

SKETCH

WINTER 2009

The magazine of the Ontario College of Art & Design





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 Gottlieb 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 Gottlieb'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 Gottlieb, "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, Gottlieb 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 Gottlieb, still express that identity, even though the way we think about our flora and fauna has changed.

Gottlieb 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



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 X 2.22 M

ALUMNI NOTES

PG17

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 Gottlieb 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. Gottlieb 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.