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Images of Canada: Canadian bank notes
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Images of Canada: Canadian Bank Notes

by Laura Millard

"The nature of our government, our bilingual heritage and the diversity of Canada's geography and wildlife are emphasized by the portraits, legends, landscapes, birds and national symbols which appear on every bank note."

This quotation from the display text in the "Paper Money" exhibition at the Currency Museum in Ottawa states that aspects of our 'nature' as Canadians are emphasized through the appearance of our bank notes and suggests that every note provides a cryptic combination of elements which signify 'Canada'. The text goes on to say, "Bank notes are worth getting to know better - not only because of their value but because of the fascinating secrets they have to tell." The key for unlocking these secrets, however, is not provided by official texts.

Just as our nature as Canadians apparently 'appears' to us on our bank notes, the bank note imagery itself seems to 'appear' through a conjuring act which is unfettered by accompanying explanations. The routes taken which lead to the specific images selected are not marked. The official literature does not discuss the process through which it is decided how Canada is portrayed, but states simply that Canada is portrayed. Clues to the nature of this portrayal, to the identity of this Canada, spring from the hope that a picture is indeed worth a thousand words and that an analysis of the Bank of Canada's bank note imagery from its first issue to the present will provide these clues.

The history of the Bank of Canada's control over note design begins in 1915 when it struggled for sole right to issue notes. Provincial governments and chartered banks had previously issued their own. The issue then, as now, was security and control and the newly founded Bank claimed to be better able to control counterfeiting. It set out to improve printing technology so that increasingly intricate designs could be issued to ensure its claim. The Bank of Canada pursues this endeavour to this day. Unlike the tradition of American paper currency which has not deviated from its "green-back," Canadian bank notes have undergone numerous design and imagery changes.

Through a self-propelled flurry of continuing improvement, set in motion by the initial rush to prove itself to angry provincial governments and banks, the Bank of Canada now claims to have arrived at the forefront of currency design. A line is devoted to each press release to the fact that counterfeiting is not a problem in Canada, nor has it been for years. Regardless, the Bank of Canada maintains a program of deterring counterfeiting.

The pursuit of the technologically more advanced note is the rationale behind the almost constant changes and plans to change our bank note design. An example of this can be seen in the creation of the new optical security device (OSD). According to a Bank of Canada press release of 1989, "Canadians can be justly proud of this technological breakthrough, which puts Canadian notes a good step ahead of advanced copying and printing techniques. Canada does not have a counterfeiting problem and the OSD will help to make sure it stays that way."

What "fascinating secret" might this aspect of bank note design tell us? The preoccupation it
suggests with security, control and the law, is met with the relentless pursuit of a technology that will ensure the maintenance of that preoccupation, in spite of the fact that there are no real threats or enemies to protect against. Compare this with the situation in the United States which have, according to the Currency Museum's employees, the most counterfeited currency in the world, and yet employ design technology equivalent to what ours was in

1935. Perhaps the American government is just less inclined to interrupt the cash flow of its spirited entrepreneurs, but more certainly it shows that country's own preoccupation with its history and the tradition of its "green-back."

Beginning with its first issue in 1935, which was issued in separate French and English versions, the images presented on both versions were as follows:

$2.00 bill: "Harvest allegory: Seated female with agricultural products."

$5.00 bill: "Electric Power allegory: Seated male with symbols of electricity."

$10.00 bill: "Transportation allegory: Mercury with ship, train and plane."

$20.00 bill: "Tobacco allegory: Seated male exhibiting the produce of the field to the Spirit of Agriculture."

$50.00 bill: "Modern Inventions allegory: Seated female with symbols of radio broadcasting."

$100.00 bill: "Commerce and Industry allegory: Seated male showing ship to child, harbour scene and blustery 


The same images were used on the following 1937 bilingual issue. When I first saw these images I was taken aback by how foreign they appear, slightly European but predominantly American. The promise, the optimism and the reassurance offered by the supernatural beings portrayed are not aspects of the nature of Canada as I understand it. Portrayed in these bank notes is what Galie McGregor, in The Waucosta Syndrome, Explorations in Canadian Landscape, describes as the American colonist's experience of the New World environment: "Under the influence of the millennial expectations of the 17th century, the early American colonist, borrowing concepts from scriptural explication, tended to interpret the empirical environment predominantly in terms of signs or types of supernatural events."

Through this association, "the entire world would become charged with cosmic significance and every human life was seen as part of a cosmic conflict between the forces of Good and Evil."

The landscapes in these images have been won over by Good. The landscape is set in the distance and poses no threat, only the promise of space fully inhabitable and hospitable. It is almost

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Border/Lines 28
Chippoke Na Gomi

by Mishia

It is raining sand and dirt. It is blisters in driver's seats and clouds and the ham of his charm. The red bricks of the station platform split as he heads forward to catch each of his connection.

His leather bellies fell at his feet like two black leopards. He grunts their collars and drags them crossing the grate floor.

He frowns, training with the luggage. It grows heavier with every mile.

He focuses on a shadow etched against the wall. It is a shadow of a missing person bent over in thought.

The shadow of an elegant woman in a soft sable coat. The coverall has a flame colored zander patch on the shoulder. She is leaning forward with her elbows on her knees. Her head is down and her hands are lightly held in interlocking fingers. When he blinks she is all flat again, like a shadow.

He sprints the bags over to the bench and sits down. He brakes the windmill off his feet and stands up. The sun slides through an opening in the cloud.

Small strings of dust float from the ceiling toward the floor.

He sobs.

A brown bocino bounces across the tile floor. He turns and sees a tattered desolate ragtag out of the door. From him rage unraveled and fell into the depths of the station. The sable bottle pulls in the hand along with the pocket beneath the bench. A huge column of purple and orange flame is rising, royally, double-spaced, and perfect only on one side of the manuscript page. Rampie is not responsible for the terms of scars or photographs. Coins like time are available and when you have found a photo from publication. The authors are responsible for the terms of which appear in this supplement, but any opinions expressed by the authors are solely their own. All copyrights remain the contributing authors.

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**EDITORIAL:**

This is the first Rampie Literary Supplement to appear anywhere. In the spirit of cooperation, Borderlines magazine has generously invited Rampie to include a literary supplement within its pages on a semi-regular basis. This current edition includes a range of works by writers and artists from across North America. In future, we will expand our horizons and continue our policy of publishing the new and the authoritative in recent art and writing by writers and artists from around the world. The Rampie Literary Supplement will continue the tradition of Rampie magazine which has an on-going policy of seeking out modes of expression that are inventive in structure and function. Upcoming supplements will include interviews with writers and artists, and will feature a range of texts & images by authors, visual artists, performance artists, and theoreticians. In the coming year, the Rampie/Borderlines Literary Supplement will inculcate in a polyphony of voices, a ram-bluer-border- line-que that lies beyond the inspected, rejected, expected, and disconnected. Rampie is regularly employed as the subjective, the gene- bending and the heretofore, unknown. As editors of this modest first edition, we look forward to this new forum. We thank our steady readers for their on-going support in the past, and we welcome all new readers to these pages!

Two Poems
by John Donlan

The Me
I'm not hip here.
I can never get enough credentials!
Don't take yourself for too real.
Easier to carry a frog than a snake.
All those looking for a short-term relationship
raise your right paw.
Eyeshine, ardent talk, shimmer and pop
self, bubbleshell between
nature and nature.
Flying out of our skins, we
sparks rush into the gap left by John Clare.
TV vampire romance queen reclines
on bourgeois icon,
time-sharing memory, will, sense
for the effect of simultaneity,
life-based thinking...
Forget who's watching
secret raccoons wash and out.
Repeat No Voice, No voice, walking through
unimproved land.

Just Do It
This was Zhou En-lai's cot, with its worn blanket -
early all he owned.
He was part of the new style, the new
attitude they called reckoning with death.
He aimed to violate some principles,
firmly held beliefs that look so different from the back.
Let's empty just one day of content, let's
dump its time out and waste it.
Martha I'm mourning,
painting the sacred book black.
Even grief has its utility,
plastic, motion, raging at the shapes
imposed on it by its handler.
They burn us, and we burn back, until the bars
between the crowd and the caged crazy animal
are gone at last. Symbols of old order
go next, and then the long forging begins
again, those chains of chilling generations.
Some of us by the stove were missed out. Water boads
racing over the iron: where do they go?
Riddle in Silk
g by Yves Troendle

A young woman parts the crimson velvet drapes and tiptoes into an ornate but deserted drawing room. Except that now she’s standing in it. She looks around, which is very French. A maid’s lazy cap is perched atop her weav of dark hair. Silk stockings give a magical sheen to her shapely legs. Placed, as she is, on an unoccupied armchair. The story is mainly about these stockings, though they’re artfully introduced as incidental. They were sent by a pilot, Mike Tramper, from Cuba to this place, the palatial home of Ralph Vallerie, a deep-voiced, silver-haired man who radiates wealth and distinction. Enable a can, etched knifing, diamond-studded from the certainty, flesh seems a thudder. Vallerie, you see, did Mike to develop long-range photography in the lowest air lines above the Caribbean. Mike had a top-notch collection of sky maps. Down the corridors of corner, doors are numbedless. While scurrying down the marble hallway, the maid glimpsed a man’s swarthy face in a painting mirror. Or rim. mir to x x im.

Now she’s haunted by the fear that he glimpsed her own!

You mean a plane flying over enemy territory could map their location and beam images back to headquarters? A deathly quiet, except for the maid’s frightened panting, and rain thwarting on the windows. You could almost hold the room in your hands, like a box filled with magic light. The pretty maid’s lips are vivid scarlet, her face dead-white—chill with terror. There is a telephone on a carved oak desk. The desk, with gilt griffon feet, and hiding tiny compartments, comes from successively older masons (counting backward), the telephone comes from a factory and sauce and spices attract lightning, just as a needle does electrical fire. Vallerie, the maid, walks briskly up to it. Exactly. And Mike did, too! He promised to send the accent in code, but all he got was… silken stockings from Havana! Vallerie unhooked it furtively. After drinking scotch, the men in cigars. Lahry-ty and his hand down spiked, slap jasmine, grip the balustrade. *Ehlo. Important. I want to police!”

But before Mike could send an explanation under separate cover, he was down somewhere over the Gulf—killed by agents of a war-like power. The last postcard he sent showed an orange sky, and sounded like a distant foghorn. Images flicker, memory shadows, depart by the light of his shirt. So it was up to Vallerie to figure out how the secret message was encoded in the silk. He walked up cold marble steps, leaving prints in the dew. Hold still so I can scribble all over you. He asked his niece, the gorgeous Dorthea, to wear them.

The perfect place to hide an invisible message—for all eyes to see! First of many paradoxes. All goals of desire. We gaze her into life. Her whiteness is barely audible. And nobody repeats. The various brash fixtures on the telephone reflect the electric bulbs that light the room. And silver lightning shadows in the polish of the oak desk-top. Nuttine spins around and clutches edge of the desk, her kimono tumbles white, but seen nothing.

And, standing by this very desk, Dorthea Vallerie will soon be telling Scott Ely, private investigator, that after drinking down some strangely bitter-tasting scotch in her room that evening, she’d fainted. Satin, silk, coliseum, kim, red dust, his ornaments. Now all Nuttine can hear is the pulse of blood in her ear. Dorthea recovered her senses—and legs; upright with a gasp! Nuttine glances behind the desk, and gasp! Someone had removed Dorthea’s slippers—and her garters were unknown! The telephone wire is slashed! Those stockings sealed the difference between peace and war on the Continent! Then the room is plunged into utter darkness.

Nuttine can only see vague gray and yellow shapes swimming in the black. Darkness apprehends her. This excites the rest of her. Looking, after all, requires a little of the infared-land’s ghastly gloom, her legs will be suddenly covered with brilliant diagrams of the glimpses, arranged in sinuous rows.

All those years, and now this ring. The sea charming and churning in dark harps. Break the body into webs that may erupt whole when someone further engaged. The carved oak and brass clock on the mantel indicates the time. Late train, hired blue, such is what it is, or anyway, faces glass told. Exactly 11:17. motifs, the dark and moving, hurried steps and anxious voices can be heard coming down the hallway. Gazing at the legs while Bricklely holds the lamp aloft, each person will be weary a shock of recognition. The lenses of Ralph Vallerie’s glasses will reflect the glimpses in bright inverted miniature. Someone just outside citikina, “Pray to God we’re not too late!” as the brass knobs turn.

Rose World

by Edward Mycuce

(For Donna M. Lane, inspired by her own story, STUCK, published Apr. 19, 1985 in the Sunday San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle *I'm age* magazine, pp.20-23).

Carthets

- cellphone phones

the rough

b eating

B books

in the work of removal.

- thin paper crust

under an electronic core can interface you read the data on, and then recycle it—

songs, drawings, stories, teareful memories...

- cursive memory patterns

in huge computer databases reduce to one small chip or grain

like phantom hair that riches where the hair had been

but all, feeling and unfeeling, are added, squeezed, stung

by fate furlonging under the rose bush in the form of a bent, used hypodermic needle wrapped in a newspaper

- some pinata paper balloon

surrounding a virus hard grenade.
The Spacious Chambers of Her Heart
by Diane Schoemperlen

"The heart, in the adult, measures five inches in length, three and one half inches in breadth, and a half in thickness. The prevalent weight, in the male, varies from ten to twelve ounces; in the female, from eight to ten: its proportions to the body being as 1 to 169 in males; 1 to 149 in females. The heart continues increasing in weight, and also in length, breadth, and thickness, up to an advanced period in life.

GRAY'S ANATOMY, 1901 EDITION

Evangeline Clark loved four things, and four things only. Her heart having only four chambers, spacious though they might be, she had limited herself to loving four things.

First there was music.

"The Right Atrium is a little larger than the left, its walls somewhat thinner, measuring about one line; and its cavity is capable of containing about two ounces."

This love she learned from and shared with her mother who was a pianist, long dead now but still an inspiration to Evangeline. The home of her childhood was always filled with music, her mother at the piano all morning and all afternoon. The meals were slapdash, the house was a mess, but always the air in the cluttered stuffy rooms was saturated with beauty and truth and just plain joy. Sometimes when she had insomnia due to the weight of the world on her slender shoulders, her mother would play Mendelssohn's Songs Without Words in the middle of the night and the sound would come gently to Evangeline safe in her little bed, the high notes sprinkling around her like confetti, the low notes like an August downpour, quarter-sized raindrops on warm asphalt.

At the crucial moment of her life, when she might have become a concert pianist, her mother had become instead her mother. For that was how things were done in those days, one or the other, not both, multiple loves in those days being deemed mutually exclusive. Regret and resentment, like infidelity, were not acceptable maternal manifestations. For this, Evangeline was grateful.

Although she had no musical talent of her own and so had never learned to play any instrument, Evangeline kept the air in her house too always filled with music, any kind of music. There was country and western for her, rock and roll for dancing, jazz for the nerves, blues for the blues, and classical for catharsis. And especially there was Mendelssohn for the middle of the night, to smooth the wrinkles out of the weight of the world.

Secondly there was colour.

"The Right Ventricle is triangular in form, and extends from the right auricle to near the apex of the heart. Its anterior or upper surface is rounded and convex, and forms the larger part of the front of the heart... The walls of the right ventricle are thinner than those of the left, the proportion between them being as 1 to 3... The cavity equals in size that of the left ventricle, and is capable of containing about three fluid ounces."

This love she was learning from and sharing with her husband, who was a painter, a very good painter whose vivid larger-than-life canvases were shown all over the continent. "Brilliant" and "electric" were the words most often applied by the critics, used indiscriminately, it seemed, to describe both the man himself and his provocative and penetrating use of colour. Her husband was indeed a brilliant and electric man, a volatile over-stimulated genius who was always painting in his studio or wanting to. Evangeline quickly discovered that most of the manoeuvres and mechanicals of daily life struck him as mundane, if not a downright waste of time. From him she learned that all things, animal, vegetable or mineral (also plastic, polyester or nylon), were intrinsically important not because of function but because of colour, which is all the naked eye naturally cares about anyway. He spent a lot of time mixing colours, trying to create the true green of grass, the true blue of sky, the true red of blood, and the true iridescent colour of the sun, which was not yellow at all, though he had all been tricked from an early age into believing that it was. This search for the true colour of everything was, he said, like trying to create life in a test tube. But what is life, what is truth, what is the colour of your breath in the summer, what is the true colour of flesh?

Although she had no artistic talent of her own and had never painted a painting or anything, Evangeline took great pains to keep her house (his house, their house) full of colour. She had a stained glass window installed in the bathroom so that her husband's naked body (also his naked eye) would glow like an illuminated prism in the shower. This calmed him down considerably because any form of clarity (plain glass, cellophane, Saran Wrap, or water) tormented him unreasonably because it was unsatisfactory. She was careful to dress herself in bright colours, yellow scarf, green blouse, blue skirt, red tights, purple shoes, because clearly her husband adored her when she appeared before him like this, with the bands of colour encircling her body like a rainbow or pretty ribbons, like wondrous bandages from her head to her toes.

Every morning her husband sat in his blue shirt at the breakfast table, surrounded by the still life she had so carefully arranged: the yellow egg yolks, the red jam, the brown coffee, the purple lilacs on the windowsill, his red lips, white teeth, chewing and smiling. And while he admired the orange juice shot through with sunlight, Evangeline was left breathless and intoxicated with the pleasure of her own power. Of course she didn't put it to her husband that way. Instead she said she was smiling because she was happy.
"The Left Atricle is rather smaller than the right; its walls thicker, measuring about one line and a half; it consists, like the right, of two parts, a principal cavity, or sinus, and an appendage auriculae."

This love had come to her of its own volition, right out of the blue (long before she'd married and discovered the meanings and messages of sky blue, the wild blue yonder or any other mutation of blueness). This love she was sharing with and passing on (she hoped) to her son who was just learning to read. He followed her around asking, "What does this say? What does that say?" For every room, when you looked at that way, was filled with the printed word. Besides all the books which covered every flat surface, there were corned boxes, labelled cases, shampoo bottles, toothpaste tubes, postcards and notes to herself stuck on the fridge, all of these covered with instructions, ingredients, reminders, names and warnings. He came home from school with little books which she read to him every evening after supper. She nearly wept with happiness when he learned to pick out words by himself: "the, you, go, no, pop, hop, hop, on pop". She printed out lists of rhyming words like: "book, hook, look, rook, rock, crook, shuck," and they hugged each other with excitement. When she thought about all the words in the language, she had to marvel at the miracle of anyone ever learning to read in the first place. They were all geniuses, when you looked at it that way.

Although she had no literary talent of her own and so had never written a story, a novel, not even a poem, Evangeline kept the whole house full of books. There were bookcases in every single room, even the bathroom. The books were stuffed and the house was a colourful mess, because when Evangeline was not changing the music or arranging the new purple and turquoise jewel-tone towels in the bathroom, she was reading. She had a special little bookstand which she carried around the house with her so she could read while she cooked, while she ate, while she did the dishes, vacuumed, washed the colourful floors. Often she went to bed with a headache (and so had to say to her husband, "Not tonight dear, I've got a headache") caused no doubt by eyestrain. But she preferred to think, in her more whimsical moments, that it was caused by the weight of all the words she'd jammed into her brain, all of them in there whirling and twirling, doing magic tricks and juggling for position. Some words were better than others, she knew that by now. All words were not created equal. All words were more than the sum of their parts. A word like "wilder" was better than either "with" or "her", for instance. "Holocaust" was better than either "ruin" or "fire". "Synergy" was better than either "sin" or "energy". Something was better than nothing. Her over-stimulated husband usually grunted and suggested Aspirin or therapy but she said she'd rather suffer.

Finally there was light.

"The Left Ventricle is longer and more conical in shape than the right ventricle, and on transverse sections its cavity presents an oval or nearly circular outline. It forms a small part of the posterior surface of the heart, and a considerable part of its posterior surface. It also forms the apex of the heart by its projection beyond the right ventricle. Its walls are much thicker than those of the right side, the proportion being as 3 to 1. They are thinnest opposite the widest part of the ventricle, becoming gradually thinner toward the base, and also toward the apex, which is the thinnest part."

This was her secret love which she had learned from and shared only with herself. For years she had carried it on privately, in love with the muffled Pacific light of the bedroom in the morning when it had snowed overnight. Or the amiable pink light of a clear summer morning (which she refused to believe, as her husband warned, was really a result of all the pollution in the dying air). Or the fast-fading light of a mid-winter late afternoon which made her legs go weak with lassitude. Or the garish lurid light of a Rabooyean sunset, a cliché certainly, but thrilling and unforgettable nonetheless. Or the spring sunbeams on the kitchen floor which her son, as a baby, had liked to sit and smile in like a little Buddha on the green linoleum.

All of these explicit and unconditional lights she had recorded, not with her naked eye, but rather with her naked heart which, she imagined, operated much like a primitive camera, a pinhole in the centre through which the illuminated images were funnelled and then amplified.

As she grew older, her heart was growing heavier (also longer, wider, thicker) and this spot of light was growing too. This process did not require talent. It only required patience and the imponderable passage of time. Right now, she figured, it was about the size of a regular incandescent light bulb, sixty or maybe a hundred watts. Soon it would be the size of a spotlight, a perfectly circular beam of lucidity. It would mutate then to a strobe-light, rendering all motion robotic and frenetic. From there it would transform itself into a searchlight, its radiant beacon searching out the secret corners of everything. Next it would stop moving altogether and expand smoothly to the size of a floodlight, washing away all colour and confusion within its vast range.

Finally the light of her life would achieve its apex, expanding inexorably and infinitely to illuminate all the spacious chambers of her heart.
The Two Gentle Ladies from K-Mart
by M.A.C. Farrant

I'm in the basement coffee room at K-Mart, the downtown store. I came in here looking for cheap dish towels and the two women in charge of household items told me to wait in here, in their coffee room, a small dingy room located somewhere in the basement of the building.

There's some cold pizza in a box on the coffee table and they suggested that I might like to help myself to some or make myself some instant coffee if I get thirsty. Then they went away and locked the door.

I had a look at the pizza but declined a slice. With curling bits of dry salami sprinkled over its surface it hardly looked appetizing.

For some reason the K-Mart ladies think I am wonderful. Every now and then they peep in at me to show me the other sales ladies from Home Furnishing and Linens. They point me out to them, smiling, and are extremely polite and deferential. Then they all giggle together and agree that I am quite a unique find.

I can't understand why they regard me as some kind of marvelous jewel they have just discovered or happened upon, so marvelous they wish to keep me here for their own private viewing.

Still, they are trying to make me happy— I can't fault them for that— by telling me that they have an especially good bargain in dish towels (just for me!) and that they are the same item they've had for years, still in style, and they've picked them all together and sticking on their price tags. All marked down to one cent apiece. A bargain indeed! So I am grateful for their efforts and I must hate and protest my capture. Because that is what it is. A capture and imprisonment of some sort. And there is too much time. I have spent with them and am not doing anything. I am not going anywhere. I am not even going to write this in my notebook. There is too much time, in their eyes, and they are trying to make it yet more time. What do they see there? I wonder? But before I have passed them I have given me a set of generic dish towels, I picked up my coffee and ate a piece, and I haven't seen the time go by. I am not even going to write this. I am not even going to make anything, decide anything, I am just writing down all the time that passes by.

This pleases them so much that I am encouraged to show them my other works. I am trying to do some drawing. I am not even going to write this. I am not even going to make anything, decide anything, I am just writing down all the time that passes by.

Now that I am free to go and have hurried off in search of my wife. I have found her, standing in front of the town, far from the curl and twirling, as I had feared, drawing angry storms from the papers, putting me in the papers.

So I have taken her now by the arm and together we are hurrying away from town. Correctly, on the right side of the sidewalk. Because in this time the journey is tedious enough — what with the chance imprisonments that can befoul you at any moment — without inviting further misery by disobeying the rules of the road, as well.

CONTRIBUTORS’ NOTES:
John M. Bennett publishes the remarkable & unreliable Lina Bizette Prude out of Columbus Ohio. Mieko Chojohack canines lives in Gorge Oregon. She is currently working on yet another prize winning novel. Judith Cawson is a translator per excellence currently residing in Quebec. John Donkin is part of a new wave of writers working out of London, Ontario. Brian David Johnkain is a recent artist from Cambridge, Ontario. M.A.C. Farrant currently lives in Western Canada. She regularly contributes vivid dialogues to Banksy's Torenion. Leyla Megancan be found as a part of the art scene in Toronto. Elizabeth Schenkelwein lives on a farm with her typewriter in Kingston, Ontario. East Teardrop is a writer/performance/improviser living unusually in Toronto.

THE NEXT "RAMPFIE LITERARY SUPPLEMENT" WILL APPEAR IN A FUTURE ISSUE OF BORDERLINES MAGAZINE TOWARD THE END OF THIS YEAR. IN THE MEANTIME, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF RAMPFIE MAGAZINE WHICH WILL FEATURE THE TOPIC OF "CREATIVE MISUNDERSTANDING" AVAILABLE AT A NEWSSTAND NEAR YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

prominent Canadian dimension was created by replacing the earlier allegorical figures with Canadian landscapes. They are described simply as a series of "realistic landscapes and seascapes.

Clearly the Bank of Canada felt that the previous imagery was not Canadian enough. The difference between the 1935 images and the 1994 images is striking. The 1994 images are as follows.

$1.90 bill "Prairie View Recreational Park."
$2.00 bill "View of Upper Melbourne, Richmond, Quebec."
$2.50 bill "Ottawa Falls at Mile 98 of the Alaska Highway."
$10.00 bill "Mount Burgess, Alberta."

It is assumed, or hoped, that the Canadian dimension that these images create are self-apparent. How does this created dimension imagine itself and how do these images locate it? The allegory of garden paradise in the previous images is gone, replaced by realism. This realism is attained by beginning the image production process with a photograph of the landscape. The photograph is then used as the source for a painted image, a procedure also employed by many Canadian landscape painters from Tom Thompson to Jack Chambers. The painted step in the procedure, which brings in a "human" touch, is almost

apologised for in the Currency Museum’s display text: "Because of some of the technical and aesthetic considerations of Bank note design, the illustrations may vary slightly from the actual locations depicted."

The engraving made from the painting renders it mechanically reproducible but so intricately detailed that it is as difficult to copy as possible. The resulting landscape has a technological aesthetic, a realism devoid of subjective interpretation or of the mythicized encounter with the landscape in the 1935 series. This process of demystifying the landscape is also commented on by McGregor: "Too extensively
demystified the environment tends simply to become a kind of void that resists all human connection. This is what happens in the Canadian landscape.

What evidence of this void can be found in the Canadian dimension series? Whereas all the previous issue images celebrated the inhabited and benevolent landscape, only half of the 1964 series show any sign of a human presence at all and it is revealing to look at how this human presence is portrayed.

For example, the $1 bill presents the landscape as a vast expanse under a stormy sky. Cutting through it are telephone poles, a dirt road and a barbed wire fence that recede in one-point perspective to a distant grain elevator poising on the horizon. A large thunderhead hogs just above the tiny structure. It is a far and rather lonely cry from the Agriculture allegory seated in her throne surrounded by hooves of produce. The thin threads of transportation (road) and communication (poles) provide little reassurance against the distant storm and vast space.

The $2 bill shows three or four small farm houses and a church clustered in the center of the mid-ground. The distant houses are alone and unreachable. The $1000 image is like the $2 one, showing a few structures in the mid-ground, but here the foreground is greatly reduced and mountains shroud the horizon which almost obscures the sky. The vast landscape again engulfs a few buildings. This image is also in stark contrast to its previous image of the Secretariat allegory. The remaining images of the 1954 series depict landscapes devoid of human presence and of these only the $1000 one has a foreground which it seems possible to enter. The other images do not suggest possible passage through them, their foregrounds blocked by rapidas, trees or snow. The images on the $5, $10 and $50 bills specifically appear utterly wild and alien. McGregor suggests that, "The real relevance of the wilderness myths to Canada can be seen only if we pay attention to what its proponents show us unconsciously, rather than giving too much weight to what they say they are doing."

What do the 1954 issue images show us, given that they are to create a dimension that is Canadian? With regard to the portrayal of Canadians within the Canadian landscape, they unquestionably show a great deal of it and a little of us. We wade together while the landscape surrounds us and look out at a wilderness that prohibits our entry. Northrop Frye has termed this response to the Canadian landscape the "pervasive mentalility" and McGregor has termed it the "Wacousta syndrome."

Between 1965 and 1975 a new set of images replaces the 1954 issue. They are as follows:

$1 "Parliament Hill across Ottawa River."
$2 "Lantrix hunting scene on Baffin Island."
$5 "Salmon, Selkirk, Johnson Strait, Vancouver Island."
$10 "Polymer Corporation, Sarnia, Ontario."
$20 "Morrison Lake, Alberta."
$50 "Dome Formation, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Musical Ride."
$100 "Waterfront scene at Lunenburg."

These images again provide an interesting set of images and the Canadian landscape becomes inhabitable again, but without the assistance of supernatural beings. Technology, government and the law are now featured and, with the exception of the image on the $20 bill found within the confines of a National Park, all these new images show clear signs of human presence.

In the new $10 bill this presence overwhelms the landscape: it presents a techno-scene where not a trace of Nature remains. This complete reversal is all the more remarkable because of the extremes it represents.

Into this new configuration of It and Us, a third term is introduced by the first appearance of Them in Bank of Canada notes. "They" are the people pictured on the $2 bill, appearing in the horsetail of the series landscapes. With minimal (low-tech) means, they interact with the landscape in a nostalgic hunting scene. Nostalgia plays a part as well in the ship building industry pictured on the $100 bill with its sailing ships of a bygone era.

The government is presented on the $1 bill back and center, crowning Parliament Hill and overlooking the river. The threatening storm and the vast distances portrayed on the previous $1 bill are replaced by an image of a log-choked river (prosperity through natural resources), overseen by government's central body. It is worthwhile mentioning here that the industrial scene on the $10 bill of this series depicts Polymer Corp. which was at the time of issue a crown-owned company.

While the government is portrayed on the $1 bill centrally placed and looking outward from its vantage on the hilltop, the bill is portrayed as a ribbon looking outward. The R.C.M.P. Dome Formation on the $50 bill gives the unfortunate impression of a low force poised to attack itself, its weapons pointed in The threat of the sea presented in the previous $50 bill is replaced by an image which shows the national police force ceremonially closed in on itself in a circle with nothing at the center save the threat of its own spear.

The idea of generalized landscapes reemerges with the current series issue. The current series began in 1986 and the Bank of Canada's decision to make the change is described as follows: "There were three principal reasons for its introduction: technological advances in printing and photocopying of coloured graphic material that made the earlier series more vulnerable to counterfeiting; the need to facilitate the operation of high-speed, note-sorting machines by removing a large box of codes, and the development of features to assist the visually impaired. " These new notes which come to be through the "advanced Canadian technology" and make "le Canada a l'avant-garde de la conception des billets de banque" picture the Canadian landscape utterly devoid of any human presence. The word "CANADA" now sits in the sky of a landscape solely inhabited by birds.

Buried under assurances that these new notes are even more secure and are more helpful than before, the question that lurks is "Where did We go?"

Optical security devices, electronic readers and high-speed note-sorting machines do not provide an answer. Perhaps the question is not a relevant one, the "pervasively Canadian dimension" being technology itself and not the imaginative concern of locating Us, Here.

The 1988 issue images are as follows:

$2 "Robin."
$5 "Sailed Kingfisher."
$10 "Osprey."
$20 "Common Loon."
$50 "Snowy Owl."
$100 "Canada Goose."

The bird images are constructed so that they best accommodate the enhanced security printing technology. The design criteria state, however, that specific birds were selected because they have wide nesting ranges and would therefore be most familiar to Canadians. There is a concern, then, for recognizability.

While the birds are specifically named, the landscapes are generic; the wetlands, the grasslands, the northern wilderness. The specific locations of "here" in most of the previous images (Otter Falls at mile 100 on the Alaska Highway, Upper Melbourne, Richmond, etc.) is now replaced by a generic image of "there." The placement of birds, large in the immediate foreground, right of center and facing left, is done for reasons concerning printing and verifiability. The landscapes are minimal, primarily to contrast the detail in the birds, and for reasons of cost. Because of this, birds seem separate from the landscape - momentarily halted, ready to fly off again.

The Canadian landscape here is seen as utterly uninhabitable and unenterable, the possibility of moving through it blocked by the apposition of its own name in huge block letters. The unrecognizable treatment of this landscape may be more familiar and more acceptable to Canadians than are the birds that fly in front of it. Looking out across a sparse and unlocated land we see only the ghostly name of ourselves, a mirage which names our country but prohibits passage over its own horizon.
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