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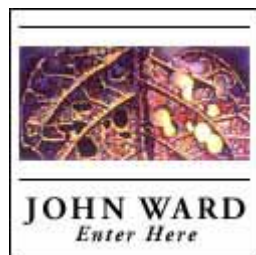
E D I T O R I A L

this is the last issue of the Arts Business Exchange Newsletter.

David and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Lori Stufflebeem at Dick Blick Art Materials and Howard Forman of SellYourArt.net for their support. The financial and moral commitment of these two American companies to this enterprise has been greatly appreciated.

Thank you as well to these individuals for their participation: Sharon Boyle at the University of Calgary Press; Julie Wright at Hawkestone Communications in Toronto; Bob Rowell at NAMTA in Huntersville, NC; Mary Da Costa at Industry Canada; and Jim Gillies at Lambeth Desktop, Internet & Design, London, Ont.

Finally, we would like to thank the almost 200 visual arts workers who responded with such passion to our request. And to our writers, many thanks for your thoughtful and inspiring contributions.



Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, 1975

Cover: Jane Evans (Canadian, b. 1947) *HAND 16*, from *Portrait of the Artist as a Woman*, digitally manipulated photograph printed on Arches 190 lb, 16.5" x 11", 2002.

www.geocities.com/janeanneevans.html

BLUE CHIP QUOTES

Business Art is a much better thing to be making than Art Art, because Art Art doesn't support the space it takes up, whereas Business Art does. (If Business Art doesn't support its own space it goes out-of-business.)...

Business Art is the step that comes after Art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist. After I did the thing called "art" or whatever it's called, I went into business art. I wanted to be an Art Businessman or a Business Artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. During the hippie era people put down the idea of business - they'd say, "Money is bad", and "Working is bad", but making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art.

ART TRADE POLICIES

New arts sector profiles and strategic plans will help guide Canadian cultural industries beyond the border

OTTAWA - One of the largest problems faced in establishing policies on the visual arts and crafts at any level of government in Canada is the remarkable shortage of statistical data available. Without a sound foundation of facts, it is all but impossible to establish ground rules for helping artists and arts businesses to succeed financially abroad.



To address this fundamental concern, the Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage in June 1999 established a "consultative mechanism for cultural trade development activities" the Cultural Trade Advisory Board now called Trade Team Canada Cultural Goods and Services. The arts now have the appearance of status equal to other industries that are part of Trade Team Canada Inc.

From the Canadian Heritage web site:
www.canadianheritage.gc.ca

http://exportsource.gc.ca/heading_e.cfm?HDG_ID=57. Canadian Heritage is moving forward into the 21st century and the world of liberalised trade.

According to the Heritage web site, the purpose of the Cultural Goods and Services team (TTCCGS) is "to develop consensus on strategic priorities for cultural trade and to assist Canadian companies in the cultural sector to better position themselves to access international business opportunities. It will also help the sector achieve its full export potential by encouraging stakeholders to speak and act collectively, to advance cultural trade and market development interests."

There are 20 arts working groups under the umbrella of TTCCGS. According to Miska Têtu, visual arts sector specialist in Trade & Investment Development at Canadian Heritage, the fine art working group consists of individuals from: the Art Dealers Assoc. of Canada; the Canada Council; the Ontario Arts Council; L'association des galeries d'art contemporain; Saskatchewan Professional Art Galleries Association; the Ontario Ministry of Culture Sport and Recreation; the Ontario Ministry of

Economic Development and Trade. The working groups meet about twice a year and report to the Heritage ministry twice a year.

Tom McFall, Exec. Director of the Alberta Craft Council is chair of the Fine Craft working group. He was available from his offices in Calgary to explain how his group has progressed.

Each group is required to produce a "sector profile" before they can proceed to a strategic plan of action. Fine Craft is in the final stages of their profile. Inaccuracies in statistical information currently available, however, forced the group to poll craftspeople through provincial and local crafts councils.

"According to federal statistics, there are no exports of fine craft. Our research says there is about \$100 million in fine craft is sold each year outside the country," stated McFall.

"Statistical information currently available was often unusable for our sector profile. For example, in federal statistics if you were a production potter you would have been categorized with ceramic insulator producers and brick makers."

"The business data received from professional craftspeople shows that they generate a small net income and expenses are very high. The national average of net income is less than one third of gross income. Clearly, it is inappropriate to apply traditional business standards to the arts."

The sector profile has been in the works for 2 years -- it is a fact finding exercise resulting in a statement on education to incomes to exports. When the profile is accepted by the federal government they will be able to provide funding for activities that will strengthen the export of Canadian cultural products.

"We have begun development of the strategy already and I am on the steering committee," stated McFall. The strategy is a multiyear plan for what the Canadian Craft Federation (CCF) and provincial craft councils want to do.

"We want to create a national festival of fine crafts for the fall of 2006. Expanding Canadian presence at SOFA is also an idea as is participation in the Glass Arts Society Conference in Amsterdam. Coordinating exhibitions competitions and initiatives through the CCF is an important strategy."

Resource sharing and division of specialised duties will also eliminate duplication of effort.

"When all the sector profiles and strategies are in place they will provide a framework by which the bureaucrats will set policies," commented McFall.

"Activities will be prioritised based on this information. We will have a guide as to whether one initiative is more important than another."

TAXING ARTISTS

arts conference digs into the issue of art business taxation

by Anita Grace, Special to ABX

OTTAWA - Taxes are not usually a riveting subject. But when arts administrators from across Canada got together in May for the third annual Chalmers Conference, tax laws were discussed with a tangible verve.



Photo of 'CCRA dilemma' panelists (from left to right): Megan Davis Williams, CCA; Susan Wallace, CAEA; Dan Donaldson, Orchestras Canada; Anne-Marie Des Roches, Union des Artistes; Patrick Close, CARFAC Saskatchewan

Signatories to the working group document:
Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA)
American Federation of Musicians (AFofM)
Canadian Actors Equity Association (CAEA)
Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA)
Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA)
Canadian Dance Assembly (CDA)
Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC)
Opera.ca
Orchestras Canada (OC)
Professional Association of Canadian Theatres
Stratford Festival
Union des Artistes (UdA)

The Chalmers Conference, organized each year by the Ottawa-based Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA), was held May 21 and 22 in the spacious Panorama Room at the National Arts Centre. It touched on the expected themes: networking, advocacy, creative management and Human Resources. There was a well-received speech by Canada Council for the Arts Director, John Hobday and even an exercise in which groups had to prepare a 15-minute pitch to the next Prime Minister of Canada (funding, funding, and more funding).

But it was the Wednesday afternoon panel on 'the CCRA Dilemma' which brought a sense of urgency not always apparent at arts administration meetings.

A four-person panel, chaired by CCA National Director Megan Davis Williams, addressed the draft information bulletin from Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) regarding the issue of employee versus self-employment status pertaining to artists working for performing arts companies.

Susan Wallace, Executive Director of Canadian Actors' Equity Association (CAEA) and the first panelist to speak, neatly summed up the issue: as employees, artists can receive pension and Employment Insurance (EI), but forgo their ability to deduct expenses. As independent contractors they can make deductions, but forgo EI. As employees they may also lose copyright since creations made during the period of employment remains the property of the employer.

Wallace has been part of a working group set up by the CCA in response to a CCRA bulletin presented to the cultural community on January 9, 2002 which laid out a 'four-fold' test to be applied to artists in determining whether they were employees or independent contractors.

To say the arts community found the document wanting would be an understatement. "Many in the community felt [the bulletin] did little to clarify the issue," explained Williams. "Indeed, they saw potential for greater confusion and financial risks for individual artists and the performing companies they work with."

The working group set itself the task of preparing a written response to the bulletin; this document was presented to Chalmers Conference participants prior to the panel discussion.

On May 22, following the conference, a delegation of representatives from arts organizations and the Department of Culture and Heritage, met with officials from CCRA Employment Insurance and Canadian Pension Plan Eligibility unit to discuss the document and decide where they will go from here.

Williams reported that an agreement was reached to set up a joint task force "as a first step with members from our working group and CCRA, accompanied by legal expertise". She said the task force will look at specific scenarios which could illustrate how the four-fold test should be applied to artists.

"The key question," said Williams, "is who is the artist in business for? Whose business is it?"

Creating a joint task-force is a small but significant step forward in an issue that has been batted around arts organizations, government departments and the revenue agencies for over three years. What makes the topic particularly thorny is that not only does it have the potential to affect artists and arts organizations in every sector, but it has been difficult, if not impossible, for the arts community to find a unified position.

A news bulletin from the CCA on October, 2002 stated that "many organizations have internal conflicts as some of their members value independent status while others would prefer to be employees." It was no small feat that the working group was able to present a document signed by twelve arts organizations and associations, albeit with an aside that "a few of the organizations which signed on to the response retain some concerns over wording in portions of the document".

While the 'CCRA dilemma' has the greatest impact on performing artists, Patrick Close, Executive Director of CARFAC Saskatchewan, said the issue will spill over into other artistic fields. He suggested visual artists will have to be especially diligent in negotiating any contract and "make sure it is a contract for service and not an employment contract."

While some arts administrators infer a hostility on the part of the revenue agency toward the cultural sector, Close thinks it is a question of flexibility, or lack of, within existing bureaucratic systems.

"There is a failure of the system to come to grips with demographics," he said. "Arts is a growing demographic and instead of coming to grips with this challenge, instead of expanding the criteria, there seems to be an attempt to retrench and force people back into employer/employee contracts."

With the task force now in the works, members of the cultural sector working group will be re-iterating their assertion that artists should be presumed to be independent contractors unless there is an agreement to the contrary. The CCRA will examine a sector profile developed by the CCA and will look at how it could be applied as a guideline for auditors in the field. Updates will be available through CCA bulletins or on their web site at www.ccarts.ca.

ART AT THE SUMMIT

Toronto City Summit Alliance demands government support for the arts

by Charmian Love, Special to ABX

TORONTO - Toronto will be facing some significant challenges over the next few years. And the Toronto City Summit Alliance has recognized this by amassing a group comprised of over 40 civic leaders to address the issues surrounding these challenges and present feasible recommendations to all levels of government, the private sector, voluntary organizations and citizens. One of the thirteen stated visions for the future of the region, which is addressed in their Action Plan, surrounds the need to have Toronto recognized for its cultural and artistic excellence.

It is widely realized that the arts are a critical component of a community. Currently, organizations that are focussed on this sector are drastically under-funded due to a decline in government support. On a provincial level, since 1994 there has been a shocking 40% drop in grants from the Ontario Arts Council (not much offset by the 1998 Ontario Arts Endowment Program). Municipally, the support of marquee arts groups was reduced from \$3.5 million in 1990 to \$2.3 million in 2002. These statistics illustrate conditions where organizations are challenged by insecure capital assets, burnt-out staff and essentially, find themselves in a state of perpetual crisis.

The Alliance has acknowledged the deterioration in effect and are urging that all levels of government provide, at the least, annual inflationary increases as well as singling out specifically to the Provincial government to restore arts funding to 1994 levels. Also in the Alliance's Action Plan is a recommendation to work with the arts and culture sector, the Toronto Community Foundation, the Toronto Arts Council and the private sector to explore new approaches to arts and culture funding. It further proposes existing efforts to revitalize the arts be continually built-on such as Toronto Arts Council's "Great Arts = Great City" campaign, helping enhance Arts Toronto's "Arts Week", and supporting the Creative Trust's art stabilization program and the City of Toronto Culture Division's new plan and programs.

The challenges facing Toronto are significant, but with the forward-thinking Toronto City Summit Alliance on side, the art communities can be assured that their importance in the future of the region is recognized.

ARTZINE REPORT

ABX readers respond to request for paid subscription

PENETANGUISHENE - A flood of email replies choked the ABX office email inbox on May 28/03. The request for a commitment of \$20. for an annual subscription was met with a flurry of letters from some 200 readers.

By magazine trade standards, a 3% return on direct mail offering is considered very good. While the ABX request was in the form of a poll, a 4% affirmative reply rate was gratifying. Unfortunately, the break-even point was 10%.

The letters of support and encouragement were at times lengthy, always enthusiastic and deeply sincere. Here are just a few of the approximately 200 letters of encouragement from ABX readers:

I have been meaning to write you earlier to let you know how much I value the Arts Business Exchange. However now seems like a particularly important time to write. I am active in a variety of sectors of the arts, as an artist, as a consultant in community economic development and the visual arts and as a College teacher in the areas of marketing, small business and entrepreneurship for visual artists and in eco-tourism.

I have used information from your publication in all of these aspects. At the recent Community Arts Ontario Conference I ran into Ben Darrah and was commenting to him and to other people that I thought your publication is the most useful one in the area of the business of art in Canada. (Ben Article on shipping work to the United States is a terrific resource for any artist looking at this sector)

Given all of that I would be most happy to pay \$20 a year for this publication. Having your publication on-line is a great plus, easy to store and to access. I sincerely hope that ABX will continue!
Jim Blake, Haliburton, Ont.

Alvin Balkind was absolutely right. If anything, the system is even less logical and transparent as it was back then. For this reason I would hate to loose your informative web magazine. I enjoy receiving it and find it of interest.

Clara Hargittay, independent curator and art consultant, Toronto

I think your information is relevant and important and that there should be a market for this...I feel strongly that the visual arts in Ontario is facing a crisis and you are beginning to feel it. Visual Arts Ontario is now touring for what I personally feel is the same reason...the claimed to be wanting to be effective but were really looking for guidance as to

where to go from here. I hope you take the time to respond as I would appreciate engaging you in this dialogue that I am embarking upon locally. Thanks for making such a great product and I hope it survives...it is needed as the arts really are a business!

Ben Benedict, BA, BFA, London, Ont.

I would like to subscribe to ABE. twenty dollars a year is certainly much cheaper than the cover price of Canadian Art, however, I live well below the poverty line and don't know if I'll have the \$\$\$\$ when you will need it.

I would be sorry to see your publication go - it provides insight into many art issues which bridge the cultural and private sector and which are often not covered in general arts magazines. I hope you can keep publishing and will subscribe if I can.

Jan Mollison, artist, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

I for one would like your publication to continue.

I have enjoyed reading it for quite a while now. But my original intention was to send it out to CARFAC BC's membership through out e-bulletin. Since we cannot send attachments to this list, it did not meet my original objective.

May I suggest that your articles have not met the criteria that Alvin Balkind wrote about. You probably would have more readers in the art world if you could:

- a. send it out other than as an attachment
- b. have more hard hitting articles on the implementation of business in the arts that would be useful to all - note that if I had to pay for this newsletter, I would not be subscribing - the organization, as well as the artists in BC probably cannot afford it; and, of course,
- c. find ways to raise the money necessary to pay the writers sufficiently well enough to get those in-depth articles about the incomprehensible art world in Canada.

Good Luck. I hope you can continue.

Linda Williamson, CARFAC British Columbia

I do believe that there is room for you in the Canadian System. I have enjoyed your articles for many years. They have been informative as well as thought provoking at times.

One of the main differences is that your publication feels like it is written from the prospective of the average artist and art lover. It is written from the "trenches"...where most creative Canadians find themselves today. Your publication seems to have more to do with the artist than with the collector and big business. If it is your intent to continue to produce a publication from this point of view, you may wish to expand it to include current artist concerns, such as funding

problems, galleries/dealers with poor reputations, suppliers who offer discounts, interesting new business approaches, more call for entries, exchanges of ideas...etc. There is a wealth of information that never gets published in this country because of the behavior hierarchies, gossip, myths, gods, heroes and villains that Alvin Balkind speaks of. By putting more of a "value add" into your publication, it may entice a readership more willing to pay.

Our Canadian system has encouraged handouts and not a proactive investment in our careers so it may be a hard sell...:)

Having been in the Canadian Art world for over 20 years I have only now begun to get a peek inside the inner workings. As an artist living and working in Quebec, there is also the phenomena of the two solitudes that literally has the art world divided in two here. This artificial separation, has only assisted in the disintegration of a once thriving art community, and encouraged the behaviors described by Balkind. There are many highly gifted artists in this province that are completely unknown both inside and outside Quebec from the many cultural communities that reside here. You may wish to highlight some of the "gifted unknowns" from across Canada in your future articles too...:)

What remains important is getting the real art business news out there. For example not too many of my fellow artists are aware of bill M-293, which concerns us all. You brought it to your readers. From your article Claude Monet: a 19th century businessman, to your last editorial, proves that you have a role to play. The question remains whether your readership will want to pay to receive current information from the frontlines of Canadian Art. I for one wouldn't mind forking over 20 dollars, if ABX continues to be "my publication", where the voices in "the trenches" can be heard. If enough voices are heard a difference can be made, and we can change some attitudes as well as the way art business is done in this country.

I would like to thank you as well as all of your writers for your hard work over the past few years. I hope your other readers will feel the same.
Stewart Fletcher, Visual Artist, Montreal
www.stewartfletcher.com

I have found the publication very accessible and a "quick read" which may attract a different and much larger audience than other arts publications. I would subscribe for a year and hope that the publication is sustained through similar subscribers.

Betty Gormley, Administrative Director
Canadian Crafts Federation/Fédération canadienne des métiers d'art

I would be happy to pay a \$20 annual subscription for ABX. It is vital that professional sectors have a mechanism for discourse in an open forum. In addition, ABX provides an extremely important resource for academics interested in the workings and issues of contemporary culture.

Dr Judith Mottram

**Research Director, Loughborough University School of Art & Design
Loughborough, Leics, UK**

I was sent your request of statement of interest in the Art Exchange newsletter. I belong to several cultural groups in the craft sector and had never heard of this before. It seems like an excellent idea. Most cultural groups seem to function parallel to and not in tandem with each other and this Art Exchange newsletter may function as a unifying body.

There is a great need for some sort of concerted effort to connect all groups and establish their roles to avoid duplication and redundancy. There is also a need to expose this whole sector to the international market.

**Rachelle Chinnery, Ceramist, British Columbia
www.rachellechinnery.ca**

The Winnipeg Art Gallery would certainly purchase a subscription for \$20. There is always something of interest in each issue.

Currently we print them off and post them on the bulletin board, then they are catalogued and added to the Clara Lander Library in the periodicals section.

Marilyn E.A. Williams

**Head of Communications, The Winnipeg Art Gallery
<http://www.wag.mb.ca>**

Count me in for two subscriptions!

**David Brooks, The Vincent van Gogh Gallery
<http://www.vangoghgallery.com>**

*Your newsletter is informative and factual. I certainly believe that there is a need for an Arts Newsletter in Canada which focuses on the **business** of being an artist - as artists we know what our philosophical *raison d'etres* are - what we need is practical, timely information on the marketing of art, on publicity and public relations, on networking, on what's happening in the art world, on galleries that are interested in representing new artists. I am very concerned that Canadians seem willing to pay more and more for furniture and high tech gadgets but are not interested in supporting art, particularly Canadian art. We need a newsletter that will promote Canadian art to buyers in Canada as an excellent investment for the future. Canadians need to be encouraged to buy Canadian art because they like it and as an investment in Canada that boosts the economy and creates jobs.*

Ron Noganosh, Artist & Sculptor, Ottawa

I would be happy to subscribe to this publication. I look forward to receiving it each month. I like to download it to refer back to articles or read at a later date. It keeps me informed as to what is happening in the art scene outside of my own little area and I feel that is important for any artist.

April Lafferty, Artist, Vancouver Island

Please accept my pledge of \$20 for an annual subscription to ABX. I am somewhat new to your newsletter but I have been interested in and impressed by the writing and subjects tackled in the issues I've seen. ABX has a place and a role in the relatively slim roster of Canadian art publications. It deserves to survive.

Liz Bierk, Arts Administrator, Peterborough, Ont.

Of course the Canadian visual arts system has its own customs and costumes, code (sic) of behaviour hierarchies, gossip, myths, gods, heroes and villains. Surely this list of characteristics are intrinsic to culture. In archaeology, these same categories are used to determine the existence of a idiosyncratic society -- a distinct and separate culture.

It bothers me how quickly the media, and in specific, art critics, pooh pooh on living and dead Canadian artists and the culture in which they operate. I'm tired of being told that myself and the many practising, very Canadian artists that I know, are not part of a distinct and separate culture. Bolly hog!! If we are not Canadian, if we are not artists - then what the heck are we? Some would like to pretend we are figments of our own imaginations. I suspect instead, that it is their lack of vision which leads them to declare, "There is no Canadian culture."

Let me know if i can help support your exchange. Thanks for your work to date.

Nicoletta Baumeister, visual artist, White Rock, BC

I believe strongly that ABX Newsletter has an important place in the Canadian visual arts industry and I wish to subscribe to help you to continue its publication.

Germain Lefebvre, Visual Arts, Montreal Arts Council

EXPATRIATE ARTISTS

why some Canadian artists leave their home and native land for good

by Jane Evans in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

For more than a half century, droves of Canadian artists have come to work and live in San Miguel, a 500-year-old cobble-stoned, bougainvillea-dappled jewel of a town in central Mexico. San Miguel boasts, along with perfect weather, chamber music festivals, a jazz festival, art schools,



John Hall (Canadian b. 1943) *MASK 4*, 6"x 9", acrylic on panel, 1995.

More work by John Hall can be seen at:

[John Hall](#)

and

www.theartark.com/johnhall.html

galleries, countless artists, and an international arts dialogue with a heavy emphasis on the production of art and not on the discourse that surrounds that production.

Why do we come? Mostly it is a matter of dollars and senses to come here: the cost of living; the aesthetics; the climate; the clarity of an expatriate position; the impassioned dialogue; the politics and romance of an international art community. Artists from all over the world have long been enchanted by Mexico. Sergei Eisenstein perhaps described it best in his original plan for "Que Viva México!":

"... the great wisdom of Mexico about death. The unity of death and life. The passing of one and the birth of the next one. The eternal circle. And the still greater wisdom of Mexico: the *enjoying* of this eternal circle."¹

But why do we leave a first world nation for the relative chaos of a developing country? I was once present in a group of 118 Mexicans from a variety of classes, who were asked, that on their death, what was the one word they would like to be remembered by and they almost without exception said "alegre", joyful. What would most of us say: "honest? intelligent? hard working"? How dour! In contrast the pursuit of joy sounds downright sinful in Canadian language.

I came to Mexico first in 1990 on a vacation from rules, isms, from the careful, safe order of home. I came to see what else there was, what it was like to live with different values, with different things. Like Jackie Burroughs' Maryse Holder in "A Winter Tan", I came to take risks. I came to fill my senses with the colour of something other than black and white absolutes and grey political positions and something more profound, less plastic perhaps, than that which is provided by our near American

¹ *The Film Sense*. First Outline of *Que Viva Mexico!*, Sergei Eisenstein, p. 252. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., San Diego, New York, London, 1974.

Canadian culture. I came like Holder to fill what Octavio Paz describes as "...the center of {my} being...that secret place that renders a woman vulnerable and mortal..."²

It seems to me that art and culture have been invaded in Canada like the rest of our society, by the pursuit of order. Order, orderliness, obeisance of written law is the natural outcome of a literate society.³

This obsession with order and control is supposed to be the work of God and the artist - what's an artist to do if there is no chaos to order? Unfortunately, a consuming interest in order, be it municipal codes or new testament, spawns the abandonment of the visual experience. Words and images are the two basic human experiences of representations,

presentations, and symbols.⁴ The scales have tipped hugely in Canada towards words. The sayable, the discourse, the telling have begun to outweigh the seeable, the display, the showing.⁵

As a Canadian artist I felt as though I must incorporate into my art language which is understood by the literarily literate who are at the same time visually illiterate, a public that is accustomed to having television images explained by parallel language. It can be a cold shower for an artist.

Mexico is like stepping into a warm bath. It is predominantly illiterate (by Canadian standards) and relies hugely on images to promote good behaviour and discourage

bad. One does not read the Bible; instead pastorals, parades and icons tell and teach. One finds one's way through the Metro in the world's second largest city, Mexico, D.F., thanks to a brilliant series of simple images. The burn of a firecracker and the gore of a bull's horn teach safety rules much more quickly than Canadian laws which keep us at television distance. And the art community speaks a common language-international art.

In 1990, I left behind a self-indulgent art community (artistic self indulgence is a luxury not often witnessed in countries still fighting for human rights), the impassive ease of an orderly Canadian life where I had to remind myself of the importance of art: that at the end of a society all that is left are the artefacts, the banks and oil companies come and go and are soon forgotten (Do you remember the Northland Bank?). I came to the anarchic freedom of a nearly tribal, imagistic third world nation



Installation at the Casa Verde Gallery, San Miguel de Allende, by Joice and John Hall. The small painting on the left is entitled *Memoria 1* and the large painting is entitled *Ofrenda*

² *¿Águila o Sol? / Eagle or Sun?*, Poems by Octavio Paz, *My Life with the Wave*, p. 49. Peter Owen Publishers, Great Britain. 1990.

³ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. pp.8-14. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

⁴ "Word and Image", W.J.T. Mitchell. p. 47. *Critical Terms for Art History*, Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, Editors. University of Chicago Press, London. 1996.

⁵ *ibid*

where, even in poverty, with deadly problems, Mexicans hold art and the artist in esteem; even the destitute live their lives richly with colour, texture and ritual. I prefer to live here in dignity, rather than there, indignant. Here in joy rather than there in rage.

I came here to join other international artists, many with a much more prestigious trajectory than mine. In 1947 Leonard and Reva Brooks came for the artistic community. Although Reva, perhaps the greatest living Canadian photographer, has recently moved to a nearby nursing home, Leonard, now 92, continues to paint daily here. The 1940's were artistically exciting days in Mexico -- days of social activism, Trotsky, the great murals of Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros. In 1948, Leonard, a demobilized Canadian war artist and a fine musician, became part of the Siqueiros team painting the mural in Bellas Artes (one of San Miguel's art schools). He soon went on to found the Bellas Artes music program and the ensuing International Chamber Music Festival.

Chilean/Canadian painter Carmen Cereceda, who was studying mural techniques in Mexico City with the chemist who had worked with Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros, first came to San Miguel in 1954 on a day trip to see that Siqueiros mural. On her retirement from the Ontario College of Art in 1992, she struggled to find a place where she could continue to work. Disillusioned with the politics in Chile she found inspiration and quiet in San Miguel. Cereceda currently works on a mural commissioned by the town of San Miguel in the Angela Peralta Theatre, the town's primary musical venue.

Nonie Mulcaster received her Master's Degree from the other art school, the Instituto Allende, and returned permanently to San Miguel in 1973. The aesthetics were what drew her -- the beauty, the charm and the fact that her second love-horseanship- was practised here too. Mulcaster and Leonard Brooks are both recent recipients of the Queen's Jubilee Medal as outstanding artists.

For others economics played a more major role. John and Joice Hall, familiar with San Miguel since the mid 60's when John was a graduate student at the Instituto, moved to San Miguel in 1988. San Miguel's charm, interesting expatriate community and affordability were central to their decision to do so.

But San Miguel de Allende has changed. The climate is still perfect, the town as beautiful as ever but the cost of living has soared as much as tenfold. The community made popular by artists has drawn others, 'wannabe-artists', retiring from more conservative lives who are able to pay higher prices. What worked well for the Brooks, Mulcaster, and Cereceda has faded for many of us. John and Joice Hall have chosen to make British Columbia their permanent retirement home.

Like many I came for the passion. Like some I remain for the peace and the pace. For me, the costs of home remain too high.

Disclaimer: the author's ideas are not necessarily those of the artists mentioned.



About the Author

Jane Evans is a visual artist, teacher and writer with a special interest in film, video and new technology art. She left Canada in 1990 to live in Mexico. She has taught art, design and communications for the Universidad del Valle de México and the Academia de Fotografía. Jane obtained her BFA from the University of Alberta in 1982.

HOW TO GET A GRANT: THE MUSICAL

Excerpted lyrics from *How to Get a Grant: The Musical* (1992)

Book by Marion Lewis. Music by Diane Roblin.

Produced at the 1992 Fringe Festival in Toronto Canada.
Thanks to the extraordinary Paul Bettis for his direction and help.

A woman in black appears on a naked stage. Jazz piano chords play in the background

She speaks

In the beginning there was life.
And there were the arts and there were rats
and the tarts in between.
And the two made culture
and the culture was good
and everybody likes it.
The tarts, the art, the rats and so on.
For a while, everybody made art
And everybody had a really good time,
There were stars and more stars for a while....

Then came The Proposal and the Tarts left to find a new party and were replaced by the Whores who submitted and submitted and submitted. Well, in fact, the Whores really loved to submit so there was no problem and even though everyone missed the bright young Tarts and the sparkly ideas, the Whores knew how to do it and get it right. So we all learned to forget, forget... (She sings)

The dream of art
This is my art
And my past, the dreaded buried part
You will find what goes on later
And begin again,
The dream of art

No matter,
The dream of art
This is my art
Inside of me
It's undeniable

To please the art, the dream
Begin again, this is my art
This is my breath
The rhythm of my beating heart
It is my creation
And I begin again

.....The dream of art

Second excerpt

The bedraggled has-been artist has been out on the town trying to scare up recommenders that might have some sway with the jury. Having not met with much luck and overhearing two young things call her out-of-date and over-the-hill, she has had too much to drink and gone home with a hang over.

In her nightclothes she sings...

IF I get my grant , I'll pay off my debts,
book a facial and buy a great new dress,
I will start again, with a brand new life,
buy a computer, a printer and live without strife!

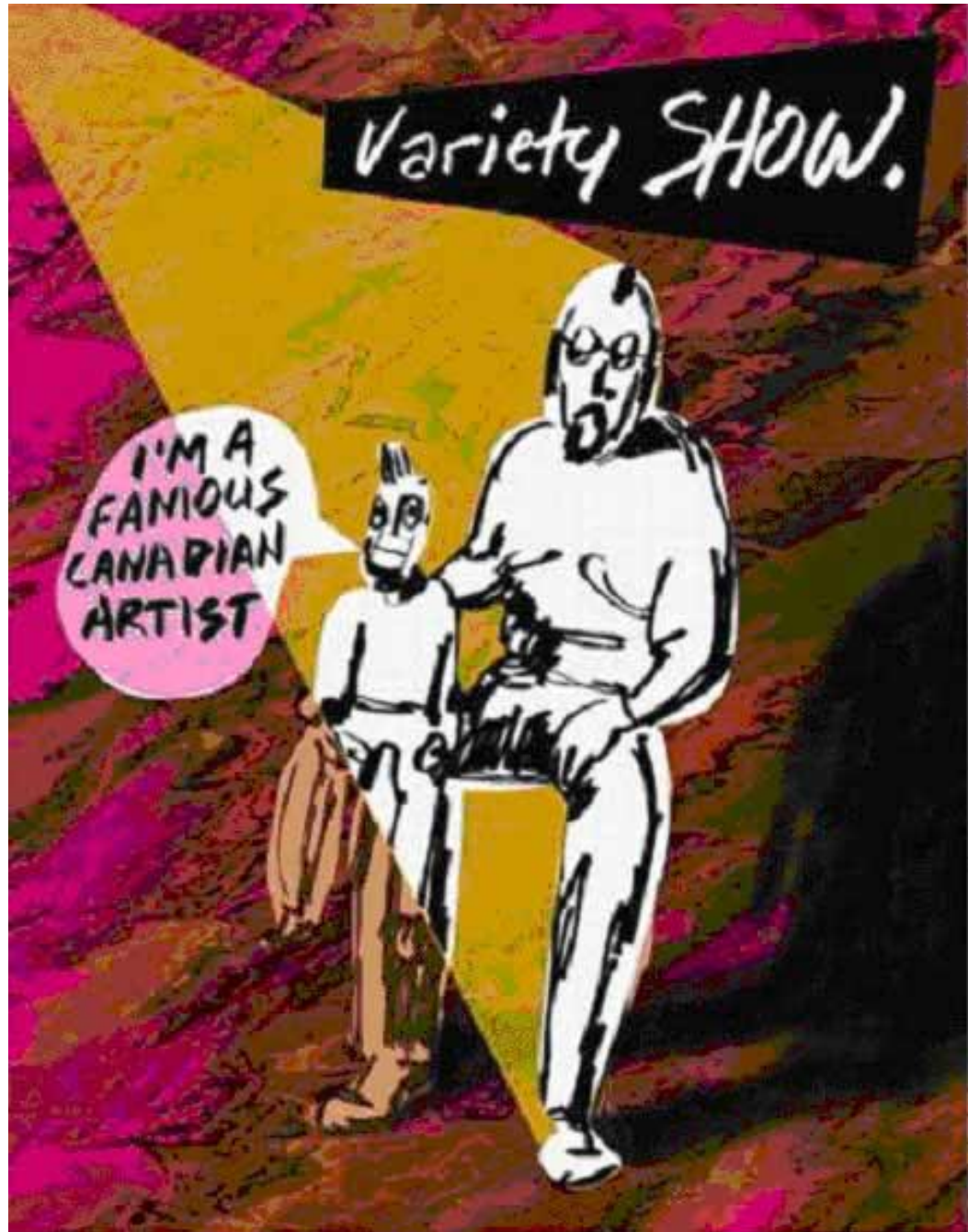
But if I don't get it,
Don't get any money,
If the grant does not come through
I will be in serious trouble
What they call financial doo doo doo!

What if they don't like me?
Really hate the project?
Hate the ideas and me too?

I should have worked much harder
and made the project better.
That guy at the party was probably on the jury
Did you see the way he looked at me?
I'm needy and broke and really un-cool!

IF I get my grant
I will fix that tooth
buy a push up bra and fix the leak in my roof.
I can start again with a brand new life.
Buy a computer and a printer and life without strife!

Canadian Curators Conference



For Artsake!

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B I L U M A R T

Making time for the everyday art of bilums

by David Whittaker, ABX in Papua New Guinea

“By 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable.” So Baudelaire saw the vitality of modern art in the everyday life of Paris in the 1830s. The traditional and the fashionable, 'high culture' and popular culture, were equally valid expressions of individual and social identity through art.



Expression: a fairly simple pattern on a basically white bilum but with a flourish of flowing colour from the top.

The critics and theorists of 'high modernism' in the first half of the 20th century would eventually drive a wedge between fine art and popular culture, the traditional and the avant-garde, only for postmodernism to restore Baudelaire's reciprocal vitality after WWII. And today, contemporary art is once again intoxicated as much with the complex 'beauty' of ordinary life on our streets (think Thomas Struth's photos) as the artefacts of high culture presented in museums.

But art still tends to be something we have to consciously make an effort to go and see or do. It's not part of our ordinary routines and daily experience. Our specifically cultural practises are similarly something we tend to wheel-out only on special days, and dust-off for anniversaries, rather than being part of a living tradition continuously remade. Neither are central to our busy, important, practical schedules.

But if we sometimes seem caught between past and future, there are still places, often south of the equator, where time moves differently, where art and daily life are not the opposing poles of a cultural dichotomy. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), traditions and aspirations crash spectacularly and confusingly into an elastic present, where at least some of the most ancient values and visions are still as 'ephemeral, fugitive, and contingent'

as they are 'eternal and immutable.' Art isn't something you go to see in museums, it's what you use each day, part of your story: where you came from, where you're going. This is the art of the bilum.

A bilum is quite simply a string bag - with a single strap for carrying over your shoulder or on your head. But it's also a little more than that. Bilums are made with local materials by women all over the country, using skills passed down from generation to generation. They can be identified by regional and practically distinctive designs: from loosely woven, minimally-coloured, workaday styles which seem capable of carrying the owner's body weight in food from the market or garden; to

fine-patterned, close-knit, flamboyantly-coloured varieties, often decorated with animal fur or feathers carrying almost ritual significance.

Particular combinations of colour and form immediately tell people the origins of your bilum, and by extension therefore, when away from purely practical situations, the origins of its owner. Status is symbolised by the richness of decoration and the degree of functionality - if a bag could never quite become art for art's sake, the ratio of utility to appearance does indicate a pecking-order akin to class.

Though people may well own several bilums, and use each in particular situations, they never quite lose touch with both their democratic origins - made by 'ordinary' people and bought from local markets for just a few kina (dollars) - and applications - used for carrying papers, provisions, and pikinini (children) [see photo]; displaying in public or private [see photo]; or giving as a gift, typically when someone 'goes finish' (leaves a job, a place, the country).



Starting young: a horizontally zig-zagged bilum (highlighted!) working hard at school.

Like American burgers, Dutch clogs, and German lederhosen, bilums are as PNG as you can get. But as creative expressions of complex social relations - unique, hand-made artefacts of great beauty and practicality - they also meet most people's criteria for art.

PNG is obviously not immune from the influence of modernisation, however, and its traditions are evolving. People's lifestyles, as well as their languages, have been changed by communication and movement, both nationally and internationally. Commodity products imported from overseas have

challenged local customs in everything from food to clothes to music to architecture. Bilums too are now often substituted for rucksacks and kit sports bags, but while the logos of Nike and Dunlop may be as recognisable as styles from a given province, and carrying an expensive Western product says as much about status as a particular kind of animal skin, the mechanised factory it came from hardly connects up to the same range of shared skills and symbols as a bilum hand-made in the same way it was as long as people can remember.

Combining artistic and artisanal skills, while balancing practical convention with creative invention, the bilum is a fairly unique example of the best sort of tradition, one that's living, breathing, democratic, and creative: a contemporary art as rooted and vital as Baudelaire's, but in tune to 'PNG time.'

A R T L O S S

risk management for your art collection

by Charmian Love, Special to ABX

Charmian Love is a consultant specializing in valuable articles and collector services at the Chubb Insurance Company of Canada. She obtained her undergraduate degree in art history and business from Queen's University.

You get the call.


The dreaded call.



The voice on the other end explains that there has been a fire, a flood, or a burglary. Everyone is fine, but the collection of Picasso sketches, Group of Seven oil paintings, Inuit carvings or Alexander Calder mobiles you have been passionately collecting for years is completely lost. Catastrophes such as these are why special precautions are required to protect art collections whether personal or in the possession of art institutions. Conscientious art connoisseurs understand the importance of ensuring that they have adequate insurance coverage and that a sophisticated security system is in place to help mitigate the potential for a loss to occur.

Unfortunately it is often assumed that the personal contents coverage portion of a homeowners insurance policy is sufficient to cover personal collections in the case of a loss. However, industry trends indicate the opposite. Claims reports show that people are often underinsured if required to replace everything,

especially when their valued collections are not covered separately. Valuable articles coverage is relatively inexpensive and can include additional features which are not provided under a standard insurance policy. These special features can range from worldwide coverage, breakage, mysterious disappearance, to items in transit or those that are newly acquired. Insurance companies that specialize in these objects also often also have in-house valuable articles services which can include art specialists who are able provide curatorial consultation for loss prevention, ensure that security of the home is optimal and even conduct photo-documentation to help create inventory management tools.




Commercial insurance for art dealers and museums requires additional coverages beyond the consideration of the personal collector. Since 9/11 museums have seen increased attendance to almost 900 million visitors a year. It is important that insurance companies involved in this line of business offer flexibility considering the valuation of these collections. Other features can include worldwide protection while collections are in transit or in the care, custody or control at the exhibiting location, and protection for newly acquired collections which have been willed or donated.

Sentimentality makes pieces of a collection 'priceless', however, up-to-date appraisals give an anticipated value of what it would cost to replace an object and thus provide the collector with a sense of security. After a brief respite from the increases of the 1990's, the international art market is again hot. This growth is reflected in the values for pieces which are steadily, and sometimes steeply, increasing. An art appraiser determines the insurance value by researching and by analyzing current art market trends, using information from many sources in the process.

Selecting an appraiser to complete this important service is not a decision to be taken lightly - experience and education are paramount. This includes a formal education in the art field and membership to at least one professional organization such as the AAA (Appraiser Association of America), ASA (American Society of Appraisers), or ISA (International Society of Appraisers). An appraiser should be fluent in the genre being collected and have references from satisfied clients. The appraisal documents and a complete inventory including photographs of all pieces should be safely stored away from the residence in a fire-proof safe or bank safety deposit box. A little foresight using categorical inventory practices and newly updated appraisals provides collectors with the peace of mind that their collection is adequately documented if a catastrophe occurs.

Sadly, a serious threat to the security of collections is the loss and harm caused by theft. Art theft has tripled in the last twenty years and the international market for stolen art is estimated to have a turnover of 500 million to 1 billion dollars. Alarm companies are responding to this trend by providing customized solutions and applying technological advancements in detection devices. Any home or business containing a substantial collection should have a centrally monitored alarm system at the very minimum. Devices commonly used include infrared motion detectors which identify the movement of an intruder passing through the house, glass breakage detectors which are set off by the shock or sound waves generated by a window being broken and magnetic door and window contacts which are activated when the area in question is opened. These systems are linked directly to outside monitoring companies who in turn alert the authorities when any of the devices are triggered.

Additional security measures include placing magnetic contacts on particular art pieces, display cabinets or safes. If the object is moved or opened the alarm is activated ensuring a quick response to potential trouble. Other devices gaining popularity are cellular back-up systems, which alert the alarm company if phone lines are cut, and monitored security cameras with on-line viewing capabilities. The major advantage to any such centrally monitored systems is that response is generated, even when no one is present at the scene.



Centrally monitored fire detectors are also important components of a comprehensive alarm system. Detecting a fire at the incipient stage could prevent a fire from burning out of control and destroying important collectibles and pieces of art. Fire is not the only enemy as smoke damage can be equally severe. Smoke contains elemental carbon particles which can cause irreversible damage and discolouration to works of art. The sooner a fire is detected, the greater the chance valuables have at surviving the incident intact. It is strongly recommended that a centrally monitored detector be placed near major pieces to promptly alert the alarm company of any problems.

The passion of a collector will always be discovering the 'find of a lifetime'. With this passion comes an understanding of the importance of protecting works of art with a secure environment and adequate insurance. Valuable article insurance is a specialized line of business which not all companies choose to offer. Collectors should place their business with an insurance provider who understands their needs and can offer the expertise these treasures require.

E N D N O T E S

The Magazine

The ABX newsletter is a digital publication (PDF) covering Canadian and international: art business news; art economics; art history; art law/art policies; art trends in Canada and abroad; art dealer and auction news. It is published 11 times a year by the Arts Business Exchange. Final issue June 2003.

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Dedication

This issue is dedicated to the exercise of social capital, the acceptance of risk and the leap integral to faith.