Document généré le 24 avr. 2024 08:11

Vie des arts

Vie des arts

Texts in English

Volume 29, numéro 116, septembre–octobre–novembre 1984

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/58889ac

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Éditeur(s)

La Société La Vie des Arts

ISSN

0042-5435 (imprimé)
1923-3183 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

(1984). Texts in English. *Vie des arts*, *29*(116), 90–95.

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TEXTS IN ENGLISH

AN EXCEPTIONAL SUMMER

By Andrée PARADIS

Art has never been as alive as in this summer of 1984. Biennales, festivals, exhibitions, summer theatres, summer music centres, symposiums and cultural meetings have proliferated in Quebec, in Canada and abroad. A flood of celebrations intended to stress various anniversaries and centenaries gave rise to achievements of imagination that contributed to the production of many projects in which the artist took his part.

While the international press hastened to write the usual reports at the Basle Fair and the Venice Biennale in Canada the dominant note on events was one of opening; most of the biennales became national and international, as did the symposiums, the meetings, the exhibitions and the parallel events. Let us add that a genuine concern for quality was everywhere a priority and that it compensated, in some cases, for the gaps inherent in beginning experiences. The objectives were ambitious and, as is proper, they were sometimes not enough to control the difficulties in producing the projects, since tools always remain imperfect.

Since the first Sculpture Symposium at Montreal in 1964, the multiplication of these events, of which two of international character – the first at Chicoutimi in 1980 and the second at Saint-Jean-Port-Joli in 1984 – reflect the important changes occurring in the expanding of cultural life and generate a new self-confidence in active milieus. The regions were invited to take their destiny in hand on the subject of culture; the answer was not long in coming. It must rejoice us with its attributes of the positive, the daring and the imaginative. Programs are organized and in general are very good; they succeed in obtaining the necessary financing. It remains to measure the quality of the productions and the impact created on the immediate environment. We now know that we can undertake anything everywhere. We are learning or perfecting the mechanisms of production. The big question remains: for whom are they meant? Whom are we meeting? The low rates of attendance at conferences and summer colloquies, even at events that announced prestigious names, are cause for concern.

It is certain that the poles that the big centres form are no longer closed and that in all regions the vitality of visual arts needs to be demonstrated. A well-organized event in any corner finally creates interest if it can answer curiosity and the need to discover. All through the summer, events have been produced with a great deal of earnestness. They have succeeded in better publicizing many artists and in introducing to the public the different trends of contemporary art. At Saint-Jean-Port-Joli and at Quebec, international artistic language was able to bring together in a spirit of good fellowship and exchange, critics, sculptors and lecturers from all parts of the world. Works created on the spot will henceforth enrich the visual landscape of the places which were endowed by the creators. In December *Vie des Arts* will bring reports of some of these events to the attention of its readers.

We have reserved a large part of the present issue for the bicentenary of New Brunswick in order to give our readers a survey of the cultural life deeply rooted in this Canadian region since the founding of Acadia in 1604.

We are all indebted to what has since developed in that favoured land where so many writers and artists have left their mark. Very close ties exist between the artists of New Brunswick and the Canadian artistic family. Recently, John Hooper and Claude Gauvin made two remarkable contributions, a sculpture and a mural, to the programme of the National Capital Commission of Canada. At Fredericton, Sackville and Moncton, New Brunswick commands attention by the excellence of the instruction in the arts which it offers in its universities. New Realism took off at Mount Allison University and won international recognition when Alex Colville was teaching there, and Neo-expressionism, to-day so alive, had a master, Bruno Bobak, who supported Expressionism in a masterly manner at the University of Fredericton, much before this trend knew a world renaissance; at the University of Moncton sculptor Claude Roussel, for his part, influenced a generation of young artists in a positive way.

The important development of museums and art galleries in New Brunswick is also evidence of a cultural evolution that rests on economic evolution. Already in 1966, Luke Rombout wrote in *Vie des Arts*[1]: "History has proved that, on the level of the development of the arts, artists keep pace with social progress and that they are often in the vanguard of these movements. What is happening presently in the east of Canada (in the Atlantic provinces) is a new proof of this assertion." In the past we devoted articles to the artists of New Brunswick, and we intend to pursue this course. We would have liked to speak immediately of many more creators, of all those who are working at the development of contemporary art but, in the face of the size of the task, we have been obliged to limit our objective to publicizing certain aspects of cultural life that confirm the artistic vitality of that Canadian province.

Our sincerest gratitude to the Commission of the Bicentenary of New Brunswick for having contributed generously to the production of the pages which follow and, more particularly, to its president, Alfred Landry and to its director general, F. Winfield Hackett. We warmly congratulate all our fellow citizens on the happy event of the Bicentenary and, naturally, we add our thanks to our contributor, professor Ghislain Clermont, who took on the responsibility of co-ordinating the section on the Arts in New Brunswick.

1. XI.44.32.

(Translation by Mildred GRAND)

NEW BRUNSWICK ARCHITECTURE

By Stuart Allen SMITH

New Brunswick has a rich architectural past. The story of the first 150 years of Canadian architecture cannot be written without it. The chronicler of the last 100 years would be entirely justified in ignoring it. Why one and the other are both true is the history of New Brunswick and proof of the centrality of art to the real patterns of life.

Buildings survive from all periods except the pre-expulsion Acadian occupation of old and new Acadia.

Recent architectural investigations in Annapolis Royal may prove that statement to be untrue, but at the moment nothing exists in a sufficiently recognizable form to speak to us authentically of the period bounded by Champlain's arrival in 1604 and the tragic summer of 1755. From literary and archeological evidence, however, we can document an essentially medieval peasant culture not much different in its beginnings from its 17th century counterparts in what is now the United States. The only locally established variant not found in the American colonies is the use of wattle and daub (en torchis), documented by surviving 19th century tradition in the Caraquet area and earlier literary references.

The conflict between those two North American settlement realities and the trans-oceanic ambitions of England and France prevented the establishment of a coherent colony of the sort evolving in Quebec and finally doomed the tiny Acadian population; but it also provided for its succession.

By the 1760's, Massachusetts was running out of available land. Strange as that may seem with an empty continent behind them, the move north proved more attractive than a move west. And up they came, into lands which they had recently convinced England had to be cleared to protect New England. As New England settlers moved into the Annapolis Valley, the Atlantic coast ports of Nova Scotia, the Tantramar, the St. John River valley, they brought traditions that had developed over a 150-year period. Both their influence and their buildings were to last and, despite the earlier Acadian presence, that is the point at which our continuous building traditions originate.

That essentially American presence was reinforced 25 years later by the arrival of more 'Americans'. This time it was a major influx of population. 14,000 Loyalists arrived in the fall of 1783 representing all classes of society and all attitudes within 18th century colonial society. They created New Brunswick not just politically but artistically and culturally. While they were undeniably American and considered themselves that, rather than English, they were loyal to an English political system and to established English architectural ideas. Their first architectural expressions are modest continuations of what they had known before. Until recently that modesty has been most often attributed to reduced economic conditions which seemingly made it necessary, but the real reason is revealed by the period of building activity that follows.

Architecturally, the pre-Loyalist presence in New Brunswick was a craft tradition in which plan, elevation and decoration, or rather the lack of it, followed a functional base. The arrival of the Loyalists brings the possibility of a post-renaissance attitude to building design, as a thing essentially of taste and style. In short, the developed attitude of 18th century English country and city house. It brings a possibility but not a certainty, no necessity to accept the new fashion fully. The modesty of Loyalist architecture in New Brunswick is in reality an inherent conservatism and that conservatism is fully expressed when government in the new colony sets out to build official buildings. In the first decade of the 19th century the commitment to English models is not a surprise. The surprise is that they seek models not of the moment, of current fashion, but older ones – in fact, the same English models that had inspired American architects of mid-18th century[1].

Conservative and English by orientation, New Brunswick forges an identifiably local domestic style that can be seen in both city and town until well into the 1840's[2]. Until the 1840's, most churches in the province were in a style which could be recognized as congregational and reminiscent of New England. But one church of the early 19th century, 1817 in fact, is an event of national importance. The Church of St. John (stone church) is in the Gothic style. In 1817 in England that was a stylistic option, not terribly fashionable but acceptably so. By 1840, it was

a necessity. The rise of Gothic fashion was powered by the troika of religion, nationalism, and moral superiority, and it became irresistible.

New Brunswick joined the international mainstream of that development in 1845 when the first Anglican Bishop of Fredericton, John Medley, arrived determined to reform his church and its buildings. His masterpiece, Christ Church Cathedral[3], is a building of international importance in the history of the Gothic Revival.

Medley was an architectural purist. He proceeded on the basis of archeological exactness and historical appropriateness. He did not have much company either inside or outside of the church. His influence was great but his followers were few, most people accepting the less demanding tradition of Ruskin's enthusiasm and, by the 1870's, Gothic forms of some sort or another are in every builder's vocabulary.

By that date many had gone on to other revival possibilities. All of the historical revival styles are to be found with a preference for Italian variants in houses and a growing commitment to Second Empire in public buildings. Gradually, as in the rest of the world, the pursuit of individual styles gave way to a general enthusiasm, an eclectic enthusiasm, for all styles and all periods and often in the same house. The prosperity of the third quarter of the 19th century, the carpentry skills, the unlimited availability of lumber, and all that freed imagination produced some quite spectacular architectural enterprises, especially in coastal locations.

However, with Confederation that prosperity was to vanish and so would the enthusiasm and the locally generated skills. The long slow slide into the 20th century spelled architectural as well as economic disaster for us. As we progressively lost control of our own economy, as the shipbuilders disappeared, the industrial base withered and the economic base became increasingly central Canadian, so we lost artistically. The head office of a bank can be a collector of art, a patron of innovative architecture, but inevitably, that means at head office. The branches get posters on the wall and prefab architecture.

While New Brunswick lost opportunity and initiative through harsh economic realities, it also lost through its own failure, its own inner failure to teach, to foster pride where possible, to support and encourage. As generation after generation the young and ambitious moved out, the remaining population came to detest its own history, its own artistic heritage. The saddest part of that reality became apparent, not in the depression or the war years, but only when prosperity came slowly in the late 50's and 60's and nurtured the ambition of the 70's was it evident that we had sold out.

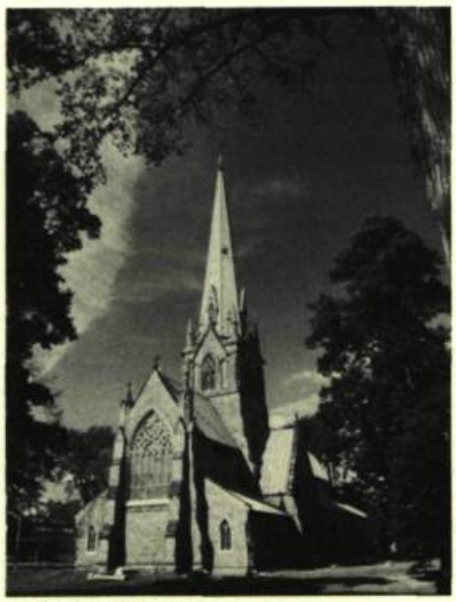
Viable downtown areas were destroyed physically and economically by ugly and mean suburban shopping plazas. Old structures of integrity and quality were razed to be replaced by painted concrete block or building catalogue assemblages featuring three types of brick and coloured panels in aluminum frames.

It was change so it must be progress. One town council after another voted to destroy or to remove in the pathetic belief that it all represented progress. At a time when business and government in other jurisdictions were discovering economic, historical, and artistic truths in their own modest and recent past, we with the richest history were busy, in the 1970's, installing 1940's expressways to cut the capital off from its river or demolishing more of Saint John with bulldozers and federal subsidies than the great fire managed to do, and ignoring the enormously exciting social, environmental and historical realities that even casual visitors could see.

The list of lost opportunities is too long, but examples rush to mind. The provincial government, intellectually just a large town council, celebrated the centennial of Canada by demolishing an entire block in the centre of Fredericton to build a nondescript office building. That in itself was no remarkable thing, but its implications were profound. A large area containing the best houses in Fredericton was declared a 'Public Works Development Area' for further expansion, and spot demolition began at once. Next door, the first Catholic church built since the expulsion was demolished and its memorial stained-glass windows smashed in order to replace it with a 1950's suburban church. To the north, the adjacent block was levelled for a playhouse that Lord Beaverbrook insisted on giving the province, and, in the process, an 18th century inn, quite possibly the first place of meeting of the Legislative Council, was destroyed. Of course, all that activity overloaded the street and parking facilities, so another block was razed to provide surface parking.

After years of agitation, Saint John obtained its own university. It was placed, as was its new regional hospital (by local standards a huge undertaking) as far from the established and identifiable centre of the city as was physically possible. Cultural agencies fared no better. The University of New Brunswick in Fredericton expanded by forcing factory-designed Georgian imitations onto a dramatic hill site. The newly-founded University of Moncton celebrated its creation as the intellectual focus of Acadian culture by spreading several hideous yellow brick buildings incoherently and inconveniently over an enormous acreage. The failure in all this was a failure of imagination. No one's fault but our own.

This, I am sure, is a depressing chronicle for any one to read. It is certainly no pleasure to recount, but it is essential to say it in order to measure what has happened to us and to be able to gauge real progress. Because there is progress and there is hope.



Christ Church Cathedral.
Fredericton, 1845.

The nature of that hope needs to be carefully defined. It is not, nor could we hope for, a sudden rush of world class structures. In 1984, our social and historic realities would make that impossible. Economic realities guarantee this and there is no point in reflecting that while the Bank of Canada's interest rates prevent us from building middle class housing, it does not prevent Mr. Bouey from housing his staff in a palace.

Whatever we accomplish here must come from ourselves, our own imagination even if, as in many cases, the architectural skills employed are outsiders'. The first and most important step is to reinforce and complement what we have, be it history, social or geographic realities, or even climate.

Only a lunatic would design university or school buildings so that a move from one class to another in February becomes an exercise in Arctic survival. The University of New Brunswick has finally accepted that fact and the Ottawa firm of Murray and Murray provided them with the first sensible and imaginative building in the last 75 years[4]. The integrated university complex links two existing buildings, provides a specialized library and links the necessary administrative offices, melding it into existing landscape contours.

An earlier example in Fredericton, and successful enough to become almost unnoticeable, is an addition of new church and hall facilities to the historically important first Anglican parish church, built by Bishop Medley in 1846. In this case a local architect, Stanley Emmerson of Saint John, was responsible. These and the several conversions of older structures such as canoe factories and the Provincial Normal School are not great architecture, but they are coherent and appropriate structures and, together with the high quality older work, sensitize the population to sound innovation.

No better or more optimistic example could be set out than the recently opened Market Square Project in Saint John[5]. Years of so-called urban renewal had emptied the historic centre of Saint John. It was not just blocks of demolished buildings; the sense of centre was gone and the new Saint John Thruway was just that – a cross-harbour bridge and expressway smashed through the centre of the city and designed to get motorists from the western outskirts to the eastern outskirts without having to stop.

A Saint John developer, Pat Rocca, had the imagination of the newly-arrived, saw what was possible, had the wit to ally himself with Ray Affleck and Arcop Associates of Montreal, and quite simply set out to recreate a central focus for the city. The conventional wisdom said it could not be done. Central Saint John had been abandoned by wealth, influence, and business for too long. By preserving the facades of the Old Market Slip buildings and then weaving retail space, convention facilities, and housing tightly around them he had something new, but it was held within the existing pattern of New Brunswick's only really urban context. Linked by an elevated bridge to existing structures across the street, visitors are able to remain indoors yet experience changes in elevation, pattern, and texture as they connect with the City Hall and the Brunswick Square commercial complex and hotel above.

In reality it is a sophisticated shopping mall but with some very important extras for Saint John. It does not dominate; it is integrated into existing city patterns, and it has restored a focus to the down-town area. Saint John has a centre and spill-over benefits have begun.

Saint John, like most New Brunswick towns and cities, has no proper theatrical or concert facilities, but it does have a surviving theatre, the Capitol, probably the last grand structure built in Saint John. For the past number of years it has been used by the Full Gospel Assembly as a place of worship. After a period of prayerful thought, the church authorities agreed to sell for one million dollars. Ten years ago that would have been the end of the story but, buoyed by the new spirit of pride and awareness created by Market Square, a citizen's committee raised the money to buy it – from within the community itself. Subsequently the city, not previously distinguished in the field of historical preservation, made it possible to preserve two adjacent houses which, when restored, will be the finest example of Saint John's glory days and distinct national treasures.

In 1563, John Shute, writing the first book of architectural theory in England, said good building consisted of three things: "commodity, firmness and delight". By that I take it he meant appropriate structure, sound engineering, and the application of sound intellectual and aesthetic values. It still is a valid statement and the measure of success for most architecture will be the degree of delight it includes and affords. Seldom in history are we given monuments that force all else into submission and I am sure that New Brunswick will never be responsible for one, but I am equally sure that we are more in tune with our history than we have ever been and, out of that, will come much delight.

Please note that you will find the references at the end of the French texts.

THE NEWLY-EXPANDED BEAVERBROOK ART GALLERY

By Ian LUMSDEN

Since its extensively publicized opening in 1959, the Beaverbrook Art Gallery has occupied a unique position in the Canadian museum community. Unlike its American neighbour, Canada does not have a tradition of industrialists and business tycoons establishing art galleries and museums to house their private collections and then furnishing endowment funds for their operation. Although such institutions as the Mendel Art Gallery, The McMichael Canadian Collection and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery have received considerable support from one private benefactor, it is virtually impossible to name an art gallery or museum in Canada that has been more the creation of one man than the Beaverbrook Art Gallery.

Upon the death of Lord Beaverbrook in 1964, his son and daughter-in-law, Sir Max and Lady Aitken, admirably committed themselves to carrying on what Beaverbrook had conceived through their pledge of support from The Beaverbrook Canadian Foundation in the maintenance and growth of this institution.

The close association of the Hosmer, Pillow and Vaughan families with the Beaverbrook Art Gallery goes back to the Gallery's inception in the late 1950's with the donation of a part of the Lucile Pillow Collection of 18th and 19th century English porcelain housed in the Lucile Pillow Room, which was followed by the gift of Miss Olive Hosmer (Mr. Pillow's cousin) of a collection of continental European miniatures along with paintings by Constable, Morrice, Cullen and Horne Russell in 1959. The initial support of the Pillow and Hosmer families has been handsomely sustained by the numerous generous contributions made by Mrs. Pillow's daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. A Murray Vaughan.

With the knowledge of this impressive record of philanthropy one can better appreciate the fact that the Aitken and Vaughan families subsidized almost 70% of the funding for the construction of the new East and West Wings of the Beaverbrook Art Gallery which opened to the public on October 29, 1983. The remaining 30% came from the Government of Canada, the Province of New Brunswick and the City of Fredericton.

Within the East Wing are two major exhibition areas, the Hosmer-Pillow-Vaughan Gallery and the Sir Max Aitken Gallery; the former displaying primarily continental European works of fine and decorative art from the 15th to the 19th century (along with a collection of paintings by the Canadian expatriate, James Wilson Morrice); and the latter housing British portraits, conversation pieces and landscapes from the 17th to 19th century, which were acquired by Lord Beaverbrook.

As a result of the addition of the internationally-acclaimed Hosmer-Pillow-Vaughan Collection, the Beaverbrook Art Gallery has extended its parameters in at least three new directions. With this collection, the Gallery has committed itself to a study of the decorative arts – furniture, tapestries, porcelain, silver and 'objets vertus' are now included in its mandate. Continental European fine and decorative arts, an area only incidentally reflected in the Gallery's holdings, are sufficiently well represented to provide a picture of the artistic continuum from the medieval period to the late 19th century in Northern and Southern Europe. The time line of the works the Gallery presents now dates back to the early 14th century with an anonymous French gothic ivory diptych, "Christ on The Cross: Virgin and Child between two Angels", purchased by Elwood B. Hosmer in 1940.

Northern European Renaissance paintings are particularly well represented in the Hosmer-Pillow-Vaughan Collection. Beginning in the Low Countries is the charming small panel given to a follower of Dieric Bout, "The Madonna of the Reading Christ Child" (c. 1475) the attribution made by the late Max J. Friedlander. The Madonna and Child are portrayed in the traditional 'hortus conclusus' or enclosed garden. Moving into the 16th century is a small triptych "Crucifixion, Via Dolorosa, Deposition" (c. 1550) created for private devotional needs by Marcellus Coffermans, a follower of Roger van der Weyden. Contemporaneous with this is the Flemish tapestry, "Holy Kinship, Virgin and Child with St. Anne" in which the planimetric treatment of the carefully articulated figures is disposed in three tiers.

Moving eastward into Germany, we have the same principals reappearing in the primitive "Virgo inter Virgines" (c. 1470) which has been likened to a female sacra converzazione. Here again is the 'hortus conclusus' with the same classical layering of figures parallel to the base. Its most recent attribution is to an unknown German painter who was active in Haarlem and Munster although it has previously been ascribed to the Master of the Tiburtine Sibyl (based on the distant landscape) and formerly by Dr. Alfred M. Frankfurter to an unknown Burgundian Master under the influence of Jean Fouquet.

Making that quantum leap from the sacred to the profane, our attention is directed to the reduced portrait of "Lucretia" (c. 1530) by Lucas Cranach the Elder. In a recent cleaning Lucretia's fur collar, added in the 19th century, was removed to reveal the tip of a poignard piercing her flesh, thereby positively identifying the sitter whose story is chronicled by Livy. Another beneficiary of the patronage of Emperor Maximilian was Barend van Orley who, about 1550, produced the cartoon designs for the "The Hunts of Maximilian" tapestries woven by the Gobelins factory. A second set was woven in the atelier of Mozin from 1692 to 1693 and it is from this series that the powerful tapestry in the Hosmer-Pillow-Vaughan Collection originates. There are 12 tapestries representing the months of the year in this series, the Gallery's depicting July; other months are to be found in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Philadelphia Museum of Art and the City of Paris.

In Cologne we have Bartel Bruyn accommodating both the spiritual and the secular needs of his patrons. "The Virgin and Child with St. Anne" and "St. Elizabeth of Hungary giving Alms" (c. 1530) constitute the wings of a triptych created for private worship, the central panel of unknown subject having been separated from these two components. Of a worldly caste is the portrait of the sumptuously garbed "André Reidmor" (c. 1540) given to Bartel Bruyn.

Sixteenth century France finds its representation in two small portraits. The earlier, "Girl with a Coif" (c. 1525) possibly a fragment, looks back to the Byzantine period with the highly stylized presentation of the figure on a gilded ground whereas the exquisite "Claude de Clermont-Tonnerre, Sieur de Dampierre" (1540-1545) by Corneille de Lyon heralds the dawn of the realistic portrait, Northern Europe's major contribution to the Renaissance, as has already been seen in the portrait of "André Reidmor". The Corneille de Lyon portrait which was in Horace Walpole's Collection at Strawberry Hill bears an elaborate gilt metal frame incorporating images of man's mortality, no doubt alluding to the premature demise of the sitter.

From Southern Europe, the Collection offers two early Spanish Renaissance panels, Jaime Cirera's "St. Martin of Tours" (c. 1440) and Martin de Soria's "Presentation of the Virgin" (c. 1475) which bear considerable affinity to the Byzantine artists' tendency to favour the richly gilded ornamentation of the panel surface in a shallow plane rather than attempt to deal with the recessional move into the picture through the illusionistic creation of depth. The gothic tracery used to frame the panel echoes the architectural components contained in the composition.

The impact of the Renaissance on Italy is made manifest in paintings from Florence, Brescia and Venice. The charming panel, "The Marriage of St. Catherine", given to the Florentine painter, Benozzo Gozzoli, disposes the three figures close to the picture surface with considerable visual interest furnished by the elegantly draped clothing and gold aureolae with only cursory acknowledgment of the distant landscape. In the unidentified portrait, "A Young Man", by the Brescian painter, Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, we have another powerful example of the realistic portrait. In its clarity of modelling and acute eye for detail it closely resembles the work of the younger Brescian artist, Moroni. Another painting of "St. Catherine", this time a half-length portrait with a crown of flowers, is ascribed to Bartolomeo Veneto and just hints at the richness of 16th century Venetian painting.

The Baroque and Rococo periods are lightly touched through the presence of the painting, "Three Ladies in Black", attributed to Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and several pieces of Continental European and English furniture from the 17th and 18th centuries.

19th century France held considerable fascination for Elwood B. Hosmer as evidenced in the outstanding cache of paintings and water-colour studies he assembled by that precursor of Impressionism, Eugène Boudin. The seven works from the Collection represented here span the period from 1858 through the Trouville beach scenes done in the 1860's to the "Rivage de Berck" of 1886. With the complex disposition of multiple groups of figures, rendered in sombre earth tones in Boudin's "Pardon à Sainte-Anne-la-Palud" (1858) one can discern numerous parallels to the epic canvas by Courbet, "Burial at Ornans", painted three years earlier in 1855. It was in 1859 that Boudin exhibited the painting for which this is a study at the Salon des Artistes

The Hosmer-Pillow-Vaughan Gallery

Français, the same year he became acquainted with Courbet. The larger version is in the Musée des Beaux-Arts André Malraux, Le Havre.

It was in Le Havre that Boudin became aware of the caricature drawings being produced by Claude Monet. Subsequently Boudin introduced Monet to the secrets of landscape painting, a debt that Monet gratefully acknowledged throughout his life. Both artists exhibited in the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874. Boudin's mastery of the sky and its kaleidoscopic nature is perhaps his greatest legacy to Monet, a testament to which is "Rivage de Berck" painted by the elder artist in 1886. The appearance of three charming pencil and watercolour sketches for Boudin's outstanding series of paintings of elegantly attired ladies and gentlemen disporting themselves among the bathing houses of the beach at Trouville intimates the masterful finished compositions of the same subject matter within the Collection but not presently on display.

Other facets of 19th century French painting are also given their due. The greatest exponent of Romanticism in French painting of this era, Eugène Delacroix, could not be better represented than by the small masterpiece, "Lady Macbeth" (1850). Delacroix is portraying her at the end of the sleepwalking scene and through the deft counterpointing of light and dark tones has managed to convey all the drama of the moment.

The taste for topographic Parisian street scenes in late 19th century France as manifested in the work of Jules Bastien-Lepage and Jean-François Raffaëlli is superbly represented in the latter's "Place de l'Opéra, Paris" which was painted in 1878 and must surely rank high among this artist's masterworks. More of a draftsman than a colourist, Raffaëlli has elected to render this neo-Baroque monument of the Second Empire and its environs with a monochromatic palette of browns and blacks.

Completing this compendium of more than six centuries of European art history is a collection of paintings by the expatriate Canadian impressionist, James Wilson Morrice, who established himself in Paris toward the end of the 19th century. Views of his native Montreal, his adopted Paris and such favourite painting locales as Venice, Tangier, Tunis and Brittany's coastal towns are all represented. It is in "The Shore at Paramé" that Morrice most closely approximates the Impressionists' credo. Large cumulus clouds emitting rays of light illuminate the distant town of St. Malo and reflect off the tidal flats in the middle ground, with the entire composition framed by the bathing houses and the finely-costumed ladies animating the wet sand in the foreground. The logic of Morrice's representation in this important collection is without question being the inheritor of the preceding six hundred years of western art history so succinctly represented.

Taken together with the pre-eminent collection of British painting already housed by the Gallery, a portion of which is on view in the new Sir Max Aitken Gallery ("Portraits, Conversation Pieces and Landscapes from the 17th to 19th Century") as well as its comprehensive Canadian holdings, the existence of this remarkable collection accumulated by three generations of discerning Canadians places the Beaverbrook Art Gallery in a singular position in Atlantic Canada and in an enviable one in the rest of the country. It is an auspicious way to mark the Gallery's 25th anniversary in the year of New Brunswick's Bicentennial celebrations.

Léo-B. LEBLANC
Au pays de Cocagne.
Artist-book.

LEO B. LEBLANC
ACADIAN FOLK ARTIST

By Patrick Condon LAURETTE

Leo LeBlanc, a Charolais cattle farmer on the Cocagne River in Kent County, New Brunswick, is 70 years old this year. Nineteen years ago he began painting pictures: scenes from his life. Both the Charolais and artistic decisions (1940's, 1960's) were imaginative, even for one gifted Acadian out of many who comprise the historic minority of those displaced and repressed for two centuries. Until 1960, which marked the election of the first Acadian Premier, Louis J. Robichaud (now Senator), a Kent Co. neighbour of Leo's, as well as the founding of the Université de Moncton as the academic seat of the "renaissance".

Painting could be called Leo's third life, after woodcutting and farming in what was probably the poorest county in the province. His pictures, however, are not poor, and he has produced upwards of 200 to scale (excluding "touristic" miniatures, a questionable trend), making his cultural career irrefutable. But Leo is not one of those chansonnier starlets, packaged in the 1970's, programming Acadian chic in Montreal and Paris. His parallel in that respect would be Calixte Duguay, whose New Brunswick songs are actually poems of the people.

And Leo's (Aristotelian) philosophy of art: each thing has its place; nature means variety; things involve human beings. You paint, he says, "something that would have value some day, for the younger generation to see". To be that, it has to add up, period, not to mention aesthetically. If a picture comes around to having 17 "buildings", for example, in an old-time mussel fishing subject, he will suggest a *mise en scene* of "twenty-five fellows fishing and a few skidoos on the river... It will bring it to life, like'alive alive-O'and all that stuff", quoting from the old English folk song ("Cockles and Mussels").

LeBlanc's typical vantage is wide-angled, usually for a village panorama, but suggesting a bird's-eye view. The time and space and action are conceptual, colour and scale unifying and animating the memory image. Drawings of component subjects may be cut out, like stencils, and positioned on the support to arrive at the required scale and proportions. A comprehensive preliminary drawing may also give an account of colour composition, although the finished work may vary. What Leo calls "buildings" create the pictorial chassis; nature's varietal effects are accomplished by due improvisation in mixing and modelling; finally, very small figures take their places. What transpires are the "Memoirs of Everyman" and what the American folk art historian, Alice Ford, further defines as history and escape.

In the painting, *Point Wolfe,* 1980, done directly after a visit to the historic Albert County location of an early 19th c. lumbering community, we can examine a subject and content bearing on Leo's New Brunswick life. When the 1940's sawmill operator visited the 1823 sawmill site, he was apparently struck by the pathos of time passing, his own included. The end of the log drive, when the logs roared in to the holding pond, was a day of ceremony, when the villagers turned out in their best dress after a winter of work in the woods. (His 1974 picture, *Notre-Dame, Kent Co. in 1923,* focussing on the hometown sawmill of his childhood, shows a log dam, a covered bridge, and a spillway in the foreground; even the smoke from the great stack appears in *Point Wolfe,* as the dark portion of cloud over the spillway). The Point Wolfe operation was abandoned in the 1920's; all that remains after 160 years is the covered bridge and a folkloric "enchanted spring". Such bridges, like barns and buildings in general, are prime targets for the LeBlanc eye.

Nine tourists explore the Point Wolfe River "brow", now under reforestation, where logs were once stacked in advance of the spring drive. One woman in a speckled skirt snaps a picture of the spillway. The red, white, and blue of the painting's centre give us the choreographic plan. Three figures in blue and white, nearest the nine steps that lead to the back field, approximate between them the spans of the spillway or river. The two red-shirted figures match the bridge's span, while the pair farthest removed (yellow pants) mark the measure of the sunwashed field, itself defined by brightened birch trees framing the far edge. A separate figure in a wine-colored dress, apparently a young girl, contemplates the spillway most directly, as if to cross. The ratio of recession from spillway wave to bridge to field, in terms of widths, is 1: 2: 4, as the wave recycles into what seems at first to be a Madame Pompadour cloud swell. Thus, the point of the picture lies somehow in the back field, a void saturated with light, light in fact being lost.

That entropy is anticipated by the pigeon-colored slurring of the foreground riverbank. However, the human heart, so to speak, survives abomination and time, the latter swallowed up by the past like so much water under the bridge. People seek rejuvenation in their past when they have become what Joan Miro said was in his pictures: "tiny forms in vast empty spaces". *Point Wolfe,* one of the later examples of Leo's work that is painted over a red ground, is a characteristic subject, in the context of the village, farm, sugar or logging camp, and coastal scene, all referring to the nuclear community. Key colors remain as red, black, and white, complemented by chameleonic blues and greens, with grey as an extensive meeting ground of value.

The definitive LeBlanc picture is ruled, with fence posts or the like, from the bottom of the picture plane and grows upward; or, it is balanced laterally in a symmetrical or checkerboard way. The best works have a serial play, but each disguises, besides a heart, a voice box, a diaphragm, or a solar plexus (or all of the above). Indeed, there can be different levels in a Leo LeBlanc. Consider the dynamics of the great cloud form over the delta field in *Point Wolfe*: seen as heading east (right) rather than as simply reflecting light from the west (Madame Pompadour), the form reveals an angel or mermaid carrying an armful of "foreboding". Such a surplus yield, while applying Rudolf Arnheim's psychology of perception, is of course a gift beyond the artist; but the basic criterion for the interpretation of meaning in such work was established in 1951 by anthropologist Raymond Firth ("The Social Framework of Primitive Art"): 1) social relations ultimately produce art, and 2) the artist's system of symbols parallels the system of social relations. We can interpret, therefore, according to society's use of the object and to the nature of the values expressed by the formal characteristics. Leo LeBlanc, a man of wit who reported in 1982, "The demand is good and picking up all the time", would undoubtedly respond: "C'est ça".

THE QUIET VISION OF THADDEUS HOLOWNIA

By Virgil G. HAMMOCK

I live in a haunting landscape, the Tantramar Marshes of New Brunswick. I look over them from my library where I am writing this article. They are forever changing. They are never dull. Yet many people who live in this region are seemingly blind to their beauty; this is not so with my friend, Thaddeus Holownia, a photographer who has worked and lived in this area for the last six years. He is a professor of photography in the Fine Arts Department of Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick. He has an eye that is sensitive to the beauty of this place and its history. The area was once French or rather Acadian, but with the fall of Fort Beauséjour and the shameful episode of the expulsion of the Acadians, it became English. However, it was the early French settlers who gave the land its form. They built dykes, which were called in Acadian *aboiteaux*, to hold back the sea. This reclaimed land became the Tantramar Marsh.

his talent for photography when he enrolled in the Fine Arts programme at the University of Windsor in the late 1960's. After his graduation from university, he moved to Toronto to take up photography full-time. Thaddeus had often driven through the Tantramar Marshes in his childhood – you must pass through them on your way to Nova Scotia from New Brunswick – and was impressed with them then, but they were an important rediscovery when he was invited to Mount Allison University as a visiting artist in 1977. Later, that same year, he was invited back to the university to become a member of its faculty. By this time he was already using large format view cameras, although to record urban rather than rural landscapes. He has since told me that initially he had planned only to stay a year or so in Sackville and then return to Toronto, but he found that there was much more here to photograph than he had originally thought and he decided to stay here permanently.

Thaddeus uses what was originally called a banquet camera. It produces negatives that are seven by seventeen inches in size. These negatives are then carefully contact-printed by the artist. This technique is the only one that can give the results that he desires. There is a detail in the prints that could not be achieved with a smaller camera or prints that have been enlarged. The photographs are in black and white because this is the medium best suited to this particular situation. Colour would take away from their starkness – which is so much a part of the image of the Marshes. It is the detail that counts in these pictures. They are similar to the landscape in early Flemish art. One of the theories behind early Flemish art is that in the detail you experience the presence and the power of God – that is to say, that God is just as present in the minute as he is in the universal.

Photography is the least understood of all the so-called fine arts because of its very accessibility – anyone who owns a camera thinks that he is a photographer, which makes about as much sense as saying that anyone who owns a typewriter is a writer. Thaddeus says that he is not interested in equipment. He does not manipulate the image during the taking or the printing process. A good exposure, a good contact print and that is all. It is important, however, that he uses a large format camera for these particular photographs for philosophic as well as technical reasons. A large-view camera of the type that Thaddeus uses requires the use of a tripod. A very slow exposure is needed (even though he uses a fast film, Tri-X, which has to be especially cut to size for him by Kodak) because of the small F-stop that is required to obtain the maximum depth of field. The exposure must be *right* and for this reason he uses a spot exposure meter which provides precise information. He exposes for a slightly dense negative which allows him to make a contact print on projection paper (good contact paper, in the size that he would need, which has a slower exposure time than projection paper, is no longer produced). What all of this means is that Thaddeus' is a photography of *care* and not the type where one shoots a hundred pictures to get one good one. He spends a lot of time looking, in some cases months, before he shoots a picture. It is a thinking man's photography. It is also what I would call straight photography. I'm not implying that there isn't poetry in Thaddeus's photography, because there is; an artist, and Thaddeus is certainly an artist, can point out the commonplace and show us the beauty that we might have missed. I am tempted to use the word transform when writing about Thaddeus' photographs, but I don't believe that its use is appropriate. He doesn't transform, he informs, but it is art nonetheless. There is a stillness in his work that edges on the monumental. This is not because he uses a large camera, as it is his images that have this quality regardless of the size of the negatives. It is true that you wouldn't use an antique banquet camera as a candid camera or to photograph sports events, but Thaddeus' work would have many of its present qualities if he were using a pin-hole camera.

Some of his photographs are of vast vistas and others are, in comparison, close-ups, but you sometimes have to look at the titles to know which is which. Having lived on the prairies for a number of years, I thought I knew the meaning of horizons, but the marshes have given me pause to rethink. At times there seems to be a total absence of any clues to the scale of the landscape, no matter how hard one looks. These marshes are unique in the Maritimes. They come as a surprise in the generally rolling landscape of the region. Because of the presence of dykes, the marshes might remind one of Holland, but they are different because Holland is as full of people as the Tantramar is empty of them. This is a place that was, not a place that is or is going to be. Perhaps this is why Thaddeus and I like this place – we like it as it is now because of what it was. There is a sense of sadness about this place that can only come from a place with a past.

Thaddeus HOLOWNIA
Sackville, February 1978.
Photograph in black and white.

Forty of Thaddeus's photographs of the marshes are touring the Maritimes during 1983 and 1984 in an exhibition titled *Dykelands*. He has completed a book on the same subject with a text by the poet, Douglas Lochhead, who is also a professor at Mount Allison University. The book, which is yet to be published, was originally planned to be in honour of the 1984 bicentennial of New Brunswick. Historically this region is one of the most interesting in Canada. People had been living and working in the region long before New Brunswick became a province in 1784. Nowhere else in the province are the traces of this history of human involvement with the land more evident than in the landscape of the Tantramar Marshes. Although these marshes are man made, it is nature that in the end triumphs. Much of the history of the marsh around Sackville has been covered by the camouflage of an overgrowth of new vegetation. This continual recycling of the land is a recurring subject in Thaddeus's photographs. It takes a trained eye to look at the land and understand what has gone on there before. Thaddeus has this understanding.

The land seems elemental to Canadian art and artists, yet at the same time it has been difficult to avoid clichés. It is necessary to live close to the land if you are going to portray it. You have to see it every day in its many moods and you must have a love for the land. We can pass things every day and not see them. Sometimes it is because what we are trying to avoid is ugly and we don't want to confront the ugliness and other times it is just because we are not looking. It is the artist's job to look and this is especially true of photographers. It is even more so with a photographer like Thaddeus who is presenting us with a fresh look at reality; a reality with all its warts and, at the same time, all its natural beauty.

Thaddeus Holownia was born in England, but spent his high school years in New Brunswick, although not in Sackville, but rather, in Rothesay, a suburb of Saint John. He first discovered

NEW BRUNSWICK CRAFTS – CREATING FROM TRADITION

By George FRY

The New Brunswick craftsman, like many of his confreres across Canada, is caught in a very immediate dilemma, that of delineating his rôle within contemporary society. Whilst his success is based on an understanding of process inherent in his patrons, which makes his product readily acceptable to the general public, his persona is now far removed from the isolated and intellectually circumscribed maker of the past. By and large the contemporary craftsman is a well-schooled, highly intelligent man or woman whose approach to his work is primarily through his creativity and intellect rather than through a continuum within a tradition. Rarely now are technique and purpose handed down from parent to child, but are absorbed through college training, extensive reading and research, and a diversity of learning experiences wherever they may be found.

The public's sense of the worth of handmade objects is a prevalant phenomenon in the Atlantic provinces, and this fact is credited with the overwhelming popularity of and support for crafts in the east of Canada.

It must be remembered that the early settlement of the east coast of the continent brought to it people who were dependent on their hand skills for their survival. They came to a land in which the indigenous population were culturally based in crafted objects, both secular and sacred. This sense of respect for the handmade piece has never died and craft festivals and exhibitions can attract audiences which are the envy of many a fine art gallery director.

The tradition of craft in New Brunswick is extremely strong and a host of rural practitioners continue to work, producing technically superb quilts, embroidery, weaving and carving. However, the modern craft movement springs primarily from latter-day settlers attracted to the province by this respect for the handmade, and the subsequent conducive atmosphere for creativity.

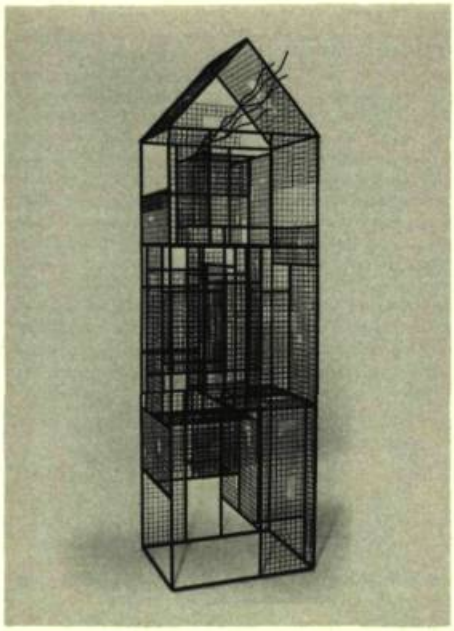
Strangely, the history of New Brunswick is one of tradition destroyed. Whether one considers the Micmacs and the Maliseets, the Acadians or the Loyalists, each in their turn were social groups which had their beliefs, skills and identity disrupted by invasion or expulsion; all that remained being a fading memory of what once was. These ideals were later amalgamated with the more peaceful settlement of the Dutch, Scots, Germans and Irish, each bringing souvenirs of their own cultures.

To-day the young New Brunswick craftsman, whatever his ethnic origin, is attempting to assess his social rôle whilst seeking for his lost origins which have been frequently distorted by history. This search is particularly characteristic of the Native peoples and the Acadians who are not only looking for their own traditions but, like their anglophone brethren, are seeking a status which is not a poor copy of Upper Canada or our American cousins to the south.

Two emerging craftspeople who characterise this very clearly are Chantal Godin and Ned Bear, recent honours graduates of the New Brunswick Craft School. Godin from the north of the province is firmly aware of her Acadian heritage and whilst using contemporary techniques applies them to an imagery which is based deeply in Acadian lore. Her painted satin and silk contains subjects derived from her world of lonely, seatouched farms where her people struggled to retain their cultural roots. This is not done without humour, and what makes Chantal Godin's work potentially extremely interesting is her sophisticated technical skill allied to the delicate wit of her images. Ned Bear, a Micmac, works as a woodcarver. Carving is not an indigenous craft of the eastern Indians, other than the Iroquois who have a highly subscribed form in their false face masks. Therefore Ned Bear has no teachers from his own culture and similarly much of the mythology and symbolism has been lost. To study, he has worked under two major masters, Abner Paul, the doyen of Maliseet artists, and John Hooper known for his publicly commissioned works in Ottawa. Bear is trying to discover new forms and to invent symbolism to convey concepts for which there are no known visual artefacts. This study, apart from his technical and artistic work at the Craft School, was undertaken at local universities in the burgeoning schools of Indian Studies, while he is endeavouring to research his culture and language as a starting point for his creativity.

The craft world which these young people are entering has its origins in the 1940's and 50's when Kjeld and Erica Deichmann, potters from Denmark, Lucie and Bart Wittewall, jewellers from Holland, Adele Ilves, a weaver from Estonia, and Ivan Crowell, a pewterer and weaver from Montreal came and settled in New Brunswick where Pat Jenkins was already causing contemporary interest through her original woven tartan designs. To this group of people is credited the beginnings of the modern craft movement in New Brunswick. Their designs and objects rapidly began to circulate throughout North America and Europe, drawing attention to the small province on Canada's Atlantic coast.

A second wave of immigrants in the 1960's, primarily from the United States, reinforced the work that had already been started. This second group, many highly trained, brought a new dynamic into the craft world. Typical of these is Peter Powning, a potter and sculptor, who settled in a rural community in King's County. Powning is essentially an innovator, highly skilled in his craft and a controller of a multiplicity of techniques and processes. He is aggressive in his need to develop and will disappear periodically, with his wife and son, to study. He later returns to the province to introduce a suite of totally new forms and concepts, whilst continuing to function as a leading production potter. In recent years he has opened, and successfully runs, a gallery craft shop in the market town of Sussex and was instrumental in pursuading the builder speculator, Pat Rocca, to include art works and an elegant co-op craft gallery in the award-winning Market Square Complex in Saint John.



Peter POWNING
Shaper.
Steel; Height: 101 cm. (8'5")

Powning appears to see no division between art and craft, but moves like a Scandinavian between production and gallery pieces. Recently he has had a major show in Moncton of his latest experiments in sound sculpture, reinforced by the computer research he is currently studying in Community College. Very much a Renaissance man in his breadth of interest, and impossible to capsulise because of his constantly changing interests, Powning is a potter's potter, admired for his skills and his inventive mind. Whilst his works are prized by collectors, he is equally successful in the "coffee mug" trade, bringing the same integrity and thought to his production pieces as to his more expressive works.

Another American who has become a recent resident, and is quietly producing experimental pieces of museum quality, is the woodturner Wayne Hayes. Hayes has a Bachelor of Science degree in botany and came to wood as a source of manipulative creativity in the year following his graduation. Working under Arnold London, he translated his academic knowledge into a sensual appreciation of the colour and composition of wood. He began to experiment, under London's enthusiastic tutelage, with unusual and frequently rejected pieces such as burls and spalted wood, using their configurations and distortions as the raison d'être for their final form. His recent works utilising wood with natural disfigurments and depressions are not only beautiful, but technical masterpieces in the control by which he cuts them; the slightest miscalculation in the angle of the tool would shatter the piece irrecoverably. Hayes' work is recognised throughout the country and he was recently asked to exhibit in Vancouver at the Cartwright Gallery with such other masters as Hogbin, Hosalyk, McKinley and Osolnik. He is currently entering a new phase of conceptual works, layering exotic veneers onto local woods before the turning process.

All the white ethnic groups of New Brunswick have included the crafts of fibre as part of their heritage. While the province possesses many craftspeople still practising in the traditional forms, many others are using fibre as a medium of artistic expression. Charlotte Glencross, trained as a fine art artist in Montreal at Sir George Williams College, was attracted to the potential of batik. Her considerable skills as a draughtswoman led her to develop a subtle form of wall-hanging in which her painterly use of multi-dying and the fine control of linear wax brought her recognition for her originality and technical expertise and she was included in several exhibitions and national collections. However, during a period of study with Adele Ilves, a master weaver teaching at the New Brunswick Craft School, she developed an overwhelming interest in woven fibre and transferred much of her production from surfacing to tapestry. Determined to develop her skills, she went for a year to Germany and France to learn a more disciplined approach to her craft. On her return she started to produce both tapestries and rugs, which are as suitable for walls as they are practical on floors. Glencross teaches and endeavours to keep up her production while creating works for galleries. Possessing a visual artist's sensitivity to colour and line, she is able to transfer these attributes to her work, and like Powning imbues her production items with the same sensibility that enables her to create a major wall-hanging.

It is perhaps a characteristic of contemporary New Brunswick craft that because of the geographic isolation from artistic centres, creativity at its best has an originality not associated with modish trends. Recently at the Salon des Métiers d'Art in Moncton, Danielle Ouelette exhibited a new series of works combining enamel, silk painting and fibre. Ouelette, after a career as a home economist with the government, opened a refreshing and lively craft store. Whilst on a buying tour she met Gabrielle Robichaud, a creative weaver with whom she began to study. Robichaud, who comes from a talented and artistic family, has for several years been experimenting with a stimulating variety of forms and techniques. Being self taught, Robichaud's creativity comes from both her technical experimentation as well as her artistic background. Ouelette, an eager student, rapidly developed her own personal vision using fibres as the inspiration. Her skills soon were recognised and she had works accepted into juried exhibitions and later was requested to prepare one-man shows. The recent works are minute, and the multi-media she uses with great finesse present delicate conflicts where silk becomes solid and enamelled copper is softened by colour. Freshness of colour is evident in her work, but she mutes Acadian chromatic exuberance while retaining the unusualness of its relationships.

The advent of Bicentennial in New Brunswick has produced for many creative people a stimulus to re-assess their heritage. Perhaps one of the most original and inventive statements of the old war horses of the province's history comes from silversmith Elma Johnston McKay. McKay applied for and received a Canada Council grant to produce a major suite of silver jewelry based on the lore and legends of New Brunswick. These nineteen pieces will be toured en suite within the province and will then be circulated to other centres.

McKay, as a New Brunswicker born and bred, has looked at her history and has created an exciting and fresh series primarily in silver with imbedments of other substances where appropriate. Most pieces have moveable parts and many contain hidden surprises which make a gently witty comment on several provincial sacred cows. Elma McKay during her career has developed great technical expertise in her handling of metal, and the discipline she has placed on herself in creating this concept has pushed her skills into a new dimension of development.

McKay's project is perhaps a most appropriate summation of the best of New Brunswick craft in 1984. The suite of work is expertly constructed and finished, it has a uniqueness and humour unaffected by outside influences, and it is based on tradition whilst being able to cut through the bonds which tradition often imposes.

New Brunswick considers its craftsmen a very important part of its culture, and it is not without significance that one of the five Prix de Mérite for artistic achievement, to be presented for the first time in 1984, will be given to a craftsman.