

Architecture Defines the Frame: Canadian Murals by Reid, Leduc and the Group of Seven

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The main practical purpose of a frame is to protect the painting it adorns when the work is moved around or even just hanging on the wall. The frame is also intended to finish the work, make it look complete, raise it up off the easel to its place of prominence on the wall. As soon as a frame is added to a painting, the art work increases in importance; the frame draws attention to the work. In the same way, displaying an object in a vitrine, whether it be a small sculpture or a silver teapot, makes the work look more impressive; it becomes a rarefied object and achieves the status of a work of art.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a period marked by debate over the major versus the minor arts, there was a renewed interest in the decorative arts – a development associated with the English Arts and Crafts movement and, on the Continent, with the desire to create a total work of art or Gesamtkunstwerk. Painters in Europe and North America began to reconsider the frame and treat it as a work of art. Artists began not only to design their own frames but went beyond the frame and designed the painting's whole setting. Most famously, in James McNeill Whistler's Peacock Room of 1876–77 for Frederick Richards Leyland in London, the artist created an all-encompassing framework for his painting, *The Princess from the Land of Porcelain*, which extended out to include the colour of the walls and shelves, as well as the decoration of the ceiling, window shutters, and the woodwork.¹

The Viennese Secession artist, Gustav Klimt, designed not only the frames for paintings but integrated them into his design for a whole art exhibition installation in 1908.² Or in his Arles house, Vincent Van Gogh made natural walnut frames for his paintings to match his walnut furniture.³

In Canadian art of this period, more research needs to be carried out to document artist-designed frames. Also, the question arises: What was a painting's original frame, as it may have been removed with the change of owner, with the change of taste, or with the change of a building's interior décor. In contrast, a mural painting is immovable, unless it is painted over, destroyed, or taken out of situ; its frame remains intact. In this article, I shall focus on the Canadian mural and its frame by three artists: George A. Reid (1860–1947), Ozias Leduc (1864–1955), and J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932), who



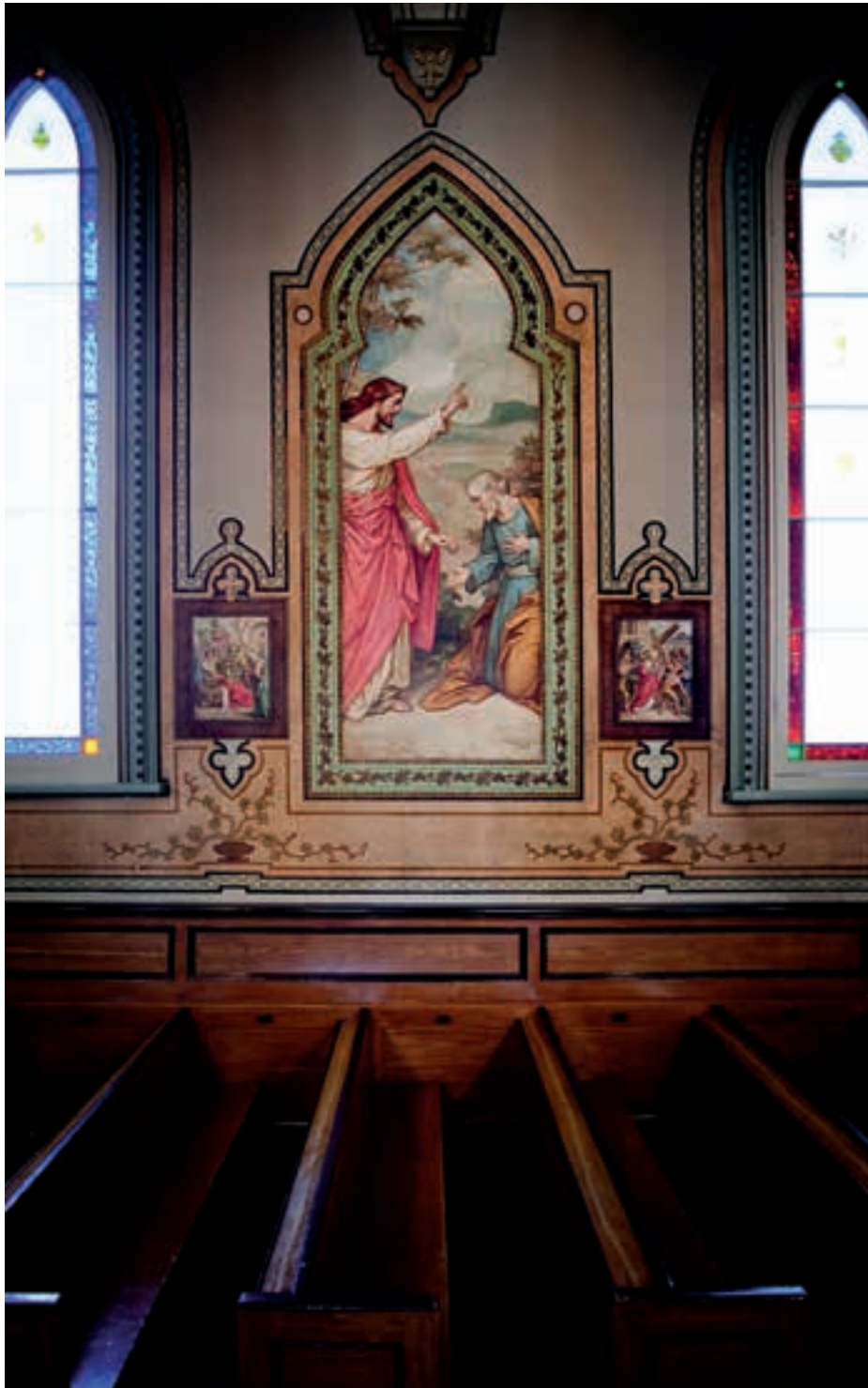
1 | George A. Reid, *Staking the Pioneer Farm*, oil on canvas marouflaged to plaster wall, Toronto Municipal Buildings, 1899. Courtesy National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: Steven Evans)

painted figurative compositions, executed in oil on canvas and then affixed to the wall with an adhesive paste, following the techniques of French *peintures marouflées* of the nineteenth century. A mural's frame was not an independent element: it was defined by, and integrated into, the architectural framework of its site.

A number of Canadian artists followed the lead of art developments in England, France, and the United States and turned to mural painting in the late nineteenth century. They wished to make art more accessible to the public and give it an educational role in the form of murals to be placed in schools, city halls, government buildings, and libraries. Toronto artist George Reid became a leading proponent of mural painting in Canada. He had spent over a year in Paris from 1888–1889, and had been impressed by the prestigious commissions for murals being given by the French government to some of the country's foremost artists – for example, Puvis de Chavannes, Paul Baudry, and Jean-Paul Laurens.⁴ Reid was also familiar with recent developments in American mural painting.

Reid led a group of seven Toronto artists in organizing the Society of Mural Decorators in 1894.⁵ Their aim was to encourage all levels of government to commission Canadian murals for the country's institutional buildings.⁶ Their initial proposal for murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings (designed by Edward J. Lennox and constructed from 1897 to 1899) met with little success, and so George Reid offered to paint two panel decorations free of charge in the entrance hall of the building. For this space, Reid had initially proposed a series of murals based on Ontario's early history, to be painted around the walls leading to the various offices off the entrance hall. One of the only panels executed, *Staking the Pioneer Farm* (Fig. 1), shows a grouping of figures arranged in a rather rigid composition of horizontal and vertical elements, to reflect the horizontality of the wall space as well as the vertical lines of the wall pilasters and columns of the entrance hall. To further integrate the mural within its architectural setting, Reid picked up the pink, yellow, and brown tones in his mural from the building's floor mosaics, the buff sandstone arches, and the yellow streaked marble of the wall. Around the mural he painted a decorative border on the canvas, which included the names of Ontario pioneers, such as John Graves Simcoe and Robert Baldwin.⁷ Painted in unobtrusive green and beige tones which matched the palette of the mural, this type of mural frame was modelled after the decorations of Puvis de Chavannes, who often added a wide painted border of devices to his mural canvases, notably in his Amiens cycle, 1861–1865.⁸ Reid's painted frame did not disturb the planar quality of the mural; it functioned as a buffer between the wall elements and the mural itself, and affirmed the mural's status as a painting. The architectural frame of the work consisted of white marble pilasters flanking Reid's mural. At the top, the painted canvas is bordered by a cornice of decorative mouldings (leaf-and-tongue as well as beaded moulding), and below, by the prominent white marble moulding that caps the high marble wall dado. This architectural surround provides a frame, somewhat like the aedicular frames with cornices, pilasters, and pediments, designed by artists such as Lawrence Alma-Tadema and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, to provide a sense of formality and grandeur to their paintings within an interior setting.⁹

Quebec artist Ozias Leduc had the opportunity to go even further than Reid and design the whole decorative program, including frames, for his murals in the Saint-Hilaire Church, Quebec. Ozias Leduc was one of Canada's preeminent mural painters, executing many commissions for churches mostly in the province of Quebec.¹⁰ His mural series for the Gothic style stone church in his home town of Saint-Hilaire, just south of Montreal, was one of Leduc's earliest commissions, begun in 1897.¹¹ In 1897, the church's priest, curé Joseph-Magloire Laflamme, commissioned Leduc to paint fourteen works for



2 | Ozias Leduc, *Le Christ remettant les clés à Saint Pierre*, oil on canvas marouflaged to plaster wall, frame stencilled onto wall, about 1897–1899, Saint-Hilaire Church, Quebec. (Photo: Mario Campanozzi, *La Presse*, Montreal)

the Stations of the Cross, as well as fifteen murals illustrating biblical scenes from the New Testament for the walls of the nave, the side chapels, and chancel of the church.¹² Leduc worked on the project until 1899, unifying the works through an extensive framework of painted borders of his own design throughout the building.

With this commission in mind, curé Laflamme had sent Leduc to France in May 1897. The artist first stopped in London for a week and continued on to Paris for six months until 25 December.¹³ Leduc began to conceive his ideas and make sketches for the project while he was in Paris, inspired by the flourishing revival of murals in France. Decorative borders were included in some of the studies Leduc prepared for the commission, so he was already thinking of the frame as an essential part of the completed work of art.¹⁴ Leduc's biblical scenes in the Saint-Hilaire Church were all executed in oil on canvas and then attached to the wall, according to the French method. Their frames, however, were painted directly onto the plastered wall. These frames were made of multiple borders of different design, much like the varied mouldings of an easel painting's frame. Around each canvas mural is a prominent border of running leaf design stencilled in pale, golden brown on light green in two models: one, a *convolvulus* vine of the morning glory family and another, a climbing vine with a six-petalled flower (Fig. 2).¹⁵ It is interesting that Leduc chose common field plants to frame the murals, in keeping with his love for the natural landscape of his Quebec rural surroundings. This wide border is edged with single mosaic lines, which in turn are set against a wider mosaic band painted or stencilled by hand in light brown tones. The mosaic design extends around the nave, creating a frieze above the wood-panelled dado. Within this Byzantine flourish of mosaic pattern are vases holding branches, which, if not of Byzantine inspiration, add a Japanese touch to the whole surround in this period of eclectic ornament. Capping this stencilled decoration, above and below the murals is a final running border of bead and reel design which links all the murals, and travels over windows and doors, behind altars, and up into the vaulted ceiling of the church to bring all the architectural elements into a harmonious interweaving of architecture, ornament, and art.¹⁶

The Saint-Hilaire Church decoration was just the beginning of a series of commissions by Leduc for church murals and decorations, ever more elaborate and complex, which reached a peak with the private Bishop's Chapel in Sherbrooke, Quebec (1921–1932).¹⁷ Leduc's interest in the frame as a geometrical element to define space is also evident in his painting *Nature morte (au mannequin)*, 1898, in which he frames the subjects of his artistic inspiration in the composition: drawings, books, and figure models (Fig. 3). You might say that the frame frames his thoughts in this painting, as he



3 | Ozias Leduc, *Still Life with Lay Figure*, 1898, oil on cardboard, 28 × 24 cm, Coll. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, gift of the Succession J.A. DeSève. (Photo: Christine Guest, MMFA)

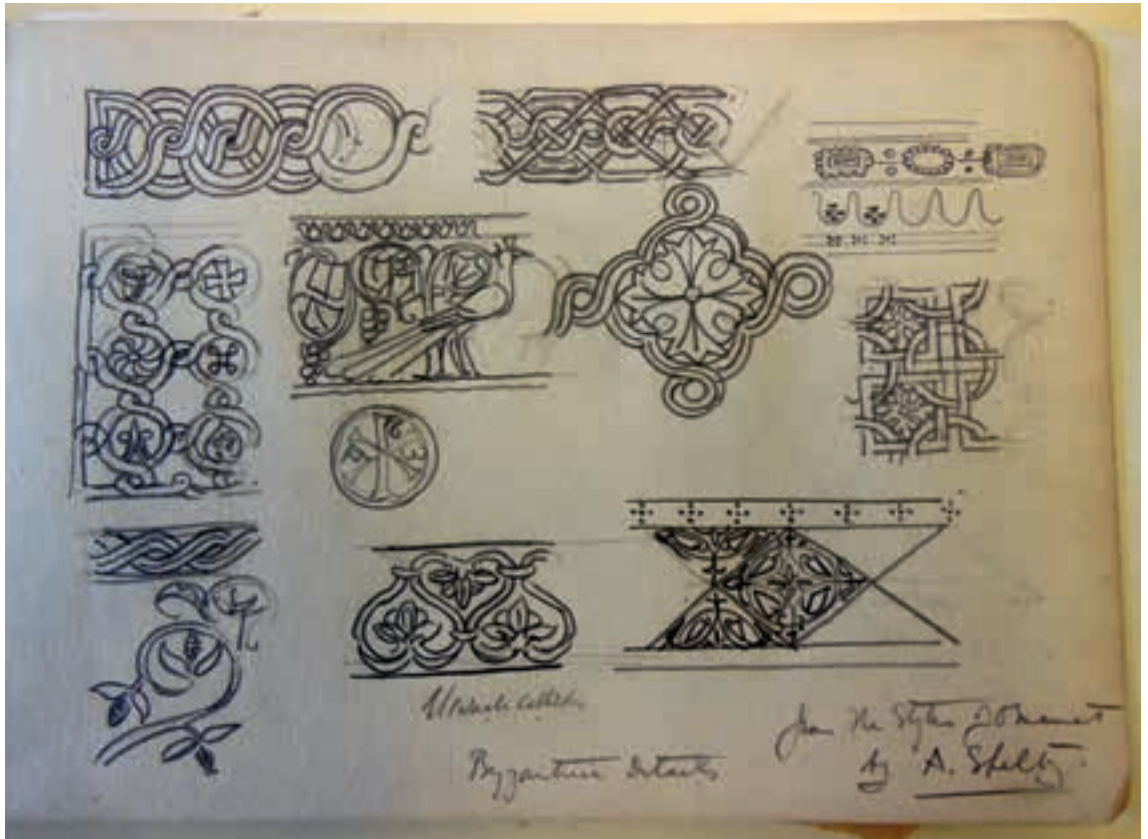
has enclosed the composition within a painted border of letters spelling out his name, the date of the work, location, and what he considered the main essentials in art: *dessin, couleur, composition = la trinité du peintre*.¹⁸ The composition of the painting is all about frames, beginning with the corner of a frame for a mural in the open sketchbook of the foreground. Sections of framed borders are visible on the loose paper sketches and through the circular frame of the magnifying glass, as well as in the bold outlines of the small images which appear in the journals piled behind. The backdrop culminates the dialogue of frames with the small figurine of Voltaire framed

within a large red rectangle. Each frame denotes its own space as you move back into the painting, which is enlivened by this juxtaposition of geometric forms.

In other parts of Canada, church mural commissions were more rare than in Quebec. However, the congregation of the St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto invited Group of Seven artist James Edward Hervey MacDonald in 1923 to design a series of murals and decorative ornament to embellish the somber interior of their Byzantine revival style church. MacDonald had already supervised a major mural commission in the summer residence of Dr. James MacCallum in 1916–1917 (discussed later on in this paper), and he seems to have been drawn to this art, as he entered the Royal Canadian Academy of Art competition in 1923 for a mural design on the subject of early settlement in Canada.¹⁹ MacDonald's entry, *A Friendly Meeting, Early Canada*, depicted a First Nation's man in discussions with early explorers and settlers. Like George Reid, MacDonald looked to the example of the French muralists and framed his composition with a painted border on the canvas, incorporating motifs related to the subject and colour tones of the mural.²⁰ He won first prize in the contest, although it was never mounted in a building. This award may have been the catalyst for the invitation he received for an extensive mural program in St. Anne's Anglican Church, 270 Gladstone Avenue Toronto.²¹

In 1908 the St. Anne's congregation had replaced their earlier Gothic style church from 1862, with a larger, more fashionable building designed in a Byzantine revival style by Toronto architect W. Ford Howland.²² In the second half of the nineteenth century, European archaeologists, architects, and art historians had begun to look at Byzantine art and architecture, such as the early Christian monument, Hagia Sophia, built under Emperor Justinian in 537 CE, in what was then Constantinople. In England, writer and art critic John Ruskin became a champion of the richness of colour and ornament in Byzantine architecture. In his influential book, *The Stones of Venice*, of 1851–1853, he compared Byzantine decoration to illuminated manuscripts.²³ The increased availability of photographic reproductions encouraged the study and emulation of Byzantine architecture, and this interest quickly spread to North America.²⁴

In 1923, under the direction of a dynamic minister, Canon Lawrence Skey, the St. Anne's Church carried out interior alterations under Toronto architect William Rae and commissioned an extensive program in decoration from J.E.H. MacDonald.²⁵ The artist commented on the aims of the commission in his later article on the project: "the walls were a brownish concrete color, so dull that they gave no indication of the true architectural form of the church . . . It was desired to have the whole decoration bright in color, with as much gold as could be reasonably used."²⁶



4 | J.E.H. MacDonald, “Byzantine Details,” from a sketchbook entitled, “Notes for St. Anne’s Church, 1924.” Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1973-14-1.1R. (Photo: Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada)

MacDonald had been aware of the enthusiasm for Byzantine design from his years of study in London from 1903 to 1907. So for this commission, he launched enthusiastically into research on Byzantine ornament. A sketchbook he dated 1924 is devoted to the St. Anne’s decorations and reveals the studies he undertook in preparation for this extensive project as well as the preliminary compositions he sketched out for the mural paintings to be executed by all the artists on the project.²⁷ MacDonald copied the interlaced motifs, medallions, and geometric borders he found in books on Byzantine monuments, such as the Hagia Sophia, or on mosaics from the sixth century Church of San Vitale in Ravenna (Fig. 4), sometimes noting down the colours or adding them in watercolour. He copied figural compositions after Giotto as inspiration for the St. Anne murals, and he took down notes on the religious symbolism of certain colours and motifs.²⁸

To execute murals for the chancel, central dome, four pendentives, and transept walls of the church, MacDonald recruited Group of Seven colleagues



5 | Chancel murals in St. Anne's Anglican Church, Toronto, oil on canvas and marouflaged to plaster wall, 1923–1924. (Photo: Alan Pike)

Franklin Carmichael (1890–1945) and Frederick H. Varley (1881–1969), as well as his son Thoreau MacDonald (1901–1989) and four other painters.²⁹ In his text, J.E.H. MacDonald described how the artists carried out the murals in their own studios, “keeping their work in close harmony with the general design, using the same strength of colors throughout, and drawing on a common stock of materials for their supplies.”³⁰ Seven of the murals were painted around the chancel's domed ceiling, over a series of five arches enclosing stained glass windows from the church's earlier Gothic building. The murals, representing scenes from the life of Christ, are all rectangular



6 | Detail of St. Anne's Church chancel murals: J.E.H. MacDonald, *The Transfiguration* (left), J.E.H. MacDonald, *The Tempest* (right). (Photo: Alan Pike)

in shape or slightly tapered at the top to fit the rounded curve of the domed ceiling. To quote MacDonald, "The paintings are set in wide richly ornamental borders of Byzantine discs and entwined scrolls in strong color and gold"³¹ (Figs. 5 and 6). This decorative framework and the predominant colours of deep rose-pink, royal blue, and gold harmonized in tone and richness of ornament with the leafy scrolled tendrils and grape clusters symbolizing the Eucharist, which were painted all over the domed chancel ceiling and set against an ultramarine blue background. This decoration, inspired by the brilliance of Byzantine mosaics, gave the chancel a bejewelled effect enhanced by the intense colour of the stained-glass windows.³²

Located above the great piers supporting the central dome were the pendentive murals, their triangular shape defined by the architecture. MacDonald designed a painted border to frame these murals, its colour tones in keeping with the main canvas as he described: "They [pendentives] all have narrow borders of dog-tooth pattern in Venetian Red and Gold, and the backgrounds are in painted gold, lined with Venetian Red, suggesting the mosaic of the ancient work, the halos and other principal parts being in gold

leaf.”³³ To further define the rectangular form of the murals, he added an additional gold zig-zag border painted right on the wall at the juncture of the arch and mural. Macdonald’s written description reveals his attention to detail in creating designs which would accord with the vivid colour and ornament of the church’s Byzantine inspiration. The hand-painted motifs after nature and the integration of the murals with their architectural setting were done in the spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement.³⁴

High up on the transept walls are two small rectangular murals by Thoreau MacDonald, depicting St. Anne and St. George. They are outlined with a narrow rose-pink border and flanked by floating blue and pink constellations that anchor the paintings to the wall decoration as a whole. The figures are closely cropped, and the flat stylized forms with heavy black outlines and the bold black and gold borders recall book or periodical illustrations, especially the Vienna Secession periodical *Ver Sacrum*. The sketches for these murals appear in J.E.H. MacDonald’s sketchbook, complete with the frame design. So despite their having been painted by his son, Thoreau, the composition and frame may be attributed to J.E.H., and they provide a link with his early work in graphic design.³⁵

In the St. Anne’s commission, J.E.H. MacDonald planned the complete interior decoration of the church, including the murals, bas-relief sculpture, stencilled patterns on the arches and columns, and interior dome “in a strong tone of red, with a powdering of various designs – sun and star emblems in cream white,”³⁶ all brought together in a joyous celebration of colour and Christian symbolism. The decoration achieved the Arts and Crafts ideal of the integration of the arts under the umbrella of architecture.

To turn to another J.E.H. MacDonald commission – this time for a rural country house that was especially suited to an Arts and Crafts approach – the artist again supervised a mural scheme enclosed within a framework which developed from the construction of the house owned by ophthalmologist Dr. James MacCallum. He was a friend and patron of the Toronto artist Tom Thomson (1877–1917) and a great supporter of Thomson’s colleagues who later exhibited together as the Group of Seven in the 1920s. As a way to help some of these artists financially during the war years, in 1915, MacCallum commissioned murals from MacDonald, Thomson, and Arthur Lismer (1885–1969) for the living room of his summer cottage, built in 1911 on an island in Georgian Bay, Ontario, on the eastern reach of Lake Huron.³⁷ The house was a typical summer home, constructed of wood with a steeply pitched roof and encircled by a large verandah. The walls and roof were made of pine boards, held in place by vertical studs at regular intervals.³⁸ The large living-room was the central hub of the house, measuring 7.32 × 4.72 m, having a massive stone chimney at one end and a high ceiling composed of natural pine rafters.



7 | The MacCallum-Jackman Cottage Mural Paintings: Interior view of Dr. James MacCallum's summer cottage on Georgian Bay, showing three walls of the living-room with murals by J.E.H. MacDonald, Tom Thomson, and Arthur Lismer, oil on Beaverboard, 1916–1917, National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives. (Photo: John Evans)

Depicting the summer and autumn landscape, the murals (Fig. 7) brought the outside into this interior room, to enliven the walls with colour and visual interest.³⁹

J.E.H. MacDonald knew Dr. MacCallum well and took charge of the commission, making a rough sketch of the interior plan of the living room, including the measurements of the walls, window, and door openings. The sequence of panels, to be executed on wood-fibre panels known as Beaverboard, could then be worked out. MacDonald painted two large murals, *Inhabitants of Go-Home Bay* for the west wall, which fitted snugly on either side of the fireplace (not illustrated here). The rest of the murals, rectangular in form, went around the walls like a frieze. They varied in height and width to take into account the window and door openings, and probably the building studs as well. In order to mount and frame the murals, MacDonald resorted to very plain strips of natural wood, which were extensions of the wooden battens securing the Beaverboard walls in place.

The lintels of the doors and windows also provided part of the framework for the smaller panels. The lower moulding of each large mural had a pronounced lip, which served to separate the painted panel from the undecorated lower wall and responded to the depth of the window sills around the room. In fact, the three large paintings, MacDonald's *The Supply Boat* and Arthur Lismer's *The Picnic* and *The Skinny-Dip*, were in their subject and composition like windows looking out to the summer activities of the family. When the murals were installed in 1916, the slim wooden battens holding them in place formed a pattern of horizontal and vertical lines over all the walls, unifying each painting, whether the summer scenes, or the smaller, more abstract and decorative panels by MacDonald and Thomson. These simple wooden frames, which integrated each artist's work with the wall, suited the straightforward wood construction of MacCallum's summer cottage and reflected an architecture of unpretentiousness and practicality.

As George Reid wrote in his support of mural painting and applied art in 1900, "The artists who are usually thought of as painters of pictures . . . are not satisfied to occupy such a narrow groove in the world of art, but instead are chafing under the limitations of the positions they are supposed to occupy."⁴⁰ Canadian artists began to look beyond the canvas to the design of the frame of a painting, and even beyond that boundary to the painting's ultimate destination. J.E.H. MacDonald and Ozias Leduc each designed an all-encompassing framework for their mural paintings. In the case of the Saint-Hilaire Church, Leduc created a "running" frame that not only extended around the murals but also around the windows, around the sculptures, and up into the vaulted ceilings of the church, unifying the art work with the architecture. Attentive to the Byzantine inspiration of St. Anne's Church, MacDonald likewise enveloped the murals in an all-embracing creation of decorative painting, architecture, and ornament.

The purpose of the easel picture frame was to set the art apart from the wall; the painting might even be "enthroned" against the wall in a prominent frame, often gilt or ornately carved in relief. In contrast, the mural was part of the wall and was meant to lie "quietly and flatly in its place."⁴¹ It did not challenge the surrounding architecture but submitted to its physical frame, enhanced by the creativity of the mural's artist.

NOTES

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Johnston Miller, Library and Archives Canada; Marie-Claude Saia, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Alan Pike; and especially Laurier Lacroix and Sacha Marie Levy who invited me to participate in this project.

- 1 Marilyn JOHNSON, “The Artful Interior,” in Doreen BOLGER BURKE, et al., *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Rizzoli, 1986), 122.
- 2 Eva MENDGEN, ed., “Art or Decoration: Picture and Frame in the Work of Stuck and Klimt,” in *In Perfect Harmony: Picture + Frame, 1850–1920* (Van Gogh Museum/Kunstforum Wien and Waanders Uitgevers, Zwolle, 1995), 126.
- 3 Louis VAN TILBORGH, “Framing Van Gogh,” in *In Perfect Harmony*, 168.
- 4 Reid had been especially interested in a major project for murals by over ninety artists in Paris’s Hôtel de Ville, which had been extensively covered by the press in 1889. Rosalind PEPALL, “The Murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings: George Reid’s Debt to Puvis de Chavannes,” *Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d’histoire de l’art canadien* 9:1 (1986): 143. For another Canadian artist inspired by the French mural movement, see Laurier LACROIX, “Henri Beau et la peinture d’histoire,” in Pierre L’ALLIER, ed., *Henri Beau 1863–1949* (Quebec: Musée du Québec, 1987), 42–45.
- 5 The members of the Society were: Frederick Challener, William Cruikshank, Harriet Ford, Wyly Grier, George Reid, Sidney Strickland Tully, and Curtis Williamson, as given by Jean GRANT in “Studio and Gallery,” *Toronto Saturday Night* 11 (8 January 1898): 9.
- 6 For a look at the Society’s proposals, see Charles C. HILL, ed., “For an Integration of the Arts,” *Artists, Architects & Artisans: Canadian Art 1890–1918* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2013), 136–41; also Marilyn J. MCKAY, *A National Soul: Canadian Mural Painting 1860s–1930s* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 39–40, 135–36.
- 7 Simcoe was the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1791, and Baldwin was a politician who, with Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, established responsible government in Canada after 1841.
- 8 Louise d’ARGENCOURT and Jacques FOUCART, *Puvis de Chavannes, 1824–1898*, ex. cat. (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1977), 58–67. The Nabis muralists, such as Maurice Denis and Edouard Vuillard, also added decorative borders directly onto the canvas of their murals in the 1890s, inspired by Puvis de Chavannes. See Gloria GROOM, *Beyond the Easel: Decorative Painting by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, and Roussel, 1890–1930*, ex. cat. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 81, 90, 135.
- 9 Lynn ROBERTS, “Victorian Frames,” in *In Perfect Harmony*, 64, 81.
- 10 A chronological list of church decorations by Ozias Leduc is given in Laurier LACROIX, ed., in collaboration with Monique LANTHIER and Arlene GEHMACHER, *Ozias Leduc. Une œuvre d’amour et de rêve* (Montreal: Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 1996), 299–303.
- 11 J. Craig STIRLING, *Ozias Leduc et la décoration intérieure de l’église de Saint-Hilaire* (Quebec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1985), 24–25.
- 12 The contract, dated 22 Apr. 1897, is reproduced in LACROIX, *Ozias Leduc*, 105. The specific subjects were listed in the contract.

- 13 Ibid., 290.
- 14 See drawing for *La foi*, fig. 31, in *ibid.*, p. 109.
- 15 The *convolvulus* or bindweed is a wild plant that grows in the fields and is included in Owen Jones, *Grammar of Ornament*, 1856, pl. xcviii–xcix, nos. 8 and 9, a well-known source of design at that time. Craig Stirling includes a discussion of the border motifs in Leduc’s Saint-Hilaire murals, p. 144–45. The second vine motif is most probably something like a clematis or wild climbing vine.
- 16 The two murals in the chancel, *L’Adoration des Mages* and *L’Assomption*, fit exactly into the pointed arches of the vaulted ceiling, and so they received a different painted border of suitably Gothic trefoil leaves in gold.
- 17 A detailed account of the Sherbrooke mural decorations is given in Laurier LACROIX, “La Décoration religieuse d’Ozias Leduc à l’évêché de Sherbrooke,” MA thesis, Université de Montréal, 1973. Leduc’s mural *Le Sacré-Coeur de Jésus*, painted in 1917–18 for the Saint-Enfant-Jésus du Mile-End Church, has a wide, French-inspired canvas border of fruit and leaves (illustrated in LACROIX, *Ozias Leduc*, 212–13).
- 18 Arlene Gehmacher gives an analysis of the content of this painting from the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal collection in the exhibition catalogue, LACROIX, *Ozias Leduc*, 126–27.
- 19 MCKAY, *A National Soul*, 137–39.
- 20 In the frame are included pine cones to reflect the forest setting, arrows and moccasin designs related to aboriginal motifs, and fleur-de-lis to suggest Quebec, where the meeting took place. The mural is presently on view (framed) in the collection of the Toronto Metropolitan Library.
- 21 An illustration of MacDonald’s mural for the R.C.A. competition was included in the frontispiece of an article he wrote on the St. Anne’s commission: J.E.H. MACDONALD, “Interior Decorations of St. Anne’s Church, Toronto,” *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* 2 (May–June 1925): illus. 3.
- 22 According to Robert G. HILL, ed., *The Biographical Dictionary of Architect in Canada*, W. Ford Howland (1874–1948) signed the presentation drawings for the church in 1907 but “likely prepared the design with the advice of” Toronto architect Edmund Burke, who had considerable experience in ecclesiastical architecture. Howland had articulated with Burke from 1891–1896. See Angela CARR, *Toronto Architect Edmund Burke: Redefining Canadian Architecture* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995), chapter 3.
- 23 Robert S. NELSON, *Hagia Sophia, 1850–1950: Holy Wisdom Modern Movement* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), in chapter 3, “Stones of Byzantium: John Ruskin and *The Stones of Venice*,” 69.
- 24 For example, an article on the construction of Westminster Catholic Cathedral in London, completed in 1903 and inspired by the Hagia Sophia, was published in the Canadian magazine *Construction*, 1909, in which the writer, Herbert Clark, claimed that it was “architecturally the greatest ecclesiastical production in centuries.” *Construction* 2:9 (July 1909): 40–46. Also MCKAY, *A National Soul*, 84–88.
- 25 St. Anne’s Church was designated a National Historical Site in 1997. (Jacqueline Hucker, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Agenda Paper, 1998–46, largely based on research from Catherine MASTIN, “James Edward Hervey MacDonald and the St. Anne’s Anglican Church Mural Decoration Program,” MA thesis, York University, 1988.)

- 26 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," 86.
- 27 The sketchbook is in Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, James Edward Hervey MacDonald Fonds, Acc. No. 1973-14-1.
- 28 Among the books MacDonald scribbled as references in his sketchbook were: Alexander SPELTZ, *Styles of Ornament: Exhibited in designs and arranged in historical order with descriptive text: a handbook for architects, designers, painters, sculptors, woodcarvers, chasers, modellers, cabinet-makers and artistic locksmiths as well as also for technical schools, libraries and private study* (first published in German in Leipzig by Brockhaus, 1904). An English edition came out in 1906 (Berlin/New York: B. Hessling) and a translation by Brockhaus in 1910. Also MacDonald noted Nathaniel Hubert J. WESTLAKE's *History of Design in Mural Painting from the Earliest Times to the Twelfth Century, with an introduction on the art of the pre-Christian period* (London: J. Parker and New York: E.P. Dutton, 1902-1905); and Ellen CONROY, *The Symbolism of Color* (London: William Rider & Son Ltd., 1921). It is interesting to note that the design for the St. Anne's plaster roundels, set between the arches of the chancel and representing two peacocks (symbols of the Resurrection) drinking from a fountain, was taken directly from RUSKIN's *The Stones of Venice* 2 (1852): pl. 32 in chapter v on "Byzantine Palaces."
- 29 J.E.H. MacDonald painted three murals: *Transfiguration* and *The Tempest* in the chancel ceiling and *The Crucifixion* in one pendentive. Franklin Carmichael painted two murals in the chancel ceiling, *Adoration of the Magi* and *Entry into Jerusalem*. Frederick H. Varley painted the pendentive mural, *The Nativity*, and four portraits of Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, and Jeremiah in the central dome collar. The other artists were Thoreau MacDonald, Neil McKechnie (not the one who died in 1904, but perhaps his son), Arthur Martin, H.S. Palmer, and A.S. Stansfield. Florence Wyle and Frances Loring were responsible for the plaster bas-relief sculptures. Two murals on the back walls of the church were done in 1960 by Stewart Treviranus.
- 30 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," 87.
- 31 Ibid., 89.
- 32 The blue and gold mosaics of the main altar and dado were added in 1960 and 1968, replacing a curtain which had originally hung there.
- 33 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," 89.
- 34 For MacDonald's relationship with Arts and Crafts workmanship, see HILL, *Artists, Architects and Artisans*, 41, 48-49, 176-79.
- 35 For illustrations of some of MacDonald's designs for reviews and book illustrations with pronounced, decorative borders, see Robert STACEY and Hunter BISHOP, eds., *J.E.H. MacDonald, Designer: An Anthology of Graphic Design, Illustration and Lettering* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, an imprint of Archives of Canadian Art, 1996); for example, the title page and frontispiece of Grace MCLEOD ROGERS' *Stories of the Land of Evangeline*, published in 1923 by McClelland & Stewart, 63, illus. 27.
- 36 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," 88. The colouring of the dome interior has been changed to olive brown in tone with constellations in light blue.
- 37 For the construction of the house, MacCallum had the help of his friend Professor C.H. Wright, Chair of the Department of Architecture at the University of Toronto. Pierre B. LANDRY, *The MacCallum-Jackman Cottage Mural Paintings* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1990), 12.

- 38 The basic construction of the walls and roof may be seen in a 1968 photograph in *ibid.*, 54.
- 39 In 1953, two small panels were added by A.Y. Jackson to the north wall, which had two empty spaces on account of an original miscalculation of the measurements (Jackson had been on the front in the First World War when the original commission was carried out). The whole series of murals was given to the National Gallery of Canada by H.R. and Mary Jackman in 1968, and the paintings are on permanent display in the Canadian galleries, installed as they were in the cottage, without the framed openings of the doors and window, which had originally served as part of the framework of the small murals. The wall battens that were originally natural wood have been painted green.
- 40 George A. REID, "Applied Art," *Canadian Architect and Builder* 13:3 (March 1900): 55.
- 41 Frederick S. CHALLENGER, "Mural Decoration," *The Canadian Architect and Builder* 17:5 (architect's edition) (May 1904): 90.

Quand l'architecture définit le cadre : les murales canadiennes de Reid, de Leduc et du Groupe des sept

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Au début du ^{xx}^e siècle, les praticiens canadiens de la peinture murale ont été inspirés par l'essor de cette forme d'art en Europe et aux États-Unis. Les murales, peintes à l'huile sur une toile et fixées à un mur selon la technique des peintures marouflées françaises du ^{xix}^e siècle, exigeaient une approche différente des tableaux de chevalet quant à la texture de surface, à la couleur et à la lumière. Cela dit, la principale distinction résidait dans le fait que la murale faisait par définition partie du mur, tandis que la peinture de chevalet s'en détachait au moyen d'un cadre, qui pouvait être richement doré, abondamment sculpté ou simplement peint. Une murale était toutefois plus qu'un revêtement et nécessitait un encadrement pour être considérée comme une peinture. L'œuvre était ainsi habituellement destinée à un espace particulier sur un mur, qu'il s'agisse d'une alcôve, d'un tympan semi-circulaire ou d'un pendentif. L'architecture du site d'une peinture murale définissait par conséquent son cadre.

L'artiste de Toronto George Reid (1860–1947) était l'un des plus importants adeptes des peintures murales pour les édifices publics canadiens. En 1899, il a d'ailleurs réalisé, dans le hall d'entrée des bâtiments municipaux de Toronto, deux panneaux muraux encadrés par des pilastres en marbre blanc, la moulure décorative de la corniche du plafond et la garniture en marbre du lambris d'appui mural. Afin de séparer ce cadre architectural de l'œuvre, Reid a peint une bordure ornementale autour de la toile, à la manière des muralistes français.

Le peintre québécois Ozias Leduc (1864–1955) était également au fait du regain de la peinture murale en France, ayant passé six mois à Paris en 1897 en vue de préparer une commande de décoration pour l'église Saint-Hilaire au Québec. Afin d'ancrer visuellement ses toiles marouflées aux murs de cette église, Leduc a peint des cadres directement sur le plâtre. Il a en outre conçu un cadre « courant » qui s'étendait non seulement autour des murales, mais encore des fenêtres et des niches des sculptures jusqu'aux plafonds voûtés de l'église, unifiant ainsi les peintures, la décoration et l'architecture en une œuvre d'art complète.

En 1924, l'artiste de Toronto J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932) a élaboré une décoration intégrale similaire pour l'intérieur de l'église anglicane St. Anne's, à Toronto. Dans cet édifice de style byzantin, MacDonald a proposé une série de toiles marouflées dotées d'un encadrement peint inspiré des enjolivures et des couleurs vives de l'art byzantin. Les tableaux créés par MacDonald et sept autres artistes, y compris Frederick Varley (1881–1969) et Franklin Carmichael (1890–1945) – ses collègues du Groupe des sept –, se fondaient en une joyeuse célébration de la couleur et du symbolisme en réponse à l'inspiration byzantine de l'architecture du bâtiment. Cette approche de l'art et du design basée sur le mouvement Arts and Crafts était semblable à celle adoptée par MacDonald, en collaboration avec ses confrères Arthur Lismer (1885–1969) et Tom Thomson (1877–1917), pour une commande réalisée en 1916 et 1917. Celle-ci consistait en un jeu de murales pour le chalet d'été de leur mécène, le docteur James MacCallum. Peints sur des panneaux de fibre de bois, les tableaux évoquaient dans le salon les couleurs des paysages d'été et d'automne. Les panneaux, installés juste au-dessous de la ligne de toiture, étaient maintenus en place par des moulures en bois naturel qui prolongeaient les voliges de bois fixant les murs en fibre de la pièce. Le simple encadrement en bois des tableaux convenait à la simplicité de la construction du chalet et reflétait son architecture pratique et sans prétention.