2009

Sketch

McLennan, Leanna, Kostoff, Larissa, Diamond, Sara, Sandals, Leah and Colette, Laliberté

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

SKETCH

WINTER 2009

The magazine of the Ontario College of Art & Design

SKETCH

COVER & INSIDE COVER
ORLAN AT OCAD, 2008
(COVER, L-R) CHARLOTTE HERRIMAN (STUDENT, INTEGRATED MEDIA), ORLAN, NATALYN TREMBLAY (ALUMNA, INTEGRATED MEDIA)
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

The Ontario College of Art & Design is Canada's "university of the imagination," engaging in education and research and contributing to the fields of art and design, local and global cultural initiatives, and knowledge and invention across a wide range of disciplines.

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Oops!
In the spring 2008 issue of *Sketch*, an Alumni Notes article about Geoffrey Pugen neglected to mention that he is represented by the Angell Gallery in Toronto.

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WINTER 2009

The magazine of the Ontario College of Art & Design

FEATURES

COLUMNS

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

SARA DIAMOND
PHOTO BY TOM SANDLER PHOTOGRAPHY

First of all, let's acknowledge that we are in a profoundly challenging time — a time when universities must act as a critical resource by forming new alliances and strategizing solutions. We offer hope by nurturing a new generation of creative makers and thinkers, as well as research, community development and wealth-producing efforts. Investing in university infrastructure stimulates jobs and builds capacity for the future.

"I wish we had a dozen OCADs." When social theorist Richard Florida stated this in the Winter 2008 issue of *Canadian Art*, it was before the current economic downturn. He was referring to the creative class that's capable of propelling a new economy and OCAD's role in creating a visual beacon (through the Sharp Centre) for that class. His words have even more resonance now: "You have to build a creative *society*. Industry will follow."

OCAD accelerated this capacity when it recently hosted the Canadian University Presidents' Initiative in Cultural Sector Education and Research — a two-day summit organized by the Association of Canadian Institutes of Art and Design with a large group of presidents from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. The event brought university presidents face to face with key players from the culture sector, research councils, government and industry. Dr. Geoffrey Crossick, Warden of Goldsmiths, University of London, spoke about the deep value that culture brings to society. And with the assistance of Ron Freedman, co-founder of The Impact Group, and other participants — including Ontario Minister of Culture Aileen Carroll and Dr. James Fleck, Chairman of Business for the Arts — the group recommended that businesses and governments should turn to the research and creative capabilities of the art, design and larger culture sector to shore up Canada's economy.

More than $84 billion. That's the value attributed to the Canadian culture sector's 2007 economic footprint, according to keynote speaker Dr. Michael Bloom of The Conference Board of Canada, the organization that produced *Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada's Creative Economy*. In 2007 this sector contributed 1.1 million jobs to the national economy. As president of OCAD, I firmly believe that we must engage the culture sector at every turn in confronting the economic downturn.

Art and design sustain intrinsic values, facilitating cultural cohesion, dialogue and the understanding of diversity. Art and design *add* value. Design is fundamental to the realization of Canada's research and innovation priorities and to the focus of its science and technology strategy. Information and communications technologies, digital media, green technologies — these are just a few examples of where design should be at the forefront. This is underscored by the Faculty of Design's research policy: "Designing sustainable environments not only deals with the built environment but also extends to the form of cities, the systems and structures that form the human habitat and a host of new green and clean technologies."

For this reason, rather than talk about STEM (science, technology, engineering and medicine), it is far more strategic to describe the research and innovation knowledge set as STEM D (science, technology, engineering, medicine and design). "Hard problems" in research are called "wicked problems" by designers — challenges that require intensive collaboration. Fortunately, designers are multilingual and able to facilitate dialogues between very diverse disciplines, and between researchers and investors.

Art aligned with science — known as "ArtSci" in the U.K. — is a driving force for new approaches to problem-solving and out-of-the-box thinking. According to Adam Bly, founder and editor-in-chief of Seed Media Group and the first of three keynote speakers in OCAD's 2008–2009 President's Speaker Series, art also has the capacity to take issues that are fundamentally scientific and activate them in society. This is the sensibility driving the Cape Farewell project, which has been sending artists and scientists to the Arctic since 2003 and is the brainchild of David Buckland, who spoke at OCAD last year. Faculty of Art professor Colette Laliberté participated in the Cape Farewell Youth Expedition 2008 and we're pleased to include her Arctic adventure in this issue of *Sketch* (see page 10).

These examples illustrate how art and design are increasingly reaching beyond physical walls. As Noah Richler wrote in the Winter 2008 issue of *Canadian Art*: "OCAD's greatest advantage…still resides in the fact of the city itself being the greater studio." The studio at OCAD has been altered since 1876, but it remains our locus of learning. And as OCAD proves, the studio is a site of complex intellectual discourses interwoven with visual and sensory acuity. It is testimony to the power of art and can now be rediscovered at the newly transformed Art Gallery of Ontario.

Partnerships like those we've forged with the AGO as part of our new graduate programs (see page 14) represent the building of a creative society. In these times of challenge, let us do it together — with creativity and commitment — walking hand in hand with industry, public institutions and other sectors of society. Recovery will surely follow.

—SARA DIAMOND

The Hon. James K. Bartleman is OCAD's second Chancellor, succeeding Rosalie Sharp. Prior to his appointment as Ontario's 27th Lieutenant-Governor, Chancellor Bartleman enjoyed a distinguished 35-year career as a diplomat in the Canadian foreign service. The Chancellor grew up in the Muskoka town of Port Carling, Ontario, and is a member of the Mnjikang First Nation. He is widely known for promoting literacy among Aboriginal Canadian youth and is himself the author of four books. The most recent, *Raisin Wine: Boyhood in a Different Muskoka*, was published by McClelland & Stewart in 2008.

INTERVIEW WITH THE CHANCELLOR

ON CAMPUS

PG3

PHOTOS BY LINO RAGNO

In a wide-ranging interview with Sketch, *the Chancellor displayed a keen sense of humour and a deeply personal relationship to the arts. Portions of the interview are excerpted here.*

Sketch: How did you come to be Chancellor of OCAD?

James Bartleman: At a lunch I attended with members of the OCAD Board of Governors, [President] Sara [Diamond] spoke a great deal about diversity as a component of the university's strategic direction, and she spoke of the proposed Aboriginal Visual Culture program. Then she asked me if I'd consider being Chancellor. I said that I'd be honoured despite the fact [*laughs*] that without an art and design background, I'm not the most qualified person in the room.

Sketch: On the contrary, it seems to me that with your love of books and reading, you're a real champion of the imagination and the power of the imagination to create change.

JB: My belief is that life is really about meeting the basic human needs of food, shelter, sex and so on, and only when these basic needs are satisfied do we move on, as a society, to the psychological. And in the area of psychological needs, you'll probably also find spiritual needs. At a very basic level these have to do with a sense of belonging. They also have to do with aspiration, with having faith or wanting to have faith, which brings us to the big existential questions like "Who am I?" "What is the meaning of life?" [*and*] "Is there a God?"

These questions have consumed people for as long as people have been alive, and from my perspective it's because people are trying to find expression for their sense of wonder at the world. We live in a world surrounded by a kind of veil and we spend our time punching, punching, punching at this veil — trying to penetrate it. But ours is a world of limits and it's a world that has us preoccupied with meeting our basic needs. So only occasionally do we actually penetrate that veil, and when we do we experience a sense of wonder.

When I talk about experiencing a sense of wonder, I'm referring to the way we can suddenly snap — take a position outside the movement of our lives. Let's say I'm walking home. I'm in the bush and suddenly I see a piece of birch bark, an ordinary piece of birch bark that for whatever reason looks wonderful. It may not be beautiful, but perhaps there's a drop of dew on it, or rain, and it's jagged at one end. It's wonderful because I experience it as reality and for that second I'm alive.

What art does is it exposes us to that wonder all the time — whether or not we're in a position to appreciate it.

Sketch: How would you describe your own relationship to the visual and other arts?

JB: I see visual art especially as sitting somewhere between music and literature. Music goes straight to the soul; there's no interpretation. It goes straight in — it's like getting an infusion — and the meaning is direct, emotional, psychological. Writing, on the other hand, filters through the brain. We use our imagination to interpret it, to relate it to our own life experience. It's why I've always loved reading and it's why I promote it.

So, music has the potential for direct impact, while literature requires reflection. It's my belief that art and design function on both levels.

Sketch: You're an artist now, too. Tell us about your recent move from writing non-fiction to writing fiction.

JB: After four books of non-fiction, I've just finished my first novel. It tells the story of a Native youth living on the streets of the big city, the streets of Toronto. Ultimately, it's a book about the existential issues of Native people, issues of adaptation, acculturation, truth and reconciliation.

Sketch: Can you talk a little bit about your work with Aboriginal youth?

JB: I run 39 literacy camps every summer for kids in the Canadian North. I've put 5000 kids in reading clubs that provide them with books every several months, and I've established libraries throughout the Ontario First Nations communities.

What we're seeing blossom in these kids is a kind of literary pride. They're also being exposed to art and design. Last summer, for example, 5 OCAD students participated as camp counsellors and I'm hoping for close to 10 in the coming year.

Books and reading were so important to me growing up, as I'm sure they are to OCAD students. Now they're important to these kids, too.

ON CAMPUS

TOP, LEFT
INTERACTIVE TREADLE PUMP DISPLAY IN BUTTERFIELD PARK
PART OF "DESIGN FOR THE OTHER 90%" AND SCOTIABANK NUIT BLANCHE 2008
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

ABOVE
DO NOT PLAY ON OR AROUND EXHIBITION
COORDINATED BY JAMES GAUVREAU, TRANSIT SPACE, 2008
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

OCAD'S WHITE NIGHT

On October 4, 2008, OCAD celebrated Scotiabank Nuit Blanche with a presentation of the exhibitions "Useless Beauty" and "Design for the Other 90%" alongside a performance by French artist ORLAN. "Useless Beauty," curated by OCAD professor Johanna Householder and Gallery Stratford curator Jennifer Rudder, set out to address notions of hybridity, gender, race, beauty, utility and fashion, and was in part a response to ORLAN's week-long residency at OCAD (see page 6).

What Torontonians now recognize as the pulse of Nuit Blanche begins slowly. This year, however, a lineup was forming outside of OCAD even before the evening's 6:52 p.m. start. And as night fell, the number of people entering 100 McCaul Street through the Elizabeth and Goulding Lambert Lounge accelerated swiftly, reaching its peak between 9 and 9:30 p.m., when about a hundred people per minute passed through the doors. All told, OCAD hosted a record 25 000 art lovers over 12 hours.

Visitors were met with Berlin-based David Krippendorff's video projection, *Behind the Curtain*, as soon as they entered the OCAD Auditorium. Upon exiting, they were invited to participate in *Ordinary People*, a "call to action for all ordinary people from ordinary people." Initiated by OCAD students and French performance artist ORLAN, the public action/intervention asked Nuit Blanche revelers to stop for 4 minutes and 33 seconds and hold up a piece of paper displaying the word *ART* (see page 7).

The stream of traffic then spilled into the lobby, where guests were treated to a visual feast — Toronto-based Lois Andison's gorgeous sculptural works *Camouflage 1* and *3*. Two additional pieces by Andison were on display upstairs in the Great Hall, alongside *Cyborg Hybrids*, a photographic series by Winnipeg artist KC Adams. These theatrically staged, celebrity-like portraits of models of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry spanned the perimeter of the hall, offering an interesting interplay of contemporary race politics and analytical detachment.

Particularly intriguing, and satirically very sharp, were Adams' *Cyborg Hybrid Accessories*. Also featured, on a large screen in the Great Hall, was Krippendorff's *Night of 1000 Stars*.

The OCAD Alumni Association invited Nuit Blanche visitors to participate in Sketching Beauty, an all-night sketch crawl. As a consequence, one could barely see the grass for all the people in Butterfield Park. The idea was for participants to first gather sketching materials (donated by Aboveground Art Supplies) and then return with their art to OCAD for display. But the event was so popular there were sketches tacked to pillar and post, even to the few trees encircling the concrete bowl that comprises the park's core.

Design for the Other 90%

Nuit Blanche also provided the backdrop for exhibitions at Transit Space and the OCAD Student Gallery, as well as the launch of "Design for the Other 90%" at the OCAD Professional Gallery.
This exhibition — organized by the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt and National Design Museum in New York City and curated by Cynthia E. Smith — represents a growing movement among designers to design low-cost solutions for "the other 90%" — the 5.8 billion people (out of the world's total population of 6.5 billion) who have little or no access to the products and services most of us take for granted. It offers a collection of design solutions addressing the basic needs — water, shelter, energy, education, health and transport — of poor and marginalized populations that are not traditionally serviced by professional designers.

The exhibition, which is supported by the Toronto Arts Council, runs until January 25, 2009 at the OCAD Professional Gallery.

WHODUNIT? OCAD MYSTERY ART SALE

"The $75 question" — as the *National Post* once called it — had many people guessing at the seventh annual Whodunit? OCAD Mystery Art Sale, held Saturday, November 22, 2008.

It was a question that also yielded a record 688 sales in support of the university's Dorothy H. Hoover Library and a new Learning Zone for students. This year's Preview Gala featured a live auction hosted by Perry Tung of Ritchies Auctioneers and artwork by the following artists: David Bolduc, Margaretha Bootsma, Malcolm Brown, Alex Cameron, Darlene Cole, Kim Dorland, Thrush Holmes, Joshua Jensen-Nagle, Howard Lonn, Rachel MacFarlane, Robert Marchessault, Charles Meanwell, Charles Pachter, John Scott and Michael Smith.

New this year was the addition of mid-size work to the Preview Gala's silent auction, including works by local artists James Durant, Brendan Flanagan, Larry Humber, John Kennedy, Burton Kramer, Andrew Rucklidge, Jaclyn Shoub, Alli Van Gruenm and Steve McDonald.

We extend a special thank-you to our gallery partners for supporting Whodunit? — Angell Gallery, Bau-Xi Gallery, Blaise DeLong Gallery, Edward Day Gallery, LE Gallery, Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Muse Gallery and Wynick/Tuck Gallery.

Many thanks also to Orangina, the event's new presenting sponsor and generous provider of the $15 000 educational award to Erica Chia, Canada's first Orangina artist (see back cover). We're grateful too for the support of Georgian Capital Partners Inc., which sponsored artist participation in the Gala Preview; corporate supporters Polar Securities Inc. and Barometer Capital Management Inc.; and media sponsors Newstalk 1010 CFRB, *The Globe and Mail*, ONESTOP Network and *NOW Magazine*. A gracious nod also to our event supporters — Absolut Vodka, à la Carte Kitchen Inc., Annan & Sons, Chair-man Mills, Curator Asset Management,

Hillebrand Artist Series, McNabb Roick & Associates, Porter Airlines, Roma Moulding Inc., Soapbox Design Communications, Steam Whistle Brewing and Unisource Canada.

Among the many other partners we'd like to acknowledge are Aboveground Art Supplies, Burry Sign Studio Inc., Grassroots Advertising Inc. and Westbury National Show Systems Ltd. And of course a hearty thank-you to the dedicated Whodunit? Committee, led again this year by Anu Bhalla, Gala Preview Committee Chair.

Finally, a heartfelt thank-you to the countless mystery artists and designers who selflessly contributed their work. Without them, Whodunit? would not have been possible.

OPPOSITE, TOP CENTRE
ORDINARY PEOPLE
A "CALL TO ACTION FOR ALL ORDINARY PEOPLE FROM ORDINARY PEOPLE," INITIATED BY OCAD STUDENTS AND FRENCH PERFORMANCE ARTIST ORLAN FOR SCOTIABANK NUIT BLANCE 2008
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT
LOIS ANDISON
CAMOUFLAGE I, 1998
AUTOMATED SCULPTURE
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

BELOW, LEFT
CAMPAIGN POSTER FOR THE SEAGULL
COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

BELOW, RIGHT
ORIGAMI FLYER CREATED BY OCAD ADVERTISING STUDENTS
PHOTO BY LINO RAGNO

ABOVE
WHODUNIT? 2008
PHOTO BY TOM SANDLER PHOTOGRAPHY

PG5

OCAD ADVERTISING STUDENTS AMONG PARTNERS FOR NATIONAL BALLET CAMPAIGN

As part of an initiative to entice first-time attendees to the ballet, five ad agencies and a group of students from OCAD's Advertising program created pro bono campaigns for the National Ballet of Canada's 2008–2009 season. GJP Advertising & Design (Gee Jeffrey & Partners), Leo Burnett Company Ltd., Smith Roberts, John St., The George Partnership and OCAD all signed on to create campaigns, with each agency assigned to one of the season's six ballets.

In a press release describing the intiative, the National Ballet stipulated that the agencies "had to meet specific criteria, such as great creative and strategic reputations, innovative thinking and a passion for the arts." The selection of agencies was also likely based on the ability to attract a different crowd — in the words of Kevin Garland, Executive Director of the National Ballet, those "young, urban professionals who might not consider going to the ballet."

Tony Kerr, Chair of OCAD's Advertising program, couldn't be happier. "I've long wanted the [ad] industry to regard these students as boardroom-ready and I realized recently that the only way to prove this point was to compete."

That's when Kerr called in some contacts and, as he puts it, "they realized I was right." It's also when representatives from the National Ballet asked OCAD to participate as an agency. Although it was the middle of summer, Kerr contacted his thesis students, and together they met with Karen Kain, the Ballet's Artistic Director. "We were like the dog that chased the tank and then caught it," he says. "We weren't sure what we were going to do."

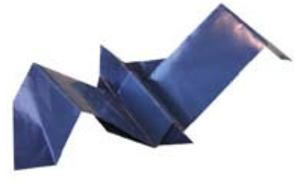
What they did was present 10 options, which Kerr describes as "an embarrassment of riches." One of the options involved inventing a brand-new medium, an interactive flyer, says Kerr, and the National Ballet "was blown away."

"It was a delight for us at the National Ballet of Canada to work with the OCAD students," says Garland, calling their ideas "fresh" and "creative," and praising their "professionalism."

Hannah Smit was among the many participating students. She and her peers attended a rehearsal of *The Seagull* in order to familiarize themselves with the story, both in its original Chekhovian incarnation (involving a love triangle that pits playwrights against each other in an intergenerational struggle between old and new) and in the ballet version, which was choreographed by John Neumeier and features a similar artistic struggle.

What actually caught the eye of the National Ballet was the "executional tool" — a flyer folded into an origami seagull — designed by Smit's team, which included core members Sam Archibald and, later, students Olivia Chow and Julia Dickinson. "Once we got word from the Ballet that they liked our executional tool, we had to come up with what to put on it," recalls Smit. "It was a lengthy process of back and forth, one that involved a lot of collaboration and integration of different ideas. I learned so much about how to deal with a client and how to manage expectations."

Not to mention how to get to the folding of 5000 origami birds. These were distributed in two drops to bars, restaurants and coffee shops throughout the city.



IN THE FLESH: THE ART OF ORLAN

By Leah Sandals

ORLAN IS REPRESENTED BY B&D STUDIO MILANO (ITALY), GALERIE MICHEL REIN (FRANCE) AND GALERIE SÉJUL (KOREA)

OPPOSITE
ORLAN
AMERICAN INDIAN SELF-HYBRIDATION PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT, 2005
49 X 60"
COURTESY OF ORLAN STUDIO

PG7

In a spare, echoey, concrete-floored seminar room, the artist ORLAN is sitting next to me and I am nervous. Sure, I've met artists before. Sure, some of them are internationally renowned like ORLAN. But to be frank, none of them have had hornlike protrusions surgically implanted into their foreheads as an art piece — let alone protrusions that are coated with silver glitter gel and that seem to draw my stare no matter how hard I try to maintain my professional composure.

Such is the nature of ORLAN's art — difficult, yet seductive; queasy, yet impressive. Whether selling kisses from behind a nude cut-out at an art fair in the 1970s for *The Kiss of the Artist*, putting her genitals on public view in the 1980s under the rubric of *A Documentary Study: The Head of Medusa*, undergoing repeated plastic surgeries in the 1990s for *The Reincarnation of Saint ORLAN*, or posing as a Native American in the 2000s as part of her *Refiguration/Self-Hybridation* series, ORLAN has consistently taken a raw, controversy-inviting tack on vital issues such as gender, sexuality, history and ethnicity.

The more we talk however, the more I'm convinced of — and feel relaxed by — the intelligence behind this artist's much-discussed visage. "I'm a very normal artist when I'm not in the operating room," she jokes. "I'm always just trying to find the best materials to say what seems important to say in the period in which I'm living."

When her output is reviewed comprehensively, it's clear that ORLAN has said a lot about both the ephemeral and the enduring issues of the day.

Early in her career, in the 1960s, ORLAN performed extra-slow walks through her hometown of St-Étienne, France, using her body to measure its public spaces. In one work, she measured the dimensions of a public square in *ORLAN Bodies* by repeatedly lying down on the ground and ticking her body length from end to end with a piece of chalk. This series of works, dubbed *MesuRages*, was rather prescient, given today's artistic mania for city-building, architecture and urban intervention — a mania that has manifested itself in myriad ways, from the "starchitect"-

In late September 2008, French artist ORLAN arrived at OCAD to mark the final instalment of the university's Nomadic Residents program, a residency supported by Partners in Art and the Consulate General of France in Toronto. During her week-long residency, ORLAN gave a public lecture to a packed audience in the OCAD auditorium, sharing her perspective on her works, from her earliest years selling photos of body parts in a Portuguese market to reworking classic Native American portraits in recent years. She also met with various classes at the university and collaborated with students on *Ordinary People*, a work created for Scotiabank Nuit Blanche, inviting people to stop at midnight and hold up a sign reading "ART" for 4 minutes and 33 seconds in a commentary on Prime Minister Stephen Harper's federal election campaign suggestion that "ordinary people" don't care about art (or, as the *Toronto Star* reported, "the 'rich' artists who gather at galas"). ORLAN's visit was followed by "Useless Beauty," an exhibit of works on the artist's recurring themes of hybridity, gender, race, beauty, utility and fashion. The exhibit, co-curated by OCAD professor Johanna Householder and Gallery Stratford curator Jennifer Rudder, also featured the work of KC Adams, Lois Andison and David Krippendorf.

ABOVE
ORLAN
LE BAISER DE L'ARTISTE
PARIS PERFORMANCE, 1977
COURTESY OF ORLAN STUDIO

ABOVE
ORLAN
HARLEQUIN COAT, 2007
DEVELOPED DURING SYMBIOTICA RESIDENCY
COURTESY OF ORLAN STUDIO

led renovation of the Art Gallery of Ontario to the fêting of "creative class" urbanist Richard Florida and the increasing popularity of street festivals like Scotiabank Nuit Blanche.

From 1971 to 2005, ORLAN riffed on both artistic and religious iconography in the persona of the easel-toting, cross-wielding, wimple-wearing Saint ORLAN, who appeared in photographs, videos and performances. Directed entirely by the artist, the works appropriated the supplicating servant-of-God figure that dominates the portrayal of women in Western religious art. This type of malleable, paradoxical character still finds resonance in the performing-for-the-camera practices of Matthew Barney and Cindy Sherman, as well as in the dual influence that the Vatican and the artistic canon continues to have on women's roles.

In the last couple of years, ORLAN's collaborations with bio-technology groups like SymbioticA, a unique science lab/art studio hybrid based out of the University of Western Australia (UWA) in Perth, have led to projects involving skin grafts and genetics. Granted, these projects have not always been technically successful. During her most recent visit to UWA in October 2007, for example, ORLAN wanted to craft a multicoloured harlequin's coat using real skin samples from people of different ethnicities, a project that was eventually abandoned due to cell-rejection difficulties. Still, the process and resulting work — in this case a video of skin cells in a harlequin pattern projected onto a cell incubator — probes issues of significant societal currency, what with the massive global research investment in undertakings like the Human Genome Project. ("Bio-technology is so important," notes ORLAN, "but we are not ready — psychologically, physically and otherwise — to face the changes that will come with it.")

Given the range of ORLAN's work, it's no surprise to find a diversity of opinion in academic, journalistic and popular circles about its meaning. Some say it's about masochism. Indeed, who else would willingly remain conscious during surgery to make paintings with her own blood (which was part of *The Reincarnation of Saint ORLAN*) even though anesthetic is applied? Others believe it's more about narcissism — those surgeries gave her the chin of Botticelli's Venus, after all. And still others say it's about digital culture and the slipperiness of identity that such culture engenders. (Here, *Art-Accès-Revue*, which ORLAN developed in the early 1980s and is among the first online journals of contemporary art, seems particularly relevant.)

But when asked what links all of her works, ORLAN's answer is brief: bodies and boundaries.

"It's very simple," she explains. "All my life I work with the same concept: the status of the body, with all the social pressures, cultural pressures and political pressures that are put on it. Sometimes it's with video, sometimes it's with installation, sometimes it's with photography, sometimes with sculpture or performance or biotechnology or design. But all the time it's this question of the body.

"I also try to break down the boundaries between things — between generations, between the sexes, between skin colours and between practices."

Yet, as encompassing as ORLAN's practice can be in summary, certain strains do speak in particular to women's bodies, experiences and politics. ORLAN considers herself "very feminist," though she has only recently taken up the title due to what she perceives as a recent decline in women's rights worldwide.

"I would like women's issues not to be a worry for me because there are many other problems we have to solve in art, in life," she says. "In France, the things we [of the 1960s and '70s feminist movement] fought for are in the process of being shut down." Politician Ségolène Royal's well-documented run for the French presidency last year and the sexism she encountered in the process spring to mind. "Millions of women worldwide are also without rights," ORLAN continues. "For a while, I said that I was simply against all discrimination; now I say again that I'm a feminist."

Given all this, it makes sense that ORLAN's notorious *The Kiss of the Artist* — that life-size photo of her nude torso, which functioned as a slot machine and kiss-vending prop and which got her kicked out of a teaching position in the late 1970s — made it into "WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution," the groundbreaking international exhibition of feminist artists of the '60s and '70s currently touring North America.

As pleased as she is about the show, ORLAN cautions against taking such curatorial groupings for granted. "Something that a lot of young artists and critics don't know is that in my generation [of feminist artists] we were totally isolated. We had no information about each other," she notes. "Everyone says, 'Oh, [outspoken female European artist] Valie Export knew about you and you knew about Valie Export.'"

But that wasn't the case, according to ORLAN. "[It] may seem bizarre, but it's true. In the 1960s and '70s I was in a little town, St-Étienne, and even if we did lots of performances, we didn't take photos, we didn't invite journalists, we didn't exhibit. There were hardly any magazines on the arts. There was no Internet. We had no bursaries, no residencies, no travel grants. It took a long time until the resources came.

"Yet it was such an exciting time, it was [when] we fought for rights for everything — for the right to go to a restaurant alone without being treated as a slut, for the right to abortion and birth control. But people must realize that many influences attributed to us were interpreted in retrospect. I was working from a rebellious and intuitive place."

ORLAN's comment on rebellion prompts a consideration of one of her earliest works: a self-portrait, *Tentative de sortir du cadre avec masque*, where she is captured emerging from a golden frame. "I don't want to be trapped in a frame or box," she says, "so when the work becomes a little stale or what's expected, I propose questions and try to make a little step to the side."

It's not everyone, of course, who would see the permanent addition of hornlike bumps to one's forehead as "a little step to the side." Far from it, but maybe that's just another part of ORLAN's practice: being understanding of the conformities that she herself chooses to buck. "I have no judgment of those who use plastic surgery conventionally," she says. "The pressure is so enormous and each person has to navigate the problems of aging and death as they wish.

"What I try to do is put other possibilities and other images opposite that. That's all."

With admissions such as these, ORLAN's own presence as active artist — rather than iconic image — comes to the fore. There's no doubt that her provocative appropriations of science, medicine, religion and Western and global art histories will remain uncomfortable and problematic for many years to come. But in the end, horns and all, this so-called saint has been a button-pushing blessing to the contemporary art world.

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Toronto-based art writer Leah Sandals contributes regularly to the *National Post*, *NOW* and *Spacing* magazines. She is also associate editor of www.canadianart.ca, the web arm of *Canadian Art* magazine.

ABOVE
ORLAN
ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE THE FRAME
WITH MASK NO. 3, 1965
BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPH, 81 X 76 CM
COURTESY OF ORLAN STUDIO

ABOVE
ORLAN AT OCAD, 2008
PHOTO BY MARINA DEMPSTER

BELOW
ORLAN
DRAWING DONE IN BLOOD DURING
THE SURGERY PERFORMANCES, 1990–1993
BLOOD ON PAPER, ENLARGED ONTO OILCLOTH
THROUGH SCANACHROME, 100 X 73 CM

THE CULTURE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

"Woke this morning to a jagged brown coast, a long, dark profile against a white sky. In the foreground icebergs queued like buses heading south, one behind another in the coastal current."

— Martin Rose, Director, British Council Canada, and Writing Advisor, Cape Farewell Youth Expedition 2008

CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION 2008

By Larissa Kostoff and Colette Laliberté

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. NATIONAL SNOW AND ICE DATA CENTER (NSIDC), THE SIZE OF THE ARCTIC ICE CAP HIT A 2008 LOW OF 4.52 MILLION SQUARE KILOMETRES ON SEPTEMBER 12. THAT'S CLOSE TO THE RECORD LOW OF 4.13 MILLION SQUARE KILOMETRES REGISTERED LAST YEAR, AND FAR FROM THE CLOSE TO 8 MILLION OBSERVED EACH YEAR FROM 1979, WHEN THE NSIDC BEGAN TAKING SATELLITE IMAGES OF THE ICE, TO 2000.

ABOVE ICEBERGS
CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION 2008
PHOTO BY ROBERT VANWAARDEN
COURTESY OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL CANADA

If, as Inuit activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier has argued, the Arctic is the "barometer of the world's health," then the world is very sick indeed. And the melting Arctic is our warning.

Cape Farewell's annual voyages into the Arctic are about heeding that warning — witnessing the effects of climate change and then communicating "through the emotional responses of the arts, as well as through hard science, the urgency of action."

The project, which has been sending artists, scientists and students into the Arctic since 2003, is the brainchild of British artist and filmmaker David Buckland, who has adopted as his mandate the notion that the world can only change the way it acts on climate change by changing the way it feels.

Cape Farewell's voyageurs have recorded the way the Arctic has changed in film, photography, music and words, as well as through scientific observation. It is Buckland's wish that all of them, including the students — perhaps especially the students — return home to assume the role of ambassadors, as powerful agents of change.

Colette Laliberté, an artist and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Art at OCAD, discusses her Cape Farewell experience in these pages. It's a story that began when OCAD President Sara Diamond recommended her to David Buckland as an artist, mentor and potential voyageur. And it's a story that took off on September 5, 2008, when 28 high-school students, including 16 from Canada, 3 from Great Britain and 2 each from Brazil, Mexico and India, as well as 18 specialists in climate change, science, art and education boarded the *Akademik Shokalskiy* after a two-day stay in Iceland.

Cape Farewell's sixth voyage, a collaboration with the British Council Canada, was the first to travel to the Canadian Arctic. The young people who participated — Laliberté calls them "extraordinary" — went through a lengthy selection process and were chosen in part for their communication skills and their commitment to the environment. The international scope of the group was intentional, a way of creating a global network of students who would become communicators and leaders in their own communities and beyond.

Leading the oceanography and climatology student group was Bruno Tremblay, an oceanographer and professor in McGill's Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences. Working with him were Christopher Giesler, science teacher at Ontario's Southwood Secondary School; Jessica Houston, artist and instructor at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; and Geneviève Côté, children's book illustrator and 2007 General Governor's Award winner for illustration. The biogeography group was led by Doug Fraser, Head of Science at Ontario's Timiskaming District Secondary School, and artist/teacher Karen Channing from Newfoundland. Christopher Burns, a specialist in permafrost and a professor of geography at Carleton University in Ottawa, and Laliberté led the geomorphology group.

Colette Laliberté: After preliminary training/orientation at Lake St. George in Richmond Hill (just north of Toronto), and air transport to Reykjavik, Iceland, our Arctic expedition departed on September 7, 2008, for 40 hours of navigation across the Denmark Strait to Ammassalik, Greenland. Following an official bonjour with Danish customs, the *Shokalskiy* continued along the western coast of Greenland to its southern tip, stopping along the way at a beach at the foot of a glacier. Our itinerary allowed for a second venture onto land at Skjoldungen, then up the eastern coast to stop in Tasermiut Fjord, in Tasisuak Lake, and in Nuuk, the capital of Greenland.

From Nuuk we journeyed another 38 hours across the Davis Strait, crossing the Arctic Circle to Qikiqtarjuaq in Baffin Island, where we reported to Canadian customs, visited a school and made two additional stops in Padlopen and Butterfly Bay. We enjoyed a Zodiac tour of Monumental Island in order to see polar bears before our final stop on September 19 in Iqaluit, where we boarded the plane that would take us back to Ottawa.

SCIENCE AND ART: A DIALOGUE

sci•ence: *n. **1** a branch of knowledge conducted on objective principles; esp. concerned with the material and functions of the physical universe*

art: *n. **1** human skill or workmanship as opposed to the work of nature **2** a making or doing of things that display form, beauty and unusual perception*

Science fills seats, says Adam Bly, founder and Editor-in-Chief of Seed Media Group, a science media company. The first of three keynote speakers in the 2008–2009 President's Speaker Series at OCAD, Bly delivered the talk "The 21st-Century Scientific Revolution: Shattering Disciplinary Boundaries Between Science, Art, Design and Culture" on November 13, 2008.

According to Bly, we need to talk about what science knows. Bly is advocating for "a scientific renaissance as a way of galvanizing a population," of saving a "planet in peril," and what's interesting about his argument is where it positions art. The relationship of science to art, he claims, is not discretionary. Art has the capacity to take issues that are fundamentally scientific and activate them in society.

This is also the premise of Cape Farewell, and it's echoed elsewhere, in far less remote places than the Arctic. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) just employed a philosopher-in-residence, and Princeton University opened the Center for Theoretical Science. In a trans-disciplinary world, knowledge gathering also happens between disciplines.

But is there a difference, in that liminal space, between looking and seeing? It's a question that came up again and again during the trip for geomorphologist Chris Burns, who found partnering with Laliberté so "intellectually provocative" he has asked her to accompany him and his students on field trips in 2010.

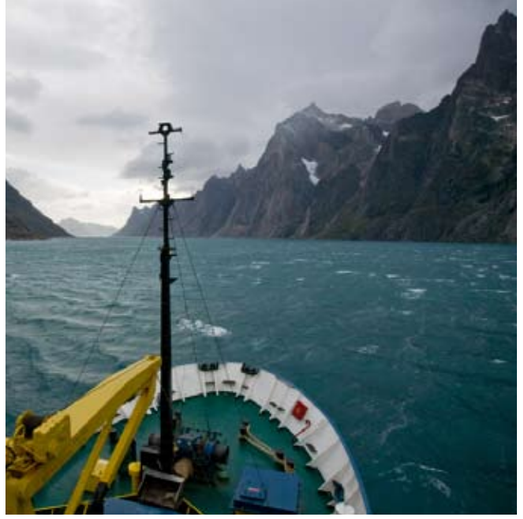
Colette Laliberté: The dialogue between scientists and artists quickly revealed that our working processes had similarities. Both groups relied on their powers of observation. They collected information, transcribed collected data, translated that data and asked a lot of questions. We observe by looking, touching, tasting, hearing, smelling; this observation is what gives us data. The tools we use to register this data vary according to the work done.

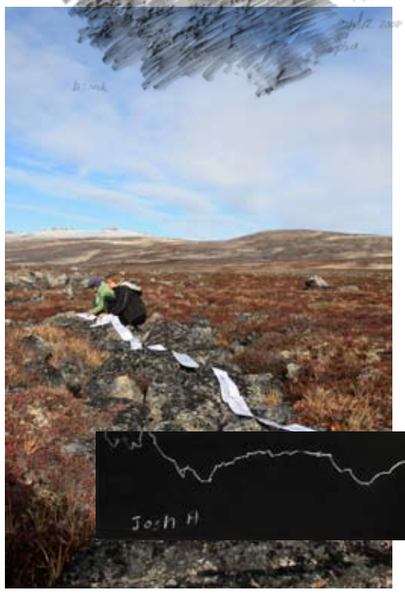
Like the scientists, the artists are guided by what they find. And like the scientists, we engage in a process of reflection. We reflect on the present world to produce works that speak of temporality, change and the fleeting moment. We also share similar questions: How does one look? What is scientific practice? How might science and art complement one another? How to record a trace? How to record a vanishing moment?

In an attempt to answer these questions, the biogeography group photographed and, where possible, collected samples of alpine growth; the geomorphology group calculated and entered in their field books the depth of the permafrost, the temperature of soil and air, and our Global Positioning System (GPS) location; and the oceanography group registered air and water temperatures twice daily.

The work quickly became collaborative. Burns showed the geomorphology group how to probe the ground to calculate the permafrost and take soil temperatures. To measure the depth of the permafrost, we used a stainless steel rod called a "gooser." This was followed by a drawing session. We each drew the tundra growth that we observed in the area into which we had inserted the gooser. [Interestingly, Burns notes that explorers of the Canadian North used to take a sketch artist on each and every journey. Sketching is still a component of field trips today.]

THE CULTURE OF CLIMATE CHANGE:
CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION 2008





TOP
DEVIN AIRUGANA
(TUSARVIK SCHOOL, NUNAVUT); VISTA OF PADLOPEN ISLAND
PART OF "DRAWING THE LINE"
PENCIL ON REEVES PAPER

ABOVE
JUNK LINE
PART OF "DRAWING THE LINE"
PADLOPEN ISLAND
PHOTO BY COLETTE LALIBERTÉ

TOP, RIGHT
BOW OF VESSEL
PHOTO BY ROBERT VANWAARDEN
COURTESY OF BRITISH COUNCIL CANADA

ABOVE, RIGHT
COLETTE LALIBERTÉ
CROSSING THE ARCTIC CIRCLE ON OUR WAY TO QIKIQTARJUAQ, BAFFIN ISLAND, SEPTEMBER 15, 2008
WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT
COLETTE LALIBERTÉ
RUBBING OF A ROCK, WEST COAST OF GREENLAND
GRAPHITE ON PAPER

OPPOSITE, TOP CENTRE
LUISA LIZOAIN
(UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCHOOLS, TORONTO, ONTARIO)
EXPEDITION MAP
PASTEL/TRACING PAPER; WATERCOLOUR/PAPER

ABOVE
RUBBINGS OF ROCKS: LINE VIEW
JESSICA HOUSTON (L), COLETTE LALIBERTÉ
PHOTO COURTESY OF COLETTE LALIBERTÉ

OVERLAY (B/W)
JOSH HOCKRIDGE (LAUNCESTON COLLEGE, LAUNCESTON, CORNWALL, U.K.)
DRAWING-THE-LINE: RECORD OF THE IMPRESSION AND SENSATION OF THE GROUND WHILE WALKING AMONG THE DEBRIS OF PADLOPEN ISLAND
WHITE CONTÉ ON BLACK REEVES PAPER

TOP, RIGHT
COLETTE LALIBERTÉ AND DAVID BUCKLAND
CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION 2008
PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE
PHOTO BY LINO RAGNO

ABOVE
LAND ART
CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION STUDENTS CREATE LAND ART IN THE SPACE LEFT BY THE RETREATING GLACIER
SKJOLDUNGEN, GREENLAND
PHOTO BY COLETTE LALIBERTÉ

In fact, as a way to echo the repetitive scientific collection of data, the artists invited all students to devote 10 minutes a day to their sketchbooks. The sketchbook thus became a place to retreat from the group, a site to reflect. Students in the oceanography and climatology groups were also required to go on the bridge each day to complete two watercolour paintings: one of the skies and one of the oceans.

The art mentors and students discussed at great length the power and versatility of mark-making, or the process of applying pencil to paper. We asked students to inscribe, through mark-making, a vanishing moment, and to do so by observing in nature a moment of change — a cloud, a bird singing, a pebble thrown in the water.

THE VANISHING MOMENT: A TRACE

trace: *v. tr.* ***1 a*** *observe, discover or find vestiges or signs of by investigation*

The Cape Farewell Youth Expedition 2008 brought together artists, scientists and students on a journey of discovery. The idea, of course, was to take it out, upon returning home, to communicate to a larger audience. But what of during? Perhaps the first directive was, simply, to observe. To not only look, as geomorphologist Chris Burns remarked, but also to see. What was perhaps impressed upon all travellers was that what they were seeing would soon be no longer.

So, as Laliberté asks, how to record a trace? How to record a vanishing moment?

Colette Laliberté: On our third landing, I picked crowberries with the intention of making jam once back on board. I marvelled at the soft-carpeted lichen growing painfully on the rock's surface. And I thought of taking home with me a vestige of time by making rubbings.

To make a rubbing is to lift something from a place without actually taking it. In essence, it is "found" work that emerges out of the site-specific activity of tracing a physical presence, of turning a moment in time into a drawing. Jessica Houston and I would later decide to do a "line" of rubbings. The frottage drawings that emerged in our case were of 40 000-year-old rocks deposited, then shifted, by the movement of glaciers in the Arctic.

We walked on grounds touched by few other creatures. We took imprints of rocks that could not, or should not, be removed. It's not incongruous to create rubbings in a land once home to age-old glaciers; the technique goes back to 300 B.C. And the rubbings we created? They point to what's already there, what has always been there: a rock, a fragment of a whole, a vestige of the dynamic forces of nature and the ceaseless passage of time. They represent the impossible task of trying to pin down, to capture and then hold still the ever-vanishing present, this moment in time.

THE LINE: AN INTERVENTION

in•ter•vene: *v. intr.* ***2*** *interfere; come between so as to prevent or modify the course of events*

If scientific consensus is anything to go by, climate change should not be a partisan issue. Hopefully, as we move forward we'll value the impartial analysis of scientific evidence and we'll also realize that the question has become one of affecting change. Nobel laureate Sherwood Rowland has said: "After all, what's the use of having developed a science well enough to make predictions if, in the end, all we're willing to do is stand around and wait for them to come true?"

How, then, do we move from tracing a physical presence to intervening in it? How do we move from drawing a moment in time to drawing a line, drawing the line that delineates a moral boundary — the line that says, and loudly, *enough* is *enough*.

Colette Laliberté: A couple of days before arriving in Iqaluit, we conducted a ritual unifying art and nature. We landed in Padlopen near the small Inuit town of Qikiqtarjuaq, and as we approached shore we discovered the remains of a previous settlement. Hundreds of crushed oil drums lay with the carcasses of tractors, rusted machinery, tin cans and other detritus. We learned that the burnt buildings and the dump left behind was an abandoned weather station dating back to the '50s or early '60s.

Chris Burns used the site to talk about marginality, reminding us that we were standing on a landscape in flux. And he spoke of what makes change happen. The people who made camp here brought what they needed to survive, he said, much as we had done. The problem is what they left behind. We were horrified to find so much evidence of human activity on this remote seashore of the Arctic. And we decided to stage an intervention. *Drawing the line* was an art ritual, a metaphor to express the urgency we felt, the need to stop — or, at the very least, slow down — what is clearly endangering our world.

We asked the students to record, as they walked amidst the debris, their impressions and sensations of the ground beneath their feet. They did this with a strip of black paper and white Conté. On another, larger piece of paper, they drew the vista they saw after reaching the end of their linear walk.

Everyone then scavenged through various pieces of metal to build a three-dimensional junk line, which extended from a group of rusted barrels to another pile of metal junk a hundred metres away. This was our way of expressing the necessity and the responsibility we have as individuals and as a society to change our habits of consumption and the way we treat the world.

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE RATIONAL AND THE EMOTIONAL

Laliberté hopes that others will join her, that "we'll draw the line together" — for ourselves and for future generations. She's looking into a post-expedition exhibition at OCAD and is eager to discuss the back-home initiatives of student voyageurs like George Voronov from Dublin, Ireland, who is publishing a book. (For more information, visit www.capefarewell.com/expeditions/2008youth.)

Cape Farewell — its legacy and learning — will live on in the work of its student ambassadors and its artists and scientists, who will draw their own conclusions and decide how best to appeal to their communities, now and in the future. Buckland's premise — that science and art, the rational and emotional, will together make the fiercest appeal, the one that comes from head *and* heart — is both powerful and plausible.

As British Council Canada Director Martin Rose wrote, in sum, of the students who participated in the expedition: "They have made for themselves opinions on the greatest issue of our time, and they are going off into the world, strengthened, to become leaders and thinkers.

"It has been a stunning, transforming, illuminating voyage."

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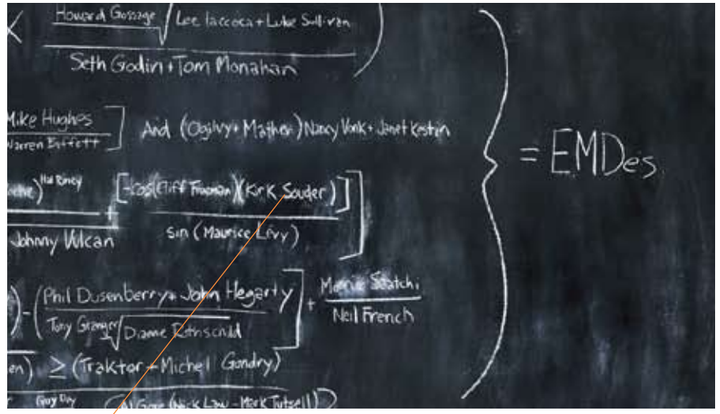
Colette Laliberté is an artist and an associate professor at OCAD, where she teaches drawing, painting, installation and site-specific art intervention. Since returning home she has continued to do rubbings. She is also developing a series of paintings in preparation for a solo exhibition next year.

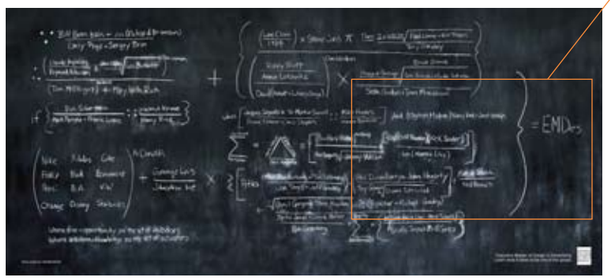
BROCHURE PRODUCED FOR EMDES PROGRAM, 2008
HUXLEY QUAYLE VON BISMARK

"Is there a formula for greatness in Marketing/ Advertising/Design? Well, this equation suggests there is, or at least it's being rigorously explored at OCAD. We used the simple idea of a complex physics equation made up of the names of people who have made an impact in the brand building business and suggest that the EMDes program is where this can be solved."

—Chris Hall, ad man at Huxley Quayle von Bismark

For more information, visit www.ocad.ca/masterminds





FROM ARCHITECTS TO BEST BOYS: OCAD'S FIRST MASTER'S STUDENTS

by Leanna McLennan

What do a film electrician, an intern architect and an advertising agency project manager have in common?

They're all graduate students in the newly launched master's programs at OCAD: the Master of Fine Arts in Critical & Curatorial Practice (MFA in CCP), the Executive Master of Design in Advertising (EMDes) and the Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media and Design (IAMD).

Artists, designers, architects, creative directors, writers and film electricians are among OCAD's first class of graduate students. Their projects span a range of creative practices and interests, from studying tombs and pyramids to creating compelling advertisements to building monuments from discarded computer parts.

Sarah Beck, an IAMD graduate student, started her creative career studying photojournalism at Ryerson University, with the lofty goal common among undergraduates: to change the world. But she decided that the program might not be quite right for her and instead went to work in film as a "best boy." If you're wondering what the term means, it's an electrician. Beck was one of the very few female best boys in the film industry.

While working in the film business, Beck found time to develop her first art project: ÖDE. For ÖDE, she created a company that markets and produces military tanks. Like the designs of popular Swedish furniture-maker IKEA, ÖDE tanks, which have been exhibited at the Vancouver Art Gallery, are marketed as affordable and easy to assemble (for more information, visit www.shop.ode.com). Beck views ÖDE as a way to encourage consumers to critically examine lifestyle advertising and their own consumption habits.

The Interdisciplinary Master's program appealed to Beck because she saw it as an opportunity to develop the critical aspects of her art-making practice, as well as to hone her technical skills. Her preliminary idea for her graduate work at OCAD is to create a ship in a bottle using non-recyclable objects. In her view, the choice of materials would speak to both the permanence of monuments and the devastating effects people have on the environment. As well, she is excited about the possibility of collaborating with other OCAD graduate students who bring to the program different skill sets and areas of research.

Among IAMD students, research interests include design, jazz and media; sculpture, advertising and social context; animation, printmaking and fibre; and architecture, sound and music. While at OCAD, students will create hybrid projects, which often combine digital and analog elements.

IAMD is unlike other master's programs in that successful candidates will graduate with one of three degrees: a Master of Fine Arts, a Master of Design or a Master of Arts. At the beginning of their second year, students will meet with their principal advisor and a thesis committee to determine which degree they will pursue. Their decision will be based on their research project and thesis proposals. IAMD is unique in Canada, not just because most Canadian programs offer only MFAs but also because of its interdisciplinary focus.

"The program is designed to challenge students to investigate, research and produce creative works that explore the intersections between art, design, visual theory and cultural studies," says Professor Vladimir Spicanovic, Director of the IAMD. "The objective is to involve students in research that maps out new ways of articulating art and design today. By engaging in research that integrates theoretical inquiry, practice-based visual research, and social research, they'll develop new interdisciplinary methodologies."

The MFA in Critical & Curatorial Practice has also attracted students with very diverse research interests. These include curatorial and critical theory, contemporary Canadian art, current tensions in Canadian art criticism, and performance studies.

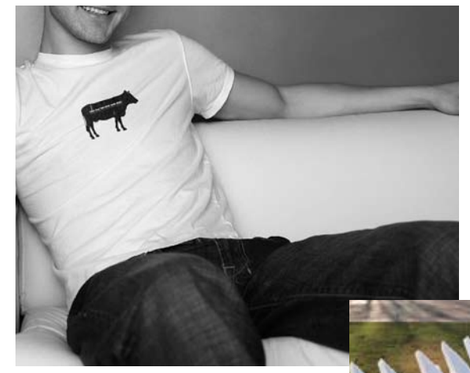
Funerary architecture (such as tombs, pyramids and monuments), mythical literature and the theme of immortality are the research interests of MFA student and former intern architect Deborah Wang. While completing her fourth-year program in Rome as part of an undergraduate degree in architectural studies at the University of Waterloo, Wang went on a walk that explored psycho-geography — the study of the effects of the geographical environment on people's emotions and behaviour — and was inspired by the experience. In particular, she was impressed by Venetian designer Carlo Scarpa's stone staircase in the Brion-Vega Cemetery. Wang describes the staircase — where stepping on each stair triggers the sound of different musical notes — as a large-scale xylophone.

As part of her coursework in Rome, Wang created *A House for John Cage*, a project largely inspired by Scarpa's work. Her model of a piazza in one of the city's central transportation hubs showed a half-buried structure that integrated interactive soundscapes — water sculptures, ear trumpets and stones that emit musical sounds when people walk across them.

While completing her undergraduate degree, Wang also worked as an intern architect with de Architekten Cie in Amsterdam, where she built models for an airport design. Upon graduation, she worked as an intern architect for Toronto-based Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects (KPMB) on the Quantum-Nano Centre at the University of Waterloo. Her team focused on the "envelope" (or "skin") of a building, which is the architectural term for exterior design.

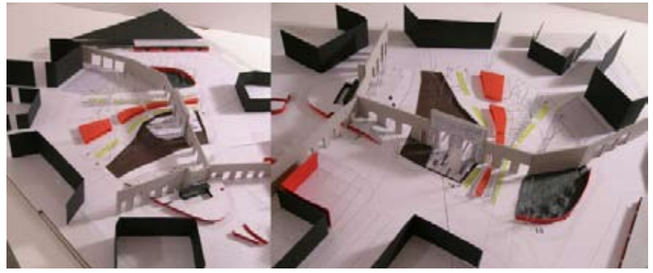
At this time, Wang also began creating fibre installations. *Big Knitting*, a 4½'-by-14' piece that she produced with colleague William Elsworthy, was shown at the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto in 2007 as part of *Big Fibre, Little Fibre*. "Our textile projects are abstracted landscapes, where we explore and expand the act — and craft — of knitting," says Wang, who is looking forward to adding curating to her list of achievements.

Her first and only choice for graduate school was OCAD because the MFA in CCP allows her to focus on curating. Furthermore, she wanted a program at a university with a special emphasis on art and design. OCAD's location appealed to her as well, the campus being in downtown Toronto, in close proximity to outstanding art galleries such as the Art Gallery of Ontario.



"One of the most exciting aspects of the Criticism & Curatorial Practice program is the partnership with the AGO, our next-door neighbour," says Professor Rosemary Donegan, Director of the MFA in CCP.

An outcome of this collaboration is Inside the AGO, a course that is team-taught by senior gallery staff. Among the faculty members is Kelly McKinley, Director of Education and Public Programs at the AGO, as



ABOVE
DEBORAH WANG AND WILLIAM ELSWORTHY
BIG KNITTING: LANDSCAPE SECTION
4.5 X 14'
FIBRE INSTALLATION AT THE GLADSTONE HOTEL, TORONTO
PHOTO BY KATHERINE MORLEY

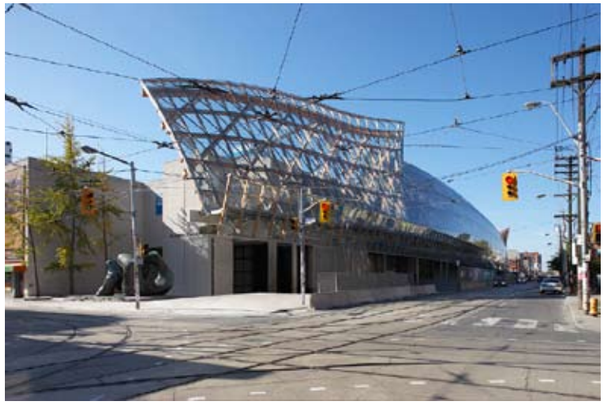
TOP
SARAH BECK
ÖDE. TANK IN DRIVEWAY, 2001
PHOTO BY SARAH BECK

BELOW
HEIFER COWSHIRT, 2008
JOE MUSICCO, WRITER; FADY SBEIH, ART DIRECTOR; KRISTIN ALT, ART DIRECTOR; CALEB GOODMAN, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR

ABOVE
DEBORAH WANG
PORTA MAGGIORE. PUBLIC SPACE PROJECT MODEL
PHOTO BY DEBORAH WANG

BOTTOM
SARAH BECK
FENCE SCAN (FROM ÖDE TANK PROJECT), 2001
PHOTO BY SARAH BECK

FROM ARCHITECTS TO BEST BOYS:
OCAD'S FIRST MASTER'S STUDENTS



ABOVE
ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO
PHOTO BY CRAIG WEBB
COURTESY OF THE ART GALLERY
OF ONTARIO 2008

ABOVE
(L-R) **CALEB GOODMAN, SARAH BECK, DEBORAH WANG**
PHOTOS BY LINO RAGNO

well as curators, project managers, registrars and conservators.

As part of the MFA in CCP program, OCAD students have the unique opportunity to curate a diversity of projects at the AGO, including exhibitions, symposia, online ventures, performances and other interventions into the gallery spaces.

Partnerships are also an integral part of the Executive Master of Design in Advertising, which has leading industry professionals as professors and guest lecturers. For instance, Andy Macaulay, President of Zig, a Toronto-based creative agency, delivered an illuminating lecture about the case histories of Zig clients.

The opportunity to meet top professionals is part of what drew account director Caleb Goodman to the program. "You have the opportunity to really get inside the minds of these people and to ask them questions," Goodman points out. "This gives us a great perspective because we hear different points of view that we can compare and contrast to develop our own ways of thinking."

According to EMDes Director Robert Saxon, the program is unique in providing advertising education because it allows working students to keep their jobs. And while most master's programs admit students right out of an undergraduate degree, EMDes students must have at least four years' experience working in the field.

The EMDes program has also attracted marketing directors, creative directors, writers, researchers, designers, and agency owners from across Canada as well as the United States and Lebanon because it fosters close working relationships among people in different disciplines. "This mirrors the trend in progressive agencies," says Saxon. "The goal is to produce the next generation of industry leaders by bringing together top professionals to work in teams. Through cross-pollination, they become more multi-dimensional thinkers.

Goodman agrees. "Working so closely with people from different disciplines generates a really rich dialogue. It's thought-provoking and it forces you to think from a different point of view."

Goodman, who holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bishop's University in Sherbrooke, Quebec, has worked for the last eight years as a group account director at Taxi, an advertising agency with an impressive client roster that includes Canadian Tire, Coca-Cola, Molson Canada, Telus and WestJet. As a team manager, Goodman develops communication strategies, generates creative briefs and determines general account strategy. He'd like to run his own agency one day, he says, and sees the EMDes program as an important step in achieving that goal.

The enthusiasm Goodman brings to his studies at OCAD, not to mention his already impressive professional profile, makes him a great role model for undergraduate students.

Michael Owen, Vice-President, Research & Graduate Studies, agrees. "Our graduate students will definitely be mentors for our undergraduate students. Overall, the quality of students is one of the most exciting aspects of launching our first three graduate programs." Owen is helping to develop what will amount to 10 graduate-degree programs by 2011. OCAD will launch at least two new programs in 2009, subject to approval by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies: a Master of Arts in Contemporary Art History and a Master of Design in Strategic Foresight.

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Leanna McLennan is a Maritime-born writer and academic. Her work has been published in *The Antigonish Review, Broken Pencil, Fiddlehead, Taddle Creek* and *Third Floor Lounge: An Anthology from the Banff Centre for the Arts Writing Studio, 2004.*

BEAVER TALES: CANADIAN ART AND DESIGN

Antlered animals. Beavers. Canada geese. Evergreens. Maple leaves. Trilliums.

Chosen for their ability to inspire and endure, these six examples of indigenous Canadian flora and fauna provided the organizing framework for the exhibition "Beaver Tales: Canadian Art and Design," which ran until December 6, 2008, at the University of Toronto Art Centre.

Guest co-curators Rachel Gotlieb and Martha Kelleher brought together more than a hundred objects for this unique multi-disciplinary showcase of the fine and decorative arts. Each emblem had a dedicated room — there was a moose room, a room for Canada geese, and so on — and in each case, visitors were made aware of how loaded with meaning these symbols are, how utterly Canadian.

Part of that has to do with the way these symbols have endured. There's no question this was an archives-inspired exhibit. Kelleher's expertise lies in 19th- and 20th-century pieces, which require extensive archival research, while Gotlieb's field has been Canadian design since 1940.

"The works in this exhibition played a significant role in how the nation imagined itself so many years ago," explains Kelleher. Adds Gotlieb, "It was extremely important that Martha [Kelleher] and I show emerging artists and designers with the established ones. We were able to illustrate the powerful influence of Canadian identity on artists and makers from the 19th century right through to the 21st century."

Canadians of the late 19th century, the Canadians of Confederation, first looked for ways to define themselves (with one stab at definition being the creation of their own emblematic imagery inspired by indigenous flora and fauna). Then, in the early 20th century, they looked for ways to define their art. Nowhere is this later effort more apparent than in the nationalist aesthetic established by the Group of Seven, represented in this exhibition by, among other members, former OCAD vice-principal Arthur Lismer. An oil sketch by Lismer, *A September Gale, Georgian Bay* (done for the famous painting of the same name), is quite possibly one of the Group's most iconic images.

In her catalogue essay, Gotlieb also engages us in an examination of Canadian identity through nature, albeit a more playful one. She tells us that politics, commerce and culture were still the driving force behind the artistic expression of Canadian symbols in the latter half of the 20th century, as they had been since Confederation. But there is a difference, and that's the distance we've been trying to establish, culturally speaking, between ourselves and our colonial heritage.

"When we have chosen a national look, we will have found a national identity," wrote Ken Lefolli in his book *The Canadian Look: A Century of Sights and Styles*, published in 1965. Flora and fauna, according to Gotlieb, still express that identity, even though the way we think about our flora and fauna has changed.

Gotlieb uses as an example the beaver, which used to be admired for its wisdom and perseverance and is now seen as a symbol of creativity. Take OCAD alumna ('91) Mary Anne Barkhouse's heartbreaking *Persevere*, in which a bronze beaver sleeps deeply on a cushion silkscreened with an 18th-century map of Canadian fur-trade routes. Contrast this with alumna ('04) Anneke van Bommel's *Beer Buddies* brooch, an irreverent souvenir pin that juxtaposes a beaver motif with beer to poke fun at Canadian identity. The brooch is among many pieces in the exhibition that demonstrate the way indigenous flora and fauna commemorate a sense of place, making ideal subject matter for souvenirs.

Nature is chic these days — or so claims a *New York Times* article that Gotlieb uses to show us that by no means is this just "a Canadian thing." Our connection to the land and natural environment is increasing in popularity as issues of sustainability become widespread concerns, and artists and designers are no different. Gotlieb also shows us that the back-to-nature aesthetic is something that has emerged "partly as a reaction to cookie-cutter design and globalization — industrial design is increasingly infused with craft and one-off techniques."

The Canadian cabin style is a great example. From alumnus ('03) Rob Southcott's impossible-to-miss antlered chairs, pictured right (they were in the moose room), to alumnus ('04) Tristan Zimmermann's plastidermy collection (no animals were killed for these trophies), the referencing of indigenous materials and imagery is fun — and funny. Of course it's natural to wonder at the difference between a real spirit of nationalism and an identity of kitsch, but for the purposes of this exhibition it doesn't matter.

Antlered animals, beavers, Canada geese, evergreens, maple leaves, trilliums — how loaded they are with meaning.

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Also featured in the exhibition were alumni Mauricio Affonso ('07), Katherine Morley ('07), Harold Town ('44), Thea Yuzy ('05), Elizabeth Wyn Wood ('25) and Don Watt ('57), as well as former OCAD faculty member Emanuel Hahn and former principal J.E.H. MacDonald.

ABOVE
EMANUEL HAHN
CANADA GOOSE, 1932
SILVER-PLATED
CAST BRONZE
COURTESY OF THE ESTATE OF
ELIZABETH WYN WOOD AND EMANUEL HAHN

BELOW, LEFT
MAURICIO AFFONSO
TRILLIUM SCARF, 2008
WOOL
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

BELOW, RIGHT
ROB SOUTHCOTT
UNITED WE STAND, 2007
BIRCH, PLY, BRASS
HARDWARE
2.44 X 1.52 X22 M

ALUMNI NOTES

PG17

ASTMAN OPENS AGO, COMPLETES MAJOR PUBLIC PROJECT

Barbara Astman has been exhibiting at public art galleries in Canada and abroad since 1975, shortly after she graduated from OCAD. Yet, with her work this year on one of the opening exhibitions at the Frank Gehry–redesigned Art Gallery of Ontario, as well as a massive public art project, Astman marks another leap in the profile and scope of her career.

Astman was a sculpture student at OCAD when she had her first encounter with a Polaroid camera. She'd completed a series of aluminum earthworks and wanted to document them on the shores of Lake Ontario. A friend lent her the Polaroid and she used half a roll of film before returning to her apartment, where she was struck with the desire to find something interesting to do with the other half. "I just very instinctively started acting out," Astman says. "I started performing for the camera. There was actually a eureka moment."

An American who studied design and silversmithing at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Astman came to Canada in 1970 during the Vietnam War. "I went to a big expensive American school," she explains, "and at one point during my second year I came up to see the Bauhaus exhibition at the AGO. I saw this little school nestled behind the gallery and I wandered in."

It's clear in talking to Astman that she's a great lover of the story. Much of her photographic work is presented progressively, in series, and much of it has a sense of narrative. Think of her enormously seductive *Dancing with Che* (2002), in which revolutionary icon Che Guevara becomes a sort of dance partner by virtue of being the decal image on the dancing artist's T-shirt.

Astman furthered this notion of storytelling in a recent work, adding to it the act of documenting, when three years of her own reading material became *The Newspaper Series*, which showed at Toronto's Corkin Gallery in 2007.

Astman is also known for her public art. "Some artists make a whole career out of public art, yet they keep doing the same thing over and over," she says. "I teach. I earn a good living selling my art. Public art I do because I get to try something completely new."

The Murano, a condominium development at Bay and Hayden streets in Toronto, is the site of her latest public project. Using new digital technology from DuPont, Astman discovered a means of embedding colour digital photographic imagery right into the glass of the development's second- and third-storey windows, in effect "wrapping" an image all the way around the building. This project, scheduled to launch in early 2009, encompasses 217 windows in the block-long building.

Astman also embarked recently on a curatorial project at the AGO. Together with Georgiana Uhlyarik (Assistant Curator, Canadian Art), she worked on one of the newly transformed gallery's opening exhibitions. For this project, Astman was hired to select works from the '60s and '70s that supported her research — works that came from the AGO's extensive collection.

Uhlyarik, who uses the words "compelling, thoughtful, intelligent and generous" to describe Astman, has this to say about the process: "Last spring, we invited a number of people associated with Coach House Books in the '60s and '70s to remember the era, and to consider the most important and influential event or activity or idea for them from that period. Barbara [Astman] put forth an incredibly thoughtful exhibit proposal. In it, she spoke of her desire to look at the influence of American expatriates who moved to Canada and stayed on to participate very actively in art, culture and society. She also expressed an interested in examining the roots of the emerging feminist practice — its effect on her own practice and that of her contemporaries."

The resulting section of the exhibition, *Joyce Wieland and the Emergence of Feminist Practice*, features Wieland along with Lisa Steele, Suzy Lake and Barbara Astman. It opened in mid-November 2008, coinciding with the reopening of the AGO.

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Barbara Astman is a professor in the Faculty of Art at OCAD and is represented by the Corkin Gallery in Toronto.

ABOVE
ASTMAN ON SITE AT THE ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO DURING INSTALLATION OF THE EXHIBITION
PHOTO COURTESY OF BARBARA ASTMAN

BELOW, LEFT
HANDMADE PAPER HUNG TO DRY ON A CLOTHING RACK ON THE ARTIST'S BACK DECK AND USED LATER AS SET DRESSING
PHOTO BY KATHERINE DYNES

BELOW
DYNES AT WORK ON "MAN IN THE MEADOW"
PHOTO BY NAN SHEPHERD

BOTTOM
KATHERINE DYNES
MAN IN THE MEADOW
FOUR PANELS USED IN FILM, 8 X 12'
PHOTO BY KATHERINE DYNES

ABOVE
ASTMAN AND CREW ON MURANO SITE TO INSPECT THE FIRST FOUR WINDOWS
PHOTO BY DAVE TRAUTRIMAS

ALUMNI NOTES

PAPERMAKING, PRINTMAKING, FILMMAKING, TIME TRAVELLING

Printmaker Katherine Dynes is effusive about Barbara Astman (see story above). "She's my fairy godmother," says Dynes, who credits the artist, curator and OCAD professor with making the call that got Dynes the job — a big one — just after graduating from OCAD in 2007.

Dynes worked as an actor for 10 years before realizing that, hypothetically speaking, if she were to win the lottery she'd go straight to art school. On the heels of that epiphany she actually went to art school, to OCAD. Then she graduated and got a job working with actors.

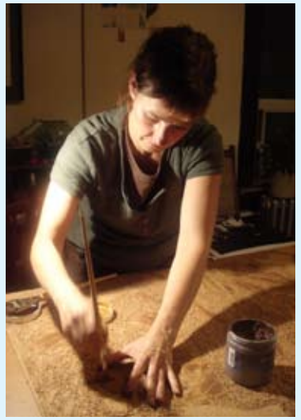
On Astman's recommendation, Dynes was hired to assist with the production of *The Time Traveler's Wife*, the much-awaited film version of the beloved 2003 novel by Audrey Niffenegger. One of those iconic once-in-a-generation love stories, the plot centres on a man, afflicted with a genetic disorder that causes him to time-travel intermittently, and his artist wife, who makes paper sculptures and has to cope with her husband's frequent absences and dangerous experiences. The movie, scheduled for release on Christmas Day 2008, stars Rachel McAdams (*The Notebook*) and Eric Bana (*The Hulk*).

Commissioned for her papermaking skills, Dynes says she did "a bit of everything." She'd be asked: "Can you coach the actress?" "Can you be on-set?" "What would we find in a printmaking/papermaking studio?" She even ended up making some art. Says Dynes, "At one point, they had me collage with teabags and coffee filters. I was drying everything on a clothing rack in my apartment and they saw it and said, '*We need that. We need that in the film.*'"

Dynes found the work especially rewarding for the way it brought together two disciplines: visual art and acting. "I realized I knew right away what she needed," says Dynes, referring to McAdams. She and McAdams actually spent one madcap day learning printmaking/papermaking techniques at OCAD. On the morning of her "workshop," the movie actress opted to cycle to 100 McCaul Street but forgot her bike lock, and she and Dynes had to sneak her bike past security. Later, McAdams would ask that Dynes be on-set for each and every scene involving art.

The collaborative nature of the work was appealing; it became part of a process of discovery for Dynes, another epiphany. "I realized that a part of me loves to be in the service of something," she says. "I really enjoy being that support."

It's a sensibility she'll no doubt bring to her current work/study involving reiki, a Japanese healing-touch technique that also had an influence on her art as a student at OCAD. Interestingly, Dynes was a medal winner in her thesis year for a beautiful, ephemeral project that explored "the relationship between body and memory." Not exactly time-travelling, but close.



McGILL–QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS REVIVES WORK OF ICONIC '60s AUTHOR

"That Phyllis Brett Young attended the Ontario College of Art (OCA) during the 1930s not only accounts for some details in descriptions of the city in the novel, but also provides clues about the artistic context in which readers might situate the novel's heroine."

— From the introduction to the 2008 edition of *Pscyhe*.

Rarely these days are reputations lost and found, particularly those of best-selling authors. Books go in out of print, but there's almost always something left behind. It's the book-as-artifact argument and it doesn't even begin to touch the great archival energy of today's search engines.

So what happened to the work and reputation of OCA alumna Phyllis Brett Young (1914–1996)? Although the Canadian author published six books that made their way into numerous languages and editions in Canada, the United States and Europe, she defied our best attempts to remember her and to archive her tremendous contribution. She was lost to us in so many ways.

But now, she's found — and what a discovery.

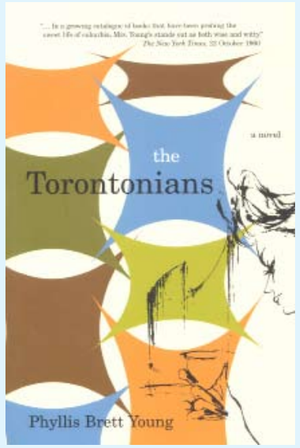
Once an international best-seller, Young's *The Torontonians* was, along with *Psyche*, one of the writer's two novels republished this year by McGill-Queen's University Press. Writes *Toronto Star* reporter San Grewal of *The Torontonians*: "It's difficult to decide what is more astonishing — the book's utter disappearance, along with the author, from the literary map, or its acute examination of subjects still central to the changes currently redefining Toronto some 50 years later."

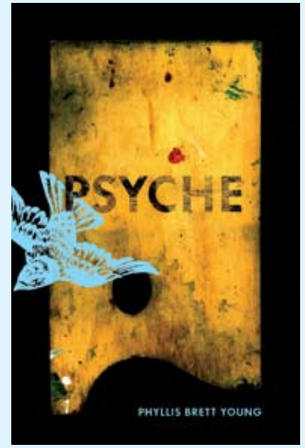
The novel was originally published to much acclaim in 1960, with *Psyche* released one year earlier — the same year that Hugh MacLennan's *The Watch That Ends the Night* and Mordechai Richler's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* were published, authors with whom Young was once compared.

Editors Nathalie Cooke and Suzanne Morton are, respectively, Associate Dean of Arts and Professor of History at McGill University. It was Morton who came across *The Torontonians* through a friend who'd found it by chance in a used-books store in Nova Scotia. Morton immediately identified its cultural significance and would later write, in the revived book's introduction, of the former "literary sensation" as a forerunner to J.K. Rowling for the way Young appealed to a popular audience by "pushing the boundaries of expectation."

The Torontonians has been adopted by reading lists in Canadian-history courses at Queen's University and the University of New Brunswick and is now prescribed reading in a Canadian-fiction course at the University of Toronto. Roy Ward, College Sales Coordinator at McGill-Queen's University Press, says that, academically speaking, this kind of academic traffic is both product and purveyor of the buzz that keeps a book alive.

Psyche, in this incarnation, is still too new for course lists. Although it doesn't name Toronto explicitly, the personality of Grange Park (especially as a locus of creative activity) is hard to miss. Says Young's daughter, Valerie Argue, who in this case is quick to refute the notion — or at least the impossibility — of autobiography, "There's no question: Art is extremely important to the development of *Psyche*'s character."





ABOVE
PHYLLIS BRETT YOUNG
PORTRAIT COURTESY OF VALERIE YOUNG ARGUE

BOTTOM, LEFT
RICHARD B. NEVITT
A CALEDON SKETCHBOOK
(PORCUPINE'S QUILL, DANBURY: 2008)

ABOVE, LEFT
PHYLLIS BRETT YOUNG
THE TORONTONIANS
(McGILL-QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS, NEW YORK: 2007)
JACKET DESIGN BY DAVID DRUMMOND

ABOVE, RIGHT
PHYLLIS BRETT YOUNG
PSYCHE
(McGILL-QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS, NEW YORK: 2008)
JACKET DESIGN BY HENG WEE TAN

BELOW
RICHARD B. NEVITT
INTERIOR PAGE DETAILS
A CALEDON SKETCHBOOK
(PORCUPINE'S QUILL, DANBURY: 2008)

NEVITT HOPES SKETCHBOOK WILL INSPIRE

"*A Caledon Sketchbook* insists that drawing has little to do with style and aesthetics. Drawing is, in its essence, a means to the end of understanding ourselves and our place in the world."

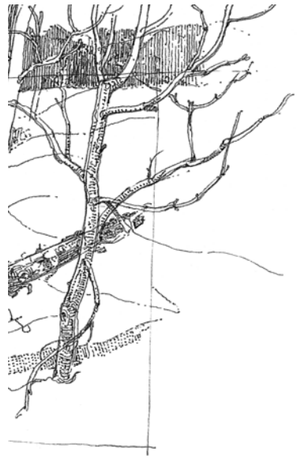
— Tom Smart, Executive Director & CEO, McMichael Canadian Art Collection. From the foreword to *A Caledon Sketchbook*.

In the very early stage of his career, Richard B. Nevitt ('62) was, as he puts it, "taken to the vaults and shown the journals." He is referring to the writings and drawings of the Group of Seven, whose work he has managed to keep in closest proximity and to use as resource and inspiration over some 50 years. In November 2008, Nevitt celebrated the publication of his own journal of sorts at the Group's unofficial home, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection.

The location of the launch is significant for other reasons. It's where Nevitt — who taught anatomy, life drawing and foundation studies at OCAD between 1965 and 2002 — still teaches and lives. "For the past 30 years, I've recorded…my feelings and thoughts as they relate to the landscape of the Caledon Hills."

A Caledon Sketchbook (Porcupine's Quill, 2008) provides an apt record of these musings, both in sketch and in caption, and will likely serve as a resource to students of art and nature in years to come. Writes Nevitt in the preface, "A field journal is the first repository for many of the creative ideas that are essential to the spirit of any completed work."

His hope is that his own field journal will help slow people down, allowing them to "respond to the seasons and reflect on the landscape," perhaps even participate in it by reading, sketching or writing about it. Says Nevitt: "Art is often about going to nature first. It isn't until later that we start dealing with interpretation."



The artist's visual eye must be trained to marshal chaos into a plausible design, and for many (myself included) the journal will prove to be the reference point for the development of a unique artistic vocabulary and vision.

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Treasures to behold: Over the years one of the most satisfying experiences I have enjoyed has been the opportunity to share with my students a few of the many wonders of the landscape of the Caledon Hills north of Toronto. But nature does not present itself already pre-arranged into harmonious order.

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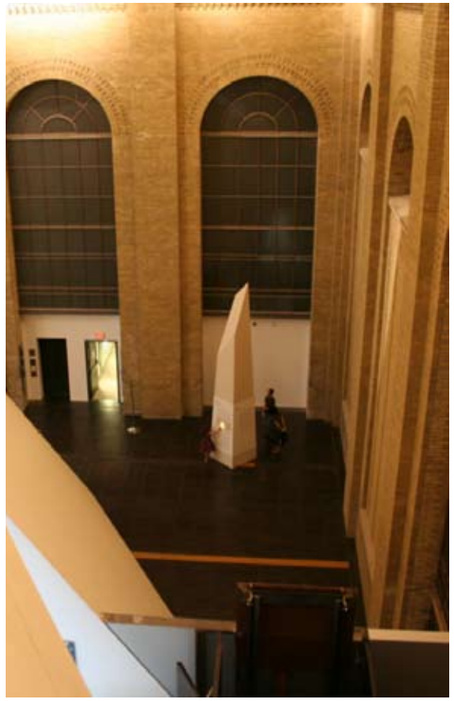

OPPOSITE, LEFT
GORBET DESIGN
HEARTBEAT, DRAKE HOTEL, TORONTO, 2004

OPPOSITE, RIGHT
GORBET DESIGN
SOLAR COLLECTOR, CAMBRIDGE, 2008

ABOVE, LEFT
GORBET DESIGN
THRESHOLD MEMORY
DRAKE HOTEL
TORONTO, 2004

ABOVE
GORBET DESIGN
DONOR OBELISK
AT THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM
TORONTO, 2008

ABOVE & TOP
GORBET DESIGN
DONOR OBELISK
AT THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM
TORONTO, 2008

FACULTY PROFILE

THE AESTHETIC IS THE INTERACTION: GORBET DESIGN

By Leanna McLennan

"Surprise and delight — that's what we're aiming for. It's at the core of everything we do."

Susan L. K. Gorbet is describing the essence of Gorbet Design Inc., the Toronto-based company she co-founded with Matt Gorbet in 2001. The Gorbets are one of those couples with so much collective talent that it's awe-inspiring. Not only are they both instructors in the Faculty of Design at OCAD, they also teach intensive courses as part of the TELUS Interactive Art and Entertainment Program at the Canadian Film Centre's Media Lab. And they run a successful design company.

From obelisks that glow to aluminum shafts pulsating with light, together Susan and Matt Gorbet make visually dynamic interactive sculptures. Their creative process bridges the fields of art and design: they use design methodology to create sculptural work that's known for its clean lines and organic forms. In conversation they move between the two fields, referring to themselves as artists on the one hand, designers on the other.

Neither planned to be an artist. Susan began her career studying computer science and psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. From the outset, her focus was on the relationship between people and design. With her finger on the pulse of media innovations in the early days of 3-D design for the Web and interactive television, she moved to Silicon Valley to work as a computer programmer and interaction designer. Notes Susan, "I've always worked in areas that are inventing the rules rather than applying them."

Meanwhile, Matt's interest since the beginning of his career has been in combining art and technology. "When I came out of high school, there wasn't a place to combine those interests," he says, "so I decided to apply to four different art schools and to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology], rolling the dice to see what would happen."

As luck, or fate, would have it, Matt was accepted at MIT, and he went on to do his master's at the university's Media Lab, where he researched human/computer interaction. Upon graduation, he worked at PARC (Palo Alto Research Center) with a highly creative team.

The couple first met in San Francisco in 1995, when they were working on a project at Silicon Graphics, Inc. Two years later, they ran into each other at a conference in Atlanta and started dating. Both highly creative, Matt and Susan thrive on their work and their relationship to such a degree that they have seamlessly combined their personal and professional partnerships. They also tend to finish each other's sentences.

"We found we were always talking about the projects we were working on…" says Susan, to which Matt adds, "…so we decided that in order to spend more time together, we wanted to work together."

In 2001, the couple moved from San Francisco to Toronto and started Gorbet Design. Because they see design as a conversation with the viewer, the Gorbets create each piece with multiple layers. As viewers discover a sculpture, they respond to the immediate visual impact. Then they enjoy the delight of coming across something unexpected, followed by the discovery that they can interact with it.

"We don't have a visual aesthetic that's our calling card," Matt says. Susan continues, "Instead, our aesthetic is about interaction."

Together, they see people as both their audience and their medium. That's where Susan's psychology degree comes into play. "As an artist, you're relying on people to act in a certain way," she explains. "Much like oil painters need to understand the properties of oil paint, interactive designers need to understand the properties of their medium, which is people."

People are central to *Threshold Memory* and *Heartbeat*, which were designed for Toronto's Drake Hotel and launched at its official opening on Valentine's Day in 2004. *Threshold Memory*, which consists of eight vertically stacked neon numbers, keeps a running count of people moving between the lobby and lounge. Every time someone passes, a sensor registers the person's presence and the number increases by one. At the current rate, the counting will continue for 300 years. As of October 22, 2008, the total registered was 1 665 098. *Heartbeat*, a series of six custom ambient sound sensors installed in the walls and ceilings, measures the sound levels in different areas of the hotel. The gauges displaying these sound levels are located in the geographic centre of the Drake. People can watch the needle of the gauge that reads *You Are Here* move as it registers their sonic presence.

Another piece that invites viewer interaction is the 20-foot-high obelisk at the Royal Ontario Museum. It was designed for the reopening of the ROM in 2008, as a means of recognizing donors to the Renaissance ROM campaign, which saw the addition of the Daniel Libeskind–designed Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. Donors' names are permanently engraved into the obelisk, which is made from Corian, a reconstituted stone that is also translucent. Touching a name illuminates it, with the light coming from inside the stone, and as your hand moves over the obelisk, it creates a path of light.

"The obelisk acts as a bridge between the old building and the new, a bridge between the past and the present, which influenced the form and the materials we chose," explains Matt.

The classic obelisk form, the materials and the names carved in stone speak to the old building. The contemporary lines, straight edges and smooth surfaces, as well as the angle at the top of the stone, all echo the angles and lines of the new building. So does its placement: at the building's architectural border between old and new.

Solar Collector, which launched on the 2008 summer solstice, also bridges two environments: the industrial area where it's located and the natural world. Designed with Rob Gorbet, Matt's brother, for the Waterloo Regional Operations Centre in Cambridge, Ontario, the piece consists of 12 large-scale aluminum shafts fitted with solar panels. The shafts visually represent the movement of the sun through the sky, with the tallest shaft perpendicular to the sun at winter solstice and the flattest shaft perpendicular to the sun at summer solstice.

The idea is that people can interact with the natural world via the Internet by going online to set the speed and direction of light patterns in the panels. A custom electronic "brain" located in each shaft is responsible for the timing of an individual lamp, with the lamp's schedule dependent on a database of patterns created on the actual site. (To view the patterns in real time, log onto www.solarcollector.ca.)

For more information on Gorbet Design, visit www.gorbetdesign.ca.

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Leanna McLennan is a Maritime-born writer and academic. Her work has been published in *The Antigonish Review, Broken Pencil, Fiddlehead, Taddle Creek* and *Third Floor Lounge: An Anthology from the Banff Centre for the Arts Writing Studio, 2004.*

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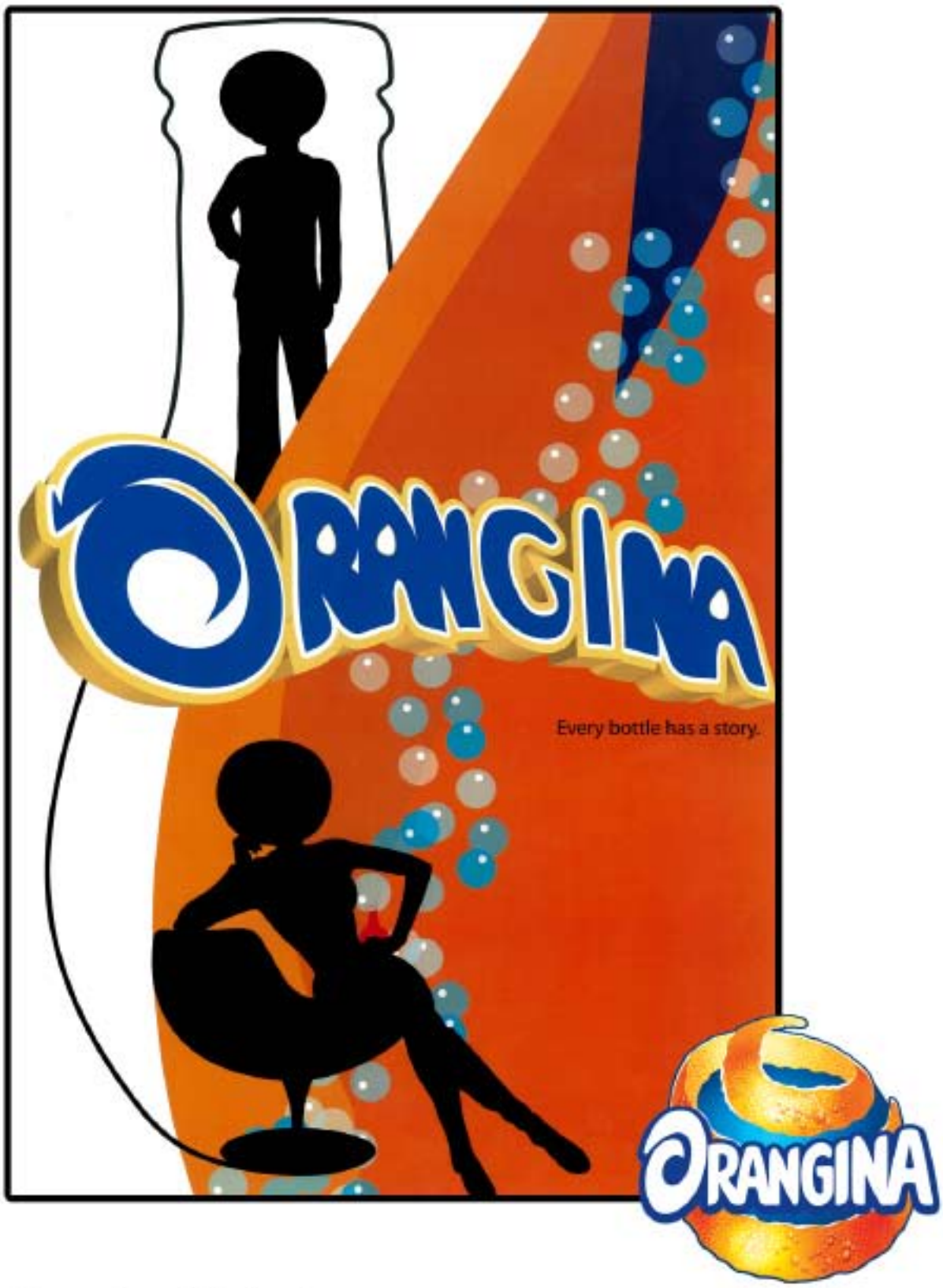

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Congratulations to Erica Chia, winner of this year's Orangina Originals at OCAD student competition. Thanks to her lively work entitled Orange Meets Gina, Chia has earned a $15,000 educational award and becomes Canada's first-ever Orangina artist.

Be one of the select few to own a signed, limited edition print of Orange Meets Gina, on sale for $75 at www.ocad.com/whodunit beginning December 5, 2008. All proceeds benefit the OCAD foundation.