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ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This volume of *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* celebrates our thirty-fifth anniversary. Having accomplished over three decades of continuous publishing, we believe that we have made an important contribution to heightening the awareness and understanding of the concerns of Canadian art history and all that this encompasses. The various roads and byways that *The Journal* has traversed over the past thirty-five years are too numerous to recount in this note and perhaps should best be left to future analysis. Nevertheless, when Donald Andrus and I began *The Journal* as a way to fill an obvious void, we had little expectation that the periodical would be cited in so many publications of all stripes dealing with aspects of Canadian art history. A glimpse at our past tables of contents on our website reflects the range of topics, themes and viewpoints that constitute the concerns of the publication and the community of art historians working in Canadian studies over the ensuing years. This anniversary volume of *The Journal* provides an example of our inclusive perspective and the periodical's support of a myriad of approaches to deciphering Canadian visual culture.

The articles here could suggest the various possibilities of art historical interpretation under the rubric of "biography." In his interpretation of the word, which goes well beyond its origins as a branch of literature, Michael O'Malley reexamines the history of the portrait of Mother Catherine of Saint-Augustine attributed to Frère Luc. O'Malley allows the methods of painting conservation to reveal the portrait's changing pictorial life and the reading of that life across time. Jayne Wark writes a chapter of the biography of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and its lithography workshop during its halcyon days of conceptual art in the 1970s. Aspects of the biographies of public art institutions are discerned through two different lenses: Andrea Kunard's overview of the first three decades of photography exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada and then the second and concluding part of Jean Trudel's study of the early years of the Art Association of Montreal and its effort to establish an identity within the city.

Sandra Paikowsky
Publisher and Managing Editor

NOTE DE L'ÉDITRICE

Ce numéro des *The Journal of Canadian Art History/ Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* célèbre notre trente-cinquième anniversaire. Après plus de trois décennies de publication continue, nous croyons avoir contribué de manière significative à susciter une prise de conscience et une meilleure compréhension de ce qu'est l'histoire de l'art canadien et de tout ce que cela englobe. Les divers chemins et détours que les *Annales* ont empruntés au cours des trente-cinq dernières années sont trop nombreux pour être rappelés dans la présente note et devraient peut-être faire l'objet d'une analyse future. Cependant, lorsque Donald Andrus et moi-même avons fondé les *Annales* comme moyen de remplir un vide évident, nous ne nous attendions certes pas à ce que la revue soit citée dans autant de publications diverses traitant d'aspects de l'histoire de l'art canadien. Un coup d'œil sur la table des matières des numéros précédents en ligne sur notre site Web révèle l'étendue des sujets, des thèmes et des points de vue qui constituent les centres d'intérêt de notre publication et de la communauté des historiens de l'art engagés dans les études canadiennes au cours des années qui ont suivi. Le présent numéro anniversaire des *Annales* fournit un exemple de la perspective inclusive et de l'appui de la revue à une foule de manières différentes de déchiffrer la culture visuelle canadienne.

Les articles du présent numéro pourraient suggérer diverses manières d'interpréter l'histoire de l'art sous la rubrique « biographie ». Dans son interprétation qui va bien au-delà de ses origines en tant que branche de la littérature, Michael O'Malley revoit l'histoire du portrait de Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin attribué à Frère Luc. O'Malley permet aux méthodes de conservation des œuvres picturales de révéler la vie changeante du portrait et l'interprétation de cette vie à travers les années. Jayne Wark écrit un chapitre de la biographie du Nova Scotia College of Art and Design et de son atelier de lithographie durant les beaux jours de l'art conceptuel dans les années 1970. Des aspects des biographies d'institutions artistiques publiques sont discernés à travers deux regards différents : un aperçu, par Andrea Kunard, des trois premières décennies d'expositions de photographies par la Galerie nationale du Canada, puis la deuxième et dernière partie de l'étude de Jean Trudel sur les premières années de l'Art Association of Montreal et ses efforts pour forger son identité à l'intérieur de la ville.

Sandra Paikowsky
Éditrice et rédactrice-en-chef



fig.1 Après restauration, **Portrait de Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin**, vers 1668, huile sur toile, 72 x 59 cm, collection Monastère des Augustines de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec. (Photo: Michel Élie, Centre de conservation du Québec)

UN NOUVEAU REGARD SUR LE PORTRAIT DE MÈRE CATHERINE DE SAINT-AUGUSTIN

Les restaurateurs de peintures entretiennent un rapport privilégié avec les œuvres d'art. Non seulement ils les explorent en profondeur lors des examens, mais ils participent à leur mise en valeur et à leur transformation lors des traitements de restauration. Ces transformations se révèlent tout particulièrement lors du dégagement de vernis assombris ou de surpeints qui masquent et trahissent le sens et la subtilité d'origine des tableaux. Ce processus de dégagement peut même, à l'occasion, dévoiler des surprises étonnantes. La restauration du portrait de Mère Catherine Simon de Longpré de Saint-Augustin (1632-1668) figure parmi ces exemples. Elle offrira, aux observateurs, non seulement la possibilité d'apprécier le fin travail de l'artiste et l'état réel de ce tableau, mais elle permettra également d'ouvrir la discussion sur sa provenance, afin de mieux situer son contexte artistique et historique.

Le portrait de Mère Catherine s'avère un tableau très précieux pour les sœurs Augustines de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec (fig.1). Grâce aux annales de leur communauté et à une biographie publiée en 1671, trois ans après son décès, par le père Paul Ragueneau¹, la vie de Marie-Catherine Simon de Saint Augustin est bien documentée. En 1648, elle était professe à Bayeux, chez les hospitalières, en Basse Normandie. À l'âge de 16 ans, elle a répondu favorablement à une demande d'aide de la part de ses consœurs Augustines, établies en Nouvelle France depuis 1639. Dans la colonie, elle servira la communauté comme infirmière, économe et finalement comme directrice générale de l'hôpital. Pendant vingt ans, sa générosité, son dévouement et la ferveur de sa vie spirituelle ont marqué la colonie française. Encore aujourd'hui, elle continue à susciter une dévotion toute particulière. Béatifiée par le pape Jean-Paul II en 1989, Mère Catherine compte parmi les fondateurs de l'Église catholique au Canada.

Ce portrait en buste, de forme rectangulaire, mesure 72 x 59 cm. Il s'inscrit dans un ovale, créé par une marie-louise brunâtre peinte en trompe-l'œil. Mère Catherine porte le costume traditionnel des Augustines réservé pour la célébration de fêtes liturgiques : le voile et la chape noire contrastent avec la guimpe et le bandeau blanc qui circonscrivent son visage. Ses mains, dissimulées dans les manches de sa robe, tiennent un crucifix tourné vers elle, comme si elle s'approchait de sa réunion ultime avec le Seigneur. Ses yeux, légèrement cernés, sont dirigés vers le ciel. En arrière-plan, un paysage sauvage est esquissé à l'aube du jour. La tradition allègue que ce portrait évocateur aurait été réalisé au



fig.2 Avant restauration, **Portrait de Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin**, vers 1668, huile sur toile, 72 x 59 cm. (Photo: Michel Élie, CCQ)



fig.3 **Portrait de
Mère Catherine de
Saint-Augustin, détail,**
vers 1668, huile sur toile,
72 x 59 cm. (Photo:
Michel Élie, CCQ)



fig.4 **Portrait de Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin, détail, vers
1668, huile sur toile, 72 x 59 cm. (Photo: Michael O'Malley, CCQ)**

moment du son décès, en mai 1668, à la suite de complications de santé. La présence d'étiquettes relativement récentes, collées au dos de l'œuvre, l'identifie comme étant un portrait « tiré après sa mort² ». La Révérende Mère Marie de Saint-Bonaventure, mère supérieure à l'époque, écrivait des dernières heures de Mère Catherine, « Enfin apres une grande foiblesse qui luy prit, dont on eût de la peine a la faire revenir, elle retomba dans un état où elle n'avoit ni poulx ni mouvement. On fit les prières des agonizans ; toute nôtre Communauté étoit présente et fort attentive a la considerer, parce qu'elle avoit les yeux élevez au ciel, comme une personne bien appliquée, et que nous jugions qu'il se passoit en elle quelque chose d'extraordinaire³ ». Ce témoignage fut possiblement la source d'inspiration pour le rendu du regard de Mère Catherine que l'on observe dans le portrait.

Un portrait métamorphosé

Avant sa restauration au Centre de conservation du Québec, en 1997, le portrait était recouvert d'importants surpeints. Ceci modifiait grandement la présentation originale du tableau, principalement le visage et l'arrière-plan (fig.2). Selon la notice du catalogue des peintures de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec, le tableau a été retouché à quelques reprises au cours du XIX^e siècle et également au début du XX^e. Enfin, le portrait est devenu méconnaissable, vers les années 1950, à la suite d'une importante campagne de repeints entreprise par une religieuse qui souhaitait lui donner « un air plus jeune et souriant⁴ ». D'autres altérations témoignaient également d'interventions antérieures sur l'œuvre, comme la présence d'une toile de doublage et le remplacement du châssis et du cadre d'origine. En préambule à la restauration, une radiographie du portrait a révélé sous les surpeints un visage différent (fig.3). Il s'agissait d'un visage vieilli et fatigué, avec de grands yeux humides, aux paupières tombantes, dirigés vers le ciel. Des tests de solubilité des repeints ont confirmé que ceux-ci pouvaient être retirés de façon sécuritaire et que la matière picturale sous-jacente était relativement bien préservée.

Pendant le dégagement des surpeints sur l'arrière-plan du tableau, on observait qu'ils se partageaient en deux couches distinctes qui témoignent des différentes interventions antérieures espacées dans le temps (fig.4). Lorsque les surpeints eurent été complètement retirés, ils ont laissé paraître des détails et des caractéristiques qui n'avaient pas été exposés à la lumière du jour depuis des décennies. À ce moment, les coups de pinceau de l'artiste, la subtilité des coloris originaux et l'ancien réseau de craquelures sont redevenus apparents. Le regard de la religieuse a repris toute sa dignité. Le faux teint rosé des carnations fut dégagé au profit d'un teint plutôt grisâtre, avec des reflets bleutés. Ce choix, sans doute voulu par l'artiste, s'avère plus représentatif du portrait d'une mourante. Par ailleurs, des brindilles d'arbustes et de fleurs sont réapparues en arrière-plan, et un paysage montagneux, avec des nuages roses, a refait surface à l'horizon. Le ciel bleu, usé, a laissé entrevoir la couche de préparation

rougeâtre sous-jacente. On a également constaté que les arbres étaient plutôt ébauchés. Il en fut de même pour les rehauts de lumière sur la marie-louise qui circonscrit l'image de Mère Catherine. Ces éléments esquissés du tableau contrastent de façon marquée avec le sujet principal, dont le travail est nettement plus soigné. Cette disparité au niveau de la finition et la présence de traces d'abrasion dans le ciel, survenue lors de nettoyages antérieurs trop agressifs, sont fort probablement des facteurs qui ont jadis contribué à la décision d'embellir le tableau. Le dégagement des surpeints terminé, la dernière étape du processus de restauration fut la réintégration des lacunes et des usures de la surface. Elle s'effectue au moyen de retouches ponctuelles, en respectant la matière picturale originale. Le but ne vise pas à redonner au tableau une apparence neuve, mais plutôt à atténuer les dommages qui gênent son appréciation, sans trahir les effets du passage du temps.

Une attribution à considérer

Le tableau ne porte ni signature, ni date. Par contre, son exécution fine et habile amène à penser qu'il proviendrait plutôt d'un artiste de formation européenne et non d'un peintre amateur ou autodidacte. Nul besoin de rappeler que la plupart des tableaux issus de la colonie française, à cette époque, étaient plutôt maladroits dans leur facture. Ce portrait est généralement attribué à Hughes Pommier (1636-1686), prêtre et artiste attaché au Séminaire de Québec⁵. Cependant, cette attribution semble plutôt conjecturale, pour la simple raison que Pommier était alors l'un des seuls peintres connus travaillant en Nouvelle France à cette époque. Selon Marie-Nicole Boisclair, il est déconcertant que les faits entourant la mort de Mère Catherine soient détaillés dans les annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu, mais que l'on n'y retrouve aucune référence relative à son portrait. Il en est de même pour la bibliographie du père Ragueneau. En effet, il est tout à fait légitime de s'interroger sur l'identité réelle du personnage dépeint et sur la vraisemblance du portrait. S'agit-il d'un véritable portrait posthume de Marie-Catherine de Longpré?

L'historien de l'art Gérard Morisset est le seul à avoir connu ce tableau avant sa transformation. En effet, une photographie prise en 1945 témoigne de son état (fig.5). Déjà, à cette époque, on constate que les joues de la religieuse sont légèrement badigeonnées de couleur, les manches sont tachées et l'arrière-plan est neutralisé par la présence de surpeints. Morisset constate en 1960,

Les peintres ne sont pas nombreux en Nouvelle-France. Précisément, il y en a un au Séminaire, l'abbé Hughes Pommier. Il se rend à l'Hôtel-Dieu et tire le portrait de la Mère Catherine. Assurément, c'est un tableau étrange ; le modelé manque de souplesse et le dessin, de correction. C'est une œuvre d'une sincérité brutale ; elle étonne par le coloris du visage, d'une justesse effrayante, par la fixité douloureuse du regard. Ajoutons que cette peinture a été maintes fois retouchée⁶.



fig.5 **Portrait de Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin**, photographie du tableau, vers 1945, Fonds Gérard-Morisset, BANQ. (Photo: Centre d'Archives de Québec, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, E6,S8,SS1,P10952-H11/ IOA)

Dès 1936, Morisset avait établi un lien entre ce portrait et les personnages féminins dépeints dans deux œuvres du frère Luc (1614-1685). Il s'agit de *Hospitalière soignant le Seigneur dans la personne d'un malade*, conservée au monastère des Augustines de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec (fig.6) et de *La Vierge à l'Enfant*, appartenant au Musée de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré (fig.7). À propos de ce dernier, il écrit « ...elle est ravissante dans ses traits comme dans son expression et elle se rapproche de la figure de l'Hospitalière soignant Notre Seigneur dans la personne d'un malade et du portrait de la Mère Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin⁷ ». Par ailleurs, en 1934, il avançait à propos de *La Communion de sainte Claire d'Assise* (fig.8), conservée à l'église de la Présentation, « C'est sûrement une peinture de l'École française, œuvre académique de bonne tenue que l'on [sic] quelconque des émules de Le Brun eût pu signer. Peut-être porte-t-elle une signature? Pour la trouver, il faudrait débarrasser la toile de la couche de terre de Sienne qu'elle a reçue vers 1819⁸ ». Morisset reconnaît la



fig.6 **Hospitalière
soignant le Seigneur
dans la personne d'un
malade, détail, vers
1670, huile sur toile, 99
x 140 cm, coll.
Monastère des
Augustines de l'Hôtel-
Dieu de Québec.**



fig.7 **La Vierge
à l'Enfant, détail,
vers 1671, huile sur
toile, 163 x 116 cm,
collection Musée de
Sainte-Anne de
Beaupré, (Photo:
Michel Élie, CCQ)**

facture française de l'œuvre, mais il est sans doute gêné par la présence de vernis assombris et de surpeints pour avancer une attribution. Plus tard, vers 1960, il révisera son appréciation du tableau non seulement en l'attribuant au frère Luc, mais il l'associera également avec le portrait de Mère Catherine : « ...à la figure de sainte Claire, l'artiste a prêté les traits de la Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin, comme il l'a fait d'ailleurs dans un autre tableau⁹ ». Par ailleurs, l'historien d'art Laurier Lacroix rattache le personnage de sainte Claire à *La Vierge à l'Enfant* de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré et confirme l'attribution de *La Communion de sainte Claire d'Assise* au frère Luc¹⁰.

Dans sa plaquette monographique sur le frère Luc, Françoise Nicolle s'appuie sur Morisset pour proposer une liste de dix-huit tableaux rattachés au peintre et conservés au Québec. Étonnamment, le portrait de Mère Catherine figure sur cette liste, sans que la source y soit précisée¹¹. Somme toute, il est curieux de constater que lors des nombreux écrits sur l'art ancien au Québec, Morisset n'ira jamais jusqu'à attribuer franchement le portrait au frère Luc. En contrepartie, dans sa biographie sur le peintre, Morisset raconte que Mgr de Laval, premier évêque de Québec, aurait commandé au frère Luc des plans pour le futur Séminaire ainsi qu'un tableau portant sur le thème de *l'Apothéose de Mère Catherine*. Il ajoute également que Mgr de Laval, fervent admirateur de Mère Catherine, a probablement fourni un dessin provenant du frère Luc, pour la réalisation d'une gravure de Jean Patigny illustrant la vision mystique de Mère Catherine (fig.9). Il clôt le sujet en ajoutant ce commentaire : « À cause de l'ordonnance de cette composition et de l'expression des figures, on peut sans hésitation attribuer au frère Luc le dessin qui a servi à Jean Patigny dans l'exécution de la gravure de l'ouvrage du père Ragueneau, *Vie de la Mère de Saint-Augustin*¹² ».

Effectivement, la restauration du portrait de Mère Catherine démontre qu'elle possède une parenté étonnante avec la sainte Claire de la Présentation. Tel que constaté par Morisset, la ressemblance entre les deux figures s'affiche alors indéniablement (fig.10). Elles partagent une physionomie et des traits particuliers que l'on retrouve sur plusieurs visages de jeunes femmes peints par le frère Luc. Notons la forme ovale, la pâleur du visage, les grands yeux animés par des rehauts de lumière blanche et le teint rosé des paupières. De plus, le nez allongé, dont la partie supérieure est plate, et la petite bouche rouge, dont les lèvres charnues se terminent en pointes élancées, s'avèrent tous des éléments représentatifs du style pictural distinctif du frère Luc. D'autres éléments du portrait présentent également des similitudes avec certaines des œuvres du frère Luc. Notons les arbres dans le paysage situé à gauche de la Révérende Mère, semblables à ceux de *l'Ex-voto à l'Immaculée Conception* de Trois-Rivières. Par ailleurs, la juxtaposition des couleurs sur l'horizon, à droite de Mère Catherine, rappelle celle appliquée dans *l'Assomption* de l'Hôpital général de Québec et dans *l'Ex-voto à l'Immaculée Conception*, soit le même bleu délavé, sous un ciel rose-pêche (fig.11). Dans ces trois cas, il serait instructif de comparer éventuellement les résultats d'analyses des pigments présents.



fig. 8 **La Communion de sainte Claire d'Assise**, XVII^e siècle, huile sur toile, 261 x 203 cm, collection l'église de la Présentation. (Photo: Legris Conservation)



fig.9 L'Apothéose de Mère Catherine, gravure de Jean Patigny
présentée dans la biographie de père Paul Ragueneau (1923).

Certes, le portrait en buste de forme ovale, inscrit dans un rectangle, est une convention très connue, mais qui n'est pas étrangère à l'œuvre du frère Luc. Il a adopté ce format pour la *Mater Dolorosa* du Musée de Tours et le *Saint Bonaventure* du Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, Ottawa. Deux autres œuvres attribuées au frère Luc, le *Jésus Enfant* et *La Vierge de douleur*, conservées à l'église de Saint-Joachim, Québec, affichent également cette même présentation. Il est intéressant de constater que l'artiste a utilisé cette convention pour des tableaux religieux qui sont, par définition, des représentations imaginaires de personnages. Quelques rappels sur le passage du frère Luc en Nouvelle France aideront à mieux étayer la problématique actuelle. En août 1670, il fait partie d'un groupe de six récollets qui débarquent à Québec avec le sieur intendant Jean Talon. Leur mission principale consiste à rétablir la présence des récollets au Canada et à rebâtir leur chapelle, abandonnée depuis leur expulsion en 1629, lors de la prise de Québec par les frères Kirke.

Pendant son séjour, outre la reconstruction du couvent et de la chapelle de son ordre, le frère Luc s'est consacré à produire des œuvres pour orner les églises de la région de Québec. Une seule liste, bien connue, de ces œuvres a été



fig.10 Composite, détails des deux religieuses.



fig.11 Composite, détails des paysages de l'Ex-Voto de l'Immaculée Conception, de Mère Catherine et de l'Assomption.

dressée par le père récollet Chrestien LeClerc, en 1691. Elle figure dans son recueil intitulé, *Premier établissement de la Foy en Nouvelle France*. Il fut publié six ans après le décès du frère Luc et une vingtaine d'années après son passage en Amérique. On y apprend que plusieurs institutions de Québec ont bénéficié de sa production artistique : la chapelle des Récollets fut la première, suivie de l'église paroissiale de Québec, de la chapelle des Jésuites, de celle des Ursulines ainsi que de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec. À celles-ci, s'ajoutent les églises des paroisses environnantes situées à Sainte-Famille, Île d'Orléans, à Château-Richer et à l'Ange-Gardien¹³. Cette liste ne fait aucune référence au portrait de Mère Catherine. Cependant la liste demeure incomplète et plusieurs œuvres ont depuis disparu. Ceci complique l'établissement d'un inventaire et d'une chronologie définitive pour les œuvres qu'il a réalisées en Nouvelle France. Après un séjour de quinze mois, le frère Luc quitte le pays en novembre 1671, avant la formation des glaces sur le fleuve, vraisemblablement sur le même navire que Mgr de Laval. De retour en France, son intérêt et sa connaissance de la colonie l'ont amené à servir d'agent de liaison pour le gouvernement royal. Il s'est alors occupé à planifier la relève et il a poursuivi son travail de peintre en expédiant des tableaux, dont au moins deux d'entre eux (*La Vierge à l'Enfant* et *La Présentation au temple*) sont toujours conservés au musée de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré¹⁴. Le frère Luc est décédé le 17 mai 1685, au couvent des Récollets à Paris.

Examens scientifiques

Nonobstant les similitudes stylistiques, existe-t-il d'autres particularités qui pourraient rapprocher le portrait de Mère Catherine de certaines œuvres du frère Luc? En restauration de peintures, la prise de radiographies contribue régulièrement à résoudre des questions relatives à la conception ou à la mise en œuvre de tableaux. Or, un détail de la radiographie de l'œil de Mère Catherine démontre une ressemblance surprenante lorsqu'il est juxtaposé à celui de Tobie, l'androgyné adolescent de *L'Ange gardien*¹⁵. On devine le même réseau de rehauts perpendiculaires en dessous de l'œil de Mère Catherine (fig.12). D'autres types d'analyses permettent de documenter et de comparer les matériaux constitutifs des œuvres d'art. Des experts de l'Institut canadien de conservation s'intéressent depuis plusieurs années aux peintures du frère Luc. À cette fin, ils ont effectué des analyses des pigments et des couches de préparation de huit œuvres qui lui sont attribuées. Selon une étude publiée en 1998¹⁶, quatre de ces peintures peuvent être regroupées, non seulement en raison de leur similitude



fig.12 Composite, détails des radiographies de Mère Catherine (présentée ici à l'envers, pour les fins de comparaison) et de Tobie de *L'Ange gardien*. (Photo: Michel Élie, CCQ)

stylistique, mais également à cause des matériaux analogues qui se retrouvent dans leurs couches picturales. Entre autres, ces quatre œuvres possèdent toutes des préparations rouges, appliquées en une seule couche. Ces préparations se composent principalement d'ocre rouge (des oxydes de fer), de carbonate de calcium et de minium (un oxyde de plomb de couleur rouge). À ces préparations s'ajoutent également de petites quantités d'autres charges et de pigments, tels que la barytine et un peu de terre d'ombre.

Toutefois, il existe au Québec au moins deux autres œuvres qui présentent des cas d'exception et dont l'attribution au frère Luc n'est pas, à ce jour, contestée. Ces deux œuvres possèdent des couches préparatoires à la fois distinctes l'une de l'autre et également différentes des autres peintures examinées. La première, *La Sainte Famille à la Huronne*, conservée au Musée des Ursulines de Québec, possède une seule couche de préparation rouge. Cependant, au mélange d'ocre rouge, de minium et de carbonate de calcium, s'ajoutent un peu de laque rouge, du noir de charbon et du blanc de plomb¹⁷. La seconde, *Le Christ dictant la règle à saint François*, conservée à l'église de Saint-Antoine-de-Tilly, possède, quant à elle, une préparation double. Il s'agit d'une couche grise superposée à une couche rouge. La couche grise se compose de blanc de plomb et de noir de charbon et elle semble appliquée en deux couches – une couche gris foncé sur une couche gris pâle¹⁸. La partie rouge de cette préparation ressemble, cependant, aux préparations rouges des quatre tableaux constituant le groupe de référence.

En comparaison, la préparation du portrait de Mère Catherine est particulière. Dans ce cas, il s'agit d'une préparation double, soit une couche de préparation plutôt brun-orangé superposée sur une couche rouge. La couche rouge est composée d'ocre rouge, de carbonate de calcium, d'un élément à base de plomb (soit du blanc de plomb ou du minium), de gros fragments de noir de charbon et peut-être d'un peu de terre d'ombre. La seconde couche brun-orangé contient également un oxyde de fer, ainsi que du blanc de plomb, du quartz et du carbonate de calcium, qui se présentent sous forme de grosses particules blanches¹⁹. Cette préparation se distingue non seulement de toutes les œuvres analysées lors de l'étude, mais également des deux autres exemples mentionnés ci-dessus.

Les analyses démontrent que les couleurs dans le portrait sont réalisées à partir de pigments anciens, comme le blanc de plomb, le noir de charbon, divers oxydes de fer, le vermillon et le jaune de plomb et d'étain²⁰. Tous les pigments identifiés du portrait, autant dans la préparation que dans la couche picturale, sont grossièrement broyés et ils s'apparentent aux matériaux que l'on pourrait retrouver dans un tableau du XVII^e siècle. En ce qui a trait au jaune de plomb et d'étain, il a disparu des palettes des artistes vers le milieu du XVIII^e siècle²¹. Que penser de la disparité, observée jusqu'ici, dans les résultats des analyses des

couches préparatoires de tous ces tableaux? Est-ce que la préparation particulière du portrait de Mère Catherine l'exclut automatiquement d'une attribution au frère Luc? Lors des études des matériaux des œuvres d'art, il est important de se rappeler la diversité des techniques parfois employées par les peintres et l'inconstance de la disponibilité de certains produits. En effet, une importante étude sur les préparations des peintures françaises des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, par Alain Duval, témoigne de la diversité des recettes et des matériaux utilisés à ces époques²². Par ailleurs, selon Duval, la répartition aléatoire d'œuvres sélectionnées pour son étude et la modeste quantité d'œuvres examinées empêchent, actuellement, le dégagement de caractéristiques précises propres à chaque peintre. Ces considérations rappellent qu'il n'est pas toujours aisé de tirer des conclusions fermes sur l'attribution des œuvres en se basant uniquement sur les résultats d'analyses de matériaux constitutifs. Il serait fructueux, cependant, de poursuivre l'analyse systématique de toutes les œuvres connues ou attribuées au frère Luc, autant au Québec qu'en France. Cela permettrait de constituer une banque de références plus large, afin d'augmenter nos connaissances sur l'éventail des matériaux et des techniques employés par le peintre.

Conclusion

Plusieurs questions méritent d'être posées, mais les réponses demeurent toujours en suspens. Si cette œuvre énigmatique représente Mère Catherine, pourquoi aucune mention ne s'y retrouve dans les écrits de l'époque? Pourquoi y a-t-il des disparités dans la finition entre le visage et l'arrière plan? Si le tableau se veut effectivement de la main du frère Luc, comment peut-on expliquer le laps de temps entre le décès de Mère Catherine, en mai 1668, et son passage en Nouvelle France (1670-1771)? Aurait-il peint le portrait sur place, deux ans après son décès? Alternativement, aurait-il pu l'expédier avec d'autres œuvres destinées à la colonie, après son retour en France? Une attribution de ce portrait au frère Luc nous conduirait à penser qu'il ne s'agit peut-être pas d'un portrait authentique, mais plutôt d'une création, d'un témoignage contemporain idéalisé, conçue pour commémorer la vie et la spiritualité de Mère Catherine. Le fait que les traits de son visage soient non personnalisés et qu'ils soient quasi identiques à ceux qui se retrouvent dans plusieurs tableaux religieux du frère Luc milite en faveur de cette attribution. Toutefois cette œuvre mérite l'attention d'une étude plus poussée, afin de la situer dans le contexte de portraits de religieuses et de portraits posthumes du XVII^e siècle.

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Notes

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- 1 Paul RAGUENEAU, *La vie de Mère Catherine de Saint Augustin*, Paris, 1671, réimpression de 1923.
- 2 Marie-Nicole BOISCLAIR, *Catalogue des œuvres peintes conservées au monastère des augustines de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec*, Québec, Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, Direction générale du Patrimoine, 1977, p.65.
- 3 Jeanne-Françoise JUCHEREAU et Marie Andrée DUPLESSIS, *Les Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec 1636-1716*, Hôtel-Dieu de Québec, 1939, réimpression en fac-similé, 1984, p.156.
- 4 BOISCLAIR, *Catalogue des œuvres peintes*, p.65.
- 5 François-Marc GAGNON, *Premiers peintres de la Nouvelle-France*, Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1976, tome II, p.99 ; Dennis MARTIN, « Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin » dans *Portraits des héros de la Nouvelle-France*, Éditions Hurtubise HMH (Ville Lasalle) 1988, p.38 ; Gérard MORISSET, « La peinture en Nouvelle-France », *Le Canada français*, vol. 21, n° 3 (novembre 1933), note 2, p.213 ; *Peintres et Tableaux 1*, Québec, Les éditions du Chevalet, 1936, note 8, p.40 ; J. Russell HARPER, *Painting in Canada: A History*, second edition, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1985, p.5.
- 6 Gérard MORISSET, *La peinture traditionnelle au Canada français*, Ottawa, Le Cercle du livre de France, 1960, p.44 (dans L'Encyclopédie du Canada français).
- 7 Gérard MORISSET, *Peintres et Tableaux 1*, Québec, Les éditions du Chevalet, 1936, p.39-40.
- 8 Gérard MORISSET, « De surprise en surprise à l'église de la Présentation. » *Le Canada*, vol. 321, n° 176, 30 oct. 1934, p.2. Ce tableau a été restauré en 1999 par Legris Conservation, Montréal.
- 9 MORISSET, *La peinture traditionnelle au Canada français*, p.25.
- 10 Laurier LACROIX, « Œuvres d'art de l'église de La Présentation-de-la-Sainte-Vierge, Peinture », *Les chemins de la mémoire*, tome III, Les Publications du Québec, 1999, p.272.
- 11 Françoise NICOLLE, *Frère Luc - Un peintre du XVII à Sézanne*, Rotary Club de Sézanne, 1996, p.20.
- 12 Gérard MORISSET, *La vie et l'œuvre du frère Luc*, Québec, Medium, 1944, p.124.
- 13 François-Marc GAGNON et Nicole CLOUTIER, *Premiers peintres de la Nouvelle-France*, Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1976, tome I, p.60.
- 14 *Ibid.* p.94, note 77.
- 15 *L'Ange gardien*, également restauré au Centre de conservation du Québec, est conservé au Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (74.255).
- 16 Marie-Claude CORBEIL et Elisabeth MOFFAT, « L'analyse de tableaux canadiens attribués au frère Luc », dans Jacques Goupy et Jean-Pierre Mohen, *Art et chimie, la couleur*, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 2000, p.194. Ces quatre tableaux sont *La Présentation de la Vierge au Temple* (Musée de Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré) ; *La Vierge et l'Enfant* (Musée de Sainte-Anne-

de-Beaupré) ; *L'Ex-voto à l'Immaculée conception* (église Saint-Philippe, Trois Rivières) et *L'Ange gardien* (Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec).

17 Marie-Claude CORBEIL, Rapport d'analyse LRA 3723, *La Sainte Famille à la Huronne*, Institut canadien de conservation, 5 juin 1998.

18 Marie-Claude CORBEIL et Elisabeth MOFFAT, Rapport d'analyse LRA 4378, *Le Christ dictant la règle à saint François*, Institut canadien de conservation, 2 juin 2006.

19 CORBEIL et MOFFAT, Rapports d'analyse LRA 3711 et LRA 3711.2, *Deux tableaux attribués à Hughes Pommier*, Institut canadien de conservation, 14 mai 1998 et 15 juil. 1998.

20 *Ibid.* Note – les pigments bleus dans le portrait n'ont pas été identifiés en raison de la petitesse des échantillons.

21 Hermann KUHN, « Lead Tin Yellow », *Artists Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics*, Vol.2, ed. Ashok Roy, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, p.86.

22 Alain R. DUVAL, « Les préparations colorées des tableaux de l'école française des dix-septième et dix-huitième siècles », *Studies in Conservation*, vol.37, n° 4, 1992, p.256.

Summary

A NEW LOOK AT THE PORTRAIT OF MOTHER CATHERINE OF SAINT-AUGUSTIN

Painting conservators develop a privileged relationship with works of art. Not only do they come to know them intimately during the course of examination and treatment, but they also participate actively in their transformation when layers of discoloured varnish or overpaint are removed. This process can occasionally reveal many surprises, as was the case with the portrait of Catherine Simon de Longpré de Saint-Augustin (1632-1668). The conservation treatment has enabled viewers to rediscover both the original painting and the fine work of the artist. It has also allowed the discussion around the provenance of the painting to continue, to situate it firmly in a historic and artistic context. The portrait of Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin remains a precious object for the Augustine nuns of the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec. For twenty years, Mère Catherine's generosity, devotion, and spiritual fervour made a lasting impression on the young French colony. She served the community first as a nurse, then as keeper and director-general of the hospital. Beatified by the Vatican in 1989, Catherine de Longpré stands out among the founders of the Catholic Church

in Canada. Oral tradition relates that the portrait was made at her deathbed, following a period of poor health that claimed her life in May 1668 at the age of thirty-six.

Prior to the conservation treatment, undertaken at the Centre de conservation du Québec, the portrait had been largely covered by overpaint that masked its original appearance. According to a note in the catalogue of works of the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec, the painting had been retouched on several occasions during the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1950s the portrait was finally rendered unrecognizable by a nun who had attempted to “freshen up” the painting by giving the sitter a younger, more cheerful appearance. The removal of the overpaint uncovered details and characteristics of the original paint that had not been seen in decades. The brushwork and the subtleties of the original palette were revealed, as well as the network of old craquelure. Dignity was restored to the sitter’s gaze. The false pink tint that had disguised her complexion was removed, revealing the original greyish-blue tones. This deliberate choice of colour by the artist was more in keeping with a funeral portrait. The work is neither signed nor dated, but the quality of its execution points to an artist of European training, as opposed to the hand of an amateur or a self-taught painter. The portrait has generally been attributed to Hughes Pommier (1636-1686), a priest and artist associated with the Séminaire de Québec. However, this attribution appears to be conjectural, based largely on the fact that he was one of the few artists known to have worked in New France during this period.

The art historian, Gérard Morisset (1898-1970), had seen the work before its last transformation; in fact, a photograph of the painting in the Fonds Morisset shows its appearance in 1945. At that time, the colour of the sitter’s cheeks had already been somewhat changed, the sleeves had been slightly modified and the background had been neutralized by the overpaint. As early as 1936 Morisset had noticed a resemblance between this portrait and the female figures in two works by Frère Luc (1614 -1685), but stopped short of attributing the portrait to him outright, perhaps because Frère Luc had come to Québec only in 1670, two years after the death of Mère Catherine. Without doubt, the portrait bears an uncanny resemblance to the figure of Saint Claire in the *Communion of Saint Claire*, at the Church of La Présentation, Québec. The two figures share a striking similarity in their facial features, a trait common to many of the female subjects portrayed by Frère Luc. It is important to note the shape of the face, the pallor of the complexion, the large eyes with white highlights, and the pink tint of the eyelids. The long, elongated nose, which is flattened near the brow and the small mouth with fleshy red lips that terminate at either end in a fine point, are other characteristics that point to the distinct pictorial style of Frère Luc. Other elements in the portrait also suggest the possible authorship of Frère Luc. The trees sketched in the background to the left of Mère Catherine are similar in shape to those in the ex-voto *l’Immaculée*

Conception in Trois-Rivières. The juxtaposition of the colours on the horizon to the right of Mère Catherine recall those in the *Assomption* at the Hôpital Général in Québec City and the ex-voto *l'Immaculée Conception*. All three works have a pale blue sky contrasted with a peach-coloured tint near the horizon line.

Scientists at the Canadian Conservation Institute have long been interested in the paintings of Frère Luc and have carefully examined the pigments and grounds of many works in Québec attributed to him. According to a study published in 1998, four of eight paintings they examined can be grouped together, not only for stylistic reasons but for the analogous nature of the materials found in their paint and ground layers. This said, at least two other works in Québec that have firmly been attributed to Frère Luc (not included in the original study) differ from the others studied. These two paintings also have ground layers that are distinct from one another. By way of comparison, the ground layers of the portrait of Mère Catherine are also unlike those of the other examined works. However, all the materials in the portrait, from the fabric support to the paint layers, are typical of the seventeenth century. Many questions still remain unanswered. An attribution to Frère Luc could lead to the suggestion that the painting is not in fact a true portrait, but rather a stylized and idealized contemporary creation, meant to commemorate the life and spirituality of Catherine de Longpré. The fact that the facial features are not personalized and that they are practically identical to those found in other religious works by Frère Luc, lends credence to this attribution. In any event, the portrait merits further study and should be placed within the broader context of posthumous religious portraits of the seventeenth century.

Translation: the author



fig.4 National Gallery of Canada, *Judging the Fourth International Salon of Photographic Art*, 1937. (Photo: NGC, EX0265)

THE ROLE OF PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITIONS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA (1934-1960)

Through the efforts of Director Jean Sutherland Boggs and James Borcoman, Acting Curator of the Collection of Photographs, the National Gallery of Canada began acquiring photographs as an artistic medium in 1967.¹ Although this was a significant moment in the institution's history, the medium had a presence within the Gallery prior to that date. This article investigates the histories of photography exhibitions at the National Gallery from the *Canadian International Salons of Photographic Art* of the 1930s to *The Family of Man* show in 1957 and particular attention is paid to how the institution incorporated changing notions of creativity, aesthetics and the photographer as artist. As I discuss, the six salons that took place from 1934 to 1939 accentuated the high aesthetic principles of photography, whereas in the early 1940s, the Gallery supported the display of propaganda themes as part of the war effort. In the post-war economy viewers were regarded as consumers and this led to another shift in emphasis. In particular, through the highly popular *The Family of Man* exhibition, photography was understood to affirm larger cultural ideals that emphasized the "universality" of white, middle-class American and, by extension, Canadian values.

In 1934, in the opening section of the catalogue for the *First Canadian International Salon of Photographic Art*, the National Gallery's director, Eric Brown, wrote, "No form of artistic expression has made greater advances in recent years than photography. The pictorialist, after a long sojourn in the wilderness of complete subservience to his medium, has at last wakened up to the fact that he is master...he can draw from nature's visible storehouse such abundant wealth of design, form and character as will supply most of his artistic needs, and the result is modern photography."²

Pictorialism was the predominant aesthetic in photography in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Generally speaking, pictorialists sought recognition of photography as an art form, with considerable attention being paid to the choice of subject matter, composition, tonal balance and technique. Photographers such as Americans, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen and Paul Strand, and Canadians, Sidney Carter and John Vanderpant, believed the medium could convey even higher, more spiritual and metaphysical ideals, although most photography enthusiasts would hesitate to describe their work in such a lofty manner. However, it was widely believed that photography was the



fig.1 Unknown, **Fishing Boat near the Percé Rock**, 1932.
(Photo: Clifford M. Johnston, Library and Archives Canada, PA-056660)

equal of other visual arts such as painting and as such, deserved recognition from the art museum. Nevertheless, in much pictorial photography the visual lexicon was limited; the particular and local were erased, cropped out or blurred and the work often expressed the clichéd and anecdotal. In Canada, such imagery perpetuated longstanding stereotypes of the nation, especially the Maritimes and Québec, as pre-industrial, rural, pastoral and thus exotic in nature (fig.1). This worldview was reinforced by the work of Royal Canadian Academy painters who used easily understood themes taken from everyday life: flower and portrait studies, landscape scenes, rural life, and ethnic and racial types. Such tendencies accorded with the conservative tenor of much Canadian art of this period.

Prior to the period discussed in this text, the advancement of photography was fostered in Canada and elsewhere through the agency of the camera club; although the support of public institutions such as the National Gallery further confirmed and promoted photography's artistic capacities. Through the Gallery's extensive touring exhibition program, photographs by camera club members could be seen at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Edmonton Museum of Fine Arts, as well as other venues. Clifford M.

Johnston, leader of the Ottawa Camera Club, clearly understood the advantages of allowing the National Gallery to cover the prohibitive costs of touring and producing catalogues: "the Gallery, with its prestige and no entry fee, can attract a much wider band of workers and give a better Salon at a trifling cost to ourselves."³ Although its first photographic *Salon* was produced in partnership with the Ottawa Camera Club, the National Gallery soon assumed much of the financial and administrative burden for these shows. In addition to producing the handsome small illustrated handout listing participants and their work, the Gallery was also responsible for mounting, packing and insuring prints, along with maintaining correspondence with the photographers. Even though the Ottawa Camera Club assisted the Gallery to some extent, Johnston regarded the project as "distinctly a National Gallery of Canada Salon" and further commented that "The Gallery has already created a prestige with exhibitors, and a goodly number of the world's best known workers contribute."⁴

Prior to the involvement of the Gallery, major camera clubs in Canada sought public support of photography by organizing annual salons. The clubs emulated art-institution practices to promote photography as a creative activity: photographs were framed, matted and hung in a manner that encouraged contemplative viewing. Both camera clubs and art galleries also validated the image's inherent aesthetic quality through the notion of "quality" works created by "masters" of the medium. The appropriation of the term "salon," which had originally been applied to European fine art exhibitions, denoted a highly structured organization with strict rules governing such activities as jury formation, judging of prints, notification of participants, installation of work and return of prints.⁵ Since 1919, the Toronto Camera Club had organized a major show at the Canadian National Exhibition, the extremely popular fair held annually in Toronto. Displayed in the Graphic Arts Building, the TCC *Salons* were major events; between 350 and 500 works were displayed, selected from over 1500 submissions. One writer estimated that if only one-tenth of the visitors to the CNE went to see the 1921 exhibition, attendance would have easily reached 125,000.⁶

In addition to the international interest in photography salons, the medium was represented in established art journals. From 1931 to 1942/43, the widely-read English arts magazine, *The Studio*, published an annual volume on photography. Featuring the work of leading international photographers, it also paid tribute to the diversity of this medium: as a means of artistic expression, for documentation and in advertising. Both Eric Brown and the National Gallery's assistant director H.O. McCurry knew the magazine and were aware that its sympathetic and supportive attitude would advance their own plans for photography exhibitions in Canada.

Certain members of the Canadian art community were longstanding supporters of photography and in some cases, they also wrote on photography. For example, M.O. Hammond, a well-known art critic and historian, was also a pictorialist photographer. A founding member of the Arts and Letters Club, he was active in the Toronto art community and was also a close friend of the painter Horatio Walker, often visiting him for photographic excursions on Île d'Orléans.⁷ Harold Mortimer-Lamb was another important proponent. A photographer, painter, and art critic, he wrote regular art reviews for the *Montreal Star* and acted as Canadian correspondent for *The Studio*. He was also an ongoing contributor to the particularly important international publication on photography, *Photograms of the Year*.⁸ The artist Bertram Brooker was similarly supportive of photography; in 1936 he dedicated the *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada* to the medium, illustrating work by John Vanderpant, Yousuf Karsh and J.H. Mackay. Throughout the 1920s, the Canadian journalist and art critic Newton MacTavish, who like Hammond was a pictorial photographer, included images by American pictorialist Edith S. Watson in several issues of the *Canadian Magazine of Politics, Science, Art and Literature*.⁹

Saturday Night magazine also published articles on photography by camera buff and enthusiast "Jay" (Thomas George Jaycocks) and reproduced the work of such Canadian photographers as Harold Kells (Ottawa), Wallace R. MacAskill (Halifax), and Frank Halliday (Calgary), as well as a variety of international artists. In addition, "Jay" exhibited eighty of his own photographs in 1934 at the Art Gallery of Toronto.¹⁰ His book *Camera Conversations*, published two years later, also illustrated his work, which ranged from standard descriptions to more formal aesthetic studies.¹¹

Despite such support by the public realm, recognition of the medium by established art institutions was minimal. The Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo was the first North American institution to purchase photographs in 1910 and the Museum of Modern Art only began to acquire the medium in 1930, forming its Department of Photography ten years later. In Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery held an exhibition of the photography of John Vanderpant in its lecture hall in 1932. In this context, the support photography received from the National Gallery in the 1930s was highly unusual and of vital importance.

The National Gallery's commitment to photography between the wars must be seen in conjunction with other changes affecting the institution. The late 1920s and 1930s were marked by numerous developments in the visual arts that challenged the Gallery's perception of what it believed to be its central role in the country. The Group of Seven, closely associated with the Gallery, was losing force, finally disbanding in 1933. Other groups including the Manitoba Society of Artists (1925), the Sculptors' Society of Canada (1928), the Women Painters of Western Canada (1931), the Alberta Society of Artists (1931), the

Canadian Group of Painters (1933), the Maritime Art Association (1935) and the Contemporary Arts Society (1939) were now reconfiguring the art community. As a result, the National Gallery was challenged in its conviction that it could represent the aesthetic interests of all Canadians. This dilemma became particularly evident with the NGC annual exhibitions of Canadian art. First organized in 1926, the shows soon became a political nightmare for Eric Brown; the West was especially annoyed about its lack of representation¹² and this underscored the Gallery's centralist bias. With rising criticism and a national petition demanding Brown's resignation, the last *Annual* was held in 1933. Hostilities towards the Gallery were also fueled by ongoing battles with the Royal Canadian Academy over the NGC's authority to represent the interests of Canadian art and artists.¹³ The last straw was the fact that the Gallery's budget dropped substantially from \$130,000 in 1929-30 to \$25,000 in 1934-35.¹⁴

Under these circumstances, the idea of photographic salons may have been most appealing to Brown; they were a novelty and therefore without the factional history of presenting the more established fine arts. Photography exhibitions were also less expensive to assemble and tour, a definite budgetary advantage in 1934 when the salons were initiated. The medium could also be used to demonstrate basic principles of art, as well as those of a more "radical" nature seen in recent art. Canadian painting, exemplified by the work of James Wilson Morrice, John Lyman and many members of the Canadian Group of Painters, pursued a modernist approach with relatively moderate experiments in colour and design. However, camera clubs had little interest in the type of experimentation occurring in Europe: photomontage and collage, vorticism, photograms and the use of visual distortion. In Canada, such radical approaches to imagery were rarely pursued; in other words, the adage "nothing in excess" accurately described both painting and photography of this period (fig.2).¹⁵

As such, pictorial photography with its easily recognizable subject matter was a perfect choice for the NGC.¹⁶ Brown, in a 1936 letter to C.M. Johnston, noted the medium's didactic capabilities in terms of teaching art principles: "I think the Canadian International Salon, which has developed so largely through the efforts of the Ottawa Camera Club, is an important contribution to the educational work of the Gallery."¹⁷ As H.O. McCurry put it in 1939, "Good photography appeals to everyone and is a valuable link in interesting people in painting and drawing."¹⁸ The West Coast photographer John Vanderpant was in agreement, stating in an earlier letter to Brown that, "Somehow photography is easier understood and for many the door by which they enter the realm of art."¹⁹

The credibility of photography as a creative medium was further substantiated through the NGC's lecture series; Eric Brown insisted that the speakers must be people of "unquestioning authority."²⁰ In 1935, after completing jury duties on the second photographic *Salon*, Vanderpant was hired to speak about



fig.2 John Vanderpant,
Urge, 1937, National
Gallery of Canada, shown
in the *Fourth Salon*.
(Photo: John Vanderpant, ©
National Gallery of Canada)

photography to groups in Ottawa, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, New York and Winnipeg. In 1936 Nicholas Ház, a well-known American photographer, writer, and critic of artistic photography was also engaged by the NGC to lecture in Ottawa on the medium.²¹ Ház's cosmopolitanism was extremely appealing to the local audience; as one writer commented, "His deep knowledge, rich living experience and smiling ease of utterance are virtues that will impress everyone who hears him."²² Ház combined his knowledge of art and photography with moderation in speech, thought and comportment to produce erudite "good taste," a quality that affirmed the beliefs of both lecturer and audience and of course, the National Gallery of Canada. The juries for the salons included established photographers and respected individuals of the photographic and art communities. Most judges were Canadian and were comprised of such established pictorialists as Vanderpant, Johnston, Bruce Metcalfe (Toronto) and Johan Helders (Ottawa) (fig.4). The jury for the second photographic *Salon* also included Frank Fraprie (Boston). As editor of the *American Annual of Photography* and with controlling interest in *American Photography*, Fraprie tirelessly promoted American pictorialism for over twenty-five years. The sixth and final NGC *Salon* jury was comprised of McCurry, Hamilton printmaker Leonard Hutchinson and the American pictorialist Edward Alenius (Jamaica, NY).

The opportunity to exhibit in the salons attracted photographers from around the world, some of whom had highly respected credentials. For example, the *First Salon* of 1934 included work by the celebrated photojournalist and commercial photographer Margaret Bourke-White, the renowned British society photographer Dorothy Wilding and Marcus Adams, a famous British photographer of children. Other notable practitioners included Alenius and Fraprie, as well as Grete Popper (Prague), Ernő Vadas (Budapest), Chin-San Long (Shanghai) and Dr. Max Thorek (Chicago), a prominent surgeon who later published several books on photography. The work of Canadians such as Vanderpant, Helders, Minna Keene (Oakville), Harold Kells (Ottawa), Karsh and Arthur Lomax (Hamilton) was thus positioned within a solid international context. In addition, the great interest generated by these exhibitions as they travelled across the country, prompted some local artists and art groups to hold their own lectures on photography. In 1935, at the opening of the *First Salon* in Kingston, the painter Goodridge Roberts compared photographs to drawings and emphasized how good design ensured success in both media²³. In conjunction with the London exhibition of the *Fifth Salon* in 1938, Fred Coates, president of the London Camera Club, delivered a lantern slide lecture on photography to an eager public.²⁴ Most importantly, newspaper articles from across Canada effused over the *Salons'* high standard of work and credited the National Gallery with the foresight to prepare and circulate these popular exhibitions.

Nonetheless, the salons had their detractors; camera club members were engaged in constant battles over fair judging processes and what was regarded as the detrimental influences of "modernist" impulses. The American photographer William Howard Gardiner had an extreme dislike of John Vanderpant, calling him "narrow, dogmatic and erratic." In a letter to Johnston, Gardiner opined that Vanderpant's "modernistic stuff, far from being the last word in pictorial photography, has had its day, has made its contribution, and is virtually dead among those of seasoned culture."²⁵ Johnston was more diplomatic, but for the most part agreed: "I cannot see personally his ideas, I have an admiration for his technique and from my very short acquaintance I have liked his personality, aside from his exposition on photography."²⁶

The Gallery and the Ottawa Camera Club made efforts to be careful in their choice of judges but, nevertheless, complaints over jury selection were voiced.²⁷ At the 1935 *Salon*, William Gardiner was again especially critical of Vanderpant, accusing him of imposing his views on his two fellow judges, Bruce Metcalf and Fraprie and thus usurping the selection process. In reply, Johnston emphasized that even though the judges were at one point at "loggerheads," the judging "at no time...assume[d] the air of violence or sudden death that one or two reports we have received, seem to have suggested."²⁸ Johnston again had to smooth ruffled feathers when the Australian photographer Dr. Julian Smith

wrote to Eric Brown in 1935 to complain about the selection methods, the acceptance of photogravure as a photographic process, the recognition or not of certain technical processes and the definition of “experimental photography.” Brown simply passed the letter to Johnston for response.²⁹ For the most part, however, the Gallery did not concern itself with the politics of the photographic societies, which left Johnston to deal with his community. From his point of view, the Gallery was a means to an end; a way for camera clubs to receive more serious attention nationwide. As a result, Johnston downplayed the internal squabbling of the clubs, arguing that the role of the National Gallery was one of education and that as “a government institution, it had a policy of fostering interest in all the Arts.”³⁰

However, there was also enthusiastic support for the photographic salons as a representation of a modern outlook, indicating that the Gallery had moved beyond supporting only painting and sculpture. As Johnston wrote in a 1935 letter to Fraprie, “There was some doubt at first as to the reception of a Pictorial Photography exhibit in such a staid institution as the country’s premier Gallery of painting and the older arts, but the public response was so overwhelming that the Gallery officials have been outspoken in their appreciation of its value.”³¹ An article in the *Toronto Telegram* criticized the Art Gallery of Toronto for not exhibiting the *First Salon*: “Perhaps the city is not yet able to accept the fact that modern art is photography and not the atavistic drawing and painting of many of its so-called ‘modern painters’.”³²

While the salons made the NGC known internationally to the pictorialist community and increased the public’s awareness of photographers from around the world, this put both Canadian photographers and the Gallery in an ambiguous position. On the one hand, the popularity of the salons united the country in an unprecedented manner³³ as they received critical attention from media across Canada. Photographers whose work had been selected were a source of local pride; but on the other hand, the salons also disclosed whether or not a local camera club was represented in the show, thus putting its members under scrutiny. The low proportion of Canadians represented in the salons was also cause for concern but Canadian pictorialists were not as prodigious as some of their foreign, especially American, counterparts.³⁴

Furthermore, photography was a double-edged sword in terms of defining nationalism; the medium could either consolidate or fragment ideas of national identity depending on how it was viewed. As the draft text, most likely written by Brown as a potential foreword to the 1938 *Salon’s* catalogue stated:

The Fifth Canadian International Salon once more demonstrates the possibilities of Photography from a pictorial standpoint but at the same time makes one regret that photographers the world over are not developing a technique typical of their environment. Very few seem to approach their

subjects with any particular interpretation in mind and so with the possible exception of the Japanese and Indian work, the photographs all appear much alike. This lack of a definite national characteristic is very noticeable in the work done in Canada, where in spite of the unparalleled opportunity afforded by our rugged landscapes, brilliant atmosphere and the sharp divisions of our seasons, so successfully interpreted by Canadian artists, most of our photographers are content to portray household pets, still-life and genre subjects.³⁵

While this text was not published, it reveals the Gallery's preoccupation with supporting what it understood to be a national art and its skepticism that photography could express that vision.

Nonetheless, the NGC's interest in photography extended in several directions. In 1936 McCurry assisted Vanderpant in reproducing his work in *The Studio's* annual publication, *Modern Photography*. Brown was in touch with the editors and asked both Vanderpant and Bruce Metcalfe to send him prints that he would forward to them. As a result, Vanderpant's work *Pride of Matter*, exhibited in the *Third Salon* as *Spirit and Matter*, was included in its 1936/37 issue. In 1934 Brown had earlier informed Vanderpant that: "We are building up a library of written lectures with slides on all art subjects and they are in continuous circulation. We should like to add one on modern art photography and dwell principally on its possibilities as an art form and it should be illustrated with about forty slides."³⁶ McCurry later approached Vanderpant again on this same topic, noting that the American Federation of the Arts had in circulation a lecture on contemporary photography written by the American Florence Seville Berryman, and that he wanted to do the same with a Vanderpant text. McCurry also appeared interested in displaying a history of the medium in the Gallery; in a handwritten note at the bottom of the letter he asked Vanderpant if he had materials for an exhibition of early photography that would run at the same time as the *Second Salon*, but the show did not take place.³⁷

The National Gallery also promoted the idea of creating a national photographic society because the salons were demanding in terms of time and resources for the NGC. In 1936 a proposed constitution of a Federation of Canadian Camera Clubs was drawn up. The Federation would be dedicated to the promotion of the art and science of photography, the organization of photographic salons and the encouragement of photography in schools, colleges, and universities; but such a national support system never materialized. As Brown stated in a letter to the Calgary photographer Frank Halliday, "We had hoped that the salon would have resulted in the formation of a national society of photography which could have taken over the exhibition [Salon], but this has not happened, although we still hope it may. Anything that can be done towards this end will be most valuable."³⁸

In addition to exhibiting and touring photography, the Gallery was slowly developing an interest in collecting photographs and creating a permanent exhibition space. In 1949, Anna K. Ackroyd, one of Vanderpant's daughters, approached the Gallery with the proposal that it should acquire a collection of her father's work. She also wanted the prints to be on permanent exhibition, but McCurry replied that such an acquisition was impossible due to lack of space. Concerning their display, he stated that, "They could be shown at times and held for the establishment of a proper photographic section, which we have contemplated for years, either in this building or in the projected new National Gallery building."³⁹ The Gallery did not accept the Vanderpant work, or that of any other photographer. Both the collection and regular display of photographs at the NGC would have to wait until the establishment of a photographs department in the 1960s.

Despite their success and the regular increase in the number of exhibited photographs and presentation venues, the last photographic *Salon* took place in 1939. The on-coming war was cited as a major reason for the subsequent cancellation of the series. As McCurry stated in a letter to C.H. Weaver, president of the Ottawa Camera Club, the international basis of the *Salon* created difficulties because it was almost impossible to contact participants.⁴⁰ The production of photographs in Britain and many European countries was also hampered by the severe paper shortage due to the war.⁴¹ But as McCurry wrote in a 1941 letter to John Fleetwood-Marrow (president of the Toronto Camera Club in 1940-41), "I sometimes wonder if we were well advised in discontinuing this interesting exhibition during the war. So many sources of good prints were cut off that we thought we would be unable to carry on."⁴²

Despite McCurry's regrets but perhaps closer to the truth, the photography salons had proven to be too great a burden on the Gallery. In the case of shows of more traditional media, nationally organized art societies increasingly undertook the brunt of the work required to assemble their exhibitions for circulation by Ottawa. For example, at the time of the *Sixth Salon* the NGC was touring fourteen shows, including those organized by the RCA, the Society of Artists Print-Makers, the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour, and the Canadian Society of Graphic Art. In contrast, there was no such external support system for the salons and the responsibilities of sending out a call for work, assembling a jury, and mounting, framing, insuring and returning prints rested with the Gallery. Thus, the NGC may simply have withdrawn its support of the salons because of the inability of the camera club to similarly formalize their activities on a national level.

The foreword to the catalogue accompanying the *Fourth Salon* in 1937 (fig.3) clearly indicates that the Gallery was experiencing difficulties even before the onset of the Second World War: "the great popularity of the National



fig.3 Installation shot of the *Fourth International Photographic Salon* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1937. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada, EX0265)

Gallery's Salon and the consequent length of its tours in visiting the principal Canadian art centres, may result in its change to a biennial event, which would tend to strengthen the representation and illustrate concrete progress without lessening the interest." This proposal caused great consternation, especially in Calgary where the *Salon* was one of the best attended attractions of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. Frank Halliday expressed his deep regret about the decision, noting that the salons were the only opportunity for people in the West to see the work of international photographers.⁴³ However, the difficulties associated with mounting the annual salons were amplified by the death of Eric Brown in 1939. H.O. McCurry, who had done a great deal of the administrative work for the salons, was now occupied with directorial duties and the energy that had propelled the Gallery's interest in the salons was severely dissipated.

The demise of the photography shows assembled by the NGC was largely a product of circumstances specific to time and place. However, pictorialist photography was also losing favour internationally. Throughout the forties, the Museum of Modern Art and photographers, curators and critics such as Ansel Adams, Beaumont Newhall and Nancy Newhall developed new ideas about

photographic aesthetics. Pictorialism was viewed as a vernacular form of visual communication and was deemed unsuitable for the display of higher metaphysical issues. However, pictorialist visual strategies can reduce complex issues to a simple means of presentation and this would prove valuable in the use and display of photography in the art museum throughout the Second World War and for a decade thereafter. From approximately 1940 to 1960, photography maintained a presence in the NGC, not as an aesthetic, self-contained object, but as a form of mass communication.

The belief that a photograph could be used to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings was an important aspect of its aesthetic value and was also applied to the photograph's documentary use. But importantly, it was believed that the photograph itself could not convey specific meaning and that the viewer needed guidance in order to appreciate the image's context. One strategy was to supplement the image with text; another entailed grouping photographs together under a central idea or theme. Nevertheless, the clear and uncomplicated manner of conveying subject matter that had developed through pictorialism was also used for a variety of purposes by the mass media and in advertising. The photostory found in magazines such as *Life* and *Look*, provided readers with entertaining narratives on a wide range of topics; at the same time, photography became a pivotal player in sustaining a consumer economy. These ideas of the medium – as art, propaganda, entertainment and advertisement – entered the art gallery in a number of exhibitions. The belief that the photograph could be understood solely as a unique aesthetic expression, now competed with popular uses of the medium.

In 1940 the National Gallery was involved in two early examples of Canadian photography exhibitions that focused on propaganda: *War for Freedom* (fig.5) and *Somewhere in France*. The shows, inaugurated by the London Passenger Transportation Board and Britain's Ministry of Information respectively, had been exhibited at Charing Cross underground station. Both exhibitions had a strict display sequence and used extended captions to ensure the optimum delivery of propaganda. *Somewhere in France* recounted events of a soldier's life in the army and comprised seventy-six images drawn from such agencies as the *Associated Press*, *Planet News* and *Wide World Photo*. *War for Freedom* contained a similar number of press photographs shown in eleven sections to illustrate "in popular form, events leading up to the War."⁴⁴ Its display used photographs and text in a highly didactic manner. For example, accompanying an image of Hitler in a raincoat was the caption, "The German people never wanted, never understood democracy. They gladly followed the first leader who offered them discipline instead." McCurry was reluctant to show or circulate the British exhibitions, informing O.D. Skelton, Canada's Undersecretary of State for External Affairs that, "Exhibitions of this kind are



fig.5 Installation shot of *War for Freedom*, shown at Charing Cross, London, England, 1940. (Photo: NGC, EX0330)

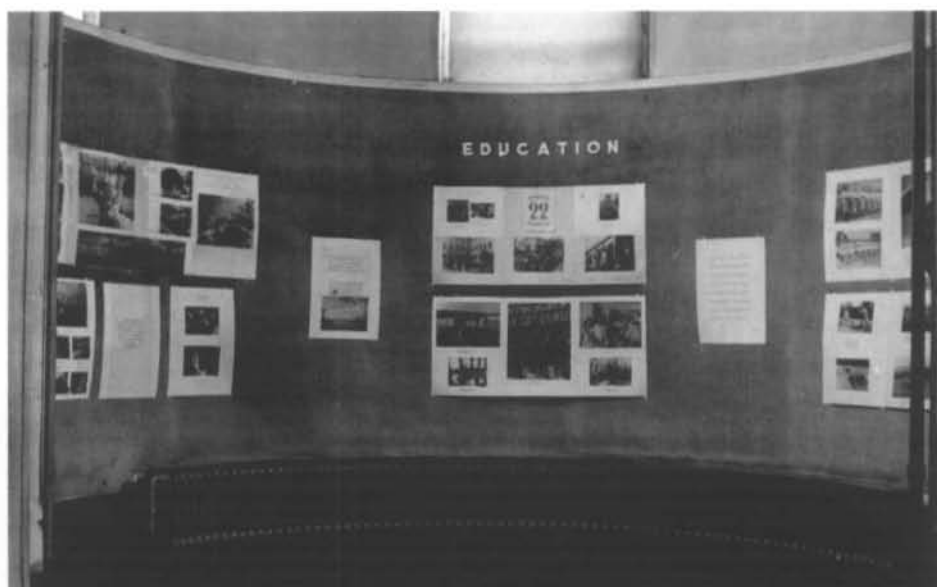


fig.6 Installation shot of *Twenty-five Years of the Soviet Union* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1943. (Photo: NGC, EX0377)

rather outside the province of the National Gallery and its cooperating organizations throughout the country.”⁴⁵ He suggested, however, that the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railway companies display the works in their hotels, which were located in every major Canadian city and were easily accessible to the public. Both *Somewhere in France* and *War for Freedom* were shown at the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa in the autumn of 1940 with the technical assistance of the NGC.

Nevertheless, the Gallery could not ignore its role in both presenting and circulating wartime images in various media and exhibited a number of shows in its own space, including *Exhibition of British War Posters* (1941), *Britain at War* (1941), *Walls Have Ears* (1943) and *Artists for Victory* (1944). In addition, three exhibitions of war art from Britain, Canada, and Australia were displayed in the first half of 1945. In such exhibitions as *Twenty-five Years of the Soviet Union* (fig.6) and *Great Britain and Her People* (1944), photography again served an informative role, presenting the land, peoples, and cultures of allied countries. The exhibition on the Soviet Union included panels with cartoons, posters and photographs and the overall visual effect resembled a magazine layout. Text often accompanied the images and the panels were grouped under thematic headings such as “Industry,” “Science,” “Education,” and “War.” *Great Britain and Her People*, organized by the British Council, contained one-hundred and seventy photographs depicting the wartime lives of people in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Gallery toured both exhibitions extensively throughout Canada.

Another example of photography as propaganda was *This Is Our Strength* (figs.7 and 8), a two-part exhibition shown at the NGC in 1944 and 1945, the first section of which was circulated to galleries nation-wide. Assembled by the Wartime Information Board (WIB), the first part paid homage to the home-front effort, while the second demonstrated the move to a post-war economy. Photographs chosen from the National Film Board (NFB) and commercial stocks were enlarged, cropped and framed to highlight their pointed messages. The two *This is Our Strength* exhibitions delivered their message with pointed use of text. The first part consisted of seventy-four photographs that were large for the time, from 51 x 41 cm to 76 x 102 cm and expertly mounted. The quality of the photographs and their manner of presentation did not go unnoticed. Alex Musgrove, curator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, remarked that visitors appreciated the high standard.⁴⁶ R.W. Hedley, director of the Edmonton Museum of Arts, also praised *This is Our Strength* for the exceptional quality of the photographs and their presentation.⁴⁷

The images in *This is Our Strength* were also manipulated for dramatic effect. For example, four large blow-ups of photographs were cut out and given the subtitle “Our Strength Behind the Forces.” The two central



fig.7 Installation shot of *This is Our Strength I* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1945. (Photo: NGC, EX0403)



fig.8 Installation shot of *This is Our Strength I* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1945. (Photo: NGC, EX0403)



fig.9 Installation shot of *This is Our Strength II* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1945. (Photo: Library and Archives Canada, PA-206909)

images, depicting a smiling man and woman, were flanked by cut-out photographs of an older couple. "Our strength," therefore, was to be found in the wisdom of the older generation and the energy and exuberance of the younger one, both groups representing the unpretentious and easily accessible labour of the working classes. The efforts on the home front were divided into such categories as "Food from the Soil," "They Produce Steel" and "Men of the Forest." In each section, the photographers employed various techniques to create dynamic images. For example, in "A Nation of Shipbuilders," striking vantage points were exploited by unknown photographers in images that show the launching of the cargo ship *Fort Esperance* and the positioning of a propeller in the repair of a freighter.⁴⁸ Other images were carefully staged, taking advantage of lighting and interplay of subject matter; this is exemplified in the view of two men braiding a massive cord of rope, which was also taken by an unknown photographer.⁴⁹

The second part of *This is Our Strength* (figs.9 and 10) focused on preparing the public for the movement from a war economy to that of peacetime. Twenty groups of photographs provided inspiring views, among them "Women in War," "Farmer's Achievement," and "Canada's Achievement in War and her Potentialities for Peace." The gallery space was used in a dramatic fashion:

photographs were placed on free-standing structures, hung on stretched wire, overlapped and positioned salon style to impart maximum visual effect. However, the pictorialist idea that the photograph was intrinsically and irrefutably linked to the circumstances of its taking was of little importance; what mattered was the effectiveness of the image within a larger didactic display. For example, the Harry Rowed photograph of a man and child listening intently to a radio that appeared under the title *As the Child Grows, So is the Nation Formed* was originally captioned *Canadian Village at War, Port Daniel, Québec, November 1941*. However, neither the photographer's name nor the caption was important in this exhibition. The use and manipulation of imagery was most clear about its message: it was propaganda, intended to reassure viewers about their roles and the role of their country within the larger theatre of war.

The visual dynamics and the politics of persuasion demonstrated in these exhibitions had other applications as the country entered the post-war economy. Similar tactics were particularly important in the display of photographs in the numerous design shows that were presented at the NGC, although the Museum of Modern Art had assembled most of these shows. *The Wooden House in America* (1944), *Elements of Design* (1946), *If You Want to Build a House* (1946), *Modern Buildings for Schools and Colleges, I & II* (1948), *Three Post-War Houses* (1948) and *The Story of Modern Chair Design and Useful Objects of Fine Design* (1949), to



fig.10 Installation shot of *This is Our Strength II* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1945, NGC. (Photo: Library and Archives Canada, Mikan No. 3951045)

name a few, were shown in Ottawa and circulated nationally to educate viewers about the latest and most tasteful consumer products to hit the market.⁵⁰ One influential exhibition eventually led to the establishment of the National Industrial Design Committee (1948-1960); *Design for Use: A Survey of Design in Canada of Manufactured Goods for the Home and Office, for Sports and Outdoors* was assembled in 1945/46 by the NGC, the NFB and the Department of Reconstruction. Images such as those by the Ottawa photographer Malak showing the forestry industry (fig.11), were re-used as design elements in an exhibition dedicated to informing the public about new products for the home, office and cottage.

The importation of avant-garde display ideas from the 1920s and 30s had other consequences for photography, evidenced most notably in *The Family of Man* exhibition assembled by Edward Steichen for the MoMA in 1955 and held at the NGC from 1st to 22nd February 1957. The exhibition's design was influenced by radical new approaches to gallery space; these strategies had already been explored in wartime propaganda and information exhibitions and were also reflected in the use of photographic imagery in popular magazines. Photographs could be drawn from the massive image banks that had been created in both the United States and Canada; images were categorized and cross-referenced under various subject headings and thus could be used for any number of projects. The application of such tactics in the gallery space, combined with propagandist use of text and image, resulted in highly popular exhibitions. In *The Family of Man*, Steichen mixed words and pictures to communicate simple, but pointed ideas.⁵¹ The exhibition did not promote a specific national ideology but it expressed the theme that humankind was unified through certain universal activities and experiences. The exhibition consisted of five-hundred and three photographs by two-hundred and seventy-three amateur and professional photographers from sixty-eight countries including Robert Capa, Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Works were grouped on the wall or hung at various levels from the ceiling to create a dynamic viewing experience. At certain points, isolated images served to underscore various themes. Lines of poetry by Carl Sandburg and William Blake and quotations from Bertrand Russell, Sophocles and the Bible were used to accentuate the visual experience. Paul Rudolph, the head designer of the exhibition at the MoMA, based his format on their highly popular *Good Design* exhibitions, which had presented viewers with examples of tasteful consumer objects.⁵² However, in *The Family of Man* this visual and physical arrangement did not position the audience as consumers of household objects, but of cold war ideology as conveyed through photographs.

In the exhibition's original version shown at the MoMA from 24 January to 8 May 1955, photographs and panels were positioned to create a labyrinth. The images at the start of the exhibition were printed on scrims and Lucite,



fig. 11 Installation shot of *Design in Industry* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1945/46. (Photo: NGC, EX0476)

allowing the viewer to see through and beyond to the family portraits. As was usual with photographs drawn from image banks, the original idea behind the taking of the photograph mattered little and, because the original format of the photograph was considered unimportant, images were cropped to suit the show's overall design. For Steichen, the treatment of the imagery – cropping, enlargement and placement – was a means to an end: declaring the unity of humanity.

When the MoMA first approached the National Gallery of Canada in March 1955, McCurry responded regretfully that the Trustees would most likely not approve the five thousand dollar fee for this exhibition.⁵³ Later that year, the MoMA offered a version that was one-third the size of the original exhibition. The one thousand dollar fee also made it more affordable. Photographers in the community such as Rosemary Gilliat and Richard Harrington, who was one of the few Canadians in the show (Reva Brooks and Ronny Jaques being the others), encouraged the NGC to accept the exhibition. Finally, in November 1955, Donald Buchanan, Associate Director, booked *The Family of Man* for February 1957.⁵⁴ The exhibition had different configurations depending on available space. The version shown at the NGC was one that

Steichen had developed to accommodate smaller venues.⁵⁵ Keeping the original number of photographs, he made smaller prints and grouped them on panels to reduce the amount of display space required. The exhibition came to Ottawa with full instructions for its assembly, precluding the necessity of a curator or trained technician travelling with the show.

For viewers in Ottawa and elsewhere, the message was clear and uplifting. Some writers felt that the show was proof that photography was a vital medium of both artistic expression and communication. "Not long ago," wrote one commentator, "the exhibition would have been generally abstruse – or even unintelligible – for most of the people who comprehend it immediately today. Its use of photographs, and of a museum's space to present them, follows and preresquires an expanding familiarity with the terms and grammar of a complex pictorial language."⁵⁶ The writer believed that the show was easily "read" and thus was both a testament to the talent of its organizers and to the visual literacy of its audience. For the thousands of people who saw the show, it represented the best application and exhibition of photography in the gallery.

Throughout the fifties, photographs maintained a continued presence in the NGC. Most of these shows were didactic, for example: *Britain, 1921-1951: A Photographic Survey* (organized in London by *The Times*, and circulated by that city's Art Exhibitions Bureau in 1951), *The Art of France* (a photographic survey organized by the American Federation of the Arts in New York in 1955) and *Bridges are Beautiful* (also circulated by AFA the same year). It was not until later in the decade that photography was exhibited at the Gallery in its own right, beginning with *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Decisive Moment: Photographs, 1930-1957* (1958), circulated by the American Federation of the Arts, and followed by *A Not Always Reverent Journey: Photographs by Donald W. Buchanan* (1959). The majority of photography exhibitions at the NGC would now follow art historical models; as conveyors of aesthetic concerns, photographs were considered unique, individual objects, framed, matted, and covered with protective glass.

This new approach coincided with the appointment of Alan Jarvis as director in 1955, and Donald Buchanan as associate director. Both Jarvis and Buchanan believed that the photographic medium could help individuals to perceive the world with a "heightened" eye and that it was a means of bringing order to the perceived chaos and fragmentation of reality that, for many, defined modern existence. Buchanan was an accomplished photographer whose work reflected a cultivated lifestyle. He published three books of photography: *A Nostalgic View of Canada* (1962), *To Have Seen the Sky* (1962) and *Sausages and Roses: Casual Photographs from Three Continents* (1963). In his publications, photographs and text were combined to anchor experience and consolidate memory; image and text worked together to present an ordered account of perceptions, observations, and emotions. As well, his photographs shaped an experience of the modern and new. Buchanan's understanding of photography may



fig.12 Installation shot of *A Not Always Reverent Journey* at the National Gallery of Canada, 1961. (Photo: NGC, EX0921)

have been influenced by his work for the National Film Board – specifically the institution’s use of imagery to inculcate nationalist sentiments within the Canadian populace.⁵⁷ The ideas of photographic display he developed through his time with the NFB and WIB also maintained an understated presence in his exhibition *A Not Always Reverent Journey* (fig.12) that was circulated by the NGC from 1959 to 1961. Photographs were displayed with a strong design element in mind; images either stood alone, filling the entire frame or they were grouped with other photographs against a white background and some also included text. In order to encourage the viewer to connect visually and emotionally with the photographs, images were varied in size and arranged across the wall so as to create a rhythmic effect that was poetic and evocative.

Jarvis shared Buchanan’s sense of the relationship between art and life. In 1947 he wrote the introductory volume for the British Thames and Hudson series *The Things We See: Indoors and Out*. It not only included Jarvis’s text on art and photography, but writings on cars, radios, pottery, furniture, and gardens to encourage people “to look at the objects of everyday life with fresh and critical eyes.” In many respects, his ideas on photography stemmed from the post-war industrial climate in which ordinary individuals have the means to make what are felt to be improvements in their life, but are overwhelmed by too many choices. For Jarvis, photography had the capacity to enhance vision: “The great contribution of the camera is in helping us to see.”⁵⁸ He believed that beauty is

inherent in the world but one must develop what he termed “the camera eye” in order to appreciate the harmony of forms and the play of pattern, shape and texture that exist everywhere. In 1957 Jarvis took his ideas to television in his series *The Things We See*. In the first broadcast, he used a camera to differentiate between seeing and looking, describing the latter as a more general condition of sight, a way of surveying one’s surroundings. Seeing, however, involves concentration and deliberation. He demonstrated with the camera that the act of seeing allows an object or person to emerge as a distinct entity out of the flux of existence. Thus, the camera provided a means to frame the world and its lens brought the world into sharp focus. Photography was a readily available means to hone vision and, by further opening up one’s eyes to the beauty of existence, a greater appreciation of art could be achieved.⁵⁹ However, Jarvis’ direct involvement in selecting shows for the National Gallery appears limited.⁶⁰ But he demonstrated his support of photography when in 1959 he granted Buchanan a leave of absence from the Gallery to undertake a six-month photographic excursion in Europe. When he returned, Jarvis selected sixty prints for Buchanan’s 1959 exhibition *A Not Always Reverent Journey* that toured nationally.

Jarvis and Buchanan shared a paradoxical understanding of photography: they described it as a “democratic” medium, but also as one through which individuals could demonstrate their heightened sensibility. This view of photography accorded with liberal, humanist ideas of art that emphasized the spiritual, moral and intellectual development of society. For both men, the medium was a means to integrate art and life through the cultivation of the aesthetic eye. They were committed to demonstrating the different ways photography could be used and understood and to emphasize the capacity of the medium to shape experience and ideas of identity.

From the 1930s to the late 1950s, photography exhibitions held at the National Gallery of Canada represented one method of constructing meaningful statements that reflected or supported the institution’s ideas and beliefs on the relation of art to society. Larger cultural processes such as the war effort, post-war reconstruction and, as was seen in the case of *The Family of Man*, humanist ideals, also shaped the presentation of these beliefs. For the most part, Gallery directors and staff such as Eric Brown, H.O. McCurry, Alan Jarvis and Donald Buchanan promoted ideas of culture that emphasized a harmonious state of existence; exhibitions reflected this ideal through the display of what was considered appropriate subject matter, carefully arranged on the gallery walls. In the ensuing years, the Gallery believed that the organization of aesthetic objects within its space not only confirmed the cultural achievements of the nation, but also provided an example of a well-integrated world that could be reproduced in daily lives. Such ideas in turn confirmed their belief that the National Gallery represented the highest aesthetic standards. Although such

ideals were thought to be best demonstrated through painting, photography could also play a role as the medium was more accessible to the general public. The camera "concentrated seeing" and by extension, encouraged intellectual and aesthetic engagement with the world.

Within the highly constructed environment of the art museum, photographs in an exhibition communicate specific types of knowledge; they may be displayed as works of art or as a component in the transmission of information and ideas. Its ability to be variously positioned has made this medium a valuable means of supporting the National Gallery of Canada's mandates and confirming the institution's significance to Canadian society.

ANDREA KUNARD

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Notes

1 This article is drawn from Andrea KUNARD, "Promoting Culture Through Photography in the National Gallery of Canada and the Still Photography Division of the National Film Board of Canada," Ph.D. thesis. Queens University, Kingston, 2004.

2 Eric BROWN, "Canadian International Salon of Photographic Art," *Canadian International Salon of Photographic Art* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1934), n.p.

3 C.M. Johnston to Fred Coates (London Camera Club), 2 Oct. 1937, "Photographic Art—Fourth Canadian International Salon of" (1937), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 1, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

4 Ibid.

5 Ulrich F. KELLER, "The Myth of Art Photography: An Iconographic Analysis," *History of Photography* 9 (January-March 1984): 252.

6 J. Addison REID, "The Toronto Exhibition," *The Photographic Journal of America* 58, no.10 (October 1921): 416.

7 For more on Hammond's views on the relationship between art and photography, see Janet DEWAN, "M.O. Hammond of Toronto: Canadians, Colonials and Public Taste," *History of Photography* 18, no.1 (Spring 1996): 64-77.

8 In 1906 Mortimer-Lamb formed a partnership with Sidney Carter and they established a photography gallery in Montreal; see David STRONG, "Photography into Art: Sidney Carter's Contribution to Pictorialism," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XVII, no.2 (1996): 6-27. Both Hammond and Mortimer-Lamb espoused the conservative and genteel tastes prevalent in Canadian art at the time.

9 Edith S. Watson, and her partner Victoria Hayward, a writer, made regular excursions to Canada throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. They were drawn to pre-industrial areas and lifestyles, especially suited to the soft-focus pictorial style that connoted a nostalgic view of the world. In 1922, they published *Romantic Canada*, a book of photographs and writings that depicted the country as quaint, charming and pastoral and as a place of refuge for Americans disenchanted with the industrialization of their country. See Francis ROONEY, *Working Light: The Wandering Life of Photographer Edith S. Watson* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1995), and Anna Maria CARLEVARIS, "Edith S. Watson and Romantic Canada (1922)," *History of Photography* 20, no.2 (Summer 1996): 163-65.

10 The managing editor of *Saturday Night*, Bernard K. Sandwell, tried unsuccessfully to interest the Gallery in the exhibition. Sandwell to McCurry, 4 Apr. 1934, "Jay Photographic Exhibition-Proposed" (1934), NGC 5.5J, file 14, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

11 Jaycocks asked Eric Brown to write on art in photography for the publication, but he refused. Jaycocks to Brown 6 Jan. 1936; Brown to Jaycocks, 16 Jan. 1936, "Jay Photographic Exhibition-Proposed" (1934), NGC 5.5J, file 14, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives. Also, Thomas George JAYCOCKS, *Camera Conversation* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1936), with a foreword by B.K. Sandwell.

12 Charles HILL, "Collecting Canadian Art at the National Gallery of Canada, 1880-1980," *Canadian Art*, eds. Charles Hill and Pierre Landry (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1988), xvi.

13 Brown's personality also added ammunition to the attacks. George Henderson, a lawyer and an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees for the RCA, accused Brown of being constantly irascible and moody, and obsessed with modern art especially that of the Group of Seven. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa (LAC), MG30, D186, vol. 2, file "National Gallery of Canada 1934." McCurry, writing to Norman Mackenzie, agreed that such behaviour put Brown in a vulnerable position: "I have been wondering just how Eric Brown should be told about the desirability if not the necessity of overcoming the temperamental disabilities which were discussed at our meeting and which we all agreed were a considerable handicap to him as Director of the Gallery." McCurry to Mackenzie, 3 Mar. 1934, LAC, MG30, D186, vol. 2, file "National Gallery of Canada 1934." Other RCA artists, such as Wylie Grier and Arthur Heming, accused Brown of being too dictatorial. Edmond DYONNET, *History of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts* (Montréal: T.A. Dickson, 1934), 7.5; and Charles HILL, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1975), 21-23. McCurry interpreted newspaper articles that questioned Brown's suitability as director as being "a pretext for an attack on the real work of the National Gallery." McCurry to Mackenzie, 21 Mar. 1934, LAC, MG30, D186, vol. 2, file "National Gallery of Canada 1934."

14 HILL, *Canadian Art*, xvii and HILL, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties*, 14.

15 For more on Canadian photographic modernism, see Ann THOMAS, "Between a Hard Edge and a Soft Curve," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XXI, nos.1-2 (2000): 74-95.

16 As Johnston optimistically wrote to John Vanderpant on 29 Mar. 1935, concerning the Gallery's interest in continuing the photographic salons, "This is rather indefinite at the moment, but we might say that as a result of our last year's salon and the effort in this

direction the Gallery Officials are pretty well sold on Pictorial Photography as a popular medium to the public and feel that they are fully justified in giving this its place as one of the Arts." Johnston to John Vanderpant, 29 Mar. 1935, "Canadian International Salon of Photographic Art," LAC, MG30, D373, vol. 1, file 4, part 1 of 2.

17 Brown to Johnston, 9 Jan. 1936, LAC, MG30 D165, vol. 1, file 3, part 2 of 2.

18 "International Salon of Photographic Art Opens," *Ottawa Citizen*, 28 Oct. 1939.

19 Vanderpant to Brown, 30 Jan. 1935, "Correspondence 1935," LAC, MG 30 D373, vol. 1, file I-23.

20 On 10 Jan. 1934, Brown wrote, "The National Gallery is practically forced by public opinion to employ only those who appeal to the average person...." He suggests the Gallery would support a lecture series if Vanderpant found art associations to accept the lectures. Brown to ?, 10 Jan. 1934, "Correspondence 1934," LAC, MG30 D373, vol. 1, file 1-22.

21 Karsh to McCurry, 19 June 1936, "Photographic Art-Third Canadian International Salon of" (1936) NGC 5.5P, file 6, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

22 P.W., "Canada's Third International Salon of Photographic Art is Now Open," *Evening Citizen* (Ottawa), 24 Oct. 1936.

23 "Exhibition of Photos on Display in City," *Kingston Whig-Standard*, 24 Jan. 1935.

24 "International photo salon opens here," *The London Free Press*, 24 Jan. 1938.

25 Gardiner to Johnston, 17 Oct. 1935, LAC, MG30 D165, vol. 1, file 5, 2 of 2.

26 Johnston to Gardiner, 5 Nov. 1935, *ibid.*

27 For more on the various factors influencing the makeup of juries see Christian PETERSON, *After the Photo-Secession: American Pictorial Photography, 1910-1955* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 142-43. Eric Brown also attempted to engage well-known artists as judges in order to add more credibility to the Salon and the jurying process. For example, Edwin Holgate was approached for the fourth show but declined as he had just arrived at his painting shack in the Laurentians and was not eager to return to Ottawa. Holgate to Brown, 6 Sept. 1937, "Photographic Art-Fourth Canadian International Salon of" (1937), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 1, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

28 Johnston to Gardiner, 5 Nov. 1935, LAC, MG30 D165, vol. 1, file 5, 2 of 2.

29 Brown to Johnston, 12 Sept. 1935, *ibid.*

30 Johnston to Brown, 16 Sept. 1935, *ibid.*

31 Johnston to Fraprie, 8 Mar. 1935, *ibid.*, part 1 of 2.

32 "Untitled," *Toronto Telegram*, 8 June 1935. Geoffrey Malcolm, of the Toronto Camera Club, wrote to T.H. Hawkins, secretary of the Ottawa Camera Club, that the TCC had lobbied the Art Gallery of Toronto to take the 1934 Salon, but was refused on the grounds of a conflict of dates. However, Johnston had also noted a certain "apathy" on the part of the AGT towards the exhibition. Malcolm to Hawkins, 4 Nov. 1935 and Johnston to Malcolm, 12 Nov. 1935, LAC, MG30 D165, vol. 1, file 5, 2 of 2.

33 To ensure that the work could be seen in both large cities and small communities, the Salon could be sponsored by a local camera club, an art association or an art gallery.

34 In 1934, 26% of the participants were from Canada, 12% in 1935, 15% in 1936, and 23% in 1937. LAC, MG 30 D165, 1937, vol. 1, file 11. In 1930, an all-Canadian photography exhibition was held at the CNE, an event that was repeated nine years later. In 1934, the Hamilton Camera Club held the *First Annual Canadian Salon of Photography*. The

emphasis on Canadian work was welcomed by some and bemoaned by others because it was felt that there were not enough pictorialists in the country doing quality work. See Joan SCHWARTZ, "Salon Crescendo/1930-1940," in *Private Realms of Light: Amateur Photography in Canada (1839-1940)*, ed. Lilly Kolton (Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1984), 97-101.

35 Holgate to Brown, 6 Sept. 1937, "Photographic Art-Fifth Canadian International Salon of" (1938), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 1, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

36 Brown to Vanderpant, 10 Jan. 1934, "Correspondence 1934," LAC, MG 30 D373, vol. 1, file I-22.

37 McCurry to Vanderpant, 28 Oct. 1935, "Correspondence 1935," LAC, MG 30 D373, vol. 1, file I-23.

38 Brown to Halliday, 29 Nov. 1937, "Photographic Art-Fourth Canadian International Salon of" (1937), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 1, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

39 McCurry to Ackroyd, 21 July 1949, "Vanderpant, John," (Correspondence with/re Artists), NGC 7.1 V, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

40 McCurry to Weaver, 14 Nov. 1946, "Photographic Art-Seventh Canadian International Salon of (proposed)" (1939-1947), NGC 5.5P, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

41 McCurry to Gordon M. Tranter, secretary, Calgary Photographic Society, 22 Feb. 1946, "Photographic Art-Seventh Canadian International Salon of (proposed)" (1939-1947), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P; D.H. Baker to McCurry, "NGC Memorandum" 21 Feb. 1946, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

42 McCurry to Fleetwood-Morrow, 28 Oct. 1941, "Photographic Art-Sixth Canadian International Salon of" (1939), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 2, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

43 Halliday to Brown, 15 Nov. 1937, "Photographic Art-Fourth Canadian International Salon of" (1937), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5P, file 1, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

44 W.C. Hankinson, senior secretary of the Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Ottawa to Lauren Beaudry, Assistant Undersecretary for the Department of External Affairs, 24 Jan. 1940, "War Photographs Exhibitions" (1940), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5W, file 8, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

45 McCurry to Skelton, 2 July 1940, "War Photographs Exhibitions," *ibid.*

46 Musgrove to McCurry, 10 May 1944, "This is Our Strength Exhibition 1 and 2" (1944-1945), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5T, file 8, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

47 Hedley to McCurry, 18 Sept. 1944, "This is Our Strength Exhibition 1 and 2," *ibid.*

48 The original caption for the boat launching was "The 10,000 ton cargo ship S.S. Fort Esperance slides down the ways during her launch ceremony at the United Shipyards Ltd." The photograph was taken in September 1943 in Montreal when a record twelve ships were launched on the same day; see LAC, MIKAN No. 3196929. The original caption for the propeller photograph was "Workman guides a crane lifting a propeller to be used in repairing a Yugoslavian freighter," taken in July 1943 in the Maritimes; see LAC, MIKAN No. 3196731.

49 For the most part, NFB photographers used medium to large format cameras that discouraged spontaneous images.

50 A direct link between the Gallery and local commercial interests is seen in shows such as *Useful Gifts of Good Design Under \$6.00 From Ottawa Stores* (1951), and *Useful Gifts of Good Design Under \$15.00 From Ottawa Stores* (1953 and 1954), both of which took place in December. These exhibitions were most likely based on MoMA's *Useful Household Objects* shows that were an annual event from 1938 to 1950; see Mary Anne STANISZEWSKI, *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1998), 161-67.

51 Critical writing on the exhibition includes Roland BARTHES, "The Great Family of Man," *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 100-102; Lili Corbus BEZNER, "Subtle Subterfuge: The Flawed Nobility of Edward Steichen's Family of Man," in *Photography and Politics in America: From the New Deal to the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 121-174; Louis KAPLAN, "Photoglobe: The Family of Man and the Global Rhetoric of Photography," in *American Exposures: Photography and Community in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 55-79, 207-211; and the entire issue of the *History of Photography* 29, no.4 (Winter 2005).

52 STANISZEWSKI, *The Power of Display*, 173-90.

53 McCurry to Monroe Wheeler, Director of Exhibitions and Publications, MoMA, 10 Mar. 1955, "Family of Man Exhibition" (1957), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5-F, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

54 Buchanan to Antoinette Irving, Scheduling Manager, MoMA, 30 Nov. 1955, "Family of Man Exhibition," *ibid.* Although not toured by the NGC, the exhibition also went to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Public Library and Art Museum, London, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

55 STANISZEWSKI, *The Power of Display*, n.70, page 334-35 regarding the different versions of the exhibition. Although it is not entirely clear, it appears that the MoMA toured the original exhibition to eight US institutions. Two smaller versions were circulated by the museum, and four smaller ones travelled both nationally and internationally under the auspices of the United States Intelligence Agency. At the NGC, all correspondence is directed to the MoMA's Circulating Exhibitions Department with no mention of USIA involvement.

56 Martin S. DWORKIN, "Steichen's Great Exhibition, The Family of Man," *Canadian Commentator* 1, no.7 (July 1957): 14-15. Dworkin was a celebrated American film critic.

57 In 1941, while employed by the NFB as Supervisor of Rural Circuits, Buchanan established a broad distribution network to ensure that information films were available in the remotest areas of Canada. Buchanan also developed an extensive traveling display program for both the Wartime Information Board and the NFB. In 1944, he edited *This is Canada*, a pictorial essay featuring NFB photographers Nick Morant, Harry Rowed, Ronny Jaques, Jean Palardy and Frank Tyrell. After the war, as part of the post-war reconstruction plan, Buchanan organized the Industrial Design Exhibition that later led to his establishing the National Industrial Design Committee at the National Gallery.

58 Alan JARVIS, *The Things We See: Indoors and Out* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1947), 9.

59 Jarvis also expresses this view in a speech he wrote for Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent, for the opening of *The Family of Man* exhibition in Montreal on 8 March 1957. The text notes that the exhibition proves that photography is an art form and, "it also proves that art is not so much a way of doing or making, but a way of *seeing with fresh eyes*. It is the mark

of genius that the artist, whether he is a painter, photographer, or sculptor, reveals to us new ways of seeing the world; he shows us aspects of beauty to which we had hitherto been blind, and he discovers beauty in unexpected, even in unlikely places." *Family of Man Exhibition* (1957), (Exhibitions in Gallery), NGC 5.5-F, NGC Fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

60 The files provide little information on the curatorial decisions and administrative processes surrounding the selection and creation of photograph exhibitions at this time. In the case of *The Family of Man*, the letter from the Museum of Modern Art proposing the exhibition was passed around, with various people signing their support in the margins. In terms of Jarvis' involvement with exhibitions, Andrew Horrall believes that Jarvis was slightly removed from such concerns. When Jarvis was hired, it was recognized that he lacked administrative experience and Buchanan was named assistant director and put in charge of running the institution on a daily basis. His administrative expertise freed Jarvis to fulfill the role for which he had been hired: to publicize the Gallery and Canadian art throughout the country. From his arrival in May 1955 until about the end of 1956, he was on the road constantly. Jarvis thus managed the Gallery by putting his full trust in his senior staff and if Buchanan wanted to mount photography exhibitions, Jarvis would have most likely supported him. Email correspondence, Andrew Horrall to Andrea Kunard, 4 Mar. 2009; see also Andrew HORRALL, *Bringing Art to Life: A Biography of Alan Jarvis* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009).

LE RÔLE DES EXPOSITIONS DE PHOTOGRAPHIES À LA GALERIE NATIONALE DU CANADA (1934-1960)

Le présent article explore l'histoire diversifiée des expositions de photographies à la Galerie nationale du Canada (maintenant Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) avant l'acquisition de photographies comme médium artistique en 1967. Ainsi que je le soutiens, la photographie était clairement liée à la manière dont l'institution comprenait sa fonction en tant qu'établissement artistique national, bien que sa présentation d'expositions de photographies ait été motivée, à certains moments spécifiques, par différentes raisons. L'organisation et les tournées de Salons internationaux canadiens de photographie de 1934 à 1939, conjointement avec des clubs photo, coïncidaient avec la manière dont la Galerie comprenait son rôle pédagogique en diffusant parmi un large public ce qu'elle voyait comme étant les grands principes esthétiques du médium. Dans les années 1940, la Galerie soutenait la diffusion de thèmes de propagande en faveur de l'effort de guerre. Puis l'accent se porta sur la vision des spectateurs comme consommateurs dans une économie d'après-guerre. À travers la très populaire exposition *The Family of Man*, présentée à la Galerie en 1957, on comprenait que la photographie affirmait des idéaux culturels plus étendus qui soulignaient l'« universalité » de l'Américain blanc ordinaire et, par extension, les valeurs canadiennes.

Dans les années 1930, la Galerie faisait la promotion de l'esthétique photographique picturaliste dans ses très populaires Salons de photographie qui montraient les oeuvres d'importants photographes internationaux et canadiens. Le mouvement picturaliste était complexe et les photographes picturalistes choisissaient avec soin le sujet, la composition, l'équilibre des tons et la technique. Les picturalistes croyaient que leur travail se comparait aux autres arts visuels, comme la peinture, et méritait d'être reconnu par le musée. Eric Brown, directeur de la Galerie nationale, soutenait le picturalisme à cause de son attrait de masse; il le jugeait utile comme « introduction » esthétique aux arts plus nobles. Les Salons étaient aussi destinés à refléter la vision de plus en plus moderne de la Galerie, bien qu'ils aient joué un rôle ambivalent au regard des préoccupations de l'institution d'appuyer ce qu'elle considérait comme un art national. À la fin des

années trente, la Galerie retira son appui aux Salons, qui étaient devenus un fardeau pour le musée à cause des difficultés occasionnées par la guerre et du soutien insuffisant des clubs photo qui n'avaient pas réussi à structurer leurs activités au plan national.

Vers 1940 et jusqu'en 1960, la photographie continua d'être présente, non comme objet esthétique indépendant, mais comme une sorte de communication de masse. Durant toute la durée de la guerre, les photographies entrèrent au musée en tant que matériel éducatif et outil de propagande. Les photographies de *Twenty-five Years of the Soviet Union* (1943) et *Great Britain and Her People* (1944) montraient la terre, les peuples et les cultures de nations alliées. Des expositions comme *War for Freedom* et *Somewhere in France*, montrées en 1940, suivaient un ordre strict et utilisaient des légendes explicatives étendues pour assurer une diffusion optimale de la propagande. La quintessence de l'utilisation du médium à des fins de propagande a été atteinte dans *This Is Our Strength*, exposition en deux parties montrées à la Galerie nationale en 1944 et 1945, dont la première a circulé dans les musées à travers le pays. Réalisée par le Wartime Information Board, l'exposition montrait le travail sur le front domestique pendant la guerre. L'exposition avait un aspect théâtral pour l'époque. La photographie documentaire se combinait à des techniques visuelles dynamiques comme l'agrandissement, le recadrage et un éclairage dramatique. L'accent était mis sur l'efficacité de l'image à l'intérieur d'une présentation didactique. L'utilisation et la manipulation de l'imagerie étaient des plus claires quant au message : rassurer les spectateurs sur leur rôle et sur le rôle de leur pays sur le plus vaste théâtre de la guerre.

La dynamique visuelle et la politique de persuasion de ces expositions ont été également utilisées lors de l'entrée du pays dans une économie d'après-guerre. Des stratégies visuelles semblables étaient particulièrement importantes pour la présentation de photographies lors des nombreuses expositions de design à la Galerie nationale, comme *The Wooden House in America* (1944), *Elements of Design* (1946), *If You Want to Build a House* (1946) qui étaient réalisées, pour la plupart, par le Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) de New York. L'influente exposition, *Design for Use: A Survey of Design in Canada of Manufactured Goods for the Home and Office, for Sports and Outdoors* a été réalisée en 1945 par la Galerie nationale, l'Office national du Film et le ministère de la Reconstruction. Les photographies ainsi présentées servaient principalement d'illustrations et de guides pour les valeurs créées par le nouveau culte du consumérisme.

La transformation de la Galerie en spectacle visuel était évidente dans l'exposition du MoMA *The Family of Man* organisée par Edward Steichen, où les spectateurs étaient visuellement et physiquement mis en situation de

consommateurs de l'idéologie de la guerre froide. Bien que la version d'Ottawa n'ait comporté que le tiers de l'exposition originale, les photographies étaient regroupées sur le mur ou suspendues au plafond à différents niveaux pour créer une expérience visuelle dynamique. Pour des milliers de spectateurs, à Ottawa et ailleurs, l'exposition envoyait un message clair et édifiant tout en démontrant que la photographie était un médium vital d'expression artistique et de communication. *The Family of Man* obtint un très vif succès car, pour les spectateurs, elle représentait la meilleure façon d'utiliser et d'exposer les photographies de la Galerie.

Tout au long des années cinquante, le médium est demeuré présent à la Galerie à travers des emprunts d'expositions. De plus, la décision de présenter ces expositions dépendait le plus souvent des intérêts personnels du directeur, Alan Jarvis, et du directeur adjoint Donald Buchanan. Tous deux voyaient dans la photographie un moyen d'intégrer l'art et la vie, car le médium aidait le spectateur à percevoir le monde d'un point de vue plus « élevé ». La photographie montrait aussi comment mettre de l'ordre dans ce qui était perçu comme le chaos et la fragmentation de la réalité qui, pour plusieurs, définissaient l'existence moderne.

Depuis les années trente jusqu'à la fin des années cinquante, les expositions de photographies tenues à la Galerie nationale du Canada étaient un moyen de formuler des énoncés qui reflétaient ou appuyaient les conceptions de l'institution concernant les relations de l'art à la société. À l'intérieur de l'environnement très construit d'un musée des beaux-arts, les photographies exposées communiquent des modèles spécifiques de savoir; elles peuvent être montrées comme des œuvres d'art ou comme une composante dans la transmission d'informations et d'idées. Cette étude des expositions de photographies à la Galerie nationale du Canada durant cette période révèle comment elle a répondu aux événements historiques et aux forces culturelles. La possibilité de disposer les photographies de différentes manières a fait du médium un moyen précieux de justifier le mandat de la Galerie nationale du Canada et de confirmer son importance pour le pays.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette



fig.1 Greg Curnoe, **Homage to Sam Langford** (title page), 1970, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 33 x 20 cm, printer Robert Rogers. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. © Succession Greg Curnoe Estate/SODRAC 2008. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

CONCEPTUAL LITHOGRAPHY AT THE NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

In 1973 the Dublin-born artist Les Levine wrote an article in *Art in America* in which he asked whether the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in Halifax just might be “the best art school in North America.”¹ Levine had spent time that year at NSCAD as a visiting artist and had encountered a milieu in which an experiment in radical pedagogy had transformed a provincial art school into a key centre for conceptual art. This transformation aligned NSCAD with the most challenging and vanguard art practices of the day and brought international acclaim. Paradoxically, however, one of its most important innovations was the reinvention of the traditional art of lithography as a medium for the critical questioning of aesthetic precepts and ideas: a questioning that characterized conceptual art. The formation of the NSCAD Lithography Workshop in 1969 was only one facet of the sweeping changes the school underwent at this time, but it was crucial as it provided both direct and indirect support for the total transformation.

This development could scarcely stand in sharper contrast to the history of the school, which was founded by the citizens of Halifax as a patriotic tribute to Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. The initiative for the school’s creation is largely credited to Anna Leonowens, former governess to the King of Siam (and famously immortalized by the Rogers and Hammerstein musical, *The King and I*), who was then living in Halifax. It opened in October 1887 as the Victoria School of Art and Design, to educate young women and men in the fine and applied arts.² Renamed the Nova Scotia College of Art in 1925, it was well served by leaders such as Arthur Lismer (1916-19), Elizabeth S. Nutt (1919-43) and Donald C. MacKay (1945-67), but the school did not undergo the invigoration of the arts that occurred elsewhere during the years after the Second World War. Even by the late 1960s the school remained a backwater, still defined by a traditional ethos that had long been superseded in more progressive Canadian and international art institutions.

All of that began to change radically in 1967 with the hiring of a new president, Garry Neill Kennedy, a Canadian who had received his MFA from Ohio University in 1965 and was then in his second year as head of the art department

at Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. Intrigued by the idea of returning to Nova Scotia where he had spent part of his childhood, Kennedy agreed to take up the challenge of reinvigorating Halifax's small but tenacious art college.³ He began his overhaul of the school immediately by adding the word "Design" to its name in recognition of the growing importance of the institution's design programs and by establishing it as the only art college in Canada accredited to confer Bachelors and Masters degrees in Fine Art and Art Education. Kennedy also expanded the College's cramped four-storey Coburg Road building and upgraded its facilities by taking advantage of new federal initiatives to develop technical and vocational programs in post-secondary educational institutions. The six-storey addition included a gallery space for professional and student exhibitions.⁴ Named in honour of Leonowens, the Gallery was crucial to Kennedy's overall strategy of bringing the College into contact with the larger art community. The gallery held its inaugural exhibition, *5 Canadians*, in December 1968⁵ and ran an active program of the work of numerous national and international artists. In 1969 the small mezzanine space overlooking the main gallery was also used for exhibitions; it was formally established as The Mezzanine in September 1970 with the appointment of Charlotte Townsend-Gault as director and featured a highly innovative schedule of weekly exhibitions and projects closely tied to NSCAD's curriculum.⁶

Another of Kennedy's key gambits was to update the curriculum and hire a new roster of permanent faculty who were active professionals conversant with current trends in art and design. By the end of 1968, most of the faculty who had been on staff prior to Kennedy's hiring had resigned or been fired and had been replaced by "specialists," the majority of whom were American or British. As contemporary press accounts indicate,⁷ this was not a painless transition for the College; it alienated many students and members of the local art community and the hiring of non-Canadians seems to have been seen as a sign of cultural imperialism. In a letter responding to an enquiry from the chairman of the board about the nationality of the College's faculty members, Kennedy cogently defended his hiring practices. Explaining why only three of the fourteen new appointments made in 1968-69 had gone to Canadians, he pointed out that no Canadian colleges offered instruction at the graduate level (MFA) and that, of the sixty-seven applicants to the new positions, only nine were Canadian and none had teaching experience beyond the high school level.⁸ Kennedy has also reported that he tried to recruit such prominent Canadians as Iain Baxter (who, along with Ingrid Baxter, formed the conceptual art entity N.E. Thing Co.) and Greg Curnoe, but that they were unable or unwilling to come to what they regarded as the remote and provincial city of Halifax.⁹ In contrast, many of the Americans recruited by Kennedy saw NSCAD as a means to leave behind the turmoil then afflicting American society. By 1968 the initial

euphoria of the counter-cultural revolution had imploded under the weight of the international crises taking place from Paris to Prague to Mexico City. In the United States it was a year of unrelenting catastrophe and mayhem with the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the student occupation of Columbia University and rioting in cities across the country. With the election of Richard Nixon in November 1968, the escalation of the war in Vietnam seemed certain. The resulting reductions to draft deferments for students enrolled in universities led to a surge of middle-class draft resisters moving to Canada. Although few of the teachers and students who came to NSCAD during these years were actual draft dodgers, the allure of Canada as a liberal state led by the newly elected Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau was compelling.¹⁰

This new political situation, along with the changes to NSCAD's curriculum, the addition of gallery spaces for exhibitions and the implementation of the Visitors Program and the Lithography Workshop, contributed to fostering the College's new pedagogical objectives. By April 1969, international artists like James Lee Byars, Rex Lau and Lawrence Weiner had already visited the College as the first participants in David Askevold's innovative Projects Class and held exhibitions and events at the Anna Leonowens Gallery.¹¹ Askevold intended that students would work directly on projects with contemporary artists who either visited the College for a period of time, or who sent instructions by mail or telephone for a project that the students would carry out under his supervision.¹²

The facilities for the Lithography Workshop were in place by fall 1968 and the Workshop became fully operational in January 1969, thus preceding the inception of Askevold's Projects Class by many months.¹³ Although it was initially overshadowed by the notoriety of the experimental Projects Class, the Lithography Workshop would have an equally important and even more enduring role in connecting the College to the larger contemporary art world as the Workshop lasted until 1976, but the Projects Class closed four years earlier. Perhaps more importantly, the Workshop produced tangible works of art rather than ephemeral projects. But like the Projects Class, it was crucially important to the Visitors Program because it offered artists the opportunity to come to the College to produce a limited-edition print with the assistance of a master printer. As will be discussed, however, this premise was not strictly adhered to since not all of the artists who participated in the Lithography Workshop actually visited the College. Nor was the Visitors Program tied directly either to the Lithography Workshop or the Projects Class. Indeed, it took advantage of all opportunities to attract people of interest to any facet of the school and have them participate in as many activities as possible, including mounting exhibitions, giving presentations, workshops or lectures, meeting with the Art Now class or producing a lithograph.¹⁴

The idea for the Lithography Workshop came from Kennedy's association with Gerald Ferguson. They had been colleagues at Ohio University and Ferguson joined the NSCAD faculty in 1968; he had also introduced Kennedy to Jack Lemon at the Kansas City Art Institute. Trained as a master printer at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles, Lemon had set up a professional printmaking workshop in Kansas City to produce limited-edition lithographs by prominent midwestern artists. Because Kennedy believed that NSCAD would benefit from a similar program, he appointed Lemon in 1968 to build and direct the Lithography Workshop and also hired his Kansas City colleague, Robert Rogers, who had been affiliated as well with Tamarind, as the master printer. The NSCAD Lithography Workshop set out to achieve four main objectives: to build up a fully equipped, high-quality printmaking program in lithography and intaglio; to attract international professional artists to the College; to provide students with direct contact with these artists as they worked through the printmaking process; and to raise income for the College through the sale of prints.¹⁵

During its initial phase, the NSCAD project operated largely in accordance with the original ideals and objectives of the Tamarind Lithography Workshop. When Tamarind was founded in 1960 under the direction of June Wayne, she stated that its main intention was "to rescue...the art of the lithograph" by redressing the practices then prevalent in European printmaking whereby the artist would supply a sketch or painting to a master printer who would copy or "interpret" this onto the stone.¹⁶ The "interpretation" would be mechanically reproduced by means of photolithography, the resulting prints being sold as signed "originals." By contrast, the Tamarind method was to have the artist come to the print shop for an extended period and work directly with the master printer to "accustom artists and printers to intimate collaboration so that each becomes responsive to the other," thus elevating the overall aesthetic quality of the finished print.¹⁷

As Eric Cameron has noted, by emulating this Tamarind ideal, the NSCAD Lithography Workshop produced spectacular technical achievements during its first two years.¹⁸ These included a print by Toronto artist Gordon Rayner involving the application of twelve colours in fifteen bands at a different angle on each of four plates, as well as a print by Washington artist Gene Davis with the unprecedented number of twenty-two colours. Another complex project was made by Greg Curnoe, the London, Ontario artist who, despite having harshly criticized NSCAD as an outpost of American art, came to Halifax in February 1970 and produced a highly innovative suite of ten lithographs imitating a writing pad with typed notes recounting his visit (figs.1 and 2).¹⁹ During 1970, however, the direction of the Workshop changed dramatically when Gerald Ferguson became its director after Lemon's departure to set up

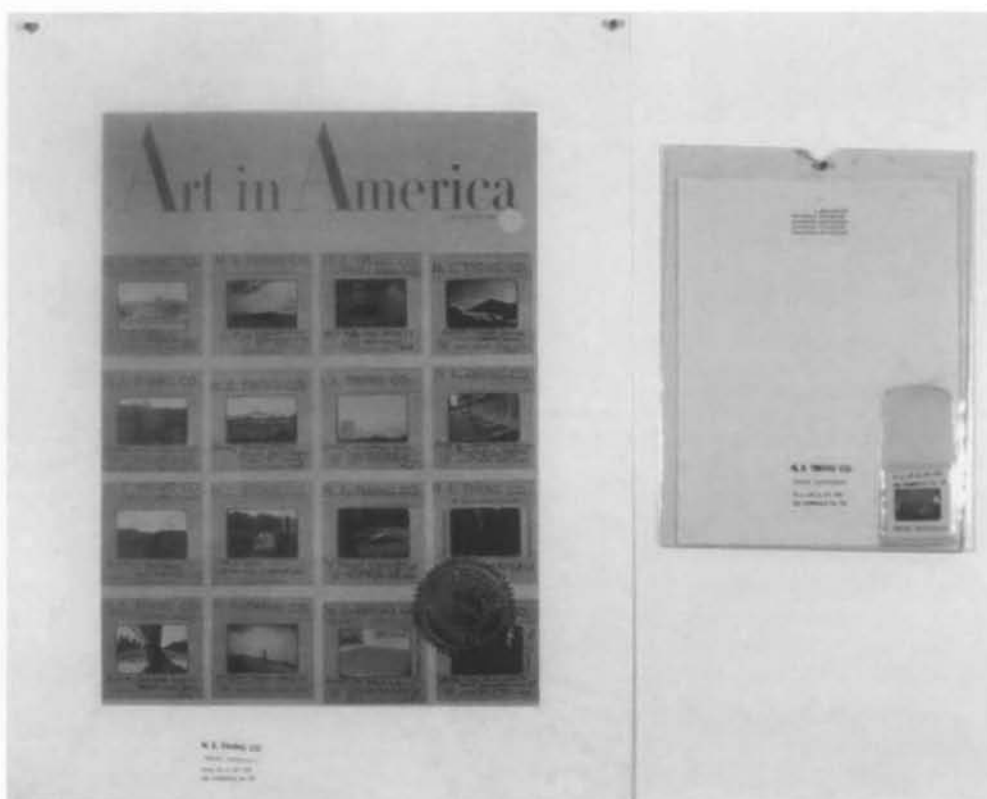


fig.3 N.E. Thing Co., $P + L + P + L + P = VSI$, 1970, lithographic print on white Rives BFK paper, 61 x 48 cm, printer Robert Rogers. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. © Iain Baxter, courtesy of Corkin Gallery, Toronto. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

the Landfall Press in Chicago. The two main factors that precipitated this change were Ferguson's explicit intention to bring in more international artists to gain better access to the lucrative American art market and his specific interest in conceptual artists, who were then being accorded increasing prominence both internationally and at NSCAD itself.

Conceptual art had emerged as a discernable entity by 1967 when Sol LeWitt defined it in his influential essay "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" as an art form in which the concept or idea is the most important thing.²⁰ Although it was initially a practice existing on the margins of an art world still dominated by the formalist paradigms of Modernism and Minimalism, in 1969-70 conceptual art achieved an international prominence evidenced by the proliferation of exhibitions in Europe and North America, including Lucy Lippard's *955,000* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 1970.

NSCAD's early and direct connection to conceptual art was demonstrated in numerous ways including the April 1969 shows by Lawrence Weiner and James Lee Byars, the roster of conceptual artists participating in the Projects Class and the inclusion of NSCAD faculty and graduate students like Ferguson, Askeveld and Richards Jarden in the important *Information* show at the Museum of Modern Art in July 1970. Another key example was NSCAD's hosting of what became known as the Halifax Conference on 5-6 October 1970. Although it is often described as an event planned by Seth Siegelaub, the New York dealer and impresario of conceptual art, it was actually conceived by Weiner and Ferguson as an opportunity to bring artists together for an open dialogue and exchange of ideas. Siegelaub became involved later when he proposed publishing the conference proceedings as a book, which, however, was never published.²¹ The conference, which was attended by nineteen artists from seven countries, was a fractious affair, but a pivotal moment for NSCAD.²² Siegelaub's involvement confirmed the importance of conceptualism at NSCAD and put the College on the map internationally. As a cumulative result of the conference, the Projects Class, The Mezzanine and the Lithography Workshop, it became much easier to attract artists to visit Halifax and participate in College activities.

The impact of all of this was seen in the Lithography Workshop, which, under Ferguson's direction, decisively turned away from the values espoused by the Tamarind "renaissance" and, as Cameron said, even seemed at times to travesty them.²³ Because conceptual artists were dedicated to the radical questioning and critique of all prevailing modes of art production, reception and commodification, this resulted in a paradoxical situation whereby conceptual artists who made prints at NSCAD endeavoured to achieve their goals both by means of and through the subversion of the preeminently traditional, labour-intensive, commercially-oriented and artisan-based medium of lithography. As Cameron further noted, the results, which were perhaps less technically

spectacular than the earlier lithographs, were directly engaged in current aesthetic and cultural debates and demonstrated the unique way in which printmaking could become a vehicle for and material articulation of these debates.

One of the first prints to register this new direction was made in March-April 1970 by Iain Baxter. His connection to NSCAD was established in September 1969 when N.E. Thing Co. participated in Askevold's Projects Class through a series of exchanges of propositions and information sent between Vancouver and Halifax via Telex and Telecopier. The two machines were installed in the Anna Leonowens Gallery and printouts of the transmissions were posted on the walls and eventually published as a book.²⁴ Such strategies for making art were fully commensurate with conceptual art's abandonment of traditional discipline-based approaches to artmaking in order to explore new modes of communication and information dissemination. Moreover, they were particularly useful in Canada, with its small art communities spread across a vast geography, because they allowed artists to emerge from regional isolation and make contact both with one another and with international artists in a spirit of community that resonated with Marshall McLuhan's notion of the global village. Indeed, it was the vitality of its decentralized art scene, as exemplified in this exchange between Vancouver and Halifax, that led American art critic Lucy Lippard to cite Canada in particular as a place "more fertile for new ideas and new ways of disseminating art than the U.S."²⁵

Baxter's NSCAD print incorporated his 1969 project of a cover design for the May-June issue of *Art in America*. The cover reproduced sixteen slide photographs documenting previous work by N.E. Thing Co., principally images of landscapes and urban or industrial sites that had been transformed into art by virtue of N.E. Thing Co.'s process of declaration known as ACT, which stood for Aesthetically Claimed Things. Its corollary, ART, stood for Aesthetically Rejected Things.²⁶ For his NSCAD lithograph Baxter carried this sequence of transformations back onto itself in a characteristically conceptual procedure of self-reflexiveness. As indicated by the title, $P+L+P+L+P=VSI$ (where P stands for photograph, L for lithograph and VSI for visual sensitivity information), what began in a photographic format (slides) became an offset lithograph for *Art in America*, which in turn was photographed for printing on a metal lithographic plate (fig.3). The final photographic transformation took place after the edition was printed. In what Baxter called "a gesture of complete consciousness of the medium," all fifty prints were crumpled, piled on the floor and then photographed.²⁷ This series of transformations on the one side of the equation was equal to the total amount of VSI available in the piece as a whole. Those who purchased this work received a flattened-out print as well as a title card and a slide of the pile of crumpled prints.

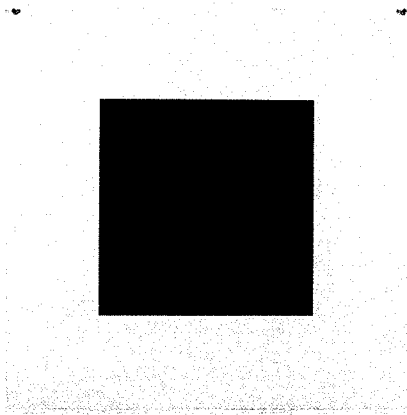


fig.4 Gerald Ferguson,
Untitled, 1974, lithographic
print on white German Etching
paper, 56 x 56, printer Wallace
Brannen. Nova Scotia College
of Art and Design, Halifax.
Courtesy of the artist.
(Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

The self-reflexive investigation of the process of printmaking evident in Baxter's print recurs in many of the conceptually oriented prints done in the Lithography Workshop. For example, Patrick Kelly's 1971 print called *Shot in the Dark* entailed registering two black lines intersecting at the centre of the paper and then having the artist attempt to match these by repositioning each paper manually on the printing bed, the results of which were superimposed in blue ink. The process of Gerald Ferguson's 1973 print called *Untitled* (fig.4) relied on the length of time needed for lithographic inks to dry. He made the print by inking a black rectangle on the stone and running it through the press. The rectangle was immediately re-inked, but for the second pass through the press, the paper was adjusted to overlap half of the rectangle. The result was a square divided into three equal vertical bands of subtle gradations of ink density; ink on paper, ink on ink and ink offsetting during the last pass through the press.

Self-reflexiveness also provided the impetus for Robert Ryman's 1971 print, *Two Stones*. It involved clamping together two small stones, rolling the surfaces in white ink and then pulling the impression under such pressure that the edges of the stones were embossed onto the paper to form what could be called a litho-relief.²⁸ By presenting the finished print as an imprint of the stones themselves, rather than as an image produced by making marks on the surfaces of the stones, Ryman drew simultaneous attention to the reproducibility of the printmaking medium and to the status of the stone as the vehicle for the authenticity of the artist's autographic marks, which in this case were completely absent.²⁹

Cameron's use of the term "autographic" to describe Ryman's work is derived from the set of distinctions that Nelson Goodman made in his 1968 book *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*. Goodman distinguished between autographic and allographic modes, classifying painting as an example of the former because the painter made all the marks on the finished product. He described musical composition as an example of the allographic mode because the composer's work is completed with the production of the score even though a performance would be the actual end result. While Goodman considered printmaking an autographic mode even though it resulted in multiple copies, Cameron argued the opposite and said that the investigation of the allographic mode became one of the distinctive features of much of the production of the NSCAD Lithography Workshop.³⁰ To simplify his analysis, Cameron essentially said that the exploration of allographic modes signified a desire to repress or "depersonalize the self-hood of the artist," which identifies a crucial aspect of the conceptual basis of printmaking at NSCAD.³¹

This repression of the artist's subjectivity is evident in these works by Baxter, Kelly, Ferguson and Ryman, where the processes and techniques of the printmaking medium superseded the artist's autographic activity. This critique of subjectivity as the basis of art practice was central to conceptual art; as historian Alexander Alberro has noted, many conceptual artists explicitly emphasized the conceptual process as a way to eliminate the perceptual object and thus dismantle "myths of integrated subjectivity."³² The point of this preoccupation with process in these NSCAD prints was emphatically not to explore the intrinsic nature of printmaking's materials, techniques and procedures, but rather to test the fundamental premise of conceptual art: the primacy of the idea itself. In so doing, it was even possible for the conceptual artist to jettison the autographic authenticity of the artist altogether. Lawrence Weiner asserted this point emphatically in his famous "statement of intent":

1. The artist may construct the piece.
2. The piece may be fabricated.
3. The piece need not be built.

Each being equal and consistent with the intent of the artist, the decision as to condition rests with the receiver on the occasion of receivership.³³

In other words, the legitimate existence of the work of art does not require the presence of the artist's autographical or indexical trace and the work can also be made by someone other than the artist or even not be made at all.

Although Weiner was a frequent visitor to NSCAD throughout the 1970s, he never made a print with the Lithography Workshop because he refused to sign his work during those years and the Workshop would not produce unsigned prints.³⁴ Under its imprimatur, however, Weiner did produce a 1971 book called *Flowed*. As Cameron points out, this demonstrates both the non-

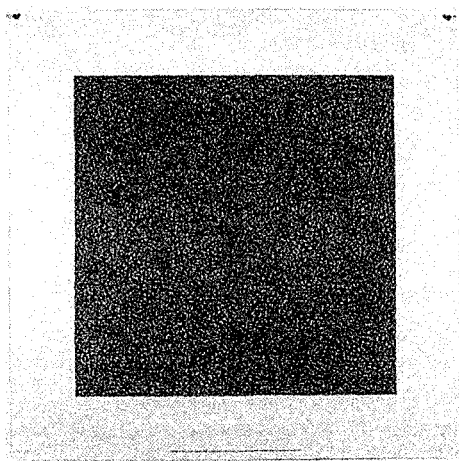


fig.5 Sol LeWitt, **Within a Twenty-Inch Square, Using a Black, Hard Crayon, Draw Ten Thousand Freehand Lines of any Length, at Random**, 1971, lithographic print on white German Etching paper, 71 x 71 cm, printers Robert Rogers and Wallace Brannen. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. © Estate of Sol Lewitt/SODRAC (2008) (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

dogmatic way in which the practice of printmaking was viewed at NSCAD and the emphasis on the idea over the medium.³⁵ These principles were affirmed by Gerald Ferguson, whose entry for an international survey book on printmaking workshops in 1974 stated that lithography at NSCAD was regarded “as an open circumstance with a rich historical tradition, but no more or less valuable than any other medium for the demonstration of an idea by an artist.”³⁶ Ferguson’s statement also affirmed the premise laid out in Sol LeWitt’s article “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art”: “In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form in art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art.”³⁷

Accordingly, when Sol LeWitt was invited to work with the Lithography Workshop in 1971, he proposed a set of ten prints based on instructions sent by mail. Instructions for seven of the prints were handed over to students who executed them by interpreting LeWitt’s ambiguous and open-ended commands, such as “Within a twenty-inch square area, using a black, hard crayon, draw ten thousand freehand lines, of any length, at random” (fig.5). The other three prints were based on LeWitt’s instructions to the master printer, such as “Print

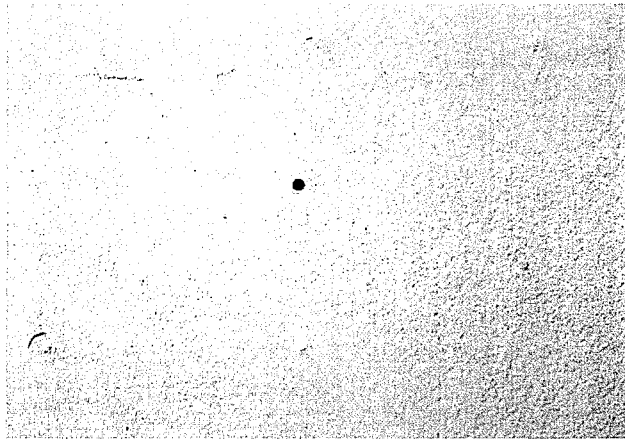


fig.6 Lawrence Weiner, **A Wall Pitted by a Single Air Rifle Shot**, Catalogue #047, 1969, drywall with rifle shot hole, reconstructed with permission of the artist in 1994 at the Anna Leonowens Gallery, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. Rifleman: Arthur Handy. Courtesy of the artist. Collection of Seth Siegelau. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

this in four colours (black, red, blue and yellow) by turning the stone a quarter turn for each colour.” In each case, the instructions were typeset at the bottom of the print.³⁸

On one level, this inclusion of the written instructions provided the opportunity to compare the idea-machine that generated the work to the results of its “perfunctory” execution. However, it also demonstrated a paradox that historian Benjamin Buchloh has identified as being central to LeWitt’s work and highly characteristic of conceptual art. By including both visual information and verbal instruction, LeWitt’s prints create conflict and confusion not only over which mode of perception the viewer/reader is to apply, but also over which mode – the visual perception or the linguistic denomination – is primary and which is secondary.³⁹ By refusing to submit to the logic of art based strictly on the evidence of the visual, LeWitt’s NSCAD prints shed light on his seemingly paradoxical statement that “Conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach.”⁴⁰

LeWitt’s statement and his NSCAD prints imply a skepticism about the modernist privileging of visual effects that was pervasive in conceptual art and evident in many of the NSCAD lithographs, including the one done by the California conceptual artist John Baldessari. Like Weiner and LeWitt, Baldessari made work that addressed the relationship between the status of art

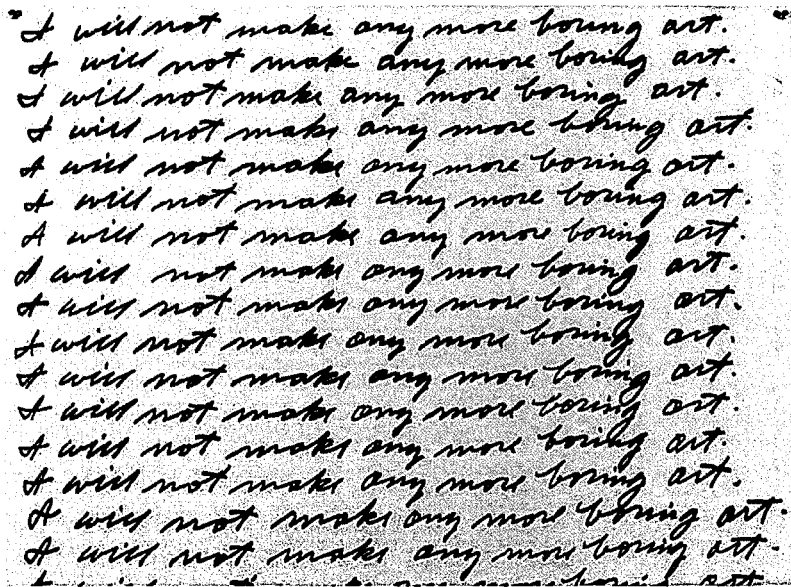


fig. 7 John Baldessari, **I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art**, 1971, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 56 x 76 cm, printer Robert Rogers. Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

as a mode of visual perception and as a mode of linguistic inquiry. The latter originated in Marcel Duchamp's readymades, which had proposed that art was an arbitrary thing defined not by any inherent aesthetic quality or essence but rather by the procedures of naming conventionalized forms and practices as art. Significantly, however, the proposition of the readymades did not rely on the tautological premise that anything can be art simply because the artist says so. On the contrary, propositions about art require the existence of an authoritative institution that holds at least theoretical power to affirm or refute their validity. Thus, when conceptual artists picked up on Duchamp's line of inquiry into the status and conditions of art, they did so by testing their propositions against the authority of an art world still dominated by Modernism's prioritizing of visuality and sensual gratification.⁴¹ This approach frequently resulted in the production of austere, seemingly banal and sensually depleted linguistic propositions or photographic documentations. Much of this work, such as Weiner's 1969 piece called *A Wall Pitted by a Single Air Rifle Shot*, simply looked boring (fig.6).⁴²

So when Baldessari accepted the invitation to do a project at The Mezzanine in April 1971 and subsequently made a print with the Lithography Workshop, it was precisely this "boring" condition of conceptual art that he addressed. In a letter to the director he proposed what he called a "Punishment Piece," which would require student "surrogates" and "scapegoats" to cover the gallery walls with the hand-written phrase: "I will not make any more boring art."⁴³ After this directive was duly carried out, Baldessari's own sample text was used in the lithograph, *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art* (fig.7).

On one level, Baldessari's statement encapsulates a central problematic of conceptual art. By resisting and refusing the visual emollients that made art pleasurable and consumable, conceptual art aimed to demystify aesthetic experience and mastery, and to propose a more rational and democratizing approach to artmaking. As historian Frazer Ward has argued, however, the implicit message of conceptual art that "anybody can do that," and its presentation of "relatively flimsy bits and pieces" as art often resulted in hostility and alienation on the part of the public who "needed better persuasion to give up its aesthetic pleasures."⁴⁴ In this respect, Baldessari's print and the associated student activities in the gallery seemed to embody both a form of collective penance and a defiant, ironic refusal of precisely those values that would deem such penance justified. On another level, however, Baldessari's letter to the gallery director calls in messianic tones for "holy innocents" to atone for the artist's sins through "self-flagellation." Thus, it also reveals a sub-text of mysticism and irrationalism that seems to go against the grain of conceptual art's empirical rationalism and yet it accords with LeWitt's characterization of conceptual artists as mystics, not rationalists.

Although many of the NSCAD prints demonstrated a strong alignment with conceptual art's concerns and preoccupations, these certainly did not constitute the totality of the Lithography Workshop's output. Indeed, many artists simply made prints based on their usual painterly practice (e.g., Art Green, 1970; Philip Pearlstein, 1970; Guido Molinari, 1971; Jack Chambers, 1972; Toni Onley, 1974; Eric Fischl, 1975; and Paterson Ewen, 1976). While the sale of such prints helped the Workshop's objective of generating income for the College, over the long term these were not the works that tended to sell out their full editions or escalate in market value.

On the other hand, a number of artists also produced works with the Lithography Workshop that engaged with conceptual problematics but in ways that complicated or qualified them. These include such photo-based prints as Dan Graham's *Homes for America* (fig.8) and Victor Burgin's series of photographs called *Untitled* (1975).⁴⁵ As Jeff Wall and others have shown, photography came to play an intrinsic role in conceptual art precisely because it constituted a visual form previously considered to lie outside the domain of art.⁴⁶ Also as David Company has noted, photography appealed to conceptual artists both because it was the "artless mass medium" of commerce, documentation, reportage and information, and because "it was marked by an indexicality that was diametrically opposed to the modern desire for transcendence and autonomy."⁴⁷ In the case of Graham's and Burgin's works, this indexicality was evident in images that referred to how the industrialized and manufactured conditions of modernity have penetrated even to the core of the private home and domestic life.⁴⁸

Cameron has pointed out that such photographic methods would have been frowned upon at Tamarind, but they presented no problem for the NSCAD Lithography Workshop, which produced many prints by these means.⁴⁹ Notable examples include Dennis Oppenheim's *Reading Position for 2nd Degree Burn* (1972), a photograph of the artist sunburning with a philosophy treatise on his chest; Emmett Williams' *Six Variations Upon a Spoerri Landscape* (1973), a suite of images showing a progressive accumulation of leftover food and dishes on a table; Les Levine's *Peggy's Cove YR BB* (1973), based on a postcard of this Nova Scotia fishing village; and John Greer's *Y.D. Klein* (1974), an image of the artist's face superimposed on Yves Klein's famous faked photograph, *Leap into the Void*.

Such examples clearly show that it was not the use of photography *per se* that set the works by Graham and Burgin apart from both the general ethos of conceptual art and the particular context of the NSCAD Lithography Workshop. What distinguished them, rather, was the fact that they were neither based on self-referentiality to the process of making nor solely directed inwards

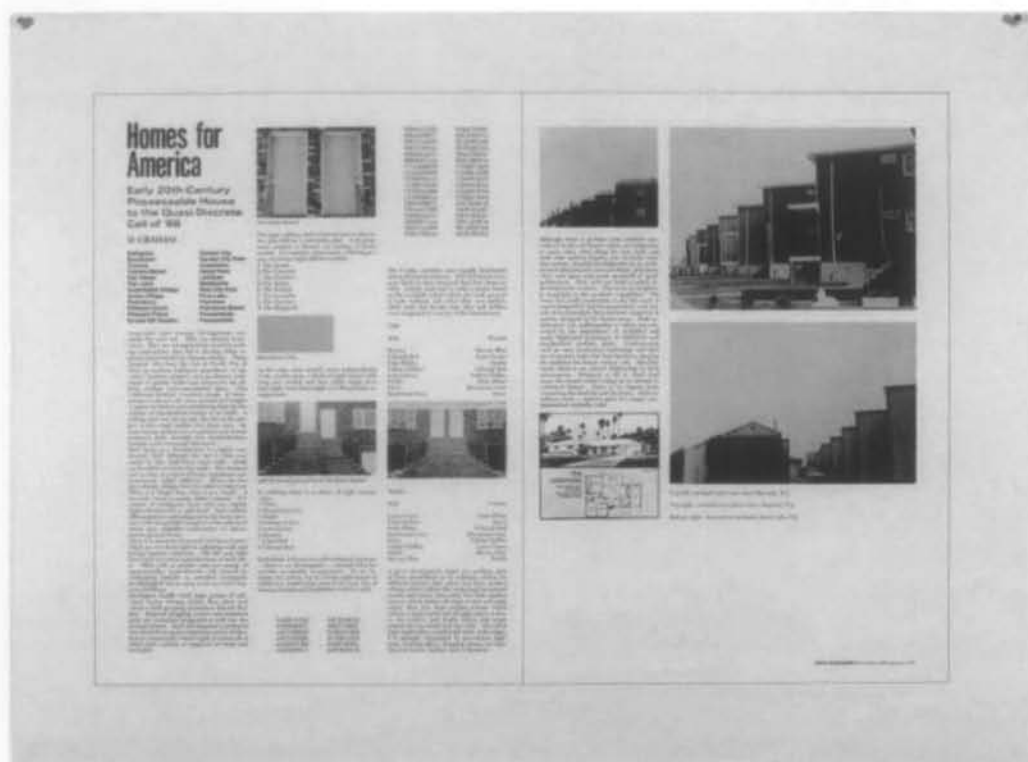


fig.8 Dan Graham, **Homes for America**, 1971, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 57 x 77 cm, printers Robert Rogers and Wallace Brannen. Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)



fig.9 Miriam Schapiro, **Re: Art History**, 1974, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 64 x 64 cm, printer Murray Lively. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. Courtesy of the artist. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

toward art and the systems that define it, but they referred instead to larger social conditions. In other words, because these works refer explicitly to the social world and its relations, they differ from the broad tendency in conceptual art to restrict its concerns to the realm of art itself. Given that the height of conceptual art activities coincided with the period of extreme social turmoil in the late sixties, this restrictive tendency became a disappointment for some of conceptualism's strongest advocates. Seth Siegelaub, for example, remarked bitterly in 1973: "Conceptual art, more than all previous types of art, questions the fundamental nature of art. Unhappily, the question is strictly limited to the exclusive domain of fine art. There is still potential of it enabling an examination of all that surrounds art, but in reality, conceptual artists are dedicated only to exploring avant-garde aesthetic problems."⁵⁰ Lucy Lippard shared this view and lamented the unwillingness of conceptual artists to focus on anything beyond the "narrow and incestuous art world."⁵¹

Apart from the works by Graham and Burgin, references to larger social conditions were as rare among the NSCAD Lithography Workshop's production as they were within conceptual art as a whole. However, they do occur notably in the work of two of the six women who made prints under its auspices. One

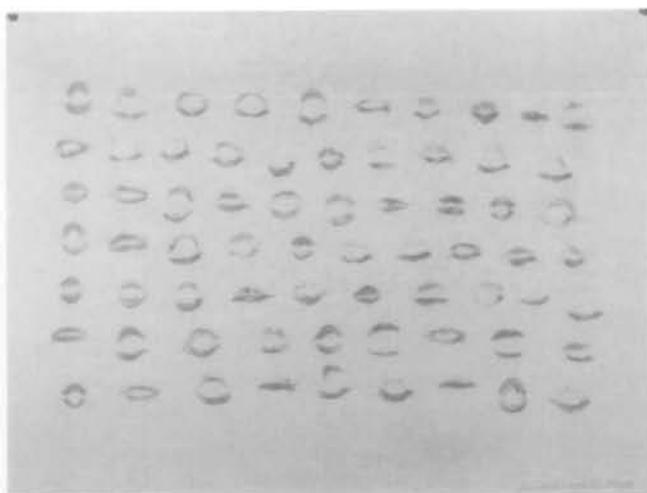


fig.10 Joyce Wieland, *O Canada*, 1970, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 57 x 76 cm, printer Robert Rogers. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. © National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)

of these was the (Canadian-born) California feminist Miriam Schapiro, who made two prints in 1975, both of which were in keeping with the activist orientation characteristic of much early feminist art. *Homage* was a tribute to modern women artists in the form of a lyrically graphic and colourful arrangement of names, while *Re: Art History* incorporated columns of names of sixty women artists who had been acclaimed in their own times and was surmounted by a hand-written text explaining why they had been effectively written out of the history of art (fig.9). While Schapiro's prints did focus on the world of art and art history, they differed from the insularity of conceptual art by exposing how the art world's values were not defined by aesthetic criteria alone, but were also an instantiation of social values – values that, in this case, established the hierarchical terms of inclusion and exclusion along sex/gender lines.

But it was the Toronto artist, Joyce Wieland, who was the first woman to produce a print with the Workshop; and in many ways her print constituted both a more explicit engagement with the social world and a more radical intervention into the male-dominated conceptual art milieu at NSCAD than did Schapiro's. Wieland's print, *O Canada*, was made in December 1970 when she and her husband Michael Snow, came from New York to Halifax to take up appointments as visiting artists and, as was often the case, were offered the opportunity to produce prints with the Lithography Workshop (fig.10). Snow's notoriety as the producer of such influential structuralist films as *Wavelength*

(1967) clearly made him the star attraction. Yet his lithograph, *Projection*, featuring Snow's image in profile sporting an impressive erection while caressing one of his *Walking Woman* silhouettes, has subsequently been completely overshadowed by Wieland's print. *O Canada*, which Wieland produced by applying her lipsticked mouth to the litho stone as she mouthed the words of the Canadian national anthem, was fully commensurate with the nationalist themes she had been exploring since 1964 in such diverse media as film, painting, sculpture, quilting and embroidery. Its explicit patriotism was also indicative of the growing sense of national identity in Canada that emanated conspicuously from the success of Expo '67, Pierre Elliott Trudeau's charismatic leadership as prime minister, as well as a desire to establish independence from the dominance of American culture and politics.

But while the economy of means by which *O Canada* was produced accorded with the pared-down restrictiveness of conceptual art, its embodied and erotic connotations ran counter to what Benjamin Buchloh has described as conceptual art's denigration of those practices that "are of performance, of the body."⁵² In *O Canada* the explicit femininity of these connotations presented what Ingrid Jenkner has described as a prescient visual parallel to the "speaking lips" that would come to be theorized by French feminism's radical notion of "*l'écriture féminine*," and thus also ran counter to the inherent masculinism of NSCAD's conceptual art coterie.⁵³

Wieland's *O Canada* was not the only NSCAD print to defy conceptual art's denigration of performative or bodily practices. In 1971 Vito Acconci made two prints with the Lithography Workshop: *Kiss-Off* (fig.11) and *Trademarks*. As with most of his work from this period, these were based on performative enactments of textual propositions. *Trademarks* features two large photographic images on the left side of the print; one is of Acconci crouched naked on the floor biting his thigh and the other is a close-up of a bite mark that is dripping saliva. On the right side of the print are impressions of Acconci's thumb, hand and forearm (with bite marks) as well as his hand-written text explaining the premise of the piece. Part of that text reads as follows: "Biting as much of my body as I can reach: turning on myself, turning in on myself: performance as locomotion across a boundary: connecting a region: absorption by one organization, of a neighboring organization: self-absorption."

While the *Trademarks* print was based on a piece done in New York in 1970, Acconci's *Kiss-Off* was an original production for the Lithography Workshop and clearly seems to have been made in direct response to Wieland's *O Canada* produced two months earlier.⁵⁴ While Wieland had applied her "speaking lips" to the stone in a way that indexed her insistently feminine authorship, Acconci first applied lipstick to feminize his male body and then wiped it off on the litho stone in a process he describes in the text on his print



fig.11 Vito Acconci, **Kiss-Off**, 1971, lithographic print on white Arches paper, 76 x 56 cm, printer Robert Rogers. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. Courtesy of the artist. (Photo: Courtesy of NSCAD)



fig.12 Martha Wilson, *Captivating a Man*, 1972, photodocumentation of performance in the artist's studio, Halifax. (Photo: Courtesy of the artist)

as "rubbing off my female characteristics, 'cleaning myself up'." Although *Kiss-Off* signified Acconci's desire to expunge the abject and alien feminine from within himself, his text suggests that it can also be read as a symbolic manoeuvre aimed at resisting the new incursion of feminine and feminist authorship that was emerging in the art world at that precise historical moment and that was so forcefully manifested in Wieland's *O Canada*.

For some critics and historians, the performative basis of Acconci's work would preclude its categorization as conceptual art. Others, however, have acknowledged that there was considerable overlap between the categories of conceptual and performance art around 1970. Frazer Ward, for example, regards the performance work of artists like Acconci, Ian Burn and Chris Burden as an explicit challenge to some of the limitations of conceptual art, "but from *within* a broadly Conceptual framework," because such work extended

conceptual art's rational analyses of institutional frameworks to include an examination of "the effects of these relations on subjectivity" as contingent and socially constructed.⁵⁵ This interpretation of Acconci's work as an investigation of gendered subjectivity accords with that of historian Amelia Jones, who has theorized it as a self-conscious critique of the dominant codes of masculinity.⁵⁶

Since Acconci's NSCAD prints reveal his body as flawed, troubled and feminized, they do allow his work to be viewed as a critique of masculine subjectivity and therefore a challenge to conceptual art's usual prohibition against subject-centred inquiry.⁵⁷ On the other hand, even though Acconci's *Kiss-Off* drew upon the parodic feminine motifs of Wieland's *O Canada*, his apparent derision of the feminine suggests the enactment of a form of "gender cleansing." Indeed, this is not the only evidence of Acconci's overt hostility to the legitimacy of a specifically feminist inquiry into subjectivity in art practice. During one of his trips to Halifax, Acconci encountered the work of Martha Wilson who had come from Ohio with her partner, Richards Jarden, when he was accepted into the MFA program at NSCAD in 1969.⁵⁸ While doing graduate studies at Dalhousie University, Wilson was hired to teach English at NSCAD, but soon began making conceptual art that paired textual propositions with photographic documents of performative transformations of gendered subjectivity, such as *Posturing Drag* and *Captivating a Man* (fig.12). Although Lucy Lippard acclaimed Wilson's work in her groundbreaking 1976 book on feminist art, *From the Center*, Wilson recalls that when she asked Acconci to critique her work he simply dismissed it as "self-indulgent and irrelevant."⁵⁹

Of course, at the time, this denigration of women artists was hardly particular to NSCAD. It is not a proud part of its history, as Garry Kennedy has recently acknowledged when noting that the stinging rebuke sent by telegram from New York for not including any women in the 1970 Halifax Conference, was a "wake up call" that led to greater participation by women at the College.⁶⁰ While some improvements in the representation of women were made in the 1970s, by the time the Lithography Workshop closed in 1976 the number of women participants remained dismal (six out of a total of 79, or 7.6%) and by the late 1970s, only two women were on the regular studio faculty.⁶¹ The real impetus for change came instead from the circulation of an unpublished paper written in 1976 by MFA student Barbara England and entitled "An Examination of Masculinism at NSCAD."⁶² This text galvanized students to demand changes, resulting in a symposium, "Women in Art," in July 1978 and the appointment of Dara Birnbaum and Martha Rosler as spring term faculty in 1979.⁶³ Rosler, who supplied a vigorous feminist critique of both art and its institutions, was especially influential. The students also successfully lobbied for the hiring of full-time female faculty members in the early 1980s and for the increased presence of women in the Visitors Program.⁶⁴

It is ironic to note, however, that despite these progressive changes, which coincided with a broader transition in the art world away from conceptual art's insular focus on art itself towards more politically-grounded critiques of larger social issues, this later period is often regarded as one of decline or detumescence after NSCAD's conceptual glory days of the late sixties and early seventies. Such a view tends to blind us to the important changes in critical outlook and practice that the College underwent during these later years. Yet we should not discount the relevance of its early period on the grounds that such activities as the Lithography Workshop only rarely alluded to the cataclysmic social upheavals and the radical rethinking of the politics of war, race, class, gender and national identity that framed it. Indeed, the critical and self-reflexive premises of the conceptually-based prints discussed here laid the groundwork for the new modes of cultural critique that emerged in the late seventies and during the eighties, which have evolved into the radical "tendenzkunst" still with us today.⁶⁵ As the alphabetical bookends bracketing its roster of artists, Acconci, with his masculine, American aggressiveness, and Wieland, with her feminist, parodic, Canadian nationalism, seem to encompass a key manifestation of how such larger international tensions and transitions were played out at the local and microcosmic level of the NSCAD Lithography Workshop.

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Notes

1 Les LEVINE, "The Best Art School in North America?," *Art in America* 61, no.4 (July/August 1973): 15.

2 See David SOUCY and Harold PEARSE, *The First Hundred Years: A History of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design* (Fredericton: The University of New Brunswick and Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1993).

3 Garry Neill KENNEDY, "NSCAD and the Sixties," in *Conceptual Art: The NSCAD Connection, 1967-1973*, ed. Bruce Barber (Halifax: The Anna Leonowens Gallery of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 2001), 20. This text is a key document for information on the school during the period under consideration here.

4 Photographs and many press clippings about the new addition and the Anna Leonowens Gallery are in the NSCAD Archives at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia (hereafter PANS), Box 23, Scrapbook 5.

5 The artists were Jack Bush, François Dallegret, Hugh Leroy, Les Levine and Robert Murray. Archival files and a database of all exhibitions held at the Anna Leonowens Gallery from its inception to the present are maintained at the gallery.

6 In her brief memoir of her days at The Mezzanine, Townsend-Gault recalls that it was conceived as a facility rather than a gallery; its objective was to access and disseminate the ephemeral, transient and conceptual art work that was then being produced in North America, Europe and elsewhere. While many of the exhibitions were by artists visiting the College in various capacities, its shoestring budget limited other exhibitions to works that could be received through the postal system. See Charlotte TOWNSEND-GAULT, "Conceptual Daze at NSCAD – The Mezzanine," in *Conceptual Art: The NSCAD Connection*, 42-4. The archival records and the chronological history of The Mezzanine are currently being compiled under the supervision of the Director of the Anna Leonowens Gallery. The first exhibition listed is Joseph Kosuth's *Art as Idea as Idea* (25 Oct. - 9 Nov. 1969), which was part of his contribution to David Askevold's Projects Class (as the space did not operate as The Mezzanine until September 1970, it is more accurately a precursor). The Mezzanine chronology lists 107 projects or exhibitions, beginning in October 1970 with Bruce McLean's *King for a Day and 999 Other Pieces/Works/Stuff*, etc. and ending in July 1973 with Ian Murray's *Keeping on Top of the Top Song*.

7 See SOUCY and PEARSE, *The First Hundred Years*, 147-9; see also press clippings from April to July 1968 in the NSCAD Archives, PANS, Box 23, Scrapbook 5. One unidentified article, "Art College Sit-in Protests Sackings," refers to antagonistic student responses and another cites Kennedy's defense of his staffing and curriculum changes (such as the implementation of a Bauhaus-type Foundation program to replace anatomy training and disciplinary-specific courses) on the premise that students should be trained in an open-ended way; see Cyril ROBINSON, "Everything's Up-to-Date at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design," *Montreal Star*, 22 June 1968. Gail DEXTER's article, "Halifax's New Gallery Has Art We Don't See even in Toronto," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 Jan. 1969, also cites Kennedy's refutation of concerns about undue American influence at NSCAD.

8 Garry Neill Kennedy to Dr. G. Holbrook, Chairman of the Board, Nova Scotia College of Art, 6 Sept. 1968, NSCAD Archives, PANS, Box 3, File 19. The three Canadians hired in 1968 were Ann Blair White, A.T. Edmund White and Orland Larson. Kennedy's letter noted that the College's total faculty in 1968 included sixteen Canadians, eight Americans, five British and two Germans.

9 Garry Neill Kennedy, letter to author, 30 Nov. 2003.

10 Gerald Ferguson, interview with author, 18 Oct. 2003; he added that Trudeau's 1970 endorsement of the War Measures Act was profoundly disillusioning.

11 This was the occasion of Lawrence Weiner's first solo show, *5 Works* (7-27 Apr. 1969). It consisted of a nail driven into the gallery floor, a wall pitted by a single air-rifle shot, five gallons of paint poured directly on the floor, a trench dug on a beach and a boulder blasted by high explosives. Rex Lau and James Lee Byars exhibited together at the Gallery from 1-3 April. Lau's work involved pouring two hundred pounds of liquid urethane into the gallery, while Byars brought in various constructed "garments" to be worn and manipulated by participants, such as a piece of red acetate twenty-five feet long and a suit that could be worn by several people simultaneously.

12 The Projects Class became a formal course in September 1969 and ran for six semesters ending in spring 1972. Participants in the first class were Jan Dibbets, Douglas Huebler, Mel Bochner, Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, Robert Barry, Lucy Lippard, Sol LeWitt, James Lee Byars, Dan Graham, N.E. Thing Co. and Robert Smithson. Of these, only Kosuth, Graham and Lippard visited the College that year. Graham's project,

called *From Sunset to Sunrise*, entailed the execution of a series of 160 photographs taken at a point near Halifax during this time framework. Graham also did a performance in September 1969 called *LAX/RELAX* and published an advertisement in the *Halifax Mail-Star* on 11 Oct. 1969 (p.9) calling for respondents to *Likes – A Computer-Astrological Dating – Placement Service*, but these do not seem to have been directly related to his Projects Class activities. Joseph Kosuth's project entailed text-based installations around the city and the documentation was exhibited as *Art as Idea as Idea* (25 Oct. – 9 Nov. 1969) in the mezzanine space of the Anna Leonowens Gallery. He also participated in a public interview with David Askevold sometime in October 1969. The transcript has been published in *Artists Talk: 1969-1977*, ed. Peggy Gale (Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 2004), 2-9. Lippard mailed instructions to Askevold and his students to make a series of sequential photographs and documentary texts of groups of people. She also lectured at NSCAD on 29 Nov. 1969; a transcript of "Toward a Dematerialized or Non Object Art" is in the Lucy Lippard Artist Box in the Art Metropole Collection, Accession No. 2712, at the National Gallery of Canada. The Art Metropole Collection also contains six letter proposals for the fall 1969 Projects Class (from Lucy Lippard, Lawrence Weiner, Sol LeWitt, Douglas Huebler, Jan Dibbets and Mel Bochner) and a complete copy of the twelve unbound project cards published by Askevold in 1969-70 as a multiple in kraft paper envelopes. See also David ASKEVOLD, "The Projects Class," in *Conceptual Art: The NSCAD Connection*, 38-9. Brief records of all these events are included in "The NSCAD Chronology 1968-1982," NSCAD Archives, PANS, Box 31, File 7.

13 See Garry Neill KENNEDY, "Nova Scotia College of Art," *Artscanada* 25, no.4 (October/November 1968): 30. He refers here to the Printmaking rather than the Lithography Workshop, the name adopted by January 1969.

14 As a result, the Visitors Program, which continues into the present, has always sponsored a diverse array of visitors, including not only artists, designers and craftspeople but also critics, curators, historians, dancers, musicians and so on. "The NSCAD Chronology 1968-1982" documents all visitors for these years.

15 As a rule, the Lithography Workshop contracted the artist for an edition of fifty prints; half went to the artist and half remained the property of NSCAD for sale.

16 June WAYNE, *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art and Techniques*, ed. Garo Z. Antreasian and Clinton Adams (Los Angeles: Tamarind Lithography Workshop, 1971), 7.

17 June WAYNE, "Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Inc.," in *The Contemporary Lithographic Workshop Around the World*, ed. Michael Knigin and Murray Zimiles (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1974), 151.

18 Eric CAMERON, "The Lithography Workshop," in *NSCAD: The Nova Scotia College of Art & Design* (Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1982), 9.

19 Lithography Workshop records are housed at the Anna Leonowens Gallery. The document "Lithography Workshop Inventory by NS Number," itemizes all known production details for every print it produced. The Workshop's total year-by-year production activity was as follows: 1969 – six prints by three artists; 1970 – thirty prints by sixteen artists; 1971 – twenty-nine prints by fifteen artists; 1972 – ten prints by ten artists; 1973 – twenty-six prints by ten artists; 1974 – sixty-one prints by fifteen artists; 1975 – thirty-one prints by thirteen artists; 1976 – four prints by four artists.

20 Sol LEWITT, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no.10 (Summer 1967): 79-84, also reprinted elsewhere.

21 Lawrence Weiner, interview with author, 23 July 2007. Ferguson confirmed this version of events in a letter to the author, 11 Aug. 2007. Siegelau was the external contact and sent out the letters of invitation to a variety of artists while Ferguson was responsible for fund raising and served as internal contact.

22 Of the twenty-seven invited artists, the nineteen attendees were Carl Andre, Joseph Beuys, Ronald Bladen, Daniel Buren, John Chamberlain, Gene Davis, Jan Dibbets, Al Held, Robert Irwin, Mario Merz, Robert Morris, Robert Murray, Iain and Ingrid Baxter (N.E. Thing Co.) Richard Serra, Richard Smith, Robert Smithson, Michael Snow and Lawrence Weiner. The fractiousness of the conference resulted from disputes over the format (the artists in a closed room with students watching through a video feed in another), concern that the College would profit from sales of the transcribed proceedings, as well as hostility to corporate sponsorship (Benson and Hedges); see NSCAD Archives, PANS Box 23, Scrapbook 3; Box 28, File 3 and Box 29, File 3.

23 CAMERON, "The Lithography Workshop," 9.

24 Iain BAXTER and David ASKEVOLD, *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO: Sept. 15 – Oct. 5, 1969* (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1970).

25 Lucy LIPPARD, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 8. Lippard had made similar remarks in her 1969 lecture at NSCAD stating that Canada in general and NSCAD in particular were ideally suited to bringing about the process of art world decentralization she advocated; see note #12 above.

26 For a discussion of N.E. Thing's ART and ACT designations, see William WOOD, "Capital and Subsidiary: The N.E. Thing Co. and the Revision of Conceptual Art," in *You Are Now in the Middle of an N.E. Thing Co. Landscape*, ed. Nancy Shaw, Scott Watson and William Wood (Vancouver: Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia, 1993), 11-23.

27 Iain BAXTER, *Media Works: N.E. Thing Co. Ltd, Co-Presidents: Iain and Ingrid Baxter* (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1992), 58.

28 Robert Rogers, who was the master printer for Ryman's *Two Stones*, in conversation with author, 3 July 2007.

29 CAMERON, "The Lithography Workshop," 14-15.

30 Ibid., 10-11.

31 Ibid., 16.

32 Alexander ALBERRO, "Reconsidering Conceptual Art, 1966-1977," in *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), xx.

33 As far as I have been able to determine, this statement was first published in the exhibition catalogue *January 5-31, 1969* (New York: Seth Siegelau, 1969), n.p.

34 Ferguson, interview with author, 18 Oct. 2003.

35 CAMERON, "The Lithography Workshop," 12-13.

36 Gerald FERGUSON, "Lithography Workshop," in *The Contemporary Lithographic Workshop Around the World*, 117.

37 LEWITT, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," 80.

38 The instructions for the prints (with the names of the student draftsmen) were published in a small booklet that also documented a series of LeWitt's wall drawings

executed by “draftsman” Hazel Boudreau outside the President’s office in June 1972; see Sol LEWITT, *Lithographs and Wall Drawings* (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1972).

39 Benjamin BUCHLOH, “Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institution,” *October* 55 (Winter 1990): 113.

40 Sol LEWITT, “Sentences on Conceptual Art,” 0-9, no.5 (January 1969): 3. For an elaboration on the non-rational basis of much conceptual art, see Johanna BURTON, “Mystics Rather than Rationalists,” in *Open Systems: Rethinking Art c. 1970* (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), 65-81.

41 For clear evidence of the vigorous defense of such Modernist values well into the late sixties, see Michael FRIED, “Art and Objecthood,” *Artforum* 5, no.10 (June 1967): 12-23.

42 *A Wall Pitted by a Single Air Rifle Shot* was one of the five works included in Weiner’s solo exhibition at the Anna Leonowens Gallery in April 1969.

43 Baldessari to Charlotte Townsend, 1 Feb. 1971, Baldessari file of The Mezzanine records at the Anna Leonowens Gallery. During the preparations for the show, Gerald Ferguson wrote to Baldessari on 10 March proposing he also make a print with the Lithography Workshop based on his sample text. Ferguson wrote, “I think this would be a very interesting paradoxical situation. ‘I will not make any boring art’ [sic], made as art, in one of the most boring art circumstances (lithography) is really very good. Further, we could both make some money,” Baldessari file, Lithography Workshop records, Anna Leonowens Gallery.

44 Frazer WARD, “Some Relations between Conceptual and Performance Art,” *Art Journal* 56, no.4 (Winter 1997): 37, 39. The phrase, “anybody can do that,” comes from Jan DIBBETS, “Dibbets,” in *Conceptual Art*, ed. Ursula Meyer (New York: Dutton, 1972), 121.

45 Dan Graham’s *Homes for America* first appeared, in a mangled layout, as “Homes for America: Early 20th Century Possessable Houses to the Quasi-Discrete Cell of ’66” in *Arts Magazine* 41, no.3 (December 1966 - January 1967): 21-22. Two subsequent versions exist: a colour print that reproduces Graham’s original layout and the black-and-white print by the NSCAD Lithography Workshop. Victor Burgin’s *Untitled* is unique in the Workshop’s production in that it was a series of photographs rather than prints.

46 Jeff WALL, “‘Marks of Indifference’: Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art,” in *Reconsidering the Object of Art, 1965-75*, ed. Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1995), 247-67.

47 David CAMPANY, “Conceptual Art History or, A Home for Homes for America,” in *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, ed. Michael Newman and Jon Bird (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 124.

48 Thomas CROW makes this point about *Homes for America* in *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 154-56; it is further elaborated upon in Paul WOOD, *Conceptual Art* (New York: Delano Greenidge, 2002), 47-48.

49 CAMERON, “The Lithography Workshop,” 17.

50 Seth Siegelau interview with Michel Claura, “L’Art conceptuel,” *xx^e Siècle* 41 (December 1973): 159; translated in Blake STIMSON, “The Promise of Conceptual Art,” in *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, xliii.

- 51 LIPPARD, postface to *Six Years*, 264.
- 52 Benjamin BUCHLOH, "The Reception of the Sixties," (roundtable discussion) *October* 69 (Summer 1994): 18.
- 53 Ingrid JENKNER, *Joyce Wieland: A Vignette* (Halifax: Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery, 2000), n.p. The notion of women's "speaking lips" was first articulated in Luce IRIGARAY, *Ce Sexe qui n'en est pas un* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977).
- 54 The Lithography Workshop Inventory gives 4-16 Dec. 1970 as the production dates for *O Canada* and 11 Feb.-14 June 1971 for *Kiss-Off*.
- 55 WARD, "Some Relations between Conceptual and Performance Art": 36. See also, ALBERRO, "Reconsidering Conceptual Art, 1966-1977," xxi. The relationship between conceptual and performance art from a feminist perspective is addressed in Jayne WARK, "Conceptual Art and Feminism: Martha Rosler, Adrian Piper, Eleanor Antin, and Martha Wilson," *Woman's Art Journal* 22, no.1 (Spring/Summer 2001): 44-50.
- 56 Amelia JONES, *Body Art: Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 103-50.
- 57 See, for example, the roundtable discussion, "Conceptual Art and Reception of Duchamp," *October* 70 (Fall 1994): 140-44, and BUCHLOH, "Conceptual Art 1962-69," 139-40.
- 58 In addition to his visit in February 1971 to produce *Kiss-Off* and *Trademarks*, Acconci also came to NSCAD in April-June 1972 to produce a third lithograph, *Touch Stone (for V.L.)*.
- 59 Martha Wilson, interview with author, 12 Apr. 1995 and Lucy LIPPARD, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1976), 105-107, 128, 130. For a more detailed discussion of Wilson's work and critical reception see Jayne WARK, "Martha Wilson: Not Taking It at Face Value," *Camera Obscura* 15, no.3 (2001): 1-33.
- 60 KENNEDY, "NSCAD and the Sixties," 23. Kennedy recalls that Lucy Lippard was the only name he recognized on the list of signatories to this telegram, but the copy in the NSCAD Archives, PANS, Box 29, File 3, does not list any names. Ingrid Baxter, as part of the N.E. Thing Co., was at the conference.
- 61 The six women who participated in the Lithography Workshop were Joyce Wieland (1970), Carol Fraser (1974), Carol Condé (1974), Agnes Denes (1974), Miriam Schapiro (1975) and Felicity Redgrave (1976). The two studio faculty members were Mira Schor and Judith Mann.
- 62 Barbara England's text is in the Women's File Research Resource, currently located in the NSCAD Student Union office.
- 63 Martha Wilson chaired the symposium and other participants included Peggy Gale, Helene Winer and Elizabeth Weatherford. Wilson also had an exhibition at the Anna Leonowens Gallery at this time. See "The NSCAD Chronology 1968-1982," 92.
- 64 Jan PEACOCK, *Corpus Loquendi/Body for Speaking* (Halifax: Dalhousie Art Gallery, 1994), 5; new appointments included Wilma Needham, Susan McEachern and Jan Peacock.
- 65 Dennis YOUNG, "Opening Remarks," *Conceptual Art: The NSCAD Connection*, 6.

LA LITHOGRAPHIE CONCEPTUELLE AU NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Le présent article examine une sélection d'œuvres produites entre 1970 et 1975 par le Lithography Workshop du Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) de Halifax, afin de voir comment il a démontré qu'il était possible d'utiliser le médium traditionnel de la lithographie en tant que véhicule pour l'art conceptuel. Le Lithography Workshop faisait partie d'une série de programmes intégrés dans une expérience radicale en pédagogie introduite par Garry Neill Kennedy lorsqu'il est devenu président du College en 1967. Désireux de mettre cette école de province au goût du jour et familier de la pratique artistique contemporaine, Kennedy a amélioré les installations, engagé de nouveaux professeurs et supervisé des projets qui allaient mettre les étudiants en contact avec des artistes canadiens et internationaux. Plusieurs des nouveaux professeurs et des professeurs invités étaient anglais, allemands ou américains, ce qui suscitait une inquiétude considérable à un moment où le Canada devenait extrêmement conscient de son identité nationale. Mais, surtout pour les Américains qui voyaient leur propre pays subir une escalade dramatique de la crise sociale et politique, particulièrement à propos des droits civiques et de la guerre du Vietnam, l'occasion de venir au College était très séduisante.

Plusieurs des artistes qui ont passé un certain temps au College au cours de ces années l'ont fait en vertu du programme de professeurs invités qui était déjà en route en avril 1968. Ce programme permettait aux artistes d'exposer ou de réaliser des projets dans les deux galeries du NSCAD, de devenir artistes en résidence, d'enseigner à court terme ou de réaliser une gravure avec le Lithography Workshop. La participation au Lithography Workshop était particulièrement intéressante pour les artistes, car elle leur permettait de créer une gravure à tirage limité (généralement 50 reproductions) avec l'aide d'un maître graveur et de garder la moitié du tirage. Le NSCAD gardait l'autre moitié pour la vente.

Le Lithography Workshop du NSCAD, ouvert en janvier 1969 et fermé en juillet 1976, suivait à l'origine le modèle du Tamarind Lithography Workshop, fondé par June Wayne à Los Angeles en 1960. Son intention était

d'arracher « l'art de la lithographie » à l'état de dégradation où il se trouvait à l'époque, en permettant à l'artiste de travailler en atelier en étroite collaboration avec le maître graveur. En suivant ce modèle, le Lithography Workshop du NSCAD a réalisé quelques gravures spectaculaires au plan technique au cours de sa première année de production. Il a toutefois effectué un virage radical en 1970, sous la nouvelle direction du professeur Gerald Ferguson. À cette époque, le College s'était beaucoup rapproché de l'art conceptuel qui constituait alors l'avant-garde d'une pratique artistique contemporaine décisive. Ainsi que l'a défini un de ses premiers adeptes, l'artiste américain Sol LeWitt, l'art conceptuel est une forme d'art où le concept ou idée est ce qui est le plus important et où l'exécution est une simple formalité.

Cet accord du NSCAD avec l'art conceptuel était évident non seulement par les artistes invités à exposer, tels Le Witt, Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, N.E. Thing Co., Lee Lozano, Bas Jan Ader et autres, mais aussi par la participation de plusieurs membres de la faculté à l'importante exposition *Information* du Museum of Modern Art (juillet 1970). Le College fut aussi l'hôte de ce qu'on a appelé la « Halifax Conference » (octobre 1970). Cet événement, conçu par Ferguson et Weiner avec le soutien de Seth Siegelaub, marchand d'art new-yorkais et impresario de l'art conceptuel, avait attiré à Halifax dix-neuf artistes éminents de sept pays pour un débat de deux jours sur des questions relatives à l'art et à la culture contemporains.

Plusieurs des artistes qui travaillaient avec le Lithography Workshop entre 1970 et 1975 reflétaient cette orientation conceptuelle en se détournant des valeurs esthétiques de Tamarind et même en les parodiant parfois. Parce que ces artistes conceptuels s'employaient à la fois à renverser la priorité moderniste des effets visuels (sous forme de peinture et de sculpture abstraites) et à contester et critiquer radicalement tous les modes prédominants de production, de réception et de marchandisation de l'art, cela créait une situation paradoxale dans le contexte du Lithography Workshop : c'est-à-dire qu'ils s'efforçaient d'atteindre ces buts au moyen de la lithographie, médium hautement traditionnel, laborieux et orienté vers le commerce. Mais, ainsi que le déclarait Ferguson dans un article de 1974 sur les ateliers de gravure, la lithographie, au NSCAD, était vue comme une modalité ouverte avec une riche tradition historique, mais ni plus ni moins importante que tout autre médium pour permettre à l'artiste de démontrer un concept.

Conséquemment, le présent article examine une série de projets réalisés par le Lithography Workshop du NSCAD qui prouvent cet avancé de diverses manières. Cela comprend des gravures par des artistes tels N.E. Thing Co., Patrick Kelly et Robert Ryman, qui exigent une enquête autoréflexive sur le processus de création de gravures de manière à remplacer la subjectivité et l'expression artistiques. D'autres artistes, comme Sol LeWitt et John Baldessari,

ont démontré la prémisse fondamentale de l'art conceptuel, c'est-à-dire la primauté de l'idée elle-même, en donnant des instructions pour des gravures dont l'exécution devait être confiée à d'autres. Plusieurs gravures, comme celles de Dan Graham, Vito Acconci et Les Levine, utilisaient des moyens photographiques, renforçant ainsi l'importance de la photographie dans l'art conceptuel tout en étant en conflit avec les objectifs initiaux de Tamarind. L'article prend aussi en considération les gravures de Joyce Wieland et de Miriam Schapiro, qui faisaient partie du petit nombre de femmes artistes qui ont produit des gravures avec le Workshop, et soutient que leurs œuvres étaient parmi les rares qui faisaient explicitement référence au contexte plus vaste des conditions sociales et politiques de l'époque. Leurs gravures sont en net contraste avec le point de vue étroit de la majeure partie de l'art conceptuel, centré sur les problèmes intrinsèques à l'art, et posent un défi au masculinisme inhérent à la coterie conceptuelle du NSCAD. L'article conclut, cependant, en affirmant que bien que la plupart des gravures du Lithography Workshop ne fassent pas directement référence aux bouleversements sociaux et aux crises politiques qui ont marqué cette période, les prémisses conceptuellement critiques et autoréflexives de sa production générale ont jeté les bases pour les nouveaux modes de critique culturelle qui ont subséquentement dominé la pratique artistique à partir des années 1970 jusqu'à maintenant.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette



fig.1 Peter Redpath, 1871, coll. de la Musée McCord d'histoire canadienne, Montréal.
(Photo: Musée McCord, I-64451)

L'ART ASSOCIATION OF MONTREAL

Les années d'incertitude : 1863-1877

(Deuxième partie)

Cet article est la suite d'un exposé publié dans le numéro précédent des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* sur les activités peu connues de l'Art Association of Montreal dans les années qui ont suivi sa fondation, en 1860.

Bâtiment et locaux

Les règlements du 12 mars 1864 définissaient le rôle du comité du bâtiment L« whose duty it shall be to procure by lease or purchase, or by erection, such rooms, galleries or buildings, as may be needed for the purposes of the Association, and to see the same in order and repair, and properly insured¹ ». C'est d'abord au Mechanics' Hall loué au Board of Arts and Manufacture for Lower Canada qu'eurent lieu les expositions de 1864 et 1865. Le comité avait aussi reçu le mandat de louer un bureau pour l'Association, ce qu'il réussit à faire en 1864 au même endroit au coût de cent soixante dollars par an, et on y apposa une plaque sur la porte portant l'inscription *Art Association of Montreal*². Faute de moyens financiers, l'AAM dut quitter ce bureau en mai 1865³.

Le conseil de l'association était très préoccupé par la question d'obtenir des locaux qui lui soient propres et adaptés à ses besoins comme en fait foi le rapport annuel de 1865:

In that as in previous Exhibitions the Council felt that their best efforts to obtain satisfactory results either pecuniary or otherwise would necessarily fail in a greater or less measure until the Association is provided with a proper gallery. Fitting up a room temporarily hired for such a purpose with gas and [...rayé...] involves a very considerable annual outlay, and the impossibility of exhibiting pictures in a proper light by day in a room not built for a gallery robs any collection of much of its charm and usefulness and further deprives a considerable number of people of the opportunity of seeing it at all. May we not hope then that the enterprise and liberality of the lovers and patrons of art in Montreal will enable us to supply this most pressing want. With such a gallery provided, we might not only look for gifts of pictures from our own members, but might be enabled to procure either as gifts or at or below cost price from the Art and Science department of the Imperial government, or other public institutions in Britain [illisible] collection of copies of the great works of the sculptors [illisible] and other models for study, such as are now furnished to the Art Schools in the Mother Country. And we might hope to establish here a school of design in which the youths of the country may be taught art after satisfactory methods and their latent genius be thus developed⁴.

La construction d'un bâtiment approprié est donc liée très tôt au travail du comité de collection d'art et à celui d'une école d'art et de design. Dès avril 1865, le conseil de l'AAM avait envisagé l'acquisition d'un terrain au Phillips Square ainsi qu'un plan pour l'érection d'un édifice permanent et d'une galerie d'art⁵.

Le rapport annuel de 1865 mentionne une collaboration possible avec les Board of Arts and Manufactures in Canada établis en 1857 et destinés à favoriser la formation de l'ensemble de la population aux sciences et techniques par l'établissement, entre autres, de cours de dessin et d'expositions⁶. La loi modifiée en 1865 permettait à l'AAM d'y élire des délégués et d'espérer obtenir une partie des fonds alloués par le gouvernement pour acquérir « a site for the proposed gallery and school of design, this latter a work which the Board and the Association have been alike established to do and which they can most economically and effectively carry on in common⁷ ». Compte tenu de la situation financière des deux organismes, le projet ne se concrétisera pas, même si le conseil autorisa son secrétaire, en janvier 1866, à écrire à cet effet au président du Board of Arts and Manufactures⁸.

Les expositions de 1867 et 1868 eurent lieu à la Mercantile Library, rue Bonaventure, les directeurs de la Mercantile Library Association ayant gracieusement mis des salles à la disposition de l'AAM. Le conseil, qui avait tenu ses réunions au Mechanics' Hall jusqu'en mai 1865 et ensuite dans divers locaux (Literary Club House, Dawson's Gallery, bureau de Peter Redpath), utilisa ces espaces comme lieux de réunion. Lors du vernissage de 1867, le révérend Jenkins évoqua l'idée d'une galerie d'art nationale à Montréal:

First, it is desirable that there be established in Montreal a Public Gallery of Art. A building should be purchased for the object, if possible, not large or expensive at first, but of suitable character and dimensions, and in a suitable position. This building should be fitted for the reception of works of art, gifts to the country and to its future generations of men of wealth, men who take an interest in the elevation of taste in Canada. There must be such men amongst us, and elsewhere throughout the country; I speak of this scheme as national in its character, for in no other place in either United Canada, as it now is, or in Confederated Canada, as it is about to be, could such an institution be founded⁹.

L'idée fut reprise par Thomas Sterry Hunt lors de son discours au vernissage de l'exposition de 1868:

Montreal, above all, should aspire to take the lead in this matter, for she is really the Metropole of the Dominion. It has long been a reproach that there is no public library here, it ought to be felt as much so that there is no Art Gallery. In Buffalo there had been a wonderful increase in three years, during which they had obtained by purchase of gift as many pictures as are at present in these rooms, which were open all the year round and visited by hundreds,

and having a thousand subscribers. What Buffalo has done, Montreal could do, and if all the friends of art would subscribe their \$5, or \$50, or \$500, gifts would come in, and in a few years they might be able to point with pride to an art gallery, which would not only be a matter of pride to the Committee but to every citizen of Montreal¹⁰.

Il était évident à ce moment-là que l'AAM avec ses cotisations à cinq dollars n'arriverait jamais à construire sa propre galerie d'art, qu'on commençait à s'en désintéresser et que le conseil ne savait plus quoi faire tout en voulant toujours atteindre ses objectifs¹¹. C'est alors que le secrétaire honoraire de l'AAM, John Popham, convoqua par annonces dans les journaux au nom de l'association une réunion publique dans la salle de conférences de la Mercantile Library y invitant « all who are favourable to the formation of a picture gallery¹² ». L'importance de cette réunion fut soulignée par le journal *The Gazette* :

We are glad to see that the Association has called a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the possibility of establishing what would prove an honour to the esthetic tastes, and a credit to the wealth and intelligence of the city.... and that some of the wealthy men of this city will act on the motto that "Richesse oblige", and fairly set the ball rolling. Art galleries play an important part in the education and material welfare of the masses of the old world, and it is fully time that their elevating influences should be exerted on the perceptions of the artisans of the new¹³.

La réunion eut lieu le samedi après-midi 29 février 1868, le jour même où se terminait l'exposition de l'AAM. La réunion étant ouverte au public et n'ayant pas une activité formelle du conseil de l'association, les archives de celle-ci n'en font aucune mention et elle ne nous est connue que par les comptes rendus des journaux¹⁴.

It was quite evident that the Art Association dependent upon precarious subscriptions form year to year, was inadequate to meet the objects in view, and would not lead to the establishment of anything permanent and substantially useful. It had been thought desirable by the friends of Art to call upon those who take an interest in the subject to consider the advisability of adopting some mode for the purpose of establishing an Art Gallery, where there might be a collection, small at first, of course, but which being a nucleus, would gradually increase to something important and permanent and valuable¹⁵.

Le chanoine Balch expliqua d'abord les raisons de sa présence à la réunion: « The clergy were at this ecclesiastical season much occupied with their duties, and at all times were engaged in spiritual affairs suitable to their holy calling. Still they had their duties as good citizens to fulfil, and one of those duties related to the intellectual improvement of the community in which they dwelt, and the cultivation of a pure taste and just appreciation of art¹⁶ ». Balch expliqua ensuite les liens entre art et religion et, plus loin dans la réunion, tenta d'intervenir d'un point de vue plus pratique.

In London, in Paris, in New York, and recently in Baltimore by the noble philanthropy of that good man, George Peabody - there are such schools furnishing great facilities for the encouragement of female talent, and opening new channels for their energies. We know the limited fields in which women must labour to maintain themselves. The "Song of the Shirt" is, unfortunately, a true picture of the life of many. Let the liberal and philanthropic citizens of Montreal know that you propose giving the same advantages to our young women, which they enjoy in other cities of the world, and rely on it your appeal will not be made in vain. Not only will you be able to foster art, and encourage many an artist struggling with adverse fortune; not only will you provide an agreeable place of resort for strangers visiting our beautiful city, and also provide the means of elevating and refining the taste of our own community, but you will be doing a nobler work still - you will develop female talent and give employment of a high order to many daughter worthy of all praise¹⁷.

Le vice-président de l'association, Peter Redpath (fig.1), qui semble avoir été à l'origine de la convocation de cette réunion, commença à explorer les solutions possibles:

One suggestion he had heard was that subscriptions should be raised, the amount funded, and the interest applied in payment of the rent of proper rooms, which should be used for a School of Design and Art Gallery. That would give the Association a local habitation, and it might enable them to extend the interest, and get a much larger number of subscribers, and then they might apply a portion of the annual income towards the purchase of pictures. If a School of Design were established it would require a considerable sum for teachers, etc., and he did not know whether they could get sufficient to do both. There was another mode by which the object in view might be arrived at. They might establish a School of Design as the Victoria Rink and the Gymnasium were established, by forming shares of a certain amount and getting the subscribers to take a certain number of shares. Of course any dividends could not be promised, but they would always have a portion of the property¹⁸.

Le juge Charles Day, président de la réunion, poursuivit en ce sens mais fit passer la collection permanente en tête des priorités plutôt que l'école d'art et de design:

A Joint Stock Company, with a capital of \$50,000, in shares of \$30 each, would be the least burdensome mode of dealing with the question. This method would allow gentlemen who take a greater interest in art to subscribe more liberally, while those who were not able to contribute so much would still have an opportunity to take what they could. The school of design might be a

secondary matter. The first object would be some mode for establishing a fund, by which to get a beginning, and then those of the citizens who might be disposed to help the art gallery could send in a picture or two as a donation, and this once done, it would swell and grow until it assumed practical importance¹⁹.

Suivit l'intervention de Thomas Rimmer, membre du conseil de l'AAM depuis 1864, qui souleva plusieurs questions:

[He] did not favour the establishment of an art gallery by means of a joint stock company. It would doubtless be a collection of common paintings and people would visit it once and not come again. The genius of Canadian artists was conspicuous in the exhibition now being given, and he thought the artists of Montreal should first form themselves into a society and ascertain what could be done towards the proposed object. Mr. Rimmer spoke very highly of the sketches of the Montreal Drawing Club which had been in existence a short time, but whose sketches showed a very high order of excellence²⁰.

[He] called attention to the three days of studious neglect which the Association had received from the public on the occasion of the present exhibition, the receipts being only \$60. The Association could not be kept alive but for the efforts of two or three gentlemen, and of the Canadian artists. The latter should form themselves into an association, and point out how they might best be aided. He asked how many were likely to be attracted by a small gallery with perhaps thirty paintings in it, which had been exhibited before, when nearly two hundred new paintings only drew the small number they had had this year²¹.

Thomas Rimmer soulignait sa confiance dans les talents artistiques qui se développaient à Montréal et sa reconnaissance pour la participation des artistes canadiens sans laquelle l'AAM n'aurait pu maintenir ses activités. Percevant les différents entre les collectionneurs d'art européen qui exposaient pour se donner un statut social et les artistes canadiens qui exposaient pour se faire connaître et se créer une clientèle, il conseillait à ces derniers de créer leur propre association afin de mieux atteindre leurs buts. Cette suggestion allait être suivie quelques mois plus tard.

À ce point de la réunion, le peintre John Bell-Smith intervint avec une généreuse proposition concernant l'école d'art et de design: « offered to place at the disposal of the School of Design, should it be established, the services of himself and son [Frederic]. They would give two evenings a week for three months at the nominal fee of \$1 a week, merely for the purpose of keeping it as select as they could. This would give it a trial, and then, if successful, it might be extended²² ». Cette proposition fut fort bien reçue et mise en œuvre peu après comme en fait foi le rapport annuel de 1868, ce qui constitue les débuts de l'école d'art de l'AAM:

During part of last winter, and at the present time, an evening class has been opened under the superintendence of Mr. Bell Smith in the Gallery in which the exhibitions of the Association have been held. The room together with models and drawings have been temporarily placed at Mr. Smith's disposal. The Council feel that it should undertake this duty of providing suitable materials and, as it is not likely to be done in any other quarter, endeavor to establish, on a permanent basis, such a School in our midst²³.

La réunion se poursuivit avec une proposition de John Popham pour financer la constitution d'une collection permanente en s'appuyant sur la générosité de personnes bien nanties:

The Joint Stock Company scheme would fall through. He considered the best plan would be to rely on the beneficence of five or six individuals who had confidence in the Art Association and obtain their subscriptions for \$500 a piece, and until in all to about \$6,000, and that would purchase fifteen or twenty pictures for the foundation of a gallery, and then they could get pictures of donations from different parties, and by these means secure the commencement of a Gallery²⁴.

La réunion prit fin sur une proposition de formation d'un comité chargé d'établir « a scheme for the foundation of an Art Gallery and School of Design » dont l'adoption fut précédée de l'intervention du trésorier de l'AAM, FB. Matthews: « If the Association would take the matter up, he felt that in the course of twelve months they would have a very fine school; and if the lovers of the fine arts would subscribe, he felt that in a year or two they could have a very good picture gallery. The first necessity was at home. He thought that if the Association could raise a thousand pounds a year, the Government might be expected to contribute that much more²⁵ ». Même si on ne connaît pas de suite à la formation du comité, la réunion du 29 février 1868 allait avoir pour résultat la mise en place de cours d'art, la formation d'une association d'artistes et la relance de l'espoir de mesures de financement de la formation d'une collection permanente et d'une galerie d'art, à un moment où le désintéressement du public pour l'AAM mettait sa survie même en danger.

1868-1871: L'AAM sous la présidence de Peter Redpath

Depuis l'automne 1866, la présence du président Francis Fulford (fig.2) aux réunions du conseil de l'AAM se faisait de plus en plus rare. Tenu en haute estime par tous, son absence aux assemblées annuelles du 29 décembre 1866 et du 21 décembre 1867 n'empêcha pas sa réélection comme président. Peter Redpath (1821-1894) fut élu président de l'AAM lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 9 janvier 1869, mais il n'était pas présent à la réunion. Il ne présida que deux réunions du conseil (10 décembre 1870 et 1er décembre 1871) et l'assemblée annuelle du 17 décembre 1870. Membre du conseil d'administration en 1863 et 1864, vice-



fig.2 Monseigneur l'évêque Francis Fulford, 1863, coll. de la Musée McCord d'histoire canadienne, Montréal. (Photo: Musée McCord, I-8730.1)

président de 1865 à 1868, il était le fils aîné de John Redpath (1796-1869), immigrant écossais établi à Montréal, qui y devint un des hommes d'affaires les plus prospères. Peter Redpath fut associé aux affaires de son père, dont la raffinerie de sucre de Montréal fondée en 1854. Fervent presbytérien, Peter Redpath fut un mécène de l'université McGill dont il fit partie du bureau des gouverneurs de 1864 jusqu'à sa mort. Même émigré en Angleterre en 1880, il fit don cette année-là d'une somme de \$100,000 qui servit à la construction d'un musée de sciences naturelles inauguré en 1882, le Redpath Museum.

Society of Canadian Artists

À la suite de l'assemblée publique du 29 février 1868, les artistes canadiens mirent très rapidement en pratique la suggestion de se regrouper en association. Avec la collaboration de l'AAM, qui leur prêta sa salle d'exposition de la Mercantile Library et leur permit de faire un tirage de l'Art Union, ils tinrent leur première exposition du 22 au 29 décembre 1868. Sous la présidence de John Bell-Smith, le financement de l'opération fut assuré par la distribution gratuite d'une chromolithographie de Burland et Lafricain à tous les souscripteurs de l'Art Union. Le vernissage eut lieu le 22 décembre :

Yesterday evening the first exhibition of Canadian Art took place in the Art's Hall of the Mercantile Library Association. The attempt to get up an exhibition of this kind, depending exclusively on artists living in Canada, was looked upon as chimerical, and the result was considered as anything but hopeful. So few opportunities were afforded to the public of seeing what the productions of many of our younger artists really were, that they were scarcely known to exist, although established favourites, like Jacobi, Way, Duncan, Vogt and others who might easily be mentioned, had made for themselves a reputation. Some little curiosity was, therefore, naturally felt to see what Canada, better known for wheat, lumber and a little beadwork, could produce worthy of being called art. The present exhibition is a triumphant answer to the doubters and to those who were willing to help forward art, yet who had not the slightest idea in the help being of much use. There are about 140 specimens of oil and water colour paintings, which had to be hung to suit every taste, and it is only just to the hanging Committee, Messrs. Bell Smith, the President of the Society, Mr. Duncan, the Secretary, and Mr. Vogt, to give them full credit for the judgment they have shown in a difficult and often a thankless task²⁶.

Le catalogue comprenait des sections de peintures à l'huile (62 entrées), d'aquarelles (80 entrées) et de sculptures (3 entrées) et donnait la liste des vingt artistes anglophones faisant partie de l'association²⁷. Les propos du président Bell-Smith lors du tirage de l'Art Union le 29 décembre furent rapportés dans *The Gazette*.

In the first place he would refer to the Art Association, to whose endeavours any taste of Art in Montreal, or in the country generally, was attributable through their admirable exhibitions. But Canadian artists, and especially the young portion of them, felt that to place their own works in juxtaposition with such works was hardly fair. It was also necessary to place the best pictures in the best positions, and for this reason also Canadian artists felt that their works were not exhibited on equal terms. It was therefore suggested that Canadian artists should form an Association. A meeting was called, and it was decided to form a Society for Canadian artists. Their first idea was merely the protection of their own interests, but it was ultimately determined to have an exhibition of Canadian works. The idea was at first laughed at, but their hopes and expectations had not been deceived. Thinking the patronage would be somewhat limited, they desired to have an Art Union, and what they had liberally promised, they had fulfilled²⁸.

La seconde exposition de la Society of Canadian Artists eut lieu au même endroit du 7 au 12 février 1870. L'association n'avait pas encore de statut légal à ce moment-là et le conseil de l'AAM adopta à la fin de 1869 une résolution manifestant son désir de coopérer avec la SCA en vue de sa prochaine exposition et de permettre à celle-ci d'organiser un tirage de l'Art Union²⁹, seul moyen pour financer cette exposition qui fut bien accueillie.

The Society of Canadian Artists will, doubtless, promote what is much needed in this country, namely, a taste for the fine arts; and, to their credit be it said, there is not a picture in their present exhibition to which the most fastidious could object in point of moral character. Mr. C.J. Way, a painter of acknowledged talent, is President of the Association, and one of the chief contributors to the exhibition. Mr. Vogt's pictures are the largest in the gallery, and on that account and from their great beauty, probably attract the chief attention; but several of the other paintings are equally admired. Edson's forest scenes and Shawinigan Falls show decided talent, and Grant's small landscapes indicate a rising man. Ida Braubach's figures show genius. Her "Peep at an Artist" and news-boys at "Pitching" and "Tossing" are to the life, as also her "Return from Market". We admire the river scenes of Mr. Sandham, and Mr. Jacobi has some of the very best of his peculiar style of paintings in the Exhibition. Murphy's pigeons show extraordinary delicacy of finish, the changing colors on the neck of one of them being as perfect an imitation of nature as we have seen. Mr. Duncan gives an elaborate and accurate view of Montreal, and Raphael's "Habitants Attacked by Wolves" is one of the best pictures in the collection. Mr. Bourassa's portraits of ecclesiastics are very good, and we would rejoice to see more pictures exhibited by French-Canadian artists³⁰.

Le catalogue comportait 64 entrées pour les peintures et 61 pour les aquarelles³¹. Il donnait aussi la liste des vingt cinq membres de l'association sous la présidence de C.J. Way dont le secrétaire trésorier était W.L. Fraser. Un seul artiste francophone en faisait partie, Napoléon Bourassa. Depuis l'assemblée annuelle du 9 janvier 1869 de l'AAM³², deux artistes de la SCA, C.J. Way et O.R. Jacobi, avaient été élus comme membres du conseil de l'AAM. Ils y furent rejoints par F.M. Bell-Smith lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 11 janvier 1870³³. L'AAM et la SCA travaillaient donc en étroite collaboration.

La loi d'incorporation de la « Société des Artistes Canadiens » fut sanctionnée le 12 mai 1870³⁴. Elle lui donnait un très large mandat et lui permettait aussi d'organiser des tirages d'œuvres d'art selon le mode de l'Art Union (article 5). Le préambule de la loi était ainsi formulé:

Considérant que Charles J. Way, O.R. Jacobi, A. Vogt, Allan Edson et d'autres artistes, membres d'une association d'artistes canadiens, ont, par pétition, exposé que depuis deux ans ils sont constitués en association sous le nom de « Société des Artistes Canadiens », dans le but de stimuler le goût pour les beaux-arts en Canada, en élevant le niveau de l'art, en formant des artistes dans la Puissance et en les encourageant à produire des œuvres artistiques destinées à figurer dans des expositions publiques, d'après le mode suivi par les associations artistiques de la Grande-Bretagne, de la France et d'autres puissances européennes, et, à ces fins, d'établir des écoles d'art et de dessin, des bibliothèques pour l'étude des arts, des galeries de peintures, et des associations artistiques, tout en secourant en même temps les artistes indigents, leurs veuves et leurs enfants, dans les cas de maladie, vieillesse ou décès, au moyen d'une contribution annuelle de ses membres destinée à créer un fonds devant être réparti dans la mesure de leurs besoins et nécessités [...].

La troisième exposition de la Society of Canadian Artists se tint comme les autres dans les locaux utilisés par l'AAM à la Mercantile Library. Elle fut ouverte aux souscripteurs de l'Art Union le lundi 6 mars 1871 et au public le mardi 7 mars. Le catalogue de l'exposition n'a pu être retracé. Par contre, le contenu de l'exposition - 70 peintures, 30 aquarelles, 5 sculptures - nous est connu par les listes critiques publiées dans *The Montreal Herald*³⁵. Plus de vingt-huit artistes y participaient. Le catalogue rendait un vibrant hommage à Adolphe Vogt - dont six tableaux étaient exposés - décédé depuis peu³⁶.

Lithographie et concours

Lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 9 janvier 1869, il fut considéré « unadvisable » de tenir une exposition cette année-là. Par contre, le conseil fit rapport qu'il avait abandonné deux ans plus tôt l'idée de distribuer une chromolithographie aux membres, mais qu'aujourd'hui, « there are facilities here for having Chromolithography done in a very superior manner ». Il fut donc décidé de faire

l'acquisition d'une aquarelle propre à être lithographiée pour distribution aux membres en 1869³⁷.

À la réunion du conseil qui suivit l'assemblée, on forma un sous-comité chargé de sélectionner une œuvre qui fut soumise pour approbation le 16 janvier suivant:

In pursuance of the recommendation adopted at the last annual meeting, the Council purchased a Water Colour drawing by Mr. C.J. Way, representing a scene near Monte Rotundo, in Corsica, which has since been chromo-lithographed by Messrs. Burland Lafricain & Co., of this city, and a copy given to every member. This picture is the property of the Association, and forms part of a collection which it is forming from its surplus funds. It is hoped these efforts may be incentive to the public to extend more support to the Society than it has done of late³⁸.

L'objectif de cette opération, comme il n'y avait pas d'exposition en 1869, était d'inciter ceux qui étaient intéressés à maintenir leur participation à l'association en payant leur cotisation annuelle de cinq dollars, ce qui leur donnait droit à la lithographie. Le conseil avait espéré ainsi attirer de nouveaux membres et fait imprimer cinq cents exemplaires de la lithographie au coût de un dollar cinquante chacun en ne versant aux imprimeurs qu'un acompte. Mais l'opération ne connut pas le succès espéré lorsqu'on fit le bilan de 1869: « Of the number published, about 400 remain undisposed; but efforts will be made to sell them at the earliest possible opportunity³⁹ ». Une longue dispute s'ensuivit avec Burland Lafricain & Co sur le paiement en entier de la commande de 1869⁴⁰, dispute qui se résolut en 1873 par l'autorisation donnée aux imprimeurs de vendre eux-mêmes les lithographies dont l'AAM n'avait pas pu disposer⁴¹.

À la réunion du 16 janvier 1869, le conseil adopta aussi une autre approche pour la lithographie devant être distribuée en 1870:

That the sum of two hundred dollars be paid by the Art Association for an original Painting in oil or water colour, painted by an Artist born, or, at present residing in Canada, & which may be selected by the Council of this Association. That Artists desiring to compete shall deliver their pictures in the Gallery of the Association at the Mercantile Library building in this City on or before the thirty first of December 1869⁴².

In accordance with this a Circular was printed last spring and distributed among Canadian Artists, and advertised in some of the public Journals. In response to this invitation four pictures have been sent in for competition;-one by O.R. Jacobi in water colour representing a scene in the Thousand Islands; one by Mr. Fowler, in water colour, representing a group of Hollyhocks; one by Mr. Edson, in oil, Shawwanagen Falls; and one by Mr. Vogt, in oil, the Shepherd and his Flock⁴³.

Ce concours avait été décidé « with the view of encouraging Canadian Art », mais aussi sans doute pour éviter les accusations de favoritisme envers des membres du conseil, ce qui ne fut pas le cas, car O.R. Jacobi, tout en ayant soumis une œuvre, était membre du conseil. À l'assemblée annuelle tenue le 11 janvier 1870, un membre du conseil, John Popham, suggéra que l'œuvre la meilleure soit choisie lors de la prochaine exposition de l'AAM devant se tenir à partir du 8 mars suivant, et donc soumise à un choix public. Il ajouta que cela dissiperait le sentiment non fondé parmi les artistes que le conseil avait déjà décidé du choix, que plusieurs artistes n'avaient pas envoyé d'œuvres à cause de cela et que deux de ceux qui en avaient envoyé voulaient maintenant les retirer. Cette proposition mise au vote fut battue⁴⁴.

Lors de la réunion du conseil qui suivit, le 15 janvier, on procéda au vote des membres pour déterminer l'œuvre gagnante et Jacobi se retira de la salle de réunion. La décision nécessita deux ou trois votes et finalement c'est l'œuvre de Jacobi qui fut choisie par cinq voix contre quatre⁴⁵. Mais les choses n'en restèrent pas là à la réunion du conseil du 17 février suivant:

Mr F.B. Matthews reported that the prize of two hundred dollars offered by the Association for a Picture, had been awarded by the Council, at the last meeting, to that by Mr Jacobi, but that the latter had generously offered to allow the Association to become possessed of it for one hundred dollars provided Mr Fowler would allow his picture to be taken at the same price. This offer, had been accepted by Mr. Fowler, & now both pictures belonged to the Association at the cost of two hundred & eighteen dollars⁴⁶.

Lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 17 décembre 1870, le trésorier de l'association rapporta que le conseil possédait maintenant un début de collection permanente, soit les six œuvres suivantes:

1. WaterColour	by O.R. Jacobi;	value \$50.00
2. do	C.J. Way	\$50.00
3. do	do	\$200.00
4. do	O. R. Jacobi	\$100.00
5. do	D. Fowler	\$118.00
6. Portrait in oil, of the late Lord Bishop of Montreal (Fulford, by Messrs Fraser and Notman, presented by W. Notman Esq. to the Council) ⁴⁷ .		

Exposition

La décision de tenir la sixième exposition de l'AAM fut prise à la réunion du conseil du 18 décembre 1869. Le prince Arthur, troisième fils de la reine Victoria, étant à Montréal à ce moment-là, on y décida d'en profiter pour lui demander de devenir le protecteur de l'association et d'être présent à la *conversazione*⁴⁸. Quelques jours avant la *conversazione*, qui eût lieu le mardi 8 mars 1870, le *Montreal Herald* publiait un long résumé de la conférence inaugurale d'une série de sept sur l'art

prononcée à Oxford le 8 février 1870 par John Ruskin, le critique d'art le plus influent du XIX^e siècle. Le résumé de la conférence était accompagné d'un article sur les progrès de l'art à Montréal.

We have now among us a number of professional artists, some of them just entering in their professional career, and others, whose years have been spent in the prosecution of their studies, and whose productions are considered among art collectors and consieurs [connoisseurs] as works worthy to be placed alongside of others eminent artists on this continent. These gentlemen have recently formed themselves into a society, for the purpose of having annual exhibitions; their last was a great success, and we believe a large portion of their products were sold at good prices, this is encouraging for the future. In a few days the Art Association of Montreal will hold its third [sic] *Conversazione* and Exhibition, at which His Royal Highness and suite have intimated their intention of being present. This exhibition will consist of oil paintings, water colours, and statuary, when an opportunity will be given to the public of witnessing how much the lovers of art have done in adding to their collections since the last exhibition. We know that a large number of very magnificent pictures have been added by private collectors, and have no hesitation in saying that, the approaching exhibition will be the best ever held in the city⁴⁹.

La conversazione, rehaussée de la présence du prince Arthur, fut très courue:

The string band of the P.C.O. Royal Rifle Brigade was in attendance, and one of the features of the evening was the presence of H.R.H. Prince Arthur, who arrived at a little before nine o'clock, and in company with the Vice-President, Dr. Sterry Hunt, and Mr. Way, (the President, Mr. Peter Redpath, being absent) examined attentively the pictures in both rooms. H.R.H. then, along with the Vice-President, ascended the dais, and the latter delivered a brief address, in which he alluded to the low state of art in Montreal, some ten years ago, when the Association was first established. He then traced the improvement in this respect to the present time, much of which was doubtless due to the exertions of the Art Association, whose object amongst other aims was to make the artisan more an artist⁵⁰.

Les commentaires sur la présentation et le contenu de l'exposition furent élogieux:

The attendance comprehended many patrons of art in the city, and the exhibition, taken as a whole, was perhaps superior to any heretofore held by the Association. The actual number of pictures on the walls may have been greater, but the general merit last night was higher, scarcely an inferior work being found. The hanging, too, was judicious, and no picture or other work of art seemed to have been thrust out of sight after having been admitted⁵¹.

L'exposition fut ouverte au public du mercredi 9 au jeudi 17 mars. On pouvait lire sur la page couverture du catalogue une citation de Ruskin: « Art gives force to knowledge, grace to utility, and a true heart to a dead age, in which materialistic



fig. 3 Thomas Sterry Hunt, 1863, coll. de la Musée McCord d'histoire canadienne, Montréal. (Photo: Musée McCord, I-7250.1)

machine work is omnipotent, and the photograph displaces the Painting⁵² ». Le catalogue comprenait 86 entrées pour les peintures, 108 entrées pour les aquarelles, 8 entrées pour les dessins et 13 pour la statuaire. L'AAM y exposait le portrait de Fulford par Fraser, ainsi que les aquarelles de Fowler, Jacobi et Way. On y trouvait 22 tableaux et 50 aquarelles d'artistes canadiens.

1872-1873: L'AAM sous la présidence de Thomas Sterry Hunt

Thomas Sterry Hunt (fig.3) fit partie du premier conseil d'administration de l'Art Association of Montreal en 1860 puis de 1864 à 1868. Il en fut élu vice-président de 1869 à 1871 et président en décembre 1871. Né en 1826 au Connecticut, dans un milieu familial puritain, il étudia la chimie en Nouvelle-Angleterre. Il entra en fonction à la Commission géologique du Canada à Montréal en 1847 en tant que chimiste et minéralogiste. Il fut aussi professeur à l'université Laval à Québec en 1856 et organisa les musées du séminaire avant de quitter ce poste en 1868. Il enseigna également au McGill College de Montréal de 1862 à 1868. Il avait atteint une grande réputation scientifique tant en Amérique qu'en Europe, lorsqu'en 1872 il fut nommé professeur de géologie et de minéralogie au Massachusetts Institute of Technology de Cambridge, poste qu'il occupa jusqu'en 1878. Vice-président de la Société royale du Canada en 1883-1884, puis président en 1884-1885, il mourut à New York le 12 février 1892.

Lors de la réunion du conseil d'administration du 15 janvier 1872⁵³, la dernière présidée par Hunt, le secrétaire de l'AAM rapporte qu'à la suite d'une résolution adoptée lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 23 décembre 1871 - et qui n'est pas consignée au procès-verbal - des discussions ont eu lieu avec la Society of Canadian Artists en vue de faire une exposition conjointe, une *conversazione* et un tirage de l'Art Union. Chaque association a formé un comité pour y travailler conjointement.

Des annonces conjointes sont publiées annonçant l'ouverture de l'exposition le lundi 8 avril 1872⁵⁴. On y mentionne que chaque souscripteur de cinq dollars aura droit à une chance de gagner un prix au tirage de l'Art Union, à l'admission gratuite à l'exposition d'un *Gentleman and Lady* et à quatre gravures originales (fig.4).

Each subscriber of five dollars will be entitled to receive the four Etchings, one "Amongst the Wharfs at Quebec" by Henry Sandham (an artist to the manner born); one by Allan Edson "All Alone," likewise a Canadian; "Young Canada" by Western [James Weston], an Englishman, a resident in Montreal; and "The Essex Ferryman," by Fowler, another Englishman, residing near Kingston⁵⁵.

Le bilan de l'opération fit état qu'il y eut 318 souscriptions à cinq dollars, 363 admissions à l'exposition (à vingt-cinq sous) et qu'on vendit 350 catalogues à dix sous. Une fois les coûts de l'exposition payés ainsi que les acquisitions d'œuvres pour le tirage, il resta un montant de cent dix dollars et dix sous qui fut partagé entre les deux associations⁵⁶.



fig.4 Henry Sandham, **Among the Wharves, Quebec** (*Sur les quais à Québec*), 1872, eau forte, 30 x 21 cm, Coll. Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo: Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, 69.694)

L'exposition eut lieu au 12 rue Bonaventure « over Mr. McLaren's Saddlery Store (formerly occupied by the Mercantile Library) » et fut ouverte au public du mardi 9 au samedi 13 avril, le tirage de l'Art Union ayant lieu le 11 avril⁵⁷.

The exhibition includes a considerable number of the works of our Canadian artists, both those who have already achieved honour and reputation, and those who, as yet, are only aspirants for popular fame, and those of European artists of world wide celebrity. It is satisfactory to be able to state that our own productions bear a favourable comparison with those of the European artists that are here exhibited, who have far better opportunity of studying art, both theoretically and practically than Canadian artists have hitherto been able to command. Generally speaking, for tone and colour and purity of taste the European artists bear away the palm, but to the Canadians is certainly due the credit of boldness and originality of design, a keen eye to the beauties of nature in their own country, and very considerable artistic skill and feeling in depicting them. And the effect of such exhibitions as that which was opened yesterday, and of such a society as that under whose auspices the pictures have been collected, cannot but be to extend and diffuse a taste for art among people, and so, by increasing the demand for paintings, to improve our native artists. In the Catalogue of the Exhibition the paintings are arranged according to the usual division into oil and water colour drawings, but perhaps the most interesting mode of viewing the collection is that which has been adopted by the hangers, who have arranged all the Canadian works on two sides of the room, and those from Europe on the other two. By this arrangement a comparison is more easily arrived at between two classes, than would have been the case had the strict line of division into oil and water colours been adhered to⁵⁸.

La collaboration entre les deux associations semble avoir changé le mode d'accrochage habituel de l'AAM qui présentait les œuvres en suivant les divisions du catalogue et ne faisait pas de distinction entre les œuvres européennes et canadiennes: « The "hanging committee" have this year performed their very difficult and thankless task with an impartiality and discretion which must shield them from objurgations of disappointed artists who are apt to attribute the positions assigned to their works to personal caprice or professional spite⁵⁹ ». L'attention fut ainsi attirée beaucoup plus que par le passé sur les œuvres des artistes canadiens et sur leurs conditions de travail:

The artists who have been mainly instrumental in getting up this, as well as former exhibitions, have expended a great-amount of time and effort, to say nothing of talent and genius, in producing the works here brought together for the delight and edification of the public. In a young country like Canada, where the taste for high art is necessarily confined to a select few, the patronage ordinarily extended to the devotees of the palette and brush is of too

limited and precarious a nature to enable them to give their whole time to the legitimate business of their calling. With a few favoured exceptions, they are obliged to devote their best energies to the more mechanical and practical departments of their art, leaving only to odd moments of leisure, and those frequently snatched from the hours of repose, the working out of the more ideal conceptions of the artistic nature. Taking into account the comparatively small number of Canadian artists, and the difficulties under which they have been thus compelled to work, the display of really meritorious works they have been able to make in this exhibition, is all the more worthy of praise, and certainly gives them a stronger claim to the generous contenance and encouragement of the public⁶⁰.

Le catalogue de cette septième exposition de l'AAM comprend 59 entrées pour les peintures, 88 pour les aquarelles, 4 entrées pour des statuettes et une liste de 22 œuvres canadiennes pour les prix de l'Art Union⁶¹. Parmi les seize artistes canadiens exposant, aucun n'est francophone.

Après l'assemblée annuelle de l'AAM du 23 décembre 1871, il n'y en eut pas d'autre avant le 13 décembre 1877. Le conseil ne tint que deux assemblées en 1872 et deux autres en 1873. Ces deux dernières furent présidées par le vice-président George Frothingham. L'assemblée du 19 février avait été convoquée à la demande de conseillers « who were desirous of efforts being made for the erection of a Building for the exhibition of Works of Art⁶² ». Elle aboutit à la formation d'un sous-comité « to ascertain the possibility of procuring a lot of ground and the erection thereon of a building for a permanent Art Gallery ». À l'assemblée du 8 novembre 1873, les membres du conseil eurent une discussion sur la possibilité d'organiser une exposition à l'hiver 1874, décision qui fut liée à la possibilité d'obtenir « pictures for sale or exhibition from American Artists⁶³ ». Il n'y eut pas d'autre réunion du conseil avant le 9 juin 1877.

1874-1877: La suspension des activités

La crise économique qui frappa l'Amérique du Nord dans les années 1870 eut de sérieuses répercussions à Montréal. L'AAM cessa toute réunion et activité pour ne les reprendre qu'après la mort de Benaiah Gibb, membre fondateur de l'AAM décédé le 1er juin 1877, dont l'exécuteur testamentaire était R.W. Shepherd qui avait été élu trésorier de l'association à l'assemblée annuelle du 17 décembre 1870. Le testament de Gibb allait finalement permettre à l'AAM de construire le bâtiment qu'elle souhaitait depuis sa fondation en 1860.

Lors de l'assemblée annuelle du 13 décembre 1877 présidée par Peter Redpath, le secrétaire de l'association, John Popham, allait ainsi résumer la période d'inactivité:

The Association seventh and last Exhibition of Fine Arts was held in conjunction with that of the Society of Canadian Artists, in April 1872 ; and terminated very successfully. The commercial depression, and a lack of sufficient Pictures of merit, which had not already been exhibited, deterred the Council from having another exhibition in 1875 and in 1876. But a re-appearance of

Commercial prosperity, and the recent acquisition of several valuable works of Art, by some of our Citizens, lead the Council to believe, that the time has arrived, when another *Conversazione*, and Exhibition should be held ; and it is expected a most attractive display of Art can be presented. It is therefore proposed that it should take place in the month of January, and that the Exhibition should be kept open to the members and the public as heretofore, for a few days after the *Conversazione*⁶⁴.

De 1863 à 1877, l'Art Association of Montreal avait traversé une longue période d'incertitude. Elle avait quand même su créer et animer un milieu culturel artistique. Cependant, malgré toutes ses tentatives et discussions visant à construire un bâtiment qui pouvait lui donner sa permanence et lui permettre d'atteindre tous les objectifs qu'elle s'était fixés en 1860, elle n'avait pas trouvé les moyens financiers nécessaires à cette entreprise. Ses membres, pourtant bien nantis, ne s'étaient pas compromis au-delà des expositions temporaires de leurs propres collections.

Cette période est riche en renseignements de toutes sortes sur le milieu culturel montréalais. Elle pourrait permettre une analyse plus poussée du début des collections montréalaises et de leur contenu en œuvres européennes, américaines et canadiennes, de la façon de considérer la photographie, du peu de sculptures et de sculpteurs d'œuvres à caractère profane, de la situation précaire des peintres canadiens et de leur développement, des théories justifiant l'importance de l'art dans la société, du rôle des critiques d'art dans les journaux et de l'absence quasi totale de la participation des francophones à l'association.

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Notes

1 *The Art Association of Montreal. Incorporated 1861. Regulations, Approved by the Council, 12th March 1864*, Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, p.1.

2 *Council Meetings*, 2 avr. 1864, p.29 et 12 nov. 1864, p.30.

3 *Ibid.*, 22 avr. 1865, p.38.

4 Document manuscrit sans titre conservé dans les Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal qui semble être le rapport annuel de 1865, p.4-5.

- 5 *Council Meetings*, 22 avr. 1865, p.38.
- 6 Voir Hélène SABOURIN, *La Chambre des Arts et Manufactures: les quinze premières années, 1857-1872*, Université du Québec à Montréal, mémoire de maîtrise en histoire, 1989.
- 7 Document manuscrit..., p.5.
- 8 *Council Meetings*, 12 jan. 1866, p.49.
- 9 *The Montreal Gazette*, 6 fév. 1867.
- 10 *The Montreal Herald*, 26 fév. 1868.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *Ibid.*, 28 fév. 1868.
- 13 *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 fév. 1868.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 2 mars 1868 ; *The Montreal Herald*, 2 mars 1868 ; *The Witness*, 2 mars 1868.
- 15 *The Montreal Gazette*, 2 mars 1868.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *The Montreal Herald*, 2 mars 1868.
- 22 *The Montreal Gazette*, 2 mars 1868.
- 23 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 9 jan. 1869, p.43-44.
- 24 *The Montreal Gazette*, 2 mars 1868.
- 25 *The Montreal Herald*, 2 mars 1868.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 23 déc. 1868.
- 27 Society of Canadian Artists. *First Exhibition 1868. Catalogue of Oil and Water Colour Paintings, Statuary. &c. Exhibited at the Gallery of the Art Association, At the Mercantile Library Building, Montreal, 23rd December 1868*, Montreal, Printed by John Wilson, 42 St. John Street, 1868, 12 p. Microfilm à la Médiathèque de l'Université de Montréal.
- 28 *The Montreal Gazette*, 30 déc. 1868.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 18 déc. 1869, p.80.
- 30 *The Daily Witness*, 10 fév. 1870.
- 31 Society of Canadian Artists, *Second Exhibition 1870. Catalogue of Oil and Water Colour Paintings exhibited at the Gallery of the Art Association at the Mercantile Library Building, Montreal, Tuesday, February 8th, 1870*, Montreal, Printed at the Montreal Printing and Publishing Company, 67 St. James Street, 1870, 9 p.
- 32 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 9 jan. 1869, p.46.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 11 jan. 1870, p.51.
- 34 « Acte pour incorporer la 'Société des Artistes Canadiens », *Statuts du Canada*, 33 Victoria, CHAP 59, 12 mai 1870, p.211-13.

- 35 *The Montreal Herald*, 6 et 7 mars 1871.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 6 mars 1871.
- 37 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 9 jan. 1869, p.44.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 11 jan. 1870, p.47-48.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 17 déc. 1870, p.54-55.
- 40 *Council Meetings*, 21 mai 1872, p.92.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 8 nov. 1873, p.94.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 18 jan. 1869, p.78.
- 43 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 11 jan. 1870, p.48.
- 44 *The Montreal Gazette*, 12 jan. 1870.
- 45 *Council Meetings*, 15 jan. 1870, p.81.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 17 fév. 1870, p.82.
- 47 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 17 déc. 1870, p.54.
- 48 *Council Meetings*, 18 déc. 1869, p.80.
- 49 *The Montreal Herald*, 1^{er} mars 1870.
- 50 *The Daily Witness*, 10 mars 1870.
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 Art Association of Montreal. *Sixth Exhibition 1870. 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, Montreal, 8th March, 1870*, Montreal, Printed by John Lovell, St. Nicholas Street, 1870, 11 p.
- 53 *Council Meetings*, 15 jan. 1872, p.90.
- 54 *The Daily Witness*, 3 fév. 1872 ; *The Montreal Herald*, 27 mars 1872.
- 55 Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, *Répertoire de coupures de journaux 1864-1882*, p.40, journal non identifié, mars 1872.
- 56 *Council Meetings*, 21 mai 1872, p.92.
- 57 *The Montreal Herald*, 12 avr. 1872.
- 58 *The Montreal Gazette*, 9 avr. 1872.
- 59 *The Montreal Herald*, 9 avr. 1872.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 10 avr. 1872.
- 61 Art Association of Montreal and Society of Canadian Artists, Seventh Exhibition. *Catalogue of Oil, and Water Colour Paintings, Statuary, &c. Exhibited at the Gallery, 12, Bonaventure Street, Montreal, Monday, the 8th April, 1872*, Montreal, 1872, 10 p. Archives du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal.
- 62 *Council Meetings*, 19 fév. 1873, p.93.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 8 nov. 1873, p.95.
- 64 *Annual Meetings-General Meetings...*, 13 déc. 1877, p.61.

THE ART ASSOCIATION OF MONTREAL

The Years of Uncertainty: 1863-1877

(Part Two)

This article continues the discussion of the little-known activities of the Art Association of Montreal during the period shortly after its founding in 1860, published in the previous volume of the JCAH. In 1865, the AAM again resolved to find permanent premises for a gallery, an art school and other activities, possibly on Philips Square in downtown Montreal. It would only become a reality fourteen years later through a bequest by Benaiah Gibb. In 1864 and '65, exhibitions were held in the Mechanic's Institute and then at the Mercantile Library, which had also been one of the sites for the association's council meetings. In order to encourage the construction of a major public art gallery and to determine methods for obtaining funds for a permanent building as well as the intention to institute a art permanent collection, a special meeting open to the public was held in late February 1868. There was also lengthy discussion on the merits of creating a school of art and design, which would expand upon the AAM's drawing class given by John Bell-Smith. The suggestion of the formation of an association of Canadian artists received a rapid, positive response.

From 1868 to 1871, the president of the AAM was Peter Redpath, a sugar merchant who was better known for his support of McGill University than as a dedicated leader of the art association. The AAM supported the first exhibition of the newly-founded Society of Canadian Artists in December 1868. Under its president, John Bell-Smith, the presentation of one hundred and forty-five works by twenty Anglophone artists was accompanied by a draw for a chromolithograph to Art Union subscribers. The second SCA exhibition took place two years later and again a print was offered as a means of financing the show. The catalogue listed the one hundred and twenty-five works on display (including a portrait by the sole Francophone, Napoleon Bourassa), along with the names of the twenty-five SAC members, including its president, C.J. Way. Collaboration between the society and the AAM was further solidified in subsequent meetings of the Art Association. The SAC was incorporated in May 1870 and within its broad mandate, it had the rights to operate an Art Union, similar to that of the AAM, in order to raise funds for its exhibitions. Although the catalogue for its third exhibition has not been traced, newspaper accounts state that its text rendered homage to the late Adolphe Vogt and that six of his paintings were included in the presentation of over one hundred works by almost thirty Canadian artists.

Meanwhile, the AAM had cancelled its own 1869 annual exhibition although it agreed to purchase a watercolour by C.J. Way, which would be lithographed and distributed to new members of the association. Because of a lengthy dispute with the printer, the project was unsuccessful; internal politics defeated a similar attempt to distribute a Canadian artwork the following year. However, during the annual meeting in December 1870, the AAM treasurer announced that the association had obtained six works by Canadian artists that would constitute the beginnings of a permanent collection. The sixth AAM exhibition had also taken place in March 1870 and was preceded by a *conversazione* or opening where Prince Arthur, the third son of Queen Victoria, was the guest of honour. The exhibition catalogue, which carried a quotation by John Ruskin on its cover, reflects a much larger exhibition than in recent years: two hundred and fifteen works of which one-third were by Canadian artists.

Under the presidency of Thomas Sterry Hunt in 1872-73, the AAM annual exhibition offered four etchings as part of its Art Union draw. Subscribers now numbered over three hundred at a fee of \$5.00. The exhibition at the former site of the Mercantile library was a further collaboration between the AAM and the SAC. It also demonstrated a significant change in the exhibition's installation as Canadian and European artworks were now arranged separately, even though they continued to be listed together in the catalogue, where the work was divided according to medium. However, the overall number of works was significantly lower and only sixteen Canadian artists participated in the exhibition.

From the time of the AAM's annual general assembly in late 1871, no other such meetings took place for the next six years and the council sessions were also infrequent. Little had been accomplished towards the achieving of a permanent art gallery and school of art and design. The economic crises that battered North America in the 1870s had serious repercussions for Montreal. The annual exhibitions were cancelled and no council meetings were held between 1874 and 1877. In essence, the AAM had ceased to function. The annual assembly of 1877 was prompted by the death of a founding member, Benaiah Gibb, and the announcement of his bequest of funds that finally ensured the construction of a major art gallery for Montreal, an objective that dated back to the founding of the AAM in 1860. While the period from 1863 to 1877 reflected a period of uncertainty, the activities of the Art Association of Montreal provide an important glimpse of the Anglophone cultural milieu and its attitudes toward the visual arts.

Translation: Sandra Paikowsky

CORRESPONDING INFLUENCE

Selected letters of Emily Carr and Ira Dilworth

Edited by Linda M. MORRA

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350p., colour and b/w illus.

Hardcover, \$67, Paperback \$34.95



Almost a decade ago I had hoped to refer in a lecture to *My-E-En*, a painting in the collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria by the Vancouver-based artist Vera Weatherbie (1909-77). Very little about her was readily accessible, other than frequent mentions of having been the 'muse' and lover of Frederick Varley and later the wife of Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Not surprisingly, also wanting was anything substantial about the canvas itself, possibly a depiction of a Chinese fish seller, for which Weatherbie had received the Beatrice Stone Medal in Painting in 1934. This past summer, my quest again proved to be less than satisfactory, even if the Vancouver Art Gallery has a website post on Weatherbie's *Portrait of F.H. Varley*.

There may be a particular but unknown reason why - over thirty years after Weatherbie's death and with numerous paintings in public institutions - her presence is still obscured. Far more likely, a different dynamic accounts for the silence. It is what might be called "the Emily Carr nuisance factor," something akin to a sinkhole that regularly opens up to swallow the efforts of Canadian scholars and museums, leaving many of Carr's contemporaries and near-contemporaries resting above ground on a flat surface. In a 24 April 1942 letter to Ira Dilworth, Carr observed that "a duplex person 'Artist and writer' is extra nuisance" (p.5). She was quite right: part of what has helped enslave the Canadian art world has been her outpouring of words, so many of which coalesce into wonderfully contradictory autobiographical sentences. While her art, her stories and her journals have followings among large publics, all of her words, including fragments of stories, speeches and letters, have been poked and prodded by art writers as they try to decipher the nature and place of her visual production.

Dilworth was purportedly the artist's closest friend in the last five years of her life as well as being her literary executor and co-trustee of The Emily Carr Trust of

paintings. That 1942 letter is part of a lively if sometimes mawkish correspondence between the two, part of which has been introduced, transcribed and edited very capably by Linda M. Morra in *Corresponding Influence*. This hardcover book, now also available on-line through the Canadian Publishers Collection, unleashes another torrent of words guaranteed to offer something to every Carr community. Importantly for those examining the development of her literary career, the accumulated correspondence gives Dilworth his due in terms of both the creation and editorial production of the first six Carr books published: from *Klee Wyck* in 1941 through to *The Heart of a Peacock* and *Pause, a Sketch Book* in 1953. Evidently his privileged position elicited resentment from some of her friends as can be seen in a 24 February 1943 letter from Nan Cheney to Humphrey Toms: "By the way you know [Ira] is her literary editor & nothing of hers can be printed without his permission. You can imagine the biography he will write having only known her for the last 3 years. You could do much better with all the letters you have & could collect as I have no intention of giving Ira mine."¹

In the wake of Morra's labours, Dilworth who at the time was the British Columbia Regional Director for CBC Radio, can no longer be marginalized by anyone. He was largely responsible for securing the completion of what had been until then a 'failed' *Klee Wyck*; and he may well have been the primary reason why the artist kept revising and writing as long as she did, working right up to her death on new stories, some of which have been published only recently.² He is revealed as the gentlest of editors, someone who was prepared to suggest rather than carve up, an approach much more to Carr's liking than what she saw as the aggressiveness of earlier partners like Flora Burns and Ruth Humphrey. If Dilworth remains, both in the Introduction to Morra's book and throughout the correspondence, a somewhat less developed protagonist than Carr, this is probably as it should be. The two were locked in an intense relationship in which her writing work became 'their' work. Nevertheless, given the artist's several references to the significance of CBC Radio in her era, a few more details about Dilworth's responsibilities in the now beleaguered organization would have been welcome.

For those who revel in Carr's rambunctious writing, enjoyment is provided by such passages as; "Stationary is one of the things that marks a true lady I've heard??? – no lady me – would you prefer half a dozen politenesses on real vellum? Then return unopened as threatened & I'll start a heart-to-heart correspondence with Max [Maynard] or Jack [Shadbolt] or both. So there!" (p.47). For those who continue to explore the character of Carr's friendships, there are valuable insights, with – as we have come to expect – some of her former stalwarts coming under heavy criticism. Even Lawren Harris, recognized by all as a powerful force in her life from 1927 on, suffers a little when she compares him to Dilworth: "I agree with you that he is a prince in his own right [,] a grand person [,] but he has nothing on you" (p.262). On a more positive or at the very least a less instrumental note, Dr. Ethlyn Trapp (1891-1972) who had already emerged as important to Carr in the 40s in the published

correspondence with Nan Cheney, now takes on greater prominence. In November 1941, Carr writes: "Vapor & fancy talk are brothers. Doctor Trapp is real [-] that was a real night we had that night. I can't remember a great deal of what was said but the feel of it is with me still" (p.57). Almost a year later this affection is still firmly in place: "[Dr. Trapp] had on lipstick!! Didn't know she wore it – but I love her all the same, though it did not go with her severe mannish hat" (p.160). Clearly, this accomplished and highly educated radiologist, Acting Medical Superintendent and then Acting Director of the British Columbia Cancer Institute during the war years, who much later would donate her "Klee Wyck" estate to the District of West Vancouver for an art centre, garnered and retained Carr's respect at a time when her life is often thought to have been dominated by men.³

Not necessarily constructed with art historians in mind, *Corresponding Influence* is nevertheless worth the reading for those primarily concerned with the visual. Further negotiations through what have come to be seen as troubling aspects of Carr's art are invited as we imagine, for example, the conversation during one of Dilworth's visits to Victoria that prompted his written follow-up: "You are absolutely so right about the Indians, their life and their art. I agree that those things are gone – no that is not right – they are done for all time and not to be done again. We should look upon them with great awe and respect but we should not do what so many people do [-] try to make cheap imitations of them and wallow in sentimental twaddle about them" (p.122). We also learn of Carr's willingness to try new working methods in what would be the final years of her life: "I'm trying an experiment [...] trying to write and paint the cedar sanctuary together. I would not tell another soul about it (not at this stage) – while you are feeling your way it is best not to talk of these things..." (p.91).

Moreover, and to the shock of "Small," Emily's youthful alter ego, we are told of the artist's hour-long discussion about art with a "solitary youth" who had flung his bicycle down and wandered over to interrupt her painting while she was in Mount Douglas Park (p.148). In general, the exchange of letters contains evidence of the significant place of art in the interactions between Carr and Dilworth, whether it be the playful references back and forth to *The Juice of Life* (one of the paintings she gave to the man she nicknamed "Eye"⁴), the discussions of what images to use for book covers or her requests that he select paintings and watercolours for her friends and for extensions to The Trust. Available as well are fascinating insights into the formation of The Trust, with Carr at one point describing how she was forced to insist to Lawren Harris that she be allowed to hold back some of her watercolours as a source of support for her sister and herself (p.290).

As rich in gifts as it is, Morra's book does raise one major question. Of the 440 extant letters between the two friends, only 142 have been published. Indeed, only a snippet from the "nuisance" letter of 1942 is included and used simply to underscore a point in the Introduction. What was fragmentary, repetitive in terms of content or "focused on more mundane affairs such as the weather or gardening," were eliminated, as were letters "that did not contribute to the larger narrative of Carr's

life" (p.x). Some of the decisions are frustrating for the art historian, as when a letter from Carr concerning her last major sketching trip to Mount Douglas Park in 1942 is reduced to two sentences and placed in a footnote (p.147). However, there is a larger issue at stake. Emily Carr seems destined, whether one likes it or not, to remain a focus of national art conversations in the foreseeable future. Healthy attendance figures for the recent National Gallery of Canada and Vancouver Art Gallery's *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon* traveling exhibition and fiery responses to both the exhibition and its catalogue from the likes of Maria Tippet⁵ alone attest to her continuing ability to raise temperatures. The debate about her relationship to the First Nations is edging towards its third decade of prominence and is sure to retain its vigour while other concerns, not yet imagined, emerge.

One must ask, then, what "larger narrative" could have served as an unimpeachable guide for Morra? Might not the costs of the physical publication of *Corresponding Influence* have been better directed toward financing the transcription of the complete set of Carr/Dilworth letters? Such an endeavour, in addition to providing absolute transparency, could then have been made available electronically and supplemented with negotiated, carefully interwoven links to other published Carr correspondence, of which there is a good deal. It might also have gone on to shelter new transcription projects, perhaps the most appreciated of which would be the letters from Lawren Harris, reread and treasured by Carr. None of this, of course, would automatically have offered relief for Vera Weatherbie. A systematic gathering together of Carr correspondence would merely have reduced the depth of the sinkhole, allowing scholars to get in and out of Emily Carr discussions with less exertion and perhaps leave time for other artists, for other kinds of art.

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Notes

1 Emily CARR, *Dear Nan: letters of Emily Carr, Nan Cheney, and Humphrey Toms*, ed. Doreen Walker (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), 391.

2 See Emily CARR, *This and That: The Lost Stories of Emily Carr*, ed. Ann-Lee Switzer (Victoria: Touch Wood Editions, 2007).

3 See Charlotte HACKER, *The Indomitable Lady Doctors* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1974), 226, for a brief account of Dr. Ethlyn Trapp's professional career.

4 Morra asserts (p.37) that Dilworth's *Juice of Life* is the same painting now in the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, bequeathed by Trapp, who is the only owner cited in the work's provenance.

5 Maria TIPPETT, "Still Controversial, Sixty Years On," *Literary Review of Canada* 15, no.2 (March 2007): 6-7.