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Children of the Cold War era know this expression: the longest undefended border in the world. It may no longer feel that way, as we file shoeless between stanchions in airport lines or sit in our cars inhaling fumes from the tailpipes of others, but the border between Canada and the United States used to be something rather more notional; in some parts of the continent it was an arbitrary line, easily crossed.

This issue contains many such crossings. People and pictures are on the move, and whether the travel is actual or armchair, the effect is nearly the same. Modernity's mobilization of people and images cultivates affinities between artists; images from the past, that other country, foster the impression of seeing Canada as others saw it; reproductions allow a nearly free exchange of forms and techniques. And what is the tender of this exchange? Major works of art, of course, seen in exhibitions and engravings, but also, as Sara J. Angel has discovered, clippings from mass market publications, iffy reproductions that end up in an artist's scrapbook, confirming or guiding new directions in his work.

As Louise Vigneault and Isabelle Masse argue, borrowings become a matter of cultural survival for the Huron-Wendat painter Zacharie Vincent. Through easel painting Vincent enters the frame of the other, becoming an icon so as to be seen. Other journeys may seem less pressing, but they are no less crucial to our understanding of art makers. Think of Mariette Rousseau, a daughter of Trois-Pistoles, Quebec, picking up and moving to San Francisco in 1948, on the strength of an article in *Life* about the Dorothy Liebes studio. Not quite so amazing, when Anne Newlands explains that Rousseau's father, a cultural maven in his community, subscribed to the magazine to encourage his children to learn English. Rousseau's confidence was home-grown, but even taking into account the mobilization of the postwar years, her decision was remarkable; she was passionate about weaving and had guts.

To understand the construction of an independent artist's mind – what is allowed to enter, what is barred – Liz Wylie reads *The Optimism of Colour: William Perehudoff, a Retrospective*, the catalogue accompanying the Mendel Art Gallery exhibition. Perehudoff and his wife Dorothy Knowles spent summers near the artists' workshop at Emma Lake and so the outside world, including some notable Americans, came to him, not the other way around. Although the effects of these contacts are imprecise, they are felt to have been crucial. François-Marc Gagnon reviews Louise Vigneault's comparative study of Tom Thomson and Jean-Paul Riopelle, in which other kinds of crossings are made and affinities are found in the nomadic natures of these artists, their hardy pioneer or trapper personas.

If borders are being crossed in this issue, they are also being noticed as more than lines in the sand. In a new section of the *Journal*, Kristina

Les enfants de la guerre froide connaissent l'expression « la plus longue frontière non défendue au monde ». Il ne semble plus en être ainsi depuis que nous défilons nu-pieds à travers les filtres de contrôle des aérobares ou quand, assis dans notre voiture, nous respirons les gaz d'échappement qui nous arrivent de l'extérieur, mais la frontière entre le Canada et les États-Unis était, autrefois, quelque chose de plus capricieux, du moins dans certaines parties du continent, une frontière arbitraire aisément franchie.

Ce numéro contient plusieurs de ces traversées. Les gens et les images sont en mouvement et, que l'on voyage pour de vrai ou dans son fauteuil, l'effet est presque le même. La mobilisation par la modernité des gens et des images cultive des affinités entre artistes ; des images du passé, cet autre pays, entretient l'illusion de voir le Canada comme les autres le voient ; les reproductions traduisent des formes et des techniques dans une atmosphère de presque libre échange. Et quelle est la monnaie d'échange ? Les œuvres d'art importantes, bien sûr, celles que l'on voit dans les expositions ou sur les gravures, mais aussi, comme Sara J. Angel en a fait la découverte, les coupures de publications de grande diffusion, reproductions imprécises qui se retrouvent dans l'album d'un artiste, confirmant ou guidant son travail dans de nouvelles directions.

Comme le démontrent Louise Vigneault et Isabelle Masse, les emprunts deviennent, pour le peintre huron-wendat Zacharie Vincent, une question de survie culturelle. Par la peinture de chevalet, Vincent entre dans le cadre de l'autre, devenant une icône afin d'être vu. D'autres voyages peuvent sembler moins pressants, mais ils n'en ont pas moins une importance cruciale pour comprendre les créateurs d'art. Pensons à Mariette Rousseau, une fille de Trois-Pistoles au Québec, qui fait ses bagages et déménage à San Francisco, en 1948, sur la foi d'un article sur le studio de Dorothy Liebes publié dans *Life*. Ce n'est pas si étonnant quand on sait que, comme l'explique Anne Newlands, le père de Mariette, champion de la culture dans sa communauté, s'était abonné à la revue pour encourager ses enfants à apprendre l'anglais. La confiance en soi de Mariette lui venait de sa famille, mais, même en tenant compte de la mobilisation des années d'après-guerre, sa décision était remarquable ; elle avait la passion du tissage et du cran.

Pour comprendre ce qui se passe dans le cerveau d'un artiste indépendant – ce qui est autorisé à y entrer et ce qui en est exclu – Liz Wylie lit *The Optimism of Colour: William Perehudoff, a Retrospective*, le catalogue qui accompagne une exposition à la Mendel Art Gallery. Le monde extérieur, y compris certains Américains bien connus, sont venus à Perehudoff, et non le contraire, alors que sa femme, Dorothy Knowles, et lui demeuraient près des ateliers d'artistes à Emma Lake. Ces contacts semblent avoir été cruciaux, bien qu'imprécis dans leurs effets. Il y a une autre sorte de traversées dans l'étude comparée entre Tom Thomson et Jean-Paul Riopelle par Louise Vigneault, recensée ici par

Huneault reflects on the work of the Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, risking the thought that such gendered projects may, in the minds of some, have run their course. She refers to Marilyn McKay's recent survey of Canadian landscape art, which, coincidentally, is reviewed in this issue by Karen Stanworth. The criss-crossing of concepts in this issue continues in Stanworth's exploration of McKay's notions of territory, including the nomadic mode that, for her, does not include the Group of Seven. Huneault, for her part, notes that McKay has opted to integrate the work of men and women in her account; boundaries are territorial, as they are in this *Journal*. But Canadians are also curious, so we have invited the American print historian Georgia B. Barnhill to share her research on views of Canada published in the United States. Here, a two-way mirror replaces the border.

All of this hopping is making me quite giddy, so I will close with the hackneyed observation that travel is broadening – it has broadened the scope of this issue. As you contemplate your next move across the field of Canadian art history, or maybe a trip across its borders, I am daring to hope that a copy of the *Journal* has replaced your diary as sensational reading on the train. Travel safe and write if you see work.

Martha Langford

François-Marc Gagnon, où l'on trouve des affinités dans le tempérament nomade et la personnalité de rude pionnier ou de trappeur de ces artistes.

Si, dans ce numéro, on traverse des frontières, on y voit aussi plus que des lignes dans le sable. Dans une nouvelle section des *Annales*, Kristina Huneault se penche sur le travail du Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes, et se hasarde à croire que de tels projets, axés sur le genre, peuvent, dans l'esprit de certains, avoir fait leur temps. Elle fait référence à une étude récente de Marylin McKay sur l'art paysager canadien qui, par coïncidence, fait l'objet d'une recension de Karen Stanworth dans le présent numéro. Les concepts s'entrecroisent à travers ce numéro, alors que Stanworth explore les notions de McKay sur le territoire, y compris le nomadisme qui, pour elle, ne comprend pas le Groupe des Sept. Huneault, pour sa part, note que, dans son étude, McKay a choisi d'intégrer le travail d'hommes et de femmes – ses limites sont territoriales comme celles des *Annales*. Mais les Canadiens sont aussi curieux, et nous avons invité l'historienne américaine de la gravure, Georgia B. Barnhill, à partager ses recherches sur les vues du Canada publiées aux États-Unis. Ici, la frontière est remplacée par un miroir sans tain.

Tout ce va-et-vient m'a donné le vertige. Je vais donc conclure par une remarque banale : voyager ouvre des horizons – et a élargi la portée de ce numéro. Quand vous contemplerez votre prochaine excursion à travers le champ de l'histoire de l'art canadien, ou peut-être au-delà de ses frontières, j'ose espérer qu'un exemplaire des *Annales* remplacera votre journal intime comme lecture passionnante sur le train. Voyagez en sûreté et, si vous voyez que quelque chose se passe, écrivez-le.

Martha Langford

Traduction : Élise Bonnette



Looking North: Views of Canada Published in the United States

GEORGIA B. BARNHILL

Although there is now a political boundary between the United States and Canada, their shared colonial history likely created the interest in Canadian urban and landscape views among eighteenth- and nineteenth-century residents of what is now the United States. Today, the two nations have much in common; they share a language, similar educational systems, networks of professional sports teams, and environmental concerns that transcend that political border. In New England, it is not uncommon for families to have Canadian branches. In spite of the political division that ensued after the American Revolution, historic, aesthetic, and commercial interests resulted in a large number of printed views of Canada made in the United States. Clearly, residents of the United States were fascinated with the landscape and urban centres of Canada, and tourists still travel north for the same reasons. As we shall see, both historical allusions and the magnetic scenery were behind the creation of many Canadian views by Americans.

A second reason for the production of Canadian images in the United States is that printmaking started later in Canada than in the major urban centres of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Additionally, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century and the early decades of the nineteenth century, patronage of fine and popular art in Canada was probably not substantial enough to sustain a vital community of producers of commercially published images. The smaller population and the presence of print publishers in London ready to supply the pictorial needs of that colony affected the supply and demand for locally printed images. Prior to 1820, there were just twenty landscape and portrait prints published in Canada. The editor of the *Quebec Magazine* published a few engravings by J.G. Hochstetter; George Heriot (1759–1839) experimented with printmaking; and in 1819 John Elliott Woolford (1728–1866) drew, etched, and published a group of depictions of

Detail, Edwin Whitefield, *Ottawa City, Canada West. (Late Bytown). View of the Uppertown, looking up the Ottawa River, from Government Hill*, 1855, lithograph, 57.8 × 91.8 cm (Ottawa: Edwin Whitefield, 1855). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

Halifax. Several early lithographs were printed at the Royal Engineers Office in Quebec, initially for military purposes.¹

Another factor that limited print production is that in French-speaking Canada, early settlers came from coastal Brittany and Normandy, not Paris and Lyon, the centres of French print production in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The early immigrants from Brittany and Normandy did not have a tradition of printmaking.² Indeed, colonists from New England brought the first printing presses to New France in 1760.³ After the American Revolution, familial relations among the people of the Canadian Maritime provinces and New England existed through migration and trade and this contributed to the important role of Boston printmakers in the creation of the imagery of Canada.⁴

As pointed out by Jim Burant in an essay examining the growth of the Canadian graphic arts industry between 1850 and 1914, lack of tariff protection also affected the Canadian print publishing industry. This lack of tariff protection in the 1830s and 1840s made it difficult for Canadian firms to compete with those in Boston and New York. Burant also notes that some American artists, including Augustus Kollner (1813–1900) and Edwin Whitefield (1826–1898), worked in Canada but had their images printed in the United States.⁵

The American production of views of Canada dates back to the mid-eighteenth century when the British colonists joined forces with the British army to drive the French out of Nova Scotia. In 1745 Thomas Johnston (1708–1767) of Boston engraved the *Plan of Cape Breton, & Fort Louisbourg*, six impressions of which remained in his stock at the time of his death in 1767.⁶ One of the members of the New England forces was Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Gridley, the engineer who earlier had drawn a plan of the town and fortress at Louisbourg; the Boston artist Peter Pelham (1697–1751) reproduced it as a mezzotint in 1746.⁷ A decade later during the Seven Years War, Thomas Johnston engraved a view of *Quebec, The Capital of New-France* (Fig. 1) that was derived from a French print. Other views of Canada drawn by Americans proliferated during the American Revolution and the early nineteenth century. It is clear that two types of prints emerge at this time – those that portray realities of military conflicts and those that reveal the beautiful landscape.

The Philadelphia engraver Robert Aitken (1734–1802) trained in England and produced engravings of technical and literary subjects as well as historical ones; he was also the publisher of *The Pennsylvania Magazine*. During the American Revolution, he engraved the *Plan & Fortifications of Montreal* and the *Plan of Quebec, Metropolis of Canada in North America* for the November and December 1775 issues of his magazine. As Stefanie Munsing Winkelbauer



1 | Thomas Johnston, *Quebec, The Capital of New-France, a Bishoprick, and a seat on the Soverain Court*, 1759, line engraving with hand colouring, 18.7 × 22.9 cm. (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

and Peter J. Parker observed thirty years ago, these images were “artisan work, subject to temporal, thematic, and financial limitations frequently beyond their creators’ control.”⁸ These two Canadian views accompanied a history of the Province of Quebec from its beginnings through the Seven Years War.

American engravers continued to depict notable Canadian places a generation after the Revolution. In New York, John Roberts (1768–1803) produced the *View of Quebec* for *The Monthly Military Repository* published in 1796. Charles Smith issued the same engraving in *The American War* published in New York the next year. The accompanying text contains a detailed description of the various parts of the city keyed to a map as well as the military actions that took place there during the American Revolution suggesting that the subject still had great topical interest even at the end of the century.

The War of 1812 stimulated curiosity about the British colonies to the north and prompted the publication of several book illustrations of Canada. The Philadelphia architect William Strickland (1788–1854) provided the



2 | Salathiel Ellis, *Battle of Windmill Point (near Prescott Upper Canada) on Tuesday Nov. 13th between the Patriots and the British*, 1839, lithograph, 31.8 × 52.7 cm (New York: Lith. of Endicott, 1839). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

View of Quebec from Point Levy for the April 1813 issue of *The Port Folio*. The aquatint was by William Kneass (1780–1840) of Philadelphia, one of the early American practitioners of this form of etching. Strickland created *Queenstown, Upper Canada* for the August 1814 issue; the print depicts the site of the battle at which the British Army, Canadian militia, and a detachment of Mohawk Indians defeated the American General Stephen Van Rensselaer. About one thousand American troops died in the battle, as did the British General Sir Isaac Brock, who earlier had captured Detroit. The editorial comment related to the print includes a description of the military action in which the American troops ascended the cliff. But the cryptic heading for the brief commentary is merely “American Scenery.”⁹ The editor may have wanted to avoid focusing on this devastating loss.

Canadian publishers turned to American lithographers for several important later historical prints, including Salathiel Ellis’s (1803–1879) *Battle of Windmill Point* (Fig. 2). Ellis resided in St. Lawrence County, New York, and his earlier prints, which were commissioned by the land developer George Parish (his brother had bought Ogdensburg, N.Y. in 1808), had been



3 | Fitz Henry Lane after William H. Wentworth, *View of the Great Conflagration that took place on the Night of Saturday, 14th of January 1837*, 1838, lithograph, hand coloured, 42.5 × 66 cm, gift of Charles E. Mason, Jr., June 1979 (Boston: Thomas Moore, 1838). (Courtesy: The Boston Athenaeum)

printed in Europe.¹⁰ George Endicott (1802–1848) in New York lithographed *Battle of Windmill Point* in 1839. This battle occurred in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1837 that “pitted Canadian rebels and their American supporters from northern border counties against the British in Canada. The goal was to invade Canada, free it from the British yoke, and establish a republic.”¹¹ The windmill stands on the Canadian shore of the St. Lawrence River, 2.4 kms from Prescott, Ontario. The battle lasted four days; clearly the invaders lost. Sixty of the prisoners were sent to a British penal colony in Australia.¹²

Another important historical print, *View of the Great Conflagration at Saint John, New Brunswick* (Fig. 3), was lithographed on stone by Fitz Henry Lane (1804–1865) and printed by Thomas Moore in Boston in 1838. William H. Wentworth (1781–1849), a Connecticut-born Yankee, raised in Saint John by his uncle, made the original drawing showing the devastation as seen from his studio. The extensive commentary below the image describes the destruction of 108 buildings in the commercial district with 170 different



4 | Artist unknown, engraved by Hewitt, *On the St. Lawrence*, 1813, line engraving, in *The Port Folio*, 8.9 × 15.2 cm. (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

tenants. A close examination of the foreground and the burning wharf in the middle ground suggests that the stacks of furniture and other salable goods were for export, not household use. The coastal trade between the Maritime Provinces and New England included far more than prints.

Other American publishers were pleased to include views of Canada that would either convey useful information or ornament their publications. New Yorker Cornelius Tiebout (ca. 1773–1832) engraved the *View of Shelburne Light House* on Roseway Island, Nova Scotia, for Thomas and James Sword’s *New York Magazine* in 1791. An anonymous reader from Nova Scotia sent the sketch of this landmark to the magazine’s editor because of its importance to navigators; the view is taken from Cape Negro Island, to the west. Alexander Robertson (1772–1841), a drawing instructor in New York, provided a sketch titled *Near Berthier on the St. Lawrence* for *The Port Folio* in 1809. The editor commented, “The shores of the St. Lawrence, one of the most noble rivers in the world, are rich in beautiful and picturesque scenery.” He further noted that the landscape will “appeal to the voyager of taste, whom pleasure or business may lead to navigate its waters.”¹³ Berthierville is on the north shore of the river between Montreal and Trois-Rivières. A few years later, in July 1813, Hewitt (his first name is not recorded) engraved the view *On the St. Lawrence* (Fig. 4) for John Inskeep and Samuel Bradford, the publishers of *The Port Folio*. The text notes, “This view on the river St. Lawrence, is taken from a situation between Trois-Rivieres and Quebec; it exhibits one

of those beautiful and extensive reaches which are frequently seen in a ride from Montreal to Quebec, and which characterize the picturesque scenery of this majestic river.”¹⁴ Descriptions such as this encouraged the beginnings of landscape tourism.

Joseph Sansom’s *Sketches of Lower Canada*, published by Kirk and Mercein in New York in 1817, includes several views. William Satchwell Leney (1769–1831), a New York resident, engraved the view of *Quebec City*. In the preface Sansom notes, “It is of importance that neighboring Nations should be acquainted with each other, that they may form a just estimate of one another’s friendship, or enmity . . . Governments are often led into fatal errors, in estimating the temper, or the resources of each other.”¹⁵ Sansom’s full text derives from direct observation and from materials found in private libraries in New York City. The inscription on the engraving notes that Leney made the view “from Memory.” Presumably Leney, a British-trained engraver, had visited Canada earlier in his career and this image was one result. He later retired to a farm near Montreal in 1820.¹⁶

The Town of York, soon to become Toronto, was the subject of an anonymous engraving that appeared in the *Analectic Magazine* published in Philadelphia in 1819. Oddly, there is no text associated with the image. The town was the site of an important action in the War of 1812; so it is not surprising that the fortification is a significant part of the composition.

American travel narratives began to appear at this time; interest in both the industrial and natural landscape is typical of work beginning in the 1820s. The amateur artist Daniel Wadsworth (1771–1848) travelled northward from Hartford, Connecticut, with Benjamin Silliman, professor of chemistry and natural history at Yale. Silliman was particularly interested in the history of the region because, “less has been said by travellers in America, than might have been expected, of scenes and events, which, to Americans, I conceive, must ever be subjects of the deepest interest.”¹⁷ He began to compile text with the intention of placing occasional articles about the region in the *American Journal of Science*, which he edited, but he decided on a book publication instead. Silliman’s narrative, *Remarks Made on a Short Tour Between Hartford and Quebec, Lumber Establishment, at Montmorenci, and Falls of Montmorenci*. Silliman credits the illustrations to his travelling companion, Daniel Wadsworth, and praises the young engraver, Simeon S. Jocelyn (1799–1879) of New Haven, as being, “a young man of twenty, almost entirely self-taught” whose talents had been noticed by John Trumbull.¹⁸ The book has nine engravings, including *Approach to Quebec* taken from a steamboat. The small scale of the engraving *Falls of Montmorenci* makes it impossible to capture the majesty of the site, not to mention the wet spray that must have dampened



5 | Simeon Smith Jocelyn after Daniel Wadsworth, *Lumber Establishment, at Montmorenci, and Bay of Quebec*, ca. 1824, line engraving, 8.3 × 12.1 cm, in Benjamin Silliman, *Remarks made on a Short Tour between Hartford and Quebec* (New Haven: 1820). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

Wadsworth's sketchbook. A Mr. Patterson owned the great saw mill below the falls depicted in *Lumber Establishment, at Montmorenci* (Fig. 5); the engraving shows the pipes for the water drawn from above the falls that drove the wheel of the saw mill.¹⁹ Each illustration is carefully described in the text.

The burgeoning American interest in Canadian scenery is reflected in the several views published in literary annuals and gift books destined for the parlour tables of middle- and upper-class homes. A different view of Montmorency Falls, accompanied by a lengthy essay on the scenery of the St. Lawrence River, appeared in *The Atlantic Souvenir* for 1826, published in Philadelphia (Fig. 6). The anonymous author wrote: "As I approached the fall, the rainbow burst upon my sight, in indescribable magnificence." He goes on to exclaim about the "vestal veil of fleecy spray," depicted in the engraving made by Cephas G. Child (1793–1871) of Philadelphia after Thomas Doughty's (1793–1856) design. He claimed "In the old world or the new, I had seen no waterfall like this, except the matchless grandeur of Niagara."²⁰



6 | Cephas G. Childs
after Thomas Doughty,
Montmorenci, line
engraving, 10.2 × 7.6 cm,
in *The Atlantic Souvenir*
for 1826 (Philadelphia:
1825). (Courtesy: American
Antiquarian Society)

The Gem of the Season issued in New York in 1849 includes the engraving *View on the St. Lawrence* with Montreal in the background. The engraver derived his image from one of the plates by William Henry Bartlett (1809–1854) in Nathaniel P. Willis’s *Canadian Scenery* issued in London in 1842. A view of Quebec from the *Rose of Sharon: A Religious Souvenir* published in Boston in 1856 is another instance of an engraver copying an earlier print. The image is copied from Edwin Whitefield’s view of that city published in 1855 as part of his series of *Original Views of American Cities*. The view in the *Rose of Sharon* is accompanied by a poem that refers to the death of Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham.

Charles Magnus (1826–1900) of New York is well known for his lithographed city views on letter sheets stationery; he also issued some of his letter sheet views as prints intended for framing. Some of his views are



7 | Artist unknown, *The Rose of Canada: Prince of Wales Bouquet*, lithograph, 22.9 × 22.9 cm (New York: Charles Magnus & Co., ca. 1860). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

derived from earlier prints such as his view of Ottawa, mounted on black card stock and decorated with gold borders, which is based on Edwin Whitefield's handsome lithograph published in 1855. Magnus's image of Halifax is based on one of Bartlett's views from *Canadian Scenery* and it is among a number of images copied from Bartlett.²¹ A very interesting folded souvenir item with tiny views of popular buildings and places in Canada was published as *The Rose of Canada: Prince of Wales Bouquet* (Fig. 7), undoubtedly printed to celebrate the visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada in 1860.²²



8 | William H. Bartlett, *View on the St. Lawrence: Indian Encampment*, lithograph, 20.3 × 31.8 cm (New York: Currier & Ives, 1857–72). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

Nathaniel Currier and Currier & Ives, the prolific New York printmakers, published about twenty views of Canada, most of which depict landscapes, rivers, and waterfalls. Given the distribution network of the firm, some of these were undoubtedly sold in Canada and destined for use in Canadian homes or businesses; others appealed to tourists and went to homes elsewhere. Typical of their work is *View on the St. Lawrence: Indian Encampment* (Fig. 8); this generic image, which could have been made almost anywhere, was copied from one of William Henry Bartlett's views in *Canadian Scenery*. Other landscape subjects include a winter scene, the Bay of Annapolis, the St. John River and Nova Scotia scenery. City views include Toronto, Saint John, and Ottawa. Again, several of these prints were copied from Bartlett's engravings.²³

It is not surprising that there was a market for depictions of Canada in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. Interest in the American landscape developed in the 1790s, reaching full flowering in the Hudson River School and Americans were also interested in the Canadian landscape. What is more significant, however, is the role that American lithographers and print publishers played in supplying images of Canada for

Canadian audiences. Just as engravers and lithographers moved across the border, so did prints and illustrated books.²⁴ During these years and later, American printmakers and publishers made and distributed prints to the Canadian market.

One of the early examples of the dependence of Canadian authors and publishers on American printers was the 1829 publication of the Rev. George Bourne's *The Picture of Quebec*, published in Quebec by D. and J. Smillie. The Rev. George Bourne was an early abolitionist who was born in England and arrived in New York in 1804. He moved frequently in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Leaving the United States for Quebec in 1825, he returned to New York City in 1830.²⁵ Smillie's contact in New York was George Melksham Bourne (1806–1887), the son of the book's author, who operated the Depository of Arts, Engravings and Fancy Store at 359 Broadway from 1827 to 1832.²⁶ The plates for the etchings illustrating the text were made in Quebec by James Smillie (1807–1885) but printed in New York because of the lack of a copperplate printer in Quebec. The map was printed by a New York company, P. Desobry's Lithography. An image on the wrapper of the first edition of 1829 bears a charming landscape vignette engraved on wood by Alexander Anderson (1775–1870) of New York City for which he received three pounds five shillings from the publisher.²⁷ James Smillie's plates for the book are accurate depictions of Quebec, the work of a skilled engraver who had received some professional training in Edinburgh. One plate, *Quebec Driving Club* depicts a busy winter scene. Bourne explains "A Number of gentlemen some years since, formed an association to exhibit the Canadian Cariole, who usually hold a weekly meeting for their display and parade in the Place d'Armes, before the Castle Yard."²⁸ Winter sleighing scenes frequently appear in the oeuvres of other Canadian artists. *The Picture of Quebec* proved to be popular: in 1830 George M. Bourne reprinted the book in New York where he sold it in his Depository of the Arts and P. & W. Ruthven issued it in 1831 in Quebec.

Canadian publishers of lithographs continued to employ American printers for the next generation. *Views of British America Drawn from Nature, and on Stone by Mrs. Hall* contains six lithographs of sites in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia printed by the Pendleton Lithography firm in Boston (Fig. 9). Mary G. Hall (act. 1833–1835), the proprietor of a drawing academy in Saint John, must have been an ambitious artist to issue the slender volume, published by subscription in 1835. Each of the plates is accompanied by text printed by H. Chubb of Saint John. She also executed a series of views of the Hudson River and Niagara Falls.²⁹

Another ambitious Canadian artist and lithographer, Lady Mary Heavyside Love (1806–1874), was born in Saint John, New Brunswick, the daughter of



9 | Mary G. Hall, *Entrance to Digby from the North*, lithograph by Pendleton's Lithography, Boston, 15.2 × 22.9 cm, in *Views of British North America drawn from Nature and on stone by Mrs. Hall* (St. John, NB: 1835). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

a prominent merchant. She was educated in England and married a British army officer stationed in Saint John. She made many watercolours of scenery in New Brunswick and Quebec, including two lithographed in Boston by the Pendleton firm: *A view near St. Andrews, New Brunswick (chamcook)*, and *A view on the St. Croix River, New Brunswick*.³⁰ Another female artist, Miss A.D. Stevenson, was responsible for *St. Andrew's, A View of the Town and its Harbour*, lithographed in Boston by John H. Bufford in 1834. Although she created a rocky foreground and incorporated several sailing ships and a flock of birds in the sky to give the distant view some life, the composition is clearly the work of an amateur.

Little is known about William Hunt (fl. 1834–1838) who was a medical doctor and amateur artist; he worked in Saint John and St. Andrews for a time, but returned to the United States, probably because he had few patients. Again, he had his work lithographed by William Pendleton in Boston, such as *The Tower, St. John* and, in 1829, one of his two panoramic views of Saint John; the other was lithographed in London. Hunt also produced several

lithographs and *A Series of Studies in Drawing*, an art instruction manual printed in Boston between 1833 and 1842 with plates lithographed by William Pendleton and Thomas Moore;³¹ he was also the author of *The Cabinet of Nature and Philosophy* (Boston: Munroe & Francis, 1833), which contains several plates lithographed by William Pendleton.

Born in County Cork, Ireland, William Eagar (ca. 1796–1839) was a Canadian businessman and artist. He probably received some artistic training in Ireland before arriving in St. John's, Newfoundland, prior to his marriage in 1819. By 1831, he had painted a view of the city that was published as a stipple engraving. In 1834, he moved to Halifax, where he executed topographical views of the Maritime provinces.³² A newspaper advertisement suggested that they would be issued as engravings and published in two parts in *Nova Scotia Illustrated in a Series of Views Taken on the Spot* to be published in Halifax by C.H. Belcher. Since no printer was available in Halifax, Eagar first tried to have his sketches reproduced in Edinburgh, but the costs were too high. He then turned to lithographer Thomas Moore in Boston (the successor to the Pendleton firm) where the first nine views were printed in 1839. The next three were printed by Moore's successor, Benjamin W. Thayer, a year after Eagar's death. The prints are all small, measuring about 19 by 33 centimetres. On the title page, Eagar noted he had travelled to Boston to draw the scenes on stone.³³ Since Eagar died before the series was completed, Benjamin Champney (1817–1907), an experienced lithographic draftsman trained at Pendleton's, drew two of the late images on stone. In 1840, Champney was at the end of his apprenticeship in Boston; in 1841 he went to Paris with the artist Robert Cooke (ca. 1810–1843), another former apprentice of William Pendleton.³⁴ The third was drawn by Benjamin Nutting (ca. 1803–1887), another experienced Boston draftsman. Thayer also printed Eagar's charming *Tandem Club Assembling in Front of Dalhousie College, Halifax, N.S.*, which combines aspects of genre scenes with architectural depiction.

Many of the state legislatures, including Massachusetts, Maine, and New York, published natural history and geological surveys beginning in the 1820s. Abraham Gesner (1797–1864) compiled a similar volume: *Remarks on the Geology and Mineralogy of Nova Scotia*, printed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1836 by Gossip and Coade at the Times Office. The author of the book was responsible for the view of Cape Split and Miss A.A. Jeffery made views of Parrsborough on Partridge Island and the lithograph *West Bay Near Partridge Island, Parrsboro*. Benjamin Nutting, who was working as a freelance lithographic draftsman for various lithographic firms in Boston, copied the images on stone for the publication.³⁵ Jenkins & Colburn of Boston printed the three lithographs for the publisher in Nova Scotia. This company was active in Boston for just two years, 1836 and 1837, during which it printed



10 | William S. Hunter, *Rideau Falls, Falling into the Ottawa River*, 1855, 21.63 × 29.8 cm, in William S. Hunter, *Hunter's Ottawa Scenery in the Vicinity of Ottawa City, Canada* (Ottawa City: Wm. S. Hunter, Jr. 1855), J.H. Bufford's Lith., Boston. (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

lithographs for a number of book and sheet music publishers and issued prints on its own account.

Twenty years later, in 1855, another illustrated volume, this time published in Ottawa, appeared with lithographs printed in Boston. William S. Hunter (1823–1894), the son of an English father and a French Canadian mother, was born in St. John (now St-Jean-sur-Richelieu), Quebec. He worked variously as a mining broker and boot, shoe, and harness maker, but it is his work as an author and artist that brought him lasting recognition. He wrote and illustrated two important books. *Hunter's Ottawa Scenery* was published in two editions in 1855 and 1856. The first edition contains fifteen lithographs printed by John H. Bufford (Fig. 10). Hunter's views and text of his first book focus on the Ottawa River and the surrounding scenery. He describes the river as “the most picturesquely beautiful of all the rivers of Canada” and notes that few know the territory well, except for those in the fur or lumber trades.³⁶ The views that he had reproduced range from the purely sublime to the view of the suspension bridge. Winslow Homer (1836–1910) and John P. Newell (fl. 1858–1866) drew the images on stone. Bufford had printed a



11 | Artist unknown, *View from Parliament Buildings, Quebec*, 1850, colour lithograph, 17.8 × 25.1 cm (New York: Sarony & Major, 1847–57). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

lithograph for Hunter, *The Vermont State Fair* in 1853,³⁷ so it was natural for Hunter to turn to Bufford for this ambitious work.³⁸ The text is addressed to tourists in general. A request by the Canadian Legislative Assembly for copies for each member resulted in the second edition of *Ottawa Scenery*.³⁹ Another book written and illustrated by this author, *Hunter's Eastern Townships Scenery, Canada East*, was published in Montreal in 1860. Again, Hunter provided the views and Bufford printed them. John P. Jewett in Boston published *Hunter's Panoramic Guide from Niagara Falls to Quebec*. This inexpensive guidebook has an accordion-folded map “of all the most celebrated and picturesque points along this noble river.”⁴⁰ First issued in 1857, this publication was specifically designed for tourists and it was reprinted in Montreal in 1860. The illustrator Alfred R. Waud (1828–1891) provided the illustrations for this publication, not Hunter.

Napoleon Sarony (1821–1896) and Henry B. Major (fl. 1844–1854) published an interesting set of six Canadian views about 1850 in New York (Fig. 11).⁴¹

Born in Quebec, Sarony arrived in New York about 1836, where he studied drawing with Alexander Robertson and worked for Henry R. Robinson and Nathaniel Currier. He and Major formed their lithographic firm in 1846. It is easy to speculate that Sarony had relatives in Quebec who might have commissioned him to execute the group of Canadian views. We do not know if these prints were issued separately or were part of a publication; the literature on Canadian art does not provide any clues. These lithographs depict streetscapes, not panoramic vistas. In some ways, they are reminiscent of John Murray's (1810–after 1868) four engraved views of Montreal street scenes, executed about 1843 to 1845 and published by Adolphus Bourne.⁴² The Canadian artist James D. Duncan (1806–1881) has been linked to Sarony & Major lithographs and it is conceivable that he was responsible for the Sarony & Major lithographs of Quebec. Born in Ireland, he arrived in Canada in 1825 and eventually settled in Montreal where he became a major figure in the Montreal art scene and the city is featured in many of his topographical views. He also worked in oil and watercolour and paid particular attention to architectural detail. Among his other activities, he supplied illustrations for the *Illustrated London News* and the *Canadian Illustrated News* and taught drawing in several schools and academies.⁴³

Cornelius Krieghoff (1815–1872) also commissioned New York City lithographic firms to reproduce his paintings. He was born in Amsterdam of a German father and Belgian mother. The family later moved to Düsseldorf and then to Bavaria. He apparently studied painting in Germany before leaving for New York in 1836. He served in the United States Army during the Seminole War, possibly as an artist. During the next decade he married a French Canadian woman, studied painting in Paris, and in about 1847, he returned to Canada where he set up his home in Montreal. Indians became his favourite subject matter and he had the foresight to begin a series that was reproduced as lithographs in New York, Munich, and London. George and William Endicott reproduced *Indians and Squaws of Lower Canada, Montreal*, in 1848. Charles G. Crehen, who had recently arrived from Paris, drew the image on stone; the print was published and sold by John McCoy in Montreal and was advertised by John McCory on 15 July 1848 in the *Montreal Gazette*.⁴⁴ R. & C. Chalmers in Montreal issued eighteen lithographs after Krieghoff's paintings beginning in October 1848 with a series titled *Scenes in Canada*. Included were two lithographs printed in New York by Sarony & Major, *Ice Cutting* and *Sugar Making in Canada*. The same firm may have printed two other plates – *Hunter, Two Squaws and Papoose* and *Indian Portaging a Canoe*. A final print lithographed by Sarony & Major after Krieghoff is a handsome architectural view of the *French Church, Place d'Armes, Montreal* prior to 1857.⁴⁵ Although they were printed in New York, these prints probably did not circulate there.



12 | John W. Hill, *View of Saint John, N.B.*, 1851, 1851, hand-coloured lithograph, 72.5 × 98.3 cm (New York: Francis Smith & Co., 1851), I.N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. (Courtesy: New York Public Library)

City views published in the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s are the most impressive of the prints produced by Americans for a Canadian audience. Fortunately, John Reps included Canadian views in his *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America*. Many prints of Canadian subjects that Reps located for his magnificent catalogue exist in just one or two impressions in local Canadian repositories such as town libraries or local historical societies. Given the rarity



of so many of them, I believe that we can conclude that the audience for these prints was Canadian. The creators of these views merit further discussion.

George N. Smith (1789–1854) was responsible for just one city view, that of Saint John, New Brunswick, printed by John H. Bufford in Boston about 1848. The view is taken from across the bay in Carleton. Smith was also responsible for an architectural print, *View of Province Hall and Public Offices, Fredericton, New Brunswick*, printed by Ephraim Bouvé in Boston about 1850.⁴⁶ Smith was born in England, where he studied watercolour painting as a child, and edited a newspaper in Saint Andrews, New Brunswick, before opening an art school in Saint John.⁴⁷

John William Hill (1812–1897) was an artist known for his many views of the United States and several of his Canadian views were included in Reps

catalogue. The son of John Hill (1770–1850), the well-known aquatint artist, John W. Hill worked for the New York State Geological Survey and then in 1850 became associated with the Smith Brothers of New York in their business producing views of American cities. His *View of Saint John* (Fig. 12) appeared in 1851, lithographed by Sarony & Major and published by Francis Smith & Company of New York. This print must have had some circulation in New York because Reps notes that two of its three known locations are New York institutions. The print was dedicated, however, to the citizens of Saint John and the vicinity. The text also notes the important lumber and ship building trades and predicts that the city will become one the most “flourishing and populous cities in America.” Hill also drew *Halifax, N.S. Dedicated by Permission to His Excellency Sir Gaspard Le Marchant*, lithographed by Endicott & Company for the Smith Brothers in 1855.

Augustus Kollner (1812–1906) was a prolific topographic artist working in the United States and many of his views were published in Paris and New York by Goupil, Vibert and Company. Reps included four of Kollner’s views of Canada in his catalogue, but they are just a small part of Kollner’s ambitious series of American and Canadian views, which included many landscapes.⁴⁸ *Canada. Quebec and Fort* of 1851 is typical of his work in that it is a panoramic landscape view rather than a city view since the skyline of the city is barely visible.

Edwin Whitefield, probably the best known of the urban view makers, was responsible for eleven views drawn in Ontario and Quebec between 1852 and 1855, while he was a resident of Canada. Two prospects of Ottawa are typical of his work; they were published in Ottawa by Whitefield in 1855 and printed by Endicott & Company in New York, a firm that issued city views as part of their general commercial business. These prints are large, measuring 61 by 91 cm. The draftsmanship is elegant, but one could conclude that Whitefield sought an artistic image rather than one that is slavish to detail.⁴⁹ His Canadian views were part of a series, *Whitefield’s Original Views of North American Cities*, begun in 1845 and concluded in 1857. Bettina Norton’s monograph on Whitefield provides detailed information on all of the prints as well as his life. As his preparatory sketches of Quebec City and Ottawa demonstrate, he was very attentive to capturing minute details of the built environment, although they are lost in the final lithograph.⁵⁰

Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler (1842–1922) was the most prolific of all of the Americans who made city views. Reps noted that he had a role as artist or publisher of more than four hundred views. The eight views included in Reps’s catalogue are of Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and Ontario and they were produced between 1878 and 1881. Typical is *Winnipeg, Manitoba. Incorporated*



13 | Edwin Whitefield, *Ottawa City, Canada West. (Late Bytown). View of the Uppertown, looking up the Ottawa River, from Government Hill*, 1855, lithograph, 57.8 × 91.8 cm (Ottawa: Edwin Whitefield, 1855). (Courtesy: American Antiquarian Society)

in 1873. 1880 published by J.J. Stoner in Madison, Wisconsin, and printed by Beck & Pauli in Milwaukee. Winnipeg was established in 1821 and the print notes that the population was 3,700 when it was incorporated as a city in 1873. River traffic was obviously important to the early development of the city, but its real growth occurred after it was connected by rail to St. Paul in 1878 and after the Canadian Pacific arrived in 1881.⁵¹ Fowler's other views in Reps's catalogue include Emerson and Morris in Manitoba, Windsor in Ontario, and Annapolis Royal, Digby, and Windsor in Nova Scotia.

Herman Brosius (1851–1917) was responsible for more than fifteen Canadian views; they are all of sites in Ontario, suggesting that he travelled extensively in the province during the early 1870s. Typical is his *Ontario, Canada*. 1875 published in Madison, Wisconsin, by J.J. Stoner, and printed in Chicago by Charles Shober & Company. His views were often made from a very high viewpoint, displaying the street pattern almost as if it were a map. Reps notes that Brosius's views accurately reflected details such as those in the architecture of buildings.⁵²

Albert Ruger (1828–1899) produced seven views of towns in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland in 1878 and 1879. During those

years and the preceding year, he also produced views of nearby Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont; he was active for a total of twenty-five years. His *Panoramic View of St. John's, Newfoundland*, published in 1879, is impressive and clearly shows that trade was an important part of the city's existence in the late nineteenth century. Ruger's views lack the artistic qualities of Whitefield's, but they provide a painstaking representation of the city's buildings, wharfs, and setting.

On the western coast of the continent, Eli Sheldon Glover (1844–1920) depicted the city of Victoria, British Columbia's capital. A.L. Bancroft and Company of San Francisco printed *Bird's-Eye View of Victoria, Vancouver Island, B.C. 1878* for the publisher M.M. Wiatt in Victoria in 1878. Glover worked in the Midwest and the West from 1868 until 1912, producing more than sixty views. He and his family settled in Portland, Oregon, in the fall of 1877, and he used that city as a base from which to draw views of Seattle, Port Townsend, Tacoma, Olympia, and Victoria. The life of a view maker was one of frequent moves. Glover and his family moved back to Michigan in 1879.⁵³ Bancroft printed many of his views as well as a large number of California views by other artists.

The movement of artists and their prints back and forth across the border of the United States and Canada was an interesting publishing phenomenon. Even after Confederation in 1867, American artists and publishers continued to supply city views for a Canadian audience. Jim Burant observed, "Canadian printmaking has both benefited from and suffered by its proximity to its southern neighbour, the United States. While Canadian efforts suffered from commercial competition and the loss of trained and experienced engravers and lithographers as well as artists, . . . the development of both commercial and fine-art printmaking was also accelerated by American training, technology, and experience."⁵⁴ American lithographers, engravers, print publishers, and view makers also benefited from the expanded audience for their images in the nineteenth century. This business of providing images for audiences on both sides of the border contributed to a more informed and greater appreciation of Canada's history, landscape, and urban centres in both the United States and Canada.⁵⁵

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- 1 Mary ALLODI provides a thorough account of the early print publishing efforts in *Printmaking in Canada: The Earliest Views and Portraits* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1980).
- 2 A. Hyatt MAYOR, *Popular Prints of The Americas* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1973), 5.
- 3 Rosemarie Tovell provided me with this information.
- 4 Mary ALLODI and Rosemarie TOVELL, *An Engraver's Pilgrimage: James Smillie in Quebec, 1821–1830* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1989), xiii.
- 5 Jim BURANT, “The Growth and Protection of a Cultural Industry: The Graphic Arts in Canada, 1850–1914,” *Imprint* 24, no. 2 (Autumn 1999): 25–37.
- 6 Sinclair HITCHINGS, “Thomas Johnston,” in *Boston Prints and Printmakers, 1670–1775* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1973), 110.
- 7 Andrew OLIVER, “Peter Pelham (ca. 1697–1751), Sometime Printmaker of Boston,” in *Boston Prints and Printmakers*, 155.
- 8 Stefanie WINKELBAUER and Peter PARKER, “Embellishments for Practical Repositories: Eighteenth-Century American Magazine Illustration,” in *Eighteenth-Century Prints in Colonial America To Educate and Decorate*, ed. Joan D. Dolmetsch (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1979), 71.
- 9 *The Port Folio* 4 (August 1814): 198–99. About thirty prints and book and periodical illustrations of Canadian subjects are described in the American Antiquarian Society online Catalogue of American Engravings through 1821. Accessed 6 Sept. 2011, <http://catalog.mwa.org:7108/>.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 68.
- 11 Wendy SHADWELL, “St. Lawrence County, 1838, As Seen through the Eyes of Salathiel Ellis,” in *Prints and Printmakers of New York State, 1825–1940*, ed. David Tatham (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 80.
- 12 Information on the prisoners is taken from the Parks Canada website devoted to the Battle of the Windmill National Historic Site of Canada. Accessed 6 Sept. 2011, <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/on/windmill/natcul/natcul.aspx>.
- 13 *The Port Folio* 2 (September 1809): 265.
- 14 *The Port Folio*, third series, 2 (July 1813): 83.
- 15 Joseph SANSOM, *Sketches of Lower Canada* (New York: Kirk & Mercein, 1817), 5.
- 16 ALLODI and TOVELL, *An Engraver's Pilgrimage*, 64. For a full description of Leney's life and work, see Donald C. O'BRIEN, “William Satchwell Leney, Artist, Engraver, and Entrepreneur,” *Imprint* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 2–13 and ALLODI, *Printmaking in Canada*, 64–77.
- 17 Benjamin SILLIMAN, *Remarks Made on a Short Tour Between Hartford and Quebec* (New Haven, CT: S. Converse, 1820), 3.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 4.

- 19 Ibid., 234.
- 20 *The Atlantic Souvenir; A Christmas and New Year's Offering for 1826* (Philadelphia, PA: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, ca. 1825), 133.
- 21 The American Antiquarian Society has views of Halifax, Kingston, Ottawa City, and Hamilton on one sheet. Each view is based on one of Bartlett's.
- 22 *The Rose of Canada* is not dated.
- 23 Such views include Currier & Ives's *The Bay of Annapolis, Indian Town, Lily Lake, A Clearing* (copied from Bartlett's *Davis Clearing*, and *On the St. Lawrence*). A complete study of the circulation of Bartlett's views would be welcome.
- 24 James Smillie (1807–1885) moved south from Quebec to New York in 1830 to find work; William Satchwell Leney (1769–1831) retired to Montreal in 1820 where he occasionally worked as an engraver. Herman Bencke, of Fuller and Bencke in Toronto, was the lithographer of Paul Kane's print *The Death of Omoxesisixany or Big Snake*. Bencke continued his career in New York from the 1860s. See Mary ALLODI, Jim BURANT, Rosemarie TOVELL, *The Stone Age, Canadian Lithography from its Beginnings* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2000).
- 25 ALLODI and TOVELL, *An Engraver's Pilgrimage*, 119.
- 26 This was the address for the lithography business of George Endicott from 1834 to 1839.
- 27 ALLODI and TOVELL, *An Engraver's Pilgrimage*, 85.
- 28 George BOURNE, *The Picture of Quebec* (New York: Bourne, 1830), 7.
- 29 J. Russell HARPER, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 140–41.
- 30 Ibid., 201.
- 31 Ibid., 166; Sally PIERCE and Catharina SLAUTTERBACK, *Boston Lithography, 1825–1880* (Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1991), 175. Also see: Paul A. HACHEY, *The New Brunswick Landscape Print, 1760–1880* (Fredericton, NB: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1980). Hachey attributes several lithographs to William Henry Hunt who was a well-known British watercolourist. I believe that William Hunt, M.D., and William Henry Hunt (1790–1864) are different men.
- 32 J. Russell HARPER, *Painting in Canada: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 88; HARPER, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada*, 100; BURANT, "Growth and Protection," 26. A full biographical sketch can be found in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*. Accessed 6 Sept, 2011, www.biographi.ca.
- 33 Alexandra E. CARTER's article on Eagar in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* is very helpful. Accessed 6 Sept. 2011, http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=3370
- 34 Benjamin CHAMPNEY, *Sixty Years' Memories of Art and Artists* (Woburn, MA: 1900), 14–16.
- 35 PIERCE and SLAUTTERBACK, *Boston Lithography*, 178. Oddly, *West Bay* was not used in the 1836 publication, but appeared in a later book by Abraham GESNER, *The Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, NS: A. & W. MacKinlay, 1849), long after the lithographers were out of business.
- 36 W.S. HUNTER JR, *Hunter's Ottawa Scenery, in the vicinity of Ottawa City, Canada* (Ottawa City, Canada West, 1855), preface, 1.
- 37 Copies of both editions of *Hunter's Ottawa Scenery* are at the American Antiquarian Society.

- 38 The lithograph is in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society. David TATHAM, *Winslow Homer and the Illustrated Book* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 22–24.
- 39 Ibid., 23–24.
- 40 William S. HUNTER, *Hunter's Panoramic Guide from Niagara to Quebec* (Boston: J.P. Jewett & Company, 1857), preface.
- 41 Charles W. JEFFERYS, *A Catalogue of the Sigmund Samuel Collection of Canadiana and Americana* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1948), 102.
- 42 ALLODI and TOVELL, *An Engraver's Pilgrimage*, 190 and ALLODI, *Printmaking in Canada*, 64–65. The four engravings are reproduced and described on pages 191–99 of *An Engraver's Pilgrimage*. Murray had emigrated from Ireland about 1836 and prepared a sketch of the 1845 fire that ravaged Quebec, which was lithographed by George Endicott in New York and published by Bourne in Montreal. He also was an architect and this is evident in his views.
- 43 HARPER, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada*, 97.
- 44 HARPER, *Painting in Canada*, 97–99. The print is reproduced in *Exhibition of Prints in Honour of C. Krieghoff, 1815–1872* (Montreal: McCord Museum, 1972), plate 6.
- 45 *Exhibition of Prints in Honour of C. Krieghoff*, plates 7–10, plate 11.
- 46 Reproduced in *The New Brunswick Landscape Print*, plate 85.
- 47 HARPER, *Painting in Canada*, 88.
- 48 John REPS, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 186–87.
- 49 Ibid., 215–16.
- 50 Bettina A. NORTON, *Edwin Whitefield: Nineteenth-Century North American Scenery* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishing, 1977). The views of Quebec City and Ottawa may be viewed on the web site of the Library and Archives of Canada. Accessed 6 Sept. 2011, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/index-e.html.
- 51 John REPS, *Bird's Eye Views. Historic Lithographs of North American Cities* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 91.
- 52 REPS, *Views and Viewmakers*, 165–66.
- 53 Ibid., 178–80.
- 54 BURANT, “Growth and Protection,” 36.
- 55 Alexandra E. Carter suggests that Canadians also benefited from seeing images of their cities and towns and that contemporary viewers saw such prints as “an expression of patriotism.” Accessed 6 Sept. 2011, http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=3370

Regards sur le nord: vues du Canada publiées aux États-Unis

GEORGIA B. BARNHILL

Les États-Unis et le Canada partagent une même histoire et une même frontière depuis plusieurs générations. Même lorsque les deux nations étaient des colonies britanniques, des graveurs de la colonie du Massachusetts ont commencé à produire des vues de villes et de sites historiques canadiens. Les deux nations ont aujourd'hui beaucoup de choses en commun et partagent une langue commune, des systèmes d'éducation similaires, un réseau d'équipes sportives professionnelles et des intérêts communs pour l'environnement qui transcendent les frontières politiques. Il n'est pas rare que des familles de Nouvelle-Angleterre aient de la parenté au Canada ; les déplacements d'un côté à l'autre de la frontière ont toujours été aisés et il en était apparemment ainsi pour les artistes au XIX^e siècle.

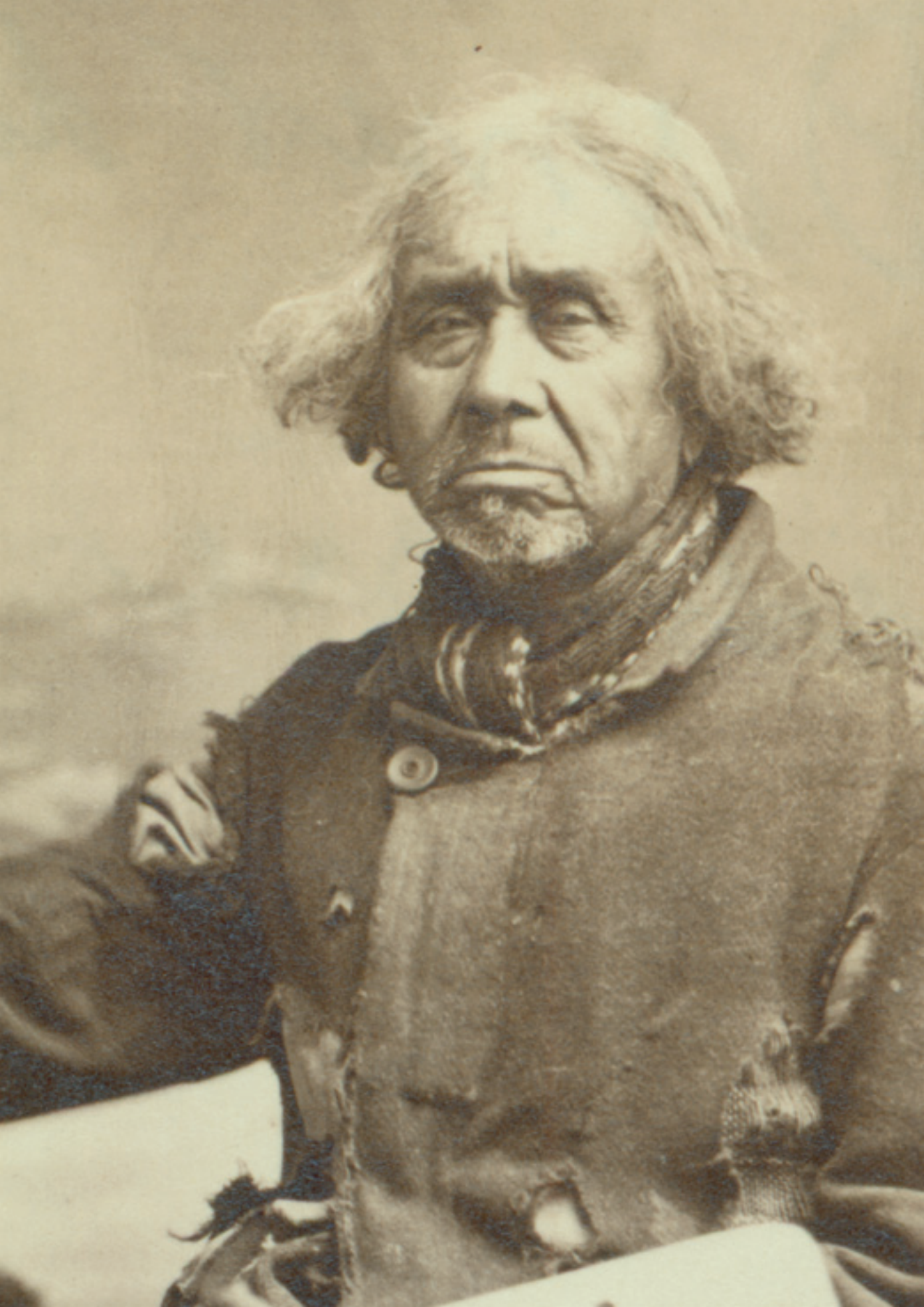
Après la Révolution américaine, les intérêts historiques, esthétiques et commerciaux ont produit un nombre important de vues gravées du Canada fabriquées aux États-Unis. Il y avait, de toute évidence, une clientèle pour ces vues aux États-Unis. Les allusions historiques et des paysages attirants ont inspiré plusieurs des vues, à commencer par des illustrations gravées des périodiques après 1790. Des vues de Québec, d'York et de Queenstown durant la guerre de 1812, par exemple, ont permis aux citoyens des États-Unis de découvrir les lieux où se faisait l'histoire. Les vues dramatiques du fleuve Saint-Laurent et des chutes Montmorency ont aussi inspiré plusieurs gravures dans les années 1810. En 1820, le tourisme axé sur le paysage s'était implanté et l'artiste amateur Daniel Wadsworth (1771–1848), voyageant avec Benjamin Silliman, professeur de chimie et d'histoire naturelle à Yale, a visité le Canada et trois des gravures qui ornent le livre qui en est résulté représentent des sites canadiens.

L'introduction aux États-Unis de la lithogravure venue d'Europe a permis aux graveurs de produire des vues relativement bon marché sur des sujets d'actualité, telles *View of the Great Conflagration that took place on the Night of Saturday, 14th of January 1837* et *Battle of Windmill Point* en 1838. En l'absence de presses lithographiques au Canada, plusieurs artistes, comme Mary G. Hall (1835–?), lady Mary Heaviside Love (1806–1894), Mlle A.D. Stevenson, William Hunt (fl. 1834–1838), William Eagar (vers 1796–1839), William S. Hunter (1823–

1894) et Cornelius Krieghoff (1815–1872) se tournèrent vers des imprimeurs de lithographies à Boston et New York pour des reproductions de leurs dessins et peintures. D'autres firent faire des reproductions en Angleterre.

Simultanément, on vit apparaître un engouement pour des vues panoramiques urbaines comme celles d'Edwin Whitefield (1826–1898) et d'Augustus Kollner (1813–1900). D'autres lithographes ont copié les œuvres de William Henry Bartlett (1809–1854) publiées dans *Canadian Scenery*. Même après la Confédération, en 1867, il n'y avait pas encore d'industrie active des arts graphiques au Canada. Les imprimeurs-graveurs américains fournissaient des vues urbaines aux Canadiens. De toute évidence, la faible population et la présence d'imprimeurs-graveurs à Londres et aux États-Unis, prêts à répondre aux besoins des consommateurs canadiens, ont affecté l'offre et la demande pour des images gravées localement. Le commerce d'images pour une clientèle des deux côtés de la frontière a contribué à former un public mieux informé et plus élogieux au sud de la frontière. Les superbes vues des villes canadiennes auront aussi sans doute renforcé le patriotisme des citoyens canadiens.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette



Les autoreprésentations de l'artiste huron-wendat Zacharie Vincent (1815–1886) : icônes d'une gloire politique et spirituelle

LOUISE VIGNEAULT ET ISABELLE MASSE

« *L'état d'urgence est toujours aussi un état d'émergence* ».

– Homi K. Bhabha, *Les lieux de la culture*, ca. 1994.

En 1838, Antoine Plamondon réalise *Le Dernier des Hurons*, un portrait du chef Zacharie Vincent (1815–1886) reconnu, à l'époque, comme l'ultime représentant de « race pure » de la Nation huronne-wendat. Dans un article consacré à l'œuvre, François-Marc Gagnon a suggéré qu'elle constituait alors une allusion indirecte aux enjeux de survivance de la communauté francophone soumise à la domination britannique¹. Dans ce contexte, Vincent devenait le modèle tout désigné pour incarner la perte d'autonomie politique et la fragilisation des cultures minoritaires. Quelques années plus tard, celui-ci entame, en guise de réplique, une série d'autoportraits. En s'appropriant le dispositif occidental de la peinture illusionniste et en engageant un rapport dialogique avec les œuvres à thématique autochtone réalisées notamment par Antoine Plamondon (ca. 1804–1895), Cornelius Krieghoff (1815–1872), Théophile (1817–1870) et Eugène Hamel (1845–1932), l'artiste huron trouvera un moyen efficace de se réappropriier le contrôle de son image. Cette manœuvre lui permettra du même coup de réviser le discours alarmiste associé au sort de la communauté huronne de Lorette et de traduire la manière dont cette dernière a réussi à articuler son héritage et sa réalité contemporaine.

D'emblée, les autoportraits de Vincent ouvrent sur la nécessité d'interroger le processus de redéfinition de l'identité du sujet autochtone face à la présence étrangère. Nés du choc des cultures, mais aussi d'une dynamique d'échanges et de négociation, ils tendent à refléter et à symboliser à la fois la condition de l'artiste, à conjuguer la projection de ses propres désirs et l'histoire politique de sa communauté. Derrière les poses, les parures et les regards, se profile un jeu d'identification à des modèles exemplaires. Cette tactique mimétique,

Détail, photographie de Vincent au chevalet, par Louis-Prudent Vallée, vers 1875, Collections spéciales et livres rares, Université de Montréal. Collection Baby – Photographie / P00581FP06718 ; Division de la gestion de documents et des archives (1FP.06718). (Photo : Université de Montréal)

que Homi K. Bhabha décrit comme « une forme de pouvoir exercée aux limites mêmes de l'identité et de l'autorité, dans l'esprit moqueur du masque et de l'image », a pour effet de bouleverser les frontières entre les identités autochtones et allochtones, de conforter et de menacer à la fois la majorité blanche². Pour Vincent, cette ambivalence engendre, en fait, le ferment d'une expression créatrice et critique susceptible de transcender les tensions internes que vit sa communauté entre les nécessités de transmettre et de renouveler. Par un travail performatif de relecture de la contemporanéité huronne, le peintre a mis en place des espaces d'entre-deux, à la frontière de réalités proscrites, inédites ou syncrétiques, espaces qui ont eu comme effet de contourner les dynamiques binaires de pouvoir et de produire un possible. Étant donné qu'au XIX^e siècle la notion de métissage n'était pas encore en vigueur et que les Hurons en général ne se considéraient pas comme des Métis ou des sujets assimilés³, malgré leur adaptation à la majorité, cette catégorie évoquait plutôt une entité en processus de transformation, de transition ou d'incorporation d'une réalité étrangère⁴. En récupérant à son profit l'identité du « peintre de chevalet », véritable archétype de l'artiste européen, Vincent a d'abord assuré la diffusion d'une image actualisée du sujet huron, avec toutes les contradictions qu'elle renferme. Un bref rappel des événements qui ont marqué l'histoire de la communauté de Lorette permettra d'éclairer cette initiative.

De la pureté ethnique à la régénérescence

Au cours du XIX^e siècle, la population de Lorette, dont les ancêtres ont été exilés des Grands Lacs, au XVII^e siècle, à la suite d'une série d'épidémies et de conflits avec les Iroquois, compte tout au plus 300 habitants. Elle subit, en outre, l'envahissement progressif des Canadiens dans son tissu social et sur son territoire⁵. Jusqu'à cette date, les Hurons envisageaient de partager le territoire avec les autres peuples, en vertu d'une fidélité réciproque. Après la Conquête, ils entretiennent un partenariat avec la couronne britannique à laquelle ils souhaitent demeurer fidèles, en échange de la protection de leurs intérêts. Afin de récupérer les terres de la Seigneurie de Sillery dont ils s'estiment propriétaires en vertu d'un traité du XVII^e siècle, ils adressent aux gouverneurs canadiens une série de pétitions qui demeurent vaines et les contraignent à s'adresser directement aux instances britanniques. En 1825, le grand chef Nicolas Vincent, grand-oncle de Zacharie, rencontre à Londres le roi Georges IV afin de lui demander de trancher pour les injustices territoriales dont les siens ont été victimes. Confrontée à l'échec de cette ultime requête, la communauté huronne doit désormais faire appel à d'autres stratégies pour assurer sa survie, notamment la protection de

son identité culturelle et ethnique. Dans ce contexte, « le dernier Huron » Zacharie Vincent revêt un statut de symbole exemplaire, et ce, malgré le fait que pour les communautés autochtones, l'identité ne se transmet pas par un lien de sang, mais par une filiation culturelle. C'est ainsi que les pratiques d'échange et d'exogamie, qui avaient témoigné de la capacité d'adaptation et de rayonnement des Hurons, ont fini par provoquer leur déclin. Cet état de fait les motive à développer une nouvelle tactique de survivance : celle de sa « régénération » qui se concrétise, sur le plan culturel, par un renforcement des liens de filiation transmis par la langue et les traditions et, sur le plan économique, par un essor de l'industrie artisanale menant à une autonomie financière de la communauté. Cet essor provoquera toutefois sa soumission aux lois de l'offre et de la demande ainsi qu'un clivage social. Réagissant contre ces ambitions entrepreneuriales, Zacharie Vincent opte plutôt pour un mode de vie simple et une revitalisation par la continuité filiale, laquelle s'exprime notamment par la présence de son fils aîné dans ses premiers autoportraits.

Les autoportraits de Vincent avec son fils : écho de l'iconographie religieuse

En 1845, à l'âge de 30 ans, Vincent est élu chef des guerriers. Il deviendra également dépisteur de la garnison britannique et guide de chasse pour les militaires en permission et les visiteurs de marque. En 1852, il est promu chef du Conseil⁶, l'année même où il réalise ses premiers autoportraits avec son fils (Fig. 1)⁷. Ces œuvres lui permettent alors de souligner sa continuité filiale et de répliquer aux prédictions de disparition de la Huronie. Si le motif du parent avec son enfant est exploité à l'époque dans les portraits bourgeois, chez Plamondon et Théophile Hamel, une autre piste iconographique mérite d'être explorée : celle de l'icône de la Vierge ou de saint Joseph avec l'Enfant Jésus. Par les qualités de présence et d'omnivoyance qui lui sont attribuées, l'imagerie religieuse aurait servi, à notre avis, non pas de simple motif référentiel, mais de dispositif de communication et de concrétisation des ambitions et des craintes de la communauté huronne, de miroir en somme de sa condition⁸. Bien qu'il soit aléatoire d'identifier les images religieuses avec lesquelles Vincent aurait été mis en contact, compte tenu de leur diversité et de leur diffusion massive, certaines icônes demeurent incontestablement présentes dans la communauté, notamment celle de la Vierge à l'Enfant dédiée à la chapelle Notre-Dame de la Jeune-Lorette, premier sanctuaire de la population huronne construit après son exil dans la région de Québec.

C'est en 1650, à la suite du démantèlement de la Nation huronne causé par les maladies infectieuses et les offensives iroquoises, que ses survivants s'exilent vers la région de Québec afin de bénéficier de la protection



1 | Zacharie Vincent, *Zacharie Vincent et son fils Cyprien*, vers 1852, non signé, huile sur toile, 48,4 × 41,4 cm, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo : Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec)

française⁹. Ils s'installent alors sur l'île d'Orléans (1651–56), jusqu'à ce qu'un raid iroquois les force à un retour à Québec (1656–66). De nouveau déportés en 1666 à Beauport, ils s'ancrent à Notre-Dame-de-Foy jusqu'en 1673, puis à la première mission de Lorette (qui deviendra l'Ancienne-Lorette) jusqu'en 1692, avant de s'enraciner définitivement à la Jeune-Lorette, appelée également le « Village des Hurons », aujourd'hui Wendake¹⁰. En 1674, le père jésuite Pierre-Marie-Joseph Chaumonot fait ériger à la mission une chapelle qui se veut une réplique de la Sainte Maison de Nazareth. La *Santa Casa*, lieu présumé de naissance de la Vierge et de l'Annonciation, aurait été transportée, au XIII^e siècle, à Loreto en Italie, pour devenir, à partir du XVI^e siècle, le site de guérisons miraculeuses¹¹. La mission huronne, tout comme l'érection d'un sanctuaire reproduisant la Sainte Maison, offre alors à Chaumonot l'occasion de perpétuer, au-delà des limites de la chrétienté, les fondements de la doctrine chrétienne, le mystère de l'Incarnation que véhiculent la Vierge/Notre-Dame et l'Enfant-Dieu. En tant que figure rassembleuse et protectrice, la Vierge assurait un dialogue avec les communautés sises en terre américaine¹², moyennant une dynamique d'intercession et de négociation, de grâces accordées en échange de sacrifices, notamment par l'intermédiaire d'images. Chaumonot raconte, à ce titre, une série de miracles imputés à son intervention, comme celui d'une Française qui désespérait d'enfanter après huit jours de travail : « Après l'avoir confessée, je lui conseillai de faire un vœu à Notre-Dame-de-Foy, et d'en mettre sur elle l'image que je lui prêtai : ce qu'elle n'eut pas plus tôt fait qu'elle fut mère heureusement d'un garçon [...] »¹³. Il en est de même pour le projet de construire la chapelle de Lorette au Canada à l'image de la *Santa Casa* italienne, initiative qui permettait d'en perpétuer l'efficacité liturgique et de célébrer le mystère de l'Incarnation, comme l'explique le père Bouvart en 1675 :

De même que nos jours de fête sont institués pour renouveler intérieurement en nos âmes les mystères qu'ils représentent, ainsi notre chapelle a la vertu de nous appliquer intérieurement les grâces qu'elle représente en représentant le lieu, les personnes et les actions qui les ont méritées. Dieu veuille que Marie ayant donné dans son sein, une vie humaine à Jésus dans l'ancienne Lorette (d'Italie), elle lui donne dans la nouvelle une naissance spirituelle dans le cœur de tous les Français, et de tous les Sauvages de l'Amérique¹⁴ !

Ainsi, le renouveau spirituel que représente la Vierge, tout comme le secours et la protection qu'elle voue aux croyants, s'incarne dans la chapelle érigée en 1674, mais également dans les statues de Marie et de Joseph avec l'Enfant Jésus¹⁵. Représentée sous les traits de la Reine des Cieux parée d'une

couronne et d'une robe de brocart, la Madone de Lorette est une réplique de celle du sanctuaire italien. La statue reçue d'Italie sera toutefois remplacée par une figure de la Vierge à l'Enfant sculptée par François Baillargé (1759–1830) et revêtue d'une robe brodée offerte par les religieuses de l'Hôpital de Québec¹⁶. Calquée sur ce modèle, la Vierge à l'Enfant de la chapelle de la Jeune-Lorette sera couronnée d'un triangle de bois peint imitant la forme de la robe¹⁷. Ces images décrivent ainsi le processus spirituel du croyant : elles sont à la fois le miroir et le moteur de changement des conditions, suivant le rapport d'influence de la figure religieuse sur la population. Selon ce principe, il n'est pas surprenant que certaines communautés autochtones dites « converties », soumises aux menaces d'extinction ou de dispersion, aient tenu à perpétuer le culte chrétien (moyennant certains transferts rituels), lequel serait devenu, par-delà les décennies, un des agents de survivance et de régénération sociale.

Dans son ouvrage consacré à l'usage des images pieuses dans le contexte missionnaire, François-Marc Gagnon a fourni des indices sur le type de relation que la communauté huronne aurait entretenue avec la culture visuelle¹⁸. Partant du constat que la communication orale s'avère moins équivoque que les images, qui ouvrent à de multiples interprétations, les religieux, redoutant les méprises, ont d'abord misé sur la parole évangélique qu'ils ont tenté de traduire en langues autochtones. Leur crainte était d'ailleurs justifiée par le fait que les composantes des images étaient déchiffrées par les Autochtones à partir de leurs propres schèmes culturels et conceptualisations mythologiques. Dans cette optique, la colombe du Saint-Esprit était associée à l'Oiseau-Tonnerre et les figures des saints, aux divinités totémiques¹⁹. Le récollet Gabriel Sagard rapporte néanmoins que les Hurons manipulent les livres illustrés des heures durant, un attrait motivé par une réaction animiste, la croyance que les images sont dotées de vie et de pouvoir, en vertu d'une interdépendance et interdétermination entre les êtres et les phénomènes :

En vérité les images devotes profitent grandement en ces pays-là, ils les regardent avec admiration, les considerent avec attention, & comprennent facilement ce qu'on leur enseigne par les moyens d'icelles. Il y en a memes de si simples qu'ils ont cru que ces images estoient vivantes, les apprehendoient, & nous prioient de leur parler [. . .]²⁰.

Les jésuites remarquent, pour leur part, que les Autochtones attribuent aux images tantôt un pouvoir négatif, tantôt un pouvoir positif, notamment curatif, en vertu du principe de restitution d'un ordre. Un sorcier avoue, par exemple, que le songe d'une image pieuse lui donne la santé, alors qu'un autre l'associe au déclenchement d'une épidémie. En somme, le statut de

l'image se restreint à celui de présence et son contenu ne sera considéré que postérieurement²¹. Les religieux commanderont pourtant aux artistes européens des images adaptées au contexte autochtone. Les prescriptions visent notamment à captiver les regards et à éviter les réactions de rejet, comme le port de la barbe, proscrit chez les Autochtones. Le jésuite Charles Garnier réclame également que les personnages ne soient pas représentés de profil, mais de face, et qu'ils aient les yeux ouverts afin de renforcer l'impression d'omnivoyance, l'illusion que le personnage s'adresse au spectateur : « ces Images leur plaisent qui regardent tous ceux qui les regardent²² ». C'est ainsi que le dispositif de l'image religieuse a joué le double rôle d'instance silencieuse et de réflecteur des désirs de la population, et que cet espace liminal, qui sépare le matériel et l'éternel, a contribué à transformer la condition de cette dernière. À la lumière de ces données, peut-on penser que certains aspects de cette tradition visuelle de communication et de concession aient été reconduits dans les autoreprésentations de Zacharie Vincent ?

Les premiers autoportraits réalisés par l'artiste huron, vers 1852, le présentent aux côtés de son fils aîné Cyprien qui est âgé de 4 ou 5 ans. Or, cette période coïncide avec le décès récent de son cadet Gabriel, disparu le lendemain de sa naissance (1850), et à la naissance de son troisième fils prénommé Zacharie (1852-1855), lequel décèdera, à son tour, deux ans plus tard. Dans cette circonstance où l'artiste se montre déterminé à prouver que la lignée du dernier Huron n'était pas interrompue, l'œuvre revêt une dimension à la fois revitalisante et désolante. Les registres nous apprennent également qu'à 33 ans, Vincent épouse Marie Falardeau, laquelle est âgée de 24 ans et enceinte de trois mois²³. On peut se demander, par conséquent, si l'autoportrait a pu servir à légitimer la paternité de l'artiste. Ce couple, qui présente un profil hors norme, est d'ailleurs comparable à plusieurs égards à celui de la sainte Famille : une « Marie », jeune épousée d'un compagnon plus âgé et déterminé à assumer les soins du futur né. Ce parallèle aurait-il contribué à redorer la situation filiale « particulière » de Vincent ? Notons, à ce titre, qu'antérieurement, le père Chaumonot a été le cofondateur, à Ville-Marie, de la Confrérie de la Sainte-Famille destinée à encadrer les familles chrétiennes, à resserrer les liens filiaux et à « réformer les conduites négligentes²⁴ ». Bien que l'iconographie religieuse s'écarte, à première vue, du propos profane des autoportraits de Vincent, est-il possible que le motif de la Sainte Famille, demeuré central dans la transmission du culte, lui ait permis d'ennobler ses idéaux de continuité filiale et de résilience culturelle ? Dans l'affirmative, le pouvoir de protection et de négociation spirituelle que revêtaient les images religieuses picturales ou sculptées transmises par les missionnaires aurait du même coup bonifié le rôle que Vincent aurait attribué

à ses autoportraits, à titre de représentant de la « race », après avoir servi de modèle à l'œuvre de Plamondon. Nous verrons, dans les autoportraits plus tardifs, que la communication assurée par le sujet-modèle et la symbolique de ses ornements porteurs de valeurs culturelles, politiques et spirituelles, connaîtront une nouvelle adaptation.

Les autoportraits en chef de guerre : l'iconographie des modèles héroïques

« *In spite of his failings, there was something heroic in Zacharie* ».

– William G. Beers, « The Huron Indian Artist », *The Gazette* (Montréal), 1^{er} fév. 1887.

Au cours de la décennie 1870, Vincent réalise une autre série d'autoportraits dans laquelle il met de l'avant son identité de chef, non pas sous le mode du déclin, comme l'avait représenté Plamondon en 1838, mais sous les traits d'un héros guerrier, vénérable et couronné. En se présentant à la fois comme chef huron et artiste se peignant lui-même, Vincent remet alors à l'honneur la capacité des Hurons à s'adapter et à absorber les éléments de culture de l'Autre. Cette image désormais active de l'Autochtone s'est imposée, à l'époque, à un public large et diversifié, rejoignant même certains dirigeants coloniaux et membres de la monarchie, dont lord Elgin, lord Monk et la princesse Louise²⁵. Les autoportraits de Vincent offrent ainsi une actualisation de l'identité wendat mouvante et métissée, laquelle se traduit notamment à travers les marqueurs vestimentaires et les ornements qui jouent un rôle de médiation symbolique entre la réalité sociale huronne et la présence allochtone. L'intégration d'éléments issus des cultures dominantes complexifie toutefois la dynamique politique, en impliquant une mise en exposition de son pouvoir et une négociation de sa reconnaissance²⁶. De cette manière, si les dignitaires hurons considèrent les instances britanniques comme des alliés et des égaux, l'émulation illustrée de certains vêtements et ornements issus de cette culture participerait à l'entretien symbolique de cette relation.

Les autoportraits de Vincent en chef guerrier forment un corpus relativement homogène d'une douzaine de tableaux répertoriés à ce jour. Parmi eux, celui du Château Ramezay (Fig. 2) servira d'exemple à notre démonstration. Ces œuvres ont en commun de posséder une même composition – une coupe à mi-corps dans un cadrage serré – et de représenter similairement une figure richement parée des attributs soulignant un statut et une fonction. Cette construction s'abreuve à la source d'une iconographie type de chefs de guerre autochtones, modèle iconographique largement diffusé au XIX^e siècle par la gravure, qui prend la forme de portraits dans lesquels le guerrier indien apparaît digne et stoïque, vêtu d'un costume d'apparat militaire. Parmi ces images, les représentations de deux célèbres



2 | Zacharie Vincent, *Zacharie Vincent Telari-o-lin, chef huron et peintre* (1815–1886), vers 1875–78, non signé, huile et mine de plomb sur papier, 92,7 × 70,8 cm, Musée du Château Ramezay : 1998. 1098. (Photo : Musée du Château Ramezay)

chefs, Joseph Brant (1742–1807) et Tecumseh (1768–1813), présentent des analogies saisissantes avec les autoportraits de Vincent. Les similitudes qui émergent présupposent non seulement l'imitation d'une expression plastique, d'une condition sociale ou d'un positionnement politique, mais surtout, la reprise d'un modèle héroïque à caractère tragique : le type exemplaire du chef indien, un combattant des guerres de résistance dont le destin glorieux est invariablement voué à l'échec. L'hypothèse avancée suppose que l'artiste huron se représente symboliquement comme un « héros tragique²⁷ », une figure échafaudée sur des bases tant historiques que légendaires, tant autochtones qu'allochtones et dont la construction syncrétique traduit une pensée idéologique équivoque. La figure héroïque et son imitation par Vincent soulèvent un paradoxe. En effet, en tant que leader de résistance autochtone, le héros type incarné par Brant et Tecumseh est puissant et rebelle. Il engage une action dissidente, un combat moral, qui dénonce l'usurpation des droits territoriaux, l'injustice de la dépossession, l'arbitraire des crimes coloniaux. Or, la valeur de subversion attachée à cette lutte demeure incertaine dans la mesure où la révolte engagée se conclut dans la défaite. La forme oxymorique de la terminologie « héros tragique » cristallise ainsi l'ambiguïté d'une conception réunissant grandeur et infortune. Dans ces conditions, la référence au modèle peut témoigner, pour l'artiste huron, autant d'une quête libératrice que d'un constat d'impuissance. Nous tenterons donc ici de cerner les enjeux que sous-tend l'appropriation de cette imagerie héroïque et, en se fondant sur la notion de mimétisme culturel théorisée par Homi K. Bhabha, nous soupèserons l'ambivalente portée émancipatrice ou assujettissante des autoportraits de l'artiste dans le contexte de colonisation.

Au XIX^e siècle, le modèle du héros tragique, une construction interculturelle issue principalement de la littérature, s'inscrit dans la mouvance d'un engouement chez les Euro-américains pour le thème de l'indianité. La tragédie amérindienne se signale alors en tant que genre littéraire et se présente sous des formes diverses allant du roman historique au récit biographique, en passant par le texte dramatique et le poème épique. Le chef guerrier, comme figure exemplaire au destin funeste, se popularise. Sa bravoure indéniable et son malheur immérité participent du style tragique, au même titre que sa vertu et son stoïcisme²⁸. Une iconographie populaire, sous forme de portraits historiés, fait directement écho aux récits biographiques de cette littérature à caractère épique. L'image rend expressément compte de l'exemplarité du chef indien et de ses accomplissements. Elle souligne la dignité et la gravité du portraituré tandis que les détails du costume témoignent de son rang et de sa fonction. De prime abord, cette héroïsation procède des canons de l'art européen. Envisagé sous ce rapport, le paradoxe de la glorification et de la victimisation, qui à la fois affirme et limite le

pouvoir de l'Autochtone rebelle, serait ainsi strictement relayé par les canaux de la culture impérialiste. Mais tout bien considéré, ces histoires et ces portraits émergent bel et bien à la croisée de deux univers culturels. Partiellement informés par la tradition orale dans laquelle s'inscrit la harangue, ils participent d'un mythe historique formulé d'une double voix, tant autochtone qu'allochtone. Ils érigent par leur grandeur épique les fondations légendaires de tous les nationalismes en présence, et la figure du héros tragique y apparaît, en définitive, comme un modèle issu d'un métissage entre les nations.

L'histoire de Zacharie Vincent suit une trajectoire qui, sans être glorieuse, s'apparente à certains égards à celles des chefs Brant et Tecumseh, deux icônes de cette tradition littéraire. Non seulement les trois hommes se butent tour à tour à un échec ultime, mais ils épousent les mêmes fonctions sociales et allégeances politiques : ils occupent le rang de chef de guerre, exercent un rôle diplomatique et soutiennent les intérêts d'une confédération autochtone en s'alliant politiquement et militairement au camp britannique. Brant, figure légendaire des Six Nations, se bat auprès des Britanniques durant la révolution américaine, puis s'exile au Canada après la défaite, avec un groupe de combattants iroquois. De son côté, Tecumseh entreprend sans succès de former une confédération de nations autochtones, soutient héroïquement les Britanniques dans des expéditions antiaméricanistes, mais est mortellement blessé en 1813 à Moraviantown. Vincent, quant à lui, joue, à titre de chef, un rôle diplomatique au sein de la Fédération des Sept Feux²⁹, adhère à la cause monarchique et renonce au prestige économique pour embrasser un idéal d'ascèse. Ces trois chefs de guerre partagent également un métissage identitaire. En l'occurrence, Brant et Tecumseh se révèlent historiquement de puissants vecteurs d'hybridité culturelle. Respectivement d'origine mohawk et shawnee, ces deux alliés des forces britanniques adoptent maintes pratiques propres à la société euro-américaine. Brant reçoit, par exemple, une éducation à l'anglaise qui lui permet de s'adapter à la culture européenne, voire de frayer élégamment dans un univers mondain³⁰. Le Mohawk considère d'ailleurs l'adaptation aux deux cultures comme la meilleure chance de survie et d'autonomie des Autochtones. Similairement, Tecumseh ajuste ses stratégies politiques et militaires à la conjoncture coloniale afin de résister plus efficacement à l'envahissement territorial que le gouvernement américain fait subir à son peuple. Cette mouvance identitaire trouve une résonance toute particulière chez Vincent, puisque celui-ci se situe, politiquement ou culturellement, à la confluence des repères nationaux hurons, britanniques et mohawks. D'une part, il porte allégeance à la couronne avec une conviction évidente. D'autre part, en dépit de son appartenance huronne, l'univers mohawk participe activement de son identité biologique et culturelle,

ce qui renvoie, dans le cas présent, aux origines iroquoïennes de Joseph Brant. À cet égard, un article de 1895 décrit la mère de Vincent comme une « Huronne-Iroquoise de descendance iroquoise³¹ ». Or, les systèmes sociaux huron et mohawk sont traditionnellement matrilineaires et les liens de filiation s'établissent, par cette tradition, selon l'ascendance maternelle. Dans cette optique, Vincent appartiendrait au clan iroquois. L'univocité de cette appartenance mérite toutefois d'être nuancée, puisque l'empreinte culturelle européenne a lentement fait dévier, pendant le XIX^e siècle, la filiation de la mère vers celle du père. Quoi qu'il en soit, les liens de l'artiste à la Nation iroquoise sont corroborés par d'autres éléments factuels qui sont, sur le plan linguistique, l'appartenance des Hurons à la famille iroquoise et, sur le plan politique, l'alliance qui unit les Nations huronne et iroquoise à travers la Fédération des Sept Feux. Sur le plan personnel, Vincent choisit également, à 64 ans, de quitter Lorette pour vivre parmi les Mohawks de Caughnawaga (Kahnawake)³². Sans surprise, les portraits de Brant, Tecumseh et Vincent portent visuellement l'empreinte du métissage à travers les éléments de costume.

En outre, le lien d'identification que Vincent aurait manifesté à l'égard des deux figures reposerait moins sur leur dimension historique que sur leur réputation de héros mythiques. Plus précisément, l'artiste calque idéologiquement des figures de résistance fantasmatiques nées conjointement de la réalité historique, de la légende littéraire, de la tradition orale et de l'iconographie. Analphabète, l'artiste huron n'est pas en mesure de lire les récits, factuels ou fictifs, qui relatent les combats de ces chefs. En revanche, il ne peut ignorer la transmission orale et l'imagerie populaire qui promeuvent, au même titre que la littérature, les valeurs auxquelles son titre est associé. En particulier, l'héroïsation de ces deux Autochtones est abondamment diffusée, à la fin du XIX^e siècle, par la voie du portrait. Les biographies, mémoires et histoires, qui pullulent à l'époque de toutes parts, arborent le plus souvent un portrait gravé en page frontispice. En l'occurrence, l'iconographie consacrée à Joseph Brant compte une profusion d'œuvres à l'huile, dont certaines de la main d'artistes de renom, ainsi qu'une masse de représentations imprimées et de copies. Un tableau attire particulièrement l'attention, par la fréquence de sa reproduction : celui de George Romney (Fig. 3). De la même façon, les illustrations du chef Tecumseh profitent d'une large diffusion. L'image la plus répandue de ce dernier consiste en une gravure illustrant un portrait composite, issu de la main de deux artistes du début du XIX^e siècle. Elle se base sur un croquis au crayon exécuté d'après nature par le marchand créole Pierre Le Dru, croquis qui sera ultérieurement modifié par un officier britannique anonyme. Le Dru dépeint Tecumseh avec un turban orné d'une plume d'aigle et des ornements au nez, tandis que l'officier ajoute à la tenue



3 | Gravure de John Raphael Smith d'après George Romney, *Joseph Tayadaneega called the Brant, the Great Captain of the Six Nations*, 1779, 50,2 × 35,3 cm, British Museum. (Photo : British Museum, Londres)



4 | Zacharie Vincent, *Tecumseh, Huron*, non daté, non signé, fusain sur papier, 42,5 × 36,1 cm, Musée du Château Ramezay: 1998.549.20. (Photo : Musée du Château Ramezay)

une médaille royale et un manteau rouge à épaulettes militaires. Le portrait sera publié, en 1869, dans l'ouvrage *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812* de Benson John Lossing³³. Les historiennes de l'art Marie-Dominique Labelle et Sylvie Thivierge ont identifié cette image comme ayant servi de référence à un fusain réalisé par Vincent (Fig. 4)³⁴. L'artiste intitule erronément sa

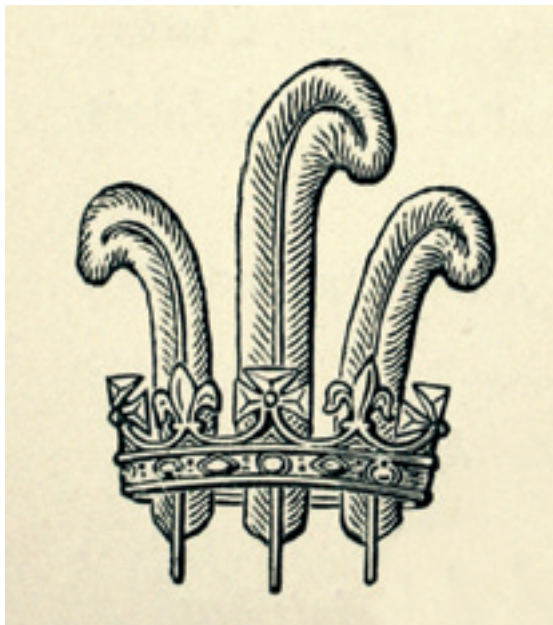
copie *Tecumseh*, *Huron* et modifie l'image source en omettant les ornements nasaux, ce qui rapproche l'identité et l'apparence du modèle de la sienne. En ce sens, l'œuvre témoignerait d'un processus identificatoire à la figure héroïque. Selon Anne-Marie Sioui Blouin, Vincent établirait, au surplus, un parallèle entre la cause et le sort du chef Shawnee et ceux de la communauté huronne de Lorette³⁵. Sur le plan formel, le dessin reprend la pose figée des autoportraits et présente les mêmes problèmes d'échelle. Comparé à la gravure de Lossing, il amplifie la dimension de la tête par rapport au reste du corps et celle des yeux dans l'ensemble du visage. Ces disproportions anatomiques tendent à accentuer la subjectivité et la présence du portraituré, mais aussi, à mettre en évidence la médaille royale qui, arborée sur un petit tronc, assume une importance symbolique proportionnelle à sa taille. Aussi, les éléments référentiels et leur inscription dans cette composition informent-ils une subjectivité mise en évidence, de même qu'un statut social, une fonction militaire et une allégeance politique : ils exposent, somme toute, le sujet et son histoire. En conséquence, en tant que portraits historiés, la caractéristique commune des représentations de Brant et de Tecumseh demeure, en substance, la glorification du modèle, de ses exploits et de sa cause.

Compte tenu de ce qui précède, les similitudes que les autoportraits en chef de guerre entretiennent avec les images de Brant et de Tecumseh ne relèvent, sans doute, ni de la coïncidence, ni du phénomène de mode. Suivant cette hypothèse, les œuvres de Vincent constituent une imitation des modèles autochtones héroïques en circulation au XIX^e siècle. Dans la forme, l'artiste huron copie le langage plastique européen. Dans le contenu, il mime un statut hiérarchique, s'exprimant par l'opulence du vêtement, ainsi qu'un double positionnement politique, s'avérant fédéraliste dans l'univers autochtone et loyaliste dans le monde euro-américain. Si cet acte de mimétisme est porté par une intention émancipatrice certaine, son impact subversif, on l'a vu, demeure ambigu. Vincent use-t-il sciemment d'une stratégie mimétique ou copie-t-il passivement un modèle de résistance ? Endosse-t-il une cause dissidente ou s'allie-t-il avec résignation à l'impérialisme ? De manière générale, l'imitation peut prendre deux formes : elle peut être associée tant à un mouvement d'acculturation qu'à un élan de libération. Dans *Les lieux de la culture*, Homi K. Bhabha définit le mimétisme, dans un sens large, comme l'imitation des attitudes sociales et culturelles du dominant par le dominé³⁶. Si l'acte d'imiter est couramment associé à un comportement menant à l'assimilation et à la négation identitaire du colonisé, selon la théorisation de l'auteur, le concept de mimétisme possède aussi un caractère de subversion. Il constitue, avec celui d'hybridité, l'un des moyens de déstabilisation du pouvoir colonial. Ainsi, il présente deux revers : d'une part, une stratégie de contrôle créée par l'autorité coloniale, et d'autre part, une appropriation culturelle,

libératrice, réalisée par le colonisé. La définition d'un mimétisme subversif pourrait donc s'appliquer aux autoportraits de Zacharie Vincent. En effet, en peignant sa propre image, l'artiste expose le regard qu'il porte sur lui-même, transgresse les frontières identitaires déjà établies et révèle l'artificialité de la logique oppositionnelle entre Soi et l'Autre. Sa glorification narcissique n'est pas soumise à une volonté extérieure : elle est affirmation de soi, affirmation d'une *estime* de soi. En relatant un hommage rendu au peintre, en 1895, un journaliste fait d'ailleurs mention de cette dignité personnelle : « *among [many virtues] was a self-respect that kept him from begging in all his hardships*³⁷ ». Toutefois, même si la stratégie mimétique semble procéder, au premier abord, d'une démarche émancipatrice, les autoportraits en chef de guerre méritent d'être interrogés dans leur forme et dans leur contenu afin de saisir l'impact réel de la démarche artistique. Suivant cette perspective, il convient d'examiner les mimétismes du langage plastique et des positionnements social et politique afin d'évaluer comment ces tactiques s'inscrivent ou non dans un mouvement de résistance.

Dans la création de ses autoportraits, Vincent a recours au médium européen de la peinture à l'huile³⁸ et imite autant la manipulation technique de la matière que l'organisation formelle de l'image picturale académique. Suivant cette démarche, l'acte mimétique et la mimesis de l'image renversent subrepticement le rôle hégémonique d'un mode d'expression artistique qui fait figure d'autorité : le Huron affiche sa subjectivité dans toute sa complexité et, ce faisant, confronte les représentations réductrices qui objectifient l'Autochtone. Selon Bhabha, ce type d'imitation constitue une menace à l'ordre établi, puisqu'il reproduit, partiellement et inadéquatement, le discours en vigueur. Il « contamine » ce discours par une hybridité « indue », européenne et autochtone, qui expose au grand jour l'une de ses failles majeures, à savoir son ambivalence intrinsèque. Cette ambivalence veut que les stratégies normalisatrices instituées par les autorités coloniales maintiennent paradoxalement, pour des raisons de pouvoir, une différence artificielle entre le colonisé et le colonisateur. La révélation de l'ambivalence du discours officiel déstabilise, inévitablement, sa valeur d'instance de légitimation³⁹. Ainsi, le mimétisme du langage pictural offre au colonisé, à Zacharie Vincent, un lieu de résistance qui défie de l'intérieur l'autorité impérialiste.

Une autre manœuvre d'imitation consiste à témoigner, par la tenue vestimentaire et les ornements, de l'affiliation de l'artiste à une élite sociale et politique de haut rang. En effet, le costume arboré par Vincent, en tant que chef guerrier, comporte des affinités notables avec les parures figurant sur les images de héros autochtones. En prenant comme points comparatifs l'autoportrait du Château Ramezay et le portrait de Brant réalisé par Romney,



5 | Armoirie du prince de Galles [*Shield of the Prince of Wales impaling Denmark*] (détail). Tirée de Steven Thomas Aveling (dir.), *Heraldry, Ancient and Modern: Including Boutell's Heraldry*, W.W. Gibbins, Londres, 1892, p. 288. Bibliothèque des livres rares et collections spéciales, Direction des bibliothèques, Université de Montréal.

ces analogies se déclinent comme suit : les deux hommes sont parés d'un couvre-chef de plumes, d'une pipe-tomahawk, d'une ceinture perlée, de brassards métalliques, et enfin, d'une pièce ornementale à la base du cou⁴⁰. À la liste des parures, il convient d'ajouter la médaille du monarque d'Angleterre que l'artiste huron affiche ostentatoirement sur sa poitrine⁴¹ et qui apparaît couramment dans les portraits de chefs guerriers, notamment celui de Tecumseh. Enfin, si la coiffe de Vincent s'apparente significativement à celle de Brant, elle possède, de plus, la particularité de reproduire l'emblème héraldique du prince de Galles composé de plumes d'autruche et d'une croix de Malte (Fig. 5). Le couvre-chef à plumes, qui possède une signification distincte selon les cultures, fusionne ainsi en un seul objet les symbolismes monarchique et autochtone. S'ensuit une condensation visuelle et idéologique élevant Vincent au rang fantasmatique de héros couronné. Pour des motifs divers, l'artiste se serait identifié au personnage royal. D'abord, en tant qu'héritier du trône, le prince Albert Edward (1841-1910), futur Édouard VII, jouit d'une forte autorité morale auprès des Hurons, dont l'alliance avec la couronne britannique tend à contrecarrer les pressions exercées par les instances gouvernementales canadiennes. À l'occasion de l'inauguration du pont Victoria en 1860, le prince fait une visite hautement remarquée à la population du Canada. Celle-ci coïncide toutefois avec le transfert des responsabilités des Affaires indiennes du gouvernement impérial au gouvernement provincial et avec l'émission de *l'Acte relatif à l'administration*

des terres et des biens des sauvages, lequel renforcera bientôt les politiques d'assimilation et mettra en œuvre l'appropriation des terres autochtones à des fins de colonisation⁴². Lors de son passage à Québec, des dignitaires hurons saisissent l'occasion pour exprimer leur loyauté en offrant des *wampums* et présents divers. En retour, plusieurs d'entre eux reçoivent des médailles⁴³. Deux chefs hurons, Tsawenhohi et Tahourenché, présentent également une courte harangue au prince dans les locaux du parlement. On imagine ainsi facilement l'importance que la visite princière revêt pour Vincent et l'ensemble de sa communauté⁴⁴. L'insistance de ce dernier à multiplier les ornements monarchiques, dans ses autoportraits, a pu être motivée en premier lieu par un désir de souligner l'alliance et le lien de parenté symbolique qui unissaient les Hurons à leur « Mère », la reine Victoria, qui leur a promis aide et protection⁴⁵. Plus spécifiquement, les autoportraits témoignent d'une série de parallèles que le Huron semble avoir établis entre sa propre expérience et celle du prince héritier, non seulement dans leur rôle politique respectif, mais également dans leur intérêt précoce pour les arts⁴⁶ et leur statut de digne représentant d'une « noble race ». Ainsi, cette monstration de soi par la tenue vestimentaire constitue tant l'affirmation d'un choix politique que d'un statut hiérarchique. Si l'affirmation de l'Autochtone, dans un contexte de répression, s'avère un acte de résistance, il paraît juste également de prétendre que l'exposition ostentatoire du costume d'apparat est bel et bien une stratégie subversive. Dans la mesure où la tenue témoigne d'une fonction sociale, cette stratégie s'avère autant une appropriation individuelle de Vincent qu'une œuvre collective, à savoir un héritage des chefs guerriers. Bien que le croisement culturel des codes vestimentaires et ornementaux ne soit pas inédit, il a pour effet, comme le mimétisme des modèles héroïques, de rompre avec l'image essentialisée de l'Autochtone et d'exposer la subjectivité de l'artiste.

La *persona* de Vincent en vagabond : écho de l'ascète religieux

« Pour un missionnaire du Canada, ceci passe pour proverbe : il faut avoir l'estomac fait pour la faim, les yeux pour la fumée, les pieds à la neige et tout le corps à la fatigue ».

– P.-J.-M. Chaumonot, lettre adressée à Monsieur Guyotte, Dijon, 1666.

Au cours de la même période où il réalise ses autoportraits en chef héroïque, Vincent fait appel à la photographie de studio qui connaît une démocratisation. En tant qu'outil promotionnel, ce médium lui permet de diffuser efficacement son statut d'artiste à une éventuelle clientèle, mais aussi, de remplacer le miroir dans le processus de création des autoportraits.



6 | Photographie de Vincent au chevalet, par Louis-Prudent Vallée, vers 1875, albumine, 14,5 x 9,8 cm, Collections spéciales et livres rares, Université de Montréal. Collection Baby – Photographie / P00581FP06718 ; Division de la gestion de documents et des archives (1FP.06718). (Photo : Université de Montréal)



7 | *Zacharie Tehar-i-olin Vincent*, photo de Louis-Prudent Vallée, vers 1875-1879, 17,5 x 12,5 cm, Coll. François Vincent, Archives du Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat (Ph. 15-52). (Photo : Archives du Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat)

Réalisés au studio de Louis-Prudent Vallée (1837–1905) de Québec, les clichés contrastent, à l’époque, avec les portraits ethnographiques, tout autant qu’avec les photographies de chefs hurons tirées aux studios Notman et Livernois, qui témoignent d’une indianité modernisée et prestigieuse. Le cliché de Vincent au chevalet, installé dans un décor de forêt en trompe-l’œil (Fig. 6), présente, pour sa part, une catégorie encore inexistante : celle de l’artiste huron, d’un être actif et créateur, qui reprend le contrôle de son image. Dans une seconde photographie (Fig. 7), on reste frappé, cette fois, par la négligence de son apparence qui contraste avec son attitude de digne désinvolture, comme si l’artiste était passé d’une tentative de s’élever au rang de la majorité à celui de refuser son autorité et de se marginaliser volontairement⁴⁷. Le Dr William Beers, qui s’est intéressé à l’époque aux œuvres de Vincent, a d’ailleurs rapporté, dans un hommage posthume, l’allure singulière qu’il arborait, à la manière d’un vagabond : « *He was, however, very particular about his person; he never wore flannel until seven months before he died. His winter attire was a coat, under it another coat, under that a third coat, and then nothing*⁴⁸ ». Beers associe alors cette apparence au modèle romantique de l’homme des bois : « *he was a vagabond of the woods and waters*⁴⁹ ». Quelques années plus tôt, le journaliste et historiographe de la Nation huronne-wendat, André-Napoléon Montpetit, livrait un portrait similaire de Vincent, désigné sous le diminutif de « Cari » :

Cari restera légendaire. Le vrai dernier Huron n’est-il pas né artiste peintre ? Dès que son talent se manifeste, des hommes de l’art lui proposèrent de lui faire les frais d’un tour d’Europe pour lui permettre d’étudier la peinture sous les maîtres et de s’inspirer du génie des anciens. Ces propositions n’attiraient rien de plus qu’un sourire sur les lèvres de Cari. À ses heures, il prenait pinceaux et palette, esquissait un tableau ou un portrait, et s’en allait le vendre au plus vite, à peine ébauché, pour quelques dollars qu’il dissipait en quelques jours. Aussi longtemps qu’il fut jeune, qu’il conserva la vivacité de l’imagination, la sûreté de la main, il vécut de ses toiles et de ses dessins. Il vécut sans travailler presque, car il ne reprenait ses pinceaux que lorsque la misère et même la faim les lui rapportaient. Deux jours de travail lui procuraient parfois un mois de flânerie. Doux, liant, causeur, quoique bègue, il s’accrochait un peu partout, se portant d’intérêt à chacun et s’oubliant lui-même, vivant au jour le jour, oublieux de la veille, insouciant du lendemain. Que lui importait la gloire, un nom d’artiste, une fortune ? Un morceau de pain, quelques gouttes d’eau de vie, le grand air, le soleil, un paillason pour y dormir et, à son défaut, l’herbe des prés comblait son âme [. . .] L’âge vint avec les infirmités, le talent

s'éteignit, et Cari dû se faire peintre d'enseignes. Plus tard, on le vit réduit à badigeonner des murs. Pauvre, quasi-mendiant, il quitta Québec, en janvier dernier, avec un de ses fils, pour se rendre au Sault-Saint-Louis, à deux cents milles de Lorette, où il comptait fabriquer des raquettes. Le pauvre homme n'avait que quelques piastres dans son gousset, et à 63 ans, souffrant de rhumatismes, il entreprenait en souriant ce long trajet à pied [. . .] Telle est la légende du vrai dernier Huron pur sang⁵⁰.

Cette allure de clochard rappelle évidemment celle de l'artiste bohème, marginal et sans attache, popularisée à l'époque par l'avant-garde européenne, mais dont la reconnaissance canadienne se fera plus tardivement. Il demeure toutefois légitime de questionner les raisons qui auraient motivé Vincent à se présenter dans cette posture qui contraste radicalement avec celle des autoportraits héroïques, en considérant la manière dont était perçu, à l'époque, ce que nous qualifions aujourd'hui de « déchéance physique ». Au XVIII^e siècle, un témoignage du père jésuite Lafitau témoigne de la manière dont les Autochtones d'âge mûr abandonnaient progressivement leur opulence physique : « Dès que cet âge est passé, [l'Autochtone] fait gloire de vivre dans un état de négligence, ne portant plus aucune parure superflue ni quoi que ce soit qui n'est pas usé, pour bien montrer que son esprit s'attache aux choses sérieuses⁵¹ ». Ainsi, la soi-disant déchéance ou négligence des hommes d'âge respectable s'avérait en fait un signe de détachement de l'ordinaire temporel, une sorte de vœu de « simplicité volontaire ». C'est ainsi que les marques d'héroïsme qui caractérisent les autoportraits de Vincent ont été remplacées dans les photographies, par des signes de détachement des valeurs de prestige. Un article anonyme de 1895 corrobore d'ailleurs cette image : « *No promise of comfort could induce him to settle down permanently in the village of Lorette. He liked the freedom of the bush and communion with nature better than village gossip*⁵² ». Compte tenu des valeurs d'authenticité et d'engagement que charriait son titre de dernier Huron, ainsi que de sa détermination à résister au potentiel d'enrichissement auquel était exposée sa communauté, il est possible que les valeurs de simplicité aient fourni à l'artiste une démarche morale à laquelle il a choisi de demeurer fidèle.

À cet égard, ces valeurs rappellent celles qu'avait adoptées le père Chaumonot, tout comme son destin singulier. Contrairement à ses confrères Brébeuf, Lalemant, Jogues, Garnier et Chabanel, dont les historiographes ont retenu les actions et le destin jugés exemplaires, l'histoire de Chaumonot est restée, quant à elle, intimement liée à la communauté huronne-wendat avec laquelle il a choisi de partager son existence. Reconnu pour sa grande

humilité, sa discrétion et son ouverture, Chaumonot se démarque des autres missionnaires canadiens par ses origines modestes et son existence de « vagabond⁵³ », comme il s'est lui-même décrit. En dépit de son absence de formation théologique, il s'est également élevé au-dessus de sa condition, en accédant à la Compagnie de Jésus. René Latourelle a d'ailleurs confié que son éventuelle canonisation lui vaudrait le titre de « patron des clochards⁵⁴ ». Ce profil particulier pour un religieux a sans doute attiré la sympathie de Vincent. L'autobiographie du jésuite, rédigée en 1688, révèle d'abord qu'il est né en France en 1611 d'un père « pauvre vigneron⁵⁵ » et qu'il fuira le milieu familial pour vivre « en vagabond par le monde ». Chemin faisant, il renie ses origines et se prétend le fils d'un procureur du roi. Chaque élan d'orgueil a alors pour effet d'éprouver davantage sa condition qui devient de plus en plus misérable : « Voilà mon apprentissage de gueux [. . .] J'étais pieds nus [. . .] Ma chemise pourrie et mes habits déchirés étaient pleins de vermine ; ma tête même que je ne peignais point se remplît d'une si horrible gale qu'il s'y forma du pus et des vers avec une extrême puanteur ». Se rendant en pèlerinage à Rome pour purger ses fautes, Chaumonot se réfugie à la basilique de Loreto qui abrite la Sainte Maison où il reçoit une faveur de guérison. À maintes reprises, il se dit guéri par l'intervention divine et endossera lui-même, par la suite, un pouvoir thaumaturgique⁵⁶. Il se reconnaît alors une dette envers la Vierge qu'il décide de servir le reste de son existence. Les circonstances le font rencontrer des religieux de la Compagnie de Jésus qui lui offrent une éducation. C'est au cours de son noviciat qu'il parcourt une relation du Canada rédigée par le père Brébeuf et est frappé par les conditions d'extrême pauvreté dans lesquelles vivent les missionnaires. Cet état de fait lui inspire alors le projet de servir les populations autochtones, considérées alors comme les « plus pauvres des pauvres ». À cet effet, il réussira à convaincre le Révérend Père de la Compagnie de lui accorder cette responsabilité, en dépit de son manque de formation : « [pour] instruire et pour convertir ces nations barbares, l'humilité, la patience, la charité et le zèle des âmes étaient plus nécessaires que beaucoup d'esprit et de science⁵⁷ ». Privé des connaissances philosophiques qui constituent la base doctrinale de l'ordre jésuite, Chaumonot manifestera sans doute moins de résistance que ses confrères aux concepts et vérités entretenues par les Autochtones. Avant sa traversée outre-Atlantique, le jésuite fait un dernier pèlerinage à Loreto où la Vierge lui inspire le vœu de « chercher toujours et en toutes choses la plus grande gloire de Dieu ». Contractant alors avec Elle un pacte, il lui aurait répondu « Je le veux bien, ô Sainte Vierge ! Pourvu que vous soyez ma caution, et que vous m'aidiez à garder une telle promesse ». La figure maternelle et protectrice de la Vierge et celle de Joseph, saint patron du Canada français, lui auraient alors

assuré une double intervention. Il s'appropriera, en leur honneur, les deux prénoms pour devenir Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot⁵⁸.

Arrivé en Amérique en 1639, il fait œuvre d'évangélisation chez la communauté huronne et partage ses épreuves. Au même titre qu'il avait jadis erré de la France en Italie, avant de trouver son sanctuaire, il accompagne les Hurons à travers leur long périple qui les mène à la Jeune-Lorette. Entre 1655 et 1658, il s'adresse également aux délégués des Cinq Nations iroquoises où il fait preuve d'autorité et de persuasion dans la défense des intérêts de la communauté huronne : « Gardez vos castors, si vous le trouvez bon, pour les Hollandais [. . .] Nous ne cherchons point les choses périssables ». Son ouverture et sa capacité d'adaptation le mènent également à atteindre un rare degré d'approfondissement de la langue huronne qu'il considère comme « la plus difficile de toutes celles de l'Amérique Septentrionale⁵⁹ ». Son œuvre la mieux connue demeure d'ailleurs un dictionnaire français-huron. Dans la lettre circulaire rédigée à la mort de Chaumonot, le Supérieur des missions, le père Claude Dablon, souligne sa grande humilité, mais aussi le soin qu'il mettait à rappeler ses origines et les travers de sa jeunesse, afin de témoigner de la Miséricorde de Dieu et du pouvoir de transformation de l'être : « il a toujours fui les charges les honneurs et les louanges autant qu'il l'a pu ; et quoiqu'il ait été presque toujours supérieur dans nos missions, il paraissait l'inférieur de ceux qui étaient sous lui [. . .]⁶⁰ ». Ainsi, le jésuite aura d'abord renié, pendant sa jeunesse, ses origines et refoulé sa condition de dénuement, en prétendant être issu d'un noble terreau. Cette attitude qui l'a mené à s'enfoncer plus profondément dans le creuset de la honte se transforme par la suite radicalement lors de son engagement missionnaire auprès des Autochtones, au cours duquel il se fait gloire désormais de son dépouillement physique tout autant que de ses carences de savoirs. Cette distance de l'Europe, de son confort comme de sa *doxa*, lui permet alors de s'ouvrir à l'altérité, à un essentiel humaniste, et de renouer avec les valeurs chrétiennes initiales.

Suivant un revirement similaire, Zacharie Vincent a d'abord exposé son identité de chef des guerriers et de « prince éternel », en misant sur sa « distinction », prise aussi bien au sens de distance et de différenciation que de prestige et de dignité. Cette image glorieuse fera toutefois pendant à celle d'une supériorité morale enrichie moins par son savoir que par la diversité et la valeur de ses expériences. La *persona* d'un artiste qui se drape des augustes attributs de l'ascète. Les derniers seront les premiers . . . Bien que Vincent n'ait sans doute pas calqué sa vie de manière littérale ou consciente sur celle de Chaumonot, il est probable qu'il se soit inspiré de ce modèle et ait pris connaissance de l'autobiographie dont la première édition paraît en 1858⁶¹. En raison de son analphabétisme, Vincent aurait sans doute été initié à son

contenu par un intermédiaire, comme son neveu, Prosper Vincent (1842–1915). Premier Huron à être ordonné prêtre, l'abbé Vincent dit *Sawatanin*, « l'homme du souvenir », est alors un des rares membres de la communauté à maîtriser la langue huronne. À l'instar de Chaumonot, il rédigera également un dictionnaire huron⁶², poursuivant ainsi son œuvre de mémoire. Au XIX^e siècle, le dictionnaire Chaumonot est conservé par les Grands Chefs de la Jeune-Lorette⁶³, notamment par François-Xavier Picard (de 1870 à 1888), ami d'enfance du chef Philippe Vincent, père de Prosper et frère de Zacharie. La réputation de Prosper Vincent est également bonifiée en 1862, lorsque, assisté de plusieurs concitoyens, il sauve la majorité des objets pieux et du mobilier de l'incendie de la chapelle de Notre-Dame-de-Lorette⁶⁴. Zacharie Vincent a d'ailleurs souligné l'événement en réalisant trois œuvres, dont *Incendie du moulin à papier de Lorette*⁶⁵. Si, par sa fonction de prêtre, l'abbé Vincent a défendu les valeurs évangéliques, son statut de « premier Huron ayant accédé à la prêtrise » lui a conféré une aura de modèle exemplaire moralement supérieur et reconnu de surcroît par la majorité allochtone. Cette position a vraisemblablement jeté une ombre au statut de « dernier Huron » auquel Zacharie Vincent a été jusque-là associé, au même titre que les valeurs d'intégrité ethnique ont été remplacées par celles de la revitalisation sociale et économique. Dans ce contexte, l'identification du peintre huron au père Chaumonot et l'adhésion à son éthique de vie lui auraient sans doute conféré une nouvelle aura, celle d'un héroïsme spirituel propre à s'élever au-dessus des instances et des institutions d'ici-bas.

En démantelant les images essentialistes, exotiques et figées du sujet autochtone, qui ont nourri son incompréhensibilité, Vincent a contribué à tisser les premiers maillons d'une communication vivante avec la présence allochtone, à négocier un espace de représentation de la réalité huronne, et à réconcilier les différentes facettes de son identité et de son cheminement historique. Les autoportraits présentent en fait les transformations successives du corps social, mais aussi une vision critique sur la théâtralisation du mode de vie de la communauté de Lorette livrée au regard de l'Autre. Ils synthétisent des signes empruntés, adaptés et convertis, suivant une logique de concessions et d'échanges, au même titre que les objets de traite ont servi, jusqu'au XIX^e siècle, d'intermédiaire entre les groupes autochtones et allochtones. Si l'imitation des modèles héroïques et religieux a eu comme effet de déstabiliser partiellement les dynamiques de pouvoir colonial, le rôle mythique qu'a choisi d'endosser Vincent ouvre sur un possible, lequel dépasse toutefois les cadres culturels et identitaires définis par la communauté huronne depuis son exil. Cette posture le rapproche d'ailleurs de celle de l'artiste moderne qui s'est volontairement marginalisé et qui a tenté de se libérer des déterminants socioculturels au profit d'une perspective

universaliste, afin d'opérer un renouvellement intégral de sa condition. En mettant en image et en esthétisant sa propre déchéance, en concordance avec les modèles exemplaires politiques et religieux, Vincent a réussi à élever sa condition et à transformer les préconceptions d'une indianité en déclin. Cette résilience s'est toutefois opérée à l'encontre des idéaux nationalistes de revitalisation économique, d'homogénéisation sociale et autres valeurs rationalistes ancrées dans le passé. Alors que le nationalisme cherche à unifier les composantes discordantes, en refoulant les clivages idéologiques et en effectuant une sélection de la mémoire collective, certaines expressions plus autonomes et spontanées tendent, au contraire, à questionner et à contester ce *statu quo*. Ces regards discordants, qui travaillent au cœur même des entre-deux et des éléments divergents, rejoignent bien souvent une couche profonde de la culture. Elles réussissent également à engendrer son renouvellement et à assurer sa pérennité. Telles sont les œuvres de Vincent.

NOTES

- 1 François-Marc GAGNON, « Antoine Plamondon, *Le dernier des Hurons* (1838) », *Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien*, vol. 12, n° 1 (1989), p. 72-73.
- 2 Homi K. BHABHA, *Les lieux de la culture. Une théorie postcoloniale* (*The Location of Culture*, ca. 1994), Paris, Payot, 2007, p. 116, 147-49.
- 3 Nadine CHARRON, « La politisation de la culture à travers l'industrie touristique : performances et revitalisation des traditions chez les Hurons-Wendat », mémoire de maîtrise, département d'anthropologie, Université de Montréal, 2006, p. 57.
- 4 Michel LAVOIE, « "C'est ma Seigneurie que je réclame". La lutte des Hurons de Lorette pour la Seigneurie de Sillery, 1760-1888 », thèse de doctorat, département d'histoire, Université Laval, 2006, p. 372.
- 5 Voir notamment Michel LAVOIE, *C'est ma seigneurie que je réclame. La lutte des Hurons de Lorette pour la seigneurie de Sillery, 1650-1900*, Montréal, Boréal, 2010 ; Michel LAVOIE et Denis VAUGEOIS, *L'impasse amérindienne. Trois commissions d'enquête à l'origine d'une politique de tutelle et d'assimilation, 1828-1858*, Québec, Septentrion, 2010.
- 6 Claude et François VINCENT, « Les grands-chefs hurons-wendat de Wendake » (affiche), Archives du Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat, Wendake, 1998.
- 7 Deux autoportraits avec son fils ont été répertoriés à ce jour : *Zacharie Vincent et son fils Cyprien*, vers 1852, non signé, huile sur toile, 48,4 × 41,4 cm, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, et *Portrait de l'artiste par lui-même*, vers 1852 non signé, huile sur toile, 44,4 × 35,5 cm, coll. Morrin College, reproduit dans William WOOD, *The Storied Province of Quebec. Past and Present*, Toronto, The Dominion Publishing Company Ltd, 1931, p. 118.

- 8 Voir à ce sujet Alexis LUSSIER, « L'Autre du miroir », dans *Imaginaire et transcendance*, sous la direction de Anne Éline Cliche, Stéphane Inkel, Alexis Lussier, Montréal, Figura textes et imaginaires, UQAM, 2003, p. 25.
- 9 Jean-Sébastien LAVALLÉE, « Sillery terre huronne ? Étude de la première revendication territoriale des Hurons de Lorette (1791-1845) », mémoire de maîtrise, département d'histoire, UQAM, 2003, p. 16.
- 10 « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », *Notre-Dame de Lorette et le père Chaumonot*, choix de textes de Gilles Drolet, Montmagny, Éditions Anne Sigier, 1985 ; L'abbé Lionel LINDSAY, *Notre-Dame de la jeune Lorette en la Nouvelle-France : étude historique*, Montréal, Cie de publication de la *Revue canadienne*, 1900, p. 20-24.
- 11 Une légende rapporte qu'à la fin du XIII^e siècle, au moment où Nazareth était menacée par les musulmans, elle fut soulevée et transportée à Loreto. Dans les faits, le prince byzantin Nicéphore 1^{er} Doukas a fait transporter une maison palestinienne jusqu'en Italie. « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », p. 12 ; Charlotte et Céline GROS-LOUIS, *La chapelle huronne de Lorette 1730-1980*, Village-des-Hurons, 1980.
- 12 « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », p. VIII.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 98-99.
- 14 « De la Chapelle Notre-Dame de Lorette en Canada », mémoire du père BOUVART, écrit le 1^{er} et 2 mars 1675, rapporté dans *Notre-Dame de Lorette et le père Chaumonot*, p. 122-23.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 132.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 140, p. 167-68.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- 18 François-Marc GAGNON, *La conversion par l'image. Un aspect de la mission des Jésuites auprès des Indiens du Canada au XVII^e siècle*, Montréal, Bellarmin, 1975.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 20-21. Bruce TRIGGER, *Les enfants d'Aataentsic, L'histoire du peuple huron*, Montréal, Libre Expression, 1991, p. 427.
- 20 *Relations des Jésuites*, vol. 3, p. 628-29. Rapporté par GAGNON, *La conversion par l'image*, p. 17.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 26-28, 34-36.
- 22 Rapporté par GAGNON, *ibid.*, p. 38-39, 42-43. Sur le dispositif d'omnivoyance de l'image religieuse, voir Nicolas DE CUES, *Le tableau ou la vision de Dieu*, Paris, La nuit surveillée, 1986, p. 32.
- 23 Marie Falardeau épouse Édouard Sébastien (Bastien) en 1841, à l'âge de 17 ans, et lui donne deux enfants : Marie-Adélaïde en 1842, et Édouard en 1844. Ceux-ci décèdent en bas âge : Édouard meurt âgé de 20 mois, quelques jours après son père, décédé accidentellement le 7 novembre 1845. Ainsi, Marie Falardeau est non seulement veuve, mais aussi en deuil de ses enfants, lorsqu'elle épouse Vincent, trois ans plus tard. Archives nationales du Québec (BanQ) – Centre de Montréal, Fonds Drouin, Registre des décès pour Saint-Ambroise de la Jeune Lorette.
- 24 « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », p. 93-94.
- 25 « Mort d'un artiste huron », *Le Canadien* (Québec), 2 déc. 1886.
- 26 CHARRON, *op. cit.*, p. 102 ; voir l'analyse d'Henrietta HARRISON, « Clothing and Power on the Periphery of Empire: The Costumes of the Indigenous People of Taiwan », *Positions*, vol. 11, n^o 2 (2003), p. 347.

- 27 L'expression est empruntée à l'auteur Gordon Mitchell SAYRE, dans *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
- 28 À la source de la tradition littéraire qui voit naître la figure du héros tragique, Gordon Sayre identifie particulièrement les biographies historiques d'Indiens de Samuel Gardner Drake et Benjamin Bussey Thatcher. Intitulées *Indian Biography*, ces deux volumineuses compilations de portraits littéraires ont fait l'objet de multiples rééditions après leur parution initiale de 1832. Samuel GARDNER DRAKE, *Indian Biography*, Boston, Josiah Drake, 1832 ; Benjamin Bussey THATCHER, *Indian Biography*, New York, J. & J. Harper, 2 vol., 1832. *Ibid.*, p. 10-13.
- 29 La Fédération des Sept Feux réunit les nations autochtones christianisées du Bas-Canada, dans le but de renforcer leurs liens culturels face au pouvoir gouvernemental. Voir Denyse DELÂGE et Jean-Pierre SAWAYA, *Les traités des Sept-Feux avec les Britanniques. Droits et pièges d'un héritage colonial au Québec*, Québec, Septentrion, 2001, p. 19-23.
- 30 Dans ses *Mémoires*, la baronne Friederike Charlotte von Riedesel (1746-1808) note les manières distinguées et la tenue vestimentaire du Mohawk : « *I saw at that time the famous Indian chief, Captain Brant. His manners are polished; he expressed himself with fluency, and was much esteemed by General Haldimand [. .] In his dress he showed off to advantage the half military, half savage costume. His countenance was manly and intelligent, and his disposition very mild* ». William Leete STONE, *Life of Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea)*, Albany (N.Y.), J. Munsell, 1865, vol. 2, p. 250.
- 31 L'auteur note : « *His father and grandfather had been Hurons, from Huron mothers: his mother was a Huron-Iroquois of Iroquois descent* ». « The Folk-Lore Society. Story of the Life and Work of a Huron Artist », *The Gazette* (Montréal), 15 nov. 1895, p. 2.
- 32 « Mort d'un artiste huron », *Le Canadien*, 2 déc. 1886.
- 33 R. David EDMUNDS, *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership* (Library of American Biography Series), Boston / Toronto, Little Brown, 1984, p. 221.
- 34 Marie-Dominique LABELLE et Sylvie THIVIERGE, « Un peintre huron du XIX^e siècle : Zacharie Vincent », *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, vol. XI, n^o 4 (1981), p. 331.
- 35 Anne-Marie SIOUÏ BLOUIN, « Histoire et iconographie des Hurons de Lorette du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle », thèse de doctorat, département d'histoire, Université de Montréal, 1987, p. 440-41.
- 36 BHABHA, *Les lieux de la culture*.
- 37 « The Folk-Lore Society. Story of the Life and Work of a Huron Artist », *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 38 L'artiste utilise également d'autres médiums, comme le crayon à mine et le lavis, mais pour les besoins de la démonstration seule la peinture à l'huile est retenue.
- 39 BHABHA, *Les lieux de la culture*, p. 152.
- 40 Brant porte un hausse-col, pièce d'uniforme militaire européen servant à protéger le cou, tandis que Vincent arbore une broche.
- 41 Il s'agit d'une médaille de la reine Victoria frappée en 1840. Victor MORIN, *Les médailles décernées aux Indiens. Étude historique et numismatique des colonisations européennes en Amérique*, Ottawa, The Mortimer Co., Limited, 1916, p. 45 ; Martha WILSON HAMILTON, *Silver in the fur trade, 1680-1820*, Chelmsford, MA, Martha Hamilton Publishing, 1995, p. 161.

- 42 Ian RADFORTH, « Performing Indians », *Royal Spectacle. The 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States*, Toronto, Buffalo, London, University of Toronto Press, 2004, p. 229–30.
- 43 MORIN, *Les médailles décernées aux Indiens*, p. 49.
- 44 LAVOIE, « “C’est ma Seigneurie que je réclame”. La lutte des Hurons de Lorette pour la Seigneurie de Sillery, 1760–1888 », p. 392–93.
- 45 Nous tenons à souligner la contribution de Sandrine Garon dans l’analyse iconographique des médailles de traite et de l’emblème du prince de Galles. R.W. MCLACHLAN, « Medals awarded to the Canadian Indians », Montréal, 1899, p. 26 ; George TANCRED, *Historical Record of Medals and Honorary Distinctions Conferred on the British Navy, Army & Auxiliary Forces: from the earliest period*, Londres, Spink, 1891. MORIN, *op. cit.*, p. 44–45.
- 46 Albert Edward a reçu une éducation axée notamment sur les arts, passion que partage alors le couple royal, Victoria et Albert. Pierre-J. Olivier CHAUVEAU, *Relation du voyage de Son Altesse Royale le prince de Galles en Amérique*, Montréal, Sénécal, 1860, p. 5–6.
- 47 Voir à ce sujet Alain BOURDIN, « La dangereuse évidence de l’identité substantielle », *La représentation de soi : études de sociologie et d’ethnologie*, actes du Colloque de Genève, septembre 1985, Département de sociologie, Université de Genève, 1987, p. 61–77.
- 48 « The Folk-Lore Society. Story of the Life and Work of a Huron Artist », *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 49 William G. BEERS, « The Huron Indian Artist », *The Gazette*, 1^{er} fév. 1887, p. 5.
- 50 A.-N. MONTPETIT (Ahatsistari), « La Jeune Lorette (pour faire suite à Tahourenché) », *L’Opinion publique* (Montréal), 29 mai 1879.
- 51 Joseph François LAFITAU, *Mœurs des sauvages américains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, 1724. Rapporté par Karlis KARKLINS, *Les parures de traite chez les peuples autochtones du Canada : un ouvrage de référence*, Ottawa, Lieux historiques nationaux, Service canadien des parcs, Environnement Canada, 1992, p. 76.
- 52 « The Folk-Lore Society. Story of the Life and Work of a Huron Artist », *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 53 « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », p. VII.
- 54 René LATOURELLE, *À la recherche du sens perdu. Témoins du sens révélé : Brébeuf, Chaumonot, Bressani*, Montréal, Bellarmin, 2004, p. 73.
- 55 « Autobiographie du père Chaumonot », p. 2.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 5, 10, 13, 25.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 14, 28–29.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 31, 34.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 54, 78–79.
- 60 Lettre circulaire contenant un abrégé de la vie et mort du R.P. Chaumonot décédé au collège de Québec le 21 février 1693, rédigée par le P. Claude Dablon. Archives du séminaire de Québec, Lettre R, no 4.
- 61 L’autobiographie du père Chaumonot, conservée par les Hospitalières de Québec, est publiée une première fois à New York en 1858, puis à Paris en 1885. *La vie du R.P. Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot*, New York, Nouvelles Presses Cramoisy, 1858, 2 vol. éd. de John Gilmary SHEA ; *Un missionnaire des Hurons : autobiographie du père Chaumonot de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Paris, H. Oudin, éd. de Félix MARTIN, 1885.

- 62 Cet ouvrage de l'abbé Vincent demeure toutefois introuvable aujourd'hui. Megan LUKANIEC, *The Form, Function and Semantics of Middle Voice in Wendat*, Québec, Centre interuniversitaire d'études et de recherches autochtones, Projet Yawenda. Document de recherche 9, Université Laval, 2011, p. 46. Fonds Marius Barbeau, Archives du Musée canadien des civilisations, Gatineau ; Fonds Prosper Vincent, Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Centre de référence de l'Amérique française.
- 63 Le dictionnaire Chaumonot figure parmi les objets que Pierre-Albert Picard, fils du Grand Chef François-Xavier Picard, lègue au collectionneur Cyrille Tessier en 1888. La succession Tessier le légua aux Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Centre de référence de l'Amérique française. Fonds François-Xavier Picard, BANQ. LATOURELLE, *op. cit.*, p. 128-29.
- 64 LINDSAY, *Notre-Dame de la jeune Lorette en la Nouvelle-France : étude historique*, p. 14-15.
- 65 Huile sur carton, non daté, non signé, 44,4 × 59,4 cm, Musée de la civilisation, Québec.

The Self-Representations of the Huron-Wendat Artist Zacharie Vincent (1815–1886): Icons of Political and Spiritual Pride

LOUISE VIGNEAULT ET ISABELLE MASSE

From the 1850s to the 1880s the Huron-Wendat chief Zacharie Vincent (1815–1886) executed hundreds of drawings and paintings aimed at a public composed of visitors to the village of Jeune-Lorette (near Quebec City), British soldiers on leave and members of the political elite. These works were created as a response to the art works on Aboriginal themes so popular at the time among some French-Canadian nationalists – an attraction due in part to this group’s identification with other minorities threatened with acculturation and extinction. By employing the language of academic painting and assuming the identity of an “easel painter,” Vincent was striving to reappropriate control of his own image and that of his community. It was an approach that allowed him both to rectify the prevailing alarmist discourse concerning the fate of the Huron-Wendat community and to assert an identity that integrated into the Wendat heritage a number of non-Aboriginal elements. In his modernization of the image of the Huron subject, Vincent revealed aspects of the cultural mixing that would ensure the community’s renewal and survival.

In the face of the territorial and political losses undergone by his community and the ineffectuality of its strategies for survival, Vincent undertook first to defend filial values and furnish evidence of the continuation of his “race” by portraying himself with his eldest son, Cyprien. Establishing a number of parallels between Vincent’s own domestic experience and that of the Holy Family, the authors begin by suggesting that iconographical themes of the latter and the special status assigned to religious imagery inspired the Huron chief in the creation of this first self-portrait and provided him with a way of effectively conveying the hopes and fears of his community. Taking an equivocal view of his circumstances, Vincent went on to conduct a silent dialogue with Francophone and British milieus alike by imitating some of their models. Drawing upon Homi K. Bhabha’s work, the authors identify some of the possible motives underlying such an approach, prevalent among minority and politically marginalized groups.

Study of the twelve self-portraits so far discovered has yielded considerable evidence of strategic identification with models drawn from epic literature and the diplomatic face of the British monarchy. The image of Vincent dressed as a Huron dignitary was inspired in the first place by the pictures of Aboriginal warrior chiefs – notably Joseph Brant (1742–1807) and Tecumseh (1768–1813) – that were disseminated widely during the nineteenth century. The similarities between these figures and the Huron artist have their source in a mimicking of artistic style, social circumstance and political status, but reflect above all the reprise of a model at once heroic and tragic: the exemplary Indian chief, the resistance warrior whose quest for glory is destined for failure. The historical portraits gave Vincent the opportunity to celebrate, by proxy, his own status and achievements. But while there was a clearly emancipatory impulse underlying this act of mimesis, its effect was nonetheless ambiguous: did it represent the defence of a dissident cause or a resigned acceptance of imperialism? This line of inquiry is stimulated by certain iconographical details. In the same series of images Vincent includes ornamental elements inspired by motifs from British heraldry: the three ostrich feathers and the Maltese cross that adorn his silver crown are derived directly from the crest of the Prince of Wales. The copying of these motifs in fact participates in diplomatic tradition, since it enabled the artist to cultivate symbolically the relations that Huron leaders wished to establish with the prince's representatives, whom they considered both their equals and valuable allies in the struggle to resist the pressure to assimilate being exerted by the Canadian government.

The combined sense of grandeur and misfortune that emanates from the heroic figures of Brant and Tecumseh re-emerges in a third model, represented in photographs. During the same period, Vincent had a series of pictures taken in a Quebec City studio that showed him in his artistic persona. By having himself photographed both as a Huron chief and as an artist painting his own image, Vincent emphasized the Hurons' capacity to adapt and to assimilate elements of the culture of the Other while creating a new identitarian category, thereby undermining existing schemas of representation for the Aboriginal subject. In other photographs, however, Vincent eschewed status symbols and exhibited signs of apparent social decline that actually reflected a conscious opting for simple living and a rejection of materialism. This image, which immediately recalls that of the modern artist, rebellious and marginal, can also be indirectly related to the singular life and destiny of the Jesuit Pierre-Marie-Joseph Chaumonot. During the seventeenth century this little-known missionary accompanied the Huron community on its forced move from the Great Lakes to the

Quebec City region, where he founded the mission in Lorette, the country's first church for Aboriginal refugees. Identification with these different models was, for Vincent, an effective way of reinforcing his heroic status within his community and of preserving its cultural memory, while at the same time breaking with the social and economic models it had hitherto defended. It also allowed the Huron artist to cultivate an image of dignified resistance, to undergo a visual "re-birth" and to have this renaissance officially recognized – all with the goal of transcending his condition.

Translation: Judith Terry



Mariette Rousseau-Vermette: Journey of a Painter-weaver from the 1940s through the 1960s

ANNE NEWLANDS

When the internationally renowned Quebec artist Mariette Rousseau-Vermette (1926–2006) died in 2006 at the age of seventy-nine, she left behind a rich production of over 640 tapestries, many of which were created for prestigious commissions, such as the National Arts Centre, Ottawa (1968); the Eisenhower Theatre, John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. (1971); Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto (1981); and the headquarters of Imperial Tobacco, Montreal (2002). Rousseau-Vermette exhibited widely throughout her career; she received prizes and honours, including Officer of the Order of Canada (1976); her work is also represented in public collections nationally and internationally. Despite this recognition, little has been written about her beginnings as an artist, the development of her identity as a painter-weaver, and the early years of her success as a modernist artist.

The term ‘painter-weaver’ (also ‘*peintre-lissier*’ and ‘*peintre-licier*’) began to be used in the popular press in Quebec in the mid-1960s to describe artists such as Rousseau-Vermette, her contemporary Micheline Beauchemin (1929–2009), and others who were trained as visual artists in fine art academies, embraced the aesthetics of visual art with its expressive emphasis on colour, line, shape and texture, and chose to weave, creating tapestries of their own design on a loom.¹ Given the centuries-old tradition of domestic weaving in Quebec, many Quebec artists who employed weaving to create autonomous works of art used this term to distinguish themselves from those who wove fabric for domestic and utilitarian purposes; critics who supported them adopted the term as well. Additionally, for artists who wove, identifying themselves as ‘painter-weavers’ signaled their medium as an important part of their artistic identity and community. Unlike Europe, where tapestry production had been established since the Middle Ages, in Quebec, woven tapestries made on native soil did not appear until the mid-twentieth century.

Detail, Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Printemps*, 1961, wool tapestry, 210 × 257 cm, Collection Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo: Jean-Guy Kérouac)

In the tapestry traditions of Renaissance Europe, artists or designers created ‘cartoons’, drawings or paintings, that would be woven into a tapestry by a specialized weaver or members of a weaver’s guild. By the mid-nineteenth century in Britain, William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement advocated the creation of textiles that were not imitations of paintings, but were, as textile historian Virginia Troy has stated, “independent objects that related to other objects through the decidedly non-painterly, flat and decorative style of art nouveau.”² Opposed to the categories that separated classes of art, Morris embraced textiles because they could function both as utilitarian objects in the decoration of an interior, as well as pictorial expression. Morris and his artists, however, continued to employ professional weavers to render their designs. It was not until the founding of the Bauhaus in Germany in 1919, that artists such as Anni Albers, Ethel Mairet, Marion Strengel and others, were taught the techniques of weaving, enabling them to execute their own compositions as samples for industry, but also as autonomous works of art. Both the Arts and Crafts movement, and the Bauhaus “broke down the barriers between the major and minor arts, placing the emphasis on the originality of the work and recognizing tapestry weaving as an art in its own right.”³ This spirit of inclusivity that blurred the boundaries between fine art and other forms of art was also characteristic of the interdisciplinary Canadian art scene of the 1960s. On the cusp of the “Fibre Revolution” that would see textile artists experiment with new materials and push the limits of traditional weaving off of the wall,⁴ Canadian painter-weaver contemporaries of Rousseau-Vermette such as Beauchemin, Charlotte Lindgren (1931–), Krystyna Sadowska (1912–), Helen Frances Gregor (1921–1989), and others explored these new possibilities; their works were reviewed by art journals and exhibited in art galleries and museums, confirming the status of their handmade textile creations as art.

In addition to her identity as a painter-weaver, Rousseau-Vermette’s work was also rooted in a modernist context in which textile artists looked to the nature of the materials and their method of construction for inspiration. Furthermore, her training as a visual artist, her embrace of the visual language of abstraction, and her ambition to create work in collaboration with architects were also hallmarks of modernism. Writing on the status of textiles in the first half of the twentieth century, Troy affirmed that textiles had “moved to the center of modernist theoretical dialogues and debates, as they began to embody the ways in which art, craft and architecture could be fused into decorative and architectural programmes.”⁵ Indeed, for Rousseau-Vermette, art and craft were not two concepts at odds in the creation of her tapestries, but were rather a necessary marriage of aesthetic vision and conceptual knowledge of the materials and the processes of weaving.

Interviewed by the craft historian Sandra Alföldy in 2005, Rousseau-Vermette insisted that “a textile artist must not be taught to be just a weaver, but also a designer and an artist.”⁶

This paper explores the development of Rousseau-Vermette’s career as a painter-weaver from the 1940s through the 1960s. It examines her relationship to the art and craft of weaving in Quebec in the 1930s and 1940s, her artistic training and influences, the Quebec art milieu in the 1950s and 1960s as defined by the aesthetics of geometric abstraction of the Montreal Plasticiens, and the critical reception of her work in the 1960s. It argues that Rousseau-Vermette’s success as a modernist artist derived from her embrace of geometric abstraction as her primary visual vocabulary, an approach to weaving that involved a modernist truth to materials and a shunning of excess ornamentation, and her collaborations with architects who sought her powerful and meticulously woven tapestries as complements to the stark austerity of modern architecture.

Mariette Rousseau – the Formative Years

For generations, weaving has been done in nearly all French-Canadian families; so it was natural for me to be interested in it from my youth. More advanced studies enabled me to see the contribution of contemporary painting and possibility of expression through tapestry.⁷

In the early years of the twentieth century, members of Montreal’s Women’s Art Society travelled along the south shore of the St. Lawrence and noted that many domestic arts were disappearing due to the prevalence of mail order catalogues that brought manufactured goods to distant towns and villages. In 1906, Alice Peck (1855–1943) and May Phillips (1856–1937), the leading women of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in Montreal, embarked on a crusade to resurrect and promote traditional Quebec textiles and handicrafts. In 1910, Marius Barbeau (1883–1969), an anthropologist and ethnologist with the Museum Branch of the Geological Survey of Canada (later the Museum of Man) became an active proponent of Quebec folklore, culture and textiles. In partnership with a Canadian Pacific Railway publicist, John Murray Gibbon, Barbeau organized The Canadian Folk Song and Handicraft Festival in Quebec City in 1927, to celebrate the art, craft and music of Quebec.⁸

In 1930, responding to an economic crisis made worse in rural areas where crop failure brought people to the brink of starvation, the Quebec Government, a leader in Canada in the promotion of textiles, established a Department of Handicrafts under the province’s Ministry of Agriculture and appointed Oscar Bériau as its director.⁹ At the same time, the Ministry’s

creation of the École Provinciale des Arts Domestiques in Quebec City introduced nuns and other women teachers to weaving, spinning, and rug hooking in order to expand the provincial teaching ranks for these skills. Artists from the United States and Europe supervised their work, directing their patterns, products, and aesthetic decisions in order to support the province's focus on creating a successful commercial industry that perpetuated traditional Quebec handicrafts.¹⁰ Writing in 1933, soon after the founding of The Provincial School of Handicrafts, Bériau insisted that, "rural arts must be truly Canadian in execution . . . and be made to harmonize [with] the architecture of our typical habitant farms."¹¹ The production of handmade textiles supplied the domestic market and at the same time kept old traditions alive in the face of machine-made commodities.¹²

Thus by the time of Mariette Rousseau's birth in 1926 in Trois-Pistoles, Quebec, a small town on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River, hand weaving was widespread both as a pastime and a necessity, especially in rural areas.

Rousseau's mother, Corinne Bélanger (ca. 1880–ca. 1929) was a painter who died when Mariette was two years old. Her father, Joseph Hervé Rousseau (1877–1964), was a celebrated notary and a musician; he founded and directed the local brass band, and encouraged his children's education and lives beyond their small town.¹³ He also organized a program whereby English Canadians and Americans interested in learning French could live with local families. Perhaps to assist in his own family's access to English, he subscribed to *The Globe and Mail* and *Life* magazine, a gesture that would later prove significant for his youngest daughter.¹⁴ The gift of a small loom, presented to Rousseau at the age of twelve, launched her life-long passion for weaving.

The Quebec government's support for traditional textiles was sustained throughout the 1930s. In 1939, it established a centre for carpet and tapestry hooking in the Charlevoix region on the north shore of the St. Lawrence at Pointe-au-Pic, under the direction of artist Georges-Édouard Tremblay (1902–1987). About twenty women students boarded at Tremblay's school-workshop, where they learned the skills of rug hooking and produced hooked tapestries. They worked directly from paintings by Tremblay that featured images of picturesque farms and a sentimental view of pre-industrial rural life in Quebec.¹⁵ In the same year, and again in 1940, exhibitions of domestic weaving held in collaboration with the Canadian Handicraft Guild on Île Sainte-Hélène recognized the resurgence of traditional crafts. In 1942 Bériau proudly reported on the success of the "Craft Revival in Quebec;" he described the legions of teachers who had travelled throughout the province

teaching weaving at community centres, reaching 800 Cercles de Fermières (Farm Women's Clubs) and 110 branches of Women's Institutes, with the result that there were "now 60,000 looms in rural Quebec and 100,000 spinning wheels."¹⁶ However, as Sandra Alföldy has observed, "the anonymity of the traditional textile artisan was soon to be overshadowed by modern art's insistence on recognized producers, and the successful negotiation of a space for textiles within the modernist art world."¹⁷ In addition, the increasing numbers of interior design studios, operated by weavers such as Karen Bulow (1899–1982) who opened her studio in Montreal in the early 1930s,¹⁸ and Irène Auger (1905–2003), whose Quebec City studio opened in 1940, helped to popularize the taste for handmade fabrics and individually hooked rugs.¹⁹

The late 1930s and early 1940s were also auspicious years for modernist art in Quebec. In 1939, due to the impending war, painter John Lyman (1886–1967) returned to Montreal after studies in Paris at the Atelier Matisse, and twenty-four years abroad. In the same year, he founded the Contemporary Arts Society, an association of artists committed to the ideas of European modernism. Frustrated by the conservative teaching at the École des Beaux-Arts that shunned the work of the Post-Impressionists, Fauves, and Cubists, these artists embraced Lyman's dictum that "the essential qualities of a work of art lie in the relationships of form to form and colour to colour as carriers of aesthetic feeling."²⁰ Painter Alfred Pellán's (1906–1988) return to Quebec in 1940, after fourteen years in Paris, was another boon to modernism. Retrospectives of his work in Quebec and Montreal featured boldly coloured, quasi-abstractions influenced by the work of Matisse and Picasso and caused a stir in the Quebec art world. Beyond these advances in modernist figurative art, in 1942, painter Paul-Émile Borduas (1905–1960), then a drawing instructor at the École du Meuble in Montreal, exhibited forty-five gouaches, which revealed his interest in surrealist theories of automatism and painting without preconceived ideas. These radical notions expressed a desire for new aesthetic freedoms and attracted the attention of younger Montreal artists who sought to break with conservative traditions and to express the world of dreams and the subconscious.

For the development of a future painter-weaver however, the bridge between an artisanal approach to weaving and modernist art in Quebec was still under construction. A notable exception was the transformation in 1941 of Alfred Pellán's painting *The Juggler* into a hooked rug by Thérèse Lafrance, a weaver at the École des Beaux-Arts de Québec.²¹ Although it followed the Tremblay model mentioned earlier, with an artisan executing the artist's composition, Pellán's partnership with Lafrance is significant for its introduction of modern, semi-abstract imagery into a traditional craft. Gaby

Pinsonneault in Montreal would follow suite in the 1950s, and render the abstract designs of Fernand Leduc (1916–), Louis Belzile (1929–), and others into hooked rugs; however, Mariette Rousseau-Vermette would be among the earliest to *weave* the designs of abstract artists.

L'École des Beaux-Arts de Québec

In 1944, Rousseau enrolled at the École des Beaux-Arts in Quebec City, a practical choice given its relative proximity to Trois-Pistoles and the company of relatives, both from her mother's family and her older brothers who were studying at Laval. In addition, the school offered a wide range of courses that included painting, sculpture, graphic arts, interior decoration, ceramics, enamelling and weaving. While prominent artists such as Jean Paul Lemieux (1904–1990) taught at the school during Rousseau's tenure, it is known that her studies with the painter Jean Dallaire (1916–1965), who began teaching there in 1946, were seminal.²² Dallaire, a popular and devoted teacher, who refrained from theorizing about figuration or abstraction, encouraged his students to explore and find their own way. While Dallaire's previous studies in France and promotion of early twentieth-century modernism through his stylistic emulation of the work of artists such as Picasso and Braque would have been stimulating, his enthusiasm for tapestries designed by the French painter Jean Lurçat, would certainly have struck a chord with Rousseau.²³

In 1947, the school commissioned Dallaire to produce a series of mural sized paintings featuring allegories of the different courses taught at the school: *Les Arts plastiques*, *La Publicité et la Décoration*, and *La Céramique et le Tissage*. The frontality, flatness and whimsical character of Dallaire's figures animated by non-naturalistic use of colour recalled the dream-like stylized figures that populated tapestries designed by Lurçat and woven in the Aubusson ateliers in France. Known as the father of "la nouvelle tapisserie," Lurçat was recognized for creating a renaissance of the art of tapestry by encouraging modern artists to create cartoons for the Aubusson ateliers. There is no evidence that Rousseau herself aspired to make tapestries in the style of Lurçat or Dallaire's painted works. Their importance to her development lies in their example of freedom to explore modern imagery on a large scale, either painted or woven.

In addition to her lessons in painting and drawing at the École des Beaux-Arts, Rousseau's exercise books with woven textile samples produced in the Atelier de Tissage between 1944 and 1948, confirm her early mastery of a wide range of pattern and weaving techniques. Rousseau studied with weaver Irène Beaudin whom she acknowledged as an excellent technician who helped students to appreciate the importance of structure.²⁴ However, as Dallaire

lamented in a letter to Lurçat in 1948, in Canada, weavers were still ignorant of the fine art of tapestry and scarcely knew anything of the principles or qualities that governed it.²⁵ While many of Rousseau's fellow students would later travel to France to learn the art of tapestry, she looked to the United States, inspired by an issue of *Life* magazine in which an article titled "Top Weaver" introduced her to the innovative Dorothy Liebes studio in San Francisco. Interviewed many years later, Rousseau acknowledged, "I saw an article in *Life* magazine saying 'Textiles were dull. Now they are becoming interesting.' It was about her, I had to know why she wanted to make them lively – so I went."²⁶ In the article, illustrated with coloured images of Liebes's wool filled studio, details of woven fabrics, looms and assistants, Rousseau would have learned about the scale of Liebes's operation, which produced over 2,500 sample swatches a year for clients that included private couturiers, architects, and industry, as well as Liebes's innovations with materials, and her "prophetic instinct for trends in the colour field."²⁷

In 1948, the year Rousseau departed for the United States, the art of tapestry was beginning to acquire a more prominent profile in Quebec. In May, Jean-Marie Gauvreau (1903–1970), head of the *École du Meuble* arranged for an exhibition of historical and contemporary French tapestries at the Hotel de Ville in Montreal. It included seventeenth-century Gobelin tapestries as well as Jean Lurçat's *Summer*, produced in 1932 at L'Aubusson, France.²⁸ In addition, the provincial government initiated the *Concours artistique de la province de Québec*, the Annual Arts Competition of the Province of Quebec, a generous monetary prize that recognized excellence in the decorative arts, as well as in painting and sculpture.

Studies in California: 1948–1949

Following her graduation from the *École des Beaux-Arts* in 1948, Rousseau, who at the time spoke little English, travelled to San Francisco hoping to find a job at the Dorothy Liebes studio. To help cover her costs, she taught French in exchange for room and board.²⁹

Dorothy Wright Liebes (1899–1972) was born in California and learned to weave at Hull House, Chicago; she continued to weave at home to fund her studies at the University of California (BA, 1923), California School of Fine Arts (1926), and Columbia University (MA, 1929). In 1929, she travelled to Paris where she studied textile design at the Paul Rodier Studio. Rodier was a proponent of the constructive weaving process by which textured, multi-hued patterns were created by the directions and luminous quality of the threads rather than by surface decoration. Returning to San Francisco in 1930, she married Leon Liebes, and by 1937, opened a professional studio where she

produced boldly textured and vibrantly coloured textiles that often integrated unusual materials such as feathers, plastics, and bamboo; decorators and architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, were her primary clients. By 1938, her studio employed seventeen female and male weavers, some of whom continued to work with her for the duration of her business.³⁰

Self-described as an “artist-designer,” Liebes “consciously chose to make textiles the outlet of her creative expression.”³¹ Furthermore, as a confident businesswoman making one-of-a-kind pieces for architects, Liebes would have been an important model for the young Rousseau as she speculated about her future as a painter-weaver. Sometime in 1948, the year that Rousseau arrived in San Francisco, Liebes moved to Washington, D.C., and by 1949, she was living in New York where she opened another studio. She did, however, continue to assert her style and control over the projects in the San Francisco workshop through occasional cross-country trips and extensive correspondence with trusted employees. After some initial difficulties in securing a position in the workshop, Rousseau later spoke very warmly of the year spent in Liebes’s studio assisting in the weaving of curtains, learning professional techniques and in a typical Liebes style, weaving unusual materials such as wood into textiles.³² During her American sojourn, Rousseau also took classes at the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland.

In addition to her experience in Liebes’s studio, Rousseau may also have been aware through the popular press, or through Liebes herself, of the work of the celebrated German artist-weaver and textile designer, Anni Albers whose work was presented in the first-ever solo exhibition of art textiles at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1949. Following the closing of the Bauhaus in 1933, Albers and her husband, the painter Josef Albers, along with many other German artists and architects, had moved to the United States, bringing with them the art and design ideas central to international Constructivism. In the realm of weaving, this meant an adherence to the concept of “truth to materials” in the production of “rationally produced patterns determined by the horizontal and vertical structures of weaving as well as by the natural hues and textures of fibre.”³³ Commenting on her method years later, Albers wrote, “I worked with a weaver’s concern with threads as an artistic vehicle and I was interested greatly in the technique and discipline of the craft . . . In weaving, one deals with the surface quality of the threads – rough, smooth, glossy, shiny . . . The medium is a force that stimulates an artist’s productive energies.”³⁴ Like Liebes and Albers, Rousseau would also embrace the characteristics and the limitations of the medium as conditions with which to create her art.

Other European émigrés, such as the Finnish weaver Loja Saarinen and German textile designer Marianne Strengell, may also have attracted Rousseau's attention. Saarinen and Strengell both worked in collaboration with the architect Eliel Saarinen at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan and they broke new ground as professional artists creating modernist textiles with designs that reflected the inherent structure of weaving itself.

The Montreal Years 1949–1951

Upon her return to Canada in 1949, Rousseau settled in Montreal and worked briefly as a designer for a textile company. She also worked with interior designers, such as Delisle and Sabourin, Chicoutimi, many of whom were associated with artistic and theatrical groups, and wove exclusive fabrics for fashion designers and decorators.³⁵ In this capacity, Rousseau often visited local Montreal galleries in search of modern hand-crafted objects to complement clients' contemporary interiors. Such excursions led to a meeting and subsequent friendship with Montreal artist Claude Vermette (1930–2006), whose colourful abstract paintings and boldly shaped ceramics she admired.³⁶ Through Vermette, Rousseau met the young artists associated with Paul-Émile Borduas and the Automatistes who in 1948 had signed the manifesto, *Refus global*, a passionate call for new social, religious, and aesthetic freedoms in the conservative Church-dominated society of Quebec. As art historian Rose-Marie Arbour explains, the spirit of liberation promoted by Borduas and the Automatistes also encouraged and fostered autonomy for many of the female signatories to the *Refus global*, artists such as Françoise Sullivan (1925–), Marcelle Ferron (1924–2001), and Madeleine Arbour (1923–). As a means of expression, automatism was a tool for subjective and emotional emancipation that in turn inspired the creativity of these artists as well as other women artists emerging on the scene.³⁷ Although, Rousseau did not emulate the gestural, tachiste effects of Automatiste painting in her work, the example of Borduas and his followers as artists who took their professions seriously and dedicated their lives to art, was both inspirational and influential. In particular, Rousseau befriended Automatiste painters Fernand Leduc (1916–) and Jean-Paul Mousseau (1927–1991) who would provide designs for her early tapestries.

In January 1952, Rousseau, Vermette, and a group of artist friends travelled to Europe to explore the contemporary art scene and in Rousseau's case, to visit weaving studios. They toured France, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden and Finland where Rousseau became particularly interested in Scandinavian

textile design. In October, Rousseau and Claude Vermette returned to Montreal; in November they married and moved to Sainte-Adèle, in the Laurentians north of Montreal, where Claude Vermette had been invited to teach at the Centre d'art de Sainte-Adèle.

Rousseau-Vermette: The Painter-weaver and the Dawn of the 1960s

A tapestry expert may use a variety of materials, and by means of highly developed techniques, employ these materials intelligently. My quest is simple: the loom and instruments I use have their requirements and possibilities. I want above all to find quality in the colour, the texture and the arrangement of masses.³⁸

The early years in Sainte-Adèle were marked by the birth of their first child in 1953, and Rousseau-Vermette's desire to forge her own path as an artist. Synthesizing the impact of her European travels, the contemporary art milieu, and the enduring influence of the natural surroundings of mountains, lakes and forests, Rousseau-Vermette returned to her low-warp loom, unravelling her earlier tapestries and reusing the wool to make new ones. In addition, to help make ends meet, she taught tapestry classes at Centre d'art de Sainte-Adèle, and wove and sold men's neck ties (Fig. 1) through commercial establishments in Montreal and Toronto under her own label, *Marver* – a shortened version of her name. She also continued to create fabric for local fashion designers such as Jacques de Montjoye (1928–).³⁹ Interviewed years later about this period, Rousseau-Vermette reported that it was through her husband Claude, who was working with architects on ceramic projects, that she too became acquainted with them, and they in turn, became interested in her work. The benefits of this partnership would later be reciprocated, as architects attracted to Rousseau-Vermette's tapestries would discover the ceramics of her husband.⁴⁰

While it is hoped that future research may uncover work from the early 1950s, the earliest recorded tapestry in Rousseau-Vermette's meticulously kept *carnet noir* is dated 1956 and was woven from a design by Fernand Leduc. Although Leduc had originally been a follower of Borduas and had painted in a spontaneous, gestural fashion, by the early 1950s, he and a small group of artists known as "Les Plasticiens" pursued a more ordered form of expression based on a defined juxtaposition of colours and geometric shapes that sought a purification of the plastic elements.⁴¹ The clarity of Leduc's composition and the angularity of many of the forms in his design for *Rencontre totémique à Chilkat*, 1956 (Fig. 2) were well suited to the grid of the loom and in 1957, Leduc and Rousseau-Vermette were awarded first prize in the decorative arts section of the Annual Arts Competition sponsored by the Province of



1 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Handwoven ties with Marver label*, Estate of Mariette Rousseau-Vermette. (Photo: Courtesy of the author)

Quebec. Exhibited at L'Actuelle galerie d'art non-figuratif in October 1956, along with abstract paintings by Leduc, this work was an important first step in Rousseau-Vermette's public association with the aesthetics of abstraction; furthermore, it demonstrated the high quality of her work as a weaver and her sensibility in rendering abstraction in wool. According to Suzanne and Laurent Lamy, Leduc's motivation for having his work translated into wool was to make his new, more radically abstract works more inviting and accessible to the public.⁴² As Virginia Troy has stated, textiles were "the ideal cross-over medium in modernist attempts to erase the social and visual boundaries separating art from craft, art from industrial design, and elite from popular culture."⁴³

A woman of prodigious energy with a strong dedication to research and expanding the horizons of her art, Rousseau-Vermette was committed to travel in order to keep abreast of contemporary art movements. In 1958, she journeyed again to Europe. In Italy, an exhibition of the meditative work of



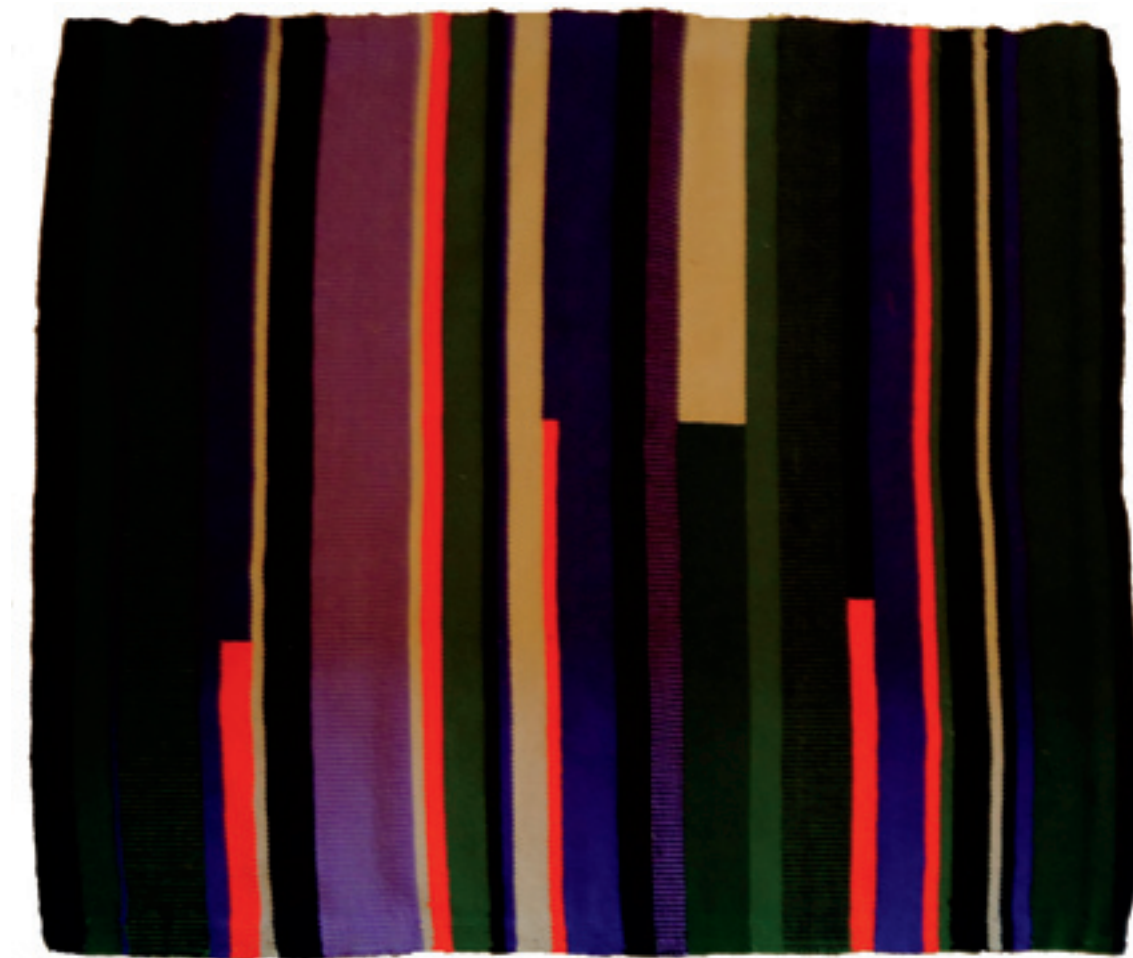
2 | Fernand Leduc and Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Rencontre totémique à Chilkat*, 1956, after a cartoon by Fernand Leduc, wool tapestry, 212.4 × 137.2 cm, collection Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo: Jean-Guy Kérouac, © Fernand Leduc/SODRAC, 2011)

the American abstract painter Mark Rothko was particularly inspiring, and triggered the use of a brushed-wool technique that would allow a softened blending of colours and a sense of inner light in her tapestries. She was also particularly impressed by the art of weaving in Finland, perhaps finding in their explicit use of wool and rough textures, a response to the ruggedness of the Finnish landscape that she also experienced in the Quebec Laurentians. In the same year, along with the birth of a second son, the artist produced three more tapestries, one of which was designed from a cartoon by Mousseau.

In 1959, Rousseau-Vermette continued her partnerships with artists with whom she shared an aesthetic based on “Plasticien” principles; she produced tapestries with precise compositional structures, isolated bands of colour and geometric shapes from cartoons designed by Mousseau, Guido Molinari (1933–2004), Louis Belzile, Jean Goguen (1927–1989), and Claude Vermette. In July of the same year, she received a letter from the National Gallery of Canada inviting her to participate in a travelling exhibition (Canadian Artists Series III, *Beauchemin, Vermette*) with the Quebec painter-weaver, Micheline Beauchemin. The Gallery’s letter stated that the exhibition’s purpose was “to make Canada’s artists known outside their own regions in areas where significant exhibitions of Canadian art do not usually travel.”⁴⁴ Each artist was invited to submit ten works, a statement, and a short biography as notes for the slim catalogue that would accompany the exhibition. While the Gallery had originally implied that the exhibition would tour smaller towns in Ontario, the final itinerary included eleven venues. The exhibition opened in January 1960 at McMaster University, toured five cities in Ontario, and then continued across the country with stops in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and finally closed at the Vancouver Art Gallery early in 1961. The Gallery’s press release stated that the tapestries of both artists “raise weaving from a craft to the level of fine art.”⁴⁵

It is difficult to assess the impact or reception of the exhibition from a modest collection of clippings that mostly repeat phrases from the Gallery’s press release and published artists’ statements. However, black and white installation photographs taken at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen’s University, Kingston, show the large scale and compositional vigour of the geometric abstraction in Rousseau-Vermette’s works.⁴⁶ Three of the tapestries in the exhibition were designed by Rousseau-Vermette and six were designed by other artists.⁴⁷ As Rousseau-Vermette explained her approach,

The techniques I use respond adequately to the particular genius and creative expression of each artist. In view of that, it is not for sheer whim that Mousseau expresses himself in long wool, that Molinari



3 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Noirs, violets, blancs, verts*, 1959, wool tapestry, 116 × 143 cm, Estate of Mariette Rousseau-Vermette. (Photo: Courtesy of the author)

and Goguen demand well defined planes and volumes, that Vermette requires warm, brushed wool, and Belzile needs smooth masses.⁴⁸

While Rousseau-Vermette did not elaborate her approach to the design of *Noirs, violets, blancs, verts*, 1959 (Fig. 3), with its rhythmic vertical bands of black, green, and purple relieved by areas of red and white, it clearly demonstrates her confident mastery of the formal geometric language of the “Plasticiens.” It is important to note that from this time on, Rousseau-Vermette would be the sole designer of her tapestries; thus she achieved the status of an autonomous artist, and specifically, a painter-weaver. Like artists such as Dorothy Liebes and Anni Albers before her, she would create her own cartoons using oil pastel to sketch out the shapes and disposition of colour and form that would determine her selection of wool and other fibres. These drawings were usually accompanied by samples of the yarn to be used and the meticulous measurements necessary to calculate the enlargement of the drawing to the loom.

In 1961, the Canadian Handicraft Guild awarded Rousseau-Vermette 2nd prize for *Tapestry #10*, 1959, one of the tapestries that had been included in the National Gallery of Canada exhibition. Also in the early 1960s, Rousseau-Vermette established a relationship with the spinners and weavers on the Île-aux-Coudres, 60 km east of Quebec City in the St. Lawrence River. Proud to create work with wool from Canadian sources that would better support her response to nature and her ambitions to create work rooted in native soil, Rousseau-Vermette had the wool dyed to her specifications at the École des Textiles de Saint-Hyacinthe. The provincial Ministère de la Jeunesse de la province de Québec supported this endeavour and saw these collaborations as a way to perpetuate the learning of traditional handicraft skills by a younger generation.⁴⁹

The 1960s: Exhibitions and Collaborations with Architects

Between 1961 and 1969, Rousseau-Vermette produced approximately 220 tapestries, ranging in size from small maquettes of a square metre, to enormous theatre curtains made with the assistance of other weavers and commercial establishments. The titles of most of her works allude to the seasons, the natural environment, and colour harmonies; they attest to the enduring inspiration of nature and her commitment to an abstract visual language. While small-scale private commissions outnumber the larger-sized public ones, Rousseau-Vermette’s many collaborations with architects were signs of tapestry’s rising star in the context of modernist architecture whose stark concrete walls and austere corridors called for the colour and warmth of

modern tapestry. In the 1950s, textile artists such as Karen Bulow and Helen Frances Gregor had begun to work on large-scale productions with architects. Other artists followed in the 1960s, including Carole Sabiston (1939–) and Joanna Staniszki (1944–) in British Columbia, Charlotte Lindgren (1931–) in Nova Scotia, and Beauchemin and Rousseau-Vermette in Quebec.⁵⁰ While the enthusiasm for modernist architecture was indeed a national phenomenon, it was most pronounced in Montreal where large public structures such as Place Ville Marie and Place des Arts, both designed in 1963, set the stage for the modernist achievements of Expo 67.⁵¹

With the dawn of the Quiet Revolution under the leadership of Jean Lesage, the early years of the 1960s were marked by a liberal humanism that embraced the arts. In 1961, the Quebec Government created Le Ministère des Affaires culturelles, recognizing the world of arts and letters for its political value and its association with national identity. In the same year, a group of young artists that included Mousseau, Rita Letendre (1928–), and Claude Vermette, petitioned the Quebec Government to more actively support artists through the creation of grants, financial assistance for exhibitions, studios, as well as a policy promoting the integration of art in architecture.⁵² This interdisciplinary spirit, combined with a building boom in the city of Montreal and across the country, also opened the door for increased collaboration between artists and architects; by 1965, it took the form of provincial legislation ruling that one percent of a public building's budget must be spent on art. Rousseau-Vermette's use of a geometric abstract language in the creation of her tapestries ensured her appeal to modernist architects who shared her sparse visual aesthetic in their large angular structures of glass, steel and concrete. The international recognition brought by her inclusion in the first and subsequent exhibitions of the Biennale Internationale de la Tapisserie in Lausanne, Switzerland, would also contribute to her visibility and success.

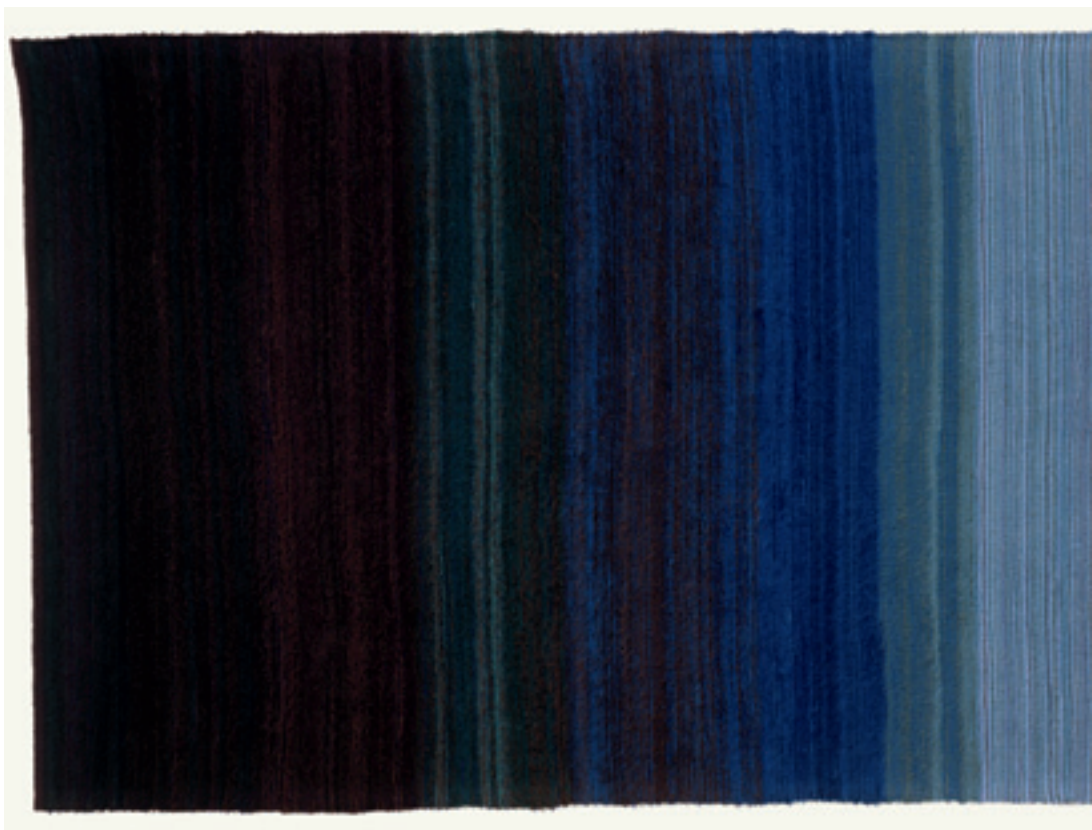
Although recognition for Rousseau-Vermette's work in the 1960s came both from art galleries and craft organizations, newspaper articles and catalogues reviewed to date confirm that critical attention came mainly from the art world.⁵³ Art museums had long embraced tapestry as "high art" due to its historical association with allegorical and narrative painting and like painting, tapestry was also displayed on the privileged position of the wall. In addition, the American Craft Council lobbied for the status of craft as art, and by 1964, at the First World Congress of Craftsmen, the American art critic Harold Rosenberg declared that, "the fine artist and the inventive craftsman are indistinguishable from one another."⁵⁴ Acknowledging this recognition of craft as art at this highly influential gathering, Alföldy writes, "the American

Craft Council and the World Crafts Council sought to institutionalize the modernist narrative.”⁵⁵ Just a year later, the 1965 Canadian Conference of the Arts was held in Rousseau-Vermette’s home town of Sainte-Adèle, Quebec. Montcrieff Williamson, the first director of the new Confederation Centre Art Gallery in Charlottetown, called for excellence, inventiveness, and professional standards for Canadian craft and suggested that fine crafts should be on an equal footing with other forms of artistic production in Canada. Indeed, in his selection of work for the Canadian Fine Crafts exhibition held two years later at Expo 67, Williamson sought to raise Canadian craft to international standards; he included both traditional and contemporary works, and actively supported “more conceptual work” such as Rousseau-Vermette’s abstract tapestries.⁵⁶

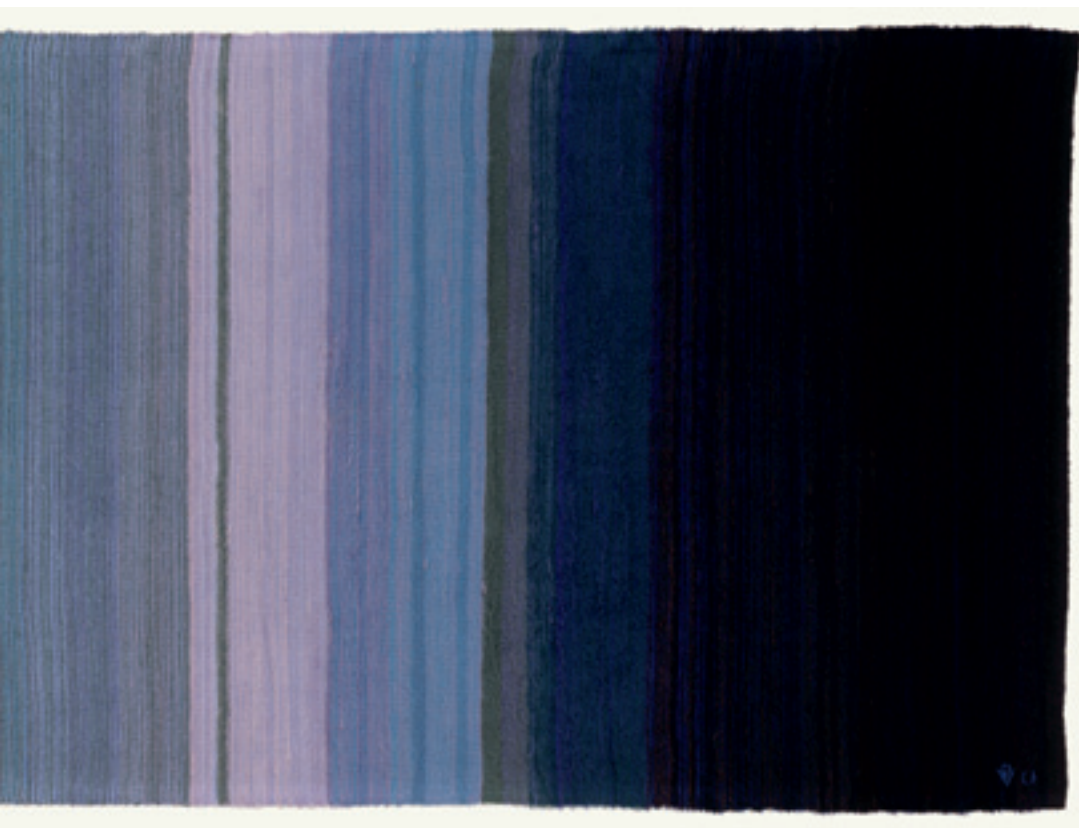
As a detailed examination of Rousseau-Vermette’s vast output over a single decade would be beyond the scope of this paper, a selective look at works produced between the years 1961 and 1969 will offer insights into her aesthetic explorations and commitment to geometric abstraction, examine her success in exhibiting tapestries nationally and internationally, and recognize her accomplishments in integrating tapestry with contemporary architecture.

In the autumn of 1961, Jean-Paul Mousseau invited Rousseau-Vermette to join him in an exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Organized in the context of the Museum’s “Gallery XII Exhibitions,” these were two-person shows and the artists paid for both the exhibition space and opening reception – right down to the liquor license.⁵⁷ Rousseau-Vermette exhibited eight tapestries, all of her own composition. Rather than imitate painting as she had in the past, in these works she unleashed her creative passion for weaving, producing large-scale tapestries such as *Hiver canadien*, 1961 (Fig. 4), that functioned architecturally as a wall and in its subtle colour gradations, communicated in the language of the loom. Woven in collaboration with the weavers on the Île aux Coudres, the work measured 215 × 540 cm, its extended horizontal format was animated by softly integrated vertical bars of colour that eschewed the geometric precision of earlier more “Plasticien” works. In *Hiver canadien*, deep blues, blacks, and greens anchor the viewer in the shadowy light of dawn that gradually brightens to clear blues, mauve-blues, and then darkens to greens and the sombre hues of night. Played out in wool, *Hiver canadien* offered warmth and light, creating a visual impact that could not have been achieved in any other medium.

Response in the Francophone Quebec press was enthusiastic and acknowledged Rousseau-Vermette’s ambition to create tapestries that would bring warmth and gaiety to contemporary architecture. Reviewing the exhibition for *Le Nouveau Journal*, Jean Sarrazin noted that Rousseau-



4 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Hiver canadien*, 1961, wool tapestry, 213.3 × 540.7 cm, Collection Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo: Jean-Guy Kérourac)



Vermette's tapestries were technical "tours de force" with their subtle colour transitions and delicate nuances. In *Printemps*, 1961 (Fig. 5), the artist explored colour variations within a single hue, presenting a series of understated vertical modulations from cool to warm and focusing on a series of yellow-greens, yellow-golds and clear yellows that recalled the colour studies of Josef Albers's *Homage to the Square* series begun in 1950. Sarrazin also praised Rousseau-Vermette's use of variously textured wools: thick, frothy and even "furry," that would confer the expected feelings of warmth and comfort to architectural spaces, but more importantly, on an emotional level, provide a visual and spiritual refuge.⁵⁸ In an article by Marie Laurier in *La Presse*, Rousseau-Vermette stated that her goal was to create a personal style, not one based on [European] French precedents, but, through her use of local wools and colours inspired by the environs of the Laurentians, one that was truly Canadian.⁵⁹

In 1962, only two Canadians were included in the first Biennale Internationale de la Tapisserie in Lausanne, Switzerland: Rousseau-Vermette



5 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Printemps*, 1961, wool tapestry, 210 × 257 cm, Collection Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. (Photo: Jean-Guy Kérouac)

and Krystyna Sadowska (1912–1994), who immigrated to Canada from Poland in the 1950s. Co-founded by the collector Pierre Pauli and artist Jean Lurçat, the biennale’s inaugural catalogue featured statements by architects Le Corbusier and Richard Neutra who both embraced “the new tapestry.” Le Corbusier extolled its virtues as a ‘muralnomad’, capable of being rolled and moved as owners changed homes, and Neutra praised the discipline of weaving, recognizing in tapestry a welcome counterpoint to the cool austerity of modern architecture.⁶⁰ In contrast to Sadowska’s figurative work, Rousseau-Vermette exhibited her large abstraction, *Hiver canadien*. In a review of the exhibition, the writer in *L’Écho de Bas St. Laurent* praised Rousseau-Vermette’s successful adaptation of the ancient art of tapestry to contemporary tastes, and importantly, noted that nature was her source of inspiration and that her

intense colour and harmonious lines successfully captured the beauty of “our Québécois landscape.”⁶¹

Between 1962 and 1963, Rousseau-Vermette began to design new compositions with stronger colours, simplified contrasts, and more obvious geometric form. In *Ablaze*, ca. 1963 (Fig. 6), two bold vertical columns of red are interrupted by a crenellated pattern whose angular definition diminishes in proportion from left to right. In contrast to its theatricality, other works of these years demonstrate the use of more delicate, subdued palettes and evoke the reflections of lakes, falling snow, and setting suns.

Ever committed to researching global weaving traditions, Rousseau-Vermette travelled to Japan in the spring of 1964, to visit weaving studios and to learn Japanese approaches to materials and techniques. In May of the same year, Galerie Camille Hébert in Montreal presented eleven of Rousseau-Vermette’s newest tapestries. Critics raved about the exhibition agreeing that the tapestries were “real works of art” and the products of an immense talent. An unnamed critic in *La Presse* praised the works, both those with subtle colour contrasts and those with strong geometric designs, for their great refinement and sumptuous beauty.

The forms are important, but the wool is there to tone down the impression of massiveness or harshness. In all of the tapestries, the wool conveys an element of softness, especially when it is brushed and almost resembles felt. The violence of the contrasts is quieted, and the brushed wools create effects of light and reflections . . . altogether the exhibition conveys an impression of intimacy, warmth and sensuality, of rest and equilibrium born from the rigour of the compositions.⁶²

The mid-1960s were a whirlwind of activity for Rousseau-Vermette who received several prestigious commissions as well as invitations to participate in national and international exhibitions. In 1965 alone, she produced twenty-three tapestries and was included in the National Gallery of Canada travelling exhibition, *Montreal Artists*, curated by Guy Robert (1933–), then director of the newly formed Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal. Rousseau-Vermette was dubbed a “muralist” and her work grouped with that of Micheline Beauchemin and the ceramist Jordi Bonet (1932–1979); Robert signaled his appreciation of the vision of these artists who brought large-scale works of art to contemporary architecture.⁶³

In 1965, invited to participate in the second International Biennial of Tapestry in Lausanne, Switzerland, Rousseau-Vermette created *Contrastes*, 1965. This large work (215 × 540 cm) is animated by brown and gold crenellations juxtaposed against vertical stripes of colour that fade and



6 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Ablaze*, ca. 1963, wool tapestry, 210.8 × 172.7 cm, Collection National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada)



7 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Mortaises rouge dans le noir*, 1966-1971, wool tapestry, approx. 10 × 12 metres, Collection Eisenhower Theatre, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. (Photo: Estate of Mariette Rousseau-Vermette)

intensify in alternating columns; it affirmed her desire to “transmit to city and public buildings the feeling of fulfillment contained in the calm and beauty of nature.”⁶⁴ Exhibited at Place des Arts in Montreal during Expo 67, this work was later purchased by the Federal Department of the Environment for their new building Édifice Fontaine, in Hull (now Gatineau), Quebec.

That same year, the new Canadian Centre for the Performing Arts in Ottawa (later re-named the National Arts Centre), commissioned Rousseau-Vermette to weave a curtain for The Theatre. Micheline Beauchemin received the commission for the Opera (Southam Hall) curtain. Rousseau-Vermette’s commission was one of her largest to date and measured 427 square metres. The work was composed of vertical masses of blue, purple, rose, and green, and designed to accommodate the parallel folds of a curtain.⁶⁵

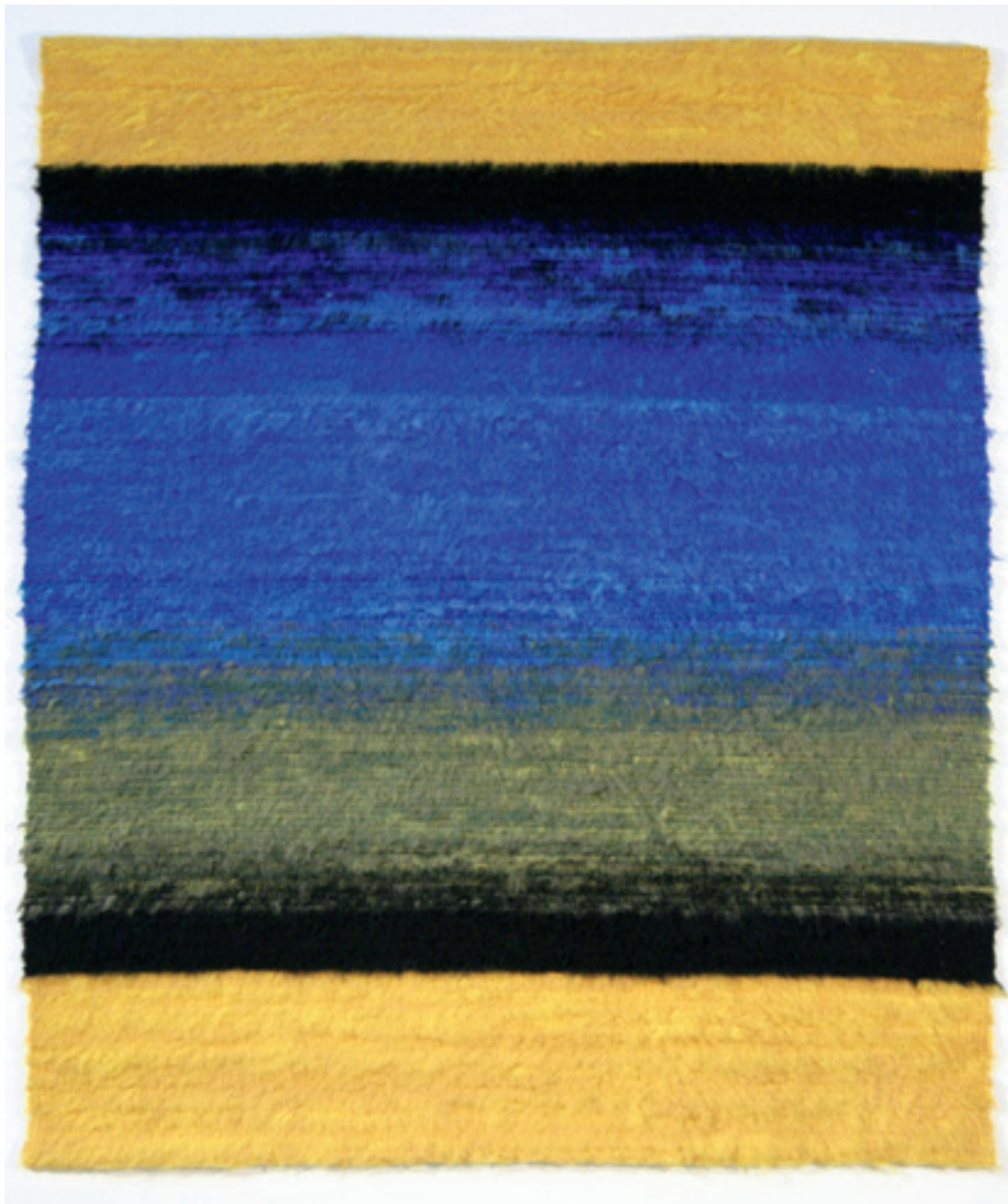
Under Rousseau-Vermette's careful and frequent supervision, the curtain was produced with the assistance of the commercial weavers Cleyn and Tinker Ltd, in Huntingdon, Quebec, and completed in 1968 in good time for the opening of the National Arts Centre in September 1969.⁶⁶ Interviewed following its unveiling, the artist declared that the colours were "what I felt were needed for a calm and warm theatre."⁶⁷

Rousseau-Vermette further secured her international reputation with *Mortaises rouges dans le noir*, 1966–1971 (Fig. 7). The curtain commissioned for the Eisenhower Theatre, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., was presented as a gift and a tribute to the late president by the Canadian government. Interviewed in 1970, shortly before its completion, Rousseau-Vermette stated that the tapestry was more than a stage curtain, but rather an integral part of the architecture, created in collaboration with the Kennedy's Center's architect Edward Durrell Stone.⁶⁸ With its bold red and black crenellated pattern meeting in the centre of the design, Rousseau-Vermette sought to express "the unity of all nations in friendship and in progress."⁶⁹

In Europe, Rousseau-Vermette's work *Éclats de Braise*, 1966, was included in the Third International Biennial of Tapestry in Lausanne, held in 1967. Appreciated as the "doyenne des peintres-liciers du Québec" by Colette Duhaime in *La Patrie*, the critic praised Rousseau-Vermette's fidelity to the rigours of traditional low-warp weaving techniques, and her skill in imbuing them with a contemporary style, modern and abstract.⁷⁰

Expo 67, the Montreal World's Fair and celebration of Canada's centenary, put Canadian artists and architects on the world stage at home, and provided numerous commissions and exhibition opportunities for Rousseau-Vermette. In addition to *Carte du Monde*, 1967, a tapestry commissioned by The Jeunesses Musicales for the Canadian Music Pavilion, she also produced *Fleurs dans la Toundra*, 1967, for the Quebec Pavilion, and a tapestry for an apartment in architect Moshe Safdie's (1938–) housing complex *Habitat 67*. At the Canadian Fine Craft Exhibition organized by Montcrieff Williamson, she exhibited *Brasier* (1963), and *Aube ou Nuit*, 1965 (Fig. 8). In this last work, broad horizontal bands of yellow, at the top and bottom, frame a bright blue centre area that darkens as it meets the yellow. In contrast to previous works with more assertive geometric patterns, the softness of the brushed wool and repeated horizontality of the coloured bands evoke the introspective compositions of Rothko and achieve a similar air of serenity and contemplation. The beauty and high quality of Rousseau-Vermette's work attracted praise from André Malraux, France's minister of cultural affairs.⁷¹

Following the successes of 1967, Rousseau-Vermette continued to seek opportunities to work with architects on new building projects in which she



8 | Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, *Aube ou nuit*, 1965, wool tapestry, 166 × 143 cm, Collection Confederation Centre for the Arts, Charlottetown. (Photo: Confederation Centre for the Arts, Charlottetown)

was involved at the conceptual stage. In 1968, she embarked on the first of many projects with Vancouver architect Arthur Erickson (1924–2009) who selected her to create a pair of tapestries for the MacMillan Bloedel Building in Vancouver. Entitled *Sous-bois au printemps*, the tapestries designed with complementary palettes, were each composed of three vertical columns of colour; one in a palette of moss greens, earth brown, and yellows, and the other, in shades of blues, greens and yellows. Installed on the concrete walls of a main floor corridor, they evoked the dappled light of the forest in springtime, and with their striking verticality, each approximately four metres high, echoed the soaring concrete grid of the building's exterior.

By the close of the 1960s, Rousseau-Vermette's status as one of Canada's leading modernist textile artists was firmly established. In addition to the scores of prestigious commissions that would continue to come her way in future decades, her status as an artist and a painter-weaver would be sustained nationally and internationally by solo and group exhibitions. When her work was included in the exhibition *Art for Architecture – The Wall*, organized by Anita Aarons for the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1969, along with painters, sculptors and other textile artists such as Joyce Wieland (1931–1998), Micheline Beauchemin, and Charlotte Lindgren, Rousseau-Vermette reaffirmed her vision, "I hope that my tapestries satisfy my desire to contribute to the architecture of today."⁷²

Mariette Rousseau-Vermette's contributions to modernist textiles extended beyond her own magnificent work. In her trajectory as a successful modernist painter-weaver with an expanding national and international reputation, Rousseau-Vermette was instrumental in transforming the art of weaving in Quebec. Practiced as artisanal women's work in the 1930s and 1940s, and often overlooked by museums and art institutions, weaving became one of the most successful contemporary art forms to be integrated with modern architecture. The recognition brought by her inclusion in the three international biennales of tapestry held in Lausanne, Switzerland in the 1960s, coupled with her enormous output of high-quality work that was appreciated by critics, curators, and architects around the globe, affirmed her status as a leading painter-weaver, a professional artist whose aesthetic vision and expert knowledge of the art and craft of weaving earned her high esteem as a model and inspiration for artist-weavers working in Canada today.

- 1 In the 1960s, authors such as the following explored the concept of painter-weaver: “Artiste-tapisseur” in Guy ROBERT, “Syphonies en laine et couleurs,” *Vie des Arts* 36 (1964): 18–24; Dorthy BARNHOUSE, “Gallery featuring Painter in Wool,” *Edmonton Journal*, 14 Mar. 1966; “Doyenne des peintres-liciers,” *La Patrie* (Montreal), 10 June 1967. Even today, the term, with the variation of “artist,” rather than “painter” persists; for example, contemporary Quebec artist-weaver Marcel Marois who admired Rousseau-Vermette, refers to himself as an “artiste-licier.”
- 2 Virginia GARDNER TROY, *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America 1890–1940* (Aldershot, UK: Lund Humphries, 2006), 14.
- 3 Françoise CLOUTIER-COURNOYER, *Quebec Tapestries* (Montreal: Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal, 1979), 5.
- 4 Mildred CONSTANTINE and Jack LENOR LARSEN, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972).
- 5 GARDNER TROY, *The Modernist Textile*, 13.
- 6 Sandra ALFOLDY, “Canada’s Textile Pioneers,” in *Crafting New Traditions – Canadian Innovators and Influences*, ed. Alan C. Elder (Gatineau, QC: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2008), 81.
- 7 National Gallery of Canada, “Mariette Rousseau-Vermette artist’s statement,” *Beauchemin/Vermette – Canadian Artists Series III* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1960).
- 8 Ellen EASTON MCLEOD, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 242–65.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 242.
- 10 Oscar BÉRIAU, “The Handicraft Renaissance in Quebec,” *Canadian Geographic Journal* 3 (1933): 148–49.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 Suzanne and Laurent LAMY, *La Renaissance des métiers d’art au Canada français* (Quebec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1967), 11–29.
- 13 Luce Vermette (the sister of Claude Vermette), interview with the author, Gatineau, QC, 24 Feb. 2010. General biographical information about the artist is drawn from this source.
- 14 I thank Dr. Sandra Alföldy for sharing the contents of her interview with Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, Saint-Adèle, QC, 29 Apr. 2005.
- 15 “L’école d’artisanat de Pointe au Pic,” *Le Confident* (Quebec), 6 Apr. 1966.
- 16 Oscar BÉRIAU, “Craft Revival in Quebec,” *Craft Horizons* 2, no. 1 (1942): 26.
- 17 ALFOLDY, “Canada’s Textile Pioneers,” 79.
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 Gloria LESSER, *École du Meuble 1930–1950: Interior Design and Decorative Art in Montreal* (Montreal: Le Château Dufresne, Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts, 1984), 65.
- 20 Ann DAVIS, *Frontiers of Our Dreams: Quebec Painting in the 1940s and 1950s* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1979), 11.
- 21 Michele BERNATCHEZ and Ginette HARVEY PERRIER, *La Tapisserie* (Montreal: La Documentation québécoise, 1977), 8.
- 22 Luce Vermette, interview with the author, Gatineau, QC, 24 Feb. 2010.

- 23 Future research may uncover information about the visual sources that Dallaire would have used to introduce his students to Lurçat's work. He may have had photographs of Lurçat's designs or of the tapestries woven from same, or he may have invited them to look at his own work, where he emulated the effects of woven works in paint.
- 24 Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, hand-written notes for a talk delivered at the Musée du Québec, 23 October 1992. The Estate of Mariette Rousseau-Vermette.
- 25 Didier PRIOUL, *Dallaire* (Quebec: Musée du Québec, 1999), 136, fn. 27.
- 26 Terry KIRKMAN, "Weaving warmth into buildings," *The Montreal Star*, 26 Dec. 1970.
- 27 "Top Weaver," *Life* magazine, 24 Nov. 1947 (vol. 23, no. 9): 93–95.
- 28 Cyril SIMARD, *Artisanat Québécois* (Montreal: Les Éditions de l'homme, 1975), 420.
- 29 Sandra Alfoldy, interview with Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, 29 Apr. 2005.
- 30 Alexandra WINTON, "Colour and Personality: Dorothy Liebes and American Design," *Archives of American Art Journal* 48:1–2 (2009): 4–17.
- 31 Ibid, 17.
- 32 Sandra Alfoldy, interview with Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, 29 Apr. 2005.
- 33 GARDNER TROY, *The Modernist Textile*, 116.
- 34 Gene BARO, *Anni Albers* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1977), 8.
- 35 Hélène OUVARD, *Wall Tapestries: Mariette Rousseau-Vermette* (Montreal: Éditions Formart, 1974), non-paginated.
- 36 Luce Vermette, interview with the author, 24 Feb. 2010.
- 37 Rose-Marie ARBOUR, "L'apport des femmes peintres au courant post-automatiste : une représentation critique (1955–1965)," in *Les Arts et les années soixante : architecture, arts visuels, chanson, cinéma, design, littérature, musique, théâtre*, ed. Francine Couture (Montreal: Tryptique, 1991), 25–35.
- 38 Artist's statement, *Beauchemin/Vermette*.
- 39 "Hommage à nos courtiers canadiens," *La Presse* (Montreal), 15 Nov. 1958.
- 40 KIRKMAN, "Weaving warmth into buildings."
- 41 DAVIS, *Frontiers of Our Dreams*, 35.
- 42 Suzanne and Laurent LAMY, *La Renaissance des métiers d'art au Canada français*, 26.
- 43 GARDNER TROY, *The Modernist Textile*, 16.
- 44 Letter dated 8 July 1959 to Rousseau-Vermette from Richard B. Simmins, Director, Exhibition Extension Services, National Gallery of Canada. Archival file: Exhibitions in Canada, Canadian Artists Series III, Box 12-4-75, National Gallery of Canada Archives.
- 45 Undated National Gallery of Canada press release, "Canadian Artists Series III," Archival file in *ibid*.
- 46 Installation photographs of Canadian Artists III exhibition taken at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, Ontario, 2–21 June 1960. Archival file in *ibid*.
- 47 Rousseau-Vermette had submitted ten works but actually toured nine works; one of the tapestries after a cartoon by Mousseau was withdrawn at the last moment. Supplying record – outward #473, 15 January 1960 indicates a tapestry after a cartoon by Jean-Paul Mousseau was returned to Rousseau-Vermette. Archival file in *ibid*.
- 48 Artist's statement, *Beauchemin/Vermette*.
- 49 "Exposition de tapisseries de Mariette Rousseau-Vermette," *L'Écho de Bas St. Laurent*, Rimouski, QC, 22 Nov. 1961.

- 50 Sandra ALFOLDY, *Art Textiles of the World* (Brighton, UK: Telos Art Publishing, 2009), 12.
- 51 Leon WHITESON, *Modern Canadian Architecture* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1983), 9–14.
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Mariette Rousseau-Vermette : Le cheminement d'un peintre-lissier, des années quarante aux années soixante

ANNE NEWLANDS

Lorsque Mariette Rousseau-Vermette (1926–2006), artiste québécoise de renommée mondiale, s'est éteinte en 2006, à l'âge de 79 ans, elle laissait derrière elle un riche héritage de plus de 640 tapisseries, dont plusieurs commandes prestigieuses, entre autres du Centre national des arts du Canada, Ottawa (1968); du Eisenhower Theatre, du John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. (1971); du Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto (1981); et du siège social de l'Imperial Tobacco, Montréal (2002). Rousseau-Vermette a eu de nombreuses expositions au cours de sa carrière. Elle a reçu prix et honneurs, y compris l'Ordre du Canada (1976). Ses œuvres se retrouvent dans des collections publiques au Canada et dans d'autres pays. Malgré cette reconnaissance, on a peu écrit sur ses débuts comme artiste, sur le développement de son identité de peintre-lissier et sur ses premiers succès comme artiste moderniste.

Le présent article explore le développement de la carrière de Rousseau-Vermette comme peintre-lissier depuis les années quarante jusqu'aux années soixante. Il étudie ses rapports avec l'art et le métier de la tapisserie au Québec dans les années trente et quarante, sa formation artistique et ses influences, le milieu de l'art au Québec dans les années cinquante et soixante, tel que défini par l'esthétique de l'abstraction géométrique des plasticiens de Montréal, et la réception de son œuvre par la critique dans les années soixante. L'article soutient la thèse que le succès de Rousseau-Vermette en tant qu'artiste moderniste s'enracine dans son adhésion à l'abstraction géométrique comme vocabulaire visuel primaire et son approche à la tapisserie fondée sur la vision moderniste de l'authenticité des matériaux et le rejet de l'ornementation superflue, ainsi que sa collaboration avec des architectes qui recherchaient ses tapisseries, puissantes et méticuleusement tissées, comme complément à la stricte austérité de l'architecture moderne.

Au début du xx^e siècle, la Canadian Handicraft Guild et certaines personnes, comme l'anthropologue Marius Barbeau (1883–1969), cherchent à faire revivre les métiers d'art et du textile traditionnels du Québec. En 1930, le gouvernement du Québec fonde un département des métiers d'art et crée

l'École provinciale des arts domestiques afin d'enseigner aux femmes à filer, à tisser et à crocheter des tapis, et assurer la production de tissus fait main pour le marché domestique et la préservation des anciennes traditions face aux produits fabriqués en usine. En 1926, année de la naissance de Mariette Rousseau, à Trois-Pistoles, Québec, le tissage à la main est répandu aussi bien comme passe-temps que par nécessité. Rousseau avait douze ans quand elle reçut son premier métier à tisser.

La fin des années trente et le début des années quarante ont été un temps propice pour l'art moderniste au Québec. La fondation de la Société d'art contemporain, en 1939, le retour de Paris d'Alfred Pellan (1906–1988), en 1940, et l'exposition des gouaches abstraites surréalistes de Paul-Émile Borduas (1905–1960), en 1942, ouvrent des portes aux jeunes artistes désireux de s'affranchir des traditions conservatrices. Le pont entre l'art moderniste et les arts textiles s'est construit lentement : en 1941, Thérèse Lafrance réalise un tapis croché d'après une œuvre de Pellan, *Le Jongleur*, et, au début des années cinquante, Gaby Pinsonneault exécute des tapis d'après les dessins abstraits de Fernand Leduc (1916–) et de Louis Belzile (1929–). Mariette Rousseau-Vermette est cependant l'une des premières à *tisser* les dessins d'artistes abstraits.

De 1944 à 1948, Rousseau étudie la peinture, le dessin et le tissage à l'École des Beaux-Arts de Québec, où Jean Dallaire (1916–1965) a laissé un souvenir mémorable en tant que professeur. L'enthousiasme de Dallaire pour les peintures et tapisseries de l'artiste français Jean Lurçat, le père de « la nouvelle tapisserie », devait certainement toucher une corde sensible chez Rousseau. En 1948, à la fin de ses études, elle se rend à San Francisco étudier auprès de Dorothy Liebes (1899–1972), créatrice textile renommée et innovatrice qui tissait pour les décorateurs et les architectes. Rousseau suit aussi les cours du California College of Arts and Crafts, à Oakland. Durant cette période, elle pourrait aussi avoir connu l'œuvre d'Anni Albers, influente artiste lissière et designer textile allemande qui, avec d'autres artistes allemands, avait importé aux États-Unis l'art et les idées du Bauhaus ainsi qu'une manière moderniste d'utiliser les textiles.

Rousseau revient au Canada en 1949 et s'installe à Montréal, où elle travaille pour une fabrique de textile avec des architectes d'intérieur et où elle tisse des tissus exclusifs pour des stylistes de mode et des décorateurs. Ses liens d'amitié avec l'artiste montréalais Claude Vermette (1930–2006), dont elle admirait les peintures abstraites aux vives couleurs et les céramiques aux formes audacieuses, la conduit à une rencontre avec les jeunes artistes associés à Paul-Émile Borduas et aux automatistes. Les peintres Fernand Leduc et Jean-Paul Mousseau (1927–1991) allaient, plus tard, lui fournir des dessins pour ses tapisseries.

En 1952, après des voyages en Europe pour voir des œuvres d'art et étudier les techniques de la tapisserie, Rousseau et Vermette se marient et s'installent à Sainte-Adèle, au nord de Montréal. En 1956, Rousseau-Vermette tisse *Rencontre totémique à Chilkat*, d'après un carton abstrait de Fernand Leduc. Cette œuvre a remporté le premier prix dans la section des arts décoratifs des concours artistiques annuels de la province de Québec, en 1957. En 1959, Rousseau-Vermette et Micheline Beauchemin (1929–2009) sont invitées par le Musée des beaux-arts du Canada à participer à une exposition itinérante. En plus des tapisseries aux structures d'une composition précise, avec des bandes de couleur isolées et des formes géométriques, d'après des cartons de Mousseau, Guido Molinari (1933–2004), Louis Belzile, Jean Goguen (1927–1989) et Claude Vermette, elle expose aussi des œuvres qu'elle a elle-même dessinées. À partir de ce moment-là, elle est la seule dessinatrice de toutes ses tapisseries.

Entre 1961 et 1969, Rousseau-Vermette produit environ 220 tapisseries, depuis des petits formats d'un mètre carré jusqu'à d'énormes rideaux de scène fabriqués avec l'aide d'autres tisserands et établissements commerciaux. Les titres des œuvres font largement allusion aux saisons, à son environnement naturel et aux harmonies de couleurs ainsi qu'à son engagement envers un langage visuel abstrait. L'usage qu'elle fait d'un langage géométrique abstrait dans la création de ses tapisseries, les faisait apprécier par les architectes modernistes qui montraient la même sobre esthétique visuelle dans leurs grandes structures angulaires de verre, d'acier et de béton. De plus, la haute qualité technique de son travail, son habileté éprouvée à produire des tapisseries de très grand format, comme *Hiver canadien* (Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec), dès 1961, et la reconnaissance internationale que lui a valu sa participation à la première Biennale Internationale de la Tapisserie de Lausanne, Suisse, et à celles qui ont suivi, ont aussi contribué à sa visibilité et à son succès.

En 1965, le Centre national des arts du Canada, à Ottawa, lui commande un rideau de scène. Pour Expo 67, Rousseau-Vermette produit *Carte du Monde*, pour le pavillon des Jeunesses musicales du Canada, *Flours dans la Toundra*, pour le pavillon du Québec, une tapisserie pour un des appartements d'Habitat 67 par l'architecte Moshe Safdie (1938–) et, dans le cadre de l'exposition sur l'artisanat canadien, elle expose des œuvres dont les larges bandes horizontales de couleur témoignent de son admiration pour l'œuvre du peintre américain Mark Rothko. En 1968, elle s'engage dans le premier de plusieurs projets avec l'architecte vancouverois Arthur Erickson (1924–2009), qui l'avait choisie pour créer une tapisserie pour l'édifice MacMillan Bloedel de Vancouver.

À la fin des années soixante, la réputation de Rousseau-Vermette comme l'un des leaders au Canada parmi les créateurs textiles modernistes était solidement établie. En plus des dizaines de commissions prestigieuses et de collaborations avec des architectes qu'elle ne cessait de recevoir, sa réputation en tant qu'artiste-lissier allait se maintenir grâce à des expositions solo ou en groupe sur la scène nationale et internationale.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette



PETUNIA
Seven Americans, Anderson Galleries

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE
Courtesy of Alfred Stieglitz

Two Patrons, An Exhibition, and a Scrapbook

The Lawren Harris–Georgia O’Keeffe Connection, 1925–1926

SARA J. ANGEL

In the spring of 1938, Lawren S. Harris (1885–1970) and his second wife, Bess, drove more than 3,000 kilometres through ten states and over half the North American continent to relocate in Santa Fe, a sand-blown city renowned for its ethereal light and mystic landscapes.¹ The couple made the move from Hanover, New Hampshire, where they had lived for four years after leaving Toronto in 1934.

The Harrises’ relocation is an event that has been chronicled as happenstance: the couple arrived in the Southwestern city while on a motor holiday and liked it so much they decided to stay.² This account, however, seems unlikely. Aside from the extensive distance that the pair drove to reach their new home – much more an epic journey than a leisurely jaunt – it is hard to imagine that Harris, a man whose life was characterized by precise planning and actions, would have commenced such an ambitious expedition without a fixed destination. This paper explores what was arguably a key motivating factor behind the Harrises’ move to the Southwest: his interest in the American painter Georgia O’Keeffe (1887–1986), who from 1929 onward lived part of every year in Abiquiú, just outside of Santa Fe, as one of the area’s most celebrated residents.³

Since 1984 when Roald Nasgaard proposed a connection between the paintings of Harris and O’Keeffe and argued that both manifest transcendental symbolist content, scholars have drawn parallels between the work of these two artists who painted concurrently and shared an interest in forging an indigenous response to European modernism.⁴ Echoing Nasgaard’s view, Michael D. Hall and Nannette V. Maciejunes situate Harris, along with O’Keeffe, Charles Birchfield, John Marin, Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth, and Arthur Dove, as part of a group of North American avant-garde modernist painters who transformed landscape subjects into visual abstraction.⁵ Sandra Shaul suggests an even stronger link between the pair,

Detail of a page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing a reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Petunia and Coleus*, 1924, pasted upside down. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

stating that Harris's expressionist, geometric work "draws him closer to Georgia O'Keeffe" than any other artist associated with Stieglitz's modern art galleries.⁶

Peter Larisey takes the comparison one step further and suggests that Harris's natural, simplified approach to *North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1926, may have been influenced by the precise lines and simplified surfaces O'Keeffe used in her pastel *Alligator Pear*, 1923.⁷ "Like O'Keeffe," he surmises, "Harris wanted to reduce the shapes of objects to their essential forms so that a picture would suggest a universal meaning."⁸ Finally, Dennis Reid writes that the work of O'Keeffe and her teacher Arthur Dove, "based on an intense nature experience, often symmetrical, and otherwise hieratic in nature," would have encouraged Harris in the mid-thirties when he began to depict an increasing number of abstract forms such as *Winter Comes from the Arctic to the Temperate Zone (Semi-Abstract No. 3)*, ca. 1935.⁹

Despite the range of scholarship comparing Harris's art to that of O'Keeffe, there has been no conclusive evidence that demonstrates which of her paintings he saw, and when. My research will close this gap by revealing that Harris saw O'Keeffe's work through two art patrons: Doris Louise Huestis Mills (later Speirs, 1902–1989), the Canadian painter and art writer, and Katherine Dreier, founder of the New York-based avant-garde art organization, the Société Anonyme, Inc. I will also examine Harris's personal scrapbook, a previously unstudied artifact, which includes no fewer than six reproductions of paintings by O'Keeffe. In light of this documentation, I will compare works made by O'Keeffe and Harris in the mid-twenties to argue that the relationship between these two artists merits further study.

Doris Mills, Bess Housser, and *The Eggplant*, 1924

Although documentation establishes that Harris was familiar with O'Keeffe's painting in the mid-twenties, exactly when he became aware of her work is unknown.¹⁰ His first recorded visit to New York City, a getaway taken with some fellow officers while serving in the Canadian Army, was from 30 December 1917 to 7 January 1918.¹¹ During this trip, it is possible that he visited the celebrated photographer, curator, and publisher Alfred Stieglitz, who had recently mounted O'Keeffe's inaugural solo exhibition at his 291 Gallery. From that show onward O'Keeffe's name appeared regularly in the media as she quickly became known for her powerful personal style, characterized by precise lines, simplified surfaces, and transcendental themes.¹² By the summer of 1918 Stieglitz had made a professional commitment to show and promote O'Keeffe's work regularly.¹³ If her art did not catch Harris's eye while he was an army officer, it certainly would have by 1921 when O'Keeffe became one

of North America's most talked-about painters. As Nancy Hopkins Reily writes, after Stieglitz (who married O'Keeffe in 1924) exhibited her paintings alongside his nude photographs of her, she was "at once on the map [and] everyone knew her name."¹⁴

In 1925, Doris Louise Huestis Mills became the first Canadian to buy a painting by O'Keeffe, a purchase that can be linked to Harris.¹⁵ Biographical entries on Mills, who exhibited with the Group of Seven in 1926, 1928, 1930, and 1931, connect her to Harris through the Toronto Studio Building where she took an atelier in the twenties and worked alongside him, A.Y. Jackson, and J.E.H. MacDonald.¹⁶ In the context of documenting Harris's interest in O'Keeffe, however, there is a much more significant connection between him and Mills and it predates the early twenties.¹⁷

In 1934, Bess Larkin Housser (1890–1969) married Harris, becoming his second wife. A painter and art journalist known for her charm and intellect, Larkin Housser was a close friend of Doris Mills. "I looked up to her as to a goddess," wrote Mills. "She was so beautiful and everything she did seemed so right to me."¹⁸ Larkin Housser was equally admiring of Mills, whom she credited as "the instigator" for encouraging her to start painting.¹⁹ The two women met as girls and had much in common: both were graduates of Toronto's Havergal Ladies College, Christian Scientists, largely self-trained artists, and dedicated supporters of the Group of Seven. Doris and her first husband W. Gordon Mills, an executive with the T. Eaton Company (and later Deputy Minister of National Defence for Naval Services in the Second World War) were among the earliest individuals to collect works of the Group of Seven, while Bess Larkin was married to F.B. Housser (1889–1936), author of the first history of the Group of Seven.²⁰

The friendship between Bess and Fred Housser and Doris and Gordon Mills extended to Harris and his first wife Beatrice. Both Harris and Gordon Mills were members of the Arts and Letters Club, while Harris and Fred Housser had attended St. Andrews College together.²¹ In early 1920, Harris painted *Portrait of Bess*.²² He displayed his painting of Larkin Housser in the Group of Seven's first exhibition (1920) then never again showed it in public.²³

There is little question that, by the time Doris Mills and Bess Housser visited New York City together in May 1925, the women shared a powerful bond with one another and with Harris.²⁴ Well-read and cosmopolitan, Mills regularly turned to him for advice on art. In fact, in 1927, she confessed in her diary how Harris and Bess had become such important influences on her art that she needed to pay less attention to them and trust her own judgment more.²⁵ In light of this, it is hard to imagine that Harris did not have a hand in shaping the itinerary of the two friends, which included a visit to the Anderson Galleries, where earlier that spring Steiglitz had curated an



1 | Georgia O'Keeffe, *The Eggplant*, 1924, oil on canvas, 81.5 × 30.5 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario, Donated in memory of Doris Huestis Speirs by her late husband, Dr. J. Murray Speirs, 1990. (Photo: Art Gallery of Ontario © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/SODRAC, 2011)

exhibition, *Seven Americans*, in which paintings by Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Charles Demuth, Paul Strand, Alfred Stieglitz, and Georgia O'Keeffe had been on view.²⁶

At the Anderson Galleries, Mills became captivated by a vertical painting of an aubergine, executed by O'Keeffe in 1924 and listed in the exhibition's program as *The Egg Plant* (Fig. 1).²⁷ "She has painted [it] perfectly," Mills wrote in her travelogue, "with blue-purple light over it . . . Miss O'Keeffe [sic] is very wonderful, silent, sensitive as a medium, observing and transmuting. She

paints her reaction to nature, water, flowers, etc and rarely uses forms which remind one of things but of feelings, thoughts.”²⁸

Shortly after Mills wrote this entry she purchased the painting. Today, it is the sole O’Keeffe work owned by the Art Gallery of Ontario. In 1925, however, *The Egg Plant* hung in the home of Doris and Gordon Mills, where regular guests, including Lawren Harris, had ample opportunity to view it.

Harris, Katherine Dreier, and *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*, 1926

In November 1926, Harris’s path intersected with O’Keeffe’s again, when both artists displayed their work in *The International Exhibition of Modern Art* at the Brooklyn Museum. The show was arranged by Katherine Dreier, who contacted Harris after admiring his paintings – *Ontario Hill Town*, 1926, and the gold-medal winning *Northern Lake*, ca. 1926 – at the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition, a world’s fair held from May until November in Philadelphia to celebrate the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence.²⁹

Dreier and Harris had an immediate rapport: both were passionate champions of contemporary art, committed theosophists, and admirers of the Russian painter and theorist Wassily Kandinsky (who was named Honorary Vice-President of the Société Anonyme in 1923).³⁰ Dreier had founded the Société Anonyme in 1920, with Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp. The society’s mandate was to promote modern art in the wake of the First World War; according to Dreier, disillusionment toward the avant-garde followed the cataclysmic events of the early twentieth century. Without exposure to contemporary art, she argued, Americans would quickly lose interest in the forms that were “giving expression to the new ideas which were stirring the century.”³¹ After seeing work by Harris in Philadelphia, Dreier invited him to join her organization and to participate in the Brooklyn show at which he was the sole Canadian representative.³²

Approximately three hundred works were on view at the Société Anonyme exhibition, the largest and most significant showing of international modern art since the 1913 Armory Show.³³ Harris displayed two paintings: *Miners’ Houses*, *Glance Bay*, ca. 1925 and *Mountain Forms* (date unknown).³⁴ He was one of 106 artists from 23 countries – among them Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, Fernand Léger, Marcel Duchamp, Franz Marc, El Lissitzky, and Georgia O’Keeffe, whose paintings *Grey Tree*, *Lake George* (Fig. 2) and *Abstraction II* (Fig. 3) were both on show.³⁵

On the evening of November 19, 1926, O’Keeffe and Steiglitz attended the opening of the exhibition.³⁶ Although there is no documented account of



2 | Georgia O'Keeffe, *Grey Tree, Lake George*, 1925, oil on canvas, 91.4 × 76.2 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Alfred Stieglitz Collection, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe, 1986, Accession Number 1987.377.2. (Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art © 2010 Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York)

Harris's presence at the Brooklyn Museum that night, it is hard to imagine that he did not encounter O'Keeffe and her work at the show. Harris made visits to New York in the late fall of 1926 to meet with Dreier in an effort to bring the Société Anonyme exhibition to the Art Gallery of Toronto.³⁷ For him it was "the most representative, most stimulating and the best exhibition of modern art so far shown on this continent," and its presentation in Canada was a matter of national interest.³⁸ As he wrote to Dreier, Canadian artists would not be able to forge a nationalistic response to contemporary art until they had first-hand experience of it.³⁹ Thanks to Harris's efforts, the Art Gallery of Toronto's board committed to showing the exhibition from 2–24 April 1927, the first display of avant-garde art in Canada.⁴⁰

Despite Harris's extensive involvement in *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*, there is no record of his intersection with O'Keeffe's painting at the 1926 show. One potential explanation for this lack of documentation is that, despite her participation in the Brooklyn exhibition, O'Keeffe never



3 | Georgia O'Keeffe, *Abstraction II (Pink Tulip)*, 1926, oil on canvas, 91.5 × 76.2 cm, The Baltimore Museum of Art: Bequest of Mabel Garrison Siemonn, in Memory of her husband George Siemonn, BMA 1964.II.I3. (Photo: The Baltimore Museum of Art © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/SODRAC, 2011)

joined the Société Anonyme.⁴¹ Another possible reason is that when the exhibition did come to Toronto in early 1927, O'Keeffe's paintings were not included. Owing to Stieglitz's concern for their safety, works by O'Keeffe, Stieglitz, Dove, Hartley, and Marin were all omitted from the Canadian show.⁴²

However, it is important to consider O'Keeffe's contribution to the Brooklyn exhibition particularly with respect to Harris's writing in defence of *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*. When the avant-garde show opened its doors in Canada, its unfamiliar-looking works became a source of media scorn and ridicule. "Cosmic comedies" and the "greatest freaks of art" sneered the *Toronto Star*, which also labeled the exhibition's artists a "weird mixture of juveniles, Aztecs, and intellectuals."⁴³

In response to widespread criticism and other angry outbursts about the show, Harris published "Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions: An

Appreciation” in the *Canadian Forum*. His goal was to educate readers about contemporary painting and to illuminate some of its philosophical underpinnings. Most of the works in the exhibition, Harris explained, required “a new way of seeing.” One had to become familiar with a fresh visual idiom to enjoy “a new, clear and thrilling communication.”⁴⁴ For the sake of greater comprehensibility, Harris identified two categories of abstract painting: representational works based on “naturalistic sources” and non-objective art based on “inner seeing.”⁴⁵ While Harris defended both categories, he declared a bias toward the first category of avant-garde painting, which he described as “the most convincing pictures,” for their ability to convey “a sense of order in a purged, pervading vitality that was positively spiritual.”⁴⁶

As Elizabeth Turner and Marjorie Balge-Crozier demonstrate in *Georgia O’Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*, O’Keeffe’s art, no matter how closely it flirted with abstraction, was always rooted in the thing she was painting.⁴⁷ The two works that O’Keeffe had on display at the Brooklyn exhibition exemplify this quality as well as Harris’s description of abstract art based on “naturalistic sources.” *Grey Tree, Lake George* is the final work of seven in a series of canvases, each 61 × 91.5 centimeters, in which O’Keeffe depicted white tree trunks twisting amid foliage. Featuring spindly, curving, and highly expressive branches, O’Keeffe anthropomorphizes and enlivens nature’s grey and green woody limbs to present an abstract vision based in nature.⁴⁸ Similarly, although the title of O’Keeffe’s other work in the Brooklyn exhibition, *Abstraction II*, signals that the painting does not represent a familiar object, in fact its arcs of chartreuse and ripples of yellow depict a figurative image based in nature: a cropped view of a tulip’s interior.⁴⁹

In addition to the fact that Harris would have seen *Abstraction II* in the Brooklyn exhibition, there is another important reason to consider this painting in relation to his art. It is one of a series of large-scale flower paintings that O’Keeffe began in 1924, a body of work for which she would become particularly renowned. We know that Harris was among those who studied and considered O’Keeffe’s flower paintings because his scrapbook contains *Petunia and Coleus*, one of eight floral works that O’Keeffe exhibited in 1925.⁵⁰

The Lawren Harris Scrapbook and Six O’Keeffe Reproductions

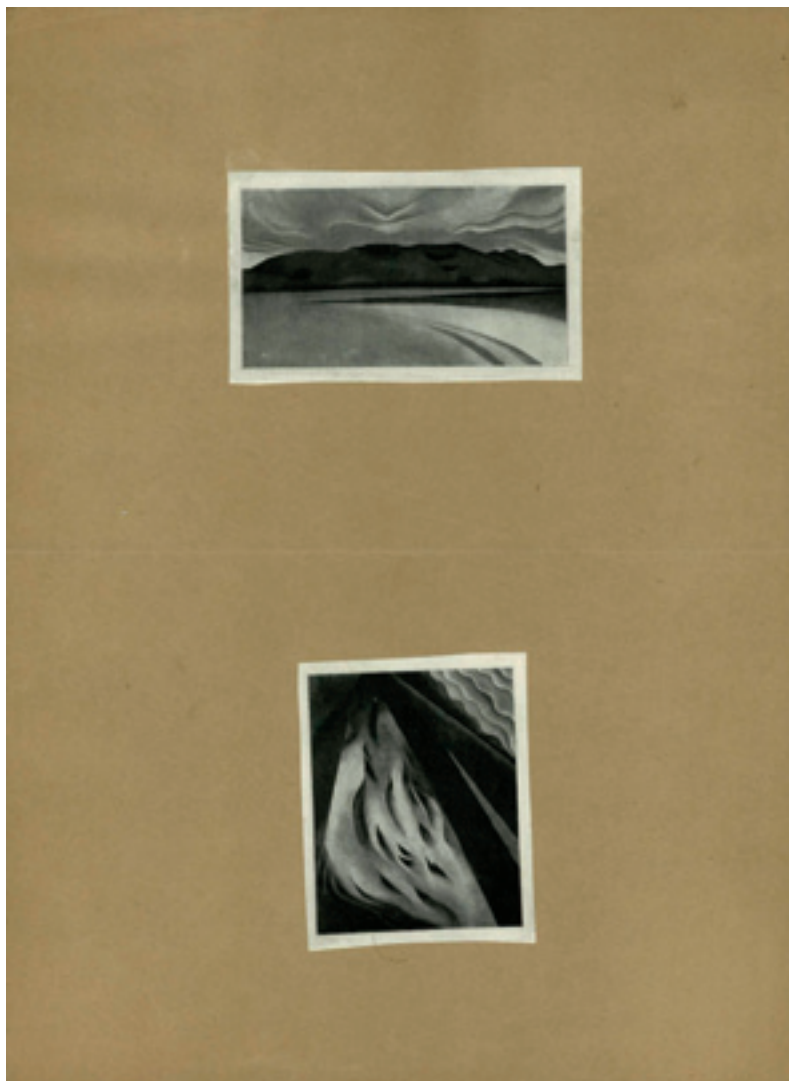
Scrapbooks are by nature private, eccentric, and idiosyncratic. Moreover, according to the historians Katherine Ott, Susan Tucker, and Patricia P. Buckler, in form, scrapbooks more often resemble a kitchen junk drawer than a thoughtfully composed visual narrative. As they write in their introduction

to *The Scrapbook in American Life*, “Some scrapbooks spend their entire existence unbound.” Such volumes wait the day “when the gatherer will become the compiler.”⁵¹

Lawren Harris’s scrapbook might be classified in this way.⁵² It is housed at Library and Archives Canada and has been catalogued as pertaining to the years 1922–1960. However, most of its vertical, legal sized, heavy, parcel-paper-coloured pages, which measure 36.5 x 28 cm, contain pasted ephemera that is undated and uncaptioned. Moreover, the scrapbook also seems to have been a place for storing loose keepsakes, presumably to be pasted in at a later time. Such items include invitations, postcards, art exhibition programs, and reproductions of artworks. Also clipped but loose and unglued is a range of newspaper and magazine stories from Canadian and international publications including *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Canadian Forum*, *The Washington Star*, and the *Santa Fe New Mexican*.⁵³

Since Library and Archives Canada stores the pages of Harris’s scrapbook in an unbound form and because most of its folios are undated, it is impossible to read the volume as a continuous narrative or to give it any sort of precise chronology. Nonetheless, the album does provide valuable insight into Harris’s interest in Georgia O’Keeffe. In his scrapbook, Harris pasted reproductions of works by Canadian and international artists, including Alexander Archipenko, Constantin Brancusi, Pieter Brueghel, Honoré Daumier, Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974), Rockwell Kent, Thoreau MacDonald (1901–1989), Aristide Maillol, John Marin, Georgia O’Keeffe, Auguste Rodin, Henri Rousseau and Tom Thomson (1877–1917). However, of all the international artists whose work Harris clipped and collected, only two individuals are represented by more than three examples: Rockwell Kent, represented by nine works, and Georgia O’Keeffe, represented by six works. The works by O’Keeffe, all executed in the early 1920s, are as follows: *Lake George* and *Blue and Green Music* (pasted upside down) (Fig. 4a), *Alligator Pear* (Fig. 4b), *The Flagpole (II)* (Fig. 4c), *Petunia and Coleus* (pasted upside down) (Fig. 4d), and *Spring/The Flagpole* (Fig. 4e).⁵⁴

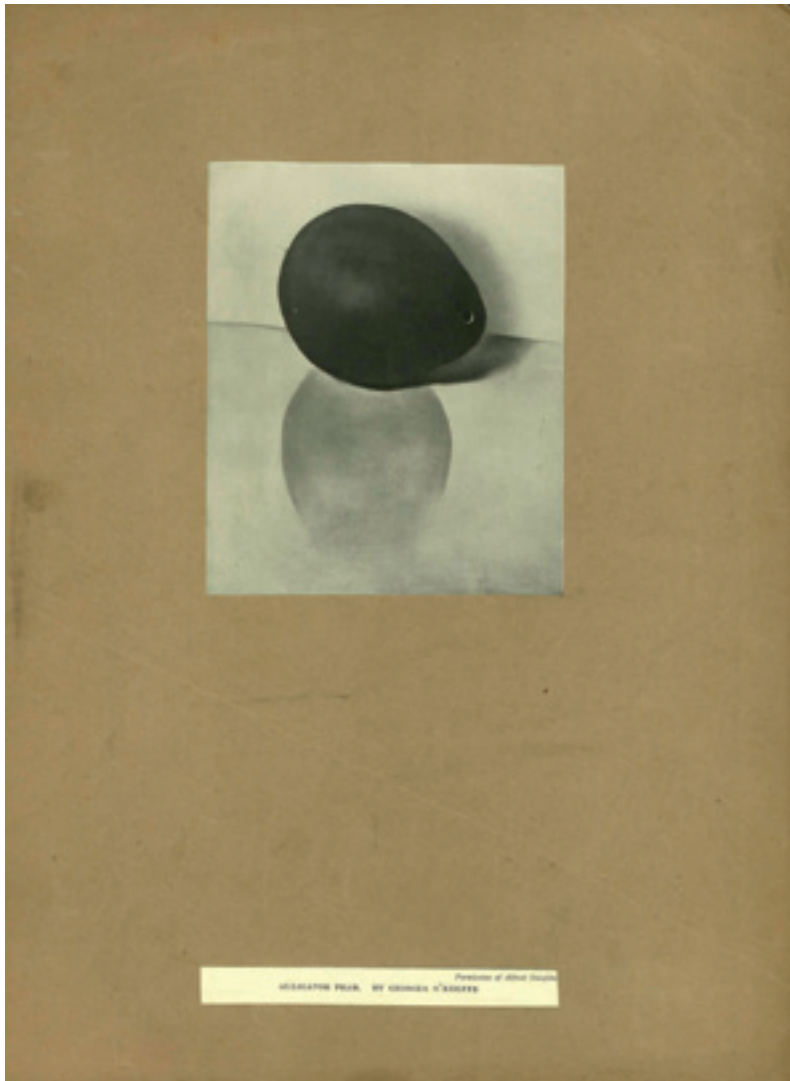
To understand what these works might have meant to Harris, it is helpful to take a step back and consider the scrapbook as a product of its time. By the late nineteenth century, when the deluge of printed matter – ticket stubs, advertising cards, photographs, candy wrappers, news media – reached unprecedented heights, scrapbooks provided a way to create a sense of order.⁵⁵ “We all read, but not with enough purpose,” wrote E.W. Gurley, an early advocate of the scrapbook. He advised that a more focused understanding of print media could be achieved through the regulation, organization, and storage of material in “the well preserved pages of a good scrapbook.”⁵⁶



4a | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproductions of *Lake George*, 1922 (above) and *Blue and Green Music*, 1921, pasted upside down (below) by Georgia O’Keeffe. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

By the time Harris was a schoolboy, educators had long been promoting scrapbooks not only as a means to encourage mental concentration, improve visual literacy and train the mind’s eye, but also as a valuable tool for teaching art.⁵⁷ The process of cutting and pasting – skills that emphasized order and repetition – and the collection of such cultural iconography as flags, stamps, and reproductions of noteworthy paintings turned scrapbooking into a significant exercise for anyone seeking to create a personalized art notebook.⁵⁸

Harris may be counted as one of several early twentieth-century artists, most famously the German Dadaist Hannah Höch, who used the scrapbook as an aid to creating their work.⁵⁹ Although they were using a mass-cultural form, these artists pioneered an authentic genre, creating an entirely unique



4b | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Alligator Pear*, 1923. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

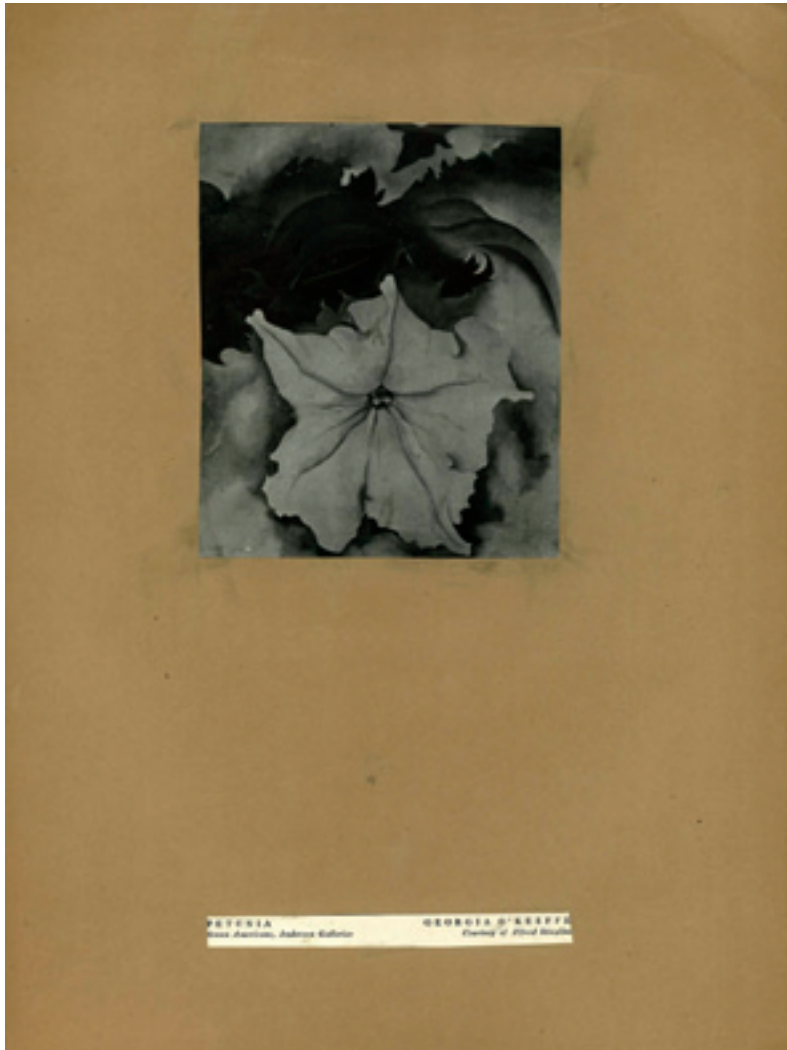
product. Ott, Tucker, and Buckler support this point and argue that, in this respect, the scrapbook is similar to the artist’s book, and might be understood as such.⁶⁰ Furthermore, they suggest that although these volumes represent enigmatic accounts of the self, their collected pages contribute to a larger narrative of their makers. Despite the coded nature of the scrapbook, as Martha Langford states in *Suspended Conversations*, “the album gives voice to the intensity of human experience.”⁶¹ While her words reference books of collected photographs, this insight can be applied to the Harris scrapbook. Its contents are items that were separated and preserved from the detritus of Harris’s everyday life – ephemera that was valued, which provides a clue to a moment of particular intensity in his life: the mid-twenties.



THE FLAGPOLE (THIRD PARTIAL), BY GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

4c | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *The Flagpole (II)*, 1924. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

Although the contents included in Harris’s scrapbook spans approximately forty years, it contains few folios featuring material that is both pasted down and dated beyond the late twenties. By the thirties, the scrapbook seems to have become more of a repository for clippings than a thoughtfully composed book. Moreover, while Harris provides no caption information as to where he found the O’Keeffe reproductions in the scrapbook, with the exception of *Alligator Pear*, it can be established that they were published in the mid-twenties.⁶² These facts reveal that just before and after 1925 was a particularly intense and noteworthy time in Harris’s life with respect to his observation of O’Keeffe’s work.



4d | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Petunia and Coleus*, 1924, pasted upside down. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

In *Georgia O’Keeffe: Catalogue Raisonné*, Barbara Buhler Lynes includes a publication history of reproductions of O’Keeffe’s early painting until 1946.⁶³ Based on Lynes’s inventory and the fact that the Harris scrapbook contains so few pasted and dated items after the late twenties, we can determine where and when the O’Keeffe images in his scrapbook were found. The *Lake George* reproduction came from the 15 October 1923 issue of *Vogue* magazine where it was part of an article called “Why Modern Art?”⁶⁴ Harris clipped *The Flagpole (II)* from the May 1925 issue of the American art and culture journal *The Dial*, where it was captioned “The Flagpole Second Painting.” No further notation of this work exists other than in Steiglitz’s records and today it is



THE FLAGPOLE (SECOND PAINTING), BY GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

4e | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Spring/The Flagpole*, 1923. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

assumed that the painting is lost.⁶⁵ *Petunia and Coleus* was also published just once before 1946, in the April 1925 issue of *The Arts*.⁶⁶ *Spring/The Flagpole* can be traced to the May 1925 issue of *The Dial*, the only place it was published before 1946.⁶⁷ *Blue and Green Music* was first published in *Vogue* in 1923; it was alongside *Lake George* in the magazine and it appears this way in Harris’s scrapbook.⁶⁸

The records of Doris Mills and Katherine Dreier leave no doubt that Harris saw O’Keeffe’s work in person in 1925 and 1926. Harris’s scrapbook reveals that during this same period he not only observed the media’s attention to O’Keeffe’s painting, he was moved to clip, save, and store samples of it, singling out her art from the work of others. From these facts, the following questions may be asked: Did O’Keeffe’s painting have an impact on the evolution of Harris’s own work during this period? And if so, what was it?

Harris Reconsidered

In the fall of 1921, Harris left Toronto to visit the north shore of Lake Superior. Within months of this journey he began creating work that set him apart from his colleagues in the Group of Seven. The full extent of Harris's artistic evolution is exemplified in *Above Lake Superior*, 1921–22.⁶⁹ Compared to *Beaver Swamp, Algoma*, 1920, painted less than two years earlier, the forms of *Above Lake Superior* are pared back, its colours are muted, and its brushwork is far less visible. As Jeremy Adamson writes, the painting is the artist's most pivotal work and one that "no earlier picture prepares us for."⁷⁰

In the first commentary on *Above Lake Superior*, written in 1926 by F.B. Housser, Harris's stylistic leap is connected to his contemporaneous embrace of theosophy, a doctrine that holds all religions as spiritual attempts to evolve to greater perfection.⁷¹ While it is indisputable that theosophy had an impact on Harris's painting, in particular his reduction of forms, Housser and subsequent scholars have overemphasized its importance as the key explanation for the artist's stylistic transformation.⁷² Despite the prevailing myth that the Group of Seven's style came about because its members divested themselves of foreign techniques and turned exclusively to the Canadian landscape for direction, and although Harris himself insisted that his art had no known ancestry, his interest in O'Keeffe's paintings as evidenced in his scrapbook, as well as his first-hand encounter with her art in the mid-twenties, demands that his artistic development be revisited in light of these influences.⁷³

This evolution includes a new composite form that emerged fully in Harris's painting by 1923: oscillating, undulating bands of colour. In Harris's *Above Lake Superior*, 1922, the bands can be found in cloud patterns set in the sky; in *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* (Fig. 5), the form is evident in the sky's striations and the water's waves. The moving stripes of colour in both of these paintings are strikingly similar to the diagonal ripples found in O'Keeffe's *Blue and Green Music* (Fig. 4a), a work that Harris saw in 1923 and whose reproduction he included in his scrapbook.

Although by 1925 Harris's subject matter differed from O'Keeffe's (landscape was his focus, hers was primarily still life, especially fruit and flowers), closer attention must be paid to how *The Eggplant* may have influenced his art. Part of a series of works experimenting with Cubist faceting, *The Eggplant* is an example of how O'Keeffe employed a reductive formalism and a flat, even application of paint to distill a single subject to its essence.⁷⁴ Harris used a similar approach in his 1925 painting *Mount Temple* (Fig. 6), a work that, like *The Eggplant*, allows one natural element to become the central focus of the canvas. Although *Mount Temple* is based on an actual mountain, one that Harris saw when he first visited the Rockies in 1924, he



5 | Lawren S. Harris, *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior*, ca. 1923, oil on canvas, 94 × 114.3 cm, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Bequest of H.S. Southam, C.M.G., LL.D., 1966. (Photo: Stewart Sheppard and the Art Gallery of Hamilton)



6 | Lawren S. Harris, *Mount Temple*, 1925, oil on canvas, 122 × 134.6 cm, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest. (Photo: Stewart Sheppard and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts)



7 | Lawren S. Harris, *North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1926, oil on canvas, 102.2 × 128.3 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. (Photo: © NGC)

paints this natural form with a decidedly stylized use of light and colour that animates the foreground and serves to draw the eye deeper into the composition – an approach similar to O’Keeffe’s depiction of *The Eggplant*.

Harris’s *North Shore, Lake Superior* (Fig. 7) is a third painting worth considering in light of the art by O’Keeffe that he had seen and contemplated by the mid-twenties. One of the most notable features of the painting is that it marks an early instance of Harris honing in on his subject, presenting it close to the painting’s foreground. Whereas Harris views landscape from a distance in *Mount Temple*, his *North Shore, Lake Superior* presents nature up close and with an unprecedented intensity. In this respect the painting echoes two works by O’Keeffe, both published in May 1925, and both found in the Harris scrapbook: *Spring/The Flagpole* (Fig. 4e) and *The Flagpole (II)* (Fig. 4c). Like



8 | Lawren S. Harris, *Lake Superior III (Lake Superior)*, ca. 1928, oil on canvas, 86.1 × 102.2 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Vincent Massey Bequest, 1968.
(Photo: © NGC)

these works by O’Keeffe, *North Shore, Lake Superior* includes a dramatically low horizon line – one far closer to the painting’s base than can be found in any previous works by Harris. As well, *North Shore, Lake Superior* shares a dominant compositional element with both paintings by O’Keeffe: a tall vertical form that projects from the earth and intersects with the sky.

Another parallel between *North Shore, Lake Superior* and O’Keeffe’s art lies in how Harris presents an abstracted view of his subject. A.Y. Jackson, who was with Harris when he found the damaged tree trunk depicted in the work, wrote that it was not within sight of a lake.⁷⁵ From this description we might conclude that Harris’s depiction of a tree trunk, lit from the side, exaggerated in its three-dimensionality, and overlooking water, represents a personalized vision of his subject. At its core *North Shore, Lake Superior* is a stylized consideration of nature – much like O’Keeffe’s approach to her dramatically rendered tulip in *Abstraction II*.

A final point of comparison might be made between Harris’s *Lake Superior III* (Fig. 8) and *Grey Tree, Lake George* – the other painting by O’Keeffe that Harris saw at the Brooklyn exhibition. Like O’Keeffe’s two flag paintings in the Harris scrapbook, this work features a low horizon, a dominant perpendicular motif, and the presentation of its subject matter as radically near. But a new element also enters this work. As Peter Larisey writes, there is an important distinction between *Lake Superior III* and Harris’s earlier paintings of the region: its trees are “anthropomorphic . . . as they bend or lean toward the light.”⁷⁶ Only one year earlier Harris had encountered a similar vision of nature in O’Keeffe’s *Grey Tree, Lake George*. Arguably, her attenuated and life-like branches offered a source of inspiration for Harris’s otherworldly and reaching tree in *Lake Superior III*.

The New Mexico Connection

Starting in 1929, Harris faced numerous challenges both in his professional and personal life that would bring his painting to a near standstill by 1930. He was committed to the promotion of modern art yet he could not wholeheartedly embrace abstraction; he continued to promote Canadian culture yet his own painting increasingly presented an interest in a universal consciousness. Moreover, Harris had fallen in love with Bess Housser, for whom he would leave his wife of twenty-four years, Beatrice.⁷⁷ In 1934, seeking refuge from disapproving friends and relatives in Toronto, the couple moved to Hanover, New Hampshire, where Harris’s uncle and friend William Kilborne Stewart was a professor at Dartmouth College.⁷⁸

Further evidence of Harris’s connection to O’Keeffe during this period comes from Emily Carr (1871–1945). While the late twenties marked a time

of artistic stagnation for Harris, the opposite was true for Carr, whom he mentored and counted as a friend from the time of their first meeting in 1927. Harris was a tireless supporter of Carr's work and arranged for her to meet Katherine Dreier in New York in April 1930. Dreier then introduced Carr to O'Keeffe, who had just returned from a four-month stay at the Taos home of the American arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan.⁷⁹ There O'Keeffe had found volcanic mountains and empty deserts that spoke to her; she learned of prehistoric Indian culture in which colour symbolism played an active role and vibrant native ritual in worship of the land and universe.⁸⁰ Following this experience the artist wrote, "I feel so alive that I am apt to crack at any moment," and resolved to spend a part of every year in New Mexico.⁸¹

Carr witnessed O'Keeffe's enthusiasm for the Southwest first hand when she viewed the artist's recent Taos paintings at An American Place, the gallery Stieglitz opened in 1929.⁸² While Carr's correspondence with Harris has been lost, there is a considerable possibility that she told him how these works affected her. As Sharon Udall writes, after Carr met O'Keeffe her art began "to pulsate with the force of vibrations, as O'Keeffe's work."⁸³ Even if Harris did not learn of O'Keeffe's paintings from Carr, he would have read about them. The press covered O'Keeffe's 1930 exhibition extensively, reporting that the New Mexico work marked a decided change in her painting and a fresh, spiritual, indigenous, and abstracted approach to landscape.⁸⁴

Harris's art also underwent a fundamental transition in the early thirties. Within weeks of his arrival in New Hampshire, Harris began to paint again after a two-year hiatus and his compositions moved toward a new type of abstraction, one based on inner seeing. It was an evolution that would be fully realized only when he moved to New Mexico four years later and became part of the Transcendental Painting Group, composed of artists who were concerned with the development and presentation of various types of non-representational painting.⁸⁵ For Harris, an artist who identified himself as a painter of Canadian landscapes, this stylistic shift was monumental. Moreover, it was one that defined the rest of his artistic career.

By 1939, Lawren and Bess Harris were living happily in Santa Fe where they were members of the city's vibrant arts scene. In mid-February of that year Doris Mills received a letter from Bess, packed with accounts of her friend's new Southwestern home. The note also included details of her travels with Harris to New York City earlier that month. As part of their trip out east, Bess told Mills how they visited Steiglitz and had a "tender and lovely" time.⁸⁶ The familiarity implied in this phrase suggests that by the late thirties, Harris and Bess's relationship with Steiglitz was hardly new. This gives further credence to the assertion that the Harrises ended up in Santa Fe by intention rather than coincidence. It is a subject that, along with

Harris's scrapbook, his encounters with O'Keeffe's work, and the connections between his painting and hers, belongs to a much larger story: the account of how in the mid-twenties Harris began to withdraw from a distinctly Canadian idiom to contemplate new questions of style and new directions for his art.

NOTES

I am grateful to Professor Mark A. Cheetham, Professor Dennis Reid, and Professor Martha Langford for their encouragement, guidance, and insightful comments on this essay. I would also like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for its support.

- 1 For more on Santa Fe and its mystic appeal to artists see Sharyn ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Santa Fe Art Colony, 1900–1942* (Santa Fe: Gerald Peters Gallery, 1987), 11–30.
- 2 Peter LARISEY, “Chronology,” in *Atma Buddhi Manas: The Later Works of Lawren Harris*, ed. Dennis Reid (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1985), 105. Also see Ian M. THOM, “Lawren Stewart Harris: A Canadian Painter,” in *Lawren Stuart Harris: A Painter's Progress* (New York: The Americas Society, 2000), 39.
- 3 On O'Keeffe's division of her time between New York and New Mexico see Roxana ROBINSON, *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 313–45.
- 4 Roald NASGAARD, *The Mystic North: Symbolist Landscape Painting in Northern Europe and North America, 1890–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 203–204.
- 5 Michael D. HALL and Nannette V. MACIEJUNES, “On the Middle Border: Charles Burchfield Revisited” in *The Paintings of Charles Burchfield: North by Midwest* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., in association with the Columbus Museum of Art, 1997), 20. Ann Davis also echoes Nasgaard's view, stating that both Harris and O'Keeffe shared a concern with the spiritual; see Ann DAVIS, *The Logic of Ecstasy: Canadian Mystical Painting, 1920–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 6.
- 6 Sandra SHAUL, *The Modern Image: Cubism and the Realist Tradition* (Edmonton: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1982), 16.
- 7 For reference to *North Shore, Lake Superior*, see Peter LARISEY, S.J., *Light for a Cold Land: Lawren Harris's Work and Life – An Interpretation* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), plate 24. For reference to *Alligator Pear*, see Barbara BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Catalogue Raisonné* (New Haven: Yale University Press; Washington: National Gallery of Art; Abiquiú, NM: Georgia O'Keeffe Foundation, 1999), 224; entry 414.
- 8 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 95–96.
- 9 REID, *Atma Buddhi Manas*, 23–24, 65.

- 10 On Harris's awareness of O'Keeffe and Stieglitz, see Charles C. HILL, "Interview with Doris Huestis Speirs, 15 October 1973," *Canadian Painting in the Thirties Exhibition Records* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada Fonds, National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, 2008), 10.
- 11 Peter LARISEY, "Chronology," in *Lawren S. Harris: Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes 1906–1930*, ed. Jeremy Adamson (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1978), 15. Although not all trips were documented after this one, Harris made several visits to New York City; see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 126.
- 12 For an example of early writing on O'Keeffe, see William MURRELL FISHER, "The Georgia O'Keeffe Drawings and Paintings at '291,'" *Camera Work* (June 1917): 5.
- 13 Barbara BUHLER LYNES, *O'Keeffe, Stieglitz and the Critics: 1916–1929* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989), 8–9.
- 14 Nancy HOPKINS REILY, *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Private Friendship* (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2007), 289.
- 15 Judith PARKER, "Speirs, Doris Huestis," in *A Dictionary of Canadian Artists* 9 (online), compiled by Anne Newlands and Judith Parker, National Gallery of Canada. Accessed 2 Aug. 2011, <http://www.pro.rcip-chin.gc.ca/bd-dl/aac-aic-eng.jsp>.
- 16 Ibid. Also see the entry "Speirs, Doris Huestis" in *The International Register of Profiles* (Cambridge, UK, 1976).
- 17 In the city archives of Pickering, Ontario (where the Houssers lived), photographs of the Harrisses with the Millses in 1919, confirm that their friendship predated Doris's studio rental. See HS-Art165, Pickering Township Historical Society Fonds, Pickering Public Library. Provenance: Doris Huestis Speirs to Pickering Historical Society to PPL.
- 18 Doris Speirs to Lawren Harris, 6 Oct. 1969. Ms Spiers, D. Coll 319, Box 5, folder 6, Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library (Hereafter referred to as the "Speirs Collection").
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Charles C. HILL, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd.), 217, 226. F.B. HOUSSEY's book is *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1926).
- 21 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 4.
- 22 For a reference to Harris's portrait of Bess Housser, see HILL, *The Group of Seven*, 309. For more on Harris painting this portrait, see Ross KING, *Defiant Spirits: The Modernist Revolution and The Group of Seven* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre and Kleinburg: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2010), 378–79.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 For documentation of the trip to New York by Doris Mills and Bess Housser, see Doris Spiers, 14 May 1925, Diary 1924–26, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 25 Doris Speirs, diary entry, 12 Aug. 1927, Diary 1927, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 26 The full title of the exhibition was *Alfred Steiglitz Presents Seven Americans: 159 Paintings, Photographs & Things, Recent & Never Before Publicly Shown by Arthur G. Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Charles Demuth, Paul Strand, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Alfred Steiglitz*. The exhibition was on display from 9–28 Mar. 1925. For a brochure of the exhibition, the history and how it entered into the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, see *The Eggplant* Registration file, The Art Gallery of Ontario.

- 27 For reference to this work, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 246, item 453. Today, its title is *The Eggplant*.
- 28 Doris Speirs, diary entry, 14 May 1925, Diary 1925, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 29 Dreier to Harris, 26 Aug. 1926. Katherine S. Dreier Papers / Société Anonyme Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, YCAL MSS 101 (Hereafter referred to as the “Dreier Papers”). For reference to *Ontario Hill Town*, see LARISEY, plate 16. For reference to *Northern Lake*, see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 74.
- 30 For a more detailed discussion of the shared interests of Harris and Dreier, see SHAUL, “Katherine Dreier: The Société Anonyme and the Canadian Connection,” in *The Modern Image*, 9–10.
- 31 Katherine DREIER, “Intrinsic Significance in Modern Art,” *Three Lectures on Modern Art* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 5.
- 32 Dreier to Harris, 19 Nov. 1926. Société Anonyme File, Art Gallery of Ontario.
- 33 Ruth L. BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), xviii.
- 34 Ibid. *Miners House* is in the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario. *Mountain Form* was exhibited as an undated work. Today the painting is unaccounted for; it was in storage at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1934. After that there is no record of it. See letter of Dennis Reid, Art Gallery of Ontario to Sandra Shaul, 30 Apr. 1981.
- 35 For reference to both these works, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 288 (*Grey Tree, Lake George*, item 512) and 265 (*Abstraction II*, item 478). In the catalogue raisonné, *Abstraction II* is referred to as *Pink Tulip*.
- 36 Hunter DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP, *Full Bloom: The Art and Life of Georgia O’Keeffe* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 269.
- 37 BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition*, 63.
- 38 Lawren Harris letter to the Exhibition Committee, Art Gallery of Toronto, December 1926, reprinted in L.R. PFAFF, “Lawren Harris and the International Exhibition of Modern Art: Rectifications to the Toronto catalogue (1927) and Some Critical Comments,” *RACAR* (1984): 84.
- 39 Harris to Dreier, December 1926, Dreier Papers.
- 40 Christine BOYANOSKI, *Permeable Border* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989), 20.
- 41 While Dreier asked Stieglitz and O’Keeffe to join the Société Anonyme, only the former became a member as O’Keeffe shied away from joining group organizations. However, Stieglitz convinced O’Keeffe that the 1926 Brooklyn exhibition was of such significance that she participated in it, along with other members of Stieglitz’s circle, including Arthur Dove, Charles Demuth, and John Marin. See BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition*, 50.
- 42 Ibid., 222, footnote 52. Bohan cites Stieglitz’s letter to William Henry Talbot, 21 Sept. 1926, in which he addresses his concern that the frames of O’Keeffe’s paintings not be scratched, as “any markings would destroy the perfection of O’Keeffe’s work and presentation.”
- 43 “Art Gallery Now Contains Greatest Freaks of Art,” *Toronto Star*, 31 Mar. 1927. “Exit Scrambled Zoo Exhibition,” *Toronto Star*, 25 Apr. 1927.
- 44 Lawren HARRIS, “Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions: An Appreciation,” *The Canadian Forum* 7 (May 1927): 240. Also in the same issue was a scathing assessment of the show by Franz Johnston, a former member of the Group of Seven (who

resigned in 1922), entitled, “An Objection” in which he referred to the works as “abortions in paint” and “mental miscarriages” claiming that the artists who had created the works were “more dangerous than many incarcerated in asylums for the insane.”

- 45 Later in 1949, when Harris wrote “An Essay on Abstract Painting” for the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, he identified three categories of abstract art (images inspired by nature; non-objective painting conveying a central idea through formal means, and autonomous works composed only of formal elements with no predetermined idea). See Joyce ZEMANS, “Abstract and Non-objective Art in English Canada” in *The Visual Arts in Canada*, ed. Anne Whitelaw, Brian Foss, and Sandra Paikowsky (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2010), 164.
- 46 HARRIS, “Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions.”
- 47 See Elizabeth TURNER, “The Real Meaning of Things” and Marjorie BALGE-CROZIER, “Still Life Redefined” in *Georgia O’Keeffe: The Poetry of Things* (Washington: The Phillips Collection, 1999), 12–13, 52.
- 48 DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP, *Full Bloom*, 251.
- 49 For a further description of this work, see BUHLER LYNES, *O’Keeffe, Stieglitz, and the Critics*, 58 and 157, and Sarah WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O’Keeffe. The Early Years* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 132.
- 50 BUHLER LYNES, *O’Keeffe, Stieglitz, and the Critics*, 335. Of the 30 works O’Keeffe exhibited in 1925, 8 were flowers. For a reference to *Petunia and Coleus*, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 252, item 463.
- 51 Katherine OTT, Susan TUCKER, and Patricia P. BUCKLER, “An Introduction to the History of Scrapbooks” in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, ed. Katherine Ott, Susan Tucker, and Patricia P. Buckler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 12.
- 52 Scrapbook 1922–1960, vol. 12, Lawren S. Harris Fonds, MG30-D208, Library and Archives Canada.
- 53 Other papers that Harris clipped include *The Canadian Review*, *The Detroit News*, *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Winnipeg Free Press*, *Saturday Night Magazine* (Toronto), *The Listener* (London), *The Mail and Empire* (Toronto), *The Toronto Telegram*, *The Toronto Star*, and *Weekend Magazine* (New Zealand).
- 54 For colour reproductions and further commentary on these works, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*; 185 for *Blue and Green Music* (item 344); 211 for *Lake George* (item 391); 224 for *Alligator Pear* (item 414); 240 for *Spring/The Flagpole* (item 446); and 252 for *Petunia and Coleus* (item 463).
- 55 Maurice RICHARDS, *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 283–85.
- 56 E.W. GURLEY, *Scrap-Books and How to Make Them* (New York: Authors’ Publishing, 1880), 10–11, 13, 51.
- 57 By 1835 the use of scrapbooks was prolific enough that a Hartford Connecticut publisher founded a periodical entitled *The Scrapbook*, which described the hobby of scrapbooks as keeping a blank book in which pictures, newspaper cuttings and the like were pasted for safekeeping. See OTT, TUCKER, and BUCKLER, “An Introduction to the History of Scrapbooks,” 8.
- 58 Grace STORM, *The Social Studies in the Primary Grades* (Chicago: Lyons and Carnahan, 1931), 267.

- 59 Melissa A. JOHNSON, "Souvenirs of Amerika: Hannah Höch's Weimar-Era Mass-Media Scrapbook" in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, eds. Ott, Tucker, and Buckler, 135–52.
- 60 OTT, TUCKER, and BUCKLER, *The Scrapbook in American Life*, 12.
- 61 Martha LANGFORD, *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 21.
- 62 According to Buhler Lynes, *Alligator Pear* was exhibited in 1924 at the Anderson Gallery and then in 1934 in New York at an American Place before becoming part of a private collection in Paris, France. The author provides no record of publication for this work. See BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 224.
- 63 In the Buhler Lynes's O'Keeffe catalogue raisonné, the publication history of O'Keeffe's paintings goes up to 1946 (and not beyond this date) because this documentation was created as part of a project initiated and sponsored by the American Art Research Council, starting in 1944. Rosalind Irvine (later curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City) created the publication record and she conducted most of her research between 1944–1946. For further details see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 14–15.
- 64 Herbert J. SELIGMANN, "Why 'Modern' Art? Six Artists in Search of Media for Their Various Capricious Spirits Demonstrate That 'Modern' Art is Not Merely Contemporary Art," *Vogue* 62:8, 15 Oct. 1923, 76–77. According to Buhler Lynes, this image was first published in the October 1923 issue of *The Arts*. See *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 211.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 1103. The image appears in *The Dial* as part of an insert of illustrations after page 380 of the volume.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 252.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 240.
- 68 SELIGMANN, "Why 'Modern' Art?" 76–77. In Seligmann's article the painting was titled *Music*. It was next reproduced in 1927 and titled *Music–Blue and Black and Green in Pageant of America*. Its next reproduction, in *Knight Publisher*, plate 6 (1937), was titled *Music–Blue and Black and Green*. In 1939 it was reproduced and titled *Music Black and Green in A Primer of Modern Art*. For further details see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 185.
- 69 For a reference to *Above Lake Superior* see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, plate 23.
- 70 ADAMSON, *Lawren S. Harris*, 123–24.
- 71 See F.B. HOUSSEY, *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1972 edition), 190–91. Harris first came into contact with theosophy while studying in Berlin from 1904 to 1908, but like many others of his generation, adopted its principles after the First World War. In 1922 Harris became a member of the Toronto Theosophical Society and by the time he painted *Above Lake Superior*, he was a firm believer that, in accordance with theosophical doctrine, the contemplation of visible nature and the rendering of natural scenes and effects demanded a simplification of the naturalistic to its fundamental and purest forms.
- 72 See ADAMSON, *Lawren S. Harris*, 123–24 and THOM, "Lawren Stewart Harris: A Canadian Painter," 29–33.
- 73 Harris said of his art: "It was not derivative. It was not English Landscape. It was not French Impressionism or Post Impressionism . . . It was a natural growth in the

country . . . Nature evolves new species by ‘spirits’ sudden and inexplicable leaps into altogether novel flowerings.” See Lawren HARRIS, “Canada Has Given Birth to a New and National Art,” *Toronto Star Weekly*, 26 Jan. 1924. Quoted in LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 59.

74 For further commentary on *The Eggplant* see BOYANOSKI, *Permeable Border*, 30 and WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O’Keeffe*, 100 and 274.

75 A.Y. JACKSON, *A Painter’s Country: The Autobiography of A.Y. Jackson* (Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1958), 58–59.

76 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 96.

77 Ibid., 118.

78 Ibid., 124.

79 Emily CARR, *Growing Pains: The Autobiography of Emily Carr*, foreword by Ira Dilworth; introduction by Robin Laurence (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2005), 302.

80 WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O’Keeffe*, 505.

81 Georgia O’Keeffe to Ettie Stettheimer, August 1929, Art Institute of Chicago. Quoted in WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O’Keeffe*, 302.

82 Sharyn ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Carr, O’Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 250.

83 O’Keeffe and Carr discussed O’Keeffe’s *The Lawrence Tree* (1929) at length. This painting is a depiction of a great pine described in D.H. Lawrence’s novel set in Taos, *St. Mawr*. From that conversation, Carr developed a fascination with Lawrence and would soon copy the *St. Mawr* passage into her journal. According to Sharyn Udall, Carr’s meeting with O’Keeffe may have influenced her decision (in 1930–31) to produce charcoal drawings that moved away from native imagery and toward a search for nature’s formal equivalents. As well, after Carr’s meeting with O’Keeffe, she began to incorporate zig-zag or saw-tooth shapes into her work (see *Untitled*, 1930) as O’Keeffe had done before her. For further details see ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Carr, O’Keeffe, Kahlo*, 147–52.

84 Publications on O’Keeffe’s 1929 New Mexico paintings include: Edward Alden JEWELL, “New O’Keeffe Pictures: A Sharp Monumental Vigor Characterizes Work of This Brilliantly Original Artist,” *New York Times*, 9 Feb. 1930; Henry MCBRIDE, “The Sign of the Cross: Georgia O’Keeffe’s Impressions of the Taos Region Exhibited Here,” *The New York Sun*, 8 Feb. 1930; Marty MANN, “Exhibitions,” *International Studio* (March 1930); “The Paintings of O’Keeffe in Taos,” *Atelier* (June 1931); Murdock PEMBERTON, “The Art Galleries: Raise the Flag, the French Are Here! – A Different American,” *The New Yorker* (February 1930); Mabel Dodge LUHAN, “Georgia O’Keeffe in Taos,” *Creative Art* (June 1931).

85 REID, *Atma Buddhi Manas*, 28–29.

86 Doris Speirs to Bess Larkin Housser, 19 Feb. 1939, Box 4, folder 23, Speirs Collection.

Deux mécènes, une exposition et un album

La relation entre Lawren Harris et Georgia O’Keeffe, 1925–1926

SARA J. ANGEL

En 1938, Lawren S. Harris (1885–1970) et son épouse, Bess Larkin Housser Harris (1890–1969), quittent Hanover, New Hampshire, où ils demeuraient depuis quatre ans, après leur départ de Toronto en 1934, pour Santa Fe, Nouveau-Mexique. Bien que les documents indiquent que ce déménagement a été le fruit du hasard, nous soutenons, dans le présent article, que le facteur déterminant qui sous-tendait le départ de Harris pour le sud-ouest américain, était l’intérêt qu’il portait à l’artiste américaine Georgia O’Keeffe (1887–1986) qui, à partir de 1929, passait une partie de l’année à Abiquiú, Nouveau-Mexique, près de Santa Fe.

Pendant des décennies, les historiens de l’art ont tracé des parallèles entre l’œuvre de Harris et celle d’O’Keeffe. Tous deux peignaient à la même époque et s’intéressaient à des sujets comme la transformation des paysages en abstractions visuelles, le contenu symboliste transcendant et la conception d’une réponse indigène au modernisme européen. Pourtant aucune étude n’offre de preuves évidentes qui permettent de savoir quelles peintures d’O’Keeffe Harris a vues et quand. Pour combler ce vide, le présent article cherche comment Harris a pu se familiariser avec l’art d’O’Keeffe durant les années 1925 et 1926, et lesquelles de ses œuvres il a pu voir.

L’article discute de la manière dont Harris a connu les peintures d’O’Keeffe grâce à deux mécènes, Doris Louise Huestis Mills (plus tard Speirs, 1902–1989), peintre canadien et écrivaine d’art, et Katherine Dreier (1877–1952), fondatrice de la célèbre organisation new-yorkaise d’art d’avant-garde, la Société Anonyme, Inc.

En 1925, Mills est la première personne au Canada à acheter une œuvre d’O’Keeffe, acquisition qu’on peut associer à Harris et à sa seconde épouse, Bess. L’année suivante, le chemin de Harris croise de nouveau celui d’O’Keeffe, et les deux artistes exposent leurs œuvres à l’*International Exhibition of Modern Art* au Brooklyn Museum, la plus grande et la plus importante exposition internationale d’art moderne depuis l’*Armory Show* de 1913. Bien que Harris se soit largement investi dans cette exposition internationale d’art moderne de 1926 et qu’il ait contribué à la faire venir

au Canada, le présent article est le premier à indiquer précisément quelles œuvres d'O'Keeffe il y a vues.

Les rapports de l'artiste à O'Keeffe sont examinés de manière plus approfondie par une exploration de l'album personnel de Harris, qui se trouve à Bibliothèque et Archives Canada et qui n'a pas encore été étudié. Bien que les rapports de Doris Mills et de Katherine Dreier ne laissent aucun doute quant au fait que Harris a vu personnellement les œuvres d'O'Keeffe en 1925 et en 1926, l'album de Harris révèle que, durant la même période, il a non seulement pris note de l'intérêt des médias pour les peintures d'O'Keeffe, mais qu'il a été porté à en découper et conserver des exemplaires.

L'album comprend pas moins de six reproductions de toiles d'O'Keeffe. Bien que l'auteur de l'album ne donne aucune information sur la provenance des reproductions, le présent article les date du milieu des années vingt, démontrant que la période autour de 1925 a été une époque particulièrement intense et remarquable dans la vie de Harris relativement à ce qu'il a pu observer du travail d'O'Keeffe.

À la lumière de cette nouvelle documentation, on peut comparer les toiles de Harris et d'O'Keeffe pour soutenir que les rapports entre ces deux artistes méritent une étude plus poussée. Une attention particulière se porte sur le changement de style de Harris à l'automne 1921, comme le montre *Above Lake Superior*, 1921–1922, où il commence à créer une œuvre qui le démarque de ses collègues du Groupe des Sept. À partir du premier article sur cette œuvre, par F.B. Housser en 1926, le saut stylistique de Harris a été relié à son adhésion à la théosophie à la même époque.

Nous soutenons que, bien que les nouvelles croyances spirituelles de l'artiste aient eu un impact indéniable sur sa peinture, les historiens de l'art ont surestimé son importance comme clé de la transformation stylistique de l'artiste. Malgré le mythe prévalent voulant que le style du Groupe des Sept soit venu du fait que ses membres ont abandonné les techniques étrangères pour se tourner exclusivement vers le paysage canadien, et bien que Harris lui-même ait insisté sur le fait que son art n'avait pas d'ancêtre connu, sa connaissance des toiles d'O'Keeffe, que démontre son album, ainsi que sa rencontre de première main avec les œuvres de l'artiste américaine, au milieu des années vingt, exige que son développement artistique soit revisité à la lumière de ces influences.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

The Canadian Women Artists History Initiative

KRISTINA HUNEALT

The Canadian Women Artists History Initiative (CWAHI) has launched its second database for researchers. Now, in addition to its artists' database, which offers short biographical and extensive bibliographical information on women artists in Canada born prior to 1925, scholars may consult *Canadian Exhibition Reviews Online*: an open-access full-text resource that provides searchable coverage of reviews of the annual exhibitions of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Art Association of Montreal, from 1873 to 1940. A collaborative project, undertaken in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and Concordia University, the still-expanding database indexes all artists, male and female, who exhibited with the societies. Thus, while it is anticipated that this resource will be particularly valuable to those researching women artists, on whom published information is often so very sparse, the database is also intended to meet the broader needs of the Canadian art history community as a whole.

Indirectly, then, *Canadian Exhibition Reviews Online* raises questions about the current status of scholarship on women artists and how it relates to broader disciplinary practice; while the gender-specific mandate of the Canadian Women Artists History Initiative is clear from its name alone, in its new database that mandate has been liberally interpreted. The old dilemma of whether to carve out women's art as a special field of study or to integrate it into the mainstream seems, perhaps, a less weighty matter than once it did, but changing responses to the issue remain instructive. Two recent broad-based studies of Canadian art, *The Visual Arts in Canada: The Twentieth Century* edited by Anne Whitelaw, Brian Foss, and Sandra Paikowsky, and *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500–1940* by Marylin McKay, opt for integration. Both texts clearly recognize the importance of including women artists, and McKay explicitly comments on her decision to bring “women into the same discourse of representation [as men], rather than treating their work separately as many feminist art historians have done.”¹ If readers are not quite sure whether or not to number McKay among the feminists, her subsequent account of how British women “were taught to represent landscape in much the same way

as men,” more plainly minimizes the gendered and thus highly differentiated settings in which the products of that education circulated. For McKay, such considerations are eclipsed by the importance of women and men’s shared interest in bolstering the Empire. The perspective is a valid one, and if, like all perspectives, it entails exclusions, those very exclusions also help us to ask a timely question: What, if anything, is still to be gained by maintaining the female focus of a *women’s* art history?

The current publishing activities of the Canadian Women Artists History Initiative offer one answer. Unlike its *CERO* database, the first book to emerge from CWAHI’s activities is dedicated exclusively to women artists. *Rethinking Professionalism: Essays on Women and Art in Canada 1850–1970* stems from the Initiative’s inaugural conference in 2008. Through thirteen separately-authored chapters, the collection analyses the historical and ideological work performed by a discourse of professionalism that has largely been naturalized within art history. Such a critical reassessment thus affirms the ongoing power of feminist scholarship to disrupt disciplinary narratives. What is new is that those narratives are no longer only those of a patriarchal field. With regard to professionalism, for instance, the stories that women’s art history has created over recent decades also require scrutiny.

For forty years, feminist investigation has worked to change the nature of art history, bringing new artists, new objects, and new theoretical questions to the discipline. Although the field looks somewhat different with respect to contemporary art, with regard to historical study, feminism’s fortunes might appear to be following a conventional pattern of rise and decline. From its initial position on the margins of academic practice, the study of women, art, and gender acquired a sustained prominence throughout the 1980s and 90s, but this prominence seems to be fading, as the political urgency that once accompanied its investigation shifts to other areas of inquiry. Whether this is more a matter of battles won or ground lost is an open question. In the economic arena, data from Statistics Canada indicates that over the past fifteen years, the wage gap between university-educated women and men in Canada has grown by almost 7%, reversing a two-decade trend towards equality.² Socially, many women with daughters awash in the pink clothing that is so all-pervasive are attuned to a gendering of little girls that is, in many respects, even more intense now than it was in their own childhoods. This raises the spectre of an alternative to the linear temporality of feminist art history’s apparent trajectory of rise and fall: that of the generational cycle. Indeed, cyclical history is a familiar pattern to students of feminism, as successive waves of women take up the struggles that their grandmothers thought they had won. In light of this, it is worth pointing out that there is still no scholarly history of women and art in Canada that aspires to a broad-based coverage of women’s creative practice across lines of ethnicity, class,

medium, geography, and timeframe. Without such a widely accessible and representative account, women's integration into the mainstream of Canadian art history is rendered more difficult. The Canadian Women Artists History Initiative is working to respond to that lacuna. If, from one temporal perspective, CWAHI's responses run the risk of appearing old hat, from another vantage point, they might be viewed as a legacy that will help obviate the need to constantly recommence the struggle for a fairer constitution of our society's power-knowledge formations. The possibility of embarking on a comprehensive history of women and art in Canada will be the focus of attention at the next CWAHI conference, to be held in Montreal on 3–5 May 2012. We welcome interest from any scholars or students who would like to be involved in our activities: <http://cwahi.concordia.ca>

NOTES

- 1 Marilyn McKAY, *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500–1950* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 9–10.
- 2 Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada*, 1985–2010 editions. Thanks to Kathleen Lahey, Queen's University, for sharing these figures.



Le Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes

KRISTINA HUNEAULT

Le Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes (REHAC) vient de lancer sa deuxième base de données pour la recherche. En plus de sa base de données sur les artistes, qui présente une courte biographie et une bibliographie complète sur les femmes artistes actives au Canada nées avant 1925, les chercheurs peuvent maintenant consulter les *Comptes rendus d'expositions canadiennes en ligne* : ressource de recherche en libre accès de l'intégralité des textes des recensions des expositions annuelles de la Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, de l'Ontario Society of Artists et de la Art Association of Montreal, de 1873 à 1940. Créée en partenariat avec le Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, le Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal et l'Université Concordia, cette base de données, en croissance constante, répertorie tous les artistes, hommes et femmes, qui ont exposé avec ces sociétés. Ainsi, bien que l'on s'attende à ce que cet outil soit particulièrement utile à ceux qui font des recherches sur les femmes artistes, à propos desquelles on a publié très peu d'informations, la base de données pourra aussi répondre aux besoins de l'ensemble des historiens de l'art canadien.

Donc, indirectement, *Comptes rendus d'expositions canadiennes en ligne* soulève la question de la relation entre les études actuelles sur les femmes artistes et la pratique de la discipline en général. Bien que le mandat spécifique du Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes quant au sexe soit évident de par son nom même, il a été interprété de façon large dans cette nouvelle base de données. Le vieux dilemme d'avoir à choisir entre faire une place spéciale à l'étude de l'art des femmes ou l'intégrer dans un contexte général semble, peut-être, peser moins dans la balance que par le passé, mais les nouvelles réponses à la question demeurent instructives. Deux récentes études diversifiées sur l'art canadien, *The Visual Arts in Canada : The Twentieth Century* édité par Anne Whitelaw, Brian Foss et Sandra

Elizabeth Sutherland, *murale Saint John Vocational School mural*, 1939, oil/huile, 167.6 x 50.8 cm, one of four panels/ l'un des quatre panneaux. This panel depicts domestic work/ce panneau représente le travail domestique, *in situ*, Harbour View High School, Saint John, NB. (Photo: Kirk Niergarth)

Paikowsky, et *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500–1940* par Marilyn McKay, ont choisi l'intégration. Les deux textes reconnaissent clairement l'importance d'inclure les femmes artistes, et McKay commente explicitement sa décision d'amener « les femmes à l'intérieur du même discours représentatif [que les hommes], plutôt que de traiter leurs œuvres séparément comme plusieurs historiennes de l'art féministes l'ont fait! ». Si, d'après cela, les lecteurs ne sont pas certains de pouvoir mettre Mme McKay elle-même au nombre des féministes, sa déclaration subséquente sur la manière dont « les femmes anglaises des classes moyenne et supérieure ont appris à représenter les paysages généralement de la même manière que les hommes », minimise plus clairement les usages sexués et donc hautement différenciés auxquels cette éducation a été affectée, afin de souligner un même intérêt pour soutenir l'Empire. La perspective de McKay se justifie et si, comme toutes les perspectives, elle suppose des exclusions, il faut dire aussi que ces mêmes exclusions nous aident à poser une question opportune : à quoi servirait-il de fixer l'attention des femmes sur une histoire *féminine* de l'art ?

Les publications actuelles du Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes fournissent une réponse. À la différence de la base de données des comptes rendus, le premier livre à émerger des activités du Réseau est consacré exclusivement aux femmes artistes. *Rethinking Professionalism: Essays on Women and Art in Canada 1850–1970*, est issu de la conférence inaugurale du Réseau en 2008. Ses treize chapitres, par des auteurs différents, examinent le travail en histoire de l'art effectué par une formation culturelle d'importance majeure pour les femmes ; en étudiant les intersections entre les expériences féminines d'un discours changeant mais puissant sur le professionnalisme en art, le livre réclame pour l'histoire de l'art des femmes le pouvoir permanent de déranger un discours disciplinaire devenu commun et, par conséquent, invisible. La nouveauté, c'est que ce discours n'est plus *seulement* le discours d'un champ patriarcal, mais qu'il doit aussi inclure les récits que l'histoire de l'art des femmes a lui-même créés au cours des décennies.

Depuis maintenant quarante ans, les recherches féministes ont travaillé à changer la nature de l'histoire de l'art, y apportant de nouveaux artistes, de nouveaux objets et de nouvelles questions théoriques. En ce qui a trait aux études historiques (le domaine semble quelque peu différent en ce qui concerne l'art contemporain), le destin du féminisme dans cette entreprise pourrait sembler suivre un modèle conventionnel d'ascension et de déclin. Depuis sa position initiale, en marge de la pratique universitaire, l'étude des femmes, de l'art et du genre a acquis une prééminence soutenue durant les années 1980 et 1990, mais cette prééminence semble maintenant en perte

de vitesse, alors que l'urgence politique qui avait accompagné la recherche s'est portée sur d'autres champs d'investigation. Quant à savoir s'il s'agit davantage de batailles gagnées ou de terrain perdu, la question reste ouverte. Dans le domaine économique, les données de Statistiques Canada indiquent qu'au cours des quinze dernières années, la différence de revenus entre les femmes et les hommes détenteurs d'un diplôme universitaire au Canada a augmenté d'environ 7%, renversant une tendance de près de deux décennies vers l'égalité². Au plan social, plusieurs femmes dont les filles sont immergées dans une mode rose envahissante, sont éveillées à une sexualisation des petites filles qui est, sous plusieurs aspects, encore plus intense que dans leur propre enfance. Ces circonstances évoquent la possibilité d'une alternative à la temporalité linéaire de la trajectoire apparente d'ascension et de déclin de l'histoire féministe de l'art : celle du cycle générationnel. En fait, l'histoire cyclique est un modèle familier à ceux qui étudient le féminisme, alors que des vagues successives de femmes prennent le relais des luttes que leurs grands-mères ont cru avoir gagnées. À la lumière de ces faits, il vaut la peine de souligner qu'il n'y a pas, à ce jour, d'étude de niveau universitaire sur l'histoire des femmes et de l'art au Canada, qui aspire à une couverture diversifiée de la pratique créatrice des femmes au-delà des frontières de l'ethnicité, de la classe, du médium, de la géographie et de l'époque. Sans un rapport largement accessible et représentatif, l'intégration des femmes dans le courant général de l'histoire de l'art canadien devient plus difficile. Le Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes cherche, par des moyens différents, à combler cette lacune. Cette réponse, qui peut sembler dépassée selon un modèle temporel, pourrait, si on la considère d'un autre point de vue, être un héritage qui aidera à parer à la nécessité de recommencer constamment la lutte pour une plus juste constitution des rapports de savoir-pouvoir dans notre société. La possibilité de s'engager dans une histoire exhaustive des femmes et de l'art au Canada sera au cœur de nos discussions lors de la prochaine conférence du réseau, à Montréal en mai 2012. Nous remercions pour leur intérêt les chercheurs et étudiants qui voudront s'impliquer dans nos activités : <http://cwahi.concordia.ca>

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

NOTES

- 1 Marilyn McKAY, *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500–1950*, Montréal et Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011, p. 9–10.
- 2 Statistique Canada, *Femmes au Canada*, éditions 1985–2010. Merci à Kathleen Lahey, Queen's University, qui nous a communiqué ces chiffres.



*Espace artistique et modèle pionnier.
Tom Thomson et Jean-Paul Riopelle*

LOUISE VIGNEAULT

Hurtubise, Montréal, 2011
487 p.

François-Marc Gagnon

Espace artistique et modèle pionnier. Tom Thomson et Jean-Paul Riopelle de Louise Vigneault, cette année, est un livre majeur, non seulement sur ces deux géants de l'art canadien, mais sur la définition même de l'art canadien à partir d'un modèle qu'on avait peu exploité avant elle, surtout à propos de Riopelle (1923–2002), le modèle du pionnier. On le voit, le propos est ambitieux. Il était déjà original

de rapprocher Thomson (1877–1917) et Riopelle, mais encore plus de leur trouver une affinité profonde. Se présentant l'un et l'autre comme une espèce de « trappeur » – le mot a eu une grande fortune à propos de Riopelle – ou d'aventurier nomade, ces deux artistes témoignent d'un nouveau type de rapport au territoire canadien, mais aussi incarnent un modèle inédit, à la fois en Europe et aux États-Unis, de pratique artistique.

Ce qui est remarquable dans l'approche de Louise Vigneault, c'est qu'elle situe son travail au-delà du déblaiement qu'on a souvent été obligé de faire entre la légende et la vérité, entre le mythe et les faits, à propos de ces deux artistes. Que n'a-t-on pas écrit sur la disparition mystérieuse de Thomson, sur son endurance physique, sur ses explorations solitaires des régions « sauvages » du Nord de l'Ontario ? Et que n'a-t-on pas dû vérifier sur toutes les fausses pistes sur lesquelles Riopelle s'était amusé à lancer ses historiens ? Si ce travail de démêlage était nécessaire, il n'en reste pas moins que la légende et les mythes autour de ces personnages auront été finalement plus influents que les faits sur la prise de conscience d'une culture spécifique au Canada, et qu'ils méritaient, comme tels, une analyse. C'est précisément la tâche à laquelle s'est vouée Louise Vigneault.

« . . . nous avons entrepris non pas de départager les éléments qui relèvent du mythe et de la réalité, mais de cerner plutôt la possible fonction de cette

construction dans l'imaginaire collectif, de déterminer de quelles manières les données biographiques, la démarche et les œuvres ont été intégrées aux mailles du tissu social, culturel et politique canadien, et ont fini par traduire les préoccupations, manifestes ou latentes, de la population » (p. 61).

Dans le cas de Thomson, cela a entraîné la lecture d'une multitude d'écrits moins intéressés à son art qu'à son caractère, moins à ses tableaux qu'à sa biographie. Cela a aussi obligé à mettre en veilleuse la critique d'auteurs comme David P. Silcox ou d'artistes comme Harold Town (1924–1990) qui ont dénoncé, à propos de Thomson et du Groupe des Sept, la mythification qui en a fait « une école macho, avant la lettre, de coureur des bois s'enfonçant dans la forêt pour compenser leurs débuts efféminés dans les écoles d'enseignement classique de l'art, ainsi que leurs emplois sans panache dans des ateliers de gravures commerciales¹ ». Ce que portait la légende, cependant, c'était une nouvelle définition de l'artiste, comme pionnier, comme nomade confronté à un espace auquel il était possible à tout Canadien de s'identifier. D'autant que le puissant modèle expansionniste américain rendait difficile, surtout en milieu anglo-canadien, la prise de conscience d'une manière d'être spécifique. Ainsi Sherrill Grace définissait la figure de Thomson par les caractères suivants : « *manliness, solitary independence, practical skill in the northern bush, sympathetic but*

*unsentimental intimacy with nature, silence and humility, and the curiosity and courage of the explorer . . .*² ». Cette figure, très différente du *trailblazer* américain, et n'ayant pas de correspondant en Europe, devenait une figure d'identification du Canadien. Il est vrai que le Canadien-français ne se reconnaît pas beaucoup dans ce portrait et que Riopelle, en choisissant la *persona* du trappeur, du chasseur, de l'aventurier qui le rapprochait de Thomson, sortait des cadres de la collectivité canadienne-française (préoccupée de survivance), quitte à les réintégrer vers la fin de sa vie, quand justement cet attachement au passé, à ce que Marcel Rioux appelait l'« idéologie de conservation³ », commençait à perdre du terrain dans l'imaginaire des Québécois.

Il ne faut pas réduire le propos de Louise Vigneault au seul problème de l'identité canadienne. Il court, dans toute son œuvre, une définition de l'avenir qui semble laisser loin en arrière nos problèmes d'identité nationale. Pour elle, le Groupe des Sept et Thomson avant eux d'un côté, et Riopelle de l'autre, ont fini par dégager leur œuvre de ses préoccupations nationales de départ, pour proposer, dans l'image de l'artiste pionnier, une prise de conscience de « la condition de l'individu confronté à son environnement, à lui-même et à sa responsabilité de mener seul sa destinée » (p. 78). Une sorte de « protomodernité ». Car peindre des régions « sauvages » encore « vierges de tout contact humain », c'était se situer bien avant tout nationalisme. C'est d'ailleurs la raison pour laquelle

la peinture régionaliste du Québec n'a jamais été attirée par les terres vierges ou le Grand Nord. En peignant les villages, comme Clarence A. Gagnon (1881-1942) ou l'habitant, comme Suzor-Coté (1869-1937), on se situait beaucoup plus proche des temps présents.

Le cas de Riopelle est particulièrement éloquent de ce point de vue. Il n'a eu de cesse de désintriquer son œuvre de tout discours nationaliste et de proposer au contraire une affirmation de l'individu face à son destin, tout en définissant celui-ci comme le destin du chasseur et donc avec une tout autre relation au territoire que l'habitant ou le citoyen. L'artiste, en traversant l'espace canadien, devient le frère de tous ces migrants, refaisant à leur compte l'expérience des pionniers.

Les analyses de Louise Vigneault de la *persona* de Riopelle sont particulièrement intéressantes et stimulantes. Elle a pris au sérieux le paradigme de la chasse chez Riopelle⁴. Au lieu d'en être agacée, Louise Vigneault y a vu à la fois la clé du comportement de l'artiste et de ses stratégies artistiques. Dès son premier livre, *Identité et modernité dans l'art au Québec*, elle nous livrait une première analyse du paradigme de la chasse dans la *persona* de Riopelle.

S'appropriant les habitudes du chasseur, Riopelle se donne alors comme règles de se contredire, de donner de fausses pistes, de tendre des pièges en tentant d'effacer ses propres traces. Aussi, l'audacieux qui s'aventure à le

questionner sur ses œuvres et sur ses intentions sera aussitôt tiré vers un autre univers . . . ⁵

Il n'y avait pas que son comportement à s'expliquer par cette référence à la chasse. Toutes ses stratégies picturales en étaient marquées.

. . . son emprunt à l'univers de la chasse répond à un besoin de renouveler sans cesse sa position et d'échapper à toute définition statique, afin d'affirmer le caractère changeant et complexe du réel⁶.

On connaît les constantes allées et venues de Riopelle du figuratif à l'abstrait et de l'abstrait au figuratif, toujours d'ailleurs à rebrousse-poil des tendances dominantes de l'heure. Cette analyse est reprise et amplifiée dans ce récent ouvrage.

Mais je m'en voudrais, en terminant cette recension, de ne pas dénoncer comme un scandale l'absence de reproductions de tableaux de Riopelle dans cet ouvrage majeur. Une note au verso de la page titre et qui risque de passer inaperçue tente d'expliquer cette lacune :

Les Éditions Hurtubise, de même que l'auteure, ont dû se résigner à ne pas représenter équitablement Tom Thomson et Jean-Paul Riopelle dans cet essai puisqu'il n'a malheureusement pas été possible d'obtenir les autorisations requises pour

reproduire les œuvres de Jean-Paul Riopelle évoquées dans le texte, pas plus qu'un portrait de l'artiste, dans les délais nécessaires à la production. Nous remercions à l'avance les lecteurs de leur compréhension.

Il va sans dire que ce petit texte vise surtout l'absence de tableaux de Riopelle, puisque l'ouvrage comporte quatre excellentes reproductions de tableaux de Thomson (y compris *Froidure de novembre* qui montre un vol d'oies sauvages et permet du même coup de faire visuellement le lien avec l'œuvre de Riopelle) et un portrait de l'artiste, ainsi que la fameuse photo de Thomson photographié au Lac Canoe, Parc Algonquin. De Riopelle, rien d'équivalent. Cela est d'autant plus scandaleux que les moindres élucubrations de critiques d'art patentés, les moindres catalogues de marchands de tableaux ont droit à des présentations somptueuses, richement illustrées en couleur, pleine page, des œuvres de Riopelle. Alors que pour cette étude majeure, dépassant de loin tout ce qui a été écrit sur Riopelle depuis, on n'a pas trouvé le moyen de reproduire un seul tableau du maître ! C'est aberrant. Il faut dénoncer cette politique mesquine de droits d'auteur qui va confiner bientôt les chercheurs sérieux à ne s'occuper que des maîtres anciens, à ne plus pouvoir traiter d'art moderne ou contemporain, faute de fonds pour payer les droits d'auteur du peintre, de ses descendants, voire de leur photographe ! Qu'on taxe les utilisations

purement commerciales des images passe encore, mais les travaux qui sont fondés sur des recherches exhaustives et étendues, comme c'est le cas pour le livre de Louise Vigneault, et qui, en conséquence, donnent à comprendre les peintres et leurs œuvres sous un jour nouveau, devraient bénéficier d'exemptions. Tout le monde y trouverait son profit, y compris les artistes eux-mêmes. Que gagneront-ils à ce qu'on ne puisse plus parler d'eux autrement que dans des textes promotionnels et publicitaires ?

NOTES

- 1 Harold TOWN et David P. SILCOX, *Tom Thomson: The Silence and the Storm*, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1977, cité p. 64 dans Louise VIGNEAULT, *Identité et modernité dans l'art au Québec*. Borduas, Sullivan, Riopelle, Montréal, HMH, 2002.
- 2 Sherrill GRACE, *Inventing Tom Thomson*, Montréal et Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004, p. 3, cité par VIGNEAULT, *Identité et modernité dans l'art au Québec*, p. 70.
- 3 Marcel RIOUX, *La question du Québec*, Montréal, Parti-pris, 1977, p. 88 et suiv.
- 4 Guy Robert, au contraire, avait tendance à ne pas y attacher d'importance et faire de Riopelle « un pacifique dilettante de la forêt », plutôt qu'un vrai chasseur. Voir son *Riopelle ou la poétique du geste*, Montréal, Éditions de l'homme, 1970, p. III.
- 5 VIGNEAULT, *Identité et modernité dans l'art au Québec*, p. 295.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 298.



The Optimism of Colour: William Perehudoff, a Retrospective

KAREN WILKIN, ROALD NASGAARD
AND ROBERT CHRISTIE

Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 2010
208 p.

Liz Wylie

This is an important book from several points of view. The authors have set out to describe and contextualize the career and art production of one of Canada's senior painters, the respected and talented Saskatoon-based William Perehudoff (1919–). The volume is a serious and ambitious publication, with numerous, large, colour plates and excellent historical photographs. It is encouraging to all Canadian artists to think that they too could one day receive similar treatment at the hands of a public

gallery (in this case it is Saskatoon's Mendel Art Gallery), should they just keep on working and exhibiting. At the time of writing, Perehudoff is ninety-three years old and in fairly frail health; he has not been able to work on large paintings for several years. In charting his career, the swath the book cuts through the history of twentieth-century art is remarkable, even breathtaking. It includes, to cite just one example, a discussion of the key/(in)famous years of the Emma Lake workshops, that weird crucible/chapter in Canadian art history that may never be fully or conclusively unravelled and interpreted. What happened there, and to whom, and how good or how bad it all was, will likely always be controversial. Coincidentally, Perehudoff and his artist wife Dorothy Knowles (1927–) had a cabin on Emma Lake, and so, intriguingly, they ended up participating in many of the workshops and yet maintained their independent and unique status by staying at their own place. Nevertheless, Perehudoff's contact with the artists that he met at the workshops was crucial to his own direction.

The initial and larger questions that come to mind in considering Perehudoff's unlikely career are posed and pondered by the writer of the first of the three texts in the book, Karen Wilkin. How does it happen, she muses, that a person who grows up in a rural environment, far from any urban centre of cultural activity and institutions, even conceives of the idea of becoming an artist, let alone pursues this direction with any success? Wilkin cites incidents

and potential influences such as the bright colours of the scarves from the Caucasus that he saw growing up in a Doukhobor community, but basically comes up empty – this question has no tangible answer. Of course, we can continue to wonder and marvel about people who have seemed destined to become great achievers despite their backwoods origins. We might also puzzle over the notion of Perehudoff's career in terms of critical and curatorial reputation and commercial success. How much was all of this hindered by his coming from and staying in the province of Saskatchewan? Was his peer, Toronto-based artist Jack Bush (1909–1977), a better artist, or did he just have more connections, living and working in Toronto? Perehudoff's Warholian fifteen minutes would seem to have taken place in the mid and late 1970s. He was included in the widely circulating Time Canada-sponsored exhibition of 1975 called *The Canadian Canvas*, and in 1977 was one of the artists selected by Andrew Hudson for a group show in Washington D.C. that received a great deal of press, called *14 Canadians: A Critic's Choice*. Once the new image and neo-expressionist movements in painting were in full swing in the 1980s, however, Perehudoff's status reverted to that of an important regional artist, rather than one on the national radar. But he has not gone unnoticed. He continued to exhibit regularly through the 1980s and 90s, and in 1999 he was awarded the Order of Canada. His work has been included in the major texts on modern Canadian art. All this

is remarkable given his recipe for non-success: staying in a small city in a rural province with very little opportunity for sales of art, and working at a day job in commercial art to survive. His first solo show was at the age of twenty-nine, which seems reasonable, but his first solo exhibition outside of Saskatchewan was held when he was forty-eight. So he was ploughing uphill all the way.

This book sets out to celebrate and honour Perehudoff's achievement and it does so with a fair amount of success. The volume's three authors and their topics are: New York-based Karen Wilkin, who seems to have set out to talk about Perehudoff's mature, abstract paintings; art historian Roald Nasgaard, who focuses on the artist's mural works, and lastly, Robert Christie (1946–), who was one of the Saskatoon-based artists for whom Perehudoff fulfilled the role of a mentor, gives a personal tribute as a younger artist. For reasons that are not apparent, Wilkin spends a large portion of her text on the earlier years of Perehudoff's life and work, covering the same ground as Nasgaard does. Wilkin was the guest curator of the travelling exhibition for which this book forms the catalogue. She also curated a ten-year solo survey show on Perehudoff at the Mendel Gallery in 1981. Now, thirty years later, it is not hugely evident that Wilkin had anything new to bring to the topic, in fact, she sometimes repeats herself almost verbatim from her 1981 catalogue text. For example in the 1981 Mendel catalogue, *William Perehudoff: Ten Years 1970–1980*, she writes of "Perehudoff's interest in Adolph

Gottlieb, Jack Bush and possibly even Joan Miro” (7). In the current book she says: “Perehudoff has been frank about the art that interests and stimulates him, declaring in his paintings of the 1960s, his admiration for Adolph Gottlieb, Jack Bush, and possibly Joan Miro, with a nod at [surely she means “to”] Jules Olitski’s sharply stamped-out *Core* paintings” (23). One cannot help wonder why Miro is only a possible interest – is it Wilkin who thinks this, or Perehudoff? And why not have nailed this down possibility after thirty years? Another example of Wilkin’s verbatim repetition is again on the topic of the artist’s influences. In 1981 she wrote: “But the complexity of Perehudoff’s background is significant. He is a painter who draws upon many sources” (5). In the current book she says: “He is a complex man and a complex painter who draws upon many sources” (26). A reader is not told anything more; no detail about the artist’s complexities, or in what ways he drew upon his sources.

There are other weaknesses in Wilkin’s essay; she attempts to link Perehudoff with other Canadian artists who supported themselves as graphic designers or commercial artists (Tom Thomson, David Milne [1882–1953], some members of the Group of Seven, and Jack Bush). How much relevance does this have? Surely no more than grouping together contemporary artists who all happen to have day jobs as baristas. Wilkin attempts to cover all the bases, but there is no convincing picture of Perehudoff’s period context or the traditions he drew from, and

she makes no distinction between his murals and his mature, abstract paintings. Her attempt to argue for the importance of *place* for Perehudoff as an artist, and his relationship with the prairie environment, is not convincing and seems almost half-hearted. Many of the ideas she introduces are passed off with generalizing phrases, nothing being clarified or exact. Her use of the oppositional Apollonian/Dionysian is a stretch and seems to have very little to do with Perehudoff’s own thinking about or approach to his work. To read a text that truly gives a real and convincing flavour of William Perehudoff we must turn to the writer Nancy Tousley and her essay in the 1993 Mendel Art Gallery’s catalogue for a show called simply *William Perehudoff*. In Tousley’s text we learn, for example, about the early Saskatoon landscape artist Robert Hurley (1894–1980) and his Sunday painting expeditions with the young Perehudoff and that Hurley introduced him to the weekly salon evenings at the home of the so-called *Weinerschnitzel* guru of Saskatoon, the realist landscape artist Ernest Lindner (1897–1988). In addition, Tousley charts Perehudoff’s avid reading. She also relates that, after travelling to Regina to see works by Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski in Clement Greenberg’s 1963 *Three American Painters* exhibition, Perehudoff began trying acrylic paint rather than oil, and exploring staining as a technique.

Roald Nasgaard’s essay is titled “The Early Work of William Perehudoff: The murals, a preliminary report.”

This wording is odd, are we to expect a final report coming later? Nasgaard acquits himself with workmanlike dedication to presenting the details of Perehudoff's mural commissions, which spanned the mid 1940s to the early 1960s. In 1949 the artist travelled some 1,500 kilometres to Colorado Springs, Colorado, to attend a fresco workshop given by artist Jean Charlot. This gave him the technical knowledge to begin mural commissions once he was back in Saskatoon. Nasgaard describes these commissions individually and the works are all illustrated with historical photographs that are excellent in quality and redolent of their period. Nasgaard's text is serviceable, marred by only a few aspects. For some reason, he quotes statements directly when it would have been better to simply paraphrase them without quotation marks. Two examples of this are one of Perehudoff's daughters, as saying "Music was really important to Dad" (63), and Dorothy Knowles as recalling that Perehudoff and the American artist Hermann Cherry, who led the 1961 Emma Lake workshop, "got along like a house on fire" (67). Nasgaard's text has a few unfortunate spelling errors that a good editor would surely have caught: in footnote 17 Hans Hofmann is spelled Hoffman. In footnote 45 a woman is quoted as saying curtain road (instead of rod), with no *sic*. Pierro della Francesca is spelled Piero (60) and the artist Will Barnet's name is spelled Barnett (67). And, although the Montreal political activist and artist, architect, and writer Harry Mayerovitch (1910–2004) is cited as the author of an

article on Mexican art in the inaugural issue of *Canadian Art* magazine in 1943 (51), he is not identified, even just in passing, in Nasgaard's text.

But generally we learn what we want to know from Nasgaard's essay and are left contemplating the social and political complexities of the mural movement in general, and how Perehudoff was able to wrangle his own patronage for the art form in Saskatoon in the middle of the last century. His main patron was the meat-packer magnate Fred Mendel (founder of the Mendel Art Gallery), who had an art collection of some interest. Nasgaard mentions a Camille Pissarro, a Maurice de Vlaminck, a Franz Marc, and a Lyonel Feininger, with which Perehudoff was familiar.

Finally Saskatoon-based artist Bob Christie has written a frank and down-to-earth text on the helpful and supportive role that William Perehudoff played in the community of Saskatoon artists over the decades. This essay is a good touch; descriptions and anecdotes by someone who has known the artist well provide important information and there is warmth, admiration, and humour in Christie's approach.

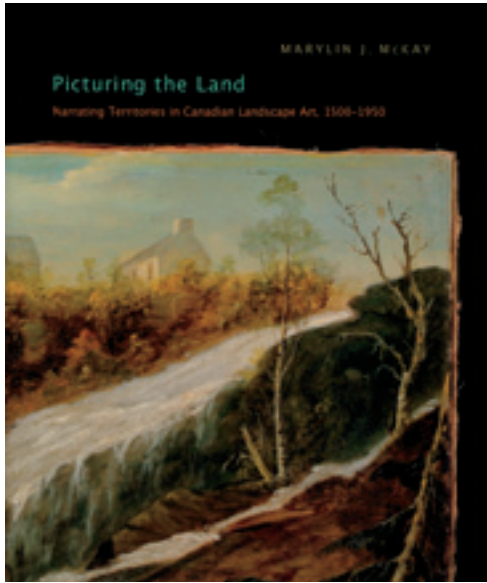
William Perehudoff had two distinct careers: one as a representational muralist, and a second, subsequent one, as an abstract painter. The seeds for his second career were sown during his 1950–51 studies in New York with the Purist artist Amédée Ozenfant and they blossomed forth into pure expressive expanses of colour. Perehudoff's emotions and intellect were channeled into the rarified language

of abstract form with great success. Following his studies in New York, Perehudoff travelled to Europe in 1951 to ask Dorothy Knowles, then studying painting in London, to marry him. They spent some time travelling and seeing museums, then came home to Saskatoon. Perehudoff began his twenty-five year stint as a commercial artist, and also maintained his family's farm near Langham, Saskatchewan. Knowles and he had three daughters, all of whom have gone on to become painters; this is not mentioned in this book.

A brief mention must be made of the French translations of the texts, which follow each English version through the book. For the most part the translation is acceptable, but one trips up on the odd rough patch. In the French version of Bob Christie's essay the final three paragraphs are printed twice. In his text he mentions that "Bill's character simply didn't fit the charismatic" (95) which has unfortunately been translated as "Le caractère simple de Bill" (103). When translating Christie's description of Agnes Martin's fullness of colours, the word "plénitude" is used (106). And the "pulse" that Wilkin says Perehudoff liked to feel in a painting is translated as "impulsion," which means impulse (31).

The design of the book is excellent and serves the topic and images well. Unfortunately, the bibliography and chronology are virtually unusable. The bibliography should have been split into major texts and small reviews, and the chronology is a thicket of entries. If the reader wanted to identify

Perehudoff's most important shows or the major critics and curators who have written about him, it would be a huge chore to weed through the chronology and bibliography to gain any sense of this. The title of the book remains puzzling, and is not credited to anyone, nor explained in the texts. How can colour be optimistic? Why is the noun "exhibition" not added after the adjective "retrospective?" In sum, however, this book is a valiant and commendable effort. It just would have benefited from the hand of a skilled editor to massage the texts and eliminate overlap among them, and to achieve an intelligent organization and format for the bibliography and chronology. The vintage photographs and colour plates of the artist's work are the best parts of the book. Perhaps this is just as it should be.



Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500-1950

MARYLIN J. MCKAY

Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011
384 p.

Karen Stanworth

In *Picturing the Land*, Marilyn McKay has achieved the ambitious and laudatory goal of re-presenting Canadian landscape art by arguing that it is embedded in Western visual culture yet also specific to the territories and moments depicted. Working from an understanding of representation as a process of mediation, McKay offers alternative ways to comprehend landscape images in relation to

contemporaneous discourses about the land. While she modestly claims that she does not provide a complete account of Canadian landscape, she takes the reader on a remarkable journey from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century “art-maps” of French and English Canada to modernist landscapes of the mid-twentieth century.

McKay ties thematic and chronological chapters together by relating the images to a set of concepts that delineate Western attitudes towards territory. While the categories she proposes are cumbersome at times, her argument not only clearly establishes that landscape needs to be located within Western tradition, but also makes an important contribution to Canadian art historiography. The dominance of the Group of Seven in histories of Canadian art has led to a widespread assumption that Canadian landscape painting inevitably portrays wilderness and an untamed landscape. McKay provides a nuanced discussion of domesticated property, which insists that the representation of land is always meaningful, but not necessarily always about the portrayal of seemingly unpopulated and unknown territories.

In the introduction, McKay describes four concepts of territory that shape her vision of landscape art. She explores the roots of what she calls the nomadic, Arcadian, Edenic, and sedentary notions of territory in historical writings. Citing Homer (ca. 800 BCE), McKay suggests that the nomadic idea of territory is defined in his contrasting of civilized space to the

boundless, often uninhabited, space beyond it. The Arcadian or pastoral concept also emerges from Greek thought, but represents a temporary retreat from the civilized world. The Edenic is distinguished from the Arcadian in that Eden represents the garden of Judeo-Christian thought, a site to which one longs to return. The origins of the sedentary concept are located in Herodotus (500 BCE), whose writings link the desire to occupy land and the ways in which that settlement contributes to land-based identity formation. This collective identity depends on the belief that the land “was always agricultural and never wilderness” (7). Teasing these concepts apart in subsequent chapters, McKay provides a way to think about the depiction of settled land with nuance and specificity. McKay offers a fifth concept that is located solely in the twentieth-century vision of territory as ‘universal’. This category is proposed as a way to understand the shift from the depiction of specific locations to modernist and abstracted images of the land. McKay draws parallels between these conceptualizations of the land and the thematic boundaries of each chapter.

Exploring the iconography of art maps, McKay points to the relatively evident relationship between maps featuring vignettes of conquering nations and the nomadic. The maps are well illustrated in colour and provide a glimpse into their substantial contribution to the visualization of the strange and ‘savage’. The drawings and watercolours in the chapter on “Place

and Displacement, 1600–1830” are also situated within the aesthetic and philosophic tradition of the nomadic. McKay argues that, in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century versions of the nomadic, territories are subject to ownership and the resulting landscape images served to support and encourage “exploration and occupation” (45).

McKay frequently refers to contemporaneous literature, such as the writing of nineteenth-century, English tourist E.A. Talbot who comments that the features of the “Lake of the Thousand Islands” displays all the features of “the placid, the picturesque, and the sublime” (61). Yet Talbot’s view of the picturesque is constantly challenged by the contradictions that arise “with a striking intermixture of the savage and the uncouth” (61). This would have been a good moment for McKay to explain how the conceptual category of the ‘nomadic’ allows for the contradiction between the tamed and the untamed, and how ownership relates to a rhetoric of colonization. Talbot’s comments on the “savage and the uncouth” beg to be unpacked, particularly in relation to the practices of “exploration and occupation” that McKay earlier identifies as part of the ‘nomadic’ concept. While Talbot’s observation was directed at the contrasting elements of the picturesque Canadian landscape, his choice of words speaks to the ways in which colonization required the subjection of the land and its occupants. Given that one of the largest islands, Wolfe Island, for example, had been conquered by

the French, then the English, and was occupied largely by wealthy American summer tourists by the 1870s, there is a wealth of detail about the “savage and uncouth” that could have been mined here.

On occasion, the attempt to draw the distinctions between concepts leads to unwieldy discussions of particular images. In the 1830 to 1850s, for example, English artists often used conventions of the picturesque to depict settled territory. Robert Whale’s (1805–1887) *General View of Hamilton* (1853) loosely references John Constable’s *Dedham Vale* (1828). However, Constable’s Romanticism establishes a relationship between the viewer and the scene, whereas the strong contrast between the distant view of civilization and the wilderness of the foreground in Whale’s landscape serves to situate the viewer as a passive observer. As such, McKay argues, Whale remains within the nomadic concept of territory. Still, one could argue that contemporaneous writing, which often describes an Edenic experience, reinforces a Romantic relation to the land. The strength of McKay’s argument may well lie in the conversations that she provokes about these relations as opposed to an absolute categorization.

McKay engages with earlier studies of landscape in Canada with no holds barred. For example, she suggests that the tendency to interpret Quebec landscape as about “homeland” results in a homogenizing of the differences that underpin representations across time. McKay also critiques the

limitations of art histories that focus solely on male artists. In response, she includes numerous landscapes by women (Elizabeth Simcoe [1762–1850], Elizabeth Hale [1774–1826], Anna Jameson [1794–1860]) yet acknowledges that these women did not have access to the same skill development as male artists of the period. However, the women did participate in the same nineteenth-century ideologies of empire and represented what they saw through the same aesthetic categories (beautiful, picturesque, and sublime).

Perhaps it is inevitable in a book with such a wide scope that small errors creep into the otherwise excellent coverage of the art historical literature achieved by McKay. While somewhat critical of John Porter’s interpretation of Joseph Légaré’s (1795–1855) landscapes as “innovative,” McKay nevertheless relies on Porter’s documentation of Légaré’s aesthetic environment (chapter 4). The repetition of Porter’s observation that the English dominated the Society for the Encouragement of Art and Science, established in Quebec City in 1827, is not actually correct. Indeed, the membership of the learned society was predominantly French until its 1829 union with the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

In the chapter on farmland images of the 1870s to 1915, McKay suggests that the depictions “are based on the Arcadian or the Edenic, or a mixture of the two concepts” depending on the location of the farm depicted (104). She argues that the “Canadian experience of Arcadia . . . was not just a place of

idyllic repose” but “also a locus of material progress achieved through hard labour” (110). The farms of this Arcadia were largely situated in eastern Canada, and farming scenes depicted by artists such as Homer Watson (1855–1936) and William Hind (1833–1889) portrayed domestic animals contentedly grazing or distanced views of rural families in harmony with the land. Attempts to describe the West as an “earthly paradise” were readily refuted by the barren tree-less quality of the land, the impoverished state of many immigrants, and the “sorry state of Native people” (119). While the illustration of posters promoting immigration juxtaposed against photographs of poor settlements is welcome to promote understanding of how landscape art participates in a visual discourse of nationalism, McKay’s narrative stance can result in generalizations or omissions. For example, Watson, a central figure in the development of a distinctive approach to landscape in Ontario, receives short shrift with only one paragraph of discussion.

In yet another well-researched chapter – on wilderness landscapes that pre-date the Group of Seven – McKay argues that images demonstrating “dominion over wilderness territory” depict the use of natural resources for profit and recreation (154). She draws on numerous contemporaneous authors to illustrate how territory was explicitly linked with national progress. The use of different stylistic approaches – aestheticism, art nouveau,

expressionism – in the depiction of wilderness images reflected a desire to appeal to the senses “and offers an intense anti-modern experience” (164).

McKay astutely divides her examination of the Group of Seven into two chapters. Chapter 8 focuses on the writing and work of the group of artists; chapter 9 on the cult that developed around their work. Curiously, she does not call upon the landscape concepts that frame earlier chapters, although by this point in the book, she may well anticipate that the reader would see aspects of the Arcadian and the nomadic in the depictions of wilderness. But there seems to be a reluctance to place this work into the same conceptual categories as earlier narratives of territory. Modernism and the depiction of wilderness do not fit the nomadic vision, yet many of the terms recall the ideas of the savage, rugged, and untamed.

McKay incorporates the conclusions of a significant number of Canadian art historians throughout the book, sometimes with less than complimentary commentary. While she agrees with Canadian art historians (citing J. Russell Harper, Dennis Reid, Christine Boyanoski, and Charles Hill), that mid-twentieth century representational art may appear moribund, she points out that, by moving beyond visual appeal to consider why the work might appear “lethargic,” a critical history of the period can emerge (241). Landscapes by artists such as Jean Paul Lemieux (1904–1990),

Goodridge Roberts (1904–1974) and David Milne (1882–1953) are discussed as “fantasy landscapes” and McKay suggests that this concept provides a way to think about the abstracted canvases of the 1930s to 1950s. The term is not imposed but draws attention to the invented character of images that remain landscapes, yet withdraw from national or regional specificities.

In a recent review, *Picturing the Land* was described as a social history (*Atlantic Books Today*, May 2011). I would argue that this characterization inadvertently diminishes the significance of McKay’s extensive examination of a broad range of contemporaneous beliefs and practices that inform how the land was understood, and the limits of possibility within which the land could be depicted. The scope of the book is remarkable, even more so in that McKay manages to tell the story of an extraordinary range of visual objects produced over a 400-year period. Over 150 excellent reproductions bring the diversity of landscape images into conversation with each other. The writing is engaging and provocative. McKay has produced a major study that promises to stimulate further research and conversation about how visual culture narrates stories of the land.

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KRISTINA HUNEALT is an associate professor at Concordia University, where she holds a research chair in Art History. Her published writings focus on aspects of subjectivity, gender, and colonial identity in art by and about women. She is the author of *Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, Britain 1880–1914* and editor of a forthcoming volume of essays entitled *Rethinking Professionalism: Essays on Women and Art in Canada*,

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ANNE NEWLANDS is a former art educator and researcher-writer at the National Gallery of Canada, and now works as an independent curator and freelance writer on Canadian art. Her publications include *Canadian Art – From its Beginning to 2000* (2000), and introductory texts on Clarence Gagnon (2005), Emily Carr (1996), and Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven (1995). She recently received a Jean A. Chalmers Grant for the Crafts by the Canada Council for the Arts to assist with research and travel for her work on Mariette Rousseau-Vermette. Newlands holds an MA in Art History from Université Laval, Quebec.

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de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada, est le premier jalon d'une étude élargie sur les langages de représentation et les stratégies en vigueur chez les artistes d'origine autochtone du Québec.

LIZ WYLIE is curator of the Kelowna Art Gallery in Kelowna, British Columbia, a position she has held since 2007. Prior to this, she was the University of Toronto art curator for eleven years. In addition, she has been writing reviews and articles on contemporary and historical Canadian art for thirty-five years. Her most recent publication is *The Point Is: Pierre Coupey; Landon Mackenzie; Martin Pearce; Bernadette Phan; Bryan Ryley*, a catalogue accompanying the exhibition of work by these contemporary Canadian painters at the Kelowna Art Gallery.

The *Journal of Canadian Art History* welcomes submissions of previously unpublished manuscripts. One printed copy and a digital file are required; both should include a short abstract. Send printed copies (including photocopies of images) to the editorial office address below. Send digital files to jcah@alcor.concordia.ca. Typescripts for articles should not exceed 8,000 words, excluding endnotes. Essays should not exceed 4,000 words. Reviews of exhibitions and books are assigned by the editor-in-chief; proposals from reviewers are invited.

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