

Thanks and a Reluctant Farewell to Brian Merci et un au revoir récalcitrant à Brian

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Thanks and a Reluctant Farewell to Brian Merci et un au revoir récalcitrant à Brian

Once again we must say a fond goodbye to a key member of the editorial team. Brian Foss has been on the team since 1999, and he was central to the resurrection of *RACAR* over that time. Brian, we will miss you very much. Thanks so much for your friendship and cordiality as well as for your incisive judgment. Thanks also for the major role you played in bringing Dominic Marner to *RACAR* as your replacement. We welcome Dominic and hope he will find his time at *RACAR* as interesting as our work with you has been.

Last year, when Brian wrote a piece similar to this one in honour of former editor Nicole Dubreuil and former managing editor Barbara Winters, he remarked that “like everyone else who has ever been involved with the journal, they did part-time work that ultimately added up to the equivalent of month after month of full-time work.” The *RACAR* file for the last three years alone contains more than 450 messages from Brian, and this in spite of the fact that during that time he took on new professional challenges, moving from Concordia University to Carleton, where he became director of the School for Studies in Art and Culture. Some of those messages were several paragraphs long and others were short; all were valuable and to the point. “Lovely. Really lovely,” was his response once when an exceptionally fine set of revisions came in; on another occasion, however, he commented that “deleting material can be a wonderful way of avoiding big hairy problems, but there are times when pretending that something doesn’t exist makes things worse than before.”

Brian gave to his *RACAR* work not only his great editorial skill, but much more. At our request, Nicole Dubreuil, who shared so much of *RACAR*’s history with Brian, has sent a “petit hommage” to him, and we include it here to provide a richer sense of his contribution.

Brian Foss vient de quitter son poste de rédacteur de *RACAR*, aussi discrètement qu’il avait exercé cette responsabilité pendant près de quinze ans. La revue, pourtant, lui doit beaucoup. C’est grâce à sa compétence scientifique, à son ouverture intellectuelle et à son engagement indéfectible envers la communauté académique des historiens d’art canadiens que *RACAR* est devenu le lieu de publication dynamique qu’il est aujourd’hui. La revue que Brian a prise en mains en 1999 peinait à trouver, avec un rythme régulier de parution qui la rendrait attrayante pour les spécialistes, un nouveau souffle de vie. Les défis provenaient d’horizons divers : émergence de nouvelles tendances critiques, de nouvelles problématiques et de nouveaux objets qui ébranlaient les pratiques et les spécialités les mieux établies dans la discipline ; développement significatif des programmes de formation supérieure en histoire de l’art entraînant des besoins accrus de publication de la recherche et l’arrivée de jeunes auteurs en apprentissage ; changements majeurs imposés aux revues savantes par les nouveaux modes de diffusion électronique. Brian se plaignait à l’occasion de ses ordinateurs qui semblaient enclins à égarer quelques dossiers d’articles. Qu’on ne s’y méprenne pas cependant : il dominait la situation à *RACAR* par la qualité et la clairvoyance de sa pensée et par cette écriture remarquable, toute en finesse, qui lui permettait de sauver des textes en ménageant la susceptibilité des auteurs.

Merci, Brian Foss, pour ces remarquables années de service éditorial ; ton travail va demeurer, en plus d’un modèle du genre, une source d’inspiration pour la relève.