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Contents/Table des matières

Articles

Housing in Québec Before Confederation. Christina Cameron	1
<i>Résumé</i>	35
The Vocabulary of Freedom in 1948: The Politics of the Montréal Avant-Garde Judith Ince	36
<i>Résumé</i>	64
Approche sémiologique d'une oeuvre de Borduas: 3 + 3 + 4 Fernande Saint-Martin	66
<i>Résumé</i>	81

Short Notes/Notes et commentaires

Le tableau de l'ancien maître-autel de Sainte-Anne de Beaupré Nicole Cloutier	83
The Drawings of Alfred Pellon: Further Thoughts by the Author Reesa Greenberg	91

Sources and/et Documents

Élèves canadiens dans les archives de l'École des Beaux-Arts et de l'École des Arts Décoratifs de Paris Sylvain Allaire	98
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<i>Book Reviews/Comptes rendus</i>	112
<i>Publication Notices/Notes de lectures</i>	134
<i>Notices/Avis .. Errata</i>	136

Housing in Québec before Confederation*

Visitors to the province of Québec are often impressed by the distinctive character of its architectural landscape; it has something of a French provincial air about it, something of a British colonial spirit, yet it is also North American, though unlike other parts of North America. The architectural distinctiveness of Québec is a reflection of its historical evolution. Discovered by Jacques Cartier in the sixteenth century and colonized by France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Québec was transferred to British rule in 1763 at the end of the Seven Years War. Although the impact was not immediately felt, successive waves of immigration, first the loyalists from the United States after 1776, dispossessed farmers, genteel younger sons and military men from Britain after 1800, implanted British cultural values and symbols on the former French colony. By the time Confederation became a reality in 1867 yet another influence, that of the burgeoning United States of America, had made itself felt as railways and canals accelerated the pace of cultural exchange. It is this amalgam of influences in concert with the exacting requirements of a harsh climate which determined the nature of housing in Québec before Confederation.

In 1664 Pierre Boucher, the founder and first seigneur of Boucherville, published his description of New France. To the question "What are the houses built of?" he answers that: "Some are built entirely of stone and covered with boards or planks of pine; others are built of wooden framework or uprights, with masonry between; others are built wholly of wood", indicating that the various types of construction familiar in France were also used in the colony.¹ The pressing problem faced by the seventeenth-century colonists of New France was the modification of the traditional forms to produce shelter adequate to a hostile climate. Throughout that ill-defined and unpromising portion of the French empire that was already known as Canada [soon to include Louisbourg (N.S.), Île-Saint-Jean (renamed Prince Edward Island) and scattered outposts in present-day Ontario as well as what we now call Québec] domestic architecture had to cope with the problem of severe cold and its disastrous effect on wall and roof structures.² Although Boucher mentions houses built entirely of wood, or with a heavy wooden frame filled in with stone (*colombage pierroté*), and as late as 1749 Peter Kalm noted that most of the houses in Montréal were built of timber, almost nothing wooden dating from the French régime is

* This article was originally prepared in 1974-1975 as a chapter for the projected *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*. Publication of this long-awaited book has unfortunately been cancelled. I am indebted to Professor Douglas S. Richardson, University College, University of Toronto, and William Toye, Editor, Oxford University Press, Don Mills, for their many ideas and suggestions which have become part of the fabric of this study on Québec domestic architecture.

known to remain standing.³ Only stone houses had the resiliency, the sheer durability, to survive to the present, and they are few enough.

A rare example of a surviving seventeenth-century stone dwelling is the *Jacquet House*, 34 rue Saint-Louis, Québec (fig. 1). The original



(1) **Jacquet House**, 34 rue Saint-Louis, Québec, c. 1675; 1689/99, as it appeared in the 1870's. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, C-28809.)

structure was a one-storey house, like most of the residences in the city, covered with a hip roof (one that slopes in on all four sides). It was erected about 1675 for the master slate-roofer François Jacquet *dit* Langevin, whose nickname indicates that he came from the Anjou region of France, which was famous for its slate quarries.⁴ Considering the degree to which the building trades were subdivided and stratified in Europe, it is somewhat surprising that this stone building was the work of a master carpenter rather than a mason.⁵ The builder was Pierre Ménage (ca. 1648-1715), a native of Poitiers first mentioned in Québec in

1669, who participated in nearly all the major building projects in the city during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, including the Jesuits' house in the Lower Town in 1684, the reconstruction of the Ursuline Convent in 1687-1688, the belfry of Notre-Dame-de-la-Victoire in 1690 and that of Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix, the Hôtel-Dieu in 1691, and the Château Saint-Louis in 1692-1700.⁶

Some time before 1699 changes were made for the new owner of the *Jacquet House*, François de Lajoüe (ca. 1656-ca. 1719). The roof was apparently rebuilt in its present gabled form to add a usable upper level, and the house was described in a contemporary document as "twenty-five feet wide (French measure) by twenty feet deep, with cellar below and attic above the two storeys, a ladder outside to climb up to it, and a covered gallery leaning against the rear wall."⁷

Born in Paris, the son of a surgeon, Lajoüe was a surveyor well trained in mathematics and draftsmanship before he arrived in Québec. He seems to have sought out Ménage and took up residence in his home. He married Ménage's daughter almost immediately in 1689, and acquired the house Ménage had built for Jacquet. Once established, he worked as a land surveyor, master mason, engineer, contractor, and architect. He is an outstanding example of social and vocational mobility in the New World, a phenomenon already suggested by the case of his father-in-law: he was a man of many trades who, breaking the restrictions that circumscribed his contemporaries in tightly structured European guilds, extended his practice to take in many of the crafts involved in this field in addition to those in which he was actually trained. Lajoüe's remarkable success was undoubtedly due in part to his superior formal education; by contrast, Ménage was illiterate and unable to sign documents. In any case, Lajoüe's position improved materially and hence socially in the process, until finally he was regarded as a professional man, an architect, rather than a tradesman. He was involved in a number of the same major undertakings as Ménage: several projects for the nursing Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu, in particular the reconstruction of their convent in 1695-1698 (where one of his own daughters perished when the building burned down in 1775; only the impressive stone vaults survive); the rebuilding of the Château Saint-Louis in 1692-1700; and the building of the Porte Saint-Jean in the town walls in 1693. Evidently a restless man, he left the colony in 1715 or shortly after and died about 1719 in Persia, where he was working as an engineer.⁸

In the nineteenth-century photograph illustrated here, the *Jacquet House* looks very much as it would have done in Lajoüe's time. The steepness of the roof is particularly striking. In addition to its verticality, it is remarkable for the pairs of hooded dormers set low on the slope; such dormers are of a type rarely found in Québec, but common enough

in parts of France.⁹ The roof was covered with wooden shingles, like most of the early buildings, and pointed shingles were used decoratively on the ridges and lower slopes of the dormers. These and the wooden finial in the peak of the gable, a modest vertical accent, are details often seen in eighteenth-century work in the colonies. Only the doorways in the end wall and the shutters with movable vanes on most of the windows are of early nineteenth-century appearance.

The rubble masonry of the *Jacquet House* is another standard feature of the French period. When Marie de l'Incarnation, the founder and Superior of the Ursuline Convent at Québec, described the houses in the city in 1644, she contrasted these rudely finished buildings with the highly finished mansions of Paris: "Do not think that our houses are cut stone. No, only the door- and window-sills." The lime-slate of the locality, called "Cape" stone (in reference to Cape Diamond), of which the first masonry houses of Québec were built, remained the traditional material until long after the Conquest. This she described as "like a species of almost black marble, which comes apart quite well when cut properly, better than the quarry stone of France." Splitting readily in small layers when exposed to the air, it was generally laid as rough rubble in random courses, typically with large quantities of mortar. Grey limestone was used for trim, and Mère Marie complained that: "The sills are very beautiful but they are expensive to cut because of the hardness."¹⁰ This masonry was originally protected from moisture by a white stucco-like mixture called *crépi*. Without this, moisture would enter into the mortar and might cause damage in a climate noted for recurrent freezing and thawing. Overall the finished *Jacquet House* strongly resembled a small and contemporary (or somewhat earlier) farm house in a French village.¹¹

Though this tiny house is now dwarfed by its nineteenth-century neighbours, it was once among the largest houses on the street, an indication both of Lajoüe's status in the colony and of the small scale of the eighteenth-century streetscape. Substantially renovated inside at the end of the eighteenth century, the house belonged briefly, in 1815-1816, to novelist Philippe-Aubert de Gaspé.¹²

In its original state, the interior of the *Jacquet House* probably resembled that of the seventeenth-century *Soeurs de la Congrégation House, Beauport, Québec* (figs. 2, 3, 11), which still survives more or less intact.¹³ A stone partition running from front to back divides the interior into two principal living spaces, kitchen and bedroom. Originally the stone walls were probably finished inside (as outside) with white *crépi* and the enormous ceiling beams, part of the roof frame, are frankly exposed (fig. 2). The ceiling between the beams is boarded and the joints between the boards are covered with narrow battens. Casement windows are recessed and a cupboard or *armoire encastrée* is set within the thick-

ness of the walls that are two to three feet deep. The kitchen, with its large fireplace in the end wall (fig. 3) for cooking and heating, is the focus of the household. In some houses the chimney stack often projected into the room from a position against an end wall or was centrally located (as in figs. 13, 14) in order to conserve as much heat as possible.



(2) *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, Beauport; Armoire encastrée in kitchen, seventeenth century. (Photo: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Technical Data Services.)



(3) *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, kitchen fireplace. (Photo: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Technical Data Services.)

The fireplace is unornamented: there is no mantelpiece, though there was sometimes a moulding (as in this example) or a hanging shelf (*tablette*) to support household implements, and from which a ladle or other utensils could be suspended.¹⁴

During the old régime, and even well into the new, French-Canadian architecture is remarkable for its conservatism. Methods and styles originally brought over from France were repeated again and again with only slight modifications until nearly the end of the eighteenth-century. The *Maillou House*, 17 rue Saint-Louis, Québec (figs. 4-6) exemplifies this traditional approach. For while it embodies three distinct construction periods spanning almost seventy years under French and English ownership, externally it shows surprisingly few changes in style. The house was begun soon after 1736 and may have been built by the owner himself, Jean-Baptiste Maillou (1668-1753). Born at Québec, the son of a *sabotier* (man who made

wooden shoes), Maillou stands out as an early native Canadian architect. He began his career as a simple mason and rose to the status of master mason, engineer, and finally architect and contractor of the King's works. He participated in many building projects around the city, including the fortifications in 1706-1707, part of the Hôpital-Général in 1717, the upper storey of the Intendant's Palace in 1726, and the vaults of the Château Saint-Louis in 1731. The degree of his success can be measured by his own removal from the crowded Lower Town, where he was born, to this conspicuous residence in the Upper Town, (very near the Château Saint-Louis), where he lived until his death. He was buried in the crypt of the cathedral, Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix, a mark of the esteem and respect in which he was held.¹⁵

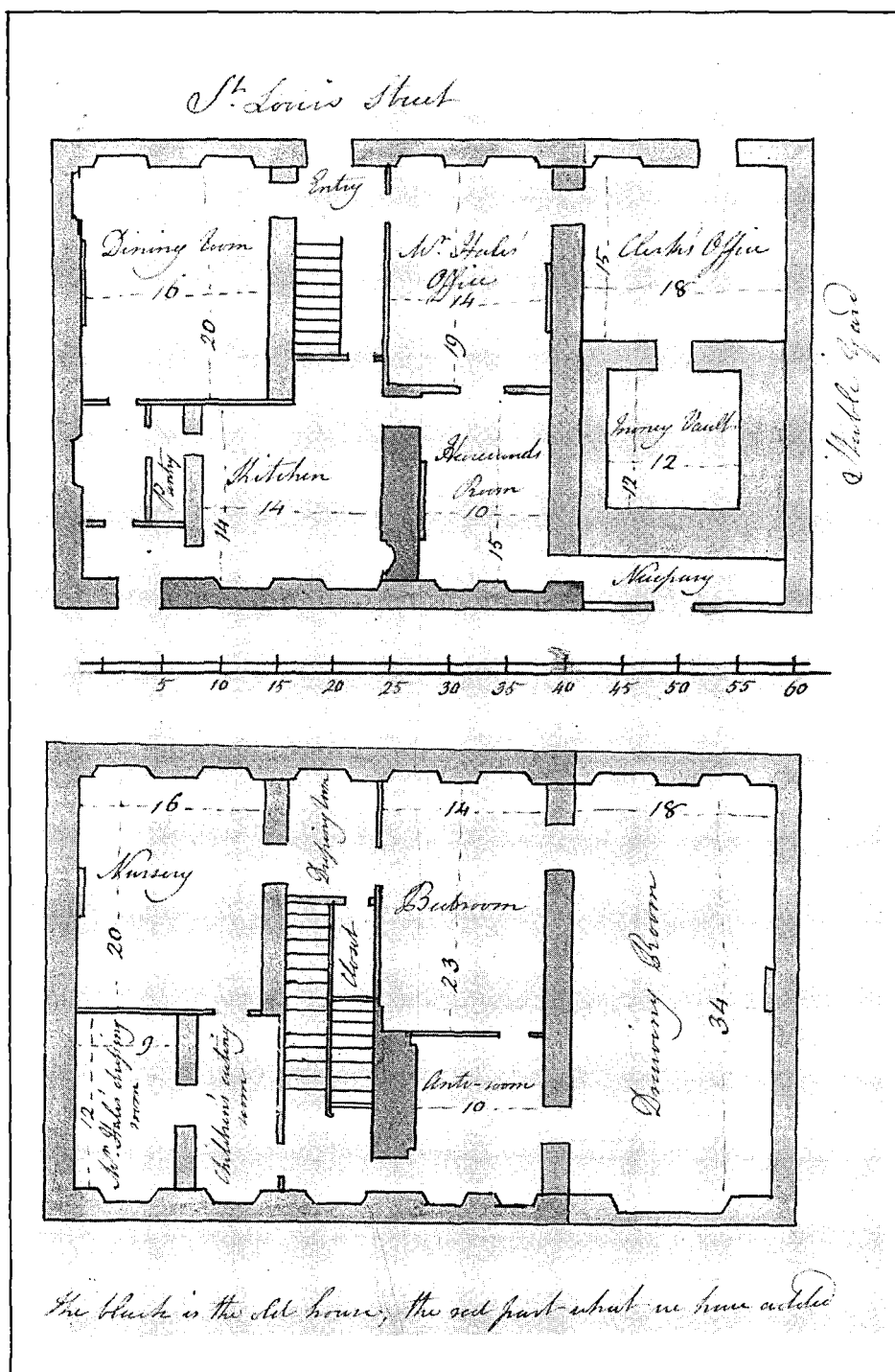
Standing at the head of the rue Saint-Louis, the *Maillou House* originally consisted of a one-storey stone residence with a door between two pairs of windows (the five bays on the right in the view, fig. 4, but to the left in the plan, fig. 5). A stone coach house and stable extended along the street frontage (to the left in the view). A comfortable house for the time, it had a full basement, a ground floor that contained the principal living quarters, including a kitchen, living-room, study (*cabinet*), and three bedrooms plus two attic levels.¹⁶ Though the roof of the original *Maillou House* no longer exists, it must have been steeply pitched, like that of the *Jacquet House*. Documents tell us that there was a main attic with a smaller attic above, an indication that the roof slope was long enough to accommodate, and require, two rows of dormer windows. The rubble masonry is dressed here with cut-stone trim for the door and window surrounds. Both the trim and the steep roof pitch are standard ingredients for an eighteenth-century building in Québec.

The plan (fig. 5) shows the house after two series of renovations, but it points up the remarkable openness, structurally, of early French-Canadian stone houses. Typically these houses were not divided internally by bearing walls of stone unless the house was very large. What appears to be a bearing wall running through the *Maillou House* (towards the right side in fig. 5) is of course, the original end wall. The heavy timber frame that formed the floors and ceilings often spanned the interior from side to side. Only wooden partitions, solidly constructed but relatively slight compared with the frame of nearly foot-square timbers, were required to subdivide the space.

The house was doubled in size when the upper storey was added about 1766-1767 by another owner, Antoine Juchereau Duchesnay, Seigneur of Saint-Denis.¹⁷ The new work was so similar in character that it was scarcely apparent that the house had been enlarged. The masonry resembles the stonework in the lower storey and the new roof, originally shingled, is characteristically steep, with more than one row



(4) **Maillou House**, 17 rue Saint-Louis, Québec, 1736; 1766-1767; 1805-1806. (Photo: the author.)



(5) **Maillou House**, plan of ground storey and second storey as drawn by Mrs. John Hale in 1805. (Photo: Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.)

of dormer windows. The chimney stacks are placed asymmetrically along both front and rear slopes, more or less directly above the fireplaces they serve. This haphazard arrangement, revealing more concern for function than formal design, belongs to the 1736 period; the chimneys were simply raised thirty years later.

The third phase of construction took place during the ownership of the Hon. John Hale, who extended the house in 1805 by two bays (on the left in the view; at the right edge in the plan). Hale was the Deputy Paymaster General for the British Army in North America and made the addition to provide space for his clerk's office (originally with its own door in the face of the building), and for a money vault with immensely thick walls. (In fact, Hale first built the office and vault in 1799, but the outside wall was not sufficiently strong and had to be rebuilt.)¹⁸ The substantial amount of hard cash kept in the strong room when troops were paid in currency, before there were any banks in Canada, was an incentive for the use of iron shutters. But such shutters on the windows and even on the doors were apparently a customary feature of houses in both Québec and Montréal. According to a contemporary description by an English officer, Thomas Anburey, the shutters were a precaution against both fire and theft. He comments that:

These doors and shutters are made of plate iron, near half an inch thick, which, perhaps, you will imagine, give the house a very disagreeable appearance, but it is far otherwise, for being mostly painted green, they afford a pleasing contrast to the whiteness of the house.¹⁹

The exterior character of the *Maillou House* remained largely unchanged, with its rubble masonry and steep roof pitch, but one or two features hinted at a break with traditional building methods. New dormer windows, for instance, are positioned further up the roof slope and the new end chimney, astride the ridge, shows a conscious attempt at symmetrical form. Within the house a modern taste for the neo-classical is most clearly felt. In Europe the French at times played as important a role as the English in the development of neo-classical style in the decades following the middle of the eighteenth century. But considering the disruption of direct French influence in Canada following the Seven Years War it is not surprising that the advent of neo-classicism in French Canada was generally associated with English taste.

Mrs. Hale's letters home to her brother, Lord William Amherst (nephew of Lord Jeffery Amherst) give a fascinating insight into the contrast between traditional French-Canadian decorative schemes and her own more advanced tastes nurtured in Georgian England. In her letter of 28 October 1799 she writes:

I have new paperd & beautified my Room & have sent Lady A(mherst) a pattern of the paper & border which look extremely well, particularly in this Country where houses are not very magnificently furnished & *taste* seems an entire stranger, which you will allow when I tell you that one favorite stile of furniture is full red paper with a Yellow Border half round the room & the other half wainscot painted white which for want of new painting is generally very dirty — they are also very partial to painting a Room a sort of Olive Green & a Yellow border is indispensable on all occasions — the paper we found in our drawing Room was thought extremely handsome here & was a composition of all the colours in the Rainbow & exactly suited to a Cabaret.²⁰

Though these colours were warm, intense, and earthy (the yellow no doubt was really ochre), Mrs. Hale considered them garish and proposed to use "a recipe for making a light Green wash," a delicate, pastel, and presumably cool tint. Significantly the recipe was "brought from Italy," the great repository of antique classicism.²¹

A conscious attempt to conform to an established English architectural standard is apparent in her comments on the new wing in another letter six years later, 28 October 1805, which is accompanied by the plans reproduced here:

the new drawing room [on the second floor (fig. 6), above the clerk's office and money vault] is too narrow for its length according to the rules of Architecture, but one must cut ones Coat according to the Cloth... — the room is 12 feet high & has a sort of Venetian window at the Back.²²

The height of the room is remarkable, especially in contrast to earlier French-Canadian interiors; so is the graceful pattern in the glazing bars of the new window. Internal shutters, to ward off drafts and afford privacy, fold neatly into the splayed thickness of the wall to either side in English fashion. centered on the long outer wall is a fireplace with a mantelpiece imported from England and "a large glass," or mirror, above. These innovations, tending towards self-conscious regularity, decorum, and even fashion, reflect the arrival of neo-classical style in the province; henceforward the new taste for symmetry and classical detail began to make its impact on the forms of Québec buildings. Occupied by the army in the nineteenth and part of the twentieth century, the *Maillou House* was restored in 1959 and now houses the Québec Board of Trade.



(6) Maillou House, venetian window in upper storey drawing room. (Photo: the author.)

The usual eighteenth-century urban type of house (that persisted well into the nineteenth century) was row-housing of stone, illustrated in the magnificent daguerreotype of the *Beaver Hall Hill area in Montréal* (fig. 7) about 1852. The free-standing house, with lawns at the front and to either side, was unknown in densely built communities like Québec and Montréal until after the influx of the British and the Loyalists at the end of the eighteenth century. The early row-houses, unlike later terraces, were not yet designed as parts of an overall composition. Each house was erected individually according to the needs and tastes of the particular owner, yet they had many features in common. They were usually built of stuccoed rubble masonry and dressed stone trim, with walls coming up to the front edge of the property and often to the property lines at either side as well so that they sometimes shared gable



(7) **Beaver Hall Hill area**, Montréal, ca. 1852. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, National Photography Collection, C47354.)

walls. These party walls, into which wide chimneys were placed, ended in stone firewalls: parapets projecting not only above the shingled roof but also carried forward, beyond the line of the eaves, on massive corbels (simply but handsomely moulded on their underside, as a rule) to retard the spread of fire if one should break out. The rhythmic quality of the firewalls and the monumental chimney stacks gave a distinctive flavour to the French-Canadian townscape.²³

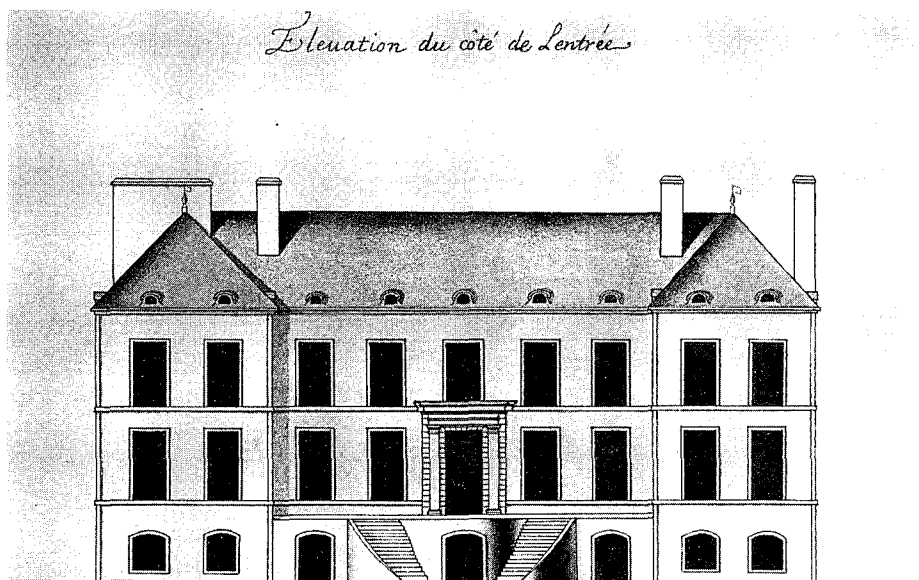
It was probably a combination of French tradition and the high cost of land that accounted for this row-housing. Building sites were soon scarce within the major towns, as early accounts of Québec make clear, and the spacious layout of the *Maillou House*, with its coach house at the street line, was obviously an exception. The row-houses sometimes had carriageways incorporated into the ground storey, though landways fitted with gates between houses are more common, as in the *Beaver Hall Hill* view; both provided access from the street to the rear courtyards and stables. For the less affluent, sharing party walls was an economy in construction and heating. Some argue that the form depended on the building codes imposed by the Intendants for fire protection. As early as

1673, regulations at Québec required: "That no one shall erect a new building in the lower town which has not at least the two gables in masonry" and "That ladders must be provided for reaching the roof." Half a century later strict measures applied generally throughout the colony and in 1727 it was forbidden:

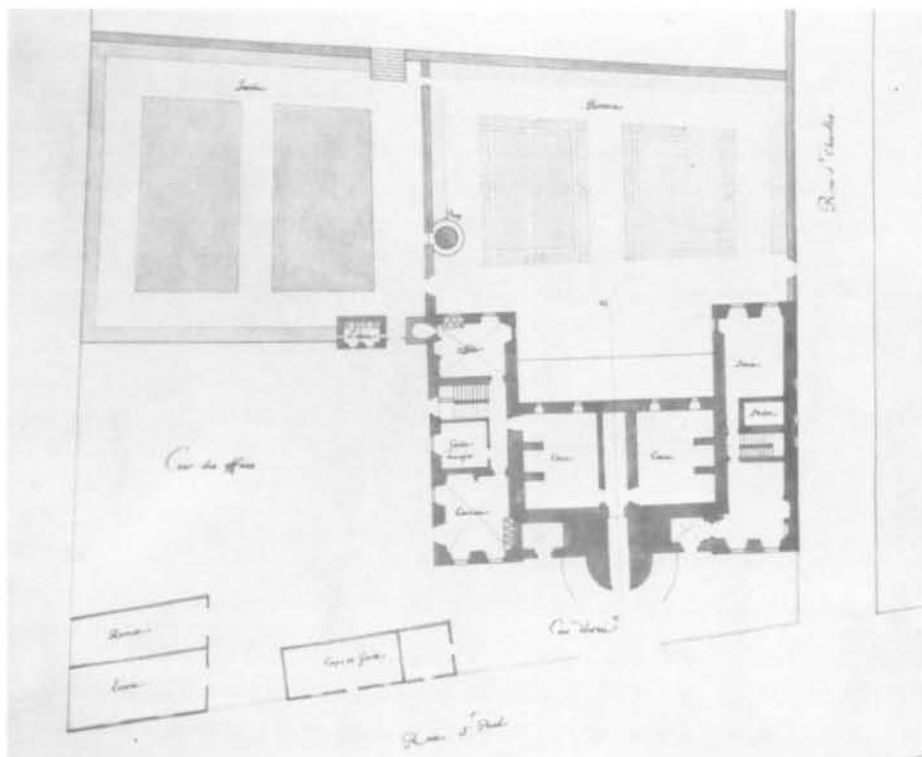
- 1) To build any house in the towns and large villages where stone can be conveniently found, otherwise in stone.
- 2) To build otherwise than in two storeys.
- 3) To use exposed wood in lintels for doors or windows.
- 4) To cover with shingles.²⁴

A lower pitch in the roof (to allow firefighters to walk on it) was also obligatory. But it is difficult to assess the extent to which these rules and regulations were observed: the prohibition of wooden shingles, for example, was impractical and it seems that slate and tinned iron (*fer blanc*), both imported, were scarcely used except on public buildings until the early nineteenth century. In any case, as the century advanced, row-houses grew taller (up to three storeys) and their roof pitch gradually diminished. This type of building spread ultimately outside the province, notably to communities in eastern Ontario like Kingston, Merrickville, Ottawa, and Perth.

The sophisticated *Château de Vaudreuil*, formerly situated on the rue Saint-Paul, Montréal (figs. 8, 9) offers a sharp contrast to the rather



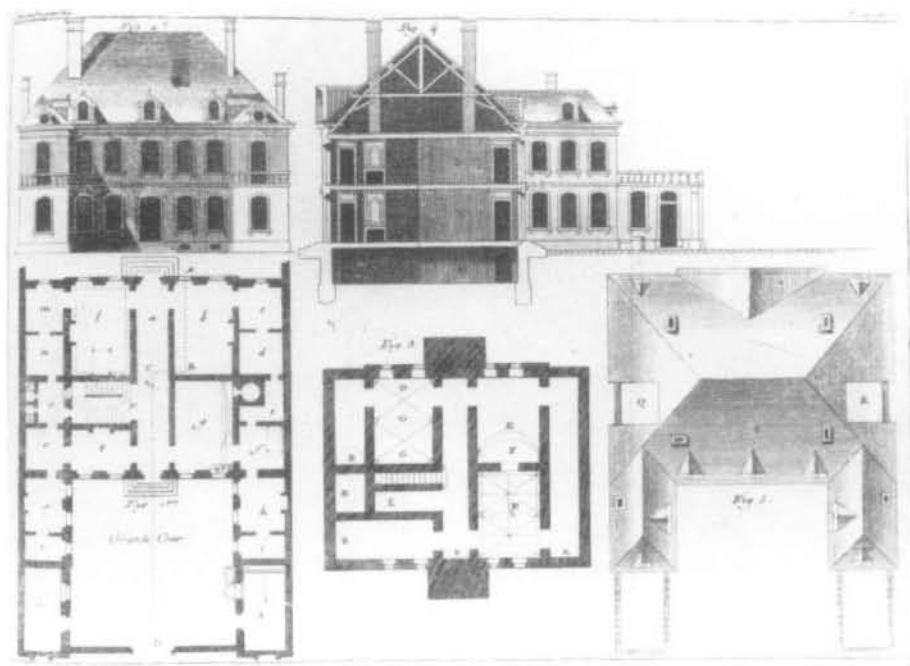
(8) *Château de Vaudreuil* [now demolished], rue Saint-Paul, Montréal, 1723. Principal elevation of 1727 after Gaspard CHAUSSEGROS DE LERY. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, National Map Collection, C37604.)



(9) **Château de Vaudreuil**, plan of basement and gardens in 1727 after Gaspard CHAUSSEGROS DE LÉRY. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, National Map Collection, C85810.)

plain eighteenth-century row-houses. Intended to serve as a government house when the Marquis de Vaudreuil, the Governor, was in residence at Montréal, the *Château de Vaudreuil* was designed in 1723 by the resident Royal Engineer Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry.²⁵ Chaussegros was born at Toulon in 1682 and died at Québec in 1756. He appears to have served as a military engineer with the French army in Europe and in 1714 he completed the manuscript for an eight-volume treatise on military fortifications which was never published. While in the Marine Department he was transferred to Canada in 1716. He spent forty years here and undertook numerous military works, including the Redoute royale, Québec, in 1717 and 1748; the fortification of Montréal, begun in 1716 (but removed in 1801-1817); the vaults of the Dauphine Barracks, Québec, 1749-1754, and the magazine in Cape Diamond Bastion, 1754, which preceded the present Citadel at Québec. He also produced designs for official buildings: part of the Château Saint-Louis of 1727, the top storey of the Intendant's Palace of 1726; and churches as well: the façade of Notre-Dame-de-Montréal in 1721; and the rebuilding in 1744-1749 of Notre-Dame-de-la Paix at Québec.

The *Château de Vaudreuil* draws on both earlier and current French fashion for its inspiration. The elevated posture, balanced composition, and selective detailing of the façade standing on a high basement with hip-roofed pavilions projecting symmetrically at each end and a striking entrance in the centre, recall the country houses of the gentry and minor nobility in France over the previous century and a half, and specifically certain designs in the third *Livre d'architecture* published by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau in 1582 or as reproduced in 1743 in Buchotte's *Règles du Dessein, et du Lavis* (fig. 10). Chaussegros's treatment was



(10) Buchotte, *Les Règles du Dessein, et du Lavis* (Paris: 1743), pl. 11. Blackader Library McGill University, Rare Book Section. (Photo: Brian McNeil.)

austere overall, and certain features such as the spiky finials on the pavilions strike one as distinctly old-fashioned. But the house was remarkably up-to-date for the colony in other respects. It featured a roof of imported slate and a monumental doorway with large classical orders soberly carrying a deep entablature, enlivened by the sweeping curves of its double staircase. The gardens behind the house (fig. 9) were laid out formally in a symmetrical design with the well ornamenting the parterre and relatively handy to the kitchens (ranged along the left side of this basement plan), but also too close to the privy ("lieus"), as was often the case. The general conception resembles Chaussegros designs of the same period for the immense official residences at Québec, although the *Château de Vaudreuil* scale is smaller. The building serves

to remind us that a self-conscious classicizing French tradition coexisted in New France with the more widespread popular tradition. The house remained in the possession of Vaudreuil's son, the Marquis de Rigaud, until 1760, but burned to the ground in 1803.²⁶

The popular building tradition in rural Québec is illustrated by the *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, Beauport, Québec (fig. 11), whose interior has already been described. Built in the seventeenth century, it typifies early Québec farm houses in which practical problems of survival rendered decorative considerations superfluous. It faces south, like many



(11) *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, Beauport, seventeenth century. View including main front and dairy. (Photo: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Technical Data Services.)

houses in the country, including those in Thomas Davies' 1787 view (fig. 12) of the village of Château-Richer (just down river from the *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*). The thick stone walls are pierced only by small, widely spaced windows and are stuccoed against the biting winds. The windows are fitted with simple shutters. In contrast to the stylish Vaudreuil mansion, the walls of the farm house are low and the floor flush with the ground, an economy of time and material. The steep roof is finished neatly at the wall's edge and has no dormer windows to occasion heat loss or impede the descent of snow and ice. The small wing attached to the southwest gable wall is a dairy which provided a



(12) Thomas DAVIES, *Farm houses in the village of Château-Richer in the late eighteenth century*, watercolour, coll.: National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: National Gallery of Canada.)

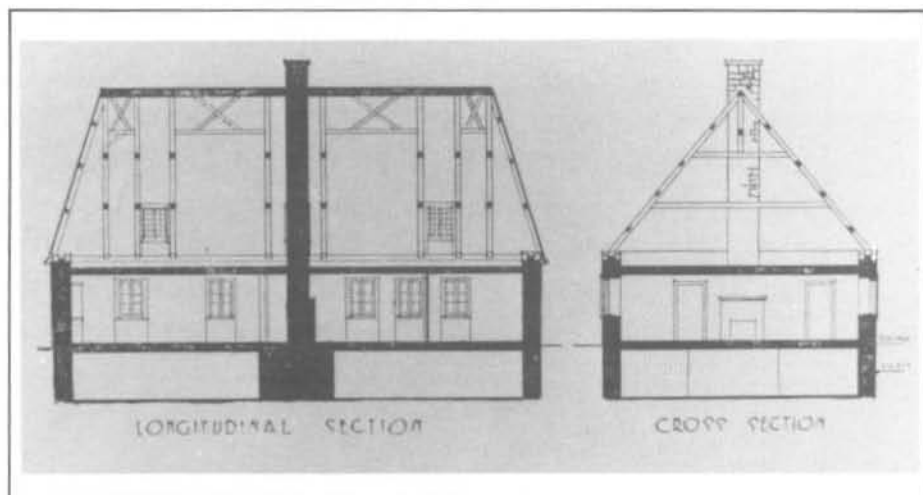
primitive system of refrigeration. What is so visually striking in this sturdy farm house is the long sweep of the dark roof set off against the thin white band of wall below. It is from this simple and rudimentary model, still closely allied to counterparts in rural areas in northern France, that the slow evolution towards the nineteenth-century Québec rural house began.²⁷

From its perch in the foothills of the Laurentians, the *Auclair House*, *Charlesbourg, Québec* (figs. 13, 14) overlooks the farmlands of the St. Lawrence valley. (The view in fig. 13 is of the rear or northerly wall.) Formerly called the *Villeneuve House*, it was first owned by the Auclair family and, in spite of the 1684 date often cited, a date in the middle of the eighteenth century is suggested by both its substantial size and documentary sources.²⁸ Like the roof of the earlier *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, the steep roof of the Auclair house dominates the low stone walls. But this distinctive example differs from the simple gable of the *Beauport house* in that it is four-sided, with ends that slant inward at an exceedingly steep pitch crowned once again by wooden finials. This "French" or pavilion roof presumably owes its form to stately French country houses that are characteristically set out with a centre block or *corps de logis* and flanking *pavillons*, as in the *Château de Vaudreuil*. While rarely encountered in more modest houses in the French countryside, the pavilion roof was used in the Québec area, on unassuming wooden farm houses as well as on dignified manor houses. The roof of the

Auclair House encloses an attic storey of great height that contrasts with the low walls of the ground floor (fig. 14). It is constructed with massive trusses and its ridge is stiffened by criss-cross wind-bracing of the *croix de Saint-André* variety. Such a roof conservatively built (in a sense overbuilt) was frequently used in Québec in the eighteenth century.



(13) **Auclair House**, Charlesbourg, middle of the eighteenth century. North face as it appeared in 1919. (Photo: National Museums of Canada, Barbeau Collection.)



(14) **Auclair House**, sections. (From Ramsay TRAQUAIR, *The Old Architecture of Québec* [Toronto: 1947], p. 47, courtesy of the Redpath Library, McGill University, Montréal.)

In spite of the graceful design of the roof, there are reminders that the underlying motivation for the *Auclair House* was utilitarian. The prevailing winds along the St. Lawrence are northeasterly, and even though the stone walls of the house are thick, clapboarding covers the masonry on the northeast wall (just visible on the left side in fig. 13) as a practical measure, more effective than *crépi*, to protect the mortar against moisture driven into the joints by the wind. The pattern of the windows is irregular: two windows crowd together in order to make room for the cross-wall that lines up with the central chimney and divides the interior very simply into two highly flexible spaces (subsequently partitioned into many more small rooms).

As part of a general adaptation to the North American context, the early rural house typified by the *Soeurs de la Congrégation* and *Auclair* examples gradually evolved into a larger, more comfortable dwelling. The *Beauchemin House*, *Varennnes*, *Québec* (fig. 15), built about 1770, represents a stage in this development.²⁹ It is both taller and deeper than its predecessors. The main floor is now raised several feet above ground level; the upper level, illuminated by dormers and side windows, has become a full living space. A sure sign of prosperity is the increased number of fireplaces, which are also required by the greater size of the house. Located in the gable walls, they are served by pairs of chimneys positioned part way down each roof slope and linked by stone curtain walls, with the chimney mass still carried inside the house to reduce heat loss to the exterior. The same broad, expansive quality that characterizes the house as a whole may be detected in individual details. The coarse rubble masonry has a different appearance from examples in the region of Québec, since broken fieldstone, not quarried stone, has been used. Truly massive, roughly squared stones are used to obtain good corner joints, and large wrought-iron S-shaped ties or anchors just below the eaves secure the masonry to the internal frame of the house. The eaves originally ended in a modest bell-cast curve, a change from the flush eaves of earlier roofs that probably occurred to keep rain, snow and ice away from the masonry walls. Both the extended bell-cast eave on one side and the cantilevered porch constructed below it are characteristic “québécois” developments and are later additions in this as in many other cases. The compact, dense, protective character of earlier Québec farm houses is still suggested by the relatively small ratio of window area to wall surface, but the *Beauchemin House* exemplifies the development towards the more gracious yet practical dwelling that was to reach its ultimate expression in the nineteenth century.

The influence of English taste generally, and English neo-classicism specifically, was rarely felt in Québec before the end of the eighteenth century and was often (though by no means always) associated with English-speaking clients. In the case of the *Papineau*

House, 440 rue Bonsecours, Montréal (fig. 16), the Patriot leader Louis-Joseph Papineau undertook in 1831 to refurbish his eighteenth-century rubble masonry house by sheathing the lower storey with a wooden façade.³⁰ This was worked to imitate regular cut-stone blocks in the smooth but strongly bevelled form of "rustication" thought appropriate to the ground-floor treatment of many British buildings throughout the Georgian period. Considering Papineau's political views, this elegant wooden covering is an unexpected concession to British neo-classical taste.



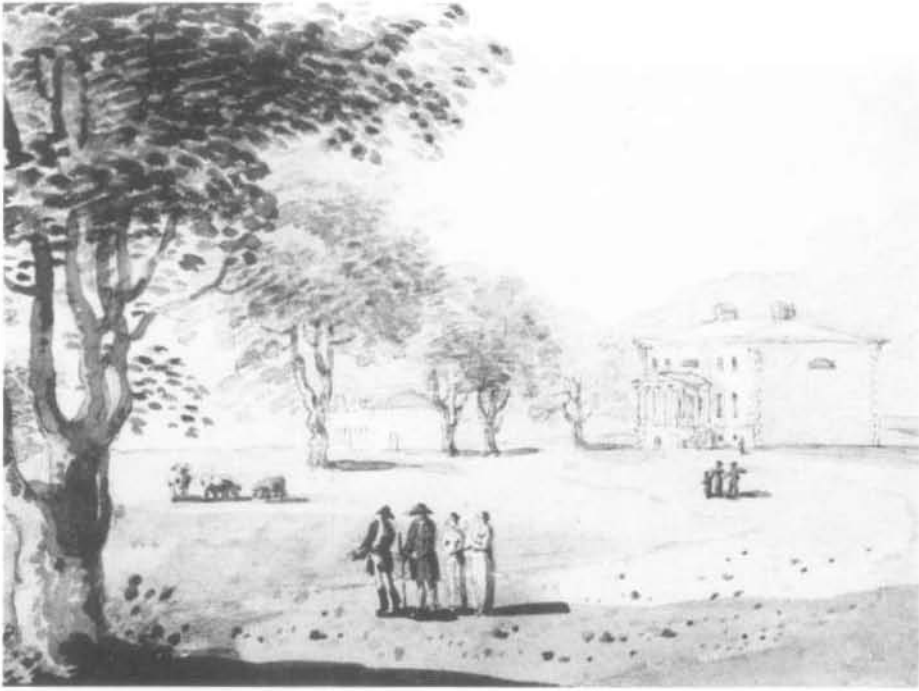
(15) **Beauchemin House**, Varennes, c. 1770. East end and south front as they appeared in the 1940's. (Photo: Ministère des affaires culturelles du Québec, Inventaire des biens culturels.)



(16) **Papineau House**, 440 rue Bonsecours, Montréal, as altered in 1831. (Photo: Parks Canada, Canadian Inventory of Historic Building.)

British influence in the handsome recasting of the *Papineau House* exterior is literally superficial, but the picturesque neo-classicism of *Monklands* (now *Villa Maria Convent*), 4245 boulevard Décarie, Montréal (figs. 17, 18) is unequivocal and thorough. It was the country home of the Hon. James (later Sir James) Monk. A member of the Executive and Legislative Councils of Lower Canada, he was born in Boston, educated in Halifax, named Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench at Montréal in 1794. Within a decade he acquired this large country property near Montréal and erected this house in 1803-1804. He may have designed *Monklands* himself for, while the masons and carpenters are named in the building contracts, no architect is mentioned.³¹ George Heriot's watercolour (fig. 17), painted in 1813, soon after the completion of *Monklands* shows the stone house in its attractive landscaped grounds at Côte Saint-Antoine, then a distinctly rural locale. Monk's choice of this natural setting, with all its irregularity and variety, reveals that he was an admirer of the Picturesque movement then in vogue in England.

Both in general form and detail, *Monklands* breaks sharply with traditional Québec architecture. The gently hipped and dormerless roof is as different as it can be, in its restrained profile and geometric order,



(17) **Monklands (Villa Maria Convent)**, 4245 boulevard Décarie, Montréal, 1803-4. As it appeared in an 1813 watercolour by George HERIOT. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, Picture Division, C10680.)

from the roof the *Auclair House*. The stonework attains a new standard of refinement and execution: the contract called for cut stone, not merely large rubble blocks. The cut-stone quoins (very regular and slightly projecting corner blocks) and the string course (an ornamental band between the lower and upper storeys) are prominent features in the Heriot view. In keeping with the neo-classical insistence on symmetry, *Monklands* is arranged around a central hallway. The chimneys, evenly inset on the roof, correspond to the back-to-back fireplaces in the regularly paired rooms on either side of the centre hall. But the new classical emphasis in design is demonstrated specifically in the pedimented portico of free-standing columns and their responds in the pilasters of the doorway itself.

The well-preserved interior decoration surprises by its sophistication. The main rooms abound in small details carved in wood and moulded in plaster that reflect something of the grace and elegance of Robert Adam's style. One such example is the superb mantelpiece, complete with overmantel, that survives in the western parlour (fig. 18). It is alive with classicizing figures, festooned vases, swags, medallions, ribands and floral motifs from the Adamesque tradition. The individual elements are coarser and blunter than their prototypes



(18) **Monklands**, mantelpiece in western parlour. (Photo: Mathilde Brosseau.)

which were presumably known only from prints and somewhat awkwardly related to one another, for the craftsmen called upon to execute such work must have been trained in church decoration and were accustomed to producing broad effects for distant viewing. In this dependence on neo-classical design and in the implied allegiance to the Picturesque movement, *Monklands* is the epitome of the new English taste that slowly reached the province. It was occupied by Monk until 1825, then by his niece until 1843. When used subsequently as a residence for several Governors General, major additions were made by the architect George Browne. It was converted to a hotel in 1850, but in 1854 the villa became the property of the Congrégation Notre-Dame-de-Montréal, and now serves as a school.³²

The charming *Hamel House*, 2608 chemin Saint-Louis, Saint-Foy, Québec, (fig. 19), erected about 1859 for the timber inspector Michel Hamel, is also free-standing and set in generous grounds but is less formal in design than *Monklands* and therefore more clearly in the tradition of the villa as a suburban retreat. It retains the balanced design of the classical tradition in its central door and symmetrically disposed chimneys. At the same time it has a distinctly "québécois" flavour. For while the *Hamel House* is built of wood and has none of the massiveness of the earlier stone buildings, it has a broad hipped roof that approaches the steepness of Québec tradition yet sweeps out on all sides in an extended bell-cast curve. The treatment of the roof imparts a light-hearted quality of gaiety to the house. Beneath its graceful curve is the surrounding veranda, enlivened by pairs of very slender posts with criss-cross treillage that leaps and dances in the afternoon sunlight. In contrast with thick-walled, small-windowed traditional houses, the *Hamel House* is not one that fears nature; its tall windows and inviting veranda reach out to the nearby garden and suggest an existence of pastoral bliss.³³

Displaying some of the features of the *Hamel House*, the rural Québec house had begun to take its definitive form by the middle of the nineteenth century. A random example from the Québec countryside is the attractive house at 340 rue Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, Québec (fig. 20). In comparison with the rugged early farm houses, this nineteenth-century model was better adapted to the climate and reflected the increased prosperity and ease in the life of the habitant farmer. The wall structure was often built of squared wooden logs laid horizontally, *pièce-sur-pièce*, since wood was more economical and accessible, and covered with mill-sawn clapboard. The timber trade in Québec was still booming during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. However, stone continued to be used for rural houses and brick also became popular as a building material at mid-century. The characteristic features of this nineteenth-century farm house are the

spaciousness suggested by the veranda, the height contributed by the higher basement wall, and the gentle pitch and graceful form of the roof. The main storey is raised off the ground, freeing the doors and windows from snow accumulations. The distinctive full-width veranda is tucked under the gracefully extended eaves. It is a mark of the popular genius that this bell-cast curve, which began as a practical means of keeping moisture away from the wall surface, should evolve so prettily into the veranda roof. The veranda itself often provides the excuse for whimsical carved decoration, usually painted in gay colours, a testimony to the joy and vitality of the popular tradition.

An extremely attractive variant of the nineteenth-century rural house is found along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, from L'Islet-sur-Mer to the Gaspé region. The remarkable feature of this type is the treatment of the bell-cast roof, as illustrated by the *Le Bouthillier House, Anse-aux-Griffons, Québec* (fig. 21), which was built about 1818.³⁴ Ordinary bell-cast eaves are finished underneath with a flat cornice, but here the bell-cast curve is matched by a curved soffit. The clapboard end walls are extended to form brackets that create a graceful profile in the gable ends.



(19) **Hamel House**, 2608 chemin Saint-Louis, Sainte-Foy, c. 1859. South front as it appeared in 1957. (Photo: Office du Film du Québec.)



(20) House at 340 rue Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, nineteenth century. (Photo: Mathilde Brosseau.)



(21) Le Boutillier House, Anse-aux-Griffons, c. 1818. (Photo: Office du Film du Québec.)

While the rural house became more settled in its proportions and picturesque in its details, mid-nineteenth-century urban architecture was moving steadily away from traditional forms. The austere stone houses of Montréal and Québec began to give way to substantial architect-designed houses. The influx of architects and builders trained in the British Isles was undoubtedly a contributing factor in this trend throughout the 1830's and 1840's. Take, for example, the *row-houses at 60-66 sur Saint-Louis, Québec* (fig. 22). Erected in 1828-1830 as a speculative venture by British master mason and architect John Phillips and master joiner Robert Jellard, these four houses differ from some of the earlier row-housing seen in the *Beaver Hall Hill* daguerreotype (fig. 7). The roof pitch is less steep in the Phillips/Jellard row. The masonry is squared and evenly coursed though still somewhat rough-faced, reflecting the growing competence of masons at Québec many of whom were being trained in British methods at the Citadel works in the 1820's. Each entrance, moreover, boasted an elegantly carved wooden door-frame with Ionic pilasters and entablature in the latest phase of neo-classicism, the newly fashionable Greek Revival.³⁵

Among the most elaborate of the town houses in the old capital is the *Têtu House, 24 avenue Sainte-Geneviève, Québec* (figs. 23-26). It was built in 1852-1854 for the merchant Cirice Têtu, who owned a successful import company, lived in fine style, made frequent trips to Europe, and kept a noted stable of horses.³⁶ The *Têtu House* was designed by the architect Charles-Philippe-Ferdinand Baillairgé (1826-1906), who had received his training from his father's cousin, the prominent architect Thomas Baillairgé and the abbé Jérôme Demers at the Seminary of Québec. The last of a virtual dynasty of québécois architects, Charles was in private practice in the 1850's and designed many residences in Québec City. He later became city engineer, a post he held for thirty-three years (1866-1898). He wrote a French dictionary and various works on geometry and trigonometry, on constructing an indestructible vessel to travel to the North Pole, and on a "stereometric" system for reducing all matter to the same base. His scholarly contribution was recognized internationally, for he was awarded thirteen medals of honour and seventeen diplomas from institutions in Europe and Asia, as well as North and South America.³⁷

Although Baillairgé was trained entirely in Québec, he drew on the international Greek Revival style for the design of the *Têtu House* (fig. 23). The façade is composed of massive ashlar blocks of pale Deschambault stone, up to five feet long, and finished in fine bush-hammered work. Elements like the Doric columns, which are derived more or less directly from Greek sources, are carved from single blocks of stone. In addition to this fondness for light colouring, monolithic details, and gigantic scale, one recognizes other features equally



(22) Row-houses at 60-66 rue Saint-Louis, Québec, 1828-1830. (Photo: Parks Canada, Canadian Inventory of Historic Building.)

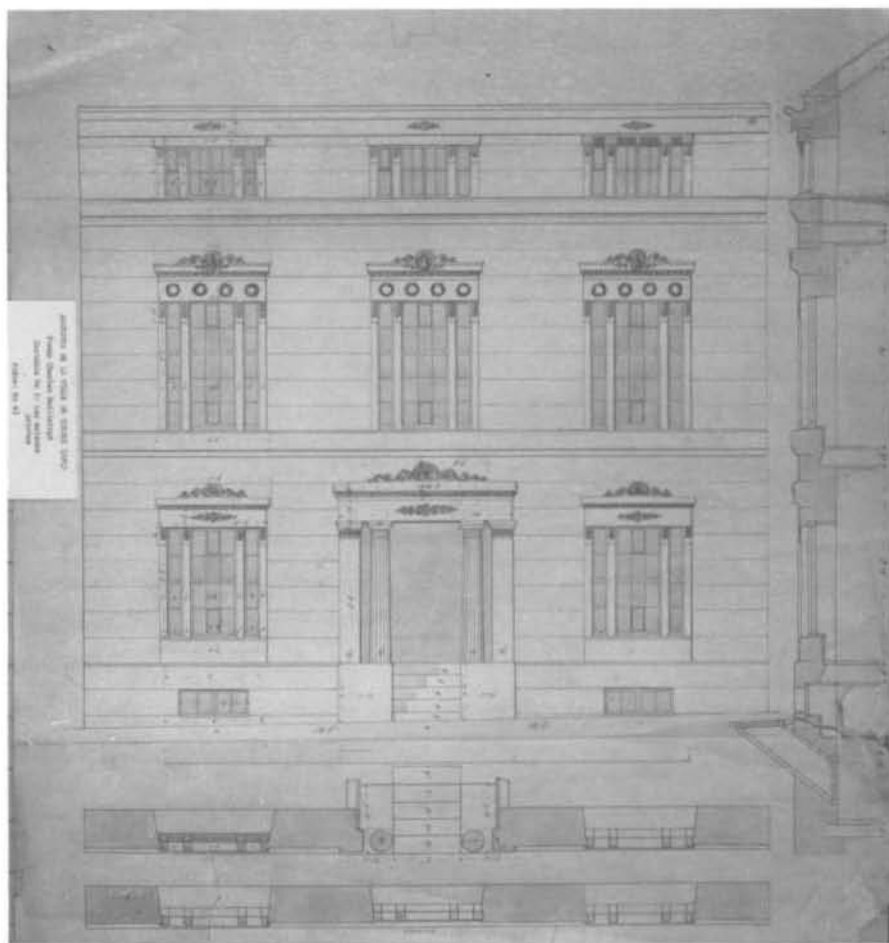


(23) Têtu House, 25 avenue Sainte-Geneviève, Québec, 1852-1854. (Photo: the author.)

characteristic of the Greek Revival: the dramatic contrasts between solids and voids, round and square elements, textured and plain surfaces. This is illustrated in the smooth front wall juxtaposed with a deeply recessed and shaded doorway, or in the crisply fluted and free-standing columns abruptly placed next to the plain antae in the wall. Baillairgé's drawing (fig. 24) shows that the windows on all storeys were meant to be a departure from the traditional casement windows, which were still employed in French Canada even at this date. They were intended to be fitted with double-hung sashes, long preferred by British and American architects, and grouped in triplets, like Palladian motifs recast in Greek Revival form. While the overall design is Baillairgé's, certain details are sufficiently peculiar to document his dependence on the books published by one of the leading "Greeks" among American architects, Minard Lafever. The skilful execution of the stone trim is a tribute to the talent of the master mason Pierre Châteauvert (active 1831-1873).³⁰ The façade, still in excellent condition, is the most sumptuous in the Greek Revival mode at Québec.

The interior of the *Têtu House* is consistently grand, featuring marble mantelpieces, elaborate woodwork, and splendid plaster ceilings (fig. 25). Characteristic of the mid-Victorian organization of space, and

of Baillaigé's flair for treating space graciously, is the second-floor double parlour, a vast room measuring twenty-seven feet by twenty feet under the tall ceilings of the period. Although these two rooms can be divided by sliding doors (fig. 26), they are unified by matching marble mantels at each end and by the attractively framed opening between, with richly foliated capitals and scrolled tendrils derived from Lavever's book, *The Beauties of Modern Architecture* which had been published in New York in 1835. The house was convenient as well as beautiful, for it was fitted up with gas lighting, indoor bath and toilets, and a remarkable central heating system, invented by Baillaigé himself.³⁹ Traces of wood tubing for the hot-air system still survive in the house.



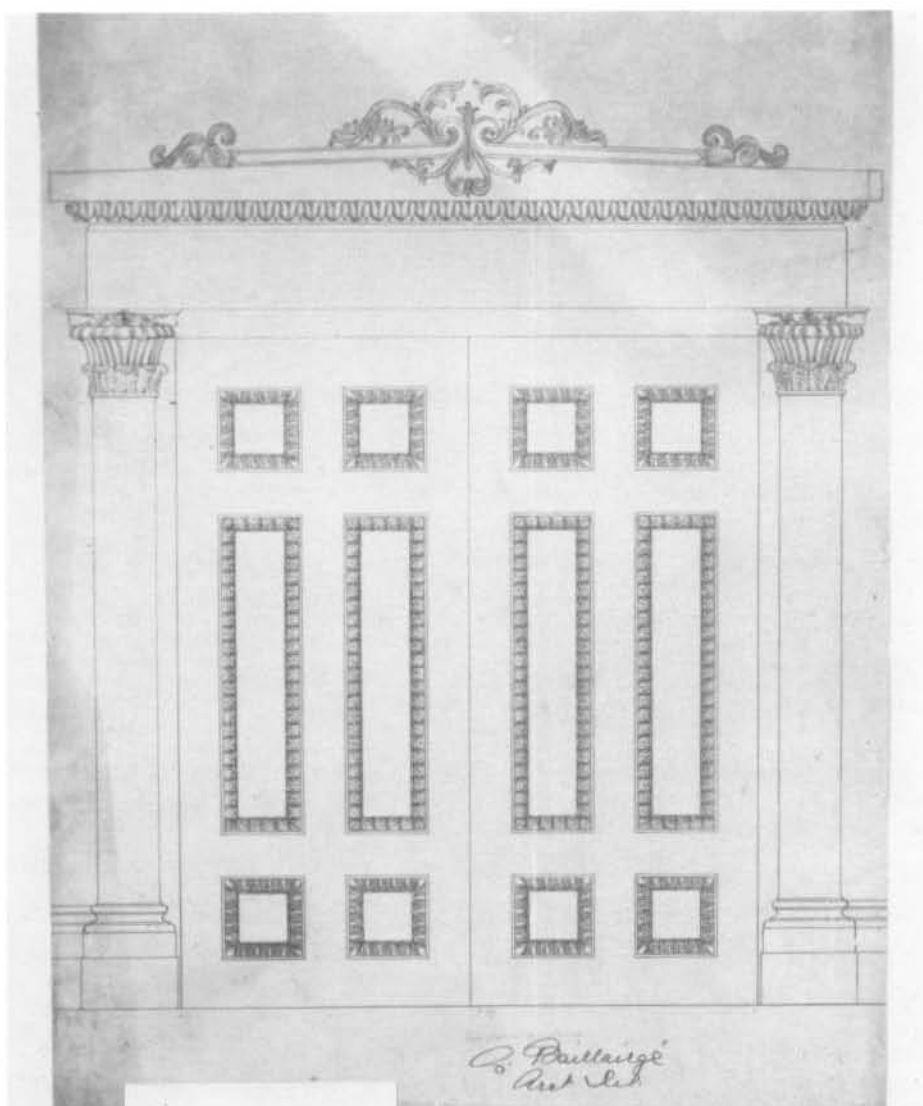
(24) **Têtu House**, elevation by Charles BAILLAIRGÉ. (Photo: Archives de la ville de Québec, fonds Charles Baillairgé, 1-43.)



(25) **Têtu House**, double parlour on second storey. (Photo: the author.)

Though the *Têtu House* was elaborate by standards at Québec, it seems almost austere beside a Montréal counterpart of 1857-1858, the *Harrison Stephens House*, formerly at 363 Dorchester St., Montréal (fig. 27). According to the building contracts, the architect responsible for this house in Italianate style was James H. Springle, who was active in Montréal from 1845 to 1873 and whom Stephens may have met in his capacity as a Director of the Bank of Montréal, for Springle had made an unsuccessful bid to design the head office of the Bank of Montréal in 1846. He was responsible instead for three Ontario branches of the Bank of Montréal in Cobourg, Belleville, and Brockville in 1857, the same year as the Stephens commission, as well as for later alterations to the head office.⁴⁰ Harrison Stephens was an American importer from Vermont who arrived in Montréal in 1828, established the firm of Stephens & Kellogg, became senior partner in Stephens, Young & Company, and amassed a large fortune.⁴¹

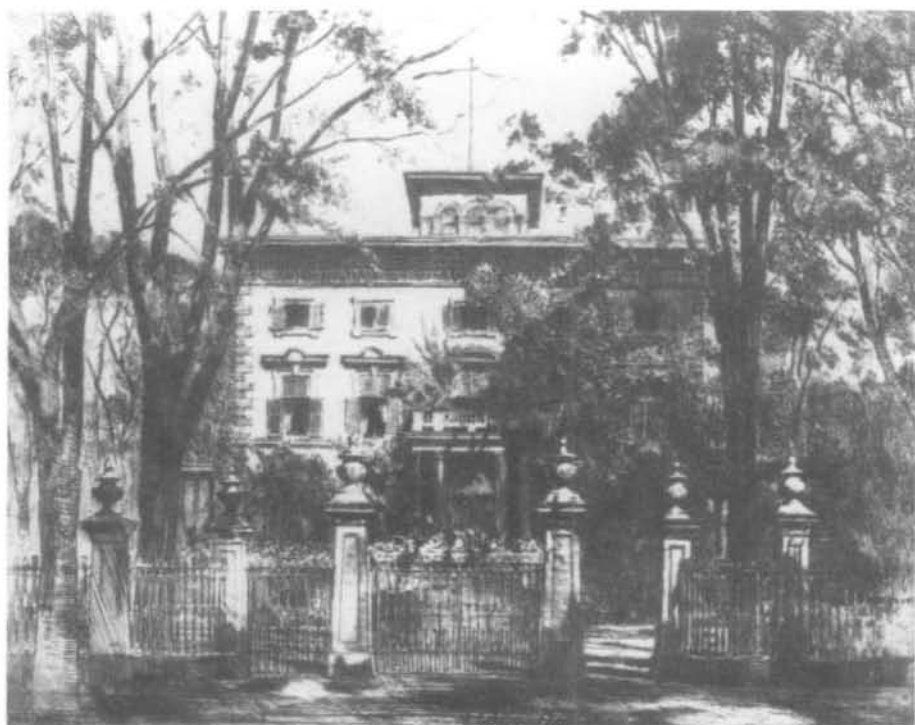
The Italian prototypes on which the *Stephens House* depended for its design were the city palaces and country villas of the Florentine and Roman bourgeoisie during the Renaissance. Set in large grounds that gave it an almost rural air, its general proportions were massive and blocky, like those of an urban palazzo of square plan with a weighty, bracketed cornice. Also drawn from the Italianate idiom were the low roof profile, the diminutive attic storey, the rusticated quoins, the



(26) **Têtu House**, elevation of parlour doors by Charles BAILLAIRGÉ. (Photo: Archives de la ville de Québec, fonds Charles Baillairgé, 1-52.)

variety of pediments above the windows, and the Tuscan portico. Crowning the composition was a square cupola with rhythmic round-headed openings, a characteristic feature of Italianate design. This immense property, next door to the fashionable St. James Club, was enclosed by a cast-iron fence supported by carved stone posts with urns, all contributing to the stately effect of the design.

The *Stephens House*, on the site now occupied by Place Ville-Marie, was destroyed because of railway work at the turn of the century. While it lasted it was a symbol of wealth and power, yet it was only a foretaste



(27) James H. SPRINGLE, **Stephens House**, formerly 363 Dorchester Street West, Montréal, 1857-1858, etching by H. RACINE. (Photo: Public Archives of Canada, Picture Division, C3110.)

of the still more opulent and ostentatious mansions of the *nouveaux-riches* industrialists that were to spring up in Montréal throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴² When they appeared, there was a complete rupture in the popular tradition in favour of internationally approved styles. If one looks beyond the period under discussion here, there was a relatively brief but exciting interval at the turn of the century during which vernacular interpretations of the most conspicuous features of those stylish mansions gave many québécois stone houses a piquant or even daring character. The resulting townscape is one of nice contrasts between two very different but compatible and equally indigenous modes. Shortly after this outburst of vernacular flamboyance, Québec domestic architecture lost its distinctive character.

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Canadian Inventory of Historic Building
Parks Canada, Ottawa, Ont.

Notes:

- 1 Pierre BOUCHER, *Histoire véritable et naturelle des moeurs et productions du pays de la Nouvelle-France*, Paris, 1664, trans. by E.L. MONTIZAMBERT as *Canada in the XVII Century* (Montréal: 1883), p. 73.
- 2 An analysis of the impact of climate on Québec rural housing is found in Georges GAUTHIER-LAROCHE, *Évolution de la maison traditionnelle dans la région de Québec* (Québec: 1974).
- 3 Adolph B. BENSON, ed., *The America of 1750: Peter Kalm's Travels in North America* (New York: 1964), p. 412. (This edition is based on the English version of 1770-1771, but revised from the original Swedish publication of 1753-1761.) For housing in the French régime, see Alan GOWANS, *Building Canada: An Architectural History of Canadian Life* (Toronto: 1966), pp. 12-38; Yves LAFRAMBOISE, *L'architecture traditionnelle au Québec: la maison aux 17^e et 18^e siècles* (Montréal: 1975); Yves LAFRAMBOISE, "Neuville: architecture traditionnelle," *Les cahiers du patrimoine*, III, Québec, 1976; Michel LESSARD and Huguette MARQUIS, "La Maison d'inspiration française (1608-1780)," *Encyclopédie de la maison québécoise* (Montréal: 1972), pp. 179-247; Peter N. MOOGK, *Building a House in New France* (Toronto: 1977); Luc NOPPEN, Claude PAULETTE and Michel TREMBLAY, *Québec: trois siècles d'architecture* (Québec: 1979); A.J.H. RICHARDSON, "A Comparative Historical Study of Timber Building in Canada," *APT: Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, V, No. 3, 1973, pp. 77-102.
- 4 Archives nationales du Québec (cited hereafter as ANQ), greffe Romain Becquet, Vente, François Jacquet à Pierre Ménage, Québec, 28 février 1675. For the use of notarial records in building research, see A.J.H. RICHARDSON, "Notarial documentary sources on French colonial buildings in North America," *Architecture Canada*, XLVI, No. 2, 1969, pp. 37-41. Parks Canada has prepared annotated inventories of building contracts or 'marchés' found in Québec City notarial records. See Geneviève G. BASTIEN, Doris D. DUBE, and Christina SOUTHAM, "Inventaire des marchés de construction des archives civiles de Québec, 1800-1870," *History and Archaeology/Histoire et archéologie*, I (Ottawa: 1975); Doris DUBE and Marthe LACOMBE, "Inventaire des marchés de construction des archives nationales à Québec, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles," *History and Archaeology/Histoire et archéologie*, XVII (Ottawa: 1977).
- 5 For an examination of the apprentice system in New France, see Jean-Pierre HARDY and David-Thierry RUDELLE, *Les apprentis artisans à Québec, 1660-1815* (Montréal: 1977).
- 6 For a short notice on Pierre Ménage, see the entry by Pierre MAYRAND in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, II (Toronto: 1969), p. 467.
- 7 ANQ, greffe François Genaple, Échange entre Pierre Ménage et François Lajoüe, Québec, 3 mars 1699.
- 8 See the entry on François de Lajoüe by Pierre MAYRAND, pp. 337-39.
- 9 For examples of this particular feature, and of the French background to French-Canadian architecture generally, see Georges DOYON and Robert HUBRECHT, *L'architecture rurale & bourgeoise en France*, 3rd ed. (Paris: 1969).
- 10 Joyce MARSHALL, trans. and ed., *Word from New France: The Selected Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation* (Toronto: 1967), p. 129. See also BENSON, *The America of 1750*, pp. 429-30 and p. 460 for Peter KALM's description of this building stone.
- 11 The use of different building stones and other features of construction are discussed by Mary K. CULLEN in "Highlights of Domestic Building in Pre-Confederation Québec and Ontario as seen through Travel Literature from 1763 to 1860," *APT: Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology* (forthcoming).
- 12 A.J.H. RICHARDSON, "Guide to the Architecturally and Historically most Significant Buildings in the Old City of Québec," *APT: Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, II, Nos. 3-4, 1970, p. 13.
- 13 The name of the original owner has not been established. Pierre-Georges ROY calls it the *Cléophas Girardin House*, after its then current owner, in *Old Manors, Old Houses* (Québec: 1927), p. 266, while GAUTHIER-LAROCHE refers to it as the *Soeurs de la Congrégation House*, GAUTHIER-LAROCHE, pp. 25-32.
- 14 For a survey of household objects found in the houses of New France, see Louise DÉCARIE-AUDET, Nicole GENÉT, and Luce VERMETTE, *Les objets familiers de nos ancêtres* (Montréal: 1974). An unpublished Master's thesis by Luce VERMETTE, dealing specifically with the fireplace and entitled *Les feux domestiques à Montréal de 1740 à 1760*, was desposited with Laval University in Québec City in 1977.
- 15 For Jean-Baptiste Maillou, see the entry by Peter N. MOOGK in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, III (Toronto: 1974), pp. 419-21.

- 16 ANQ, greffe Jacques Barbel, Vente, Louis Aubert, Seigneur de la Chesnaye et al. à Jean Maillou, Québec, 2 mai 1736, No. 1286; greffe Claude Barolet, Inventaire de feu Jean Maillou, Québec, 21 septembre 1753; greffe Antoine Panet, Vente, Antoine Juchereau Duchesnay à Dame Elizabeth Manifold, veuve de George Tobie Fitzgerald, Québec, 21 septembre 1782.
- 17 ANQ, greffe Claude Louet, Transaction entre Dame Marie-Geneviève de Longueuil Lemoine et Antoine Juchereau, Québec, 18 octobre 1766; greffe Claude Louet, Bail, Antoine Juchereau Duchesnay et John Clark, Québec, 27 avril 1767.
- 18 Elizabeth Frances HALE to Lord Amherst, 28 October 1805, Hale Family Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. These letters were brought to my attention by the late S.W. Shelton of Toronto.
- 19 The description is contained in a letter from Montréal, dated 26 November 1776 in Thomas ANBUREY's anonymous *Travels through the Interior Parts of America, in a Series of Letters, by an Officer* (London: 1789), I, pp. 123-25.
- 20 HALE to Amherst, 28 October 1799.
- 21 HALE to Amherst, 22 July 1799.
- 22 HALE to Amherst, 28 October 1805.
- 23 Row housing of this type may be seen in many views of Québec City sketched about 1830 by Lieut.-Col. James Pattison Cockburn and reproduced in Christina CAMERON and Jean TRUDEL, *The Drawings of James Cockburn: A Visit Through Québec's Past* (Toronto: 1976).
- 24 ANQ, NF 2, Ordonnances des Intendants. These portions are quoted from Ramsay TRAQUAIR, *The Old Architecture of Québec: A Study of the Buildings Erected in New France from the Earliest Explorers to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: 1947), pp. 14-15. Building codes are found in Intendant Michel Bégon's "l'Ordonnance portant règlement pour la reconstruction des maisons (détruites dans l'incendie du 19 juin 1721, en la ville de Montréal) en matériaux incombustibles et pour d'autres fins," 8 juillet 1721, and Intendant Claude Thomas Dupuy's "l'Ordonnance portant Règlement pour la construction des maisons en matériaux incombustibles dans les Villes de la Colonie," 7 juin 1727. Both documents are quoted extensively in LESSARD and MARQUIS, pp. 491-519.
- 25 For Chaussegros de Léry, see the lengthy entry by F.J. THORPE in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, III, pp. 116-19; see also Marie-Madeleine AZARD-MALAUURIE, "De l'architecture monumentale classique à Québec," *Vie des arts*, no. 49, 1968, pp. 42-49.
- 26 For a discussion of the *Château de Vaudreuil*, see Jean-Claude MARSAN, *Montréal en évolution* (Montréal: 1974), pp. 79-80.
- 27 On the development of the French-Canadian house, see GAUTHIER-LAROCHE, pp. 23-37.
- 28 ANQ, greffe Jacques Pinguet, Inventaire des biens de la communauté qui a été entre le feu Pierre Auclair et dame Marie Madeleine Sédillot, Québec, 3 janvier 1742; répertoire Geneste, Inventaire du feu Jean-Baptiste Auclair, Québec, 11 juillet 1769.
- 29 Yves LAFRAMBOISE, "Bâtiments anciens: le rang de la Picardie," *Decormag*, I, No. 6, 1973, pp. 35-36.
- 30 Papineau describes the changes to his house in a series of letters to his wife, published in "Lettres de L.-J. Papineau à sa femme," *Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec*, XXXIV-XXXV, 1953-5, pp. 304-11, 316-17.
- 31 Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal (cited hereafter as ANQM), greffe L. Guy, Marché entre l'Hon. James Monk et Gilbert Duchatel et Jean-Baptiste Sené, Montréal, 3 mars 1803, No. 102; greffe L. Guy, Marché entre l'Hon. James Monk et Pierre Poitra, Montréal, 16 juin 1803, No. 140.
- 32 ANQM, greffe Henry Griffin, Contract and agreement between George Bowie and the Board of Works of Canada for additions, alterations, and repairs to *Monkland House* as a residence for the Governor General, Montréal, 14 March 1844, No. 20, 520; MARSAN, p. 168.
- 33 Michel Hamel sold his property "with new house and dependancies [sic]" in 1859. ANQ, greffe Samuel Isidore Glackemeyer, Sale, Michel Hamel to John Flanagan, Québec, 10 November 1859.
- 34 TRAQUAIR, p. 58; P. Roy WILSON, *The Beautiful Old Houses of Québec* (Toronto: 1975), p. 106.
- 35 ANQ, greffe Louis Panet, Deed of Sale, Henriette Guicheaux, widow Thomas Dunn to Charles Aylwin, Robert Jellard, and John Phillips, Québec, 5 September 1829, No. 3553; greffe L.T. McPherson, Contract between Charles Aylwin, John Phillips, and Robert Jellard, Québec, 13 May 1830; greffe Louis Panet, Sale, John Phillips to William Smith, Québec, 16 August 1830, No. 4031. For information on the interior of the Phillips/Jellard row, see Christina CAME-

- RON, "Selecting an Appropriate Vernacular Moulding," *APT: Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, X, No. 4, 1978, pp. 80-87.
- 36 Building contracts for the *Têtu* house include ANQ, greffe Joseph Petitclerc, Marché, Isaac Dorion et Pierre Châteauvert, Québec, 16 novembre 1852, No. 6889; Marché, Isaac Dorion et Cirice Têtu, Québec, 16 novembre 1852, No. 6891; Contract, William and James McKay and Isaac Dorion, Québec, 15 February 1853, No. 7022; Contract, Thomas Murphy and John O'Leary and Pierre Châteauvert, Québec, 24 December 1852, No. 6934. Information on Cirice Têtu is found in Mgr Henri TÊTU, *Histoire des familles Têtu, Bonenfant, Dionne et Perrault* (Québec: 1898) pp. 229-36.
 - 37 Although there is some confusion in published biographies about the date of Charles Baillairgé's birth, the correct year is 1826, as proven by the registration of his baptism (two days after his birth) in the Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Registre des naissances de la paroisse Notre-Dame-de-Québec, 1 octobre 1826. The principal published biographies include E. LA SELVE and Léon LORTIE, *Biographie de Charles Baillairgé* (Québec: 1897), and George MACLEAN ROSE, ed., *A Cyclopaedia of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: 1888), p. 166. [This author is currently writing a doctoral thesis on architect Charles Baillairgé for Laval University, Québec City].
 - 38 Biographical information on Pierre Châteauvert is found in RICHARDSON, "Guide to... Québec," p. 79.
 - 39 Charles BAILLAIRGÉ, *Description et plan d'un nouveau calorifère à air chaud sur le système tubulaire* (Québec: 1853).
 - 40 ANQM, greffe E.J. Isaacson, Contract, Harrison Stephens with Jean-Baptiste Saint-Louis and François Saucisse, Montréal, 11 March 1857; greffe E.J. Isaacson, Contract, Harrison Stephens with William Holmes and William Rodden, Montréal, 16 December 1857. Drawings by James Springle for the Bank of Montréal buildings in Belleville, Brockville, and Cobourg are indexed in Rodrigue BEDARD, Nicole CLOUTIER, and André GIROUX, "Plans de l'architecture commerciale et industrielle inventoriés aux archives nationales du Québec à Montréal," *History and Archaeology/Histoire et archéologie*, IVB (Ottawa: 1975), Nos. 7, 8, 21.
 - 41 For biographical information about Harrison Stephens, see J.D. BORTHWICK, *Montreal: Its History* (Montréal: 1875), pp. 116-17; for another view of the house, see Luc D'IBERVILLE-MOREAU, *Lost Montreal* (Toronto: 1975), p. 87.
 - 42 For a descriptive guide to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses in Montréal, prepared by students in the graduate program in Canadian Art History at Concordia University, see Susan Tenney FEINDEL et al., *Mansions of the Golden Square Mile*, ed. by Christina CAMERON (Montréal: 1976).

L'habitation au Québec avant la Confédération

Les premiers colons de la Nouvelle-France se construisaient des labris de madriers et de pierres, sur le modèle des simples maisons de ferme aux toits pointus de la mère-patrie. Alors que les abris de bois ont presque entièrement disparu, plusieurs exemples des abris de pierres ont survécu jusqu'à nos jours (maison Jacquet, Maillou et des Soeurs de la Congrégation). Il n'y eut que de rares apparitions, en Nouvelle-France, de maisons inspirées du classicisme français raffiné, agrémentées de pavillons, de toits d'ardoise et de portails monumentaux (Château de Vaudreuil).

Au cours du XVIII^e siècle, les maisons prirent de plus grandes dimensions; plus élevées que le niveau du sol, ces maisons avaient aussi une maçonnerie plus perfectionnée. Dans les constructions rurales, les larmiers commençaient à s'étendre au-delà des murs pour former le toit en forme de cloche bien connu, adaptation du type de toit originel qui protégeait les murs de maçonnerie (maisons Auclair et Beauchemin).

Les Anglais apportèrent avec eux le goût du style néoclassique et de l'idéal décoratif. Cette influence se traduisit par un nouveau souci de symétrie, une pente du toit plus douce et l'application des normes classiques pour les ouvertures des portes et des fenêtres. À l'intérieur, les détails de Robert Adam et d'autres architectes néoclassiques anglais firent leur apparition (Monklands). Parallèlement à l'attention donnée aux valeurs décoratives, les villas gagnèrent la faveur de la population et s'ornèrent de fenêtres françaises et de vérandas à treillis. Elles gardaient toutefois leur cachet québécois par leur toit en croupe à l'inclinaison marquée, selon la tradition québécoise (maison Hamel).

Vers le milieu du XIX^e siècle, les maisons urbaines s'éloignèrent des formes traditionnelles au fur et à mesure que les architectes se mirent à chercher leur inspiration dans les livres de modèles architecturaux. Dans certains cas, les murs de moellons smillés et les délicates arabesques sont des copies conscientes des modèles inspirés du Renouveau grec (maison Têtu); ailleurs, les lourdes silhouettes palatiales et les riches ornements s'inspirent de la Renaissance italienne (maison Stephens). Alors que l'habitation rurale du Québec continuait à suivre les formes traditionnelles bien après le début du XIX^e siècle, l'habitation urbaine avait rompu avec la tradition en faveur des styles internationalement acceptés.

Christina Cameron

The Vocabulary of Freedom in 1948: The Politics of the Montréal Avant-Garde

From the ferment of recent years, Prisme d'Yeux... [whose members are] not galley slaves, tied to a theory they feel compelled to prove, rowing blindly... It supports all other groups which seek to preserve the independence of art.

— Prisme d'Yeux Manifesto,
February 1948¹

Without surrender or rest, in community of feeling of those who thirst for better life, without fear of set-backs, in encouragement or persecution, we shall pursue in joy our overwhelming need for liberation.

— *Refus Global*, manifesto of the Automatistes, August 1948²

Devant des réalités aussi tangibles, comment oser parler de 'liberté', d'"indépendance", et autres fariboles?

— "Mercure", *Le Devoir*, October 1948³

Freedom and its synonyms dominated the vocabulary of Canadian artists, intellectuals and politicians in 1948. In February, the issue of freedom divided the Montréal avant-garde into two hostile factions:⁴ the Prisme d'Yeux, led by Alfred Pellan⁵ and the Automatistes, led by Paul-Émile Borduas.⁶ The ideological⁷ basis of the debate on freedom is disclosed through an analysis of the clashing definitions of freedom contained in the manifestoes of the contending avant-gardes,⁸ and in two works produced by their leaders in 1948: *L'homme A grave* by Pellan (fig. 1) and *Objet Totémique* by Borduas (fig. 2). Furthermore, through an examination of the critical reception of the Prisme d'Yeux and the Automatistes in 1948, and of contemporary politics, one may locate the interface of the aesthetic debate and the most contentious aspect of the discourse on freedom: the strategies to be used against communism in the Cold War, which as one writer noted in 1948, "est l'affaire de tout le monde."⁹

Until the late 1960's, the Prisme d'Yeux-Automatiste conflict was explained as essentially a personality clash between Borduas and Pellan.¹⁰ F.-M. Gagnon's 1973 article, "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes: Men and Ideas in Quebec," undermined this traditional explanation, and posited a new one which maintained that the controversy between the rival Montréal avant-gardes was due to a collision of the ideologies of "contestation" and "rattrapage".¹¹ Gagnon's analysis, while currently the prevailing one, is problematic, however, for although it claims to place the aesthetic debate within the matrix of history, the specific questions of the artistic and political history of the late 1940's are overlooked, and ahistorical conclusions substituted in their place. Moreover, although Gagnon regards the Prisme d'Yeux-Automatiste confrontation as grounded in ideology, he per-



(1) Alfred PELLAN, *L'Homme à grave*, ink on paper, 29.8 x 22.8 cm., coll.: Musée du Québec. (Photo: Musée du Québec)



(2) Paul-Émile BORDUAS, 7.48 or **objets totémiques** 1948, oil, 55.8 x 46.9 cm, coll.: Mme Vianney Décarie. (Photo: Yvan Boulerice)

ceives only the manifestoes of the competing vanguards to be ideological, while their paintings are excluded from the parameters of ideology; he does not explain why the written word is permeable to ideology, but the painted image is not. The problems with which this paper will deal, therefore, are those which Canadian art history has ignored: the examination of the verbal and visual ideologies¹² of the competing Montréal avant-gardes, and the historical factors which shaped them.

The *Prisme d'Yeux* and the Automatistes first clashed openly at the annual meeting of the Contemporary Arts Society (C.A.S.),¹³ which had functioned as the official representative of modern art in Québec since its founding in 1939. At the February 9 meeting, Borduas was elected President, despite opposition from the *Prisme d'Yeux*, for as Borduas later wrote to Luc Choquette, "Il y a d'ailleurs trois ans que je contrôle la majorité des voix à la C.A.S."¹⁴ Alledging that Borduas' accession to power threatened the pluralist character of the C.A.S. (and along with it, freedom) several members of the *Prisme d'Yeux* withdrew, prompting Borduas' resignation as well;¹⁵ like the *Prisme d'Yeux*, he alleged that authentic liberty was no longer tenable within the C.A.S. As John Lyman, the founder and past President of the Society later noted, "aesthetic liberty... became the instrument of sectarian contention."¹⁶

The tactics of the avant-garde¹⁷ partially explain why Borduas suddenly repudiated the Society whose presidency he had so recently sought and secured. By holding its inaugural exhibition on February 4,¹⁸ and breaking its ties with the C.A.S. barely a week later, the *Prisme d'Yeux* defined itself as the newest and most autonomous avant-garde in Montréal, a position previously occupied by the Automatistes alone.¹⁹ Faced with a new, distinct avant-garde which labelled the Automatiste dominated C.A.S. anathema to freedom, Borduas was compelled to repudiate the Society if he was to salvage the Automatiste's reputation as the penultimate avant-garde. Borduas himself noted a year later that the Automatistes needed to define themselves in opposition to both the C.A.S. and the *Prisme d'Yeux* in order to be regarded as the most "progressive" wing of the Montréal artistic hierarchy: "In short, the left and the right of the contemporary movement — positions which the public does not differentiate — had to separate out."²⁰

The polarization of "left" and "right" occurred over the issue freedom, at the heart of both the C.A.S. confrontation and the manifestoes printed by the *Prisme d'Yeux* and the Automatistes in 1948. The *Prisme d'Yeux* released its manifesto at its inaugural exhibition in February and again at its second exhibition in May.²¹ This brief document associates apoliticism with aesthetic freedom:

We seek a painting freed from all accident of time and place, and of restrictive ideology; and conceived without interference of literary, political, philosophical, or other influences which can adulterate its expression and sully its purity.²²

The delineation of aesthetic freedom as a function of art disentangled from political concerns, and as a return to the halcyon era of art for art's sake, affords striking parallels with that of liberal Quebec intellectuals²³ who characterized apolitical freedom as the ultimate goal of culture. Maurice Blain, for example, casts freedom as the object and most laudable product of literature, while insisting that cultural freedom remain immune from the solicitations of politics:

Il ne s'agit plus... d'une acceptation de consigne, ou du service d'une formation politique... La vocation réelle de l'écrivain nous apparaît comme un effort de dépassement et de libération.²⁴

Adamant that art be divorced from politics, liberal francophone intellectuals were also immersed in the campaign against communism, a major issue of the provincial election campaign of 1948.²⁵ Communism was construed as hostile to cultural, political and personal freedom; Guy Cormier summarized the position of francophone liberals when he declared, "nous ne pouvons suivre Marx. Notre conscience y répugne, et qui plus est notre intelligence y répugne... L'International russe [a un] caractère fasciste."²⁶ Ignoring the expressly political complexion of the anti-communist debate, writers who advocated a strict separation of art and politics frequently infused cultural commentaries with anti-communist sentiments, as is revealed in a book review in *Le Quartier Latin*, the student newspaper of the Université de Montréal:

Le Parti immuable... avance, recule; commande, décommande; récompense, tue; tue, récompense... Le Parti est alors apparu sous son vrai jour, c'est-à-dire: une individuation despotique et orgueilleuse.²⁷

Thus, while the fusion of politics and art signified the sacrifice of aesthetic freedom, the conflation of anti-communism and culture did not.

The *Prisme d'Yeux* manifesto also insists that the toleration of diversity secures liberation. Like the C.A.S.,²⁸ the *Prisme d'Yeux* welcomed "paths which take opposite directions, but which, like night and day, fire and water, are all equally possible and true."²⁹ The *Prisme d'Yeux*, therefore, regarded commitment to a single set of aesthetic precepts, notably Automatism and academicism, as the antithesis of freedom, but perceived acceptance of contradictory ones as the guarantor of freedom.³⁰ Eclecticism, however, while superficially motivated by the desire to remain unimpeded by the claims of a specific artistic or political group, and characterized by a refusal to adopt a specific position on various issues, did in itself actually denote a position taken in 1948: through their eloquent silences, the *Prisme d'Yeux* inadvertently

aligned itself with a group having identifiable political and cultural biases, namely francophone liberalism.

The twin principles of non-committal apoliticism associated with anti-communism and the attempted reconciliation of contradictions as means to achieve freedom, define the position of francophone liberals during the 1948 provincial election. Contemptuous of the reactionary social policies and notorious corruption of the incumbent Premier, Maurice Duplessis, these intellectuals nevertheless reluctantly supported him³¹ on the key issues of anti-communism and its corollary in the '48 campaign, provincial autonomy³²; liberals agreed with Duplessis' belief that "[la centralisation est] la mère du communisme, ce qui nous montre la nécessité de l'autonomie de la province."³³

Despite their assertions that art be divorced from politics, both the *Prisme d'Yeux* and liberal intellectuals nevertheless acknowledged that the artist remained wedded to political realities, wittingly or not. Madeleine Gariépy, the art critic for *Notre Temps*, inserted the following comment in a review praising art which appeared devoid of specific meaning, but which possessed a ubiquitous, albeit nebulous, "richesse de fond".³⁴

[La peinture] est l'expression plastique d'une époque troublée et inquiète où l'homme se trouve aux prises avec des problèmes nouveaux et difficiles.³⁵

Similarly, while condemning political content in painting, Pellan noted that "Art should be a healthy by-product of society... The great artist echoes the dominating social accents of his age."³⁶ Pellan was thus suspended between the necessity of apoliticism to ensure aesthetic freedom and the desire to be 'of his time.' The recognition that purely representational art was bankrupt, and that complete abstraction would alienate his public, further complicated the artist's plight, especially one like Pellan who maintained a populist approach to art: "I myself, want to paint for people."³⁷ How then, does *L'homme A grave* address these antipodal demands, and what do these contradictions and Pellan's attempted reconciliation of them reveal about the aesthetic ideology of the work?

L'homme A grave is one of a series of drawings which Pellan executed in 1948, inspired by a reading of "Volontairement," from Paul Éluard's *Capitale de la Douleur*.³⁸ The punning title of the work is typically surrealist; and characteristic of Pellan's antipathy towards commitment to a single position, as it has several alternate meanings: the first rate man engraves, the man engraves, the serious man, the heavy man, the man is aggravated. When considered simultaneously, these epithets evoke the position of the artist in 1948, subject to a series of pressures, both artistic and social, which Pellan acutely felt. According to Reesa Greenberg,

Pellan deliberately changed the titles [of the drawings inspired by *Capitale de la Douleur*] in an attempt to obscure their source, in response to the current anticommunist climate in Quebec... A non-communist, Pellan preferred not to have his art interpreted on the basis of a political affiliation with the most vocal European communist Surrealist, Éluard, nor for that matter with the Montreal *Automatistes*.³⁹

Considering the tension existing between Pellan and Borduas, in 1948, Pellan's self-censorship on the surrealist source of the series of drawings to which *L'homme A grave* belongs, is comprehensible as an avant-garde tactic of self-definition in contradistinction to another rival avant-garde. Pellan's fear of being regarded as a communist through affiliation with Éluard, however, is more problematic than he and Greenberg suggest.

Whatever Éluard's subsequent political convictions⁴⁰ and their influence on his poetry, *Capitale de la Douleur* owes its allegiances to surrealism, not communism; its introspective, individualistic and often hermetic qualities were, in fact, precisely those which caused the Parti Communiste Français (P.C.F.) to regard the Surrealists as the poets of the alienated but politically naive and self-indulgent bourgeois intelligentsia.⁴¹ The lack of political consciousness and the absence of communist ideas in *Capitale de la Douleur* is scarcely surprising considering Éluard's attitude towards the P.C.F. at the time he wrote it: in 1926, Éluard, like several other Parisian Surrealists, was flirting with the notion of collaborating with the P.C.F. in fomenting revolution, but the flirtation remained an idealistic one, and did not solidify into a wholehearted acceptance of either the cultural or political policies of the P.C.F.⁴²

While the non-communist tenor of *Capitale de la Douleur* and the fact that it was written prior to Éluard's active involvement with the P.C.F. make it difficult to understand Pellan's anxiety about being regarded as a communist through affiliation with it, the status of Éluard among Québec's critics in 1948 adds further dimensions to this problem. Only the most conservative critics judged Éluard as a specifically communist writer⁴³; these critics, however, were also those who had castigated Pellan's art as "bolchevistic" because of its similarity to the modern art of France, which they regarded in an apocalyptic light as inherently atheistic and communistic⁴⁴. It is therefore unlikely that Pellan avoided mentioning the influence of Éluard on his art for fear of antagonizing these hysterically anti-modernist critics, who vilified his work even without knowing of the Éluard connection. Among Québec's liberal literati, Pellan's sympathetic audience, however, Éluard was extremely popular, and his allegiance to the P.C.F. was overlooked. Liberal intel-

lectuals placed Éluard in the pantheon of twentieth-century French culture, along with many School of Paris artists (several with communist connections) who Pellán quite overtly imitated and for whom he often expressed admiration.⁴⁵ Jean-Marc Léger's article on surrealism in *Notre Temps* is characteristic of the image of Éluard which liberal intellectuals presented to their public:

[Le surréalisme]... renfermait des éléments véritablement constructifs et... il répondait à un besoin. Comment expliquer, autrement, l'étendue et la profondeur de son succès et qu'il ait pu rallier des artistes aussi authentiques qu'un Éluard, un Aragon, un Ivan Goll (chez les poètes), qu'un Miro, un Masson et, pour un temps, un Fernand Léger (chez les peintres).⁴⁶

Aware of Éluard's political connections, Quebec liberals avoided mentioning them in their panegyrics on him, for despite their cultural liberalism, their fealty to the adamantly anti-communist political status quo led them to omit such details as Éluard's membership in the P.C.F. Nevertheless, because it was the liberals of Québec who formed Pellán's audience, his refusal to acknowledge Éluard as the source of his inspiration for his 1948 drawings on the grounds that it would jeopardize his non-communist status, remains somewhat tenuous.

Pellán's attempt to conceal the connections between his art and *Capitale de la Douleur* does become comprehensible when one recalls the *Prisme d'Yeux* manifesto's edict against "the interference of literature... which can adulterate its [art's] expression and sully its purity."⁴⁷ Pellán's artistic output of 1948 was entirely inspired by literature, and therefore violated the aesthetic code articulated in the *Prisme d'Yeux* manifesto; public admission of this fact would have severely compromised both his own credibility and that of the *Prisme d'Yeux*. Moreover, the *Prisme d'Yeux*'s vilification of art with literary connections must be seen as a subtle thrust against the Automatistes, who had often been accused of producing overly "literary" art, a charge motivated by the fanciful titles which many of them gave to their paintings, and by the fact that automatism was a technique first used by surrealist writers.⁴⁸ By using poetry as a source of artistic inspiration, Pellán transgressed a major article of faith of the *Prisme d'Yeux* manifesto, but by obscuring this fact, he could nevertheless appear to uphold its principles and still measure his distance from the "literary" Automatistes. That Pellán's career in 1948 was so fraught with contradictions is not necessarily an indication of hypocrisy on his part, but rather is an example of his propensity to regard dichotomies as natural, and the reconciliation of them as a bid for aesthetic freedom.

Both the title and figurative content of *L'homme A grave* refer to graphic art. The central image of the work may be read as an emblem of the graphic artist: a hand grips an etcher's stylus and inscribes an encoded message on a plate. In 1948, graphics occupied a prominent position in the lives of the Prisme d'Yeux artists, for they were working on *Les Ateliers des Arts Graphiques*, a magazine jointly sponsored by the Ecole des Arts Graphiques de Montréal and the provincial Ministère du Bien-Être Social et de la Jeunesse.⁴⁹ Regarded as avant-garde within Québec, but by the English press and the Automatistes as passé,⁵⁰ *Les Ateliers* repeats the main tenets of francophone liberalism and the preoccupations of the Prisme d'Yeux.

In an article in *Les Ateliers*, Jacques de Tonnancour, the principal author of the Prisme d'Yeux manifesto, advances graphics as the bridge between the "old" and the "new," associating graphics with tradition and any style post-dating Cézanne with modernity.⁵¹ In *L'homme A grave*, the references to graphics and their expression through modernist styles function as a visual analogue of de Tonnancour's perception of the role of graphics in the visual arts. Pellán's synthesis of two main branches of the School of Paris, cubism and surrealism, also relates to the old/new dialectic.⁵² By 1948, cubism occupied a position of respectability within the aesthetic cosmos of Québec; by virtue of its respectability, it had lost its avant-garde, and hence, aggressively modern allure.⁵³ In contrast, surrealism continued to be viewed as a distinctively modern adjunct of contemporary art;⁵⁴ its execration by conservative critics only enhanced its veneer of novelty.⁵⁵ Through allusions to the old and the new, the figurative and stylistic components of *L'homme A grave* appear as a fulfillment of the criterion of aesthetic freedom — duality — celebrated in the Prisme d'Yeux manifesto: "Prisme d'Yeux rallies to the oldest theory of art... to that of the cave man [and] to the most contemporary of 20th century man."⁵⁶

The reconciliation of both the distant and recent past with the onrushing present also formed a dominant motif of liberal anti-communist thought. Linking the rural, pre-war economy of the province with tradition, and the urban, industrialized post-war economy (and its concomitant problems) with the present,⁵⁷ liberal intellectuals contended that communism would swallow up the urban and working poor, unless the government rectified some of the new problems faced by them; mild social reforms would accomplish this goal, while leaving the essentials of the political structure intact.⁵⁸

In *L'homme A grave*, the combination of references to graphics and both traditional and avant-garde modernist styles, elements which betokened the old and the new, is a visual reworking of the ideology of francophone liberalism, which simultaneously insisted on its claims to the present and future by presenting itself as modern,⁵⁹ but which established the validity of those claims by remaining firmly tied to the values of the status quo; likewise, liberals asserted that freedom could

only be preserved by successfully amalgamating the old and the new, without damaging any of the old assumptions.

While the figure of the graphic artist dominates *L'homme A grave*, another, smaller, inverted man appears on the right hand side of the work, beyond the rectilinear forms evocative of a wall. Reference to the poem which inspired the drawing and to the title of the work itself suggests this figure represents the public persona of the artist. Éluard's poem, "Volontairement", deals with the relationship between the private, creative existence of an artist and his life in the "outside" world:

Aveugle maladroit, ignorant et léger
Aujourd'hui pour oublier,
Le mois prochain pour dessiner
Les coins de la rue, les allées à perte de vue
Je les imite pour m'étendre
Dans une nuit profonde et large de mon âge.⁶⁰

Similarly, *L'homme A grave* refers to "l'homme" not "les hommes" suggesting that the drawing, like the poem, deals with two different incarnations of a single individual, the artist.

The business suit, hat, and tie of the inverted man intimate that he represents the public persona of the artist. The wall separating the artist at work in the studio from his existence in the outside world reproduces the liberal prescription for aesthetic freedom: liberals contended for the autonomy of art, and alleged that if it were jeopardized, it would be pressed into the service of political propaganda, and more specifically, communist propaganda.

The treatment of the two figures' eyes reinforces the dichotomy between the public and the private, the social and the artistic: those of the inverted man are hypnotically wide, while those of the artist are stitched shut. However, the schematic dilated eyes of the public self also appear in the grid structure emerging from the interior of the artist's head, implying that while he must literally shut his eyes to the outside world, the imprint of what is seen beyond the studio can never be entirely effaced.

In addition to the eyes which are sewn together, other images of control and silence appear in *L'homme A grave*: the lips of the artist are firmly pressed together, the encoded message on the plate remains incomplete, the sheaf of papers (or are they posters, already tacked up?) remain blank, walls proliferate around the hand and plate, constraining them, and the inverted man's limbs are contorted, as if pulled by the invisible strings of a marionetteer. Themes of order and control also threaded liberal anti-communist rhetoric; liberal intellectuals maintained that controls must be placed on communism in order to preserve the democratic freedom they perceived existing in Québec. When, for example, Duplessis invoked the Padlock Law⁶¹ to close the communist

newspaper *Combat* in February 1948, liberals rallied to defend him from the criticism of both the English press and federal Liberal politicians. An editorial in *Le Devoir*, the influential Montréal daily and locus of liberal sentiments, articulates the liberal position on Duplessis' actions:

Une législation pour empêcher la diffusion du communisme est donc chose légitime. Ceux qui revendiquent la liberté de la presse à ce sujet pourraient aussi bien invoquer la liberté du commerce en faveur des trafiquants de narcotiques.⁶²

The implications of Pellan's work communicates a similar ideological construct which conflates freedom and control: the artist is free because he is immune from the political coercions of the outside world, but also free because his freedom is subject to a multiplicity of controls. Freedom, therefore, is gained through the suppression of freedom.

Pellan's dependence on surrealist imagery and cubist techniques also relates to the correlated concepts of freedom and control; both Pellan and his critics perceived surrealism as evidence of spontaneity, while cubism inferred control. Pellan believed that "surrealism has added to the richness of the artist's raw material. That material should still be filtered through the conscious mind."⁶³ He further subscribed to the "use of the new material of deliberate free-association and the spontaneous sub-conscious within a classical framework,"⁶⁴ a framework identified with cubism. Critics praised this conjunction of opposing tendencies; in a highly positive review of the *Prisme d'Yeux*'s second exhibition, Madeleine Gariépy commented.

*Prisme d'Yeux, c'est-à-dire des regards différents jetés sur des réalités diverses dans une lumière qui est autre. Prisme d'Yeux, symbole plastique de la diversité des expériences humaines et des transpositions multiples qu'elles donnent dans le domaine de l'art.*⁶⁵

In contrast, art lacking the harmonious integration of the liberated and the ordered engendered cultural chaos and tyranny, effects associated with communism in liberal polemics,⁶⁶ Art which appeared to combat these effects through a celebration of the harmonious, controlled and free, concepts associated with liberal democracy, should be supported. As one critic noted in a laudatory review of a *Prisme d'Yeux* artist,

Aujourd'hui, comme autrefois, l'Art c'est l'ordre, l'équilibre, l'harmonie. Il faudra toujours lutter contre l'obscurité, le désordre, l'incohérence... qui sèment la confusion dans les esprits.⁶⁷

For liberal francophone intellectuals, the works of Pellan and the formation of the *Prisme d'Yeux* symbolized the vitality of Québec's culture. While modern in a limited and general sense, *L'homme A grave* did not challenge any of the aesthetic norms previously made acceptable by the C.A.S.; commented one anonymous critic in *Le Canada*, "un nouveau mouvement est né... Rien de nouveau."⁶⁸ Similarly, the defenders of the *Prisme d'Yeux* did not seriously oppose any of the political or cultural positions of the status quo, but instead defined and codified them. Consequently, works such as *L'homme A grave* were perceived by the status quo as a testament to the supremacy of the culture arbitrated by them, and to the validity of the variant of freedom on which it was theoretically based. With the advent of the *Prisme d'Yeux*, Québec's intellectuals could proudly declare:

Ces sociétés, il en faut applaudir l'éclosion. Elles sont le signe de notre santé intellectuelle et elles ont, dans notre culture, un rôle de premier plan à jouer: celui de répandre la connaissance de l'art, d'en favoriser l'appréciation et de collaborer à la création d'un commun langage de vision... Nos yeux sont fixés sur eux, amicaux et expectatifs.⁶⁹

Like the *Prisme d'Yeux*, the Automatistes repudiated the incursions of politics into art. Moreover, in their manifesto, *Refus Global*,⁷⁰ they expressly denounced the right and the left as forces against freedom:

Friends of the present regime suspect we support the Revolution. Friends of the Revolution say we protest what now exists but only to transform and not to displace it. The United States, Russia, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain: sharp-fanged inheritors of a single decalogue.⁷¹

As art historians have frequently pointed out, the Automatistes' formulation of freedom as the fruit of the eradication of communism and conservatism, antagonized francophone liberals.⁷² While such critics as Laurendeau and Pelletier offered tepid support for the *Refus Global's* critique of social and religious abuses, they ultimately vilified the group for failing to countenance disparate ideologies, their ultimate criterion of freedom:

Car M. Borduas vaticane comme un prophète avec un mépris total pour toute démonstration et preuve rationnelle... Voilà qui tend à nous fixer dans un climat sectaire... ce dogmatisme nouvelle manière ressemble trop à celui que l'auteur condamne. Voilà le comble de la loufoquerie dangereuse.⁷³

The hostile reception given the *Refus Global* within Québec, however, was also a function of a fact uniterated by the liberal francophone press: although the manifesto's vociferous denunciation of communism conformed with a fundamental tenet of liberalism, its attack on other, equally important components of liberalism was the real motivation for liberal condemnation of the manifesto.

While francophone liberals inveighed against the *Refus Global* as too dogmatically polemical and as an effrontery to universal truths, anglophone liberals lionized it.⁷⁴ The state of English Canadian liberalism in 1948 largely explains why it supported this group of French-speaking artists. To be a liberal in post-war English Canada signified a repudiation of both the radical left and the reactionary right; Lester Pearson described the battle which liberals perceived themselves to be fighting in 1948;

it is wherever free men are struggling against totalitarian tyranny of right or left. It may run through the middle of our own cities, or it may be on the crest of the remotest mountain.⁷⁵

The war on the right was to be waged against Duplessis, regarded by anglophone liberals as the incarnation of corrupt conservatism.⁷⁶ Significantly, it was the Automatistes' apparent denunciation of the Québec status quo and Duplessist values which secured their esteem among English Canadian liberals. In a review of the *Refus Global* in the federally funded periodical, *Canadian Art*,⁷⁷ Donald Buchanan hailed the Automatistes for fighting forces of oppression within Québec:

'automatisme' is an attempt by a group of Quebec artists to throw off the strait-jacket of... restrictions in education and culture and to create for themselves something new.⁷⁸

Anglophone liberals' hostility towards Duplessis' reactionary nationalism, and their concomitant support for a fully bicultural federal state also predisposed them to sympathize with the Automatistes' condemnation of that nationalist cultural conditioning which kept them "French and Catholic by resistance to the conquerer, by an irrational attachment to the past."⁷⁹ The sudden interest of anglophone liberals in the culture of Québec, motivated by subscription to a federalist biculturalism which was most receptive to the new, anti-traditionalist culture of Québec,⁸⁰ is apparent in the January-February 1948 issue of *Canadian Art*, a special issue devoted to the art of Québec. Significantly, little mention is made of Pellán and other *Prisme d'Yeux* artists, whereas its only article on an individual group of artists, and the only one in French in an otherwise uniformly English periodical, deals with the Automatistes.⁸¹

The Automatistes' antagonism towards the status quo *per se* responded to another area of liberal thought: anticommunism.⁸² To anglophone liberals, hostility towards the status quo symbolized the vitality of Western-style freedom, in contrast to communist regimes where dissent was not tolerated:

Democracy does not mean preservation of the status quo... We must demonstrate by deeds and not merely by words that democracy is a more dynamic, humanitarian creed than communism.⁸³

While hostility towards the left and right was perceived as a manifestation of cultural liberation by anglophone liberals, they simultaneously defended the notion of political contentless art. "Political content" was generally understood as Marxist content:

The age of radicalism is happily ended... Liberals no longer measure literary values by the yardstick of political orthodoxy... They are disenchanted but free... Marxist categories are not applicable in the realm of literary values.⁸⁴

The Automatistes' denunciation of politically involved art, and their rejection of political extremes parallels this prescription for aesthetic freedom.

While the Automatistes denounced partisan politics as ultimately oppressive, they did not relinquish the idea of a political morality, however nebulous. Political morality, insofar as it was defined, signified commitment to the overturning of "the inexorable regression of collective moral power," achieved by breaking with "all conventions of society," and characterized by a refusal to "remain silent."⁸⁵ The decisive act of rupture was the first step in artistic emancipation, as Leduc noted in a letter to Borduas regarding his break with the C.A.S.:

L'attitude décisive que vous avez prise vis-à-vis de la Société d'art contemporain et les déchirements qu'elle a pu entraîner apparaissent comme le prélude à une série de ruptures libératrices dont nous nous réjouissons et qui s'annoncent dans un avenir rapproché.⁸⁶

Similarly, in his letter of resignation from the C.A.S., Borduas indicts Maurice Gagnon for his "complète nullité dans la lutte engagée." Couched in the language of existentialism, the Automatistes linked commitment, the decisive act, and freedom itself, links which the *Prisme d'Yeux* sought to deny.

The Automatistes' insistence on freedom as a challenging moral problem, and their perception of the necessity of clinging to a political morality, parallels the tone of anglophone liberal anti-communist rhetoric. English liberals believed that if Western culture was to remain

immune from politics, it was imperative to wage a moral war against communism on all fronts, as apolitical culture was possible only in a liberal democratic society. The specifically moral rather than partisan tone of the liberal anti-communist crusade is revealed in a speech made by Saint-Laurent in April 1948:

We must constantly remember that the union of the free world... will possess overwhelming strength only if it is based on moral as well as material force; if its citizens are bound together not merely by a hatred of communism, but by their love of free democracy.⁸⁷

The Automatistes also perceived the defence of freedom as an ineluctable imperative at a time when "the H hour of total sacrifice is upon us."⁸⁸ Similarly, anglophone liberals defined freedom as a response to both domestic communism and the spectre of a nuclear finale to the Cold War. These critics lauded Borduas for creating what they perceived as an appropriate aesthetic response to the crisis of freedom in the Cold War; Stuart Keate, for example, commented in *Time* magazine that Borduas and the Automatistes embraced "a new civilization and an atomic age art."⁸⁹ In 1948, the "atomic age" denoted not only the advent of the nuclear bomb, but also the Cold War, and hence, for anglophone liberals, the anti-communist struggle. The social significance of art in the Cold War world was candidly remarked upon by a writer for *Canadian Business*:

...socialism is constantly on the offensive. This attack can be met only by... telling something of what free enterprise has done for this country... using cultural materials.⁹⁰

Anglophone liberals expected art to respond to the crisis of communism without renouncing its claims to apoliticism; they also perceived surrealism as a logical response to global political tensions related to the Cold War:

Much of the current anxiety... is no doubt caused by the world's increasing destructive potential... the implications of the destructive deployment of the U235... [does] not contribute to our sense of security in a world where actual warfare may only be held in abeyance... These factors... form the background, conscious and unconscious for painters of today. ...They do influence this expression... There is an increasing interest in non-objective and surrealist abstraction... His [the artist's] involvement is concerned with exploring the concepts of art forms and stating them in the audacious terms of today.⁹¹

Such pessimism, and its effect on art, was also shared by the Automatistes:

Two world wars have been necessary to bring us to a recognition of this absurd state. The terror of the third will be conclusive.⁹²

Informed by the cataclysms of the world of which they were a part, the Automatistes believed that painting must respond to this world, yet remain detached from its political realities; furthermore, they believed that only automatism could articulate freedom in the face of the extremities of the political situation:

Il est évident que ces formes peintes correspondent à des désirs qui ne peuvent s'exprimer dans les cadres de la société actuelle.⁹³

What then, does *Objet Totémique* do with such a conception of freedom?

First, it abjures those traditions which the Automatistes regarded as loaded with political connotations. For them, figurative or anecdotal art, whether fused with modernist styles or not, had been corrupted by the left. Commenting on social realism, Pierre Gauvreau stated:

Il s'accommode facilement de toutes les exploitations techniques selon le stage d'évolution du pays où il est pratiqué: en URSS, il se résume au plus grossier trompe-l'oeil porteur d'anecdotes édifiantes; en France, il adopte volontiers un aspect plus évolué qu'il exploite à des fins politiques en restaurant l'anecdote édifiante dans le cubisme, le fauvisme, etc.⁹⁴

Also incompatible with genuine aesthetic freedom was cubism, not only because it was a style so closely associated with the *Prisme d'Yeux*, but also because it had been co-opted by both the right and the left for political purposes. In a letter to *Le Canada*, Riopelle stated:

Ne voit-on pas les peintres des ateliers d'art sacré aussi bien que les peintres ralliés aux partis politiques de gauche, utiliser chacun de leur côté les découvertes cubistes à des fins de propagande?⁹⁵

The Automatistes' censure of the traditions of recent artistic history⁹⁶ corresponds to the anglophone liberal polarization of aesthetic freedom and tradition:

The...prerequisite for true self-expression is freedom from tradition... [and] the obligations imposed by social conventions and social consciousness.⁹⁷

For Borduas, only superrational automatism could express freedom without entailing its sacrifice to political norms, as it was dependent on the emotional and unconscious realms of man which he regarded as quintessentially apolitical.⁹⁸ In *Objet Totémique*, the loose brushstroke, lack of finish, and abstract forms attest to Borduas' attempt to allow the unconscious mind to prevail. To English liberals, the exploration of psychological reality by Western artists affirmed the existence of the liberty uniquely enjoyed by the liberated artist in a liberal society. Furthermore, such artists epitomized the essence of aesthetic excellence, defined by one critic as belonging to:

one who has achieved radical freedom from social restraint and conventional order, who has penetrated the walls protecting our world of reality and has there, in the realm of dreams and somnambulistic phantasy, encountered the unconscious springs of our imagery.⁹⁹

Despite the spontaneous brushstroke, the forms of *Objet Totémique* are harmoniously organized into a series of horizontal and vertical elements which are played off against one another to produce an image of stability. The formal structure of the work implies that the unfettered psyche produces forms which though rough hewn, coalesce into an ordered and integrated whole; it thus functions as a visual expression of Borduas' conviction that psychological liberation could produce a new, harmonious social order in which "man is freed from chains to realize a plenitude of individual gifts."¹⁰⁰ Anglophone liberals also accorded psychological freedom a pre-eminent role to play in the restructuring of the post-war world; as the literary critic, Charles Glicksberg noted, "The revolution... must take place within the heart. It is man who must be transformed."¹⁰¹ The new credo of the liberated psyche, however, contained political undercurrents for English liberal intellectuals, those disenchanted Marxists who had lived in political limbo since "confessing their past sins"¹⁰² of Marxist dalliance in the 1930's. For them, the "revolution of the heart and psyche"¹⁰³ not only appeared as a means of attacking the old enemy, the right, but also the new enemy, the left:

Freudianism convinces man that the effort to establish a more humane world order will no longer be achieved by a bloody class war. Dictatorships of the left and the right stand accursed in the eyes of all free men.¹⁰⁴

Such works as *Objet Totémique*, however, were not viewed by Borduas as simply nebulous commentaries on aesthetic and social freedom, but as containers of a specific set of meanings, discernible through an analysis of their titles and forms.¹⁰⁵ *Objet Totémique* suggests connections with primitive, ritualistic art, and particularly with the totem poles of the Northwest Coast Indians of British Columbia.¹⁰⁶ The vertical elements of the work, with their multi-faceted planes of colour, may

indeed be read as a carved pole, while the horizontal bands at the left and right evoke rippled sand of a beach in the distance. In the late 1940's anglophone critics perceived the conjunction of avant-garde and primitive art as a symbol of the artist's reaction against the contemporary world and as a means for probing the unconscious:

If there is any modern art to which... ['modern primitivism'] might apply... it is to be found when the artist's responses to a situation in his own world reproduces in its essentials the attitude of the primitive to his; when that is, an emotional conviction so profound, so vital, that the conscious intellect has no chance to interfere.¹⁰⁷

Anglophone critics considered both primitivism and spontaneous, unconscious content in art as evidence of the artist's ferocious need to maintain and acquire personal and aesthetic freedom by delving into the collective unconscious and there abutting its uncorrupted freedom. At the same time, however, they also saw these characteristics as disinterested reactions to the contemporary political situation, and expected this art which they regarded as inherently apolitical to lead society out of the current political morass:

Living in a world that seems more fettered and crippling than ever before... [we] are feeling the urgent need of an art that is symbolic in its true sense, that can be for us the talisman of a new faith, without which there can be no will to live.¹⁰⁸

While the assimilation of the new canons of the primitive and unconscious in *Objet Totémique* fulfill Borduas' desire to escape the corrupted traditions of both figuration and cubism, reminiscences of these traditions still prevail in it. The space existing in *Objet Totémique* is an emphatically cubist one, while the easily deciphered forms indicate that figuration has not been completely forsaken. Both Borduas and his critics avoided the apprehension of such incongruities, thereby evading the troubling conclusion that his art was not as radically modern and apolitical as it superficially appeared, precisely because of the presence of those traditions which he regarded as hopelessly retardaire and politically potent: figuration and cubism.

Anglophone liberals were equally inconsistent in their assessment of the position of freedom in the post-war world. While condemning partisan politics, they called for an "end to ideology"¹⁰⁹ only in order to more thoroughly combat communism. Furthermore, they consistently aligned themselves with the policies of the federal Liberal party and Liberal government, while disavowing any specific partisan position. When these intellectuals upheld Borduas and his art as exemplars of universal freedom, therefore, they were actually only celebrating their

own definition of freedom, the liberal one, spelled with both an upper and lower case "l"; in Borduas, anglophone liberal intellectuals perceived a reflection of themselves, hostile to the left and the right, faithful only to freedom itself:

...that such thoughts should have been put thus directly on paper by a group of artists [in the *Refus Global*] does prove what diverse stirrings, sometimes direct and clear, sometimes confused and incoherent do exist in French Canada today. Let us hope that such freedom of thought will not be crushed out too arbitrarily.¹¹⁰

In conclusion, in 1948, the fight for freedom was simultaneously aesthetic and political, with the two realms interpenetrating one another. Catalyzed by Cold War politics, the schism between French- and English-Canadian liberalism widened over the definition of freedom, a division which informed the verbal and visual ideologies of the Montréal avant-garde. The *Prisme d'Yeux*, in eclectically assimilating everything, and, as its name implies, refracting everything, articulated the major tenets of Québec liberalism; in contrast, the Automatistes, in their "refus global" rejected everything connected with the liberalism of Québec's intellectuals, but in so doing became unexpectedly aligned with the position of anglophone liberalism. By accepting everything and rejecting everything, the *Prisme d'Yeux* and the Automatistes not only came to blows with one another, but also, despite their avant-garde facades, aligned themselves with the status quo, albeit different and contending ones.

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Notes:

- 1 Prisme d'Yeux manifesto (untitled), cited by Guy ROBERT in *Pellán, His Life and His Art*. trans. George LACH (Montréal: Éditions du Centre de Psychologie et Pédagogie, 1963), p. 49, 51.
- 2 *Refus Global* in *Paul Émile Borduas: Écrits/Writings 1942-1958*, ed. François-Marc GAGNON and trans. Dennis YOUNG (Halifax and New York: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1978), p. 54.
- 3 "Mercure" (pseud.), "L'actualité: Les grandes amitiés," *Le Devoir*, 5 October 1948, p. 1.
- 4 "Avant-garde" is usually used to conjure up an image of a group of artists who "[break] through all the confines, fly on ahead of the mass of their contemporaries... [They] can never be turned into establishment figures... The function of the avant-garde is to stretch the human mind and spirit, to pull man in new and unsuspected directions..." (Douglas COOPER, "Establishment and Avant-garde," *Times Literary Supplement* (London), 3 September 1964, p. 823). Unlike Cooper and most other chroniclers of "avant-garde" art, I do not use "avant-garde" in a qualitative sense; instead, I use the term to denote two groups of artists working in Montréal in 1948 that defined themselves *as groups* by giving themselves particular names (the Automatistes and the Prisme d'Yeux), issuing manifestoes, and exhibiting together under the group's banner; that aligned themselves with modernity; and that coalesced out of their members' similar aesthetic and political goals, in addition to personal and professional links.
 Until 1948, the Montréal avant-garde had presented a unified public front via the Contemporary Arts Society; nevertheless, within the Society there had been previous international disagreements, but these were mild compared to the degree of hostility which erupted within it in 1948. On conflicts within the C.A.S. prior to 1948, see: Claude GAUVREAU, "Révolution à la Société d'Art Contemporain," *Le Quartier Latin*, 3 December 1946, pp. 4-5; Claude GAUVREAU, "L'épopée automatiste vue par un cyclope," *La Barre du Jour* no. 17 (January-August 1969) pp. 48-96; Lise PERREAULT, *La Société d'Art Contemporain* (M.A. Thesis, Université de Montréal, 1975); Bernard TEYSSEDER, "Fernand Leduc, Peintre et Théoricien du Surréalisme à Montréal," *La Barre du Jour* no. 17 (January-August 1969) pp. 224-270; Christopher VARLEY, *The Contemporary Arts Society: Montreal, 1939-1948* (Edmonton: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1980).
- 5 The founding members of the Prisme d'Yeux were: Louis Archambault, Paul Beaulieu, Léon Bellefleur, Jean Benoît, Albert Dumouchel, Gabriel Filion, Pierre Garneau, Arthur Gladu, Lucien Morin, Mimi Parent, Alfred Pellán, Jeanne Rhéaume, Goodridge Roberts, Jacques de Tonnancour, Rolland Truchon and Gordon Webber. Although the manifesto of the group pointedly professes a desire to remain leaderless, Pellán was regarded as its informal leader by the press, especially as many members of the Prisme d'Yeux had been or were his students at the École des Beaux-Arts.
- 6 Members of the Automatistes who signed the *Refus Global* were: Magdeleine Arbour, Marcel Barbeau, Paul-Émile Borduas, Bruno Cormier, Marcelle Ferron, Claude Gauvreau, Pierre Gauvreau, Muriel Guibault, Fernand Leduc, Thérèse Leduc, Jean-Paul Mousseau, Maurice Perron, Louise Renaud, Françoise Riopelle, Jean-Paul Riopelle, and Françoise Sullivan. Although Borduas was never declared the official leader of the group, he functioned as its *de facto* head, because of his senior age and prestige, and because he had taught many of the Automatistes at the École du Meuble.
- 7 The term "ideology" raises certain difficulties given the current debate on its meaning and application to art history currently being carried out by T.J. Clark, N. Hadjinicolaou, and O.K. Werckmeister, among others. This paper is dependent on the definition provided by CLARK in "Preliminary Arguments: Work of Art and Ideology," *Proceedings of the Caucus for Marxist Art History* (Chicago, 1977), p. 3: "Can we agree on the following working definition of *ideology*? (Probably not, but let's proceed.) Ideologies are those systems of beliefs, images, values and techniques of representation by which particular social classes, in conflict with each other, attempt to 'naturalise' their own special place in history. Every ideology tries to give a quality of inevitability to what is in fact a quite specific and disputable relation to the means of production — it pictures the present as 'natural', coherent, eternal. It takes as its material the real substance, the constraints and contradictions, of a given historical situation — it is bound to refer to them somehow or other, bound to *use* them, otherwise what content would it have, what (distorted) information would it convey, what would it be *for*? But it generalises the repressions, it imagines the contradictions solved."
- 8 The manifestoes of the Prisme d'Yeux and the Automatistes provide one of the major routes of access into the ideologies of these two groups, for they constitute their theoretical justification and naturalisation. cf. Harold ROSENBERG, "Collective, Ideological, Combative," in *Avant-Garde Art*, *Art News Annual* no. 34 (1968) ed. Thomas B. HESS and John ASHBURY, p. 75: "No matter how radical its effects, an action is not avant-garde without an ideology to

characterize it... More unequivocally avant-garde than actions retrospectively labelled advanced is the action that *arises out of* the ideology. With most twentieth-century avant-gardes the ideology comes first and shapes the action, as well as accrediting it."

- 9 Michel ROY and Paul ROLLAND, "La terreur rouge du grand soir", *Le Quartier Latin*, 14 December 1948, p. 3.
- 10 The origins of this interpretation lie with not only the very personal tone of much of the 1948 confrontation, but also with an early interpretation of it forwarded by John Lyman in "Borduas and the Contemporary Arts Society," an essay in the exhibition catalogue by Even H. TURNER, *Paul-Émile Borduas 1905-1960* (Montréal: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1960): "...as Paul developed he began to expect of his companions the attitude of disciple... Pellan returned to Montreal and he, too, with his followers joined the Society. Thus it became divided into two factions each of which sought to prevail" (pp. 40-41). Guy ROBERT's 1963 book, *Pellan, His Life and His Art* (*op. cit.*) further entrenched Lyman's assessment of the reasons for the split in the Montréal avant-garde when he quoted Pellan on Borduas: "Borduas was a bad friend, because he had no time for anybody unless they worshipped him... Borduas behaved like a petulant and moody adolescent" (p. 54). Writers who have contested the explanations which place the personalities of Pellan and Borduas at the centre of the 1948 confrontation include Claude GAUVREAU, "L'épopée automatiste vue par un cyclope" (*op. cit.*); Marcel FOURNIER and Robert LAPLANTE, "Borduas et l'automatisme," in P.-E. Borduas, *Refus Global et Projections Libérantes* (Montréal: Éditions du Parti Pris, 1977); François-Marc GAGNON, "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes: Men and Ideas in Quebec," *Artscanada* 29 (December 1972/January 1973) pp. 48-55. Gagnon's article provides the most sustained critique of the personality clash explanation; although I disagree with his interpretation, Gagnon's works on this period are the most valuable ones available to the student of modern art in Québec.
- 11 In "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes," (*op. cit.*), GAGNON associates Pellan with "the ideology of rattrapage" and Borduas with "a critical attitude... towards the ideology of rattrapage," an ideology which he labels as "contestation" (p. 51). Serious problems are raised by Gagnon's terminology, in part because he neither provides a detailed definition of "contestation" and "rattrapage," nor how these ideologies specifically relate to the circumstances of the clash in 1948. His reliance on the word "ideology" further complicates this semantic problem: while "ideology" is used colloquially to signify a "political doctrine," it has acquired an entirely different meaning in historical and art historical analyses (see above, note 7). Gagnon appears to hover between the two definitions, for he uses "ideology" in the colloquial sense in order to perform a kind of art history which attempts to take into account historical factors, and therefore is related in certain, very limited respects to the work of art historians who use "ideology" in a sense dependent on Marx's understanding of the concept. (see: Karl MARX, *The German Ideology*, 1845-46.)
- 12 cf. Nicos HADJINICOLAOU, *Art History and Class Struggle*, trans. Louise Asmal (London: Pluto, 1968), p. 16: "every picture is an ideological work independently of its quality. In this sense, the world that it reveals is the world of an ideology... The ideology of a picture is literally a visual ideology, and not a political or literary ideology; it can only be found within the limits of a picture's two dimensions, even though at the same time it has specific links with other kinds of ideology which may be literary, political, philosophical, and so on."
- 13 Pellan and Borduas had had previous disagreements, however, as Gagnon notes in "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes," (*op. cit.*) as well as in his recent book, *Paul-Émile Borduas: Biographie critique et analyse de l'oeuvre* (Montréal: Fides, 1978).
- 14 BORDUAS to Luc CHOQUETTE, cited in PERREAULT, *op. cit.*, p. 88. Perreault says the letter was written on February 3, 1948, but it appears more likely that it was written on February 13.
- 15 A chronology of events is difficult to reconstruct as various dates for the resignations have been provided by different sources. PERREAULT (*op. cit.*, p. 88) gives the date of Borduas' resignation as February 3, whereas GAGNON maintains in "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes" (*op. cit.*, p. 54) that it occurred on February 7, while he notes in his biography of Borduas (*op. cit.*, p. 235) that it occurred on February 13, a date which seems to be the most plausible one.
- 16 John LYMAN, "Borduas and the Contemporary Arts Society," *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- 17 The seminal work on the relationship between the avant-garde and society is Renato POGGIOLI's *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Gerald FITZGERALD (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968). For a more critical approach to the avant-garde, see Nicos HADJINICOLAOU, "Sur l'idéologie de l'avant-gardisme", *Histoire et Critique des Arts* (July 1978), pp. 49-79.

- 18 The first exhibition was held for one night only at the Art Annex of the Art Association of Montreal. The exhibition was widely reported in the French press, but largely ignored outside Québec.
- 19 The Automatistes held their first exhibition in 1946, and had maintained a relatively high public profile since that time, in part because several members of the group frequently wrote provocative articles in and letters to the press. The Automatistes appear to have been more sensitive to their public image as an avant-garde and more thoroughly versed in the strategies of avant-gardism than were the Prisme d'Yeux artists. Claude GAUVREAU's article, "L'épopée automatiste" (*op. cit.*) is revealing on this point: "Leduc était le plus convaincu du bien-fondé de l'attitude de Borduas à l'égard de Pellan... Il voyait déjà à quel point il était nécessaire de centupler l'efficacité d'imposition de la tendance moderne la plus progressive en la rendant autonome et homogène" (pp. 52-53). In addition to understanding the necessity of internal cohesiveness, the Automatistes comprehended the importance of demonstrating antagonism towards not only the status quo, but also towards rival avant-gardes, as is revealed in a letter written to *Le Canada*, 8 November 1948, in response to an interview in which Agnès Lefort praised Pellan and reproached the Automatistes: "Il est naturel pour les corrompus et les impuissants qui se sentent irrémissiblement attaqués dans leur corruption et leur impuissance de chercher par tous les moyens à sauver leur peau. Le dynamisme de la pensée surrationnelle est un effroyable péril certain pour tous les tièdes et tous les exploités" (p. 4).
- 20 Paul-Émile BORDUAS, *Projections Libérantes* (1949), in *Paul-Émile Borduas: Écrits/Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
- 21 The second exhibition of the Prisme d'Yeux was held at the Librairie Tranquille, May 15-29, 1948.
- 22 Prisme d'Yeux manifesto, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-51.
- 23 Mainstream francophone liberalism in the post-war period found expression in such periodicals and newspapers as *Notre Temps*, *Le Quartier Latin*, and *Le Devoir*. Partisans of liberalism in Québec tended to belong to the educated, professional sector of society, who wrote for and read these publications. The essential characteristics of liberalism in 1948 in Québec are best summarized by the editor of *Le Devoir*, Gérard FILION, in an editorial on 28 February 1948; although his comments concern his perception of the role of *Le Devoir*, they apply equally well to the perception of liberals of their role in society: "*Le Devoir*, journal indépendant, nationaliste, et catholique, fondé et maintenu à coups de sacrifices, ne tombât entre les mains d'un parti politique... *Le Devoir* est un journal indépendant qui discute les idées, les actions et les omissions des hommes et des partis politiques... *Le Devoir* est la conscience politique du peuple canadien-français" (p. 4).
That mainstream francophone liberals formed a significant sector of the Prisme d'Yeux's audience seems clear when one considers the guest list at their first exhibition, which contains many names associated with post-war francophone liberalism: Maurice Gagnon, Jean Simard, Robert Élie, Pierre-Carl Dubuc, Jean LeMoine.
- A small group of anti-clerical and anti-nationalist group of "new liberals" contested the claims of mainstream liberalism in the late 1940's; these liberals expressed their views in strongly partisan Liberal newspapers, *Le Canada* and *Le Clairon* (Saint-Hyacinthe). The positions adopted by these newspapers and their writers on both political and cultural matters bear a strong resemblance to those expressed by anglophone liberals.
- 24 Maurice BLAIN, "Engagement de la littérature", *Le Quartier Latin*, 26 October 1948, p. 4.
- 25 cf. Guy LEMAY, "La campagne électorale est terminée: la parole est à la population," *Le Devoir*, 27 July 1948: "Plusieurs questions importantes étaient en jeu... mais les questions les plus discutées ont été l'autonomie provinciale et l'anticommunisme" (p. 3). For an analysis of the relationship between anti-communism and provincial autonomy, see Richard DESROSIERS, *L'Idéologie de Maurice Duplessis (1946-1955)* (M.A. Thesis, Université de Montréal, 1971), Chapter I. See also Herbert F. QUINN, *The Union Nationale: Quebec Nationalism from Duplessis to Levesque* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1979), Chapter VI.
- 26 Guy CORMIER, "Propriété privée et propriété commune," *Le Quartier Latin*, 16 March 1948, p. 3.
- 27 Jacques PARENT, "Mains Sales et Communisme," *Le Quartier Latin*, 16 November 1948, p. 3.
- 28 The C.A.S. constitution makes clear its catholic approach to modern art in Article 2, which states that the object of the Society is "to give support to contemporary trends in art." Only academicism was censured by the Society in its constitution: "All professional artists... who are neither associated with, nor partial to, any Academy, are eligible as artist members"

- (Article 3). (Cited by Christopher VARLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 39).
- 29 Prisme d'Yeux manifesto, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
- 30 As F.-M. GAGNON has pointed out in "Pellan, Borduas and the Automatistes" (*op. cit.*), "Jacques de Tonnancour claimed the right of free expression for many individuals having in common a desire for independence; but at the same time this desire was to be expressed through the vocabulary of the École de Paris" (p. 54).
- 31 On the close relationship between liberals and the Union Nationale, see Gilles BOURQUE and Anne LÉGARÉ, *Le Québec: La question nationale* (Paris: Maspéro, 1979); and Gérard BOISMENU, "Politique économique au niveau provincial: le duplessisme," in *Le Québec en Textes*, ed. Gérard BOISMENU, Laurent MAILHOT, Jacques ROUILLARD (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1980), pp. 90-98.
- 32 An editorial in *Le Devoir* on July 27, 1948 criticizes both the Liberal Party and the Union Nationale, but counsels the voter to choose the latter party as the lesser of two evils.
- 33 Maurice Duplessis quoted in *Le Devoir*, 27 July 1948.
- 34 Madeleine GARIÉPY, "A la Société d'Art Contemporain," *Notre Temps*, 21 February 1948, p. 6.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 Paul Duval quoting Pellan in "The Work of Alfred Pellan," *Here and Now I*, 3 (January 1949) pp. 53-54.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 38 Reesa GREENBERG, *The Drawings of Alfred Pellan* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1980), p. 145. Although I disagree with her on many points, I am indebted to Greenberg's research on the relationship between Pellan's 1948 drawings and Éluard's poetry, an aspect of Pellan's career which has formerly been ignored.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 66. Greenberg's comments are based on a 1979 interview which she conducted with Pellan.
- 40 Éluard joined the Parti Communiste Français (P.C.F.) in 1927, along with four other Surrealists: Breton, Aragon, Unik, and Péret. The Surrealist-P.C.F. alliance was an uneasy one, as the P.C.F. doubted the Surrealists' reliability and commitment to the Party, while Éluard and Breton were "put off by the oppressive atmosphere in the Party under the narrow, sectarian and fundamentally anti-intellectual leadership of Barbé and Celor" (David CAUTE, *Communism and the French Intellectuals, 1914-1960* (London: André Deutsch, 1964), p. 97). Together with Breton and Crevel, Éluard was expelled from the P.C.F. in 1933; the Surrealists were expelled for having attacked, among other things, "the wind of cretinization blowing from the U.S.S.R." (Maurice NADEAU, *The History of Surrealism*, trans. Richard HOWARD (Middlesex: Penguin, 1973), p. 208). Éluard rejoined the P.C.F. in 1942, and remained a member until his death in 1952. On the relationship between the French Surrealists and the P.C.F. see: Robert S. SHORT, "The Politics of Surrealism, 1920-36," *Journal of Contemporary History* I, 2 (1966) pp. 3-25; Jean TOUCHARD, "Le Parti Communiste Français et les intellectuels (1920-39)," *Revue française de science politique*, XVII, 3 (June 1967) pp. 468-83; André THIRION, *Révolutionnaires Sans Révolution* (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1972).
- 41 See, for example, Pierre NAVILLE, *La Révolution et les Intellectuels. Que Peuvent faire les Surréalistes?* (Paris: 1926).
- 42 Indicative of the Surrealists' ambivalence towards the P.C.F. was their refusal to abandon publishing their journal, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, and to devote their energy exclusively to the party's paper, *L'Humanité*. As SHORT has noted (*op. cit.*), the contents and title of *La Révolution Surréaliste* "caused consternation and moral outrage" among the leaders of the P.C.F. (p. 10).
- 43 In "Bilan du Surréalisme," *Revue de l'Université Laval* 3 (November 1948), Auguste VIATTE wrote, "le surréalisme... pouvait sembler une entreprise de démoralisation au service du communisme... Éluard, Breton, Aragon, n'adhéraient-ils pas au parti communiste?" (p. 234). In reality, Viatte's condemnation of surrealism embraces most of modern French culture, for he subsumes writers as diverse as Flaubert and Éluard under the rubric of surrealism.
- 44 See, for example, René BERGERON, *Art et Bolchévisme* (Montréal: Fides, 1946) and Clarence GAGNON, "L'immense blague de l'art moderniste," *Amérique Française* VII, 1, 2, 3 (1948) pp. 60-65; pp. 44-48; pp. 67-71.
- 45 In an interview with Paul Duval in *Here and Now* (*op. cit.*), Pellan said, "For me, Giotto, Poussin, Léger, Klee and Miro are great painters... I embrace the surrealism of André Masson,

- Klee and Miro" (p. 55). It is significant that despite Pellan's reluctance at being connected with a writer with communist connections, he did not hesitate to align himself with artists such as Picasso and Masson who had belonged to the P.C.F.
- 46 Jean-Marc LÉGER, "Porter l'obscur à la lumière; Situation du surréalisme," *Notre Temps*, 1 May 1948, p. 5.
 - 47 Prisme d'Yeux manifesto, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.
 - 48 cf. Géraldine BOURBEAU, "Monsieur Borduas et l'automatisme," *Liaison* II, 13 (March 1948): "l'automatisme (essentiellement langue écrite) ne peut apporter... absolument rien en peinture" (p. 175).
 - 49 The Automatistes had collaborated with the future members of the Prisme d'Yeux on the first issue of *Les Ateliers*; on this point see F.-M. GAGNON's biography of Borduas (*op. cit.*), pp. 213-14.
 - 50 cf. for example, the comments of Leduc writing to Borduas on the first issue of *Les Ateliers*: "je vous avouerai qu'il m'a été très pénible de constater votre (je pense au groupe) présence à la *Revue des Arts Graphiques* tout ce qu'il y a de plus bourgeois et de plus conformiste par la présentation de plus réactionnaire par les textes" (letter dated 17 July 1947, quoted by F.-M. GAGNON in *Borduas: Biographie critique, op. cit.*, p. 214). See also Guy SYLVESTRE's lukewarm review of *Les Ateliers* in *Canadian Art* V, 3 (Winter 1948) p. 152.
 - 51 Jacques de TONNANCOUR, "Considérations sur le graphisme," *Les Ateliers des Arts Graphiques* 2 (1949), n.p.
 - 52 Paul Duval alluded to this duality in Pellan's work in "The Work of Alfred Pellan" (*op. cit.*): "Alfred Pellan is the *enfant terrible* of Canadian art. He is the acknowledged leader of the Montreal School — that singular cultural bridge between the Old and the New Worlds" (p. 53).
 - 53 Cubism had become an "acceptable" style in Québec by the early 1940's; see, for example, Eliane Houghton BRUNN, "La Volonté du Cubisme," *Amérique Française* I, 7 (August 1942), pp. 23-28.
 - 54 See, for example, J.-M. LÉGER, "Surrealism" *op. cit.*
 - 55 Surrealism's most bitter critic prior to 1948 was René BERGERON, who attacked it as communistic in *Art et Bolchévisme* (*op. cit.*). In 1948, surrealism was attacked most vociferously by Auguste VIATTE (*op. cit.*) and Hyacinthe-Marie ROBILLARD: "Le manifeste de nos surréalistes," *Notre Temps*, 4 September 1948, p. 4; "Le Surréalisme; La révolution des intellectuels," *Revue Dominicaine* LIV, t. 2 (December 1948) pp. 274-82; "Réponse à la lettre de Pierre Gauvreau sur la mort du surréalisme", (letter) *Le Canada*, 7 January 1949, p. 4.
 - 56 Prisme d'Yeux manifesto, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
 - 57 World War II prompted an increase in industrialization and urbanization in Québec; on the effects of these changes see: Kenneth McROBERTS and Dale POSGATE, *Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis* (revised edition), (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980); Roland PARENTEAU, "L'industrialisation du Québec et ses conséquences," in *Le Québec en textes, 1940-1980* (*op. cit.*), pp. 45-59.
 - 58 On this point, the thinking of liberals coincided with that of the church. In "Le manifeste communiste de 1848. II — Influence et Rayonnement," *Relations* VII, 90 (June 1948), Girard Hébert counsels Catholics to thwart communism by ameliorating the conditions of workers: "La deuxième conclusion, c'est la nécessité de travailler à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des masses ouvrières, puisque le communisme, doctrine de révolte, ne peut se développer que dans une société qui connaît les mécontentements et la misère" (p. 173). Similar ideas had previously been articulated by Pope Pius XI in *Quadragesimo anno*.
 - 59 Liberals perceived their very mild anti-clericalism, tepid support for unions, and receptiveness to international culture as the key differences between themselves and the political status quo.
 - 60 Paul ÉLUARD, "Volontairement", in *Capitale de la Douleur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1926), p. 41.
 - 61 The Padlock Law was passed in 1937 as "An Act Respecting Communist Propaganda"; QUINN (*op. cit.*) comments, "Under this act Duplessis as Attorney General, was given extensive powers to close, or padlock, any premises used for the purpose of 'propagating Communism or Bolchevism'" (p. 126). See also: Bernard SAINT-AUBIN, *Duplessis et son temps* (Montréal: Les Éditions de la Presse, Ltée., 1979), Chapter XV.
 - 62 Paul SAURIOL, "La Loi du Cadenas," *Le Devoir*, 1 March 1948, p. 1.

- 63 Pellán quoted by DUVAL, "The Work of Alfred Pellán," *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- 64 DUVAL. *ibid.*, p. 55.
- 65 Madeleine GARIÉPY, "Exposition Prisme d'Yeux," *Notre Temps*, 22 May 1948, p. 5.
- 66 cf. Maurice FRAIGNEUX, "Communisme et esprit moderne," *Notre Temps*, 20 March 1948, who associates partisans of communism with "le chaos et le désespoir" (p. 1).
- 67 Maurice HUOT, "Mimi Parent", *La Patrie*, 4 June 1948.
- 68 "Prisme d'Yeux est consacré," *Le Canada*, 5 February 1948. *Le Canada*, a Liberal newspaper, was one of the few newspapers to greet the advent of the group with less than complete enthusiasm; see, for example, the editorial, "Pour nous en faire voir de toutes les couleurs!," 6 February 1948. On the perception of the Prisme d'Yeux as modern, but not radically so, cf. Berthelot BRUNET, "Notre peinture vraie et les vieux modernes," *La Patrie*, 22 May 1948: "Ces peintures... ne semblent révolutionnaires que pour ceux qui ont négligé de se mettre à l'heure dite avancée, une heure que les plus réalistes ont adoptées."
- 69 Jean SIMARD, "Autour du Prisme d'Yeux", *Notre Temps*, 14 February 1948.
- 70 The *Refus Global* went on sale at the Librairie Tranquille on August 9, 1948; a draft of the manifesto, however, had been written by the end of 1947.
- 71 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 52, 48. In his private correspondence, Borduas was even more adamantly anti-communist. In a letter to Riopelle, for example, he wrote, "Les communistes sont d'un égoïsme immédiat dégoûtant... Ils font plutôt figure d'opresseurs que de libérateurs." (Quoted by F.-M. GAGNON, *Borduas: Biographie critique*, *op. cit.*, p. 207).
- 72 The most complete bibliography of contemporary reactions to the manifesto is "Réactions de Presse," *Études Françaises* VIII, 3 (August 1972) pp. 331-38. The only francophone critic who gave the *Refus Global* extremely strong support was Charles Doyon, the art critic for *Le Clairon* (Saint-Hyacinthe); cf. his comments in "Refus Global," 27 August 1948: "Ce que plusieurs d'entre vous éprouvent silencieusement, ce que de rares précurseurs ont rêvé, ce que ceux de ma génération ont prévu est ici dévoilé... C'est un cri de détresse suscité par l'écoeurément des jeunes devant une génération d'assis et d'encenseurs" (p. 5). The receptiveness of Doyon and *Le Clairon* to the political content of the *Refus Global* is understandable given the paper's political position: a Liberal newspaper, it constantly took aim at Duplessis and the Catholic church. The other major Liberal newspaper in Québec, *Le Canada*, also provided a sympathetic account of the *Refus Global*; see LAFCADIO, "L'underground de l'esthétique: 'Refus Global'," 23 August 1948, p. 3. Moreover, *Le Canada* printed an enormous number of letters from the Automatistes without editing or rebutting them. The volume of letters from the Automatistes to *Le Canada* suggests that newspaper's subscribers constituted a major sector of the Automatiste's public.
- 73 Gérard PELLETIER, "Deux Ages, Deux Manières," *Le Devoir*, 25 September 1948, p. 8.
- 74 cf. Madeleine GARIÉPY, "À la Société d'Art Contemporain," *Notre Temps*, 21 February 1948: "Fait curieux à noter, ce sont surtout des canadiens-français qui vont de l'avant. Pourtant, ils trouvent souvent le public anglo-canadien plus intéressé à leurs oeuvres que le public canadien-français" (p. 6). It should be noted that both the Automatistes and the Prisme d'Yeux received a frosty reception from conservative anglophone critics such as Robert Ayre; see, for example, AYRÉ's "Recent Developments in Canadian Painting," *J.R.A.I.C.* XXV, 1 (January 1948) pp. 10-14. Conservative critics regarded Quebec as a backwater of provincialism and cultural retardation, and any evidence to the contrary produced enormous anxiety for them, as it called into question their conviction that the culture of English Canada was superior to that of French Canada. The English Canadian avant-garde of the 1930s also viewed the rise of the Prisme d'Yeux and Automatistes with alarm, for these groups challenged the hegemony of the old Canadian avant-garde; see, for example, Paraskeva CLARK's letter to *Canadian Art*, V, 4 (Spring-Summer 1948), p. 21.
- 75 Lester B. PEARSON, *Words and Occasions* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970), p. 72. At the time of this speech, Pearson was an employee of the Department of External Affairs under Louis Saint-Laurent, then Secretary of State for External Affairs. As Jack GRANATSTEIN and Robert CUFF have pointed out in *Ties that Bind. Canadian-American Relations in War Time: From the Great War to the Cold War* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1975), in the 1940's intellectuals increasingly clustered around civil service jobs, especially those of an executive rank; they further note that "this group of professionals... conceived themselves to be part of an international governing class" (p. 117). While Granatstein and Cuff do not examine the implications of the supportive role which intellectuals played in the formulation and administration of government policy, such analyses have been undertaken by American historians insofar as the relationship between American intellectuals and American politics is concerned. "The Cultural Cold War,"

by Christopher LASCH (reprinted in *The Agony of the American Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969) offers an analysis of this relationship which applies with equal validity to Canada in the post-war period: "Intellectuals were unusually sensitive to their interests as a group and... they defined those interests in such a way as to make them fully compatible with the interests of the state. As a group, intellectuals had achieved responsibility for the machinery of education and of cultural affairs in general. Within this sphere — within the schools, the universities, the theater, the concert hall, and the politico-literary magazines — they had achieved both autonomy and affluence, as the social value of their services became apparent to the government, to corporations, and to the foundations. Professional intellectuals had become indispensable to society and to the state" (p. 94).

- 76 English liberals nevertheless remained fascinated by Duplessis' tenacity in Québec politics, albeit expressing their fascination in condescending and self-righteous tones; the most characteristic example of this kind of thinking is Stuart KEATE's "Maurice the Magnificent", *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 7, pp. 71-75; see also Harold H. MARTIN, "Quebec's Little Strong Man," *Saturday Evening Post*, 15 January 1949, pp. 17-19, pp. 102-04.
- 77 At the time, *Canadian Art* was funded by the federal government through the National Gallery of Canada; see "Canadian Art", *Food for Thought* 10 (May 1950), p. 58.
- 78 Donald BUCHANAN reviewing the *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 86. The issue of cultural oppression, in Québec had been dealt with previously by Louis MUHLSTOCK in "An Excess of Prudery", *Canadian Art* V, 2 (Christmas 1947): "These are only slight examples of the backwardness and narrowmindedness of the province I live in... As artists we must be free to paint and exhibit what we feel. Here we are not free... If we are silent about it, we have no one but ourselves to blame" (pp. 76-78).
- 79 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 45. The stress which liberal intellectuals placed on biculturalism and federalism also relates to the Cold War. Liberals believed that an internally unified Canada, fortified by a strong defensive alliance with other Western countries provided the only security against the Eastern Bloc nations. By attempting to prove their commitment to a fully bicultural country, liberals hoped that they could overcome the resistance of Quebec to international political commitments, which was based on a suspicion that Ottawa's external affairs' policies were designed to protect English Canada alone. See: Howard A. LESSON, *External Affairs and Canadian Federalism: the History of a Dilemma* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston of Canada, 1973); Escott REID, "Canada and the Creation of the North Atlantic Alliance, 1948-1949", in *Freedom and Change: Essays in Honour of Lester B. Pearson*, ed. Michael FRY (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), pp. 106-35.
- 80 Many liberal intellectuals believed that Quebec's emergent modern culture afforded the possibility of becoming the basis of a truly national culture; see, for example, John K. B. ROBERTSON, "Art in Canada," *Here and Now* I, 1 (December 1947): "Where — except perhaps in Montreal — are the 'schools,' the rebels, the theories, which mark a dynamic cultural situation and which would, perhaps, in their resolution, bring a truly national culture?" (p. 77).
- 81 Maurice GAGNON, "D'une certaine peinture jeune... ou l'Automatisme," *Canadian Art* V, 3 (Winter 1948); pp. 136-38.
- 82 Little has been written on the Cold War, especially insofar as it relates to Canadian liberalism; the best source on this subject is GRANATSTEIN and CUFF, *Canadian-American Relations in Wartime* (*op. cit.*). Substantially more has been written on the Communist Party, however; see Ivan AVAKUMOVIC, *The Communist Party of Canada. A History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975) and Norman PENNER, *The Canadian Left, A Critical Analysis* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1977).
- 83 Louis SAINT-LAURENT, quoted by Blair FRASER in "Where does St. Laurent Stand?" *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 September 1948, p. 7. The relationship between Saint-Laurent and English Canadian liberalism is an important one, but it has been neglected by Canadian historians. Although Saint-Laurent's origins were French Canadian, the kinds of policies he supported in the House of Commons as Secretary of State for External Affairs, and later as Prime Minister, were antithetical to those espoused by most francophone liberals in the years immediately following World War II. See, for example, SAINT-LAURENT's article in the pre-eminent liberal periodical, *The Canadian Forum*, "Canada and the U.N.," XXVIII, 329 (June 1948), pp. 49-50.
- 84 Charles GLICKSBERG, "Literature and the Marxist Aesthetic," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XVIII, 1 (October 1948), p. 84.

- 85 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.
- 86 LEDUC to BORDUAS, 8 March 1948; quoted by F.-M. GAGNON, *Borduas: Biographie critique*, *op. cit.*, p. 235.
- 87 SAINT-LAURENT, *House of Commons Debates*, 29 April 1948.
- 88 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
- 89 Stuart KEATE, "L'Automatiste," *Time*, 18 October 1948, p. 22.
- 90 Murray TEVLIN, "Business and Culture," *Canadian Business* XXI, 8 (August 1948), p. 45.
- 91 Charles COMFORT, "Observations on a Decade, 1938-1948; Canadian Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking: Transition," *J.R.A.I.C.* XXV, 1 (January 1948) pp. 7-8.
- 92 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
- 93 Pierre GAUVREAU, quoted by Tancrede MARSIL in "Gauvreau, Automatiste," *Le Quartier Latin*, 28 November 1947, p. 5.
- 94 Pierre GAUVREAU, "Arbre généalogique de l'automatisme contemporain," *Le Quartier Latin*, 17 February 1948, p. 3. cf. Gauvreau's remarks to those made by Arthur M. SCHLESINGER in *The Vital Center* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1949), a book which enjoyed enormous popularity among liberal intellectuals in both English Canada and the United States: "The conclusion is clear... Let them [Soviet artists] create only compositions which officials can hum, paintings which their wives can decipher, poems which the party leaders can understand" (p. 79).
- 95 Jean-Paul RIOPELLE, "En marge des propos de l'artiste Agnès Lefort," *Le Canada*, 5 November 1948, p. 4.
- 96 The Automatistes' attacks against recent artistic styles may also be seen as an avant-garde tactic; by describing current modernist styles as passé, an avant-garde is able to place itself at the forefront of artistic history. In "Arbre généalogique de l'Automatisme contemporain" (*op. cit.*), Pierre GAUVREAU provides a summary of modern movements, but significantly, places automatism at the head of them: "Il appartient aux Automatistes canadiens d'apporter leur effort à la libération de l'objet peint... Ils le feront prochainement" (p. 3). Similarly, in "La générosité en fuite," *Le Quartier Latin*, 30 January 1948, Claude GAUVREAU catalogues a variety of modern styles before concluding, "Dans notre décade... les recherches surréalistes et automatistes constituent l'avant-garde" (p. 3). cf. Borduas in "Commentaires sur des mots courants" (released with the *Refus Global*) in *Paul-Émile Borduas: Ecrits/Writings* (*op. cit.*); after reviewing various stages of art history from "the beginning of Christianity" to the twentieth century, Borduas concludes that "[painting] has finally opened to us a vast domain, until now taboo and unexplored, the province of angels and devils: surrealism" (p. 77).
- 97 Dr. H. LEHMANN, "Art and Psychology," *Canadian Art* VI, 1 (Autumn 1948), p. 17.
- 98 cf. Borduas' definition of Superrational Automatism in "Commentaires sur des mots courants" (*op. cit.*): "Unpremeditated plastic writing... During the process, no attention is given to content... Complete moral independence with regard to the object produced... It hopes: an acute knowledge of the psychological content of any form, of the human universe—in short, the human universe itself" (p. 74). Borduas believed that great art could not become politically corrupted: "The items of this treasure reveal themselves, inviolable, to our society. They remain... incorruptible... They were ordained spontaneously outside of and in opposition to civilization" (*Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 50).
- 99 LEHMANN, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- 100 *Refus Global*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
- 101 GLICKSBERG, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
- 102 *Ibid.*
- 103 *Ibid.*
- 104 *Ibid.*
- 105 cf. BORDUAS, "Commentaires sur des mots courants," *op. cit.*: "The secrets of these pictures are encoded in their forms" (p. 78).
- 106 This connection has already been pointed out by F.-M. GAGNON in his biography of Borduas, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
- 107 Doris SHADBOLT, "Our Relation to Primitive Art," *Canadian Art* V, 1 (October-November 1947), p. 16.
- 108 *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

109 This phrase was current in both Canadian and American politics at mid-century; it was first coined by American "new liberals" to signify their repudiation of the extreme right and left; see SCHLESINGER, *The Vital Center*, *op. cit.*, and Daniel BELL, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* (New York: The Free Press, 1961). Although he does not make the connection between liberals' call for an "end to ideology" and the *Refus Global*, F.-M. GAGNON notes in his biography of Borduas (*op. cit.*) that "le manifeste souhaite la fin de l'ère des idéologies" (p. 241).

110 BUCHANAN, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

L'utilisation du vocabulaire politique de la liberté
parmi l'avant-garde artistique montréalaise en 1948.

En 1948, l'avant-garde montréalaise est divisée en deux factions hostiles: le groupe Prisme d'Yeux, sous la direction d'Alfred Pellan, et les Automatistes, sous celle de Paul-Émile Borduas. Les deux groupes entrent ouvertement en conflit en février 1948, à l'occasion de la 9^e réunion annuelle de la Société d'art contemporain. Au cours de cette réunion, Borduas est élu président, ce qui amène le groupe de Pellan à se retirer de l'association, décision qui entraîne elle-même la démission de Borduas et de plusieurs de ses partisans. Toute la dispute porte sur une question qui, en 1948, était au centre des discours des intellectuels et hommes politiques canadiens ainsi que l'un des thèmes dominants des manifestes des deux groupes d'avant-garde: la signification de la liberté dans le contexte de la guerre froide.

Dans la manifeste du groupe Prisme d'Yeux, la liberté est définie comme étant essentiellement apolitique et tolérante à l'égard de la diversité; cette définition est fortement tributaire de l'idéologie prônée par l'intelligentsia libérale du Québec, groupe dont les préjugés politiques sont nettement favorables au gouvernement provincial en place. Dans un manifeste intitulé *Refus Global*, les Automatistes soutiennent, eux aussi, que la liberté authentique doit être à l'abri de toute considération politique; en même temps, ils attaquent les valeurs à la base même du statu quo politique et intellectuel de la province, probablement pour indisposer les partisans de Prisme d'Yeux, le gouvernement provincial, la presse et les intellectuels en général.

Malgré ses détracteurs aux Québec, *Refus Global* reçoit l'appui des intellectuels libéraux du Canada anglais, qui voient dans le manifeste une illustration de leurs propres convictions: hostilité envers l'establishment politique et culturel francophone, antipathie envers les extrémistes de gauche et de droite et, conséquemment, fidélité au "centre vital", position politique à laquelle se rattachent les libéraux anglophones.

Les idéologies verbales des deux groupes ressortent clairement à la lumière de la conjoncture historique de 1948, des critiques dont a fait l'objet chacun des groupes et d'une lecture attentive des textes eux-mêmes. En outre, l'examen minutieux du style et du contenu de deux oeuvres produites par les leaders de deux factions avant-gardistes, *L'homme A grave* de Pellan et *Objet Totémique* de Borduas, révèle des idéologies opposées l'une à l'autre, mais tout à fait conformes à celles qui apparaissent explicitement dans les manifestes publiés la même année.

En 1948, la liberté fait l'objet d'un débat esthétique et politique animé, les deux tableaux s'interpénétrant. Catalysée par la guerre froide, la scission entre le libéralisme des Canadiens français et celui des Canadiens anglais s'amplifie en raison même de la définition donnée par les uns et les autres à la liberté; c'est cette division qui sera à la base des idéologies verbales et visuelles de l'avant-garde montréalaise. En assimilant tout de façon éclectique pour le réfracter, comme son nom l'indique, le mouvement Prisme d'Yeux reprend les grands principes du libéralisme francophone. Dans leur «refus global», les Automatistes

rejetent au contraire tout ce qui est relié au libéralisme des intellectuels du Québec et, ce faisant, prennent indirectement position pour le libéralisme anglophone. Par leur acceptation globale et par leur refus global, les partisans de Prisme d'Yeux et les Automatistes en sont venus non seulement à se quereller, mais, en dépit de leur façade avant-gardiste, à soutenir, chacun à leur manière, le statu quo.

Judith Ince

Approche sémiologique d'une oeuvre de Borduas: 3 + 3 + 4

La sémiologie topologique veut se constituer comme un système de description du langage plastique qui permet d'identifier les éléments de base de ce langage et les règles syntaxiques qui régissent leurs interrelations. C'est uniquement à partir de ces deux fondements que pourra s'élaborer en troisième lieu, la dimension sémantique de l'oeuvre.

Pour la sémiologie topologique, le langage plastique relève davantage de ce que la linguistique verbale a décrit comme le langage "performatif" (*Speech Acts*) que du langage descriptif ou constatif. Le langage plastique engendre des événements, plus qu'il ne décrit des choses. Comme le langage performatif, défini particulièrement par Austin¹, le langage plastique n'a pas son référent hors de lui, ou avant lui, ou en face de lui. Il n'exprime pas quelque chose qui existe, hors langage ou avant le langage plastique. Il produit plutôt et transforme des situations, il "opère" au sein d'un environnement où s'élabore un référent particulier.

Par son activité d'engendrement et de transformations des éléments plastiques, l'artiste réalise une expérimentation de situations où se révèlent les modalités de son expérience existentielle. Pour les intuitionner, le percepteur de l'oeuvre doit entreprendre un même type d'expérimentation, soit la mise en relation d'éléments, dotés d'intensités variables, de forces et de résistances; tout en actualisant ainsi ses propres structures d'organisation, le percepteur peut les dialectiser dans une véritable confrontation et communication avec un autre être humain.

Des axes principaux de la linguistique: syntaxique, pragmatique et sémantique, la présente étude veut privilégier l'axe pragmatique, soit l'application des données syntaxiques dans un contexte précis, un "acte de parole" donné, l'oeuvre de Paul-Émile Borduas (1905-1960) intitulée 3 + 3 + 4 et datée de 1956 (Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal) (fig. 1). Pour y parvenir, nous devons auparavant esquisser brièvement le modèle syntaxique qui sera utilisé².

Toute oeuvre plastique apparaît à la sémiologie topologique comme un "champ visuel" particulier, c'est-à-dire un champ de forces, un champ de tensions, constitué par l'ensemble des relations dynamiques qui s'établissent entre les éléments fondamentaux du tableau, à partir d'un certain nombre de lois d'organisation.

Éléments du langage plastique

Les "signes" ou éléments de base de l'oeuvre plastique sont ici désignés comme étant les régions ou colorèmes. Les régions constituent les premiers corrélatifs d'un acte de perception visuelle, c'est-à-dire qu'elles sont chacune posées/reconnues comme des champs de force,

par toute "centration" du regard en un lieu quelconque du tableau. Ces régions peuvent être de dimensions variables et à partir de centrations ultérieures, elles peuvent se différencier en plus petites régions (ou sous-régions) ou encore, se regrouper en des ensembles plus larges ou super-régions.

La caractéristique principale d'une région est qu'elle est constituée par une couche centrale et une couche périphérique, sièges de tensions spécifiques en continuelles interactions. Une région peut être considérée comme limitée (par une courbe fermée) ou illimitée; elle peut par exemple, être compacte ou diffuse, stable ou instable. Plusieurs régions peuvent être dites continues ou étrangères les unes aux autres.

La couche périphérique d'une région est liée à la notion de frontières, qui désignent des régions (ou sous-régions) qui déterminent la nature des "limites" d'une région donnée et la façon dont le passage s'y fait vers d'autres régions. Les frontières peuvent être dures ou floues, fluides ou solides, fermes ou poreuses, rigides ou élastiques, mouvantes ou plastiques.

On appelle *trajets* les mouvements établis ou perçus au sein d'une région ou entre plusieurs régions, résultant des tensions produites par diverses centrations et/ou des caractéristiques propres des régions. Lorsque les trajets sont orientés, ils portent le nom de "vecteurs".

Toute région est liée aux autres régions par les trajets qu'effectuent les centrations diverses du perceuteur, qui transforment les caractéristiques premières de la région déjà posée, en la situant dans un ensemble différent, maintenant constitué des relations entre la première et la deuxième région considérée.

Ces trajets sont appelés "locomotions" quand ils résultent des mouvements effectués par le regard du spectateur entre les différentes régions; ils portent le nom de "communications", s'ils désignent des mouvements résultant de la répercussion des caractéristiques d'une région sur l'état d'une autre région.

La perception et/ou la description sémiologique d'une oeuvre est naturellement étroitement liée aux trajets effectués par le perceuteur d'une région à une autre région dans le tableau. Cependant ces trajets visuels ne sont pas le fruit d'un pur aléatoire, ils nous semblent au contraire conditionnés par un ensemble de lois qui tiennent *à la fois* à la structure du processus de perception visuelle humaine et à la structure plus "objective" du champ visuel que constitue l'oeuvre.

Structures syntaxiques

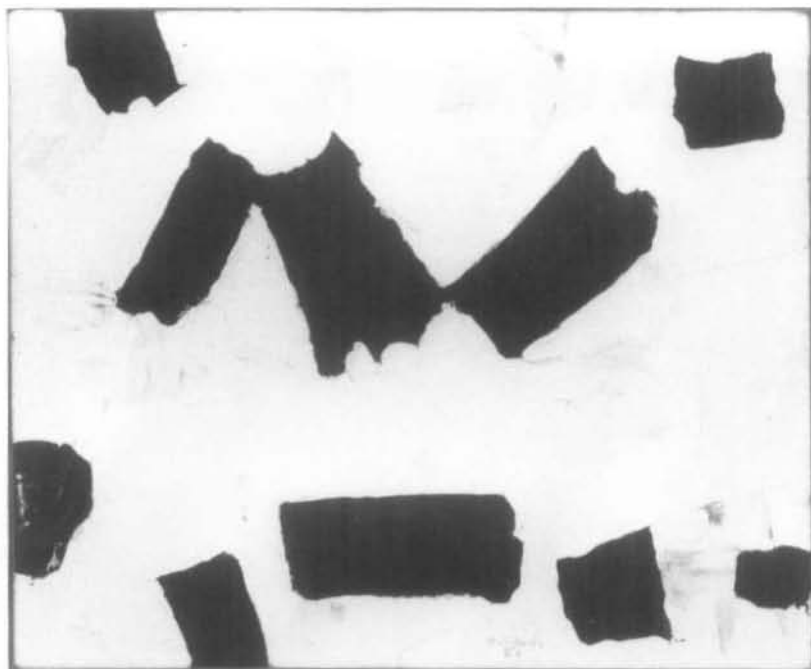
La sémiologie topologique pose que les mouvements et tensions qui se produisent entre les éléments plastiques, dans ce champ de forces que constitue l'oeuvre, sont régularisés par quatre types minimum de lois d'organisation, qui sont à l'oeuvre dans tout tableau quel qu'il soit.

1) Ce sont d'abord les rapports topologiques qui structurent les premières relations entre les régions ou groupes de régions³. Les plus importants sont des rapports que l'on nommera: **voisinage/séparation, joint/disjoint, fermé/ouvert, d'enveloppement** et **d'ordre de succession** (symétrie/asymétrie, répétition/réurrence, gauche/droite, haut/bas, etc.)

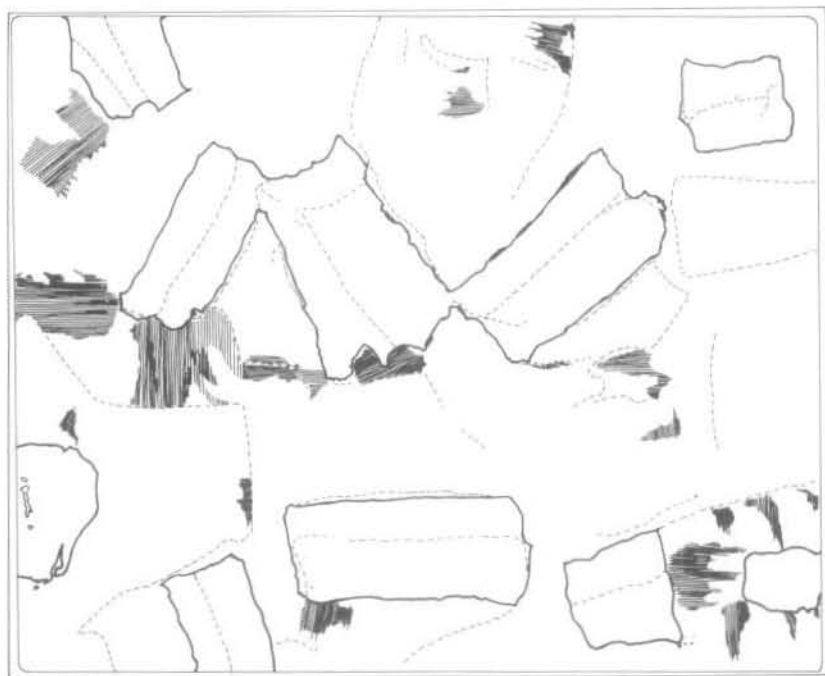
2) Les mouvements/trajets entre les régions s'effectuent aussi à partir des rapports énergétiques produits par la perception visuelle et qui ont été décrits par la *Gestalttheorie*. Ils sont fondés à la fois sur les rapports topologiques et la dynamique des champs de force visuels.

3) Les trajets sont aussi régularisés par les rapports énergétiques qui résultent de la "loi de complétude" de la couleur, comme l'avait d'abord dénommée Goethe; ce terme recouvre toutes les lois d'interaction de la couleur, le contraste simultané, l'addition soustractive de la couleur, etc.

4) En dernier lieu, les tensions dans le tableau sont produites et régularisées par les rapports énergétiques qui structurent le "Plan originel", déjà posé par Kandinsky⁴. Cette donnée structurelle, réinterprétée par la sémiologie topologique, pose que le Plan originel, c'est-à-dire le Plan premier qui préexiste à tout geste de projection plastique de la part de l'artiste, est constitué: a) par l'énergie générée par les coins, c'est-à-dire l'énergie engendrée par la rencontre à l'angle droit des côtés qui forment le Plan originel et par l'énergie propre de ces vecteurs; b) par l'énergie issue du cruciforme, c'est-à-dire par l'énergie virtuelle qui résulte de la rencontre de l'horizontale et de la verticale, au centre du tableau, à partir de l'énergie rayonnante des coins; c) par les énergies résultant des deux diagonales: harmonique et discordante, ainsi que des triangles dissemblables produits dans le Plan originel par ces diagonales (fig. 5); d) par l'énergie spécifique du format particulier du Plan originel.

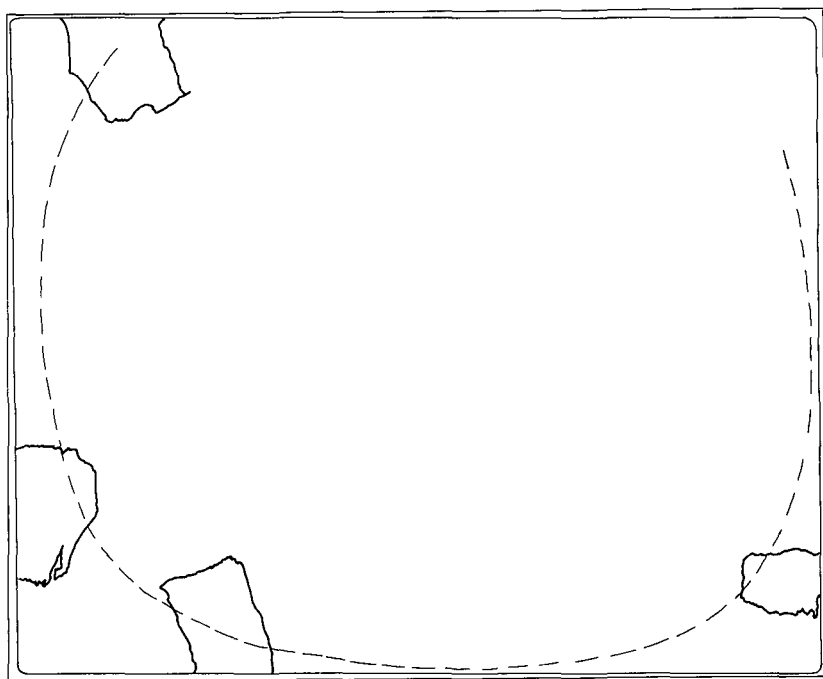


(1) Paul-Émile BOR-DUAS, 3 + 3 + 4, huile sur toile, 59,5 cm x 72,8 cm, 1956, Collection Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal, (Photo: Musée d'art contemporain)

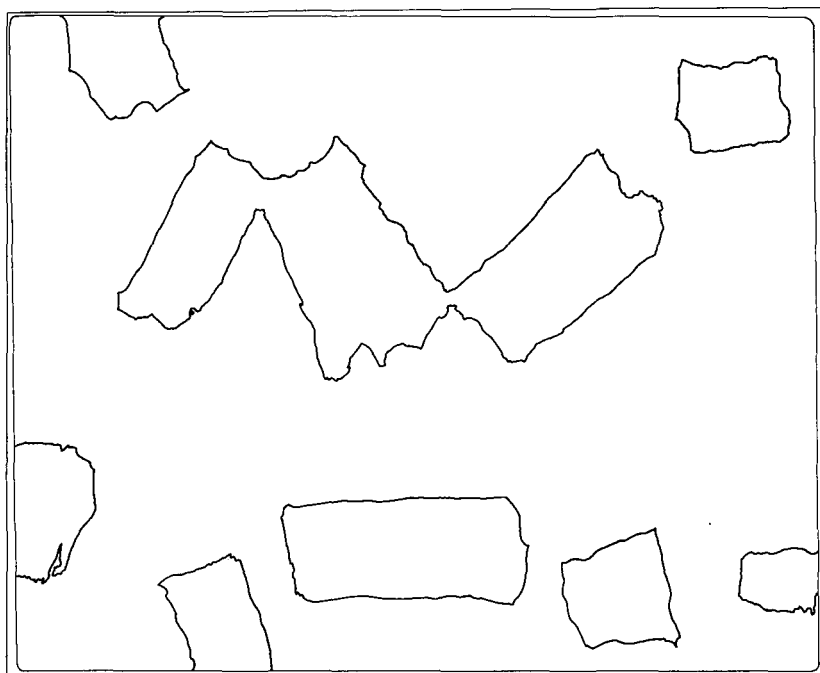


(2) Ce schéma illustre trois des quatre régions principales, déterminées par l'analyse topologique. Les lignes continues encerrent les régions noires, ouvertes ou fermées; les lignes pointillées, les régions blanches et les traits regroupés, les régions grises. D'autres régions, linéaires, sont constituées, en relief, par un plissement ou effet de crête, de la matière picturale.

(3) Ce schéma isole les régions noires dans la couche périphérique du tableau, qui par leur position, accentuent l'énergie des frontières du tableau et créent un enveloppement des couches centrales.



(4) La position des régions noires renforce les énergies diagonales du Plan originel et engendre quatre verticales virtuelles qui dynamisent les régions blanches, ramenant vers l'avant les diverses colonnes ainsi formées.



Pragmatique, 3 + 3 + 4

Une super-région. Avant de procéder à l'analyse des régions qui constituent 3 + 3 + 4, rappelons que tout tableau, considéré dans sa globalité, constitue une *super-région*, formée de sous-régions et constituée de deux couches principales: la couche centrale et la couche périphérique. Cette dernière couche longe les "limites" du champ, tout en les spécifiant et ses propriétés diffèrent nécessairement de celles de la couche centrale.

Les quatre *principales régions* de cette oeuvre se distinguent avant tout par leurs qualités de lumière et de couleur. Ce sont les régions noires, blanches, grises, linéaires.

Les régions noires. Il existe dix régions noires marquées à la fig. 2 par un trait continu. Elles peuvent être dites compactes, bien que la majorité d'entre elles sont subdivisées en deux ou plusieurs sous-régions par le travail de la spatule, qui leur imprime des tensions vectorielles internes.

Elles sont de dimensions différentes, mais se distinguent davantage entre elles par leur caractère fermé ou ouvert. C'est à dire que six (6) d'entre elles sont limitées/fermées et quatre (4) sont illimitées/ouvertes. Par ailleurs, trois (3) d'entre elles sont jointes et par là, continues, alors que sept (7) sont disjointes ou discontinues/étrangères.

Les quatre régions noires ouvertes, dont une frontière coïncide avec les "limites" mêmes du tableau (ou des segments de la frontière périphérique) sont distribuées sur chacun des quatre côtés du tableau. Par là, la couche périphérique acquiert des caractéristiques différentes spécifiques de la couche centrale, puisque par ces quatre points d'ancrage sur le pourtour, elle crée un "enveloppement" particulier des couches centrales (fig. 3).

Les régions blanches. Elles sont marquées par des lignes pointillées dans la fig. 2, les régions blanches peuvent être dites mi-compactes, mi-diffuses; elles se déploient à travers tout le tableau, aussi bien dans les couches centrales que dans la couche périphérique.

On peut compter une douzaine d'entre elles comme ouvertes sur la limite périphérique du champ du tableau, parfois continues entre elles dans les couches centrales. D'autres, à l'intérieur, sont fermées par des régions linéaires en léger relief. Quand les frontières des régions blanches sont bien marquées, elles s'offrent comme des quasi-plans dans une infra-structure qui s'étend jusqu'aux côtés du tableau, sauf pour les régions noires, ouvertes sur le pourtour. Sur le côté droit du tableau en particulier, les régions blanches s'offrent dans un "étalement" qui fait colonne, constituant une super-région verticale adjacente aux autres régions blanches, plus ou moins obliquement orientées dans le reste du tableau.

Les régions blanches ont été peintes après les régions noires, sauf pour deux d'entre elles, soient les régions noires ouvertes sur les côtés 1 et 3 où le noir est superposé au blanc. Par cette superposition, la majorité des régions blanches créent un effet d'encastrement des régions noires, qui tend à les faire reculer et à nier l'effet d'avancement que leur densité produirait, c'est-à-dire un effet de formes noires sur un fond blanc. La tension vers l'avant des régions blanches est surtout sensible dans les formes de triangles ou de pointes, produites dans la couche centrale supérieure ou bien lorsque les régions blanches sont étroitement enserrées par les noires dans la couche centrale inférieure.

Ces régions noires et blanches offrent le contraste maximum de couleur et de lumière et leurs tensions spécifiques les feront alternativement avancer ou reculer l'une par rapport à l'autre.

Les régions grises. À partir de la dimension de la couleur, il faut distinguer, dans ce tableau, un certain nombre de régions grises, rosées ou bleutées, représentées dans la fig. 2 par de courts traits juxtaposés.

Ces régions sont assez diffuses, presque toutes ouvertes ou illimitées. Le plus grand nombre d'entre elles sont situées dans la couche périphérique. Dans la région centrale supérieure, les plus importantes produisent comme une ombre portée sous les régions noires, combattant ainsi l'effet de profondeur créé par l'encastrement des noirs par les blancs, en faisant reculer les blancs dans la profondeur. Cet effet est d'ailleurs constant partout où se retrouvent ces régions grises.

Les régions linéaires. Il est important de distinguer encore dans cette oeuvre les diverses régions linéaires qui se constituent entre les régions noires ou blanches, autour de ces régions ou au sein de ces régions, par plissement ou effet de crête, en relief. Ces régions linéaires jouent en partie une fonction analogue à celles que nous décrivions pour les régions grises, soit de "creuser", de faire reculer les régions blanches ou noires qu'elles ensèrent et pour lesquelles elles créent des types de frontières spécifiques⁵.

Par ailleurs, ces régions linéaires ont une orientation et une vectorialité précises. Certaines sont verticales, d'autres horizontales, d'autres obliques, ou même forment parfois des angularités. Certaines d'entre elles sont particulièrement importantes en ce qu'elles soulignent ou font écho à l'axialité horizontale prononcée du format rectangulaire de ce tableau.

Leur nombre est par ailleurs beaucoup plus grand dans les premiers deux-tiers du tableau, si l'on part de la gauche, engendrant un effet de pression de la région d'extrême-droite sur la gauche du tableau.

En examinant par la suite *les frontières* de ces diverses régions, il faut rappeler que certaines de ces frontières coïncident avec la dynamique des côtés périphériques, notamment pour quatre régions noires et un grand nombre de blanches.

Dans les régions fermées, les frontières offrent trois grands types de caractéristiques: a) un dessin plus ou moins ferme, lisse ou dentelé, dans les régions noires et blanches; b) une arabesque plus suivie, créée par l'ensemble des contours des régions noires adjacentes (liées par un côté), dans la couche centrale supérieure du tableau; c) un effet de relief ou de saillie, à la limite de régions blanches ou grises, plus ou moins floues. Un même effet de saillie, ou de reflux des blancs qui s'agglutinent et débordent les frontières des régions noires, accentue un mouvement de contraction des masses sombres.

On peut aussi compter comme "frontières", les "coupures" effectuées au sein des régions noires par des tracés de spatule, qui divisent presque toutes ces régions en sous-régions, réduisant ainsi leur cohérence interne et l'effet de densité de leur masse.

Ces éléments étant distingués, nous allons décrire les divers trajets qui établissent des relations entre eux, à partir de la structure syntaxique définie précédemment.

La structure d'organisation

Le rapport topologique fondamental qui s'établit dans le tableau vu comme totalité, ou super-région, est celui de l'enveloppement qui établit une hétérogénéité entre les régions ouvertes à la périphérie et les régions fermées dans les couches centrales, c'est-à-dire une caractéristique dynamique tout à fait différente de la couche périphérique par rapport aux couches centrales.

En constituant quatre points d'attache ou de conjugaison énergétique, les régions noires ouvertes en périphérie véhiculent vers l'intérieur du plan, de façon plus décisive, les énergies que véhiculent les côtés du Plan originel et plus particulièrement, étant donné leur localisation, les énergies des coins qu'elles avoisinent. Même la cinquième région noire de la couche périphérique, qui est fermée et à distance des bords, devient dissemblable aux autres régions noires centrales par sa relation privilégiée au Coin supérieur droit.

Ces régions qui intersectent les côtés du Plan originel acquièrent une densité, une prégnance plus forte et elles se réunissent pour former une sorte de "coque" virtuelle qui resserre l'expansion possible des régions centrales. Cette coque, cet enveloppement, produit en particulier une "fermeture" de l'espace global du tableau (fig. 3).

Il faut en effet se méfier de l'homonymie qu'engendre le terme de "région ouverte". Au contraire de ce qui a été parfois posé⁶, les régions ouvertes sur la périphérie ne produisent pas une expansion hors de "l'aire picturale"; ce concept nie la notion même d'une "aire picturale"

spécifiée par le dynamisme énergétique de son format. Les régions ouvertes sur les côtés qui forment le Plan originel actualisent au contraire davantage l'énergie des côtés périphériques et des angles formateurs du champ; elles reconduisent à l'intérieur du champ, renforcent l'action centripète des côtés, produisant une contraction et une densification des régions internes.

Et inversement, des régions fermées dans les couches internes laisseraient plus ouvert ou neutre l'espace ambiant du tableau qu'aucun élément ne viendrait plus ponctuer et renforcer de façon spécifique en périphérie. Mais cet espace énergétique qui constitue l'aire picturale (ou dans notre vocabulaire, le Plan originel) possède une structure spécifique qui garantit leur dynamisme aux éléments plastiques. Hors du tableau, ces dynamismes perdent leur fondement et leur actualisation, leur caractère sensible et perceptible qui leur permettent de devenir éléments d'une fonction linguistique.

Par ailleurs, dans les couches centrales, les rapports topologiques de voisinage/séparation — ainsi que ceux du joint/disjoint, produisent une différence majeure entre les régions noires du haut et celles du bas (fig. 4).

Dans le haut, les trois régions noires centrales se regroupent en super-région continue, à partir de leurs frontières adjacentes, s'opposant ainsi aux caractéristiques des autres régions noires du tableau. Cette continuité est cependant asymétrique, puisque les frontières contiguës des trois grandes régions se situent d'abord en haut, puis en bas de ces régions, créant comme un effet de torsion dans la super-région noire.

Dans la couche centrale inférieure, les régions noires sont disjointes, séparées et orientées de façon plus orthogonale. Elles se succèdent dans une espèce d'énumération à l'horizontale qui les rattache davantage aux côtés parallèles du tableau.

Cependant une certaine symétrie verticale dans la position des régions inférieures et supérieures de la couche centrale, ainsi que l'absence de "plans intermédiaires colorés" comme le disait Borduas⁷, suggère une sorte de rabattement topologique du haut du tableau sur le bas, accentuant ainsi l'énergie de l'axe horizontal. Ce rabattement est aussi renforcé par l'orientation vectorielle de la région oblique ouverte sur la base inférieure, qui se relie à la région ouverte sur le côté supérieur du tableau. De même, l'axialité horizontale est aussi appuyée par la position de régions linéaires en relief qui font écho à cet axe.

En outre, une certaine disjonction du haut et du bas est aussi suggérée par les caractères topologiques différents de certaines régions blanches, qui dans la région supérieure n'entourent pas complètement les régions noires, mais s'y insèrent plutôt comme la pointe d'un trian-

gle qui pousse les régions noires vers le haut ou les presse vers le bas. Alors que dans la zone inférieure, les régions blanches sont autonomes et indépendantes vectoriellement des noires.

D'autres caractéristiques topologiques distinguent le haut du bas. La couche périphérique de la zone supérieure n'est "ancrée" à ses limites que sur un côté, alors que la zone inférieure l'est sur trois côtés. Les interrelations entre les éléments de la zone inférieure ne sont plus englobées dans une arabesque, mais plutôt dans la relation binaire des intervalles qui vont du semblable au différent (noir/blanc) entre des éléments séparés, en plus forte opposition les uns avec les autres. Ces dernières régions possèdent des frontières plus lisses et fermes, moins rongées que celles du haut.

Les régions de la section inférieure tirent leur énergie de la contradiction chromatique blanc/noir, qui offre une ponctuation forte, tissant un espace plus resserré et circonscrit. Cependant cette contradiction chromatique nette du blanc et du noir est atténuée par une décisive multiplication dans le Coin inférieur droit des régions grises aux frontières assez floues, suggérant une profondeur plus grande, analogue même si elle est moins prononcée, à celle du Coin supérieur droit.

Il faut souligner par ailleurs, que les différentes orientations des régions (orthogonales et obliques) tendront à donner aux diverses dimensions des régions une fonction dans la détermination de leur position dans la profondeur. Les orientations obliques, comme l'a déjà souligné Mondrian⁸ tendent à instaurer la suggestion d'un trajet dans une profondeur de type naturaliste ou euclidienne.

Dans cette forme de suggestion perspectiviste, la dimension des régions acquiert une fonction, non-topologique, de signalisation de la distance dans la profondeur. C'est-à-dire que les régions plus "grandes" ou plus "grosses" semblent plus rapprochées du spectateur que les plus petites. Ou d'autres encore semblent justifier leur plus petite dimension par la suggestion qu'elles sont vues de profil, à partir d'une torsion qui fait tourner ce plan vers l'arrière.

L'ensemble de ces facteurs topologiques et projectifs/euclidiens tendrait donc à déterminer dans les zones supérieures et inférieures du tableau deux types d'espace différents, l'un plus profond et indéfini dans le haut, l'autre plus dense, rapproché et défini dans le bas.

Si l'analyse sémiologique du tableau se limitait à ces rapports topologiques sommaires, elle entraînerait une interprétation sémantique particulière, fondée sur la disjonction ainsi décrite entre le haut et le bas du tableau. Ce dualisme nous renvoie, en effet, à certaines interprétations faites de l'oeuvre de Borduas⁹, qui lui reprochent d'avoir conservé des éléments de l'espace naturaliste, en particulier des allusions à l'expérience de la gravitation et de la tri-dimensionnalité, qui seraient ensuite extrapolées dans une sorte de cosmogonie naturaliste.

Dans cette interprétation, Borduas conserverait le rôle fondamental de la ligne d'horizon comme départageant deux ordres de phénomènes naturels et visuels: le niveau de la terre, de la compacité et de la gravitation et celui du ciel, où cette gravitation est allégée, cette compacité diluée, par divers mouvements kinesthésiques (explosions, etc.)

Ainsi dans le "bas" logerait le tactile, c'est-à-dire la masse, dense, lourde, aux mouvements lents et horizontaux, concentrant en elle-même le maximum d'énergie. Dans le "haut" par contre, les taches seraient inscrites dans un trajet vertical ou oblique, niant la gravitation. Elles perdent ainsi de leur tactilité, de leur pesanteur, elles se "dématérialisent", deviennent plus visuelles que tactiles et sont significatives d'une expansion vectorielle plus vive. Dans cette zone supérieure, la "tache", qui est une unité fort complexe, prend une fonction vectorielle et kinesthésique plus importante que celle qui lui était attachée, quand elle "signifiait" la masse matérielle dans la zone inférieure.

Dans cette problématique dualiste, le signe pictural devient qualitativement réversible dans le même tableau, quand il va du bas vers le haut, comme s'il était logé dans des hypothèses structurelles différentes. L'inconvénient majeur de cette problématique est qu'elle ne tient pas compte du contexte, non hypothétique, établi par les autres régions blanches, grises ou linéaires, lesquelles sont complètement désinvesties par la perception. Pour en rendre compte, il faut examiner, outre les rapports topologiques, le type d'intégration que toutes les régions réalisent en relation avec la dynamique du Plan originel.

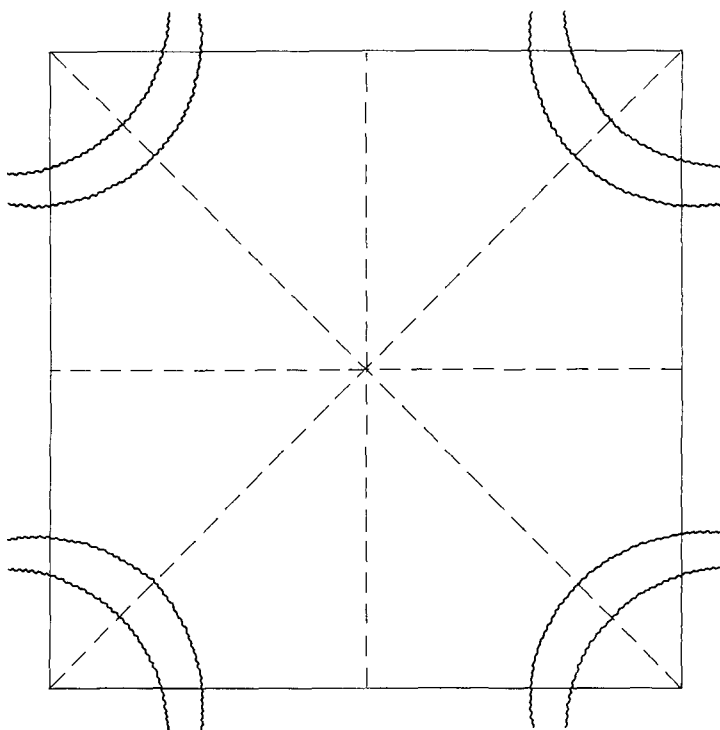
Interrelations avec le Plan originel

Ce tableau est construit dans un format rectangulaire horizontal, lequel transforme de façon spécifique les énergies du Plan originel et la fonction spécifique des positions qu'y occupent les différentes régions¹⁰.

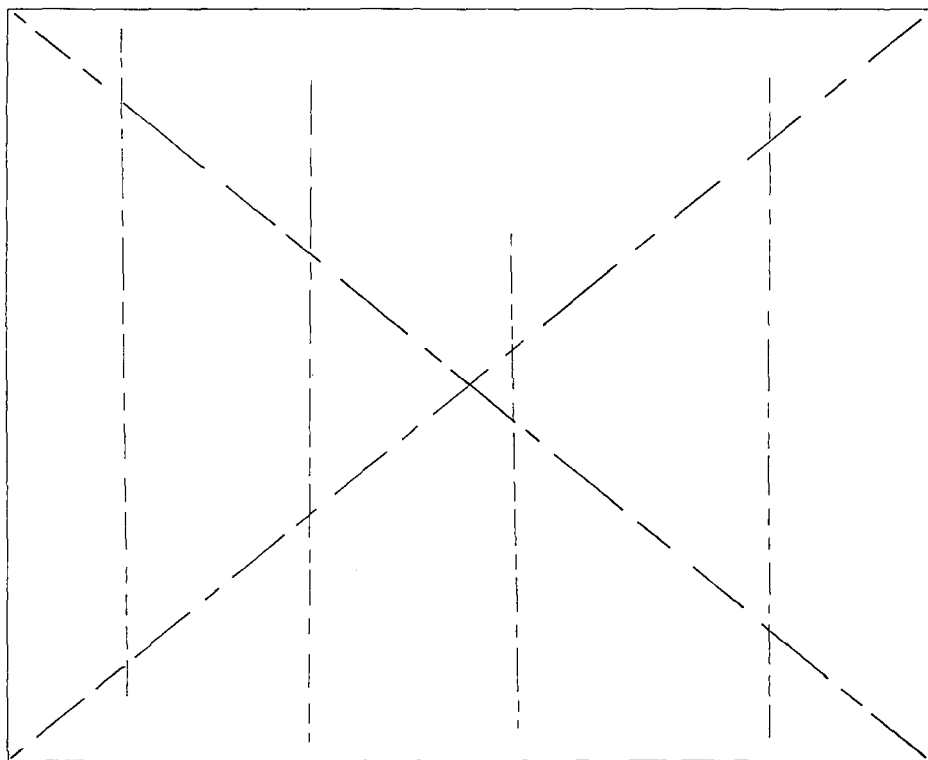
Dans un format carré, tel celui que Kandinsky a longuement décrit, la structure cruciforme qui est produite par le rayonnement de l'énergie des coins, permet essentiellement d'unifier le bas et le haut, la gauche et la droite, par attraction ou rabattement, en faisant passer d'un côté à l'autre les énergies égales issues de la périphérie (fig. 5).

Ce type d'équilibre est rompu dans le format rectangulaire, qui accentue le rôle fonctionnel d'une multiplication des axes verticaux, dont l'énergie est plus forte que celle des axes horizontaux, puisque tout point sur ces verticales est plus rapproché de la source énergétique des côtés enserrant le Plan originel. Dans l'oeuvre de Borduas, nous observons en effet l'émergence dynamique de quatre axes verticaux, aux frontières de certaines régions noire, blanche ou linéaire. Ces énergies verticales virtuelles sont d'autant plus fortes qu'elles se rapprochent de leurs côtés parallèles formant de Plan originel (fig. 6).

(5) Le système énergétique du Plan originel se forme par la rencontre orthogonale de deux paires de lignes-vecteurs parallèles. L'énergie irradiante des coins engendre la dynamique virtuelle des diagonales et du cruciforme central.



(6) Le format rectangulaire du Plan originel accentue le rôle fonctionnel des axes virtuels verticaux par rapport aux horizontales et le primat énergétique des diagonales reliant les coins opposés.



Cette grille verticale, issue de l'infra-structure propre au Plan originel et appuyée par la position des régions élaborées par l'artiste, confère aux régions blanches qu'elle sous-tend, aussi bien dans les colonnes verticales du centre que des extrémités, une plus grande densité qui les attire vers l'avant.

Par ailleurs, le format rectangulaire établit une différence plus importante encore entre les axes vertical et horizontal et la longueur des diagonales qui relient les coins opposés, i.e. les sources énergétiques les plus fortes du Plan originel.

Ces diagonales, comme l'avait bien observé Kandinsky, sont de deux types: la diagonale harmonique, qui réunit le Coin inférieur gauche et le Coin supérieur droit, et la diagonale discordante ou disharmonique, qui relie le Coin inférieur droit au Coin supérieur gauche. Chacune de ces diagonales engendre deux triangles dissemblables, par rapport auxquels se définiront les positions et les qualités spatiales des régions. Cette structure en X, dans le format rectangulaire, tient en échec la disjonction suggérée entre le haut et le bas, en établissant des liens très forts entre le haut et le bas, la droite et la gauche du tableau, ainsi insérés dans des trajets obliques importants.

Dans le tableau de Borduas, la diagonale harmonique est nettement réaffirmée par la disposition des régions et de leurs frontières, et même dans la frontière interne créée par la spatule dans une masse noire oblique. Cette diagonale relie fermement la partie triangulaire supérieure à la partie triangulaire inférieure, en activant la densité et la prégnance des régions blanches dans la région de gauche (fig. 6).

Non seulement la diagonale harmonique présuppose que le Coin inférieur gauche est une région dotée d'une énergie plus forte que le Coin supérieur droit, puisqu'on puisera dans ce réservoir l'énergie qui doit conduire au Coin supérieur droit, mais l'artiste l'a souligné, en y disposant deux régions ouvertes noires qui enserrent et solidifient ce coin, accentuant par là l'énergie blanche des régions adjacentes.

Et ce sera justement la fonction des régions grises que d'atténuer le caractère "lumineux" ou trop énergétique des régions blanches ainsi dynamisées, qui s'avanceraient dans l'espace, en rejetant vers le fond les régions noires qui n'apparaîtraient plus que comme des "échantures" derrière le blanc et non pas comme des "encastrement" aux positions quasi égales dans la profondeur.

La diagonale harmonique entraîne naturellement un regroupement différent des régions noires, c'est-à-dire réunit quatre régions noires dans son triangle supérieur et sept dans son triangle inférieur.

La fonction de la diagonale disharmonique ou discordante est encore plus décisive pour l'organisation de l'espace pictural, tout en combattant d'une façon aussi efficace que la diagonale harmonique, la disjonction du haut et du bas dans la région médiane horizontale du format rectangulaire. Cette diagonale qui va du Coin inférieur droit au

Coin supérieur gauche, et considérée par Kandinsky comme proprement "dramatique", par opposition à la première qui est "lyrique"; elle est surtout par ailleurs un mouvement "vers le lointain", c'est-à-dire vers la plus grande profondeur. C'est-à-dire que cette diagonale monte du bas vers le haut, sous la diagonale harmonique, en creusant comme dans un mouvement de spirale une profondeur spécifique. Ce mouvement de "creusage" a été constaté de façon ferme par les recherches gestaltiennes sur les mouvements visuels, le percepteur refusant toujours de poser des "collisions" dans des trajets visuels et opérant un "détour" dans la profondeur¹¹.

Et c'est bien à cette dynamique qu'a ici recours Borduas pour établir une "troisième dimension", à partir de cette diagonale solidement appuyée dans ses coins inférieur et supérieur par la position spécifique des régions noires¹². C'est-à-dire que le lieu de "dématérialisation" ou de dialectisation des éléments susceptibles de créer l'espace ou la profondeur n'est pas la région médiane horizontale, comme le suggérerait une première lecture topologique des régions noires, mais cette région de la couche centrale supérieure qui regroupe à la fois deux régions noires, des régions blanches et grises dans des tensions particulièrement aiguës et vibrantes.

C'est dans l'ouverture de cette région plus mobile, qui pulse du concave au convexe, qu'il faut situer le lieu d'expressivité de ce tableau, où l'artiste réalise, selon sa propre métaphore verbale, cet "espace cosmique" qui ne soit plus seulement limitée à l'homme, mais "qui participe de l'universel¹³." C'est-à-dire un lieu synthétique, dont la structure ne relève plus de l'espace euclidien et où pourraient s'articuler la conscience de l'homme et l'objectivité du réel, dans le rapport vécu et senti de l'individu Paul-Émile Borduas.

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Notes

- 1 J.L. AUSTIN, *How to do Things with Words*, Oxford, 1962.
- 2 Ces brèves indications sont extraites d'un ouvrage en préparation, *Introduction à la sémiologie des arts visuels*.
On pourra consulter sur le sujet des artistes américains à l'École des Beaux-Arts l'article de H. Barbara WEINBERG, "Nineteenth Century American Painters at the École des Beaux-Arts", *American Art Journal*, vol. 13, no. 4, autumn 1981, pp. 66-84.
- 3 Pour un approfondissement de ces notions, nous renvoyons le lecteur à notre ouvrage, *Les Fondements topologiques de la peinture*, Montréal, HMH, 1980.
- 4 W. KANDINSKY, "Point, Ligne et Plan" (1926), *Écrits Complets*, tome 2, Denoël-Gonthier, 1970, pp. 157-189.
- 5 Borduas a particulièrement attiré l'attention sur l'importance fonctionnelle de ces régions linéaires: "Je veux, nous explique-t-il, donner à chacun de mes tableaux la qualité de lumière qui lui est propre. Dans celui-ci, nous fit-il remarquer, en montrant du doigt une longue ligne blanche peinte au couteau et faisant une légère saillie, cette lumière est donnée par le relief qui projette, par un effet particulier d'éclairage, une demi-teinte naturelle." Jean GACHON, "Le peintre Borduas parle de son art à un journaliste parisien", *La Presse* 18 mars 1957, p. 17.
- 6 François-Marc GAGNON, *Borduas*, Montréal, Fides, 1978, p. 407.
- 7 Paul-Émile BORDUAS, Interview "Carrefour", Société Radio-Canada, mai 1957, publié dans *Liberté*, janvier-février 1962, pp. 15-16.
- 8 Piet MONDRIAN, "Réalité nouvelle et réalité abstraite" (1919-1920), reproduit dans Michel SEUPHOR, *Piet Mondrian, sa vie, son oeuvre*, Paris, Flammarion, 1956, p. 304.
- 9 Voir note 6.
- 10 L'importance de la "position" des masses par rapport au format et au champ global est affirmée par Borduas, qui expliquera à Jean GACHON qu'il veut produire des "masses peintes" à des "places très précises." *La Presse*, 18 mars 1957, p. 17.
- 11 Paul A. KOLERS, *Aspects of Motion Perception*, Oxford, New York, Toronto, Pergamon Press, 1972, p. 81.
- 12 "Quand vous parlez d'espace, est-ce qu'il s'agit de perspective, comme l'entendaient les peintres?" — Réponse de Borduas: "Non, il n'y a plus de perspective, ni aérienne, ni linéaire, mais quand même toujours la troisième dimension qui est exprimée sans le secours de toute une série de plans". *Liberté*, janvier-février 1962, pp. 15-16.
- 13 *La Presse*, 18 mars 1957, p. 17.

A Semiotic Approach to a Painting by Borduas, 3 + 3 + 4

Of the three principles of linguistics, syntax, pragmatics and semantics, this semiotic study will emphasize pragmatics, which is to say, the application of syntactical elements to a precise context, in this instance Borduas' work entitled 3 + 3 + 4 (1956). This method will require first of all an elucidation of the syntactical model to be used.

Topological semiotics provide for a description of the plastic language based on the following processes of identification: a) the basic elements of the plastic language; b) those syntactical rules which govern their interrelationship within the support that constitutes the basic plane. From these two processes may derive a third concern, the semantic dimension of the work.

In topological semiotics, the work in its plasticity is understood to be a force/tension field, which is constituted by the dynamic relationship between its elements and the interaction of a given number of its organizational laws.

The basic elements of the plastic language are the *areas* or "colorems," that is to say, the force-fields correlative to a centering on a specific part of the painting. These areas, of varying size, comprise both a central and a peripheral layer, each one endowed with specific tensions in continual interaction. The peripheral layer is tied to the notion of *boundaries* (the *edge*), where both the nature of a given area's limits and the way in which it leads into other areas are defined. These may be: hard or soft, fluid or solid, sealed or porous, etc.

All areas interconnect by paths of successive centerings effected by the viewer, and by the interaction between the state of one area and the characteristics of another. This action is not subject to chance, rather it is conditioned by a body of syntactical laws created by the structure of man's visual perception and by the more "objective" structure of the visual field itself.

Syntax in a visual work is comprised of four orders of organizational laws:

- 1 - The topological relations: adjacent/separate, connected/unconnected, open/closed, envelopment, succession, etc.
- 2 - The constants of visual perception, determined by the psychology of perception (Gestalt theory, etc.)
- 3 - The laws of the interaction of colour, simultaneous and successive contrasts, subtractive, additive, etc.
- 4 - The structure of the basic plane.

Pragmatics: Borduas' "3 + 3 + 4"

Within the total surface area of the work, the black, the white, the grey and the linear are the four distinct types of area. Of the ten black areas, six are closed and four are open on their periphery; three are connecting and seven are unconnected. They endow the peripheral layer of the overall area with the characteristic of an envelopment of the central layers.

The more numerous white areas are opened or closed by borders (edges) in relief set up in columns at the right side of the painting. Superposed to the black areas, they defeat the protrusion of the latter, causing alternating tensions of forward and recessive movement in these two types of areas. Elsewhere the grey areas tend to push back certain white ones, as do the numerous linear areas created by a folding in relief of the "matière".

The simple topological relationship of envelopment, within the overall area, of adjacent/separate or open/closed in the central areas, tends to establish a disconnection between the upper and lower parts of the painting. This is accentuated through several effects of perspective and projection; the dynamic activity of the basic plane's original structure undermines the certainty of the semantic effects which would be their result.

The infrastructure of the basic plane, by virtue of its cruciform and diagonal axes, reaffirms the dynamism of the white areas and leads to a new regrouping of the black areas in the upper and lower triangles. It allows the upper central layer to harbour that expression of "cosmic space," which was Borduas' ultimate aim.

Fernande Saint-Martin

Le tableau de l'ancien maître-autel de Sainte-Anne de Beupré

Le 17 août 1666, Alexandre Prouville de Tracy (1596-1670), lieutenant général de la Nouvelle-France, se rend en pèlerinage à Sainte-Anne de Beupré accompagné de Monseigneur François de Montmorency Laval (1623-1708); il "donne un très beau tableau pour l'autel". La tradition veut qu'il s'agisse du tableau "miraculeux" connu jusqu'à ce jour sous le titre d'*Ex-voto du Marquis de Tracy* (fig. 1).

En 1844, ce tableau ornait toujours le maître-autel de la chapelle de Sainte-Anne de Beupré: "Un tableau de Ste Anne au-dessus du maître autel donné en 1666 par Mr de Tracy Vice Roy et gouverneur général. Ses armoiries y sont peintes"². En 1870, on le voit toujours au même emplacement³. Deux photographies de Livernois antérieures à 1876 nous confirment que le tableau était placé au-dessus de l'entablement du retable⁴ (fig. 2). À la suite de la construction de la nouvelle église en 1878, on l'y a transporté, et il a été accroché au-dessus du maître-autel⁵.

En 1893, on fit exécuter une copie du tableau⁶. Il nous est donc fort difficile, à partir de cette date, de déterminer sur les photographies où le tableau est présent, s'il s'agit de l'original ou de la copie⁷. Dans son guide de 1904 Simard affirme que l'original est accroché au-dessus du maître-autel de la chapelle commémorative, tandis que la copie est conservée dans la sacristie⁸. Une photographie de Livernois datant vraisemblablement de 1904 nous permet de constater que l'original est bien dans la chapelle⁹; une autre photographie de la même époque situe la copie à la sacristie¹⁰.

Lors de l'incendie de 1922, l'original se trouvait dans l'église et "il n'a été sauvé de l'incendie du 29 mars que grâce à un effort héroïque"¹¹. L'original est actuellement conservé au musée de l'Historial de Sainte-Anne de Beupré et une autre copie d'un certain M. Mauro orne la chapelle commémorative.

Le groupe de l'éducation de la Vierge, placé au centre de la composition, est une copie partielle du célèbre tableau de Pierre-Paul Rubens daté vers 1625 et conservé au Musée Koninklijk à Anvers (fig. 3). Agenouillé dans l'angle gauche de la composition, un homme barbu tient un bâton de pèlerin. L'artiste lui a peint une coquille Saint-Jacques sur l'épaule de son vêtement. Dans l'angle droit, une femme porte les mêmes attributs. Au-dessus du groupe, le père éternel, entouré d'anges, domine la composition.

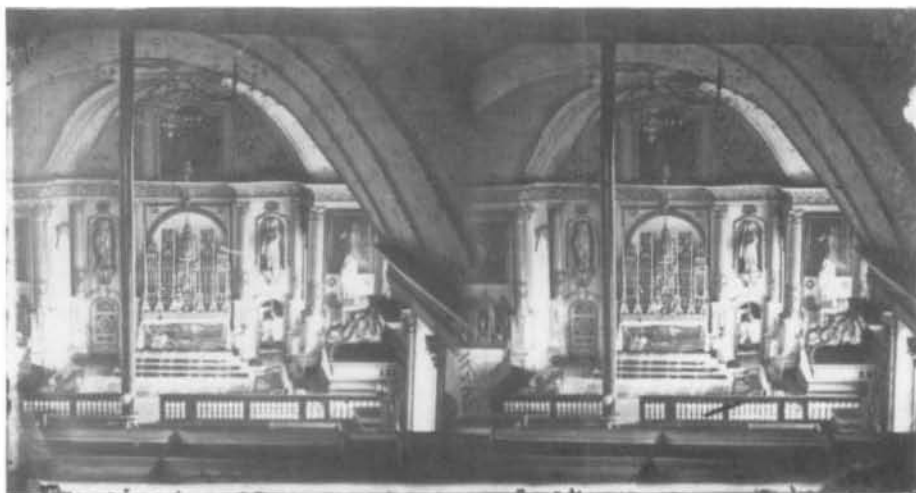
On a longtemps affirmé que les deux personnages agenouillés aux pieds de sainte Anne étaient Monsieur et Madame de Tracy¹². Il est impossible que cet homme dans la pleine force de l'âge soit un portrait du Marquis. En effet, Alexandre Prouville de Tracy était né en 1596, ce qui lui donne soixante-neuf ans lors de l'exécution du tableau. Un examen attentif du tableau nous incite à croire que les armoiries, peintes sur la partie inférieure au centre de la toile, sont un ajout. D'ailleurs un



(1) Anonyme, **Éducation de la Vierge aux pèlerins**, vers 1665, huile sur toile, 2,3 m X 1,9 m. Collection Musée de l'Historial, Sainte-Anne de Beaupré. (Photo Jean Bélisle, 1977).

article du *Courrier du Canada* de 1870 nous confirme que les armoiries ont été déplacées: "C'est un présent de M. de Tracy, vice-roi de la Nouvelle-France, dont on aperçoit les armes à un des angles du tableau ¹³."

En page frontispice des *Annales de la Bonne Sainte-Anne de Beaupré* de 1898, une gravure place les armoiries dans l'angle droit de la composition¹⁴. Néanmoins ces armoiries sont bien celles de Tracy et de



(2) LIVERNOIS, Intérieur de l'église Sainte-Anne de Beupré, avant 1876. Impression moderne à partir d'un négatif sur verre en stéréoscope. Collection Archives de la Basilique Sainte-Anne de Beupré, PA-16/11184.

son épouse Louise de Fouilleuse¹⁵. L'identification des armoiries ne signifie aucunement qu'elles datent de l'exécution du tableau.

Ce tableau a en effet été retouché. Une observation aux rayons ultra-violets permet de voir plusieurs repeints: une partie de la robe de sainte Anne, le visage de la femme de droite, le drapé du haut du tableau et les armoiries. Nous avons également remarqué que le tableau a subi un nettoyage partiel au niveau des mains et des visages des personnages¹⁶. Nous savons qu'un certain Weidenbach aurait réentoilé et nettoyé ce tableau en 1897¹⁷.

En 1870, un journaliste du *Courrier du Canada* attribue le tableau à Charles Le Brun (1619-1690) sans toutefois en donner les raisons¹⁸. Par la suite, de nombreux historiens ont accepté cette attribution¹⁹. Gérard Morisset rejettera cette hypothèse et attribuera le tableau à un peintre parisien anonyme²⁰. Comme le faisait remarquer pertinemment Morisset, on ne peut croire que Charles Le Brun ait copié Rubens.

Comme nous l'avons dit, la partie centrale du tableau a été copiée de Rubens. Le reste de la composition s'inspire d'une gravure de Gabriel Le Brun (1625-1660) *Image de la confrérie de la Conception de la Glorieuse Vierge Marie*²¹. La Bibliothèque nationale de Paris conserve une version non signée de cette gravure²² (fig. 4). Les comptes de la confrérie parisienne précisent que Charles Le Brun en fit le dessin en 1657²³. On y voit saint Joachim, muni d'un bâton, agenouillé dans l'angle inférieur gauche. Dans l'angle inférieur droit, sainte Anne, les bras croisés sur la poitrine, est agenouillée devant un livre. Au centre de la composition, Charles Le Brun a représenté la Vierge sur un croissant de lune. Dans la partie supérieure, Dieu le père plane sur des nuages. La composition de

la gravure de la Conception de la Glorieuse Vierge Marie, si l'on excepte la partie centrale, ressemble à celle du tableau de la collection de Sainte-Anne de Beaupré.

L'artiste qui a peint le tableau donné par le Marquis de Tracy a donc élaboré sa composition à partir de cette image de confrérie. C'est tout probablement d'une autre image de confrérie inspirée de *l'Éducation de la Vierge* de Rubens qu'il copia la partie centrale du tableau.

Au XVII^e siècle, les confréries de métiers favorisèrent la grande popularité du thème de l'éducation de la Vierge. D'ailleurs, la collection d'images des confréries parisiennes des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles conservées à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris en font foi. Réimprimées très souvent et distribuées à tous les confrères, ces images gravées ornaient les ateliers des maîtres artisans²⁴. V.F. Poilly exécuta en 1710 une gravure à partir du tableau de Rubens, pour la confrérie des marchands gantiers et parfumeurs de Paris²⁵. En plus des gravures des confréries de métiers, ce tableau a été largement diffusé par la gravure²⁶.

Tout nous porte donc à croire que le peintre du tableau de Sainte-Anne de Beaupré utilisa pour élaborer sa composition deux gravures françaises distribuées fort probablement par des confréries de métiers dans les années 1660. Cependant, l'artiste ne pouvait représenter deux fois sainte Anne dans une même composition. Il dut modifier la sainte Anne d'après Le Brun et éliminer le livre lui servant d'attribut. Ajoutant un bâton de pèlerin au personnage féminin, il la transforme en pèlerin. Les coquilles et les gourdes furent ajoutées pour marquer la nouvelle identification des personnages.

Devant cette nouvelle interprétation du tableau donné par Monsieur de Tracy, on doit donc cesser de le considérer comme un ex-voto. Il ne répond d'ailleurs pas à la définition d'une peinture votive. Sa composition, son format et sa forme à orillons nous portent à croire que le tableau a été conçu comme un tableau d'autel. Les photographies anciennes et les inventaires de l'église de Sainte-Anne de Beaupré corroborent notre hypothèse. Puisque ce tableau ornait le maître-autel, il faudrait donc suggérer un nouveau titre, comme *L'Éducation de la Vierge aux pèlerins*.

Comme nous l'avons vu, ce tableau a été copié au moins à deux reprises. De plus cette iconographie a été largement diffusée dans les *Annales de la Bonne Sainte-Anne de Beaupré* à la fin du XIX^e siècle²⁷. En 1909, les *Annales* donnent en prime une reproduction du tableau²⁸. Une médaille frappée lors du jubilé de 1908 reprend la même composition²⁹ (fig. 5). Les rédemptoristes favorisent donc une grande diffusion de cette iconographie³⁰.



3. Pierre-Paul RUBENS (1577-1640), *Éducation de la Vierge*, vers 1625, huile sur toile, 1,94 m. X 1,40 m. Musée Kononklijk, Anvers. (Photo Institut Royal de Patrimoine artistique, Bruxelles.)



(4) Anonyme, *Image de la Conception de la Glorieuse Vierge Marie*, gravure. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, RE 13, Tome II, p. 61, neg. Bll656.



(5) Anonyme, *Médaille du jubilé*, 1908. Collection Université Laval, Centre de recherches en religions populaires. (photo de l'auteur.)

L'Éducation de la Vierge aux pèlerins ne peut être attribuée dans l'état actuel de la recherche. L'on peut supposer que de Tracy la fit exécuter en France en 1665 et qu'il la donna l'année suivante lors de son pèlerinage à la paroisse de Sainte-Anne de Beauré pour orner le maître-autel de la nouvelle église.

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Notes

- 1 *Le Journal des Jésuites*, Montréal, J.M. Valois, 1892., p. 348.
- 2 Archives de la Basilique Sainte-Anne de Beauré (dorénavant ABSAB), PA-15d/b-1/892-1. «Inventaire des biens meubles et immeubles appartenant à la fabrique Ste Anne du petit Cap, fait en 1844», p. 1.
- 3 Anonyme, «La fête de la Bonne Ste-Anne», *Courrier du Canada*, 3 août 1870, p. 2.
- 4 ABSAB, PA-16/11184. Livernois, *Intérieur de l'église Sainte-Anne de Beauré*. Impression moderne d'un négatif sur verre en stéréoscope, avant 1876.
ABSAB, PA-16/11476. Livernois, *Intérieur de l'église de Sainte-Anne de Beauré*. Impression moderne d'un négatif sur verre ancien, avant 1876.
- 5 David GOSSELIN, *Manuel du pèlerin à la Bonne Sainte-Anne de Beauré*, Québec, J.A. Langlois, 1879. pp. 18-19.
- 6 ABSAB, B-11-b/b-1/123, «Droits d'auteur et de reproduction d'une copie du tableau miraculeux», 3 mai 1893.
- 7 J.E. Livernois exécuta en 1893 une copie de l'original comme l'atteste une note conservée aux ABSAB: «Nous convenons en acceptant le don fait à notre maison par J.E. Livernois photographe de Québec consistant en une peinture à l'huile copiée du tableau miraculeux de Ste Anne» ABSAB, B-11b/b-1/123, «Droits d'auteur... 3 mai 1893.» Cette copie portait l'inscription suivante au bas «Donné par le Marquis de Tracy 17 août 1666» (Archives Nationales du Québec, Fonds Livernois, N 77-11-17-4. Plaque de verre no 74350). Cette copie de Livernois a vraisemblablement disparu en 1922, dans l'incendie de l'église. De nos jours, on conserve dans la chapelle commémorative une autre copie signée M. Mauro.
- 8 Joseph SIMARD, *Guide de pèlerin et du visiteur à la Bonne Sainte-Anne*, Sainte-Anne de Beauré, 1904. p. 51.
- 9 ABSAB, PA-16/11196. Livernois, *Intérieur de la chapelle commémorative, vers 1904*. Impression moderne d'un négatif sur verre.
- 10 ABSAB, B-9a/7176. Anonyme, *L'autel du tableau miraculeux et des reliques à la sacristie*. Carte postale couleur.
- 11 George BELANGER, *La Bonne Sainte-Anne au Canada et à Beauré*, Québec, 1923, pp. 83-84.
- 12 Régis ROY, «Un tableau de 1665», *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, 1923. p. 73.
Gérard MORISSET, «Les ex-voto de Sainte-Anne de Beauré», *La Patrie*, 23 juillet 1950. p. 47.
- 13 Anonyme, «La fête de la Bonne Ste-Anne», *Courrier du Canada*, 3 août 1870, p. 2.
- 14 *Annales de la Bonne Sainte-Anne de Beauré*, août 1898, page frontispice.
- 15 ABSAB, B-11b/b-1/128. Lettre de Régis Roy au Père Leclerc, 13 mars 1924: «... j'ai pu établir que les armes accolées à celles de M. de Tracy sont des Marquis de Fouilleuses seigneur de Flavacourt, en Beauvaisies.»
- 16 Examen à l'ultra-violet effectué par Rodrigue Bédard, restaurateur, en octobre 1977.
- 17 ABSAB, PA-16/4413. Document, vol. 3, pp. 239-241.
- 18 Anonyme, «La fête de la Bonne Ste-Anne», *Courrier du Canada*, 3 août 1870, p. 2.
- 19 Anonyme, *Manuel de Dévotion à la Bonne Sainte-Anne*, Québec, L.S. Demers, 1899. p. 19.
P.V. CHARLAND, *Le culte de sainte Anne en Occident*, Québec, Imprimerie Franciscaine, 1921. p. 412.
David GOSSELIN, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
E.Z. MASSICOTTE «Tableaux, portraits et images d'autrefois», *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, 1934, p. 117.
Régis ROY, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
P.G. ROY, «Un tableau de Lebrun», *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, janvier 1898, p. 158.
- 20 Gérard MORISSET, «La peinture en Nouvelle-France», *Le Canada-français*, novembre 1933, p. 224.
- 21 Bernard de MONTGOLFIER, «Charles Le Brun et les confréries parisiennes», *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. LV, 1960, p. 337, fig. 6.
- 22 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, RE 13, Tome II, p. 61, nég. B 11656.
- 23 Bernard de MONTGOLFIER, *op. cit.*, p. 337.
- 24 Jean GASTON, *Les images des confréries Parisiennes avant la Révolution*. Paris, André Marty, 1910. p. XXI.
- 25 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, RE 13, p. 12.

- 26 Comme exemple, voir: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Rd3, nég. B 59089; Michel Dossier (1684-1750) *Sainte Anne*, gravure.
Voir aussi: Montréal, Musée de la Ferme Saint-Gabriel, no. cat. 12 i 1024, François Chereau (1680-1729), *Sainte-Anne*, gravure.
- 27 Les pages frontispice des *Annales de la Bonne Sainte-Anne de Beaupré* des années 1898 et 1899 reproduisent ce tableau.
- 28 *Annales de la Bonne Sainte Anne de Beaupré*, avril 1909, recto de la page couverture.
- 29 Collection Université Laval, Centre de recherches en religions populaires. Anonyme, médaille du jubilé 1908.
- 30 Régis ROY, *op. cit.*, p. 73. L'auteur indique qu'une reproduction du tableau est parue dans la revue illustrée de *La Presse* du 20 janvier 1923. Signalons de plus qu'au cours du XXe siècle les Rédemptoristes, en plus de publier des photographies du tableau dans les *Annales*, en firent tirer plusieurs cartes postales. La plus ancienne que nous ayons pu retrouver est antérieure à 1922 et la plus récente date de 1977.

The Drawings of Alfred Pellán*: Further Thoughts by the Author

To review one's own work is either to run the risk of public self-justification, self-congratulation, self-promotion, apologia, confessional lapses or to adopt an overly laudatory stance. Self-critique is as biased and as revealing as the original manuscript and its criticism by others. Yet one can argue that in specialized areas of research, an author is often more familiar with the material than one's colleagues and can contribute further insight on the subject in review format. While some might question the ethics of the practice, it offers the opportunity for self-analysis, annotations and additions that otherwise would not be made public until a much later date, usually in the form of a revised preface if there is a second printing.

Having contemplated various stylistic modes ranging through the satiric, the anecdotal, the narrative and the academic prior to writing this review, I have chosen the last. Hopefully my choice of style will not totally obscure the inherent humour I find in this situation. I have also chosen to write the review in the first person. To do otherwise would mask my responsibility for writing both the catalogue and this review.

Although drawings and drawing played a central role in Alfred Pellán's work, until recently no examination of Pellán's *œuvre* existed. As such, *The Drawings of Alfred Pellán*, published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, is an important addition to the extant Pellán literature and the study of Canadian drawings. As I state in the preface, the catalogue is a "preliminary study", not a *catalogue raisonné*. It consists of an essay, entries for the eighty-nine drawings, a list of principal exhibitions including drawings, an appendix, a selected bibliography and 121 illustrations. In the essay, I attempt to present an overview of Pellán's drawing styles, technique and content beginning with his student years and ending in the late '60's. Detailed entries and lengthy discussion of specific works in the essay either corroborate the main theses or introduce other considerations. The text contains extensive information about the drawings themselves and, with the discussion of the relationship between the drawn and painted *œuvre*, reveals unknown aspects of Pellán's art.

The essay is divided into chapters, with the theoretical construct of my interpretation outlined in the introduction. Here, I classify Pellán's pre-1944 drawings as classical or academic and the post-1944 work as Surrealist, suggesting that Pellán's dissatisfaction with the academic tradition as practised at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Montréal is the primary reason for a stylistic shift in the drawings. I believe that this not only helps to clarify the anomaly of Pellán's different painting and

*Editors' note: This exhibition catalogue and essay are reviewed on p. 123 of this issue of *The Journal of Canadian Art History*.

drawing styles in the preceding decade but also elucidates one aspect of his eclectic approach to art. Notwithstanding Pellan's corroboration, however, my premise that all Pellan drawings executed after the Maillard debacle are Surrealist is, perhaps, an oversimplification. Both here and in the ensuing chapters, I avoided directly confronting François-Marc Gagnon's assertion that Pellan's post-Paris work is *rattrapage*,¹ minimized the implications of Pellan's proclivity for image repetition after 1950 and failed to articulate the salient features of what I referred to as "Pellan's eclecticism" at the beginning of the introduction.

Subsequent chapters conform to the chronological periods of Pellan's career as determined by residence and/or style. These vary in length, depending upon the existence of extant works, the frequency with which Pellan drew and, of course, my knowledge and interests. As might be expected, there is a paucity of work dating from Pellan's student years in Québec City. Although it was difficult to formulate a notion of Pellan's style from the four works known to me (two only by photograph), I feel I was remiss in not exploring the relationship between Pellan's training and his known drawings more fully in this section. Such an investigation would have added to the knowledge of theory and practice between 1920 and 1926 at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Québec City.

An important by-product of art publications is the sudden focus of attention on a subject and the resulting emergence of "new" information. Contrary to my statement that none of Pellan's early pencil sketches survived, recently I have been informed of the existence of two. Knowledge of Pellan's Québec years will be extended when his known formal studies of casts can be compared with his more impromptu drawings of friends, particularly if their identity can be established. I concentrated on establishing typologies and a general chronology for the drawings executed between 1926 and 1940 in the Paris chapter. Its value is that of a necessary first step in attempting to sort out the period, but I admit to reservations about erecting a chronology on primarily statistic evidence and, by inference, the date ascribed to certain works.

In reference to the latter, since writing the catalogue, I have revised my opinion on the dating of the untitled drawing depicting Mlle Geneviève Tirot (cat. no. 11) which is dated 1941 on the *recto* and inscribed 1938 on the *verso* by Pellan. I initially believed it to be a work executed even earlier, corresponding to the period when Pellan favoured ink line drawings and frequently drew the model. Neither rationale makes much sense on further contemplation. The short, nervous lines are quite similar to the style employed by Pellan to render the landscape of St. Louis de Courville in a number of 1940 ink drawings. Moreover, further reflection on the apparent discrepancy of a Montréal drawing depicting a woman who was still in Paris is resolved when one accepts

the possibility that Pellán's 1942 practice of executing second versions of Paris drawings in charcoal actually began in 1941 and in ink. For these reasons, I believe the date on the recto is, in fact, correct.

The Paris chapter also attempted to explain the differences in painting and drawing styles. My contention that Pellán was more interested in traditional formal concerns than experimentation in his drawings, while probably correct, requires elaboration. The discussion of Pellán's classicism acts only as a mild antidote to otherwise dry stylistic analysis, and, at the same time, dilutes the importance of the intense emotions Pellán depicted in these drawings. Equally problematic are my comparisons with Picasso and Matisse which are, with one exception, too tentative and suffer from a lack of supporting documentation.

In the following chapter, "Montreal: 1940-1944", I document the first instance of Pellán's practice of executing more than one version of a given drawing at different times. The discussion clarifies the difference in Pellán's drawing style between the '30's and '40's and firms up the chronology. Moreover, the definition of the practice and pinpointing the time of its inception provides information about Pellán's technique.

Equally important is the section devoted to the pivotal Graida Esar drawings. They are the first instance of Pellán working in series and demonstrate that Pellán was developing a different stylistic vocabulary in his charcoal drawings prior to switching to ink in 1944. In the leaflet, *Alfred Pellán*, published by the *Musée d'art contemporain* in conjunction with the exhibition, Diane St-Amand expanded on my discussion of the Graida Esar portrait entitled *Young Girl* (catalogued by the *Musée d'art contemporain* as *Three Eyes*). St-Amand's interpretation of the third eye as "*œil de l'inconscient*" and her reference to Klee as a source clearly establish the Surrealist content of the drawing and, by implication, the related work entitled *Face and Profile*. My discussion of the drawing in both the catalogue and *Surrealist Traits in the Heads of Alfred Pellán*² was limited to an analysis of its relationship to Cubism. St-Amand's insights give deeper meaning to the drawing.

The weaknesses of this chapter are similar to those in preceding chapters and the one alluded to above; analysis that is too formalistic, insufficient documentation and an avoidance of concepts. These comments are most pertinent in reference to the discussion of the ink drawings of the period executed at Charlevoix. Hopefully, the influence of this art community on Pellán in the early '40's will be more apparent after the forthcoming "Charlevoix" exhibition at the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts. Without doubt, the 1944-52 chapter is the richest. This period of Pellán's *œuvre* and Montréal art history has been the subject of numerous studies, many of which provided information and interpretative models upon which to base my discussion. The chapter itself

is the most extensive study of Pellán's Surrealist works to date, defining their poetic content and source.

One of my major discoveries was the identification of forty-four drawings inspired by the poetry of Paul Eluard (co-related with the specific poem in the appendix). Also, I was able to solve the mystery of the "lost" drawings of the period, known to me through photographs in Pellán's archives. Many drawings were painted over by Pellán and reclassified in the painting section of his inventory. This discovery has important repercussions regarding the quantity and nature of extant work of the period as well as Pellán's technique and notions of drawing and painting. Unlike the other chapters, the stylistic analysis is integrated with a fuller discussion of Pellán's work, making reading easier.

Stressing the 1944-48 years is both a strength and a weakness of the catalogue. The period is a fertile and crucial one in the development of Québec modernism in which Pellán's role was important. Rather than following the usual practice of juxtaposing Pellán and Borduas, I concentrated on establishing Pellán's work as an independent entity, partially as a means of drawing attention to hitherto unknown or minimized aspects of Pellán's *œuvre* and partially to reinforce the viability of the option that Pellán's art presented at the time. In so doing, I admit to shirking from fully taking on the Pellán/Borduas debate. Moreover, although I offered a variety of reasons for Pellán's abandonment of the academic tradition in his drawings, I did not investigate sufficiently the implications of his battle with Maillard.

In the final chapter, I faced a problem encountered by many authors writing about the later years in the career of an artist whose reputation was established decades earlier on a different type of work, work that is seen as more serious, more innovative and less commercial than the later work. The closest parallel is the literature on Picasso where his later years are discussed primarily in terms of his preceding work and any new developments are handled somewhat indulgently. The problem was compounded in my case by the fact Pellán is still alive and active. Although his drawing activity after 1952 greatly diminished, my treatment of this work is thin. Once again I retreated behind the safety of an archaeological approach, preferring to categorize as opposed to discuss. It is not surprising, in light of the above discussion, that the interpretative text of the catalogue entries varies in detail and depth. Both the discussion of the early and late works is too descriptive. The most complete entries are those discussing Pellán's early Surrealist drawings (1944-1948). Here, in fact, description and interpretation are more balanced.

The format and layout of any publication is as subject to criticism as the content. Too often the distinction between author- and publisher-responsibility in this sphere is not sufficiently delineated. My part in determining the design of this catalogue was limited to the

enunciation of general principles: low-cost, manageable size, legible typeface, wide margins, footnotes at the end of chapters rather than at the end of the essay, as close an integration of text and illustrations as possible and a photographic layout that made its own case. With the exception of the last two points, I was reasonably pleased considering that the manuscript was published without my seeing a design mock-up. All works discussed are illustrated; the inclusion of so much visual material is one of the catalogue's strengths. Not only are the three monographs on Pellán containing reproductions of his drawings out of print⁴, none include as comprehensive a representation from as many different periods of his work. The compilation of so many good quality illustrations in one source will prove a valuable tool for future scholarship.

Author, publisher and designer, however, can be faulted on not finding or agreeing upon a more workable solution to the book/catalogue design dilemma. The main problem is the location of the illustrations⁵. All illustrations for works in the exhibition are located at the end of the relevant chapter regardless of whether the work was discussed in the chapter text. Comparative material and illustrations of works discussed in the text but not included in the exhibition are located in the essay text. This is a particularly confusing and frustrating arrangement, necessitating keeping one's fingers in three places at once, while reading the essay (four, if one wishes to consult the catalogue entry for further information on items included in the exhibition.) Furthermore, the splitting of pairs and sequences of illustrations should not be determined by inclusion of the works in the exhibition. Said split undermines the strength of the comparisons. In the text section, the grid could have been broken differently to avoid placing comparative material on the *recto* and *verso* of the same page.

Had I been given *carte blanche*, I would have designed a catalogue in which each work discussed in the essay was not only illustrated in text but also in close proximity to the relevant passages, preferably on the same or adjacent page. Rosalind Krauss' *Passages in Modern Sculpture*⁶ is an exemplar of this type. Each of the catalogue entries would be accompanied by a photographic identification, even if this meant repetition. Here, the National Gallery's own *Pluralities/1980*⁷ can be cited as a model. In addition to the identification photographic entry, essential comparative material would be repeated. Auxiliary comparative illustrations and photographs of cited related works would also be included in this section. To paraphrase Panofsky: the art historian with the most photographs wins. Put less competitively, one of the goals of scholarly publications on Canadian art should be the inclusion of as much visual material as possible. The accessibility of all forms of information is essential in familiarizing both the public and the scholar with our too little-known heritage and spurring further research in what is still a young field.

I cannot refrain from mentioning two other points of contention. The first is the practice of citing the dimensions of works only in metric units; the second, placing the name of the collection below the entry text. Both are National Gallery house style. Given the country's recent conversion to metric measure, the use of differing conversion formulae and the fact that most works now cited only in metric units were once exhibited or published with measurements given in inches, the scholar trying to determine without a photograph whether a given work is in fact one and the same with the work discussed in the catalogue is faced with needless work. Surely, both units could be included. The separation of concrete data related to a specific work by interpretative text is also tedious. The National Gallery explanation is that visual highlighting of this nature is a means of drawing attention to the lender without whose generosity exhibitions and publications would not occur. No one can argue against the desire to acknowledge the important part played by lenders in an exhibition, but the same result could be effected within the information section of the entry.

To its credit, the National Gallery initially and wisely decided to publish separate English and French editions. As a result, both weight and cost were kept low. The late Jean-Claude Champenois contribution as editor was instrumental in arriving at a more accurate, sensitive and lucid text in both versions and his presence will be sorely missed in future publications. The National Gallery should also be commended on engaging guest curators, particularly in the Canadian field. Despite the problems for both parties that out-of-town contract work presents, it is a means of enabling scholars to disseminate their work to a wider public and to collaborate with Gallery staff in a mutually instructive undertaking. Without the support of government institutions, the possibilities of publishing technical material would be far fewer. Although the catalogue has its faults, the National Gallery is to be thanked for creating the opportunity to publish a pioneer study.

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Notes:

- 1 François-Marc GAGNON, "Pellan, Borduas, and the Automatistes," *Arts Canada*, XXIX, 5 (December 1972/January 1973, 174/175), pp. 48-55.
- 2 *Journal of Canadian Art History*, III, 1 & 2, Autumn 1976, pp. 65-66.
- 3 Pellan owned a copy of Eluard's *Capitale de la douleur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945). Although it was known that some of Pellan's drawings were inspired by Eluard's poetry, neither the number of drawings nor the specific source had been enumerated.
- 4 Eloi de GRANDMONT, *Cinquante Dessins d'Alfred Pellan*, Les cahiers noirs, vol. I. Montréal: Éditions Lucien Parizeau, 1945; Germain LEFEBVRE, *Pellan*, Toronto: McClelland and Steward, 1973; Guy ROBERT, *Pellan: His Life and His Art*, Montréal: Editions du Centre de Psychologie et Pédagogie, 1963.
- 5 See "Dessins et Surréalisme au Québec", *Journal of Canadian Art History*, V, 2, 1981, pp. 142-45 where I discuss other aspects of the problem.
- 6 Published by Viking Press in New York in 1977.
- 7 Ottawa, 1980.

Élèves canadiens dans les archives de l'école des Beaux-Arts et de l'École des Arts Décoratifs de Paris.

Les archives de l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, pour ses documents postérieurs à la suppression des Académies en 1793 et antérieurs à 1920, ont été versées aux Archives nationales, à Paris, en 1972¹; elles sont regroupées sous la cote AJ 52 et sont pourvues d'un inventaire imprimé². Ce fonds forme un ensemble remarquable, intéressant différents aspects des activités de l'École pendant le XIXe siècle et le début du XXe: administration, personnel, élèves, programme, concours, collections, expositions. Les *registres des ateliers*, les *dossiers individuels des élèves* établis à la suite du Second Empire et une partie de la *Correspondance générale* ont été consultés dans le but de recenser les Canadiens qui ont fréquenté l'École.

Bien que les renseignements recueillis soient exclusivement administratifs, ils permettent de suivre les débuts de plusieurs "rapins" canadiens (voir index des 55 artistes mentionnés).

Des extraits du registre des élèves étrangers admis à l'École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (Archives nationales, série AJ 53) font l'objet d'un supplément.

Les titres suivant les cotes, sont ceux de l'inventaire imprimé.

Sylvain Allaire
Montréal, Québec

1 Les documents antérieurs à 1793 ont été maintenus à la bibliothèque de l'École (inventaire publié); ceux postérieurs à 1920 sont conservés par les services administratifs de l'École.

2 LABAT-POUSSIN, Brigitte, *Inventaire des Archives de l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts et de l'École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs* (Sous-séries AJ 52 et AJ 53), Paris, Archives nationales, 1978.

AJ ⁵² 236

**Registre matricule des élèves des sections de peinture et de sculpture,
octobre 1871 — juillet 1894.**

Présenté selon l'ordre numérique du matricule. Donne les nom et prénom de l'élève, date et lieu de sa naissance, son adresse à Paris, le professeur-chef de l'atelier auquel il est inscrit, enfin la date de son admission comme élève de l'École. Les renseignements sont repris dans les dossiers individuels des artistes (voir AJ⁵² 250-339).

4131

HUOT, Charles. 25 mars (sic)
1856. Québec. Canada.
10 Passage Beaux-Arts,
Place Pigalle.
Cabanel. 16 mars 1875.

4920

BRIDGMAN, Georges.
9 nov. 1865. Toronto. Canada.
44, rue Jacob.
Gérôme. 11 mars 1884.

4985

MORAN, Thomas William.
27 avril 1856, Toronto. Canada.
44, rue Jacob.
Gérôme, 5 août 1884.

5211

LONGMAN, John. 11 octobre
1860. Toronto. Canada.
203, boulevard d'Enfer.
Boulangier et Lefebvre.
15 mars 1887.

5460

LAROSE, Ludger. 7 mai 1868.
Montréal. Canada.
18 bis, Denfert-Rochereau.
Boulangier et Laurens.
16 juillet 1889.

5512

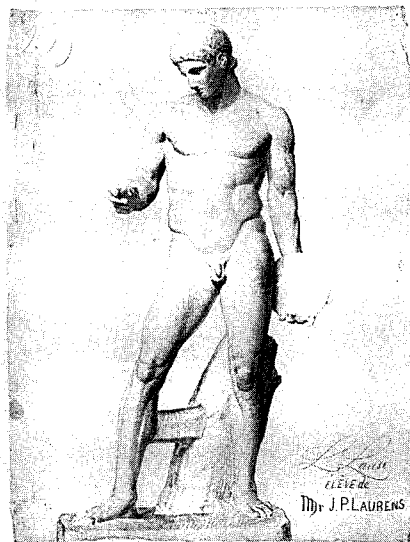
SAINT-CHARLES. 5 juin 1868.
Montréal. Canada.
59, rue Bonaparte.
J. Lefebvre. 16 juillet 1890.

5576

FRANCHÈRE, F.C. 4 mars 1866.
Montréal. Canada.
117, rue N.D. des Champs.
J. Blanc. 23 février 1891.

5675

COTÉ, Hypolite Wilfrid
Marc-Aurèle. 7 avril 1869.
St-Christophe.
Bonnat. 11 juillet 1892.



(1) Ludger LAROSE, **Figure d'après la
bosse (plâtre antique)**, fusain sur papier,
62,7 x 46,8 cm
en bas à droite: L. Larose/ÉLÈVE de/Mr
J.P. LAURENS;
en haut à gauche: 295;
verso, en haut à gauche: L. Larose/42;
(estampillé): ÉCOLE/DES BEAUX ARTS/
CONCOURS D'ÉMULATION
Galerie nationale du Canada (1980)
(Photo: G.N.C.)

Registre d'inscription des élèves dans les ateliers de peinture, sculpture, architecture, ateliers extérieurs. 1874-1945.

Donne les renseignements (noms, lieu et date de naissance, adresse à Paris) au moment de l'inscription à l'atelier — ce qui ne constituait pas l'admission comme élève de l'École. La pagination est celle du cahier. Il n'existe pas de registre donnant le temps passé aux ateliers ni informant sur les autres activités. Une "*feuille de valeurs*" est habituellement versée au dossier individuel établi pour certains élèves (voir AJ⁵² 250-339).

(atelier Cabanel)

HUOT Charles. Québec. Canada.
10 avril 1855. Naturalisé. École
Niedermeyer. 29 juin 1874. p. 1
HUOT Charles. Québec. Canada.
25 mars 1856. 10 Passage des
Beaux-Arts, Pl Pigalle, 19 mars
1875. (la ligne est biffée) p. 1
RUSSELL Edwin. Montréal.
Canada. 2 juin 1854. 81 bd
Montparnasse. 4 oct. 1875. p. 2

(atelier Delauney)

LAROSE Ludger. Montréal.
Canada. 1 mai 1868. 5 rue
Martignac, 15 8bre 89. p. 13

(atelier Cormon)

MAYBEE Eli Delbert. Sterling.
Canada. 14 avril 1881. 9 rue
Champs 1ère. 23 janvier 1905.
p. 25

(atelier Bonnat)

COTÉ Hypolite Wilfrid
Marc-Aurèle. St-Christophe.
Canada. 7 avril 1869. 131 Rue de
Vaugirard. 20 juin 1891. p. 77
LEBLANC Zacharie. St-Grégoire.
Canada. 29 janv. 1876. 37 bd
Montparnasse. 22 xbre. 1891. p. 78

(atelier Gérôme)

MORAN Thomas William.
Toronto. Canada. 27 avril 1856.
44 rue Jacob. 10 (octobre) 83.
p. 145
BRIDGMAN George B. Toronto.
Canada. 5 novembre 1865. 44,
rue Jacob. 10 (octobre) 83. p. 145
SAUNDERS Theodore. Kingston.
Canada. 17 février 1862. 63 R. de
Seine. 6 nov. 1883. p. 145

LONGMAN John B. Toronto.
Canada. 11 8bre 1860. 203 bd
d'Enfer. 18 (octobre 1887). p. 148
GILL Charles Ignace. Sorel.
Canada. 21 8bre 1871. 21 rue de
Tournon. 18 (octobre 1890). p. 149
DUBÉ Louis Théodore. St-Roch.
Canada. 7 avril 1862. 59 av. de
Saxe. 20 (octobre 1890). p. 149
GRAVEL-LAJOIE Louis Charles.
Montréal. Canada. 30 mai 1868.
43 rue Cherche-Midi. 27
(novembre 1890). p. 150
COBURN Frederic Simpson.
Melbourne. Canada. 18 mars 71.
1 rue Leclerc. 29 avril
(1892). p. 151
PARADIS Jobson. St-Jean.
Canada. 22 février 1871. 10 juin
1892. p. 151
LAMARCHE Ulric. St-Henri.
Canada 15 xbre 1868. 66 rue N.D.
des Champs. 2 9bre (1892). p. 152
MORRIS Edmond Montague.
Perth. Canada. 18 8bre 71. 95 R.
Vaugirard. 19 (octobre
1894). p. 154
TUDOR-HART Ernest Percival.
Montréal. Canada. 27 déc. 1873.
6 avenue Tronchet. 7 (novembre
1894). p. 154
LAUGHLIN Ian MC.
Charlottetown. Canada. 9 nov.
76. 18 bis Impasse du Maine. 17
(octobre 1898). p. 157
WHITE Charles Henry.
Hamilton. Canada. 14 avril 1878.
156 boul. Montparnasse. 2 mai
99. p. 157

FABIEN Henri. Montréal.
Canada. 8 juillet 1878. 60 r. de
Vaugirard. 5 février 1900 (?).

p. 158

CHARRON Adélard Émile.
Ottawa. Canada. 14 fév. 1878. 20,
rue l'Estrapade. 31 (octobre
1903).

p. 160

(atelier Gabriel Ferrier)

ROBINSON Albert Henry.
Hamilton. Canada. 2 janv. 1881.
26 rue des Mathurins. 6 (avril
1905).

p. 162

(atelier Lucien Simon)

Mlle G(?)HRISHOLM Juliette.
Oakville. Canada 17/7 1902. 166 B
Montparnasse. 13 jan.

p. 174

MASSON Roger Pierre Joseph.
Ville Marie, district de Pontiac.
Canada. 18.3.08. 6 rue Marcel
Renault 17ième. 23 oct.

1926. p. 175

PELLAND M. A. St-Roch de
Québec. Canada. 16.5.06. 39 bd
du Port Royal. 27 oct. 1926. p. 175

CRACK Francis E. South
Durham, Prov. de Québec.
19.6.07. 19 bd Jourdan. 27 oct.
1927.

p. 176

RYAN Frederic. Charlottetown.
Canada. 10.5.07. 14 rue Bréa,
Paris 6e. 15 oct. 1929.

p. 178

BRYAN (Etr.) Alfred Thomas
George. Toronto. Canada.
20.11.07. 19 bd Jourdan. 24 oct.
1931.

p. 181

(atelier Sabatté)

BISHAW (Etrang.) James Porter.
Victoria. Canada. 28.4.13. 25 rue
de Longchamp, Neuilly sur
Seine. 19 oct. 1938.

p. 188

BEAULIEU (Etr.) Paul. Montréal.
Canada. 24.3.16(?). 17 rue
Campagne 1er. 22 juin
1939.

p. 188

(atelier Thomas)

LALIBERTÉ Alfred. Ste Sophie.
Canada. 19 mai 1878. 29 avenue
du Maine. 15 déc. 1902.

p. 237

HÉBERT Joseph Henri. Montréal.
Canada. 3 avril 1884. 49 rue
Bonaparte. 24 oct. 1904.

p. 237

(atelier Injalbert)

LAMOTHE Onésime. St-Louis de
France. Québec. Canada.
3.7.1893. 269 r. St-Jacques. (20
octobre 1920).

p. 243

(atelier Mercié)

BRUNET J. Émile. Huntington.
Canada. 18/3/1895(?). 259 B.
Raspail. 19 oct. 1923.

p. 268

(atelier Sicard)

Mlle NEELY Dorothy H. Toronto.
Canada. 7 juin/02. 12 rue Murillo.
20 fév. 1931.

p. 305

(atelier Leconte)

FISSET (Etr) Edouard. Rimouski.
Canada. 7.3.10. 63 rue Mr Le
Prince. 20 oct. 1936.

p. 390

(atelier Expert)

RUSSELL (Etr) Gordon Donald.
Fergus. Canada. 18.9.09. 232 bd
Raspail. 14 janv. 1939.

p. 433

(atelier Pannemaker)

Mlle FRIEMAN. Guelph. Canada.
22.6.1906. 9.1.26

p. 43-



(2) Ludger LAROSE, *Figure d'après la bosse (plâtre antique)*, fusain sur papier, 61,5 x 46,8 cm
 en bas à droite: L. Larose/Élève de/M^r G^{ve} Moreau;
 verso, en haut à gauche: L. Larose/42; (estampillé): ÉCOLE/DES BEAUX ARTS/CONCOURS D'ÉMULATION
 Galerie nationale du Canada (1980), (Photo: G.N.C.)

AJ 52 250-339

Dossiers individuels des élèves.

Le dépouillement se rapporte aux seuls dossiers des peintres et des sculpteurs pour les années antérieures à 1911. La consultation ayant été effectuée selon une liste établie à partir des artistes apparaissant au registre d'inscription dans les ateliers (AJ⁵² 248), voici ceux pour qui un dossier n'a pas été localisé: Coburn, Gill, Hébert, Leblanc, Longman, Maybee, McLaughlin, Moran, Morris, Paradis, Peel, Rho, Robinson, Russell, Saunders, Tudor-Hart, White.

Il s'agit essentiellement de dossiers administratifs qui renferment les lettres de présentation (provenant du secrétariat ou de l'ambassade, d'autorisation ou d'inscription (signées par les professeurs); les feuilles de renseignements et des récompenses qui donnent la date à laquelle l'élève est entré à l'École, les concours qu'il a passés, les récompenses qu'il a obtenues; parfois une correspondance de la Direction.

Le numéro correspond à la cote de la boîte où se trouve le dossier. La pagination est celle du document.

— 269 HUOT Charles. 25 mars 1856. Québec. Canada

Feuille de renseignements: Admis Élève de la section de Peinture le 16 mars 1875. Par décret du Président de la République Française du vingt cinq septembre 1877, Mr Huot est autorisé à établir son domicile en France pour y jouir des droits civils tant qu'il continuera d'y résider. *Date des jugements* 31 juillet 1877 mention honorable pr travaux d'atelier de fin d'année. p. 401

"Demande de renseignements auprès du Directeur de l'École par la Direction des Beaux-Arts": 10 avril 1877 p. 402

"Brouillon de réponse pour le Directeur": le 14 août 1877. Le jeune homme admis à l'École en mars 1875 a des dispositions heureuses pour les arts. Grâce à son assiduité, et à son attention aux conseils de ses

- maîtres il fait des progrès sensibles. Il a obtenu au mois de juillet une mention honorable pour ses travaux d'atelier à la suite de l'exposition de la fin de l'année. C'est un bon élève et s'il m'était permis d'émettre un avis à ce sujet je dirai que le jeune Huot mérite que sa demande soit prise en considération. p. 404
- 265 LONGMAN John B. 11 octobre 1860. Toronto. Canada.
 "Lettre de présentation de la Légation des E.U. d'Amérique": 13 janvier 1887... où il demeure à Paris no 203 bd d'Enfer. p. 264
 "Lettre d'admission": Nous avons l'honneur de présenter (J.L.) notre élève et déclarons qu'il est apte à concourir pour les places. Nous attestons de sa bonne conduite. G. Boulanger J. Lefebvre. p. 266
 "Lettre d'inscription": J'autorise Mr Longman à entrer à mon atelier de l'École des Beaux-Arts. Paris le 17 oct. 1887. JL Gérôme p. 267
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par M. Boulanger et J. Lefebvre. Élève de M. Gérôme. Date des épreuves subies pour l'admission le 14 février 1887. Admis à l'École section peinture le 18 mars 1887 le 29 février 1888. p. 268
- 276 BRIDGMAN Georges B. 5 novembre 1865. Toronto (Angleterre).
 "Lettre de présentation de l'ambassade d'Angleterre": 25 septembre 1883 pour Bridgman âgé de 18 ans.
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par Gérôme. Élève de Gérôme. Date des épreuves subies pour l'admission Février 1884. Admis à l'École 11 mars 1884, 21 juillet 1887.
Feuille des récompenses: 11 mars 1884 29e rang; 31 jv 1887, 29e rang; 4 fév. 1888 mention pour travaux (composition décorative); 29 juin 1888 1er Prix, travaux d'atelier (de composition décorative).
- 277 COTÉ, né le 7 avril 1869. Saint-Christophe. Canada.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée Fabre 20 juin 1891. p. 404
 "Lettre d'inscription": J'ai l'honneur de vous prier de faire inscrire sur la liste des élèves de mon atelier Mr Coté demeurant 131, Rue de Vaugirard. L. Bonnat. 16 juin 1891. p. 403
Feuille de renseignements: Admis à l'atelier le 22 juin 1891. Présenté par Mr Bonat. Date des épreuves pour l'admission février et juin 1892. Admis à l'École le 11 juillet 1892 le 11 mars 1893.
- 277 CULLEN Maurice Galbraith. 6 juin 1866. St-Jean, Terre-Neuve.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée Fabre le 17 nov. 1888 p. 443
 "Lettre d'inscription au concours des places": signée Edmond Dupaire, 152 bd Montparnasse, Paris le 17 juin 89. p. 422
Feuille de renseignements: Elève de Mr Delaunay. Admis à l'Ecole le 3 novembre 1890. Date des épreuves subies pour l'admission Février et Juin 1890. p. 444
- 278 DUBÉ Louis Théodore. 7 avril 1862. Saint Roch.
 "Certificat de citoyenneté anglaise sous le sceau de la R.F." no. 1032
 "Lettre d'inscription à son atelier": signée Gérôme 11 oct. 1890 no. 379
Feuille de renseignements: Élève de Gérôme. Admis à l'atelier le 20 octobre 1890. Admis Galeries le 20 (octobre 1890).
- 279 FRANCHÈRE F.C. 4 mars 1866.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre 11 avril 1888. p. 365
 "Lettre d'autorisation": J'autorise M. J.C. Franchère à faire le concours des places. Joseph Blanc 4 fév. 1891. p. 366
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par J. Blanc. Admis Bibliothèque 18 avril

1888. *Cours oraux* 18 (avril 1888). *Galerie* 18 (avril 1888). *Date des épreuves* Juin 1888, Février et Juin 1889, Février et Juin 1890, Février 1891. *Admis à l'École* 1891, 7 juillet 1891, 13 d 1892. p. 367
Feuille des récompenses: Élève de M. Gérôme et J. Blanc. *Dates des jugements* 23 fév. 1891. 52e rang, 23 fév. 1891 15e rang, 23 février 1892 12e rang, 18 avril 1891 mention (fig. dessinées antique), 2 juin 1891 mention (fig. dessinées nature), 20 avril 1892 mention (fig. dessinées antique). p. 304
- 280 GRAVEL-LAJOIE Louis Charles. 30 mai 1868. Montréal. Canada.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre le 22 nov. 1890. no. 201
 "Lettre d'inscription à son atelier": signée Gérôme 20 nov. 1890. no. 200
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par Gérôme. *Admis Galerie* le 12 novembre 1889. *Admis à l'atelier* le 24 novembre 1890. *Date des épreuves subies* Février et Juillet 1890.
- 282 LAMARCHE Ulric. 15 déc. 1868. St-Henri de Mascouche (Canada).
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre 10 juin 1891. P. 42
 "Lettre d'inscription": Je vous prie de vouloir faire inscrire Mr Lamar-
 che au nombre des élèves de mon atelier. L. Gérôme Paris 19 oct.
 1892. p. 41
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par Gérôme. *Admis à la Bibliothèque* 14
 juin 1891. *Cours oraux* 14 (juin 1891). *Galerie* 14 (juin 1891). *Admis à*
l'atelier 2 décembre 1892. p. 44
- 282 LAROSE Ludger. le 1 mai 1868. Montréal.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre 29 mars 1887. p. 102
 "Lettre d'inscription": ... faire inscrire pour l'atelier... Elie
 Delaunay. p. 100
 "Lettre d'inscription au concours des places": J'ai l'honneur de présen-
 ter Ludger Larose étudiant en peinture demeurant au no 9 rue Maglin.
 Je déclare qu'il est en état de concourir aux places. 15 juin 1887 G.
 Boulanger. p. 101
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par Mrs Boulanger et J.L. Laurens.
 Élève de M. G. Moreau. *Date des épreuves subies* Juillet 1889. *Admis à l'École*
 le 16 juillet 1889, 16 juillet 1890, le 11 mars 1893, 8 id 1893. p. 104
- 285 SAINT-CHARLES. 5 juin 1868. Montréal.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre 11 avril 1888. p. 249
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par Mr Jules Lefebvre. *Date des épreuves*
 Mars et Juillet 1890. *Admis à l'École* 16 juillet 1890. p. 251
Feuille de valeurs: Élève de Mrs. J. Lefebvre et B. Constant. *Concours de*
figure dessinée antique 10 avril 1894 3e médaille, *nature* 13 janvier 1891 3e
 médaille. p. 248
 "Reçu signé St-Charles 15 mai 1891 du livre de Mr Vibert "La Science de
 la Peinture". p. 25
- 289 CHARRON Adélarde Émile. 14 juin 1878. Ottawa.
 "Lettre de présentation": signée H. Fabre 30 sept. 1903. p. 123
 "Lettre d'inscription": ...inscrire sur la liste des élèves de mon atelier
 A.E. Charron, 20 rue de l'Estrapade. M. Gérôme 31 oct. 1903. p. 422
 "Lettre d'autorisation à travailler dans les galeries": signée Jules Lefeb-
 vre 13 oct. 1903. no. 123 bis
Feuille de renseignements: Présenté par M. Le Commissaire Général du
 Canada. Élève de M. Gérôme. *Autorisé à travailler dans les Galeries* le 14
 octobre 1903. *Admis dans l'atelier* le 31 octobre 1903. p. 122

- 291 **FABIEN** Henri. 8 juillet 1878. Montréal.
 “Lettre de présentation”: signée H. Fabre. 11 octobre 1899.
 “Lettre d’inscription à son atelier”: signée JL Gérôme 13 janvier 1901.
 “Lettre de G. Courtois de l’Académie Colarossi demandant l’inscription de Fabien son élève au concours des places”.
Feuille de renseignements: Élève de Mr Gérôme. Admis dans l’atelier le 5 février 1901. A subi les épreuves d’admission avril 1902.
- 337 **LALIBERTÉ** Alfred. 19 mars 1878. Ste Sophie.
 “Lettre de présentation”: signée H. Fabre 13 décembre 1902. ...Le Premier Ministre du Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier s’intéresse à M. Laliberté et vous serait reconnaissant de toutes les facilités que vous voudrez bien lui accorder pour se former comme artiste sculpteur.
 “Lettre d’inscription à son atelier”: signée G. Thomas 12 xbre 1902.
Feuille de renseignements: Élève de Thomas. Admis dans l’atelier le 15 décembre 1902. Épreuves d’admission octobre 1904, juillet 1905. Admis à titre temporaire 7 novembre 1904, le 2 août 1905.
Feuille de valeurs: Épreuves d’admission admis 7 novembre 1904.
 “Lettre de J.P.L. Bérubé, secrétaire des beaux-arts, Ministère de l’Agriculture, rue St-Laurent à Montréal demandant à Laliberté d’obtenir des plâtres pour les cours de dessin et de modelage de l’institut national des Beaux-Arts, datée 17 mai 1904”: ...vous faites bien de continuer de travailler votre Massacre de Lachine et quand pensez-vous l’exposer au Salon?
 “Minute de lettre pour la réponse à Bérubé”: ...J’ai le regret de porter à votre connaissance que nos crédits ne nous permettent pas de faire des libéralités de cette nature. Ces moulages dont vous avez reçu le catalogue sont reproduits pour le compte des particuliers par une entreprise qui ne ne relève en aucune façon de l’École...



(3) Ludger LAROSE, **Figure d'après la bosse (plâtre antique)**, 1892, fusain et craie blanche sur papier, 60,7 x 32 cm
en bas à droite: L. Larose/MAI 1892
Galerie nationale du Canada (1980),
(Photo: G.N.C.)



(4) Ludger LAROSE, **Figure d'après la bosse (plâtre d'écorché)**, fusain sur papier, 62,6 x 27 cm
en bas à droite: L. LAROSE
Galerie nationale du Canada (1980),
(Photo: G.N.C.)

AJ 52 464 II.

Correspondance générale.

Répertoire alphabétique des élèves autorisés à étudier dans les galeries.
1888.

CULLEN, 18 bis Denfert-Rocherau. Présenté par le Ministre du Canada.

GRAVEL-LAJOIE, 44 rue du Dragon. Présenté par le Commissaire général du

Canada C. HILL, 46 rue Mazarine. Présenté par le Commissaire du Canada.

MASSON, 4 rue Catlogon (?). Présenté par le Commissaire du Canada.

RICHER, 190 Faub. St Denis. Présenté par le Ministre du Canada.

Demandes d'inscriptions irrecevables (limite d'âge).

1924-1929.

Lettre du Commissaire Général du Canada, datée 12 oct. 1925 demandant une exception pour l'inscription de M. J.B. SOUCY, boursier en architecture du Gouvernement du Québec qui a dépassé de quelques mois la limite d'âge. La réponse est négative.



(5) Joseph SAINT-CHARLES, *Étude d'après la bosse*, fusain sur papier
61,2 x 46,8 cm, Fonds Saint-Charles, C.R.C.C.F., Université d'Ottawa.
(Photo: C.R.C.C.F.)

Élèves étrangers. 1878-1928.

- I. **Demandes de renseignements sur l'organisation de l'École. 1894-1911.**
Lettre en-tête "Art Association of Montreal", datée Jan 26 1894 et signée Robert Lindsay demandant des renseignements sur l'organisation de l'École en vue de l'établissement d'un programme d'esthétique, d'histoire de l'art et de cours techniques à Montréal.
- II. **Demandes individuelles de renseignements pour inscription et demandes d'autorisation pour étudier dans les galeries. 1892-1911.**
Lettre datée Montréal 17 avril 1911 et signée P. LA FERRURE, demeurant au 546 rue Sherbrooke, demandant des renseignements en vue de l'inscription à l'École.
Lettre datée juillet 1892 et signée H. Fabre demandant l'admission de Louis SAINT-HILAIRE, né le 20 juillet 1860, habitant Paris, 33, rue Dauphine.
- III. **Lettres de présentation d'étrangers par leurs ambassades. 1878-1902.**
Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 2 nov. 1893, en faveur de Charles René BÉLIVEAU né à Montréal le 20 nov. 1872.
Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 28 mars 1891, en faveur de M. COTÉ Marc-Aurèle né le 7 avril 1868 à Arthabaska.
Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 15 nov. 1889, en faveur de M. Louis Charles GRAVEL-LAJOIE né à Montréal, le 29 mai 1868, habitant 29 rue Jacob.
Lettre signée Jules Lefebvre, le 17 oct. 1887, en faveur de M. de MARTIGNY de Montréal pour obtenir une carte d'étudiant dans les galeries de l'École.
Lettre de la Légation of the U.S. datée 17 avril 1882, en faveur de Paul PEEL, né à Philadelphia, E.U., le 7 nov. 1860 et demeurant à Paris no 54, rue d'Assas.
Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 30 sept. 1891, en faveur de F.X. RAPIN de Montréal, né à Saint Thimothée le 26 octobre 1869.
Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 2 février 1894, en faveur de Jules-Joseph SCHERRER, né à Saint-Joseph de Lévis, le 3 mars 1867.
- IV. **Demandes d'inscription d'étrangers. 1916-1928.**
BIELER (André), naturalisé Britannique, 1922.
FREIMAN (Lily), Canadienne, 1925.
POLSON (Franklin Murray), Canadien, 1926-1927.

(6) Joseph SAINT-CHARLES, Académie (nu assis), fusain, 62 x 47,4 cm
 en haut à droite: ST CHARLES/ÉLÈVE DE
 M.M./LEFEBVRE & CONSTANT. Fonds
 Saint-Charles, C.R.C.C.F., Université
 d'Ottawa (Photo: C.R.C.C.F.)



Archives de l'École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (Archives Nationales, AJ⁵³).

L'École créée au XVIII^e siècle, se maintint sans interruption jusqu'à nos jours sous divers noms. Elle fut jusqu'en 1891 réservée aux jeunes gens. Son enseignement est fondé sur le dessin et les techniques appliquées aux arts mécaniques. Le fonds versé aux Archives nationales est incomplet et il n'y a pas comme dans celui de l'École des Beaux-Arts de registres d'inscription permettant de recenser tous les élèves.

AJ⁵³ 143.

Élèves étrangers admis à l'école. 1855-1938.

I. Lettres ministérielles autorisant les élèves étrangers, proposés par le directeur de l'école. 1855-1878.

Liste des élèves étrangers admis à titre provisoire à l'École nationale de dessin et de mathématiques:

HUOT Charles. Angleterre.

II. Lettres d'introduction des ambassades pour l'admission d'élèves étrangers à l'école. 1875-1938.

(liasse Canada)

Lettre signée P. Dupuy, 28 sept. 1926, en faveur de Omer PARENT, boursier du Gouvernement de la province de Québec.

Lettre du représentant officiel du Gouvernement de la province de Québec, le 6 novembre 1929, en faveur de J. B. SOUCY.

Lettre signée Arthur de Martigny, le 29 sept. 1911, en faveur de Georges VANIER de Montréal, né le 8 décembre 1887.

Lettre signée A. de Martigny, le 30 septembre 1911, en faveur le M. Lucien KEROACK, né à Montréal le 4 février 1886.

Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 6 janvier 1910, en faveur de Gaspard GIROUARD demeurant à Paris au 33, rue Madame et né à Longueuil le 31 janv. 1887.

Lettre signée H. Fabre, le 20 mars 1905, en faveur de M. Edward BOYD de Montréal.

Lettre signée H. Fabre, 29 sept. 1900, en faveur de Henri HÉBERT, fils de Philippe Hébert, statuaire de Montréal.

(liasse États-Unis d'Amérique)

Lettre du 11 septembre 1905, en faveur de Mr Eli Delbert MAYBEE, artiste américain, né le 14 avril 1881 à Sterling, Ontario, Canada.

Lettre du 9 janvier 1882, en faveur de Paul PEEL, né à Philadelphia, le 7 nov. 1860 et demeurant à Paris 54, rue d'Assas.

(il n'y a pas de liasse Angleterre).



(7) Joseph SAINT-CHARLES, *Académie (nu debout)*, fusain, 61,5 x 47,3 cm
en bas à droite: St-Charles/Élève de
M.M./J. Lefebvre et/J. Blanc Fonds
Saint-Charles, C.R.C.C.F., Université
d'Ottawa (Photo: C.R.C.C.F.)

INDEX (AJ⁵²)

- BEAULIEU, Paul, 248
 BÉLIVEAU, Charles René, 470
 BIELER, André, 470
 BISHAW, James Porter, 248
 BOYD, Edward (suppl. AJ⁵³-143)
 BRIDGMAN, Georges B.,
 236, 248, 276
 BRUNET, J. Émile, 248
 BRYAN, Alfred Thomas George,
 248
 CHARRON, Adélarde Émile, 248,
 289
 COBURN, Frederic Simpson, 248
 CRACK, Francis E., 248
 CULLEN, Maurice, 277, 464
 DUBÉ, Louis Théodore, 248, 278
 FABIEN, Henri, 248, 291
 FISET, Edouard, 248
 FRANCHÈRE, Joseph, 236, 279
 FREIMAN, Lily, 248, 470
 G(?)HRISHOLM, Juliette, 248
 GILL, Charles, Ignace, 248
 GIROUARD, Gaspard, (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 GRAVEL-LAJOIE, Louis Charles,
 248-280
 HÉBERT, Henri,
 (suppl. AJ⁵³-143)
 HÉBERT, Joseph Henri, 248
 HILL, (?), 464
 HUOT, Charles Edouard, 236,
 248, 262, (Suppl. AJ⁵³-43)
 KEROACK, Lucien, (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 LA FERRURE, P., 470
 LALIBERTÉ, Alfred, 248, 337
 LAMOTHE, Onésime, 248
 LAMARCHE, Ulric, 248, 282
 LAROSE, Ludger, 236, 248, 282
 (figs 1-4)
 LEBLANC, Zacharie, 248
 LINDSAY, Robert, 270
 LONGMAN, John, 236, 248, 265
 de MARTIGNY, 470
 MASSON, Roger Pierre, 248, 464
 MAYBEE, Eli, 248 (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 McLAUGHLIN, Ian, 248
 MORAN, Thomas William, 248
 MORRIS, Edmon Montague, 248
 NEELY, Dorothy, 248
 PARADIS, Jobson, 248
 PARENT, Omer, (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 PEEL, Paul, 470, (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 PELLAN, Alfred, 248
 POLSON, Franklin Murray, 470
 RAPIN, F.X., 470
 RICHER, 464
 ROBINSON, Albert Henry, 248
 RUSSELL, Edwin, 248
 RUSSEL, Gordon Donald, 248
 RYAN, Frederic, 248
 SAINT-CHARLES, Joseph, 236,
 285 (figs 5-7)
 SAINT-HILLAIRES, Louis, 470
 SAUNDERS, Theodore, 248
 SCHRERRER, Jules Joseph, 470
 SOUCY, J.B., 464,
 (suppl. AJ⁵³-143)
 SUZOR-COTÉ, 236, 248, 277, 470
 TUDOR-HART, 248
 VANIER, Georges, (suppl.
 AJ⁵³-143)
 WHITE, Charles Henry, 248

**Gothic Revival in
Canadian Architecture**

Mathilde Brosseau
Canadian Historic Sites:
Occasional Papers in Archaeology
and History
No. 25
Parks Canada
206 pp. 124 ill., paperback \$10.00

The study of architectural history in Canada has finally come of age. Ten years ago Harold Kalman wrote an article, "Recent Literature on the History of Canadian Architecture," in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (Dec. 1972, Vol. XXXI), remarking on the new interest in the subject. This concern with Canadian architecture is broadly based including not only specialists such as architects, preservationists and historians, but the general public as well. As a result of this increased fascination with the built environment, a number of books, periodicals, organizations and lecture series have appeared firmly establishing the discipline.

The nationwide Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, founded in the early 1970's, publishes a bulletin that gives the reader regional news, book reviews and a wide range of articles on specific buildings and architects; the Society also sponsors an annual meeting where scholars present their current research. In 1974 in Montréal Peter Rose initiated a series of architectural lectures held at McGill and sponsored by Alcan. This past year Alcan began a similar series on the west coast in Vancouver. A signal event, in the long list of developments in the study of architecture, was the creation in 1979 of the Canadian Centre for Architecture. Located in Montréal, it is a resource centre designed to encourage the study of Canadian as well as international architecture. Early in 1981, *Trace*, a Canadian magazine devoted to architecture and aimed at a wide audience, made its debut.

An important part of this general trend is the appearance of books such as the *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture* by the late Mathilde Brosseau. This small format (21 x 21 cm.) paperback makes a significant contribution to the analysis of the

Neo-Gothic style in its many manifestations across the country. The study resulted from the building survey undertaken by the Canadian Inventory of Historic Building in 1970 and sponsored by the federal government. The program was to be accomplished in four phases: Phase I: To record exteriors dating from 1880 or earlier in eastern Canada and up to 1914 in western Canada; Phase II: To record the interiors of particular buildings selected from Phase I; Phase III: In depth documentary research of selected buildings; Phase IV: To update the inventory of buildings in eastern Canada to 1914.

The data that provided the basis for this book was collected during field surveys made from coast to coast. A team of researchers was given a short training course and then sent out with a standard form to evaluate buildings of historic interest. The form consists of multiple choice descriptions of a variety of building features such as the type of plan, type of foundation, method of construction of exterior walls in wood, stone, brick, concrete, metal, glass, type of bearing wall construction, roof-type, treatment of windows and entrances. The information was then coded and computerized. Since the collected facts proved to be of limited use, stylistic studies were undertaken to interpret the material. The *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture* is the first of a number of these analyses which also includes the *Second Empire Style* by Christina Cameron and Janet Wright.

The goal of this particular work, *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture*, according to the author's comments in the preface, is to:

elucidate... the arrival of the style in this country, its evolution through three general phases of mutation, and finally the interpretive variants attributable to geographical context, various cultural traditions and the development periods of the principal regions of Canada.

This doubtless was a daunting task and is only partially achieved.

The book consists of an essay of approximately twenty-four pages, one hundred and twenty-four black and

white photographs each with a textual description, a list of illustrations, bibliographical notes to the essay, notes to the text accompanying the photographs and a bibliography. The essay is organized into chapters tracing the development of the Gothic Revival style from its whimsical romantic beginning, through its moral and structural second phase, to its High Victorian Gothic aspect and finally to the so-called Beaux-Arts conclusion. Within each of these major areas of stylistic development, consideration is given to religious, domestic and public architecture in that order. In each section the reader is given a selection of representative buildings from the Atlantic provinces to the west coast, with a discussion of influences to be found in the particular region. Sometimes these sources of inspiration are publications such as the *Canadian Farmer*, appearing first in 1864, which affected the Ontario cottage type: a small house with a square plan, Gothitized by means of the application of details such as the trefoil. Another work that had great impact on domestic style was A.J. Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses*, published in 1848. Many of the local builders of rural Ontario were stimulated by this book. Establishing these interconnections is extremely useful and they are convincingly achieved by Brosseau.

While the major Gothic Revival buildings in Canada such as the Houses of Parliament by Fuller, Jones, Stent and Laver, ca. 1859, and Christ Church Cathedral by Wills and Butterfield, 1846-53, are well-known, the Carpenter's Gothic examples are not. One of the joys of this book is that it provides examples of these beautifully inventive lesser-known structures such as the United Baptist Church, ca. 1862, St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, N.B., and the United Church, ca. 1870, Malpeque, P.E.I. Also of great interest are oddities such as the Hydraulic Power Station, Blair, Ontario (n.d.), an example of industrial architecture using board and batten siding and employing small pointed windows to emphasize its Gothicism.

Dealing with the rationalist and ecclesiological modes, the author discusses the influence of the Cambridge

Camden Society and its publication the *Ecclesiologist* on Christ Church, Fredericton. More interesting, because it has not been so often mentioned, is the fact that Pugin's theories made an impression on Roman Catholic circles in Montréal. Father Joseph Vincent Quiblier wrote to Pugin in 1842 asking him to provide a model of a medieval English church when preparations to build St. Patrick's Church were underway. This is the sort of valuable information the essay yields. However, the text suffers from excessive density and from the assumption that the reader possesses a great deal of knowledge about the development of the Gothic Revival in England and America.

The text, enlightening as it is, contains a number of errors. The editors should have been more meticulous in double-checking text information against that which accompanies the photographs. For example, on page 19, Trafalgar Lodge, Montréal, 1848 is attributed to "the English architect Albert Furniss," while the entry for Plate 60 gives the architect as John Howard. The current owners of the house say that there is in fact some doubt as to the architect although Howard is generally credited with the building. The basis for this assumption is to be found in Howard's diaries "Incidents in the Life of J.J. Howard of Coburn Lodge," in the Blackader Library, McGill. Howard states that he "drew plans, specifications and estimates for a Gothic villa which was erected in Montréal for Albert Furniss." An error of this nature indicates that more exacting research and checking is necessary to assure the reader on the accuracy of factual information. In this case, an attribution to John Howard with reference to the diaries would have been a more satisfactory mode of presentation.

The photographs were selected to demonstrate various points in the text, however, their quality is uneven. Many are no more than amateur snapshots depriving the viewer of precisely the Gothic details he wants to see. In the case of Trafalgar Lodge, the rose window above the door, one of the noteworthy features of the house recalling the French rosace, is hardly visible. In the case of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Tors Cove, Nfld., ca. 1890, the

false buttresses are important but unfortunately, truncated in the illustration. The best photographs were those taken by the author where the stylistic peculiarities of the Neo-Gothic such as gingerbread trim and board and batten construction are clearly visible.

By virtue of its trans-Canadian scope, this book is extremely useful. This reviewer however, would like to suggest that for subsequent publications, some modifications should be undertaken to make them more efficient for the reader to handle. For example, the system of notation used for what has been called "legend sources" (a cumbersome term for the information accompanying the illustrations) is awkward. The reference note should appear on the page along with the information so that the reader does not have to flip constantly back and forth; in future, wherever possible, full archival references including numbers should be used. For example, Plate I illustrating the "Main elevation of the Government House for Quebec" Design 1811-12, by Jeffry Wyatt, comes from the Public Archives of Canada. The researcher wants to know the Ms, not only the secondary reference source which is given at the back of the book under "legend sources." While it was not the intention of this series at the outset to provide detailed archival information, it would be a welcome addition to future books.

Despite flaws that could be rectified by more attention to editorial detail, as a clearly defined approach to architectural photography and the inclusion of precise primary source material, the *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture* is an important addition to the growing body of architectural literature.

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Dom Bellot et l'architecture religieuse au Québec

Nicole Tardif-Painchaud
Les Presses de l'université Laval,
Québec, 1978
292 pp., 191 ill., \$16.00

I have just been reviewing Tom Wolfe's *Bauhaus to Our House* for another publication. I don't know whether Canada as a whole is ready for Tom Wolfe yet or not; certainly my base, Victoria, isn't. My God, can you imagine Tom Wolfe in Victoria? However, I digress, and I haven't even started to review *Dom Bellot*... Yet actually it's not entirely a digression, for there is a connection. Tom Wolfe and Robert Hughes (and many others lately) have been usefully reminding us how much was lost in the Bauhaus Blitz; what a clean sweep these European manifesto-manufacturers made of American traditions, American heritage, American craftsmanship and for that matter, American common sense. But that obliteration of the past wasn't only limited to the United States. Among Gropius's earliest converts were Canadians who had gone down to the "shrine" he presided over at Harvard; on returning they were just as zealous as any Bauhauslers to wipe everything "bourgeois" (i.e. everything architectural and sculptural from ca. 1870 to 1940) off the landscape, in the name of some optimistic utopian new world to be created any day now. The Dom Bellot tradition of church architecture was among their victims. They didn't physically demolish its buildings; since they were churches in Québec that just wasn't possible. But the churches could be and were made to seem out of date, out of fashion, contemptible, in consequence "le style Dom Bellot... c'est une page brève," lasting twenty years, 1930-1950. All the more useful, then, to have so fine a study made of it now.

Tardif-Painchaud begins with a general review of artistic developments with particular reference to Catholic religious art circles during the early decades of this century. It was a time of discontent with old formulae and there was a sense of urgency about renewals and revitalization "in modernist spir-

it." Dom Bellot's ideas were in the mood of this time. Born in 1876 of a family of architects, he took Benedictine vows in 1901 and was almost immediately ordered by his superiors to undertake construction of an abbey church at Oosterhout. So he found himself pursuing the family profession after all, with time to reflect upon the meaning of architecture. He made connections with various other groups working toward a more contemporarily meaningful modern architecture: craftsmen of all sorts, trying to revive somehow what they considered to have been the spirit of medieval art without necessarily reproducing its specific forms, but rather, devising forms suitable to their own twentieth-century times. Tardif-Painchaud describes these people and their theories admirably. How humane they seem, especially compared to the coldly scientific approach being fostered at this same moment by Corbu and Oud and Gropius and the rest of what Wolfe has so neatly called "The White Gods." How reflective! How concerned to build meaningfully and creatively on the past, rather than simply to obliterate it to make way from something new; "starting from zero" as Albers decreed in the fabled Bauhaus *Vorkurs*. She goes on to describe Dom Bellot's contacts in Québec, his work on the Oratoire (Basilique Saint-Joseph du Mont-Royal) in Montréal and the abbey of Saint-Benoît-du-Lac, and his three principal Québécois disciples: Adrien Dufresne, Edgar Courchesne, and Dom Claude-Maire Côté (*catalogues raisonnés* of their works are appended.) She then describes "le rayonnement du dom-bellotisme au Québec" and its rather abrupt end when the new style of church building derived from (though still by no means slavishly imitating) Bauhaus and CIAM principles swept into the province, beginning with the Lac Bouchette chapel by Henri Tremblay. Actually Tremblay made no sharp break with Québécois tradition either; he worked rather gradually out of Dom Bellotisme and retained traditional proportions (as I pointed out in an article on him and his work long ago in the *Journal of the RAIC*, 1953, if anyone should be interested.)

I wish she had said a little more about this, perhaps she will, in another connection. For with all their efforts to maintain ties with the past, the Dom-Bellotistes made their own contribution to digging the chasm which today separates us from our past. I well remember how Gérard Morisset, one of the principal young protagonists of this renewal of religious art, talked about late Victorian art in the late 1940's. He would have none of it. He wouldn't have minded much if all Québécois churches between around 1870 and 1910 had fallen down, or even been torn down, not that he therefore refused to record them for his *Inventaire des Oeuvres d'Art de la Province de Québec*. Good archivist and scholar that he was, he recorded them just as carefully as the earlier ones that he cherished, and the Dom Bellot churches that he promoted. But he saw no merit in them; and in that, he was absolutely typical of his generation. Another memory of mine is of being at Harvard, when I was president of the Society of Architectural Historians, trying to save a campus building by Richard Morris Hunt, the great American academic architect of the 1890's and early 1900's. The Harvard administration wanted to tear it down to make room for some insipid monstrosity in Modern style, and eventually did so. The critical factor in their decision, so rumour had it, was a consultation with one of Harvard's senior architectural historians, a famous name throughout the world, a contemporary of Morisset, who privately advised the president that American buildings of this period and type were of little or no historic value. And that was in the early 1970's!

In retrospect we can easily understand that the buzzing noise in their ears was that of the saws going through the limb on which they sat. As soon as you start talking *Zeitgeist*, about style being the product of the "spirit of the time," the past is lost. The whole past becomes irrelevant and you must eventually come to agree with the *echt Modernismus* position: since the Middle Ages built in medieval style and the Renaissance in Renaissance style and so forth, it follows that we *must* build in Modern; we have no alternative but to

base our art wholeheartedly on steel-mills and railroads and Science, because the spirit of *our* age is scientific. All talk about "modernizing Gothic" is nonsense. Indeed so! The only way to argue, if you want to preserve the past, is from the fact and not from Hegelian theory: the fact being, that it is *not* true the Middle Ages built in medieval style and the Renaissance in Renaissance and so forth. In every age you can find all sorts of styles overlapping. For what determines style is not some spirit of the age obeyed by its artists, as Wölfflin, following Hegel, would argue (and indeed as the Dom Bellotistes were forced to argue too); it is the social function a given building performs. Style depends upon social function, on what a building is intended to do, in and for society. If the style of a given building is understood by the people who use that building to connote or allude to ideas which the builders or the inventors of the style intended, then that style is alive and working, no matter whether it was a product of modern times or ten centuries earlier. There is no reason to change it. Had the Dom Bellotistes seen style in this way, their arguments would have been sounder and their cause gone better. But they argued on their opponents' grounds. Inevitably they lost. And they lost the past as well. Yet at least the Dom Bellotistes' mistakes were made in a generous spirit which is more than can be said for the spirit of their rivals. How infinitely better to have destroyed unwittingly than to have been the conscious purposeful obliterator of our past. It is a pleasure to recall these people through the medium of Tardif-Painchaud's lucid prose and well-chosen illustrations.

I do wish, though, she had found space for mentioning some of the Dom Bellot related churches that were executed by others besides the monk-architect's three main disciples; for example the admirable church and presbytery of St. Clare in Windsor Ontario, by Albert J. Lothian (1931). Even though not in Québec, it is such a magnificent example of the style that it deserves a mention. Equally the Dom-Bellotiste église St-Pierre of 1953 in Joliette might have been cited. Maybe she does mention it. Since there

is no index and I might have missed a reference, I can't be sure. (Incidentally, *why* would a first-class press like Laval put out a book without an index?) But these are minor points which perhaps can be acted upon in a second edition, and by no means criticisms of a piece of scholarly work that reflects creditably upon all concerned.

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The New Brunswick Landscape Print: 1760-1877

Paul A. Hachey
Beaverbrook Art Gallery,
Fredericton, 1980
111 p. 122 ill., \$12.00

The *New Brunswick Landscape Print...* does not claim to be a definitive study, but is seen by its author as a foundation for further research and analysis. Given the textual content of the catalogue, there would appear to be much room for such exploration. A one-page introduction hints at a variety of important points, but rarely expands on them or refers to actual examples to illustrate them.

Of the 117 prints included in the fully illustrated catalogue, Hachey is careful to point out that seventy-nine are lithographs, nineteen are aquatints and nineteen are engravings; further counting reveals that of the thirty-nine artists identified, twelve served in the British Army; twenty-four of the prints were produced in England, thirty-two in the United States, four in Canada and seven are of unknown origin. Apart from its statistical value, no conclusions are derived from this ciphering. Throughout the catalogue, the reader is left to draw his own associations between the text and the prints. This is unfortunate, since it is evident that a great deal of research went into assembling the exhibition, yet this is not always reflected in the introduction or the catalogue notes.

Hachey points to several phenomena that served as motivation for the production of the prints and lists military strategy, civic pride, economic development, tourism and reportage of news events among them. However, the catalogue is not arranged to reflect such aspects, but instead is presented chronologically, starting with a 1760 engraving of *Miramichi* after Hervey Smyth and ending with a lithograph of the *Great Fire of St. John* done about 1877.

The exhibition is limited to engravings, aquatints and lithographs to the exclusion of wood-engravings, chromolithographs and photoprocess prints. The reasons for excluding the latter are not explained but one guesses that it was done in order to limit the size of the exhibition. Inclusion of a few examples of these types of prints would have given a more balanced representation and an earlier cut-off date would have better defined the purpose of the exhibition. Even though wood-engraving and photography are ignored, this does not preclude the presence of lithographs done after photographs (such as those by Thomas Pye) or the inclusion of an engraving after a wood-engraving (*St. John after Carson Flood*). Such examples serve to confuse the rationale for excluding these newer media, unless the purpose was to illustrate the declining popularity of the lithograph, aquatint and engraving as commercial printing processes.

Hachey attempts to discuss the relationship between the artist, engraver/lithographer, printer and publisher and states that none of the artists "responsible for the original design also engraved the printing plate." While this is largely true, there are two cases in which the artists was apparently responsible for preparing the lithographic stone for printing. According to the inscriptions on the prints after Mary Hall and Robert Petley, both artists drew their compositions "on stone," as well as being the originators of the design. The first print known to have been wholly produced in New Brunswick is included, but there is little discussion of this important work by Timothy O'Connor. More complete information can be found in Mary Allodi's *Printmaking in Canada* (Toronto: Royal

Ontario Museum, 1980, p. 209).

The juxtaposition of drawing and prints is done to advantage, and, as in the case of the Levinge drawing and lithograph of the *Sleigh Club*, the results often speak highly of the skills of the lithographers and printers who translated the watercolours and drawings into prints. Wash drawings by Bartlett are put along side the well-known engravings, but again the viewer is left to ponder the connection with little help from the catalogue notes. There is also a failure to make any links between certain prints in the exhibition. For instance, an 1815 aquatint book illustration of *Great Falls* after Joseph Bouchette reappears fifteen years later in almost the same size with only minor changes and designed for inclusion in another book by Bouchette. Catalogue notes do not refer one print to the other nor do they comment on this phenomenon. This recycling of images is an important part of iconographic study and should also have been discussed in connection with the Currier and Ives lithographs after Bartlett.

The landscape prints document the growth of New Brunswick. This point can be demonstrated by comparing various views of Saint John starting with the Ralph Stennett view of 1815 and ending with the 1864 view after George Bowron. The nature and accuracy of the views is not accounted for in the text, and those weak on New Brunswick history are not given much background information. Additional mention of the artistic landscape traditions at work over the 120 year span under consideration would have enhanced the viewer's appreciation of the prints as a mixture of document and art. Even though Hachey claims this is not a definitive study, more cultural and art historical background material would have increased the impact of the catalogue.

The *Bouchette Great Falls* aquatint of 1815 could have been compared to the set of William Hickman lithographs of the *Nipisauquit River* of 1860. The transition from wilderness to sportsman's paradise is effectively demonstrated when the contemplative Indian in the Bouchette is replaced in the Hickman by active fishermen and campers. Further development of this theme

could include the Currier and Ives prints after Bartlett which reflect a nostalgia and sentimentality for the past rather than accurately documenting New Brunswick of the late nineteenth century.

The catalogue entries contain good basic information about the works, including carefully transcribed inscriptions taken from each print. This is a boon to further research since the catalogue reproductions are cropped to the image and are of only fair quality. Unfortunately, the measurements are given only for the image, while platemark and even sheet sizes are equally important for further study of these prints. In general, the catalogue information is accurate and reliable; however, in some instances there is a lack of information which could be misleading. For instance, two states of a view of the *St. John River* from the *Atlantic Neptune* are included, but no mention is made of the fact that they are insets on much larger maps. It is only upon viewing the exhibition that this point is discovered.

Another curious catalogue entry appears for a panoramic view of Saint John after W.H. Hunt. The print is actually two prints joined to form a larger view, but this is not mentioned. Dates are given to some prints, such as the view of Long Reach, where dates are not documented in inscriptions or other publication information. However, no reason for the attributed dates is given. An index of artists' biographies (incomplete, however) is provided with information drawn from standard dictionaries. There is also a useful selected bibliography, but it does not contain a listing of the books from which a number of the prints are taken. Two indices for subjects and artists are included at the end of the catalogue.

A number of minor criticisms could also be made but it is enough to say that more complete comments on the prints and their subjects would have greatly increased the value of this catalogue. One feels Hachey withdrew too soon from his examination, assuming, as stated in his introduction, that he could leave the material for others to analyze further.

Alongside Charles de Volpi's books of Canadian views, this catalogue will

serve as useful *aide memoire* with its reproductions and basic catalogue data. Together with the recent exhibitions prepared by Mary Sparling (*Great Expectations*, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, 1980) and Mary Allodi, this exhibition enhances the appreciation of our visual heritage and encourages further thought and research. The comparison with Sparling and Allodi, however, does not fully hold since one feels Hachey has not fully shared his knowledge and ideas on the New Brunswick landscape print.

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Jock Macdonald: The Inner Landscape/A Retrospective Exhibition

Joyce Zemans
Toronto: The Art Gallery of Ontario,
1981
288 pages, 203 ill., \$17.50

Joyce Zemans' catalogue comes as a welcome addition to scholarly art historical writing, especially for an artist as crucially important and as little known in a critical sense as Jock Macdonald. The author, with her diligent research, immensely readable prose and masterful organization, has eliminated many of the lacunae which plague the serious study of Macdonald.

Professor Zemans' method of approaching her subject from a chronological viewpoint works remarkably well. Such an approach runs the risk of turning biography and criticism into an incoherent stream of facts and comments. Yet Macdonald emerges not as a character in search of a novelist, but as a celebrity in need of just such a biographer as Zemans. Her success in this regard is due largely to her decision to use Macdonald's striving, from the early 1930's onwards for an art which would match his own philosophical beliefs, as the leitmotiv of the catalogue. So strong is this current that the reader feels a disappointing sense

of regression with the landscapes of the early 1940's after the enthusiastic discussion of Macdonald's emerging symbolism during the 1930's. Following the artist through his experiments with theosophy, the modalities, the automatics and his work with Painters XI, we arrive at the late works, the most completely successful of his entire oeuvre, with a sense of relief and pleasure. We finally see Macdonald's art as the successful search for reality beyond matter and in harmony with all Nature. In having thus given her catalogue such a strong sense of artistic inevitability leading to an ultimate goal, the author has created a solid framework which she can decorate with anecdotes and analyses without allowing them to obscure her central thesis.

A secondary and related theme is that of nature and of Macdonald's reliance upon it as a source of his art and imagery. Zemans gives this theme excellent consideration, especially in the late, non-representational paintings. It is only after finishing the catalogue that the reader realizes the full implications of Zemans' two major themes, and therefore fully appreciates the subtitle *The Inner Landscape*.

One of Professor Zemans' greatest problems involves terminology. "Surrealism" has unfortunately become a generalized and fuzzy term, as have so many other words denoting aesthetic styles. The tendency towards the use of such terms encompasses virtually every artistic movement, and numbers "Impressionism", "Expressionism" and "Surrealism" among its most maligned victims. This is, of course, not particularly surprising: these styles have great popular appeal, and it is this very quality which tends to submerge many tenets of basic doctrine beneath an avalanche of generalizations and truisms. Inaccurate use of such words in laymen's conversation, however, is a far cry from their misuse in scholarly publications.

Professor Zemans uses "Surrealism" without sufficient concern for its accurate definition. She (justifiably) discusses at length the influence of the British Surrealist Grace Pailthorpe upon Macdonald, dealing specifically with their shared use of the technique of automatic painting. So far, Zemans is on solid

ground. Automatism, which theoretically allows the subconscious mind to express itself without being saddled with the censoring and organizing tendencies of the conscious mind, is a basic element of Surrealism. The author does not go on, however, to consider Macdonald's Surrealism on its many potential levels, and it is at this point that her argument weakens. She never, it is true, attributes qualities to Surrealism which it did not have; the weakness lies in her brushing over aspects of Macdonald's art which are clearly surreal in derivation. She makes constant references, for example, to bird and animal imagery in his work, without seeming to realize that such imagery had the clear stamp of approval of the Surrealist movement in general, and of the major European Surrealists in particular. In this regard, one wonders where Macdonald found these Surrealist traits. The author deals with Pailthorpe's Surrealism only in terms of its automatic aspects, completely neglecting any discussion of her imagery and philosophy, (despite the fact that *The Spotted Oozle*, the only work by Pailthorpe illustrated in the catalogue, contains clearly animalistic forms). Surrealism is, at root, a philosophy for an improved world, art being only one of its manifestations. Did Macdonald absorb these aspects of the movement? If so, was it only through the influence of Pailthorpe? Certainly Macdonald's entire oeuvre mirrors his ongoing search for an art suitable to his philosophical outlook, which seems to have had much in common with Surrealism. ("Because a work does not aim at reproducing natural appearances it is not therefore an escape from life but may be a penetration into reality — and an expression of the significance of life — a stimulating to greater effort in living.")¹

Perhaps Macdonald was fascinated by the work and thought of some of the major Surrealists or by the work of the Montréal school (with whom he shares some fascinating characteristics). He was a prolific letter-writer, and many of his lecture notes survive. One would expect these sources to indicate at least some of his thoughts on Surrealism, especially the ones regarding artists whom he admired. This suspicion is

reinforced by the inclusion of Breton's *Manifesto of Surrealism* in the bibliography.

Interestingly, despite the fact that she stresses Pailthorpe's influence upon Macdonald and compares one of his works to that of a major Surrealist painter (see below), Professor Zemans nowhere makes specific reference to Macdonald as a practising Surrealist, even during the 1940's. This seems peculiar in light of the artist's anthropomorphic imagery and of his automatics being "created in a mood of 'ecstasy' and totally lacking in preconception,"² two eminently Surrealist qualities. Why does Zemans seem so reluctant to classify Macdonald as a Surrealist, even if only for a short period in his life? The implication is strongly and repeatedly made in the text, but is never explicitly stated.

As a final word on Zemans' treatment of Surrealism, one wonders about her visual analysis. Her comparison of the background in Macdonald's *Fish Family* (1943) to those of Tanguy's seems awkward. The former, with its ambiguous but limited background, has little in common with Tanguy's endless vistas.

Just as Zemans dances around the notion of Surrealism without ever quite committing herself, so she marches a parade of philosophical influences upon Macdonald before the reader without ever defining the degree to which Macdonald may be considered and adherent of any of these schools of thought. Annie Besant, Lawren Harris *et. al.* are cited in a discussion of theosophy which somehow never quite goes beyond hinting at what it has to say. Too often we are not told whether Macdonald's acquaintance with these thinkers and artists was first - or second-hand. The author's use of these sources (such as Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*) in analyzing Macdonald's paintings seems to be minimal, despite the importance which she attaches to them.

Professor Zemans' visual analysis of Macdonald's work seems too often to restrict itself to describing the placement of forms, information which could as easily be gleaned by glancing at the reproduction in question. True,

this sort of approach has a long, if not illustrious, history in the writing about art, but that alone cannot justify it. Zemans is, in this regard, trapped by her very laudable attempt to fuse in this catalogue a solid introduction to Macdonald for the layman with the first truly comprehensive study of the artist for the art professional. Such an approach will almost inevitably lead to superficial pictorial analysis in the interests of maintaining everyone's interest.

Zemans is clearly capable, however, of insightful visual analysis. Her remarks regarding the nature-derived imagery of Macdonald's art are among her best. There are, in addition, many examples throughout the catalogue of thoughtful correlations drawn between Macdonald's work and that of other artists. These comparisons, however, are not consistently good. The similarities between Macdonald's *Polynesian Night* (1953) and Graham Sutherland's *Thorns* (c. 1946)³ do not seem strong enough to support the author's argument for their importance. (On the other hand, the clear presence of Miró in *Polynesian Night* is not mentioned, despite the fact that this may constitute another element of proof for Macdonald's essays into Surrealism.) The comparisons to other artists' work, notably that of Kandinsky and Carr, occasionally suffer from a lack of relevant pictorial reproduction in the catalogue.

Thus, the most serious problems in Professor Zemans' catalogue may be seen as relating to the thorny issues of influences upon the artist. (One such probable influence, entirely ignored by the author, is that of the presence of Neo-Platonism in the early part of this century. Manifesting itself as Christian Science, it played a strong role in the landscapes of the Group of Seven,⁵ to which those of Macdonald owe much.)

The reproductions are consistently sharp and clear, and the colour plates almost always admirably capture the subtleties of tone in the paintings. Unfortunately, the illustrations are not identified by plate numbers, and the text does not indicate whether or not a discussed work is reproduced. This is ameliorated somewhat by the fact that reproductions are generally within one

or two pages of the relevant textual passages. An index would also have been appreciated in a catalogue as comprehensive and lengthy as this one, and the very short bibliography is a disappointment in such an important book. There is included a most complete chronology of the artist's life, a listing of principal exhibitions, and a listing of all the art works included in the exhibition, with appropriate documentation. There are, of course, the inevitable errors of a large text, the most serious being the dating of John Vanderpant's death as having occurred in 1938 instead of 1939.⁶ Comparatively minor problems, however, must not blind the reader to the tremendous value of Professor Zemans' catalogue. It is a *magnificent* work of scholarship, and will stand as the dominant authority on Macdonald for many years to come.

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Notes

- 1 Joyce ZEMANS, *Jock Macdonald: The Inner Landscape/A Retrospective Exhibition* (Toronto: The Art Gallery of Ontario, 1981), p. 229.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- 3 *Ibid.*,
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 163.
- 5 Charles C. HILL, *John Vanderpant Photographs*. (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1976), p. 28.
- 6 Zemans, p. 96.
Hill, p. 32.

Jock Macdonald: The Inner Landscape/A Retrospective Exhibition

A comprehensive retrospective exhibition of the work of J.W.G. (Jock) Macdonald (1897-1960), a founding member of Painters Eleven in Toronto, is certainly overdue. Dennis Reid and Ann Pollock's small but estimable 1970 exhibition of Macdonald's work at the National Gallery was the first since the artist's death, but still was not based on a great deal of original research. This current exhibition, organized by Joyce Zemans, Associate Professor in art history at York University, includes 157 works and reflects several years of research and study on her part.

Both the exhibition and catalogue are divided into thirteen time periods, providing a useful breakdown of a rather complex and varied *oeuvre*. To Zemans' credit, she has managed to convey a good idea of Macdonald's social milieu during his years in Vancouver (1926-47); his musical evenings with the Vanderpant, for example, and his relationships with Lawren Harris and F.H. Varley are well documented. Much of this cultural/social history has been recorded in published form concerning Montréal and Toronto artists but Zemans' research makes one aware that this sort of work should be undertaken on other cities in Canada in order to shed light on artistic production in smaller centres.

Her work on British Surrealism and its influence on Macdonald's art (largely via the bizarre Grace Pailthorpe) was a huge undertaking in itself, the British movement being more or less an offshoot or backwater to the European one. As Zemans describes the role of British Surrealism in Macdonald's work, one begins to see it as an intriguing foil to the exploration of French Surrealism by francophone artists in Québec such as Pellán, Borduas and their followers. Zemans brings out the fact that Macdonald felt Borduas and his students to be rivals to English-Canadian abstractionists for the limelight of having introduced abstract art to Canada.

She lays to rest a long-held misconception often referred to of Mac-

donald's training under, and debt to, Hans Hofmann. In fact, Macdonald was over fifty, and a fully developed artist, when he went to Provincetown for a few weeks in the summers of 1948 and 1949. Although Hofmann's role in the development of Macdonald's work was minimal then, his advice was identical to that which Varley gave Macdonald in the 1930's and which Dubuffet was to offer in 1955. Macdonald had to become more fluid and less tight and linear in his use of paint. Doubtless this problem was caused by Macdonald's early training and years of work as a commercial artist, a relationship Zemans does not explore. Indeed, the advice seems to be that heeded by several of Canada's commercial artists/painters who struggled to become more painterly. Both Tom Thomson and Jack Bush come to mind as outstanding examples.

Zemans' main weakness in this essay is her failure to give the reader a convincing portrait of Macdonald, both as an artist and a man, and to set him in an artistic/intellectual context. Her writing tends to be brittle and reads as though she is holding both Macdonald and his work at arm's length. Her approach is more one of analysis than an emotionally involved investigation. Despite her commendable and competent interviewing, research and marshalling of material, Zemans stops short of interpretation at various points. Granted, the task of making sense of Macdonald's work would not be an easy one; the artist was something of an anomaly and drew from eclectic sources. But in this work, both Macdonald and his art end up floating in a nether world in which, for example, Kandinsky and Mondrian are given the same credence as Ouspensky.

Zemans' removed and analytical mode is perhaps most inappropriate in her descriptions of Macdonald's late works. These are the culminating canvases of his career and as spiritual expressions are nothing short of magnificent. The brushstrokes mediate between personal expressive gestures and anonymous "found" daubs or shapes in nature. Thus, the works have the feeling they have naturally evolved and were not contrived or forced. Yet,

as abstract paintings, Macdonald's late works are not modernist, in Clement Greenberg's sense of the term, and do have a dated look to them. Zemans does make the astute observation that Macdonald remained an *easel painter* and never moved into the large scale of gesture and canvas of the Abstract Expressionists in New York. In fact, Macdonald and his pupils, for example, William Ronald and John Meredith, could almost be seen as the flip side to the coin of modernist painting in English Canada (if things were ever so simple) with Jack Bush and the artists he influenced on the other and more prominent face.

Any such context for Macdonald's work is what is needed in order to view his paintings with some sense of their place. Zemans opens up many areas for further research or thinking on Macdonald as well as this one. His precise ideas on spirituality, on nature, and on such notions as Ouspensky's fourth dimension need more definite articulation, particularly as they relate to the content and style of his work. Also, the relatively unexplored era/area of transcendentalism and fascination with the spiritual world on the part of many North American artists between the two World Wars is of vital interest and importance to the study of art history of the period.

Macdonald leaves us many direct clues to the meaning of his work, particularly in his 1940 manuscript on "Art in Relation to Nature", which Zemans reproduces as an Appendix. All things considered, Zemans, with her well-organized research, has created a successful book, one which can only serve to stimulate interest and further writing on Jack Macdonald.

Liz Wylie,
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The Drawings of Alfred Pellán

Reesa Greenberg

The National Gallery of Canada

Ottawa, 1980

150 pp., 121 ill., \$14.95

The work of Alfred Pellán has chronically received little serious Scholarly attention;¹ the work of Reesa Greenberg during the last decade, however, has reversed this state of affairs.² In her most recent contribution to the field, *The Drawings of Alfred Pellán*, Greenberg uses formalist methodology and the principles of connoisseurship to trace Pellán's "drawn oeuvre in terms of intent, chronology, and style, as well as their (*sic*) relationship to the paintings" (p. vii). The lengthy text is illustrated with reproductions of every drawing contained in the National Gallery of Canada exhibition for which the catalogue was produced, a major achievement on Greenberg's part, as most of these drawings have not been previously published. Dates and provenances are established for each drawing included in the catalogue; in addition, the catalogue contains an appendix providing a hitherto unpublished concordance of Pellán's drawings of 1948 and the poems from Paul Éluard's *Capitale de la Douleur* which inspired them. Despite Greenberg's meticulous research, thorough documentation of the drawings, and many original contributions to the study of Pellán's work, *The Drawings of Alfred Pellán* has serious weaknesses which arise out of the limitations of the author's conception of art history.

The introduction to the catalogue provides a brief overview of several major issues raised by Pellán's art, while also bringing into focus problems with Greenberg's approach to them. After broaching the thorny question of Pellán's eclectic borrowings from School of Paris artists, for example, Greenberg promptly scuttles it by dismissing it as a quirk of his "philosophy of art,"³ which she details through paraphrasing and quoting Pellán's statements on the nature of his art. She does not, however, attempt to critically analyze Pellán's artistic "philosophy," a feat which could have been accomplished by exploring why he chose to be influenced by certain modes of artis-

tic expression, but not others; why his descriptions of his art return compulsively to certain aspects of his art, while remaining silent on others; or how his verbal statements relate to his visual statements. By refusing to probe into the underlying implications of Pellán's artistic "philosophy," and by cleaving it from the art produced by him, Greenberg eliminates the possibility of discussing his work on anything but purely formal grounds; the unfortunate result is that his "philosophy," like his drawings, is endlessly described, but never fully explained.

Greenberg frequently returns to Pellán's relationship to the School of Paris throughout the catalogue; her primary interest in this subject appears to be the performance of the visual gymnastics of connoisseurship, accomplished by establishing parallels between Pellán's work and a variety of twentieth-century Parisian artists on the basis of evidence which is at once superficial and obvious. The following passage is typical of Greenberg's approach:

characterized by a few, thick, firmly controlled, often stylized lines, the drawings recall certain works by Matisse in their precision, clarity, and decorative qualities, even though that artist's work was executed in ink and usually depicted the full figure. (p. 35)

While the non-specific and generalized nature of this comparison illuminates little of consequence about the nature of Pellán's style, a close reading of the passage is revealing about the kinds of conclusions Greenberg wishes the reader to reach insofar as Pellán and the School of Paris are concerned. She does not say that Pellán was influenced by, or derivative of Matisse, for such a statement would be at odds with her assumption that "art for Pellán involves an individual, exploratory process in which one is free to use any device or technique that permits a personal solution to artistic problems" (p. 2). Instead of using semantics which would reveal Pellán's heavy dependence on the formulas of the School of Paris (which would also immediately raise questions about Pellán's artistic originality and critics' perception of it),

Greenberg chooses words which stress his affinity with and equality to such artists as Matisse; the effect of Greenberg's language is to subtly insist on the *quality* of Pellan's art by implying that it occupies a niche within the mainstream of modern art, namely, alongside the work of the School of Paris. As a result of Greenberg's implicit assumption that it is a professional obligation to prove the aesthetic merits of Pellan's work, the kind of critical distance which is required to come to terms with the complex history and meaning of his art is diminished in this study.

The most lengthy section of the catalogue deals with Pellan's career from 1944 to 1952, a period which Greenberg regards as a crucial one due to its "surrealist imagery and techniques [which] provided him with a new concept upon which he would anchor his drawing for the rest of his career" (p. 3). Although Greenberg regards surrealism as being of paramount importance to the "mature" period of Pellan's career, she does not clarify the exact nature of his relationship to that internally contentious movement; she does not, for example, investigate which elements of which branch of surrealism that Pellan adopted, he either ignored or rejected, and the reasons for such choices. By evading questions of this nature, the usefulness of Greenberg's analysis of the "surrealist" phase of Pellan's career is severely circumscribed and remains at the level of superficial generalizations; nevertheless, by avoiding those disconcerting questions which are predicated on "why?", and which inevitably lead into the realm of historical investigation in order to be fully answered, Greenberg is able to remain faithful to the narrow path of orthodox formalism to which she is committed.

Despite Greenberg's refusal to go beyond the boundaries of positivistic formalism on most aspects of Pellan's career, she makes a curious incursion into the vicissitudes of history in her discussion of Pellan's career in the late 1940's:

In Quebec, the traditional views of the political, religious, academic, and art establishments resulted in a restrictive climate vigorously opposed to modern-

ism and internationalism — the foundation of Pellan's painting and of his position in the Montreal art world... Pellan deliberately changed the titles of his drawings for *Capitale de la Douleur* in an attempt to obscure their source, in response to the current anti-communist climate in Duplessis's Quebec. (p. 66)

The reasons for Greenberg's brief review of the history of post-war Québec and Pellan's response to it are ambiguous, for she does not use her historical research to illuminate the meaning of Pellan's art in any significant way. The manner in which she uses fragments of social history, however, suggests a reason for this abrupt entry of historical factors into an otherwise formalist essay. By juxtaposing Duplessis, anti-communism and anti-modernism with Pellan, Greenberg implies that Pellan aligned himself with the forces of aesthetic and political progress against those of reaction in "Duplessis's Quebec." If all of the historical evidence is surveyed, however, Greenberg's inferences regarding Pellan's attitude towards the Québec *status quo* would be called into question; the paucity of her historical evidence alone renders her conclusions on this point suspect. Since the "Quiet Revolution" however, Canadian art historians have found it difficult to accept any French-Canadian artist as thoroughly modern without attempting to prove that he or she opposed Duplessis long before the Union Nationale's fall from power in 1960. As Greenberg evidently regards Pellan as a quintessentially modern artist, she also appears to regard it as given that he was also "ahead of his time" both politically and aesthetically, and therefore opposed the dominant ideology of Québec during the late 1940's and 1950's. Accepting Pellan's hostility towards the *status quo* as a natural consequence of his avant-gardisme, Greenberg does not bother to substantiate her assessment of Pellan's relationship to historical events through reference to those events themselves, in all their myriad and complex details. Due to her reliance on conventional assumptions about the nature of an avant-garde artist's relationship to society, Green-

berg's description of Pellan's career at mid-century is a distorted one, the victim of what Sartre has called "a priorism"; "the [violation of] experience, by overlooking embarrassing details, by grossly simplifying the event, and above all, by conceptualizing the event before having studied it."⁴

In the preface to *The Drawings of Alfred Pellan* Greenberg states: "I am well aware that within the context of the problems raised, more can be said and that some issues have not been addressed" (p. vii). This *caveat* notwithstanding, I do not fault Greenberg for failing to account for all the issues pertinent to Pellan's career, but rather question the relevance and intentions of the purely formal issues which she regards as the crucial, preliminary ones; my fundamental reservations about this catalogue, therefore, lie with its methodology and its tacit art historical assumptions. The kind of descriptive formalism used by Greenberg constrains her from incorporating her observations about Pellan's style into a synthetic totality, and forces the catalogue to remain a series of disunited descriptions of the most superfluous aspects of Pellan's style. The fragmented character of Greenberg's methodology is only aggravated by her deviations into pointless social history and testimonials to the quality of Pellan's work.

Formalist Canadian art historians will undoubtedly regard *The Drawings of Alfred Pellan* as a meritorious addition to the study of one of the major figures of modern art in Québec. Apart from Greenberg's original research on the documentation of Pellan's drawings, to the partisans of critical art history who insist on understanding the complex relationship of art to the historical realities which impinge upon it, *The Drawings of Alfred Pellan* is a disappointing study, interesting mainly insofar as it reveals the state of crisis and confusion which informs contemporary formalism.

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Notes:

- 1 To date, only four monographs have been published on the work of Pellan, and only one of these during the past decade: Maurice GAGNON, *Pellan* (Montréal: l'Arbre, 1943); Donald W. BUCHANAN, *Alfred Pellan* (Toronto: Canadian Publishers, 1962); Guy ROBERT, *Pellan: His Life and His Art*, trans. George LACH (Montréal: Éditions du Centre de Psychologie et de Pédagogie, 1963); Germain LEFEBVRE, *Pellan* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart). While these works contain pieces of information which are indispensable to the student of Pellan's career, they are not, nor do they pretend to be scholarly works; they are more biographical than art historical, laudatory rather than critical.
- 2 See the following articles by GREENBERG: "Surrealism and Pellan: L'amour fou," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* I, 2 (Autumn 1974), pp. 1-11; "Surrealist Traits in the Heads of Alfred Pellan," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* III, 1-2 (Autumn 1976), pp. 55-72; "Pellan, Surrealism and Eroticism," *Artscanada* 240/241 (March/April 1981), pp. 42-46.
- 3 To describe an artist's statements about his art as constituting an aesthetic "philosophy" as Greenberg does, is to immediately surround those statements with a screen of critical inviolability; "philosophy" is charged with such powerful, positive, and elevated associations that its use in conjunction with an artist's comments about his or her art minimizes the possibility of clearly and objectively perceiving the implications of the component parts of an "artistic philosophy."
- 4 Jean-Paul SARTRE, *Search for a Method*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 23.

10 Canadian Artists in the 1970s An Exhibition for European Tour

Roald Nasgaard

Art Gallery of Ontario, 1980

112 pages, 57 ill., \$7.50

About five years ago, the late Amy Goldin commented in *Art in America* that "art in Canada is oppressed by the fear of provincialism" and she then went on to suggest that this might help explain why "Canadian artists are eager to compete for international recognition." It must have been with some satisfaction, then, that Roald Nasgaard, Chief Curator of the Art Gallery of Ontario learned during the 10th International Sculpture Conference held in Toronto in 1978 of the interest on the part of European curators and critics in an internationally touring exhibition of Canadian art.

The result of this encouragement was *10 Canadian Artists in the 1970s*, which after opening in Toronto, circulated for eight months to three centres in western Europe (although I must admit I had to use an atlas to locate two of the cities). Fortunately the artists are much more familiar: Baxter, Bush, Ewen, Favro, Kennedy, Martin, Molinari, the Rabinowitch twins and Snow. That is to say, three "painter-painters," three multimedia conceptualists, two minimalist sculptors, one conceptual painter and one "process-painter." The exhibition was accompanied by a hefty, well-designed and fully illustrated catalogue where the artists' statements seem to be as important as the works themselves.

The exhibition, and therefore the catalogue, is essentially thematic. Nasgaard's notion was to present:

art which has deliberately undertaken a shift in focus away from the object in order to set up a conscious dialogue between object and viewer... a tendency (which has) been... labelled Minimalism, Process Art, Conceptual Art etc...

Given that this premise is the binding principle for the choice of both the artists and the works, it is rather surprising that Nasgaard has not been more exacting in his definitions. Minimalism, as has been emphasized by other writers, is better described as

literalism because of the hierarchy of the object and the artist's direct relationship with his materials. This is at the opposite pole to conceptualism given its disdain for the act of execution. Process art presents a third and distinct tendency because of its emphasis on the pattern of physical transformation and its insistence on the object's process of production.

Nasgaard's concern for art that exists essentially within itself, alienated from the outside world, demands that the work must have conviction and authority for its essential meaning lies within the power of its presence. Similarly, as the objects are intended to participate in a specific sort of dialogue with the viewer, the integrity of the piece is essential. Furthermore, because Nasgaard has chosen, on the face of it, to emphasize art which does not obey traditional expectations wherein the work is comprehended in a single glance or a series of glances, the object's appeal to the mind must be sustaining. If the work does not follow these precepts, it can end up looking contrived and witless.

But does the selection of the pieces and the choice of artists really live up to Nasgaard's criteria stated in the catalogue? Or are we rather presented with a Procrustian exercise where the hoped-for uniformity of aesthetic is arrived at through arbitrary decisions? Several of the pieces are either too timid or too jokey to illustrate Nasgaard's proposition. In the curator's "Preliminary Explanation" to the catalogue, he comments that this exhibition is "celebrating achievement not testing 'new talent'." Such reasoning presumably justifies the inclusion of Jack Bush in this context. Nasgaard proposes that Bush's reinvention of figure-ground relationships permits a dialectic interaction between object and viewer. But the complex relationships that Bush presents on a purely visual level encourage a direct emotional response precisely because of its appeal to the senses. Unlike the work of Kennedy, for instance, there is in Bush something to look at. The range of visual stimulus ensures that the work will continue to give of itself. Perhaps Bush simply has to be included in any Canadian exhibition for export. In this way, he can be made to

stand for all of Toronto painting in the 1970's.

Paterson Ewen is also a peculiar choice. Although his forthright process and rather primitive drawing is sufficiently awkward to separate him from the modernists, his emotionally charged images do not quite fit into a reductionist pigeon-hole. It is also surprising that in terms of reputation, Baxter and Kennedy should be included in the same context as Snow and Molinari. It seems that the "senior artists" act as a kind of support for those with shorter careers and less evolved histories.

That these artists really do "indicate the variety and richness of artistic production in this country" is slightly misleading. Rather, the exhibition does not accurately reflect the full degree of experimentation and aesthetic enterprise in Canadian art. With the exception of Bush, there is no representation of the renaissance of painterly abstraction. Neither realism nor the various forms of obsessional representationalism are presented. While Nasgaard seemingly did not want to send out a show that took risks, it might have been interesting for him to have chosen only one of the Rabinowitch brothers, especially since no other sculptors are included.

While it is always easy to reinvent a thematic exhibition with a different cast of characters, it does seem that this show has a strongly London, Ontario bias. That most of the artists have some connection with the Carmen Lamana Gallery of Toronto could also reinforce the notion that the show is, in more ways than one, a reflection of an entrenched art establishment. Because the exhibition has so many guidelines and parameters, it runs the risk of denying the fact that Canadian art possesses a greater energy and vitality of ideas than this presentation would suggest.

The catalogue is, ironically, more satisfying than the exhibition. Perhaps this is readily understandable when the theme of the show seems more important than the work included. Even if the arguments are not overly convincing, Nasgaard's twelve page introduction is well-written. The brief "histories" of the artists' work following his opening remarks are arranged chrono-

logically. Except in the case of Molinari, however, the discussion pays little attention to the artist's cultural milieu. Unfortunately, the text is riddled with exaggerated claims for Canadian aesthetic ingenuity; and Nasgaard's short discussion of the artists' approaches is slightly undermined by nationalistic chest-thumping and some twisting of art history. Given that the exhibition was primarily intended for a European audience, that kind of rhetoric can tend to make us look like colonials.

Following Nasgaard's essay, the next eighty-five pages are given over to the artists. Each individual, in alphabetical order, is represented by the inevitable artist's statement (in varying degrees of literacy), then illustrations of the work (including pieces not exhibited), and the entry concludes with a selected *curriculum vitae*. For some curious reason, Royden Rabinowitch's biography has his birthplace and date and the title of only one of his exhibitions. At the end of the book, the catalogue entries for the exhibition are listed, a useful device for discerning exactly what went on tour.

All in all, *10 Canadian Artists in the 1970s* offers an individual point-of-view that seems slightly out-of-date. As an exhibition for European circulation, it does present art that looks like art done elsewhere, and because of that, the show should bring us the validation we seemingly crave so much. That the catalogue essay is insufficiently analytical and somewhat lame is unfortunate. There is a good idea here, but it needs to be explored at greater length and within a larger context. Canadian art should be promoted on the international circuit, but perhaps in a format that shows more openness to the wider range of achievement than is described in this exhibition.

Sandra Paikowsky

**The Robert McLaughlin Gallery,
Oshawa — Permanent Collection**

Joan Murray, staff editor:

Jennifer C. Watson, research &
compilation

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery,
Oshawa, 1978

129 pp., 199 black and white ill.,
2 colour ill., \$20.00

**The University of Guelph Art
Collection: A Catalogue of
Paintings, Drawings, Prints
and Sculpture**

Judith B. Nasby, Curator of Art

Univ. of Guelph, 1980

410 pp., 479 black and white ill.,
31 colour ill., \$15.00

**Checklist of the Paintings,
Prints and Drawings in the
Collection of the Robert Hull
Fleming Museum**

Nina G. Parris, compilation

The Robert Hull Fleming
Museum, Univ. of Vermont,

Burlington, 1977

166 pp., 4 ill., \$7.50

The compilation and design of a permanent collection catalogue in many ways resembles the assembling and mounting of a large and complex exhibition of works of diverse schools, periods and media, in one place at one time. The analogy holds in that the catalogue must do justice to the individual works and to the overall theme of a gallery's acquisition practices, through an articulate, logical, consistent and sensitive arrangement of the whole material. The catalogue therefore is more than simply a record of contents and will invariably condition the user's attitude toward the institution and the collection that it houses. It is therefore essential that it be carefully researched and skilfully designed for maximum didactic efficiency and convenience of use.

The catalogues of the Robert McLaughlin Gallery (R.McL.G.) and the University of Guelph Art Collection (U.G.A.C.) are the main subjects for this review. The Robert Hull Fleming Museum (R.H.F.M.) checklist is included here since it offers an alternate and distinctive solution to the common problem, as viewed by a museum of

comparative scale and scope of operations. One can safely assume that the decision to publish in each case was one made on the basis of a collection that quite recently, both qualitatively and quantitatively appeared to demand this summation in print. Given the prohibitive costs involved in printing illustrated material it cannot have been a decision either undertaken lightly or without considerable planning.

In the first place there would be the need to pull together a research team under an editor responsible for establishing division of labour (updating artists' files, publication and exhibition histories of individual works, establishing precise measurements for all works and noting the exact medium of each work.) The U.G.A.C. catalogue lists sixteen research assistants and the R.H.F.M. lists fifty-six research assistants. The two universities in question would undoubtedly enjoy an advantage in this respect given the numbers of willing and able students available for a project such as this. Critical paths must be established to keep the work from dragging on over such an extended period of time that when finally concluded it is necessary to update research previously completed. One can glean from the respective "Introductions" that the R.McL. G. devoted six years of its energies to this task and the R.H.F.M., five years. Available existing models of catalogues must be examined and camera work undertaken on an ongoing basis to assure the best photographic record possible.

A special problem unique unto this type of catalogue production is that the finished product cannot simply be constructed around what exists at the point of publication. It must also anticipate to some degree what is to come. Given the time expended in research and the sizeable outlay funds, catalogues such as these will generally have to serve to document the particular collection for a considerable portion of the foreseeable future, perhaps as much as ten to fifteen years; this despite the fact that public collections are living organisms that will continuously expand at a steady rate. Joan Murray points out in the "Acknowledgements" for the R.McL.G. catalogue that between the cut-off date for com-

pletion of research and compilation (end of 1977) and the publication date (in 1978), sixty-three additional works entered the collection. Aside from emphasizing the necessity to keep to a critical path of production dates, this situation emphasizes the importance of considering future publications in planning for the present.

The finished catalogue will have to have been designed in the context of at least the following considerations: a) will it be seriously outdated and of little further value within ten to fifteen years, or b) given the careful research, entry notations etc. will it continue to be of use even when a companion volume eventually appears? c) will the original catalogue permit sensible supplementary sections to be added beside it so that *in toto* the publications parallel and catch up to the collection itself at regular intervals? There is, of course, no entirely satisfactory answer to these questions; nonetheless these and other possibilities must all be considered from the point of the inception of the project. A further ramification directly related to this problem is that Directors and/or Curators involved in such a project often emerge with new insights into their collections and in this respect catalogues such as these have a real impact upon the direction and growth of public collections.

Another factor to be considered in the planning stage has to be the need to satisfy the differing but not necessarily mutually exclusive demands of: a) maintaining professional standards in art historical publications; b) honestly portraying the true nature of the collection, and *all* collections formed as they are over the years by numerous personalities involved in acquisitions ebb and flow in terms of judicious and injudicious decisions (university art collections are often at the tender mercies of zealous alumni only too willing to foist upon them souvenirs of trips to "exotic lands.") On a more serious note the relatively more rapid turn-over of curatorial staff in smaller institutions often results in an eclectic collection. Smaller institutions often have their beginnings in unusual and borderline groupings of work around which the institution in fact originally coalesced; c) there is also the need to impress upon the governing body of the institu-

tion the value of the collection and the need to sustain and build upon it; d) the publication, finally, will have to have a sufficiently wide appeal in appearance and content to be saleable in order to provide some revenues to offset its costs.

The ultimate determinant as to the nature of the publication in its appearance and probably also the quality of its contents has to be that of the available funding. Funds have to be solicited from a number of sources. In this regard both the R.McL.G. and U.G.A.C. find themselves blessed in their location in the province of Wintario. In addition to grants from this source, a reading of the respective "Acknowledgements" of these two catalogues indicates the additional sources that had to be tapped. The R.H.F.M. also recounts its funding by the Museum Program of the National Endowment for the Arts (U.S.A.) and additional trust funds. This and all of the foregoing factors play a part in determining the eventual appearance of the publication which, in turn, will likely reflect the many compromises made along the way from inception to completion.

The R.McL.G. catalogue commences with a "Foreword" by Joan Murray dealing with the funding of the Gallery's collection based upon "thirty-seven paintings willed to the City of Oshawa by Alexandra Luke, to be held 'til such time as a non-commercial art or picture gallery is established in Oshawa, wherein they can be properly displayed." The "Foreword" then details the growth of the collection and continues on to discuss the role of Alexandra Luke. There then follows a page by Jennifer Watson devoted to explanatory notes on the organization and content of the catalogue entries and use of abbreviations.

The entries are made alphabetically according to artists' surnames "regardless of school or country." This arrangement of course scatters the relatively few non-Canadian entries throughout the catalogue, rather than orphaning them in a small section at the conclusion. It also is obviously designed to permit an easy search for a particular artist. In fact this intention is frustrated to some degree by an unfortunate text design and idiosyncratic placement of certain groups of works.

The use of a four-column text per page format together with a continuous entry format means that a particular artist's entry can begin at any point within a column depending upon the conclusion of the immediately preceding entry; as a result information frequently continues to the top of a few columns and is broken by page turnings. A dictionary scheme is employed by prefacing the top left-hand side of a new page with the surname of the artist whose entry has been continued from the previous page. However English language dictionaries preface a new page *not* by repeating a previous page entry's name, but rather by noting the *succeeding* entry on the new page.

Further confusion arises in the R. McL. G. catalogue when in the course of the alphabetical sequence one encounters, immediately following "Eccles, R.K." (p. 16) for example, the entry "Editions I A set of thirty award-winning prints from a juried competition sponsored by the Ontario Arts Council in 1974." Immediately following this explanatory note appears the alphabetical listing of the thirty artists concerned, over pages 17 to 20, in an identical type-face, scale and entry system used throughout the catalogue. If one opens the catalogue by chance in the midst of this particular entry one can be easily confused by this second alphabetical listing apparently out of synch with the remainder of the catalogue. The next entry to follow, on p. 21 is "Eyre, Ivan" following on immediately without sufficient pause, leaving one with the initial impression that this is a misplaced entry from the "Editions I" grouping.

The same situation is repeated following "Gordon, John S." (p. 32) where one finds the "John Gordon Portfolio" running from p. 32 through to p. 35, immediately followed on p. 36 by "Gould, John"; "Jones, Phyllis" (p. 46) is followed by "Japanese Prints" (pp. 47-53). The first two columns on p. 53 conclude the "Japanese Prints", the remaining two columns move on to "Jopling, F.W."; "Olympic Prints" follow "Novak, Nicholas" on p. 93 through to "Panabaker, Frank" on p. 94. One gets the hang of this if one reads the catalogue strictly in sequence from start to finish, but catalogues of this type are reference tools, not gener-

ally handled in that manner by the reader.

Groupings of special collections always create something of a problem for publications, as is clearly evident in this catalogue. Perhaps, given the density of information and text per page it would have been wiser to collect these groupings within a separate, clearly identifiable, section. It might have then been possible to find a home for "Oscar Cahen's illustrations excluded" (p. xiii) (Illustrations of and for precisely what?) in the catalogue.

The individual entries themselves are praiseworthy and Jennifer Watson is to be congratulated for her efforts in this respect. They provide all the necessary information one could hope to usefully find in a catalogue such as this: artist's name, dates, title of work, year, a very complete description of the physical nature of the work, size (metric only), artist's notations on the work, provenance, accession code, and exhibition history of the work. In addition and on occasion information is included, where appropriate, as to watermarks and pentimenti. Where the notation "Literature" is appended to an entry, a somewhat heavy concentration is made upon "in house" publications such as *What's Happening at the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa*. The annotation of random works in the form of explanatory remarks concerning a particular choice of subject matter or medium by an artist is invariably interesting and refreshing as it serves to punctuate and enliven the unfolding roll-call of artists, works and specifications.

Limiting the type-face styles to two, on two differing scales and employing bold type for entry headings, italics for titles, artists' signatures and print enumerations helps to clarify the sequence of information, but from a visual point of view it makes for a very busy page. Photographic reproductions are numbered consecutively throughout, at the lower left hand corner of the image; the number is then repeated immediately before the title of the work in the text column.

The U.G.A.C. catalogue is a handsome production and an ambitious one for a university art gallery. Following a "Foreword," "Acknowledgements" and discussion of Dr. O.J. Stevenson's

contributions in initiating a "college art collection," p. xiii provides the reader with explanatory notes on the catalogue, and its systems. As is the case with the R.McL.G. catalogue, entries are made alphabetically according to artists' surnames regardless of country and school of origin or period of activity.

Each entry commences a new page so that one is readily able to establish whether a particular artist is represented in the U.G.A.C. The disadvantages of the system appear in disconcerting encounters such as "Goya y Lucientes" sandwiched between "James Gordaneer" and "K.M. Graham" or "Rembrandt van Rijn" flanked by "George A. Reid" and "Jack Reppen"! The overall attitude of the U.G.A.C. is to allow for a more lavish format than is the case in the R.McL.G. example; as a consequence certain benefits do accrue to the reader. The entries are arranged in what is essentially a three-column format, the first column invariably providing biographical information on the artist: full name, nationality, date and place of birth and (when appropriate) death. The biographical column also contains a brief summary of the artist's education, important exhibitions and short notes on the characteristic style and subject matter of the artist.

The column devoted to specifications of the works themselves gives in standardized form the title, date, medium, size (metric only), signature/date and the accession number, provenance, exhibitions and, under "References" where and when the work has been published. This entry information is never broken over two pages and each succeeding and complete listing of a particular artist's work commences anew on a second or third page where required. Each succeeding entry on an artist commences a new page and is emphasized by means of a double ruled line above the new entry's name. In no case is there more than one artist listed per page. The arrangement of all information on a page usually allows for generous quantities of type-free space.

Two point sizes are essentially used for the type, the larger for biographical information and the smaller for the specifications. Within this format the

use of italics and two different "weights" of type further serves to clearly distinguish between the variety of information being offered. Photographic reproductions are identified by means of the U.G.A.C. accession number at the lower right corner of the image which, itself, is always placed in close proximity to the particular listing for the work. All in all these factors make for a highly legible, clearly organized, reassuringly consistent, easily-learned system.

At the conclusion of the alphabetical sequence there is a section somewhat lamely identified as "Other artists" (pp. 394-401) devoted to "Unidentified" Chinese, Canadian and Inuit artists. A listing of "Portraits of Record" (pp. 403-05) is oddly separated from "Index of Portraits" (p. 410) when there is some apparent connection between the two pieces of information. An "Index of Artists" (pp. 406-09) lists artists in the collection by nationality within "American," "British and European" and "Canadian" groupings, with a final small group of "other artists."

The R.H.F.M. *Checklist* as its name infers represents an alternative to the illustrated catalogues already discussed. A *Foreword* provides a brief description of the origins of the collection and on p. 10 "An Explanation of Format" notes the checklist methodology. The system employed here sees a division made between "North American artists" (alphabetical listing according to artists' surnames) and "European and Latin American artists" (alphabetically according to nations within each of which, alphabetical listing of artists' surnames.) Each of the two divisions is prefaced by a "Bibliography" but the "North American" contains no standard references for the section on "Canada" (pp. 117-18). The reason for this *lacuna* can only be that at the time of going to press the R.H.F.M. possessed only nine works by six Canadian artists.

The *Checklist* employs a format based upon a two-column structure with individual entries broken, where necessary, over successive pages. Artists' names are given in a bold type-face, titles of works in largest point scale and upper case lettering. Following the artist's names there appears a concise

biography and bibliographical references to the artist. Specifications of the works are curt and to the point: medium, size (metric only), signature/date location, museum accession number, occasional exhibition references, and provenance, all arranged in a block without headings.

The comparatively modest approach of a checklist format at times appears to have encouraged a somewhat slipshod layout. The top of the first column on p. 124 is inexplicably blank leaving one with the impression that some information may be missing; p. 125, the last two entries of the second column are printed out of line with the preceding information. There is also, at times, a certain vagueness in maintaining the pre-determined "box" for textual information (p. 128), probably in an attempt to avoid breaking individual entries over two pages.

The *Checklist* has no photographic reproductions, and as a result the great advantage to the R.H.F.M. has to have been a comparatively low production cost. As Nina Parris mentions in her "Introduction" the hope was that this would be the first in a series of publications necessary to cover the eclectic collection held by the R.H.F.M. In fact a companion volume published in 1980 (*Recent Gifts and Acquisitions 1976-1980*) has appeared in the interim. This new volume (not seen by the author) does not however cover all the remaining areas of the collection left out of the original 1977 publication; for the moment no further companion volumes are planned. However the initial decision to produce a modest checklist has permitted a complementary volume to appear within a three year period.

The checklist approach brings one naturally to the issue of photographic reproductions. The R.H.F.M. decision not to reproduce works (the four illustrations are based on "photocopies of the architectural plans by McKim, Mead and White of New York City for the Fleming Museum in 1930") obviously makes the heaviest demands upon the user of the three publications being considered. The *Checklist* is designed for the scholar with sufficient knowledge of the field concerned not to need reproductions. (The R.H.F.M. *Recent Gifts and Acquisitions* has however included eighteen black and white

and one [on the cover] four-colour reproductions). If the original intention of separate volumes on the various areas of the R.H.F.M. collection is honoured then the scholar need only acquire the volume of particular concern — a saving in costs to museum and user alike. Another advantage is that the individual volume can be relatively slim and portable ($8'' \times 8\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$ - $20.2 \times 21.5 \times 1.5$ cm) and easily used as a reference guide when touring the museum.

The R.McL.G. offers two, four-colour and 199 black and white reproductions thus covering 26.6% of the 755 works in its collection as of December 1977 in a format correspondingly more substantial in scale and weight ($9\frac{3}{4}'' \times 8\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$ - $24.7 \times 21.5 \times 1.5$ cm). The reproductions themselves vary in scale from approximately six to sixteen square inches (39 cm^2 to 103 cm^2). This range however is not related in any manner to the different sizes of the works reproduced so that one must check the specifications in order to imagine the actual scale of the original. The reproductions are scattered with a certain random abandon throughout, a consequence no doubt of having settled upon the four-column layout. This further serves to break up the flow of information on any one page. The quality of reproduction appears acceptable although one is at a loss to explain the rakish angle of the printing of F.W. Jopling's *Whirlpool Rapids...* on p. 53, apparently subject to the forces portrayed in this mezzotint.

The U.G.A.C. catalogue contains thirty-one four-colour and 479 black and white reproductions, representing a little over 70% of the 674 works listed. This greater proportion of reproductions in comparison with the R.McL.G. catalogue tells in the overall dimensions of the U.G.A.C. publication: $10\frac{1}{2}'' \times 8\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1''$ - $26.6 \times 21.5 \times 2.5$ cm. The individual reproductions are correspondingly more generous in scale ranging in general from five to thirty-six square inches in area (32 cm^2 to 232 cm^2). Once again the relative scale of the reproductions has been considered more in terms of the over-all design of the catalogue rather than the specifics of the individual works. One further point in common between the R.McL.G. and U.G.A.C. catalogues is that neither one can

guarantee the user that what is reproduced is *not* a cropped image. A rule of thumb to be followed here is to always permit an edge of paper, liner, frame or contrasting ground to remain apparent in order to guarantee full inclusion of the image.

Under completely ideal conditions every Director/Curator would like to see the majority of paintings reproduced to appear in a four-colour process. Given the prohibitive costs of colour printing this is generally not feasible. The R.McL.G. contents itself with two colour reproductions, William Ronald's 1956 *J'Accuse* on the cover (a handsome and appropriate choice given the R.McL.G.'s concern with the Painters Eleven) and Alexandra's Luke's 1957 *Symphony* as a frontispiece to the "Foreword." The U.G.A.C. catalogue, in addition to the juxtaposition of an "ancient" and "modern" Canadian work on its cover again reflects its more lavish ambitions in reproducing thirty-one works in colour in a sixteen page grouping at the catalogue centre. Each of these works is reproduced again in black and white beside its particular entry, a debatable duplication when one considers costs, but necessary to maintain uniformity of catalogue design. Obviously scattering the colour reproductions throughout and beside particular entries would have vastly increased printing costs and could not have been seriously considered.

In summation one is presented then with three distinct approaches to the problem of permanent collection catalogue publication. The R.McL.G.'s catalogue some may feel suffers in respect to overall design and lay-out, but is a relatively compact, informative, reasonably well-illustrated reference work that would be of equal value both in the presence of and apart from the collection. The scale of its undertaking would not seem to prohibit a companion or supplemental volume from appearing within the period of ten to fifteen years from the original publication date. The U.G.A.C. catalogue is well designed, fully illustrated and constructed with a high degree of legibility in mind. The comparatively more lavish attitude would seem to suggest that this publication will have to stand for its collection far into the

forseeable future. This might not be as critical an issue for a university collection where acquisitions generally mount at a rather less dramatic pace than at other types of public art galleries. The comparatively austere approach of the R.H.F.M. has established a modest policy in collection publication for that institution. The benefits in low initial costs and in allowing a second volume to appear quite recently are readily apparent. If nothing more it is a well-designed *aide-memoire* and an enticement to visit first-hand, the R.H.F.M. Any comparatively scaled institution embarking upon a similar project would be well-advised to consider the options offered by these three recent publications.

Donald F.P. Andrus

**Portrait Miniatures in the
Royal Ontario Museum**

H. Hickl-Szabo

Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 1981.
60 pp., 50 ill., \$6.50

The recent surge of interest in the portrait miniature is undoubtedly due in part to economics; the miniature has the advantage of being both an original work of art and an antique, but is small enough to be portable in our mobile modern world. For this reason, it is usually listed as one of the more "sure investments" in a column such as that of Robin Duthy in *Connoisseur* (v. 207: 832, pp. 125-26). This pragmatic interest, however, has fostered a growth of scholarship and publication dealing with portrait miniatures from the point of view of art history. In the last two years, more than twenty-five books, catalogues or periodical articles have appeared regarding miniatures, from the broadest type of introduction to a scholarly history and descriptive analysis of one particular portrait. It is clear that Hickl-Szabo is right in stating that "the portrait miniature is very much in demand as a collector's item" (*Portrait Miniatures in the Royal Ontario Museum*, 1981, p. 1).

Until recently Harper's brief history of silhouettes and miniatures (Chapter 10 in his *Painting in Canada: A History*) was the only published survey of the portrait miniature in this country. Various articles and even books had been written about some miniaturists, but the majority of these were either books published before World War II dealing with an artist who also did miniatures, or were newspaper articles dealing with a hometown miniaturist. Interest in Canada, however, has followed the general trend with the result that several articles and two monographs have appeared within the last few months. Rosenfeld's thesis, for Concordia Univ., the appendix of which appeared in the *Journal of Canadian Art History* (v. 2, pp. 111-21), was the first done in Canada dealing specifically with miniatures (Betcherman's 1962 thesis on Berczy, while it included his miniatures, dealt with his entire career).

Undoubtedly, the Royal Ontario Museum's collection of miniatures is one of the largest in the country,

although there are other smaller collections as well as scattered portraits in large art collections in many museums and galleries. The Houses of Parliament, for instance, contain the set of Fathers of Confederation painted by Juliette de Lavoye and commissioned by Samuel Bronfman in honour of Canada's centennial. Seagram's 1967 annual report included a supplemental six-page folder that was basically a catalogue of this set. The museum at the Halifax Citadel has a display of twelve miniatures by Laura M. D. Mitchell, who was born in Halifax in 1883, although her work as a miniaturist was done largely in the United States.

This particular catalogue is the first to be published in Canada dealing with a miniature collection (aside from the Seagram folder mentioned above). The basic style follows that of several recent examples such as the New Orleans Museum of Art's catalogue of the Latter-Schlesinger Collection or Reynolds' new edition of the catalogue of miniatures of the Wallace Collection in London. The arrangement is generally chronological moving from the probable 1530's to the 1830's, often with unfortunate gaps. Each of the fifty miniatures is illustrated (six in colour). The subject, artist and date are given (where these are known), medium and size listed, and then a brief description follows, giving details on the subject, the artist, or both. On occasion, a short provenance is also given. There are no works by Canadian miniaturists and no portraits of figures notable in Canadian history. Infrequently, though, a Canadian connection does appear; plate 35, for instance, illustrates a miniature by Denis Brownell Murphy, father of the renowned Anna Jameson (although this fact is not mentioned in the plate description). A second catalogue is evidently planned and this perhaps may contain miniatures of Canadian significance. While there is a short bibliography on the last page, there is no index by artist, sitter or even country. This is an unfortunate omission as some artists are represented more than once, several pages apart, depending on when the particular miniature being described was painted.

As is stated in the introduction, the catalogue itself is not intended as a

scholarly publication but as an enjoyable introduction to miniatures in general, and specifically to the Royal Ontario Museum's collection. In this objective, it succeeds. Nevertheless, there are statements made in the introduction which are somewhat misleading, even for a popular publication. The first of these, that "the portrait miniature (though still not entirely neglected) is today a medium that appeals to perhaps fewer than forty artists in Europe and the Americas." In fact, modern miniatures, too, are enjoying something of a revival. The 1975 exhibit of the Society of Miniaturists in London featured works by forty-five artists and only last year, Rae Harris, a member of the Royal Society of Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers, published a manual on painting miniatures, in her home town of Perth, Australia, through her local university press. A further statement reads "...miniatures have largely been the work of Englishmen, with some influence from France." While it is true that the English (both men and women) dominate this field certainly there are extensive bodies of work by other artists. This catalogue itself includes nine miniatures from France and eleven from other European countries.

Overall, though, the publication is pleasing, especially *visually*. The placing of text and plate together is convenient and, while it may have been interesting to know more of the provenance of many of the pieces, it is obvious that only the information that is known can be given. The author has relied heavily upon the two major reference works in miniatures (the biographical dictionaries by Foskett and Schidlof) for much of the artists' biographical data and where these two works do not include much information he has not attempted to add further details. The fact that many of the miniatures were gifts from private donors reflects the importance of individual benefactors to public institutions such as museums and galleries. Certainly, the publication of the next catalogue, featuring the collection donated by Harrison Fraser, will be looked forward to with interest and anticipation.

Jan Roseneder
Bibliographer, Special Collections
Arts & Humanities Library
The University of Calgary

Je poursuis des recherches en vue de la rédaction d'un mémoire de maîtrise à l'Université Concordia. Mon sujet porte sur les critiques de Jacques de Tonnancour écrites entre 1940 et 1960. Afin de faire le lien entre ses écrits et son oeuvre de peintre, j'aimerais retrouver le plus grand nombre possible de peintures et de dessins exécutés par de Tonnancour entre 1940 et 1960 et faisant partie de collections privées ou publiques.

Toute personne pouvant me renseigner à ce sujet est priée de communiquer avec moi à cette adresse. Je les en remercie vivement.

Michèle Thériault
5446 av. Brodeur
Montréal,
Québec H4A 1J3
(tél.: 514-484-4056)

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery is organizing a large-scale exhibition of the work of the Canadian artist, Albert H. Robinson (1881-1956). The show will concentrate on paintings from the 1920's, the major period of the artist's career. We are most anxious to make this exhibition as complete as possible, and would appreciate any information on canvases or oil sketches by Robinson in public and private collections. Confidentiality will be observed at the owner's request. Please telephone Jennifer C. Watson at (519) 579-5860 or write: Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 101 Queen Street North, Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6P7.

Jennifer C. Watson
Curator

Errata: VOLUME V NO 2 1981

- i) on page 141, column 1, paragraph 3 it should read "Lyman's social contacts, his sophistication and his abiding adherence to the aesthetic of significant form provided him with the resources to create a city's conversion to modern art."
- ii) On page 143, the author of *Sur-réalisme et littérature québécoise* should read André G. Bourassa.