

A mixed issue is an occasion as well as a test of the editorial mission. The range of topics and approaches found in this issue demonstrate both the scope and the depth that the *Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* strives to maintain. Honouring the very high standard set by founding editor Sandra Paikowsky, *JCAH/AHAC* aims with every issue to get “better and better.”

The restoration of two works by Jean-Antoine Aide-Créquy (1749–1780) done by Élisabeth Forest, Marie-Claude Corbeil, and Elizabeth Moffatt at the Centre de conservation du Québec has unearthed a wealth of information about the working methods of this priest and painter, claimed as the first painter born in Canada – *avant la lettre* to be sure. This article extends a very strong tradition in *JCAH* of attention to object, a mission confirmed by the thematic issue on the frame not so long ago.

David Silcox's return to the subject of David Milne (1881–1953) will both interest and surprise devotees of this modern Canadian artist. A new fact about Milne's life sets the record straight and reminds us of the circumstances in which he grew up and made his first paintings – rather a long way from New York. Silcox is both a Milne biographer and the compiler of his catalogue raisonné. The ongoing interest in Milne within the field and in the broader Canadian culture is confirmed by James King's new biography of the artist, reviewed in this issue by Liz Wylie.

Other interests have been excited by the monumental exhibition *1920s Modernism in Montreal: The Beaver Hall Group*, organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The culmination of a decade of research by co-curators Jacques Des Rochers and Brian Foss, the exhibition and its accompanying publications are reviewed with brio by Alicia Boutilier who finds much to celebrate in the curatorial approach. Members of the Beaver Hall Group (the ‘other’ Group, as Boutilier reminds us), who were mainly though not exclusively women, are now firmly inscribed in the pantheon. Significantly, for this reader, the project's reconstruction of the exhibition history of the Beaver Hall Group is underscored by Boutilier. We are given glimpses of Canadian art experience – the shock of the modern sometimes delivered, sometimes suppressed.

The history of Canadian art includes the histories of its art institutions. Ian Ferguson's account of the National Gallery of Canada's acquisition of a Jackson Pollock painting will be nothing short of enthralling for students of Canadian cultural policy and internal bureaucratic manoeuvres. The main actors are NGC director Jean Sutherland Boggs and the institution's first curator of contemporary art, Brydon E. Smith, both committed to an expansion of the National Gallery's collection to reflect the broader North American context – in this case, an iconic figure of American abstract expressionism.

Being modern – in this case, being a modern woman – sent photographer Lorene Squire in quite the other direction, following the waterfowl that were her passion from the American Midwest to the Canadian North. Technology of course took her there: modern transport and communications, and the camera. Karla McManus explores the factors that subtended Squire’s short, but productive career as a nature photographer, including commissions from the Hudson’s Bay Company magazine, *The Beaver*, and the growing awareness of the earth’s fragility after the four drought events of the Dirty Thirties. McManus’s transnational research is contributing to the expansion of Canadian photographic studies by delving into print culture and its archives.

Adam Lauder’s fascination with the twentieth-century mind has yielded great riches in the pages of this journal, first shining light on the practice of Iain Baxter (b. 1936), and in this issue, correlating the work of a polyphonic Canadian creator Bertram Brookner (1888–1955) with the influential psychological boosterism of French psychologist Émile Coué. An echo of the Coué method can be felt in my opening paragraph. Lauder’s development is considerably subtler.

Big ideas yield big books that require considerable unpacking. Robin Simpson’s review essay of Garry Neill Kennedy’s *The Last Art College* gives this weighty tome its due, reconstructing the pedagogical experiment of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (now NSCAD University) as presented by the former president and impresario of NSCAD’s extraordinary star performance. Sometimes reading against the grain, and with a sharp eye for omissions, Simpson performs yeoman service, demonstrating that the story of NSCAD is yet unfolding.

To be continued.

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