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Lise Robichaud
Ecrire l'avenir, 2002
Installation
Photo: G. Robichaud

CARAQUET, NB

VISUAL ACADIA!

FESTIVAL DES ARTS VISUELS EN ATLANTIQUE

4th–7th July, 2002

With a unique and ever changing cultural mix, Acadia maintains its persona in the gestures and sounds that embody everyday life there. The popularity of local cultural manifestations such as the *Festival des arts visuels en Atlantique*, held annually in Caraquet, New Brunswick, is not confined to the young, middle-aged or old—but involves *all the community*. This initiative, which began as *Caraquet en couleurs* in 1997 consists of a brief and intense summer celebration of Acadian culture. It includes workshops for young people, four major exhibitions, a francophone visual arts competition, an Acadian book launch, an art auction, as well as a professional arts show. There is even an *on site* restaurant with local cooking.

Le défi de création en direct brought together 19 professional artists: Carole Bherer, Michel Robichaud, Pauline Bujold, Dominique Cruchet, Alex Thériault, Frederick Avy and Antoine Thomas from France, Jacques Lantaigne, Alexandre Robichaud, Joan Cullen, Nathalie Daigle, Gilbert Leblanc, Gorges Goguen, Jocelyn Philibert, Rita Lamontagne, and Roger Vautour. Unveiled during the event, Caraquet sculptor Norbert Gionet's *Brise collective* (2001), a fibreglass and bronze commission depicting a maritime boat, figure and sea, is to be sited in Caraquet's Fédération des Caisse populaires acadiennes. Festival host Lise Robichaud's installation *Ecrire l'avenir*, with its flotilla of envelopes and image of hand writing alluded to time, place and memory, past, present and future. For the open competition this year, Lise Rocher won 1st prize for her

ceramic and steel sculpture *Homage to Jean-Paul Riopelle and Huguette, Marie Hélène Nardini's* Bagage Vital won 2nd prize and honorable mentions went to Gorges Goguen, Nathalie Daigle and Monique Côté. This year's *Festival des arts visuels en atlantique* proved to be a lively celebration of, by, and with, Acadian art, culture and identity.

John K. Grande

SACKVILLE, NB

I'D BE A FOOL

7TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM OF ART

Owens Art Gallery
49 York Street, Sackville, NB

Struts Gallery
7 Lorne Street, Sackville, NB

21–26 October 2002

This year marks the 7th annual international symposium of art in Sackville. Co-sponsored by Mount Allison University's Owens Art Gallery and the Struts Gallery, this year's

I'd be a Fool symposium is centred around performance art. Performance art is not new. It can certainly be dated to the Dada period during, and after, World War One and the *Happenings* of Allan Kaprow which date from 1959, but it is an art form that continues to be controversial and within that controversy lies its charm. The press release refers to *time-based art*... Doesn't all art exist in time? At least when this kind of art is bad and it is over, it disappears without a trace, unlike bad painting and sculpture which continues to haunt us. Performance art is documented, but documentation is a poor substitute for the real thing: being there is everything...

Music in performance art is often performed by non-musicians under the vague premise anyone with an artistic license is gifted. The results leave much to be desired, just like painting by actors. For the Sackville event music is being performed by *Motion Ensemble* under the solid stewardship of co-directors and professional musicians, Andrew Miller and D'Arcy Gray. This group has commissioned works by composers who include Atlantic Canadians James Code, Michael Miller and Alastair MacLean, and will be giving public workshops on the work of the American composer John Cage on October 18th, 19th and 20th. *Motion Ensemble* will lead off the symposium with a concert featuring works by composers associated with John Cage, including David Tudor.

Symposium events that will happen in and around Struts Gallery include the very interesting *Projet Mobiliture Bookmobile*. The project is a bookmobile housed in a specially designed twenty-six foot vintage Airstream trailer. It features artists books, hand-made magazines and other independent publications.

The trailer will be parked outside the gallery and project staff workshops on the publication of hand made books and magazines will take place. Based in Montreal and Philadelphia, *Projet Mobiliture* tours Canada and the United States, stopping at public libraries, community, senior and youth centres. The project seeks to demystify art by letting ordinary people in on the act.

Three events during the week at Struts: *DUORAMA*, performed by Toronto artists Ed Johnson and Paul Collard; a performance by Ontario artist, Shary Boyle titled *Honki-tonkioko*; and a piece by Vancouver artist Smart Bodies. These events may prove more challenging to the public than the bookmobile. *DUORAMA* addresses the ... relationships and the social and political reaction to various aspects of gay culture. It does so by having the performers, among other things, engage the architectural surroundings. Ms Boyle's performance combines drawing with country and western karaoke and, finally Smart Bodies will work with her audience to uncover areas of public surveillance by using readily available technology.

The symposium will wrap up Friday night (October 25th) with a lecture titled *Joseph Beuys Props for the Memory or Remembrances of Doing Wrong* by art writer and teacher Kristine Stiles from Duke University. Ms. Stiles is co-author, along with Peter Selz, of the reference *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Source Book of Artists Writings*. Her lecture will question Beuys's Nazi past and may assert Beuys was more of a good Nazi than he led people to believe during his life. In all, the symposium *I'd be a Fool* promises to be a busy week full of surprises. It is to the co-sponsors credit (The Owens Art Gallery & Struts Gallery) that this event occurs annually in Sackville and at Mount Allison University. Pots do need stirring every once in a while, if only to make sure we don't get too comfortable with our ideas about art and life.

Virgil Hammock



Andrew Chandler
Performance, 1988



Scott MacLeod
Taos Sunset, 2001
Oil on wood

MONTREAL

SCOTT MACLEOD

TAOS MEMORY SERIES

The Gallery at Victoria Hall
4626 Sherbrooke St. W.

Tel.: 989-5226

Sept. 5th–Oct. 2nd, 2002

Following on from his *Ancestral Homes* exhibition of Viking inspired works, held at the Swedish American Museum in Chicago, Scott MacLeod's *Taos Memory series*, on view in Montreal for the first time, were created in response to the New Mexico landscape he experienced during a summer residency at the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation in Taos, a place that has always attracted artists since, and before, the days of Georgia O'Keefe, Stieglitz, and Marsden Hartley. Painting out of doors, often with the sun at its decline, to better understand the New Mexico light and landscape, MacLeod wasn't really satisfied with the results.

A chance meeting with Townsend Ludington, the author of a biography on the American painter Marsden Hartley, evolved MacLeod's approach to painting the American desert landscape. As MacLeod states: "I was back in Montreal away from this place I had just begun to understand. Still interested in

producing works that reflected the area, I gave up on working from photographs and remembered Hartley's approach to his *Memory Series*. I then began to take on Hartley's process and paint the light, shapes, and lines of the New Mexican desert I had left behind." As a result, MacLeod developed a more acute eye for the qualities of local colour, the blue and purple light he had discovered while painting the *Sangre de Cristo Mountains* and desert mesa floor.

Scott MacLeod learned how to capture the essence of desert light the longer he painted there, but on his return to Montreal the real seeds of the *Taos Memory series* germinated into the celebration of the New Mexico landscape now on view at Victoria Hall in Westmount. Some of the paintings such as *The Ceremony series* (2002) constitute narrow vertical slices of the horizon reminiscent of Japanese calligraphic works. They are likewise suffused with the vibrant complimentary desert colours. The abstraction recalls California painter Richard Diebenkorn's work but the colours are deeper with saturated hues and soft light. Others paintings based on visits to various sites in New Mexico including Abiquiu, Ghost Ranch, Pilar, and the Rancho de Taos, where remnants of the old pueblo settlements can still be found. The overall impact is of light suffusing and diffusing, and of majestic natural landforms, the ever changing atmospheres of the desert landscape.

John K. Grande

HULL

VIKINGS

NORTH ATLANTIC SAGA

Canadian Museum of Civilization
100 Laurier Street

Tel.: 819-776-7000

1-800-555-5621

www.civilization.ca

May 8th–October 14th, 2002

On the shores of the Ottawa River at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Vikings have landed! More than 300 artifacts from nine countries from navigational instruments, to agricultural tools, wood and stone carvings, jewellery, armor, a whale-bone ironing board, and a scale model reproduction of the Viking Gokstad ship are here until October. Interestingly, a team of fifteen curators from museums around the world helped assemble this intricate weave of objects to bring an important part of North American and European history to the public.

Apparently, when evidence was discovered proving the Vikings had been in North America 500 years before Christopher Columbus, the Italians rioted in New York! The Vikings were pirates, and the loot they captured, some on view in Hull, evidences the range of territory they covered: a 6th century Buddha, a 10th century Irish cross, Ranvaig's 8th century copper and enameled casket from Scotland, ivory chess figures from the Isle of Lewis. Looking at the swords, with their intricate design and construction one can only be impressed by the high level of Viking blacksmith work. A carved limestone slab from 8th-9th century Gotland depicts a Viking ship carrying the dead warriors to the afterlife in Valhalla where, we can see, fighting and feasting continue to go on! A mini-section that will delight children and adults, shows the famous Viking helmets from an IKEA version, to the Minnesota Vikings. We discover they never had horned helmets, but the larger than life fiction lives on. An actual fragment of a 13th century long-ship sail (waterproofed with animal fat) from the Thule District of Greenland, a parchment (ca. 1400) of the famous Egil Saga, a 13th century Baffin Island Innu carving of a European, and a full scale replica of the Jelling Runestone (ca. 965) are among the fascinating Viking documents and relics on view. Worth a visit!

John K. Grande



Gokstad Ship Model
Museum of National Antiquities
Stockholm
Photo: Christer Ahlin

OTTAWA

KENOJUAK

PRINTS

National Gallery of Canada
380 Sussex Dr.

Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9N4

Tel.: 613-990-1985

www.national.gallery.ca

April 5th–October 20th, 2002

This 40 year overview of Kenojuak's art and life is a well kept secret. While some of these images now look stereotypical, others (mostly the earlier work from the 1960s and 1970s) are animated and full of life. The 1962 work titled *Birds* has an incredible winged animal (even Mickey Mouse-like) better than any Disney animator could conceive of. They display Kenojuak's almost organic skill at merging line, colour and image to present an unconscious cosmology, something Saumik (James Houston) recognized and encouraged early on. Why is Kenojuak never presented as a contemporary Canadian artist?

The famous Kenojuak print *The Enchanted Owl* (cut by Iyola King-watsiuk & printed by Eegvudluk Pootogook in 1960) is an icon of Canadian art... that eventually became a postage stamp! Kenojuak images have penetrated Canadian households as poster images, but not enough has been said about the aesthetic of Kenojuak's art. Maybe there has been too much Cape Dorset print production without serious critical input into the content and style (something that could help their art to evolve and grow). This mini-retrospective of Kenojuak's art does not remedy the sorry state of the art in the print co-ops and the Innu art exchanges. A lot Innu art is stereotypical and too self-conscious of what sells and what does not. Lucy Tasseor-Tutsweetok and Nick Sikkuark are two notable exceptions to the rule, and there is always new talent, but it needs to be recognized and supported!

Surprising images surface, like Kenojuak's first earliest print, *Rabbit Eating Seaweed* (1958), based on a design from a sealskin bag she made in the early 1950s. These early prints, and the drawings in particular, are imaginative, and with a sensitive use of line and texture that highlights the inner world and cosmology of Innu culture. We would like to see more such work, but sadly, technique of



Kenojuak Ashevak
The Enchanted Owl, 1960
 Stonecut in red, blue
 and black on laid paper
 61.0 x 66.1 cm
 Collection: National Gallery of Canada

manufacture has come to dominate the Innu print world like it has the non-Innu art world, at the expense of an aesthetic or cultural worldview (it must be there somewhere). As Kenojuak commented in conversation with Jean Blodgett in 1980: "I just take these things out of my thoughts, and out of my imagination, and I don't really give any weight to the idea of its being an image of something."

John K. Grande

TOM THOMSON

National Gallery of Canada
 380 Sussex Dr.
 Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9N4
 Tel.: 613-990-1985
<http://national.gallery.ca>
 June 7th–Sept. 8th, 2002

Vancouver Art Gallery
 750 Hornby
 Vancouver, BC V6Z 2H7
 Tel.: 604-662-4700
www.vanartgallery.bc.ca
 October 5th, 2002–January 5th, 2003

Tom Thomson is, along with Emily Carr, one of Canada's most salient and immovable myths, when it comes to Can-Culture. His art has been examined under the microscope and copied by thousands of Canadian Sunday painters, and art school students. Thomson's rustic "studio/cabin" has been moved from the unlikely setting of Toronto to the grounds of the McMichael Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario where school busloads of students come each year to marvel at and re-discover this myth, ..., or play frisbee or football in the ravine.... The

book that immortalized Thomson for my generation was *The Silence and the Storm*, co-authored by David Silcox and the Toronto artist Harold Town. The focus there wasn't on the elaborately hewed brush and palette "masterpieces" like *Northern River* (1914-15) or *The Jack Pine* (1916-17) but the brief, flighty, light and colour capturing sketches Tom made camping or canoeing in the woods at Algonquin Park, at Dr. MacCallum's cottage (whose walls were brought from Go Home Bay to Ottawa and are now on permanent exhibit in the National Gallery of Canada).

This fresh assessment of Tom Thomson's life and art involved a lot of collaboration; the scholars include Charles C. Hill (NGC), Dennis Reid (AGO), Andrew Hunter, Sandra-Webster Cook, Anne Ruggles and that great popularizer of Thomson Joan Murray, among others. Looking through the show, and seeing the early Victorian-influenced dark and



Tom Thomson
A Northern Lake, 1912
 Oil on paperboard
 Collection: Camp Tanamakoon, Algonquin

gloomy landscapes with your own eyes, you can't help but think how dark those windowless prospectors' and settlers' cabins really were in the 19th century. Tom Thomson's incredible gift as a draftsman and commercial designer shines through in the ephemera such as posters, ink studies and the like in this Tom Thomson show. (Group of Seven members likewise worked in commercial design at Grip in Toronto, others at Brigdens, etc.) Was it the level of abstraction, chaos and depth Thomson experienced in the Canadian wilderness forests that influenced his choice of format, line, depth, and design when painting on large canvases? The contrast between being on your knees in a canoe or ranged on benches working in a design office must have been edifying... Of course, there was the love affair that was never consummated, and Joyce Wieland's film tribute *The Far Shore*, an offshoot of the days of Canada's nationalist Waffle party and maybe CAR... and the eternal question that persists.... Was he killed in his canoe or was it an accident? Tom Thomson is a show to see, particularly as Canada's lonely and stoic cultural icons are increasingly threatened by the *Hollywoodization* of just about everything! Joan Murray's compilation of Thomson's letters in the show's catalogue publication are a *fait accompli*. They shed new light on the social side of Thomson's life. Its Thomson's brushwork, colour and design sense. His sketches are as alive as when they were painted, before and during the Great War.

John K. Grande

TORONTO

KARILEE FUGLEM...

WATER DRAWINGS

Leo Kamen Gallery
 Suite 406, 80 Spadina Avenue
 Tel.: 416-504-9515
r.holt-kamen@sympatico.ca

Karilee Fuglem continues to explore aspects of the ephemeral with her new *Water Drawing* series on view at Leo Kamen Gallery. Best known for the *Breathing Wall* she exhibited at CIAC's first Montreal Biennale in 1998, Fuglem has recently experimented with the colourless medium of water, brushing it directly onto tracing paper. The first results were exhibited in a show titled *Someday Soon You Will Stop Searching for Meaning* at Pierre-Francois Ouellette Art Contemporain this past May along with an installation titled *Secret Visibility*. The installation had



Karilee Fuglem
Water Drawing #

thousands of clear acetate disks attached in clusters onto the gallery walls. Activated by fans intermittently they moved mysteriously and poetically...

More recently, the volatile nature of tracing paper has caused Fuglem to use vellum. Approximately 10 new works in varying dimensions are on view at Leo Kamen Gallery. The *Water Drawings* involve making circles or ovals onto paper, to then let the paper dry and repeat the actions again. The result is fascinating, and a purely physical response to the action of water on paper patterns. Fuglem's physical and material interactive art recalls Andy Goldsworthy experiments placing reddish Morecambe Bay stone into large snowballs from 1992 that, when it melted onto paper made arbitrary forms of varying colour densities. Fuglem's *Water Drawings* likewise mirror nature's sensitive and often invisible, ever changing chaos.

Drawing with water and delving into the dynamics of nature, Karilee Fuglem surprises us yet again with the subtlety of her art. Letting go or controlling the brushwork determines how the work evolves. With or without your magnifying glass, whether investigating the microcosm or the macrocosm, Fuglem's *Water Drawings* are a must see!

John K. Grande

SASKATOON

QU'APPELLE:

TALES OF TWO VALLEYS

The Mendel Art Gallery
 950 Spadina Crescent East
 P.O. Box 569 Saskatoon
 Saskatchewan S7K 3L6
 Tel.: (306) 975-7610

June 14th–September 2nd, 2002

Qu'Appelle: Tales of Two Valleys, the Mendel's programming centrepiece for 2002, considers Saskatchewan's most famous valley

from multiple historical, social, industrial, spiritual, visual, textual, even medical points of view. More than an exhibition, this multi-media event includes two art shows and a well-designed and informative website (<http://quappelle.mendel.ca/exhibition/>) that includes histories; school projects; recollections, comments, and filmed interviews and slide shows from writers, artists, and Piapot elder, Beatrice Lavalie; and a very cool virtual tour of the shows. The gallery has arranged on-site and outreach educational programs and a two-volume exhibition catalogue.

The historical art survey, co-curated by Robert Stacey and Dan Ring, is a collage of paintings from the 1840s to the present. There are dozens of big and little scenes and portraits, mostly hung salon-style, by C.W. Jefferys, Inglis Sheldon-Williams, Nicholas de Grandmaison, Ernest Lindner, and others. Many are little known varnished, muddy views, or brighter confections. They reveal an imported Romantic gaze that refigures both the original inhabitants and "grandure" of this modest little valley to suit the needs of recent colonizers. Pity the immigrating farmer who judges the whole of southern Saskatchewan from these oasis pictures. But there are also some sensitive surprises from early and mid-20th century by artists such as Illingworth Kerr who seems to be searching for something of the place itself, or for something of himself in this place.

The works by contemporary artists are familiar but, in this context, enlightening. The views range from modernist documentaries by Gregory Hardy, Dorothy Knowles, Landon Mackenzie, etc., to attempts to evoke the hidden lived meanings of the valley: Bob Boyer and, especially, Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak's crowded video installation, *Blood Records*, which examines the "Fort San" tuberculosis sanatorium.

Exceptional and thorough though it is, *Qu'Appelle: Tales of Two Valleys* is too much of too little. It is a museum squeezed into a temporary art exhibition. It is like thumbing through the images of a well-illustrated history book. The glimpses are dutiful to an inclusive project but are partial and tantalizing.

However, this is significantly remedied by the collection of Edward Poitras' 20 year contemplation of the valley. Unlike the survey show, we get to see an artist's more complete essay. Poitras (who represented Canada at the 1995 Venice Biennale, and is the most recent recipient of the Governor General's Award in Vi-

sual and Media Arts), offers a resident's perspective, but it is a native experience filtered through an international caliber art practice. Poitras offers complex challenges, not souvenirs.

Broken is a wooden replica of the Fort Qu'Appelle stone obelisk that marks the Treaty Four signing. Poitras' version commemorates broken treaty promises; it is a symbolic deconstruction and reclamation (the structure is fitted with Bison horns); and the translation from stone phallus to dismembered wood is a funny revenge wish.

Residential Girls (2002) has 62 framed photographs of Aboriginal girls lined up on a shelf that passes through a white wall. The photos were rescued from a residential school group picture. While the assembly line suggests the regulation of Indian bodies by the combined institutions of religion and school, Poitras' salvaging and separating of the individuals from the group asserts the fact that these people are individuals. Their passage through the white wall (if they conform) is a more indelible description of assimilation than any book on the subject.

Because he is Métis, Poitras is both a physical and cultural site of the mixing of the cultures that inhabit the valley. This unique in-between and amongness is reflected in thoughtful and witty work that tends to interrogate, underline ironies and express ambivalence rather than simply record and denounce or celebrate.

Finally, while this provocative exhibition is eager to be exhaustive, inclusive and generally fair-minded to the many views of this valley, it is puzzling that the title, *Tales of Two Valleys*, insists on inscribing a division between dominant culture and First Nations. There is one valley and many, not just two.

David Garneau

VICTORIA, B.C.

RON NOGANOSH

IT TAKES TIME

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
1040 Moss Street
Victoria, B.C. V8V 4P1

Tel: 250-384-4101

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July 12th–Sept. 22nd, 2002

Cecilia looked at him with horror, and then, to his shock, she threw herself from the fast-moving car. The whiskey was clouding his mind, so it took him a long time to realize what had happened and

stop the car. He hurriedly put the car in reverse and sped backwards to find her and see if she was injured. The rear of the car bounced upwards and with a terrifying scream of anguish he realized what he had done. At the trial they said that he had pushed her from the car and then had deliberately backed over her. They said that he had had too much to drink and didn't know what he was doing, and that instead of sending him to jail they were recommending that he go to the hospital for a while... The narrative above refers to the experience of growing up Native on a reserve in rural Ontario, on or around 1956 and is an excerpt from *Anon Among Us* written by Ron Noganosh.

The issues of identity and displacement embedded in this text echo the complicated, unresolved histories shared by the original people and the dominant culture, descendants of the the New World "discovered" by Columbus. Within this discourse of difference, the sculptures and installations of senior Ojibway artist, Ron Noganosh, hover with honesty and eloquence. Since the 1980's, his work has addressed the concerns any contemporary Native community struggles with in defining itself.

Using the shield as a cultural icon Noganosh began to deconstruct its form. When asked what a shield might represent to an Amerindian, his response was, "alcohol." Inspired by a drinking binge, Noganosh's first shield was named *Shield for a Modern Warrior, or Concession to Beads and Feathers in Indian Art*, (1983). This quick, dark, wit informs much of his shield production. *Shield For a Yuppie Warrior*, (1991) pairs hide, fur, beads, and bone (Indian artifacts) with silk fabric and a designer label (consumer artifacts). A similar critical edge is established in *That's All It Costs*, a shield that juxtaposes a Hudson Bay blanket with a shredded American flag. Tiny Dollar Store trinkets—a deer, a teddy bear holding a Canadian flag, an Indian in regalia, dangle informally from the fabric. Two earlier works, *Bee That As It May*, (1998), and *Turtle Shield*, (1996), are meditations on the ephemerality of nature. Invested with irony and humour, Ron Noganosh's sculptures are spare and beautiful.

Innu, (1990), pairs a trio of toy fighter jets with a Big Horn sheep's antler. Similar elements are echoed in an adjacent work, *Where the Buffalo Roam Where the Deer and Antelope Play*, (1991). This sculpture elicits a somber response because Noganosh tells us, through

metaphor, what we know is true: deforestation and clear-cut logging practices are destroying our environment. Miniature animals and fighter jets, antlers, chain saw blades and a dead tree trunk form a visual narrative integral to the sculpture's meaning and prove how Noganosh knows how to manipulate objects and the relationships they bear to one another. Massey Harris (1985) relies on a similar semiotic format (of signs and signifiers) to deliver its political punch, while *Skraeling* (1994) whose title is the Viking word for Native People activates the space with its dramatic structure.

Noganosh's 1999 video installation, *Anon Among Us* is a moving eulogy to twenty-six of Noganosh's family who have died violent deaths, often due to alcohol. Their names are projected on the wall behind a crude grave site consisting of a mound of dirt and a wooden cross. The piece bears witness to an endemic situation of neglect in a country where national pride is dismissive of its original people. Now on view at The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria *Ron Noganosh: It Takes Time* is co-sponsored by The Ottawa Art Gallery and The Woodland Cultural centre in Brantford, Ontario.

Linda Giles



Ron Noganosh