construct some "sociopolitical or cultural offering" that will be treasured in the future. Recognising this ambivalence, the artist needs to adopt a *reparative* technique that addresses whatever potential may remain in an "impure" or "ruined" "subject, object, idea, or form." This technique doesn't try to hide flaws, but rather to integrate traces of damage with any remaining qualities of value. This humane reparative approach constitutes the "foundation of artistic integrity."[54]

In Randolph's terms, Frenkel's websites could be thought to mediate the literal and figurative technologies and the agencies that support them. Her work may be taken as embodying that "ambiguity, perceptual fluidity, and non-complicity" that transforms technology into something "amenable to the interpretation and valuation of viewers affected by it."[55] In *Body Missing*, Frenkel projects the darkness of the sociopolitical psyche and its apparatuses while precisely directing us, as *Transit Bar* regulars, to make an empathetic "gesture" toward "an earlier artist and an absent work." We are to make some reparation for what has been lost, "as if in conversation with the past – whether in the form of an interrogation, a concrete poem, a personal history, studio re-enactment, or fiction." This does not, Frenkel tells us, mean actual copying of works that have been lost, which would imply that something lost could be replaced. Rather, we are directed to make a gesture – whether we cast it as artistic, intellectual, poetical, ethical – merely as a move toward acknowledging the damage, toward reincorporating the virtue into the fatally ruined.

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Notes

1 Walter BENJAMIN, "A Berlin Chronicle," in Michael W. Jennings, ed., *Walter Benjamin Selected Writings*, vol.2, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap, 1999), 595-637, 211.

2 *The Institute: Or, What We Do for Love* <http://www.the-national-institute.org>; *The Body Missing Project* <http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing>.

3 BENJAMIN, "A Berlin Chronicle," 211.

4 Haider is quoted in Isolde CHARIM, "Haider Kunst," in *FALTER* 48 – 95:19. The slogan, "The Future of Austria is our Art," from a 1994 campaign poster of the Freedom Party, is also reproduced.

5 The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphii* has been made into a website (MIT Press/Design Knowledge Systems Group at the Technical University of Delft). It is profitable to line up its architecture and monuments and gardens with those of Frenkel's websites.

6 On the evocative heterotopia as a place of "poetic wonder," of "revelations of similitude hidden among the ruins," of "fragments of forgotten lives and objects," of "strange unsettling novel things," see Kevin HETHERINGTON, *The Badlands of Modernity: heterotopia and social ordering* (London: Routledge, 1997), 42-43, 50.

7 See Ruth EATON, *Ideal Cities: Utopianism and the (Un)Built Environment* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002).

8 Liane LEFAIVRE, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. Re-Configuring the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1997), 8.

9 Hannah ARENDT, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1966), 413.

10 Slavoj ZIZEK, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan Through Popular Culture* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT/*October*, 1991), 151.

11 Ibid., 152.

12 Ibid., 153. For the novel as paranoid overinterpretation, see *Titan*, admired by the surrealists, in which the Frenkel-like narrator imagines himself at the centre of a network of spies. Jean Paul RICHTER, *Titan: A Romance. From the German of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter*, trans. Charles Timothy Brooks (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1862).

13 Vera FRENKEL, "Artists in Residence," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio broadcast "The Arts Today," 12 June 2000 <http://www.radio.cbc.ca/programs/artstoday/artontheweb/artistsinresidence/part_3.html>.

14 Jon RUDDY, "Will four thousand eight hundred and seventy seven CBC executives please stand up?" *Maclean's* (2 April 1966), 10-11.

15 Peter Becker and William Clark, eds. *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 1.

16 It has been argued that the great revolution of Taylorism (the scientific study of production line efficiency) was the separation of thought from making, in that decision-making was isolated in the administrative office, far from the production line, Henry MINTZBERG, *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research* (London: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 74. In 1934 John Dewey, that theorist of modern systems, had noted the separation of "imagination" from "executive doing," and of "significant purpose" from work as quoted in Sigfried GIEDION, *Space, Time and Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), 12.

17 There is a subtrade in independently assembled kits made available by afficionados of certain kinds of building, such as "Lego Kits for Military Modelers."

18 Heimito von DODERER, *The Lighted Windows, or, The Humanization of the Bureaucrat Julius Zihal*, trans. John S. Barrett (Riverside, CA: Ariadne, 2000), 33. See also Becker and Clark, *Little Tools of Knowledge*, 3.

19 Benjamin BUCHLOH, "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetics of Administration to the Critique of Institutions," *October* 55 (Winter 1990):105-43.

20 Michel FOUCAULT, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock, 1972).

21 Becker and Clark, *Little Tools of Knowledge*, 27.

22 von DODERER, *The Lighted Windows*, 17, 28.

23 BENJAMIN, "A Berlin Chronicle," 211.

24 See Alan SCHECHNER's photographic work, *Bar Code*, in *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/ Recent Art* (New York: Jewish Museum, 2003).

25 See Hans Erich BÖDEKER, "On the Origins of the 'Statistical Gaze': Modes of Perception, Forms of Knowledge and ways of Writing in the Early Social Science," in Becker and Clark, *Little Tools of Knowledge*, 169-195.

26 The Hollerith machine, manufactured by a subsidiary of IBM, indicates the role of impersonal data management in industrialized mass murder. Information stored on Hollerith cards in the 1939 census later assisted in locating and rounding up Jews. See Gotz ALY and Karl Heinz ROTH, *The Nazi Census: Identification and Control in the Third Reich*, trans. Edwin Black (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003).

27 See Yaacov LOZOWICK, *Hitler's Bureaucrats: The Nazi Security Police and the Banality of Evil*, trans. Haim Watzman (New York and London: Continuum, 2002).

28 From Heimrad BÄCKER, "Widerspiegelung," *Die Rampe, Hefte für Literatur* (Linz: Land Oberösterreich, 1994), 60-61.

29 Ibid.

30 George GRANT, *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, [1965] 1989), 18.

31 "The union of the provinces...was singularly lacking in the emotional content of nationalism in the traditional sense." G. P. de T. GLAZEBROOK, "Some Thought on Canadian Nationalism," in *Empire and Nations*, eds. Harvey L. Dyck and H. Peter Krosby (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 19.

32 This is described as "a typical Canadian venture-pioneering in another field," as the "pushing back" of "another frontier." Brooke CLAXTON, *Opening Proceedings of the Canada Council* (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1957), 15.

33 The myth of the railways is most memorably set out in Gordon Lightfoot's song, "The Canadian Railway Trilogy," released in Canada's centennial year, 1967, and in Pierre BERTON's popular history, *The Last Spike* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971).

34 See Diana NEMIROFF, "A History of Artist-Run Spaces in Canada, with particular reference to Véhicule, A Space and the Western Front." Master of Arts Thesis, Concordia University, Montréal, 1985.

35 *Museums by Artists*, AA Bronson and Peggy Gale, eds. (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1983), 29-30.

36 "In the 1980's Hamilton had entered the economic downturn common to most steel towns in the developed world. Since then, considerable effort has been put into diversifying the economy and revitalizing the moribund city centre. Recent efforts have been concentrating on building expressways through Hamilton's impressive natural landscape, and moving the waterfront away from the heavy industry represented by the two main steel corporations, Stelco and Dofasco." The former Customs House is now The Workers' Art and Heritage Centre.

37 Henry MINTZBERG, *The Structuring of Organizations: A synthesis of the Research* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1979), 371.

38 Ibid., 463.

39 Ibid., 455.

40 Frenkel's choruses remind us of Julius Zihal's nightmare in which bureaucrats appear as marching giant insects who chant, "Because of illness, due to sickness, on account of illness, due to unbecoming illnesses.... Because of the personal element, due to the personal element on account of the personal nature, due to unbecoming elements, due to personality, because of personality, due to that element." Von DODERER, *The Lighted Windows*, 132.

41 Jon RUDDY, "Will four thousand eight hundred and seventy seven CBC executives please stand up?" 10-11.

42 Henry FRIEDLANDER, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). In at least six hospitals, disabled and "deviant" people were murdered by ordinary nurses and doctors.

43 See for example Melvin Charney's drawing, *City of Death/ Heavenly City (After Matthias Hafenreffer's Reconstruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, Tübingen, Germany, 1631)*, 1986; http://expositions.bnf.fr/utopie/grand/4_88.htm

44 See Frederic JAMESON, *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 1991), 15.

45 Von DODERER, *The Lighted Windows*, 132.

46 BÖDEKER, "On the Origins of the 'Statistical Gaze,'" 179.

47 HETHERINGTON, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 141.

48 The designer Allan Fleming used a continuous flowing line from "C" to "N" to symbolize "the movement of people, materials and messages from one point to another." In 2000 the CN logo was listed as one of the "Top 50 Corporate Logos of All Time," in an international competition sponsored by the *Financial Times* and the *Report on Business*. It was the only Canadian design on the list.

49 Mel W I L S O N and Rosie L O M B A R D I, "Globalization and Its Discontents: The Arrival of Triple-Bottom-Line Reporting," *Ivey Business Journal* (September-October 2001). Quoted on PricewaterhouseCoopers website, accessed March 2004: http://www.pwcglobal.com/extweb/manissue.nsf/docid/F2C229B0D463808285256AEC005F1A37

50 Especially applicable to an understanding of the shadowy *Transit Bar* regulars, both within *Body Missing* and as transmuted into residents of *The Institute* is Kevin Hetherington's observation that in heterotopic spaces "Great Man" history is replaced by "actor networks" of individuals and forces and organizations: "Margins, orderings and the laboratories of society," *Badlands of Modernity*, 20-39.

51 Herbert MARCUSE, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), 97 and 111.

52 Ibid., 87 and 96.

53 Jeanne RANDOLPH, "Ambiguity and the Technical Object," in Dana Friis-Hansen, *Visionary Apparatus: Michael Snow and Juan Geuer* (MIT: Hayden Gallery, 1986), 39; see also RANDOLPH's "Influencing Machines: The Relations Between Art and Technology" (1984), in *Psychoanalysis and Synchronized Swimming* (Toronto: YYZ, 1991), 37-54.

54 RANDOLPH, "Ambiguity and the Technical Object," 40.

55 D.W. Winnicott, quoted by RANDOLPH, "Ambiguity and the Technical Object," 41. See Vera FRENKEL, *The Bar Report* (Toronto: Art Gallery of York University, 1993), 20: A character does some intellectual name-dropping: "You know me. I can't resist. Hitler. Freud. Whatever I can get my hands on. A Winnicott article or a monograph on Klein...."

Résumé

«UN MEILLEUR LIEU DE VIE»

La poésie bureaucratique dans *Body Missing* et *The Institute* de Vera Frenkel

Dans son installation et son site web *The Body Missing* (1994 en cours), Vera Frenkel s'attaque aux répercussions durables du *Kunstraub* nazi, le grand pillage d'œuvres d'art durant le troisième Reich. Dans son œuvre actuelle, *The Institute™: Or, What We Do for Love*, Frenkel tisse les implications de cette sorte de bureaucratie qui sous-tendait le *Kunstraub* et l'Holocauste, en une enquête sur la condition des artistes vieillissants au Canada. Au cours d'une année 1997 fictive, dans le sillage du démantèlement du système public de santé et du financement des arts au Canada, Frenkel imagine que le gouvernement fédéral adopte une loi pour transformer les hôpitaux en un réseau corporatif d'un océan à l'autre, *The Institute*, où sont logés des artistes «âgés» et des administrateurs culturels devenus superflus. La référence aux hôpitaux rappelle le statut équivoque de l'artiste, qui a été placé – selon un euphémisme connu – dans une sorte de «foyer». *The Institute* est une parodie de site web corporatif, dont la section de cartes de vœux virtuelles offre une carte avec un champ générique qui pourrait signifier «être mis au vert».

Frenkel renverse les traditions d'avant-garde des foyers pour artistes, particulièrement dans un contexte canadien : *The Institute* est l'effondrement des

idéaux communautaristes collectifs de nombreux centres gérés par des artistes et financés par des subventions du gouvernement, à l'apogée des années 1970. Elle transporte ce «réseau de communautés» des années 1970 dans un «âge d'or» euphémique. Le sous-titre d'un article de 1966 sur la bureaucratie de la CBC, dans le magazine *Maclean's*, se lisait : «Voici des créateurs. Ils sont à surveiller. Voici le personnel administratif de la CBC. Il surveille les gens créatifs» Ce spectre fou, infantilisé, institutionnalisé de l'artiste nous conduit vers des modèles de gestion intenables de bureaucraties professionnelles créatives, lesquelles, selon le gourou canadien de la gestion Henry Mintzberg, ont tendance à être inefficaces au plan bureaucratique, «incapables de faire des choses ordinaires». Si *The Institute* de Frenkel existait, quelle forme administrative prendrait-il et quelles tensions aurait-il à subir ? On pourrait se tourner vers les communautés idéales imaginées aux XVIII^e^ et XIX^e^ siècles, telles les phalanstères de Fourier, où chacun s'épanouit dans le travail et la liberté sexuelle. Dans *The Institute* ces éléments sont réfractés, à la manière canadienne, à travers la lentille moins idéaliste des études de gestion. *The Institute* montre les complexités et l'hybridation de toute bureaucratie professionnelle, en s'inspirant de ce qu'on pourrait voir comme une gestion romantique : la notion d'un ferment centralisé, à pollinisation croisée, sur place, toujours disponible, d'intellectuels réunis dans un seul espace. Il entre dans la catégorie des «combinaisons bureaucratie/adhocratie» où l'artiste de profession profite du «meilleur des deux mondes». Il est lié à une organisation tout en restant libre d'agir à son gré. Il évite virtuellement toutes les pressions et tractations que suppose l'interaction avec ses pairs. Mais, évidemment, comme toute personne vivant en institution le sait, l'interaction avec les pairs est nécessaire, car nous savons que quelqu'un, quelque part, mijote quelque chose qui aura des effets négatifs pour nous, pour notre financement, pour notre statut. Dans *The Institute*, les terribles implications du commérage, de l'espionnage et de la dissimulation qui traversaient *Body Missing* deviennent de vulgaires cancans d'initiés entre artistes et intellectuels.

Après *Body Missing*, *The Institute* peut sembler d'une sentimentalité banale, mais on y trouve d'étranges inflexions mutuelles, en voyant comment la bureaucratie du nazisme culturel déteint sur sa forme contemporaine, atrophiée, pusillanime, dans l'administration canadienne des arts. La bureaucratie d'État demeure, naturellement, cruciale dans nos démocraties occidentales compromises, apparemment au service d'un certain nombre de positions idéologiques vaguement dissimulées qui, toutes, camouflent leurs insincérités respectives. Le seul référent solide est un point de fuite, non pas vers l'horizon de possibilités éthiques, mais vers le «résultat». Dans l'apothéose inversée de Frenkel, les excès de la bureaucratie nazie sont punis en étant resitués dans des conditions réduites et humiliantes.

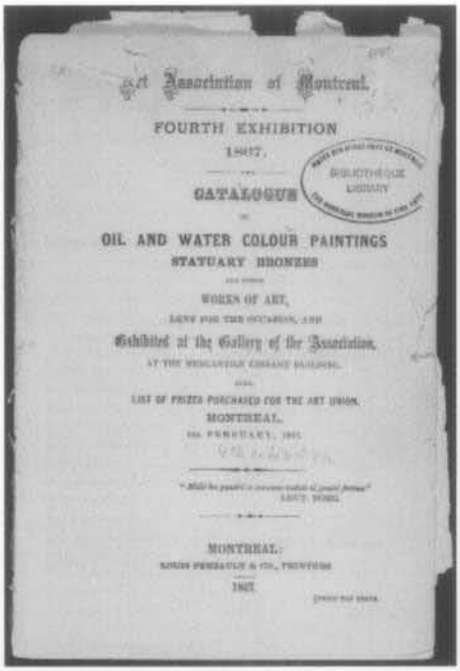
The Institute est, d'une certaine manière, l'apothéose de la vision canadienne nationalisée des arts. Il représente, en même temps, la réduction de l'académie à un «centre de soins» euphémisé et bureaucratisé, à travers un processus d'attrition gouvernementale. Cette vision est en accord avec la tradition canadienne d'une fonction publique puissante, où tout pouvoir exercé de manière évidente doit être

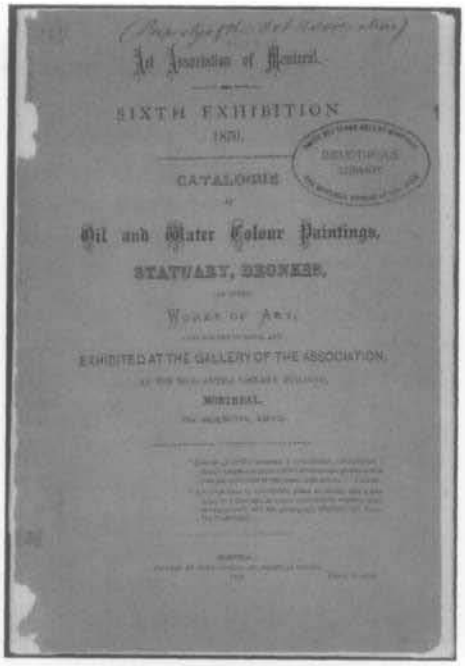
déplacé vers l'administration. Dans son essai phare sur l'identité canadienne, *Lament for a Nation*, George Grant prétend que la fonction publique est un «instrument essentiel grâce auquel l'identité nationale est préservée», grâce auquel le Canada évite le continentalisme américain. Là encore, pour se distinguer des États-Unis, la formation historique propre du Canada doit beaucoup plus à des accommodements pragmatiques qu'à une idéologie nationaliste.

Un prototype de *The Institute* est le Banff Centre for the Arts, où Frenkel a été artiste en résidence et où elle réalisé *The Institute*. La situation géographique de Banff incarne la mythologie nationaliste de l'unification du Canada par le chemin de fer. Son nom même est l'écho des origines écossaises des premiers directeurs de la Canadian Pacific Railway et d'une histoire du Canada impériale et sentimentale. Le Banff Centre incarne les aspects de la vie canadienne contemporaine puisqu'il comprend, outre le Centre for the Arts, le Banff Centre for Management qui a accueilli des conférences portant sur les questions récurrentes dans les débats sur l'identité canadienne – la politique de l'eau, la gestion des forêts et des parcs et, surtout, la nationalisation des soins médicaux. En tant que réseau de «centres» subventionnés par le gouvernement, *The Institute* de Frenkel se présente comme un ordre spatial typiquement canadien, récapitulant les modèles régionaux dispersés du nationalisme canadien.

The Institute incarne aussi le cycle de transformations urbaines où des entrepôts industriels inutilisés deviennent des lofts d'artistes, puis des galeries, puis des lofts et condominiums que les artistes ne peuvent s'offrir. Hamilton, Ontario, le lieu supposé de *The Institute*, est une ville sidérurgique qui cherche à se démarquer de l'industrie lourde et à rehausser son «image» en tant que «destination artistique». Comme ailleurs, mais sur une échelle plus modeste, ses institutions artistiques agissent comme une sorte de façade qui camoufle une réelle et traumatisante perturbation économique et sociale causée par une économie post-fordienne sous laquelle tous les nationalismes tendent à être subsumés.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette





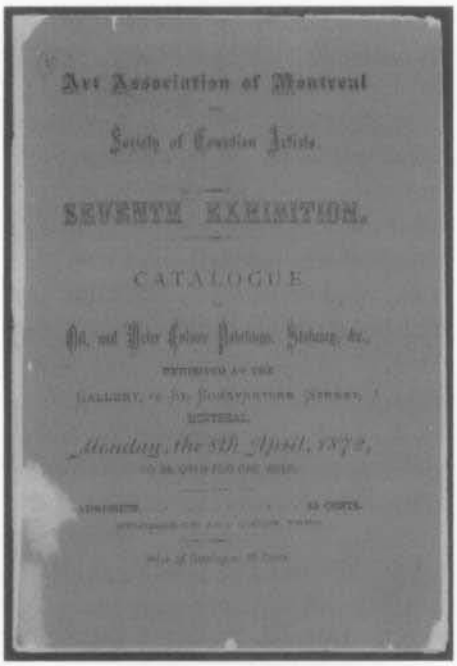


fig.1 **Art Association of Montreal. Fourth Exhibition 1867; Art Association of Montreal. Sixth Exhibition 1870;** et **Art Association of Montreal. Seventh Exhibition 1872,** Archives, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. (Photo: Christine Guest, MBAM)

L'ART ASSOCIATION OF MONTREAL
Les années d'incertitude : 1863-1877

Au début de 1860, la fondation de l'Art Association of Montreal fut suivie d'une année d'intense activité marquée par l'organisation d'une première exposition en mai et d'une seconde à la fin d'août au Crystal Palace, dans le cadre des festivités marquant la visite à Montréal du prince de Galles[1]. Les activités de l'AAM cessèrent après cette visite pour ne reprendre qu'à la fin de 1863. Elles furent à nouveau interrompues de 1874 à 1877 à cause de la crise économique qui sévissait en Amérique du Nord. La période 1863-1877 de l'histoire de l'AAM est généralement passée sous silence alors qu'elle mérite d'être examinée en détail : elle marque une étape importante de l'histoire culturelle montréalaise dans le contexte de la naissance de ses musées[2].

Des six objectifs que s'était fixés l'AAM lors de sa fondation[3], deux seulement furent partiellement atteints pendant cette période, soit l'organisation d'une exposition annuelle d'œuvres d'art et le développement du sens critique dans le domaine artistique. Faute d'appui financier suffisant, il fut impossible de construire un bâtiment permettant la création d'une salle de lecture et d'une bibliothèque, d'une galerie permanente de sculpture et de peinture ainsi que d'une école des beaux-arts et de design. Il faut cependant ajouter que pendant toute cette période[4], l'AAM avait tenté d'encourager la formation de collections d'œuvres d'art tant européennes que canadiennes à Montréal, de présenter ces œuvres au grand public, de maintenir des liens avec les artistes canadiens et de favoriser le développement de jeunes artistes par des cours de dessin.

Notre approche de cette période est chronologique et relate le développement de l'AAM sous ses trois premiers présidents (Francis Fulford de 1860 à 1868, Peter Redpath de 1868 à 1871, Thomas Sterry Hunt de 1872-1873). Cette étude est basée sur les archives manuscrites et imprimées du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal (fig.1) et sur une longue recherche dans les journaux de l'époque qui s'avèrent essentiels pour compléter les archives du musée. Les minutes des assemblées annuelles et générales s'interrompant en 1872 pour reprendre en 1877 et celles du conseil d'administration s'interrompant en 1873 pour reprendre en 1877; nous n'avons pas dépouillé les journaux pour la période d'interruption des activités.

1860-1868 : L'AAM sous la présidence de Francis Fulford

Né en Angleterre en 1803, Francis Fulford fit ses études à Oxford où il obtint une licence ès arts en 1827, une maîtrise ès arts en 1838 et un doctorat en théologie en

1850. Ordonné prêtre de l'Église d'Angleterre en 1828, il fut sacré évêque à l'abbaye de Westminster en 1850 en même temps qu'il se voyait confier le diocèse de Montréal qui venait d'être créé. Après l'incendie de sa cathédrale anglicane rue Notre-Dame, il fit construire l'actuelle cathédrale Christ Church, rue Sainte-Catherine, de 1857 à 1859. Élu président de l'Art Association of Montreal lors de sa fondation le 17 février 1860, il occupa ces fonctions jusqu'à sa mort le 9 septembre 1868[5]. C'est lui qui accompagna le prince de Galles le 25 août 1860 lors de sa visite de l'exposition organisée au Crystal Palace par l'AAM. On peut imaginer la déception des membres de l'AAM lors du refus du prince d'accepter de devenir le protecteur («patron») de l'Association. Ce refus tout aussi bien que les dépenses encourues par les Montréalais pour l'accueil du prince firent qu'aucun quorum ne put être obtenu lors des tentatives subséquentes de réunion des membres de l'AAM[6].

Statut légal et fonctionnement

Même si l'acte d'incorporation de l'AAM avait été sanctionné le 23 avril 1860[7], l'Association n'avait toujours pas de statut legal, ne l'ayant pas adopté en asssemblée générale. Ce n'est pas avant octobre 1863[8] que, lors d'une réunion présidée par Fulford à laquelle assistait «a majority of the said Corporation», l'acte d'incorporation fut accepté. À la suite de cette réunion, on distribua un feuillet imprimé en date du 18 décembre 1863, accompagné d'une liste de tous les members en règle de l'AAM, afin de convoquer une assemblée des membres le 22 décembre. Il y était mentionné que, lors d'une réunion récente des membres, la loi d'incorporation avait été formellement acceptée et qu'un comité avait été formé pour établir les statuts (*By-Laws*) de l'Association.

Ces vingt-trois statuts régissant de façon très précise le fonctionnement de l'AAM furent adoptés lors de l'assemblée générale du 11 janvier 1864 et publiés par la suite avec la loi d'incorporation[9]. Ils furent suivis de règlements dont une première version fut préparée et approuvée par le conseil d'administration le 26 janvier suivant[10], et une seconde version, légèrement différente, fut approuvée le 12 mars[11]. Statuts et règlements n'avaient rien laissé au hasard et ne laissaient rien à envier à ceux des musées d'aujourd'hui. Ils avaient été élaborés en fonction des objectifs visés à la fondation de l'Association et du fonctionnement d'un musée idéal doté d'un bâtiment, d'un budget, de collections et de personnel. Le statut XVII de l'Association, par exemple, lui donnait le pouvoir d'engager des employés et le règlement V se lisait ainsi :

> 1.The Officers to be appointed by the Council under the 17th By-Law of the Association shall be : -1. A Secretary to perform the duties therein set forth; -
>
> 2. A Curator, at such salary (not to exceed $400 per annum) as the Council may from time to time determine. And such Curator shall be the custodian of all property of the Association, shall assist the Secretary in the discharge of his duties, and shall have generally the management and conduct of the Association, subject to the direction of the President and Council[12].

En ce qui concerne le «Curator», il s'agit de la description d'un poste de directeur de musée dont les termes sont toujours actuels. Faute de moyens financiers, les postes de secrétaire et de directeur ne furent pas comblés et tout le travail de l'AAM reposa sur le bénévolat des membres. Les règlements prévoyaient aussi la formation de cinq comités permanents du Conseil bien définis : un comité des finances, un comité du bâtiment, un comité d'exposition, un comité de l'école d'art et design, un comité de collection d'art et un comité d'Art Union. Exception faite du comité de collection d'art, les membres de ces comités avaient été nommés pour 1864.

Art Union

Le feuillet du 18 décembre 1863 mentionnait que recommandation serait faite au conseil d'administration «to prepare some scheme for distribution of works of art among the Members, after the system of Art Unions elsewhere». D'origine suisse au début du XIX[e] siècle, le système de l'Art Union s'était répandu dans plusieurs pays d'Europe, en Angleterre à la fin des années 1830 et aux États-Unis au début des années 1840. Il s'agissait d'une association d'individus dont les petites cotisations annuelles servaient à acquérir des œuvres d'art contemporain redistribuées par loterie[13]. Le coût de la cotisation étant peu élevé, on permettait ainsi à des individus peu fortunés de posséder des œuvres d'art tout en soutenant les artistes contemporains. Le règlement II approuvé par le conseil de l'AAM le 12 mars 1864 se lisait ainsi :

> 1. The Association shall, so soon as the necessary sanction can be obtained, establish a scheme for the purchase, and distribution by lot, of Works of Art among its Ordinary and Associate Members.
>
> 2. To that end, the Council shall in each year purchase so many of the Works of Art exhibited as the funds at the disposal of the Association will permit, – such works to be distributed under regulations to be hereafter framed for that purpose.
>
> 3. In the choice of Works of Art thus to be distributed, a preference will be given to such as are painted in Canada, or such as illustrate Canadian Scenery, History, or Life[14].

La première version des règlements (20 janvier 1864) prévoyait que chaque membre de l'AAM, en plus de sa cotisation annuelle, devait verser quatre dollars et les non membres cinq dollars dans un fonds spécial pour faire partie de l'Art Union. Mais dans son rapport du 5 mars au conseil d'administration[15], le comité des finances, craignant que ces cotisations soient trop élevées et affaiblissent les finances de l'AAM, recommanda plutôt l'abolition d'un fonds spécial et la création d'une catégorie de membres associés annuels payant la même cotisation que les membres ordinaires (cinq dollars), tous ayant droit aux tirages.

Comme les loteries relevaient d'une loi canadienne, on prépara en février une pétition qui fut envoyée à Québec pour permettre à l'AAM d'établir une Société des

Beaux-Arts en rapport avec ses autres opérations[16]. Cette loi fut sanctionnée le 30 juin 1864. Elle donnait le pouvoir à l'AAM «d'acheter ou de se procurer autrement des tableaux ou autres œuvres d'art et de les distribuer parmi les membres de l'Association ou les souscripteurs et les personnes qui contribuent à ses fonds, et ce au moyen du sort, en vertu de règlements faits et passés ou qui le seront, pour régler la dite distribution...». Le comité de l'Art Union nommé par le conseil d'administration le 12 novembre lui fit rapport le 19 novembre suivant[17] pour établir les modalités de sa première activité. Puisque toutes les œuvres d'art offertes en prix devaient être choisies parmi les œuvres exposées lors des expositions de l'AAM, les tirages eurent lieu au rythme des expositions. Sur la cotisation de cinq dollars, un dollar était réservé pour acquisition d'une gravure ou photographie donnnée à chaque souscripteur, deux dollars pour acquisition d'œuvres d'art devant faire l'objet d'un tirage et deux dollars étaient réservés pour les dépenses de l'AAM.

Le comité fit état d'une proposition du photographe Alexander Henderson – dont le nom apparaît sur la liste des premiers souscripteurs à l'AAM – qui fut alors acceptée : «They further report that Mr. Henderson will supply the Association with photographs of Canadian Scenery on tinted mounts, with the names of the views lithographed, for the sum of fifty cents each – and that he will make over to the Assoc. six negatives to be selected by them, which are to be considered the bona fide property of the Assoc. The Committee recommend that Mr. Hendersons' offer be accepted[18]». Une exposition étant prévue pour la fin de février 1865, l'annonce suivante fut publiée plusieurs fois dans *The Montreal Gazette* du 17 au 27 décembre 1864 :

ART UNION

The Art Association of Montreal having obtained the necessary powers in the last session of the Provincial Parliament, are now about to put into active operation that portion of their general plan for the advancement of Art in this Province, viz. : – an ART UNION, according to the general practice and rules of the British Art Unions.

For the season 1864-65, the following scheme has been prepared, which it is thought will be favourably received by the public.

Each subscriber of *Five Dollars* to the Association will receive

Firstly,- A season ticket to all the Exhibitions of pictures and works of Art, Conversaziones [vernissages], &c., that may be held under the auspices of the Association.

Secondly,- A share in the ballot for paintings and other works of art which will take place immediately after the close of the EXHIBITION in February 1865.

Thirdly, – Two photographs to be selected from six Canadian Scenes by a well known amateur of this city. The copyright of these views is secured to the

Association, consequently none but subscribers can obtain a copy of them.
The photographs are of a high order, and such as will commend themselves to all lovers of the beautiful in Art or Nature.
Subscriptions will be received at the office of the Art Association, MECHANICS' HALL, or at DAWSON BROTHERS, where copies of the photographs may be seen.

Le tirage de l'Art Union eut lieu le 18 mars 1865 et *The Montreal Gazette* en décrivit les méthodes de tirage, les quarante lots et leurs gagnants dans son édition du 20 mars 1865. Il y fut aussi rapporté le bilan public suivant :

> Previous to the announcement of the drawing, Dr Sterry Hunt briefly addressed those present stating that there were 461 subscribers at $5.00 each, which gave a total of $2,305. Prizes to the value of $907, besides photographs to the value of $470, were provided for distribution – the total value of the prizes thus being $1,377. Had the patronage of the public been greater, the amount of the prizes would have been larger; he hoped, however, the subscribers would be satisfied. The amount taken during the exhibition had been more than $500, and the Council considered, on the whole, there was reason for congratulation. He trusted in another year they would have a room of their own.
>
> We may add that each of the subscribers received two photographs by Henderson, and those residing in the country even four.

Si l'encouragement aux artistes canadiens et aux collectionneurs, de même que l'augmentation des membres de l'AAM (passés d'environ 200 à 461) furent un succès, il en fut autrement pour l'aspect financier de l'opération. Les dépenses combinées de l'exposition et de l'Art Union laissaient un déficit de $20[19]. De plus, on devait $170 à George A. Drummond (membre du comité) pour l'achat d'un tableau qui avait été offert en prix[20] et $210 au photographe Henderson, dettes qui furent acquittées par les membres du conseil[21].

En 1866, l'AAM n'organisa ni exposition ni tirage de l'Art Union dont le comité fut cependant actif. Comme suite à l'offre d'un tableau du peintre Otto Jacobi, on envisagea la production d'une chromolithographie pour les membres de l'Art Union et on lui demanda «to paint a picture of the Parliament Buildings and scenery at Ottawa[22]» (fig.2). Jacobi soumit trois tableaux en juillet 1866, mais ils ne rencontrèrent pas l'approbation du conseil : «only one of the pictures at all meets with the approval but that it is not taken from the designated point of view and that the proper effect of the scenery is not given; that moreover the Council wishes to see all the views which Mr Jacobi took during his visit in order that one more suitable may be selected[23]». Mais le conseil, désappointé de ne pas trouver d'œuvre appropriée à la production d'une chromolithographie, abandonna ce projet[24]. En janvier 1867, le conseil décida de tenir un autre tirage de l'Art Union en même temps que l'exposition prévue pour le 5 février[25]. Le comité de l'Art Union se mit rapidement au travail pour soumettre au conseil, le 30 janvier, une liste de

fig.2 Otto Reinhold Jacobi, **Les édifices du Parlement à Ottawa,** 1866, aquarelle, 25 x 38 cm, MBAM. (Photo: Brian Merrett, MBAM)

vingt-trois lots d'œuvres d'artistes canadiens destinés à être acquis pour le tirage[26]. La liste finale des acquisitions de l'AAM figure dans la section des prix de l'Art Union du catalogue de l'exposition du 1867[27]. On y trouve quatre tableaux : *Sault Ste-Marie* de Wharton Metcalfe, acquis pour la somme très importante de $180[28]; *Ayers Flats Eastern Townships* d'Allan Edson, peintre qualifié de jeune artiste canadien prometteur, acquis pour $45 incluant le cadre[29]; *Sheep Heads* et *A Pair of Calves* d'Adolphe Vogt, acquis pour $25 chacun[30]. On y trouve aussi dix aquarelles : une des peintres Daniel Fowler, Henry Sandham, James Duncan, deux de John Fraser et cinq d'Otto Jacobi. À cette liste s'ajoutent sept lots de photographies : trois d'Alexander Henderson (*Canadian Views*), et quatre de William Notman (dont trois *Canadian Sports*).

Dans son compte rendu du tirage des prix, qui eut lieu le 15 février 1867, *The Montreal Gazette* fit état du discours du vice président de l'AAM, Peter Redpath, de la procédure du tirage et de la liste des gagnants :

> The President of the Association [*sic*], Peter Redpath, Esq. presided. He said the exhibition which was about to close had been a source of labor to those concerned in it, though they had their reward in the appreciation with which it had met. The only desire of the promoters had been a creation of a taste for art; and the Association had not labored without result, as to it they owed the presence of many works of merit, both in sculpture and painting, to which the highest meed of praise was due. He was anxious to show that the subscribers to the Association got the full value for their money. The amount of subscription was $5, for which each subscriber got two tickets to the conversazione which experience had shown could easily be disposed of at $1 each. For the remaining $3 they had the chance of a prize in the Art Union equal to 1 in 16, from a value of $220 down to $8, and even those who got the smallest prize had more than the worth of their subscription. It had been proposed to give every subscriber a picture, and the matter was now under consideration of the Council. The project, however, would depend not only on the amount of funds, but on their being able to procure suitable pictures. In the management of the Association there had been no waste; there was no salaried officers, and this year there had been no rent, in consequence of which the whole funds of the Association had been available[31].

Trois cent neuf billets avaient été vendus pour le tirage[32] et, lors de l'assemblée annuelle des membres en décembre 1867, les objectifs de l'Art Union furent ainsi résumés : «In conducting the Art Union, the Council went upon the principle that all prizes should consist of the productions of Canadian artists; and although their selection was narrowed, they think that such a preference was due in order to recognize and encourage those who live and work among us. Twenty-one prizes to the value of six hundred and ninety one dollars were thus distributed[33]».

Le conseil de l'AAM décida de ne pas tenir de tirage de l'Art Union lors de l'exposition de février 1868[34] et abandonna par la suite toute organisation de tirages pour concentrer les énergies et les finances à la création d'une galerie d'art permanente, comme en font foi les discours prononcés lors de la *converzatione* du 25 février 1868 :

> Toward the close of the conversazione the Vice-President, Mr. Peter Redpath, addressed the assembly. He said the absence of the President, his Lordship the Metropolitan, must be a source of regret to all. One of the chief sources of encouragement of the Association was the attendance at these gatherings, which on this occasion could not compare with last year, when it amounted to 425; the number of subscribers had also fallen off from 300 to 180, and the Council found it difficult to keep up the interest of the Association. They had tried to do so by giving prizes in the Art Union, but funds were inadequate[35].

L'opinion d'un autre membre du conseil, T. Sterry Hunt, fut aussi rapportée dans *The Montreal Herald*:

> Dr. T. Sterry Hunt, on being called on, said the establishment of an Art Gallery had been spoken of. The distribution of prizes in the manner of an Art Union had been objected to by many on principle, on the ground of its being a lottery, and some proposed putting aside any surplus the Association might have to buy a few pictures as the foundation of a public Gallery, thinking it better that the money should be thus used, rather than be given in pictures to the value of five or ten pounds each among the members. Some thought they would lose subscribers by this, but he thought it was better such subscribers should go, as those acting with them from higher motives than the desire to draw as much possible were a source of weakness rather than of strenght[36].

Expositions

Le premier article des règlements adoptés le 12 mars 1864 concernait les expositions[37] de l'AAM et comportait deux paragraphes :

> 1. Two or more Exhibitions of Works of Art shall, if practicable, be held in each year, to be opened at such place, upon such day, and to be closed upon such subsequent day, as the Council may from time to time appoint.
>
> 2. All Works of Art, whether Paintings in Oil or Water-Colours, Statuary, Casts from original models for statuary, Pencil-Drawings, Drawings in Crayon, or Architectural Designs, may be admitted at such Exhibitions, subject however in all cases to the approval of the Exhibition Committee[38].

Dans la première version des règlements adoptés le 25 janvier précédent, le premier paragraphe du premier règlement se lisait ainsi : «An Exhibition of Works of Art, upon Canadian subjects, or executed by Artists resident in British North America, shall be held (if practicable) in each year, under the auspices of the Association, to be opened annually at such place, upon such day in the month of May, and to be

closed upon such subsequent day as the Council may from time to time appoint[39]». Entre les deux versions des règlements s'était tenue la seconde exposition de l'AAM (la première ayant eu lieu en mai 1860) et l'impossibilité d'assembler une exposition à contenu entièrement canadien était sans doute apparue aux membres du comité d'exposition.

Organisée sous la direction de Thomas Davies King, nommé «Honorary Curator» le 9 février, l'exposition eut lieu au Mechanics' Hall du jeudi 11 au samedi 13 février 1864. Elle s'ouvrit le soir du 11 par une *conversazione* (ou vernissage) agrémentée d'un concert par un orchestre sous la direction du Dr. James Pech, dont le programme fut publié dans le catalogue de l'exposition[40]. À cette occasion, le président Francis Fulford prononça un discours dont le contenu fut repris dans les journaux[41]. Le vernissage, réservé aux membres de l'AAM et à leurs épouses, fit l'objet de remarques ironiques par le peintre Napoléon Bourassa (un des rares membres francophones de l'AAM) : «Si j'allais passer devant quelques chefs-d'œuvre sans les apercevoir, j'en demande pardon d'avance aux propriétaires : c'était le soir, il y avait foule dans la salle, et, je le répète, la belle nature avait aussi envoyé sa petite contribution de chefs-d'œuvre; et celle-ci se donnait plus de mouvement que l'autre pour se faire admirer[42]». Après la soirée du vernissage, l'exposition fut ouverte au public les deux soirs suivants, l'éclairage de la salle ne permettant pas l'exposition pendant le jour[43]. Les frais d'admission de vingt-cinq sous rapportèrent $180 (720 entrées payantes), revenus qui n'arrivèrent pas à couvrir les dépenses[44] : «Financially the undertaking was, of course, unsuccessful. It was not undertaken with a view to add to the funds of the Association, but to bring together once more the old subscribers of the Association and the possessors of work of art, to start anew in their labor of love[45]».

La qualité des œuvres exposées, qui provenaient toutes de collections de membres de l'AAM, fit l'objet de commentaires qui nous en donnent une idée générale :

> One marked feature of the display is the modest good taste presiding over the choice of these pictures for the adornment of quiet homes. They are, almost without exception, genre pictures or landscapes. Fuselli or poor Haydon would have gone mad to see such an absence of the classical and magnificent. – There was a copy of Guido's Aurora, indeed, and one or two classical subjects, but no grand themes treated, such as are becoming adornments of great churches, palaces, Senate Houses and public galleries, but not so benefiting the merchant's quiet villa. We regard this absence of pretentiousness as a merit. – But we hope the time is not far off when we shall have some genuine high art enshrined in a public gallery, or ornamenting some of our public edifices[46].

Les commentaires de Napoléon Bourassa allèrent dans le même sens :

> Toutes ces toiles font partie de petites collections particulières que l'on avait transportées là dans l'intérêt de l'Association et du public. Malgré que beaucoup d'entre elles soient très mauvaises, que plusieurs autres soient très médiocres, il

convient de juger de l'ensemble avec bienveillance; d'ailleurs, il ressort de la réunion de tous ces objets d'art une impression favorable; on voit que plusieurs de leurs possesseurs ont été dirigés, dans leur choix, par un coup d'oeil presque toujours juste et par le désir d'acquérir de véritables bonnes choses. La passion du clinquant, qui domine notre hémisphère, le plaisir de surprendre l'admiration de nombreux Midas, ne se montrent pas trop dans les collections de nos amateurs. Il serait donc déraisonnable de juger ces tableaux avec rigueur : ce serait décourager de louables intentions et peut-être priver le pays de peintures plus précieuses encore, dans la suite[47].

Dans ses brillants et érudits commentaires sur les collectionneurs et leurs œuvres qui font partie de l'exposition, Bourassa s'attarde particulièrement sur la collection du vice-président Benaiah Gibb dans un texte visionnaire pour la suite de l'histoire de l'AAM en 1877 :

Monsieur B. Gibb s'était contenté d'envoyer à l'Art Association quatre de ses tableaux; il aurait pu en livrer un plus grand nombre, mais il a préféré céder l'espace à d'autres. J'aurais voulu voir ici, quelques autres tableaux de M. Gibb, pour le plaisir des bons amateurs. Mais si quelqu'un était très curieux de connaître la collection toute entière, il n'aurait qu'à faire d'abord la connaissance de son bienveillant propriétaire; il arriverait facilement au reste.

M. Gibb est garçon, je crois, – je ne dis pas cela pour que l'on aille troubler son repos.- Il a une jolie fortune, noblement acquise par le travail de chaque jour. Il essaie aujourd'hui, d'en faire le plus bel usage possible, et il réussit bien. M. Gibb a beaucoup voyagé et il a su faire du voyage une source de jouissances pour sa vieillesse future : n'ayant pas de descendants, il s'aide de l'art pour grouper autour de lui une nombreuse famille; et grâce à son bon goût, il a la certitude de n'avoir jamais que de jolis enfants. Sa collection est la plus sérieuse qui soit à Montréal et, s'il tient à l'augmenter, elle pourra, plus tard former le noyeau d'un joli musée : qui sait ?...Je ne connais pas les héritiers de M. Gibb; et, quoique je sois déjà tout disposé à leur faire mon compliment, je ne sais pas même s'il s'en est choisi quelques uns...mais ce qu'il y a de très certain c'est que l'Art Association va faire tous ses efforts pour exister; et comme je m'intéressse à elle, autant que M. Gibb, qui est son vice-président, je lui souhaite de faire de beaux héritages...[48].

La présentation des œuvres de l'exposition – qui furent toutes assurées contre perte par incendie[49] – est décrite dans *The Montreal Gazette* :

On either side of the Hall were ranges of paintings hung on screens, and lighted by rows of jets let down from the ceiling for the purpose. Thus a very excellent light was obtained. Upon the stage were hung also on screens erected for the purpose, the very fine collection of water colours. Along the center of the room were placed tables, with coins and medals, bronzes, books of engraving, portfolios of chromo lithographs, photographs, &c. &c. Here also were the four state swords presented to Gen. Williams, kindly lent for the occasion[50].

La liste des œuvres du catalogue ne mentionne pas toutes les œuvres exposées dont plusieurs – médailles et pièces de monnaie, photographies, chromolithographies, gravures – s'ajoutèrent à la dernière minute. Les œuvres exposées furent abondamment commentées dans les journaux, parfois avec force détails et commentaires.

Le catalogue de l'exposition se divisait en trois sections : les peintures (122 entrées), les aquarelles (43 entrées) et les objets de vertu (10 lots de bronzes, marbres et argenterie). À partir de cette liste, on peut constater que les tableaux et aquarelles provenaient de quarante prêteurs, dont sept étaient des artistes canadiens. Parmi les tableaux, 87 étaient européens, 28 canadiens et 8 américains. On remarque que William Notman possédait une collection de tableaux européens et canadiens, la maison Dawson Bros. (gravure et lithographie), des œuvres de Cornelius Krieghoff, Samuel A. Kilbourne et William Raphael qui lui-même prêta le numéro 21 du catalogue, *Bonsecours Market*, remarqué par la critique :

> An extremely clever picture was sent by Mr. Raphael, a young Canadian artist. The subject was a very characteristic street scene in front of the Bonsecours Market in the height of the early morning business in the winter time. The figures are full of life and animation, and the costumes, the carriages, the snow and the winter atmosphere just after sunrise, are all rendered, with remarkable happiness and faithfulness. This is a genuine Canadian picture in every sense of the word[51].

Outre Raphael, six autres artistes prêtèrent des œuvres : Robert Duncanson, Herbert Hancock, Jacobi, Mrs E. Murray, Miss E. Ross et William Sawyer. En ce qui concerne les aquarelles, les artistes canadiens les mieux représentés chez les collectionneurs étaient C.J. Way et James Duncan. Quelques œuvres hors-catalogue furent mentionnées dans les journaux :

> Besides some examples sent by Dawson Bros., the wonders of chromo-lithography were beautifully illustrated by a magnificent collection of prints from Mr. Horne, St François Xavier Street, taken from works by Turner, Stansfield, Mulready, Lanel, Richardson, Topham and others. Really, it seems, that this almost mechanical art so imitates the excellence of artists in water colours as very nearly to defy their own criticism to discern the difference between their own works of highest genius and these mechanical copies. The «Chromos» which Mr. Horne and Mr. Matthews sent were marvellously excellent[52].

Le bilan de l'exposition fut fait lors d'une réunion du conseil le 20 février et des félicitations adressées au conservateur honoraire. Le conseil adopta aussi une résolution acceptant l'offre de William Notman – qui avait exposé des photographies hors-catalogue – d'offrir à chacun des membres du conseil la photographie d'une aquarelle propriété de Thomas Reynolds et intitulée *Taken Aback*, œuvre qui avait fait l'objet de commentaires élogieux :

> Let us now ascend to the stage, around which the water-color pictures are hung. And first we are struck by the sight of the central and marine one (33), «Taken Aback», painted by Duncan, contributed by Mr. Reynolds. We may be said to

> have been ourselves, for a moment, taken aback when we first beheld it. The water and the wind are alike rising into rage; and the latter appears to have invisibly cought the ship in its arms, from which the former, with inverted and shivering sails, seems starting back with affright[53].

On décida aussi lors de cette réunion d'écrire à l'Arundel Society afin d'obtenir les publications déjà parues. Du nom de Thomas Howard Arundel (1585-1646), considéré comme le premier grand collectionneur d'art en Angleterre, cette société fondée en 1848 reproduisait les œuvres d'artistes célèbres afin de promouvoir l'intérêt public dans les arts.

La troisième exposition de l'AAM se tint aussi au Mechanics' Hall. Elle s'ouvrit le lundi 27 février 1865 par une *converzatione* dont le programme musical fut exécuté «by the Septette under the leadership of Mr. Torrington[54]». Le président Francis Fulford y prononça un long discours[55]. Henri Bourassa nota que: «Le Lord Bishop de Montréal, président de l'Association, à laquelle il s'empresse toujours d'apporter sa part de sympathie, fit le discours d'ouverture. Ses paroles, témoignent assez de l'intérêt qu'il porte aux œuvres d'art et l'appréciation éclairée qu'il fait de ces diverses expressions du génie humain, font suffisamment comprendre que l'Évêque Fulford est le premier patron de l'Art Association à plus d'un titre[56]». Un membre du Parlement britannique, George Thompson, de passage à Montréal, s'adressa[57] aussi à la brillante assemblée ainsi décrite dans *The Montreal Gazette*: «From the platform upon which were arranged some beautiful specimens of cabinet work, the room presented an animated and brilliant appearance, the bright dresses of the ladies (of whom large numbers were present), and the sprinkling of undress military uniforms constituting a pleasant contrast to that funeral costume which is inexorably decreed to unhappy civilians as full dress[58]». L'assemblée fut aussi qualifiée par *The Montreal Herald* : «The guests of the Association of which the audience was entirely composed, consisted of the elite of the city not only in wealth and social position but in cultivation and refinement in all that pertains to Art[59]».

Après le vernissage, l'exposition fut ouverte au public du jeudi 2 mars au samedi 18 mars moyennant un prix d'entrée de vingt-cinq sous pour les adultes et de douze sous et demi pour les enfants : «It was visited by over three thousand persons, who not only appeared to derive enjoyment from it, but, in a majority of cases, in consequence of the varied character and excellence of the works exhibited, must have profited by the instruction it was calculated to afford them[60]». Mais la fréquentation de l'exposition est certainement exagérée dans ce texte probablement préparé par le président de l'AAM puisque les journaux mentionnent que la mauvaise température des premiers jours d'ouverture au public a nui au nombre de visiteurs et que, le 16 mars, *The Montreal Gazette* publie les lignes suivantes :

> It will perhaps only fall upon the ear of the public, like a tale twice told to a drowsy man, to say that the Art Association Exhibition will positively close upon Saturday next. This is a fact, but we regret to state another fact that the exhibition has failed in a pecuniary sense. We do earnestly hope that what has

> really been intended for the public good, will during the next three days be better patronized. We can say no more than to request every one who has not yet seen the exhibition to do so before Saturday, in order to relieve the citizens from the disgrace of apathy and indifference to Fine Art culture.

Le soir du vernissage, le catalogue n'était pas prêt et toutes les œuvres n'étaient pas encore exposées :

> In regard to the exhibition, in its present state it would be somewhat difficult to speak in more than general terms, as in the first place the whole of the objects at the disposal of the Association, have not been yet arranged and, in the second, the catalogue has not been completed. It may however be stated that it is considered by those who are able to form an opinion fully equal to that of last year, the aggregate value of the pictures being much greater. In water colours the collection is much finer, there being many exquisite specimens of this peculiarly English department of Art. Although the objects of the Association are more immediately intended to foster native genius, the present exhibition owes many of its chief attractions to the liberality of American artists; and not only this, for we understand a large number of subscribers have also been obtained from the States, and the private galleries of American citizens have been laid under contribution for the present occasion. In connection with this, the name of Mr. H. Camp of New York, who acted as Honorary Associate for the Association in that city, and has contributed many valuable paintings, is particularly mentioned[61].

Le conseil de l'AAM – dont plusieurs membres entretenaient sans doute des relations d'affaires aux États-Unis – avait donc recruté collectionneurs et artistes à New York et Boston. Leur participation était fort bien vue par Napoléon Bourassa :

> Maintenant, si l'on ne considère que la valeur intrinsèque de l'exposition de cette année, il est aisé de constater encore un progrès marqué sur les années précédentes. Peut-être qu'il s'y trouve moins de peintures de mérite fournies par les artistes et les amateurs de Montréal; mais, en revanche, nous avons eu l'avantage d'en voir plusieurs très-jolies, qui ont été envoyées de New-York et de Boston. Ceci est un excellent résultat.
>
> Il fait voir d'abord, que l'action de l'Art Association s'étend déjà au loin; ensuite, qu'il s'établit un lien de communication entre les sociétés de ces deux grandes villes et la nôtre, puis, enfin, qu'il se forme chez nous un centre d'intelligence à côté d'un centre d'affaires, qui doit tendre à compléter et à perfectionner notre état social, et à nous assurer une importance et une gloire plus durables. Plus nous pourrons attirer au milieu de nous d'œuvres étrangères remarquables, plus nous donnerons aux hommes sensibles au beau, des moyens de comparer et d'apprendre, et aux artistes une occasion d'établir plus solidement leur réputation[62].

Bourassa constate cependant qu'en ce qui concerne les œuvres d'artistes canadiens, peu de progrès ont été réalisés :

> On a bien vite constaté, en parcourant de l'oeil cette réunion de petits tableaux variés, qu'aucune œuvre nationale d'une grande importance n'a vu le jour cette année; l'exposition donne moins la preuve des progrès de notre art, que la mesure des efforts croissants que la Société fait pour activer notre vie artistique. Dans une ville comme la nôtre, où végètent quelques amants désespérés de la peinture, on ne doit pas s'attendre à être soudainement ébloui par des éclairs de génie; à voir apparaître, dans l'espace d'un an, les splendeurs du dix-septième siècle. En Amérique, on crée bien des villes en un jour, mais il ne faut pas songer à voir surgir de ces agglomérations de peuples et d'édifices neufs, des productions d'une nature aussi relevée, qui ne peuvent être que la conséquence d'un certain ordre d'idées, de dispositions et de faits fortuits ou intelligents. Il nous naîtrait aujourd'hui cent Michel Ange que nous en aurions quatre-vingt-dix-neuf de trop, et le centième crèverait de faim ou devrait s'abandonner à la culture de la vigne; comme le fait Plamondon dans sa riante solitude de St-Charles[63].

Une fois la présentation de l'ensemble de l'exposition complétée, certains commentaires en sont assez critiques :

> The Exhibition on Thursday night opened to the public; and the paintings, both in oil and water, the engravings, photographs, pictorial volumes, medals, statuary, and other works of art, having now all arrived, and being in their places, a juster judgement may be formed of the aggregate merit of the show than could be done on the evening of the conversazione. A closer inspection and more intimate acquaintance therewith has enhanced our good opinion of it, though we are still under the impression that there are in Montreal materials for a still finer collection[64].

Des photographies faisant partie de l'exposition, Bourassa, qui en tant que peintre en subissait la concurrence, semble mettre en doute leur valeur en tant qu'œuvres d'art :

> Nous sommes au règne de la machine; les faveurs de la fortune appartiennent pour le moment à tous ces héritiers de Daguerre, à tous ces enfants trouvés de l'art, nés d'un perfectionnement de la chimie et de quelques rayons de lumière. – Il faut bien que le soleil luise pour tout le monde. Quand tous ces industrieux fabricants de figures seront devenues nombreux comme les étoiles du firmament, lorsqu'ils auront reproduit tout ce qui peut tomber sous les sens, quand tous les individus de quatre ou cinq générations auront fait recopier à l'infini leur portrait pris de face, de trois-quart et de profil, à toutes les époques intéressantes de leur carrière, depuis le maillot jusqu'à la dernière grimace que la mort nous fait jeter à la vie; alors l'œuvre intelligente reprendra sans doute tout son mérite aux yeux de la foule, et l'ouvrier commencera à vivre[65].

L'œil exercé de Bourassa le porte aussi à commenter l'éclairage au gaz de l'exposition :

> Sans doute que cette exposition de peintures, à la lueur du gaz, quelqu'intensité que l'on donne au foyer lumineux, n'est pas une heureuse invention; d'autant plus que les tableaux restent exposés durant le jour, et que les rayons du soleil, si rayons il y a, leur arrivent dans une direction tout-à-fait imprévue quand on

a d'abord disposé les objets. Tout le monde sait, les dames surtout, combien les lumières artificielles altèrent l'apparence de certaines couleurs. Toujours est-il bien constaté que toutes les teintes où le rouge et le jaune entrent dans une proportion notable, perdent une partie de l'effet de cette combinaison, même sous le plus brillant luminaire. Et l'on sait le rôle important que jouent ces deux couleurs essentielles dans la peinture; on sait aussi que les tableaux sont exécutés le jour et doivent être vus au jour; plusieurs perdent considérablement à l'exposition du soir. Mais l'administration n'a pu rien faire de mieux, pour le moment, sans doute. D'ailleurs il serait injuste aux artistes de se plaindre, ils ont tous été soumis à la loi commune[66].

Le catalogue de l'exposition, qui se vendait au public pour dix sous, comportait trente-six pages et avait des intentions didactiques en ce sens qu'il reproduisait les textes de F.T. Palsgrave publiés sur la peinture à l'huile, les aquarelles et la gravure dans le *Catalogue of the Fine Arts Collections at the Exhibition of all Nations* tenue à Londre en 1862[67]. La liste des œuvres comprenait 177 entrées pour les peintures, 89 entrées pour les aquarelles, 29 entrées pour les gravures, 39 entrées pour les photographies et 32 entrées pour une catégorie «Miscellaneous» dans laquelle on retrouvait des reproductions d'œuvres de vieux maîtres de l'Arundel Society prêtées par son agent à Montréal, Dawson Bros. En ce qui concerne les tableaux et aquarelles, une quinzaine d'artistes canadiens avaient prêté plus de trente-cinq œuvres parmi lesquelles on trouvait même des plans d'architectes comme Alexander Hutchison, Lawford & Nelson et C.P. Thomas pour des édifices construits à Montréal. Napoléon Bourassa avait lui-même prêté trois tableaux et deux portraits au crayon, ce qui ne l'empêcha par de passer les remarques suivantes sur les œuvres européennes exposées :

On voyait encore sur les murs de la salle des Artisans, des toiles que le catalogue attribue à Rembrandt, à Marilhat, à Isabey et à Turner; mais, quoiqu'elles portent quelques uns des caractères de la manière de ces grands maîtres, ce ne sont cependant que des œuvres très-inférieures : celle signée par Marilhat n'est qu'une étude d'enfant, et les deux pochades dont on accuse Turner d'être le père, ne sont que des rêves faits en dehors de toutes les données de la nature et des bornes du raisonnable[68].

Comme dans le cas de l'exposition précédente, les commentaires parfois détaillés publiés dans les journaux viennent ajouter aux listes du catalogue qui ne comprennent que le sujet de l'œuvre, le nom de l'artiste et le nom du prêteur. Ils nous permettent de repérer les œuvres considérées comme les plus remarquables. L'une de ces œuvres d'importance est sans doute le *Portrait of the Bishop of Montreal* (fig.3), numéro 16 au catalogue des tableaux, peint en pied par John A. Fraser qui travaille pour le studio Notman à ce moment-là[69]. Il semble bien que cette œuvre ait tenu la place d'honneur dans l'exposition non pas tant pour sa qualité d'exécution que parce qu'elle représentait le président de l'AAM, Francis Fulford :

One of the most prominent objects on entering the room, and that to which the point of honor is properly assigned, is the large and characteristic portrait of His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal and Metropolitan, executed by Mr. J. Fraser,

fig.3 John A. Fraser, **L'évêque Francis Fulford,** 1865, huile sur toile, 214 x 140 cm, Diocèse anglican de Montréal. (Photo: Christine Guest, MBAM)

> and presented to the Montreal Art Association by Mr. William Notman. We believe it is generally admitted on all sides that the portrait is a correct one, although we have heard some difference of opinion even among artists (who seldom agree) as to the general banding and accessories. We think, however, it will impress the unsophisticated public, upon the whole, as a noble portrait; and it is a matter of congratulation that the Association possesses such an admirable likeness of their first president; at the same time we doubt not it is their sincere wish that the revered original may preside over them for many years to come[70].

Francis Fulford lui-même fit allusion à ce tableau et à son importance comme premier tableau de la collection de l'AAM dans son discours prononcé lors de la *conversazione* du 27 février 1865 :

> There is also one picture here, painted by a resident artist, Mr. Fraser, which has been presented to the Association by Mr. Notman, who has been anxious to see it a success; but with the condition annexed that the Association shall within five years have a gallery of their own, with no less than 25 pictures, as the nucleus of a permanent collection. As the first President of this Association, I feel no small gratification at this success we have thus far attained. I trust that the picture in question may survive long after I am gone – to witness its growth and increase; that it will find a local habitation and many companions, and partake in silent approval of many periodical meetings of the lovers of Art for social enjoyment and mutual improvement. For though there are higher aspirations and sublimer truths than appertain to these subjects, to the love of which I am bound to try and win your hearts, yet I cannot but feel that what are termed the amusements and recreations of society might be sometimes improved; and to awaken better tastes and kindle aspirations connected with objects of high art, must have a tendency to strengthen the mind, and give it a relish for pursuits of a less frivolous kind[71].

Pour ce don, William Notman fut nommé membre à vie de l'AAM[72]. Le don était cependant conditionnel et visait à servir d'incitatif à la construction d'une galerie d'art et à la constitution d'une collection de peintures, ce qui ne se produisit pas dans les délais fixés par Notman qui fit parvenir la lettre suivante au président Peter Redpath en 1871 :

> In March 1865 I gave, under a notarial Deed, an oil Painting of the Late Bishop Fulford to the Art Association on condition that a collection of Works of Art, comprising not less than 25 paintings should be contributed to form a Gallery, and a local habitation be provided for the same within 5 years, – otherwise the painting to revert to me. I have allowed an additional year to transpire, but as no movement has been made, so far as I am aware of, to fulfil the condition of the Deed. I shall feel obliged if you will give instructions to have the painting returned to me and in conformity with the Notarial Deed of Gift[73].

Le conseil n'eut pas d'autre choix que de retourner le tableau à Notman. En possession de Henry M. Belcher, le gendre de Notman, l'oeuvre fut donnée en 1895 au diocèse anglican de Montréal où elle est toujours conservée.

Il n'y eut pas d'exposition en 1866. Les raids féniens – par des sympathisants américains de l'indépendance irlandaise voulant attaquer le Canada pour l'annexer aux États-Unis –, «kept the public in a disturbed state for several months, beginning at the very time which had been arranged by the Council for their annual exhibition, and calling several of its members to new and arduous duties[74]». La quatrième exposition de l'AAM se tint au troisième étage de la Mercantile Library, rue Bonaventure, qui avait été obtenu sans frais de location[75]. La *conversazione* eut lieu le mardi 5 février 1867 :

> From an early hour in the evening both room being suitably and brillantly lighted, were thronged by the elite and beauty of Montreal Society, no less than six hundred being present of whom, as usual at such re-unions, a large proportion were ladies, who relieved by their brilliant costumes, that sombre garb in which civilized mankind are bound to appear on state occasions. As the company wandered through the rooms to the music of Thorbaha's excellent Quadrille Band, the scene was a very animated one, and all seemed pleased with the choice that had been made by the Council as regarded the place of exhibition and the very superior class of works composing the collection. On this head we believe it is universally admitted that the exhibition is far superior to that of last year[76].

Un membre du conseil d'administration, Thomas Sterry Hunt, fut invité à prononcer le discours d'ouverture et le révérend John Jenkins, président du bureau des commissaires des écoles protestantes de Montréal, prit lui aussi la parole[77].

L'exposition fut ouverte au public dès le lendemain du vernissage, et ce jusqu'au samedi 16 février suivant. Les commentaires publiés dans les journaux firent état de deux aspects différents des expositions précédentes : la qualité des nouvelles salles d'exposition et la qualité des œuvres choisies par le comité d'exposition.

> We think that this Association has reason to congratulate itself upon the success of its endeavours this year to diffuse a taste for the fine arts among our fellow citizens. They have obtained, let us say in the first place, a more suitable gallery than that which they have occupied for their exhibition in former years. They have, as the catalogue will show, a greater number of pictures, and what may perhaps be regarded as a chief merit – the hanging Committee seems to have in general rigorously rejected such paintings as were decidely bad. One or two which should not have been admitted, have escaped judgment; but the collection as a whole if it does not contain any thing of the very first excellence, is a long way before mediocrity[78].

Les activités de l'AAM étaient surtout suivies par les journaux anglophones. Le journal *La Minerve*, qui avait brièvement signalé l'exposition de 1865, publia un long article détaillé sur l'exposition de 1867, dont le passage suivant :

> Ces expositions, comme on le sait déjà, sont d'un genre tout différent de celles que l'on fait en Europe. Ici il ne s'agit pas de prix ni de jugement sur des ouvrages nouveaux; c'est une collection de ce que Montréal renferme de meilleurs travaux d'art, que les propriétaires confient pour quelques jours, à l'Association qui les laisse voir au public moyennant un droit minime. Plusieurs de ces tableaux sont ainsi exposés plusieurs années de suite, sans que le public cesse de les admirer. D'autres, dès la première fois, passent inaperçus, d'autres enfin, sont trop vus.
>
> Nous regrettons que tous ceux qui ont de bonnes peintures, ne les envoient pas à cette exposition. Ils peuvent avoir de bonnes raisons pour garder leurs trésors à domicile, mais nous ne le regrettons pas moins. La meilleure galerie à Montréal, appartient à Monsieur Gibb. Pourtant, il n'a envoyé, en fait de peinture, qu'un petit tableau, très bien, c'est vrai, mais qui n'en fait que plus désirer d'autres de la même touche.
>
> Pourquoi aussi M. Bourassa n'envoie-t-il pas quelques uns de ces précieux bijoux, qui naissent en foule sous son magique pinceau ? Plusieurs personnes croyaient voir dans la salle l'apothéose de Christophe Colomb, dont nous avons parlé l'autre jour. Il y a 130 tableaux à l'huile. Ils représentent des paysages, des portraits, des scènes de moeurs, des animaux. Il y a beaucoup de vues marines. On sait que les anglais sont passionnés pour la peinture marine et animale[79].

La fréquentation de l'exposition fut ainsi mentionnée dans le rapport annuel de l'AAM pour 1867 : «Four hundred and twenty five persons were present at the Conversazione. Two thousand one hundred and five visited the exhibition, and on the last day the price of admission was lowered to ten cents so that all classes might avail themselves of it. The continued bad weather during nearly the whole period of the exhibition was much regretted as it kept many away[80]». Les journaux donnèrent une brève description de la présentation et de l'accrochage de l'exposition : «The walls of the large rooms on the third story of the new Mercantile Library building were hung with pictures from top to bottom; one room being devoted to oil paintings and the other to those in water-colors, and it was difficult to say which was the most attractive[81]». De son côté, *The Montreal Herald* ajouta que :

> In the room set apart for water colours the Sketching Club had in the centre a screen with a series of sketches on each side, those facing the door being illustrations of «contrasts» those on the other «Relics of the past», old scenes, old houses, old people and old incidents. Both sides were highly creditable to the members of the Club. The walls of the room were completely covered with paintings; but the very cursory view which could be taken renders it impossible to give any detailed remarks on the various subjects exhibited[82].

Un bilan positif de l'exposition et de ses objectifs fut dressé dans le rapport annuel de 1867 présenté aux membres :

> The Conversazione held last winter showed a marked improvement on the previous ones in the general average excellence of the pictures exhibited.

> Excepting two pictures, none were admitted which had been shown before and yet the large number of 132 valuable oil paintings, & 434 water-colour drawings (besides works in bronze and marble) most of which had been purchased during the previous year, bore witness to the taste of their owners, and their generosity in lending them for public gratification and improvement. The collection of Water Colours was singularly large and made a distinguishing feature of this exhibition. A room was set apart for that branch of Art and it seemed to be much in favour with visitors. The thanks of the Association are due to the Montreal Drawing Club who kindly contributed a large number of interesting sketches to this portion of the Exhibition. The Council are glad to be able to say that some of our resident artist contributors obtained orders in consequence of this opportunity of displaying their works, and found an advantage in becoming more widely known among picture-buyers. Here, where there are no public galleries, such a collection, though for so short a time, is of great benefit, not only in improving the public taste by the comparison of one picture with another; but in affording even to resident artists models of varieties of style, and the means of comparing their work with that of artists of other Countries[83].

Le catalogue de l'exposition comportait les sections suivantes : peintures à l'huile (132 entrées), aquarelles (108 entrées), aquarelles du Montreal Sketching Club (35 entrées), dessins au crayon (2 entrées), bronzes (9 entrées), marbres et statuettes (9 entrées) ainsi que la liste des œuvres destinées au tirage de l'Art Union qui avaient été acquises par l'AAM[84]. Parmi les œuvres d'artistes canadiens au catalogue, on peut relever 25 tableaux – dont *Crossing Mail at Quebec* de Krieghoff propriété de William Scott – et 82 aquarelles. Plusieurs de ces artistes sont aussi des prêteurs, dont Daniel Fowler, Frederic Bell-Smith et William Sawyer. Quant aux œuvres des collectionneurs, l'auteur de l'article de *La Minerve* jugea bon d'émettre un avertissement aux visiteurs :

> Quelques uns de ces visiteurs, assez peu connaisseurs, jugeaient de la valeur d'un tableau par le nom du propriétaire qui se trouvait inscrit sur le catalogue. Nous croyons pouvoir déclarer que cette méthode peut conduire à de graves erreurs. Il y a des hommes d'une excellente position dans la société qui possèdent de médiocres peintures. Parmi leur collection, il peut également s'en trouver de valeur différente (nous parlons de valeur artistique) et on aurait tort de les confondre dans un même jugement[85].

La cinquième exposition de l'AAM, la dernière tenue sous la présidence de Fulford, fut plus modeste. Elle se tint aussi à la Mercantile Library. La *conversazione* eut lieu le mardi 25 février 1868 et le programme musical sous la direction monsieur Torrington fut donné par l'Amateur Musical Union[86]. On remarqua dans les journaux que ce vernissage fut moins fréquenté que les précédents. L'homme d'affaires et vice-président de l'AAM depuis 1866, Peter Redpath, prit la parole ce soir-là. Il exprima le regret de tous causé par l'absence du Président, souligna que l'an dernier il y avait 425 personnes au vernissage et que le nombre de membres de

l'AAM était passé de 300 à 180 seulement. Des discours furent aussi prononcés par le juge Charles Deway Day, président de l'Institut royal pour l'avancement des sciences et chancelier de l'Université McGill, et par Thomas Sterry Hunt, membre du conseil de l'AAM, les trois conférenciers exprimant l'importance de créer une galerie d'art permanente[87]. L'exposition fut ouverte au public du mercredi 26 au samedi 29 février 1868. Le rapport annuel de 1868 présenté aux membres souligne que 250 personnes étaient présentes au vernissage et que 1 023 personnes seulement avaient visité l'exposition :

> And it is to be mentioned with surprise and regret that the Exhibition did not receive that amount of patronage which it deserved. It is perhaps a question worthy of your consideration whether at any future exhibition it may not be advisable to bring it more thoroughly before the notice of the working classes, and especially among our fellow citizens of French origin, in the hope of merely diminishing the apparent apathy hitherto shown in the smallness of the attendance[88].

La question de la participation des francophones à l'AAM avait déjà été soulevée par *La Minerve* quelques jours avant le vernissage :

> La culture des Beaux-Arts, est à la mesure des progrès de la civilisation et de l'éducation dans un pays. Les Beaux-Arts annoblissent les idées et donnent à une société ce brillant et ce poli auxquels l'admiration ne saurait échappper. Malgré les aptitudes des Canadiens Français pour les Beaux-Arts, nous devons avouer que cette branche importante de l'éducation est en arrière de toutes les autres chez nos compatriotes. On commence, il est vrai à s'adonner à la musique; mais la peinture est réléguée dans l'ombre et non seulement nous n'encourageons pas nos artistes, mais nous laissons tomber tous les appels généreux, tous les exemples d'encouragement qui nous viennent d'ailleurs.
>
> Il existe, à Montréal, une Association des Beaux-Arts alimentée presqu'exclusivement par les Canadiens Anglais. Le 25 du courant, elle donnera son exposition annuelle de tableaux et peintures. Ces années dernières, la société s'est adressée à plusieurs riches citoyens Canadien-Français qui leur ont à peine prêté leur attention. Ce fait est humiliant pour nous et nous devrions avoir à coeur de le faire oublier. Nous pensons que le même appel se fait cette année. Efforçons nous d'y apporter notre contingent d'efforts en souscrivant d'abord, puis en mettant à la disposition de l'Association les objets d'art qui peuvent se trouver chez nos compatriotes[89].

En ce qui concerne l'exposition elle-même, le comité d'exposition rapporta au conseil que photographies et lithographies avaient été exclues de l'exposition projetée[90]. Les caractéristiques de cette exposition furent soulignées par les journaux. Selon *The Montreal Gazette* , «it may be stated that neither the collection of oil paintings or water colours were so numerous as last year, though in point of merit they were undoubtely select, and as regarded Canadian, and especially Montreal artists, infinitely superior to any previous exhibition. All the pictures,

moreover, were new, and had never been exhibited in public before[91]». *The Daily Witness* nota de son côté que : «It is but proper, however, to mention that many regretted to see such an amount of bare walls in the room for the exhibition of the paintings in oil. Surely a greater number of good pictures were available, and if they were not, it was unwise to exclude all pictures that had been exhibited before. If a thing of beauty is a joy for ever, then a good picture will bear a second and even a third exhibition[92]».

Le catalogue de l'exposition de 1868 comprenait 68 entrées pour les peintures, 91 entrées pour les aquarelles, 9 entrées pour la statuaire, 9 entrées pour les bronzes et 5 entrées sous le titre *miscellanae*[93]. Parmi les œuvres exposées, il y avait 17 tableaux et 55 aquarelles d'artistes canadiens. Une œuvre d'Allan Edson, propriété d'H.R. Ives, fut particulièrement remarquée :

> Missisiquoi River, 12, is by A. Edson, a young artist of this city, and is the best out of several of his pictures that are in the exhibition. It is rich in performance, and still richer in promise. The sky is a little hard; but perhaps it is as well that he left it so, for it is in the finishing of their skies that comparatively inexperienced artists often spoil their pictures. The water, too, though not bad, might be better; but two-thirds of the picture, including a large portion of the foreground, is almost beyond all praise[94].

Le comité d'exposition s'était donc efforcé de choisir les œuvres avec plus de soin, misant sur les œuvres récemment acquises par les collectionneurs et qui n'avaient encore jamais été présentées dans les expositions antérieures.

> On this occasion about sixty eight paintings in oil and one hundred fifty water colours, and about eighteen pieces ot Statuary in Bronze and Marble were, by the kindness of the owners lent and exhibited. With one or two exceptions none of these works had previously been exhibited and a considerable proportion had been purchased a short time previous only to the opening of the Exhibition. This fact is mentioned with pleasure, as it evidences that a taste for, and the desire to acquire works of art are not diminishing amongst the inhabitants of this City; although it must be admitted, that when the population and wealth of this City are considered, there is still ground for complaint, that Artists do not find here a larger number of Patrons. But when the number of really good pictures in this City but a few years since, is compared with the number of those of today, there is ground for hope, that ere long, Montreal may not be behind the most favored Cities, of equal size in Europe, in her taste for, and her patronage of the Painter and the Sculptor[95].

Les collectionneurs montréalais étaient plus intéressés à acquérir des œuvres européennes que canadiennes. Il faut noter ici que le conseil de l'AAM, à sa réunion du 28 janvier 1868, forma un comité chargé de rédiger, au nom de l'Association, une pétition au gouvernement «requesting a repeal or modification of the existing Tariff

in so far as it applies to importation of Works of Art[96]». Le vice-président Peter Redpath rapporta à la réunion suivante que la lettre expédiée au ministre des douanes, l'Honorable Samuel Tilley, avait attiré son attention et à la réunion du 7 octobre suivant on prit note qu'il avait accusé réception des amendements suggérés par l'AAM[97]. Ces amendements visaient à exempter de droits d'importation au pays les peintures à l'huile par des artistes au mérite reconnu ou les copies de vieux maîtres par de tels artistes et les sculptures de grandeur naturelle en bronze, marbre ou albâtre. La mise en place de ces mesures plutôt que l'abolition pure et simple des tarifs douaniers sur toutes les œuvres d'art souleva des réactions publiques sur leur application[98].

(La suite et fin de cet article sera publiée dans le prochain numéro des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*.)

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Notes

1 Voir Jean TRUDEL, «Aux origines du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. La fondation de l'Art Association de Montréal en 1860», *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol.XV, nº 1 (1992): p.31-60.

2 Cette période tient en une courte page dans l'histoire officielle du musée, voir Georges-Hébert GERMAIN, *Un musée dans la ville. Une histoire du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal*, Montréal, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 2007, p.25. Pour un portrait d'ensemble de la situation, voir Hervé GAGNON, *Divertir et instruire. Les musées de Montréal au XIX^e siècle*, Sherbrooke, Les Editions G.G.C., 1999.

3 TRUDEL, «Aux origines du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal», p.43.

4 Dennis REID, *«Notre patrie le Canada». Mémoires sur les aspirations nationales des principaux paysagistes de Montréal et de Toronto 1860-1890*, Ottawa, Galerie nationale du Canada, 1979; cette importante publication constitue un complément indispensable à notre étude sur les activités et l'organisation de l'AAM.

5 John Irwin COOPER, *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*, vol.IX de 1861 à 1870, Québec, PUL, 1977, p.318-23.

6 TRUDEL, «Aux origines du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal», p.54.

7 *Statuts de la Province du Canada*, 23 Victoria, Cap. 13, 1860, «Acte pour incorporer l'Association des Arts de Montréal», p.29-31.

8 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, p.20. Une grande confusion règne dans les dates des minutes des réunions entre 1860 et 1863. Un espace blanc marque le jour précis de la réunion d'octobre 1863.

9 *Art Association of Montreal (Founded 1860) (Re-organized under Act, 1863), The Act of Incorporation (23RD Vic., Cap. 13)* and *The By-Laws adopted 11th January, 1864*, Montreal, M. Longmoore & Co., 1864, 21p.

10 *The Incorporated Art Association of Montreal. Regulations Approved by the Council 26th January, 1864*, 3p.

11 *The Art Association of Montreal. Incorporated 1861. Regulations, Approved by the Council, 12th March 1864*, 4p.

12 *Ibid.*, p.2.

13 Joy SPERLING, «Art, Cheap and Good: The Art Union in England and the United States, 1840-60», *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide, a Journal of Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture*, vol.1, nº 1 (printemps 2002), à www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring.02/articles.

14 *Regulations, Approved by the Council, 12th March 1864*, p.1.

15 *Council Meetings 1860-1895*, p.26-27.

16 *Statuts de la Province du Canada*, 27-28 Victoria, Cap. 141, 142, 1864, «Acte pour permettre à l'association des arts de Montréal, d'établir une société des Beaux-Arts, en rapport avec ses autres opérations», p.624-25.

17 *Council Meetings*, 19 novembre 1864, p.31-33.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*, 24 mars 1865, p.37.

20 *Ibid.*, 1 novembre 1865, p.42-43.

21 *Ibid.*, 8 novembre 1865, p.43-44.

22 *Ibid.*, 13 avril 1866, p.49-50.

23 *Ibid.*, 14 juillet 1866, p.50.

24 *Ibid.*, 29 décembre 1866, p.32.

25 *Ibid.*, 26 janvier 1867, p.54.

26 *Ibid.*, 30 janvier 1867, p.55 et 57-58.

27 *Art Association of Montreal. Fourth Exhibition 1867. Catalogue (...)*, Montreal, Louis Perrault & Co., p.17.

28 *Council Meetings*, 2 février 1867, p.59.

29 *Ibid.*, 30 janvier 1867, p.55 et 57-58.

30 *Ibid.*

31 *The Montreal Gazette*, 16 février 1867.

32 *The Daily News*, 16 février 1867.

33 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, 21 décembre 1867, p.36-37.

34 *Council Meetings*, 8 février 1868, p.70.

35 *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 février 1868.

36 *The Montreal Herald*, 26 février 1868.

37 En ce qui concerne les expositions, voir Jonathan FRANKLIN, *Index des catalogues d'art parus au Canada au XIX^e siècle*, Ottawa, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, Bibliothèque et Archives, Documents hors série, volumes 1 et 2, 2004.

38 *Regulations, Approved by the Council, 12th March 1864*, p.1.

39 *Regulations Approved by the Council 26th January, 1864*, p.1.

40 *Second Conversazione, Art Association of Montreal, Held February 11, 1864*, Montreal, Herald Steam Press, 1864, 15p.

41 *The Montreal Gazette*, 12 février 1864.

42 Napoléon BOURASSA, «Quelques réflexions critiques à propos de l'Art Association of Montreal», *La Revue Canadienne*, tome I (1864): p.180.

43 *The Montreal Gazette*, 11 février 1864.

44 Document manuscrit sans titre conservé dans les Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal qui semble être le rapport annuel de 1865, p.2.

45 *The Montreal Gazette*, 17 février 1864.

46 *Ibid.*

47 Napoléon BOURASSA, «Quelques réflexions critiques à propos de l'Art Association of Montreal», p.180.

48 *Ibid.*, p.181-82.

49 *The Montreal Gazette*, 6 février 1864.

50 *Ibid.*, 12 février 1864.

51 *The Montreal Herald*, 12 février 1864.

52 *The Montreal Gazette*, 17 février 1864.

53 *The Daily Witness*, 17 février 1864.

54 *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 février 1865. On y publia aussi le détail du programme musical.

55 *The Montreal Herald*, 28 février 1865.

56 Napoléon BOURASSA, «Causerie artistique sur l'exposition de l'Art Association, etc.», *La Revue Canadienne*, tome II (1865): p.171.

57 *The Montreal Herald*, 28 février 1865; *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 février 1865.

58 *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 février 1865.

59 *The Montreal Herald*, 28 février 1865.

60 Document manuscrit sans titre conservé dans les Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal qui semble être le rapport annuel de 1865, p.4.

61 *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 février 1865.

62 BOURASSA, «Causerie artistique sur l'exposition de l'Art Association, etc.», p.174-175.

63 *Ibid.*, p.173.

64 *The Daily Witness*, 8 mars 1865.

65 BOURASSA, «Causerie artistique sur l'exposition de l'Art Association, etc.», p.173.

66 *Ibid.*, p.174.

67 *Art Association Exhibition, 1865. Catalogue of Oil and Water Colour Paintings, Engravings, Photographs, and other Works of Art, Lent for the occasion, and exhibited at the Mechanics' Hall, Montreal, February 27, 1865*, Montreal, Herald Steam Press, 1865, 36p.

68 BOURASSA, «Causerie artistique sur l'exposition de l'Art Association, etc.», p.178.

69 Sur ce tableau et sur Fraser, voir REID, *«Notre patrie le Canada»*, p.134-39.

70 *The Montreal Gazette*, 1 mars 1865: voir aussi *The Montreal Herald*, 28 février 1865 et *Montreal Witness*, 4 mars 1865.

71 *The Montreal Herald*, 28 février 1865.

72 *Council Meetings*, 30 janvier 1867, p.56.

73 *Ibid.*, 1 avril 1871, p.87. Voir Stanley G. TRIGGS, *Notman. L'empreinte d'un studio*, Toronto, Musée des beaux-arts de l'Ontario/The Coach House Press, 1986, p.27 et p.169, note 35.

74 *The Montreal Gazette*, 6 février 1867.

75 *Council Meetings*, 19 janvier 1867, p.52-53.

76 *The Montreal Gazette*, 6 février 1867.

77 *Ibid.*

78 *The Montreal Herald*, 6 février 1867.

79 *La Minerve*, 12 février 1867.

80 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, 21 décembre 1867, p.36.

81 *The Daily Witness*, 9 février 1867.

82 *The Montreal Herald*, 6 février 1867.

83 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, 21 décembre 1867, p.35-36.

84 *Art Association of Montreal. Fourth Exhibition 1867. Catalogue of Oil and Water Colour Paintings, Statuary Bronzes and other Works of Art, Lent for the occasion, and exhibited at the Gallery of the Association, at the Mercantile Library Building. Also, List of prizes purchased for the Art Union, 5th February, 1867*, Montreal, Louis Perrault & Co., Printers, 1867, 17p.

85 *La Minerve*, 12 février 1867.

86 *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 février 1868.

87 *Ibid.*, et *The Montreal Herald*, 26 février 1868.

88 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, 9 janvier 1869, p.42-43.

89 *La Minerve*, 11 février 1868.

90 *Council Meetings*, 22 février 1868, p.73.

91 *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 février 1868.

92 *The Daily Witness*, 26 février 1868.

93 Art Association of Montreal. *Fifth Exhibition 1868. Catalogue of Oil and Water Colour Paintings, Statuary, Bronzes, and Other Works of Art Lent for the Occasion, and Exhibited at the Mercantile Library Building, Montreal, 25th February, 1868*, Montreal, Herald Steam Press, 19p.

94 *The Daily Witness*, 26 février 1868.

95 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings January 1860-November 1954*, 9 janvier 1869, p.41-42.

96 *Council Meetings*, 28 janvier 1868, p.69.

97 *Ibid.*, 8 février 1868, p.70; 7 octobre 1868, p.75.

98 *The Montreal Gazette*, 5 et 7 mai 1868.

THE ART ASSOCIATION OF MONTREAL
The Years of Uncertainty: 1863-1877

This article reconstructs the little-known activities of the Art Association of Montreal during the period shortly after its founding in 1860. The research derives largely from local newspaper accounts as well as AAM documents and exhibition catalogues in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' archives. Under its first president, Francis Fulford, the AAM was officially incorporated in 1863 and a year later, twenty-three bylaws were passed to ensure the founders' original intention to construct a permanent building to house exhibition galleries, a lecture hall, a library and a school of art and design. A curator would function as the institution's director along with five permanent committees. An Art Union to raise funds for the permanent collection by selling annual subscriptions for draws on small Canadian art works and to provide its subscribers access to exhibitions and events, was in place by 1865. Although the scheme had to receive government approval as it was a form of gambling, the project became less of a priority three years later because of the lack of public support. Instead, the AAM's board decided to devote its energy and funds towards creating a permanent art gallery.

During this early period, the AAM put into play its 1864 by-law of an annual exhibition of juried work. In 1864, the Association's second exhibition (the first was in 1860) of nearly two hundred works, mainly European but including twenty-eight Canadian objects from private lenders and Quebec artists was held at the Mechanic's Hall. The exhibition's opening, called a *conversazione*, was restricted to AAM members. It was accompanied by orchestral music and a lengthy speech by Fulford that was duly recorded in the newspapers – a pattern that would be repeated at each annual. While the press reservedly admired the exhibition, the painter Napoleon Bourassa, one of the few French-Canadian AAM members, had particular praise for works from Benaiah Gibb's collection. Bourassa would be similarly impressed by work lent by American collectors from Boston and New York for the next exhibition held the following year, also in February and at the same place. However he was somewhat disappointed by the lack of progress demonstrated by Canadian artists. He also questioned the exhibition's inclusion of photographs as legitimate works of art and complained that the gas lighting disadvantaged the colour of the pictures. Nevertheless, the exhibition catalogue lists a robust three hundred and sixty-six entries along with a lengthy didactic text. Fifteen Canadian artists lent thirty-five works, which also included architectural plans for Montreal buildings. While Bourassa (who had lent five works) noted "old master" paintings attributed to Rembrandt, Turner and others, he was less than convinced by the quality of these works. The Montreal press was quite taken by John Fraser's *Portrait of the Bishop of Montreal*, which was to

be given to the AAM's permanent collection by Fraser's associate, the photographer William Notman. However, the donation was dependent upon the construction of an art gallery by 1870 and when that did not occur, the painting was returned to Notman and is now owned by the Anglican Diocese of Montreal.

Because of the threat of Fenian raids by Irish-Americans into Canada, the 1866 AAM exhibition was cancelled. In February of the following year, the fourth annual show was held at the recently-constructed Mercantile Library and as previously, the opening was a musical *conversazione* with speeches. While the French and especially the English-language press continued its positive support, *La Minerve*, which had previously paid little attention to the AAM, now commented at length on the exhibition. Although the newspaper was enthusiastic towards the 1867 annual, it regretted the lack of good pictures and that there was only one small painting from the superb collection of Benaiah Gibb as well as insufficient examples of Bourassa's "magic brush." The number of objects was less than in the prior annual, although over one hundred works were by Canadian artists, some of whom were also lenders to the show.

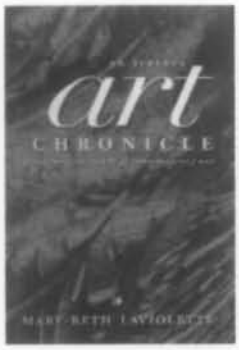
The fifth annual exhibition was again held at the Mercantile Library but the number of AAM members had severely declined from the previous year. It was perhaps for that reason that the three speeches delivered at the *conversazione* stressed the importance of creating a permanent art museum. The relatively poor attendance at the exhibition by the general public, especially by francophones, was noted in the AAM's 1868 *Annual Report*. Earlier, *La Minerve* had commented that French-Canadian art had not enjoyed its due recognition at these exhibitions. The newspaper emphasized that the AAM was the enclave of English-Canadians and that the small number of works borrowed from francophone collectors and artists for the annuals was humiliating. It urged French-Canadians to make a determined effort to rectify the situation by becoming subscribers to the AAM and to ensure that more works from the francophone community were part of the annual exhibitions.

The 1868 annual was substantially smaller with only one hundred and eighty-two works, and just seventeen oils and fifty-five watercolours by Canadian artists. Because of prior criticism of their mechanical process, photographs and lithographs were no longer presented. On the positive side, the press noted the improved selection of objects and that none of the works had been seen in previous annuals. Around the time of the exhibition, and because Montreal collectors were primarily interested in purchasing European art, the AAM executive committee petitioned the government concerning tariffs on imported works. They requested the removal of customs charges on oil paintings by recognized artists, on copies of works by these same "old masters," and on life-size bronze, marble and alabaster sculpture. Such changes, rather than the complete elimination of import duties, would stir up public reaction once the new laws were put in place. (Note: This article will continue in the next volume of *The Journal of Canadian Art History*.)

Sandra Paikowsky

A HISTORY OF ART IN ALBERTA
1905-1970
Nancy TOWNSHEND
Calgary: Bayeux Arts, 2005
304p., illus., $39.95

AN ALBERTA ART CHRONICLE
Adventures in Recent and Contemporary Art
Mary-Beth LAVIOLETTE
Canmore: Altitude Publishing, 2006
544p., illus., $39.95



State anniversaries are occasions to reflect on what went before and to construct narratives that impart a level of order and coherence on the events of the past. Alberta's centennial in 2005 saw the publication of two major accounts of artistic practice in the province: Nancy Townshend's *A History of Art in Alberta: 1905-1970* and Mary Beth Laviolette's *An Alberta Art Chronicle: Adventures in Recent and Contemporary Art*. Although different in structure, style and scope, together these two publications provide an overview of one hundred years of artistic production in Alberta. Given the dearth of comprehensive histories of the art of the province, they will be much-used reference sources for many years to come.

Reviewing these books provides an opportunity to think through the characteristics and requirements of the art history survey text. As Robert

Nelson[1] noted in 1997, it functions as the *map* of art history, a characterization that underscores the spatial range as well as the directional quality of the genre. Surveys thus play a central role in establishing chronology and historical development, locating important centers of artistic activity, as well as formulating a list of artists and works that are deemed to have value. Since their inception in the late eighteenth century, museums have been shaping and reshaping the list of great artists; but it is with the printed global survey texts of post-war America that such lists were refined and the canon of important works and their creators were disseminated across North American universities. That the survey is a powerful ideological force should be no surprise: over the past decades the general art history survey has been under constant attack, most notably from feminist art historians querying the lack of women artists included in the list (and the manner in which those lucky few have been incorporated into the narrative), to post-colonial critiques of the positioning of "non-western" artistic practices both historical and contemporary, and the more recent questioning of the value of insisting on a teleological narrative of artistic progress in the wake of post-modern critiques of master-narratives. Nevertheless, the art history survey remains the most dominant pedagogical instrument in university art department curricula, if only because of the familiarity of the model and the ease with which mass-produced textbooks provide material support for the delivery of course content.

The concerns raised in considering the organizational structure of the general survey are just as easily transposed onto existing surveys of Canadian art. These much smaller volumes prompt similar questions of the nature of canon formation, the dominance of artistic progress as an organizational trope and, while not entirely unique to Canadian surveys, the mapping of artistic progress onto a prevailing narrative of national becoming. A cursory look at surveys of artmaking in Canada produced over the past one hundred years presents the image of chronological development from the arrival of French settlers to the present. In the still-widely used volumes of J. Russell Harper (*Painting in Canada: A History*, 1966, 2nd ed. 1977) and Dennis Reid (*A Concise History of Canadian Painting*, 1973, 2nd ed. 1988), painting was the only medium examined, formal description dominated the text, and the volumes' narrative structure depended on national artistic development that pivoted on two artistic moments: the formation of the Group of Seven and the emergence of international abstraction. Anne Newlands' *Canadian Art: From its Beginnings to 2000* (2000) and Joan Murray's *Canadian Art in the Twentieth Century* (1999) are more recent publications that both expand the range of media considered and add artists ignored in the previous surveys, most notably artists of First Nations ancestry. Neither, however, has given much consideration to the nature of the survey itself or to the terms within which a national canon is formed.

Into this field come *A History of Art in Alberta: 1905-1970* and *An Alberta Art Chronicle*. One of the main challenges acknowledged by both authors was the production of the art history of a province that has been marginalized in the major surveys of Canadian art. In the publications cited above, the centrality of artists from Eastern and Central Canada goes unquestioned, with Vancouver and more recently Winnipeg as representative of "the West." A rationale for such marginalization can be made in relation to the dominance (in terms of economic as well as cultural clout) of the older and larger cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, and their ability to anoint the players in the national and even international art scene. A counterpoint to such thinking can come from the argument that a vibrant cultural scene – and an active arts community intent on getting its work seen outside of the immediate geographical context – will produce institutions that can play a leadership role in bringing local artists to a broader audience. A key example would be Winnipeg's Plug In Gallery whose director Wayne Baerwaldt successfully nominated Janet Cardiff (then professor of Fine Art at the University of Lethbridge) as Canada's representative to the 2001 Venice Biennial. An earlier example was the ability of Regina College to turn the Emma Lake Workshops into an international gathering-place for modernist artists in the 1960s and early 70s. Although both might be considered the exceptions that test the rule, they do suggest that cultural power in Canada is not as centralized or as powerful as might be thought.

The marginalization of Alberta art from mainstream accounts of Canadian art production – both historical and contemporary – nevertheless remains an issue that many artists in the province feel quite strongly. In her introduction to *A History of Art in Alberta 1905-1970*, Nancy Townshend writes: "Alberta's art deserves to be written on its own terms, with Alberta as its own centre of artmaking." (p.i) On the one hand, this is very clearly an appeal to examine art on its own merit, outside of assessments of "fit" with models from central Canada that might have been in play from time to time. This seems particularly useful in Alberta where art institutions have a relatively recent history: the Edmonton Museum of Arts, the province's first art gallery, was incorporated in 1924 but suffered through a series of inadequate temporary locations and had few acquisitions until 1952; the Alberta Society of Artists was formed in 1931 through the efforts of British immigrant artist A.C. Leighton as a means of professionalizing artistic practice throughout the province; and H.G. Glyde was hired in 1946 by the University of Alberta in Edmonton to set up a Department of Fine Arts. While the institutional model might have come from elsewhere, the creation of spaces for making, teaching and exhibiting art resulted in the formation of a local sphere for the exploration and testing of (local) ideas.

On the other hand, Townshend's call for a focus on "Alberta as its own center of artmaking" could equally be seen as a methodological imperative, which seeks to identify an essential characteristic that marks art made in the province. In writing about the emergence of modernism in the work of Maxwell Bates, W.L. Stevenson, Roy Kiyooka and Illingworth Kerr during the 1940s and 50s, Townshend underlines the individualism of each of these artists and their unwillingness to follow an existing model: "the individualism in Alberta's post-war art till 1970 was so substantial, the commitment to making art in Alberta so resolved that a true flowering of Alberta's post-war modern art occurred, this time strong enough to stem off artificial dominant cultures that held no relevance to, and in Alberta." (p.99) This rhetoric of pioneer individualism can be found in many accounts of Alberta's history, particularly as a response to perceptions of backwardness or conservatism. In these narratives, individualism is a useful strategy for an active differentiation from the political and/or cultural center of the nation. Employed as both a reactive and a proactive strategy, Alberta's presentation of itself as pioneer, renegade and self-sufficient loner has consistently worked to enhance the province's self-image. Conveniently, such attributes are also key to art historical notions of avant-gardism, a concept that fits well into Townshend's narrative of Alberta's modernist art historical past.

Mary-Beth Laviolette takes up the story of Alberta's artistic production in 1970 and is much more explicit about the organizational imperative of the survey format. Stating from the outset that the book will show evidence of her own intellectual interests and geographical location, Laviolette frames *An Alberta Art Chronicle* as an "adventure" rather than a strict or exhaustive survey of art activity in the province. The sense of location comes through not only in the situatedness of the author but in the book's organization: the first quarter addresses the question of place, with a particular emphasis on landscape and how successive generations of artists have responded to the physical (geographical) characteristics of Alberta, either through straightforward landscape painting, photography or forms that explore a more abstract but nevertheless potent sense of location; and two other sections trace the distinctive trajectories of artmaking in the major cities of Edmonton and Calgary. The final section uses thematic groupings to discuss the history of ceramics in Alberta, feminism, post-modernism and more recent artistic practices.

At over five hundred pages, Laviolette's book is extensive and will be a particularly useful introduction to the work of artists known and unknown outside the province, and the conditions that have contributed to the development of their work. Her discussion of art institutions is particularly helpful as it provides an explanatory context for some of the idiosyncrasies of Alberta's recent

art history. One example that Laviolette explores at some length is the dramatically different kind of artmaking produced in Edmonton and Calgary: Edmonton's longstanding support of formalist painting and sculptural traditions is discussed in terms of the formative influences of the University of Alberta's Department of Art and Design and the staff of the Edmonton Art Gallery throughout the 1970s and 80s. In contrast, Calgary developed a somewhat more diverse set of practices through the pedagogical framework provided by the Alberta College of Art, as well as the differently structured Department of Art at the University of Calgary. As Laviolette notes, the presence of alternative art spaces in both cities was instrumental in enabling a diversity of artistic practices, but Calgary seems to have been more successful in building on this diversity and helping to bring Alberta's artists greater national and international recognition.

One of the differences between Townshend's and Laviolette's books lies in their approach to the idea of a unique or distinct "Alberta" art. Throughout her text, Townshend demonstrates an interest in identifying the characteristics that unify Alberta's most important artists. By privileging the work of modernists in the province, she argues that a shared sense of individualism and a belief in subjective approaches to artmaking enabled artists like Maxwell Bates, W.L. Stevenson and Marion Nicoll to break away from the imitative conservatism of their British-trained teachers and find their own voice. Laviolette, in contrast, is more interested in how Alberta as a physical and psychic space has shaped the work of artists in the province. Even when she is discussing artists working in similar genres (landscape, video, steel sculpture), she is less concerned with identifying common characteristics than with thinking through how the artists' interactions with their physical and artistic location have shaped their practice. This questioning extends to a reflection on the "place" of Alberta art within the larger national imaginary: "Alberta artists somehow sense that beyond all the imported influences and traditions, the prairie west was and still is 'radically and absolutely different from the East in every respect.'" (p.127) Although Laviolette discusses the lack of critical engagement with Alberta artists by critics from Eastern and Central Canada, she does so by raising the much more general question of whether recognition "from outside" is the only form of artistic or critical legitimacy. She thus problematizes the center/periphery relationship that seems to plague so many writers on Canadian (let alone Alberta) culture not by ignoring it, but by foregrounding the question of "the regional" as both a grounded sense of place (where one is from) and as a critical stance that implies a certain rejection of the inherent dominance of the center.

Writing any kind of survey is a complicated business, and the added pressure of providing an overarching narrative that will better link the artists and works selected for (re)presentation only adds to the challenge. Both Nancy

Townshend and Mary-Beth Laviolette's books are useful contributions to any history of Canadian art – particularly if one of the challenges currently facing the writing of art history is the questioning of the very terms along which the (national) canon is formed. Of the two, Townshend's book is possibly the less successful as the author favours a disjointed style of writing and is hampered by a need to locate an essential "Alberta" character. Laviolette is much more aware of the limitations of the survey genre and organizes her extensive discussion of over one hundred and seventy artists in order to examine some of the received ideas (both within and outside the province) about the nature of artistic production in Alberta. As a result, her book is not only a valuable reference guide but also a considered reflection on how artistic communities are formed, and the impact of geographical and social spaces on the work of artists. If some of the global surveys cited at the beginning of this review had been more cognizant of the necessity of thinking more critically about "place" in the history of artistic production, then the "map" of art history might contain a few new routes.

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Note

1 Robert S. NELSON, "The Map of Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 1 (March 1997): 28-40.

UNSETTLING ENCOUNTERS
First Nations Imagery in the Art of Emily Carr
Gerta MORAY
Vancouver/Toronto: UBC Press
and Seattle: University of Washington Press
386p., illus., $75

Emily Carr is to Canadian art what Louis Riel is to Canadian history. They both incite extreme reactions and their lives and work provide a seemingly endless field for exploration, conjecture and debate. Ignored for much of her lifetime, championed by feminists in the 1980s, vilified in the 1990s for cultural appropriation, Carr's writing and artwork have been the subject of numerous publications; yet she appears to be a far from exhausted subject. Her numerous eccentricities, her status as a marginalized, unmarried female artist in a community still dominated by late-Victorian attitudes, her fictionalized autobiographical writings and most importantly, her distinctive paintings insure our continued interest. Gerta Moray's work on Emily Carr influenced this discourse several years before the publication of the book under review. Douglas Cole's 2000 article "The Invented Indian/The Imagined Emily" in *BC Studies* relies heavily on Moray's doctoral dissertation, "Northwest Coast Culture and the Early Indian Paintings of Emily Carr, 1899-1913," completed in 1993. It is Emily Carr's early work that has been Gerta Moray's project and through careful consideration, she constructs a pointed yet compassionate window into the life and work of a woman who lived uneasily on the overlapping boundaries of gender, race and the social conventions of her time. Moray's title, *Unsettling Encounters*, is derived from the notion that Carr's encounters with the Haida, Coast Salish, Tlingit and Nuu-chah-nulth (among the nine North West Coast nations whose territories she painted), were deeply unsettling to her and subsequently, to her audience.

In the preface, Moray describes the book as a recontextualization project, a positioning and re-positioning of Carr within a series of "concentric circles: demographic change, missionary activity, the development of anthropology, and the collection of First Nations artifacts." She reconstructs the attitudes and historical context in which Carr worked, particularly the oppressive policies of the Canadian government implemented through the authority of the Indian Act, which outlawed potlatches, confiscated valuable cultural property and removed children to residential schools. In addition to this careful reconstruction of social and historical context, Moray uses Carr's early work to construct a compelling visual narrative. Dismissed by Cole as mere salvage anthropology, by others as the less interesting floundering of an artist who had yet to find her oeuvre, Moray invites the reader to take another look. Lacking the somber drama of the later works, the earlier images are more intimate portraits of village life and older abandoned sites. Not the empty lands, the colonial fantasies for which she and the Group of Seven have been critiqued, these paintings and drawings are inhabited: boys perch on war canoes, children and dogs play in the shadows of totem poles. This is an intensely human world and while Carr may have initially been invested in the notion of the "vanishing Indian," Moray convincingly argues that she came to see that she was witnessing profound change, rather than death; the people were becoming "modern, but still Indian." During her research, Moray endeavored to retrace Carr's artistic journeys, travelling to most of the villages she visited and interviewing the people who still remembered her. The nature of Carr's relationships with First Nations people has been alternately exaggerated and ridiculed as sham. Moray carefully reconstructs Carr's complex and subtle relationships with the people who were her guides, advisors and friends. Negotiated within the constraints of social distance in an essentially racist environment, Carr's interactions are significant on this point alone.

Moray also describes the process by which Carr's voice and vision is endorsed as authentic, while the people whose work she celebrates became increasingly silenced. Her discussion of the early curatorial essays and journalistic response to Carr's paintings makes for chilling reading. She provides the complete text of an editorial review of the 1927 *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern*, which is particularly useful in helping the reader understand the prevalent attitudes of the day. She describes the growing enthusiasm for Carr's work, which from its inception emphasized her role as medium for the spectral presence and "Indian feeling" of the nations of the North West Coast. However the degree to which Carr is implicated in these fictions during her lifetime remains unclear. She had a strong sense of her own artistic importance, so that her position as self-appointed spokesperson and artist was a slippery one.

The book is not without its shortcomings. Carr's clumsy identification with the people whose vigorous creative life she celebrated in her own work and who

were the uncomfortable recipients of her "love," is not adequately addressed. Her appropriation of First Nations imagery in her own craft production also warrants further discussion. A troubling flaw is the short description of contemporary North West Coast art that closes the book, unfortunately titled "Beyond Emily Carr." Too brief to do justice to the vibrancy of contemporary North West Coast artistic and ceremonial practice, the device of inserting a fictionalized "what would Carr think" echoes the very paternalism that Moray has worked so hard to deconstruct. It inserts Emily Carr into an artistic and cultural revitalization in which she had absolutely no involvement, real or imagined. It would have been much better to conclude with the real incident describing Emily Carr's gift of her art supplies to Nuu-chah-nulth artist George Clutesi, with whom she visited in the mid-1940s; or perhaps to expand on Carr's continued posthumous role in displacing and diminishing both the historic and contemporary work of North West Coast artists. Other sections also beg for expansion. Moray's discussion of Carr's intimate spiritual and artistic connection with female carvings is among the most interesting in the book and the images are certainly among Carr's most powerful. One of these, *Guyasdoms D'Sonoqua*, was chosen as the cover illustration and it can only be hoped that the too-brief analysis of Carr's personal symbolism will be the subject of further attention by the author.

Marcia Crosby, a Tsimshian-Haida art historian and cultural critic, wrote the forward to the book and in a recent newspaper interview, Moray credited her with "intervening into the Carr literature." She acknowledged the importance of their "extended conversations," which no doubt ended in Crosby's contribution to this publication. Crosby's forward, gentler than her 1991 critique in *Vancouver Anthology*, privileges Haida memory against the better known and fictionalized memoirs constructed by Carr herself. Positioning Carr as a "guest" who only partially understood and inaccurately remembered her experiences, Crosby writes in her forward to *Unsettling Encounters* that "through Moray's text, I recognize Carr more clearly in a context I know and understand: race relations and the colonial and patriarchal history of British Columbia and Canada." It is this interdisciplinary merger and her respectful acknowledgement of Carr's Aboriginal critics that forms the key strength of Moray's work.

That this publication is sound scholarship is indisputable. Awarded a CLIO Award by the Canadian Historical Association and shortlisted for the British Columbia Award for Canadian Non-Fiction in 2007, *Unsettling Encounters* is meticulously researched, thoughtfully organized and engaging reading. The book's lavish production is ample proof of Carr's enduring popularity, but this is much more than a coffee-table tome. The inclusion of detailed maps and Carr's humorous and anecdotal drawings, the juxtaposition of archival photographs of

coastal villages and people beside Carr's sketches of the same or similar subjects, provide important visual information to support Moray's arguments. The ninety-one plates, including many reproduced in colour for the first time, reveal Carr to be a sensitive observer and a motivated chronicler of one of the most pivotal periods of First Nations history and Canadian art. Together with Moray's skillfully woven text, the carefully selected illustrations make this an important contribution, not only to the literature on Emily Carr and Canadian art, but to the growing body of literature on the mutual and transformative impact of contact across cultural boundaries.

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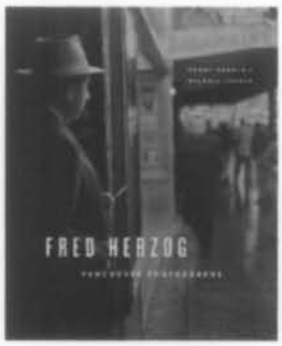
SEDUCED BY MODERNITY
The Photography of Margaret Watkins
Mary O'CONNOR and Katherine TWEEDIE
Montreal and Kingston:
McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007
321p., illus., $49.95

FRED HERZOG
Vancouver Photographs
Grant ARNOLD, Fred HERZOG,
and Michael TURNER
Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2007
160p., illus., $45



Two recent publications on photography aim to awaken interest in Canadian artists whose contributions have been missed or undervalued until now. *Seduced by Modernity: The Photography of Margaret Watkins* is the biography of the Hamilton-born artist who has previously been known and appreciated for Pictorialist and advertising photographs made while living in New York during and for a decade after the First World War. The book has been co-authored by Mary O'Connor, a professor of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster and Katherine Tweedie, a photographic specialist and retired professor of Studio Arts at Concordia. *Fred Herzog: Vancouver Photographs* is a photographic book published in conjunction with the first major exhibition of his work, organized by Grant Arnold, curator of British Columbia art for the Vancouver Art Gallery. The two books are

comparable to the degree that both fill gaps in our knowledge of photographic Modernism. They are equally thought provoking in terms of the authors' attempts at answering reasons for those gaps. In other respects, the books are significantly different. An institutional perspective frames the Herzog project, while second-wave feminism plays an important role in delivering the portrait of Watkins. The authors were working with different expectations of reception, and they were not wrong. Although not entirely obscure, Herzog's remarkable oeuvre broke over the Vancouver art scene like a wave; O'Connor and Tweedie's long anticipated monograph has been received by the photographic community with pleasure and relief.

Margaret Watkins was born in Hamilton, Ontario in 1884. Until the age of fifteen, she was a child of bourgeois privilege. A combination of parental health crises and business failures brought the family down the social ladder and established certain productive tensions in Watkins' life: a restlessness with bourgeois domesticity and a desire for a home of her own; a sense of indebtedness to her Glasgow aunts and an independence of mind. She left Hamilton at the age of twenty-four and never again lived in Canada. Having been pushed by the family's circumstances to turn her creative talents to account, she headed for the Roycroft Arts and Crafts community in East Aurora, New York, where working as a chambermaid, she learned new skills such a book illumination and was introduced to the movement's marriage of utopian ideals and cottage industry. Moving to another summer place, Sydney Lanier Camp that catered to the escapist desires of the rich, Watkins encountered a stricter aesthetic code as well as its usual complement, free love. In her summers at Lanier she made soft-focus images of campers and Bible plays, both contrived with the latter excruciatingly so. Away from the Camp, she learned photography at Arthur Jamieson's portrait studio in Boston. She went on to study at the Clarence H. White Summer School in Maine where she produced increasingly disciplined, lucid views of the landscape at water's edge. The reader begins to see something of the talent that would make Watkins' reputation over her next thirteen years in New York.

Three chapters of the book are dedicated to the New York period from 1915 to 1928. This is the Watkins that Canadian photographic specialists may have thought they knew. Of the eight works by Watkins held by the National Gallery of Canada, six belong to this time. The context of their creation is clearly illuminated by O'Connor and Tweedie, who patiently trace the evolution of Watkins' style from Pictorialism into Modernism along with her intelligent application of advanced formal and philosophical ideas to the burgeoning world of photographic advertising. Watkins' work was widely exhibited during this period, winning many prizes; and she was increasingly active as a teacher, executive member of the Pictorial Photographers of America, and personal assistant to Clarence White, an involvement that would blight the end of her New York career and effectively drive

her from the field. The ins-and-outs of the legal battle are evenly handled by the authors and none of it is too surprising given the stinginess of human affairs. Far more interesting are the authors' analyses of Watkins' pictures, using background information on the cult of healthy bodies and materialist appetites to inform our reading of nudes and domestic still-lifes. To understand *Still Life with Mirror and Flowers* (1925-27) as a study for Macy's department store advertising, enlarges our appreciation of the intersections between photographic art and photographic experience in the pages of a "woman's magazine." Appreciation for the finer things, instilled in Watkins as a girl, persists in these photographic objects and makes the transition from her Victorian upbringing to her Modernist attitude rather more predictable than puzzling.

Watkins left for Europe in 1928, another rupture in her life in that she never worked in advertising or editorial photography again. She continued to photograph, however, in bursts of activity on her travels through Europe and in the former U.S.S.R. Although a tourist, she thought as a photographic artist, exploring interior and exterior spaces for their interesting conjunctions of soft light and modern engineering. In Leningrad and Moscow, she favoured signs of the "new society" such as reconstruction projects, massive posters, and child-care arrangements for the workers. In Glasgow, between stints as a caregiver for her aging aunts, she photographed the industrialisation of shipping on the Clyde River. The authors explain Watkins' attraction to the river as a way of breaking out of her aunts' claustrophobic environment – one that she would herself perpetuate as an isolated woman in her last years. The river seems also a reminder of other picture-places – the water's edge in Maine, the Seine in Paris; dappled light and patterned reflections being the attractors for a photographer of Watkins' predilections.

Seduced by Modernity is a biographical treatment of Watkins the creator. Her affective life inside and outside the family or within photographic circles is considered only as it intersects with periods of creativity. Even her stint as a landlady after World War II is narrated in terms of intellectual growth and musical appreciation. The authors immersed themselves in the legacy of Watkins' "daft solitary enthusiasms" (p.261). Watkins accumulated books, magazines, newspaper clippings, cards, and programmes, annotating these things with comments and exclamations. She also wrote poems and letters, maintaining some Canadian friendships from girlhood to the end of her life. These things contextualise Watkins' photographic production and contribution to photographic Modernism, and the biography is richly informative on those levels. Despite Watkins' early exit from Canada, the book can also claim a place in Canadian cultural history. It adds a photographic chapter to the history of expatriate Canadian artists and writers whose resonance in the Canadian imagination is perhaps heightened by their decision one day to leave.[1]

O'Connor and Tweedie take a balanced look at Watkins' legacy. They describe her photographic work with close, loving attention. They identify

better-known American photographers Margaret Bourke-White, Paul Outerbridge and Ralph Steiner as her students. The authors also note that Watkins' work was out of circulation from the 1930s to the time of her death, and only came to light gradually through exhibitions and books on the influence of the Clarence H. White School of Photography and the work of women photographers, research conducted mainly by feminist cultural historians. Watkins' inability to stick it out in New York or reluctance to return might have been framed by O'Connor and Tweedie as a personal tragedy and a collective loss. That they stay their hand is the very strength of this biography, honouring Watkins for the fine work that she did and leaving her more ordinary moments open for ordinary people to walk in.

Born 1930, in Bad Friedrichshall, Württemberg, Germany, Fred Herzog's early life was full of the violence of war and the upheaval of displacement. By contrast, his ideas about photography and the body of work that he began to produce in the 1950s appear to have been formed with remarkable coherence and confidence, despite the lack of critical and institutional attention. Herzog immigrated to Canada in 1952, and was established in Vancouver by the following year. He began making colour photographs at that time, and eventually found a job as a medical photographer, in 1961, becoming head of the Photo/Cine Division, Department of Biomedical Communications at the University of British Columbia. He held that post for twenty-nine years, retiring in 1990.

In between, Herzog occasionally exhibited his photography – there was a solo exhibition at Mind's Eye Gallery in 1972 – and he also did some teaching in fine arts departments at Simon Fraser University (1967-69) and at the University of British Columbia (1969-74). He was active during the first stage of the West Coast Photoconceptual movement and is indeed credited for his participation in the N.E. Thing Co. (Iain and Ingrid Baxter) *Piles* project of 1969. Just prior to retirement from the Photo/Cine Division, Herzog's photographs began to attract the level of attention that would lead to the Vancouver Art Gallery's 2007 retrospective. His work was included in thematic exhibitions organized by Helga Pakasaar (Presentation House, 1986), Roy Arden (2001), and Bill Jeffries (2003), as well as in exhibitions whose titles hooked into a growing appetite for colour among photographic theorists and collectors.

Herzog's street photographs were colour slides, which in the fifties and sixties were mainly identified with such popular themes as fall foliage and football as well as advertising. Street photography was an important genre for photographic artists, but it was practiced almost exclusively in black and white. In the collection of Herzog's work edited by VAG curator Grant Arnold, that rule is reversed. Colour not only predominates but it also seems right, so that Herzog's own black and white images (and there are some) stand out as curious bits of punctuation – reminders of a photographic regime that ruled by standards of monochromatic seriousness.

Grant Arnold reviews this history in his introduction to the book, explaining the neglect of Herzog's work in terms of institutional collecting policies, the association

of colour with advertising and by gatekeepers such as the critic A.D. Coleman who in 1971 admitted his "blind spot" about colour photography, declaring it "too damn 'realistic' for its own good." (p.5, 19) Herzog shot Kodachrome and presented his images in sequenced slide shows of the originals. Arnold states that this would have been impossible in a gallery setting: "the shuttling clicks and turns of the projector, the sudden appearance and disappearance of images in a darkened room." (p.5) This explanation is not quite right. At one end of the spectrum, Michael Snow was producing work in the sixties that included colour slides in carrousel projectors (*Sink*, 1969-70, *Slidelength*, 1969-70). At the other, there were scores of slide shows produced by the Still Photography Division of the National Film Board to be shown in theatres and darkened gallery spaces. Strikingly close to Herzog in both subject matter and style, Helen Levitt, a highly influential New York street photographer, began working in colour in 1959. Fifteen years later the Museum of Modern Art presented her images in a continuous slide presentation. So it could be done and the reasons that it was not done have not been run to ground in Arnold's essay. Indeed, it is only in the interview that we learn that Alvin Balkind included thirty-six of Herzog's colour prints in an exhibition organized in 1969 for the UBC Fine Arts Gallery, an exhibition that subsequently went to the National Gallery and then toured to various cities in Canada (p.29). The reception of this exhibition is not discussed in the interview and the record shows that National Gallery did not acquire any of those prints. But there was some interest in Ottawa: in 1976, the Still Photography Division purchased twelve of Herzog's Ektakolor prints and sixteen have recently been added to the collection, now held by the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography. Further complexifying this legend of neglect are Arnold and Herzog's reminiscences about his connections – social and professional – with the Vancouver arts community. Herzog found that photographs were accepted: "No different from now. You know, it is amazing the way photography burst upon the scene in the '60s. It was quickly accepted...." (p.29) This period of photographic history has been opened up by Arnold's probing and genuine affinity for Herzog's work, but there are many questions left unanswered by the writing in this book.

In interviews, Herzog and Arnold touch on the cultural trope of the *flâneur* and there is in fact an image that situates that figure on a Vancouver street: *Flâneur, Granville*, 1960. Inarguably appropriate to street photography, the figure leads Arnold's essay from Charles Baudelaire through Walter Benjamin's contagious melancholy to the socio-spatial theory of Henri Lefebvre. For Arnold, the figure is also a *modus operandi*: he understands Herzog's street photography as formally expressing attachment to an embodied vision. Herzog supports this in interview with references to literary realisms – John Dos Passos, for example – and his desire "to know what the city feels like" as both *flâneur* and actor, by seeing and sometimes by *being seen* in a way that generates encounters and enriches the visual narrative. Some of these encounters are with the self. In the late fifties and sixties, Herzog

made a number of images of shop or restaurant windows in which a person looking out may or may not be aware of Herzog taking the picture, but the spectator most certainly sees the photographer-actor as a shadowy reflection in the windowpane. In the early sixties, American photographer Lee Friedlander took a number of self-portraits in this manner and in similar circumstances, by haunting working people's main streets, though never *ever* in colour.

At the end of his interview with Herzog, Arnold asks the inevitable question about the relationship between Herzog's work and that of the Vancouver school of photoconceptualists. As curator for the Vancouver Art Gallery, Arnold is interested in making those kinds of connections and filling gaps in the timeline of Canadian photographic history. Herzog's answer is considered. He admires the work of a number of these artists, especially their realist images or images addressing issues that effect real people – images that intersect with his own formal and social concerns and anchor them in a particular place.

Michael Turner's essay focuses on the representation of Vancouver in Herzog's work. Herzog's pictures are so taut, so perfectly framed, so complete as Modernist visual statements, that one might forget the conditions of time and place from which they were extracted. Turner makes us see the importance of the vernacular, not only as something recorded in Herzog's work but as its motor. The street life of Vancouver in the fifties and sixties inspired Herzog in its particulars: the vitality, the grit, the blaring graphics, the cheesecake – signs of plenty and signs of want compressed in the same window display of second-hand watches, gadgets, wrenches, and cameras. Turner uses Herzog's imagery to understand better the transition that Vancouver has gone through, from its resource-based past to its future-minded global economy.

Will the history of Canadian photography be rewritten by the appearance of these revisionist collections? No, for there is no canon to revise. The coincident appearances of *Seduced by Modernity: The Photography of Margaret Watkins* and *Fred Herzog: Vancouver Photographs* allow us to consider just what kind of photographic history we should be writing.

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Note

1 An excellent recent study of this phenomenon is Nick MOUNT, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). Dealing primarily with writers, Mount nevertheless includes illustrated books and periodicals published in the late nineteenth century when Watkins was growing up in Hamilton.

KENNETH LOCHHEAD
Garden of Light
Ted FRASER
Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 2005
95p., illus., $28

The sense I have of the goals of independent curator Ted Fraser for this exhibition and catalogue project on Ken Lochhead (1926-2006) is that he wanted to bring together many of the best paintings by this now late, important artist to create an old-fashioned retrospective exhibition. He also wanted to write a detailed catalogue essay that would make a claim for Lochhead's art as a major œuvre, from his earliest years on through to the present. Fraser definitely wants us to stop focusing only on those heady Regina Five years that catapulted Lochhead onto the international stage. In this specific aspect Fraser has set out to right a perceived wrong, and it is a tall order. We can certainly admire him for this – the way one would cheer for anyone who had set himself a challenging task – and Fraser rolled up his sleeves and went at it with gusto.

His text is massive – at thirty thousand words – and it has no divisions; we just have to read it all in one long run. The numbered sections (there are five) have no titles, and the text just flows continuously past these numbers, like water around rocks in a stream. None of the sections boasts an introduction or a conclusion or links between the previous or next sections. It is evident from the onset that Fraser has spent a great deal of time talking with the artist and looking at the work. Some of Fraser's best writing in the catalogue is about the paintings themselves; he loses himself in them and writes passionately and enthusiastically, with great verve and understanding. He takes his time and goes into detail, reconstructing the artist's early years of training and travel, setting the foundation for his lengthy discussions of Lochhead's mature works. The text is never dry and it has an inner momentum that carries us along from phase to phase of Lochhead's career. At times the writing is almost rhapsodic; Fraser says of the artist's years as a student:

"The world teems with vital surprise" and from another passage on his early work: "his alert brush sweeping...."

However once in a while Fraser's take on events seems surprisingly deadpan. For example, he tells us that Lochhead and his first wife moved from Regina to Balgonie, Saskatchewan in 1954. He does not explain or speculate as to why this decision was made: did they want to live closer to the land, experience aspects of the rural life in Saskatchewan? Most readers would not know – I didn't – that Balgonie is a tiny village (population in 2005 of 1000), situated twenty-three kilometers east of Regina. Life did prove fruitful there and Lochhead became acquainted with a genuine-article folk artist, R.C. McCarger, who was the railroad station master in Balgonie. In a similar vein, Fraser tells us cooly that in 1958-59, using funds received for his 1958 airport mural commission in Gander, Newfoundland, the artist travelled with his wife and small children to Rome for eight months and then around Europe for four more months. This must have been a horrendous enterprise of planning and childcare, and speaks to me so eloquently of both Lochhead's keen desire and the value he placed on seeing works by the great masters in the real. But Fraser mentions it without commenting on its unusual nature, as though the family had done something commonplace like going on an afternoon picnic. One other example of this oddly detached tone happens when Fraser describes the creation of the fictional woman artist Win Hedore by artists Ted Godwin (*win*), Ken Lochhead (*hed*) and Ronald Bloore (*ore*). Hedore made and exhibited art using found objects, including gigantic sculptures from wrecked cars. This weird, improbable and hilarious hoax is recounted in the same tone used in describing the invitation of leaders to the Emma Lake workshops.

The book's black-and-white photographs are an excellent selection and addition to the reader's experience. Many show Lochhead in his various studios over the years. The colour reproductions are ganged up in groups and arranged chronologically, which works well as we read our way through the text as it also has a chronological structure. The overall design is workable, if somewhat unremarkable; to my mind this is far the better alternative for an art catalogue than a design that calls attention to itself. There are, however, a few bothersome errors and usages that should have been dealt with by the publication's editor: Toni Onley is spelled as Tony and Takao Tanabe is called Takeo; Fraser uses both "morph" and "impact" as verbs. The terms "modernism" and "formalism" are not defined but neither are they used interchangeably, so at times I found it impossible to understand what Fraser was driving at.

Much of Fraser's text is devoted to recounting the facts of Lochhead's life as they pertained to his painting, but without going into any personal, biographical details about his marriages or children or other relationships. Some of that story is now so well-known. In 1950, at the age of twenty-four, Lochhead was named Director of the School of Art at Regina College (later the Regina campus of the

University of Saskatchewan, now the University of Regina). In 1955 he established annual two-week workshops for professional artists in August at an old art camp site on Emma Lake in northern Saskatchewan, so that local artists could meet and benefit firsthand from contact with artists of stature from elsewhere. While its first leaders were Canadian artists (Jack Shadbolt in 1955 and Joe Plaskett in 1956), subsequent invitations were almost all to well-known artists from New York. This led to heated controversies that have never been resolved.

At this point, some fifty years later, I would venture that there will never be a resolution about what happened in the late fifties and early sixties to those artists whose work changed dramatically from participating in the Emma Lake workshops. There is still no consensus on what *did* happen. Were careers paths diverted from where they otherwise would have gone? Unquestionably. Was this a bad thing? It depends on whom you talk to. As Fraser comments, people were polarized in their opinions. One had to either resist the lure of Post-Painterly Abstraction (and stay provincial) or jump on (and be seen as selling out). Individual artists were also split within themselves. John O'Brian quoted a telling passage from Wallace Stegner's *Wolf Willow* in his 1989 *Flat Side of the Landscape* exhibition catalogue, the crucial fragment of which is: "the discrepancy between the part of me which reflects the folk culture and that part which reflects an education imported and often irrelevant." This dichotomy is still the crux of the issue and we seem to keep prodding it like a sore tooth, exploring for some change in condition.

Could there possibly have been a third way for Emma Lake artists? A middle path? Perhaps. One could certainly ponder the case of Saskatoon-based landscape artist Ernest Lindner (with whom Lochhead was good friends, according to Fraser). Lindner attended the Emma Lake workshops for nine years between 1955 and 1966, including the 1962 Clement Greenberg and 1963 Kenneth Noland sessions. After 1966, when he was sixty-nine years old, his name does not appear on the workshop lists. Lindner wrote to Lochhead in the fall of 1955 about how much he had learned from Jack Shadbolt. Lindner's own work, however, did not appear to have changed. It has been suggested that he did adopt the notion of flatness beginning in the 1960s, which Barry Lord credits to Clement Greenberg, but which Terence Heath says was the idea of Jules Olitski. Lindner eliminated the backgrounds in his landscape works, and zeroed in on close-up views of stumps, foliage, etc., so that the surface of the work was reiterated as a flat plane. He did not, as we know, begin staining large areas of acrylic paint into canvas, and become an abstract artist.

Ken Lochhead himself had been painting Surrealist-inspired figures-in-landscape works in the early and mid 1950s – one might think of De Chirico meets Picasso Blue Period – with stylized, upright figures on geometricized, universalized plains landscapes. By 1960, he had taken his painting in a completely different

direction, following on the Emma Lake workshop led by New York painter John Ferren, and was working in enamel on large pieces of masonite to produce black and white gestural abstractions. After Greenberg's famous 1962 workshop these gave way to colour-field stain paintings, beginning with the so-called "stem" series, which involved groupings of coloured, loosely geometric shapes clustered in the middle of each canvas and joined to the bottom or one of the side edges by a bar of colour. An examination of Lochhead's art specifically during the 1962-67 years was made by curators Peter White and Helen Marzolf in 1988 when they worked together on an exhibition and catalogue for the Dunlop Gallery in Regina. Their essays take a careful look at this period of the artist's work with thoughtful and penetrating analysis. Marzolf concludes that ultimately Clement Greenberg's influence on Ken Lochhead was catalytic rather than prescriptive.

What is Ted Fraser's take and position on this? To summarize and paraphrase, Fraser tries to accept Greenberg's brand of modernism, but wants to skew our lens a little so that we look with a different emphasis. To me, this comes across as more non-modernist, than anti-modernist – a democratic embracing of the artist's production as a whole, along with his aesthetic meanderings. Fraser's position seems to be a-critical as well, promoting a holistic integration of the artist as human being with his work. Fraser emphasizes at several turns the importance of the artist's connection with nature. This is unfortunately presented at face value, with no overt recognition of the layers of (sometimes controversial) meaning with which the term "nature" is now freighted. Because of such exercises as post-modern "re-scripting" of the sublime, the notion of "nature" can be a catchall and I have seen too many amateur artists extolling their love of nature in artist statements to be able to swallow it whole in a scholarly text such as this one. But Fraser wishes us to consider Lochhead's work as a continuous entity with even the abstractions being rooted in nature in some way. He feels the work was "sparked for a moment [by Clement Greenberg] but never derailed or taken over," but this opinion is not convincingly substantiated.

Once Lochhead moved from Regina to Winnipeg to take up a teaching position at the University of Manitoba in 1964, he did not attend any subsequent Emma Lake workshops. It was in Winnipeg that Lochhead began his impressive "L" paintings, large-scale acrylic stained works that repeated the shape of the letter from one corner of the canvas toward the centre. Fraser postulates/implies that the artist flippantly chose the first letter of his surname to form the image in these works. Who knows? Maybe he was also thinking of "L for landscape" to further the whimsy of it all. Once Lochhead had left Winnipeg and was teaching at York University in Toronto for two years (1973-75), he pursued his own brand of spray painting, using various spray guns to create lyrical and lovely huge canvases, with linear arabesques on top of layers of atmospheric, bright colours.

But when he relocated again in 1975 to his home town of Ottawa where he taught at Carleton University until his retirement in 1990, Lochhead turned away permanently from abstraction and worked instead on various series of representational subjects such as gardens, portraits and hockey games. Was this an attempt to move backwards through the wormhole through which he had journeyed, to take up again from the point where he had departed from his Surrealist, figurative works of the early 1950s? Fraser does not comment on this, but democratically discusses these works with the same excitement and respect that he showed for those from the preceding groups. One senses Lochhead struggling to bring together in his Ottawa paintings of the 1980s the disparate aspects and interests he has held over the years. For example, throughout the catalogue Fraser reminds us of Lochhead's respect for and inspiration drawn from works by various old master artists. Lochhead has apparently felt free to pick and choose his influences, as the years have gone by. At one point he mentioned to Fraser that he had been enjoying mixing up a cocktail "with a little bit of Dufy, Fragonard, and Klee" in his representational paintings. While one can discern aspects of these artists in Lochhead's 1980s works, the choice of his influences might be questioned.

In his artist's statement published in the 1961 *Five Painters from Regina* catalogue Lochhead states that while he recognizes Matisse as a twentieth-century master, he prefers Paul Klee. Thinking about this brought to my mind an encounter I once had with the painter Otto Rogers years ago in Saskatoon: he said he worried if young artists told him they admired Paul Klee because he did not consider Klee to be a good influence. He said "Do you know what I mean by a good influence?" I thought that I did: one that would open doors and allow artists to develop their vision, not one that would limit options with emulations that were too specifically contained within a given idiom.

One fact I learned from Fraser's essay that I had not known before was that Ken Lochhead became close friends with Clement Greenberg. The two stayed in touch by correspondence until Greenberg's death in 1994 and Lochhead would send the New York critic slides of his work for comment from time to time. Greenberg visited him in Ottawa in the 1980s, but did not have a positive response to his work from that period.

In 1988 the artist built himself a studio (designed by one of his sons) in the woods in the Gatineau region, a short drive from his home in Ottawa. The paintings from the 1990s are all investigations of the dense forest seen from the large windows of the studio. Lochhead told Fraser that this return to his childhood landscape gave him the sense that it formed the underpinning of all of his work throughout his long career. Fraser writes: "[Lochhead] holds that the Gatineau forest is the ultimate source upon which all other influences are based, for the iconography of the surrealistic landscapes of the 1950s, the near-geometric

abstractions of the 1960s, and the sprays of the 1970s." Does Fraser himself agree with this notion? He is silent on this point. This brings us to wonder, ultimately, whether Ken Lochhead's work has been well served by Fraser's treatment? While Fraser's text is written with enthusiasm, a reader gets the feeling that he shied away from asking the tough questions about Lochhead as an artist: which are his best works? How and where does he "stack up?" At one point Fraser attempts to sum up the kernel within all of Lochhead's varied production, stating: "He believes in a transcendental romantic art that recognizes the spiritual." I have trouble garnering specific meaning from this statement.

Fraser decries the lack of curatorial and critical attention given to Lochhead. He is not wrong in this, and we can take note as a case in point that the *Garden of Light* exhibition is not travelling beyond its Regina installation. But sadly it seems to me that Lochhead's case is not atypical in a country that tends to ignore its senior artists and focus on the constantly refreshed ranks of emerging ones. I am not valorizing this syndrome, just making the point that I do not think that Ken Lochhead has been singled out for neglect. The questions and concerns that arose in reading Fraser's text led me to think about the issues in Lochhead's career and work as they might arise and apply to all artists. What, after all, is art-making all about fundamentally – personal expression? a journey of discovery? social or political commentary or action?

Of course there are no easy answers, but I was struck by the personal and emotional tenor of a passage that Fraser quotes from a letter written by Clement Greenberg to Ken Lochhead in 1963: "What you in particular have to impress on yourself most is that you're not a virtuoso and that painting is not an instrument like a piano on which one performs, but the means by which a vision is established and explored. What you see and who you are, are far more important than any number of successfully executed pictures." I would never have attributed such a point of view to Greenberg, and found it moving to consider his advice to a mid-career artist. I think he was saying, in other words, that your inner life matters more than your specific art production. These are wise words for any artist, no matter the details of their particular circumstances.

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Canadian Women Artists

HISTORY INITIATIVE

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE

The Canadian Women Artists History Initiative is a newly-founded collaborative endeavour that aims to bring resources and researchers together to enhance scholarship on historical Canadian women artists across a wide range of visual media, including architecture, craft, design, illustration, indigenous arts, painting, photography and sculpture.

An inaugural conference, with a keynote address by Dr. Ruth Phillips, will be held at Concordia University in Montreal, from 2 – 4 October 2008. Inquiries and participation are welcome.

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Le Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes est une nouvelle organisation coopérative qui s'est donné pour mission de mobiliser ressources et chercheurs afin d'accroître les connaissances historiques sur les artistes canadiennes œuvrant dans divers domaines en arts visuels : architecture, artisanat, art autochtone, design, illustration, peinture, photographie et sculpture, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns.

Le congrès inaugural aura lieu du 2 au 4 octobre 2008 à l'Université Concordia (Montréal) et aura pour conférencière d'honneur Dr. Ruth Phillips. Nous vous encourageons vivement à y participer!

CONGRÈS INAUGURAL

Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des

ARTISTES CANADIENNES