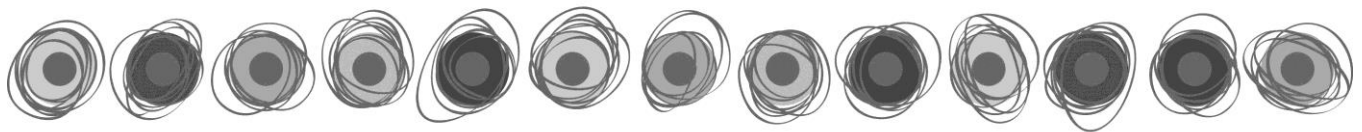


Réseau d'étude sur l'histoire des artistes canadiennes



Canadian Women Artists History Initiative

IMAGINING HISTORY:

THE SECOND CONFERENCE OF THE CANADIAN WOMEN ARTISTS HISTORY INITIATIVE

MAY 3-5, 2012

Concordia University, Montreal

## Conference Program 2012

*Thursday 3 May*

- 16h00 - 16h30      Registration (outside MB S2.210)
- 16h30 - 18h15      Welcoming Remarks (MB S2.210)  
                         Catherine MacKenzie (Department of Art History, Concordia University)  
                         Kristina Huneault (Department of Art History, Concordia University)
- Keynote address  
                         [Individual Lives, Collective Histories: Representing Women Artists in the Twenty-First Century](#)  
                         Mary Sheriff, W.R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor  
                         University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- 18h15 - 19h30      Reception (EV 3.741)

*Friday 4 May*

- 08h30 - 16h00      Registration  
                         (EV 3.725 Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art)

09h00 - 10h30: **BLOCK A**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD** [Retelling Feminism I: Theory and Narrative](#) (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Susan Cahill (Nipissing University)

[Ordinary Affects: Folk Art, Maud Lewis and the Social Aesthetics of the Everyday](#), Erin Morton (University of New Brunswick)

[Are We There Yet?](#) Critical Thoughts on Feminist Art History in Canada, Kristy A. Holmes (Lakehead University)

[Gendering the Artistic Field](#): The Case of Emily Carr, Andrew Nurse (Mount Allison University)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY** [By Album, Print and Brush: Early Canadiana](#) (EV 3.760)

Moderator: Anna Hudson (York University)

Louise Amélie Panet (1789-1862), Caricature and Visual Satire in Lower Canada, Dominic Hardy (L'Université du Québec à Montréal)

[Decoding a Victorian Woman's Album: A Case Study in the Reading of Autobiography](#), Pat Sheppard (Concordia University)

EnGendering Canadian Humour: Alice Killaly's *A Picnic to Montmorenci* (1868), Arlene Gehmacher (Royal Ontario Museum)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE Art and Activism** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Monika Kin Gagnon (Concordia University)

[Escaping the Cage: Cultural Performance as Activism, 1890–1951](#), Sherry Farrell Racette (University of Manitoba)  
[Intersecting Practices of Art and Activism: Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Doreen Jensen, and Daphne Odjig](#), Lee-Ann Martin (Canadian Museum of Civilization)  
[Joyce Wieland's Party](#), Joan Borsa (University of Saskatchewan)

10h30-11h00: Coffee Break (EV 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby)

11h00 - 12h30: **BLOCK B**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD (continued) Retelling Feminism II: Alternate Historiographies** (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Susan Cahill (Nipissing University)

[Why should you know Julia Crawford? Or, the Gallery, the University and the Rules of the Game](#), Kirk Niergarth (Mount Royal University)  
[City Life: Gender, Modernism, and the Curious Life and Afterlife of the Beaver Hall Group](#), Brian Foss (Carleton University)  
[La Chambre nuptiale de Francine Larivée \(1976\) et la fin de la dichotomie entre l'art savant et l'art populaire: une oeuvre issue de l'idéologie de la démocratie culturelle](#), Anithe de Carvalho (L'Université du Québec à Montréal)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY (continued) Beading and Embroidery: Traditional Aboriginal Arts** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Wahsontiiio Cross (Independent Scholar)

[La présence des Amérindiennes dans l'art du Canada au 17<sup>e</sup> siècle](#), Laurier Lacroix (UQAM)  
[Wendat Women's Arts: Values of Individuality and Community](#), Anne de Stecher (Carleton University)  
[Remember Me: Early Twentieth Century Beadwork and Collecting at the Six Nations of the Grand River](#), Stacey Loyer (Carleton University)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE (continued) Healing and Transformation** (EV 3.760)

Moderator: Loren Lerner (Concordia University)

Making Histories: Sanaugait and a New History of Inuit Women's Cultural Production, Alena Buis and Sarah Smith (Queen's University)  
[Healing Vibrations? Alma Rumball's Visionary Paintings \*\\*text only\\*\*](#), Maggie Atkinson (Memorial University)  
[Lorraine Malach's \*Exultation\* as Transformation](#), Susan Surette (Concordia University)

12h30-14h30: Lunch

14h30 - 16h00: **BLOCK C**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD (continued) Missing Information: The Challenges of Women's Art History** (EV 3.760)

Moderator: Catherine Sinclair (Ottawa Art Gallery)

[Off the Wall: 'Jane Hamilton O.S.A. active 1876-1887'](#), Michelle Gewurtz (Brandeis University)

[Some Early Nova Scotian Women Artists](#), Dianne O'Neill (Art Gallery of Nova Scotia)

[Public History and Cultural Production: Women's Contributions to Canada's Heritage](#), Andrea Terry (Carleton University)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY (continued) Women's Missions: Art, Change and Community** (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Janice Helland (Queen's University)

[Jessie Luther and the Craft of Healing](#), Susan Cahill (Nipissing University)

[Textiles Anonymous: Canadian Women and Temperance Banners](#), Julia Skelly (Concordia University)

[Stories Still to be Told: Canadian Women Missionary Artists in China, 1900-1947](#), Catherine MacKenzie (Concordia University)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE (continued) Gender and Collaboration** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Dr. Krista Lynes (Concordia University)

[Living Ahead of its Time: Art Deco House in Toronto](#), Alla Myzelev (University of Guelph)

[Landscape Design, Collaboration and Gender: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Feminist History of Canadian Art](#), Cynthia Hammond (Concordia University)

[The Group: Founders of The Photographers Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 1970-1972](#), Martha Langford (Concordia University)

16h00 - 16h30: Coffee Break (EV 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby)  
and time to walk to MB S2.210

**BOOK LAUNCH Rethinking Professionalism: Essays on Women and Art in Canada** (MB S2.210)

16h30 - 17h30: **LECTURE**

[Learning to Rethink Professionalism](#), Kristina Huneault (Concordia University)

17h30 - 18h30: **RECEPTION** (EV 3.741)

Saturday 5 May

08h30 - 12h00 Registration (EV 3.725 Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art)

09h00 - 10h30: **BLOCK A**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD (continued) Discovery: Research and Archives in Women's Art History**  
(EV 3.760)

Moderator: Cyndie Campbell (National Gallery of Canada)

[Greetings from Montreal](#), Monique Nadeau-Saumier (Independent scholar)

[Seeking the Archival Traces of Historical Women Artists](#), Amy Marshall Furness (Art Gallery of Ontario)

[Canadian Women's Art at Exhibition up to 1930: An Analysis of Published Catalogues](#), Jonathan Franklin  
(National Gallery of Canada)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY (continued) Home, Family and Empire** (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Mary Vipond (Concordia University)

[Kodaking and Being Kodaked: The Guisachan Photographs of Ishbel, Lady Aberdeen](#), Carolyn MacHardy  
(University of British Columbia)

[Crafting Empire: Intersections of Irish and Canadian Women's History](#), Elaine Paterson (Concordia University)

[A Canadian Artist in King Arthur's Court](#), Samantha Burton (McGill University)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE (continued) Contemporary Women's (Self) Representation** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Johanne Sloan (Concordia University)

[L'\(auto\)representation des femmes: Des pratiques artistiques en mutation?](#), Eve Lamoureux (L'Université du Québec à Montréal)

[Aging-Related Images: A Case Study of Marion Wagschal's Figurative Self-Portraits](#), Loren Lerner (Concordia University)

[Time is a Bitch: The Aging Female Body – a Site of Power in the Work of Dominique Rey, Meera Margaret Singh and Suzy Lake](#), Mary Reid (University of Manitoba)

10h30 - 11h00: Coffee Break (EV 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby)

11h00 - 12h30: **BLOCK B**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD (continued) Women and Museums** (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Laura Brandon (Canadian War Museum)

[Women as Art Brokers in Mid-Twentieth-Century Canada](#), Anne Whitelaw (Concordia University)

[Looking for Women in the Art of War](#), Laura Brandon (Canadian War Museum)

[Entre art public et peinture : le cas de Marcelle Ferron au Pavillon d'art québécois et Canadian du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal](#), Veronique Millet (L'Université du Québec à Montréal)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY (continued) Women and Social Change in the '20s, '30s and '40s** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Esther Trépanier (Université de Québec à Montréal)

[On the Line: Young Working Girls in Edwin Holgate's \*Wrong Number\*](#), Melissa Alexander (Carleton University)  
[Elizabeth Cann's Representations of Women and Everyday Life](#), Gemey Kelly (Owens Art Gallery)  
[Molly Lamb Bobak as a Wartime Portraitist](#), Lora Senechal Carney (University of Toronto Scarborough)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE (continued) Performance and Enactment** (EV 3.760)

Moderator: Barbara Clausen (Université de Québec à Montréal)

[Beyond The Domestic Sphere: Reconsiderations of Gathie Falk's performance work, \*Red Angel \(1972\)\*](#), Sarah Watson (Concordia University)  
[The Specter of a Rose: Re-enactment of the History of Photography and Autofiction for New Histories of Contemporary Art](#), Maryse Larivière (University of Western Ontario)  
[Les Fermières Obsédées : L'art féministe est mort, vive l'art féministe](#), Marie-Claude Gingras-Olivier (L'Université du Québec à Montréal)

12h30 - 14h30: Lunch

14h30 - 16h00: **BLOCK C**

**STRAND ONE: METHOD (continued) Attribution, Audience and Display: Craft in Canada** (EV 1.605)

Moderator: Cynthia Cooper (McCord Museum)

[Whose Quilt is it Anyway?](#) Alicia Boutilier (Agnes Etherington Art Centre)  
[Marion Nicoll's Crafty Path: The Road Not Taken](#), Jennifer Salahub (Alberta College of Art and Design)  
[Celebrating Canada's Craft Amateurs](#), Sandra Alfoldy (NSCAD University)

**STRAND TWO: HISTORY (continued) Changing Canadian Modernisms** (EV 3.760)

Moderator: Sandra Dyck (Carleton University Art Gallery)

[A Bridge and a Blind Spot: Feminism, Modernism, and the Work of Eva Stubbs](#), Andrew Kear (Winnipeg Art Gallery)  
[Sixteen years: Modernism and the brief visual arts career of Laura Evans Reid](#), Ruth Burns (Art Gallery of Alberta)  
[Emma Lake Revisited: Memory, Artefact and Art History Methodology](#), Mona Holmlund (University of Saskatchewan)

**STRAND THREE: PRACTICE (continued) Art and Technology** (EV 1.615)

Moderator: Reesa Greenberg (Independent Scholar)

[Women, Art and Telecommunications in Canada 1975-1985](#), Caroline Langill (OCAD University)

[Archiving, Mobile Technology and Bodies: The Work of Liss Platt](#), Mary O'Connor (McMaster University)

16h00 - 16h15: Coffee Break (EV 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby)

16h30 - 17h00: **CLOSING ADDRESS** (EV 1.605)

[The Missing Future](#), Joyce Zemans (Professor Emerita, York University)

17h00 - 17h10: **CLOSING THANKS** (EV 1.605)

Janice Anderson, Concordia University

We wish to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art for their generous support of this conference.

The Institute is hosting the book launch and its facilities (EV 3.725) are available throughout the conference for participants seeking a quiet place to meet, to run through their powerpoints, or to check their email.

## ABSTRACTS

**Alexander, Melissa (Carleton University)**

[On the Line: Young Working Girls in Edwin Holgate's \*Wrong Number\*](#)

Women and Social Change in the '20s, '30s and '40s  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 11h00 - 12h30

Today, young Canadian women are considered an integral part of the workforce, but in the early twentieth century their place in society was much more controversial. The development of the social conception of the working girl as both a social problem and a victim of industrial modernization can be seen in the politics, literature and visual culture of the time. This paper analyzes one such work, an Edwin Holgate woodcut print of a female nude entitled *Wrong Number*. Instead of Holgate's typical and idyllic woman-as-nature scenes, the nude is placed against an industrial back drop of telephone poles and wires in the midst of a storm. By locating this work within its cultural context, I argue that the nude is an allusion to female telephone operators, part of a generation of young working girls who were often cast as economic, moral, and medical victims of Canada's technological and industrial modernization.

**GemeyAlfoldy, Sandra (NSCAD University)**

[Celebrating Canada's Craft Amateurs](#)

Attribution, Audience and Display: Craft in Canada  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

Canada's cultural fabric has been knit together in part by the women who have pursued various craft hobbies. These amateur crafts have become important markers of regional, national and personal identities. This paper will not focus on an individual female maker, but instead will argue that the role of craft amateurs challenges traditional art historical monographs as it demands acknowledgement of groups of often anonymous practitioners whose work falls outside professional classifications while simultaneously providing popular culture benchmarks that define both craft and romantic national ideals. This paper will analyze specific examples that have contributed to Canadian national identity through amateur craft including: the Cardale, Manitoba Suffragette League's quilting fundraiser for farm women (1921); the Red Cross's World War Two mitten drive; *Chatelaine* magazine's 1967 Centennial craft projects; and the 2011 "Strawberry Shortcake for Canada Day Cake" challenge. What do these instances tell us about the power of popular craft as a tool in shaping women's national ideals?

**Atkinson, Maggie (Memorial University)**

***Healing vibrations? Alma Rumball's visionary paintings***

Healing and Transformation  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

Canadian artist Alma Rumball's (1902–1980) geometric symbols, Tibetan deities, images of the Holy Ghost, and representations of the Tree of Life are studied by diverse scholars, including those that work in medical facilities, who argue that her images facilitate meditative processes that activate subtle shifts in consciousness promoting physical and spiritual well-being in viewers. Rumball's intricately designed representations can be characterized as pioneering in their connection with spirituality and the other worldly. Unfortunately she is portrayed as a mere vehicle and as having suffered from "some madness"; characterizations that serve to trivialize and even



vilify her work. I want to argue that Rumball's art was the result of her association with artists and craftspeople and that she put her learned techniques into practice to produce images that have been exhibited throughout the world.

### **Borsa, Joan (University of Saskatchewan)**

#### **[Joyce Wieland's Party](#)**

Art and Activism

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

In 1987 Joyce Wieland's long-awaited retrospective exhibition opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first retrospective of a living Canadian woman artist at this key art institution. When the reviews of the exhibition appeared they devoted a disproportionate amount of time to Wieland's "matronly" appearance as if reluctant to pursue a more rigorous discussion of her contribution to feminist and contemporary art practice.

For the year leading up to Wieland's exhibition a group of Toronto-based feminist artists, curators and critics had been meeting regularly to discuss each other's work. Our collective response to the reviews was to place an advertisement in *The Toronto Globe and Mail* for a "new and critically responsible" Canadian visual arts critic. Much to our delight the ad appeared without any editorial changes. The very public forum of our intervention and the sense of community and empowerment that resulted generated a great deal of good will. To celebrate, we organized a potluck picnic in a public park in the heart of Toronto's art community, with Joyce Wieland as our special guest of honour.

In this paper I will analyze and situate the circumstances and institutional frameworks which motivated our critical response, and develop the critical significance of this collective action. As an instance of Canadian feminist resistance which was directed at effecting change in the art institutions and processes that frame our individual and collective work, this particular action is but one example of the events and stories which complicate, contextualize and expand our reading of Canadian art history.

### **Boutilier, Alicia (Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, Kingston)**

#### **[Whose Quilt Is It Anyway?](#)**

Attribution, Audience and Display: Craft in Canada

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

This talk will examine ongoing issues of attribution, audience and display as public institutions take stock of their historical quilt collections. When local quilters approached the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in 1980 to propose the establishment of a historical quilt collection, they noted that "a dramatic change of attitude" had taken place. The 1970s had witnessed a "craze for quilts," inspired in part by the 1971 *Abstract Design in American Quilts* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Historical pieced quilts were hung on walls like non-objective paintings. While the exhibition heralded a new way of looking at quilts as art, it also elicited criticisms that quilts were being separated from their cultural context, and the women who made them too easily dismissed as happily anonymous. When the Agnes Etherington Art Centre celebrated thirty years of its Heritage Quilt Collection, it was part of another surge of interest. In 2010–2011 there were a number of major historical quilt exhibitions abroad and in Canada **that** underlined ways of displaying quilts as both aesthetic and cultural objects, while recognizing gender and the complexity of quilt authorship.

**Brandon, Laura (Canadian War Museum)**

**[Looking for Women in the Art of War](#)**

Women and Museums

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

Many of the current museum debates relating to the presentation and material history of women in wartime are historical. The masculine reality of war and past collecting practises continue to marginalize women's wartime roles and experiences. This is no less true for Canada's official war art collections. In the context of an ongoing Canadian War Museum and Canadian Museum of Civilization-initiated project on women and war, recent research in the war art collection sheds light on how and where women are depicted in war art. Preliminary conclusions suggest that women's war history continues to be under-represented in military art. Furthermore, the past few decades' notable increase in the number of women military artists has done little to ameliorate the situation.

**Buis, Alena and Sarah E.K. Smith (Queen's University)**

**Making Histories: Sanaugait and a New History of Inuit Women's Cultural Production**

Healing and Transformation

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

Inuk artist and art historian Theresie Tungilik explains that her embroidered wall hangings "tell a part of the history of the Canadian Inuit" and should be understood as "a route for [viewers] to understand how we as Inuit lived long ago." Tungilik's creations are categorized as *sanaugait*, the Inuktitut term for things created by hand, encompassing what is conventionally labelled craft production. This paper takes the production and use of sanaugait in Nunavut as its starting point, seeking to examine the textile works of Tungilik and other Inuit women. Specifically, we see their production as a method of preserving cultural practices garnered from previous generations, in turn resisting colonial processes that have attempted to delegitimize and eradicate that which is documented in their textile works. Basing our study on interviews with Tungilik, we explore her artistic practice in relation to larger questions about new methodologies for the study of women and material cultural production in Canada. In particular, we seek to interrogate issues of women's roles as makers and storytellers raised by current considerations of material culture production, invoking Claire Farago's call for art historians to examine "what happens when new identities are formed, when new communication occurs, when representational practices that have never been in contact before are suddenly in collision and contention, when the readability of the art changes because of contact, and when people's lives are changed because of their altered material culture" (2010). As such, we question how the production of sanaugait fits into histories of women and art in Canada, as well as what can be gained from their inclusion. Ultimately, we suggest Tungilik's work as a method of reclaiming and reasserting cultural practices, a dynamic material form of resistance in support of indigenous sovereignty.

**Burns, Ruth (Art Gallery of Alberta)**

**[Sixteen years: Modernism and the brief visual arts career of Laura Evans Reid](#)**

Changing Canadian Modernisms

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

This paper offers a case study of Laura Evans Reid, who was distinguished from many of her Alberta contemporaries by the nature of her engagement with modern art. In 1935, when Reid was 52 years old, she

ventured out with an amateur art group in Vegreville, Alberta, a rural community located east of Edmonton. Though her name is rarely mentioned in Canadian art history, Reid received critical success during her relatively short practice which lasted only sixteen years. She formed close relationships with established artists, and exhibited at major art institutions across the country. She displayed a willingness to experiment and innovate, resulting in watercolours that are remarkable early examples of modernism when viewed within the context of the history of art in Alberta. Despite the geographical isolation of Vegreville, Reid was well aware of national debates about visual art. Whether through the formal qualities of her art, or through social and political subject matter, her practice was undeniably modern. Unfortunately, there is limited surviving documentation regarding her own thoughts about her work or her outlook on art. In order to better understand her practice and how it developed, this paper will examine the impact and role of key artists and resources during her career, such as her teacher H.G. Glyde, the magazine *Saturday Night*, and organizations such as the Calgary Sketch Club and Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour.

**Burton, Samantha (McGill University)**  
[A Canadian Artist in King Arthur's Court](#)

Home, Family and Empire  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

In 1904, Canadian artist Elizabeth Armstrong Forbes published her long-awaited book *King Arthur's Wood*, an elaborately illustrated fairy tale based on Sir Thomas Malory's medieval epic *Le Morte Darthur*. Through the luxury object's appeal to British history, and specifically, to the mythology of an extended white, Anglo-Saxon family that united the British Empire, the Ontario-born artist smoothly inserted herself and her work into an established racial and artistic lineage, asserting her claim to belonging in Britain and in the British art world. Viewed in the context of Forbes's rather unstable expatriate identity, the book appears as a significant engagement on behalf of a Canadian woman artist with *fin-de-siècle* debates surrounding race, imperialism, and cultural heritage. A closer examination of the artist and her work provides an opportunity to extend the boundaries of Canadian women's art history of the pre-WWI period beyond strict national borders, and to situate the field within the wider context of what has come to be called the British World.

**Cahill, Susan (Nipissing University)**  
[Jessie Luther and the Craft of Healing](#)

Women's Missions: Art, Change and Community  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

My paper examines the production and sale of textile objects, Grenfell Hooked Rugs, as the antidote to social, physical, mental, and economic ills in early twentieth-century Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, I focus on these objects in relation to Jessie Luther (1860-1952) and her work with the Grenfell Mission. As head of the Grenfell Industrial Department from 1906 to 1910, Luther led the production and sale of the mission's most well-known arts and crafts objects, Grenfell Hooked Rugs, which remain valued collectible items to this day. By interweaving social history and material culture, I address Luther's aims as an occupational therapist (a trade that enabled women to work within the medical profession) to mesh therapeutics with arts and crafts revivalism to create programs and products that would benefit the individual and collective life of rural communities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**de Carvalho, Anithe (UQAM)**

**[La Chambre nuptiale de Francine Larivée \(1976\) et la fin de la dichotomie entre l'art savant et l'art populaire: une oeuvre issue de l'idéologie de la démocratie culturelle](#)**

Retelling Feminism II: Alternate Historiographies

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

Dans son livre *Vous êtes tous créateurs ou le mythe de l'art*, Yves Robillard encense *La chambre nuptiale*. Pour lui, cet environnement d'animation est une forme d'expression artistique nouvelle qui a refusé les médiums traditionnels et a été présentée hors les murs institutionnels officiels. Nous verrons dans cette communication que, malgré le fait que cette expression artistique populaire ait trouvé d'autres lieux de présentation, elle est ici la matérialisation des enjeux et tendances historiques en matière d'étatisation de la culture dans le cadre de la mise en place de la politique de la démocratie culturelle. C'est dire que ce premier environnement féministe de l'histoire de l'art canadien se réalise avec l'assentiment des institutions culturelles et artistiques diverses et qu'il a rejoint des publics néophytes. Cette hypothèse de recherche inédite sera démontrée à partir de l'analyse des intentions de Francine Larivée et des stratégies des politiques culturelles en ce qui a trait à la notion de public participatif.

**de Stecher, Anne (Carleton University)**

**[Wendat Women's Arts: Values of Individuality and Community](#)**

Beading and Embroidery: Traditional Aboriginal Arts

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 11h00 - 12h30

Wendat women's visual arts, grounded in perspectives drawn from Indigenous value systems and worldview, are a rich inclusion in the histories of women and art in Canada. The moosehair-embroidered souvenir arts of the Wendat of Wendake, Quebec were sought-after, precious objects to European and Euro-Canadian collectors. I will discuss the work of Marguerite Vincent La8inonkie and Caroline Gros Louis, two women whose artistic production played important cultural, economic and diplomatic roles for the Wendat nation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Further, in recognition of the number of Wendat women whose virtuosity in this difficult art form brought such renown and in keeping with Indigenous values of community, I will explore the work of Wendat women artists whose names are not yet known but who may be identified through stylistic analysis.

**Farrell Racette, Sherry (University of Manitoba)**

**[Escaping the Cage: Cultural Performance as Activism, 1890–1951](#)**

Art and Activism

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

Kitsipimi Otunna, a Sarcee woman from Alberta, greets the crowds at Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, a high ranking Kwakwaka'wakw woman is dubbed "Queen" by the Chicago press at the 1893 World's Fair, and a young woman quietly weaves fibre garments for herself and her daughters and prepares to perform outlawed dances. Escaping the oppressive hand of the Canadian government, the simple act of performing culture on the public stage asserted visibility in the face of erasure, ensured the survival of critical artistic practices and cleared a path for subsequent generations of activist artists.

**Foss, Brian (Carleton University)**

[City Life: Gender, Modernism, and the Curious Life and Afterlife of the Beaver Hall Group](#)

Retelling Feminism II: Alternate Historiographies

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

For almost a half century now, Montreal's Beaver Hall Group of artists has been defined largely – indeed, almost exclusively – as a group of women artists. Yet slightly more than half of its members were men, the intentions behind its creation had nothing explicit to say about women artists, and contemporaneous press reaction made virtually no mention of women as a significant component of the membership. This paper examines questions around the presence of women in the group both during its brief existence in the 1920s, and within the historiographic analysis and definition of the group from 1966 to the present. Why did women artists become involved in Beaver hall? What roles did they play in it? How did their work contribute to the group's promotion of a 'Montreal approach' to visual modernism? And what can the posthumous history of the group tell us about the status of feminist studies of Canadian art history?

**Franklin, Jonathan (National Gallery of Canada)**

[Canadian Women's Art at Exhibition up to 1930: An Analysis of Published Catalogues](#)

Discovery: Research and Archives in Women's Art History

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

The 'Index to Art in Canada to 1930' is a web-accessible research resource compiled at the National Gallery of Canada Library, with over 75,000 index records to catalogues of art exhibited in Canada. Many of the over 8000 artists represented are Canadian women. The work of Canadian women artists has been publicly exhibited since at least 1838, but how much do we know of the first 100 years of this activity? Which Canadian women artists exhibited the greatest number of works? Which ones commanded the highest prices for sold works? How frequently did women exhibit within women's groups such as the WAAC as opposed to the general exhibiting societies? Which media were favoured by Canadian women artists, from traditional painting and watercolour through craft production to 'new' media such as photography? And what exhibited works by non-Canadian women were exhibited during the period? These questions and more will be addressed by this paper, based on analysis of the database records.

**Gehmacher, Arlene (Royal Ontario Museum)**

**EnGendering Canadian Humour: Alice Killaly's *A Picnic to Montmorenci* (1868)**

By Album, Print and Brush: Early Canadiana

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

*A Picnic to Montmorenci* (1868) is the title of a set of six chromolithographs, as well as the watercolours on which the set is based, that narrates a winter day's outing by couple "Captain Busby" and "Miss Muffin." To date, the printed set has been used as illustrative of courtship in nineteenth-century English Canada. A recently-recovered advertisement, however, suggests a work that is layered and complex in both production and potential interpretation.

The ad of March 1868 promoting *A Picnic* touts first and foremost the chromolithographed set's "national" virtues: it was in all respects – subject, humour, artist, printer, publisher – wholly "Canadian." Yet the ad also reveals the author of the images to be female, "Miss A.K.," now confirmed to be "Alice Killaly." In light of this

firm identification, one is encouraged to read the humour of the narrative – the irony of the title “*Picnic*” given the mishaps wrought on the couple, for example – primarily through a lens that has the hapless Busby the butt of laughter.

I consider the validity of this perspective as a means to understand the particular nature of Killaly’s humour and the significance of her approach, and to consider the degree to which it is in fact gendered. Taking into account the content, production, promotion, and critical reception of *Picnic* in its own time, I consider how her viewpoint may or may not have been modified by the involvement of men in the production process, or reshaped within the broader arena of reception.

**Gewurtz, Michelle (Brandeis University)**

[Off the Wall: “Jane Hamilton O.S.A. active 1876-1887”](#)

Missing Information: The Challenges of Women’s Art History  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

A watercolour by a woman named Jane Hamilton (dates unknown) currently hangs in my parents’ dining room. The work is signed Jane Hamilton, lower left, and the skillful depiction of “Boats Approaching a Wharf” has formed part of my own cultural imaginary since the late 1980s or early 1990s. As an art historian who is now trained in visual analysis, I am able to contemplate Jane Hamilton’s representation of 19<sup>th</sup> century life and pose critical questions.

A cursory search yields nothing more than the information I already have to hand, all of which is contained within the framed work itself. I am proposing to mobilize Jane Hamilton’s painting that was produced c. 1876-1887 in order to think about how a particular artist who has yet to occupy a place in an expanded cultural and critical history of women and art in Canada might be incorporated into art historical discourse.

**Gingras-Olivier, Marie-Claude (UQAM)**

[Les Fermières Obsédées : L'art féministe est mort, vive l'art féministe!](#)

Performance and Enactment  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

Par le biais d'une étude de cas, celui du collectif artistique *Les Fermières Obsédées (F.O.)*, et en nous appuyant sur un corpus théorique de troisième vague féministe, nous analyserons dans cette communication le dialogue existant entre les pratiques d'art actuel et le féminisme ambiant. Nous verrons comment se manifestent les enjeux caractéristiques de la troisième vague féministe (articulation des rapports sociaux de sexe, de genre, de classe et d'origine ethnique) à travers une sélection de performances artistiques des *F.O.*, exprimant la performativité exacerbée du genre féminin, une esthétique *calculée* de la démesure et le désir *persuasif* d'éveiller la conscience critique. Nous étudierons comment le dialogue entre art et féminisme est important dans l'élaboration et l'analyse d'une histoire de l'art des femmes artistes et nous tenterons de montrer que ces pratiques d'art engage participent au mouvement féministe actuel, à titre de pratique féministe légitime dans la société civile.

**Hammond, Cynthia (Concordia University)**

## [Landscape Design, Collaboration, and Gender: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Feminist History of Canadian Art](#)

Gender and Collaboration

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 14h30 - 16h00

The landscape design firm Dunington-Grubb + Stensson operated in Ontario from 1911-2009. The firm was founded by English-born landscape architect, Lorrie Dunington (1877-1945) and her husband, Howard Grub (1881-1965). The Dunington-Grubs emigrated to Canada in 1911, when they launched their joint practice and founded a nursery to facilitate their landscape design work. They produced exquisite garden designs for private homes during the interwar years, and increasingly began to court public commissions. Lorrie Dunington-Grub published extensively during this same period, promoting the firm's designs, philosophy, and horticultural knowledge to a broad audience in Canadian publishing. The firm was also active in establishing the profession of landscape architecture in Canada through the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, for which both served as president before WWII. With the expansion of the firm to include Sven Herman Stensson (?-1972), the firm entered a new phase, producing hundreds of major designs including McMaster University in Hamilton, and University Avenue in Toronto. Stensson's son's wife, Janina Korkuc Stensson (1919-2009) was the last landscape architect to join the firm. Under her direction, the firm embraced modernism. Widely recognized for her work, Korkuc Stensson was invited to create landscape designs for Expo 67 – a contribution to the profession that has virtually without trace today.

This fascinating design firm originated with a woman and ended in 2009 with the death of Korkuc Stensson. In many ways, it constitutes a landscape design dynasty. Remarkable as the firm's success was, it nonetheless poses a problem for the writing of a new history of women and art in Canada. The female designers' lives and work were completely intertwined with the lives and work of the men they married, hired and supervised. Feminist architectural history has often pointed out the problem of conferring authorial status to a single name when architecture is inherently collaborative. But this issue is even acute for the profession of landscape architecture, where the final products have far more transient and fragile futures than buildings. Yet a feminist solution to this issue cannot mean eliding the joint contributions of male members of the firm. My presentation for "Imagining History" will introduce the remarkable work of Dunington-Grub + Stensson, detailing some of the firm's best known designs. Drawing from feminist architectural history that contends with the issue of collaboration and gender in the American context (Wright 1999, Friedman 1998), I will make the argument that a new feminist history of Canadian art history must grapple with ephemeral forms of creative work, such as landscape design, while at the same time making room for collaboration across gender lines.

**Hardy, Dominic (UQAM)**

**Louise Amélie Panet (1789-1862), caricature and visual satire in Lower Canada**

By Album, Print and Brush: Early Canadiana

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

The systematic study of caricature in Canadian art history is in its first years: there is much to be done in identifying the artists who worked in satiric practices since the times of the earliest European settlements – and this in ways that reflect the full diversity of Canadian experience. The goal of this talk is to call for a consideration of women artists working in caricature and graphic satire in Canada, by focusing on one of the earliest figures for whom there are ( tantalising ) traces of activity in visual satire: Louise Amélie Panet, artist, poet, landowner, linked to the milieu of politics and art through family connections by birth and marriage (Panet married the son of William Berczy in 1819). By re-examining drawings attributed to Louis Dulongpré and other



archival sources, this talk considers Panet as the creator of visual satires both public and private – thereby suggesting methodological avenues for future work in the field.

**Holmes, Kristy A. (Lakehead University)**

[Are We There Yet? Critical Thoughts on Feminist Art History in Canada](#)

Retelling Feminism I: Theory and Narrative  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

Within the last forty years, the discipline of art history has been transformed by feminist politics. During that rather short time span, feminist art history has shifted from a project of recovery and recuperation –one of finding so-called lost women artists and adding them into the dominant narrative of Western art– to one that questions and critiques patriarchy as one of the foundational ideologies of disciplinary art history. Within Canada, however, these critical discussions have had little, if any, impact on the dominant narrative of Canadian art. Art historians interested in critically examining the development of feminist art practices in Canada are consequently faced with a dilemma: is it necessary to create alternative critical frameworks in order to examine the art production of women artists? If so, what would these frameworks look like? This paper examines the ways in which the dominant narrative of Canadian art history has been written (historically and currently) and, using the work of Joyce Wieland as a case study, how it has negotiated female artistic production. I then discuss, from a more speculative point of view, if the project of feminist art history in Canada is one that is necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Holmlund, Mona (University of Saskatchewan)**

[Emma Lake Revisited: Memory, Artefact and Art History Methodology](#)

Changing Canadian Modernisms  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

Saskatchewan's Emma Lake Art Camps and Workshops have loomed large in Canadian Art History. These events were one of the chief conduits for the transmission of New York's Greenbergian Modernism in a pre-internet age. As one of the staples of the Canadian, and certainly Saskatchewan, art historical canon, we assume Emma Lake is well understood. But closer examination of the output of the artists attending the camps, both at the time and throughout their subsequent careers reveals a gender bias that has not been sufficiently examined. As part of a larger SSHRC-funded research project which seeks new perspectives and ways of telling the history of Saskatchewan's visual culture, this paper uses oral history (from the surviving women Emma lake participants) and an empirical analysis of the entire run of Emma Lake Scrapbooks (held at the University of Saskatchewan archives) to examine the ways in which memory, artifact and the archival project can intersect in the manufacture of historical understanding.

**Kear, Andrew (Winnipeg Art Gallery)**

[A Bridge and a Blind Spot: Feminism, Modernism, and the work of Eva Stubbs](#)

Changing Canadian Modernisms  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

Feminism's 40 year old "encounter with the canon" has not only served to uncover, reframe, and problematize the normative assumptions and methods that structure modern accounts of art history but, some claim, has also



exposed a broader fundamental rift between feminism and modernism. Lisa Tickner, for instance, has argued that feminism is politically unsuited to modernism for, among many other reasons, the latter's "pursuit of universal values at once transcendent (of mundane social realities) and the intrinsic (to the autonomous work of art severed from the social circumstances of its production and circulation)."

However, the purportedly unbridgeable gap between feminism and modernism raises important questions about why women artists have invested in modernism historically, not only in its morphological signifiers, but in some of its deep theoretical tenets. The majority of this paper will be concerned with investigating the work of Eva Stubbs (b. 1925), a Winnipeg-based sculptor who matured creatively during the 1950s and 1960s. I will argue that her work is modernist in that she has aimed through it to express universal values about the human condition, albeit in ways stemming from her personal experience as a woman. This paper will conclude by asking whether and how future Canadian feminist art historical scholarship ought to revisit its historic opposition to modernism

\* Lisa Tickner, "Feminism, Art History, and Sexual Difference," *Gender 3* (Fall 1988): 94..

### **Kelly, Gemey (Owens Art Gallery)**

#### **[Elizabeth Cann's Representations of Women and Everyday Life](#)**

Women and Social Change in the '20s, '30s and '40s  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 11h00 - 12h30

This paper looks at the work of Nova Scotia painter Elizabeth Cann (1901-1967) best known for her portraits of women and young girls. I want to consider Cann's portraits as depictions of lived lives including her own, and at her studio practice itself as an important aspect in the creation of her everyday life. A member of the privileged class, born into a family of wealthy Yarmouth shipbuilders and educated in Europe and Montreal, Cann painted women of wealth and status, as well as the children and women of the Yarmouth working class poor. Represented as lonely, sad, dislocated or isolated individuals, living in boring, confining, or exhausting circumstances, the figures in Cann's paintings lead us to consider the lived experience of gender, cultural difference, education and class - for the artist, her subjects, and her audiences.

### **Lacroix, Laurier (UQAM)**

#### **[La présence des Amérindiennes dans l'art au Canada au 17<sup>e</sup> siècle](#)**

Beading and Embroidery: Traditional Aboriginal Arts  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 11h00 - 12h30

La littérature portant sur l'art des femmes pendant la période coloniale française traite surtout de leur implication dans les arts décoratifs. La broderie est un secteur de création investi à la fois par les Amérindiennes (perlage des wampums et broderie avec des poils de porc-épic) et les religieuses venues au Canada (parements d'autel).

Cette communication revient sur les textes originaux (missionnaires et explorateurs) qui ont décrit l'art du premier groupe et aborde la nature de leur description. Elle vise à évaluer les interprétations de ces sources surtout d'ordre ethnographique et anthropologique et plaide pour l'introduction de la production des Amérindiennes dans le discours de l'histoire de l'art. Plus largement, cet exposé traite de la question de l'écriture de l'histoire de l'art lorsque seuls les documents écrits subsistent sans support visuel pour l'appuyer.

**Lamoureux, Ève (UQAM)**

[L'\(auto\)représentation des femmes : Des pratiques artistiques en mutation?](#)

Contemporary Women's (Self) Representation

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

Dans cette communication, nous aborderons, dans une perspective historique, les modes d'autoreprésentation des femmes artistes québécoises photographes et performeuses depuis les années 1970. Nous verrons comment cette appropriation d'un pouvoir, celui de contrôler la représentation de soi et d'autres femmes, a été (et est encore) une des stratégies adoptées pour se faire voir et entendre dans le champ de l'art, ainsi qu'une manière de contribuer, socialement et politiquement, à la dénonciation des visions stéréotypées du corps de la femme, de son identité, de sa sexualité, de son rôle social, etc. Nous tenterons d'analyser comment cette autoreprésentation se modifie dans le temps, se transforme, suivant en cela l'évolution des pratiques artistiques en elles-mêmes, le féminisme, la condition des femmes artistes et leurs représentations identitaires. Nous tenterons ainsi de montrer que, malgré la multiplicité des pratiques et stratégies d'autoreprésentation, il est possible d'observer un phénomène de fond assez influent soit le passage du « genre revendiqué » à la « déconstruction du genre ».

**Langford, Martha (Concordia University)**

[The Group: Founders of The Photographers Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 1970-1972](#)

Gender and Collaboration

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 14h30 - 16h00

In 1970, a small group of photographers living in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, founded The Group, a collective unified by their belief in documentary photography as legitimate art form and social practice, and highly determined to place their work before the public. Members of The Group included Richard Holden, James Lisitza, Sylvia Jonescu Lisitza, and Sandra Semchuk. The connectedness of The Group functioned on different levels, public and private, professional and domestic. The core group, a Group of Four, was practicing photographers; they were also married couples. The Group exhibited their photographs in unconventional locations, including department store windows and a laundromat. They also founded The Photographers Gallery, one of the first parallel, or artist-run, spaces in Canada. My paper will explore some of the socio-political factors, the ethnic and gender roles that conditioned the activities of the Gallery and encouraged relational concepts to assume photographic form.

**Langill, Caroline (OCAD University)**

[Women, Art and Telecommunications in Canada 1975-1985](#)

Art and Technology

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 14h30 - 16h00

Over the last two decades, a canon of writing regarding art, science and technology (AST) has attempted to impact traditional art histories. Within the AST genre of practice the role of women has been documented to some degree, *Women, Art and Technology* by Judy Malloy being a case in point. Building on existing research – presented at Rewire: Media Art History conference, Liverpool, UK, 2011 – regarding women working within the art and technology field in Canada, this paper will track artists working specifically with telecommunications technology. Nell Tenhaaf, Judith Doyle, and Vera Frenkel produced work that progressed the potential of these technologies for artist's use, challenging the dominant aesthetics of sculpture and installation art, and staking

out territory for women within the field of new media art during the emergence of digital culture (1975-1985). I will argue that these artists provided differentiated aesthetics within the male-dominated field of new media art at a crucial time.

**Larivière, Maryse (University of Western Ontario)**

[\*\*\*The Specter of a Rose: Re-enactment of the History of Photography and Autofiction for New Histories of Contemporary Art\*\*\*](#)

Performance and Enactment

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

*The Specter of a Rose* creatively re-imagines the many histories of Canadian art by women. A project-based doctorate thesis, *The Specter of a Rose* comprises of a novel written within the parameters of autofiction and a portrait series of Canadian artists re-enacting historical photography of women by women. It is through this feminist revision of the history of photography that the project addresses an absence of female artists in the history of contemporary Canadian art. This project critically examines the role of the art historian and curator by investigating affective thinking and fictions of artistic practice. As such the project responds to the challenges of scholarship production on the recent history of art in Canada. The presentation will survey the creative process of *The Specter of a Rose*, and how it employs photography to give women artists a central role and active voice in the construction of their history.

**Lerner, Loren (Concordia University)**

[\*\*\*Aging-Related Images: A Case Study of Marion Wagschal's Figurative Self-Portraits\*\*\*](#)

Contemporary Women's (Self) Representation

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

This project examines aging-related images by Canadian women artists, the premise being that this imagery offers a unique arena of knowledge for developing an understanding of the personal, social and cultural experiences of aging from a women's perspective. In this presentation I will focus on Marion Wagschal's recent figurative self-portraits in how she has chosen to depict herself growing older. The theoretical grounding for my research originates from the outlook of feminist gerontologists who have contributed to our comprehension of the interrelations of age and gender by engaging with postmodern theory, autobiography and concepts of embodiment. Within this context two theorists, Jean Baudrillard and Judith Butler, explored by Simon Biggs in his studies of the shared features of contemporary feminism and critical gerontology, instruct my analysis.

**Loyer, Stacey (Carleton University)**

[\*\*\*Remember Me": Early Twentieth Century Beadwork and Collecting at the Six Nations of the Grand River\*\*\*](#)

Beadwork and Embroidery: Traditional Aboriginal Arts

Friday, 4 May 2012 EV 1.615, 11h00 – 12h30

Beadwork made by the Onkwehowne at the Six Nations of the Grand River has a long and fascinating history, coloured by tradition, modernity, commoditization and innovation. Drawing on a variety of document-based, visual and material sources, in this presentation I describe two instances of collecting at Six Nations in the early twentieth century: first, ethnologist Frederick Wilkerson Waugh's search for traditional beadwork among Onkwehonne communities, which led him to reject items from a

beadworker at Six Nations because they were “not suitable” for his “purposes,” and next, the context surrounding the creation and preservation of a beaded picture frame decorated with the message “Remember Me,” saved in a collection made by three teachers from Six Nations, known as the Jamieson sisters. Through both situations, I explore how beadwork was a nexus where competing ideas of Onkwehonwe tradition emerged, and artists could intervene to both challenge ethnographic notions of authenticity and assert agency over their memory.

**MacHardy, Carolyn (University of British Columbia)**

[Kodaking and Being Kodaked: The Guisachan Photographs of Ishbel, Lady Aberdeen](#)

Home, Family and Empire

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

This paper examines a series of snapshots taken by Lady Aberdeen in October of 1891 on her first visit to the “Guisachan Farm”, the 480-acre property in the Okanagan Valley that she and her husband had purchased and named, sight unseen, the year before. The name given to the property established its link to the shooting estate in the Scottish Highlands belonging to Lady Aberdeen’s family, the Marjoribanks, and secured the new Guisachan’s ties to her childhood rather than her husband’s. I engage with the idea, proposed by the Aberdeens’s daughter Marjorie, that her parents imagined the B.C. Guisachan, as “their very own play-house”. I argue that a close reading of the largely unexamined snapshots reveals information about the family’s agenda that is not disclosed in *Travels Through Canada with a Kodak*, the published account of the Aberdeens’s visits to Canada in 1890 and 1891. My discussion focuses primarily on those photographs that frame Guisachan Farm as a site for staging family rituals that bring Lady Aberdeen’s brother, Coutts Marjoribanks, into the new enterprise, providing a needed corrective, in Lady Aberdeen’s eyes, to his image as a ‘failed’ rancher in the American west. Particularly important to this project were the many photographs of the house, designed by Coutts. During their eight day stay at Guisachan in 1891, far from the disapproving gaze of Dudley Coutts Marjoribanks, the family patriarch, Lady Aberdeen and her family performed for the camera, creating images of much-desired family cohesion in their Edenic playhouse.

**MacKenzie, Catherine (Concordia University)**

[Stories Still to be Told: Canadian Women Missionary Artists in China, 1900-1947](#)

Women’s Missions: Art, Change and Community

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

When a Chinese National Aviation Corporation airplane exploded in mid-air about a hundred miles west of Wuhan on 29 January 1947, the conflagration took the life of a Canadian woman whose oeuvre may very well have been familiar to more viewers in the world than the work of any other Canadian woman artist practicing at the time. Beatrice McDowell Kitchen was, and had been for the previous quarter-century, the resident artist for the Canadian Mission Press in Chengdu. Kitchen was not the only Canadian woman artist working on behalf of the desire to staunch, as J. Hudson Taylor had put it in the 1880’s, “the great Niagara of souls passing into the dark in China,...a million a month.” There were several other women in China during the first half of the twentieth century who used their formal training in the visual arts in long-term support of mission activities.

The overdue acknowledgement of the category of ‘overseas woman missionary artist’ may not contribute in a major way to a new history of women and art in Canada. Nevertheless, as this presentation seeks to demonstrate through its investigation of the scope and dynamics of the China-based practices of a number of

such women, it does allow for the identification of relevant – sometimes even surprising phenomena – within a framework that might initially appear to be too distant and too restricted to warrant attention.

**Marshall Furness, Amy (Art Gallery of Ontario)**

[Seeking the Archival Traces of Historical Women Artists](#)

Discovery: Research and Archives in Women's Art History  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

This paper will explore the ways in which the analysis of contemporary artists' archives can begin to give us a sense of what has been lost when we try to make sense of the record of historical women artists. My doctoral research on artists' archives explores the complex relationship between artistic practice, the artist's oeuvre and the artist's archival fonds. Contemporary art theory has problematized the boundaries of the art object, the artist's studio, and the role of the institution. Arguably, the boundaries of an artist's oeuvre of finished work have always depended on the complex interplay of factors such as intentionality, the art market, taste, and institutional mandates and politics. The elements shaping an artist's archival record are less well understood, but archives increasingly are being seen as the product of many authorial forces. Meanwhile, the boundary between art and archives has never been clear-cut. Drawing on examples from Canadian archival repositories, I will suggest ways to think about an artist's archival record, even when – as in the case of all too many women artists – we have missed the opportunity to collect the traces in time.

**Martin, Lee-Ann (Canadian Museum of Civilization)**

[Intersecting Practices of Art and Activism: Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Doreen Jensen and Daphne Odjig](#)

Art and Activism  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

Artists Joane Cardinal-Schubert (1942-2009), Doreen Jensen (1933-2009), and Daphne Odjig (b. 1919) all were active in the intersections between art and activism. Each woman played a significant role in advancing the recognition of Aboriginal art in Canada. This presentation will focus on the roles of each artist within distinct (and often male-oriented) moments in this recent history: Daphne Odjig and the "Indian Group of Seven" in Winnipeg; Doreen Jensen and the formation of the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry (SCANA); and Joane Cardinal-Schubert and a "new" generation of Aboriginal artists in Canada.

**Millet, Véronique (UQAM)**

[Entre art public et peinture : le cas de Marcelle Ferron au Pavillon d'art québécois et canadien du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal](#)

Women and Museums  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

Icône de la femme artiste québécoise, Marcelle Ferron est pourtant encore tenue à l'écart dans certaines expositions et publications récentes sur l'automatisme qui font la part belle à d'autres signataires de *Refus global*. Cette double perception s'illustre notamment dans le nouveau pavillon d'art canadien et québécois du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. Y sont présentées deux œuvres de Marcelle Ferron : visible depuis la rue Sherbrooke, un vitrail a été magistralement installé à l'entrée, alors qu'à l'intérieur, y est accroché un petit

tableau de 1947, une œuvre des tout débuts de l'artiste, exposée un peu comme celle d'une « élève » de l'automatisme.

Or l'année 2011 marque le dixième anniversaire de la mort de l'artiste. Que reste-t-il, aujourd'hui, de Marcelle Ferron? Je me propose d'interroger, dans le cadre de cette communication, la fortune critique de cette artiste afin de mieux comprendre les mécanismes entourant la réception actuelle de son œuvre. Comment expliquer que sa pratique de la verrière semble aujourd'hui éclipser auprès des décideurs et des commissaires celle de la peinture, alors que l'artiste a choisi, à la fin des années 1980, de revenir à ce médium?

**Morton, Erin (University of New Brunswick)**

[Ordinary Affects: Folk Art, Maud Lewis and the Social Aesthetics of the Everyday](#)

Retelling Feminism I: Theory and Narrative

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

This paper examines public history projects surrounding the life and work of self-taught Nova Scotia artist Maud Lewis. In particular, it examines the tensions between historical constructions of Lewis as a poor, rural folk artist who overcame such marginalization by painting joyful landscapes of her everyday environment, and her cultural and material reality as someone whose artwork received significant recognition during her lifetime. Rather than proposing to uncover the truth of Lewis's life from its misrepresentation in screen and print media and museum exhibitions, this paper begins with the assumption that there are no such misrepresentations when it comes to public history making – only hegemonic narratives and affects that succeed publicly over alternative and resistant points of view. This paper will analyze public history projects that have narrated Lewis's story since the 1960s, by positioning them against late-twentieth-century ideas about antimodernism, ordinariness, and the ongoing pursuit to claim an agrarian past in late-industrial Canada.

**Myzelev, Alla (University of Guelph)**

[Living Ahead of its Time: Art Deco House in Toronto](#)

Gender and Collaboration

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.615, 14h30 - 16h00

Alexandra Biriukova had only one commission in Canada as a professional architect. After arriving to Toronto from Rome she received a prestigious commission from one of the main ideologists of painterly nationalism in Canada, Lawren Harris. Resulting building became one of the earliest examples of Art Deco residential architecture in Toronto. In addition to its stylistic innovation, the house became a turning-point in life and artistic career of both the architect and the artists, albeit in different ways. Alexandra Biriukova, was never to design anything else; owing to the Great Depression and her lack of connections and experience she could not gain any more commissions and retrained as a tuberculosis nurse. Harris, a prominent member of the Group of Seven landscape painters, left his house and his family soon after moving in, closed it up, removed his paintings and was never to return to his magnificent residence. This paper evaluates the contributions of both architect and artist to the design of the house and argues that despite the claims by previous researchers that Harris played a major role in the design of the house, it was indeed Biriukova, a young yet experienced female architect, who conceived, completed and supervised the project. The article hopes to draw attention to the work of the architect and also uncover a process of obliteration of the female architect from architectural and design histories of the past. Lastly, it attempts to hypothesise what made this house so unusual in Toronto and why in spite of positive reviews of her first project Biriukova never received more commissions.

**Nadeau-Saumier, Monique (Independent scholar)**

**[Greetings from Montreal](#)**

Discovery: Research and Archives in Women's Art History

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

During the 1920s and at the onset of the Great Depression, a group of Montreal women artists, influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, turned to more simple and personal creative outlets. Linoleum block prints and greeting cards became a tool for their artistic expression.

The chance discovery, some months ago, of a scrapbook containing more than thirty examples of such Christmas and New Year greeting cards, revealed a little-known episode in their artistic production. Created during the period of Regionalism, many of the cards are inspired by Quebec rural scenes, others use more conventional religious themes, many reflect the urban décor of their Montreal home.

Among the group, Sarah and Marion Robertson, Nora Collyer, Dorothy Coles, and several others, including some founding members of the Beaver Hall Group, all previous students of William Brymner at the Art Association of Montreal. Their work will be studied in the broader context of handmade greeting tradition that involved many important American artists at the same period.

**Niergarth, Kirk (Mount Royal University)**

**[Why should you know Julia Crawford? Or the Gallery, the University, and the Rules of the Game](#)**

Retelling Feminism II: Alternate Historiographies

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

Every time I teach a course on the history of Canadian visual culture, I show my students Teresa MacInnes' 1998 NFB film *The Other Side of the Picture*. This film asks – with varying levels of criticality – some of the key questions of women's art history: Why have there been no “great” women artists? Is it sufficient to reform institutions so that they make more space for women artists (or, as it is known in shorthand, “add women and stir”)? What, fundamentally, is the difference gender makes?

Julia Tilly Crawford (1896-1968) was a New Brunswick painter who died before these kinds of questions became commonplace in the field. Studying her life and the few works of hers that have made it into public collections does not, however, afford answers that reconcile easily with the narratives about women artists offered in, for example, MacInnes' film. What would be the benefits of “rescuing” Crawford from relative obscurity, through wider scholarly assessments and gallery exhibitions? And, would such a reclamation effort risk obscuring elements of Crawford's lived experience as an actor in the field of Canadian cultural production?

**Nurse, Andrew (Mount Allison University)**

**[Gendering the Artistic Field: The Case of Emily Carr](#)**

Retelling Feminism I: Theory and Narrative

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

This paper explores Bourdieu's "field of artistic production" as a framework within which a gendered history of modern Canadian artistic production could be written. Emily Carr's life and artistic work provide an effective



case study for this analytic framework both because Carr's life and work have been well documented and because she worked during a period of remarkable institutional and artistic activism that gave shape to the modern Canadian artistic field. Her occupational and creative plurality, public statements and artistic practice demonstrate how gender worked within and structured the evolution of an artistic field in the first half of the twentieth century. The gendered dynamics of cultural power, I argue, created an ambiguous field that simultaneously embraced and marginalized women artists and had important ideological effects. In Carr's case, it pushed her artistic expression toward gender neutral aesthetic standards (e.g., genius and a wilderness aesthetic) that mystified the gendered reality of her creative life.

**O'Connor, Mary (McMaster University)**

[Archiving, Mobile Technology and Bodies: The Work of Liss Platt](#)

Art and Technology

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 14h30 - 16h00

A new history of women and art in Canada would need to include the horizon(s) of mobile technology. One might ask if the new technologies of cell phones, GPS, as well as of digital networks are radically changing both art and subjectivity. Studies have begun of new archiving projects as *Net-Dérive* or *Cyworld*.<sup>\*</sup> This paper will examine the work of multi-media artist Liss Platt, who has lived and worked in Canada for the last thirteen years. Her work has been exhibited or screened internationally, including at MoMA. In a response to a call from the Gordon Pinsent Centre for the Arts in Newfoundland on the theme of the River as Source, she created a mobile video device housed in a plexiglas orb that tracked the flow and scenes of travel over the Exploits River. An extension of her earlier work, which is concerned with the flow of everyday life, physical embodiment in her medium, and interactivity, the Orb project includes the stories of other inhabitants of the river's space and history. Perhaps the new technologies offer an always-unfinished history because always evolving in alternative forms of installation and digital interactivity.

<sup>\*</sup> Goggin, Gerard and Larissa Hjorth. Eds. *Mobile Technologies: From Telecommunications to Media*. Routledge, 2009.

**O'Neill, Dianne (Art Gallery of Nova Scotia)**

[Some Early Nova Scotian Women Artists](#)

Missing Information: The Challenges of Women's Art History

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

Art history privileges the status quo. The Belton timeline included one Nova Scotian woman artist active during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The CWAHI database introduces seven more and its files name another nine. Our preliminary list for an exhibition of work by Early Nova Scotian Women Artists at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia considered the connections among thirty professional and amateur artists for whom locally available works were easily identified. The names of another sixty-two were known from exhibition catalogues. Searching for them produced limited results, but uncovered some new artists in the process, so our final exhibition list gave us with 61 works by 28 artists and many questions. No one will dispute the limitations of the old timeline, but neither can CWAHI's lists produce a true picture of the community of women artists that existed across time in any particular locale, because too many linkages are missing. How much do the hidden links limit the validity of a new history of women and art in Canada?



**Paterson, Elaine (Concordia University)**

[Crafting Empire: Intersections of Irish and Canadian Women's History](#)

Home, Family and Empire

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 09h00 - 10h30

This paper takes as its starting point the craftwork produced under the auspices of the Irish Industries Association (IIA), the leading body of the home arts movement in Ireland (est. 1886), specifically the weaving and embroidery of the Dun Emer Guild established outside Dublin by the Yeats sisters with Evelyn Gleeson (in 1902). One of the main goals of the Irish Association was to offer creative work to women in rural Ireland in order to prevent them from emigrating to places like Canada. Yet, it is through this immigrant experience (that of Irish women who embodied particular craft skills and traditions, in this case) that an international context for the home arts movement may be established.

In this transcultural approach to Canadian women's art history, I shall examine the colonialism implicit in the establishment of art industries in areas controlled by a dominant Englishness at this time and deeply affected by emigration, with its narrative of dislocation and ethnicity. This narrative has led me to the craft revival movement in Canada, specifically the work of the national Canadian Handicrafts Guild (founded by prominent Montrealers Alice Peck and May Phillips in 1905). Thus, I will explore how those rural Irish women who did, in fact, emigrate were targeted by similar home art industries in major centres of immigration, in this case Montreal. In particular, how might their craftwork have been reframed in the Canadian context, specifically at the high profile, international venue of the 1904 St Louis World's Fair, Missouri, where the craftwork of both the Irish Dun Emer Guild and the Canadian Guild was prominently displayed and received much critical attention. Historian Laura Peers contends that the most intimate frontiers of empire were those of the home, the family and, most significantly, the things one made and used within those spaces – performed and displayed in this instance at both the Irish and Canadian pavilions of an international exposition. In this paper, I shall seek to examine how the women of these guilds helped to produce, organise, display, distribute and deploy these exquisite craft objects within the cross-cultural dynamics of colonialism.

**Reid, Mary (University of Manitoba)**

[Time is a Bitch: The Aging Female Body – a Site of Power in the Work of Dominique Rey, Meera Margaret Singh and Suzy Lake](#)

Contemporary Women's (Self) Representation

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 09h00 - 10h30

In the work of these three female photo-based artists the aging female body is a powerful subject rich in (un)expected associations of beauty, sexual desire, strength, resilience and fortitude. Dominique Rey's *Sisters of the Cross* project centres on this order of nuns. Over the last three years Rey has immersed herself inside this private world of women. Through photography, video, and painting she re-presents this overlooked space of contemplation in the search of life lessons lost. Meera Margaret Singh had been photographing her mother, aunt and older female family friends for more than four years. The distinctive suites she creates positions the aging nude female body as contemporary odalisque, ripe with evocative energy, and as *vanitas*, warning of the impending end. In contrast to Rey and Singh, the full body scans performed by Suzy Lake places the artist's own aging body between the virtual and literal, commanding a presence that is both haunting and sentient.

**Salahub, Jennifer (Alberta College of Art and Design)**

[Marion Nicoll's Crafty Path: The Road Not Taken](#)

Attribution, Audience and Display: Craft in Canada  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

This paper considers an overlooked path travelled by the otherwise well-documented mid-twentieth-century Canadian artist Marion Nicoll (1909-1985). Going through early records relating to the history of craft at the Alberta College of Art and Design, I established that it was Nicoll who was instrumental in bringing craft to the forefront and who ultimately informed craft as it is taught at ACAD today. While we celebrate Nicoll the painter, she also taught courses on jewellery, leather, batik, ceramics and block printing on fabric. The information about her involvement has never been published. In fact, at first reading one might consider her to be a poster child for women artists in mid-century Canada, as she appears to have sauntered by many of the hurdles her contemporaries faced. In fact, there were indeed obstacles to overcome and the strategies that she employed were subtle – lies by omission perhaps?

**Senechal Carney, Lora (University of Toronto Scarborough)**

[Molly Lamb Bobak as a Wartime Portraitist](#)

Women and Social Change in the '20s, '30s and '40s  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.615, 11h00 - 12h30

Molly Lamb Bobak made a number of fascinating informal portraits of members of the Canadian Women's Army Core during her CWAC years, beginning in 1942. She used a very sensitive, studied approach for these portraits that differs vastly from the caricatures and equally light texts constituting her well-known diary of those years, and differing also from most of the work that she produced in 1945-46 as the only woman appointed to the Canadian War Records program. I propose to explore these portraits as a particular kind of wartime portrait. Like the informal wartime images of woman made by Pegi Nicol MacLeod, they reflect the increasing sense of independence and opportunity that Canadian women experienced in this era, even in the profoundly masculine preserve of war. They are also accomplished works that deserve a high place in a history of Canadian wartime portraitists including Charles Comfort, Eric Aldwinckle, Jack Humphrey, and Charles Goldhammer.

**Sheppard, Pat (Concordia University)**

[Decoding a Victorian Woman's Album: A Case Study in the Reading of Autobiography](#)

By Album, Print and Brush: Early Canadiana  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 09h00 - 10h30

Albums, defined when new by their barrenness, have long served as welcoming repositories for words, pictures and keepsakes. They are cultural artifacts that leave behind traces of a rhetorical impulse to express oneself in a wide range of topics including family, social, political and economic concerns. It is only recently, however, that scholars have begun to recognize their potential as a source for academic research.

Lady Bucknall Estcourt, a British aristocratic military wife, worked on such an album for nearly forty years (1837-1875), five of which were spent accompanying her husband during two military postings in Canada. Despite the lack of overtly personal content and the initial impression of randomness conveyed by the materials within the album, a detailed analysis reveals the presence of a coherent, vital, and very personal narrative. What is intriguing is that this has been accomplished as much through the absence as through the presence of its

creator. Using a variety of coding techniques, she memorialized important events of her life. She engaged with the important discourses of her era by making her husband's military career and, by extension, Great Britain's much larger imperial project important subjects of her album. Through my work of decoding, my research sheds new light on *how* one aristocratic Victorian woman used the material and visual culture at her disposal to express her own identity. By understanding the *how*, it has been possible to gain insight into the *what*, the impact of the broader concerns of an era on one woman, and thus to provide a uniquely feminine perspective.

**Sheriff, Mary (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)**

[Individual Lives, Collective Histories: Representing Women Artists in the Twenty-First Century](#)

Keynote Address: Thursday, 3 May 2012, MB S2.210, 16h45 – 18h15

In my presentation I will be analyzing the history of writing the history of women artists, and how women participated in that project from 1858 on. What factors diverted scholars from the later recuperation effort that began in the 70s? And why, and how, we should continue (even turn again to) that effort?

**Skelly, Julia (Concordia University)**

[Textiles Anonymous: Canadian Women and Temperance Banners](#)

Women's Missions: Art, Change and Community

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 1.605, 14h30 - 16h00

This paper will critically examine banners produced by Canadian members of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) between the years 1877 and 1932. As many feminist scholars of craft have observed, female producers of nineteenth-century textiles have often remained anonymous in histories of art. There is only one signature to be found amongst the twenty-one extant W.C.T.U. banners that were exhibited at the Textile Museum of Canada in 1999, and this signature might well have belonged to a male designer, as some of the banners were likely made by machines operated by men. This paper will address the problematics of privileging the named artist in art history and craft studies, while also acknowledging the importance of names in women's lives and histories. The Canadian members of the W.C.T.U. who produced the banners would not have identified as either artists or 'professional' craftswomen. Different methodologies and archival strategies are needed, therefore, for the study of the W.C.T.U. banners. I propose that, in this context, *imperfections* function as the material signature, or sign, of historical women's touch – not meant here as that ostensibly innate quality long attributed to women – but rather the manual work done by female producers who created objects that now comprise a feminist material culture associated with social activism. I discuss also the potentially revolutionary impact that recognizing the methodological value of imperfection in craft made by women might have on the feminist art historian in both her life and her work.

**Surette, Susan (Concordia University)**

[Lorraine Malach's \*Exultation\* as Transformation](#)

Healing and Transformation

Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

*Exultation*, a monumental 1981 figurative ceramic mural enlivens the sanctuary of the otherwise subdued Holy Family Notre Dame parish church, Port Alberni, B.C., a modernist and modest Roman Catholic place of worship. As sacred modern art, created by the feminist Catholic artist, Lorraine Malach, *Exultation* offers an opportunity to consider agency within the context of the mural's commission, installation, style, iconography, and location. I shall argue that this mural, installed as a reredos, acts as a social and political transformative agent for viewers

who have interacted with it, while they, in turn, transform its representation. Located within a specific religious space with its accompanying rituals, *Exultation's* agency can furthermore be understood within the context of spiritual healing. A reredos is traditionally commissioned as an expression of gratitude, but also often depicts the life and work of a saint to whom a needful petitioner can turn. Malach's reredos, *Exultation*, originated within the context of specific Franciscan and Catholic celebratory anniversaries as well as Vatican II's call for the renewal of the Church; however, it was made by an artist who chaffed at the Church's restrictive roles for women, and installed in a community confronted by great economic, social and environmental challenges. Through an examination of Malach's Franciscan iconography, her lively composition, and the figurative abstraction, the paper will address how this artifact "coshapes" its use and thus challenges relationships between viewers and their world.\*

\* Peter-Paul Verbeek, Robert P. Crease (trans.), *What Things Do: Philosophical Reflections on Technology, Agency, and Design*, (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), p.170

**Terry, Andrea (Carleton University)**

[Public History and Cultural Production: Women's Contributions to Canada's Heritage](#)

Missing Information: The Challenges of Women's Art History  
Friday, 4 May 2012, EV 3.760, 14h30 - 16h00

Within recent art historical research on women's contributions to Canadian museums, an account of the historic house museum movement is still largely missing. In this lecture I consider the work of "women volunteerists" in Dundurn Castle – the home of Prime Minister and Family Compact leader Sir Allan Napier MacNab (1798-1862) in Hamilton, Ontario. From 1901 to the 1960s, women worked as curators, guides, and administrators turning the home into a museum. Their efforts ultimately recommended the possibility of the site's restoration as Hamilton's Canadian Centennial project. Similar tales could be told across the country. As such, why is there such a pronounced absence of narratives of heritage sites from the histories of women and art? Can public history not be considered a unique form cultural production?

**Watson, Sarah (Concordia University)**

[Beyond The Domestic Sphere: Reconsiderations of Gathie Falk's performance work, Red Angel \(1972\)](#)

Performance and Enactment  
Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 3.760, 11h00 - 12h30

Pioneering Vancouver performance artist Gathie Falk created a series of fifteen performance works between 1968 and 1977. Her performances have been the subject of critical writing that falls into two main categories: feminist analysis that relates the instrumental use of domestic items with second wave feminism, and descriptions of Falk's performances within the context and narrative of the Vancouver Intermedia scene in the late 1960s and 1970s. While both approaches affirm Falk's foundational status within the history of performance art in Vancouver and Canada, they lack two areas critical to the understanding of any new artistic medium namely: a broad consideration of the significant cultural shifts that may have influenced its development, and a means to locate this work within the development of contemporaneous practices outside the local context.

Watson's paper will explore new possibilities for reconsidering Falk's work by analyzing the video documentation and script of her performance Red Angel from 1972, within the context of women's labour experience in post-war early 1970s culture and in relation to the American influence of Minimalist dance choreography as well as the framing of the work within Funk art. Falk's re-occurring performance objects are

discussed beyond the context of the domestic realm but rather within the territory of post-war consumer culture, a time when gender roles transition into the information society of the 1970s. Asking if a reconsideration of Falk's work within an expanded cultural and art historical framework serve as a model for the study of other foundational performance works created in Canada during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

**Whitelaw, Anne (Concordia University)**

[Women as Art Brokers in Mid-Twentieth-Century Canada](#)

Women and Museums

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 11h00 - 12h30

This paper examines the activities of women in the buying, selling and collecting of art in Canada at mid-century. Working in both paid and volunteer capacities, women during this period played important – although often overlooked – as museum curators, educators, and dealers. While male curators and museum directors have received the lion's share of analysis, the examination of any Canadian institution's archives reveals the substantial number of women working alongside their male counterparts. Kathleen Fenwick, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the National Gallery from 1928 to 1968 was instrumental in building that institution's collection of prints over a 40-year career. Norah McCullough was not only a longstanding member of the Saskatchewan Art Board, but she played a central role in the establishment of the National Gallery's Extension Department and deftly navigated the Gallery's difficult relationship with western Canadian art galleries. Meanwhile, on the voluntary side, Marjorie Dunlop used her position as Chief Librarian of the Regina Public Library to carve out permanent space for art exhibitions within the library's walls – an endeavour that resulted in the formation of the Dunlop Art Gallery, and Ruth Jackson built on her interest in the decorative arts as a member of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' Ladies Committee to establish that area as a curatorial department of that institution.

What unites these – and other – women working in museums during this period is the ability to negotiate a place for themselves within an art world dominated by male curators and directors. Often relegated to the "softer" areas of artistic practice – prints, the decorative arts – or marginalized within more educational or administrative positions, women nonetheless made significant contributions to the growth of Canadian cultural institutions and were very active participants in the circulation and exhibition of art in Canada at mid-century.

**Zemans, Joyce (Professor Emerita, York University)**

[The Missing Future](#)

CLOSING ADDRESS

Saturday, 5 May 2012, EV 1.605, 16h15 - 17h00

I cannot underline sufficiently the difficulty we face in overcoming the gross exclusion of women from the canon ... and even from contemporary art through to today. That in itself requires bold gestures of scholarly recovery, while at the same time we have to deconstruct the resulting tendency to generalize these artists as merely exemplars of a gendered collective: women, a sexualizing nomination by which they are, as a category, lumped together, their singularity annulled. As "women artists, not artists who are women, they are excluded a priori from the category "artist," which has been symbolically reserved for men.

Griselda Pollock "The Missing Future: MoMA and Modern Women" *Modern Women*, MoMA, 2010, 53/54

In an article written for RACAR in 2000, "A Tale of Three Women: The Visual Arts in Canada / A Current Account/ing", \* I examined issues of power and representation in twentieth century Canadian art and attempted

a stock-taking of the current position of women artists in Canada. In the essay, I looked at the status of Canada's women visual artists considering, particularly, the institutional nature of discrimination and its impact, both economic and ideological, on the lives and livelihoods of women artists.

I chose to examine the situation from both a qualitative and a quantitative perspective, attending to both the art historical discourse and to institutional practice, with particular attention to museum and gallery practice (through an examination of the collecting and exhibition practices of the National Gallery of Canada); the policies and practices of the Canada Council for the Arts, the principal granting agency to support individual artists (and organizations) in Canada; and the post-secondary educational environment, particularly the Ontario College of Art and Design (now OCADU) -- the oldest and largest art college in the country which had, in the early 1990s adopted a hiring policy intended to address the historic gender imbalance in its teaching faculty, and York's Visual Arts Department. My objective was to understand how institutions articulate or alter the dominant hierarchies.

My findings, though discouraging, were, in some instances, salutary: Canada Council grants were strong for emerging artists but support for senior women artists was not. The conditions for women artists teaching in post-secondary institutions were promising but had not changed dramatically. The exhibition and acquisition records of the NGC were, overall, disappointing. Though, generationally, the situation had improved for individual artists, there was a long way to go.

In the intervening decade much has changed internationally. In the U.S. and Europe, several major institutions have challenged the imbalance in the representation of art by women; important, groundbreaking exhibitions have been held; and new research networks engaging art historians and curators, focused on this issue, have been established. This year, I returned to the research, inspired and challenged by the evidence of a growing consciousness of the need to explore, reframe and address "The Missing Future" within the Canadian context.

My research, to date, has been encouraging with respect to the situation of artists teaching in the post-secondary education system. But it also indicates that the NGC's acquisition and exhibition of work by artists who are women and the Canada Council success rate for senior artists remain problematic.

My current research updates the quantitative and qualitative data of my earlier findings. Based on this work, and an analysis of the current situation, I will attempt to determine root causes, and to examine best practices and the potential for new approaches, with the intention of articulating the necessary conditions for a new history of art by women artists in Canada and of Canadian art.

\* "A Tale of Three Women: The Status of Women Artists in Canada," *RACAR*, Vol. XXV 1-2, 1998, 103-12; (published Spring 2001).