



## Plugged in

Reporter Maureen Johnson tries out tape-recorder guide

# Acoustiguide

## Everyman's art expert at National gallery

Visitors to the National Gallery can now take a conducted tour of the huge Centennial Exhibition, Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art — and be alone to contemplate.

The Gallery last week introduced a new service for visitors — the Acoustiguide. The portable tape playback machine contains a recorded description of the major works of art in the exhibition.

The service is available free-of-charge and aids can be obtained from the information desk.

Each aid weighs just over two pounds and can be slung from the shoulder or carried in hand or purse; a light ear-piece leads from the aid.

**U.S. invention**

The Acoustiguide, an American invention, is designed for ease and simplicity. It has just two controls, the volume regulator and an on/off switch.

The Gallery is the first art gallery in Canada to use the portable tape-transmitter. For

aided to listen more accurately — his driving license is credit card his passport — and this is insured when he brings back the aid.

The extraordinary covers 40 key works out of the 120 paintings and sculptures in the exhibition and lasts 20 minutes.

The usual programs of gallery talks will continue as these have the advantage of personal contact between the

visitor and a guide who can answer questions.

However, the Acoustiguide will be used for major exhibitions at the Gallery as visitors don't have to wait around for a set time or get a guided tour after it has started.

Already a second commentary is being worked on a tour of the Gallery's permanent collection.

## Local MLA proposes new attack on pollution

Premier John Telford has been asked to take the legislative formulation of a provincial-municipal commitment to plan control of pollution in the Ottawa River.

The proposal for harmony is a letter to the premier by Rev. Lawrence, MLA for Ottawa

called over appearance of the river and shore and also the conventional pollution.

"We need to take a new approach to this whole matter," he said. "There is no point in arguing about past mistakes and what responsibility is re-

# Sounding Nation: Audio Guides and Myths of Participation at the National Gallery of Canada's Centennial Exhibit

MAY CHEW

To commemorate the Centennial of Confederation in 1967, the National Gallery of Canada (NGC) in Ottawa organized the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Canadian art to date. *Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art: An Exhibition Arranged in Celebration of the Centenary of Confederation* = *Trois cents ans d'art canadien : exposition organisée à l'occasion du centenaire de la Confédération* included close to four hundred paintings, sculptures, as well as graphic and decorative arts, tracing a line from the French colonial period to the nation's hundredth birthday.<sup>1</sup> Adding to the significance of the NGC's retrospective was that it marked the first time an interactive technology was used in a Canadian gallery.<sup>2</sup> The Acoustiguides were individual, hand-held, portable tape playback machines which contained a recorded tour of the major works on display, narrated by exhibition curator Robert H. Hubbard. Although the exhibit's introduction of the audio guide passed with modest fanfare, I argue that it serves as a crucial iteration of cultural citizenship. Not unlike the nation's many other commemorative events this year, the NGC's retrospective lauds the nation's entrance into liberal modernity through an emphasis on technological access and participation.

To better elucidate the historical significance of the exhibition and its use of an interactive technology, the first section of this paper briefly delineates the socio-political landscape of the tumultuous 1960s, focusing on the rousing yet ameliorating techno-spectacles of the Centennial celebrations. Establishing this context is crucial in order to underscore the fact that the NGC's use of the audio guides emerges from a broader historical continuum of technologies employed in the service of nation building. Following this, the essay turns to the NGC's *Three Hundred Years* exhibition to explore the role of the audio guide in facilitating embodied rites of cultural citizenship. I argue here that the constructed visual-aural landscape beckons the audience through

Detail, Plugged in: Reporter Maureen Johnson tries out tape-recorder guide.  
 "Acoustiguide: Everyman's art expert at National Gallery," *Ottawa Citizen*,  
 26 July 1967. (Photo: the author)

the promise of control, access, and communion. By thus summoning the audience into its fold, the exhibition also coaxes into existence a particular *subject* of nation, one whose body is maneuvered through the linear narrative of nation, and performs the gestural and ambulatory articulation of progress.

Running as an undercurrent throughout this paper is Ian McKay's "liberal order framework" thesis, which conceptualizes Canada as a "category" or "a historically specific project of rule, rather than either an essence we must defend or an empty homogeneous space we must possess."<sup>3</sup> Such an approach seeks to denaturalize the "politico-economic logic" of liberalism, and asks us to think through the ways in which it is established and secured through acts often involving violence. McKay's framework provides an integral lens in this examination of how nation is congealed through technological intervention, how bodies are ushered into its fabric – whether through exclusion or strategic inclusion – and in the process, how these subjects are defined as *within* or *without* the discourse of modernity.

### Technologies of Nation Building in 1960s Canada

On 1 July 1967, actor and activist Chief Dan George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation took to the stage in Vancouver's Empire Stadium to partake in the "Centennial Birthday Party." Here, in front of a jubilant crowd of 32,000 gathered, he delivered an impassioned soliloquy which opened with the following lines: "How long have I known you, Oh Canada? A hundred years? Yes, a hundred years. And many, many seelalum<sup>4</sup> more. And today, when you celebrate your hundred years, Oh Canada, I am sad for all the Indian people throughout the land." As one newspaper at the time reported, George's "Lament for Confederation" – an unflinching indictment of the colonial state – left the crowd "incredulous and silent."<sup>5</sup> George's "lament" evidenced the amplifying struggle for Aboriginal rights that perhaps found its footing in the 1960s alongside other global decolonizing movements, but would surely continue well beyond this decade. While this speech might have seemed in stark contrast to the other exuberant salutes that took place during Centennial, it was in fact one moment among many during the 1960s which revealed the deep fissures within official narratives of nation.<sup>6</sup> Many of the decade's tensions collected around rapidly transforming ideas of national identity. While some in the country were anxiously clinging to British legacy, others were demonstrating their opposition to a system increasingly recognized as outmoded, or downright oppressive and colonial. In Quebec, the *maîtres chez nous* ("masters in our own house") rallying cry behind the Quiet Revolution captured the burgeoning movement for self-determination which was steadily gaining in strength and urgency. This discontent was

further intensified with the founding of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) in 1963, and the 1968 publication of Pierre Vallières's incendiary *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*. Added to this already heady mix were the unrests and anxieties not unfamiliar to other parts of the West during this time: the women's movement, labour strikes, as well as rapidly changing demographics caused by an upsurge in the youth population, and substantial increases in numbers of non-European immigrants. As the rest of this section illustrates, responses to the decade's crises largely coalesced around technologies of nation building which promised to bolster collective identity and offer a common path toward modernization.

The crisis in Quebec in particular led to a number of state measures to reinvigorate the symbolic potency of nation for the growing number of discontented fractions.<sup>7</sup> Included among these symbolic overhauls were the creation of the new Canadian Maple Leaf flag in 1965 and the replacement of "God Save the Queen" with "O Canada" as national anthem.<sup>8</sup> The coalescing tensions during this period also drove the federalists, as L.B. Kuffert puts it, to "a new phase of constitutional wrangling."<sup>9</sup> In 1963, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was formed to find ways to conciliate the disquieted Francophone community back into the folds of nation.<sup>10</sup> The growing demand for global labour in the late 1950s also eventuated in the introduction of 1967's immigration points system, which was touted as a departure from the previous policy based on overt racial discrimination, in favour of one which appraised potential newcomers based on the "objective" criteria of education and skills.<sup>11</sup> Unsurprisingly, the supposedly rehabilitated system had an implicit mechanism of differentiation that affirmed the technological priorities of the moment: ranked highest were those immigrants equipped with the professional, managerial, and technical skills which would allow them to best conform to Canada's envisioned future.<sup>12</sup>

Another ameliorative effort came in the form of the Centennial, which arrived in the midst of a turbulent decade as a serendipitous opportunity for those around the country to at least momentarily galvanize around the performative revelry of nation. Among the numerous projects organized to mark the anniversary, many focused on the crucial role of technology in fostering national unity and participation. Two CBC-commissioned projects, Gordon Lightfoot's song "Canadian Railroad Trilogy," and Glenn Gould's experimental radio documentary "The Idea of North,"<sup>13</sup> highlight the centrality of technology as both the *object* of the national imaginary, as well as the nation's hallowed *medium* of transfer. The symbolic importance of the rail was also the focus of the Confederation Train, which served as an interactive mobile exhibition of Canadian history on board fifteen cars. The train received 2.5 million visitors as it journeyed across the country, making

sixty-three stops along the way.<sup>14</sup> For communities beyond the main rail lines, “Confederation Caravans” consisting of numerous connected tractor-trailers also travelled on highways throughout the country to reach over six million visitors. Additionally, the Centennial Canoe Pageant, in which ten canoes constructed in the likeness of the *voyageurs*<sup>15</sup> north canoes and aptly named after early explorers like John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto) and Samuel de Champlain, made its way from Alberta to Montreal, retracing the “original water trails” traversed by the early explorers and fur traders.<sup>16</sup> Taken together, these projects did more than simply laud the role of technology in the manifestation of nation: they also provided, through physical and symbolic transport, the means through which the mythos of settler-colonial nationhood could be affectively and haptically (re)lived.

There were further examples of Centennial projects which emphasized the role of technology as both *object* of national imagination as well as *medium* of symbolic transfer. Established under the recommendation of the Massey Report in 1951, the Canadian Science and Technology Museum opened in the nation’s capital in November of 1967. The museum, whose stated goal is to study the vital role of science and technology in the constitution of modern Canada, illustrates the attempt to ensconce innovation and progress as foundational myths in the story of nation.<sup>17</sup> In the same year, the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) launched the groundbreaking film series Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle (CFC/SN), which capitalized on newly invented portable video technologies like the Sony Portapak, also introduced in 1967, to produce collaborative, process-oriented documentary projects with communities around the nation.<sup>18</sup> CFC/SN was guided by the philosophy that access to technology, especially for underrepresented and marginalized groups, could lead to citizenship education and social change. There was, in other words, a conviction that participatory technologies and public communication channels had the potential to corral disparate bodies into a coherent democratic community.

Of all the Centenary events, none brandished technological pageantry more grandly than the “Universal and International Exhibition Montreal Expo ’67” held between 28 April and 29 October of 1967. While Centennial events as a whole worked to project a vision of Canada as a thoroughly modern nation, nowhere was this more evident than the Montreal fairgrounds, which welcomed over fifty million visitors from around the world. Expo’s theme, “Terre des Hommes/Man and His World,” and pavilions (which included Man the Explorer, Man the Producer, Man the Creator, Man the Provider, and Man in the Community) were broad declarations of tolerance, pluralism, and universalism.<sup>19</sup> This affirmation of universal citizenship, however, must not be seen as separate from the fact that Expo

was offered as a conciliatory gesture towards Quebec. As Alexander Wilson points out, the award of Expo to Quebec was meant as a stimulus to urge the province to relinquish its “infantile” ethnic concerns and finally join the continental advance towards a “technological society.”<sup>20</sup> Rather than slackening the boundaries of nation, therefore, proclamations of universal humanism in fact served as an extendible model of accommodation through which nation was able to retain its foothold.

Centennial celebrations did not merely function as the palliative salve aimed at quelling internal fractions; they also seduced through the technologized projection of nation. The pageantry of Centennial emphasized the crucial role of technology – and the interactive and participatory paradigms it espoused – in the embodied rites and rituals of citizenship. Expo 67 presents an explicit example of how cultural citizenship was framed as a distinct form of spectatorship groomed under the aegis of emerging vision technologies.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the NGC’s employment of audio guides for its Centennial exhibition encouraged audiences to construct and consume nation through the technological apparatus. The ambit of technology as both *binding thread* and *common horizon* was such that it encompassed not only modernization strategies and responses to national schisms during this period; it also enframed some elements of dissent, as was the case with Chief Dan George’s repudiation of the colonial state, which was aurally transmitted through the technological apparatus (recording and broadcasting technologies) with the capacity to tie together the distant threads of a nation from coast to coast. The underlying imperatives of capturing and receiving the nation through a technologized lens were not necessarily new; however, the speed and intensity with which such technologies were employed are revealing of the nation’s accelerated public coming-of-age. Viewed in this light, the technological harbingers of Canada’s entrance onto a modern, international stage during the late 1960s worked in the service of constructing and validating a particular kind of civic participant. This is a subject plugged-in – ideologically but also viscerally – to the technological apparatus of nation, and primed to receive its overtures.

### ***Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art: Summoning Citizenship***

Compared to the fanfare surrounding Expo 67, the NGC’s *Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art* garnered meagre public and scholarly attention.<sup>22</sup> Despite this, the exhibition deserves attention for a number of reasons. First, an ambitious attempt by the Gallery to craft the “largest and most inclusive” panoramic survey of Canadian art to date, the retrospective’s authoritative scope ensured its continuing influence beyond the initial showing.<sup>23</sup> This

exhibition can be viewed as an articulation of a burgeoning narrative of nation that was already calcifying as authoritative national art history.

Secondly, in contrast to Expo 67's "fantasy of modernity," which protracted nation through utopic visions of the "future-tense city,"<sup>24</sup> NGC's commemorative project set out to establish a prehistory culminating in the crowning of the modern nation. The "project" of nation, which McKay's reconnaissance reminds us is never an easy feat, simultaneously involves the envisioning of futurity as well as the active effort of genealogical justification; both can be apprehended as complementary chimeras cohered through a linear narrative of progress. *Three Hundred Years* hinges on the notion of anteriority, such that the mechanisms of the active, present-tense nation *in the making* occur precisely through the reminiscent fantasy of nation as already *made*. In the exhibit, which chief curator Robert H. Hubbard described as "all-inclusive" and ideologically neutral,<sup>25</sup> nation is established through a distinctly colonial rubric centred on European contact. The exhibition was divided into four sections arranged chronologically through three floors of the gallery: the French colonial period (late 1660s to mid-1700s), the English colonial period (mid-1700s to 1867), and Post-Confederation (later nineteenth century) culminate in the twentieth century, the most robust section comprising roughly half the works.<sup>26</sup> The curatorial thesis, as emphasized through Hubbard's audio guide narrative, is that Canada's colonial lineage directly matures into the nation's definitive modern movements, which include Painters Eleven, Les Automatistes, and most emblematically, the Group of Seven.<sup>27</sup>

Thirdly, the exhibition is important because it marked the first time an interactive technology was used in a Canadian gallery, a fact that also received little to no attention in exhibition reviews at the time.<sup>28</sup> A decade before its introduction in the NGC, the Acoustiguide Corporation<sup>29</sup> invented the first audio interpretative device, used to deliver a guided tour of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Hyde Park home narrated by his widow Eleanor Roosevelt. The first use of the audio guide in a major blockbuster exhibition was the Tutankhamen exhibition in the 1960s, where the invention of portable audiocassette technology allowed the audio guide to be easily handled by museum audiences.<sup>30</sup> The NGC's deployment of audio guides during the Centennial marked an orientation towards interactive and participatory paradigms that were among the most prevalent figures of 1960s Canada.<sup>31</sup> The soundscape created by NGC's Acoustiguides also presents an interesting phenomenological counterpoint to Expo 67. While the latter encouraged the sublimation of self through the phantasmagoric appeal of the overpowering spectacle,<sup>32</sup> the NGC's use of the Acoustiguide seemed centred on a different experience based on intimacy, discreet access, and the regulation of affect. Rather than sensorially engulfing the body, the Acoustiguides meticulously

guided it through a didactic tour of nation and grounded it as a rational, judicious subject (read: citizen).

In pondering the significance of *Three Hundred Years*, perhaps there is a much too easy tendency on the researcher's part to overemphasize the importance of beginnings, or commencements. Carolyn Steedman reminds us that beginnings are not given, but in fact created; "[n]othing starts in the Archive, nothing, ever at all, although things certainly end up there."<sup>33</sup> Part and parcel of the urge to archive is the need to locate – or more precisely, to *possess* – the beginning, or, if that is not possible, to write a story that provides an origin. This is especially the case in settler nations, where an innocuous origin can be constructed to legitimize the state's existence through what Jonathan Bordo might describe as the (re)inaugurating “rupturing event.”<sup>34</sup> Of course, the “fever” for beginnings can be attributed to the state as much as to the researcher embarking on a hunt for justificatory frameworks. With this in mind, my weighing of the NGC's Centennial exhibition and its significance lies less in the interest of various firsts – the first Centennial, the first prolonged attempt to chronicle the whole of Canadian art history, the first use of an interactive technology in a Canadian gallery, etc. Instead, I contend that this moment exists within a larger historical continuum, and represents a particular period in time when notions of Canadian identity were being rigorously tested and carved out.

When I conducted archival research at the NGC, first in the spring of 2012 and later in the fall of 2013, I was struck by my surroundings. The NGC's archives sit at the back of the gallery, with floor-to-ceiling windows on one side, overlooking the Ottawa River and the Alexandra Bridge. This area contains a dense assemblage of monumental testaments



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## Acoustiguide

### Everyman's art expert at National gallery

Visitors to the National Gallery can now have a confidential user of the huge Centennial exhibition. Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art — and be there to contribute.

The gallery just opened introduced a new service for visitors — the Acoustiguide. The portable tape placement machine contains a recorded description of the major works of art in the exhibition.

The service is available in the first-floor and can be obtained from the information desk.

There are weights just over five pounds and can be slung over the shoulder or carried in hand or purse. A tape recorder is built into the unit.

U.S. inventors

The Acoustiguide, an American invention, is designed for use in museums. It has just two controls, the volume regulator and an on-off switch. The gallery is the first art gallery in Canada to use the portable tape recorder. For a number of years the system has been used in some major museums in the States.

The gallery is enthusiastic about the Acoustiguide, but officials are so pleased with the public response to far that it is almost sure to stay.

French and English

Three Acoustiguide tapes have been taped under contract from an American firm. They give a commentary in English spoken by the Robert H. Wallace, chief curator of the gallery and admission supervisor. The other two give a French commentary. The inventor is generally

known as Jean-Pierre Secord — has driving interest in creating such for example and into is mounted when he begins work the unit.

The Acoustiguide consists of a tape recorder in the unit, soundings and amplifiers in the exhibition, and tape in minutes.

The overall program of gallery talks will continue to focus on the importance of personal contact between the

viewer and a guide who can answer questions.

However, the Acoustiguide will be used for the major exhibitions at the gallery as visitors must have to read around but a not down or get a guided tour after it has started.

Already a second Acoustiguide is being tested on a tour of the gallery's permanent collection.

## Local MLA proposes

### new attack on pollution

Premier John Robarts has been asked to take the initiative in launching a provincial attack on pollution in the Ottawa River.

The proposal, first advanced in a letter to the premier by Mrs. Lawrence, M.L.A. for Huron, says the government should be composed of members from Ontario and Quebec as well as the federal government.

It would act in an advisory capacity, assisting in coordinating the efforts of the three governments.

While the main concern would be with pollution the commission might also involve such matters as bridges and inter-provincial transportation, highway planning and tourism. The latter suggestion.

Regarding the plan, Mr. Lawrence said it is evident that the problem of pollution

cannot be solved by the river and also the provincial pollution.

"We need to take a new approach to the whole matter," he said. "There is no point in arguing about jurisdiction and which jurisdiction is responsible for pollution. We should close the book on the past and make a new beginning."

He announced his own intention that the various governments are concerned enough to work together to solve pollution.

## School board

### in Gloucester almost broke

Plugged in: Reporter Maureen Johnson tries out tape-recorder guide. "Acoustiguide:

Everyman's art expert at National Gallery,"

Ottawa Citizen, 26 July 1967. (Photo: the author)

to national history, including Library and Archives Canada, Parliament, and the Château Laurier. Directly across the river is Gatineau, Quebec, where the Canadian Museum of History – the NGC’s human history correlate – is located. Also visible from this vantage point is Roxy Paine’s towering arboreal steel sculpture, *One Hundred Foot Line* (2010), a tribute to the interrelation of environment and industry, nature and technology. Not far from that, right atop Nepean Point, stands Hamilton MacCarthy’s imposing statue of French explorer Samuel de Champlain holding his famous astrolabe, with an accompanying bronze plaque declaring him “The first great Canadian.” During my hours there, thinking about nationhood while absentmindedly gazing out the window, I often felt that I had been thrown into some picturesque *mise-en-scène* of nation. Beholding Champlain, I remembered having read that his sculpture was not so long ago adorned with the figure of a kneeling Indigenous scout, before protests successfully led to this figure’s removal in 1996. I was cognizant of the fact that I was being intentionally situated within an aestheticized tableau of nation, from which vestiges of coloniality “reformed” were still discernable.<sup>35</sup> There is indeed something uncanny about the experience of being heralded by nation. I felt that I could have perhaps surrendered to being embedded within an undoubtedly manufactured yet, on some level, tangibly reassuring scene. This reassurance bewitches insofar as it plies its beholders with easy guarantees that they too can inherit the spoils of nation.

It was these provocations that propelled me to mull over possible material and phenomenal connections between my experience in the archives and that of the exhibition visitor to the Lorne Building nearly a half century ago. I listened to a cassette copy of the audio tour on an old Sony Sports Walkman, a relatively rudimentary technology not much different from the machines the Centennial visitors would have used, except for the fact that mine allowed me to rewind and fast forward through the tape, while those early Acoustiguides only allowed users to press the start and stop buttons, and to adjust the volume of the emanating narrative. My device was also less bulky than the original contraptions, which visitors had to strap around their shoulders and carry through the exhibition spaces. Like the 1967 user, I bore this technology upon my body. The headset made contact with my ear, forming an aural enclosure. Having no other parallel entry point to *Three Hundred Years*, I used this audio tour to plunge me into its curatorial narrative. When I pressed play, the voice that greeted me was not merely any anonymous authorial figure, but the commanding baritone of Robert H. Hubbard, the exhibit’s chief curator as well as the NGC’s first ever Curator of Canadian Art: “I will be your guide on this tour of Canadian art.” The fifty-minute audio tour alludes to roughly sixty pieces of art, compared to the

exhibition's entire collection of close to four hundred. In general, Hubbard touches on works that he deems most significant: works that support the exhibition's overarching narrative of French and English colonial tradition ripening into twentieth century modernity; works that are exemplar of certain movements; and works produced by the usual assembly of canonized Canadian artists.<sup>36</sup> Hubbard's authorial presence captains the listener's trek through the physical, historic, and symbolic terrains of national art history as encapsulated through these works. To receive his voice and acquiesce to its appeals is to permit oneself to be led synchronously through the labyrinthine exhibition space, the nascent terrain of national art history, and the thicket of symbolic wilderness.

This engagement with the phenomenal experience of the audio guides offers an ingress to historically imagine the ways that this same technology would have affectively beckoned visitors half a century ago. What some theorists characterize as the renewed interest in the materiality of media – which we find adjacent to the archival turn – can be explained by the fact that grappling with the current proliferation of virtual and ephemeral forms leads us, perhaps all too understandably, to seek answers from the tangible object.<sup>37</sup> When it comes to gleaning the past through the material record that remains, some have pointed to the impossibilities of the task, given that the physical record – while in some form experientially accessible – is fundamentally dislodged from the context of the recording.<sup>38</sup> In Jonathan Sterne's exploration of the excavation of “audible pasts” made possible through the advent of sound reproduction technologies, he presents the caveat that while these technologies allow us to construct an audible history, we do so through what amounts to partial assemblages of material detritus. He writes, “[w]e can listen to recorded traces of past history, but we cannot presume to know exactly what it was like to hear at a particular time or place in the past.”<sup>39</sup> The proceeding section draws from this supposition, and acknowledges that the audio tour recording – the material record that remains today – only provides provisional clues about how bodies would have moved through the exhibit, at which points along the path they might have lingered, or how they might have responded to the exhibit's host of technological appeals.

### *Control*

In the NGC's Centennial exhibition, the visitor makes their way through the topography of nation which simultaneously propels the feet, eyes, and ears. Through the use of the audio guide in particular, the exhibition embroils the visitor through three seductions of interactivity: control, access, and communion. The first of these, the myth of control, revolves around a notion that the engine of cultural citizenship is churned in part through a conviction

in empowerment, engagement, and exertion. Many contemporary museum experiences – especially those based on the rehearsals of cultural citizenship for certain privileged national subjects facilitated through participatory technologies – arguably harken back to the imperial resolve that led the nation’s earliest settler-colonizers to trudge through the “wilderness,” conquering its anarchy through an overdetermined technological prowess. This is particularly the case with *Three Hundred Years*, whose thesis centres on the imaginary and symbolic manufacture of nation through the technologized conquering of land.

The construction of landscape through technological will is nothing new in the aesthetic history of Canada,<sup>40</sup> though two examples warrant special attention here. First is the role of the “soldier-topographer” in the pre-Confederation period. Soldier-topographers were British engineers and artillery officers whose training in the medium of watercolour allowed them to render and record the topography of the new colony before the invention of photographic technologies.<sup>41</sup> Importantly, the work of these artists – a group that included George Heriot (1759–1839), William Henry Bartlett (1809–1854), and Thomas Davies (ca.1737–1812), all represented in *Three Hundred Years* – were “widely published” to satisfy the European curiosity about the colonies.<sup>42</sup> The second example is the free cross-country rail access provided by Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and Canadian National Railway (CNR; now CN) to various artists (including members of the Group of Seven) during the early part of the twentieth century, in exchange for the artists’ renderings of the newly opened region.<sup>43</sup> These images were then used in promotional materials to boost tourism and settlement in the West, and came to represent a visual testimony of nation. In this way, as the rail hurtled west, it created an imperial communications artery for the transfer of both material as well as symbolic inventory across the vast stretch of land.

The mastery of the landscape is manifested literally and figuratively in the NGC’s exhibit, primarily through the incorporation of many of these landscape “views” into an iconic national art narrative, and the rigorous figuration of the Group of Seven – the commonly accepted quintessence of Canadian artistic identity – as intrinsically tied to the land. Lynda Jessup diagnoses this tendency when she writes of the mythologization of the Canadian artist as “bushwhacker,” or “a premodern man seeking, in the imagined premodern environment of the Canadian wilderness, the physical and emotional intensity identified with authentic experience.”<sup>44</sup> This brandishing of Canadian identity as founded on a heroic confrontation with the “wild” is evidenced in Hubbard’s audio tour description of the Group’s forefather, Tom Thomson (1877–1917), whose artistic legacy is inseverable from his fabled relationship with the land. Describing Thomson’s famous painting,

*The Jack Pine* (1916–17), Hubbard emphasizes that the self-taught artist was also a guide and fisherman in Algonquin, and someone who “knew the north, from personal experience.”<sup>45</sup> Hubbard’s subsequent recounting of Thomson’s mysterious death by drowning in 1917 – in a setting not unlike the very one depicted in this painting – seems to be offered as part parable, part sacrificial narrative. While Thomson was ultimately unable to survive his passage through the wild, he nonetheless demonstrates a constitutional affiliation with the land that his descendants must inherit, yet ultimately surpass.

Beholden to this logic, the *Three Hundred Years* narrative clarifies that a primordial romance with the land must necessarily be rendered through technological will. The landscape of nation presented here is one in which the “wild” has been brought into the national gallery, where it is tamed through chronology, stitched into narrative, and enlivened through a corresponding audioscape. Here, in other words, wilderness is transformed – *rationalized* – in miniature. Further, the audio guide provides this national thesis with an extra-sensorial resonance through which the visitor can relive the colonial drama of overcoming the indeterminacy of the wild through a fantasy of control. In the gallery, visitors trudge through the “wild” unknown – now produced under various curatorial tutelages – while relishing in their power to traverse its very “wildness” through the cunning push of a button, and turn of a dial.

The sense of viewer agency engendered here centres largely on the exhibit’s promised all-encompassing breadth. Described by Jean Sutherland Boggs, then NGC Director, as “nearly the ideal collection, a *musée imaginaire*, of Canadian art,”<sup>46</sup> and by a reviewer at the time as a “vast panorama of Canada,”<sup>47</sup> *Three Hundred Years* was touted as a comprehensive chronicle of nation. Especially illuminating here is Lieven De Cauter’s configuration of the panorama as a spatial or temporal horizon which cannot be thought of separately from capitalist and colonial modes of consumption. The Centennial landscape encourages a panoramic gaze, whereby the primacy of perspectival agency is foregrounded against “a surrounding nature” available to be exploited as “raw material.”<sup>48</sup> By moving swiftly through the space-time of nation, the visitor sees, hears, and *feels* Canada come into being through the narrative of progress. The conceit of such narratives rests on the implication that subjects, granted the privilege to bear witness to the triumphal tale of progress, themselves emerge as modern. Marshall Berman’s broad configuration of modernism as “any attempt by modern men and women to become subjects as well as objects of modernization” sheds light on the experience of modernity as centred on an onerous pursuit of agency.<sup>49</sup> He describes this ordeal as that of subjects “mak[ing] their way through the maelstrom.”<sup>50</sup> Berman was not alone in his use of this particular imagery;

navigating the turmoil of the modern experience is also an exordial figure in Marshall McLuhan's *The Mechanical Bride*.<sup>51</sup> Taking a cue from Edgar Allan Poe's homonymous story, McLuhan conceptualizes his methodology as "a descent into the maelstrom."<sup>52</sup> Based on a belief in the futility of resistance, McLuhan's treatise instead calls for submersion in the very "whirlpool" of modernity, seeing this as the necessary ritual through which cognitive and sensorial dissonances could be reorganized such that they eventually provide a "thread . . . out of the Labyrinth."<sup>53</sup> It must also be noted that McLuhan's method fascinatingly resembles the panoramic mode, in that it is presented as the "attempt to set the reader at the center of the revolving picture created by these affairs where he may observe the action that is in progress."<sup>54</sup> The instrumentalization of the vista – variably conceived of as Berman's "maelstrom" or McLuhan's "whirlpool" and "revolving picture" – also calls to mind Mary Louise Pratt's diagnosis of the promontory trope in colonial literature. The promontory, according to Pratt, allows an omniscient subject who presides over, and "deictically order[s]" the scene below.<sup>55</sup> Such a view renders unequivocally the power secured by the beholder in the very act of beholding. In the settler-colonial context, the distantiated mastery over the rendered scene is an imaginal mechanism that, far from innocent, is fundamentally tied to the erasure of Indigenous presence.<sup>56</sup>

Significantly, the panoramic sweep of *Three Hundred Years* is manifested not through sight alone, but through the confluence of image and sound. Sound functions as more than just a supplement to vision; as an enclosing surround, the acoustic element challenges the limiting frontal perspective of vision. In flooding the scene through an additional sensory dimension, sound also stretches and deepens the diegetic plane.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, the audioscape accompanying *Three Hundred Years* is the aural-realization of a rational and linear art historical narrative wherein citizenship is induced through *overcoming*. The body beckoned here is implicitly one that is hooked up and plugged in to a linear imagined community, and further cohered atop its *sonic* promontory. It must be said, therefore, that immersion in a scene does not always have to do with the surrender of one's jurisdiction over her own body. In *Three Hundred Years*, the aesthetic surround plays directly into our fantasies of control, for it presents itself as a compass *laid out*, and made available for easy and facile access. As gallery visitors position themselves – or *are* positioned – within the constructed vistas of nation-as-panorama, they can imagine themselves as those enterprising early settlers who hacked their way through the undergrowth of nation.

### *Access and Reception*

The semblance of agency and determination granted the visitor through the exhibit's employment of the audio guide can be encapsulated in this visitor's ability to push the start/stop button, to adjust the volume setting, and to regulate the pace of their journey through the grand narrative of National Art History. It is safe to say, accordingly, that "control" within this context occurs in a minor key, and is fleeting at best. Rather, it is access and reception which prove to be this technology's more plausible entreaties, as they allowed audiences to tune in "directly" to the sonic frequencies of nation. The *trial* – and *trail* – of citizenship here is organized around the body of the visitor being placed within, and guided through, an aestheticized commemorative landscape of nation, and invited to bear witness to its coming of age.

While the audio tour is directly drawn from the exhibition catalogue text – which itself is based on curator and narrator Robert Hubbard's *An Anthology of Canadian Art*, published in 1960<sup>58</sup> – it takes a more conversational tone, with Hubbard often using first person and direct address to engage the listener. The tour includes a considerable amount of instruction regarding the use of the Acoustiguide, as well as how to move throughout the exhibition space. This can likely be explained by the fact that Hubbard felt the novel technology required clear directions for use, but also that the exhibit's narrative of Canadian art history hinged on the audience's rather precise adherence to sequence and chronology. Unlike audio tours which run through closed-circuit broadcast system and allow users to wander through the gallery at their will and "tune in" to fragments of corresponding commentaries via radio signal, the linear tour employed in *Three Hundred Year* censors its users' itinerant wandering. Once they press "play," they are to an extent beholden to the guiding voice emanating from the tape deck, which explicitly shepherds them through the exhibition chronology. Throughout a good part of the fifty-minute audio guide, Hubbard offers the listener detailed instructions as to which path they should chart, peppering his tour with numerous reminders to pause the player so that one might linger on particular works before proceeding to the next tour marker. He also provides narrative links to cohere the exhibition framework, as when he suggests to the visitor looking at David Milne's (1882–1953) *Trees in Spring* (ca. 1917) that they should peek down over the gallery railing in order to see how the line of abstraction extended from Milne to contemporary painting; "you'll be able to look down to the floor below and see how far the tendency towards abstraction has gone in contemporary art. And then you can glance back at Milne's work and see its origins."<sup>59</sup> At another point, he also offers suggestions regarding how the listener might position their body while absorbing the art and his commentary:

in completing our survey of 300 years of Canadian art, we're going to be discussing a number of works here . . . I'd suggest you sit on one of the benches near that centre of the room – providing, of course, that they're not already full – because from that vantage point, most of the paintings I'll talk about can be clearly seen.<sup>60</sup>

What makes these aural directional cues fascinating is that they function like signposts which render the terrain legible. Moreover, they attempt to position the listener as *receiver* of this national discourse and heir to its legacy. The exhibition is an inherently modernist project which presents a cumulative history of progress; the visitor, by cutting a circumscribed path through the space-time of nation with the aid of the audio guide, thus re-enacts its chronology and becomes a fellow citizen of modernity.

The notion that both citizen and nation are mutually constituted by the former being guided through an emblematic panorama can be further parsed through an inspection of the figural witness. Jonathan Bordo's analysis of the "specular witness" in works by Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven is especially helpful here. Bordo describes the "dual role" of this important figure-function in settler-colonial landscapes: the witness "exalts a picture that testifies to an unpicturable condition – the wilderness sublime – while simultaneously legitimating, as a landscape picture, terrain violently seized, dispossessed of its Indigenous inhabitants, and reconstituted as territory."<sup>61</sup> The witness function ultimately hinges upon acts of erasure and possession, particularly as landscape testimony necessitates a "rupturing event" whereby the re/presentation of "wilderness" functions both as a disavowal of what came before, and an inauguration of history "enshrined as visual testament."<sup>62</sup> The process through which landscape declares the "zero degree of history"<sup>63</sup> sheds light upon how the colonial framework of *Three Hundred Years* – which begins with the French occupation and reaches its pinnacle in mid-twentieth century modernity – rehearses the commencement of nation through a strategic denial of all that preceded it. Revealingly, the only Indigenous work referenced through the entirety of Hubbard's audio guide is a passing reference to an unidentified totem pole, which is only mentioned as a landmark to spatially guide the listener from George Theodore Berthon's (1806–1892) *The Three Robinson Sisters* (1846) to Cornelius Krieghoff's (1815–1872) *Portrait of John Budden* (1853). Within this landscape, the visitor serves as the pivotal specular witness, by in fact (*re*)witnessing the scene of symbolic conquest in the panoply of landscape paintings by artists such as Thomas Davies, Cornelius Krieghoff, the Group of Seven, etc., and also by receiving the curatorial narrative of nation stitched together by Hubbard and the gallery. Bordo further makes the case that such acts of witnessing require

the absenting of the human spectator, or else its substitution by a nonhuman proxy: “the crossing of the threshold from witnessed to unwitnessed is marked by the erasure of the figural traces of human presence ... and the substitution of that witness figure, for example, by the nonhuman figure of a solitary tree.”<sup>64</sup> Tom Thomson’s iconic *The Jack Pine* is exemplar; in this painting, the pine tree declares its looming custodianship of the unfolded vista without needing to tarnish the latter’s immaculacy through the admission of human presence.

These arguments add a compelling aesthetic dimension to Ian McKay’s assertions regarding the “politico-economic logic” of the liberal order framework.<sup>65</sup> McKay’s description of the “project” of Canada as “an attempt to plant and nurture, in somewhat unlikely soil, the philosophical assumptions, and the related political and economic practices, of a liberal order”<sup>66</sup> essentially discloses the very mechanisms of landscaping. Because liberalism did not exist as a “consensus viewpoint,” McKay conveys that the arduous task of establishing it as such from the late nineteenth century onwards required acts of “symbolic or actual violence.”<sup>67</sup> This idea helps to demonstrate why the settler nation’s elected aesthetic genealogy lingers so compulsively on tracts of “uncultivated” wild. The representation of these verdant landscapes is akin to the sculpting of the land and the simultaneous *erasure* of its tillage, a logic that Carole Pateman traces back to the settler’s proclaimed “right to husbandry” over *terra nullius*.<sup>68</sup> McKay also puts forward that the liberal order works to install a faith in the “epistemological and ontological primacy” of the individual.<sup>69</sup> This heroic individual – an abstract, “purified and rationalised” entity rather than an actual human being<sup>70</sup> – resembles Bordo’s solitary pine tree: both have been implanted and naturalized within the mythic space-time of nation as absentee overseer.

In *Three Hundred Years*, sound functions as invitation, resonating its intimate appeals through sonic pulsations against the ear. The body “receives” nation by engaging in what Paul Connerton describes as the commemorative “re-enactments of the past,”<sup>71</sup> whereby nation is consecrated through seemingly minute, everyday bodily commitments. This process also entails that “culturally specific postures” of citizenship become archived within the body.<sup>72</sup> The visitor’s entrance into the landscape of nation occurs most provocatively through the bodily enablement of acoustic access. It is tempting to perceive of this process as *auscultation*, a diagnostic practice involving listening, either through an instrument or unaided, to the sounds generated by the body’s internal organs. This rests on the assumption of nation as the entity to be played opened and ascertained. However, a more accurate conception might be that the audio guides provide channels through which the soundscape of nation apprehends the body, such that the “diagnostics”

is employed to stabilize and naturalize the body as subject-as-nation. This proves especially the case when one remembers that deployments of participatory paradigms especially proliferated in the 1960s, a period in Canadian history when state-led initiatives were put in place to quell dissent, or at least choreograph its more threatening energies through managerial projects of inclusion.<sup>73</sup> It is indeed intriguing to think of the ways that an interactive soundscape of nation might function as a curative means of entry into the otherwise inviolable archive, one which directly engages the body in order to stifle some of the latter's potentially unruly energies.

The privilege granted to the NGC's *Three Hundred Years* visitor revolves primarily around the notion of *access* to a dreamscape already unveiled. By re-witnessing and re-living the conquering of "wilderness," this visitor is ultimately bestowed with an invitation to bear witness to the modern nation as it develops into fullness at the cusp of its second century. In these ways, access and bodily reception become the vital methods of summoning the subject-of-nation; in return, the opened body assumes the form of another landscape where the nation unfurls itself, where modernity *takes place*.

### *Communion*

In the case of the audio guide, access and reception do not enable members of an imagined community to *speak together*, so much as they elucidate the capacity for these members to *tap into* and *inherit* a common audiovisual topography of nation. Nevertheless, the promise of communion remains a crucial mode of enticement. By fleshing out and materializing an audible narrative of nation, the audio guide tour was meant to function, in a sense, as Benedict Anderson's "imagined sound," that technology of common cultural language which affectively connects members of a nation through "a ghostly intimation of simultaneity across homogeneous, empty time."<sup>74</sup> In order for there to exist that "deep, horizontal comradeship,"<sup>75</sup> which for Anderson is an imperative of the imagined community, the archive needs to present itself as accessible and penetrable. The subversion of the hierarchical verticality that stands in the way of idealised notions of community requires that bodies be invited not just to saddle up alongside inviolable archives, but allowed to *enter into* them. Thus, the audio guide functions through the endowment of an intimate soundscape which *enfolds* its receiver. This soundscape becomes a point of entry: the sensuous and flexible opening through which visitors are invited to conjoin with the official national imaginary. For Anderson, *simultaneity* is designated as *unisonance*, a shared chorus which stands as an "echoed physical realization of the imagined community."<sup>76</sup> By providing a sonic accompaniment that "echoes" the visitors' treading through the presented landscape, the audio guide rests on the tacit invitation of the visitor's body to converge with the national art narrative. In contrast to the

experience of merely beholding the static painted image on the wall, this technology enables a theatre of communion which facilitates a kind of ecstatic embodiment, whereby the synchronization of national history with one's ambulatory passage through the exhibition renders the journey epic, while deepening its affective and symbolic resonance.

While the lush acoustic dimension profits the construction of communal experience, the technological experience itself is riven with contradictions. First, communion figured through the user's agentive access to the national archive is funnelled through a seemingly private and autonomous experience of engaging with the audio guide. The latter submerges the user into a presumably "collective" national narrative, but does so through discreet, enclosed sound bubbles. Hence, the audio guide experience highlights the somewhat paradoxical relation produced when we don headphones. Rainer Schönhammer describes this solitary listening experience as the temporary cessation of "being-in-the-world,"<sup>77</sup> whereby contact and connection with the acoustic realm received through one's headset entails the concurrent "loss of contact"<sup>78</sup> with one's immediate physical world. Secondly, there is also the matter of the listener becoming beholden to an authorial voice, as Maurice Charland explored in his critique of the hollow promise of technological nationalism. Charland provides the example of national radio (the CBC), which he argues forms a community of listeners who are a passive "audience, subject to a voice."<sup>79</sup> In *Three Hundred Years*, interactivity and participation are considerably delimited by the commanding presence of the state gallery, and Hubbard, its synecdochic voice. Rather than being allowed to pursue divergent informational paths, visitors here are corporeally ushered into a synchronous imagined community. In this way, communion is structured through entrance into an imagined relationship with the archive, under the tutelage of an aural chaperone.

These minute contradictions ultimately reflect the larger inconsistencies of fellowship and belonging as articulated within a modern liberal humanist framework. As Adele Perry points out, "the new nation forged in the crucible of the liberal order project would be one where settler men would gain their constituent status through the multifaceted exclusions of women, Indigenous people, and racialized migrants."<sup>80</sup> Modernity, in other words, is a perpetual drama of exclusion – or histrionics of so-called "inclusion" – wherein even proximal others prove necessary so that modernity might have something to appropriate and define itself *against*. If, as Perry states, exclusions can be "constituent," it is also conceivable that inclusions might serve to prohibit and estrange.

## Conclusion

The 1960s saw the technologies of nation building meted out on myriad fronts, from the spectacular techno-pageantry of Expo; to the wistful memorialization of rail and canoe; to the use of the audio guide for the NGC's Centennial exhibit. *Three Hundred Years*, like many other aesthetic-symbolic gestures which coalesced around Canada's Centennial, was an attempt to project a presupposed and stable nation amidst a time of social discontent and existential turmoil. It presented a peaceable colonial narrative of a nation three centuries in the making, with all the violence of this making rendered invisible. However, that which is left unspoken is perhaps most revealing of the all-too-timely urge to contain the ruptures festering under the seemingly stalwart corpus of nation. Moreover, the exhibit's art historical chronology not only provided a genealogical justification for the colonial status quo, but also worked to secure a coherent subject-of-nation within the landscape of modernity. The exhibit's construction of a nominally interactive soundscape of nation reveals the ways in which body-technology encounters are often mobilized around a politics of recognition and discourse of hospitality. Interestingly, while relying on interactivity to proffer the myth of nation as open and mouldable text, such models of cultural citizenship often mobilize around reception rather than participation, and prove just as often enabled through a corporally seductive and narratively accessible, though ultimately *unalterable*, archive. As shown in the NGC's exhibit, citizens are beckoned precisely through their bodily orientation towards official national heritage as

edifying and uplifting. It is through their snug insertion into narrative linearity that these citizens become the privileged heirs of a longstanding colonial history which continues to labour – sometimes covertly, other times less so – to contain a litany of internal fissures and contradictions.

## NOTES

- 1 The Centennial exhibition ran from 12 May to 17 Sept. 1967 at the NGC. It was later pared down and shown in the newly renovated and renamed Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto that same year.
- 2 Maureen JOHNSON, "Acoustiguide: Everyman's art expert at National Gallery," *Ottawa Citizen*, 26 July 1967, 20.
- 3 Ian MCKAY, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81:4 (December 2000): 621.
- 4 *Seelanum* is the Salish term for lunar months.
- 5 Mike BOLTON, "Chief Silences Birthday Crowd," *Province*, 3 July 1967.
- 6 Bryan D. PALMER, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); L.B. KUFFERT, *A Great Duty: Canadian Responses*

- to *Modern Life and Mass Culture, 1939–1967* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); M. Athena PALAEOLOGU, ed., *The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2009); Gary MIEDEMA, *For Canada's Sake: Public Religion, Centennial Celebrations, and the Re-making of Canada in the 1960s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).
- 7 MIEDEMA, *For Canada's Sake*.
  - 8 Although "O Canada" did not officially become the national anthem until 1980, moves were already well under way during the 1960s to replace "God Save the Queen." "National Anthem: O Canada," Canadian Heritage. Accessed 7 July 2015, <http://pch.gc.ca/eng/1359402373291/1359402467746>.
  - 9 KUFFERT, *A Great Duty*, 221.
  - 10 Importantly, the B & B Commission is seen as the precursor to the adoption of official multiculturalism. For more on this, consult Eve HAQUE, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework: Language, Race, and Belonging in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).
  - 11 Freda HAWKINS, *Critical Years in Immigration: Canada and Australia Compared* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991); Peter LI, *Destination Canada: Immigration Debates and Issues* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003). For a more critical assessment of the reasons behind this new immigration policy, refer to HAQUE, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework*.
  - 12 See especially Peter S. LI, "Visible Minorities in Canadian Society: Challenges of Racial Diversity," in *Social Differentiation: Patterns and Processes*, ed. Danielle Juteau Lee (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 117–54; Ninette KELLEY and Michael TREBILCOCK, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 354.
  - 13 Broadcast on the CBC in December of 1967, "The Idea of North" was part one of what would become Gould's *Solitude Trilogy*.
  - 14 Peter H. AYKROYD, *The Anniversary Compulsion: Canada's Centennial Celebrations A Model Mega-Anniversary* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1992), 124.
  - 15 *Voyageurs* were individuals – mostly French Canadians – engaged in the fur trade during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
  - 16 Canada Centennial Commission, *The Centennial and Canadians: A Report of Centennial Activities 1966–1967* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), 6.
  - 17 "About the Canada Science and Technology Museum," Canada Science and Technology Museum. Accessed 7 July 2015, <http://cstmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/about-the-museum.php>.
  - 18 For a comprehensive study of CFC/SN, see Thomas WAUGH, Michael Brendan BAKER, and Ezra WINTON, eds., *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).
  - 19 Rhona RICHMOND KENNEALLY and Johanne SLOAN, eds., *Expo 67 Not Just a Souvenir* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 6.
  - 20 Alexander WILSON, "Technological Utopias: World's Fairs and Theme Parks," in *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991), 164.
  - 21 Expo 67's introduction of multi-screen and large-format films were the direct precursors to IMAX technology. For more of this history, refer to Charles R. Acland, "IMAX Technology and the Tourist Gaze," *Cultural Studies* 12:3 (1998): 429–45; Alison

GRIFFITHS, *Shivers Down Your Spine: Cinema, Museums, and the Immersive View* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

- 22 Douglas Ord surmises that, while the exhibition was embraced by critics who were swept up by “nationalistic fervour,” its insular scope failed to garner much attention from the public, in Douglas ORD, *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas Art Architecture* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 223. Unsurprisingly, the critical and scholarly interest around *Three Hundred Years* also pales in comparison to that around Expo 67. The growing list of critical works about Expo 67 includes: RICHMOND KENNEALLY and SLOAN, *Expo 67 Not Just a Souvenir*; Monica GAGNON and Janine MARCHESSAULT, eds., *Reimagining Cinema: Film at Expo 67* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014); John LOWNSBROUGH, *The Best Place to Be: Expo ‘67 and Its Time* (Toronto: Penguin, 2012); Erin HURLEY, *National Performance: Representing Quebec from Expo 67 to Celine Dion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010); André JANSSON, “Encapsulations: The Production of a Future Gaze at Montreal’s Expo 67,” *Space and Culture* 10:4 (November 2007): 418–36; Eva-Marie KRÖLLER, “Expo 67: Canada’s Camelot?” Remembering the Sixties, special issue of *Canadian Literature* 152:3 (Spring/Summer 1997): 36–51.
- 23 “Our History: 1960s,” National Gallery of Canada. Accessed 8 July 2015, <https://www.gallery.ca/en/about/1960s.php>. Prior to *Three Hundred Years*, there had been other attempts to construct comprehensive nationalist art historical narratives, like the NGC’s “Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern” in 1927 and the Tate Gallery’s “A Century of Canadian Art” in 1938. See Lynda JESSUP, “Hard Inclusion,” in *On Aboriginal Representation in the Gallery*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Hull, QC: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2002), xi–xviii. *Three Hundred Years* became the basis of the NGC’s slide library on the history of Canadian art, comprised of approximately two thousand educational slides, and accessible to educational institutions around the country.
- 24 Janine MARCHESSAULT, “Multi-Screens and Future Cinema: The Labyrinth Project at Expo 67,” in *Fluid Screens, Expanded Cinema*, ed. Janine Marchessault and Susan Lord (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 31.
- 25 Said Hubbard of the collection: “There’s no message. We wanted to avoid that.” He further states, “everything was chosen for its esthetic importance. We want everyone to draw their own conclusions from what they see.” Hubbard quoted in KRITZWISER, “In Splendid Company They Hang,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 May 1967.
- 26 J. Russell HARPER, “Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art,” *Burlington Magazine* 109:773 (August 1967): 461–65.
- 27 Robert H. HUBBARD, “Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art” (cassette audio tour), 1967, Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art Collection, National Gallery of Canada Archives, Ottawa.
- 28 Aside from the one short *Ottawa Citizen* article describing the NGC’s Acoustiguide as “everyman’s art expert” (Johnson, “Acoustiguide,” 20), exhibition reviews I have come across do not mention the introduction of this technology at all.
- 29 Acoustiguide was an American company that, in 2005, merged with the Israeli-owned Espro Information Technologies. The Espro Acoustiguide group has offices all over the world, and remains one of the top two providers of interactive mobile museum technologies around the world today. Loïc TALLON, “Introduction: Mobile, Digital, and Personal,” in *Digital Technologies and the Museum Experience: Handheld*

- Guides and Other Media*, ed. Loïc Tallon and Kevin Walker (Lanham, MD and Plymouth: AltMira Press, 2008), xix.
- 30 Jennifer FISHER, "Speeches of Display: The Museum Audioguides of Sophie Calle, Andrea Fraser and Janet Cardiff," *Parachute* 94 (April–June 1999): 26.
  - 31 See Zoë Druick's discussion of the National Film Board and participatory media as the "representative semantic figure of the decade," in Zoë DRUICK, "Participatory Media: Lessons from the 1960s," *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures* 2:2 (2010): 120.
  - 32 This was especially the case with the National Film Board of Canada's *Labyrinth* pavilion. Ben HIGHMORE, "Into the Labyrinth: Phantasmagoria at Expo 67," in *Expo 67 Not Just a Souvenir*, ed. Rhona Richmond Kenneally and Johanne Sloan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 125–42.
  - 33 Carolyn STEEDMAN, "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida, and Dust," *The American Historical Review* 106:4 (October 2001): 1175.
  - 34 Jonathan BORDO, "Picture and Witness at the Site of the Wilderness," *Critical Inquiry* 26:2 (Winter 2000): 231.
  - 35 Claudette LAUZON, "Monumental Interventions: Jeff Thomas Seizes Commemorative Space," in *Imagining Resistance: Visual Culture and Activism in Canada*, ed. J. Keri Cronin and Kirsty Robertson (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2011): 79–93.
  - 36 Some examples of mentioned works are: François Beaucourt, *Negro Slave with Still Life* (1786); Antoine Plamondon, *The Pigeon Hunt* (1853); Thomas Davies's late eighteenth-century watercolour topographies; Robert Harris, *Fathers of Confederation* (1883); George Agnew Reid, *Forbidden Fruit* (1889); Paul-Emile Borduas, *Leeward of the Island* (1947); Jacques Hurtubise, *Sabine* (1966); works by members of groups like the Montreal School, Painters Eleven, Les Automatistes, and the Group of Seven; and works by individuals including Cornelius Krieghoff, Paul Kane, Emily Carr, and Alex Colville.
  - 37 Zoe DRUICK and Gerda CAMMAER, eds., *Cinephemera: Archives, Ephemeral Cinema, and New Screen Histories in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014). Media archaeological approaches also demonstrate this renewed attention to materiality: Jussi PARIKKA, *What is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2012); Erkki HUHTAMO and Jussi PARIKKA, eds., *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
  - 38 See David GRUBBS, *Records Ruin the Landscape: John Cage, the Sixties, and Sound Recording* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Jonathan STERNE, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Production* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2003).
  - 39 STERNE, *Audible Past*, 19.
  - 40 George Grant would describe this as the liberal faith in the individual human capacity to "shape the world as we want it." George GRANT, *Technology & Empire* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969), 114.
  - 41 Robert H. HUBBARD, *The Development of Canadian Art* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1963); KRITZWISER, "In Splendid Company."
  - 42 HUBBARD, *Development*, 48.

- 43 See Lynda JESSUP, "The Group of Seven and the Tourist Landscape in Western Canada, or The More Things Change . . .," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 37:1 (Spring 2002): 144–79.
- 44 Lynda JESSUP, "Bushwhackers in the Gallery: Antimodernism and the Group of Seven," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 132.
- 45 HUBBARD, "Three Hundred Years."
- 46 Jean Sutherland BOGGS, "Forward," in *Three Hundred Years of Canadian Art: An Exhibition Arranged in Celebration of the Centenary of Confederation*, ed. Robert H. Hubbard (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1967), ii.
- 47 KRITZWISER, "In Splendid Company."
- 48 Lieven DE CAUTER, "The Panoramic Ecstasy: On World Exhibitions and the Disintegration of Experience," *Theory, Culture & Society* 10:4 (November 1993): 16.
- 49 Marshall BERMAN, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin, 1982), 5.
- 50 Ibid., 16.
- 51 Interestingly, McLuhan greatly inspired Expo 67, which was unofficially dubbed "McLuhan's Fair." Expo pavilions were based on the theorist's works, and his writings were also displayed throughout the fairgrounds. Donald THEALL, *Virtual Marshall McLuhan* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 126.
- 52 Marshall MCLUHAN, *The Mechanical Bride* (London: Duckworth Overlook, 2011), v.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Mary Louise PRATT, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 201.
- 56 This idea is inextricably tied Lorenzo Veracini's idea that settler colonialism endeavors to establish "first consciousness" through the double disavowals of both Indigenous presence and its own foundational violence. Lorenzo VERACINI, "On Settleness," *Borderlands* 10:1 (2011): 4. Accessed 8 July 2015, [http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol10no1\\_2011/veracini\\_settleness.pdf](http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol10no1_2011/veracini_settleness.pdf).
- 57 In this way, the NGC's Centennial audioscape differs markedly from McLuhan's romantic account of acoustic space. Emerging out of Innis's time-biased vs. space-biased dialectic, McLuhan's acoustic space harkens back to the phenomenology of supposed preliterate cultures in order to describe the immersive qualities of the electric age. Unlike its visual correlate, this auditory realm is without centre or focus; it is instead omnidirectional, nonsequential, and constantly in flux. For more, see Marshall MCLUHAN and Edmund CARPENTER, "Acoustic Space," in *Explorations in Communications*, ed. Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960).
- 58 Robert H. HUBBARD, *An Anthology of Canadian Art* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1960).
- 59 HUBBARD, "Three Hundred Years."
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 BORDO, "Picture and Witness," 227.
- 62 Ibid., 231.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Ibid.

- 65 MCKAY, “Liberal Order Framework,” 621.
- 66 Ibid., 624.
- 67 Ibid., 632.
- 68 Carole PATEMAN, “The Settler Contract,” in *Contract and Domination*, ed. Carole Pateman and Charles W. Mills (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 36.
- 69 MCKAY, “Liberal Order Framework,” 624.
- 70 Ibid., 626.
- 71 Paul CONNERTON, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 72.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 For more on 1960s participatory citizenship initiatives, see Martin LONEY, “A Political Economy of Citizenship Participation,” in *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power*, ed. Leo Panitch (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 446–72; Zoë DRUICK, *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007).
- 74 Benedict ANDERSON, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 144–45.
- 75 Ibid., 7.
- 76 Ibid., 145.
- 77 Rainer SCHÖNHAMMER, “The Walkman and the Primary World of the Senses,” *Phenomenology + Pedagogy* 7 (1989): 136.
- 78 Ibid., 135.
- 79 Maurice CHARLAND, “Technological Nationalism,” *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory* 10:1 (1986): 205.
- 80 Adele PERRY, “Women, Racialized People, and the Making of the Liberal Order in Northern North America,” in *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution*, ed. Jean-Francois Constant and Michel Ducharme (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 289. Similarly, Claude Denis condemns the ways in which the Canadian “whitestream” continuously assigns itself as diametrically opposed to aboriginality. Denis provides as an example 1969’s White Paper on Indian Policy, a “thoroughly liberal and modern” federal government policy which sought to assimilate First Nations. Claude DENIS, *We Are Not You: First Nations and Canadian Modernity* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1997), 153.

## Sons et nation : les « acoustiguides » et le mythe de la participation à l'exposition du centenaire a la Galerie national du Canada

MAY CHEW

En 1967, la Galerie nationale du Canada (Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) a lancé ses audioguides portables (ou « acoustiguides ») lors de l'exposition *Trois cents ans d'art canadien* organisée pour le centenaire de la Confédération. C'était la toute première fois que des technologies interactives étaient utilisées dans un musée canadien. À l'époque, l'appareil consistait en un lecteur de bande magnétique portable individuel où figurait l'enregistrement d'une visite commentée par Robert H. Hubbard, commissaire de l'exposition, sur les principales œuvres présentées. L'exposition regroupait quelque quatre cents peintures, sculptures et œuvres d'art tant graphique que décoratif, traçant une ligne temporelle de la période coloniale française jusqu'au centième anniversaire du pays. En cette décennie marquée par le mécontentement social et l'agitation politique, l'événement se voulait une célébration et une consécration de la modernité technologique du Canada. À l'instar d'autres fêtes nationales de l'époque, l'exposition *Trois cents ans d'art canadien*, par son recours aux audioguides, annonçait le rôle pivot que serait appelée à jouer la technologie dans les rites de citoyenneté.

Afin de bien cerner la portée historique de l'exposition et de sa technologie interactive, nous effectuons d'abord un bref survol du paysage sociopolitique tumultueux des années 1960. Nous examinons en particulier les technospectacles des célébrations du centenaire qui, bien que perfectibles, suscitaient un vif enthousiasme. Cette mise en contexte permet de souligner que la première utilisation des « acoustiguides » au MBAC s'inscrit dans le continuum historique plus vaste des technologies ayant contribué à l'édification de la nation. Ensuite, nous nous penchons sur l'exposition *Trois cents ans d'art canadien* du MBAC et explorons le rôle facilitateur de l'audioguide dans l'enracinement des rites de citoyenneté culturelle. Nous posons comme argument que le paysage audiovisuel construit attire les visiteurs en leur promettant contrôle, accès et communion. En invitant ainsi le public dans ses pans, l'exposition donne naissance à un certain *sujet* de la nation, dont le corps est manœuvré au moyen du récit linéaire de la nation, et exécute les manifestations gestuelles et ambulatoires du progrès.

Tout au long de l'article, nous faisons référence à la thèse du « cadre de l'ordre libéral » d'Ian McKay, laquelle conceptualise le Canada comme une « catégorie » ou « un projet de règne historiquement précis, plutôt qu'une essence à défendre ou un espace homogène inhabité à posséder<sup>1</sup> » (traduction libre). Cette approche vise à dénaturiser la logique politico-économique du libéralisme, et nous incite à réfléchir sur les façons dont celui-ci est établi et maintenu au moyen d'actes souvent empreints de violence. La cadre de McKay sert d'objectif panoramique pour examiner la manière dont la nation se coagule par intervention technologique, la façon dont des entités y sont intégrées par exclusion ou par inclusion stratégique, et la façon dont ces sujets sont définis comme *appartenant* ou *n'appartenant pas* au discours de la modernité.

Nous avançons que les « acoustiguides » ont été utilisés pour donner un pouls à l'histoire (de l'art) nationale au moyen de paysages sonores intimes – fenêtres insaisissables appelant le visiteur, par les sens, à accéder aux archives officielles. L'« acoustiguide » attirait aussi le visiteur en lui offrant des mythes de contrôle, d'accès et de communion. Or, bien que reposant sur l'interactivité pour enraciner le mythe de la nation comme trame ouverte et façonnable, ce modèle de citoyenneté culturelle mise en fait sur la *réception* plutôt que sur la *participation*, proposant des archives séduisantes et accessibles, mais au bout du compte, immuables. Dans l'exposition de la Galerie nationale du Canada, les citoyens sont attirés par leur orientation corporelle vers un patrimoine (officiel, national) réputé édifiant et inspirant. Ainsi confortablement intégrés dans la linéarité narrative, ces citoyens deviennent les héritiers privilégiés d'une longue histoire coloniale intacte et incontestée.

## NOTES

- 1 Ian MCKAY, « The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History », *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 81, n° 4 (décembre 2000), p. 621.