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The exhibition *Urban Images: Canadian Painting*, originating at Kingston's Agnes Etherington Art Centre and visiting Toronto, Windsor, Montreal and Halifax in 1990 and early 1991, was a pioneering project, the first comprehensive effort to explore the image of the city in Canadian pictorial art. Its catalogue by Dorothy Farr is a milestone in the field.

The catalogue includes black-and-white plates of nearly all the 51 paintings by 49 artists featured in the exhibition; four are also reproduced as colour plates. An introductory essay establishes a framework for the pictures, identifying many key painters of Canadian urban subjects and briefly locating them in the contexts of urban history and the emergence of particular artistic styles. Accompanying the introduction are small reproductions of six further noteworthy paintings that were not part of the exhibition. Each of the 51 pictures is then introduced by a short, anecdotal text discussing aspects of its style, historical circumstances and artists's biography. The catalogue is sparsely referenced; readers seeking bibliographic information are largely left on their own.

Creating an exhibition and catalogue of this kind anticipates rejoinder concerning the pictures selected and curator's commentary. In some cases, debate may centre on specific aspects of the project. Readers may query, for example, why two important early painters of Canadian townscapes, James Cockburn and Dominic Serres, are represented by work done in Kingston and Halifax, rather than the views of Quebec City on which their status more

firmly rests. Cockburn, as an omnivorous chronicler of every day life, and Serres, in oils based on topographic sketches by Richard Short which record the town's appearance immediately following the conquest, produced some of our only depictions of urban form in the French regime. Or they may question the inclusion of some fairly tangential pictures, such as David Milne's *Shrine and Saints II* and John Boyle's *Poundmaker*, in the absence of work by such key 20th-century painters of the city as Phillip Surray, Albert Franck and Millar Brittain, who is represented in the introduction but not the exhibition itself.

More generally, the exhibition tends to emphasize picturesque cityscape and unpeopled streetscape, categories accounting for about half the pictures. James Duncan, for example, is represented by his *Panoramic View of Montreal*, rather than the images of everyday urban social life that are the more enduring in his body of work. There are also no depictions of open markets, a common theme in Canadian urban art since its inception. The solitary individual in the city, meanwhile, who has been a recurrent subject in urban painting in recent decades, is nearly absent, though represented in an early noteworthy picture of the type, Frederick Varley's *Night Ferry, Vancouver*. As well, industrialization is not highly visible in the catalogue, reflected only in Lawren Harris' well-known *Miners' Houses, Glace Bay* and two small prints in the introduction, J. E. H. MacDonald's *Tracks and Traffic* and Brittain's *Longshoremen*. In this connection, D. C. Grose's 1863 idyll of boating on the Don River in a bucolic Toronto might have been usefully paired with William Armstrong's image one year later of the emergence of industrial urbanism in the same city (*Toronto Rolling Mills*), and Marc-Aurele Fortin's ethereal 1920s impression of Montreal might have been complemented by an Adrien Hébert

harbourscape of grain elevators and freighters done the same decade. Both Armstrong and Hébert are, on the other hand, represented in key entries in the catalogue, *Arrival of the Prince of Wales at Toronto* and *Hyman's Tobacco Store*.

The overall organization of the pictures—chronological, centring on urban and stylistic periods and artists' biographies—is serviceable, and in its framework Farr sketches a sound historical framework for situating urban images. Her discussion of the recurrence of depictions of civic events and public occasions does, however, hint at another, perhaps more comprehensive approach that might be used as the field develops: viewing pictures in the context of repeated themes. The bulk of 19th and 20th-century Canadian urban images fall into fewer than a score of thematic categories—house portraits, market scenes, harbourscape, atomized individuals, streetlife and so forth—and it is worthwhile to explore the interplay of these themes in the work of one or several artists and to examine patterns of similarity and difference in these various sub-genres over time.

Farr's invitation to a debate helps establish a basis for further work in the field and suggests a number of items for its agenda—for example: in bracketing the "dream city" as an important focus of inquiry (in implicit recognition of the way that urbanism and utopianism are tangled in western culture); in her trenchant comments about such "regionalist" painters as Jack Humphrey and Greg Curnoe (reflecting the insight that metropolitanism is often merely another form of provincialism: "Most have been arbitrarily grouped into the category because they did not work in central Canada"); and in arguing that not only cities but also the impact of urbanism on Canadian hinterland falls within the aegis of "urban painting" (a theme of special importance in a cultural milieu whose most popular paintings have

often been mythologies of primal "nature" that overlook the nearly ubiquitous and systematic extraction of this nature on which our economy has depended). As well, she brings to the fore a number of compelling observers of urban landscape and social life—among others, Cockburn (featured on the catalogue's cover), Joseph Légaré, Marian Scott, Jean-Paul Lemieux and Christiane Pflug. It is not difficult to argue with some of Farr's choices of pictures, or various slants of her text; the more important job is to continue the work she has begun.

The absence of industrial urbanism in Farr's pictures is remedied by Rosemary Donegan's catalogue for the exhibition *Industrial Images*, which originated at the Art Gallery of Hamilton and visited Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Calgary and Halifax during 1987 and 1988. It includes 149 black-and-white plates of works that, besides painting, include photography, sculpture, murals, magazine advertisements, posters and a melange of other visual materials. After a brief introduction, in which Donegan argues that industrial representation in Canada illustrates the principle that visual imagery not only reflects but is also an important constitutive element of social reality, the catalogue is organized geographically, with chapters allotted to the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and British Columbia. A running text, copiously footnoted, refers to adjacent illustrations; a final chapter treats "the industrial idea."

Donegan's perspective is the context of labour history. She acknowledges the C.L.C. for early support for her work, and it is clear a like-titled project sponsored by a corporate patron (say, Conrad Black) would assemble a quite different array of images. An early plate in the catalogue is Sir William Van Horne's dramatic 1907 *Steel Mills, Sydney*, the vision of a captain of industry for whom the factory—and the idea of *enterprise*—was

the hero. Donegan distances herself from this position ("consistent with his own personal economic interests as a major shareholder" in the Cape Breton plants). Many of the pictures she has gathered (like Van Horne's) are industrial landscapes, but her heroes and the catalogue's most recurrent theme are working people—slaughtering meat in a packing house, hacking coal in a hard-rock mine, building bridges on the St. Lawrence, women workers of the war years. Her project, though, is not hagiology; the images are of too high a quality and too carefully chosen for that. Among the most compelling are those of individual figures—Bertram Brooker's *Recluse*, Nathan Petroff's *Modern Times*, Edwin Holgate's *Lumberjack*, Leonard Hutchinson's *Lock-Out*. Labour history is a complex field whose practitioners will no doubt find in Donegan's commentary a number of bones of contention; and they will be fascinated by the pictures. Apart from its value as scholarly stimulus and resource, the catalogue is a labour historian's coffee-table book.

In the contexts of the study of cities and artists' depiction of cities, Donegan provides a partial pictorial chronicle of the emergence of industrial urbanism in Canada and its landscape and everyday life. She includes some of the painters who are absent from Farr, most notably Brittain (a second canvas of *Longshoremen*) and Surray whose *Workmen on a Winnipeg streetcar* might have been nicely accompanied by Brittain's *Two Waitresses on a streetcar in St. John*). Some other artists are in Farr too, but Donegan has chosen different pictures. The work of Humphrey, for example, illustrated in Farr by a townscape, is represented here by *Building Ships for the Merchant Navy*. Armstrong's *Rolling Mills* is included, as well as a Hébert harbourscape (the catalogue's cover) and Harris' *Eaton Manufacturing Building*. Harris is also represented by *Miners' Houses*, the exhibitions' sole common picture.

Overall, the two catalogues, each concerned with imagery, create very different images of Canadian urbanism. In one case, the city is largely picturesque or genteel, partly a function of Farr's choices but also an accurate reflection of the way in which painters have often chosen to depict Canadian urbanity. In the other, the city is peopled by men and women who work with their bodies, and dominated by the functional architecture of industrialism. Taken together, they offer instructive lessons about inclusion and exclusion, the social construction of history, and the deployment of pictures as ideological devices.

To be sure, while it is a creditable work of history, there is an explicit political subtext in Donegan's project. But partly for this reason, because their attitude is generally *implicit*, the pictures chosen by Farr even more clearly illustrate the manner in which "art" is saturated by politics.

In this context, it may be noted that Donegan makes a generalization about visual artifacts emerging from the "'fine' arts" that may provoke demurrals: that they are "stronger" than those of "the more derivative applied arts," partly as a function of "independent, self-determined production" rooted in the "experience of marginality." There are a number of problematic features to this argument that are not helped by the ambiguity of the word "stronger." "Marginal," in any case, is not a good characterization of the social position of such 19th-century entrepreneur-painters as Armstrong or Duncan (whose work includes several "strong" depictions of working-class life in 1840s Montreal). As well, though, the crucial matter of whether artists may be privileged as creating more "self-determined" work than other categories of social actors is a moot issue that remains vigorously debated in the sociology of painting.

For all that, Donegan's work, too, is a milestone.

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**Gagan, David.** *'A Necessity Among Us': The Owen Sound General and Marine Hospital 1891-1985.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. Pp. xiii, 161. Black and white photographs; index.

David Gagan's new book concisely analyzes the development of the general hospital at Owen Sound from its beginnings as a local charitable enterprise in 1893 to its emergence in the age of medicare as the central institution in an integrated web of regional medical resources. An excellent introduction solidly places the hospital's history in its broader context: the twentieth-century transformation of North American hospitals from "charity" shelters for the sick poor to efficient, scientific and enormously expensive dispensers of care. This case study is particularly valuable in that the operation of these forces in Canada is still largely unexplored.

The history of the G & M illustrates a central contradiction. In the 19th century, the well-to-do supported hospitals as a charitable haven for the poor, who could not afford home care by a private physician. In response to a variety of factors including a growing spirit of progressive urban reform, an increased availability of effective medical therapies and an increase in the status of the medical profession, the 20th century hospital came to be perceived as a vital necessity for the community as a whole, expected to deliver quality health care to all classes while functioning as an efficient business enterprise. The book's greatest strength is in its depiction of the characteristically uneven yet continuing growth that resulted not only from technological and

administrative change but from these gradually changing attitudes.

Even as the hospital began its transformation, the demand for health care and the costs of providing it began their modern spiral. These changes guaranteed that patient fees, even coupled with periodic fundraising drives, would quickly prove insufficient to sustain services even at current levels, and still less to provide for timely modernization and expansion. Older ideas about what a hospital should be, however, were slow to die, and conflicting expectations ensured early and ongoing conflicts over hospital control and financing. Among the lay volunteers who helped to found the G & M, women were the first casualty, being quickly and systematically excluded from any decision-making function. Next came the struggle for dominance between medical professionals and lay trustees, with the "lady superintendent" eventually giving way to a team of administrative specialists. Like other hospitals, the G & M experienced repeated financial crises. While it was often forced to postpone expansion, and even at times to curtail or to impose surcharges on existing services, the community and its politicians seemed slow to appreciate that the problem was, perhaps, less a question of "inefficiency" than of unrealistic expectations.

After 1945, the crisis became acute. People were less likely than ever to see the hospital as a legitimate recipient of charitable donations, and, in Gagan's words, the G & M was "caught between the millstones of ... [booming] demand for its services and lack of public interest in its problems." Originally offered optional "extras" and relied upon to subsidize basic services for all, paying patients might now face "medical impoverishment" even for routine hospital procedures. Postwar, the immediate problem was alleviated through increased availability and utilization of private hospital insurance.

The observation has become commonplace that the subsequent involvement of the provincial and federal governments, first in hospital and then in general medical insurance, has not solved all of Canada's health care problems and may, indeed, have created some. But Gagan's exploration of the hospital's history between 1960 and 1985, covering about fifteen pages, is far too short and sketchy to shed much light on these issues. For earlier periods, changing patterns of hospital income and patient utilization are given in helpful statistical summaries integrated with the text, and should offer a sound basis for comparison in studies of other Canadian hospitals. Discussion of the earliest years of the G & M are also supplemented with a richly detailed picture of daily life in the hospital, where student nurses, who had "virtually complete charge of the wards" during their 12-hour shifts, attended classes in their "free" time; and where patients were faced with a bewildering array of rules governing behaviour whose violation could bring discharge. Unfortunately, this descriptive account is not sustained into later periods, and hence there is little sense of changes in actual patient experience to counterbalance the hospital's changing administrative and financial condition. In fact, less emphasis might have been given overall to the minutiae of the G & M's financial woes. While the description of funding sources makes an essential point about the perceived role of the institution in the community, even readers quite undaunted by long discussions involving debentures, bonds and sinking funds might wish for a more lively style, and more balance with the changing social context.

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